

Sue Johnston © 2002

This paper was written as a research assignment for a graduate course. It may be reproduced, in whole or in part, as long as attribution is given as follows:

The author, Sue Johnston, MBA, ABC, is a principal of It's Understood Communication, which can be reached at www.itsunderstood.com.

PRIMAL

LEADERSHIP

WHAT THE E.I. PHENOMENON
MEANS FOR COMMUNICATORS

**SUSAN JOHNSTON
ROYAL ROADS UNIVERSITY
PR 650 – MANAGING RISKS, ISSUES AND CRISES**

AUGUST 2002

PRIMAL

LEADERSHIP

WHAT THE EI PHENOMENON
MEANS FOR COMMUNICATORS

“No creature can fly with just one wing. Gifted leadership occurs where heart and head – feeling and thought – meet. These are the two wings that allow a leader to soar.”
– Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, *Primal Leadership*¹

Thanks to the business press, organizational leaders are aware of, if not receptive to, the need to develop the ‘softer side of management.’ *Emotional Intelligence*, the 1997 best-seller by psychologist/journalist Daniel Goleman, suggested that being in tune with one’s self and able to understand and use emotions is more important than intellect. In his 2002 book, *Primal Leadership: Realizing The Power Of Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman and co-authors Richard Boyatzis and Annie McKee provide an approach business leaders can use to develop their own emotional intelligence (EI) and encourage it in their organizations.

At the time of writing, *Primal Leadership* was number 81 on Amazon.com’s sales list,² a spot that is unusually high for a business book.³ A work so many people are being exposed to will influence business thinking. Communicators working in or with organizations trying to develop leadership competence will need to be familiar with its principles.

Yet that is not the only reason *Primal Leadership* is of interest to organizational communicators. If, as in Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee’s metaphor, feeling and thought are dual wings that support leaders, then communication represents the feet – the landing gear. Communication allows the soaring leader to manoeuvre on the ground, in the day-to-day world of sales calls, order fulfilment, data analysis and customer service. It helps the leader persuade a flock to join the journey when s/he says, “Come, fly with me!” Building communication competence throughout our organizations can become an important element of the communicator’s job. It is a particularly important tool to add to the skill set when making the leap from a tactical to a strategic role, or from counsellor to partner in decision-making.

This paper examines the ideas outlined in *Primal Leadership* in the context of their impact on and opportunities for organizational communicators.

Why the interest in Emotional Intelligence?

The concept of ‘emotional intelligence,’ outlined in Daniel Goleman’s 1997 book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*, began a wave of interest in what it means to ‘be smart.’ Goleman cited biological and neurological research that explained how humans develop – and can change – their repertoire and use of ‘soft skills’ such as empathy, flexibility, self-confidence, conflict management and collaboration.⁴ He linked this to research from life situations, including the workplace, which supports his hypothesis that emotional intelligence is more critical than intellectual horsepower in achieving success.

In explaining how the brain works, Goleman avoided the language of surgeons and psychiatrists, so his work found a wide audience. It did so at a time the corporate world was looking for new tools to employ in meeting business goals. Strategic planning, total quality management, cross-functional work teams, business process re-engineering and ISO standards had worked, with varying degrees of success, to improve business operations and processes. On the human side, organizations had explored competency models, learning maps and performance management to define, develop and assess the characteristics of excellent employees and the gap between ideal and real. They had addressed workplace diversity according to physical attributes (race, disability, gender, sexual orientation, dependent care responsibilities, etc.), yet little attention was given to other attributes, more connected with personality or attitude.⁵

The need to lead

Still, organizations were not without glitches. With processes and people under the careful scrutiny of armies of productivity improvement consultants, attention turned to leadership.

The EI evidence seemed to mesh nicely with the prevailing view that the skills of command and control, which had taken so many to the top of their organizations or professions, were desperately out of date. Goleman and others applied the EI model to existing research in leadership behaviour and they conducted new research within their client companies.

Two Goleman articles in the *Harvard Business Review* (HBR), “What Makes A Leader?” (Nov.-Dec. 1998) and “Leadership That Gets Results,” (March-April 2000) drove the EI message firmly into the popular business press. “What Makes A Leader” is one of HBR’s most requested reprints.⁶ Clearly, there was interest in how to use EI techniques in developing leaders and leadership.

