

# EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

## TRAINING MANUAL

# Why Should I Care about Emotional Intelligence at Work?

- It may not seem necessary to think about our emotional intelligence when things are going well, but what about on a bad day?
- Sometimes it's when we do not want to think about our own improvement that we need it most!
- Improving emotional intelligence will help us like our jobs more, like our peers more, be more liked by our peers, and be more effective at our jobs.



## Some times to turn inward and think about our emotional intelligence (E.I.):

1. Someone at work is being just impossible  
**Think:** What is the problem?  
What could solve the problem?
2. For some reason, we are unable to get our point across  
**Adjust.** If one thing isn't working, try another.  
**Rework.** Gear message to better suit the listener's style.  
**Ask.** Find out if you are making sense, or if not, why?
3. We feel sad, irritable, frustrated, stressed, unappreciated, etc.  
**Time Out.** Take a few minutes away from the situation to figure out why you are feeling these ways  
**Work.** Focus on feeling better before tackling interactions (focus on breathing, focus on feelings, step into the other person's shoes.)
4. Negotiation is necessary  
**Wish list.** We often can't get exactly what we want, but knowing what we want is a good starting point.  
**Sacrifice:** What can we possibly give up for the sake of a positive outcome for both parties?

# First Things First



- Before we can think about others, we sometimes need to first think about our own behaviors.
- Is there anything we can do to easily improve an interaction with someone?
  1. Do I have time to give this person the proper attention?
  2. Am I giving this person my full attention?
  3. Am I letting my own issues affect this interaction?
  4. Do I understand the message this person is trying to convey?

# Know Thyself

- What is your greatest strength? This is what you should emphasize!
- Think of several ways in which you can emphasize your strength.
  1. For example, my strength is empathy.
    - a) I can emphasize that by listening more effectively.

# Know Thyself

- What is your biggest weakness? This is what you should work to improve!
- Think of a few ways that you can improve upon your weaknesses.
  1. For example, my biggest weakness is I interrupt, and I am too sensitive.
    - a) I can work to improve that by focusing on what the speaker is saying, not having to always respond, and having confidence that I am a good person even if someone finds fault.
    - b) Work to improve rather than feel defeated.

# Listen Up!

Adults are usually distracted by other things while they listen, and therefore, hear at about 25% efficiency.

- Rather than always try to listen when someone is speaking, sometimes it is necessary, and even helpful, to ask the speaker to come back at a later time when we can be more receptive.
- It has been found that multi-tasking does not really work, so if someone is talking to you, put your phone down, turn away from your computer monitor, and just listen.
- Listening is about more than being able to repeat what someone just said. It involves hearing the words, interpreting the entire message of the speaker, and giving helpful comments or feedback in return.
- Sometimes the words do not convey the whole message. Good listeners are often analyzing what the speaker is trying to get across, why the speaker is sharing the information with us, and what type of feedback may be desired in return.

# Listening:

## Conflict Resolution and Negotiation

- When tempers flare, and frustration levels are high, active listening can have a calming effect.
- If someone is angry or frustrated and not calming down, it could be partially because he or she does not feel like anyone is paying attention.
- The FBI's Critical Incident Response Group (CIRG) has developed a negotiation technique for situations such as hostage negotiations. The main steps that are recommended are minimal encouragements, paraphrasing, emotion labeling, open-ended questions, and 'I' statements. Just as important, however, is a well-placed break in conversation.

# Active Listening Techniques

1. Let the speaker know that you are listening with well-timed and short replies, e.g. I see, or yes, or tell me more, or even by nodding.
2. Paraphrase speaker's messages to make sure you are understanding, and also to show an effort to understand.
3. Identify the emotion the speaker is feeling. For example, if the speaker is very angry and ranting, the listener can say, 'it sounds like you are really hurt', or 'that makes you really angry, huh?' This serves to validate the speaker's feelings.
4. Instead of asking 'Why?' which may put the person on the defensive, ask open-ended questions. ('tell me about that'...or 'could you help me understand better?')
5. Use 'I' statements rather than 'You' statements ('I feel frustrated when you yell at me', for example.) These statements sound less accusatory.
6. Effective pauses. Sometimes not saying anything at all is more effective than even the perfect response. By leaving gaps in the conversation, it allows the speaker to share more. Also, sometimes the speaker is trying to elicit a response, and not giving one, takes some wind out of his or her sails.

