



**EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
EVALUATION TEMPLATE**



EI Evaluator's Toolkit

How to Observe, Assess & Evaluate Emotional Intelligence in Others



Managers

Build development plans grounded in real behavioral evidence.



HR Professionals

Identify high-potential leaders and coach for growth.



Coaches

Establish a clear EQ starting point with every client.



Interviewers

Assess candidate EQ through structured behavioral questions.

How to Use This Toolkit

This toolkit is not a test you give someone. It is an **observation-based evaluation system** — you watch, listen, and interact with a person over time and record what you see. The most accurate EQ evaluation is built from **patterns of behavior across multiple situations**, not a single moment.

Best Used For

- Evaluating a team member's EQ for development conversations
- Assessing a candidate's EQ during hiring
- A coach understanding a client's EQ starting point
- An HR professional identifying high-potential leaders
- A manager building a development plan for someone

📌 Golden Rule of EQ Evaluation

One observation is a data point. Three observations in different contexts is a pattern. A pattern is what you evaluate — never a single moment.

Part 1: Observation Guide

What to Watch For Across the 5 EQ Pillars

Before using any scoring tool, understand what high and low EQ actually looks like in observable behavior. Each pillar has its own set of behavioral signals — what you see when EQ is present, and what you see when it is not.

Self-Awareness

Recognize emotions and triggers

Motivation

Drive, persistence, and purpose



Self-Regulation

Manage impulses and responses

Empathy

Understand others' feelings

The five pillars build on each other. Self-Awareness is the foundation — without it, none of the other pillars can be fully developed. Use the following section to understand what each pillar looks like in practice before scoring.

Pillar 1: Self-Awareness

Can They See Themselves Clearly?

What to observe: How do they respond when given critical feedback? Do they acknowledge their own role in a conflict? Can they articulate their strengths and weaknesses honestly? Does their self-description match how others experience them?

✓ High Self-Awareness

- Receives feedback without immediate defensiveness
- Acknowledges their emotional state openly
- Self-description matches external perception
- Connects reactions to values or history
- Can laugh at themselves without self-deprecation
- Says "I was wrong" cleanly, without drama
- Knows their triggers and can name them

🚩 Low Self-Awareness

- Deflects, justifies, or blames when given feedback
- Denies being affected — "I'm fine" when clearly not
- Big gap between self-perception and how others experience them
- Seems surprised by their own emotional patterns
- Either excessive self-criticism or no self-reflection at all
- Apologies come with "but" attached
- Seems ambushed by their own reactions repeatedly

Best Situations to Observe

- After they make a mistake — watch the response
- During a performance review or feedback session
- When challenged publicly in a meeting
- When something does not go their way

Pillar 2: Self-Regulation

Can They Choose Their Response?

What to observe: How do they behave under pressure or in a crisis? Do they react impulsively or pause and respond? Can they stay composed when provoked? Do their emotions leak through tone, body language, or passive behavior?

✓ High Self-Regulation

- Stays calm and clear when others are panicking
- Pauses visibly before responding in heated moments
- Communication tone stays consistent under stress
- Can sit with uncertainty without forcing a premature decision
- Addresses issues when emotionally ready, not when activated
- Can compartmentalize — leaves personal stress outside work
- Takes accountability after a reactive moment

🚩 Low Self-Regulation

- Their anxiety or frustration becomes the room's anxiety
- Responds immediately and impulsively under pressure
- Tone becomes sharp, cold, or dismissive when stressed
- Needs to resolve discomfort immediately, even if it means a bad decision
- Sends the email at 11pm when frustrated
- Personal difficulties bleed into professional behavior visibly
- Minimizes or doesn't acknowledge when they've reacted poorly

Best Situations to Observe

- A high-pressure deadline or crisis situation
- When plans change unexpectedly
- When someone challenges their idea or authority in public
- When they receive criticism in front of others

Pillar 3: Motivation

What Drives Them?

What to observe: What do they talk about with genuine enthusiasm? Do they sustain effort when results aren't immediately visible? How do they behave when recognition is absent? Do they bring initiative without being asked?

