Master of Professional Studies

(Leadership and Development)

ASSESSMENT – FINAL REPORT

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"An Emotional Rollercoaster"

The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership and Management

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Abstract

This inquiry aimed to explore the lived experiences of 5 volunteer participants from an organisation in the UK before and after an Emotional Intelligence (EI) based programme on management and leadership.

The desired outcome was to discover how aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management? I wanted to identify the impact that EI had on leadership and management and how a different approach may help in developing their working relationships.

A hermeneutical phenomenological approach was used to elicit the lived experiences of the participants through the meaning and perception of their experiences.

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data using audio recorded pre-programme and post programme, with a final group discussion as the final data gathering event.

Thematic analysis was used to identify codes and themes, and the key themes will be taken forward by the organisation to steer future development.

The findings, *in my opinion*, show there is sufficient behavioural change to warrant an investment in EI as a key ingredient to how we lead and manage others.

Key terms include:

"Emotional Intelligence", "Moccasin Approach", "Leadership", "Management", "Communication", "Lived experience".

1. Introduction

I had worked in the field of Leadership and Management since 1979, when I was asked to deliver a Leadership/Management course for newly promoted Ammunition Technicians in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps (RAOC). From that experience, I had a problem about how Leadership and Management was taught in the armed forces as I didn't agree with it. This experience, and others through the years, have lit the passion I have for how we engage and work best with each other *regardless* of any hierarchical organisational structure.

The purpose of my research is to examine the question "How do aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management"?

This project will inquire about the impact an Emotional Intelligence (EI) based programme, entitled the "Moccasin Approach®", has had on the way we communicate with others at work and the positive effect that has on communication as we manage and lead others, regardless of hierarchical position.

The term "Moccasin Approach®" was created from a saying with many variations along the lines of, "never criticise a man until you've walked a mile in his moccasins". While this saying is often cited as an old Indian saying, it is believed to come from a poem by Mary T. Lathrap published in 1895 (Lathrap et al., 1895). I have adopted the essence of the saying and married it to the four ingredients of EI (below), to create an approach which helps people see things from the perspective of others before they decide thus improving all aspects of communication as we manage and lead those around us.

The 4 core ingredients of EI (as per an organisation called TalentSmart (TalentSmart).

1. Self-awareness

2. Self-management

3. Social awareness (*Daniel Goleman refers to this as "Empathy"*)

4. Relationship management

1.1 Hopes

I hope that this inquiry will:

- identify how EI impacts the effectiveness of communication and culture of an organisation.

- encourage organisations to realise the value of EI in Leadership and Management and include it in their people development initiatives.

- promote the use of easily managed EI monitoring tools to ensure the lessons are taken into the workplace and used.

- create an awareness within the L&D community at large, that EI plays an important role in the world of Leadership, Management and people skills and should be considered a best practice ingredient.

For too long, Leadership and Management has been taught by relating to various popular Leadership models and outdated thinking (Kezar, 2009). It appears to assume that all people can adopt Leadership and apply it in the same way as all others do, without any consideration of our considerable individual differences and preferences.

In my personal experience, what has been lacking is the people skills in making some of these great models work. Managing people is no different, and the Moccasin Approach helps people understand other people and how they must learn to see things not just from their perspective alone, but most importantly to consider the perspective of others first.

In the book "Leadership Through People Skills" (Lefton and Buzzotta, 2004) the authors express their belief that people skills will enhance the working relationship between people making them more effective in their work thus surely improving organisation success. I too believe that it is people skills that we must focus on to acquire "clean information" through "clean communication". After all, if the information we get back from people is even slightly inaccurate, or edited so it doesn't cause upset or anger, how can the decisions based on such information be good?

With over 40 years of experience in managing and leading up to 500 people, I believe that my experience, and what I have learned from it, gives me the knowledge and credibility to conduct such an inquiry.

I have been fortunate enough to be given access to a team of aspiring managers/leaders in an organisation where I have been conducting a Leadership and Management programme. They have kindly become my participants in this inquiry and their willing participation in my research has been the foundation of my findings.

While we can look at the whole organisation as the "system in focus" (Battram, 2001), we clearly need to consider the subsystems which are recognised as teams within the organisation. However, there are separate unofficial sub-sub systems which have evolved, which do not technically exist but are present none the less such as various cliques.

These unofficial sub-sub systems have been created through time by organisational justice or injustice (Folger and Cropanzano, 1998), and need to be recognised and addressed by analysis of the root cause and a healthy objective comparison against the organisational goals and customer needs to dissolve them.

I feel best placed to investigate this situation as I understand the issues within the organisation from an outsider's perspective. I am not affected by the beliefs and desires of others. Whilst I am literally an "Outsider" (Costley et al., 2013), I believe that my involvement and the relationship I expect to build with the programme members, may almost convert me to an unconscious insider.

I wish to discover how communication will be far less infected by personal bias and the impact this has on how they lead and manage others. The more we believe we are in control of our conscious bias, the more we will fall prey to the invisible unconscious bias that is within us all (Ross, 2014).

I wish to investigate the lived experience of attendees of an Emotional Intelligence based Leadership programme. Specifically, "How do aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management"? This will be achieved through one to one and group interviews to discover the lived experiences and effects of the Moccasin Approach on the participants during and after the Leadership and Management programme.

I aim to discover the lived experiences of participants both before and after their EI based Leadership and Management programme and the impact of their use of EI in their modified approach to their communications whilst leading and managing colleagues.

The main objective I wish to achieve is to inquire about is if EI is a fundamental requirement for how we lead and manage people, regardless of where we are in the company hierarchy.

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2   Knowledge Landscape

2.1   My experiential Knowledge Landscape.

My own knowledge landscape has formed over 40 years within the world of learning, Management and Leadership, in both theoretical terms and as a practitioner. I have also learned from various sources of knowledge which I have been pointed towards, I have discovered or have realised learning from my own experience and the experience of others.

I see all of this coming together to offer thoughts and direction towards an EI based approach to Leadership and Management, which in turn affects the organisational "culture". Whilst my project stops at "The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership and Management", I feel it important to associate the further value this inquiry suggests and how it may impact organisational culture. I am considering the cultural aspect for a future PhD.

I would like to start by discussing some of the literature I have found through friends, colleagues, my searches and recommendations from institutions and some of the thinking they have created.

To address my research question of "How do aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management", my experience tells me I should adopt a more holistic approach. As mentioned in my introduction, my experience is that leadership and management is infected with too many process-driven models of management which people follow with little regard for what makes these people tick, how can I relate to them personally.

My belief is that we need to address what people feel about things, dare I suggest, engage with their hearts, feelings, emotions! The audacity! But, collectively, these spell out vital ingredients of Emotional Intelligence.

Having said that, I am also conscious that organisations, including my own, focus on performance and there I need to keep in mind how performance management may also come into the mix with Emotional Intelligence.

Combine the old and the new, and we have a hearts and minds approach which I call "Fires and Wires"! We need to connect in the brain, the wires, but we also need to light the fires of emotion and passion, the fire.

From experience, I am very aware that to find out about people, we must use questions, and with my many years of experience as a facilitator and trainer, I understand the power of questions in learning. Therefore, I also want to touch on experiential learning.

I then want to see how EI fits in with other, but connected, thinking, and how that can help us. We need to think about how EI can impact on performance and how questioning is such a critical part of how people learn and remember. All this adds up to a recipe for a far better understanding of others and therefore improved relationships as well.

2.2   Literature and associated learning

2.2.1   Emotional intelligence (EI)

One of the earliest measurements of EI was entitled the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale (MEIS) which consisted of twelve ability measures of EI divided into 4 classes which were perceiving, assimilating, understanding and managing emotion. J. D. Mayer, P. Salovey, & D. R. Caruso in 1998 (Salovey et al., 2007). Goleman went on to develop these and today lists them as Self-awareness, Self-management, Empathy and Relationship management.

I have been greatly influenced by Daniel Goleman who is often credited with bringing EI into the public domain and who went on to refine EI into his current 4 ingredients of Self-awareness, Self-management, Empathy and Relationship Management. Goleman happily admits that his interest was fed by Howard Gardner, who incidentally was a classmate of Goleman at Harvard, who created his well-known Multiple Intelligences. Gardner described "interpersonal" intelligence as the ability to understand others and "intrapersonal" intelligence or self-awareness (Gardner, 1983).

During my army career of 22 years, I began to recognise the need for human engagement, which the rigorous hierarchical structure of the army did not recognise. Unconsciously, I had discovered a need for what is now recognised as EI.

In his books, Goleman has a theme that EI is something we need to work on and enhance to be successful at what we do regarding how we communicate with people. It affects how we

influence, inspire, support and lead. Specific books from Goleman which have influenced and supported my thinking and I will touch on these now.

(Goleman, 1996) described an incident where two children were arguing about a difference, and one child became very angry and frustrated. When he was taken aside and was invited to look at things from the other child's point of view, there was a marked difference in that child's approach (what Goleman calls empathy and some social awareness). Now it could be argued that if a child can do it so can adults, but that is the enigma! Our experiences in life form an almost defensive mechanism about how we deal with such emotions, and that is why we must become emotionally intelligent.

