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EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT WORKPLACE BEHAVIOUR
AN INTRODUCTION TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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ABOUT GENOS

We help professionals improve emotional intelligence in order to enhance their impact, influence, and resilience. To learn more about our unique approach, and the improvements we are generating in terms of productivity, profitability, and customer loyalty, visit our website:

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THE 24-HOUR EMOTIONS ACTIVITY

In the space below, write down as many feelings you can recall experiencing during the last 24 hours.

Using the feelings words list prompt, write down as many feelings you can recall experiencing during the last 24 hours.

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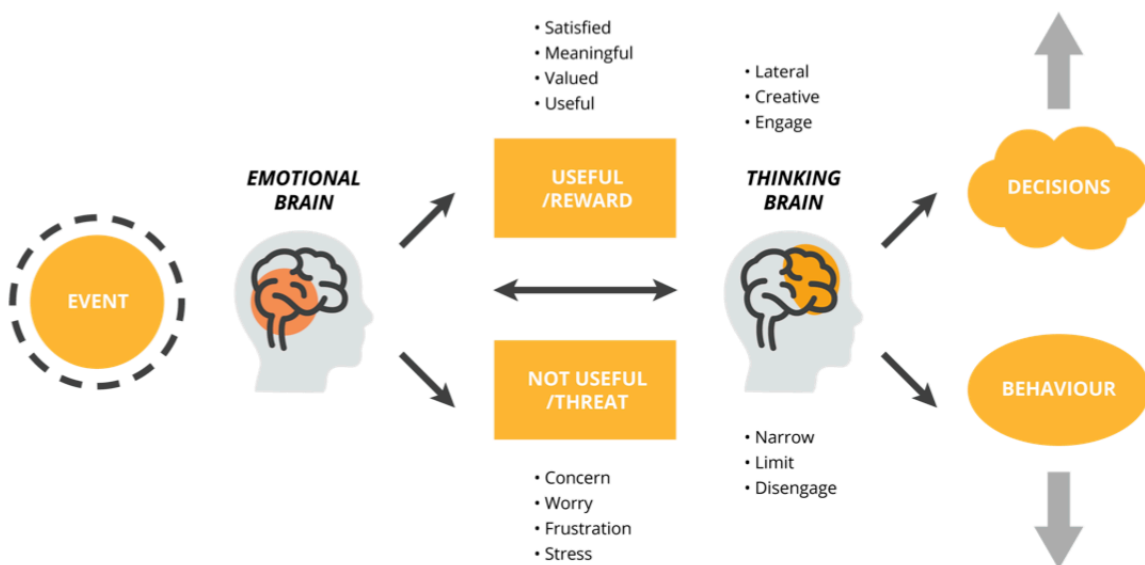
Total number recalled:	Total number recalled:
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Total number productive:	
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Total number unproductive:	
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THE SCIENCE OF EMOTIONS

Neuroscience, the study of the biological mechanisms of the brain, has shown that whenever an event around us occurs (such as the way someone is talking to us in a meeting), the first thing that happens is our so-called Emotional Brain, which involves structures such as the amygdala, tags that event as either a reward or a threat; or friend or foe. The job of the Emotional Brain is to make very quick, unconscious determinations about whether something or someone is safe or not. The tag, which is in fact an emotion, is communicated to the so-called Thinking Brain, which involves structures such as the prefrontal cortex. The prefrontal cortex is involved in helping us determine good from bad and better from best. It helps us anticipate behaviour and determine the best behavioural response to make to events.



Neuroscience has also shown us that positive emotions tend to enhance the functioning of our prefrontal cortex having, what social psychologist Barbara Fredrickson termed, a “broaden and build” effect. That is, positive emotions help us think more openly, creatively and laterally. With positive emotions we tend to be more open to new ideas. We also tend to think more deeply about issues and see more options. Positive emotions also increase dopamine levels, which are important for interest in things and learning. Conversely, negative emotions limit the functioning of our prefrontal cortex, narrowing our thinking and limiting our interpretation of events. Negative emotions tend to diminish our cognitive resources. Thus, we can become biased in our views, lose our capacity to objectively evaluate situations and conceptualise our best responses to them. You may have experienced this in a verbal conflict with someone where you felt threatened and thought about all the best or “smartest” things to say once you’d walked away from it.

