HOW TO DEVELOP EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Between stimulus and response, there is space. In that space lies our freedom and power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and freedom - Viktor E. Frankl

What is Emotional Intelligence ?

Emotional intelligence (**EI or EQ**) is the ability to perceive, use, understand, manage, and handle emotions of oneself and others. It allows for individuals to guide thinking and behavior, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, and adjust emotions to adapt to environments.

EQ is a Leadership Trait. It helps an individual never let their temper get out of control, no matter what problems they are facing. It helps the leader gain complete trust of their team and helps them always make careful, informed decisions.

Key Elements of EQ ?

1

Self-awareness:

Self awareness is a very important capability in the pursuit of developing EQ. When you are self-aware you know how you feel and how your reaction can impact the situation and people around you. It gives you an opportunity to choose to react in a manner that demonstrates your humility.

Self-regulation:

Practice being calm. Self-regulation can be developed with practice. Leaders who regulate themselves effectively refrain from verbally attacking others or making rushed or emotional decisions, stereotyping people or compromising their values. Self-regulation is all about staying in control.

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Motivation:

Leaders who are self-motivated set very high standards for themselves. They are focused and work relentlessly towards achieving their goals. Their focus and determination is inspirational and they set themselves as role-models for their peers and rest of their teams.

Empathy:

In order for you to be a successful leader, you should learn to be empathetic towards your team. It allows you, as a leader, to leverage your EQ and step into others shoes and analyze the situation. It helps you to provide constructive feedback and earn the respect and loyalty of your team.

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Social Skills:

Leaders with good social skills are great communicators. They are good listeners and experts at getting their team to support them. They are good at managing change and resolving conflicts diplomatically. They strive towards setting an example for their team with their own behavior.

How to avoid Ego Traps ?

Ego traps are inevitable during the successful development of one's EQ and need to be identified and later avoided to grow as a Leader. Ego traps create a situation where an inflated perception of yourself and overconfidence distorts reality and negatively influences your growth and performance.

1

Ego Trap # 1 - Ignoring Negative Feedback

When you stop listening to negative feedback, you can end up deluding yourself into thinking that you're always doing things right, 100% of the time, with no room for improvement. Develop a mindset where you evaluate both side of feedback and use it constructively to improve yourself.

Ego Trap # 2 - Falling Victim to Flattery

A known downside to positive feedback is that it may lead to appealing to your ego, getting self-absorbed in praise and flattery. This could eventually lead to influencing your fair decision-making capability. Stay clear of superficial flattery and focus on improving your EQ.

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Ego Trap # 3 - Clinging on to Control

One of the most common ego traps that leaders often fall into is to try and micro-manage their team. The tendency to cling on to control sends a message to the team that there is lack of trust in the team's capabilities. It also leads to having a closed mind towards new and innovative ways of doing work.

Ego Trap # 4 - Refusing to Change Course

This is the "permanence" ego trap. Refusing to change course, after having invested time and energy into a philosophy, even if it's producing diminishing returns leads to performance degradation. As a leader if you want to succeed in the long-term, you're going to need to adapt. Don't let your ego get in the way.

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Ego Trap # 5 - Making False Promises

One significant pitfall for a leader is not being able to deliver on their vision or promise. You will be perceived by your team as someone who is all hype and no substance. Use your EQ to evaluate work and set realistic expectations and deadlines. Deliver high quality work on time and earn the respect of your team and peers.

How to Grow as a Leader ?

In order to become an effective and inspiring leader you must have a sound understanding of your own emotions and resultant actions that would impact people around you. The better people relate to you as a leader, the more successful you will turn out to be. Use your EQ to good effect.

Take the time to work on self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Emotions are important pieces of information that tell you about yourself and others. However, the stress factor takes us out of our comfort zone. We can become overwhelmed and lose control of ourselves. Manage stress and stay emotionally present, do not let it override your thoughts and self-control. Working on these areas will help you excel in the future!

All leaders need to have healthy egos. They need to have a modicum of pride, a helping of confidence, and a degree of self-assurance - Samuel Bacharach

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