

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CRITICAL THINKING FOR LIBRARY LEADERS

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND CRITICAL THINKING FOR LIBRARY LEADERS

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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*To Alicia, Bryce, and Brinn, may you always be guided by
emotional intelligence and critical thinking.*

Thank you for your love and support.

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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| <i>Acknowledgments</i> | <i>ix</i> |
| <i>Preface</i> | <i>xi</i> |
| 1. Emotional Intelligence: An Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Self-awareness | 7 |
| 3. Self-management | 19 |
| 4. Social Awareness | 29 |
| 5. Relationship Management | 43 |
| 6. Traits and Practices of Emotional Intelligence People Outside of Libraries Find Important | 55 |
| 7. Critical Thinking: An Introduction | 63 |
| 8. Critical Decision-making | 67 |
| 9. Critical Problem-solving | 75 |
| 10. Writing Critically | 87 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| 11. Creative Thinking | 101 |
| 12. In Closing | 109 |
| Appendix A. Case Studies | 111 |
| Appendix B. Kreitz's 96 EI Traits | 127 |
| Appendix C. Standard Memo Layout | 133 |
| Appendix D. Elements of an Executive Summary | 135 |
| About the Author | 139 |
| <i>Index</i> | 141 |

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PREFACE

This book is the first in a planned series of seven. Each book will take an in-depth look at two (of 14 total) foundational competencies for library leaders and managers as defined by the Library Leadership and Management Association a division of the American Library Association (LLAMA, 2014). This book will cover emotional intelligence and critical thinking. Other books in the series will cover topics such as:

| | |
|--|---|
| 2 Collaboration and partnerships Marketing and advocacy Ethics | 5 Team building Project management |
| 3 Forward thinking Evidence-based decision making | 6 Communication skills Change management |
| 4 Budget creation and presentation Ethics | 7 Problem solving Conflict resolution |

When this author, a library practitioner, researcher, and professor of library management, feels that the topics are important, but do not appear to be addressed by the LLAMA Foundational Competencies (e.g., fundraising), he will attempt to place that topic within the confines of the competency that he feels is most related, such as in this case, budget creation and presentation.

While the series will be based in research, it is meant for a practitioner audience and thus will err on the side of practical advice. In addition to being a researcher in management and leadership, having formerly run the Center for Library Leadership and Management at the University of Southern California (USC), the author is also a practitioner, having run two public libraries. He has also been a member of an executive team or consulted with the executive team in three other large urban public libraries over his 15+ year career in librarianship. While not an academic librarian, the author was housed within the Doheny Memorial Library and did collaborate with academic librarians often while at USC. The author has also been a member of the Special Library Association (SLA), has supervised many students in internships in special libraries, attended SLA conferences, and often consulted with his corporate special library during a previous career in advertising. Thus, he will attempt to address management and leadership variables that may be of particular interest to those working in special libraries as well. Last, the author has consulted with school librarians throughout his career, counting many as close acquaintances, and will do his best to address their challenges as well. In general, this work is meant to aid all librarians who wish to improve their management and leadership skills. He hopes you will enjoy this series.

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EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE: AN INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence, which Daniel Goleman (2004) calls the “sine qua non of leadership” (p. 182), involves “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action” (Mayer, DiPaolo, & Salovey, 1990, p. 189). Managerial leaders with a high level of emotional intelligence try to lower the stress level in the organization (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002), maintain follower trust, and work collectively to achieve the organizational mission.

While Daniel Goleman did not discover emotional intelligence, he certainly can be credited with popularizing the theory, which he did in his 1995 bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ* (Goleman, 1995). This work was groundbreaking, perhaps because it filled in a societal knowledge-gap of why smart people, those with a high IQ, don’t always succeed, while those with proverbial “street smarts” often do. Goleman (2004) once wrote, “having a well-developed emotional intelligence, both for the individual and for the organization, make [developing] it worth the effort” (p. 91). This last

point is relevant, because it points to something researchers on the topic have uncovered: Emotional intelligence not only improves with age but can also be learned (Colfax, Rivera, & Perez, 2010).

Not much scholarly work has been published on emotional intelligence in libraries, so this book will rely heavily on the work of a few earnest scholars in the profession that have investigated it, while expanding to other researchers outside librarianship to help fill in gaps. As this is meant to be a practical text with much application, the author will also draw on real-life examples from his career and those of other library leaders. He will also borrow heavily from his soon-to-be-published Emotional Intelligence study, which he conducted, as well as its associated case studies (four of which are featured in this book). The study investigated public library leaders' use of emotional intelligence traits during times of economic crisis, particularly the recession of the late 2000s and early 2010s and its aftermath.

