MANAGING PEOPLE WITH EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

A K Das* & Shikha Lahiri Das**

Received: 5th Sept.2010 Revised: 16th Oct.2010 Accepted: 25th Oct. 2010

Abstract
As a leader in an organization when we are struggling with a deadline, grappling with cut-throat competition, managing paradigm changes or dealing with delicate decisions, the last interruption we would want is to deal with "people". When the battle is really on and the outcome is undecided, we would want our team to act co-operatively, quickly, rationally; we would not want a disgruntled employee resisting change, a worker who avoids work, a key engineer being tired all day because he has sleepless night thinking about how secure his job is….. But this is what happens, and as a leader we have to deal with it. Few "people problems" can be solved quickly, some are totally beyond control and can only be contained; but we do have influence over many factors which affect our people and so it is our responsibility to ensure that the influence is a positive one. This is where no formula works, and here the human factor comes in, which is very crucial for success. This of course easier said than done. Keeping people motivated and committed in an era of unrelenting and accelerating change is tough. To meet the challenge leaders must be able to create a climate in their organization that not only fosters performance but also builds a sense of pride and purpose. Hence leadership in organizations goes much beyond possessing the professional skills, the leaders and managers of the organizations should also have leadership skills; the social and emotional competencies required to handle their own and other people's emotions, and to drive these emotions in the right direction.

The authors based on their experiences are briefly looking at the emotional competencies to be possessed by a leader/manager which would affect both tangibles like bottom-line results and the retention of talent, and intangibles like work morale, motivation and commitment.

INTRODUCTION
In business we as leaders live and breathe numbers. Every year we set new targets, every month we strive to achieve one twelfth of these targets, then we neatly forget about it. Every week in production we appreciate those running ahead and lament over those lagging behind. No matter what we are talking about leads made, units sold, deals closed, income generated-it all focuses around numbers. We measure performance by team members, profitability, product success and return on investment. On one hand we cannot succeed in business without paying careful attention to numbers; but on the other hand the truth is that we can come up with all the right numbers and still be a failure. We can meet our targets, improve profitability, enhance market share, increase efficiency and still feel less than happy, stressed out, unfulfilled and bitter.

We have to acknowledge that there is more in business than numbers. If producing good numbers does not make success than what really does? The answer revolves in discovering our very purpose within the organization. As a leader what is our purpose? Is it only designing flawless systems and creating accurate and efficient processes?

We may be very efficient, knowledgeable, strategic and visionary, but yet at the end of the day leave the office feeling empty, hollow and weighed. This is an indicator for alarm and we must ask ourselves "Why do I lead?" and "How can I lead better?" We need to reconnect our heart to our thinking and action. Those leaders who refuse to ask themselves about their purpose are always searching for that "greener pasture" outside, which they will never find, but can be created within the very organization where they are.

Successful corporate leaders should have the social and emotional intelligence required to make the emotions in their group work for—and not against—the interests of the organization.

CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE WITH REFERENCE TO LEADERSHIP

"Emotional Intelligence" refers to your capacity to recognize your own feelings and those of others, for motivating yourself, and for managing emotions well in yourself and in your relationships. It describes abilities distinct from, but complementary to, academic intelligence, the purely cognitive capabilities measured by IQ. Many people who are book smart but lack emotional intelligence end up working for people who have lower IQs than they but who excel in emotional intelligence skills.

Emotional intelligence is defined as a person's self-awareness, self-confidence, self-control, commitment and integrity, and a person's ability to communicate, influence, initiate change and accept change (Goleman, 1998). Studies have shown that emotional intelligence impacts a leader's ability to be effective (Goleman, 1998). Three of the most important aspects of emotional intelligence for a leader's ability to make effective decisions are self-awareness, communication and influence, and commitment and integrity. Managers who do not develop their emotional intelligence have difficulty in building good relationships with peers, subordinates, superiors and clients (Goleman, 1998).

