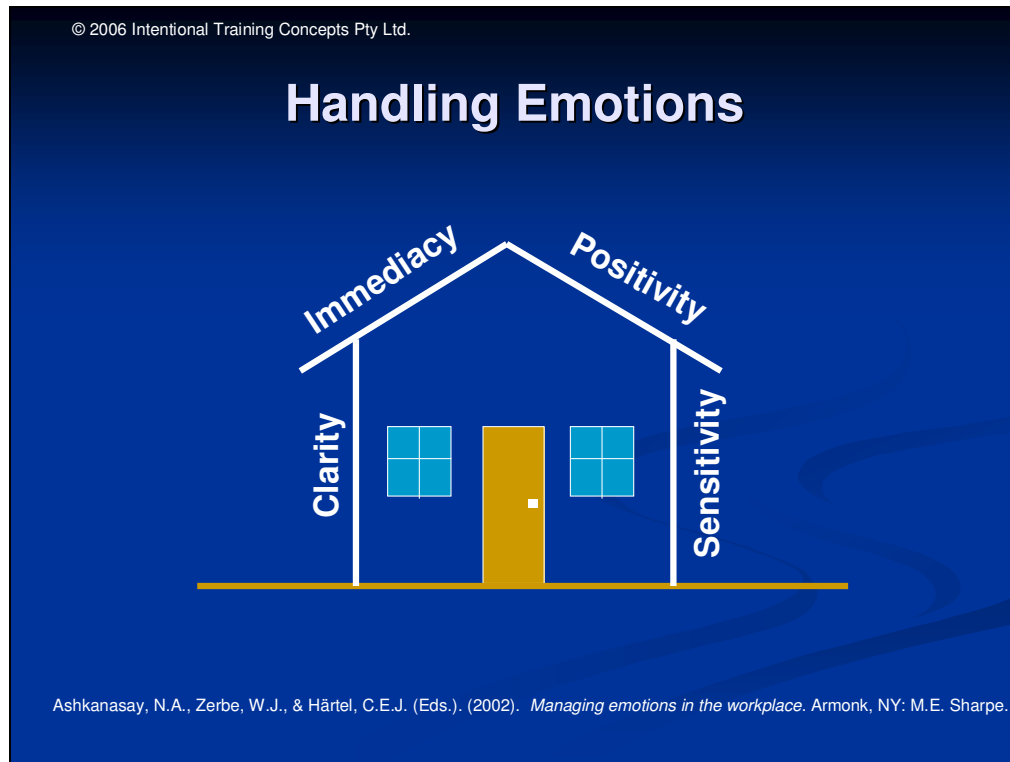


## Handling Emotions at Work

Most managers rely on “rational argument” to influence staff. Emotional displays are seen as “irrational” and are quickly suppressed. Yet, science tells us that emotions are our *first* response to the outside world. We *feel*; then we think. Not the other way around!



Professor Neil Ashkanasay from the University of Queensland Business School outlines a number of tools for managing emotions in the workplace (Ashkanasay, Zerbe & Härtel, 2002):

- **Clarity:** *Maintain open and quality communication:* Provide regular, high-quality information to staff to help reduce uncertainty and anxiety.
- **Sensitivity:** *Manage “emotional events”:* Deal directly and immediately with emotions expressed by the team member or felt by you personally. Accurately identifying emotions in the moment shows understanding and empathy.
- **Immediacy:** *Display interpersonal sensitivity:* Quickly and appropriately express regret for any adversity experienced by the team member as a result of your decisions. This displays personal ethicality and trustworthiness.
- **Positivity:** *Engender a positive outlook:* A creative intuitive style to management is associated with positive mood in staff as long as the manager keeps his or her focus on the task.