In order to present the information in an organized fashion, this book will use as its framework Goleman's and his colleagues' four domains of emotional intelligence. These being: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman et al., 2002). Furthermore, it will focus on the most important 96 emotional intelligence traits identified by Hernon and Rossiter (2006), as recasted and studied by Kreitz (2009) in her work on emotional intelligence in academic library leaders, as well as later work, discussed previously, by this author which focused on emotional intelligence in public library leaders (Shaffer, in press).

THE FOUR DOMAINS

As previously, stated the emotional intelligence theory this book uses for its basis is made up of four domains as defined

by [Goleman et al. \(2002\)](#). They are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management. Briefly, these researchers defined these domains as follows (pp. 40–51):

Self-awareness – The ability to have a deep understanding of one’s emotions, strengths, limitations, values, and motives; it also encompasses possession of strong self-confidence.

Social awareness – The ability to empathize and possess organizational awareness along with the realization that one’s mood and actions can affect others in positive and negative ways.

Self-management – Characterized by an understanding of one’s emotions and being clear about one’s purpose. It also involves keeping one’s emotions in check and constant reflection via inner-dialogue, while staying transparent, optimistic, and displaying initiative.

Relationship management – Entails engagement in the arts of persuasion, conflict management, and collaboration, and involves inspiring, influencing, and developing others.

Each of the following four chapters will focus on one of the above domains. The final chapter on emotional intelligence will focus on a handful of traits others (outside of librarianship) find important. It is not that the library leaders who participated in the studies did not think these important, rather they did not rise to the level of most important in their minds. In each chapter, the author will first introduce two to three traits that library researchers found to rise to the top in terms of importance under each domain, along with other traits for each domain that were also identified to be of importance to library and

information science professionals who participated in the studies for a total of five traits per domain/chapter. The researcher will also present three leadership styles and one leadership tool (one per chapter) which use characteristics of emotional intelligence and align with the chapter in which it is presented. Appendix A features four case studies from the author's study on emotional intelligence of public library directors, while in Appendix B, Kreitz's (2009) 96 traits of emotional intelligence are listed in full. This book, however, will not delve into them all. Rather, as stated, it will focus on the 25 traits library leaders and those outside of the library field have identified as most helpful.

This said, the five emotional intelligence traits that rose to the top for participants in the three library leadership studies referenced in this book are as follows:

1. Ability to function in a political environment (Relationship Management).
2. Ability to build a shared vision and rally others around it by articulating the direction for the library (Relationship Management).
3. Possession of a stable temperament and ability to maintain an emotional balance under constant tensions (Self-management).
4. Realistic understanding of oneself: emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives (Self-Awareness).
5. Cognitive ability to deal with complex scenarios or situations (Self-awareness).

All of these and more will be touched upon in the succeeding chapters.

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SELF-AWARENESS

Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee (2002) relate that, “self-awareness is the ability to have a deep understanding of one’s emotions, strengths, limitations, values, and motives. It also encompasses possession of strong self-confidence” (p. 40). Please see Case Study #1 in Appendix A for an example of a library leadership team that used self-awareness when faced with crisis.

As surfaced in the studies that inform this book, the most important self-awareness traits for library managers and leaders are:

Realistic understanding of oneself: emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives

Know where she or he is going/taking the organization

Cognitive ability to deal with complex scenarios or situations

Other important self-awareness traits for library managers and leaders are:

Ability to delegate

Respect for individuality and diversity.

The most important self-awareness trait for library managers and leaders are discussed below in detail.

REALISTIC UNDERSTANDING OF ONESELF: EMOTIONS, STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, NEEDS, AND DRIVES

A realistic understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives is at the core of the self-awareness domain. The ancient Greeks had an expression attributed to many sages, which purportedly was carved in the forecourt of Apollo's temple at Delphi. It read, *Gnōthi Seauton*, which translates to English as Know Thyself (Pausanias, n.d.). Self-awareness is a foundational skill of emotional intelligence, making other emotional intelligence traits easier to master (Bradberry & Greaves, 2009). Knowing what pushes one's buttons, what one's weaknesses are, and what gets one excited are the early steps of getting to know one's self. Just paying attention to reactions, perhaps writing them down, and looking for connections can be both liberating and extremely helpful.

KNOW WHERE SHE OR HE IS GOING/ TAKING THE ORGANIZATION

Knowing where one is going or taking the organization when one is the leader or part of the leadership team implies there is a plan in place. Having no plan is akin to setting off on a journey