

# Using Emotional Intelligence to Maximize Sales Performance

Stu Schlackman

What is selling? I believe the true definition of selling is “the transfer of emotions from one person to the other.” People buy emotionally and back up their decision with logic. If that’s the case, then the second question to consider is what’s more important, EQ or IQ? EQ is the emotional quotient and IQ is the intelligent quotient.

Back in 2006 a study was conducted by Dr. Michael Cox who was with the Dallas Federal Reserve Bank. I found the study most intriguing as it was on the six most needed business skills in the U.S. Here they are. Number six is Muscle Power. Muscle power is heavy lifting, construction, and manual labor, yet this is the sixth most needed skill in our country. This is learned through on-the-job training and not formal education. It is learned with muscle memory.

The fifth most needed skill, taking it one step further, is Dexterity. Dexterity is typing, sewing, or playing the piano. Again this is something that is learned through muscle memory. I never took typing and usually type with three or four fingers, but over time I’ve memorized where all the keys are and can type just fine. Again, this is the fifth most needed skill.

Number four is a little different. Number four is Formulaic Intelligence. This is using formulas to solve problems. This is where formal education is needed. This is what we call left-brain activity where calculations and logic are used regularly.

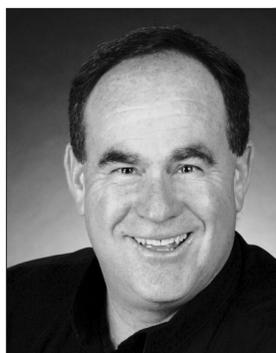
Taking this a step further, the third most important business skill needed is Analytical Reasoning. Analytical reasoning is assessing numbers and what they mean. If we did \$10 million in 2009 and \$12 million in 2010, what will our projections be for 2012? Or looking at the actuarial tables, what is the life expectancy of a person with certain characteristics?

Analytical reasoning is making sense of trends and numbers and, again, this is the third most needed business skill and also utilizes the left hemisphere of the brain.

Number two takes a turn. Number two is Imagination and Creativity. So think of companies you know of that you would consider creative. Several that come to mind are Apple, Disney, Google, Amazon, and one of my favorites is Starbucks. Think about it, who in their right mind would spend \$7 on a cup of coffee? The answer is everyone. What Starbucks has done is create an environment that is conducive to everyone. Whether you want to relax and read a book, play on your laptop, or have a business meeting, Starbucks has created an environment that is conducive for everyone. Creativity is a right-brain activity.

The number one most needed skill in our country is People Skills and Emotional Intelligence. This isn’t something you learn in school; it’s something you learn in life. Think of some companies that have high people skills. What comes to mind for me is Southwest Airlines. I was on a plane going from Dallas to Harlingen, Texas. The ride was bumpy, which I do not feel at all comfortable with. As we were landing, the plane was rocking from side to side. We hit the ground so hard that everyone on the plane screamed. I thought we had crashed! The pilot had the audacity to get on the intercom and say the following, “Ladies and gentlemen, that wasn’t my fault. That wasn’t the flight attendant’s fault, that wasn’t the plane’s fault, that was the asphalt!” See, what Southwest figured out is that they are in the people business, they just happened to fly planes to make a living.

So what is emotional intelligence? Daniel Goleman wrote the book *Emotional Intelligence* and says it this way: “It’s the



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ability to recognize and regulate the emotions in ourselves and others.” Is this easy to do? Not really. Travis Bradberry who wrote the book *Emotional Intelligence 2.0* takes it a step further and says there are four elements of EI. The first is Self Awareness. Are you aware of your strengths and weaknesses? I know I am. I love to talk, and that’s what I do for a living. The question becomes number two—self-management—do I know when to stop talking? The third element is social awareness. Are you aware of who is buying into what you’re saying, and are you aware of who isn’t buying into what you’re saying? The last element is Relationship Management. Are you able to manage the relationships in a meeting? Is there disagreement, and can you bring everyone to consensus?

