

Leading with Emotional Intelligence.

Building Stronger Teams and Workplace Relationships

Think of the Best Leader You've Had

Picture them for a moment. What made them great to work for?



Raise your hand for A

**Mostly their
technical expertise**

What they knew and could do



Raise your hand for B

**Mostly how they
treated people**

How they listened, stayed steady, and
made you feel

Our Time Together



STEP 1

Feel It

Experience EI in action with a quick partner activity



STEP 2

Understand It

The five components and how emotions shape teams



STEP 3

Apply It

Triggers, a simple reset tool, and real leadership scenarios



STEP 4

Own It

Build your personal EI action plan

Same Words, Different Message.

Activity 1 | 10 minutes

Activity 1: How to Play

1

Pair up

Turn to a neighbor. A trio works too.

2

Draw a card

Take an emotion card. Keep it secret.

3

Say the line

Deliver the line using only your hidden emotion.

4

Guess and swap

Your partner guesses. Switch roles.

ROUND 1

“Can you stop by my office at 4 today?”

ROUND 2

“Thanks for sending that report.”

Words stay the same. Only the emotion changes.

What Just Happened?



How quickly could you tell the emotion?



What gave it away: tone, face, posture, pace?



How did the frustrated “stop by my office” make you feel?



How often does your team hear your emotions when you think you are just sharing information?

THE TAKEAWAY

Your emotions ride along with every message, whether you intend them to or not.

What Is Emotional Intelligence?

The ability to recognize, understand, and manage your own emotions, and to recognize and influence the emotions of others.



It is a skill, not a trait

Unlike IQ, EI can be learned and strengthened with practice at any career stage.



It multiplies technical skill

Expertise gets you the role. EI determines how well you lead people in it.



It shows up under pressure

EI matters most in the moments when emotions run highest.

Emotions Ripple Through Teams



Research on emotional contagion shows that one person's mood spreads through a group and changes how the group cooperates and handles conflict.

Leaders set the tone because everyone is watching them.

Psychological Safety

Do people speak up, admit mistakes, and raise concerns?

Collaboration

Do people work together or protect their turf?

Engagement & Retention

Do people give extra effort, and do they stay?

What It Looks Like on a Team

LOWER Emotional Intelligence

- Reacts with outbursts out of proportion to the situation
- Blames others when things go wrong
- Interrupts and struggles to listen
- Gets defensive when given feedback
- Shuts down other points of view

HIGHER Emotional Intelligence

- Stays steady and calm under pressure
- Owns mistakes and shares credit
- Listens to understand, not to respond
- Asks for feedback and uses it
- Stays open and flexible when things change

The Five Components of EI

KNOWING AND MANAGING YOURSELF



Self-Awareness

Recognizing your emotions and how they affect others.

AT WORK

Noticing impatience in a meeting and adjusting your tone.



Self-Regulation

Managing impulses so you respond instead of react.

AT WORK

Absorbing bad news from above without venting at the team.



Motivation

Drive rooted in purpose, not just rewards.

AT WORK

Keeping standards and optimism high through setbacks.



Empathy

Understanding the feelings and perspectives of others.

AT WORK

Checking in privately when someone's performance dips.



Social Skills

Building relationships, influencing, and resolving conflict.

AT WORK

Drawing a quiet team member into the conversation.

Quick Self-Check

	Rarely				Consistently
Self-Awareness	1	2	3	4	5
Self-Regulation	1	2	3	4	5
Motivation	1	2	3	4	5
Empathy	1	2	3	4	5
Social Skills	1	2	3	4	5

ON YOUR HANDOUT

- 1 Rate yourself 1 to 5 on each component. Be honest; no one sees this.
- 2 Circle your strongest component.
- 3 Star the one you most want to grow.
- 4 Tell your neighbor your star and why. (1 minute)

When Emotions Take the Wheel

COMMON WORKPLACE TRIGGERS

-  Being challenged or questioned in front of others
-  Time pressure and shifting deadlines
-  Mistakes, your own or someone else's
-  Feeling unheard, excluded, or disrespected
-  Change you did not choose

REACT

The emotional brain drives

Immediate and automatic

Protects your ego

Often regretted later

RESPOND

The thinking brain drives

Intentional and considered

Protects the relationship

Builds trust over time

On your handout: write down your #1 trigger.

