The emotional and social intelligences of effective leadership

An emotional and social skill approach

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to describe a framework for conceptualizing the role of emotional and social skills in effective leadership and management and provides preliminary suggestions for research and for the development of leader emotional and social skills.

Design/methodology/approach – The paper generalizes a dyadic communications framework in order to describe the process of emotional and social exchanges between leaders and their followers.

Findings – The paper shows how emotional skills and complementary social skills are essential for effective leadership through a literature review and discussion of ongoing research and a research agenda.

Practical implications – Suggestions for the measurement and development of emotional and social skills for leaders and managers are offered.

Originality/value – The work provides a framework for emotional and social skills in order to illustrate their role in leadership and their relationship to emotional and social intelligences. It outlines a research agenda and advances thinking of the role of developable emotional and social skills for managers.

Keywords Emotional intelligence, Social skills, Leadership development

Paper type Conceptual paper

In his classic work on managerial skills, Mintzberg (1973) listed specific interpersonal skills (i.e. the ability to establish and maintain social networks; the ability to deal with subordinates; the ability to empathize with top-level leaders) as critical for managerial effectiveness. Even earlier than 1973, researchers examined the role of broad interpersonal skills, such as empathy, social skills, and tact, in predicting leadership emergence and effectiveness (see Bass, 1990 for a review). Managers, executives, and human resources professionals clearly understand the importance of strong interpersonal skills. A common theoretical framework linking emotional and social skills with leadership effectiveness is necessary to guide research and the assessment and training and development of organizational leaders.

This paper takes a framework for understanding the emotional and social skills that underlie any form of interpersonal communication, and applies it specifically to leader and managerial processes and outcomes. We make comparisons between this emotional/social skill approach and the emerging constructs of emotional and social intelligences – two other constructs that were developed in the sphere of interpersonal communication and later applied to management. Further, in a series of research propositions we discuss how specific types of skills should play an important part in

effective leadership and management. Based on existing research and our research propositions we present an agenda for further investigation of emotional and social skills and leadership. Finally, we discuss the measurement of emotional and social skills and their practical implications for leadership development.

Emotional and social skills

Early research on social skills focused primarily on clinical populations, using social skills assessment and training as a means of understanding and treating certain forms of psychopathology or problems in psychosocial adjustment (Curran and Monti, 1982; Trower *et al.*, 1978). At the same time, emotion researchers began to examine the role of emotional skills in social interaction and interpersonal relationships. For example, Gottman and his colleagues (Gottman, 1982; Gottman and Levenson, 1986; Gottman and Porterfield, 1981) stressed the role of effective communication of emotions in the maintenance and development of marriages. Possessing emotional and social skills was also associated with higher quality social relationships and more supportive social support systems (Riggio *et al.*, 1993; Riggio and Zimmerman, 1991). Moreover, deficits in emotional skill have been implicated in certain forms of psychopathology, leading to low levels of social and emotional competence that can break down family and other relationships (Perez and Riggio, 2003; Philippot *et al.*, 2003).

Research on emotional skills, primarily associated with investigations of nonverbal and emotional communication (Friedman, 1979; Riggio, 2006; Rosenthal, 1979), paved the way for the construct of emotional intelligence. First presented by Salovey and Mayer (1990), but popularized by Daniel Goleman (1995, 1998), emotional intelligence (referred to as EI or EQ) is a multidimensional construct that is likened to verbal intelligence, or IQ. Both IQ and EQ are composed of different and somewhat distinct abilities.

The soundest approach to emotional intelligence is the abilities model suggested by Salovey, Mayer and colleagues (Caruso *et al.*, 2002; Mayer *et al.*, 2000; Salovey and Mayer, 2004). The abilities model consists of four general emotional abilities:

(1) *identifying emotions*, which involves the ability to recognize emotions in oneself and others, as well as the ability to express emotions;

(2) *using emotions to facilitate thinking*, which involves using emotions to improving thinking processes and harness the power of positive moods;

(3) *understanding emotions,* including the complexities and subtleties of emotions as well as their interrelationships; and

(4) *managing emotions,* which involves skills in regulating and controlling felt emotions in a positive fashion.

