

Rapid Skill-Builder® Emotional Intelligence



Your success depends on more than just your knowledge, skills, or what is often termed “intelligence”. In both personal and professional life, emotional intelligence, or your ability to connect appropriately with other people and the world around you, is crucial to sustained success.

Emotional intelligence can be described as the ability to:

1. Perceive or sense emotion
2. Use emotions to assist thought
3. Understand emotions
4. Manage emotions.

Every person has emotional intelligence (also known as EI or EQ) to some degree. However, how each person actually applies his or her EQ can vary considerably.

This Skill Builder provides an introduction to the subject of emotional intelligence, and proposes a four quadrant style model which can help you to learn how to apply feelings appropriately across a range of situations and experiences in order to become more “emotionally intelligent”.

▼ Recognise

Personality

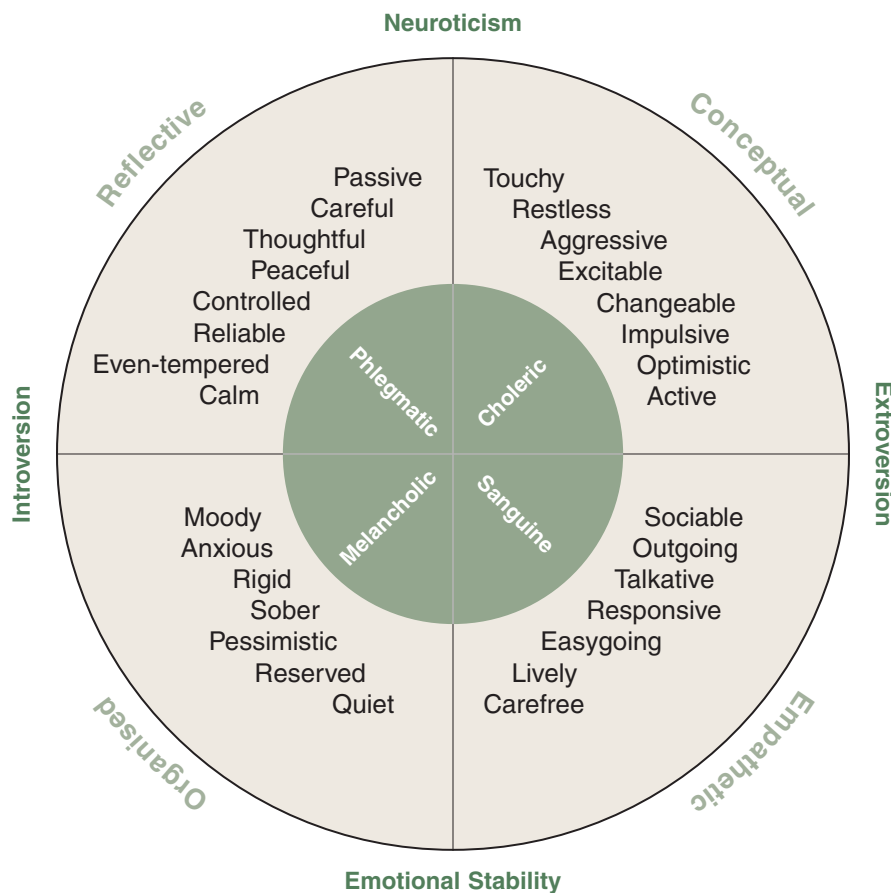
Since the time of the ancient Greeks, emotions have been seen to affect both the mind and the body. For example, emotions such as love, joy, hate and anger affect people psychologically via their thought processes, as well as physiologically through symptoms such as increased heart rate, higher blood pressure, trembling or tears.

Hippocrates was just one of the ancient Greeks who sought to classify or categorise emotions so they could be more easily understood. These theorists believed that there were four emotional temperaments.

Their view was that every person had one of these temperaments as a dominant influence on their character and therefore their emotional responses could be anticipated to some degree.

Although little of this thinking had any scientific support, the idea of characterising emotions, styles or general behavioural “types” has continued, and provides the basis for much of the psychological testing used today. The model below shows the four Hippocratic temperaments in the centre, overlaid with the more modern trait theory developed by 20th Century psychologists such as Jung, Eynsenck, Cattell and Myers-Briggs.

