

Leadership Bites: Personal Impact

LEADERSHIP LEARNING IN 20 MINUTES

NHS

Leadership Academy

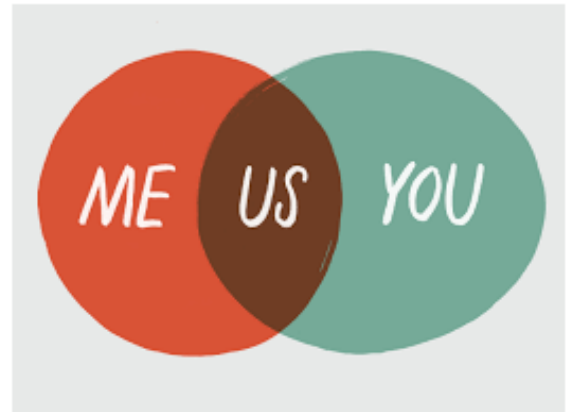
South East

Introduction

How do I come across? 'How do I affect you?' What impact do I have?' are not questions we tend to ask ourselves or each other on a daily basis. We do however pick up a sense of when people are responding to us better than others; how often do we stop to question why?

There are 3 perspectives to every interaction and relationship; what you bring to the table, what the other person brings to the table, and how you can bring those elements together to support each other.

For us to be able to get anywhere at all with understanding the impact we have on others, it is essential that we first know as much as we can about ourselves.



Self-Awareness

Self-awareness is the ability to see ourselves with our own eyes; understanding what is important to you, how you experience things, what you want or feel, and how you come across to others. Without knowing who you are, self-acceptance and change become impossible.

One way of looking at it is that awareness is the first step in the creation process. As you grow in self-awareness; you will better understand why you feel what you feel and why you behave as you do. Those that demonstrate self-awareness understand how their own feelings impact on their performance, giving the opportunity to change their mindset and behaviours.

Several factors can influence your behaviour at any time. Each of us experiences the world in a different way to others, based on our experiences, beliefs and values. This means that each of us will have our own unique view of the world and often these views may differ dramatically to those of the people you work with - which cause the difficulties.



Look at the image to the right; both people are correct, they just have a different perspective.

Personal Brand

Ask yourself this: 'what do people say about me when I leave the room?'

Whatever words have just popped into your head, that's your personal brand. Is it what you want it to be? Were you able to answer it?

Seeking feedback is the only real way of knowing the impression you leave. Bear in mind, that if you ask for feedback you need to be receptive; if you are defensive about feedback, that will also contribute to how people perceive you. Seek to understand before being understood.

We form a first impression in approximately 7 seconds, so it's important for long term working relationships that we set the tone we want to when we first meet somebody new. It's possible to change personal brand through development but it's important to be authentic and true to yourself.

Take a look at the words below and pull out 3 or 4 that resonate the most with your values, personality and style:

Honesty	Empathy	Fun	Caring	Classic	Outspoken
Community	Humility	Selflessness	High Energy	Sharp	Respect
Independence	Authenticity	Positive	Polite	Tailored	Straightforward
Trust	Consistency	Serious	Dynamic	Natural	Storyteller
Integrity	Faith	Reserved	Persistent	Polished	Low key
Responsibility	Pride	Self-assured	Resilient	Larger than life	Unconventional
Loyalty	Open-minded	Calm	Composed	Colourful	Healthy
Self belief	Obedience	Dependable	Driven	Open	Bright
Acceptance	Harmony	Laid back	Sincere	Articulate	Energetic
Caring	Commitment	Reflective	Inspirational	Down to earth	Quirky
Freedom	Duty	Inclusive	Spontaneous	Conservative	Subdued
Gratitude	Trustworthiness	Assertive	Adventurous	Dynamic	Bold
Dignity	Charity	Bold	Sincere	Fast	Dramatic
Courtesy	Modesty	Diligent	Open book	Soft	To the point
Fairness	Justice	Diplomatic	Bubbly	Distinct	Down to earth
Compassion	Philanthropy	Steady	Composed	Uniform	Understated
Equality		Independent	Firm		

Now think about what's important to you, your style of working and leading; pick 2 or 3 of the following words or phrases that are most like you:

