PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT | PSYCHOLOGY

Can I Bring My Emotions to Work?

Suddenly, even the stolid Harvard Business Review started publishing articles on the role of emotions in business

by **James Pereira**

999 words | 4 pages

In the mid ‘80s, I did Management as my Minor as an undergraduate. The implication I got from studying management was that it was a cut and dry function. Everything was supposed to be objective with no role for subjectivity, including the fickle thing that humans suffer from - emotions.

My first job in the mid ‘80s was direct selling of encyclopedias and children’s educational publications. I learned very quickly that if I wanted to sell my high-end products, I had to get into the good graces of my prospect. So as I entered homes and offices, I made small talk, before launching into the product presentation. Nowadays we call this small talk, rapport building or icebreakers.

Then I switched my career to pharmaceuticals sales in the late ‘80s and the general wisdom in those days was that doctors, being scientifically trained, didn’t want their time wasted in small talk. How wrong the pundits were. Here too, I realized that I needed to get the doctor to like me before he or she would use my products.

Some years later, I was promoted to management and one boss in particular used to repeat the mantra that in business, emotions should be left at home. You’re unprofessional if you exhibit your emotions in dealing with peers, customers, subordinates, bosses and suppliers. Those were the days when the word, love, could never be used in a professional setting.

Soon after becoming a manager, I did my MBA. Even in the Human Resources Management course, no mention was made of the role of emotions in the work place. It looked like everybody was ignoring the elephant in the room - the role of emotions in the work life.

As I went up the career ladder and took on more senior roles, it slowly dawned on me that emotions do indeed play a significant role in all human dealings including business.

This was the early to mid 2000s when I came of age. This was also when there was an explosion in self-help and self-development books and seminars.

Suddenly, even the stolid Harvard Business Review started publishing articles on the role of emotions in business. Daniel Goleman's publication of his seminal work on Emotional Intelligence threw open the curtains and emotions started being welcome in offices.

As a trainer, I use a substantial amount of emotional engagement during my training sessions with sales people and leaders. Of course not all cultures are comfortable with the touchy-feely stuff, but we're getting there.

Here are some pointers on emotions relating to the direct selling world.

1. **People do business with those they like and trust.** So before you start talking business, make sure you get the good feelings going in your prospects by complimenting them (be genuine, of course). You could also ask about their family or background.

In some cultures, business is only conducted during or after a meal. The Arabian and Japanese societies are well known for this.

Building trust is not a one-off episode and has to be done throughout every interaction.

2. **The intensity of your desires or passion will drive your success.** If the MLM business you're in is a drag for you, you're never going to succeed no matter how hard you work. You'll just suffer burnout even if you make tons of money and will eventually fizzle out.

So make sure you identify your passion for whichever type of MLM or Networking business you're going to be involved with. The business must match your passion and vice versa.

In the terminology of DSWA (Direct Selling World Alliance), we refer to it as your *Emotional Why*. Not everybody who does this business is in it for the money. There are powerful non-financial drivers too.

Harv Eker, pointed out in his bestselling book, Secrets of The Millionaire Mind, that Thoughts lead to Feelings that lead to the Actions that you take or don't take.

And where do your Thoughts come from? It's from the way you Program your mind. I'm certain you're familiar with this acronym - GIGO - Garbage In Garbage Out. Your mind works the same way. Program it correctly and you will get right Thoughts that will lead to right Feelings and right Actions.

So how do you Program your mind to be in that Peak Zone?

Four daily habits that Program your mind are Daily Affirmations, Daily Reading, Self-Coaching and Daily Prayer/Medication. These 4 are some of the habits of successful people.

One other habit of successful people, which is not done daily, but ideally weekly, is to be coached, so that you remain aligned to your passions and goals.

3. **Build up your Emotional Quotient.** You read that right, your EQ is not inherited but can be developed. Much recent research has shown that successful people have high EQ and that EQ is the trump card that determines success, rather than IQ.

With a well-tuned EQ, you will be able to utilize the emotions of your team members to achieve what they want. A high EQ will also ensure that you have a grip on your emotional state too.

This characteristic is what will make you an effective leader in your network marketing business, in terms of being level headed and being a great coach to your team.

In conclusion, emotions are not just welcome for any business to succeed but they are essential for a business to soar.

James Pereira has invested 30 years in sales and marketing in B2B and Direct Selling organizations. He is the DSWA Certified Trainer and Coach for Asia. His expertise is in supporting organizations in boosting their revenues by building their people skills. You may contact James at James@DSWA.org and check out his profile here - http://dswa.org/members/james-pereira/