



LEADER TOOL

LEADING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



This tool was created by one of our senior clinical team members, Kate McPhee, Psychologist & Clinical Associate Coordinator at AccessEAP.

Leadership is challenging, demanding, stimulating, interesting and often at times rewarding. Reading about leadership is often so much easier than actually leading people. Leadership is the intersection between asking questions, setting a strategy, goal and direction and influencing others to come along for the ride. Brene Brown tells us that brave leadership is a willingness to make a decision, follow through on the action, manage the uncertainty, act with integrity and know that the outcome is not going to be perfect. Exhausted yet? There are some skills that all leaders (great and small) can learn, and one is emotional intelligence.

Many leaders who are dealing with large roles, a large number of reports and an inbox that is busting at the seams can ask why emotional intelligence is necessary when there is work to be done. The simple answer is that those leaders who have higher emotional intelligence create more connected and motivated teams – which make getting through the work easier for both the leader and their people. Skills that emotionally intelligent leaders possess make them effective managers, but they are also able to influence, inspire others, model integrity and communicate effectively. Remember that these are all skills we can learn.

Emotional intelligence for leadership consists of five attributes:



There are three simple but elegant steps each leader can take (no matter if they are the lacking end of the leadership spectrum or those who are exceptional at being a leader):

1. **Ask great questions** - develop a mindfulness practice to pause to think through how to best frame your questions.
2. **Actively seek feedback.** Be aware of how you react to feedback; as an emotionally intelligent leader, resist the urge to interrupt instead listen intently.
3. **Develop empathy** - Use 1:1 time to learn about your people and what is important to them. Use any downtime to get to know your people, their interests and how they approach their work.

Finally, Brene Brown tells us that learning to rise as a leader is a crucial skill in developing emotional intelligence. Reviewing our inner self-talk when things go wrong is important as it will influence how you talk to others. If you are someone who blames, the blame illustrates a fixed mindset but attempting to learn shows a growth mindset. Getting curious about the emotions that come up when stressed or dealing with risk will be a hugely important step. What we know is that those leaders who choose how they respond to fear will be stronger and more effective. As a leader, the next time you are called upon to lead, try to remember to show up fully, embrace your values and be the first to do so when things don't go according to plan. If you need assistance, please use our Manager Support Hotline on 1800 818 728 to access our highly skilled professionals to work with you no matter where you are on the leadership spectrum. As always, as your EAP we are here to support your people whatever the nature of their concerns, please contact AccessEAP on **1800 818 728**.

