

**Question:**

As a Project Manager, what might be your response to manage the emotional reactions of a customer? You should use at least three academic papers to support your response and write a minimum of 300 words as your response.

**Answer:**

There are certain emotions that are highly beneficial to businesses if managed well. At the highest level, they can be divided into dimensions of positive and negative affect, however further hierarchy proposes division into anger, fear, sadness and shame for negative, and contentment, happiness for positive (Laros & Steenkamp, 2005). In the context of project management, project managers highly benefit from having a high level of Emotional Intelligence (EI) (Khosravi et al., 2020). EI covers four areas of importance (Yale, n.d.):

1. Self-Management: being able to make decisions based on your emotions
2. Self-Awareness: being aware of how your emotions affect your thoughts and actions
3. Social Awareness: being able to recognise a range of cues in others that indicate how they feel
4. Relationship Management: being able to effectively manage the emotional cues you send to others.

Particularly, Clarke (2010) emphasises a situation where negative emotions amongst the team and stakeholders reached “a point of no return”, however, the manager used emotional awareness to identify and remedy sources of frustration and to identify a shared goal to improve the communication within the project. Research from Connor et al. (2022) highlighted that managers should incorporate reflective practices to

ensure that their past experiences benefit potential future situations, and they can incorporate learnings from their past reactions. Additionally, managers exercising empathy and adjusting their delivery to customers depending on nature of the message and intended audience show more effective project management performance. Finally, and critically, managers can also manage emotions of the customer successfully by ensuring the initial project is delivered successfully, thus reducing risk of negative outcomes. Luong et al. (2021) highlight how EI is a protective factor for anxiety, as anxiety can manifest in behaviours detrimental to the project such as not speaking up when there are potential issues within the team or project estimates.

In conclusion, it is critical for project managers to develop EI to be able to successfully manage emotions of customers. Benefitting from increased awareness to a range of social cues can result in more harmonious interactions and productive outcomes, and self-reflective practices of project managers can ensure these skills persist in the long-term.

## **References:**

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