

CAREER DEVELOPMENT AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

TOMESCU-DUMITRESCU CORNELIA

ASST.PROF.PHD., "CONSTANTIN BRÂNCUȘI" UNIVERSITY FROM TÂRGU-JIU

e-mail: elitomescu@gmail.com

Abstract

Emotional intelligence is the ability to recognize, understand and manage both one's own emotions and those of others effectively. It's a concept that has gained popularity in the field of personal development in recent decades. In his works, Thorndike addressed the idea that success in life is not solely determined by cognitive intelligence or intellectual abilities, but also by a person's social and emotional capabilities.

Keywords: *emotional intelligence, career development, intellectual skills, cognitive intelligence*

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1. Introduction

In the 1990s Psychologist Peter Salovey and his colleague John Mayer developed an initial model of emotional intelligence, which they defined as the ability to recognize, understand and manage emotions.

The concept of emotional intelligence has continued to be developed and applied in various fields, including education, business, health and personal development. Several tools have been developed to measure emotional intelligence, and research has continued to explore how it influences personal and professional success.

Today, emotional intelligence is recognized as an important aspect of human intelligence and is considered essential for success in life, both personally and professionally. It includes capacities such as self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, all of which are essential for navigating the interpersonal world and developing harmonious relationships.

2. Career development and emotional intelligence

Management is often defined as the process of planning, organizing, leading, and controlling resources to achieve organizational goals. This foundational concept is central to understanding the career trajectory of those in management positions.

The role of managers has evolved significantly, especially in contemporary organizations. Managers today are expected to be not only decision-makers but also leaders, strategists, and facilitators of innovation.

Career development is the lifelong process of managing your learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future.

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to understand, use, and manage your own emotions in positive ways to relieve stress, communicate effectively, empathize with others, overcome challenges, and defuse conflict.

A management career typically starts at lower levels, such as junior manager or supervisor, and progresses through middle and senior management positions. Some key career milestones include becoming department heads, project managers, executives, or CEOs.

Effective leadership is a critical skill for managers. This includes the ability to inspire teams, make decisions under pressure, and maintain high levels of employee engagement and morale.

Managers must be able to communicate clearly with their teams, peers, and superiors. This includes both verbal and written communication as well as interpersonal skills.

The ability to see the big picture, make long-term plans, and align team efforts with organizational goals is central to management.

A strong understanding of budgeting, financial forecasting, and cost management is important for making informed decisions.

Emotional intelligence has become a key factor in effective management. Managers with high EQ can manage their own emotions and understand the emotions of others, leading to better team dynamics and decision-making.

The business world is constantly changing, and effective managers must be able to adapt to new situations and challenges while solving complex problems creatively.

Historically, managers followed a hierarchical career structure, progressing from entry-level roles to senior leadership positions, often within the same company or industry.

Today, many management professionals experience more nonlinear career paths, often moving between industries, companies, and even countries. This trend is influenced by globalization, the rise of startups, and shifts in the labor market.

Many managers eventually transition into entrepreneurial roles, leveraging their management experience to launch their own businesses. This has become a significant career option for those with a strong risk appetite and a vision for innovation.

Some managers transition into consulting roles, leveraging their expertise to advise other businesses on strategic, operational, or organizational issues.

Challenges in a Management Career

- **Work-Life Balance:** One of the most prominent challenges for managers is balancing professional and personal life. The high demands of management roles can lead to burnout, stress, and difficulty in maintaining personal relationships.
- **Leadership Challenges:** Managers must navigate complex dynamics, including managing conflict, motivating diverse teams, and making tough decisions that impact employees' lives.
- **Technological Disruption:** The rapid pace of technological change presents both opportunities and challenges for managers. Those in leadership roles must continuously adapt to new tools, platforms, and ways of working.
- **Globalization:** Managing teams across different regions and cultures presents additional challenges, particularly in communication, coordination, and cultural sensitivity.

