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Emotional Intelligence as predictor of performance

# Introduction

Throughout history, there are people who excel more than the others. Some are admired for being successful in life, while many seem to live in despair and constant regrets. So, how do we become who we want to be**?**

When the concept of emotional intelligence was first introduced to the masses in 1995, scholars knew it was the missing link that could explain why people with average IQ were found to outperform those with the highest IQs 70% of the time. Yes, success isn’t really about IQ. It is mostly about your EQ.Body.

# Body

1. What is Emotional Intelligence?

Emotional Intelligence or EQ is that intangible thing within us that affects how we navigate social complexities and manage our behavior to achieve positive results. It is made up of four core skills including self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management skills. The first two refer to our ability to stay aware of our emotions and manage behavior and tendencies. The latter two refer to our ability to understand other people in order improve the quality of our relationships with them.

1. How Does Emotional Intelligence affect our lives?

In the late 1960s, researchers observed hundreds of four-year-olds to test willpower: the children were placed in a small room with a tempting food (i.e. a marshmallow or a cookie). They were told they could either eat one treat now, or, hold out for another 15 minutes and get two.

Some kids said they would wait, but some wanted to wait but could not. Many were able to hold on for minutes but they eventually gave in. Those who succeeded were those who found means to distract themselves by covering their eyes, turning around and other creative ways to avoid eating the treat for 15 minutes.

Fourteen years later, those same kids were surveyed again. The researchers found some remarkable differences between those who held out for the second marshmallow and those who didn’t. The first group generally grew up to be adventurous, confident and better adjusted teenagers. The other group, on the other hand, became more likely to be lonely and stubborn. The kids’ SAT scores also showed that those who held out scored an average of 210 points higher. These findings only show that managing one’s responses to an impulse by delaying gratification predicts an individual’s ability to perform.

EQ contribute much to our professional success. It helps us focus our energy in one direction to achieve tremendous results. In a more recent study, TalentSmart found strong evidences that EQ is the strongest predictor of performance. The results showed that 90% of top performers are also high in EQ while only 20% of bottom performers are high in EQ. The link between EQ and earnings is so strong that every point increase in one’s EQ adds $1,300 to his annual salary.

1. Can Emotional Intelligence be developed?

Unlike IQ, an individual’s EQ can actually be increased tremendously as the person consciously strives to improve it. Using strategies to increase EQ allows billions of neurons lining the road between the emotional and the rational centers of the brain, allowing them to branch off small “arms” to reach out to the other cells. So, once the brain is trained, emotionally intelligent behaviors become habits.

 Neurologists describe our brain’s ability to change as “plasticity”.

1. How can we develop Emotional Intelligence?

Stephen Covey suggests five ways to develop EQ.

1. We’ll need to develop self-awareness by realizing our capacity to be the main driving force in our lives.
2. We have to practice self-motivation.
3. We’ll then have to regulate ourselves by executing tactical decisions to make ourselves do what we want to do.
4. We need to develop empathy so we could get into the head and hearts of other people.
5. Lastly, we’ll be more emotionally smart if we become better social communicators.

# Conclusion

For a minute, think about what this implies to what we need to learn. If we could consciously develop our EQs, we can soon learn to channel our feelings into positive behaviors and develop self-control. Eventually, we’ll all be able to take full control of situations, our emotions and responses, and our lives.

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