

‘From self to other’

Mini guide to emotional intelligence for leaders

Effective leadership relies on healthy relationships. Yet these can easily become strained when we’re under pressure, especially if you’ve got stuck in ‘command and control’ or micromanagement mode. This guide sets out a ‘co-active’ leadership and communication model that makes it easier to lead others and support their development. *It also gives a taste of our ‘Wisdom at Work’ Leadership Mastery programmes*, including the ‘From self to other’ emotional intelligence programme.

The co-active model of leadership and communication

The ‘co-active’ model is based on a fundamental psychological truth: ***every human has the resources they need to solve their own problems or to move towards their goals***. It’s just that sometimes certain beliefs and experiences prevent access to these resources. People may have got bogged down in complexity and over-thinking; they may not have had sufficient experience in certain tasks; or they may lack confidence or self-trust. As a leader, you can make your life much easier if you can follow a simple process to help people access their own problem-solving resources – in the process, supporting their growth and development.

Step 1 – setting the foundation

- *Creating the right conditions*: time, place – putting the other person at ease.
- *Clarity on your role*: you are there to help them think things through, not fix things for them.
- *Establishing trust*: creating safe environment, showing concern, and maintaining integrity.
- *Co-creating the relationship*: find out how you might best support the other person.

Step 2 – Getting clear: focus and outcome

- *Focus on the issue(s)*: and narrow down to what can be done in the time you have.
- *Outcome*: get clear on where a good place to get to would be.

Step 3 – Delving deeper

- *Active listening*: being fully present, and listening deeply to what the other person is really seeking.
- *Intuition*: trusting your gut instinct about the direction to take the conversation in.
- *Questioning/curiosity*: asking open-ended questions that reveal understanding.
- *Feedback/challenge*: providing rigorous support to reality test.

Step 4 – Facilitating actions and learning

- *Getting practical*: drawing out practical actions to achieve desired change
- *Be specific*: ensuring actions are specific; capturing these next steps
- *Review*: identifying progress made; acknowledging any major changes and milestones.

Putting it into practice: suggested exercise

To get a taste of how this model works, follow these simple steps in some personal or professional conversations:

1. **Practise deep listening**: instead of commenting or chipping in, spend more time listening out for the true needs and values that the other person is revealing. Reflect this back so they get to understand themselves more deeply.
2. **Get curious**: as a natural next step to listening, ask open-ended questions that allow the person to reveal more.
3. **Enabling change**: rather than suggesting solutions, ask what the other person sees as their next steps. Notice how this may happen naturally when your listening and curiosity have given them more time and space to reflect.

Found this guide helpful? Contact us to find out more about the ‘From self to other’ programme and our ‘Wisdom at Work’ Leadership Mastery Programmes:

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