



## Emotional Intelligence: Leadership in CME

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Historically, institutions have taken a keen interest in leaders and leadership. The word leader actually means to show the way. This first came into existence in the early 13th century. Leadership is characterized as a process of mutual understanding between people.

Literature suggests people who take on leadership positions, in any field, must possess the following qualities:

- Be open to feedback from others and use this information to make corrective changes within his or her units
- Have the ability to adopt behaviours and work methods in response to changes in his or her environment
- Be resilient and always remain optimistic and persistent under adversity
- Be a catalyst for innovative changes
- Instill public trust
- Value cultural diversity and other differences
- Ensure people are treated fairly and equitably
- Engage in interprofessional activities
- Create a culture that fosters high standards of ethics and morals

These characteristics distinguish effective leaders from non-effective leaders.

However, within the current dynamic healthcare system, leaders need to go beyond the usual skill set and move towards a more humane side of leadership called emotional intelligence (EI).

Leaders must have an ability to manage themselves and their relationships effectively. The healthcare environment has been dealing with:

- reforms,
- downsizing,
- reduced funding,
- a shortage of physicians,
- general dissatisfaction,
- negative skepticism and
- a resistance to change.

*Within the current dynamic healthcare system, leaders need to go beyond the usual skill set and move towards a more humane side of leadership called EI.*

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Leading in this type of unpredictable environment requires leaders who are flexible and who are able to modify their style according to the external demands. Goleman's framework of EI stresses that leaders of this century will need to have a great deal of self-awareness on how their internal world relates and impacts others around them.

Recent research conducted by Goleman and colleagues, identified six leadership styles that contributed towards an effective leader. Each of the following styles had some aspect of EI (*i.e.*, coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pace-setting and coaching). Utilizing these styles would likely benefit the individual leader during times of unpredictable change.

CME leaders, by virtue of their field, face the impact of changing educational, social, political and additional financial forces in their units. They must strive towards acquiring this different competency of EI with the goal of creating a climate that nurtures and fosters physician-directed lifelong learning.


**cme**

#### References

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