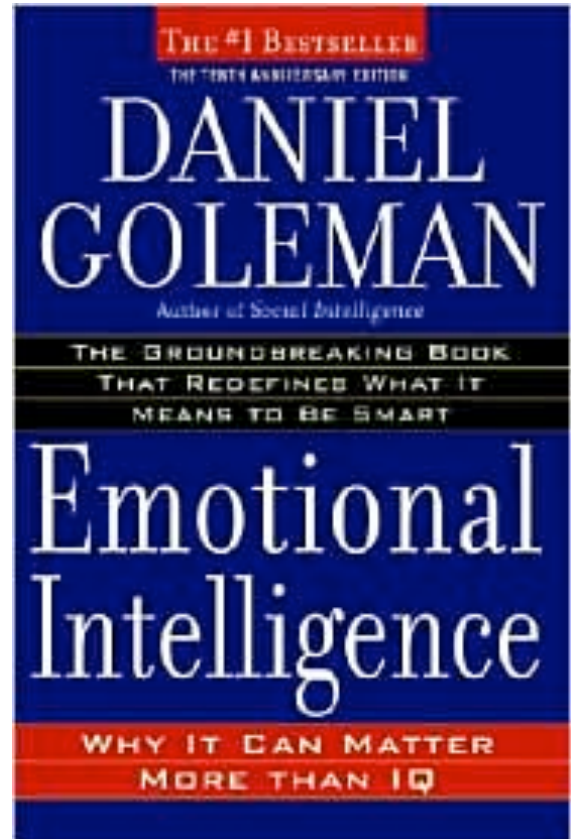

BOOK REVIEW

"Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ" by Daniel Goleman

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Although published way back in 1995, this book has become the biggest single book in HR history.

Decades ago, IQ was thought to be the sole determinant of success or failure. As more and more research was undertaken, people began to question what accounted for the failure of a person with high IQ and the success of someone with more moderate IQ. And so EI came into the picture. For example, it has been suggested that in terms of career success, IQ only accounts for between 4-10% of that success!

A study done in the 1960s on children and emotional intelligence, was popularly known as the Marshmallow Experiment. Done by Walter Mischel at Stanford

University, the study gave a group of four-year-olds one marshmallow each. They were promised a second one if they waited twenty minutes before eating the first one. Some children were able to wait, some weren't. The research team, with the help of the children's parents and teachers, then followed the growth and development of these children into adolescence and found that those who were able to wait were better adjusted and more dependable, and scored significantly higher on their SAT Reasoning Test. This ability to control impulses and delay gratification is one sign of an emotionally intelligent individual.

EI is defined as the awareness of and the ability to manage one's emotions in a healthy and productive manner. There are two components of emotional intelligence. The **self component** includes self-awareness, impulse control, handling stress and anxiety, self-motivation, and coping skills. The **relationship component** includes reading social and emotional cues, awareness of others' perspectives, sociability, motivating people, managing conflict, and listening.

Daniel Goleman's book, "Emotional Intelligence", champions EI. It has been alleged however, that Goleman as a journalist simply re-packaged the original work by Dr Peter Selve which was considered somewhat boring and uninteresting. It is claimed that Goleman re-jigged the work into a more palatable form. Some would say not far enough in that many readers find the book tough-going and don't make it past Chapter 1. The book is packed with research, facts and figures, and may seem daunting at first, and could be considered hard-going, but Goleman does pepper the book with stories and anecdotes that make it an easier read. He provides a solid connection between the brain and emotions by explaining the neurology behind it, lending credence to the role and importance of EI.

One important point the book stresses is how childhood affects one's EI later on in life. If, indeed, Freud is correct in saying that "the child is the father of the man", then we need not look far for explanation than EI and childhood. The book talks about the role of parents, teachers, and anyone involved in rearing and educating a child, and how this role is critical in developing an emotionally intelligent child, who will grow up into an emotionally intelligent adult.

Another point is gender differences and EQ. Goleman writes:

"By contrast, men who are high in emotional intelligence are socially poised, outgoing and cheerful, not prone to fearless or worried rumination. They have a noticeable capacity for commitment to people or causes, for taking responsibility, and for having an ethical outlook; they are sympathetic and caring in their relationships. Their emotional life is rich, but appropriate; they are comfortable with themselves, others, and the social universe they live in...

Emotionally intelligent women ... tend to be assertive and express their feelings directly, and to feel positive about themselves; life holds meaning for them. Like

the men, they are outgoing and gregarious, and express their feelings appropriately (rather than, say, in outbursts they later regret); they adapt well to stress. Their social poise lets them easily reach out to new people; they are comfortable enough with themselves to be playful, spontaneous, and open to sensual experience. Unlike the women purely high in IQ, they rarely feel anxious or guilty, or sink into rumination...”

It is interesting to note that Goleman’s emotionally intelligent man and woman sound a lot like Maslow’s self-actualized person, although while Maslow theorizes that self-actualization is a need, Goleman’s EQ suggests that it is a tool towards self-actualization.

This is no self-help book, though. True, it explores cause and effect, but essentially it drills down to the fact that emotional intelligence is a responsibility of parents, teachers, and other educators. IQ is genetic, but without properly nurturing EQ, all we’ll raise are highly-intelligent sociopaths.

More than fifteen years have passed though, and the book has become outdated. It also doesn't show you how to improve your EQ, which is something that researchers have discovered how to do during the last decade. Nevertheless, it set a precedent for the whole of HR and the whole of business.

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