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Enhancing managerial effectiveness via four core facets of emotional intelligence: Self-awareness, social perception, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation

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INTRODUCTION

Managers often feel intense emotions in their daily work lives—emotions that are triggered by the various opportunities and challenges that they face in their jobs. For instance, managers become excited to share new ideas with their colleagues, anxious when preparing for a difficult conversation with a struggling employee, and angry when management rewards their colleagues more than them. Research suggests that managers who employ emotional intelligence in these situations—for instance, by effectively regulating their emotions—might accelerate their careers. By contrast, managers who do not exercise emotional intelligence when faced with the same opportunities and challenges might have their careers stalled.

Here I describe how managers can develop and apply emotional intelligence, based on over 25 years of academic research. I describe how managers can develop and leverage emotional intelligence in a variety of situations they frequently encounter at work, such as performance review meetings with their employees, tense negotiations with potential clients, and the implementation of change. The techniques will enable readers to employ emotional intelligence in their jobs for the benefit of their organizations.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities to reason about emotions and use emotions to enhance thought. Emotional intelligence is often described as a single type of intelligence, but it is actually best understood as a series of

distinct capabilities about emotions. Here, I focus on the capabilities that have been most extensively researched and validated in the academic literature. I refer to these capabilities as self-awareness, social perception, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation.

While all types of intelligence are loosely related, there is not necessarily a strong relation between a person's cognitive intelligence (or "IQ") and his or her emotional intelligence (or "EQ"). There are people who have relatively high cognitive intelligence and relatively low emotional intelligence, and vice versa. Therefore it is important not to assume that a person with high cognitive capabilities also has high emotional capabilities, and vice versa.

HOW MUCH DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE MATTER IN THE WORKPLACE?

Many studies have tested the validity of emotional intelligence—how much it predicts criteria such as job performance and leadership effectiveness. If a manager or employee obtains a high score on a measure of emotional intelligence, is that person more effective compared to someone who obtains a low score? Some of these studies also evaluated the incremental validity of emotional intelligence—how much emotional intelligence enhances predictions of effectiveness when the role of cognitive intelligence and personality traits (such as conscientiousness and neuroticism) has already been taken into account. If an organization already uses measures of cognitive intelligence and personality to select employees, does it gain by spending additional resources to measure emotional intelligence?

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.orgdyn.2017.05.007>
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The conclusions that I reach below are based on studies conducted in realistic organizational or team settings, with valid measures of emotional intelligence. This is important because studies that lack these features can be misleading. For example, studies using measures asking participants to evaluate their own level of emotional intelligence are problematic because these measures are prone to biases such as socially desirable responding. People's beliefs about their own emotional intelligence are often different from scores on objective tests of emotional intelligence. Therefore studies featuring self-assessed emotional intelligence might reveal that employees who think they are emotionally intelligent perform better than employees who do not, but they do reveal whether employees who are actually more emotionally intelligent perform better.

The research shows that emotional intelligence predicts performance, particularly in jobs requiring frequent or complex interactions with co-workers, subordinates, supervisors, or customers. In one study, the emotional intelligence of managers was related to higher job performance (rated by their supervisors) when these managers were required to address issues of diversity among their employees. Other studies found that emotional intelligence is especially important in jobs that are emotionally demanding, such as jobs that require employees to frequently regulate their emotions in interpersonal interactions with co-workers, supervisors, or customers. Emotional intelligence predicts performance in emotionally demanding jobs even after controlling for cognitive intelligence and personality traits. Many jobs in the modern economy feature emotional demands, and these jobs will likely be even more prevalent in the future. Therefore emotional intelligence could become an increasingly important contributor to effectiveness in the future.

Emotional intelligence, however, is less strongly related to performance in jobs with few managerial or emotional demands. These findings are not surprising—they parallel similar findings that cognitive intelligence is a stronger predictor of performance in technically complex jobs and a weaker predictor of performance in jobs that are not cognitively complex.

