

Using Emotions as Tools to Persuade

Some additional benefits of Emotional Intelligence

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SOME ADDITIONAL BENEFITS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence in leadership is often referred to when it comes to create high engagement and a healthy spirit in a team, or strong relationships with individual team members. In both cases, the focus is on the relationships between the leader and people she works with.

Emotional Intelligence is certainly helpful here, and researchers are accumulating evidence that Emotional Intelligence makes a real difference (For more information, visit the website of the Emotional Intelligence Consortium, a group of high-profile academics: www.eiconsortium.org).

At the same time, there is another area where Emotional Intelligence brings some benefits: using emotions to persuade.

The ability to persuade is certainly what is needed on a regular basis. Can you think of a day when you don't have to persuade somebody, in one way or another?

Persuading can be defined as having somebody accept an idea or a plan we present to him, and, often, have him take action accordingly.

How can emotions possibly fit in this process?

Let's look at what typically happens when we try to persuade people. We line up arguments supporting our idea or plan, and shoot them one after another, a bit like arrows that we shoot towards a target.

Sometimes, our arrows hit the target and people accept our argument. Frequently, quite a lot of our arrows miss the target (people discard our argument), or get intercepted before they have a chance to reach the target (people interrupt us!).

What happens is that we persuade at a purely rational level. We mention reasons why the person we are trying to persuade should accept our idea or plan. Then, if we fail to persuade that person after giving a first bunch of reasons, that person will provide us with another bunch of good reasons to go for an other idea or another plan.

While persuasion on a purely rational level as described above is inevitable, we can use **emotions as additional tools to reinforce our ability to persuade**. How does this work?

Verbalizing our emotions about the particular idea or plan that we are trying to promote **can significantly enhance our ability to persuade**.

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This is mainly because emotions are highly contagious. Emotions of one individual in a group can impact deeply and quickly the whole group (see Note below).

As a leader, why not make the best use of this?

For example, expressing clearly how excited and enthusiastic we feel about our idea or project has an impact that can be greater than the arguments we use.

We often assume that people know how we feel. We think that if we are excited or enthusiastic about a project, they will notice it and there is no need to mention it. **Wrong assumption!**

People do not always pick up our emotions accurately so we can not leave it to them to guess. Let's make it easier for them by expressing clearly what we feel.

And one great advantage in using emotions in persuasion is that emotions can not be denied or dismissed as rational arguments are likely to be. Can you imagine somebody telling you "No, that's not true, you are not enthusiastic about that project"?

Don't forget, the root of the word "emotion" in Latin is "to move". As a leader, you can use emotions to persuade your people. And have them move in a direction that will bring great results both for you and them.

Let's keep progressing!

Sebastien

Note: Here are three fascinating biographies that are not directly related to Emotional Intelligence but from which we can learn a lot on persuasion and how emotions of one individual in a group can impact deeply and quickly the whole group.

- Nelson Mandela, [A long walk to freedom](#)
- Eric Luther, [Che Guevara](#)
- Margot Morrell and Stephanie Capparell, [Shackleton's way: Leadership lessons from the Great Antarctic Explorer](#)



Sebastien Henry is **Progress-U's expert for Emotional Intelligence (EQ) and stress management**. He works with executives who want to:

- avoid feeling exhausted and uprooted as their career takes them to the top;
- become more inspiring leaders by developing their Emotional Intelligence (EQ) at work; and, as a consequence
- be able to motivate their people more and retain the best.

Having worked in an Asia-Pacific regional position at a multinational company, Sebastien has experimented extensively on how to develop Emotional Intelligence in his daily work life. He is currently writing a book on this topic. His articles on Emotional Intelligence in Leadership have been published in Human Resources and South China Morning Post.

He firmly believes in action, and the tools he uses and shares are derived from several areas of his life: his business experience as a corporate executive, of course, but also his intensive practice of mountaineering and rock climbing (7a on-sight and more than 50 alpine routes), his commitment to teach and coach prisoners, and his daily meditations for more than six years.

Positions of his clients as a one-to-one coach are: Asia/Pacific General Manager, Country General Manager, Department Head, etc.

Languages: Spoken and written Mandarin, Japanese, English, French (native language)

Credentials:

- MBA, BA in Psychology, BA in Philosophy
- Certified NLP Practitioner and Master Practitioner
- Certified NLP Trainer (NLPU, USA)
- Certified Coach (ICC)
- More than 40 days of training with the Gestalt approach at the Paris School of Gestalt
- Certified Trainer of the "EQ Impact Learning" program (Talentsmart, USA)

Services offered: 1:1 Executive Coaching, Group Seminars and Workshops, Key Note Speeches

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