








PUTTING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE TO WORK

TRACOM[®] GROUP
THE SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE COMPANY[®]

Emotional Intelligence (EQ) is a concept focused on how effectively people work with others. Emotional Intelligence skills are unique from a person's technical skills and cognitive abilities. Multiple studies have shown that Emotional Intelligence competencies often account for the difference between star performers and average performers, particularly in positions of leadership.

THIS PAPER DISCUSSES THE FOLLOWING ASPECTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ):

-  **THE EVOLUTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE**
-  **THE BUSINESS CASE FOR EQ**
-  **THE INTERSECTION OF EQ AND BEHAVIOR**
-  **A MODEL FOR IMPROVING BEHAVIORAL EQ**
-  **PERFORMANCE BENEFITS OF BEHAVIORAL EQ**



EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE SUCCESS STUDIES

1. A study of partners at a public accounting firm found that partners with high EQ skills added 390% incremental profit while partners with high analytical reasoning skills contributed just 50% incremental profit.¹
2. An insurance company found the average policy sold by one group of agents was \$54K, while another group with EQ training sold policies with an average of \$114K.²
3. A study of more than 500 executive search candidates identified emotional competence a significantly better predictor of placement success than intelligence or prior experience. Findings were consistent in all countries and cultures.³
4. Analysis of 33 different studies found that children who were taught social and emotional skills had an 11 percentile gain in academic performance.⁴

Emotional Intelligence was the variable in each of these examples. In recent years, interest in Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has grown as research has shown its impact on a variety of business measures. These include recruiting and job selection, sales results and leadership performance.

Johnson and Johnson was among the first companies to test the linkage between Emotional Intelligence and business performance. More than 1,400 employees took part in a comparison of high performers and average performers. They found a “strong relationship” between superior performing leaders and emotional competence. Further they found that Emotional Intelligence, like technical skill, can be developed through a systematic and consistent approach to building social and emotional competency.⁵

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The concepts of Emotional Intelligence are not new, with research going back to the early part of the 20th century. The term “Emotional Intelligence” was introduced by Salovey and Mayer⁶ in 1990. But it was Daniel Goleman, a Harvard-trained psychologist and writer who really brought EQ into the mainstream. He wrote about EQ in The New York Times and his 1995 book Emotional Intelligence. Even before Goleman, some of the EQ concepts have been studied for nearly a century, simply called by different names like social skills or social intelligence, but his book really kick-started the business community’s interest in Emotional Intelligence.

The evolution of EQ has had two main phases and now a third development. Back in 1990 EQ was conceptualized as the ability to recognize, understand, and control one’s own emotions. At this stage it was really an academic study, and researchers believed it was a form of intelligence that could be tested through ability measures, just like IQ or cognitive intelligence. That’s why it was called EQ. While the concept was interesting, what’s been found is that this “ability” version of EQ has not been a good predictor of important outcomes like job performance. So although it’s interesting in a theoretical sense, its usefulness has been very limited.

The second generation of EQ began with Goleman and Richard Boyatzis who developed a competency-based model of EQ. Their model was based on a number of skills, or competencies, and essentially was an umbrella for every ability not covered by either traditional IQ or personality measures. Because it was such a broad model, its relationship to job performance has been very mixed. Some skills in the model were related to performance while others were not, and also it predicted performance in some types of jobs or roles better than others. For example EQ was more relevant for people in customer facing roles or who deal with individuals on a constant basis, such as sales, police, and customer service, than it was for people who do not work frequently with other people.

Another criticism of competency-based models is that they ignore the context of where EQ is practiced. They tend to be very global models, and the truth is people will act differently and display EQ differently depending on the situation and who they’re interacting with. A recent meta-analysis in the prestigious Journal of Applied Psychology, strongly cautions against using competency-based EQ models for these reasons.⁷

NEXT GENERATION OF EQ:

BEHAVIORAL INTELLIGENCE RECOGNIZES THE MOST IMPORTANT ELEMENT IS EFFECTIVE BEHAVIOR.

After decades of research and efforts to build EQ skills, we've entered a third generation of EQ. This research and practice have shown that some of the elements of the earlier models simply aren't very important or relevant, especially in the workplace. Businesses have called for a model that is focused on the most important aspects of EQ and that is measured specifically for a work context.

One of the key takeaways from research is that the behavioral skills from EQ are the most important. The competency-based models measure a variety of skills, some behavioral some not. So rather than take what was essentially a "grab bag" approach to measure anything that might matter, the new emphasis is on understanding and developing a much smaller number of high-impact behavioral skills, which are the best predictors of job performance and success.

In addition, measures that are more focused are better for training and development because they're a manageable set of skills to work on. So we now distinguish between Emotional Intelligence, which is emotion awareness, recognition, and understanding, and *Behavioral Intelligence*, which represents skills you practice that directly influence others and your own effectiveness.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

- Ability to perceive and understand one's own emotions and the emotions of others
- Having insight into oneself, and awareness and empathy for others

BEHAVIORAL INTELLIGENCE:

- Ability to recognize the impact that emotions have on one's own behavior and the behavior of others
- Ability to use this awareness to manage personal behavior and relationships



BEHAVIORAL INTELLIGENCE RATHER THAN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

This 3rd generation of Emotional Intelligence emphasizes behavior and is more appropriately known as Behavioral EQ. To fully understand the differences, consider that Emotional Intelligence is completely internal – it is a person’s ability to understand his own emotions and recognize the emotions of others. Therefore Emotional Intelligence can be thought of as preceding Behavioral Intelligence. It might be helpful to practice Emotional Intelligence, but it is difficult to observe.

