Using Emotional Intelligence (EI) to better manage actuarial teams

Michelle Lister & Peter Heffernan (PwC)

A bit about ourselves

- 44 years old. Married, 2 kids, (19 and 16).
- Cyclist (with 6 bikes). Plays videogames (mainly Nintendo).
- Loves David Shrigley's artwork.
- Burning passion for developing people at work, it's what I love, and it's what I'm brilliant at.
- Strong dislike of neoliberal economics.
- Life actuary. Been running actuarial teams since 2001.

- 38 years old. Married, 2 kids (7 and 4)
- Runner, learning to play the piano, loves listening to music, learning a dance routine to a Jessie J song as part of Jazz dance class.
- Love seeing people develop in their roles and I love to learn too.
- Strong dislike of injustice.
- Life actuary, also tries to make Peter behave in presentations.
- Been running actuarial teams since 2005.

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What we will be talking about

A range of different models.

Each has a **'so what'** afterwards, aimed at giving you practical tips you can try with your teams.

1. How to deal with the walking dead and well poisoners

2. Ikigai (have you and your teams found it?)

3. Political awareness at work (are you a donkey, or a fox?)

4. Diversity of thought / intergenerational differences

5. Parent child relationships / transactional analysis
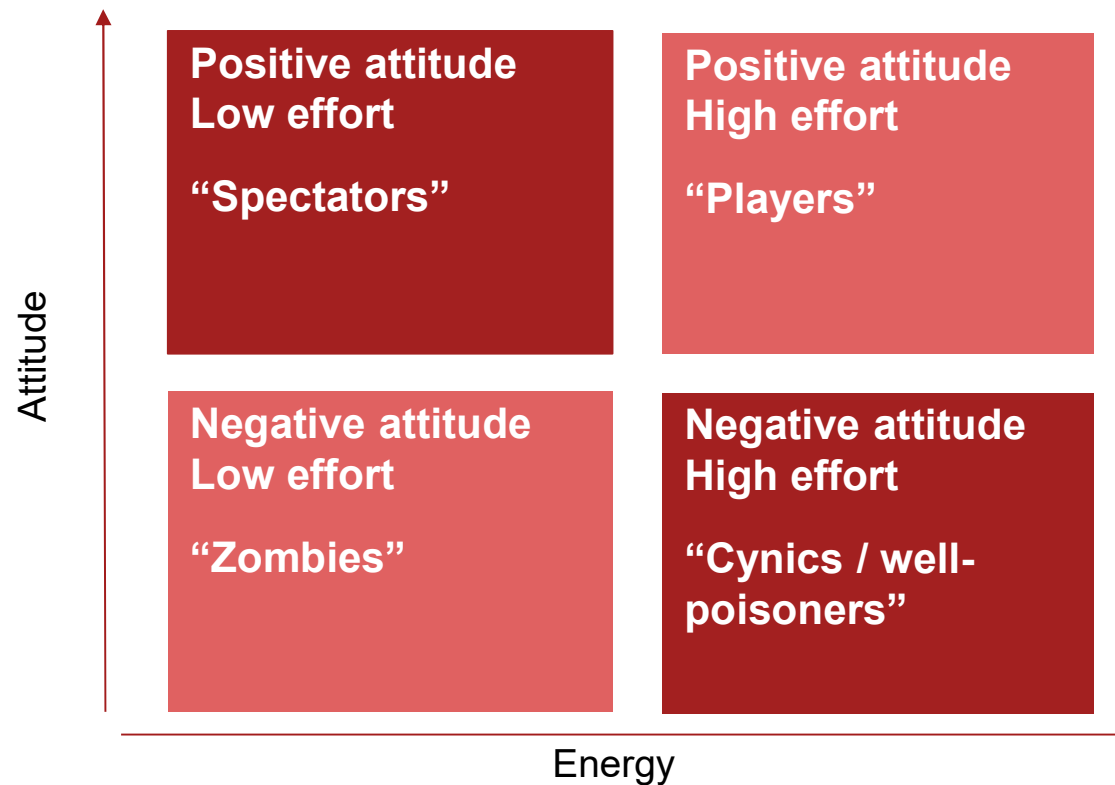
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The Energy Investment model

Dealing with well-poisoners

The Energy Investment Model

Attitude (vertical axis)

Energy (horizontal axis)

Positive attitude **Low effort** **"Spectators"**	**Positive attitude** **High effort** **"Players"**
Negative attitude **Low effort** **"Zombies"**	**Negative attitude** **High effort** **"Cynics / well-poisoners"**

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So what?

