

Emotional Intelligence.

Emotional intelligence has been accused of being nothing more than 'old wine in a new bottle'. A fair comment when you consider 'psychosocial factors' have long been influencing the way we think, define and measure intelligence.

For some time now it has been accepted that intelligence is not just a measure of cognitive abilities such as memory and problem solving. As early as the 1940s, David Wechsler referred to 'non-intellective' as well as 'intellective' elements of intelligence, the non-intellective being affective, personal and social factors. He wasn't on his own in his thinking either. In the late 1930's, Robert Thorndike was talking about the importance of 'social intelligence' in adaptation and success. However, interest and research into social/psychosocial aspects of intelligence ceased for a while, and it wasn't until the 1980s when Howard Gardner introduced us to the concept of 'multiple intelligences' that interest and research into 'non-cognitive' intelligences made a resurgence.

By the 1990's, Salovey and Mayer coined the term 'Emotional Intelligence'. They described emotional intelligence as "a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action". When one looks at the definition and emotional competencies outlined in this model ([click here for a free pdf of 'The Emotional Competence Framework', published by the EI Consortium](#)) one can clearly see that Salovey and Mayer share similar views on the concept of 'multiple intelligences' with researchers such as Wechsler, Thorndike and Gardner. Surely, this demonstrates scientific research and rigour at its best. What we have here are similar arguments from a number of well-documented researchers all asking similar questions and presenting both their understanding and empirical data to the scientific community.

As an advocate of emotional intelligence, and its practical applications for the workplace and personal development, I would like to leave a small consideration for those sceptics who have little knowledge or understanding of emotional intelligence – "some wines mature and develop an optimum flavour whilst sitting on a shelf for a while". Shouldn't today's concept of emotional intelligence – or this 'old wine in a new bottle' be sampled before judgment is made? Surely, one should be aware of the research underpinning 'emotional intelligence' and theory on which it is based before brandishing it as nothing new".

A Business case for Emotional Intelligence

Since the publication of Daniel Coleman's book in the 1990s, emotional intelligence has become one of the hottest buzzwords in corporate America. Numerous studies, conducted on both sides of the Atlantic, in both the public and private sector, have found emotional intelligence plays a critical role in increasing levels of performance/productivity (*Cavallo & Brienza, 2001; Hunter, Schmidt, & Judiesch, 1990; Boyatzis 1982; Bachman, et al, 2000*); and sales (*Spencer and Spencer 1993; Spencer, McClelland & Kelner, 1997; May, McBer Research Innovation Group 1997*); whilst decreasing grievances/accidents and time lost (*Porras & Anderson 1982*).

Emotional intelligence can be measured on either an individual or a group level. Individual measures can help a person identify their strengths and weaknesses; they also provide information that can be used to set 'development points'. In contrast, group based measures (such as multi-rater-360° surveys) are useful as they can provide an insight into a person's perceived strengths and weaknesses compared to others' perceptions of them within an organisation, or similar role. They also provide feedback on potential discrepancies in how a person perceives themselves, and how others perceive them. Again, this information is useful in setting 'development points'.

Widespread interest and empirical data continue to support the importance of emotional intelligence within any organisation. At the Kade Consultancy, our highly qualified team of Educational and Occupational Psychologists have the professional skills and competencies to administer, interpret, and give feedback on a variety of psychological assessments. From intelligence tests (both cognitive and non-cognitive) to personality and ability testing; whether downsizing, restructuring, recruitment and selection or career development we have the tools and expertise to assist your business in meeting its legal requirements in decision making.

For your free emotional intelligence best practice guidelines, published by the EI Consortium please [click here](#).

If you are interested in emotional intelligence, then why not subscribe to the EI consortium (www.eiconsortium.org). In their free monthly newsletter, you will be kept up to date with the latest research and current trends and practices on emotional intelligence.

All information in this document has been taken from the EI consortium.

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