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# ABOUT MYSELF

**I** am an Engineer Manager with more than 15 years' experience in the Automotive and Aerospace industries. Worked and lived in multiple countries. I also possess several management degrees that allow me to be a better leader, better professional, and person.

My passion is to lead multicultural teams to achieve success. I can tell you there is usually a better, smarter way to do things, to be assertive and go beyond your expectations if you believe in yourself, trust your instincts, let go of the fear of failure, be open to learning new things, and don't let others push you back.

I will share the knowledge and tools I used by working in several countries and corporations as an engineer and manager. I intend to be as forthcoming as possible, crude, to say things as they really are and how they worked for me. I gathered valuable information from my experience and from research to lay it here down for you in a simple, down to earth manner. You will be able to apply it starting day one. I worked with all kinds of people in different positions in a company, from the shop floor to CEOs/Company owners, with different cultures, from different countries and different generations. I failed as much as I succeeded.

I made mistakes, made breakthroughs, embraced both, and learned with both. I am here to help you. My goal is to empower you to have a new perspective, become smarter, see the signs in front of you, and grab the opportunities. I had some help during my work life, and now that I am in my 40s, I decided it is time to share my knowledge with others.

Continuing to evolve in my career, always learning and open to new experiences and challenges. Workplaces are complex and in movement, not static places where one rule applies to all. Come and learn how to navigate through rough water to get to your desired goal.

In this book, I am going to focus only on corporate professionals. I am going to mention here can be used in other kinds of teams, but my experience is on corporate companies, especially Engineering professionals.



# **Chapter 1**

## **EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**



# INTRODUCTION

**W**hat is Emotional Intelligence (EQ)? How is it necessary, and how it influences you and your career?

I will explain what EQ is, its importance on your career, show you several examples of different situations, how I think you should handle them, and the expected result. This is based on my professional experience, professionals I talked to, and studies I read.

To master EQ is extremely important, and it will make the difference between you staying in your position, lose it, or moving up quickly on your career. Professionals, who master Emotional Intelligence, have strong social awareness, thrive, and have respect from their peers. When you don't have a sharp EQ is like you are driving in a heavy fog road that you only notice danger or a warning when you are about to hit something and by that time is too late to avoid it. When you have EQ and use it, it is like

flying high and seeing all the obstacles and seeing what is around you from miles away.

# WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?



Figure 1 - Photo courtesy of pixabay

**Y**ou probably hear about Emotional intelligence (EQ) before, but you probably don't know what it is or when and how to use it properly.

As individuals, our success and the success in the role we play today depend on our ability to read other

people's signals and react appropriately. There are many areas in life that a sharp EQ is essential, like in your relationships, when playing sports. Still, I will talk about those areas where I have experience as a professional and as an Engineer Manager, leading a team to success.

Before I share my personal experience, let me show you how the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) appeared in our society? These were the order of events:

1920's	IQ started
1985	Dr. Reuven Bar-on, a clinical psychologist and W.L. Payne, started to include the IQ concept in his work.
1990	John Mayer and Peter Salovey, both psychologists, identified EQ as not being the same as having intellectual ability
1995	EQ becomes a worldwide concept mostly because of books published by Daniel Goleman.

Our level of intelligence is usually measured nowadays by our IQ. There are many tests and sites online

mentioning you can improve your IQ, but what I read about is that out IQ is set by the age of 3. After that, it does not change much. So how can you improve your work performance if you can barely change your IQ anymore? The answer is to improve your EQ.

How do you explain people with high IQ not moving up on their career, not being great leaders, and people not following them? Because they can act very emotionally at times, say the wrong thing at the wrong time, and not listen. They lack emotional intelligence. Having High IQ doesn't mean you have High EQ. We all know brilliant professionals, brains in their area but rude, unsocial, not a people person. We don't all grow up to be great speakers or sellers or good at negotiations, but having reasonable control of your emotions will contribute to all areas of your life. So how do we do that? I will show you as we move forward in the book.

First, let me show you an example I have on a company I worked for.

I had colleagues that were somehow smart but arrogant, didn't know about the technical things we

were doing or developing, and had the most stupid ideas for a new process or new ways to do things. You could see right away they wouldn't work, but these colleagues could sell the concept very well, and if you would listen to them, even you could get hypnotized with what they say because they know how to please and work people. They could even convince you. They had a good EQ, and I call them a good car salesman.

I also had brilliant colleagues who knew what they were talking about and knew about the subject. The problem was their ability to keep it together when things didn't go the way they planned. They lashed out to their workers because they have a bad day or are being pressured by upper management.

