



Emotional Intelligence and Talent Acquisition

White Paper

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Introduction

The Changing Workplace

The rate of change in today's workplace is accelerating.

Deloitte's [Human Capital Trends 2023](#) report shows that organisations and workers are grappling "with a greater degree of discontinuity and disruption than ever before".

"Many of the boundaries that used to provide the structure of work have been dismantled. Now the boundaries that remain are much more focused on human dynamics, and how people interact with and engage with work."

– Chris Ernst, CLO, Workday



As boundaries fall away, organisations need to let go of the old idea of absolute control and acknowledge the role they play in creating dynamic, evolving ecosystems, in which employees take on more responsibility and influence in shaping organisational results.

Is your organisation well placed to chart this new path?

This new world of work opens the way for greater and more meaningful collaboration and cocreation within organisations and, as a result, our ability to build relationships, be flexible, engage with challenges, sustain performance, and rebound quickly from adversity, becomes increasingly vital to success.

Hiring employees who are willing and able to collaborate, experiment with new approaches, embrace failure as an opportunity for learning, and then move forward is critical.

The Talent Selection Challenge

The Current Climate

In these increasingly complex and competitive working environments, organisations and the people in them are trying to achieve more with fewer resources and with greater pressure. Many are challenged with engaging employees and establishing a competitive advantage during rapid change and constant uncertainty.

Those who create and sustain strong business results in this climate engage hearts and minds, managing complex, often competing, agendas with savvy and awareness. This is where emotional intelligence comes in.

For organisations, having a culture and brand known for emotionally intelligent employees starts with the recruitment process.

“The first step is acknowledging openly that emotional intelligence is one of your top criteria for hiring.”

– Annie McKee, Primal Leadership



The Maths: Cost of Mis-hires

The cost of mis-hires can be crippling. When you consider the cost of selection tools, screening CVs, interview time, onboarding training, wasted management time, salaries and the cost of lost opportunity/ brand damage. Hiring the wrong person, or even a mediocre performer, can mean losing customers and having to invest additional time and money in development.

[Dr Bradford Smart](#), author of ‘Topgrading’, used research from over 50 companies and estimates **the cost of a mis-hire as between 5 – 27 times the role’s annual salary.**

Selecting The Right People Can Be Challenging.

Candidates often exaggerate on their CV’s and are so well versed in behavioural interviewing that they know exactly what to say to your, ‘can you tell me about a time when...’ questions.

If you could better read between the lines and experientially test the talent you require, how much stronger could your talent pool be?

What is Emotional Intelligence?

“Emotional intelligence isn’t a luxury you can dispense with in tough times. It’s a basic tool that if deployed with finesse, is the key to professional success.”

– Daniel Goleman, HBR



Emotional intelligence can be defined as the intelligent use of emotions.

Emotional intelligence refers to ‘a set of emotional and social skills that influence the way we perceive and express ourselves, develop and maintain social relationships, cope with challenges, and use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way.’

It underpins our ability to work well with others, manage stress and make effective decisions.

People with high EI are described as ‘aware, authentic, empathic, resilient, empowering and centred’ rather than ‘disconnected, guarded, insensitive, limited, indifferent, temperamental and reactive’.

The good news is that these abilities can be measured and learned.

A compelling body of research shows that emotional intelligence, more than knowledge, technical skills or traditional measures of intelligence, determines individual effectiveness and successful business outcomes.

This critical competency differentiates high performers and propels leaders, team members and organisations to higher and more sustainable levels of success.

Emotional intelligence is yielding bottom-line results for organisations across diverse industries and gathering scientific data that explains why. It’s a powerful predictor of success because it instantly reflects how a person applies knowledge/skill in a given situation.

