

Leaders who want their organizations to not only survive but thrive in the fast-changing world of business today need to develop the wisdom of Deep Intelligence . . .



Deep Intelligence

The Critical Intelligences for Leadership Success in the 21st Century

By Cindy Wigglesworth

The idea that there is more to effective leadership than high IQ is now well accepted. In the past two decades, Daniel Goleman's groundbreaking research on Emotional Intelligence (EQ) has been widely embraced by the business community. It is no longer uncommon to find leaders being assessed on self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills, as well as more traditional qualities such as technical depth, determination, and vision.

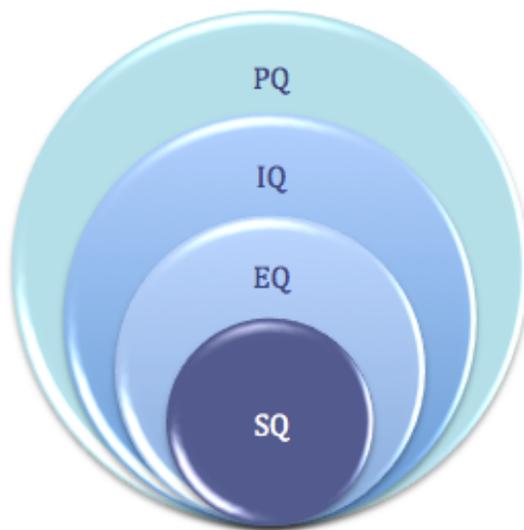
As leaders confront today's increasingly challenging business environment, however, even EQ is not enough to help them survive and thrive. Author and organizational consultant Cindy Wigglesworth, founder of Deep Change, believes that there are four critical intelligences that today's leaders need to develop. In addition to strong IQ and EQ, she argues, a strong foundation in Physical Intelligence (PQ) and a willingness to develop Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) are needed. When these four come together, she writes, the result is the Deep Intelligence™ that is necessary to lead a transformative organization in a fast-changing and unpredictable world. In this article, she discusses the unique challenges facing leaders today, offers some background on the idea of multiple intelligences, describes each of the four critical Intelligences (with a particular focus on the less familiar concept of SQ) and discusses the benefits and challenges of developing and measuring these intelligences in a business environment.

INTRODUCTION: CHANGE HAS CHANGED

At the 2009 World Business Forum in New York City, Gary Hamel, dubbed "the world's most influential business thinker," by the *Wall Street Journal*, told the gathered delegates: "The signature characteristic of our time is the pace of change. After 13.5 billion years of evolution, change went hypercritical in our lifetime. The world is changing faster than companies can become resilient."¹

For today's organizations, change is no longer a luxury or something you discuss at an annual strategic planning retreat. It has become a daily challenge. As a recent article in *BusinessWeek* put it, "There is no more normal. . . . Smart leaders recognize that they can use this crisis as a catalyst to spark new ways of thinking and doing business."² Cisco CEO John Chambers, one of today's most innovative and unconventional leaders, told *McKinsey Quarterly* that, "Where the industry's going, in every industry, will be about how do you change? How do you get outside your comfort zone? If you don't move, you will get left behind."³ Change that is to be sustainable cannot be merely surface rearrangements. For most organizations, deep change is required, but as Hamel observes, "deep change is nearly always crisis-led."⁴ People are "pushed into the icy waters of change by circumstances beyond their control."⁵

It seems to be human nature to resist change as long as possible, and as Chambers points out, it is often the leaders who are the most resistant.⁶ What if we could change that? What if a new breed of leader began to show by example that it's not necessary for life to push us to the brink of disaster before we are willing to let go of our old ways of doing things and create new ones? And what if the new ways are changes that so clearly serve the stakeholders of the organization that "uptake" is relatively easy and sustainable? I firmly believe that the leaders of the future will be those who develop this capacity. And I have found that the key to leading deep change resides in a set of skills that can be measured and developed: a skill set I call Deep Intelligence. Deep Intelligence brings together some of the more familiar notions of Cognitive Intelligence (IQ) and Emotional Intelligence (EQ) with the often-taken-for-granted but foundational idea of Physical Intelligence (PQ) and the newly emerging field of Spiritual Intelligence (SQ).



