

## **LEADERSHIP AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)**

WE OFTEN HEAR PEOPLE SAY, "JOE MUST BE HIGH IN EQ." OR, "MARY'S LOW IN EQ."

BUT WHAT DO WE REALLY KNOW ABOUT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE (EQ)? WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO A LEADER'S EFFECTIVENESS AND CAN IT BE LEARNED? THIS ARTICLE IS THE FIRST IN A SERIES OF ARTICLES THAT WILL EXPLORE THESE QUESTIONS AS WELL AS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN EQ AND LEADERSHIP. WE WILL BEGIN BY FOCUSING ON ONE OF THE CORE COMPONENTS OF EQ – SELF-AWARENESS.

### **WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?**

EQ IS THE SOCIAL EQUIVALENT OF IQ. ACCORDING TO DANIEL GOLEMAN, AUTHOR OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND WORKING WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, THERE ARE FIVE COMPONENTS OF EQ. THE FIRST THREE COMPONENTS OF EQ ARE ALL ABOUT MANAGING ONESELF. THE LAST TWO ARE ABOUT MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS.

1. **SELF-AWARENESS** – THE ABILITY TO RECOGNIZE AND UNDERSTAND YOUR MOODS, EMOTIONS, AND DRIVES, AS WELL AS THEIR EFFECT ON OTHERS.
2. **SELF-REGULATION** – THE ABILITY TO CONTROL OR REDIRECT DISRUPTIVE IMPULSES AND MOODS.
3. **MOTIVATION** – A PASSION TO WORK FOR REASONS THAT GO BEYOND MONEY OR STATUS.
4. **EMPATHY** – THE ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND THE EMOTIONAL MAKEUP OF OTHER PEOPLE.
5. **SOCIAL SKILL** - THE PROFICIENCY IN BEING PERSUASIVE AND MANAGING RELATIONSHIPS AND BUILDING NETWORKS.

### **WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN LEADERSHIP AND EQ?**

IN MY WORK AS A LEADERSHIP CONSULTANT AND COACH TO EXECUTIVES FOR THE LAST 20 YEARS, I HAVE SEEN FIRST HAND HOW EQ HAS PLAYED A CRITICAL ROLE IN WHAT MAKES SOME SUCCESSFUL AND OTHERS DERAILED. AS YOU GO UP THE CORPORATE LADDER, YOUR TECHNICAL SKILLS – WHAT YOU WERE INITIALLY HIRED FOR – BECOME LESS IMPORTANT AND YOUR EQ BECOMES MORE IMPORTANT. THIS POSES A CHALLENGE FOR THOSE LEADERS WHO RELY ONLY ON THEIR "SMARTS" TO GET TO THE C-SUITE.

WHY DO TECHNICAL SKILLS BECOME LESS IMPORTANT OVER TIME? IN ORDER TO BE TRULY EFFECTIVE A LEADER MUST KNOW WHO THEY ARE AND HOW TO STAY CALM IN A CRISIS. THEIR AGENDA IS NOT PERSONAL AND BECAUSE THEY ARE SELF-AWARE THEY UNDERSTAND WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK AND USE THAT TO INSPIRE AND MOTIVATE PEOPLE TO CHANGE. ALL OF THESE ARE COMPONENTS OF EQ.

IN ONE STUDY CONDUCTED BY GOLEMAN OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE LEADERS, INTELLECT, COGNITIVE SKILLS AND IQ WERE RATED IMPORTANT BUT EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE PROVED TO BE TWICE AS IMPORTANT FOR JOBS AT ALL LEVELS. WE KNOW THAT EFFECTIVE LEADERS USUALLY VARY THEIR STYLE TO FIT THE SITUATION AT HAND. THERE IS, HOWEVER, ONE THING EFFECTIVE LEADERS HAVE IN COMMON AND THAT IS THAT THEY ALL HAVE A HIGH DEGREE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

### **DEVELOPING SELF-AWARENESS**

THERE IS A REASON THAT SELF-AWARENESS IS THE FIRST COMPONENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE. AS SOCRATES SAID THOUSAND OF YEARS AGO, "KNOW THYSELF." UNLESS YOU FIRST UNDERSTAND WHO YOU ARE OR WHAT I REFER TO AS ONE'S "DEFAULT STYLE" IT IS DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND OTHERS AND SCORE HIGHLY ON THE OTHER FOUR COMPONENTS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE.