2.2.2 How EI sits with other EI authors and other aspects of what makes us "Us."

This arguably touches on Robert Kegan's work on the order of consciousness (Kegan, 1995), which sits well with the EI terms self-awareness and social awareness from EI. From my interpretation, Kegan points out that we may need to almost step away from what we perceive to be "us" or ourselves and think more objectively about that which we thought a concrete part of us. By looking at things from the perspective of others, we are able to ignore our own drivers and see that fresh perspective. The danger is that how we see ourselves is often dependent on how we *think* others experience us, and therefore, we act or behave differently to counteract that perceived thinking.

Goleman discusses how EI skills are, in many ways, the ingredients for charm, social success and even charisma. All such ingredients arguably help us become better managers, leaders and communicators (Goleman, 1996). He goes on to suggest, not state, that EI can be as important for advancement as IQ.

In regard to leadership and management, I make an analogy to cooking. We can all use the same or very similar ingredients, but how much we use each and even how we use them can make a whole world of difference. This is his point. We are so used to seeing intelligence as just a data-driven result of scores (IQ), whereas, the fuller, richer and critical addition is emotion, as this infects and alters how we use our data/intelligence. From his research involving business leaders around the world, EI is a proven ingredient in those people who can get the best from others, often making themselves a success.

Goleman also says we have an inherent drive to connect to each other whether we like it or not, and how we are hard-wired to react to empathy and be empathetic (albeit with a few exceptions such as psychopaths etc.) (Goleman, 2007). Goleman emphasises what he calls the three types of empathy Cognitive, Emotional and Empathic Concern. He goes on to say that without all three, we cannot maintain the best relationships (Goleman, 2015).

When talking about the brain, Dr David Eagleman (Eagleman, 2017) touches on empathy, but worryingly points out that we humans have the capacity to "switch it off"! This is when external forces such as propaganda infect us and where we willingly take part in horrors such as ethnic cleansing! Our brains are hugely affected by what we have experienced or experience, so we are an ever-evolving being and not necessarily always for the better! This concept can be seen in the workplace through negative and self-destructive cultures.

Further reading of books from doctors Travis Bradbury and Jean Greaves, founders of TalentSmart in the US which is a provider of EI books, research and courses, drew me into their 4 skills of EI which are Self-awareness, Self-management, Social Awareness and Relationship Management (Bradberry and Greaves, 2006). They are for *me* the cornerstones of EI.

Goleman's ingredients of EI match with TalentSmart's except for his inclusion of "Empathy" whereas TalentSmart refers to that aspect as "Social Awareness". When compared, they merge together seamlessly.

It is my belief that EI is like the conductor in the orchestra, and as the conductor helps all the musicians work so well together, EI helps us communicate in a far more effective manner. I base this belief on the research and findings of Goleman and TalentSmart, my own experience and also logic. If we are more in tune with others, look at things from their perspective, we will be better able to make decisions which take into account the thoughts of others. This does not mean we will always do what they want, but we will be more aware of how they feel and appreciate the impact our decisions may make on them. We still have to make well-informed decisions. In business particularly, there has to be a balance between what others would like/prefer and what the business requires. We need the right tools for the job!

I have looked at my experience of how people see things, but what tools are out there to help us achieve the clarity of communication we need to make informed decisions?

A fundamental requirement is clear, effective and efficient communication. My experience shows that this can only be achieved through openness and honesty, clarity and transparency. Gary Chapman talks about this topic and touches on 5 levels of communication (Chapman, 2014).

These are all easily compared to how we differ as people and how our styles of communication are different in each of us. This, in turn, affects how we deal with each other and how we receive the other person's communication style. Just think of that person who annoys you or who is always a challenge to understand them when you talk with them, that is it!

2.2.3 Performance Management

Another tool which we need to use EI in is the art of helping people develop their performance in the workplace, in other words, managing performance. It is an area which we have historically handled very poorly, and countless of us have left a feedback session feeling unrecognised and undervalued with little hope for the future. In my experience, we must not "give" feedback, but facilitate it using powerful questions to help the recipient reason out what could be done better and why, how it could be done better and why, with the key being that they are doing the thinking for themselves.

(Sargeant et al., 2015) discuss the facilitation of feedback and describe a similar model, the "R2C2 Facilitated Feedback Model" where they too have facilitated feedback. The model and its four phases which build the relationship, explore their reactions, explore the content, coach for performance change based on those aspects. We need to make people do the thinking, the reasoning and discover the solutions for themselves; that brings about far better performance change, praise and recognition and thus self-respect.

We need to help people understand that Performance Management is not a one-off event but a continuous process which never stops. There is a growing movement in the world of business for more frequent casual check-ins on a much more regular basis. This has been seen to gain far better results and when facilitated correctly, brings quicker performance change.

If someone becomes aware of what is not working so well, why it is not working so well, the impacts of it not working so well and how they could improve this, surely that internal searching will feed the desire to improve, after all, it is their own thinking. Top that with them thinking through why doing something differently will be better, whom it will help, and what benefits it may bring, are all motivators to get on and do something about it.

Questioning is seen as the foundation of great coaching, but if I could differentiate by saying it should be questions which are for both performance improvement and self-development. Michael Bungay Stanier, in his book "The Coaching Habit" (Bungay Stanier, 2016), raises the question are you coaching to improve performance or coaching for development? This examines coaching to deal with an issue or coaching how the person sees and deals with the issue. I believe that in performance management, we should be using both as the situation requires. Questions can be a great aid to learning as this next topic shows.

2.2.4   Discovery learning

I also see Socratic Questioning not just as a powerful questioning technique for coaching, but a wonderful resource in many other situations. Socratic questioning is about evoking and drawing out the feelings, thinking, and even knowledge which the individual has but is just reluctant to admit or hear from others. This means we must know aspects of the person (Social Awareness), to help this work effectively; hence, it works hand in glove with EI (Passmore et al., 2019).

All of this facilitated feedback brings the missing detail that may have been forgotten or overlooked in the initial learning, so it is in itself a new learning experience. As with any new understanding and learning, we must engage the learner through questioning. If we had just told them everything and explained it all, they would not have worked it all out for themselves.

Dr David Eagleman notes that the best way for the brain to accept learning is through experience (Eagleman, 2017), what better way to experience the learning by discovering it ourselves through some carefully crafted questions to guide their thinking.

I believe much of what has been mentioned thus far has an impact on how people feel, how they are treated, and how the management and leadership of an organisation communicates with their people. All of this helps create the culture of an organisation.

I think any organisation would be well advised to establish their own cultural web (Johnson et al., 2011), health check against what they wish it to look like and invest in the required changes.

Through my experience with this organisation, I feel able to say that their culture is not near where it should be. Whilst my enquiry does not include the culture as such, I did wish to see if any evidence in the findings touched on this topic and I am pleased to say that it has uncovered enough to warrant further investigation at a later date. The evidence includes the stories which are repeated to new starters, the constant mentioning of that old "council way", the protection by some of what has always been and the resistance to change, the lack of interest/support for the organisational values, the mockery of the "One Team" ethos, unofficial subcultures which thrive and the constant ridicule of what is hoped for.

The main questions I have about this project include:

1. What are the lived experiences of the participants before the programme regarding the Leadership and Management relationships within the organisation?

2. What changes in Leadership and Management do the participants believe are required to improve working relationships across the organisation?

3. How has the EI based Moccasin Approach programme has produced indicators that their new approach is producing different behaviours that are associated with improved leadership in areas such as a more open communication approach leading to better clarity, greater harmony, efficiency and effectiveness and therefore less stress?

4. How can the attendees see EI being used to improve other aspects of workplace performance?

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3 Methodology

3.1 Purpose:

The purpose of my proposed research is to examine the question "How do aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management"?

3.2 Aims:

To investigate the lived experiences of colleagues before, during and after an Emotional Intelligence based Leadership and Management programme.

3.3 Objectives:

1. What are the lived experiences of the cohort before the programme regarding cultural Leadership and Management relationships?

2. What changes do the participants believe are required to commit to, to improve current Leadership and Management practices?

3. How has EI impacted Leadership and Management relationships, and what commitments are required to improve?

4. How can the attendees see EI being used to improve other aspects of workplace performance?

3.4 Impacts and outcomes:

1. The outcome will encourage the organisation, and other organisations, to realise the value of EI in Leadership and Management.

2. Identify how EI impacts the effectiveness of communication and culture of an organisation.

3. Promote the use of easily managed EI monitoring tools to ensure the lessons are taken into the workplace and used.

4. Create awareness within the L&D community at large, that EI plays a vital role in the world of Leadership, Management and people skills and should be considered a best practice ingredient.

I wished to inquire about how aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management. The methodology I used was critical to the whole project. I needed to finish knowing that my research was based on a sound, appropriate methodology, and that the methods used captured the participants lived experience. I needed to discover if what I believed did, or did not, hold true. I also hoped to be surprised by some of the findings.

3.5 Methodology:

I was drawn to Hermeneutical Phenomenology because my goal was to discover not only the lived experience of the participants of the programme, but to understand the impact of human experience (Moustakas, 1994). I wanted to inquire into the lived experiences of the *individual* and the *perspectives* of each participant.

