

## Emotional Intelligence for Librarians

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### Abstract

Emotional intelligence (EI) is the capacity to be aware of, control, and express one's emotions, and to handle interpersonal relationships effectively within your library. Theories about developing emotionally intelligent staff through training, mentoring, and succession planning are discussed specifically in relation to librarianship. The theories and discussed philosophies and practices of EI will encompass and blend new concepts into existing and widely valued library literature with theorists from within the business sector. This article discusses how EI is used in the employment selection process and how it defines the core competencies we see in our employees. This article will delve into training, benefits, challenges, and how it is used in the change management process. In healthy libraries, EI is for leaders, managers, and employees at all levels.

### Introduction

Psychologist and emotional intelligence (EI) expert Daniel Goleman told a story of an airline flight attendant who used emotional intelligence to calm a plane full of weary and agitated travelers (2001). In chapter two of *Emotional Intelligence: Issues in paradigm building*, Goleman described a situation that arose after a long and difficult flight. The passengers were late in their arrival and overly anxious to depart the plane because the Super Bowl football game was about to begin. They rose from their seats before reaching the gate because they were anxious almost to the point of having their hearts reach despair. This was an emotional reaction despite the fact that they were cognitively aware that they must stay seated until the plane reaches the gate, and comes to a complete stop. Goleman says there is a great divide between the mind and the heart, i.e., cognition and emotion. "Other abilities integrate thought and feeling and fall within the domain of emotional intelligence, a term that highlights the crucial role of emotional performance" (2001, p. 14). How did the flight attendant accomplish this great task? Instead of chastising them, she picked up the intercom and stated calmly, in a sing-song fashion, "You're staaanding!" (2001, p. 13). In fact, Goleman explains further that the flight attendant was able to "hit exactly the right emotional note—something cognitive capabilities alone are insufficient for, because by definition they lack the human flair for feeling" (2001, p. 14). Her humor diffused the situation, calming the weary and anxious passengers.

Emotional intelligence, Goleman says, is the ability to "recognize and regulate emotions in ourselves and in others" (2011, p. 14). He also suggests four major domains within EI: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. "The model of EI as a variety of intelligence has a wide range of implications...particularly in predicting and developing the hallmarks of outstanding performers in jobs of every kind and at every level" (2001 p. 20). If Goleman's theory applies to performers in jobs of every kind and at every level, then it follows that he believes also that library managers, staff, senior administrators and strategic leaders have the potential to be emotionally intelligent or already have the innate ability to behave and to manage or lead in such a manner. The business literature, such as what Goleman dedicated his professional life to, which is written outside of the library profession, should instill a sense of intrigue among librarians. As a profession, librarians need to think out of the box with ingenuity and intellectual curiosity. So to speak, librarians must stop relying solely

on library literature, lest we continue thinking inside the box. This limitation that we put on ourselves simply recreates what other librarians have researched and enacted in the institutions where they have an affiliation. This affiliation could be a home library or perhaps even at organizations where they conducted qualitative, quantitative, or mixed method research. It's the famed situation: same old same old...

So exactly how do we apply the flight attendant's experience with an angry plane full of passengers to a library? It's simple really. Think logically and complete the following analogy: a flight attendant is to a passenger as a librarian is to a (fill in the blank). Librarians face unhappy patrons on a daily basis. College students, for example, are tired, worried, or falling behind in their studies. Perhaps they just left the registrar's office where they were told they could not register for the next semester because they owe library fines. Yes, they are probably irate. And how would a librarian handle the situation? Hopefully with a healthy dose of emotional intelligence. The librarian would have to put themselves in the patron's shoes. Be empathetic. Be mindful of your own emotions as well as the emotions of the patrons. If you feel their anger is directed towards you, and in some cases it is, diffuse the situation. How? Humor in this case is not your best option. Perhaps being empathetic, using your best listening skills, and doing what is called "talking them down." When students break down into tears, your emotional intelligence must ignite.

Library literature will provide us with immediate examples of how other librarians work. This is helpful for people who feel they are pressed for time. However, this flies in the face of reason. When we expand our horizons and delve into literature outside of library science, in particular the business expert literature, we forge our own future. Librarians must keep abreast of the changing business climates, trends, and opportunities. If we disregard business trends in light of conducting our research in a faster and easier manner, we continue to operate status quo. Transformational leaders cannot operate in status quo mode. They must create the vision. The vision should not be based solely on the expertise of a few librarians. If librarians delve deeply into the library literature, which is a finite number of articles, then they can become a transformational leader, but one must read the expert business literature, too. "While there is wide acknowledgement in the general management literature emanating from the business world that EI competencies are valuable, most literature in the library realm is limited in scope and has been focused on positions at the higher levels of leadership...with little research performed on non-leadership or entry-level positions within academic libraries" (Klare, et al., 2014, p. 22).