✓ High Motivation (EI-Type)

- Talks about the meaning of their work, not just metrics
- Continues working hard even when no one is watching
- Recovers from setbacks with renewed energy
- Brings ideas and initiatives that weren't asked for
- Finds aspects of even difficult work that interest them
- Enthusiasm is internally sourced — not performance
- Sets goals that stretch them beyond comfort

🚩 Low Motivation

- Disengages when recognition or incentive is removed
- Effort level rises and falls with external reward
- Setbacks lead to extended disengagement or victim thinking
- Does exactly what is asked — no more, no less
- Performs at minimum acceptable standard when not supervised
- Enthusiasm is performative — present when it matters for image
- Sets safe goals to guarantee success

Best Situations to Observe

- During a long project with no immediate visible result
- After a failure or major setback
- When the work becomes repetitive or difficult
- When they are not being publicly recognized

Pillar 4: Empathy

Can They See and Feel Others?

What to observe: Do they notice when someone in the group is struggling — even silently? Do they adapt how they communicate based on the other person's state? Do they listen to understand or listen to respond? How do they treat people when they have nothing to gain?

✓ High Empathy

- Notices a colleague is off before that person says anything
- Adjusts communication style for different people naturally
- Responds to the emotion beneath the words, not just the words
- In meetings, pulls quieter people in — "what do you think?"
- Feedback lands softly even when the content is hard
- Treats junior staff with the same respect as senior leaders
- Can say "I see why you feel that way" even in disagreement

🚩 Low Empathy

- Seems surprised when someone reveals they were struggling
- Communicates the same way with everyone regardless of impact
- Responds only to the literal content of what was said
- Does not notice or address unequal participation
- Feedback is accurate but regularly received as harsh
- Warmth is selective — higher for people with power
- First response to disagreement is to counter, not to understand

Best Situations to Observe

- How they behave in meetings with mixed seniority
- When a team member shares personal difficulty
- How they give feedback — especially difficult feedback
- How they handle a colleague who is visibly upset or disengaged

Pillar 5: Social Skills

Can They Work With and Through People?

What to observe: How do they handle conflict — avoid it, escalate it, or resolve it? Can they influence people without authority or pressure? Do people around them feel energized or drained? Do they build trust quickly with new people?

✓ High Social Skills

- People open up to them — trusted with honest information
- Addresses conflict directly but without escalation
- Can change someone's mind without making them feel defeated
- Reads the room — adjusts energy, pace, and depth for the audience
- Leaves conversations with people feeling heard
- Builds relationships before they need them
- Repairs damaged relationships — does not leave ruptures unaddressed

🚩 Low Social Skills

- People give surface-level answers — they don't get the real story
- Either avoids conflict or handles it in ways that create more damage
- Wins arguments but loses relationships
- Delivers the same message the same way regardless of audience
- People feel processed rather than connected after conversations
- Builds relationships only when they need something
- Lets interpersonal damage sit and harden over time

Best Situations to Observe

- Cross-functional meetings with stakeholders they don't manage
- When they need to influence without formal authority
- When there is visible tension between team members
- When they interact with difficult personalities or resistant stakeholders

Part 2: The EQ Observation Scorecard

For Structured Behavioral Evaluation

Rate the person on each behavior after observing them across multiple situations. Do not rate behaviors you have not had the opportunity to observe – mark as **N/O (Not Observed)**.

Person Being Evaluated

Name / Role:

Evaluator

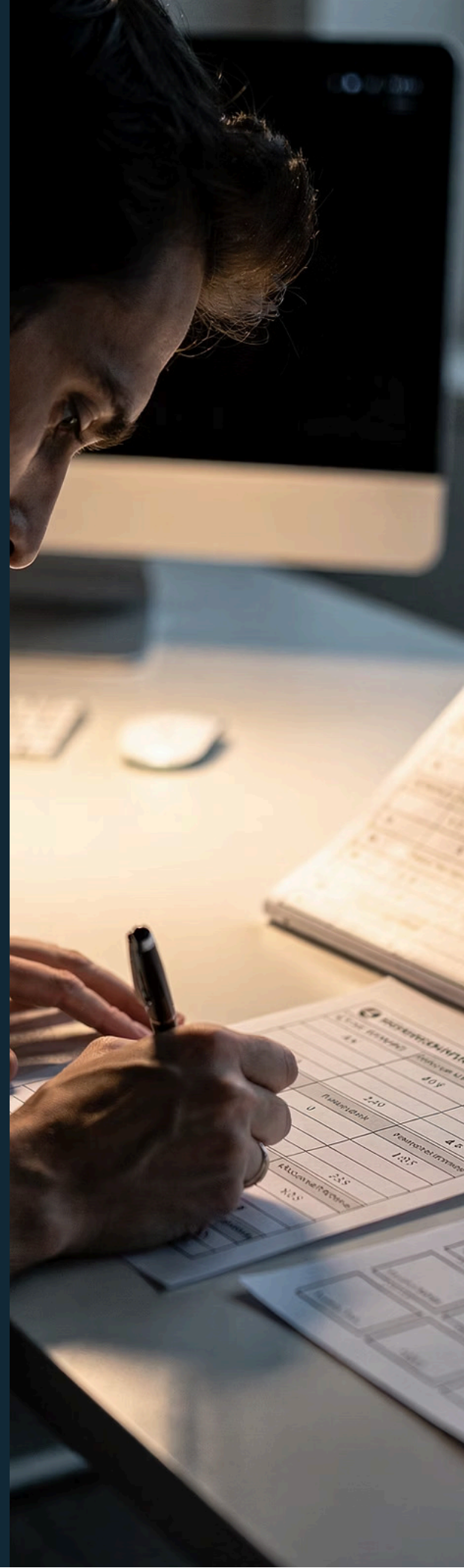
Name:

