

# Media Selling, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition

By Charles Warner

## Chapter 6 – Emotional Intelligence

When I returned from the final sales call in 1957 on Parrott’s Florist as described at the beginning of Chapter 2, my general sales manager asked, “How did it go? Did you close him?”

“No. He said he didn’t get any results,” I replied sheepishly.

“That’s a common objection,” replied my sales manager. “You should have asked him a bunch of questions that led him to the answer you wanted him to give you and then sold him sizzle!”

“Sizzle?”

“Yeah, you know, ‘sell the sizzle, not the steak!’” My sales manager always spoke in exclamation points. It was his way of showing that he was enthusiastic.

“Enthusiasm, enthusiasm! Enthusiasm is what gets orders! Always sell the sizzle!” And with that, he reached back to his small bookshelf, took out a book, and handed it to me. “Read this!”, said my sales manager, “it’s by Elmer Wheeler and it’s called *Sizzlemanship!* It’s the greatest book ever written about selling! Memorize it!”

### Old-Fashioned Models of Selling

In 1957, books on selling, such as *Sizzlemanship!*, Frank Bettger’s *How I Raised Myself from Failure to Success in Selling*, and Og Mandino’s ode of humility, *The Greatest Salesman in the World*, preached a model of selling that was developed in 1920s, 1930s, and 1940s, as described in Chapter 1. Books on selling urged the use of techniques and tricks that were relatively successful for products that could be sold in one encounter, that were often low-cost, and for which people could be badgered into buying, often just to get rid of the salesperson.

These outmoded selling models used a simple mnemonic to guide salespeople, AIDA, which stood for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. The old-time practitioners urged outrageous, often silly, techniques for getting a prospect’s attention. They advocated manipulative techniques such as “sizzlemanship” to get interest and create desire (usually by overselling and over-promising). And they advocated a number of techniques that pressured prospects to act immediately, allowing the salesperson to slam down a one-time sale. While there is nothing wrong with the AIDA mnemonic, these old-fashioned, manipulative, hard-sell techniques, which include the “tell and sell” model, are largely responsible for the bad reputations that salespeople are often saddled with today.

### Old Models Don’t Work Today

Carl Zaiss and Thomas Gordon point out in their excellent book, *Sales Effectiveness Training*, that old selling models do not work in today’s highly competitive, interactive, and sophisticated business environment. This is due to increased competition, the increased need for stronger customer loyalty and long-term relationships, the increased cost of developing new business, and the current trend in business toward solutions selling.

Rather than being seen as the manipulators and hard closers of the past, salespeople want to be perceived as trusted and respected partners who get results for their customers. Unhappy with the pressure and grind of one-shot sales, today's media salespeople prefer long-term relationships.

While many experts on selling have helped shift the focus from the old-fashioned, hard-sell approach to a gentler needs-based and consultative approach, four men stand out in the field. They are Larry Wilson with his Counselor Selling Program and training seminars and books, Mack Hanna with his Consultative Selling Program, Tony Allesandro with his book *Non-Manipulative Selling*, and Neil Rackham with his book, *SPIN Selling*. While the consultative selling approach has now evolved into a solutions-selling approach, I still recommend reading the Allesandro and Rackham books.

## **Solution Selling as the Current Model**

Buyers and customers of the media are hypersensitive to the tricks and manipulations of the past. With complex alternatives and problems, buyers need *established and ongoing relationships based on mutual trust*. This is the first step for successful solutions selling and requires *emotional intelligence*.

## **Emotional Intelligence**

The term, emotional intelligence, was popularized by Daniel Goleman, a Harvard-educated PhD in psychology, in his best seller, *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*, which expanded on the work of the world-renowned educational psychologist, Howard Gardner, Robert Sternberg and others.

Gardner, Sternberg and others questioned accepted definitions of intelligence and began to look beyond a number or IQ (intelligence quotient). After exploring the topic thoroughly, they realized that what IQ tests measured was only a person's ability to take an IQ test and was not the enormously complex construct that had been referred to in the past as "intelligence."

While Howard Gardner broadly defined intelligence as "the ability to solve problems or to create products that are valued within one or more cultural settings," in his influential book, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, he identified seven facets of intelligence. These are *linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal*. In his book, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, he added three more facets of intelligence: *naturalist, spiritual, and existential*.

Daniel Goleman concentrated his research on the importance of the personal intelligences, which he labeled *emotional intelligence*. Beginning in *Emotional Intelligence*, published in 1995, and in three subsequent books, *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, *Primal Leadership: Realizing the Power of Emotional Intelligence*, and *Social Intelligence* Goleman has continued to refine and simplify his construct of emotional intelligence (EI) and social intelligence. In *Working With Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman defined *emotional intelligence* as the "capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships."<sup>1</sup> His book, *Primal Leadership*, lays out an expanded definition that includes four dimensions of EI (See Exhibit 6.1)

## Exhibit 6.1

### Emotional Intelligence Domains and Associated Competencies

**Personal Competence:** These capabilities determine how we manage ourselves.

#### **Self-Awareness**

- *Emotional self-awareness:* Reading one's own emotions and recognizing their impact; using "gut sense" to guide decisions.
- *Accurate self-assessment:* Knowing one's strengths and limits.
- *Self-confidence:* A sound sense of one's self-worth and capabilities.