“Most effective leaders are alike in one crucial way,” Goleman wrote in *What Makes a Leader?*. “They all have a high degree of what has come to be known as *emotional intelligence*. It’s not that IQ and technical skills are irrelevant. They do matter, but mainly as “threshold capabilities;” that is they are entry level requirements for executive positions.” He described EI as “The *sine qua non* of leadership. Without it, a person can have the best training in the world, an incisive, analytical mind, and an endless supply of smart ideas, but he still won’t make a great leader.”⁷

Leaders were already facing a disturbing workplace challenge, the war for talent. Corporations needed competent, committed, cost-effective work forces but found a new generation of highly sceptical, independent-minded workers. Doug Coupland’s *Generation X*,⁸ Dan Pink’s *Free Agent Nation*⁹ and Karol Kinsey Goman’s *The Human Side of High-Tech*,¹⁰ suggested that business leaders needed radically new ways to recruit, retain, motivate and communicate with workers.

Globalization and new economic partnerships were adding complexity to the corporate leader’s decision-making environment. They called for a leader for whom ‘other duties as assigned’ in the job description included exercising diplomacy and dealing with cross-cultural, multinational and political sensibilities.

Government regulators, consumers and employees added their voices to calls from special interest groups, for organizations to behave in more socially responsible, people-friendly ways.

Then came the terror attacks on the World Trade Centre in September of 2001, when leaders came face-to-face with the human aspects of an unimaginable tragedy that, for most of the victims, took place at work. The need for human skills was never more apparent.

News media interest in corporate leaders, already high, turned into obsession in the aftermath of the Enron investigations. It seemed that each morning throughout 2002, the headlines held new allegations of incompetence – if not wrongdoing – at the top levels of major corporations. The public grew mistrustful of businesses, even those that employ them.¹¹ Regaining trust was added to the leader’s ‘To Do’ list.

These men and women must balance the need for financial success in difficult economic times, the imperative to build shareholder value in a bear market, an increasing demand from many stakeholders for accountability, transparency and social responsibility, and the need to recruit, retain and motivate a work force no longer characterized by loyalty to the organization. The skills

needed for each of those tasks are not, necessarily, those needed for the others. There is what Heifetz and Laurie call an “adaptive challenge.”¹²

Against this backdrop, *Primal Leadership* is a research-based response to the quest for a formula that will

- permit leaders to master the human skills their roles increasingly demand and
- help organizations to recruit, develop, promote and retain good leaders – and retrain or lose the bad ones before they can do more damage.

The EI phenomenon is already at work, with numerous consultants and training firms working with organizations to implement Goleman’s ideas. *Primal Leadership* adapts the theory and puts it squarely into an organizational context.

What is Emotional Intelligence?

The term ‘emotional intelligence’ appeared in work by Salovey and Mayer in 1990. They described emotional intelligence as “a form of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and action.”¹³

Daniel Goleman, a *New York Times* science writer, heard of their work and began to investigate it further. He had trained as a psychologist at Harvard and worked with Professor David McClelland, whose research area was motivation and achievement.¹⁴ McClelland was one of many researchers concerned that traditional tests of cognitive ability – IQ tests – were not good predictors of success in life.¹⁵ McClelland and his colleagues worked to identify the competencies required for success.¹⁶ Goleman’s EI ideas were grounded in this work in competency modelling.¹⁷

When Goleman published *Emotional Intelligence* in 1997 it created a huge wave of interest. The concept explained why people of average intelligence could excel in business and in life – and why smart people could so often do stupid things.

Psychologists and academics debated its roots and its merits, but could not deny that there is more to success than cognitive ability. As Cary Cherniss stated in his speech to the Society of Organizational and Industrial Psychology, “there now is a considerable body of research

suggesting that a person's ability to perceive, identify, and manage emotion provides the basis for the kinds of social and emotional competencies that are important for success in almost any job. Furthermore, as the pace of change increases and the world of work makes ever greater demands on a person's cognitive, emotional, and physical resources, this particular set of abilities will become increasingly important."

The EI theory

Goleman's 1997 theory suggests that IQ contributes just 20 per cent to success in life – the rest comes from emotional intelligence. He cites neurological research that says humans have the equivalent of two separate minds – one that thinks and one that feels – which operate independently. EI is an intelligent balance of reason and emotion.

