LESSON SUBJECT (21st Century Skill, Lesson Number: Topic)

Empathy, Lesson 1: Listening & Mirroring

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ACADEMIC LEARNING GOALS (OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES) FOR THIS LESSON:
(What learners should know or be able to do as a result of the lesson.)

The four primary attributes of Empathy covered in Lesson 1 & Lesson 2 are listed. This lesson will primarily provide an overview of attributes 1 & 2:

1. **Knows the difference between empathy (putting yourself in someone else’s shoes) versus sympathy (feeling sorry for/ understanding what someone is going through) and knows when to use one approach or the other.**

2. **Connects with others by being a good listener, asking questions to help understand what the other person is feeling, being honest, and mirroring positive nonverbal communication to build trust.**

3. **Develops good relationships with people from different backgrounds and cultures by showing they are respected and valued.**

4. **When working with clients or customers, makes decisions based on client or customer needs and points of view, and asks how satisfied they are with the outcome.**

CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS UTILIZED IN THIS LESSON:
(What elements of the lesson allow learners to utilize critical thinking techniques.)

- Using facilitation strategies in addition to instruction will encourage learner participation and opportunities to exercise critical thinking.

- In this lesson, the facilitation strategies are group discussion, paired listening, and a personal assessment.

- Think of the 80-20 rule. 80% of this lesson is ready for use, 20% can be enhanced by interactive activities and examples you come up with as an instructor. After using this lesson, you can provide your feedback and enhancements through the [www.newworldofwork.org](http://www.newworldofwork.org) website.
MEDIA, HANDOUTS, OR EXTRA MATERIALS: (What media is used in addition to lesson plan.)

The skills lessons have been designed to go along with the New World of Work/CreatorUp video content. All the Lesson 1’s can incorporate the “What Not to Do” videos and all Lesson 2’s can utilize the 21st Century Skills Video Assessments. These videos can also assist in hybrid/online courses. Gauge student interest in the videos and play throughout the course as needed.

**This lesson uses:**

New World of Work’s Empathy “What Not to Do” Video:
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey4dEjETGZw&t=7s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey4dEjETGZw&t=7s)

Nova’s Mirror Neurons Video:
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmx1qPyo8Ks](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmx1qPyo8Ks)

Empathy Self-Assessment:
[psychology-tools.com/empathy-quotient/](https://psychology-tools.com/empathy-quotient/)

INSTRUCTION: (List of reproducible steps for the lesson.)

**Instructor Notes (General):**

To allow for greater flexibility of delivery, lessons can be shortened to fit into a 45min class period. They can be expanded, with more time for facilitated activities and examples, up to a 90min session.

PPT presentation slides have been kept basic to avoid copyright infringement on images hosted open source. Feel free to add your own images when presenting the slides to your learners.

**Instructor Notes (Lesson-Specific):**

If you are covering the skills in a series, Empathy lessons can be preceded by the Communication and Collaboration lessons because the concept of empathy builds on the concepts of nonverbal communication and how we interact with one another. In addition, the Empathy lessons can be followed by Analysis/Solution Mindset, which expands the concept of how empathy and attentive listening can be used in problem solving and design thinking.

Notes from the lesson plan have been included in the PPT slides, if viewed in presenter mode.
1. **PPT Slides 1 & 2:** Introduce the skill set of Empathy, and review the primary attributes that make up the skill. Let students know this lesson will primarily focus on attribute 1 & 2.

2. **PPT Slide 3:** Review the definition of **Empathy** vs. **Sympathy**

   Have students come up with examples of sympathy versus empathy, or you can give them prompts like: “If you have never had a parent pass away but your friend’s father just died, would you express your empathy or sympathy to your friend?” Follow up with a question such as: “What are some ideas for building your empathy skills if you haven’t experienced exactly what another person has gone through?” Let them know you will be learning about two of these skills today: mirroring and attentive listening.

3. **PPT Side 4:** Make the point that empathy is not just for personal interactions, but is necessary for professional interactions as well.

