



Search Inside Yourself
Leadership Institute



STATE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

REPORT

2020

WELCOME

"More than ever, emotional intelligence is not just a 'nice to have' but a core capability for the future."

Pip Russell,
Strategy, Innovation and Operations Vice-President
Schneider Electric

At the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute, or SIYLI, we believe in the power of emotional intelligence to transform individuals, teams and organizations.

Since our beginning more than ten years ago, we've seen emotional intelligence as an essential skillset for focus, wellbeing, collaboration and effective leadership. In 2020, with the COVID-19 crisis, the world and workplace has fundamentally shifted. We believe emotional intelligence is all the more critical right now to navigate the unfolding challenges and changes in a way that is sustainable, effective and resilient.

But we wanted to ask industry experts to test our hypothesis. We're committed to measuring the impact of emotional intelligence on organizations and their employees. So this year we've surveyed organizations on the state of emotional intelligence at the individual, team and organizational level to look for trends, opportunities and insights.



STATE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

We surveyed 955 people from organizations in 59 countries on the state of emotional intelligence at the individual, team and organizational level to look for trends, opportunities and insights.

Our survey respondents represent a wide range of industries, both from within and beyond the SIYLI community. The methodology used in the survey is observational, industry-based and does not draw causal conclusions.

This report presents the results we have received and provides evidence that the importance of emotional intelligence to an organization is related to self-perceived organizational success. Additionally, our results show that emotional intelligence is a critical future-readiness skill for organizations.



955 participants from organizations around the world

In the next few pages you will find highlights around the importance of collaboration in teams, the value of compassionate leadership, and the broad shift in openness to emotional intelligence skills. At the end you will also find further details about our methodology.

We're highly encouraged to see that emotional intelligence continues to grow as a critical skill set for organizations. We will continue to collect industry data to ensure that we can share robust insights with our partners and community.

DEMOGRAPHICS

The State of Emotional Intelligence Survey 2020 participants were drawn from a wide sample of organizations within and beyond the SIYLI community. The survey had 955 participants spanning a wide range of industries, countries, professional levels and organizational profiles.

We believe the responses of the group represent broad international trends in how organizations value and implement emotional intelligence.

International, Highly Experienced and Professionally Diverse

- 59 countries spanning all continents except Antarctica
- 28 industries including education, healthcare, IT, banking and consulting
- 79% with professional experience of 10+ years
- Mix of multinational and smaller organizations

COUNTRY OF RESIDENCE



59 Countries Total*

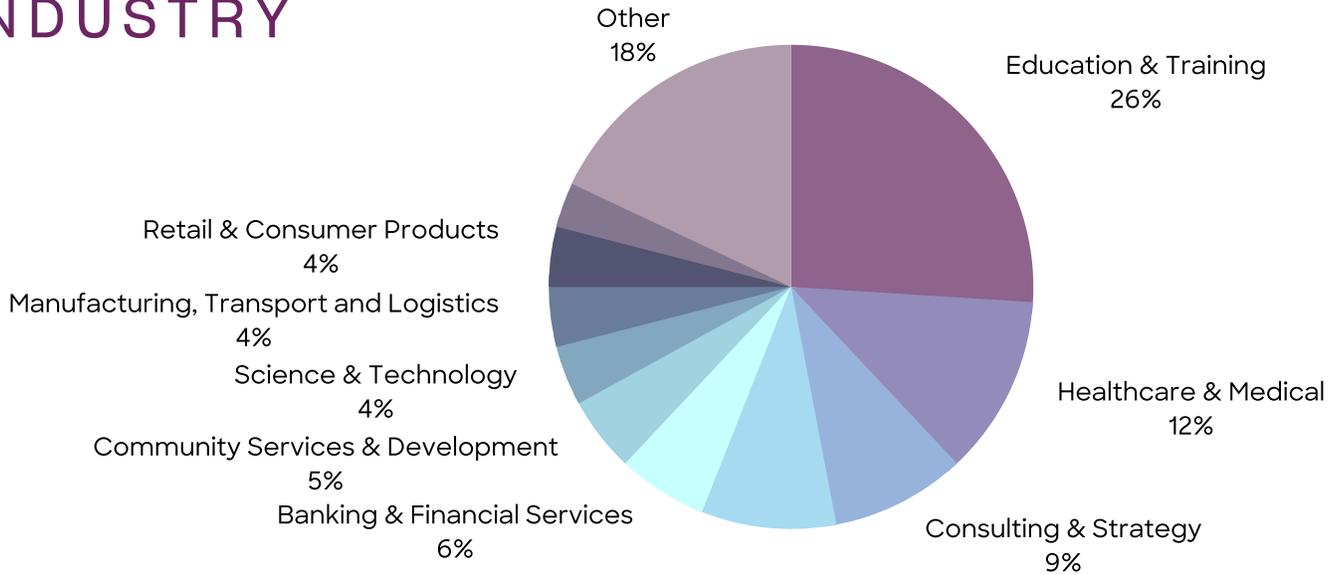
1. United States
2. Canada
3. Germany
4. United Kingdom
5. Australia
6. Bhutan
7. Vietnam
8. Brazil
9. India
10. Switzerland
11. China
12. Mexico



