

## *Decision-Making for the Emotionally Intelligent Leader*

Reflecting on Emotions Leads to Higher Levels of Team Collaboration, Productivity

Recall the biggest decision you've faced in the last five years. It may have been whether to invest in a business, move your parents into an assisted care facility, or maybe go back to college. What were the factors you considered when choosing between options?

If your emotional intelligence (EQ) is relatively high, you considered more than just your own preferences. You considered how those decisions were affected by your own emotions and how those decisions would affect others.

Several years ago, I met a man whom I consider to be one of the wisest I've ever known. In his own gentle way, he challenged my decision-making process like no one had previously. "Consider every major decision you've made in your life, Ron, and I'll wager that most of those decisions were based on your own personal comfort and happiness." Personally, I was horrified at that thought, but eventually I had to admit it was true. "Virtually every decision we make from where we work, to whom we marry, to our simplest everyday decisions, is based on our own comfort," he continued. "A great leader is able to see that tendency within himself and make decisions based on the good of those his decision will affect the most, even if that decision is frightening."

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Unknowingly, he was speaking of one of the five components of emotional intelligence. And he's right: An emotionally intelligent leader considers how his or her own emotions affect their decisions, as well as the impact those decisions will have on others. An emotionally intelligent leader connects the dots.

Taking it a step further, an emotionally intelligent leader understands and reads the emotions of those he or she is leading and adjusts any communications so any message isn't lost in translation. "How" we speak is as important as what we say.

Think of the melody Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star. Now imagine it being played sweetly on a finely tuned violin. Imagine how easily a child (or a weary adult) could fall asleep to that lilting lullaby. Now, just as the child is about to fall asleep, change the instrument to a trumpet. The tune is the same but how it's played will make all the difference. But in another setting, using a trumpet to play that tune may be entirely appropriate.

When leaders consider their own emotions, as well as the emotional responses and needs of those they're leading — and the leader makes adjustments — the end result is higher levels of team collaboration and productivity.

It's a simple illustration, but it makes the point: Leaders with high EQ make the decision of what tune to play (strategy) and how to play it (tactics), keeping in mind the emotions, the passions, the

strength of feeling, and the sensitivities of those he or she is leading.

The emotionally intelligent leader makes decisions based on the strengths of the team and manages relationships in light of an understanding of the emotional makeup of the people he or she is leading.

**Guest Author - Ron Haynes**

**Ron Haynes works with [Corter Consulting](#) and specializes in using the science of TTI's TriMetrix HD assessment to help companies select and develop their top talent, create job benchmark solutions, and implement succession planning.**

## *The Four Saboteurs of Decision Making*

Life moves pretty quickly and we are challenged with making decisions at the same speed. So quickly that we often consider only the information that's right in front of us vs. information that is 'off stage.' In general, society doesn't have a great track record for making great decisions. How many of you are working in the area of you education or what you had planned to do for your occupation? Did you know 85% of mergers/acquisitions fail to create shareholder value; 90% of American's don't save enough for retirement; the divorce rate is 50% and I could go on and on. So why don't we make better decisions?

According the authors Chip and Dan Heath, in their book *Decisive*, there are four saboteurs of decision making that we have to overcome in order to make better decisions in our work and personal life.

1. **Narrow Framing** – With this saboteur we define our choices to narrowly. We often put it in terms of this option **or** that option rather than opening up the possibilities to other options. For example, let's say we are looking at an employee who is not meeting performance expectations we

might think of firing him or giving him a warning. We might not consider other options such as finding him a role in the organization that better matches his skills/abilities or providing development/training opportunities or, or, or...

2. **Confirmation Bias** – This saboteur is sneaky. When making a decision we often develop a preliminary decision or develop quick beliefs and then we seek out information that supports that initial decision. If you're going to buy a new car and you've seen one you like you might seek out information that supports you buying that car. Or, if you're thinking of promoting a person on your team, you might seek out information or opinions from others that support that promotion.
3. **Short-term Emotions** – Have you ever made an impulse purchase only to regret it later? If so, you've been the victim of this saboteur. Our emotions can cloud our good judgement and our ability to reason.
4. **Overconfidence** – Sometimes we can be so confident in our own skills, abilities, intuition, experience that we think we can't be wrong. In the late 50's a major record executive told the Beatles that 4 piece guitar bands were finished. He was so confident he knew what the future held he passed on one of the most successful bands in the rock error, without a second thought.

So, how do we avoid these saboteurs? Pros and Cons lists won't help. That's an analysis and we need a strong process. In next month's edition of the Catalyst we'll explore the WRAP model/process and how it can help us overcome the four saboteurs.

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*“Whenever you see a successful business, someone once made a courageous decision. ~*

-Peter Drucker



Coaching & Consulting

1650 Faxon Avenue

Memphis, TN 38112

Tel: 901-272-7390

[bburtch@harmonycc.net](mailto:bburtch@harmonycc.net)

[www.harmonycc.net](http://www.harmonycc.net)

## Schedule of Public Courses

The following courses are being offered to the public by Harmony Coaching & Consulting. Click on the associated link for more information on the program or to register.

Course Title	Date(s)	Time	For More Information/Registration
<b>SHRM Learning System®</b> is the preparation course for the HR Certification Exam <i>(Every other Saturday)</i>	<b>September 26 – December 5, 2015</b>	8:30AM – 4:30PM	<a href="http://www.cbu.edu/shrm">http://www.cbu.edu/shrm</a>
<b>The Coaching Clinic®</b> is a two-day workshop for executives, managers and leaders to experience and learn coaching skills and competencies.	<b>Fall 2015</b>	8:30AM – 5:00PM	<a href="http://www.harmonycc.net/coaching-clinic.php">www.harmonycc.net/coaching-clinic.php</a>

