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## How to correct a peer so they will listen

**By Laura Rose, CTACC**

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Someone recently asked me "If I see a peer doing something wrong, how can I gently correct them so that they will change their behavior, and how can I do it without giving offense?"

Unsolicited advice is a tricky business because it includes at least three faulty premises:

1. You are assuming that there is only one "right way": your way
2. You are making a judgment that your peer is "wrong" based on the above assumption.
3. You hope they value and appreciate someone telling them what to do.

If you feel you need to correct someone without their permission, the best way is to follow Stephen Covey's Habit 5: Seek first to understand and then be understood (from Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People).

Seek to understand why your friend is doing what he is doing. What does he hope to accomplish by his actions? What is his ultimate goal or vision? Once you understand the background and you have a shared experience or goal, ask his permission to share how you accomplished a similar goal. This way you are not correcting anyone, but sharing an experience that enabled you to accomplish a similar goal.

Once we realize that our way isn't the only "right" way, then their way isn't necessarily "wrong". There are multiple routes to the same destination. Furthermore, if you don't understand his destination, then how can you say he is going the wrong way? An added advantage is that pooling both shared experiences will lead to even a better higher-level solution.

One quick trick is to change the mindset from "correcting a peer" to collaborating or co-creating with a peer.

This recipe has been frequently successful for me. But I know this isn't the only solution. Tell me about your experiences.

### **About the author**



Laura is a certified efficiency and business coach. Laura offers one-on-one career and life coaching, small group coaching, seminars and workshops.

She has been in the software and testing industry for over 20 years. She's worked with such international companies as IBM, Ericsson, Staples, Fidelity Investments and Sogeti in various client advocacy and project management roles. The techniques she uses in her business coaching and client advocacy work saved these companies both time and money, which resulted in on-time, quality product delivery with higher client satisfaction.

Laura now uses her client focus, project, quality and people management skills in her business and personal life coaching career. As a personal life coach, she helps people integrate their goals and dreams into their everyday

lives. Laura uses creative and practical tools to help her clients realize what really matters to them in their professional careers as well as personal development. They then follow-through with project and time management techniques to create the reality they really want. You can learn more about her at [www.RoseCoaching.info](http://www.RoseCoaching.info) and contact her at [LauraRose@RoseCoaching.info](mailto:LauraRose@RoseCoaching.info)