

GETTING STARTED

The first section of this chapter introduces the building blocks of Tactical Empathy. The foundation is your tone of voice, which can soften a harsh statement or put starch in a soft one. The Black Swan Group urges our clients to find their soothing ‘late-night FM DJ’ tone of voice. Upward inflections imply a question, downward inflections show understanding. In that voice you mirror and label, affirm and defuse. Denials or disagreements are off the table. You’re there to understand and influence, not to debate. The other person needs to feel heard.

You seem worried about the time you need – is a label on a feeling; or...It looks as if you want to protect the first agreement. You even put words to negative perceptions: It might seem as if I’m ignoring your suggestion.

Every person you deal with—*every single person*—regardless of the outcome, should feel respected by having interacted with you. In a hostage situation in the Philippines, three weeks after the hostage walked out free, the losing terrorist called the government negotiator. He still had the negotiator’s cell number. He opened with, “Did you get promoted? You’re really good at what you do. They should promote you.”

This terrorist was probably a sociopath, and at the same time he was human. He felt the negotiator’s respect. He responded to it. The negotiator never lost sight of the fact that he was dealing with another person. In spite of losing the negotiation, the terrorist called to say in effect, *I felt respected by you. I’d deal with you again.*

Maya Angelo said, “People don’t remember what you say, they remember how you made them feel.” Tactical Empathy takes less time and earns greater results than any other approach.

The Black Swan message of Tactical Empathy is that it is perishable. To have it in working order when you need it, you practice every chance you get. You never stop practicing because Tactical Empathy is a life skill.

If you've been listening, at this point you might say to me, "So Tactical Empathy was created in the field, is continually researched, science-backed, is often counterintuitive, and ultimately is the surest and most direct route to real leadership?"

That's right.



About Chris

Chris Voss is the bestselling author of *Never Split the Difference*, former lead international FBI kidnapping negotiator, and CEO and founder of The Black Swan Group.

During his 24-year career with the FBI, Chris served as the FBI's hostage negotiation representative for the National Security Council's Hostage Working Group and has represented the U.S. at two international conferences. He's been recognized for a number of awards, including the Attorney General's Award, and the FBI Agents Association Award for Distinguished and Exemplary Service. He has received negotiation training from the FBI, Scotland Yard, and Harvard Law School.

Since retiring from the FBI, Chris has earned his Master's in Public Administration from Harvard University, and taught at a number of esteemed institutions, including the University of Southern California Marshall School of Business, Georgetown University, Harvard University, Northwestern University, the IMD Business School in Lausanne, Switzerland, and the Goethe Business School in Frankfurt, Germany.

Following the success of his book *Never Split the Difference*, Chris co-authored a book with real estate guru, Steve Shull, *The Full Fee Agent*, which provides practical and skillful negotiation techniques for real estate agents—both experienced and expert. Chris has been featured on podcasts and media outlets such as *TIME Magazine*, CNN, CNBC, the Lex Fridman podcast, Inc., and others.

His company, The Black Swan Group, established in 2008, aims at providing negotiation coaching for professionals all over the world through corporate and individual coaching, as well as live events.

When he isn't coaching or giving keynote speeches, Chris is passionate about learning, working out, reading, and spending time with his family. He currently lives in Las Vegas.

To connect with Chris and his company, you can go to:

- blackswanltd.com

You can also follow him on LinkedIn and Instagram.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT I'VE LEARNED ABOUT LEADERSHIP AS A 'DISEASE DETECTIVE'

BY JENNIFER LEE

– FOUNDER AND CEO, JLC LIFE SCIENCES

Cancer, akin to a thief, robs us of loved ones. Perhaps it was the elusive nature of the disease that drew me to the sharp, analytical world of Sherlock Holmes, thereby serving as the primary source of inspiration for my life's work in cancer treatments.

My father introduced me to the stories as a child, and from those tales I was inspired to approach cancer research with the same keen observation, aiming to unravel its mysteries. Growing up in South Korea, the Arthur Conan Doyle tales my father shared with me ignited a profound curiosity within me. They instilled an intense desire to solve problems by diligently examining the evidence.

