

# Emotional Intelligence

## What is Emotional intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence (EI) refers to the capacity to deal effectively with one's own and others' emotions. EI has become a popular framework for looking at the interpersonal skills required for performing effectively in today's workplace and it is now being considered by many as being a critical predictor of success in fields dependent on high quality interpersonal relationships.<sup>1</sup>

Emotional Intelligence:

- is a set of non-cognitive abilities that influence your ability to get on in life.
- works synergistically with IQ to enhance performance.
- can be measured and learned. <sup>2</sup>

### Areas where EI is useful

In the work place, EI has been said to contribute to<sup>3</sup>:

- networking abilities
- listening and oral communication skills
- stress tolerance and adaptability
- conflict management
- building healthy trusting relationships with clients and colleagues
- teamwork effectiveness
- skills at negotiating agreements.

the ability to lead, motivate and foster positive attitudes with and amongst employees.

### Five dimensions to emotional intelligence

This framework, popularised by Daniel Goleman,<sup>4</sup> consists of five key areas or dimensions:

- **Self-awareness** – being aware of how you feel and why you feel the way you feel.
- **Self-regulation** – managing your emotional response to a situation.
- **Self-motivation** – the ability to marshal positive emotions.
- **Empathy** – the capacity to know how someone else feels.
- **Social skills** – the ability to deal effectively with others.

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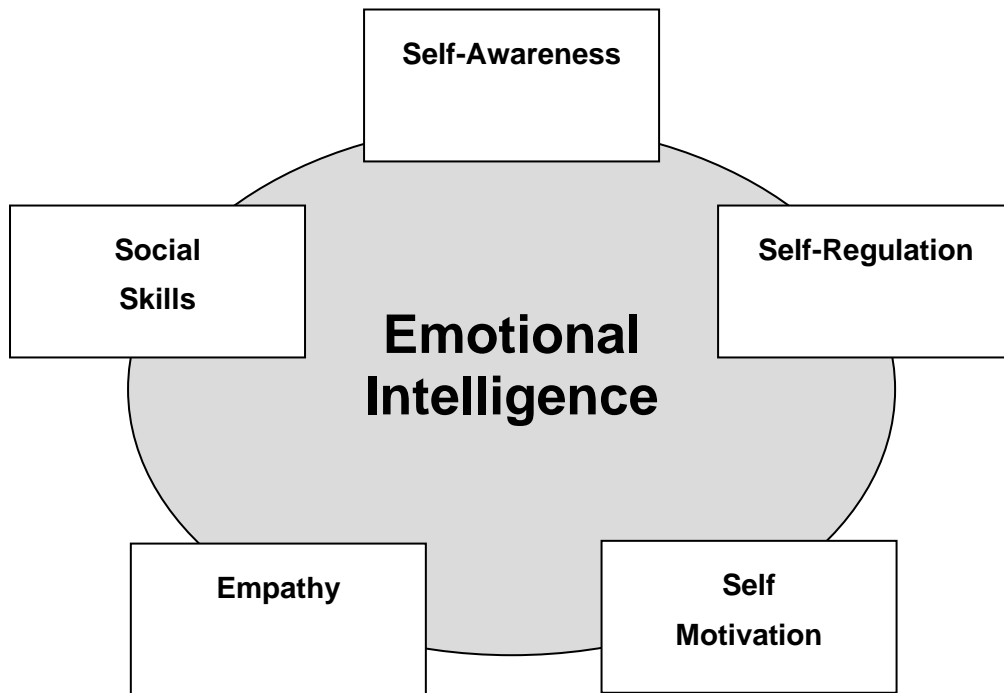
<sup>1</sup> Robbins, S.P., Millett, B., Cacioppe, R. & Waters-Marsh, T. 1998. *Organisational Behaviour, Leading and Managing in Australia and New Zealand*, Prentice Hall, Sydney

<sup>2</sup> Cannon & Orme, 2000. Cited in Lowry, M. 2002. *Prescribing an Emotional Intelligence Training Program for Entry-Level Employees in a Hotel Environment in Ontario*, unpublished paper

<sup>3</sup> Swinburne Centre for Neuropsychology 2002

<sup>4</sup> Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R. & McKee, A. 2002. *The New Leaders: Transforming the Art of Leadership into the Science of Results*, Little, Brown, London, pp.253/254

Figure 1: Emotional Intelligence Model<sup>5</sup>



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<sup>5</sup> McShane, S., 2001. Canadian Organisational Behaviour. 4thEd. Chapter 7 p. 199

## **Self-awareness**

The 'cornerstone of emotional intelligence' consists of knowing your internal states, preferences and intuitions. There are three specific competencies associated with self-awareness; emotional self-awareness, accurate self-assessment and self-confidence. Goleman asserts that individuals high in emotional self-awareness are:

- attuned to their inner signals, recognising how their feelings affect them and their job performance
- attuned to their guiding values
- able to be candid and authentic
- know their limitations and strengths and gracefully learn where they need to improve
- able to welcome constructive criticism and feedback
- able to play to their strengths.

## **Self-regulation or self-management**

Self regulation (or self management) involves managing your internal states, impulses and resources. There are five specific competencies associated with self-regulation: self-control, trustworthiness, conscientiousness, adaptability and innovation.

Goleman claims that individuals high in self-management are able to:

- find ways to manage their disturbing emotions and impulses
- stay calm and clear-headed under high stress or during a crisis
- behave transparently by living their values
- openly admit to mistakes or faults
- confront unethical behaviour rather than turn a blind eye
- be flexible in adapting to new challenges.

