

Emotional Intelligence: The Pillars for the Professional Readiness Sequence in an Undergraduate Business Program

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Abstract

To develop professionally ready graduates who will be worthy employees, effective managers, and dynamic leaders, students must be prepared to learn a variety of emotional and social intelligence skills including how to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of their emotions and the emotions of others to facilitate high levels of collaboration and productivity for their future employers. Based on feedback from companies who hire its graduates, the university has a responsibility to provide students not only with a strong foundation in the major functional areas of business but also in professional readiness. We believed that emotional intelligence is a major component of professional readiness. We integrated emotional intelligence modules into a four-year professional readiness sequence. We believe these students' emotional intelligence will continue to improve and they will be better equipped for leading tomorrow's organizations. We hope other business schools will follow our example.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, professional readiness; curriculum development; teaching modules; AACSB

1. Introduction

Our university's school of management prepares leaders to make a positive difference in the world. Coupled with business education is conscience. We have the ultimate gift and responsibility of educating and developing leaders based upon the Jesuit tradition of learning, leadership, and service and include reverence for the dignity of the human person. This all begins with emotional intelligence. Through an intentional focus on this emotional intelligence, the school of management can help ensure the professional readiness that companies and organizations identify as a critical competency.

This 21st century work environment has an increased need for managers who can bring skills in leadership, teamwork, networking, and collaboration to the table. Emotional and social intelligence is believed to be the cornerstone of developing and increasing such abilities (Goleman, 1995; Tomer, 2002; O'Connor, Phipps, & White, 2013). If the school of management is going to continue preparing leaders to make a positive difference in the world, incorporating these skills into the business core curriculum is critical.

2. Literature Review

Emotional intelligence phoenixes from the concept of social intelligence first identified by Thorndike in 1920. Thorndike defined social intelligence as "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls—to act wisely in human relations" (p.228). Wechsler (1940) fought for the addition of non-intellective aspects as a measure of general intelligence.

Likewise, Leeper (1948) purported that emotional thought should be considered when reviewing the concept of logical thought. However, it was not until the 1980s that the concept of social intelligence began to emerge into emotional intelligence or what some people refer to as EI.

Gardner (1983) shared a theory of multiple intelligences that encouraged researchers to step outside the notion that human beings are confined to a singular view of intelligence. However, the term emotional intelligence only first appeared in an unpublished study in 1986 (Payne). Salovey and Mayer's study of social intelligence presented a framework for emotional intelligence. They coined the term "emotional quotient" and defined it as "a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use that information to guide one's thinking and actions (1997, p. 185)." Later, Gardner (1993) included interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences in his theory of multiple intelligences. Within these multiple levels of intelligences, a movement evolved that expanded two particular areas of Gardner's approach. Both intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence are theorized to be a large portion of what Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey (2000) defined as emotional intelligence.

In the 21st century, research on the topic of emotions and emotional intelligence resulted in a number of edited books (Ashkanasy, Hartel, & Zerbe, 2000; Ashkanasy, Hartel & Daus, 2002; Payne & Cooper, 2001) and articles in professional journals: *Journal of Organizational Behavior* (Fisher & Ashkanasy, 2000); *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes* (Weiss, 2001); *Human Resource Management Review* (Fox, 2002); *Leadership Quarterly* (Humphrey, 2002); ; and *The Annual Review of Psychology* (Brief and Weiss, 2002). The importance of emotional intelligence has been recognized as a vital part of the educational process for nearly 20 years (Stuller, 1997). Advocates of both the emotional intelligence and management skills movements maintained that intrapersonal and interpersonal skills are critical success factors and cannot be substituted with cognitive intelligence or technical skills (Clark, Callister, & Wallace, 2003; Goleman, 1998a; Whetten & Cameron, 2007.) Keating, Rishel, & Byles (2005) offered suggestions for introducing emotional intelligence into the business curriculum, and a number of management courses have been used to improve students' emotional intelligence scores (Burbach, 2008; Clark, Callister, & Wallace, 2003).