As mentioned, the four main components of EI are self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management. All can come into play, just as Goleman points out. To improve self-awareness is to improve objectivity, self-motivation and intuition. To improve self-management, curb any tendencies to react quickly to incidents and risk outbursts that might arise in the heat of the moment. Basically, maintain your composure. Communication and self-management help us deal with conflict and change management. If librarians can develop their EI skills in social awareness and relationship management, they will become better equipped to settle disputes, effectively communicate, and develop successful and lasting relationships.

I liken EI to a process I call TIPR (pronounced tipper). This process involves four steps. First when facing conflict, (t)hink. Before you act you must clear your head. The next step is to (i)nvestigate. Find facts. Find data. Interview the staff. Ask questions. Next, after educating yourself on the true issues or problems, (p)lan your course of action, in preparation for you to (r)each.

The librarian's skill and comfort level with EI depends solely on two aspects of EI that mirror the leadership/management conundrum: is an emotionally intelligent person born or made? We can hire for EI and we can provide training for EI. In this chapter, we discuss theories about developing emotionally intelligent staff through training, mentoring and succession planning. Discussions regarding the effects of change management and its correlation to EI are incorporated. The theories and recommended philosophies and practices of EI will encompass and blend new concepts into existing and widely valued literature and theories from leading experts from both the business sector and within the library science field. The following sections on competencies, development and training, EI benefits and opportunities, change management, and EI for leaders and managers will guide you through some of the most attainable EI soft skills for leaders and managers alike. From this chapter, one can take away the overarching possibilities to instill EI skills and appreciation to all staff, no matter they fall in the organizational chart.

### **EI and the Employee – Selection Process**

Selection is more than picking your hire. It involves the entire search process. It starts with the job description. To say you want leadership skills may not be enough. It will not yield the data you seek from your applications. The selection process enables you to weigh the candidates, weeding out transactional managers from transformational leaders. Screening for soft skills is a difficult endeavor. Oftentimes we merely select those applicants who have the harder job specific skills, such as computer programming or cataloging. We select reference or interlibrary loan applicants because they show progressive increases in managerial responsibilities. The key to a successful selection process lies in the job description and in the interview questions, topics discussed thoroughly in this section.

“Organizations today need emotionally intelligent leaders. More and more research shows leaders need more than cognitive intelligence; they need the types of soft skills associated with emotional intelligence, like the ability to honestly express their emotions and perceive the emotions of those around them” (Martin, 2016, p. 346). Soft skills are those traits or characteristics that effectively create harmony between people, and in this case, we are referring specifically to our colleagues. Soft skills are much different than hard skills, which relate to one's skills in the technicalities and operability of one's position. For example, a systems librarian must know computer coding languages to be hired. Coding is a hard skill. Soft skills in a systems librarian include being an effective communicator, being flexible, maintaining composure, and displaying talent in conflict resolution. These soft skills also include being an effective team leader and teammate. Effective team leaders and teammates with EI skills are trustworthy, adaptable, and take initiative. These are characteristics that are also qualities of being emotionally intelligent. They may be innate for some, but certainly ascertainable for others.

Key terms that should be included in a job posting will vary from position to position. Writing a thorough and informatively detailed posting will help the search committee screen for both hard and soft skills. For example, list such position requirements as:

- Hard skills: Five years of professional reference desk experience in an academic health sciences library.
- Soft skills: Demonstrable project management success.

Search committees need to quickly spot candidates that have the requisite experience and hard skills of the posted position as exemplified above. However, they need proof on the application that the candidates being called into an interview can lead teams, for example. Team leading involves managing conflict, delegating, making decisions, and maintaining poise when project activities are challenged.