- A fundamental model for anyone managing a team.
- Dealing with **well-poisoners** should be one of your highest priorities due to their ability to spread poison quickly.
- At a guess, we have all been in all four states in the past.
- It's sometimes ok to be a cynic in a "safe place" e.g. with your friends / people disconnected from the team (to vent).
- It's rare (impossible) that anyone can be a player 100% of the time. You should adjust your expectations accordingly.

Discuss this model with your team, raise awareness of it, gives you an instant vocabulary to help you challenge any unsuitable behaviours.

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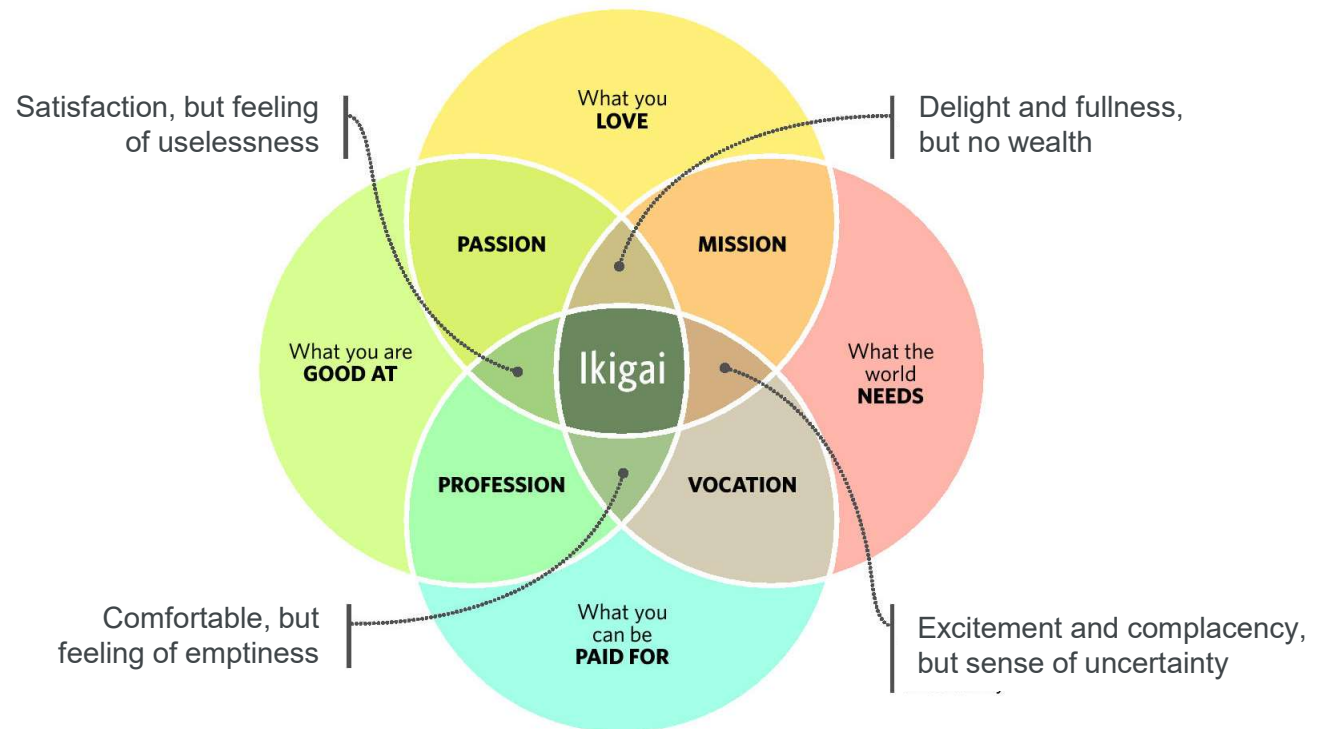# Institute and Faculty of Actuaries

Ikigai

Ikigai

Ikigai is a Japanese concept that means "a reason for being."

It is similar to the French phrase Raison d'être.

Everyone, according to Japanese culture, has an **ikigai**.

Finding it requires a **deep and often lengthy search of self.**

Satisfaction, but feeling of uselessness

Delight and fullness, but no wealth

What you **LOVE**

PASSION

MISSION

What you are **GOOD AT**

Ikigai

What the world **NEEDS**

PROFESSION

VOCATION

Comfortable, but feeling of emptiness

What you can be **PAID FOR**

Excitement and complacency, but sense of uncertainty

So what?