It is important to remain realistic about the potency of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is one of the factors that facilitate effectiveness, but it is not a panacea for all personnel issues in organizations. In jobs with considerable managerial or emotional labor demands, emotional intelligence matters more for job performance than each of the major traits of personality (i.e., agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, and openness to experience). However, cognitive intelligence has been shown to relate to performance even more strongly than emotional intelligence in some situations. Thus managers need to be thoughtful about the relative strength they place on different measures depending on the job.

WHAT ARE THE CORE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES?

Self-awareness, social perception, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation are the emotional intelligence capabilities that have received the most extensive validation.

Self-awareness

Self-awareness refers to how well people know themselves. In the domain of emotional intelligence, self-awareness specifically refers to how well people can identify their own emotions. When managers react emotionally to events, some aptly realize that they are experiencing an emotion and correctly identify which emotion they are feeling. Other managers are oblivious that they are becoming emotional or guess which emotion they feel incorrectly. For instance, after their employees make a decision without their input, Drea and Tony might both become angry. Drea might realize that she is reacting strongly to not being involved in the decision and also pinpoint that she is feeling angry, rather than sad or anxious. Tony, however, may be less self-aware and fail to realize that this event has triggered an emotional response.

Being aware of our own emotions is important because it is a first step toward changing our emotions if these emotions are not appropriate in a given context. Drea will be better able to regulate her anger and, in turn, she will interact with her employees more effectively than Tony if she realizes she is getting angry, while Tony is unaware he is feeling an emotion. Specifically, Drea may proactively utilize coping strategies at her disposal (e.g., she can try to understand why the employees made a decision without her input—for example she may realize that her employees were under pressure from clients to make a rapid decision) to regulate her anger. By contrast, Tony may remain angry and, as a result, potentially lash out at his employee. As another example, in one study, emotionally intelligent new managers were less likely to want to quit their jobs after undergoing stressful developmental job experiences, because these managers presumably better identified that these experiences were stressful and, in turn, could more easily ameliorate these reactions. By contrast, managers with low self-awareness likely remained stressed, and this stress made them more likely to want to quit their jobs.

Social Perception

Social perception involves accurately identifying which emotions other people—subordinates, colleagues, senior executives, clients, and customers—feel or express. This capability involves perceiving what one other person feels (for example, when a coffee shop employee serves a customer). It is also likely important to identify the distribution of emotions that are felt in a group. Perceiving others' emotions may be particularly important for those in positions in power. Subordinates might hesitate to tell their managers how they genuinely feel, and thus managers need to detect their subordinates' feelings through non-verbal channels. For example, two managers, Demar and Kyle, might exhibit different levels of this capability when addressing their teams. Demar might correctly ascertain that most of his employees are enthusiastic about the announcement, but also that a few members of the team are hesitant. By contrast, Kyle might fail to realize that his team members are having various different reactions to the announcement, and instead assume that the reaction is uniformly positive.

Social perception also involves distinguishing emotional expressions that are authentic from expressions that are fake. Employees might sometimes “put on a show” and pretend to have emotions that they do not genuinely feel inside. These emotional expressions can be deemed inauthentic or “fake” because they do not match internally felt emotions, and they should not be treated as reliable guides to others’ attitudes, goals, and intentions. In one study, customers with high capability to detect inauthenticity gave lower service evaluations to service agents who faked emotions than to those who showed authentic emotions, while customers with low levels of this capability were less able to discern between good and bad service. While Demar might detect when his employees are faking enthusiasm about a project, Kyle might lack this ability and assume that his staff will be engaged during a project.

The capability to identify which emotion others feel is important because it helps individuals garner important information about others’ attitudes, goals, and intentions, which are communicated through emotional expressions. Further, being able to discern between genuine and fake displays helps managers determine if they can rely on their employees’ displayed emotions to infer their attitudes, goals, and intentions, or instead draw inferences cautiously. This information can be used to navigate interactions with others effectively. For example, Demar’s ability to perceive that a few of this team members are hesitant about an announcement can help him understand and address their concerns, which would then allow him to implement change more effectively. By contrast, unaware that some of his team members are hesitant, Kyle might be surprised to encounter resistance when trying to implement change, and his effectiveness as a manager would be undermined. Further, when announcing an unpopular decision, Kyle might “misread” his subordinates and miss that they are pretending to be enthusiastic. Demar’s higher level of social perception would help him realize that the enthusiasm is fake. Armed with this understanding, Demar might then potentially use strategies to generate genuine enthusiasm in order to more effectively enact change.