This four-factor structure of emotional intelligence is typically measured with the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT; Salovey *et al.*, 2004), a performance-based assessment tool.

Emotional skills are related to the ability to accurately express, read, and understand emotions; all of which are components of emotional intelligence. However, EI is broader than the emotional skills approach, since it also includes the ways that emotions inform mental processing. Emotional skills represent the more "social"

elements of emotional intelligence in that they focus on how emotions are conveyed between or among individuals in social interaction.

Social skills represent a broader range of abilities that is most closely linked to the construct of social intelligence. Although social intelligence, the ability to think and act wisely in social situations, was first explored by psychologist Edward Thorndike (1920), and later by Guilford (1967) in his model of "behavioral intelligence," it is only in the last few years that social intelligence has been popularized by Goleman (2006) and Albrecht (2006). Social skills that are key components of social intelligence include the following: the ability to express oneself in social interactions, the ability to "read" and understand different social situations, knowledge of social roles, norms, and scripts, interpersonal problem-solving skills, and social role-playing skills. Interestingly, although social intelligence has been connected to effective social functioning in general (Cantor and Kihlstrom, 1987) and to effective leadership specifically (Zaccaro, 2002), there has been no agreed-upon framework outlining the specific dimensions of social intelligence or ways to measure it. We argue that our emotional and social skills framework is not only more parsimonious than these previous models of social and emotional intelligence, but it also has the advantages of the availability of valid measurement and an emphasis on skills that are open to development.

Proposed framework of emotional and social skills and leadership
In this paper, we expand on a model of emotional and social skills proposed by Riggio and colleagues (Riggio, 1986; Riggio and Carney, 2003; Reichard and Riggio, 2008) and apply it to the domain of leadership effectiveness. This framework, which is grounded in basic research on interpersonal communication, suggests that emotional and social communication can be conceptualized as composed of three basic skills: skill in expression, or what communication scholars refer to as encoding skill, skill in recognizing and decoding messages from others, and skill in regulating and controlling communication behaviors. Each of these three skills operate in both the emotional domain (emotional skills) and in the verbal/social domain (social skills).

As shown in Table I, the three emotional skills are:

(1) emotional expressiveness;

(2) emotional sensitivity; and

(3) emotional control.

While emotional expressiveness is the ability to communicate nonverbally, especially when sending emotional messages, emotional sensitivity refers to skill in receiving and interpreting the nonverbal, or emotional, expressions of others. Finally, emotional control refers to regulating nonverbal and emotional displays.

The three corresponding social skills are labeled:

(1) social expressiveness;

(2) social sensitivity; and

(3) social control.

Social expressiveness is ability to communicate verbally and skill in engaging others in social interaction. Social sensitivity is verbal listening skill, but also ability to "read" social situations, and general knowledge of social rules and norms. Social control refers

Table I.
The emotional and social skills framework: definitions and leader behaviors

Skill	Definition	Examples of leader behaviors
Emotional expressiveness	Skill in communicating nonverbally, especially in sending emotional messages, nonverbal expression of attitudes, dominance, and interpersonal orientation	Motivating/inspiring followers; conveying positive affect and regard
Emotional sensitivity	Skill in receiving and interpreting the emotional and nonverbal communications of others	Understanding followers' needs and feelings; establishing rapport
Emotional control	Skill in controlling and regulating one's own emotional and nonverbal displays, especially conveying or masking emotions on cue	Regulating inappropriate emotions; masking or stifling the expression of strong emotions
Social expressiveness	Skill in verbal expression and the ability to engage others in social discourse	Public speaking; persuasion; coaching
Social sensitivity	Skill in interpreting the verbal communication of others; ability to understand social situations, social norms, and roles	Effective, active listening; regulating and monitoring of social behavior
Social control	Skill in role-playing and social self-presentation	Being tactful; leader impression management; social and leader self-efficacy

