

# emotional intelligence

*The ability to monitor one's own and other people's emotions, to discern between different emotions and label them appropriately, and to use emotional information to guide thinking and behavior*

Emotional Intelligence is commonly defined by four attributes:

**Self-management** – You're able to control impulsive feelings and behaviors, manage your emotions in healthy ways, take initiative, follow through on commitments, and adapt to changing circumstances.

**Self-awareness** – You recognize your own emotions and how they affect your thoughts and behavior. You know your strengths and weaknesses, and have self-confidence.

**Social awareness** – You have empathy. You can understand the emotions, needs, and concerns of other people, pick up on emotional cues, feel comfortable socially, and recognize the power dynamics in a group or organization.

**Relationship management** – You know how to develop and maintain good relationships, communicate clearly, inspire and influence others, work well in a team, and manage conflict. Why is emotional intelligence so important?

As we know, it's not the smartest people who are the most successful or the most fulfilled in life. You probably know people who are academically brilliant and yet are socially inept and unsuccessful at work or in their personal relationships. Intellectual ability or your intelligence quotient (IQ) isn't enough on its own to achieve success in life.

Your IQ can help you get a job, but it's your EQ that will help you manage the stress and emotions of that job. IQ and EQ exist in tandem and are most effective when they build off one another.

*Emotional intelligence affects your performance at work.* High emotional intelligence can help you navigate the social complexities of the workplace, lead and motivate others, and excel in your career. Many companies now rate emotional intelligence as important as technical ability and employ EQ testing before hiring.

The good news is that emotional intelligence can be learned and developed:

**Observe how you react to people.** Do you rush to judgment before you know all of the facts? Do you stereotype? Look honestly at how you think and interact with other people.

**Do a self-evaluation.** Are you willing to accept that you're not perfect and that you could work on some areas to make yourself a better person?

**Examine how you react to stressful situations.** Do you become upset every time something doesn't happen the way you want? The ability to stay calm and in control in difficult situations is highly valued in the business world and outside it.

**Take responsibility for your actions.** If you hurt someone's feelings, apologize directly, don't ignore what you did or avoid the person.

**Examine how your actions will affect others** – before you take those actions. If your decision will impact others, put yourself in their place. How will they feel if you do this? Would you want that experience? If you must take the action, how can you help others deal with the effects?