

Empathy: *It's What's Missing*

Presented by:

Heather M. Hylton, MS, PA-C, DFAAPA, FASCO



Disclosures

- No relevant commercial relationships to disclose



Session Objectives

- At the conclusion of this session, participants should be able to:
 - Describe what empathy is (and what it is not)
 - Discuss the importance of empathy in effective leadership
 - Describe ways leaders can develop empathy



Think about a time when...



What is Empathy?

- 3 subtypes described by Daniel Goleman:
 - Cognitive
 - Emotional
 - Empathic concern
- Differentiating empathy from sympathy and compassion

Goleman D. *Empathy*, 2017.

Wakeman C. *The reality-based rules of the workplace*, 2013.

Brown B. RSA Short: *Empathy*, 2013.



What Are Qualities of Great Leaders?



Why is Empathy Important for Effective Leadership?

- Irrespective of a leader's position in an organization, there are certain competencies that transcend leadership roles
- How might empathy help leaders with:
 - Communicating effectively with others
 - Driving vision, purpose, engagement, and results
 - Anticipating and balancing the needs of stakeholders
 - Resolving conflicts and gaining the support of others
 - Adapting their leadership style to meet the needs of any situation
 - Building their networks
 - Developing talent



A Closer Look

- Anticipating and balancing the needs of stakeholders
- Resolving conflicts and gaining the support of others
- Developing talent

Seppala E. *Empathy*, 2017.
Sinek S. *Leaders practice empathy*, 2018.



Developing Empathy



Establishing Meaningful Relationships

- People:
 - What motivates them?
 - What matters to them?
 - What are their barriers?
 - What is their working style?
 - What is their understanding of their place in the organization?

Perlo J et al. *IHI framework for improving joy in work*, 2017.
Stallard M. *Connection Culture*, 2020.



Listening

- Understanding vs. responding
- Dynamic process
- Commit to understanding an alternative point of view
- “Sponge” vs. “trampoline”

Zenger J et al. *Empathy*, 2017.



Listening

Environment

- Create a safe space
- Remove distractions
- Set up for eye contact
- Set the tone

Actions

- Observe the speaker
- Validate
- Ask questions
- Confirm understanding

Zenger J et al. *Empathy*, 2017.

Perlo J et al. *IHI framework for improving joy in work*, 2017.



Communication

“If communication is the joint that holds relationships together, empathy is the connective tissue.”

Sipe JW et al. *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership*, 2015.



Nonverbal Communication

- E.M.P.A.T.H.Y. checklist developed by Helen Riess
 - Make meaningful **eye contact**
 - Observe the person's **muscles of facial expression**
 - Be mindful of presenting **posture**
 - Observe the person's **affect**
 - Be mindful of your **tone of voice**
 - **Hearing the whole patient** (person)
 - **Your response**

Riess H et al. *Academic Medicine* 2014;89(8):1108-1112.



Verbal Communication

- Empathic speech:
 - Intention and authenticity
 - Acknowledge the emotion(s)
 - Convey appreciation and respect, acknowledge courage
 - Explore
 - Provide support

Silk S et al. *Los Angeles Times*, 2013.



Interviewing for Empathy

- Assess empathy
 - Within your team
 - In the talent acquisition process
- Behavioral interviewing



Emotions Are Contagious-Manage Them

McKee A. *Empathy*, 2017.



When Something Doesn't Go as Expected

- Pause...
- 30,000 foot view
- Perspective-taking
- Safe space
- Authenticity, kindness, support
- Expectations

Seppala E. *Empathy*, 2017.



For Your Awareness

- Empathy gap
- Empathy and the rise of leaders
- Empathy fatigue
- Empathy can be exhausting

Ruttan R et al. *Empathy*, 2017.

Goleman D. *Empathy*, 2017.

Solomon L. *Empathy*, 2017.

Riess H et al. *Academic Medicine* 2014;89(8):1108-1112.

Waytz A. *Empathy*, 2017.



There is not an exhaustive supply of
empathy

Waytz A. *Empathy*, 2017.



Self-Reflection

- Do I typically feel empathy for others?
- How do I show empathy?
- How does “busy-ness” impact my ability to feel empathy?
- How could empathy improve X situation at work?
- How can I make myself fully present for a conversation?

Sipe JW et al. *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership*, 2015.



Take Home Points

- Empathy is an essential skill for leaders at all levels of an organization
- Empathy drives connection which is crucial for keeping individuals, teams, and organizations moving forward
- You can develop empathy within yourself and others
- There is a limited supply of empathy-solution wisely
- Mindfulness and self-reflection are key to empathy awareness



References & Resources

- Brown B. RSA Short: Empathy. <https://brenebrown.com/videos/rsa-short-empathy/>, 2013.
- De Zulueta PC. Developing compassionate leadership in health care: an integrative review. *Journal of Healthcare Leadership* 2016;8:1-10.
- Goleman D. What is empathy. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017.
- Hilton K, Anderson A. *IHI psychology of change framework to advance and sustain improvement*. IHI White Paper. Boston, MA: Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2018.
- Lee TH. *An epidemic of empathy in healthcare*. New York, NY: McGraw Hill Education, 2016.
- McKee A. Empathy is key to a great meeting. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017. Accessible online at: <https://hbr.org/2015/03/empathy-is-key-to-a-great-meeting>.
- Perlo J, Balik B, Swensen S, Kabcenell A, Landsman J, Feeley D. *IHI framework for improving joy in work*. IHI White Paper. Cambridge, MA: Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2017.
- Riess H. The power of empathy: Helen Riess at TEDxMiddlebury <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baHrcC8B4WM>, 2013.
- Riess H, Kraft-Todd G. E.M.P.A.T.H.Y. *Academic Medicine* 2014;89(8):1108-1112.
- Ruttan R, McDonnell M-H, Nordgren L. It's harder to empathize with people if you've been in their shoes. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017. Accessible online at: <https://hbr.org/2015/10/its-harder-to-empathize-with-people-if-youve-been-in-their-shoes>.

References & Resources

- Seppala E. Why compassion is a better managerial tactic than toughness. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017. Accessible online at: <https://hbr.org/2015/05/why-compassion-is-a-better-managerial-tactic-than-toughness>
- Silk S, Goldman B. How not to say the wrong thing. *Los Angeles Times*, 2013. Accessible online at: <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/op-ed/la-xpm-2013-apr-07-la-oe-0407-silk-ring-theory-20130407-story.html>.
- Sinek S. *Leaders eat last*. New York, NY: Penguin Group, 2014.
- Sinek S. Leaders practice empathy: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c_XZ36b_aDI, 2018.
- Sipe JW, Frick DM. *Seven Pillars of Servant Leadership: Practicing the Wisdom of Leading by Serving*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2015.
- Solomon L. Becoming powerful makes you less empathetic. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017.
- Stallard ML. *Connection Culture, 2nd ed*. Alexandria, VA: ATD Press, 2020.
- Wakeman C. *The reality-based rules of the workplace*. San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2013.
- Waytz A. The limits of empathy. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017. Accessible online at: <https://hbr.org/2016/01/the-limits-of-empathy>.
- Zenger J, Folkman J. What great listeners actually do. *Empathy*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Review Press, 2017. Accessible online at: <https://hbr.org/2016/07/what-great-listeners-actually-do>.

Questions?

Please text or call me at 617.901.0024

Thank you for your time and attention!