Ancient Greek to Modern Day Thinking



Emotions

Despite the advances that have been made in psychology and neuroscience, emotions are still poorly understood. They have generally been categorised as basic processes that help you deal with “fight or flight” issues and play little part in the brain’s more analytical processes.

The argument continues about whether emotions and the accompanying physiological releases of chemicals such as adrenaline, serotonin or dopamine, are just fast track reasoning processes or something quite detached. However, the prevailing view is that emotions are separate and are actually linked to your senses and central nervous system. This suggests that humans have three quite distinct thinking capabilities:

1. An emotional thinking capacity
2. A reflective reasoning capacity
3. A combined emotional and rational thinking process.

This third process, which could be termed as the emotionally intelligent response, helps you view any experiences you encounter through an appropriate context and then guides your behaviour or actions accordingly.

Intelligence

Efforts to understand and accurately define human intelligence have continued for thousands of years, and ancient Greeks such as Socrates, Plato and Aristotle wrote extensively on the subject. However, serious efforts to systematically measure human intelligence did not occur in earnest until the scientist Charles Spearman identified a formal intelligence measurement system. This has become known as IQ, or the Intelligence Quotient.

Although there is dispute about the worth of IQ tests, their use in schools, universities, the armed services, government and the business world has become widespread as a way of distinguishing and classifying people’s capacity to think, learn, be creative, solve problems and act.

Even if IQ testing works reasonably well as a predictor of performance, it is not a complete solution. In other words, IQ, general aptitude and even personality tests are often a measure of language capability, which is very much a rational left-brain skill. They may also look to measure analytical capabilities via numerical and spatial tests, for example. However, this provides a very limited view of what constitutes a person’s “intelligence”.



In 1983, Howard Gardner's book *Frames of Mind* drew attention to the fact that too much focus had been given to what he called **verbal/linguistic intelligence** and **logical/mathematical intelligence**. He proposed a further five intelligences and ten years later added one more. Gardner's model helped to broaden understanding and provides an illustration of how traditional IQ provides only a limited view of a person's intelligence. A summary of his Multiple Intelligences Model is shown here:

Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Model

Verbal/Linguistic	Sensitivity to the spoken and written word, the ability to learn languages, and use language to accomplish goals
Logical/Mathematical	The ability to logically analyse problems, conduct mathematical operations and scientific investigations
Visual/Spatial	The ability to perceive the visual world accurately and the heightened perception of colour, line and form
Body/Kinaesthetic	Expertise in using the body to express ideas and the hands to produce or transform
Musical/Rhythmic	The capacity to perceive, discriminate, transform and express musical form
Interpersonal	Sensitivity to other people and the ability to respond effectively to their feelings
Intrapersonal	Understanding your strengths and limitations and a capacity for self-discipline
Naturalistic	Ability to appreciate the world from an environmental perspective



▼ Understand

A number of theorists have proposed that emotions are biologically pre-wired or built-in. Of course, many basic emotional reactions may be due to inborn physiological responses like pain, fear, crying, hunger, sensual pleasure, etc. These and other emotions like ecstasy or sadness may be genetic, hormonal or even drug induced.

However, a large body of opinion suggests that you learn to experience and express your emotions over time. As people grow out of early childhood, certain emotions become associated with particular situations and events; this forms part of a learning process.

Many of these associations are not necessarily rational. For example, an individual may fear situations that are not dangerous, such as meeting someone or speaking in public, or distrust everyone they meet because a specific person once let them down.



Instead of just responding out of these past associations and allowing their emotions to impair their judgement, a person who is emotionally intelligent can utilise both knowledge and feelings to select an appropriate response to any situation or experience they encounter.

It is important to realise that the concept of “emotional intelligence” is a relatively new one, which is being continually developed. It is an umbrella term that captures a broad collection of what are usually referred to as “soft skills”.

To be successful, you need both traditional intelligence (IQ) and emotional intelligence (EQ). This view aligns with the idea that it takes more than just brains to succeed in life. The ability to develop and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships is also crucial.

