



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

CONNECTING AT WORK

By Ruth Farenga



“FOR THE FIRST TIME
EVER, THERE IS 30 YEARS
BETWEEN ME AND 40%
OF MY TEAM, I NEED TO
UNDERSTAND THEIR
NEEDS, WANTS, FEARS,
ASPIRATIONS CLEARLY.”

~ SURVEY RESPONDENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is fast becoming recognised as a key attribute in successful leaders and is therefore an area of particular interest for professional development.

EQ is the ability to perceive, understand and monitor your own emotions, along with those of others, and apply that understanding to leading effective teams and organisations.

In other words, it enables us to respond to leadership situations with patience and empathy, for a positive outcome.

This research was designed to appreciate the current levels of understanding around emotional intelligence, as well as the appetite for further knowledge and forms that may take.

The survey comprised of 79 individual online responses in September 2019 from business leaders across UK small and medium enterprises (SMEs). Respondents were primarily C-level executives or directors of these SMEs.

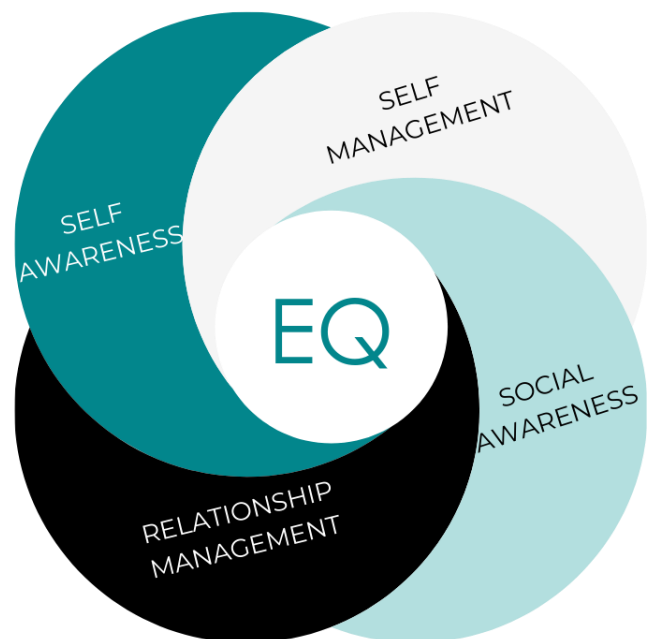
There is already a comprehensive amount of ongoing scientific research supporting the benefits of this aspect of personal development, but it is important to understand the attitudes of business leaders today.

In a world where workers are increasingly spread out yet connected for greater periods (technologically at least), **EQ will truly be the differentiator for businesses and organisations.**

Key findings

The majority of SME Leaders (75%) recognise the value of EQ in the workplace – especially with an increasingly remote workforce – for engaging, motivating and managing staff. This is seen as having a positive impact on collaborations and productivity, which ultimately affect the bottom line.

The challenge is turning this into training as currently most learning is piecemeal from LinkedIn and online media. Time is the biggest barrier, but 87% are interested in EQ Professional Development.



SURVEY RESULTS

FAMILIARITY

EQ is a concept that is familiar to leaders in today's more conscious business environment: 96% survey respondents are acquainted with the concept.

This is compelling since it was ranked sixth in the World Economic Forum's list of the top 10 skills that employees will need to possess to thrive in the workplace of the future.

Encouragingly, 1 in 7 have read extensively or trained in EQ.

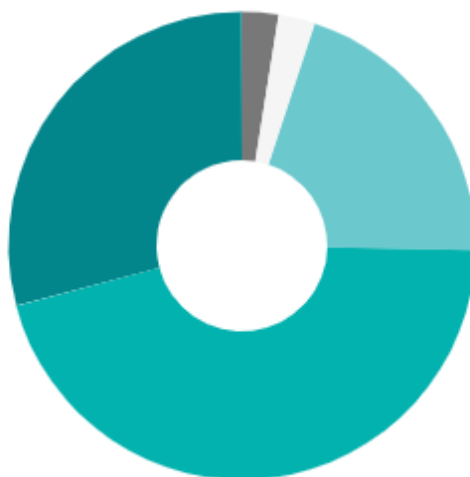
EQ PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

3 out of 4 leaders say they consider EQ professional development to be valuable or **extremely valuable**, although others feel they don't know enough about it at this stage.

