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Got Negotiation EQ?

Effective negotiators and successful leaders share similar traits. What distinguishes great leaders from average ones isn't IQ or technical skills, says psychologist Daniel Goleman, Ph.D., author of the bestselling book *Emotional Intelligence*. It's emotional intelligence, also known as EQ. When Goleman analyzed leaders at nearly 200 large, global companies, he found emotional intelligence was twice as important as IQ and technical ability in performance results.

According to Goleman, emotional intelligence is made up of five components:

Self-awareness: Understanding one's own emotions and their effect on others. Self-aware leaders are confident and candid. They can realistically assess and talk about their strengths and weaknesses, often with a self-deprecating sense of humor. Similarly, great negotiators keep emotions in check by separating people from the problem, and candidly assess the options that are available if no deal is reached.

Self-regulation: The ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses. To think before acting. Effective self-regulators tend to be comfortable with ambiguity, able to suspend judgment, and open to change. Likewise, strong negotiators don't give knee-jerk reactions to sharp tactics the other side may use to gain a psychological advantage.

Motivation: A passion to work with energy and persistence for reasons beyond money or status. Similarly, effective negotiators are goal oriented, optimistic, and committed to finding creative solutions to close the deal.

Empathy: Understanding the emotional needs of others and treating them accordingly. Empathetic leaders serve clients and customers, and manage cross-cultural sensitivities. Great negotiators don't focus on their own problem, exclusively. Solve the other side's problem as the means to solving your own. Let them see that your way is their way.

Social Skill: Proficiency in managing relationships, developing networks, building rapport, and finding common ground. It makes leaders more persuasive, and helps them create change. Similarly, negotiators who take the time to build a good working relationship can use that rapport and trust to get better terms and more durable agreements.

We can all increase our level of emotional intelligence by developing the brain's limbic system which governs feelings, impulses and drives. In fact, emotional intelligence also increases with age, due to an old-fashioned phenomenon known as maturity.