Evolution provided humans with emotions, to drive us to take action – or take flight – when confronted with danger. In today's business world, this 'fight or flight' mechanism is not as useful as it was back when we faced life and death situations on a regular basis. The *limbic brain*, where emotion and feelings begin, and structures known as the *amygdalas*, which respond to emotional memory and passion, are the feeling brains. The *neocortex* is the thinking brain.

Usually the thinking brain is able to suppress the 'fight or flight' response. But strong emotions can interfere with our ability to focus and think clearly. Goleman calls this experience "emotional hijacking," for the emotions can take control of the situation and divert the individual from the original path. We need to learn to control that, he says, but we must not eliminate emotion. Awareness of emotions, our own and others' – and how to handle and use them is a characteristic of EI.

In his research, Goleman analyzed competency models from 188 companies, mostly large, international organizations. The standard process was to identify capabilities typically used by the organizations' outstanding leaders. Goleman divided these competencies into three universes: technical skills (such as accounting or business planning), cognitive skills (such as analytical reasoning and 'big picture' thinking) and emotional intelligence. Analyzing the data, he discovered that, while certain technical and cognitive skills are very important, overall, emotional intelligence was "twice as important as the others for jobs at all levels."¹⁸

He combined that with research from McClelland that showed companies with leaders who scored high in these EI competencies outperformed annual earnings targets by 20 per cent.¹⁹

The EI competencies

So what are these competencies? And how do we find, nourish and develop them? Researchers at Rutgers University's Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations, where Goleman is Co-director, have identified detailed descriptors for each of the 18 EI competencies. These are available at the consortium's web site, at eiconsortium.org.²⁰ We list the EI domains and associated competencies outlined in *Primal Leadership* in less detail.

PERSONAL COMPETENCE These capabilities determine how we manage ourselves.	
Self-Awareness	Self-Management
<p>EMOTIONAL SELF-AWARENESS: Reading one's own emotions and recognizing their impact; using 'gut sense' to guide decisions.</p> <p>ACCURATE SELF-ASSESSMENT: knowing one's strengths and limits.</p> <p>SELF CONFIDENCE: A sound sense of one's worth and capabilities.</p>	<p>EMOTIONAL SELF-CONTROL: Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses under control.</p> <p>TRANSPARENCY: Displaying honesty and integrity; trustworthiness.</p> <p>ADAPTABILITY: Flexibility in adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles.</p> <p>ACHIEVEMENT: The drive to improve performance to meet inner standards of excellence.</p> <p>INITIATIVE: Readiness to act and seize opportunities.</p> <p>OPTIMISM: Seeing the upside in events.</p>
SOCIAL COMPETENCE These capabilities determine how we manage relationships.	
Social Awareness	Relationship Management
<p>EMPATHY: Sensing others' emotions, understanding their perspective and taking interest in their concerns.</p> <p>ORGANIZATIONAL AWARENESS: Reading the currents, decision networks, politics at the organizational level.</p> <p>SERVICE: Recognizing and meeting follower, client or customer needs.</p>	<p>INSPIRATIONAL LEADERSHIP: Guiding and motivating with a compelling vision.</p> <p>INFLUENCE: Wielding a range of tactics for persuasion.</p> <p>DEVELOPING OTHERS: Bolstering others' abilities through feedback and guidance.</p> <p>CHANGE CATALYST: Initiating, managing and leading in a new direction.</p> <p>CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: Resolving disagreements.</p> <p>TEAMWORK & COLLABORATION: Co-operation and team building.</p>

The *Primal Leadership* authors say even the most outstanding leader will not have all the EI competencies, and "highly effective leaders typically exhibit a critical mass of strengths in half a dozen or so."²¹ The EI theory suggests that these behaviours can be learned and that an individual can increase EI with concerted, thoughtful practice over time.

Genetics and nurture play roles in developing EI; however, says Goleman, "research and practice clearly demonstrate that emotional intelligence can be learned."²² Best of all, it can be learned by both individuals and organizations.

What is Primal Leadership?

Primal Leadership (PL) takes EI theory and applies it to leadership in organizations. Great leaders move people. They inspire them. They ignite people's passion for the task at hand. They know how to work through human emotion.

The authors cite studies that show there is contagion of emotion in organizations and work groups that results from something in the limbic brain's operation called "open loop," in which emotions can communicate without words and people begin to mirror each others' feelings.²³

The emotions of the leader are transmitted not just by action, but also by mood. Anyone who has ever worked for a toxic boss will recognize this, as will those who have worked with excellent leaders. And moods have an impact on the outcomes of almost any workplace activity. Good moods and good work are powerfully connected.

