

Meet the Leadership EI Challenge

Answer these four questions to assess how well you lead in certain circumstances.

1. If you are angry or disappointed with an employee's behavior, you are likely to:
 - a. Express your disappointment or displeasure.
 - b. Let the person discover the consequences of his or her actions.
 - c. Think about the message you want to convey, and then act accordingly.
 - d. Eat a carton of Ben & Jerry's to bury your disappointment.
2. The most important trait for you to display when leading a team is:
 - a. The Wisdom of Solomon.
 - b. The inspirational power of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - c. The patience of Job.
 - d. The restraint of Adam Sandler in *Anger Management*.
3. When you lead a department meeting, you:
 - a. Sum up the meeting's purpose – and warm up the crowd – with a quick 15 minute monologue.
 - b. Ask open ended questions and lead discussions.
 - c. Place a staff member in charge and observe the group dynamics.
 - d. Fall asleep during "Old Business."
4. When one of your people admits a mistake, the first thing you do is:
 - a. Show support; "It's great that you can admit your mistake."
 - b. Down play the mistake's impact; "Don't worry about it."
 - c. Gently chastise the person; "Let's make sure that doesn't happen again."
 - d. Ask follow up questions; "What else have you screwed up?"

What Is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and those of the people around you. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people.

For leaders, having emotional intelligence is essential for success. After all, who is more likely to succeed – a leader who shouts at his team when he's under stress, or a leader who stay in control, and calmly assesses the situation?

According to Daniel Goleman, an American psychologist who helped to popularize EI, there are five main elements of emotional intelligence:

- Self-awareness.
- Self-regulation.
- Motivation.

- Empathy.
- Social skills.

“Leaders influence the team’s mood. The team’s mood drives performance. What’s your conclusion?” – Joshua Freedman, *The Business Case for Emotional Intelligence*.

Answers:

1. C – Leaders think before they speak, especially when negative emotions are involved; however D is tempting.
2. B – All are valuable, and leaders who can’t inspire people aren’t leaders.
3. B – Leaders ask piercing questions and encourage free flowing discussions; at least while they’re awake.
4. A – Leaders support people who acknowledge their errors

Source: Orlando E. Blake, PhD CPT, The Blake Group – www.blake-group.com