

# ***Guidelines for choosing effective Emotional Intelligence programs***

## **Press release**

The Missing Link in **Emotional Intelligence**

Theory versus Educational Programs



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May 2014



The interest for a superior understanding of **emotions**, together with its relation to **reason**, is long-standing. That is not surprising, since they play a key role in human life. The last mid-century, scientists developed emotional intelligence (EI) in order to shed light on the issue, resulting in the appearance of various EI theoretical models, in parallel to the **boom** EI educational programs.

However, EI has been subject to well-founded **criticism**, revealed in the present review. For instance, some EI theories do not discriminate EI from personality traits. In reference to EI programs, evaluation is often compromised, amongst other criticism. Moreover, a **gap** has been found between theory and EI programs. That is, less robust EI models underlie the majority of EI programs (e.g. SEL), also within the Iberian Peninsula. That could be due to the fact that educational context fits better with this model.



However, it would be recommended to develop EI programs based on the **abilities model** proposed by Salovey and Mayer, which is considered by researchers as the more valid. This model emphasizes the enhancing of emotional abilities such as emotion recognition or emotion regulation, in front of other models that also comprehend moral factors and personality traits or **competences**. The application of these models has blurred the EI concept.

Concurrently, EI researchers might consider some of the issues raised in the current study, taking this opportunity to **refine** the concept. For instance, considering the difference between primal and secondary emotions could improve EI construct and its applications.

Substantial **social improvement** could follow the application of robust EI programs if researchers, alongside with educational stakeholders, make the efforts to narrow the gap between theory and practice on EI

Finally, extracted from the more recent EI research, a set of **guidelines** for choosing the more valid EI programs will be provided. An efficient EI program should bear in mind the following:

- a) Based on a solid framework, not on intuitive or over-inclusive views of EI
- b) Specifying program goals, targeting components of the chosen EI model
- c) Identify the context in order to adapt the program + teachers formation!
- d) Integration in the school curriculum, duration more than a year
- e) Facilitate generalization
- f) Programs' evaluation through robust assessment tools