Note: Definitions adapted from Riggio and Carney (2003)

to sophisticated social role-playing skills and tact in social situations. These three broad social skills represent the communicative elements that are associated with models of social intelligence (see Guilford, 1967; Riggio, 1986), as well as related constructs such as social insight and perspective-taking (Chapin, 1942; Davis, 1983; Hogan, 1969; see also Riggio *et al.*, 1991). Here, we argue these are the key emotional and social skills necessary for effective leadership.

Emotional expressiveness and leadership

   P1.   Emotional expressiveness is positively associated with perceptions of a leader's charisma and effectiveness.

As noted, emotional expressiveness is the ability to convey emotional messages to others and, we argue, is an essential component of successful leadership. For example, the role of emotional expressiveness in leadership has been closely associated with charismatic leadership (see Bass, 1990; Riggio, 1987). Specifically, research has demonstrated that the manipulation of a leader's emotional expressiveness can lead to perceptions of charisma (Cherulnik *et al.*, 2001; Howell and Frost, 1989), and that emotionally expressive leaders were, in fact, more effective (Groves, 2006). Charismatic leaders use their ability to express emotions to rouse and motivate followers and to build strong emotional ties with them. There is a great deal of evidence that expressive individuals are evaluated more positively in social encounters, are rated as being more physically attractive, have a broader network of social ties, and are more confident public speakers – all characteristics that are associated with charisma (Friedman *et al.*,

1980, 1988; Riggio, 1986). Although individuals vary in their degree of natural and spontaneous expressiveness, the ability to express emotions can be developed (Riggio, 1987; Taylor, 2002).

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Of course, emotional expressiveness is not the only emotional skill possessed by successful charismatic leaders. Charismatic leaders are able to regulate their emotional displays and are sensitive to followers' needs and emotions (Conger and Kanungo, 1998; Riggio, 1987). The transfer of emotions in charismatic leadership is a reciprocal process, known as "emotional contagion," in which leaders express emotions to followers, and leaders "feed off" the emotional reactions of followers (Reichard and Riggio, 2008). For instance, transformational and charismatic leaders use emotional expressiveness to move and inspire followers, and the transmission of emotions has been well documented (Bono and Ilies, 2006; Friedman and Riggio, 1981).

P2. Leader emotional expressiveness is positively associated with a positive emotional climate in followers.

Research supports the relationship between emotional expressiveness and aspects of charismatic leadership and the charismatic leadership process (i.e. emotional contagion). We propose that leaders also use skill in emotional expression to foster a positive emotional climate in the group or organization. For example, leaders such as Southwest Airlines' Herb Kelleher and Cisco Systems' John Chambers, became well known for their ability to create and sustain a positive emotional climate among their employees. Research has demonstrated that positive affect in a work group is related to better group motivation and coordination (Barsade, 2002; Sy *et al.*, 2005) and to better task performance, particularly on creative tasks (Isen, 2004). Furthermore, according to Fredrickson's "broaden and build theory," positive emotions increase attention and cognition resulting in upward spirals of positive emotional well being (Fredrickson and Joiner, 2002). In a recent series of studies, Bono and Ilies (2006) demonstrated that charismatic leaders who experienced and expressed positive emotions had more satisfied followers who rated their leader as more effective and Halverson (2004) found that the contagion of positive emotions was related both to positive perceptions of leaders and followers' incidence of organizational citizenship behaviors.

In certain situations, of course, leaders need to convey negative emotions, such as displeasure with a colleague's performance or disapproval of a course of action. Effective sending of such negative emotional messages requires particular skills in both emotional expression and emotional control in order to convey displeasure, but not more extreme emotions such as irritation, frustration, or anger, which might be counterproductive and damage the leader-colleague relationship.

