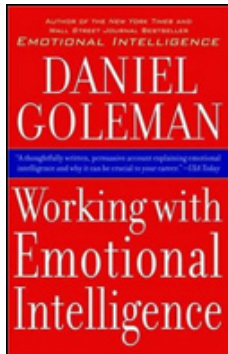


# Book Reviews for Managers

## Working With Emotional Intelligence

by Daniel Goleman



Bantam Books, 2000,  
ISBN #0-553-37858-9

*"Somewhere between 75% to 90% of effective performance is attributable to "emotional intelligence."*

### REVIEWED BY IAN COOK

What are the ingredients that make up *superior performers* in our organizations? Must they be intelligent? know their stuff? have unyielding drive? be likeable? Recent research indicates grey matter and technical/job knowledge are but threshold competencies. What differentiates the "stars" are the personal qualities, the so-called "soft skills." It appears that Antoine de St.-Exupéry perhaps got it right in *The Little Prince* when he said, "That which is essential is invisible to the eye."

The top two reasons managers are "derailed" in their careers, according to the Center for Creative Leadership, are

1. inability/unwillingness to adapt and
2. failure to establish and maintain collaborative working relationships.

Now Dan Goleman has followed his 1995 groundbreaking book, *Emotional Intelligence*, with a cutting edge application of his research to the world of work. *If you are at all concerned about human performance and development in your organization, read this book!*

Goleman's thesis is that somewhere between 75% to 90% of effective performance, particularly in the case of managers and leaders, is attributable to "emotional intelligence" (EI). What is EI? He defines it as, "the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships." He devotes two-thirds of the book to laying out in detail 25 competencies, grouped into five domains, the first three reflecting how we manage ourselves and the last two how we handle our relationships with others. These domains are:

#### 1. Self-Awareness

An ability to notice what you are feeling in the moment and to tap into your intuitive self as you deal with the daily decisions and challenges of organizational life. It includes exercising a selfconfident, candid openness to feedback about your strengths, your blind spots and where you need to grow.

#### 2. Self-Regulation

Managing your deeper emotions and impulses appropriately, rather than self-indulgently (know anyone who allows himself/herself to "fly off the handle" and lash out at others?). It includes positioning these feelings against the wider perspective of your longer-term goals and the interests of others and the organization at-large. "Stress-hardy" individuals are those who have mastered the ability to stay focused and constructively energized in times of stress. This domain is also about choosing to be trustworthy ("walking your talk") and allowing space in your world for ambiguity and for the (often different) ideas of others.

#### 3. Motivation

A combination of an internally generated drive to achieve, an emotional commitment (often called passion) to goals (both your own and the organization's), a willingness to mobilize yourself and others to action, all the while placing an optimistic "spin" on challenges and setbacks you face.

#### 4. Empathy

This is an absolute key to establishing working relationships. It builds on the first two domains. You can't tune in to others if you are preoccupied by your own disrupting feelings. Empathy means having a genuine interest

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in, and sensitivity to, the perspectives, concerns and needs of others. In companies, it includes a service orientation to the customer as well as a healthy attunement to the prevailing organizational politics.

#### 5. Social Skills

Influencing others is a prerequisite to your success. To influence, you deal with the emotional state of others. With individuals, you build rapport, communicate, resolve disagreement, and inspire them towards your vision and ideas. With groups and teams, you network (it's a verb now), collaborate, create a sense of the team's identity, and foster the synergy from the pursuit of collective goals.

Goleman believes all of the emotional competencies can be developed. This is done, he says, by replacing old, ingrained *habits* of thought, feeling and behavior with new habits. You do it by practicing the new habits, over time engaging new neural pathways in your brain as you install your new, more appropriate default responses. He outlines a 14-point process for doing this to bolster your organization's "immune system" that keeps it healthy, resilient and able to take advantage of opportunities that emerge.

The author makes a strong case for the high leverage gained by focusing on the

soft skills that underpin and drive "hard" business and organizational results. He draws our attention to the importance of what he calls the "invisible interpersonal economy" that exists in organizations. Your high performing leaders and individual contributors are those who understand and work effectively with the "currency" of this parallel economy—the *emotions* that are attached to the needs, hopes and fears of all who work in your organization.

So, what does this book mean for managers? I believe Daniel Goleman has tapped into some fundamental truths about human performance in organizations. He has laid out the roadmap. We need to focus the investment of our people development dollars in these emotional competencies that so often receive only lip service in business today.

This requires faith: the return on investment takes time. Why? Because many of our old habits are well entrenched, often since childhood. Many of these competencies are rooted deep in our personality. *Yet, we know they hold the key to individual performance and effectiveness.* What Daniel Goleman has done is move us one step closer to that question we must eventually answer in management training: *Can we, in fact, develop strong performers without addressing the human psyche itself?*

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