



Emotional Intelligence: What's New, What's True — Improving EQ with Behavioral Styles

This paper discusses the following aspects of Emotional Intelligence:

- What EQ is and why it matters
- Can EQ be learned?
- The business case for EQ
- EQ and leadership
- Improving EQ by applying Behavioral Styles



Emotional Intelligence: What's New, What's True **Improving EQ with Behavioral Styles**

1. An insurance company found the average policy sold by one group of agents is \$54K, while another group sold policies with an average of \$114K. ¹
2. The U.S. Air Force increased its ability to successfully predict recruiter success by three-fold and reduced recruiting expense by \$3 million. ¹
3. A study of more than 500 executive search candidates identified emotional competence as significantly better predictor of placement success than intelligence or prior experience. Findings were consistent in all countries and cultures. ¹

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.

J&J was among 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. ²

**This whitepaper is based on a webinar presentation made April 29, 2009.
The webinar is available for On-Demand viewing at HR.com.
[Click here to watch this webinar.](#)**



What is 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 Mayer 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. But it was his 1998 article in Harvard Business Review³ that sparked great interest in the business community.

The key premise of Emotional Intelligence is that EQ skills relate to how effectively people work with others, specifically around:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Management

1) Self-Awareness

Self-Awareness means having a clear understanding of one’s emotions, strengths, weaknesses, drives and capabilities. On the surface there’s really nothing new about this concept – it’s been touted for thousands of years. But it’s a critical skill and it’s overlooked by many people.

It’s so important because people with a high degree of self-awareness recognize how their feelings and values affect them, and this relates to how they interact with others. They tend to be very thoughtful in the sense that they take time to think about the things that are important to them, and how their work and lives relate to these things. This self reflection helps them to be aware of both their limitations and strengths, and they’re candid about this.

2) Self-Management

Goleman says that Self-Management frees us from being prisoners to our emotions. Without understanding what we’re feeling, we can’t control our feelings and this leaves us at the mercy of our emotions. This is okay when it comes to positive emotions like enthusiasm or success, but it’s a problem if we’re controlled by negative emotions like frustration or anxiety.

People with this mastery are usually optimistic, upbeat and enthusiastic. This is particularly important in the workplace because emotions are literally contagious.



What is Emotional Intelligence? (continued)

“In my executive coaching practice, I use Social Style and Emotional Intelligence to help build more effective leaders.

Emotional Intelligence and Social Style provide a common language to talk about problems and accomplishments. Both help diagnose day-to-day situations and help us to discover how best to deal with differences. We often role play difficult situations where the leader needs to prepare for an upcoming interaction. Our debriefing becomes very powerful when we talk about their experience using EQ and Social Style language and concepts.

Together, the models provide the coach and leader a powerful tool to improve interpersonal and leadership effectiveness.”

*— Rob VeVerka
President, Professional Learning Systems
and Executive Coach,
TopLevelCoaching.com*

3) Social Awareness

The third component of Goleman’s EQ model, Social Awareness, is mostly about empathy. It’s the ability to read another person’s facial expressions, voice and non-verbal signals in order to understand that person’s emotions. This is especially important for leaders because by staying attuned to how people are feeling, they can say and do what is most appropriate. For example, they can try to calm people’s fears, lessen anger, or in a more positive example have a good time at the office party.

4) Relationship Management

Relationship Management is where these three skills all come together. This is the most visible aspect of a person, and in particular leaders. This is where you see skills like conflict management, team building, and influencing others.

Leaders with good skills in the first three areas of EQ will usually be effective at managing relationships because they’re attuned to their own emotions and this means that they’ll approach relationships from a position of authenticity. It’s not just being friendly, but it’s what Goleman calls “friendliness with

a purpose”: motivating people in the direction you desire. These people are very good at developing networks, not necessarily because they’re highly sociable, but rather because they understand that nothing gets done alone and they’re skilled at being able to work with others.

