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Emotional intelligence at work: Don't leave home without it

*EQ helpful tool
in recruitment
and development*

BY EILEEN CHADNICK

When the going gets tough, as is inevitable in business these days, survival of the fittest is no longer about who has the highest IQ. What's increasingly more important is emotional intelligence, or the emotional quotient (EQ), a different kind of smart that's getting more notice lately and is increasingly distinguishing top performers from those who simply get by or, worse, fall out of the game completely.

On an intuitive level, street smarts and hearty spirits have long been understood to be as important for success as technical and "book smarts" — but there's more to EQ. It wasn't until author Daniel Goleman published his best-selling book in 1995, *Emotional Intelligence*, that the EQ concept became more fully-articulated and popularized.

In 1997, Toronto-based Multi-Health Systems (MHS) introduced the BarOn Emotional Quotient Inventory (BarOn EQ-i), a scientifically developed assessment that measures emotional intelligence.

A decade later, EQ has grown up and is being taken seriously as a critical success factor in business for recruiting, retaining and developing talent.

"When we started working in the area of emotional intelligence in the early 1990s there was only one published scientific study in the literature... (now) there are over 750 published scientific studies on emotional intelligence, not counting hundreds of dissertations," says Steven Stein, CEO of MHS and author of *EQ Edge* and *Make Your Workplace Great — The 7 Keys to an Emotionally Intelligent Organization*.

The BarOn EQ-i, one of many assessment tools in the market, has been administered in more than 35 countries by more than 4,000 professionals, says Stein.

CIBC, American Express, the FBI, the United States Air Force and Air Canada are just a few of the organizations that have worked with MHS on a variety of EQ-i programs related to profiling, recruiting and developing top talent, says Stein. The EQ-i has been used with airline pilots, naval and army officers, sales clerks, front-line staff and leadership of all ranks, he says.

EQ defined

Emotional intelligence is an array of personal, emotional and social abilities and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures. The BarOn EQ-i system distinguishes 15 different factors within a wide spectrum of emotional competencies within various realms: intrapersonal (self awareness and self management); interpersonal (relating well with others); adaptability; stress management and general mood. (See sidebar at right for more details.)

This is in contrast to IQ, which measures an individual's inherent intellectual, analytical, logical and rational abilities. A key distinction of EQ is that it is dynamic. That means an individual can hone, acquire and develop emotional skills with the right training, coaching and experience. IQ, unfortunately, cannot be developed. What you get is what you've got.

The EQ difference

With the ever-increasing complexities of work and life, individuals, teams and organizations will need to continually shore up their emotional fluency if they are to compete, survive and thrive effectively. Relationship effectiveness, problem-solving, innovation, adapting to change, managing stress, actualizing potential and engaging self and others are all related to EQ.

Profiling top performers and recruiting

MHS's work with the U.S. Air Force has generated a lot of interest in using the EQ-i to profile successful or top performers in any given sector and then recruiting to those strengths. For example, Air Canada

now administers the EQ-i with each pilot candidate before hiring, says Stein.

Because each industry has its unique challenges, profiles of star or high performers might be specific to the particular organization, role or sector. Sales success in pharmaceuticals may be linked to different EQ-i competencies than those that are critical for sales success in another industry, such as consumer products.

But generally, MHS has found sales success is often linked with five EQ competencies: self actualization, independence, self regard, optimism and assertiveness.

Leadership

Leadership and EQ have been strongly linked over the years. MHS partnered on research with the Centre for Creative Leadership in North Carolina and identified four major competencies associated with effective leadership performance: centered and grounded; ability to take action; participative management style; and tough minded.

Each of those competencies was strongly linked to specific factors within the EQ-i composites including: assertiveness, independence, optimism, social responsibility, self-regard, stress tolerance and impulse control.

Coaching for EQ development

EQ-i is also a good coaching tool. An assessment can provide a snapshot of where an individual or group of people is with respect to their overall and specific EQ competencies and how they stack up in terms of job performance. Coaching programs can be customized to develop areas that are most in need and pertinent to the role. As well, the EQ-i can be administered before and after coaching to measure the effectiveness of a program.

With appropriate coaching, training and experience, EQ development can help:

- a technical leader improve her people skills and become more effective at relationship building and leading teams;
- stressed employees more effectively cope with their work and life pres-

EQ FACTORS

The 15 areas of EQ-i

The BarOn EQ-i defines emotional intelligence as an array of personal, emotional and social abilities and skills that influence one's ability to succeed in coping with environmental demands and pressures.

Here are 15 areas that make up the EQ-i.

Intrapersonal:

- emotional self-awareness;
- assertiveness;
- self-regard;
- self-actualization; and
- independence.

Interpersonal:

- empathy;
- interpersonal relationship; and
- social responsibility.

Adaptability:

- problem-solving;
- reality testing; and
- flexibility.

Stress management:

- stress tolerance; and
- impulse control.

General mood:

- happiness; and
- optimism.

sure;

- high potential talent grow and actualize into their leadership potential;
- employees navigate careers for more success and fulfillment;
- under-functioning teams work better together;
- organizations and teams develop a more collaborative work culture;
- move a "stuck" employee or team towards better problem-solving abilities;
- develop a top-down "functional" manager into a more collaborative, inspiring and effective leader; and
- shift a change-resistant organization into one with more adaptability and resilience.

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