The Center for Creative Leadership stated in 1994 that 75 percent of careers are derailed for reasons of emotional competencies. Poor leadership, interpersonal conflict, or personal problems all have impact on careers. It’s stated that 58 percent of your job performance has to do with emotional intelligence. In your line of business selling insurance, it is more like 90 percent. You see emotions are our sixth sense. Our first reaction to anything is emotional. Our brain is hardwired to give the emotions that upper hand over logic every time. Our limbic brain, where emotions lie, is stimulated 3,000 times more than our rational mind, the neocortex. Ninety percent of top performers have high emotional intelligence.

Here is what happens according to Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, and Switzler who wrote the book *Crucial Conversations*. We have a conversation with someone for the first time. After about 30 to 60 seconds, we tell ourselves a story. The story goes like this, “I kind of like this person, they seem warm and friendly like me, they’re making eye contact, and I feel comfortable.” The story impacts my emotions; my emotions impact my behavior; and my behavior impacts my attitude toward them. The important thing to realize is that your attitude toward them is directly proportional to their attitude toward you. This is all based on a story you told yourself. What if you got the story wrong? That can happen since there are people who don’t have the same personality that you do. You see, we are all made of three components: a personality style, which you are born with; IQ, which is developed between the ages of 5 and 15—after that you don’t get any smarter. Oh, we learn and gain knowledge and practical experience, but IQ is set by age 15. The last component is emotional intelligence. This is the only one that can be improved upon. I believe the way we improve it is by being able to understand the four different personality styles.

Now before we get into personality what we need to understand is that it’s different from attitude. What is attitude? Attitude is actually the habit of thought. Attitude is positive, negative, or indifferent. But it can change. If you win a big sale, most likely you will feel pretty positive the next day, and, if you lose a sale, you might be negative. Some people, though, seem to be down all the time. You have friends like this. They call you up and spend just five minutes on the phone with you just to ruin your day. I have a friend who calls about every two weeks. Let’s say his name is Jack. “Jack how are you?” “Hanging in there, surviving.” “Jack, how’s life?” “It’s taking forever.” I, on the other hand, am pretty positive all the time. I just had my annual physical a couple of months ago, and the first thing they do when you go through the door at the doctor’s office is weigh you. I go into the doctor’s office, and the doctor says, “We have a problem.” I say, “What’s that?” “Well according to the chart you are 30 pounds overweight.” “No way, let me see that chart. No, according to the chart I should be 6’8.” So I went on a 30-day diet, and after thirty days, I lost a month!

Personality is the ingrained nature we are born with. What is personality? It’s our psyche, our makeup, and our view of life. There has never been anyone like you. It’s the way we think and feel. How do you make decisions? Fast or slow, with your heart or with your head? It’s how we work or play. What do you like to do for a living or for fun? That says a lot about your personality style. Do you like to be in a crowd or by yourself? How many of you would consider yourself an extrovert? Notice that I ask the extroverts to raise their hands. Well what’s the definition? Extroverts gain energy in a crowd, but introverts gain energy when they are alone. That’s all you need to know. Yet when we tell ourselves that story, in the first 30 to 60 seconds extroverts think introverts are not friendly, and that just isn’t true. It’s also how we learn and teach. It’s a known fact that the education system in our country is geared toward left-brain learning. So if you are right brained, it’s more difficult. Here’s how it works. The teacher says to the class, “Open your books to page 1 and read to page 10. When you are done, answer the questions on page 11.” If you are a left-brain person, that is not a problem. If you are right-brain dominant like me, you’re starting to feel ill at this point. See right-brain people will go to page 11, look at the questions, and then go back and find the answers. They learn differently.