- Can be a disruptive model, if people realise they are in the "comfortable, but feeling of emptiness" category
- Can lead to existential crises (which can be a good thing!)
- "Satisfaction, but feeling of uselessness" – can be a real issue if an individual cannot see how their work contributes to society.

- Challenge yourself as to whether you have found yours!
- Consider carefully what changes you might need to implement
- Useful model if you are having a 1:1 with a team member who is seeking career advice and guidance.

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Political awareness at work

Are you a fox, or a donkey?

What happens to sheep???
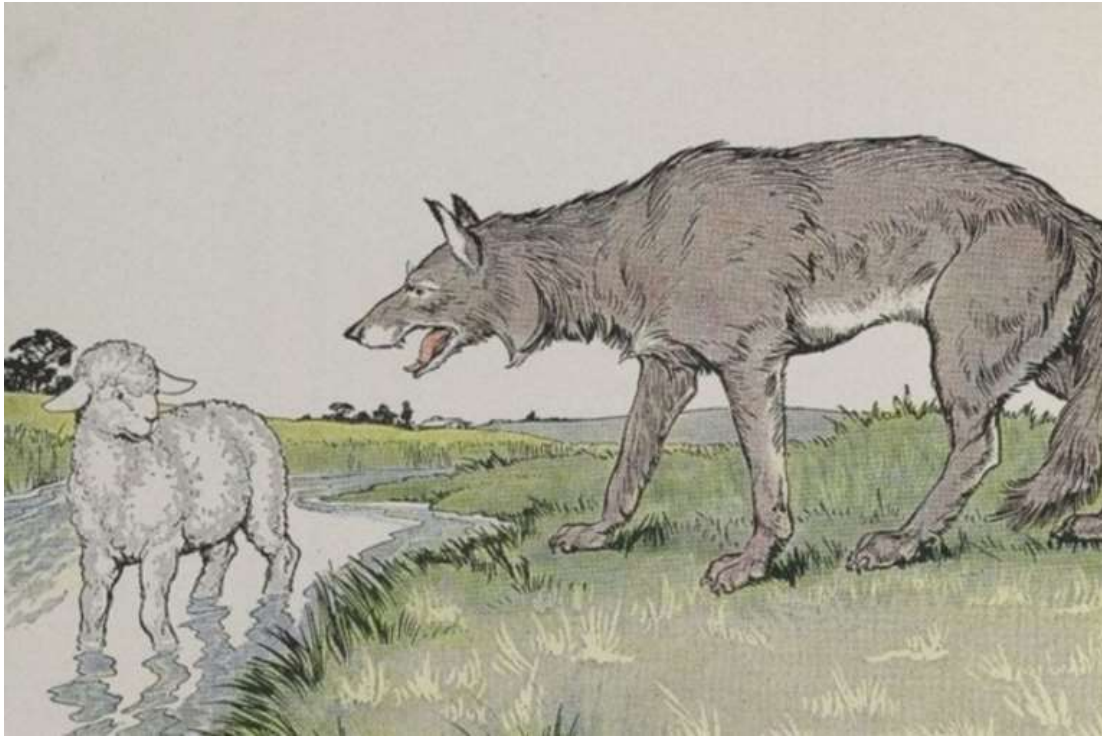
So what?

- Like all these models – a slick and easy way of categorising things. But important to raise awareness that **people can be foxes, or donkeys**, and self awareness of your state, and awareness of others is important

- **You can't opt out** – doesn't matter if you say 'I'm not doing politics' – others will be playing political games.

- There are pitfalls with working with **donkeys and foxes** in particular.

- Know who the owls are and make friends with them. They are often key to understanding what is going on in your organisation.

- Challenge the foxes on their behaviour and motives.

- What would you do if you had an entire team of sheep, or foxes?!

Diversity of thought

Aka let's blame millennials for *everything*

Diversity of thought

What do we mean by diversity of thought?

- We're all familiar with diversity in terms of **gender, ethnicity, age** etc. However, do we spend enough time thinking about whether we **think differently** enough to each other?

- Our thinking is shaped by our **experiences**, our **background, culture** and our **individual personalities**, and given those variants, there will be a wide range of thought processes within any team / department for any given **situation**.

- Our starting point is that there is less **understanding**, **appreciation** and **acceptance** of alternative approaches to work than there should be.

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For our purposes, millennials are those born between 1980 and 1995.

