



Breaking
the Ceiling



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EMOTIONAL FLEXIBILITY

FLEXIBILITY TRAINING MODULE



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1. Introduction



In the journey of life, we will be faced with a wave of changes, transitions and new experiences, which can generate crises or also be magnificent opportunities for growth in any area of our lives. There are different types of skills related to flexibility. These include cognitive flexibility, which involves adapting one's thinking and being receptive to new ideas, and **emotional flexibility**, which involves managing one's own and other's emotions in a healthy way.

Emotional flexibility refers to the ability to adapt and respond to different emotional experiences and situations in a balanced and adaptive manner. As a result, individuals are able to navigate a range of emotions, adapt their emotional responses according to the context, and shift their emotional states as needed.

Individuals with emotional flexibility are not rigidly attached to one emotional state but are able to experience and express a wide range of emotions in a healthy and appropriate manner. They can adapt their emotional responses based on the demands of a situation, exhibit resilience in the face of challenges, and maintain emotional well-being. It is closely related to other aspects of emotional intelligence, such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, and social skills. It plays a crucial role in building and maintaining positive relationships, coping with stress, problem-solving, and overall emotional well-being. Developing emotional flexibility involves self-reflection, practising mindfulness, improving emotion regulation strategies, and fostering empathy and understanding towards oneself and others.



2. The module in the professional environment



Emotional flexibility is a valuable skill in the labour market, as it allows the person to flow and adapt to different situations in the environment in a happy and healthy way. When it comes to understanding the environment that affects us and being able to focus the energy of people and the strategy of companies so that they can be effectively directed in terms of competitiveness, a new concept arrives that allows us to define our current situation in a closer and more precise way, and that concept is the **BANI ENVIRONMENT**. These environments go hand in hand with some of the acclaimed soft skills such as resilience, courage, creativity, integrity and emotional intelligence.

The BANI environment is named after the initials **B**rittle, **A**nxious, **N**onlinear and **I**ncomprehensible. It is the new way of understanding the processes of change that we can undergo throughout our lives, which generate chaos and confusion in a very short time. We live in an accelerated process of constant change and we have to be prepared for it. Anything can happen at a moment's notice. However, you may not have the resources or the knowledge to cope with all these changes. So what can you do? Here are some key points to consider regarding the relationship between emotional flexibility and women in the labour market:

- Emotional flexibility enables women to communicate and collaborate effectively with colleagues, clients, and stakeholders. It involves being able to understand and manage their emotions, listen empathetically, and respond appropriately in diverse work settings.
- Women who exhibit emotional flexibility possess a distinct advantage when it comes to adapting to new roles, emerging technologies, and evolving work dynamics. It empowers women to navigate unfamiliar territories with resilience and agility. They are able to embrace change, quickly learn new skills, and adapt their mindset to embrace innovative approaches.
- In the labour market, women often face various stressors, such as work-life balance challenges, gender biases, and career-related pressures. Emotional flexibility equips them with the ability to regulate their emotions, manage stress, and bounce back from setbacks.
- Women with emotional intelligence and flexibility are better able to inspire and motivate other professionals, handle conflicts, and make wise decisions. Their ability to consider different perspectives and adapt their leadership style enhances their effectiveness in managerial roles.

3. Impacts recognized through gender stereotypes



When a belief settles in our brain, it does so underpinned by a main reference, generally arising in our childhood and from a reference figure to whom we endow a great moral authority. From then on, we develop in society, in the personal, emotional or professional spheres, looking for references that reinforce the belief formed at the time and nurtured over the years. To disarm a limiting belief we have a dangerous tendency to want to tear it down, but that can trigger a defensive movement in the brain against the threat of someone coming along and questioning something it has considered part of its identity. That is why the right thing to do is not to "knock it down", but to "dismantle it" by seeking a break with certainty. And if certainty is 100% certainty, lack of certainty can range from 99% to 1%. As soon as a wedge is driven to undermine this certainty, we will have already begun to achieve our objective.

