What is Social Sensitivity

Social sensitivity is an empathic ability to correctly understand other's feelings and thoughts (1) and to be acquainted with general knowledge of social norms (2).

Due to the fact that socially sensitive people are perceptive to other's feelings and accept people for who they are with their differences, they are good listeners and they tend to be warm and caring in their relationships. Moreover, they are good at dealing with social relationships and adapting well in social situations (1).

The other important characteristic of socially sensitive people is having extensive knowledge of social rules and norms. They express deep concern about the appropriateness of their behavior and the behavior of others. In some extreme cases, that deep concern about social behavior leads to social anxiety and inhibit people from social interaction (2).

According to Salovey and Mayer, social sensitivity is a part of social intelligence and shares some similar characteristics with it. Taking responsibilities for social problems, being open new thoughts, having an interest in world affairs, and enhancing other's mood are the features of a socially sensitive people (3).

In another model, social sensitivity is taken into consideration as an element of social competence. According to model, social sensitivity consists of role-taking and social inference abilities (4).

Social Sensitivity and Group Working

Previous research shows that social sensitivity average in a group correlates closely with the collective intelligence level which is defined as a general ability of group (not just a member of the group) to perform wide range of tasks. In other words, if people are socially sensitive in a group, they put in good performance collectively at work (5).

Another study reveals that social sensitivity is highly correlated with team effectiveness and member satisfaction. That socially sensitive people tend to be open new ideas and to correctly perceive and respond to team member's needs creates a positive environment to produce new ideas, to question about the work and share responsibilities (1).

References