Emotion Understanding

Emotion understanding involves identifying why we feel the emotions that we feel, and why other people feel the emotions that they feel. Employees with high levels of this capability can correctly pinpoint the specific events that are responsible for their emotions. Other employees with lower levels of this ability might identify the wrong causes of emotions. For example, Charli, an employee with a high level of emotion understanding, might correctly identify that she is anxious because of an upcoming team meeting. Camille, a coworker with a low level of emotion understanding, might make a mistake and guess that she is anxious because of an upcoming presentation to prospective clients instead.

Emotion understanding also involves accurately predicting how future events (for example, a planned vacation or an upcoming promotion) will influence the emotions that we will feel in the future. Research on this capability—also termed affective forecasting—suggests that most people

struggle to predict their future emotional reactions. Some people, however, make relatively good predictions about their future emotions, and these people have been found to achieve relatively high scores on tests of emotional intelligence. While Camille might over-estimate how satisfied she will be if she earns a promotion, Charli might realize that a promotion might bring stressful demands and frustrating conflict with other executives.

Identifying how events influence our current and future emotions is important because this knowledge might guide important decisions, such as whether to accept a job offer from a competing firm, applying for a prestigious but likely time-consuming and stressful position in our firm, taking on an interesting-looking project, or spending money on a vacation. Research on affective forecasting reveals that people often waste important resources because of such prediction errors. Further, it may be difficult to recover from many of these errors. Camille might find herself in a difficult situation if she succumbs to the “grass is greener” phenomenon and accepts a position at a competing firm, before realizing that there is more conflict in her new firm than in her previous firm. Charli might find herself in a better position if she can accurately predict that she will not necessarily be more satisfied in the new firm because conflict happens in most firms, and not just the firm where she is currently employed.

Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation is how well individuals increase, maintain, or decrease the magnitude or duration of their emotions or others’ emotions. I focus on three facets of this capability.

Setting appropriate emotion regulation goals

The first facet of emotion regulation involves determining if our emotions are optimal for the current situation, and setting goals for modifying our emotions if these emotions are sub-optimal. Some individuals know which emotions are more appropriate or useful to feel in certain situations, and these people set more appropriate goals for emotion regulation than others. For example, before commenting on impending lay-offs, Serena might better understand which emotions she should feel and display to her team than another manager, Angelique.

This facet of emotion regulation is important because emotions influence the way we think and act. For example, anxiety causes people to take fewer risks. There is much to gain from feeling “the right emotion at the right time,” and much to lose from feeling inappropriate emotions. For example, when situations are relatively safe, people might benefit from taking calculated risks. In these situations, feeling too much anxiety would be costly because people will not take risks that they should take. In her executive role, Serena would benefit from setting a goal of feeling less anxious, because if she reduces her anxiety, she would in turn take more beneficial risks for her firm. By contrast, Angelique would perform less effectively as an executive if she does not set a goal of feeling less anxious. If she does not set this goal, Angelique might feel too anxious to take the sort of calculated risks that would be beneficial for her firm.

Selecting effective strategies to regulate emotions

The second facet of emotion regulation involves choosing the regulation strategies that are most likely to create the desired emotions. Some individuals are better at matching emotion regulation strategies to the situations that they encounter, and flexibly employing these strategies depending on the situation. For example, in one investigation, people who had good knowledge of the strategies that are most effective to regulate emotions in particular situations were better at converting their goals into action, presumably because they could aptly boost the emotions that help them achieve their goals. Angelique might know the right things to say to generate engagement among her staff, but Serena might not know which words will lead her staff to be more engaged.

