

# How to create an EI culture

Continuing from Thursday, today we are going to explore how to create an EI culture as follows:

## How to create an EI culture

- Stage 4: Two-way communication
- Stage 5: Designing a programme
- Stage 6: Piloting the design pragmatically
- Stage 7: Reviewing the pilot
- Stage 8: Completing the cycle

## Journal entries

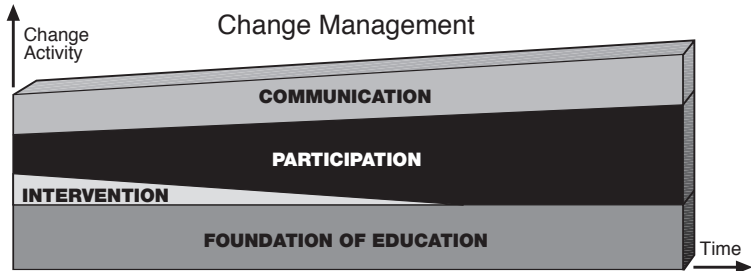
- Learning organisation mind map
- Programme outcomes

## Stage 4: Two-way communication

The communication of the dream or vision for the new EI culture must be effective both ways reporting from top to bottom and vice versa:

- The strategy must enrol all staff in the new approach clearly stating the benefits, including financial ones, and speculative risks
- The strategy must ensure that there is sponsorship of the new culture by those with power in the organisation.

Actively increase 'shop floor' participation using skills transferred from change agents. Plan to reduce over time the scale of intervention by change agents, managers, consultants



or trainers. Do not reduce the effort for Continuous Professional Development, education or communication.

It is often economic to bring in experienced executives who can model the new behaviours and it is not unusual for senior executives who cannot to elect to leave.

## Stage 5: Designing a programme

A culture change project should start with a self-awareness programme (Step 1 overleaf). If members of staff are not able to see themselves as others see them, it is pointless attempting to raise their social skills and awareness of others. The design must include what has to be given up to achieve the dream or vision.

### *The five-step EI team programme*

For the EI team, I recommend a five-step training and development process laid out below. I would suggest that a pivotal goal is that the EI team creates a 'critical mass' of advocates and exemplars of the new culture. It is essential that this programme be considered a business priority. The whole company should be put through as many of the steps

as can be afforded with a recommended minimum of the two marked with an asterisk.

Step 1 **\*Foundation** (see Monday) – Self-awareness and knowledge about own EI competencies – Awareness of feelings, Personal insight and self-assurance. Identification of a first set of unproductive behaviours and commitment to change through development back in the workplace.

Step 2 **\*Generating an Internal Observer** (see Tuesday) – Using increased self-awareness from Step 1 to increase self-control by identifying the emotional triggers to unproductive behaviour – enhancing Self-regulation, Authenticity, Accountability, Flexibility and Self-motivation.

Step 3 **Change agency and stress management** (see Wednesday) – Using Steps 1 and 2 to understand sources of stress, to generate and commit to stress management strategies. To understand and utilise change management techniques suitable for self, use with others and organisationally.

Step 4 **Conflict management, negotiation and assertive behaviour** – Influencing strategies and techniques are explored to resolve conflict equitably, to reconcile differences in negotiations and to practise assertive behaviour.

Step 5 **Developing specific EI coaching skills using a seven-step coaching process and method** (see *Effective Coaching* by Marshall J Cook (McGraw Hill)).

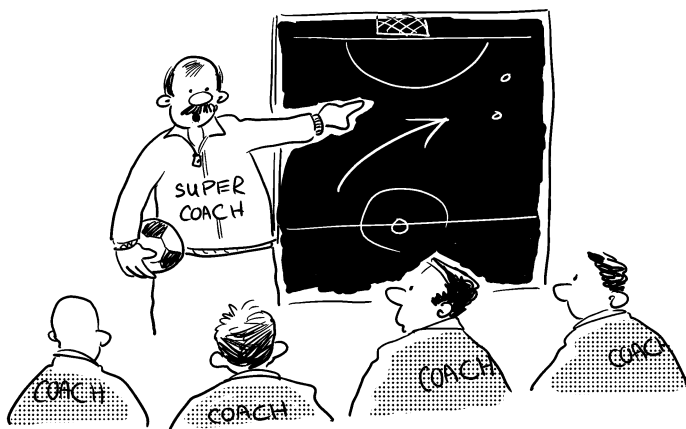
5.1 **Contracting phase** – The challenge faced by the

coachee and the required outcome are identified. The contract for the coaching relationship is explored and the commitment is made.

