

BA Leadership and Skills Management for the Workplace

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Developing Emotional Intelligence Skills for the Workplace

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1.INTRODUCTION:

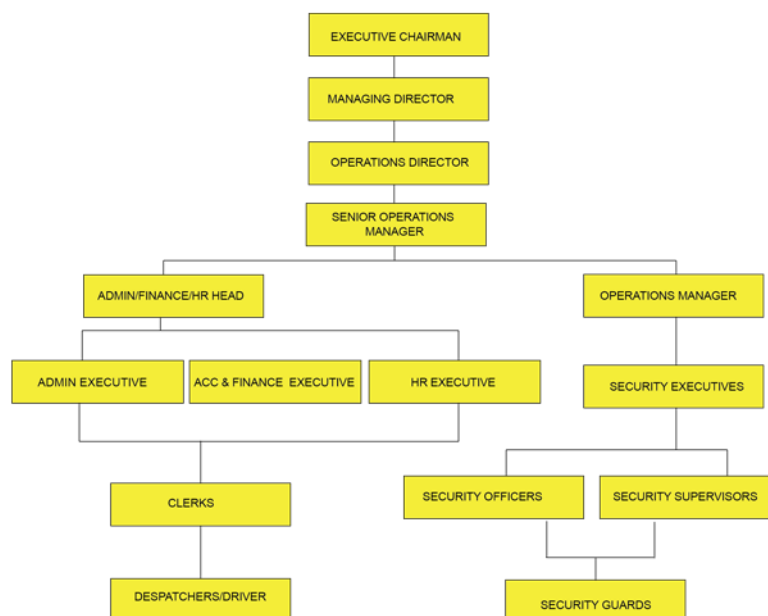
The essay is focussed on the benefits of developing emotional intelligence and how it has impacted the performance of DHL. It will first explain the concept of EI, the challenges DHL has faced before implementing it and how its implementation has impacted the employees. Then the relationship between EI, effective management, communication and business advantage with reference to DHL will be assessed. Also, the models of EI which are relevant to DHL will be evaluated to demonstrate whether they are appropriate to meet the development needs of the employees both in teams and as individuals. Finally, the essay will appraise how DHL has gained from the development of EI and discuss how it can help the organisation gain competitive advantage, followed by the conclusion.

1.1 BRIEF HISTORY ABOUT DHL:

DHL is a global Logistics company, offering services in over 220 countries and territories. It is one of the two strong brands of Deutsche Post DHL Group, operating in a high growth market with a market share of 19.51%, and, it consists of a matrix organisational structure which combines the functional departments and divisions. As the largest Logistics business in the world, DHL uses the differentiation strategy of focusing on a flexible, cost-efficient transport of high standards to sustain its competitive advantage. Also, as part of its ethical values, DHL embraces the corporate social responsibility through the “GO GREEN” programme with an aim of reducing the carbon footprint (DHL supply chain, 2014-2015).

The mission of DHL consists of four major elements two of them concerning the wellbeing of customers and customers and returns to the investors; as well as being respectful to the associates and focusing on the strategic objectives of the organisation. It serves both private and business customers and it consists of DHL Packet, DHL Express, and DHL Global Forwarding and DHL Supply chain as its business units, while the services include; International express, Air and Ocean freight, Road and Rail transportation, Contract logistics, Warehousing and distribution, and International mail services to customers internationally.

Figure 1. The organizational Structure of DHL



source: www.imgbin.com (2019)

TOP COMPETITORS OF DHL IN DATANYZE UNIVERSE			
Top Competitors	Websites	Market Share	Versus Page
UPS	8,800	27.40%	DHL vs. UPS
USPS	7,266	22.62%	DHL vs. USPS
FedEx	4,365	13.59%	DHL vs. FedEx
UPS Tracking API	1,422	4.43%	DHL vs. UPS Tracking API
USPS Web Tools API	1,095	3.41%	DHL vs. USPS Web Tools API
DHL Express Tracking Tools	1,018	3.17%	DHL vs. DHL Express Tracking Tools
FedEx Tracking	783	2.44%	DHL vs. FedEx Tracking
SAP Logistics Execution	490	1.53%	DHL vs. SAP Logistics Execution
Kewill Global Trade & Logistics	160	0.50%	DHL vs. Kewill Global Trade & Logistics
Descartes	100	0.31%	DHL vs. Descartes

