

*Praise for*

## LEADING IN THE LAW WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

*Leading in the Law with Emotional Intelligence* is the cutting-edge collaboration of a law professor (and former associate dean) and a psychologist who has established numerous emotional intelligence-based leadership programs (across health systems, government agencies, engineer programs, and law schools). This is a superb book for lawyers, law students, and other professionals on how to build trust, manage conflict, and lead with humility, courage, and emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is tied to academic and career success, and EI skills can be taught and learned. The book is interactive, with self-discovery and reflection exercises to cultivate self-awareness, empathy, techniques to manage emotions, and abilities to connect with others. *Leading in the Law with Emotional Intelligence* is a remarkable manual of leadership skills that emphasize collaboration, listening to various perspectives, and developing healthy emotional habits to lead, as Durr and Zimmerman say, “from the inside out.”

**NANCY LEVIT**

Associate Dean for Faculty and Curators' Distinguished Professor  
and Edward D. Ellison Professor of Law,  
University of Missouri—Kansas City School of Law  
Co-author of *The Happy Lawyer: How to Build a Meaningful  
Life in the Law*

Far from being just another lawyer “self-help” book, this work presents the case for lawyer emotional intelligence based upon rigorous review of academic literature and empirical studies. Written in a straightforward style, the authors draw upon their years of experience teaching and counseling both law students and practitioners to show why emotional intelligence is a critical component of leadership in the law.

**DAN BOWLING**

Distinguished Fellow at Duke Law School  
Former Senior Vice-President of Human Resources,  
Coca-Cola Enterprises

In the decade since I took Cliff and Rob's inaugural course, I've consistently reflected on the many ways their teaching has shaped me as a law student, practicing lawyer, husband (to a psychologist, by sheer coincidence), father, and person. I'm very pleased that their crucial lessons and message will be reaching a wider audience. This book should be mandatory reading for law students, lawyers, and for anyone else who wishes to gain a greater understanding of leadership, the many ways that success can be defined, and, most importantly, themselves.

**PETER MAYER**

Former student and General Counsel, Mustang Litigation Funding

A practical guide that forces lawyers to look inward and practice self-awareness and empathy. *Leading in the Law* addresses an important topic missing from most legal education: emotional intelligence. A must-read for any lawyer who wants to develop the emotional intelligence necessary to effectively interact with clients, colleagues, witnesses, and judges.

**KATHERINE E. RHOADES**

Former student and Partner at Bartlit Beck LLP

Lawyers are leaders, and *Leading in the Law with Emotional Intelligence: The Path to Becoming a Twenty-First-Century Leader* is the definitive leadership guide for law students and lawyers alike. The authors clearly and engagingly explain what emotional intelligence is and why it matters more than ever in providing legal services as well as in a lawyer's role as a leader in any capacity—be it in their law firm, on a school board, or in a corporate boardroom. Equally important, the authors provide innumerable insightful examples and potent exercises that guide the reader to build the essential skills of empathic leadership.

**MICHAEL T. COLATRELLA JR.**

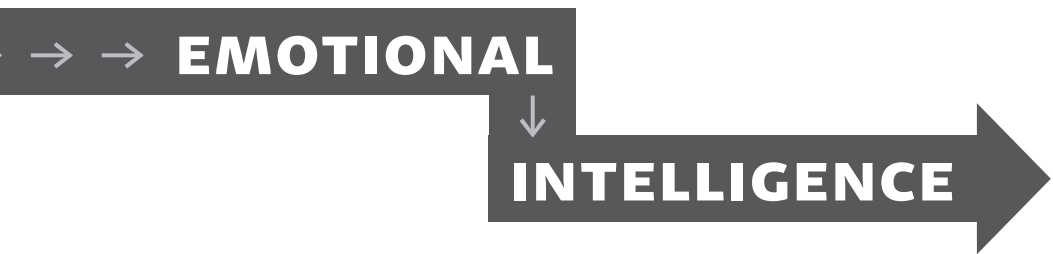
Inaugural Tracy A. Eglet Chair in Alternative Dispute Resolution & Professor of Law; Co-Director, Institute for Law Teaching & Learning, University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law

LEADING IN THE LAW → → → → → → → →  
→ → → → WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

**LEADING IN THE LAW**



**WITH → → →**



*The Path to Becoming a  
Twenty-First-Century Leader*

**ROB DURR, PHD**  
**CLIFF ZIMMERMAN**



CAROLINA ACADEMIC PRESS  
Durham, North Carolina

Copyright © 2025  
Rob Durr, PhD and Cliff Zimmerman  
All Rights Reserved

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS CATALOGING-IN-PUBLICATION DATA

Names: Durr, Rob, author. | Zimmerman, Cliff, author.

Title: Leading in the law with emotional intelligence : the path  
to becoming a 21st century leader / Rob Durr & Cliff  
Zimmerman.

Description: Durham, North Carolina : Carolina Academic  
Press, 2025. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2024050052 | ISBN 9781531029654  
(paperback) | ISBN 9781531029661 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Practice of law--Psychological aspects. |  
Lawyers--Psychological aspects. | Emotional intelligence.

Classification: LCC K346 .D87 2025 | DDC 340/.19--dc23/  
eng/20241022

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2024050052>

Carolina Academic Press  
700 Kent Street  
Durham, North Carolina 27701  
(919) 489-7486  
[www.cap-press.com](http://www.cap-press.com)

Printed in the United States of America

*To Dea, for her constant support, reading, and conversations  
while walking, running, and everywhere else.*

—CZ

*For Ellie, Claire, and Maisie, who show me how to  
feel and lead with love every day,  
Lauren, for keeping me grounded and laughing,  
And our future leaders, who will lead with heart and curiosity.*