*Countries listed are ranked by highest number of respondents.

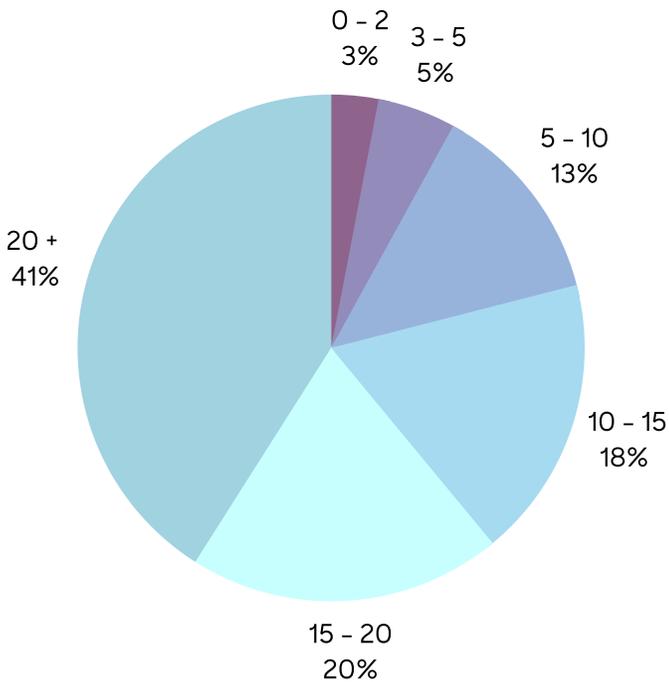
DEMOGRAPHICS

INDUSTRY



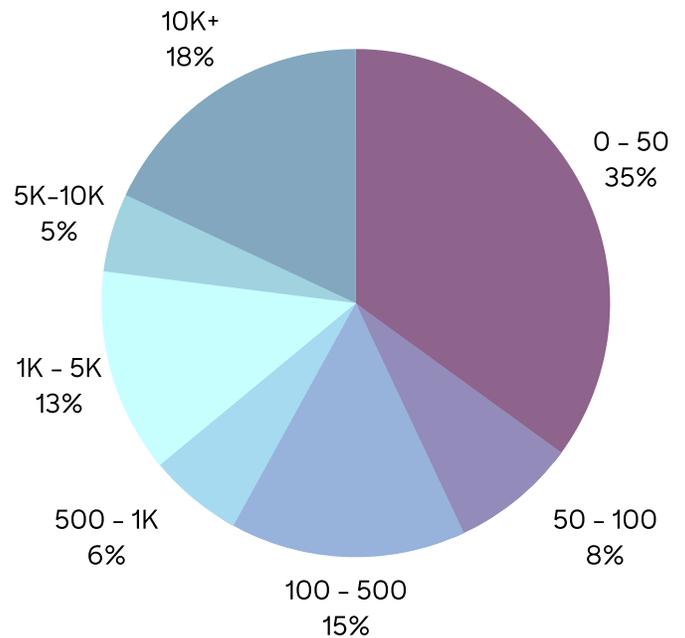
PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Number of years of professional experience*



