

EMPATHIC  
LEADERSHIP  
SELF-ASSESSMENT



# Self-Assessment Q#1

**I practice seeing situations from diverse perspectives and putting myself in others' shoes.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

Empathy is the ability to notice, feel, and understand other people's diverse emotions and experiences, even when they're quite different from our own, so practicing putting yourself in other people's shoes and engaging in "perspective-taking", or seeing things from other people's point of view, is critical to becoming adept at empathic leadership. Doing this impacts every action or word you choose in your interactions with employees and colleagues, and can have a noticeable impact on business outcomes.

# Self-Assessment Q#2

**I regularly set aside time for conversations devoted to getting to know my team members so that I have a more complete understanding of who they are.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

Understanding employees as people, including their formative and current life experiences, is important to create a culture where everyone feels valued and a sense of belonging. Statistics show that workplaces that feel inclusive and empathic are much more likely to garner positive employee sentiment, and can impact critical areas such as employee engagement, productivity, and retention. You might also discover dormant skills certain teammates possess that they might not have listed on their resume, but that can positively impact the team.

# Self-Assessment Q#3

**I practice having empathy for myself when I make a mistake, and allow myself to show vulnerability in front of my team.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

The way we see and treat ourselves influences the way we see and treat others. When we're self-critical, we tend to also be critical of others, and when we focus on blaming ourselves for mistakes, we usually seek to blame others when they make mistakes as well. A blame-seeking leadership style is often not as effective as an empathic, solution-focused approach. When we practice having empathy for ourselves, it becomes much easier to feel empathy for others, and to create a work environment that lends itself to better outcomes.

# Self-Assessment Q#4

**I show understanding when employees or colleagues make mistakes or need assistance.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

Approaching employees' mistakes or needs with empathy rather than blame leads to a work culture where people feel they can take healthy risks, and also seek support when they need it. Both of these working behaviors lead to better business outcomes. When employees feel there is a threat of repercussion, not only will they be less likely to take accountability or ask for help, but studies show that this kind of atmosphere also negatively impacts the ability to think clearly and engage in high-level executive functioning tasks such as organization and time management.

# Self-Assessment Q#5

**I take time to self-reflect and gain awareness about my own identity, thoughts, and feelings.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

**Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

Just like having empathy for yourself helps you have empathy for others, self-reflection and self-awareness help you relate to and understand others better, and are critical attributes of effective leaders. We can only meet others where they are to the extent that we are able to meet ourselves where we are. In order to do that, it's important to take time to think about some of the more complex parts of ourselves, the way our thought processes and emotions work, and how our different aspects of our identity might impact our approach to leadership.

# Self-Assessment Q#6

**I am able to regulate my emotions during challenging situations in order to address them in a way that is productive and inclusive for everyone involved.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

When the state of our emotions and nervous system is not in an ideal place, it negatively impacts our thoughts and actions. This makes it difficult to tap into empathy, and affects everyone around us. We tend to *react* instead of *empathize*. As a leader, you interact with many people in your organization everyday, and your actions impact them. If your emotions are running high or you're stressed out, it's hard to harness empathic leadership skills, especially during difficult moments. Your state influences your perspective and all of your leadership choices, which trickle down to everyone in your circle of impact.

# Self-Assessment Q#7

**I am vocal in front of my team when I notice mistreatment or lack of respect among team members.**

Strongly Disagree → Strongly Agree

## **Why this empathic leadership skill is important**

To be a truly effective leader, it's important that you not only cultivate your own empathic leadership skills, but that you also act as a role model and hold the rest of your team accountable for empathic interaction also, since all relationships on a team matter. Establishing team tenets and agreements about how you interact with each other can serve as a helpful foundation to refer back to if you notice employees treating each other in ways that don't abide by your mutually agreed upon team culture. This will foster trust and connection between you and your team, and among team members, which will ultimately enhance communication and productivity levels.



# Self-Assessment Feedback - Low

## **Low score range (0 – 3)**

You might benefit from further exploration of what empathic leadership is and why it's important. This is an opportunity to see if practicing new kinds of leadership skills actually does enhance your team's performance. Research shows that empathic leadership is a top determinant for success. Some best practices include self-reflection, perspective-taking, active listening, meeting others with understanding, and role modeling empathy so that your team feels safe to take innovative steps.

### ***Pop-up highlight box:***

For empathic leadership skill-building exercises, download our ***Empathic Leadership Skill-Builder Workbook***.  
([hyperlink](#))

# Self-Assessment Feedback - Moderate

## **Moderate score range (4 – 6)**

You are well on your way to being a great empathic leader. It seems you probably understand empathic leadership is and why it's important, though you might benefit from putting this kind of leadership skill into practice even more. Research shows that empathic leadership is a top determinant for success, so focusing on things like self-reflection, perspective-taking, active listening, meeting others with understanding, and role modeling empathy, can really enhance your team's performance. Maybe you're already doing some or all of these things to a certain extent. This is an opportunity to step up this part of your leadership style, and see what positive changes transpire.

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# Self-Assessment Feedback - High

## **High score range (7 – 10)**

You're a great empathic leader! It seems that you truly understand what empathic leadership is and why it's important. Still, there's always room for more active practice. Reflect on some of the things in this assessment that seem most important to you, and consider further professional development to bolster these qualities even more. Research shows that empathic leadership is a top determinant for success, so continuing to focus on cultivating this skill is well worth your time and resources. Also consider becoming a true champion for empathic leadership by sharing what you know with other business leaders.

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