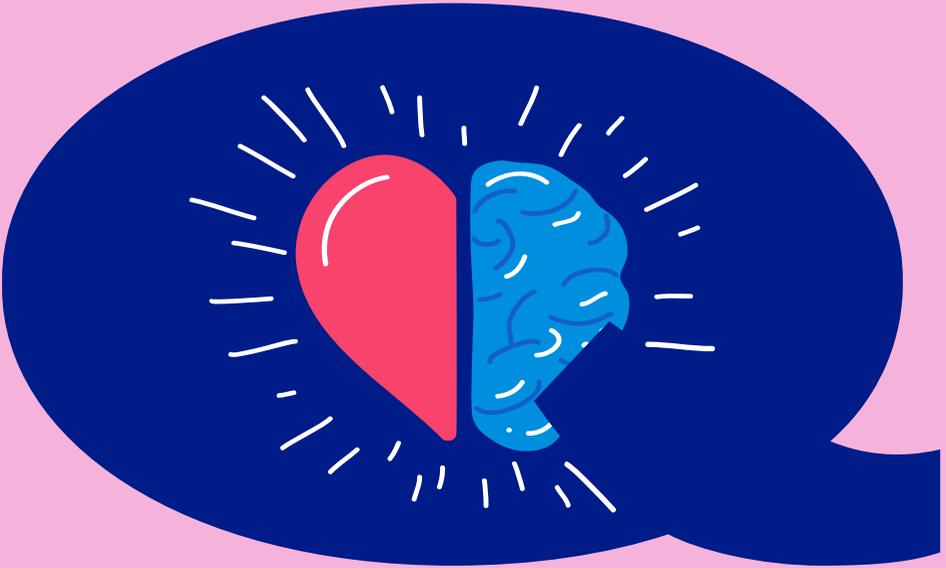# THE EQ COURSE

officevibe × JUNIPER

THE
EQ
COURSE

So What Exactly Is This EQ That You'll Be Developing?

Simply put, having a high EQ means having the ability to recognize, understand and manage your own emotions, while also responding to and influencing the emotions of others. We've broken down this course into 5 Key EQ Skills that will help you do exactly that. They are:

Self-Awareness   Knowing your own strengths and weaknesses.

Self-Regulation   Controlling and redirecting your moods and reactions.

Empathy   Understanding what drives others' actions and behaviors.

Social Skill   Bringing others to your way of thinking.

Motivation   Aligning others' values and goals with the bigger mission to create purpose.

Why Is Having A High EQ So Useful - Even Critical - For You As A Manager?

Traditionally, good leadership has been associated with greater intellectual abilities and technical skills. While those skills are still important, they're increasingly being considered as entry-level requirements for managerial positions. Research shows that today's top leaders have both the required intellectual quotient (IQ) for the job, and a high emotional quotient (EQ). The most successful leaders are the ones who actively develop their EQ by focusing on how to better serve their people. So, increasing your EQ is actually key to maximizing your own and your team's performance.

Can Emotional Intelligence Be Learned?

Like with any talent, some people are just naturally better at this than others. But as any Olympic athlete will tell you, raw talent doesn't win you the gold – practice, feedback and persistence do. Just like any other muscle, you need to exercise your brain to master those people skills. As the saying goes – practice makes perfect!

The most important part for you will be the homework – you'll make the most progress by actually using the techniques presented. Go at your own pace. There's no time limit, and no prize for finishing quickly. A lot of the homework involves other people – and that's by design. These are tough skills to learn by yourself, and you'll only get better (and closer to your team) if you work on them live.
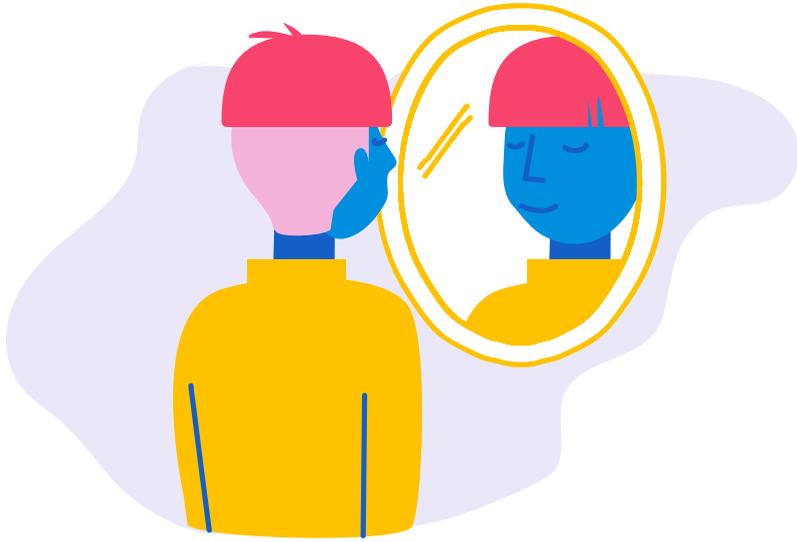
Self-Awareness

