



## Emotional Quotient A bundle of key competencies

The capacity to understand and manage your emotions can produce better collaboration among employees, a happier workplace, and other practical benefits (MichaelPage, 2018). This capacity is at the core of “emotional intelligence” or emotional quotient (EQ), a concept described and popularised by Daniel Goleman in his 1995 book.

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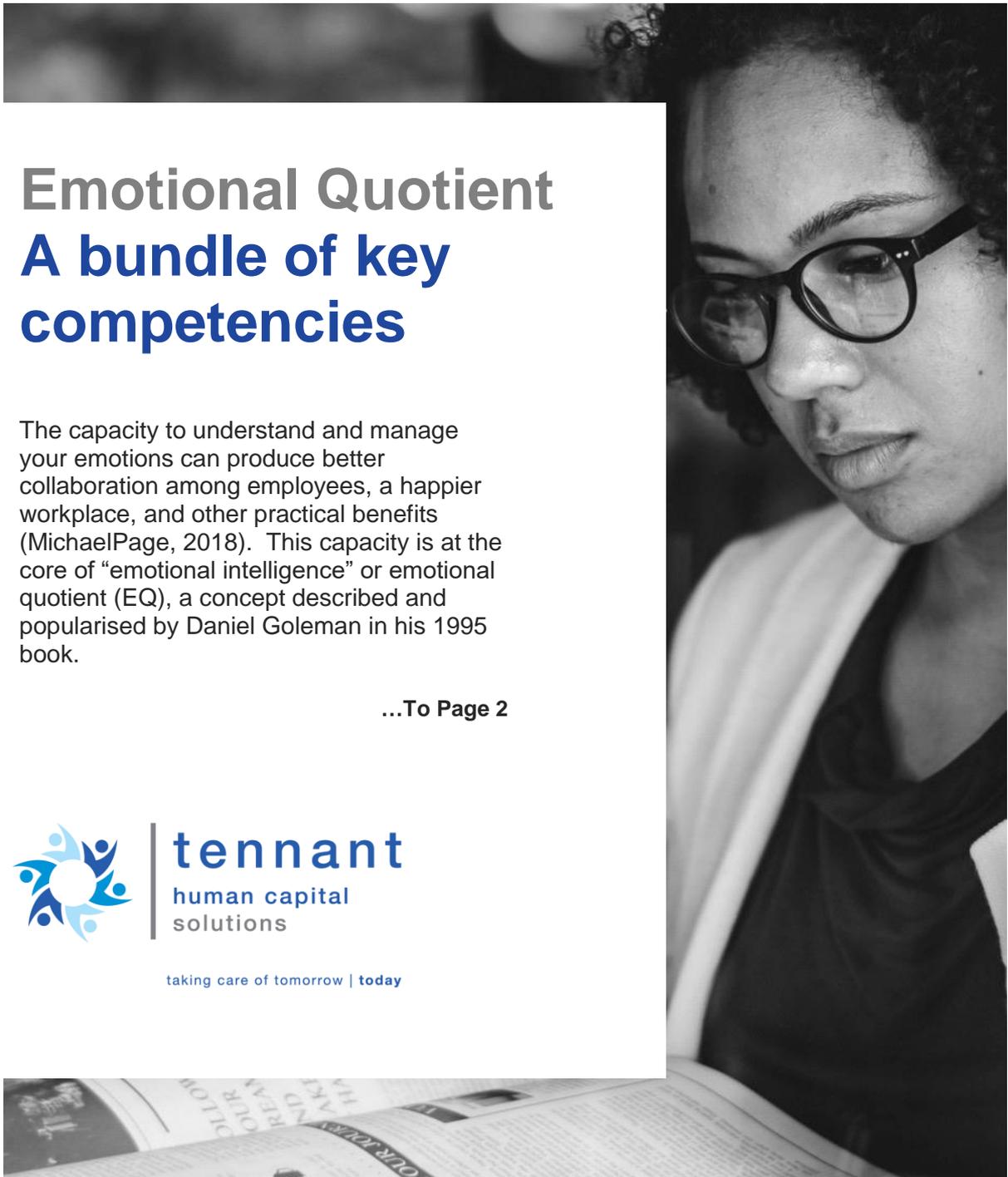
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## Emotional Quotient – A bundle of key competencies

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If one considers that high EQ boosts career success, leadership talent, health, relationship satisfaction, humour, and happiness as well as being an effective counter to workplace stress, the question whether one can develop EQ in employees is important. Studies have shown that EQ is a quality which is stable over time. It is influenced by our early childhood experiences and even genetics. That does not mean EQ cannot be changed, but, realistically, long-term improvements will require a great deal of dedication and guidance (Chamorro-Premuzic, 2013).