DEEP INTELLIGENCE = ALL 4 ESSENTIAL INTELLIGENCES IN PROPER BALANCE FOR THE ROLE AND THE BUSINESS CONTEXT OF THE LEADER

LEADING CHANGE

While the attributes of great leaders have been scrutinized in numerous books, surveys, and articles, what it takes to *become* a great leader remains something of a mystery to many. In his bestselling book *Good to Great*, Jim Collins identified what he called "Level 5 Leadership" as a key to greatness,⁷ and described such leaders as surprisingly self-effacing, humble, and able to "channel their ego needs away from themselves and into the larger goal."⁸ But Collins confesses: "I would love to be able to give you a list of steps for becoming Level 5, but we have no solid research data that would support a credible list. Our research exposed Level 5 as a key component inside the black box of what it takes to shift a *company* from good to great. Yet inside that black box is yet another black box—namely, the inner development of a person to Level 5. We could speculate on what might be inside that black box, but it would mostly be just that—speculation."⁹ Duke University's 2009 Executive Leadership Survey¹⁰ revealed Leadership Development to be the number two challenge facing organizations—exceeded only by the issues of innovation and growth.

What is interesting about Collins' observation is that the qualities he identifies as defining Level 5 are all qualities commonly associated with spiritual attainment. And he is not alone in these observations. So-called "soft skills"—from collaboration to empathy to inclusiveness to inspiration—are scoring high on leadership surveys. This does not mean that aspiring leaders should abandon their MBAs and head for the monastery. Hard business skills and a high IQ are still essential. But it highlights the fact that notions once confined to personal faith and self-improvement are now showing up in the boardroom. And they are here to stay.

Bestselling business gurus like Stephen Covey and Peter Senge use the term “spiritual” freely, and there is growing agreement that the inner dimensions of life play a key role in effective leadership and sustainable success. In fact, trend-tracker Patricia Aburdene claimed in her 2005 book *Megatrends 2010* that “spirituality in business, having quietly blossomed for decades, is an established trend that is about to morph into a megatrend.”¹¹

I believe that what all of this tells us is that not only Emotional Intelligence (EQ) but also Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) are becoming increasingly important components of leadership development, together with the other critical intelligences we may be more familiar with. The notion of spiritual intelligence has proven to be an attractive premise for open-minded companies and consultants, including Nokia, Unilever, McKinsey, Shell, Coca-Cola, Hewlett Packard, Merck Pharmaceuticals, Starbucks and the Co-operative Bank.¹²

The challenge, however, as Collins indicates, is the lack of solid research data and effective measurement tools to shine light inside that “black box,” especially when it comes to SQ. While EQ is now a well-established field with proven methods and assessments, there is very little concrete advice to be found about how to use SQ as an effective tool, and how to measure and develop it.

However, as we shall discuss in this article, it is possible to quantify even such seemingly intangible “skills” as those Jim Collins and others have identified, skills that I would categorize as SQ skills. And for leaders of deep change, it is essential. To be effective and inspirational, the great leaders of today and tomorrow will need to focus on developing multiple intelligences simultaneously, and be able to measure and track their progress.

MULTIPLE INTELLIGENCES: A BRIEF HISTORY

The notion of multiple intelligences was first introduced by psychologist Howard Gardner in his 1983 book *Frames of Mind*. “As human beings, we have many different ways of representing meaning, many kinds of intelligence,”¹³ writes Gardner. Based on his empirical work with both normal and gifted children and also with brain-damaged patients, he initially identified seven distinct intelligences: linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. In more recent years, he added an eighth, naturalist intelligence, and continues to speculate about a possible ninth, existential intelligence.

