

Soften up for success

By DON KREGER
Freeman Staff

Gary Laszkiewicz, an IT security manager for the Brady Corp. of Milwaukee, turned to his emotions to improve his career.

"It was about understanding and recognizing my own emotions," he said, "and knowing what to do about that. This is especially important for me in my business environment and in my professional career."

"I can better understand how to deal with people in different circumstances," he continued, "recognize their emotions and deal with them appropriately."

Laszkiewicz is part of a growing group who are taking part in emotional intelligence seminars.

The concept of emotional intelligence, which has received a great deal of attention from the professional and nonprofit world for almost a decade, started with psychologist Daniel Goleman's book, "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More than IQ" and with his second best-seller, "Working with Emotional Intelligence."

The books claimed brainpower alone is not sufficient for success in either the business world or in life generally. What is needed instead, according to Goleman, is the ability to develop and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

Emotional intelligence training is supposed to improve productivity and profitability, higher morale, less turnover and greater customer satisfaction.

Patricia Clason has helped business people throughout greater Milwaukee with their interpersonal skills for the past 30 years.

Clason, who conducts seminars at the Center for Creative Learning at the Barnabas Business Center in Glendale, offers a range of seminars on business relationships. But she considers the emotional intelligence or EI training the core of all their offerings.

"EI is very complex," she said. "It's a very high order and important skill. People with the ability to communicate and manage relationships often succeed better than people who are just smart."

She said most people are not taught emotional intelligence skills and instead learn by watching and modeling themselves after others.

"The fact is that the majority of people are not good communicators or good at relationships," she said. "Take the divorce rate, for example. The fact that it's so high shows that we're not very good at managing relationships or communicating well with the people we want to be in a relationship with."

The EI seminar consists of two four-hour sessions or a weekend session that runs from Friday night through Sunday.

"It's not just lecture," Clason said, "it's interactive and experiential. There are activities between two people and between small groups, and the participants can be employees on the same level or on different levels of the business structure."

Clason said the seminars can be customized to meet the needs of an individual or organization.

Diane Eisold, a project manager at US Bank and one of Clason's seminar instructors said participants keep their group posted on their progress.

Introspection, empathy are making inroads into an often impersonal corporate world



Deb Kranitz/Freeman Staff

Giving a seminar on emotional intelligence, Patricia Clason quizzes the audience on recognizing the emotional states of others.

IMPROVING YOUR EMOTIONAL HEALTH

Tips from emotional intelligence expert Patricia Clason:

- Identify your own emotions accurately. Express them in healthy and safe ways. Do reality checks when you generalize and use words such as "everyone," "always," "every time" etc.
- Don't assume what other people are feeling. Ask!
- Motivate yourself. Acknowledge what you do well and use your strengths wisely. Be with others in their emotions rather than ignore them or try to soothe them over.
- Be consistent so others will trust you.
- Don't try to suppress conflicts and upsets. Handle them with care until they can be resolved.
- Stay in the present moment and observe so you can work with reality rather than reaction and assumption.
- Lighten up! Laugh! Humor does wonders for your physical and emotional health.

Emotional intelligence seminars teaches five core competencies:

- **Self-awareness and self-understanding.**
"It's about knowing your own emotions, because many times people don't know, realize or understand them," Patricia Clason said. "It's not something we're trained to do in our day-to-day world, but once we understand ourselves, the better we can understand emotions in other people."
- **Manage your emotions.**
"I think the most common comment from people taking the course," Eisold added, "is that prior to enrolling they were unaware of how much emotional responses impacted their day-to-day life."
- **Self-motivation.**
- **Recognize the emotions of others, what other people are feeling.**
- **Handle relationships and respond appropriately to the emotions observed in other people.**

"Everybody who is a member of the group," she said, "reveals how they're doing in terms of their focus and their energy level on a score of one to ten. What's more, if they wish, they can share with us a little bit of

what's going on with them.

"The idea," she continued, "is to set a context for the group working together and an understanding of where they are emotionally."

The FREEMAN
BUSINESS MONDAY

Center for Creative Learning, LLC

Patricia Clason, Director

OFFICES: 2437 N. Booth Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 374-5433 fax (414) 374-3997 (800) 236-4492

CONFERENCE CENTER: Barnabas Business Center - Jefferson Building
4650 N. Port Washington Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53212 (414) 332-3656

www.lightly.com patricia@lightly.com

Soften up for success

By Don Kreger
News Graphic Correspondent

Ozaukee County — For almost a decade, the concept of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has received a great deal of attention from corporations, nonprofit organizations and governmental agencies nationwide.