Emotionally intelligent leaders create in an organization something the authors call "resonance."²⁴ As in music, people vibrate in compatible frequencies – the organization metaphorically "hums along." In the same way, leaders can create organizational "dissonance." The vibration is there, but it is not harmonious.

The authors seem to have chosen the word 'primal' for its double meaning: 1) primitive, primeval and 2) chief, fundamental.²⁵ This type of leadership comes from the first part of the human brain to evolve, the limbic, fight-or-flight, brain. It comes from the chief (the C in CEO). And it is fundamental to organizational success, in the '00s and beyond.

Types of leaders

Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee identified six leadership styles that use the EI competencies in different combinations. Each is useful in a variety of situations, though some are less versatile or useful than others. Each contributes to organizational resonance, and each has drawbacks and situations in which it will not usually be successful. One individual may exhibit all six styles, and the ability to use the right one at the right time is a PL trademark.

The value of style diversity echoes other management research, particularly that of Robert E. Quinn, whose "Competing Values Model," suggests that competent managers demonstrate skills from four distinct managerial modes which appear to be mutually exclusive.²⁶

The Leadership styles outlined in Primal Leadership are, in descending order of impact in creating a climate of resonance:

Visionary Leader

This leader creates resonance by moving people towards shared dreams. It is most successful when change demands a new vision or a clear direction. Of all the styles, it is the most successful in contributing to organizational achievement. Inspirational leadership, transparency, and empathy are the key competencies for this leadership style.

Coaching Leader

This leader creates resonance by connecting what a person wants with organizational goals. It has a highly positive impact on organizational climate. It is most useful in helping employees improve performance by building long term capabilities. Key competencies are developing others, emotional awareness, and empathy.

Affiliative Leader

This leader builds resonance by connecting people to each other. While it has less impact on organizational effectiveness than the visionary or coaching style, it has a positive effect. It is most useful in healing rifts in a team, motivating teams during stressful times, or building connections. Empathy is a key competency as is developing relationships. This approach, combined with the visionary approach, can be a potent combination.

Democratic Leader

This leader values people's input and builds commitment through participation. Its positive effect is strongest when consensus is needed or to get employee input. The downside of the democratic style can be an appearance of indecision, but it is very useful to rely on more experienced colleagues when you don't know how to proceed. Key competencies are listening and collaboration.

Pacesetter Leader

This leader meets challenging and exciting goals, and can sometimes build resonance but, unfortunately, has a negative impact on the organization because they are frequently poorly executed. The style is appropriate for getting high quality results from a motivated and competent team, but it can backfire, so is best applied in small doses. It is very common amongst leaders who are, themselves, obsessed with doing things better and faster and focussing on performance.

Drive and initiative are the key competencies, but if a pacesetter leader lacks empathy, as they often do, the result can be pain for the organization.

Commanding Leader

This leader can soothe fear by giving clear direction in an emergency. But without a crisis the style is not effective except with problem employees. This style is often misused and is highly negative in building a healthy and productive organizational climate. Influence, achievement and initiative are key competencies. Self awareness, emotional self-control and empathy can keep a commanding leader from going astray.²⁷

Developing the requisite competencies and knowing when to use which style are elements of PL that can be learned through a program of self-study, 360° feedback, coaching and practice.

Becoming a resonant leader

The work of Boyatzis suggests a process in five recurring steps.

- 1) Imagine the ideal self.
- 2) Discover the real self.
- 3) Build a learning agenda to reduce gaps between ideal and real and build on strengths, shown in the points of overlap.
- 4) Experiment with new behaviours, thoughts and feelings; practise.
- 5) Develop trusting relationships that support each step in the process.²⁸

These steps involve the type of inquiry done in conjunction with an executive coach or life coach.²⁹ Indeed, the authors recommend using a competent coach to assist in developing the EI qualities.³⁰ The authors suggest the technique of “reframing the situation,” which is used by coaches and counsellors is useful in learning new ways to think about behaviours. As Boyatzis suggests in his fifth step, the coach becomes the trusted advisor, supporting the process.

The coaching phenomenon has grown rapidly as business leaders recognize the utility of having someone, unconnected with their jobs or personal lives, help frame their ideas and determine approaches to try. A good coach helps them focus on the real issues and discover what they can do about them. A coach also promotes self-awareness by making the client think about EI qualities and attributes on a regular basis.

