



# Emotional Connection for Improving Productivity Transforms Team Dynamics



For nearly 70 years, California Bank & Trust has been helping California families and businesses grow and prosper. Today they are one of California's most admired banks, offering guidance, collaboration, and customized options simply not found at other banks.

Industry: Finance

## THE CONTEXT

Since 1952, California Bank & Trust has been helping Californians, and their businesses thrive. Today they are among California's leading banks, with more than \$12 billion in loans, \$16 billion in deposits, and more than 80 branch offices throughout the state. They strive to deliver customized solutions, tailored loans, and full-service private banking. The driving factor behind everything CB&T does is building strong relationships among team members, intuition, and excellent customer service.

"I always considered myself pretty intuitive, open, and honest with people," says Dr. Betty Uribe, Executive Vice President of California Bank & Trust, "and I mentor my team to be empathic with each other," Dr. Uribe, along with Rocky Bandeladze, Senior Vice President, set out to create an environment where individuals can grow, collaborate, and help each other. Their goal was to create

a culture where individuals didn't feel alone, isolated, or cut off from the rest of the group.

They wanted to become more effective in their leadership, communication, conducting meetings, and improving overall team productivity.

## OUR ENGAGEMENT

Unwittingly at first, the Emotional Connection model from EmC Leaders shaped the way Uribe and her Senior Executive Team guided and cultivated, nurturing the culture at CB&T. While Uribe and Bandeladze had instinctively followed the Process of Emotional Connection in resolving challenges, they decided to integrate the EmC approach into their 15 bank branches across Southern California. Based on their experience, they had already envisioned what they wanted their bank managers to exhibit on a daily basis:

- Avoiding emotion was no longer an option. Recognizing that emotions drive interactions started to de-escalate the negative cycles and restructure conversations into a positive cycle.





- Emotional safety was key to fostering a culture of trust, care, and loyalty. Leading from a place of vulnerability helped navigate through difficult conversations, helping eliminate tension in the workplace. Training in emotional connection increased understanding and skills that continually reinforced the safety and strengthened the bond.
- Learning how to create an emotional connection with each team member and helping them connect together was the main focus. This became the standard expectation for each bank manager.

After identifying key elements for improving performance, the team adopted strategies and practices consistent with the EmC process aimed at restructuring interactions and creating strong relationships. EmC Leaders' experience with dozens of companies has shown that leaders who actively use the EmC process are much more successful in changing and creating a connected team culture throughout their organization.

- **Dynamic Ability.** Uribe and Bandeladze emerged themselves in understanding the forces behind emotions and how emotions impact team dynamics. They began to pay greater attention to the steps which influence their interactions and use tools to guide their dance of connection. Their focus shifted from providing solutions to creating emotional safety so the direct reports could come up with solutions. The shift in dynamics created efficiency and focus.
- **The Language of Emotions.** The team attended Emotional Connection training and experiential practice through classroom education, individual, pair, and team sessions. Using the EmC skills to instill confidence and comfort with the language of emotions, each manager generated energy, excitement, and motivation as they felt more understood, valued, and heard by their colleagues.
- **Connected Team.** "By getting emotionally connected the way we did, we knew that we had each other's backs; we didn't have to second guess each other. We understood where everybody was coming from, and because all of the noise was taken away, we were able to focus on the task at hand and getting the work done," Uribe says. Productivity, efficiency, and accountability significantly improved. Each direct report was motivated to learn the skills of emotional

connection from their manager so that they could teach those skills and implement them in their own teams. Uribe noted that once the team felt connected, everyone had laser-like focus and felt united.

- **Relationship Management.** By empowering people with Emotional Connection, team members learned the roadmap to strengthen work and personal relationships. They gained greater job satisfaction, happiness, and further development. **Recognizing and harnessing the power of emotions in the workplace allows for a holistic approach to building and nurturing relationships.** When everyone speaks the same language, knows how to reconnect, and feels safe to share vulnerabilities, team members start to grow with each other. They created an environment where individuals felt freer to connect with each other directly, resolving issues faster and with better solutions together.
- **Professional Growth.** The breakthroughs with individuals who went through the EmC process and training contributed to creating a safe learning environment to coach and teach others about the negative cycles and emotions, leading to bonding conversations. In addition, the Process promoted and instilled professional dedication, focus, and genuine care in putting relationships first. The roadmap to emotional connection allows individuals to bring their whole selves to work, with their hearts and minds exploring, creating, and achieving unlimited possibilities.



## RESULTS AT A GLANCE

While the fact that CB&T was voted as the Best Commercial Bank in the community cannot be entirely traced to their work in emotional connection, EmC Leaders is proud to have played our part in sharing the power of emotions as the most effective change agent in organizations.



– ABOUT –

# EMOTIONAL CONNECTION

*Emotional Connection is centered around the systematic and systemic exploration of emotions present during moments of great stress, uncertainty, and volatility through a proven process that is at once experiential and holistic. The EmC courses give people the skills to transform negative interactions into dialogue for bonding relationships and improved results. With EmC, people can share emotions in an open, honest, and respectful way; individuals start to collaborate better, create safer work environments, and foster cultures of trust and respect. The EmC courses are available in virtual and in-person learning formats.*



Transforming organizations through emotional connection

– ABOUT EMC LEADERS –

We offer training programs and professional services in the areas of Emotional Intelligence, Leadership Development, and Conflict Resolution, focusing on creating a culture where people can bring their whole selves to work. With over hundreds of cases under our belt, we create a pathway for people to thrive. Our impactful courses include The Fundamentals of Emotional Connection®, Negative Interactions and Preserving Connections®, Bonding Conversations to Strengthen Connections®, The EmC Master Class for Mastering Emotional Connection®, and Trainer Certification.

VISIT [emcleaders.com](https://emcleaders.com), CONTACT US AT [hello@emcleaders.com](mailto:hello@emcleaders.com) OR CALL 1-800-651-4121