



Book Review: What's Your Emotional Intelligence

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Daniel Goleman's new book entitled "Working with Emotional Intelligence" is an important addition to those many books that concern managing companies or other organizations. For school board members, superintendents and members of the educational community interested in human resources or organizational behavior, an understanding of Goleman's concepts can be greatly beneficial, since these ideas may not only help in the governance and operations of your school districts, but can easily impact on how and what students are taught in your schools.

Goleman's basic premise is striking. He first argues that there are basically three "domains" of excellence which help explain job success. The first two are IQ and expertise. These are sort of "threshold" expectations of anyone going after a job. However, these two domains together account for only one-third of the abilities deemed essential for effective performance. The third domain is what he calls "emotional intelligence," which matters *twice as much* as the other two competencies.

According to Goleman's concept, the importance of a person's "emotional intelligence" as compared with the other two domains, held true across all categories of jobs and in all kinds of organizations. The higher one goes in an organization, the more important emotional intelligence is. For success at the highest levels, in leadership positions, emotional competence accounts for 90% of success.

What is this crucial "emotional intelligence?"

According to Goleman, it is "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." Awareness of how our emotions affect what we're doing is the fundamental emotional competence.

This is not a lesson in some kind of "touchy-feely" theories. Goleman's book is chock full of real-life anecdotes and studies from well-known companies that detail the effects of adequate and inadequate emotional intelligence. He discusses the abilities of individuals and how those with high IQ's and great expertise can be totally out of synch with those with they work with and can kill morale if they rise too high in an organization. But he also writes about those who have self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-control and other competencies which have enabled them to become tremendously successful in their fields.

Goleman discusses many of the values which are crucial to operating organizations in positive ways and how individuals can help strengthen their organizations and themselves by learning more about one's own emotional intelligence. He writes of integrity, conscientiousness, flexibility and other values and how ability to work with others is becoming more and more necessary in almost all of our relationships.

It is easy to see how many of his points can relate directly to school systems. Emotional intelligence is crucial to successful boards of education and the excellent functioning of school districts. His point that emotional intelligence, as exemplified by coalition-building and team-building, is becoming an even greater prerequisite for success, is consistent with what we are hearing from business about the competencies they think our students will need for success in the future.

He also discusses the teaching of emotional competence, that is, how to implement these competencies to succeed, rather than merely teaching *about* emotional intelligence. Certainly these concepts are particularly important to students as they prepare for the future.

While it's true that much of this book is based on common sense, common sense is not always that common. It has many good suggestions and certainly provides much food for thought. I recommend that you take a look at this new perspective on achieving success.