

Social and Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence isn't a luxury you can dispense with in tough times. It's a basic tool that is the key to professional success. If emotional obliviousness jeopardizes your ability to perform, fend off aggressors, or be compassionate in a crisis, no amount of attention to the 'iron triangle' of time, cost and quality line will protect your career or engender success in your project. Emotional Intelligence, measured by your Emotional Quotient (EQ) isn't so soft; it is a critical skill to develop and deploy with finesse.

Research shows that people with a high EQ possess clarity in thinking and remain composed in stressful and chaotic situations. A person who has good EQ can manage his or her own impulses, communicate with others effectively, manage change well, solve problems, and use humour to build rapport in tense situations. These people will have empathy, remain optimistic even in the face of adversity, and are gifted at educating and persuading in a sales situation.

Social Intelligence, measured by your Social Quotient (SQ) is closely aligned, it is a measure of social awareness. SQ relates to a person's ability to understand and manage people and to act wisely in human relations. It is equivalent to interpersonal intelligence; as society becomes more complex, intellectual competences need to become more sophisticated. SQ is the intelligence that lies behind group interactions and behaviours.

A person with a high EQ or SQ is no better or worse than someone with lower scores; they're just different and have different attitudes, hopes, interests and desires. However, having good EQ and SQ is what separates top performers from weak performers in the workplace. Traditional IQ on its own is fine for technical work but as a person moves into higher management roles, the ability to lead, manage and influence others becomes increasingly important.

EQ Defined

Emotional intelligence is broadly defined as the ability to identify, understand and manage the emotions around you. The theory of emotional intelligence states we are born with an innate capacity to recognise emotions in ourselves and the people around us. Connecticut-based Dr. Hendrie "Hank" Weisinger says, "We are born with the ability to regulate them, like a thermostat", but rather than nurturing that ability, most people walk around "like a thermometer, just reacting to what's around them."

Managers with a high EQ (emotional quotient) understand

- People need to be valued.
- People need to feel a sense of belonging.
- People need a realistic and hopeful future.
- People need basic organization in their lives.

The five key competencies in emotional intelligence are:

Self Awareness

Everyone has self awareness, a high EQ is associated with high self awareness that both notices and interprets emotional signals. Is the person with the arms folded angry or cold? Once you become aware of your thoughts about yourself and others you can start to use them as positive instructional thoughts, 'I understand what's going down, I don't need to get defensive, I can handle this.'

Mood Management

High EQ is not just mood management; it's having strategies to changing your mood. Emotions affect performance both in yourself and in others around you. A project manager can take anger and turn it into

motivation or use anxiety to make people more careful by planting doubt so a team checks it work more closely. Emotions are contagious.

Self Motivation

Self-motivation is about how you get yourself to do things that you don't want to do. A sense of persistence that allows you to overcome adversity.

Interpersonal Expertise

High EQ people relate well with others. This involves exchanging information with people and feelings. But it's not easy; which is easier? "Tell about your feelings?" or, "How was your day?" High EQ people do not just talk about things on a factual level; they disclosure how they feel and how they think and get other people to do same. That's what makes teams perform.

Emotional Mentoring

This is about helping others deal with situations that may or may not involve you. It is essentially separating your emotional needs from those around you.

All of these competencies are in your emotional intelligence portfolio. No one is preventing you as a writer from finding a good idea, or, if you are stuck in traffic, no one is doing that to you. People who manage their emotions well are high on these five components and are more successful in everything.

SQ Defined

The social intelligence quotient or SQ is a statistical abstraction similar to the 'standard score' approach used in IQ tests with a mean of 100. Unlike the standard IQ test however it is not a fixed model. It leans more to the theory that intelligence is a complex hierarchy of information-processing skills underlying an adaptive equilibrium between the individual and the environment. An individual can therefore change their SQ by altering their attitudes and behaviour in response to their environment.

The social intelligence (SI) quotient algorithm is a combination of:

1. Socially Aware population classification. The Socially Aware in society are community minded and socially active; always searching for the new and different, looking for new things to learn. They embrace learning as well as earning a living.
2. Positive attitude to progressive social issues ('somewhat progressive' or 'very progressive')
3. Attraction and openness to new experiences

SI is not an inward awareness (but requires you to be in touch with your EQ), it is outwardly focused on the people you interact with. The five dimensions of SI defined by Karl Albrecht are: presence, clarity, awareness, authenticity and empathy.

A smile and remembering someone's name has far more impact than your intelligence or razor sharp wit! In business, SQ relates to how effectively you interact with the organisational structures (both formal and more importantly, informal) and by interacting, adapt the structures to your needs.

Nice guys no longer finish last – being socially sensitive is a pre-requisite to management success; and is directly aligned with a high SQ.