



All Limitations Are

Self-Imposed

Sanyo Kapur

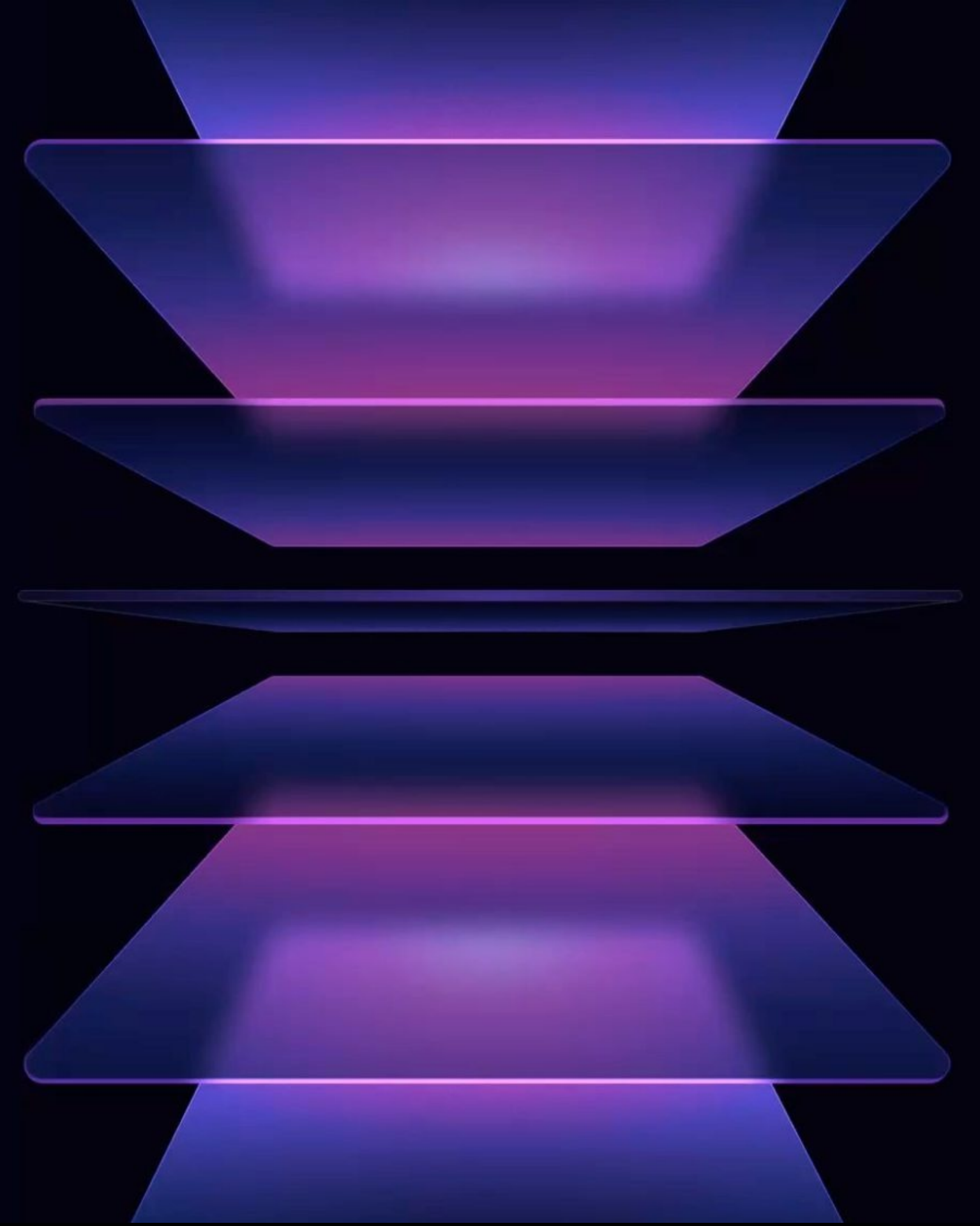
Northwest Building Officials and Code Administrators

Illinois Council of Code Administrators



**Transforming Code
Official Leadership
Through Emotional
Intelligence and Soft
Skills**

The NWBOCA Success Story



Sanyo Kapur

CBO, Lead Associate

Director of Building and Code Enforcement

Village of Hoffman Estates, IL

Past President & current Treasurer, NWBOCA

Secretary, ICCA

28 years of construction industry experience

Degree in Architecture

Healthcare Architecture

Code Official since 2014

Collection of Cowgirl boots

Self described code geek!



