



## Forward Thinking - Compassion

Forward Thinkers are compassionate leaders. They know that compassion is the human quality allowing them to understand what another person wants and to do something about it.

Many times, we don't realize that the work we are doing is not to satisfy our own needs. The financial statement, sales report, or product sample are usually not for ourselves, but are actually for someone else, be it a client, boss, or peer. If we make small changes in our perception of how we fulfill the work we do for others, our outlook towards our task will change, resulting in a more positive work experience and better-quality work done faster.

When we begin to understand what another person wants, we instinctively want to do something about it. Within each one of us is the desire to help, serve, and collaborate. Often, we lose sight of this desire due to time pressures and deadlines – mostly imposed by ourselves but sometimes by others. Think about it: when a friend or colleague asks for help, don't you usually want to yes? Most times, we speak before thinking and commit to helping before considering our schedules. I call this the intuitive "yes". Intuitively, we want to be of service to others and help them achieve their goals. Forward Thinking Leaders understand their intuitive competency and use it to help those around them as well as the organization they serve. We all possess this intuitive ability, but some are more advanced at it than others.

To further understand others, Forward Thinking Leaders look to the diversity within the members of their team. A Forward Thinker seeks to understand the competencies and personality traits of their team members. By doing this, they know where to deploy resources to support the members of their team.

In addition, they take this knowledge and work collaboratively with their teams to break down barriers that stifle creative thought and innovation. As leaders, they co-construct with their team to ensure all voices are heard and everyone has input into the design of the team and its vision.

By co-constructing, members have a sense of ownership. This allows for a deeper sense of equality

and the builds a desire to work towards solutions that are good for the entire organization. Co-constructing team allows Forward Thinking Leaders to get to know what their team members are passionate about. It is through the construction process that members demonstrate the areas in which they have a passion to contribute. Sometimes this is their functional area and other times it is in an area that is outside their normal range of competency.

One interesting fact is that within the word compassion is buried the word "passion." When we do things we are passionate about, it shows. People cannot just see it but they can feel it. Quite often when we are passionate about our work, we go that extra mile to ensure that the project is not just done right but also with a little extra. No task is too large when we have passion for it

Forward Thinking Leaders are passionate about their teams. In other words, they are passionate about compassion. Understanding the dynamics of their teams is not a one-time deal. As with any other organism, teams are organic – they change and evolve. It is the Forward Thinking Leader that is constantly scanning the team to see where things are changing and what areas need to evolve.

In many cases, the Forward Thinking Leader is the coach that pushes the team to achieve its desired goal and ultimately surpass its projected vision.

All of us possess the ability to evoke the compassion within us. As a result, we all possess the passion to be Forward Thinking Leaders. Forward Thinking is hard work: it involves using your intuition; uncovering your desire to help, serve and collaborate; as well as identifying the passion within. By making small changes in these areas, we can create an immediate impact upon the people that serve our organizations as well as the bottom line

---

*Eric Lutzo earned his Masters of Business Administration from Case Western Reserve University's Weatherhead School of Management. Eric is the founder of Forward Thought, a coaching and leadership development practice. ([www.forwardthought.net](http://www.forwardthought.net))*

*Email: [Eric@ForwardThought.net](mailto:Eric@ForwardThought.net)*