



Leadership Tips
March 2019:
Get Smarter...
Increase
Your
Emotional
Intelligence

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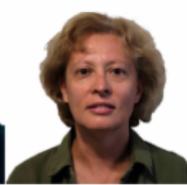
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Are you obsessed with being right? Are you consumed with knowing all the answers? How does this help you lead others? How does proving you're right, or that you know all the answers, strengthen your team, its morale and confidence in themselves? Have you ever worked for someone who was fixated on being the smartest one in the room, on the team or in the organization? How did that feel for you?

If you are super smart and think that you are right most of the time, it can certainly limit your openness to others' input and undermine your relationships. Consider this story of a brilliant professional lacking self-awareness of her impact on others and the effect on her team.

We recently coached an executive VP. As part of the buyout package when her company was acquired she was asked to stay on in the same capacity. As a subject matter expert she was right 99% of the time; her ego had swelled significantly. She was acting in self-righteous ways and causing considerable friction in the office.

After we administered an [EQ-360 assessment](#) and reviewed the results with her she was astounded. She had no idea how her behavior was impacting others. Now she saw how her attitude was very offensive to others.

We [coached](#) her to be strategically and appropriately vulnerable. For the first time, she was able to publicly admit when she made a mistake, without the sky falling. She began asking for help and seeking input from others, who now felt more valued. And as a result, her credibility improved and she was able to develop a deeply supportive relationship with the new CEO and with her team.

Transformation isn't an overnight fix. It takes time to change patterns. In her case the change took a year and a half but the change was profound and in his case liberating. In her own words, "The best thing I learned from the assessment and coaching was that I didn't have to be right all the time."

Showing vulnerability is not a sign of weakness on your part, but of strength. Humility also makes you more approachable, and allows others to safely show their own vulnerability.

2. Being Courageous Instead of Fearful

Like everyone, leaders with high EQ have fears too. Yet they don't let their fears immobilize them, consuming their time and psychic energy. They confront their fears, proactively. They display a bias to action that inspires others.

The Consulting Team was brought in to coach an Executive Director of a non-profit. In his new position José was consumed with fear...of rejection, of not being liked, and of failing. As a result, he didn't have the courage to say no to the many requests that came his way. As you can imagine, this was problematic as he fell behind, missed deadlines, saw overall productivity declining, and disappointed others in the process.

First, we administered an assessment and reviewed the results with him and his board. Then we worked with him and his overseer to help him understand the impact of his saying yes and of not saying no, was having on others. We then expanded the discussion to address the discipline of time management techniques and importance of prioritizing skills. And over a period of several months he better managed his workload, became more assertive in declining certain requests and, in the process, enhanced his own credibility as he kept his eye on the most important priorities and improved his delivery record. Both José and the board were happier over time as he found his groove in this new position.

Fear can be a de-motivator is left unchecked. Turn your fear into focus and others will follow your lead. Leaders lacking EQ will dwell in fear. More confident leaders with higher EQ focus on their goals, as should you.

3. Listen First, Listen More, Listen Empathically

While decisiveness is important for leaders, so too is making informed decisions after weighing many points of view. When we have a closed mind, rush to judgments or don't solicit input from others we run the risk of alienating others and miss opportunities for healthy debate, idea refinement and collaborative inspiration.

As president of a fast-growing tech company, Brad was anything but open-minded. Others considered him impatient, judgmental, condescending, a poor listener and allergic to collaboration. Simply put, he was hard to work with, and hard to work for.

Through ensuing individual coaching and team-coaching, he was able to increase his own self-awareness and improve his relationship skills. Over time he began to consciously demonstrate patience, focus on listening better, and engage deeper with his employees. The new Brad was able to better express empathy as his more mindful listening helped him see more clearly the strengths and

needs of the employees he was leading. This brought a closeness to his team. They felt valued and that he cared.

Time spent up front listening to others will pay dividends down the road through better understanding, team cohesion, and appreciation for each other. Emotionally intelligent leaders invest in relationship-building.

Unenlightened leaders regard listening as passive and less meaningful than dispensing answers or solving problems. High EQ leaders see listening as a precursor to experiencing and expressing empathy. Employees trust leaders implicitly who listen deeply and express empathy.

4. Risk-Taking Leads to Rewards; Avoiding Risks is Riskier Business

Leaders with low EQ often play it safe and are risk-averse, not realizing they are doing themselves and their teams a disservice. Few realize the risks involved in avoiding risk-taking.

We coached with a private sector CFO who was really smart, and very shy. Like many numbers people, Samantha was reserved by nature and very quiet. Yet she possessed great vision. In our one-on-one coaching sessions we helped her understand how important her presence was at every meeting, where before she'd been almost invisible. She began to realize people wanted - and needed - to hear from her. They wanted her to share her point of view and vision. We coached her to develop talking points in advance of the meeting to facilitate discussion. Expressing herself has simultaneously boosted her esteem, benefited her company and strengthened her team.

Ironically, staying in one's comfort zone can be dangerous. By stepping outside of hers, Samantha grew her emotional intelligence as she was asserting her leadership.

EQ Rising

As a leader, are you already looking for ways of increasing your emotional intelligence? Are you ready to take an EQ assessment? Are you open to learning more about your strengths and opportunities for growth. Are you excited about finding ways to better engage with your colleagues, co-workers and direct-reports? Can you benefit from one-on-one or team coaching? As part of your continuous improvement plan let's talk about ways we can help you increase your EQ (Emotional Intelligence Quotient).

It's Time to Q-Up

Leaders who apply emotional intelligence to their communications, interactions and relationships become more effective and achieve greater results. From self-awareness comes improved social awareness that strengthens team cohesion and effectiveness. We cordially invite you to develop your emotional intelligence in concert with your native intelligence and reap the rewards.



COACHING:

Do you have a leader or employee in need of coaching to improve their leadership, communication skills (including listening skills), emotional intelligence or customer service? *Let us help.*

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ASSESSMENT TOOLS:

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CONFLICT MEDIATION AND COACHING:

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Contact The Consulting Team to learn more about training and consulting assistance and also one-to-one coaching for leaders and employees.

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