

A Journey Towards Leading with Empathy

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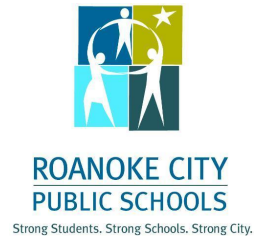
Vice President for Business Affairs

• Life is a
journey
not a destination.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



A bit about my journey....

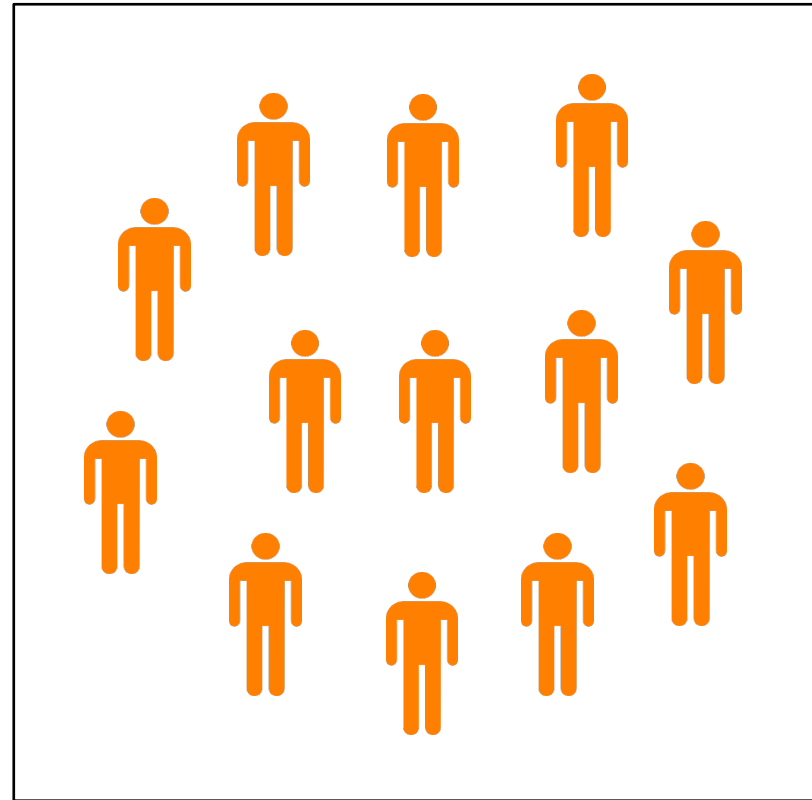
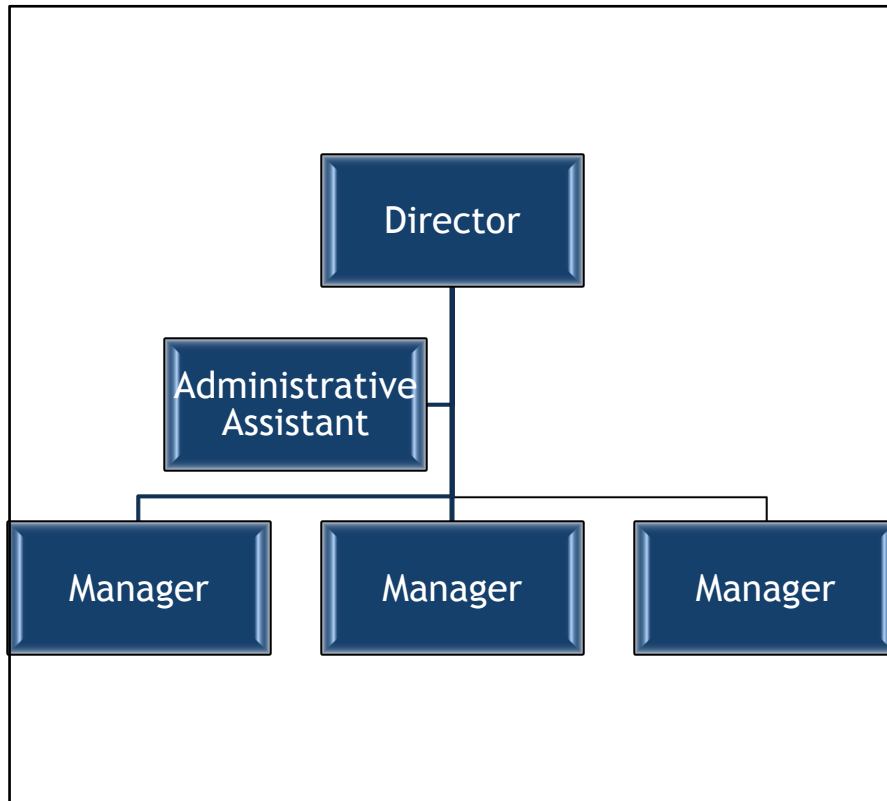