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Millennials – a common (lazy, pejorative) view

Millennials – a different perspective

- We carried out a survey of our actuarial department at PwC which was completed by c. 150 people. Millennials will make up **50%** of the global workplace by 2020 and **85%** of people who filled in our survey.

- Drivers of millennial behaviour

    - first generation without DB pensions schemes,

    - Expect to be working past 65

    - Will have seen parents lose jobs or savings in the recession

    - Large student debts

    - No such thing as a job for life

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Millennials – a different perspective

- Millennials are asking for things that other generations want too - flexible working, mentoring, tech that makes life easier

- If millennials are **lazy snowflakes**, then baby boomers and Gen X'ers are **greedy**

- Millennials value personal development and flexible working over pay

- Millennials joined the workforce shortly before, during or shortly after the financial crisis. Whilst their demands and list of wants might seem idealistic, in practice as a generation millennials have struggled to get jobs and had to compromise when they get one – i.e. they're not all idealistic hipsters

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Millennials – through the ages
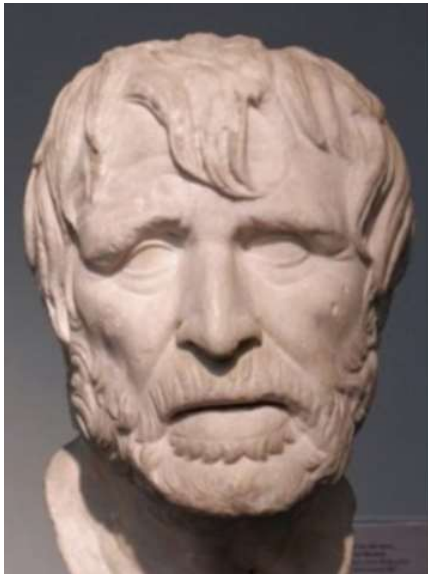
I see no hope for the future of our people if they are dependent on the frivolous youth of today, for certainly all youth are reckless beyond words. When I was a boy, we were taught to be discrete and respectful of elders, but the present youth are exceedingly wise and impatient of restraint.

— Hesiod —

AZ QUOTES
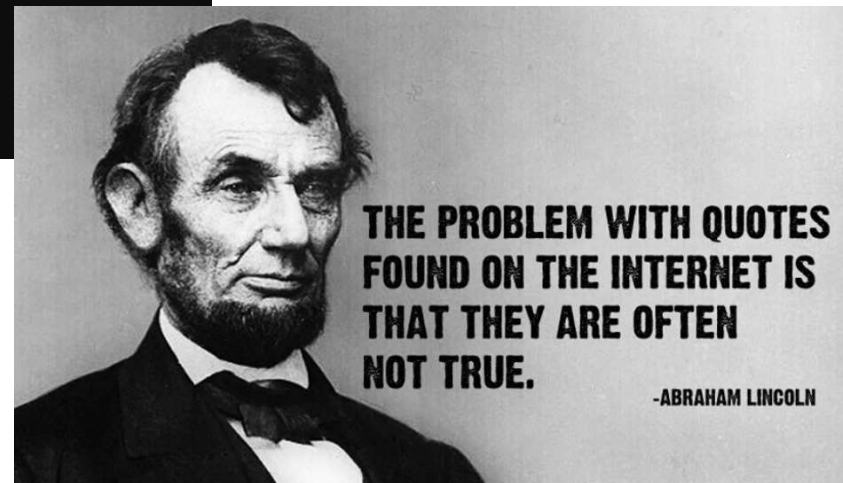
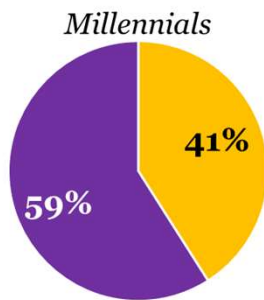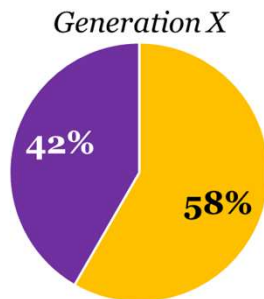THE PROBLEM WITH QUOTES FOUND ON THE INTERNET IS THAT THEY ARE OFTEN NOT TRUE.

-ABRAHAM LINCOLN

Two opposing views - what's the reality?

- Perception is reality. Millennial reality will be different to Gen X reality.

- A good question to ask when faced with different generations and their funny ways is "what's going on there?"