ORGANIZATION SIZE

Organization size by number of employees*

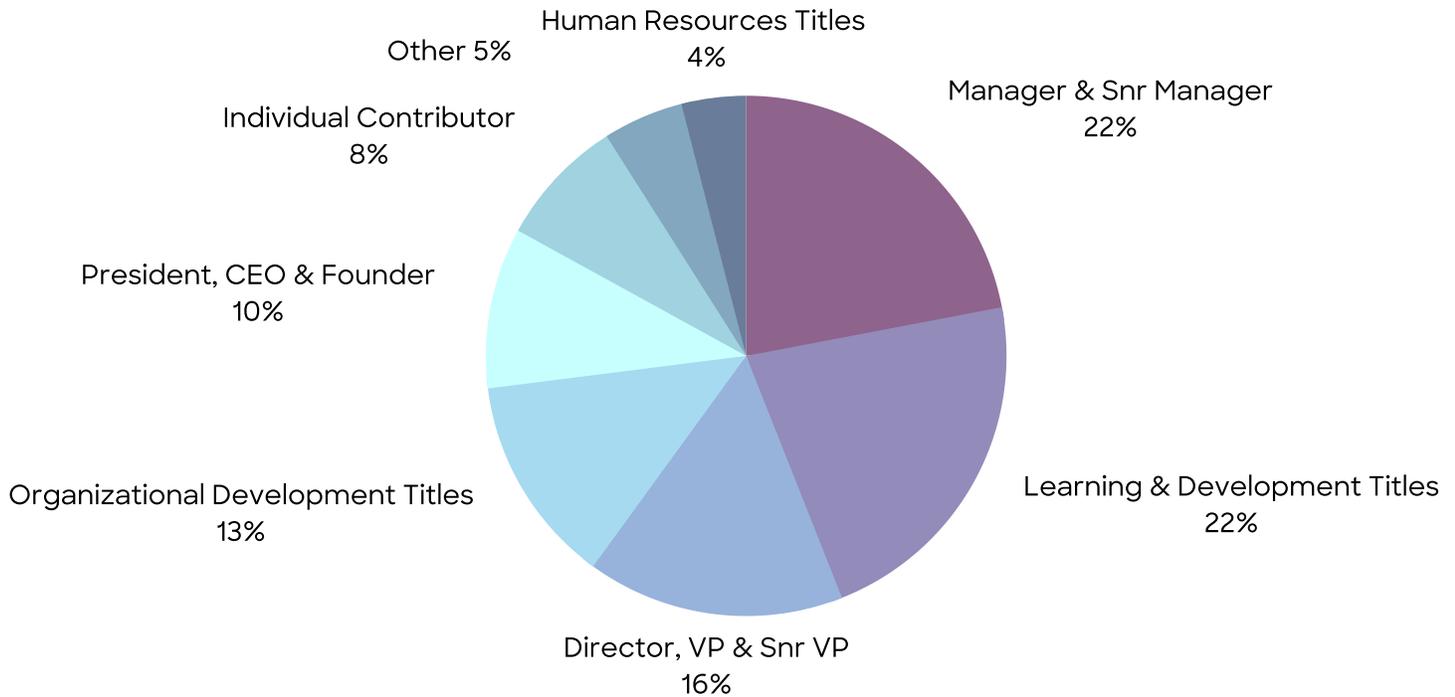


*Percentages rounded to nearest whole number.

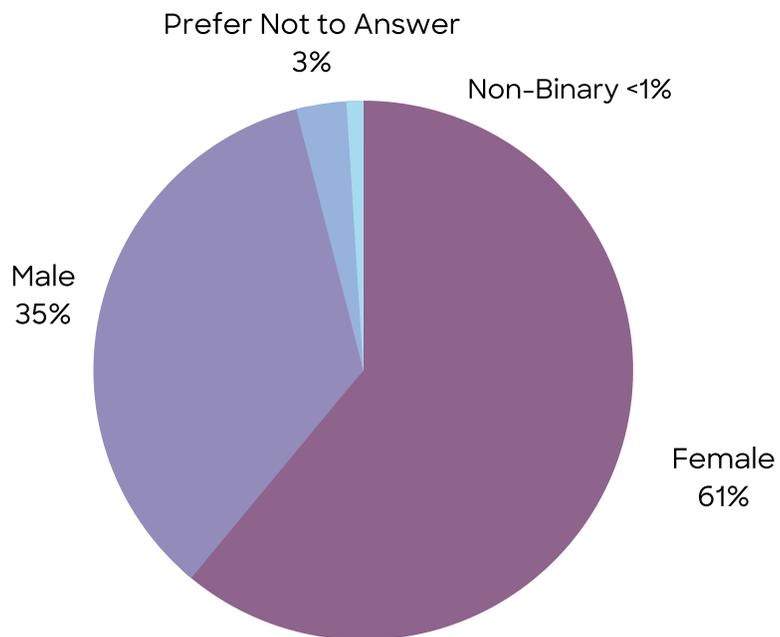


DEMOGRAPHICS

TITLE



GENDER



*Percentages rounded to nearest whole number.



