

positive intent

choosing to assume that our coworkers are working to the best of their ability with the resources and information they have now



Assuming best intentions can help us:

Foster positive relationships We are more likely to approach others with kindness when we assume that they are acting with good intentions. This can create a positive feedback loop, as the other person is more likely to respond positively to our approach and treat us with kindness in return. In contrast, if we approach others with suspicion, they may be more likely to react defensively and the relationship may suffer.

Avoid misunderstandings and conflicts When we assume that others are acting with good intentions, we are more likely to try to understand their perspective and find common ground, rather than jumping to conclusions or becoming defensive. This can help to prevent misunderstandings from escalating into full-blown conflicts.

Be more open-minded and receptive to new ideas When we are open to the possibility that others might have valid points of view that differ from our own, we are more likely to listen and learn from them. This can help us to grow as individuals and to expand our understanding of the world around us.

Practice Assuming Best Intentions

Take a moment to reflect on your own assumptions Are you quick to jump to negative conclusions about others' intentions? Try to be more mindful of this tendency and make a conscious effort to give others the benefit of the doubt.

Seek to understand the other person's perspective When conflicts arise, try to see things from the other person's point of view. Ask questions and try to understand where they are coming from.

Communicate openly If you have concerns, try to address them honestly, rather than letting them go unaddressed.

Remember that everyone makes mistakes No one is perfect, and it's important to be forgiving of others' mistakes.

Recognize the Downsides to Assuming Best Intentions

While assuming best intentions can be a helpful mindset in many situations, there *may* be downsides to this approach. Consider the following drawbacks to assuming best intentions:

It can lead to being taken advantage of When we assume that others are acting with best intentions, we may be more likely to overlook warning signs that someone is taking advantage of us.

It can prevent us from addressing issues We may be less likely to confront conflicts head-on if we always assume that others are acting with best intentions. We may allow problems to fester and potentially escalate over time.

It may not be realistic in all situations While it can be helpful to assume good intentions in most cases, there may be situations where it is not realistic or appropriate to do so. For example, if someone has a history of dishonest or manipulative behavior, it may not be wise or appropriate to assume best intentions on their part.

Overall, we should recognize that assuming best intentions is a mindset that can be helpful in many situations, but it's not always appropriate or realistic in every case.