

A leader who has a high level of emotional intelligence must also possess high levels of self-control.

Self-control involves regulating your own behaviour, the ability to resist certain emotions or temptations in the moment. Self-control is an essential skill for a manager, during certain scenarios such as conflict resolution, it is key for a manager to stay in control of their emotions throughout.

So where do you begin when it comes to improving self-control? Let's take a look at some methods that can help:

## **Firstly, you must reduce the attraction of your temptations.**

A classic example of this was the marshmallow study back in nineteen seventy-two in Stanford, where children were sat in front of a marshmallow.

They were informed they could have the marshmallow at any point, however if they exercised self-control, they could have the marshmallow as well as a further treat on top. A follow up to the study showed that the children who delayed gratification did better in emotional situations as well as performing better in tests at school.

Consciously resist your temptations, don't have that drink after work or that extra snack in the afternoon, the more you practice this self-control, the more you'll be able to control your emotions as a result.

## **Secondly, when you make plans you must encourage yourself to stick to it.**

Many of us consistently make plans in our personal lives and in the workplace that we never stick to. If you make plans to go to the gym three times a week, or to meet with your team at the end of the week, and you don't see this through, it shows that you've not only lost self-control but it also means that in your mind it is acceptable to regularly do this.

When you make serious plans, whether they're at work or in your personal life, stick with them otherwise you'll see a decrease in your self-control.

## **Finally, as a manager you must plan ahead on how you recover from setbacks.**

At times, being a manager is not easy; when things go wrong certain people will crumble, shrug their shoulders and say they just can't be bothered. To conquer this natural reaction to failures, form a "if this happens...then I must" plan. So for example:

"If I don't go to the gym, then I must have a salad for my dinner"

Think of various work scenarios that could go wrong, and make plans for each one, and then if this certain thing was to go wrong, you are prepared for the outcome.

So when it comes to improving your self-control, consider the following points:

**Number one – reduce the attraction of your temptations**, don't just give in to your impulses.

**Number two – when you make plans, encourage yourself to stick to them**, if you frequently sway away from the plans that you make then you'll see a decrease in your self-control in other situations.

**And number three – plan ahead how you recover from setbacks** by forming an "if/then" plan