

PERSPECTIVE-TAKING

Before completing this sheet, watch the video that introduces this topic. After watching the video, return to this sheet to review the concept of perspective-taking and complete the exercise on the following page.

What's perspective-taking?

Perspective-taking is the ability to understand and consider the thoughts, feelings, and experiences of others. It involves stepping into someone else's shoes and seeing the world from their point of view (Everydayspeech.com, n.d.).



Why is perspective-taking important in the workplace?

1 Builds connections

We can show others that we value their thoughts and feelings, fostering a sense of trust and respect in our relationships (Everydayspeech.com, n.d.).



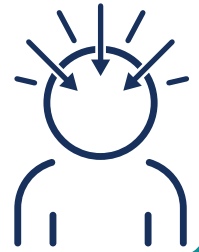
2 Promotes empathy

When we tune into another individual's outlook and see the world through their eyes, we can try to feel their feelings and understand why they feel the way they do (Soeiro, 2020).



3 Encourages open-mindedness

When we approach conversations with an open mind, we can appreciate varied viewpoints and better understand different perspectives (Everydayspeech.com, n.d.).



Sharpen your skills and remember...

You can respectfully acknowledge a different perspective while not agreeing with it.

5 Ways to Hone Your Perspective-Taking Skills

1 Practice active listening

Focus on listening to what others are saying without immediately formulating a response.

3 Ask open-ended questions

They can help draw out more nuanced and detailed explanations.

5 Summarize the conversation

Summarizing shows that you genuinely listened and ensures that everyone understood the message.

2 Acknowledge biases

Everyone has them. Confronting your own biases can help you better understand how they might influence your interpretations of other perspectives.

4 Stay curious

Instead of trying to win a discussion, aim to learn something new.

References:

- Everyday Speech. *Understanding different perspectives: A guide to high school perspective taking*. <https://everydayspeech.com/sel-implementation/understanding-different-perspectives-a-guide-to-high-school-perspective-taking/>
- Everyday Speech. *Understanding others: The importance of perspective taking*. <https://everydayspeech.com/sel-implementation/understanding-others-the-importance-of-perspective-taking/>
- Soeiro, L. (2020 September 23). *Three things you need to know about perspective-taking*. Psychology Today. <https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/i-hear-you/202009/three-things-you-need-know-about-perspective-taking>

PERSPECTIVE-TAKING | EXERCISE

Complete this exercise to learn more about perspective-taking.

1. Consider this scenario:

A patient in your hospital presents with a terminal illness. As the veterinarian, you recommend euthanasia as an option, but the owner declines due to religious beliefs.



Before you pass judgment, practice perspective-taking.

It can be tempting to pass judgment on this client since you believe the best option for the patient is euthanasia. However, discussing the client's perspective can help you work together to ensure their pet is comfortable in the final stages of their disease.

What type of question could you ask to try to understand this client's point of view?

To see examples of these types of questions, refer to the bottom of the page.

- Clarifying
- Experience-based
- Belief and Opinion
- Feeling and Emotion
- Understanding Perspective
- Check Assumptions

Write a question that you could ask your client to learn about their perspective.

2. Consider this scenario:

A client brings their new “designer-breed” dog in for an exam. Their paperwork shows the price they paid for the dog. A team member scoffs and condescendingly asks how anyone could spend that much money when so many shelter dogs need homes.



Before you pass judgment, practice perspective-taking.

It may be easy to jump in and agree with the team member's comment. However, pausing a moment to try to understand the client's perspective on why they chose this breed may build a stronger sense of trust between the practice and the client. This connection will likely lead to increased owner compliance and better lifelong care for the pet.

Write a question that you could ask your client to learn about their perspective.

Types of open-ended questions

Clarifying

- What led you to feel this way?
- How did this situation come about?

Experience-based

- How did you feel when that happened?
- What was going through your mind at the time?
- How has this experience affected you?

Belief and Opinion

- What are your thoughts about the current situation?
- What are your beliefs and values that influence this perspective?

Feeling and Emotion

- What feelings have been the most challenging to navigate?
- What emotions come up for you when discussing this?

Understanding Perspective

- What would you want to know or understand in my position?
- What questions have I not asked that would allow me to understand your perspective better?

Check Assumptions

- Am I correct in understanding that you feel/think/believe...?
- What assumptions do you think people make about your perspective that may not be accurate?