These EQ skills are unique from a person’s technical skills and cognitive abilities. According to Goleman’s research: 90% of the difference between star performers and average performers was attributable to EQ competencies.³

This and other research show that EQ skills are directly linked to critical business measures and individual success, more so than traditional measures such as IQ. It’s not that IQ and traditional factors are not important. Clearly they are. But IQ and various job-specific skills are essentially entry requirements, particularly in leadership and managerial positions.

For more information about Daniel Goleman and his work, [click here](#).



Can Emotional Intelligence 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.

The truth is that some people will be more naturally gifted than others, but the good news is that EQ skills can be learned. There's been some clear research on this, and our own research at TRACOM has 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.

Most of us can think of people who seem to have a natural ability to work well with others. So while EQ may be an important talent, is it something that can be developed or is it something a person is born with?

Research is available that clearly shows EQ can be learned. Dr. Fabio Sala of The Hay Group found that workshop interventions are effective at improving EQ.⁴ A study at Case Western University found that EQ training not only improves performance, but such gains are retained over many years.⁷

So the good news for business is that while there may be a genetic pre-disposition towards Emotional Intelligence, these skills can be developed and they tend to be retained for the long-term. There is certainly a need for practice and reinforcement to build these skills. And finally, EQ skills won't be improved without a sincere desire to do so.



EQ and Leadership

While EQ is relevant in almost any work situation where people work collaboratively, the use of EQ to improve leadership and managerial performance is of great interest to the HR community. And the current challenging economy has everyone trying to achieve more productivity with fewer resources. It's this desire for high performance that led TRACOM to look more closely at EQ.

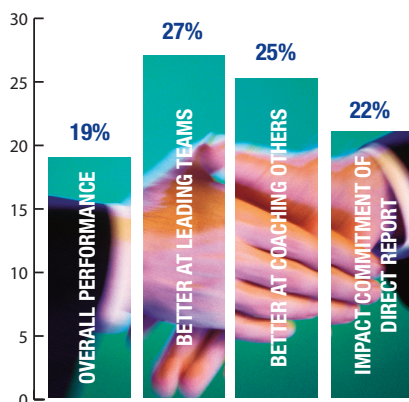
For 50 years TRACOM has helped organizations achieve higher performance through training and interpersonal skills development. Our experience with companies of all size, shows that effective leaders can improve the performance of their organizations.

Certainly different situations necessitate different leadership techniques. And in practice a leader with good EQ skills is able to assess a situation and determine an appropriate response. Without EQ, a person with high IQ, great experience and good ideas will not become a great leader.

And the higher a leader advances, the more important Emotional Intelligence becomes. But the potential for EQ problems also rises with more senior executives. Research conducted by Fabio Sala showed that higher level executives consistently rated themselves higher on EQ competencies than did their lower-level colleagues. They have an inflated view of their EQ.⁵

Sala suggested that the rating difference may be related to a lack of objective information about their own skills, saying that senior executives typically have fewer opportunities for feedback because of their position and that people are often less inclined to give constructive feedback to people in positions senior to themselves.

**MANAGERS WITH HIGH VERSATILITY
SIGNIFICANTLY OUTPERFORM LOW VERSATILITY**
The Case for Versatility Training



Tracom's Versatility measure distinguishes high performance.



Putting EQ to Work

Starwood Hotels Case

- *Starwood Hotels*
 - 940+ hotels in 90 countries
 - 150,000 employee associates
 - *Delivered integrated Emotional Intelligence and SOCIAL STYLE training to 100K+*
 - *Goal: Creating a service culture*
 - *How: Develop front-line employees' ability to understand a situation and effectively respond to the unique and individual needs of each customer.*
 - *Result: "Teaching Emotional Intelligence and SOCIAL STYLE is an important part of achieving a culture of customer service. It's allowed Starwood Hotels to move from relying on scripted interactions to having Associates who are able to make thoughtful decisions about how to most effectively respond to the needs and requests of our customers. And it's improved our overall customer satisfaction."*
- Allison Barber, vice president talent management, Starwood Hotels

One criticism of Emotional Intelligence that we often hear is that it sounds good in theory but it's difficult to put into practice. And some of the proponents of EQ don't seem to do a very good job of examining what it looks like in the day-to-day workplace, or how it can be practiced and enhanced.

