



HOW TO BE A GOOD FRIEND?

Handbook

2016

Dear readers,

The students from seven European countries who participate in Erasmus+ strategic partnerships project „Effective Communication –A Successful Future Life” such as Bulgaria,Portugal,Poland,Slovakia,Slovenia ,Czech Republic and Latvia were asked one and the same question.

How to be a good friend?

As a result we have got a lot of amazing answers and we were very happy that students from all the countries understand that friends are very necessary and important in our life.

Of course, to have a good friend, you must be one.

If you want to be a good friend and deepen a friendship to make it last, just read our handbook.



“A friend is someone who understands your past, believes in your future, and accepts you just the way you are”.

Unknown



How to make friends

Let's be honest, there are times when you want to know how to make friends. Maybe you are shy or unsure of how to approach a person.

- **Remember**, friends seldom come knocking on your door while you sit at home playing on your laptop. If you want to make friends, you first need to go out in order to meet people.
- Accept people as they are. You can like other people even if you don't agree with everything they say or do.
- Try to find somebody who has similar interests and hobbies.
- Don't give up trying to make friends if you're not very lucky at first. Just be yourself, smile and be friendly so that others will want to know you.



When you meet someone, you don't know whether that person is going to become a good friend, so you have to be a bit careful at first.

Be very careful about making 'friends' on the Internet - some 'friends' may not be who they pretend to be.

All you need is your best friends:

If you need help, they would help you.

If you need a support, they would support you.

If you need a company, they would stay with you.



Ivan Ivanov (Bulgaria)

How to be a good friend?

➤ Be honest

If you want to be a good friend then you have to be honest about your feelings, about your friends' actions, and about how you feel about your friendship. If your friend hurts you, don't be afraid to talk about it; if something is upsetting you, don't feel too shy to open up to your friend about it.



Here's what the students said...

*“A good friend is cheerful and frank.
He never lies”.*

*“This is someone you can trust and
who gives you a helping hand in
hard times”.*

➤ Keep your promises

Don't ever make a promise that you can't keep - or at least don't make a habit of it. If you just cannot go to your friend's birthday party, please, don't promise, but give your friend a gift and tell him or her sorry. Nobody's perfect, and it's okay if you skip out on a promise once but don't make it a regular thing. When you make a serious promise do not break any such promise, as that will hurt your friend. It might even break your friendship!



Here's what the students said...

“A good friend is the one that I can count on”.

“If my friend promises me something he does it”.

➤ Apologize when you've made a mistake

If you want your friends to trust you, then you can't act like you're flawless. If you know you've made a mistake, own up to it. Though your friends won't be happy that you made a mistake, they'll be very pleased that you're mature enough to admit it instead of just pretending that nothing is wrong, or worse - blaming it on someone else.

When you say sorry, you should mean it! Let your friends hear the sincerity in your voice instead of thinking that you don't really care how they feel.



Here's what the students said...

“A good friend needs to be a person whom you can trust. He needs to be a person you can tell secrets to and trust that he will keep them under any circumstances”.

➤ Be respectful

Good friends show respect for each other by being openly and mutually supportive. If your friend has certain values and beliefs that don't align with your own, respect his or her choices and be open to hearing more about them. If you want your friend to trust you, then your friend should feel comfortable voicing opinions that you may not agree with, or discussing a new perspective with you. Sometimes your friend will say things that you find boring, uncomfortable or annoying, but if you have respect for your friend, you'll give your friend the space to speak, and to do so without judgment.



Here's what the students said...

"A good friend should be someone who can accept different types of people as friends with good and not so good characteristics".

➤ Be a good listener

Don't monopolize conversations and take the time to truly understand and support your friend when he is talking to you. It sounds simple, but make sure you're listening as much as you're talking about yourself. Listening opens space between the two of you and reassures your friend that you care.

Try to strike a balance of letting your friend talk about half of the time. Though some people are more shy than others, if your friend feels like he/she can't get a word in when he/she is around you, it'll be hard to have a thriving friendship.



Here's what the students said...

“A good friend is someone who always gives you a helping hand, never offends you. Listens to you carefully without interrupting you while speaking”.

➤ Learn to forgive

If you want your friendship to last, then you should be able to forgive your friend and to move forward. Recognize that nobody is perfect and if your friend is sincerely sorry and if he or she didn't do anything too horrible – forgive your friend! If your friend really did something so unforgivable that you just can't get past it, then it's better to move on than try to save the friendship when it's doomed. But this should happen very rarely.

If you're angry at your friend but haven't told him or her why, you'll never be able to forgive him if you don't talk about it.



Here's what the students said...

“A good friend is the one that I can count on”.

“The best friend is someone who understands and encourages you”.

➤ Be selfless

Though you can't be selfless all the time, being selfless is an important part of being a good friend. Accommodate your friend's wishes whenever you can, provided this is done in a balanced way. Reciprocate his or her acts of kindness with caring deeds of your own, and your friendship will be strengthened. If you get a reputation for being selfish and only being around your friends when you need some help, then people will know you're not looking out for them.

Do a favour for your friend just out of the goodness of your heart, not because you want something in return.



Here's what the students said...

“He needs to be a person that is able to tell you the truth even if it isn't pleasant to hear. He needs to be able to tell you something that you might not want to hear”.

