



Theme:

Integrating Fresh Perspectives to Leadership and Management

January 11, 2008

“I saw the angel in the marble and carved until I set him free”. (Michelangelo)

I feel most privileged and highly honoured to be invited to the 2nd Annual Women in Management Conference 2006. And what’s more, in addition to being a participant of sorts, the invitation to present a paper on **Understanding and Engaging Emotional Intelligence: Fresh Perspectives for Leadership and Management** at a time when Nigerian women are making waves, ripples and setting new standards of achievement in public and private sectors of the nation, is very timely. It is also interesting to note, that this phenomenon, in what I regard as a paradigm shift, is also being experienced world wide. Let me first of all start by putting my paper into context, with particular reference to our current setting and in this regard, three things stand out –

1. The growth of Women in the Modern work force
2. The emerging concept of Emotional Intelligence as a tool for human output and performance.
3. The current global focus on leadership development and its emergent issues.

It is against this background that my paper is set. Before I proceed to the core issues that we will be exploring this morning, I congratulate the organizers of this conference who are in touch with the fact that issues affect women as a group,

particularly in career and work setting bring in new dimensions and as such require fresh perspectives and insights indeed.

THE GROWTH OF WOMEN IN THE MODERN WORK FORCE

One of the changes in the modern society is the rapidly expanding access and entry of women into the world of work, particularly in non-traditional settings and leadership positions. This is further encouraged by the growing number of women going through Higher Education and subscribing to professional careers with the increased potential for personal and professional growth. As at Independence in Nigeria, the relative ratio of women to men was about 1:100, while currently, the gap is closing in with student enrolment in Universities attaining about 50:50 in gender representation with women now subscribing to non-tradition programme than used to be the case. It is this growth that is reflected in the increasing number of women who hold executive positions of Leadership in Public and Private sectors in Nigeria. Hence at the moment, Nigeria can boast of Women Ministers in the none-traditional Ministries such as Finance, Education and Solid Minerals, the curriculum vitae and outstanding performance of these women and other women such as Professor Dora Akunyili of National Agency for Food and Drugs Administration and Control (NAFDAC) are going a long way to establish the reputation of women as leaders and managers in the modern era. To this end

therefore, women in these contexts are breaking through the 'glass - ceiling ', the invisible barrier that had hitherto prevented women from advancing to the highest levels in their professions (Brannon 1996).

THE EMERGING CONCEPT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional information plays a critical role in our working lives since the relationships we form are governed by rules of behaviour - of cooperation and dominance, among others - that are triggered by our emotions. Being able to understand this information, and its impact on personnel and the organization, is what makes an individual, at least in part, emotionally intelligent.

The concept of Emotional Intelligence grew out of an attempt to understand the essential factors beyond cognitive measures of Intelligence and creativity such as IQ, which accounted for success in work and life. This was further reinforced by the observation that there was very little correlation between IQ and eventual success. In an article by the American Psychological Association Monitor, 1998, Bridget Murray said "People who rise to the top of their field—whether it's psychology, law, medicine, engineering or banking—aren't just good at their jobs. They're affable, resilient and optimistic, suggests a growing store of studies on professional leaders. In other words, it takes more than traditional cognitive

intelligence to be successful at work. It also takes 'emotional intelligence,' the ability to restrain negative feelings such as anger and self-doubt, and instead focus on positive ones such as confidence and congeniality, claims an emerging school of behavioral thought. The theory first captured the public imagination three years ago with the release of 'Emotional Intelligence: Why it Can Matter More than IQ,' (Bantam, 1995) by psychologist Daniel Goleman, PhD” According to Goleman (1996), 'Emotional intelligence matters twice as much as technical and analytic skill combined for star performances,' he says. 'And the higher people move up in the company, the more crucial emotional intelligence becomes.' Studies on gender differences in intelligence and mental abilities raise questions with regards to the issues of whether women and men have different abilities, use different strategies, vary with respect to verbal, quantitative and spatial abilities. However this may have been debated, women have been represented in psychological literature as exhibiting behavioural traits associated with care giving and nurturing roles requiring the operant demonstrations of emotion and feelings in a way that is verbally communicated and visibly demonstrated. Prior to the development of Emotional Intelligence, these skills and traits were deemed undesirable and detestable to the context of the work place, which had its unwritten rules of what was appropriate and acceptable. Hence women were deemed to be emotionally unsuitable to hold office **unless they became more like men.** With the growth of

