

Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace

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As we move forward into the summer of 2021, many of us are returning to working at our desks at the office and at school, rather than from home. Still, others are continuing to work and school from home for various reasons. Emotionally intelligent leaders, employees and students are becoming a more important factor of daily life, no matter where our desks are physically located.

What is emotional intelligence? As defined by the dhhs.gov site, “Emotional intelligence (EI) is the ability to recognize and be aware of our emotions, to accurately perceive emotions in others, and to use this awareness to empower successful relationships. EI at work or school promotes positive interactions with others and leads to more cooperation and a better ability to adapt to a changing environment.”

Examples of emotional intelligence include: sensing a colleague’s frustration and gently inquiring about it rather than ignoring it; recognizing that missing a deadline impacts others; sensing tension and being proactive in looking for resolution during a group project for work or school; choosing a pleasant, positive attitude, in spite of how you might actually feel.

Of the many books and articles written about emotional intelligence, it appears that recognizing that our attitude is a choice is a real signal of emotional intelligence. Attitudes are contagious, and a positive attitude can reap rewards for individuals, teams, classrooms and organizations.

And, to improve one’s attitude and be that positive influence in the room, the dhhs.gov article recommends the basics - such as getting enough sleep, getting daily exercise, and taking appropriate time off to recharge and renew.

Whether we are continuing to work or school from our home space or commuting back to offices and classrooms, it might be a good time to hit the refresh button on our emotional intelligence - making sure we are practicing some self-awareness, some other-awareness and building on our ability to positively impact our work and school environments.