Source: www.datanyze.com (2019)

2.0 EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:

Historically, Studies regarding EI can be traced from the 1990's by several researchers; (Salovey & Mayer, 1990) aimed at understanding an individual's feelings and their ability to understand others feelings as well as sharing them, while Gibbs (1995) focused on how the management of emotions can help improve the individual's quality of life. Complementary to this, Daniel (1998) identified human competencies as a key determinant of success in life at the workplace. He furthermore, described EI as the ability to recognise, express and manage personal feelings and those of others in this case work colleagues, likewise, Dalip (2003) defined EI as involving the response and control of emotional feelings both from within an individual and from outside such as work environment.

A team leader leads a group of members from different backgrounds, with different emotions and levels of EI and yet they have goals to achieve as a team and these are part of the strategic objectives of DHL, I refer to EI as the ability of the leaders to effectively recognise, manage and express their feelings both within the team and to others outside the team, and having empathy for feelings of others while carrying out their duties (Goleman, 1995).

This is explained and illustrated by my feelings and response in the situation when one of the team members who were on internship at that time was offered the post I had also applied for. I was affected emotionally but I was able to overcome the negative emotions after a self-assessment and realising that my colleague possessed the skills required for the job and was also more qualified than me, so I was able to manage my feelings in a positive way.

Based on the findings of Salovey and Mayer (1997), they identified self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills as skills involved in EI, and as some of the significant areas which reflect the application of EI at the workplace. Then again Rhaghubir (2018) outlined the same skills and explained how they contribute to the wellbeing of the workers. This contrasts with Goleman (1997) who described them as personal competence and social competence. These factors have contributed to employers taking EI seriously, for example the development of EI at DHL enabled me to acquire both emotional skills and abilities from which I have benefited personally and as a team leader by being able to manage emotions within myself, discern emotions in my work colleagues and coach others as a team leader.

This is justified by Shanwal & Mandal (2008) analysing the dimensions of managing emotions; Rhett Power (2017) characteristics of the levels of EI as either low or high. Through the self-assessment system each employee is able to identify areas of EI that needs to be developed and this has improved not only the EI levels of individuals but also of teams, motivated the workers and this has resulted in high performance for the organisation. However, Peterson (2016) refers to EI as an outdated theory, while Grant (2014) argues that the skills of EI can be used by individuals not only to hide their emotions but also to manipulate others.

2.1 The Importance of Developing EI in the Workplace:

Due to the globalisation in this 21st century as well as the use of modern technology to be able to compete effectively, the developing of EI is very vital, for example at DHL teams involved are cross cultural and global which leads to a complex interaction of emotions. The development of EI does not only enable the employees to effectively cope with the complex interaction but also they acquire skills and competences to help them focus on the objectives that align with the strategic goals of DHL. This is demonstrated by the Human Resource Director of DHL, who; “After observing how the process of getting the job done on time in a time-sensitive industry was affecting positively the employee engagement, collective team effectiveness and performance”, he recommended the EI and appointed someone to implement the leaders training programme at DHL.

The importance of developing EI at DHL is reflected in the professional development of the staff members and its impact on the relationships amongst the employees while carrying out their duties, which motivates them to improve their performance (Desiree *et al.*, 2018). Then again, Bar-on (1997) highlights its importance in building effective relationships at all levels in an organisation through findings from his study which show workers with high levels of EI performing better than those with low levels.

Furthermore, In their article, Druskat & Wohf (2001) identifies three conditions that contribute to effective relationships in a group at work places as; trust, group identity and the ability of the group to achieve the set goals. This is illustrated by my personal observation while carrying out my duties, as a result of the skills acquired from the EI training, I realised that listening to and understanding the work assigned to the team members, the demands attached to this work and their points of view has not only strengthened our relationships within the group but also improved the speed and quality of our decision making (Druskat & Wohf, 2001).

