Global Communication Skills and Its Relationship with Emotional Intelligence

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Emotional Intelligence comprises of five components: Self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. These components have a direct relationship on a person's emotional intelligence that further drives a person's performance and business. Communication skills vary globally. Collectively, we studied these components of Emotional Intelligence and our studies reveal that all five components have "communication skills" in common and that it is one of the chief requirements that will determine a leader's effectiveness. This paper explains how Emotional Intelligence helps a person to communicate better and its benefits in understanding global communication skills.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization presents opportunities, but also possesses challenges for many professions (Martinez, 2012). Globalization refers to the "integration of the world economy into one large market" (Faber & Johnson-Eilola, 2002). It is the combination of knowledge, technology, and far-reaching communication like we have never experienced before, creating new opportunities for every country, and indeed every individual, in this world to compete for anything on any level (Martinez, 2012). With growing globalization and internationalization of higher education, it is becoming increasingly essential to develop global communication skills. Though a large number of people in the world interact with each other using the English language on a daily basis, there still are certain gaps in conveying and interpreting thoughts. This is majorly because communication encompasses a wide range of forms. Communication can be either in the spoken word, written word, or in non-verbal ways, such as facial expressions, speaking tempo, vocal pitch, intonational contours, gestures or body language. Another important aspect that causes a barrier in global communication is "culture". The world is witnessing a vast variety of diverse cultures in every nook of the globe and it is certainly difficult for an individual to follow each and every culture. Even when two people are speaking the same language, cultural differences can affect vocabulary, colloquial expressions, voice tone and taboo topics. In Japanese business culture, for example, it can be considered rude to ask personal questions in an initial business meeting. In the U.S., on the other hand, asking personal questions and sharing personal information can display warmth and openness. American and Japanese businesspeople who understand this about each other can communicate in ways that resonate more effectively with each other (Ingram, n.d.).

"Global communication", as a concept, is the practice of exchanging ideas, forums, cultures, institutions, etc. In order to match the increasing global communication demands, managers and leaders across the globe need to consider global communication skills of prime importance. Global communication starts with identifying and respecting cultural differences. Modern entrepreneurs and employees need the ability to catch subtle nuances of people's manner of speech when communicating across cultures (Ingram, n.d.). In the face of globalization, it can be difficult to understand non-verbal and hidden forms of communications across different cultures and hence there needs to be a common ground on which people can interact.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

In 1985 Wayne Leon Payne, then a graduate student at an alternative liberal arts college in the USA, wrote a doctoral dissertation, which included the term "emotional intelligence" in the title (Hein, 2005). It was the first ever time the term "emotional intelligence" was used academically. Further, "emotional intelligence" grabbed the attention of two American university professors, John Mayer (University of New Hampshire) and Peter Salovey (University of Yale). They published two academic journal articles that discussed their findings on people's emotions. One of their articles titled "Emotional Intelligence" (1990) defined emotional intelligence as

> "…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 actions" (Mayer & Salovey, 1990).

They also credited that "Emotional Intelligence" is a part of Howard Gardners' view of social intelligence, which he referred to as personal intelligences in his book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (1983). However, the person most commonly associated with the term emotional intelligence is Daniel Goleman, a New York writer, psychologist, and science journalist (Hein, 2005). According to a *Harvard Business Review* article (2004), Goleman first applied the concept of "emotional intelligence" to business with his 1998 HBR article "What makes a leader". In his research at nearly 200 large, global companies, Goleman found that while the qualities traditionally associated with leadership—such as intelligence, toughness, determination, and vision—are required for success, they are insufficient (Harvard Business Review, 2004). Truly effective leaders are also distinguished by a high degree of "Emotional Intelligence", which includes self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skill (Harvard Business Review, 2004). Further, Goleman found direct ties between emotional intelligence and measurable business results and his article remains the definitive reference on the subject, with a description of each component of emotional intelligence and a detailed discussion of how to recognize it in potential leaders, how and why it connects to performance, and how it can be learned.

