

Make It Stick

*Activity Pack*

Emotional Intelligence

 **Helping lessons learned through training become part of *how we work*.**

**To the Learner Leader…**

This suite of activities has been designed to reinforce the key learning from the **Emotional Intelligence** course. They have been designed to be led by team leaders or designated trainers and do not require training experience, though for best results we recommend that whoever is leading the activities understands the principles of adult learning and has some experience in leading learning activities.

The suite of activities will provide you with up to six months of learning reinforcement. We recommend that an activity is run each month following the **Emotional Intelligence** course.

When running each activity:

* Ask the group to reflect back on the original course they attended:
  + What takeaways did they have?
  + What have they tried to implement?
  + When revisiting some of these activities for a second time, ask them what additional ideas or thoughts they have in applying the concepts and tools in the activities to their job.

Each activity will take 10-15 minutes to run depending on the size of the group.

There is one activity to a page. Each activity has a brief introduction followed by instructions for the learner leader.

We suggest the following to optimise your learning experience:

* Have the group meet away from their normal workspace
* Make sure mobile devices are switched off so that everyone fully engages
* Make the environment ‘safe’ and encourage everyone to contribute
* Run these activities with everyone standing – try running them outdoors in the fresh air
* Have other team members take the lead and run an activity – this will build confidence and leadership skills
* Don’t be afraid to improvise – the learning needs to be about you and your group so make it meaningful
* When debriefing an activity, get the group to reflect on what the activity means for them and what they will do differently or continue to do that underscores the learning points from the activity

**Activities in this pack**

1. REACH profile and the Johari Window
2. Expressing my feelings
3. Handling strong emotions
4. Building emotional resilience
5. Having emotionally intelligent conversations
6. Emotional honesty

**Activity 1: REACH profile and the Johari Window**

**Introduction**

The REACH profile includes six dimensions that measure aspects of emotional intelligence

* Consideration – Higher EI means recognising and responding to others’ feelings
* Adaptability – Higher EI means being more flexible and adaptable to change
* Decision-making – Higher EI means having a more intuitive approach to decision-making
* Affiliation – Higher EI means working more closely with others
* Assertiveness – Higher EI means having the confidence to influence others
* Openness – Higher EI means allowing others to be more open with you

**Instructions**

Ask each of your team to bring their REACH Personal Style profile to the activity.

Make it clear that the group will be talking about feelings in a high trust environment.

Ask each of the group in turn to disclose a dimension of their profile that they need to work on in developing their EI. Ask them what they have been doing and ask the group to provide suggestions on what else they could be doing.

Briefly recall the Johari Window.



Ask each of the group to reflect on their ability to disclose things about themselves including feelings, to others. Ask the group how they might as individuals give feedback to each other on aspects of their behaviour or personality they may be blind to and those aspects of their personality or behaviour that may be hidden from others.

**Activity 2: Expressing my feelings**

**Introduction**

We are not always comfortable expressing our feelings. Letting other people know how we feel allows another person to have real empathy and to understand us more fully, which leads to more harmonious workplaces.

**Instructions**

You can create cards with the following statements on them or simply ask the group in turn to describe the situation that caused the feeling.

* When did you last feel angry at work?
* When did you last feel sad at work?
* When did you last feel annoyed at work?
* When did you last feel admired at work?
* When did you last feel fear at work?
* When did you last feel joy at work?

After each person describes the event that caused the feeling, the group have the opportunity to ask questions (if they wish), for example:

* Have you felt that way before?
* Do you always feel that way?
* How did you express your feelings?
* Did you let anyone else know how you felt – why/why not?

Finally ask the group to reflect on the importance of letting others know how we feel and when we may want to say something to another about our feelings.

**Activity 3: Handling Strong Emotions**

**Introduction**

A competency of emotional intelligence is emotional self-control or the ability to control strong emotions. Reflecting on what others do helps us when we are faced with similar circumstances.

**Instructions**

Ask the group in turn when the last time was that they had a strong emotional reaction to something at work. Ask them what strategies they used to control their emotions (or perhaps they didn’t), and then ask the group for their input – what would they have done?

Some strategies are:

* Recognising in advance when a strong emotion is building up and has the potential to overpower you and being able to circumvent this before it does. Emotional intelligence and EQ is not about avoiding emotions or ignoring or repressing them; it involves being smart with your emotions. This is an essential skill for everyone in the workplace including the leadership team.
* Being able to use self-calming techniques so that you can quickly reduce the strength and severity of the emotions.
* Being able to use techniques which allow you to continue working productively even when strong emotions, such as extreme anxiety or panic, are present. This can be essential when giving presentations, for example.
* Making sure you do not become stuck in unhelpful and negative emotions. Emotional intelligence involves paying attention to, acknowledging and moving through all your unhelpful emotions, including strong ones. Controlling your strong emotions does not mean habitually burying your feelings or suppressing the emotions and memories of traumatic events. This is emotionally unhealthy.
* Being able to understand the destructive impact that the emotion may have on yourself, your reputation and others, and taking steps to successfully reduce this impact.
* Being able to remove yourself from the situation in which you are experiencing destructive emotions, such as fury and exasperation, until you have returned to a more productive state, so that no one gets harmed.
* Understanding what triggers these emotions in you, so that you can reduce the triggers and experience the strong emotions less frequently.
* Being able to take responsibility for your own emotions without blaming others for them. Blame in the workplace is destructive.
* Recognising when you are being distracted by romantic thoughts, excitement over holidays, and other strong "positive" emotions that stop you from concentrating; and being able to park them until you have finished your work.
* Being able to manifest positive outcomes from the strong emotions. For example, feeling furious may be related to an injustice you have witnessed and can be used to empower you to change and rectify the situation.

