Comparing the emotional intelligence, personal traits, and work impacts of performing versus high-performing middle managers

Teresa Lara

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COMPARING THE EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, PERSONAL TRAITS, AND WORK IMPACTS OF PERFORMING VERSUS HIGH-PERFORMING MIDDLE MANAGERS

A Research Project
Presented to the Faculty of
The George L. Graziadio School of Business and Management
Pepperdine University

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Science
in
Organization Development

by
Teresa Lara
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This research project, completed by

TERESA LARA

under the guidance of the Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the faculty of The George L. Graziadio School of Business and Management in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF SCIENCE
IN ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Date July 25, 2011

Faculty Committee

David Jamieson, Committee Chair, Ph. D.

Terri Egan, Committee Member, Ph. D.

Linda Livingstone, Ph. D., Dean
The George L. Graziadio School of Business and Management
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Deep gratitude also goes to my employers at UCLA for their flexibility and for being the stellar researchers and visionaries who are changing the world. It's truly been my pleasure to learn and work with you.
Abstract

The study of emotional intelligence (EI) has grown in popularity over recent decades. Some authors have argued that EI results in heightened personal and professional success. Middle managers, in particular, are believed to require EI, as they are tasked with linking and coordinating the strategic and operational levels of the organization. Having EI is believed to help middle managers develop relationships; influence others and garner their support; create harmony among stakeholders; and communicate, collaborate with, and lead others. All of these activities require understanding and managing others, their needs, and their emotions—in short, all of these activities require EI. However, while some evidence exists that EI contributes to performance, the specific role of EI in performance (and whether other factors also need to be present for high performance to occur) is unclear. This study examined the use and impact of EI among performing and high-performing middle managers in the workplace. Special attention was given to examining whether the use of EI varies for average performing versus high-performing middle managers.

This study used a mixed-method design. Ten average performers and 11 high performers completed an EI assessment. Of these, four performers and five high performers completed an interview regarding their interest in the study and awareness of the study topic, their personal traits, and their workplace impacts. Descriptive statistics and $t$ tests were calculated to determine and compare the EI scores across the samples. Content analysis was used to examine the interview results.

Levels of EI were found to be generally consistent across both groups. However, self-reports seemed to indicate that high performers possessed slightly higher levels of self-awareness, EI, and people skills, traits of enthusiasm, high energy, and positivity; good communication skills; and skill in handling complexity and details. No significant differences were found in the impacts and leadership of performers versus high performers. These findings suggested that EI might not directly contribute to middle manager performance.

Although limitations of self-reported data affected the study and this research should be repeated with a larger sample size and improved measurement tools, some recommendations for companies were offered. These included not making EI training a strong focus in developing leadership talent and screening for and developing desired traits in the employee base.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

The study of emotional intelligence (EI) has grown in popularity over recent decades (Abraham, 2004; Clarke, 2006; Goldenberg, Matheson, & Mantler, 2006; Humphrey, Curran, Morris, Farrell, & Woods, 2007; Goleman, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Although many varying definitions of EI exist, they tend to agree on the ideas that EI refers to individuals’ ability to appraise, express, and regulate their own emotions and appraise others’ emotions in an effort to “motivate, plan, and achieve in one’s life” (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 185). Additionally, emotion and cognition are believed to have a reciprocal influence where competence in one domain enhances awareness and management of the other (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Some authors have argued that EI results in heightened personal and professional success (Chan, 2005; Clarke, 2006; Goleman, 1997; Lam & Kirby, 2002), while others counter that emotional competence (rather than EI alone) is responsible for success (Abraham, 2004).

Rock (2004) noted that up to 90% of one’s happiness in life is directly related to the ability to deal with the emotional aspects of life successfully. He stated that in 35 years of counseling and organizational consulting, most personal or organizational problems stemmed from interpersonal interactions and relationships. In other words, the ways in which people dealt with other people and the emotions surrounding those interactions were the problem. Individuals or groups might be technically and intellectually savvy, capable, and competent.
However, their emotional competence (emotional quotient, according to Rock) might not be equally well developed.

One workplace population, in particular, that is believed to require EI or emotional competence is the population of middle managers. These employees, who are one level above front-line employees and generally two levels below the chief executive officer (Huy, 2001), are tasked with linking and coordinating the strategic and operational levels of the organization (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Emberton, 2006). Creating this link is made possible when middle managers leverage their close relationships with executives and front-line workers, and rely on their informal social networks to get things done (Pappas, Flaherty, & Wooldrige, 2004). EI becomes even more critical in the utilization of these informal social networks when one considers Rock's (2004) observations, as mentioned above.

Having well developed EI can help middle managers develop relationships (Pappas et al., 2004); influence others and garner their support (Balogun & Johnson, 2004); create harmony among stakeholders (Jamieson, 2003); and communicate, collaborate with, and lead others (Huy, 2001; Munkeby, 2003; Thompson, Purdy, & Summers, 2008). All of these activities require understanding and managing others, their needs, and their emotions. Additionally, the self-awareness and self-management achieved through EI helps middle managers regulate their own stress, emotions, and motivation in the face of constant change and evolution of their skills (Embertson, 2006; Potter & Balthazard, 2002).
Nevertheless, some disagreement exists whether EI alone explains work performance (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1998; Mayer et al., 2000). While Kauffmann (2007) concluded that EI in combination with functional knowledge explains performance, other researchers explained that EI was an ingredient to a larger body of emotional competencies that foster high performance (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1998; Mayer et al., 2000). Understanding the particular roles of EI and other personal traits in the performance of middle managers was the focus of this study, because middle managers face a unique and complex set of challenges.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine existing levels of and ability to utilize EI among middle managers in the workplace. Special attention was given to examining whether the use of EI varies for performing versus high-performing middle managers. Three research questions were explored:

1. What are the EI levels for performing versus high-performing middle managers?
2. What personal traits do performing versus high-performing middle managers possess?
3. What impacts do performing versus high-performing middle managers have on their work environments?

**Definition of Terms**

1. EI: possessing awareness, management, and control of one’s own emotions and those of the people around them (Goleman, 1997).
2. High-performing: Levels of performance above the norm for a stated position. For the purposes of this study, levels of performance were based on nominations by others.

3. Attitudes and perceptions: Attitudes have been defined as “a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degree of favor or disfavor” (Eagly & Chaiken, as cited in Van Overwalle & Siebler, 2005, p. 231). Attitudes are stored in memory and persist over time. They color people’s thoughts and actions and are automatically activated simply by mention or presence of a stimulating entity (Van Overwalle & Siebler, 2005). They simplify interactions with the environment by saving individuals the time and trouble of evaluating circumstances that are similar or the same as past experiences. They also help create a congruency to life by providing a coherent interpretation of the milieu in which people find themselves. Perceptions are the processes by which people attain understanding or awareness of the world around them by structuring and interpreting information received through their senses (Pomerantz, 2003). For the purposes of this project, attitudes and perceptions determine how people navigate their experiences.

**Significance of the Study**

It is essential to understand what contributes to middle managers’ success given their important role in helping execute organizational strategy (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Embertson, 2006). However, the disagreement and uncertainty regarding EI and its contributions to middle manager performance (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1998; Kauffman, 2007; Mayer et al., 2000) lead to a lack of clarity about how to best develop these managers.
The insights gained through this study add to existing literature and point to helpful recommendations for middle manager development, mentoring, and training. Enhancing middle manager development also should help enhance their effectiveness in organizations. This study also pointed to directions for continued research to further examine the role and impacts of EI and other personal traits within this population.

Summary

This chapter provided the background, purpose, definitions, and significance of the study. Chapter 2 provides an in-depth examination of the literature regarding the constructs of attitudes and perceptions and EI. Chapter 3 describes the methods used to collect and analyze data for this study. Chapter 4 reports the study results. Chapter 5 provides a discussion of the results.
Chapter 2

Literature Review

This study examined the EI, personal traits, and workplace impacts of performing versus high-performing middle managers. This chapter reviews relevant literature. The first section reviews EI, including the origins and definition of the construct, its outcomes, its impact on performance, and how it is measured. The second section reviews literature on middle managers, including the role and their need for EI.

To produce this review, online searches were conducted in several databases, including Academic Search Premier, Business Source Premier, and ProQuest for various terms such as attitudes, perceptions, positivity, competitive edge, emotional intelligence, multiple intelligences, work motivation, worker motivation, organizational commitment, occupational commitment, product development time, and sample size determination. Results were limited to full-text peer-reviewed articles. No time limit was placed on the searches because both contemporary and classic studies were examined. The most contemporary articles were used, except where older articles shed light on the historical development of a construct or theory. Relevant books also were included.

EI

Several authors noted that interest in the EI construct has been growing in the past several years (e.g., Abraham, 2004; Clarke, 2006; Goldenberg et al., 2006; Humphrey et al., 2007) and it has subsumed several fuzzy terms such as people skills, soft skills, and people’s overall ability to deal with the demands of daily life. One reason some believe EI has become such a popular field of
research is the EI stance that cognitive intelligence, in and of itself, has not proven out to be a reliable predictor of success in any particular area of life. Thus, a search for more reliable predictors has been observed, and EI is among those candidates being considered (Goldenberg et al., 2006).