This facet of emotion regulation is important because strategies that are effective to change emotions in certain situations might be ineffective in other situations. Therefore a person might invest energy and effort to regulate emotions yet achieve no benefits if the strategy is ineffective in the context in which it is deployed. For instance, Angelique, a sports coach with high levels of this capability, could determine that giving a fiery speech will create higher levels of energy in the team than alternative strategies (e.g., letting the team captain address the team). By contrast, Serena might not select the most appropriate strategy to create energy, and her team might then lose to a competitor playing with more energy.

Implementing emotion regulation strategies effectively

The third facet of emotion regulation involves deploying regulation strategies effectively in order to produce the desired effect on emotions. This is important because it is not necessarily true that employees who choose the most effective strategies to manage their emotions also implement these strategies effectively. Employees who choose the best strategies but fail at implementing them will not modify their emotions. In one investigation, people were less likely to experience depressive symptoms after encountering stressors (such as job loss) only if they could aptly implement strategies to regulate emotions. Two managers, Serena and Angelique, might both choose the best strategy to manage their team members' emotions, but they might achieve different outcomes if they differ in their ability to implement that strategy.

This aspect of emotion regulation is critical because it is where managers actually impact emotions. A poorly executed strategy to boost engagement might have no impact at all—or even backfire—if it is not executed properly. Two sport coaches, Serena and Angelique, may have different impact on their teams even if employ the same emotion regulation strategy (i.e., giving a fiery speech) if Serena can aptly increase her energy level to give an effective speech, while Angelique fails at creating energy.

CAN MANAGERS LEARN TO BE MORE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT?

Some research suggests that people can learn to be more emotionally intelligent. A number of studies have shown that

emotional intelligence is not fixed at birth. To the contrary, parents have an important impact on the emotional intelligence of their children. In addition, in several studies, training improved how well adults could identify various aspects of social interactions in which the protagonists expressed emotions, such as relative status or kinship between the protagonists. Exposure to emotions expressed by members of different cultures increases the ability to identify these emotions. Importantly, research has shown that defensiveness can be a considerable barrier to learning emotional intelligence. Below I offer recommendations to identify which skills to improve and overcome defensiveness during the learning process. These recommendations will help managers leverage opportunities to improve emotional intelligence.

Become Aware of Your Levels of Emotional Capabilities

An important first step in becoming more emotionally intelligent is finding out if we are good or bad at the various emotional intelligence capabilities. This “meta” capability goes beyond being good (or bad) at a capability—it involves *knowing* that we are good (or bad) at this capability. Research reveals that, perhaps surprisingly, people are not very good judges of their own emotional capabilities. There is only a small correlation between self-reported and objectively-assessed emotional intelligence. For example, among those who can correctly tell when the boss is in a good mood, there are some who know they are socially perceptive, and others who are unaware that they have this capability. Claire and Jillian might both be excellent social perceivers, so that they can both tell when their co-workers are enthusiastic about an idea, but Claire might know that her perceptions are accurate, while Jillian doubts the accuracy of her (correct) perceptions. The implication is that if you try to guess if you can perceive the emotions of your clients well, or cope with stress effectively, what you will conclude might not reflect reality.

Being aware of our capability levels is important because perceptive managers will use valid information about emotions more if they know that this information is correct. By contrast, perceptive managers may deprive themselves of useful information if they doubt that the information that they gather from “reading” others is correct. Claire and Jillian might both correctly perceive that their employee is in a bad mood. Claire will more effectively interact with her employee (for example, by refraining from making large demands that day) than Jillian if Claire knows that her perceptions are correct and Jillian does not.

Further, as it relates to developing emotional intelligence, it is also important for people who are deficient on any of the emotional intelligence capabilities to know it. If Kieran and Darren often make wrong guesses about their employees' emotions, Kieran will fare better if he knows that his guesses are often wrong because he will then feel motivated to improve that capability. If Darren is confident that his perceptions are accurate, he will have little incentive to invest time and energy into developing this capability. Darren might also reject helpful feedback if he feels he is correct in his perceptions, depriving himself of the opportunity to learn through experience.