ROME WAS NOT BUILT IN A DAY... BECAUSE IT DID NOT PASS INSPECTIONS!

This isn't
up to code.



Sanyo Kapur

Accomplished as a mom





My Personal Journey: From Code Expert to Chapter President

- 1 Starting Point
- 2 Critical Realization
- 3 Conscious Decision
- 4 The Breakthrough



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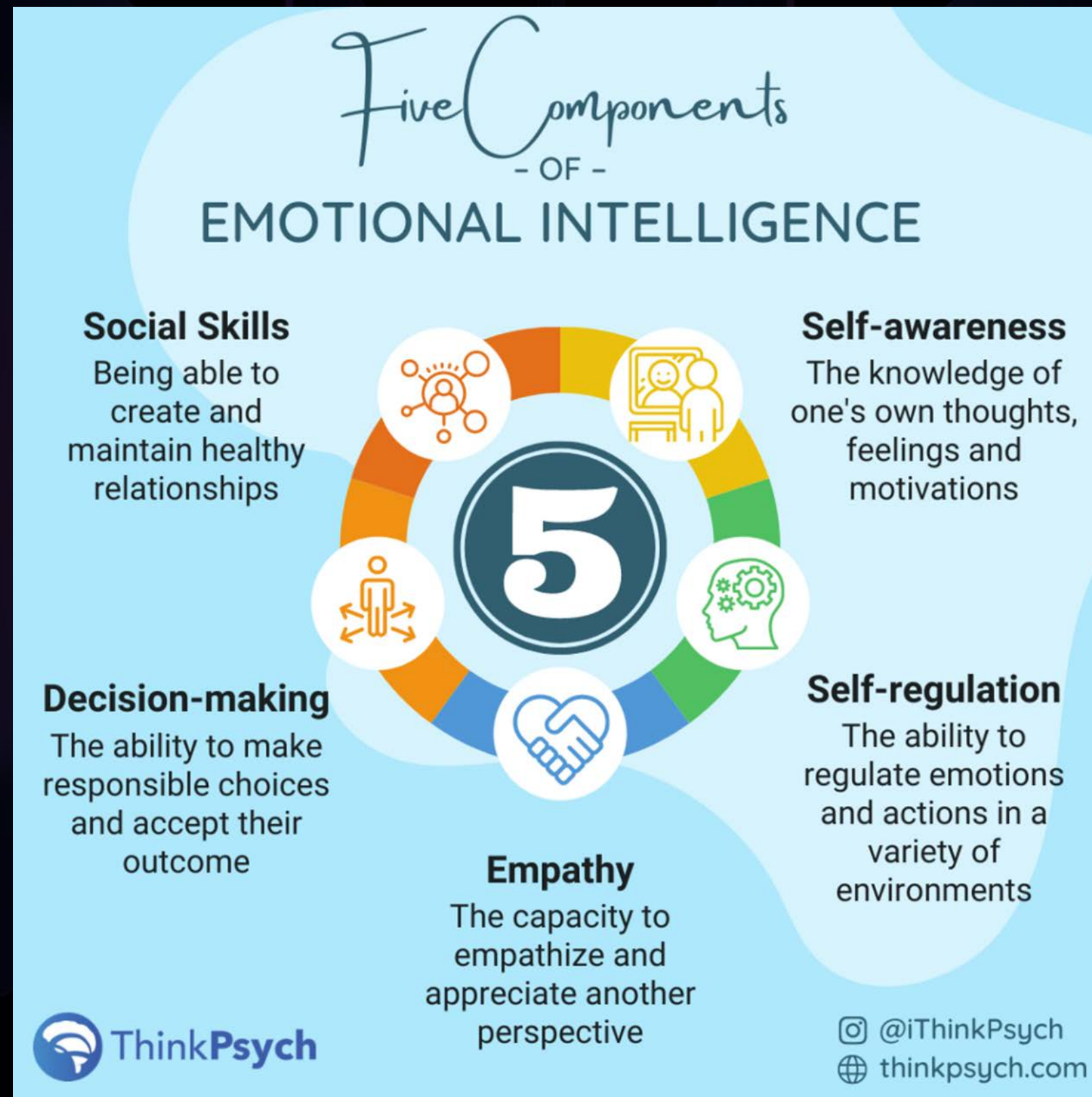
01. Opening Philosophy

02. Industry Crisis

03. Emotional Intelligence Framework

04. Results and Action

What is Emotional Intelligence?