ORGANIZATIONS ARE RESILIENT

Some of the latest neuroscience and behavioral research suggests that resilience—the ability to recover from adversity, adapt and thrive—can be systematically developed as a set of skills inside organizations.

As SIYLI surveyed the contemporary issues that organizations are facing, a clear picture emerged of organizational resilience despite challenging conditions. Organizations are delivering on their mission but are doing so with higher workloads, lower revenue, mixed customer demand and lower or static training budgets.

Delivering on Goals

Only 9% Disagree that they're fulfilling their mission

Despite tough business conditions, participants reported that their organizations are delivering on their goals. This finding was consistent at the team and individual level, with only 6% at each level disagreeing they were fulfilling their goals.

Higher Workload

65% Agree that workloads have increased

Work volume was the largest area of agreement in the organizational issues category with only 17% of respondents reporting a decrease in work volume in 2020. This was contrasted with mixed results in customer demand with 48% of participants indicating demand had increased but 31% indicating demand had decreased.

Fewer Resources

50% Agree that revenue has decreased

The majority of respondents agree that their organization's revenue has decreased or remained static this year (71%). Additionally 87% agree that budget for training has decreased or remained static in 2020.

TOP PRIORITIES

In 2020 organizations are facing the dual needs of responding to the immediate challenges of the COVID-19 crisis and continuing to develop evergreen leadership skills. Leadership and collaboration appear repeatedly as themes in organizational priorities, skills and values.

Participants ranked their top three organizational priorities across the next 12 months with the option to write in priorities. The aggregated ranked priorities are outlined below.

1. Dealing with Uncertainty

2. Productivity

3. Leadership Skills

4. Stress & Burnout

5. Collaboration

6. Resilience

7. Well-being

8. Diversity & Inclusion

9. Skillful Communication

Unsurprisingly, Dealing with Uncertainty is a key organizational priority in 2020. It was the number one choice for participants and also the aggregated ranked choice for priorities 1, 2 and 3. Nevertheless, the top five priorities were closely ranked with Dealing with Uncertainty receiving 11% aggregate priority ranking, followed by Productivity (9.5%), Leadership Skills and Stress & Burnout (both 8.5%), and Collaboration (7.7%).

Interestingly, Technical Skills was rated the lowest of the priority sets with 5.7% respondents identifying it as a top priority.

Please note, the relatively low percentages reflect the wide variety of responses available to participants in this question set.

10. Employee engagement 11. Effective Decision-making 12. Managing Dynamics 13. Technical Skills. Additional responses included Empathy, Sales & Acquisition, Digitization, Agility, Remote Work, and Revenue Generation.

