

# The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Nurse Leader Effectiveness

TIFFANY K. STREET, DNP, ACNP-BC

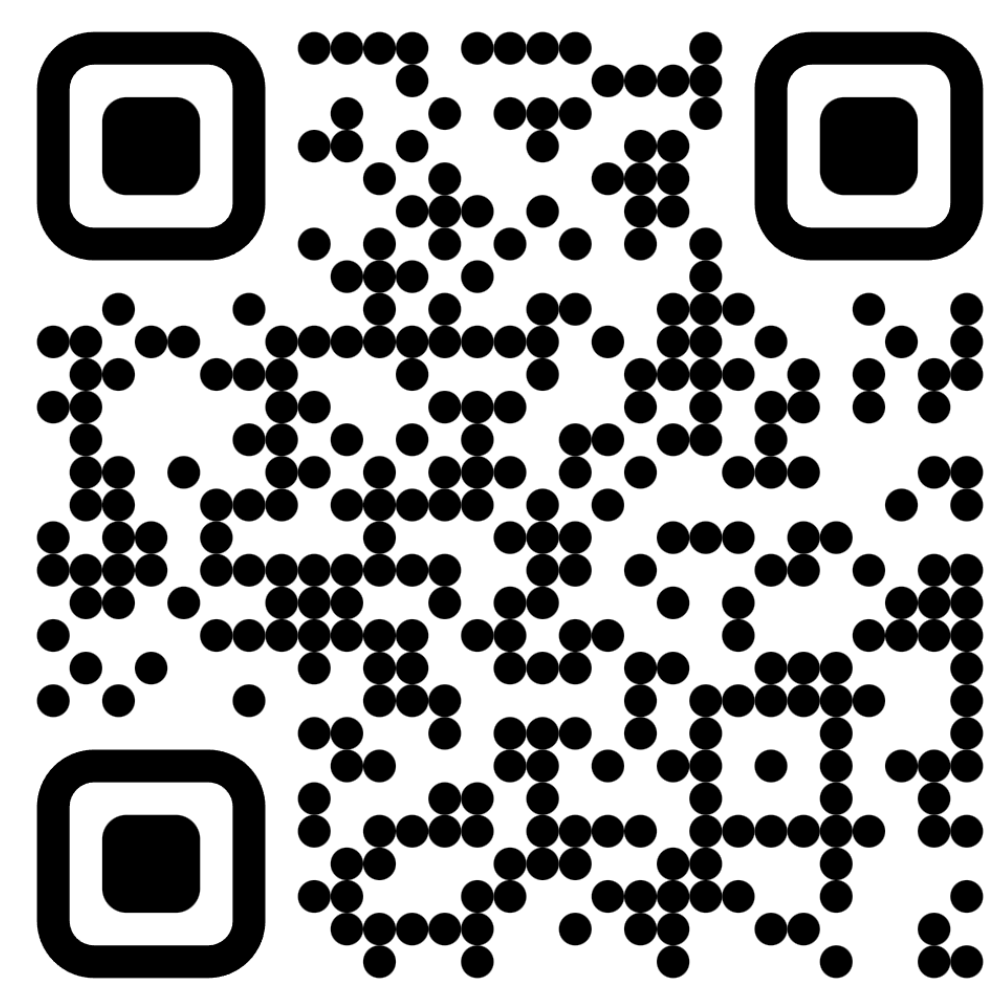
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## ABSTRACT

There is an emerging trend for Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs) to seek out leadership roles. The educational preparation for an APRN is based on the skills required to provide evidence-based care and improve patient outcomes but lacks leadership development. As APRNs advance their clinical competence, many aspire to assume direct leadership responsibilities. With the proper investment in their development as leaders, they are positioned to capitalize on these leadership opportunities.

Effective nursing leadership is critical to successful healthcare organizational and team outcomes. Nursing leaders are responsible for the teams they lead, which requires managing social and interpersonal dynamics. Effective nurse leaders recognize people's emotional aspects and are aware of emotions, their causes, and the consequences these emotions can have on a team dynamics. Therefore, leadership rooted in emotional intelligence (EI) components is critical to effective leadership. The EI competencies required for effective nurse leadership mirror many of the nurse leader competencies published by the American Organization of Nurse Leaders (AONL). The AONL nurse leader competencies are comprehensive, and the competencies that align closely with the components of EI are most appropriate for the APRN leader.

