

Organizational intelligence

The first intelligence studied was cognitive intelligence. Next came emotional intelligence research that reported that IQ represents only 20 percent of the equation for predicting a person's potential; the other 80 percent is based on emotional intelligence.

Daniel Goleman, author of the landmark book *Emotional Intelligence*, then moved on to author another book on the role of social intelligence. Educator Howard Gardner's seminal work around multiple intelligences impacted the way educators evaluated a learner's capacity to learn. Interestingly, all of the above intelligences have one common element: they identify behaviours and skills for predicting future capacity and success.

This article introduces another intelligence that will help predict how effectively people will work together to assist an organization to achieve its full potential. I call this organizational intelligence. Social psychology teaches that social interactions influence how people think and feel. Thus the perception of how people think and feel about an organization impacts how they behave and how that impacts organizational success.

How much organizational intelligence a company has depends on how effective its leaders are at influencing and facilitating the 15 core elements listed below. These will ultimately define the organization's level of organizational intelligence.

- **Culture** – what people really believe to be true about the organization.
- **Commitment** – the accepted work ethic and level of commitment demonstrated.
- **Co-operation** – how people work together as teams to achieve agreed upon organizational goals.
- **Caring** – how people support and protect each other's interests, as well as the organization's.
- **Consistency** – the level of commitment and pride to do quality work.
- **Career path** – the level of job satisfaction and career opportunities perceived.
- **Controls** – the degree of integrity to follow processes, protocols, standards, ethics and laws.
- **Compensation** – how satisfied and competitive people think their pay and benefits are.
- **Congratulations** – how people perceive they are acknowledged and recognized.
- **Change** – how flexible people are to new ways and ideas for doing business.
- **Conflict** – how effective people are at resolving conflict and solving problems collaboratively.
- **Captain** – how positive and trusting people are in their leadership.
- **Communication** – how effective people are at communicating both orally and written.
- **Carrying through** – how convinced people believe leadership does what it says.
- **Customer service** – how effective the organization is at providing excellent customer service, both internally and externally.

One metaphor to help leaders have a frame of reference as to how to manage the 15 core elements of organizational intelligence is to think of a stereo equalizer and each core element is a button that has its own setting.

Three simple steps to facilitate the development of organizational intelligence: 1) Objectively assess and evaluate each core element; 2) If necessary, make a plan and take action to improve core elements that need attention; 3) Regularly monitor, measure and adjust each



core element. Only through a continuous process will an organization develop its organizational intelligence to its fullest potential.

In the end, development of organizational intelligence requires senior leaders who are committed to the above process of facilitating and growing it. A company will achieve its fullest potential only when the entire workforce is heading in the same direction in regard to thinking and feeling, as these directly influence employee daily behaviours that synergistically define the organization's ultimate success or failure.