Emotional sensitivity and leadership

P3. Leader emotional sensitivity is positively associated with high quality leader-member relationships.

Emotional sensitivity is the ability to read and decode others' emotional and nonverbal messages. Originally conceptualized as leader empathy (Bass, 1960, 1990), emotional sensitivity allows leaders to gauge the emotional reactions and general emotional tone of a group. We propose that coupled with the ability to express emotions accurately, emotional sensitivity is critical to the development of a strong relationship between a

leader and individual followers (as well as the development of close relationships with supervisors and with managerial peers).

It is in the genre of recent leadership theories such as leader-member exchange (LMX) and transformational theories that a leader's emotional sensitivity is especially highlighted. The importance of emotional sensitivity is perhaps best illustrated by the transformational leadership component of individualized consideration. Individualized consideration refers to the transformational leader's ability to be aware of specific follower feelings and needs and to be responsive to them (Bass and Riggio, 2006). Indeed, one of the most common complaints about otherwise technically competent managers is that they are "unresponsive to" or "out of touch with" team members, suggesting low levels of emotional sensitivity.

Specifically, the development of high-functioning work teams requires strong interpersonal relationships, with team members sensitive to one another's moods, attitudes, and needs. Drawing on LMX research, Uhl-Bien (2003) asserted that the development of relationships between leaders and followers as well as among team members is critical to leader and managerial effectiveness. In fact, she argued that giving greater attention to the development of relationship-building skills in managers would enhance leadership development efforts.

> P4. Leader emotional sensitivity is associated with better assessment of negative moods among followers.

We further propose that a leader's emotional sensitivity can also be important in assessing negative moods in the workplace. With increasing concern about dysfunctional emotions and behaviors in the workplace, including expressions of anger leading to acts of violence, the emotionally sensitive manager may be able to pick up on a follower's negative affect and take action before negative emotions escalate and lead to counterproductive work behaviors, or before the disgruntled employee influences others (Ostell, 1996).

Emotional control and leadership

> P5. Leader emotional control is positively associated with leader impression management and effective leadership under stress.

Emotional control, the ability to regulate both the expression and experience of emotions, or intra-individual regulation, is a critical component of emotional skill and is particularly important in the workplace (Cote, 2005; Gross, 1998, 1999; Riggio, 2006). Whereas strong emotions, positive and negative, are often freely expressed in the home or in the context of personal relationships, the expression of emotions in the workplace is typically more subtle and subdued requiring more skill in emotional control.

We propose that emotional control is an important element of effective leadership because leaders of all types must often stifle the expression of their felt emotional states to create a calm and controlled impression. In fact, there is an extensive literature on the role of impression management in leadership (e.g. Gardner and Avolio, 1998; Sosik et al., 2002), and controlling the expression of emotions is an important part of impression management (Chemers, 1997; Giacalone and Rosenfeld, 1991). The most commonly researched construct related to emotional regulation and impression management is called emotional labor. According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1993),

emotional labor refers to the display of expected emotions by service agents during service encounters and has some negative consequences depending on the intensity of the expression (i.e. surface acting versus deep acting). These concepts of impression management and emotional labor have been extended to the leadership domain (e.g. Wong and Law, 2002).

We suggest that there are a variety of leadership situations that require emotional regulation. For example, emotional control and impression management are particularly important during a crisis, which Mitroff (2007) argues every leader in every organization will eventually face. Managing emotions during crises can be an important skill for leaders to develop, especially because the emotional sensitivity of followers is extremely heightened in these situations. Other situations that may require emotional regulation and impression management include engaging in heated negotiations, interviewing for a position, and reprimanding a subordinate.

Social expressiveness and leadership

P6.   Leader social expressiveness is associated with leader emergence and upward leader career progression.