A review of the literature revealed significant research concerning the types of EI, components of EI, and EI in general. Additionally, there is a large body of research on the historical antecedents of EI, specifically Gardner’s (1993a, 1993b) Multiple Intelligences Theory. Gardner posited that eight distinct types of intelligence exist, including musical, kinesthetic, logical-mathematical, spatial, linguistic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist.

Salovey and Mayer (1990) explored the idea of intelligence in the form of EI, defining it as “the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (p. 187). Salovey and Mayer’s model included three activities: appraising and expressing emotions, regulating emotions, and using information from these activities in subsequent thought and action. Many other models of EI soon followed (e.g., Bar-On, 1997; Cooper & Sawaf, 1997; Goleman, 1997; Wessinger, 1998). Critics argued that these models were vague and strayed from traditional intelligence definitions (Petrides & Furnham, 2000).

Mayer and Salovey (1997) then articulated an ability model of EI, which refers to emotion-related cognitive abilities that could be measured by maximum-performance tests. They added that mixed models of EI incorporate a wide range of personality variables.
Petrides and Furnham (2000) countered that the various EI models were better classified as *trait EI* versus *information-processing EI*. They explained that trait EI was concerned with behaviors that are stable across situations (e.g., empathy, assertiveness, optimism), whereas information-processing EI concerns cognitive abilities, such as being able to identify, express, and label emotions. Trait EI is associated with personality and is measured using self-report measures of typical behavior. In contrast, information-processing has a stronger relationship to traditional intelligence and, therefore, can be assessed using measures of maximum (not typical) performance. A sample trait EI measure is Bar-On (1997), whereas an information-processing EI measure is the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale by Mayer, Salovey, and Caruso, (2002).

**EI Defined**

In revisiting their early work on and definition of EI, Mayer and Salovey (1997) stated, “Reasoning that takes emotions into account is part of . . . *emotional intelligence*” (p. 4). They treated the concepts of emotion and intelligence separately, noting that helping professionals have long subdivided the human mind into three primary component parts: thought, emotion, and conation (or cognition, affect, and motivation). They then detailed the functions of each area, with intelligence tending to fall under the cognitive banner. Emotions, naturally, are placed within the emotion or affective sphere. Motivation is relegated to either learned behaviors regarding goal-seeking or urges of a biological nature.

Mayer et al. (1998) emphasized that any definition of EI must connect intelligence with emotion such that the individual has “heightened emotional or
mental abilities” (p. 5). They elaborated that EI means that the thought of emotion increases the intelligence of thought, while simultaneously causing one to consider emotions more intelligently. Mayer et al. provided the example where intense emotions might enhance intellectual response by forcing consideration of an important situation. Thus, their preferred definition of EI was: “The ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth” (p. 5). Salovey and Mayer have since reconceptualized EI as a four-branch construct: (a) the reflective regulation of emotions, (b) the comprehension of emotions, (c) the assimilation of emotion in thought, and (d) the perception and expression of emotions (Mayer, Caruso, & Salovey, 1999). They added that this definition fits the criteria of intelligence being developmental, conceptual, and correlational.

Goleman’s (1997) definition to EI was used in this study due to the widespread public awareness of his work. Goleman asserted that EI consists of understanding and managing oneself and others in the form of five activities: (a) knowing one’s own emotions, (b) managing those emotions, (c) being self-motivating, (d) seeing and understanding emotions in others, and (e) managing one’s relationships (i.e., managing others’ emotions). The central tenets of EI, according to Goleman, are (a) having an understanding of other people and their emotions and (b) having an equivalent understanding of one’s self, goals, desires, intended actions, manner of responding to circumstances, and behaviors. Goleman acknowledged that individual differences would naturally account for each person having different levels of intelligence in each of these
domains. He added that through understanding and with proper guidance individuals could increase their mastery of each domain. Goleman emphasized that by understanding emotions, people can recognize, change, and control them.

Chan cited Salovey and Mayer (1990) in suggesting that individual differences in such personality areas as perception, understanding, and utilization of these types of information might be recognized as individuals’ differing levels of EI. Chan went on to suggest that, generally, researchers agree that EI can provide a framework which provides for recognition and labeling of skills required to improve understanding and use of emotions.

**Outcomes of EI**

Several general outcomes have been posited to emerge from EI. Chan (2005) examined the relationship between EI, psychological distress, and social coping from a perspective of psychotherapeutic intervention in college students. Citing Salovey et al. (2000), Chan noted that phenomena related to affect and emotions could give individuals useful information about their life and context. Such information could provide ways to monitor and direct their thinking, actions, and feelings about outcomes. This aspect of EI sheds light on Salovey and Mayer’s (1990) description of emotions as things to be utilized—more like a tool instead of the traditional view of emotions as being a bothersome quality to be shunned, avoided, or stifled.

Goleman (1997) argued that individuals must possess awareness, management, and control of their own emotions and those of the people around them to be successful. Middle managers face a significant challenge in dealing
with the behaviors and performance of their subordinates. Rock (2004) stated that 90% of the problems people face in their day-to-day lives is caused by emotional interactions with others. He stated that many companies have hired very bright individuals only to fire them because of stupid, silly, or unethical behaviors.

The question then is, why do intellectually bright people do stupid things? The answer is that intellect and EI are separate competencies, with intellect governing an individual’s ability to perform technical tasks, and EI governing how the individual interacts with others.

Middle managers are required to ensure that subordinates exhibit appropriate behaviors and performance. According to Huy (2002), middle managers play a crucial role in managing subordinates’ emotions, especially during times of organizational change implementation. In a 3-year inductive study of a change initiative in progress, middle managers were found to facilitate change when they were able to commit emotionally to the change initiative and effectively manage subordinates’ emotions.

Therefore, helping subordinates regulate their emotions appropriately is part of the complex set of job requirements incumbent on the middle manager. How to accomplish this task is not within the purview of this paper. However, it can be safely stated that, according to Goleman’s definition, EI requires that individuals manage not only their own emotions, but those of the individuals with whom they interact.

As evidenced by Rock (2004), those who lack or score low in EI may experience a wide range of problems, from depression or anxiety to anger
issues. Obviously, this can lead to destructive circumstances and situations for one’s self as well as one’s family, friends, or coworkers. Low EI also can damage one’s friendships, relationships, and even society at large. Conversely, those who score high in EI are more likely to experience positive changes and have greater control of self as well as harmony with one’s family, friends, and coworkers. High EI also has been associated with bringing positive outcomes to friendships, relationships, and society (e.g., Goleman, 1998; Rock, 2004; Schutte, Schuettpehl, & Malouff, 2001).

Characterizing the impact of EI on individuals, Goleman (1997) compared high IQ individuals who were low in EI to those high in EI. He argued that individuals who have high IQ without high EI tend to be condescending, critical, inhibited, fastidious, sexually incompetent or at least ill at ease, emotionally bland, detached, and unexpressive. Conversely, individuals with high EI (with or without a high IQ) tend to be outgoing, cheerful, socially poised, able to commit, accepting of responsibility, ethical, and sympathetic. They also are less likely to be unnecessarily fearful or worrisome. He went on to say of high EI individuals that “their emotional life is rich, but appropriate; they are comfortable with themselves, others, and the social universe they are in” (p. 45).

Goleman also alleged that high EI individuals are able to influence others to assess, understand, and or control their own emotions. Therefore, high EI individuals can influence others to develop their own EI. It follows that EI has been acknowledged as being able to aid in the growth and development of individuals (Steiner & Perry, as cited in Chan, 2005). It has also been seen to
have use in psychotherapeutic interventions dealing with emotional regulation (Greenberg, as cited in Chan, 2005).

**Impact of EI on Performance**

It has long been held that worker attitudes and perceptions have a direct effect on quality and productivity. The now famous Hawthorne experiments provide ample evidence that worker attitudes and perceptions can have a direct impact on levels of productivity (Bucklow, 1966; Merrett, 2006), although their studies, when carefully examined, do not show a specific direction of impact. In other words, changes in attitudes and perceptions can have either a positive or negative impact on productivity. Likewise, productivity and the attention given coworkers can have a positive or negative impact on attitudes and perceptions. Later studies have shown that worker satisfaction (hence, productivity) can be linked to other factors. A complex relationship exists between productivity and personal or job satisfaction and this relationship has been well researched.

Many studies have provided insight into the impact of workers’ attitudes and perceptions on productivity. Avey, Luthans, and Wernsing (2008) surveyed 132 organizational employees and found that a positive effect was noted in their attitudes and behaviors when these individuals possessed positive *psychological capital* (defined as hopefulness, optimism, efficaciousness, and emotional resilience). Subsequently, a positive impact on changes in their organizations also was noted. Additionally, they found that mindfulness (which can also be considered one aspect of EI) was instrumental in the prediction of positive emotions. Another finding was that positive emotions and psychological capital helped offset or overcome resistance and cynicism aimed at organizational
change. According to Flynn (2009), positive attitudes and perceptions create an environment that promotes enthusiasm, worker satisfaction, and improves productivity and performance levels while simultaneously leaving to reduced absenteeism and turnover.