The second main point is that Behavioral Intelligence is what people see, hear and respond to. The research clearly shows that behavior is the best predictor of effectiveness. While it’s good and maybe even necessary to have emotional awareness, unless this awareness is translated into behavior it is somewhat meaningless. For example, a manager may be aware that someone on his team is struggling with the workload and also needs some development, but if the manager doesn’t do anything with this awareness and lets the employee languish without taking steps to help him, then the awareness doesn’t do either any good.

Even people with high EQ, in the pure sense of having good emotional awareness and recognition, will not by default be more effective in their behaviors. And behavior is what matters. It is what people notice and respond to. Someone can’t see inside another person’s head to know what they are experiencing, one can only rely on what people say and do.

SUCCESS STUDIES

There have been well documented examples of the importance of EQ from many spheres of life, including work life in both the private and public sectors.



An international petroleum company wanted to understand what differentiated superior from average performers across a number of job roles, and in particular people who had to operate in an international environment. What they found were ten core skills that differentiated these people, and seven of those skills were Behavioral EQ skills. These results were achieved in an industry where soft skills have not been historically valued. People are hired and almost always promoted based on their technical abilities. The author of this study said that people's EQ gave "traction" to their technical abilities and high intelligence. Traction is a good way to describe how Behavioral EQ works in relation to other abilities.⁸



The U.S. Army has the Comprehensive Soldier Fitness Program, a multi-faceted approach to help soldiers maintain their health across all aspects of their lives, including their social and emotional well-being. As part of that they've implemented something called Resilience Training. This program is unique because rather than treating soldiers who have already suffered the effects of combat, it's a proactive approach that provides soldiers the skills needed to be more resilient in the face of adversity. So it prepares soldiers for what they can expect, and how best to manage and cope with these adversities. This is an enormous program that will affect over one million individuals, and should help reduce the rate of PTSD that affects many returning soldiers.⁹



Research is also showing the impact that EQ can have starting at earlier ages, when people are particularly amenable to this type of learning and development. The accreditation body for engineering programs recently mandated that engineering schools need to provide formal instruction on EQ skills like teamwork and communication. Schools like MIT and Stanford have found that their students not only learn to work better together, but are also producing better products and more creative ideas.¹⁰ They want engineers who are not only technically skilled, but can also work well in teams and communicate their ideas to others. There are also examples of medical schools that are implementing similar programs in order to help not only bedside manner but reducing the amount of medical errors that are found in hospitals across the country.



Despite a growing body of research questioning the value of performance reviews, they are certainly common in the workplace. Even positive reviews can be difficult. Given in the wrong way they can affect people's emotions negatively and influence their subsequent motivation and behavior. There was one study that showed that positive feedback, when delivered in a negative, cold tone of voice, actually made people feel glum and dejected. Even more surprising is that when negative feedback was given in a warm, positive tone it made people feel upbeat and energized to act.¹¹

So there are very real, important benefits of EQ. This is not a feel-good learning paradigm, it impacts areas that are critical not only for organizations but even for society.

CAN BEHAVIORAL EQ BE LEARNED?

One question that often comes up is whether people are born with high EQ, or whether it can be learned. We all know people who seem to be naturally gifted in how well they work with others. They intuitively understand how to put people at ease and, if they're leaders, how to motivate their people and keep them actively engaged in their work.

But the good news is that Behavioral EQ skills can be learned. There's clear research on this, and TRACOM's research has also shown good evidence that people can learn how to interact more effectively at work. But in order for this to happen people have to be personally motivated, and they need to practice what they learn back on the job and get reinforcement for their new skills.

How do you do it? The best way to start is with some feedback to develop insight. TRACOM's Behavioral EQ Assessment or other EQ assessments can provide an understanding of a person's strengths and weaknesses in this area.

One of the key benefits of the Behavioral EQ model is that it's manageable and therefore actionable. Research has shown these skills are important and working on just one or two of these skills can improve performance in significant measure. It's often easiest and most effective to start with behavior, instead of the EQ skills. This seems like a paradox since people believe good EQ is necessary for showing skill in the behaviors. But by changing behavior this can actually influence EQ.



BENEFITS & SUMMARY

In today's economy, organizations are looking for ways to improve their productivity with Emotional Intelligence. Behavioral EQ has emerged as the proven way to quickly improve the performance of individuals and their organizations.¹ And Behavioral EQ skills are objective, measurable benefits associated with increased sales, better recruiting, effective leadership and high customer service.

Further, there is evidence that Behavioral EQ skills can be developed through training programs. Developing these skills makes individuals and their organizations more productive and effective.

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– IS A WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE COMPANY AND A LEADING
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