

Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness in Organisations

Student Name: Stojan Petrovic

Student Number: 2414754

Module Code: LCLM5006

Module Title: Developing Emotional Intelligence Skills

Lecturer: Kazeem Oseni

Assignment Title: Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness Organisations

Submission Date: 17/08/2026

Table of Contents:

Emotional Intelligence and Mindfulness in Organisations	1
Executive Summary	3
1. Introduction	3
2. Task 1: Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace	4
2.1 Understanding Emotional Intelligence	4
2.2 Self-Awareness and Employee Performance	5
2.3 Self-Regulation, Stress and Well-Being	5
2.4 Empathy and Effective Communication	6
2.5 Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management	6
2.6 Emotional Intelligence and Leadership	7
2.7 Emotional Intelligence and Decision-Making	7
2.8 Critical Evaluation of Emotional Intelligence	7
3. Task 2: Managing a Multigenerational Workforce	8
3.1 Understanding Generational Diversity	8
3.2 Generation X	8
3.3 Generation Y – Millennials	9
3.4 Generation Z	9
3.5 Differences in Communication and Technology	10
3.6 Motivation and Retention	10
3.7 Using Emotional Intelligence to Manage Generational Diversity	11
3.8 Mindfulness and Inclusive Leadership	11
4. Recommendations for Senior Management	12
4.1 Introduce EI Development	12
4.2 Include EI in Leadership Development	12
4.3 Use Mindfulness as a Supportive Practice	12
4.4 Build Psychological Safety	12
4.5 Avoid Generational Stereotyping	12
4.6 Develop Flexible Communication	12
4.7 Strengthen Recruitment	12
4.8 Monitor Outcomes	13
5. Conclusion	13
7.Reference List	14

Executive Summary

Modern organisations depend on employees who can work effectively with people, manage pressure and respond appropriately to workplace challenges. Technical knowledge remains important, but it is not always enough to produce good teamwork, effective leadership and positive employee relationships. Emotional intelligence (EI) and mindfulness have therefore become important areas of organisational development.

This report critically examines the role of emotional intelligence and mindfulness in the workplace. It considers three important EI approaches: Goleman's Emotional Intelligence framework, Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model, and Bar-On's Emotional-Social Intelligence Model. The report explains how EI can improve communication, conflict management, leadership, decision-making, employee performance and well-being. It also considers the limitations of EI, including difficulties in measuring it and the risk of treating it as a simple solution to complex organisational problems.

The report also examines the management of Generation X, Generation Y (Millennials) and Generation Z. While these groups are often described as having different workplace expectations, research suggests that managers should avoid treating generations as completely separate groups. Age, individual personality, career stage, culture and personal experience can be just as important as generation. Emotional intelligence and mindfulness can help managers understand these differences without relying on stereotypes.

The report concludes that organisations should develop EI and mindfulness as practical leadership and employee-development capabilities. Recruitment should assess interpersonal skills alongside technical competence, while training should encourage self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, active listening and reflective decision-making. These practices can support inclusive leadership, stronger relationships, psychological safety and a healthier workplace culture.

1. Introduction

Organisations operate in environments characterised by rapid technological change, workforce diversity, pressure for high performance and changing employee expectations. These conditions mean that managers must do more than organise tasks. They must also understand people, manage emotions, resolve disagreements and create an environment in which employees feel respected and able to contribute.

Emotional intelligence refers broadly to the ability to recognise, understand and manage emotions in oneself and in other people. The idea became widely known through the work of Goleman (1998), although Mayer and Salovey developed an earlier psychological model of emotional intelligence based on emotional abilities. Bar-On (2006) later developed a wider emotional-social approach.

Mindfulness is closely connected to emotional intelligence because it encourages people to pay attention to their current thoughts, feelings and experiences without immediately reacting to them. Research suggests that workplace mindfulness programmes can reduce stress and improve well-being, although the strength of evidence varies depending on the

type and quality of the intervention (Virgili, 2015). More recent research has also suggested that mindfulness can support workplace performance, although the effects are not always large or consistent (Vainre et al., 2025).

