

LEADING GROUP PROJECTS WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Developing Emotional Intelligence Skills

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INTRODUCTION Emotional intelligence (EI) refers to how well a person notices and handles their own feelings, and how well they read and respond to what others are feeling (Goleman, 1995). In group projects, team members often respond differently to feedback, deadlines and pressure — some remain motivated while others disengage — partly reflecting generational differences in how emotions are expressed and regulated (Rothschadl, 2025). Strong EI improves leadership, teamwork and communication, helping diverse student teams collaborate despite these differences and complete complex tasks with fewer breakdowns.



EI in Teamwork

Self-awareness — Recognising your own frustration before it affects a meeting.

Self-regulation — Staying calm and professional when a deadline is missed.

Motivation — Keeping team morale up during a difficult project phase.

Empathy — Noticing a quiet member is struggling and offering support.

Social skills — Mediating a disagreement over task allocation.

Self-awareness ▶ Self-regulation ▶ Empathy ▶
Collaboration ▶ Successful Team



Managing Your Own Emotions

Mindfulness — Pausing before replying in a tense group chat message.

Reflection — Reviewing what triggered stress after a group meeting.

Stress management — Breaking a large task into manageable steps.

Emotional regulation — Not reacting defensively to critical peer feedback.

Positive thinking — Reframing setbacks as opportunities to improve.

Challenge ▶ Emotion ▶ Pause ▶ Reflect ▶ Positive
Response ▶ Better Outcome



Understanding Others' Emotions

Active listening — Letting a teammate fully explain an idea before responding.

Empathy — Understanding why a member missed a deadline before judging.

Perspective taking — Considering a quieter member's viewpoint in planning.

Constructive feedback — Framing criticism around solutions, not blame.

These behaviours build trust, strengthen communication and collaboration, and improve overall team performance.

Trust • Communication • Collaboration • Performance



CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Developing emotional intelligence enables students to lead with greater self-control, empathy and adaptability. Awareness of generational differences — older students often favour structured self-regulation, younger students value open emotional expression — can both enrich and challenge group dynamics (Rothschadl, 2025). Teams that manage these differences communicate more openly, resolve conflict faster and sustain motivation, producing stronger outcomes and better-prepared future leaders.

✓ Listen actively

✓ Respect different opinions

✓ Stay calm under pressure

✓ Focus on solutions, not blame

✓ Reflect after every meeting

REFERENCES (Harvard)

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