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M. Alexandrovich
М. А. Александрович
БГЭУ (Минск)

Научный руководитель Т. Н. Якович

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE:
A HIDDEN TALENT OR A SKILL TO BUILD

ЭМОЦИОНАЛЬНЫЙ ИНТЕЛЛЕКТ:
СКРЫТЫЙ ТАЛАНТ ИЛИ НАВЫК, ТРЕБУЮЩИЙ РАЗВИТИЯ

After the lecture of Vitaliy Denisenkov, the “Studia Borovogo” CEO, a new term was added to my professional vocabulary – Emotional Intelligence. That encouraged research aimed at determining the reasons for acquiring this essential soft skill and defining the ways how to gain and develop Emotional Intelligence (EI).

By intelligence itself we understand the ability to learn, understand, and make judgments or have opinions that are based on reason. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences [1983] described 9 types of intelligence, one of which was named *intrapersonal*, or *emotional*. Thus, EI is a relatively new term. It gained popularity in the 1995 Daniel Goleman’s book by the same title. Since then this phenomenon has been thoroughly studied. EI is the capacity to be aware of, control and express one's emotions and to handle interpersonal relationships judiciously and empathetically. It

is a skill rather than an inborn ability and can be acquired with long years of training and mastering.

In fact, academic intelligence has little to do with emotional life. People with high IQs can find it impossible or difficult to understand and manage feelings and emotions. Emotional life is a domain that requires its unique set of competencies. According to the surveys held among the BSEU students and top managers of several Belarusian companies, 45 per cent of students are unaware of what EI is, how to measure and develop it. The employers, on the contrary, take it into account and highly appreciate its presence. It proves that students need to raise their awareness of EI by gaining theoretical knowledge on the subject and acquiring practical skills.

Currently, scholars distinguish three models of EI that view this concept from different sides. In our research we applied *the mixed model* that focuses on EI as a wide array of competencies and skills that drive leadership performance. This very model was studied by Goleman. It mixes together EI qualities with other personality traits unrelated to either emotion or intelligence. In other words, it combines the core idea of emotional intelligence with a variety of other personality traits. In the course of work, the three most common tools recommended to boost our level of EI were tested.

The first, *introspection*, or looking inward, is a deliberate and time-consuming process that requires us to study ourselves so that we can assess ourselves accurately. I take 5 minutes daily to introspect and assess myself after a working day. The most significant result of this process is that I have become more cautious while dealing with people and performing tasks.

The second one is *non-verbal communication* that is observing others very carefully, so that we can recognize individual differences in how they operate. This tool has turned to be more difficult and complex to implement. Also, observing others' body language helped to take control of your own body reactions.

The third tool, *networking*, implies the ability to facilitate the uniqueness of people we communicate with for positive results. It is not only about looking for communication, but also about endorsing and recommending others, or being a "positive giver". Getting acquainted with people at lectures or seminars not only provides us with future communication benefits but also makes our stay at those events more comfortable and informal.

The undertaken research makes it possible to work out some tips for students to help us develop our EI and to acquire skills essential not only in professional, but also in personal life. First, make your feelings, emotions and reactions conscious, take responsibility for them. Second, try to gain experience of dealing with various people and situations. For this purpose, take part in various learning programs including internships and volunteering; make as many acquaintances as you can during various meetings, master-classes and other events. Third, do not hesitate to seek advice and ask questions, no matter how extraordinary they are.