

LEADERS & EMPLOYEES: Habits of Mind Explanation

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|  <p>Thinking About Your Thinking (Metacognition) <i>Know your Knowing!</i> Being aware of your own thoughts, strategies, feelings and actions and their effects on others.</p> |  <p>Persisting <i>Stick to it!</i> Persevering with a task through to completion; remaining focused; searching for ways to reach your goal when stuck. Not giving up.</p> |  <p>Managing Impulsivity <i>Take your time!</i> Thinking before acting; remaining calm, thoughtful and deliberate.</p> |  <p>Striving for Accuracy <i>Check it again!</i> Doing your best. Setting high standards. Fact checking and finding ways to improve.</p> |
|  <p>Listening with Understanding and Empathy <i>Understand others!</i> Devoting mental energy to another person's thoughts and ideas. Making an effort to perceive another's point of view and emotions.</p> |  <p>Thinking Flexibly <i>Look at it another way!</i> Being able to change perspectives; generating alternatives; considering options.</p> |  <p>Questioning and Posing Problems <i>How do you know?</i> Having a questioning attitude; knowing what data are needed & developing questioning strategies to produce those data. Finding problems to solve.</p> |  <p>Thinking Interdependently <i>Work together!</i> Working with and learning from others in reciprocal situations. Teamwork.</p> |
|  <p>Thinking & Communicating with Clarity and Precision <i>Be clear!</i> Striving for accurate communication in both written and oral form; avoiding over-generalizations, distortions, deletions and exaggerations.</p> |  <p>Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations <i>Use what you learn!</i> Accessing prior knowledge; transferring knowledge beyond the situation in which it was learned.</p> |  <p>Gathering Data Through All Senses <i>Use your natural pathways!</i> Paying attention to the world around you. Gathering data through all the senses: Sight, Sound, Smell, Taste, and Touch.</p> |  <p>Creating, Imagining, and Innovating <i>Try a different or new way!</i> Generating possibilities; playing with new ideas.</p> |
|  <p>Taking Responsible Risks <i>Venture out!</i> Being adventuresome; living on the edge of your competence.</p> |  <p>Finding Humor <i>Laugh a little!</i> Finding the whimsical, incongruous and unexpected. Being able to laugh at one's self.</p> |  <p>Responding with Wonderment and Awe <i>Become intrigued!</i> Finding the world awesome, mysterious and being intrigued with phenomena and beauty.</p> |  <p>Remaining Open to Continuous Learning <i>Learn throughout your lifetime!</i> Having humility and admitting when you don't know and are curious to find out. Resisting complacency.</p> |

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Each day businesses around the world interact with customers and clients. Whether you are a restaurant owner, soccer coach, karate instructor, police officer, or cashier - your interaction with the public is critical to your success. Realizing success is understanding that in life, we are wrong more often than we are right. As leaders, it is important to view growth as a way of thinking flexibly, and with creativity, especially when faced with problems and situations that elicit self-doubt. Habits of Mind provide the framework for developing dispositions for leaders to use when confronted with problems and situations in which the answer is not immediately apparent. Leaders and employees who draw upon and model these dispositions when working with customers and clients prioritize successful behaviors.



Thinking About Your Thinking (Metacognition)



Effective leaders and employees — no matter what type of role they serve in their place of employment — are attentive to their actions and behaviors. Metacognition is what goes on inside your head when you are thinking about something. It is being aware of your thinking while you are in the middle of planning, interacting, and producing. It is something we all do, even if we are not consciously aware it is happening. When developing metacognition in your daily work, thoughtful leaders and employees plan, rehearse and evaluate their own strategies and actions.

Leaders and employees could practice metacognition by using strategies, such as:

- ***Planning ahead on how to best approach a variety of “unexpected” situations.*** Consider typical scenarios in your line of work to simulate possible responses to unfortunate customer experiences.
- ***Creating a plan of action for an upcoming event, meeting, or day of work.*** Mentally and physically prepare before providing services to customers.
- ***Planning for a sensitive conversation with an employee.*** Mentally rehearsing what is your goal, what you are going to say, and what you will search for in your employee’s reaction.