How can we understand others if we don't understand ourselves first? Self-awareness is the essential ingredient to emotional intelligence, and the perfect starting point for our EQ journey.

Consider The Following Scenario

You've received negative comments from an employee about how you're doing as a manager.

Even the most appreciated managers aren't spared negative feedback from time to time, but receiving critical comments isn't as important as what you choose to do

with them. Understanding how your behavior and actions affect others is the key to assessing your own strengths and weaknesses, as well as the starting point for helping others to do the same. Put another way, self-awareness is the first step in becoming a great leader. Therefore, feedback – whether negative or positive – is a gift you should be thankful for… even if it's not always the most pleasant of experiences.

As explained by psychologist and author of Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman, "People who assess themselves honestly – that is, self-aware people – are well suited to do the same for the organizations they run." Being self-aware will help you make better decisions for two reasons. Firstly, an honest assessment of your own capabilities, and those of others around you will make assigning tasks that much easier. Secondly, the openness and humility needed for self-awareness will help you look at problems in a less ego-driven way. What's more, your honesty will earn you respect as a leader.

To start drawing an accurate portrait of yourself, follow these homework instructions.

Homework To Become More Self-Aware

1. Self-Assessment
To start uncovering your traits, ask yourself and write down the answers to:

When am I at my best, and why?

What am I like on a very bad day?

What does my ideal-self look like?

2. Solicit Feedback

Next, ask the same questions to a few trusted colleagues or team members you either currently work with, or have worked with in the past. Create opportunities for as many people as possible to give you feedback either anonymously, or by scheduling one-on-one meetings. Frame your feedback request along the lines of: I'm looking to understand how to better serve my team - and your honest, constructive feedback will help me reach that goal.

3. Compare Answers

Now compare the answers you originally wrote down to the feedback you collected:

What did others confirm about you?

Is there anything unexpected in what they said?

What stands out, and why?

4. Follow Up

Share and discuss your findings with the people you tapped for feedback. Following up will help you draw an even clearer picture and show that you truly value their input.

Repeat these steps every 3-6 months to track and celebrate your progress!

Key Tips For Soliciting Feedback

- Embrace the idea that generally every piece of feedback holds some truth that can help you become a more effective leader.
- Do not interrupt, and avoid becoming defensive.
- Remember to thank others for their courage, honesty, and time.

Try This Tool

If you're looking for an easy way to collect anonymous feedback from your team, Officevibe's employee engagement software lets you do that, and more. Plus it's free for managers! Check it out at **officevibe.com**

Additional Resources

Psychometric Test: One way to learn about yourself is through psychometric (personality) testing. Doing an assessment like Myers-Briggs or Hermann Brain Dominance can help raise your awareness about the ways you function best. 16 Personalities also offers a free (and fun!) online self-assessment. Though far from perfect, these tests can provide you with a framework for identifying your own preferred thinking style, and can also help you realize that others may think and act differently (for different reasons) than you do.

Self-Regulation

It's not enough just to understand ourselves – we also need to be able to adjust our behavior accordingly. Monitoring and managing the ways in which we react to the world around us is crucial to achieving success as a leader.

Consider The Following Scenario

You're having a bad day (maybe because of personal reasons or something at work) and you struggle with staying positive, cool-headed, and energetic.

Now that you're getting better at recognizing the effect you have on others, it's time to work on making sure that effect remains positive. The ability to self-regulate – to control your own feelings and impulses – is a crucial ingredient to great leadership.

Being able to "lead" yourself first helps you create an environment of trust and fairness for your team. If you're known to deal with issues reasonably and calmly, your team will be more open and honest with you. Also, being in control of your emotions will help you deal with the increasing pace of change in business. Good leaders don't panic when big changes occur – they gather information before making decisions, present clear analysis when offering thoughtful solutions, and make lemonade from the lemons they're given.