The sentence which sold me to the hermeneutical side was "Phenomenology becomes hermeneutical when its method is taken to be interpretive (rather than purely descriptive as in transcendental phenomenology)" (Van Manen, 2016).

So, my conclusion was that the hermeneutical approach is focused on the *interpretation* of the lived experience and not just the experience (Given, 2008). Why is this important?

I want *their* interpretation of *their* lived experience. I want their past and present influences to emerge unrestrained, so that my findings can show the truth they have experienced and not a pressurised and distorted version given through the lens of worry from what others may think.

Our personal perspective can also be affected by our earlier, sometimes very personal lived experiences, which may have altered our approach or acceptance of new experiences because of those earlier experiences. Our perception of reality is not an accurate reflection of what is happening in the real world, but more to do with how our brain is interpreting that reality (Eagleman, 2017). So regardless of what is taught or even how it is taught, the hermeneutical phenomenological approach is imperative to capture what the learning has meant to each participant through their own lens. On a similar slant, an interpretivist inquiry is not based on just the one reality but lends to the belief that there are in fact, multiple realities (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013).

Whilst this may seem incongruous with logic, when we think of the term "belief creates reality", we can see that if someone truly believes in their own version of reality, then it is, for them at least, reality! It is as Denzin and Lincoln say, "the knower and the known shape one another" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2013)!

3.6 Planning:

Participants:

I expected 7 people on the programme, but sadly 2 left during the programme and their data deleted. In my opinion, this loss of two participants has not made a difference. I note that for phenomenological studies, 5 – 25 is recommended, (Creswell, 1998) whilst (Morse and Niehaus, 2016) suggests it may be less than six depending on so many variables there cannot be a rule. I feel no loss was incurred as their thoughts were in the same vein as their colleagues.

3.6.1 Lived experience journal:

Each participant was *encouraged* to maintain a set of casual notes to form a lived experience journal, from the start of the programme to the end and beyond. The idea was that they could add their lived experiences as they experienced each new moment, whether good or bad and see what they could learn from them. I wanted them to do this as I believe it would offer an insight into how they, their peers, and other influences, affect their use of the programme content.

The very act of writing slows our thoughts and often allows us to consider aspects of what we're writing about in a different light or perspective. It may even help us question what we were about to write and lead us into other questions we had not considered (Cunningham et al., 2016). This could prove very useful for them to be able to recall various entries they made relevant to the topic(s) we were discussing in the interviews and lead me to data which would otherwise not have been remembered.

I hasten to add that their journals/notes were theirs, and I did not read them or collect them in any way, they remained their private property entirely.

3.6.2   Semi-structured interview:

I used a semi-structured 60-minute recorded interview to allow me to cover the main themes, but we were not restricted to a set of limiting questions which would not allow us to stretch out into relevant branches of discussion. Remember, I wanted *their* views through *their* lens and in my mind that meant I had to give them space to expand on themes.

The semi-structured interview gave me the freedom to expand on the unexpected but relevant themes, topics and issues (Edwards and Holland, 2013). This included multiple interviews before, after and even later with a group style discussion as an informal washup.

The thinking behind these interventions was that I believed that the very experiences they had as they progressed through and beyond the programme, meant that their thinking, perception and beliefs would evolve, and capturing *that* would be most useful. These interviews facilitated the goals of my first and second objectives which were "What are the lived experiences of the cohort prior to the programme in terms of cultural Leadership and Management relationships?" and "What changes do the participants believe are required to improve their current situation?" I invited the participants to refer to their journal notes during the interviews if they wished to, so I could discover aspects they may have forgotten about between the two interviews.

The theme of the interviews was to explore the *non-hierarchical* Leadership and Management regarding any original issues in communication concerning leading and managing others, what were the effects of these issues, were people open to listening to suggested improvements, if not why not, what participants see regarding the future for this Moccasin Approach? All of this unveiled a wealth of data for the inquiry to consider.

3.6.3   Group discussion:

After the individual interviews, I conducted a group discussion with all the participants. I believed that some participants would gain confidence from their peers and say things they may not have said during the one to one interview, I am delighted to say that this happened. I also found that listening to each other caused synergy and ignited thoughts, frustrations and even fire in their communication.

Advantages and disadvantages of a group style discussions (Aubel et al., 1994).

Advantages:

- In such a group setting may be that participants feel empowered to spontaneously express their thoughts and suggestions in front of their colleagues knowing they will have their support
- The group setting will allow each participant to avoid questions they do not wish to answer knowing others in the group will do so
- With numerous people in the group, a wider range and more substantial amount of data can be gathered in a far shorter time.
- The group can almost self-police content offered as it is being given in front of witnesses who can validate or invalidate the data

Disadvantages of a group interview:

- Participants may feel pressurised and therefore not give full and open answers due to peer pressure.

- Participants may feel awkward stating their true beliefs of others or managers whom others in the group may know and have as friends.

- Dependent upon the participant, others may seek to agree to gain approval rather than just agree with the expressions being offered.

I am pleased to say that, in my belief, we gained all the advantages and none of the possible disadvantages. I would even be as bold to say that this was mainly due to their use of EI.

Whilst I am not actually working with Action Research, I am taking the cycle of "plan, act, observe, act" and promoting it to the participants. It fits nicely with what we are trying to achieve in the longer term (Kemmis et al., 2014).

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4 Project activity

4.1 Introduction:

I was just about to start a new project with a client, which would be a leadership and management development programme based on EI called the Moccasin Approach (MA) (LaPD Solutions Ltd). This programme covered many different aspects of leadership and management, but all topics are underpinned by EI.

The programme included the following key topics:

The Moccasin Manager. This is where a manager would use the Moccasin Approach by considering things from the other person world first. Using their knowledge from the Social Awareness aspect they would consider the positive and negative triggers for others before communicating or taking action.

Interactive Presentations. Instead of the usual lecture-based approach to a presentation, the presenter uses a far more interactive approach. This includes using questions which relate to the audience's prior knowledge, needs and hopes, so again, touching on the Social Awareness ingredient.

Performance Management. In the usual process of performance management, the manager will explain many of the areas a person needs to improve and helps them understand how they can improve. The EI based approach used here uses questions, often Socratic, to elicit those areas of development to be explored, have the person reason through the impact(s) or possible impact(s), why they would wish to do things differently, how that would be better, how it would benefit and how they may go about developing the areas. This vastly improves Self-Awareness and helps people to manage those areas of development far more effectively.

Communication Skills. The focus here is the manner in which we can unconsciously create barriers between people, the impacts and how to remove such barriers. There is also focus on how to avoid such barriers through social awareness and self-awareness as well.

4.1.1 Project Planning

I decided I wanted to conduct two semi-structured interviews. One showing where the participants were in terms of previous leadership and management training and how they felt leadership and management felt at the time, and then post Moccasin Approach programme, a second interview with each person to discover how the EI aspects had impacted on them and what differences this had made to how they initially felt.

The semi-structured interview gave me the freedom to expand on the unexpected but relevant themes, topics and issues.

I started with 7 people on the programme, and in terms of suitable numbers for such research, I was comforted to read that a number of 6 is in fact recommended for phenomenological studies (Edwards and Holland, 2013).

Just before the interviews started, we lost two participants in quick succession due to them finding new jobs. I still believe that the 5 participants and their interviews produced sufficient data. I also noted Edwards and Holland also say that there is no set formula or rule for how many we should have, as in their opinion it very much depends on the nature and design of the study. I tend to agree, in an unbiased way, of course.

The organisation agreed for me to use their employees as participants, and I arranged an initial meet up with them all to check they were happy with what I intended to do, and they all were. It is worthy of note that I believed that the organisation, the participants and I would gain from this research topic and that no one would be treated unfairly or be disadvantaged in any way.

One issue quickly became apparent. Whilst all agreed to sign and give me permission to use the data from their interviews; it became clear that the organisation would know that this data could only come from one group of people in the organisation. Protecting individual identity is critical, so no disadvantage, or advantage, can occur (Shamoo, 2015). To remove this risk, it was agreed that when asked, the group would be able to say that other data were collected from unnamed sources within the organisation but outside their programme group. This is what actually happened. Having looked at the research I have now completed, and after asking others for their opinion, I believe that the steps taken from the university's

ethics approval to my own ethical code have ensured no advantages or disadvantages in all regards.

4.1.2   Interviews

After gaining the signed permission from each participant (Appendix A) and gaining my ethical approval, I conducted the first round of one-hour interviews.

I then delivered the Moccasin Approach programme through until the end of the year.

In February 2019, I conducted the final round of interviews plus an additional group interview.

Once I transcribed the data, I used MAXQDA software to assist me in coding (VERBI Software GmbH). I found it very helpful as it allowed me to sort and colour code, which helped me see themes and even surprises that the data supported but which I had not expected.

A surprise for me was that some of the interviews went off on quite a tangent. Although all relevant, initially my concern was, have I skewed things by asking participants different question, even though the flow of the conversation took us there?

After some thought and research, I was happy as some of those tangents were brought about by the participant's notes they brought to the interview. As mentioned earlier, I had encouraged the participants to make notes, keep journals, as they used their new knowledge on a day to day basis after the programme.

