



Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance
CONNECT • ADVANCE • LEAD

SAVVY
SERIES

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Knowing and improving yours

Ericka Harney, CAE, CFRE, GPC, CVA
AFWA Executive Director
ericka.harney@afwa.org



AFWA.org

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

and why should I care?

Emotional intelligence (EQ) is defined as the capacity for understanding our own feelings and the feelings of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing our emotions effectively in our relationships.

IQ - vs - **EQ**

conceptual abilities

“people smarts”

EQ in the office

Emotional intelligence is essential in effective leadership and has a direct impact on work performance.



An employment search firm, analyzed 515 senior executives and found the executives with strong EQ test results were more likely to succeed than executives whose strength areas were in either relevant previous experience or traditional IQ scores.



Research at the Center for Creative Leadership has shown that the primary cause of executive turnover was individual deficiency in the area of emotional competence.



A study that involved 130 executives, showed there is a strong correlation between how well an individual handled personal emotions and the willingness of others to work with that individual.

EQ & The Accounting/Finance Professional

Many researchers in the accounting profession (Cook, Bay, Visser, Mayburh & Njoroge, 2011; Daff, de Lange, Jackling, 2012) have identified emotional intelligence as an area that accountants need to improve to perform better in leadership, team building, client relations, and decision making. In their work, there has been a link drawn between EQ and 'soft skills', which are specified as necessary in the Core Competency Framework published by the AICPA. It was also found that employers are specifically seeking accounting and finance employees with EQ awareness and higher EQ quotients. The Big 4 are now offering EQ skills training to employees (Daff et al., 2012). In accounting education, faculty is increasingly including Emotional Intelligence into the curriculum to give graduating students a head start in this area when entering the work force.

To be able to comfortably engage with clients from all walks of life, accounting and finance professionals need to improve their EQ quotients to better serve clients, relate to coworkers and peers, and perform well in their fields.

Citations:

American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA). 2010. Core competency framework and education competency assessment. Available at: <http://www.aicpa.org/InterestAreas/AccountingEducation/Resources/EducationandCurriculumDevelopment/CoreCompetencyFrameworkandEducationCompetencyAssessmentWebsite/Pages/default.aspx>.





Cook, G.L, Bay, D., Visser, B., Myburgh, J.E., & Njoroge, J. (2011). Emotional intelligence: The role of accounting education and work experience. Issues in Accounting Education, 26(2), 267-286.

Daff, L., de Lange, P., & Jackling, B. (2012). A comparison of generic skills and emotional intelligence in accounting education. Issues in Accounting Education, 27(3), 627-645.

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Four Competencies

Rather than being a single characteristic, emotional intelligence can be thought of as a wide set of competencies that are organized into a few major clusters. The most widely accepted view of emotional intelligence identifies four competencies, organized into four clusters. In the following pages, we'll uncover how to recognize and improve each core competency.

SELF		SOCIAL	
REGULATION	 SELF AWARENESS	 SOCIAL AWARENESS	
	SELF CONFIDENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none">Emotional Self AwarenessAccurate Self Assessment	EMPATHY <ul style="list-style-type: none">Organization AwarenessUnderstanding Environment	
RECOGNITION	 SELF MANAGEMENT	 SOCIAL SKILLS	
	SELF CONTROL <ul style="list-style-type: none">TrustworthinessConscientiousnessAdaptabilityDrive and MotivationInitiative	INFLUENCE <ul style="list-style-type: none">Inspiration LeadershipDeveloping OthersBuilding BondsTeamwork and Collaboration	

SELF AWARENESS



Self-Awareness is the ability to accurately sense and identify personal feelings, along with the ability to understand and evaluate them. To be fully aware of your feelings you must first identify them, and then you must acknowledge and accept them.

Individuals who have high self-awareness are able to conduct accurate self-appraisals, are self-confident, are authentic, welcome feedback, perceive situations accurately, and are willing to take risks for what they believe to be right.

Increasing your self-awareness will require serious thought and effort. You will have to be objective about yourself and your own perceptions as you examine your inner feelings and explore your reactions to be the people and events in your work life.

Specifically, you will have to summon the courage to objectively examine the ways that you make appraisals, tune in to our senses, and get in touch with your feelings. You will have to learn how to identify your true intentions and pay close attention to your actions.

	KNOWING	IMPROVING
SELF CONFIDENCE	Self-confidence is your own belief in your capability to accomplish a task. Self-confidence includes acknowledging and affirming that you are the best person for the job that you are doing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adjust your thinking and behaviors so that they closely match those of someone whose models that trait of self-confidence—with that model in mind, act decisively, instead of self-consciously watching your every move. Find someone you trust who would be willing to help you to objectively analyze your abilities.
EMOTIONAL SELF AWARENESS	Emotional self-awareness is the ability to recognize your own emotions and their effects, to identify how you react to cues in the environment, and to understand how your emotions affect your overall performance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay attention to the physical reactions aroused in your body during stressful situations. Keep a journal where you write down your behaviors and inner feelings when faced with stressful situations on a daily basis.
ACCURATE SELF ASSESSMENT	Accurate self-assessment is the process of identifying your inner resources, abilities, strengths, and acknowledging and accepting your limits. It is based on the desire to receive feedback and new perspectives about yourself and is motivated by the desire for continuous learning and self-development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When interacting with people with whom you feel comfortable, ask for their constructive feedback about your actions and behaviors. Make a list of what you believe to be your strengths as well as areas where development is needed, and then compare your own list and a similar list prepared by someone else.

