

Reducing Conflict 57 Emotional Intelligence Post COVID

by Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD



Enhancing the level of Emotional Intelligence will reduce conflict in your organization, especially post COVID.

In the 1980s several social scientists developed the concept of Emotional Intelligence (commonly called EI). EI is a measure of the ability of an individual to work well with people at all levels. Higher Emotional Intelligence is a good predictor of success in professional life and also in social activities.

Founders of the concepts

Keith Beasley coined the term Emotional Quotient (EQ) in 1987. The term “Emotional Intelligence” was popularized by Daniel Goleman in the mid-1990s. Goleman wrote several books and articles on the topic and he is still active today.

It is possible to develop one's Emotional Intelligence rather easily at any point in life. We have the ability to train our brains to react differently to current conditions. That is a highly liberating thought. It means that we can reduce conflict in our lives through study to develop higher EI.

Another helpful book

One of my favorite books on Emotional Intelligence is by Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves entitled [Emotional Intelligence 2.0](#). If you have not been exposed to this book, perhaps this article will whet your appetite to purchase it.

More relevant in a post-COVID World

Although they published the book 13 years ago, the techniques are critical in our post-COVID world. EI allows people to hear each other accurately so true needs surface. EI fights against a “command and control” mentality on the part of leaders. Unfortunately, many leaders still have a command and control mindset and do not even realize it.

During the pandemic, most people were working remotely. As managers tried to keep productivity high, they resorted to many different tracking systems. People felt lower trust and higher scrutiny for more than two years. In the hybrid situation, people are still feeling lower trust, and that has a negative impact on productivity.

Managers need to redouble their efforts to improve Emotional Intelligence based on their actions. Read and heed the information in Emotional Intelligence 2.0.

About the book

The authors start out by giving a single-sentence definition of Emotional Intelligence *"Emotional Intelligence is your ability to recognize and understand emotions in yourself and others and your ability to use this awareness to manage your behavior and relationships."* This leads to a description of the four quadrants of EI.

- 1. Self Awareness** - ability to recognize your own emotions
- 2. Manage your emotions** - manage your emotions to enable helpful behavior
- 3. Social Awareness** - understand emotions in others (also called empathy)
- 4. Relationship Management** - manage interactions for successful outcomes

The book contains a link to an online survey that lets you measure your own EI. This survey is an interesting exercise, but it lacks validity because people with low EI have blind spots.

Be careful about rating yourself

You might rate yourself highly in EI when the reality is somewhat lower. At least you can compare your current perceptions to a future state after you have made some improvements.

How to use the book

Most of the book consists of potential strategies for improving Emotional Intelligence in the four quadrants described above. You get to pick the quadrant to work on. Also, you select strategies that would work best for you.

The approach is to work on only one quadrant, using three strategies at a time for the most impact. They also suggest getting an EI Mentor whom you select.

Work on your EI for about six months and retest for progress, then select a different quadrant.

Training your own brain

Train your brain to work slightly differently. Create new neural pathways from the emotional side of the brain to the rational side of the brain. I like to use a [video analogy of plowing a driveway in your brain](#) to describe how it works.

We are bombarded by stimuli every day. These stimuli enter our brain through the spinal cord and immediately go to the limbic system. That hemisphere is the emotional (right) side of the brain.

That process is why we first have an emotional reaction to stimuli and often flash out at other people. The signals have to travel to the rational side of the brain for us to have a conscious reaction. We then decide on our course of action. To do this, the electrical signal navigates along a kind of driveway in our brain called the Corpus Callosum.

The Corpus Callosum is a fibrous flat belt of tissue that connects the right and left hemispheres. How quickly the signals move through the Corpus Callosum determines how effective we will be at controlling our emotions.

As we improve our EI, what we are doing is plowing the snow out of the way in the Corpus Callosum. The result is that the signals can transfer more easily and we see less conflict in our lives.

Working with the concept of EI is an effective way to improve our effectiveness in this critical skill.

Roughly 60% of performance is a function of Emotional Intelligence. We now have an easy and almost-free mechanism to improve our interpersonal skills and reduce conflict.

Conclusion

I hope you will purchase this little book, particularly if you are a leader. It can change your life. For leaders, EI is the most consistent way to improve performance and be more successful with less conflict. The skills are particularly important in a time of turmoil such as the post-COVID environment.

Bob Whipple, MBA, CPTD, is a consultant, trainer, speaker, and author in the areas of leadership and trust. He is the author of: *The Trust Factor: Advanced Leadership for Professionals*, *Understanding E-Body Language: Building Trust Online*, and *Leading with Trust is Like Sailing Downwind*. Bob has many years as a senior executive with a Fortune 500 Company and with non-profit organizations. For more information, or to bring Bob in to speak at your next event, **contact him** at www.Leadergrow.com, bwhipple@leadergrow.com or 585.392.7763

The
TRUST
Ambassador