

Social Intelligence

DEVELOP YOUR SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE

Some people naturally have better social skills than others. However, because social intelligence involves a basic understanding of human nature, plus a skill-set for how to successfully interact with people, SI can be improved with learning and practice. Some actions may be easier to adopt, while others may take more time and effort.

Six Ways to Develop Your Social Intelligence

1

CREATE RAPPORT

One of the most important SI skills is learning to connect well with people. This includes making other people feel comfortable around you, and feel like they are being listened to and understood.

- A** Show curiosity. Ask people questions that show interest in their lives, but avoid being intrusive. For example, “Tell me more about your weight-loss programme” is better than “How much do you weigh now?”
- B** Listen actively without interrupting. People like to be heard. Allowing them to talk with minimal interruption lets others see you as caring, trustworthy, and likable.
- C** Tune into other people’s needs. Try to understand what others are thinking and how they’re feeling about things.
- D** Develop empathy. Learn to be in “another person’s shoes.” When people sense your empathy, they connect with you better.

2

BE CLEAR

Avoid miscommunication and misunderstandings by learning to express yourself clearly. If you’re not sure, ask.

3

THINK BEFORE YOU SPEAK OR ACT

Ensuring that we take time to think before acting or speaking prevents us from acting impulsively, which may leave us with regrets later.

4

BE AUTHENTIC

Most people appreciate an honest opinion expressed in a non-judgmental, non-critical way.

5

AVOID BEING JUDGMENTAL

People are more likely to open up when they feel they will not be judged.

6

UNDERSTAND THE RULES AND NORMS OF YOUR SOCIETY, COMMUNITY, OR WORKPLACE

When you move to a new social environment (a new country, city or workplace), learn the rules and social norms for behaviour. It is helpful to become adaptable and to be open to new ideas and experiences.