

## ARTICLE: Emotional Intelligence Impacts Decision-Making

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What does emotional intelligence or EQ have to do with good decision making? The answer is everything. Have you ever made a decision when you were really angry? Looking back do you now realize that making an important decision in that emotional state wasn't in your best interest? If you had to do over again, you would no doubt wait until you had calmed down before acting. This illustrates that knowing how you are feeling (Self-Awareness), and having the ability to regulate those feelings (Self-Regulation) will act as your guide to better decision-making.



News articles have told stories of road rage where people became involved in shouting matches or a brawl after they reacted to being cut off by an aggressive driver. When reflecting on the event they may have realized that their decision to take up their sword and shield, and head off into battle to defend their rights was not smart. Their knee-jerk reaction to the situation led to a negative outcome. In fact, if they could do it over, they would then exercise self-control, and let that person be on their way. Thus they would have avoided the negative consequences of their previous poor decisions.

Having the wherewithal to *stop* and *think* before responding to emails, to what somebody said or did or to something you heard, would result in a positive outcome all around. Why? Making good decisions prevents wasting time and money. Employers hope that their leadership teams are making good decisions every day. Not allowing your emotions to hi-jack you is a vital skill to possess. **Self Awareness** and **Self Regulation** are 2/5ths of the emotional intelligence world. Both are related to *intrapersonal* skills. The good news is that you can grow both.

The third *intrapersonal* aspect of EQ is **Motivation**. When bad news abounds many lose focus, energy and creativity. People may also lose the ability to remain passionate for reasons that go beyond money. They lose sight of important goals and the impact those goals have on their performance. (You can grow Motivation)

**Empathy** is an *interpersonal* skill. If someone who knows you well, suggested that you're not empathetic they are sending you a message and you would be wise to listen to them. When your empathy radar is turned on and you sense how someone else is feeling you have the opportunity of communicating at a higher level. This may be critical to helping them perform and getting the results you both want. Taking someone's temperature so to speak and helping them to lower their temperature (emotions like anger or being afraid) allows them to make better decisions. (You can grow empathy)

Lastly, there are **Social Skills** (*Interpersonal*). Social skills are impacted by the other four areas of emotional intelligence. The stronger a person is in each of those areas the greater the ability to build networks and manage relationships. Since building relationships is one of the cornerstones of effective leadership, building capacity in this area is crucial to performance. Any good leader has the ability to build relationships. What is interesting is that how they are treated is a direct reflection of how they are treating others. (You can grow Social Skills)

In conclusion, as we grow our emotional intelligence so will our ability to make good decisions.

**About Jason Kleid:** Jason is a coach, educator and facilitator. His focus is on optimizing performance and getting results. Underscoring this philosophy is a belief that it is always the individuals in any organization, where the greatest potential for improvement and possibility of change resides. It is the mind or one's thinking where new ideas broaden understanding and cause things to happen. However, it is the heart, the inner person, where transformation occurs.