EMOTION IN THE LIBRARY WORKPLACE

ADVANCES IN LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION AND ORGANIZATION

Series Editor: Samantha Schmehl Hines

Recent Volumes:

EMOTION IN THE LIBRARY WORKPLACE

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PREFACE

INTRODUCTION: EMOTIONS IN THE LIBRARY WORKPLACE

Having now served as the series editor for ALAO for two years, I can say that the volume on Emotions in the Library Workplace struck a chord with our contributors and editorial board in a way that no previous volume has done. The topic brought us many fine submissions, and our board engaged with them deeply, delivering feedback and comments to these authors at a level I had not seen before. Perhaps this is due to the deep importance of the topic – emotions really do matter in our work environments. Perhaps it is because librarianship is often seen as caring work, where there is an expectation of emotional engagement. A large part of it, of course, is due to the authors themselves and their captivating takes on a topic that still remains underexplored in our profession.

We begin the volume with a primer on emotions in the workplace by Miriam L. Matteson, Volume Editor and Associate Professor at the Kent State University School of Library and Information Science. Miriam has been writing, presenting, and researching on the topic for years and provides us with the ideal starting point for placing the following chapters into the existing broader context of research on emotions in the workplace.

With the next few chapters, we examine the role of emotion in the library workplace from a more personal perspective. Brian Quinn, Social Science Librarian at Texas Tech University, writes about the potential of using mindfulness practices to regulate emotions on the part of library workers both within the organization and when working with library users. He provides a good overview into the research on mindfulness alongside practical approaches for individuals or managers to take within their own workspaces.

Next, Barbara M. Sorondo, Health Sciences Librarian at Florida International University, looks at how affect, personality and job satisfaction can be assessed in library employees and how these factors are related and interact within the library workplace. She provides insight as to how measuring these factors within your own library may help administrators customize employee resources to best meet unique needs.

This is followed by Ruth Wallach's chapter examining how librarians think about the value of their work. Wallach, the Associate Dean for Public Services at the University of Southern California's USC Libraries, offers an interesting examination of how librarians situate themselves within the process of inquiry

and scholarship, and how librarians thus construct their professional competence and authority. Understanding these concepts and processes can help administrators better provide for librarian satisfaction and professional growth.

Amongst the Editorial Board when discussing this potential volume, there were many people interested in a chapter about avoiding burnout which Margaret Hogarth, Information Resources and Acquisitions Team Leader for the Claremont Colleges Library, provides for us. Her chapter presents a tool to identify and quantify activities that can help individuals reduce burnout, which will be of great value to library administrators both for their organizations and also for their own use.

Turning toward more technical issues, Lindsey Reno of the University of New Orleans and Megan Lowe of the University of Louisiana-Monroe write on the emotions surrounding deselection, or weeding, in the library. One of the more fraught tasks of the library is addressed alongside strategies to help library workers better cope with the process both within the library and regarding the outward perception of weeding among library users.

Using emotional−social intelligence as a framework for reference and user services librarians' competencies and traits is the subject of the next chapter, by Terri Summey, who serves as Coordinator of Reference Services at Emporia State University Libraries and Archives. Through her chapter we learn that reference and user service librarians, in a small-scale survey, tend to score in the mid- to high range on the Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence. She suggests that the competencies and traits identified by library professional associations like the American Library Association for reference and user services librarians back up this observation and that a focus on emotional intelligence can help enhance librarians working in these areas.

From here the volume focuses on ways that emotions in the library affect management work. We begin with a chapter by Deborah Gaspar, Director of Public Services at Rowan University, and Kelly Hayden, a recent graduate of Rutgers University's Graduate School of Communication and Information, where the authors examine generational theory as it pertains to legacy practices. Legacy practices, the "we've always done it this way" of libraries, can be a challenge for managers to overcome, but through the lens of generational theory this chapter presents ways to understand and honor practices while making positive changes.

Improving internal employee interactions is the focus of the next chapter, written by Wendy C. Doucette and Rebecca L. Tolley from East Tennessee State University. They look at civility initiatives within the library workplace as a method for improving employee interactions, and present a mix of strategies that can be implemented within the reader's library to develop and improve organizational culture and workplace morale.

Another practical tool for improving organizational culture is offered in Kabel Nathan Stanwicks' chapter on communication agreements. The Head of Access Services at the University of Albany Libraries, Stanwicks discusses what

communication agreements are and gives an overview of the process as well as how to assess the efficacy of agreements once implemented. This approach can be very beneficial for those in a diverse library workplace with many different styles and means of communication.

