

## Pushing towards maturity!

There is an old children's joke: "What do you call a nerd in 15 years from now" the answer, "Boss." The thinking prompting such humor, that intellectual intelligence (IQ) is the automatic panacea for success in life, has long been dispelled. Time and again studies confirm that IQ only counts for about 20% of the factors that make for success in life, with the balance attributable to other qualities of which emotional intelligence (EI. or EQ.\*) represents a significant part. Even high IQ people do much better when their academic skills are married to good interpersonal abilities. Any senior management team will admit the absence of emotional maturity amongst colleagues is still the single biggest factor limiting organizations, governments and businesses from really excelling. The cost of immature behavior is more extensive and expensive than most realize. We will return to this thought later.

People with a high EQ. are frequently described as being competent in (1) Self-awareness; (2) Self-Regulation; (3) Motivational capabilities (4) Being Empathetic; (5) Possessing Social Skills. Whilst we acknowledge the above are certainly true, we note that of the five competencies only one really deals with managing and expressing emotions namely, being empathetic. The balance is rooted in cognitive skills of varying degrees. The 'guru' of EQ Daniel Goleman acknowledged this when he admitted too little attention had been paid to the emotional composition of EQ.

At the heart of emotional intelligence is an issue frequently over-looked, namely our willingness to be vulnerable (dropping our guard; risk being misunderstood; rejected, or even ridiculed) about our feelings, inner convictions, and doubts and uncertainties. What we forget is it is not so much our capacity to think and reason that determines success in relationships and business, but our willingness, to communicate, and to express ourselves with feeling and candor. Being vulnerable does not distract from our humanity, but reinforces it. It is a manager's openness to share himself with feeling and appropriate emotion that communicates to staff the humanity and substance of superiors. It is the willingness to engage sensitively in the personal space of a hurting or disgruntled 'other' that reflects the values of care and strength what mission statements proclaim but can never demonstrate.

Some of the BIG buttons of emotional behavior that evidence the emergence of substantial maturity concern practicing forgiveness, a willingness to face and admit error, generosity in attitude to others, and impulse control and deferring immediate gratification needs. It is forgiveness that we will address first. The Stanford Forgiveness Project made some interesting observations regarding non-forgiveness such as:

- **Lack of forgiveness** produced victims instead of masters of a situation;
- **Non-forgiveness** results in biased and erroneous views of the facts;
- **Non-forgiveness** Insists on rules that cannot be enforced. Aggrieved people often want behavior and responses from those offending them that they have no prospect of achieving. Consequently they feel trapped between what they want and what they can get.
- **Lack of forgiveness** traps people in the past instead of living in the future.

When managers and leaders work with unresolved conflicts or frustration the impact on productivity, creative flair, cooperation and teamwork is devastating. (It's expensive) Furthermore the time spent in feeding the "grape vine" with the latest gossip and speculation further undermines productivity and performance. (It's extensive) Forgiveness does NOT require us to be friends with those who have offended us, but it requires us to let go of any 'right' to get even, and frees us to move into the future.

There is nothing which ties a person to the past as much as non-forgiveness, there is nothing which makes people pioneers of a better future than being willing to let go of past hurts!

Until next month, Yebo!

