



Managers who can't relate often fail as office leaders

Rating 'emotional intelligence' first step to success

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The president of a \$5 million organization recently became interested in executive coaching for her own growth and development. She knew she had issues appreciating her employees' diverse perspectives and business styles and wanted to become more successful by improving her workplace relationships.

To determine a plan of action, her executive coach first measured her emotional intelligence.



**EXECUTIVE
COACHING**

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Emotional intelligence (known as EI) describes a person's ability, capacity or skill to perceive, assess and manage one's emotions and the emotions of others and groups. EI differs from cognitive intelligence in that it is interpersonal intelligence - not necessarily associated with rational thought or IQ.

Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills are the five dimensions of EI. These have roots in social intelligence, and they allow one to recognize feelings and use that recognition to influence cognition and actions.

Emerging research has shown that having these traits is vital to success in the workplace.

APPLYING EI TO THE JOB

From universities to boardrooms, experts are discussing emotional intelligence and how it affects relationships and predicts success in business. Many believe that if you can master your own emotions and the ability to perceive other's emotions as a manager, then it follows that you can grow and develop these things within the people you are charged with leading.

Research by the Center for Creative Leadership has found that the primary causes of derailment in executives involve deficits in emotional competence. The three primary ones are difficulty in handling change, not being able to work

well in a team and poor interpersonal relations.

The need to understand and develop EI is growing in business environments because companies are learning that demonstrating competency in self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and social skills at the appropriate time can result in outstanding performance and increased retention. EI traits can also be used to benefit people dealing with a conflict or negotiation.

TOOLS FOR MEASUREMENT

There are several tools used to determine a person's level of emotional intelligence in order to target the best approach to strengthening self-awareness and, in turn, increasing the probability for leadership success.

For example, 360 degree Feedback is one measurement tool that can provide practical feedback on the development of EI. This is an assessment tool from an individual's "circle of influence." It measures others' opinions in a formalized manner.

In past years, most companies did individual assessments by seeking feedback primarily from the individual's supervisor or the owner of the business. With 360 Feedback, evaluations come from managers, peers, subordinates and self, and are pulled into a multi-source feedback or group performance review.

The Birkman Method is another tool used for measuring EI. It's a personality assessment that facilitates team-building, executive coaching, leadership development, career management and interpersonal conflict resolution.

The Birkman Method creates a multi-dimensional portrait of individuals by highlighting their usual behaviors, stress behaviors, underlying needs and motivators and organizational orientation. The Birkman helps individuals know their own interests and passions and then begin to understand how they may differ from others' perspectives.

TAKING ACTION

Vivian Kist, chief learning officer and executive coach for Baker & Daboll in Cincinnati, just finished a six-month engagement with the

aforementioned president of a \$5 million organization. To measure her emotional intelligence, Kist and her colleagues had the executive complete both a competency-based 360 evaluation and a Birkman questionnaire.

The results showed the client had very little appreciation for other people's business styles, she overwhelmed her colleagues on a regular basis and her expectations of herself were unrealistic.

The executive used this nonjudgmental, non-threatening look into the mirror as a way to gain a better understanding of others' perspectives of her.

She then started building on her strengths and managing her limitations to become a stronger leader.

Based on these findings and some significant self-awareness exercises, she was able to begin to modify her behavior. Kist's team challenged her to develop her weakest components of her emotional intelligence by introducing her to an active listening model.

The simple model of acknowledging input, being aware of her body language and responding with clarifying question was one tool that helped her improve her EI competencies and her relationships with colleagues.

SUCCESS IN THE WORKPLACE

After her assessment and coaching, this executive's direct reports noticed her improved behavior. They found she was more open to ideas and they became less inhibited to present them to her. Their creative juices flowed after they saw that she could now appreciate their unique perspectives.

"The organization is now exceeding all of their goals and this individual is being discussed for a national position," said Kist. "This shows how self-awareness can have a huge impact."

Uterstaedt is the president, CEO and senior executive coach at Baker & Daboll. For more information on emotional intelligence or executive coaching, contact Baker & Daboll LLC at (513) 339-1007 or visit them at www.bakerdaboll.com.