“Better recruitment practices that consciously include EI language in job postings would partially address the issue of deliberately seeking emotionally intelligent individuals in today’s libraries, but there are additional ways to ascertain a candidate’s ability to reflect and manage relationships” (Klare, Behney, Kenney, 2014, p. 23). “During the interview phase, search team members can create scenarios for candidates that would require emotionally intelligent responses or ask them to reflect on a situation that did not go well and what they learned from the experience, (Klare, 2014, p. 23). After all, “if smart people miss emotional cues, they can come across as clueless and uncaring, which undermines their ability to build the connections necessary for successful leadership” (Klare, 2014, p. 21). Klare continues to say “When emotions are dismissed, we forfeit the opportunity to build a cohesive and resonant work environment and tap into the motivation of individuals” (Klare, et al. 2014, p. 21).

In another example, when hiring a head systems librarian, the candidates will need both hard and soft skills. The search committee screens candidate’s applications for the core competencies (hard skills) of the specific position. Committees need to uncover both when reviewing applications. Then the committees need to uncover in the interview process who might best show innate abilities related to EI, or the potential for learning emotionally intelligence skills, otherwise known as soft skills. Let’s talk more about this process.

Softer skills are so desired amongst candidates being considered for hire that displaying soft skill talents in a job interview may be enough to set one apart from all other applicants. Let’s pose a case scenario to our interviewees and weigh their responses in the realms of emotional intelligence:

The Systems Department implemented a new Integrated Library Service, and when the project rolled out, it rendered communications between the circulation and interlibrary loan departments incoherent. Neither could read their own departmental files, much less cross-departmentally, a function imperative to both parties. Tempers flared. Because the problem was cross-departmental, and it involved the daily mission, the head of the department must become involved in a transactional yet emotionally intelligent manner.

What answers from each candidate can lead us to uncover their expertise and/or potential? We look for responses that involve communication skills and the ability to investigate situation from all angles. For example, the candidate says, “I would speak to all those affected to gather information and data first.” The candidate’s answers can demonstrate that they understand the importance of showing restraint and patience. They seek buy in, and show empathy for those affected by the system’s issue. Perhaps the candidate you select is the one who best verbalizes the need to bring the circulation and interlibrary loan managers into the same room so that everyone can discuss the best solutions to the problem. The systems librarian can express such skills as conflict resolution, composure, and the ability to listen and concentrate to the emotions of the librarians involved. If one candidate expresses a need to diffuse a potential conflict at a higher cognitive level, they might just be your first choice.

EI is considered a soft skill, less attuned to the cognitive intelligence skill. It can be also considered a social skill (Promis, 2008). The research Promis covers discusses the key

elements of job descriptions when seeking candidates who possess existing EI traits. “Leadership competency is cited most often in the categories of dean, assistant/associate dean, and departmental head” (Promis, 2008, p. 28). The job ads usually mention leadership skills, she says, but without further descriptions or details. Similarly many job ads simply say the applicant needs to provide future vision for the library (Promis, 2008).

## EI Core Competencies

EI consists of a core set of competencies. Interviewees are selected because their resumes or curriculum vitae show the technical skills required for the position. Some new hires will need leadership skills, and as discussed EI must be questioned in the interview process. EI talent may have been inherent in a natural skillset in some librarians, while others may have been trained via workshops, institutes or by more personal interactions with mentors and coaches. Through training, being mentored, and with practice and reflection, they can become more self-aware and aware of the emotions of those they supervise and/or lead both within their departments or cross departmentally.

“Managers can learn and improve EI if there is a willingness to do so. Mentoring relationships, conferences, and literature provide supplements to traditional library management courses in this skill area. Moreover, practicing emotional awareness and empathy in interpersonal communications with staff is a good way to improve EI. Analyzing good and bad staff interactions provides opportunities to assess one’s EI levels” (Porter, 2010, p. 209).

Being warm and outgoing, Goleman says, is not demonstrable EI. Being warm and outgoing is part of one’s personality. It’s a characteristic. However, “it may also be a reflection of a specific set of EI competencies, chiefly those involving the ability to relate positively to others” (2001 p. 20). Understanding yourself and looking objectively at your strengths and areas for improvement is the first step to take in developing and improving EI. We are librarians: read books and articles on the topic and attend seminars or workshops that are focused on EI soft skills such as effective communication, motivation, and time management. “EI can be developed and improved...simply understanding the essential elements of EI can help people to improve their EI. The more you learn about EI and consider how it applies to you the better your EI skills will become” (Sweetman, 2016, p. 43). In addition to being warm and outgoing, try to be social too. Knowing a little about your staff’s personal lives is acceptable within organizational culture and its limitations. The old policy of keeping your distance from your staff contradicts EI.