Personality is also about how we prefer to communicate. How do you like to start a meeting—with small talk, getting right down to business, or with an agenda? Is your style

more conducive to telling or asking questions? Personality is also about what we value, what we want from relationships, the jobs we prefer, and how we dress. It's also indicative of how we respond to stress and conflict. It tells us about our strengths and weaknesses. That's just the tip of the iceberg,

Personality styles were discovered in the year 370 BC by Hippocrates. He named the four styles by the four bodily fluids. The model we use is a color scheme. Why colors? Because it's easy to remember the characteristics of a color. It's also easy to remember a face with a name and with a color. The four colors are green, blue, gold and orange. When you think of green, just remember that we are going green. Think of Mother Nature, wind power, solar power, and nuclear energy. The detail of science is the color green. When you think of blue, think of the sea—calm, soothing, pacifying, and peaceful. When you think of gold, remember money—status, power, security, fiscal responsibility—that's gold. Finally the color orange—fire, brilliance, excitement, competition—that's the color orange. Now we all have all four colors in us, but there is always one more dominant color, and that is called our primary personality style. That tells me the most about you. Your second highest color has some influence, the third is not significant, and your lowest score is what you are least interested in and can actually be a weakness.

So let me share with you the characteristics of each of the colors. The blue personality's top priority is relationships. Family and friends are at the top of the list. Blues like to feel unique and look for the deeper meaning of things. They need harmony, enjoy small talk, and encourage you to express yourself. Blues like opportunities to be creative. They compromise and cooperate and are nurturing. Blues share emotions easily and make decisions with their heart, based on how they feel. My son Bryan is a blue. He walked from Northern Ireland to Valencia, Spain, to raise funds for water purification systems in Africa because blues get caught up in causes. He also is an excellent guitar player, which is another strength of blues. Blues gravitate to nurturing careers such as elementary school teachers, human resources, nurses, real estate, and insurance sales. Blues bring unity to society. You have to have blues on your team. Blues are great at selling themselves. They build the relationship first and foremost based on trust and integrity. Blues are right-brained people.

Golds, being left brained, are quite different from blues. Golds top strength is order and organization. They are dutiful and stable, need to be useful, and measure worth by completion. Golds want to be self-sufficient, schedule their

lives, and value punctuality. My brother, Jay, was gold. Unfortunately he died in 1998 from leukemia, but at the age of 12, he would get up at 8:00 a.m. every Saturday, run into the kitchen, have his favorite breakfast of skim milk and Grape Nuts, and then put together his schedule and to-do list for the day. This was a Saturday, and he was a 12 year old. I was 15 and, as an orange personality, would get up around 11:00, have a bowl of Corn Flakes, and try not to get arrested by 3:00. Jay was very successful as a stockbroker on the American Stock Exchange, which is a natural for golds. Golds are traditional and work their way into management. CEOs, CFOs, lawyers, accountants, and CPAs are natural for golds. The military is gold since it has rank. Golds are sequential in the way they do things. They follow and make rules and regulations. Politicians, many times, are gold. They are good about preparing for the future, and they are the stabilizers of society. You need golds on your team.

Greens again are another unique personality style. Greens are also left-brained like golds. Greens value logic, information, and analysis. They are your most skeptical personality style. Greens push themselves to improve and seek knowledge to better understand. Greens will ask the most questions in order to learn. They are typically your engineers, information technology people, and any job that requires heavy analysis and detail. Greens are the innovators of society. Great examples of greens are Bill Gates and the late Steve Jobs. Competence and expertise are their main strengths. Greens are slow to make decisions since they need all the information. They're also many times oblivious to emotions since they typically fall on the introverted side. Greens like concise communication and are very succinct. They are futuristic and are the innovators of society. You need greens on your team.

The last color is orange. Oranges are similar to blues since they are right brained also. Oranges are free and spontaneous. They are impulsive risk takers and are active and competitive. To the orange, life is a game and a challenge. They thrive on crises since they love to fix things. They are very hands-on and like variety since they get bored very easily. Oranges enjoy action jobs like sales, marketing, professional speaking and are carpenters, plumbers, and electricians. Anything that has variety and requires them to multitask is what oranges enjoy. They are animated communicators and like to be the center of attention. That's why I love doing what I do for a living. When I'm done talking about me, I'll let you talk about me. That's just the way I am. Oranges bring excitement to the team. You need oranges on your team.