* Managing Director, Stallion Textile Industries Ltd, Lagos, Nigeria
** Professor, National Institute of Technical Teachers Training & Research, Bhopal, India. E-mail: shikhalahiri@gmail.com
Emotional intelligence is a combination of competencies. These skills contribute to a person's ability to manage and monitor his or her own emotions, to correctly gauge the emotional state of others and to influence opinions (Caudron, 1999; Goleman, 1998). Goleman describes a model of five dimensions. Each area has its own set of behavioral attributes as follows.

1. Self-awareness is the ability to recognize a feeling as it happens, to accurately perform self-assessments and have self-confidence. It is the keystone of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995).

2. Self-management or self-regulation is the ability to keep disruptive emotions and impulses in check (self-control), maintain standards of honesty and integrity (trustworthiness), take responsibility for one's performance (conscientiousness), handle change (adaptability), and be comfortable with novel ideas and approaches (innovation).

3. Motivation is the emotional tendency guiding or facilitating the attainment of goals. It consists of achievement drive (meeting a standard of excellence), commitment (alignment of goals with the group or organization), initiative (acting on opportunities), and optimism (persistence reaching goals despite set backs).

4. Empathy is the understanding of others by being aware of their needs, perspectives, feelings, concerns, sensing the developmental needs of others.

5. Social skills are fundamental to emotional intelligence. They include the ability to induce desirable responses in others by using effective diplomacy to persuade (influence); listen openly and send convincing messages (communicate); inspire and guide groups and individuals (leadership); nurture instrumental relationships (building bonds); work with others toward a shared goal (collaboration, cooperation); and create group synergy in pursuing collective goals.

These five characteristics will generally apply to a leader's ability to make effective decisions.

WHY EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IS NEEDED IN LEADERSHIP AND FOR MANAGING PEOPLE

If we look back at our own history we have examples of great political leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King. These great leader move us. They ignite our passion and move the best in us. When we try to explain why they were so effective, we speak of strategy, vision and powerful ideas. But the reality is much more elementary. Great leaders work through their emotions. No matter what the leader sets out to do whether it is creating strategy or mobilizing teams to action-their success depends on how they do it. Leaders should strive to drive emotions in the right direction.

Leadership in corporations goes beyond reaching a short-term goal or ensuring that a job is well done. It is also about driving the collective emotions in a positive direction – and avoiding or controlling deadly emotions. Deadly emotions like fear, anxiety, anger, hostility, envy, jealousy, not to mention greed and selfishness can have fatal consequences for an organisation, as we have seen time and time again, not least recently. Thus nothing can be more important for the owners and boards of companies than to ensure that, in addition to their required professional skills, the leaders and managers of the corporation also have leadership skills; the social and emotional competencies required to handle their own and other people's emotions, and to drive these emotions in the right direction. To explain in brief the leaders should act as the groups emotional guide. In any group the leader has the right to vote.

Moreover the world is moving from a manufacturing economy to a value-added, service-oriented economy. And at the heart of service is relationships: interpersonal relationships; intergroup relationships; and interdepartmental relationships. The ascendancy of work teams in large organizations puts a new premium on relationship team skills. Among others, this includes the following competencies:

1. communicating or listening openly and sending convincing messages, 2. managing conflict, which entails negotiating and resolving disagreements, 3. inspiring and guiding individuals and groups as a leader, 4. initiating and managing change, and 5. collaborating and cooperating with others toward shared goals (Perrella, 1999).)

There is an obvious growing importance of finding, hiring, training, and retaining leaders with high emotional intelligence.

MOTIVATION AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

No matter how experienced as a leader we are, chances are at times we have struggled to motivate certain individuals. We have sat down one-to-one with the individual concerned and explained the situation, outlined the big vision again in the hope of inspiring them. We have given them the bottom line: "Either you pull your finger out or your job is on the line". Sometimes we may have dangled a carrot in front of them: "If you make your targets you'll get a great bonus". Sometimes it works, but not every time.

