

When asked, "Who is emotional intelligence for?", the most often answer is, "Emotional Intelligence is for leaders." This book attempts to clear up that misbelief by expanding it to followers and a variety of occupations as well.

**EQ is for EVERYONE:
A look at how emotional intelligence
benefits all of us...with examples**

By Hank Clemons

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HANK CLEMONS

EQ
is for



Hierarchy of Emotional Intelligence[®]

EVERYONE

SECOND EDITION

Includes the S.M.A.R.T.[®] Approach to EI and the EI Hierarchy[®]

EQ

Is for
EVERYONE

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Chapter 6

DEVELOPING YOUR

EI: 5 Strategies



Where do I Start?

It starts with Self-Awareness. Self-Awareness is the skill of being aware of and understanding your emotions as they occur and as they evolve. None of us are perfect. The more you know about yourself, the better you'll be able to understand how you're perceived by others and why they respond to you the way they do.

We all have fears, self-doubts, inadequacies, and insecurities we don't want others to know about. In most cases we may not want

to admit them to ourselves. Building this awareness can not only help you thrive in a corporate setting and enjoy happiness in the workplace, but also lead to a more effective and satisfying life in general.

Working effectively with members of your team, peers and management at all levels is key to your success and to the success of your organization. Yet how can we effectively communicate with; effectively work with individuals and groups with diverse working styles and preferences? A foundation of professional success lies in self-understanding, understanding others and knowing the impact of one's personal behavior on others.

Many of us avoid self-awareness. We want to protect, maintain, and enhance our self-concept and the images others have of us. We have fears, inadequacies, self-doubt, and insecurities that we don't want to reveal to others or even admit to ourselves. If we open ourselves up to honest self-appraisal, we might see things we don't want to see. None of us are perfect and knowledge about our strengths and weaknesses can help us gain insights into areas we want to change and improve.

Developing your emotional intelligence requires *time* and *practice* – two areas most of us don't have enough of or resist doing. Most of all it requires a serious examination of your emotional behavior, how you interact with others and recognizing areas you need to improve in.

A first step to improve your EI would be to work on how you perceive your own emotions. If you know how you feel in certain situations and why you feel that way, it will become much easier for you to understand other people's emotions. This is called Self-Awareness – one of the four components of the model developed by Daniel Goleman.

What's My Current EQ?

While this seems like a question that everyone should ask, you might find it surprising that few people ask it. Often people will simply look for a course that will teach them about emotional intelligence. Much like the individual that applaud because everyone else is applauding

I suggest before taking a course, you should answer the question “Why do I want/need to develop my emotional intelligence”. Reasons could include:

- Improve personal relationships
- Improve professional Relationships
- Be a better friend
- Be a better husband/wife
- To be more empathic
- To be a better leader
- Be better at communicating with others
- To get a better job
- To be a better team member
- To perform better as a student
- To improve my overall wellbeing
- To lead a healthier, happier and more productive life

There can be a multitude of reasons. I encourage you to identify the top three – write them down. They will be where you focus. You may discover as you move along that they might change or blend into one.

After answering the “Why” question. The next question is “Where am I now”. This question is asked to identify your strengths and challenge areas. You will get a snapshot report of where you fall relative to other people. This information is meant to give insight, not to paint a picture that is unchanging but as a living canvas

that can be view differently depending on where you're standing (context).

Far too often when an individual receives their scores from an EQ assessment, they become “fixed” on the score and see it as defining them. I tell my clients to think of it as taking a ‘selfie’. I then walk over and stand next to them as if we’re taking a “selfie”. I then walk away and ask if the imaginary photo is representative of us now or five minutes earlier. The answer is usually “no”.

Assessing your EQ

As discussed earlier, many models and definitions of EQ have been proposed. The same holds true for tools that measure emotional intelligence.

Currently no test can measure EQ as precisely as IQ. However, the EQ-I 2.0™ by MHS is the one I use most often with my clients. As a Training Partner with MHS, I facilitate certification training for others to be approved to use this highly rated and validated tool. Without a doubt it’s at the top of my list.