The key to mastering self-regulation is changing your perception of the events that affect you, so you can fix your resulting behavior. By frequently reflecting on your behavior and what drives it, as well as getting others to help you in that process, it becomes easier to correct your default reactions while learning to manage situations in new, more positive ways.

Follow the homework instructions on the next page to keep your bad moods from negatively affecting your work relationships.

Homework To Self-Regulate

1. Schedule Check-Ins

Schedule daily end-of-day or end-of-week check-ins with 1-2 trusted employees or colleagues to gather feedback on your behavior and actions.

Ask them and write down their answers to the question: What did I do well and what could I have done better today/this week, why, and how?

As with the last piece of homework, frame the conversation as follows: I'm looking to understand how to better serve my team - and your honest, constructive feedback will help me reach that goal.

2. Act

Use the outcome of your research and reflection to guide your approach in future situations. Realize that this will take practice, patience, and control. Note that the point is not to stop feeling any negative emotions, which is impossible, but rather to find ways to manage and channel those emotions in a useful way.

3. Reflect

Reflect on the reasons why you sometimes react in a negative way, and work to reframe your approach to the situations that trigger you. How could you have better managed your emotions in that moment?

4. Follow Up

Share and discuss your findings with the people you tapped for feedback. Following up will help you draw an even clearer picture and show that you truly value their input.

Additional Resources

Practicing mindfulness is an extremely effective way to improve your mood and gain control over your emotions.

Mindfulness is the ability to be fully present, aware of where you are and what you're doing, while also not being too reactive or overwhelmed by what's happening around you.

There are several books to help you practice mindfulness that you can check out today:

10% Happier: How I Tamed the Voice in My Head, Reduced Stress Without Losing My Edge, and Found Self-Help That Actually Works
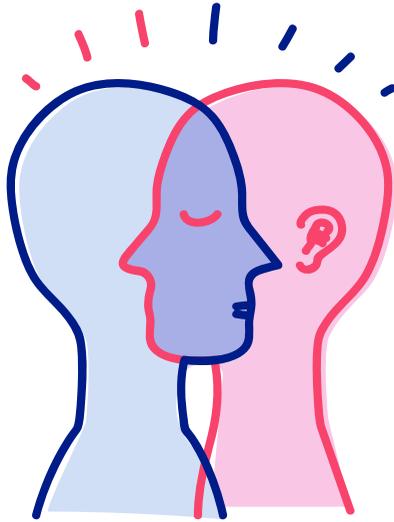by Dan Harris

Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life
by Jon Kabat-Zinn

The Miracle of Mindfulness: An Introduction to the Practice of Meditation
by Thich Nhat Hanh

Empathy

Now that we more easily understand how to regulate ourselves, we can turn our focus toward understanding others. Empathy is the key skill here – seeing the world from someone else's perspective is often the starting point for giving them what they need to be successful themselves.

Consider The Following Scenario

An employee is underperforming and putting the entire team's success in jeopardy… and you have to let them know.

Humans are like icebergs – what you observe on the surface is only 10% of who they are. The other 90% which lies "below the surface" – their preferences, knowledge, beliefs, and values – is what really drives their decisions and actions. It's also what you want to understand most about the people you work with.

To understand people at their core you need to develop empathy, which is the ability to thoughtfully consider another person's point of view. The first step in solving the above scenario is having an open conversation and empathizing with the other person's perspective to try and uncover the underlying reasons behind their performance. Underperformance is often a symptom of a deeper problem, not the problem itself. By asking a series of "why" questions, and digging deeper into their motivations, you can better understand the reasons behind the results, and make smarter decisions to help solve the issue.

Once you know what drives or triggers the people on your team, you can use that knowledge to help them be happier at work by finding ways to motivate and challenge them. Employees are much less likely to leave companies where their managers help with continuous self-improvement in ways that are meaningful to them.

Follow the homework instructions to help yourself become more empathic.

Homework To Develop Empathy

1. Put Yourself In Someone Else's Shoes
Write two paragraphs about someone close to you - specifically, what you believe their underlying motivations, values, and beliefs, and stressors are. Then share it with them to see how accurate it is. Practice this exercise with several people to get better at seeing below other people's "water lines".

2. Listen To Understand, Not To Respond
Practice listening to others without interrupting, and then paraphrasing their thoughts afterwards. Provide an insight of what people were trying to communicate but did not say expressly. Finally, ask for feedback on how well you paid attention, paraphrased key points, and showed you understood the message they were conveying.

