

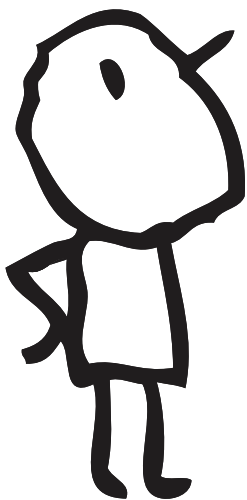
Zero in

ON KNOWLEDGE

Emotional Intelligence and Star Performance

Written by Diana Durek

Organizational challenges related to talent management include high turnover, training costs, and lost productivity. By benchmarking Emotional Intelligence skills, an organization determines the skill sets that are associated with high performance in specific roles. Resultant profiles can be used to inform the selection process, increasing its reliability and efficiency by giving a critical perspective about the skills that candidates will need to perform their roles based on the skill sets associated with those who are currently successful. Benchmarking also provides a way to evaluate fit against organizational culture and results in increased potential for success and retention. Training and coaching become more effective, as they can be targeted at emotional and social skills that are empirically linked with high performance. Additionally, training can give individuals opportunities to learn the specific skills they need to move along career paths.



Diana Durek

Studies indicate that Emotional Intelligence accounts for 15-45% of work success, whereas cognitive intelligence has shown low and insignificant correlations with performance in the workplace (for example, Jae, J. H., 1997).

Emotional Intelligence competencies can be improved through training, and thus, provide an excellent means of identifying strengths and potential growth edges, as well as measuring the effectiveness of individual and organizational development initiatives. The most intelligent or highly technically qualified person may not have the emotional make-up to handle the stresses of the job environment effectively. In terms of management assessment, many people in leadership roles possess strong cognitive skills; often, their academic achievements also attest to this. Therefore, only a finer discrimination will determine which members of such a group will excel in relation to others; in other words, a different set of criteria is required. Research studies have demonstrated that it is Emotional Intelligence that predicts effective transformational leadership skills and leadership performance (Barling, Slater, & Kelloway, 2000) and that the absence of Emotional Intelligence is related to career derailment (Ruderman, Hannum, Leslie, & Steed, 2001). Benchmarking with the EQ-i raises the standard in management assessment by identifying the emotional and social skills required for the successful interface of an individual's strong knowledge base with their unique workplace environment.

As an example, a recent study of leaders across all functional groups was conducted in a national telecommunications company. EQ-i scores accounted for 48% of the variance in leadership competency scores between high and low performers. In other words, one half of the skill set required for successful execution of this organization's leadership competencies is comprised of emotional and social skills. Specifically, the model that predicted top performance was comprised of Happiness (24%), Self-Regard, (12%), Self-Actualization (9%), Interpersonal Relationship (2%), and Optimism (1%). These results have powerful implications for selection and development initiatives in this organization. The EQ-i factors that account for the differences in performance can be incorporated into the leadership competency training to increase its efficacy. Additionally, the selection process can be enhanced significantly with the addition of the predictive model. The model will evaluate each candidate's EQ-i match against high performers in the position in order to predict the likelihood of an individual becoming a top performer.

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In 2006, MHS worked closely with a global Fortune 100 insurance provider to design a candidate selection system that would reliably identify future top performers among claims trainees. Our candidate selection system has proven so successful that the company is expanding it for use in filling other positions.

STAR PERFORMER SYSTEM

Star performer studies compare star versus non-star performers based on independent job performance criteria in order to determine how EQ-i factors are related to job success.

1. EQ-i Administration

It is recommended that a minimum of 70 individuals be included to ensure conventional levels of statistical significance.

2. Collection of Performance Data

Performance goals must be measurable and clearly defined in order to accurately classify individuals into high and low performance groups.

3. Statistical Procedures

Discriminant function analyses determine which EQ-i factors predict top performance and the percentage of variance they account for.

4. Creation of Predictive Model

A statistical algorithm will be created that will evaluate a candidate's EQ-i match against high performers in the position, generating a value to predict the likelihood of an individual becoming a star performer.

MHS can help you use EQ-i results to identify the skills and qualities critical to on-the-job success. Before recruiting, assess the role you want to fill. By comparing high and low performers in a given role, the EQ-i can provide the pattern of emotional and social skills predictive of star performance within the specific role. With this pattern of skills established, you can easily assess the degree of fit between a new candidate's EQ-i scores and those of employees who already excel in the position. This method of selection—customizing your search by matching your candidates with your metrics—saves you time and money.

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