

# RICK'S TIPS

***Rick's Tips* explores the competencies necessary for successful leadership and provides activities to assist with the development and mastery of these skills.**

## THE EXECUTIVE GROUP

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# MANAGING EMOTIONS

## MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS OR THEY WILL MANAGE YOU

"I've had a lot of worries in my life, most of which never happened."  
– Mark Twain

Being able to function normally under stress and pressure is one of the most critical components of leadership. Regardless of how positive the environment, there will always be situations and circumstances that go wrong or seem impossible. This is normal. However, the reaction to such situations says much about a leader. Losing one's cool and getting upset is not conducive to a successful career. The ability to function normally under stress and pressure is an important requirement for persons in positions of leadership. These are skills that can and should be improved and mastered.

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### EMOTIONS ARE COMPOSED OF 3 ELEMENTS

The Source → A Response → The Expression

An emotion is an interpretation of an event and a feeling is the response to the emotion. Our emotions control our behaviors and thoughts and also affect our bodies.

Emotions are designed to help you cope with an emergency or threat. They trigger body changes and physical responses to prepare you for dealing with the situation in what is known as the "fight or flight" response. Most people think of this response in the terms of prehistoric man and the constant stress of survival (remember it was "eat" or "be eaten"). Today, situations still exist, including our own thoughts, which can trigger the same physical reactions. Emotions can shut you down and leave you neither choosing to fight or flee.

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### MOVE EMOTIONS TO DATA

When we become emotional about a subject or issue, especially something we are passionate about, our reaction can be emotionally charged. How those emotions emerge and how we handle them are based on our perspective of the situation. We may become angry or frustrated. I once read that a 48-hour "break" was required before deciding to court-marshal someone, allowing for an introspective period. The obvious rationale for this is that once there has been time allotted for calming down and logical thinking has broken through, then emotion can move to data. It is data that provides distance from emotion, after which data can tap into our intuition and problem-solving ability.

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## TEN WAYS TO MANAGE EMOTIONS MORE EFFECTIVELY

### **Do a Self-Inventory**

Identify situations or triggers that cause you to lose control of your emotions; note the commonalities (who, what, where, when, why, how).

### **Decrease Triggers**

Place triggers into categories based on the commonalities, then work to develop appropriate responses.

### **Rehearse Responses**

For each situation or trigger, develop a response, write it down, and rehearse it.

### **Think Before You Speak**

Hold back your first response long enough to think of a second and other possible responses.

### **Count to 10**

Practice delaying tactics. Take at least one minute to regain your composure. Create and rehearse a mature response when faced with a delay.

### **Control**

Plan for delays and lengthen or extend timelines and schedules to allow for them; this allows you to control the situation.

### **Blame and Vengeance**

These emotional reactions only supply temporary satisfaction and usually cause more trouble in the long run. When you feel you are being attacked, rephrase it as an attack on a problem. When replying, recite only the facts and their impact.

### **Anxiety and Conclusions**

Take time to understand and define a problem. Ask clarifying questions, restate the problem, ask for opinions, debate possible solutions and finally, decide.

### **Workaholic Syndrome**

Release work frustration in a constructive way and not at work. Exercise, take a class or discover a hobby.

### **Find a Confidante**

Find someone you respect who will act as a sounding board, tell you what you need to hear and get you back on track.

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## EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The ability, capacity, or skill to perceive, assess and manage the emotions of one's self and others is known as Emotional Intelligence (EI). Emotional Intelligence can be measured and improved. People who are attuned to their own feelings and the feelings of others can use their understanding to enhance the performance of themselves and others.

Read the following 5 components of emotional intelligence for development in those areas:

### Self-Awareness

This component provides the basis for all the other components of emotional intelligence. Self-awareness means being aware of what you are feeling, being conscious of the emotions within yourself. People with high levels of self-awareness learn to trust their "gut feelings" and realize that these feelings can provide useful information about difficult decisions.

### Managing Emotions

The second key component of emotional intelligence is managing emotions. This means you are able to balance your moods so that worry, anxiety, fear, or anger don't get in the way of what needs to be done. People who manage their emotions perform better because they are able to think clearly. Managing emotions does not mean suppressing or denying them but understanding them and using that understanding to deal with situations productively. People should first recognize a mood or feeling, think about what it means and how it affects them, and then choose how to act.