—ROB





# Contents

|  |              |
|--|--------------|
| <b>Figures and Exercises</b>   | <b>xi</b>    |
| <b>Acknowledgments</b>   | <b>xv</b>    |
| <b>Preface</b>   | <b>xvii</b>  |
| Cliff: The Rocky Road to EI-Based Leadership                             | xvii         |
| Rob: In the EI Carpooling Lane with Cliff                                | xx           |
| Rob and Cliff: Creating an EI Leadership Driver’s Manual                 | xxii         |
| <b>Introduction</b>  | <b>xxvii</b> |
| Research about Law Students, Lawyers, and Success                        | xxix         |
| A Balance in Values  | xxxi         |
| From Values to Leadership  | xxxiii       |
| <b>Chapter I → Why Emotional Intelligence Matters for Lawyers</b>        | <b>3</b>     |
| A. Importance of Emotional Intelligence: Research and Academic Curricula | 3            |
| B. Legal Education Failing in Emotional Intelligence Nurturing           | 4            |
| C. Problem—Connection—Solution   | 5            |
| D. Emotional Intelligence and Leadership                                 | 10           |
| E. A Tough Way to Start Law School                                       | 13           |
| <b>Chapter II → Understanding Emotional Intelligence: What It Is</b>     | <b>19</b>    |
| A. A Brief Historical Foundation   | 20           |
| B. Current State of Emotional Intelligence Science: The Top Frameworks   | 21           |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| C. The Emotional Intelligence Competencies                                    |            |
| That Matter for Lawyers   | 22         |
| 1. Self-Awareness   | 23         |
| 2. Self-Management  | 27         |
| 3. Social Awareness and Relationship Management                               | 30         |
| D. Strong Emotional Intelligence: Achievement, Performance,<br>and Leadership | 35         |
| <b>Chapter III → Know Thyself: Self-Awareness in Legal Practice</b>           | <b>39</b>  |
| A. The Two-Branch Model of Self-Awareness                                     | 40         |
| 1. Deep Insight: Understanding Your Personal Narrative                        | 42         |
| 2. Mindfulness: Developing Greater Current-Moment<br>Self-Awareness           | 58         |
| B. The Power of Psychological Assessment in Gaining Greater<br>Self-Awareness | 66         |
| <b>Chapter IV → Self-Management for Lawyers</b>                               | <b>75</b>  |
| A. Learning When to Brake   | 78         |
| B. Learning How to Brake  | 80         |
| C. Regulating Attention, Psychologically Speaking                             | 83         |
| D. Strengthening Self-Management  | 92         |
| 1. Explanatory Style  | 92         |
| 2. Resilience   | 94         |
| 3. Cognitive Interaction  | 95         |
| 4. Do You Have a Mantra?  | 105        |
| 5. Adaptability   | 106        |
| 6. Achievement Orientation  | 108        |
| 7. Positive Outlook   | 110        |
| E. Finding Happiness  | 113        |
| 1. Lawyer (Un)happiness   | 113        |
| 2. Happiness Advantage  | 114        |
| 3. Boosting Your Mood   | 116        |
| <b>Chapter V → The Empathic Lawyer</b>  | <b>121</b> |
| A. Moving to Empathy  | 121        |
| 1. Visualizing How Emotional Intelligence Leads<br>to Empathy                 | 121        |
| 2. Overcoming Mental Heuristics   | 124        |

|  |            |
|--|------------|
| 3. Embracing Social Awareness  | 126        |
| B. Clarifying Empathy  | 128        |
| 1. Empathy versus Sympathy   | 128        |
| 2. Empathy and Lawyers   | 130        |
| 3. Empathy and Relationship Management                               | 133        |
| C. Building Empathy  | 134        |
| 1. Hurdles to Building Empathy That Are Unique<br>to the Legal Field | 135        |
| 2. Steps to Building Empathy   | 136        |
| 3. Five Practices of Empathy Empowerment                             | 137        |
| D. Applying Empathy  | 160        |
| 1. From the Content to the Dynamic                                   | 161        |
| 2. From Empathy to Loving-Kindness                                   | 162        |
| <b>Chapter VI → Relationship Management</b>                          | <b>171</b> |
| A. The Social Nature of Humans and Loneliness                        | 174        |
| 1. Social Capital and the American Deficit                           | 174        |
| 2. Social Isolation and the Pandemic                                 | 176        |
| 3. Link Between Relationships and Happiness/<br>Health/Success       | 179        |
| B. From Emotional Intelligence to Social Intelligence                | 180        |
| 1. Self-Awareness of Your Beliefs about Relationships                | 180        |
| 2. Self-Awareness of Your Personality Traits                         | 184        |
| C. The Four-Stage Model of Relationship Management                   | 188        |
| 1. Identifying Stage   | 188        |
| 2. Initiating Stage  | 190        |
| 3. Developing Stage  | 193        |
| 4. Collaborating Stage   | 194        |
| 5. Recap of the Stages   | 196        |
| D. Building Trust  | 197        |
| 1. Trust Models  | 199        |
| 2. Multicultural Leadership  | 201        |
| 3. Trust and Virtual Teams   | 212        |
| 4. Building Community and Relationships Post-Pandemic                | 215        |
| E. Working on Teams  | 216        |
| 1. Benefits of Working in Groups                                     | 217        |
| 2. Concerns about Teamwork—Debunked                                  | 219        |
| 3. MBTI® and Team Relationships                                      | 224        |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| F. Managing Conflict  | 226        |
| 1. Positive Contribution of Conflict  | 226        |
| 2. Conflict Management and EI Skills  | 227        |
| 3. Application of EI Skills as Conflict Management  | 228        |
| G. Conclusion: The Two Faces of Empathy in Relationship Management  | 230        |
| <b>Chapter VII → Emotionally Intelligent Leadership: Filling the Gap in Twenty-First-Century Leadership</b> | <b>233</b> |
| A. Clarifying What We Mean by <i>Leadership</i>   | 238        |
| 1. Emotional Intelligence and Organizational Culture  | 238        |
| 2. The Ubiquity of Leadership   | 241        |
| 3. Varied and Authentic Leadership Styles   | 244        |
| B. The State of Leadership Theory: Lessons from One Hundred Years of Research                               | 247        |
| 1. Authentic Leadership Theory  | 247        |
| 2. Resonant Leadership Theory   | 249        |
| 3. Combination of Theories  | 249        |
| C. Leading in the Law with Emotional Intelligence: The Twenty-First-Century Leadership Profile              | 249        |
| 1. Humility   | 251        |
| 2. Integrity  | 258        |
| 3. Values   | 260        |
| 4. Professional Identity  | 262        |
| 5. Vulnerability (Comfort with Discomfort)  | 262        |
| 6. Courage  | 264        |
| 7. Trust  | 265        |
| D. The Path Forward as a Twenty-First-Century Leader  | 268        |
| <b>Endnotes</b>   | <b>271</b> |
| <b>Index</b>  | <b>293</b> |
| <b>About the Authors</b>  | <b>297</b> |

