

Emotional intelligence - three schools of thought



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Emotional intelligence. What is it and what role does it play in work and life effectiveness? Is “ emotional intelligence” just a repackaging of “ people skills” in scientific clothing? Research suggests it is not. Academics and business people alike are intrigued by the possibility that emotional intelligence is a distinctive and measurable form of intelligence that is important to success as a leader. But how important is it to effective leadership? Are there some aspects of emotional intelligence that are more important than others? And, importantly: are there any downsides to having too high an “ EQ”?

What is Emotional Intelligence?

From the review of the research there is no proper consensus about what actually “ emotional intelligence” constitute. According to the research there are 3 schools of thought:

1)First school of thought like Goleman 1998 thinks factors influencing emotions and intelligence as “ initiative”, self confidence” and “ drive for results”

2)Second school of thought like Bar-On 1997 view emotional intelligence as a personality dimension,

like extroversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability.

3)Third school of thought like Mayor, Dipaolo thinks that emotional intelligence is the set of abilities which constitutes the capacity of the person to understand, reason about and how to use emotions to think and act.

All three share a fault in terms of measuring leadership effectiveness. The tests are designed to assess specific aptitudes, traits, abilities, or behaviors thought to relate to emotional intelligence, but without regard as to how those may relate to success in particular situations. This is also the fundamental flaw in how “ emotional intelligence” is being applied to effective leadership: we are beginning with competing “ constructs” of emotional intelligence and attempting to relate them to leadership success, instead of going the other way around. We are, in effect, looking through the wrong end of the telescope at leadership performance.

How Effective Leaders Demonstrate

Emotional Intelligence

At Cambria Consulting, we have taken the approach advocated by McClelland: identify the most effective leaders and study what makes them different from the average. During the past 30 years, we have observed and interviewed over 1000 highly effective senior managers and executives in prominent Fortune 500 companies, federal agencies, nonprofits and the military..

Based on this research, we have noted several critical aspects of emotional intelligence that are highly important to leadership effectiveness, as well as others that can actually be dysfunctional. What follows is a brief summary of our conclusions about “ what works” and “ what doesn’t work” based on our observations.

1. Effective leaders are aware of their impact

on others and use it to their advantage.

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Effective leaders in an organization know that their strong personalities , their position and even their physical presence makes a strong impact on others. they are also sensitive about hoe they come across to others. They form channels to bring about best in others. Such kind of leaders thinks that they are in perfect control over about their own feelings nad how they express them. But at the same time there is a big risk involved with such kind of leaders that these may come across as overbearing. Perfect balance is being created by the effective leaders.

2. Effective leaders have empathy for others;

yet can still make tough decisions.

Effective leaders often are best from thinking on placing himself in others position. They place themselves in other's shoes and are able to think why and how employees react at the time of personal crisis, any changes may it be transformational or transactional, any prganizational events. But it doesnt prevent them to take tough decisions. They make people acknowledge that the decisions really make sense. The risk attached to it is that it's easy to over-identify with others or let

empathy be confused with sympathy, and not

make the tough decisions as needed.

3. Effective leaders are astute judges of

people without being judgmental.

Effective leaders are able to judge others in terms of strengths and weaknesses and are able to apply and recognize diverse talents of the organization. The risk is that they may be overly critical about what they perceive about others' weaknesses and may make them feel undervalued or disrespectful by dismissing the advice of such people.

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4. Effective leaders are passionate about

what they do, and show it.

Good leaders are passionate, highly optimistic and believe in the inevitability of success. They encourage others to believe that the most challenging goals can be met and the most daunting obstacles overcome. But it doesn't mean that they are always cheerleaders; their passion may be expressed as persistence in pursuing an objective or a relentless focus on a valued principle. However, there's a fine line between being excited about something and letting too much passion close your mind to other possibilities and ignoring realities that others see.

5. Effective leaders balance feeling and logic

in making decisions.

Effective leaders are in touch with their gut instincts about the right thing to do in the absence of supporting data. They also recognize their internal warning signs that something might not be the right thing to do despite the

seemingly compelling analysis. They understand that logic and “ facts” are not

the only things to consider. Nevertheless, they do not just “ go with their gut” without checking out their instincts with others. The drawbacks are the temptation to rely largely on their feelings about things and bet that they are correct without further investigation. They are essentially gambling with the resources of the organization, and can lose big.

6. Effective leaders are excellent communicators.

Effective leaders understands that the information should reach to people on time about the business. though they are not good speakers but still they kknow the hot buttons of the organization. They know that timely information always motivates people and make them connected to the organization. The only problem they face is that they get into the trouble of providing too much or too less information to the people connected with the organization. sometimes information not passed with the fear of people being upset from the truth.

As in most things, emotional intelligence as a leadership requirement should be kept in perspective. The key to effectiveness is balance: a strong mix of cognitive capacity (logical, conceptual and creative thinking), people skills (interpersonal astuteness, influence skills, and communication skills), and the wisdom borne of experience and having to make unprecedented decisions based on a strong set of personal values and personal integrity. Taken together, this is what makes for effective leadership.