



Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i)

What's it all about?

The Emotional Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) measures our ability to recognize, understand, and express emotions and to understand our relationships with others. It also measures and assesses how we manage emotions, adapt to change, and solve interpersonal conflict. The tool is designed to measure competencies rather than traits. While personality traits are usually understood as more permanent and inflexible, competencies can be improved throughout our lives and developed through the right training.

This summary is part of our curated digital platform on social and emotional skills (SES) assessment and contains key details on one of the external SES assessment tools and applied studies we reviewed. The platform is part of The Conference Board of Canada's multi-year research project for the Future Skills Centre on SES. [For more information, check out our landing page here.](#)

How does it work?

The EQ-i's 360-degree approach involves both a self-reporting questionnaire and information gathered from colleagues about the test-taker's skills and behaviours, which together provide a more comprehensive picture of their social and emotional skills.

The questionnaire evaluates 15 competencies, divided into five broad categories: self-perception, self-expression, interpersonal skills, decision-making, and stress management. The tool generates an aggregated total score, five composite scores associated with each of the categories, and 15 sub-scale scores that allow users to dig into their specific strengths and weaknesses.

The EQ-i is suitable for people over the age of 18 and takes 20 to 30 minutes to complete.

Why use this tool?

The competencies measured by the EQ-i tool help test-takers gain a holistic understanding of their behaviours, strengths, and weaknesses. With this knowledge, they can identify specific areas that can be improved through training.

Intended users

Employers

Employers can use this tool to identify employees' competencies and track their development over time. This allows employers to learn which social and emotional skills they should focus on and whether professional development tools or training used for employees has been effective in developing these SES.

Career-planning specialists

The EQ-i can help specialists assist people looking for employment or career development. Because this tool requires self-evaluation and self-awareness of social and emotional skills, career planners can work effectively with test-takers to help guide them to jobs they will enjoy and excel at.

Job seekers

Job seekers can use this measurement tool to evaluate their own competencies and identify potential jobs that align with their skills. Based on responses, the EQ-i generates a profile which includes potential job suggestions.





Validity

The EQ-i has been used internationally for over 20 years, and many studies have demonstrated its reliability and validity. The tool captures the expression of SES in a typical performance context. Peer-reviewed studies of the tool have found no significant differences between responses across diverse international populations, demonstrating its cross-cultural applicability.

One area of concern is that users often overestimate their own SES. The EQ-i also tends to measure positive constructs without considering common negative emotions like rage, grief, or guilt. The tool has been criticized for measuring constructs that are too similar to personality measurement tools like the Big Five, which are based on stable traits, rather than measuring distinctive skills and competencies.

Social and emotional skills measured

The definitions provided below are as described in the Bar-On model of emotional-social intelligence, which forms the basis of the EQ-i, developed by psychologist Reuven Bar-On.

Self-perception

- **Self-regard:** our ability to look inward and accurately perceive, understand, and accept ourselves.
- **Self-actualization:** our ability to set personal goals and the drive to achieve them in order to actualize our potential.
- **Emotional self-awareness:** our ability to be aware of, identify, and understand our emotions.

Self-expression

- **Emotional expression:** our ability to be aware of and understand our emotions.
- **Assertiveness:** our ability to effectively and constructively express our emotions.
- **Independence:** our ability to be self-reliant and free of emotional dependency on others.

Access this tool

Proper accreditation is necessary to ensure that practitioners can properly administer the tool and understand its results.

Information about certification:

<https://www.eitrainingcompany.com/eq-i-certification/>
[alievo.com](https://www.alievo.com) - EQ-i 2.0® and EQ 360® Certification Program

Take the test:

<https://www.eitc.shop/product/ei-assessment-debrief-coaching/>

Interpersonal skills

- **Interpersonal relationships:** our ability to establish and maintain mutually satisfying relationships and relate well with others.
- **Empathy:** our ability to be aware of and understand how others feel.
- **Social responsibility:** our ability to identify with social groups, among friends, at work, and in the community, and to cooperate with others in a constructive and contributing manner.

Decision-making

- **Problem-solving:** our ability to effectively solve problems of a personal and interpersonal nature.
- **Reality testing:** our ability to objectively validate our feelings and thinking with external reality.
- **Impulse control:** our ability to effectively and constructively control emotions.

Stress management

- **Flexibility:** our ability to adapt and adjust our feelings, thinking, and behaviour to new situations and conditions.
- **Stress tolerance:** our ability to effectively and constructively manage emotions.
- **Optimism:** our ability to maintain a positive and hopeful attitude toward life, even in the face of adversity.



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