Ways to Demonstrate EI

Three Ways Leaders Demonstrate EI



Acting with Integrity

Self-awareness and empathy build trust and foster supportive work environments.



Acting with Intentionality

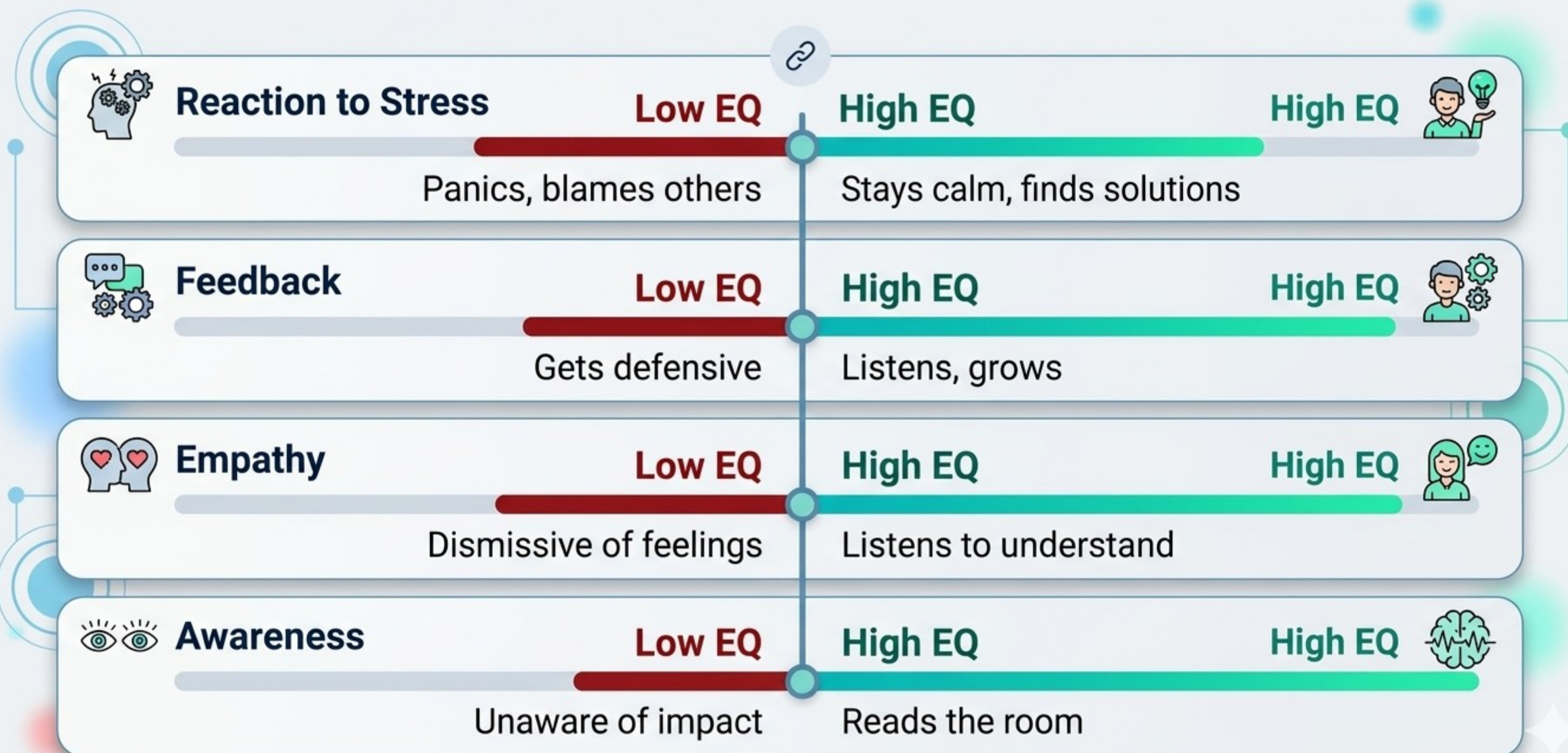
Self-regulation and motivation help leaders stay composed, goal-focused, and inspiring.



Acting with Certainty

Social skills and confidence enable effective communication, and stability.

