

UNDERSTANDING EQ

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is a term used to describe the following five core concepts important to academic and career success beyond traditional intelligence.

- **Self-Awareness:** The focus here understanding your own emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. Understanding how your actions and words impact others makes you a better team player and leader. Regularly pause and consciously identify how you feel and what is causing your emotions. Think about how your negative emotions (anger, frustration, indifference, fear) may affect you and those around you, and acknowledge the consequences of behavior that stems from them.
- **Self-Management:** This is the capacity to effectively manage your motives and regulate your behavior. Brainstorm ways to control your emotions to avoid hasty reactions and inadequate responses, whether it's focusing on your breathing, taking a break, or focusing on a calming mantra. It's okay to let others know you are upset, just express your feelings in a controlled and appropriate manner.
- **Motivation:** This is what drives our accomplishments. This is ideally driven internally rather than by external rewards like money and titles. Avoid making unreasonable demands on yourself, and be assertive when responding to others. Focus on small, measurable goals and adopt an optimistic mindset.
- **Empathy:** This involves perceiving, understanding, and acknowledging the way others feel. Learn to identify the things that make people feel valued, listened to, cared for, consulted, and understood. This means communicating with others that you understand and care about them, even if you do not agree with them, and paying attention to how other people are reacting or anticipating how they are likely to react to what you do and say.
- **People Skills:** These are the skills we use to interact with other people. We are more effective when we are good listeners, easy to talk to, charismatic, and attractive to others. To do this well, we should ask open-ended questions and practice active listening. We should be aware of our tone and body language when communicating with others and practice good eye contact when starting conversations.

When working on developing EQ, consider how you can apply these concepts in your daily life.

- **Meditate:** To rationally manage your emotions, you must be aware of them. Take time to process emotional challenges. Close your door, shut your eyes, and sit in silence for 5 minutes to reflect.
- **Be honest:** Don't ignore or suppress your emotions, though you may have to filter exactly how you feel. Take time to really acknowledge and sort through your emotions before you express them.
- **Avoid assumptions:** Remember, people don't act irrationally due to one event; they act irrationally in response to being overwhelmed. You never know what could be happening in a person's life. Don't take it personally, and don't match their emotional behavior.
- **Walk away:** There will be times when you must walk away from situations. Most people will respect you if you ask them to let you continue the conversation after you've had some time to process.
- **Take care:** You need to take care of your emotional health, just like your physical health. This might mean taking some time off, listening to music, or meditating – whatever helps you settle your emotions so you can stay level-headed in the face of difficulties.
- **Manage expectations:** Remember, you can't control other people. Unrealistic expectations of others are often a misguided attempt to control other people. Be present for people as they are, validate their current struggles, and set boundaries on their behavior. Meet them where you are instead of where you want them to be.