Title of report: Virtual EQ – the talent differentiator in 2020?

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Abstract

In an increasingly competitive, globalised world, knowledge-intensive industries/ services are seen as engines for success. Key to this marketplace is a growing army of 'talent' i.e. skilled and dedicated knowledge workers. These knowledge workers engage in non-routine problem solving through combining convergent, divergent and creative thinking across organizational and company boundaries - a process often facilitated though the internet and social media, consequently forming networks of expertise.

For knowledge workers, sharing their learning with others through communities of practice embedded in new information media becomes an important element of their personal identity and the creation of their individual brand or e-social reputation. Part of the new knowledge/skills needed for this process becomes not only emotional intelligence (being attuned to the emotional needs of others) but being able to do this within and through new media, thus the emergence of virtual emotional intelligence (EQ).

Our views of current research found that HRD practitioners in 2020 might need to consider Virtual EQ as part of their talent portfolio. However it seems that new technology has created strategies for capturing and managing knowledge that are readily duplicated and that a talent differentiator in 2020 might simply be the ability and willingness to learn.

Keywords *Knowledge Workers, Emotional Intelligence, Virtual, Learning, Talent*

1. Introduction

This paper considers the implications that a future of socially networked knowledge workers will have upon an organisation's talent management approach in 2020. It will begin with a discussion of the concept of talent management before considering knowledge workers and their engagement with communities of practice. The paper will then move on to a consideration of current research that evaluates the impact these new technologies have upon the knowledge workers of the future and the consequent decisions that HRD practitioners may need to consider when reviewing their approach to talent management.

2. Talent Management

It is appropriate to begin this discussion with the concept of Talent Management. This was built upon the premise that "[organisations] that will win in the competitive arena are those that are the best at locating, assessing, recruiting, and keeping the most talented people" Pfeffer (2001, p248). This concept began life in an article by McKinsey consultants (Chambers et al 1998) entitled 'The war for talent'. This war cry was subsequently taken up by Michaels et al (2001) in an identically named

article in the Harvard Business Review. This clarion call appealed as it brought a range of HR approaches under a banner that was arguably easier to communicate to an executive audience. Its impact has been significant for both practitioners where 'talent' has been accepted as part of modern HRM language e.g. the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development's Resourcing and Talent Planning survey (CIPD 2011a) and academics when many text book titles have now changed to incorporate an aspect of talent e.g. Taylor's (2010) Resourcing and Talent Management book.

Lewis & Heckman (2006) produced a critical review of talent management which suggested that the concept itself was nothing new and perhaps just strategic Human Resource Management rebadged. While not key to the debate in this paper, it is worth highlighting that there are various perspectives upon the concept of talent management. As this paper is not positioned to conduct a full review of the concept, and is looking at the practical application of Talent Management and its impact upon the HRD practitioner, a practitioner definition has been selected: "*Talent management is the systematic attraction, identification, development, engagement, retention and deployment of those individuals who are of particular value to an organisation, either in view of their 'high potential' for the future or because they are fulfilling business/operation-critical roles*" (CIPD 2011b).

3. Knowledge workers

These business roles are impacted by factors such as globalisation, the process where geographical areas are increasingly more interconnected and interdependent. When combined with technological change this has resulted in a trend towards a greater role of service and knowledge based industries, particularly in Western countries. In Europe employment in Agriculture and industrial sectors continues to fall whilst there has been a significant increase in the service sector (Stewart and Rigg 2011). This has led to the view that workers will need to be more knowledgeable in order to meet the demands of future roles.

All societies have both common and esoteric knowledge. Common knowledge can be understood by many, whereas, esoteric knowledge is generally known only by a few. More recently, the concept of knowledge has received much attention with an array of different references to the knowledge economy (Harrison and Kessels 2004) knowledge workers, and knowledge sharing. It has provoked reaction in many disciplines and knowledge is now deemed a top priority (Davenport and Prusak 1998; Goh 2002).

There are broadly two different types of knowledge. One of which, tacit knowledge, is personal and private and generally difficult to make explicit (Dewey and Bentley 1949; Sternberg and Wagner 1986; Gourlay 2002). The second is public knowledge (Eraut 1994). Tacit knowledge according to Gourlay (2002) is more complex and more difficult to define than public knowledge and there continues to be significant on-going debate concerning whether tacit knowledge is an individual or collective trait and whether it is explicable or not. Polyani (1966) is attributed to inventing the term 'tacit knowledge' to describe that which we know but cannot tell. Tacit knowledge is formed from a mixture of professional education, reading, personal interest, experience and social interchange with fellow professionals. Organisational knowledge utilises the tacit nature of knowledge that has been developed over many

years through experience and interaction of employees. The knowledge is embodied in people and is personal to their own world-views. The knowledge is based on values and assumptions which the knowledge holder may not be aware of and, therefore, may not be able to articulate (Hislop 2003). Personal or tacit knowledge is a process that involves the application of theoretical knowledge, as well as intuition and is developed over time through practice (Eraut 2000).

