



## Connect with Respect: Leadership Checklist

### Before the Conversation

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Reflect on your intent:** Am I prepared to listen without judgment or defensiveness?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Create a safe space:** Choose a setting that encourages openness and psychological safety.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Prepare to be present:** Minimize distractions and give your full attention.

### During the Conversation

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Listen actively:** Focus on the speaker's words, tone and body language.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Avoid interrupting:** Let the person finish before responding.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Validate feelings:** Acknowledge that others' emotions and experiences are real.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Stay curious:** Ask open-ended questions to understand more deeply.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. **Avoid comparisons:** Don't shift the focus to your own story or experience.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. **Don't rush to fix:** Offer support, not solutions, unless asked.

### Try Out These Empathetic Responses and Create Your Own

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. "Thank you for sharing that with me."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. "I can see this has been difficult for you."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. "I appreciate your honesty; it takes courage to speak up."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. "I'm here to listen and learn."

### After the Conversation

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. **Follow up:** Check in with the person to show continued support.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. **Take action:** If concerns were raised, explore what steps can be taken.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. **Reflect and learn:** What did I learn? What could I do differently next time?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. **Model respectful behavior:** Demonstrate empathy and openness in future interactions.

### Reminders for Leaders

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Silence can be misinterpreted; instead, respond with care.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Empathy is a skill—practice it regularly.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Speaking up is hard—make it easier by being approachable.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Respect is shown through listening, not just words.