My alternate assessment is the EISAP 2.0™ which I developed several years ago and recently updated. This assessment consists of 40 questions/statements that are based on the four core competencies discussed earlier – Self Awareness, Social Awareness, Self-Management and Relationship Management. The emotional intelligence test will evaluate several aspects of your emotional intelligence and will suggest ways to improve it.

For more information on either of these assessments, see the contact information at the back of this book.

Having assessed your EQ, and settled on and area for development, let’s explore 5 strategies that can be applied to a variety of emotional intelligence issues.



Strategy #1



Reframing

Reframing is a way of viewing and experiencing events, ideas, concepts and emotions to find more positive alternatives. Reframing involves identifying our unhelpful thoughts and replacing them with more positive or adaptive ones. Reframing is thinking about a current perspective in a new and different way.

Reframing is also an opportunity to rethink the event or story in a more positive light. This is important because how we see a person, situation or challenge impacts on how we respond.

Our minds are constantly bombarded with negative thoughts, visions of horrible things that may happen to us, and terrifying reasons not to do the things we want to do - yet in the end, these horrible things rarely ever happen.

For example, a job seeker that failed to get a job after an interview might have self-talk that sounds like this:

“I blew it!”

“They weren’t going to hire a woman for that position.”

“They wanted someone younger/older.”

“The interviewer didn’t like me because I wasn’t tall enough.”

“I was too nervous.”

Instead, they might reframe the self-talk by telling themselves that it was a “useful learning experience”. Or in the example above, instead of blaming ourselves for being *nervous*, remind ourselves that being nervous might be a very normal and helpful response in a given situation?

Instead of bottling up emotions, try acknowledging your feelings while reframing your thoughts to stay positive even in trying situations. For example, if you get “called on the carpet” at work, acknowledge that you feel disappointed or discouraged, but also tell yourself truthfully that this situation is a learning opportunity, not only in terms of your work product, but also in terms of having crucial conversations with your boss.

A reframe is far more effective when you understand what’s going on behind the thought (Emotional Self-Awareness).

To effectively reframe, there are three things to remember.

The first one is that events or situations do not have inherent meaning; rather, we assign them a meaning based on how we interpret the event.

For example, something seemingly horrible happens to you, *it is only horrible because of the way you look at it.*

Examples you can reframe:

- A weakness as a strength
- A problem as an opportunity
- Unkindness as lack of understanding

Here's one that most of us have heard.

Statement: "We've tried that already and it doesn't work."

Reframe: "So, we have a good idea about what doesn't work. What can we do differently this time?"

Think about what other understandings or viewpoints might be possible. Try to suspend judgments and remain curious about different ways to understand the person, event or challenge.

Use reframing to develop:

- Self-Regard
- Assertiveness
- Independence
- Reality Testing
- Optimism

Reframing can be used to help remove limiting beliefs, to help appreciate positive moments that you might otherwise miss, or for any other negative thought you would like to change.



Strategy #2



Journaling

Journals help you improve your self-awareness. If you spend just a few minutes each day writing down your thoughts, this can move you to a higher degree of self-awareness. Journaling, also called reflective writing, allows you to be aware of your own thoughts and feelings and be in a better position to manage and handle stress.

Journaling is a practice through which individuals can work on improving their own emotional self-management and emotional intelligence by documenting their life experiences and the different emotional changes they experience as a result of these events on a daily basis. In doing so, individuals are able to work through their emotions in a private, personal, and productive manner. Periodically, look back over your journal and take note of any trends, or any time you overreacted to something.

In my practice as an emotional health and wellbeing coach, I give each of my clients a small spiral notebook and ask them at the end of each day to record at least five emotions that they experienced. Then reflect on the action taken based on those emotions and answer the question as to whether it was appropriate or not for the situation. We need to understand why

we feel in particular ways and what these feelings mean for us. Then we are able to change negative emotions into positive ones.

Here's are 5 simple proven steps to keeping a journal.