# Figures and Exercises

## FIGURES

|                  |  |     |
|------------------|--|-----|
| <b>FIGURE 1</b>  | The Emotional and Social Competency Framework  | 23  |
| <b>FIGURE 2</b>  | Self-Awareness Balance                         | 61  |
| <b>FIGURE 3</b>  | Personality Type Self-Assessment               | 71  |
| <b>FIGURE 4</b>  | The Emotional and Social Competency Framework  | 78  |
| <b>FIGURE 5</b>  | Modal Model of Emotion                         | 86  |
| <b>FIGURE 6</b>  | Five Families of Emotion-Regulation Strategies | 89  |
| <b>FIGURE 7</b>  | ABCs of Human Functioning                      | 98  |
| <b>FIGURE 8</b>  | The Emotional and Social Competency Framework  | 127 |
| <b>FIGURE 9</b>  | The Emotional and Social Competency Framework  | 158 |
| <b>FIGURE 10</b> | Cyclical Nature of EI Domain Interactions      | 187 |
| <b>FIGURE 11</b> | Four Stages of Relationship Development        | 189 |
| <b>FIGURE 12</b> | The Five Dysfunctions of a Team                | 200 |
| <b>FIGURE 13</b> | Twenty-First-Century Leadership Profile        | 237 |
| <b>FIGURE 14</b> | Twenty-First-Century Leadership Profile        | 250 |

## SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISES

|                                  |  |       |
|----------------------------------|--|-------|
| <b>SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 1</b> | Best Boss                                      | xxxv  |
|                                  | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 1</i> | xxxvi |
| <b>SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 2</b> | On Stressors                                   | 14    |
|                                  | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 2</i> | 15    |
| <b>SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 3</b> | Goals for Improvement                          | 37    |
| <b>SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 4</b> | Passion Mapping                                | 53    |

|                            |  |     |
|----------------------------|--|-----|
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 5  | Your MBTI® Personality Type  | 72  |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 6  | I Tend to ...  | 85  |
|                            | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 6</i>                       | 86  |
|                            | <i>Review of Self-Discovery Exercise 6 and Subsequent Reflection</i> | 88  |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 7  | Explanatory Style Self-Test  | 94  |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 8  | Self-Management  | 97  |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 9  | Doing the ABCs   | 99  |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 10 | Creating a Thought Record  | 103 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 11 | What's Your Mantra?  | 106 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 12 | What Makes You Happy?  | 116 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 13 | Happiness at Work  | 118 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 14 | Thinking about Empathy   | 134 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 15 | Being Curious  | 143 |
|                            | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 15</i>                      | 143 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 16 | Just Like Me and<br>Loving-Kindness Mindfulness                      | 163 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 17 | What's Their Problem?  | 163 |
|                            | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 18</i>                      | 181 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 18 | Your Relationship with<br>Relationships                              | 181 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 19 | Self-Awareness of Social Savvy                                       | 183 |
|                            | <i>Reflection on Self-Discovery Exercise 19</i>                      | 183 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 20 | Self-Awareness of<br>Personality Traits                              | 185 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 21 | Exploring the Four Stages  | 197 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 22 | Rating Self-Awareness  | 204 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 23 | Know Your Biases   | 208 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 24 | Knowledge of Others  | 210 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 25 | Your Team Experience   | 223 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 26 | Your Personality Type<br>and Teams                                   | 225 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 27 | Cultural Identifiers   | 241 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 28 | Firm Values  | 254 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 29 | Finding Humility   | 257 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 30 | Find Your Ideal Self   | 261 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 31 | My Legacy  | 261 |
| SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 32 | Writing a Growth Contract<br>for Yourself                            | 269 |

**REFLECTIVE WRITING**

|                       |       |
|-----------------------|-------|
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 1  | xxxvi |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 2  | 17    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 3  | 38    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 4  | 57    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 5  | 65    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 6  | 72    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 7  | 84    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 8  | 91    |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 9  | 105   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 10 | 110   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 11 | 114   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 12 | 118   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 13 | 146   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 14 | 149   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 15 | 152   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 16 | 164   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 17 | 168   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 18 | 168   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 19 | 209   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 20 | 211   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 21 | 224   |
| REFLECTIVE WRITING 22 | 245   |





## Acknowledgments

All books are the product of teamwork and we have had an incredible team who shared ideas, gave critical feedback, did great research, edited our words to sound better, worked on graphics, and pulled it all together in the end to produce this book. We want to acknowledge all (hopefully leaving no one out), particularly given the length of this project. We are deeply aware that we could not have done this without you and hope that we can add at least as much support to your ventures.

Hundreds of Northwestern Law students have taken the leadership course, in which they read predecessors of these chapters and completed early variations of these exercises. Thanks to all of the students we have taught and interacted with over the years. Your engagement and responses to the materials have been both inspiring and critical to the adaptations over time. During her first year of law school, Deidra McCall (JD '23) stepped forward to contribute the first student research to the project. Subsequently, Gabriella Goldstein (JD '25), Sarah Norise (JD '24), Michael Pranger (JD '23), Scott Shimizu (JD '24), and Elise Wu (JD '23) provided excellent research as we changed and updated the chapters. Aly Hiller (JD '25) took the research to a higher level and helped us get the project across the finish line. We are deeply grateful to all of you.

The work of several individuals has been inspirational to us in the project. Specifically, the research and thinking of Ken Sheldon, Larry Krieger, Richard Boyatzis, Annie McKee, Bill George, Dan Goleman, and Len Riskin have kept us grounded while opening doors for us to move forward. Thank you for your pathbreaking work, a level of achievement that we aspire to here.

We have greatly benefited from the administrative support of Shona Bonds and Jazzma Pryor at Northwestern. Sheila Sybrant's editing has made this manuscript more readable than we ever could have done on our own. Meg Mitchell at CAP loved the book idea from our very first conversation on the topic and shepherded us through the publication process where Scott Sipe provided key support to us as well. Surely many others, unknown to us, at CAP made it all work right as well. We are deeply grateful to all of you.

Many other Northwestern University colleagues supported the development of a for-credit course in higher education on emotional intelligence that laid the groundwork for this book and the course it is based on. Specifically, Wei-Jen Huang's passion for emotional intelligence and insights helped Rob's initial thinking on the topic, and Joe Holtgrieve, Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Engineering, and David Shor, Staff Psychologist at Northwestern in Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), both opened doors for what became the Leading in the Law course in the law school. Any and all errors are our own.

