

# Working with Emotional Intelligence

By Daniel Goleman, 1998

## Introduction

Increasingly, success in the workplace is being determined more by emotional intelligence than by IQ.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) means managing feelings so that they are expressed appropriately and effectively, enabling people to work together smoothly toward their common goals.

EI does not depend on gender. The level of EI is not fixed genetically nor does it develop only in early childhood. EI is largely learned, and it continues to develop as we go through life and learn from our experiences. As Goleman mentions, in a fundamental sense, EI is nothing about maturity. All emotional competencies involve some degree of skill in controlling our feelings and emotions are at play.

EI has five main components:

- Self awareness
- Self regulation
- Motivation
- Empathy
- Adeptness in relationships

## Self awareness

People with high emotional awareness:

- Know how they are feeling and why
- Realize the links between their feelings and what they think, do and say
- Recognize how their feelings affect their performance

Accurate self assessment means being:

- Aware of one's strengths and weaknesses
- Reflective, learning from experience
- Open to candid feedback, new perspectives, continuous learning & self development
- Able to show a sense of humor and perspective about themselves.

Self confidence means the ability to:

- Present oneself with self assurance
- Voice views that are unpopular
- Be decisive, make sound decisions despite uncertainties and pressures.

| EI Component   | Competencies  |
|--|---|
| <b>Self awareness</b><br>(knowing what we are feeling at the moment, having a realistic assessment of our capabilities and being self confident)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emotional awareness</li> <li>• Accurate self assessment</li> <li>• Self confidence</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Self regulation</b><br>(Controlling our emotions so that they do not interfere with the task at hand)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self control</li> <li>• Trustworthiness</li> <li>• Conscientiousness</li> <li>• Adaptability</li> <li>• Innovation</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Motivation</b><br>(Moving towards our goals, taking initiative, striving to improve and persevering in the face of setbacks and frustrations)                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achievement drive</li> <li>• Commitment</li> <li>• Initiative</li> <li>• Optimism</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Empathy</b><br>(Sensing what people are feeling, understanding their perspective, cultivating rapport and diversity with various people)                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding others</li> <li>• Developing others</li> <li>• Service</li> <li>• Leveraging diversity</li> <li>• Political awareness</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Social Skills</b><br>(Handling emotions in social relationships well, persuading and leading, negotiating and settling disputes for cooperation and teamwork) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communication</li> <li>• Conflict management</li> <li>• Leadership</li> <li>• Change catalyst</li> <li>• Building bonds</li> <li>• Collaboration &amp; cooperation</li> <li>• Team capabilities</li> </ul> |

### Self regulation

Self control involves:

- Managing impulsive feelings and distressing emotions well
- Staying composed, positive and unflappable, even in trying moments.
- Thinking clearly and staying focused under pressure

People high on trustworthiness:

- Act ethically and above reproach
- Build trust through their reliability and authenticity
- Admit their own mistakes and confront unethical actions in others
- Take tough, principled stands even if they are unpopular

People who are conscientious:

- Meet commitments and keep promises
- Hold themselves accountable for meeting their objectives
- Are organized and careful in their work

Adaptability involves:

- Smoothly handling multiple demands, shifting priorities, rapid change
- Adapting responses and tactics to fit fluid circumstances
- Flexibility in seeing and interpreting events
- Motivation

Innovation means:

- Seeking out fresh ideas from a wide variety of sources
- Entertaining original solutions to problems
- Generating new ideas
- Taking fresh perspectives and risks in their thinking

## **Motivation**

Achievement drive involves:

- Being result oriented, with a high drive to meet objectives and standards
- Setting challenging goals and taking calculated risks
- Pursuing information to reduce uncertainty and finding ways to do better
- Learning how to improve performance

Commitment means:

- Making sacrifices to meeting a larger organizational goal
- Finding a sense of purpose in the larger mission
- Using the group's core values in making decisions and clarifying choices
- Actively seeking out opportunities to fulfill the group's mission

Initiative means:

- Readiness to seize opportunities
- Pursuing goals beyond what is ready or expected
- Cutting through red tape and bending the rules when necessary to get the job done
- Mobilizing others through unusual, enterprising efforts

