

## TEMET NOSCE – “KNOW THYSELF”

As you take on increasingly larger projects it quickly becomes apparent that you need more than yourself to get things done. In these situations, effective communication between you and the people around you is important to the success of a project. Though we would like people around us to understand what we are trying to convey every time, a crucial part of effective communication, that is sometimes missed, is being able to know yourself. As you take on more challenging leadership roles a confidence in what you know about yourself and what you want or need to get accomplished has to be at the forefront of your mind. By mastering the ability to understand how you interact with the people around you allows you the ability to adapt to different situations and permits you to make important decisions quickly.

### a) Assessing Yourself

- a. **Always keep focused on your emotions and how it is affecting how you interact with others** - We sometimes say things in the heat of the moment and most often the arguments that we make usually end up being more influenced by our emotions than reason. Be sure to understand how you are feeling at all times when you are communicating to another person.
- b. **Why are you having this conversation?** Know what your goals are and why are you are having a particular conversation. Sometimes when people get caught up in conversation, they end up forgetting why they were speaking in the first place. Keep focus on the information that you are trying to communicate.
- c. **Understand the difference between agreeing, understanding, and living with (or willing to try) decisions before disagreeing** – Some decisions are always tough and making the choice that will satisfy everyone is never easy. Always be aware that if you cannot agree with someone on a decision, you should understand why that person came to their own conclusion. Ask yourself can you live with this decision or conclusion? What’s the best that can happen? What’s the worst that can happen? Are you willing to try going with this decision (risking the best scenario versus the worst)? Can you live with the worst scenario?
- d. **Apathy or not having an opinion is just avoiding self assessment** – Not being able to determine how you feel on a particular topic/decision can affect how you interact with your team. Not having an opinion lowers team morale since it demonstrates that you have not put any thought into a particular decision and moreover shows that you don’t care.

### b) Assessing How Others Perceive You

- a. **Always keep focused on you body language and tone** – What you are communicating when you speak may be not the same message you wish to convey when you add your body language and tone.
- b. **Mirroring** – Repeating what someone says and expressing your opinions or feeling toward what that person has said will accomplish two goals. 1) It demonstrates that you were listening to the other person and 2) it shows that you care enough to hear out a person and are engaged in the conversation.
- c. **Watch for signs/reactions to what you say** – Before receiving a response some people may send out signs/cues/reactions that may convey their interpretation of what you are communicating. If it is a reaction you are not expecting, be prepared to change your wording or body language to ensure your message is not being misinterpreted.
- d. **Let people know your current state of mind** – This removes the guesswork of the people who are engaged in conversation with you and it informs the people that are talking with you how what they are saying is affecting you and vice versa.