# Talking Points

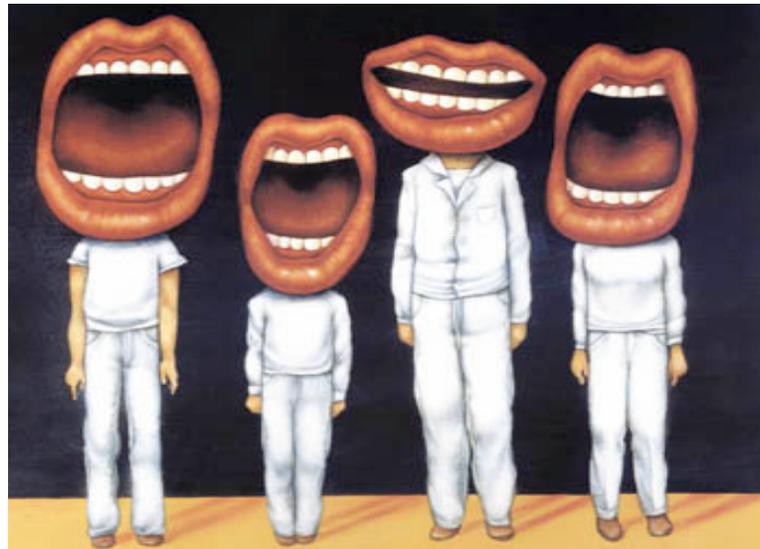


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Are you getting your point across?

# Are you Making Yourself Clear?

- You might be pretty sure that you're being perfectly clear, but you might not be!
- Give yourself time to organize your thoughts and make sure that your main points are clear.
- Give examples.
- **Pay attention to your listeners:**
  - Do they seem to understand?
  - Are they engaged and seeming interested in what what you are saying?
  - Perhaps sum up your thoughts in brief statements periodically and ask listeners to say how they are interpreting what you are saying.
- **Pay attention to yourself:**
  - Make sure you listened to others' preceding comments.
  - Wait for correct entrance to express what you have to say.

# Yes, but what do you REALLY mean?

- We all know that nonverbal communication is at least as important as verbal communication, but how can this knowledge help us in everyday interactions?

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# Nonverbal Communication

- Whether you are a speaker or a listener, sender or receiver, paying attention to body language can guide you to a more positive outcome.
  1. Does the listener seem receptive with open body language, or defensive (if minds are open, bodies tend to be more open)?
    - not holding barriers between you and them, palms up, calm and relaxed face
  2. If you are the speaker, do you seem relaxed, knowledgeable, and open to discussion, or do you seem domineering, accusatory, and a know-it-all?
    - Palms up or arms at your sides rather than pointing or pounding a desk, looking people in the eyes, opening your own body language,
    - check the tone of your voice: is it friendly, or does it sound like you are barking? Are you speaking at a reasonable speed and volume?

# Nonverbal Communication

**Important:** Nonverbal communication is very contextual and individual. Never assume someone's feelings based on one or two common behaviors.

1. Rather, use your suspicions as an opportunity to ask your audience about their reactions or to experiment with your own body language.
2. Maybe a slight change would make a big difference in effectiveness!

# Why must you be so difficult?!

Difficult people come in many forms:

- **The provocateur:** purposely says inflammatory, unnecessary, or off-topic comments in order to get a reaction from you.
- **The withholder:** does not volunteer any information, answers with very short responses that are not helpful.
- **The sarcastic one:** does not take things seriously; puts a negative and somewhat mocking spin on your message.
- **The critic:** Nothing is good enough; nothing is enlightening; the process is stupid; anywhere else would be more enjoyable.
- **The shy one:** In contrast to the withholder, the shy one may want to cooperate, but is difficult to draw out, does not give helpful responses, and is not easy to read; may seem uninterested in your subject matter due to self-conscious behavior.

# Difficult people

- Whether someone is trying to be difficult, or just has a gift, we need to have some strategies to deal with these people while keeping our cool.
  1. Confront their attitude with a question (e.g. “Maybe you disagree with that statement; could you tell me your view about that?”)
  2. Draw difficult people into a friendly dialogue to hopefully lighten up the mood and feel more positive for everyone.
  3. If all else fails, ignore the problem person, and think about all of the positive people instead. This way you will not be weighted down by one person’s negativism.

# I'm sorry; I can change if you'd like.

- Sometimes the problem is not difficult people, but it is people trying too hard to please everyone.
- If you are one of these people, you know that this is a losing battle in which no one is happy.
- This most likely comes from a lack of confidence and self-esteem, but it could also come from not knowing how to deal with difficult people.

**'I know trying to please everyone is futile, but what do I do instead?'**

# When Trying Is Not Working...

1. **MOVE ON.** Part of being emotionally intelligent is being able to read people and situations while knowing how we are feeling and coming across. If a person or situation is a lost cause, it's okay to let it go. Do not waste your valuable time and energy any more than is necessary (assuming that you have made reasonable attempts.)
2. **WORK ON YOU.** Stay focused on what you can do better rather than change someone else's behaviors. In the end, each person is responsible for his or her own behavior: not others' behavior.
3. **DO NOT TRY TOO HARD.** Stop trying to please everyone. The person who is always trying to help everyone is the first one to get knocked down. In other words, people do not appreciate someone trying to help them, and they often will take out their frustration on the very person who is TRYING.

# I am So Stressed!

## Stress Reduction Kit



### Directions:

1. Place kit on FIRM surface.
2. Follow directions in circle of kit.
3. Repeat step 2 as necessary, or until unconscious.
4. If unconscious, cease stress reduction activity.