- 5.2 **The coaching approach** - Possible approaches to the coaching process are brainstormed based on understanding of the context of the challenge as well as the employees' personal issues. Lateral thinking is encouraged and unconventional ideas given consideration.
- 5.3 **The action plan** - The first meeting needs to complete some time management and the practical aspects of the coaching environment. What type of environment is suitable to the nature of the challenge (complete privacy needed or relative privacy of noisy public venue)? What aids might be needed if any?
- 5.4 **Agree deadlines** - What is the schedule and arrangements for changing it (revisit contract if required)?
- 5.5 **Evaluation** - What are the criteria for evaluation of success? How will the coachee know when the coaching is working? When will the coach establish that his or her subject is not coachable on this topic?
- 5.6 **Facilitate action** – What can you as coach do to help your employees succeed? Facilitation involves avoiding being tempted to rescue employees, thus stealing their autonomy of action and thought. Paternalistic or maternalistic

approaches that take over the task from the employee are diametrically opposed to the coaching approach.

- 5.7 **Follow through** – This is a collaborative way of enforcing deadlines and setting time to review progress to ensure well-intentioned plans do not get lost.



Working with the executive layer, the programme may be re-iterated with the first batch becoming ‘super coaches’.

Coherent management of the change programme can be achieved by merging EI competencies with hard managerial and analytical skills.

#### *EI learning methodology*

The programme should generate opportunities for experiential learning, sharing knowledge of EI and change agency.

*Classroom-based work*

By being very interactive, participants practise the skills they are developing through a variety of training methods, which meet delegates' varying learning styles:

- a variety of accelerated learning techniques and exercises to help practise new skills and knowledge
- Mind Mapping<sup>[TM]</sup> or Freenoting<sup>[R]</sup> to speed learning and ensure thorough understanding of the new concepts
- presentation and discussion of relevant material and debate to facilitate understanding of their role in the organisation
- Self/peer evaluated role-plays to allow delegates to practise skills and to facilitate self-assessment of their own developing skills
- activities allowing delegates to understand themselves and the ways they interact with others, e.g. games to understand how they relate to colleagues and customers (both internal and external), or team building exercises to facilitate support of each other in their new role.

*Development at work*

Working with the business to embed EI coaching in the culture and processes, developmental learning back at work should be provided to ensure success within the work context. Exercises should be designed to fit in with routine events in the workplace, e.g. team meetings. This will include the following:

- focus groups or workshops, e.g. ways of developing structures to generate the EI programme internally
- directed self-study and shared EI exercises
- learning sets and cross-functional teams

- facilitated e-rooms to share knowledge and experience (if you have the technology and are globally disparate)
- one-to-one coaching or supervised/observed coaching sessions or team coaching.

*Learning outcomes for EI culture change interventions*

People behave as they are rewarded. Organisations waste money by charging ahead with training while delaying alignment of reward mechanisms to the learning outcomes. This is essential in Stage 5. Mismatches are very disillusioning for participants. Once you know what hard performance indicators and behavioural competencies are required, you must act on this.



In order for participants to continue to adopt a positive approach throughout the organisation, it is important that they have coaching immediately following each course. It would be helpful if their consolidation successes are recognised (rewards, reviews, appraisal etc).

***Learning outcomes of the five-step programme***

By the end of the programme, the EI team will have achieved all the learning outcomes:

- Have a sense of self-esteem and self-confidence and the ability to maintain them under all circumstances – successfully managing themselves in challenging situations
- Further develop a variety of interpersonal skills, e.g. assertiveness, managing their own emotional responses, rapport building etc.
- Display integrity, honesty and authenticity, when dealing with colleagues, creating more effective teams
- Be able to recognise when they relate to people using their previous opinions rather than looking for opportunities to reinforce new behaviours
- Have measured their approach to feedback and discussed the present organisational culture
- Understand how to use positive feedback in order to change behaviour
- Improve their strategies to consistently generate positive feedback
- Be able to self-assess their positive feedback to employees
- Understand the purpose of EI coaching and analyse their strengths and areas of development as coaches
- Respect the autonomy of coachees in action and thought
- Use a variety of coaching styles and understand when a particular approach is required, e.g. more direction
- Set up structures that facilitate an enduring coaching culture which boosts sales, stimulates creativity and engenders co-operation

## Stage 6: Piloting the design pragmatically

Do not select the worst region because you want to change it the most and think that this will form a useful pilot. Your consultant team may well be experienced enough to tackle this region but your new EI coaches may find it too big a step. This will be demoralising and you need to start with a winner. In surrounding regions that have taken the transformation well and have emotional stamina, you can always restructure (each absorbing parts of the difficult region) using the critical mass.

Make sure that you have consulted all stakeholders on the pilot evaluation criteria. Be clear that you know what good looks like in the new behavioural competencies in the opinion of all the key decision-makers. To sustain the new culture it is essential that those who will judge competence are reliable and consistent.

Usually consultants 'start the fire' and teach others how to spread it with a wedge of resources that reduces with time. The goal is for the EI team to transfer all of their knowledge and skills to the business through experiential learning. The approach will only be successful if the recipients pick up all of the skills needed from the consultants and do not dilute the messages.