The reasons stated for the importance of EQ development focused around **employee engagement** with statements such as:

- "*Driving performance* through strong levels of employee engagement"
- "Enabling more engaging conversations that translate into more *collaborative and valuable business partnerships*"
- "*Understanding the emotional backdrop* to work situations is vital in being able to have *genuine, honest conversations* with staff that supports staff engagement"

The value of EQ

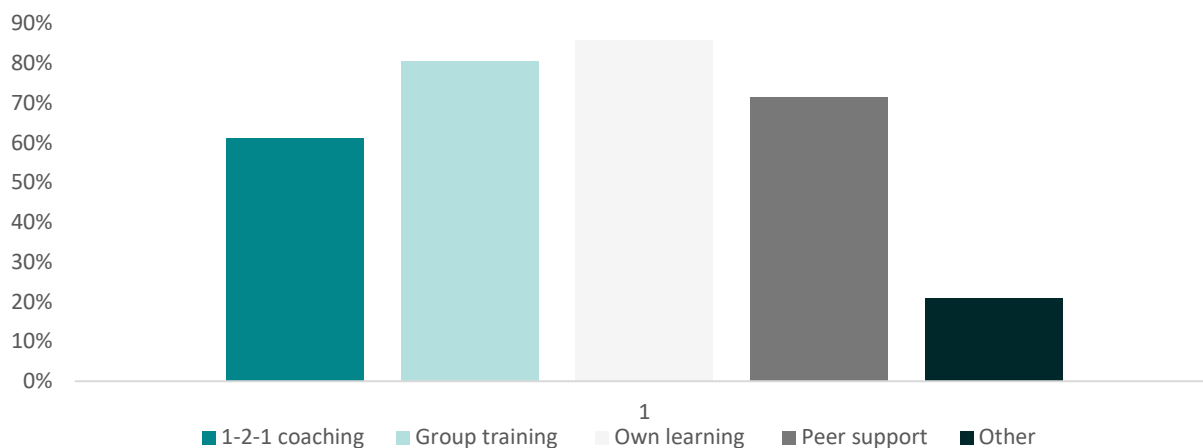


■ 1. No value at all ■ 2. ■ 3. ■ 4. ■ 5. Extremely valuable

Leaders with a solid understanding of how their emotions and actions affect the people around them will be more effective. The more someone can relate to colleagues, associates and partners, the more successful they will be.

Leadership professional development is prevalent as 86% do their own learning. There seems to be a good mix of learning styles with group training, peer support and 1-2-1 coaching also being used by over half of respondents.

Which of the following types of leadership professional development have you done before?

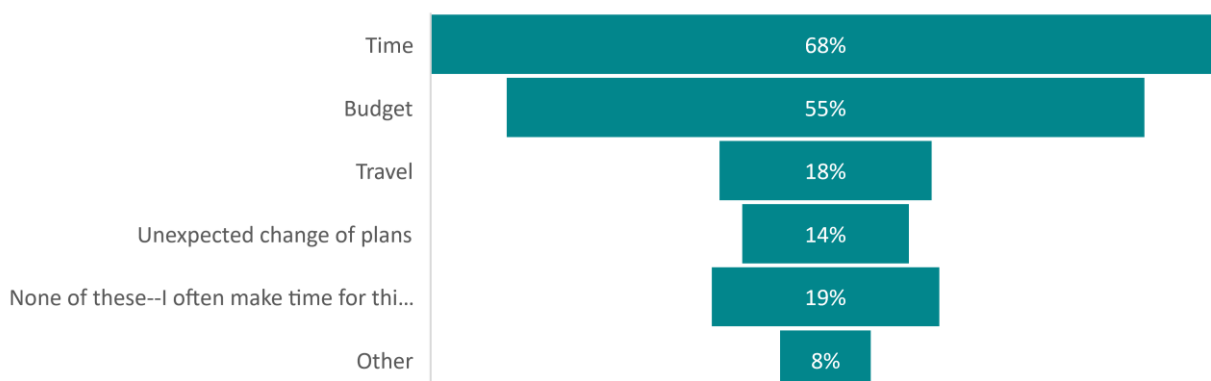


Barriers

Time is the biggest barrier to professional development (68%), and this has been reflected in similar surveys. 58% indicated budget as an issue whilst travel or unexpected change in plans are both under 20%.