The development of EI through coaching and training programmes at DHL has enabled the leaders, teams and other staff members to improve their inter-personal skills and to communicate effectively with other members within the chain especially the logistics, and this has resulted in a work environment that promotes the individuals and teams to thrive. The reliability of every member within the chain is a critical success factor for the success of DHL.

Furthermore, the importance is demonstrated in the role EI plays in the employees' lives to understand their strengths and use this potential to the benefit of the business (Goleman, 1995; 1998). These areas include communication, motivation, management of emotions, decision making and performance improvement of the individuals, groups and the organisation. Each of these is discussed to show how it is affected by EI;

EI and Communication:

Communication involves not only considering personal feelings but also the feelings of others and expressing empathy for them. The skills of self-awareness and self-regulation enables the leaders at work to listen and think positively of ways to solve problems involving team members and even

workers from other departments of the organisation. Studies show recognition, identity and clearing any misunderstandings as some of the ways EI can be reflected in communication (Schmitz, 2016), and this can be expressed by the fact that every employee including the managers and the senior staff reacts to different situations in different ways, for instance, fear and anger may make most of us frustrated while emotions of happiness may make us excited.

This is justified by (R. Smith,) who explained in his study how thoughts and situations affect our feelings and how we respond. Sometimes we get anxious especially when faced with challenges, but due to the development of EI, we are able to recognise and manage reactions to our emotions. According to Chignell (2018), EI is referred to as the ability to be conscious of and to effectively control our feelings and emotions. The ability to control one's emotions increases job satisfaction, and this leads to increased performance (Guy & Jung Lee, 2013).

In addition, our emotions and feelings are expressed when we get feedback from our superiors, especially the negative feedback. In their business article Solvey & Mayer (1990) identified four attributes of EI, all of which are equally important in reflecting the individual's level of EI but my emphasis is on two of them; the appraisal and expression of emotion as well as creative thinking and motivation which directly link EI to advantages because motivated employees perform better in their job while creative thinking contributes to the development of the business through innovation.

2.2 EI and Decision Making:

The personal experience as a Team leader is how the ability to make decisions at work is impacted by recognition, understanding and response to emotions. More importantly, is realising how making emotional based decisions affects the leader's performance, the performance of others at work and the relationship with them (Huffington Post, 2013). Evidence from several researchers suggests a strong correlation between lower EI, anxiety and poor decision making.

Also, findings by Bacihogalupo (2011) show how the application of EI in decision making impacts the employees positively, then again, recommended it as a good strategy to help develop the decision-making skills. This is illustrated by our views as to how self-assessments and EI coaching has enabled us to avoid emotions that are not related to our job roles as a team from affecting our performance, and in so doing we are able to focus on the objectives in order to achieve the set goals, both individually and as a team. Findings by (Huffington post, 2013) points out how the high EI plays a big role in decision making by enabling individuals not to focus on emotions that are not in alignment with the decision making process.

2.3 EI and Job performance:

The working environment of DHL includes different people with different personalities and this may involve different challenges as well. This requires effective communication amongst the employees, and between the employees of DHL with the external stakeholders within the chain to be able to deal with situations that are challenging. According to an article by Elaine Houston (2019), it is stated that the development of EI in a work place can help the employees to build effective relationships by managing emotions, which motivates them to work towards achieving the set objectives, hence improving job performance. This is reflected in the relationship between the employees and the management of DHL through the programmes where the employees are engaged to motivate them as well as making each one of them to feel that they are valued in the work place. These relationships are not only among individuals at the same level in the hierarchy of DHL but also amongst employees at different levels (Lopes & Salovey, 2013).

