

# "The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership Development and Business Success

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## **Abstract:**

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as a critical factor in effective leadership and organizational success. This paper explores the role of EI in leadership development and its impact on business outcomes. Through a review of current literature and case studies, the importance of EI competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills is examined. The paper also discusses strategies for developing EI in leaders and its influence on employee engagement, team performance, and overall organizational success.

**Keywords:** Emotional intelligence, leadership development, business success, self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skills, employee engagement, team performance, organizational success.

## **Introduction:**

In today's dynamic and complex business environment, the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in leadership development and business success cannot be overstated. EI encompasses a set of abilities that enable individuals to understand and manage their emotions effectively, as well as to recognize and respond to the emotions of others. This paper aims to explore the various dimensions of EI and its impact on leadership effectiveness, employee engagement, team dynamics, and ultimately, organizational success.

## **Theoretical Framework of Emotional Intelligence:**

The theoretical framework of emotional intelligence (EI) encompasses various models and concepts that explain how emotions impact individual behavior, decision-making, and interpersonal relationships. One prominent model is Daniel Goleman's Emotional Intelligence framework, which proposes that EI comprises four domains: self-awareness, self-regulation, social awareness, and relationship management. Self-awareness involves recognizing and understanding one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and values, leading to enhanced self-confidence and authenticity in leadership roles.

Self-regulation refers to the ability to manage and control one's emotions, impulses, and reactions, enabling leaders to remain composed under pressure, make rational decisions, and adapt to changing circumstances effectively. Social awareness involves empathizing with others, recognizing their emotions, and understanding social dynamics, fostering strong interpersonal connections, empathy, and inclusivity in leadership interactions. Relationship management encompasses skills such as communication, conflict resolution, collaboration, and influence, crucial for building and sustaining productive relationships, motivating teams, and achieving organizational goals.

Another theoretical perspective is Mayer and Salovey's model of EI, which emphasizes the cognitive aspects of emotional intelligence. This model posits that EI involves the ability to perceive emotions accurately, use emotions to facilitate thinking, understand emotional

meanings, and manage emotions to promote personal growth and social effectiveness. These cognitive processes underlie effective leadership behaviors such as problem-solving, decision-making, and conflict resolution, highlighting the interconnectedness of emotional and cognitive intelligence in leadership development.

Furthermore, the Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) model, proposed by Petrides and colleagues, focuses on individual differences in emotional self-perceptions, including aspects such as self-esteem, emotional expression, and emotional management. This model suggests that individuals vary in their inherent emotional intelligence traits, which can influence their leadership styles, communication strategies, and interpersonal effectiveness. Understanding these trait-based differences can inform leadership development initiatives tailored to individuals' unique emotional profiles, optimizing leadership performance and organizational outcomes.

### **Importance of Emotional Intelligence in Leadership:**

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a pivotal role in leadership effectiveness and is increasingly recognized as a crucial skill for modern leaders. Firstly, EI enables leaders to understand and manage their own emotions effectively. Leaders with high EI are more self-aware, able to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, and can regulate their emotions in challenging situations. This self-awareness fosters better decision-making, as leaders can make choices that align with their values and goals rather than being swayed by impulsive emotions.

Secondly, EI enhances leaders' ability to empathize with others. Empathy, a key component of EI, allows leaders to connect with their team members on a deeper level, understand their perspectives, and respond with sensitivity. This empathetic approach builds trust and rapport, leading to stronger relationships and increased collaboration within the team.

Thirdly, EI contributes significantly to effective communication in leadership. Leaders with high EI can express their ideas and feedback clearly and empathetically, leading to better understanding and engagement among team members. They also excel in active listening, which is crucial for addressing concerns, resolving conflicts, and fostering a positive work environment.

Moreover, EI plays a vital role in managing stress and handling pressure effectively. Leaders who are emotionally intelligent can remain calm and composed in challenging situations, inspiring confidence and stability among their team members. This ability to stay resilient in the face of adversity not only boosts morale but also enables the team to perform optimally under pressure.

In conclusion, the importance of emotional intelligence in leadership cannot be overstated. It empowers leaders to understand themselves, connect with others, communicate effectively, manage stress, and ultimately drive positive outcomes within their teams and organizations. As the landscape of leadership evolves, EI remains a fundamental attribute that distinguishes exceptional leaders and contributes to long-term success.