Emotional Intelligence, the existing challenge today is for both men and women to understand and engage their emotions, intuitions and feeling effectively, hence the term **Emotional Intelligence**

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND ITS EMERGENT ISSUES

Growing leadership capacities have become the biggest challenge of the 21st century. In the words of Noel Tichy - Executive Director of the Global Leadership Programme, University of Michigan, U.S.A. and adviser to the CEO-General Electric, “the greatest challenge facing organizations in the 21 century is to grow more leaders at more levels than the competition” In the process, organizations and individuals have developed an understanding that leadership skills and aptitudes can be developed, hence the old adage that leaders are born is now deemed obsolete. As leadership has to deal with the individual and his interaction with others in engaging his environment, it becomes increasingly obvious that the emotions, which so govern human interactions have an essential part to play in leadership success, hence a link between Emotional Intelligence and Leadership.

SPECIFIC CHALLENGES FACED BY WOMEN

In spite of the growing women representation in the workforce, women are still grossly underrepresented in Leadership positions. This situation is caused by a number of factors which affect women attaining their rightful positions

These are

- 1. Socialisation** – Societal expectations and socialisation processes have a lot of effect on the unwillingness of many women to apply themselves to attain the highest positions in their organisations. While many more are reaching new heights many women are still held back. This is even more serious when they find themselves having to take responsibility over men.
- 2. Absence of Role models** – The limited number of women in high positions inadvertently leads to many women lacking role models for their ultimate attainment
- 3. Discrimination/Gender bias** – Women are obviously victims of discrimination designed to perpetuate stereotypes of gender inferiority.
- 4. Lack of Training** – The greater challenges which women face in Leadership definitely require greater training and development of skills to enable these challenges. It is in these areas that developing Emotional intelligence skills will provide essential tools for personal growth

WHAT THEN IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

In attempting to understand Emotional Intelligence in its most basic form, the poem by Nicholas Gordon provides some insight into the nuances of the concept and application of Emotional Intelligence.

**To appear wise, one must talk;
To be wise, one must listen.
To appear to do good, one must be busy;
To do good, one must know when to stand aside.
To appear to lead, one must put oneself first;
To lead, one must put oneself last.
To appear caring, one must give advice;
To be caring, one must give space.
To appear to love, one must know how to give;
To love, one must know also how to receive.
To appear happy, one must smile;
To be happy, one must be free with tears.**

The early Emotional Intelligence theory was originally developed during the 1970's and 80's by the work and writings of psychologists Howard Gardner (Harvard), Peter Salovey (Yale) and John Mayer (New Hampshire). Emotional Intelligence is increasingly relevant to organizational development and developing people, because the EQ principles provide a new way to understand and assess people's behaviours, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills, and potential. Emotional Intelligence is an important consideration in human resources planning, job profiling, recruitment interviewing and selection, management

development, customer relations and customer service, and more (Alan Chapman - 1995-2006 Consortium for Research on Emotional Intelligence)

George Klemp, Partner, Cambria Consulting, in a paper titled Emotional Intelligence and Leadership –What really Matters, points out that there are three major schools of thought as to what Emotional Intelligence really is. This is enumerated in the following lines –

Some (e.g., Goleman, 1998) equate it to personal characteristics such as “initiative”, “self-confidence”, and “drive for results”, factors that bear little if any relationship to either emotion or intelligence.

□ Others (e.g., Bar-On, 1997) view emotional intelligence as a personality dimension, like extroversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability.

□ A third school of thought defines emotional intelligence as a specific set of abilities that include the capacity to understand, reason about, and use emotions in thinking and action (e.g., Mayer, DiPaolo and Salovey, 1990; Mayer, Caruso, and Salovey, 1999).

“Emotional intelligence, then, refers to the capacity to understand and explain emotions, on the one hand, and of emotions to enhance thought, on the other.”

John D. Mayer and David Caruso

The following four domains and competencies are universally agreed as forming the bases of Emotional Intelligence -

Self-Awareness

- **Emotional Self-Awareness:** Reading ones own emotions and recognizing their impact; using “gut sense” to guide decisions.
- **Accurate Self-Assessment:** Knowing one’s strengths and limits.
- **Confidence:** A sound sense of one’s self-worth and capabilities.

Self-Management

- **Emotional Self-Control:** Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses under control.
- **Transparency:** Displaying honesty and integrity; trustworthiness.
- **Adaptability:** Flexibility in adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles.
- **Achievement:** The drive to improve performance to meet inner standards of excellence.
- **Initiative:** Readiness to act and seize opportunities.
- **Optimism:** Seeing the update in events.

