

the ADVISOR

RESOURCES FOR SUPERVISORS, MANAGERS, AND HUMAN RESOURCES PERSONNEL

Developing Your EQ

When making a list of the key qualities a manager should bring to their work, emotional intelligence (or EQ) is sometimes forgotten. Yet emotional intelligence, or the ability to recognize the impact one's behavior has on others, is a key ingredient in management success.

A person who is skilled in the use of emotional intelligence can:

- ▶ Effectively regulate their emotions in difficult situations or challenging conversations
- ▶ Maintain self-awareness during interactions with others
- ▶ Identify and sympathize with what others may be experiencing or feeling

A strong EQ increases our capacity for empathy and removes barriers to understanding.

Emotional intelligence comes more naturally to some people than others. However, EQ is a learned skill, and anyone who is willing can improve their abilities. To increase your EQ:

- ▶ Learn about people from other cultures and value systems, including those from generations other than your own. Consider how differing experiences may

impact a person's view of the world and how they communicate with others.

- ▶ Step outside your comfort zone by learning a new skill or taking on a big challenge. Keep in mind that we learn more from mistakes than we do from successes. It's okay to not be perfect.



Inside:

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- ▶ Management Consultation



- ▶ Ask your family, friends, and workplace peers for feedback regarding your active listening and relationship skills. Identify areas where you could improve your ability to express yourself to others.
- ▶ Examine how your biases impact your capacity to empathize with others, especially those with differing backgrounds or levels of experience. Be sensitive to unconscious biases related to race, gender, or cultural background.
- ▶ When you are spending time with people of differing viewpoints, listen and look for common ground. When necessary, practice the art of “agreeing to disagree.”
- ▶ Read a book that diverges from your usual genre, watch a movie

that is outside your comfort zone, or switch to a different newspaper or news website for a few weeks. Experiencing a wider variety of media may broaden your perspective.

Strengthening EQ has benefits for managers beyond their own personal growth. To apply these skills to your role as a manager:

- ▶ **Connect with each of your direct reports.** Learn about their work background and experience (avoid prying into their personal lives). Spend time learning about what they do and, if possible, occasionally “walk in their shoes” by assisting with tasks or talking through problems.
- ▶ **Become a better listener.** Listening is the best way to learn

what a person is thinking or feeling. Start by asking open-ended questions and focusing on the person’s responses. In face-to-face conversations, pay attention to the other person’s facial expressions, tone of voice, and body language. Keep in mind that non-verbal communication is key to deciphering a person’s true feelings in a given situation.

- ▶ **Practice compassion.** Your team is made up of human beings who encounter the same stresses and personal challenges that you do. When a team member is struggling with a personal situation, it’s important to express your support. Remind the person about helpful organizational resources and let them know that you care about their wellbeing.
- ▶ **Be mindful of your own behavior.** Set an example for your team to emulate. If you make a mistake, own it.

Emotional intelligence is a key asset in creating a healthy, respectful workplace. A manager who communicates effectively and who expresses appreciation well may find it easier to maintain individual and team morale. In addition, employees who feel both emotionally safe and valued for their contributions are more likely to bring their best selves to their work.

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service can provide resources for developing your EQ. Call 24/7/365.

Source: Life Advantages

How Do I Say That? Restoring Confidence



Sometimes, an employee will make a mistake that shakes their confidence. When this occurs, they may mistrust their own judgment or instincts in a way that impacts their productivity.

While taking the time to do a “gut check” is important, a lingering loss of confidence may turn a short-term error into a long-term problem. If you are looking for ways to restore an employee’s lost confidence:

- 1. Consult with Human Resources.** Explain your concerns and review any relevant policies. LifeMatters is also

available to discuss strategies for both addressing the mistake and helping the employee to move past it.

- 2. Meet privately with the employee.** Outline your concern within the context of their work performance.

Sample language: “You’ve seemed less confident in your work lately. I’m concerned that this cautious approach may be impacting your ability to meet individual and team goals.”

- 3. Listen.** Give the employee time to explain their perspective. If the employee is struggling to find the right words, use active listening skills, such as nodding or saying things like “go on,” to build rapport and create a sense of safety.

- 4. Express confidence.** Remind the employee that everyone makes mistakes. Tell them that they are still a valued member of your team.

Sample language: “I know it can be disheartening when you make an error. However, I value your contributions to our workplace, and so do your colleagues.”

- 5. Make a plan.** If the employee seems uncertain about how to respond to a particular problem or situation, review policies or make a list of “best practices” in that circumstance. If necessary, refer the employee to remedial training.

Sample language: “Let’s break the situation down step by step and review what you can do differently.”





6. Refer the employee to LifeMatters. LifeMatters can suggest strategies for managing feelings of stress, anxiety, fear, or uncertainty. If the employee's actions violated company policy, consider making a performance referral.

Sample language: "LifeMatters can help you cope with stress and uncertainty. I recommend you give them a call."

7. Follow up. Give the employee some time to settle back into their routine before checking

on their progress. In some instances, a casual conversation may make sense, while in others, you may want to schedule a meeting. Review the improvements you have observed as well as any lingering concerns.

Sample language: "I wanted to see how you are feeling about your progress. Here is what I have noticed."

The LifeMatters Management Consultation Service is available to help a struggling employee get back on track. Call anytime.

Management Consultation

LifeMatters is available to help with:

- ▶ Confronting an employee about performance issues
- ▶ An employee's personal problem
- ▶ Suspected drug or alcohol use on the job
- ▶ Interpersonal conflicts between team members
- ▶ Establishing clear, attainable expectations for performance
- ▶ Addressing crisis situations, such as a violent incident, the death of an employee, or a natural disaster
- ▶ Your own personal concerns
- ▶ Any other work-related issue

LifeMatters offers professional management consultation when you need it, as often as you need it. Call anytime.

Call the **LifeMatters®** Management Consultation Service toll-free anytime. **1-800-634-6433**

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