## Preface

This book grew out of our work together in the Dean of Students' office at a Top 10 law school. As the dean of students (Cliff) and a licensed psychologist (Rob), we were charged with the mission of helping to equip law students with the essential life skills necessary to make it through law school and sustain a balanced and ethical legal career—to achieve success and thrive in the profession.

The origins of our collective experiences, which aided our work, go back a bit further than our time at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law. Our journey, apart and together, has been one of adventure and discovery. And in this book we share the road map with you to guide you on the path to leading in the law with emotional intelligence (EI) in the twenty-first century.

### **CLIFF:**

#### **THE ROCKY ROAD TO EI-BASED LEADERSHIP**

In 2004, I became the associate dean and dean of students at Northwestern Law, a top law school with an accomplished faculty and alumni. Prior to that role, which is unmistakably one of leadership, I had little awareness of having any particular leadership skills or holding a meaningful leadership role. I had been a civil litigator in a small private practice, then a law teacher. I had received some training in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator® (MBTI®), a personality assessment of unconscious preferences. I had briefly held the position of academic counselor in the law

school. But none of these positions or trainings included substantive training or experience in leadership.

While problem-solving and strategic and analytical thinking skills from law school were beneficial, these planning and implementation skills and experiences have their limits. Thus, at the start of my time as associate dean and dean of students at Northwestern Law, I managed the job not necessarily spectacularly but certainly well enough. I welcomed the responsibility, perhaps taking on matters that were beyond my legal training. Legal training, as I understood it, meant that I could handle pretty much anything that came through the door. In private practice, however, I learned limits, sending the tax matters to a tax lawyer and the cases that were beyond my expertise to an expert in that area. In contrast, student problem-solving in an academic institution is the responsibility of the people in charge of the institution, and I was the one with direct responsibility for them. Not surprisingly, then, in the first few years, I made some mistakes and sometimes focused in the wrong places. But all in all, I competently did the job—lots of perspiration, some inspiration, and a decent scorecard for the job.

This felt right and comfortable until the tide of students struggling with law school and self-care reached a point where I recognized that my legal training and problem-solving skills no longer helped me or the students. Whether this was a change in the students or greater recognition on my part and the profession's awareness of the importance of psychological health, I could not say; but the trends became clearer, and my acuity for what I could and could not do in this realm became greater. In particular, more and more students with weakening or compromised mental health were coming into the office, and there was a simultaneous push for "practice-ready" graduates at the conclusion of law school. To be sure, most high-performing, highly successful, highly motivated students work past the basic anxiety and lowered self-esteem that comes with the first year of law school and are loath to attribute failings (lowercase *f*) to anything or anyone but themselves. I had been able to distinguish the serious (sent to counseling services) from the manageable (dealt with by me or my staff), but the balance was shifting fast under my feet. Part of the problem was my lack of training and expertise in psychology and counseling, and part was in the institutional counseling services being spread across a variety of schools within the university, each with very different needs and challenges. Top students were strug-

gling with the impact of legal education on their ability to learn, and I needed help.

This challenge has been widely recognized in legal academia. Researchers have identified how legal education replaces students' intrinsic values (such as honesty, integrity, humility, self-care, family and other relations) with extrinsic values (such as money, prestige, and achievements)—with the result being reduced self-esteem, poor mental health (and increased anxiety and depression), and a decline in performance. But the concern is not just that some students have mental health concerns that are exacerbated in law school. Many students go to law school with strong mental and physical health and then become susceptible to the same mental health concerns either due to the rigor and demands of law school or because the displacement of their intrinsic values with extrinsic ones has a significant and detrimental impact on their self-worth, identity, and purpose.

My own journey through law school was marked by some of the struggles I was seeing in the students. No one in my family had gone to law school, so I knew little of what I was getting into or how and what to get out of it. I had no family financial support, so the cost of the venture, the debt incurred, and the pressures of those weights were on me alone. I also felt so alienated in the first year (1L) that I seriously considered leaving after the year was done. I only decided to stay after sage friends suggested that I take it one step at a time. That first step I took was working in a law school clinic during my first summer. What I did not realize then but know now is that the experiential learning brought out and developed key EI skills in me—validating the need for self-awareness and recognizing and building my empathy in particular. (These are two of four key domains in emotional intelligence, all of which will be explained in the chapters that follow.) Those 1L feelings and experiences were so strong that they remain with me to this day.

If I was going to be able to do the dean of students job that I had been hired to do, then I had to get help in this realm. I understood exactly what the research said and needed someone who understood what happens in the law school and in legal education to address the issues of law students. That person could work with the university's counseling and psychological services in the health center, but that person also had to work very closely with me to understand what they were dealing with and how to present a unified approach. That person would have to be

physically in the law school to see students individually, in groups, and in larger gatherings, as well as at critical times like the start of the semester and during exams and on-campus interviewing—all of which would go a long way toward bringing balance to the students and helping them through law school.

Northwestern Law needed a dedicated psychologist, someone who would understand the students for who they are: a unique group of high-achieving individuals who were now in an ultra-intense and competitive environment; a diverse group hoping to enter what is still a very homogenous profession; and a young, idealistic, equity-driven group entering a world defined by events that most of us see as changes. It would take a team to address those students who were reeling under the pressures. Little did I know, at that time, that the team would then also ensure that everyone could understand the interconnected impact of legal education, debt, and mental health and well-being in the positive framework of leadership.

With this general research and after gathering specific data and trends on Northwestern Law students, I negotiated and lobbied for and then got the green light to hire a staff psychologist who would be both a member of the university's Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) team and dedicated to learning about and serving the law school population. From the hiring process, my team identified Rob as the best candidate, and our working relationship began.

#### **ROB:**

#### **IN THE EI CARPOOLING LANE WITH CLIFF**

Being Northwestern Law's dedicated psychologist was a dream job for me. To have the opportunity to help hundreds of law students overcome psychological hurdles on an individual level while developing broader wellness programming in such an important profession was truly one of the greatest honors in my career. While I always valued the individual work, I entered the role with an eye toward expanding the notion of wellness services to include leadership, career development, and success.