Developing EI in the organization

The process for building EI throughout the organization is similar to that for building it in individual leaders. It starts with recognition of the ideal situation. The authors cite many examples of organizations that were transformed along with their leaders. While there is benefit as a leader changes his or her ways, transformation is most likely when there is a concerted effort to develop a critical mass of resonant leaders. But they caution that CEOs cannot just send everyone on a course and expect to wake up in an EI organization.³¹ It is a time consuming process that requires practice thinking and behaving in new ways so that the brain is, effectively, rewired or reprogrammed to be emotionally intelligent.

So where do communicators fit in?

Cherniss told industrial and organizational psychologists that the EI phenomenon was good news for their profession. “They are the ones who are best situated to help clients to use emotional intelligence to improve both productivity and psychological well-being in the workplace of tomorrow.”³² He might have been discussing the role of communicators, who also are well positioned to take advantage of the opportunity to apply EI principles to themselves – and to their work in and with organizations.



Making EI work in organizations

In individuals, competence involves the interaction of intellect and emotion and the parts of the brain that control them. In an organization, the same is true; the spirit or feeling of the enterprise mixes with intellectual capital and know-how. But unlike humans, there is no neurological connection in a firm. For ‘organizational brain circuitry’ to work, a third layer is required – communication.

The language of leadership

One of the reasons leadership development efforts fail, say the authors, is that organizations fail to develop a “language of leadership – meaningful words that capture the spirit of leadership by symbolizing ideas, ideals and emotionally intelligent leadership practices.”³³

Organizational communicators are well positioned to be using this transformational language in both their formal communications on behalf of the organization and their informal communications within it. First they have to understand it – and see how it relates to the context in their own organizations.

Whether or not there is a formal initiative to build EI competencies in the organization, communicators can begin to slide the language and the concepts into the organization through their role as influencers and their choice of form and content in official communications.

Where there is a formal program to build leadership competencies, communicators can and should be partners in promoting it through the organization. Of necessity, it cannot be a program led from Corporate Communication or Human Resources but must be driven from the top and involve people from the bottom up. But communicators, in their role of vision-crafters and storytellers, can play an effective role in clarifying the goals and presenting the program in language that will inspire understanding and commitment.

Writer Tony Schwartz, describing an EI training session says, “Most attendees of these emotional-competence workshops are compelled to learn a new language for one simple reason: They're visiting a foreign land. Over the past 50 years, large companies have embraced a business dictum that told workers to check their emotions at the door. A legacy from the days of "The Organization Man" and "The Man in the Grey Flannel Suit," this never-spoken but widely shared policy reflected the sensibility that frowned on employees who brought messy emotions and troubling personal issues to work.”³⁴

Communicators can help create an environment in which the language of EI, the new language of leadership, is spoken and understood, and people develop fluency in it.

Help clarify the vision

PL theory tells us that visionary leaders are the most successful in creating an organizational climate that promotes effective work and successful outcomes. Communicators have long had a role in helping organizations craft their visions. Words and images, symbols and stories are tools of our craft. The communicator can be a formidable ally to the visionary leaders, refining and adding detail and understanding to an inspired vision – making it inspiring.

One of the first steps in developing EI in individuals and organizations is to create a picture of the ideal state. Communicators are not only skilled at describing these, once they have emerged from the executive conference room, they are increasingly adept at helping to formulate the vision.

Developing skills such as dynamic inquiry and coaching methods, communicators can assist organizational leaders in uncovering the vision and creating the future – then articulate it so it will attract support, boost people’s confidence, and point them in the right direction.

Practise what you preach

For many communicators, including the author of this paper, the vision for the communication profession is that we no longer assist the organizational leaders in their work; we are the organizational leaders. We are part of a team that combines its knowledge, technical skills, and various EI competencies and leadership styles to develop the future of our organization. With that in mind, it is critical for us to develop our own emotional intelligence.

By understanding and developing it in our own lives and business roles, we not only entrench the behaviours, we model them for others. Most people in the work force can name one or, if they are lucky, several people whose style is a model for their decisions. We think, “What would So’n’So do?” As communicators, we have a role in influencing people who don’t report to us and can be that model for others.