Goleman identified the following abilities as representative of EQ:

- to recognise own emotions
- to relate to others' emotions
- to actively listen to others
- to actively participate in interpersonal communication and understand the nonverbal cues of behaviour
- to control one's thoughts and feelings
- to effectively manage emotions and express them in a socially acceptable way
- to receive criticisms positively and benefit from them
- to forgive, forget, and move on rationally

(Chowdhury, 2019)

This means that an employer should incorporate high EQ into its job specifications and recruit high-EQ candidates rather than hire low-EQ employees and try to improve their EQ through training.

An employer may decide to implement an employee EQ development programme, to enhance constituent competencies. A study of university students showed that online training, classroom training, and coaching are all effective development options. This allows employers to use the training modality which best matches the resources and possibilities available. (Gilar-Corbi *et al*, 2018)

Coaching as an EQ development intervention aims to enhance social, interpersonal, or "soft skills". According to Chamorro-Premuzic (2018) the success of coaching depends on the following variables:

- **Quality of the coaching programme and coach**

Good coaching programmes can produce a 25% (or higher) improvement in the targeted dimension of EQ. The benefits of EQ-coaching are higher levels of happiness, mental and physical health, improved social and personal relationships, and decrease levels of cortisol (the stress hormone). A talented coach using methods such as cognitive-behavioural therapy and psychological flexibility enhancement will get optimal results.

- **Accurate feedback**

People are not good at assessing their own EQ and are generally unaware of how others see them. An EQ coaching programme will be more likely to be successful if the programme participants are given accurate feedback through processes such as personality tests or 360-degree feedback on their actual (and not self-perceived) strengths and weaknesses.



- **Coachability**

Some people are more coachable than others. Ironically, it is the high EQ employees who are more likely to benefit from coaching than lower EQ employees. A study showed that evaluating clients' coachability levels at the start of the sessions can increase the effectiveness of coaching.

Fostering a work environment of emotionally intelligent employees, through specifying high EQ as an employment criterion and through EQ development programmes is a worthy people-goal for employers to pursue. Employees who can perceive, manage, and express emotions effectively in the workplace will contribute to improving people interactions and engagement which in turn will grow organisational success.

## Wellness

### Sleep, a critical factor in work performance

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*“You're not healthy, unless your sleep is healthy.”*

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Dr William Dement

A lack of sleep affects an employee's capacity to do a good job. It also has a significant impact on the health of an employee. That is why employers should be concerned about this subject and take steps to ensure that they are not contributing to this widespread societal challenge.

Many people are not getting enough sleep. Working long hours, 'always on' phone and computer communication, active social lives, and hours spent glued to social media and other screen-based activities are contributory factors. Sleep

loss makes it difficult to learn, pay attention, memorise information and work effectively. This may manifest in low work quality.



Nap Pods at work – antidote for sleep deprivation?

Research shows that sleep deprivation affects the body (Lewis, 2016):

- Just one all-nighter alters your immune system's functioning, like the way stress does. One night of sleep deprivation significantly reduces the peak concentration of your white blood cells' diurnal rhythm, making you more vulnerable to illness and infection.
- A single night of sleep deprivation results in increased blood pressure. Even a half-night of sleep loss can have the same effect for individuals who are hypertensive or pre-hypertensive.
- Your body experiences many unique endocrine changes during sleep related to growth and thermo-regulation. Curtailing sleep disrupts these. Satiety hormones, like leptin and ghrelin, are also altered, which may result in increased hunger and weight gain.
- One week of mild sleep restriction (six hours per night—a typical schedule for many people) causes increased secretion of pro-inflammatory cytokines, which can contribute to cardiovascular and neurocognitive dysfunction. (Recovery sleep on the weekends lowers these inflammation levels.)
- One week of six hours per night is associated with a change in the transcription of over 700 genes,



many of which are implicated in the body's circadian rhythms, oxidative stress, and metabolism.

What does sleep deprivation do to your brain?

- One night of total sleep deprivation reduces the coordination and speed of our ability to eye-track, like the effect of alcohol/drug intoxication.
- The same study that found that following one week's modest sleep restriction, three nights of recovery sleep (10 hours per night in bed) was not enough to reverse deficits in attention and reaction time.
- Many studies have concluded that chronic sleep loss is associated with deficits in both short- and long-term memory, memory formation, decision-making, and attention / vigilance.

A commitment to employee wellness will be incomplete if an employer expects employees to work after hours to the extent that doing so infringes on a good night's sleep. Lewis argues that a good sleeping habit is the single best thing a person can do to perform and feel his or her best every day (2016).

## Annual leave: Wellness & productivity

According to the International Labour Organisation, the aim of annual vacation leave is to allow workers to recover from the mental and physical strain of work and to provide time away from the workplace. Annual leave is important for workers' physical and mental well-being. If structured properly, the granting and taking of annual leave have a positive impact on occupational health and safety as well as improve productivity in the workplace. (ILO, 2015)

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*“The opportunity to step away from everything and take a break is something that shouldn't be squandered.”*

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Harper Reed

In South Africa, the statutory annual leave entitlement is at least twenty-one consecutive days (three weeks) leave in respect of each year of employment. An employee is entitled to consecutive days and can insist on a three-week period of unbroken leave each year. Annual leave must be granted within six months after the end of each annual leave cycle. The timing of leave should be agreed upon between the employer and employee. If no agreement can be reached, the employer is entitled to decide when leave must be taken. An employee may not take annual leave during any other period of paid leave in terms of the BCEA, such as sick leave, or during any period of notice of termination.