My path to becoming a psychologist was defined by a life-changing experience of my own. I had participated in a semester-long National Outdoor Leadership School (NOLS) wilderness expedition during my

sophomore year of college that entailed spending roughly one hundred days straight in the wilderness. I have always been introspective and questioned deep existential realities, such as the meaning of life and purpose. As a freshman in college, I recognized the gravity of career decision-making and the importance of finding a calling as I navigated the multitude of career paths and choices and recognized the weight of everyone in my life asking me, “What do you want to do with your life?” (i.e., “What are you going to major in?”). During that time period, I came to recognize the significance of finding a calling, a career path, that would provide meaning and a sense of purpose. I recognized that so much of a person’s life and identity is determined by what they do for work, and as I grappled with that decision myself, felt the weight of it, and worked through it on the NOLS course, I found psychology and a love for helping others grow as leaders—a passion for helping others find a meaningful and balanced career of their own.

I spent the next decade earning a doctorate in psychology and learning the essential skills and practices that it takes not only to help others find a meaningful career path but also to help them thrive as leaders in all parts of their lives and attain success. I also grew passionate about helping specific professions identify and overcome the inherent challenges in their vocations. My research on career development, psychology, and leadership revealed that the same essential psychological and behavioral habits underlie mental health, career advancement and success, and exceptional leadership; that they ultimately fall under the EI umbrella; and that they can be developed in school simultaneously as students learn the intellectual and technical skills that they need to succeed.

My background in leadership and psychological health led to the realization that these two key differentiating factors of success in the legal profession share the same underlying mental and behavioral habits: in other words, wellness and leadership are intricately connected. By developing emotional intelligence during law school, graduates would be practice-ready to lead and find a balanced, sustainable approach to their legal careers. So when the Northwestern Law psychologist position was posted, I leaped at the opportunity to extend my work to another profession.

Even before joining Northwestern Law, I recognized the pioneering potential in this work. My private leadership consulting practice was

already flourishing in business and medicine, and I knew that the legal profession was years if not decades behind these professions in incorporating psychological science and leadership development into training. I had successfully established mindfulness, EI-based leadership programs in a large health system, a state department of transportation, and the school of engineering at Northwestern. (The EI course for Northwestern's engineering school, a version of which is still offered to this day for all incoming Northwestern undergraduate students, was developed in collaboration with a dean in engineering and another psychologist at Northwestern.) I witnessed the power of emotional intelligence for physicians and engineers in rounding out their professional skills. These proactive methods to reach students who were not coming in of their own volition was a clear need and I thought that Cliff and I could build on those ideas in the law school setting. Initially, the course idea seemed nebulous to Cliff, and he pushed me to focus on more immediate needs.

Once in the role, I saw firsthand that many high-achieving students (and lawyers for that matter) were not seeking out mental health services for myriad reasons, and I recognized that various factors both in an individual's culture and within the culture of legal education often prevent lawyers from seeking help. Like all professional groups, law students and lawyers are interested in leadership and success, and if the skills needed to stay psychologically healthy could be incorporated into programs targeting these outcomes, I knew that I could reach far more students. I quickly realized that the answer was a for-credit "leadership course"—not waiting around in the clinic for students to find me once they were struggling.

#### **ROB AND CLIFF:**

#### **CREATING AN EI LEADERSHIP DRIVER'S MANUAL**

Rob had built his programming and continually raised the prospect of developing a course that would be preventative, business-savvy, and grounded in empirical research from diverse fields including business, psychology, and neuroscience. We talked more and more specifically about what such a course would look like in the law school. Over time, the idea began to clarify and crystallize.

Through our conversations about the course and its components, Cliff came to realize (and make sense of) much about himself, his path,



and his choices. For example, Rob's affinity for mindfulness gave Cliff a name for something that he had practiced, most intensely as a runner. Our conversations about planning, programming, and teaching brought to light the key aspects of personal values—something that also had been at the heart of Cliff's work but without a framework. For example, Cliff's decision that he could not manage the evolving student issues at Northwestern Law was tied to humility. His earlier decisions to go to and then stay in law school despite the alienation and mounting debt were driven by independence. And his caring ethic was pure empathy, and it defined not only his current work but also many of his job changes preceding his current role. Above all else, our conversations made Cliff more aware, or self-aware, of what he was thinking and feeling both in the moment and deeply—respectively, mindfulness and personal narrative or identity. This resonated deeply within Cliff as he began to see connections that he had not understood. He wondered, “What if I had understood those powerful aspects of self-awareness when I was in law school?”

At the same time that we were developing the course, we worked with thousands of students, addressing individual student issues, creating individualized plans for students, and developing community-wide programs presented at key points (orientation, exams, grade distribution, and on-campus interviewing). While attending to all students, we saw that the students who struggled more through law school lacked in areas that came naturally to outstanding students. However, it was not about their IQ or LSAT scores. This struggle was not with the cognitive skills that the legal field regards so highly. Instead, it had to do with well-being and being “well-rounded.” Time and again, the students who ended up in our offices lacked emotional and social skills. (These experiences and others provide the basis for some of the anonymized vignettes that appear throughout this book.) Rob provided Cliff with the connection between psychological health and leadership, as well as the research in psychology, business, leadership, and organizational behavior identifying the distinguishing factor for these professionals as the lack of EI skills.<sup>1</sup>

As we discussed the leadership course, Cliff came to realize that what made him an effective leader (as reported to him by others) in the office and in the law school community was living and working his values: honesty, integrity, humility, empathy, a willingness to be vulnerable

about his own experiences, and, above all else, the moment-to-moment and deep self-awareness of these values so that he could act on them. He also came to realize that he had taken the next step as well in creating time and space to understand his own emotions and act in an intentional way with that understanding. His leadership ability was almost completely attributable to a growing or high level of emotional intelligence—the core of the course that we were constructing.

With the understanding that these skills and competencies are visible, tangible, trainable, and measurable—and with Rob’s clarity that the course had to be based on emotional intelligence—we developed one of the first EI-based leadership courses for law students: called “Leading in the Law;” it has been offered for credit since 2014. The course elevates students’ ability to see themselves as leaders—of the legal community and of themselves—and to see the importance and value in having a high degree of self-awareness to get there. Growing their self-awareness is integral to students’ avoiding and addressing the inherent pressures in legal education and properly assessing and addressing the wave of extrinsic values placed before them—which enables them to make the right decisions for themselves. Countless students have benefited in their law school careers and beyond. Luckily for them, the key habits and skills needed to achieve success (however it is defined) also lead to psychological health.

