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Empathy: A Primer (Building Blocks of Emotional Intelligence Book 6)

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14 Highlights

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 59

It turned out, for jobs of all kinds, at all levels, on average, emotional intelligence was twice as important as cognitive ability in terms of the distinguishing competencies. The higher you go in the organization, the more it matters. If you look at top leadership positions, C-suite positions, you'll see that 80 to 90%, sometimes 100%, of the competencies that organizations independently determined to set apart their star leaders are based on emotional intelligence.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 79

There are two sets of Emotional Intelligence Competencies. The first is crucial for leading ourselves, for self-management. It includes Emotional Self-Awareness, Emotional Self-Control, and other competencies. These are the skills that play out on an individual basis. They refer to how we relate to ourselves, our emotions, and our responses to the world around us. The second set of competencies deals with how we relate to others. It includes our relationships and awareness of other people. They are crucial for teamwork, for sales, for handling clients, and particularly for leadership. The self-management competencies are: Emotional Self-Awareness Emotional Self-Control Positive Outlook Achievement Orientation Adaptability The relationship management competencies are: Empathy Organizational Awareness Influence Coach and Mentor Inspirational Leadership Teamwork Conflict Management

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 118

Empathy means having the ability to sense others' feelings and how they see things. You take an active interest in their concerns. You pick up cues to what's being felt and thought. With empathy, you sense unspoken emotions. You listen attentively to understand the other person's point of view, the terms in which they think about what's going on.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 122

Empathy doesn't mean psyching out the other person so you can manipulate them, but rather knowing how best to collaborate with them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 142

Executives with high empathy are better at keeping employees engaged, and employees with empathy give customers the very best experience.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 146

8 Neuroscientists recognize two important types of empathy: cognitive empathy and affective or emotional empathy. Each of these is mediated by different circuits in our brains. Cognitive empathy is being able to understand another person's perspective, reflecting on their situation, and considering the events or the forces that may be acting upon them.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 156

The emotional part of empathy is mediated by different circuits than cognitive empathy. Interestingly, the insula—the area of the brain involved in emotional self-awareness—also is involved in the emotional part of empathy. The insula plays a critical role in monitoring our bodily signals. When you are emotionally in tune with another person and feeling their pain, you are feeling their pain because you sense the changes in your body that are occurring in response to viewing another person in pain. When the other person's insula is active, your insula is often active as well. You feel inside yourself whatever is going on with the other person.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 175

Empathy is a quintessential emotional intelligence competency. There can be no doubt that team leaders and team members with empathic competence have greater potential to boost the esprit de corps and performance of their teams. But excessive empathy is also a common source of problems in teams.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 192

Too much empathy in teams is a frequent problem. Highly empathic team leaders and team members often refrain from providing constructive feedback to team members who break norms or underperform on the team. They report that they are afraid the feedback will “do more harm than good.” Yet team members also report that their chief frustration in teams is lack of team member accountability and the “free riding” it perpetuates. Team leaders who are uncomfortable providing constructive feedback become poor role models and do not help their teams develop norms that support providing one another with constructive feedback. This is one of the most common problems we see in teams.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 215

What drives the Empathy Competency? The underlying intent of empathy is wanting to understand another person. This is not merely making believe you want to understand them, but actually caring about doing so. While the behavior most related to empathy is listening, I don't mean just noticing the words coming out of someone's mouth. I mean taking the time to ask questions of others, having patience, and genuinely showing an interest in someone by really paying attention to their response and then using that information to inform your future interactions with that person.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 226

How can you develop your own empathy skills or encourage others if you are coaching them? Since the intent of empathy is to understand others and the action is listening, if you want to practice it, get into the habit of asking more questions of the people around you. Very often that means asking them what they're thinking about or how they're feeling.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 240

Cognitive empathy, the ability to understand another person, may be enhanced through gathering information about how certain kinds of conditions influence another person.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 268

To develop empathy, you must learn to open your heart, to be able to recognize, feel, and name a range of emotions. Sometimes doing something as simple as going to a good tear-jerking movie can open somebody's heart. Good movies drive us through the range of emotions they depict. It also is important to recognize that all emotions are important.

Highlight (Yellow) | Location 272

Another way to open your heart is to tell the pain of your life. Take a deep story of one of your most painful moments, and express that to a friend, a colleague, someone who can hear how you had pain in your life and feel their compassion. Very often people become detached and aloof and numb themselves to difficult feelings. We use this storytelling process in our training programs when we ask leaders to create a timeline of their life experiences, including their five most painful events, stories, or losses and their five most positive stories, events, or things that happened to them.

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