LOSS, LEARNING, AND THE QUEST FOR A CURE

Following the clues over the past twenty-plus years in the healthcare world, I have been privileged to play a part in the development of seven first-in-class therapies that are now widely used in around 140 countries—helping countless patients worldwide. More importantly, for me, these patients have experienced extended, fulfilling lives due to these therapies.

That early curiosity I developed was shaped toward helping others by two painful losses within the space of a year or so. My beloved grandfather died of cancer after years of suffering for which he could not get the treatment he needed. While I was still mourning his passing, my father was in a bad automobile accident. Because his severe internal injuries were not detected in time, he died the following day.

As a seven-year-old, I did not understand all that had happened to these two men I loved, and why, but I was determined to do whatever I could to shield others from such devastating, preventable tragedies. In my younger days, I was captivated by marine life. I envisioned myself standing in front of a classroom, enlightening eager minds about the mysteries of the ocean.

However, as the realities of life came into sharper focus, I recognized the challenges that lay ahead. The long journey to such a profession, with its financial and time commitments coupled with my family's financial situation, was a distant dream, causing me to rethink and adapt my aspirations.

THE AMERICAN DREAM AND PROFESSIONAL BREAKTHROUGHS

Upon setting foot in the United States, I decided to pursue biochemistry, which opened up a whole new world. A college internship with G.D. Searle, then a small pharmaceutical company, gave me an opportunity to collaborate with the pioneering team behind the development of *Celebrex*, a groundbreaking pain reliever used as an arthritis medication. This enriching experience led to a full-time position, granting me vital real-world experience and invaluable insights into the pharmaceutical landscape.

Such hands-on participation proved indispensable when I later chose to further my academic pursuits—earning a master's degree in Clinical Research and Regulatory Administration from Northwestern University. The combination of real-world experience and academic training equipped me uniquely for the challenges in the pharmaceutical landscape.

During my twenty-six years in the drug industry, I've been privileged to help drive some seminal drug advancements. Among them, *Orserdu*, a drug approved by the FDA, which is the first and only oral treatment for postmenopausal women and adult men with ER-positive, HER2-negative, ESR1-mutated advanced or metastatic breast cancer after progression on endocrine therapy.

LEADING WITH EMPATHY AND PRECISION

Developing groundbreaking therapies in the pharmaceutical and biotech sectors demands more than mere scientific knowledge; it calls for a unique, multidimensional blend of empathy and determination.

At the forefront is our empathy for the patients we aim to serve. While the intricate process of creating effective drugs requires patience, there's an urgency to this endeavor. This sense of pressing need should resonate with every team member involved; each passing day might deprive a patient of a life-altering remedy. Perhaps, in the extended months we are able to give someone, another innovative treatment might emerge.

Time is of the essence, as is effectiveness. That means we set ourselves high standards. We have clear goals, and we hold ourselves and each other accountable to them. We don't let things slide. If there are missed deadlines or mistakes, we face them square on and talk about how we are going to course correct and avoid repeating the error.

My guiding principle is simple – address issues decisively while treating individuals with kindness. Leadership begins at the helm, ensuring your team members understand they have your unwavering support while exemplifying relentless dedication. This commitment might manifest as being the earliest bird and the last to depart. There may need to be some straight-talking behind closed doors, but outwardly your team needs to be confident that you believe in and support them. I often use the illustration of rowing with my teams: just as in a boat, synchronized efforts prevent us from veering off course or, worse yet, capsizing.

Internal empathy to the organization means recognizing that people

are more than just their skills. Someone may be struggling to deliver because they have a situation in their personal lives that is affecting them. It's important they know you understand and sympathize, but also that there is a sense of team responsibility which means they feel able to come to you to explain when things might be hard, rather than wait until their performance is negatively impacted.

Personal empowerment is vital too. When team members feel they have some freedom to initiate, they rise to the challenge. That was my experience when I was asked to step in a few years ago with a company whose promising breast cancer drug project had stalled, with no patients enrolled for the next important round of trials.

I discovered a bigger problem than I had anticipated: a small team that was lacking in direction, discouraged, and divided. I needed to be a tough parent, balancing warmth with clear expectations. Some people needed to be let go and new team members recruited who bought into the vision. It was demanding, but we rallied around our shared goal and within just fifteen months had recruited almost five hundred patients for a trial that paved the way for bringing that new drug to the market soon. At the core of that turnaround: a bold vision, shared convictions, and relentless drive.