EI researchers also have alleged that workplace outcomes result when workers have high EI. Carmeli and Josman (2006) found a positive correlation between work outcomes, such as task performance, compliance, and altruism, and EI. Goleman (1997) provided a memorable story of a Manhattan bus driver in the 1970s whose character was totally opposite to those around him. Passengers would board his bus morose and sullen, but the bus driver’s infectious good humor and constant monologue on the uniquely wonderful events taking place on his route would transform their emotions from enclosed, self-absorbed, and negative to positive and accepting.

In the healthcare field, Clarke (2006) investigated how EI might be developed in the workplace, observing that several authors had voiced a desire to see such research performed. In part, such research was seen as desirable because prior research found an emotional component present in caring, an ability necessary for successful work performance in the healthcare field. Thus, the ability to deliberately and consciously develop not only the emotional component of caring, but also the ability to consciously control that emotional component would be seen as potentially providing positive workplace performance. EI is, in part, defined by many researchers as the ability to control the emotional component (e.g., Goleman, 1998; Salovey & Mayer, 1990; Schutte et al., 2001).
Salovey and Mayer (1990) studied EI as an antecedent to performance (Abraham, 2004). Research performed by Lam and Kirby (2002) found support for the idea that EI can contribute to productivity. Abraham (2004), however, provided a detailed report of the multitude of dimensions comprising EI and her findings differed from those reported by Salovey et al. and Lam et al. She held that various emotional competencies support productivity and excellence in performance rather than EI, per se. Pointing out that EI is comprised of 27 separate emotional competencies, Abraham argued that a cadre of emotional competencies is the force that drives EI’s ability to predict performance. Further, she indicated that at the time of her research, none of these competencies had been tested separately to discover the predictive strength of any one of them. Thus, she reasoned, it may be that some of them have little or no predictive value, while others may have great predictive strength. Finally, she pointed out that other factors must be considered simultaneously, such as the job milieu and job demands.

There is ample literature which supports the idea that EI has an impact on performance. This impact has been shown to have a direct correlation to workers' ability to impact positive or negative outcomes for change initiatives as well as worker satisfaction and such workplace behaviors as absenteeism and task adherence. There have been many instruments used to measure EI. The next section examines just a few of these.

*Measuring EI*

Chapman and Hayslip (2005) referred to several measures created to test various attributes of EI. Examples include the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence
Scale, the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), and the Schutte Self-Report Inventory of Emotional Intelligence. Goldenberg et al. (2006) examined convergent validity for the MSCEIT, a measure which tests EI based on performance by presenting problems to which there are assumed to be correct responses, and the Self-Report EI Scale, which measures EI abilities by self-report. By the preponderance of evidence, it is safe to accept EI as a construct which has been accepted by the community of psychological professionals.

Chapman and Hayslip (2005), reported that several measures created to measure EI through performance, such as Mayer et al.’s (1999) Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale and the MSCEIT (Mayer et al., 2002) have met with difficulties, both psychometric and conceptual, resulting in “low subscale reliabilities and high standard errors of measurement in independent investigations, difficulty justifying ‘correct’ answers to emotional questions, and potential cultural biases inherent in two competing scoring methods” (Chapman & Hayslip, 2005, p. 154). Other measures, which encounter fewer difficulties (such as those mentioned above), have focused on EI operationalization as a trait through self-reports of observable behaviors.

Chapman and Hayslip (2005) cited the Schutte Self-Report Inventory of EI (Schutte et al., 1988) as the leading brief scale for measuring EI. This scale, according to Chapman, positively predicts bivariate context grade point average scores among college students. It also provides a moderate correlation with Big Five Personality traits as reported by the NEO Five-Factor Inventory and the Revised NEO Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985).
Middle Managers

Middle managers are those employees who are one level above front-line employees and generally two levels below the chief executive officer (Huy, 2001). Thus, they serve as an important communication link between the strategic and operational levels of the organization (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Embertson, 2006). Creating this link is made possible when middle managers leverage their close relationships with executives and front-line workers, and rely on their informal social networks to get things done (Pappas et al., 2004). Then, within these networks, the managers need to champion the key organizational messages, wherein they “grasp the broad vision of the organization and apply it daily in a practical way” (Thompson et al., 2008, p. 66).

By influencing senior managers’ beliefs and actions and, in turn, gaining subordinates’ commitment, they help carry the work of the organization forward (Balogun & Johnson, 2004). This requires the ability to synthesize, interpret, evaluate, and frame information to provide the senior leadership with insights and new ideas for accomplishing the strategy and vision of the organization. In these ways, middle managers play a key role in carrying out organizational strategy and maximizing performance through their abilities to represent, translate, and convey the meaning of the firm’s strategy to employees. Importantly, middle managers also need to be able to create harmony among various stakeholders and balance continuity with change (Jamieson, 2003).

Tasks and Responsibilities

Middle managers are tasked with solving a variety of organizational, individual, and team-oriented issues. Solving these issues requires a range of
skills and competencies (Gosling & Mintzberg, 2004; Mintzberg, Lampel, Quinn, & Ghoshal, 2003). One of these skills is leading change (Munkeby, 2003). This is an ever-present need, given the ongoing reality and increasing speed of change (Handy, 1996). Leading change means that middle managers need to be flexible and adaptable despite rapidly changing organizational environments (Munkeby, 2003). Organizational change often directly affects middle managers as organizations become flatter and adjust reporting relationships. For some middle managers, this means shifting from managing people to managing projects. This shift can require a dramatically different skill set than they have developed, thus, emphasizing the need for adaptability and the continual development of new skills (Embertson, 2006). As organizations shift and evolve, middle managers also must evolve (Potter & Balthazard, 2002).

Despite any such shifts, middle managers still need to be able to manage and lead others. This involves skills such as developing people, communicating organizational messages effectively (including persuading and influencing), and resolving conflict. Personal traits that are helpful for middle managers to possess include approachability, desire to know their employees’ needs, challenges, preferences, and potential as individuals; and ability to understand and manage others emotions (Munkeby, 2003). Huy (2001) found that middle managers were critical to the success of change initiatives, since their role included committing to change initiatives, communicating the change requirements as well as their own commitment, and managing the emotions and activities of subordinates.

Another skill set of middle managers is providing expert guidance and oversight, often specific to their functional area. Middle managers achieve this by
completing administrative duties such as keeping records, managing budgets and resources, and providing technical expertise developed through their education and experience (Embertson, 2006).

Communicating is yet another necessary skill for middle managers. This includes relaying selected information to the appropriate audiences and tailoring messages as needed. When it is done well, organization members throughout the company are motivated to collaborate and share information (Huy, 2001). Communication also plays a central role in helping middle managers exert influence and gain commitment and support for organizational strategies. Importantly, listening is a core component of communication that also helps gain employees’ trust (Thompson et al., 2008).

Middle managers also need to be entrepreneurial, meaning that they must be able to detect the problems that occur on the front-line and quickly create solutions. This requires familiarity with operations, employees, and customers (Huy, 2001). Further, detecting the core issues underlying problems and fashioning workable solutions requires strong relationships with front-line employees, deep understanding of the organization’s culture, and keen knowledge of the organization’s competitive environment (Pappas et al., 2004). Together, these aptitudes make it possible for the middle manager to understand the strategic picture, interpret information accurately, and create effective solutions (Embertson, 2006).

Finally, given their role between the upper and lower levels of the organization, middle managers must be both leaders and followers (Kerry, 2003). In fact, their work may be considered to begin with following, as they endeavor to
understand top management’s vision, directives, and change initiatives. With this understanding clear, middle managers then exert their leadership through managing, persuading, and influencing others, as discussed earlier in this section.

Need for EI

Comparing the literature on EI to the literature on middle managers reveals several ways in which the middle manager position relies upon EI. Goleman (1997) emphasized that EI means (a) knowing one’s own emotions, (b) managing those emotions, (c) being self-motivating, (d) seeing and understanding emotions in others, and (e) managing one’s relationships and others’ emotions. Mayer et al. (1999) added that EI leads to a reciprocal positive effect where thought of emotion increases the intelligence of thought, while simultaneously causing one to consider emotions more intelligently. These competencies benefit middle managers’ in developing and leveraging their relationships with executives and front-line workers (Pappas et al., 2004); influence others and garner their support (Balogun & Johnson, 2004); creating harmony among stakeholders (Jamieson, 2003); and communicating, collaborating with, and leading others (Huy, 2001; Munkeby, 2003; Thompson et al., 2008). Notably, all of these activities require understanding and managing others, their needs, and their emotions. Additionally, the self-awareness and self-management achieved through EI helps middle managers regulate their own stress, emotions, and motivation in the face of constant change and evolution of their skills (Embertson, 2006; Potter & Balthazard, 2002).
Several studies also have examined the role of EI in achieving workplace benefits and these studies hold some insights about the need for EI among middle managers. Lusch and Serpkenci (1990) found in their study of store managers in a retail chain that the ability to handle stress predicted net profits, sales per square foot, sales per employee, and per dollar of inventory investment.