# Take a Chill Pill!

- Extra responsibility, less sleep, lower expendable income, and never-ending bills can make us more stressed than we even realize.
- Stress exacerbates many other conditions, such as: depression, insomnia, irritable bowel syndrome, and colds, as well as others.

## **Good news!**

- There are many simple ways to reduce our stress levels that are very effective.
- By managing our stress levels on a regular basis, we are likelier to remain more relaxed, and decrease stress quicker and easier in the future.
- How can I manage my stress?

# Managing Stress

- Step away from the situation if possible
- Focus on the in-and-out of your breath for a few minutes, and concentrate only on that.
  - If thoughts or feelings come up during this exercise, that's fine, but quickly refocus on your breathing.
  - This helps you calm down and gain perspective.
- If you need to vent, find a friend, family member, or trusted colleague who you can trust to listen and maybe offer helpful suggestions.
- Once you are calm, think about the stressful situation in a different way.
  - How can you change it?
  - How can you better cope with it?
  - Have you tried some alternative ways of dealing with the situation or person?

# May I have your Attention, Please?

- Hopefully, before you began speaking, you assessed the situation to make sure that your timing was good. Even if you did, things may have changed.
- If your audience is clearly not interested or just does not have the time or attention to listen to what you are saying, here are a few options:
  - Drop a large object on the floor to wake them up (probably not the best option)
  - Ask a question in which the audience elaborates on what you have said.
  - Speed things up a bit.
  - Ask if there would be a better time to speak because they seem distracted.

# Boundaries

- An important part of emotional intelligence that is often ignored is people's boundaries.
- What might be perfectly appropriate to you may be inappropriate or uncomfortable for someone else.
- When someone's boundaries are crossed, it can have negative results, such as:
  - Anger
  - Closed off to your message
  - Sadness
  - Distrust
  - Lack of focus; distractibility
- If you sense that you have crossed the line with someone, apologize, and proceed with caution.
- Switch to a lighter subject, or put the ball in someone else's court (i.e. stop talking; let someone else speak for a while.)

# Rules of Thumb

- A good rule of thumb is to ask and share a little less rather than a little more. If the other person is open to sharing more, then he or she will.
- Do not push people too hard or too quickly.
- We can never know for sure what is okay and what is taboo for any particular person.
- Just because an experience is one way for you, does not mean that the experience is the same way for others.
- You don't have to understand why someone feels a particular way necessarily, but you do need to respect that it is his or her feeling to have.

# Questions from Others

## **How do I keep people motivated even on a boring project?**

- If you are having trouble keeping people awake with your subject matter when speaking publicly, try asking an open-ended question that requires audience participation.
- Ask for volunteers to share relevant experiences. If there is silence, share something yourself, and ask if anyone can relate to your experience.
- Go back to the basics: are you speaking in a dynamic and engaging tone? Are you using eye contact? How is your body language? Can you make your material any more interesting while you are speaking?

# Questions from Others

**How should I handle “attack criticism” in front of a group.**

- Draw the critic into a conversation where he or she is free to voice any concerns or doubts.
- If the critic is not letting up, try to lighten up the mood with a short, positive comment, and move on.
- Rather than confront the critic--which could cause embarrassment and more criticism--address possible concerns in your next few sentences and check for change in mood.

# Questions from Others

**How can I help the “withholder” to open up and help avoid passive stalemates that waste time and aggravate?**

- Ask specific and open-ended questions directed toward that person (be subtle and somewhat gentle so as to not seem threatening)
- Open up a little yourself; give a little more.
- Do not waste too much time on someone unwilling to participate in a dialogue; try a couple of times, but then move on to others.
- Empathize. What is causing this person to withhold? Is he or she shy? Having a hard time? Not understanding? Try to think of this person’s perspective and change your behavior accordingly.
- Directly mention that he or she seems to be withholding, and find out if this is because he or she needs time to open up, or are you being offensive, or unclear, and so on?

# Questions from Others

## How should I handle the “always right person”?

- It can be tricky when you are talking to someone who knows everything already, but we can get out gracefully with some patience, positive attitude, an open mind, and a willingness to listen and learn.
- It may sound like a joke, but maybe we could learn something from the ‘know-it-all.’ How?
  - Ask questions
  - Challenge Mr. or Ms. Know-It-All with a bit of healthy debate or asking for sources of the knowledge.
  - If this stops feeling productive and starts feeling petty or fake, do not take the bait that this person is putting out for you. Stop responding and move on to others who are more receptive.

# Questions from Others

## **How can I give concise directions that can be understood by all learning styles?**

- Another big part of emotional intelligence is reading your audience and being flexible enough to work with a variety of personalities.
- We may be assuming that everyone is at the same level of understanding or experience, but this might not be true.
  - Given that there are many different learning styles, make sure to say things in more than one way.
  - Double-check understanding as you go by looking, listening, and asking.
  - Make your speaking style concise; there is no need for flowery language or excessive information.
  - KISS: Keep It Simple, Stupid!