So the question becomes, who makes the best sales person? Which color? The answer is, all of them for different reasons. It's not what you do, but why. The four colors are great at sales for different reasons. Blues are great at selling themselves and building trust and integrity with the customer. Golds are very structured and organized and very good at selling the stability of your company and the security that comes with it. Greens are the best problem solvers and will craft the right coverage for you and your family. Oranges are the most persuasive and love to beat the competition.

We need to better understand the why behind each of the colors, and the best way to show that is to look at the four quadrants of the brain. Daniel H. Pink in his book *A Whole New Mind: Why Right-Brainers Will Rule the Future* very nicely lays out the difference between the left-brain and the right-brain hemispheres. This gives us a better understanding of golds and greens (left-brained) versus blues and oranges (right-brained).

Left-brained people like to understand the verbal and what is said. Right-brained people look for the nonverbal gestures and how it's said. Left-brained people want the details while right-brained people want the big picture. Left looks at things serially or sequentially in order, while right looks at things all at once. The left wants text while the right wants context. Left is about analysis while right is about synthesis. Task is left, relationship is right. Logic is left, creativity is right. Also, women are wired differently from men according to Pink. Women are wired for empathy and men are wired for building systems. Let me give you an example. I come home from work, and my wife says to me first thing when I walk through the door, "How was your day dear?" Men, you know the answer, it's a four letter word. "Fine!" Once in awhile I'll get creative and say, "Good." I start to walk away, and I feel like my wife is following me. She clears her throat and then I turn around and say, "How was your day, Dear?" Men, do I get "fine"? No. I get a 45-minute dissertation of every conference call that went on that day.

When we look at the four quadrants, we can see why each color behaves the way it does. Greens are all about logic, analysis, thinking calculations, and reading. That's why they are good at detail and enjoy jobs that require calculations, such as engineering and information technology. Golds are about sequencing, ordering, judging, naming, and speech. That's why they live a scheduled life and are good at accounting and other very organized careers. Oranges' part of the brain has images, patterns, perception, imagination and impulse. That's why oranges get bored very easily, and they are definitely

impulsive. Blues are all about feelings, emotions, recognition, creativity, and music. Blues make decisions based on feeling and are the most emotional of the personality styles.

To better understand these quadrants, let's address some behaviors around rules, decision making, communication, and risk. Golds make the rules being judges, while oranges, being opposite, break the rules. Greens question the rules, and blues abide by the rules. When it comes to decision making, both oranges and golds are very decisive since golds need to make decisions by a certain time frame, and oranges are impulsive in nature. Both, though, are concrete thinkers, which means they use their five senses to make decisions and are, therefore, fairly decisive.

Greens and blues, on the other hand, are slow to make decisions since they are intuitive, which means they don't use their five senses to figure things out. Greens need all the information while blues need to feel comfortable and trust the person they are working with. When it comes to communication, both golds and oranges have a natural style of "telling," while greens and blues have a tendency to "ask." When it comes to risk, golds assess risk, greens calculate it, oranges embrace it, and blues avoid it.

So how do we apply the four personality styles to the world of selling in the insurance and financial services industry? I believe, when working with potential clients, the best question we can ask is, "When it comes to insurance and investments, what's most important to you?" The answer to this question will help you identify their personality style. People will buy based on certain criteria, and, in your industry, four of the most important decision-making criteria are product portfolio, service, expertise, and financial impact. When we look at these four criteria, we tend to see each of the personality styles prioritize these differently. For the green personality, typically what's most important is that you have expertise and the right product portfolio. For golds it's the financial impact and product portfolio. Oranges value financial impact and service, and blues value product portfolio and service. Service tends to be more important for right-brained people since relationship is so important. Also, when it comes to gaining commitment from the four personalities, realize that since golds and oranges are pretty decisive, it's okay to ask for commitment—they expect it. Blues and greens, however, being slower to make decisions, should never be pressured to make a decision. They will absolutely be turned off by the pressure.

