

Enhancing Your Emotional Intelligence in the Boardroom

WGOB E-Guides provide tips for your board journey, empowering you with the confidence and courage to lead and serve on corporate boards.

Enhancing your emotional intelligence (EI) as a board member improves boardroom dynamics and decision-making. EI involves understanding and managing your emotions while empathetically recognizing the feelings of others. When board members enhance their emotional intelligence, it fosters a collaborative and respectful atmosphere in the boardroom, ensuring diverse perspectives are acknowledged and decisions are made with empathy and foresight.

Here is what board members should consider when enhancing their emotional intelligence in the boardroom.

1. Skills and Competencies

Focus on enhancing essential emotional intelligence skills, which include self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, and empathy. These abilities enable leaders to navigate complex boardroom dynamics and promote team cohesion.

2. Social Skills

Strengthening relationships with your board colleagues and the executive team will help you navigate social complexities. Effective communication — including active listening, mindfulness, and reflection — is also essential for influencing and guiding the board. Offer and request constructive feedback to foster growth and learn from experiences.

3. Challenges and Opportunities

Identify possible boardroom conflicts and use emotional intelligence to address them effectively, transforming challenges into opportunities for growth.

4. Practical Applications

To improve effectiveness, implement strategies that enhance emotional intelligence, such as mindfulness practices, active listening, and constructive feedback. Leaders with high emotional intelligence manage stress, conflict, and criticism more effectively. They cultivate trusting relationships, resulting in more positive and impactful boardroom dynamics.

5. Leading by Example

Board leaders with high emotional intelligence cultivate a culture of respect, openness, and collaboration, encouraging others to enhance and apply their emotional skills. These leaders manage stress, conflict, and criticism with greater proficiency.

6. Impact on Board Decision Making

Board decisions that incorporate emotional intelligence consider the human aspect of business. This comprehensive approach can lead to more sustainable and ethical outcomes.

Emotional intelligence is a critical yet often overlooked skill in the boardroom. Cultivating and applying emotional intelligence as a board member can foster more effective and collaborative leadership, ultimately benefiting the organization.