Here is an example where metacognition may come into play:

Party planners need to be forward thinkers. It is more about the work being done ahead of time rather than in the moment. Writing notes, self-questioning ideas, designing party themes, and sticking to a schedule are just some of the integral actions a planner needs to metacognitively consider.



Persisting

Persisting in the workplace requires the ability to enable someone to overcome adversity and challenges in the workplace. When faced with uncertain situations, resilient leaders and employees figure out ways to push forward and complete daily goals. Although times may get frustrating and complicated, they strengthen their ability to stay focused on what is most important on behalf of the quality of the work and the needs of the client or customer. It is about making conscious decisions to push forward to produce successful results. Whether working with customers or co-workers it is important to stick with it until the job is completed.

Leaders and employees could practice persisting with strategies such as:

- ***Eliminating distractions that may prevent job success.*** Figuring out the best approach for you to be your most productive self.
- ***Overcoming roadblocks by connecting with your inner dialogue.*** Refuse to let self-doubt take over your mindset and attitude toward meeting a goal.

Here is an example where a strategy for persisting may come into play:

Marketing managers are responsible for developing marketing plans for attracting customers to a product. They often work with a group and can get caught up in listening to so many different ideas that they have a hard time bringing the job to closure. They need to stick with finding the best idea. Instead of feeling frustrated, they need to keep their inner dialogue positive and energetic so that they can lead the group to a good conclusion.



Managing Impulsivity

The workplace can trigger a cascade of demands, urgent matters that need tending to, and at times a constant feeling of tension. This may lead to impulsive behavior where one's decisions could lead to serious consequences. Instead of responding from an emotional state, it is the ability for one to “put the brakes on” while considering alternative avenues of actions and thinking in order to make the most effective decision. Efficacious leaders and employees become more deliberate in their thinking.

Leaders and employees could practice managing impulsivity with strategies such as:

- ***Withholding immediate value judgments*** before fully understanding an idea. Try counting to 10 before responding.
- ***Seeking assistance and input from others.*** Sometimes others may have had experience with similar problems or can see a different array of solutions.
- ***Finding a safe space*** for themselves where they can breathe, think clearly, be alone, and get calm.
- ***Making strategies visible*** so that the group recognizes how the leader manages his capacity to wait and think before responding.

Here is an example where a strategy for managing impulsivity may come into play:

A frustrated restaurant manager where employees are looking at their cell phones rather than paying attention to what is happening with their customers. Rather than just reprimand the employees with anger during a pre-service meeting, the manager calls attention by labeling this inattention to customers as impulsive and distracting behaviors. The manager can ask, “What are some ways that are helpful to manage impulsive behavior?” One employee suggests collecting cell phones and locking them in the restaurant safe before each shift. Another suggests putting their phones on vibrate and turning the “do not disturb” feature on. The manager asks for each to make a commitment to learn how this works and will report out at a meeting next week. Do you want your employees to think first and control their own behavior rather than giving up their cell phone?



Striving for Accuracy

In order to meet goals and success, all leaders and employees must value accuracy, precision, and craftsmanship. The use of technology has changed our workplaces. We now have access to an incredible amount of data that can, if used skillfully, help us with problem-solving and productivity. However, the data is only as good as the way we analyze and evaluate its meaning. As leaders we need to encourage employees to check their work, find ways to improve, and do their best in whatever task they take on. Productive leaders and employees take pride in reviewing each others' work in the workplace. Striving for accuracy does not mean that we must always be perfect. Rather, it means that we value the aspiration to always commit to our highest level of performance in a given situation. It is being intentional with the work we produce and the high standards we set for ourselves.

