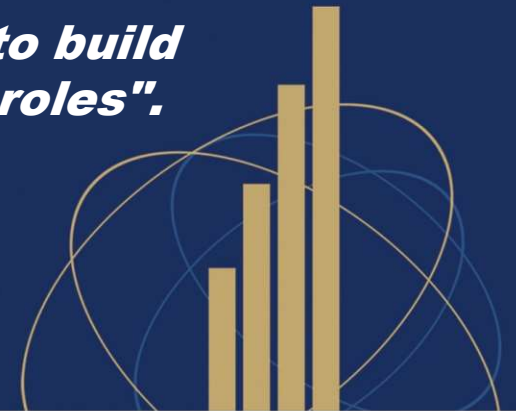




"Emotional intelligence in public leadership: Tools to build empathy, resilience, and self-awareness in service roles".

Mpumalanga Young Professionals Symposium
13 February 2026
Ms. MM Makhongela: Vice President CIGFARO



Emotional Intelligence

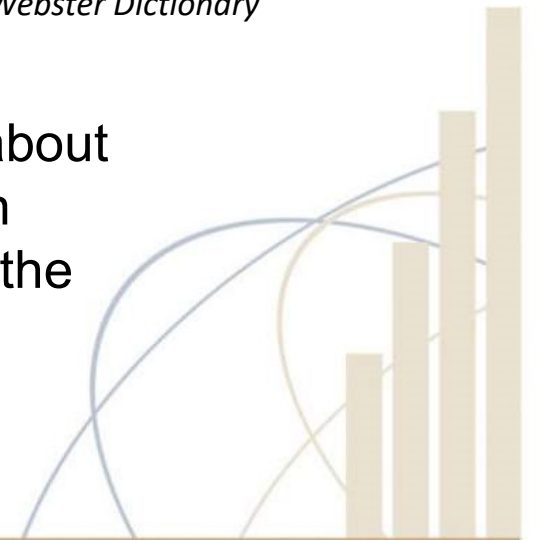


Vecteezy.com

The ability to recognize, understand, and deal **skillfully** with one's own emotions and the emotions of others (as by regulating one's emotions or by showing **empathy** and good judgment in social interactions)

Merriam Webster Dictionary

A large part of *emotional intelligence* is being able to think about and empathize with how other people are feeling. This often involves considering how you would respond if you were in the same situation.—**Kendra Cherry**

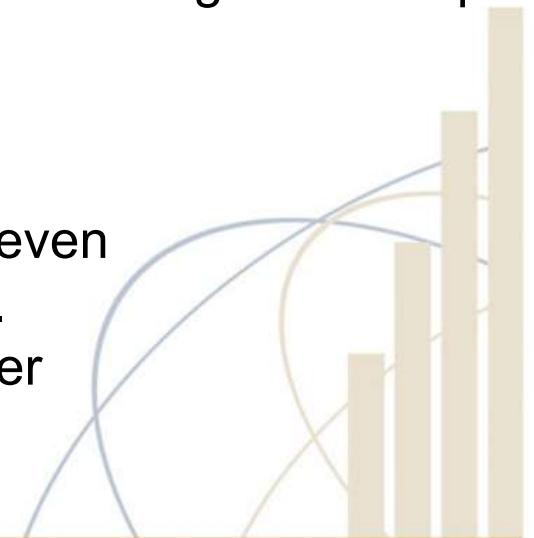


Let's reflect...



Remember 1994?

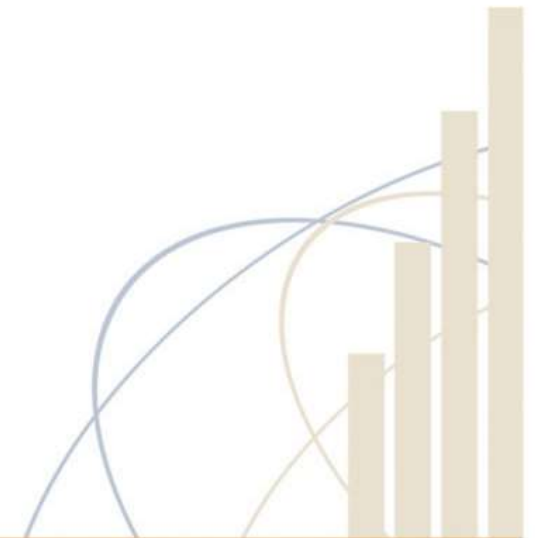
- ✓ White South Africans feared retribution, while Black South Africans' anger threatened to explode into violence.
 - ✓ Observe the manner Pres Nelson Mandela dealt with the matters.
 - ✓ He did not ignore the emotions but acknowledged them openly.
-
- ✓ He showed he understood white South Africans' fears by learning Afrikaans, meeting with former oppressors, and even cheering for the traditionally white Springbok rugby team.
 - ✓ At the same time, he validated Black South Africans' anger while channeling it toward peaceful change.