4.1.3   The Good, the Bad and the Ugly

In hindsight, I was surprised and disappointed at my reaction to some of the unexpected data. I was almost annoyed; it had the audacity to appear when I had not been looking for it! I then realised my emotions pointed to what I wanted, and worryingly a possible bias. I was annoyed that I had not spotted this earlier. I then revisited the data with fresh eyes and with a more open approach and found this experience helped me become more objective. It also encouraged me to conduct a bias check of my coding which, in albeit in just a few instances, led to changes. The surprise was that some evidence of EI being used unconsciously was found in the pre-programme interviews (yellow highlighted text in Appendix C).

Robert Kegan uses the phrase "Big assumption" (Kegan and Lahey, 2002). He distinguishes it from what we understand as an everyday assumption, as in something we aren't certain is true. A *big* assumption, on the other hand, is that which our belief *tells* us is the truth. In other words, because we believe in something so much, then it becomes a truth for *us* (belief creates reality). The problem with this is that when something bumps against our big assumption, we defend against it as it is challenging what we believe to be true.

My own big assumption was that EI was EI; in other words little else worked like EI, whereas in fact, we all possess varying amounts of EI and just because we had not been taught it didn't make it cease to exist in natural personality traits where, for example, empathetic people had all three types of empathy (Goleman, 2015).

My own lesson here is that I had to review what I held to be true and give it a health check. In doing so, I re-evaluated my *big* assumption into an ordinary assumption, and I realised that as an assumption, it could be challenged. My brain was then quite happy to accept that and run with change.

The best part of this surprise is that I enjoyed that short journey of realisation, as this means I can now employ this in my own professional practice.

This whole issue of being surprised led me to research the experience of being surprised. I found a great point that surprise was found to be experienced as a negative. This they say is due to what our brain has already considered as possible, even if only a slim possibility, it has already been reasoned through, whereas a surprise is clearly something we *didn't* expect. (Hidi and Boscolo, 2006) It also made me question why the surprise was seen as a negative! Was it going against what I fundamentally *wanted* to discover?

For me personally, this helped a great deal as I could understand why I had been negative, and it also reinforced that the action I had taken to check for bias, had indeed been most wise. Our brains go through a bit of a balancing act by wanting to conserve energy by knowing the way of our world and relying on that expectation, whilst seeking out the excitement of true surprise (Eagleman, 2018). In my case, I just didn't want to experience that surprise, and for me, that triggers my fear of bias!

I had expected that my participants would experience surprise from the benefits of using the EI based Moccasin Approach. I was, in fact, pleased to hear that on many occasions,

through improved relationships and a new approach to communicating, it helped in many ways. I shall elaborate on this in my findings chapter.

4.1.4 The analysis

I focussed on the Braun and Clarke method of Thematic Analysis (TA) (Braun and Clarke, 2014) and as they encouraged, I then read some of their more recent writings and watched videos on their approach. I found this experience to be somewhat liberating, but only compared to the monster I had created in my head around TA. Having had no previous experience with TA at all, I somehow managed to see it as an immensely complex process.

My Brain works on all that is logical and clings to processes and structure like a child to its mother. This caused me a huge problem with Thematic Analysis as I wanted a one plus one equals two proves where I count up the word *great* or *engaged* and so on. I soon realised that I had to look deeper and using the hermeneutical and interpretive approach to lift the unseen feeling behind the data. Things became far easier after this.

A big demotivator was when I initially tried using Excel to capture and sort the data, but this I found most problematic due mostly to my limited knowledge of how to use Excel effectively, but also as my autistic traits did not like it.

My relief came in the form of the well-reviewed software called MAXQDA mentioned earlier. This proved quite a moment as it helped me see things in a way my brain finds far easier to process as it has less noise.

An example of the colour coding is shown in Appendix B. I was able to split the interviews into three groups, one from the pre-programme interview, one from the post programme interview and one for the group discussion. I was then able to colour code (Green and Red), which were from each group and add Memo notes to any code I wished, as shown in the images at Appendix B.

If I were to advise anyone embarking on TA for the first time, my advice would be to revisit the data constantly. Immerse yourself in it repeatedly. I did this by being the interviewer, by listening to each recording as I transcribed it, by going back through and listening as I read so I could format various words to show the emphasis they were spoken with, to print and read the transcripts where I used post-it notes to cross-reference, and finally just listening

again and again and revisiting sections to compare statements. I loved the term which Braun and Clarke used in their book, which was "intimately familiar" (Braun and Clarke, 2014). I think that is where you have to get to. If I were to do this again, I would use video to record the interviews. There were moments I could remember seat shifting or the eyes widening with passion or anger; this data would have been of additional benefit.

My first error was to try and apply codes too soon. I realised this was always needing updating, so I deleted them all, revisited the data numerous times and made notes/memos and then went on to make codes. As recommended, I tried to avoid one-word codes and then found I had to shorten some very wordy codes.

The more I reviewed it, the more the real underpinning thinking and perspectives seemed clear. I found that by listening to *the w*ay they spoke on certain topics, really revealed just how vital that emphasis was. Excuse this sidestep, but a top tip is also asking participants to keep journals or notes of incidents and experiences in work as they began to use their learning from the programme. Without these, the participants agreed they would have forgotten about many of the experiences, and I would not have been able to capture that data.

When it came to the themes, it seemed very logical. It was like sorting various coins into money bags. Only the right ones could go in the bags with labels like relationships, engagement feeling of not being listened to and so on.

The topic of weighting themes was considered but was decided not to do this. The first reason was that the weighting of the themes would not have been greatly different although Relationships was ahead of the rest. The second reason was that I did not want to encourage any preference or focus on some themes over others. I would rather that a balanced approach was used to address these areas and to avoid any one theme being selected over another.

Whilst I would still recommend TA for qualitative research analysis, I was drawn to the thinking of James Scheurich (Scheurich, 2001) who says we must be very careful in how we approach our coding or even interpretation of what the interviewee is saying. His concern, which I agree with, is that we can interpret the language of the interviewee from our perspective, which in itself lends more to misinterpretation.

Having said that, as a researcher using Hermeneutical Phenomenology, I feel I am almost licenced to do just that. I need to get into the contextual aspects of what the interviewee has said. Why did they say it, and where did that come from for them?

One of the changes this experience with thematic analysis will bring about for me is that previously I looked at raw data, numbers of times, repetition so perhaps a far more quantitative approach than this. Rarely did I really try to analyse what was behind the data! This whole university experience has awakened a desire to look deeper and find *why* things are, where did that *why* come from? What caused the person to feel that?

A concluding, and perhaps worrying thought is, what if in 3 months I were to go back and review and recode and rethink; what differences would I discover?

5. Project findings

5.1 Introduction

The findings were generated from two sets of semi-structured interviews with 5 participants. The participants were from different teams and roles, and some had managerial role experience, and some did not. I would like to remind the reader that this inquiry is looking at how we manage and lead others, *regardless of hierarchical position*. A key premise of the programme is that leadership and management skills are not only for those in official leadership or management positions, but skills which should be taught to all employees to prepare them for such roles and better manage their communication between colleagues.

The first set of interviews focused on their own management style and how their managers managed others, regardless of whether they managed the participant or not.

The second set of semi-structured interviews were focused on how the aspect of EI had influenced their own style and what, if any, impact it had on those around them.

There was one final interaction which was a group interview, which explored the same themes but to see if being surrounded and possibly feeling supported by their peers, the participants would share anything different or present differences in a different way. Summary.

This chapter will show examples of the findings of each interview set and discuss the findings in turn.

5.2 Initial interview – leadership and management approach pre-programme.

Participants were asked a series of informal questions (see samples at Appendix E) to ascertain how they and their colleagues, especially those in official or unofficial management and leadership roles, managed and led others. Some of the questions quoted below were not on the original list as they were probing questions following the theme of the chat.

This *may* indicate how well any previous management programmes at the organisation compared to the current programme or show that the previous management programme learning was not followed through to the workplace and measured. Regardless, I believe that it will give a baseline understanding of management practice against which I can compare attitudes and behaviours post the Moccasin Approach programme.

My insight into the previous programme is because I was involved in it, albeit in a small way. I did, however, have a full understanding of the previous programme and how it was measured through a summative assessment (the same as the initial assessment to compare against). The programme provider has now ceased using the programme due to it being outdated.

It would also allow the participants to compare the then current styles of management and leadership compared to those encouraged in the programme after it had concluded, and they had time to put it into practice.

The key themes that I discovered from the pre-programme interviews were:

- Lacking Social Awareness (empathy)
- Lack of Recognition
- Lack of Top-Down Leading
- Not listened to

Supporting codes for each can be viewed at Appendix C

5.2.1   Lacking Social Awareness (empathy)

This next quote comes from a probing question which was, "is there anything from your perspective about how you were managed or how others managed you that makes you say lots of managers lack social awareness?"

> "The Social Awareness side of EI was emphasised a lot during the programme, and it is such a powerful approach to build relationships. The more we know about those we work with, and not just subordinates but peers and managers too, the more we can figure them out and communicate with them far better. I am constantly using the Moccasin Approach now, it just works". Participant 5.

(Bradberry and Greaves, 2006), talk about *social competence* to describe our ability to recognise and understand the behaviours of others. Once we can do this, we become socially aware.

