



Controlling Emotions in the Workplace— The Impact on Your Bottom Line



February 2011

**TTI: The Assessment Company—
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www.johnhersey.com
Phone: 877-816-3467



Introduction

Emotional intelligence is the foundation of sound decision making, which is at the core of consistently high performance.
Studies on the impact of emotional intelligence in the workplace emphasize that organizations with higher levels of emotional intelligence reap benefits in productivity and success; therefore forward thinkers continue to mine it for business tools that lead to superior performance. Business leaders who use Emotional Quotient expertise to build an emotionally intelligent culture do gain a competitive edge for their organization in the marketplace.

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What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and use the power of emotions to facilitate high levels of collaboration and productivity. In essence, it is the ability to effectively manage emotions.

What is EQ?

EQ, or emotional quotient, refers to a measurement of emotional intelligence. Talking about EQ is a way to discuss the level of emotional intelligence operating in an individual or group. The good news is that unlike IQ, which tends to be constant, EQ can be intentionally raised.

The Organizational Cost of Low EQ Workplaces

The emotional climate of a workplace either supports or deteriorates performance. **Ignoring this layer of workforce reality is perilous because when emotional intelligence is low, it can result in very negative consequences to the organization's bottom line.**

Many of the ways that low emotional intelligence affect a business are obvious, such as having managers' time and energy diverted to dealing with emotion-driven conflict among team members.





Negative Emotions & Performance

The below results were published based on a poll of thousands of managers and employees asked about the effects of incivility in the workplace.

After being the victim of on-the-job rudeness and hostility:

- 2/3 of employees said their performance declined.
- Four out of five lost work time worrying about the unpleasant incident.
- 63% wasted time avoiding the offender.
- More than 3/4 of respondents said that their commitment to their employer had waned.
- 12% resigned because of the bad treatment.

“The Cost of Bad Behavior: How Incivility Is Damaging Your Business and What to Do About It”, by Christine Pearson and Christine Porath

Don't Let Performance Suffer!

The emotions with the most potential to cause negative repercussions in the workplace are anger and fear. When feelings are intense, it's almost as if the brain is being held hostage by the emotion. Strong feelings like fear, anger and anxiety temporarily impair the ability to think rationally. The brain is wired to be on alert status from a threat of any kind, whether real or imagined. Anger and fear activate the brain's “fight, flight or freeze” response, and it commonly takes as much as four hours for the person's body to return to normal. In the meantime, the derailed person is not able to focus fully on work, depending on the intensity of the emotion.

When people are upset, they suffer from diminished cognitive abilities. Anyone who has ever struggled to stay focused after an emotional interlude at work can attest to this statement.

The area of the brain that generates emotion floods the brain area in charge of executive functions, and as a result attention, problem solving and access to memory are all impaired. A person's planning and organizational abilities are diminished while in this state. Their ability to concentrate is all but gone as they deal with the distraction of trying to process their reactions and plan a response. Since logic and critical thinking are executive functions of the brain, the person's ability to calm down is reduced as the emotional flooding continues. The longer





the emotional flood gates are open, the more difficult it gets to get back on track.

An organization suffers the most lost productivity when a managers' low EQ behavior impacts others exponentially within the organization. Leaders and managers have a more powerful influence on others, and they influence a wider range of people than rank-and-file team members have the potential to do. A managers' ability to self-regulate and to empathize with others has the greatest potential to impact the organization for better or worse. If they are unable to manage their own emotions, their negative behavior saps the energy of staff. **When employees are the targets of anger and frustration, their abilities and motivation erode, lowering performance.**

Emotional Behavior at Work

- 34.5% have experienced being bullied.
- 15.5% have witnessed someone else being bullied.
- 49.6% have not been bullied or witnessed it.
- 72% of bullies are bosses.

Statistics taken from a Zogby International online survey of 2,092 adults on workplace bullying in August of 2010, www.workplacebullying.org





“Workplace Bullying: Do We Need A Law?”

92% of respondents said YES.

Sunday newspaper magazine Parade asked this question in a July 18, 2010 article and in an online poll.