Evaluation Period

Date Range:

Context

Manager / Coach /
Interviewer / HR:



Rating Scale

Apply this scale consistently across all five pillars of the scorecard. Never rate a behavior you have not directly observed — use N/O instead.

4 — Consistently

Demonstrates this behavior across multiple contexts with no prompting.

3 — Usually

Usually demonstrates this behavior; occasional lapses under stress or pressure.

2 — Sometimes

Sometimes demonstrates this behavior; inconsistent across contexts.

1 — Rarely

Rarely demonstrates this behavior; requires significant development focus.

N/O — Not Observed

Not yet observed — do not rate. Seek more opportunities before scoring.

Scorecard: Pillar 1 — Self-Awareness

Observable Behavior	Rating (1–4 / N/O)	Evidence / Example Observed
Acknowledges their own emotional state openly and accurately	___	
Receives critical feedback without immediate defensiveness	___	
Identifies their role in conflicts or problems honestly	___	
Shows awareness of how their behavior impacts others	___	
Their self-perception aligns with how others experience them	___	
Can name their emotional triggers without prompting	___	
Demonstrates honest self-assessment — neither inflated nor excessively self-critical	___	

 Self-Awareness Score: ___ / 28

Scorecard: Pillar 2 — Self-Regulation

Observable Behavior	Rating (1–4 / N/O)	Evidence / Example Observed
Stays composed under pressure or in high-stakes situations	___	
Pauses before responding when emotionally activated	___	
Communication tone stays consistent and professional under stress	___	
Takes accountability for reactive behavior after the fact	___	
Makes sound decisions even when emotionally challenged	___	
Recovers from difficult moments without prolonged disruption	___	
Does not leak frustration, anxiety, or anger into unrelated interactions	___	

 Self-Regulation Score: ___ / 28

Scorecard: Pillar 3 — Motivation

Observable Behavior	Rating (1–4 / N/O)	Evidence / Example Observed
Sustains effort and quality even when recognition is absent	___	
Recovers from setbacks with energy and forward focus	___	
Brings initiative and ideas beyond what is formally required	___	
Speaks about their work with genuine purpose and meaning	___	
Maintains optimism and engagement during difficult periods	___	
Sets stretching goals rather than safe, easy targets	___	
Effort level is internally driven, not dependent on external reward	___	

 Motivation Score: ___ / 28

Scorecard: Pillar 4 — Empathy

Observable Behavior	Rating (1–4 / N/O)	Evidence / Example Observed
Notices when others are struggling — even without being told	___	
Adjusts communication style based on the other person's emotional state	___	
Listens fully before responding — does not interrupt or rush	___	
Responds to the emotion beneath the words, not just the literal content	___	
Treats all people with equal respect regardless of seniority	___	
Feedback is received as helpful, not harsh — even when content is difficult	___	
Creates space for others' perspectives before asserting their own	___	

 Empathy Score: ___ / 28

Scorecard: Pillar 5 — Social Skills


Observable Behavior	Rating (1–4 / N/O)	Evidence / Example Observed
Builds rapport and trust with new people quickly	___	
Addresses conflict directly and constructively without escalation	___	
Influences others effectively without relying on authority or pressure	___	
Reads the room and adapts approach for different audiences	___	
People feel genuinely heard after interactions with them	___	
Maintains and repairs relationships — does not let ruptures sit	___	
Navigates difficult interpersonal dynamics with skill and maturity	___	

 Social Skills Score: ___ / 28

Total EI Score Summary

Transfer scores from each pillar scorecard. Scores should reflect observed patterns — not isolated incidents. Any N/O behaviors should be noted in the evidence column for follow-up observation.

