

This past spring, I taught a class in advocacy communication. The application piece entailed us working with a nonprofit organization. We helped it gain greater recognition and communicate more effectively. We needed to be sensitive to the people involved in the nonprofit. It was essential that we honor their knowledge, experience, hard work. We had to really hear where they were and where they wanted to be. In short, we needed to be highly ethical.

At one point in the term, my students and I were watching a video on Pulitzer Prize winning photos. We were learning how people work with others to tell their stories without exploiting them. In the video, photographer Carol Guzy says that empathy isn't *understanding* how someone feels but *feeling* how the person feels. That resonated, so we turned to a favorite resource, YouTube, for examples.

We watched clips from a presidential debate between George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton. An audience member asked the candidates how the recession had affected them personally. Bush became defensive, asking the woman how she could think he wasn't affected. He said that she had no idea what he had to deal with. Clinton went next, walking into the audience to talk with her, empathizing, relating. He said that in a small state such as Arkansas, he knew the people personally and could feel their pain. He promised to do something about it. Many of my students were way too young to remember the original debate. But they chuckled and said that now they knew why Clinton defeated Bush.

We concluded by watching the famous JFK Ich Bin Ein Berliner speech. A number of my students knew that the German was not grammatically correct. But as we talked about the historical context of what the people in Berlin had gone through and the impact of a presidential visit, we felt their thrill.

For us, Ethics without empathy and application are hollow principles. YouTube is a great resource that we use continually.