You can have good EQ, control your emotions, and have social awareness. Anyone can. I remember when I could not see things through the fog, I could feel inside something was wrong, but not put my finger on it.

# WHAT IS THE EQ DEFINITION?



Figure 2 - Photo courtesy of rawpixel

**D**aniel Goleman (mainly responsible for EQ to become a Worldwide phenomenon due to his book) from the Institute for Health and Human Potential defined EQ as:

**“EQ is the ability to recognize, understand, and manage our own emotions; Recognize, understand, and influence the emotions of others.”**

EQ can be radically changed, learned, and used as a powerful asset to move on your career, in relationships, even in sports and area in life.

I am sure you know people who you think don't have an IQ as higher as you, who cannot do what you do or see what you see but who can have high EQ and move faster on their career. They can keep calm and focus when things are hard or under fire, quiet when needed, and say the right thing at the right time in the right way. They can read people's emotions very well, listen, look you in the eyes and see what you are saying. They have empathy, know when you are lying, keep good relations, avoid burning bridges with other people, customers, avoid conflicts in general, and read a room very fast.

How do you think they do it? Don't you believe that people with good EQ feel fear, stress, sadness, rage, and other kinds of emotions? Yes, they all do, but they learn through training or/and experience how to react to those feelings and control them.

# TYPES OF COMMUNICATION



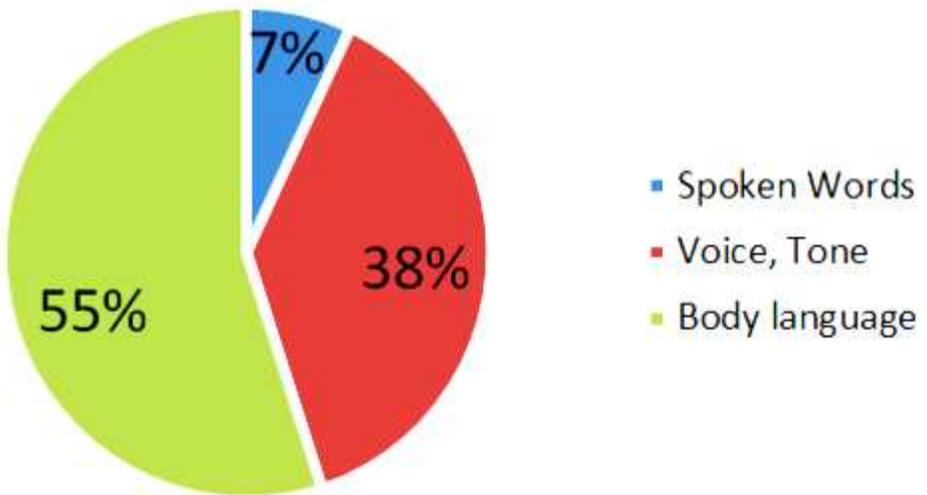
Figure 3 - Photo courtesy of rawpixel

**L**et's talk first about the known types of communication. They are interconnected with our EQ and can be used to better communicate and receive communication from others.

The most respectful study on the importance of verbal and nonverbal messages was done by Prof. Albert Mehrabian of the University of California in Los Angeles in the 1970s and is still applied today. He said

we usually have our feelings, attitudes, and beliefs about what someone says in a certain way, not by what they actually say, the actual words, but by their body language and tone of voice.

Prof. Albert Mehrabian then came up with the **7-38-55 rule**, where 7% of what we say is spoken words, 38% is voice and tone, and 55% is body language. This is why vital conversations and negotiations should be done in person and not by phone or chat. He believed that if words and body language disagree, we should acknowledge the body language.



I remember many times giving a task to a person and, in the end, asking if they understood the task,

and the answer was yes, but the body language was clearly saying no. You could see it in the person's face and eyes. I even had one team member who usually shook his head sideways, showing a clear no, while saying yes. So yes, do believe mainly in the body language.

Who didn't have any misunderstandings while on a chat or email? As per this study, I can understand why. We lose 93% of our communication using only spoken words. Unfortunately, many people feel more comfortable behind a computer and prefer to send an email rather than pick the phone or talk face-to-face. I have seen it often happen where people are seated side by side and are emailing each other. If possible, always use the face to face method, unless you want to hide something and you know it will show in a face to face conversation.

Maybe you are thinking about using Video conferences instead of face to face meetings. Is it the same as having a video conference or being present? In my opinion, there is a big difference. It feels artificial. It is like eating something with peach flavor and eating a peach. You cannot see everything, only what is

framed on the screen, often the face and upper shoulder part, losing a lot of body language.