Pillar	Score	Out Of
Self-Awareness	___	28
Self-Regulation	___	28
Motivation	___	28
Empathy	___	28
Social Skills	___	28
TOTAL	___	140

 A score is only as valid as the observations behind it. The score summary should always be read alongside the evidence notes — never in isolation.

Part 3: Situational EI Interview Guide

For Hiring Managers & Interviewers

Use these questions to draw out behavioral evidence of EQ. The goal is not to catch candidates off guard — it is to create the conditions for authentic responses. Listen for **specificity, accountability, and emotional insight** — not rehearsed answers.

Self-Awareness

3 structured questions with listening guides

Self-Regulation

3 structured questions with listening guides

Motivation

2 structured questions with listening guides

Empathy

3 structured questions with listening guides

Social Skills

2 structured questions with listening guides

What to Listen For in Every Answer

✓ Signs of High EI in Responses

- Uses "I" statements — takes personal ownership
- Names their emotion specifically — not just "I was stressed"
- Describes what they learned, not just what happened
- Shows awareness of impact on others, not just themselves
- Gives a specific situation — not a vague generality

🚩 Signs of Low EI in Responses

- Focuses heavily on what others did wrong
- Cannot name their emotional experience precisely
- The "lesson" is always about external circumstances, not internal growth
- Speaks in generalizations — "I always try to..." with no specific example
- Becomes visibly defensive about the question itself

📄 The best EQ interview answers are rarely perfect. A candidate who describes a moment of low EQ — and what they learned from it — is demonstrating higher EQ than one who claims every situation went smoothly.

Interview Questions: Self-Awareness

Q: "Tell me about a time you received feedback that was difficult to hear. Walk me through exactly how you responded."

Listen for: Do they describe their emotional reaction honestly? Do they acknowledge initial defensiveness if it existed? Does growth follow genuine reflection — or is the learning too neat and rehearsed?

Q: "What is one emotional pattern you have noticed in yourself that you are actively working to change? What have you tried?"

Listen for: Specificity and honesty. Vague answers ("I sometimes get stressed") signal low self-awareness. Detailed, honest answers with specific practices signal genuine self-reflection.

Q: "Describe a situation where your perception of how you handled something was very different from how others experienced it."

Listen for: Can they hold two realities at once — their own experience and another person's? Low-EQ candidates will struggle to generate this kind of example.

Interview Questions: Self-Regulation

Q: "Tell me about a time you were in a high-pressure situation where your instinct was to react strongly. What did you do instead?"

Listen for: Do they describe a genuine moment of regulation — a pause, a breath, a decision not to react? Or do they claim they simply weren't affected?

Q: "Have you ever sent an email or made a decision you later regretted because you were emotionally activated? What happened?"

Listen for: Willingness to be honest about a moment of low self-regulation. Candidates who claim this has never happened are either unaware or dishonest — both are EQ concerns.

Q: "Describe how your behavior changes when you are under extreme stress. What signals do the people around you notice?"

Listen for: Self-awareness of how stress manifests behaviorally — not just internally. The phrase "what signals do people around you notice" deliberately requires them to take an external perspective on themselves.

Interview Questions: Motivation

Q: "Tell me about a goal you pursued for a long time without visible results. What kept you going?"

Listen for: Intrinsic language — purpose, meaning, belief in the outcome. **Red flag:** Purely extrinsic language — "I needed the money," "my manager was watching."

Q: "Describe a significant professional failure. How did you respond in the weeks after?"

Listen for: The recovery process. Did they process, learn, and re-engage? Or did they minimize, blame, or remain stuck? Resilience is visible in the detail of what came after.

Interview Questions: Empathy

Q: "Tell me about a time you noticed a colleague was struggling before they said anything. What did you do?"

Listen for: Specificity — what did they observe? What did they do with the observation? Did they act or just notice?
Compassionate empathy = noticing + acting.

Q: "Describe a time you had to give difficult feedback to someone. How did you prepare emotionally and how did you deliver it?"

Listen for: Did they consider how the feedback would land emotionally before delivering it? Did they adjust their approach for that person specifically?

Q: "Tell me about a person whose working style was very different from yours. How did you adapt?"

Listen for: Genuine curiosity about the other person's style rather than frustration. High-EQ candidates describe a real attempt to understand — not just tolerate.