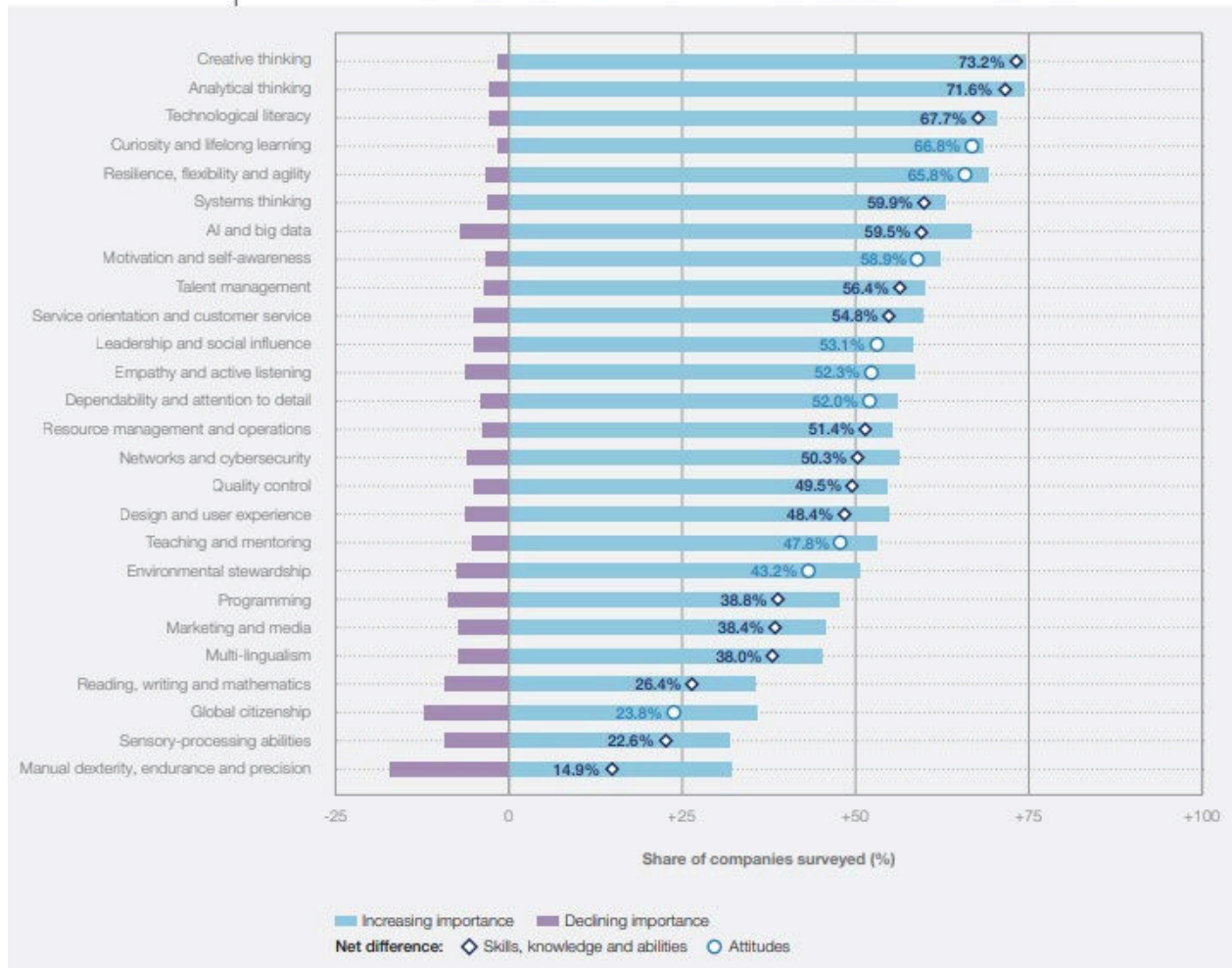
Emotional intelligence is an essential skill

Talent Acquisition

According to the [World Economic Forums' Future of Jobs 2023 report](#), the importance of emotional intelligence capabilities, such as resilience, empathy, flexibility, problem-solving and self-awareness continues to increase in the workplace. Ensuring you are recruiting for these key capabilities is critical.

FIGURE 4.3 Skills on the rise

Share of organizations surveyed which consider skills to be increasing or decreasing in importance, ordered by the net difference.



Recruiting and retaining people who demonstrate the emotional intelligence capabilities necessary to meet future demands head-on is crucial to an organisation's success.

Are you recruiting for knowledge and experience or attitude and talent?

Measuring Emotional Intelligence

EQ-i 2.0 Model of Emotional Intelligence

Emotional intelligence has proven relevant to leadership/ team member performance and positive/ empowered team culture. It provides a new way to understand and assess people's behaviours, management styles, attitudes, interpersonal skills and importantly, their potential.

EI is a powerful predictor of success because it instantly reflects how a person applies knowledge/ skill in a given situation.