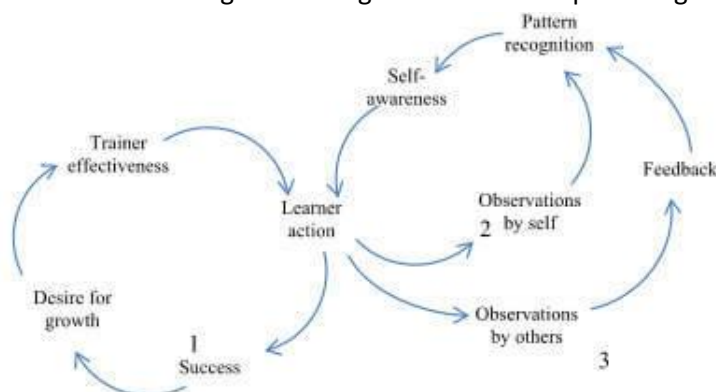
Furthermore, (Suzanne et al., (2018) her findings show the positive effect of the development of emotional intelligence on the emotional caring services of the nurses involved; whereas, in her concept review, Raghuubir (2018) outlines four attributes of EI and how they contributed to the performance of the nurses to the benefit of the service users and colleagues at work.

2.4 Managing emotions:

Team leaders face stressful situations such as criticisms from team members and other work colleagues, but they are able to not only manage their emotions and response to these emotions but also to calmly think of a way to resolve the challenges using the skills acquired from developing their EI. Individuals are able to accommodate both pleasant and unpleasant emotions by controlling their personal feelings and those of others (Emmerling *et al.*, 2008). Furthermore, (Houston, 2019) also discussed the role EI plays in enabling the employees to achieve the set goals which is achieved through the self-awareness, effective communication and decision-making skills.

Several researchers have come up with different models regarding EI. The essay is focussed on the following models that are applicable to DHL; 8EQ competencies (Freedman & Jensen, 2004), the Bar-on model of Emotional-social Intelligence (Israel, 2006), Goleman's model of EI (Goleman, 1995) and the Four Branch model (Fiorl & Mautlefer, 2018). In addition, the Ability model, Traits model and the mixed model will also be evaluated with reference to DHL.

The Self-awareness growth model is appropriate for a multi-national service organisation like DHL because it helps in improving the communication and inter-personal skills of the employees. The individuals are able to identify the strengths and weaknesses in their personalities, how the emotions impact the others at work, and think of ways to deal with problem. Also, through this model, are able to discover the benefits of EI for every individual's well-being and for the improved performance of DHL. The benefits are reflected in the customer service culture at DHL which shows both employee and customer loyalty to the brand and employee interactions which has built trust in the customers to believe the service excellence of the organisation. Also, building and maintaining effective relationships within the logistics chain is another area to reflect the benefits of EI to DHL through the self-awareness growth model, a lack of EI skills can negatively affect the relationships within the chain (Ramsey and Lieberman, 2015). Then again, is the Self-awareness Casual loop which shows the individual's thinking that strengthens relationships amongst the employees as per diagram below.



Source: Roipel, (2019)

The diagram above illustrates the idea of relationship between different learning melodies in a unique way of thinking.

The Bar-on model (Reuven, 2006) is also appropriate for DHL as it describes the link between EI, social skills and competencies as well as their effect on the intelligence behaviour of an individual. The model outlines five attributes regarding the skills and behaviour of individuals, which are dependent on each other (Bar-on, 2013), as per diagram below:



Source: www.weebly.com (2019)

All the five competencies in this model can be used to develop the individual EI level of the staff with DHL in many different ways, for example, self-awareness can enable them to identify their level of EI, while the self-expression can lead to effective communication skills and motivation, and this will result in improved performance. However, the Bar-on model presents emotional and cognitive as two separate types of intelligence, with the EI regarded as more appropriate for predicting an individual's ability to successfully carry out their job roles (Reuven, 2006).

Likewise, the Goleman's model also focuses on competencies and skills as per the Bar-on model but identifies them as leadership and managerial abilities that drive performance (Goleman, 1995). With reference to the Organisational structure of DHL, these skills are required at all levels from the strategic to the operational level and across functions to ensure the corporate goals as per the vision of DHL are achieved. On the other hand, the four-branch model as per the diagram is relevant in the customer service culture of DHL which requires effective relationships among the team members and within the different departments in the organisation. These skills will not only enable the employees of DHL at all levels of the organisation to solve the problems they encounter, but also to make the right decisions that align with the corporate goals of the organisation and to be able to cope with the daily demands and challenges of their job roles.