Several studies indicate a positive correlation between EI and academic success among college students. Burgess-Wilkerson, Benson, and Frankforter (2012) conducted an analysis of EI in an academic setting and found that EI scores can improve as a result of academic interventions. Another leading researcher in the field of emotional intelligence was Reuven Bar-On. According to Bar-On (2002), several researchers expanded Gardner's interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligences into six primary components of emotional intelligence: emotional self-awareness, assertiveness, empathy, interpersonal relationship, stress tolerance, and impulse control. Several definitions of emotional intelligence emerged through the advanced study of the six components. Since diverging from Gardner's view of the construct, some researchers (Goleman, 1998a; Mayer & Salovey, 1997) named this construct emotional intelligence while in 1997 Bar-On chose the term emotional and social intelligence and formalized the concept of Emotional-Social Intelligence (ESI) in 2005. Perhaps no one defined emotional intelligence anymore simply than Panda: "knowing what feels good, what feels bad, and how to transform from the former to the latter (2008, p.13)."

The Management Education Task Force of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools in Business (AACSB) issued a report in April 2002 that called for an increase in instruction in communication, leadership, and interpersonal skills to make curricula more relevant to today's global workplace (Doria, Rozanski, & Cohen, 2003). Supporting this report are employers who are substantially less satisfied with graduates' interpersonal and emotional competencies than with their conceptual and analytical skills (Rynes, Trank, Lawson, & Ilies, 2003; O'Conner, Phipps, & White, 2013). A national survey found four in ten workers were not able to work cooperatively with fellow-employees and only 19 percent of entry-level applicants had sufficient self-discipline in work habits (Harris Education Research Council, 1991).

To further understand this trend, the National Association of Colleges and Employers (NACE) surveyed 640 randomly selected college recruiters to identify the most important performance dimensions currently being sought by prospective employers. The surveyed employers rated interpersonal skills as the most important skills they desired in recent college graduates, followed by ethics and integrity, leadership, perseverance, and knowledge (Shivpuri & Kim, 2004). It is no surprise that colleges and universities are now increasingly more concerned about the emotional skill gaps in students who are looking for employment upon graduation.

Recognition exists among researchers and practitioners that emotions play a large role in organizational life and the claims made for emotional and social intelligence as a predictor of success in business are significant. Goleman indicated that emotional intelligence is twice as important as IQ in determining success at work. The higher the rank of the person considered a star performer, the more emotional intelligence capabilities showed up as the reason for his or her effectiveness. Goleman found “nearly ninety percent of the difference in their profiles was attributable to emotional intelligence factors rather than cognitive abilities” (1995, p. 94). General intelligence and technical skills contribute to high performance and good decision-making. However, to truly succeed consistently, employees must also possess a high level of emotional and social intelligence which includes being able to motivate one’s self, being persistent in facing obstacles and achieving goals, controlling impulses and delaying gratification, controlling one’s moods, thinking rationally, and empathizing with others.

In two articles in the *Harvard Business Review*, “What Makes a Leader?” (1998b) and “Leadership that Gets Results” (2000), Goleman explained the concept of emotional intelligence in the business world. First, from his research concerning almost 200 large global companies, he reported that “truly effective leaders are distinguished by high degree emotional intelligence” (1998b, p. 82). Secondly, by drawing on the experiences of over 3000 executives, Goleman again demonstrated the link between emotional intelligence and leadership and concluded that leaders can ‘increase their quotient’ of leadership styles by understanding which ‘emotional intelligence competencies underlie the leadership styles they are lacking’ and working to develop them (2000, p. 90).

Tucker, Bojka, Barone, & McCarthy (2000) viewed an important goal of management education as developing leadership rather than focusing strictly on management skills. A number of studies indicated that emotional intelligence skilled people positively influence management/strategic processes (Huy, 2002; Samra-Fredericks, 2004). Social scientists considered the role of emotional intelligence in transformation leadership (Brown and Moshavi, 2005). Alon and Higgins (2005) considered the importance of emotional and cultural intelligences in developing global leadership success. In negotiation, Der Foo, Elfenbein, Tan, & Aik (2004) examined the role of emotional intelligence in formulating joint value and personal outcomes.