According to Promis, not only do librarians need to hire people with the right competencies, they need to implement professional development plans for existing staff to enhance their existing EI skill-set. She asks, “If cognitive intelligence and academic credentials are no longer enough to succeed, what does it take to be successful in the twenty-first century academic library?” (Promis, 2008, p.24). She continues to explain that “By contrast, EI comprises a variety of individual skills and behaviors also referred to ... as ‘soft skills.’ Many but not all the soft skills are cognitive skills: that is, higher order thinking skills such as creative thinking, critical and analytical thinking, data manipulation and synthesis, and decision-making” (Promis, 2008, p. 24). In addition to being an effective communicator an emotionally intelligent employee, whether staff, administrator or librarian, they should also be flexible with conflict resolution skills (Promis, 2008).

EI skills are most often valued in upper management, which may leave middle manager job ads lacking the details. Potential middle and upper management need to understand what

the employer seeks and what to expect on-the-job, if hired. In actuality, these soft skills are essential at “all levels of the professional workforce” (Promis, 2008, p. 28). She continues to say that more and more modern libraries are creating teams to drive the organization forward. These project based teams can use the TIPR method, for example, as they plan for new resources and services. In the interview process, it would be completely natural to ask candidates to describe any project teams they worked on and what role they played. Ask what challenges they faced and what lessons they learned.

“Teamwork brings all members to the same level; hence any behavioral gap becomes apparent and hinders the work of the team. Emotionally intelligent individuals are necessary ...where work relies on collaboration, development of partnerships, incorporating changes in the work place, and leveraging a diverse workforce” (Promis, 2008, p. 28). Additionally, all teams need managers, and all managers need leaders. All team and project managers will report to a senior manager, and hopefully that senior manager is a library leader. In any event, cross-departmental teams create that special ambiance where the team manager is not the formal manager of all members. Many managers feel distressed by assigning work to those outside of their domain, hence the necessity of a leader who can set the parameters straight so that the project or team manager is given due authority.

Hernon and Rossiter identified “...the traits that comprise emotional intelligence. And suggests which ones might be most important for library directors to possess” (2006, p. 260). However, it is not a skillset reserved only for senior management and/or leadership. “Leadership focuses on social influence—influencing others to attain group, organizational, and societal goals. However, it is not a function confined solely to library directors in the senior management team; leadership should be evident at all levels of the organization” (Hernon and Rossiter, 2006, p. 260). This statement mirrors the sentiments of many other EI experts who say that EI must be present throughout the organization. Additionally, individuals might not be leaders in the library’s general operations but they may instead be “leaders on specific issues and problems such as intellectual property rights, entrepreneurship, access to government information, scholarly communication...collaboration, political skills and group processes” (Hernon and Rossiter, 2006, p. 286). Individual front line librarians and staff, who show leadership potential and who also exhibit emotionally intelligent skills, may also be selected to be team or committee leaders. One director in Hernon and Rossiter’s studies said that one chooses the traits to showcase depending on the situation. “Changing times and circumstances might require different (traits)” (Hernon and Rossiter, 2006, p. 270). These changing circumstances could be the differences between moving the tutoring center into the library or moving a marketing team forward. For example, when the library space planning begins for moving the tutoring center, the project manager needs the skills necessary to reduce stress among not only the team members, but the overall library staff in general. That situation might require a different set of EI skills than what the chair of the marketing committee possesses. That team leader may have to present negative student comments to the team during the data collection phase. This situational leader may instead need to use EI to deflect a sense of being criticized. In both of these instances, EI among situational leaders may require different personalities and skillsets.

## EI Development

EI is inherent in some individuals, while for others (managers and leaders) it can be developed. EI can also be helpful as a way to improve existing leadership skills. How do we hire librarians into organizations, no matter what management or leadership position? How do we screen for applicants who already have EI skills or those who might be able to learn new

skills? Is EI born or made? Existing leaders can encourage EI among new staff and librarians. They can provide formal training or help with mentoring.

Existing leaders can mentor and coach new employees who are interviewed and selected because of their EI potential. They can also mentor and train existing employees who they have either been singled out or who show potential to excel at EI. Perhaps in some instances, the acts of singling out potentials can be considered succession planning, something covered in detail in the Developing Leadership chapter. Similarly, candidates can attend training in the form of one-off classes, or multiple on-or-off site institutes. Yes EI, much like leadership, is not strictly a born skill. It can be introduced, developed, learned and then employed in real-life situations.

