Leading Resonant Teams with Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

Based on “Leading Resonant Teams”,
by Daniel Goleman, in Leader to Leader, No. 25 Summer 2002
Teams

- The vehicle of choice in today's organizations
- Demonstrates the superiority of group decision making over that of even the ablest individual in the group
- One obvious exception to this rule: when a team is conflicted or dispirited, decision making is adversely effected
Emotions in teams

- Every group - every team - has a mood
- For e.g., in any team meeting, the emotional temperature in the room can be sensed immediately
- Teams can be upbeat or downbeat, optimistic or pessimistic, motivated or demotivated, alienated or involved
- All of those dimensions describe emotional realities
Team Performance

- Determined by how harmonious the team is, how well people get along.
- If people on the team feel that "nobody cares about me," or "they are really mad at that person over there", or "they can't stand the team leader", they will not contribute their best.
- They won't work well with other people and won't be seamless in their efforts.
- Will be lowered directly.
People do not leave their emotions at home when they go to work

Although many organizational cultures place a high value on intelligence devoid of emotion, our emotions are really more powerful than our intellect

Our emotions alert us to dangers and are crucial to our survival

When people are angry, anxious, alienated, or depressed, their work suffers

They can't think as clearly; can't take in information as fully, understand it as deeply, and respond as adaptively when they're upset
Upsetting Emotions

- Signals to pay attention to what's distressing and to do something about that
- If you are preoccupied, the net result is that your ability to effectively process information suffers
- When this happens in a team setting, it is even more dangerous and dysfunctional
Emotions are contagious

- If someone comes into a meeting upset or angry, and that emotion is not dealt with, it can quickly spread to everyone in the group.
- A person with a good sense of humor can quickly get a whole roomful of people laughing.
Emotional system of our brain

- Unlike any other biological system in the body - is designed to be regulated not just internally but externally, in our relationships with other people.
- The circulatory system is a closed loop.
- But emotions are an open loop system.
- Designed so that other people can help us manage our emotions better.
Team leadership

- Help everyone manage their emotions
- The leader to help us make sense of something that's confusing or disturbing, or to give us direction, to inspire us, to motivate us
- The leader's fundamental task is an emotional task
Team Leaders

- If they think "This isn't really part of my task; it doesn't matter how I act, just so long as people understand what I want," then it undermines their ability to lead.
- Determines the consensual emotions, the shared emotions.
- Must pay attention to the emotional reality of a team and take care of it.
Emotional Intelligence (EQ)

- There are four aspects of EQ: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management.
- The leader needs to help the team become adept in each of these aspects of EQ.
The Team Leader

- Establishes a set of ground rules for the way people work together, both by example in his/her own behavior and by commenting on the behavior of others and helping people do better.
- Help the team become more self-aware, which is the core aspect of EQ.
- Self-awareness is a prerequisite for the team's ability to manage its own emotions, to deal with issues rather than burying them.
Developing team self-awareness

- The leader establish positive norms so that the team, as a whole, has empathy, both internally - we pay attention to each other - and externally – and also pay attention to how the rest of the organization is regarding us;
- The team has political awareness as a group - know how to get what it needs from the organization to do the best; high-performing teams know how to access the resources in a larger organization;
- The team manages its collective relationships with the rest of an organization and are aware that they, as a team, have relationships - not individually but as a team.
Resonance

- Defined as the propagation of sound "by synchronous vibration"
Resonant Leaders

- Tune in to their own values, priorities, sense of meaning, and goals,
- Lead authentically from those, and
- Tune in to other people's sense of values, priority, meaning, and goals
- When they tune in to others, that helps them tune in to you
- Create a climate where you can articulate a shared mission that moves people
Dissonant Leaders

- Don't care how people feel
- Just want to get the job done, no matter what
- Pressure people
- Create fear as a motivator - which is itself a destructive emotion
- Do things that make people angry, and they act as though it didn't matter
- But it matters greatly, if you take two leaders - one resonant and one dissonant - the resonant leader will always do better than the dissonant one
Team resonance

- Releases energy in people, and it increases the amount of energy available to the team, which, in turn, puts people in a state where they can work at their best.
- The members “vibrate” together with positive emotional energy.
- When a team as a whole shows EQ, i.e., resonates, it will be a top-performing team, no matter what its performance criterion might be.
Using different leadership styles to create resonant teams
Leadership styles for resonant teams