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

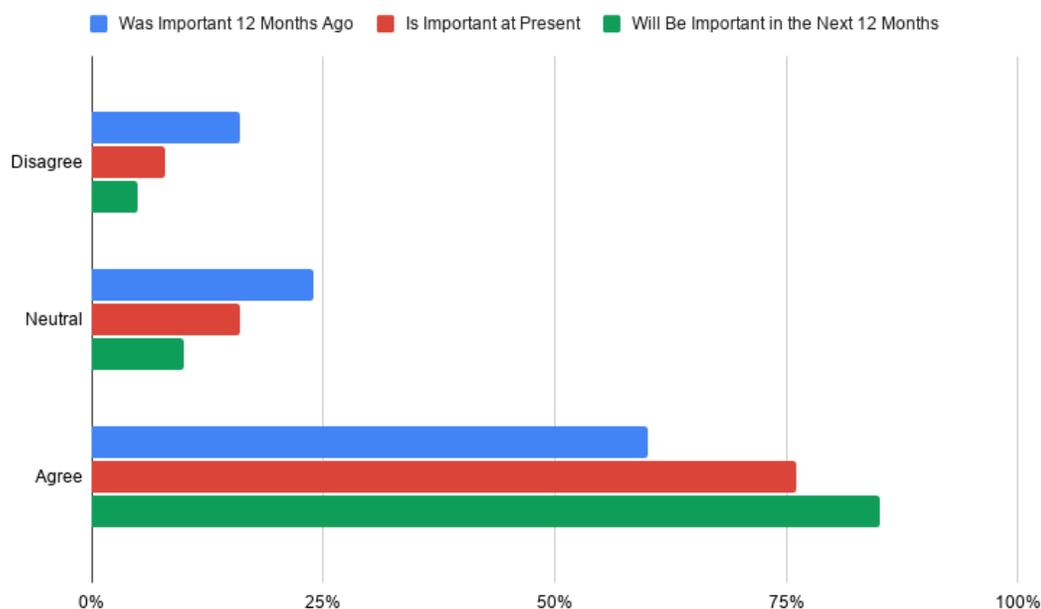


FUTURE-READINESS

Studies from Future of Work 2022, Deloitte Global Human Capital Trends Survey and Gallup all confirm emotional intelligence is needed for the future of work. Our findings further confirm that emotional intelligence is becoming more important over time as a workplace skill set.

We assessed the degree to which participants perceived emotional intelligence as important to their organization across time. The questions looked at the importance of emotional intelligence 12 months in the past, the present and the next 12 months.

85% Agree that emotional intelligence is important for the future



Agreement that emotional intelligence is important goes up over time

A high baseline of participants agree emotional intelligence was important in the past (60%). Agreement goes up for importance in the present (76%), and a very high 85% of participants agree that it's important for the future.

Disagreement that emotional intelligence is important goes down over time

Correspondingly, disagreement that emotional intelligence is important goes down over time. While 16% of participants disagree that emotional intelligence was important in the past, 8% disagree that it's important at present and only 5% disagree that it will be important in the future.



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

SIYLI's Program Impact Report shows the strong relationship between individual high performance, focus, resilience and emotional intelligence skills. In the State of Emotional Intelligence Survey 2020, SIYLI wanted to extend these findings at the individual level to investigate the relationship between the importance of emotional intelligence at an organizational level and organizational success. We compared the reported importance of emotional intelligence against the six indicators of organizational success below.

Our findings point to a positive relationship between the importance of emotional intelligence to an organization and self-perceived organizational success. We caution that the survey draws on observational self-reported data that is not determinatively causal.

Our findings point to a positive relationship between the importance of emotional intelligence to an organization and self-perceived organizational success.

Six Indicators of Organizational Success

Emotionally Healthy Leadership

Employee Engagement

Top Talent Retention

Financial Sustainability

Mission Delivery

Future Readiness

SIYLI identified six broad indicators we think are important for successful organizations and participants self-reported on how successful they think their organizations are by these indicators. This was also not an exhaustive study of these areas but a broad pulse check on the presence of organizational success factors.



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE & ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS FINDINGS

Our findings indicate that when participants agree that emotional intelligence is important to their organization, they also agree to a much greater extent that their organizations are successful across six indicators. This finding, while not tested for causality, points to an important relationship between emotional intelligence and organizational success.

"Emotional intelligence is important to my organization."

High agreement on
organizational
success



62%*

*When participants agree that emotional intelligence is important to their organization (across six indicators of organizational success and three indicators of importance), 62% of participants agree on average that their organizations are successful.

"Emotional intelligence is not important to my organization."

Low agreement on
organizational
success



14%*

*When participants disagree that emotional intelligence is important to their organization (across six indicators of organizational success and three indicators of importance), only 14% of participants agree on average that their organizations are successful.



ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES

When an organization has deeply embedded emotional intelligence, these qualities often appear as part of organizational values and culture. We were interested in learning more about the values organizations enact, not just those present on their mission statement.

Participants ranked their top three organizational values with the option to write in priorities. The aggregated ranked priorities are outlined below.

1. Performance

2. Collaboration

3. Integrity

4. Technical Excellence

5. Compassionate Leadership

6. Innovation

7. Agility

8. Authenticity

9. Psychological Safety

In the list of top five organizational values, Performance (15%) and Technical Excellence (9.5%) were unsurprising and reflect many organizations' core missions to deliver high quality services and goods to clients. Collaboration as the second highest value (11%), however, reflects a crucial trend in organizations prioritizing and valuing team collaboration as a crucial skill for the future.

Similarly, the high value given to Integrity (9.4%) and Compassionate Leadership (8.6%) point to an increasing value being placed on authentic, compassionate and wise leadership inside organizations.

