

Establish-Maintain-Restore (EMR) Framework for Staff

The Establish-Maintain-Restore (EMR) framework is a valuable guide for educators and administrators aiming to create and sustain positive relationships with staff. This approach centers on three key phases: establishing a solid foundation, maintaining ongoing connections, and restoring relationships when conflicts arise. By following this framework, you can foster a supportive and collaborative work environment where every staff member feels valued and understood.

E - Establish

The Establish phase is about building solid and positive relationships with your colleagues right from the start. Creating a welcoming and inclusive workplace where everyone feels respected and appreciated is essential. Begin by getting to know your colleagues personally—learn their names, interests, and what motivates them. Show genuine interest in their professional and personal lives and ensure clear, consistent communication. The goal is to set a positive tone that encourages trust and openness, laying the groundwork for a supportive and productive working environment.

M - Maintain

The Maintain phase focuses on keeping those positive relationships with colleagues strong and steady. Consistently show care and interest in their well-being and professional growth. Regularly check in with them, celebrate their successes, and offer support when they face challenges. Keep communication open and upbeat, and provide positive feedback that fosters development. Maintaining a supportive environment reinforces trust and ensures that colleagues feel valued and understood, promoting engagement and motivation.

R - Restore

The Restore phase addresses repairing and strengthening relationships when conflicts or misunderstandings occur. It's normal for issues to arise; this phase is about handling them promptly and thoughtfully. When conflicts occur, take the time to listen to your colleagues' perspectives and validate their feelings. Approach the situation with empathy and work together to find solutions that rebuild trust and respect. Constructively addressing conflicts demonstrates your commitment to maintaining positive relationships and helping colleagues feel secure and valued even when challenges arise.

By integrating the Establish-Maintain-Restore framework into your interactions with staff, you can create a more harmonious, productive, and supportive work environment.

Phase	Suggested Activities/Strategies	My Strategies
Establish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Icebreaker Activities: Engage in icebreaker games during staff meetings to help everyone get to know each other. ● Personalized Greetings: Greet colleagues by name and with a warm smile each day. ● Interest Surveys: Distribute surveys to learn about colleagues' interests and preferences. ● Team Agreements: Collaboratively create a set of team norms or agreements. ● One-on-One Meetings: Hold introductory one-on-one meetings to build personal connections. 	
Maintain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Regular Check-ins: Schedule regular check-ins to discuss progress and concerns. ● Celebrate Achievements: Acknowledge and celebrate milestones and successes. ● Consistent Feedback: Provide ongoing constructive feedback. ● Workplace Rituals: Establish positive rituals, like weekly team lunches or morning huddles. ● Open Communication Channels: Ensure colleagues know they can approach you anytime. 	
Restore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Conflict Resolution Strategies: Implement strategies like mediation or peer discussions. ● Empathetic Listening: Practice empathetic listening to understand colleagues' feelings. ● Restorative Conversations: Hold discussions focused on resolving the issue and moving forward. ● Apology and Forgiveness Activities: Facilitate activities that encourage apologies and forgiveness. ● Follow-Up Meetings: Schedule follow-ups to ensure issues are resolved and relationships are back on track. 	

Refer to the list above to identify strategies for the areas you intend to focus on (either from the examples given or by generating your own ideas).