This means we can tune in to how the other person is feeling and build successful relationships from that social competence. The authors also state that the key to building great working relationships is through the first three skills of EI which they name as Self-awareness, Self-management and *Social awareness*. It is worthy of note we must know our self well before we can build those relationships. We need to be aware of how we affect others first.

In support of this thinking, Goleman states that we have an inherent drive to connect with each other whether we like it or not, and how we are hard-wired to react to empathy and be empathetic (Goleman, 2007).

5.2.2   Praise and Recognition

The following quotes came from a question which asked; "In general, or specific terms, how do you feel about coming into work?" The discussion then linked to a probing question which was "so I get the feeling you don't feel recognised for your hard work is that the gist of it?"

> "Exactly, yes! I know I am there to do a job, but if I don't get praised just a little then I start to think why should I bother working late or coming in early, I start to think can you even see me, why bother? A lot of colleagues feel they are

invisible, but others have better managers who do recognise their work and say so too." Participant 3.

"Well yeah, not getting any praise was awful but yet it's expected. You'd hear in meetings week after week, certain times it would be more so, that you'd hear about the negative rather than all the positive and they might only be one negative and ten positives. But it's not always recognised, and it's not what you're expecting people say oh yeah, you've done a brilliant job all the while but a little bit of recognition for the team. I think that that makes a whole lot of difference and makes us want to do well." Participant 1.

The lack of praise and recognition has come through on several occasions. This is something I have taught for over 40 years, that the foundation of motivation is praise and recognition. This belief, however, is based solely on my own experience as a trainer and facilitator. Cindy Ventrice says praise, thanks, opportunity and respect combine to become the four elements of recognition (Ventrice and Soundview Executive Book, 2010).

Ventrice goes on to say that the simplest of gestures can communicate recognition such as remembering the details of an employee's project, an email saying thank you and even a handwritten note. Her overarching point is that recognition does not have to be something elaborate, in fact, for me, it is that little comment, that moment of recognition for a job well done that hits the mark.

Having said all the above which most participants agreed with; a participant voiced their view that:

"It's always nice to get praise and recognition, but one of the things that annoy me is that I'm paid to do my job anyway. You come in and do your job, that's what you're paid to do. I mean yeh, I suppose it is nice someone gets noticed, but at the end of the day, that's not your drive or the reason you come to work. It's not for me. I'm here to do a job. I'm here to get paid. I like to do the best I can. I just see it as that's the way it is. Behaviours, you should always have good behaviour at work." Participant 4.

My take on this statement is that we don't all get motivated by the same things, so, therefore, if we are truly knowledgeable about others, we will be able to use different

motivational techniques to meet the need of the individual. This person says, "I like to do the best I can", so we should recognise that and use that social awareness appropriately to praise or recognise them accordingly.

The fact is that we are all motivated in some way. Quite a statement I agree, but surely if we weren't, we would not be doing what we are doing. But the key question is, *why* are people motivated (Fowler, 2017)? What motivates us to do various things can be deeply personal.

5.2.3 Lack of Top Down Leading

This was a follow-on question from, "Which negative aspects arise most and why do you feel that may be? The follow-on question was, "Do you think that's a problem between the teams? I don't mean leadership, management per se, but in managing the whole. That there's not enough exposure to what you do, what I do, what they do?"

> "Although you see these offices are open plan, they're also isolated as well. You can sit next to people, and they have no idea what's going on in your world or your team or your life. I find it so weird as I've never experienced that before." Participant 2.

> "We've got Corporate Directors here who sit on the top floor, and they work on the strategy and the vision of the business. Then you've got another tier down, Heads of Service and Directors, operational stuff. They sit in an office themselves as well. They should be mingling, they should be seeing, they should be asking and understanding, not just collecting figures. Challenge how the good figures are got." Participant 2.

This topic of engaging with colleagues has also emerged in chats a few times. My own experience of working with many organisations shows me that informal communication is the cornerstone of engagement. That work based but socialised communication. Scott Carbonara (Carbonara, 2013) says that to gain good employee engagement, it is not enough to have satisfied or content employees, you must have thriving employees. That connection to what they are doing has to be there, and that is helped greatly by how they are treated.

I have long extolled the benefits of *bringing* people with you, as opposed to *pushing* them there. It is similar to Dale Carnegie's story of putting a gun in someone's ribs as motivation to give them their watch (Dale Carnegie, 2009). Carnegie went on to point out that this is

temporary at best and the only way to truly motivate someone is to gain trust and respect and inspire others. *Truly* motivated people, who thrive in their environment and who are pulled with you rather than pushed by you will be truly engaged employees.

5.2.4   Not listened to

The question that gained this response was a follow-on question probing the feeling of being ignored.

"What do you feel caused this feeling of being ignored?"

> "I think it's where people have not always been listened to and who can take action because sometimes you would just say it but whilst there was a bit of nodding going on and "yes it'll be looked into", but then it wasn't actually ever resolved or looked in to, so you thought what was the point in even saying anything. It's like it didn't even really matter in a lot of ways." Participant 4.

There was a real feeling that what people had to say to help and improve was never truly listened to or appreciated. This blocked any path to meaningful conversation, and the willingness to speak up was lost! This theme has raised its head in several responses, and a key theme grew concerning people feeling that they were not listened to or valued.

Goleman's emphasis on empathy has grown over the years and now includes what he calls the three kinds of empathy or as he terms it, "The Empathy Triad" (Goleman, 2015). Goleman says there are three types, Cognitive empathy - when I can understand your emotions/pain, Emotional empathy - where I feel your emotions/pain and then third Empathic concern - where I feel so intensely about how you are feeling I *want/need* to do something to help. These people were exhibiting signs that they did hear (I hope), but after that, there seemed no genuine concern sufficient to make them want to truly listen or take action.

These managers were not using what I call clean communication. I use the term "clean communication", which ensures we all give good, reliable, honest, open, therefore "clean" information/communication. Had they been using this, they would have said why they were not going to take it forward.

5.3 Second round of interviews – leadership and management approach post programme.

The key themes that I discovered from the post programme interviews were:

- Relationships
- Self- awareness
- Social awareness (Empathy)
- Engagement

Supporting codes for each can be viewed at Appendix D

5.3.1 Relationships

The question which gained the following two response was, "What did you do to become more self-aware (just you, or asking colleagues etc)?"

> "I'd say in particular my self-awareness has changed, and my relationship management has changed. I'm more aware now of them emotionally. Before I probably thought, I haven't got time to chat with people so that relationship management side of things was lost. I didn't see that I had time to chat about general things, but of course, I'm now doing just that and building that relationship is important in order to get results from my people." Participant 4.

> "Then other things, I've just asked for, like we have these 360 feedbacks, do you remember we had that? Well again, a lot of that was very much around you could like say that's self-awareness, self-management, and again, relationship management and social awareness really, so all of them. In emotional intelligence, it's where you have to adapt that way in order to change and make the differences that were needed and identified from the 360 feedback." Participant 5.

I am one of those people who believe that people are our most important assets, but like Todd Davis (Davis, 2019), I also believe that even with the best people, it's the nature of the relationships that bring real success. EI is a great tool for developing relationships between people of any level.

It is heart-warming for me to read how well this person, and others, have taken to EI and use it so well. Whilst I am not a great fan of the 360-feedback method, I do think from a self-awareness side it is a great tool, as long as the information we receive is open, honest and clear. More examples are given in the group discussion element below.

5.3.2 Self- awareness

After asking, "How has self-awareness and social awareness appeared in day to day working examples?" participants replied:

"So much more self-awareness for me, I'm quite critical of myself anyway but now I am more aware of why. I try not to beat myself up about stuff, and I have started recognising where other people are doing things wrong. Thinking, actually, I feel like going and telling you that you're doing it wrong. But I don't want to see managers sulk, which I've seen recently. They need to become more self-aware too, and that will only happen when they ask others". Participant 1.

"Even directors, just walking past you, who are not even saying hello and I think, actually, you're supposed to be promoting our values, "One Team" and developing relationships. Whether top directors or whoever, we are all accountable and responsible to use self-awareness to realise what we're doing wrong, but we'll never know unless we use social awareness to find out. Only then can we develop our working relationships." Participant 3.

Self-awareness is something we have to work at to discover. Good friends will help and other things like Johari's window. However we have also to strip away the self-important characters we hold dear (Van Warmerdam, 2014), we are no longer, and we are far better able to come to terms with how we really are. To wrap that thinking up, I would like to share this quote from Gary van Warmerdam. "Humility isn't something you gain or achieve. It is what remains after you strip away the layers of the ego, false identities, and false beliefs."

5.3.3 Social awareness

This answer came from a description of an incident where a meeting was started on a negative and the team were held accountable for the issue. The point being made was that regardless of blame, this should be handled carefully so to try and find the root cause of the issue and how to rectify it.

"I'd start the meeting off a bit more positive. I wouldn't start with a huge negative. I'd try and get everyone on the side first and chat about how everything's running and then see if there are any reasons for the issue. It's how you ask that matters. Enquire first as you're there to help them improve not just blame them and say you're all no good! We need to really get to know people and understand them and their triggers". Participant 4.