What does this mean for library managers? Pure managers, those who are considered transactional, might not be considered formal leaders. They still can be promoted into leadership positions after learning and demonstrating EI principles. Those in positions of authority who are not perceived as leaders can learn to become more skilled in the practices of EI. Their senior administrative position can shift in the eyes of the people within the organization. That is to say, once they display an understanding of EI principles they can grow into a true leadership position. The common denominator for both managers and leaders is that each can be promoted to a more senior leadership position. Goleman says that “EI emerges as a more powerful predictor of who succeeds and who does not—for instance, who is promoted to the upper echelons of management and who is passed over,” (2011, p. 24). However, this is dependent on each person’s ability to improve EI skills. EI, management and leadership can all be learned and improved to the benefit of the organization at large and to the individual’s personal job satisfaction and career mobility. “Moreover, practicing emotional awareness and empathy in interpersonal communications with staff is a good way to improve EI. Analyzing good and bad staff interactions provides opportunities to assess one’s EI levels” (Porter, 2010, p. 209).

## EI Benefits and Challenges

EI does not belong only to the senior leaders and or managers. It can and should be developed among all staff. “If possessing a number of EI traits is valuable for the leader of an organization, perhaps it is equally valuable for the senior management team members” (Kreitz, 2009, p. 532). Concomitantly, when front line staff are emotionally intelligent, and when they work for managers and leaders who are also emotionally intelligent, it creates an emotionally intelligent organization that is equipped to successfully achieve their internal goal.

“Without the skills necessary for managing relationships and demonstrating caring, we lose the ability to persuade and build connections. Empathy is a particularly important component of EI because it enables individuals, particularly those in leadership positions, to understand the viewpoints of others and foster group cohesiveness” (Klare, et al., 2014, p. 21.) It would seem that EI would be most effective in a consultative style of management and leadership, but alas, it could also work with assertive styles, democratic styles, and persuasive styles. EI, in fact, can take unhealthy organizations to another level, ultimately ensuring a “clean bill of health.” “This is a very personal process that requires motivation and commitment to change habitual emotional responses and patterns of interaction and incorporate new patterns of thinking and behaviors” (Klare, p. 23).

The success and benefits of EI lies in trusting relationships, communication, shared service values, and an ability to influence others to enact the organization’s daily mission and all

the work that it entails. Let's not forget about vision, the overarching goal of all organizations. Trust, communication, shared values, and influence are just as applicable to the success of a library. EI and organizational success are also in part dependent on understanding the importance of desired performance improvement, not in an elimination of employees but understanding the feelings of others. Is EI most useful when addressing performance issues? Or are there other methods of getting poor performers on a performance improvement plan?

Leaders also have a keen ability, perhaps more so than managers, to smooth over relationships between the staff they supervise and lead. When conflicts arise either interdepartmentally or cross-departmentally, leadership EI can effectively enhance esprit de corps both in daily activities and in long term planning or improvement initiatives. Think back to earlier in this chapter, where we discussed the systems librarian's interactions with the circulation and interlibrary loan departments. The systems librarian's direct reports, under managerial guidance, may have overlooked critical data that led to the breakdown between circulation and ILL. Using EI skills and the TIPR method will help guide the systems librarian to understand the issue, understand the underlying emotions, fix the system's problem and then finally, that leader can begin to improve the relations between the two affected departments. EI can help improve and even repair relationships, a primary benefit of emotional intelligence and a proven method to heal unhealthy library cultures.

In some libraries, EI skill development extends past managers and leaders. As such, employees can also be trained and mentored. In doing this, the organization achieves a synergy of healthy relationships that grow in a mature manner. "When conflicts arise, supervisors appreciate employees who can effectively manage their relationships with colleagues. Therefore, it is in a leader's best interest to find a way to manage disagreements while preserving collegial relationships" (Porter, p. 209). Additionally, leaders who are skilled in EI benefit greatly from effectively managing conflict resolution and that it increases both morale and efficiencies. When people get along in a positive collegial manner, work activities are more productive, and people are genuinely happier in their daily and professional work life.

