

EI courses provide well-structured spaces for reflective thinking on self and one's engagements with others, writes **Veena Vohra**



Emotional Intelligence boosts team dynamics at workplaces

The world of work has witnessed shifts during and after the Covid pandemic. Ongoing seismic geopolitical trends, the advent of generative technologies and societal shifts have also driven changes in the way we work as also how we view work. Managing and leading self and others in such a constantly shifting environment requires development of deep expertise.

Leaders today are required to demonstrate high levels of Emotional Intelligence (EI) to successfully navigate highly complex situations in organisations. From

being perceived in initial phases as a fuzzy concept or an umbrella term, EI today is a firmly established and widely researched competence. Leading with EI is built upon the foundations of self-awareness and regulation, social awareness and social skills. The key aspect to consider here is that EI can be developed and strengthened through well-developed reflective processes to drive behavioural change.

Deep Thinking

Business schools are well positioned to nurture EI in young aspiring leaders. Courses on EI are offered to students providing well-structured spaces for deep, reflective thinking on self and one's engagements with others. Built on the foundations of neuroscience and positive psychology,

such courses bring together research and findings to provide relevant frameworks and models of learning. These findings acquaint students with critical concepts such as body brain connections, amygdala hijack situations, or lead an exploration into the impact of stress on the body and cognition. Knowledge of emotions, emotional literacy and the nature of emotions form part of the rich content that students traverse as they work on building their own EI.

To enable learning in students, faculty often incorporate role-play simulations, leadership labs to encourage students to experiment with behavioural choices as they learn to move from reactive to responsive modes of living.

Enabling leaders to enhance their own effectiveness requires

a consistent investment in the building of EI skills. A leader's EI testing happens during the 'moments of truth' as they interact with teams, clients, employees or significant stakeholders.

Empathetic leadership catalyses cultural shifts and drives deep listening and reflection in various organisational parts. Leaders trained in EI are able to manage the emotions of their teams more effectively. An important indicator of organisational health is the retention rate. Studies indicate that promoting EI is associated with higher retention rates due to the ability of organisational members to navigate varied stressors and address them appropriately.

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Reflective assignments that surface emotional insights and drive action plans prove to be more effective