As a successful leader, your goals will be accomplished with the support of others. That means you need to build and maintain relationships in and outside your organization. Sometimes we need a reminder to do that.

A check sheet makes a great reminder. You can create a personalized check sheet. Make a list of things you believe help initiate, develop, and maintain relationships. Literally thousands of items could be placed on this. You will have a sense of what you need to improve. After you’ve created an initial list, have someone whom you trust review it and provide some insight about other things that you could add. To get you started you might consider these:

- Listen without judging.
- Understand other people and their unique characteristics.
- Take the first step to get to know others better.
- Initiate conversations—have a list of discussion starters available.
- Learn three nonwork items about everyone, such as hobbies, children, interests.
- Treat people equitably. Different people have different needs.
- Share something about yourself.
- Practice reliability and accountability.

When developing and maintaining relationships, give special attention to one group: future leaders. These individuals may have been tapped as high-potential employees. They are likely the future leaders for the organization. Accepting your responsibility in developing and maintaining these special relationships encourages them to stay with the organization. You will be helping the organization maintain this unique talent pool. High-potential employees are a corporate asset. Do what you can to build a relationship with and retain this asset.