

Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is your ability to recognise the impact of your own emotions upon your behaviour and to be aware of the emotions of others around you.

When you have an employee with great qualifications and experiences who just cannot work with others or guide others towards a goal, that employee is lacking emotional intelligence. Having poorly developed EI may not necessarily have held you back in the past; today, in a workplace where people are more self aware and less tolerant of arrogance and ignorance; low levels of EI will poison the workplace and contribute quickly to your demise. Many a seemingly competent person has been passed over for promotion or even moved on without being able to pinpoint the reason why. After all they were very efficient and effective; regrettably they also managed to get everyone off-side, didn't consider the human cost of their conquests and lacked the ability to manage their own emotions and impulses.

The following diagram illustrates the Emotional Competency Framework as proposed by Daniel Goleman in his book '*Working With Emotional Intelligence*.'

PERSONAL COMPETENCE	SOCIAL COMPETENCE
Self Awareness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional Awareness: Recognising one's emotions and their effects • Accurate self-assessment: Knowing one's strengths and limits • Self-confidence: A strong sense of one's self worth and capabilities 	Empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding others: Sensing others' feelings and perspectives and taking an active interest in their concerns • Developing others: Sensing others' development needs and bolstering their abilities • Service orientation: Anticipating, recognising, and meeting customers' needs • Leveraging diversity: Cultivating opportunities through different kinds of people • Political awareness: Reading a group's emotional currents and power relationships
Self-Regulation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-Control: Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses in check • Trustworthiness: Maintaining standards of honesty and integrity • Conscientiousness: Taking responsibility for personal performance • Adaptability: Flexibility in handling change • Innovation: Being comfortable with novel ideas, approaches, and new information 	Social Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Influence: Wielding effective tactics for persuasion • Communication: Listening openly and sending convincing messages • Conflict management: Negotiating and resolving disagreements • Leadership: Inspiring and guiding individuals and groups • Change catalyst: Initiating or managing change • Building bonds: Nurturing instrumental relationships • Collaboration and cooperation: Working with others toward shared goals • Team capabilities: Creating group synergy in pursuing collective goals
Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievement drive: Striving to improve or meet a standard of excellence • Commitment: Aligning with the goals of the group or organisation • Alignment: Readiness to act on opportunities • Optimism: Persistence in pursuing goals despite obstacles and setbacks 	

Being emotionally aware is not easy. You do need to work at it constantly. Our brains tend to move into 'fight or flight' mode very easily, causing us to react before we have time to think. As your parents were fond of saying, think before you act! The way to combat this instinctive reaction is to hone your awareness of your own emotional states. For example, certain events will trigger of a negative emotional response in each of us. Do you know the events that trigger of such a response in you? Take out a pen and paper, spend ten minutes writing down all the things that get under your skin. Now write down the signs that warn you such an event is about to occur. What strategies could you put in place to minimise the impact of such events? Just by being aware of your own emotional states will help you be more aware of the emotional state of others. In being so your empathy levels will be much higher. By being aware of those trigger points that point to a possible negative reaction you are becoming more aware, you are managing your responses and you are moving from being reactive to being proactive.

In the modern organisation leadership is not confined only to those with management titles. Everyone has a capacity to provide leadership someplace. A key aspect of providing leadership is being able to build relationships, foster collaboration, communicate and influence others. This requires that you be balanced, that the positive aspects are enhanced and the negative aspects are recognised and anticipated. It requires you to be open to the ideas of others, not to feel threatened by the opinion of others. It requires you feeling sufficiently confident in your own abilities so as know when to lead and when to step back and allow others to lead. These are the things we do as we build long-term, sustainable, relationships that, in turn, provide the resources to achieve outcomes.

This management tip has been brought to you compliments of John Coxon & Associates. We work with management teams and managers in the health sector and not for profit sector in Australia and New Zealand to help develop leadership capacity and management competencies. We achieve this through consulting, management coaching and professional development opportunities. Telephone Australia (03)5561 2228 or NZ (0272) 583232.

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