

**FOR HIRING**

**MANAGERS**

***Emotional  
Intelligence and  
the Liberal Arts***

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**TIP SHEET**

**E**motional Intelligence, the hard science behind “soft skills,” is a body of work that examines and explains abilities people have, to varying degrees, to understand other people, to recognize emotions and to use them in decision-making. Emotional Intelligence (EI) goes beyond cognitive intelligence (IQ) and includes being compassionate, optimistic, trustworthy, self-aware, adaptable and, eventually, influential. There’s a growing recognition, backed by significant research, that people on the job who have EI succeed; people who lack EI, even if they’re brilliant (IQ), struggle.

The bonus round question becomes, then, *How does one develop EI?* There’s more than one answer and, sadly for corporate training providers, no add-water-and-stir approach.

Here’s a list of a few EI “competencies,” as they’re called, and ways in which a liberal education helps develop these abilities:

<b><i>EI</i></b>	<b><i>Liberal Arts Preparation</i></b>
Understanding Others	Examining character motivation in literature deepens an understanding of others, as does studying human behavior (psychology)
Political Awareness	Anticipation reactions (that is what “politics” is) can be developed by examining historical events, human behavior
Leveraging Diversity	Studying language is much more than mechanics and translation; it’s culture, and develops an appreciation of other ways of doing things, seeing things
Emotional Awareness	Productivity, outcomes, human behavior (at work, anywhere) are powerfully influenced by emotions. Knowing how to use this knowledge, comes from examining the lives of others in history, literature, social sciences
Innovation	Studying the creativity of others (writers, artists, researchers) inspires originality
Adaptability	The liberal arts teach you about a variety of questions, not the certainty of answers, the predictability of outcomes, which encourages people to roll with change.

Looking for people to add to your workforce whose educations have prepared them with some important Emotional Intelligence abilities? Now you know where to look.