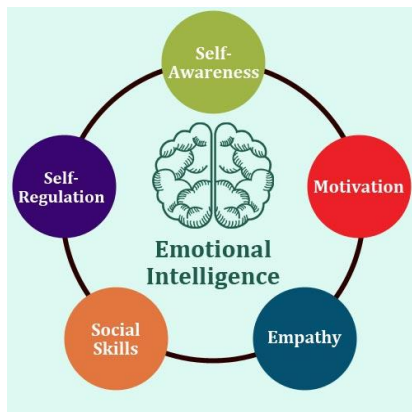


Three Important Skills
CSC 424 Software Design
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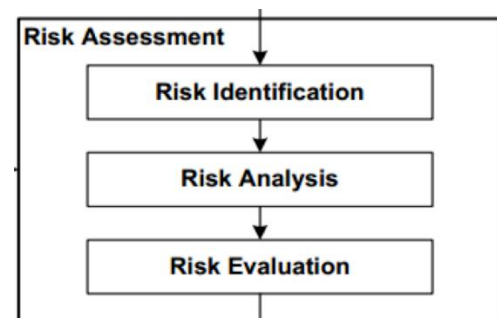
Projects and their trajectories are influenced by a myriad of factors: availability, motivation, entropy, and even leadership. The ability to control the outcome of a project or to control the contribution towards a project, can be moderated with a given number of skills. The development and refinement of these skills can be greatly influential in the completion of a given project. The three chosen here are: emotional intelligence, risk analysis, and critical thinking.



Emotional intelligence is defined by Oxford Languages as: the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle, interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. Emotional intelligence is also divided, by the mixed model, into five interconnected aspects: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills, and empathy. [1] Each ability deals with the identification and control of one's own emotions and the management of relations with regards to, and understanding of, the emotions of others. The importance of each of these abilities, with regards to project development, may seem to be of less relative importance when compared to more physically practical abilities, however thought experiments will be a good way to highlight their necessity.

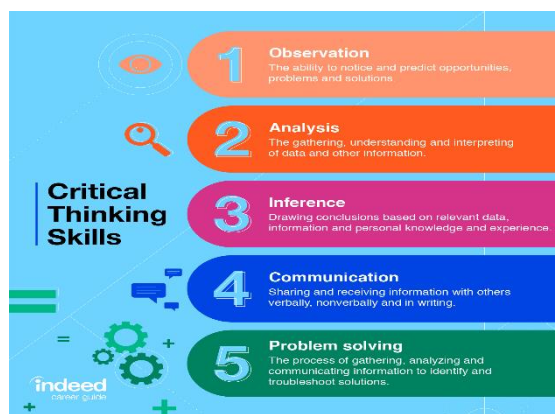
A team is having some form of difficulty in cooperation. Some members, after having been given the pitch for the project, are slow to contribute and when asked, respond in a non-specific way. Their actions could be explained by outside forces influencing their thoughts and slowing their work, however without emotional intelligence this turmoil may be lost on team leaders and, in turn, reduces the likelihood of other members bringing their concerns forth further in the project. The ability of empathy in this scenario, understanding the feelings of the team members, informs the response created by social skills and improves the motivation of these members.

Risk analysis is the process of determining the likelihood than a given event will produce a negative outcome. [2] It applies itself to various disciplines, typically economic, within corporate or government spheres, but is at its most broad a method of determining the success of a project or goal. There exist various methods to perform risk analysis, one of those being the Facilitated Risk Analysis Process, which begins by identifying individual risks and then having a given team determine methods of mitigation. The conclusion of this process should



result in a documented list of which risks exist, methods necessary to accomplish mitigation, and an overall plan to fully implement necessary controls.

In this hypothetical, the initial formation of a project has begun. The team is weak in risk analysis and fails to define a key issue halfway through projected development. Time to fix this unforeseen issue sets the project back noticeably, additional funding is required, and clients are upset. The ability to predict this risk sufficiently and correctly, a practice which may have taken a few hours, would have saved an incredible amount of time and money.



Critical thinking is defined as: the objective analysis and evaluation of an issue in order to form a judgement. The relation to both risk analysis emotional intelligence becomes more apparent and builds upon the importance of critical thinking as an important skill. It is a self-directed, disciplined, monitored, and self-corrective method of thinking. [3] When used correctly it can improve many other skills and, in the context of project development, can prevent unnecessary decisions which will save time and money.

The synergy for critical thinking found within emotional intelligence cannot be understated. Empathy may inform social skills, however without proper critical thinking during an inner monologue to finalize a response, those abilities have the potential to create more harm through a misreading of a given situation. Its importance for risk analysis could be seen as even more tightly woven, the critical step of evaluation relying on critical thinking skills to properly address identified risks can be the difference between a few hours lost addressing the issue, to months lost creating a remedy. The importance of critical thinking is nearl capable of standing on its own, requiring only that people be pointed in its direction so that they may understand.

References

- [1] D. Goleman, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, New York: Bantam Books, 1998.
- [2] A. Hayes, "Risk Analysis Definition," Investopedia, 19 February 2021. [Online]. Available: <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/r/risk-analysis.asp>. [Accessed 23 April 2021].
- [3] J. Clarke, *Critical Dialogues: Thinking Together in Turbulent Times*, Bristol: Policy Press, 2019.