1. Close your eyes and take several deep breaths and 'feel' what you are feeling.
2. Think about what the names for your feelings are.
3. Then begin your sentences with..... **Today I feel**..... sad, mad, troubled, uncertain, happy, excited, frustrated, embarrassed, angry, etc.
4. Then write "Why am I feeling this?"
5. Then answer as many of the following as possible.
 - a. How often do I feel like this?
 - b. Where did the feeling come from?
 - c. When have I felt like this before?
 - d. How can I change the feeling around?
 - e. Who can help me?

This should serve as a guide to get you started. You will need to tailor it so that it reflects you and the specific areas you've decide to work on. The more you journal, the easier it gets.

As you work to incorporate journaling into your life, remember the mighty elephant is best eaten in small bites. Being patience and consistent are crucial in forming new habits. Begin writing perhaps three days a week, first thing in the morning or just before bed.

Learning to identify a variety of different emotions is a big part of cultivating your emotional intelligence. To help you dig a little deeper during journaling, here's a short list of feelings words from A to Z.

List of Emotions (Partial)

Amazed	Foolish	Overwhelmed
Angry	Frustrated	Peaceful
Annoyed	Furious	Proud
Anxious	Grieving	Relieved
Ashamed	Happy	Reluctant
Bitter	Hopeful	Resentful
Bored	Hurt	Sad
Comfortable	Inadequate	Satisfied
Confused	Insecure	Scared
Content	Inspired	Self-conscious
Depressed	Irritated	Shocked
Determined	Jealous	Silly
Discouraged	Joy	Stupid
Disgusted	Lonely	Suspicious
Eager	Lost	Tense
Embarrassed	Loving	Terrified
Empathetic	Miserable	Trapped
Energetic	Motivated	Uncomfortable
Envious	Nervous	Worried
Excited	Neglected	Worthless



“For news of the heart, ask the face.”
— *West African saying*

Strategy #3



Purposeful Listening

In today's fast-paced organization, listening is key to effective working relationships among employees and between management and staff. Listening skills also impact a company's interaction with customers and other businesses. It is equally important in our personal life. Listening is key to all effective communication. Without the ability to listen effectively, messages are easily misunderstood.

Listening is the key to great relationships and understanding. It's important in today's society, with all of our high-tech communication capabilities, to tune in and really listen to one another whenever possible pays dividends. However, research shows that the average person listens at only about 25% efficiency.

A *purposeful* listener knows how to mirror the same energy or emotions as the speaker. Show that you're engaged by responding with matching expressions. Reflect their feelings by responding with a smile when they smile and nod when they're looking for clues that you're getting what they're saying to you.

Purposeful listening can help you diffuse conflict. There are times in the workplace or a personal relationship when you may have to deal with conflict. Although you may not always agree with other person's point of view, it's important to be open to the experiences and perspectives (*empathic listening*) of others, and the best way to demonstrate this is through purposeful listening.

Conflict between two parties can make people defensive, but if a person feels that their concerns are being listened to and taken seriously, the chances of reaching a resolution is high.

And, if both parties feel that their point or perspective is clearly understood, the resolution is likely to be longer lasting. It may also encourage the parties to speak regularly and openly about conflict, resulting in a more transparent workplace generally.

In October 2016 Inc.com published the below list of benefits of being a great listener.

1. Mutual trust: Authentic listening generates respect and trust between talker and listener. Employees will naturally respond better to managers who they think are listening intently to their needs.
2. Productivity: Problems are solved faster if people are encouraged to explain problems and be given the freedom to work through solutions out loud before being told what to do.
3. Cooler heads prevail: Listening intently helps both sides to stay cool -- and helps them cool off -- when they are dealing with a crisis or discussing a sensitive issue.
4. Boosts confidence: Great listeners tend to have better self-esteem and self-image because, in their listening, they work toward establishing positive relationships.
5. Fewer mistakes: Good listening leads to more accuracy in retaining information. You'll remember important facts later on, minimizing the risk of miscommunication and making mistakes.

Characteristics of a Purposeful Listener (Place a check mark by each that you routinely demonstrate)

- Is motivated
- Makes eye contact
- Shows interest
- Avoids distractions
- Has empathy
- Asks questions
- Paraphrases
- Doesn't over talk
- Is aware of and confronts biases

Listening is not a passive process. In fact, the listener can, and should, be at least as engaged in the process as the speaker.