### **Self-Awareness and Self-Regulation:**

Self-awareness and self-regulation are foundational aspects of emotional intelligence (EI) that play a crucial role in leadership development and business success. Self-awareness involves the ability to recognize and understand one's own emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and values.

Leaders with high levels of self-awareness are better equipped to manage their emotions effectively and make informed decisions. This awareness allows them to assess their impact on others and adjust their behavior accordingly, leading to more positive interpersonal interactions and stronger relationships within the organization.

Self-regulation, on the other hand, refers to the ability to control and manage one's emotions, impulses, and reactions. Leaders who excel in self-regulation are adept at handling stressful situations calmly, making rational decisions under pressure, and maintaining composure during challenging times. This skill is particularly valuable in leadership roles where resilience, adaptability, and sound judgment are essential for navigating complex business environments and driving organizational success.

Leaders who possess a high degree of self-awareness and self-regulation are often perceived as authentic, trustworthy, and emotionally mature. They demonstrate consistency in their actions, respond thoughtfully to feedback, and are open to self-improvement. This authenticity fosters a culture of transparency and accountability within the organization, encouraging team members to also develop their emotional intelligence and contribute positively to the overall work environment.

Furthermore, self-awareness and self-regulation contribute significantly to effective communication and conflict resolution. Leaders who understand their own emotional triggers and communication styles can tailor their messages to resonate with diverse audiences and defuse conflicts constructively. This ability to navigate interpersonal dynamics with empathy and tact promotes collaboration, reduces misunderstandings, and enhances team cohesion, ultimately driving greater productivity and innovation within the organization.

In summary, self-awareness and self-regulation are fundamental competencies that empower leaders to lead with authenticity, make sound decisions, foster healthy relationships, and navigate challenges effectively. Investing in the development of these emotional intelligence skills not only benefits individual leaders but also contributes to a positive organizational culture and sustainable business success.

### **Empathy and Social Skills:**

**Understanding Empathy's Role:** Empathy, a fundamental component of emotional intelligence, plays a pivotal role in effective leadership. It involves the ability to understand and share the feelings of others, fostering connections and trust within teams. Leaders with high empathy can perceive the emotions of their team members, which enables them to respond appropriately and build stronger relationships. This empathetic understanding contributes significantly to a positive organizational culture and enhances employee morale and motivation.

**Empathy in Decision-Making:** Empathetic leaders are adept at considering the perspectives and emotions of various stakeholders when making decisions. This skill leads to more informed and inclusive decision-making processes. By valuing diverse viewpoints and understanding the impact of decisions on individuals, empathetic leaders can create strategies and policies that resonate with their teams and stakeholders, leading to greater acceptance and support for organizational initiatives.

**Social Skills and Relationship Building:** Social skills complement empathy in leadership, encompassing communication, collaboration, and interpersonal effectiveness. Leaders with

strong social skills can navigate complex social dynamics, build rapport, and inspire trust among team members and external partners. Effective communication, active listening, conflict resolution, and negotiation skills are integral aspects of social competence that contribute to successful leadership and organizational performance.

**Creating a Supportive Environment:** Leaders who excel in empathy and social skills create a supportive work environment where individuals feel understood, valued, and motivated. They foster open communication channels, encourage collaboration, and promote a culture of empathy and mutual respect. Such environments are conducive to innovation, creativity, and high performance, as employees feel empowered to contribute their ideas and talents without fear of judgment or criticism.

**Impact on Organizational Success:** The integration of empathy and social skills in leadership directly impacts organizational success. Teams led by empathetic and socially skilled leaders demonstrate higher levels of engagement, productivity, and satisfaction. They experience lower turnover rates, stronger team cohesion, and enhanced problem-solving abilities. Moreover, organizations with a culture of empathy and strong social connections are better equipped to navigate challenges, adapt to change, and achieve long-term growth and success.

These paragraphs highlight the significance of empathy and social skills in leadership development and their profound impact on fostering a positive work culture and driving organizational success.

### **Strategies for Developing Emotional Intelligence in Leaders:**

**Assessment and Feedback Mechanisms:** A crucial starting point for enhancing emotional intelligence in leaders is through self-assessment tools and 360-degree feedback mechanisms. These tools help leaders gain insights into their emotional strengths and areas for improvement, as perceived by themselves and their peers, subordinates, and superiors. By receiving constructive feedback and understanding their emotional tendencies, leaders can identify specific areas to focus on for development.