Journey to leadership..



Note:
Emotional Intelligence
will separate great
leaders from the rest/
managers.



Travis Kalanick (Uber – Former CEO)

What happened:

Uber faced multiple scandals under his leadership — toxic workplace culture, harassment allegations, aggressive behavior toward regulators, and a viral video of him arguing with an Uber driver.

EI issues:

- **Poor empathy** toward employees and drivers
- Aggressive, confrontational leadership style
- Failure to build a healthy organizational culture
- Limited accountability

Outcome:

He resigned as CEO in 2017 due to pressure from investors.

Lesson:

High performance does not compensate for poor culture leadership.



Elizabeth Holmes (Theranos – Founder/CEO)

What happened:

Theranos collapsed after it was revealed that its blood-testing technology did not work as claimed.

EI issues:

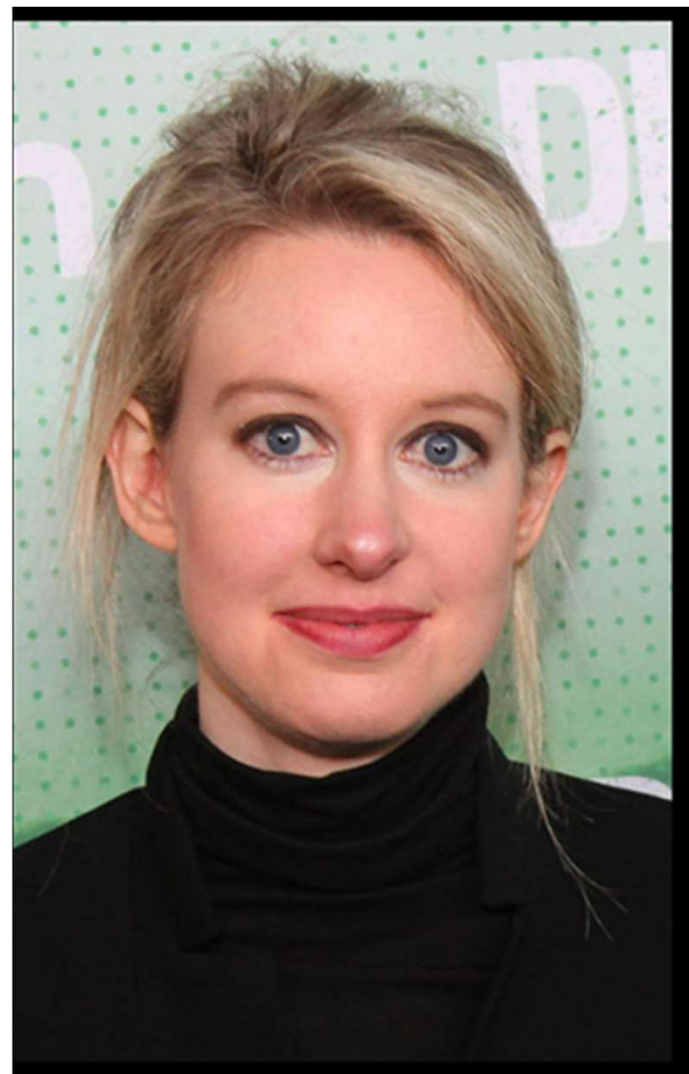
- ***Refusal to listen*** to experts and internal critics
- **Suppression of dissent**
- Overconfidence and lack of **self-awareness**
- Intimidation of whistleblowers

Outcome:

The company collapsed, and Holmes was convicted of fraud.

Lesson:

Leaders who cannot tolerate feedback create dangerous blind spots.



Adam Neumann (WeWork – Co-founder/CEO)

What happened:

WeWork's IPO failed dramatically after concerns about governance, self-dealing, and erratic leadership behavior surfaced.