GOLEMAN'S FIVE EI FACTORS

Goleman introduced the five components of emotional intelligence at work in his 1998 HBR article, *What makes a leader*. He identified the five components of Emotional Intelligence at work to be self-awareness, self- regulation, motivation, empathy and social skill. The first three components of emotional intelligence—self-awareness, self-regulation and motivation are all self- management skills, however the last two—empathy and social skill concern a person's ability to manage relationships with others. Self-awareness, the first component of emotional intelligence, means having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs and drives. People who have high degree of self-awareness recognize how their feelings affect them, other people, and their job performance. Abrahams (2007) described self-awareness as "an individual's ability to understand his feelings, even as they change from moment to moment." Tjan (2012), in his HBR blog, wrote: "Without self-awareness, you cannot understand your strengths and weakness, your "super powers" versus your "kryptonite." It is self-

awareness that allows the best business-builders to walk the tightrope of leadership: projecting conviction while simultaneously remaining humble enough to be open to new ideas and opposing opinions."

"We all believe that our biggest mistakes and regrets are due to being overly emotional—the times when our emotions get the better of us. After all, emotions are remnants from 300 million years ago, when they were necessary for the survival of our species" (Darwin, 1998). Caruso & Salovey (2004) cite that emotions contain information-- they are signals to us about important events going on in our world, whether it's our internal world, social world, or the natural environment. Because emotions contain information and influence thinking, we need to incorporate emotions intelligently into our reasoning, problem solving, judging, and behaving. This requires us to stay open to emotions, whether they are welcome or not, and to choose strategies that include the wisdom of our feelings.

The second component of emotional intelligence-- Self- regulation, as described by Goleman (1998a), is the component of emotional intelligence that frees us from being prisoners of our feelings. DeWall et al. (2011) cite that self- regulation involves overriding one response so as to make another possible. It is required in order to control emotions and feelings, impulses and manage time. Self-regulation is typically needed when motivational conflicts arise, and self-regulation is typically used to resolve these conflicts in a particular direction, namely in favor of long-term, enlightened rationality and social desirability at the expense of short-term selfish indulgence in tempting pleasures. A self-regulated leader is the one who is highly respected and trusted. Followers have an understanding of the leader's principles and they (followers) make an attempt to abide to them (principles). Leaders who are self-regulated can easily respond to changes and plan likewise. Leaders who are in control of their feelings and impulses create an environment of trust and fairness, and are models of resiliency. In today's business environment, rife with ambiguity, pressures, and change, being able to remain calm and keep your emotions under control is key to your success, your health, and the health of your team. Self- awareness combined with self-regulation helps a leader to have fairness towards his approach, actions and reactions. Such leaders are great motivators and highly ethical.

Motivation is a common trait that most successful leaders have. According to Greenberg and Baron (2000) the definition of motivation could be divided into three main parts. The first part looks at arousal that deals with the drive, or energy behind individual(s) action. People tend to be guided by their interest in making a good impression on others, doing interesting work and being successful in what they do. The second part refers to the choice people make and the direction their behavior takes. The last part deals with maintaining behavior clearly defining how long people have to persist at attempting to meet their goals. Motivated leaders are driven by passion, commitment and desire to excel in whatever they do. Goleman (1998a) states that those with leadership potential are motivated by a deeply embedded desire to achieve for the sake of achievement. Such leaders are highly energetic, optimistic, eager to learn and explore new approaches, open to creative challenges and to take calculative risks, proud about their achievements and are indifferent to external rewards like salary, status, power etc. Self-regulation combined with motivation can help in overcoming setbacks caused by failures.

Empathy plays a great role in relationship management. It is that quality of a leader which can win his followers' trust and support. According to Voss, Gruber, and Reppel (2010), empathy skills allow leaders to understand better other peoples' perspectives and opinions, making the work environment more enjoyable and productive. Empathy ensures that connections occur between people so that everybody is included and no employee feels left out, and as such, an empathic leader is perceived as an effective leader (Cockerell, 2009). Marques (2009) states that, to achieve leadership effectiveness, leaders must develop empathy skills to their fullest potential since empathy enhances a sense of leadership by providing leaders with the awareness to listen, serve their followers, and have greater understanding of interrelationships within the group. Thus, followers may be more likely to invest energy and commitment in their performance to the group. Empathy has become increasingly important to the success of leadership because empathic leaders are more likely to have an appropriate degree of openness about diversity and the differences between cultures (Atwater & Waldman, 2008; Choi, 2006). According to Rahman & Castelli (2013) and Martinovski, Traum & Marsella, (2007) state that empathy also plays an important role in developing trust in leader-employee relationships. According to Mahsud, Yukl, and