Daniel Goleman takes a similar, if broader, position on what constitutes emotional intelligence. He argues that the emotionally intelligent individual is skilled in two key areas:

1. **Personal competence** – how you manage yourself
2. **Social competence** – how you manage your relationships with others.

Irrespective of the exact model you use, highly emotionally intelligent people can be distinguished from those with lower levels of EQ. Although there are potentially many differences, these can be summarised in three core areas.

1 **The rational context for their feelings**

Emotionally intelligent individuals will draw direct parallels between their feelings, what they think and what they say.

They will more quickly recognise that natural emotions such as happiness, sadness or anger are part of a sophisticated response process and will take effort to understand the context in which these emotions are being felt.

This will be instinctive on the part of some people and learned behaviour in others. However, in both cases, individuals with high EQ will look for the meaning behind their feelings, rather than just blindly acting on them.

2 **An openness to feedback**

Another key strength of the emotionally intelligent individual is their capacity to talk about their feelings and to accept feedback – even if that feedback is quite confronting.

They are happy to discuss their emotional responses or reactions and look for opportunities to gain new angles or perspectives, so they can develop a greater understanding that will help them to develop and grow.

3 **A capacity to be realistic**

Writers on emotional intelligence, such as Mayer and Salovey, Goleman, Cooper and Sawaf, draw the conclusion that emotionally intelligent people have a high sense of self-worth and do not take themselves seriously.

They may be relatively light-hearted and easygoing and are quite realistic about their own personal strengths and weaknesses.



▼ Learn

The term “emotional intelligence” draws on two simple concepts: to be “intelligent”, which can be described as the ability to apply knowledge appropriately, and to be “emotionally astute” (or “tuned in”), which means the ability to appropriately manage and respond to emotions.

To help you learn more about yourself and how you can understand and increase your EQ, a four quadrant model has been developed. This model, which is pictured below, is based on the view that your emotional intelligence is driven by a combination of your motivation, and the structure or flexibility of your thinking – about yourself and others.

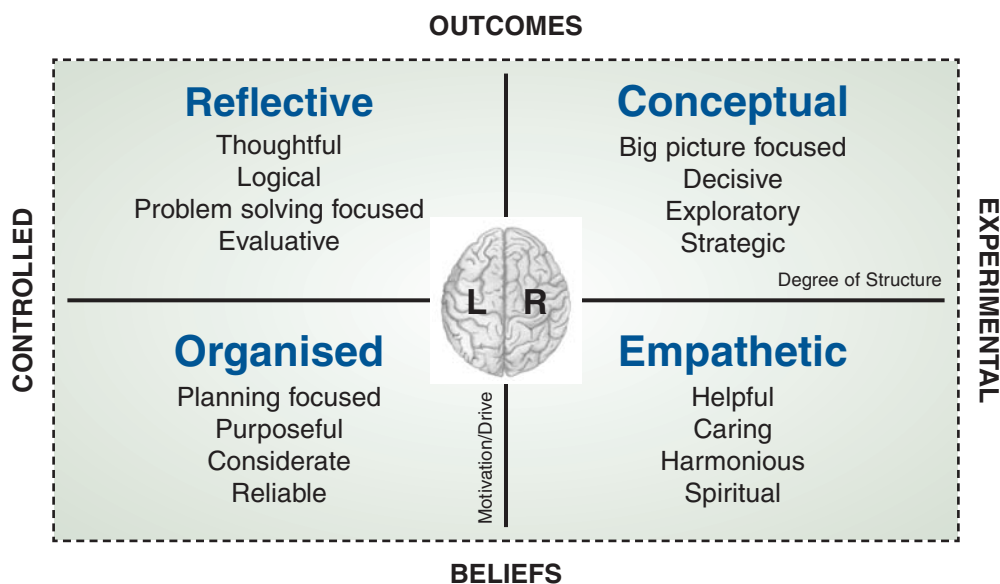
The vertical axis of the model is labelled *Motivation/Drive*, and looks at basic drive or motivation in reference to behaviour. The **Outcome** end of the scale involves being predominantly focused on tasks or results, and relates to the appropriate application of knowledge, by using an analytical or intuitive approach. At the other end of this vertical axis is **Beliefs**. At this end of the scale, a person will predominantly focus on past experience and personal values and adopt a practical or expressive approach. This relates to the appropriate management of emotions.