Leaders and employees could practice striving for accuracy with strategies such as:

- **Stepping away to take a break.....then returning with a fresh mind.** When you come back with a fresh mind, you allow yourself to take a closer look at what you can improve or fix.
- **Asking for an extra set of eyes.** Find a colleague to check your work according to the guidelines.
- **Creating a checklist for yourself.** Develop a list of steps that you need to complete in order to reach success with a certain project or assignment.
- **Finding your ideal work time and space.** Ask yourself these questions when striving for accuracy: *What time of day - morning, afternoon, or night - am I the most focused? Where do I work best for success?*
- **Search for examples of what accuracy looks like.** Sometimes a model or example can lend a helping hand in what you are trying to perfect.

Here is an example of a strategy in which striving for accuracy may come into play:

An auto mechanic is trying to figure out why the engine coolant light reappeared on a car he had just repaired a few days ago. He ran the computer diagnostics again and the repair held, but the light was still on. Then he considered whether the seal on the cap was loose — it was. The computer diagnostics checklist combined with the experience the mechanic had in similar repairs helped solve the problem for the car and the customer. This is striving for accuracy because you continue working until you bring your highest level of expertise to solve the problem. As a leader, you always try to model this behavior and expect the same from your employees.



Listening with Understanding and Empathy



Good communication skills are essential to every business. Sometimes we forget that the most effective side of communication starts with good listening, taking into consideration the importance of not being judgmental. Productive leaders and employees develop an ability to listen intently to others, empathize with, and understand their point of view. They monitor their own thoughts while simultaneously paying close attention to what is being said by others. They observe what might be beneath the words and pay attention to the speaker's emotions so that they get a clearer picture of what is being conveyed. This leadership trait is a necessary skill to build relationships and invest in others' thoughts and feelings.

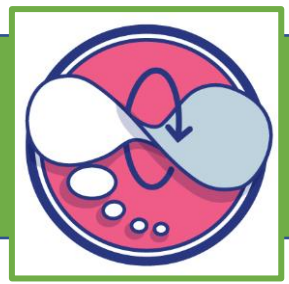
Leaders and employees could practice listening with understanding and empathy with strategies such as:

- **Block out all distractors when in conversation.** When in a conversation tell yourself that the only focus should be listening and understanding what someone is telling you.
- **Identify indicators of feelings or emotions from the communicator.** Pay attention to verbal and body language of the speaker. Often you can gain a sense of the emotions behind their words to cue a response at that moment.
- **Show your investment in their words by paraphrasing.** When you say back what you heard in your own words, you show that you understand and value what the other person is saying.
- **Build upon what was said.** Provide examples and ask clarifying questions to show you value others' contributions.
- **Withhold your own thoughts, judgments, and opinions.** Listen first to understand what the other person is saying before offering your own thinking.

Here is an example of a strategy in which listening with understanding and empathy may come into play:

As a salesperson, it is essential to be certain that you are really understanding what the person is asking for before you jump in and start giving answers that your product(s) can help with. Leaders train their employees to learn how to discover what the real problem presented is so that the company's product can resolve a pain point for the customer. This often requires an empathic ear--"I hear how frustrating that must be..." as well as an understanding ear--"I think I understand your situation. Let me just say back to you what I think you are describing..." starting a response with "I" shifts the focus from the person back to the listener. Keep the focus on the person by starting with you. For example, "What you're suggesting is....." or ".....that surely is a frustrating experience."

Thinking Flexibly



Thinking flexibly is part attitude - our openness to new ideas - and part action of knowing how and when to expand our horizons and use new ideas and information. In many instances, we consider ourselves stuck rather than asking ourselves “is there another way that I can solve this problem?” Considering viable alternatives is central to problem-solving and can encourage creativity and novel thinking.