SELF MANAGEMENT



Self-management is the ability to use your feelings to reason well and act intentionally.

People who are good managers of their emotions typically do well in life as they are open to change, effective in mood management, consistent in stress management. They are intentional, productive, and behave in a reasonable and rational way.

	KNOWING	IMPROVING
EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL	Emotional self-control is the ability to keep impulsive feelings and emotions under control. It is being able to restrain negative actions when provoked, when faced with opposition or hostility from other people, or when working under pressure.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of all the things that trigger you to lose control. Create a strategy to prevent these triggers from causing you to lose your composure and your self-control. • Consider the issues on which you are willing to act against all opposition. • When current strategies are not working, stop what you are doing, acknowledge that it is not working and make the necessary changes to your plans, activities, objectives, or behavior. • Try to change your thoughts from negative to positive. Use positive affirmations, mantras, journals, peer check-ins or other tools to help.
TRUST- WORTHINESS	Trustworthiness is maintaining standards of honesty and integrity. It includes communicating intentions, ideas, and feelings openly, and welcoming openness and honesty in others.	
CONSCIENTIOUS- TIOUSNESS	Conscientiousness is about taking responsibility for personal performance. It reflects an underlying drive for being reliable and delivering quality work.	
ADAPTABILITY	Adaptability is the ability to be flexible and work effectively within a variety of changing situations and with various individuals and groups.	
OPTIMISM	Optimism is about seeing the world as a glass that is “half-full” rather than “half-empty”. It is the ability to see good in others and in the situations at hand. Threats are viewed merely as opportunities	
INITIATIVE	Initiative is the ability to identify a problem, obstacle, or opportunity and take action on it.	

SOCIAL AWARENESS



Social awareness refers to how people handle relationships and awareness of others' feelings, needs, and concerns. It is the ability to recognize and appropriately respond to the emotions and feelings of others.

Social awareness is very important for creating and maintaining good working relationships with other people. People high in social awareness can feel what other people are feeling and can put themselves in their shoes.

	KNOWING	IMPROVING
EMPATHY	Empathy is about understanding other people. It is the ability to hear and understand accurately unspoken or partly expressed thoughts, feelings, and concerns of others. People with empathy are able to constantly pick up on emotional cues, and they can appreciate not only what people are saying but also why they are saying it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pay attention to critical interactions with others. Turn off the sound on the television and watch it to see if you can identify moods and nonverbal cues of the actors without hearing anything.
ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS	Organizational Awareness is the ability to understand the power relationships in one's group or organization. This includes the ability to identify the real decision makers and who can influence them. It is also about recognizing the values and cultures of organizations and how they affect the way people act and behave.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key people inside and outside the organization who exert influence over policies and activities. Create an influence chart for your organization or department and compare it to the formal organization chart. In your discussions with others, try to get their perspective on how to get things done within the department. Try to provide information about unspoken organizational constraints that may prevent certain things from happening at certain times.
SERVICE ORIENTATION	Service orientation is anticipating, recognizing, and meeting other people's needs. It means focusing ones efforts on others, and reaction to the requests of others.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Set a measurable goal to improve the level of service you provide to others. Include a needs analysis, an analysis of your service, and an analysis of the concerns and needs of others. Start a reading file of articles about the needs of others in your department or organization. Take action to change or modify some procedures in your department that others have complained about.

SOCIAL SKILLS



People with good social skills are good business leaders, leaders in society, and effective parents who understand that personal success and group or family success are inseparable. They lead by example, encouraging others in positive ways, validating them and creating trust within them.

KNOWING

IMPROVING

DEVELOPING OTHERS	Developing others is the ability to promote the long-term learning or development of others. Its focus is on the developmental intent and effect rather than the formal role of teaching or training. Those who do this well spend time to help people find their own way to excellence through specific feedback on current performance.	Regularly take time to talk to individuals about their aspirations, the things they want to do better, and the things they would like to try out.
INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP	Inspirational leadership is the ability to take on the role as leader of a team or group. Inspirational leaders work to bring people together to get the job done, they build a strong sense of belonging within the group leading others to feel they are part of something larger than themselves.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When launching significant new projects or initiatives, consider spending time with the team, create a vision for the work to be done, and build commitment to moving forward. Interview or shadow a leader whom you find inspirational. Ask yourself why you find this individual inspirational, analyze their style, and ask how they view their roles.
INFLUENCE	Influence is the ability to persuade, convince, or impact others to get them to go along with or support your agenda. Influence is about grabbing someone's attention and passing on something they want to hear.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Form a study group among colleagues to talk about successful experiences and reality-test future strategies. Take part in a task force or committee on an important and timely organizational or cross-departmental problem.
COMMUNICATION	Communication is the ability to send clear and convincing messages to an audience in open and effective way. People high in communication make their presentations engaging and are open to dialogue with the audience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and observe others who have an engaging style while presenting, pay attention to their nonverbal cues, and the visual aids they use to get their meanings across. When delivering information to people, encourage them to ask questions and encourage them to summarize your key points to ensure they have understood you.

