

EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT SCOUT LEADER

Why is it Needed

When we think of an ideal Adult Leader in Scouting, what comes to our mind?

- Someone who has earned the complete trust of his/her Scouts, other Leaders, the parents and supporters from within and outside Scouting
- Someone who listens to everyone and is easy to talk to
- Someone who makes careful and informed decisions
- Someone who does not let his/her temper get out of control, no matter what problems they are facing

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is relevant for us in Scouting as it creates the conditions for:

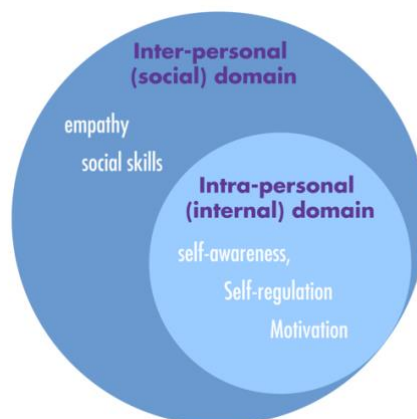
- outstanding performance
- excellent leadership
- happiness for those who we work with and for the world in general

What is it

Salovey and Mayer (1990), the originators of this concept, define Emotional Intelligence as "The ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions. The ability to discriminate or discern among those and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions."

In his highly influential book Emotional Intelligence (1998), Daniel Goleman came up with five interrelated domains of Emotional Intelligence also called five Emotional Intelligence Competencies:

- **Self-Awareness:** knowing one's internal states, preferences, resources
- **Self-Regulation:** the ability to manage internal states, impulses and emotions
- **Motivation:** understanding the tendencies that facilitate reaching one's goals
- **Empathy:** the awareness of others' emotions and concerns
- **Social Skills:** being adept or skilful at working with others



Five Emotional Intelligence Competencies



How is it Used

To inculcate, develop and strengthen the Emotional Intelligence of a Leader is a process and requires developing certain competencies. These competencies can be accessed by anyone through awareness and practice. Everyone in Scouting will benefit from this, particularly the Scouts who will develop themselves faster and stronger in the presence of a Leader and role model who displays Emotional Intelligence.

Here are some ideas on developing the five EI Competencies.

- 1. Self-Awareness:** A Leader who is self-aware, always knows how one feels and how one's emotions and actions can affect others.
 - Maintain a 'self-awareness journal': Spend a few minutes every day to write down your thoughts and feelings, and what triggers caused them. If you want to add another layer, note down how you reacted or responded in those moments.
 - Own your Emotions: It is important not to reject or judge your emotions, else they get suppressed and come out in other complex forms. When you feel something, observe them and take note of them. If you can, name them and say affirmably to yourself that it is okay to feel like this. For example, I feel angry or sad or afraid or excited or joyful or hopeful or calm, and it is okay to feel this.
- 2. Self-Regulation:** Leaders who regulate themselves stay in control of their emotions and rarely attack others or make rushed judgements/decisions.
 - Practice Mindfulness: it is about staying in the present moment and paying attention to everything around and inside us, without judgement. One can choose to practice it in several ways, through focusing on one's breath, or by observing the sounds, visuals and smells around us. It brings our attention to the present moment and away from worrying about the past or fearing about the future. Mindfulness is the most powerful tool for strengthening EI.
 - Tools for Regulation: Just like we increase or reduce the speed of a fan on demand using a knob, one can reduce or strengthen the intensity of an emotion through breath work (observing while inhaling and exhaling deeply) or by counting from 1 to 10 and back. Another tool you can try is to quickly start adding or multiplying numbers to switch to a logical mindset which relaxes one's emotions.
 - Mind-Body Effect: Relaxing the body usually results in relaxing the mind and helps in regulating the nervous system. One can use yoga, walking or light exercises to have this effect.



3. **Motivation:** Leaders who understand what factors inspire them to work towards their goals use this knowledge effectively to fill their path and space with these facilitators:
 - Reflection: Each time there is a huge success or failure, take note of what aspects worked as enablers or deterrents in each such experience. Notice patterns and keep note of both aspects.
 - Communication: It is important to communicate openly about one's needs, to ensure others in the team can support or contribute to one's motivation.
 - Planning: When working on a goal or a project, ensure your plan includes several stations or pit-stops that act as motivation boosters.

4. **Empathy:** Leaders with empathy have the ability to put themselves in someone else's situation, listen to everyone, challenge those who are acting unfairly and provide constructive feedback.
 - Listening: Listening fully without interrupting is a deeply comforting situation for the other and provides vital clues on how to understand the motivation of others. It involves listening to verbal communication as well as observing body language and expressions. Paraphrasing what one has understood helps clarify between one's own perception and what the other person is actually thinking and feeling.
 - Creating a Safe Space: Once we understand the motivation of others and their situation and concerns, it is important to create the right atmosphere needed for the growth and empowerment of the others. This includes creating a comfort zone as well as a challenging environment that is safe and bereft of judgement for those who need to learn and grow.
 - Practicing Boundaries: Creating and verbalising emotional boundaries for oneself and others helps people understand optimal behaviours expected out of one another. When others or yourself breach established boundaries, ensure it is addressed in a constructive way and allow people to make amends and rebuild bridges and connections.

5. **Social Skills:** Leaders with effective social skills are positive minded, enthusiastic and supportive of others. They are good at managing change and help resolve conflicts.
 - Self-Initiative: Take the initiative to reach out to others and ensure regular communication and interaction, encouraging those who are introverts to express themselves and sometimes politely requesting those who consume too much airtime to be succinct in their expressions.
 - Feedback: Provide positive affirmations and ensure due credit is given to those who contribute with their efforts. Celebrate successes of oneself and others without needing to put down anyone. Help others understand where they can grow and ensure support to those who need or ask for it.
 - Openness: Openness builds trust and is a central aspect of relationship building.



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[What is Emotional Intelligence](#)

[Daniel Goleman Introduces Emotional Intelligence](#)