This report therefore considers EI and mindfulness together. It argues that both can contribute to better workplace relationships and performance, but they should not be treated as substitutes for good organisational policies, fair management or appropriate working conditions.

2. Task 1: Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

2.1 Understanding Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence can be understood in different ways. Mayer, Salovey and Caruso (2004) define EI mainly as an ability to process emotional information. In simple terms, this means being able to identify emotions, understand what they mean and use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour.

Mayer and Salovey's Ability Model contains four main abilities. The first is **perceiving emotions**, which involves recognising emotions in facial expressions, tone of voice and behaviour. The second is **using emotions to support thinking**, where emotions can help individuals focus attention or consider different perspectives. The third is **understanding emotions**, which involves recognising how emotions develop and change. The fourth is **managing emotions**, meaning that individuals can regulate their own emotions and respond appropriately to other people's emotions (Mayer, Salovey and Caruso, 2004).

This model is useful because it treats EI as a form of ability rather than simply a collection of desirable personality characteristics. However, its focus is relatively narrow compared with some workplace models.

Goleman (1998) presents a broader framework consisting of **self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills**. Self-awareness involves recognising one's own emotions, strengths and weaknesses. Self-regulation involves controlling inappropriate emotional reactions. Motivation refers to the ability to remain focused on goals. Empathy means understanding the feelings and perspectives of others. Social skills involve building relationships and managing interactions effectively.

Goleman's approach is particularly useful to managers because it connects emotional abilities with leadership behaviour. However, critics argue that broad EI models sometimes overlap with personality, motivation and social skills. This makes it more difficult to determine exactly what EI measures.

Bar-On (2006) provides another broad approach through the **Emotional-Social Intelligence Model**. His model includes areas such as intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management and general mood. The model therefore considers how individuals deal with themselves, other people and difficult situations. The Bar-On approach is particularly relevant to employee well-being because it includes stress management and adaptability.

The three models are therefore useful for different reasons. Mayer and Salovey provide a clearer ability-based explanation, Goleman provides a practical leadership framework, while Bar-On provides a wider view of emotional and social functioning.

2.2 Self-Awareness and Employee Performance

Self-awareness is an important foundation of emotional intelligence. Employees who understand their emotions are more likely to recognise how feelings influence their behaviour and performance.

For example, an employee who notices that they become defensive when receiving criticism can learn to pause before responding. Instead of immediately rejecting the feedback, they can ask questions and consider whether the feedback is useful. This can support learning and professional development.

Managers also benefit from self-awareness. A manager who understands their own communication style can recognise when they are dominating a discussion, becoming impatient or making assumptions about an employee. This awareness can encourage more balanced leadership.

Mindfulness can support this process. Mindfulness encourages individuals to observe their thoughts and feelings before automatically reacting to them. A workplace study found that mindfulness training increased mindfulness and emotional awareness, although the short intervention did not produce significant improvements in every aspect of emotional management (Caporale-Berkowitz et al., 2021).

Therefore, mindfulness should not be presented as a quick solution. Regular practice and organisational support are more likely to produce meaningful benefits.

2.3 Self-Regulation, Stress and Well-Being

Self-regulation is the ability to manage emotional responses rather than allowing emotions to control behaviour. This is especially important in stressful workplaces.

For example, during a disagreement, an employee may feel angry because they believe their ideas have been ignored. Poor emotional regulation may result in shouting, blaming or withdrawing from the discussion. Good regulation allows the employee to recognise the emotion, pause and communicate the concern in a constructive way.

Mindfulness can support emotional regulation by creating a short space between an emotional reaction and a response. This can be useful during difficult meetings, customer complaints or organisational change.

Evidence also suggests that workplace mindfulness training can improve well-being. A systematic review of workplace mindfulness programmes found improvements in mindfulness, stress, anxiety, psychological distress and well-being (Virgili, 2015). However, mindfulness should complement rather than replace organisational action. If an employee is stressed because of excessive workloads, poor management or inadequate staffing, asking the employee to meditate does not solve the underlying problem.