We have taught the course consistently since then and in a variety of formats, even as our lives and careers changed. Rob left his full-time position at Northwestern Law to develop a wide-ranging practice with a focus on leadership consulting and psychological assessment while maintaining his adjunct faculty role to teach the course. His methods use and build on the content of the course. In 2017, Cliff returned to teaching full-time and expanded the range of his courses, all the while bringing many of the methods here into his pedagogy. Through all of these changes, our focus on how EI competencies lead to strong leadership in both the law and life has remained constant.



As we taught the course, we found that others’ materials did not match our needs, so we used our course materials to create this book. In this book, we draw on our research and experiences to share how you

can incorporate emotional intelligence into your personal and professional life and be a strong and effective leader in the twenty-first century.

We anticipate that you are investing in this book either to gain or hone your leadership skills or to explore the benefits of emotional intelligence in your life and career, or because you understand the importance of intrinsic values and recognize that your happiness and success require something more. We are with you for any of these reasons, as well as others that may apply.

One of our guiding values is generativity—the willingness to open doors for others, to make their journey smoother, and to inspire positive change. Thus, this book is about trying to make the profession better through the addition of each new generation of lawyers by assisting global efforts in making the law more humanistic and collaborative, as these virtues will always win over the traditional adversarial approach. This book and its individualized exploration through self-discovery and reflection exercises will help you, whether you are a law student or a lawyer, to develop a high(er) degree of self-awareness, to manage your emotions in making difficult decisions, and to understand (empathize) and resonate with others—thus finding your leadership skills to address the challenges of the twenty-first century.

Other core values for us are love and family. They have driven our respective career decisions: Cliff left the regular practice of law and shifted into teaching, and Rob focused his practice and leadership in Asheville, North Carolina, where his family is centered. Our core values underlie and connect to just about every decision we make in our lives. We hope that is clear in our actions and aids today's lawyers in deciding their paths as well.

**ROB & CLIFF**  
**JANUARY 2025**



# Introduction

What makes an effective leader? And what will make you an effective leader? While we mean *leader* in the traditional sense (the head of an organization or group of individuals) and in the lateral sense (people who step into guiding or directing roles in groups or teams), we also aim to expand your notion of leadership to include *leading in your life* to self-actualize and attain your goals. We came to answer these questions indirectly when we sought to answer a different one: “What do law students and lawyers need to succeed?” In discovering the answer to this latter question, we uncovered a strategy to enable you to develop your leadership skills for the professional and personal challenges of the twenty-first century.

Our purpose in writing this book is to aid you in achieving success and well-being—in law school, in the traditional practice of law, or in roles and organizations beyond—by helping you to develop and strengthen a clear set of skills best defined as emotional intelligence, or EI. By *emotional intelligence*, we mean a deep self-awareness and empathy, a strong resonance with others, and a self-understanding that drives one’s purpose. Through learning about emotional intelligence and its component domains of self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management, you will improve client service, personal well-being, and your relationships within organizations and institutions. Thus, the EI skills\* described in the following chapters hold the

---

\* We use the terms *skills* and *competencies* interchangeably to describe the parts of emotional intelligence that are teachable, learnable, and growable within you.

power to make a tremendous impact in your life as a law student, a practicing attorney, and a human being.

Over the years, we came to see this happen in real time during our leadership course and in consulting with legal professionals. First, a student leader responsible for enforcing the rules shared how she applied her newly developed self-awareness and self-management skills in dealing with a member who was not fulfilling their obligations; she used these skills to pause and find out what was really going on before deciding whether to discipline or give grace in this particular situation (rather than just deciding to punish, which is what she would have done prior to taking the course). This student leader learned vital information that helped her to frame a solution that got the work done and preserved a good relationship. A couple of years later, when we taught the course over winter break, several students came to our final class session with stories about how their self-awareness and empathy had allowed them to have better conversations with friends and family over the holidays (a time when conversations can sour quickly). Then we saw our students come to view each other in new ways: in one case, after participating in in-class sharing sessions that provided the opportunity to watch each other develop relationship-building abilities, one outgoing journal leader saw how a class member would be very capable of stepping into that same position the following year. And, finally, a practicing lawyer/client shared how, after talking with his spouse about empathic curiosity, the couple elevated their end-of-the-day conversations to better understand what the other was dealing with, which inherently deepened their relationship.

Thus, because of our personal experiences with law students and lawyers and a century's worth of research in the field of leadership, we now know that these central leadership skills and practices can be developed. We have found that law students and lawyers who are able to do this exhibit a different kind of leadership—one based in self-leadership with emotional intelligence at the core.

Learning this type of leadership is particularly important for you as law students and lawyers because life in our post-pandemic world can feel isolated and factionalized. Ultimately, leadership is about your ability to build connections with others—seeing others, finding their true potential, and helping them to see it as well—and how you make them feel in the process. Leadership requires seeing others' strengths and vir-

tues, developing relationships that allow them to see their best selves, and inspiring them to become leaders in their own ways. The best leaders provide a mirror for others to see their own potential, to start to believe in themselves, and to find the motivation and courage to self-actualize—that is, to become their best selves and reach their greatest potential, both professionally and personally.

On your journey so far, you have probably encountered one or more of these leaders—people who inspired you, who really saw your gifts and virtues, who helped you believe in that version of yourself, and whose experiences influenced your own skills and values. This book outlines your next journey: one of self-discovery as a leader. The exercises, information, and legal application of material from fields as diverse as business, psychology, and medicine will equip you with the skills necessary to sustain happiness, develop rich relationships, and lead in the law in the twenty-first century.

#### RESEARCH ABOUT LAW STUDENTS, LAWYERS, AND SUCCESS

At this point, we need to unpack some paradoxes in legal education and the legal profession. Everyone enters law school with strong cognitive skills. Most admissions processes focus to a great degree on the measures of those skills as found in LSAT (or GRE) scores and GPA numbers, and to a lesser degree as reflected in interviews and essays. However, although the American Bar Association<sup>1</sup> has suggested that law schools assess emotional intelligence in the admissions process, an extensive law school search reveals that few, if any, currently do so.<sup>2</sup> This is so despite employers and clients expecting lawyers to have, in addition to critical cognitive skills, the skills to remain poised under immense pressure: they want lawyers who listen to their clients' needs, who strongly empathize to help meet those needs, who resonate with others, and who are aware of and able to regulate their own emotions so that when clients pay for the lawyer's services, they receive 100 percent of their lawyer's time and effort. These EI-related expectations make sense because, as confirmed by a meta-analysis (a summary of the research on a given topic), emotionally intelligent people perform better in their jobs.<sup>3</sup> Although all of these expectations implicate strong EI skills (and strong cognitive skills), these EI skills are only partially captured in high LSATs and GPAs.

