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## Why Employee Emotional Intelligence is Just as Important as IQ to Your Organization

By: The McCalmon Group, Inc.

A CareerBuilder survey of 2,662 human resource professionals and hiring managers reveals that Emotional Intelligence, or EI, is critical for hiring and career advancement.

EI is the self-perceived ability to identify, assess and control emotions to more effectively manage one-on-one relationships as well as group dynamics.

The CareerBuilder survey illustrates the greater emphasis employers are placing on emotional intelligence today. In particular:

- Fifty-nine percent of employers would not hire someone who has a high IQ but low EI.
- Seventy-five percent of employers said they are more likely to promote a worker with high EI.

The competitive job market allows employers to assess candidates based on intangible qualities in addition to technical competency and intelligence. They claim employees with high EI are more likely to stay calm under pressure, know how to resolve conflict, are empathetic, lead by example and make more thoughtful business decisions. "Seventy-one Percent of Employers Say They Value Emotional Intelligence Over IQ, According to CareerBuilder Survey," [www.prnewsire.com](http://www.prnewsire.com) (Aug 18, 2011).

Have you ever wondered why that brilliant friend you graduated from high school with never fulfilled his or her potential? One reason could be low EI.

Delving deeper into the survey, respondents were asked what specific behaviors employees with high EI exhibited in the workplace. Responses included that employees with high EI admitted to mistakes and learned from them, kept discussions from getting emotional even through tough issues and possessed above-average listening skills. People with high EI also took criticism well and showed grace under pressure.

New York Times writer, Daniel Goleman, released his book *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* in 1996 followed by *Working with Emotional Intelligence* in 1998. After Goleman's books, business leaders and top-performers were no longer defined by their high IQs or job skills alone, but also by their EI.

The single most important revelation from the CareerBuilder survey discussed in the source article is just how popular the concept of emotional intelligence is today, especially among hiring professionals and employers.

According to Adele B. Lynn, author of *The EQ Interview: Finding Employees with High Emotional Intelligence*, what are needed in the workplace are not necessarily more interviews, but better interviews that assess or measure a candidate's emotional intelligence.

We could not agree more and add that high EI lowers your risk to liability from workplace wrongdoing. Management personnel with high EI are more likely to address workplace wrongdoing in a proper legal manner versus offering a risky emotional response that often leads to litigation.

For example, a manager with a high EI accused of wrongdoing is less likely to retaliate against his or her accuser than a person with a low EI.

EI defined in terms of interpersonal skills, communication and common sense are important factors for most jobs. Thus, in addition to thorough background checks, thorough interviews are also important. Finally, high EI is measured in how a person has worked in the past not only performing the skills of the position, but how they worked with others.

## Dates to Remember

**Friday – Saturday, October 21 – 22, 2011**

\* Mental Health First Aid Workshop \* Location TBD \*

\* [More Info Link](#) \*

**Thursday, November 17, 2011**

\* How to Read Body Language \* Presented by Lisa Cox, Certified Rehab Counselor \* Meridian Technology Center, Stillwater \* 11:30 – 1 pm \* [RSVP Link](#) \*

## Unhappy In Our Work

*A new study shows that employee engagement hits new lows as employees feel stuck.*

Americans are not happy in their work, a recent

study by Modern Survey reveals. The survey of employee engagement levels in the U.S. workforce has unveiled the somewhat disturbing reality that even while employee engagement is sinking to new lows, only 21 percent of workers report that they are seeking new employment opportunities.

The study found that 70 percent of employees are now either disengaged or under engaged at their job – a record high number since Modern Survey began tracking these numbers in 2007 before the recession started. Additionally, the number of fully engaged employees has dropped to a record low of just 8 percent. Compared to one year ago when 15 percent of the workforce was fully engaged, the most recent data demonstrates a profound deterioration in the number of workers who are fully committed to their work and to their organization.

Shockingly, while 70 percent of workers are disengaged or under engaged, only one-fifth of the workers reported that they are currently looking for a new job at a different organization – a percentage which is remarkably consistent across nearly all captured demographic, including job level, pay basis (salaried vs. hourly) and company size.

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“Employees discouraged with their current job may not be looking for a new job because there are no openings in their field, or they would have to take a wage decrease,” said Rob Grunewald, associate economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Minneapolis.

Current economic conditions are likely impacting employee morale. “When there is uncertainty about future economic conditions, consumers and businesses hunker down. Consumers tend to keep

the job that they have and are cautious with their spending – they are even saving more now – while businesses are holding back on making investments,” said Grunewald.

Companies can take action to reverse this trend. “One of the most effective ways organizations can inject their employees with confidence is by embracing transparency. Even if the news isn’t particularly good, employees tend to respond well if senior leaders are open and honest about the state of the business and clearly communicate, in the simplest possible terms, their plans and strategies for ensuring the organization’s future health and success,” said Bruce Campbell, Modern Survey senior consultant, in a press release.

