

## THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF TEAMS

This tool enables leaders to increase the level of emotional intelligence of their teams. It suggests ways to increase the awareness of emotions at both the individual and team level. It also suggests strategies to help regulate emotions. This is invaluable for leaders who want to create teams where there is a healthy balance of emotional and analytical intelligence.<sup>1</sup>

Creating awareness of emotions	
Individual:	Team:
<p><b>Interpersonal Understanding</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Take time away from group tasks to get to know one another.</li> <li>2. Have a “check in” at the beginning of the meeting – ask how people are feeling.</li> <li>3. Tell your teammates what you’re thinking <u>and</u> how you’re feeling.</li> <li>4. Assume that undesirable behavior takes place for a reason. Find out what that reason is. Ask questions and listen. Avoid negative judgments or attributions.</li> </ol> <p><b>Perspective Taking</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask everyone for their input before making a decision.</li> <li>2. Ask quiet members what they think.</li> <li>3. Question decisions that come too quickly.</li> <li>4. Appoint a devil’s advocate.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Team Self-Evaluation</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Schedule time to examine team effectiveness.</li> <li>2. Create measurable task and process objectives and then measure them.</li> <li>3. Acknowledge and discuss group moods.</li> <li>4. Communicate your sense of what is transpiring in the team.</li> <li>5. Allow members to call a “process check.” (For instance, a team member might say, “Process check: is this the most effective use of our time right now?”)</li> <li>6. Discuss the culture and politics in the organization.</li> <li>7. Ask whether proposed team actions are congruent with the organization’s culture and politics.</li> </ol> <p><b>Seeking Feedback</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ask your “customers” how you are doing.</li> <li>2. Find out the concerns and needs of others in the organization.</li> <li>3. Consider who can influence the team’s ability to accomplish its goals.</li> <li>4. Post your work and invite comments.</li> <li>5. Benchmark your processes.</li> </ol>

<sup>1</sup> Excerpted from “Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups,” by Vanessa Urch Druskat and Steven B. Wolff; Harvard Business Review, March 2001

Ways to help regulate emotions	
Individual:	Team:
<p><b>Confronting</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Set ground rules and use them to point out errant behavior.</li> <li>2. Call members on errant behavior.</li> <li>3. Create playful devices for pointing out such behavior. These often emerge from the group spontaneously. Reinforce them.</li> </ol> <p><b>Caring</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Support members: volunteer to help them if they need it, be flexible, and provide emotional support.</li> <li>2. Validate members' contributions. Let members know they are valued.</li> <li>3. Protect members from attack.</li> <li>4. Respect individuality and differences in perspectives. Listen.</li> <li>5. Never be derogatory or demeaning.</li> </ol>	<p><b>Creating Resources for Working with Emotion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make time to discuss difficult issues, and address the emotions that surround them.</li> <li>2. Find creative, shorthand ways to acknowledge and express the emotion in the group.</li> <li>3. Create fun ways to acknowledge and relieve stress and tension.</li> <li>4. Express acceptance of members' emotions.</li> </ol> <p><b>Creating an Affirmative Environment</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Reinforce that the team can meet a challenge. Be optimistic. For example, say things like, "We can get through this" or "Nothing will stop us."</li> <li>2. Focus on what you can control.</li> <li>3. Remind members of the group's important and positive mission.</li> <li>4. Remind the group how it solved a similar problem before.</li> <li>5. Focus on problem solving, not blaming.</li> </ol> <p><b>Solving Problems Proactively</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Anticipate problems and address them before they happen.</li> <li>2. Take that initiative to understand and get what you need to be effective.</li> <li>3. If others aren't responding, assume responsibility for finding out why and propose solutions to the impasse.</li> </ol>