



COMMUNICATING CARE AND COMPASSION

Empathy and compassion can be a great tool for effective leadership. Not just in times of uncertainty and crisis, but to carry your team through good times too!

Researchers have found that empathy plays an important role in creating a culture of support and protection to promote successful job performance, especially in the changed climate of work.

Source: Centre For Creative Leadership

But more often than not, we struggle to express empathy and compassion, especially with the constant change in our work environment.

So, how can you make empathy and compassion the foundation of interpersonal communication in your team?

By employing the strategies derived from the **Egan's Model of Counselling**.

Egan's model is a strategy traditionally used by counselling psychologists. However, in an organizational setting, it can be implemented by someone who is in a higher position, who has to lead or manage a group of people.

HOW DOES IT WORK?

It works as a three-stage process with the following stages:



Exploration

Understanding the dynamics of the team and getting to know their challenges

Analysing and Empathising

Helping them view the challenges from different perspectives and guiding them by exploring different solutions

Achieving Action

Sharing tools and skills available to achieve the solutions

Seems simple enough, but each of these stages requires us to draw on specific techniques to help us get our message across in an effective but compassionate manner.



Exploration Stage 01

- Establish a great rapport with the team
- Understand their current situation – challenges, resources and opportunities

Use the technique of

Active Listening

Take the time to hear the person out without responding immediately.



Analysing and Empathising Stage 02

- Once the challenges have been identified, help them view it from different perspectives
- Guide them by exploring options, avenues and resources for solutions

Use the technique of

Empathy

Imagine yourself in the other person's predicament.

Paraphrasing

Highlight the important aspects of the challenge through discussion, confirm if you have understood it correctly.

Questioning

Ask reflective & open-ended questions using words such as "What", "How", "When" with the intent of genuinely seeking answers.



Achieving Action

Stage 03

Recommend tools and skills to make the solutions possible.

Use the technique of

Prioritizing, Educating, Time management, Negotiation, Conflict Management, Encouraging Emotional Intelligence, Referrals – recommending services such as EAP

HOW DOES EGAN'S MODEL LOOK LIKE IN PRACTICE?

This is Terrence, a 28-year-old design expert who has been struggling to meet his deadlines of late. This has been brought to the attention of his manager by his colleague.

Recently, Terrence has been finding it difficult to stay on track with his deadlines.



"Jatin, I think there is something bothering Terrence. This is the third time he has missed a deadline this month. I think you should have a chat with him."



Jatin reaches out to Terrence.



In the session, Jatin gently brings up the issue of missed deadlines and asks Terrence why this is happening.

I understand that it can be difficult to stay motivated all the time but if there is something else that's bothering you, I would like to help.



Terrence hesitates but reassured by Jatin's gentle demeanor he opens up about his feelings of emptiness and inability to concentrate.



Jatin realizes that Terrence's inability to meet the deadlines stems from his mental health challenges and suggests the resources that the company provides. He also assures him that this is not a reflection of his ability as an employee.

Empathetic communication can help you build and maintain relationships. At the heart of all successful organizations are these relationships. Now when we work across cultures, time zones and even spaces, it has become more imperative that we take special measures to preserve them.