This is an important criticism of workplace mindfulness. Organisations should not use mindfulness to place responsibility for organisational stress entirely on employees. Leadership, workload, job design and organisational culture must also be addressed.

2.4 Empathy and Effective Communication

Empathy involves understanding another person's feelings and point of view. It does not necessarily mean agreeing with them.

In the workplace, empathy can improve communication because it encourages managers to listen before judging. For example, if an employee's performance has declined, an emotionally intelligent manager will investigate the reasons rather than immediately assuming that the employee is lazy or uncommitted.

Empathy is also important for inclusive leadership. Employees from different cultural, professional and generational backgrounds may have different communication preferences. A manager who listens carefully can adapt their communication without lowering performance standards.

Active listening is another important EI behaviour. Managers can demonstrate active listening by giving employees their full attention, asking clarifying questions and summarising what has been said.

However, empathy also has limitations. Excessive emotional involvement can make objective decision-making difficult. Managers must therefore combine empathy with fairness, organisational policies and evidence.

2.5 Emotional Intelligence and Conflict Management

Conflict is unavoidable in organisations because employees have different goals, personalities, values and working methods. EI can help managers deal with conflict constructively.

Self-awareness allows a manager to identify their own emotional response. Self-regulation prevents the manager from escalating the situation. Empathy helps the manager understand each person's perspective, while social skills support negotiation and problem-solving.

Research provides evidence for this relationship. A meta-analysis of 20 studies involving 5,175 participants found a positive relationship between EI and constructive conflict management (Schlaerth, Ensari and Christian, 2013). This suggests that EI can be particularly useful when leaders need to move disagreements towards problem-solving rather than blame.

For example, when two employees disagree about how a project should be completed, an emotionally intelligent manager can ask each employee to explain their concerns. The manager can then identify the shared objective and help the employees agree on a practical solution.

Nevertheless, EI should not be used to avoid necessary difficult conversations. Effective conflict management sometimes requires managers to make unpopular decisions or challenge unacceptable behaviour.

2.6 Emotional Intelligence and Leadership

EI is strongly connected with leadership because leadership involves influencing and working with other people. Goleman (1998) argues that technical ability and intelligence are important but are not sufficient for effective leadership.

An emotionally intelligent leader can recognise the emotional atmosphere within a team. For example, during organisational change, employees may experience fear or uncertainty. A manager who ignores these emotions may create resistance. A manager who acknowledges concerns and communicates clearly may increase trust.

EI also supports transformational and inclusive leadership. Leaders can use empathy to understand employee needs, self-awareness to recognise their own biases, and social skills to build cooperation.

Psychological safety is particularly important. Edmondson (1999) defines psychological safety as a shared belief that people can take interpersonal risks within a team. Her research found that psychological safety was associated with learning behaviour and team performance. ([Sage Journals](#))

An emotionally intelligent leader can support psychological safety by responding to mistakes with curiosity rather than immediate blame. Employees are more likely to raise concerns, ask questions and admit mistakes when they believe that doing so will not result in humiliation.

2.7 Emotional Intelligence and Decision-Making

Decision-making is sometimes presented as a purely rational process, but emotions influence how people understand information, assess risk and respond to uncertainty.

EI does not mean removing emotion from decisions. Instead, it means recognising emotional information while maintaining rational judgement.

For example, a manager may strongly support a particular employee for promotion because they personally like that employee. Self-awareness can help the manager recognise this emotional influence. The manager can then use objective criteria, evidence and other people's views before making the decision.

EI can therefore improve decision quality by reducing impulsive reactions. However, organisations should not assume that emotionally intelligent individuals always make correct decisions. Good decisions also require reliable data, technical knowledge, ethical standards and appropriate organisational processes.

2.8 Critical Evaluation of Emotional Intelligence

The growing interest in EI has several advantages. It provides organisations with a useful language for discussing communication, leadership and emotional behaviour. It can also support leadership development and employee relationships.

However, there are criticisms. First, different EI models define the concept differently. The Ability Model focuses on emotional reasoning, while Goleman and Bar-On include wider personality and behavioural characteristics. This creates problems when comparing research.

