

Exploring Emotional Intelligence

If IQ measures your intelligence then what is EQ and is it important to childcare business leaders? - Apparently so. EQ isn't just a "new piece of jargon designed to sell a few books" as Jacqui Burke lifts the lid on why a degree of EQ is critical to business leadership.



- Wishing to attract, retain and motivate really good people
- Relying on people's ability and willingness to constantly accept and embrace change
- The breakdown in respect for traditional authority, particularly amongst younger people, means that people can only be led if they wish to follow
- The increasing diversification of our workforce, with a blend of people from different cultures and different ages, presents cultural challenges.

FINAL DRAFT

Growing your EQ

Growing EQ isn't a quick fix. It can't be taught on a course - it relies on experiential learning - "practice and feedback" (1), developing new habits and patterns of behaviour. Some practical steps that you can take to help you include:

- Seeing ourselves as others see us is hard. Consider tools such as 360 degree feedback or psychometric assessments, or just asking someone you respect for some honest feedback.
- Identify a role model who has high EQ. Watch how they handle situations. Perhaps invite them to act as your mentor. Mimic their behaviour.
- Get a coach who will individually tailor their support, and encourage practice and reflection.

Whether you chose to find support or to grow your own EQ through practice and feedback, there is nothing to stop the motivated leader from becoming emotionally intelligent and reaping the rewards gained from more positive working relationships.

Ref (1) *What makes a leader?* by Daniel Goleman (published by Harvard Business Review Nov/Dec 1998)

What is Emotional Intelligence?

The phrase Emotional Intelligence has been used by several writers and researchers in recent years, in particular, Daniel Goleman (1) who defines the five key elements that make up EQ:

- **Self awareness** – our ability to recognise our moods and emotions and how they affect others.
- **Self regulation** – our ability to control our moods and think before acting.

- **Motivation** – a passion to work and to pursue goals with energy and persistence for reasons that go beyond money or status.
- **Empathy** – our ability to understand the emotional make-up of others and to treat them according to their needs.
- **Social skills** – proficiency in managing relationships by finding common ground and building rapport.

Does EQ matter more than IQ?

Research has found that as we take on more of a leadership role, our intellect (IQ) and cognitive abilities (e.g. analytical skills, technical skills) become less critical, whilst our ability to read and manage situations and relationships becomes more critical. These "softer" skills are no longer just "nice to haves" but are essential to the job because increasingly business leaders are faced with challenges such as:

- Needing to improve people's ability to work effectively in teams

Recognising EQ

1. Consider a few public figures from the world of politics, sport, entertainment etc...

- How emotionally intelligent are they?
- What is it about their behaviour that supports your view?

2. Next consider managers and leaders that you work with and ask yourself the same questions.

3. Finally take a step towards growing your own self awareness by asking the same questions about yourself.