



Empathy in Communication: Metamorphosis of Corporate Language

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Abstract: In this world, driven by global marketing strategies corporations are feeling the need to become truly responsive to the needs of their customers and employees. Communication has many ways to reach out to people but one part of communication that should be more emphasized by scholars and aspirants is ‘empathy’ part. In this changing course of time, effective communication will not only be profound and appropriate but also be empathetic in nature and specifically in a corporate field where the customer is considered to be the most prioritized being. However, ‘Empathy’, which is the ability to perceive and relate to the thoughts, emotions, or experiences of others, has long been a soft skill that's overlooked as a performance indicator. The corporate world is an increasingly immediate, intimate, and interactive space. And yet this desire to change is hampered by the fear of appearing weak and vulnerable. One can not achieve the desired interactive outcome until and unless that person imagines himself/herself in the situation of another, experiencing the other person's emotions, ideas, and opinions. Words are associated with our thoughts and feelings. When communicating with potential customers, one should always follow a certain code of conduct. Communicating confidently is only a small piece of this puzzle. Politeness, sympathy, empathy, problem-solving, and other soft skills are also crucial. Modern-day communication lacks personal touch as emails and other modes of communication have been standardized. Lack of personal touch and missing empathy has become a deterrent to the customers. As long as one does not feel others' problems and pain, one can not solve them properly. Thus, putting yourself in others' / customers' shoes is and always should be step number one.

Keywords: Communication, Feelings, Empathy, Corporate

I. INTRODUCTION

Amidst the turmoil caused by the coronavirus, content creators have turned their gaze to a theme of particular interest: empathy. Brands seek to change the tone of their voice so that mindfulness, understanding, and compassion for others become absolute priorities. In addition, many organizations focus on empathic communication when speaking with their employees, as well as with existing and potential customers. A readiness to listen and an openness to participating in a discussion that emphasizes the well-being of the person you're speaking to are the first steps toward empathetic communication.

Need for empathy in Business

The subject of empathy has not received much research. We are aware that empathy is mostly based on emotion and, more specifically, emotional connection. In order to encourage and assist others, empathic communication requires embracing and tolerating diverse viewpoints and feelings in them as well as sharing them with them. Additionally, it involves carefully listening in an effort to comprehend the feelings of the person you are speaking with.

Why is this significant for big businesses? Along with fostering an inclusive workplace, supporting empathetic communication with data-driven assistance is a wise corporate move. As it turns out, research into what it means for businesses to be empathetic began long before 2020 and surprised us with some curveballs.

A 2016 research by the Harvard Business Review rated several businesses using an Empathy Index that takes into account a wide range of factors, such as corporate culture and brand message. According to the study, there is a strong link between an organization's Empathy Index and its performance. Empathetic cultures are thought to maintain the best employees working in the healthiest surroundings, which increases productivity.

Although the Harvard Business Review research didn't specifically assess empathic language, it did take into account brand impression and public message on social media. Additionally, it recognized the significance of language in influencing a company's Empathy Index.



What Does Writing with Empathy Look Like?

When we think about empathy, it's typically in the context of a conversation between two or more individuals. It's advised to "put yourself in the other person's shoes" and speak in a way that would encourage that individual to express themselves freely. The suggestion is not very specific. Additionally, it does not assist in the complete development of the abilities required to offer emotional support to others in a variety of contexts.

What does it mean to converse with genuine understanding, though, and what abilities are required? When your target customer isn't yet conversing with your brand, what does it mean to apply empathy in business? Or what does it mean for you as an employer to encourage a compassionate work environment among team members?



Fig. 1 Empathy characteristics and features

II. FIVE POINTERS FOR EMPATHETIC COMMUNICATION

1. When your target audience's problems arise, quickly address them. Whether it's a national emergency or a support ticket, responding quickly to the problem (without turning it into a marketing campaign right away) demonstrates to them that you actually care about how they feel.
2. Draw ideas from thoughtful listening. Try to express your understanding together with an explanation of the circumstances leading to people's reactions, rather than just saying "I understand your worries." Frequently, this entails adding a second line that begins, "I get where you're coming from. (Validating the person's emotional experience) I would feel the same way if I went through it. Reiterating someone's sentiments back to them in your own words without using an interpreter makes individuals feel heard and understood.
3. Even if you disagree, respect others' subjective experiences. "We understand that the most recent modifications to our terms and conditions may cause some individuals to feel uneasy, but you can rely on us to give you clear communication and flexible solutions," the statement reads.
4. Be responsible. Your company should be accountable for how your content impacts individuals, regardless of the motivation behind your communication, even if it causes an unintended response.
5. Be responsible while using emotive language in the material. Make sure you're not unnecessarily inciting fear or rage in your target audience by using an emotional analysis tool.

Empathetic communication abilities are essential for internal and external communication, including between clients and employees. Put this advice to use as you work to improve your communication abilities! Try to engage in reflective listening the next time you have a conversation with a coworker to show that you are aware of what they are saying. Or consider how your emotional expression might affect the recipient when you compose your next email.

III. THE USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN COMMUNICATION

- AI encourages effective professional communication. AI can predict the sorts of engagement that are most appropriate for your target audience and show the success rate of presentations using a variety of data. You may identify your areas of strength and weakness by having your presentation skills assessed, and assessing certain aspects of your team's reaction to the presentation's content, style, and duration optimizes the way you convey information. The feedback you get from these AI systems allows you to learn which communication methods are effective with your audience, resulting in more individualized and focused workplace communication.