Prussia (2010), empathy enables leaders to have a better understanding of new social surroundings, and helps them quickly learn and adapt to new environments. In the same vein, empathy skills also help leaders have a positive attitude towards adapting to new environments and trends, which create a collaborative atmosphere. Empathy gives leaders the ability to read and be aware of people's emotions; thus, leaders are able to perform critical leadership activities (Skinner & Spurgeon, 2005). Skinner and Spurgeon (2005) further point out that the importance of empathy in leadership behavior cannot be underestimated because empathy gives leaders the power to read between the lines; thus, they are able to make appropriate decisions.

Goleman (1998a) cited social skill as friendliness with a purpose. Riggio & Reichard, (2008) claimed that social skills represent a broader range of abilities that is most closely linked to the construct of social intelligence. Social skills that are key components of social intelligence include the following: the ability to express oneself in social interactions, the ability to "read" and understand different social situations, knowledge of social roles, norms, and scripts, interpersonal problem-solving skills, and social role-playing skills (Riggio & Reichard, 2008). Saporito (2009) explains that "social skill is the ability to leverage relationships toward the ideas and ideals a leader wants to promote, through likeability, trust and respect. But just as the line blurs between self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation and empathy, social skill also represents shades of the other four. Without social skill, the other four components of emotional intelligence may fall flat." People with social skills can have a network when the time for action comes (Goleman, 1998a).

Building upon and integrating a great deal of research, Goleman presented a model of emotional intelligence in his book *Working with emotional intelligence* (1998b) with twenty-five competencies arrayed in five clusters (Boyatzis, Goleman & Rhee, 2000). They were:

a) The Self-awareness Cluster included Emotional Awareness; Accurate Self-assessment; and Self-confidence;
b) The Self-regulation Cluster included Self-control, Trustworthiness, Conscientiousness, Adaptability, and Innovation;
c) The Motivation Cluster included Achievement Drive, Commitment, Initiative, and Optimism;
d) The Empathy Cluster included Understanding Others, Developing Others, Service Orientation, Leveraging Diversity, and Political Awareness;
e) The Social Skills Cluster included Influence, Communication, Conflict Management, Leadership, Change Catalyst, Building Bonds, Collaboration and Cooperation, and Team Capabilities (Boyatzis, Goleman & Rhee, 2000).

COMMUNICATION SKILLS: A SUBSET OF GOLEMAN'S FIVE EI FACTORS

President and CEO of National Semiconductor Corporation, Gilbert Amelio, said that "Developing excellent communication skills is absolutely essential to effective leadership.
The leader must be able to share knowledge and ideas to transmit a sense of urgency and enthusiasm to others. If a leader can't get a message across clearly to motivate others to act on it, then having a message doesn't even matter." According to a study conducted by The Ken Blanchard companies, about 41% of the respondents identified the inappropriate use of communication as the number one mistake that leaders make. Too often leaders either don't communicate, over-communicate, communicate inappropriately through outbursts, anger, or blaming, or simply don't communicate clearly.

Goleman introduced "communication skills" as a part of the Social Skills cluster in his EI model. However, there is a strong presence of "Communication skills" in other clusters as well. Several research and studies have shown significant ties between communication skills, self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation and empathy. Communication skills as most describe, is simply the process in which people share information, ideas, and feelings. It can be either in the spoken word, written word, or in non-verbal ways, such as facial expressions, gestures or body stance. It can even be pure silence. The communication process is made up of various elements: sender and receivers, messages, channels, noise, feedback, and setting. Conrad and Poole (1998), point out that people who understand how to communicate functions in

an organization, who have developed a wide repertoire of written and oral communication skills, and who have learned when and how to use those skills seem to have more successful careers and contribute more fully to their organizations than people who have not done so. Facey (n.d.) writes in his magazine article, "Superficially, communication appears to be deceptively simple - write an email or send a memo. In fact, it's a complex process that must be addressed from many angles to achieve the best results. Leaders must understand all components of the communication process to apply them effectively." O'toole (2012) cited Crystal (2007) who mentioned, effective communication occurs in many forms, including vocalizing without words (e.g. laughing or crying), non-verbal cues (e.g. eye contact, facial expressions, gestures and signing) and material forms (e.g. pictures, photographs, picture symbols, logos and written words), it requires consideration of multiple factors.