Much of the ongoing development and debate around Gardner’s theory is centered on education, but the basic idea that we have more than one kind of intelligence has become widely popular—so much so that a flood of recent books have picked up on the notion, from “financial intelligence” to “social intelligence” to “practical intelligence.” The most highly developed area of this field, however, has been Emotional Intelligence. Psychologist Daniel Goleman brought the idea of EQ to a wide audience in his 1995 book of that name, and specifically to the world of business in his 1998 *Harvard Business Review* article. While dismissed by some in the research community as “pop science,” the model of EQ created by Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis has become the most widely used approach to EQ in the business world. Backing up his ideas (which were unconventional in business at the time) with solid research at nearly 200 global companies, Goleman was able to tell “a persuasive story about the link between a company’s success and the emotional intelligence of its leaders,” and demonstrate that “people can, if they take the right approach, develop their emotional

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intelligence.”¹⁴ Goleman identifies four main Emotional Intelligence constructs: Self-Awareness, Self-Management, Social Awareness, and Relationship Management.

The notion of Spiritual Intelligence is less accepted and even harder to pin down than EQ, but it is slowly becoming more mainstream in scientific inquiry and philosophical/psychological discussion. Models for developing and measuring SQ are also increasingly used in corporate settings. It has been identified as a key component of leadership by bestselling business author Stephen Covey. Many people attribute the term to Danah Zohar, who introduced the idea in her book *ReWiring the Corporate Brain* in 1997, and developed it, together with Ian Marshall, in subsequent books, including *SQ: The Ultimate intelligence*.

Howard Gardner chose not to include SQ amongst his intelligences due to the challenge of codifying quantifiable scientific criteria.¹⁵ Instead, Gardner suggested an “existential intelligence” as viable,¹⁶ which subsequent researchers have attempted to connect with spirituality.

There is a great deal of disagreement over the measurement of spiritual intelligence. Many suggest that this ability set cannot be measured by traditional means, while others maintain that, as with most psychological constructs, some degree of measurement is possible. I believe it is not only possible but essential to measure SQ, and most effective to do so as part of an integrated assessment of four key intelligences: Cognitive Intelligence (IQ), Emotional Intelligence (EQ) Spiritual Intelligence (SQ) and Physical Intelligence (PQ).

While these four are by no means the only intelligences, they are the ones I have found to be most critical for leaders. Leaders need all four of the primary intelligences, and they need to understand what their interrelation-

ships are. Most importantly, they need to understand the special role of SQ as an *integrating intelligence*—a “capstone” that links and amplifies our rational and emotional capacities. I would concur with author Stephen Covey, who writes that “Spiritual intelligence is the central and most fundamental of all the intelligences, because it becomes the source of guidance for the other[s].”¹⁷

THE FOUR CRITICAL INTELLIGENCES FOR DEEP LEADERSHIP

1. Physical Intelligence

While many people take it for granted, Physical Intelligence (PQ) is foundational. I define PQ simply as: “Body awareness and skillful use.” It begins in childhood with mastering simple skills like rolling over, crawling, walking, throwing, and catching a ball. It continues through our lives in terms of how we observe and manage our energy, stamina, sleep patterns, and our overall health as a “corporate athlete.”¹⁸

If PQ is not in place, attempts to develop all the other intelligences will be stunted. As Abraham Maslow demonstrated in his Hierarchy of Needs, the lower level (deficiency) needs must be fulfilled before the individual even becomes aware of some of the higher level (being) needs. “A hungry man may willingly surrender his need for self-respect in order to stay alive; but once he can feed, shelter, and clothe himself, he becomes likely to seek higher needs.” If a leader is sleep-deprived, she will not have the focus or energy to develop or use cognitive, emotional, or spiritual skills. When we are exhausted, our hormones out of balance, or our blood sugar levels too low, even high IQ, EQ, and SQ people can make mistakes in logic, become inconsiderate, and see things from a narrow self-interested point of view. Corporate athletes need to take excellent care of their bodies.



Like the Hierarchy of Needs, the four intelligences can be represented as a pyramid (see diagram below). The base of the pyramid—our PQ—needs to be strong in order to support the “weight” of levels above. When we don’t take care of our bodies, everything else suffers.