A MOTHER'S LEGACY: STRENGTH IN ADVERSITY

Developing this rounded sense of empathy has been a process, a journey of discovery. If there's one single person who most shaped me into the woman I am today, it's my mother. I'm awed when think of the resilience she showed on being left a widow at the age of thirty-eight, with four small children to raise—at a time when South Korea was not as prosperous as it is today.

We lost everything virtually overnight. Within a short time of my father's death, the members of his board sold the company from under us. Even before the funeral, officials from the bank came round to our home and yellow-stickered everything that could be sold off—including my precious Barbie doll.

With no qualifications, my mom called friends and acquaintances to

ask if there was anything she could do to earn a little money—clean their home, clean their restaurants. All this while trying to shield us from the stress, as we coped with the loss of our beloved father.

Unable to stay in our home, it looked like we would be out on the streets until a church stepped in to help. They allowed us to move into a small, one-bedroomed apartment that was part of the facility. It wasn't much for a family of five, but at least we still had a roof over our heads. We ate a lot of ramen noodles.

Throughout it all, my mother never complained. Though she was heartbroken, she lived without regrets. And even though we were barely scraping by, she was always aware of the needs of others and continued to encourage us to be generous and thoughtful—even when it hurt.

One bright point following my father's death was that, somehow, we had been able to hold onto a beautiful grand piano we owned. Not only was it a connection to happier times, but it was also a source of comfort for my sister and me, as we taught ourselves to play. Then, one day when I came home from school, the piano was gone. Mom had donated it to a church, saying their need was greater than ours. I cried, but in time I would come to see her selflessness in what she did and appreciate her all the more for it.

Mom's quiet strength saw us through the turbulence of immigrating to the United States when I was a teenager. Being able to join relatives was a great opportunity, of course, but it was still challenging. Arriving without understanding a word of English, we nestled into a modest townhouse in Park Ridge, a Chicago suburb, sharing space with our aunt, uncle, and three cousins. Mom never sought any kind of public aid, working relentlessly across multiple jobs to provide for us. All this as a minority woman in a foreign country: I learned profound resilience.

Adolescence can be hard enough, without the additional challenges of a new culture and language. I was determined not to add to Mom's burdens, though, so I studied diligently to assimilate. I'd go to school, then walk several miles to a doctor's office where I worked in the office. I'd leave there at 8 p.m. or 9 p.m., get home and eat dinner before doing my homework in the early hours.

I was a dutiful student, but one day I was so tired I slept through a whole high school chemistry exam. The teacher, Mr. Guthrie, woke me at the end, his eyes filled with understanding. I recall he gave me an A for the class, but more importantly, he granted me a lesson in compassion and support.

PARTNERS IN LIFE AND LEADERSHIP

While my mother exemplified the gentle touch of genuine empathy, my partner, Daniel Song, has shown me that leadership doesn't always mean wielding an iron fist. Instead, true leadership is a graceful blend of compassion and conviction, a balance between understanding and decisiveness. Since our college days, Daniel has built a highly successful dental practice while also venturing into fruitful real estate opportunities.

Throughout his journey, he has demonstrated the fine art of merging heart with hard lines—nurturing a business with care while ensuring accountability. In addition, he has always been my unwavering pillar, not only supporting my professional desires, but also helping me realize them. For example, he managed our bustling household with three young children (and two pets!) during a period when I was a weekly 'super-commuter' between Chicago and California.

PIONEERING A COLLECTIVE FUTURE IN LIFE SCIENCES

As rewarding as all the breakthroughs I have participated in have been, a deeper urge within me yearned for an even broader impact. That desire propelled me to found JLC Life Sciences. Through consultation and guidance for other entities in the life sciences field, I aim to leverage my expertise, catalyzing greater advancements in the field.

It also affords me an opportunity to engage more broadly within the industry, from delivering keynote speeches to contributing to prestigious, peer-reviewed journals and guest columns. A key challenge I'm advocating for is to see companies share some of the unsuccessful data from their trials, to expedite the research journey for others. While I recognize the need to protect competitive intelligence, a degree of