Knowledge workers are more likely to gain power and status from their tacit knowledge, although perceptions and definitions of knowledge workers vary. The OECD (2001) in their growth report locate knowledge workers in the field of science for example, engineers, and technicians. However, CPB (the Dutch National Planning Office) clusters knowledge workers into three groups: Researchers and Scientists; Alumni of Higher Education and also Human Resources in Science and Technology including teachers and engineers with secondary vocational education level (Harrison and Kessels 2004). In summary, knowledge workers are frequently perceived to be professional, managerial and technical, often with a degree level education. Based on this, more general definition there is a wealth of evidence that demonstrates the increased number of these workers and the expectation that these numbers will continue to rise.

Leitch (2006) findings indicate a mediocre performance for the UK with 'intermediate' skills such as technical and craft in the bottom-third, but 'higher skills' just outside the top 10. Other issues include a lack of basic numeracy and literacy skills at one end of the job market and poor employability graduate skills at the top end of the job market. One significant finding in relation to this research is that he predicted an increase in jobs by 2020 in the higher skilled occupational groups with lower skilled jobs continuing to decline. The increased jobs are predicted to be in management and professional work. Furthermore, 40% of new jobs will require a degree-level education. One argument in the changing world of globalisation is that people can provide a source of competitive advantage. Research has shown us that knowledge workers can make the difference in success within an organisation and will be an asset that must be valued.

One of the distinguishing features of professional workers, which the majority of knowledge workers will logically be, is their specific knowledge base (Larson 1977) that affords them privileges such as autonomy and authority over their client base. As a result knowledge workers may have a different psychological contract with the organisation. They will take on a greater responsibility for their personal career development in order to enrich and expand their knowledge base. They can also have different expectations of the organisation; for example, there is evidence that they can have a stronger allegiance to their profession than their organisation (Gouldner 1957). Organisations will need to work harder to preserve, disseminate and integrate the tacit knowledge that can be found in knowledge workers.

4. Learning in the Virtual World

Knowledge workers acquire and expand their knowledge through informal learning, a process that has become increasingly facilitated through online communities and resources. Technology has increased rapidly in recent decades, moving from computers that originally required an entire room to exist to mobile phones that now have as much computational power as a desktop computer. Technology is now the

lynch pin of many peoples' social and business communities. While in the past, learning in and through groups or networks was usually generated face-to-face, with the growth of the new technologies, this is increasingly facilitated through virtual channels. Technology is no longer simply a computer sat on a desktop; technology is now part of society, business and social interaction and includes anything from computers to mobile phones to satellite navigation (Hopper and Rice 2008). Each of these aspects are ingrained into society to the point where the majority of the developed world are reliant upon this technology to function efficiently and effectively. Businesses now utilise technology to sell their wares, motivate staff and conduct virtual networking.

Formal learning involves planned learning activities, (through accredited or non-accredited programmes), usually held in a classroom setting but sometimes on-the-job within a workplace environment. They are usually pre-planned, trainer-led, structured and well defined with a curriculum, learning objectives and assessment methods (Marsick and Watkins 2001). In contrast, informal learning takes place in a more unstructured manner, outside the classroom, using a variety of means such as self-directed and experiential approaches. Informal learning is a more learner-centred approach for bridging learning and work practice, and arises through interactions at work, from action, through problem-solving or through processes such as coaching and mentoring (Gray et al 2004). What Eraut et al (1998) call 'consultation and observation' involves learning within and through teams and in groups. Learning occurs through brainstorming ideas, or asking questions to gain an overview of projects or issues. According to Eraut et al (1998) learning from one another is one of the unrecognised forms of learning at work.

We need to understand that these capabilities vary across generations. Rosen (2009) simply captures the generational issues that will face the HRD professional of the future. They will be developing a workforce that will comprise Generation 'X' (c1965 - 1979), Net Generation (also called Millenials, Generation Y) (1980 to the mid 1990s) followed by the iGeneration - who will begin to flow into the workforce of 2020. Cullen (2011) states that the increase in the use of technology by Generations 'Y' and 'I' (sometimes called the Generation 'Me') in normal day-to-day lives means that it is automatically fed into business and directs how business conducts itself. An increase in technology awareness means that staff will direct the technological advances of business requiring the IT capabilities of business to adapt to suit their needs and wants.