It began in the mid-nineties with the publication of psychologist Daniel Goleman's book, "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Matters More Than IQ." This was followed shortly thereafter with his second best-seller, "Working with Emotional Intelligence."

The thesis of these books was that brainpower alone is not sufficient for success in either the business world or in life generally. What is needed instead, according to Goleman, is the ability to develop and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships.

Organizations that have undergone Emotional Intelligence training have seen improvements in productivity and profitability, higher morale, less turnover and greater customer satisfaction.

Over the last thirty years, Patricia Clason has been intimately involved with the issue of interpersonal skills and conducts seminars on this topic throughout Greater Milwaukee, including Ozaukee County.

These seminars take place at her facility, the Center for Creative Learning at the Barnabas Business Center in Glendale, or in the conference rooms of client organizations.

While the Center conducts a wide diversity of seminars on business relationships, Clason considers EI to be at the core of all their offerings.

"EI is very complex," she said. "It's a very high order and important skill. People with the ability to communicate and manage relationships often succeed better than people who are just smart."

"Most of us," she continued, "are not taught EI skills as we're growing up. We learn from watching and modeling ourselves after others. The fact is that the majority of people are not good communicators or good at relationships."

"We learn from the role models around us. And if the role models around us are not very competent, then we won't learn or integrate very competent skills."

The EI seminar at the Center for Creative Learning consists of two four-hour sessions given a week apart. There is also a weekend session that runs from Friday night through Sunday.

"It's not just lecture," Clason said, "it's interactive and experiential. There are activities between two people and between small groups, and the participants can be employees on the same level or on different levels of the business structure."

Diane Eisold, a project manager at US Bank, is one of Clason's seminar instructors and describes the process of checking participants into the seminar.

"Everybody who is a member of the group," she said, "reveals how they're doing in terms of their focus and their energy level on a score of one to 10. What's more, if they wish, they can share with us a little bit of what's going on with them."

"The idea," she continued, "is to set a context for the group working together and an understanding of where they are emotionally."

Gary Laszkiewicz, an IT security manager for the Brady Corporation, recalls the EI seminar he attended.

"It was about understanding and recognizing my own emo-

Introspection and empathy are making in-roads into the oftentimes cut-throat and impersonal business world

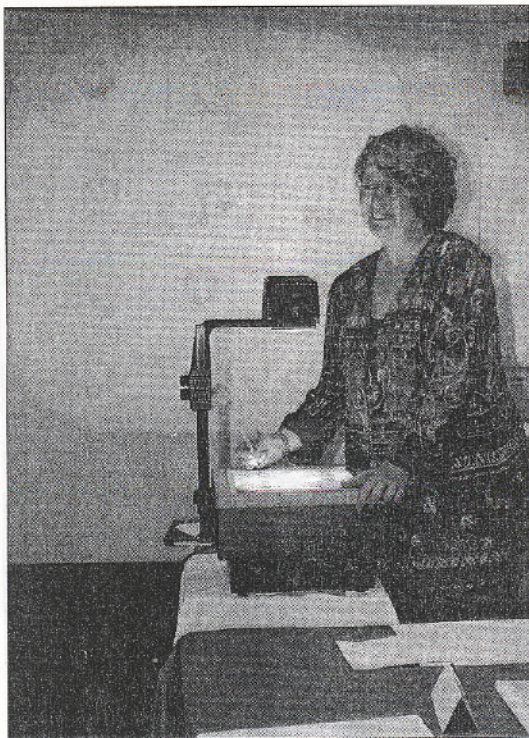


Photo by Deb Kranitz

Giving a seminar on Emotional Intelligence, Patricia Clason quizzes the audience on recognizing the emotional states of others.

HOW TO BOOST YOUR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Identify your own emotions accurately. Express them in healthy and safe ways.

Do reality checks when you generalize and use words such as "every-one," "always," "every time" etc.

Don't assume what other people are feeling. Ask.

Motivate yourself. Acknowledge what you do well and use your strengths wisely.

