Discussion Prompts
With Yourself

Exercise 1: Explore What Respect Means to You

💬 **Ask Yourself:**

What experiences influence how you think about respect? Who in your life has modeled how respect should and shouldn't look?

Remember that respect is not fixed, universal, or absolute. It changes as your life changes. Your definition of respect and what it currently looks like to you are a reflection of your earlier experiences.

To learn more about the different factors that can impact how you see respect in the workplace, and to reflect on the different factors that may shape your personal view of respect, refer to the "Influences" chapter in the 7 Forms of Respect™ book.

Exercise 2: Reflect on How You Feel Adapting to Others

💬 **Ask Yourself:**

- How often do you find yourself adapting to accommodate other people's desired 7 FoRs?
- Do you feel your energy increasing or decreasing when you adapt to others' preferred 7 FoRs?
- When do you think it's acceptable to do something you really don't want to do because you want to give someone respect?

These questions are designed to help you become more aware of how you feel adapting to others. Feeling tired or drained of energy might indicate you're adapting too much to the needs of others.

Exercise 4: Identify Bias in Who You Respect

We all harbor biases. It is human nature to have a preconceived notion or prejudice about individual people or groups of people. These biases can be conscious or unconscious and can have negative or positive consequences. They sometimes are reflected in the contradictory elements of how we exercise respect.

💬 **Ask Yourself:**

Are you giving and/or expecting to get certain FoRs with certain groups of people only? Why?

Respect is relative and contradictory. Aside from respecting individuals differently, you might treat entire groups of people with different forms of respect. When I use the term "Groups," I am referring to a specific collection of people who are classed together. In the examples I use below, I refer to those classed together by race and by the kind of school they attend. Other examples of groups include those who identify as belonging to the same gender, the same socio-economic group, the same club or organization.

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Exercise 4: Identify Bias in Who You Respect Continued

Think about the reasons behind your biases. Even if you don't realize you're doing this, others probably notice and it could hurt those subject to the bias as well as your own credibility.

The contradictory nature of respect doesn't excuse you from having bias. First, you have to understand the reasons for these biases. Then you evaluate if the reasons serve your intended purpose.

💬 Ask Yourself:

1. What is an example you give and/or expect with certain groups of people only? How does that example translate into a FoR?
2. Ask the question "Why do I do that with this certain group of people?" three times to uncover more of the truth.
3. After you figure out your reason, ask yourself "What will I do now that I know this? Does it make sense to continue what I'm doing/expecting from this certain group of people or should I change the way I interact with them?"

This doesn't mean you have to treat all groups of people the same all the time. You just need to become more aware of your biases. Then decide whether it makes sense to change or not.

To see how I asked myself these series of questions to uncover my own biases, refer to Part IV: With Yourself, Exercise 4 in the 7 FoRs book.

✋ Keep in mind:

Admitting that you treat different groups differently can be hard, vulnerable work.

Discussion Prompts

With Others

Exercise 2: Help Others Become More Self-Aware

We all harbor biases and sometimes we see it happening to other people. You can use elements of CAFA (refer to Part IV the 7 FoRs book or the PDF version) to start conversations when you see someone not respecting or perhaps even disrespecting someone or a group of people. You can help them become more aware of their own actions.

> 💬 **Ask Others:**
>
> 1. What is an example you give and/or expect with certain groups of people only? How does that example translate into a FoR?
> 2. Ask the question "Why do you do that with this certain group of people?" three times to uncover more of the truth.
> 3. After you figure out your truth, ask them "What will you do with this piece of information now? Does it make sense to continue what you're doing/expecting from this certain group of people or should you change the way you interact with them?"

These conversations can be quick and ideal or take numerous conversations to uncover others' biases. So as you ask these questions to someone else, be open to listening to what they have to share, even if you strongly disagree. Remember, if you want others to change their minds, you have to be willing to change your own.

To see an example of a conversation of how others can become more self-aware of their biases, refer to Part IV: With Yourself, Exercise 4 in the 7 FoRs book.

> 👆 **Keep in mind:**
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> The 7 FoRs can help people who acknowledge that they might be unintentionally disrespecting others. If your colleague isn't open to the possibility that they might have made a mistake, then they can't engage in the hard, humbling work being respectful demands. And the 7 FoRs won't work for those who don't think they have anything to learn.

Exercise 3: Explore Different Perspectives

There are many times when you have to prioritize giving/getting one FoR over another. It's good to know what matters to you and to others. And it's also important to know that you will sometimes have to adapt to others depending on the situation.

Discuss these scenarios with someone else so that you can learn their perspective and their priorities. You may want to name the complexity in a situation and the different FoRs that are in tension with one another. That way, you can recognize the choices you have to make, including the choice to interpret the situation differently.

The following series of scenarios are designed for you to analyze each situation through the 7 FoRs lens.

Exercise 3: Explore Different Perspectives Continued

Scenario 1:

You're a mid-level manager and you're in a one-on-one meeting with Alex, a senior leader at your company. You finish talking about business and now he's telling you about his views on life (he's talkative). You have a meeting scheduled with Rick at 4 p.m., and now it's 3:59 and Alex is still passionately sharing his non-work-related opinions. Do you interrupt him and let him know you have another meeting with Rick? Or do you continue to carefully listen to him until he finishes?

