

Discussion:

Empathy as a key to success as a freelancer

My empathy trainers



What are Alicia and Kiki communicating?



Why do you think that is what they are communicating?



Introduction

- **A) Why this topic?**
- 1) More and more, I have come to realize in everyday living that what I miss most in encounters with people is empathy.
- 2) That led me to reflect on the role of empathy in my work as a translator, interpreter and in business relations with customers and colleagues and suppliers.
- 3) This brief presentation and discussion aims to provide us with the opportunity to jointly reflect on how empathy already influences our work and how we can use it to improve it.

Definitions: What is *empathy*?

Merriam-Webster: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/empathy>

1. 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

- also : the capacity for this

2. the imaginative projection of a subjective state into an object so that the object appears to be infused with it

Definitions: What is *empathy*?

German translations:

Dict.cc:

Einfühlungsvermögen

- Mitgefühl
- Empathie
- Einfühlsamkeit
- Einfühlen
- Einfühlung

Definitions: What is *empathy*?

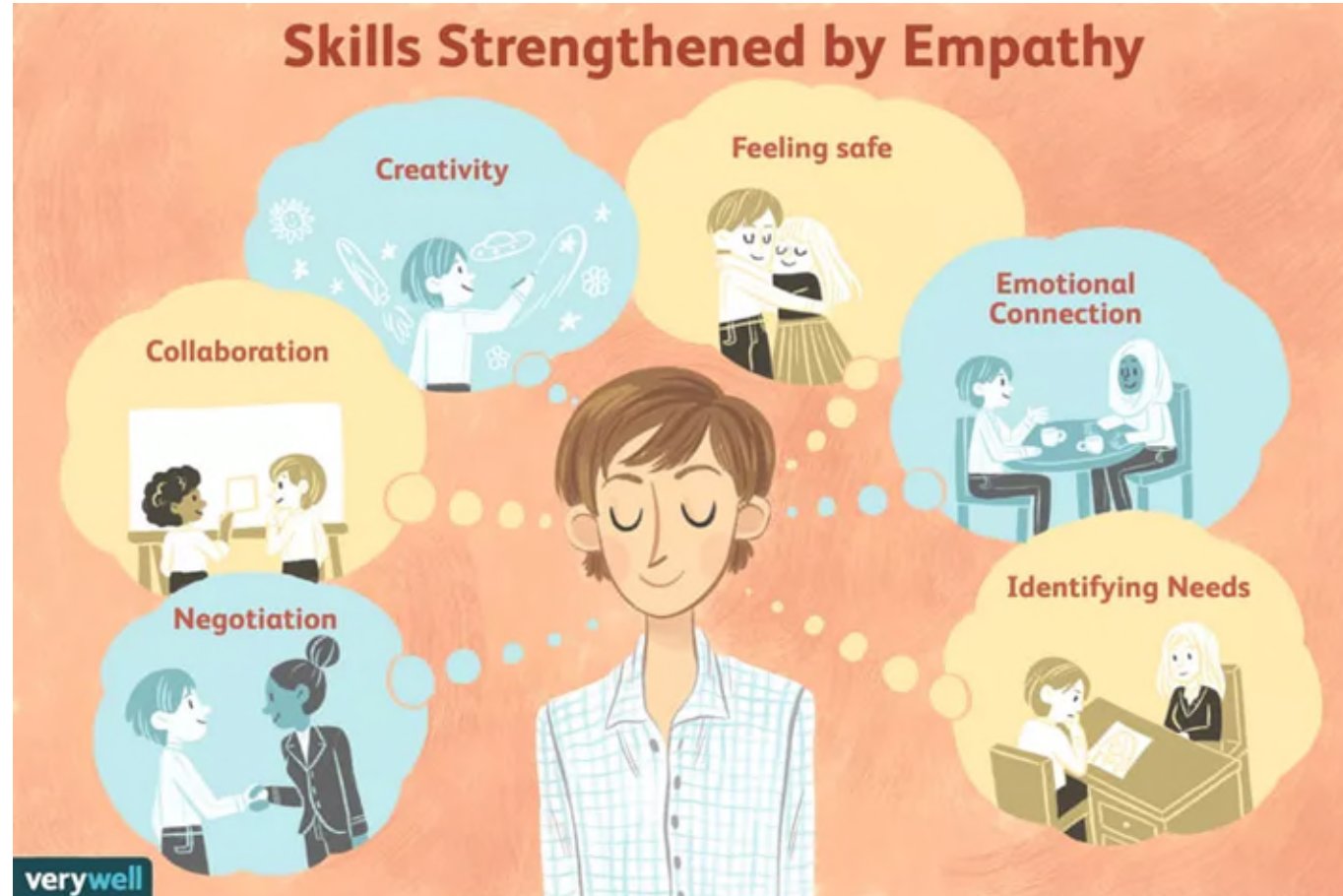
<https://www.verywellmind.com/cognitive-and-emotional-empathy-4582389>

