

Empathy

When someone feels love or unconditional acceptance, they will be open to your influence. To be this open to your influence, people have to know that you empathize with their situation.

Empathy has both Latin and Greek roots. The two parts of the word mean “to see through” and “the eye of the other.” The ability to see through the eye of another creates long-term influence. When people know that you can see what they see, feel what they feel and hurt the way they hurt, then they will be willing to be influenced by you. The whole world is full of people who are trying to make us do things for their reasons. When faced with a persuasive situation, all we need to do is pause to understand who we are dealing with, what they are thinking and why they are thinking such things. Once we understand these principles, we have empathized with our prospects and the influential door swings wide open.

Empathizing with and caring for others are part of having humility. When you are humble, you demonstrate that you are not driven by ego and pride, nor are you out to get the best for yourself at the expense of others.

Nothing develops or displays your character better than your desire to put others first. As our friend Zig Ziglar says, “The best way to get what you want out of life is to help others get what they want.” Empathy and genuine concern encourage communication, which is a driving force behind influential success.

If you have a hard time empathizing with others then you’re not alone. This skill is not something you learned in school or on the streets. We learn empathy by really caring about the people we help and serve. Unfortunately, modern life doesn’t give us many opportunities to serve others. So, if you want to master empathy, you must turn to those you work with and look for opportunities to serve them and their needs. When a client feels his representative really cares about him, understands him and would never sell him anything he would not need, that sales representative has a customer for life. In fact, he

doesn't even need to sell anymore. He has established such a high level of influence that all he needs to do is present the product and the deal is instantaneously done. If you need to find ways to develop empathy, ask yourself the following questions:

How would I feel if I were that person?

Why is that person feeling this way?

How can I help?

How would I feel if that happened to me?

Basically, when assessing an individual situation, be sure to always consider the universal needs of everyone: approval, attention, praise, encouragement, understanding and acceptance. When you accept the whole person unconditionally, you create empathy. You accept her/his strengths and triumphs along with her/his weaknesses, failures, doubts and fears. We can learn a lot about empathy from the ancient classic, *Tao-te Ching*, by Lao-tzu: "Evolved leaders win the trust and support of the people through their complete identification with them. The interests of people are naturally promoted because they become the interests of the leader as well."

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