Furthermore, are the three models by a group of researchers; ability, traits and mixed. The Ability model (Salovey & Mayer, 2000) involves the understanding of emotions as well as the non-verbal language (Salovey and Birnbaum, 1998), which is essential for all organisations dealing with the customer service, both internal and external customers. The model helps the employees of DHL to develop the understanding of how to communicate with different people and in different ways such as verbal and non-verbal. The model furthermore emphasises the understanding and interpretation of other people's emotions as well as ability to manage personal emotions which are very vital because

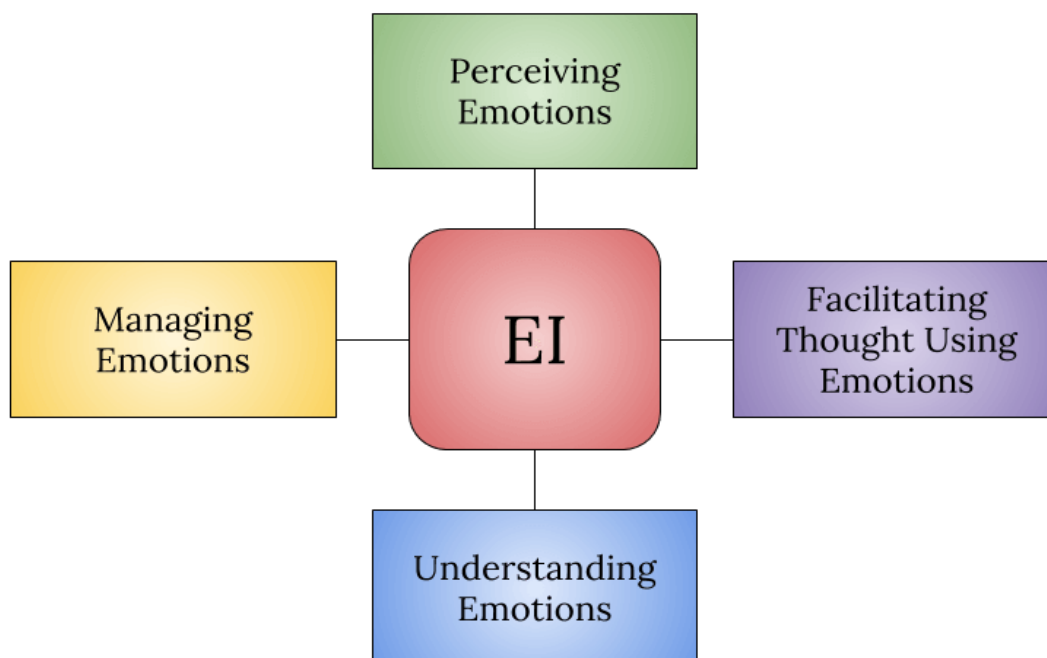
situations differ as employees interact with people from different backgrounds. The traits model (Petridis, et al 2004), on the other hand, focuses on the “Trait Emotional Intelligence” and this mainly applies to those in leadership roles. The model builds on the ability model in that emotional intelligence involves being able to perceive and understand personal emotions, however, the traits emotions will determine the leadership style or approach to be used by the individual. Regarding DHL, the leadership styles or approaches used will also have an impact on the team members and teams. For example, poor leadership styles will demotivate the team members which affects their performance as individuals and as a team, this inefficiency can affect other departments or divisions as well as the reputation of the corporate image through customer service that is not up to the standard of DHL.

The mixed model is a combination of both the traits and the ability model and it builds on the five skills stated by Goleman (1995) in his book “Emotional Intelligence”. The five skills play the role of helping the employees of DHL to focus on a customer centred culture which aims at satisfying customers as well as retaining them, hence improving the performance and increasing the profitability.

All these models can be applied to DHL but with limitations as well. First of all is the cost involved which may be higher, followed by the change in the mind-set of the employees that is required for the successful implementation of the EI training programmes.

3. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE:

DHL like any other organisation is facing challenges due increased completion as per the diagram be below.



Source: Fiori & Vesely (2018)

DHL like any other organisation is facing challenges due increased competition as well as the internal challenges as a result of the growing need of speed, accuracy, efficiency and cost control in the supply chain. Despite this, it has been able to successfully gain competitive advantage through its critical

success factors such as; web designs and online services through the e-supply chain. One of the many illustrations of the competitive advantage of DHL is as per the statement by Ken Allen, CEO DHL express; “163 external honours in more than 48 countries 2013 across a range of functions including human resources and customer service”.

There are many other different ways that can be used by organisations to achieve competitive advantage such as innovation and differentiation of products or services. However, these strategies have to align with the vision of the organisation to enable the achievement of the corporate objectives. The mission of DHL as stated in the brief history is centred on customer satisfaction and maximisation of returns to the investors which are to be achieved through the established strategic objectives. One of the ways DHL has achieved competitive advantage is through customer service excellence and this is enhanced by focussing on the on the management of the intellectual capital as per findings by Meso & Smith (2000) who argue that it is the human resources who process and apply their knowledge and skills in the use of all other resources. This will involve training the employees, for example the development of emotional intelligence training, to help them acquire the relevant skills and to improve their working attitude and performance. Another illustration by the CEO DHL Express as per the website stated below, concerns the engagement of the employees in the Certified International Program (CIS) in 2010 that led to opportunities in different functions to develop and utilise their capabilities.

The EI training programme plays an important role in developing and maintaining the customer service Excellency as well as establishing a culture centred strategy which leads to achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage for DHL in the area of customer service (Brown, 1997). This is reflected in the differentiated services offered by DHL to its customers, the management of customer relationships, friendly technology and internal processes, as well as focussing on the employees through training, motivation and rewards. Even though there are many other training required by the employees of DHL to develop them, the EI is very important because it acts as a foundational programme in that it develops into each individual an understanding of developing and retaining the skills pertaining to customer service. Also, it involves a cultural change that eventually will have effect on the behaviour of the employees to the extent that their dedication to customer service excellence will influence the service culture.

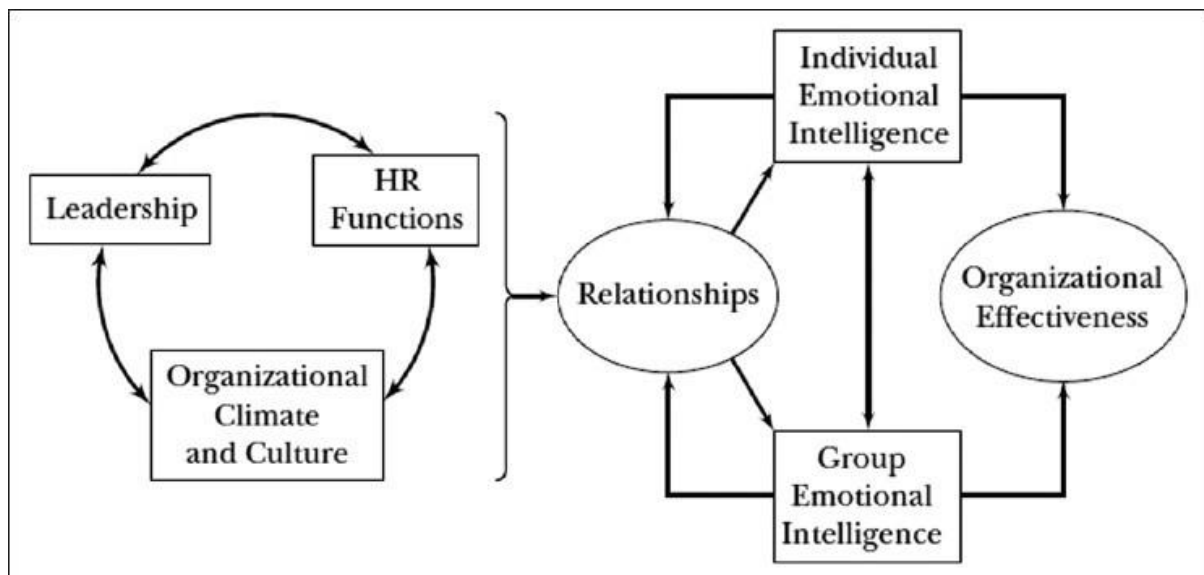
Furthermore, EI can help DHL to gain competitive advantage through its role in marketing, communication, supply chain management and motivation of the employees. With reference to the models discussed in this essay and the framework of emotional intelligence (Goleman, 1995), the development of EI nurtures effective communication and good working relationships within the teams which motivates them to improve their performance. In addition, the application of the EI skills and competencies in their work will enable the staff to develop quality decision making through their ability to manage the negative feelings or thinking that may prevent them from making decisions that are not only appropriate to the situation but also align with the corporate objectives of DHL.

