

People Leaders Brief - EI and ME Session – 7 Nov 23

Introduction:

Historically, those attending our workshops and programmes have encountered challenges and even resistance from People Leaders and departmental colleagues after our sessions. This is usually because those people did not attend and, therefore, did not have the advantage of being involved in the discussions to appreciate the benefits. Remember that challenge and change **may** feel uncomfortable for those we challenge for change, especially the more senior they are.

This document aims to remove those challenges by ensuring that all People Leaders are informed of the key areas covered during our session and the thinking from it.

We would like to ensure you that we have taken very careful note of the Ofwat values, and the key ingredients below will have been strongly encouraged:

- We work collaboratively, we stand by each other and are committed to each other's wellbeing.
- We act and speak honestly and have the confidence to challenge and be challenged.
- We love to learn about new ideas and different ways of doing things, and we help each other to develop and grow.
- We take responsibility for our own actions and care about our impact on others.
- We value people for who they are and the ideas and perspectives they bring.

All the points above are the basis of psychological safety and our Moccasin Approach® (below).

In the best-case scenario, we hope that all People Leaders will embrace the organisational values and the thinking from our session and, where possible, adopt them, ensuring they become embedded within teams and normal working practices.

We have also asked the group to do their best to have a monthly catch-up to swap notes on what they have done, thoughts from their discussions with their People Leaders and share best practices.

If you have any questions at all, please call the facilitator, Mac Macdonald (03000303007), so he can offer answers and explanations as required.

The objectives of the session were to have:

- Completed an EI self-assessment.
- Prepared a list of areas for development and how you plan to measure your improvement in those areas (peer reviews are great for this).
- Completed a peer-reviewed reflective activity to sense-check their own EI Self-Assessment and discuss how to improve EI in others in their workplaces.

As we are sure you'll understand, we will have asked your people to return to their workplaces, experiment with the learning, thinking and tools we discussed during the session, and brief their leaders/managers about what they took from the session and what they want to do/try with it.

What are we asking of People Leaders? Please:

1. speak to each of your people who attended the session to discover what they learned. (If more than one of your people attended, please ask them together).
2. ask them what they want to do with that learning in the workplace. (This may include sharing aspects of the day with their colleagues).
3. ask them to list the things they wish to introduce and why.
4. allow them reasonable time to use and implement the list.
5. set a catch-up date with your whole team to discuss how things have gone and invite thoughts and ideas.

What is EI? – Emotional Intelligence is recognising and intelligently managing the emotions within us and others. It is a critical ingredient of everyday communication at work, home and socially too. We focused on work relationships, but EI impacts all human relationships.

EI self-assessment – The EI self-assessment is a high-level tool to determine a person's EI score, known as the Emotional Quotient (EQ). It is used to help the individual develop specific areas within the four areas of EI and improve them at work.

Empathy – This is to ensure everyone understands how important empathy is and its impact and that not employing empathy can cause breakdowns in healthy relationships.

Amygdala Hijack (Emotional Hijack) – This is where we have taken actions or made decisions based on our emotions rather than logic and good reason. A heat-of-the-moment act/decision which we often come to regret later.

Relationships - How do we create, maintain, and grow relationships to the level we require when we are at work (or even socially)? How does all this impact our desire to work in a High Performing Team (HPT)? Why is Relationship Management the ultimate goal of EI? All these were discussed.

Psychological Safety – (Feeling safe to speak our minds respectfully and professionally without fear of repercussion of any form). We discussed what this meant and why, without it, we would never fully adhere to the Ofwat values and why our organisational culture, employee engagement and productivity would always be impacted negatively. Also, if impacted badly enough, it could also create conscious or unconscious saboteurs.

The Moccasin Approach[®] - This is our approach to how all people should communicate. We believe that to create psychologically safe working environments and encourage innovation and collaboration, the Moccasin Approach must be adopted as a way of normal working life.

The approach aims to learn as much about those you work and communicate with so that you can see things from their perspective. This allows you to communicate and work more efficiently and effectively with each other. A short handout can be read by [clicking here](#).

Values – As mentioned above, we looked at the meaning behind each ingredient of SAILOR. We discussed why EI is essential to ensure we and all our colleagues adhere to the Ofwat values.

Summary Document – Each attendee should have a copy of our “summary document” to help support their thinking and refer to over the months ahead. We are more than happy for that to be shared with colleagues and discussed as you wish.

Workplace Challenges – Over the years, our experience of graduate and apprenticeship programmes has shown that most, if not all, have concerns about working for and with others as they move into their roles and work closely within teams. They are often especially concerned about their relationship with their leader or manager. This depends on how effective a leader or manager is and what professional development they have received to lead and manage others.

Moving from the world of university life and living can be a hugely exciting and challenging time for people. The routines they were used to may have been quite generous regarding time management, so this recent change may have been very different to what they are experiencing now. Adjusting to the world of work can be a struggle, especially for any neurodivergent people.

We will have discussed any aspects brought up, but please be good enough to explore these with your people as and when the opportunities arise. We will encourage them to use all the above ingredients and refer to your organisational values as their permission to speak freely.

Clarification Sessions – We offer clarification sessions for the attendees over the next year (via Beth Savage - Early Careers), which we conduct online through Zoom/Teams. This helps keep their thinking on track as new situations and circumstances occur.

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