Think of this as a facts (Outcome) versus feelings (Beliefs) approach, e.g., how much you consider the people involved in comparison with the results or objective outcome of a situation. This scale asks the question, “What do you most care about?”

The horizontal axis illustrates the *Degree of Structure* people use in their approach and behaviour. At the **Controlled** end of the scale, the focus is more on facts and being “systems-oriented”. At the **Experimental** end, the person will be open-minded, and concerned about the feelings of those they are relating to.

This scale can be more easily understood by considering the idea of the left and right brain. The left side of the brain represents a thinking structure that is concrete, solid, controlled, “tried and true”, logical and grounded in fact (Controlled). On the other side you have the right brain, which is unstructured, loose thinking, strategic, plays with alternatives, and tries to avoid rigid structure (Experimental).

By intersecting the two axis, the grid creates four emotional intelligence styles. Every one of these styles may be adopted in different situations, although it is most likely that you will naturally utilise one or two of the styles in most circumstances you encounter.



▼ Assess

In order to assess which emotional intelligence style you primarily use, it is helpful to understand them more thoroughly. The four EQ styles are as follows:

- 1 Reflective (Outcomes driven and Controlled structure).** Predominantly interested in how the external world is structured and ordered, this style is most concerned with gathering data and mentally sifting and reviewing it. It is thoughtful, logical, focused on solving problems and evaluation. The person using this style will work towards goals in a quiet, thoughtful and planned fashion.
- 2 Conceptual (Outcomes driven and Experimental structure).** The Conceptual style is predominantly interested in how the external world can be understood in a range of different ways, and then changed or altered through action. It is focused on the “big picture” and is decisive, exploratory and strategic in nature. The person using this style will invest in an approach that is new and interesting.
- 3 Empathetic (Beliefs driven and Experimental structure).** Predominantly interested in how the world of inner feeling, beliefs and values can be better understood, this style is focused on being helpful, caring about people and seeking harmony. The person using this style will be concerned with the connection of the people involved and whether they feel good about each other.
- 4 Organised (Beliefs driven and Controlled structure).** The Organised style is predominantly interested in how the world of inner beliefs and the values of every individual can be accommodated in an orderly way, using practicality and parameters. It is focused on the planning process, consideration, reliability and being purposeful. The person using this style will be most interested in doing what the group or team institution has sanctioned.



Although individual styles are not as clear as this, you will find that your natural tendencies are likely to play themselves out in patterns. For example, have you ever been told that you tend to be too soft or easy on people or cold, uncaring or too focused on results?

This can be common when you are dealing with people who are “more” or “less” belief driven than you are. Knowing about your primary and secondary EQ style can help you match or adjust your style to the needs of others, when that is appropriate. In a sense, knowing your own preferred style, or EQ Profile, is only half of the equation. The other half is being able to recognise other styles so that you can “flex” your style to better accommodate other people and make an interpersonal connection. Every person has elements of all four styles, even though most tend to use (or overuse) one or two of them, most of the time.

Each of these styles has a specific contribution to make. However, the more you can utilise the style which is most appropriate for a given situation, rather than just relying on your preferred style, the more “emotionally intelligent” you are likely to become. This requires considerable practise for most people. The process starts with a strong sense of self-awareness and an appreciation of the quadrants or styles you operate in strongly, as well as those that need to be developed. The chart on the following page provides you with a quick overview of the benefits and potential downfalls of each style.