Almost 1 in 5 say they make time for leadership professional development, and they don't let barriers get in their way which is very positive.

In the past, what has stopped you engaging with those kinds of professional development?



EQ IN THE WORKPLACE

Respondents were asked *what challenge(s) do you face at work that you think training in EQ could support you with?*

There was a diverse set of responses - many were focused around **motivating others, remote teams / management and managing the pace of change.**

This is just a sample.

Understanding one's own character and approach towards engaging with others. This, I believe, comes down to self-awareness, self-belief and confidence. The ability to step back, listen, and to be still without judgement.

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Working with those very different to me.

Managing virtual teams on projects

Opposing department pressures. Recognising the human behind the role, rather than the fight to raise your priorities above another.

Work/life separation i.e. not taking the job home with me. Understanding how different personalities rub together in the workplace. Helping employees feel listened to and managed without me feeling bossy or wasting business time too much either.

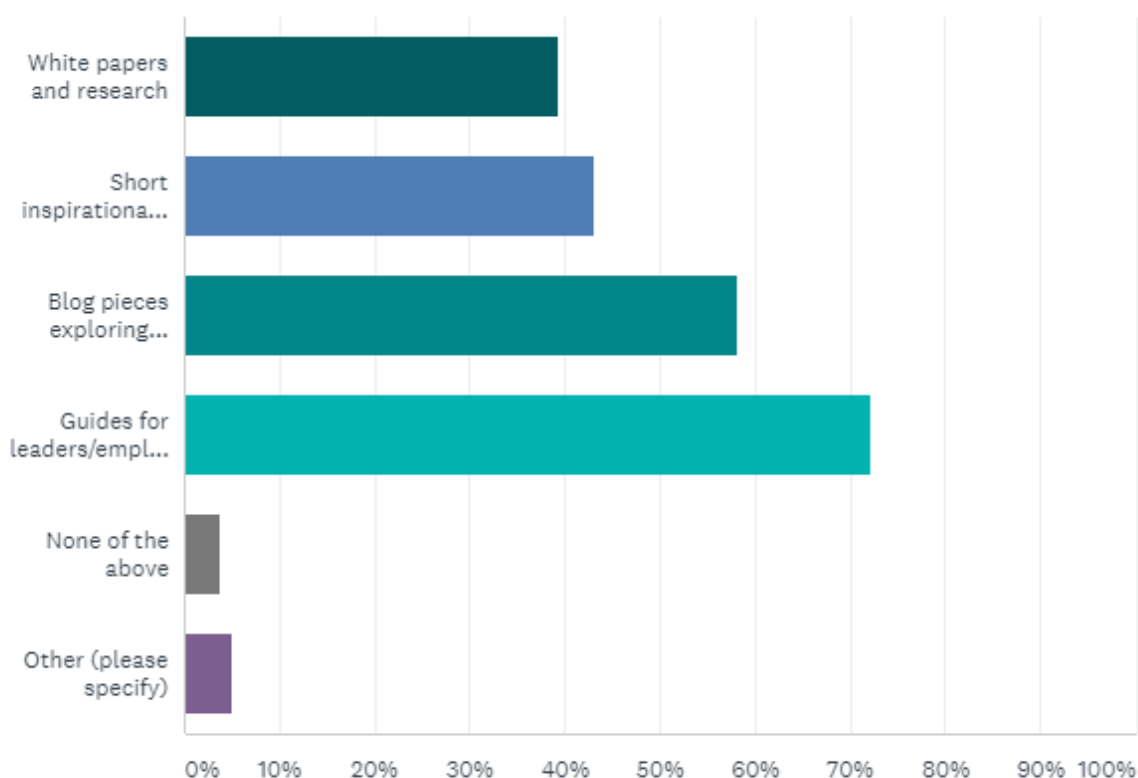
Conflict resolution. Performance management. Coping with the stresses that work / life presents.

Staying informed

Leaders value guides for themselves & their employees as well as blogs. Interestingly, white papers and research was less popular.

There has been a recent trend for employee guides focused on conversational writing and using graphics to make the content more engaging and readable.