A study published in the *Journal of Organizational Behavior* (O’Boyle Jr. Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver, & Story, 2011) concluded that emotional intelligence was the strongest predictor of job performance. An analysis of more than 300 top-level executives from 15 global companies showed that six emotional competencies distinguished the stars from the average. In a large beverage firm, 50 percent left within two years, mostly because of poor performance. When the firms started selecting based on emotional competencies, only 6 percent left, and they performed in the top 1/3 of executive ranks.

Experienced partners in a multinational consulting firm were assessed on the emotional intelligence competencies. Partners who scored above the median on 9 or more of the competencies delivered \$1.2 million more profit from their accounts than did other partners—a 139 percent incremental gain (Boyatzis, 1999). At L’Oreal, sales agents, selected on the basis of certain emotional competencies, significantly outsold salespeople selected using the company’s old selection procedure, by nearly \$1,000,000 (Cherniss, 1999). Salespeople selected on the basis of emotional competence also had 63 percent fewer turnovers during the first year than those selected in the typical way (Spencer, McClelland, & Kelner, 1997). An analysis comparing leaders’ emotional intelligence scores to key financial indicators shows that leaders who are high in emotional intelligence are 20 percent more productive than their low-EQ counterparts. This amounts to \$250,000 more productivity for those leaders high in EQ (Bradberry & Greaves, 2005).

O’Conner, Phipps, & White (2013) investigated the local business community’s expectations of our university graduates and how well they meet those expectations. The data was gathered from a survey that collected both quantitative and qualitative data pertaining to qualities that employers expect from new graduates and how well our graduates perform in those areas: strong work ethic, initiative, positive attitude, analytical skills, and self-awareness, awareness of others, and empathy (i.e., emotional intelligence.) While employers, faculty, and recent graduates agreed on what was important (work ethic, emotional intelligence, and initiative), students put far more weight on analytical skills and did not understand the importance of emotional intelligence. This could be in part because they are not being educated on the role it plays in being successful in business-related careers.

Goleman (1995) suggested that “emotional life is a domain that, as surely as math or reading, can be handled with greater or lesser skill, and requires its unique set of competencies” (p.36). Our school of management has positioned itself as the place “where leaders learn.”

Students must be prepared to learn a variety of emotional and social intelligence skills including how to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumen of their emotions and the emotions of others to facilitate high levels of collaboration and productivity for their future employers.

3. Purpose of the Research

3.1 Create a Professional Readiness Curriculum

The Dean charged the author to create a professional readiness curriculum that imbeds emotional intelligence as a pillar; i.e., create emotional intelligence modules that can be integrated into each of the university's school of management's new professional readiness sequence pilot: MG 1001 Professional Readiness: Exploration & Foundation; MG 3001 Professional Readiness: Skill Development; and MG 4001 Professional Readiness: Experience & Transition. Each class is a required one-hour credit course in the new undergraduate BSBA core curriculum.

4. Discussion

4.1 Curriculum Development

The BSBA Curriculum Review Committee assessed the current offerings and made changes to update and improve the overall quality of the program based on the results of O'Connor, Phipps, & White's report (2013). In developing its recommendations, the committee continued to ask, "How can we best prepare our BSBA students to meet the needs of their future employers?" The committee's recommendations conserved the larger educational environment, the expectations of prospective employers, the expectations of prospective students, and the current and potentially available resources within the school of management.

The parameters for the committee included the following:

- Courses have to stay within the current credit hour structure.
- All recommended changes must be consistent with accreditation standards of both HLC and AACSB.
- Final recommended changes should reflect external trends noted in the preparatory research and take into consideration the concerns of all key stakeholders.
- The goal is to retain and not increase the total number of credits required for graduation and the BSBA required hours should not exceed its current number of hours.
- Ensure that all changes to the curriculum include a focus on helping our students become more emotionally intelligent.