Second, some EI measures depend heavily on self-reporting. Employees may rate themselves more positively than their actual behaviour justifies. Bar-On's model, for example, uses the EQ-i as a self-report measure (Bar-On, 2006). ([PubMed](#))

Third, EI should not become an excuse for organisations to ignore structural problems. An employee cannot use emotional intelligence to solve every problem caused by excessive workload, poor pay, discrimination or ineffective management.

Overall, EI is best viewed as one part of a wider organisational development strategy.

3. Task 2: Managing a Multigenerational Workforce

3.1 Understanding Generational Diversity

Modern organisations may include employees from several generations. This can provide benefits because employees may bring different experiences, knowledge and perspectives.

Generation X is generally associated with people born approximately between the mid-1960s and early 1980s. Generation Y, commonly called Millennials, is generally associated with people born from the early 1980s to the mid-1990s. Generation Z generally refers to people born from the late 1990s onwards. These dates vary between researchers, so they should not be treated as exact boundaries.

It is important to avoid assuming that everyone in a generation has the same attitudes. Research on generational differences is mixed, and researchers have warned that differences attributed to generation may actually be caused by age, career stage, historical circumstances or other personal factors (Parry and Urwin, 2011; Lyons and Kuron, 2014). ([Wiley Online Library](#))

Therefore, managers should use generational research as a guide rather than a fixed description of employees.

3.2 Generation X

Generation X employees are often described as independent, practical and comfortable with autonomy. Some research describes them as valuing independence and work-life balance.

Many Generation X employees entered the workforce during periods of economic and organisational change. They may therefore value job security while also wanting freedom to complete tasks without excessive supervision.

In communication, some may prefer direct and practical conversations. However, managers should not assume that every Generation X employee prefers face-to-face communication. Individual preference should always be considered.

Generation X can contribute significant organisational experience and institutional knowledge. Managers should therefore avoid age-based assumptions that older employees are less capable of using technology. Research on workplace age stereotypes shows that younger employees may be viewed as more adaptable while older employees may be viewed as more reliable and competent, demonstrating how stereotypes can influence workplace perceptions (Kornadt et al., 2021). ([PubMed](#))

3.3 Generation Y – Millennials

Millennials are often associated with expectations for meaningful work, development opportunities, flexibility and regular feedback. They are also frequently described as comfortable using digital technologies.

For managers, this can mean providing opportunities for career development, coaching and involvement in decision-making. However, these expectations should not automatically be attributed to being a Millennial. Employees from other generations can also value flexibility, development and meaningful work.

A good manager should therefore ask employees about their individual goals rather than assuming what they want based on their age.

Millennials can contribute strong digital awareness, willingness to collaborate and openness to new ways of working. They may also challenge traditional organisational practices when they believe that alternative approaches would be more effective.

3.4 Generation Z

Generation Z is the newest of the three groups considered in this report. Many members have grown up with smartphones, social media and rapid technological development.

They are often described as expecting fast access to information, digital communication, flexibility and opportunities for development. They may also place importance on organisational values, inclusion and mental well-being.

For managers, this means that onboarding and training should make effective use of digital tools while still providing personal support. Younger employees may also benefit from mentoring because entering employment can involve learning workplace norms that are not taught through technology.

However, organisations should avoid assuming that all Generation Z employees are automatically highly skilled in every form of workplace technology. Being comfortable with social media or smartphones does not necessarily mean having advanced professional digital skills.

3.5 Differences in Communication and Technology

Different employees may have different communication preferences. Some may prefer face-to-face meetings, while others may favour email, instant messaging or video meetings.

If these preferences are poorly managed, misunderstandings can occur. For example, a manager who relies heavily on instant messaging may frustrate an employee who prefers more detailed conversations. Conversely, long meetings may frustrate employees who believe that information could have been communicated digitally.

Technology can therefore be both an advantage and a source of conflict.

Research into generational diversity has identified communication, technology, work motivation, work values, attitudes and leadership as important areas of interest, although the evidence remains mixed (Costanza and Finkelstein, 2015). ([INSEAD](#))

The best solution is flexibility. Managers should use different communication methods and establish clear expectations about when each method is appropriate.