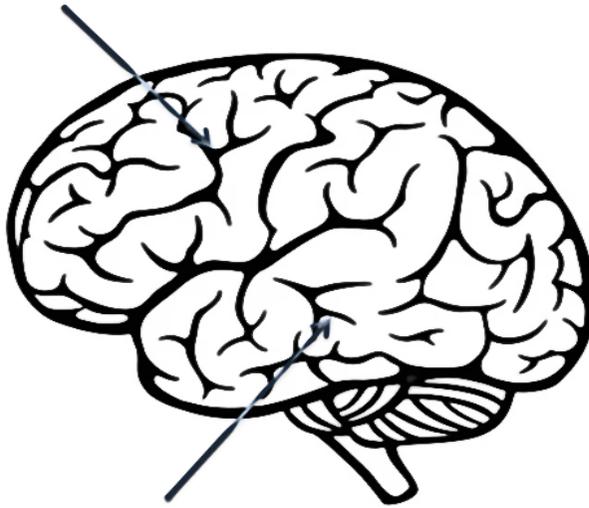
To understand how much body language is essential in a negotiation, experts whose only task is to be on critical negotiations observing the room and all people involved and taking notes to brief the CEO/manager at the end of the negotiation. Interesting, don't you think? For someone to be on a meeting, just to measure you up, what you are implying, feeling, and hiding.

So why do we need EQ? We need it because we are reactive creatures. We react first and think later if we don't control our emotions.

Why do we react first and think later? It has to do how our brain is designed.

Our emotional brain is located in the Limbic System, and since our ancestors, it is much older in our evolution. The Neocortex is more recent, and it is where all cognitive abilities reside our IQ.

**Neocortex - Thinking Brain**



**Limbic System-Emotional Brain**

So we feel before we think, which for our ancestors and nowadays, in dangerous situations is excellent. If our ancestors had a predator coming their way, the emotional brain would turn on and send them running away to try to escape. They wouldn't stop and think first if they should go left or right or stay. If we let our emotions take over completely, the emotional brain will make us react in 3 ways, fight, flight, or freeze. Our emotional reaction is also very connected to our emotional background, how we were raised, our experiences, and how we were brought up basically. It

is imperative also that you sleep well. Lack of sleep will make it more difficult to control your emotions.

We can control our emotions. It takes training, control, discipline, and proper rest. Let me show you a real example on the next page.

# REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE



Figure 4 - Photo courtesy of rawpixel

**I** had to change and adapt. When I started my first real job, I can say I had low EQ. This was back in 2003. I still remember how I would be uncomfortable talking in front of a group of people. Doing a presentation, for example, it was an anxiety trigger.

I still remember when my boss back then told me that I had to train 20 people because he could not. I knew

about the subject. I was an expert on it but had never given training before.

I was introverted back then, and so my anxiety level went high at that moment. I remember the time I felt uncomfortable talking to my manager to grab an opportunity on the company or saying that I could not work on the weekend even if I had excellent reasons. I was young and naive and learned the hard way.

During the next following year, I learned a lot about controlling my emotions more efficiently, having more social awareness, and being smarter in using my new skills to favor me.

I remember one episode I was asked to work on a weekend by Andrew, a senior manager because we were late on schedule, and he wanted to show to his boss that he had a plan to improve the dates. He did not have any plan, any real one at least, but just by asking people to work on the weekend was like a smokescreen to show he was on top of it, and if something went wrong, he had time to come up with an excuse.

First, he asked me this on a Friday, and secondly, I had already told him I had plans but that I would gladly cancel them if it were vital like a plane is on the ground or one of our customers' needs this ASAP. I asked him what was needed, the plan, the expected result for the weekend, and he had no clear answer, no plan, just wanted for me to show up and be on-site if necessary.

I suggested to him taking my laptop home and calling me on my cell phone anytime if needed. He rejected that idea ultimately. He wanted me to present on-site no matter what. I politely said that I wouldn't come to work that weekend since my presence would not make any difference. The company would be paying for me to be there for nothing, and I had to cancel my plans for the weekend. He did not like my response and left, really upset. He did not like me very much after that. I was polite, calm, explain my point of view, and listen to his.

You are only responsible for your actions and emotions. Whatever others do or feel is not your concern as long you are assertive.

Later on that day, I talked to my manager in his office, and the General Manager was also inside talking with the company VP. Andrew, the senior manager that spoke with me before, entered the room and asked me again if I could come on the weekend in front of my manager, the GM, and the VP. He intended to make me give under pressure and accept to go on the weekend. I was nervous, but I was able to remain calm and answered no again. The GM asked me why, and I told him what I told Andrew. He agreed with me. Later that day, he called me to his office and put me in charge of a new project. So be honest, truthful, assertive, and professional. You never know who is listening. It could quickly come the other way, and the GM could not have agreed with me. I wouldn't change the way I am or work. I would start looking for another job at a different company that has values similar to mine.