Triggers can be both positive and negative triggers, but regardless we need to be aware of them all, especially those which trigger negative behaviour.

If we think of STAR (Coates, 2017), Stressor, Thoughts, Affect and Response, we can break down the impact of triggers and learn to deal with them in a considered manner before they cause unfortunate follow on behaviours.

This manager's first words were blame and triggered enormous resentment and blocked lines of communication as people felt disengaged. That manager needs a whole jug of self-awareness washed down with a litre of social awareness.

5.3.4   Engagement

I asked participants if they had noticed any changes for you or your colleagues in engagement, which they would attribute to EI?

"I have a couple of colleagues who haven't been on the EI workshop, but they have still benefited from others who've been. They say, "Even though I've not been on the workshop, I've noticed a change in how [person's name] approaches things. I now feel much more engaged with them and I feel like they've become much more part of the team." You've got that buy-in from both aspects. I've done the workshop so I understand EI and I'm using it, and the impact on me have been far more engagement in the team. Yes, I've noticed it. It's good." Participant 3.

"I'm feeling in a far more positive place. I believe I'm having more of a positive influence on people around me. For example, instead of people walking past and just nodding or going, "Good morning", it's "Hi [person's name]." When I hear someone use my name, I'm thinking, wow, they're aware of who I am and not just, "Oh yes I recognise her from somewhere or whatever." Little things like that

give me a little bit of a boost, especially if it's somebody that I thought, "Oh I didn't know that I was on their radar." It's nice to know because that's something that I was working on, to develop my relationships and raise my profile.*"*

Participant 1.

As I said above "satisfied or content employees, you must have thriving employees", employee engagement must not be confused with satisfaction. Satisfied employees will show high scores on employee satisfaction surveys, but they need to feel respected, valued, and *emotionally* engaged at work if you want them to truly respond to organisational values, needs and goals. All these things demand a commitment from managers, which means an emotional commitment too (Bradberry et al., 2014).

5.4 Group discussion post programme

Most of the key themes that I discovered from the group interviews reinforced those found in the second-round interviews (post programme). Whilst there was a list of questions to guide the discussion, many aspects arose from the points of other participants, so no distinct question initiated that thinking. The following themes came through most strongly:

- Relationships
- Self- awareness
- The moccasin approach (Social awareness)

5.4.1 Relationships

I asked an initial question to start the group discussion, which was, "What have you noticed about how others have reacted to your modified approach?"

"Definitely going back to the values as one team because I'm more emotionally aware of them and how to get better results and getting to know them. Relationship management-wise, I feel that that has improved drastically and I'm finding that people want to get more involved and you see where people strengths are, and then I think it empowers them because you're saying, "I think you're really good at that. How did you find that?" It's more about now asking them what their views are rather than me giving instructions to say, we'll do it this way or shall we do this? It's now giving them their opinions so that they can say, "Oh, well should we try it this way." Then we're evaluating and getting

results or praising them for the job well done, and I think they're more then coming back to you to do more again because they're excited about it and they can see that it's something that they're going to be valued for seeing their point of view." Participant 2.

"I think it's about them as now they've got the confidence to approach you. Because you build that trust up and improve relationships, they've got the confidence to come to you more because they feel they can now. You build that good working relationship, and I think that's one of the things that I've noticed from changing my approach and being more self-aware of my environment, my reactions to feelings." Participant 5.

The first statement alone shows aspects of change and development on all 4 of the key themes from the pre-programme interviews which included "Lacking Social Awareness, Lack of Recognition, Lack of Top-Down Leading and Not listened to". It would also strongly suggest that they have gained great benefit from turning their learning into performance.

Organisations need to understand that the success of their organisations is not so much about having great people, although this is clearly important, it is about those people having great relationships and working together. This recipe then creates great leadership, a strong organisational culture and all through interpersonal and group dynamics which are weaved together conceptually and behaviourally (Schein and Schein, 2018). As the summary quote in their book says, "*The essence of Humble Leadership is maintaining an acute focus on interpersonal and group dynamics*".

5.4.2 Self-awareness

These next quotes came from the initial question of, "What have you done to become more self-aware?"

"The side effects for me is that probably when you're thinking about how people might react, it's that extra time it takes for the mind process. Sometimes it will take me a bit longer to respond to stuff, so it's not quite natural at the moment if that makes sense. Then probably stuff where I go the opposite way and I react and then reflect on it I'll probably go over-critical of myself thinking I could have

said this, or I could have acted this way or approached it in a different way kind of thing." Participant 3.

"Even the little things they're probably not big things but you can take it a bit personal and you don't always get the reaction you expected. I think that's the thing sometimes. You can overthink everything but we need to become more self-aware of how we feel as that helps us understand and empathise with how others feel" Participant 5.

I always say that in principle, EI is not complex at all; it is relatively simple really. But I do add that it's the putting it into practice that takes strength, courage and sometimes a walk outside our comfort zone. Anyone truly wishing to become more self-aware will need to go through the discomfort of discovering things about themselves that need improving (Bradberry et al., 2014). Like most things in life, when it comes with some pain, it usually means it has been a rewarding journey; not unlike going to the gym!

5.4.3   The Moccasin Approach (Social Awareness)

This next statement was from some follow-on discussion from this question, "What have been the direct benefits from using EI and any knock-on side benefits?" The follow-on question was, "Did you have any specific moments when you were using the Moccasin Approach?"

"Oh for sure, yeh. I found that actually in situations where I disagree with someone I used to be very sort of "NO I think I'm right here," but now I think I have a better understanding of the person on the other side and thinking, "Okay, well if I was in this person's shoes now, how would I be feeling about the way I'm reacting to this?" (*Moccasin Approach*). I think it just helps me sort of take a step back and think, "Okay, well we're not on the same page here. Let's work through it." It just helps those conversations, I think, and there's not this kind of well they're reacting to my reaction, and we're not getting anywhere because we're all- we're not in a good place." Participant 1.

"Yes me too, I feel that that has improved drastically and I'm finding that people want to get more involved because you're saying, "I think you're really good at that". How did you find that?" It's more about asking them what they think so I

can see things from their point of view rather than me giving instructions like, we'll do it this way or what about this?" Participant 2.

The term Moccasin Approach, mentioned in the introduction, is where we look at things through the lens of the other person or people. Whilst we can do this at any time, it is only when we have a great social awareness of the other person/people that the approach is most effective, as then we know all their worries, concerns, likes, dislikes, ambitions etc.

5.4.4 Future development

One of my project objectives was to establish, what changes the participants felt were required to improve current Leadership and Management practices? From that question, here are a few responses.

"We need to actually use the values, that should be addressed. Performance should be linked to those values. To say that you're doing your work, that's fine, but your attitude towards other colleagues could be improved because of X, Y, Z, and it would be more in line with this value and tying that to the value. I don't think colleagues' behaviour is always addressed and it really needs to be." Participant 2.

"I think for the corporate directors; they have a stage of self-awareness and being aware. What that means, looking at themselves, to say, how am I driving our values? To answer the question, EI would definitely affect that because it would help people reflect and understand how the values help them in their role and professionalism." Participant 5.

"I think [person's name] mentioned how people aren't tackled so those people would be tackled because you'd have an honest conversation and manage the relationship using EI. I'd be happier if more people had the emotional intelligence because then I'd know where I stand with them and them with me, so approaching situations you feel better to start with and that'd have better outcomes." Participant 4.

"I'd say EI is a good investment. If they demonstrated emotional intelligence with their team and they could have those conversations, they might find that they're

happier as well. They could then delegate better and then it's all that thing about retention and all that conversation it's going to be facilitated well, and everyone's just happier." Participant 3.

"We've got to make sure they've all got an understanding of EI and if you have had successes where it has worked and made a difference, sharing it and letting them know why you believe in it and why it's worked for you. I think then they can see that that's proof that you put it into practice and it had quite made a difference." Participant 1.

"I don't doubt it. I don't think there's any harm in trying. Whether it's something the business would do cost wise across the business, I'd certainly give it out to managers, middle management first. Oh, and don't forget top down too." Participant 5.

There is a clear emphasis on organisational values not being adhered to, a lack of accountability which appears to be affecting performance, in their eyes.

They also promote the use of an EI approach being a developmental preference. I believe, after their experience, they would be well placed to recommend a solution given they are all employees and working in various teams across the organisation. They know how they, and their colleagues, feel and have shared this and their proposed solutions.

5.4.5   Chapter Summary

The findings in this chapter show that the four ingredients of EI can help people communicate in a very different way. They do not have to adhere to a prescribed *model* of management or leadership, but just be open and honest and authentic in how they approach their colleagues and have to be **courageous** and say what they believe they should say. That mixed with the ability to style flex as they learn more about others is a key skill which will take time to hone and use effectively.

Likewise, those to whom people come to for advice, guidance management and leadership; those people are **accountable** and responsible to all to be open, willing to listen and to value the communication from others. The consequences of not doing this means people feel closed down, that there is little point in talking when they will not be heard. That is far too great a cost for any organisation to bear. If we think of our best friends, they are best

friends due to the qualities they possess, such as being **trustworthy**, honest, supportive and empathetic to our needs. It is that sort of bond that creates the concept of a high performing **one team,** which allows the performance of that team to be nothing less than **excellent**.

