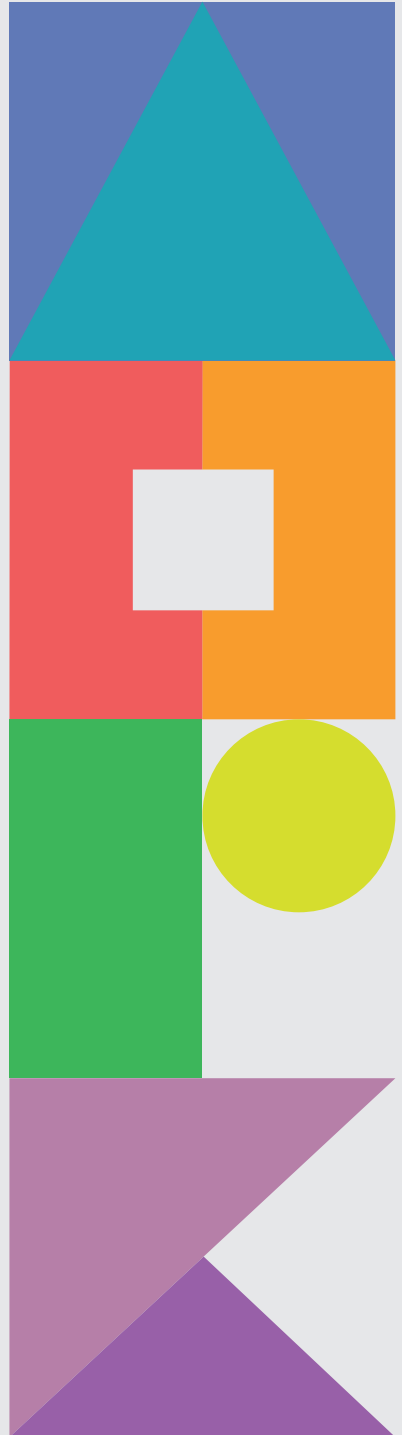


The School of Life for Business

20 Key Emotional
Skills for the Workplace

**THE
SCHOOL
OF LIFE**



Our Mission: Developing Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

People are the most expensive, complex, and valuable asset of any company. But all too often, they are the least understood. At The School of Life, we believe that emotional maturity is the key to better employee performance and engagement. Our service is built on years of experience working with individuals and organisations to develop emotional intelligence.

We work with businesses to help employees function better together – to form more engaged teams, be more productive, dynamic, and work together in more innovative and entrepreneurial ways.

Our Business programme is built around 20 core emotional skills that we believe each employee needs to learn to

contribute and thrive in the workplace. For each skill we provide a tailored two-hour workshop delivered by our world class faculty. We provide suggested learning-journeys or can tailor 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 material draws on case-studies from history, philosophy and culture and is psychologically rich, thought-provoking and enjoyable.

The 20 Emotional Skills

1 Adaptability



2 Calm



3 Charm



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7 Decisiveness



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Adaptability



Businesses need to be agile, and people increasingly do too. In fact, 71% of recruiters say that adaptability is the most valuable skill for candidates. Coping with and even embracing rapid change is a difficult, yet vital, skill in our fast-paced and highly unpredictable world.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Discuss why we often fear and avoid needed change and how we can come to fear it less
- Learn methods for coping with uncertainty and setbacks and for embracing improvisation, uncertainty and growth
- Consider how we might actively adapt, welcoming and even initiating and leading needed changes in our organisation
- Explore the potential risks and benefits of a given change in our organisation

‘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 cost the UK economy upwards of £30 billion per year.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Consider the role of anger at work and why it is no longer very helpful in professional relationships
- Explore the crucial role of expectations in forming our reactions and how we can modify these expectations so as to cope with greater calm when things go wrong
- Practise how we might take a new calming perspective on difficult events, especially those over which we have little control
- Learn to cope with challenges and setbacks with less anger, anxiety or despair

‘I love the storm and fear the calm.’