One of the real issues here is that Emotional Intelligence tends to be somewhat generic in its focus. It assumes that all people can display these skills in more or less the same ways. Goleman and his colleagues are clear that not all effective leaders possess all EQ skills, and that much of the value of EQ is situational – certain situations will call for some EQ skills more than others.

What's often overlooked, though, is that there's another dimension of behavior that influences how people act and also how they interpret the behavior of others. At TRACOM we've been researching these behavioral Styles for nearly 50 years and we've found that each Style is predictably different in how they like to get work done, communicate, make decisions, and use time.

TRACOM's SOCIAL STYLE is recognized as the premier model for interpersonal behavior. It identifies four

unique Styles of behavior: Driving, Expressive, Amiable and Analytical. People of each Style have preferred ways of using their time, making decisions and interacting with others. Every person has their own comfort zone based on their SOCIAL STYLE and when we interact with others, those preferences can conflict with each other.

So even though a person might learn about EQ and practice those skills, others will always perceive this behavior within the framework of that person's SOCIAL STYLE

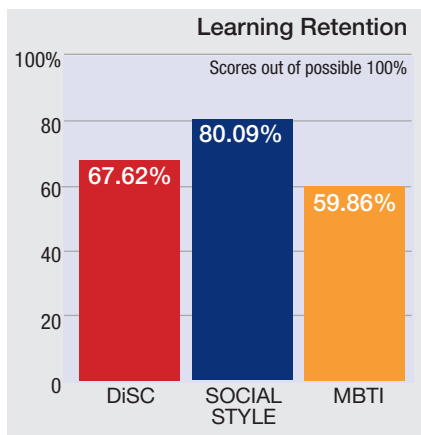
Consider this example of how two different Style people may behave. Driving Style people have a need for results and they try to achieve their need by taking action. They tend to be very fast paced and impatient. Amiable Style people, on the other hand, have a need for maintaining personal security in their relationships. They place a high value on maintaining friendly and harmonious relationships with their co-workers, and they tend to be slower paced and more patient than Driving Style people.

When it comes to displaying EQ skills like optimism and adaptability, two of the competencies of Self-Management, these two Styles will behave differently. Driving Style individuals usually don't



Putting EQ to Work (continued)

Colorado State University conducted a research study in conjunction with Regis Learning Solutions that compares the effectiveness of interpersonal skills training programs from three popular providers: the **Myers-Briggs Type Indicator®** model from CCP, Inc., the **DiSC®** model from Inscape Publishing and the **SOCIAL STYLE MODEL™** from the TRACOM™ Group.



show optimism through exciting speeches or a cheerful presence. Instead, their optimism comes across as confidence that things will turn out alright, and that positive outcomes will happen through taking a course of action. They're going to show their enthusiasm by actively working on problems and showing self confidence that they and the team will succeed.

In terms of adaptability, many Driving Style people tend to see change as a challenge that should be met head on. Instead of ruminating on all of the problems that the change is going to cause, a Driving Style person with a high level of adaptability will focus on how to influence the change and make it a benefit instead of a detriment. These people are so action-oriented that they may actually be faster to respond to change than is comfortable for people of other Styles.

