

# High eq attributes yield a more successful work environment

[Business](#), [Leadership](#)



Traits that define exceptional emotional intelligence, or EQ, are often at odds with leadership traits, specifically results orientation and competitiveness. High EQ skills are defined by emotional competencies: self awareness, self management, relationship building and sensitivity to others emotions are not transparent in how they contribute to the bottom line of organizations profitability. Results, regardless of how they are obtained, have typically been the yardstick in measuring a leader's performance or effectiveness.

The challenge this creates is that though over time high EQ attributes yield a more successful work environment, in the short run leaders are constrained by chasing immediate results. This creates the potential for corruption as often unethical behavior translates into positive balance sheet results. Through understanding emotional intelligence, how it is related and differs from leadership traits, and how some leadership trait promote corruption it can be understood how EQ training and development might prevent unethical behavior from developing in an organization.

Emotional intelligence is described by author Dr. Jarik Conrad as " the ability to recognize and manage one's own emotions while simultaneously recognizing and responding to the emotions of others" (Conrad, 2008, p. 108). Emotional intelligence competencies are now being recognized as a critical component in the performance success of an individual at work, between 24 to 69% by some estimates (Lynn, 2008, p. 7). The ability to build relationships, display sensitivity to the needs of others and manage your emotions would all qualify as EQ attributes.

Great leaders share many of the traits of high EQ individuals. The ability to foster and mentor requires emotional sensitivity and empathy. Leaders who motivate and inspire can do so because of their emotional intelligence, it is reflected in how they treat others. Leaders who are defined by their ability to influence others, a hallmark of leadership regardless of title, are effective in extending influence because of their ability to build relationships with others, an identifiable EQ trait. Some leadership traits can be at odds with EQ, specifically competition and results orientation.

There is a fine line in leadership between the emotional sensitivity of understanding and supporting missed performance expectations, and creating an environment where excuses dominate results. Leaders are expected to be strong figure heads, cool and collected regardless of situation. This conflicts with the image of emotional sensitivity, just as “there is no crying in baseball”, there is no crying for leaders (“Being Boss is Hard”, 2008, p. 293). Leaders, who seek immediate impact through quick wins, often do so at the expense of emotional sensitivity to others.

The “Quick Wins Paradox”, described by authors Mark E. Van Buren and Todd Safferstone, illustrates that the “quest for instant results is inherently dangerous” (Van Buren & Safferstone, 2009, p. 55). Among the traps inherent in the process, included were “intimidating others”, “micro managing” and “jumping to conclusions”, all of which are at odds with emotional sensitivity. The need for results can promote an environment of corruption, as healthy wins in the areas of building relationships and

understanding and reacting to the emotional uniqueness of your teams is shunted in favor of bottom line performance.

If leaders are recognized and rewarded for their EQ abilities, they will feel less tempted to engage in corrupt behavior that inflates the appearance of balance sheet performance. Training and development in the area of emotional intelligence will create a healthier and more productive work environment. A focus on recognizing leaders for their abilities to “ gain a firmer grasp on her direct reports’ strengths, weaknesses, and aspirations” and the mastery of “ the teams working relationships” should be weighted as equally as the short term performance of a leader from a results standpoint (Van Buren & Safferstone, 2009, p. 61).

By creating an infrastructure where EQ abilities are trained, developed and recognized, organizations can prevent corruption and unethical behavior from developing in their companies as a result of slavish devotion to the bottom line.

## References

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