In its deliberations the team considered possible mechanisms for increasing the professional readiness of the BSBA students and made recommendations that aligned with proposed curricular changes. No matter where our students were in their education, their ultimate desired outcome is high performance. They want and need to perform well if they intend to get hired by companies and organizations upon graduation. At the centerpiece of high performance is good decision-making and research indicates that good decision-making is tied to emotional intelligence (TTI Emotional Intelligence Inventory, 2009).

Neurological research indicates students develop emotional intelligence in stages: first by developing self-awareness in recognizing their own thoughts and feelings toward people and situations; then moving toward understanding individuals and groups and the subtleties at play in social groups; and then using this information to induce preferred responses in others (Sigmar, Hynes, & Hills, 2012). Although there are several packaged curriculums sold on the internet and in bookstores, the university feels that their modules to increase emotional intelligence must be in alignment with its mission and core values. This implies seriously evaluating every discussion and assignment to ensure this necessary alignment. This paper provides instructional modules that can be integrated into any course and will enable students to understand, appreciate, and apply the principles of emotional intelligence. However, these modules may or may not ensure alignment with other universities' values. For the school of management's professional readiness sequence, emotional intelligence modules are embedded into the three formal core curriculum courses required during the freshman, junior, and senior years and one informal course during the sophomore year. The first year includes students completing an EI assessment, reading articles, listening and understanding lectures on emotional intelligence, reading their EI report, developing a personal plan for improved emotional intelligence, and submitting bi-weekly journal entries that detail progress toward their plans' goals. The second year involves an independent service-learning project and keeping a journal, both of which can be done outside the classroom.

The third year includes reading *Empathy Why It Matters, and How to Get It* by Roman Krznaric (2014), revisiting the student's initial EI plan, checking for progress, and adding another area of development. In the fourth years, students apply what they have learned to further develop their skills in action-learning role-practice. All modules incorporate reading magazine and journal articles and watching videos that reinforce the modules.

Freshman Year Module 1

Learning Outcome: Students will understand the business case for emotional intelligence. Prework

- Students take TTI Emotional Quotient inventory.
- Students read "The Business Case for Emotional Intelligence" by Cary Cherniss, PhD (1999).

In Class

- Instructor introduces the concept of multiple intelligences.
- Students watch 30 minute you tube video "Daniel Goleman Explains Emotional Intelligence"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZsdqBC1tHTA>
- Instructor debriefs the video.
- Instructor provides clarity on the definition of terms for emotional intelligence including self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, social skills, and empathy.

Freshman Year Module 2

Learning Outcome: Students will begin to understand how to increase their emotional intelligence.

Prework

- Students read their individualized EI report
- Students read "Five Tips to Develop Your Emotional Intelligence (EI)" by Kerrie Fleming, PhD. (2014).
- Based on instrument results, students create an emotional intelligence development plan that includes overall scores, strengths, opportunities for improvement, goals, and activities for reaching their goals.

In Class

- Instructor facilitates discussion about the importance of emotional and social intelligence on both the personal and social dimensions in the context of small business ownership and entrepreneurship.

Homework

- Students choose one of the components of emotional intelligence covered in class and write a short 1 page reflective essay on a leading entrepreneur from today or the past.

Freshman Year Module 3

Learning Outcome: Students understand what part empathy plays in corporate social responsibility.

In Class

- Instructor discusses empathy in conjunction with models of corporate social responsibility
- Students read "Understanding Empathy Key to Furthering Corporate Social Responsibility" by Olivia Coleman <http://csrinternational.blogspot.com/2010/10/understanding-empathy-key-to-furthering.html>
- Instructor debriefs article
- Students watch the video (25 min) "Behind the Swoosh"
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M5uYCWVfuPQ>
- Students write a one-page reflection paper on empathy as it relates to "Behind the Swoosh."

Freshman Year Module 4

Learning Outcome: Students understand the role that listening plays in increasing emotional and social intelligence

In Class

- Instructor discusses listening and the role it plays in developing emotional intelligence.
- Students get in pairs to explore and hone effective listening skills. One person speaks for 2 minutes. The other person is not allowed to talk during that time. At the end the other person repeats back to the speaker what they said or what they thought they heard.

