



BLENDING EMOTIONAL AND ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

AS NEW TECHNOLOGIES such as Robotic Process Automation (RPA), Artificial Intelligence (AI), and Machine Learning automate traditional and routine tasks in the workplace, you start wondering how this will impact leaders, managers, and employees on the way they'll be interacting in this new blended environment. On one side you have the machines that are quickly gathering insights from big data and analytics coming from disparate systems. On the other side are the humans (Employees) trying to use all the new information generated almost instantaneously to provide customer service or support other internal corporate functions. Now, we are all working at a faster pace than before. It requires more engagement from us, employee autonomy, being able to deal with more stressors, faster response time in decision making, and at the same time having empathetic managers and transformational leaders that support the process and help align the team to increase productivity.

So... How do we cope with this new blended environment? the answer, we all need to develop emotional intelligence skills (EI). According to the Capgemini Research Institute, demand for EI skills is set to increase by six times in the next 3-5 years and will be the highest in India, followed by the US across all sectors with the highest in financial services (insurance and retail banking).

Although EI skills are a must, recruitment and training in this area has mostly failed to change. This is set to leave many companies unable to reap the benefits EI offers in terms of increased performance, higher sales and profits, improved customer satisfaction, lower attrition and cost reductions.

Working effectively with all the different and difficult types of people in the workplace—from co-workers to customers to suppliers to higher-ups—isn't easy. Now, what exactly is emotional intelligence? Emotional Intelligence refers to a set of emotional and social skills that collectively establish how well we perceive ourselves and how well we express our feelings, build and maintain relationships with others, understand our environment and make decisions, and deal with stressful or difficult situations. It is a filter through which all our thoughts, actions, and reactions must pass irrespective of whether that thought stays in our head, we say it loud, or act on it.

Therefore, how can organizations develop a more emotionally intelligent workforce to deal with the upcoming automation? The Capgemini Research Institute suggests to use technology and data for building a high EI culture, customize existing learning programs to integrate EI and make them accessible to all employees, apply an EI lens when promoting

and rewarding talent, and modify recruitment processes to include the evaluation of EI.

Leadership can be developed but it requires commitment. The role of emotional intelligence in leadership is crucial but it doesn't operate on its own. It's influenced by our underlying core values, drives, and beliefs.

Now, how do we become emotionally effective leaders to inspire and develop an emotionally intelligent workforce in the age of automation? According to the EQ-i 2.0 Model of Emotional Intelligence, transformational leaders need to show authenticity and serve as a role model for moral and fair behavior commanding esteem and confidence from employees, coach effectively and be seen as a mentor who support employee growth to achieve highest levels of performance, provide insight by sharing a purpose and hopeful vision for colleagues to follow and exceed goals, as well as to be an innovative leader who focuses on taking risks, spurring colleagues' ingenuity and autonomous thought.


What kind of leader do you want to become in the age of automation? Are you up for the challenge? ●



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