



The Busy Leader's News Brief

Gray Matter™

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On the Flip Side

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NOTABLE QUOTABLE

"Judge a man by his questions, rather than by his answers."

- Voltaire

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Hired on experience, fired on personality

In a study of 500 managers on 3 continents, Egon Zehnder International found that unsuccessful managers, each with exceptional IQ's and experience, lacked emotional intelligence. (Sometimes referred to as emotional strength.)

Psychologist and researcher Daniel Goleman, discovered that emotional intelligence skills account for an astounding 90 percent of the success of senior leaders.

A growing consensus on professional leadership shows that people who rise to the top of their field from finance to law, to medicine or other aren't just good at their jobs.

They're affable, resilient and

optimistic. In other words, traditional cognitive intelligence, or IQ, may not be enough.

It also takes 'emotional intelligence' or EQ: the ability to restrain negative feelings such as anger and self-doubt, and instead focus on positive ones such as confidence and congeniality.

In his 1995 book, Goleman organizes emotional intelligence into four Domains: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management.

Debate remains on the definition of EQ but such studies add new metrics to the old mantra of executive recruiters: "Hired

on experience, and fired on personality."

Whereas IQ is relatively fixed, emotional intelligence (or strength) can be learned.

So how do you increase workplace EQ? The best way is to work with a professional qualified to teach EQ skills.

But what's the payoff? Not only is job performance enhanced but higher EQ can improve relationships in every area of life. Happier bees are more productive bees!

With the costs of turnover (150% of payroll) and workplace conflicts, that's a terrific ROI.

*Sources: ASTD, APA, and
Pierce Management Development*

Rope-a-dope & sting like a bee.

To effectively deal with uncertainty, organizations need to have the two main characteristics of professional boxers: agility and the power of absorption.

Organizational agility is the ability to identify and capitalize on opportunities faster than the competition, providing the firm with a competitive advantage.

Organizations with operational agility can identify opportunities to improve processes, which will generate cost reductions and quality improve-

ments. Asset or portfolio agility allows firms to quickly reallocate resources such as cash and talent to more attractive units. Strategic agility is management's ability to seize game-changing opportunities that can quickly create a great deal of value.

Taking advantage of these opportunities may require entering a new market aggressively or taking a chance on a new technology that competitors have not yet embraced. Firms also need to absorb damage and

wait for golden opportunities to come along; to do this, they need to have the adequate size, diversity, and cash reserves available.

One example of adapting to this environment is GE. They are breaking into a number of independent units that can make decisions quickly despite high levels of absorption.

So if you want to be a champion, train like Ali: to take a punch and still sting like a bee.

*Source: Harvard Business Review (02/09)
Vol. 87, No. 2, P. 78;*

Mr. Leader: Tear down those walls!



Times of crisis can actually benefit companies in several ways, for example by finally forcing management to focus on the real priorities due to a sense of urgency.

But it's also a great opportunity to do something that the "Great Communicator" asked another leader to do with historic results: tear down a wall.

Sales, finance, legal, operations, HR, and every other discipline bring different perspectives. Cross-functional and cross-organizational teams should be created that examine key issues.

A choreographed move from turf wars to communal farming can grow the harvest. Protect teams from individuals with personal agendas that focus on their own opportunities at the expense of others.

A crisis is also a great time to re-instill the story and purpose of an organization to boost identity and coordinate peoples' actions.

Tearing down walls requires building (or rebuilding) trust.

Face-to-face communication, not memos and feel-good banners, encourages trust during change. Taking risks

to invest in change requires clear and personal executive endorsement.

That can't happen if leadership is squirreled away behind closed doors in enclaves crafting the next epiphany from on high.

Pay attention to the generational wall: fresh perspectives are great but "The people who have made you successful in the past often have unique insight into what may help you in the future." Work to go from compete to complement.

Source: Seattle Post-Intelligencer (WA) (02/16/09) P. B7; Moriarty, Maureen

Ignored 'soft' skills: A hard lesson in tough times.



One can lead a project, a market, an industry, but to effectively accomplish those goals, one must first successfully lead people.

How is that done? By building a tremendous set of technical skills? Developing significant core competency muscles? Being the best marketer, scientist, operations manager?

Yes and no. It takes a whole

menu of talents to reach leadership levels.

But in time of a crisis, to effectively and quickly implement a new strategy or make major changes means converting others to believers — followers.

That takes more than fancy strategic footwork. It takes the ability to communicate credibility, trust and motivation — often referred to as the

soft skills.

"Such skills are essential, indispensable and equally important to the 'hard' skills," says Ruth Sherman, communications consultant and author of [Get Them to See It Your Way, Right Away](#).

And like insurance, it's critical to have them *before* you think you will need them.

Source: R. Greenspan, ExecuNet, 1.28.08

CAUTION: Cause marketing can be hazardous to your health.

"Cause marketing" is the term being used today to describe all manner of cross-promotional efforts between for-profit businesses and non-profit organizations.

More than 1 of every 4 retailers are promoting charities at some level — and the Web seems to be speeding that growth.

Research shows 64% say they

have purchased from a brand because it supported a cause they believe in.

A 2001 survey suggested that 81% would choose one brand over another if a cause were involved, assuming price and quality were similar.

If you have done due diligence, and your stakeholders understand and believe in the cause, great! But sales people

for cause marketing—with noble titles in the nonprofit world like corporate outreach or community development officer — have their own agendas which may not coincide with your best interests.

Never ever assume your customers share the values to which you are hitching your corporate wagon just because the charity makes that claim.

Sources: FutureNow; Synapse



NEVER ASSUME