

Accessing heads, hearts and hands in the evolution of EQ to HQ

By [Sue Bakker](#)

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In a world where fragmentation often surpasses integration, what businesses are needing is a shift back to what it means to be human-centric. With humans at the core of either executing on business plans or the target of business plans, the question of what it means to be human is resurfacing as a catalyst for organisations and leaders to embrace systemic and leadership intelligence to gain desired outcomes.



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The question of what it means to be human has been a worthy one asked for centuries from the perspectives of science, biology, philosophy and spirituality with differing perspectives ranging from brains to limbs to souls to passions. But if we asked the question from the perspective of business, we would probably find fragmented articulations about performance, execution, going the extra mile, working harder, smarter, more efficiently. With the world of business revering the bottom line, or progressively in some cases the triple bottom line, are we not doing the humans in our organisations, and thus the bottom line, a disservice by partial inclusion of our humanity?

Gone are the days where leaders tell employees to leave their emotions at the door, yet expect motivation, passion and commitment, all of which are derivatives of emotion. Why would we subscribe to an instructional approach to management and leadership, when the brains potential is so much greater than what is being asked for?

“ *What it means to be human is to pay attention to thoughts, hearts, behaviours, skills, motivations and decisions that work together to integrate the multiple intelligences inherent in who we call our human resources. But often what we are asking for is only hands, not heads and not hearts, thus limiting and impacting expansiveness, capacity and scalability.* ”

Focus on emotional intelligence

Over the past years, there has been a lot of focus on the importance of emotional intelligence, and rightly so, as awareness and self-control are foundational to leadership presence and influence. But for us to remain conscious and relevant, we are needing to consider that emotional intelligence needs to be more holistically integrated with other behavioural focus areas in order to embrace the full range of what it means to be human. The challenge is thus to elevate our thinking and practice from EQ to HQ (the human quotient) to guide our proactive investment in the whole person.



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Through this whole-person approach to leadership, which is a focus on both character and competence, we are better able to connect, collaborate, access and develop potential to reach new heights in organisational success and human fulfillment.

In the emergent work of JoAnn Corley-Schwarzkopf (2018) and David Brendel (2018), we see the slant to move toward this human-centric approach within organisations with a direct link to successful business outcomes and improved bottom line. While in principle many leaders will support this approach, the dedication to the 'HOW' requires not only a commitment to knowledge and skill, but to a consistent *leadership from within development* investment. This calls for *leadership intelligence* that is able to:

Embrace character and competence

While the predominant business focus is usually on competence, what the human quotient is asking for are leaders to develop an approach that invests in both character and skill. 'We cannot lead where we ourselves are not willing to go' is a helpful reminder of the fact that the work of integrating doing and being begins with us.

Hold complexity and polarity

We are living in an increasingly complex world and need to develop the skill for holding a 'both and' approach rather than merely an 'either or' approach. We are no longer operating in landscapes where it is about right and wrong; instead it is about multiple perspectives that make up the whole. In the words of Thomas Edison: "I have not failed, I have merely found 10,000 ways that won't work." Every perspective should be viewed as a valued link in the chain that leads to success.



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Create thinking environments

From the perspective of neuroscience, our actions and behaviours result from the thinking we do first. Yet as leaders, we often shut down rather than open up thinking through our need to have answers, through experience that is tried and tested, or through the pace of life and work that does not appear to have time for new perspectives. Whatever the reason, if we understand that through accessing our team members heads, hearts and hands, we activate elevated potential, then surely it is in the best interest of all to promote thinking and feeling beings.

Embrace collaboration, is engaging and elastic

In many ways, the Covid-19 pandemic has ensured that micro-managers are out of a job. Through hybrid ways of working and delivery despite command and control approaches, we now have opportunity to embrace collective intelligence in our

decision making, our planning and our strategic execution. We are needing leaders that embrace elasticity and resilience in integrating learning and bouncing forward.

Is purpose driven and values led

This is the foundation of good leadership – to live and lead with presence and consciousness as we align and move from current to desired realities and outcomes.



CQ is the new EQ for executives

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With leadership that embodies an HQ philosophy and practice, what we will see emerge are colleagues who:

- are motivated, inspired, engaged and committed,
- go above and beyond because they want to (discretionary effort),
- are aligned, and who create a positive organisational culture where people thrive,
- bring their heads, hearts and hands to work,
- trust and are trusted,
- are respectful and empathetic in their engagement.

With heart, investment and accountability, we can ensure that we remain on the cutting edge of what people and business need in order to thrive and flourish.

As a believer in transforming business through the heart of human experience, the challenge is to invest in collective experiences that promote the indispensable link between human doing and human being. After all, every behaviour caused or influenced is either serving business outcomes or not, so a focus on HQ is surely the way to go as we focus on the reality that humans make up 100% of our business. Engaged colleagues + delighted customers = thriving business.

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