

An AI summary of:

The empathy problem: Balancing emotion in decision making

<[Link](#)> to original report

The document explores the role of empathy in managerial decision-making, highlighting how emotional intelligence influences delegation, trust, and overall team productivity.

The Empathy Problem in Decision Making

This report explores the complex interplay between emotional intelligence and decision-making in managerial roles.

- Managers often claim to make decisions without emotional influence, yet personal stories reveal the significant role emotions play.
- The report identifies "the empathy problem," focusing on how managers balance emotion in decision-making.
- Emotional intelligence is crucial for effective management, influencing delegation, trust, and team dynamics.

Importance of Trust in Delegation

Trust is a key factor in how managers delegate tasks and responsibilities.

- 52% of delegation decisions are based on trust and development opportunities.
- Managers with higher trust levels delegate development opportunities 11% more frequently.
- Lack of trust leads to fewer development opportunities and lower promotion rates for direct reports (23% less likely to be promoted).

Curvilinear Relationship Between Empathy and Productivity

Empathy's impact on team productivity is not straightforward and can be curvilinear.

- High levels of empathy can undermine productivity, while low levels can also be detrimental.
- Research shows that empathy has become more predictive of employee engagement and productivity since 2019.
- Managers with excessive empathy may avoid delegating tasks, leading to increased workload and lower trust.

Emotional Decision Making: A Double-Edged Sword

Emotional decision-making can be both beneficial and detrimental, depending on the context.

- Four in five managers believe they make decisions without emotional influence, but experiences suggest otherwise.
- Emotional engagement can enhance decision-making, as seen in stock investors who performed better when emotionally involved.
- Self-regulation is crucial for balancing emotional biases in decision-making.

Heuristics in Managerial Decision Making

Heuristics are cognitive shortcuts that managers use to make quick decisions, often influenced by emotions.

- Managers often rely on innate heuristics, which can lead to biases and misjudgments.
- Deliberate application of learned heuristics can lead to better outcomes.
- Examples of effective heuristics include delay heuristics and prioritizing human connection before tasks.

Current Decision-Making Practices Among Managers

Managers often seek peer support when facing emotionally charged decisions, but this can reinforce biases.

- 58% of managers consult other managers for advice on emotionally charged challenges.
- Peer support can be valuable but may perpetuate bad habits and biases.
- Managers need to develop self-awareness and recognize when emotions influence their decisions.

Building Emotionally Intelligent Decision Makers

Strategies to enhance emotional intelligence in decision-making among managers are essential.

- Raise awareness of heuristics to help managers identify cognitive shortcuts and biases.
- Encourage techniques for recognizing emotional influences in decision-making, such as purposeful reflection and perspective-shifting.
- Provide reliable resources and support to help managers make balanced decisions without relying solely on peer advice.