Graphic: High vs. Low EQ



"IQ gets you hired, but EQ gets you promoted."

—Anonymous

In code administration:
Technical knowledge opens
doors. Emotional intelligence
builds organizations.





IQ: Technical Expertise



EQ: Emotional Intelligence

Technical expertise gets you in the room . Emotional intelligence gets you leading it.

TOP 5 CONCERNS HINDERING CODE OFFICIALS

1. WORKFORCE DEPLETION & AGING PERSONNEL



Retirement of experienced staff; recruiting and training new talent.

2. LEGISLATIVE CIRCUMVENTION OF CODES



Policy bypass of data-driven safety standards; balancing affordability with essential regulations.

3. RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL & REGULATORY CHANGES



Keeping pace with new tech like EV chargers & energy storage; frequent code updates.

4. BUDGETARY & RESOURCE CONSTRAINTS



Limited funding for staff and equipment; needs for digital tools and transformation.

5. CODE COMPLEXITY & INCONSISTENCY



Navigating intricate new regulations (climate resilience); conflicting local vs. national standards.

USING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ) TO ADDRESS CODE OFFICIAL CHALLENGES

WORKFORCE DEPLETION



MENTORSHIP & EMPATHY:

Build retention through
supportive coaching.

LEGISLATIVE CIRCUMVENTION



PERSUASION & RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT:

Influence policy with
safety-focused stories.

RAPID TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE



GROWTH MINDSET & SELF-REGULATION:

Embrace new
technology with
adaptability.

BUDGETARY CONSTRAINTS



INFLUENCE & ASSERTIVENESS:

Communicate value
to secure funding.

CODE COMPLEXITY



CONFLICT MANAGEMENT & ACTIVE LISTENING:

De-escalate disputes
and improve
compliance.



Putting EQ Into Action: Scripts for Difficult Conversations

5 Practical Scripts for Code Officials

**Frustrated
Contractor**

Validate stress
before enforcing
requirements

**Regulation
Challenge**

Active listening to
find common
ground

**Aggressive
Stakeholder**

Self-regulation
and boundary
setting

**Policy Maker
Persuasion**

through human-
centric
storytelling

Overwhelmed Inspector

Empathy and supportive coaching

Script # 1

When a Contractor is Frustrated by a Correction Notice

The EQ Goal: Validate their stress before sticking to the requirement.

"I hear your frustration, and I know this correction adds pressure to your timeline. My goal isn't to hold you up, but to ensure that when we walk away, this building is safe for the people who will live/work here. Let's look at the specific code requirement together—how can we get this corrected in a way that keeps you moving forward as quickly as possible?"

Validates emotion

I hear your frustration

States shared goal

Ensure building safety

Invites collaboration

How can we get this corrected

Script # 2

When a Developer Challenges a Complex Regulation

The EQ Goal: Use active listening to find common ground.

"I understand that this particular energy/fire code feels like a moving target because it's new. It sounds like your main concern is the unexpected cost. While I don't have the authority to waive the code, I can help you interpret the intent behind it. If we can meet the safety objective through [Alternative Method], would that help balance the budget while keeping the project compliant?"

Acknowledges concern

Feels like a moving target

Identifies core issue

Unexpected cost

Offers alternatives

Alternative Method to meet objective

Script # 3

When Dealing with an Aggressive Stakeholder

The EQ Goal: Self-regulation and setting boundaries without escalating.

"I can see you're very passionate about this project, and I want to help you get it across the finish line. However, it's hard for us to find a solution when the conversation is this heated. Let's take five minutes to cool off, and then we can sit down with the plans and figure out a path that meets the safety standards we're both responsible for."

Affirms intent

You're very passionate

Sets boundary

Hard to find solution when heated

Creates space

Take five minutes to cool off

Script # 4

When Influencing a Policy Maker or City Manager

The EQ Goal: Persuasion through human-centric storytelling.

"I know the priority right now is increasing housing density quickly. However, skipping the technical vetting on [Specific Code] could create a legacy of risk for our residents. If we look at the data from [Recent Incident], we see that these codes are exactly what prevented a tragedy. How can we work together to streamline the process without compromising the protection our citizens expect?"

Acknowledges priority

Increasing housing density

Uses evidence

Data from recent incidents

Seeks partnership

Work together to streamline

Script # 5

When Mentoring a New or Overwhelmed Inspector

The EQ Goal: Em pathy and supportive coaching.