— Christina, Queen of Sweden

Charm



Though we appreciate charm when we find it, most of us rarely think of consciously setting out to be charming. But charm has a huge role to play in communicating the importance of ideas.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Explore why vulnerability is often such a crucial ingredient of charm
- Discuss how charm and encouragement is often a better motivator than some other alternatives
- Examine some tips and recommendations for how to foster positive and long-term relationships with colleagues, clients and stakeholders
- Learn how to listen attentively and encouragingly to other people

‘I think charm is the ability to be truly interested in other people.’

— Richard Avedon

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 the obstacle of assumptions, and the difficulty of knowing whether we are communicating effectively
- Practise ‘teaching’ others effectively, getting past emotional barriers and resistance to new information
- Practise ‘learning’ effectively, parsing out what others are really trying to convey
- Practise seeking out feedback on our mannerisms, tone and the overall impression that we give out when we speak

‘Language is wine upon the lips.’

— Virginia Woolf

Confidence



The greatest projects and schemes die for no grander reason 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:

- Consider the challenges and benefits of feeling confident and appearing confident at work and in life
- Learn about the 'inner voices' that guide the way we think and consider how to channel more positive, encouraging and helpful inner voices
- Think about ways to respond positively to setbacks without losing confidence
- Learn techniques for recognising and avoiding self-sabotage
- Practise demonstrating confidence and promoting our own capabilities

'How very little can be done under the spirit of fear.'

— Florence Nightingale

Creativity



Einstein said that we're all born geniuses – which suggests that the the journey toward adulthood often constrains our thinking. 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 chosen career.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn the myths and realities of the creative process
- Practise strategies for coming up with new ideas
- Explore how to transcend outdated assumptions and develop radically new ideas
- Discuss the emotional obstacles which sometimes inhibit our creative efforts
- Consider how to regularly access a more creative mindset

'You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.'

— Maya Angelou

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 on 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
- Learn more about the psychology of decisions and discuss the unconscious influences which may affect our judgement
- Discuss ways of entering a different, more confident mindset when making decisions
- Learn how to feel more comfortable with imperfect outcomes and 'repair' decisions that don't quite go to plan

'You can't make decisions based on fear and the possibility of what might happen.'

— Michelle Obama

Diplomacy



Diplomacy is the art of navigating difficult and sensitive issues with others. Studies show that poor diplomatic skills are responsible for dramatic drops in employees' productivity.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn to identify different conflict styles in others and in ourselves
- Explore how we might 'import energy' from other areas of our lives into conflicts at work
- Look at strategies to help us become more diplomatic by viewing situations from different perspectives
- Consider the value and uses of politeness, humour, and empathy in difficult situations
- 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 prioritise tasks and make realistic, more effective plans of action
- Discuss habits and techniques which can help us to beat procrastination, take tactical 'shortcuts' and reassess our overall aims
- Learn how to make the most of feedback in order to become more effective

'The most effective way to do it is to do it.'

— Amelia Earhart

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 one that we can all learn to wield.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Learn how to overcome the most common barriers to effective public communication
- Explore strategies for overcoming anxiety and self-consciousness during public presentations
- Learn how to present information with greater clarity and in a more engaging manner
- Practise presenting our body and voice in an authentic, engaging manner

'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:

- Explore how to use empathy to improve our working relationships, from customers to clients to colleagues
- Consider the use of empathy in devising products and solutions that will work well for other people
- Practise using empathy to convince and persuade
- Practise using empathy as a way of building connection and overcoming conflict

‘Do not do unto others as you would have them do unto you – they might have different tastes.’

— George Bernard Shaw

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:

- Dispel certain myths about what it takes to think like an entrepreneur
- Learn to spot key frustrations and build products and services to address them
- Practise using introspection and empathy to uncover what potential customers would really love
- Consider the role of higher needs in the development of new ideas and products
- Work together to generate new business ideas and potential avenues of exploration

‘The best way to have good ideas is to have lots of ideas – and then throw away the bad ones.’