We propose that social expressiveness, or verbal speaking skill and fluency and the ability to engage others in social interaction, is important for leaders. For example, the eloquence of great leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., Winston Churchill, and Franklin Delano Roosevelt suggest that being able to express one-self clearly and compellingly can be a powerful social skill. In addition, leaders need to engage others in conversation, such as knowing how to "work a room". We propose that as managers rise in the hierarchy to higher levels of leadership, speaking skill and thus skill in social expressiveness will become more and more important. In one study of fire service officers/leaders, we observed increases in social expressiveness and other social skills moving up the organizational hierarchy (Riggio *et al.*, 2003).

We further propose that social expressiveness is also important in one-on-one situations such as conducting interviews and in performance evaluation or coaching sessions. There is evidence that verbal articulation and the ability to engage others is critical in the interview situation (Riggio and Throckmorton, 1988). Likewise, skill in verbal expression should be important when providing sensitive feedback to employees regarding their performance, although effective coaching likely calls into play a wide range of both social and emotional skills.

Social sensitivity and leadership

P7.   Leader social sensitivity is positively associated with leader career progression and leadership success.

Social sensitivity is the ability to read and interpret social situations, as opposed to the emotional sensitivity's focus on reading others' feelings. Social sensitivity also includes knowledge of social norms, roles and scripts. We argue that both emotional and social sensitivity allow managers to truly know and understand what individual workers and the work group are feeling and experiencing. This helps the leader navigate during interactions with followers and the work team.

In addition to monitoring the social situation and other people's behaviors, another aspect of social sensitivity involves the ability to monitor one's own social behavior. This is closely related to the well-researched construct of self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974, 1987). It has been suggested that self-monitoring is a way of conceptualizing general social skills/competence, as factor analyses of the Self-Monitoring Scale have shown that it is composed of three factors:

(1) e*xtraversion* (similar to social expressivity);

(2) o*ther-directedness* (the element of social sensitivity that involves observing oneself in social situations); and

(3) a*cting* (similar to the skill of social control) (Briggs *et al.*, 1980).

It has been argued that because it is not a unitary construct, self-monitoring is actually a surrogate for a broader range of social skills (Riggio and Friedman, 1982). This is perhaps the reason why self-monitoring has been found to be an important predictor of leader emergence (Day *et al.*, 2002).

Finally, it is proposed that social sensitivity is also important in understanding and managing one's career path. This aspect of social sensitivity is similar to what Sternberg and associates have called tacit knowledge (Sternberg, 2002; Sternberg and Wagner, 1986). Tacit knowledge consists of the unspoken rules that an individual needs to be successful in a given position, role, or social environment.

Social control and leadership

P8. Leader social control is positively associated with leader self-efficacy and ability to enact the leadership role.

Social control is defined as skill in role-playing and social self-presentation and is perhaps the most critical leadership social skill. Managing people and leading groups effectively involves a very complex social role. The skill of social control has been likened to "savoir-faire" or "knowing what to do" and is associated with being tactful and socially competent (Eaton *et al.*, 2007). Research has found that the skill of social control is related to the emergence of leaders in small groups and to their rated effectiveness, presumably because they are able to better enact the role of a prototypical leader (Riggio *et al.*, 2003). Again, this skill of control over one's social behavior combines with emotional control to create an individual who is extraordinarily effective in playing the complex role of leader.

There is considerable evidence that the possession of social control is related to a sense of confidence and self-efficacy in social situations (Riggio *et al.*, 1990). Self-assuredness and a belief in one's ability to lead are instrumental for effective leadership (Murphy, 2002) and are critical for a leader's ability to engage in image management (Chemers, 1997).

Discussion

Based on existing research and in a series of research propositions, we have presented a framework for emotional and social skills, and discussed how these are related, or should be related, to important leadership processes and outcomes. Specifically, skill in emotional expressiveness, emotional sensitivity, and emotional control should result in

such leadership behaviors and outcomes as motivating and inspiring followers, understanding followers' needs and feelings, and regulating inappropriate emotions. The social skills, including social expressiveness, social sensitivity, and social control, are expected to contribute to such leadership processes and outcomes as public speaking, coaching, effective listening, and impression management.