El issues:

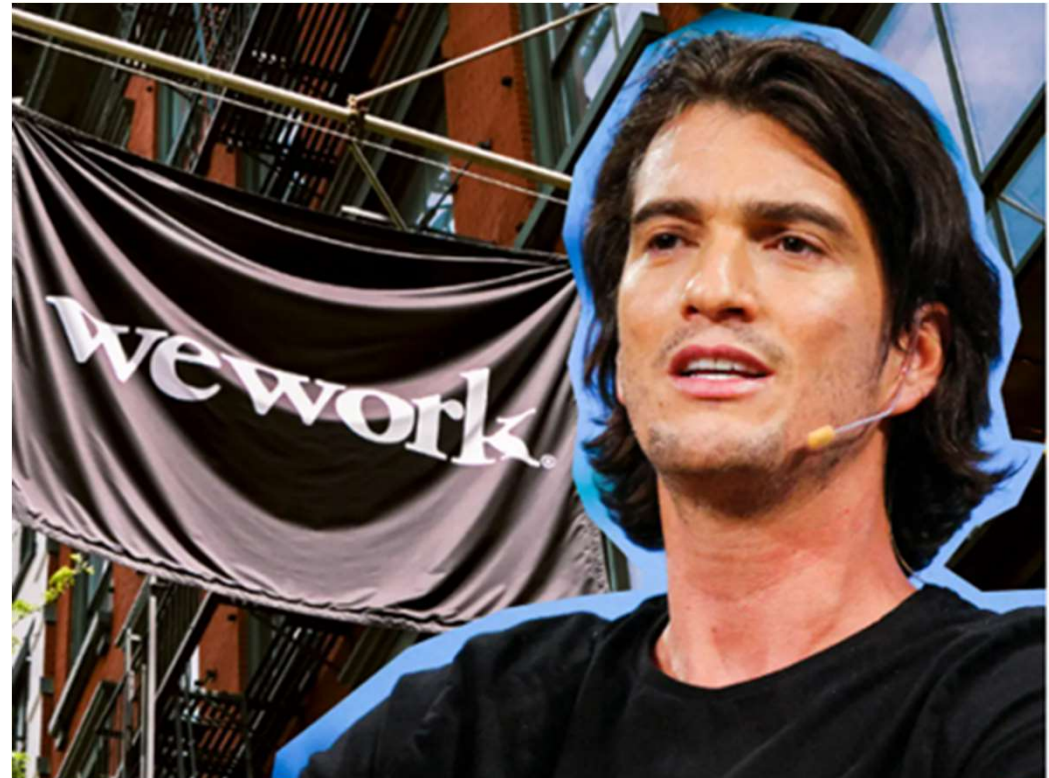
- Poor impulse control
- **Self-centered** decision-making
- Lack of accountability
- Inability to build trust with investors

Outcome:

Removed as CEO in 2019.

Lesson:

Vision without emotional maturity leads to instability.



Tony Hayward (BP – Former CEO)

What happened:

During the Deepwater Horizon oil spill crisis (2010), Hayward made tone-deaf public statements such as “I’d like my life back.”

EI issues:

- Lack of empathy during crisis
- Poor communication sensitivity
- Failure to understand public emotion

Outcome:

Stepped down as CEO later that year.

Lesson:

In crises, empathy and communication matter as much as technical solutions.



BSc (First Class) in Geology - Aston University, Birmingham, UK. **PhD in Geosciences** - University of Edinburgh, UK
Honorary Doctorates from multiple universities including Edinburgh, Aston, Birmingham, and Robert Gordon University.
Visiting Professor at the University of Edinburgh.

Jeffrey Skilling (Enron – CEO)

What happened:

Enron collapsed in one of the biggest corporate scandals in history.

EI issues:

- Arrogance and dismissiveness
- Culture of fear and intimidation
- Encouraging excessive risk-taking
- Lack of ethical awareness.

Outcome:

Convicted of fraud; Enron collapsed.

Lesson:

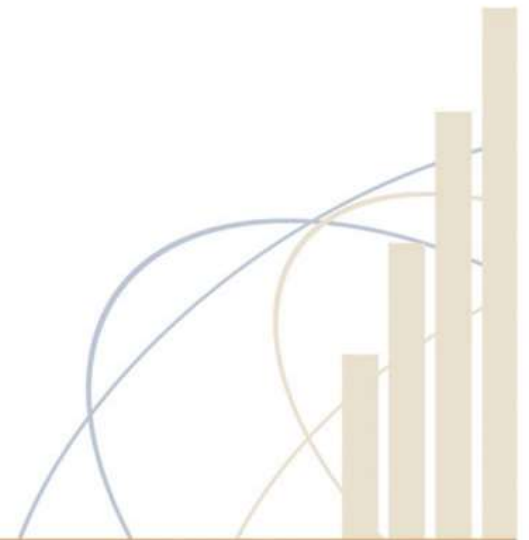
Ethical blindness and ego-driven leadership destroy organizations.