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## PURPOSE:

The purpose of the project was to increase the leadership effectiveness of the NP team leaders in Vanderbilt Heart and Vascular Institute (VHVI) through a structured coaching program based on the competencies of EI. The objectives of the project were:

1. Obtain demographic information for each NP team leader.
2. Determine the baseline EI of the NP team leaders through an EI assessment tool before implementing the intervention of coaching.
3. Develop an individualized coaching strategy based on EI competencies for each NP team leader focused on specific opportunities for improvement.
4. Implement a structured and individualized coaching strategy for NP team leaders based on the NP team leaders identified EI areas of improvement.
5. Obtain qualitative data from NP team leaders on their perception of the effectiveness of the coaching strategy to improve their leadership effectiveness.
6. Compare the results of the pre-intervention and the perception of the effectiveness of the coaching strategy to determine if there is an improvement in leadership effectiveness of the NP team leaders.

## METHODS:

1. The participants completed a survey of demographic information before the beginning of the project.
2. The participants attended a four-hour class on the concept of EI.
3. The participants completed the MHS EQ-i 2.0 tool to evaluate their baseline EI assessment.
4. The DAP evaluated the results of the MHS EQ-i 2.0 baseline EI assessment.
5. The DAP developed an individualized one-on-one coaching strategy based on the EI competencies for each participant focused on deidentified opportunities for improvement.
6. The DAP conducted in collaboration with each participant a structured a customized coaching strategy for each participant. Coaching sessions were conducted weekly for one hour sessions for a total of five weeks.
7. Each project participant logged situations in which they used one of their coaching EI strategies and opportunities to implement one of the strategies but failed to do so.
8. The DAP obtained qualitative data from the participants on their perception of the effectiveness of the coaching strategy.
9. The DAP compared the pre-intervention and the participants perceptions of their EI effectiveness to determine if the coaching strategies improved their effectiveness as a leader.

## BACKGROUND:

- Site location: Vanderbilt Heart and Vascular Institute (VHVI)
- Over 120 advanced practice providers (APPs) employed
- APPs work in a variety of clinical specialties with two models including clinical APP teams and physician aligned.
- All APP clinical teams have a NP team leader who are responsible for oversight of daily operations which includes ensuring adequate staffing for clinical coverage, coordinating new provider orientation, leading team meetings, serving as the liaison with the APPs and the medical director, and contributing to quality and safety initiatives.
- Director of Advanced Practice (DAP) is responsible for the management and professional development of the NP team leaders.
- DAP spends 50% of time coaching NP team leaders.
- NP team leader challenges are all EI competencies including management of interpersonal relationships, team morale, change management, providing constructive feedback, conflict resolution

## RESULTS:

- **Demographics:** Majority of participants were female with age ranges 35-44 years old, all Caucasian with a Masters of Science in Nursing as the highest level of education with an acute care board certification.
- **Novice leaders with < 3 years of leadership experience**
- **Experienced clinicians with 10-24 years of NP experience**

### Results of the MHS EQ-I 2.0

Composite	n	Mean (n=4)
Self-Expression	2	0.50
Decision Making	1	0.25
Stress Management	1	0.25

Subscale	n	Mean (n=4)
<b>Assertiveness</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>Independence</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0.75</b>
Self-Regard	2	0.50
Emotional Self-Awareness	2	0.50
Self-Actualization	2	0.50
Impulse Control	2	0.50
Flexibility	2	0.50

### Results: Common Themes from the Coaching Strategies

- Increased stress from team dynamics or clinical workload equals increased impulsivity as a leader and decreased assertiveness as a leader
- Increased information as team leaders regarding work condition/workload/global vie equals decreased independent perception vs. understanding of the perception of the reality of team members related to work conditions, workload, or overall job satisfaction.

