

Bonding creates high-performing teams | LinkedIn



The [emotional intelligence](#) model can be looked at in terms of what it means to be intelligent about emotions, which is being self-aware, knowing your own feelings, and why you feel that way. It's about managing those emotions. But it's also sensing how other people are feeling, knowing the other person's emotions, and then finally managing all those emotions in the way that is best for everyone.

How does managing emotions come into play when building high-performing teams? I spoke with IMD professor, [George Kohlrieser](#) for my [Leadership: A Master Class](#) series about the importance of a leader's [EI skills](#) in creating solid, dynamic bonds within a team.

“Managing emotions is how you build a team, an organization. It's the ability to get team members inspired. It's about dealing with emotions, building high emotions and creating an inspired team. If you've ever been in a high performing team, it just inspires, even though there's stress and challenge. And [there's always going to be a leader](#), as part of that process, to build that creativity. So it's essential for leaders to understand how team bonding works, and how bonding in a team will build energy.

Sense of belonging

The leader has to make everybody feel like they belong - [even if you don't like them](#).

Of course, typically after creating a bond you learn to like the person. You discover some part of them that brings you together. With team members who don't want to belong, you have to [put the fish on the table](#) and say, "Do you really want to belong to this team? If you are ambivalent, it's going to be a source of conflict."

Build mutual respect

Again, if you don't like somebody, it's OK, but you have to show respect, and you create high energy by being respectful. Use your mind's eye like a flashlight to look for what you can learn from somebody.

Offer choice

People want to feel they have power over themselves. That's why asking a question is so important in any leadership activity, and being able, where possible, to give people choice and power over what they can do. When you delegate, you open up possibilities to let people shine. Think of it like your children. You want your children to be smarter than you. You want the people who follow you to be smarter than you, to do better than you. If you create that sense of support, that foundation, then you have these [explosions of creativity](#).

Empathy in bonding

Being able to understand grief is very important. When people don't get over something, there's going to be a negative consequence somewhere up the road. Help everyone - including you - [get over whatever happened](#). The future is the future. The past is the past. [Put the fish on the table to deal with conflicts](#). Understand that it's better to be slapped in the face by the truth than kissed by a lie. Be a leader who says the truth, but say it with empathy. Say it with bonding, because tough leaders who bond get good results from their teams."

Learn more emotionally-intelligent leadership skills in my [Leadership: A Master Class](#) video series from [More Than Sound](#).