Emotions in the library workplace also affect the library administrators, and Jolene M. Miller from the University of Toledo presents library administrators with the concept of intentional reflective practice as a way to become mindful of emotions in their day to day work, and as a technique to improve emotional self-regulation. This can help readers reduce their stress on the job and accomplish more within and for their libraries.

To wrap the volume up, Miriam L. Matteson returns with an afterword outlining next steps for exploring emotions in the library workplace. She offers us suggestions on how to broaden and deepen the inquiry both in research and in practice. One of my favorite pieces of advice is to not be afraid to get messy, and this advice definitely resonates in discussions around emotion in the library workplace. We've seen through these chapters that no matter how vulnerable it may make us feel, a focus on emotional awareness directly benefits the workplace in improved job satisfaction and performance, in better communication and interactions, and in managing change and moving forward in a dynamic professional environment. Readers of this volume will find value in these discussions both in the immediate ability to apply tools and techniques as well as food for thought for future research and practice in the library profession.

Samantha Hines
Series Editor

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A PRIMER ON EMOTIONS IN THE WORKPLACE

Miriam L. Matteson

ABSTRACT

This chapter provides background information on the human emotions process, differentiating between processes that are spontaneous and automatic and those that can be regulated with intentional effort. The chapter then also highlights two constructs, emotional labor and emotional intelligence, that naturally derive from the emotion process and are prevalent in the workplace. These two constructs are important to understand from a theoretical and empirical perspective to identify and manage them most effectively in library work settings. The chapter is a general review of some key concepts citing seminal and exemplar literature from the fields of organizational behavior, psychology, and library and information science to support and illustrate the ideas presented. The value of the chapter is first as an orientation to the science behind emotions. To more fully understand how and why emotion is such a force in the workplace, it is necessary to understand the emotion process. Further, the chapter adds practical value by presenting the constructs of emotional labor and emotional intelligence and including suggestions for how employees and managers can most effectively harness the power of emotions in ways that are most productive for individual employees as well as to achieve organizational goals.

Keywords: Emotions; emotional labor; emotional intelligence; library

INTRODUCTION

Emotions may not be the first thing that come to mind when thinking about library work, but they are ever present in the workplace. Whether it's the joy that accompanies finding an elusive piece of information for a patron, the frustration from struggling with a piece of technology, or the satisfaction from collaborating with a colleague on a challenging project, emotions are a part of everyday experiences in all work, and libraries are no exception.

What is remarkable, however, is the relatively little attention paid to the emotionality of library work. The field of librarianship has focused more on the functional and technical aspects of the work than on the softer skills — the emotions and interpersonal skills that underpin the hard skills of the field. Multiple reasons may explain this phenomenon. The study of emotions in any workplace is a relatively recent development in organizational behavior research (Ashforth & Humphrey, 1995). For most of the 20th century, the commonly held view by management scholars was that the workplace could be understood through a rational, cognitive lens. Research subsequently focused on improving workplace operations through understanding how people think about work, how they make decisions, how they process information, or how they structure their work tasks, paying little to no attention to affective elements (Katz, 1974). Only in the final decades of the 20th century did management research begin to systematically explore the emotionality of work (Barsade & Gibson, 2007). Second, the technical and functional aspects of library work are vital to operations and are constantly changing. Keeping up with new technology and best practice across all areas of library work is effortful, leaving little time for developing the non-technical, non-specific, foundational skills of the workplace. A final challenge to understanding emotions in the workplace is that they are a messy and difficult thing to understand. Emotions are challenging enough to deal with in more personal situations such as with close friends and family; exploring and processing emotions with colleagues or customers is not something most people are comfortable doing. Most of us are simply not as well equipped in identifying, sharing, and reacting to emotions as we are at other aspects of our work.

More reason, then, for the growing focus in research and practice on emotions in the library workplace. Emotions are reactions to stimuli, which means they are occurring constantly throughout a work day. They provide employees with information that guides subsequent thoughts and actions (Elfenbein, 2007). It is not an overstatement to say that emotions drive much of what we do in the workplace. Therefore, if we desire to create effective, high-performing work environments, it is essential that we understand how emotions contribute to the workplace. This chapter provides a high-level look at the nature of emotions within individuals and explores two key constructs of emotional work, emotional labor and emotional intelligence. The first section of the chapter

provides an overview of the autonomous emotion process and the ways in which that process can be consciously overridden. Next, there is a discussion of the functional purposes of positive and negative emotions in the workplace and how the constructs of emotional labor and emotional intelligence may contribute to and detract from optimizing work performance. The chapter closes with some suggestions for incorporating emotional awareness in management practice.