As mentioned before, most leaders have a boss, just as managers do. Each exists as the middle man: a manager to your leader – a leader to your staff. "Leadership studies in academic libraries tend to focus on the library director. However, in university libraries, leadership is typically distributed between a director and those members of the senior management team who are in decision making positions" (Kreitz 2009, p. 532). In particular, university library directors report to a higher up, just as do those higher ups. It's easy to understand this when we consider that even the college president has a boss: the board of directors. In certain circumstances, leaders and managers are one in the same. When directors work in small libraries, they may need to exhibit vision and mission, steering the organization forward while directing everyday activities.

"An increased EI awareness will also enable library directors to build strengths in areas where the entire team's collective skills are lacking...in addition, understanding which EI traits are seen as most important for which leadership levels might have organizational implications for recruitment, retention, and succession planning and educational value in helping graduate schools and leadership institutes focus their training" (Kreitz, 2009, p. 532). Most research, Kreitz says, focuses on the top leader. Kreitz also found that "the top leader's primary role is to create change while the director's management team focuses on running the organization and implementing change" (2009, p. 544). Each of us has the potential to be a manager to your leader and a leader to your staff.

Leaders have vision, while managers have staff and resources to enact daily mission organizational changes to fulfill their leader's vision. Kreitz continues, "Integrity, good judgment, an ability to listen, people skills, effectiveness in leading change, and self-understanding were ranked as the top competencies that any leader should possess and that individuals – no matter where they are in an organization—would like any leader to possess" (2009, p. 546).

## EI and Change Management

The course of academic libraries is changing at a pace that is difficult at best to foresee and even more difficult to navigate. Strong leaders focus on the future and have to be not only insightful but well versed in the literature and their individual philosophies. "Today's workforce is expected to understand change" (Sweetman, 2016, p 40). This change can take the form of revising job descriptions so that the cataloger also begins to manage the shelving process. This leads to changes among the circulation staff. Perhaps the clerical workers who shelved the books now report to a different manager, one who enacts further change. "People react to change in different ways, but when the reaction is negative, frequently it is fear based. Many kinds of fear can surround a change, fear of the unknown, fear of making the wrong decision, fear of success, fear of failure, fear of loneliness, fear of losing one's job" (Sweetman, 2016, 40). Other authors and researchers agree. According to Hendrix (2013) change will inevitably create emotional responses amongst staff and librarians.

Fear is an emotion. Understanding these emotions and being able to respond in a way that calms your staff is a primary goal of EI. For example, let's imagine that senior campus administrators decide to move the learning and tutoring centers into the library building that had just five years ago absorbed the entire computer help desk staff and its 90 computers. Librarians and staff may still remember the fear they felt before that change occurred. Also, the library staff remembers the issues that arose as the staff were smashed together into one big happy (or not-so-happy) family. These past experiences trigger an automatic fear reaction: Will I have to share my office? Will we have to share the lunchroom with the computer help desk staff and now the learning center staff also? Will we be expected to assume more daily work (like sorting mail for another department)? More importantly, will my work be displaced, and will I lose my job? What about our futures? Will other departments displace us further? Fear is a true and real feeling; it is a natural reaction when facing the unknown.

The changes that occur within an organization will create emotional responses in all library staff and librarians. These responses do not have to be the demise of that change: a project to change how and/or who provides library instruction, the change from ILLiad to Tipasa, or a major building renovation that will move a learning and tutoring center into the library building (to create a true learning commons). Emotions are not destructive, and Hendrix says they are a vital part of change (2013). The old paradigm of fight vs. flight cannot hold true in today's libraries and cannot serve the evolving library of today and of the future. "Improved management of workplace emotion can help create successful change by enhancing optimism and agility and enabling people to make sense of change efforts" (Hendrix, 2013, p 172).

Without EI, it is difficult if not impossible to achieve and maintain buy in and support when facing change. A leader may experience initial positive reactions, but as the change process unfolds, and as staff begin to feel that their jobs, professional status, office spaces, and/or professional relationships are threatened by the unknown, they will undoubtedly begin to have mixed emotions. Some initial change reactions may be positive, especially for those who handle change easily or even enthusiastically. However, many staff may feel exposed and display emotional reactions negatively, leading to stalled projects that have the potential to

falter. Concomitantly, these initial reactions may flip-flop. Those initially onboard may receive conflicting information, causing their initial buy-in to wane. Take, for example, the staff who think that having tutors in the building is a great addition to the services provided by the reference librarians. The initial supporters learn further down the line that the tutors will be stationed alongside the librarians at the reference desk. This may lead to anxiety as the librarians fear the unknown and express concerns that their desk will be too small and they don't want to share what limited real estate the librarians actually have. EI must be incorporated into the interactions that managers and leaders have with these initial supporters. These initial supporters will demonstrate enthusiasm for and encouragement regarding change management, and if they have EI skills, they can effectively communicate their support of change to other staff members—EI that functions laterally instead of vertically. Conversely, some staff, at first leery of such change, will warm to the prospect of change if their feelings and emotions are addressed.