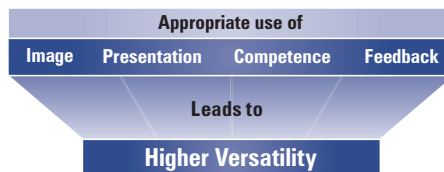
Contrast this to the Amiable Style person. When they're feeling hopeful and optimistic about things, they'll be outwardly cheerful towards coworkers and show a lot of energy around work activities. They'll be very talkative and upbeat in what they say, and this can have a big impact on workgroups because, as we pointed out earlier, emotions are contagious. These are the types of people who are very skilled at

rallying the troops to a cause through their enthusiasm and optimism. When confronted with a dramatic change, these people's personal adaptability will often show itself in terms of how the change will impact the group. They'll be very focused on trying to ensure that there's benefit for the team, so their adaptability in this regard is often focused on achieving benefits for the people who work for them, or ensuring that the change won't negatively affect the cohesion of the work group.

The key point of this example is that just as self awareness is important for developing Emotional Intelligence, it's also critical to understand your own natural Style of behavior and not try to force fit EQ behavior into your own repertoire in an unnatural way. Any of the EQ skills can be applied, but they are most effective when applied in ways that are most natural for your Social Style. Trying to act in ways that aren't comfortable for your Style will usually come across to others as contrived or insincere.

2009 Research on EQ and Versatility

The other key principle from the SOCIAL STYLE model is Versatility. Versatility is a measure of a person's interpersonal effectiveness. Like Emotional Intelligence, Versatility has several sub-components: image, presentation, competence and feedback.



Versatility complements EQ in important ways. The Versatility model focuses on aspects of Emotional Intelligence that are most relevant to the workplace.

Researchers at Colorado State University have just completed a study that compared Versatility to two separate measures of EQ, and they found a significant relationship between Versatility and EQ.

Thus the correlations Colorado State University found between Versatility and EQ are extremely high, showing a very close connection between these two measures.

Comparison of TRACOM's Versatility Model and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) and Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (SREI)	
TEIQue	0.88 correlation
SREI	0.78 correlation
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 79% in bottom of 25% of Versatility also scored in bottom 25% of TEIQue 88% of top 25% of Versatility also scored in top 25% of TEIQue 	

Other correlations for comparison (Higher correlation indicates stronger relationships)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.11 correlation between taking an anti-histamine & reduced sneezing/runny nose
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.20 correlation between a successful job interview and actual job success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 0.60 correlation between proximity to the equator and higher temperature

The main take away from this research is that by working on Versatility and an awareness of Style and how different people respond to behavior, you can also increase your EQ.

This research shows that by learning about behavioral style and how it impacts Versatility, people can also improve their Emotional Intelligence. TRACOM offers a wide variety of training programs including programs developed to teach Versatility within the responsibilities of managers, sales professionals and individual contributors. [Learn more.](#)



Summary

In today's economy, organizations are looking for ways to improve their productivity. Emotional Intelligence has emerged as a resource to improve the performance of individuals and their organizations. And as research continues to document, EQ is making a difference. There are objective, measurable benefits associated with EQ including increased sales, better recruiting and retention and more effective leadership.

Further, there is evidence that EQ skills can be developed through training programs. SOCIAL STYLE and Versatility training teach specific skills that increase Emotional Intelligence. Developing this expertise in behavioral styles makes individuals and their organizations more productive and effective.



Citations and Additional Resources:

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- ⁷ Boyatzis, Richard E. "Unleashing the Power of Self-Directed Learning." Case Western Reserve University; Original Reference - Reprinted With Permission Boyatzis, R.E. "Unleashing the power of self-directed learning." In R. Sims (ed.), *Changing the Way We Manage Change: The Consultants Speak*. NY: Quorum Books, 2002. http://www.eiconsortium.org/reprints/self-directed_learning.html
- ⁸ Adler, Michel; Cherniss, Cary; Cowan, Kim; Emmerling, Robert and Goleman, Daniel. "Guidelines for Best Practice." 1998. <http://www.eiconsortium.org/reports/guidelines.html>.
- ⁹ The Emotional Intelligence Consortium – www.eiconsortium.org
The mission of the EI Consortium is to advance research and practice of emotional and social intelligence in organizations through the generation and exchange of knowledge. <http://www.eiconsortium.org>.



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