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Title: Analyzing Emotionally Intelligent Organizations

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Abstract

Like air, emotional intelligence (EI) is something intangible, a key aspect of our everyday lives, something we need but is so hard to define. As of now, there is not much literature written on the subject of EI but more light is starting to be shed on it as more are emphasizing on social skills rather than qualifications when hiring new employees in organizations. This research paper looks into this developing field. Based on our findings, we will define EI in regards to how the brain works, how it looks like in practice and then what it means for employees and organizations. Four case studies are done on EI organizations namely: Facebook, Google, Starbucks and Ford. They will aid our research on EI as we study what they have in common which makes them an EI organization. This paper will then further look into the significance of EI using findings on implications of how low EI could adversely affect an organization. This involves the concept of taking two hands to clap - where both the employee and organization have to work hand in hand and they affect each other greatly as it determines whether the organization is headed for success or failure.

Background

Defining Emotional Intelligence

Involving the brain:-

Emotional Intelligence (EI) can be split into two components: emotional and intelligence. According to Goleman (2006), different components of the brain can be used to explain the two aspects of emotional and intelligence. The operations of the neocortex greatly affects the intelligence aspect, whereas the subcortex is responsible for the emotional aspect. According to Alipour, Arefnasab and Babamahmoodi (2011), the growth of an individual's EI has to do greatly with the limbic brain known as the emotional brain and the thinking brain known as the neocortex brain. With the strengthening of the limbic brain, it would also enhance the neocortex.

In practice:-

EI has gone beyond the intrapersonal level, becoming highly involved on the interpersonal level, often playing a part in creating a positive or negative relationship with others. According to Salovey & Mayer (1990), EI can be defined as regulating feelings between both parties, which helps to create an amicable setting. This is especially important in the workplace. In order for productive work to take place, there must be an amicable setting for employees to work in. Goleman (2006) mentions the importance of EI in the workforce, he emphasized that someone who is good in his academics might not necessarily do well in the workforce due to their EI inadequacy.

For employees:-

According to Goleman (2006), skills and education only aids you in meeting the basic requirements to do the job. There are 4 other dimensions which employers look out for:

cognitive, team player, independent with drive and personal fit. Out of the 4 dimensions, all of them rely on EI apart from cognitive. Companies want employees who are team players and are able to build good working relationships with their colleagues. They also value employees who are independent with drive - being self-motivated and able to deliver results without constant help and reminders. Companies also try to look for potential employees who can fit the organization well. With employees who fit well into the organization, bonds of greater quality would be developed, and employees would have lesser cultural clashes with the organization.

For organizations:-

Apart from selecting good potential employees, the characteristics of the organization play a colossal part in its success. According to Goleman (2006), companies should have certain characteristics to be successful. The characteristics are self-awareness and self-regulation, motivation and empathy, leadership skill and open communication. Having such qualities, enhances the organizational strength and vitality thus allowing for more cohesiveness.

According to Goleman (2006), companies with good EI are noted to have lesser hierarchical emphasis and prioritise the bonds of their employees. This plays a critical part in having excellent leadership and creating favorable working environments. The quality of work in the organization also improves as a result of employees being offered more platforms to actively contribute, form bonds and network thus creating a sense of interconnectedness.

The findings of the Hawthorne Experiment has also showed that employees want and like organizations that have good EI. According to Miller (2012), from the relay assembly test room, it was observed that social satisfaction was of higher priority to the workers rather than their physical and economic gains. Similarly, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs talks about human needs,

and the belonging and love needs in particular is related to social satisfaction. Social satisfaction is not just solely an important part of human needs, but it can strengthen bonds and empower an individual to succeed in his or her work. According to Goleman (2006), workers who are responsible and have good relationships with their colleagues will greatly aid the organization in its endeavour to success.

Case Studies

After acquiring knowledge of what EI means, in this section of the paper we aim to identify existing organizations which have displayed characteristics of being an EI organization in spite of it not having the term currently pinned to it due to the term's recentness and the lack of literature written regarding the topic. These case studies will aid our research as we look into EI organizations.