Leaders and employees could practice thinking flexibly with strategies such as:

- ***Seek out alternative action plans.*** Often carefully made plans go awry. Adjust to what is not working by considering what else might work in this situation. It can be advantageous to create a backup plan so that you can take quick action when it is needed.
- ***Calm, Think, Act (CTA) Approach.*** The CTA approach is a method for figuring out an alternative action when a plan is not working. Calm (relax your mind and body in order to be effective in your thinking), Think (ponder some possibilities that could fix this situation), Act (go ahead and put the process into play).
- ***Create a personal “flexibility” operator manual.*** This manual offers strategies and tools as options for what to consider when developing new work routines.
- ***Ask questions from the customers or employees.*** It is always helpful to understand others’ points of view.

Here is an example of a strategy in which thinking flexibly may come into play:

A hardware store manager recognizes many customers are not finding the items they desire. As a way to create a more user-friendly floor plan for customers, the manager decides to sit down with employees to come up with different ideas and designs for a revamped floor plan. The employees design a few questions to ask customers before they exit the store and continue to make adjustments to their floor plan and other signage to help.

Questioning and Posing Problems



Leaders and employees who question and pose problems display curiosity to discover new solutions and build a motivating mindset. When they engage in persistent information-seeking behavior they begin to fill the gaps between what they know and what they don't know. They ask questions that invite further thinking.

Leaders and employees could practice questioning and posing problems with strategies such as:

- **Group time to raise questions and wonder about new ideas.** Gathering the team together for a collaborative meeting offers an opportunity for people to energize their curiosity and recognize problems that have not yet been recognized.
- **Question and Problem (Q & P) Box.** Establish a space (e.g., box, email address, monthly coffee roundtables) where employees can ask questions or express problems that can be followed through to create more effective solutions, workflow, or interactions with customers.
- **Connecting with customers.** Let them know you value their thoughts and opinions by asking questions such as: *What do we do well? How can we improve? How can we make your experience better?* Face-to-face interaction is typically more personal and valuable, however, genuinely being curious about the customer experience will likely make them feel that you care about their opinion..

Here is an example of a strategy in which questioning and posing problems may come into play:

The director of an aquatics program wants to do more outreach to age groups who have never learned how to swim but are struggling with how to get them signed up for the classes. Discounts and other incentives aren't helping. One of her swim instructors suggested finding out more from the older children as to what is preventing them from learning how to swim. The director hosted a focus group and asked questions to better understand the challenges the adolescents faced. As a result of exploring the questions and probing for a better understanding, one incentive came from some of the teenagers — free bus transportation to the aquatics center. Through questioning, the teens posed and solved a problem the instructors were not aware of!



Thinking Interdependently



Our world is pressed by many complex and multifaceted problems. These problems require a magnitude of knowledge, insight, and creativity that can only be accessed when people come together and are open to learning from one another's perspectives. Effective leaders encourage others to speak up, contribute to the discussion, and advocate for a particular position or plan. They facilitate discourse and help individuals recognize when to take a step forward, hold back, or think outside the box. These interactions lead to the consideration of solutions that not only work in the short term but also might impact consequences that affect the long term.

Leaders and employees could practice thinking interdependently with strategies such as:

- **Mix group personalities and size.** Shake group members up at each meeting. This gives everyone an opportunity to learn, work, discuss, and think with different members.
- **Use collaborative thinking maps to engage in conversation with one another.** Offer the ability for everyone to visualize their thinking in the group. Creating a thinking map that guides the discussion offers everyone the ability to understand through a visual.

Here is an example of a strategy in which thinking interdependently may come into play:

At a local Boys and Girls club, employees sit together each month to share reflections from the kids they serve in connection with their broader mission - *To enable all young people, especially those who need us most, to reach their full potential as productive, caring, responsible citizens.* These regular conversations provide opportunities for employees to listen to one another's ideas, raise questions, and entertain possible actions. The goal of these meetings is to be an integral part of the thinking that may lead to changes in policies and practices in service of their mission as well as strengthen connections to each other.