It is important not to jump to conclusions (low impulse control) about what you see and hear. You should always seek clarification to ensure that your understanding is correct.

Listening Test

Examine the following statements and situations and indicate how you would most likely respond. In order to receive the most accurate results, please answer as truthfully as possible.

For each of the following questions, select the answer (✓) that best describes your listening habits.			
	Usually	Sometimes	Seldom
1. Maintain eye contact with the speaker.			
2. I determine whether or not a speaker's ideas are worthwhile solely by his or her appearance and delivery.			
3. I try to align my thoughts and feelings with those of the speaker.			
4. I listen for specific facts rather than for "the big picture".			
5. I listen for both factual content and the emotion behind the literal words.			
6. I ask questions for clarification and understanding.			
7. I withhold judgement of what the speaker is saying until he or she is finished.			
8. I make a conscious effort to evaluate the logic and consistency of what is being said.			
9. While listening, I think about what I'm going to say as soon as I have my chance.			
10. I try to have the last word.			
Scoring Key and Interpretation.			
For questions 1, 3, 5, 6, 7 and 8, give yourself 3 points for "Usually", 2 points for "Sometimes", and 1 point for "Seldom".			
For questions 2, 4, 9, and 10, give yourself 3 points for "Seldom", 2 points for "Sometimes", and 1 point for "Usually".			
Sum up your total points. A score of 27 or higher means you are a good listener. A score of 22 to 26 suggests you have some listening deficiencies. A score of less than 22 indicates that you have developed a number of bad listening habits.			

*There is a difference between listening and
waiting for your turn to speak.*

- Simon Sinek

Strategy #4



Meditation

Meditation is an approach to training the mind, similar to the way that fitness is an approach to training the body. In other words, meditation means turning your attention away from distracting thoughts and focusing on the present moment.

It often feels like there is just not enough time in the day to get everything done. We are often so busy we feel there is no time to stop and meditate! But meditation actually gives you more time by making your mind calmer and more focused.

For example, if we are forced to work with a colleague whom we dislike, we will probably become irritated and feel put upon, with the result that we will be unable to work with him or her efficiently and our time at work will become stressful and unrewarding.

You'll be happy to hear that you can meditate anywhere and at any time, allowing yourself to access a sense of tranquility and peace no matter what's going on around you.

If you have not tried meditation before (or even if you had) his meditation exercise is an excellent introduction to meditation techniques.

1. Sit or lie comfortably.
2. Close your eyes. Meditation can be performed with the eyes open or closed, however as a beginner it may be best to first try meditating with your eyes closed.
3. Breathe naturally. Make no effort to control the breath. Try to focus on your breathing and only your breathing. Don't *think* about your breathing or pass any sort of judgment of it (e.g. that breath was shorter than the last one),
4. Focus your attention on the breath and on how the body moves with each inhalation and exhalation. Notice the movement of your body as you breathe. Observe your chest, shoulders, rib cage, and belly. Simply focus your attention on your breath without controlling its pace or intensity. If your mind wanders, return your focus back to your breath.

Maintain this meditation practice for two to three minutes to start, and then try it for longer periods.

Meditation doesn't have to be limited to strictly defined practice sessions, you can also practice meditation throughout your day to day life. For example, in moments of stress, try to take a few seconds to focus solely on your breathing and empty your mind of any negative thoughts or emotions.

A former client I had that had anger issues said that he had a very short fuse – to the point of wanting to commit acts of violence. He was concerned that if it wasn't dealt with, he might lose his job. Meditation taught him to recognize his own anger

and become more detached from it. It cleared his mind and calmed him down.

Meditation induces relaxation, which increases the compound nitric oxide that causes blood vessels to open up and subsequently, blood pressure to drop.

