



# NOVA

GUEST SPEAKER

*“The impact of  
Emotional Intelligence  
on Career Journeys”*

»» Paula Sequeira

# “The impact of Emotional Intelligence on Career Journeys”

– Paula Sequeira

A summary of key lessons from Paula Sequera’s address to the  
CWIT NOVA programme on 15 January 2026.

## Leadership failure doesn't mean you're not leadership material

A setback is not a verdict on your potential. Sometimes the smartest move is a step back to build the skills you don't yet have. Career growth is not a straight ladder.

Apply it:

- ✦ Reframe setbacks as learning phases.
  - ✦ Ask whether you are unfit or simply unprepared.
- 

## Technical excellence gets you in the room - it doesn't help you lead

Technical skills keep you competent. Emotional intelligence allows you to grow and sustain leadership roles.

Apply it:

- ✦ Stop trying to solve people like problems.
- ✦ Treat leadership as a discipline to be learned.

## Emotional labour is real - unmanaged, it burns you out

Leadership involves absorbing emotional load. If you believe every problem is yours to fix, leadership becomes overwhelming.

Apply it:

- ✦ Pause before reacting.
  - ✦ Support rather than solve.
- 

## Self-awareness is the foundation of leadership

Strong reactions often come from past experiences rather than present reality.

Apply it:

- ✦ Ask why something is triggering you.
- ✦ Look for patterns in your reactions.

## Self-management means acting from values

Values guide behaviour under pressure. Assuming good intent is a strategic choice.

Apply it:

- ✦ Before tough conversations, ask what value you want to act from.
- 

## You don't need to fix people - you need to listen

Listening to feelings, not just facts, reduces overload and builds trust.

Apply it:

- ✦ Ask how people feel.
  - ✦ Resist jumping into solutions.
- 

## Pausing is a leadership skill

Calm beats speed in difficult moments.

Apply it:

- ✦ Reschedule if emotions are high.
- ✦ Ask whether this will matter in five years.

## Confidence comes from learning, not perfection

Leadership confidence grows through reflection, not certainty.

Apply it:

- ✦ Replace "*Am I good enough?*" with "*What am I learning?*"
- 

## Managing managers requires humility and clarity

Managing managers is harder than managing individual contributors.

Apply it:

- ✦ Be explicit about expectations.
- ✦ Stay humble and open to learning.

## Paula's Leadership Challenge to you...

### Do these three things:

1. Before difficult conversations, identify your feelings and values.
2. In one-to-one's, ask one genuine question about how someone feels.
3. After setbacks, ask what the experience is teaching you.



# NOVA

## GUEST SPEAKER

*“The impact of  
Emotional Intelligence  
on Career Journeys”*

»» Paula Sequeira