Thinking and Communicating with Clarity and Precision



Language and thinking are closely entwined. Like either side of a coin, they are inseparable. Fuzzy, vague language is a reflection of fuzzy, vague thinking. Efficacious leaders strive to communicate accurately in both written and oral form, take care to use precise language, define terms, and use correct names, universal labels, and analogies. They strive to avoid over-generalizations, deletions, and distortions. Instead, they support their statements with explanations, comparisons, quantification, facts, and evidence. When leaders plan ahead, they are mentally rehearsing their messages. They think about what the main points are that they wish to convey and how they want to structure their presentation. This is equally true for both oral as well as written communications.

Leaders and employees could practice thinking and communicating with clarity and precision with strategies such as:

- **Body language is another way of speaking.** It is hard sometimes to convey your feelings or ideas through words. Sometimes actions speak louder than words. Identify certain gestures and signals that work within the workplace that best suits all workers. It is like having a common language -- with body language.
- **Slow it down!** Speaking fast and trying to get your point across can sometimes confuse the listener. Working on pacing, pronunciation, and clarity can make a world of difference.
- **Analogize the talk.** Find analogies to use that fit within the workplace. When people use analogies it clarifies understanding.

Here is an example when thinking and communicating with clarity and precision may come into play:

A mechanic is working on a car for a customer. There is an issue with the owner's catalytic converter. When the mechanic meets to explain the problem with the owner he uses an analogy. The mechanic says, "Your catalytic converter is like your liver - it cleans excess fuel from your engine exhaust before it is emitted from the exhaust pipe". Instead of confusing the customer with mechanic terminology - which might sound foreign to most people not knowledgeable about cars - he uses a great analogy that connects and makes sense.

Applying Past Knowledge to New Situations



When faced with volatile and complex issues, we can easily forget what we already know and treat each situation as if it is the first time we are encountering it. Efficacious leaders pay attention to drawing upon past examples and experiences as they work toward solving problems or improving performance. They tap into their memory bank of learnings and seek analogies and commonalities as they strategically consider how to move forward.

Leaders and employees could practice applying past knowledge to new situations with strategies such as:

- **Documenting learning.** Using time throughout a day, week, or month to reflect on happenings within the workplace can become helpful down the road. When leaders and employees read these reflections in the future it could spark up ideas, generate new thinking, or support an issue that had come up.
- **Making analogies.** Thinking about other situations that are like the one that the group is engaged with helps to find commonalities of practice and success.

Here is an example where applying past knowledge to new situations may come into play:

A new ice cream shop is struggling to pay the monthly bills. The leader shares with her employees that she is passionate about the venture, but she needs assistance from them as to what might draw them to *this* ice cream shop. She listens to and documents ideas as the employees share strategies they have seen from past food service experiences as well as reflecting on their own customer behavior.

Gathering Data Through All Senses



Human beings have five traditional senses: gustatory, olfactory, tactile, kinesthetic, auditory, and visual. The brain reacts and closely makes connections with all senses. When we learn new information and store it away, we can always provide better retrieval for that information when identifying it with the senses. Multiple brain pathways can activate information to meet challenges. Leaders whose sensory pathways are more open, alert, and acute often absorb more information from the environment. They also can gather data from internal sources and like walking antennae, they receive and register the felt experience of those around them.

Leaders and employees could practice gathering data through all senses with strategies such as:

- **Engaging in a new topic or problem.** They ask themselves, “What sources of data should I consider? How is what I am experiencing impacting my thinking?”
- **Paying attention to the world around them.** “What am I noticing in my environment? What details capture my attention?”
- **Deliberately using one’s senses when trying to remember something.** For example, draw (or find) a picture that captures the idea. Act out a historical event to capture the feeling or mood.
- **Using descriptive language.** Leaders model using sensory images in their communications to model and inspire the writing of others in the organization.
- **Invite others to clarify their ideas.** Leaders probe their thinking by asking what it looks like, sounds like, feels like, etc.

Here is an example where gathering data through all senses may come into play:

A store manager is working with her team to set up an exciting camping display to call attention to new items. She asks the team to close their eyes and imagine a camping experience. What would the environment look like? What are some feelings you might have about sleeping in an outdoor environment? What are some of the sounds that you might hear? How could we tell a story or communicate what we imagine and show sensitivity to how our products relate to the answer to some of those questions in our display?

