

Of Interest

Employee Assistance Program information
Summer 2020

Raise your emotional intelligence at work

What do you do when someone jumps in front of you at the deli counter, cuts you off on the freeway or takes credit for your work? How you address these and similar situations constitutes your emotional intelligence (EQ).

“If you wish you had behaved differently in any of those situations, you may be a victim of ‘emotional hijacking,’” says Adele B. Lynn, president of the Adele Lynn Leadership Group in Belle Vernon, Pa., and author of *The EQ Difference: A Powerful Plan for Putting Emotional Intelligence to Work*.

An emotional hijacking is when the rational, thinking part of your brain is bypassed because of your intense emotions. When this happens, you’re so emotionally fired up you can’t think or solve problems.

How high is your EQ?

We all know that IQ measures a person’s intelligence. But, what exactly is EQ? Ms. Lynn defines emotional intelligence as your ability to manage yourself and your relationships.

Why do you think employers interview prospective employees when they could easily spend less time just testing them for their intelligence?

Here’s why: In interviews, employers are looking for personality traits. When doing interviews, managers can experience how people communicate, determine their personality, and whether they’ll fit in with the rest of the staff.

This is important, as one employee who can’t get along can disrupt an entire workplace. At your office, you may know some very intelligent workers who can’t get along with people, and whose emotions easily get out of hand. Their inability to handle their emotions makes them destructive employees, in spite of their intelligence.

Start with yourself

You don’t have control over other people’s behavior, but you can learn to control your own. Therefore, you need to start by raising your own EQ.

A notebook is an important tool for raising your EQ. Writing down your reactions to emotional situations will help you become aware of your behavior and think rationally.

In *The EQ Difference*, Ms. Lynn discusses steps to improve emotional intelligence. Three of those steps are:

Observe

“Pay attention to your emotions. Try to observe while you’re ‘in the moment,’ especially during conflict situations,” says Ms. Lynn.

Observe both your feelings and reactions in difficult or stressful situations. Are you thinking only of yourself, or can you empathize with the other person? A person with a high EQ is able to think not only of their own needs, but also empathize with others.

Interpret

“Try to determine your triggers and other indicators that prompt you to lose your cool or become fearful,” says Ms. Lynn. When you have intense negative emotions, they’re usually related to your fears.

Write down any fears you believe may have triggered your reaction. Then go over them one by one and determine which, if any, are realistic in this situation.

Pause

Engage in a long pause to help you regain your intentions. Without the pause, you may react without thinking. Many people avoid pauses because they feel uncomfortable when there’s a silence. It’s okay to feel uncomfortable and take that long pause anyway.

EAP CAN HELP!

Your EAP is a confidential, assessment, short-term counseling and referral program for you and your family members. It is a free benefit provided to you by your organization.



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Online Work/Life Services

If your organization offers Online Work/Life Services, visit our 24-hour internet resource for information, advice and support on a wide variety of issues. Contact your human resources department for a company code then check our Work/Life Services at www.workforceeap.com

Styles of Communication

There's a lot more to communicating than just knowing how to string words together and provide straight-forward answers to questions. It's important to recognize that there are many different ways to communicate and that each way is dependent upon the individual.

Whether you're a manager working with a team or a team member working with your coworkers to reach a goal, here are the different communication styles you might encounter:

The Director

- Looks for direct lines of communication and stays focused on tasks.
- Makes decisions quickly, confidently, and practically.
- Can be dominant in discussions, which may lead to being impatient and insensitive.
- Doesn't like being questioned, especially if he or she is the one providing directions.
- Doesn't waste time and sets goals to get things done quickly.

The Team-Player

- Supports others.
- Has an enthusiasm that makes the individual approachable.
- Speaks with animated gestures.
- Is willing to make changes and be creative to reach goals.
- Thinks out loud and involves others in decisions.
- Desires to support others and is sensitive to their needs, making the person vulnerable to criticism.
- Decisions are based on personal wishes, needs, and desires and often lack details and follow-through.

The Contributor

- Tends to support the decisions of others rather than provide his or her own direction.
- Is dependable, relaxed, and supportive.
- Listens carefully to what others have to say and provides genuine responses.
- Can be seen as being too passive or indecisive, because of his or her support of others.
- Doesn't always share true feelings to keep from creating confrontation with others.

The Thinker

- Is always prepared, ready to analyze, and searching for the details.
- Likes to make lists so that he or she can keep all of the facts out in the open.
- Strives for accuracy when trying to get his or her point across.
- May be too cautious or inflexible when it comes to making decisions.
- Adheres to high standards that others might find critical or insensitive to the needs of the group.
- Likes to ask questions and look for solutions to problems that others have overlooked.

Did you recognize what style of communicator you are?

Did you determine the styles of your coworkers or managers?

Once you recognize the differences between how you and others pass along and interpret information, you can begin to see where there are positive and negative relationships between those styles and how to build solutions to any problems that stem from differences in communication styles.

