



Learning and Development at The School of Life

Teaching the emotional skills needed
to succeed in the modern economy

Developing Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

At The School of Life, we believe that emotional maturity is the key to better employee performance and engagement. Alongside technical skills, employees need to master a range of sophisticated 'soft' emotional skills to be able to better thrive, manage themselves and succeed at their tasks.

Our Learning and Development programme is designed to build emotional maturity in the workplace through the teaching of **20 core Emotional Skills**. For each skill, we provide a precisely-designed two-hour workshop, best experienced within a modular, comprehensive learning journey. We provide our own suggested learning-journeys or can create one for you with your organisation's particular needs in mind.

Our workshops bring about true changes in behaviour, helping employees to overcome hurdles and approach tasks with greater focus, confidence and maturity. The experience is psychologically rich, thought-provoking and enjoyable, often resorting to case-studies drawn from history, philosophy and culture.

The Emotional Skills



Adaptability



Calm



Confidence



Communication



Creativity



Decisiveness



Diplomacy



Effectiveness



Eloquence



Empathy



Entrepreneurship



Innovation



Objectivity



Persuasiveness



Playfulness



Purpose



Resilience



Resourcefulness



Self Awareness



Supportiveness



Adaptability

Businesses need to be agile, and people increasingly do too. In fact, 91% of human resource directors say that, by 2018, adaptability will be a major trait for which to recruit.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Discuss why we often fear change and how we can come to fear it less
- Practise techniques for cultivating an open mind towards change and new strategies for implementing it
- Learn imaginative techniques for developing new ideas, rather than relying on old paradigms
- Learn methods for coping with uncertainty and setbacks and for embracing improvisation, uncertainty and growth

“Intelligence is the ability to adapt to change.”

Stephen Hawking



Calm

No one is calm all the time. Nor should we be; a touch of fear and adrenaline can be useful and helps us to perform in tight situations. However, many of us struggle in our jobs with excessive stress, anxiety and burnout. Indeed, stress and mental ill health costs the UK economy upwards of £30 billion a year.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider why experiencing change can be so difficult
- Learn to cope with challenges and setbacks without anxiety, panic or despair
- Create a toolbox of resources to use when times get tough and learn how to develop new, more useful coping strategies
- Explore how we might take a new perspective on difficult events

“Nothing is so aggravating as calmness.”

Oscar Wilde



Confidence

The greatest projects and schemes die for no grander reasons than that we don't dare. Indeed, research shows that having the right level of confidence makes us more likeable, productive, influential and ultimately successful. That's why nearly half of all employers say they look for confidence when hiring.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn how to identify the right level of confidence for a given task
- Identify sources of confidence we can rely on and ways of coping with anxiety
- Learn how to overcome setbacks and remain confident when things get tough
- Explore how our personal histories may be unhelpfully determining the level of confidence we bring to tasks

“Nothing reduces the odds against you like ignoring them.”

Robert Brault



Communication

The stronger a team's communication skills are, the better the outcome: studies have found that highly effective communicators are 32% more likely to meet the goals of a major project. This makes it crucial that we learn how to convey tricky but important messages in good time, with clarity, respect and patience.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider barriers to good communication at work
- Learn how to “tune in” to the signals we are giving others and the way others may see us
- Practise listening better and asking the right questions
- Learn how biases can impede communication and how to spot potential communication pitfalls in advance

“We have two ears and one mouth so that we can listen twice as much as we speak.”

Epictetus



Creativity

Einstein said that we're all born geniuses – which suggests that a lot of education strips us of our innate creative powers. Very often, the pressure to be serious, along with stress, anxiety, and self-criticism holds us back from being fully creative. With the right mindset and strategies we can overcome these blocks and bring creativity back into our daily lives and our professional career.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn the myths and the realities of the creative process
- Explore our intuition and learn how to access it regularly
- Learn strategies for coming up with new ideas and overcoming creative blocks
- Reflect on our own strengths and weaknesses during the creative process

“The secret to creativity is knowing how to hide your sources.”

