

# The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership

Strategies for Improving Emotional Intelligence Skills



**Keyturn**

# Introduction

Emotional intelligence is a key component of leadership in the modern workplace. Leaders who possess a high level of emotional intelligence are able to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as those of their colleagues and subordinates. This paper aims to explore the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership and provide strategies for improving emotional intelligence skills, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills.



## **What is Emotional Intelligence**

Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others. It encompasses four key competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. Self-awareness is the ability to recognise and understand one's own emotions, and how they impact our thoughts and behaviour. Self-regulation is the ability to manage one's own emotions in a way that is appropriate for the situation. Empathy is the ability to understand and appreciate the emotions and perspectives of others. Social skills are the ability to use emotional intelligence to build and maintain relationships with others.



## **The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership**

Leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate the complex relationships and emotions that are inherent in leadership. They are able to communicate effectively with their team members, build strong relationships, and motivate and inspire their subordinates. Research has shown that emotional intelligence is a key predictor of leadership success, and that leaders with higher levels of emotional intelligence are more effective in their roles.

A study published in the Harvard Business Review found that emotionally intelligent leaders are better equipped to handle high-pressure situations, communicate more effectively, and build stronger relationships with their teams. These leaders are also more adaptable, able to manage change, and more resilient in the face of adversity.

Another study conducted by the Centre for Creative Leadership found that emotional intelligence is a critical component of successful leadership. The study found that leaders with high levels of emotional intelligence were able to build better relationships with their team members, resolve conflicts more effectively, and create a more positive work environment.





## Improving Emotional Intelligence Skills

Improving emotional intelligence skills requires a conscious effort to develop and refine these competencies. The following strategies can be used to improve emotional intelligence skills in each of the four key competencies:

### 1. *Self-Awareness*

The first step in developing self-awareness is to understand your own emotions and how they impact your thoughts and behaviour. This can be done by keeping a journal of your thoughts and emotions or by practicing mindfulness meditation. It is also important to solicit feedback from others about how your behaviour impacts them.

A study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* found that leaders who received feedback on their behaviour were more likely to improve their emotional intelligence skills. The study also found that leaders who were more self-aware were better able to manage stress and build stronger relationships with their teams.

### 2. *Self-Regulation*

Self-regulation involves managing your emotions in a way that is appropriate for the situation. This can be achieved by practicing stress-management techniques such as deep breathing, exercise, or meditation. It is also important to develop strategies for managing negative emotions such as anger or frustration.

A study published in the *Journal of Management* found that leaders who were better able to regulate their emotions were more effective in their roles. The study also found that leaders who were better able to manage stress were more resilient and better able to handle high-pressure situations.

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### 3. *Empathy*

Empathy is the ability to understand and appreciate the emotions and perspectives of others. This can be developed by actively listening to others and practicing perspective-taking. It is also important to cultivate a sense of curiosity about other people and their experiences.

A study published in the *International Journal of Business and Management* found that leaders who were more empathetic were better able to build strong relationships with their teams. The study also found that leaders who were more empathetic were able to better understand the needs and motivations of their team members, and were better equipped to provide support and guidance when needed.

### 4. *Social Skills*

Social skills involve using emotional intelligence to build and maintain relationships with others. This can be achieved by practicing effective communication, collaboration, and conflict resolution. It is also important to develop strategies for building trust and creating a positive work environment.

A study published in the *Journal of Applied Psychology* found that leaders who were more socially skilled were better able to build and maintain relationships with their team members. The study also found that leaders who were more skilled in conflict resolution were better equipped to manage conflicts and create a more positive work environment.



# Conclusion

Emotional intelligence is a critical component of effective leadership. Leaders who possess high levels of emotional intelligence are better equipped to navigate complex relationships and emotions, communicate effectively with their team members, and inspire and motivate their subordinates. Improving emotional intelligence skills requires a conscious effort to develop and refine the four key competencies: self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. By focusing on these competencies, leaders can improve their emotional intelligence skills and become more effective leaders.



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