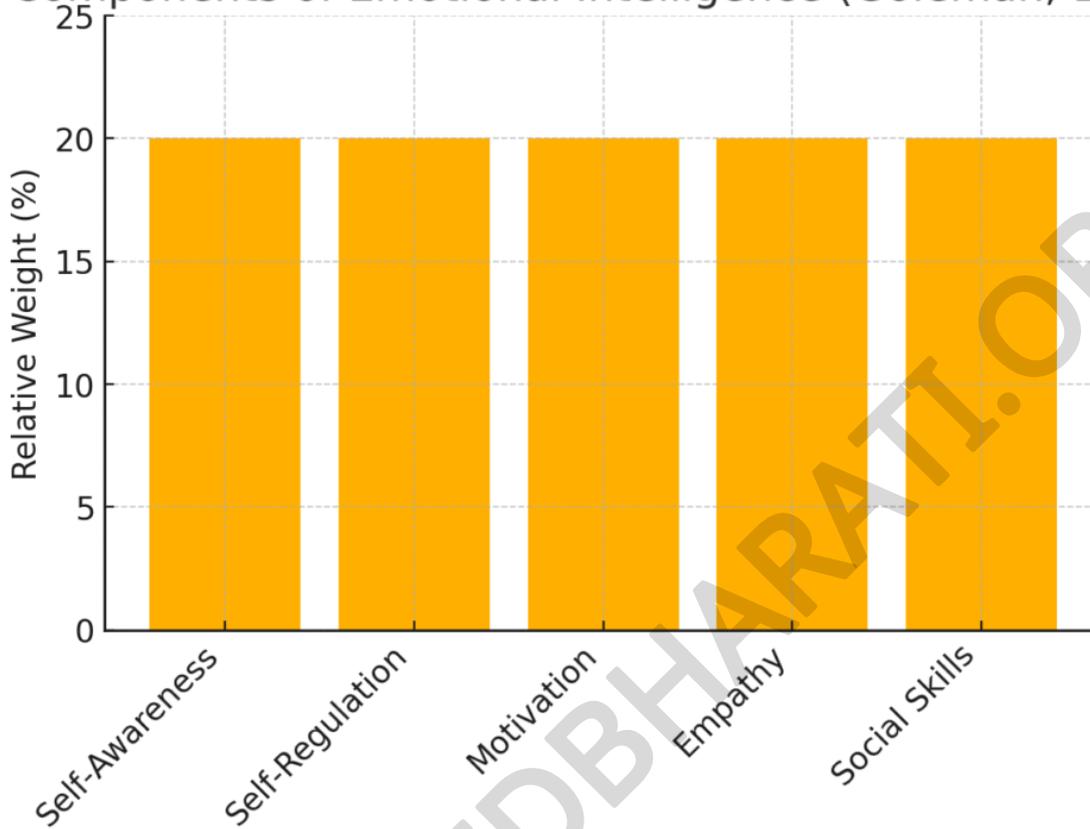


Unit 5: Interpersonal Communication

Components of Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995)



Conflict Management Styles Matrix

	Conflict Style	Assertiveness (1-5)	Cooperativeness (1-5)	Typical Phrase	When Useful
1	Competing	5	1	"My way or no way."	Urgent, safety-critical decisions
2	Collaborating	4	5	"Let's find a win-win."	Complex problems needing full buy-in
3	Compromising	3	3	"Split the difference."	Limited time, mutually acceptable trade-offs
4	Avoiding	1	1	"Let's talk later."	Trivial issues or high tension cooling-off
5	Accommodating	2	4	"Whatever you prefer."	Preserving harmony, minor stakes



1 Foundations of Positive Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal communication is the dynamic exchange of information, emotions, and meaning between two or more people in real time. Relationships thrive when communicators intentionally invest in **credibility**, **consistency**, and **reciprocity**. Credibility grows through truthful self-disclosure, demonstrated competence, and fulfilment of promises; consistency stabilises expectations; and reciprocity balances the dialogue so neither party monopolises airtime or emotional labour. Practically, this translates into behaviours such as remembering personal details, following through on micro-commitments (e.g., “I’ll email that file by 5 p.m.”), and calibrating language formality to the relationship stage.

Relational scholar Mark Knapp’s *Stages of Relational Development* (initiating → experimenting → intensifying → integrating → bonding) highlights that communication needs evolve: small talk suffices during initiation, whereas shared narratives (“our story”) cement bonding. Periodic “relational maintenance check-ins”—short conversations assessing mutual goals—pre-empt drift and resentment.

