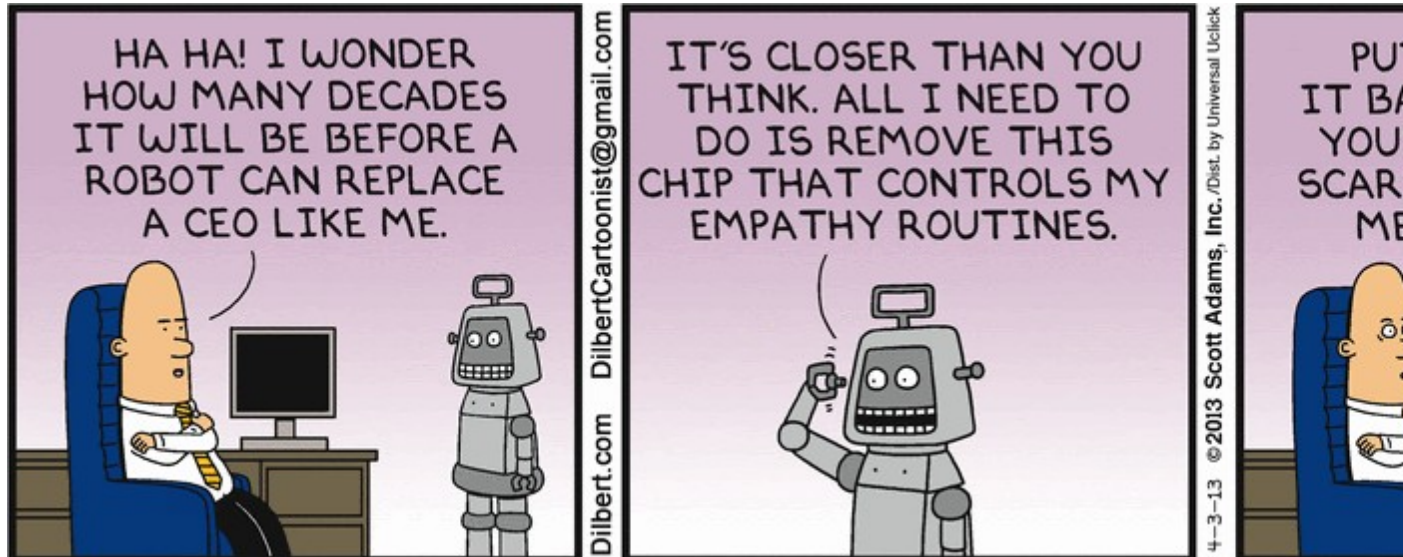


## All That Matters - Core Values – Empathy and Flexibility

We are in the business of solving problems. Half of the solution to any problem lies in our ability to understand the problem, and that requires empathy.

Empathy is our ability to perceive what others are feeling and going through. We all have the ability to empathize with others, but oftentimes our personal passions outweigh our other senses and we fail to see what others are going through. The points below serve as a tool to help us get past our own selves and start looking at the world from other perspectives.



## Be Inclusive

Use 'we' and 'us' more often. Assume that clients are part of your team and include them in your statements when in a discussion. If there is no us vs them, there is no conflict. Realize the fact that your success is dependent on the success of your team and your partners/customers. Your path to success lies in helping your team and customers succeed.

## Listen Without Interrupting

Letting other people finish what they are trying to say shows them that you care. Most of the time, when someone is passionately debating a point they will refuse to listen to you unless they have been fully heard. And listening to them solves half of the problem. Once the other party is done talking, always acknowledge that you have understood their point of view, and then present your arguments. Never say that they are wrong, present your point of view and let them see the merit.

## Give recognition when appropriate:

Do not be stringent with praise. Acknowledging other's efforts does not take something away from you. You will gain respect as a leader if you pass on the

credit to your team. Who would you rather work with? Someone who does most of the challenging work and takes the credit? OR someone who shares the workload with you and gives you all the credit?

## Ask for Opinion

During discussions, involve others by asking their opinion. When you ask for advice, you are including others in your decision. Even if you do not include their advice in your eventual decision, those who have provided feedback feel part of the process and will work towards helping you succeed.

## Do not multitask during Conversation

If you do not have time to pay attention in a discussion, excuse yourself. Focusing on your phone or laptop during a discussion means that you are not interested and this sends all sorts of wrong signals about your commitment.

## Ask for feedback and learn to receive feedback positively

We have worked with people who have a hard time taking criticism, these are the sort of individuals who rarely grow as they pile on years of work experience. Understand that constructive criticism is a gift and should be cherished, and learned from. Make it a habit to ask for feedback from the people you work closely with. This would give you insight into what others think about you and will help you fix behaviors that are detrimental to success.



## Encourage others and be supportive

Try to be aware of what's going on with other people's lives, encourage and support them in their time of need. A kind word and a little help go a long way in establishing bonds between people.

## **Show patience and express yourself calmly**

Be aware of your own feelings. Calm your nerves, and get rid of anger before you respond to someone. Negativity is more contagious than positivity. Rumi --- Raise your words, not voice. It is rain that grows flowers, not thunder.

## **Be more flexible when plans change**

When plans change and decisions are reevaluated, try to understand the reasons behind the changes. This would help you to accept the change and go with the flow. As a matter of fact, most of what we do is prepare for change. Change in requirements, change in plans, and change in scope. Embracing change is at the heart of Agile.

## **Identify your personal biases**

Everyone has biases and these influence our behavior. Identify your biases and determine which ones are irrational. You would be surprised to see how irrational some of your biases can be. And such biases prevent you from going beyond initial impressions. Irrational biases include biases towards genders, races, and religions. Get rid of all your irrational biases.