Barsade (1998) examined the role of emotional regulation in the workplace using a role play of managers coming together in a group to allocate bonuses to their subordinates. A trained actor who was planted among the volunteer managers always spoke first. The actor varied his emotions from group to group. In some, he exhibited cheerful enthusiasm. In others, he exuded relaxed warmth. In still others, he was depressed and sluggish, and in others he was hostile and irritable. The study results suggested that the actor’s emotions spread throughout the group. Where he exhibited positive emotions (e.g., cheerfulness, warmth), improved cooperation, fairness, and overall group performance resulted. The cheerful groups, in fact, were better able to distribute the money fairly and in a way that helped the organization.

Rosenthal (Rosenthal, Hall, DiMatteo, Rogers, & Archer, 1979) found that empathy, a core component of EI, contributes to professional and personal success. Pilling and Eroglu (1994) found in their survey of retail sales buyers that they preferred apparel sales representatives who could listen well and really understand what they wanted and what their concerns were. These results suggest that those sales representatives with EI secured more business customers and sales.
While these cases suggest that EI plays a key role in workplace performance, it is important to acknowledge that Goleman’s (1998) and Mayer et al.’s (1998) admission that EI by itself is likely not a strong predictor of job performance. Instead, EI is a foundation for competencies that do directly impact performance. Goleman (1998) elaborated that it is emotional competence, which is comprised of the personal and social skills, that leads to superior workplace performance. An example of an emotional competence is influence (central to the work of a middle manager), which rests on the EI trait of accurately recognizing what another person is feeling. Similarly, initiative or the drive for achievement is made possible by the EI trait of regulating one’s emotions (Cherniss, 2000). This means that a certain degree of EI is needed to develop emotional competence and emotional competence, in turn, leads to high performance. Therefore, understanding a middle manager’s EI is a necessary first step in predicting his or her ability to achieve high performance in the workplace. Consequently, many organizations have begun to include EI among the required core competencies for high performers (Laff, 2008).

At the same time, some evidence suggests that EI might not be related to high performance. Kauffman’s (2007) study of a $100 billion Fortune 500 United States company trying to grow market share and change its culture found that EI, alone, did not explain the success of the high performers. Kauffman concluded, however, that EI might be a contributing factor to success, as when EI was combined with knowledge about consultative sales skills, there was a slight increase in sales performance.
Summary

This chapter reviewed literature relevant to the present study. The construct of EI was reviewed first, followed by a review of the middle manager position and these professionals’ need for EI.

Various researchers of recent decades have examined EI (Abraham, 2004; Clarke, 2006; Goldenberg et al., 2006; Humphrey et al., 2007; Goleman, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). While various definitions of EI exist, they converge on the ideas that EI refers to understanding and regulating one’s own and others’ emotions. Some authors have argued that EI results in heightened personal and professional success (Chan, 2005; Clarke, 2006; Goleman, 1997; Lam & Kirby, 2002).

Middle managers, in particular, are believed to require EI, as they are tasked with linking and coordinating the strategic and operational levels of the organization (Balogun & Johnson, 2004; Emberton, 2006). Having EI is believed to help middle managers develop relationships (Pappas et al., 2004); influence others and garner their support (Balogun & Johnson, 2004); create harmony among stakeholders (Jamieson, 2003); and communicate, collaborate with, and lead others (Huy, 2001; Munkeby, 2003; Thompson et al., 2008). All of these activities require understanding and managing others, their needs, and their emotions—in short, all of these activities require EI.

However, while some evidence exists that EI contributes to performance, the specific role of EI in performance (and whether other factors also need to be present for high performance to occur) is unclear (Abraham, 2004; Goleman, 1998; Mayer et al., 2000). Understanding the particular roles of EI and other
personal traits in the performance of middle managers was the focus of this study. The next chapter describes the methods used to solicit participants and to collect and analyze data.
Chapter 3

Methods

This study examined the use of EI among middle managers in the workplace. Special attention was given to examining whether the use and impact of EI varies for performing versus high-performing middle managers. Three research questions were explored:

1. What are the EI levels for performing versus high-performing middle managers?
2. What personal traits do performing versus high-performing middle managers possess?
3. What impacts do performing versus high-performing middle managers have on their work environments?

This chapter describes the methods used to conduct this study. The following sections describe the research design, sample, confidentiality and consent, data collection, and data analysis procedures.

Research Design

This research used a mixed-method design consisting of a quantitative survey and face-to-face qualitative interviews. Mixed-method research is helpful in that generates both breadth and depth of data in order to answer the research questions more completely (Creswell, 2003).

Sample

Participant recruitment began by asking people within her personal professional network to nominate performing and high performing participants for the study (see Appendix A). The researcher requested nominations using an
email sent to (a) the listserv of students and alumni of Pepperdine University’s Master’s of Science in Organization Development program, which consisted of 500 recipients, and (b) the listserv of the Las Comadres de Las Americas Network, which consisted of 700 recipients. Colleagues then sent the names and email addresses of potential participants to the researcher.

Recipients of the email were asked to nominate two “positive and productive middle managers.” All nominees were required to work 30-40 hours per week and supervise at least one other employee. Nominee 1 also needed to get results, influence others, follow leadership, and demonstrate functional competency. In contrast, Nominee 2 needed to exceed results, influence others, display leadership, and exceed functional competency.

After receiving a nomination, the researcher emailed a study invitation and informed consent clause (see Appendix B) to the study candidate to request his or her participation. When a candidate responded with his or her email consent, the researcher emailed him or her a link to the EI Assessment along with a unique password associated with his or her email address.

Those who completed a survey also were invited to complete an interview (see Appendix C). Participant selection continued until a minimum of four performers and four high performers were interviewed. Ultimately, 21 surveys were completed (10 by performers and 11 by high performers) and 9 interviews were completed (four by performers and five by high performers).

Confidentiality and Consent

This research was conducted under the guidance of the Pepperdine University Institutional Review Board. The study was granted exempt status.
because participants faced no major risks as a result of their participation in the study. Participation was completely voluntary and participants had the right to decline any question asked of them or to withdraw from the study at any time.

Online surveys and personal interviews were conducted at the participants’ convenience and the only cost incurred was the time required to fill out the survey or to complete the follow-up interview. Total time needed for participation was up to 45 minutes.

Participants provided their consent to participate in the survey by returning an emailed consent clause. Surveys were submitted anonymously, except for the email contact information provided by those who stated interest in being interviewed. Email and any further contact information only was shared with the company that administered the survey.

Each interviewee was asked to review and sign a hard copy letter of consent before completing an interview (see Appendix D). This letter explained the intent of the study, confidentiality of the results, and acknowledgement that the interview would be digitally voice recorded. No identifying information was recorded with the interview responses.

Participants’ responses were kept confidential and only aggregate data are reported. All study data, including audio-recordings are stored as password-protected electronic files on the researcher’s computer. Only aggregate data are reported in the thesis and any subsequent publication of the results. The data files will be kept for 3 years, after which time the files will be deleted.
Data Collection

Data were collected using a survey and a one-on-one interview. These procedures are described below.

Survey

A self-reported online survey was used in this study to answer Research Question 1. Advantages of this method include the ease, low cost, and flexibility of its automated approach to data collection along with enhanced ability to handle a geographically diverse sample. Online surveys also are believed to pose fewer risks than paper-and-pencil surveys for response biases such as socially desirable or inhibited answering (Strickland, Moloney, Dietrich, Myerburg, Cotsonis, & Johnson, 2003). However, online surveys tend to yield lower response rates than other types of experimental designs or survey methods (Mitchell & Jolley, 1996). Higher error margins also have been noted, which affect accuracy rates when compared to surveys administered by investigators or controlled experiments.

The online survey used in this study was the PeopleIndex Assessment, developed by Ken Nowack, Ph.D., from Envisia Learning. The PeopleIndex Assessment is a self-assessment of EI. The goal of the assessment is to help respondents both understand and manage their behaviors and emotions, a key component of Goleman’s (1997) definition of EI. It is also intended to help users improve awareness of critical interpersonal strengths (another area of Goleman’s definition), self-management, and areas of opportunity for development. Users are provided in-depth reports of the instrument results along with exercises they can do to strengthen their EI.
The survey conceptualizes EI as 17 competencies grouped into three core competencies (self-management, relationship management, and communication) (see Table 1). Respondents' EI is assessed using 74 questions. The survey required 15 minutes to complete. The researcher received a report of each participant's 17 competency and 3 three core competency scores calculated by Envisia Learning. Respondents received a complimentary copy of their EI report.

