

Emotional Intelligence in Practice: A Critical Reflection

C1 Poster Assignment · Lecturer: Dr Chinonso Nwagboso · BA (Hons) Leadership & Management Studies for the Workplace

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Date: October 2026

INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence, which can be defined as 'being aware of your feelings and letting them guide your reasoning and taking decisions' (Salovey & Mayer, 1990), is a fundamental determinant of success in both college and workplace scenarios. Our contribution is the identification of a real-life workplace dispute situation, which we have used to test the validity of various emotional intelligence models and thereby, explore emotional awareness, assess the impact of emotional intelligence in the resolution of conflicts, and identify mindfulness and regulation techniques that foster growth.

METHOD

A critical-incident structured approach (Tripp, 1993) was employed to dissect an employee disagreement through the lens of Goleman's (1998) four-branch Emotional Intelligence (EI) model, i.e., self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. I drew on theories, articles and book chapters about EI, stress as well as resilience to reflect and find strategies I could apply.

01 ANALYSE EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

HOW EMOTIONS SHAPED DECISIONS

- + **Frustration & feeling disrespected** drove my decision to refuse the break — anger overrode pragmatic compromise.
- + I stayed **outwardly calm** (self-management) but was internally rigid — a gap between expressed and felt emotion.
- I did not **name my emotion** before acting; "I feel disrespected" was never separated from "I will not cooperate."

DEVELOPING AWARENESS

Stop and think for a moment, identify the emotion you were feeling, tell yourself it's a different thing from acting on that emotion. Practices such as controlled breathing, keeping a journal and saying the feeling out loud so that you tame it help us gain control of what we feel. Therefore, we are no longer driven by impulsive defiance.

02 EVALUATE EI IN ACADEMIC SUCCESS

KEY EMOTIONAL FACTORS

Stress Mgmt
regulates anxiety

Motivation
sustains effort

Resilience
recovers from setbacks

Self-Regulation
controls impulses

APPLYING EI TO CHALLENGES

- + Often it's the case that Procrastination hides from the person an anxiety or something else, it can be quite deep. In the case of Emotion Intelligence, a feeling can be detected, and a reason is found out, which is the opposite of just fixing the problem, the symptom that has been created by the emotion.
- + Break large tasks into smaller chunks, engage in self-compassion practices regularly, and use grounding techniques when the situation is really pressuring you to finish on time.

03 CRITICALLY REFLECT ON PERSONAL EXPERIENCE [CRITICAL INCIDENT]

THE INCIDENT

On one occasion a supervisor wanted me to take a short only after I had worked two hours into my ten-hour shift. I asked very politely if we could move my break to a late stage and he responded with sarcasms, "it is what it is" and denied having any discussions about it. Then I decided not to go for the break. He commanded me to go for a break and I refused. The company representative, who was an agent from this company, supported the supervisor and then said, "You have to take the break now or go home. I opted to go home and as a result, they have issued me with a written warning for refusing to take the break. On the next day the supervisor greeted me cordially after my complaints, and the reason why was because he had learned there were other customers that had also lodged complaints against him and he was under a threat of losing his position

STRENGTHS

- Kept calm, never raised voice or had any verbal altercation
- Retained self-respect and maintained own limits.
- Maintained boundary which led the supervisor to change his pattern of behaviour.

AREAS FOR GROWTH

- No other options were examined at that time.
- The person delayed taking the matter through the correct complaint procedure.
- By not complaining to the managers the problem was seen as something only I was concerned about and it gave the other person the excuse he needed for his behaviour towards me.

MINDFULNESS & REGULATION STRATEGIES

- The first thing you should do is pause do 3 deep breaths before reacting.
- Keep a record of incidents and communicate formally in a written form when needed.

★ KEY LEARNING

Emotional intelligence does not mean accepting disrespect. It means you're still able to be rational and thoughtful when confronted. By staying put, I managed to get his attention on the fact that the way he was treating me was not okay and that he shouldn't do it. But, in the first place, if I had been complaining through a formal procedure of writing down a report which is kept on record of my employee files, I would also have accomplished the objectives while being safer. When one is mindful and has self-control, he or she is better equipped to make a choice of the way to respond to the situation that would not only be respectful to oneself also that will help in achieving long-term goals.

REFERENCES

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- Word count = 550 · In-class poster presentation (10 min + 5 min Q&A) · Week 8, October 2026

