



Benefits of Teaching Emotional Intelligence (EI) in the Healthcare Workplace



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Internal candidates, what are the key skill sets you are looking for?

I have always adopted the concept of hire for attitude train for aptitude. Most graduates and seasoned professionals have the basic clinical and non-clinical educational and work performance requirements. So what sets the top performers apart? These qualities are a *“can do”* attitude and high levels of emotional intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a teaching method gaining commendable recognition in the world of business. Emotions are the most private and personal aspects of the psyche. In our work in treatment and counseling we understand that it is hard to delve into the mind of another individual and training it to be self-reliant and self-controlled. Most people believe they are already in control of their emotions and resist the new concept of (EI). When emotional intelligence is introduced in a positive and non-judgmental setting, most people grasp the method and recognize its potential for improving their self-management skills in the workplace and in everyday tasks.

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In my work nationally we work with leadership teams to gain an awareness of the performance, behavior aptitude and attitude skills needed for highly effective team members. One of the assessment areas are centered on positive attitude characteristics. Do you or other team members possess the attitude and behaviors below to support the team's ability to focus on solutions and not the problems?

Positive Attitude Characteristics: (i.e., Focuses on solutions not on the problems)

Typical Focus Areas:

- Positive- We can do this...

- Respectful
- Cooperative
- Creative
- Flexible
- Responsible
- Adaptive
- Responsive
- Team Player
- Willing to be cross-trained
- Professional
- Emotional Intelligence

Promoting emotional intelligence in the healthcare workplace presents unique challenges. Inviting people to expose their emotions to the “scrutiny” of their co-workers will cause some discomfort in the majority, but as they learn to integrate emotional intelligence skills into productive self-management, they recognize the value of the self-awareness emotional intelligence develops. It is considered a crucial component of this century’s business dynamic. Its impact on the business world becomes more evident each year. Those who are willing to improve their life-management skills through the medium of IE become valuable commodities in the workplace.

Problem Solvers – Every business devotes a great deal of time to solving problems. Employees trained in EI have the skills to drastically reduce the amount of time spent on problems and redirect that time and energy into productive projects.

Relationship Builders – Human personality always comes into play in the work environment. EI knowledgeable employees can read the emotions of others and adapt to those needs in a sensitive and positive manner.

Achievers – Those employees who have developed their EI are confident in their abilities to perform their responsibilities in the workplace. This confidence allows them to work quickly and accomplish their tasks in less time than those lacking this skill.

Leaders – Employees adept in EI, own all the “self” words. They are self-motivated, self-aware, self-reliant and self-assured. They display the needed characteristics of leadership. They are “team” players, perform well under pressure, and energize their co-workers.

Some people have a natural ability to learn and adapt to each new challenge as it is presented. They appear to be fearless when faced with discouragement and defeat. When other people give up, these people get inspired. Thomas Edison was this kind of



person. During the time he was creating the light bulb, he had thousands of unsuccessful attempts. He didn't consider those attempts to be failures. When asked about his "failures" he responded, "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work." He understood that success always involves learning.

The positive attitude characteristics combined with an active understanding and ability to master emotional intelligence provides leaders and work teams with valuable skills in the areas of Personal competence and social competence. These competencies allow us to be self aware to maintain appropriate self management while at the same time be socially aware and maintain and enhance work relationships to maximize efficiency and effectiveness to accomplish strategic goals.

People with developed EI don't fall apart emotionally when something doesn't work out as intended. They are able to evaluate the problem, re-think the solution, apply the new tactic, and achieve success.

There are accepted ways to introduce EI into the workplace. Many large companies hold emotional intelligence workshops and have realized significant benefits. A presentation during regular morning meetings can generate great results for smaller businesses where a seminar or workshop is not possible. Start on a small scale and build as you recognize those employees that have the natural aptitude for fast learning. Utilize these employees to share their training when problems arise. Let them guide others in using emotional intelligence to arrive at a solution.

Utilizing EI has the opportunity to propel healthcare business growth and success. Expanding and developing your teams emotional intelligence generates possibilities and compounds success in today's Healthcare Environment.

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