

THE PEOPLE BUSINESS IS OUR BUSINESS: CIVILITY IN THE DIGITAL AGE



At BMC, two of our guiding principles are "Do the Right Thing" and "Prioritize People." These principles shape how we interact with our workforce, customers, and partners. As we observe [National Civility Month](#) this August, it's an opportune time to reflect on the importance of civility in our rapidly evolving digital landscape.

Civility is integral to our customer-centric approach, which ensures that every decision we make is aimed at delivering products, services, and experiences that foster satisfaction, loyalty, and advocacy. At its core, civility is about recognizing our shared humanity. By leading with empathy and the Platinum Rule—treating others the way they want to be treated—we enhance our understanding of customers and colleagues and their diverse needs and expectations.

The business impact of civility and customer centricity

At BMC, we strive to accelerate innovation and while delivering excellent customer experiences—both to our internal employee customers and our external customers. Happy employees make happy customers, and the two are inextricably linked. When our employees feel respected and valued, they are more motivated to deliver exceptional service, creating a positive feedback loop that benefits everyone.

[The PwC Customer Loyalty Executive Survey 2023](#) revealed that 37 percent of customers ceased their engagement with businesses following poor service experiences. In our digital-first world, human interaction remains a key driver of customer loyalty. Civility and respect in these interactions are more important than ever.

Civility across a global and hybrid workforce

Our globally distributed and increasingly hybrid workforce presents unique challenges and opportunities for practicing civility. Understanding the cultural and regional differences in behavior and communication preferences is essential for building strong, respectful relationships. For instance, in virtual meetings, choosing whether to jump straight to business or start with some light conversation can set the tone for the entire interaction. Taking the time to understand and respect these preferences can significantly enhance our working relationships.

Practical tips for fostering civility

In every interaction, whether in-person or virtual, it's important to be present and attentive. Here are a few practical tips for fostering civility:

1. **Start with respect:** Begin [meetings](#) with a simple greeting and a moment of genuine interest in how others are doing.
2. **Be mindful of time:** Respect others' schedules by being punctual and keeping meetings concise—or making that meeting an email instead.
3. **Engage fully:** Give your full attention to the speaker, turn off distractions, and come prepared.
4. **Communicate clearly:** In emails and other communications, be clear, respectful, and considerate of others' time and workload—and remember that language matters.
5. **Set boundaries:** Respect and acknowledge the boundaries set by others and be clear about your own.

Civility and DEI: A symbiotic relationship

Civility is a critical component of our [diversity, equity, and inclusion \(DEI\)](#) efforts. An inclusive workforce that truly embraces everyone fosters an environment where civility thrives.

To promote inclusive leadership and civility, we've established a [#BelongingAtBMC](#) LinkedIn Learning pathway, which empowers all BMC employees to become advocates for change in an increasingly diverse global society. Topics include empathy, belonging, diversity, equity, accountability, and inclusion—all key ingredients of civility that also serve as a catalyst for personal and professional growth.

I encourage leaders and employees to consider implementing similar initiatives within their organizations. A great starting point is the LinkedIn Learning course "[Teaching Civility in the Workplace](#)." This course offers valuable insights and practical strategies to create a respectful and inclusive work environment. By prioritizing civility and continuous learning, we can collectively build workplaces where everyone feels valued and respected—both within our own businesses and beyond.

Building a future of respect and humanity

As BMC continues to strive towards becoming a leader in the digital-first world, we recognize that our success begins and ends with people. Our employees, customers, and partners are the heart of our business. By setting a standard for civility, we elevate everyone involved.

As VP of HR at BMC, I see firsthand the impact that a respectful and inclusive workplace has on

business outcomes. HR plays a pivotal role in shaping the culture and values of our organization, ensuring that civility and respect are embedded in every aspect of our operations. By prioritizing people and fostering a culture of civility, we not only enhance employee satisfaction and productivity, but also drive better business results.