With insight into themselves and others, they can recognise the emotions that drive thinking and behaviour; using this to generate positive outcomes.

Attuned to emotions that can disrupt engagement and productivity, they are able to convert negative emotions into opportunities and frame challenges constructively.



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Based on the Bar-On EQ-i model by Reuven Bar-On, copyright 1997.

Taking a New Approach with the EQ-i 2.0

Interviewing for Talent rather than just Skill or Experience

A skill is something you can learn; a talent is something you have innately. You can teach people skills... it's harder to teach talent. Defining the 'talents' required for a role and interviewing for these takes courage, as we so often use skills and experience as our decision point. But doing so will help you recruit people that make less, rather than more work for you.

Beyond Behavioural Interviewing

Rather than asking candidates to talk about their experience, you need to do what you can to replicate their work environment in the interview. For example, if the role is related to sales, make it hard for them to build rapport to see how talented they really are at establishing relationships.

This interview approach is designed to ascertain whether the candidate can respond to situations they will experience in the workplace - something they will not expect! This unique approach, whilst challenging for the candidate, validates their talents and abilities.

Objectively Assess

Use the EQ-i 2.0 emotional intelligence assessment to objectively assess likely workplace behaviours and potential talent.

Apply a combination of experiential and behavioural science interview techniques to drill down on the findings from the profile. This will help you identify required attitudes and patterns of thinking in candidates that get to the heart of how they tick.

The EQ-i 2.0 has a proven record on return on investment.

Have an Onboarding Plan

We rarely find a candidate with 100% of what we are looking for. Use the information obtained from the EQ-i 2.0 to establish a capability matrix that evaluates which emotional intelligence competencies underpin desired role capabilities and use this as an onboarding development plan for managers and coaches.

Build Internal Capability

Certify key individuals within your recruitment and HR practice to be able to administer, analyse and interview against the EQ-i 2.0 Emotional Intelligence assessment. The EQ-i 2.0 Certification Program goes beyond understanding and using the tool, to having your team become emotional intelligence experts, extending its use into leadership capability development and organisation culture.

EI Capability Mapping

Map EI Competencies Against Your Organisation's Capability Framework

To further align recruitment with your organisation's desired behaviours and capabilities, the EQ-i 2.0 competencies can be mapped against an organisation's capability framework.

This is done both for behaviours that support the demonstration of the desired

capability and those that might undermine or derail an individual's abilities.

This provides a lens with which to focus in on talents required from candidates. It also provides structure for experiential interviewing and is a stronger predictor of workplace behaviour.

Table 1: demonstrates how emotional intelligence can be mapped against a capability framework.

Capability	EQ-i 2.0 Subscale Mapping - Supports Capability	Undermines Capability	Potential Derailers
Personal Attributes			
Display resilience and courage	Assertiveness Independence Interpersonal Relationships Flexibility Stress Tolerance Optimism	Undermines composure May take on a defensive posture when challenged.	Lower Self-Regard Lower Impulse Control Higher Assertiveness
		Undermines stress response Unable to think clearly when under stress.	Lower Stress Tolerance
		Undermines coping May not have developed strategies to cope with challenging situations.	Lower Flexibility Lower Interpersonal Relationships
		Undermines candidness May lack confidence in their viewpoint. Could hesitate to be candid when holding others accountable.	Lower Self Regard Higher Empathy or Higher Interpersonal Relationships

This type of mapping can provide you with the following:

- Greater role and behavioural clarity
- An understanding of the essential EI talents that underpin capability/ skill
- Enable you to hire for talent/ potential, rather than just experience
- The ability to apply accountability against identified desired behaviours

EQ-i 2.0 Candidate Screening Report

EQ-i 2.0 & Talent Selection

The Challenge

As mentioned throughout this paper, the challenge faced by organisations recruiting today involves moving away from selecting candidates based purely on experience (technical) vs skill (capabilities) towards talent (innate strengths). It's talent that underpins skill and supports optimal experience. For example, a candidate low in empathy but high in assertiveness will not be naturally curious, they will likely be more directive and transactional.

The 'Recruitment Lens' Solution

While certification in the EQ-i 2.0 tool offers distinct advantages, we understand that it's not always practical to certify everyone involved in the recruitment process. That's why we developed an automated candidate screening report. The report, which is exclusive to Neural Networks, downloads automatically at the same time as the individual EQ report, saving you time and effort.

