



**FREEDOM ENGLISH ACADEMY**

# Empathy

**Tenure group: HO staff**

**Duration: 1 day**

## **Objectives:**

- Participants will understand and appreciate the importance of empathy at work.
- Participants will be better equipped to work with their teams.





## FREEDOM ENGLISH ACADEMY

09:00am - 10:00am	Power Hour.
10:00am - 10:30am	<p>Activity: Snakes. Make three teams (or more). Each team should have a minimum of five members. Each member will stand behind the other to form a snake. They will then place their hands on the shoulders of the person standing in front of them. All team members will now be blindfolded, except for the one right at the end of the 'snake.' Place objects around the room and a bucket where they have to be dropped. The objective is for the last person in the team (who has not been blindfolded), to guide the rest of his team towards the object, pick it up and deposit it in the bucket. He has to use only non- verbal communication.</p>
10:30am - 11:00am	<p>Debrief:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What were some of the challenges that you faced when you were blindfolded?</li><li>What were some of the challenges that you faced when you were the one driving the snake?</li><li>Where and when did you feel most comfortable? Why?</li><li>Have you found yourself in a similar situation at work?</li><li>Do you think your facilitators find themselves in a situation like this at work?</li><li>Who played the role of a leader in the activity?</li><li>Was it easier for you to drive the snake after you tried being guided while blindfolded? (This is where you transition into empathy and how it a powerful tool for leaders).</li></ul>
11:00am - 11:15am	Break
11:15am - 12:00pm	<p>Activity: Chart making. Divide the class into three groups and provide charts and stationary. Request them to make a mind map of what they think empathy is. They are free to use quotes, pictures or text.</p> <p>Debrief: Each team must present their charts to the rest of the participants. Once all the teams have presented their charts, add anything that they may have missed out about empathy. Allow them to share examples where they have displayed empathy to their subordinates or their peers at work. From here you can transition into Leading from the front, leading from the middle and Leading from the back.</p>
12:00pm - 01:00pm	<p>Discuss:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Leading from the front.<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Situations where this helps.</li><li>What are the benefits?</li><li>What are the drawbacks?</li></ul></li></ol>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does empathy play a role in this sort of a leadership?</li> <li>• Site examples (imaginary or real).</li> </ul> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Leading from the middle.</li> <li>3. Leading from the back.</li> </ol> <p>Allow participants to share personal experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been a time when empathy worked in your favor?</li> <li>• Has there been a time when empathy did not work for you?</li> <li>• Did you ever miss out on an opportunity to use it to your advantage?</li> </ul> <p>(Break for lunch with this thought)</p>
01:00pm – 01:30pm	Lunch
01:30pm – 02:00pm	Paper holding activity. This is an energizer linked with teamwork and how it feels to be in someone else's shoes.
02:00pm – 03:00pm	<p>Discussion:</p> <p>Tell the participants how it feels when your hand gets caught in a car door. Expect responses like "it hurts a lot." Some people might make faces. The point is that we all have empathy. "I feel your pain" is not just a saying. As humans we are hardwired to empathize.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How do we lose that feeling?</li> <li>• What are some of the factors that make you lose that feeling?</li> <li>• Why is it difficult to empathize sometimes?</li> <li>• What are the barriers?</li> </ul> <p>Give sufficient time for participants to think about this and come up with reasons that can make us lose empathy. Some of the answers that you are looking for are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obedience to authority</li> <li>• Extreme ideologies</li> <li>• Personal egos.</li> </ul> <p>Discuss each with examples from work if possible.</p>
03:00pm – 04:00pm	<p>Activity (Individual): "If I were a..."</p> <p>Provide A4 size sheets to all participants and ask them to imagine all the roles in the organization. They should jot down all the challenges that they might face in that role and try and experience how people feel under pressure.</p> <p>Get the participants to share their notes with the rest of the class. This activity will throw light on how other roles functions and what are some of the challenges that they may face.</p>
04:00pm – 04:15pm	Break
04:15pm – 05:00pm	<p>Discuss:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get participants to share instances where they felt good because someone showed empathy to them</li> <li>• What are some of the benefits of leading with empathy?</li> <li>• Take work specific examples.</li> <li>• How to display empathy at work?</li> <li>• Take work specific examples.</li> <li>• Are we as an organization leading with empathy?</li> </ul> <p>Sometimes we are so focused on achieving the goal that we forget about people.</p>
05:00pm - 06:00pm	<p>Activity: (How to tie a shoelace)</p> <p>Review:</p>

- Process - is there one? - numbered steps are usually best
- Clarity of writing/words/language - is it clear and unambiguous?
- Did anyone think to add some diagrams? - a picture tells a thousand words..
- Did anyone think to be even more creative and make a video? (As facilitator you can decide if this negates the need for written instructions.. what if the audience can't access the video?..)
- Are elements defined helpfully - did anyone use the word 'aglet'?(it's the thin tube at the lace ends - it's not a necessary part of the exercise but is a point of trivial interest)
- Ease of reading

Buffer time. End with "Nobody cares how much you know, until they know how much you care."