

How to Use Emotional Intelligence to Help Your Team Succeed

What is Emotional Intelligence (EI)

Although many definitions exist, practitioners generally agree that emotional intelligence contains these four areas. How people

- Perceive and express ourselves
- Develop and maintain social relationships
- Cope with challenges
- Use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way

Case Study

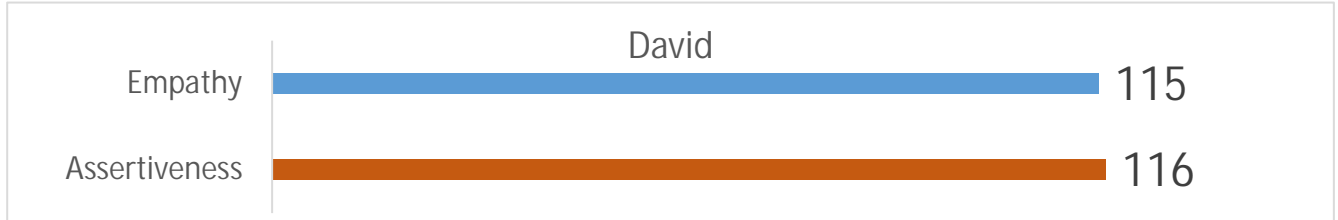
Marc is Assistant Director of Accounting for the University of Central Georgia. Recently promoted after working in the Accounting Office for seven years, he is now managing two direct reports, one of whom used to be his peer.

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Questions to Consider

1. What might be some issues inherent in the situation, regardless of anyone's emotional intelligence (EI)?
2. Based on his empathy and assertiveness, what challenges might Marc have regardless of others' EI? (Focus on his potential actions.)
3. Based on her empathy and assertiveness, what challenges might Julie have regardless of others' EI? (Focus on her potential actions.)
4. Considering their situation, as well as their EI, what strengths might Marc and Julie bring to teamwork?
5. Considering their situation, as well as their EI, what challenges might Marc and Julie bring to teamwork?

David's Empathy and Assertiveness



Questions to Consider

1. Based on his empathy and assertiveness, what challenges might David have regardless of others' EI? (Focus on his potential actions.)
2. Considering the situation, as well as everyone's EI, what strengths might David bring to the team?
3. Considering the situation, as well as everyone's EI, what challenges might David bring to the team?

Strategies for Containment

General:

- Reflect on your emotions
- Note specific examples of when your EI held you back or helped you achieve success
- Ask others for feedback
- Observe others' facial and body language
- Leverage your strengths
- Create small, sustainable strategies

Marc:

Julie:

David:

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Frequently Asked Questions

1. **What instrument should I use?** There are many psychological instruments designed to measure Emotional Intelligence. Some are better than others. Here is a list of key questions to ask:

Do research studies show it predicts performance?

Has it been scientifically validated? (Is the data available?)

Is it available online?

Is feedback specialist certification required?

I am using the EQ-i^{2.0} in this presentation, an instrument on which I am fully certified and for which I spent 5+ years teaching certification classes. It is one of the most scientifically validated Emotional Intelligence instruments on the market today.

2. **Are high scores better than low scores?** I can speak to this topic only in relationship to the EQ-i^{2.0} and that answer is not necessarily. Although we are conditioned to believe that high is good, when it comes to EI, balance can be more important than high scores. In our case study, Marc's assertiveness is out of balance with his empathy. The result might be a tendency to be aggressive. In his case, a strength—assertiveness—might be overused. Also, sometimes out-of-balance scales can actually contribute to success in certain areas, although they may cause problems in other areas of someone's life. Emotional Intelligence is complex and that's why you should get a certified professional to do a feedback using a validated and reliable instrument.
3. **Is Emotional Intelligence more important to my career than my IQ?** EI vs IQ is a controversial area. What most researchers agree on is that, whatever level you work at, your emotional intelligence will be important to your success.
4. **What should I do if I am out of balance?** First, identify your strengths. Most people focus on their faults, but knowing your strengths is very important to success in any area of your life. Leverage those strengths at every opportunity. Then identify no more than 2 or 3 out-of-balance areas, determine specific situations in which they are holding you back or preventing you from using your strengths, and develop specific, measurable strategies to either develop a lower scale or contain a higher one. Don't expect to make major changes. Focus on the concept of taking baby steps—small changes that allow you to focus on your strengths while keeping out-of-balance scales contained.