WHAT ARE EMOTIONS?

Emotions are part of a biological system. They are a reaction to a stimulus with a range of possible consequences (Frijda, 1988). The emotions process begins in the brain and follows a set of automatic, rule-directed processes resulting in feeling an emotion (Elfenbein, 2007). Emotions are contrasted with mood, which is also an emotional experience, but tends to last longer, be more diffuse, and have a less identifiable stimulus (Forgas & George, 2001). Affect is a term used in the literature to encompass both emotions and mood.

The emotions process begins with a stimulus, which can be anything detected by the senses: a sight, smell, sound; an event; a message; an experience; or an interaction. Stimuli exist all around us in the workplace, but also can be carried over into the workplace from home. Positive stimuli could be instances of connection or closeness, such as a thoughtful, engaging conversation with a colleague, or a situation of accomplishment, such as finishing a particularly challenging work task. Negative stimuli may be seen in situations of conflict, injustice, or disagreement. Stimuli are not universally interpreted in the same way, however. The stimulus of an email message announcing the retirement of a co-worker may elicit a negative response in one person and a positive response in another. Stimuli are merely external events or conditions that can be sensed. The interpretation of those stimuli is where emotions come into the process.

Once a stimulus has been detected, the brain automatically and instantaneously performs a registration process of the stimulus (Elfenbein, 2007). This process is in effect an act of sense-making where outside of our consciousness, we ask ourselves questions about the stimulus. Emotions scholars differ somewhat on the specific schemata individuals apply to this process, but there is a general agreement that the appraisal process assesses the stimulus on factors such as (Roseman, 2001):

- *Unexpectedness*: whether the event violates one's expectations
- *Situational state*: whether the event is wanted or unwanted by the person
- *Motivational state*: whether the event is related to a desire to get less of something punishing, or a desire to get more of something rewarding

- *Probability*: whether the occurrence of motive-relevant aspects of the event is merely possible or is definite
- *Agency*: what or who caused the motive-relevant event
- *Control potential*: whether there is something one can do about the motive-relevant aspects of an event
- *Problem type*: whether a motive-inconsistent event is unwanted because it blocks attainment of a goal or unwanted because of some inherent characteristic

The answers we supply to the appraisal questions point to a particular emotion. For example, a stimulus that we appraise as expected, desired, likely to occur, in line with our goals, caused by us, and under our control would point to our feeling joy. We may appraise an event that was unexpected, inconsistent with our motive, something we're trying to avoid, likely to occur, caused by someone else, and outside our control with a feeling of dislike.

This appraisal process is highly based on context and is socially constructed. Referring to the earlier example of the colleague's retirement, the departure is value neutral − it is just a fact. We make meaning of that fact when we apply the appraisal process to the fact: is it desired, expected, within our control, aligned with our goals, etc.? The answers to those questions direct our understanding and emotional interpretation of the event.

The process of applying appraisal dimensions to events appears to be universal across individuals and even cultural groups (Mauro, Sato, & Tucker, 1992). Where our individuality comes through in the process is in exactly how we interpret and apply the information we glean from the appraisal. This formula can be considered a set of feelings rules or norms that each of us develops and follows. These rules speak to how we believe we should feel about a stimulus, as well as how long and how intensely we should feel an emotion. For some people, being late to a party causes significant distress − for others, such an event is no big deal. Researchers believe that our feelings rules to some extent are informed by an underlying hedonic principle to approach pleasure and avoid pain. Regulatory Focus Theory, based on the hedonic principle, explains that individuals tend to be guided by motivations for either aspirations and accomplishments (promotion focus) or responsibilities and safety (prevention focus) (Higgins, 1997). As such, when we appraise a stimulus, our underlying regulatory focus (promotion or prevention) directs the quality and intensity of the emotions we experience. Thus, individuals vary in how they feel an emotion.

