

EMPATHY ASSESSMENT REPORT



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Empathy is the ultimate form of customer insight

- Don Peppers -

Conceptualized & Designed by Centre of Strategic Mindset

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Introduction - What is Empathy?

The definition of empathy varies. Merriam-Webster dictionary defines Empathy as 'the action of understanding, being aware of; being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing others' feelings, thoughts and emotions, whether emanating from their past or present experiences'. To make it more concise, empathy implies an accurate understanding of someone else's perspectives and experiences. To be empathic would not only mean seeing others' perspectives (both intellectual and emotional) but also gaining an insight into the legitimacy of that perspective.

"It is important to note that, in most cases, an intellectual understanding is insufficient – to be empathic one must understand the emotional experience of that individual".

Empathy is not a soft nurturing value, but a hard commercial tool that every business needs as part of their DNA to stay relevant as well as significant.

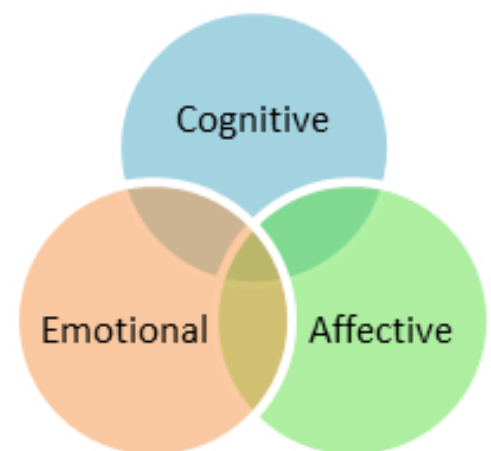
In Harvard Business Review (Parmar, 2015b), it is also stated that there is an obvious correlation between empathy and commercial success. Besides, businesses are far more profitable and productive when they act ethically, and treat their staff with respect, and communicate better with the customers. The fact that supports this statement is that the top 10 companies in the Global Empathy Index 2015, increased in value more than twice as much as the bottom 10, and generated 50% more earnings. The average earnings of the top 10 companies went up by 6% in 2015, while the average earnings of the bottom 10 companies, further dropped 9% (Dishman, 2015).

The past decade has seen a growing movement towards a view that postulates empathy as a multidimensional construct. Therefore, it is worthwhile for us to understand the construct and apply it in our lives.

Empathy Construct

We talk about empathy, most commonly as a single attribute. But a closer and deeper look at empathy reveals three guiding components and their inter- relationship, that influences human behaviours in a variety of situations. Each is important in its own way and their interoperability manifests in a variety of ways. The three components are as below :-

- **Cognitive Empathy** - the ability to understand another person's perspective;
- **Emotional Empathy** - the ability to feel what someone else feels;
- **Affective Empathy** - the ability to sense what another person needs from you



Background Research

Our tryst with empathy is two decades old. In our research on empathy, we have closely observed more than 5000 people and interviewed 500 plus leaders across industries and levels to arrive at 10 critical insights as under:-

1. Empathy is learnable through reflections and structured discipline.
2. There are stages that can be acquired, honed and mastered.
3. Each preceding stage is a precursor to understanding and learning the next stage.
4. In nutshell, it is a simple process of activating 'Stop-Start-Continue' discipline when it comes to understanding and manifesting empathetic behaviours.
5. Empathy is rooted in observation as well as non-judgement, almost simultaneously.
6. Empathy is about striking a balance between the inner world as well as the external or someone else's world, through a series of interactions between stimuli and responses.
7. Empathy is a muscle that develops with deliberate and disciplined exercises.
8. Empathy is not mere sympathy; it is rooted in concrete actions triggered by a 'moving experience'.
9. Empathy is critical to innovation, relevance and significance.
10. Empathy is severely under assault due to modern day distractions, temptations and an excessive focus on 'I - me - my' syndrome.

Key Questions that Influenced COSM's Research on Empathy

1. What is true empathy?
2. How does it differentiate itself from sympathy?
3. What behaviours exhibit themselves on the spectrum of Apathy, Sympathy and Empathy?
4. Why empathy can lead us to an 'Epiphany' (the moment of truth)?
5. Why empathy is such a misconstrued or misunderstood phenomena?
6. How come empathy is such a hard thing to develop?
7. Why empathy is often considered to be a misnomer when it comes to driving hard and aspirational results?
8. Why do we need to practice or lead with empathy?
9. How to develop empathy in a structured and conscious manner?
10. How to cultivate an Empathetic Mindset?