While the information gathered provides more information than is used in this paper, data is available for future reference and further analysis. Other research possibilities suggest themselves, such as other components of EI and the relationships to middle manager performance.

**Interview**

The qualitative interview began with a review of the consent procedures (see Appendix E). The script consisted of 10 questions organized into three categories (see Table 2). The first category consisted of two questions that asked about participants' interest in the study and their awareness of the study topic. These questions were asked for the purpose of developing rapport and creating a warm-up for the interview. The second category consisted of five questions that asked participants about their self-awareness and other personal traits. These questions gauged participants' self-awareness of their EI and solicited descriptions of their role and approach to workplace situations. These questions were asked to help answer Research Question 2. The third category consisted of three questions that asked participants about their workplace impacts. These questions were asked to help answer Research Question 3.
## Emotional Intelligence Assessment Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competency and Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Competency 1: Self-Management Category</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-Development: Manages time, abilities, and energies for continued growth personally and maximized performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Adaptability and Stress Tolerance: Maintains performance and balance while stressed and under pressure. Copes with change and ambiguity constructively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Self-Control: Manages and controls behavior and emotions even during interpersonal conflict. Exhibits patience, seldom overreacts, or is out of control.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Trustworthiness: Exhibits high levels of professional and personal integrity, candor, and honesty. Develops trusting relationships with coworkers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strategic Problem Solving: Assesses situations, identifies potential solutions, and develops appropriate action plans. Consolidates and employs available information for the purpose of comprehending and resolving organizational problems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Achievement Orientation: Completes assigned projects, assignments, and tasks in a timely manner with superior quality.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Competency 2: Relationship Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Building Strategic Relationships: Initiates and builds networking relationships with both internal and external partners which engender and support personal, departmental, and organizational objectives. Develops and maintains collaborative and effective stakeholder relationships.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Conflict Management: Settles interpersonal differences with others through negotiation and effective use of interpersonal skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership and Influence: Uses appropriate leadership approaches and styles to facilitate groups toward achievement of assigned tasks.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interpersonal Sensitivity and Empathy: Acts in ways that indicate consideration for others’ needs and feelings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Team and Interpersonal Support: Assists, prods, encourages, supports, and motivates others in team settings to accomplish assigned tasks and projects.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration: Builds and maintains collaborative, supportive, and cooperative relationships with team members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Core Competency 3: Communication</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Written Communication: Writes in a concise, clear manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Two-Way Feedback: Ensures others are provided with all necessary information when needed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oral Communication: Is able to impart ideas and thoughts clearly and concisely when speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Oral Presentation: Presents both organizational and personal points of view to groups clearly and persuasively.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Listening: Listens actively and strives to understand others’ verbal communication.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Each interview was conducted one-on-one by telephone. Each interview lasted 20 to 30 minutes in duration and were audio-recorded to facilitate accuracy in data collection. The researcher created notes for each interview based on the audio-recording. Although identifying information was not recorded, each interview script was distinguished by a unique identifier and a designation of whether the participant was performing or high performing. This was necessary to facilitate data analysis and to compare responses for performers versus high performers.

**Data Analysis**

Envisia Learning calculated the 17 competency scores for each participant and provided these to the researcher for further analysis. The researcher used
these scores to calculate mean and standard deviation scores for the performing and high performing groups for the 17 competencies and 3 core competencies. A t test was then performed for each competency to determine whether EI ability was statistically different for the two samples.

The researcher used Braun and Clarke’s (2006) approach to qualitative analysis to examine the interview data:

1. The researcher became familiar with the data by creating the interview notes, reading the notes multiple times, and noting her initial impressions and ideas.

2. The researcher generated initial codes that represented the main themes evident in the data for each question across participants. The researcher then systematically coded all the data and organized the responses by interview category and code. She then created a theme to reflect the grouped data by code.

3. The researcher reviewed the identified themes and determined whether the identified themes fit with the coded extracts and the overall data set. This process continued until the identified themes best reflected the data.

4. A second coder reviewed the researcher’s results and identified questions and areas of disagreement. The researcher and second coder discussed any questions regarding the analysis and the researcher finalized the analysis. Approximately one third of the researcher’s analysis was revised as a result of the second coder’s review.
Summary

This study used a mixed-method design. Ten performers and 11 high performers completed an EI assessment. Of these, four performers and five high performers completed an interview regarding their interest in the study and awareness of the study topic, their personal traits, and their workplace impacts. Descriptive statistics and t tests were calculated to determine and compare the EI scores across the samples. Content analysis was used to examine the interview results. The next chapter reports the results.
Chapter 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the use and impacts of EI among middle managers in the workplace. Special attention was given to examining whether the use of EI varies for performing versus high-performing middle managers. Three research questions were explored:

1. What are the EI levels for performing versus high-performing middle managers?

2. What personal traits do performing versus high-performing middle managers possess?

3. What impacts do performing versus high-performing middle managers have on their work environments?

Descriptive Statistics

Participants completed the online PeopleIndex Emotional Intelligence Assessment. This survey provides a self-report of 74 EI behaviors organized into 17 competencies: six self-development skills, referring to one’s ability to manage one’s own behavior; six relationship management skills, referring to one’s ability to manage one’s relationships; and five communication skills, referring to one’s ability to share information with others.

Both groups scored high in self-development (see Table 3). The performing group’s scores ranged from 5.26 (SD = 0.61) for self-control to 6.13 (SD = 0.53) for achievement orientation. The high performing group’s scores ranged from 5.05 (SD = 0.82) for self-development to 6.05 (SD = 0.71) for
achievement orientation. The $t$ test results showed that the mean scores across the groups did not vary to a statistically significant degree.

Table 3

**Self-Development Scores**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Performing $N = 10$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>High-Performing $N = 11$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>$t$ test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-development</td>
<td>5.35 (0.80)</td>
<td>5.05 (0.82)</td>
<td>$t(19) = .86, p = .40$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptability and stress tolerance</td>
<td>5.50 (0.54)</td>
<td>5.51 (0.56)</td>
<td>$t(19) = .04, p = .97$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-control</td>
<td>5.26 (0.61)</td>
<td>5.49 (0.68)</td>
<td>$t(19) = .82, p = .42$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trustworthiness</td>
<td>6.00 (0.50)</td>
<td>5.95 (0.27)</td>
<td>$t(13.54) = .26, p = .80$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strategic problem solving</td>
<td>5.86 (0.75)</td>
<td>5.36 (0.51)</td>
<td>$t(19) = 1.78, p = .09$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achievement orientation</td>
<td>6.13 (0.53)</td>
<td>6.05 (0.71)</td>
<td>$t(19) = .29, p = .78$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Self-Development</td>
<td>5.68 (0.51)</td>
<td>5.57 (0.45)</td>
<td>$t(19) = .55, p = .59$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1 = low, 7 = high

Both groups also scored high in relationship management (see Table 4).

The performing group’s scores ranged from 5.20 ($SD = 0.74$) for building strategic relationships to 6.14 ($SD = 0.63$) for interpersonal sensitivity and empathy. The high performing group’s scores ranged from 5.11 ($SD = 0.72$) for conflict management to 6.00 ($SD = 0.59$) for interpersonal sensitivity and empathy. The $t$ test results showed that the only mean scores that were statistically different between the groups was for building strategic relationships. The performing group scored 5.20 ($SD = .74$) versus the high performing group’s score of 5.97 ($SD = .86$). This competency involves initiating and building collaborative and effective networking relationships with internal and external partners as well as with stakeholders.
Table 4

Relationship Management Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Performing $N = 10$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>High-Performing $N = 11$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>t test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building strategic relationships</td>
<td>5.20 (0.74)</td>
<td>5.97 (0.86)</td>
<td>t(19) = 2.18, p = .04*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict management</td>
<td>5.46 (0.76)</td>
<td>5.11 (0.72)</td>
<td>t(19) = 1.08, p = .29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership and influence</td>
<td>5.42 (0.70)</td>
<td>5.22 (0.94)</td>
<td>t(19) = .55, p = .59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal sensitivity and empathy</td>
<td>6.14 (0.63)</td>
<td>6.00 (0.59)</td>
<td>t(19) = .53, p = .60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team and interpersonal support</td>
<td>5.76 (0.57)</td>
<td>5.73 (0.70)</td>
<td>t(19) = .12, p = .91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration</td>
<td>5.82 (0.65)</td>
<td>5.74 (0.38)</td>
<td>t(19) = .33, p = .75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Relationship Management</td>
<td>5.63 (0.54)</td>
<td>5.63 (0.58)</td>
<td>t(19) = .02, p = .98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1 = low, 7 = high; *indicates statistical significance at .05 level

Both groups exhibited high scores for communication (see Table 5). The performing group’s scores ranged from 5.43 (SD = 0.97) for oral communication to 6.27 (SD = 1.04) for written communication. The high performing group’s scores ranged from 5.27 (SD = 0.65) for listening to 5.88 (SD = 0.65) for written communication. The t test results showed that the mean scores were not statistically different across the groups.

