

# Understanding how emotions and values in the work and market places influence behaviour, decision making and consumer purchasing

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It's normal to experience emotions at work, such as having frustrations, anger, or excitement, but how leaders handle emotions in the workplace can go a long way to building or destroying the workplace climate. It also goes a long way in motivating, encouraging, or discouraging employees. So, organizations and management really need to see the bigger picture and understand how their employees see them. That's why it's really important to measure emotions because one gets an understanding of staff, for better or worse it, and how it influences a myriad of factors within the workplace. It influences employee commitment, creativity, decision-making, work quality, the likelihood of employees sticking around and obviously, the organization's bottom line.

To get to the sweet spot of success in the workplace, a certain amount of stress is essential. With very high levels of stress, however, one goes over the sweet spot and then cognitively, perceptually and emotionally, employees become impaired. So, you have to try and to find the perfect fit between having some stress and having no stress at all.



Our brain has two different ways of dealing with the world - one is the positive emotional state, and the other is the negative emotional state. The positive state is your parasympathetic nervous system with associated emotions like joy, gratitude, and curiosity. It is the area where you think out of the box and where there is creative thinking and innovation. Almost every company that you come across these days identifies innovation as one of their mission statements and values, but do they really know how to get their employees into that state of mind? This state is the Positive Emotional Attractors (PEA) and it actually alleviates stress.

There is also the Negative Emotional Attractors (NEG) that activates the sympathetic nervous system. This is the state that is associated with fear and anxiety and the fight or flight part of the brain and that results in the triggering of hormones such as adrenalin. Without it, we cannot actually function. Companies believe that to alleviate stress in the workplace you must decrease the workload, but research shows that it is not how we alleviate stress. Without some level of stress, one is unable to activate the analytical part of the brain and people cannot become motivated to work. So, it's about finding the right balance between these two states.

These two parts of the brain are mutually exclusive, so where one part of the brain is triggered, the other part is suppressed. When you are in a positive emotional attractor state, the negative emotional state or the analytical part of your brain does not work. What is important to remember, is that it is essential for employers to understand this and to see

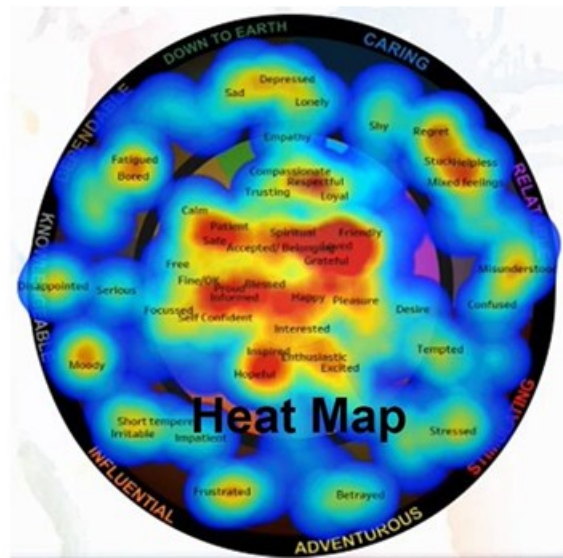
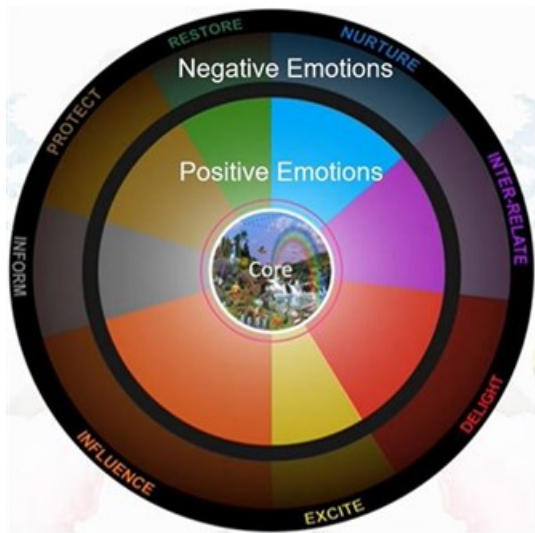
what's happening with their employees' emotional state. This is because they have to understand that innovation and creativity does not happen sitting in front of a computer finishing a report - it happens when you are in a positive state of mind.

Businesses must understand and research the different states within the workplace that produces both analytical capability and innovation. It is not only within the business that an organization needs to understand these states but also among their customers. It is important to understand that positive emotional attractors can be contagious, and it has been shown that people begin to mimic these emotions. These emotions are shown through facial and sometimes fleeting micro-facial expressions that are perceived both consciously and subconsciously. Knowing this can be important in the development of employees, and developing advertising and marketing campaigns for businesses.

Research has shown that there is also physiological synchronicity between employers in a meeting for example. People can sense and even smell fear but how this happens, is not clearly understood. However, these emotions can become contagious and result in a pandemic of negative emotions within an organization. It is therefore essential to understand what is happening in the workplace.

## **Measuring emotions, behaviour, and persona's in the workplace and among customers**

People on spontaneous recall are generally able to list 1- 3 emotions. Using a list of 100 core emotions as part of the Qi Value Systems identikit (there are 1000s of emotions that are recognised), people are able to recall 16-38 emotions. Qi Systems map these as a core set of emotions, an inner ring of positive emotions and an outer ring of negative emotions. The linkages between these thousands of emotions have been determined through the use of statistical methods.



Data collected from respondents is then represented as a heat map. Where there is a high level of red in the heat map, shows where most of the emotional activity is happening. Comparisons can then be made between different types of people such as those that may be considered to be affluent versus those that are poor. What it shows is that in many ways there are similarities in the emotions of affluent and poor people, but the poor generally have more negative emotions.

The Qi System also allows one to look at the personality differences between leaders or management. This can indicate the strengths and weaknesses of leaders or management in terms of aspects relating to their analytical capability or interpersonal relationships. This can enable one to understand why employees react or respond in a particular way to leaders or management. It can also be used to show the differences between males and females in terms of their emotions and the way that they respond to things within the workplace.

Through staff satisfaction surveys one can also get an understanding of how staff experience their managers. By understanding this an organization or management can start to look at how to bring about balance in the way that they deal with staff members to improve levels of satisfaction. The Qi System can also be equally applied to how customers see a particular brand. Based on how customers perceive a brand, one can predict their behaviour and whether they will purchase it or what will be needed for them to buy a particular brand.

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