



Identifying Emotional Intelligence In Hiring (And Why It Matters)



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More than 20 years ago, research found that individuals with average IQs were outperforming those with the highest IQs 70% of the time. Going against the rationale at the time that the most “book smart” employees would be the most successful, researchers dug deeper to understand why. Eventually, researchers found that emotional intelligence was the key ingredient of success that separated the most successful from the rest of the pack.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

Pause for a moment to think about the tasks that encompass your day. Surely there are hard skills necessary to complete them. According to the experts at Talent Smart, who literally wrote the book on emotional intelligence, emotional intelligence (sometimes referred to as emotional quotient or EQ) is the bit extra in each of us that helps us “manage behavior, navigate social complexities and make personal decisions that achieve positive results.”

Emotional Intelligence and Hiring

In all likelihood, your organization has hired a candidate who simply didn't work out. This can result in low employee morale, increased cost, loss of productivity and more — the impact on an organization can be disastrous. Factoring emotional intelligence into your hiring decisions can help mitigate the risk and offer an added layer of insight into candidates before you make a decision.

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While emotional intelligence is comprised of multiple aspects, Harvard Business Review's Christina Bielaszka-DuVernay recommends focusing on these three aspects to help you identify potential high-EQ candidates:

1. Self-awareness and self-regulation. Look for insights into the needs and wishes that drive candidates and how they affect their behavior. Candidates who are more likely to be successful can regulate their emotions to prevent any fear, anger or anxiety they experience from spreading to colleagues or result in a loss of control.

2. Reading others and recognizing the impact of his or her behavior on them. Candidates who have well-developed emotional and social "radar" and can sense how their words and actions influence colleagues are more likely to be successful within your organization.

3. The ability to learn from mistakes. Candidates who can acknowledge their mistakes, reflect critically upon them and learn from them are ideal choices for any organization.

How to Find Candidates with High Emotional Intelligence

Finding high-EQ candidates doesn't have to mean overhauling your hiring process. Ask these questions to identify the best candidates:

- What bothers you most about previous coworkers?
- Tell me about a time you helped out a coworker.

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- When was the last time you had a bad day? What went wrong?
- What has been your favorite professional relationship? Why do you think it was successful?
- What are you most proud of in your career? Why?
- Who inspires you (and why)?

Asking the right questions to determine EQ means getting the right candidates in the door for interviews. At [Staff Depot](#), we have strong relationships with top talent across Ontario. We'll help you find the best talent to help your organization reach its goals. [Contact your nearest Staff Depot office today](#) to get started.