Be with others in their emotions rather than ignore them or try to soothe them over.

Be consistent so others will trust you.

Don't try to suppress conflicts and upsets. Handle them with care until they can be resolved.

Stay in the present moment and observe so you can work with reality rather than reaction and assumption.

Lighten up! Laugh! Humor does wonders for your physical and emotional health.

—Patricia Clason

tions," he said, "and knowing what to do about that. This is especially important for me in my business environment and in my professional career."

"I can better understand how to deal with people in different circumstances," he continued, "recognize their emotions and deal with them appropriately."

Clason identified five core competencies that the EI seminar encompasses.

"The first of these," she said, "is about self-awareness and self-understanding. It's about knowing your own emotions, because many times people don't know, realize or understand them."

"It's not something we're trained to do in our day-to-day world," she continued, "but once we understand ourselves, the better we can understand emotions in other people."

"In order for people to work effectively together," Eisold added, "it's important for them to acknowledge that they're all coming from this same emotional

place. They become aware of their own emotions and understand that all emotions are OK, that it's a natural part of life, and that expressing them works better than holding them in."

"The course teaches you how to deal with other people to keep good relationships," Laszkiewicz said, "and good relationships are certainly the key to success."

"You have goals to achieve in business," he continued, "and you can't do that on your own. It requires teamwork, and teamwork comes with good communication and good interaction."

The second competency, according to Clason, "is having the ability to manage your own emotions. 'You don't let your emotions run the show,' she said. 'You don't break out into rages or crying jags.'"

"I think the most common comment from people taking the course," Eisold added, "is that prior to enrolling they were unaware of how much emotional responses impacted their day-to-

day life."

The third competency covered in the seminar is the ability to self-motivate.

"You have to be able to get yourself going, to get yourself moving," Clason said, "instead of just reacting to the world around you or becoming a victim."

"The ability to self-motivate," Eisold added, "means that I understand what my values are, what my emotions are, and therefore I know what motivates me. I also understand that people have different values."

"If I know what motivates other people," she continued, "I can give them the kind of feedback or the type of assignments that will motivate them to do what needs to be done in order to complete the project successfully."

Clason described the fourth competency as the ability to recognize the emotions of others, what other people are feeling. This is where empathy comes in.

"It's not a skill that many people have," Clason said. "Many people misread others' emotions. In fact, some claim this happens as much as 90 percent of the time."

The fifth competency is the ability to handle relationships and respond appropriately to the emotions observed in other people.

"From that point on," Clason said, "we can then go into how this affects leadership, how it affects being a manager and so forth. We talk about how people can figure out what they should be working on in terms of developing their skills, what their weaknesses are, what their strengths are, and what they're going to do with that."

"These core competencies," she continued, "are about an individual's ability to interact and relate successfully to other people, which is the core of being in business as well as the core of life itself."

"If you can't interact and communicate well with other people," she added, "you won't succeed in business no matter how good your computer skills are or how much knowledge you have."

Clason recognizes that there's a lot to EI but doesn't believe it's necessary to remember all the details. "You don't have to be a psychologist," she said, "to understand psychology 101."

She also has no expectations that everyone in an organization will automatically become bosom buddies once they embrace EI.

"This doesn't mean that conflict will be absent from the workplace," she emphasized. "You don't want that. Conflict is constructive when it can be handled with respect and with communication."

"In order for change to happen," she continued, "there has to be the old challenged by the new. We would have no progress if there was no conflict. Relationships would not get deeper and more powerful if there were no conflict."

For those who would like to know more about EI and the Center for Creative Learning, you can log onto their Web site at www.lightly.com.

Why lightly?

"The idea," Clason said, "is that when life isn't working for us, we tend to take things heavily. We tend to get depressed and feel the weight of the world on our shoulders and have a hard time enjoying life."

"But when you understand how your emotions work," she continued, "and how relationships work, then you can lighten up, enjoy life and, in fact, take it lightly."

Center for Creative Learning, LLC Patricia Clason, Director

OFFICES: 2437 N Booth Street, Milwaukee, WI 53212
(414) 374-5433 fax (414) 374-3997 (800) 236-4692

CONFERENCE CENTER: Barnabas Business Center - Jefferson Building
4650 N Port Washington Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53212 (414) 332-3656

www.lightly.com patricia@lightly.com