

Welcome to Servant-Leadership at MSOE's November 12th 2021 Roundtable

This Month's Topic Is "Empathy"



Servant-Leader Milwaukee

*"The servant-leader is servant first. It begins with the natural feeling that one wants to serve. Then conscious choice brings one to aspire to lead. **The best test is: do those served grow as persons: do they, while being served, become healthier, wiser, freer, more autonomous, more likely themselves to become servants? And, what is the effect on the least privileged in society; will they benefit, or, at least, not be further deprived?"** (Greenleaf, 1977/2002, p. 27)*

Roundtable guidelines

The Servant Leader Roundtable is a learning community. It is never intended to be a source of sales leads for products or services.

The roundtables are intended to be first-person conversations grounded in the participant's direct experiences. Practice and experience humility.

Promote mutual discussion: listen first to understand, and don't be dismissive of the input received through listening.

Keep confidentiality. The discussion of issues, ideas, and direction will not become a personal attack or return to haunt you in the future.

Share air time with others. Recognize that different individuals are more or less comfortable in groups.

Don't go off /stay off topic for long.

If you have a problem with someone, calmly and respectfully address the problem directly with them.

Thought to Contemplate

Greenleaf writes: The servant always accepts and empathizes, never rejects. The servant as leader always empathizes, always accepts the person but sometimes refuses to accept some of the person's effort or performance as good enough.

Schedule:

Noon-12:10: General announcements and Greeting

12:10~12:40: Break into groups for discussion:

Each group should be a combination of students, faculty and community members. If your group is not, please leave the break-out group and you will be reassigned.

2 Breath introduction:

Breath 1: Who are you?

Breath 2: Who have you (truly) heard and responded to this week?

Read about your topic

Choose a student (assuming there is one) to **take notes** and **share out** with the larger group at the end

Discuss the topic

If you need help ask (or call using "ask for help.")

You will get a 60 second notification that the groups will be brought back to the big meeting.

12:40-12:50: Small group report outs/takeaways (< 1 minute)

12:50: Official Adjourn and after discussion if desired

It is much easier to teach someone how to read a balance sheet than how to become an empathic listener if he or she has had poor listening skills for the past forty years. Teaching a manager the principles of asset management is a piece of cake compared with getting him or her to hold people accountable if he or she hasn't done that for twenty years. Which do you think would be more difficult: instructing a manager in a Six Sigma quality system or getting the same type A manager to display patience and humility after a twenty-five-year career of behaving as a command-and-control dictator?

James C. Hunter in
The World's Most Powerful Leadership Principle
How to Become a Servant-Leader

A bad leader cares more about others hearing their ideas.

A good leader cares more about hearing ideas from others.-Simon Sinek

Considering the above:

Odd numbered group(s):

“The idea of creating an open-empathy organization is to build and propagate a system of human information. It entails every member of an organization having a first-hand sense of what people need, how their company solves those needs, and how what they do as individuals can add or subtract value. When employees can see that their daily activities have an impact on people outside the company, they often become inspired to create more positive impacts.”

~ Jump Associates, in reference to successful companies today using this model, such as Harley Davidson, Nike and IBM

Discuss the concept of creating open-empathy organizations. Give examples of anywhere you have seen this used before. What benefits did you see, if any? As a servant leader, how could you foster an environment like this in your own life?

Even numbered group(s):

“The simplest way to have empathy for other people is to be just like them. A sense of affinity can deliver clarity to often difficult and complex situations. It obliterates faulty assumptions and sharpens ambiguous data. With that kind of empathetic connection, people inside an organization spend a lot less time arguing about what customers think or what the research is showing – they just know what to do.”

~ Wired to Care: How Companies Prosper When They Create Widespread Empathy, By Dev Patnaik

On a day-to-day basis in our lives, who plays the “customer” role? How can we be more like these “customers” to develop empathy? From a servant leadership perspective, what benefits (in addition to the ones listed above) do you see coming from increased empathy? Could this mindset foster more leaders within an organization without intervention?

Next Roundtable Friday December 10th, 2021. Topic: Greenleaf’s Best Test