Anytime a person is on the receiving end of someone else’s emotional behavior, it can cause them to become emotionally upset too, and that emotional contagion can cause a ripple effect. Emotional contagion—the tendency to be influenced by the emotions of others—is a reality on the job just as it is anywhere people come together. **Every person with low EQ who acts negatively at work is potentially the bad apple who can bring down the experience and the performance of those around them.**

The consequences of low EQ in the workplace go far deeper and are much more nuanced than just the effect on people directly involved. Research indicates that even people nearby who only observe the emotional behavior are affected, which means their performance is also affected. Observers of rude or uncivil behavior toward others suffer reduced creativity, scoring 33% worse on verbal tasks.¹ This is because people are profoundly attuned to and impacted by the emotions of those around them. **Low EQ not only diminishes an individual’s own performance, but it can also erode the productivity of those around them.**





Employee Engagement Goes Down

Workplaces characterized by low EQ suffer turnover, as employees with reduced job satisfaction look for greener pastures. Or worse, unhappy employees remain with the company but with diminished performance, possibly causing a worse outcome for a company than the cost of recruiting and training their replacement would have been. Prolonged emotional stress on the job can lead to a loss of commitment to the organization. As their energy, commitment and motivation wane, unhappy employees may intentionally withhold knowledge and resources from the current employer in order to eventually convey them to a new employer. ²



Growth Potential Takes a Hit

“Because high anxiety shrinks the space available to our attention, it undermines our very capacity to take in new information, let alone generate fresh ideas.

Near-panic is the enemy of learning and creativity.”³

A company’s potential for innovation and growth are at stake when a low EQ dynamic is in place. The courage to speak up and share ideas evaporates when individuals feel fearful. Collaboration and creativity are sapped when employees experience chronic anxiety. Short term memory suffers, reducing their ability to hold information in working memory and handicapping people’s ability to learn. Over time, the motivation to learn new ideas diminishes. **In an age when nearly all jobs require continuous learning to keep current, the implications of this to a business are not good.** It can be devastating to an organization, especially one that depends on innovation to pull ahead in the marketplace.



Why Use EQ Training in the Workplace?

EQ training in the workplace gives people the tools they need to lower the age at which they master emotional intelligence skills. People can cultivate “the wisdom born of experience” at any age by using EQ knowledge, self-awareness and experiential learning about managing their emotions. **It is possible for a person to raise their EQ!**

Learning more about emotional intelligence can help individuals and teams develop into a fleet of top performers who produce higher levels of profitability while creating an energized, healthier workplace.

The Competitive Advantage of High EQ, Competencies & Superior Performance

This example illustrates how emotional intelligence and competency skills come together to propel a performance advantage on the employer’s behalf:

- Shortly after joining Tandem Computers as a Junior Staff Analyst, Michael Iem became aware of the market trend away from mainframe computers to networks that linked workstations and personal computers (Service Orientation).
- He realized that unless Tandem responded to the trend, its products would become obsolete (Initiative and Innovation).
- Iem had to convince Tandem’s managers that their old emphasis on mainframes was no longer appropriate (Influence) and then develop a system using new technology (Leadership, Change Catalyst).
- He spent four years showing off his new system to customers and company sales personnel before the new network applications were fully accepted (Self-confidence, Self-Regulation, Motivation)

“How to Get Ahead in America,” Richman, L. S., Fortune, May 16, 1994, p. 46-54.



How to Build a High EQ Organization

1. Have Leaders Model Emotionally Intelligent Behavior

Because of their reach and power to influence others, leaders who use the language and practices of EQ in the workplace can transform the way teams collaborate. When they create an environment that supports learning and self-correction, others will follow, and the company culture will support better performance.

2. Get Buy-in to Make the Change

Building emotional intelligence is a lot like building athletic ability. No amount of reading about swimming will ensure that a person can swim—skills are mastered with practice. Employees will only dive in when they see that improving their EQ has a potential pay off that they care about. The TTI Professional Development Series, EQ Version training gives them the tools to practice, and helps them recognize that raising EQ enables them to achieve the professional and personal goals they want. The EQ skills that lend momentum to their career are strengths that reduce stress at home, too.