Cyril Edwin Mitchinson Joad



Decisiveness

Making good decisions is a fundamental aspect of being a trusted co-worker or an excellent leader. Yet, too often, studies show, our emotions have a huge influence over the quality of our decision-making, preventing us from making sound judgements.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider the barriers to effective decision-making; including decision fatigue, fear of regret, and a lack of self-knowledge
- Uncover our personal decision-making style
- Create a plan for how we will take action following our decision and track and adjust over time
- Learn strategies for reaching sounder, wiser decisions

“I’m very good at making decisions, especially the wrong ones.”

Anon



Diplomacy

Diplomacy is the art of navigating around difficult and sensitive issues without causing catastrophe or unnecessary distress. Studies show that poor diplomatic skills are responsible for dramatic drops in the productivity of employees.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn to identify different conflict styles in others and in ourselves
- Consider the value of politeness – a vital skill in any organisation – and how to apply it in difficult situations
- Practise empathy towards those we find difficult
- Consider when to press our point, when to compromise, when to let things go and when to find a genuinely collaborative solution

“Diplomacy is the art of telling people to go to hell in such a way that they ask for directions.”

Winston Churchill



Effectiveness

The end result of an absence of efficiency isn't just inefficiency, it's regret. In order to work through the never-ending to-do list and juggle the multiple demands of others, we have to sort the urgent tasks from the merely important and make a habit of being efficient.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider what makes getting things done difficult, including emotional and psychological barriers
- Learn specific ways to adapt our approach to the task at hand
- Look at strategies to help us choose realistic goals
- Learn habits and techniques to beat procrastination

“There are a thousand hacking at the branches to one who is striking at the root.”

Henry David Thoreau



Eloquence

Although many of us fear it more than death, knowing how to speak to others in front of small or large groups is a critical but neglected skill of the modern workplace. It's an enviable kind of charm that makes us far more powerful and that we can all learn how to wield.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn how to overcome the most common barriers to effective public communication
- Uncover the key elements of a good message and practise applying them to our work
- Practise presenting our body and voice in an authentic, engaging manner
- Practise overcoming anxiety and self-consciousness during public presentations

“There is no lack of readers and listeners; it is for us to produce something worth being written and heard.”

Pliny the Younger



Empathy

Feeling and demonstrating empathy is tied to better performance at work, and especially to better leadership. Empathy is also crucial for customer service – research shows that for every point increase in customer-perceived empathy, an organisation experiences a 16.4% increase in financial returns.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider the differences between empathy and sympathy
- Practise using empathy as a way of building connection and overcoming conflict
- Consider the use of empathy in devising products and solutions that will work well for other people
- Practise anticipating the needs of other people

“Who then can so softly bind up the wound of another as one who has felt it himself?”

Thomas Jefferson



Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship is a major fascination of our times. We often think of entrepreneurs as bold risk-takers with completely original ideas, but we all can benefit from thinking like an entrepreneur: generating new ideas, understanding what customers need, and constantly evaluating the end product to look for improvements.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider how to use the insights of entrepreneurship to take our creative work to the next level
- Consider myths about what it takes to think like an entrepreneur
- Practise using empathy to uncover what our potential customers would really love
- Consider the role of higher needs in the development of new ideas and products

“The trouble with the French is that they don’t have a word for entrepreneur.”

George Bush



Innovation

It’s one thing to have a good idea and another thing to put that idea into practice. In this session, we think about what to do once a good idea has struck, from the first prototype to keeping your stakeholders on board as you scale up over years.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Practise prototyping designs and pitching so that stakeholders buy into our ideas
- Consider how to keep multiple stakeholders in the loop and engaged over the long run
- Think through how to keep our project going long term
- Explore our responses to failure and risk, where they come from in our lives, and how we can embrace risk, overcome difficulty, and learn from setbacks

“Those who walk on the well-trodden path always throw stones at those who are showing a new road.”

Voltaire



Objectivity

Emotions can sometimes blur our vision. To make good decisions and work well with others, we need to be able to separate the way we feel about the world from the way it actually is.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn about the different errors and biases to which our minds are prone, and how to correct for these
- Consider the ways in which we might judge ideas too much by their source and too little on their independent merit
- Practice the art of detachment from our own experiences and interests, in order to consider things from a wider, more universal point of view
- Learn strategies for making decisions that will serve us well in the long term

“The horrid doubt always arises whether the convictions of man’s mind ... are of any value or at all trustworthy.”