The report provides an extended analysis of an individual's EQ-i 2.0 responses in a format that enables you to investigate their talent and potential, aligned to desired leadership/customer facing capabilities.

This candidate screening tool has been aligned to screen against global desired leadership (leadership lens) and customer facing (customer engagement lens) capabilities.

The questions you ask against the EQ-i 2.0 will focus on uncovering what implications there may be for having particular subscale combinations, in the context of the role you are recruiting for.

Providing Powerful Analyses

The report provides you with the following analyses for selection/ interview:

- Global leadership/ customer facing capability definitions.
- Flagged potential capability derailers and associated behavioural examples - see following page.
- Information on EQ-i 2.0 subscales associated with potential derailers, plus opening questions you can ask to explore the impact of the subscale combination for that candidate - see sample report.
- Suggested response scoring criteria for each question - see sample report.

Leadership : Sample Capability Flags

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Introduction

This report provides an extended analysis of an individual's EQ-I 2.0 questionnaire responses in a format that enables you to investigate their leadership capabilities in a candidate interview. The questions you ask against the EQ-I will focus on uncovering what implications there may be for having particular subscale imbalances in the context of leadership. The report provides you with the following:

- A definition of each capability being evaluated.
- The potential derailers and the behavioral indicators associated with each capability.
- The subscales associated with each potential derailer and an opening question/s you can ask to explore the possible impact of the derailer.
- Suggested response scoring criteria for each question.

Instructions

This report will help you explore situations where EI subscale combinations may derail a candidate's ability to succeed in a leadership position.

Please keep in mind that the initial question/s are simply a starting point and you will need to drill down (probe) and in some cases challenge candidates answers to uncover deeper level thinking. Some questions are observational or experiential - we suggest reviewing the questions briefly prior to interview to help you prepare your approach.

Leadership Competencies that will be explored in the interview include the following. Only competencies with subscale combinations that have been identified as possible derailleurs will appear with questions and scoring criteria in the report.

The list of capabilities assessed appear in the table below. Only capabilities with subscale combinations that have been identified as possible derailleurs will appear with questions and scoring criteria in the report.

Flagged	Capability
	Decision Making / Judgment
	Personal Adaptability
X	Accountability
	Authentic Communication / Clarity
	Challenging Thinking
X	Building Relationships
X	Collaboration
	Influence
	Performance Drive
	Strategic Thinking
X	Leads Change
X	Developing Others
X	Self-Awareness
X	Customer Centric Focus
X	Empowering Others

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Leads Change

Undermines Awareness

Lower Emotional Self-Awareness
Lower Empathy

Scoring

- Able to explain how change impacts on culture 3
- Acknowledges the emotions involved in change projects
- Provides an example of own emotional reaction or discomfort

Questions

What has been your experience on how change impacts on an organisation's culture?

What were the key components that caused the most issues for individuals and how did you feel about those issues?

- Able to explain how change impacts on culture 2
- Issues identified are mostly structural in nature
- Provides an example of own emotional reaction or discomfort

- Limited understanding of cultural change 1
- Issues identified are all structural in nature
- Dismissive of own response to change projects

Notes:

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Flagged	Capability
	Decision Making / Judgment
	Personal Adaptability
X	Accountability
	Authentic Communication / Clarity
	Challenging Thinking
X	Building Relationships
X	Collaboration
	Influence
	Performance Drive
	Strategic Thinking
X	Leads Change
X	Developing Others
X	Self-Awareness
X	Customer Centric Focus
X	Empowering Others



Customer Facing : Sample Capability Flags

Introduction

This report provides an extended analysis of an individual's EQ-I questionnaire responses in a format that enables you to determine their suitability as a candidate for a customer facing role. It highlights the list of possible subscale combinations that could act a 'derailer' to a candidate's ability to deliver an exceptional customer experience.

The report provides you with the following:

- A definition of each capability being evaluated.
- The potential derailers and the behavioural indicators associated with each capability.
- The subscales associated with each potential derailer and an opening question/s you can ask to explore the possible impact of the derailer.
- Suggested response scoring criteria for each question.

Instructions

This report will help you explore situations where EI subscale combinations may derail a candidate's ability to succeed in a customer facing role.