2. Cognitive Intelligence

IQ, or cognitive intelligence, is the kind of intelligence we are most familiar with, and its development is supported by our education systems. Initially we focus on mathematical and linguistic intelligences, and basic technical skills.

For leaders today, I believe the most important aspect of this intelligence is the attainment of a high level of cognitive complexity. This is most easily explained as the ability to consider many perspectives simultaneously, including all stakeholders and the “perspectives” of the group, and the cultural, economic, and other systems in which you and your business are embedded. In psychology this is sometimes referred to as the ability to think “systemically” and “metasystemically.”

The ability to perceive the flux and flow of subtle changes in groups and systems is the point at which IQ, EQ, and SQ become interconnected. These intelligences become increasingly interdependent (in other words, you need

each of them to develop the others) the more developed and effective you wish to become as a leader.

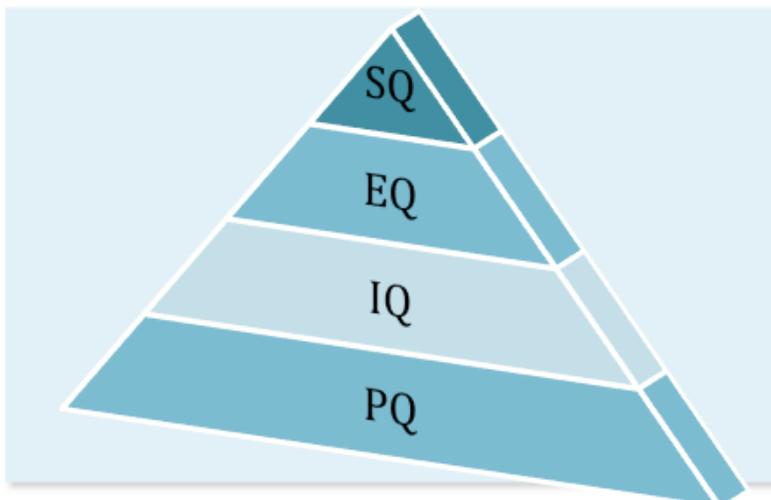
3. Emotional Intelligence

EQ has been defined in numerous ways. Because Deep Intelligence is much more about the practice and application than it is about the theory, I adopt the most well-used and field-tested definition of EQ as developed by Daniel Goleman and Richard Boyatzis.

Essentially, EQ relates to our interpersonal skills, founded on emotional self-awareness and empathy and emotional self-management. The 18 skills of EQ are divided into four quadrants. We can summarize these four quadrants as creating the ability to: recognize my own feelings; perceive and even anticipate the feelings of other people; manage my own behaviors and emotions; and manage my relationships well.

In every job ever tested, EQ enhanced performance. In one of the more surprising studies, the top 10% of programmers produced 320% more effective code than average programmers. And the top 1% of programmers produced a mind-boggling 1272% more than average programmers. The difference was assessed as EQ skills related to teamwork: “They don’t compete—they collaborate.”¹⁹ The difference is stunning in a field where it is generally assumed that interpersonal skills are not needed.

I have verified this difference with a software client. Their “best programmer” also had the highest EQ. Apparently writing *effective* code is very different from just writing code. Effective code works well with other programmers’ code, and it delivers what the customers want. All of this requires some EQ skills like empathy, listening well, cooperating with teammates, and maintaining a high customer service orientation.



4. Spiritual Intelligence

Spiritual intelligence, or SQ—the last, and most challenging of the four intelligences—is my field of specialization. How did I get here? Although I was naturally blessed with a talent for and interest in academic work (IQ), EQ came a little more slowly for me. I received the gift of appropriate feedback (yes, that means supervisors had to tell me to work on this) and trained myself in EQ fairly early in the course of my corporate career. At that time, we didn't have the language of "EQ," but I knew that my interpersonal skills had to be improved.