- Students watch you tube video “5 Ways to Listen Better” Ted Talk http://www.ted.com/talks/julian_treasure_5_ways_to_listen_better

Homework

- Students write a one page reflection paper on the video

Freshman Year Module 5

Learning Outcome: Students learn how to be aware of feelings and emotions.

Pework

- Students read “The Importance of Emotional Intelligence in the Workplace: Why It Matters More Than Personality” by Mike Poskey (2014).

In Class

- Students watch you-tube video (30 min.) “Follow The Feeling Process (For Transforming Your Negative Emotions)” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVShM00qQ80>
- Students role play using a series of interactive group exercises to practice being open, honest, and aware of feelings and emotions. Students practice using short specific honest feedback to tough situations (e.g., You and a friend see an upcoming test on the professor’s desk. Your friend wants you to take it.)

The EI inventory can be administered again any time after Module 5 has been completed.

Sophomore Year Module 6

Service learning is already an inherent part of the university’s mission, and all students graduate with both an academic and service transcript. Students spend time doing volunteer or service- learning work helping those less fortunate. These experiences evoke significant insights, learning, and gains regarding the emotional intelligence skills of self-awareness and empathy (Manring, 2012). A key principle in using service-learning as a means to foster emotional intelligence is that the more the experiences move students’ focus from their heads to the hearts, the deeper the students’ reflections and learning about emotional intelligence.

Service can refer to community service or service-learning. Voluntary community service may be a one-time, short-term project or a lengthy, on-going commitment by a group or an individual.

Community service is not compensated monetarily and may include service like tutoring a young student, working on a Habitat for Humanity house, Finucane Service Project, Safe Trick-or-Treat, coaching an athletic team, Scouting, ecology badge workshop, participating in a blood drive, AIDS Walk, fundraising to donate to another organization, serving dinner at St. James Soup Kitchen. Service-learning is a combination of community service and academic study.

Learning Outcome: Students understand positive attitude and empathy as it relates to themselves.

Outside of Class

- Students develop gratitude book and every morning for a month write down three things for which they are grateful. This assignment can be done anytime during the year. These will be turned into the professor of the MG 3001 Professional Readiness class.
- Before doing their first service project of their sophomore year, students watch you-tube video 13 minute Ted Talk “Daniel Goleman: Why Aren’t We More Compassionate?” http://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_goleman_on_compassion

Junior Year Module 7

Learning Outcome: Students reflect on progress of initial developmental plan and add breadth and depth to a revised plan.

In Class

- Students revisit initial EI plan. Students report on their personal development plans progress and add another developmental competency and three strategies or activities for reaching their goals.
- Students watch “Emotional Intelligence: From Theory to Everyday Practice” at Yale University (1 hour) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e8JMWtwdLQ4>

Junior Year Module 8

In Class

- Students watch Ted Talk (14 min) “Chade-Meng Tan: Everyday Compassion at Google” http://www.ted.com/talks/chade_meng_tan_everyday_compassion_at_google
- Professor debriefs video.

Homework

- Students write a reflection paper on the video they watched in class

Junior Year Module 9

Learning Outcome: Students understand self-awareness and assertiveness as it relates to leadership.

Before Class

- Students read two Harvard Business Review articles by Daniel Goleman

Goleman, D. (1998b). What makes a leader? *Harvard Business Review*, 77, 93-102. Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(2), 78-93.

In Class

- Students watch Greed, a documentary hosted by John Stossel (ABC News <https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL223E81BB54E143E6>). In the documentary, Ted Turner abruptly leaves the interview after becoming angry with the reporter. Students are asked to reflection the effectiveness of his behavior and develop other alternatives which might have helped Turner better communicate his position to Stossel during the interview. Instructor facilitates discussion as to what behaviors would have been more appropriate for Turner to exhibit.
- In small groups, students discuss case studies of national leaders (examples from Wall Street Journal) and identify and discuss the emotional competencies constituting effective leadership.
- Instructor facilitates discussion on self-control and emotional self-awareness.

Homework

- Students write a 1-page reflective essay on self-awareness or assertiveness as it relates to a national leader.

