How Do You Perceive Your Emotional Intelligence?

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To begin our examination of emotional intelligence, let’s imagine an iceberg. The visible part of the iceberg, which we know is just the small upper tip of it, represents your cognitive intelligence, or IQ. The much larger, underwater part represents your emotional intelligence, or EQ.

While we all know about the importance of IQ, recent studies have shown that EQ also plays a critical role in performance and success. Its impact on your outcomes in life is hard to overstate.

So, how does EQ work and why is it so important? In answering this question, let’s assume you want to pursue your heart’s deep-seated desires to live up to your full potential. Certainly, most among us have such desires, but few actually have the motivation to act on them and see them through to fruition. That’s where EQ comes in.

There is no better tool to accomplish your goals than having a high EQ. A high EQ gives you the ability to consistently and effectively advance down the path to success. How? There’s no secret to it. Only by understanding and appreciating the feelings, emotions and considerations of yourself and those around you will you be able to avoid conflicts and marshal the personal resources needed to achieve.

Think of it as a foundation — one which will anchor and underpin all the other things required in your particular endeavor as you build a successful career. Without high EQ, all is a struggle. With it, all falls into place, and you move forward in a focused, positive manner. Understanding how you and others operate will help you be more authentic, powerful and creative.

Better EQ will give you insight that you’ve probably never experienced before. It will help you be the best possible version of yourself at work too. And employers know this. Increasingly, employers recognize and reward those with high EQ because they are more effective and efficient. They are team players and can work smoothly and harmoniously with all performers and personalities in the business world.

Have I convinced you of the benefits of EQ? Assuming that I have, let’s move on to how to assess and improve your own. As a coach, I have found great value in the Multi-Health Systems (MHS) EQ-i 2.0 assessment tool, which I offer my clients. The first step is assessing how you already perceive yourself. After all, you can hardly know where you are going if you don’t know where you are.
The self-perception analysis breaks down into three components:

- **Self-regard**
- **Self-confidence**
- **Emotional self-awareness**

**Self-regard** is the ability to be realistic about your inner strengths. An acceptance of your positives and negatives helps you accept and learn from mistakes, so as to continue loving and respecting yourself without comparing yourself to others or being overly self-critical. Self-regard allows you to see the glass as half full, rather than getting down on yourself with negativity.

Your own positivity ignites positivity in others. As a result, self-regard contributes to your unique development and whole fulfillment because it supports respectful relationships with others.

Increasing self-regard starts with accepting and liking yourself for who you are instead of who you are not.

**Self-confidence** is the ability to evaluate what you can and can’t do. It’s not having an excessive or inflated confidence in one’s judgment, internal power or abilities. Nor, on the other hand, does it cause you to underestimate yourself because you don’t think you’re capable of it. Self-confidence is a combination of self-worth and self-efficacy. The way to increase self-confidence is to believe in yourself, collect past successful experiences and focus on achieving new ones by following through.

Although at first blush, self-regard sounds pretty similar to self-confidence, there are important distinctions. Self-regard is an appreciation and respect for the dignity of your core values, seeing your worth as a unique, if flawed, individual. Self-confidence, on the other hand, is the belief in your ability to accomplish your goals. The high-EQ individual has ample measure of both.

**Emotional self-awareness** is the ability to accurately perceive your emotions, label them and be aware that they initiate different feelings that you can manage. If you are not aware of what you are feeling, there is no chance that you will understand other people’s feelings. The way to increase your emotional self-awareness is to practice mindfulness, take an emotional quotient assessment, hire an EQ coach, etc.

If you really want to take control of your life, you must use not only your rational mind, but you must engage your emotional mind, too. Only by effectively using all of your faculties can you become the best version of yourself.

Neuroscience suggests our brain operates with plasticity, which makes it possible for our neurons to connect with each other (like holding hands), creating new neural pathways and
capabilities. Thus, it's clear that you are capable of building these pathways and increasing your self-perception. Enhanced self-perception will change your EQ, taking you far along the path to the pinnacle of self-actualization.

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