Additional Resources

For more insights, tips and tricks on understanding others, check out the following:

The Art of Empathy: A Complete Guide to Life's Most Essential Skill
by Karla McLaren

Empathy
by Harvard Business Review
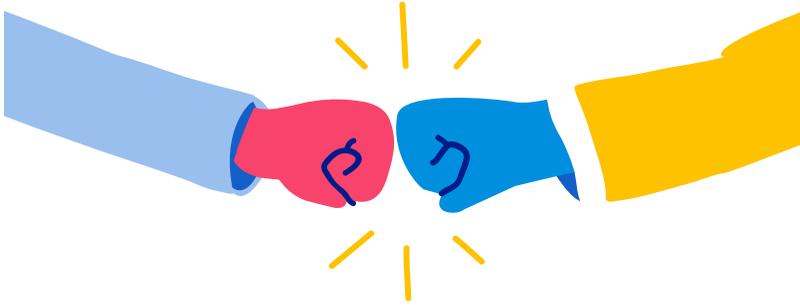
Social Skill

Social skill is all about making the right choices. In order to get people to buy into your vision, you need to go beyond simply understanding your audience, and work to build enthusiasm by knowing how to appeal to their emotions, ideals, and values, depending on the person.

Consider The Following Scenario

You're struggling to get everybody on board with a new strategy at work.

As a manager, the wrong thing to do in this case would be to use your power over others to force them to get with the

program. Threats, peer pressure, and authority are all influencing techniques you should avoid as they lead to strained relationships, and a toxic work environment that nobody wants to be part of.

Even if adopting that new strategy at work is the most logical decision you've ever made, not everybody will be persuaded with facts and rational arguments alone. They might buy you compliance, but you'll probably not get the kind of commitment or engagement you need. For that reason, your most effective influencing technique will be inspirational appeal – connecting the overall goal to the other person's values and ideals. This is where empathy comes into play since the better you understand your team members' core values, the better you can appeal to them.

Of course everyone is different, and recognizing how best to appeal to each of your employees will take time and practice, but in the end it's an essential element of creating a strong culture within your group. Follow the homework instructions below and see how being able to positively influence others will get you where you want to go!

Homework To Develop Social Skill

Role Play
Ask a trusted colleague, team member, or friend to try out these proposed role-plays with you. We've listed out the 7 different influencing techniques some of which are good,

some bad. Role play them all if you like, but your goal should be to only use the one's highlighted in blue in your actual day-to-day as they're the ones that will put your social skills to use, and make you a positive influencer, and better leader.

Pay attention to how you're phrasing things, write down your observations and ask the other for feedback. Take it to the next level by asking someone else to act as an observer to provide an additional perspective.

Role Play Scenarios:

- Optional warm up – convince the other person to parachute out of a plane with you.
- A superior complains to you about the person you just hired being too slow to complete tasks – convince them to be patient with the new hire.
- Try a real-life scenario that you're presently struggling with!

7 Influencing Techniques

- **Rational persuasion** - using logic, facts, and/or evidence (do it because of fact fact fact)
- **Inspirational appeal** - building enthusiasm by appealing to others' emotions, ideals or values (this is why doing this is important)

- **Exchange*** - proposing a give-and-take in which someone does something for you, and you do something for them in return (do this for me and I'll do that for you)
- **Personal appeal*** - referring to friendship and loyalty when making a request (c'mon, do this for me)
- **Threats*** - focusing on the potential punishment (do this or some negative consequence will occur)
- **Peer pressure*** - peer group exerting influence to persuade an individual (do it because we're all doing it)
- **Authority*** - basing a request on your authority or right, organizational rules or policies (just do it because I'm your boss)

*Note that just as you should generally never use threats, peer pressure and authority, you should also avoid using exchange and personal appeal, despite them being less problematic. Employees shouldn't feel like they owe you something, but rather be motivated by the bigger picture. Putting people first is key to leading them effectively.

Additional Resources

We've listed some great books below for learning how to positively influence others, but don't forget – practice is key!

- Influence: Science and Practice by Robert Cialdini

- Yes!: 50 Scientifically Proven Ways to Be Persuasive by Noah J. Goldstein

- Becoming a Person of Influence: How to Positively Impact the Lives of Others by John C. Maxwell

Motivation

Helping your teams to understand the relationship between what they care about and what they're doing is the key to motivating them in a meaningful way.

Consider The Following Scenario

Your team isn't motivated to work hard on a project. You've tried different incentive levers (bonuses, the promise of promotions, etc.), but team members just aren't interested in giving it their all.