Facebook

Facebook is a social networking service that was founded by Mark Zuckerberg in February 2004, and headquartered in Menlo Park, California, United States, with a total of 25,105 employees (Facebook, n.d.). Accessed by 1.4 billion active users daily, Facebook has become one of the fastest growing social media platforms that enabled millions to stay connected by sharing and expressing their feelings through posts, photos, videos and much more (Facebook, n.d.). Moreover, Facebook alone defined itself as a company that motivates their employees to be fearless in expressing their ideas in solving a problem. Employees work in small groups and improve new ideas and products rapidly. Information and materials are allowed to flow in and out, and employees are encouraged to be involved in the decision-making process.

Facebook has an idiom of "this journey is 1% finished" which is plastered on the company's walls to plant this thought in their employees' minds that they have just started accomplishing their mission in bringing the world together (Facebook, n.d.).

In 2018, the company won first place in Glassdoor's tenth annual Employees' Choice Awards, held in great respect of the best places to work (Glassdoor, 2017). With a company rating of 4.6 out of 5, Facebook has proved that they have a high-quality standard for the

employers (Gillet, 2017). According to Caitlin Kalinowski, Facebook's product design engineering director and employees are performing their work based on a special reason and not because it is a part of a regular procedure. Likewise, employees can manage the balance between work and home, since they are working for reasonable hours (Cain, 2017). Holistically, Facebook has received a rating of five, on a scale from one to five, in which five represents the most satisfied workers which are evaluated by the employees (Gillet, 2017). One of Facebook's employees who works in the data scientist department said, "I feel like the luckiest guy on earth forever landing a job here" (Gillet, 2017).

Facebook is well-known for their generous benefits and privileges that they provide to the workers. The company supplies free meals, health check-ups, haircut, dental care, fun workspaces, and also the opportunity to approach the CEO (Ward, 2017). Furthermore, Facebook also reported giving 17 weeks-paid-leave policy available to both women and men (Gillet, 2017). Facebook also allows their employees to be innovative and bring their full selves into the work. As long as they are playing their role in a right way and enjoy what they are doing, Facebook will give full support (Ward, 2017). Don Faul, a former Facebook executive, explained that Facebook provides its workers with the opportunity to express their views and encourages them to not only convey their doubts to the higher management but also allows them to raise objections to their managers (Gillet, 2017).

Additionally, Collin Graham, Director of International Compensation and Benefits at Facebook, mentioned that Mark Zuckerberg holds a question and answer session with the employees every week and he also enjoys being involved in a meaningful conversation with his employees since the workers tend to ask difficult questions (Darmody, 2017). Graham said that

diversity is an essential aspect in Facebook, seeing that there are 80 different nationalities working in the company, and for this reason, they established a programme which everyone in the company has to attend called managing bias (Darmody, 2017).

Google

Google was established by Sergey Brin and Larry Page in 1998. It is headquartered in Mountain View, California. Google initially started off as a company that specialized as a search engine, but now it provides more than 50 internet facilities for users to explore (Hosch & Hall, 2018). According to Glassdoor (n.d.), Google is one of the top 5 best places to work in 2018 with the employees' rating of 4.4 out of 5. At the same time, Google's CEO, Sundar Pichai, was chosen as one of the highest-rated CEOs.

Google's purpose is to "organize the world's information and make it universally accessible and useful." (as cited in Google). In other words, Google wants to enhance many people's living standards by moving forward purposefully. This second largest company in the U.S. owns everything beyond what employees could ever imagine, such as bicycles and electric cars, gardens, eco-friendly furnishings, and gaming centers. Google wishes to make their workers live a comfortable life and also seeks to increase the workers' well-being (Investopedia, n.d.).

Simultaneously, Google offers an on-site doctor and medical coverage to ensure that their employees are healthy. Besides that, Google also often pays their employees to go on vacation, outings, or parties which give the employees great pleasure and time to unwind (Hartmans, 2017). The company is also known to serve the employees free food three times a day, and there are cafes and food trucks that can be found on the Mountain View campus (Hartmans, 2017).

The leadership units at Google are very consistent in treating people equally when it comes to making decisions. Laszlo Bock, Google's brilliant HR boss, mentioned that every employee has an explicit job assessment parameter which is the extent of freedom to do things according to their way (Schwantes, 2017). Employees are given the opportunity to express ideas and boastfully display one's potential. The tension of work in Google is uncompetitive which results in a low-stress level when doing the job. One of the employees said, "The work environment is laid back, and less competitive than others. It allows room for creativity" (Gillet, 2016). Google gives serious attention to innovation. Therefore, this leads the company to set a variety of principles about transformation - features like Google News, Google Alerts and Google Maps were born from this kind of policies (Investopedia, n.d.).

