WIIFM

I teach international post-graduate students in the Health Care Administration program at St. Lawrence. Many of them take our program as a bridge to permanent residency before they begin to seek professional licensure (doctors, nurses, dentists, pharmacists, etc). Sometimes it is difficult for them to see the value in the leadership concepts we are providing them – so we continually work to ensure students are connected with the importance of the soft (I prefer to call them human) skills that we work on together. Teamwork, empathy and critical thinking are three key skills where our students have an opportunity to explore activities within the classroom that will enable them to grow and hone their personal styles.

For most students, working in groups and practicing these skills can be awkward – many come from command-and-control power dynamic structures (especially in health care). We continually remind students of the importance of these skills in their lives (using examples from their part-time work as well as from our own experiences) to highlight their importance. They are then more attune to hearing about these areas during job interviews, etc.

From the moment students join the program, we are sharing these messages about perspective – and we also do it through the use of voices of our graduates as well!