### Motivating Oneself

This ability to be hopeful and optimistic despite obstacles, setbacks, or even outright failure is crucial for pursuing long-term goals in life or in business.

### Empathy

The fourth component is empathy, which means being able to put yourself in someone else's shoes to recognize what others are feeling without them needing to tell you. Most of the time people don't tell us what they feel in words but rather in tone of voice, body language and facial expression. Empathy is built from self-awareness; being attuned to one's own emotions makes it easier to read and understand the feelings of others.

### Social Skill

The ability to connect to others, build positive relationships, respond to the emotions of others and influence others is the final component of emotional intelligence. We need social skills to understand interpersonal relationships, handles disagreements, resolve conflicts and pull people together for a common purpose.

## WHAT IS YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EI)?

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1= Seldom) and (5 = Often), rate how well you display the ability described:

ABILITY	SCORE 1 - 5
ASSOCIATE INTERNAL PSYCHOLOGICAL CUES WITH DIFFERENT EMOTIONS	
RELAX WHEN UNDER PRESSURE IN SITUATIONS	
"GEAR UP" AT WILL FOR A TASK	
KNOW THE IMPACT THAT YOUR BEHAVIOR HAS ON OTHERS	
INITIATE SUCCESSFUL RESOLUTION OF CONFLICT WITH OTHERS	
KNOW WHEN YOU ARE BECOMING ANGRY	
CALM YOURSELF QUICKLY WHEN ANGRY	
REGROUP QUICKLY AFTER A SETBACK	
RECOGNIZE WHEN OTHERS ARE DISTRESSED	
BUILD CONSENSUS WITH OTHERS	
KNOW WHAT SENSES YOU ARE CURRENTLY USING	
USE INTERNAL "TALK" TO CHANGE YOUR EMOTIONAL STATE	
PRODUCE MOTIVATION WHEN DOING UNINTERESTING WORK	
HELP OTHERS MANAGE THEIR EMOTIONS	
MAKE OTHERS FEEL GOOD	
IDENTIFY WHEN YOU EXPERIENCE MOOD SHIFTS	
STAY CALM WHEN YOU ARE THE TARGET OF ANGER FROM OTHERS	
STOP OR CHANGE IN AN INEFFECTIVE HABIT	
SHOW EMPATHY TO OTHERS	
PROVIDE ADVICE AND EMOTIONAL SUPPORT TO OTHERS AS NEEDED	
KNOW WHEN YOU BECOME DEFENSIVE	
KNOW WHEN YOU ARE THINKING NEGATIVELY AND HEAD IT OFF	
FOLLOW YOUR WORDS WITH ACTIONS	
ENGAGE IN INTIMATE CONVERSATIONS WITH OTHERS	
ACCURATELY REFLECT PEOPLE'S FEELINGS BACK TO THEM	
<b>TOTAL</b>	

Adapted from Training in Management Skills by Phillip L. Hunsaker, 2001, Prentice-Hall, NJ

**See next page for scoring**

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## SCORING

For each of the five components of emotional intelligence below, a score above 20 is considered high, while a score below 10 would be considered low

- Your score for **self-awareness** is the total of questions 1, 6, 11, 16, 21.
- Your score for **managing emotions** is the total of questions 2, 7, 12, 17, 22.
- Your score for **motivating yourself** is the sum of questions 3, 8, 13, 18, 23.
- Your score for **empathy** is the sum of questions 4, 9, 14, 19, 24.
- Your score for **social skills** is the sum of questions 5, 10, 15, 20, 25.

## TOTAL SCORE

Sum your responses to the 25 questions to obtain your overall emotional intelligence score

- 100 + = high emotional intelligence
- 50 -100 = a good platform from which to develop emotional intelligence
- Below 50 = below average emotional intelligence

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## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Emotional Intelligence](#) by Daniel Goleman

[10 Dumbest Mistakes Smart People Make](#) by Arthur Freeman and Rose DeWolf

[Your Own Worst Enemy](#) by Andrew Dubrin

[Facing the Fire: Experiencing and Expressing Anger Appropriately](#) by John H. Lee and Bill Stott

[Working Anger: Preventing and Resolving Conflict on the Job](#) by Ronald Potter-Efron

[Stress for Success](#) by James E. Loehr

“When dealing with people, remember you are not dealing with creatures of logic, but with creatures of emotion.”

– Dale Carnegie