It is wise for the EI team to remain ahead of the learning curve to maintain a gap between them and the main body of personnel. They are then able to support staff stopping any cultural shear between workers, supervisors, middle managers and the executive level.

During the transition phase, EI team members would be coached to ensure that they have understood the models,

practice and experience of EI coaching. The transition phase would be to complete the transfer of knowledge. Evaluation would be a continuous process, thereby ensuring business needs are met.

The pilot would then be used to decide to what scale external support remains necessary and to complete the implementation plan for the wider organisation based on success.

## **Stage 7: Reviewing the pilot**

Reviewing the pilot and matching the results against expectations, I would not expect to see financial pay back in less than 12 months. However, within 3 months I would expect individuals to evidence and report personal perceptions of benefit. They may be able to quote specific examples where use of their new EI competencies generated new business, protected existing business, increased sales, or increased advocacy, e.g. handling customer complaints.

## **Stage 8: Completing the cycle**

Completing the cycle for the rest of the organisation is vital. However, there are too many variables to give detailed advice here other than some general guidelines.

- Have a communications strategy right from the start which uses formal and informal chains of communication.
- Plan the change programme professionally paying equal attention to the psychological process that people will go through, as you do to the tasks, goals and techniques employed.

- Ideally, everyone in the company should receive at least the first two courses concentrating on achieving heightened self-awareness and a capability to use this awareness to increase self-control. Each of these should then be followed by a period of development back in the workplace.
- Put first-line supervisors through the programme first if you have to limit the volume. You can afford to leave middle management until quite late but not executives, specialists or first-line supervisors as they generate more risk if they are living the old culture.
- Have a feedback loop that evaluates comments from participants carefully, remembering where they are on the learning ladder. Participants can kick out at trainers and change agents when the subject matter is confronting because it is below their level of self-awareness (they do not know what they do not know). Anticipate this and have change techniques to hand, being prepared to give individuals extra coaching (refer back to the five-step course for the EI team).
- Do not be surprised if strong bonds emerge between the EI coaches and participants on their courses. Collaborative approaches between first line supervisors and the EI team will make the transition back to work seamless. Make the transition work by a process of encouraging supervisors to coach people emerging from courses, and by the EI team coaching the supervisors.
- Complete risk management exercises at three levels: business (speculative or good risks where you are speculating to accumulate), programme level (where many projects interact and are dependent) and the individual project level where they vary depending on the nature (Information System, building move, training lifecycle).

Key influencers and leaders in the business must reinforce the new culture. Methods of continuing the development of the organisation were included in the learning methodology in Stage 5.

### *Competency Assessment*

By adopting a coaching style of leadership, managers both motivate employees to work harder and generate a more positive culture. This also facilitates retention of key staff. Using competency assessment techniques will support continuous improvement of operations:

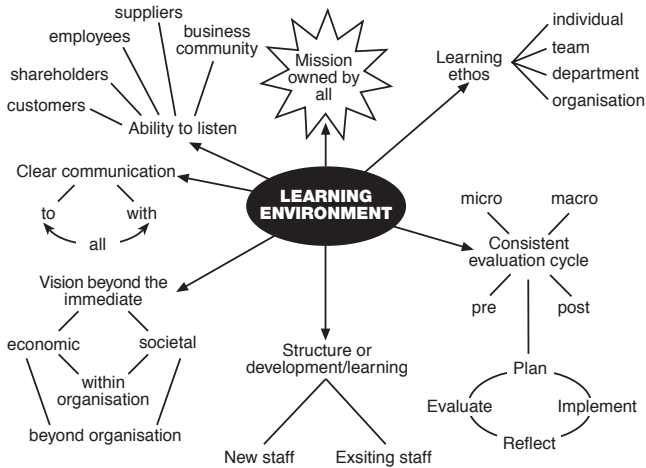
- discriminating competencies – that separate superior performers from average performers
- core competencies – characteristics that a sample of people in a job would have in common and those that are needed to get the basic job done.

The coach can spread discriminating competencies from one individual (say high cross-sales results due to excellent questioning skills) across the team. Thus over time, yesterday's core competencies evolve based on the observed discriminating competencies of today. New joiners will be selected on the basis of the higher standard. The overall standard of the team rises with time, based on this learning cycle of continuous improvement.

## **Journal entries**

Consider the following diagram. I believe that the EI programme can go a long way towards achieving the advantages of being a learning organisation. In your journal, taking a clockwise scan around the mind map, reflect on:

- where your organisation is at present
- where it wants to be and by when
- how it might get there.



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Develop a range of programme outcomes that you would like to achieve and incorporate these into a plan.

Today, we have completed how to create an EI culture. You should have enough information to work with internal teams and consultants on your own programme. Tomorrow, we are going to review the week developing a Personal Development Plan based on what we have learned.