

Improving Your Emotional Intelligence

A Magical Learning Ebook



WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)

Two pioneers of EQ research, Professors Peter Salovey and John Mayer, defined EQ as:

‘the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions.’ (Salovey & Mayer, 1990)

Our simpler definition is that EQ is ‘being aware of your emotions and the impact they have on you and others.’

We feel emotions all the time, although we’re not always aware of those emotions. When we’re under pressure or if we are having a bad time, those emotions can be on display for the whole world to see, but we may be oblivious to them.

COMPONENTS OF EQ

There are many of EQ ‘models’, but one we use in many of our programs the *Emotional Capital Model* from Dr Martin Newman.



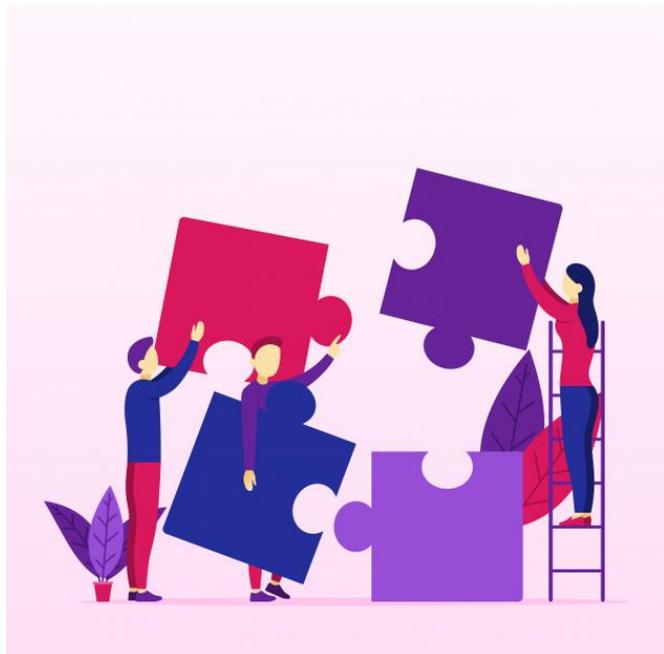
This model comes from Newman's book, *Emotional Capitalists: The Ultimate Guide to Developing Emotional Intelligence for Leaders*.

The model has five main elements:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Skills
- Adaptability
- Social Awareness.

These elements are further broken down into ten *Core EQ Skills*, that can be measured and improved:

1. Self-Knowing
2. Straightforwardness
3. Self-Control
4. Self-Confidence
5. Self-Reliance
6. Relationship Skills
7. Adaptability
8. Optimism
9. Self-Actualisation
10. Empathy.



Growing these skills can be a lifetime journey. The good news is that, as we understand our development areas, we can all grow our EQ.

LOW EQ INDICATORS

It is very rare that a person scores high across all ten EQ core skills. The following pages explore these core elements and offer indicators of both high and low competency for each skill. As you read through, score yourself from 1 (low) to 5 (high) to identify areas you might want to work on.

1. Self-knowing

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Emotional awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not good at recognising own emotions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In touch with and aware of own emotions
b) Behavioural awareness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty putting feelings into words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to link feelings to appropriate causes
c) Non-verbal communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surprised by own emotional reactions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understands impact of behaviour on others

2. Self-confidence

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Self-liking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doubts ability to do well 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accepting of self
b) Self-competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unhappy with being oneself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self-assured – confident in own abilities
c) Self-assured	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low self-esteem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels good about self and own actions

3. Self-reliance

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Independence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relies on others to lead or take control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys taking control and directing others
b) Self-belief	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty making decisions by oneself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Self-determined
c) Responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Needs protection or support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free from emotional dependence

4. Self-actualisation

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Passion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does not pursue enjoyable activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enjoys setting and achieving challenging goals
b) Work-life balance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shrinks from setting challenging goals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passionate and excited about own interests
c) Achievement drive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lacks clear purpose and direction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Values a meaningful and balanced lifestyle

5. Straightforwardness

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Assertiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Difficulty communicating ideas to others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates honestly and directly
b) Self-control	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoids standing up for own opinions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finds it easy to be straightforward
c) Acknowledges others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Passive and easily intimidated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Able to say no when needs be

6. Empathy

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Listening b) Curiosity c) Emotional connection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has difficulty understanding others' feelings • Difficult to connect to others at a personal level • Does not consider others' feelings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good at understanding others' feelings • Described by others as 'good listener' • Sensitive to feelings of others

7. Self-control

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Calmness b) Rational minded c) Disciplined 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gets emotional in stressful situations • Finds it difficult to control anxiety • Often impulsive and unpredictable 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can withstand daily pressure • Stays composed in stressful situations • Not impulsive; tolerance for frustration

8. Adaptability

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Flexibility b) Open mindedness c) Acceptance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefers a predictable daily routine • Finds it difficult to change an opinion • Likes to stick with the tested and true 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapts to changing conditions; goes with flow • Open to new opinions; change of behaviours • Enjoys challenge of adjusting to new situations

9. Optimism

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Opportunity sensing b) Positive mood c) Resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pessimistic and worries about the future • Gets discouraged easily • Focuses on the negative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able to remain optimistic despite setbacks • Positive outlook and opportunity seeking • Bounces back from defeat

10. Relationship skills

CHARACTERISTICS	WHEN LOW	WHEN HIGH
a) Equality b) Mutuality c) Empowerment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulties engaging well with others • Seen by others as aloof or impersonal • Not interested in relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enjoys others' company and making new friends • Gets on well with colleagues • Likes helping people achieve what they want