Table 5

Communication Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Performing $N = 10$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>High-Performing $N = 11$ Mean (SD)</th>
<th>t test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Written communication</td>
<td>6.27 (1.04)</td>
<td>5.88 (0.65)</td>
<td>t(19) = 1.03, p = .31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two-way feedback</td>
<td>5.77 (0.82)</td>
<td>5.48 (0.62)</td>
<td>t(19) = 0.90, p = .38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral communication</td>
<td>5.88 (0.77)</td>
<td>5.48 (0.82)</td>
<td>t(19) = 1.15, p = .27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral presentation</td>
<td>5.43 (0.97)</td>
<td>5.36 (0.80)</td>
<td>t(19) = 0.16, p = .88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>5.65 (0.84)</td>
<td>5.27 (0.65)</td>
<td>t(19) = 1.16, p = .26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall Communication</td>
<td>5.80 (0.75)</td>
<td>5.50 (0.54)</td>
<td>t(19) = 1.06, p = .30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scale: 1 = low, 7 = high
Interview Results

Four performers and five high performers who had completed the survey also consented to complete an interview. The following sections report the results.

Interest in the Study and Awareness of the Study Topic

Participants provided their thoughts about the study topic, participation in the study, and the EI assessment (see Table 6). Nearly all participants in each sample (three performers, three high performers) had familiarity with or interest in EI. One performer shared,

I’d taken it [the EI assessment] before, about 10 years ago as part of management team training. I had some familiarity. It’s [EI] something to work on and build over time in my career. In your management career, I hope that you try to improve your EI score.

A high performer shared,

I think emotional intelligence is so important. In the context of what we’re talking about. Everything that I’ve read about in books and learned in the professional development program, emotional intelligence is far more important when it comes to things like leadership and management and interacting with people in a social setting, whether it is on a baseball team or in a board room. The emotional intelligence component is part of something, it’s difficult to teach and I’m fully fortunate that I was able to develop that on top of this academic success that I had, but it did not come easy and did cause me to become a late bloomer in life and it affected me in a very positive way, and I’m thankful for that.

Despite the participants’ general familiarity with EI, three participants (one performer, two high performers) defined intelligence as dealing with cognitive (rather than emotional) ability.
Table 6

*Feedback about the Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Performer (N = 4)</th>
<th>High Performer (N = 5)</th>
<th>Total (N = 9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Study Topic</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with or interest in EI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of intelligence: cognitive</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation for Participating</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grateful for recognition</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eager to give back</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in human behavior</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback on the Assessment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concerned about accuracy*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Striving for accurate self-assessment</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curious about utility</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoyed the assessment*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Signifies an area of difference between the samples*

Participants also shared their feelings about or motivation for participating.

These motivations included being grateful for the recognition (two participants from each sample), being eager to give back (two performers and one high performer), and having an interest in human behavior (one high performer).

Regarding the assessment, seven participants (two performers and all five high performers) expressed concerns about its accuracy. One performer shared, “I looked at the scales and wondered about the self-report and how reliant it was.” A high performer explained,

I overanalyzed my little nuances. I was self-conscious about whether I was responding accurately. [When I got the results,] I was surprised. I thought I would score much higher. It was lower than expected. I wondered if the recent negative experience [I had] had affected me. I questioned my leadership.

Four participants (two in each sample) specifically described how they strove to achieve accurate results. One high performer shared, “I kept imagining myself thinking real life examples and putting myself in different situations. It was
a process to reflect and determine how to go about answering the question.”

Other themes included curiosity about the utility of the scores (two performers, one high performer) and enjoyment of the assessment (three high performers).

**Personal Traits**

Participants were asked to share perceptions about their self-awareness as well as about their personal traits. Both groups of participants appeared to have accurate self-awareness of their work performance, as three performers did not believe they were rated as high performers and four high performers were aware of their high performer status (see Table 7). One high performer elaborated,

> I am aware of it, and sometimes I feel that I’m an indispensable employee, in that if I ever were to leave the university or stop working on the projects that I’m working on, that it would cause such a wrinkle in my particular unit that I might get anything I wanted. That is actually just a fantasy.

Four high performers but only two performers stated they had strong EI skills, people skills, and communication skills. They explained,

> I have 250 people reporting to me. I have a diverse set of people with different interest, skill level, and behaviors. You need to have people skills to have that kind of a group. They come not just every day, but every hour of every day, whether it’s dealing with personnel issues or dealing with customers, or dealing with conflict. (Performer)

> I’m emotionally available and come across as real and genuine. In the world of human resources, sometimes we have deliver hard messages to employees—like with something they shouldn’t have done. There was a situation that was highly stressed, with high conflict and highly complicated issues. In the end, difficult situations need to be made. . . . I chose to look at this specific situation less legalistically and more holistically. Outcome was incredible. The person was very grateful and appreciative. (High performer)
These results suggest that more high performers than performers were aware of their actual strong EI skills. Roughly half of each sample (50% of performers, 60% of high performers) believed the EI assessment was accurate and reflected them well.

Two themes reported by only the high performers were that they believed they had self-awareness and that they practice accountability and self-examination. These results suggest that more high performers than performers have self-awareness. Each of these reported themes was reported by two participants. Comments included,

I'm fairly aware of my shortcomings and how they affect and impact those around me. When something occurs I look at my part.

I know myself pretty well.

I constantly look at my behaviors and state of mind.

Table 7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Performer (N = 4)</th>
<th>High Performer (N = 5)</th>
<th>Total (N = 9)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of work performance</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did not know she or he was considered high performing*</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware that I was a high performer*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of emotional intelligence</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High emotional intelligence, strong people skills*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong communication skills*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment was accurate</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest in and evaluation of self-awareness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Possesses self-awareness*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practices accountability and engage in self-examination*</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interested in getting an assessment of emotional intelligence</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Signifies an area of difference between the samples
Participants named six personal traits they possessed (see Table 8).

Roughly half of each sample (50% of performers, 60% of high performers) shared they were dependable and had reasonable cognitive intelligence. Two traits were voiced by more high performers than performers. The most popular of these themes, voiced by four high performers and only one performer was being enthusiastic, high energy, and positive. One high performer elaborated,

Every day, I try to bring an attitude of relentless positivity to work. It was something that I learned when I first tried to get serious about being a musician. It’s hard not to sit in a basement for 3 hours a day for 4 years, some aspect of your attitude has to be relentlessly positive because that type of work is just difficult. I try to be relentless positive in whatever I’m doing, even if I hate it. That’s something I bring to work every day and I know there are a lot of people who struggle with that.

Table 8

Personal Traits

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Performer (N = 4)</th>
<th>High Performer (N = 5)</th>
<th>Total (N = 9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Shared traits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dependable</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reasonable cognitive intelligence</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes self</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traits voiced by more high performers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enthusiastic, high energy, and positive*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good at handling complexity and details*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traits voiced by performers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Signifies an area of difference between the samples

The trait of creativity was voiced by two performers and no high performers. One performer elaborated,

I’ve always been strong analytically but I also have to tap into my creative side or I’m not happy. I know that about myself. I do it at work at being involved in and excited by planning creative projects, creative services. For example, like working with the Metro in bringing the subway to the university. So the creative side is very important to me. I also do it outside of work. My hobby is that I am a
but on day to day my job needs and I bring to it, a lot of analysis, writing and looking at numbers.

**Workplace Impacts**

All the participants in both samples reported seeing an impact from their work and getting recognition (see Table 9). Participants elaborated,

I’m almost always being recognized, getting promotions, given greater responsibilities. (Performer)

I’ve had a variety of roles and I’ve been able to see the impact very tangibly in terms of the customer feedback. . . . On a vast of number spaces, I'm able to see that by working on a team I've actually been able to see significantly be able to diminish the amount of traffic that the university generates and get a lot more people ridesharing. That’s been very gratifying; it directly impacts the quality of life of the entire university community. . . . My bosses seemed happy and appreciative. (Performer)

Yes, I have been here for 8 years and have received number of promotions and raises, and title changes. My employer supports my graduate school schedule, as well. I also get positive feedback from my boss and the president. They tell me how I make a difference. (High performer)

I’m fortunate that I have colleagues and a boss who are constantly reminding me of the impact that I have. I know that what I work on has an impact. People tell me that I have an impact and I’m fortunate to be in an environment that celebrates those type of things. . . . People flatter me a lot, too. It’s not just people who work with me, who are in support staff, they are senior managers. (High performer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Theme</th>
<th>Performer (N = 4)</th>
<th>High Performer (N = 5)</th>
<th>Total (N = 9)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sees impact and gets recognition at work</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective leader and influencer</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Signifies an area of difference between the samples
Seven participants (three performers and four high performers) shared that they were effective leaders and influencers. Participants elaborated,