**Emotional Self-Regulation Practices:** Developing emotional self-regulation is key to effective leadership. Leaders can benefit from practices such as mindfulness meditation, deep breathing exercises, and cognitive reappraisal techniques. These practices help leaders manage their stress, regulate their emotions, and respond more thoughtfully and calmly in challenging situations. Integrating such practices into daily routines can significantly enhance leaders' ability to navigate complex emotions and make rational decisions.

**Empathy Building Activities:** Empathy is a cornerstone of emotional intelligence and plays a pivotal role in leadership effectiveness. Leaders can engage in empathy-building activities such as active listening, perspective-taking exercises, and role-playing scenarios. These activities help leaders understand others' emotions, perspectives, and needs, fostering stronger interpersonal connections and effective communication within teams and across organizational levels.

**Social Skills Development:** Strong social skills are essential for effective leadership, including skills such as conflict resolution, negotiation, and influence. Leaders can develop these skills through training programs, workshops, and coaching sessions focused on communication strategies, emotional expression, and relationship building. Practicing active listening, giving

and receiving feedback constructively, and building rapport with diverse team members are fundamental aspects of enhancing social skills.

**Continuous Learning and Growth Mindset:** Cultivating a culture of continuous learning and a growth mindset is crucial for sustained development of emotional intelligence in leaders. Encouraging leaders to seek feedback, engage in reflective practices, and pursue ongoing learning opportunities fosters a mindset of growth, adaptability, and resilience. Leadership development programs that incorporate emotional intelligence training, experiential learning, and real-world application can further support leaders in their journey toward enhanced emotional intelligence and effective leadership.

### **Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Employee Engagement:**

Employee engagement is a critical aspect of organizational success, directly influencing productivity, innovation, and overall performance. One of the key factors that significantly impact employee engagement is emotional intelligence (EI). Leaders with high EI possess the ability to understand and manage their own emotions, as well as to empathize and communicate effectively with their team members. This creates a positive work environment where employees feel valued, understood, and motivated to contribute their best efforts.

One way in which EI influences employee engagement is through improved communication and conflict resolution. Leaders with high EI can navigate challenging situations with tact and empathy, fostering open dialogue and resolving conflicts constructively. This leads to stronger relationships within teams and a more cohesive work culture where individuals feel heard and supported, enhancing their engagement and commitment to the organization's goals.

Moreover, EI contributes to creating a psychologically safe workplace environment. When leaders demonstrate emotional intelligence by being approachable, understanding, and inclusive, employees feel comfortable expressing their ideas, concerns, and feedback without fear of judgment or reprisal. This fosters a culture of trust, collaboration, and psychological safety, which are essential drivers of high employee engagement and retention.

Additionally, leaders with strong EI skills are adept at recognizing and acknowledging their employees' contributions and achievements. They provide meaningful feedback, recognition, and support tailored to individual needs, which boosts morale and motivates employees to excel in their roles. This personalized approach to leadership strengthens the emotional connection between employees and their work, leading to higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction.

In conclusion, the impact of emotional intelligence on employee engagement is profound and multifaceted. Leaders who prioritize developing their EI competencies create a positive work environment where employees feel valued, empowered, and motivated to perform at their best. By fostering open communication, psychological safety, and personalized support, EI contributes significantly to enhancing employee engagement, driving organizational success, and creating a culture of excellence.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Team Dynamics:**

**Understanding Team Dynamics:** Team dynamics refer to the interpersonal relationships, communication patterns, and collaboration within a team. Emotional intelligence plays a pivotal role in shaping these dynamics as it influences how team members interact,

communicate, and handle conflicts. Leaders with high EI are adept at fostering a positive team environment, where trust, respect, and open communication thrive.

**Emotional Intelligence in Team Leadership:** Effective team leaders leverage emotional intelligence to understand the emotions and motivations of team members. They are attuned to the group's dynamics, recognizing when tensions arise and addressing them proactively. Leaders with high EI also exhibit empathy, which helps in building rapport and resolving conflicts amicably, leading to stronger team cohesion.