Unfortunately for all of us, work can't always be rainbows and sunshine... which is why sometimes we struggle to find the drive to do the less pleasant parts of our job. External motivators like money, prizes, and praise only work in the short term. We're all best motivated in the long term when we're intrinsically driven. In other words, as humans, we need to find satisfaction in the work itself. And as a leader, you're at your best when you're helping others find that motivation.

You may be thinking to yourself, "I'm not a life coach!" but with an understanding of empathy and influence you already know how to find out what drives your employees. Now, the only missing ingredient is the ability to align your team's values and goals with those of the company to create a sense of purpose. When people see that the efforts they put in are towards a goal they actually believe in, they'll be much more likely to go the extra mile.

What's more, when employees are intrinsically-motivated, they're more likely to feel committed to the team and to the organization. And committed employees won't be as easily swayed by the big salaries and fancy perks (nap pods anyone?) that headhunters will dangle in front of them.

Follow the homework instructions on the next page to get better at leading and motivating others.

Homework To Motivate Others

Informal One-On-Ones

Schedule informal one-on-ones with your team members. Help them understand in advance that the purpose of the one-on-one is to get to know each other better, and also to focus on their development. During these one-on-ones you should:

1. Get to know them by uncovering what drives them – what their values and goals are, what the best version of themselves looks like to them.

   Bonus: This will also help you with empathy and influence! Do this by being genuinely curious about them and asking questions like "What makes you happy?". If your interest in them is authentic, you'll be surprised at how open they'll likely be.

2. Help them draw connections between these insights and your company's mission, vision, and values.

3. Brainstorm ways for them to accomplish their goals within the company.

4. Ask them to develop an action plan with specific benchmarks for success that can help them track and accomplish those goals. This will foster a sense

of autonomy and mastery for employees. By setting their

own goals, they're taking the opportunity to direct their own lives and also develop skills that are important to them.

5. Establish scheduled check-ins where you go over their progress and offer help.

Additional Resources

There are several layers to intrinsic motivation. Here are some books to dive deeper into what drives people:

Drive: The Surprising Truth About What Motivates Us by Daniel H. Pink

Amplifiers: The Power of Motivational Leadership to Inspire and Influence by Matt Church

Well Done!
You Crossed The Finish Line.

The skills you've practiced – self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social skill, and motivation – all revolve around our relationships with ourselves and with each other. This is because people are at the heart of innovation, and need to be treated as such. Technology without the power and passion of human insight can only take us so far. The more you put your people first, the more you'll be able to drive them to their full potential, and beyond, again and again.

If you ever need a reminder of how to best put people first, here's a quick recap of the course's key takeaways:

• Frequently reflect on your strengths and weaknesses to build a clear understanding of yourself, for yourself.

- Work on adjusting your perceptions of the events that affect you so you can change your behavior to let you better manage situations in new, positive ways.

- Get curious, actively listen, open up and practice empathy with everyone you can to understand others at their core.

- Use inspirational appeal as a technique to influence others.

- Help others find purpose in their work by connecting their goals to your organization's mission.

But your self-improvement doesn't have to stop here. Try to repeat the homework exercises throughout your career. As you've probably discovered, these aren't just exercises for the sake of it. You're building better relationships and a better team culture as you go! When it comes to learning anything, there's really nothing better than experience, reflection, feedback, and of course...practice. If at first it all feels awkward, push through! We guarantee that the more you practice, the better you'll do!

And if you're looking for any other resources to help you keep building those amazing leadership skills, Officevibe has you covered.