➤ Don't use people

If one of your friends suspects that you're just using them, then they'll drop you like a hot potato. And if you have a reputation of using people, then new people won't be too excited to start a friendship with you. A friendship is about give and take. Sure, it may be really convenient that one of your friends gives you a ride to school every day, but make sure that you do something for that friend in return.



Here's what the students said...

"A good friend is someone in whose hands you can lay your heart and soul. This person should also have a complete faith in you. He would stop you when you make a wrong step and have almost failed. It is only the moments of trouble that can tell who is your good friend and who is not."

➤ Help your friends to deal with their struggles

To be truly supportive, you'll have to be able to watch out for your friends when they're having a tough time. If you feel that your friend is getting into some sort of trouble over which they have little control help him or her get away from the situation by not being afraid to speak up about it.

Don't assume that your friend can handle it alone; this may be the very time that your voice of common sense is needed. If you see a problem, speak up, no matter how awkward you may feel. Let your friend know that you can give him a shoulder to cry on during this tough time. If your friend feels less alone, it'll be easier for them to deal with their troubles.

If all your friend wants to do about the problem is to talk, that's fine at first, but you should help your friend find practical solutions to his problems.



Here's what the students said...

“A friend should stay by your side no matter what happens”.

“My good friend always keeps me amused and makes me forget about time and homework”.



Be there in a time of crisis

Part of being there for your friend in a crisis is providing emotional support, too. Care about your friend enough to help him or her open up and let the tears roll. You don't have to say anything if nothing seems right, just stay calm and reassuring.

If your friend is going through a crisis, don't say, "Everything is going to be all right" if it's not going to be. It's hard not to say that sometimes, but false reassurance can often be worse than none. Instead, let your friend know you are there for him or her. Stay honest, but upbeat and positive.

If your friend begins talking about committing suicide, tell someone about it. This rule overrides the "respect privacy" step, because even if your friend begs you not to tell anyone, you should do it anyway. Talk to your and your friend's parents before involving anyone else.

Let your friend see that he/she can count on you any time!

Here's what the students said...

“If you are really good friends, you will help each other whatever it happens”.

“A friend should be someone that can comfort you when you are in need of a shoulder”.

➤ Give your friend some space when he/she needs it

Part of being supportive means supporting the fact that your friend won't always want to spend time with you. Learn to step back and give your friend space. Understand if your friend wants to be alone or to hang out with other people. Don't get jealous if your friend has lots of other friends.

Every relationship is special and different, and that doesn't mean that your friend doesn't appreciate you. Allowing one another the time to hang with other friends gives you much-needed breathing room, and allows you to come together fresh and appreciating each other even more.



Here's what the students said...

“The best friend is always ready to help you, but also knows when to leave you to manage alone”.

➤ **Accept your friend for who he or she is**

To make your friendship thrive, you shouldn't try to change your friend or make your friend see the world from your perspective. If you're active and your friend is shy, then accept that instead of trying to argue about it all the time. You should appreciate the fresh perspective your friend can bring to your experiences instead of wanting your friend to see everything from your perspective.

The more you are with one another, the less you idealize each other and the more you accept one another for who you really are. This is what being a truly good friend is really about - caring deeply for each other, even if you know you're both full of flaws.



Here's what the students said...

“The best friend should accept you the way you are. The appearance is also less important. What matters is what is in your heart. Nowadays it is hard to find 'good' hearts ”.

➤ **Go beyond the call of duty**

A friend will wait while you do your homework. A great friend stays up all night helping. Remember that if you are a good friend, people want to be a good friend to you. Recognize the moments when you need to go above and beyond to help your friend and know that this will make your friendship grow, and that your friend will do the same for you in return.

If your friend really needs you and keeps saying, "No, you don't have to do that..." learn to read between the lines and know that your friend really does need you.



➤ Stay in touch no matter what

As the years pass, people tend to grow apart. Maybe you and a friend will move to different places and only see each other every once in a while. If you never stop caring about your friend, speak up. He or she will be happy to hear from you. You were friends for a reason in the past, and you may find the same bond still ties you together.

Don't let your location determine the strength of your bond. If your friendship is meaningful, then it should keep growing even if you're an ocean apart.

Make a goal of having monthly phone or Skype dates with your friend even if you're in a completely different time zone. If keeping up with your friend becomes a routine, your relationship will continue to thrive.



Friendship Rules

- Spend time with people because they are kind to you, not just because they are popular with others.
- Be kind to everyone you meet. You never know when you are meeting your future best friend.
- Always treat other people with the kindness and respect that you want in return.
- Never spread gossip about your friend even when he or she has made you angry.
- True friends will like the real you. You don't need to sacrifice your integrity in order to "fit" in with the crowd. If they do not like you for who you are, the friendship was not meant to be.
- If someone threatens to end the friendship unless you do as they please, it is not a friendship worth saving.



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“ Effective Communication - A Successful Future Life”



Schools Involved

- | | |
|--|----------------|
| • Jelgavas 6.vidusskola | Latvia |
| • OU "Hristo Botev“ | Bulgaria |
| • Agrupamento de Escolas deMontemor-o-Novo | Portugal |
| • Osnovna Sola Smihel | Slovenia |
| • Zakladni skola Ostrava | Czech Republic |
| • Szkola Podstawowa Nr 3 im.Jana Pawla II | Poland |
| • Zakladna Škola Bratislava | Slovakia |

