

Getting Along

Andrew Carnegie, the founder of a company that became known as U.S. Steel, was able to assemble the greatest private-enterprise leadership team of his day. To accomplish that goal, he searched the world for the top men and women in their various fields of expertise.

At one point, he found a chemist in Germany who was the best of the best. Carnegie more than doubled his salary, and he gave him a new house and a five-year contract. However, three months later, Carnegie called the chemist into his office and fired him. He bought out the rest of his contract and paid his moving expenses back to Germany.

Why forfeit such a substantial investment and fire an elite scientist? Because, as Carnegie discovered, this chemist was impossible to get along with. He constantly argued with others on the leadership team and hindered their progress.

Explaining his decision, Carnegie strongly declared, "I will not have anyone work for me, especially in a leadership position, who does not have the quality of being able to get along with others."

Expertise in your field will get you only so far in your career. Don't develop and practice your technical skills at the expense of people skills.

Or, as another Carnegie, named Dale, might put it, don't discount the value and necessity of "making friends and influencing people."

Live in harmony with one another. 1 Peter 3:8

--Beecher Hunter