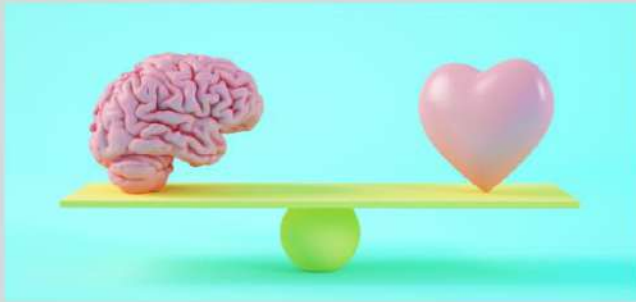


Emotional Intelligence for Outstanding Hospitality

Irina Kitley - Hotel Manager

Bristol Avonmouth Travelodge

- Responsible for the management of a 91 bedroom hotel, ensuring the cleanliness and standards are well maintained;
- Dealing with various personnel issues including disciplinary meetings and performance issues;
- Working as the Health and Safety Champion for the district;
- Visiting other hotels around the country, in order to implement new policies and procedures;
- Responsible for the hotel finances, whilst ensuring strict budgets are adhered to;
- Ensuring customers receive a first class guest experience during their stay;
- Responsible for the training of my team (35 employees), ensuring their development and coaching/mentoring as required;
- Carrying out the recruitment of staff, ensuring the right people are recruited for the roles (Travelodge Hotels Ltd, 2024).



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE - DEFINITION

'EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE REFERS TO THE CAPACITY FOR RECOGNISING OUR OWN FEELINGS AND THOSE OF OTHERS, FOR MOTIVATING OURSELVES, AND FOR MANAGING EMOTIONS WELL IN OURSELVES AND IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS'.
(GOLEMAN, 1995, P. XII)

'EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS THE ABILITY TO PERCEIVE, UNDERSTAND AND MANAGE OUR OWN EMOTIONS AND THOSE OF OTHERS' (CHERNISS AND ROCHE, 2020).

GOLEMAN'S 12 COMPETENCIES

EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL

- it helps me stay calm under stress (overbookings, complaints);
- prevents emotional outbursts, which could undermine my authority and effect staff morale;
- helps maintain professionalism in a fast-paced environment (Das Swain *et al.*, 2024; Alam *et al.* 2023).
- supressing emotional responses repeatedly can lead to mental fatigue and performance decline, decreased decision-making and attention (Gross, 2022).

EMPATHY

- extremely important in understanding guests' emotional state and providing personalised service;
- it helps me connect with staff, anticipate the team's needs and tailor my responses to unforeseen circumstances and to stress;
- key to building trust and reducing staff turnover (Assiouras *et al.*, 2023).
- it can lead to emotional exhaustion and risk of burnout, psychological drain and manipulation attempts from staff or management (Goh and Kim, 2021).

ADAPTABILITY

- it helps me respond swiftly to the constantly changing environment: staff absences, guest requests, technology failure;
- it also helps me respond effectively without losing composure;
- it is vital in budget hotels with limited budgets and resources (Han and Hyun, 2023).
- constant change can lead to role ambiguity and stress, uncertainty and disorientation (Adebayo *et al.*, 2023; Simons and Walker, 2022).

CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

- I often mediate conflicts between staff members or guests and staff, or between guests;
- the team feels more confident and the guests satisfaction increases when managers are skilled in conflict resolution;
- helps reduce disruptions and fosters a respectful workplace culture (Stoyanova-Bozhkova *et al.*, 2023).
- this can cause cognitive overload for managers in charge of large and diverse teams. It can also be time consuming (Renner, 2022).

TEAMWORK

- it helped me maintain positive energy across teams and encourages collaboration between them (housekeeping, reception, bar cafe);
- it helps build loyal staff relationships, which decreases staff turnover;
- enhances coordination, efficiency and guest experience (Zhu *et al.*, 2022).
- if there is no difference of opinion, innovation, creativity and problem solving can be inhibited; certain individuals might reduce their effort (Verwijs and Russo, 2023).

AREA FOR IMPROVEMENT

- one competency that I still need to develop and that could enhance my effectiveness is 'influence'. This involves encouraging collaboration across departments, which, in Travelodge, would involve teams from outside the hotel: maintenance, laundry, HR, higher management. Developing this skill can lead to stronger team alignment and greater adaptability during operational change (Sanchez-Rebull, Hernandez-Lara and Arimany-Serrat, 2023).

CRITICISM OF GOLEMAN'S MODEL

- Goleman's model has been criticised for lacking empirical precision (Joseph and Newman, 2021) and for lacking a clear, unified theoretical foundation, compared to the 'Ability Model' by Salovey and Mayer (De la Fuente *et al.*, 2024).
- According to Weiss (2023), some competencies overlap in meaning, leading to ambiguity in interpretation (inspirational leadership v influence or empathy v organisational awareness).
- Cultural bias : the competencies might not apply to every organisation, because they were developed for Western companies (van der Linden *et al.*, 2021).