

Guest Author Bob Cooper: Leading with Emotional Intelligence WILL Drive Bottom-Line Results



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In the book “Primal Leadership ”“ Realizing The Power Of Emotional Intelligence”, the authors Goleman, Boyatzis, and McKee discuss the importance of both personal competence (how we manage ourselves), and social competence (how we manage relationships), relative to achieving long-term success. Personal competence involves both self-awareness and self-management. Social competence deals with social awareness and relationship management.

Many people reading this may be wondering how these concepts link to business success. What does this have to do with achieving a positive bottom-line? Aren't these the “soft skills” that are nice to have, but not essential to build profitability?

I recognize that many people want good hard data to back up the idea that leading with emotional intelligence is critical to build and sustain a business. Rather than present you with productivity and turnover data, employee satisfaction statistics, etc. I ask that you reflect on the following questions and come up with your own conclusion:

1. What happens when a leader yells and bangs the table

when something goes wrong? What impact does this have on others? Who wants to do business with them?

2. What happens when a top performer is taken for granted, and not sincerely acknowledged?

3. What happens when a member of your team is going through a difficult personal situation and you don't take the time to listen and show empathy?

4. What happens when a leader says his/her employees are the most important asset, but rarely shows it?

5. What happens when the boss asks a direct report to get him/her a cup of coffee and never reciprocates?

6. What happens when a leader does not build team unity, but allows conflict amongst team members to grow?

7. What happens when a leader fails to build the competence and confidence of team members?

8. What happens when the leader is not aware of his/her strengths and limitations?

9. What happens when the leader is not able to handle adversity and change?

10. What happens when the leader is not transparent in communications, giving others the feeling that the truth is being withheld?

The following are a few suggestions to enhance your emotional intelligence:

1. **Keep disruptive emotions and impulses under control.**

2. Show all employees that you value their contributions and respect them as individuals. **Find ways to recognize and reward outstanding performance.**

3. Pay attention to other's emotions, understand their perspective, and **show an interest in helping** them whenever possible.

4. Recognize and meet other's needs "" **be willing to serve** them.

5. **Model what it means to be a good team player.** Develop team standards and hold yourself and others accountable for

“living” these behaviors.

6. Know your strengths and limits, and **surround yourself with individuals with complimentary strengths**. Great leaders know they are only as good as the team they surround themselves with.

7. **Develop team members** by giving honest and timely feedback, and offering guidance to help them to reach their full potential.

8. **Demonstrate the ability to be flexible** in handling changing situations. Help others to work with you to overcome obstacles, and move in a new direction when necessary.

9. **Display transparency** through communications and behaviors that demonstrate honesty, integrity, and trustworthiness.

10. **Be optimistic**, and help others to see both organizational and individual potential.

These are just a few issues to reflect on. These are important to employees, especially top performers. When I am asked about what I believe to be an acceptable turnover rate I always answer, “It depends on who’s leaving, and why they are leaving.”

If you truly believe that employees make the difference, then you will want to make sure that all the above questions are addressed in a positive way.

The price an organization pays when it loses the heart and soul of its employees is beyond measure. Leaders who don’t take these questions seriously, and violate the underlying principles, will lose their followers. Without followers, no real leadership exists. Without followers, your business becomes a house of cards “” ready to crumble. It’s only a matter of time before you see an erosion of market share. If your competitors embrace these principles, and thus have loyal followers, they will deliver exceptional service, and develop more innovative products and services. I have witnessed CEOs and other executives removed because of a lack of emotional

intelligence.

Creativity and innovation are unleashed by leaders who demonstrate high integrity, compassion, and show they truly care about their employees.

Leading with emotional intelligence makes good business sense. It is not a "soft skill" it's the real truth.

Bob Cooper is the founder and president of **RL Cooper Associates**, an innovative healthcare organizational and management consulting firm. With over twenty-five years experience in people and organizational development, Mr. Cooper's focus is placed on identifying strategies that maximize organizational effectiveness and fundamental transformation by enabling individuals and groups to reach their full potential. In addition to "**Heart and Soul in the Boardroom**", Mr. Cooper is the author of "Huddle Up "" Creating and Sustaining a Culture of Service Excellence", and "Leadership Tips To Enhance Staff Satisfaction and Retention." Mr. Cooper holds an MS in Human Resource Management and a BA in Economics. He is also a member of Strathmore's Who's Who. Bob can be contacted at rlcooperassoc@aol.com.