

EQ and You

Emotional Intelligence

Objectives

- A** Describe aspects of emotional intelligence.
- B** Discuss the benefits of emotional intelligence.



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Table of Contents

A	How Smart Are You Really?	2
B	Emotional Intelligence Every Day	13
So What?	Why bother learning about emotional intelligence?	2
THE GRAY ZONE	What would you do?	5
Make It Pay!	Use what you've learned—right now!	17

What do you think employers look for in a potential employee? Evidence of technical skills? Certainly. Relevant job experience? Of course. Most job applicants expect to talk about their skills and experience in an interview. Now, consider something that's a bit different—getting along with coworkers. Believe it or not, employers want to know about this ability, too.

So What



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More and more, companies are looking for employees with a high level of emotional intelligence (sometimes referred to as EQ). Knowing what this term means—and how to demonstrate it—can positively affect your personal and career success. Read on to learn more about emotional intelligence and its role in the workplace.

How Smart Are You Really?

Bradley is a brand-new employee at a sporting goods store. He doesn't know that much about the inventory, but he is doing his best to learn. One day, an angry customer comes in, walks up to Bradley, and begins to loudly complain about the quality of the items he has just purchased. The customer is so angry that he is actually rude to Bradley. Before long, Bradley becomes angry himself and is tempted to yell back at the customer.

Instead, Bradley takes a deep breath and composes himself. He tells the customer that he understands how frustrating it must be to buy defective merchandise. He calmly tells the customer that he will ask a manager to explain the refund policy and promises that they will do what they can to make sure the customer is satisfied.

- ▶ *When interacting with angry customers, it is important to control your emotions—even if the customer is not!*



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You've probably had an experience like Bradley's in which you've been tempted to do one thing, but instead checked your emotions and behaved in a different way. In this situation, **Bradley exhibited emotional intelligence**—the ability to recognize and manage emotions in ourselves and others.

Emotional intelligence has become a popular topic in the business community. The concept has been around for some time, but the work of psychologist Daniel Goleman is credited with popularizing the idea. He wrote a successful book on the topic that caused people to talk about emotional intelligence as a new definition for what it means to be smart. Some people have come to believe that emotional intelligence matters more than the traditional measure of intelligence—a person's **IQ** (or **intelligence quotient**). And, still other people think that emotional intelligence might be the best predictor of success in life!



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Learn more about Daniel Goleman's life and work at <http://www.danielgoleman.info/>.

What is emotional intelligence?

Although the concept has been defined in different ways, emotional intelligence is usually described as being aware of your own emotions, responding to them appropriately, and then doing the same with the emotions of other people. Emotional intelligence is not the same as being an emotional person. Someone with high emotional intelligence is not necessarily more emotional, nor does s/he “manage” emotions by ignoring them. Two very different people, one who cries easily and one who never shows his/her emotions, can have the same level of emotional intelligence.



Intelligence traditionally refers to a person’s **cognitive ability**, which is the ability to learn and understand. This is the kind of intelligence you probably think about most of the time—the kind of intelligence that allows you to do well in school, to solve problems, and to learn new skills. But, some people who study emotional intelligence believe that having an abundance of traditional intelligence does not necessarily mean automatic success in life.

Most of us know someone who is really intelligent, but who can't seem to cooperate with others, communicate effectively, or otherwise get along with people. Then, there are those who are perhaps not so "book smart," but succeed because they interact well with others, have a positive attitude, and are not easily discouraged. The traditional definition of intelligence seems to leave out certain personality traits that are important to personal and professional success. (For more on the difference between cognitive ability and emotional intelligence, see http://www.diffen.com/difference/EQ_vs_IQ.)

THE GRAY ZONE

Sometimes, emotional intelligence is knowing how transparent to be. Do you tell someone the whole truth, right from the start? Or, do you give the general picture at first—and reveal the details later? Your answer might depend on the situation.

Imagine you're applying for a job that requires you to be fluent in Spanish. Although you're doing pretty well in your second-year Spanish class, you wouldn't be considered "fluent" by any stretch of the imagination.

So when asked how fluent you are, what would you say? Really fluent? Fairly fluent? Not-so-fluent? Now, consider how your answer might change if the interviewer could speak Spanish fluently him/herself—or couldn't speak the language at all.

Can EQ be raised?

