



How to Sabotage Business Relationships

The key to a successful business is healthy relationships with clients and other equine professionals. Here are some common mistakes that virtually guarantee you won't develop healthy business relationships:

1. **Talking only about yourself.** Do not dominate the conversations with stories and comments about you and what you have done in life or in your profession. Avoid conversations about conflicts you have had with other equine professionals.

2. **Revealing too much.** Avoid personal stories or comments. No one really wants to hear about your ex-spouse or health troubles. These personal problems do not enhance the business relationship. Stay positive and upbeat — it's contagious.

3. **Not listening.** If you are dominating the conversation, then you aren't listening. This is particularly important if the veterinarian or trainer is attempting to discuss a problem or treatment options for a horse. Resist the desire to jump into the middle of a sentence with a quick fix before the other professional finishes. Let the other person finish speaking before you reply.

4. **Working through a conversation.** Everyone is busy, but force yourself to stop whatever you are doing, make eye contact and let the other person know that you are interested. Nothing says "I don't care what you are saying" more than dropping your head to continue the trim or shoeing.



If a client is trying to explain a concern about the horse, don't look away and continue to work.

5. **Not looking the best you can.** Shoeing horses means that you are never clean. Filthy or torn clothes say that you don't care about yourself, so you probably don't care about others. Have a change of clothes in your truck.

6. **Trying to be cool or aloof.** This behavior screams insecurity. Just be you, with small modifications as the situation dictates. Remember how you felt when another professional dismissed you and your opinions? Don't present that image to others.

7. **Be the other person.** If you admire the veterinarian, trainer or farrier and want them to be part of your professional circle, then you must be proud to be associated with them. Make sure that they are proud to be associated with you as well.

8. **Ignore your business contacts.** Always return every e-mail, phone call or correspondence as soon as possible. Once they know that you care about them, their business and their problems, you are on the



way to establishing that professional relationship.

9. Making it a one-sided relationship. If you borrow a friend's car or truck, return it clean with a full tank of gas, regardless of its filthiness or how empty the gas tank was when you borrowed it. Now the friend also benefits from the favor. Make sure that your relationships with other farriers, veterinarians and trainers as much out of the relationship as you are. A strong business network is based on respect, trust and value-add.