Charles Darwin



Persuasiveness

In order for even the best ideas to have the greatest impact they need to be communicated with a skill too often neglected in the workplace: charm. That’s why studies show that those who receive training in how to be more personable and charismatic are rated as 60% more effective by their peers.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Take a look at some surprising things that do and don’t make people charming
- Learn about the psychology of persuasion and the key role of emotion in decision-making
- Practise making our case attractive to strangers, customers and colleagues by reassuring them about their doubts and seducing them with appealing ideas
- Learn how to use humour, empathy and honesty to connect with others and motivate groups

“People almost invariably arrive at their beliefs not on the basis of proof but on the basis of what they find attractive.”

Blaise Pascal



Playfulness

Too often we think of play as something reserved for children, or worse, for the lazy, idle, and irresponsible. But playfulness is serious business. It helps us connect to one another in an authentic way, recover from high-stress situations, enjoy our job more, and remain curious about the world around us.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider the role of play in connecting with colleagues, clients, and customers
- Learn about the role of humour in building rapport and addressing conflict
- Practise using play to generate new ideas and solutions to pressing problems
- Learn ways to make our daily routine more adventurous and playful

“Some day you will be old enough to start reading fairy tales again.”

C S Lewis



Purpose

Day-to-day work can all too easily make us feel bored or burnt out. For many of us, this is when we start fantasising about changing careers. But what we most often need is to feel reconnected to our underlying values and the long-term impact of the work at hand.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Rediscover our motivations and values and learn to prioritise among them
- Explore five different areas of work in which we can find meaning
- Spend time reflecting on our professional role and its place in our organisation
- Create an action plan which helps us scale up our deeper sense of purpose

“I would live my life in nonchalance and insouciance, were it not for making a living, which is rather a nuisance.”

Ogden Nash



Resilience

To overcome the inevitable changes, stresses and setbacks of the professional world, individuals and organisations need resilience. Its value is indisputable – a meta-analysis of different studies suggests that when employees are happy and confident (whatever other challenges they are facing) they are 31% more productive, make 37% more sales, and are three times as creative.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider why experiencing change can be so difficult
- Learn to develop a growth mindset, where setbacks are seen as temporary learning experiences
- Create a toolbox of resources to use when times get tough and consider what new strategies might be useful
- Explore how we might take a new perspective on difficult events

“Anything worth achieving will always have obstacles in the way.”

Chuck Norris



Resourcefulness

Employees who lean heavily on their supervisors to make day-to-day decisions or solve problems are much less useful and productive – and take a lot of their supervisors’ valuable time. The best employees are self-driven, and resourceful, keeping themselves motivated, focused, and organised, and meeting challenges without needing too much guidance or permission.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider why we often seek solutions from others, rather than ourselves
- Practise strategies to build our confidence and keep ourselves motivated
- Start with anticipating what will be needed and learn techniques for quick and creative problem-solving when challenges arise
- Consider when to seek help, when to check in, and when to take initiative

“Do what you can, with what you have, where you are.”

Theodore Roosevelt



Self-Awareness

Self-Awareness is the foundation of emotional intelligence, yet studies show that while most of us think we understand ourselves, we often have little idea how others really see us. This alarming gap leads to misunderstandings, poor teamwork, increased conflict, poor decision-making and a lack of direction.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider how our image of ourselves may differ from how others see us
- Take stock of our own unconscious attitudes and beliefs
- Learn to recognise some common barriers to self-awareness, including projection, transference and resistance
- Learn the technique of “philosophical meditation” to begin to get to grips with the hidden beliefs that lie behind our everyday feelings and behaviour

“The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself.”

Michel de Montaigne



Supportiveness

Supporting others and listening carefully (but not uncritically) to their signs of distress allows us to give them the best advice on how to approach their challenges. The skill of being correctly supportive is crucial when leading teams, connecting with colleagues, and understanding clients.