Messinger et al (2009) discusses the phenomenon that the Internet has created in what is referred to as a virtual world. Through the Internet businesses and users can conduct in-depth communication and transfer of money and goods through a completely virtual environment, in which the user is depicted by an 'Avatar' (their virtual representation) and voice through microphones. As the concept of virtual worlds continues to develop so will the number of people using them - thus more businesses will become involved.

The use of virtual worlds is seen as a safer way of communicating and socialising with others (Brown 2011). Through social media knowledge workers can post biographical details about themselves, and promote their personal achievements. Learning itself takes place through the interchange of ideas through a variety of online media including forums, discussion groups and Skype. For knowledge

workers, sharing their learning with others through the new information media becomes an important element of their personal identity and the creation of their individual brand. So we can now talk about a knowledge worker's e-social reputation.

5. E-Social Reputation and Networking

E-social reputation has been defined as a socially constructed judgement made on an individual's or groups professional standing, based upon specific features of their web-based profile, including their contributions to the interests of the online community (eTTCampus 2.0 project 2008). E-social reputation is established and built upon a person's 'web presence', that is, an intentional and socially constructed professional and personal profile that is developed dynamically and intentionally through the support of web technology (eTTCampus 2.0 project 2008). Typical technologies include: email, having a web site/blog/wiki, being a member of, and contributing to, a social network (e.g. Facebook, YouTube), being named in a search engine, and having a web trail (web citations, Google hits, etc.). For example, a professional practitioner might write a regular blog about their work-related thoughts and activities, contribute to debates hosted on a social network site (like LinkedIn), and post comments on a site that allows for the evaluation of knowledge sources such as books and research articles.

But why do people contribute their ideas to others (especially people outside their own social or organisational networks), particularly if there is no perceivable immediate benefit to themselves? According to Bouty (2000) informal and reciprocal knowledge exchanges between individuals are valued and sustained over time because the sharing of knowledge is seen to be an important aspect of membership of a community. One way of creating connections to external knowledge resources is through virtual networks which make it possible to link and share information quickly, globally and with large numbers of people (Wasco and Faraj 2005).

In contributing knowledge, individuals must believe that their offering is of value to others, with an expectation that some value will also be created for themselves (Nahapeit and Ghoshal 1998). This is in line with social exchange theory (Blau 1964) which suggests that individuals engage in social interaction based on the expectation that it will lead to social rewards such as respect, higher status, and the approval of others. Hence, participation in a network will arise from an expectation that this will enhance the person's personal reputation within the network. Reputation is important because, through it, an individual can leverage this asset to maintain their status within a network. But individuals can also move beyond this instrumental stance. They may be motivated intrinsically to contribute knowledge to others because they see solving problems as an intellectual pursuit and a way of having fun (Wasko and Faraj 2000). The desire to enhance one's professional reputation is a significant predictor of participation in online networks (Wasko and Faraj 2005). In turn, high status actors obtain greater recognition for performing a task than low status actors (Stewart 2005).

However, to date, research and scholarship has not really addressed the issue of e-social reputation critically. While, as we have seen, benefits can accrue from building a reputation within a social network (including online networks) is there a downside? This paper suggests at least five answers to this. Firstly, if there is an emerging

'digital divide' (Norris 2001), then those who have ready access to the internet will be able to enhance their e-social reputation but those who do not have such access will not. However, in the case of knowledge workers, this is unlikely to be a problem, given their high level of internet connectivity. Secondly, if the focus of digital communities and networks reaches out beyond the individual's workplace, then how is a balance maintained between work and life? In other words, will the striving for e-social reputation lead to a collapse of the professional into the personal life? Thirdly, what about fraud? Nobody 'polices' the internet, so how is it possible to differentiate between those whose reputation is genuine and those whose reputation is invented and bogus? The virtual world can be seen as a more detached society in which individuals can be juxtaposed to their real life personality - they can be louder, thinner, shorter, prettier. The fourth answer considers whether attempts to create an e-social reputation could place a company's intellectual property at risk as individuals seek to share insider expertise to gain kudos. Finally, how do companies achieve differentiation if the knowledge worker's talent is shared with everyone? These are just a few of the issues that may have to be addressed by knowledge workers as they seek to build their online social reputations.

