

Ethics Equals Emotional Intelligence - Part I

- James Terrell

Two or three years ago an article on the direct value ethical behavior brings to the bottom line would not have gotten a second glance. The bottom line looked fine, and we were all very busy making money. Now all that's changed and there seems to be a great deal of interest in the value of ethics, but we are frustrated to discover we can't rapidly make a major investment in them by writing a check. That's how out of touch we have gotten.

Fortunately the thinking and perceiving skills at the foundation of ethical behavior are known and can be taught, learned, and constantly improved. And best of all for those who value measurables, they can be quantified using the Bar-On Emotional Quotient Inventory® -- a scientifically valid and reliable measure, normed to approximately 4000 people.

Each of the 15 specific emotional competencies which are measured by the EQi bring important ingredients to the recipe for ethical productivity. We have chosen to focus on three of them in this article, and five in the next issue.*

- **Self-Awareness** is the ability to recognize how you're feeling and why you're feeling that way and the impact your behavior has on others;
- **Assertiveness** is the ability to clearly express your thoughts and feelings, stand your ground and defend a position;
- **Independence** is the ability to be self directed and self controlled, to stand on your own two feet;

Self-Awareness is perhaps most critical of all the 15 subscales, because you have to be able to feel the difference between constructive ethical behavior and destructive unethical behavior. Regardless of how buried by advertising slogans and to-do lists it may be, each human being does have an internal guidance system that can tell him or her in advance how the results of their choices will feel to themselves, and to others.

This subconscious intuitive sense is a genetic gift from our ancestors whose survival depended on the cooperative successes of their social groups.

Assertiveness gives people the emotional strength it takes to assert and maintain their moral integrity even under the pressure of others to conspire with them. Qwest's and Enron's meltdowns could not have happened without the unethical alliances that were forged within a small group of key decision-makers.

KEYS TO EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Intra-personal Realm

- Emotional Self-Awareness
- Assertiveness
- Independence
- Self-Regard
- Self-Actualization

Interpersonal Realm

- Empathy
- Interpersonal Relationships
- Social Responsibility

Adaptability Realm

- Problem-Solving
- Reality Testing
- Flexibility

Stress Management Realm

- Stress Tolerance
- Impulse Control

General Mood Realm

- Happiness
- Optimism



**COLLABORATIVE
Growth®**

Connecting People, Purpose & Productivity!

Independence is closely tied to Assertiveness because the ability to be self directed and self-disciplined requires one to free themselves from the emotional dependencies that are normally acquired in childhood. As a child, we model the ideas and opinions of others to help us develop our own, but as mature adults we must develop our own, and feel self-confident enough to be able to implement them.

When we apply Independence, Assertiveness and Self-Awareness in an integrated fashion we bring to our business the durability that comes with ethical decision making. In our next article we will continue to explore the fundamental relationship between emotional intelligence and ethical productivity.

** Each of the definitions of the subscales in this article (in bold) are quoted from **The EQ Edge** by Steven J. Stein and Howard E. Book, Stoddart Publishing, 2000.*