3. Respect Privacy

Provide EQ reports in a safe, affirming way. The key to success is to deliver emotional intelligence feedback to employees in an atmosphere that respects their privacy. The TTI EQ Professional Development Series requires participants to actively use both personal and reflective learning, as well as team learning experiences to be successful. This allows participants to share as little or much of their report results as they are comfortable with.





4. Offer Training

Team training in EQ gives work groups a common language and shared understanding of what it takes to create and maintain an emotionally healthy environment. When stress goes down, creativity goes up. Employees appreciate the employer who is committed to creating an environment where everyone can thrive.

Important components of high EQ include personal motivation and empathy for others. **Provide team training that supports employees in building them:**

- **Values training** helps people understand the values they hold dear, the ones that make life and work meaningful for them. This contributes to self-awareness about their inner motivations for their job.
- **Behavioral training** helps the team understand how they and the people around them prefer to receive information, make decisions, communicate with others and get things done. It builds self-awareness and helps them understand others.
- **EQ training** gives employees the deep understanding and practice they need to master self-regulation, motivate themselves and build the empathy and social skills that lead to strong teams.
- **Competency skills** such as diplomacy and tact, conflict management and teamwork are firmly rooted in and support emotional intelligence. Consider on-demand, individual learning opportunities like TTI's Rx's. Employees focus specifically on the competency skills they need to acquire, using convenient internet-based learning modules when and where they have time to work on them.





5. Apply Experiential Learning

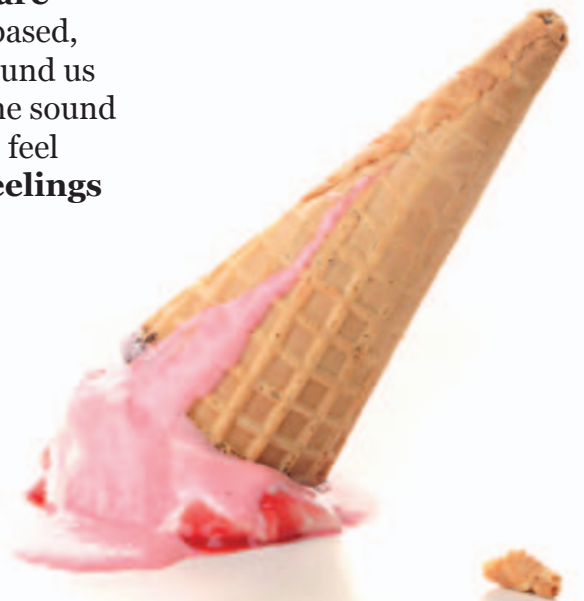
Mentoring and individual coaching are ways to take what is learned in the TTI Professional Development Series, EQ, Values and Behaviors trainings and practice using it, day in and day out. Formal mentoring and coaching relationships encourage employees to remember and apply what they've learned.

6. Celebrate Success

Post-training, give employees the opportunity to take a follow-up EQ assessment to reinforce the progress they've made. The feedback they get and the recognition that they've made progress encourages them to keep going, and everybody wins.

Why Does Emotion Affect Us?

In the business world, we prefer to behave in logical, intelligent ways, so why do we still bring our emotions to work? **The truth is that whether we choose to be or not, all humans are indeed creatures of emotion.** We have neurologically-based, split-second, unavoidable emotional reactions to things around us every moment of the day, from the way our heart races at the sound of someone suddenly yelling nearby to the flash of panic we feel when a car nearly hits us in traffic. **We can't opt out of feelings anymore than we can opt out of breathing.**





Built For Emotion

The human brain is hard-wired to respond to stimulus with emotion and to connect emotionally to others. At a subtle level, we are always observing minute details in the world around us. Infants in the cradle begin learning the fine art of reading facial expressions to decipher what they mean about the emotions of those around them. And then through trial and error, babies learn to elicit desired responses from others.

