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Compassionate Management in a time of Covid

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- Covid-19 has challenged our working arrangements
- In the first lockdown:- caring arrangements; home schooling; concerns about becoming unwell
- Key attributes – flexibility, perseverance, resilience
- In the most recent/current lockdown:- caring arrangements; home schooling; health concerns; fatigue
- Management and leadership are not the same thing but
.....

- Traits:
 - 1. Learning – willingness to learn from others (including via feedback), and from mistakes
 - 2. Removing barriers – a team approach to overcoming obstacles
 - 3. Impact – which is beyond profit
 - 4. Standards – ethical behaviour, quality and trust are key
 - 5. Influence – more about others growing and developing and enabling this
 - 6. Passion – self-possession and a capacity to foster this quality in others
 - 7. Team – collaborative working for success, pulling together
- (Campbell, 2018)



- <https://hbr.org/2018/05/assessment-are-you-a-compassionate-leader>
- https://www.kingsfund.org.uk/sites/default/files/field/field_publication_file/Caring_to_change_Kings_Fund_May_2017.pdf
- *‘Compassionate leadership creates the conditions where **the collective good** – the needs ofcommunities and staff wellbeing and development – are prioritised over individual agendas.*
- *It creates the conditions where inappropriate use of power, hierarchy or control over resources that are inconsistent with the values and visionare **challenged**.*
- *Compassionate leadership requires **courage, resilience and belief**.*
- *It begins with **self-compassion** - empathising or caring for yourself’*
- Wisdom, courage, justice are central components of compassionate leadership



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Figure 1: Roffey Park's Compassion in the Workplace Model

- During Covid-19 and HEIs:- The rhythm of the academic year doesn't stop but.....(NB. Recruitment/retention interventions)
- Flexibility of working patterns/timetabling (asynchronous vs synchronous)
- Workload – what are the alternates to redistribution
- How can work be 'bundled' e.g. use of FAQs
- Reducing the email traffic and/or Teams/Zoom calls
- What are the priorities, what can be deferred/postponed
- Looking out for each other (*'collective cuddles'*)
- Communication and raising concerns are key

- Having insight, active listening, being reflective = attributes that support compassionate management
- Being compassionate is not a weakness
- Increased productivity, investment in the individual, enhanced organisational culture, heightened staff wellbeing
- References:
 - Campbell, S. (2018). 7 Inspiring traits of compassionate leadership. Entrepreneur. Retrieved from <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/310391>
 - Dunlop, Alison (2020, "Compassionate Management in the Workplace" . Major Papers. 115. <https://scholar.uwindsor.ca/major-papers/115>
 - Guinot, J., Miralles, S., Rodríguez-Sánchez, A. & Chiva, R. (2020), "Do compassionate firms outperform? The role of organizational learning", *Employee Relations*, Vol. 42 No. 3, pp. 717-734. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ER-07-2019-0275>
 - Yukl, G. & Mahsud, R. (2010). Why flexible and adaptive leadership is essential. *Consulting Psychology Journal: Practice and Research*. 62. 81-93. 10.1037/a0019835



- <https://www.roffeypark.com/wp-content/uploads2/Compassionate-Leadership-Booklet.pdf>

Questions to help leaders identify some of the activities that foster compassion in their team and wider organisation:

1. Do I actively promote a culture in which people trust each other and know that if they talk about their problems, other team members will not judge them and they will listen and try to help?
2. Do I actively encourage and empower others to respond to a colleague's suffering?
3. Do I show care and concern towards people in my team?
4. Do I understand the value of sharing problems with others?
5. Do people in my team know that I will try to help them if they have a problem?
6. Are people in my team in regular close contact (e.g. through face to face daily or weekly department meetings)?
7. Is there a strong connection between people in my team which makes them feel joined, seen, felt, known and not alone?
8. When people in my team notice a change in the condition of a colleague, do they feel comfortable about inquiring further?
9. Is it a norm in my team to know about each other's lives and pay attention to the pain and suffering of a colleague?
10. Do people in my team feel safe in sharing their personal problems, issues and challenges with each other?
11. Do people in my team feel they can openly express their emotional pain?