

The Emotionally Intelligent Leader: Building Stronger Volunteer Relationships

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PMI Culture Value: Aim Higher

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Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this session, attendees will be able to:

- Diagnose board dysfunction using an EI + governance lens
- Apply interventions to reduce power drift, conflict loops, and burnout
- Establish norms and decision rights that protect trust and execution
- Strengthen retention, succession, and continuity across terms

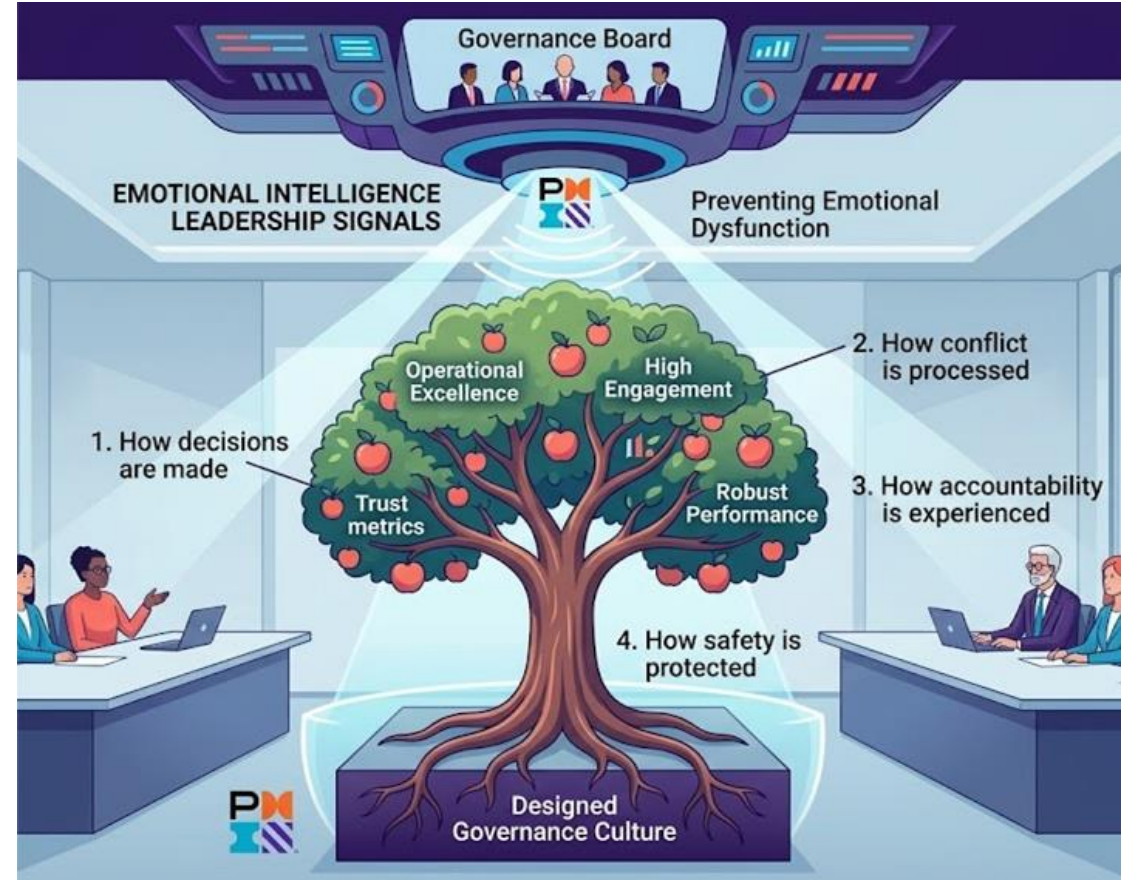
“Why do strong boards still fracture even with capable leaders?”

“Where does your board lose the most energy?”

Culture as an Enterprise Asset

Operationalizing Emotional Intelligence Leadership at the Governance Level

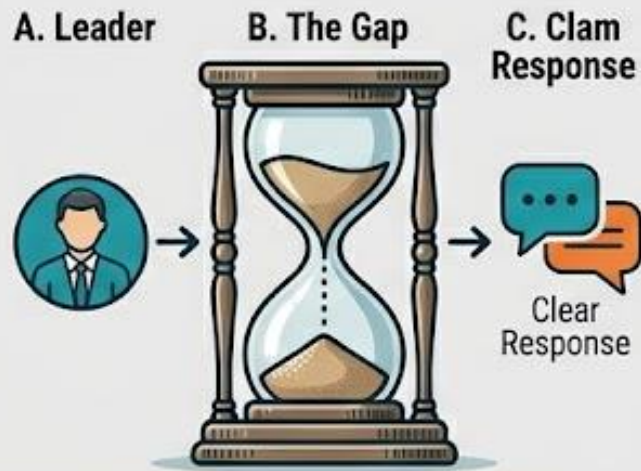
- Boards cannot build **operational excellence** on emotional dysfunction.
- **Culture** is a designed or neglected governance outcome, not an accident.
- When **execution** stalls, leaders often default to blaming volunteer commitment or skill gaps.
- In reality, disengagement is a **systemic alarm** showing that the board's leadership signals are conflicted:
 - How decisions are made
 - How conflict is processed
 - How accountability is experienced
 - How safety is protected



