

Six Ways to Boost Your Leadership EQ

with

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“think
learn?
succeed”

Rick Ginsberg (2007) recommends six techniques for boosting your EQ. Here are some practical ways to put his ideas into action.

1. Be aware that leadership involves emotional experiences

These are normal, even though leaders may not often talk about them. If you're facing a tough situation or feeling emotionally out-of-sorts, talk to someone outside your organisation.

2. Plan ahead to deal with your feelings

If you don't have a plan, your emotions can catch you off-guard. This is where you may act impulsively or make poor decisions. Think about how you react in different situations and how you can choose more resourceful responses. A counselor or coach might be a useful resource if you want to develop your capacity for emotion management.

3. Take care of yourself

Beware of dysfunctional coping strategies. These are often used by managers as 'short-term' fixes that become long-term problems. They include drinking, substance abuse, over-eating, working too hard and failing to exercise. Seek out healthy ways to deal with your stress. These include exercise, coaching, hobbies and talking with friends.

4. Challenge yourself to be emotionally mature

When you feel negative emotions, catch yourself. Pause before making decisions, speaking or taking action you may later regret. When dealing with others – particularly in tough situations – take responsibility for staying calm and in control of your emotions.

5. Understand the impact of your body language

Your staff will react to your unspoken message as well as your words. Ask someone you trust to give you feedback on nonverbal habits that may create a poor impression. Then work on changing the postures, gestures and stances that send negative messages.

6. Switch off your panic response

When you're under pressure, mistakes and emergencies can trigger a panic reaction. Learn to recognise your personal symptoms of 'amygdala hijack.' When you experience a stress reaction, use relaxation techniques such as muscle relaxation and deep breathing. Make sure you take a lunch break each day, so you're not overloading your system and increasing the chances of becoming so stressed you become illogical.

Book Eleanor to run a course for your team

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