Gender stereotypes can have a significant impact on women's emotional flexibility, as women are often associated with certain personality traits compared to men. These expectations can lead women to restrict certain emotional expressions, such as anger or ambition, which limits their ability to be emotionally flexible and authentic. They can also influence how women perceive and reflect on their own emotions, this can hinder the development of greater emotional understanding and awareness, key elements of emotional flexibility.

This can create barriers to seeking help and negatively affect women's ability to develop coping skills and emotional adaptability. And of course, they can also influence the perception of women in leadership roles. Traditional expectations can make it difficult for women in leadership positions to display emotions in a balanced way and to be perceived as strong and competent. This can limit their ability to exercise leadership in a flexible and adaptive way.

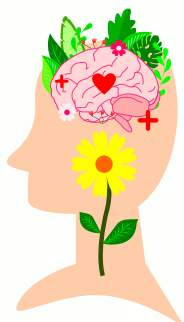
It is important to recognise and challenge these gender stereotypes in order to foster emotional flexibility in women. Promoting acceptance of a wide range of emotions and providing support for the development of emotional skills can help counteract the negative effects of gender stereotypes and promote emotional resilience in all individuals.

4. Good practices and tips



By implementing these strategies, you can improve your emotional flexibility and set yourself up for success in a fast-paced and intricate work environment. Here are some effective **tips** to enhance emotional flexibility:

- **Time to self-reflection:** Take a moment to analyse your emotions and thoughts. Identify your thought patterns and limiting beliefs that may be affecting your emotional flexibility. Ask yourself if your emotional responses are adaptive and aligned with your goals and values.



- **Check your emotions:** Recognise that all emotions are valid and there are no "right" or "wrong" emotions. Allow yourself to feel and experience a wide range of emotions without judging yourself. Accept that emotions change and fluctuate.

- **Build emotional resilience:** Develop skills to adapt and recover from emotional challenges. This involves learning to manage stress, seeking support when needed and developing healthy coping strategies, such as mindfulness practice, meditation or physical exercise.



- **Nurture empathy and compassion:** Foster empathy for yourself and others. Recognise that everyone has their own emotional struggles and challenges. Practice compassion for yourself when you face difficulties and mistakes, and also for others when they are going through difficult times.

5. Conclusions



Emotions play a central role in the set of skills needed for life, and organisations are placing more and more emphasis on stimulating emotional intelligence to achieve success in the workplace. For this reason, it has been pointed out that it is important to address emotional balance to protect our health and well-being. Emotional flexibility is of great importance for women in the labour market for several reasons, one of which is that the work environment is constantly changing, and those who possess emotional flexibility are better able to adapt to change. They can cope with unforeseen situations, organisational restructuring or changes in job responsibilities with greater resilience and emotional adjustment.

To some extent, the labour market can be stressful, especially for women who face additional challenges, such as the gender gap or work-life balance. For this reason, emotional flexibility enables them to manage stress effectively, find creative solutions and maintain a positive mindset in the face of adversity.

Developing an ability to understand and manage one's own emotions, as well as showing empathy towards others, contributes to building stronger and more effective working relationships. Emotionally flexible women can communicate effectively, resolve conflicts and collaborate constructively with colleagues and managers.

It can be concluded that Emotional flexibility enables women to make considered and balanced decisions in the work environment, as they can evaluate different perspectives objectively, consider the relevant emotional aspects and make decisions based on logical reasoning and a deep understanding of the implications involved. It is also crucial for personal well-being.

The ability to manage work demands and personal needs with emotional flexibility can lead to greater fulfilment in the workplace and a sense of accomplishment in their professional lives. In other words, it plays a crucial role in women's success in the workplace by enabling them to adapt to change, manage stress, establish effective working relationships, make informed decisions and maintain optimal personal well-being.

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