Trends in Management Careers

- **Digital Transformation:** As technology continues to reshape industries, managers must become familiar with digital tools and strategies. This includes understanding data analytics, artificial intelligence, and cloud technologies, and how they can be used to drive organizational success.
- **Diversity and Inclusion:** There is an increasing focus on building diverse and inclusive teams. Managers today are expected to foster inclusive environments and leverage the benefits of diverse perspectives.
- **Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** A growing number of managers are involved in sustainability initiatives. Leading companies are placing greater emphasis on responsible business practices, ethical leadership, and environmental stewardship.
- **Agile Management:** The shift towards agile methodologies, which prioritize flexibility, collaboration, and rapid decision-making, is influencing how managers approach project management and organizational leadership.
- **Workplace Well-being:** The increasing focus on employee well-being and mental health is becoming a significant part of the managerial role. Managers are expected to create supportive environments where employees can thrive.

Most management professionals hold degrees in business administration, management, or related fields. Many also pursue MBAs or specialized certifications to advance their careers. Management careers require continuous skill development. Professionals often engage in workshops, online courses, or executive programs to stay current with industry trends and management best practices. Mentorship plays a critical role in shaping the careers of aspiring managers. Mentors provide guidance, share experience, and help mentees navigate the challenges of management roles.

Developing emotional intelligence (EQ) has many benefits in various aspects of a person's life, including relationships, career, school and mental health. Career development is closely related to emotional intelligence. Thus, a person with a high index of emotional intelligence can have the following career benefits [1]:

- *Effective leadership*: People with a high EQ are often effective leaders, able to inspire and motivate others, resolve conflicts, and create a positive work environment.
- *Collaboration and team*: Developed EQ facilitates team collaboration, promoting an atmosphere of trust, mutual respect and open communication.
- *Adaptability and resilience*: The ability to manage emotions and stress in a healthy way helps those with high EQ to adapt to changes in the work environment and maintain resilience in the face of challenges.
- *Increased satisfaction and happiness*: People with a high EQ often have greater life satisfaction and overall well-being because they are better able to manage emotions and develop healthy interpersonal relationships.
- *Positive social relationships*: Developing EQ contributes to positive social relationships with colleagues, creating a more stimulating and supportive work environment.

Emotional intelligence is a crucial component of professional success and fulfillment in the workplace. People with a high emotional intelligence index are often effective leaders, able to inspire and motivate the team, resolve conflicts and create a positive and productive work environment. Effective communication is also an important component of workplace EQ.

To improve emotional intelligence in adults, there are several techniques and tips that can be useful in this process of personal and professional development [1].

Developing emotional intelligence is essential for creating and maintaining harmonious interpersonal relationships. Emotional intelligence helps us understand and manage our own and others' emotions in a healthy and constructive way. It gives us the skills to communicate effectively, to be empathetic, and to resolve conflicts in a way that promotes understanding and cooperation.

Table no. 1. How Emotional Intelligence Fuels Career Development

Emotional Intelligence Skill	Impact on Career Development
Self-awareness	Helps you understand your strengths and areas for growth; aids better career choices.
Self-regulation	Builds professional reputation — staying calm under pressure, handling setbacks with grace.
Motivation	Keeps you resilient and focused on your goals, even in tough times.
Empathy	Enhances teamwork, leadership, and the ability to manage diverse teams.
Social skills	Strengthens networking, mentorship, conflict resolution, and leadership abilities.

Source: Own researches

In today’s world, technical skills can get you hired, but emotional intelligence can get you promoted.

Most leadership roles demand high EI: it helps manage teams, resolve conflicts, and drive organizational success.

A career development plan involving emotional intelligence involves, according to specialists, the following steps:

Step 1: Self-Assessment (Where You Are Now)

- **Career:**
 - What is your current role?
 - What are your career goals (short-term: 1–2 years; long-term: 5–10 years)?
 - Identify your strengths and gaps (technical skills, leadership, etc.)
- **Emotional Intelligence:**
 - Rate yourself (1–5) on:
 - Self-awareness
 - Self-regulation
 - Motivation
 - Empathy
 - Social skills
 - Collect feedback from trusted colleagues or mentors.