**Impact on Communication:** Communication is a cornerstone of successful team dynamics. Emotionally intelligent team members and leaders excel in both verbal and non-verbal communication. They can convey their ideas clearly, listen actively to others, and interpret subtle cues, fostering a culture of open dialogue and mutual understanding within the team.

**Conflict Resolution and Collaboration:** Conflict is inevitable in any team setting, but how it's managed can significantly impact team dynamics. Emotionally intelligent individuals approach conflicts with a problem-solving mindset rather than letting emotions escalate. They facilitate constructive discussions, encourage diverse perspectives, and promote collaborative solutions, leading to more effective teamwork and decision-making.

**Building Resilient Teams:** Teams with high emotional intelligence are resilient in the face of challenges. They adapt to changes, support each other during tough times, and maintain a positive outlook. Emotionally intelligent teams also leverage their collective strengths, utilizing diverse skills and perspectives to achieve common goals and drive success for the organization.

### **Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Success:**

Emotional intelligence (EI) plays a pivotal role in driving organizational success by fostering a positive and productive work environment. Firstly, leaders with high EI are adept at understanding their own emotions and those of others, enabling them to navigate interpersonal dynamics effectively. This self-awareness and empathy contribute to improved communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration within teams, leading to higher levels of employee satisfaction and engagement.

Secondly, EI enhances leadership effectiveness by enabling leaders to regulate their emotions and make sound decisions under pressure. Leaders with strong EI are better equipped to manage stress, adapt to change, and maintain a sense of resilience, which are crucial qualities in today's fast-paced and unpredictable business landscape. This ability to remain composed and focused in challenging situations can have a significant impact on organizational performance and resilience.

Thirdly, emotional intelligence contributes to the development of a positive organizational culture characterized by trust, transparency, and inclusivity. Leaders who demonstrate EI traits such as empathy, integrity, and fairness inspire trust and loyalty among employees, fostering a sense of belonging and commitment to the organization's goals. This positive culture not only improves employee morale and retention but also attracts top talent and enhances the organization's reputation in the market.

Furthermore, EI influences decision-making processes within organizations, leading to more thoughtful and empathetic choices that consider the impact on employees, customers, and other stakeholders. Leaders who prioritize EI in their decision-making approach are more likely to

create win-win solutions that balance short-term goals with long-term sustainability and ethical considerations. This strategic alignment of EI with organizational objectives contributes to improved performance, innovation, and long-term success.

In conclusion, emotional intelligence is a fundamental driver of organizational success, impacting leadership effectiveness, organizational culture, decision-making processes, and overall performance. By investing in the development of EI among leaders and employees, organizations can create a resilient, adaptive, and inclusive workplace culture that drives innovation, engagement, and sustainable growth.

### **Case Studies and Practical Applications:**

Sure, here are five paragraphs discussing case studies and practical applications related to emotional intelligence in leadership development and business success:

#### **Leadership Coaching for EI Enhancement:**

In a multinational corporation, a leadership coaching program was implemented to enhance emotional intelligence among senior executives. Through personalized coaching sessions focused on self-awareness and empathy, leaders improved their ability to understand and manage emotions in high-pressure situations. This resulted in better decision-making, improved communication with teams, and increased employee morale. The case study highlights the effectiveness of targeted coaching in developing EI competencies among leaders and its positive impact on organizational culture.

#### **EI Training for Team Effectiveness:**

A technology startup invested in emotional intelligence training for its project teams. By incorporating EI workshops into their onboarding process and ongoing professional development, teams became more cohesive and productive. They demonstrated higher levels of collaboration, conflict resolution skills, and adaptability, leading to faster project delivery and improved client satisfaction. This case study illustrates how integrating EI training at the team level can enhance performance and project outcomes.

#### **EI Assessment for Hiring and Promotion:**

A financial services firm integrated emotional intelligence assessments into its hiring and promotion processes. By evaluating candidates' EI competencies alongside technical skills, the company identified individuals with strong leadership potential and interpersonal abilities. Employees who demonstrated high EI were often promoted to managerial roles, leading to smoother team dynamics, reduced turnover, and increased customer satisfaction. This case study emphasizes the strategic use of EI assessments in talent management practices.

