

Who Needs Emotional Intelligence, Anyway?

Action Steps

Your EQ can continue to increase over your lifetime, and can even be improved in *every* arena of your life. In fact, life itself is the laboratory where we build greater EQ. You can work on your Emotional Intelligence when you are alone, or when you are with your employees, co-workers, family, friends, neighbors, or acquaintances. It will take 3–6 months to make any substantial improvement in Emotional Intelligence, but the payoff is worth it if you answer yes to any of these questions:

Do you want to be more in control at work or at home?

Would you like to be able to deal more effectively with personal stress?

Would you like to have a wider circle of influence?

Do you want to commit to and move ahead with your goals?

Would you like people around you to be more productive?

Do you long to take risks and overcome your fear of change?

Would you like to develop a more positive and hopeful attitude?

And, finally, do you want to live a more satisfying and successful life?

We can't really separate the rational from the emotional any more than we can separate our work from our personal lives. The quality of one is inextricably linked to the other: what we learn off the job translates into lessons on the job, and vice versa. The positive discipline and positive reinforcement you use with your child, for example, can be duplicated with your employees; relating better with your workers will bring positive rewards at home, as well.

Emotions need not be a problem in the workplace; the right ones augment productivity and workplace harmony, but it takes EQ to know how to manage them. Many people have the title of "manager" but are simply ineffective in their positions.

Real leaders are those who actively inspire and motivate others, create teamwork, and achieve outstanding results; they model the behavior they want to see in their employees. Emotional Intelligence can move you from management to leadership, and make the people at the top sit up and take notice of your contributions to the company.

**Excerpted from The Manager's Pocket Guide to Emotional Intelligence, by Emily A. Sterrett (HRD Press, 2000).*