## **Self-motivation**

Self motivation consists of the emotional tendencies that guide or facilitate reaching goals. There are four specific competencies associated with self-motivation: achievement drive, commitment, initiative and optimism.

Goleman suggests such individuals are able to:

- set high performance standards for themselves and others
- set measurable but challenging goals
- continually learn and focus on performance improvement
- seize or create opportunities
- see setbacks as opportunities rather than threats, a glass half-full approach.

## **Empathy**

Empathy is the awareness of the needs, feelings and concerns of others. There are five specific competencies associated with empathy: understanding others, developing others, service orientation, leveraging diversity and political awareness.

Goleman suggests that individuals high in these competencies are able to:

- get along with people of diverse backgrounds
- be politically astute, able to detect crucial social networks and read key power relationships
- monitor customer satisfaction carefully to ensure they are getting what they need.

## **Social skills (handling relationships)**

Having social skills is the ability to induce desirable responses in others. There are eight specific competencies associated with social skills: influence, communication, conflict management, leadership, being a change catalyst, building bonds, collaboration/cooperation and team capabilities.

Goleman suggests that individuals high in these competencies will be able to:

- be persuasive and engaging when they address a group
- give timely and constructive feedback and be a natural coach or mentor
- be strong advocates for change even in the face of opposition
- resolve conflict by drawing out all parties, understanding the differing perspectives and finding a common ideal
- draw others into active, enthusiastic commitment to the collective effort and build team spirit and identity.

# 1. What's my EI score?<sup>6</sup>

Indicate your level of agreement with these ten statements using the following scale:

- Strongly disagree (SD)
- Disagree (D)
- Neither agree nor disagree (N)
- Agree (A)
- Strongly agree (SA)

1. I am usually aware from moment to moment of my feelings as they change.

SD    D    N    A    SA

2. I act before I think.

SD    D    N    A    SA

3. When I want something, I want it NOW.

SD    D    N    A    SA

4. I bounce back quickly from life's setbacks.

SD    D    N    A    SA

5. I can pick up subtle social cues that indicate others' needs or wants.

SD    D    N    A    SA

6. I'm very good at handling myself in social situations.

SD    D    N    A    SA

7. I'm persistent in going after the things I want.

SD    D    N    A    SA

8. When people share their problems with me, I'm good at putting myself in their shoes.

SD    D    N    A    SA

9. When I'm in a bad mood, I make a strong effort to get out of it.

SD    D    N    A    SA

10. I can find common ground and build rapport with people from all walks of life.

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<sup>6</sup> adapted from Robbins, S.P. 2002. *Self Assessment Library 2.0 CD-ROM*, Prentice Hall, New Jersey

SD    D    N    A    SA

**What's my EI score – scoring guide**

<p>For questions 1 &amp; 4 – 10, score as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>5 points for strongly agree</li> <li>4 points for agree</li> <li>3 points for neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>2 points for disagree</li> <li>1 point for strongly disagree</li> </ul>	<p>For questions 2 and 3, score in reverse.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 points for strongly agree</li> <li>2 points for agree</li> <li>3 points for neither agree nor disagree</li> <li>4 points for disagree</li> <li>5 point for strongly disagree</li> </ul>
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My score is: \_\_\_\_\_

Your score will fall between 10 and 50. While no definite cut-off scores are available, scores of 40 or higher indicate a high EI. Scores of 20 or less suggest a relatively low EI. EI may be most predictive of performance in jobs such as management and customer service where success is as dependent on interpersonal skills as technical ability. People with low EI are likely to have difficulty managing others and working on teams. Can EI be learned? A large part of an individual's EI is genetically based. However, **you can improve on your EI**. See, for instance Segal, J. *Raising Your Emotional Intelligence*, Holt, 1997. For further information on EI, you might like to visit the website of the Emotional Intelligence Consortium at [www.eiconsortium.org](http://www.eiconsortium.org).

From a development point of view it is more valuable breaking your score down into the 5 dimensions. This enables you to determine your relative EI strengths and development needs and create an action plan to capitalize on your strengths and document strategies for improvement. Work out your scores for each dimension based on which questions relate to it.

Dimension & related questions	Your score
Self-awareness (questions 1 & 9)	
Self-regulation (questions 2 & 4)	
Self-motivation (questions 3 & 7)	
Empathy ( questions 5 & 8)	
Social skills (questions 6 & 10)	

It may be interesting to reflect whether others would perceive your level of EI in the same way you do. If you are feeling particularly brave, you might like to put this to the test by getting someone who knows you well to complete this questionnaire about you.

**Developing EI competencies – action plan**

<b>EI Competency</b>	<b>How this competency can assist in providing service</b>	<b>How this competency can be further developed</b>
<b>Self-Awareness</b>		
<b>Self-Regulation</b>		
<b>Self-Motivation</b>		
<b>Empathy</b>		
<b>Social Skills</b>		

## EI competencies in action – activity

Which of Goleman’s 5 EI competencies will be useful in the following situations? Explain how.

1. You have a constituent on the phone berating you over the amount of time it took you to get back to her in relation to a query. You have put a lot of effort into researching her issue to be able to provide accurate and up to date information.

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2. A constituent is taking a long time trying to explain his query – you have a number of pressing deadlines and don’t really have the time to listen to his concerns now.

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3. In general, how do you think that the EI competencies can be useful when providing quality service?

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