

SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE: A Variant of Emotional Intelligence?

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Although there is a never-ending process among researchers of re-inventing the wheel, or renaming old concepts, Karl Albrecht (*Training Magazine*, December 2004) builds on the concept of EI in an interesting way. Citing Howard Gardner's work on Multiple Intelligences and Daniel Goleman's on EI, Albrecht adds his structure of Social Intelligence. He suggests 5 key dimensions of "SI":

1. **Situational Radar:** The ability to read situations, understand the social context that influences behavior, and choose behavioral strategies and tactics that are likely to be successful in the situational context. (I equate this ability with the skill, for example, of being able to stand "outside" a group dynamic and facilitate the solution of a problem or conflict.)
2. **Presence:** Also known as "bearing", presence is the external sense of self that others perceive: confidence, self respect, and self-worth. (Presence is projected by body posture, calmness of voice, and, for example, demeanor under pressure or attack. Do you remember the variable "Social Presence" on the California Psychological Inventory)
3. **Authenticity:** The opposite of being phony, authenticity is a way of behaving which engenders a perception that one is honest with self as well as others. (Although authenticity of speech and behavior is not always evident, it is easier to detect when a person is using self-aggrandizing speech or behaviors that are inauthentic.)
4. **Clarity:** The ability to express oneself clearly, use language effectively, explain concepts cogently, and persuade with ideas.
5. **Empathy:** Much has been written and said about the ability of "standing in someone else's shoes". Here the concept goes farther in the ability to create a sense of connectedness with others, get on their wavelength, and invite them to move with and toward you rather than away and against you.

Although almost too contrived, the acronym suggested by the 5 factors above, **SPACE**, seem to provide a useful construct: the ability to understand the social space surrounding oneself, and to be able to successfully navigate inside and, where required, outside of it in order to shape or transform that space.

The distinction between SI and EI, if it can be drawn correctly, also leads to the possible consideration of high SI and lower EI, or vice-versa. For example, Ronald Reagan, particularly in his role as President of the U.S., was a person of high SI, with the ability to touch the hearts of his countrymen and achieve a high degree of connectedness with them. However, in his personal life, he was not always able to achieve the same kind of connection with his own children.

The implications of the above are powerful in the development of leadership, of course. We have observed CEOs who were very effective with their work relationships on the job but disasters in the management of their home lives. (Does

Jack Welch come to mind?) And most of us have observed leaders who were very effective in their families or communities but failed to be powerful managers in their organizations.

Karl Albrecht's book, *Social Intelligence: Beyond IQ*, was published by Jossey-Bass in Spring 2005.

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