As I became more graceful interpersonally, I began to discover another skill-set that was impacting my effectiveness as a leader—one that seemed even more powerful than the EQ work. I traced the development of these skills back to my spiritual work—specifically around reducing my attachment to my egoic needs and focusing more on the greater good of the team, the customers, the company, etcetera. As I shifted my focus, I found that I could see solutions and work with people in creative ways that were not options for me before.

Finding the corporate world unresponsive to such notions, I began the process of translating the intangible ideas of spirituality into terms that businesspeople could relate to. I identified 21 skills of spiritual intelligence, and set out to create a rigorously tested, faith-neutral, professional quality instrument for measuring this elusive skill-set, which I called the SQ21™.

Spiritual intelligence is distinct from spirituality or religion. Spirituality, as I define it, is the innate human need to be connected to something larger than oneself, something bigger than one's little ego and its needs. That innate need exists in all of us. Religion is a set of beliefs and practices, usually based on a sacred text, and a community of practice to support people in their spir-

itual growth. And all of those things can be *reinforcing* of spiritual intelligence, but spiritual intelligence can be developed independent of belief or tradition. Spiritual intelligence is a set of skills we develop over time, with practice. We are all born as inherently spiritual beings, but we are not born spiritually intelligent. In the same way, we are born with emotions, but we have to develop the skills of emotional intelligence.

Created with much consideration, my definition of spiritual intelligence is: *the ability to behave with wisdom and compassion while maintaining inner and outer peace regardless of the situation.* The word "behave" is critical in this definition. If we do not prove it with our behaviors—if SQ doesn't show up in some exterior way—we are not yet really developed in this arena.

Why does this ability to be compassionate, wise, and peaceful matter to a leader? How do the 21 skills of SQ affect business? I would offer these answers from my own experience:

- The reduction in egoic or "small self" perspectives creates a huge increase in innovation for you and your team—and new ideas flourish.
- The reduced need to defend the old way of doing things makes change much easier.
- The magnetic attractiveness of visions generated from the higher perspective of SQ mobilizes people into action. It is energizing and taps into people's desire for meaning and purpose in their work lives.
- The higher vantage point of SQ provides a less "noisy," less fearful, less drama-prone way of working. This amplifies your IQ.
- The calm of a high-SQ perspective on problems gives you the energy to work on complex problems your business may face. You are not wasting adrenaline on the situation—you focus your energy appropriately and can accomplish more.



THE CHALLENGE OF MEASUREMENT

There is a great deal of disagreement over the measurement of all intelligences, which grows more heated as we go up the pyramid. Most people can agree on basic concepts of PQ, such as a good diet and good sleep patterns—although even that can be debated.

IQ measurements tend to be controversial. Yet we depend on some form of testing, however imperfect (such as SAT or ACT college entrance exams) to sort people for minimal qualification. We also look to academic achievement or assessments of technical skills as a way to gauge “sufficient IQ” for a job. There is a much newer extension of IQ, called “cognitive complexity,” which I find most intriguing. This is tricky to measure but can be done via written test and/or interviews to see how someone solves a problem or considers a situation. What does a person consider? What do they fail to consider? The importance of this for leadership is substantial.

When it comes to EQ, there are a number of different models, and different measurement instruments to go with them. The most widely used in business are the tools derived from Daniel Goleman’s model.

In the newly emerging field of SQ, the territory of measurement is most challenging. Due to its varying definitions and models, a number of indicators and measures of spiritual intelligence have been proposed. I have developed the first competency-based Spiritual Intelligence Assessment Instrument, the SQ21™, which measures 21 skills through a carefully created and tested questionnaire. This self-assessment has undergone statistical analysis of results to determine statistical significance and reliability, a construct validity analysis, and a correlation analysis with another highly respected, validated assessment of adult development. I believe it is a uniquely

rigorous assessment of SQ that focuses on behaviors that impact leadership.