Understanding the role of emotional and social skills in effective leadership: a research agenda
Although there has been some preliminary research on understanding the role that emotional and social skills play in leadership effectiveness, there is a great deal of research that is either in progress, or yet to be done. Models of emotional and social skills, such as the one presented here, have been used almost exclusively by social and clinical psychologists who have been concerned with understanding effective interpersonal communication. Extending emotional and social skill research to the domain of leadership will allow a deeper understanding of the specific processes leaders use to influence and affect followers. This will allow insights into how to better develop leaders, a topic that we will discuss shortly.

Existing research has demonstrated that emotional expressiveness is a key component in charismatic leadership, and it is related to a leader's ability to inspire, and presumably motivate, followers via the emotional contagion process (e.g. Groves, 2006; Reichard and Riggio, 2008). Research also has shown that the expression of positive emotions has a positive effect on groups (e.g. Bono and Ilies, 2006). Less is known about how leaders express negative emotions (disapproval, anger, disappointment) and what the expression of negative emotions might mean for group performance and affective climate. One possibility is that skilled and controlled expression of negative emotions is particularly important for leaders in the workplace to avoid "demotivating" workers or preventing the build up of resentment and resistance. While skilled emotional expressiveness may be the key, effective expression of negative affect likely involves skills in expression, emotional regulation/control, and emotional sensitivity (in order to gauge how the negative affect is being received by followers).

In recent years, there has been considerable research interest in the role of emotional sensitivity, or the ability to "decode" emotions in the workplace. Some of this research has used measures of emotional decoding skill as a surrogate for emotional intelligence (Rubin *et al.*, 2005), and other studies have explored the notion of emotional "eavesdropping" (ability to decode others' emotions even when they are not intending to convey them; Elfenbein and Ambady, 2002). One reason for the research interest in emotional decoding is that there are a number of validated measures available to researchers, as we will outline in the next section. This interest in the ability to "read" others' emotions makes sense. As noted earlier, emotional sensitivity is at the core of leader "empathy" and is likely critical to the building of effective leader-member relations. Yet, the exact role of emotional sensitivity in effective leadership is largely unexplored, and offers fertile ground for researchers.

Similar to the recent interest in emotional sensitivity, there is exploding interest in peoples' abilities to regulate and control emotions. Some of this research has been conducted by neuroscientists who are interested in how emotional regulation plays a role in coping with life stress (Gross, 2007). Other work suggests that there are

connections between emotional control and general social competence (Gross, 1998). Although it seems obvious that an effective leader must possess good skills in emotional control, particularly during crises (i.e. remaining "calm, cool, and collected"), there has been relatively little research on the role of emotional control in leadership. It is also important to note here that emotional skills may not necessarily be a case where "more is better." Our research, and particularly our training work, has shown, for example, that individuals who are particularly good at controlling and masking their emotional expressions (and especially if they are not emotionally expressive) seem distant and aloof. We have demonstrated that an "imbalance" in possession of emotional and social skills is related to poorer psychosocial adjustment in clinical groups (Perez *et al.*, 2007), and we expect that the same relationship exists between social skill imbalances and poor leadership.

There is a growing body of evidence that social skills, particularly skills in social expressiveness and social control (role-playing skill) are related to effectiveness in general social situations (Eaton *et al.*, 2006; Riggio and Carney, 2003), and to leader emergence and rated leader effectiveness (Riggio *et al.*, 2003). Research in progress is exploring how these social skills relate to leader impression management, and whether social skills can predict the rate at which leaders progress through the leadership ranks over time. The recent interest in social intelligence (e.g. Goleman, 2006) should also spur research on leader social intelligence, particularly since it has been demonstrated that social skill measures may serve as an indicator of general social intelligence (Riggio *et al.*, 1991).