SELF-AWARE LEADERS ARE CONFIDENT BECAUSE SELF KNOWLEDGE ACTS AS AN ANCHOR TO HOW THEY RELATE TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD. THEY ARE CENTERED AND HONEST WITH THEMSELVES BEING NEITHER CYNICAL NOR UNREALISTIC. FURTHER, THEY KNOW AND ACCEPT THEIR STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, NEEDS, DRIVES, VALUES AND EMOTIONS. THEY KNOW HOW THEIR FEELINGS AFFECT THEM AND OTHERS. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE LEADER I COACHED REALIZED THAT THE COLLEAGUE HE HAD THE MOST DIFFICULTY RELATING TO DISPLAYED BEHAVIORS SIMILAR TO THOSE OF HIS FATHER WITH WHOM HE HAD A STRAINED RELATIONSHIP. KNOWING THIS ENABLED HIM TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPACT THIS PERSON HAD ON HIS EMOTIONS AND HE WAS ABLE TO OBJECTIVELY STEP BACK AND NEUTRALIZE HIS FRUSTRATION.

### **CAN YOU RECOGNIZE EQ IN YOURSELF?**

THE CHALLENGE FOR MANY IS HOW CAN YOU RECOGNIZE IT IN YOURSELF? IT'S DIFFICULT TO MEASURE YOUR OWN EQ. THERE ARE WAYS OF FINDING OUT WHERE YOU ARE ON THE EQ SCALE. THE LEAST EFFECTIVE IS THROUGH A SELF-ASSESSMENT ALONE FOR OBVIOUS REASONS. OVER THE YEARS, I HAVE BEEN

AMAZED AT THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN MID-LIFE WHO WERE LACKING IN SELF-AWARENESS AND THE IMPACT THEIR BEHAVIORS HAD ON OTHERS.

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY IS BY COMBINING A SELF-ASSESSMENT AND A 360-DEGREE EVALUATION PROCESS WHERE YOU GET FEEDBACK ON VARIOUS COMPONENTS OF EQ FROM YOUR BOSS, COLLEAGUES AND DIRECT REPORTS. WHEN THIS IS DONE AND DEBRIEFED BY SOMEONE INDEPENDENT SUCH AS A LEADERSHIP COACH, IT ASSURES A HIGHER LEVEL OF ACCURACY, WHICH HELPS YOU DEVELOP IN THOSE AREAS WHERE YOU ARE WEAK. IF THE COMPANY YOU WORK FOR DOES NOT OFFER 360 EVALUATIONS, THEN SELECT SOME COLLEAGUES AND FRIENDS WHO KNOW YOU WELL AND ASK THEM TO RATE YOU ON THE COMPONENTS OF EQ.

### **CAN EQ BE LEARNED?**

THE GOOD NEWS IS EQ CAN BE LEARNED. SCIENTIFIC AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AND DEVELOPMENTAL RESEARCH SUGGESTS THAT SOME PEOPLE ARE BORN WITH CERTAIN AMOUNTS OF EQ AND THAT NURTURE ALSO PLAYS A ROLE. WHAT WE DO KNOW IS THAT IT CAN BE LEARNED BUT NOT IN A ONE DAY TRAINING PROGRAM.

FIRST YOU NEED TO BE AWARE OF YOUR BEHAVIORS AND THE IMPACT YOU HAVE ON OTHERS AND THEN BE MOTIVATED TO CHANGE. IT IS THEN THAT YOU ARE READY TO BEGIN BREAKING OLD BEHAVIORAL HABITS AND REPLACING THEM WITH NEW ONES. THIS PROCESS OF DOING AND REFLECTING TAKES TIME. MALCOMB GLADWELL IN HIS NEW BOOK, OUTLIERS, MAKES THE CASE THAT IT TAKES 10,000 HOURS TO REACH A LEVEL OF MASTERY AT SOMETHING. TRYING THESE NEW BEHAVIORS AT THE OUTSET MAY NOT BE THE MOST COMFORTABLE SO YOU NEED TO HANG IN THERE AND NOT GIVE UP. IT IS ONLY IN EXPERIMENTATION AND REPETITION THAT LASTING BEHAVIORAL CHANGE OCCURS.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO KEEP IN MIND THAT BUILDING ONE'S EQ IS NOT AN EVENT BUT A PROCESS THAT OCCURS OVER TIME. ALTHOUGH IT MAY BE PAINFUL, DISCOVERING HOW YOU RATE ON EQ IS IMPORTANT IF YOU WANT TO BE A GOOD LEADER. I HAVE ALSO SEEN MANY SITUATIONS WHERE GETTING FIRED FOR A LACK OF EQ IS A "WAKE-UP" CALL FOR MANY TO GO ON A JOURNEY OF SELF-DISCOVERY. DON'T WAIT FOR THAT TO HAPPEN. GIVEN THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF MOTIVATION AND THE SKILLS TO CHANGE, MOST LEADERS CAN LEARN THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE CAPABILITIES NECESSARY TO BE SUCCESSFUL.

STAY TUNED FOR NEXT MONTH'S ARTICLE ON LEADERSHIP AND SELF-REGULATION.

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT ME AT [JOYCEBRILLOLEADERSHIP.COM](http://JOYCEBRILLOLEADERSHIP.COM).