Please note, the relatively low percentages reflect the wide variety of responses available to participants in this question set.

10. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion 11. Sustainability 12. Fairness 13. Creativity. Additional responses included Accountability, Customer Centricity and Entrepreneurship.

*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.



TEAM SKILLS & ATTRIBUTES

Research shows the highest performing teams are grounded in growth oriented mindsets and prosocial behaviors, which build an environment of psychological safety. Participants surveyed reported a relatively high baseline psychological safety in their teams with only 12% disagreeing that they could trust their team, and 12.5% disagreeing that they can have challenging conversations.

Similarly, participants reported their teams to be broadly successful, with only 8% disagreeing that their team finds innovative solutions to problems, and 6% disagreeing that their team is reaching its goals. Additionally, participants ranked the top three skills needed for team success in the next 12 months with the option to write in priorities. The aggregated ranked priorities are outlined below.

1. Collaboration

2. Communication

3. Productivity

4. Adaptability

5. Accountability

6. Strategic Thinking

7. Subject Matter Expertise

8. Integrity

9. Empathy

Collaboration is a highly rated team skill (12.5%), organizational value and priority in 2020. There are also notable trends in skills that are associated with psychological safety – namely Communication (9.7%), Adaptability (6.9%) and Accountability (6.9%). Productivity, an evergreen skill, was also highly rated (8.1%).

These responses are consistent with other studies on high performing team attributes such as Google's Project Aristotle study. This supports the growing evidence that collaboration is crucial for team success in addition to individual performance.

Please note, the relatively low percentages reflect the wide number of choices in this question set.

10. Effective Decision-making 11. Resilience 12. Innovative Thinking 13. Transparency. Additional responses included Embodiment, Compassion, Balance and Trust.



*Percentages may not equal 100 due to rounding.

OPENNESS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is increasingly recognized as a crucial leadership skill set for organizational future-readiness. This wasn't always so. SIYLI has been tracking the growth of openness to emotional intelligence as a skill set across the past eight years and we've seen a broad growth in several areas:



91%*

Greater openness to learning emotional intelligence skills.

The vast majority of participants report that people in their organization are either open or neutral to learning emotional intelligence skills (91%). This finding signals there is a broad baseline acceptance of emotional intelligence as a skill set in the workplace. This strengthens the argument that emotional intelligence has taken its place in industry as a recognized and necessary workplace skill set.



85%*

Greater openness to sharing emotions at work.

A high number of participants agree that people in their organization are either open or neutral about sharing emotions in the workplace. While sharing emotions doesn't itself necessarily signal emotional intelligence, this finding indicates that the conditions for building emotional intelligence are present in many organizations today.

*Combined Agree and Neutral responses to 'openness to learning emotional intelligence skills' and 'openness to sharing emotions'.



IMPLEMENTATION

Emotional intelligence is a skill set that has broad application inside organizations. It can be implemented at the individual, team and organizational level in informal, formal and systemic capacities.

Participants were asked to select from a multi-choice list any ways emotional intelligence is implemented inside their organizations. Despite lower training budgets, informal practice throughout the workday (micro-practices) and staff-led practice sessions emerged as popular ways to implement and sustain emotional intelligence. This suggests their enduring value for staff even across more challenging economic periods.

There was relatively high adoption of both emotional intelligence and mindfulness trainings among the survey sample as formal ways to implement emotional intelligence. Interestingly, digital solutions (Apps, LMS platforms) were implemented less than might be expected (17% and 18% respectively).

87% Agree that budget for implementing training has declined or remained static across this year.



KEY TAKEAWAYS

Organizations are resilient despite challenging conditions in 2020. When they report that emotional intelligence is important to them, they also self-report organizational success to a much higher extent. They are implementing emotional intelligence at the individual, team and organizational level and identifying collaboration and compassionate leadership as core priority areas.

85% Agree that emotional intelligence is important for the future

Individual

1

Workloads are up (65% Agree) but individuals are still managing to deliver on their goals (only 6% Disagree). Helping individuals deal with uncertainty and stress is a core priority for 2021.

2

Emotional intelligence is a skill set that people are open to learning (91% Agree or Neutral). This supports the rationale for organization-wide implementation.

Team

3

Collaboration is highly rated as a team skill and organizational value and priority. Emotional intelligence supports psychological safety, which is critical for collaboration and leads to higher team performance.

