CONCEPT

Empathy Skills at Work: Perspective-Taking and Empathetic Leadership

23 – 27 November 2026
Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel



Empathy Skills at Work: Perspective-Taking and Empathetic Leadership

Ref: 897_21116 **Date:** 23 – 27 November 2026 **Location:** Amsterdam - Zuidas business district hotel **Fees:** 23500 SAR

Introduction:

Empathy skills are often assumed rather than practised, so teams misread colleagues, customers escalate when they feel unheard and managers mistake reassurance for understanding. The result is avoidable friction, disengagement and service complaints that trace back to how people were listened to. This Core Concept course treats empathy as a set of learnable workplace behaviours: telling empathy apart from sympathy, taking another person's perspective, listening and reflecting accurately, reading cues and responding with care while protecting personal boundaries. Participants finish with a Personal Empathy Practice Plan and a recorded role-play of a sensitive conversation.

Course Objectives:

- Distinguish cognitive, emotional and compassionate empathy from sympathy and apply the right form to workplace situations
- Use structured perspective-taking techniques to understand the needs and viewpoints of colleagues, customers and stakeholders
- Listen, paraphrase and reflect feelings and meaning so that the other person confirms they have been understood
- Interpret verbal, vocal and non-verbal cues across cultures, generations and remote channels without stereotyping
- Respond with empathy in feedback, disagreement and customer-complaint situations while keeping standards and decisions clear
- Protect personal energy from empathic distress and build team habits that make empathy visible and measurable

Target Audience:

- Line managers responsible for the engagement, wellbeing and performance of their direct reports
- Team leaders who coordinate peers and resolve everyday friction within their teams
- Customer service and client relationship leads who handle upset, anxious or frustrated customers
- Project and programme leads who work with stakeholders holding different priorities and viewpoints
- HR and people partners who support managers on sensitive staff matters
- Supervisors of remote or hybrid teams who rely on video, chat and email to stay connected

Course Outline:

Day 1: What Empathy Is and Is Not

- Empathy, Sympathy and Compassion Contrast Table With Workplace Examples
- Cognitive, Affective and Compassionate Empathy Three-Part Model
- Empathic Concern Versus Personal Distress: Other-Focused and Self-Focused Reactions
- Interpersonal Reactivity Index Self-Profile: Perspective Taking, Empathic Concern and Distress Scales
- Empathy Gap Audit of Recent Team and Customer Interactions

Day 2: Perspective-Taking and Understanding Others

- Batson Imagine-Other Versus Imagine-Self Perspective Instructions
- Empathy Map Canvas: Says, Thinks, Feels and Does Quadrants
- Ladder of Inference Walk-Down to Test Assumptions About Motives
- Stakeholder Viewpoint Rotation Exercise for Competing Priorities
- Curiosity Question Bank: Open, Clarifying and Needs-Seeking Questions

Day 3: Empathic Listening, Reflecting and Reading Cues

- Reflective Listening Sequence: Paraphrase, Feeling Label and Meaning Check
- Validation Statements Without Agreement or Rescue
- Vocal Tone, Pace and Pause Signals in Face-to-Face and Phone Calls
- Facial Expression, Posture and Gesture Cue Observation Checklist
- High-Context and Low-Context Communication and Generational Channel Preferences

Day 4: Empathy Under Pressure: Feedback, Conflict, Customers and Remote Teams

- Empathic Feedback Framing: Acknowledge, Observe, Explore and Agree
- Empathic Responses to Angry Customers: Acknowledge-Clarify-Resolve Script
- Remote Empathy Routines: Camera-Off Check-Ins, Chat Tone Reading and Async Acknowledgement
- Empathy Fatigue Warning Signs, Boundary Statements and Peer Debriefing Circles
- Empathetic Leadership and Purpose: Linking Individual Needs to Team Meaning

Day 5: Empathy Practice Plan and Recorded Role-Play

- Recorded Role-Play: Supporting a Team Member Through Personal Hardship
- Recorded Role-Play: Calming a Distressed Client About a Service Failure
- Observer Scorecard Review of Listening, Reflecting and Cue Reading
- Team Empathy Culture Measures: Pulse Items, Empathy Quotient and Behaviour Tallies
- Personal Empathy Practice Plan Drafting and Accountability Pairing

Skills You Will Gain:

- Perspective-Taking
- Reflective Listening
- Non-Verbal Cue Interpretation
- Cross-Cultural Sensitivity
- Empathic Customer Handling
- Empathy Fatigue Prevention
- Remote Team Connection
- Empathetic Team Culture Building

Why Attend This Course:

- Leave with a Personal Empathy Practice Plan and a recorded sensitive-conversation role-play reviewed by an observer
- See your own empathy profile and blind spots through a validated self-report scale and peer feedback
- Gain phrases and listening routines that calm upset customers and colleagues without giving away decisions
- Practise with managers and service leads from several sectors who face the same people and customer pressures

Conclusion:

Empathy at work is a practised skill rather than a personality trait. The week moves from separating empathy from sympathy and profiling personal empathy, through perspective-taking tools and empathic listening, to reading cues across cultures, generations and remote channels, then to applying empathy in feedback, conflict, customer situations and purposeful leadership while guarding against empathy fatigue. The final day records sensitive-conversation role-plays and turns the learning into a Personal Empathy Practice Plan ready to apply with teams and customers.