Furthermore, the EI links to the critical success factors of DHL to the human capital through the application of the following skills by (Goleman, 1995); the Skills of awareness helps the employees to impact their work environment, while Managing emotions helps them to master the unproductive characteristics that may affect their performance. In addition, the Self –motivation enables them to focus on the business objectives and building as well as retaining effective internal and external relationships in DHL. This shows how the application of EI skills by the human capital through personal qualities and emotional competencies plays a role in the achievement of the corporate strategies as well as gaining a competitive advantage for the organisation.

Also, the logistics and the supply chain management are other areas where DHL has gained a competitive advantage. These are based not only on effective relationships within the chain but also reliability and integration of the processes as well as the human resource managing the processes. The management of the logistics is in itself a critical success factor for DHL in that it can be used to control the costs in the supply chain which leads to an increase in profitability. The application of EI still involves the human capital to enable the integration of the different activities with a major focus on the customer needs (Long & Lee, 2009).

The online interactions through the tracking systems and other information technology being used by DHL to sustain their competitive advantage as well as innovation are other areas which involve teamwork and networking within DHL. They also require effective leadership styles and approaches to direct, motivate and coach the team members to help them improve their performance as individuals and as groups. The leaders do apply the skills and competencies of EI in their job roles which has an impact on the effectiveness of the leaders and their influence on other work colleagues (Srivastava, 2013) as per the Diagram

“A model of emotional intelligence and organizational effectiveness. Figure adapted from Cherniss.”



Source: Srivastava (2013)

CONCLUSION:

The development of Emotional intelligence with reference to the different authors, researches, theories and models discussed in the essay, plays a big role in the professional development and well-being of the individuals as well as enabling the employees at all levels and in different job roles to acquire the emotional skills to enable them improve their performance at work. The importance of the development of EI is reflected in the effect of the skills and competencies on decision making, communication, improved performance, effective relationships and managing personal emotions. Furthermore, the development of EI also changes the behaviour of individuals in an organisation which eventually becomes a cultural value in the organisation, for example, the culture of customer excellence with DHL.

The relationship between EI, effective management, communication and business advantage is explained through not only the models stated in the essay but also in how the development of EI helps

an organisation to gain competitive advantage. This has been illustrated by how DHL has been able to gain a sustainable competitive advantage through its critical success factors such as; creation of innovative products, a culture of customer excellence, information technology, supply chain management and logistics, but all this has been possible because of the focus on the human capital. Human capital is the resource in every organisation that links the EI skills and competences to the processes at all levels in the organisation from the corporate to the operations level, through networking, communication and effective relationships (Humphrey & Miao & Qian, 2017).

In conclusion, the development of EI is an important element in the success of organisations as it involves dealing with the human emotions. However, there is a limitation in that the successful application of the EI program in any organisation will require the willingness of the staff to participate, and this requires the employers to communicate clearly the benefits of the programme to the employees and the organisation as a whole.

The integration of EI is supported in many different areas as there is a consensus on the impact that it has on job satisfaction and facilitating a positive environment which contributes to the improvement on the performance of the employees.

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