

## A Study on Social Intelligence and Leadership

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### ABSTRACT

Having strong and enjoyable social bonds not only fosters happiness but also improves health in a society where social relationships are an essential part of daily life. A person's ability to improve both himself and their connections with others is made possible by social intelligence, which is significant and on the rise (Zautra, 2015). Building and maintaining social interactions require a lot of social intelligence (Belton, 2016). Learning social intelligence is essential now because it is the greatest way to create and sustain a positive workplace culture and to safeguard jobs in a time of rising automation. Success at work results from the development of social intelligence, which also improves the working environment and productivity (Zaccaro, 1991). For leaders, social intelligence is very crucial. It is no secret that subordinates imitate their superiors. The development of human capital is a responsibility of a leader (Goleman, 2008). It is an important leadership style that will enable an employer to interact with employees in an effective manner by using social intelligence.

**Keywords:** Social Intelligence, leadership, leaders.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The capacity to communicate effectively with others is referred to as social intelligence. Effective communication and listening skills, awareness of how they come across to others, and a conscious attempt to avoid conflict are all characteristics of socially intelligent people that you could notice.

There are four aspects of social intelligence that could aid in understanding the idea.

**Self-awareness:** Understanding one's own capabilities, ideas, and feelings is referred to as self-awareness. Self-awareness includes being aware of who you are and how you react to situations.

**Self-management:** Self-management is a step up from self-awareness because it deals with how you use your self-awareness to deal with any difficult circumstances. Self-management may be viewed as your internal decision-making process.

- **Social awareness:** When speaking with people, social awareness is the ability to read body language, subtext, and social clues.

- **Relationship management:** Using your social awareness in relationships is important. Avoiding conflict, growing in empathy, realising how your motivations may differ from others', and figuring out your place in your social network are some examples of this.

Understanding both your own motivations and other people's sentiments, knowing how to act in various social settings, and understanding what makes other people tick are all examples of social intelligence.

### *Leadership and Social Intelligence*

People are frequently elevated into leadership roles as a result of their success as individual contributors. However, what makes somebody effective in a particular capacity might not be enough to guarantee their success as a leader. Due to the social element of leadership, social intelligence is one of the most crucial character traits to assess a leader's success. Leaders must inspire followers to put out their best effort and match their actions with organisational objectives through their interactions with others.

The significance has been confirmed by research in the realm of neurology regarding social intelligence.

Neuroscientists have just learned that mirror neurons exist. These brain cells have been compared to an emotional Wi-Fi system that can recognise and mimic other people's emotions. In other words, mirror neurons enable us to experience "mutual empathy," the capacity to experience how others experience things. Since mirror neurons exist, contagious emotions are indeed possible. The emotions of those around us have an impact on our own, either favourably or unfavourably.

Given this, leaders ought to be considerate of others' feelings. People feel more connected to and are more inclined to trust leaders who share their sentiments. Because of how easily emotions may spread to others, leaders must also be deliberate about controlling their emotions.

Effective leaders are inclusive by nature. People experience "social pain," or feelings of exclusion that engage the area of the brain that perceives physical pain, when they feel excluded. People who experience social pain either leave the group or try to undermine it, whereas those who feel included are more likely to feel energising emotions.

A socially adept leader steers clear of actions that trigger unfavourable feelings in others. These tendencies include the urge to win at all costs, giving one's viewpoint to every conversation, constantly demonstrating one's intelligence to others, and using sarcasm or other demeaning language.

### *Examples of Social Intelligence in reality*

A.G. Lafley succeeded a CEO who was negative, gloomy, and lacking in humility when he took the helm of Procter and Gamble in 2000. The business had lost \$320 million the previous quarter under the previous CEO, half of its brands were losing market share, and the business was experiencing morale issues. Lafley's increased social intelligence was a breath of fresh air. Instead of criticising people, he urged them to bring the "moose" (i.e., the issues they'd been reluctant to bring up) to the conference room tables so that they could all work to find solutions together. The happy and cheery Lafley quietly solicited suggestions and comments from others, thought about them, and implemented those he believed to be the finest.