Interview Questions: Social Skills

Q: "Tell me about a conflict you navigated between two other people. How did you handle it?"

Listen for: Did they position as a neutral listener first? Did they manage their own feelings about the conflict? Did they look for shared ground? Or did they take sides and manage the politics?

Q: "Describe a time you needed to influence a decision where you had no formal authority. What was your approach?"

Listen for: Relationship-first strategies — understanding the other person's concerns, building credibility through consistency, reframing in terms of their priorities. **Red flag:** Relying solely on logic, data, or persistence.

Part 4: EQ Development Conversation Guide

For Managers Having EQ Feedback Conversations

Use this framework to structure a development conversation with someone about their EQ — without making it feel like an attack. The goal is to create insight, not defensiveness. An EQ conversation that triggers low EQ in the receiver is a poorly designed conversation.

The Setup — Before the Conversation

The quality of an EQ development conversation is determined before it begins. Preparation is not optional — it is what separates a conversation that creates growth from one that creates defensiveness.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>O1</p> <hr/> <h2>Gather Behavioral Evidence</h2> <p>Collect at least 3 specific behavioral observations — not impressions or feelings. You need concrete examples to anchor the conversation.</p> | <p>O2</p> <hr/> <h2>Identify the Relevant Pillar(s)</h2> <p>Determine which EQ pillar(s) are most relevant to their development. Focus the conversation — do not try to address all five pillars at once.</p> |
| <p>O3</p> <hr/> <h2>Choose the Right Moment</h2> <p>Select a time when both you and the person are emotionally regulated. Never initiate this conversation immediately after a triggering incident.</p> | <p>O4</p> <hr/> <h2>Frame It as Investment</h2> <p>Prepare to frame the conversation as investment in their growth — not a performance issue. The framing you open with shapes the entire tone.</p> |

Step 1 — Open with Genuine Acknowledgment

The Conversation Framework

Start with what you have observed genuinely going well. This is not a softening technique — it is **emotional accuracy**. Every person has EQ strengths worth acknowledging before discussing development areas.

"I want to talk about your development, and I want to start with something I genuinely respect about how you operate..."

- ❏ This step must be genuine. If your acknowledgment feels performative, the person will sense it — and their defenses will rise before you reach the development conversation. Only say what you genuinely mean.

Step 2 — Name the Pattern, Not the Incident

Do not focus on one event. One event is a data point — not a conclusion. Name the pattern you have observed across multiple situations. This protects the person from feeling ambushed and makes the feedback harder to dismiss.

"What I've noticed over the past few months — and I've seen it in a few different situations — is..."

Why Patterns Matter

- A single incident can always be explained away
- Patterns are harder to dismiss and easier to reflect on
- Patterns protect the person from feeling ambushed by one bad moment
- Patterns signal that you have been paying real attention



What to Do If You Only Have One Example

If you only have one observation, **do not yet have a pattern**. Use that single incident as a reason to pay closer attention. Wait until you have two or three examples before having the development conversation. Patience here leads to a far better outcome.

Step 3 — Describe Behavior and Impact (SBI)

Be specific, behavioral, and impact-focused. **Never label or diagnose.** Use the Situation-Behavior-Impact (SBI) model to keep feedback grounded in observable fact rather than interpretation.

"In [situation], when you [behavior], what I observed was [impact on the team/person/outcome]."

 Never Say	 Say Instead
"You have low empathy."	"In the last three team meetings, when colleagues raised concerns, I noticed you moved to solutions before acknowledging how they felt — and I observed them disengaging after that."
"You're not self-aware."	"In the debrief after the project, when I shared what the team had experienced, I noticed you seemed genuinely surprised — which tells me there may be a gap between how you see your impact and how others experience it."

Step 4 — Invite Their Perspective

High-EQ development conversations are dialogues, not deliveries. After naming the pattern and the impact, stop — and genuinely listen to their response. This step is where the real development work begins.

"I'm sharing this as something I've observed. I'm curious what your experience of those situations was."

Then Listen

Fully. Without planning your next response. The quality of your listening in this moment is itself a demonstration of EQ.

Be Ready to Be Surprised

Their perspective may add context you didn't have. Receiving that information gracefully models the exact behavior you are asking of them.

Hold Your Observation Lightly

You may have been right. You may have been partially right. Be willing to update your view based on what you hear — and say so out loud when you do.