Finally, social sensitivity, which is a combination of effective listening and ability to decode and understand social situations, seems to be critically important for a leader's success. It is interesting to note that although effective listening is generally believed to be an important skill for success in social life (and, of course, leadership), a review of the literature finds no empirical studies that have looked specifically at listening and leadership. Part of the problem is that it is difficult to operationally define effective listening. Again, using social sensitivity as a surrogate measure of listening may stimulate research in this area.

Practical implications: assessing and developing a leader's emotional and social skills
Common sense and some research evidence suggest that highly developed emotional and social skills should give leaders a decided advantage. To this end, we have conducted workshops and other training programs to assess and develop individuals' emotional and social skills. Initially, this work was done with the "general population," such as groups of students and workers (Riggio, 1987; Taylor, 2002). Our research has also explored the role of these skills in psychopathology/social adjustment using the general population (Riggio *et al.*, 2003) and clinical groups (Perez *et al.*, 2007). As suggested here, however, we have in the past decade applied general emotional and social skill training to leaders and followers. While rigorous evaluation of these training efforts is yet unpublished, it is clear that the majority of leaders/managers who have undergone these training programs find it a valuable learning experience. Indeed, we offer it as a concrete, skill-based alternative to workshops designed to improve emotional intelligence (and more recently, social intelligence). We will here explain the rationale behind our emotional and social skill training programs and the general processes involved.

We have suggested that emotional skills of expressiveness and sensitivity are important in motivating others and in developing good working relationships. Emotional regulation and control over strong, felt emotions is also a critical skill and plays an important part in impression management. Social expressiveness is related to the leader's "presence" and presentational skills, while social sensitivity allows the leader to analyze social situations, be an effective listener, and to monitor oneself and the situation. Finally, social control is closely linked to ability to play the complex leadership role. The question is, however, whether managers can easily develop emotional and social skills, and how to go about it.

The first step in a program designed to improve emotional and social skills is to assess the leader's current level of skills. There have been two broad approaches for measuring emotional and social skills:

(1) performance-based assessments; and

(2) self-report measures.

Performance-based measures of emotional skill include instruments such as the Profile of Nonverbal Sensitivity (PONS; Rosenthal *et al.*, 1979), the Brief Affect Recognition Test (BART; Ekman and Friesen, 1974), and the Diagnostic Analysis of Nonverbal Accuracy (DANVA; Nowicki and Duke, 1994, 2001). These tests consist of videos or photographs of enacted emotions with respondents' accuracy at decoding representing their scores on emotional sensitivity. The ability to accurately express emotions has also been assessed through performance-based measures by having individuals pose basic facial expressions (e.g. happiness, sadness, anger, etc.) on cue (or by triggering natural emotional expressions), video recording these expressions, and having judges attempt to decode them. The percentage of judges who correctly identify the expressed emotions constitutes the individual's emotional expressiveness score.

Standardized performance measures of emotional expressiveness and emotional regulation/control have not been developed. These emotional abilities have been measured with various self-report instruments (see Riggio, 2006, Riggio and Riggio, 2005, for reviews). This parallels the measurement of emotional intelligence, which tends to be self-report in nature with the exception of the MSCEIT, a performance-based test (see MacCann *et al.*, 2003, for a review).