Source: Martyn L. Newman & Judy Purse, 2009, *Emotional Capital Report – Certification Program*

Question:

What are your top 3 EQ skill areas that you want to work on?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

TECHNIQUES TO IMPROVE YOUR EQ

Some simple tools and techniques to help build your EQ include:

- Learn more about what your emotions are signalling to you. Remember, your emotions are triggered primarily through your thoughts. Take time to examine those thoughts and whether they are serving you.
- Journal after you have been through an 'emotional' situation. Ask yourself what the other person's perspective may have been.
- Talk with someone you trust, to understand what other perspectives might be involved.
- Practice breathing deeply when you start to feel stressed or emotional.
- Learn to simply observe (ie. don't react to) a situation.
- Ask yourself better questions, such as:
 - ‘What's the opportunity here?’
 - ‘How can I learn and grow from this?’

Another technique that can help build your emotional self-awareness is identifying the people, things and events that trigger intense emotions in you (positive or negative).

The following steps can help you identify those triggers and manage emotionally-charged situations more positively.

Firstly, understand that you are responding to the primal 'fight or flight' reaction when you are faced with a physical or psychological threat. It's easy to understand how negative emotions can result from physical threats, but *psychological* threats can also trigger negative emotions.

Thousands of years ago our emotional triggers were primarily physical threats: predators, famine and environmental threats to our physical safety.

Today our triggers are more likely to be psychological threats.

Psychological threats can include:

- being frustrated in pursuing a goal

- being treated unfairly
- being demeaned or insulted
- having your status, self-esteem or security threatened.

Secondly, identify and list those people, events, situations or things that evoke negative emotions (anger, annoyance, hurt, frustration, etc.). For example:

- someone interrupts you during a meeting
- you are about to make a difficult phone call
- receiving an email from a particular person causes you to feel annoyed
- your teenager comes home with an 'unsatisfactory' school report
- you lack the resources you need to complete your work project
- you hear that your department is going to reorganise, yet again
- your project deadline is shortened dramatically
- you arrive for a meeting on-time, but only half the people are there
- you see a family member who causes contention in the family
- you're constantly interrupted while trying to meet a deadline.

Finally, look over your list and identify those triggers (people, things, situations) that evoke the *strongest* negative emotions.

It may not be possible to avoid these, but understanding how you react emotionally to these situations can help you to start managing those negative emotions and think more clearly under pressure.

In a work environment, this knowledge can help you to be a better, more productive leader – and provide clearer guidance for colleagues on how to deal with emotions in the workplace.

Another thing that can help with your EQ is to build more resilience. People with high resilience are typically better at managing their emotions.

Simple tactics to build greater resilience include:

- exercise daily – short, high-intensity sessions (if you haven't exercised for a while, please talk to your doctor first)
- take regular breaks during your work day and take regular holidays
- eat well
- stay hydrated
- breathe deeply more of the time
- meditate
- sleep well
- do something each day that makes you happy
- stay connected with loved ones and friends
- reduce your exposure to media and technology
- spend time in Nature
- laugh more.

HOW TO TALK TO SOMEONE WHO TRIGGERS YOU EMOTIONALLY

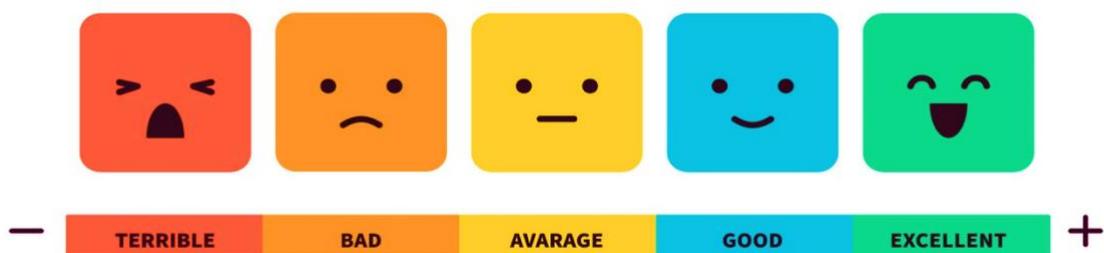
In his book, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*, psychologist Marshall B. Rosenberg offers the following approach for communicating when someone has impacted you emotionally:

1. We **observe** what is happening in a situation and whether it is enriching our lives or not
2. We state how we are **feeling** when we observe the action
3. We state what **needs** of ours are connected to the feeling we have identified
4. We **request** what we need the other person to do to make the situation better for us.

For example, if someone constantly interrupts you, you could observe that you feel upset and that you need to feel listened to. You could then talk to the person and say something like:

'Fred, when I talk you may not be aware but you often interrupt me. That makes me feel upset and I need you to listen to what I am saying. Would you be willing to stop interrupting me so that I talk through my idea in full?'

Practice trying this approach in future conversations and notice how it helps. Remember growing your EQ is a lifetime journey.



HOW WE CAN HELP

Thank you for taking the time to read our e-book. We hope you've found some useful strategies to build your EQ.

At Magical Learning, our vision is:

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by creating a safe space for them to shine.'**

We do this through providing training, webinars and coaching – and through our community programs.

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Finally, please help us achieve our vision by sharing this e-book with anyone you think may benefit from it.

Thank you - and stay awesome.

The Magical Learning Team

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