

Emotional Intelligence

“It is the mark of an educated man to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it.”

-Aristotle

Richard P. Himmer



Emotional Intelligence

In 2009, a study was conducted examining the impact of training early childhood teachers in emotional intelligence and classroom management. The course was conducted from September through April with 206 participants (K – 6th grade). The program was designed to help teachers enhance the social and emotional skills of children. The results showed a statistical improvement in teacher’s perceptions and concluded that emotional intelligent principles lead to more intrinsic motivation by students to behave, learn, and excel in the classroom.¹

The Education System

A meta-analysis was conducted on 668 evaluation studies of SEL (Social and Emotional Learning) programs from preschoolers to grade 12 by Roger Weissberg, the director of the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning at the University of Illinois at Chicago. SEL is a program instituted in preschool and K – 12 schools that teaches children the skills of Emotional Intelligence. Here are some of the results.²

- Up to 50 percent of children showed improve achievement scores
- Up to 38 percent improve their grade point averages
- Incidents of misbehavior dropped by an average of 28 percent
- Suspensions dropped by an average of 44 percent
- Attendance increased
- 63 percent of the students demonstrated significantly more positive behavior

¹ Lorrie L. Hoffman, Cynthia J. Hutchinson, and Elayne Reiss, “On Improving School Climate: Reducing Reliance on Rewards and Punishment,” *International Journal of Whole Schooling* 5, no. 1 (March 1, 2009): 13–24.

² Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (Bloomsbury Paperbacks, 2010).

Why Emotional Intelligence?

Why should you be concerned with Emotional Intelligence or emotions at all for that matter? From a business perspective, the industry has preferred hard skills (IQ and technical) to soft skills (social and emotional) for decades. The business world took their cues from Western Universities who have taught a separation of thought and emotion since the 12th Century. These European Universities believed that rational thought was the sole source of success and emotions and feelings were out of place and unteachable.³

Daniel Goleman's book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More than IQ* created a flood of interest in the area of soft skills. Finally the business world has hard evidence on which to base a paradigm shift into what makes a successful leader, manager, salesperson, accountant, engineer, customer service rep, or administrative assistant. In the education and training world, the same is applicable for teachers, coaches, even psychologists and psychiatrists. The ratio of success attributed to hard skills (20%) is less than half as compared to soft skills (47%).⁴

Emotional Intelligence is not a fad or a trend. Social scientists have been asking questions and researching a veritable gap in literature on the traits, behaviors, or skills of a successful person for the past 100 years. Have you ever taken a personality or competency test? This is a result of a company protecting its assets and searching for the maximum return on investment before hiring or promoting.

³ Ph D. Reuven Bar-On, *Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Technical Manual* (Multi Health Systems, Inc., 1997).

⁴ Steven J. Stein and Howard E. Book, *The EQ Edge: Emotional Intelligence and Your Success*, 3rd ed. (Jossey-Bass, 2011).

A significant breakthrough in this research came during the 1980s when Reuven Bar-On developed his hypothesis of a person's Emotional Quotient (EQ) as a parallel to IQ. This hypothesis remained untested until Dr. Bar-On developed the EQ-i in 1985, which stands for Emotional Quotient Inventory. Now after 500,000 tests, the hypothesis has substantial research and data to support the original premise.

While all this was going on Dr. Martin Seligman and Dr. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced: chick-sent-me-hi) developed the concept of positive psychology. For over 100 years the world of psychology has focused their attention on what is broken. The field is full of experts who can tell you what's wrong and not functioning. Sometimes they can pinpoint a number of causes for why you are messed up, but the jury is out if that makes things any better or not.

However, they are wholly unprepared to deal with what works.⁵ Positive psychology parallels Emotional Intelligence in that they both focus on what works and how to develop the skills that generate greater happiness. Happy people are more successful in what they do. They are sick less, they sleep better, they have better marriages, and they get along better with people.⁶ Happy people also learn quicker and work better in team environments.

Definition of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional Intelligence is a “set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way.”

⁵ Martin E. P. Seligman and Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, “Positive Psychology: An Introduction,” *American Psychologist* 55, no. 1 (January 2000): 5–14.

⁶ Martin E. P. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize Your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* (Free Press, 2004).

Emotional Intelligence is the ability to identify, assess, and control your own emotions and the emotions of others including groups (classrooms). It is the ability to effectively understand oneself and to possess the ability to adapt and cope with immediate surroundings. This fosters increased success in problem solving, stress tolerance, and impulse control.⁷

A Brief History of Emotional Intelligence

Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer coined the term 'Emotional Intelligence' in 1990 describing it 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*".