While the effects of emotions are obvious when we are consciously experiencing them (e.g., we do our best thinking when we feel relaxed and commonly do things we later regret when angry), emotions are constantly and powerfully affecting our decisions, behaviour and performance unconsciously as well. As previously stated, the job of the Emotional Brain is to make very quick, unconscious determinations about whether something or someone is safe or not. **This automatic, unconscious decision-making is what psychologist Joseph LeDoux calls our 'danger detector'.** We are, in fact, hard-wired to evaluate the world and make unconscious decisions about events and the people in them, based upon what feels safe, likable, valuable, comfortable, meaningful, just, correct, and so on.

This process is very important, particularly from a survival point of view. It's the reason the axiom "it's better to be safe than sorry," came into being. However, in the modern workplace, it can also cause us to think and behave in ways that are counterproductive to our performance and relationships. Consider how differently you think, behave, and interact with others at work when you feel overly stressed or worried, juxtaposed to when you feel relaxed and happy.

EMOTIONS, DECISIONS, BEHAVIOUR AND PERFORMANCE

EFFECTS OF NEGATIVE EMOTIONS	EFFECTS OF POSITIVE EMOTIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Narrow our thinking ○ Limit our interpretation of events ○ Reduce linear conscious processing ○ Cause reactionary behaviour (fight or flight) ○ Shrink from opportunities ○ Demonstrate disengagement behaviours ○ More easily triggered ○ More lasting effects ○ Reduce performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ More rational creative problem solving ○ More open to new ideas ○ More willing to try difficult things and develop new solutions ○ Cause engagement behaviour (interest and input) ○ Take more risks ○ Cause us to think more deeply about issues ○ See more options ○ Increase dopamine levels, which are important for interest and learning

APPLICATION DISCUSSION

Reflecting on your responses to the 24-hour emotions activity, how emotionally aware would you say you have been during this time?



Was the ratio of positive to negative emotional experiences over the last 24 hours typical?



What might the average ratio of positive to negative emotional experiences be amongst colleagues in your workplace? What outcomes could this ratio be causing?



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence (EI) involves a set of skills that help us perceive, understand, express, reason with, and manage emotions, both within ourselves and others. We can apply these skills to help us become more conscious of our own and others' feelings, and more conscious of the influence emotions are having on our decisions, behaviour, and performance. This in turn helps us minimise the unproductive influence emotions can have and maximise their productive qualities.



The competencies, shown in yellow on the model above, help us consistently demonstrate the productive being states on the right side of the model, as opposed to the unproductive being states, that we can all be at times, on the left side of the model.

SELF-AWARENESS

Self-awareness is about being aware of the way you feel, and the impact your feelings can have on decisions, behaviour, and performance. People who are emotionally self-aware are conscious of the role their feelings can play in these areas, and are better equipped to manage this influence effectively. When we are emotionally self-aware, we are **present** with the role feelings are playing in our decisions, behaviour, and performance. When we are not, we are often **disconnected** from this influence.

PEOPLE HIGH IN SELF-AWARENESS:

- demonstrate an awareness of the way they feel,
- demonstrate awareness of the impact emotions can have on their thinking,
- demonstrate awareness of the impact their feelings can have on how they interact with others,
- ask others for feedback on their behaviour,
- respond effectively to feedback from others,
- demonstrate awareness of their mood, and
- behave in a way that is consistent with how they describe themselves to be.



AWARENESS OF OTHERS

Awareness of others is about perceiving, understanding, and acknowledging the way others feel. This skill helps us to identify the things that make people feel valued, listened to, cared for, consulted, and understood. It also helps us demonstrate empathy, anticipate responses or reactions, and adjust our behaviour so that it fits well with others. When we demonstrate this skill effectively, we come across as being **empathetic**. People who do not demonstrate this skill can come across as being **insensitive** to the way others feel.