#### **Self-Management**

- *Emotional self-control:* Keeping disruptive emotions and impulses under control.
- *Transparency:* Displaying honesty and integrity; trustworthiness.
- *Adaptability:* Flexibility in adapting to changing situations or overcoming obstacles.
- *Achievement:* The drive to improve performance to meet inner standards of excellence.
- *Initiative:* Readiness to act and seize opportunity.
- *Optimism:* Seeing the upside in events.

**Social Competence:** These capabilities determine how we manage relationships.

#### **Social Awareness**

- *Empathy:* Sensing others' emotions, understanding their perspective, and taking an active interest in their concerns.
- *Organizational Awareness:* Reading the currents, decision networks, and politics at the organizational level.
- *Service:* Recognizing and meeting...client or customer needs.

#### **Relationship Management**

- *Inspirational leadership:* Guiding and motivating with a compelling vision (for media salespeople this would translate into creating value with an inspiring vision for your medium and your media outlet).
- *Influence:* Wielding a range of tactics of persuasion.
- *Developing others:* Bolstering others' ability through feedback and guidance.
- *Change catalyst:* Initiating, managing, and leading a new direction.
- *Conflict management:* Resolving disagreements.
- *Teamwork and collaboration:* Cooperation and team building.

Source: Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee. 2002. *Primal Leadership*. Harvard Business School Press. Used with permission.

### **How Important Is Emotional Intelligence in Selling?**

Goleman makes the case that, contrary to previously held theories, intelligence or IQ might not be an accurate predictor of life success. "At best IQ contributes about 20 percent to the factors that determine life success, which leaves 80 percent to other forces. As one observer notes, 'The vast majority of one's ultimate niche in society is determined by non-IQ factors, ranging from social class to luck.'"<sup>ii</sup> A study of Harvard graduates in the fields of law, medicine, teaching, and business found that scores on entrance exams, a surrogate for IQ, had zero or negative correlation with eventual career success.

A study initiated in 1968 by the Stanford Graduate School of Business reinforced the importance of EI for success in business. It conducted in-depth interviews with the members of its graduating class, which examined the students' academic records and grades, their extra-curricular and social activities, and their reputation among their fellow students. The school kept track of the graduates' careers and levels of success with re-interviews in 1978 and in 1988. When the school published the findings of its 20-year study in 1988, it concluded that the only two things that the most successful graduates (top five percent in title, position, money, for example) had in common was that all of the most successful graduates were in the bottom half of their class in grades and all of them were popular. In other words, relationship skills were more important for success than grades.

A major element of EI and success is optimism. A study of salesmen at Met Life by Martin Seligman revealed that "Being able to take a rejection with grace is essential in sales of all kinds, especially with a product like insurance, where the ratio of nos to yeses can be so discouragingly high. For this reason, about three quarters of insurance salesmen quit in their first three years. Seligman found that new salesmen who were by nature optimists sold 37 percent more insurance in their first two years on the job than did pessimists. And during the first year the pessimists quit at twice the rate of the optimists."<sup>iii</sup>

Media salespeople sell an intangible product similar to what insurance salespeople sell, but media salespeople do not have quite the same rejection rate, which makes media selling more desirable and satisfying. However, the above research reinforces the importance of optimism in selling. Optimism is defined in terms of how people explain to themselves their own successes and failures. People who are optimistic believe failures are the result of something that can be changed so that they can be successful the next time around. Pessimists take personal blame for failures, blaming them on some inherent characteristic they are helpless to change.<sup>iv</sup> Pessimists also often blame their parents or their bosses or even the weather for their failures. Their attitude is that they expect failure; therefore, they create failures and a disastrous future. On the other hand, optimists expect success, and therefore create a successful future.

### **Do I Have Emotional Intelligence?**

Socrates said that all knowledge begins with, "Know thyself." Self-knowledge is the keystone of EI. It is the awareness of one's feelings as they occur. Self-awareness is a non-reactive, nonjudgmental attention to one's inner states and feelings. To find out if you have emotional intelligence you have to ask yourself the following questions and answer them honestly.

1. Do I motivate myself to stick doggedly to tasks and practice or am I too easily distracted?
2. Am I critical, condescending, and inhibited or am I socially poised and cheerful?
3. Am I unexpressive and detached or am I outgoing and easily committed to people and causes?
4. Am I prudish, uptight, and uneasy with new experiences?
5. Do I tend to be anxious and handle stress poorly or am I comfortable with myself and how well do I handle stress?