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leadership Style</th>
<th>How it builds resonance</th>
<th>Impact on climate</th>
<th>When appropriate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visionary</strong></td>
<td>Moves people towards shared dreams</td>
<td>Most strongly positive</td>
<td>When change requires a new vision, or when a clear direction is needed</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Coaching</strong></td>
<td>Connects what a person wants with the team’s goals</td>
<td>Highly positive</td>
<td>To help a person contribute more effectively to the team</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Affiliative</strong></td>
<td>Creates harmony by connecting people to each other</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>To heal rifts in a team, motivate during stressful times, or strengthen connections</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Democratic</strong></td>
<td>Values people’s input and gets commitment through participation</td>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>To build buy-in or consensus, or to get valuable input from team members</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pacesetting</strong></td>
<td>Sets challenging and exciting goals</td>
<td>Frequently highly negative because poorly executed</td>
<td>To get high-quality results from a motivated and competent team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Commanding</strong></td>
<td>Soothes fears by giving clear direction in an emergency</td>
<td>Often highly negative because misused</td>
<td>In a crisis, to kick-start a turnaround</td>
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A visionary leader

- Articulates a shared vision and gives clear direction and helps people move toward a shared hope or dream
- The classic model of leadership
- Creates an immensely positive impact on the team's emotional climate
- Clearly articulates where the team is going but not how it will get there
The leader with a vision

- Sets people free to innovate, experiment, and take calculated risks
- Needs a well-developed sense of empathy
- Able to read people, to sense what they are feeling and if they resonate with the picture you are painting
- You cannot inspire people without understanding their perspectives, their hopes and dreams
The coaching style

- The least-used tool in the leader's toolkit
- Involves talking to someone, outside the team setting
- Having a one-on-one conversation, not about your shared task, not about the job but about the person
- For e.g., “Who are you?”; “I'd like to get to know you”; “I'd like to understand you”; “What do you want in your life?”; “What's your life like?”; “What do you want for your career?”; “What do you want from your job?”; “How can I help you get what you want, go where you want to go?”
Articulating the task in ways that make sense to that person, in terms of where they want to go, or to find a challenging task for that person.

Giving them a challenge that leads them in the direction where they want to be moving anyway.

Creates immense loyalty and immense commitment to the leader and the team.

Many managers are inept at using the coaching style.

Too often, they think they're coaching when they are actually micromanaging.

Good coaches ask themselves, "Is this about my issue or theirs?"
The affiliative style

- Creates harmony by getting people to connect with each other
- Create settings in which people can spend time together, get to know each other, and then bond together
- Focus on people and their feelings more than on tasks and goals and use praise lavishly
- Builds emotional capital among the team, so that the group can work together more harmoniously, even under pressure
- Team members are also more likely to be there for you when you really need them
- Focus on praise and making people feel good can allow conflicts to be swept under the rug and poor performance to be tolerated
- Should be complemented with another style, and used sparingly
The democratic leader

- A consensus builder, really listens to other people, takes their opinions into account in making a decision
- Not appropriate for a crisis situation, or when expert knowledge is required
- In situations where the path ahead is unclear, a leader can say in all honesty, "You know more about this than I do. What do you think I should do?"
- The ability to listen gets people on board and makes people feel that they matter
- It can be overused - endless team meetings, discussions that go on and on, never reaching any conclusion, except, perhaps to hold another team meeting
Pacesetting Style

- A dissonant style
- Most often used in technical fields
- Typically someone who, as an individual contributor, was superb, outstanding, a star, which led to the promotion to team leader
- If they do not have the EQ abilities of leadership, the Peter Principle comes into effect, i.e., they have been promoted to their level of incompetence
- They come into those positions unprepared
- Leads by example (Do it like I do!) and becomes very impatient when people can't meet the standard
- Give only negative feedback - make people feel bad, lowers the emotional climate instead of raising it
Pacesetting

- Works well if you are leading a highly motivated, highly competent team, where you are able to select team members, and they are all like you.
- Unfortunately, most teams are not like that.
- People have a range of talents and a spectrum of abilities and leaders who don't understand that will become impatient or dissonant.
The Commanding Style

- The old “command-and-control” military model
- "Do it because I say so, I'm the boss" - is fine in the battlefield, but not always appropriate in team settings
- "This emergency is so important that I don't really care how you feel right now - it doesn't matter."
- Ignores the emotional reality; no empathy; couldn't care less; and typically bark orders
- Almost a dinosaur now, but there are still too many people like them
- Create a negative emotional reality
Best Team Leaders

- Adept at four or more styles, and which four may differ
- People have different styles of leading
- But leaders who have a full repertoire have the best success
“Dispersed leadership"

- If you have a harmonious team, the team leads itself.
- If the ostensible leader isn't doing it right, anyone on the team can step forward and become the leader by being a democratic leader, saying, "Maybe this is a good time to hear what other people have to say", or even help coach each other.
- Leadership styles are not necessarily displayed only by the ostensible leader.
- Leadership is always dispersed to some extent.
Emotional Capital

- The sum total of positive feeling that a leader has built up
- You can draw against it when you really need it, and you build it every chance you get
- You build it through the **resonant** leadership styles
Leaders

- Without emotional capital, will find when there's a crisis or an emergency, that nobody's behind them.
- People desert you when the chips are down, but if you have built the capital, they will stand by you.
- That's when resonance on a team makes all the difference.