

On Leadership and Self-Awareness:

Recently, I spoke about leadership and self-awareness at a workshop in Doha, Qatar, sponsored by the Qatar Foundation for an international association of university presidents. The workshop focused on leadership issues, challenges in today's universities, and preparing students for the global needs of the next decade.

I began with a quote from the maestro, Peter Drucker: "Success in the knowledge economy comes to those who know themselves, their strengths, their values and how they best perform." Daniel Goleman relates this explicitly to emotional intelligence (EI), stating that EI is "often the distinguishing factor between great leaders and average leaders."

Self awareness is the cornerstone of emotional intelligence.

- With self-awareness, individuals can better manage their own emotions and behaviors and better understand and relate to other individuals.
- The behaviors of all leaders and managers have a huge impact on their direct reports, the people with whom they work, their boards and stakeholders. Their emotional style sets the tone for the whole organization.

All participants took the DISC assessment. The intent was to create greater self-awareness and many had one-on-one feedback sessions with me. The essence of the process:

- Understand yourself
- Recognize, understand and appreciate others (social intelligence)
- Adapt your style
- Work to heighten your self-awareness:
 - Recognize your emotions (out-of-sorts, irritable or sad or happy, enthusiastic, excited, humorous etc.)
 - Know why you feel these emotions
 - Recognize the impact of your feelings, moods, behaviors and actions on others
 - Alter your behavior to avoid alienating others.
- Remember that EI is all about self-control, the ability to control impulses and disruptive emotions, and to think before acting. Regulate your emotions, both inward and outward.
- Leaders with self-awareness are able to:
 - Recognize and manage their emotions
 - Display the empathy and social intelligence to manage the impact of their behaviors on others
 - Take bold, visionary steps, recognizing the impact of change and having the sensitivity to communicate effectively with all affected.