Please keep in mind that the initial question/s are simply a starting point and you will need to drill down (probe) and in some cases challenge candidates' answers to uncover deeper level thinking. Some questions are observational or experiential - we suggest reviewing the questions briefly prior to interview to help you prepare for your approach.

The list of capabilities assessed appear in the table below. Only capabilities with subscale combinations that have been identified as possible derailers will appear with questions and scoring criteria in the report.

Flagged	Capability
X	Read People
X	Rapport & Relationships
	Resilience
X	Judgement & Problem Solving
	Curiosity & Empathy
	Self-Awareness
	Personal Adaptability
X	Authentic Communication
	Influence
X	Challenging Thinking
X	Teamwork & Collaboration
	Performance Drive
	Solutions Approach
X	Gain Commitment
X	Manage Conflict (Negotiation)

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Flagged	Capability
X	Read People
X	Rapport & Relationships
	Resilience
X	Judgement & Problem Solving
	Curiosity & Empathy
	Self-Awareness
	Personal Adaptability
X	Authentic Communication
	Influence
X	Challenging Thinking
X	Teamwork & Collaboration
	Performance Drive
	Solutions Approach
X	Gain Commitment
X	Manage Conflict (Negotiation)

Challenging Thinking

Undermines Tough Questions

Higher Interpersonal Relationships OR
Higher Empathy
Lower Assertiveness

Scoring

- Provides evidence they balance their desire to be friendly with the need to address the customer's real needs. 3
- Values asking customers the tough questions as needed.
- Acknowledges that questions can be more important than the impact they may have on the relationship, but sees this as rare due to the strength of the relationships they have. 2
- Is somewhat comfortable asking the tough questions. 1
- Admits they shy away from asking the tough questions.
- Holds a belief about the importance of being non-confrontational and building comfortable relationships.

Questions

Would you agree that relationships are important to you?

How do you decide when the questions you need to ask are more important than any impact they may have on the relationship?

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Integrating EI into Recruitment Processes

Below we have provided some examples of how you can begin integrating emotional intelligence profiling into existing recruitment practices:

Become certified in the EQ-i 2.0 (optional)

To support integrating the EQ-i 2.0 into your candidate screening, we recommend you become certified in the tool. This represents a cost-effective way to administer it.

If you prefer not to become certified, NNC can do the leg work for you and provide a written report and verbal debrief to help prepare you for interview.

Integration into Interview Process

An ideal interview will use a combination of testing, interview questions, experiential activities and role plays to establish a candidate's suitability for a role.

NNC can partner with you to provide suggestions on phone screening and face-to-face interviews that pertain to exploring EQ-i 2.0 results and their impact on customer experience or leadership.

We can also provide proven experiential role plays for leadership and customer facing roles that help you test candidates' capabilities in real situations.

This process can also be used to assess coachability, if a feedback session is included in the interview process.

Support Training on the Recruitment Lens of the EQ-i 2.0

We recommend interviewers, who conduct phone screening and interviews using the EQ-i 2.0, undergo specific training. The training addresses the following:

- Know what each subscale is and how it plays out in terms of work-related behaviours.
- Know which subscale combinations align to critical global customer service or leadership competencies.
- Recognise subscale combinations that act as derailers against customer service or leadership competencies.
- Use the above information to effectively question candidates, to assess fit against critical talents/ capabilities.

This will enable you to successfully screen for talent/ potential using EI and be confident that candidates will turn into valuable and contributing members of your team.

Why the EQ-i 2.0?

The EQ-i 2.0 helps you use emotional information in an effective and meaningful way.

Emotional Intelligence as a discipline came out of a stream of psychology known as 'positive psychology' which was focussed on understanding well-functioning individuals, as compared to understanding pathology.

The EQ-i 2.0 was first developed by Reuven BarOn and released in 1983. It was based on clinical research he had undertaken into why particular individuals flourished compared to others who might have higher IQ's. This tool has now been used for over 25 years, both clinically and within corporate environments.

There are a number of tools in the market that measure emotional intelligence. What makes the EQ-i 2.0 different from most is that it measures behaviour, not thoughts and cognition, or your understanding of emotional intelligence.

In the workplace, it's more important to understand how your behaviour impacts on your ability to lead or work with others, rather than your knowledge of emotional intelligence.