In addition to regulatory focus, individuals' emotional histories help shape our feelings rules. As we encounter similar stimuli, we become practiced at interpreting their meaning, creating what is in essence an emotional groove. As we sense new stimuli, we can with great facility and familiarity slide into an old groove. An individual who has some extended experience feeling frustrated is likely to interpret other events as frustrating. The process becomes self-fulfilling. As Elfenbein (2007) writes, "everyone can experience every emotion but practice makes perfect" (p. 327).

Only after registering the emotion through the appraisal process and applying feelings rules do we reach the stage of experiencing the emotion – the recognition in mind and body of being affected emotionally. Naturally, there are a wide range of emotions that may result from appraising stimuli in the workplace. Positive emotions may include pride, fulfillment, relief, excitement, optimism, affection, empowerment, and joy, while negative emotions could be disappointment, resentment, anger, embarrassment, pain, shock, regret, guilt, fear, desperation, uncertainty, rejection, or worry (Elfenbein, 2007). Further, we are not limited to feeling a single, discrete emotion. Events are complex, often resulting in mixed emotions and feelings of ambivalence. When the emotional appraisal process results in multiple responses to the dimensions, we are likely to feel multiple emotions.

The final phase of the emotion process is the expression of the felt emotion. Emotions with greater intensity, positive or negative, tend to have more clear expressive cues. Expressed emotions convey information to those around us. Our emotions, as demonstrated through facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice, reveal something about our thinking and processing, often quite efficiently. Conveying humor by explaining why something is funny is more complicated than just laughing. Emotional expressions are also powerful forms of social influence. We smile back at others who smile at us; we tear up watching others express sadness. Our emotional expressions can also help solve problems by prompting others to respond to a situation revealed from an emotional expression. A sigh and grimace expressed while searching for information in a database may prompt a colleague to ask if they can help us.

Thus, the process of feeling emotions is an automatic, non-conscious series of cognitive and emotive functions beginning with sensing a stimulus and ending with an expression of an emotion. Each of these phases occurs spontaneously and automatically within us. However, there are regulatory steps individuals may take at each phase of this process to override the automatic responses.

Individuals may override the detection of a stimulus by avoiding situations that tend to result in a feeling they would prefer not to experience, such as fast forwarding past a scene in a movie that you know makes you feel sad. At the emotion appraisal stage, individuals may regulate their appraisal with what is known as antecedent-focused regulation. This type of regulation occurs when individuals adjust their appraisal prior to experiencing an emotion by either modifying or leaving the situation altogether, resulting in a different emotion. This regulation can also happen by modifying our perception of the situation either by redirecting attention to something else, or by reappraising the situation to change our emotional response (Gross, 1998). Denial, or completely suppressing feeling an emotion, is a severe form of regulating the experience of feeling an emotion. And finally, individuals may regulate their expression of an emotion by adjusting the expression without altering the inner felt emotion.

With this approach, an individual outwardly expresses a more desirable emotion, while internally experiencing a different emotion (Grandey, 2000).

This overview shows how fundamental and instrumental emotions are in our everyday life, including our work life. Without our awareness, we are constantly taking in events, appraising them against a sense-making schema, applying our individual feelings rules, and feeling and expressing emotions. Further, we potentially are overriding one or more of those processes at any given time, for some reason or another, that we may or may not be aware of. This complexity absolutely influences our thinking and our behavior at work.

WHAT PURPOSE DO EMOTIONS SERVE?

There are benefits to positive and negative emotions. The benefits from positive emotions are easily understood. Positive emotions act as rewards for our effort. The pride we feel from completing a work project results from the effort we brought to the project. Positive emotions, or the promise of them, keep us engaged in our work and inspire us to persevere. Employees are even willing to perform unpleasant tasks in part because of the positive emotions that may come from a positive appraisal of some aspect of the task. At first glance, negative emotions seem less useful in the workplace. Indeed, research shows that people are more responsive to negative stimuli than positive, that is, "bad is stronger than good" in terms of how we experience and remember events in our lives (Larsen, 2009). For example, research has shown that subjects report feeling greater levels of negative emotion on days they deemed as "bad days" than positive emotion on days they considered "good days," suggesting we experience negative events with greater negative intensity than positive events. Research also indicates that it takes longer to return to a baseline emotional status following experiencing negative emotion than positive. Researchers examined subjects' rating of positive and negative emotions at different times a day for a period of 28 days. The results showed that subjects returned to a baseline emotion after an extremely positive event more quickly (a range of 6 hours) than after an extremely negative event (a range of 12 hours) (Larsen, 2009). These examples support the idea that we are hard-wired to be more significantly affected for a longer time by negative emotions than positive ones.

