

BENEFITS OF DEVELOPING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN SELF AND OTHERS

What is Emotional Intelligence?

No matter what leaders set out to do, their success depends on how they do it. Leaders ignite passion and inspiration by working through their emotions. A leader's primal task is to drive emotions in the right direction to support her team in achieving organizational objectives. The key to make leadership work lies in an individual's ability in regulating her emotions as well as the emotions of others. This is referred to as emotional intelligence, also known as emotional quotient (EQ).

Emotional intelligence is linked to the neurological mechanisms of the brain and what scientists have begun to call the open-loop nature of the limbic system. An example of a closed-looped system is the circulatory system, which is self-regulating and independent of the system of other people around us. An open-loop system depends primarily on external sources to manage itself. This means that individuals rely on connections with others for their own emotional stability.

There are four core emotional intelligence domains that are the vehicles for leadership. The four domains are: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. The first two domains determine how well someone can regulate his or her emotions. The last two domains determine how well someone can recognize and manage the emotions of others. For instance, an individual cannot manage his emotions if he is not self-aware. If an individual's emotions are out of control, his relationships will suffer.

What are the Benefits of Developing Emotional Intelligence in Self and Others?

Emotions contain data, and it is that data that enables us to accurately identify emotions in ourselves and others, which can influence how we communicate and build trusting relationships with others. How we feel influences what we think, which in turn influences how we behave.

Developing emotional intelligence can increase your ability to be successful in your career and develop meaningful relationships with others. By developing your EQ, you will become more self-aware of how your emotions influence your behaviours and how those behaviours impact others; for better or worse.

Self-awareness is the foundation to emotional intelligence. Self-awareness consists of having a clear understanding of what your purpose and values are, and how they guide your behaviours. When you make the commitment to develop your EQ, you also have to be open to developing an accurate assessment of your strengths and limitations. This also includes an identification of your personal biases (blind spots) that can negatively impact your relationships and limit your success.

Although emotional intelligence is a competency that can be learned, it takes intentional effort and breaking old behavioural habits to learn new ones. It requires an individualized approach with a sincere desire to put in the time and the effort. With persistence and practice, it can lead to long lasting, positive results. People who have a high degree of self-awareness know what their blind spots are. A blind spot occurs when we fail to see the impact our behaviour has on others.

How Do you Develop Your Self-Awareness?

You have to be willing to accept you don't know everything and connect with people who know more than you. You have to be willing to change, know the things you can't control, know the things you can (like your attitude), and you have to be hopeful for the future.

Self-aware people make a conscious decision to be positive every day, whether they actually want to be that day or not. Being self-aware means, you understand how your mood influences your behaviour, and how that behaviour impacts others.

Most online courses and facilitator-led workshops on EQ focus on the acquisition of cognitive skills - knowledge gain. Very few incorporate self-reflection activities, learning supports, and 360-assessments, which are critical in supporting the development of EQ. Knowledge acquisition is the first step in understanding what EQ is, but in order for EQ to be developed, courses need to go beyond knowing and understanding.

Developing emotional intelligence takes intentional effort and practice, which occurs over a period of time. At Sinogap Solutions' we have designed our online courses to go beyond knowledge acquisition. Our courses are designed in a format that will allow you to engage in deep self-reflection and an opportunity to receive feedback on your areas of strength and improvement through a 360-degree assessment, and active experimentation of your newly acquired skills through your GAP Plan – Goals | Action | Proof.

Goals: Reflecting on your strengths and limitations from the feedback you received from your 360-degree assessment, what is one area of growth you would like to develop?

Action: What is one action you will take that will help you develop knowledge, competence, and confidence in your identified area of growth?

Proof: Over the next several weeks capture any proof or evidence that supports development in your identified area of growth.

Why Use a 360-Degree Assessment to Develop Emotional Intelligence?

A 360-assessment can be a powerful tool that will help you check your assumptions and beliefs you have about yourself and to uncover your blind spots, which we all have. A 360-assessment gives you the ability to ask for feedback from people you know, trust, and can see you more objectively than you see yourself.

What makes a 360-assessment powerful and actionable is how it is administered. According to Gallup, a 360-degree feedback surveys must include the following elements:

- The individual selects who should respond to the survey.
- The individual personally communicates with those respondents, asking them to provide their candid observations.
- The survey is not anonymous, which provides the individual the context and guidance to understand the feedback.
- The individual reviews and uses the feedback to help them create a personal development plan (i.e., GAP Plan).
- There is follow-up with the individual from their supervisor to ensure accountability.

The 360-assessment that is built into our course on emotional intelligence, [*The Emotionally Intelligent Leader*](#), integrates these elements to ensure the feedback the learner receives is meaningful and actionable. The only challenge to the 360-assessment is the last point – follow-up from the supervisor. Ideally, each individual taking the course would meet with their supervisor to engage in a conversation about how they will incorporate feedback from the 360-assessment into their GAP Plan and learning developmental goals.

This is one of the most important outcomes of any feedback process. People with little self-awareness are often puzzled by the behavior of others toward them. They might wonder, “Why do people not include me in their casual conversations?” “Why do I end up in heated arguments?” “Why was I not chosen for the promotion?” “I know more than the person they selected.” When a 360-assessment is carried out as described above, the learner is able to compare his or her self-ratings (which they are asked to complete in the online course) to the ratings from others. Having ratings from multiple people (we recommend at least a dozen) provides greater evidence that this is much more than just one person’s opinion. Combined with accountability, this evidence serves as a strong impetus to change.