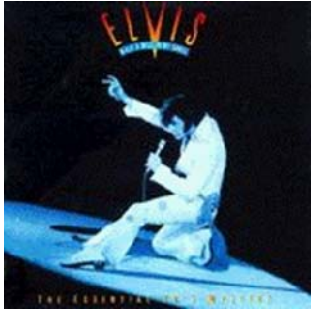




“My Feet are Killing Me!”



Think about that famous saying “walk a mile in my shoes”. I’m not sure who originally introduced the concept, but it was certainly a popular song during my lifetime. Just imagine Elvis Presley singing these lyrics in the 70’s...

*“If I could be you and you could be me for just one hour
If we could find a way to get inside each other’s mind*

*If you could see me through your eyes instead of your ego
I believe you’d be surprised to see that you’d been blind.*

*Walk a mile in my shoes, walk a mile in my shoes
And before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Walk a mile in my shoes.”*

How many times at work does someone get a little aggravating? The customer who is “demanding”, the coworker who “isn’t pulling his/her weight”, the manager who just “doesn’t understand” all seem way off base and maybe even disrespectful. They – like Elvis – just want you to “walk a mile in their shoes”. They want you to share their pain.

I suggest that you engage in a **Learning ViewpointShift™** to overcome these aggravations. This shift will increase your energy and help you achieve better results at work. At the risk of making some of you laugh, I’m going to quote Elvis and St. Francis of Assisi in the same newsletter – after all, one is “The King” and another is a Saint so I figure we can learn from both! When you engage in a **Learning ViewpointShift™**, or walk in another person’s shoes, you “seek first to understand, then be understood” (St. Francis of Assisi). Here are the steps:

1. Focus on facts –not emotions
 - Be careful not to jump right to taking things personally
2. Listen without prejudice
 - Really try to understand what the other person is saying (in words and body language)
3. Rephrase what you heard
 - To clarify and confirm or correct
4. Assure the person that you understand
 - Use helpful and hopeful words
5. Agree on next steps
 - How can you help them out?

Right now, while you are calm, cool and collected, think of the last time you skipped the “walk a mile in someone else’s shoes” and jumped right to the “MY feet are killing ME” stage?

1. Briefly, jot down the scenario (a demanding client).
2. Think of all the negative emotions you felt (frustration, impatience, bewilderment).
3. Now, write down the facts – leaving out the emotions (we were late on the delivery, this was the second time in 3 months).
4. Finally, think of how you could have handled things differently by using a Learning ViewpointShift™ (“I understand that you are angry. I’d like to get this taken care of today. I’m happy to help you right now”)

Many times, all cranky folks really want is for you to understand how they feel. Once you have learned where they are coming from... by walking a mile in their shoes... you can increase your own energy and get better results for all. Try a **Learning ViewpointShift™** the next time your feet are killing you (metaphorically speaking of course) and you’ll end up with a skip in your step after all.

Vicki Hess