All this would suggest that there is little value to experiencing negative emotions in the workplace. However, when considered more carefully, negative emotions can be useful. Negative emotions can function as important warnings that something may be not right. Even before employees can fully articulate the extent and nature of a problem situation, their emotional cues suggest there is an issue. Further, negative emotions can function as critical responses to dangerous or risky situations. Negative emotions galvanize resources and direct attention and behavior toward problems. Negative emotions help us develop

adaptability and coping skills. Like a dog's urgent barking or a baby's cry, feelings of unpleasantness, frustration, or anger wake us up to a problem we might be overlooking and direct us to act to mitigate the issue. When viewed in this light, negative emotions are important red flags that point to an opportunity to fix something. One caution should be made about the value of negative emotions. Psychologists suggest that it is important to watch out for negative feelings referred to as empty emotions, such as hopelessness, worthlessness, or despair. These emotions do not have the same warning functionality that other negative emotions do and can signal depression within an individual that should be addressed with professional help (Berstein, 2016).

Another benefit from emotions in the workplace is the communicative function they serve through the expression of emotions. Such communication of emotion can happen at the intrapersonal level, such as when an individual internally acknowledges the joy they feel about a success at work, or sadness over the loss of someone. At the intrapersonal level, the communication occurs within the individual and while it may be accompanied by visible emotional cues such as a smile or tears, the purpose and value of the communication is the internal acknowledgment and processing of the feeling, which can be motivating and/or cathartic.

Emotions, of course, are also communicated interpersonally through verbal and non-verbal communication acts. If a colleague nearby is slamming a fist on his desk, with a grimace on his face, you don't need to be told that he is likely feeling frustrated. Such expression communicates an emotion and can have a very strong social influence. Expressions of emotions — positive and negative — can trigger certain emotional responses from others. Such emotional contagion may be born out as mimicry, where a smile triggers a smile or frustration induces frustration in someone else. But emotional influence may also work in complimentary fashion where an expression of sadness encourages sympathy or embarrassment induces forgiveness.

Further, emotional expression may be used strategically to modify or encourage certain behavior. For example, a boss might publicly show gratitude to employees to reward them for their cooperation but show displeasure to those deemed less cooperative as a punishment mechanism, or she might express disapproval as a means to encourage better performance (Morris & Keltner, 2000). Indeed, research shows that positive and negative emotions point to different behaviors. The Broaden and Build theory of emotions suggest that negative emotions are linked to tendencies toward a specific set of actions: fear is linked with escape, anger is linked with the desire to attack, disgust is linked with the desire to expel (Fredrickson, 2001). In contrast, responses to positive emotions, such as joy, interest, pride, contentment, or love, lead to a less constrained set of responses. For example, joy is linked with the urge to play and be creative; interest is associated with the desire to take in more information and stay engaged; contentment creates the desire to appreciate life experiences and recreate those experiences (Fredrickson, 2004). This is not to

say that people always follow such specific action repertoires. Rather, our responses tend to come from a narrow set of options when we experience negative emotions, and positive emotions evoke modes of thinking and behaving that have less constrained possible outcomes. That is, positive emotions *broaden* experience. The theory goes on to say that positive emotions also have a long-term effect by *building* up a personal reserve of positive emotional resources that can be tapped during times of difficulty. Research bears this out with studies showing that positive emotions undo the narrowing effects of negative emotions (Fredrickson, Mancuso, Branigan, & Tugade, 2000), increase psychological resiliency (Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004), and add to reserves of personal emotional resources (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008).

Emotions serve multiple purposes in the workplace. They sustain and encourage performance, they alert organizations to problem areas requiring adjustment, and they are a form of communication that influences emotions and behaviors.

HOW DO WE USE EMOTIONS AT WORK?

Emotional Labor

As has been stated, emotions are a constant in the workplace. Emotional labor is a specific construct that describes how emotions are a formal requirement of a job and the effects such a requirement has on employee and organizational well-being. In any job, there are likely to be expectations of what are desired and acceptable emotional expressions. Such expectations are called display rules. Display rules may be made explicit to employees through onboarding training or in employee handbooks, or they may be a tacit requirement of a job. In many jobs, the display rules are roughly to express positive emotions and suppress negative ones. These display rules are common for public-facing workers, such as retail workers, teachers, caregivers, or other service professionals. Exceptions to these rules may be seen in professions that are tasked with carrying out difficult or unpleasant work such as with police officers, judges, or bill collectors where an aspect of the work is to be tough, firm, or unapproachable. The ideal for those with display rules to express positive and suppress negative emotion is that most of the time employees will authentically feel the emotions expected of them in their work, but obviously, this cannot always happen. In those situations, employees are faced with the task of regulating their authentic emotional process to meet the expectation of their position. Research shows that employees typically take one of two approaches when they experience that disconnect between felt and expected emotions.

