

# WORKING TOGETHER BETTER

“We are all in this together” is a great mantra that provided us unity to deal with the effects of the pandemic, the storms, and the adversity over the past year. However, “all in this together” does not always translate to “we are all the same.” As you look to fine tune communication skills when returning to

the worksite or formalize remote work responsibilities, a type of self-awareness and intentional process can be helpful to remain effective and professional. Consider the following process to help keep your own emotions in check when addressing a workplace concern or difficult conversation.

## SELF AWARENESS

Begin by taking a moment with a few (3-4) slow deep breaths (take a breath in on the count of 4; hold it for the count of 4; exhale for the count of 4). This may seem awkward at first, but it becomes second nature with practice.

## SELF-AUDIT

Before you begin a meeting or even a small conversation with a co-worker, ask yourself these clarifying questions:

WHAT AM I FEELING RIGHT NOW?  
WHAT AM I THINKING RIGHT NOW?  
WHAT OUTCOME AM I TRYING TO ACCOMPLISH?

These questions above give us perspective and a personal motive for any interchange we approach; however, these questions only give us our own personal awareness.

Now for the third component of a meaningful discussion or encounter:

## EMPATHY AUDIT

Before you begin a meeting or even a small conversation with a co-worker, ask yourself these clarifying questions:

WHAT MIGHT THE OTHER PERSON(S) BE FEELING?  
WHAT MIGHT THE OTHER PERSON(S) BE THINKING?  
WHAT MIGHT HIM/HER/THEY WANT TO ACCOMPLISH?

By thinking about the other person in the discussion, you are better able to apply empathy to the conversation to diffuse conflict and be open to a new perspective.

*You don't have to make this transition back to work alone. UTEAP is here for you.*