PEOPLE HIGH IN AWARENESS OF OTHERS:

- accurately acknowledge the way others feel,
- recognise others' non-verbal cues (e.g., body language),
- notice when someone needs support,
- relate well to others' feelings,
- accurately view situations from others' perspectives,
- adjust their behaviour so that it fits well with others, and
- accurately anticipate responses or reactions from others.



AUTHENTICITY

Authenticity is about openly and effectively expressing yourself, honouring commitments, and encouraging this behaviour in others. It involves honestly expressing specific feelings at work, such as happiness and frustration, providing feedback to colleagues about the way you feel, and sharing emotions at the right time, to the right degree, and to the right people. People high in authenticity are often described as **genuine**, whereas people low in this skill are often described as **untrustworthy**.

PEOPLE HIGH IN AUTHENTICITY:

- share how they feel with others,
- describe their own feelings in a way that is sensitive to the feelings of others,
- express their feelings in the right place and time,
- facilitate challenging conversations effectively,
- are consistent in what they say and do,
- encourage others to express themselves, and
- honour commitments and keep promises.



EMOTIONAL REASONING

Emotional reasoning is about using the information in feelings (from yourself and others) when decision-making. It involves considering your own and others' feelings when making decisions, combining the information in feelings with facts and technical information, and communicating this decision-making process to others.

Feelings and emotions contain important information. For example, the level of commitment colleagues demonstrate often provides insight into whether a decision is going to be supported; the emotional appeal of products and services often provides insight into selling and marketing messages. When this type of emotional information is combined with facts and technical information, people make **expansive**, creative, and well-thought-out decisions. Conversely, people who do not use emotional information, and focus on facts or technical information only, tend to be **limited** in their decision-making.

PEOPLE HIGH IN EMOTIONAL REASONING:

- reflect on feelings when decision-making,
- ask others how they feel about potential solutions to problems,
- consider issues from multiple perspectives,
- involve others in decisions that affect their work,
- demonstrate awareness of biases in decision-making,
- communicate decisions in a way that is sensitive to others' feelings, and
- use an organisation's values effectively when making important decisions.



SELF-MANAGEMENT

Self-management is about managing your own mood and emotions, time and behaviour, and continuously improving yourself. The modern workplace is generally one of high demands and pressure, and this can create negative emotions and outcomes. Our mood can be very infectious and can, therefore, be a powerful force in the workplace; productively or unproductively. This skill helps people be **resilient** and manage high work demands and stress rather than being **temperamental** at work. People who are proficient in managing their own emotions are optimistic and look to find the opportunities and possibilities that exist even in the face of adversity.

PEOPLE HIGH IN SELF-MANAGEMENT:

- respond effectively in stressful situations,
- demonstrate a positive, energising demeanour,
- adapt effectively to different/changing circumstances,
- respond effectively to criticism from others,
- manage their time effectively,
- control their anger at work, and
- improve themselves.



POSITIVE INFLUENCE

Positive influence is about positively influencing the way others feel through problem solving, feedback, and recognising and supporting others' work. It involves creating a positive working environment for others, helping others find effective ways of responding to upsetting events, and effectively helping people resolve issues that are affecting their performance. This skill helps people create a productive environment for others. Positive influence equips you with the capacity to encourage colleagues to cooperate and work effectively together. People who can positively influence others' moods, feelings, and emotions are **empowering** to work with, and easily motivate those around them.

PEOPLE HIGH IN POSITIVE INFLUENCE:

- provide useful support to others,
- help others resolve workplace conflicts,
- help others respond effectively to stressful situations,
- respond effectively to others' inappropriate behaviour,
- help create a positive work environment,
- respond effectively to others' feelings, and
- positively influence the way others feel.



DEVELOPMENT PLANNING

What are your development goals?





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