Empathy – An Instrument for Epiphany

We live in an interdependent world. Our thought process and actions impact others; and others' conduct impact us, favorably or adversely. If there is one thing that makes this interdependence work at its peak effectiveness, it is empathy. Empathy is core to '**Problem Discovery**' and is a critical imperative to be considered even before contemplating any resolution. It takes knowledge, understanding, personal experiences, a compassionate mindset and most importantly a rigorous discipline to be empathetic.



How do we balance our personal needs with others' requirements; forms the basis of **EMPATHY EQUATION** between two stakeholders or among multiple ones. And it is never a perfect or a stationary balance. It is an oscillating or shifting balance. As long as we are able to appreciate this reality, and are willing to make adjustments, we can succeed in keeping this balance intact, and the empathy equation in a desirable equilibrium.

Empathy Index – Fundamental Dimensions

Empathy Index is based on five fundamental dimensions. Each of these dimensions displays a distinctive and predictable pattern of relationships with definitive measures that provide a considerable evidence for a multidimensional approach to empathy.



RELATABILITY

Ability to relate to the emotions that people around us carry, and their state of mind, which drives their actions and behaviours. People are a product of their experiences that influence their beliefs, logics and frame of references. If we can pause to appreciate where others are coming from, we can adjust our approach, responses and hopefully influence our outcomes.



RESONANCE

Ability to feel something deeply and resonate with others' emotions and feelings, without judgement. The basic approach here is 'Appreciate First - Critique Later'. The core discipline to adhere here is, to gain entry into others' world with a sense of wonderment and curiosity; and not with prejudices. It is our capacity to resonate with another person in a manner, which is positive, affirming and empowering so that the rapport is established.



REFRAMING

Ability to come out and reframe our understanding that existed prior to experiencing others' world. The propensity here is to challenge and realign our assumptions as well as belief systems, in the light of contradicting information or thought-patterns manifested by others. This allows us to understand others' point of view, find opportunities to eliminate our assumptions and make new frames of references. Assumptions are the least form of knowledge, so reframing our understanding is critical.



REORIENTATION

Ability to adapt and calibrate our stance, position or approach with new or better understanding of the stakeholders and situations, to build rapport, create alignment and strike breakthroughs. This calls for agility, flexibility and capacity to reconsider or re-examine your actions as well as responses, based on others' thought process. It is our calibre to frame new belief systems or alter existing thoughts to navigate the relationship challenges and prime ourself to respond to other person's needs



REIMAGINATION

In the end, it is all about reimagining possibilities, visualizing prospects and neutralizing constraints, through better understanding, relatability, resonance, reframing and reorienting our approach. This is the level of empathy that is required for mutual win-win, co-creation; innovation and change. It is the prowess to skilfully design behaviours that are in resonance with own value system, yet respectful of others' belief systems, thus leading to affable responses.

Using the Report

The **Empathy Index** Report is designed to give you an insight into your **Empathy Quotient** along five empathy dimensions. Each dimension was subject to self-evaluation on eight survey items that capture the most conspicuous behaviours. Your responses have been indexed on a five point 'Frequency Scale' as under:-

1. Never
2. Rarely
3. Seldom
4. Often
5. Always

The purpose of the scale is not to test your awareness; whether you know or do not know a particular dimension, but to give you a chance to self-evaluate the frequency with which you bring these behaviours into a conscious realm of application.

Below graphic exhibits a visual depiction of how well, or inadequately, you have fared on five fundamental dimensions of Empathy Index. Your scores will broadly determine your ability to exercise empathy and gain a critical insight into others' world (customers and stakeholders) and the barriers that you will do well to overcome, through structured reflections and translating your insights into behaviours on ground.

Having a better understanding of our own empathetic quotient, enables us to reframe and realign our thought processes to meet the empathy needs of the users.

Hope you enjoy your report as much as we enjoyed creating it.

Overall Empathy index – Interpretation of Scores

OVERALL EMPATHY INDEX			
Graphic Scale			
Absolute Scores		160	
% Score		80%	

Please read following guidelines to make sense of your scores and devise your measures to enhance your empathy index.