## CONCLUSIONS:

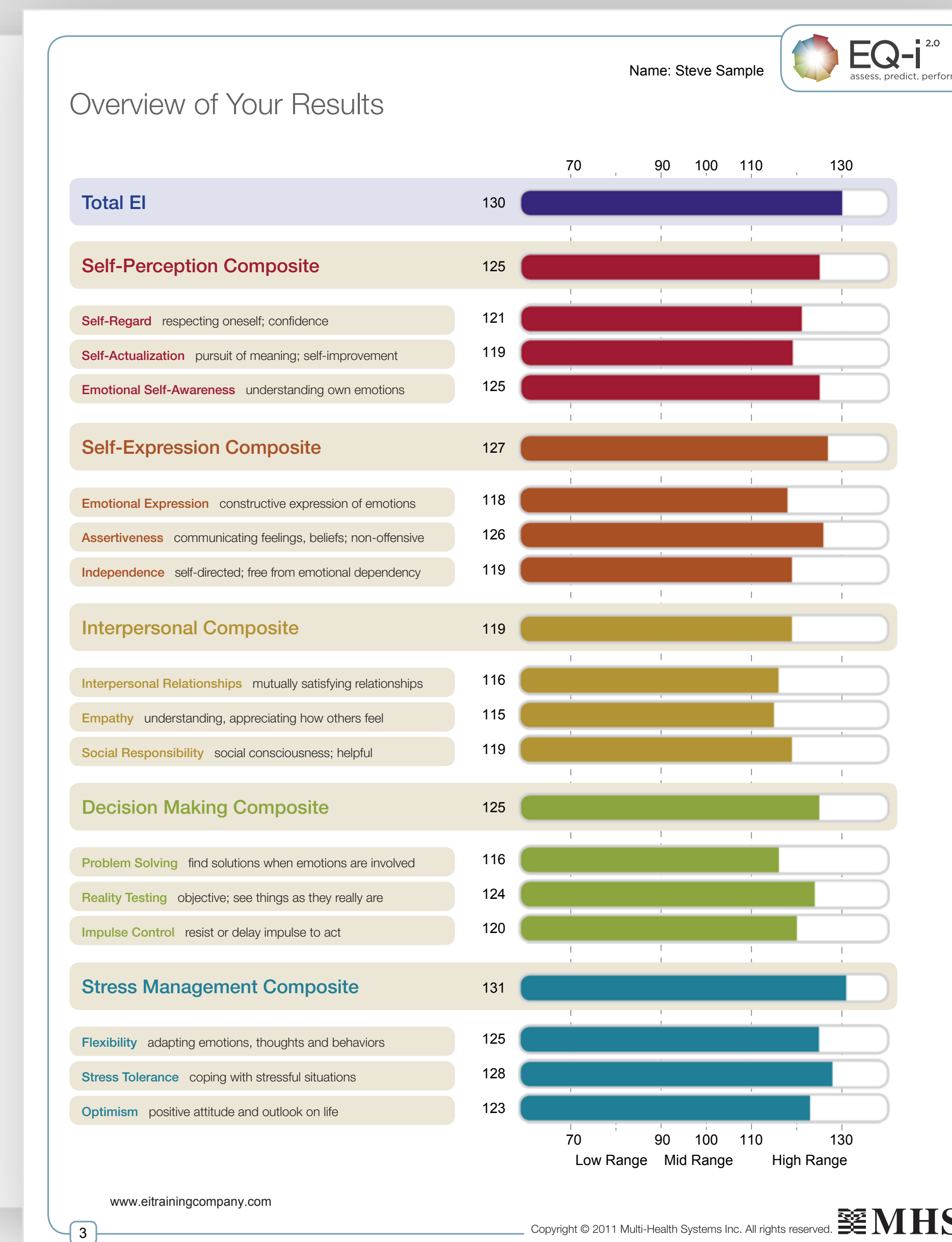
- Intentional development of frontline leaders on the soft skills of leadership such as EI does have an impact on the self perception of leadership effectiveness.
- Awareness of a leader on areas of improvement in EI improves their ability to self-regulate and manage their emotions and the emotions of others.
- Structured and customized coaching efforts can have a profound impact on the leadership development and effectiveness of a leader over time.
- Organizations should adopt a culture of coaching to develop their current and future leaders.

CHART 1:  
THE EQ-i2.0®  
MODEL



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CHART 2:  
SAMPLE  
MHS EQ-i 2.0  
Assessment



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