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1) Single most important principle in the field of interpersonal relations is Empathic Communication, which means "Seek first to understand, then to be understood"

#Leadership #Communication #empathy

2) There are four forms of communication: Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening. We spend most of our waking hours communicating. The ability to do it well is absolutely critical for human effectiveness

3) We spend years learning how to read, write and speak but how about listening? What education or training have we had that enables us to listen so that we can really deeply understand another human being.

4) We typically seek first to be understood. Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply. They are either speaking or preparing to speak.

5) We are usually listening at 4 levels:
Ignoring - not listening at all
Pretending - "Yeah. Uh-huh. Right"
Selective Listening - hearing only selective parts
Attentive listening - paying attention and focusing on words
But we should practice the 5th level : Empathic Listening

6) Empathic listening means the intent to understand and it's different from "active" and "reflective" listening. This type of listening enables us to get inside another person's frame of reference. We see the world the way they see the world.

Empathy is not sympathy and the essence of empathic listening is not agreement but fully, deeply understand that person, emotionally and intellectually.

7) Empathic listening involves much more than registering, reflecting, or even understanding the words that are said. In fact, only 10% of our communication is represented by the words, rest 30% by our sound and 60% by our body language.

8) Lack of understanding result in poor responses and its autobiographical. 4 ways to respond:
Evaluate:either agree or disagree
Probe:ask question from our frame of reference
Advise:counsel based on our own experience
Interpret:explain others motives, behavior based on our own

9) These responses come naturally to us but it tries to control and invades the communication. Its self centered and never allows us to truly step inside another person, to see the world as s/he sees it until we develop empathic listening skill to do it.

10) There are 4 stages of empathic listening:
mimic content: it at least causes us to listen what's being said
rephrase the content: little more effective
reflect feeling: bring your right brain into operation
rephase+reflect: Paying attention and feeling what is being said

11) The discerning empathic listener can read whats happening deep down and can show such acceptance that other people feel safe to open up. Right understanding build right perceptions and we begin to appreciate the impact of differences as people try to work together

12) Once you truly understand another person, knowing how to be understood is the other half and is equally critical. Seeking to understand requires consideration; seeking to be understood takes courage.

13) Essence of "to be understood" covered in Greek philosophy: ethos, pathos and logos.
ethos is personal credibility
pathos is empathetic side
logos - its the logic, the reasoning part
Notice the sequence: ethos, pathos and logos and it must be followed

14) It helps to present our ideas, PoV, thoughts clearly and more contextually. We are not wrapped up in our "own thing" delivering rhetoric but really understanding and responding which may even be different from others PoV.

15) In summary, dont rush to fix things up with good advice but take time to diagnose, deeply understand the problem first, Build your credibility and prescribe advice with feeling and logic.