The data from the initial interviews showed a concerning amount of lacking in various areas which EI holds as critical for effective and efficient communication. The data from the second interviews showed a remarkable development in terms of how people interacted, communicated and even how others who had not been on the programme reacted positively to this new approach.

I believe that the data shown provides compelling evidence that on this occasion, those who undertook the programme committed to the learning, practised it effectively and therefore the element of the EI approach has triggered changes in behaviour that appear to be showing improved outcomes in communication, engagement and relationship development. For *me*, this highlights something we probably know already, that when we look at the best relationships we currently have, they are built on knowing each other really well, openness, honesty and a deep sense of trust that we have both earned.

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6   Outcomes and recommendations

6.1 Aim of my inquiry

My inquiry had a single aim, which was:

"to investigate the lived experiences of colleagues before and after an Emotional Intelligence based Leadership and Management programme".

I believe that the investigation was a success, and I gathered data to support the before and after aspects. The evidence gathered from that data led to the findings discussed in the previous findings chapter.

6.2 The Objectives of this inquiry were:

1. What are the lived experiences of the cohort before the programme regarding cultural Leadership and Management relationships?

2. What changes do the participants believe are required to commit to, to improve current Leadership and Management practices?

3. How has EI impacted Leadership and Management relationships, and what commitments are required to improve?

4. How can the attendees see EI being used to improve other aspects of workplace performance?

6.3 Outcomes

The first objective was achieved through the pre-programme semi-structured interviews suggesting that all the participants believed that the leadership and management style they experienced ranged, in short, from good to bad. The key themes and supporting codes discovered are shown at Appendix C. This clearly had consequences to how people engaged and enjoyed their work.

The second objective was achieved through the post programme semi-structured interviews and suggests that the impact of EI was substantial. The key themes and supporting codes discovered are shown at Appendix D.

I would like to say here that these impacts are in part due to the nature of the training programme as participants had to write of their experiences in using the Moccasin Approach and had to meet both managers and mentors to review their findings.

This was not part of the research but an organisational requirement. I believe that due to their agreed commitment and requirement to write and discuss their own experiences, this application of their learning pushed them to achieve.

Without such a heavily reviewed post learning process, I am not confident the same impact would be evidenced. This technique for ensuring the learning is transferred and used in the workplace is something our organisation pushes for with clients. Training is useless without performance change. This resonates well with one of the hoped-for outcomes in chapters one, which was "promote the use of easily managed EI monitoring tools to ensure the lessons are taken into the workplace and used".

For objective 4, I believe that the data they collectively gave in the group discussion after the programme shows several key suggestions they would like to see implemented. The findings in chapter 5 (Group discussion - see 5.4) show how the participants believed that EI could have a positive effect on the adherence to the organisational values and performance management.

My second projected impact/outcome which was to "identify how EI impacts the effectiveness of communication and culture of an organisation." was also realised at least in part as there is plenty of evidence to suggest communication improved and led to better relationships. Concerning the "and culture of an organisation", this I believe would have to be questioned in a few years. This topic of organisational culture is one I hope to take forward to my doctorate (in time).

7.4   Recommendations

6.4.1   The organisation

In 1982 Jack Welch took over GE. He stripped away the boundaries which seemed to keep teams working in a silo mentality and focused on changing from the long-held thinking of rule-based management to his new style of empowered leadership. His executives were expected to be able to work in any of its divisions. In short, he ensured that the whole was always greater than the sum of its parts (Paine, 2016).

In terms of recommendations for the organisation which kindly permitted me to use their employees as my participants, I would strongly suggest that they adopt this type of open and honest thinking. Seriously rethink how their hierarchical structure is causing us and them approaches and is, in fact, working against the "One Team" value.

Introduce newer forms of Leadership styles which work for millennials and generation X such as Altrocentric, Collective, Ethical, Authentic and Transformational. *Don't* position them as individual styles but create a new blended leadership style specifically for their organisation, a new style which **all** colleagues can use regardless of their assigned generation, personality, role or position.

If you want an engaged, successful, high performing and cohesive "One Team", you need to invest in something new, as doing what you've always done will bring you what you've always had. Be honest and courageous whilst embedding the values through the use of an EI based solution such as the Moccasin Approach.

A surprise or realisation came from this project for me. It was a recognition that there are people who are seen as not having a positive attitude, so some would purposely not buy into something new like EI. This negative attitude would not show the spirit that this organisation expected from their people, and there should be a way to motivate them. So how do we fix that?

The findings chapter mentions that participants want the values to be driven and have people become accountable for evidencing those values. If this were to happen, people would have to behave in the manner the organisation says its people should behave, through those values. That would allow the culture, over time, to go through the Phoenix effect, and from the ashes would grow a new culture where people want to make a difference as they have bought into those values. They'd no longer merely adorn a wall.

One of this organisation's excellent values include "Courageous", and I challenge the organisation to be just that. Find out exactly how their people want to be led and invest in that. This would be an investment that would bring endless returns.

My final recommendation for the organisation is something which I would also share with the L&D community. I would recommend the use of an EI monitoring tool which would be a self-assessment-based activity which individuals could work with and discuss with managers

during performance reviews. Managers would also have an EI report which the Training department or HR would be responsible for monitoring for ad hoc training or coaching to ensure EI is being used throughout the organisation. This would encourage the use of EI to be monitored, and best practice spread through the organisation.

6.4.2   L&D community

My last outcome/impact from chapter 1 which was to create an awareness within the L&D community at large, that EI plays an important role in the world of Leadership, Management and people skills and should be considered a best practice ingredient.

To do this, I intend to write and publish a paper which would be a greatly reduced version of this inquiry. It would come in a few variations purely for the time required to digest it. It would be interesting to read the feedback and reviews such a paper received.

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7 Reflection

7.1 Introduction

I wish to begin my reflection with this quote from Donald Schön.

"the more powerful the professions, the more serious the dangers of laxness in concern for public service and zealousness in promoting the practitioners' interests. (Schön, 2017)"

7.2 Are we ethically professional?

I chose this quote to begin my reflection because when reading his book it reinforced one of the major learning themes that I, as a *professional* in my field, have taken from this Master of Professional Studies programme. That lesson has been a whole jigsaw of realisation about my real responsibilities as a professional. According to many online dictionaries, the word professional is generally explained as *engaged in a specified activity as one's main paid occupation rather than as an amateur*. You'll note that this says nothing about standards, quality, responsibility and my favourite phrase, "duty of care".

7.2.1 Biased and blinkered?

Schön makes a great point and a worrying one too. What stops a *professional* from consciously or unconsciously promoting their interests at the cost of their client? My learning from this programme shows me that I have unconsciously been blinkered in my own professional world. I have extolled the virtue of my beliefs but have never *truly* challenged them myself. Those I have met have often, but not always, been less experienced than me, so they have taken my word on all I say. I have *assumed* my personal experiences as correct and probably just because I agreed with them, or worse yet because I liked that thinking! Although I have challenged many people and organisations about *their* thinking, I have been blinkered and biased about my own.

I have always wanted to be truly professional, and I believe I have always strived to achieve the highest standards and always given the highest quality, but now I know how to adapt and hone that professionalism. Through the use of professional ethics and being *truly* professional, we will be best placed to lead by example and inspire our peers to uphold the honour and dignity of our profession (Sethy, 2018).

7.2.2   Back in time

We need to go back in time and regain the original meaning of the word professional (A.D. 1175–1225) where the Latin word "professio", refers to the oath taken upon entering a religious order (Bagchi, 2011). We need to restore the gravitas of that oath, promising all that we will be objective, bring knowledge, skills and an approach to make a difference to others, but most importantly to be authentic and regulate ourselves.

This Master of Professional Studies programme has taught me to be far more self-critical, not to accept things just because they fit in with my current thinking, reflect on the quality and the robustness of what I believe to be great. In fact, I need to take a leaf from EI and become far more self-aware in my professional world and check and challenge what I profess to be important to clients, peers and learners alike.

An example of the new me and how this programme has helped me become far more critical, is that in chapter 5 I noticed when I quoted one of my follow-on research questions, that on reflection it could be seen as leading. At the time, I believed I was paraphrasing what the participant had already said in a roundabout way. That said, I will now be far more conscious of the potential for leading questions. More academic criticality is a good thing.

7.3 My expedition

I would like you to read this quote from the book "The Productive Researcher" by Mark Reed, whose first experience as a researcher was in the mountain forests of Uganda.

"When we arrived, the forest was a tangled mess of green, but when we left, I was able to read the history of that forest through the names of the species that grew there (Reed, 2017)."

When I started this programme, I felt as if I was at the base of a huge mountain. The steepest climb was at the start, and the slippery slopes of academia caused me to slip and slide daily. Although it all seemed an impossible and daunting challenge, I was fortunate enough to have an excellent jungle guide, so a heartfelt **thank you** to Prof Brian Sutton.

Now, as I leave this programme, I look back, and I can now see that the initial tangled words, concepts and meanings now weave through my own work. Here at the end of this exploration I am now submitting this paper in the hope that I gain a Master of Professional Studies, but I have a feeling it will not be my last journey into the jungle of academia. I feel a new expedition is calling me.