[MORE SOCIAL SKILLS >>](#)



KNOWING

IMPROVING

CHANGE CATALYST	Change catalyst is having the ability to alert, energize and lead groups to bring about specific changes in the way things are done.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Think about the worst possible change that might happen to you and your team or department. Write a list of possible benefits from that change and think about how you would sell those benefits to the team or department if you had to. • When preparing to tell others about change, think about each person, how will the change impact this person? How has he or she responded to change in the past? What questions or comments might he or she have? Use your answers to prepare for a discussion with this person about the upcoming change.
CONFLICT MANAGEMENT	Conflict management is the ability to handle difficult individuals, groups of people, or tense situations with discretion. This involves coming face to face with the conflict rather than trying to avoid it. This competency entails focusing on the issues rather than the people and working to de-escalate bad feelings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are sensing trouble brewing with an individual, take steps to bring the disagreement or grievance into the open before it turns into a conflict situation. • When in a heated discussion, focus on the issues at hand and leave personal matters aside. Ask yourself "Is what I am saying or doing productive in trying to resolve this situation?"
BUILDING BONDS	Building bonds is about working to build or maintain friendly, reciprocal, and warm relationships or networks with people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take part in professional associations or appropriate social events to build your network and strengthen your relationships. • Identify organizational dynamics. Practice thinking in terms of these dynamics rather than simply about individuals or roles. What are the general relationships of people and groups within the organization?
TEAMWORK COLLABORATION	Teamwork and Collaboration is about working cooperatively with others, being part of a team and working together as opposed to working separately or competitively. Teamwork and collaboration is enjoying shared responsibility and rewards for accomplishments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a symbol for a group or team to rally around, or hold a get-together to celebrate the team's success. • Avoid taking control of the agenda or being the first to make suggestions, share the different roles being played in a group.

EQ IMPROVEMENT CHECKLIST

While the concept of Emotional Intelligence is certainly not a new one, Travis Bradberry and Jean Greaves have lead the way in terms of measurement and improvement. Authors of Emotional Intelligence 2.0 and the minds behind TalentSmart.com, Bradberry and Greaves provide insight into the four skill areas and also strategies for improving each. Emotional Intelligence is not a static level. It can be changed and improved if so desired.

The following checklist, provides just a few of our favorite strategies from Bradberry and Greaves.

Citations:

Bradberry, T., & Greaves, J. (2009). Emotional Intelligence 2.0. San Diego, CA: TalentSmart.

SELF AWARENESS

- ☐ Quit treating feelings as good or bad
- ☐ Feel your emotions physically
- ☐ Know who and what pushes your buttons
- ☐ Stop and ask why you do the things you do
- ☐ Visit your values
- ☐ Get to know yourself under stress

SOCIAL AWARENESS

- ☐ Greet people by name
- ☐ Watch body language
- ☐ Practice LISTENING
- ☐ Go people watching

SELF-MANAGEMENT

- ☐ Breathe right
- ☐ Make goals public
- ☐ Sleep on it
- ☐ Smile and laugh more
- ☐ Control self talk

SOCIAL SKILLS

- ☐ Take feedback well
- ☐ Build trust
- ☐ Have an “open-door” policy
- ☐ Don’t avoid the inevitable
- ☐ Acknowledge the other person’s feelings
- ☐ When you care, show it

EQ TESTS AND RESOURCES

Recent research suggests that the competencies associated with emotional intelligence are not set in stone at birth, but that the emotional competencies can indeed be learned and developed.

There are many benefits associated with developing your own emotional intelligence capabilities, and those benefits range from the personal to the organizational. There is evidence to suggest that emotionally intelligent leadership is the key to creating a work climate in which employees are nurtured and encouraged to do their best.

- ihhp.com/free-eq-quiz
- goodtherapy.org/emotional-intelligence.html
- eiconsortium.org
- In person/online trainings
- Consider improvement by skill area



RELATIONSHIPS WORTH COUNTING ON
INVESTMENT IN YOUR POTENTIAL



WHAT AFWA CAN DO FOR YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Membership in the Accounting & Financial Women's Alliance has many benefits. We are dedicated to your professional development and career advancement. The same values that define our organization can be defined within Emotional Intelligence: empowerment, leadership, integrity, and passion.

- **SAVVY SERIES:** Through monthly webinars, slide decks, and eDocs, the Savvy Series addresses the various components of EQ and more
- **LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES:** Volunteering on a local or national board of directors or committee can test and improve each of the four competencies that make up your EQ. For example:
 - Develop awareness for the needs of others
 - Practice team work and collaboration
 - Inspire and influence a community
- **COMMUNITY:** Our members have described AFWA has a safe environment to build their professional network and to step out of their comfort zone and develop skills related to EQ

For more information on
membership in the Accounting &
Financial Women's Alliance, visit
AFWA.org/JOIN