Reflect on the Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Your Job by Recalling Instances in Which You—Or Another Manager—Failed Because of Lack of Emotional Intelligence

Managers can be defensive by dismissing the importance of emotional intelligence in their jobs. One investigation showed that to protect their ego, employees who received low scores on a test of emotional intelligence tended to report that emotional intelligence was not important to succeed in their jobs. This dynamic creates the paradoxical result that employees with the lowest levels of emotional intelligence are the least likely to make efforts to improve in this area, while employees who are already emotionally intelligent are the most likely to seek ways to increase it. To fight this tendency, managers can recall specific situations where emotional intelligence was important in their work, or in the work of another manager they know well. This strategy should be most effective when the instances that are recalled are detailed and vivid.

Ask Questions About the Validity of the Assessment Tool If You Are Skeptical

If managers have taken an emotional intelligence assessment they may show defensiveness by dismissing the validity of the assessment tool used to measure their emotional intelligence. This skepticism is healthy. After all, even academic researchers sometimes treat people's beliefs about their emotional intelligence as valid indicators of their actual levels of emotional intelligence. Managers should request or search for information about the validity of the assessment tool. Managers can ask how the correct answers to the test items were determined. The correct answers are most typically determined by consulting past research, requesting the opinions of experts (e.g., counselors and psychiatrists), or aggregating the judgments of a large group of people (under the assumption of the "wisdom of crowds"). Managers can also ask follow-up questions, such as which experts provided the correct answers to the questions on the test, to reduce (healthy) skepticism about the assessment tool.

Do Not Extrapolate Feedback to Other Distinct Capabilities

Research has found that individuals sometimes resist feedback about their capabilities because they incorrectly infer that the feedback is about a more comprehensive set of capabilities than it really is. For example, managers learning that they are deficient in "reading" others' emotions may infer that they generally have poor social skills. "Reading" emotions, however, is a specific capability, and a manager who has difficulty knowing what other people feel may nonetheless be particularly effective at regulating emotions, for example. Therefore managers should focus on the specific capability being assessed, and avoid drawing conclusions about separate capabilities that were not measured—even other capabilities that seem similar to the focal capability. Managers who draw focused inferences from

assessment data will more readily accept developmental feedback, because they will feel less threatened by the feedback.

HOW DO MANAGERS LEVERAGE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO ADDRESS THE CHALLENGES THAT THEY COMMONLY FACE?

The emotional capabilities of self-awareness, social perception, emotion understanding, and emotion regulation can prove useful for managers to address a number of challenges that they face in their jobs. In the sections below, I describe how the capabilities can help managers address the challenges of evaluating and giving feedback to employees, influencing others, and managing conflict.

How to Apply Emotional Intelligence to Evaluate and Give Feedback to Employees

Be aware of your emotions in order to conduct more accurate evaluations of your employees

Managers benefit from being aware of the emotions that they feel when they conduct performance evaluations. This is because emotions could bias these judgments. Positive emotions cause people to make overly favorable evaluations, and negative emotions cause people to make overly unfavorable evaluations. Importantly, research shows that these biasing effects occur even when raters insist that their evaluations are completely objective. Managers who correctly identify which emotion they feel when they complete performance ratings can detect whether they might be overly positive or negative, and then make necessary adjustments. By contrast, less self-aware managers are less likely to realize that their ratings are biased by their feelings, and thus more likely to produce invalid ratings.

Managers can use smartphone apps to monitor their feelings. Another strategy involves asking others who are well-positioned to perceive managers' emotions accurately—spouses or close friends who know how they tend to express their emotions—to tell them if they seem more or less happy at a given moment. In addition to spouses and close friends, managers can ask emotionally intelligent work colleagues with whom they are close to identify their emotions during meetings and other situations they both experience. Managers may also ask someone known to "read" emotions well (for example, because they scored highly on a test) to help them become more aware of the emotions that they feel.

Read your employees' emotions when giving performance feedback

Feedback conversations that go awry can have devastating effects on productivity by impeding the development of cooperative relationships. Employees are likely to feel intense emotions during feedback meetings. Employees may feel anger because they perceive that they received an unfair evaluation or anxious because they cannot predict their future at the firm. Employees can down-regulate these emotions by thinking through the potential perspectives that others may have on a contentious issue, assessing the likelihood that others have each of these perspectives, and then

making statements with more informed guesses about the perspectives of others. Applying this technique will lead managers to navigate difficult conversations more efficiently, ultimately reducing tension and strengthening their relationships with their employees.