**Activity 4: Building Emotional Resilience**

**Introduction**

Resilience describes the ability of an individual to bounce back from adverse events – to positively deal with the stressors that adversity brings. Studies have shown that emotional intelligence increases resilience during stressful situations. Emotional management, emotional understanding and emotional perception positively correlate with higher levels of resilience.

The three pillars of emotional resilience are:

* Keeping cool under pressure
* Self-calming techniques
* Cultivating positive emotions

**Instructions**

Ask the group in turn to describe an occasion when they used one of these three approaches to emotional resilience and what they did to achieve it. See if you can relate what each team member says to one or more of the following:

* Accepting help and support from those who care about you and will listen to you strengthens resilience.
* Avoid seeing crises as insurmountable problems. You can't change the fact that highly stressful events happen, but you can change how you interpret and respond to these events.
* Accept that change is a part of living. Certain goals may no longer be attainable as a result of adverse situations.
* Move toward your goals. Do something regularly — even if it seems like a small accomplishment — that enables you to move toward your goals, instead of focusing on tasks that seem unachievable.
* Take decisive actions. Act on adverse situations as much as you can.
* Look for opportunities for self-discovery. People often learn something about themselves and may find that they have grown in some respect as a result of their struggle with loss.
* Nurture a positive view of yourself. Developing confidence in your ability to solve problems and trusting your instincts helps build resilience.
* Keep things in perspective. Even when facing very painful events, try to consider the stressful situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Avoid blowing the event out of proportion.
* Maintain a hopeful outlook. An optimistic outlook enables you to expect that good things will happen in your life.
* Take care of yourself. Pay attention to your own needs and feelings. Engage in activities that you enjoy and find relaxing. Exercise regularly
* Meditation and spiritual practices help some people build connections and restore hope.
* The key is to identify ways that are likely to work well for you as part of your own personal strategy for fostering resilience.

**Activity 5: Having emotionally intelligent conversations**

**Introduction**

A way to conduct emotionally intelligent conversations is to use the following model:

Recognise

* Your own emotions
* How the other person might be feeling
* The other person's body language

Assess

* The impact of those emotions on your behaviour
* The impact of those emotions on the other person's behaviour
* Introduce positive emotions into the conversation

Understand

* Ask why? – What is causing you to feel this way?
* Explore the reasons for the other person's behaviour

Manage

* The emotions of the situation
* Schedule the conversation for an appropriate time in an appropriate setting
* Ensure the other person feels heard
* Create a mutually acceptable plan

**Instructions**

Ask for two volunteers to engage in a conversation. The remainder of the group will observe and provide feedback.

Go through the RAUM model above and ask the two volunteers to roleplay one of the following situations.

**Situation 1**

Two colleagues are talking. One person states to the other that they have just been told their position has been made redundant and they are to finish work at the end of the day.

**Situation 2**

Two colleagues are talking. One person states to the other that they have missed out on the internal job they applied for after being certain they were going to get the job.

**Situation 3**

Two colleagues are talking. One person states to the other that they will have to go part-time as they will need to look after an elderly parent. They can’t afford to take the cut in salary and don’t know how they will cope financially.

**Activity 6: Emotionally honesty**

**Introduction**

The skills of emotional intelligence should be practised ethically. People who are good at reading the emotions of others may use this information to manipulate situations to their own advantage.

People with an understanding of emotional intelligence and the ability to control their emotions may be better able to mask their true feelings. What is more beneficial to an organisation, is not whether individuals are doing this, but whether the emotional climate of the organisation is supportive of people being honest with each other about their feelings.

**Instructions**

For each of the following scenarios discuss as a group and describe how you would feel and what you could say to your manager and others to improve the emotional climate.

**Scenario 1**

Your boss asks how you are getting on with your team members. You respond, “Fine mostly, though I have been having trouble getting along with Angela. She is quite abrasive when I discuss things with her.” Your boss says, “You’re a grown up, you deal with it.” The next morning Angela comes over to you just as you arrive for work and says, “I don’t appreciate you telling others that I’m ‘abrasive’.” And storms off.

**Scenario 2**

In a multi-team meeting, Joe hands Sangeeta a report she has been waiting on, “Sangeeta, here you go. I worked on this report all last night so that it would be ready for you today as I have training all day tomorrow. I really feel quite stressed at the moment.” Sangeeta says sternly, “Joe, I needed this report yesterday not today or tomorrow.” After Joe leaves Sangeeta turns to you and says, “I’m glad Joe is feeling stressed. The report was actually due tomorrow. I just wanted to see him squirm a little. Got to keep your team on their toes, eh?”

**Scenario 3**

You are in the staff lunch room when a colleague, Marjorie, walks through looking very sad (eyes and head downcast). After Marjorie exits, Joel (one of your team) says out loud “Would you look at her. Her dog died three weeks ago and you’d think she’d be over it by now. Pathetic. And it means everyone is covering for her because she can’t cope with the work. Well I’m not playing that game.”