I’m often in leadership positions, I like to help and organize projects. It’s very organic for me. I often look for more depth and am great at follow-through and consensus. I bring a lot of inclusiveness, making sure there are good fits. I motivate. I was made supervisor over two employees who thought they were up for the position. Later, the two employees realized my potential as a supervisor. (Performer)

My leadership, influence, and management style are an asset. My philosophy that if my staff don’t succeed, I don’t succeed. I’m self sufficient and expect my staff to be, as well, I do my part and provide some direction with the expectation of them making the project their own. I have an open-door policy where they can come in and ask for guidance at any point. (High performer)

Summary

Both groups scored high in self-development, relationship management, and communication. The only area where high performers exhibited statistically higher mean scores was for building strategic relationships. Some areas of difference emerged between the samples concerning their qualitative responses. More high performers than performers expressed concern about the accuracy of the EI tool and enjoyment in taking the tool. More high performers appeared to possess self-awareness. More high performers than performers shared they had high EI and strong people skills; enthusiasm, high energy, and positivity; good communication skills; and skill in handling complexity and details. Two performers (and no high performers) shared that they were creative. Both performers and high performers reported they see an impact and get recognition at work. They also reported that they were effective leaders and influencers. The next chapter provides a discussion of these results.
Chapter 5

Discussion

This study examined the use of EI among middle managers in the workplace. Special attention was given to examining whether the use and impact of EI varies for performing versus high-performing middle managers. Three research questions were explored:

1. What are the EI levels for performing versus high-performing middle managers?

2. What personal traits do performing versus high-performing middle managers possess?

3. What impacts do performing versus high-performing middle managers have on their work environments?

This chapter provides a discussion of the results. Conclusions, recommendations, limitations, and suggestions for additional research are provided.

Conclusions

Conclusions were drawn for each research question. The findings and implications of each are discussed below.

EI Levels for Performing versus High-Performing Middle Managers

Both performers and high performers reported strong scores for the self-development, relationship management, and communication EI competencies. The only area where high performers exhibited statistically higher mean scores was for building strategic relationships. This competency involves initiating and building collaborative and effective networking relationships with internal and
external partners as well as with stakeholders. Pappas et al. (2004) emphasized that developing and leveraging close relationships with executives and front-line workers was central to the role of middle managers. It follows that those individuals with stronger skills in this area may be considered higher performers than those with lower scores for building strategic relationships.

It is notable that EI for the most part did not vary across the performance levels. This is consistent with Goleman (1998), Kauffman (2007), and Mayer et al. (1998), who admitted that EI by itself is likely not a strong predictor of job performance and EI, instead, is a foundation for competencies that do directly impact performance. Previous studies, many of which were theoretical, anecdotal, or based on role playing, found that EI, by itself, explains performance (e.g., Barsade, 1998; Lusch & Serpkenci, 1990; Pilling & Eroglu, 1994; Rosenthal et al., 1979; Scott & Yates, 2002). However, the results of the present study do not bear out the notion that EI contributes to high performance in middle managers.

It is unclear whether any of the many components of EI are necessary but insufficient conditions for performance when considered alone, or if EI plays a role at all in performance. For example, Muzio and Fisher (2009) found that moderate rather than high EI was more typical among the highest performers. Examining the specific role of EI in performance remains a direction for continued research.

Given these collected findings, it appears that there is more evidence to suggest that high performance is not necessarily associated with high levels of EI. Until further data suggest otherwise, pursuing EI training to assist in
improving performance in middle managers might not be the most advisable use of organizational resources.

**Personal Traits of Performing versus High-Performing Middle Managers**

Study results showed similarities and differences in participants’ personal traits. In terms of self-awareness, participants in both samples appeared to be aware of their performer or high-performer status at work and roughly half of each sample believed the EI assessment was accurate. However, more high performers than performers appeared to possess self-awareness. Roughly half of each sample reported they were dependable and had reasonable cognitive intelligence. More high performers than performers shared they had high EI and strong people skills; enthusiasm, high energy, and positivity; good communication skills; and skill in handling complexity and details. Two performers (and no high performers) shared that they were creative.

These findings departed from literature on the linkages between self-awareness and performance, as Yancey (2002) found no differences in the self-awareness of average performers versus high performers in her study of 70 managers in a large multi-national airline. However, there was some agreement between the present findings and past literature regarding the high performers’ traits. According to previous literature, high performers are distinguished from average performers by their substantially higher productivity, deeper expertise, loyalty, hard work, and dependability as compared to average performers (Corporate Leadership Council, 2005; MKB Conseils, 2011). This is consistent with the present study’s finding that enthusiasm, high energy, positivity, and skill in handling complexity and details was reported more frequently by high
performers. Further, these findings somewhat support contentions by Goleman (1998) and Mayer et al. (1998) that emotional competencies (not simply EI) directly impact performance.

Based on these collected findings, it appears that high performers do show up in the organization and exhibit different skills and traits as compared to average performers (although self-awareness may not be one of them). It follows that high performers might be detected during the selection process if such skills and traits were measured.

**Workplace Impacts of Performing versus High-Performing Middle Managers**

Both performers and high performers reported they see an impact and get recognition at work. They also reported that they were effective leaders and influencers. Based on past literature, it was expected that notable differences would be detected between the impact, productivity, and leadership of average performers versus high performers (Corporate Leadership Council, 2005; MKB Conseils, 2011). Therefore, the present findings departed from past literature. It is likely that self-reporting bias was responsible for these findings, as employees may naturally be inclined to report that they have strong, positive impacts in their workplaces. Given this limitation, using unobtrusive measurements or 360-degree instruments would be a more effective way to answer this research question. This opportunity for further research is described later in this chapter.

**Limitations**

A primary limitation of this study was its reliance on self-reported data. Self-reports can be skewed by personal interpretation of questions or the ability or lack thereof to articulate inner thoughts, feelings, and emotions. Self-reports
also can become tainted by individuals’ perceptions of themselves or desires to present themselves in the most positive light possible. These factors affect the credibility of the data and may account for the measured results. Future studies could incorporate 360-degree instruments, unobtrusive measures (e.g., performance reviews), or observation procedures to avoid this limitation.

A secondary limitation was the varied perceptions of performing versus high performing among the nominators. Perceived performance is relative to the eye of the beholder. While detailed descriptions of the categories were provided, varied perceptions of the standards of performance could skew the results.

Another limitation of this study was its small sample size, which limited the data that could be collected and the findings and interpretations that could be drawn. The small sample size also limits this study to being exploratory. Therefore, add-on studies would need to be performed on much larger samples to confirm the findings and generalize them to other populations.

**Recommendations**

Two recommendations are offered based on the results of this study. While these recommendations are offered to organizations, organization development practitioners can play an important role in implementing these recommendations.

First, the literature points out a complex relationship between the various components of EI, EI as a whole, and performance. It has shown that EI competence produces certain benefits. However, a direct contribution to high performance does not appear to be among them. Therefore, based on the exploratory findings from this study and similar findings in the literature, this
author would not recommend that EI training be made a strong focus in talent development.

Second, study results suggested that high performers are characterized by certain traits. As the necessary and desired traits for high performance vary from organization to organization, organizations are advised to define the specific traits that high performers in their setting exhibit. Screening and development processes may then be created to assure that high performers are being hired into and cultivated within the organization.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study was deeply limited by possible self-reporting biases and it appeared that this strongly affected the findings that could be drawn for the participants’ workplace impacts. Therefore, it is important to repeat this study using a much larger sample and improved measurement tools. Sample measurement tools could include observation, unobtrusive measurements (e.g., performance reviews), or 360-degree instruments. These instruments may be more effective at producing sufficient amounts of relevant data. If an interview tool is used, care should be taken to ensure that the questions are designed to elicit substantial amounts of relevant and insightful data. Additionally, the script should be piloted to detect any limitations in the questions in advance of collecting study data. It is critical to conduct additional research to determine whether EI plays any role in performance or whether it is a necessary but insufficient condition for performance.
Summary

This study examined the use and impact of EI among performing and high-performing middle managers in the workplace. Data were gathered using a mixed-method design. Ten performers and 11 high performers completed an EI assessment. Of these, four performers and five high performers completed an interview regarding their interest in the study and awareness of the study topic, their personal traits, and their workplace impacts. Descriptive statistics and t tests were calculated to determine and compare the EI scores across the samples. Content analysis was used to examine the interview results.

EI levels were found to be consistent and high for the most part across both samples. More high performers than performers reported possessing self-awareness, EI, and people skills, in addition to having traits of enthusiasm, high energy, and positivity; good communication skills; and skill in handling complexity and details. The impacts and leadership of performers and high performers were found to be consistent.

Although limitations of self-reported data affected the study and this research should be repeated with a larger sample size and improved measurement tools, some recommendations for companies were offered. These included not making EI training a strong focus in talent development and screening for and developing desired traits in the employee base.
References
References


Appendix A

Request for Nominations
Greetings:

My name is Teresa Lara and am a student attending Pepperdine University. As a student in the Master of Science in Organization Development program at Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business and Management, I am currently recruiting individuals for my research study entitled, “Exploring the correlation between positive and productive work peers with their level of Emotional Intelligence.” The professor supervising my work is Dr. David W. Jamieson.