Creating, Imagining, and Innovating



Many people assume that creativity is a rare commodity. Some are born with it. Some recognize it later in life. And some use it to amaze the world. Everyone has the capacity to generate novel, original, clever, or ingenious products, solutions, and techniques. Research shows us that we are all born with the capacity to push the boundaries of our thinking. *Imagining* is generating new ideas without concern for the possible. *Creating* is giving form to ideas with the goal of taking something that is possible and making it come to life. *Innovating* is taking an existing system or idea and making improvements — perhaps focusing on simplicity, improved effectiveness, or beautifying its form. Efficacious leaders skillfully learn how to push the boundaries of everyone’s thinking as well as model that behavior when they take risks and push the boundaries of their own perceived limits.

Leaders and employees could practice creating, imagining, and innovating with strategies such as:

- **Think by using strange analogies.** *In what ways is a school like an airport? In what ways is soccer like a highway? In what ways is gravity like a feather?* Comparing an idea or topic and a strange analogy can illuminate new and important attributes and deepen understanding.
- **Brainstorm absurd ideas.** Albert Einstein once said, “If at first, an idea doesn’t seem totally absurd there’s no hope for it.” Leaders move toward the absurd, the “seemingly” irrelevant, in order to create new insights rather than taking an “obvious” direction.
- **Use divergent and convergent thinking in harmony with each other.** When creating or innovating, there is a balance between converging ideas by following rules, becoming precise, and drawing on factual information, and other times when divergent thinking suggests that you need to break away and generate new ideas. Leaders are alert to situational cues which signal when to use which type of thinking.

Here is an example where the strategy for creating, imagining, and innovating may come into play:

Church leaders see a consistent decline in the attendance of young families. They decided to send out a survey specifically to this group to look for patterns. The results showed them that children felt disengaged in the Sunday service. They considered one possibility: when children are separated from their family members to go into a separate space, it feels more like babysitting. Based on this idea, church leaders reached out to some parishioners from these young families and generated ideas that could make the services more invitational to a range of ages so that children could be more engaged with the service and feel part of the Church community.



Taking Responsible Risks



Risk-taking is an increasingly critical element of leadership and essential for an organization's capacity to innovate. However, all risks are not worth taking. *Responsible* risk-takers balance taking a chance based on their intuition and experience and confronting fears and challenges of trying something new. Efficacious leaders model and inspire others to draw on past knowledge, be mindful of options, and trust their well-trained sense of what is appropriate.

Leaders and employees could practice taking responsible risks with strategies such as:

- ***Developing the capacity to live with some uncertainty.*** Challenge the process of needing to find an answer immediately rather than avoiding what is not known.
- ***Being patient.*** Sustain a process of problem solving, investigation, or creation over time.
- ***Living on the edge of their competence.*** Take a chance on working on problems and ideas that are challenging and/or outside of their area of expertise.

Here is an example where taking responsible risks may come into play:

Karate instructors promote taking responsible risks with their students to encourage their progression through their growing expertise signified by the color of their belt. Progression is only attainable when students take risks in trying new karate moves. An instructor teaches techniques through the use of examples or by reminding students of times when they have taken a chance in trying something else that was new and how it felt. Making sure the environment is safe, positive in energy, and encouraging is key.

Finding Humor



Having a whimsical frame of mind, leaders can ease tensions by finding incongruities and absurdities, ironies, and satire. They are able to laugh at situations as well as themselves. This often opens up new possibilities for fresh thinking. When people are laughing *with* one another, they experience the pleasure of acceptance, an in-group feeling, and a bond with one another.

Humor can increase our ability to make decisions and solve complex problems--all of which can liberate creativity and provoke our skills to anticipate, find novel relationships, develop visual imagery and make analogies.