Step 5 — Explore, Don't Prescribe

Ask questions that build their own self-awareness rather than telling them what to do. Questions create insight; prescriptions create compliance — and compliance is not the same as development.

Instead of Saying	Ask This
"You need to listen more."	"What do you think people are experiencing when they bring you a concern?"
"You react too strongly under pressure."	"When you look back at that moment, what do you notice about how you were feeling?"
"You need to be more empathetic."	"How do you think [person] experienced that conversation?"

- 📌 The goal of Step 5 is to help them arrive at the insight themselves. Insight that is self-generated is far more likely to drive lasting behavior change than insight that is delivered.

Step 6 — Build the Development Plan Together

End the conversation by co-creating a specific, focused next step. Avoid giving a long list of things to work on — choose one clear focus and agree on what support looks like.

"Based on what we've discussed, what's one thing you want to work on? And what would support look like from me?"



One Focus

Identify a single, specific EQ behavior to develop — not a pillar, not a trait. A concrete, observable behavior.



Agreed Timeline

Set a check-in date.
Development without accountability is aspiration.
Accountability without support is pressure.



Your Role

Name specifically what support you will provide. Asking "what would support look like?" models EQ — it assumes they know what they need.

Conversation Documentation

Record key elements of the development conversation immediately after it ends. Written notes hold both parties accountable and allow you to track growth over time.

Person	_____
Date	_____
EQ Pillar(s) Discussed	_____
Strengths Acknowledged	
Pattern(s) Raised	
Specific Examples Used	
Their Response / Perspective	
Agreed Development Focus	
Support I Will Provide	
Check-In Date	_____



Part 5: Quick EQ Red Flags & Green Flags

Fast Reference for Evaluators

When you don't have time for a full evaluation, use these signals. They are not diagnostic — but they are highly predictive. A cluster of red flags across multiple contexts is a meaningful signal. A cluster of green flags is equally meaningful.

Red Flags — Low EQ Indicators

In Conversations


- Says "I'm not an emotional person" with pride
- Blames specific people when describing past challenges — repeatedly
- Cannot generate a single example of being wrong or growing from feedback
- Uses exclusively logical justifications for clearly emotional decisions
- Becomes visibly uncomfortable when asked about feelings or emotions

In Written Communication

- Emails sent late at night after a difficult interaction
- Tone changes dramatically under pressure
- Lengthy justifications when challenged — defensiveness disguised as detail
- Never asks questions — only asserts

In Meetings

- Dominates the conversation without noticing others have disengaged
- Dismisses ideas before fully hearing them
- Reacts to challenge with sarcasm, withdrawal, or aggression
- Cannot sit with ambiguity — pushes to resolve discomfort prematurely
- Never acknowledges others' contributions

 One red flag is not a verdict. Look for clusters of red flags across multiple contexts before drawing conclusions.



Green Flags — High EQ Indicators

In Conversations

- Pauses genuinely before answering difficult questions
- Uses precise emotional language — not just "stressed" or "upset"
- References what they learned from failure without excessive self-criticism
- Asks about your experience before stating their own
- Can hold their view and genuinely understand yours simultaneously

In Written Communication

- Tone is consistent regardless of stress level
- Takes accountability when things go wrong — no passive voice blame
- Asks questions before drawing conclusions
- Acknowledges the human element alongside the task element

In Meetings

- Pulls quiet people into the conversation
- Summarizes others' views before presenting alternatives
- Acknowledges tension in the room rather than bypassing it
- Receives challenge without posturing
- Says "I don't know" without discomfort

☐ Green flags accumulate. A person who consistently demonstrates these behaviors across all three contexts — conversation, meeting, and writing — is demonstrating strong, integrated EQ.

CERTIFIED EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE PROFESSIONAL

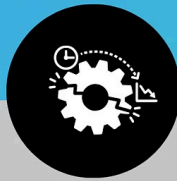


ABOUT GSDC CERTIFICATION



EBOOK

Extensive and exclusive Ebook created by world's experts to help you with understanding core concepts.



LEARNING MATERIALS

Get access to learning materials such as videos, ebooks, templates, and practice exams, which will help you clear the certification exam.



CREATED BY EXPERTS

GSDC certifications are created and authored by world's leading experts in the field.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Gain insights into autonomous decision-making processes
- Apply knowledge using ready-to-implement templates
- Demonstrate ability to work with Agentic AI models
- Validate your skills wit

Enroll now with the code **LEARN20** To avail **20%** discount

Enroll Now

www.gsdCouncil.org 