4

Teams are broadly using emotional intelligence successfully with only 12% disagreeing they trust their team and 12.5% disagreeing they can have challenging conversations.

Organization

5

When participants agree that emotional intelligence is important to their organization, they also agree to a much greater extent that their organizations are successful across six indicators (62% Agree versus 14% Agree).

6

Collaboration and compassionate leadership are notable priorities and values for organizations. This suggests organizations are increasingly recognizing that a collective and human-centered approach to work supports organizational success.



METHODOLOGY

Overview

The State of Emotional Intelligence Survey included 19 questions (44 items) that asked individuals about their organization's openness and usage of emotional intelligence. These questions were divided into individual, team and organizational sections. The survey also asked about their self-reported perception of their organization's success across six indicators (emotionally healthy leadership, employee engagement, top talent retention, financial sustainability, mission delivery and future readiness).

The survey was conducted across August and September 2020 and distributed via the SIYLI newsletter, website, social media channels and LinkedIn outreach. The participant sample draws from both within and outside the SIYLI community. The survey participants self-selected and were not restricted in their participation. In this respect, the data represents a cross-section of individuals and organizations likely to have more interest in emotional intelligence than the population at large.

Self-Reported Data

The survey questions focused on individuals' self-reported perceptions of their organizations and did not include quantitative analysis of those organizations. The majority of questions in the survey used a three point Likert scale with Disagree, Neutral and Agree answer options. Additionally, participants rated their organizational learning priorities, values and team skills using a top three ranking model, with the option to write in answers.

Limitations

The survey is observational, does not include a regression analysis, and is not determinatively causal. SIYLI has noted in this report that the data indicates an interesting relationship between the importance of emotional intelligence and self-reported organizational success. We invite further research on this particular question. The conclusions drawn from the survey findings represent SIYLI's subjective interpretation of the data.



About the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute

Bridging mindfulness practices, the latest in leadership research, emotional intelligence and modern neuroscience, we work with people and organizations to unlock their full potential.

Search Inside Yourself (SIY) was born at Google in 2007 when an engineer, Chade-Meng Tan, gathered a team of leading experts in mindfulness, neuroscience, leadership and emotional intelligence to develop an internal course for fellow Google employees. The aim of the program was to help people develop the skills of leadership, mindfulness, empathy and overall emotional intelligence to create the conditions for individual and collective thriving.

Other major contributors to SIY included meditation teachers Mirabai Bush, Norman Fisher and Yvonne Ginsberg; neuroscientist Philippe Goldin; and business leader Marc Lesser. SIY also drew extensively from the work and advisory of Daniel Goleman, Richie Davidson and Jon Kabat-Zinn.

SIY quickly became (and still is) quite a popular training program within Google. In 2012, due to the high demand for SIY

from external organizations its founders spun off the program and created the independent non-profit educational institute they called the Search Inside Yourself Leadership Institute, SIYLI (pronounced like "silly"-they wanted to keep it light!).

Since then, SIYLI has become a globally recognized institute, operating in over 50 countries across continent, with over 100,000 people attending its programs and events.

SIYLI's programs—whether delivered in person or online—help individuals and teams develop the skills they need to thrive in today's complex and fast-paced working environments, leading to improved organizational performance. The institute continues to work extensively with Google as well as SAP, the United Nations, Procter & Gamble, Salesforce and many more corporate, nonprofit and government organizations around the world.

BORN AT

GOOGLE AND

BASED ON

NEUROSCIENCE



OUR MISSION

We are a global community making mindfulness and emotional intelligence practical and accessible. Together, we're working toward a more peaceful world in which all people feel connected and act with compassion.





“What brought me to SIY was my own burnout. About ten years years ago, I was the least likely person to do meditation, but running my own company, I was really pushing myself too hard.

I was lacking sleep, and my health mentally and physically were deteriorating. What was the most striking in the SIY program is that, even just as a 2-day program, it was so relevant for my life and work situation.

The wisdom of mindfulness and emotional intelligence is vast, and SIY effectively creates relevant exercises so that the content really registers and makes sense in a working environment and in daily life.”

—Kimiko Bukura,
founder of the Mindful Leadership Institute, Japan

Do you want to create a
future-ready
organization where
people thrive?

Let's go on that journey
together.

siyli.org/resources/eisurvey

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