Here's a partial list of the physical and mental benefits of meditation:

- Lowers high blood pressure
- Lowers the levels of blood lactate, reducing anxiety attacks
- Decreases tension-related pain, such as, tension headaches, ulcers, insomnia,
- Increases serotonin production that improves mood and behavior
- Improves the immune system
- Increases the energy level
- Anxiety decreases
- Emotional stability improves
- Creativity increases
- Happiness increases
- Gain clarity and peace of mind
- Problems become smaller
- Sharpens the mind by increasing focus

Could you benefit from any of the above? Meditation just might be the strategy to implement.

Think of meditation as a form of mental hygiene - the same as if brushing your teeth, as you will. When you were young, you had to be trained to create the habit of teeth brushing. However, now that brushing is routine, the thought of not doing it is unthinkable.

The same goes for meditation - once you get into the habit and experience all of the mental clarity, emotional stability, physical relaxation that the practice offers, not practicing meditation seems unimaginable!

By training in meditation, we create an inner space and clarity that enables us to control our mind regardless of the external circumstances.



*The right word may be effective, but no word was
ever as effective as a rightly timed pause.*
- Mark Twain

Strategy #5



Pause, Stop and Think

How many times have we passed judgement on others only to find that they had good reason for doing what they were doing or what they were saying? Everyone feels his perspective on a situation is right and everyone else is wrong. Like the employee that got upset with his boss because his boss called and gave him a project that needed to be completed before he went home – and it was 4:30! His immediate reaction? In a sign of exasperation, he pushed back from desk and threw his hands in the air and exclaimed “that’s it!”.

However, if he had a little patience, he would have waited to find out what his boss needed before getting angry.

Pausing is not a period. It is a moment in which we allow our mind a little time to organize our thoughts and even second guess our decisions.

The action of pressing PAUSE in our schedule requires a conscious thought to precede the action. The more we activate

the response to pause, the more clearly we see just how necessary it is to develop a habit of pausing.

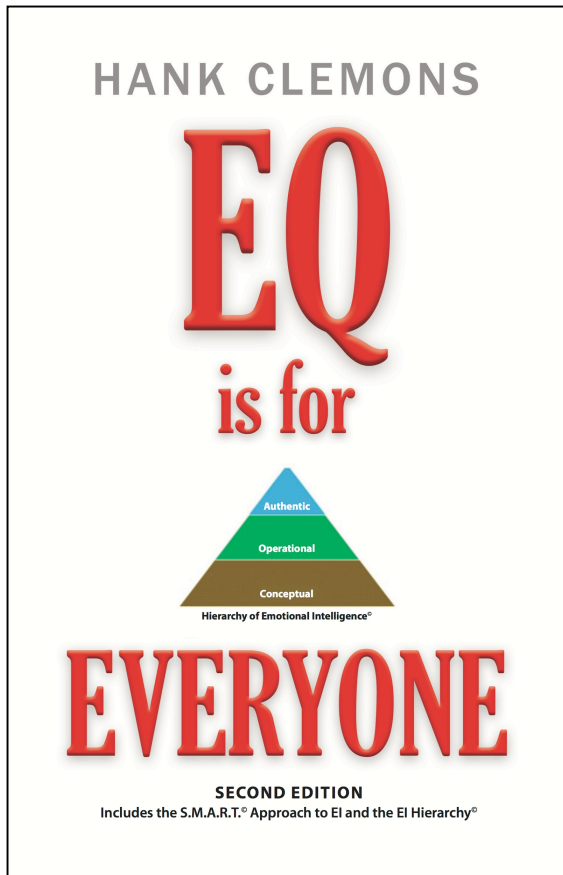
Isn't it odd that when there is more on the line, we stumble into the bad habit of "shooting from the hip" rather than giving full and measured consideration to our responsibilities?

I'll always remember the story of two lumberjacks who went into the woods. The first one went chopping down the trees for the whole day straight while the second one did some sawing and stopped during regular intervals. So, the first guy instinctively knew that his day's yield will be greater since he actually spent more time bringing down the trees.

Unfortunately, he was wrong. The second lumberjack came back with more timber pieces because when he stopped his cutting, he was taking the time to sharpen his saw.

While these strategies are just the tip of the iceberg in terms of developing your EI, putting them into practice will have you well on your way toward handling your emotions and relationships.





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