

DO LEADERS NEED EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?: A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND LEADERSHIP OF CHANGE

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ABSTRACT

Over the last few years there has been a significant and sustained growth in interest in the area of leadership (Chaudry 2000; Bagshaw & Bagshaw 1999; Goffee & Jones 2000). This paper reviews the development in thinking and research in relation to leadership. The limitations of progress in our understanding of the phenomenon are discussed (e.g., Kets De Vries 1993). Building from this review, the potential for a view of leadership relating to its role in the context of change (e.g., Conner 1999; Kotter 1998) and its relationship to Emotional Intelligence (e.g., Higgs & Dulewicz 1999) is explored. The relationship between the Competencies associated with change leadership and Emotional Intelligence is examined by means of a quantitative study involving a sample of 70 managers. Change Leadership Competencies are operationalised using an instrument reported by Higgs and Rowland (2000). Emotional Intelligence is operationalised using the EIQ developed by Dulewicz and Higgs (1999). The study reported in this paper demonstrates strong correlations between six of the seven elements of Emotional Intelligence (as defined by Higgs & Dulewicz 1999) and all five factors in the Change Leadership Competency (CLC) model (Higgs & Rowland 2000). In addition, the overall EI score correlates significantly with the overall CLC score. The author concludes that Emotional Intelligence potentially plays a significant part in the effectiveness of leadership in a change context and identifies areas for further research.