

## BPE Global Hot Topic – December 2021

### Taking that Extra Step



In December 2020, I promised you that 2021 was going to be a better year. And it was. But...it wasn't exactly an easy year. I spent the entire year being grateful for things, things that I normally wouldn't have been happy about. Things like vaccinations, which in a normal year would be a hassle to get and leave me with a sore arm. But this year, I jumped at the chance to offer up my arm in the hopes that we could collectively defend our friends, family, and the world against the devastation of COVID. I happily ate outside in the frigid San Francisco summer telling myself it was like eating outdoors along the canals in Amsterdam. And I even settled in to wearing masks while flying, grateful that I was flying again and even more grateful that we were protecting my flight attendant family.

I am ending this year on an all time high. You know why? Because am continuing to focus on bringing my best self to every interaction that I have in the hopes that I have made the year a little bit better for everyone else. I understand that people are struggling, finding things harder than they were before the pandemic, and are tired of adjusting. And I also recognize that bringing a smile to someone's face or even making them laugh will make them feel better. I am grateful that I am capable of that simple act of leaving someone in a better place than when I found them. And I am here to tell you that you can do this as well.

My holiday message this year is a gentle reminder to all of everyone that each of us can make a difference. And a reminder of the fact that if we all make an effort to improve other people's days, that our days will be actually better. And I have some ideas of some ways that we can accomplish this.

The first thing we can do is to pivot to supporting people. Put yourself in the other person's shoes and empathetically think about what they might be going through. Empathy allows us to assume the other person's perspective and understand their feelings. It doesn't mean that you have to share those feelings, you just have to hold space for those feelings. There is no need get into the specifics of what is going on or leading up to the other person's feelings, just bring your best self and conduct all interactions with a smile, lend an extra hand, and offer help. It doesn't have to be elaborate or overbearing, it can be as simple as saying "I hear you" or "I see you." You'll quickly learn that smiling and helping others will actually make you feel better.

Another thing we can all do is pivot to care and compassion. Start every interaction with a true desire to leave the other person doing better than before. Compassion literally means "to suffer together." And true compassion requires that you bring the intent to care about how the people that you are with really are. It is a very simple task to appreciate the people you interact with. Simply look them in the eye and let them know that you appreciate them.

Another huge pivot you can make is to change your approach to checking in and listening rather than just talking at someone. Instead of jumping into a discussion, take a big deep breath in and just ask "how are you?" and then listen. Listen actively for as long as they speak. It will open up the rest of your discussion and expand your thinking from where you started. It also may help the other person open up and share more information. That way you will come away with a deeper experience and something that you both understand in a more thorough way.

I know that all of this might sound like more work (just like the vaccine, outside dining and masks) but the reality is that you will end up in a better (and safer) place by making these pivots. Compassionate caring people have



**BPE Global**  
139 Pierce Street  
San Francisco, CA 94117  
T 877-264-3836  
info@bpeglobal.com

better health, well-being, and relationships. And that is something that all of us should strive for. And all of these good things will keep us from worrying as much and will make us happier.

My holiday wish for you is that you don't wait, start taking these extra steps as soon as you can. It will be as good for you as it will be for the other person. And that way, we can all collectively make things better.

BPE Global is a 17 year-old global trade compliance consulting and training firm. Beth Pride is the President of BPE Global. You can reach Beth by email at [Beth@BPEGlobal.com](mailto:Beth@BPEGlobal.com) or by phone at 1-415-845-8967.