Ultimately, motivation must come from within each person. No leader is ever the single and continuing source of motivation for a person. While the leader's encouragement, support, role model, and inspiration will at times motivate followers, the leader's greatest role in motivating is to recognize people for who they are, and to help them find their own way forward by making best use of their own strengths and abilities. In this way, achievement, development, and recognition will all come quite naturally to the person, and it is these things which are the true fuels of personal motivation.

One of the most common assumptions we make is that the individuals who work for us are motivated by the same factors as us. Perhaps we are motivated by loyalty to the organization, enjoying a challenge, proving ourselves to others or making
money. One great pitfall is to try to motivate others by focusing on what motivates us.

Numerous surveys show that most people are motivated by intrinsic factors, and in this respect we are mostly all the same. Despite this, while many leaders recognize that their own motivation is driven by factors that have nothing to do with money, they make the mistake of assuming that their people are somehow different, and that money is central to their motivation.

If leaders assume that their team members only care about their pay packet, or their car, or their monthly bonus, this inevitably produces a motivational approach that is faulty and temporary. Leaders must recognize that people are different only in so far as different particular ‘intrinsic’ factor(s) which motivate each person, but in so far as we are all motivated by ‘intrinsic’ factors, we are all the same.

Listening is a highly valuable leadership tool. So, when we remember, we listen really hard, trying to catch every detail of what is being said and maybe follow up with a question to show that we caught everything. This is certainly important. Checking your email, thinking about last night’s big game and planning our weekend certainly stop us from hearing what is being said.

But there is another important aspect to listening and that is: Listening without judgement. Often when an employee tells us why they are lacking motivation we are busy internally making notes about what is wrong with what they are saying. This is pre-judging. It is not listening properly. Really listening properly means shutting off the voice in our head that is already planning our counter-argument, so that we can actually hear, understand and interpret what we are being told.

This is not to say that ‘the employee is always right’, but only when we can really understand the other person’s perception of the situation, then we will be able to help them develop a strategy that works for them. Listening is about understanding how the other person feels - beyond merely the words that they say.

As leaders we must inspire, create resonance and move people with a compelling vision or shared mission. We should offer a sense of common purpose beyond the day-to-day tasks, making work exciting.

No personal competency is more central to managing interpersonal conflict than Emotional Intelligence. In case of conflict we need to draw out all parties, understand the differing perspectives, and then find a common ideal that everyone can endorse. We have to surface the conflict, acknowledge the feelings and view all sides, and then redirect the energy toward a shared ideal.

CHANGE MANAGEMENT AND EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE
Change management is a painful process for almost any organization. When the change impacts the core values and established systems of an organization it is important to consider the emotional as well as technical aspects involved. Newman, (2000) described two kinds of organizational change. First order organizational change is incremental and is an adjustment of systems or structures but does not involve a change in core values of the company. Second order organizational change is transformational, radical and fundamentally alters the organization. Change can generate cynicism, fatigue and ‘burnout’ as well as reduce commitment and loyalty to the company.

As leaders who can catalyze change we should be able to recognize the need for the change, challenge the status quo, and champion the new order. We can be strong advocates for the change even in the face of opposition, making the argument for it compellingly and find practical ways to overcome barriers to change.

As an individual if we can manage and make sense of our own first, and then followed by other's emotions during organizational change, we will be able to influence social relationship outcomes and contribute to that change process. Consequently we will be under less stress during organizational change as a result of our ability to be aware of our emotions and to control them effectively.

As managers, we will also be in a better position to reduce stress and anxiety that accompanies organizational change, as we are able to read others' emotions and take actions to manage those emotions prior to attitudes being affected.

GAINING TRUST AND COMMITMENT
We as leaders/ manager's have the key responsibility to create mutual respect and trust with the people who report to us. When managers lead and manage their people effectively, their people are much more likely to be engaged - and to achieve results for the organization. In practice this involves being transparent, communicating effectively, treating people equally, teaching, leading subordinates to increasingly excellent performance - and responding to subordinates as mature individuals who are owed fairness, the truth and recognition of their achievements.

A committed employee is extraordinarily valuable. We can gain staff commitment by meeting people's key needs, paying attention to all people at all levels, trusting and being trusted, tolerating individuality and creating a “blame free”, “can do” culture.