In this two-hour session, we will:

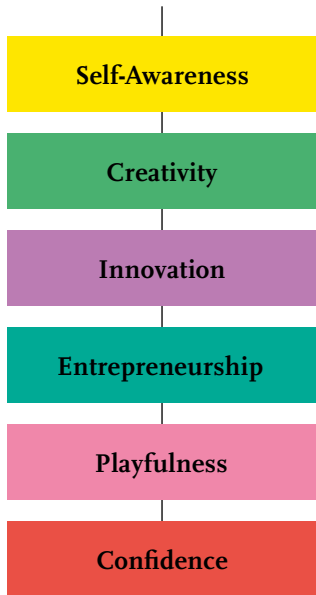
- Practise slowing down communication and listening to what others are implying as well as what they are saying directly
- Practice listening in an insightful and emotionally supportive way
- Consider the art of when and how to give advice and feedback
- Consider ways to demonstrate availability and supportiveness through action as well as words

*“When people talk, listen completely.
Most people never listen.”*

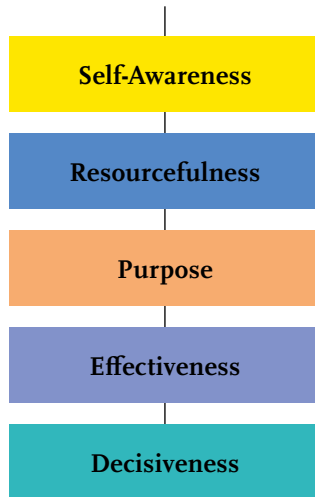
Ernest Hemingway

Suggested Learning Journeys

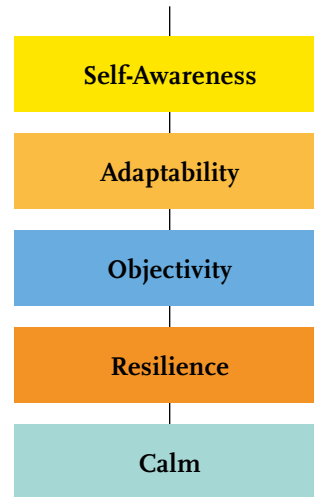
The Innovative Journey



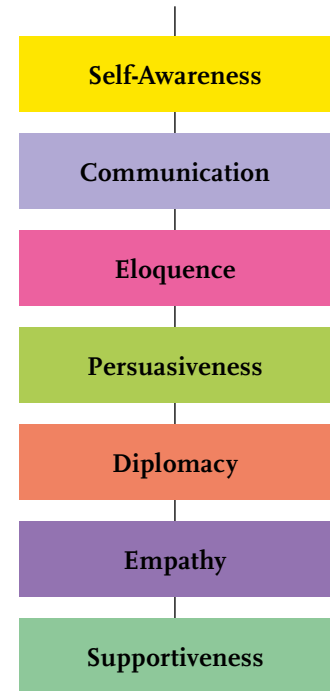
The Productive Journey



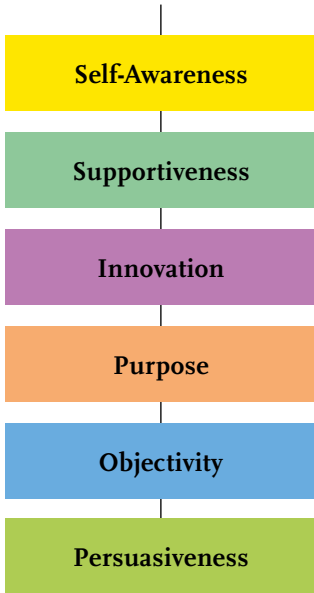
The Resilience Journey



The Collaborative Journey



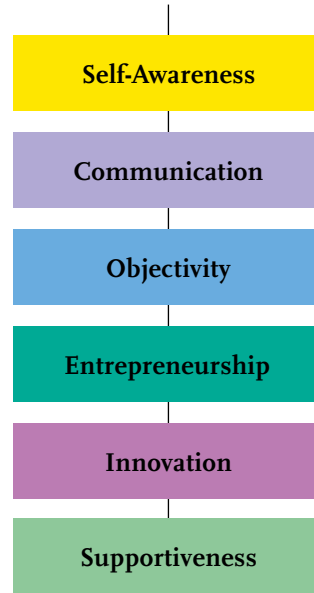
The Leadership Journey



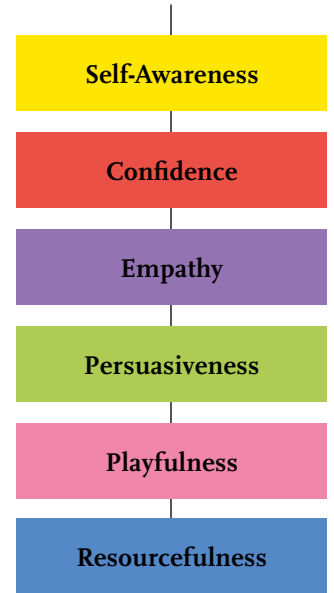
The Graduate Journey



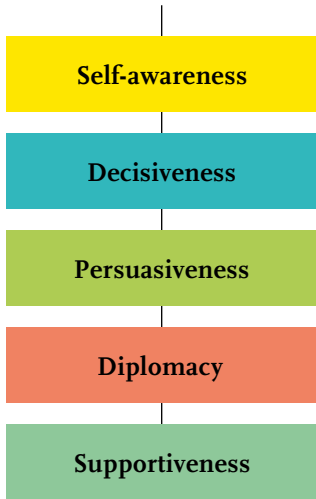
The Consultant Journey



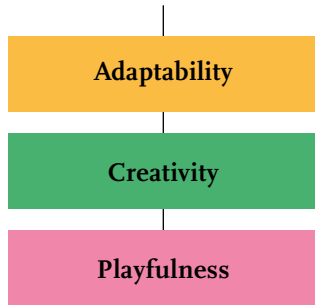
The Customer Service Journey



The New Manager Journey



The "Away Day" Journey



Digital Content

If you are interested in using any of our digital content for in-house or training purposes, please do get in touch.

“The School of Life offers radical new ways to raid the treasure trove of human knowledge”

The Independent on Sunday

Our World-Class Faculty

Our workshops are created and delivered by a distinguished faculty of leading philosophers, writers, artists, scientists and psychologists. Our faculty have extensive experience working with businesses and organisations and a deep understanding of the challenges of the modern workplace, as well as years of experience facilitating training sessions and working with people one-to-one.

“The facilitator was outstanding; so knowledgeable, thoughtful, warm and engaging.”

Class Participant, Creativity workshop

“They had a unique and rich knowledge of culture, philosophy and psychology. The workshop felt informative, humorous, deeply insightful and very practical.”

Class Participant, Purpose workshop

Blue 449



Why we got together

Blue 449 wanted to create an inclusive, collaborative culture where employees felt they had the emotional resources needed to innovate and take creative risks.