- **Cognitive Empathy vs. Emotional Empathy**
- Learn the differences between these two types of empathy
- By [Jodi Clarke, MA, LPC/MHSP](#)
- Updated on March 01, 2023
- Medically reviewed by [Rachel Goldman, PhD, FTOS](#)

Cognitive empathy involves knowing how other people think and feel, while emotional empathy involves feeling another person's emotions.

Although they are quite different, both cognitive empathy and emotional empathy are equally important for helping us form and maintain connections with others. Learn what each type of empathy is and how to find a balance between the two.

Definitions: What is *empathy*?



Definitions: What is *empathy*?

Paul Bloom, quoted in Vox, 16 Jan. 2019

Sympathy vs. Empathy

- Sympathy and empathy both refer to a caring response to the emotional state of another person, but a distinction between them is typically made: while sympathy is a feeling of sincere concern for someone who is experiencing something difficult or painful, empathy involves actively sharing in the emotional experience of the other person.

Definitions: What is *empathy*?

Paul Bloom, quoted in Vox, 16 Jan. 2019

Compassion versus empathy

- The distinction between compassion and empathy is frequently a topic of exploration.
- By empathy I mean feeling the feelings of other people. So if you're in pain and I feel your pain—I am feeling empathy toward you. If you're being anxious, I pick up your anxiety. If you're sad and I pick up your sadness, I'm being empathetic.
- And that's different from compassion. Compassion means I give your concern weight, I value it. I care about you, but I don't necessarily pick up your feelings.

Empathy in business

- <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/develop-empathy-business-communication-30895.html>
- How to Develop Empathy in Business Communication
- Empathy is understanding another person's situation and relating to his emotions. Even if you are a naturally empathetic person, empathy in business communication can often be lost in the process of getting the job done. After all, business decisions and management issues are based on facts, not emotions. However, you can gain employee and client trust by incorporating empathetic values into your day-to-day business communications. Empathetic values show you are considering not just business objectives but the needs and desires of employees and clients. Business communication empathy is developed by exercising general interpersonal communication skills.

Empathy in business

- 1. Smile and refer to people by name. This makes you approachable to others who will more readily share ideas, concerns and feedback.
- 2. Take time to listen to customers, employees, managers and shareholders. Offer surveys, questionnaires and suggestion boxes as well as open the floor to new ideas or concerns during staff meetings. Listen to what a person says and notice what his body language says as well. Most of what we communicate is in body language.
- 3. Withhold any judgment when listening to ideas that diverge from your point of view. You can not understand another person's point of view if you are judging it. Quietly consider all points then later take counsel with those you trust to determine what has merit and where thoughts and ideas can converge.

Empathy in business

- 4. Ask questions and develop relationships with managers, staff and clients. While you won't become best friends with everyone, you should know the basics about those you communicate with to understand driving factors such as family, financial goals or volunteer efforts. You may find you have more in common than originally imagined making empathy much more natural and easy to achieve.
- 5. Give praise freely. Let employees know they did a good job or that you like someone's new hairstyle. These may not seem like much, but people feel more connected when they feel noticed.

