

Bringing EQ to the corporate sector



By [Evan-Lee Courie](#)

23 Oct 2019

"My life's work is to share my experience and understanding of Emotional Intelligence (EQ) in a way that supports new ways of seeing, feeling, thinking and doing," says Liz Cunningham, co-founder of EQuip, a company that helps human resources specialists and business leaders develop EQ or Emotional Intelligence within the corporate sector.

We chat to Liz Cunningham, to find out about the journey of bringing EQ to centre stage as a vehicle for evolving business thinking and behaviour in relation to leadership, employee engagement and organisational culture.



Liz Cunningham, co-founder of EQuip

■ **Could you briefly explain what Emotional Intelligence(EQ) is?**

I like to talk about EQ as Heart Intelligence and as such, I would then describe EQ as being the bridge between our physical and thinking self.

It is about emotion, perception and sensation as an inner language and dialogue which enables us to experience who we are at a feeling level. It is a learnable self science or intelligence that enables us to recognise, understand, regulate and use our patterns of thinking, feeling and actions consciously.

EQ is a vehicle for growth and well-being that moves us into working with our energy for life at all levels - physical, emotional, mental and spiritual.

■ **Can you tell us a bit about EQuip?**

EQuip is a company that I founded with my husband Keith, in the hopes of developing emotional intelligence within the corporate space. We run workshops, provide training, mentoring and coaching with the aim to see positive change and growth.



The emphasis on EQ in our name reflects the focus of our offering. The letters 'uip' is an acronym with a number of interpretations; understanding individual patterns, unlocking individual potential, unleashing individual passion. All of which speaks to the inner relationship a person has with themselves and the way this impacts on how an individual shows up in their world each day.

■ ***When, how and why did you get started?***

Keith and I started EQuip in 2002. In the year 2000, after 20 plus years each in corporate life, both having achieved what was considered to be an acceptable degree of 'success', we stepped out of our respective leadership roles, bought ourselves a backpack and a round-the-world air ticket and headed off on a seven month journey which gave us the space and perspective to see ourselves and our work through fresh eyes.

On our return, we were inspired to collaborate with other thought leaders who were bringing the concepts of purpose-driven business to life through leadership development workshops. All external change always leads us directly to the need for internal change, without which, the external change is seldom sustainable and so more and more of our time and energy was spent on the internal change needed and so our attention to EQ became the focus.

■ ***What is the core function of EQuip?***

To teach and mentor people to navigate the unconscious sabotaging behaviours, negative emotional energy patterns, limiting beliefs and stories that keep them from living their potential.

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) provides a framework of understanding as to how these unseen patterns play out in leadership, organisational culture, employee engagement, team dynamics and customer loyalty.

Our work has been to share this understanding in the corporate space to catalyse, energise and support individual, team, leadership and organisational potential and growth.

In the last few years EQ has been recognised as a game-changer for how humanity navigates living life and doing business in the 21st-century and so we continue to evolve as we stay true to our personal purpose and what matters to us, while at the same time remaining relevant in how we serve humanity through EQ workshops, EQ mentoring, podcasts and other tools which support the change of patterns of behaviour that don't serve individuals' wellbeing.

■ ***What is the importance of EQ in the workplace?***

While we need knowledge and skill on the IQ side in the complex work and societal context we live in, without an understanding of our in-body energy guidance system, we struggle to understand and inspire the inherent potential in people, teams and organisations as a whole.

“ Emotions change everything, everywhere, all the time. They are a naturally occurring source of energy and information about ourselves and others. When worked with intentionally, they can fuel amazing change, alignment of priorities, and growth. ”

■ **Could you perhaps give a real-life scenario?**

Every business wants to produce a great customer experience and great results and to do this business needs engaged employees, more than just hands and feet arriving at work every day. Worldwide, the current employee trend is that people may want to be engaged but they are exhausted. They may be dedicated but they are depleted, running on empty.

$$\text{PERFORMANCE} = (K+S) * A^{tw}$$

K= Knowledge S= Skills A= Attitude (mindset) tw = Teamwork

The equation above describes the extent to which discretionary energy, mindset and relationships impact for better or worse on an individual's skills and knowledge. They are the exponential amplifying factor for better or worse.