“The emotional impact of the changes in academic libraries is partly due to a sense of loss” (Hendrix, 2013, 175). Change may be greeted by resistance, and then staff will go through a process of grieving, exploring, accepting and then changing. “Mixed or clear messages that one's work is not valued or is no longer relevant leads to strong, sometimes disabling, emotion” (Hendrix, 2013, p. 175). Hendrix says that:

“Library leaders—who may be in positions of leadership or in entry-level jobs, where they lead by example—can and should work to develop their own EI, since low EI can derail a change process by creating alienation and disengagement. Mixed messages that ones' work is not valued is no longer relevant may lead to resentment, and eventual resignation when retraining and adaptation assistance might have been possible” (2013, p. 178).

EI can diffuse this type of situation when managers, leaders, and staff all show empathy, are emotionally supportive, stay positive, welcome suggestions, and answer questions as honestly and as fully as possible.

Although emotional intelligence is not a new concept to leadership, research in regards to EI in academic libraries is limited. “Research in the role of emotion in the workplace is relatively recent, but the emotional part of the human brains is ancient and emotions actually appear to have evolved” Hendrix writes (2013, p. 173). And no matter where you fall in the scheme of an organizational chart, you will have emotions related to organizational change. Even in the best of times, employees still experience negative emotions. Most commonly, when employees feel their jobs are being evaluated and/or redesigned, or changes in process and performance are under the microscope, as the change process requires, staff experience anxiety, self-doubt, suspicion and perhaps even grieve the loss of the work for which they dedicated years of their life.

“The resistance stage is where the strongest emotions are manifested and is where many people get stuck. They quit thinking and move to a state of emotional reacting” (VanDuinkerken & Mosley, 2011, p.18). This situation (VanDuinkerken & Mosley, 2011, p.18) is hard to change, as individual are hearing comments with filters of anger, hurt, loss, doubt and distrust (VanDuinkerken & Mosley, 2011). “Most employees will eventually move past the resistance stage and into the exploration phase. This is where they have accepted the need to engage on the change at one level but there is still a period of personal development, adjustment, and questioning....finally, employees will enter the state of commitment...where the employee has reengaged and bought into the change ...directing one's focus and energies to

make it successful” (VanDuinkerken & Mosley, 2011, p.18). VanDuinkerken & Mosley continue to say that “the worst thing for a change leader to do is to dismiss the emotions as not having validity or importance... Recognizing the emotions and being willing to address their impact goes a long way to making the change a more positive, less negative event” (2011, p. 25).

Change for the sake of change, when perceived as such, will ultimately create the apprehension and distrust discussed prior. Leaders and managers are challenged therefore to present change as necessary to better patron service and perceptions. Keeping up the industry may be a driving force, but leaders can use EI to calmly and rationally explain to staff and librarians a detailed plan of action that is complete with an analysis of the intended results of such change.

### EI for Leaders and EI for Managers

Leadership and management skills are not static; once you have EI skills developed you should continually ride the tide. When organizational change presents itself, leaders and managers must react in different ways. Although some scenarios may use certain skills over and over, as project team compositions change, personalities and characters change, and different initiatives are launched, flexibility is eminent if success is sought. Styles of influence must be fluid, reflecting time, space, presence, and direction. “The need for particular traits can shift over time and from situation to situation” (Hernon and Rossiter, 2006, p. 261).

The difference between EI for managers and leaders is simple. Managers will use their EI skills to calm the daily fears that arise regarding sorting the mail or having to be trained on when or how to direct a student away from the reference desk and send them to the writing tutors. Leaders deal with long term fears, such as cross-departmental concerns. How will everyone get along? How will we all share our lunchroom with so many more staff? Why do we have to weed so many print books from the collection and replace them with electronic books? If we eliminate print, what will our circulation manager or cataloger do within the organization? Even scarier is the concern that they might not be needed or they could have their positions redesigned. The differences again deal with daily versus visionary issues. Managers control the daily work issues while leaders project into the future of the organization and larger scale work issues, especially one such as managerial authority, divisions of labor between departments, etc.