Empathy in business

- Outside the company, developing empathy can help you develop and market products and services for your customers. Observing how customers use products and services, and listening to them talk about the products and services they need, can make coming up with these ideas easier. “Both Akio Morita of Sony and Steve Jobs were famous for never commissioning market research,” writes James Allworth in *Harvard Business Review*, who calls empathy the [most important thing he learned at Harvard Business School](#). “Instead, they’d just walk around the world watching what people did. They’d put themselves in the shoes of their customers.”
- Companies that don’t look at things from the perspective of their customers and competitors risk being disrupted right out of their industries, like Netflix did to Blockbuster, warns Allworth.

Empathy in business

- In fact, Harvard Business School professor Clayton Christensen, famous for his work on [innovation and disruption](#), says it's important to [figure out the “job”](#) that people are “hiring” a product to do—and that job may be very different from the product's function. “FedEx, for example, fulfills the job of getting a package from here to there as fast as possible,” writes Carmen Nobel in the Harvard Business School blog *Working Knowledge*. “Disney does the job of providing warm, safe, fantasy vacations for families. OnStar provides peace of mind.”
- Function vs. job shifts perspective from the company to the customer. “Looking at the market from the function of a product really originates from your competitors or your own employees deciding what you need,” Christensen tells Nobel. “Whereas the jobs-to-be-done point of view causes you to crawl into the skin of your customer and go with her as she goes about her day, always asking the question as she does something: Why did she do it that way?”

Empathy in business

- Also, regardless of what products and services your company offers, having empathy can help [improve customer service](#). “How a customer is treated when things go wrong has an impact on whether or not the person continues to be your customer,” writes *Bruna Martinuzzi in Open Forum*.
- Inside the company, empathy helps with management and collaboration by helping to understand the other person’s perspective. Putting yourself in someone else’s shoes can make it easier to find a compromise between two points of view. Similarly, thinking about how other people might like to be treated at work can make them more productive.

Empathy in business

- So how do you develop empathy, or increase the amount you already have? Here's some suggestions from *Martinuzzi's book, [The Leader as a Mensch: Become the Kind of Person Others Want to Follow](#):*
- Listen to people—not just their words but also their facial expressions and body language—without interrupting. And while you're listening, pay attention—don't use your phone or look at your watch.
- Talk to people. Ask them about their interests, pay attention to what they're doing and praise them for what they're doing well, and encourage them to speak up with their own ideas.

Empathy in business

- <https://theraveagency.com/blog/how-to-develop-empathy-in-business-communication>
- Empathy is the concept of recognizing and relating to other people's emotions and perspectives. In business settings, empathy can be difficult to maintain, as completing tasks and projects usually overshadows people's personal needs. However, integrating empathy into daily business activities has many benefits for employees, clients and customers.
- There are three types of empathy – cognitive, emotional and compassionate. Cognitive empathy is being aware of the emotional states of others. Emotional empathy is engaging and sharing our own emotions with others. With compassionate empathy, we take action to support others emotionally. Each of these can be applied to business settings and building strong relationships with customers starts with recognizing where empathy can be improved.

Empathy in business

Here are a few simple tips to incorporate empathy into business communication:

- **Connect from within.** For a successful, empathetic business, having genuine connections within your company is integral to forming bonds with customers. Customers value authenticity, and can sense when employees are genuinely happy and satisfied in their work environment. Leaders can help each employee understand the company's mission and how each employee has a part to play in helping succeed in that way, creating a sense of purpose.
- **Ask for feedback.** Asking for feedback from both employees and customers can increase transparency and make everyone feel like their voice is heard. This can be done through questionnaires, surveys or regular check-ins with team members and past customers. Don't be defensive when receiving negative feedback, rather, try and learn from others' perspectives. People's beliefs and personal lives have an impact on how they think, so understanding the basics of who they are can help minimize conflict.

Empathy in business

- **Give your full attention.** Active listening goes a long way in building empathy and understanding. Take in what your customers are telling you, make them feel heard and pay attention to body language and tone to understand them on a deeper level. When customers feel like you are actually hearing their needs and concerns, and then receive a thoughtful response, they are more likely to continue to open up.
- **Understand different communication styles.** Your employees and customers are likely a mix of introverts and extroverts, all of whom have different communication styles and environments that they thrive in. Some people may feel more comfortable opening up in one-on-one settings, while some prefer group meetings where they can feed off of other people's energy. Having a variety of methods for customers to reach out and give their feedback will make each customer feel valued and like they have personalized options to interact with your company.