Salovey and Mayer also initiated a research program intended to develop valid measures of Emotional Intelligence and to explore its significance. For instance, they found in one study that when a group of people saw an upsetting film, those who scored high on emotional clarity (which is the ability to identify and give a name to a mood that is being experienced) recovered more quickly. In another study, individuals who scored higher in the ability to perceive accurately, understand, and appraise others' emotions were better able to respond flexibly to changes in their social environments and build supportive social networks.

In the 1990's Daniel Goleman became aware of Salovey and Mayer's work, and this eventually led to his book, *Emotional Intelligence*. Goleman was a science writer for the New York Times, specializing in brain and behavior research. He trained as a psychologist at Harvard where he worked with David McClelland. McClelland was among a growing group of researchers who were becoming concerned with how little traditional tests of cognitive intelligence told us about what it takes to be successful in life.

⁷ Bar-On, *Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory, Technical Manual*.

Goleman argued that it was not cognitive intelligence that guaranteed business success but Emotional Intelligence. He described emotionally intelligent people as those with five characteristics⁸:

1. They were good at understanding their own emotions (self-awareness).
2. They were good at managing their emotions (self-management).
3. They had the ability to constantly strive for more learning, understanding, and developing greater skills (self-motivation).
4. They were empathetic to the emotional drives of other people (social awareness).
5. They were good at handling other people's emotions (interpersonal relationships).

Teachers

Stress is an unavoidable characteristic of life and work. The wear and tear on the body and mind is usually brought about by incongruences at work, red tape, misbehaving students, coworker conflicts, and uncooperative parents. In 1992, the United Nations described “job stress” as the 20th Century disease.

Some professions have fared worse than others and it is argued that teachers are more vulnerable to job stress and professional burnout than those in product-oriented businesses.⁹ Teaching by nature demands emotional competency and control and the ability to show unusual love and kindness to their students.

Effective teaching requires high emotional intelligence. As in the medical industry, patients of doctors with high emotional intelligence heal faster, follow directions more accurately, and file fewer lawsuits; students of teachers with high

⁸ Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence*.

⁹ Mourad Ali Eissa and Waleed El Said Khalifa, “Chapter 5: Emotional Intelligence and Self-efficacy as Predictors of Job Stress Among Elementary School Teachers in Egypt,” in *Emotional Intelligence: Perspectives on Educational & Positive Psychology* (Peter Lang Publishing, Inc., 2008), 77–92.

emotional intelligence learn better, are more obedient, and contribute to an overall healthy learning climate.¹⁰

George Vaillant said it best:

“It is not stress that kills us. It is effective adaptation to stress that allows us to live.”

Emotional Intelligence is effective adaptation!

Summary

Tests and assessments such as Myers-Briggs, the Kolbe, and the Birkman measure a static trait, behavior, or type of personality. An IQ test measures cognitive ability inherited from birth. Both personality tests and intelligence quotients are fixed numbers and change relatively little over the course of a lifetime.

Emotional Intelligence can change and in fact it is expected to change. However, that part is up to you. One of the sub-scales of Emotional Intelligence is the desire for learning and change (self-motivation). A person who is a life-long-learner is simply happier and more successful.¹¹ It is a choice.

IQ and personality have limited choices. The ability to effectively communicate, understand your own feelings and the feelings of others is a learned skill. Again, it's a choice.

Using the EQ-i assessment, a skilled consultant can actually predict aspects of success within the work and home environment. The power of the test is not only the predictive capability, but rather the self-discovery that is a by-product of the debriefing. (A one-hour consultation on the results of your individual test.)

¹⁰ Stein and Book, *The EQ Edge*.

¹¹ Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*.

Professionals who engage in self-improvement and focus on the skills of Emotional Intelligence have a higher probability of success in their chosen field. For some, the direction may take on deeper meaning as the results are analyzed. Insights are discovered and assumptions are questioned as you develop a greater awareness of who you are and what you can become. The day of self-deception¹² is no longer going to be socially acceptable with the technology of the EQ-i assessment and positive psychology.

There are many tools to assess emotional intelligence. PyrBlu uses the most scientifically based tool created through the research of Dr. Reuven Bar-On call EQ-I 2.0 through Multi-Health Systems.

For emotional intelligence assessments, please call PyrBlu at

253-851-0350 or email EQi@pyrblu.com.

Assessments are conducted confidentially and coaching can be done via phone or in-person. Group discounts for teams of 10 or more. Emotional Intelligence training is conducted in workshops and on a personal basis.

Learn more at www.PyrBlu.com

Reach us at

coach@pyrblu.com

253-851-0350

¹² The Arbinger Institute, *Leadership and Self-Deception: Getting Out of the Box*, Second ed. (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2010).