(For the following questions, see Exhibit 6.1.)

6. How self-aware am I and how honestly am I able to assess my own strengths and weaknesses?
7. How is my emotional self-control and how well do I control my impulses?
8. How transparent am I? In other words, can people tell I am honest and believe I am trustworthy, that I am not hiding things?
9. Am I flexible and do I adapt easily to change or in overcoming obstacles?
10. Do I have a drive to achieve and to improve my performance to meet my inner standards of excellence?
11. Am I ready to grab the initiative, to act, and to seize opportunities as they present themselves?
12. Am I generally optimistic and do I see the upside in events?
13. How well do I sense others' emotions, understand their point of view, and take an active interest in their concerns?
14. How well do I read the currents, decision networks, and politics in my organization?
15. How good am I at recognizing and satisfying my customers' needs?
16. How good am I at creating value by communicating an inspiring vision for my medium and my product?
17. How persuasive am I?
18. Am I a catalyst for change in my organization?
19. How good am I at confronting problems, conflicts, and disagreements and resolving them?
20. How good am I at cultivating and maintaining a web of relationships?
21. How cooperative am I and how good a team member am I?

Hopefully your answers to the above questions placed you more than half-way toward the side of possessing EI, which means that you know you have an opportunity for improvement. This is a positive frame for the concept of deficiency and your first lesson in the use of framing.

People are sometimes tempted to use personality tests to determine their EI, but most of these tests, developed in the 1960s and 1970s, do not have much value in predicting success, uncovering motivation, and understanding yourself and others. Instead, they attempt to pigeonhole people into types such as “feeling” or “thinking” or expressive.” Most psychological tests are not designed to find EI. Psychological tests are often used by companies to screen job applicants, are designed to diagnose psychological disorders, and are poor predictors of motivation and how people will manage relationships.

## Can I Learn Emotional Intelligence?

Goleman feels that emotional intelligence can be learned. In *Working With Emotional Intelligence* he writes: “Unlike IQ, which changes little after our teens years, emotional intelligence seems to be largely learned, and it continues to develop as we go through life and learn from our experiences – our competence in it can keep growing. In fact, studies that have tracked people’s level of emotional intelligence through the years show that people get better and better in these capabilities as they grow more adept at handling their own emotions and impulses, at motivating themselves, and at honing their empathy and social adroitness. There is an old-fashioned word for this growth in emotional intelligence: *maturity*.”<sup>v</sup>

Some of the things you can do to improve your EI are:

1. Work on controlling your impulses – “there is no psychological skill more fundamental than resisting impulses.”<sup>vi</sup>
2. Work on developing a positive, optimistic, hopeful outlook and a belief that you are the master over the events in your life and can meet the challenges as they come up, as you learned in the previous chapter.
3. Work on improving your communication and listening skills. Chapter 7 covers more about how to acquire and practice these vital skills.

## How Can I Apply Emotional Intelligence to Selling Media?

Now that you have learned about emotional intelligence is and how EI can help you improve your relationships, the next step is to relate EI to selling. Using the three Golden Rules of Selling is the optimum way to apply EI to selling.

**Rule 1: Do unto others as they would have others do unto them.** Unlike the Bible’s Golden Rule, this does not make the assumption others like the same things that you like. Modern psychology and EI indicate that it is better to recognize people’s diversity and differences and to value their needs, wants, desires, or preferences. Empathy requires that you find out how others feel, what they like, what they want and then base your response to them according to how they want to be treated.

**Rule 2: People like and trust people exactly like themselves.** This rule reinforces the notion that people are most comfortable with other people who are similar, a fact we observe everyday as people gather in groups and cliques.

**Rule 3: People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.** This rule reminds us that feeling and communicating a sense of caring for another person comes first in any relationship. In other words, you put another’s concerns before your own.

These rules should be applied in the following steps:

**Step 1:** Just before sales conversations or meetings, ask yourself how you feel at that moment and then pause, *exhale*, and proceed. It is important to exhale because when we are nervous or tense, we tend to hold our breath, which tightens us up and makes fluid movement difficult. Exhaling is a sports training technique in which athletes release tension and improve performance. Taking time to recognize your feelings, to relax, and to exhale will allow you to manage your emotions consciously, and to control and use your emotions and your tensions to help you.

**Step 2:** Sense the mood and the emotional climate of the person or group you are meeting with. Beginning salespeople are usually nervous and anxious when they meet with

customers, particularly the first time, and are unaware that customers are probably as nervous, anxious, and uncomfortable as they are. Effective leaders, politicians, and entertainers develop a knack for sensing the mood of a crowd or audience and playing to it. Salespeople must develop similar radar.