Visit the Officevibe Blog for over 300 articles, guides, and templates covering every issue and topic a manager might need.
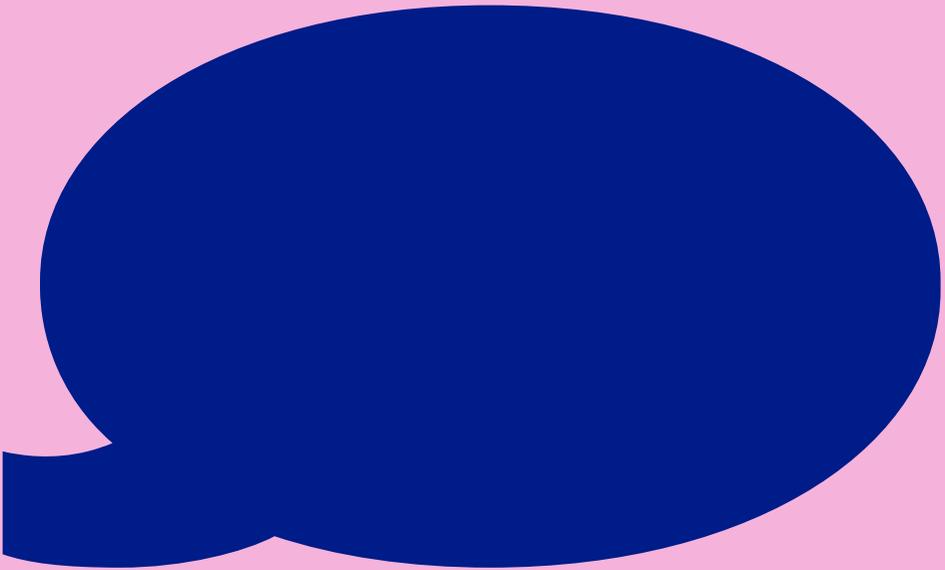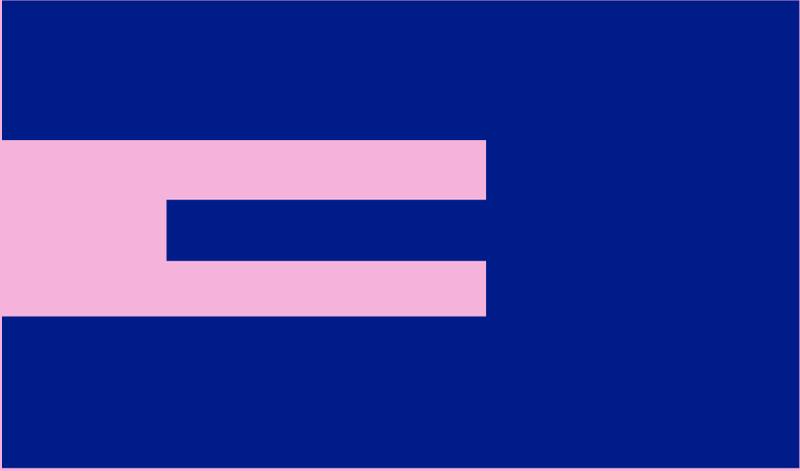
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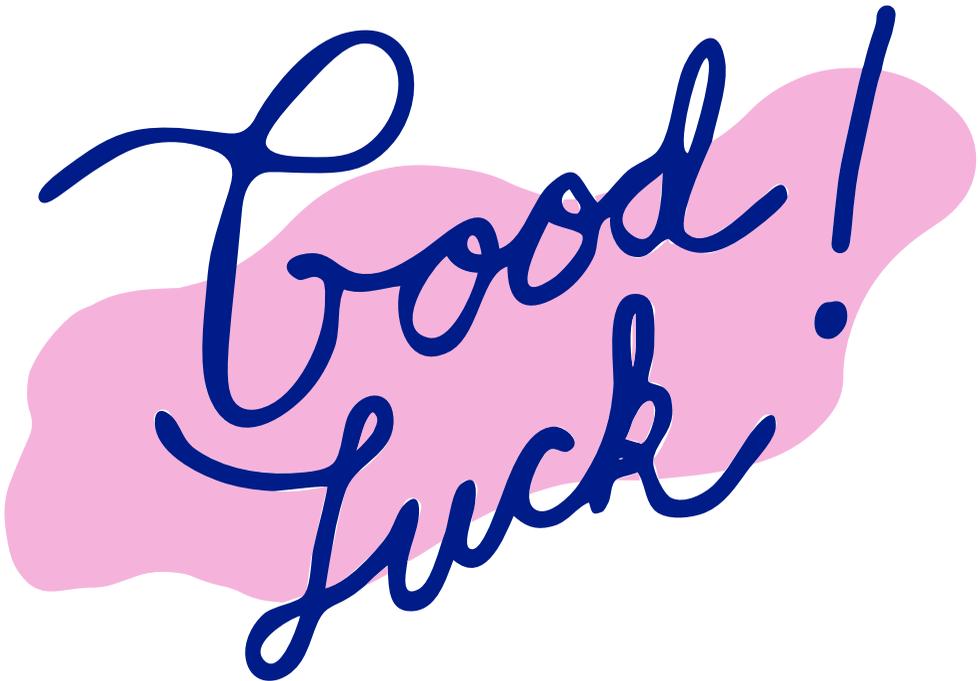
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