Step 2: Define SMART Goals

Table no. 2. SMART Goals

Area	Specific Goal	Measurable	Achievable	Relevant	Time-bound
Career Development	Get promoted to [target role]	Complete 3 skill certifications & lead 1 project	Yes	Aligns with career vision	In 12 months
Emotional Intelligence	Improve self-regulation in stressful situations	Journal emotional responses weekly	Yes	Builds leadership readiness	In 3 months
Emotional Intelligence	Strengthen empathy	Practice active listening in every meeting	Yes	Improves teamwork	In 2 months

Source: Own researches

Step 3: Action Plan

Daily:

- Morning: Quick self-check ("How am I feeling today? What is my goal?")
- Practice mindfulness or breathing exercises (5 mins)

Weekly:

- Reflect on career progress (What did I learn? What’s next?)
- Emotional intelligence journaling (moments of emotional highs/lows)

Monthly:

- Attend a career-related workshop or webinar.
- Seek feedback from peers or mentors.
- Volunteer to lead a small team task to build leadership and social skills.

Quarterly:

- Evaluate progress toward career goals.
- Take an EI self-assessment quiz.

- Adjust strategies if needed (course correct).

Step 4: Resources & Support

- **Mentor/Coach:** Schedule regular check-ins.
- **Learning platforms:** LinkedIn Learning, Coursera, Udemy for both soft and technical skills.
- **Books:**
 - *Emotional Intelligence* by Daniel Goleman
 - *Atomic Habits* by James Clear
 - *Mindset* by Carol Dweck
- **Accountability partner:** Find a buddy to share goals and progress.

Step 5: Celebrate Wins + Continuous Growth

- Celebrate small wins (completed a course, handled a tough conversation well, etc.)
- Stay adaptable: revisit your goals every 3–6 months.
- See setbacks as feedback, not failure.

Career development is shaped by a variety of **internal** and **external** factors. These factors can impact your career path, success, and satisfaction in different ways. Let's break them down:

1. Personal Factors (Internal)

a) Self-awareness

- Your knowledge of your strengths, weaknesses, interests, and values plays a huge role in career development. Being clear on what drives you (and what doesn't) helps align your career choices with your personal goals.

b) Skills & Competencies

- Your technical (hard) skills and soft skills (such as communication, leadership, emotional intelligence) are crucial. Developing and enhancing these skills will help you climb the career ladder and adapt to new challenges.

c) Motivation & Ambition

- Personal drive, determination, and ambition are key. People with strong intrinsic motivation are more likely to persist through challenges and seek out growth opportunities.

d) Personality Traits

- Your personality traits, such as extroversion, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, influence your career choices and how well you fit in different work environments or roles.

e) Values and Priorities

- What you value most (work-life balance, financial reward, creative expression, etc.) will shape your decisions. If your job aligns with your values, you'll feel more satisfied and motivated.

f) Emotional Intelligence

- Your ability to understand and manage your own emotions, and empathize with others, can significantly impact career advancement. High EI can improve teamwork, leadership, and resilience under pressure.

2. External Factors (Influences from the Outside World)

a) Industry Trends & Market Conditions

- The health and growth of your industry can impact your career options. For example, the rise of technology, AI, or sustainability sectors may open new career paths. Conversely, economic downturns can limit job opportunities or job security.

b) Networking & Relationships

- Connections in your industry or professional network can play a huge role in your career development. Mentorship, collaboration, and relationships can lead to new opportunities, advice, and support.

c) Educational Opportunities & Certifications

- Education and formal training can significantly influence career advancement. Continuous learning and professional certifications demonstrate your commitment to personal growth and help you remain competitive in your field.

d) Organizational Culture & Support

- Your company’s culture and resources (like career development programs, training, and mentorship) can either help or hinder your career growth. A supportive, growth-focused environment encourages career development.

e) Economic Factors

- Broader economic conditions, such as inflation, unemployment rates, and GDP growth, can affect job availability, salary expectations, and career progression.

f) Technological Advancements

- Technology has disrupted many industries, creating new roles (e.g., data scientist, digital marketing expert) and eliminating or transforming others. Keeping up with technological trends can influence career decisions.