To leverage social perception when preparing for feedback meetings, managers can plan to pay attention to employees' emotions during the meeting and look for signs of any emotion that might potentially make the meeting less effective. Managers can look at the employees' face and body movements for signs of emotions. For instance, managers may notice visible signs of sadness such as red eyes, or signs of anger such as raising one's tone of voice. Managers can also prepare contingency plans if employees begin to show these signs of emotions. Contingency plans could be particularly effective in regulating emotions. For example, a manager who notices signs of sadness early in the meeting can shift the order in which feedback is given or present it in a different way.

To increase their capability for social perception, it is important that managers obtain accurate information about their current levels of social perception ability. This feedback must come from a valid and reliable test. In past research, participants had difficulty estimating their own level of social perception ability. Therefore, managers will not obtain valid estimates of their capabilities by answering questions such as "Can you identify the feelings and emotions that other people feel?" Instead managers should have their social perception capabilities assessed with objective tests—for example, tests in which they are presented with pictures or videos of individuals expressing emotion and asked to identify the emotion that the person was expressing (or trying to express). These tests can provide a total score as well as scores for each of several emotions. Managers can use this feedback to identify areas they should consider developing. For example, Serena might find out that she can aptly detect happiness but has difficulty detecting anger, while Angelique might find that she is particularly capable of detecting sadness but usually misses expressions of shame. Managers can consult resources that describe the features of each of these expressions in order to "read" others better.

How to Apply Emotional Intelligence to Influence Employees and Increase Employee Engagement

Read your audience's mindset to choose the best way to influence

Reading the crowd is an important skill of public speakers and politicians. Managers can adjust their message, tone of voice, and energy level based on employees' unstated thoughts. Employees' emotions color their interpretation and reactions to their managers' messages. The exact same proposal for implementing policies for increasing diversity in an organization may generate enthusiasm among a team of satisfied employees and anger among a separate team of frustrated employees. Influence thus requires paying attention to both the emotional and intellectual reactions of their employees. To better tailor their message to the audience, managers should pay attention to their employees' expressed emotions while delivering their message and interpret the meaning of these expressions, while also focus-

ing on the content of their message. Rather than prepare a single version of an announcement and stick to it, managers should prepare contingency plans in order to adjust their message depending on their employees' emotions. If employees express confusion, managers may deviate from their script in order to repeat some explanations, so that employees become more likely to understand the intervention. If employees express anxiety, managers may change their script to communicate reassurance. If employees are subsequently less anxious about their future, they might be less likely to feel threatened and more likely to support the intervention. The end result would be better implementation of the intervention by employees.

One strategy managers could adopt to improve their capability to read their audience involves, whenever possible, directly asking audience members how they feel. Although audience members might not always be willing to reveal their feelings, in some situations they will. This strategy can help managers build their capabilities because they can first guess how the audience reacted, and then compare these guesses to what audience members report. This process allows managers to both assess their level of skill and find out why some of their guesses might be wrong. Discovering mistakes one has previously made is one of the most effective ways to avoid making these mistakes again. Thus the process of guessing followed by asking audience members to report their feelings can help managers not only be socially perceptive but also increase this capability over time.

Select the most appropriate strategies to change your employees' emotions

Emotion regulation is also a useful influence tool. Managers' attempts to influence their subordinates often involve emotions. For example, managers wishing to implement change to increase diversity run the risk of implying that the employees are being insensitive to these issues. This message can potentially arouse strong emotions among employees, because people do not like to regard themselves as closed-minded with respect to diversity. In order to influence others to change when the issues are potentially threatening, managers benefit from managing emotions effectively. In one study of employees at an eye-care company, employees who voiced suggestions for improvement were evaluated more favorably by their supervisors if they had high emotion regulation knowledge than if their emotion regulation knowledge was low. Emotion regulation capabilities allow managers to voice concerns—and potentially to influence executives more successfully—if they select appropriate strategies to regulate emotions in challenging interpersonal encounters. By contrast, the inability to select appropriate strategies may undermine managers' efforts to enact change in their organizations.