While superior cognitive or intellectual abilities, legal knowledge, and hard work are necessary just to get in the game, key ingredients of success and performance are often left to fate to develop. Indeed, research shows that, roughly, only 15 percent of success is determined by intellectual abilities or technical skills and knowledge.<sup>4</sup> This suggests that 85 percent of what determines your happiness and success is outside of what you learned in law school. And chances are you feel this and know it to be true. So, what makes up over three-quarters of your success and happiness? Research suggests that much of it falls into the *how* and *why* of living. It's about how you approach and respond to the work that matters. Research suggests quite clearly that success and happiness for lawyers, and for people generally, has as much (if not more) to do with social and emotional intelligence as it does with legal knowledge and cognitive intelligence.

What happens, then, in law school is far from surprising and quite troubling. Legal education includes an approach that wears down individuality, undermines self-esteem, increases stress and anxiety, and escalates mental health concerns—and yet lawyers shaped by this approach are regularly promoted into leadership positions not only in the profession but also in business and government. Those who successfully navigate (and survive) both the education and profession are examples for all, but they represent only a fraction of those with the potential to bring their problem-solving and analytical skills to bear on the challenges of society and the world. If the process has worn them down and stripped them of their values, and if their primary motivation is personal gain, then they will bring little or no authenticity or resonance to their work as leaders.

Studies by Larry Krieger and Ken Sheldon, and by Jerome Organ, David Jaffe, and Katherine Bender, show that shortly after starting law school, a large portion of students experience diminished social, mental, and emotional well-being, and the incidence of depression and substance abuse rises dramatically.<sup>5</sup> Other studies show that depression and substance abuse continue into practice.<sup>6</sup> These studies identify as particular causes of these changes the replacement of law students' and lawyers' intrinsic motivations and values, which are healthy and sustaining, by extrinsic motivators that can be difficult to quantify and meet, particularly when amplified by the perfectionistic tendencies of many law students and lawyers. This research is supported by self-determination theory, one of the oldest theories on motivation in psychology, which posits



that one will be far more motivated when driven by intrinsic as opposed to extrinsic factors.<sup>7</sup> As a limited example, law students' intrinsic values, such as a passion and drive for justice and fairness, are displaced by extrinsic values, such as economic gain, career achievement, and other rewards (journal editorial roles, leadership positions, and awards) along the way.<sup>8</sup> These extrinsic values are moving goalposts that students can easily and continually push further and further away as they achieve their goals, a process that amplifies mental health issues because it makes success seem tenuous.

### A BALANCE IN VALUES

These extrinsic values are not inherently bad. It is OK to want to earn money, achieve promotions, and attain select positions in law school and life. But if extrinsic values come to replace your cherished intrinsic values and cannot be met or fully satisfied (for example, 90 percent of the students cannot be in the top 10 percent of the class), then you may feel personally challenged in ways that you have never been before. If not handled well, such challenges can negatively impact your physical and emotional well-being and, ultimately, your performance and success throughout your legal career. The door is then open to the development of negative personal habits and characteristics that could lead to divisive relationships, mental health concerns, or substance abuse.

The shift from intrinsic to extrinsic motivators occurs inherently in legal education. Students are encouraged to begin thinking about extrinsic motivators during their first semester: the first-year law student faces pressure to think about potential leads on summer associate positions for the next summer, their class rank, and which legal journal to serve on. All of these are presented as being dependent upon first-semester grades, and all are a means to receiving accolades and more. These established traditions in legal education are like dangling succulent fruit, enticing achievement-oriented law students to switch their focus away from the passionate intrinsic motivators that brought them to law school and toward an external and often shallower focus. In contrast, in the same time frame, doctoral and medical students become deeply engaged not only in learning and reading but also in pursuing their interests while developing a course of study based almost entirely on their intrinsic passions, interests, and values.

The replacement of intrinsic values with extrinsic ones also has broader implications. By instilling and elevating the importance of extrinsic gains in a zero-sum space, legal education displaces strong, pre-existing skills and values, such as empathy, diversity and inclusion, equity, cultural competence, and social justice. It takes great personal will to maintain empathy (a capacity that can wax and wane) when first-year grades are on a rigid curve. The purity of learning, which flourishes in sharing ideas and solutions, can be clouded by a selfish desire to not want to help others to succeed—and surely you have heard stories of law students’ trying to figure out who should be marginalized so that they get the low grades. To be blunt, these are not intellectually, socially, or emotionally healthy approaches to living, learning, lawyering, or leadership. Thus, we join you in search of the alternative: leading yourself and others with strong emotional intelligence.

Success requires personal dedication to a cause greater than yourself and relentless adherence to your core values in life and work; it comes when you passionately follow your interests and live your values. This can be more difficult than it sounds, especially when you grew up in an educational system and larger ecosystem that perpetually rewarded extrinsic accomplishments. The difficulty increases when you know what you are interested in, care about, find meaningful, and value and yet are continuously bombarded with complex and competing social, emotional, and career data. Answering the age-old question “Who are you?” can be quite challenging indeed, but doing so is nevertheless a prerequisite for developing strong, sustainable emotional intelligence. When you follow your authentic interests and abide by your values, happiness and success ensue. The key differentiating questions then become “How do you develop your interests and find your calling or purpose?” and “How do you become the leader of others and yourself?”

Specifically, the key skills necessary to strike a healthy balance between intrinsic and extrinsic values lie in self-awareness and self-management, two cornerstones of emotional intelligence and of benefit to all law students and lawyers. Emotionally intelligent lawyers are keenly aware of what is driving them and of the complex interplay between their emotional reactions, cognitions (internal narratives), and actions. Emotional intelligence provides the tools necessary for law students and lawyers to retain their deeply held intrinsic values while simultaneously (and healthily) pursuing extrinsic add-ons.

Fortunately, even if law schools do not screen for emotional intelligence in the law school admissions process, law students and lawyers can still build and develop their EI skills no matter where they are in their academic or professional careers. The key is that both the individual and the organization must value developing and enhancing the individual's EI skills.