Although there are ways to enhance a person’s cognitive ability, the brain capacity you are born with is pretty much the brain capacity you have throughout your life. That’s not necessarily true with emotional intelligence, which has specific behaviors that you can study and practice. Some psychologists who study emotional intelligence disagree about the degree to which **EQ** (a person’s level of emotional intelligence) can be raised. In fact, some even object to the label “EQ” because it implies that an emotional “quotient” is similar to an intelligence “quotient.” But, many are intrigued by current research that suggests that it can, indeed, be improved.

How emotionally smart are you?

Emotional intelligence is more difficult to measure than traditional intelligence because EQ involves a person’s response to a situation. Some tests for emotional intelligence involve self-reporting—you choose a response that describes how you would react in imaginary situations. Because we can be either too hard or too easy on ourselves, our measure of how we would respond may not be accurate by itself. However, in combination with **feedback** from peers and others, our own reports can be very informative.

Other emotional intelligence tests do not involve self-reporting. Instead, they consist of problem-solving situations used to measure an individual’s abilities in emotional intelligence. Many organizations and companies, including the U.S. Air Force, L’Oreal, and Metlife, test their employees’ emotional intelligence.

Test Your EQ

1. I do not become defensive when criticized.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. I can stay calm under pressure.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

To take quiz, visit <http://www.ihhp.com/free-eq-quiz/>

▲ *These are some example questions that you might see on a self-reporting emotional intelligence test. What would your answers be?*

What makes EQ?

Despite the various definitions of emotional intelligence, the concept can be divided into four areas of specific skills, based on Daniel Goleman's model.

Self-awareness—Knowing your emotions

- **Awareness of emotions.** This refers to how well you know your own emotions, including your moods and behavior tendencies. Let's say that you've just started a job as a stock clerk at the local toy store. Your boss has agreed to limit your hours because of your school schedule. At first, everything works out fine, but then you find that you are being scheduled for more and more hours. You feel nervous and anxious about the situation, but you feel absolutely terrified at the idea of speaking to your employer. This awareness of your emotional state is the first step toward being able to manage it.



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- **Accurate self-assessment.** How would you assess this emotion? You know you'll be nervous when you talk to your employer. Will your annoyance be communicated, too? Do you want to let your employer know that you are annoyed, or would it be better to have a businesslike discussion? If you have an accurate self-assessment, you are aware of your strengths, weaknesses, and limitations. In this case, you know that you have a difficult time getting your point across verbally when you are nervous or annoyed. Just to be sure you are taking the right approach, you can ask a friend for help in finding the right words.
- **Self-confidence.** Your awareness and assessment of these emotions gives you the confidence you need to deal with them. Instead of leaving your boss an angry voicemail (at a time when you know he won't be available to answer the phone), you ask to speak to him at the end of your shift. In a calm voice you say, "You might not have noticed that you have been scheduling me for more hours than we had agreed to. I would like to get back to my regular schedule." In just a few moments, you've made your case (and most likely had your hours reduced) and left a favorable impression with your boss.



Discover "Six Self-Awareness Exercises to Improve Your Life and Work" by reading Erin Schultz's article and watching Thai Nguyen's video here: <https://www.entrepreneur.com/video/278120>.

- ▶ *If you are in a stressful situation, take a moment to breathe and calm down. This is one way to practice managing your emotions.*

Self-management—Managing your emotions

- **Self-control** is what keeps you from slamming the door, throwing small objects, or otherwise acting foolishly in response to your emotions. You might think that a friend who betrays you deserves a verbal thrashing, but holding your tongue shows that you can restrain yourself. When you learn that you don't *have* to do what your emotions are telling you, you understand self-control.
- **Transparency** means being who you say you are. Your motives, beliefs, and actions are just what they seem to be. You have nothing to hide and are trustworthy, never behaving in a manner that is "two-faced." If you say that you support a change in the management of the business, for example, you won't advocate keeping the same managers. Instead, you'll promote change because that's what you believe in. 
- **Adaptability** is a trait shared by people who have learned to adjust to new and changing situations. Whether you have experienced a lot of changes or just a few, you can demonstrate **adaptability** in the workplace by simply accepting a change when it comes. Without becoming fearful or angry, an adaptable person sees change as a part of life.
- **Achievement** is important to people with high levels of self-management. They often set high standards for themselves so that whatever they do is evaluated in terms of their goals. Achievement-oriented, emotionally intelligent people are motivated.
- **A positive attitude** is common in people with high emotional intelligence. They are willing to start new projects, sometimes without knowing all the details, because they are optimistic. They see their circumstances as a "glass half-full" instead of as a "glass half-empty."