2 Empathy, Emotional Intelligence & Active Listening

Emotional Intelligence (EI)—popularised by Daniel Goleman—comprises five pillars: *Self-Awareness*, *Self-Regulation*, *Motivation*, *Empathy*, and *Social Skills*. The accompanying bar chart provides a visual parity model, underscoring that neglecting any pillar destabilises overall competence.

2.1 Empathy

Definition: The cognitive and affective capacity to understand and resonate with another’s feelings.

Practice: Replace evaluative statements (“That’s overreacting”) with validating probes (“It sounds frustrating—what part bothered you most?”).

2.2 Active Listening

Active listening operationalises empathy. Components include:

- Attending** - Open posture, nodding, minimal encouragers (“mm-hm”).
- Clarifying** - Open-ended questions to deepen context.
- Reflecting** - Paraphrasing core emotion (“You seem relieved the project closed”).
- Summarising** - Synthesise key points for confirmation.

ROI: Research in *Journal of Applied Psychology* (2024) linked active-listening managers to 17 % higher team trust scores.

3 Conflict Management Techniques

Conflict is inevitable when perceptions, goals, or values collide. The Thomas-Kilmann model maps styles along axes of **assertiveness** and **cooperativeness**. Refer to the interactive *Conflict Management Styles Matrix* to explore five modes and contextual use-cases.

Core Technique	Execution Steps	Outcome Goal
“XYZ” Feedback	Describe behavior (X), situational context (Y), impact (Z): “When you interrupted yesterday (X) during the financial review (Y), I lost my train of thought (Z).”	Issue-focused dialogue, minimal defensiveness
Interest-Based Relational (IBR) Approach	1. Separate people from problem 2. Focus on interests, not positions 3. Generate options 4. Use objective criteria	Mutual gains
Cooling-Off	Schedule a 24-hour pause when emotions peak	Prevents amygdala hijack

Proper sequencing matters: start with collaborative stance; escalate to competing only under high-stake, time-critical constraints.



4 Persuasion & Negotiation Skills

4.1 Persuasion

Aristotle's triad—*ethos*, *logos*, *pathos*—still governs credibility, logic, and emotion. Modern neuromarketing adds *Kairos* (timing) as the fourth lever.

- **Ethos** - Cite expertise and past results.
- **Logos** - Embed data visualisations, cost-benefit matrices.
- **Pathos** - Tell micro-stories, use sensory language.
- **Kairos** - Frame proposals when stakeholder readiness is highest (budget cycles, pain-point peaks).

4.2 Negotiation

Adopt the **BATNA** (Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement) discipline from Fisher & Ury's *Getting to Yes*. Elements:

1. **Preparation Grid** - Define BATNA, walk-away point, aspiration point.
2. **Value Mapping** - Identify tradable variables (price, timeline, scope).
3. **Concessions Rhythm** - Make smaller, less frequent concessions as deadline nears; label concessions so their value is recognised.
4. **Closing** - Summarise wins, state next-step deliverables in writing.

Tip: Use calibrated questions ("How can we make this work for both teams?") to shift counterpart from positional rigidity to collaborative problem-solving.

5 Assertive Communication

Assertiveness occupies the balanced midpoint between passivity and aggression. Hallmarks:

- **First-Person Ownership** - "I prefer" rather than "You should."
- **Clear Boundary Statements** - "I'm available until 6 p.m.; after that I'll respond tomorrow."
- **Win-Win Framing** - Combine self-advocacy with recognition of others' needs.

5.1 DESC Script (Describe - Express - Specify - Consequence)

1. **Describe:** "During meetings, my slides are skipped."
2. **Express:** "I feel my input is undervalued."
3. **Specify:** "Could we allocate five minutes for each section?"
4. **Consequence:** "This ensures a fuller risk picture."

Practice in low-risk scenarios (restaurant orders) to build muscle memory.

6 Integrated Skill-Building Exercises

Exercise	Objective	Instructions
Empathy Map	Deepen understanding of partner perspective	Four-quadrant template (Says, Thinks, Does, Feels) post-conversation
Conflict Style Swap	Flex style repertoire	Role-play scenario twice: first with natural style, second with opposite quadrant
Negotiation Poker	Enhance BATNA use	Hidden-value chips; trade until mutual utility maximised



7 Key Takeaways & Self-Assessment Checklist

- Do I **listen more than I speak** in high-emotion dialogues?
- Can I **name my BATNA** before any negotiation?
- Did I **validate** the other person's feeling before replying?
- Which Thomas-Kilmann style dominates my default response, and have I practised at least one alternative this month?
- Have I delivered a **DESC statement** in the past week?

Consistent reflection against this checklist transforms theory into habitual competence, enabling you to navigate workplace dynamics with clarity, empathy, and influence.

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