Transparency of information is one of the critical things for Google. Google's software engineers can access all newcomers' information on the first day they enter the company (Schwantes, 2017). On the other side, employees can obtain information about the company plans, daily and weekly status reports, short and long-term goals, and they can all see what their peers are currently working on. They share all their information transparently because they believe their colleagues will regard the information as confidential (Schwantes, 2017).

Starbucks

Following the case studies on Google and Facebook, let's now consider an organization that is not only an international coffee brewing company, but also a company that has managed to become a household name over the past few decades: Starbucks. The CEO of Starbucks since 2008 has been Howard Schultz. Over the past few years, Schultz has been known to make Starbucks a safehouse for people apart from their houses and workplace - a third place where

they do not simply just drink coffee but can work, study or just be (Coulson, 2016). This vision, however had to go hand in hand with the concept of a dedicated staff that could make the people feel welcomed and also staff that were efficient enough to work the long hours. This was done in order to make Starbucks an international giant corporation which not only sells coffee to people but also has an image of being more successful.

However, the authorities at Starbucks knew that this could not be a one-sided transaction. They had to provide the employees with incentives and a secure environment so that they could focus on their jobs. Therefore, the company offered them a chance to work at least 20 hours a week. However, they will be paid more than the minimum wage, therefore nudging them to work more hours. Another very attractive strategy adopted by the company was to provide stock options to the employees at all levels so that they can feel involved and invested within the organization on a very intimate level.

Nevertheless, what we should note here is that all the attempts by Starbucks was not only to make the company more successful but also to establish a relationship with the employees at all levels. Starbucks aimed for an employer-employee relationship which was secure and well connected, which would in turn give them the opportunity to grow within the organization. At the same time, the stock options gave them an opportunity to keep growing even if they decide to leave the organization at some point, thereby making them feel confident about their job and also invested in the company's vision.

Ford

Another EI organization would be Ford. We view Ford under the leadership of a particular leader, Alan Mulally, who is not the CEO of Ford anymore. We know that a leader of

an organization plays a visionary role as someone who sets goals for the organization. However, a leader's role is not only limited to setting goals, but also to systematically boost the efficiency and functioning of the employees in order to achieve the set goals. Mulally was one leader who adopted EI strategies in order to help Ford achieve new accomplishments.

There were a lot of instances where Mulally stood as an anchor for Ford. One of the most important events would be the post 2000 recession where Ford emerged as the only major American car manufacturer which was able to avoid a bailout fund provided by the government.

What was it that made Mulally stand out as a leader? An EI leader makes sure that he is fair and available to all his employees irrespective of the time frame or how huge the organization is. And we see this in how Mulally works. One of the first things he did after becoming CEO was to tour and meet the people who would be working under him. He not only visited those who will be working in the same building as him but he also visited employees in different manufacturing units throughout America. To further personalize his relationship with these employees he often ate with them in the common eating area rather than the executive area and also wrote personalized letters of appreciation to thank his employees for their work and commitment to the organization (Mulally leveraging emotional intelligence, 2016). These actions albeit seem tiny, but they affected the employees in a very positive way as they felt that their efforts were not only being noticed by someone, but was also appreciated. They felt like an irreplaceable commodity in this organization which led to enhanced efficiency and productivity.

Implications

The lack of EI in the workplace has adverse effects and these effects often take its course over time. At first, it does not seem apparent but eventually the lack of EI disrupts relations with co workers, creates a gradually hostile and unpleasant environment to work in and this affects people emotionally and psychologically which causes them to subconsciously detach themselves from the company, the work and the environment. It has been supported by research that working in an environment with low EI eventually disrupts productivity. For instance, “TalentSmart tested emotional intelligence alongside 33 other important workplace skills, and found that emotional intelligence is the strongest predictor of performance, explaining a full 58% of success in all types of jobs” (Bradberry, Travis, 2015).

This already precipitates a heavy mental block and coming to work means being physically present but mentally and emotionally absent or in other words, unwilling and unmotivated to perform. When EI at the workplace is not managed, it can also lead to a weak direction because workers cannot put aside personal feelings or cannot communicate effectively and professionally. This leads to miscommunication, poor direction and eventually a poor outcome. This then translates to a waste of extra time, effort and resources to amend the damage done and to rectify mistakes.