💬 **Ask Yourself:**

- Do you interrupt Alex to let him know you'd like to hear this but need to let Rick know that you'll be 5 min late? *If you chose to interrupt Alex, you are giving both respect to Alex and Rick in the form of Punctuality, though you may risk the fact Alex might not like to be interrupted and he might feel you are not giving him Attention.*
- Do you choose to interrupt Alex to end the meeting on time? *If you chose to interrupt Alex so you can start your next meeting on time, you are giving respect to Rick in the form of Punctuality and also to Alex by letting him know you won't take up more of his time than originally scheduled.*
- Do you let Alex continue talking though and be late to your meeting with Rick? *If you chose to continue to listen to Alex without interrupting him, you chose to give him respect in the form of Attention because you stayed focused on the conversation. You may also be giving Consideration to Alex if you think he wants you to let him continue speaking. You are choosing not to give Punctuality to Rick.*
- How would your answer change if Alex was actually your peer or someone who had less power than you? Or if Rick was your peer or someone who had less power than you?

Scenario 2:

You're the CEO of a company engaging in discussions about pay equity. You pride yourself on fostering a transparent culture. There is disagreement among the senior leaders in the company about whether or not the company should publish everyone's salary as a way to ensure pay equity. One manager is a strong proponent of it; another manager is against it. Although the state law permits you to share this information, you know there are many employees uncomfortable with making everyone's salary public.

💬 **Ask Yourself:**

- What do you do? Do you publish everyone's salary? *If you choose to publish, you are giving respect in the form of Information to all your employees.*
- Do you choose not to publish everyone's salary? *If you chose not to publish, you are giving Consideration as a FoR to those employees who you think would not want their salary shared.*

These examples illustrate the complexity and tradeoffs of giving respect to people with different preferences. It's impossible to please everyone at the same time. Keep in mind that what is technically possible might be different from what is socially acceptable.

Exercise 1b: Evaluate Your Team's Existing FoRs (poll)

Anonymously survey employees to see what they think the top three existing FoRs are for the team. Then show the results and discuss. Assure confidentiality to help people feel comfortable being honest and candid.

> 💡 **Tip:**
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> The facilitator should ask people not to reveal what FoRs were chosen so that others don't feel pressure to share what they chose.

> ☝ **Keep in mind:**
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> People may have differing degrees of how they want each FoR demonstrated. For example, the team leader may believe they are giving Information and others don't feel that Information is being delivered sufficiently. If there is a difference in interpretation, you should discuss it as a group.

Exercise 2: Compare Individuals' FoRs with the Team's Existing FoRs

Prework:

1. All team members should take either the online assessment at https://formsofrespect.com/assessment/ or the book assessment (PDF version). Make sure all team members take the same assessment for consistency.
2. The team should complete **Exercise 1b: Evaluate Your Team's Existing FoRs (poll)**

> 💬 **Discussion Prompt:** How do the individuals' FoRs compare to the team's FoRs?

This is an opportunity to learn what is important to individual members of the team and reassess what makes sense for the nature of the team's work. Often, team norms and expectations are developed out of habit. Newcomers are expected to adjust and not question the status quo. If they feel like they can't fit in or ask others to adapt, they might not feel a sense of inclusion.

> 💬 **Discussion Prompt:**
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> What happens if some individuals have different FoRs from their team's existing FoRs?

Encourage team members to be aware of their colleagues' individual preferences so that they can adapt to one another in their one-on-one interactions. Avoid making the entire team apply their preferred, individual FoRs universally in group work. Having a discussion will help build greater understanding across the team for why the team applies the FoRs that they do, even if they aren't aligned with the preferences of individuals on the team.

Differences between the individuals' FoRs and the team's collective FoRs can co-exist when special adaptations are made. For example, Chris prefers to give Information while no one else does and the team doesn't need Information to perform the work. Instead of making the whole team adapt to Chris, Chris' colleagues now understand he is being respectful when he gives lots of extra detail and copies them on all his emails.

💬 **Discussion Prompt:**

What if the team's existing FoRs are not preferred by the majority of the individual members on the team?

Discuss if the team needs those existing FoRs to function effectively. If those FoRs are not critical, discuss how you might change your team's collective FoRs.

Exercise 4: Integrate 7 FoRs Into Recruiting and Hiring

💬 **Discussion Prompt:**

How can integrating the 7 FoRs into your recruitment process help candidates understand your team/company culture?

This framework can come in handy when people are recruiting for external job candidates. The 7 FoRs can help distill a company's culture down to their everyday actions, and more easily relay how team members express and demonstrate respect for one another.

For example:

Hiring manager: We're really innovative and fast-paced, and I give people a lot of autonomy. Everyone I hire has a growth mindset.

Job candidate: What does that look like?

Hiring manager: We prioritize Candor as a top form of respect with one another. I encourage people to give each other feedback, including me. We deprioritize Attention. We understand people are in lots of meetings so I encourage multitasking.

Job candidate: Ok, that's really helpful. I appreciate Candor. Also, I came from a team that didn't believe it's possible to multitask, so this will be a change for me.