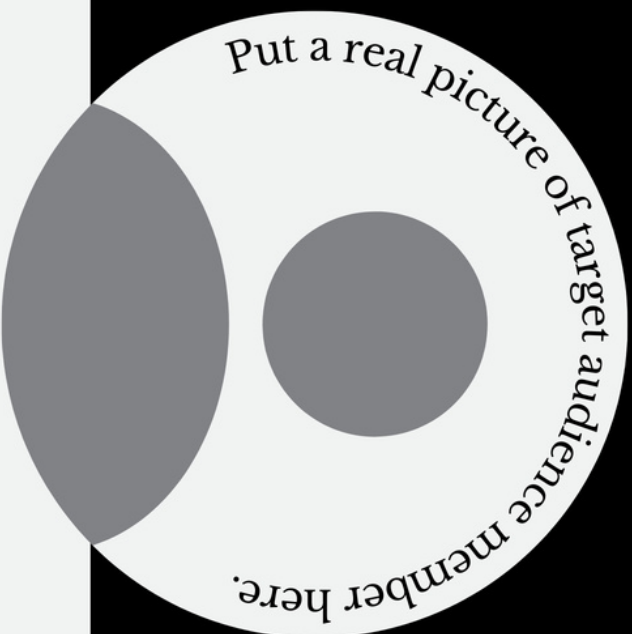


Target Audience Empathy Map



THEIR NAME

AGE:

LOCATION:

JOB:

THINK

FEEL

SEE

DO

EMPATHY EXERCISES

Physical Reality Immersion

One way to grow in your ability to empathize is to practice perspective-taking. Experience an element of your audience's physical or emotional reality before crafting your message. Example: When I worked with an infant supply company, we talked about the physical reality caregivers face in the early days at home with a newborn: daily life tasks suddenly must be performed one-handed, because the caregiver is constantly clutching the infant with their non-dominant hand. I encouraged the company's team members to keep one hand behind their back while they tested product prototypes.

The Empathetic Devil's Advocate

Before finalizing any communication plan, have someone role-play your audience's potential objections or perspectives. Example: "As the operations team, we'd worry that this marketing initiative would create fulfillment challenges during our busiest season."

The Empathy Minute

Before every meeting or call, take sixty seconds to consider:

- What might this person need right now?
- What's their likely state of mind?
- What would make this interaction valuable for them?

The Perspective Journal

Each week, write about a work situation from someone else's viewpoint. Include their likely thoughts, feelings, constraints, and priorities.

The Assumption Challenge

Identify one assumption you're making about someone else's perspective, then test it with an open question. Example: Instead of assuming your teammate is procrastinating, ask: "I notice the report is taking longer than expected. Is there something about this project that's particularly challenging?"

Active Listening in Real Time

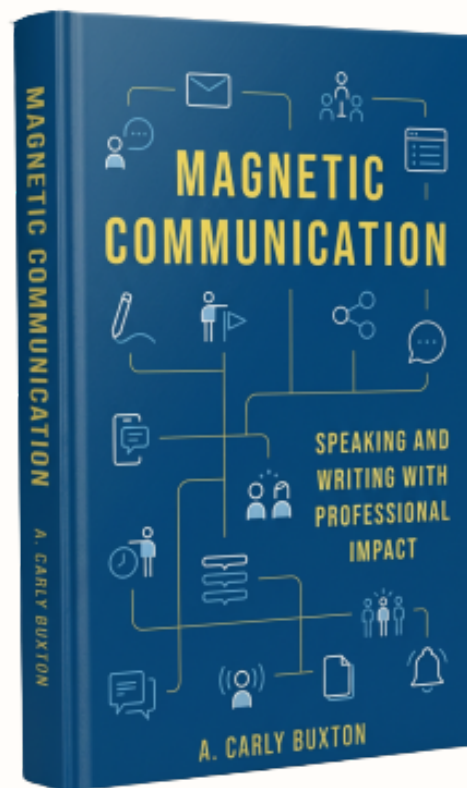
Perhaps the best practice to grow in empathy is to improve the way you listen actively in conversations:

1. Focus fully: No multitasking, no planning your response while they're speaking
2. Seek understanding: Ask clarifying questions that deepen insight
3. Reflect what you hear: "What I'm hearing is..." to confirm understanding
4. Validate emotions: Acknowledge feelings without judgment
5. Pause before responding: Give yourself time to process fully
6. Watch their faces: Notice micro-expressions during conversations
7. Track energy shifts: Pay attention to changes in voice, posture, or engagement
8. Note language patterns: Listen for emotional words and intensity
9. Confirm rather than assume: "You seem concerned about this approach. Am I right about that?"

Keep it Magnetic

This resource is free to use and share with attribution. It is drawn from the research and frameworks in *Magnetic Communication: Speaking and Writing with Professional Impact* (Bloomsbury Academic, 2027) by A. Carly Buxton, PhD.

carlybuxton.com/magnetic



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