

## Respect Factoid 1 - Relativity

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**“Respect is not an absolute concept, but a relative one.”**

A common misconception about respect is that it is an absolute concept—in other words, many people think that you respect people equally. I uncovered this misunderstanding—as common with older adults as much as it is with younger adults—during my research on respect. The fact and the truth, however, is that while it is possible to respect two people equally, it is typically the case that you respect two people at different levels.

The reason for this reality is that there are different kinds of respect, and we manifest respect in three primary and distinct ways. Also, there are various factors that influence the way we manifest respect. I write about this in *The Top Ten Laws of Respect* book series, and I illustrate this relative concept with the [EKTIMIS Respect Model](#)—a graphical view of the various components of respect.

At home, while a child can respect both parents, she may respect one more than the other; a parent can respect one child more than another; and a spouse can respect the other more today and less tomorrow, or vice versa. In a work environment, you can respect your boss more today and less tomorrow; you can respect one coworker much more than another; and you can respect one subordinate employee more than another. And, within a personal relationship, you can respect a friend or a significant other more today and less tomorrow, or less today and gradually much more over time. The Top Ten Laws of Respect principles embody this relative concept. If you wish to improve a dysfunctional relationship or a relationship plagued with disrespect, it is important to understand this concept of respect and relativity.

(Comments are welcome at <http://ektimis.com/articleslibraryfeedbackform.aspx>)

### About the Author



Niyi Taiwo is the founder of EKTIMIS and the lead editor for the EKTIMIS eLibrary articles. He is a speaker and the author of several books, including the EKTIMIS Top Ten Laws series. He is a continuous improvement expert with over 21 years of industry experience – operational, management and consulting. He has been studying the topic of respect since 2004. He holds an undergraduate degree from WPI and a master’s degree from RPI. He is a diversity consultant, a certified Lean Expert and an ASQ-certified Six Sigma Black Belt.