We need to work on developing certain qualities in ourselves such as organization pride, willingness to work for long hours, consistent personal values, strong team spirit, personally involved and committed to the organization. This entails winning peoples confidence and creating a fully committed workforce.

Gaining employee commitment results in greater profits because enthusiastic employees stay, contribute discretionary effort, and engage customers. Performance soars when customers are enthused and stay and when executives, managers, and employees are a collaborative team, united in achieving common goals.
MANAGE OURSELVES AND THEN MANAGE OTHERS

Everyone is primarily emotional. Everything that people do, or refrain from doing, is triggered by their deeper emotions. Same is more true with leaders.

What makes a great leader? They’re goal-driven and can deliver results. They’re team players and enjoy helping others. They’re committed, reliable and take risks. We all know that these are many of the characteristics and attributes that can be found in the best leaders around. But the competencies that’s probably the least discussed and undervalued is self-awareness and self-management.

As the boss of a group we are likely to be a prime role model. Employees expect us to set a positive example. It is therefore very important that we do not fall below the standards we have set. With our busy schedules, it’s really difficult to find the time to self-reflect. We think we understand our own personality traits, behaviors, strengths, wants, etc., but do we really even know how these things affect our lives? A lot of the time, we aren't even aware of how we're perceived by our peers, don't really understand the benefits in knowing and, quite frankly, just don't want to hear it! In the crazy-competitive culture that we live in today, a lot of us feel like we need to appear like we know everything all the time so we don't lose our credibility as leaders. We don't like to recognize our weaknesses for the same reason.

Self-awareness is knowing what we're good at while still acknowledging what we have yet to learn. It's owning up when we make mistakes and don't always have an answer. It allows us to better understand why we feel what we feel and why we act and react to situations and events the way we do. Most importantly, it can improve our judgment and help us identify opportunities for professional development and personal growth.

Once we are aware of our emotions we can show emotional composure even under stress or when personally challenged, seek to understand other's thoughts and ideas by being a good listener, and not let personal fear, anger, anxiety or other negative emotions interfere with leadership effectiveness.

Emotionally self aware leaders can be candid and authentic, able to speak openly about their emotions or with conviction about their guiding vision. Leaders with high self-awareness typically know their limitations and strengths, and exhibit a sense of humor about themselves. They exhibit a gracefulness in learning where they need to improve, and welcome constructive criticism and feedback. Knowing their abilities with accuracy allows leaders to play to their strengths. Self-confident leaders can welcome a difficult assignment. Such leaders often have a sense of presence, a self-assurance that lets them stand out in a group.

Leaders with strength in achievement have high personal standards that drive them to constantly seek performance improvements - both for themselves and those they lead. They are pragmatic, setting measurable but challenging goals, and are able to calculate risk so that their goals are worthy but attainable.

CONCLUSION

Emotional Intelligence has become a vital part of how today’s leaders meet the significant challenges they face. Emotional Intelligence can help leaders in an evermore difficult leadership role, one that fewer and fewer people seem capable of fulfilling. And in the middle of the “Talent War”, especially at the highest levels in organizations, emotional intelligence can give developing leaders a competitive edge.

Research has shown that Emotional Intelligence, like technical skill, can be developed through a systematic and consistent approach to building competence in personal and social awareness, self-management, and social skill. However, unlike technical skills the pathways in the brain associated with social and emotional competencies are different than those engaged by more cognitive learning. Because the foundations of social and emotional competencies are often laid down early in life and reinforced over several years they tend to become synonymous with our self-image and thus need focused attention over time to bring about change. (Goleman 1998).

Last but not the least as a leader we must envision the future, passionately believe that we can make a difference and inspire people to achieve more than they may ever have dreamed possible. We must see a changed world beyond the time horizon, create an ideal and unique image of what it could become, let our followers see that image and lift their spirits. We must believe that our dreams can become reality and, through our emotions, get people to see exciting opportunities and possibilities for the future.

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