

## INCREASING EQ THROUGH COACHING

By D. Paul Warner, M.S.

If you have ever attempted to tackle a new professional skill, you know that success requires patience and practice. It can take months, or even years, to become proficient in something new. Sure, you begin using a new skill the moment you learn it, but the real benefits come from getting good at it. Emotional intelligence, or EQ, is a set of four skills that anyone can develop. Unlike our IQ, which is fixed at an early age, EQ increases with effort and understanding.

Like other skills, boosting your EQ takes practice, but the biggest barrier to increasing your EQ is objectivity. You see, the lens through which we view the world is a tainted one; we cannot interpret events without the bias of our own interests and opinions. This bias we all share makes a coach a critical tool for developing the objectivity we need to increase our EQ.

Coaching is a way to observe, demonstrate, and lead others through the journey of change. It can be described as a focused interaction between two people, one of whom is assisting the other in learning something new. Coaching works best when it's undertaken with a concrete goal in mind, and the person being coached should be given specific behavioral tasks to help them reach these goals. When a coach is used, learning goes beyond simply reading words in a book or on a screen; in coaching, EQ is seen, imitated, and practiced with an objectivity that one can never achieve on her own.

### What makes a coach effective?

Coaching may look easy, but it takes time to become comfortable in leading people to change. Effective coaches, however, are not those who have mastered a set of prescribed techniques. Rather, they have worked hard on their own EQ skills and are constantly trying to improve. Notice that I said *worked on* it and not *mastered* it. A coach should understand the fundamental strategies and actions required to increase EQ and spend time sharing these strategies with the person he is assisting. Effective coaching does not come from pulling the other person up to his level. To bring about change, a coach must connect with the other person where they are at today, and help them understand where they can go tomorrow.

### “Know thyself”

When leading someone towards a change in EQ, you first have to know what that change feels like. Self-awareness is the first component of the EQ model for a good reason. Defined, self-awareness is your ability to accurately recognize your emotions as they happen. In a coaching engagement, it is essential that you monitor what you are thinking and feeling, and are able to use this information effectively when interacting with the person you're coaching. An effective way to know yourself better is to take the same assessments that you use in coaching. Not only will your results assist you in increasing your self-awareness; they also make you intimately familiar with the assessment method and feedback report.

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### How coaching increases EQ

TalentSmart's global research with hundreds of thousands of individuals finds that just 30% of us accurately identify our emotions as they happen, and more than 70% of us experience great difficulty handling the conflict and stress that inevitably surface at work. We don't struggle with counterproductive because we prefer it; we struggle because we're stuck.

When working with a coach to develop new EQ skills, your brain cells grow new connections that support the continued use of new behaviors. A single brain cell can grow 15,000 connections to help it communicate with its neighbors. Practicing new EQ skills with a coach does more than make them a habit; it literally strengthens the pathways in your brain that are responsible for connecting feelings with reason. TalentSmart's research shows that EQ skills account for 58% of job performance for supervisors through CEOs. Why such a strong link? The four EQ skills (self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management) are intertwined in most everything we do and say at work. Most anyone can make major leaps in productivity by simply understanding his current level in each EQ skill and increasing those he needs the most.

Since providing objectivity is the crux of the coach's role in the EQ development process, the use of assessments is essential. A coach can use the data from an assessment to bring the individual's actions to life and pinpoint the areas for improvement.

The *Emotional Intelligence Appraisal*™ is a quick and accurate assessment of EQ in the four skills from Daniel Goleman's benchmark model. It can be taken as a self assessment (in print or online) or as a Web-based 360°. Either way, the test takes just seven minutes to complete, and the results include more than 10 hours of e-learning targeted to the user's unique score profile.

More than half of the Fortune 500 use the *Emotional Intelligence Appraisal*™ to help employees discover their strengths and the areas they should work on most. The interactive, Hollywood-movie-based e-learning illustrates EQ in action, and the Goal Tracking System™ helps users monitor progress, reminds them to work on new skills, and shares goals and progress with others.

Feedback from the *Emotional Intelligence Appraisal*™ provides a consistent and structured framework to lead the coaching process, and the Goal Tracking System™ is the perfect compliment to your coaching efforts, in that it monitors progress and encourages the use of new behaviors even when you aren't in the room. What more could a coach ask for?



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THERE IS MORE THAN IQ

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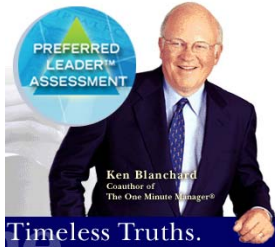
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The *Success Built To Last Profile* was created by the book's authors, and powered by TalentSmart, to help you measure where you stand in the success tenets from the book.



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