- AI also helps with uniformity in speech production. You may always retain a close connection with your audience through their response, which aids in reinforcing the presentation's substance. Since 93 percent of our communication is nonverbal, AI, unlike us humans, is able to accurately assess which presenting techniques would best engage an audience. This makes it possible for project managers and their teams to interact on a deeper level, which promotes a more productive atmosphere.
- Workplace productivity has increased and will continue to rise thanks to artificial intelligence. Teams may concentrate on more in-depth work, such as fostering the invention of new ideas, by using AI to handle fundamental, time-consuming activities like data processing and review.
- Chatbots are a practical tool that enhances interpersonal interaction, streamlines team communication to foster a more productive work environment, and gives team members more time to exercise critical thinking.
- The fundamental tenet of any use of AI is that, rather than taking our jobs, it increases our productivity and makes it possible for humans to exchange and transform ideas more effectively. It handles little things to free us up to think large instead than substituting our own thinking!
- AI pushes the limits of present job efficiency and encourages the quick advancement of our current knowledge. When humans and machines work together, a mix of biological and non-biological thinking is presented, maximizing the potential for intellectual conversation. A whole new world of possibilities is made possible by the methodical approach to more ethereal concepts, which recommends an interdisciplinary strategy that merges scientific and creative mindsets.
- The concept of nanobots that enter your bloodstream and link your brain to an artificial one, converting your own mind into a search engine, is advanced by Google's Director of Engineering Ray Kurzweil. In the blink of an eye, you might imagine yourself in the cloud or conducting a search online. And it may be here in less than 30 years. These concepts provide us with a sneak peek at the fascinating possibilities for the future of our planet.
- AI also enhances human intelligence by offering a different perspective on novel ideas. A road for continuous innovation is made possible by ideas like "digital breathing," in which AI will analyze living networks and report on precise insights, real-time updates (up to the minute), and trend analyses.
- We must stay up with AI if we want to survive in the cutthroat society we live in. AI will continue to affect communications as technology becomes more widely available and incorporated into the workplace.
- The most important thing to remember is that, despite all of AI's potential, we still hold the power. While augmenting our job and reducing our flaws, AI also replicates the caliber of our human contribution.
- Instead of replacing us, new software improves our rate of output. Contrary to what many AI skeptics would think, technology is not making people obsolete. To realize our greatest potential, we must strike a balance between natural and artificial intelligence. Rather than fear AI, the practical and rational approach would be to embrace it.

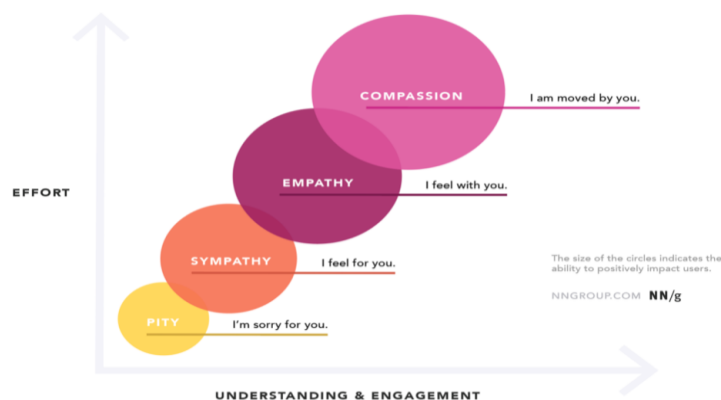


Fig. 2 Spectrum of empathy

Barrier #1: Lack of skills

Empathic communication is a skill we can learn and work on to improve ourselves. We need to look for role models from whom we can learn.

Many of us weren't taught these skills or at least given the effort to teach these skills.

To understand these skills and be able to use them, we need some sort of input from the family. Most of the time these situations are applicable:

- Our parents don't ask or value our opinions.
- Family members don't apologize every time.
- People dismiss and ignore our feelings.



When we grow up in such an environment, it's easy to slip into the same patterns when interacting with the people we work with, too.

In a workplace setting, the lack of empathic communication skills translates to:

- Not caring or giving importance to others.
- Finding it hard to apologize to our manager or our team members.
- Being dismissive and indifferent to our coworkers' feelings and experiences.

Barrier #2: Lack of time

Lack is one of the biggest problems in empathic communication.

A lot of people work from home and then end up nurturing their soft skills.

When we have really less time and we focus on getting the work done, we end up forgetting about these skills that we need to improve ourselves.

And lack of empathy ends up in rudeness.

Barrier #3: Lack of focus

Empathic communication also need focus. It needs the person to be present there and listen attentively.

When a person is out of focus, it's really difficult for that person to listen attentively or understand what the person on the other side has to say.

1) Barrier #4: Bias, stigma, and judgment

When these three communication disruptors come to play, there comes a lot of negative thoughts in that person. When these types of thoughts take over, empathy is hampered and people find it hard to communicate.

2) Barrier #5: Anger

Anger is often a barrier.

If someone is angry at someone or their teammates, it's hard to be empathic. This ends up as they say things they don't mean. Behind the anger lies the hurt, the pain, the fear, and the shame. In a lot of situations, there isn't only one barrier. There is more than one barrier and when they play it right, things get messed up and at times end up with bad consequences.

IV. CONCLUSION

There is no one "correct" approach to showing compassion and empathy. It will depend on the circumstances, the person, and the emotion that is most prominent at the time. Remember that empathy is about what the other person wants and needs, not what you desire, so any action or suggestion you make must be beneficial to them.

For instance, one of your team members may be distracted at home, making it difficult for them to concentrate on their work. Telling them they may work from home until the issue is fixed may seem nice, but employment may really provide them with a pleasant distraction from an upsetting thought. So, ask them which strategy they favor.

Also, keep in mind that empathy is not simply during times of need! It's a terrific gift to view things from a number of angles since you can use it constantly and in every circumstance. And unplanned gestures of compassion make anyone's day better.

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