3.6 Motivation and Retention

Generational differences can affect motivation, but managers should focus on individual needs.

Employees may be motivated by salary, job security, recognition, career development, autonomy, flexibility or meaningful work. These factors can appear across all generations.

A strong retention strategy should therefore include:

- fair pay and benefits;
- opportunities for learning and promotion;
- flexible working where appropriate;
- recognition and constructive feedback;
- supportive managers;
- opportunities to contribute ideas;
- respect for work-life boundaries; and
- an inclusive organisational culture.

Managers should have regular career conversations with employees rather than assuming that their generation determines their motivation.

3.7 Using Emotional Intelligence to Manage Generational Diversity

EI provides managers with a useful approach to multigenerational leadership.

Self-awareness helps managers recognise their own age-related assumptions. A manager may unconsciously believe that younger employees are unreliable or that older employees cannot adapt to technology. Recognising these assumptions is the first step towards reducing bias.

Empathy allows managers to understand why employees may have different preferences. For example, an employee with caring responsibilities may value flexibility, while another employee may prefer clear boundaries between work and personal life.

Social skills allow managers to create communication practices that include different employees. Managers can use meetings, email, digital platforms and one-to-one conversations depending on the situation.

Self-regulation is also important when generational disagreements occur. Instead of saying that "young people do not respect authority" or "older workers do not understand technology", managers should focus on specific behaviours and evidence.

3.8 Mindfulness and Inclusive Leadership

Mindfulness can support multigenerational management by encouraging managers to slow down and listen carefully.

For example, during a disagreement between an experienced employee and a younger employee, a manager can take a moment to recognise their own assumptions before responding. The manager can then listen to both employees and identify the actual problem.

Mindfulness can also reduce reactive communication. An employee who receives a critical message electronically may immediately feel angry and respond aggressively. Taking time to pause can prevent unnecessary conflict.

Research has found a positive relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence, particularly in areas related to emotional regulation (Jiménez-Picón et al., 2021). ([PubMed](#))

A randomised workplace study also found that online mindfulness training increased well-being, resilience and several measures of trait EI, while reducing stress and negative mood (Nadler, Carswell and Minda, 2020). ([Frontiers](#))

This suggests that mindfulness may be useful as part of leadership development, although organisations should provide sufficient time and support rather than presenting it as a compulsory solution to workplace stress.

4. Recommendations for Senior Management

Based on the analysis, the following actions are recommended for the organisation.

4.1 Introduce EI Development

The organisation should provide EI development for managers and employees. Training should focus on self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, active listening, conflict management and constructive feedback.

4.2 Include EI in Leadership Development

Leadership programmes should assess interpersonal behaviour as well as technical and strategic skills. Managers should receive feedback from colleagues and team members to identify areas for improvement.

4.3 Use Mindfulness as a Supportive Practice

The organisation could provide voluntary mindfulness activities such as short guided exercises, reflective breaks or mindfulness-based development sessions. These should complement wider well-being measures rather than replace them.

4.4 Build Psychological Safety

Managers should encourage employees to raise concerns, ask questions and admit mistakes without fear of humiliation. This can support learning and innovation.

4.5 Avoid Generational Stereotyping

Recruitment and management decisions should not be based on assumptions about Generation X, Millennials or Generation Z. Selection should focus on skills, experience, potential and job requirements.

4.6 Develop Flexible Communication

Managers should use a mixture of communication methods and ask employees about their preferences. Clear communication standards should be established for email, messaging, meetings and urgent issues.

4.7 Strengthen Recruitment

Recruitment processes should consider emotional and interpersonal capabilities alongside technical qualifications. Structured interviews and work-based scenarios can be used to assess communication, teamwork and problem-solving.

4.8 Monitor Outcomes

The organisation should measure whether EI and mindfulness initiatives produce meaningful results. Measures could include employee engagement, absence, turnover, conflict levels, psychological safety, team performance and employee survey results.