The question of whether employees can forfeit leave days not taken which are in excess of the statutory entitlement is often the subject of disputes. (Annual leave granted in addition to the statutory annual leave entitlement is not regulated by statute, and employers may accordingly prescribe the terms and conditions governing such leave.) After conflicting Labour Court judgments, a third judgment brought clarity.

First, in *Jardine v Tongaat-Hulett Sugar Limited (2003) 24 ILJ 1147 (LC)* The Labour Court found that statutory annual leave not taken is never forfeited and may be carried over to subsequent annual leave cycles. Then, in *Jooste v Kohler Packaging Limited (2004) 25 ILJ 121 (LC)*, the Labour Court took a different view and found that statutory annual leave not taken by the sixth month following the annual leave cycle in which it accrued is forfeited. Finally, in *Ludick v Rural Maintenance (Pty) Limited [2014] 2 BLLR 178 (LC)*, after



considering the two conflicting decisions, the Labour Court decided that claims for accrued annual leave pay upon termination are limited to annual leave not taken in the current annual leave cycle and the annual leave cycle immediately prior to the current annual leave cycle. In instances where an employer prevents employees from taking leave due, the recourse for employees earning below the prescribed earnings threshold (currently around R205k a year) would be to seek enforcement through the Department of Labour inspectorate, while those earning in excess of the threshold may seek specific performance through the Labour Court to force the employer to grant them their leave. (Bowmans, 2014)

Vacation Leave Around the World	
Brazil:	30 days
Spain:	≥ 30 calendar days
United Kingdom:	28 days (5.6 weeks)
Denmark:	25 days
Sweden:	25 days
France:	5 weeks
Australia:	4 weeks paid
New Zealand:	4 weeks paid
South Africa:	21 consecutive days (3wks)
Argentina:	14 – 35 days based on service
Canada:	2 weeks, to 3 weeks after 6yrs
Pakistan:	14 days
Japan:	10 – 20 days based on experience
Singapore:	7 – 14 days
US:	no legal minimum, employer decides

(Greenwood, 2018)

Sometimes the question arises whether employees will benefit most by taking the full annual leave entitlement in one consolidated break (as statutorily permitted) or break it up. Clinical Psychologist, Dr Colinda Linde says, regular mini breaks tend to work better as there is a periodic opportunity to recharge and reset (Freeman, 2017).

Employers should include annual leave structuring in the mix of benefits considered. In South Africa, Investec SA an asset manager with 10'000+ employees, is at the forefront of adopting

a leave model pioneered by Netflix. From September 2019, - provided they meet their deadlines - Investec staff members will have the option to move onto a new leave regime that places no limits on the number of days taken. Staff must take at least 10 days in each leave cycle and, the number of days' leave staff decide to take won't affect their salaries. The organisation's head of HR, Lee-Anne Gatter says that Investec wants a 'very adult' relationship with employees. Their culture embraces high levels of freedom and exceptional trust. (Whitfield, 2019)

Employers with a more conventional approach should actively manage employees' leave taking to ensure that employees regularly have a break from work as required by law and in the best interests of employees' wellbeing. The annual leave programme must be integrated with shorter duration breaks from work including weekly rests, daily rests and workday breaks for optimal impact.

## Misconduct

### Remorse mitigates

"This brings me to remorse. It would in my view be difficult for an employer to re-employ an employee who has shown no remorse. Acknowledgement of wrongdoing is the first step towards rehabilitation. In the absence of a recommitment to the employer's workplace values, an employee cannot hope to re-establish the trust which he himself has broken. Where, as in this case, an employee, over and above having committed an act of dishonesty, falsely denies having done so, an employer would, particularly where a high degree of trust is reposed in an employee, be legitimately entitled to say to itself that the risk of continuing to employ the offender is unacceptably great." Zondo AJP (at the time) Labour Appeal Court



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- Peter Fisher is the writer of these HR notes. His opinions expressed in the notes do not necessarily reflect the views of Tennant Human Capital Solutions (Pty) Ltd or other companies within the Tennant Group.

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11. De Beers Consolidated Mines (Pty) Ltd v Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration and Others [2000] 9 BLLR 995 (LAC) at para [25]

#### Picture

12. Nap pods Available at: <https://www.decoist.com/nap-pods-office/> (Accessed 23 June 2019)





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<b>4. Learning &amp; development</b>	Develop and facilitate training in industrial relations, supervisory and management skills, performance management, negotiation, employment equity.
<b>5. Fair dismissal</b>	Execute all aspects of the disciplinary process including investigation, charge formulation, initiation, chairing.

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**the most  
valuable of all  
capital is that  
which is  
invested in  
human beings**

- Alfred Marshall