What we created

Over four years of working together, we have run a regular series of workshops on topics such as Collaboration, Eloquence, Decisiveness, Creativity, Diplomacy and Persuasiveness.

“The School of Life have been a great partner, understanding our ethos and translating it into an inspiring, offbeat and original programme. We look forward to the next set of workshops with keen anticipation.”

Anthony Swede, Head of Planning, Blue 449

Pizza Hut



Why we got together

Pizza Hut wanted to develop a learning programme which delivered “whole person development” and that engaged staff about how to develop key emotional skills which would be useful to them both at work and in their personal lives.

What we created

A six-week curriculum, available to all employees, covering topics such as Empathy, Resilience, Confidence, Self-Awareness, Calm and many more.

“Working with The School of Life allowed us to provide expert personal development for our people which complements their work training perfectly. It’s been a great experience and we have seen a huge impact from our relationship.”

Vanessa Dodd, Senior Learning & Development Manager, Pizza Hut

Our Clients



Moët Hennessy

MR PORTER



FARFETCH

NORTON ROSE



Testimonials

“Incredibly thought-provoking, fun, insightful and inspiring. I really loved it”

Class Participant, Creativity workshop

“The sessions helped me understand what motivates me and to stand back and look at myself and say ‘how do I want to develop as a person?’”

Class Participant, Self-Awareness workshop

“I gained insights into myself and how to improve my life beyond the constraints of the workshop subject.”

Class Participant, Creativity workshop

“I gained perspective – the ability to step back, break it down and analyse problems more clearly.”

Class Participant, Decisiveness workshop

“Scientifically based, inspiring, light-hearted.”

Class Participant, Purpose workshop

Average feedback score: **9.1 out of 10**

Contact



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Have you visited our YouTube channel?

With over 1.8 million subscribers, our online curriculum is teaching the world how to be emotionally intelligent one short film at a time.

**THE
SCHOOL
OF LIFE**