— Linus Pauling

Innovation



It's one thing to have a good idea and another thing to put that idea into practise. In this session, we think about what to do once a good idea has struck, from the first prototype to helping others in the organisation to embrace the changes that innovation brings.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Explore why innovation is important in our own industry, company and team
- Discuss some of the obstacles, both psychological and organisational, that can stand in the way of innovation
- Think about the higher purpose of our organisation and use this to identify new areas of potential innovation
- Practise prototyping designs and pitching so that stakeholders buy into our ideas
- Consider how to best lead change within an organisation and help others to embrace it

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

— Voltaire



Leadership



Today, developing an authentic leadership style is crucial if we want to inspire commitment and get results. In this session, we'll reflect on what makes a good leader. This will involve considering our strengths, weaknesses and blind spots, as well as addressing key leadership challenges: from creating a compelling vision to empowering others.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Discuss the overall nature of leadership and how it has changed through history
- Take a realistic look at some of the trials of leadership, and how to tackle them
- Develop a more compassionate approach to ourselves to improve our relationships with others
- Learn to communicate clear purpose to clients and colleagues
- Build a more productive workforce by demonstrating trust in employees or subordinates

'Our chief want is someone who will inspire us to be what we know we could be.'

— Ralph Waldo Emerson



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 take them into account
- Consider the ways in which we might judge ideas too much by their source and too little on their independent merit
- Practise 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

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 helping us prepare for new challenges
- Explore how we can use play to better connect 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

‘Someday, you will be old enough to start reading fairytales 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. According to a 2016 study, 85% of companies with a strongly defined sense of purpose showed positive growth in that year.

In this two-hour session, we will:

- Draw connections between the higher-level purpose of the company and our daily work
- Consider our personal talents and passions, and how they align with our role in the organisation
- Rediscover our core motivations and values, and consider how to prioritise among them
- Explore what we would like to be appreciated for at work and how we can show appreciation for others as well

‘What you do makes a difference, and you have to decide what kind of difference you want to make.’

— Jane Goodall



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 how to develop a more helpful mindset when experiencing change and loss, avoiding blaming ourselves and instead allowing ourselves to mourn and grow
- Learn about the effects of stress and loss on our body, and about how to care for our body so as to support our overall level of resilience
- Create a toolbox of resources to use when times get tough and consider what new strategies might be useful

‘Anything worth achieving will always have obstacles in the way.’

— Chuck Norris



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 ourself 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 encouragement or 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 listening in an insightful and emotionally supportive way
- Learn the art of asking thoughtful questions that demonstrate curiosity and humility
- 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



Example Learning Journeys



Participants Have Said...

‘A totally new way of dealing with situations and people.’

‘I now understand the link between frustrations and business opportunities.’

‘The workshops are exceptionally interesting, illuminating and just as applicable to my job as they are to my personal life.’

‘I’ve had the realisation that we are all fools, and that’s ok!’

‘Since attending TSOL workshops I’ve realised I’m not that bad, I just lacked the structure and awareness that my problems were emotional, not technical.’

Leadership Programme



When leaders in an organisation take an emotionally intelligent approach, the rest of the company follows. With this in mind, we’ve created specialised versions of seven of our workshops – Decisiveness, Innovation, Leadership, Purpose, Resilience, Self-Awareness, and Supportiveness – designed to help leaders at every level take an emotionally intelligent approach to leadership and convey what they’ve learned to their teams. These modified workshops pay special attention to the challenges of

leading a team or organisation, and help leaders practice encouraging and teaching key emotional skills to those they lead.

If you are interested in running a programme of specialised leadership workshops, simply let us know. We will help you unpick the challenges facing your organisation and together build a programme to support the leaders in your organisation.

Emotional Intelligence Talk

We also offer a special short talk on Emotional Intelligence that explains what emotional intelligence is, why it is useful at work, and how we teach emotional intelligence at The School of Life. This talk makes for a great kick-off or frame for programmes of workshops, or it can stand alone for shorter events.

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Have you visited our YouTube channel?
With over 3.2 million subscribers, our
online curriculum is teaching the world
how to be emotionally intelligent one
short film at a time.