- Stating the very obvious, Millennials are different to Generation X, and other generations

- So – how do those differences appear in the workplace, and how can we appreciate and make the most of the differences?

  - Adaptability to situations

  - Performance Management conversations, including willingness to listen to and act on feedback

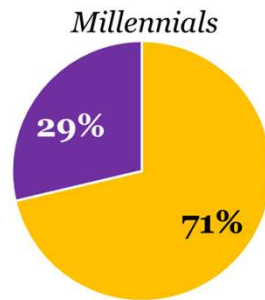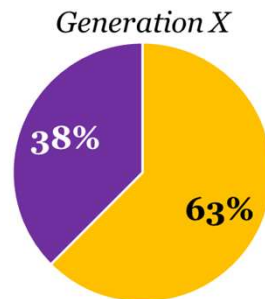 - Expectations of career progression

  - Attitudes to diversity

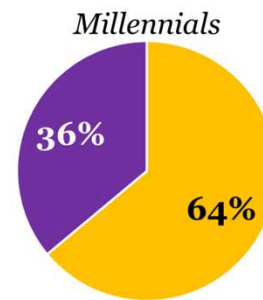# Generational differences – via something akin to Myers Briggs
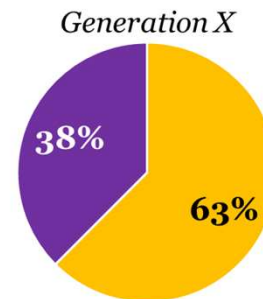
Introvert/Extrovert

Generation X
- 42% (Extrovert)
- 58% (Introvert)

Millennials
- 59% (Extrovert)
- 41% (Introvert)

■ Introvert ■ Extrovert

Sensing/Intuition

Generation X
- 38% (Intuition)
- 63% (Sensing)

Millennials
- 29% (Intuition)
- 71% (Sensing)

■ Sensing ■ Intuition

Feeling/Thinking

Generation X
- 38% (Thinking)
- 63% (Feeling)

Millennials
- 36% (Thinking)
- 64% (Feeling)

■ Feeling ■ Thinking

Judging/Perceiving

Generation X
- 46% (Perceiving)
- 54% (Judging)

Millennials
- 29% (Perceiving)
- 71% (Judging)
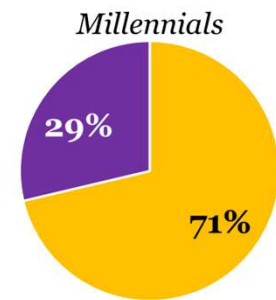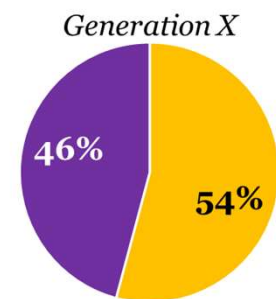
■ Judging ■ Perceiving

Complementary personality types

ENFP - "The introvert extrovert" - suggests a bit ambiverted

P type ENFP generates a bigger plan, and INFJ works out the detail.

Quite different character types means Michelle will suggest ideas Peter would never think of, and vice versa. We can see each others blind spots very well.

INFJ - "The extrovert introvert" – also a bit ambiverted

J-type – brings structure to the party – producing slides for instance…

The extrovert (Michelle) helps open up the introvert (Peter) and helps him develop his ideas.

In return Peter helps Michelle structure her ideas.

Common N and F types – we are both curious, imaginative, empathetic and cooperative

So what?

- Think about combinations of people working together. Organisations that successfully blend people who think differently from one another—for example, analytical types with creative ones, "big-picture" folks with the detail-oriented ones will spark new ideas, will help individuals unlock more of their potential.

- We believe every organisation needs to continue to appreciate and make the most of the diverse characters, their thinking and their strengths

- Consider your performance management conversations – are you appreciative of diverse character types (perhaps?) and generational differences (perhaps not?)

- Find a friend who complements you (and compliments you)

- Try encouraging different approaches and try not to instinctively react against them.

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Parent / child transactional analysis

Parent/Child Transactional Analysis

Transactional Analysis was founded by **Eric Berne**, and is based on three 'ego states'

The **Child** state consists of parts of ourselves which hark back to our childhood.
- It is **childlike but not necessarily childish.**
- In this state "reside intuition, creativity, and spontaneous drive and enjoyment".

The **Parent** state reflects the absorption over the years of the influences of our actual parents and of parent and **authority** figures such as teachers, bosses and so on.
- It enables many responses to life to be made automatically—"that's the way it's done"—thereby freeing us as adults from making innumerable trivial decisions.

