

Empathize: 1 of 3 Reinvent Essentials - A Manager's Leadership Framework

1. Empathize

Here are practical ideas, a danger to avoid, and findings of a large study regarding the importance of being a leader who can empathize based on extensive change management research and experience

Honor

Demonstrate emotional intelligence as you Honor.

Aware (their experience)

Be **aware** of what each team member has and is going through. Go **further** than they may expect. Take a few moments and investigate and research options or resources available for people in unique situations for a lasting and positive impression. We remember how people made us feel.

Pragmatic (unique)

Acknowledge that this has affected some more than others. People need to hear this, to know you understand this inequity, to allow them to move forward. It amazes me the work people are willing to endure if they believe their boss understands.

Listen (always so important)

Don't interrupt - most listen to resume talking.
Occasionally summarize - "What I hear you saying is ... Is this close?"
Don't say "I know exactly how you feel!" - rather try "I may have felt something similar when ..."
Especially important with an increasingly diverse and worldwide workforce. People want you to recognize their situation.

Honor is perceived as **genuine** when we prove our understanding through small, unanticipated words and actions during normal work activities. *Miles says, "If you honor people's past, they will let you take them to the future."*

Accommodate

Stress is reduced and people cope better when they feel your flexibility is anchored to business goals.

Flexible

You have adjusted and tell them more are needed. Tie work adjustments to processes and objectives. Show how adjustments will help, so they will appear less arbitrary and gain faster acceptance. Just as you need to recognize and rationalize the different situations individuals are facing - also acknowledge perceived work-load imbalances between different groups with processes. It is an imperfect time, commit to revisit and review later.

Danger: Favoritism

When adjusting and meeting with smaller groups of team members there is a danger of having those not involved begin to think you may be showing favoritism. To guard against this:

Consistent (in visible interactions)

For meetings and discussions you hold be sure to plan similar interactions for all similar roles and functions, even if they are not your express concern at present. Adjust the content of these discussions as applicable. People see interactions scheduled with all groups as a sign of good leadership. Watch for completions, successes to publicly point out.

Large Study: Empathize for Performance

A study of over 6,000 managers in over 35 countries confirmed the relationship between leaders who show empathy and higher performing teams.
<https://cclinnovation.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/empathyintheworkplace.pdf>

This is why **Empathize** is one of our Essentials!



#1 TAKE AWAY – EMPATHIZE

RECOGNIZE AND ACKNOWLEDGE
INDIVIDUALS' UNIQUE SITUATIONS AND THE
DIFFERENT LEVELS OF WORK EFFORT BETWEEN
GROUPS OF TEAM MEMBERS. MEMBERS
NEED TO KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND.