

THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE OF CUSTOMER SERVICE: THE POWER OF SELF-AWARENESS IN WORK

Introduction & Definition:

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is described as the capacity to perceive, comprehend, control and utilise feelings in spite of the situation. Companies consider EI to have five dimensions: self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, which are usually broken down into contemporary models (Mehler et al., 2024). Self-awareness, the personal awareness of oneself, their feelings, triggers, strengths and limitations, is a prerequisite to mobilising the other EI competencies.



THE IMPORTANCE OF EI IN THE WORKPLACE:

The studies show that there are always strong positive correlations between EI and valuable employee outcomes. Indicatively, a meta-analysis of 30 years showed that EI has a positive relationship with job performance, organisational citizenship behaviour, and job satisfaction, and a negative relationship with job stress (Doğru 2022).

Besides, emotional competencies (self-awareness and regulation) can be trained by intervention in a workplace: a 2024 study claimed that EI training can enhance emotional regulation, empathy, and performance (Mehler et al., 2024). Higher EI has also been associated with better performance in the work setting, stronger work relationships and better conflict resolution in the work environment, even in a governmental setting (Yusoff et al., 2023).

SELF-AWARENESS IN MY ROLE:

As a Customer Service Associate at one of the UK supermarkets, EI is highly applicable:

- Frustrated or upset customers are a routine task that I engage in on a daily basis, and management skills of empathy help me to gain insights into their needs and desires, and self-control enables me to remain calm in difficult situations.
- My interpersonal talents help in communicating well with colleagues, and my motivation promotes initiative in the provision of customer services.
- Most importantly, self-awareness can guide me to look back at what emotionally causes me to become triggered by certain situations, such as waiting in a long line or facing confrontation and modify my reactions immediately, which subsequently results in less emotional interactions with other people and resolving issues more effectively.

INFLUENCE ON IMPLEMENTATION AND PERFORMANCE:

My experience in building my self-awareness has bearable rewards:

- I recognise emotional patterns during busy shifts, enabling me to catch stress early and apply regulation strategies.
- I do this after challenging reactions to see what worked and what did not, and I can become better at responding and minimise reactive behaviour.
- These habits not only allow me to provide better customer service work but also work to my good by making my job more satisfying and decreasing burnout.

GENERAL ORGANISATIONAL ADVANTAGES:

Emotionally intelligent employees not only serve better at an individual level, but they also contribute towards a healthy/strong culture at the workplace.

- Less conflict and emotional stage.
- Better communication and empathy help establish a closer team than before.
- Greater innovation, particularly of jobs with flexibility: in a medical setting, research indicates that EI leads to innovative working behaviour because it enhances flexibility and emotional control.
- Improved leader performance: Most recent studies have shown that leaders of high EI provided up to 40% more performance in the areas of coaching, influence, and team development.



CONCLUSION & CALL TO ACTION:

- Self-awareness is not a soft add-on it forms the core of motivating emotional intelligence and getting the best out of it.
- Employees and leaders can become better performers, healthier individuals, and more resilient by developing EI using self-reflection, feedback, and training (Binsaeed et al., 2023).
- To create more emotionally intelligent and productive workplaces that are more caring, organisations must invest in EI development training programs, inculcating self-awareness practices into the day-to-day activities of organisations.

References:

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