3 Simple Ways to Increase Empathy at Work

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If you want to move up the career ladder, it is not enough to have great technical abilities or know how – you need to have personal skills as well. Think about a manager who is great at technical details but cannot get along with his/her team, then how can this manager manage a project if her or she cannot even manage a team? For this reason, if you want to become a better manager or a just a better co-worker, you should work on improving empathy. Below are three simple ways of doing this.

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1. Listen to others

Listen to others very carefully. Don't just listen for the sake of listening. Listen with an open heart and mind. Only in this way, you can understand the entire message the other party is trying to communicate. Pay attention to their tone of voice and body language. Really try to feel what the other person is saying to you. What is important to them? Step outside for a minute and try to understand their perspectives. This can be very helpful especially if you are discussing a divisive topic. You don't need to agree on everything the other person says but it is important to see their points.

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2. Treat others nicely

Treat others the way you would like to be treated. Be nice to people and smile at them. Don't forget that good manners and

kindness always win in relationships. If you treat others nicely, you will soon notice that they will also treat you the same way. In this way, you can build a healthy relationship with your co-workers. For example, if you are going to give a birthday gift to a co-worker, think about whether the person receiving this gift would actually like it or not. Rather than picking out something you like, try to think about the feelings of the other party and shop accordingly.

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3. Turn the tables

Put yourself in someone else’s shoes before criticizing them. First, try to understand their actions by turning the tables and then decide. The best example for this is the interview process. When you are interviewing someone, think about the interviewee. Put yourself in his/her shoes and try to remember the last time you went for an interview. Do you remember how excited and nervous you were? Then, it is normal for the person you are interviewing with to have the same feelings. Therefore, in order to calm him/her down, you can start with simple and expected questions like “Tell me about yourself” and then, move onto more difficult and technical ones.

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