

# EMBRACING EMOTIONS AT WORK



## 1 Warm up

Look at these three people answering the question, "How was your weekend?" How do you feel about these people? What do you think about their answers?

It was good thanks. And yours?	It was great thanks! We took the kids swimming which they loved! You know the new swimming pool in the centre of town? Then we watched this silly Ben Stiller film that always makes me laugh and ate pizza. Yesterday, we just caught up on sleep and went for a walk. How about you?	It was OK, I guess. We went to this new Mexican restaurant near us and I had the nachos. I don't know what was in them, but it gave me really bad wind. My wife told me we should have gone to the Italian place so had no sympathy. But Italian food always gives me heartburn.

Look at the following emotions in the box. With a partner, discuss if they are acceptable emotions to display in a professional environment in your culture, and if so, in what situation would they be appropriate?

Anger	Sadness	Joy
Jealousy	Fear	Anxiety

Which of these emotions would you display in your professional environment?

## 2 Vocabulary development

Look at these phrases from the video. With a partner, discuss what they mean. When you have finished, check your answers with your teacher or on the Internet.

1. Being stoic
2. More ... than they bargained for
3. Undermine yourself
4. A wide spectrum of ...
5. Under-emoters/Over-emoters
6. Selective vulnerability
7. Flag your feelings
8. A looming deadline
9. Read the room
10. Prone to doing something

In pairs, answer these questions.

1. Would you describe yourself or someone you know as stoic? How do you/they behave?
2. Can you describe a situation where you got more of something than you bargained for?
3. In what ways do you sometimes undermine yourself? Has anyone ever undermined you? What happened?
4. Would you describe yourself as an under-emoter or an over-emoter? Why?
5. What action can you take to flag your feelings?
6. How do you react to a looming deadline?
7. What can you do to read the room?
8. What things are you prone to doing in your daily life?

## 3 Watching for general understanding

Watch the video and answer these questions.

1. The speaker says that we work better together when ...
  - a. we present ourselves as professionals at all times.
  - b. we allow colleagues to see our human side.
  - c. we share all of our feelings at work.
2. The first way the speaker suggests to show your emotions is ...
  - a. If you're in a bad mood due to something outside of work, acknowledge it and reassure colleagues that it's not about them.
  - b. tell your colleagues exactly why you are in a bad mood.
  - c. don't tell anyone if you're in a bad mood because they are contagious.
3. The second suggestion the speaker has is ...
  - a. get other people to help you with your deadlines.
  - b. stop communicating with your colleagues if you are stressed.
  - c. analyse what your emotions are telling you and what needs you have.
4. She suggests that you should share your feelings if ...
  - a. it will make you feel better and you will be able to do your job better.
  - b. it will make your colleagues feel more supported and understand the situation.
  - c. you have a deadline and you are feeling really stressed about it.
5. Her final suggestion is ...
  - a. to understand how people feel and give them a way to move forward with their work.
  - b. If you're having a difficult time tell your boss about everything.
  - c. have a party for everyone so they will see you as a fun person.



## 4 Watching for detail

Now watch the video again and complete these notes on the talk with no more than three words.

Pervasive myth = emotions don't belong at work. \_\_\_\_\_<sup>1</sup> = stoic; cold.  
Research shows when colleagues are more human, show emotions, we \_\_\_\_\_<sup>2</sup> them more.  
However, sharing builds trust / \_\_\_\_\_.  
Emotional expression is a wide \_\_\_\_\_.  
One side = over-emoters, other side = under-emoters. Balance? \_\_\_\_\_.  
  
Four ways to start:

1. Flag your feelings. Bad moods are \_\_\_\_\_. If it's nothing to do with work, just point out that you are having a \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>7</sup>
2. If it is work related try to understand the need \_\_\_\_\_. Try to take positive action to deal with it.
3. If you want to share your feelings, see it from the other person's point of view. If what you want to say will help them \_\_\_\_\_<sup>9</sup> and feel more supported, then share. If not, don't.
4. Try to understand how people in the office are feeling, and provide \_\_\_\_\_. Acknowledge the efforts of others and show \_\_\_\_\_.<sup>11</sup>

Look back at the warm-up activity. Which person was:

- a. an under-emoter?
- b. an over-emoter?
- c. practising selective vulnerability?