Social Awareness

- Empathy: Sensing others' emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking active interest in their concerns.
- Organizational Awareness: Reading the currents, decision networks, and politics at the organizational level.
- Service: Recognizing and meeting follower, client, or customer needs.

Relationship Management

- Inspirational Leadership: Guiding and motivating with a compelling vision.
- Influence: Wielding a range of tactics for persuasion.
- Developing Others: Bolstering others' abilities through feedback and guidance.
- Change catalyst: Initiating, managing, and leading in a new direction.
- Conflict Management: Resolving disagreements.

HOW DOES EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AFFECT LEADERSHIP?

1. Effective leaders are aware of their impact on others and use it to their advantage.
2. Effective leaders have empathy for others; yet can still make tough decisions.

3. Effective leaders are astute judges of people without being judgmental.
4. Effective leaders are passionate about what they do, and show it.
5. Effective leaders balance feeling and logic in making decisions.
6. Effective leaders are excellent communicators.
7. Effective leaders create personal connections with their people.
8. Effective leaders temper drive for results with sensitivity to others.

The Emotionally Capable Leader

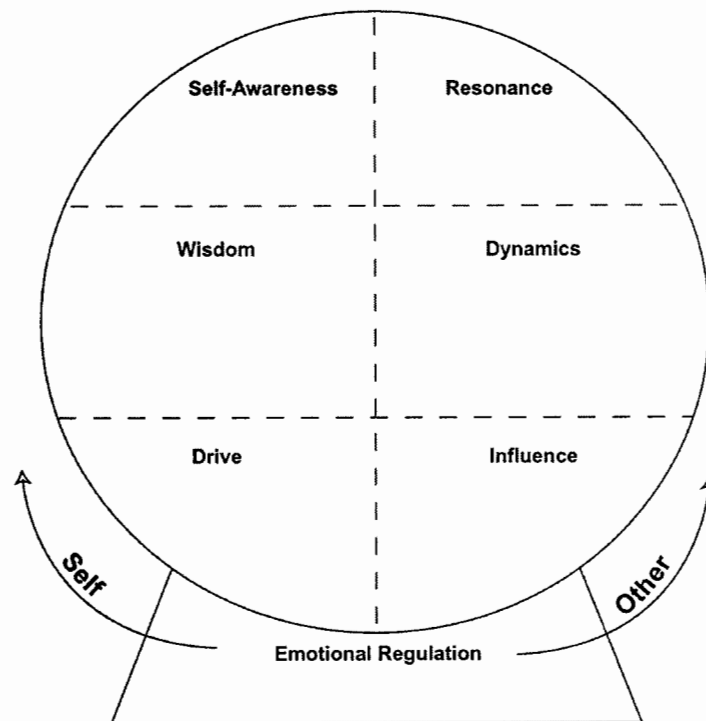


Fig. 1 - The 2003 Linkage Excellence in Management & Leadership Series

KEYS TO GROWING EMOTIONALLY INTELLIGENT LEADERS

“Our level of emotional intelligence is not fixed genetically, nor does it develop only in early childhood. Unlike IQ, which changes little after our teen years emotional intelligence seems to be largely learned, and it continues to develop as we go through life and learn from our experiences- our competence in it can keep growing” Daniel Goleman

In the light of this the challenge is how do we grow our levels of Emotional Intelligence. There are several essential keys to achieving this. These are:

- 1. Self-Reflection and Discussion**
- 2. Self -Assessment and Appraisal**
- 3. Identify Specific Behaviour patterns which influence each area**
- 4. Appraise Development Opportunities** – These include obstacles to achieving objective, strengths that can be leveraged, support facilities available e.g. mentoring and existing skills, counseling and networking opportunities
- 5. Develop Action Plans for each area.**
- 6. Continuous development and improvement - improving knowledge base.**

CONCLUSION

The concept of Emotional Intelligence provides leaders and persons aspiring to be leaders' essential tools for optimising leadership capabilities. Women who aspire to lead must therefore understand, grow and fully engage the relevant skills to maximise their leadership positions and abilities. This is a challenge we must rise up to as women of our time. As Jeffrey Gandz professor and Managing Director, Program Design, in the Ivey Executive Development Program. put it

“Outstanding leaders over the long haul recognize that they must continue to invest in core competencies at the same time that they produce results in the short-run.”

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