*Mom * Daughter * Sister*
*Friend * Colleague*
*Mentor * Mentee * Hokie*

A Journey Towards Leading with Empathy: Learning together

- ▶ Where are leaders?
- ▶ What is empathy?
- ▶ Why is empathy important in our work?
- ▶ How can we lead with empathy?

Where are leaders?



Where am I ?

Am I or can I be a leader -
....on my team?

....in my unit?

....in my department?

Where am I.....

I will be a leader -

....on my team!

....in my unit!

....in my department!

The word "Yes" is rendered in a 3D, blocky font. The letter "Y" is blue, "e" is green, and "s" is yellow. It is set against a light gray background.The word "Yes!" is written in a dark gray, bold, sans-serif font. A green pencil is shown drawing a green underline that curves under the word. The pencil is positioned at the end of the underline.The word "YES" is rendered in a 3D, blocky font. The letters are all green. It is set against a light gray background.



A word cloud of leadership styles centered around the word "Leadership". The word "Leadership" is the largest and most prominent, written in a blue, italicized serif font. Surrounding it are various leadership styles in different colors and orientations: "Democratic" (purple, top left), "Transformational" (green, top center), "Empathetic" (black, top center-right), "Charismatic" (blue, vertical, left), "Directive" (purple, vertical, top left), "Servant" (blue, vertical, right), "Strategic" (yellow, right), "Participatory" (pink, bottom left), "Transactional" (orange, bottom left), "Delegative" (purple, bottom center), "Coach" (orange, vertical, bottom center), "Visionary" (green, bottom right), "Consultative" (blue, bottom center), and "Autocratic" (red, vertical, bottom right). The background features abstract blue geometric shapes on the right side.

Democratic

Transformational

Empathetic

Leadership

Charismatic

Directive

Servant

Strategic

Participatory

Transactional

Delegative

Coach

Visionary

Consultative

Autocratic

*“Management is about
persuading people to do things
they do not want to do,
while leadership is about
inspiring people do to things
they never thought they
could.”*

Steve Jobs

Co-founder, Apple, Inc.

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of blue, primarily on the right side of the slide. These shapes include triangles and polygons, creating a modern, layered effect. The text is positioned on the left side of the slide, set against a plain white background.

Focus today: Leading with empathy

Take a moment to reflect.....

Is there a time when someone understood your situation and you knew it.....

Is there a time when you were in a difficult situation and someone failed to understand.....

*Remember your reflection...
we will come back to it shortly.*

*“I’ve learned that people
will forget what you said,
people will forget what
you did, but people will
never forget how you
made them feel.”*

Maya Angelou

What is empathy?

“the action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner”

Merriam Webster Dictionary

Is empathy different that sympathy?

- ▶ **Empathy**

- ▶ “the ability to understand and share the feelings of another”

- ▶ **Sympathy**

- ▶ “feelings of pity and sorrow for someone else's misfortune”

Oxford Living Dictionaries

Sympathy



Empathy



EMPATHY



I feel your pain.

SYMPATHY

I am sorry that
you are
in pain.



“Leadership is about empathy. It is about having the ability to relate to and connect with people for the purpose of inspiring and empowering their lives.”

Oprah Winfrey

Why is empathy important in our work?

- ▶ Leaders who are empathic are able to better understand and support their team and co-workers.
- ▶ Employees who are supported perform at higher standards.
- ▶ Teams who perform at higher standards move the organization forward are critical to the organization's success.
- ▶ Leaders who practice empathy build trust across their team. Without trust, team members are cautious, limiting full commitment.

Does empathy really impact our work?

Empathy has a direct impact on employee productivity, loyalty, and engagement.

- ▶ 77% of workers would be willing to work *more* hours for a more empathetic workplace.
- ▶ 60% of workers would accept a reduced salary for the same.
- ▶ 92% of HR professionals note that a compassionate workplace is a major factor for employee retention.
- ▶ 80% of millennials noted that they would leave their current job if their office became less empathetic.
- ▶ 66% of Baby Boomers also shared this sentiment.