Emotional Intelligence Style Pros & Cons

OUTCOMES

Reflective

PROS

Is likely to:

- think about issues quite deeply
- adopt a logical and analytical approach
- approach problems systematically
- weigh up ably quite complex alternatives

CONS

May:

- discount people's feelings
- see some strong beliefs as being poorly grounded in facts and evidence
- be seen as cool and aloof
- dismiss all opinions and assumptions until they have hard "proof"

HIGH

Motivation/Drive

Conceptual

PROS

Is likely to:

- enjoy taking on large and complex issues and challenges
- raise new and interesting options and possibilities to explore
- be quick in selecting from a range of alternative options
- cover a lot of ground in a short space of time

CONS

May:

- make decisions without much quiet or detailed consideration
- not engage in any step by step planning or preparation
- quickly "jump" from one issue to the next (in "skittish" fashion)
- not follow through or tie up loose ends

CONTROLLED

EXPERIMENTAL

HIGH

Degree of Structure

Organised

PROS

Is likely to:

- value the development of clear systems and processes
- look for widespread input from others in shaping a sound conclusion
- see themselves as resolute and dependable
- value highly practical experience

CONS

May:

- resist being pushed to decide or act
- focus on the present much more than the future
- not push the boundaries or stretch beyond known limits
- impose controls where they are not wanted

Empathetic

PROS

Is likely to:

- be generous of spirit and giving as a person
- take time and trouble to understand people's feelings
- avoid conflict and work hard to make peace
- seek deeper and more meaningful relationships

CONS

May:

- take large amounts of time to understand other people's feelings and ignore time constraints
- use gut feel, instinct and guesswork to form their views
- take issues on trust and take people at face value
- look to avoid difficult or unpopular decisions

BELIEFS

▼ Balance

Emotional intelligence is not only about being aware of your emotions but also about using your emotions in useful or functional ways.

Emotions:

- can be useful in terms of directing attention
- can be used when making decisions
- come into play in anticipating how you would feel
- can be used to facilitate certain kinds of thinking or moods.

The last of these points is a very important issue. **Positive moods can facilitate creativity, integrative thinking, inductive reasoning and better networking or relationship building.** They can lead to more flexible planning, the generation of multiple alternatives and a broadened perspective on problems.

Alternatively, utilising **critical moods can help you focus on attention to detail, detection of errors and problems, and aid in careful information processing.**

Appreciation of the consequences of moods and emotions is likely to vary across individuals. That is why a greater appreciation of your personal EQ style preferences can help you to more effectively read and control your emotions and moods.

Although some people are naturally more emotionally intelligent than others, emotional intelligence skills can be developed or improved. In other words, anyone can improve emotional intelligence competency over time with focus, effort and persistence.

A competence is a learned capability or a co-ordinated group of habits that you can use to achieve a specific result. In terms of emotional intelligence, this means that you need to learn or develop a group of habits and behaviours that you can use to recognise your feelings and those of others, and then take appropriate action. This means recognising negative or dysfunctional emotions when they occur and replacing them with positive or functionally useful ones.

Balance is also about learning to use all four EQ styles, rather than being heavily biased towards one or two – as most people naturally are.



▼ Review

Individuals who are highly emotionally intelligent tend to be more aware of their feelings and to act on them in an appropriate way. They are accountable for their actions and take responsibility for their behaviour, without seeking to make excuses or blame others.

Some people have a rudimentary understanding of how they (and other people) are influenced by feelings and use this knowledge in functional ways. For example, an individual in a negative mood who decides to delay a meeting, where proposed organisational changes that require their involvement will be discussed, intuitively realises that his or her ability to enthusiastically listen and give their willing support to the changes will be influenced by their current feelings.

Emotional intelligence also entails being able to manage the moods and emotions of others. Being able to excite and enthuse other people or cause them to feel cautious or wary, for example, is an important interpersonal skill and vehicle for social influence.

In order to be able to read individuals or groups, you need to be able to appraise how they feel and know how to influence their feelings. You also need the ability to anticipate how others will react to different circumstances and situations, and effectively manage those reactions. Being able to distinguish between genuine and faked emotions is also crucial.

The more you develop your emotional intelligence skills and learn to flexibly apply all four EQ styles previously discussed, the more you are likely to be able to respond appropriately to most situations you encounter. Whilst this requires your willingness to change your style or approach, by choosing to do this you are taking a significant step towards becoming more emotionally intelligent.

The Skill Building template on the following page can be used to help you plan how you will develop your use of the four EQ styles. You may also find Team Publications' *Emotional Intelligence Profile* helpful for identifying your primary and secondary styles so you can more accurately target any development activities.



Emotional Intelligence Skill Building Template