3. Societal and Cultural Factors

a) Gender and Diversity Issues

- Diversity and inclusion policies in the workplace, as well as cultural and gender biases, can influence career development. Navigating and advocating for inclusivity can create opportunities or present challenges depending on the environment.

b) Work-Life Balance Expectations

- Societal expectations around work-life balance can shape the career paths people pursue. For example, certain industries or roles may demand more hours and travel, while others are more family-friendly.

c) Social and Family Influences

- Family expectations, societal norms, and social influences can guide career choices (e.g., following in a family business, pursuing a career that is socially prestigious, etc.). However, these factors can also create pressures that may not align with personal career aspirations.

4. Global and Political Factors

a) Government Policies & Regulations

- Labor laws, trade agreements, immigration policies, and governmental support for certain sectors can affect job availability, career mobility, and even the skills needed in the workforce.

b) Globalization

- As companies expand globally, individuals can find new international opportunities, but they may also face increased competition from workers in other countries.

5. Workplace Challenges & Opportunities

a) Job Satisfaction and Engagement

- Your satisfaction with your current job can either fuel your career growth or hold it back. Feeling engaged and challenged at work is essential for long-term career progression.

b) Career Mobility & Advancement Opportunities

- Opportunities for growth and advancement in your current job or company (promotions, lateral moves, skill development) play a major role. Lack of these opportunities might drive someone to switch careers or employers.

c) Mentorship & Guidance

- Having access to a mentor or career coach can be a huge advantage. A mentor can offer advice, networking opportunities, and career insights, helping you navigate your professional journey.

3. Theories of career development

Career development theories provide frameworks for understanding how individuals make career decisions, develop skills, and pursue professional goals. Some key theories include:

a. Super's Life-Span, Life-Space Theory (1957)

Donald Super's theory emphasizes the dynamic and evolving nature of careers over the lifespan. Super identified different stages of career development:

- **Growth (0-14 years):** Development of interests, skills, and self-concept.
- **Exploration (15-24 years):** Experimentation with different roles and career paths.
- **Establishment (25-44 years):** Seeking stability and advancement in a career.
- **Maintenance (45-64 years):** Adjusting to changes in the job market and managing work-life balance.
- **Decline (65+ years):** Transitioning toward retirement.

Super's concept of *self-concept* is central to his theory, suggesting that individuals' careers are shaped by their understanding of who they are and how they want to align their personal identity with their work.

b. Holland's Theory of Career Choice (1959)

John L. Holland's theory focuses on the congruence between individuals and their work environments. He proposed six personality types (Realistic, Investigative, Artistic, Social, Enterprising, Conventional, or RIASEC) that interact with six corresponding work environments. Career satisfaction and success depend on how well an individual's personality aligns with their job environment.

c. Krumboltz's Social Learning Theory (1976)

John Krumboltz's theory suggests that career development is influenced by learning experiences, including environmental factors, individual learning, and cognitive processes. He proposed that career decisions are shaped by four factors:

- Genetic endowment
- Environmental conditions and events
- Learning experiences
- Task approach skills (decision-making, problem-solving, etc.)

Krumboltz's emphasis on learning experiences offers a dynamic view of career development, suggesting that people can modify their career paths throughout their lives through new learning experiences.

d. Lent, Brown, and Hackett's Social Cognitive Career Theory (1994)

This theory focuses on the role of self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and personal goals in career decision-making. It underscores the impact of societal and contextual factors (such as gender, race, and socioeconomic background) on career development, suggesting that career choices are not made in isolation but influenced by social contexts and interactions.