You have got a score of 147/ 200 as a combined total of EMPATHIC INDEX.

Let us understand what this score means for

180-200 (90% to 100%) : Level 5 = You understand, embody, and exemplify empathy, exceptionally well. You have the wherewithal to 'role-model' empathy in your context and be a champion. Keep up the good work but be wary of the empathy fatigue and its potential overuse, by actively asking this question, "Is there something getting overlooked or ignored in the garb of empathy"?

140-179 (70% to 89%) : Level 4 = You often understand and demonstrate empathic concern at a cognitive as well as emotional level but will do well to enhance your effectiveness by identifying opportunities for real application.

100-139 (50% to 69%) : Level 3 = You show selective evidence of understanding and practising empathy, but your record is sporadic, and consistency is missing. Having understood the power of empathy, you will do well to increase your attempts of applying empathy and creating a positive lasting residue.

60-99 (30% to 49%) : Level 2 = There is little evidence to suggest that your tryst with empathy has begun, yet. It may be a good idea to explore, if there are any contradictions in your mind as regards the understanding as well as the potential of empathy, as an instrument of transformation and impact.

01-59 (0% to 30%) : Level 1 = Your scores suggest a huge gap in understanding empathy and a missing opportunity in appreciating its impact on the people that you lead or may lead in future, in a given context. The sooner you begin this journey, the better you will get at the game of leading.

Dimension Wise Interpretation

EMPATHY DIMENSIONS	NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLICATION	WELL MANIFESTED	CLEAR STRENGTH
RELATABILITY					
RESONANCE					
REFRAMING					
REORIENTATION					
REIMAGINATION					

NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLICATION	WELL MANIFESTED	CLEAR STRENGTH

1. RELATABILITY (ABILITY TO RELATE) - Appreciating where someone is coming from.....					
RATING					
NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLIATION	WELL-MANIFESTED	CLEAR STRENGTH	
(ND)	(EA)	(SA)	(WM)	(CS)	
BEHAVIOURAL INPUTS					
	ND	EA	SA	WM	CS
Is alert to others' feelings at a given point of time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prepare to calm the inner chatter for active listening.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Intuitively, senses someone's awkwardness and hesitation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is able to anticipate as to what is coming next.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picks those vibes when others have something to say or talk.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Capturing cues of dissonance or disapproval.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can sense intrusions even without any visible response.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Step into others' shoes and minds to gauge their frame of references.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Key Reflections

Key Actions

2. RESONANCE (ABILITY TO RESONATE) - Finding Common Ground.....					
RATING					
NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLIATION	WELL-MANIFESTED	CLEAR STRENGTH	
(ND)	(EA)	(SA)	(WM)	(CS)	
BEHAVIOURAL INPUTS					
	ND	EA	SA	WM	CS
Can park own views to appreciate others' problems and perspectives.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Understands what makes people upset.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Able to sense the elements of synergy as well as discord.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can pick up cues that progress the conversation forward.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Easily identifies and addresses potentially conflicting issues.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Compassionate to people's struggles at work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appreciation comes easier than critique	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>
Creates an environment for people to share, easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Key Reflections

Key Actions

3. REFRAMING (ABILITY TO REFRAME) - Challenging Own Assumptions & Reframe Self Understanding.....					
RATING					
NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLICATION	WELL- MANIFESTED	CLEAR STTRENGTH	
(ND)	(EA)	(SA)	(WM)	(CS)	
BEHAVIOURAL INPUTS					
	ND	EA	SA	WM	CS
Can easily change the initial position in the light of new insights.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Sees disagreements as opportunities to refine understanding.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Can entertain 'Why' and 'Why Not', to broaden perspectives.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Considers strong opinions as an opportunity to self-reflect and explore.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Tries to look at both sides of the question.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Tries to find the best way to address an issue.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Can park viewpoints for the sake of deeper discovery.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>
Prefers asking questions rather than relying on untested assumptions.	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>	<div></div>









