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Appendix A

Sample consent form.

Appendix D - Participant Consent Form – 12 Oct 18

Middlesex University London

Participant Identification Number: **134**

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of Project:

"The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership and Management."

Name of Researcher: Mac (Peter) Macdonald

Supervisor's name and email: Dr Brian Sutton - b.x.sutton@mdx.ac.uk

Please initial all boxes

1.	I confirm that I have read and understand the information sheet dated 14 Nov 18 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to ask questions and have been given contact details for the researcher.	
2.	I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw consent without giving a reason.	
3.	I agree that this form that bears my code and signature may be seen by a designated auditor.	
4.	I agree that my non-identifiable research data may be stored in National Archi and used anonymously by others for future research. I am assured that the confidentiality of my data will be upheld through the removal of any personal identifiers.	
5.	I understand that the data I provide may be used for analysis and subsequent publication and provide my consent that this might occur.	
6.	I understand that I can ask for my data to be withdrawn from the project until analysis begins in April 2019.	
7.	I understand that my interview may be recorded and subsequently transcribec	
8.	I agree to take part in the above study.	

CONFIDENTIAL

Name of participant: 134   **Date**: 12 October 2018   Signatur

Researcher: Mac Macdonald   **Date**: 12 October 2018   **Signature**:

1 copy for the participant - 1 copy for the researcher

Appendix B

Sample colour coding and "Post It" note feature from MAXQDA

Fig 1

Fig 2

Appendix C

Sample of pre-programme themes and supporting codes

Themes			
Lacking Social Awareness	Praise and Recognition	Lack of Top-Down Leading	Not listened to
Codes			
Relationship building chit chat	Recognition is peer/hierarchical	Management & Leadership tick boxes	Not being listened to, so why say anything
Lacking Social Awareness	Recognition dependent on status?	Frustration at resistance to change	We speak but ignored
No empathy	No recognition or appreciation	Defensive against change to protect status quo	Directors not listening
Suspicion	Ignored and not recognised	Wanting openness, honesty (EI)	Innovation dies when not listened to
Senior leaders no Social awareness	No recognition kills motivation	Use Values to motivate and cull	Management didn't truly listen
Management micromanage	Performance Management only bad (No praise/recognition)	Drive culture from the top	Avoiding truth/reality
Lack of Social Awareness from Senior managers	No bonus scheme	Managers don't drive values	Leadership & Management don't like open and honest
People leave - lack of Social Awareness	No empathy so no interest	No visiting or **truly** caring	Airing negatives seen as negative
Relationships create success	I always to get to know people	Seeing things from their eyes	Unconscious Self-Awareness

The yellow highlighted text shows aspects of EI *already* in use, albeit unconsciously. This was capitalised on during the programme to show current use.

Appendix D

Sample of post-programme themes and supporting codes

Themes			
Relationships Better	Self-Awareness Better	Social Awareness Better	Engagement Better
Codes			
Relationships easier to build	Need for Self-Awareness	Everyone needs EI	EI helps me get results
Relationship building	My Self-Awareness is far better	Asking questions	Manager saw improvement
Relationship Management improves performance	Self-awareness personal change	Use of open honest talk	Closer team
Relationships are better	Knowing me to know you	Moccasin Approach works	"Team of Teams" needed
Focus on building relationships	The window made me think (Johari's Window)	Understanding how others tick and what drives them	Deal with managers better
Need for Relationship building	My behaviour affected others	Know why people are them	Engagement makes it easier
How we get on	Know me to know you	Understanding others	People become friendlier
	Why I think like that	Social awareness two way	Works with contractors
Moccasin Approach for relationships	Realising my triggers	Why they think that way	Engagement feels great
Improved relationships	Analysing my triggers	Understanding each other	Team works closer
Improved trust and respect		Knowing someone	Mentor noticed improvements
Relationships help organisational politics			Getting on together

Appendix E

Sample questions from 2 semi-structured interviews and group discussion

Questions for Semi-Structured Interview 1

1. In general terms, what is leadership and management like now and why?

2. Which negative aspects arise most and why do you feel that may be?

3. Why have these negative aspects not been addressed, or if they have, what has been done, and has it worked in any way?

4. What have been the more positive aspects and why is that?

5. What causes issues/frustrations within your team or the wider organisation?

Questions for Semi-Structured Interview 2

1. What would you say have been the overall changes due to your use of EI?

2. How would you describe the benefits of these changes?

3. In this process of implementing EI into your own approach, what challenges did you experience? (*Possibly* these may have included resistance/challenge from colleagues).

4. What did you do to become more self-aware (just you, or asking colleagues etc)?

5. How did you manage the expectations of your team/colleagues? (Did you brief them all about your EI experiences or ask a person to offer you feedback on your approach)?

Questions for Informal Group Discussion

1. What have you noticed about how others have reacted to your modified approach?

2. What have been the direct benefits of using EI and any knock-on side benefits?

3. How may EI affect the use, adherence and drive of the organisational values?

4. What have you noticed in terms of behavioural changes from colleagues who have been on the EI and Me workshop, or those you have chatted to about it, or even those who have adapted due to your new approach?

5. What short term or long-term benefits do you believe EI could have on people's attitude?

MIDDLESEX UNIVERSITY

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (PIS)

Participant ID Code 1112

1. Study title

"The Impact of Emotional Intelligence on Leadership and Management."

2. Invitation paragraph

You are being invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Thank you for reading this.

3. What is the purpose of the study?

The purpose of my proposed research is to examine the question "How do aspects of Emotional Intelligence impact the effectiveness of people in the context of non-hierarchical Leadership and Management"?

The reason for this is to see if the inclusion of EI makes a positive impact on the communication and consequent leadership and management effectiveness between colleagues in your organisation.

4. Why have I been chosen?

It is important that we assess as many participants as possible, and you have indicated that you are interested in taking part in this study. You are being invited due to you being accepted on the organisational development programme.

5. Do I have to take part?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part, you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part, you are still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. If you do decide to withdraw from the study then please inform the researcher as soon as possible, and they will facilitate your withdrawal. If, for any reason, you wish to withdraw your data please contact the researcher within a month of your participation. After this date, it may not be possible to withdraw your individual data as the results may have already been published. However, as all data are anonymised, your individual data will not be identifiable in any way. A decision to withdraw at any time, or a decision not to take part, will not affect you in any way.

6. What will I have to do?

The whole research programme will last until approximately the end of April 2019.

Your personal involvement will include a few short one to one interviews which will be facilitated as casual discussions, and a couple of group discussions too. It will flow as shown below:

- Initial interviews - one to one recorded chat for an hour to discover how things have been currently. (Recordings are purely as notes and will stay with me **only**).
- Programme delivered - a six-day programme including the six workshops.
- Post programme (PP) initial interviews (1) - informal washup to establish learning and understanding. To discuss any areas from the programme you wish clarification or further explanation on (optional).
- PP interview 2 - Discussing what have you done since the programme and how have you done it? What impacts have you experienced?
- Group discussion - All the participants involved can discuss their experiences within their own workplace and through this synergy, decide on the ingredients for an organisation wide workshop to effect the positive changes from their programme.

- "End of study" questionnaire - To ask you how this has all been and to check I did all I promised.

Please note that in order to ensure quality assurance and equity this project may be selected for audit by a designated member of the committee. This means that the designated member can request to see signed consent forms. However, if this is the case your signed consent form will only be accessed by the designated auditor or member of the audit team.

7. What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

As far as can be seen, there are no known risks in you participating in this project.

If you are concerned about what you say regarding colleagues or the organisation and how it is run, everything you say is anonymised and where it may be possible for others to work out who said what, that is then changed to prevent that.

Appropriate risk assessments within your organisation will be followed throughout the study when conducted at your organisation's offices.

8. What are the possible benefits of taking part?

We hope that participating in the study will help you and others to perform more efficiently in your work. However, this cannot be guaranteed. The information we get from this study may help us to improve personal and organisational communication therefore improving management and leadership approaches in organisations. It may also inform the wider learning and development community of improvements to their own best practice.

9. Will my taking part in this study be kept confidential?

The research team has put a number of procedures in place to protect the confidentiality of participants. You will be allocated a participant code that will always be used to identify any data you provide. Your organisation will not be named. Your name or other personal details will not be associated with your data, for example, the consent form that you sign will be kept separate from your data. All paper records will be stored in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only to the research team, and all electronic data will be stored on a password protected computer. All information you provide will be treated in accordance with the UK Data Protection Act.

10. What will happen to the results of the research study?

The results of the research study will be used as part of a Postgraduate dissertation. The results may also be presented at conferences or in journal articles. However, the data will only be used by members of the research team and at no point will your personal information or data be revealed.

11. Who has reviewed the study?

The study has received full ethical clearance from the Research ethics committee who reviewed the study. The committee is the IWBL DPS research ethics committee.

12. Contact for further information

If you would like further information about my research or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at PM961@live.mdx.ac.uk (my university email address).

If you have any questions or concerns about how the research has been conducted, please contact the research supervisor Prof Brian Sutton, Professor of Learning Performance, Faculty of Professional and Social Sciences, Middlesex University, London NW4 4BT

Email Dr Sutton at b.x.sutton@mdx.ac.uk