

# The Emotions in Action Grid

## What is it?

Grounded in science, the matrix helps people organise their understanding about emotions and the important link with energy.

## When can you use it?

Typically we use this matrix in two situations – as part of a team training session when discussing emotional intelligence; resilience; stress; change and personal development; or in a 1:1 coaching session. It is particularly helpful in helping people put a 'label' on emotions; organise these into 'zones' and understand that all emotions are useful and serve a purpose, and that the person is in control of their emotions.

## Who can you use it with?

The matrix is appropriate for most ages, from adolescents to adults.

## Top Tips for a positive coaching session:

1. Describe the two axes. The vertical axis represents the quantity of energy expended whilst feeling these emotions from low to high. The horizontal axis represents the quality of the emotions from negative to positive.
2. Explain that all the emotions are useful and appropriate in response to certain situations. The Thriving zone is about Performance; the Surviving zone is a 'Call to Action'; the Burnout zone is an appropriate response to Loss and the Recharge zone is about Replenishing your Energy. Give examples of when each zone might be appropriate.
3. Describe the four zones with examples of what you might be doing when in each one and who you might be with.
4. Ask your client to describe the zones from their point of view – what they might be doing in each and who they might be with.
5. Ask the client to describe the emotions they experience in each of the quadrants.



6. Ask the client to plot the amount of time spent in each zone on an average day or week.
7. Ask your client to list their most common triggers. A trigger is an event or circumstance that consistently prompts negative feelings or reactions causing movement from the Thriving to the Surviving zone. Look at each trigger and decide what the reaction to it was, what the impact of the reaction was and whether the reaction resolved the situation.
8. Ask your client to keep a 'Trigger Diary' – looking back on each day and recording what triggers occurred.
9. Ask your client to look at the day ahead. What meetings, interactions or situations could cause your client to be triggered? Forewarned is forearmed.
10. Develop personal strategies with your client for moving back from the Surviving zone to the Thriving zone.
11. How could your client capitalise on their Thriving emotions and spend more time in this zone?
12. How could your client build more or higher quality Recharge time?
13. How could your client role model the 'Thriving' and 'Recharge' emotions more for others?