Please understand your participation in this study is voluntary, and you/they may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. The following is a description of what your study participation entails, the terms for participating in the study, and a discussion of your rights as a study participant. Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not you wish to participate.

If you should decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to nominate positive and productive middle managers in two (2) categories.

If you are interested in this project, the qualifications are as follow:

- nominees must be a full-time employee (30–40 hours per week)
- nominees must supervise at least one other employee
- nominees would be willing to take an online emotional intelligence tool
- nominees should live or work in Los Angeles, California, however, is not required
- nominees would consider an in-person interview comprised of 10 questions with the researcher

Here are four of the top characteristics to consider when identifying Nominee 1:

- Gets results;
- Influences others;
- Follows leadership;
- Demonstrates functional competency

Here are four of the top characteristics to consider when identifying Nominee 2:

- Exceeds results;
- Influences others;
- Displays leadership;
- Exceeds functional competency

Your responses will be kept confidential.

There are no direct benefits or major risks to you for participating in this study. This is an opportunity for you to contribute to an understanding of Emotional Intelligence in the workplace.
If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you personally will be released. The data will be kept in a secure manner for three (3) years, at which time the data will be destroyed.

Should you have any questions regarding the study, you can contact me at [contact information]; my study advisor, David Jamieson, at [contact information]; or the chair of the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Yuying Tsong, at [contact information]. This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Pepperdine University and meets all requirements regarding the universities and policies.

If you are interested, please submit your nominations with an email address to [contact information]. All nominations will be kept confidential.

By responding to this email you are acknowledging you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the study.

Thank you for your thoughtful answers and support. An abstract of the study results will be provided at your request by contacting me at [contact information].

Sincerely,

Teresa Lara
Candidate, Master of Science in Organization Development
Pepperdine University - Graziadio School of Business and Management
24255 Pacific Coast Highway Malibu, CA 90263
Appendix B

Invitation and Informed Consent for Survey Procedures
Dear [Nominee]:

My name is Teresa Lara and am a student attending Pepperdine University. As a student in the Master of Science in Organization Development program at Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business and Management, I am currently recruiting individuals for my research study entitled, “Exploring the correlation between positive and productive work peers with their level of Emotional Intelligence.” The professor supervising my work is Dr. David W. Jamieson.

Please understand your participation in this study is voluntary, and you/they may withdraw from the study at anytime without penalty. The following is a description of what my study entails, the terms for participating in the study, and a discussion of your rights as a study participant. Please read this information carefully before deciding whether or not you wish to participate.

You were nominated to participate in the study based on the following criteria:

- Gets results;
- Influences others;
- Follows leadership;
- Demonstrates functional competency

OR

- Exceeds results;
- Influences others;
- Displays leadership;
- Exceeds functional competency

To protect the nominators confidentiality, I cannot release any further information.

If you should decide to participate in the study, you will be asked to complete an Emotional Intelligence Assessment survey online that should take 15 minutes to complete. The EI Intelligence Assessment measures 17 competencies grouped in three areas; Self-management, Relationship Management and Communication, from the Daniel Goleman EI conceptual model. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Although minimal, there are potential risks that you should consider before deciding to participate in this study. These risks include new information about one’s self that could be different than expected and may create some unsettledness. In the event you do experience unsettledness please notify me for a list of career counselors you may consult.

The potential benefits to you for participating in the study are further knowledge of your interpersonal, social and communication competencies derived in three specific areas:
1) Self-management; 2) Relationship Management; and 3) Communication. A personalized complimentary Emotional Intelligence report with recommendations will be emailed to you.

If you should decide to participate and find you are not interested in completing the assessment/survey in its entirety, you have the right to discontinue at any point without being questioned about your decision. You also do not have to answer any of the questions on the survey that you prefer not to answer—just leave such items blank.

If the findings of the study are presented to professional audiences or published, no information that identifies you personally will be released. The only way your information would be compromised is if Pepperdine University or Envisia's, secure, email system are compromised.

The data will be kept in a secure manner for at least three years at which time the data will be destroyed. If you have any questions regarding the information that I have provided above, please do not hesitate to contact me at the address and phone number provided below. If you have further questions or do not feel I have adequately addressed your concerns, you can contact me at teresa.lara@pepperdine.edu; my study advisor, David Jamieson, at david.jamieson@pepperdine.edu; or the chair of the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Yuying Tsong, at yuying.tsong@pepperdine.edu. This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Pepperdine University and meets all requirements regarding the universities and policies.

By responding to this email you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the study.

Thank you.

Teresa Lara
Appendix C

Invitation to Participate in Interview
Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you for completing the Emotional Intelligence assessment. If you are interested in participating in a 15–20 minute interview, please email me your name, contact information, and dates and times that would be most convenient for you over the next two weeks.

Should you decide to participate in the interview, you will have to sign a consent form that I will email you before we schedule the interview. Please read it closely and contact me with any questions you may have. You may deliver the signed consent form to me at the time of the interview, if conducted in person; or via email, mail, or fax, if conducted over the phone.

Your participation is strictly voluntary and can be terminated at any time. The interview will be one-on-one with me, either in person or over the phone, and as previously stated, will take approximately 15–20 minutes. So that I can best capture your input, I would like to record the interview and have it transcribed. Your responses will be kept confidential.

By emailing me your interest, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the interview component of my research study. I appreciate your consideration.

Thank you,

Teresa Lara
[contact information]
Appendix D

Informed Consent for Interview Procedures
I ______________________, agree to participate in the research study being conducted by Teresa Lara, a student in the Master of Science in Organization Development Program at Pepperdine University, Graziadio School of Business and Management, under the direction of Dr. David W. Jamieson.

The overall purpose of the study is to investigate the correlation between positive and productive middle managers with their level of Emotional Intelligence. I understand that individuals have been nominated to participate in this research study. I understand that my participation in this research study is strictly voluntary. The following is a description of what my participation entails and the terms for participating in the study.

The confidential interview will take approximately 15–20 minutes. During the interview the interviewer will ask 10 behavior-based questions.

I understand there are no direct benefits to me for participating in this study. This is an opportunity to give input and insight on emotional intelligence in the workplace.

I understand there are no major risks associated with this study.

I understand that I may choose not to participate in this research.

I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I may refuse to participate and/or withdraw my consent and discontinue participation in the project or activity at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.

I understand that I may request a brief summary of the study findings to be delivered in about one (1) year. If I am interested in receiving summary, I will send an email request to teresa.lara@pepperdine.edu.

I understand that the investigator(s) will take all reasonable measures to protect the confidentiality of my records and my identity will not be revealed in any publication that may result from this project. The confidentiality of my records will be maintained in accordance with applicable state and federal laws.

I understand that the investigator is willing to answer any inquiries I may have concerning the research herein described. I understand that I may contact the researcher, Teresa Lara, at [contact information omitted]. I understand that I may contact Dr. David W. Jamieson at [contact information omitted] if I have other questions or concerns about this research. If I have questions about my rights as a research participant, I understand that I can contact Dr. Yuying Tsong, Chairperson of the Institutional Review Board, Pepperdine University, at [contact information omitted].

I understand to my satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have
received a copy of this informed consent form which I have read and understand. I hereby consent to participate in the research described above.

By signing and emailing or faxing this authorization, you are acknowledging that you have read and understand what your study participation entails, and are consenting to participate in the study.

__________________________
Participant Name

__________________________  _____
Participant Signature  Date

I have explained and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. Having explained this and answered any questions, I am cosigning this form and accepting this person’s consent.

Principal Investigator  __________________________
Date_____________________________
Appendix E

Interview Format and Questions
The interview and discussion should not exceed 20 minutes.

**Interview Guidelines**

Thank you very much for taking time out of your schedule and agreeing to this interview. Before we begin, let’s get some of the administrative out of the way:

1. To maintain the authenticity of an interview, I only will be asking questions and therefore will not be commenting or dialoging along the way.
2. I want to confirm that you have provided the signed consent form prior to this interview.
3. As mentioned in the consent form, this interview is being recorded but I want to restate that I will maintain the highest level of confidentiality and anonymity. Raw data will not be included in any part of the shared study, only aggregate data will be reported.
4. Lastly, please feel free to ask me to repeat or clarify any question if I’ve asked it too quickly or if your answer takes you on a tangent and you would like a reminder of the question.

**Engagement Interview Questions:**

1. What was your reaction when you learned of your nomination?
2. What were your feelings or thoughts when taking the EI test?
3. What was your reaction when you got your EI Score?
4. In which ways do you impact your work environment?
5. How would you describe your positive traits?
6. How would you describe your intelligence?
7. Could you give me an example of a positive experience at your company.
8. Could you give me an example of a negative experience that became a positive experience at your company?
9. Are you aware of your impact to the company?
10. Is the company aware of your impact to the company?