For almost 20 years, consultants and organisations have trusted the science that underpins the EQ-i 2.0 to help improve human performance. Being the first scientifically validated measure of emotional intelligence, coupled with research from premier organisations, means you can count on the EQ-i 2.0 to add robustness and accuracy to your talent management initiatives.

What are the benefits?

- Measures behaviour, not thoughts or understanding
- Focused on personal development
- Identifies strengths
- Identifies challenge areas
- Promotes greater organisational effectiveness
- Excellent selection tool
- Excellent succession planning tool
- Great for developing leaders
- Business-centric report

What are the applications?

- Leadership development
- Individual development
- Organisational development
- High potential identification
- Team effectiveness
- Recruitment
- Executive and general coaching
- Performance management

The EQ-i 2.0 Features

- A Total emotional intelligence score with five composite scores measuring five distinct aspects of emotional and social functioning.
- 15 Subscales that home in on emotional intelligence skills critical to workplace success.
- A Well-Being Indicator that measures happiness, resulting in additional development support.

Norm Groups

EQ-i 2.0 norms are based on a large sample of 4000 respondents, across a range of age groups, and split evenly between males and females in order to closely match that of the general population.

Recently, norms based on the Australian population, along with other international markets, were developed in order to build greater relevancy to the results, including 'Global Norms'.

Validity & Reliability

The EQ-i 2.0 exhibits strong reliability, both in terms of internal consistency and test-retest. This means candidate scores will remain stable over time and that items measuring a certain subscale all tap into aspects of that subscale (e.g., all Empathy items are measuring the idea of Empathy).

The EQ-i 2.0 has extensive evidence supporting its external validity:

- It has been used to predict job performance
- EQ-i 2.0 skills can be used to predict and improve leadership competencies
- The underlying structure of the EQ-i 2.0 model holds up in different regions across the world
- The EQ-i 2.0 is based on a history of assessment research spanning decades
- The EQ-i 2.0 correlates with similar emotional and social measures and has been shown to be unrelated to dissimilar constructs, like intelligence

Workplace Report

The EQ-i 2.0 Workplace Report is a self-assessment consisting of 133 statements that cover a wide range of aspects of emotional and social functioning. The participant rates how true each statement is for themselves on a five-point scale, along with scores for four validity indices. It takes between 15 – 30 minutes to complete.

The report provides information on the individual's score across 15 subscales of emotional intelligence, providing ideas for development as well as an action plan that can be completed.

The NNC Point of Difference

We are specialists in emotional intelligence

NNC have been actively using the EQ-i 2.0 tool since 2004 in consulting to large and mid-size organisations. In 2009 we were accredited as distributors of the EQ-i 2.0 and have been delivering certification programs in the tool since 2010.

We believe in authentic partnerships and tailoring

We see the establishment of productive partnerships, both internal and external, as crucial to the successful roll out of programs. Our facilitator will discuss your objectives and tailor the materials to best suit your needs, as well as ensuring effective certification in the use of the EQ-i 2.0 tool.

We have done this before

The NNC team has worked with a number of leading organisations to integrate the EQ-i into their candidate selection process. This can include certifying internal practitioners or utilising NNC to provide insight on candidate's talent/ capability so as to screen for both desired strengths and possible derailers.

Organisations NNC has partnered with include:



"The incredibly insightful and fascinating perspective on the likely workplace behaviour of our candidates has helped us to drill down during interview on those aspects of the role that are critical for success."

NNC Team



Rosalinda Batson

(Accredited EQ-i 2.0 Trainer)

Rosalinda has extensive experience in Organisation Development with a focus on practical and pragmatic approaches to people development that builds a strong relationship between internal consultants and operational management.

She is passionate about understanding others and creating work environments where critical self-awareness can be developed.

Utilising her expertise in emotional intelligence she works with individuals to assist them with their professional development.



Dr John Gora

(Accredited EQ-i 2.0 Trainer)

John is one of Australia's leading authorities on Leadership, Culture Transformation, Sales Effectiveness, Workforce Performance & Emotional Intelligence.

Neural Networks Concepts has served as business strategists, consultants and coaches for some of Australia's leading organisations, including American Express, ANZ, Lendlease, KPMG, Medibank and CBA.

His unique array of qualifications, including a PhD in Psychology, NLP Master Practitioner, Emotional Intelligence Facilitator and Martial Arts Instructor, have enabled him to develop a number of personal and business-related methodologies designed to inspire people and organisations to achieve.