4. Career development models

Career development models help in understanding how individuals move through different phases of their careers. Key models include:

a. The Career Construction Theory (Savickas, 2002)

This model integrates Super's work with a focus on the narrative approach. Career construction theory suggests that individuals create and tell stories about their careers, which help them make meaning of their work experiences. Career development is seen as an ongoing process of self-construction where individuals create a vocational identity that matches their personality, values, and experiences.

b. The Protean Career Model (Hall, 1996)

The Protean career is one in which individuals take personal responsibility for their career development. It emphasizes flexibility, adaptability, and a sense of self-direction. Unlike traditional career models where employers had control over an individual's career progression, the Protean model suggests that career development is primarily self-driven.

c. The Boundaryless Career Model (Arthur, 1994)

This model challenges the traditional view of career progression within a single organization. It proposes that modern careers are fluid and people move across different organizations, industries, or even countries. The boundaryless career concept highlights the importance of networks and external connections in career development.

Case studies: european companies applying ei in career development

IKEA

- Focus: Empathy-led leadership training.
- Impact: IKEA's leadership development programs include emotional intelligence workshops, promoting inclusive leadership and better conflict resolution.
- Result: Improved employee engagement and internal mobility.

Siemens

- Focus: EI in leadership assessments.
- Impact: Siemens integrates EI assessments in leadership selection processes, especially for roles managing multicultural teams.
- Result: Enhanced leadership effectiveness in global operations.

Airbus

- Focus: EI in cross-cultural leadership.
- Impact: Airbus develops high-EI leadership to manage teams across Europe, fostering better collaboration and reducing cross-cultural misunderstandings.
- Result: Stronger project delivery in international teams.

Predictions: the future of EI in career development

EI will become a standard criterion in promotion and leadership pathways, not just technical expertise.

AI and EI: New HR tech will increasingly assess EI competencies in hiring and development.

As global workforces expand, EI will be vital for managing virtual, diverse teams.

Career development programs will integrate emotional agility training to help employees navigate uncertainty and change.

5. Conclusions

People with a high EQ are more resilient in the face of stress and better able to maintain balance and focus in difficult situations. Ultimately, developed EQ contributes to improved personal effectiveness and career success, providing professionals with the necessary tools to face professional challenges with confidence and wisdom.

The field of career development has evolved significantly over the past century, with a shift from viewing career paths as linear to understanding them as dynamic and multifaceted. Theories and models continue to provide insights into how individuals navigate their careers, while practical tools and strategies focus on providing support in an increasingly complex labor market. Career development is influenced by a wide range of factors, including personal, social, and organizational elements, and remains an area of ongoing research and practice in both academic and professional settings.

The demand for skilled managers is expected to continue growing, particularly in industries driven by innovation and change. However, the nature of management is likely to evolve, with a greater emphasis on emotional intelligence, sustainability, and technological proficiency.

A career in management offers diverse opportunities but also presents unique challenges. Success in this field requires a combination of skills, adaptability, and a commitment to continuous growth.

This review highlights that a career in management is multifaceted, requiring a combination of technical, interpersonal, and strategic skills. Those pursuing a management career must be prepared to navigate the complexities of organizational leadership, adapt to changing environments, and continuously develop their skill sets.

Each of these factors is interconnected and can have varying degrees of influence at different points in your career. Understanding and navigating them effectively can help you make better career choices and continue growing in your professional life.

A literature review on **career development** explores the vast body of work that has been done to understand the processes, theories, models, and practices surrounding how individuals plan, manage, and navigate their careers over time. Below is a synthesis of key themes, theories, and research findings in the field of career development.

Emotional Intelligence is no longer a “soft skill” — it is a strategic career asset. For both individuals and organisations, integrating EI into career development frameworks enhances leadership pipelines, improves adaptability, and creates more resilient, engaged workforces.

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