What type of content would you like to receive on the subject of EQ, performance in leadership and self-development?



Comments such as “*I’d like to scan and explore as appropriate*” and “*no more mailing lists*” suggest busy leaders want to go out and find their own information at the right time.

This was further backed up by answers to the next question on current consumption, with over **74% using LinkedIn and Online Media** to enhance their knowledge.

The comments suggest business leaders focus on peers and connections as a key source of information with **1 in 7 saying that they used their network of contacts to become aware of new research**. This healthy exchange of information is great for improving the way we work.

CONCLUSION

IN GENERAL, THERE IS AN APPETITE FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT AROUND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WHICH IS POSITIVE AND BODES WELL FOR THOSE ORGANISATIONS (AND SOCIETY IN GENERAL).

Currently, it seems there is more a **recognition of the concepts and need** for EQ with a desire to learn compared to an in-depth, widespread understanding.

With many turning to LinkedIn, digital media and their peers for recommendations and insights, it is more important than ever to **share valuable content** and **create like-minded communities** so we can raise the level of awareness and realise the benefits.

One of the most prominent researchers in this space, Daniel Goleman (well-known for his business psychology insights), has paved the way for us to see the personal traits and behaviours that *really* make leaders successful.

Goleman has evolved his model on EQ to be quite specific about the skills that we observe in successful leaders. He defines EQ through four key areas: **self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.**

The more that you, as a leader, manage each of these areas, the higher your emotional intelligence.

The Harvard Business Review hailed emotional intelligence as “a ground-breaking, paradigm-shattering idea,” one of the most influential business ideas of the decade.

Goleman found direct ties between EQ in leaders and measurable business results. He studied ‘competency models’ (competencies of leaders) and analysed data from over 188 companies (mainly large corporates such as British Airways and Credit Suisse) to determine which of the leaders ‘personal capabilities really drove performance’ in their particular companies and teams over others.

He discovered that **EQ was critical for those in the senior ranks of an organisation.** Nearly 90% of the difference that leaders from high-performance departments had was attributable to EQ factors over IQ (cognitive skill).

EQ will become even more important in the future than it is today. Good businesses rely on their staff and these people need leaders and an organisational culture that encourages them to be the best they can be.

Leaders and managers with a high level of EQ understand the importance of communicating effectively with staff members, and of treating each employee with respect. Application of this perspective and style to management strategies allows those leaders to be effective in our evolving society.

A large number of the respondents we surveyed are willing to be those leaders, ready to create a difference by being conscious of their approach and investing time and effort in their development as well as that of their staff.

RUTH FARENGA - BIOGRAPHY

MINDFULNESS TEACHER & PROFESSIONAL COACH



Ruth is Founder of Mindful Pathway, a qualified Mindfulness Teacher and coach, working with leaders and professionals to develop emotional intelligence & practical Mindfulness skills enabling them to be **more resilient & connected in our fast-paced world.**

As a consultant Ruth supports organisations and their leaders to develop a culture that reduces reactivity, incorporating healthy habits and Mindful approaches to life and work. Think work life with less drama & more awareness & co-operation.

Mindful Pathway's ethos is to offer **evidence-based programmes** to allow people to create sustainable practice & habits with step by step guidance, adapting to participants as individuals.

Ruth completed a 2-year Diploma in Mindfulness Teaching and continues her CPD with Oxford University. She has also completed a Diploma in Transformational Coaching, accredited by the European Coaching and Mentoring Council (EMCC) to facilitate the development of individuals as well as groups.

Ruth's professional background is in both corporate organisations, where she worked primarily for Pearson Education and Intel Corporation, and the third sector as a long-term trainer and project lead for the WISE Campaign (Women in Science, Technology and Engineering).

Ruth lives in St Albans and enjoys campervan trips with her husband and their pet husky, Juno!

For more info on Mindful Pathway visit www.mindfulpathway.co.uk

Further information on Ruth's thoughts on EQ can be found in this article on how [Emotional Intelligence is a difference-maker for leaders.](#)

**“LEADERSHIP IS NOT DOMINATION, BUT THE ART OF PERSUADING PEOPLE TO
WORK TOWARD A COMMON GOAL.”**

DANIEL GOLEMAN