People respond better to a courteous tone of voice and being urged to solve problems than an authoritarian tone of voice and being lectured, which is a sign of social intelligence. The number of employees who agreed with the statement "we're on track to deliver business results" increased from 18 percent to 49 percent in just a year after employee suggestions were implemented. After Lafley took over as CEO, the business was so successful that its stock price increased by 70% in just over two years.

According to Elizabeth Dole, who served as president of the Red Cross, "wanting to do good was not good enough" and the group had to deliver results. She was renowned for being able to recall people's names and their life's passions. She addressed them by name, enquired about their interests, and sensed the emotions they expressed through them. Dole was purposeful about connecting when it came to garnering money for the Red Cross. In order to find a key piece of information on each person she wanted to speak with, she had her staff conduct research on them. Elizabeth Dole established connections with Red Cross employees, volunteers, and donors and delivered outcomes. She successfully carried out a significant transformation programme to guarantee the security of the Red Cross blood supply throughout her time, and she extended the organization's network of qualified disaster relief personnel. She also significantly increased financial support.

### *Key features for a leader to be socially intelligent*

Being in a leadership position is a difficult assignment because you need to connect with your team in a way that keeps everyone happy while yet producing effective results. The skill of social understanding is crucial if the work knowledge of the leader is more than necessary for an organisation to succeed.

This concept of "social understanding" refers to the capacity for effectively communicating with others by being able to "read" them and understand what they are thinking. This concept is also referred to as social intelligence. Leaders who are socially intelligent are often sensitive to the feelings of others, adept at fitting into various social contexts, and knowledgeable about what makes people tick.

According to research, this is a more than necessary talent for being an effective leader and inspiring others to work towards a common objective. As the newest addition to the social sciences, social intelligence offers leaders

a fertile ground for enhancing both their own and their organization's performance.

*Why is social intelligence important for a leader?*

As has frequently been stated, leadership is a skill that can be learned. It is not a genetic gift. The way a leader interacts with the rest of the team is one of the most important aspects to improve for effective leading. Through these interactions, leaders can inspire others to put out their best efforts in order to align with an organization's goals.

According to studies, socially savvy leaders have positive effects outside of the workplace. In a poll of 700 businesses, the majority of workers responded that having a supportive employer mattered more than their pay, according to psychologist Dr. Daniel Goleman. This study also showed that encouraging leaders could boost production while keeping workers.

This is especially more crucial in today's corporate world, when people work longer hours during the day and organisations begin to resemble second families. Actually, businesses have been incorporating social intelligence tactics into the HR function for a while now; as a result, they either hire people with greater social intelligence or view the talent as a stepping stone for promotion to the next level.

## 2. CONCLUSION

A socially adept leader steers clear of actions that arouse unfavourable feelings in others. The emotions of those around us contagiously influence our own, whether in a good or bad way. Such undesirable behaviours include the urge to succeed at any costs, the propensity to brag about one's intelligence while demeaning others, interjecting sarcasm into conversations, and many others. Here, "engagement" is the secret word. Being involved in and committed to your work is the first step towards socially competent leadership.

Socially intelligent leaders are aware that the information they require can be found by taking a close look at others around them. They take note of who converses with whom, their facial expressions, and the mood of the room. It is easy to hear but difficult to put into practise. Leaders are aware that listening will allow them to learn more than trying to come up with their own points of contention.

In order to foster a sense of community among their followers, leaders must be sensitive to others' feelings. A wise leader is able to control their wrath or fear because they are aware of how their emotions affect others. People are more likely to feel good feelings that inspire and energise them when they feel involved. When someone does something they shouldn't have, give them the benefit of the doubt. It takes a lot of character to forgive. This is both the first piece of instruction a successful leader receives and a hallmark of a socially savvy person. "How would I feel if it were me in this situation?" This fundamental query identifies a socially intelligent leader.

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