

Inspirational Emails

Don't Assume

Don't assume that other people think like you do. In fact, don't even assume that they think until proven otherwise.

You know the old cliché, **"assuming makes an ass out of you and me!"** Unfortunately, this usually turns out to be true. We assume other people will naturally do something without us verifying it, getting it in writing or following up with them. Unfortunately, they don't. **We assume that other people read or hear communications exactly as we do. They don't.** We assume other people hear us, understand immediately what it is we want or need, but they don't! Sometimes, we assume they don't ever need to hear us or to understand what we want or need, but they do!

Part of the reason we assume things is because we get a little lazy. **We have a sneaking suspicion, that people may not follow through, or may not understand us, but it takes too much work, or emotional energy to double check or ask.** It's easier (or more comforting) just to assume that your investment broker, doctor, lawyer, real estate agent or other professional knows what they are talking about, rather than checking their opinion against two or three others or doing some independent research.

It's easier to assume that your spouse or children can anticipate your needs, or know what it is you want, rather than having a heart to heart talk with them that might bring up some thing's in your own life that are deficient. **It's easier to assume that your co-workers think you're great or your boss thinks you're wonderful, rather than asking for direct feed back which might reveal some areas for possible improvement.**

Another reason we make assumptions is because, for some strange reason, we assume everybody thinks pretty much like we do. Since we are all human and have a number of things in common, we assume that our mental outlooks are the same as well. **This is the greatest fallacy of all.** Everyone has been raised in different homes with different formative experiences with a different set of emotional baggage, DNA, family history and traditions, all of which shape how we hear, perceive and even integrate information. **Our rules of behavior for what's good and bad, for what's pleasing to others, for what's commendable or condemnable, are surprisingly different for each one of us.** You can never assume that other people's standards, or their professional excellence, personal loyalty, or anything else is equivalent to yours.



Bottom-line: don't assume that other people think like you do. In fact, don't even assume that they think until proven otherwise.

by C.V. Doner