"Remember how overwhelming it felt when I first started and the codes seemed to change every week. It's okay to not have the answer immediately. When you're on a site and things get complicated, tell them you'll verify the specific section and get back to them. Let's walk through this complex ESS requirement together so you feel confident explaining the 'why' to the contractor tomorrow."

Shares experience

Remember how overwhelming

Normalizes learning

Okay to not have the answer

Offers support

Let's walk through this together

Industry Challenge: Rapid Technological & Regulatory Changes

EQ Strategy: Growth Mindset & Self- Regulation

The Goal:

Manage "tech fatigue" by focusing on the underlying safety intent of new regulations.

The Script:

"Understand that these energy codes feel like a moving target because they're new. While I can't waive them, I can help you interpret the intent behind them to find a compliant path forward for your project."



Industry Challenge: Budgetary & Resource Constraints

EQ Strategy: Influence & Assertiveness

The Goal:

Frame funding requests in terms of value, liability reduction, and community resilience.

The Script:

Investing in these digital tools isn't just a department cost; it's a strategy for reducing community liability and supporting local economic growth through faster, more accurate inspections.



Industry Challenge: Code Complexity & Inconsistency

EQ Strategy: Conflict Management & Active Listening

The Goal:

De-escalate site disputes by validating stakeholder concerns before moving to compliance.

The Script:

"I hear your frustration with the timeline. My goal isn't to hold you up, but to ensure this building is safe. How can we get this corrected in a way that keeps you moving forward safely and quickly?"





**What is the Main Mission of
Your Chapter?**



Emotional Quotient Based Mission for your Chapter



The Self-Imposed Limitation in Code Official World



Constraint



Crisis



Breakthrough



Industry Crisis:

The Middle Management Void



Mass
Retirements



Unprepared
Promotions



Training
Deficit



New
Entrant
Gap



Why Technical Acumen Alone Fails Leadership

Key Metrics

70%

Time on People Issues

1%

EQ Training Provided

Challenges



Traditional
Focus



What's
Missing



The
Reality



The
Problem



NWBOCA Transformation Through EQ Leadership



**Leadership
Shift**



**EQ
Applications**



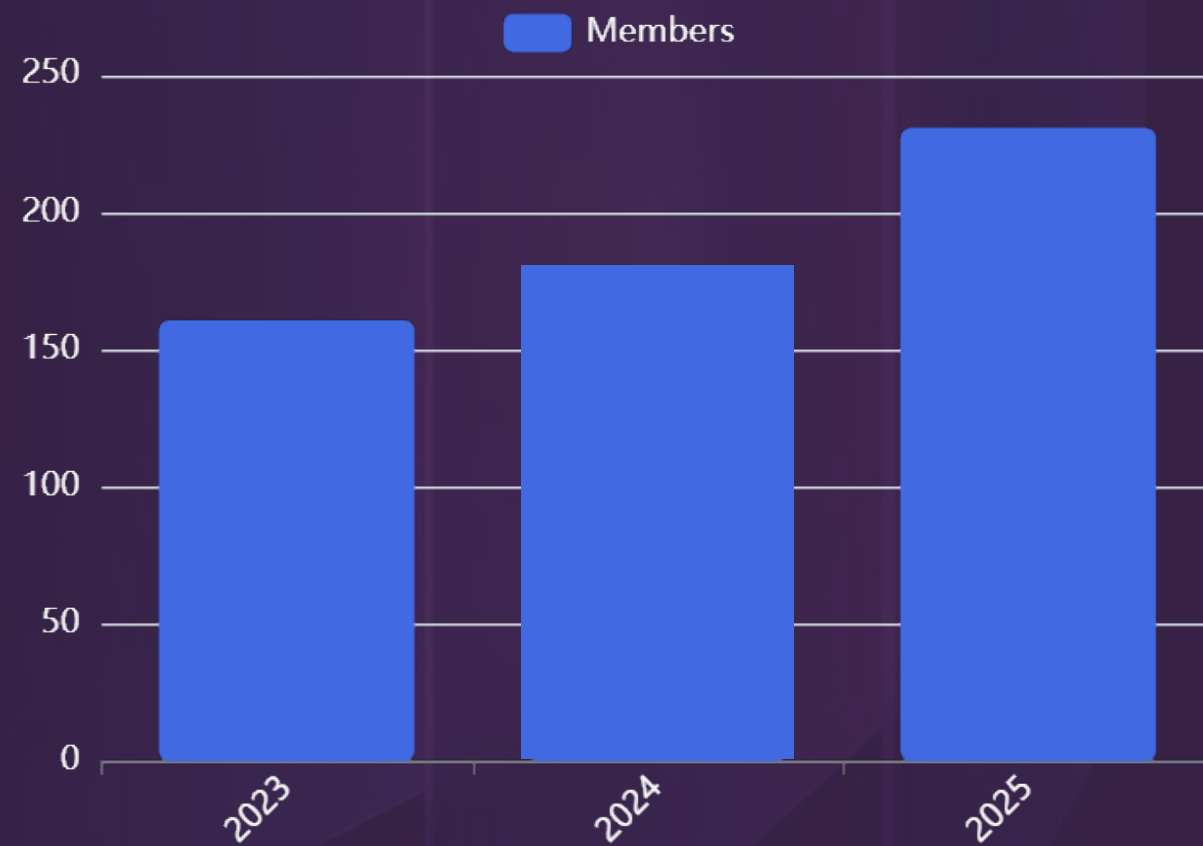
**Shared
Purpose**



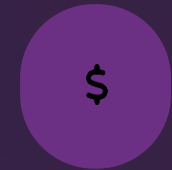
**Culture
Change**

Evidence of Success: 143% Membership Growth

NWBOCA Annual Membership Growth



143%
Member
Growth



161%
Revenue
Increase

The EQ Framework:

Communication & Management Competencies



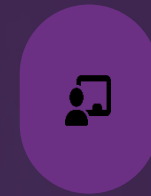
Top 3 Soft Leadership Skills for Code Official Associations



Communication
& Stakeholder
Engagement



Conflict
Resolution &
Negotiation



Coaching &
Mentorship

Skill # 1:

Communication & Stakeholder Engagement Training

Core
Competencies

Training
Methods

Measurable
Outcomes



Skill # 2:

Conflict Resolution & Negotiation Training

**Core
Competencies**

**Training
Methods**

**Measurable
Outcomes**



Skill # 3: Coaching & Membership Training

Core
Competencies

Training
Methods

Measurable
Outcomes





Integration, Not Competition:

Technical Skills \times Soft Skills



Technical
Foundation

The
Multiplier

Leadership
Level



Bridging the Middle Management Gap: EQ as Succession Solution



The
Promotion
Trap



Current
State



NWBOCA
Model



The
Solution



Practical Applications: Building EQ-Driven Chapters



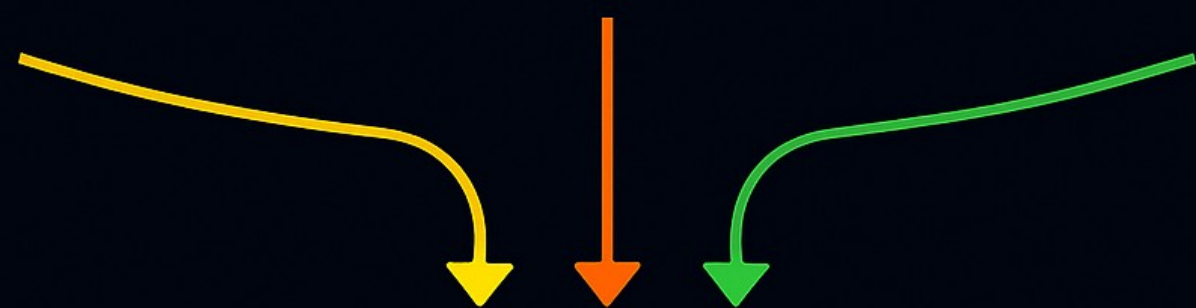
**Assessment
and Training**



**Recognition
and Culture**



**Mentorship
and Practice**



The background features a dark blue gradient with several horizontal, wavy, glowing lines in shades of blue and purple. These lines are arranged in a symmetrical, layered pattern, creating a sense of depth and movement. The central text is white and stands out prominently against the darker background.

All Limitations Are Self-Imposed

The choice is ours

Continue limiting leadership to technical skills alone

OR

**Embrace emotional intelligence to transform our industry's
future.**

The background features a dark blue gradient with several horizontal, wavy bands of lighter blue and purple. These bands have a soft, glowing appearance, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall aesthetic is futuristic and ethereal.

What will you choose?