With surface acting, employees adjust the outward expression of emotion to match the display rules, but do not alter the underlying emotion. Alternatively,

employees may use deep acting where, through a regulation of the emotion registration phase of the emotion process, they change their underlying emotion and thus alter their outward expression of emotion to the expected emotion of the job. Performing such emotional regulation, both deep and surface acting, is laborious, resulting in a range of negative effects with only minimal positive effects on employees and by extension on organizational outcomes as well. For example, research shows that surface acting predicts lowered job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and lowered professional efficacy (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Grandey, 2003; Matteson & Miller, 2013). Research looking at the effects of deep acting are only moderately better in terms of employee well-being. Findings show that deep acting is less harmful to individual well-being when compared with surface acting, but is still linked with emotional exhaustion and lowered professional efficacy. Deep acting has been shown to have a positive relationship with organizational outcomes such as emotional performance and customer satisfaction, but fundamentally deep acting still requires internal resources of employees and is effortful to carry out (Brotheridge & Grandey, 2002; Brotheridge & Lee, 2003; Hülsheger & Schewe, 2011; Totterdell & Holman, 2003).

In general, then, the regulation of one's emotions to match organizational expectations comes at a cost to employees. The mere presence of having to follow display rules, rather than being free to express authentically felt emotions, takes a toll on employees (Diefendorff & Richard, 2003; Grandey, Su, Groth, & Goodwin, 2012). Surface acting as an emotion regulation strategy, while a good instinct on the part of the employee, is a strong predictor of job burnout and other negative work outcomes. Deep acting is a more complex regulation strategy, resulting in lowered levels of burnout and higher levels of customer-based measures of job performance, but it also requires effort and drains employees' resources.

Because emotions are omnipresent in work settings, it is unrealistic to expect to remove emotional labor from the workplace. However, managers and employees can take steps to buffer the negative effects of emotional dissonance between felt and required emotions. First, organizations can write realistic display rules, with input from all employees. Mapping emotional expectations to the mission and purpose of the organization can increase employees' willingness to display the desired emotions and create a compelling reason to perform emotional labor. Second, managers and employees can create and practice routines for resolving emotionally intense situations. This might involve creating a series of conflict management steps for dealing with customers, and perhaps a different set of steps for internal conflicts among colleagues. Nevertheless, everyone in the organization should be trained in actions that can be employed to reduce emotional strain and stress both in the moments in which it is occurring as well as after the fact. Finally, creating an organizational climate where employees are free to express their authentic emotions will reduce the occasions where they may need to perform emotional labor.

Emotional Intelligence

In discussing the nature of emotions, their purpose in the workplace, and the effort involved with regulating them to meet organizational expectations, we are essentially building up to the idea of emotional intelligence. Taking these different factors of emotions in the workplace all together, we see that increasing emotional intelligence can help harness the benefits of the emotions we feel and express. The fact is, emotions exist all around the workplace. Rather than denying their existence, or encouraging employees to avoid experiencing them, we can instead build our emotional intelligence to maximize emotions to accomplish goals.

Emotional intelligence is a set of abilities to detect, understand, and manage emotions in oneself and in others (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). Like other intelligences such as spatial intelligence or verbal intelligence, emotional intelligence can be isolated from a general measure of intelligence (IQ). Emotional intelligence can be measured from an ability perspective where an individual can be assessed as having greater or lesser emotional intelligence. This viewpoint supports the conceptualization that emotional intelligence is not a trait – something we are born with and difficult to change – but an ability – a set of skills and competencies we can learn and improve (Joseph & Newman, 2010).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) conceptualized emotional intelligence as a set of abilities in four dimensions:

1. Accurately perceiving and expressing emotion
2. Integrating emotions to the thought process
3. Understanding the relations between emotions, and between emotions and circumstances
4. Managing emotions to moderate negative and enhance positive; regulating emotions