Considering where we come from as a species, this makes perfect sense. Long before humans cultivated plants and animals, organized ways to store food and water, or built fortified dwellings, we spent every moment of the day knowing that we could be eaten by animals. Survival in the food chain depended on our ability to be hyper-vigilant to danger and to respond quickly. When we avoided becoming some other creature's dinner, it was because our brains were wired to react at lightning speed, and often it was because we coordinated our efforts with other people. **Even today, we navigate to safety in a sometimes dangerous world using emotions as our early warning signals and by relying on help from others.**



The Science of Emotion

Thanks to the wider availability of tools such as Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI), scientists have advanced our understanding of how the human brain works, illuminating some of the biology that underpins our behavior. By conducting experiments that intentionally induce test subjects to have emotional experiences, researchers observe MRI depictions of their brains in real time. As brain scans display various parts of the brain “lighting up”, scientists map which parts of the brain are activated to originate emotions, to accomplish decision-making and to generate action. The resulting information has dramatically pushed forward our understanding of how and why we do what we do.

Neurological research has revealed two facts that are fundamental to understanding how emotion impacts workplaces:

First, humans are built to connect with each other. We are always subtly in tune with and affected by the emotions and actions of those around us, biologically predetermined to build connections with other people. We work in teams because we were meant to.

Second, our emotions are fundamental to decision making. Brain scans reveal that the areas of our brain that produce emotion, make decisions and take action are densely connected to each other.



Everyone is capable of near-instantaneous response to the world around them, which explains how easy it is to have a knee-jerk reaction based on emotion. But we are also capable of choosing to pause, recognize what we're feeling and think before responding. **Which we choose to do on the job can make the difference between ruinous decisions and the ones that produce outstanding results.**

When science demonstrated a biological basis connecting our emotions to decision-making and relationships, it established the emotional intelligence factor as a vital business reality. How intelligently employees process emotions has everything to do with what happens inside a company.

What Are Emotional Intelligence Skills?

Research shows that successful leaders and superior performers alike have well developed emotional intelligence skills, revealing a whole new layer of what makes a great leader great. Mastery of EQ skills makes it possible for a person to work effectively with a wide variety of people. Because of the impact of emotional intelligence skills on decision making, people with higher levels of emotional intelligence are able to respond more effectively to what are often rapidly changing conditions in the business world. **In fact, a person's EQ may be a better predictor of successful performance than IQ (intelligence quotient).**

“Emotional intelligence is what our grandparents called wisdom, and like wisdom, research indicates that emotional intelligence tends to improve with age.”

–Bill J. Bonnstetter,
TTI Performance Systems, Inc.

Unlike IQ, which tends to remain stable through out a person's life, EQ does change as a person ages, improving as the wisdom born of experience accumulates. **This means that with guided experiential learning and practice, people can intentionally improve emotional intelligence.** EQ skills are built sequentially, because in order to master one EQ skill a person must first have some facility with the ones that precede it.





The Dimensions of Emotional Intelligence

Intrapersonal Emotional Intelligence

(refers to what happens inside a person)

- **Self-Awareness:** The ability to recognize and understand your own moods, emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others.
- **Self Regulation:** The ability to suspend judgment to think before acting, choosing to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods.
- **Motivation:** A propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence, sometimes with a passion to work for reasons that go beyond a desire for money or status.

Interpersonal Emotional Intelligence

(refers to what happens between self and others)

- **Empathy** is the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people.
- **Social Skills** is a proficiency in managing relationships and building networks.

Professional Development Series EQ Version, TTI Performance Systems, Inc.

EQ skills are important in a way that is distinctly different from technical or “hard” skills. **Many technical skills will gradually diminish with lack of use over time, but that’s not the case with EQ skills.** It’s common to hear someone remark that after switching to different software, they’ve mostly forgotten a software program that they once had advanced skill in because they no longer need or use it. But in every personal or professional life, there are daily challenges that call for emotional intelligence skills. In every aspect of life, we must regulate ourselves and relate to other people in order to get things done. **Research bears out that once developed, EQ skills are retained for life.**