## NLRB Delays Effective Date of Posting Requirement

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has postponed the implementation date for its new rule requiring the posting of employees’ rights under the National Labor Relations Act by more than two months. The effective date of the posting rule is now January 31, 2012 – moved from November 14, 2011.

No other changes in the rule, or in the form or content of the notice, will be made, the NLRB stated.

According to the NLRB, the posting date was delayed in order to allow for enhanced education and outreach to employers, particularly those who operate small- and medium-sized businesses. The decision followed queries from businesses and trade organizations indicating uncertainty about which businesses fall under the NLRB’s jurisdiction.

Most private sector employers will be required to post the 11-by-17-inch notice of employee

rights under the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). The requirement applies to most private employers who are subject to the NLRA. Workplaces with or without union representation are included. There are some narrow exceptions, however, particularly for employers with small gross annual business volume.

For more information, or a copy of the poster, visit the [NLRB website](#).

## Personality Tests, Personality Disorders, and the ADA

By: The McCalmon Group, Inc.

In today’s inundated job market, employers are using personality tests to help expedite their searches for qualified candidates. Job board postings can result, depending upon the job, in as many as 3,000 online applications.

As part of a pre-hire personality test, employers have asked job applicants whether they agreed with the following statements:

- People do a lot of things that make me angry.
- Many people cannot be trusted.
- There’s no use having close friends; they always let you down.

According to a talent management firm, Development Dimensions International, one-third of employers use testing for hiring and promotions. A 2005 Society for Human Resources Management found that 23 percent of surveyed organizations used “online, minimum qualifications screening questionnaires” that may knock candidates out of the recruiting process. Josh Bersin, president and CEO of Bersin & Associates, an Oakland, California research firm, estimates that pre-hire testing has grown by 20 percent annually in the last few years.

But some personality tests may weed out job applicants with mental disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and subsequent amendments restrict employers in what they may legally ask a potential candidate prior to a job offer. While a lot of research has been conducted on personality tests and their impact on gender, race or age bias, their impact upon mental disorders and emotional problems has yet to be understood. Eve Tahmincioglu, "Employers Turn to Tests to Weed Out Job Seekers," [www.msnbc.msn.com](http://www.msnbc.msn.com) (August 15, 2011).

According to the Mayo Clinic, personality disorders are a type of mental illness. If the "personality tests" lead to the disclosure of "personalities disorders," or prevent applicants with "personality disorders" from being considered for a job, the risk of liability is real.

It is illegal to use the results of any medical examination or test results to specifically discriminate against those potential candidates that may have a physical, mental, or emotional disability. The ADA specifically prohibits employers from asking job applicants to answer medical questions or take medical exams before extending a job offer. An employer also may not ask job applicants if they have a disability or about the nature of an obvious disability.

With the EEOC paying close attention to ADA claims by employees with mental disabilities, the line is too blurred for employers to ignore the threat of disability discrimination in pre-hiring personality tests.

If you choose to give pre-hiring personality tests, seek the advice of an employment attorney. Make sure the questions are directly related to the essential functions of the job and do not ask about personality disorders or mental illnesses.

You should perform due diligence on the test to

see if any lawsuits are pending against the test or the test creators.

Importantly, ask if the test has a legal opinion that states that it does not have a disparate impact on applicants with disabilities or any other protected class.

In addition, consider the following basic requirements before asking disability related questions to help your organization stay compliant with the ADA:

- ✓ Do not make any medical inquiries or conduct a medical examination prior to making a job offer.
- ✓ Once a conditional job offer has been made and before the employee begins work, you may make unrestricted medical inquiries.
- ✓ Do not refuse to hire an applicant with a disability based on the results of these medical inquiries, unless you can prove that the reason for the rejection is directly job-related and justified as a business necessity or creates an undue hardship.
- ✓ When an individual must be rejected due to significant concerns in regard to health and safety, employers should provide the following:
  - Be prepared to show significant risk of substantial harm; not one based on speculation or remote risk.
  - Identify that risk specifically.
  - Document the risk with objective medical or other factual evidence.
  - Remember even if a genuine significant risk of substantial harm exists, you must consider whether it can be eliminated or reduced below the level of a "direct threat" by reasonable accommodation.

## HR Job Postings

Does your company have an opening in human resources? If so, take advantage of low advertising costs and place your ad in the Stillwater Area Human Resource Association newsletter and on the front page of the SAHRA website.

Consider the following:

1. \$75 per advertisement - one position
2. Position(s) must be related to human resource profession
3. Valid for 28 days from date of insertion
4. Advertisement may be renewed - \$40 renewal fee for 28 additional days
5. Must supply logo in .jpg or .gif format
6. Must supply advertisement as Word document, PDF format, or by e-mail
7. Do not need to be SAHRA/SHRM member

For more information, please contact Coral White, [coral.white@okstate.edu](mailto:coral.white@okstate.edu), (405) 744-5379.

### MISSION STATEMENT

#### Stillwater Area Human Resources Association

*To be recognized and respected as an organization, which promotes the development of Human Resource professionals into strategic business partners within their organizations by providing professional growth through development programs, networking opportunities, and community service projects.*