Empathy in business

<https://hbr.org/2022/08/4-ways-to-communicate-with-more-empathy>

4 Ways to Communicate with More Empathy

by [Joel Schwartzberg](#)

- Summary. The pandemic and other stressful events over the past few years have only made empathic communications even more desirable and necessary, especially as those expressions have become more virtual — including videos, social...
- Most business consultants — and certainly most workers — agree that [empathy is a critical leadership skill](#). We even sometimes reimagine “CEO” as “Chief Empathy Officer.” There’s no question that the ability to step into another’s shoes and understand their situation and challenges is a powerful trait that builds trust and faith.

Empathy in business

- The pandemic and other stressful events over the past few years have only made empathic communications even more desirable and necessary, especially as those expressions have become more virtual — including videos, social media posts, and emails.
- As Paul Tufano, CEO of AmeriHealth Caritas, explains in a [July 2020 McKinsey & Company article](#), “This has been a sustained period of uncertainty and fear, but also a great opportunity to forge a stronger, more cohesive, and more motivated workforce. If CEOs can step into a ministerial role — extending hands virtually, truly listening, relating to and connecting with people where they are — there is enormous potential to inspire people and strengthen bonds and loyalties within the company.”

Using empathy

- First of all, we need information about the individual.
- How and where do we obtain that? For example, by
 - observing the individual, which may include body language
 - listening to the individual, maybe on the phone
 - gathering information about the individual (or company), maybe on LinkedIn, Facebook, the individual's homepage, the website of the individual's employer, the company's website, other sites on the Internet
- For a couple of years, I interpreted for market research events where subjects were invited in to test a product and relate their reactions. For example for “wipes”, insulin pumps. The companies spent considerable sums of money on these events, but they must have been well worth the money!

Using empathy

Areas where empathy may be important or even crucial:

- Communication with customers
 - Collaboration with fellow translators
 - Marketing – website, social media, etc.
 - Office organization and technology,
 - Interpreting and translations
- among other things.

Using empathy?

Examples / applications:

- Communication with customers:

- + What do you think customers want/need?
- + I assume: Flexibility of communication, attitude of “I understand and care about your needs”, reliability, professionalism, competence
- + My behavior should reflect that premise

- Collaboration with colleagues:

- + What do you think colleagues want/need?
- + I assume: Fairness, friendliness, respect, honesty, reliability, flexibility

Using empathy

Examples / applications:

- Marketing – website, social media, etc.
- Office organization and technology
 - + My assumption: Should be “user friendly
- Interpreting and translations
 - + My assumption: Should be customer-focused.

Using empathy

Situations:

- Interpreting for a technical deposition
 - + Subject: A defective valve led to a fire and a death and a severe injury.
 - + Persons involved in the deposition: Lawyers, technicians, engineers
 - + Case: Very lengthy with many details
 - + Colleague: used sophisticated Oxford English with lengthy sentences, talked very slowly
 - + My impression: this is not appropriate for the persons involved or the situation. The American lawyers, the technicians and engineers need simple, concise language

Using empathy

Situations:

- Interpreting for non-native speakers of English, for example for asylum-seekers from Nigeria: don't use legal jargon, instead use simple terms and always observe the individual carefully to make sure they understand and ask them if they understood.
- Translating for the tourist sector, for example descriptions of tours or directions for finding something: always keep the reader in mind. This means that, when it comes to names of places, write – in my case - the German name and then, in brackets, write the English language equivalent. Or simply add a descriptive term after the name. Examples: “Drachensteig” in Murnau. “Write: “the Drachensteig trail”. The reason: the local name will appear on signs and maps, so that it must be mentioned.

Using empathy

If we show too much empathy,
that may be perceived as something negative.

Empathy can also be used as a weapon!

*Thank you for listening and sharing 😊
I wish you lots of success and enjoyment while
applying empathy in your daily work !*

<https://animalthoughts.com/how-to-communicate-telepathically-with-animals/>

