

# PRIMAL LEADERSHIP

REALIZING THE POWER OF  
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

*"The emotional task of the leader is primal - that is, first - in two senses: It is both the original and the most important act of leadership."*

DANIEL GOLEMAN  
*Author of the New York Times bestseller Emotional Intelligence*  
RICHARD BOYATZIS  
ANNIE McKEE

## Primal Leadership

To phrase it as Arie de Geus (**The Living Company**) might, in the mid-20th century, as the developed world shifted from a capital society to a knowledge society (i.e., a society in which knowledge, not capital, is the scarcest production factor), the most successful companies became those which followed a learning as opposed to an economic model. Today, therefore, we hear more and more businesspeople talk about the importance of their "intellectual capital" and the power of teamwork.

At **RED CAPITAL GROUP**, for example, we recognize that value is provided, and thus profits are created, through the knowledge, creativity, ingenuity and cooperative efforts of our colleagues. Though our steps to become a learning driven team remain a work in progress, we have embraced the undertaking genuinely. So it is for many organizations. At the same time, many other organizations, though expressing similar sentiments, betray the hollowness of their words by their attitudes and actions. Why have some organizations succeeded in becoming knowledge based learning teams, while others continue to be constrained by a century old mindset? One of the keys, I believe, is to be found in Daniel Goleman's **Primal Leadership**. If de Geus and Goleman were to compare notes, would Goleman conclude that "emotional intelligence" is the single most essential attribute of a learning company and would de Geus see such intelligence as a necessary if not a sufficient condition? The likely answers, I think, are yes and yes.

To relate Goleman's work, again by way of a question to another which, like **The Living Company**, we previously have shared with customers, business partners, colleagues and friends, what was it in Sir Earnst Shackleton's character or personality (**Leading at the Edge** by Dennis Perkins) that allowed him to guide his expedition from the brink of disaster to safety while so many others facing similar obstacles perished? Again, might "emotional intelligence" be at or near the core? Both individuals and organizations, we learn from Goleman, can be "emotionally intelligent." And, certainly, both Shackleton and his expedition evidenced it in considerable volume.

What is emotional intelligence? The ability to drive emotions positively and in doing so to bring out everyone's best. Coleman calls it creating "resonance".

For those of us who are working to become better leaders and better teammates as we simultaneously work to grow businesses with the attributes described by each of de Geus, Perkins and Goleman, perhaps **Primal Leadership's** most important lesson is that "emotional intelligence" can be learned. That is an important lesson, indeed, as no Al Dunlap-like character could have brought Shackleton's men home, nor can we imagine such a "leader" being the steward of a learning driven enterprise.

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*W. Roberts*  
Chairman & CEO