If we develop our own EI, we are less likely to develop what the authors of *Primal Leadership* call “CEO disease.”³⁵ One need not be a CEO to be a victim of this affliction in which you have no idea how you are doing and what effect you have on your organization – and no one will tell you. We may also develop the courage required to prevent others from suffering the affliction – finding ways do instigate meaningful conversations about emotional issues.

Preach what you practise

The more familiar we become with EI skills, the more successfully we can support our organizations in developing them through communication. The phenomenal popularity of EI and its successors and clones makes it almost inevitable that, overtly or covertly, the ideas and practices will be adopted in some fashion by the organizations that employ us. We need to be ready, not only to talk about it intelligently and create effective communications – but to lead the charge.

EI principles are much in tune with the principles of 21st century communicators. The emphasis on stakeholder relations in building, maintaining and recovering corporate reputation requires sensitivity to others, empathy, conflict management, teamwork, transparency – all EI competencies (listed in the chart above). The focus on employee development and performance management, which touches anyone communicating with employees and anyone who manages others, calls for coaching, listening, consensus building and other EI attributes.

The changing role of the communicator

Veteran communicators know that our profession is evolving and changing. A few years ago, we were craftsmen, recruited from journalism and valued for our writing skills and our media contacts. Some of us were, sometimes unwittingly and always unwillingly, “spin doctors,” whose job was to dress up dull events to look newsworthy, or give a story an angle that would put our organizations in the best – and not always accurate – light.

But the days of spin and press agency are over, in most organizations. Communicators who want any sort of career – or good professional fun – carve out more strategic roles for themselves. They understand the workings of their business – and business in general. They build relationships across the organization and find ways to build communication competence throughout the enterprise.

Build communication culture

Communicators cannot do all the communication, and we shouldn't. But we can influence the quality of communication and help build a culture of communication. The EI competencies are critical in achieving this.

Become expert at interpersonal communication

Organizational communication experts are seldom involved in dealing with person-to-person communication and the dynamics of interpersonal exchanges. There are opportunities to help our organizations improve by learning about communication in the workplace. In Canada, in particular, where cultural diversity adds a layer of complexity to interpersonal communication, this can be an interesting skill to add to a communicator's repertoire.

Related to the issue of diversity and interpersonal communication is the fact that people think differently. The EI work does not suggest that people who learn EI will all think or act the same way. Research into learning styles, temperament and personality, such as Myers-Briggs Type Inventory (MBTI) and other theories based on the work of psychologist Carl Jung, confirms that diversity involves more than physical attributes.³⁶

Understanding the communication styles – and communication barriers – that diverse individuals use and experience, can be a valuable tool for the EI communicator. It helps in presenting messages and interpreting them, key ingredients in stakeholder awareness.

Develop leadership communication

Professional communicators are well positioned to develop programs that encourage the sort of open and honest communication EI requires and communication theorists show is not only effective but also necessary for communication excellence.³⁷ Workshops, management toolkits, handy guides, communication newsletter and other learning tools could be used to develop the communication skills leaders need.

Develop the coaching role.

Whether or not a formal leadership communication program can be developed, communicators can adopt the role of communication coach for other leaders and potential leaders in the organization. It is possible to turn conversations into coaching moments by helping individuals recognize what is taking place and how they feel about it. Setting out to coach people as communicators not only builds their skills, it builds the communicator's skills in a much needed organizational EI competency – coaching.

Find the tipping point

The tipping point is that point at which small change has a large effect. The authors of *Primal Leadership* cite work by David McClelland in trying to determine how much of a competency that sets people apart is required for outstanding performance.³⁸ Where communication is concerned, reaching the tipping point may be farther away than we think. Being sensitive to people's feelings, different learning styles and information needs, may reveal a need for more repetition, recasting the communication in many ways and delivering it in different formats. It also may require a greater amount of listening – as suggested by the two-way symmetrical communication model of the International Association of Business Communicators' 1995 excellence study.³⁹

The last word

EI and PL represent opportunities for organizations and for organizational communicators. The energy and care with which the authors and others have validated the data through work with other organizations over the past 15 years suggests this is a business news story “with legs,” not a “fad du jour.”

The EI competencies prescribed in *Primal Leadership* are so greatly attuned to the new and emerging techniques recommended in the communication literature that communicators cannot

afford to ignore them. Instead, we must develop them, in ourselves, in our organizations and in our profession.

One of the key competencies is passion. Visionary leadership, the most successful at creating a climate of excellence, creates passion for the work at hand. Passion is developed when activity is truly action, when people are seen to benefit from our efforts, when work has meaning.

