

MOVING AHEAD

MANAGEMENT INSIGHTS FOR BUSINESS SUCCESS

[e-Newsletters](#) > [Moving Ahead Newsletter](#) > [June 2009](#) | [Volume 4](#) | [No. 6](#)

Expert Opinion

Using Executive Emotional Intelligence (EEI) for Leadership Success

By **Rob Fazio**

We know that Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a core component of success. But the problem with EI models is that they were not designed to help people navigate the challenging systems of business and organizations. They fail to focus on the people who create the tone, culture, and vision for organizations—the executives. Emphasis is placed on individual development, rather than on closing the gap between one's strategic intent and its actual impact.

I define Executive Emotional Intelligence (EEI) as “the integration of feelings and thoughts, which allows you to read and influence yourself and others so you can drive **results.**” The Executive Emotional Intelligence (EEI) model is designed to help people nurture their talents and grow their developmental areas in order to be successful leaders.

Why EI Is Important

Talking about emotion is not an accepted norm in all businesses. Too often people attempt to eliminate emotion in their decision-making processes. Yet emotion is part of every interaction and every decision, whether you know it or not. In fact, emotion is data, just like the numbers on a balance sheet.

What's Different About Executives?


Executives are unique; they are viewed under a microscope and any mistakes they make have great impact on their organizations. They are under constant pressure, which amplifies bad habits that lead to ineffective leadership. Successful executives get to where they are by driving results. But once they get to the top, a shift is necessary; they now need to achieve results through others. Their focus moves from their personal accomplishments to a wider vision and strategy aimed at growing the competence and confidence of their people.

Senior people with high levels of EEI bring their performance gaps into awareness, manage their weaknesses, and leverage their talents. The greater ability executives have to receive feedback, understand themselves, their people, and their situations, the more likely they are to choose an approach that will create the best result for their organization.

What's Unique About EEI:

EEI Focuses on:

- Results
- Increasing connecting with people to influence
- Mindset and skills that help you excel
- “How to” of setting a self strategy to drive results through others
- Successful integration of feelings and thoughts

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UPCOMING EVENTS

All components are integrated and affect each other
 Common disconnect between intention and actual impact
 Difference between a strategic response and a reaction

The EEI Model*

EEI is about the successful integration of emotions and thoughts. It includes reading and leading yourself, other people, and situations in order to strategically drive results.

Reading is about insight as you move forward—for example, knowing what is important to whom in a situation and developing an influence strategy based on that.

- **Reading Yourself:** the ability to be self-aware before, during, and after situations.
Skill: Reaction Awareness—knowing your “hot spots” or triggers that cause you to react in an emotional way. A common trigger for managers is when a direct report does not follow through on a commitment.
- **Reading People:** the ability to accurately interpret verbal and nonverbal communication and awareness of your impact on others.
Skill: Talent Identification—having insight into what people’s strengths and areas of growth are and knowing how to leverage and nurture their talent.
- **Reading the Situation:** is the ability to understand the circumstances and dynamics of past, current, and future business conditions.
Skill: Political Awareness—knowing the power dynamics of the organization (i.e., who the key stakeholders are and how they are influenced).

Leading is about action and growth—for example, acting on a strategy to test your insights.

- **Leading Yourself:** the ability to motivate and manage yourself in order to be self-strategic.
Skill: Self-Coaching—monitoring and adapting your self-talk to create positive outcomes.
- **Leading People:** the ability to encourage and inspire others based on your insights and intentions.
Skill: Engagement Enhancement—creating a climate that keeps people energized and dedicated to their work.
- **Leading Situations:** the ability to be a change catalyst and have a positive impact on internal and external systems.
Skill: Business Case Building—creating leverage that appeals to people you are attempting to influence.

Reactions vs. Responses:

Leaders need to make better choices on how to influence others, especially during these tough times. A common trap is getting caught up in “knee-jerk” reactions, which leads to bad decisions and a disconnect between intention and impact. For example, say your direct report doesn’t reach his numbers for the second quarter. A bad reaction would be to send off a strong worded e-mail cc’ing his team. A more strategic response would be to wait a short period of time and to gather information. Then have a clarifying conversation with the employee to discuss the cause of the poor performance. You will now be able to determine what leadership approach you should use in this specific situation.

Here’s another example: You get in your car and turn on the front windshield defogger. Most people crank it up on either hot or cold. Then the windshield gets foggier and they crank it up on high on the opposite temperature. This cycle goes on until the person decides to take the time to determine what temperature is needed. Similarly, in business, taking the time to be self-strategic will allow you to have an impact that is more aligned with your intent, which in turn will enhance productivity.

The characteristics listed below are based on the perceptions of leaders that have dealt with the consequences of being reactive and the benefits of being responsive.

Reactions:

Leading Through a Layoff: How to Manage Before, During and After

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Voice Success for Women

June 10 | 12:00–1:00 p.m. Eastern

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Primal Management: Using Human Nature to Inspire Employee Engagement

June 17 | 12:00–1:00 p.m. Eastern

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Managing Yourself: 7 Ways to Sharpen Your Focus When Facing Uncertainty

June 23 | 1:00–2:30 p.m. Eastern

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BOOK SPOTLIGHT



The Power of Strategic Commitment: Achieving Extraordinary Results Through Total

Alignment and Engagement, by Josh Leibner, Gershon Mader and Alan Weiss, Ph.D.

(AMACOM, 2009). Employee commitment is a crucial strategic advantage, yet it remains an elusive goal for many organizations. This useful new book lays out a blueprint for moving beyond mere compliance to that magical point where every initiative is not only accepted but supported—even embraced—by every employee at every level.

- Reactive
- Fast
- Victim
- Surprised
- By chance
- Based on emotions
- Immediate
- Lack of meaning

Strategic Responses:

- Strategic
- At your pace
- Decision maker
- Anticipated
- Desired
- Logic and emotion
- Measured
- Purposeful

The Bottom Line:

Too often, smart people do dumb things. They react unthinkingly to situations rather than taking the time to be self-strategic. The simple act of taking a step back to read before you lead will result in more interactions where you achieve your desired results. The most encouraging part about EEI is that the skills can be learned. You'll find that if you take even small steps, the ROI on your effort will be substantial.

*The EEI model is adapted from *Hold the Door for Others*, 2008 (contact the author at Rob.Fazio@LRI.com or 215-514-5113 if you would like a graphic of the model or more detail).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

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