

Alevtyna Bolshakova
Dmytro Motorny Tavria State
Agrotechnological University
Language adviser: Suprun O.M.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT

In today's business world, technical skills are no longer enough to be a successful manager. Businesses are increasingly discovering that leadership demands emotional intelligence (EI) - the ability to perceive, manage, and influence emotions. Emotionally intelligent managers build healthier workplace relationships, improve team performance, and foster organizational success (Mayer et al., 2016). This article explains how to apply emotional intelligence to management, its essential components, and how it optimises leadership.

Daniel Goleman's emotional intelligence theory (Goleman, 2005) defines five main elements: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills. Of these, in the context of management, the most significant are self-awareness, managing office politics, and inspiring employees. While IQ is relatively fixed, EI can be trained, and hence is a top skill for gaining long-term leadership success.

D. Coleman has listed five components to EI:

1. Self-Awareness. Good managers understand their own emotional state, strengths, and weaknesses. Managers who are conscious of how their feelings influence their decisions can change their behaviour to achieve better results. For example, a manager who panics and makes rash decisions can train himself to stay calm and use logic. Such an understanding of themselves inspires teams to trust their leader.

2. Self-Regulation. Effective managers stay cool even when things go wrong. Having the ability to control emotions helps them from making bad decisions when pressured. When a manager stays cool during difficult situations, it makes workers feel

safe and keeps work flowing smoothly. It also helps in solving conflicts without being angry.

3. Motivation. Emotionally intelligent leaders motivate themselves, challenging themselves with yet achievable goals. Their passion is contagious, leading employees to strive for their best. They are not reliant on external rewards but create a purpose, leading to innovation and long-term dedication. Rewarding the success of teams strengthens a high work culture.

4. Empathy. Good managers hear what their employees have to say and try to see things from their perspective. This causes employees to feel valued. An example is that if a manager recognizes a person has too much work, they can help before the person gets overwhelmed. Knowing people also settles quarrels because the manager can see both sides of the story.

5. Social Skills. Highly EI managers can communicate well, build good relations, and motivate people in good directions. They network effectively, solve problems in an efficient manner, and build teams. They give constructive feedback, settle differences fairly, and encourage free speech. They build teams which work harmoniously towards company goals.

Companies with emotionally intelligent leaders have happier employees, fewer people quitting, and better results. Workers feel heard and respected, so they work harder. These leaders also create an environment where people feel safe sharing ideas, which leads to innovation.

On the other hand, low-EI managers have high employee turnover, unhappy employees, and lots of conflict. When employees feel undervalued, they don't work as effectively, and the company spends more to hire new workers. Companies that don't teach EI to managers risk falling behind competitors who do (Богучарова, 2015; Wong & Law, 2002).

While some people are born with higher EI, it can be developed with practice. Companies can foster development with:

- Providing Training Sessions: Conflict resolution, active listening, and self-awareness training sessions equip managers with interpersonal skills that can be improved.
- Providing Feedback: Continuous feedback helps leaders become aware of the impact their emotions have on others.
- Mindfulness Practice Increased: Meditation and journaling reflective practice enhance self-regulation.
- Leading by Example: Senior leaders with EI serve as role models for others to follow.

Emotional intelligence is no longer a “soft skill”, it is the key to successful leadership. Leaders who excel in self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills make workplaces where people excel. With more stress on flexibility and humanness, EI makes a great leader outshine a very good one. Organisations prioritising emotionally intelligent leadership will not only raise performance but also maintain a sustained competitive advantage. Effective management in the future is strategic thinking and emotional intelligence leadership. Merging EI with leadership will allow managers to excel in challenges, inspire teams, and achieve long-term success.

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