

Emotional Intelligence

The key to personal and professional success

What sets the best leaders apart, whether you're looking at a multinational corporation or a family farm business? For a long time, experts thought that success was based on a combination of technical skills and your intelligence (also known as your intelligence quotient or IQ). Yet while these two factors do play their roles in personal and professional success, they cannot fully explain or predict it.

In fact, according to psychologist Daniel Goleman, emotional intelligence and the skills that relate to it are twice as important as intellectual intelligence and technical skills in determining business success.

What is emotional intelligence (EI)?

Emotional intelligence is the capacity to monitor our own and others' feelings and emotions, and to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide our thinking and actions (Mayer and Salovey, 1997). In fact, EI allows us to use our feelings and intelligence to better manage our thoughts and behaviours in order to achieve our desired goals. These are "emotional competencies" — how we manage ourselves — and "social competencies" — how we manage our relationships with others.

For decades, emotions and feelings were considered a sign of weakness, especially for managers. On the contrary, far from being a weakness, using emotions along with proper management skills represents one of the main success factors of the best managers.

The fact is, emotions are always present. According to the neuroscientist Antonio Damasio, a rational decision is an impossible decision. Even when we are making what we believe is a decision based on logic, the actual point of choice is arguably always based on emotion.

This is why it is so important to better understand the role of emotions. As reported by the expert, Amy Boren, "the capacity to recognize and regulate emotions may serve as a tool that helps us perceive contextual clues more easily, managing our relationships more effectively and motivating ourselves and others to achieve goals."

What are the specific emotional competencies that seem to be shared by entrepreneurs? They include high levels of self-confidence, trustworthiness, and achievement and service orientation, as well as the ability to nurture change, teamwork and collaboration. Trustworthiness, the ability to maintain standards of honesty, integrity and collaboration, was ranked highest among 18 emotional competencies measured.

Is it possible to have all of these competencies at a very high



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level? It seems that in order to succeed, we do not need to master them all perfectly. However, acquiring or developing these competencies facilitates success.

Why are emotions so important in the workplace?

For business managers, the lack of emotional competencies in dealing with others weakens their personal performance as well as the performance of their employees. For example, a manager who doesn't know how to manage his anger and reacts in an impulsive manner will have a very negative impact on his employees' motivation and on the team spirit.

Poor emotional management will also negatively affect decision-making. When we are under the influence of strong emotions, our ability to make the right decisions is very limited because our judgment is biased and compromised. Furthermore, people who are more competent emotionally are better equipped to sense other people's emotions, and therefore better able to respond to them. Finally, emotional intelligence allows us to be

more creative and to use our emotions to resolve day-to-day problems.

What do leaders who are in the top 10 per cent have in common? They are emotionally intelligent. The higher up the ladder you are, and the more complex the job and the responsibilities are, the more that emotional competencies will pay off. Likewise, the poorer they are, the more it's going to hold you back.

Research demonstrates that, on average, the managers in the top 10 per cent will produce twice the revenues compared to the managers in the other 90 per cent. So what about you when you are the one who makes all the decisions?

When we examine bankruptcies, we discover that expertise and technical skills are rarely the cause. Emo-

tional competency is the missing factor.

If we wish to expand and to continue to perform in agriculture, we must focus on competencies that were underestimated in the past, i.e. emotional competencies. In order to be more efficient, business leaders need to show emotional intelligence. Fortunately, these competencies can be developed. In the end, it seems that we have to take our emotions to the office... or to the barn after all.

To evaluate your Emotional Intelligence, go to my website at: http://www.pierrettedesrosiers.com/outils_en.html and choose Emotional Intelligence Self-Assessment. **CG**

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PERSONAL COMPETENCIES	SOCIAL COMPETENCIES
Self-awareness (of feelings, preferences, internal resources and intuitions)	Empathy (awareness of feelings, needs and worries of others)
Self-regulation (of feelings, impulses and internal resources)	Social competencies (in order to generate desired responses from others)
Self-motivation (tendencies that facilitate the achievement of goals)	<hr/> Goleman, Daniel

“Emotional Intelligence sets successful business people apart”

—Daniel Goleman