Leaders and employees could practice finding humor with strategies such as:

- **Share funny stories.** Stories can capture attention and captivate an audience. The funnier a story is, the more memorable the story will be.
- **Brain teasers, YouTube, and jokes.** Doing a quick search on the internet of funny YouTube videos, jokes, or brain teasers can lighten up the mood and add some laughter.
- **Promote the “laugh it off” approach.** You might have found yourself in an embarrassing moment at some point in your life. Instead of letting it bother you, laugh it off.

Here is an example where finding humor may come into play:

A barista working at a busy coffee shop looks up from making a cappuccino to see that her customer line is 10 deep. And, she is the only employee working. She could go into panic mode but that would only make things worse. Instead, she decides to add some humor to this overwhelming situation by sharing coffee-related jokes as she fluently operates the espresso machines. “Q: What do you call sad coffee? A: Despresso.” “Q: Why are Italians so good at making coffee? A: Because they know how to espresso themselves.”

Responding with Wonderment and Awe



We often forget to notice the small moves that need to be recognized and celebrated. Efficacious leaders learn to notice, appreciate, and encourage a culture of wondering. When we find something awesome or amazing, it also fills us with a sense of fascination--"How did that happen? What was the story behind that amazing situation?" Our curiosity can inspire our thinking and leave us with a renewed appreciation of the ordinary objects and events before us.

Leaders and employees could practice responding with wonderment and awe by strategies such as:

- ***The "wow factor" barometer reading.*** Look for shifts in the environment in which you can celebrate the little, simple, and unexpected things that elevate your mood.
- ***Offer book talks about inspiring leaders and workers.*** Reading and sharing amazing stories about people who made a difference can motivate everyone within a business. You may be awed by the strategies, ideas, and insights that could carry over into the workplace.
- ***Review customer feedback.*** Highlight powerful stories customers share about what employees do that solve little and big problems that result in greater customer loyalty.

Here is an example of where responding with wonderment and awe may come into play:

A team of nurses tends to 25 patients throughout their shift. At the end of their shift, all the nurses come together to discuss and share instances throughout their shift of their amazing feat. They saved a life. They made a patient smile. They released a patient to go home. They helped multiple patients alleviate some pain in their bodies. All these instances may sound small yet they are really monumental. Each nurse should feel wonderment and awe from their work shift...they all made a difference!



Remaining Open to Continuous Learning

Efficacious leaders inspire others to be continuous learners. They seize problems, situations, tensions, conflicts, and circumstances as valuable opportunities to learn. Their confidence, in combination with their inquisitiveness, allows them to constantly search for new and better ways. These leaders resist complacency as they work with their teams. Striving for improvement, always growing, always learning, always modifying and improving themselves - that is what continuous learners do.

Leaders and employees could practice remaining open to continuous learning with strategies such as:

- ***Incorporate topic share time.*** In a workplace, providing an opportunity for leaders and employees to get together and share their thinking, new perspectives, and information about a topic
- ***Embrace humility and pride when admitting they don't know.*** They reframe this as a launch for exploration, curiosity, and mystery rather than a limitation.
- ***Find time for asking questions and seeking connections.*** Deep learning is fueled by an inquisitive mind, developing capabilities for effective and thoughtful action. Leaders and employees should reflect on questions that can bring deeper learning about themselves, such as:
 - What motivates me to keep learning more about this job?
 - What do I still wonder about in this job?
 - How will I remain open to new ideas or new learning in order to better myself?
- ***Seek out a mentor.*** Encourage growth by cultivating mentoring relationships. In the workplace, shadowing and apprenticing someone with experience is often a great way to grow capacities.

Here is an example of where Remaining Open to Continuous Learning comes into play:

A graphic designer reviews his financials at the end of the year. He sees that there is steady income with the same core group of customers. He is interested in broadening his customer base, but realizes that he needs to push his own creative talents and use of new tools to the next level. He joins a networking group and learns more about helpful tutorials and bloggers to continue to grow his self-education.