Businessolver's 2017 Workplace Empathy Monitor

5 WAYS YOUR ORGANIZATION CAN ENCOURAGE

EMPATHY



1. Talk about empathy.
2. Teach listening skills.
3. Encourage genuine perspective taking.
4. Cultivate compassion.
5. Support global managers.



Center for Creative Leadership®

How can we enhance our listening skills?



Types of Listening

- ▶ *Indifferent/inactive listening* - mind is wondering; no communication.
- ▶ *Selective listening* - hear what you want to hear; actively working on response.
- ▶ *Active listening*
 - ▶ Gives speaker undivided attention
 - ▶ Listen closely to content
 - ▶ Block out distractions
 - ▶ Demonstrates interest, understanding, and empathy
- ▶ *Reflective listening* - active listening with clarifying questions to ensure you have mutual understanding.

“Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.”

Stephen Covey

LOS ANGELES TIMES

PEANUTS CLASSICS By Charles M. Schulz



How to practice active listening?

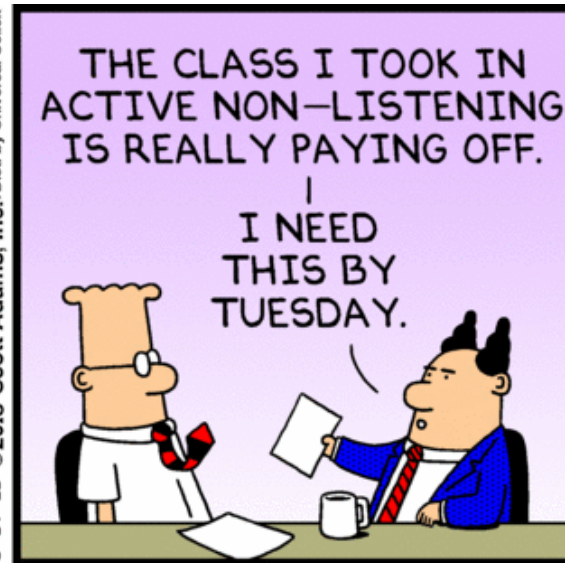
- ▶ Demonstrate respect, even if you do not share the same opinion.
- ▶ Do not interrupt or be judgmental.
- ▶ Pay attention to non-verbal communication.
- ▶ Listen more than you speak.
- ▶ Ask thoughtful questions. (*What can I do to help?*)
- ▶ Eliminate your own agenda.
- ▶ Demonstrate appreciation for speaker sharing concerns.
- ▶ Summarize/acknowledge the content.
- ▶ Walk in a team member's shoes.
- ▶ Act on items raised.
- ▶ Prioritize problems. Not everything is first-come, first-served.



Dilbert.com DilbertCartoonist@gmail.com



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*“If we were supposed to
talk more than listen, we
would have two tongues
and one ear.”*

Mark Twain

How can we lead with empathy?

- ▶ Treat team and co-workers with respect.
- ▶ Spend time developing relationships.
- ▶ Work to understand your team members and co-workers. Demonstrate you are genuinely interested in them.
- ▶ Listen to your team and co-workers - more than you talk.
- ▶ Be fully present - no electronic devices!
- ▶ Recognize and praise the work of team members - in large and small ways.
- ▶ Spend a few minutes each day thinking about your team and co-workers.

Take a moment to reflect.....

Is there a time when someone understood your situation and you knew it.....

Did the “someone” listen and show compassion?

What can you learn from how you were treated?

Is there a time when you were in a difficult situation and someone failed to understand.....

Did the “someone” listen and show empathy?

What could they have done differently?

What can I do tomorrow?

- ▶ Connect with team member or co-worker.
- ▶ Look for ways to be kind and compassionate.
- ▶ Practice active listening.
- ▶ Continue your journey - listening, learning, serving - leading with empathy.

*“You don’t have to see
the whole staircase, just
take the first step.”*

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Questions?

Additional Resources

- ▶ Five Ways to Listen Better - Julian Treasurer
 - ▶ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cSohjlYQI2A>
- ▶ *Empathetic Leadership: 47 Practical Tips for Leading with Kindness, Courage, and Confidence in an Age of Disruption* (Michael Brisciana)