Building Emotional Intelligence in Individuals

Raising the emotional climate of an organization starts by raising the individual EQs of the staff, and it goes deeper than just asking people to modify their inappropriate behavior. Emotionally-driven behavior is highly visible, but it's only the observable outcome of how we process feelings and the quality of our decision-making. Lasting change starts internally. **Professional EQ training gives individuals a clear picture of the impact emotions have on everyone's career and relationships.** With some reflection, most people already know that there have been times when their own emotions got out of hand and sabotaged them. **Training encourages participants to consider the question, "Was a better result possible?"**

Often a person knows they have a high potential for superior performance but have been falling short of it. They know they have other factors in place to excel, such as excellent technical skills, the right experience, personal competency skills and the motivation to succeed. **Learning about emotional intelligence can be the light bulb moment when they recognize that what's been holding them back is the way they handle their emotions, particularly in relationship to those around them.**

Every person needs honest, unbiased feedback on their EQ, delivered in an environment that is non-threatening so they can take it in. Organizations that use computerized EQ assessments find that they get more positive buy-in from respondents who have an opportunity to reflect on the resulting EQ report on their own. **People more readily accept the feedback the computer gives them than they would if they were to hear the same feedback from their manager or another individual.**

Learning to be self-aware before making a decision about how to proceed is crucial. This is the point where a person can recognize the factors that influence their knee-jerk reactions, and there are many. Momentary reactions draw on our underlying values





and motivations, our needs, likes, dislikes, desires, interpretations of past experiences and the attitudes we have cultivated. All of these come together in the moment of decision making, which then becomes visible as behavior or action. With practice, people stop reacting based on the emotions of the moment and start choosing to make better decisions that drive better results.

Emotional intelligence training helps individuals learn to activate their inner motivation, which is a much more powerful source of motivation than external factors alone. Any manager who has used liberal amounts of both the carrot and the stick—offering magnificent rewards and painful consequences—knows that there is more to motivating people than that. **A comprehensive EQ training program goes beyond the generalized, one-size-fits all approach, giving participants hands-on practice at using tools to self-regulate and to tap into their own uniquely powerful inner motivations.**

A comprehensive EQ professional development program will also help them become aware of the less obvious ways that their emotions have been affecting their performance and the sometimes subtle but powerful impact they have on those around them. Using experiential learning, teams practice EQ skills by enacting real life scenarios.

Conclusion

Emotions are involved in every human interaction and are a powerful factor in the equation when individuals, teams, managers and organizations as a whole work together. **Employees' EQ has everything to do with the quality of decisions they make and on the results a business achieves.** With knowledge, training and experiential learning, people can learn to manage their emotions instead of being run by them.

When it comes to making the most of all the talent available inside an organization, professional development training in EQ has the potential to move a business ahead of the pack. The difference it makes can develop a high potential manager into a leader who gets the best collaboration, creativity and energy from their organization.



Endnotes

- 1 *“The Cost of Bad Behavior—How Incivility is Damaging Your Business and What to Do About It”*, by Christine Pearson and Christine Porath, p. 57.
- 2 *“The Cost of Bad Behavior—How Incivility is Damaging Your Business and What to Do About It”*, by Christine Pearson and Christine Porath, p. 60.
- 3 *“Social Intelligence, The New Science of Human Relationships”*, by Daniel Goleman, p. 435.



About TTI

TTI Performance Systems, Ltd. is the worldwide leader in personal and professional assessment tools. With years of research and validation, TTI assessments are time-tested and proven to provide timely solutions for today's business challenges. Through a network of over 7000 Value Added Associates, TTI tools are utilized in over 50 countries and 26 languages to help businesses and organizations effectively manage their most valuable asset—people.

From recruitment to retention, TTI Performance Systems is a constant resource for new ideas and business applications. As a leader in the marketplace, we ensure the status of TTI assessments in the future by carefully managing our intellectual property and protecting the research and advancements TTI has made in the field. With several patents, copyrights and trademarks, TTI products are guaranteed to stand the test of time. Our staff is an expert resource in the assessment industry and continues to stay abreast of industry changes to enhance and expand the product line to provide unique solutions for the challenges businesses face everyday.