

ONLY results-oriented leaders with task and relationship skills are able to effectively manage the complexities of today's organisations. Role, organisational, and industrial boundaries are shifting and becoming more ambiguous; technology often requires an instantaneous response to electronic communications; tasks are more complex, teams more prevalent, and employees more diverse.

The multiple and simultaneous demands that these challenges pose – working with ambiguity, responding instantly, collaborating on teams, and managing diverse people – are successfully met only by managers with emotional intelligence (EI).

Coaching can help managers develop their emotional intelligence because Emotional Intelligence is constituted by skills and abilities that can be learned throughout one's life.

As Daniel Goleman pointed out in his 1998 book, *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, EI involves being “self-aware,” “self-regulating,” “motivated,” “empathetic,” and “socially skilled.” When we lack awareness of these variables, “we are vulnerable to being sidetracked by emotions run amok. Such awareness is our guide in fine-tuning on-the-job performance of every kind...”

Many adept and highly skilled managers are unaware of themselves and their influence on others and therefore risk derailing their careers despite technical or intellectual brilliance. Examples can be seen in a manager who does not accept that he is part of a team and who does not realise that his individual actions impact the collective task; or a chief executive officer who does not realise that his employees' failure to perform is linked to his inability to articulate either the organisation's mission or his own expectations.

Or it could be a caring manager who feels powerless in the face of larger organisational issues and who unintentionally treats her employees as she feels she is being treated by withholding information and raising counterproductive expectations.

Coaching can be a positive tool

Leaders must develop emotional intelligence

If they do not, they risk derailing their careers despite technical brilliance

for enhancing all five of the dimensions of emotional intelligence that Goleman discussed:

- **Self-awareness:** A coach can assist an executive to gain deeper self-awareness about how emotions may implicitly or explicitly influence his or her decisions and actions. A first step might be to administer a personality test such as the Myers-Briggs, which can serve as the basis for a dialogue between coach and manager about how different personal preferences influence working styles.

A coach might then shadow an executive as he or she participates in meetings or goes about daily tasks in order to later compare and contrast the manager's perceptions with those of the coach. Take for example a chief executive officer, whose hands-on management style, which had been so successful when the company was small, was negatively impacting the growing company's ability to function efficiently. Once he realised that he could no longer be involved in every decision the company faced, he began to delegate more authority to the team.

- **Self-regulation:** By discussing situations in which the manager feels that his or her emotions get the upper hand, coaching can develop strategies for not letting that happen again. A manager might learn to recognise warning signs that he or she is becoming too emotional to think rationally and therefore take a brief break to regain composure.

A manager might also work with the coach to create strategies for minimising stress in the first place. For example, an executive at an

entertainment company was having a conflict with a co-worker. She decided to take a detailed agenda to meetings involving this co-worker in order to provide a structured framework for interaction and thereby minimise the interpersonal conflict that might otherwise emerge.

- **Empathy:** After discussing the interpersonal conflict during the coaching process over a period of several weeks, the same entertainment company executive began to see things from the perspective of her rival and realised that they shared responsibility for the tension that existed between them. She was

then able to consider ways in which she could reduce the tension. She decided to share more information earlier on in their collaborative projects, thereby setting a positive precedent.

Leaders who possess emotional intelligence:

- Are able to assess their emotional states, personal strengths and weaknesses, and the impact of their biases on employees and colleagues
- Are able to control their emotions and impulses, refrain from externalising stress, and are less likely to impose their negative moods on others
- Harness emotional energy to help

themselves and others to achieve goals

- Are able to see the world through the eyes of others and to value their concerns
- Are able to negotiate relationships with superiors, peers, and employees to produce desired results
- Clearly articulate mission and goals for themselves and others despite increasing workplace ambiguity

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Take a brief break if you think you are becoming too emotional to think rationally. - Filepic