I was able to control my emotions. It isn't always possible. I learned a lot in 15 years about managing myself, my thought, and my feelings.

You can also help your team members to be more assertive and robust. I had a team member who would always say yes when asked to work on the weekends by other managers. There is nothing wrong with showing upper management that you will do overtime to help the business, but you also have your personal life to think about. It was the 4<sup>th</sup> weekend in a row he was supporting the business. I knew he had a wife and family, so I called him aside and told him that if he couldn't come on the weekend, it was ok for him to say no. He had supported the company several times before. I told him if he had any problems, to come and talk with me.

I could see he needed time off and how the constant working was affecting his moral. He said no several times, and I had to speak with the managers that were overloading him with work to stop doing that. He was happier, confident, and the quality of his work improved. There are small things you can do to empower your team, and this is one of them.

How did I control my emotions in that office when asked to work on the weekend? How can you show you are always in control and remain calm? How can

you do that, especially when you are being thrown under the bus when someone is trying to blame you for something that went wrong or ask you to do something you said you would not in front of a room full of people? It is not always easy. It takes time and experience, but it is not an impossible task. To achieve that, you will need first to:

- **Know how much you are worth to the company;**
- **Be ready to talk about your work anytime;**
- **If you don't know the answer to a specific question, say that you will investigate and come back within a particular time frame. If you are not sure, be sure;**
- **Be ready to admit a mistake was made. Have a solution for it and a way to avoid the same problem in the future;**
- **Be able to control your breathing and racing thoughts;**
- **Know what you can expect from people;**
- **Be assertive, not passive or aggressive;**
- **Read people intentions and the underline meaning of what they are saying;**

- **Learn to listen. It is ok to be in a meeting just hearing what is being said.**
- **Learn to observe what is around you and in front of you;**
- **Ask questions for clarification when needed and as many times necessary until everything is 100% clear;**

I cannot offer you experience. Only time can do that. I will guide you and show you what to do in a particular situation. What are usually other people's reactions? I will give you the tools, and then the experience will make things come out more naturally.

The experience gave me the tranquility I needed to deal with situations where I would usually feel stressed.

Remember one thing when you are under pressure; no one has the power to make you feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, or uneasy. You make that to yourself because you are not in control of your emotions. It takes time to have more Emotional Intelligence (EQ). You will have days where things don't go the way you planned. You will try things that

do not work, but you will start to see changes for the best from day one after reading this book.

I have been talking about how EQ is crucial for you as a professional, but EQ is also significant when managing a team. Your team is counting on you to be calm, direct, precise, fair, and trustworthy. Keep this in mind,

- the first reason people leave the company is because of their direct manager. They leave the manager, not the company.

# EQ ON TEAM MANAGEMENT



Figure 5 - Photo courtesy of rawpixel

**I** manage a group of brilliant engineers from different countries, backgrounds, and even different generations. I have 20 years of old Engineers as well as +50-year-old engineers in my Team.

I believe that for anyone to be a good team leader or manager, you need to:

- **HAVE EMPATHY AND RESPECT** –know your team members, understand what makes them tick. Talking with them about other things than work makes a connection. Treat your team members with the respect and dignity they deserve.
- **COMMUNICATE** – have time to listen to your team members. Have regular one on one meetings. When they come to your office, stop whatever you are doing and listen, don't continue working on your computer because that shows a lack of interest. That way, you fail to read the body language and how your worker really feels. Be sure to follow-through if they bring up an issue that they are not happy with or concerned about.
- **BE FIRM AND FLEXIBLE** – you need to follow company policy, but you need to be flexible for your best team members inside the policy. For example, I usually give them compensation time for my best team members because they did a great job on a particular project or improved the schedule. On the other hand, I will not give

compensation time to employees who just did their regular work or work extra hours to meet schedule because they slacked before.

- **SUPPORT** – Your team expects from your support, leadership, and guidance. You need to find the answers to their questions and not just give an “I don’t know” or “I will have a look at that later” answer and never giving them more feedback on the subject. Empower your team with the info and tools they need to succeed because if they succeed, you succeed.
  
- **KEEP CALM WHEN UNDER PRESSURE** – I have seen it often happen when a manager or team lead is under pressure by upper management and ends up lashing on the team. They do not filter the information, the bad energy, and go on a rampage, demanding, and talking rudely with their employees. This will alienate them. They will do less for you or just not care about doing a good job. Their trust in you will be shattered, and to get that trust back will be extremely difficult. Remain calm if your team is late, reunite with them and have a plan