BRINGING VALUE TO BUSINESS WITH A DEEP INTELLIGENCE DIAGNOSTIC™

At Deep Change, a consultancy dedicated to the development of Deep Intelligence, we believe in customizing what we do for each client. To assist a leader in her development, we would begin with an interview. Based on the person, the role, and the larger context of the business, we would consider which intelligences were most in need of assessment and which could possibly wait. We then select, using our diagnostic process, those assessments most relevant for the client. Typically, there will be at least two online assessments and a questionnaire to complete.

Once the data are received, we partner with the client to interpret the results. We bring our depth of expertise and experience, but the client brings her own self-knowledge. Only she can tell us “Why do you see things this way?” or “What did this question mean to you?” After we debrief with the client, we work together to create a list of next steps. The focus is always: “How may we serve you as a leader? What is the business challenge you most need to address? What distinctive results do you hope to achieve?”

It is my firm belief that the Deep Intelligence approach fills in the “black box” that Jim Collins described—the missing steps to creating Level 5 Leaders who can take their businesses from “good” to “great.” ■

Further information:

For more information about Deep Intelligence, please visit the Deep Change website at www.deepchange.com or contact the author at cindy@deepchange.com



Notes

¹ Gary Hamel quoted in "Time for Management 2.0" by Seth Kahan, *Fast Company*, Oct. 6, 2009:

<http://www.fastcompany.com/blog/seth-kahan/leading-change/hamel-hypercritical-change-points-radical-changes-required-management>

² Jena McGregor, "Smart Management for Tough Times," *BusinessWeek*, March 23, 2009: http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/09_12/b4124030837359.htm

³ "McKinsey Conversations with Global Leaders: John Chambers of Cisco," McKinsey Quarterly, July 2009: https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/McKinsey_conversations_with_global_leaders_John_Chambers_of_Cisco_2400

⁴ Gary Hamel, *The Future of Management* (Harvard Business Press, 2007) p.43

⁵ Gary Hamel, "Outrunning Change: The Cliffnotes Version, Part II" on his WSJ blog: <http://blogs.wsj.com/management/2009/11/13/outrunning-change-the-cliffnotes-version-part-ii/>

⁶ "McKinsey Conversations with Global Leaders: John Chambers of Cisco," McKinsey Quarterly, July 2009: https://www.mckinseyquarterly.com/McKinsey_conversations_with_global_leaders_John_Chambers_of_Cisco_2400

⁷ Jim Collins, *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap and Others Don't* (HarperCollins 2004)

⁸ *ibid*, p.21

⁹ *ibid*, p.37

¹⁰ The sample consisted of 205 executives from public and private companies drawn from the *BusinessWeek* C-Level Executives email list. The survey was launched Sept 25, 2008 and closed Oct 19, 2008. The survey was administered online through Qualtrics. <http://cole.fuqua.duke.edu/Executive%20Leadership%20Survey%20Report.pdf>

¹¹ Aburdene, Patricia, *Megatrends 2010*, (Hampton Roads, 2005) p. 127

¹² Ian Wylie, "Hopelessly Devoted," *The Guardian*, Saturday 10 December 2005

¹³ *The Development and Education of the Mind: the Selected Works of Howard Gardner* (Taylor & Francis, 2006) p.227

¹⁴ Goleman, Daniel, "What Makes a Leader?" *Harvard Business Review*, 1998, reprinted in Best of HBR, 2004.

¹⁵ Gardner, Howard, "A Case Against Spiritual Intelligence," *The International Journal for the Psychology of Religion*, Volume 10, Issue 1 January 2000, pp. 27-34

¹⁶ Gardner, Howard, *Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century* (Basic Books, 1999) p.53

¹⁷ Covey, Stephen, *The 8th Habit: From Effectiveness to Greatness* (Simon and Schuster, 2004, p.53)

¹⁸ Jim Loehr and Tony Schwartz, "The Making of a Corporate Athlete," *Harvard Business Review*, Jan 2001

http://www.peak4.nl/the_making.pdf

¹⁹ Goleman, Daniel, *Working With Emotional Intelligence* (Bantam, 1998) p.37.
