



熱點
出擊

Can you be empathic?

A while ago, the Labour Department of the Hong Kong SAR Government had a television announcement featuring employer and employees standing in opposite directions having a tug-of-war. Their forces had not only strained the rope but also tired them out. Then, the camera swiftly turned to another scene where employer and employees standing on the same side trying to pull a tightly closed door opened. Everyone was so happy when they saw the first glimpse of light. The commercial metaphorically portrayed the situations of strikes, demonstrations and social movements over the years.

As it was discovered in our latest research on “Positive Organization Index”, employees generally reckoned many problems had arisen because of the far from satisfactory communication with employers which gradually eroded the trust amongst them. The immaturity of systematic strategies on crisis management and negotiation system no doubt had triggered conflicts between employer and employees which resulted in industrial stalemate. As Rome was not built in a day, what are the important elements in helping both parties to put aside their biases and seek win-win outcomes?

As a pioneer in Employee Assistant Programme for over two decades, we believe that mutual trust plays a pivotal role in harmonious industrial relation. It takes both employer and employees to be more conscious of the importance of “Empathic Communication”. Employer and employees should not see themselves as opponents in a tug-of-war but should open up their ears and hearts to listen to each other and put themselves into other shoes so as to understand others’ difficulties and opinions which is a more sustainable way to handle various issues in the workplace. What matters is whether you are willing to step up to bridge the differences through empathic communication?

LEAP 是指：

L eading Personal Effectiveness
發展人才

E nhancing Family Cohesiveness
凝聚家庭

A chieving Team Success
卓越團隊

P romoting Corporate Wellness
促進企業健康

Turning “harmful” relationship around

“Insomnia, stomach pain, headache, chest pain, skin allergies, acne, constipation, diarrhea, and tremor ...”. About one-third of our services users were disturbed by health problems which can be traced to “Somatoform Disorder” than emotion.

Somatoform Disorder is different from other mental disorders and there are two categories to it. One is when a person starts with physiological diseases facing life stress which inevitably lead to complex mood changes that in turn worsen their diseases or symptoms. The second type is a person does not have any organic diseases, but has feelings of bloating, chest pain or strain, heart palpitations and other issues.

Recently, an employee named Thomson had come to us for services complaining of back pain which had lasted for about six months, and had become more severe. However, after going for a body check, the results came normal. So, Thomson talked to one of our Employee Assistance (EA) consultants and realised that he was in very bad terms with one of his colleagues. Thomson reflected that every time the colleague was off or on holiday, his back pain subsided.

Thomson said he was very accurate and efficient with his work. As everyone in the team had been working together for many years, majority of his colleagues was happy to watch each other out and support each other except that one particular colleague. She was the kind of person who needed thorough guidance and detailed planning and arrangement. She got thrown off by changes and when she felt helpless, she took it on Thomson. Lately, the colleague would show her discontentment with Thomson when he was around or she would refuse having lunch with other colleagues when Thomson was around. Thomson found it difficult and stressful to work or get along with the colleague.

Our EA consultant had helped Thomson understanding the needs and characteristics of the colleague and the causes of their conflicts, and suggested ways to work with this type of colleagues. Thomson adjusted his responses to the colleague according to her needs for guidance and security and tried new approach to cooperate with her.

Thomson began to explain things instantly when the colleague encountered troubles or difficulties. He found that when he was doing so, the colleagues started going out for lunch with colleagues and slowly easing her discontentment. As a result, Thomson’s back got well without medication.



Inspiration from Half of a Watermelon

A young couple went home in a hot afternoon. The husband opened the fridge seeing half of a watermelon and thus finished it immediately. When the wife came back home later knowing the husband had half of a watermelon without him, they had an argument about it.

Hearing the story, the father of the husband invited the couple to his place and gave both of them half of a watermelon asking them to leave it as it was to the other if they cannot finish it.

Later, the father took the two halves that the couple had eaten and pointed out that while the husband would start eating from the middle which was the sweetest part of the watermelon and left the sides to his wife, his wife would start from the side and leave half of it intact to her husband. The father told his son that who would not like to have the sweetest part of a watermelon but his wife was willing to share it with him.

From this little story, we see the importance of being considerate in a couple relationships. The same thing applies to family and work. One way in developing good interpersonal relationship is to be more considerate and proactively care and respond to others’ needs. With the little warmth in daily interaction, it will certainly help to nurture relationships and draw you closer to the hearts of others.