Developing EQ is a process that creates a shift in mindset, (how individuals are perceiving and responding to their world), that unlocks the discretionary energy and capacity of their talent and potential while also equipping them with the insight and tools to self regulate how they show up at work each day. In creating this internal shift in perspective employee energy, resilience, ability to navigate change, team cohesiveness and performance is impacted.

■ **The concept of your business may sound esoteric to some. So, what are some of the obstacles you've had to overcome since starting out?**

From a business perspective, the perception that EQ is “soft and fuzzy” stuff. Thanks to research and hard science, there is now more awareness and understanding that EQ enables IQ. Emotions drive people, people drive performance.

From an individual perspective, this type of growth and development is not a once-off, theoretical training course. It really is a way of learning how to see life through new eyes as each new situation presents itself and so we are constantly evolving how we reach and support individuals in their lifelong journey.

■ **How have you managed to change the lives of your clients?**

The biggest shifts and impact are in the hearts, minds and bodies of the people for whom there is just so much stress, struggle and lack of wellbeing. Our work empowers and supports individuals to find calm in the chaos so that they can take responsibility for their choices, mindset, behaviour and ultimately, their wellbeing.



7 considerations to help you live your best business life

19 Sep 2019



■ **As an entrepreneur in this niche market, what has been your proudest achievements thus far?**

Both Keith and I are at the stage of working life where we are into our third 20-year working season. We have 80 years of

business knowledge and experience between us and I am proud that our EQ work is not just what we do. It's who we are, how we live and continue to grow and contribute, every day.

▣ ***Would you encourage businesses to embrace the concept of EQ?***

As I said before, EQ is the exponential amplifying factor in human performance. It is considered to be at a minimum, 2.5 times more important than IQ in navigating complex and dynamic situations. Throw the added dimension of stress into the equation and it becomes the only self-regulating method that people can use to support themselves in finding an internal calm in the perceived outward chaos.

▣ ***Where would you like to see EQuip in the next five years?***

My work is now to share my life's experience and understanding of Emotional Intelligence(EQ) in a way that supports new ways of seeing, feeling, thinking and doing. A new way of being and responding to life situations so that we can navigate the times we live in with more joy, vitality and fulfilment.

For me, this means living my free spirit as a 'Heart Leader' (shifting perspective from fearing life to loving life, from survival to choice and growth) and 'Soul Mover' (embodying heart intelligence as a doorway to aligning body, mind and spirit using movement and energy management practices to access intuition and body/mind intelligence) and in this way, putting the 'Soul Back' into life and work.

In this new season that is unfolding, my best work is where I show up as a mentor, a non-judging conscious presence. I meet people where they are at and support them in allowing life to provide their learning so that they can integrate their personal insight and navigate their world as it unfolds. Mentoring is both creative and practical, an intuitive journey of facilitating, inspiring and stretching people to find the power of their heart, the power of their spirit, the power of their voice and to live these in the power of their actions.

I am doing this through EQ mastery retreats, individual EQ mentoring and recording an online library of podcasts.

For my partner Keith, this new season brings together all the chapters of his working life and his personal life purpose which is to 'Journey Consciously' and 'Enable Conscious Life Journeys in others' while at the same time making the roads safer for everyone who uses them.

Keith's journey has taken him into the space of Driving EQ – emotions drive people, people drive cars. So time spent driving becomes a powerful time of self-awareness, self-control, self-motivation, social awareness and social impact, all of which are the EQ building blocks of conscious change and growth.

Our dream for five years from now is that Driver Assess will be the EQ classroom in every driver's car supporting people to make conscious driving choices in the areas where their patterns of thinking, feeling and action create risk for them and others on the road. He has developed a tool that provides feedback and creates awareness of 'how we drive our car is how we drive through life'. The same patterns show up behind the steering wheel and in other areas of life.

We believe that EQ is becoming more relevant in every aspect of people's lives.

ABOUT EVAN-LEE COURIE

Group Editor: Retail and Lifestyle

▣ #StartupStory: Meet Marko Stavrou, the 18-year-old co-founder of HustlersGlobal and Stavrou Consulting - 7 Dec 2022

▣ #BehindtheSelfie: Herman Bosman, chairperson of Endeavor South Africa - 30 Mar 2022

▣ #StartupStory: Zoie Health - a digital health clinic for women - 2 Mar 2022

▣ #StartupStory: The Client Media - 22 Feb 2022

▣ #StartupStory: In the Loop with Kimberly Taylor - 17 Feb 2022

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>