Bachelor of Science (B.S.) in Engineering - *University of Southern California (USC)*
Master of Business Administration (MBA) - *Harvard Business School*

Daniel Goleman

"CEOs are hired for their intellect and business expertise – and fired for a lack of emotional intelligence."





CIGFARO
Chartered Institute of
Government Finance, Audit & Risk Officers

*Tools to build
EMPATHY,
RESILIENCE, and
SELF-AWARENESS
In service roles".*



Empathy

The ability to understand and share the feelings of another.

Oprah Winfrey

**"Leadership is about empathy.
It is about having the ability to
relate to and connect with
people to inspire and empower
their lives."**

Tools to build empathy



***Resilience:
The capacity to withstand or to
recover quickly from
difficulties.***





If you dare to venture into the unknown, you are bound to feel uncomfortable yet if you persist long enough you are bound to achieve a breakthrough.

Prof Thuli Madonsela

Tools to build resilience

Self-regulation

- Naming your emotions
- Cognitive reframing
- Ability to adapt your thinking

Develop Stress management habits

- Recovery & rest cycles
- Exercise
- Consistent sleeping patterns
- Healthy boundaries
- Mindfulness/ meditation

Maintaining professionalism in public scrutiny

- What are your values
- Your organization values
- Consistency/ Having a standpoint

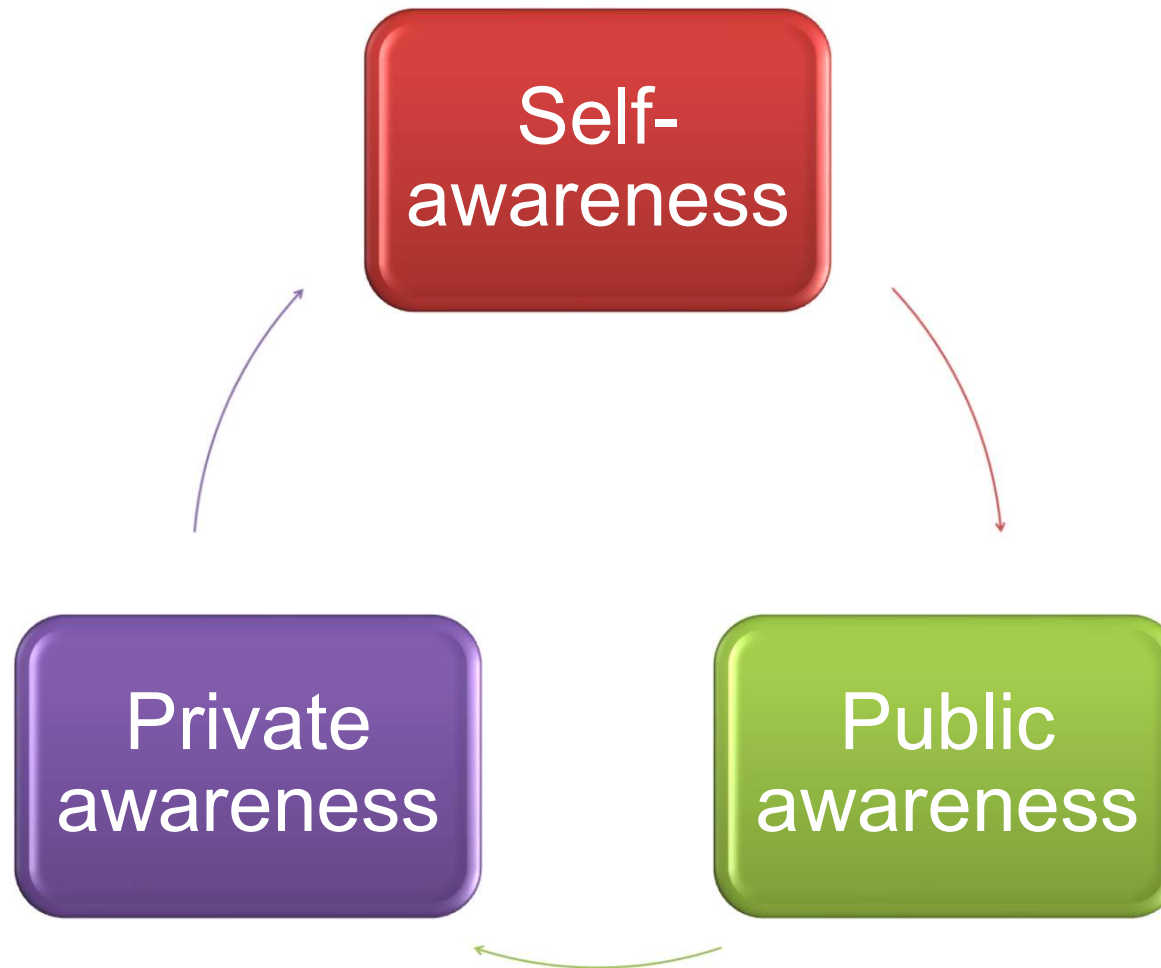
Building support Network

- Mentorship
- Accountability groups.
- Professional networks

Self-awareness

The ability to recognize and understand your own thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and how they align with your values and how others perceive you.