All four personalities are motivated differently. Blues are motivated to buy based on what it can do for their family in

regard to security and protection. Golds are motivated by future results, growth, and planning. Greens are motivated by your product portfolio and what the investments will look like in the future. Oranges are always motivated by the immediate benefits of your solution and how they will look making the investment.

It's interesting to look at the overall percentage of the population for each of the four styles. Six percent of the world is green, 44 percent of the world is gold, 10 percent blue, and 40 percent orange. Notice that half the world is left-brained and half right. Looking at some careers we see that 67 percent of fighter pilots are orange, being competitive in nature. With school teachers, 40 percent are gold typically tenth grade and up, 32 percent blue for the elementary teachers and junior high, and only 11 percent are orange since oranges would be bored with the same schedule every day. The only reason for an orange to be a teacher is to be a coach, and, plus, they get the summer off. Chemists are 54 percent green and 27 percent gold, being left brained and enjoying the analysis and detail of the job. Poets are 55 percent blue, and my favorite is, of course, criminal offenders, who are only 3 percent green, 11 percent gold, 14 percent blue and 72 percent orange. Oranges are impulsive, so it's act first, think later. With CEOs of larger corporations, we see blues being just 2 percent since there is more conflict in this position and blues would have a hard time making layoffs. Oranges, being 5 percent, are more entrepreneurs and risk takers. Greens are 32 percent, and act like Bill Gates who is green and turned the company over to his best friend, Steve Ballmer, who is gold. Sixty-one percent of CEOs are gold like Steve Ballmer and Jack Welch.

So let's talk about how to identify someone's personality. First, how do they communicate? Do they start with small talk, which is the tendency of both blues and oranges, or do they go right to business as with greens and golds? Also, golds always prefer to have an agenda. Are they serious like golds and greens or sociable like oranges and blues? Do they "ask" like blues and greens, or do they "tell" like golds and oranges?

How they dress also is an indication of their personality style. Golds are more conservative and traditional

in their dress and like suits and ties even if it's not required. Greens dress comfortably and efficiently and do not follow fashions. Blues follow styles and fashions and color. Oranges tend to dress trendy and casual. Golf shirts are preferred for oranges. Also, you can get hints from their office as to the color. Golds have neat offices with pictures of perseverance, teamwork, leadership, diplomas, and possibly organization charts. Greens have offices filled with many books, eclectic pictures, and inventions. Blues have pictures of the family, and the office is warm and friendly. Oranges have trophies and plaques of all their accomplishments and pictures of the team in Hawaii having fun.

So let's look at your sales strategy for each of the colors. For the blues, first and foremost is to build the relationship since trust and integrity are most important for a blue to invest with you. Focus on people and their concerns. Lead with your strengths when it comes to your product portfolio for their protection and security and your service. Never pressure a blue into making a quick decision.

For golds, set the expectations, since golds do not like surprises. Golds are motivated by duty. Investing in insurance is the right thing to do for your family. Golds like well-planned presentations and like to do business with companies that have been around, are credible, and have been successful in the market. Lead with your strength of financial impact and product portfolio.

For greens, expect many tough questions and don't get defensive. They ask to gain information and to learn. Prepare details and specifics and lead with your expertise and your product portfolio. Greens are futuristic, so they will ask what might change over the next 10 years. Never push a green to close; ask them what they would like to do for the next steps. Greens are also skeptical so expect a lot of "what ifs."

With oranges, build momentum, keep your presentation moving, and stay with the big picture since they get bored with the details. Focus on them as the center of attention and give them the immediate benefits that might be available. Lead with your strength of financial impact and service. Close them by saying "why wait?"