



# The Emotional Competence & Leadership Study at Harvard

(2008)

## Improved Emotional Competence and Leadership among Harvard Student Leaders

Hoffman Institute Leadership Path, 2008 Anne Gill, Ph.D. Research Associate, Department of Psychology, University of Pittsburgh.

A The Hoffman Institute Leadership Path was offered to students at Harvard in March 2008. Thirty-five students participated in the Process and completed an assessment comprised of items aimed at measuring improvement in domains specifically targeted by the Hoffman Process as well as domains previously identified to relate to emotional competence and effective leadership (Boyatzis, Goleman, Rhee, 2000). Items from the Emotional Competence Questionnaire (ECQ; Boyatzis, Goleman, Rhee) were used to assess gains in domains of emotional functioning deemed relevant for leadership.

The Hoffman Institute Leadership Path participants were asked to complete this assessment prior to their participation in the Process, and at one month and three months after their completion of the Process. Participants were assessed in the following domains of emotional competence:

- Emotional self awareness
- Accurate self-assessment
- Empathy
- Conflict Management
- Teamwork and collaboration
- Self Confidence
- Empathy
- Transparency
- Optimism
- Change catalyst
- Emotional Control
- Empathy
- Inspirational leadership

At the one month follow-up, participants demonstrated improvement on 51 of 52 items, in all 13 emotional competence domains as well as the specific areas targeted by the Process (spirituality, communication, authenticity, etc.) At three-months post-Process, participants demonstrated improvement on all 52 items, and continued improvement for 17 of 52 the items.

The following 17 items showed steady gains in a positive direction over time. They showed an improvement over pretest one month post-Process, and continued improvement even three months after the Process.

- I can identify and change behaviors that sabotage my success. (item #6) HQP
- I am able to let go of grudges and resentments. (item #7) HQP
- I speak and act authentically (from myself). (item #13) HQP
- I am defensive when receiving feedback. (item 15) Accurate self-assessment
- I am aware of my own strengths and limitations. (item #50) Accurate self-assessment
- I have a sense of humor about myself. (item #38) Accurate self-assessment

- I have mostly positive expectations. (item #25) Optimism
- I stay positive despite setbacks. (item #34) Optimism
- I learn from setbacks. (item #41) Optimism
- I doubt my own ability. (item #21 – reverse-scored, decreased over time) Self Confidence
- I present myself in an assured manner. (item #44) Self confidence
- I do not cooperate with others. (item #26 – reverse scored, decreased over time) Teamwork and collaboration
- In a group, I encourage others' participation. (item #37) Teamwork and Collaboration
- I personally lead change initiatives. (item #27) Change catalyst
- I am reluctant to change or make changes. (item 35 – reverse scored, decreased over time) Change catalyst
- I recognise the impact that my emotional states have on my behavior. (item #19) Emotional self awareness
- I behave calmly in stressful situations. (item 28) Emotional Control
- I lead by example. (item #45) Inspirational Leadership
- I publicly acknowledge my mistakes, when appropriate. (item #46) Transparency

Analyses to determine the statistical significance of these difference as well as differential gains within the various ECI domains, differences based on demographic characteristics (gender, ethnicity, age) will be forthcoming.

## References

Boyatzis, R., Goleman, D., Rhee, K. (2000). Clustering competence in emotional intelligence: Insights from the emotional competence inventory (ECI). In Reuven Bar-On and James Parker (Eds.) (2000), Handbook of Emotional Intelligence, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, pp. 343-362.