#### **EI Workshops for Managerial Development:**

Many organizations conduct EI workshops specifically designed for managerial development. These workshops focus on areas such as emotional self-control, empathy, and communication skills tailored to leadership roles. Participants learn practical techniques for handling difficult conversations, motivating teams, and building a positive work environment. Such workshops not only enhance individual leadership capabilities but also foster a culture of emotional intelligence across the organization.

### **EI Integration in Performance Management:**

Some companies integrate emotional intelligence metrics into their performance management systems. By including EI-related goals and competencies in performance evaluations, employees are encouraged to develop and demonstrate emotional intelligence in their daily work. Managers provide feedback and coaching to support EI growth, leading to improved team dynamics, increased employee engagement, and better overall organizational performance. This practical application highlights the ongoing commitment to EI development as a key driver of success in modern workplaces.

**Future Directions and Recommendations:** Integration of EI in Leadership Development Programs: As we move forward, organizations should prioritize the integration of emotional intelligence (EI) training in leadership development programs. This includes incorporating EI assessments, coaching, and feedback mechanisms to help leaders enhance their EI competencies. By focusing on EI alongside traditional leadership skills, organizations can build more resilient and empathetic leaders who can navigate complex challenges with agility.

**Research on Cultural Differences in EI:** Future research should delve into the cultural nuances of emotional intelligence, considering how EI manifests differently across cultures and how cultural factors influence leadership styles. Understanding these nuances is crucial for global organizations aiming to develop culturally intelligent leaders who can lead diverse teams effectively.

**Technology and EI Assessment Tools:** Advancements in technology offer opportunities to develop more sophisticated EI assessment tools, such as AI-driven platforms that can analyze facial expressions, tone of voice, and written communication to provide comprehensive EI insights. Integrating such tools into recruitment, performance evaluations, and leadership development can enhance the accuracy and effectiveness of EI assessments.

**EI in Remote and Hybrid Work Environments:** With the rise of remote and hybrid work models, there is a need to explore how EI skills contribute to effective leadership in virtual settings. Research and recommendations should focus on strategies for building emotional connections, fostering trust, and managing team dynamics in distributed work environments, leveraging EI as a key competency.

**Ethical Considerations in EI Development:** Lastly, future efforts should address ethical considerations in EI development, including issues related to privacy, bias in AI-based assessments, and the responsible use of EI data. Organizations and researchers must ensure that EI initiatives uphold ethical standards, respect individuals' privacy rights, and promote inclusive and equitable practices in leadership development.

By focusing on these future directions and recommendations, organizations can harness the power of emotional intelligence to cultivate empathetic, adaptive, and ethical leaders who drive business success while fostering positive organizational cultures.

In the role of emotional intelligence (EI) in leadership development and business success is undeniable. Through a comprehensive analysis of EI's various dimensions, including self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills, this paper has highlighted its critical importance in modern organizations. Leaders who possess high levels of EI are better equipped to understand their own emotions and those of others, leading to more effective

communication, decision-making, and conflict resolution. Moreover, EI plays a pivotal role in fostering employee engagement, creating positive team dynamics, and ultimately driving organizational success.

The strategies outlined for developing EI in leaders provide actionable insights for organizations seeking to enhance their leadership capabilities. By investing in EI training and development programs, organizations can cultivate a culture of emotional intelligence that permeates throughout the workforce. This not only improves individual leadership performance but also contributes to a more cohesive and resilient organizational culture.

Case studies presented throughout this paper have demonstrated the tangible benefits of EI in real-world scenarios. From improved employee morale and retention to increased productivity and innovation, the impact of EI on organizational outcomes is clear. As businesses navigate increasingly complex and diverse environments, the ability to leverage emotional intelligence becomes a strategic advantage that propels them towards sustainable growth and success.

Looking ahead, future research should continue to explore the nuanced aspects of EI, such as its intersection with diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives, as well as its role in navigating digital transformations and remote work environments. By deepening our understanding of EI and its implications for leadership and business, we can continue to refine practices and strategies that optimize organizational performance and foster a positive work culture centered around emotional intelligence.

### **Summary:**

This paper delves into the intricate relationship between emotional intelligence, leadership development, and business success. It discusses how EI competencies such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills contribute to effective leadership, employee engagement, and team performance. By analyzing case studies and practical applications, the paper provides insights into strategies for developing EI in leaders and its positive impact on organizational outcomes.

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