

Flexibility

“Flexibility is the ability to adjust your emotions, thoughts and behavior to changing situations and conditions. This component of emotional intelligence applies to your overall ability to adapt to unfamiliar, unpredictable, and dynamic circumstances” (Stein and Book, 2011, p. 187).

In The Student EQ Edge, the authors give us some helpful diagnostic questions to help us evaluate our own flexibility. The following are behaviors you might exhibit if you lack flexibility:

- Experience strong negative emotions when change happens
- Try to talk others out of change that affects you
- Getting nervous or anxious when you discover something different at home, work or school
- Being unwilling to try something new
- Staying within your areas of comfort or things you do well, rather than trying new things
- Having difficulty changing your mind

Here are some helpful ways you can grow in your flexibility:

- List five major technological changes people in your country have experienced in the last 50 years.
 - What happened to those who adapted to the change quickly?
 - What happened to those who didn't?
 - What are some conclusions you might draw in regard to flexibility as a result?
- Like most of us, you probably are a person of routine. Change a routine for one week.
 - How did it make you feel?
 - What thoughts were you having at times you would have been in your routine but weren't?
 - What did you do to cope with the change?
- If you find yourself struggling mightily with change, consult further EQ resources in The EQ Edge by Stein and Book.

(For further leadership development resources and opportunities, consult www.ascend-international.com)