**Step 3:** Set the mood, the emotional tone and climate, for the meeting. Emotion is contagious, so by taking charge and energetically exuding a sense of confidence and enthusiasm (yes, “enthusiasm!” like my first sales manager often repeated) you infect the others with your contagious enthusiasm and positive vibes. Enthusiasm does not have to be the loud, excited, highly demonstrated type we often associate with back-slapping, broad-grinning used-car salesmen, but honest enthusiasm can come through in a restrained, calm, confident way that is in harmony with the emotional state of the other person or people in a meeting.

As Goleman points out in *Emotional Intelligence*, “We transmit and catch moods from each other in what amounts to a subterranean economy of the psyche in which encounters are toxic, some nourishing. This emotional exchange is typically at a subtle, almost imperceptible level; the way a salesperson says “thank you” can leave us feeling ignored, resented, or genuinely welcomed and appreciated. We catch feelings from one another as though they were some kind of social virus.”<sup>vii</sup> Make sure the viruses you transmit are positive, caring ones.

**Step 4:** Let the person or people you are meeting with know that you care. The best way to accomplish this step in a first meeting with a person is to begin by being very open about yourself. The goal is to reach out with personal details about yourself to enable the other person to get to know you. At that point you can ask the question, “How about you?” to learn more about the other person. People will normally reciprocate with openness and talk about themselves, their families, their hobbies, and interests. As they are talking, you must search for common interests and associations, such as being married, having children, or loving sports. This is an application of Golden Rule of Selling, people like and trust people exactly like themselves, and your job is to talk about and emphasize those things in each of your personal lives that are similar. By showing a genuine sense of caring about their personal interests, they will know that you care. After the meeting, write down all the personal details for future reference.

Be prepared to encounter different responses from men and women, for as Goleman writes, men generally “... take pride in a lone, tough-minded independence and autonomy...” and women generally “... see themselves as part of a web of connectedness.”<sup>viii</sup> These gender differences are pointed out to encourage you to be aware of your own tendencies and to know what you might expect in an initial encounter with someone to be more like them and to build rapport. You can and probably should change these gender generalizations and initial stereotypes once you have had the opportunity to get to know someone better.

Also, when meeting with a group of people for the first time, it pays large dividends to research their personal backgrounds and interests prior to your meeting.

**Step 5:** Listen with “emotional synchrony,” as Goleman calls it. “The degree of emotional rapport people feel in an encounter is mirrored by how tightly concentrated their physical movements are as they talk... One person nods just as the other makes a point, both shift chairs at the same moment, or one leans forward as the other leans back.”<sup>ix</sup> This type of synchrony is a major way to transmit a “social virus” or emotional state or mood.

It is also makes you more similar to the other person in the conversation, gets you closer, and makes them feel that you care.

Having learned about the importance of emotional intelligence in building relationships in this chapter, in the next chapter you will learn how to put your EI knowledge to work in communicating with, listening carefully to, and understanding what makes people tick.

### **Test Yourself**

1. Why don't old-fashioned sales techniques work in today's media selling environment?
2. What is emotional intelligence?
3. Why is EI more important for success in business and other fields than IQ?
4. What are the four major elements of EI?
5. Why is optimism important in selling?
6. What are the three EI rules of selling?
7. What are the five steps in applying the EI rules?

### **Project**

Select a week in your life (next week might be good) in which you commit yourself to taking notes on encounters you have with people during the week whose job it is to serve you and be pleasant: waiters in restaurants or retail salespeople, for example. Take notes in two columns. In the first column, note the type of or lack of emotional intelligence you observe in each of the service people you encounter. Did the person try to connect with you, did the person cause you to leave the encounter feeling put off, angry, dissatisfied, happy, or pleased? In the second column, make notes on your feelings and your ability to control your emotions in reaction to those encounters. You might copy into your notebook the EI elements in Exhibit 6.1 and use it as a guide. At the end of the week, look over your notes and see if you picked out those people who displayed EI and how they were different from those who did not display EI and if you were able to recognize your emotions.

### **Resources**

[www.eqatwork.com](http://www.eqatwork.com) (EQ at Work website—Emotional Intelligence training and certification)

[www.eiconsortium.org](http://www.eiconsortium.org) (The Consortium on Emotional Intelligence in Organizations at Rutgers University)

### **References**

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## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> Daniel Goleman. 1998. *Working With Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books. p. 317
- <sup>ii</sup> Ibid. p. 34
- <sup>iii</sup> Ibid. p. 89
- <sup>iv</sup> Ibid. p. 88
- <sup>v</sup> Ibid. p. 7
- <sup>vi</sup> Daniel Goleman. 1995. *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Bantam Books. p. 79
- <sup>vii</sup> Ibid. p. 114
- <sup>viii</sup> Ibid. p. 139
- <sup>ix</sup> Ibid. p. 116