Tools to build Self-awareness



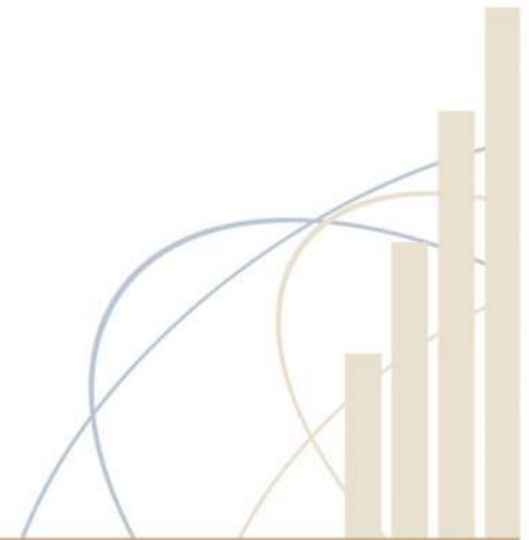
Tools to build Self-awareness



- ✓ **Mindfulness and reflection:** Observing thoughts and emotions without judgment.
- ✓ **Seeking feedback:** Understanding how others perceive you
- ✓ **Self-examination:** Honest evaluation of behaviors, beliefs, and emotional responses
- ✓ **Journaling**

Jim Rohn

"The challenge of Leadership is to be strong but not rude; be kind but not weak; be bold but not a bully."



Conclusion

Exodus 18:13-20

¹⁴ Jethro saw how much Moses had to do for the people, and he asked, “Why are you the only judge? Why do you let these people crowd around you from morning till evening?” ¹⁵ Moses answered, “Because they come here to find out what God wants them to do. ¹⁶ They bring their complaints to me, and I make decisions on the basis of God's laws.” ¹⁷ Jethro replied: That isn't the best way to do it. ¹⁸ You and the people who come to you will soon be worn out. The job is too much for one person; you can't do it alone. ¹⁹ God will help you if you follow my **advice**. You should be the one to speak to God for the people, ²⁰ and you should teach them God's laws and show them what they must do to live right.

²¹ You will need to appoint some competent leaders who respect God and are trustworthy and honest.

May your employes see:

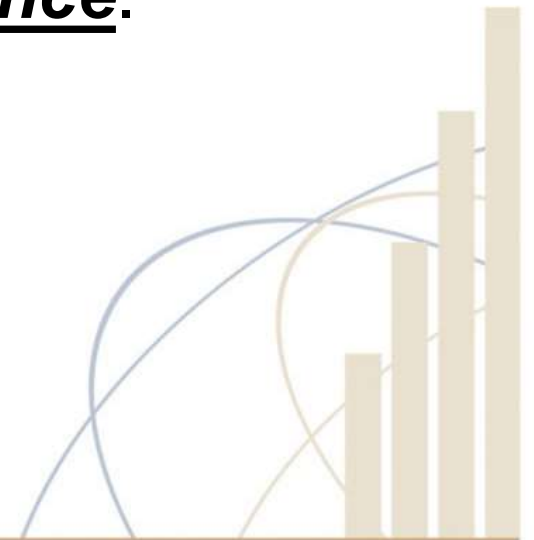
- a) **Competent leaders**
- b) **Who respect God**
- c) **Who are trustworthy and**
- d) **Honest.**

Conclusion

Colossians 3:12

New International Version

¹² Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, **clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.**



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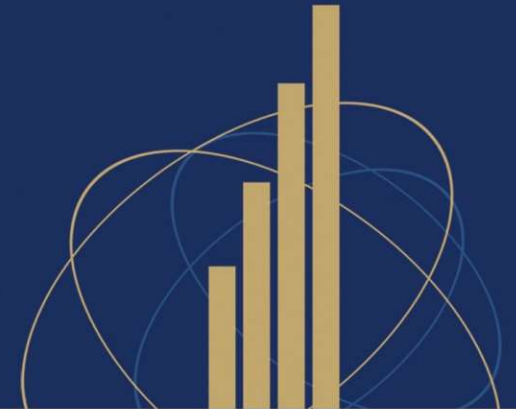
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Thank You!



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