Key Reflections

Key Actions

4. REORIENT (ABILITY TO REORIENT) - Recalibrating Own Approach.....					
RATING					
NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLICATION	WELL-MANIFESTED	CLEAR STRENGTH	
(ND)	(EA)	(SA)	(WM)	(CS)	
BEHAVIOURAL INPUTS					
	ND	EA	SA	WM	CS
Does not dwell too long when initial ideas are challenged or rejected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Excited about new inputs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sees contradictions as opportunities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is able to challenge own viewpoints in a discussion.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recalibrating own response is easy.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sees opposing ideas in creative tension, as means to greater customer centricity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
considers success in reorienting everything around customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Easily leaves current approach if it is not yielding positive results.	<input type="radio"/>	<input checked="" type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Key Reflections

Key Actions

5. REIMAGINATION (ABILITY TO REIMAGINE) - Reimagining Possibilities and 'End' Outcomes					
RATING					
NOT DEMONSTRATED	EARLY AWARENESS	SELECTIVE APPLIATION	WELL-MANIFESTED	CLEAR STTRENGTH	
(ND)	(EA)	(SA)	(WM)	(CS)	
BEHAVIOURAL INPUTS					
	ND	EA	SA	WM	CS
Begins with an end in mind and figures that out with the stakeholders.					
Is able to re-look different points of view and alters the End Picture.					
Playbacks understanding to stakeholders and gives them a sense of validation.					
Approaches a problem with a view to create a winning proposition.					
Scrapes an entire solution design if it does not fit with client's needs.					
Observes customers and users intimately to spot unmet/unexpressed needs.					
Practises structured reflections over own observations to re-imagine outcomes.					
Actively prototypes to challenge assumptions to come up with an aspirational design.					

Key Reflections

Key Actions

Developmental Guidelines

With regards to specific dimensions of Empathy, a score which is aligned with no demonstration, early awareness and selective application is low.

YOU may want you to practice some of the behaviors recommended below:



RELATABILITY

What does a low score on this dimension really mean?

- Your ability to find similar thought patterns with other people is relatively low.
- You find it difficult to understand others' point of view.
- You find it difficult to relate to others' emotional expressions.

What can you do to enhance your effectiveness on this dimension?

- Suspend Judgement.
- Appreciate where others are coming from.
- Make a conscious effort to find common interests.



RESONANCE

What does a low score on this dimension really mean?

- You have to have the last word at any cost.
- People's pains are their own, you are not bothered by them.
- People do not share their opinions and thoughts with you.

What can you do to enhance your effectiveness on this dimension?

- Be fully present and observant in conversations.
- Make an effort to park your own views to listen to others' views.
- Ensure to acknowledge others' pain points through words and appropriate body language.



REFRAMING

What does a low score on this dimension really mean?

- You find it difficult to entertain two different points of view.
- You would rather ask a few questions and get into the solution mode.
- You try to avoid conflicts arising out of difference of opinion.

What can you do to enhance your effectiveness on this dimension?

- There is an opportunity for you to entertain multiple perspectives.
- Make an active effort to resolve conflicts in your own mind first before dealing with the stakeholders.
- Seek to understand, before being understood.

Empathy index – Interpretation of Individual Dimension Scores



REORIENTATION

What does a low score on this dimension really mean?

- You would rather do things the way you want even if it is not yielding results.
- You get tensed up if you have to entertain conflicting thoughts.
- It is difficult for you to challenge your assumptions and change your beliefs.

What can you do to enhance your effectiveness on this dimension?

- You need to recalibrate your responses if they do not land well with customers.
- There is a need to temporarily suspend your beliefs to understand customer's beliefs.
- Evaluate your current approach in the light of results/outcomes.



REIMAGINATION

What does a low score on this dimension really mean?

- Your outlook towards problem solving is short-term.
- It is difficult for you to visualise what the end picture would look like.
- Multiple iterations for you is a waste of time and resources, as it may not fit customer's needs.

What can you do to enhance your effectiveness on this dimension?

- Structured reflections over own observations from customer's standpoints will help you form a holistic perspective.
- Visualising the end product and how it will serve the customer will be useful to suspend own assumptions.
- Do not get wedded to your own ideas and constructs.

A group of people, mostly young adults, are holding a large white rectangular sign. The sign is the central focus of the image. The people are wearing casual clothing like jeans and hoodies. The background is slightly blurred, suggesting an outdoor or semi-outdoor setting.

Empathy is

*Seeing with the eyes of others
Listening with the ears of others
Feeling with the heart of others*

It is about Others and not about You