Social awareness—Knowing and understanding the emotions of others

- **Empathy** means understanding the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of another person. Without **empathy**—seeing the world through another person’s eyes—you might focus only on your own needs and not relate to the needs of others. Empathy can help you understand why a worker’s productivity has dropped in recent weeks. It may even help you see what can be done to improve the worker’s productivity.
- **Organizational awareness** refers to a person’s ability to see the larger picture in an organization. A person with **organizational awareness** knows who the decision makers are and is sensitive to social expectations. If the CEO expects each company division to operate independently from the other divisions, there is not likely to be much overlap. As an employee of the company, you’ll need organizational awareness—an understanding of the relationship between the divisions. (Daniel Goleman discusses organizational awareness in greater depth in the video found here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=heRCxqQmrGQ>.)
- **Service** means being willing to help others, whether in everyday situations, such as helping a coworker find the answer to a question, or in a formal context, such as participating in a business-wide project. If helping others is important to you, you are demonstrating emotional intelligence through service.



▲ *Empathy is an important trait that will help strengthen your relationships with others, both personally and professionally.*

Relationship management—Managing the emotions of others

- **Effective communication** is a big part of emotional intelligence. If you are able to listen carefully and use words and body language that accurately reflect your thoughts and feelings, you are able to interact effectively and to inspire and persuade others.
- **Recognition of others** is acknowledging the significance of other people. When you interact with others in a way that builds a relationship, instead of in a way that attempts to build your own image, you are demonstrating emotional intelligence. And, when you reach out to a new employee at work in spite of the fact that s/he is different from you in some way, you display a high level of emotional intelligence.
- **A sense of teamwork** means that you are cooperative, willing to share information and plans, and able to draw others in. Let's say you're working on a group project at work. Allowing others to contribute to the project, even encouraging them to do so, demonstrates a high level of emotional intelligence.



- **Negotiation skills** are important because they help you to settle disagreements. Small differences of opinion can turn into major problems if you are not willing to see another person's point of view and perhaps "give in a little" to reach an agreement. People with high emotional intelligence are able to negotiate and resolve conflict in a way that is as fair as possible.
- **A change catalyst** is someone who recognizes the need to improve a situation and who works to make it happen. When you see an unjust situation, for example, are you likely to do something about it? Stopping a business scam, advocating for better employee benefits, and improving business processes are examples of being a change **catalyst**.

Summary

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize and manage emotions in ourselves and others. It is different from traditional intelligence—and may, in fact, be more important. To raise your level of emotional intelligence, you can study and practice particular behaviors within four areas of specific skills: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

TOTAL RECALL

1. What is emotional intelligence?
2. How does emotional intelligence compare with traditional intelligence?
3. Describe the significance of an EQ test.
4. Explain the following skill areas of emotional intelligence:
 - a. Self-awareness
 - b. Self-management
 - c. Social awareness
 - d. Relationship management



Emotional Intelligence Every Day

EQ—Why now?

Why is it important to pay attention to emotional intelligence—especially today? Because **collaboration** is becoming a standard method of achieving business goals. The frequent use of teams, the prevalence of group projects, and the popularity of joint ventures reflect the common saying: Two heads are better than one. Since it's almost impossible to accomplish something together without getting along, having a high level of emotional intelligence is necessary for success in today's business world.

Even George Lucas, famed creator of *Star Wars*, has spoken publicly about the importance of emotional intelligence. In an article that he wrote on the topic, he says, "We need talented individuals with technical skills, but their abilities to communicate and work with others are just as valuable."

Of course, a movie set isn't the only place where collaboration is important. Working on a software project, a marketing event, or a bank merger requires partnering with (and depending upon) other people. In fact, almost any business venture can be viewed as a group effort to meet business goals.

- ▶ *Collaborating with others is challenging without high emotional intelligence!*





Travis Bradberry explains “Why You Need Emotional Intelligence to Succeed in Business” in his article at <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/241998>.

As we use emotional intelligence to help us navigate our workplace challenges, we benefit from the advantages it brings:

- **Communicating needs effectively.** When you are aware of your own emotions, you can speak about your needs and wants in a way that is more exact. You don’t describe your feelings in inadequate terms. If you feel angry, you say so. But, you say so in a way that doesn’t infuriate those around you—rather, in a way that promotes a solution.
- **Responding to criticism.** Negative feedback is always hard to handle, but if you recognize and understand that becoming defensive is a natural first response, you can move beyond it and face the issue in a mature and productive manner. Your response can be to improve based on the information you’ve received.
- **Solving problems.** It’s easier to solve problems when you acknowledge and separate negative feelings from the positive action you can take to find a solution. Getting caught up in the emotion of the moment can cloud your judgment.