4. **PPT Side 5:** Play the **Nova Mirror Neurons** video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmx1gPyo8Ks](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xmx1gPyo8Ks)

   The Nova video is almost 14 minutes long, but it provides a very good overview of the neurological basis of mirroring and how mirroring allows us to connect with others through empathy. It also provides a theory for differences in the “mirror” neurons and ability of individuals with Autism to understand the indicators of emotion (facial expressions, body movements) in others.

5. **PPT Side 6:** Remind student that because mirroring is subtle, it can be a good way for introverts to connect with others without always having to focus on verbal communication.

6. **PPT Slide 7:** Empathy is a core skill required in the Gig Economy. Make a point of indicating that for some individuals who are on the autism spectrum, mirroring and reading facial expressions/body language gestures can be a challenge. Don’t discount others who have challenges with mirroring, as they can be valuable members of a work team, especially when they are given projects that play to their other strengths.

7. **PPT Slide 8:** Review how to mirror. Remind students just as with all skills, they should be aware of the benefits of practice. A good tip is to watch a scene in a movie you know well. Notice the facial expressions and body language of the characters to reinforce an understanding of what emotions the actors are expressing. Another good approach is to watch a foreign film with the subtitles turned off. Try and determine what the actors are saying and what emotions they are conveying. Then watch the same scene with the subtitles on to see how accurate your observations were.

8. **PPT Slide 9:** Play the **Empathy “What Not To Do”** video: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey4dEjETGZw&t=7s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ey4dEjETGZw&t=7s)

    After playing the video, ask students to comment on Peter’s mirroring. “Did he indicate through his nonverbal communication that he was engaged in the conversation or cared about the feelings of his co-worker?” “How could he have improved his mirroring?” Then expand the conversation to his listening skills. “Did he display that he was listening attentively?”
9. **PPT Slide 10:** Review the points on the slide, then ask students: “Why is attentive listening important on a work team?” and “Why it is important to use when you are working with clients or customers?”

10. **PPT Slide 11:** Have students do the pair-share attentive listening activity. There can be more than two people if the class has uneven numbers. You can call out the time to switch partners to make sure each has the same amount of time to talk.

11. **PPT Slide 12: Empathy Self-Assessment can be accessed at:**
    
    [psychology-tools.com/empathy-quotient/](http://psychology-tools.com/empathy-quotient/)

    Depending on the time in class, this can be completed as an outside of class assignment, and/or through an online assignment where students have to complete a discussion thread after getting their results.

    Ask: “Were you surprised by your results, why or why not?” “Would you like to further develop your empathy, and if so, how do you plan to do this?”

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*See next page for Class Closure ➔*
LinkedIn and New World of Work have partnered to provide suggested next steps after each of NWoW’s 21st Century Skills lessons. Learners can go through self-paced, online video courses through LinkedIn Learning’s Lynda.com platform to build on their knowledge and application of employability skills. This can be done within the class, assigned as homework, and/or hosted online if you are incorporating a hybrid format. Learners earn certificates of completion, which can be showcased on their LinkedIn profiles along with digital badges and skills verifications.

Go to: [www.linkedin.com/learning](http://www.linkedin.com/learning)

**Suggested Courses and Videos for Empathy at the Postsecondary Education Level**

- Building Trust: [www.linkedin.com/learning/building-trust](http://www.linkedin.com/learning/building-trust)
- Being a Good Mentor: [www.linkedin.com/learning/being-a-good-mentor](http://www.linkedin.com/learning/being-a-good-mentor)

- How to empathize: [www.linkedin.com/learning/developing-your-emotional-intelligence/how-to-empathize](http://www.linkedin.com/learning/developing-your-emotional-intelligence/how-to-empathize)
- Building professional relationships: [www.linkedin.com/learning/turning-an-internship-into-a-job/building-professional-relationships](http://www.linkedin.com/learning/turning-an-internship-into-a-job/building-professional-relationships)
- Focusing on customer needs: [www.linkedin.com/learning/customer-service-foundations/focusing-on-customer-needs](http://www.linkedin.com/learning/customer-service-foundations/focusing-on-customer-needs)

*Videos are hyperlinked and can also be accessed through the NWoW-LinkedIn Crosswalk*