



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN THE MILITARY ARTICLES AND STUDIES

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OVERVIEW

U.S. military personnel live and work with unusual challenges, pressures and stress on the job and in their homes. A lack of emotional intelligence can make them unaware of how emotions are clouding their judgment, aggravating misunderstandings, and triggering decisions that reduce military readiness and resilience, damage family bonds and contribute to the incidence of [sexual assault](#), [divorce](#), [post-traumatic stress disorder](#) and [suicide](#).

As the articles below demonstrate, military personnel with high emotional intelligence are usually better able to (1) handle pressure, (2) understand and cooperate with others, (3) be good listeners, (4) build cohesive units, (5) receive and apply feedback, (6) be empathetic to comrades, (7) make more thoughtful decisions, (8) prevent and resolve conflict, (9) set an inspiring example for others and (10) build stronger and more durable families, all of which contribute to a higher level of military readiness and resilience.

SUPPORTING STUDIES

The value of improved relational skills in a military setting is described in numerous articles.

1. [Fifteen Ways that Relational Wisdom Builds Readiness and Resilience in the Military](#)

"Before being elected to Congress from Oklahoma, Lt. Col. (U.S. Army, Retired) Steve Russell led the 1st Battalion, 22nd Infantry Regiment, 4th infantry Division in Iraq. In 2003, his battalion occupied Tikrit, Saddam Hussein's hometown, during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Steve's book, [We Got Him: A Memoir of the Hunt and Capture of Saddam Hussein](#), provides numerous examples of the importance of relational skills in military leadership."

2. [Emotional Intelligence and the Modern Military Advisor \(2020\)](#)

"Security Force Assistance Brigades, outfitted with NCOs competent in EI, will be the global leaders in contested environments across all domains as the U.S. Army continues to set the standard for what a military leader must be, know, and do."

3. [Emotional Intelligence: A Step on the Path to Developing "People First" Leaders](#)

"Junior leaders can utilize emotional intelligence to better themselves, their Soldiers, and the Army as a whole. In the end, EI provides leaders the skills needed to genuinely care for their subordinates, promote trust, and form cohesive teams that invest in and value their people. "People First" must be more than a slogan for us. Emotional intelligence provides a concrete solution that if correctly prioritized and altruistically implemented, can help manifest the positive change we need in our formations."

4. ['This Is My Squad': SMA Grinston Talks About His Push to Build Cohesive Units](#)

"The new SMA wants to find and replicate the model of strong, cohesive units across the Army by focusing on the positive aspects of being a soldier. Doing so will hopefully

address ongoing problems, including sexual harassment and assault, suicide prevention and domestic issues, while also building on Army readiness priorities like preparing soldiers for the new fitness test.”

5. [EI: Thoughts for Military Leaders](#) (2017, The Field Grade Leader)
“At its core, emotional intelligence, or **EQ**, is a set of characteristics or traits possessed by effective and influential leaders. Emotionally intelligent leaders have a heightened awareness of their strengths and weaknesses and can adjust their leadership approach after reading group dynamics.”
6. [The Corps’ New “Toxic Leadership Test” Will Have To Be Marine-Proof](#) (Dec. 2017)
“The Marine Corps announced a pilot program to start giving re-enlisting Marines emotional intelligence, or EQ, tests. The idea is that testing for emotional intelligence might give them a chance to remove toxic leaders before they infect units as noncommissioned officers.”
7. [Emotional Intelligence, Leadership and Resilience](#) (2016)
“The Army has become smarter in the way it leads, educates and develops its leaders; especially as the concept of emotional intelligence evolves, transforming concepts of command and leadership and applying it diligently in order to improve leadership methods and techniques.”
8. [Emotional Intelligence and Self-Efficacy in Military Leaders](#) (2016)
“The study supported the hypothesis that the higher a leader’s emotional intelligence, the higher the leader’s self-efficacy.”
9. [How Emotional Intelligence Can Make a Difference](#) (March 2011)
“The Army has recognized the need for mental resiliency beyond the battlefield – not just for soldiers, but for all members of the Army family. The necessity for strengthening this vital behavior has become more significant because of the stress of nine years of war.”
10. [Creating an Emotionally Intelligent Warrior](#) (2011, Washington Post)
“The past 10 years and two wars have made clear that professionals working in today’s complex, high-risk operating environments do not need more technical skills, but rather more sophisticated social skills to build their leadership capacity.”
11. [Emotional Intelligence and Army Leadership](#) (March, 2007)
“Leaders who exhibit heightened levels of emotional intelligence may be more likely to engage in transformational leadership behaviors than those individuals who possess lower levels of emotional intelligence.”
12. [The 3 C’s of Leadership](#) (2008, Air Force Public Affairs)
“The importance of emotional intelligence is illustrated by the number of seminars constantly offered and attended by businesspeople and military leaders. Improving one’s ability to interact in conflict management, negotiations, communications, consensus building and persuasion are but a few traits targeted in these seminars. The military environment provides the opportunity for individuals to excel in many of these traits.”