Each dimension is comprised of a set of discrete abilities. For example, under the first dimension, individuals show ability in identifying emotions in themselves through thoughts, feelings, and physical states. A slightly more advanced ability would be to express emotions accurately, and a more sophisticated ability in that same dimension would be the ability to identify the difference between accurate and inaccurate expressions of a feeling. Individuals develop their level of emotional intelligence by enhancing their skills within each of the dimensions as well as moving from the lower levels to the upper levels. In should be noted that more recent theoretical development has shown that the second dimension, integrating emotions in thoughts, may not be conceptually separate from the fourth dimension, regulating emotions, but rather a necessary component of the regulation process. Putting aside the minor theoretical consideration however, this model is a strong foundational conceptualization of the components of emotional intelligence.

HOW CAN WE INCREASE OUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Increasing our emotional intelligence is perhaps the most effective step any employee can take to harness the power of workplace emotions. Greater ability to perceive emotions in ourselves and others and more accurate expression of emotions increase the communicative value of emotions. Increasing the capacity to recognize the relationships among emotions and applying emotional knowledge to work situations increases the likelihood of making good decisions and solving problems. Effectively managing and regulating emotions can improve relationships with colleagues, superiors, and customers, resulting in more positive work experiences.

A significant piece of developing greater emotional intelligence lies in enhancing how we think about emotions. With deeper, more accurate meta-cognition about emotions, our subsequent behaviors can be more effective. To that end, here are some suggestions for increasing emotional intelligence.

- Practice consciously recognizing emotions in self and in others
  This is akin to learning letters before learning to read. To effectively regulate and manage emotions to achieve work goals, we must first be excellent readers of emotions. This is easily practiced by simply paying closer attention to emotional states at work. Check the accuracy of that recognition within yourself: "What am I feeling right now after receiving this email message from an angry patron? Is it frustration or is it closer to disgust?" If possible, check in with a close colleague: "It seems like you might be feeling some anxiety, would you say that's accurate?" Deciphering emotions can be tricky, but intentional practice can help develop greater accuracy in emotion recognition.
- Practice accurately expressing authentic emotions
  Learn to differentiate between communicating emotionally and communicating emotion. If you are feeling frustrated, instead of letting it leak out of you in tone, gesture, or writing, develop practice communicating the emotion by saying out loud to yourself, or to someone else, "Wow − I'm feeling frustrated by this situation." In effect, this challenges us to resist surface acting (masking our authentically felt emotions) and challenges us to verbalize how we're feeling with accurate, precise words.
- Practice analyzing and employing emotional knowledge
  Take the time to reflect on events to bring to consciousness some of the sense-making that occurs in that automatic emotional appraisal process. The next time you find yourself feeling a particular emotion resulting from some stimuli, ask yourself some sense-making questions about the event: was it aligned with my goals?, who caused it?, did I have control over it?, etc. By making more conscious the subconscious emotional process, we can use that emotional knowledge to bring about desired changes in our circumstances. This process can also be reverse engineered. Imagine the feeling you would

like to feel at the end of an event (a conversation, a meeting, or a service encounter, for example) and then ask yourself what path will get you there. What would need to happen to result in the desired emotional outcome?

- Practice using all your emotions

 You no doubt will experience a wide range of positive and negative emotions at work so make the most of the emotions you feel. Use those moments of positive emotions to refill the metaphorical tank of resources, to facilitate creativity and innovation, to explore and engage, and to reflect on the experience. Treat the negative emotions as signals of opportunity to make a change for the better. Deconstruct the negative emotion using a pro/con list where you examine how you are helped or hurt by the emotion. Consider the usefulness of the negative emotion: what might underlie it, and what information can you gain from it?

CONCLUSION

The last 30 years has brought an "affective revolution" to organizational research and organizational life (Barsade & Gibson, 2007, p. 36). Not only is there now a robust body of data on emotions at work, managers and employees are also becoming aware of how emotions are intertwined with all aspects of work, in all industry sectors, including librarianship. New neurological, biological, and psychological research discoveries around emotions have increased our knowledge base, helping organizations better acknowledge the emotional needs and states of employees. This heightened awareness of the role emotions play in the workplace benefits all parties. Emotions are fundamentally information that guides our thoughts and actions. By raising awareness of and practicing healthy emotion processing and regulation techniques, managers and employees can make use of the information emotions bring to work situations to improve both the well-being of employees and the quality of workplace interactions with co-workers and with library patrons.

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