

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

USING AWARENESS TO MAXIMIZE MINDFULNESS AND EMPATHY WHEN FACILITATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to monitor your own and others' emotions, sort through them, and use the information to guide your thinking and actions. If you sharpen your emotional intelligence, you'll find yourself looking at the world in a completely different way.

KEY ASPECTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

SELF AWARENESS

Self awareness is the ability to understand and acknowledge your own emotions, as well as how they may affect your thoughts and behavior. This is the foundation of one's Emotional Intelligence.

SOCIAL AWARENESS

Picking up on others' emotional cues is a function of empathy and social awareness. Other aspects of this include understanding power dynamics and recognizing the body language of others.

SELF MANAGEMENT

Self management is about recognizing how you feel, understanding where that comes from, and reacting to situations mindfully. When you're mindful of your own reactions, you can diffuse tense situations and confidently respond in a way that's appropriate.

SOCIAL SKILLS

When facilitating a situation, listen attentively and practice recognizing facial expressions, body language, and any other emotional tells. Practicing your social skills will require a culmination of self awareness, social awareness, and self management.

ADDITIONAL PRACTICE TIPS

- Use Emotional Intelligence to facilitate difficult conversations with customers:

- 1) **Visualize it going well.** Envision yourself solving a problem and enabling all involved to walk away from the interaction feeling positive.

- 2) **Take stock of your first response.**

What did you instinctively feel when you were presented with the problem?

- 3) **Identify where your first response comes from.** What factors are influencing your response?

- Be open-minded to the feelings of others.

- Practice Emotional Honesty:

- 1) **Practice responding rather than reacting.** Take a moment to pause, process information, and then respond after you've had time to think about the situation.

- 2) **Share your emotions,** especially positive emotions like happiness and joy with those around you.

- 3) **Listen non-judgementally when others are sharing their feelings.** Bring a sense of empathy to the way you listen.

- **Avoid labelling any emotions as "bad".** Emotions, even difficult ones like anger and frustration are honest parts of human connection. Accepting them will help you manage your responses and yield more positive results.

- **Use humor to relieve stress.** When appropriate, look for opportunities to introduce humor and playfulness into your emotional dynamics. Laughter is a natural stress reliever and makes you more empathetic.

- **Look at conflict as a way to connect and grow closer to others.** Conflict is a natural part of meaningful human connections. Resolving conflict has the potential to enhance and strengthen bonds between individuals.