In order to successfully send a message to someone, one needs to be sure that both his/her words and actions properly announce that message. And to do that one has to recognize what that message is, the best way to send the message and where one stands in terms of sending that message (that is where self awareness ties into communication). Self-awareness is also often a prerequisite for effective communication and interpersonal relations, as well as for developing empathy for others. When one possesses self-awareness he/she is able to practice effective communication because one is cognizant of how he/she comes across to people. Leaders who don't understand their own behavior, and how they're perceived by others, create communication glitches like misunderstandings or hurt feelings ("Personal development, leadership," n.d.).

If you have low self-awareness, you may communicate so that your true meaning is unclear. By working on your self-awareness, you will improve your communication skill. Many organizations, leaders and managers; today, use the Johari Window Model to analyze themselves so that they can communicate better with the external world. The Johari window model is a tool for illustrating and improving self-awareness, and mutual understanding between individuals within a group. As discussed earlier, self-regulation helps human to regulate emotions, feelings and moods. It also facilitates balance in the dynamics of a thought process. Verbal communication is the most obvious form of communication. However, research has shown people pay much less attention to the words that are said and much more attention to the actions and nonverbal cues that accompany those words. Nonverbal cues include facial expressions, use of hand motions, body posture and eye movements. Leaders should strive to always match their nonverbal cues to their words; when they do so, they are more believable and trustworthy. Self-regulation is extremely important in dealing with paralingual communications, which is a set of non-phonemic properties of speech, such as speaking tempo, vocal pitch, and intonational contours, that can be used to communicate attitudes or other shades of meaning. A self- regulated person is able to interpret the external situation and make modifications to his/her thought process or mood or emotions and thus communicate effectively.

Our ideas and concepts are deeply based on our thought process and the condition of our mind. If one thinks negatively, his/her communication exhibits shades of negative remarks in the form of verbal communication, body language, discussions etc. Such negativities have to be controlled within before they are demonstrated externally. This comes from high levels of self-motivation. A person who is self-motivated displays strong optimism, which further reflects in his personality and communication. A motivated individual is often looked up on as a confident individual and a go-getter. Such individuals maintain a positive aura around them and ensure they deal optimistically with other individuals, which further inculcates positivity in others. A leader who is self-motivated often deals humbly with his team and is good at communicating both verbally and non-verbally. A gifted communicator always expresses empathy toward the people they are communicating with (Bachelder, 2013). Even if a person is naturally empathetic, empathy in business communication can often be lost in the process of getting the job done. After all, business decisions and management issues are based on facts, not emotions. Therefore, leaders have to be very careful while connecting with their followers. One can demonstrate empathy by exercising general interpersonal and communication skills. "Picking the right words" and "word filtering" are often the keys to the right way of communicating, especially when empathetic. Leaders exhibiting

good empathetic skills are often type casted to be "too emotional", therefore, it becomes important to demonstrate correct levels of empathy keeping in mind the rationale of the task.

Allen et al. (2002) cite that social skills are often referred to as social competence or interpersonal competence or communication competence. Social skill usually implies high quality, or proficiency with social interactions and communications. Communication skills are the key to developing connections and to building a strong social support network. Building good relationships with other people can greatly reduce stress and anxiety in ones' life ("Effective communication," n.d.). Most of the individuals possessing good social skills are often extroverted and outgoing; however, it is not necessary that introverted people do not posses good social skills. Social skills, like any other skills, can be developed through experience and practice. One needs to have strong communication skills (both verbal and non-verbal) in order to maintain social skills.

Mastering the emotional intelligence skills can, thus, help an individual to communicate better. In this era of globalization, where we meet people from different backgrounds every day, it is essential to connect with them and make them feel comfortable. This can be achieved with good emotional intelligence skills. Even if a person does not understand other person's language, speech, culture, body language, etc… he/she can communicate with the other on basis of emotional intelligence. Thus, emotional intelligence serves as a common ground in understanding global communications.

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