Using EI and being in tune with one’s own emotions and the potential emotional reactions of others can help managers and leaders remain calm even in the most uncertain of times; they can successfully calm others with a caring approach when times are tough. As such, better decisions can be made by all. Consider the planning process involved in absorbing a new department or service into the existing library building. Those in charge, the managers and the leaders, need to plan calmly as they conduct focus groups, create surveys, and of course, take directives from those in the highest levels of authority on campus. The library leaders and the managers need to collaborate with, for example, the learning and tutoring center and then create project teams and assign rational and less fearful staff to continue with the planning process. Consider how a staff member would feel if their work was redesigned without their individual input. They may be fearful and reasonably so, if the change is edict. The staff members and librarians who actually perform the work on a daily basis will be less fearful if they are part of the planning process. Organizing these work analysis teams would be a managerial task, considering we are analyzing and reorganizing daily activities. Leadership works in conjunction with architects to analyze space constraints and opportunities, for example. However, at critical stages in the planning process, higher level updates must become an

acceptable practice; one that will decrease the fear and stress that emerges naturally amongst the front line staff. Managers lead daily work; leaders deal with higher level concerns. With a rational approach, managers and leaders can calmly explain the plans in action in a more confident, less fearful manner.

Managers and leaders will also have to deal with their own fear. Will the staff “revolt?” Will the leader and manager make mistakes that would be detrimental to their staff or the library operations? Will they be displaced and replaced? Their fears must also be acknowledged within as well as from above.

According to Caruso and Salovey, “the skills of emotional intelligence do not guarantee health, wealth, or happiness. In fact, the emotionally intelligent manager may often feel sad and anxious” (2004, p. 172). They say that the emotionally intelligent manager’s rewards lie in the desire and ability to do well for oneself and for others.

Unlike Caruso and Salovey, who say that EI managers set the course in a sea of change, EI managers in fact only serve to ensure the sailors are doing things right; they are going in the appropriate direction. That is to say EI managers deal with the daily work that is affected by the sea of change. Leaders, on the other hand, use their vision to set the course, to map out the future direction and anticipate waves in that direction. According to Warren Bennis, managers do things right while leaders do the right things. Front line staff also need to recognize and acknowledge the emotions that arise within their colleagues when faced with organizational changes. Frontline staff can support each other on a peer-to-peer level.

However, Caruso and Salovey do say that they emphasize interactions between “emotion and cognition, feeling and thinking, passion and reason” (2004, p. 195). Rational thinking, they say, is tied to emotional reasoning, and the two cannot be easily separated. “We say it can get you a long way toward becoming a leader rather than simply a manager” (Caruso and Salovey, 2004, p. 195). Caruso and Salovey continue to say that it is impossible to exhibit the five keys to leadership success as outlined by the famed leadership experts, Kouzes and Posner: a leader’s ability to model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart, Caruso and Salovey believe, depends on the ability to be emotionally intelligent. “But we think if you learn and apply it, you’ll have a chance to become something even better: a leader of teams and organizations that show lasting, positive qualities that can give them an edge in terms of loyalty and commitment, as well as in striving to do the right thing” (Caruso and Salovey, 2004, p. 196).

## Conclusion

Emotionally intelligent leaders and managers are tasked with providing staff with sound and rational emotional support. As leading business experts provide us with their philosophies, librarians must realize that these experts base their work on years of hard-lined research. They did not just read literature in their field that is concomitantly written by those in their field. Librarians who only read library specific literature will see the same results time after time, reflecting a pattern of thinking inside the box. Breaking out of this habit will enhance creativity in designing forward thinking librarians who lead, manage, and perform the daily operational duties in their libraries. If Goleman’s theory applies to workers in jobs of every kind and at every level, then we should also believe that library leaders, managers, and front-line staff have the potential to be emotionally intelligent. They may already have the innate ability to behave and to manage or lead in emotionally intelligent manners. The business literature, such as what Goleman

dedicated his professional life to, which is written outside of the library profession, should instill a sense of intrigue among librarians.

In the beginning of this article, we discussed the flight attendant who calmed an entire plane full of weary passengers. Librarians can relate this to their library operations, both with library patrons and library staff. Both need doses of emotional healing so that they are happy. Yes, happy. A flight attendant is to a passenger as a librarian is to a (fill in the blank).

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