Junior Year Module 10

Learning Outcome: Students understand the importance of collaboration and managing constructive differences as components of emotional intelligence.

Before Class

- Students read “A More Mindful Workforce” by Daniel Goleman (2014).

In Class

- Students play simulations like “Everest,” “Desert,” “Earthquake,” or “Lost at Sea” that foster collaboration and constructive differences (Hromek & Roffey, 2009).
- Students watch Ted Talk (19 min) “The Walk from No to Yes” http://www.ted.com/talks/william_ury
- Instructor facilitates discussion about managing disagreements in groups and how to respect differences of opinion while still achieving the necessary team results.

Senior Year Module 11

Learning Outcome: Students understand how to give and receive feedback.

Before Class

- Students Read “Strategies: Business Schools Eye Their Applicants’ Level of Emotional Intelligence” by Colleen Stanley (2013).

In Class

- Students watch Ted Talk (11 min.)”Run, hide, or say thank you: when faced with feedback, what do you do?” with Joy Mayer <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b0bS4xJiEU8>

- In small groups, students discuss feedback that is difficult to take. They need to discuss verbal and nonverbal feedback.
- As an in-class activity, students are given scenarios drawn from the workplace to discuss in groups and to use as a basis for role-practice.

Senior Year Module 12

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to critically assess their own situation and effectiveness in stress management and how impulsive decisions can have disastrous effects in a business setting.

Before Class

- Students read “The Emotional Path to Success: Skill with Anger, Sadness, and Their Brethren Turns Out to be a Secret of High Achievers” by C. Lambert (1998).

In Class

- Students watch Ted Talk (12 min.) “Sport psychology - inside the mind of champion athletes” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yG7v4y_xwzQ
- Students locate a research study linking emotional management with athletic performance and provide a two-minute overview to the entire class.

Homework

- Students write a short 1-page paper on stress management or impulse control as a necessary key skill for any athletic endeavor. Students use the vocabulary of emotional intelligence to reinforce the application of these skills in team efforts.

Senior Year Module 13

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to apply an effective problem solving strategy to a business case using elements from their readings.

Before Class

- Students read Dr. Martyn Newman’s article “How Great Leaders are Using Emotional Intelligence to Build Business Capital.”

In Class

- Students watch “Emotional Intelligence and Leadership” (30 min) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HA15YZIF_kM
- Students will be asked to work in small groups to discuss and solve a business case.

Senior Year Module 14

Learning Outcome: Students will leverage emotional intelligence when interviewing for jobs.

In Class

- In pairs, students practice interviewing for the jobs they want. The other person provides feedback on ways to improve.
- Instructor provides ways to use emotional intelligence to prepare for a follow-up interview (e.g., learning more than just a person’s name and position.)

Senior Year Module 15

Learning Outcome: Students will be able to see how much their emotional intelligence has improved.

Before Class

- Read “What Business Needs from Business Schools” by Dora, Rozanski and Cohen.

In Class

- Students retake the initial EI inventory and compare their pre and post test scores.
- Students write a reflection paper on emotional intelligence growth.

5. Conclusion

The university's school of management has the responsibility of educating and developing leaders based upon the Jesuit tradition of learning, leadership, and service and include reverence for the dignity of the human person and integrity and ethics in every aspect of the educational endeavor. Emotional and social intelligence are inherent in all of these responsibilities. Although a great deal of emotional and social intelligence is integrated in the mission of the university and service learning, teaching additional emotional intelligence in our school of management, core business courses must be a priority and be considered as a core learning experience for all students in all business disciplines. No one class needs to be totally devoted to teaching all of these skills because they can be reinforced year after year. Modules, however, can be integrated into the professional readiness sequence that is required of all BSBA students. Teaching students an emotional vocabulary, identifying and modeling appropriate behavior, mirroring those behaviors, and encouraging higher levels of critical thinking and reflecting are essential in the development of emotional and social intelligence. The return on investment will be the development of professionally ready graduates who will be worthy employees, effective managers, and dynamic leaders. We hope other business schools will follow in our footsteps.

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