Optimism means:

- Persistence in seeking goals despite obstacles and setbacks
- Operating from hope of success rather than fear of failure
- Seeing setbacks in a positive way

## **Empathy**

Understanding others means:

- Paying attention to emotional cues and listening well
- Showing sensitivity and understanding others' perspectives
- Helpfulness based on understanding of other people's needs and feelings

Developing others involves:

- Acknowledging and rewarding people's strengths and accomplishments
- Offering useful feedback and identifying people's needs for further growth
- Mentoring, giving timely coaching and offering assignments that challenge and foster a person's skills

Service orientation means:

- Understanding customers' needs and offering them appropriate services/products
- Seeking ways to increase customer satisfaction and loyalty
- Gladly offering appropriate assistance
- Getting a customer's perspective, acting as a trusted advisor

Leveraging diversity means

- Respecting and relating well to people from varied backgrounds
- Understanding diverse world views and being sensitive to group differences
- Seeing diversity as an opportunity

- Challenging bias and intolerance

Political awareness involves

- Accurately reading power relationships
- Detecting the forces that shape views and actions of clients, customers and competitors
- Accurately reading organizational and external realities

### **Social skills**

People high on influence:

- Are skilled at winning people over
- Can fine tune presentations to appeal to the listener
- Use their influence sometimes indirect, to build consensus and support
- Orchestrate dramatic events to make a point effectively

Communication means being:

- Effective in give and take, registering emotional cues
- Able to deal with difficult issues in a straightforward way
- Good at listening, seeking mutual understanding and welcoming information sharing
- Receptive to good and bad news

Conflict management means:

- Ability to handle difficult people and tense situations with diplomacy and tact
- Spotting potential conflict and bringing disagreements into the open
- Encouraging debate and open discussion
- Ability to orchestrate win-win solutions

Leadership means:

- Articulating and arousing enthusiasm for a shared vision/mission
- Stepping forward to lead as needed, regardless of position
- Guiding the performance of others while holding them accountable
- Leading by example

Initiating/Managing change means:

- Recognizing the need for change
- Challenging the status quo and acknowledging the need for change
- Championing the change and enlisting others in its pursuit
- Modeling the change expected of others

Building bonds means:

- Cultivating and maintaining extensive informal networks
- Seeking out relationships that are mutually beneficial
- Building rapport and keeping others in the loop
- Making and maintaining personal relationships with people in the workplace

Collaboration and cooperation involves:

- Balance between task and relationships
- Cooperating, sharing plans, information and resources
- Promoting a friendly, cooperative climate
- Spotting and nurturing opportunities for collaboration

Team capabilities mean:

- Emphasis on respect, helpfulness and cooperation
- Drawing all members into active and enthusiastic participation
- Building team identity, team spirit and commitment
- Presenting the group and its reputation, sharing credit

### **A new model of learning**

For learning emotional competence, life itself is the true arena. The brain learns by fitting new data and insights into existing frameworks of association and understanding, extending and enriching the corresponding neural circuitry. Developing emotional competence involves engaging our emotional circuitry where our social and emotional habits are stored. Emotional learning demands a more profound change at the neurological level; both weakening the existing habit and replacing it with a better one.

### **Building Emotional competence**

Building emotional competence involves various steps:

- Assess the job
- Assess the individual's strengths and limitations
- Deliver assessments of individuals with care

- Gauge readiness of people for training
- Make change self directed
- Focus on clear manageable goals

Prevent relapse as habits change slowly and relapses slips need not be equated with defeat.

The following points need to be kept in mind:

- Ongoing performance feedback is important
- Naturally occurring opportunities for practice both at home and work must be exploited
- Like minded people and role models can be approached for help
- Encourage change and experimentation
- Reinforce change by recognizing the need for recognition
- Establish ways to evaluate the development effort to see if it has lasting effects

### **Conclusion**

The premium on EI can only rise in the knowledge economy. Organizations are becoming increasingly dependent on the talents and creativity of workers who demand more and more independence. Autonomy must go hand in hand with self control, trustworthiness and conscientiousness. As people become more self centric, EI will be required to maintain the relationships vital for the survival of workers.