Furthermore, this escalates to outright bullying, sabotaging each other, threats and malicious gossiping that can be very damaging. When such undesirable events transpire, it can cost the company’s reputation. (Shamanek, Chantel ;2015) This is because the employees will then sully the company’s name to others outside and discourage others from joining the specific organization in future. It is even more damaging when high ranking officials from other

illustrious companies come to know of the blemished reputation of the company as one that has poor management, unprofessional and immature workers running amok. Additionally, when employees leave, this leads to higher loss of loyalty and because it has less senior employees staying, it has to fork out new funds to train new staff. But because of its newfound tarnished reputation, potentially good candidates will not apply to the organization and other companies and vendors will decline to do business with the organization.

Moreover, it will not only cost the company, but for the individual employees, it will potentially look bad on their resume when they apply to new places or keep changing jobs. The new employers they apply to will have an impression that they are troublesome, cannot hold on to a job, are not resilient and effective team players. (Amuzu, C. S. 2017)

It is a growing trend noted by many employers these days that many young, fresh graduates have very colorful credentials like a high GPA and many impressive exchange programs and extra co-curricular activities. However, for many, their EI is not as laudable as their qualifications. A lot of young workers often become too hot headed and think they can bypass instructions or sometimes fail to adhere to the unwritten rules of what to say to a superior or how to write tactful, civil and courteous emails. They then become restless and expect high salaries within months or promotions that other seniors have worked years to deserve. These lead to disappointment and disenchantment with their superior and their company. They resolve this by running away from the problem. They run away from the organization and think that the next job they apply to will be the “dream job” only to be further shattered and disillusioned all over again. In fact, according to Talent Smart, there was a noted “a sizeable difference in the core emotional intelligence skill of self-management. Notably, Generation Y (18–29 years old) and

Baby Boomers (42–60)—the two largest groups in today’s workforce—have a massive chasm between their abilities to self-manage.” (Bradberry, Travis, 2015).

Conclusion

At the end of it all, the core of emotion is “ empathy” (Robbins & Judge, 2013: 370). Empathy is putting yourself in another person’s shoes and trying to imagine their feelings (2005:31). Good workers are able to detect others needs, listen to others well and places the concerns of everyone as primary goal rather than oneself. These are traits that form the building block of high EI. (Robbins & Judge, 2013: 370). The meaning of high EI is not just about being caring, open, sensitive, conscientious but to also engage in conflict when it arises in the right way, because conflict can also help us grow and learn new ideas. EI offers a multigenerational workforce the ability to realize social cues and respond appropriately that manifests their empathy towards others (Emmerling & Boyatzis, 2012). Hence, it is part and parcel of high interpersonal EI to deal intelligently deal with confrontation and not just be submissive in the face of confrontation or simply unassertive and cooperative (Robbins & Judge, 2013: 370). It is therefore critical for companies to underscore the importance of some fundamental traits like self awareness, self regulation, motivation and empathy. These would be core traits that cut across all organizations for people to firstly be aware of others needs and regulate one’s own self interests, be motivated to work as a good team player and constantly place ourselves in the shoes of others. Empathy, of all traits, is arguably the overarching trait by leaders to create a paternalistic climate of support and protection. It is a overarching trait that can be demonstrated by coworkers to show that employees value each other enough to acknowledge that each one has

a set of niche skills to offer to the company and nobody's needs are to be dismissed or devalued (Madera, J. M., Neal, J. A., & Dawson, M. (2011).

Lastly, it is crucial that research on this topic of EI is done because in this day and age, more emphasis is placed on people skills and how to spontaneously act and seamlessly collaborate well with peers especially in moments of crisis or urgency. Workers need to be able to think independently and behave sensibly and conscientiously with people as a team in the face of pressure while still producing top calibre outcomes. However, with the current set of millennials known as the "soft generation" who are used to being spoon fed and self absorbed, they need to be better educated on the importance of EI, the basic unwritten rules and how to adjust themselves and adapt to an organization and to the cutthroat working world, rather than the working world catering to them. Here's an example of a folly committed by relatively young employees: " I have a pierced tongue, so what does that have to do with my IQ, - Generation Y (1997-1990)" (Meister, J. C., Willyerd, K., & Foss, E. (2010). On the bright side, EI can be honed and it is not impossible to shape a new and improved character.

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