Emotional Intelligence Hits the Big Time

Daniel Goleman wrote an article about emotional intelligence for the *Harvard Business Review* (HBR). Many business leaders pay careful attention to what the HBR publishes. But, this particular article was special: It became the most widely read article published by the HBR in 40 years! After reading the article, the CEO of Johnson & Johnson was so intrigued by the concept of emotional intelligence and its importance in the workplace that he ordered 400 copies of the article to distribute to his top managers all over the world.

- **Being flexible.** There's an old saying that goes, "Nothing is constant but change." A key ingredient for success is the ability to adapt to a changing world, changing expectations, and changes in personal circumstances. Flexing with change means adjusting to, not resisting, change.
- **Understanding other people's needs.** At some moment in our lives, we realize that the world does not revolve around us—that everyone has unique needs that may or may not match our own. Emotional intelligence allows us to see those needs and respond accordingly.
- **Responding to difficult people.** Trying to understand the motivation for a person's bad behavior often leads to a way to deal with it. If you can discover why someone is behaving the way s/he is, you might be able to address the problem directly, instead of getting caught up in responding on the same negative level. For example, if a coworker doesn't speak to you all of a sudden, it's easy to get angry and not speak to her/him in return. However, it's possible, even likely, that something else is going on—a problem at home, an illness, or some misunderstanding. Emotional intelligence helps us to see the reasons people behave the way they do.

- ▶ *When conflict occurs, try to be open and understanding rather than immediately becoming defensive or taking it personally.*



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Leaders and emotional intelligence

One reason the business world has taken note of emotional intelligence is that research tells us that the most effective leaders have a high level of emotional intelligence. Here are some examples of how emotional intelligence and leadership overlap:

- **Proactive behavior.** Leaders are expected to take action before problems develop. As you develop your emotional intelligence by being a catalyst for change, you begin to demonstrate the foresight and know-how that leaders need.
- **Perseverance.** Leaders are often the people who keep trying in spite of setbacks and seemingly impossible obstacles. With self-control, a positive attitude, and the motivation that comes with emotional intelligence, leaders learn to outlast disappointment and fatigue.
- **Positive working relationships.** Leaders have to get along with a wide variety of people, sometimes encouraging others, and sometimes inspiring them. The positive relationships that come from effective communication and a genuine interest in others are hallmarks of emotional intelligence.
- **Confidence.** Leaders need to be confident that they are doing and saying the right things. The awareness of self and others developed by emotional intelligence can reassure a leader—helping him/her to become an expert at assessing emotions and at responding in appropriate ways.

As you interact with others at work—and as you respond to new situations—use your emotional intelligence as a guide. Don't let your emotions get in the way, though. You need to demonstrate a high EQ to be successful.





In his article “Five Aspects of Emotional Intelligence Required for Effective Leadership,” Brent Gleeson relates his experiences as a Navy SEAL and entrepreneur to the need for EQ in leadership positions. You can read it at <http://www.inc.com/brent-gleeson/5-aspects-of-emotional-intelligence-required-for-effective-leadership.html>.

Summary

Emotional intelligence is especially important today because collaboration is becoming a standard method of achieving business goals. As we use our emotional intelligence at work, we experience the benefits of communicating our needs effectively, responding to criticism appropriately, solving problems, being flexible, understanding other people’s needs, and responding appropriately to difficult people. Since the most effective leaders have a high level of emotional intelligence, things such as proactive behavior, perseverance, positive working relationships, and confidence are characteristics of both leadership and emotional intelligence.

TOTAL RECALL

1. Why is it important to pay attention to emotional intelligence in today’s world?
2. What are six benefits of emotional intelligence?
3. How is emotional intelligence important to leadership?

Make It Pay!

How emotionally smart are you? Remember a stressful situation that you experienced recently at work or at school—perhaps dealing with an upset customer, participating in a frustrating group project, or receiving a grade that you felt was unfair. Did you demonstrate emotional intelligence? Were you aware of your emotions, and did you respond to them appropriately? Better yet, did you recognize the feelings of people around you and manage those individuals’ emotions in a suitable manner? Consider what you did right in the situation, such as maintaining self-control and displaying empathy, as well as how you could be more emotionally intelligent in the future.