

# Lead The Pack With Emotional Intelligence

6 min read



## Key Takeaways

- **Why Is Emotional Intelligence Important for a Leader?** : High emotional intelligence can help generate positive outcomes in the workplace and day-to-day occupation of managing people and running a business.
- **Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Style:** Working on your emotional intelligence isn't just about having stellar soft skills in the workplace; it also has a direct effect on your leadership style.
- **Can Emotional Intelligence Be Measured?:** Whether or not the effect emotional intelligence has on your business can be measured is another question that's well-worth answering, and the answer is yes.

If asked to list the top traits needed for success in business leadership, things like business acumen, vision, creativity, drive, and analytical skills would probably make the top of your

list. Emotional intelligence, arguably one of the most important traits for a business leader to possess, might not make your list at all.

This often-overlooked attribute, however, is the *key* ingredient to a successful leader.

**Having a high emotional intelligence is a real strength when it comes to navigating the interpersonal relationships, negotiations, and daily interactions that are necessary for being a successful leader.**

## **What Is Emotional Intelligence?**

Emotional intelligence (sometimes referred to as EI or EQ) is defined as "the ability to identify and manage one's own emotions, as well as the emotions of others".<sup>[1]</sup>

Going beyond its basic definition, emotional intelligence is also related to emotional regulation and emotional awareness (the ability to identify and classify your own emotions). Additionally, an emotionally intelligent individual has the ability to harness their emotions and apply them rationally to tasks like problem-solving and thinking.

The other aspect of emotional intelligence is the ability to identify, understand, and manage emotions in others by practicing empathy.

## **Why Is Emotional Intelligence Important for a Leader?**

A business leader with high emotional intelligence can harness their own emotions, understand the effects they have on others, and use this understanding and control to generate positive outcomes in the workplace and day-to-day occupation of managing people and running a business.

### **Communicate More Effectively**

Emotional intelligence is essential for communication. One must understand their own thoughts, feelings, actions, and choices to understand what motivates them and to be able to communicate their decisions, choices, and feelings to those around them.

Additionally, empathy is necessary for not only communicating clearly but for communicating effectively. To deliver messages in a way that they will be heard and well-received requires a business leader to understand the emotions of their employees.

**85% of employees at all levels experience conflict at work. Organizations lose about \$359 billion yearly because of conflict. 49% of conflict results from “personality clashes and warring egos.”- CPP. Inc. Report <sup>[2]</sup>**

As society becomes increasingly complex, so do the variety of stakeholders in your business or organization. So, business leaders cannot simply assume their speaking with people who have the same experiences, backgrounds, education, and who have similar perspectives as they do. It's necessary to have the emotional intelligence that lends you the ability to read your audience to ensure you communicate appropriately and effectively.

There is a research-validated tool to help you communicate more effectively by understanding people's needs-motivated behaviors and emotions, called **DISC**.

There are four primary DISC leadership communication styles in the model:

- **D**ominance,
- **I**nfluence,
- **S**teadiness, and
- **C**onscientious.

Differences in communication come with both challenges and benefits. However, communication diversity on the team fuels rich and lively conversation, which ignites performance excellence when managed effectively. <sup>[3]</sup>

## **Boost Employee Engagement**

An emotionally intelligent CEO naturally boosts employee engagement. An emotionally intelligent CEO trusts their employees and values their emotions. The emotionally

intelligent business leader never subjects employees to negative, unfiltered, reactionary emotions.

**Read More:** [Maximize Your Business Profit With High-Performing Teams](#)

As a result, emotionally intelligent business leaders cultivate positive workplace cultures with a strong growth mindset where employees can feel psychologically safe. These employees simply perform better, and these businesses enjoy powerful, bottom-line-boosting results driven by high-performing, better-engaged employees.

## Bad Leadership Is Expensive

Lacking emotional intelligence doesn't mean you also lack the analytical skills, vision, and business savvy that it takes to run a successful business. It does, however, mean you lack the skills to really connect with, motivate, and inspire the people working for you. As a result, your quality as a leader will suffer, and bad leadership is expensive.

**Read More:** [The Cost of Bad Leadership: How to Choose the Right Leaders for Your Business](#)

Choosing bad leaders can create a breakdown in your company culture, cause lags in productivity, and increase your employee turnover rates resulting in the high cost of replacing lost employees.

Sure, your business can survive with leaders who fall short of the ideal emotional intelligence mark, but your business will never thrive.

## Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Style

Working on your emotional intelligence isn't just about having stellar soft skills in the workplace; it also has a direct effect on your leadership style.

CEOs who have lower emotional intelligence are more likely to be more autocratic leaders, transactional leaders, and even laissez-faire leaders who all take an approach to leadership that tends to distance them personally from the people in their companies.

**Read More:** [6 Leadership Styles- Which One Is Best For Your Business?](#)

On the other hand, CEOs with high emotional intelligence are more likely to adopt more people-centric leadership styles such as democratic, coach-like, visionary, humble, and servant-in-action leadership.

Each of these approaches to leadership keeps the leader in the background while placing a high value on the feelings, thoughts, opinions, ideas, and involvement of the people in the company.

While more emotionally intelligent leadership styles can make it trickier to implement your own strategy for achieving your vision for the company, they offer a variety of benefits to taking the time to connect with and listen to your employees. These include better insight and innovation, increased creativity, increased employee engagement, and satisfaction, in addition to improved productivity and retention rates.

While a less emotionally intelligent CEO might find that these approaches to leadership require a bit more work and mindful leadership to execute, they make it possible for you to leverage a wealth of knowledge, creativity, and potential that's just sitting, untapped within your existing employees.

## **The State of Your CEO Empathy and CEO Social Skills: Can Emotional Intelligence Be Measured?**

A simple Google search will turn up several free emotional intelligence tests that you can take to see how your emotional intelligence scores. Most tests take just a few minutes to complete and can reveal a lot about your personality, self-understanding, empathy, and leadership style.

Whether or not the effect emotional intelligence has on your business can be measured is another question that's well-worth answering, and the answer is yes.

Although you might not be able to directly measure how your own emotional intelligence affects your organization, you can consider the principles of using CEO empathy and

emotional intelligence leadership styles when developing your human capital management strategy.

**Read More:** [How To Maximize Profit and ROI From Your People](#)

When you build more humane, empathic, and nurturing policies into your HCM strategy (such as flexible work schedules, increased benefits, improved modes of communication, recognition, and rewards), you can directly measure the way these policies affect your employee productivity and bottom line.

Keep a close eye on the metrics listed on your people scorecard, when you implement changes to your policies that have been inspired by the principles of emotional intelligence and compassionate leadership, in addition to perhaps mindfully adjusting your own management style.

You might be surprised to see the positive impact your newly attuned leadership style has on employee engagement, productivity, ROI, profits, and employee retention rates – not to mention the lighter, more enjoyable atmosphere permeating the office.

So, when you set aside time to hone your business acumen skills and become a better business leader, in general, you should also consider measuring and developing your emotional intelligence EQ. Doing so will help you learn how you can improve your self-understanding and empathy to take your leadership skills and business to the next level.

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[1] <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/basics/emotional-intelligence>

[2] [CPP, Inc. Report](#)

[3]

<https://leadershipstrength.com/2020/12/the-four-disc-styles-of-leadership-communication/>