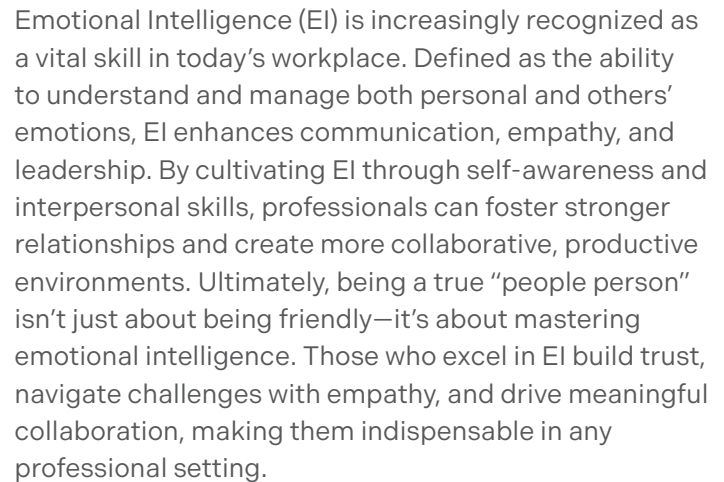


# THE EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT PROFESSIONAL: Building Bridges, Not Barriers

Written By:

**Hayden Oser**  
Business Analyst



## Knowing Yourself to Lead Yourself

Self-awareness also includes identifying “flow states,” or moments that provide enjoyment during long tasks or deep focus during activities that require concentration. Flow states help strengthen beliefs of tackling any challenge and reinforce confidence. Understanding personal triggers, physiological responses, and strengths helps you prepare for a smoother transition into the next three quadrants of EI: self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.

## Turning Awareness into Action

**A**  
**Activating Event:**  
Identify causes to reactions.

**B**  
**Beliefs:**  
Examine subjective experiences.

**C**  
**Consequences:**  
Understand the emotional responses caused by the beliefs.

**D**  
**Disrupting Thought:**  
Consider other people's thoughts.

**E**  
**Effect:**  
Recognize reactionary effects on relationships.

Following the ABCDE model is just one way to develop strong self-management. Another key practice is to learn to slow down reaction time before communicating. Take a breath. It is acceptable to pause to collect your thoughts before responding. Slowing reaction time will lead to clearer communication.

Another trait of self-management is the ability to shift perspectives. Ask questions and listen to seek alternative views. Everyone has an opinion, and it is professional to be open minded toward outside ideas. The ability to manage and understand others' perspectives strengthens your message and fosters more meaningful connections.

## Read the Room

The third quadrant of emotional intelligence is social awareness. It uses social cues, empathy, and finding common ground in interactions. During conversations, gather details about your surroundings. Body language and tone of voice are the best physical expressions to keep an eye out for in order to identify social cues. Practice empathy to build long-term, trustful relationships with clients. Ask questions about life outside of work to better understand colleagues and clients on a personal level by knowing their feelings and opinions on topics. Actively listen to others' diverse perspectives. Understanding others' intentions before and during meetings fosters more effective collaboration and continuous learning. Additionally, committing to continuous learning by aiming to discover something new in every interaction helps maintain engagement and growth. Together, these social awareness practices create a workplace where emotional intelligence thrives, leading to improved individual and team performances.



## Influence Through Connection

Relationship management, the fourth quadrant of emotional intelligence, involves effectively communicating, understanding others' styles of communication and fostering a respectful environment for collaboration and healthy discussions. The starting point for relationship management is identifying your communication strengths, whether it's making genuine connections, quickly picking up on group dynamics, or making people feel comfortable and heard. Next, learn to adapt your communication style while staying true to your values. Match your energy level and tone of voice and share personal stories with the person at the other end of the conversation. Another key aspect of relationship management is cultivating a healthy environment both internally and externally. Agree on rules of engagement within your team and ensure all ideas are heard. Practice "plussing" by using phrases like "Yes, and..." to build upon others' ideas rather than shutting them down with "Yes, but..."

Finally, take a few moments before meetings to clarify your goals to ensure your message is intentional and impactful. Relationship management is delicate, and following the correct communication strategy alongside a healthy workplace environment promotes increased productivity and thriving relationships.

Emotional Intelligence is not learned in one day, just how a strong client or internal relationship is not built in one conversation. Follow the steps of the four quadrants of emotional intelligence to identify self-behavior, practice emotional responses, grow interpersonal skills, and cultivate healthy environments. Investing in EI development not only enhances individual performance but also contributes to a more positive and collaborative organizational culture.

Prioritizing emotional intelligence drives innovation, deepens collaboration, and supports the general well-being for yourself, colleagues, and clients. Embracing EI is not just a strategic advantage; it's a fundamental component for long-term workplace success.

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## About the Author

Hayden Oser is a Business Analyst at Primera, where he applies his expertise in data management and solution-based consulting to drive efficiency, clarity, and creativity. A graduate of the University of Missouri–Columbia with a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, Hayden has contributed to a wide range of business cases, including data maintenance, change management, and utility-based program initiatives.