How to Apply Emotional Intelligence to Manage Tense Conflict

Read your colleagues' emotions to identify what they really want and value

One of the biggest challenges that confront managers is dealing with conflict—or the possibility of conflict. Managers often encounter situations where they and others have

different priorities. These situations arouse strong emotions that can prevent managers from achieving deals. In situations where there is potential for conflict, managers can apply emotional intelligence by looking for expressions of positivity by their counterparts. Research finds that negotiators express positive emotions to communicate intentions to cooperate with their counterparts. These signals are important: negotiators stand to benefit from detecting their counterparts' intentions to cooperate, because they can then reciprocate these intentions and then jointly create value with their counterpart. Managers who are not socially perceptive and miss their counterparts' cooperative signals thus forgo important opportunities to create value.

Managers can also apply emotional intelligence by detecting if their counterparts are faking their emotions in order to gain an advantage. Managers must detect whether their counterparts' expressions are authentic or fake in order to respond appropriately. For example, real anger communicates intentions to negotiate aggressively. Fake anger, however, is misleading—it sends a signal that counterparts intend to be tough when in fact they have no such intention—or no opportunity—to negotiate aggressively. By paying attention to their counterparts' emotions, managers thus detect when these emotions reveal true intentions to act in certain ways, and when these emotions are tactics to gain an advantage in the negotiation.

Leverage emotion regulation strategies flexibly to resolve conflicts more effectively

During conflict, emotion regulation capabilities can be leveraged to regulate negative emotions such as anger, frustration, and anxiety. Managers can apply emotional intelligence by flexibly deploying the regulation strategies at their disposal. Managers can employ situation modification. This regulation strategy involves changing some aspects of the situation in order to elicit some emotions or attenuate other emotions. Managers can modify the situation when anger escalates by suggesting a break. This behavior modifies the situation by separating opposing parties in different physical locations. This situation modification strategy can also help opposing parties to collect their thoughts and analyze information. For these reasons applying emotional intelligence by modifying the situation could have important consequences for the outcomes of negotiations.

Managers can also apply emotional intelligence by using a cognitive reappraisal strategy to defuse anger

during conflict. The strategy of cognitive reappraisal involves viewing an event differently, such as when employees view a major speech as an opportunity to impress others rather than an event during which they might embarrass themselves. During negotiations, managers can interpret what is being said differently, and help their counterparts interpret it differently. Managers can leverage perspective-taking by communicating the assumptions and reasoning for their positions more clearly, and asking questions that help them understand their counterparts' assumptions and reasoning better. In this way, cognitive reappraisal can attenuate negative emotions because managers might be less likely to infer malevolent intent in their opponents if they understand the reasoning for their stance. In turn, to the extent that opposing parties understand and feel less angry with their opponents, conflict is more likely to get resolved.

Leverage emotion regulation strategies to get larger pieces of the pie in zero-sum negotiations

In zero-sum negotiations, managers can obtain larger pieces of the pie if they express anger that they genuinely feel. Negotiators concede more to counterparts who express genuine anger because they infer that these counterparts have ambitious goals. When showing anger to elicit concessions from your counterpart, be mindful that an impasse is more likely. For anger to have this effect, it must be genuine. Negotiators tend to detect “fake” anger, and this causes them to lose trust in their counterparts, and then ask for more. Related, managers should avoid appearing overly satisfied in zero-sum negotiations. Your counterpart will infer that you are satisfied with what you currently have, and then give you less.

CONCLUSION

Emotional intelligence—a concept proposed by academic researchers about 25 years ago—is a set of capabilities that managers can leverage to be more effective. Equipped with emotional capabilities, managers can leverage opportunities and address challenges that they encounter on a daily basis. Managers can develop better relationships with their employees, influence them more effectively, and have better performing employees and teams to the extent that they leverage emotional intelligence.



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