

Emotional Intelligence - Do you need it? Do you have it?

It used to be called charisma, soft skills, people skills.....an intangible something that separated those who succeed from those who didn't. The common performance indicators – intelligence, education, experience and personality– were simply not good enough predictors. That missing ingredient has now been identified as Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional Intelligence is probably best defined as the ability to manage ourselves and relate to others; it is often defined as street smarts or common sense; or our ability to make our way in a complex world. Emotionally intelligent people form strong relationships, communicate effectively, are authentic, develop trust and cope effectively with difficult circumstances....emotionally unintelligent people do not.

Here's a look at the five Foundations of Emotional Intelligence and the associated skills:

(EQ-i 2.0 Model, Multi Health Systems Inc.)

Self Perception – Emotional Self Awareness, Self Regard, Self Actualization

Self Expression – Emotional Expression, Independence, Assertiveness

Interpersonal – Interpersonal Relationships, Empathy, Social Responsibility

Decision Making – Impulse Control, Reality Testing, Problem Solving

Stress Management – Flexibility, Stress Tolerance, Optimism

What is exciting is that not only can our Emotional Intelligence be measured, but it can be improved, no matter how old you are. The stronger your Emotional Intelligence, the greater your chances for success – whatever success means to you!

The Leadership Connection

- Emotional Intelligence has become synonymous with effective leadership. Recent research by James Kouzes, co-author of *The Leadership Challenge* (a long standing book on exemplary leaders), links their previous research on leadership with the skills of Emotional Intelligence.
- Daniel Goleman in his book *Primal Leadership* shows how an organization may succeed or fail based on the moods and actions of its leaders. “If a leader resonates energy and enthusiasm, an organization thrives; if a leader spreads negativity and dissonance, it flounders. This breakthrough concept charges leaders with driving emotions in the right direction to have a positive impact on earnings or strategy.” (Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence, Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, Annie McKee, 2002).
- A Centre for Creative Leadership study showed that highly placed executives fail because of inadequate team skills, poor interpersonal relationships and inflexibility – handling change poorly - again all skills of Emotional Intelligence.

- We have seen many well known leaders fail in recent years due to lack of integrity, limited social responsibility and excessive greed. We are now seeing other leaders rise by their ability to connect with people, their authenticity and vision, at the same time possessing the baseline of intelligence, training and experience.

What does this mean for you today?

- At a recent workshop, a participant described a workplace with high turnover; the average stay was about 6 months. After attending a workshop on Emotional Intelligence her manager decided to identify the key Emotional Intelligence skills for each job and began to add this to her interview mix. Besides intelligence, training, experience and personality, she looked for the specific skills of Emotional Intelligence essential to each job and has eliminated turnover for the past 4 years.
- Another participant recognized why her administrative assistant did not work out. She was lacking in flexibility, problem-solving and stress management, essential skills for their chaotic, fast moving environment. She knew what to look for in her interview the next day.
- A manager scored low in Optimism and admitted to his negativity. He also recognized the impact this was having on his department, morale, his relationship with staff and productivity. He decided to do something about this – he came back with high score on Optimism and a changed workplace!
- Or, the Senior Executive who was brought in to Winnipeg because of his superior business skills to turn a company around. He did, but soon after, head office began to receive calls from staff and customers dissatisfied with the way he was treating people. Through Emotional Intelligence surveying, both the Self Assessment and an extensive 360, (The Emotional Intelligence Inventory – EQ-i and EQ-360 from Multi Health Systems) the skills lacking were identified. Through training and coaching he was able turn his behaviour around and keep the company in the black!
- Another organization linked the skills of Emotional Intelligence to their Competency Model. They were able to identify the specific skills within each competency, measure them and provide training and coaching to develop them.

So, what do you think? Do you need it?

Now, do you have it?

If you really want to know, attend a Q-Net workshop on Emotional Intelligence www.qnet.mb.ca or contact Heather Erhard, Director, Erhard Associates, www.erhardassociates.com or erhardh@mts.net for a personal assessment.

Tools are also available for assessing the Emotional Intelligence of teams, departments, and the organization as a whole. By delivering programs to meet the needs,

organizational cultures can be changed to deliver higher productivity and better bottom-line results.