

Twenty-First Century Worker Profile: Is it IQ or EQ?

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AFTER ATTENDING The American Management Association's 1997 Annual Human Resources Conference and Exposition in Dallas April 14-17, I would like to share some perceptions that reflect today's changing business environment and the changing face of our responsibilities to students as educators. The keynote speaker for the Monday morning opening session of the American Management Association's was Dr. Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence*.

Daniel Goleman was driving up the West Side Highway in Manhattan one dreary Friday evening at rush hour when he noticed a man in a wheelchair moving in and out of traffic. The man had no legs and held a cup on his lap. Startled and moved, Dr. Goleman went to drop a \$5 bill into the cup when a gust of wind swept the bill up into the moving traffic. He was saddened by what happened. He continued watching the man in the wheelchair as someone behind him got out of his car, picked up the \$5 bill, and placed it in the cup.

"I don't know who he was, but I wish that there were more people like him," said Goleman, an esteemed psychologist, journalist and bestselling author of *Emotional Intelligence*. "We need more people in our organizations who find solutions and go the extra mile. These are people who, I say, have emotional intelligence."

Goleman claims that emotional intelligence is more of a determining factor in an individual's personal and professional success than traditional I.Q. "If you characterize the competencies of effective leaders, you find that only 20 to 25 percent of competencies that distinguish stars are I.Q. The other 80 or so percent are 'soft skills' or people management skills."

Competencies that make up emotional intelligence include self-control, integrity, persistence, adaptability, motivation, initiative, organizational commitment, optimism and empathy, according to Goleman. The bad news is that emotional intelligence is on the decline nationwide. "American children don't have the impulse control they had in previous generations." He attributes this finding to two factors - one economic, the other technological. Today, most children have both parents who work outside the home and, hence, have less free time to spend with them. Additionally, children are staring at video monitors at an unprecedented rate instead of playing with other children, which is how we pass on these social skills. "If you're not paying attention to

this range of ability, you will have severe problems later. It's imperative to deal with this reality."

The good news is that the abilities are learnable at any phase of life. "We can help people improve if we understand the fundamentals of emotional change." As educators we must ensure that students will be provided tools for Emotional Intelligence. One of the requisites for corporate success is EQ. Goleman's description of corporate success is someone who shows this profile: a good listener, gracious, a self-starter, respected and gets along well with others.

Emotion is prior to cognition and has an important role in one's life. It dictates how well people operate in life. Managing emotions, such as anxiety or anger, is imperative. Aristotle said, "Anyone can be angry but it is not easy to be angry at the right time or at the right person."

Childhood is changing, resulting in fewer people skills due to less contact with others. We as educators need to address this problem and help our students to develop human and social skills, therefore helping them to develop their emotional side along with the academic.