The measurement of social skills and social intelligence has also relied on both performance-based and self-report measures (e.g. Marlowe, 1986). Examples of performance-based measures include the O'Sullivan and Guilford (1976) tests of social intelligence and the Interpersonal Perception Task (Costanzo and Archer, 1989), which measures both the ability to read social situations and emotional/nonverbal cues. In addition, social skills in clinical populations have been measured through the use of trained observers who assess social skills while watching individuals interact in social situations. The Social Skills Inventory (SSI; Riggio and Carney, 2003) is a 90-item self-report measure that assesses the three basic emotional skills (emotional expressiveness, emotional sensitivity, emotional control) and the corresponding social skills (social expressiveness, social sensitivity, and social control) associated with the framework presented earlier. The SSI has been used extensively in research to measure possession of basic emotional and social skills in a variety of contexts. Most recently, the SSI has been used to measure the emotional and social skills of leaders

and the extent to which possession of these skills relate to leader effectiveness (e.g. Riggio *et al.*, 2003).

In research and in workshops, the self-report Social Skills Inventory allows a rudimentary assessment on each of the six skill dimensions in comparison to norms (see Riggio and Carney, 2003). This allows some indication of skill strengths and areas that need attention. Yet, the various emotional and social skills interact to some extent. For example, although emotional expressiveness and sensitivity are typically correlated (if you can express emotions well, you are usually able to decode others' emotional messages; Riggio, 1986), low expressiveness and high sensitivity may indicate someone who is shy and perhaps hypersensitive to others' emotions. Similarly, high emotional expressiveness and low emotional control may be indicative of someone who is emotionally "out of control" (in an extreme sense, think of comedians Robin Williams or Jim Carrey). The opposite, low expressiveness and high emotional control suggests someone who appears emotionally distant and aloof. When it comes to possession of emotional and social skills, we propose that a balance among the various skill dimensions is important. For example, one study with a clinical population found that it was the imbalances among the various skill dimensions that are most predictive of psychopathology and social adjustment problems more so than the total amount of emotional and social skills (Perez *et al.*, 2007).

The self-report assessments can be bolstered by using a performance-based measurement instrument, such as the Interpersonal Perception Task (IPT), which is a videotape of actual live scenes of social interactions designed to measure sensitivity to emotional, nonverbal, and social cues. By providing feedback about correct and incorrect responses, participants can also receive some instruction about which cues they should attend to and about the role that common biases and stereotypes play in accurate analysis of social situations. Research has shown improvement in emotional and social sensitivity for trainees who use the IPT to practice identifying subtle nonverbal and social cues (Costanzo, 1992).

Feedback is very important in honing emotional skills in particular because nonverbal cues of emotion, unlike verbal statements, are subtle and occur outside of normal spheres of awareness. Therefore, workshops to develop emotional and social skills make liberal use of videotaped performances, role-playing sessions, and other exercises with detailed feedback provided by both the workshop facilitators and other participants. The use of 360-degree feedback from a leader's typical followers, peers, supervisors, and relevant others, can also be a valuable source of feedback.

Targeted training interventions to help leaders achieve the optimal levels of emotional and social skills may include role-playing scenarios and reviewing videotaped performances, development of verbal and nonverbal "listening skills", exercises in emotional expression and control, and keeping a diary of emotional situations and reflecting on them.

While there is considerable evidence in the clinical psychology literature that social skill training is effective in overcoming problems in social engagement and overcoming social reticence and shyness (Carducci, 1999, Trower *et al.*, 1978), more recent evidence has demonstrated that emotional skills, particularly expressiveness, could be improved during a multi-week training session (Taylor, 2002). Through targeted training, relying on accurate assessment, and constructive feedback, the emotional and social skills of leaders can be improved.

Conclusion

There is little doubt that "people skills" – ability to communicate effectively, to manage social interactions and social relationships – are critical for today's successful leaders. To conceptualize these critical leader abilities, this paper draws on early research on emotional and social skills in psychology, and demonstrates how an emotional and social skill framework both relates to and can play a role in the development of effective workplace leaders. The parallels between the emotional and social skills framework and the new construct of emotional intelligence, and the older construct of social intelligence, are noted. We suggest that emotional and social skills can be targeted for assessment and development and can be an important component of a leadership development program. Research evidence suggests that emotional and social skills are both related to leader effectiveness and are able to be improved through training interventions.

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