Embarking on EI development, for oneself and one's organization, can rekindle enthusiasm as new ideas are embraced and new techniques are mastered. Such rekindling can ignite passion.

But while we are getting passionate about change and changing, Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee do warn us to monitor our Perceived Weirdness Index (PWI)⁴⁰ "Break the rules," they say, "but don't scare people away."

That's the balanced approach, the EI way.

References

- ¹ Goleman, Daniel, Boyatzis, Richard, McKee, Annie, *Primal Leadership: Realizing The Power Of Emotional Intelligence*, Harvard Business School Press, Boston, 2002, p. 26.
- ² At [search] [Primal Leadership] [More product details] at www.amazon.com.
- ³ Personal observation based on using Amazon for almost all book purchases since 1996.
- ⁴ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 39.
- ⁵ Personal experience working with diversity and leadership development issues in the 1990s.
- ⁶ Rosen, Judith, "More than a hunch behind Goleman," *Publishers Weekly*, March 11, 2002, p 21.
- ⁷ Goleman, Daniel, "What Makes A Leader?" *Harvard Business Review*, Nov.-Dec. 1998, pp. 95-102.
- ⁸ Coupland, Doug, *Generation X: Tales for an Accelerated Culture*, St Martin's Press, 1994.
- ⁹ Pink, Dan, *Free Agent Nation: The Future of Working for Yourself*, Warner Books, 2002.
- ¹⁰ Kinsey Goman, Carol, *The Human Side of High-Tech: Lessons from the Technology Frontier*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 2000,
- ¹¹ Declining Trust Threatens Corporate Competitiveness, *HR Next*, July 30, 2002, at www.hrnext.com.
- ¹² Heifetz, Ronald A., Laurie, Donald L., "The Work Of Leadership," *Harvard Business Review*, Dec 2001..
- ¹³ Salovey, P., & Mayer, J. (1990). Emotional intelligence. *Imagination, cognition, and personality*, 9(3), 185-211 in Cherniss, Cary, *Emotional Intelligence: What it is and Why it Matters*, Society of Industrial and Organizational Psychology, Annual Meeting, April 2000, at www.eiconsortium.org.
- ¹⁴ Lucia, Antoinette D., and Lepsinger, Richard, *The Art And Science Of Competency Models*, Jossey-Bass, San Francisco, 1999, p. 15.
- ¹⁵ *Primal Leadership* co-author Richard Boyatzis, an organizational behaviour expert known for his research in learning theory and competency models, also studied with McClelland.
- ¹⁶ McClelland went on to become a co-founder of McBer, now Hay Group, and developed methods to quantify employee competence and performance that are widely used throughout North America.
- ¹⁷ Goleman, op. cit., 1998, p 94.
- ¹⁸ Goleman, op. cit., 1998, p. 94.
- ¹⁹ Goleman, op. cit., 1998, p. 95.
- ²⁰ [Download Reports] [Emotional Competency Framework] at www.eiconsortium.org.
- ²¹ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p 38.
- ²² Goleman, 1998, p. 97
- ²³ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 8
- ²⁴ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 5.
- ²⁵ *The Concise Oxford Dictionary*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1990.
- ²⁶ Quinn, Robert E. Faerman, Sue R., Thompson, Michael P. and McGrath, Michael R., *Becoming A Master Manager, Third Edition*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 2003, p. 25.
- ²⁷ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 55.
- ²⁸ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 110.
- ²⁹ A great deal of information about executive coaching can be found at Tom Leonard's Coachville web site, www.coachville.com.
- ³⁰ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 228.
- ³¹ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 226.
- ³² Cherniss, op. cit.
- ³³ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 233.
- ³⁴ Schwartz, Tony, "Coping, How do you Feel," *The Secured Lender*; National Commercial Finance Association, New York, Nov/Dec 2000.
- ³⁵ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 92.
- ³⁶ Quinn et al, op. cit, p. 33.
- ³⁷ Dozier, David M., Grunig, Larissa A., and Grunig, James E., *Manager's Guide to Excellence in Public Relations and Communication Management*, International Association of Business Communicators, Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Mahwah, N.J., 1995, p. 13.
- ³⁸ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit., p. 146.
- ³⁹ Dozier, Grunig & Grunig, op. cit., p. 13.
- ⁴⁰ Goleman, Boyatzis & McKee, op. cit.; p 234.