

## Opening Reflections

From 'MINDCHANGE – the power of emotionally intelligent leadership'

MINDCHANGE is about challenging leaders at every level to develop and maintain a mindset based on continually being open to learn and change both at a personal and interpersonal level, within a framework of fundamental principles, values and applied integrity. Central to this approach is an acknowledgement of our own and others' emotions and the part these play in influencing attitude and behaviour.

We all know that cruel physical behaviour from the extremes of torture through to varying levels of physical abuse incite emotions such as anger, fear, resentment, dislike and hatred. But psychological mistreatment such as bullying, discrimination, put-downs or any situation where lack of respect is demonstrated, also provokes negative emotions that are often similar to and sometimes more intense than being subjected to physical abuse. For instance, psychological continual bullying can lead to a lack of self-esteem that can in turn lead to depression, self harm and even suicide. While the perpetrator/s may not acknowledge its impact or put this on a par with physical abuse, a range of similar emotions can be felt by their victims.

These may seem dramatic statements, but most of us only need to reflect on situations when our opinion was ignored, we were subjected to 'put downs' or in any way felt we had not been treated with respect to recognise the emotional impact of such behaviour. Just the perception of psychological abuse or lack of respect (whether this is intended or not) can also have a similar impact.

So, what's this got to do with leadership? Research by Surcon International (2004) suggests that up to 50% of an organisation's productivity is predictable based on employees' feelings and opinions. According to surveys, up to 85% of people believe they could double their productivity ..."If I wanted to"...and they don't want to.

### Why?

Lack of effective leadership is the key reason cited for lack of motivation and its consequent impact on productivity. Whatever the size and complexity of the organisation, the quality of leadership and its leaders' ability to inspire others is fundamental to maximising productivity and thus increasing profits.

We therefore believe that the power and ability of leaders at every level and within every type of organisation, both individually and collectively to influence others by 'emotional engagement' is as important as their intellectual contributions. Whether this is leadership in business, in politics or in the community, creating an achievement culture through productive working relationships based on mutual trust has benefits that go far beyond involvement with the people directly concerned.

It is increasingly apparent that there is a convincing 'hard case for soft skills' and that the (conscious or unconscious) application of integrity based emotionally intelligent thinking and its integration into leadership decision making is a critical component of effective performance. Emotional competence (applied EQ) can therefore achieve not only personal benefits for the people concerned but also commercial profit and political credibility. Our intention in

## Opening Reflections

From 'MINDCHANGE – the power of emotionally intelligent leadership'

MINDCHANGE is to challenge leadership practice that puts expediency and short term 'quick wins' before integrity, ethics and the development of valued and long term business and personal relationships. Our aim is to stimulate and inspire a leadership approach at all levels and in all organisations that puts emotional intelligence at the forefront of decision-making and to express our passionate belief in the value of EQ and its application.

We also believe that increasing global interdependence and the danger of becoming 'anaesthetised' to what's going on within a wider context is an issue that leaders ignore to their peril. In particular, by becoming immune to the emotions felt by those who suffer through unjust or cruel treatment and the impact this can have way beyond their immediate environment. Whether we collectively or individually have the courage or not to deal with these or ignore them; or if the issue becomes one of fear being greater than integrity, is a matter of concern to us all.

'Reflections Explored' forms the main body of MINDCHANGE. Part 1 examines why emotions are important, outlines the origins of the concept of emotional intelligence and introduces the EQ4U process model. Part 2 reflects on the leadership dimension, why EQ matters to organisations and the importance of trust. The relationship between creativity, innovation and EQ, the leadership versus management debate, the nature of strategic and operational leadership roles and the various levels of management are also explored. Part 3 reflects on the impact of EQ on culture and productivity through a selection of case studies in a variety of organisational contexts, with leadership behaviour mapped against the EQ4U PROCESS. Part 4 focuses on the practice of EQ leadership and the development of emotional competence. This is followed by our 'Closing Reflections', with an emphasis on the need for integrity to be at the centre of emotionally intelligent leadership for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We conclude MINDCHANGE with our own personal list of learning resources, some that are referred to in the text and others that have influenced us in some way. If you want to follow up any of the ideas in MINDCHANGE you may find these useful. We would very much appreciate your thoughts on the subject and welcome any feedback you are kind enough to give us.

Source:

'MINDCHANGE – the power of emotionally intelligent leadership' by Jan Childs & David Pardey, published 2005 by Management Books 2000.

The use of this material is free provided copyright is acknowledged and reference is made to the author/s or link is made to the [www.eq4u.co.uk](http://www.eq4u.co.uk) website. This material may not be sold, or published in any form.