



Mains Marathon

Day 52: Situations have meaning because of emotions. Without emotions, one would respond to situations in an automatic and uncontrolled way. Discuss the many facets of emotional intelligence and emphasize its significance for civil servants in light of this assertion. (150 words)

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

- Begin by defining Emotional Intelligence and then mention its various components, like self-awareness, self-regulation etc.
- Highlight the role of EI for Civil Servants by taking into account the intricate nature of governance.
- Conclude by referring to broader objectives of EI.

Answer:

The term 'Emotional Intelligence', first coined by psychologists Mayer and Salovey (1990), refers to one's capacity to perceive, process and regulate emotional information accurately and effectively, both within oneself and in others and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions and to influence those of others.

The various aspects of Emotional Intelligence are as follows:

Self-awareness: This is the ability to accurately analyze our feelings at any given time, and to take decisions according to our preferences. Another dimension of self-awareness consists in making a realistic assessment of our capabilities and acquiring an adequate degree of self-confidence.

Self-regulation: This aspect implies control over emotions so that they help and do not hinder the task at hand; it also implies sincerity of purpose and the willingness to delay gratification of tempting immediate pleasures; finally, it means that one is able to bounce back quickly from emotional stresses.

Empathy: This is the ability to sense what others are feeling; it enables one to look at things from the perspective of others; it implies readiness to have rapport and adapt to diverse groups of people.

Social skills: These consist of the ability to handle emotions in relationships by accurately understanding social situations and networks; behaving smoothly with people and to promote cooperation and teamwork.

Importance of EI for civil servants

The need to make civil services accountable is being felt far more in today's changing situation, with an

ever-widening domain of administration and increasing complexity of the tasks at hand. Apart from the structural reforms, there is a need to look at other measures as well. EI is one of these.

- The task of making civil servants emotionally intelligent is arduous but not impossible. In fact, it is in synchronization with the areas that have assumed importance in governance in recent years—human rights, disaster management, gender studies and so on.
- EI imparts humanistic attributes to the task of governance which is carried out by efficient yet mechanical giant administrative structures.
- It promotes a healthy work culture by promoting cooperation and understanding amongst the superior and subordinate officers.
- Numerous studies have shown that at the workplace emotionally sound people are better able to use their intellectual faculties. This can lead to better decision making and may promote more calculated use of discretion bestowed upon the civil servants.

Emotionally intelligent civil servants are likely to lead to a saner democracy as well. In fact, EI has been considered by some as the third stage after “courtesy” and “civility”, in the progress of democracy. EI concentrates on the experience aspect of democracy. It compels people to treat each other as humans and not just roles.

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