

Emotional Intelligence

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There have been many articles and a lot of literature written on emotional intelligence and whilst many people are aware of it, to many the words don't make sense. They suggest an oxymoron. How can intelligence which is rational, and emotions which are not necessarily rational be combined?

We all realise that emotions are constantly flowing in us. If for example you take an instant dislike on first meeting to someone because they speak poorly and you admire good speech, you may miss the prospect of a fantastic opportunity. You have been blown off course by an emotional storm and this uncontrolled emotion may cause personal and business harm. Your emotions have broken through the normal control mechanisms. This is clear evidence that emotions are constantly changing and can do so in a way that impacts productivity, performance and opportunity. How often have you thought negatively about someone else's behaviour? Has this thinking ever impeded your decisions and outcomes?

What is emotional intelligence? It is the ability to recognise emotions in both yourself and others and contingent on this to use the knowledge to think more effectively, to understand what causes feelings and to manage emotions as they influence thinking, behaviour and capacity to problem solve. All these factors are at work to influence productivity, performance and profitability. Using emotions with intelligence gives a person an edge for optimal personal capacity and performance and for leading and directing others most effectively.

A lot of scholarly work has been done that indicates that you can measure emotional intelligence, you can measure a person's intuitive capacity. Once measured there are tools, systems and processes to use to develop yourself, with positive results for the bottom line and a more harmonious workplace, where there is better management of stress and leaders who really lead. I'm sure we can all remember leaders who stood out from the rest because that person was inspirational, motivational and cared about you and others in the workplace. We would go that extra mile for that person based on the relationship of trust and understanding that existed. That leader would be described as being high in emotional intelligence. It is an outstanding ability.

A measure of emotional intelligence is the MSCEIT, (Mayer, Salovey Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test), developed by psychologists and acknowledged as leaders in emotional intelligence measurement and testing.

Their research indicates that emotions are an important component of work life as they drive commitment, negotiation, conflict and change. Emotion is vital to make good decisions, take optimal action to solve problems, manage change and be successful. Good decisions require emotional and logical skills and emotional intelligence integrates rational and emotional styles to reach optimal solutions and effectively problem solve.

There is a proven connection between good leadership and high emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is an ability that we are all born with and it can be increased and developed.