Pause. Breathe. Choose.

A 10-second reset for the moments that matter most



Pause

Notice the signal: a tight jaw, a racing pulse, the urge to interrupt. Then name it: "I'm frustrated."



Breathe

Take one slow breath, with the exhale longer than the inhale. It buys time for your thinking brain to catch up.



Choose

Ask yourself: "What outcome do I want, and what response will get me there?"

Emotional Intelligence in Action.

Activity 2 | 14 minutes



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Activity 2: Your Table's Assignment

Each table gets one scenario card: A, B, or C.

1

Low-EI response

What would a leader do on autopilot? What would it cost?

2

High-EI response

What would you actually say? Draft the first sentence.

3

Components in play

Which of the five components are you using, and how?



6 minutes

Discuss as a table

Pick a spokesperson

Be ready to share your high-EI response in 60 seconds

The Scenarios



Navigating Conflict

Two of your team leads have stopped cooperating. Each has come to you privately to complain about the other, and the tension is now showing up in team meetings.



Delivering Feedback

A high performer has missed deadlines for three weeks and has been short with coworkers. You need to address it today.



Building Relationships

You were promoted over a peer who also wanted the role. They have become distant and quietly resistant, and the team has noticed.

Scenario A: A High-EI Response



Navigating Conflict

THE SITUATION

Two team leads have stopped cooperating. Each complains privately about the other, and the tension now shows up in team meetings.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Empathy:** Acknowledges both people's frustration
- **Self-Regulation:** Stays neutral; doesn't take sides
- **Social Skills:** Points them to a shared goal



WHAT A HIGH-EI LEADER MIGHT SAY

"I asked you both here because I can see the last few weeks have been frustrating for each of you, and I don't think meeting separately is helping. I'm not here to decide who's right. We all want this team to hit its goals, so let's talk about what's getting in the way and agree on how you'll work together from here."

One example, not the only right answer. What phrase could you use this week?

Scenario B: A High-EI Response



Delivering Feedback

THE SITUATION

A high performer has missed deadlines for three weeks and has been short with coworkers. You need to address it today.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Self-Awareness:** Opens calmly, leads with respect
- **SBI:** Situation, Behavior, Impact stated plainly
- **Empathy:** Asks a genuine question, then listens



WHAT A HIGH-EI LEADER MIGHT SAY

“I want to talk with you because you’re one of the strongest people on this team, and something seems different lately. Over the past three weeks, the last three project deadlines slipped, and in Tuesday’s meeting your responses to Maria came across as pretty sharp. That’s put the team behind and created some tension. I’m not assuming anything, so I’d like to understand: what’s going on?”

One example, not the only right answer. What phrase could you use this week?

Scenario C: A High-EI Response



Building Relationships

THE SITUATION

You were promoted over a peer who also wanted the role. They have become distant and quietly resistant, and the team has noticed.

WHY IT WORKS

- **Self-Regulation:** Names the awkwardness calmly
- **Empathy:** Validates their disappointment
- **Social Skills:** Values strengths, invites input



WHAT A HIGH-EI LEADER MIGHT SAY

“I’d rather say this out loud than pretend it isn’t there. I know you wanted this role too, and I’d understand if the last few weeks have been hard. I really respect what you bring to this team, and I’m going to need your experience to make this work. What would make this transition work better for you?”

One example, not the only right answer. What phrase could you use this week?

Your Emotional Intelligence Toolkit



Navigating Conflict

- Meet with both people together
- Acknowledge emotions before facts
- Find the shared goal
- Agree on specific next steps



Delivering Feedback

- Check your own emotional state first
- Use SBI: Situation, Behavior, Impact
- Ask “What’s going on?” and listen
- Agree on support and expectations



Building Relationships

- Name the awkwardness directly
- Ask for their input and use their strengths
- Follow through, every time
- Share credit publicly

Leading with EI Starts Tomorrow



**Emotional
Intelligence is a skill**

It grows with practice, like any other leadership skill.



**Emotions are
contagious**

Your team takes its emotional cues from you.



**Respond, don't
react**

Pause. Breathe. Choose.

What is one thing you will do differently starting tomorrow?

Thank You!

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