5. Conclusion

Emotional intelligence and mindfulness can make an important contribution to contemporary organisations. EI provides employees and managers with skills for understanding emotions, regulating behaviour, communicating effectively and building productive relationships. Goleman's model is particularly useful for understanding leadership, Mayer and Salovey provide a more focused ability-based approach, and Bar-On provides a wider emotional-social framework.

EI can support performance, conflict management, leadership and decision-making. However, organisations should recognise that EI is not a complete solution. Workplace outcomes are also influenced by job design, organisational culture, workload, leadership systems and fairness.

Mindfulness can strengthen EI by helping individuals become more aware of their thoughts and emotional reactions. Research suggests that workplace mindfulness can reduce stress and improve well-being, although evidence for direct performance improvements is more mixed. Recent research has found small improvements in some aspects of work performance but also considerable variation between studies (Vainre et al., 2025). ([DOI](#))

A multigenerational workforce can provide organisations with different experiences and perspectives. However, managers should avoid assuming that all members of Generation X, Generation Y or Generation Z behave in the same way. Evidence concerning generational differences is mixed, and factors such as age, career stage and individual personality are also important.

The most effective approach is therefore an inclusive one. Managers should use EI and mindfulness to understand individual employees, challenge stereotypes, manage conflict and create psychological safety. When combined with fair organisational policies and effective leadership, these practices can help create a workplace where employees from different backgrounds and generations can perform well, develop their careers and contribute to organisational success.

7. Reference List

Bar-On, R. (2006) 'The Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence (ESI)', *Psicothema*, 18(Suppl.), pp. 13–25. ([Reunido Uniovi](#))

Caporale-Berkowitz, N.A. et al. (2021) 'Search inside yourself: investigating the effects of a widely adopted mindfulness-at-work development program', *International Journal of Workplace Health Management*, 14(6), pp. 593–604. ([ScienceDirect](#))

Costanza, D.P. and Finkelstein, L.M. (2015) 'Generationally based differences in the workplace: Is there a there there?', *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 8(3), pp. 308–323.

Edmondson, A.C. (1999) 'Psychological safety and learning behavior in work teams', *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44(2), pp. 350–383. ([Sage Journals](#))

Goleman, D. (1998) 'What makes a leader?', *Harvard Business Review*, 76(6), pp. 93–102. ([PubMed](#))

Jiménez-Picón, N. et al. (2021) 'The relationship between mindfulness and emotional intelligence as a protective factor for healthcare professionals: a systematic review', *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 18(10), 5491. ([PubMed](#))

Kornadt, A.E. et al. (2021) 'Implicit and explicit measurement of work-related age attitudes and age stereotypes', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 579155. ([PubMed](#))

Lyons, S.T. and Kuron, L.K.J. (2014) 'Generational differences in the workplace: a review of the evidence and directions for future research', *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 35(S1), pp. S139–S157. ([DOI](#))

Mayer, J.D., Salovey, P. and Caruso, D.R. (2004) 'Emotional intelligence: theory, findings, and implications', *Psychological Inquiry*, 15(3), pp. 197–215. ([DOI](#))

Nadler, R., Carswell, J.J. and Minda, J.P. (2020) 'Online mindfulness training increases well-being, trait emotional intelligence, and workplace competency ratings: a randomized waitlist-controlled trial', *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 255. ([Frontiers](#))

Parry, E. and Urwin, P. (2011) 'Generational differences in work values: a review of theory and evidence', *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 13(1), pp. 79–96. ([Wiley Online Library](#))

Schlaerth, A., Ensari, N. and Christian, J. (2013) 'A meta-analytical review of the relationship between emotional intelligence and leaders' constructive conflict management', *Group Processes & Intergroup Relations*, 16(1), pp. 126–142. ([Sage Journals](#))

Vainre, M. et al. (2025) 'Mindfulness-based programmes for work performance: a systematic review and meta-analysis of randomised controlled trials', *Stress and Health*. ([DOI](#))

Virgili, M. (2015) 'Mindfulness-based interventions reduce psychological distress in working adults: a meta-analysis of intervention studies', *Mindfulness*, 6, pp. 326–337.