



**PT WORK** Force®

## **Using Emotional Intelligence and Skills Assessments to Screen Candidates** *Webinar held August 20, 2021*

Debbie Muno, Genos Emotional Intelligence Solutions, shared insights and tools to help employers integrate screening for Emotional Intelligence (EI) into their hiring practices. She began with an overview of the increasing demand for EI skills in the workplace, led an exercise designed to give participants a personal and concrete example of how EI can influence productivity and professional development and shared key EI attributes employers should assess in job candidates. The [webinar recording](#) and presentation [slide deck](#) are free and available to all.

### **The Demand for EI**

In 2016, the World Economic Forum predicted EI would become one of the top 10 job skills by 2020 for every single job. In 2018, the same group listed EI at number eight on a list of 10 of the top skills employers are seeking for 2022. Similarly, a 2019 LinkedIn survey listed EI as the fifth most crucial skill companies needed most for 2020.

Formerly called a “soft skill,” EI is now considered an “essential skill” that aligns with creativity, persuasion, collaboration and adaptability. Having individuals, across all levels, with lifted EI can fuel a vibrant and productive workforce. Anytime organizations invest in the growth and development of its people, EI is one of the things that has a huge payoff.

Here’s how employers and employees each define engagement in the workplace.

- Employees: emotional attachment to their work, role, culture, position and its effect on their wellbeing and productivity.
- Employers: using measures and initiatives to increase positive emotional attachment which in turn correlates to increased productivity and business success.

These drive each other and signify a constant effort that needs to be *made by employer* and *encouraged on the part of employee*.

### **Why is EI Critical in the Workplace?**

A 20-year research study of 20,000 employee exit interviews revealed:

- 80% of all turnover is directly related to an unsatisfactory relationship with a boss.
- The number one reason people leave a job is because of a bad boss.
- 75% of those leaving don’t leave a job; they are quitting a person
- Workgroups that are poorly managed have an average of 50% less productivity and are 40% less profitable.
- Being a victim of a brutal boss leads to clinical depression in 41% of those victims.

Per *Forbes*, of the top 10 skills recruiters are seeking in 2021, 80% are related to EI, like growth mindset, continuous learning, survival skills, resilience, etc. Additionally, a study published in the *Harvard Business Review* shows that the rise of artificial intelligence is making EI even more critical element within the workforce.

## EI Characteristics of a Great Boss vs. Bad Boss

Offering six different statements, Debbie asked participants to rate, on a scale of one to five, who they considered to have been their “best boss.” A rating of one correlated to a boss who demonstrated relevant skills or action significantly less than others. A rating of five correlated to a boss who demonstrated this skill or action significantly more than others. Upon tallying the rankings, most end up with a “discretionary effort number” between 6 and 30. As expected, there is a disparity, thus revealing a significant difference in how a boss behaved and treated you in the workplace.

Best bosses usually average a discretionary effort number of seven or higher while bad bosses average a score of four or less. Below are some general statements that people use to describe the different experiences.

<b>Question/Measurement</b>	<b>Best Boss</b>	<b>Worst Boss</b>
How did this person make you feel?	valued, appreciated, included, seen, heard, competent	belittled, berated, stupid, inadequate, not enough
How would you describe this person?	mentor, true leader, compassionate, kind, open, understanding, great teammate	bully, toxic, narcissistic, egocentric, uncaring

The key takeaway for employees: It’s not you, it’s them. How we feel impacts every facet of our life and our experiences leave indelible images on us. Look at where you are today and ask yourself:

- Who in your current organization reminds you of your best boss? How are they impacting the productivity, retention, engagement, culture and profitability of people around them?
- Are there people who remind you of your worst boss? How are they impacting these same factors?

## The Neuroscience of Emotion

Our amygdala is the first place that receives all stimuli. It analyzes if something is a threat or reward. Nothing gets to our conscious brain without first being influenced by our emotional brain.

When someone criticizes or speaks negatively to us, our adrenal glands kick in, oxygen-rich blood is diverted to our limbs and we become narrowed in our ability to problem solve or see solutions because we are only focused on living through the moment. This is our “threat circuitry” as we feel concerned, worried, frustrated or stressed. Threat circuitry takes 24 hours to dissipate. If constantly running, the body never recovers, and the stress can make us physically ill.

When someone praises us, our amygdala hits the jackpot! Endorphins are released, dopamine (the feel-good hormone) is released, and we are at our smartest and want to learn more. We are at the height of

creativity and often have epiphanies. This is our “reward circuitry” as we feel meaningful, valued, satisfied and useful.

Positive or negative, our actions are predicated on our amygdala. The way we feel influences our decisions, behaviors and performance, and if we hire people with higher levels of EI, we have a chance at greater performance.

## **EI Alignment with Company Core Values**

The Genos Emotional Intelligence Selection Model measures seven workplace Core Emotional Intelligence Competencies. People with higher levels in these areas are frequently in this productive state. They consistently influence colleagues through reward circuitry, whether they are a leader or not.

- **Self-Awareness:** Understands the impact feelings have on thoughts, decisions, behavior and performance.
- **Awareness of Others:** Perceives and understands others’ emotions and how to engage, respond and motivate them. (Sometimes called “interpersonal effectiveness.”)
- **Emotional Expression:** Shares emotion effectively. Creates better understanding among colleagues by creating trust and perceptions of genuineness.
- **Emotional Reasoning:** Uses emotional information in decision making and demonstrates enhanced decision making by seeking greater buy-in from others when decisions are made.
- **Self-Management:** Manages emotions effectively. People who are good at this are resilient, have a strong sense of emotional wellbeing and are not temperamental.
- **Management of Others:** Influences the moods and emotions of others and can generate greater productivity and performance, contributing to a positive and satisfying work environment. They manage conflict effectively and are empowering.
- **Self-Control:** Knows how to control strong emotions. Thinks clearly in stressful situations and successfully handles situations that cause strong emotions. These people are centered.

When it comes to hiring practices, it’s imperative that employers ask questions that elicit responses related to a candidate’s level of EI and reasoning. Some examples are:

- **Mindset:** Tell us about your approach to decision-making?
- **Practice:** What are some of the biases that get in the way of good decision making?
- **Outcomes:** Tell us about the most difficult decision you’ve had to communicate to staff and the approach you took to doing so.

People with lifted levels of EI are more engaged, creative and agile. They exhibit better sales performance, are collaborative, facilitate change programs, are strong leaders and solid teammates, provide exceptional customer service, demonstrate corporate core values and value the perspective of a multi-generational workforce.

Common organizational core values such as ethics, integrity, trust, collaboration, self-improvement, teamwork, empathy, accountability and dedication to others are directly related to the Core Emotional Intelligence Competencies. During COVID, these attributes translate to individuals who are more resilient, manage stress, anxiety and the psychological effects of COVID more effectively, are better remote workers and lead productively remotely.

*PT WORK Force® (where WORK stands for Work force Outreach, Research and Knowledge) is an initiative to develop and deliver tools to support employers in attracting qualified candidates to the PT/MC industry and position the PT/MC industry*

*as a vibrant place to establish and develop a career. The world of work is always changing. PT WORK Force® will help you better understand and manage this evolving environment.*