The **Adult** state is where we hope to be as adults.
- It is our adult selves, dealing with the difficult issues of everyday life.
- It also has the function of regulating the activities of the Parent and Child, and mediating between them.

The adult ego state

Physical - attentive, interested, straight-forward, tilted head, non-threatening and non-threatened.

Verbal - why, what, how, who, where and when, how much, in what way, comparative expressions, reasoned statements, true, false, probably, possibly, I think, I realise, I see, I believe, in my opinion.

When you are trying to identify ego states: words are only part of the story.

To analyse a transaction you need to **hear** and **watch** what is being said as well.

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Roleplay - "When feedback conversations go bad!"

Parent/Child transactional analysis

Transactions and 'crossed' transactions

Stimulus and response
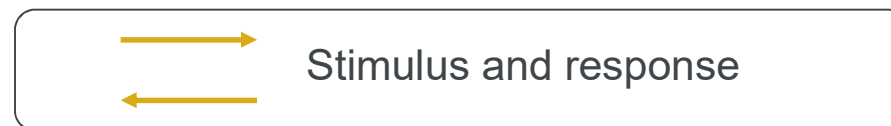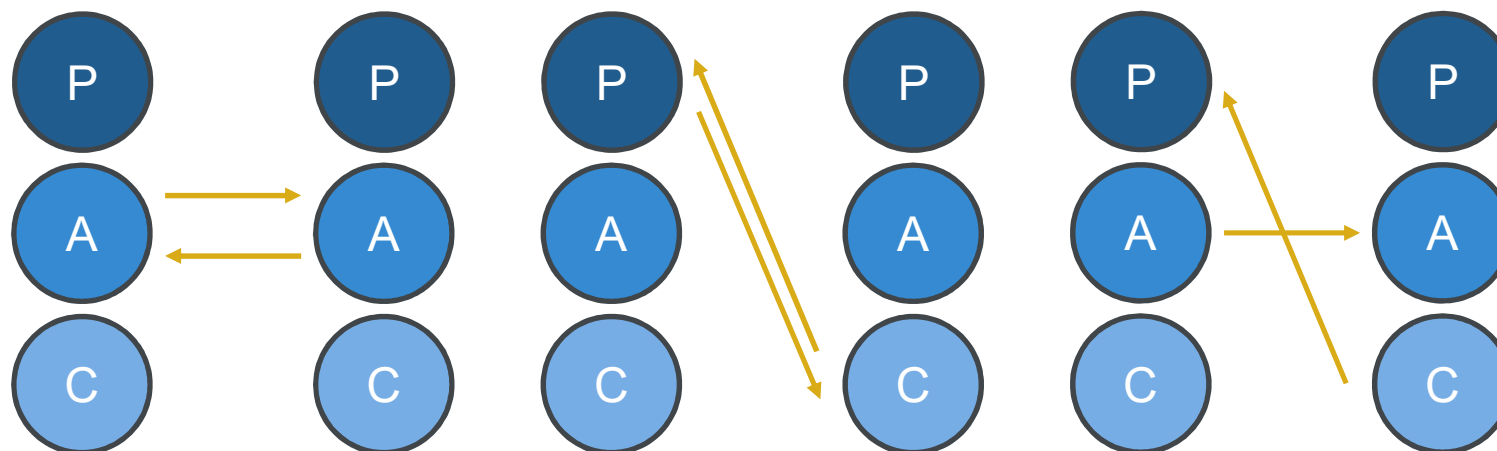
So what?

- In any transaction – you should work out what ego state you are in. This needs self awareness, which is the basic building block of EI

- Or consider the other person – can you read the other person's ego state?

- A pitfall for senior people is them adopting the 'Parent' mode as a default.

- And for the junior to lapse into the 'Child' state in a stress scenario

- Also, calling people 'kids' and 'girls' is a no-no!

- Maintaining 'adult-adult' in a stress situation requires energy and care.

Crossed transactions cause stress and damage a relationship over time

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Summary

We've covered these models

1. How to deal with the walking dead and well poisoners

2. Ikigai (have you and your teams found it?)

3. Political awareness at work (are you a donkey, or a fox?)

4. Diversity of thought / intergenerational differences

5. Parent child relationships / transactional analysis

Our suggestion - take these models back to your teams, and start exploring them.

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If you would like to talk about this further, drop us a line.

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