Do my best for myself	Always delivers on time	Lateral Thinking
Do better than others	Tells it like it is	Plate spinning
Earn a high salary	Thinks outside the box	Creating order from chaos
Do the right thing	Finds an answer no matter what	Leading from the front
Be myself at all times	Keeps the team together	Keeping going when others give up
Make a difference to others	Spots the opportunities	Create harmony in a team
Tell the truth at all times	Trusted by all	Revolutionary Ideas
Nurture others potential	Puts others first	Ask 'how' not just 'what'
Security for my family	Loyal to the company	Quick witted
Never stop learning	Brings something new to the table	Calm in a crisis
Freedom to make my own decisions	Worth listening to	Communicating complexity
Put others first	Engaging communicator	Creating top teams
Work hard play hard	Sees all sides of the story	Engendering loyalty
Challenge the norm	Calm under pressure	Minutely detailed
Leave a legacy for others	Independent thinker	Evaluating options
Become the go to person	Delivers on the bottom line	Delegation
Find the positive in every situation	Makes complex things simple	Overcoming opposition
Don't settle for second best	Respectful of others' views	Quickly building rapport

Once you've done this you can formulate a personal brand statement which details your values, contribution and style.

Personal brand statements draw on an individual's strengths and are a great barometer with which to cross-reference feedback and bolster you when you're embarking on a challenging experience or going through times of change.

When putting together your personal brand statement use the words and phrases you've already captured to form a few sentences that explain who you are and how you contribute. Consider the following points to help shape it:

- *My key personality traits*
- *How I want people to experience me (my engagement style)*
- *My role and what I bring to the work I do*
- *Expectations I have for new relationships*
- *What energises and motivates me*
- *What others can rely on me for*

Behaviour

Our behaviour is the action that others see; it's how we communicate our feelings and emotions towards a situation. The behaviour that others see in us is what forms their perception of us; it's what they say about us when we leave the room.

Think of a time when you've felt nervous or anxious, whether you were about to meet a stakeholder for the first time, present in front of an audience, or take on a new task. It's natural that you'll have felt apprehensive, perhaps lacked confidence and maybe didn't know where to start.

On the outside, what do you think people would have seen? Perhaps you were visibly anxious, maybe very quiet and reserved?

How is your behaviour impacting your personal brand?

Behaviour is simply the action that is visible based on internal events.

Below the surface are our beliefs, fears, internal dialogue and self-esteem, and the behaviour we show is a reflection of what we're feeling underneath.

For example, if you're fearful of public speaking then you're likely to appear nervous in your body language which will reinforce the belief that you dislike it. So, how can you make the experience more positive and make your energy more resourceful?



The key is in your internal dialogue. If you can acknowledge what you tell yourself when faced with a new or difficult situation, then you can start to challenge your opinion of it to adopt a more proactive and resourceful mindset.

Let's take the public speaking example; if you spot yourself internally saying 'I can't do this, I'm terrible at speaking publicly, everyone will judge me' then you can challenge your view with questions like 'What evidence do I have that says I'm terrible?', 'I obviously can do it because I've done it before' or 'People may judge me but I've never asked for feedback so if I do this and get the feedback, I'll know what they really think and how I can improve'.

The main point to remember when it comes to your behaviour is that you have the capacity to choose it, it's all a case of adopting the right mindset to the appropriate situation.

Behaviour determines impact and, as a result, the relationship you have with others. So, preparing yourself to have the right mindset will help you in having the impact you desire.

Look at the following situations – do you recognise yourself in any of them?

- How do you react when certain people approach you? Angry? Difficult?
- What about if you're asked to do something over and above your usual job role?
- Do you give excuses why you can't help?
- How do you respond to criticism? Do you become defensive or try to point score?
- Do you have a permanently negative outlook?
- Do you say what you think, regardless of the circumstances?

By doing the opposite of the above, you can go a long way to creating effective working relationships.

Give it a go...

You've started to enhance your self-awareness by thinking about how your behaviour contributes to your personal impact on colleagues.

Take some time to consider the following points:

- *What behaviours are you going to choose to display?*
- *What changes can you make to raise your awareness?*
- *What can you ask others to provide you with?*
- *When can you start to put these in place?*

Remember, you *can't* change others, but you have the power to change the way you think and approach them! Differences are bound to occur and can be resolved if conflict is managed in a polite manner.

You can't love everyone, but you can be kind to everyone.

Further learning ...

For further information and learning, as well as suggested activities, feel free to visit the People.NHS.uk website or our [South East Leadership Academy site](#).



Time to reflect...

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Take some time to note down your thoughts on what you've learned;

What resonated?

What has made you curious?

What small changes could you make to start having an impact differently and quickly?

What might you need to share with your team, and commit to 'testing and learning' together?