### FROM VALUES TO LEADERSHIP

Let's reframe the paradox described above as you transition into the heart of this book. Law students today bring with them a world of difference from almost every lawyer who is teaching or practicing. Today's students grew up against the backdrop of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and view them as formative life events; have only ever known the ubiquity of technology; have always had a wealth of information (and its overwhelming nature) at their fingertips; have witnessed the normalization of incivility in American politics and lives; keenly feel the existential nature of the climate crisis; have been disproportionately impacted in certain ways by the COVID-19 pandemic; are accustomed to there being dissonance between what is true and what is fake; and are now having to contend with the growth of artificial intelligence (which can exacerbate a number of the other issues on this list). Lawyers who are even just a bit older view these events as *changes* from the past and not necessarily how the world works. This gap is both generational (in the typical sense) and stark (atypical if one thinks about the dramatic difference between the role of technology and information in the early twenty-first century versus the latter part of the twentieth century).<sup>9</sup> The stark nature of this gap means that current leaders in the legal community need to be aware of and responsive to the changes in who is entering law school and, in turn, entering the legal profession.<sup>10</sup> If the legal profession and its members are to grow and progress, its leaders need to be compassionate, empathetic, and self-aware—what we call *twenty-first century leaders*.

#### *“Exercise” Your Leadership Potential*

With that framing, let's talk about your self-discovery journey and exercises (not the kind that make you sweat—we promise!). This introduction and the chapters that follow each contain self-discovery exercises (followed by reflections on those exercises) and/or reflective writ-

ing exercises. These exercises include thought-provoking questions and journal prompts to help you develop emotional and social intelligence.

For these exercises, take out a piece of paper or open a new Word document and answer the prompts. Make sure to write out your responses. There is something irreplaceable about putting pen to paper (or fingers to keyboard). We recommend that you invest in an EI leadership development journal or notebook—a dedicated space to write your thoughts and responses. We know what you are thinking: “Really? A journal.” But trust us, research is clear that if you really want to evolve as a leader, you must start with deep self-reflection, which is best achieved through thinking and writing so you can flex the brain regions necessary for insight. Having it all in one place can be a great way to grow and reflect on that growth!

We include reflective writing exercises in particular because reflection is a key aspect of learning. These exercises require taking time and space to consider what you are thinking about as you learn and recording those thoughts in a written format. Once you start to write, do not worry about “answering” the questions or about the length of your responses. In other words, you do not necessarily have to address every question directly, particularly if your answers to the questions coalesce into an otherwise thoughtful essay. Note that reflective writing is not concerned with characteristics found in typical written projects, such as structure, word or page limits, themes, and grammatical perfection. You know that phrase “Dance like no one is watching”? Well, just write and don’t overthink it.

The following are tips for writing a reflective paper:

- Choose a quiet space.
- Clear and focus your mind on the prompt(s).
- Write the first things that come to your mind.
- Keep writing until you have emptied your mind of your thoughts.
- Do not think.
- Do not judge.
- If you get stuck, write “I feel stuck.” Keep writing.
- You will know when you are done.

So we'll begin here with exercises related to leadership. These exercises will ask you to think about great leaders you have been privileged to know, to help illuminate the characteristics and skills necessary for success as a lawyer. You will then be asked to reflect on yourself and your leadership goals. To illuminate the essential characteristics and skills necessary for success as a lawyer, really spend time thinking about who have been the most influential people in your life. They will become your *representative heuristic*!



**SELF-DISCOVERY EXERCISE 1:  
BEST BOSS**

1. List a few people you have known or worked for who epitomize great leadership, brought out the best in you, and inspired and motivated you.
2. Write some notes about what these people said or did that moved you.
3. Write about how each of these people affected you. What was the impact? How did they make you and others feel?
4. What characteristics come to mind when you think of them? Try to make a list of the characteristics that really capture their leadership.
5. Share one example with a friend, including why you thought of that person and the lessons that you can incorporate about leading.

**[STOP and COMPLETE before reading further.]**



## REFLECTION ON SELF-DISCOVERY

### EXERCISE 1

What conclusions can you draw from your notes about the most influential leaders in your life? What leadership traits, characteristics, and qualities come to mind? Try to write those out, if you haven't already. After making a list of the characteristics that define the leader you chose, what do you notice?

We have done this exercise with various professional groups across industries, and we always find the same result. Participants usually do not list technical competencies or specific knowledge about a particular industry. While those are important and obviously threshold competencies for the work, what differentiates typical from outstanding leaders (or lawyers) are social and emotional skills—that is, emotional intelligence (EI). The difference is about how those people make you feel and the way they influence you, not where their degree is from, where they previously worked, their status in the organization, or how much money they make. Most likely, the leader you chose saw you as a person and recognized and supported your strengths. You not only felt “seen” but also felt that they helped you to see your strengths. This style of leadership required self-awareness on their part in order to stay focused on you and your strengths—a value in bringing out the best in those around you—and deep empathy to understand who you are and where you are in your development. This highlights how emotional intelligence forms the foundation for several of the core leadership practices we hear executives wanting to develop (i.e., coaching, mentoring, succession planning). In the coming pages, we will explain how to develop many of the characteristics that you likely listed.



### REFLECTIVE WRITING 1

This is a good opportunity to start reflective writing and begin the process of clarifying who you are and what values drive your leadership. Knowing your values (work-life motivators) and from where they originate will allow you to stay on course throughout your personal and professional life as well as provide you with a roadmap for your decision-

making. To really start to get in touch with what matters most to you, write a response to each prompt below. Remember: just start writing and try not to overthink it!

- Who are you?
- How did you get here?
- Where are you going?
- What brought you to read this book?
- What do you hope to gain from this book and your journey?
- What drives you now? What is your passion?
- What was your passion when you started law school?



We will return to these questions throughout the book, so your reflection here is designed partly to set a baseline in your thinking as you start reading and partly to help you experience the rethinking and reconsideration of your answers as your thinking progresses. In other words, your answers may change and develop over a relatively brief period of time as your thinking about the meaning of the phrases changes or as new considerations make you rethink the pieces in your answers and how they fit together. But finding new meaning and reconsideration of previously held views or beliefs are key aspects of growth and problem-solving skills—and growth and problem-solving skills are both critical elements of becoming a better lawyer and a great leader.

