

The Magnificent Seven

Seven Competencies That Drive Breakthrough Sales Results

By Stephen J. Blakesley

A high IQ might make you a genius, but it's high EI that will put you on top in the business world.

EI stands for emotional intelligence, which is the ability to recognize and understand your own emotions and the emotions of others. Emotional competency is the ability to efficiently use that information.

In 1990, psychologist Dr. John D. Mayer, of the University of New Hampshire and his colleague from Yale, Dr. Peter Salovey published two articles on emotional intelligence that formulated the world's first scientific definition of emotional intelligence. In 1995, Daniel Goleman wrote his popular book, Emotional Intelligence-Why It Matters More Than IQ. His book attracted much attention to the subject and deserves the credit for making the world aware of emotional intelligence and its impact on performance in the workplace. The following are four broad categories of emotional intelligence:

- Self-Awareness
- Self-Management
- Social Awareness
- Relationship Management

Goleman subsequently wrote the book Primal Leadership which focused on emotional intelligence and leadership success. American corporations have leaned on experience and IQ to indicate future success in top management roles for decades. But Goleman maintains that emotional intelligence beats IQ in determining future success.

Goleman says it is emotional intelligence alone, emotional intelligence in combination with experience or emotional intelligence and IQ together that determine success more often than any other combination. People with high emotional intelligence and relevant experience were successful 42% of the time compared to the emotional intelligence + IQ combo that predicted success 26% of the time and the experience + IQ combination predicted success only 20% of the time. Goleman says that for people in leadership positions, emotional intelligence is responsible for success nearly 85% of the time.

Emotional intelligence is important in non-management roles, too. Sales is a relationship-based function and a natural place to use such skills. Though emotional intelligence is innate, it's still possible to enhance your emotional intelligence skills.

These skills are emotional competencies, and anyone can improve them once they determine their capacity. Identifying these skills is the key to hiring and selecting a high-performance sales team. The Vantage Group developed a hiring system to identify emotional competency, and it nearly eliminates mis-hires.

Identifying Competencies

The system includes a performance-based job description and an ideal candidate profile to bring clarity to the job requirements and the ideal candidate's attributes that would likely be a game-breaker in that position. The third part of the hiring process depends upon a psychometric

assessment tool that measures the candidate's emotional intelligence, values and behavior. We identified the emotional competencies necessary for outstanding sales performance. We call those our magnificent seven. Depending on the industry and the products sold, we may modify that list by removing one and adding another that matches a specific industry from a group of 10, but we focus only on seven for hiring and selection. Let's take a look at the magnificent seven and how they impact sales results.

Core Competencies

- Results Orientation
- Planning & Organization
- Problem Solving
- Conceptual Thinking
- Flexibility
- Self-Management
- Personal Accountability

Optional Competencies

- Resiliency
- Empathetic Outlook
- Teamwork

Our research proves the magnificent seven and three optional competencies to be so powerful that success stories relating to dramatically improved sales and significantly reduced turnover rates are becoming commonplace as result of their use.

The magnificent seven are so powerful in driving sales results that some are tempted to rely solely on psychometric testing to predict a candidate's performance.

Conclusion

Testing alone is not an adequate predictor of success in a sales role. Additional tools such as a structured behavioral event interview system and job samples are essential to hiring and selection tools. Evaluating emotional intelligence is only one part of a system for hiring outstanding sales people. By combining the magnificent seven and a few additional tools, you can give your organization the best chances at hiring success.

The Vantage Group can help you develop a plan to increase productivity and revenues by harnessing the power of your future leaders today. To find out more, call us at 616-676-3330 or email us at Darrell@vantagegroupinc.com.

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