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ) IN LEADERSHIP

Focusing on Your Organizational Emotional Footprint

1. The Principle of Intentional Pausing



A. Leader → B. The Gap → C. Clam Response

- Self-Regulation
- React Externally, Respond Internally
INTERNAL EXTERNAL

- Filters Clarity, Not Chaos

2. Radical Empathy Bound by Strate (Balanced Relationship Management)



- Deep Understanding + Strategic Outcomes
- Pairs Empathy with Absolute Accountability
- Deep Organizational Intuition

- Empathy Without Stagnation

3. Cultivating Psychological Safety Truth-Telling (Social Awareness)



- Safe Environment for Unvarnished Truth
- Team Brings Raw Data, Dissenting Opinions
- Leader Reacts Constructively to Challenges

- Protects Against Catastrophic Blind Spots

4 Levers that Protect Performance

EI Governance and PMI Culture Values

EI Governance Lever	PMI Culture Value	PMI Culture Value Behaviors	Actions for Board Leaders 
 Clarity 	Make It Easy	• Enable clear, simple, and transparent communication. • Involve the right people in the right way.	Establish defined roles and decision rights. Move past static goals to explicitly map out behavioral boundaries and “The 5 Big NOs” for past leadership.
 Safety 	Be Welcoming	• Create safe, supportive, and respectful environments where every voice is heard.	Normalize disagreement without punishment. Regulate executive reactivity to ensure leaders can voice dissenting perspectives or bad news without fear of retaliation.
 Repair 	Together We Can	• Listen to understand and find ways to collaborate on solutions.	Deploy conflict recovery discipline. Break the “Agreement vs. Commitment Trap” by forcing hidden tension back into a collaborative, real-time resolution process.
 Continuity	Aim Higher	• Take responsibility for the long-term impact of outcomes and commitments.	Secure leadership transitions without loss. Build a continuous governance pipeline by mentoring successors and safeguarding systemic trust against a single point of failure.

FROM DIFFICULT BEHAVIOR TO SUSTAINED IMPROVEMENT: An EI Governance Approach

UNDERSTAND THE ROOT CAUSE



**Visible
Difficult
Behavior**

Above Surface

Identity
investment
in role

Fear of
irrelevance

Threat to
competence

Threat to
autonomy

Perceived injustice

These are the
deep, hidden drivers
often powering
challenging actions.

EI LEADERSHIP & CULTURE (Unmasking with Empathy)



**Culture based on PMI
Values and Behaviors**
(Collaboration, Respect, Integrity)

TAKE SUSTAINED ACTIONS TO IMPROVE

**EI Lever 1:
Clarity**
(Transparent Rules)

**EI Lever 3:
Repair**
(Conflict
Discipline)

**EI Lever 2:
Safety**
(Constructive Dissent)

**EI Lever 4:
Continuity**
(Systemic
Transitions)

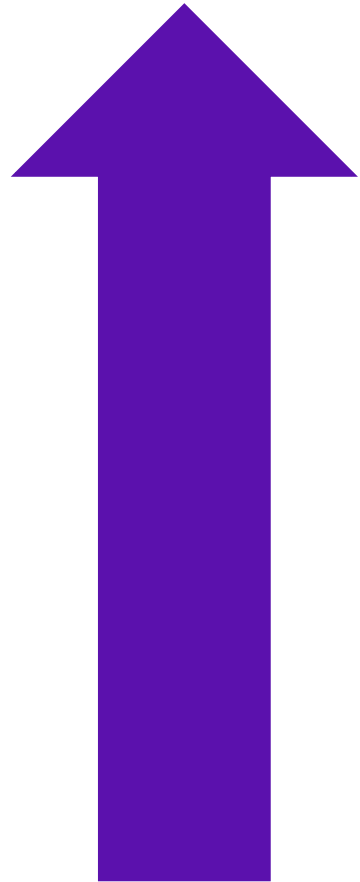
**Sustained
performance**

Intervention Discipline

Choose the lightest effective
intervention:

1. Clarify expectations publicly
2. Reset norms in real time
3. Direct 1:1 boundary conversation
4. Structured repair conversation
5. Governance action

The Chain Reaction



Performance

Collaboration improves; execution gets stronger

Trust

Trust increases

Psychological Safety

Volunteers feel safe speaking up

Emotional Intelligence

Leaders manage reactions intentionally

THE IMPACT OF EI-DRIVEN GOVERNANCE

WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE WHEN APPLIED (EI Governance in Action)



WHAT YOU EXPECT: STRATEGIC OUTCOMES (The Future State)



Case Practice

Governance-Level Scenarios

Let's Exercise !

For each case:

- We will have 10 minutes each case
- 5 minutes to discuss in your table
- 2 minutes to listen to 1 or 2 conclusions



Case A: Power Drift

A former president “advises” heavily, influences decisions informally, and undermines current leadership.

What systemic pattern is emerging?

What is the strategic cost?

What intervention would you use based on EI
Governance 4 Levers?

Case B: High Performer, High Friction

A board member delivers results but dominates discussion, shuts people down, and drives quiet disengagement.

What systemic pattern is emerging?

What is the strategic cost?

What intervention would you use based on EI
Governance 4 Levers?

Case C: Polite on Zoom, Blocking in Private

Two senior leaders appear aligned in meetings but block decisions through side conversations and delays.

What systemic pattern is emerging?

What is the strategic cost?

What intervention would you use based on EI

Governance 4 Levers?

Key Takeaways

- Culture is a governance outcome, not a personality trait
- Ambiguity in authority fuels emotional friction
- Silence compounds into conflict or exit
- The board models the culture the chapter will replicate

What kind of culture are
you unintentionally
creating right now?

Thank you !

Questions?

