

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand your own emotions and of those around you. Emotional Intelligence is a relatively recent behavioural model, rising to prominence with Daniel Goleman's 1995 book called 'Emotional Intelligence'. The early Emotional Intelligence theory was originally developed during the 1970's and 80's by the work and writings of psychologists Howard Gardner (Harvard), Peter Salovey (Yale) and John Mayer (New Hampshire). The concept of Emotional Intelligence, developed by Daniel Goleman, means you have a self-awareness that enables you to recognise feelings and helps you manage your emotions and therefore manage others more effectively. It involves motivation and being able to focus on a goal rather than demanding instant gratification. A person with a high emotional intelligence is also capable of understanding the feelings of others.

Just because someone is 'intellectually' intelligent, it does not necessarily follow that they are emotionally intelligent. Having a good memory, or good problem solving abilities, does not mean you are capable of dealing with emotions or motivating yourself.

Emotional Intelligence is increasingly relevant to organisational development because the EI principles provide a new way to understand and assess your behaviour, style, attitude, interpersonal skill and potential. Emotional Intelligence is key to management as using it effectively ensures you understand the behaviour of those that work for you. It is also important in planning, profiling, recruitment interviewing and selection, development and customer service.

EI embraces two aspects of intelligence:

- Understanding yourself, your goals, intentions, responses and behaviour
- Understanding others and their feelings

## Emotional Intelligence - The Five Domains

Goleman identified the five 'domains' of EI as:

- Knowing your emotions
- Managing your own emotions
- Motivating yourself
- Recognising and understanding other people's emotions
- Managing relationships, i.e. managing the emotions of others

## Emotional Competence

Social skills are important for you to become successful. If your emotions are out of control you become ineffective or if you do not recognise your emotions, it produces the same result. You need to express yourself and talk to the heart of the other as well as the head. This means being aware of your own personal internal states. States are the component parts or factors of your personality. States make you who you are, they have been created by a combination of nature and nurture.

The combination of empathy, emotion and social skills are therefore key to success. The competencies that encompass emotions and emotional awareness are:

- Personal & Social Competence
- Self-Awareness - Knowing one's internal states and position, preferences, resources, and intuitions. How in tune are you with yourself. Recognising who and what you are.
- Self-Regulation - Manages one's internal states, impulses, and resources
- Motivation - Emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals
- Empathy - Awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns
- Social Skills - Adeptness at inducing desirable responses in others

If you are able to develop in these areas, then your Emotional Intelligence will improve. In addition to these competencies, factors such as gut feeling and intuition are vital to Emotional Intelligence. You also need self-confidence and belief. Knowing where your strengths lie and believing in your own ability and being comfortable with who you are. The final area is knowing when to have self-control, when you should hold back with your emotions.

There are five key fundamental areas in developing your Emotional Intelligence:

### 1. Gut Feeling

It is important to listen to your inner voice. Too often we ignore our instincts and bear the repercussions. The most important time is when it comes to decision making. It has now been proven that hunches start deep in the brain. The brain stores aspects of experiences and these are replayed by triggers. The triggers can be a wide range of factors including a person's name, a

sound, a smell, a conversation, something visual or similar events occurring. These replays are then signalled to us as a positive or negative. If we tune into these signals, we then pick up on our 'gut feeling'. Our nature then decides on whether we listen to those inner messages. The old fashion expression for this is wisdom!

## **2. Intuition**

Intuition is all about trusting yourself, now defined as subconscious logical analysis. It is also important when dealing with customers, colleagues and more senior management. When meeting someone for the first time we make a judgement in the first 30 - 90 seconds. This process is a remnant of earlier nature, warning signals from our origins as hunter-gatherer. Whenever we encountered a new situation, person, animal, environment, we had to quickly make a judgement as to whether there was a threat. Our lives have now changed dramatically, but our inner programming still exists. Using instinct increases your performance.

## **3. Emotional Awareness**

To be effective we need to know our emotions and why particular situations trigger certain feelings. We need to create awareness of the triggers and the feelings that are responded. When feelings are played, it can then have a positive or negative affect on performance. To improve our performance, we need to build awareness. Not only do we need to be aware of our emotions but also of our values and targets. Awareness is fundamental to enable us to take the right course of action. It helps with performance, motivation, how tuned in we are to others, builds good relationships, team working and management. Awareness tunes us into our feelings and then gets us to recognise how these affect us. We can then identify the impact and affect we have on others. Effective individuals listen to the messages our brain sends us and then act and implement. Make sure you take time to reflect, review, and decide on your progress. Focus on yourself and those around you.

It is important to make an accurate self-assessment of yourself. Ensure that you are aware of strengths and weaknesses. Spend time now and in the future to reflect. Take time each day to identify your impact on emotions and what affects you have created. Welcome and gain feedback, this will give you new perspectives. Look for opportunities for self-development and challenge. Above all, keep things in perspective. It is important to have a sense of humour - it is all about balance in work and outside.

## **4. Self-Confidence And Self-Belief**

Self-assurance is vital to be effective – it leads to presence - you need to be noticeable. This means being prepared to go out on a limb, having the

courage of your conviction. If you have self-confidence and belief you can carry out actions, be decisive in your attitude and manner.

Self-confidence is the key to belief and performance. Be happy with who you are and comfortable within your own skin. If you lack confidence then any failure will reinforce your personal state, you will see yourself as powerless. If you become a powerless, performance will drop and others will lose respect. Be wary of the opposite, extreme self-confidence is arrogant and brash. Self-confidence is about projection, charisma, inspiration and enthusiasm.

If you lack self-belief you are more likely to give up when challenged or shy away when there is any risk involved.

## **5. Self-Control**

Emotional regulation includes clamping down distress and impulses. It also means changing your state of mind, however it does not mean suppressing true feelings or over control. Be prepared to manage impulse feelings and distress. Stay composed, positive and unflappable. When under pressure stay focused and think clearly.

The ultimate act of personal responsibility is taking control of your own state of mind. Resisting the despotic qualities is essential to working productively. You need to be seen as trustworthy and reliable. If others trust you, you will increase performance and foster good communication. To increase the trust others have in you, ensure that you act ethically, have a strong set of morals and beliefs. Make sure you are reliable and authentic, be seen to follow through and someone with conviction. Create an open atmosphere and be prepared to admit your own mistakes and be prepared to confront unethical actions.

Be conscientious in your approach. Ensure that you meet commitments and keep promises, hold yourself accountable. Ensure that you are organised and practical in your approach.