To aid the development of knowledge workers, companies may set up internal communities of practice, through bringing experts together and/or building media platforms and tools to assist dialogue and creativity. Such media may include facilities for the establishment of, say, peer to peer mentoring and coaching. However, communities of practice flourish in situations where they are free of managerial control and interference. Indeed, vibrant communities of practice may prefer to look outwards from the organisation, linking to fellow experts globally (boundary spanning). Interventions by the organisation itself may be viewed not as facilitation but as surveillance. This challenges the notion of the organisation as a provider and controller of people development and may undermine traditional notions of HRD. Knowledge workers own their personal development, their brand and their professional identity but it may be increasingly difficult to maintain a division between the personal and the private.

Smedley (2012) highlights activities amongst organisations like BP and the Big Lottery fund that create internal social networks (The Hub and Big Connect) respectively. These have been put in place to avoid the risk of the leeching of intellectual capital and also serve to help maintain a positive employer brand. The question here however is whether these approaches will secure a benefit significant enough to warrant the developmental and continuing IT investment involved. Individuals dial into networks for information- will employees really take the time to populate and share? In addition, will the same employees, those knowledge workers who are already affiliated to their professions really stop using their existing social networks?

6. Emotional intelligence and Virtual Emotional Intelligence

Salovey and Mayer (1990, p. 189) proposed a formal definition of Emotional Intelligence (EI) as "The ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings, to discriminate among them, and to use this information to guide one's thinking and action." The concept was later popularised by Daniel Goleman with his book: Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995). This populist approach was followed by

Cooper and Sawaf (1997) who wrote about "Executive EQ" - a testable Emotional Quotient (EQ) that acted as a talent differentiator.

Part of the new knowledge and skills needed to operate in the virtual world and within communities of practice (a group of people who share an interest, a craft, and/or a profession) becomes not only emotional intelligence (being attuned to the emotional needs of others) but being able to do this within and through the new media. Hence we need to talk not about EQ but about *Virtual EQ.* This is the ability to sensitively and appropriately acquire and share knowledge through virtual communities of practice while maintaining personal and organisational integrity. Through the process of sharing information and experiences, group members learn from each other, and have an opportunity to develop themselves personally and professionally as well as providing the opportunity to form virtual teams.

To gain a greater understanding of the EI concept it is necessary to explore the key ideas behind Salovey and Mayer's (1990) model. They suggested that EI comprised four abilities:

1) Perceiving emotions - in self and in others through sight, sound and cultural understanding. To some extent this is the cornerstone upon which the other three aspects of emotional intelligence are built.

2) Using emotions (moods) - to support different cognitive processes eg problem solving when feeling happy (e.g., Isen et al 1985).

3) Understanding emotions - a nuanced insight into different emotions (and their language labels) and how they vary over time e.g. between sad and miserable and how sadness can evolve over time.

4) Managing emotions - personal control of emotions and harnessing them in others to bring about intended outcomes.

To embrace the needs of the practitioner reader, Parvesh et al (2010) produced an EI model that differentiated 'management excellence' capability - a significant ambition for those in HRD seeking to develop their talent pools of future leaders. They suggested that it was akin to relationship management and was the ability to "handle relationships successfully by learning from criticism, avoiding judgements and respecting others at work and beyond." (ibid, p983)

The central idea underpinning the model is that EI is contextual; "a set of skills or competencies rather than personality traits... [and that] In order to use these skills, one must be aware of what is considered appropriate behavior by the people with whom one interacts." Salovey & Grenwal (2005, p282). This then offers the opportunity to differentiate between the EI abilities expected in face to face interactions versus those conducted within a virtual world.

There has been some interesting EI research covering a number of themes that are of significant interest to HRD professionals who are considering the composition and development of their 2020 workforce. They include Conflict management: Jordan & Troth (2002); Emotional labour: Wong & Law (2002), Brotheridge (2003); Relationship management/Interpersonal skills: Lopes et al (2005), Mayer, Roberts &

Barsade (2008); Transformational leadership: Palmer et al (2001), Feyerherm & Rice (2002) and Team performance and processes: Jordan et al (2002), Moriarty & Buckley (2003), Jordan & Troth (2004). While the demand for EI competencies in these areas is unknown in the longer term, 2020 is only 8 years away so it is fair to speculate that demand for them will remain.

Areas where there could be some reservations about future demand e.g. teamworking (reduced perhaps as part of a future with more remote working) have been argued as remaining essential (e.g. Tapscott & Williams 2010). De Mio (2002), talks about Virtual EQ in terms of an enhancing of virtual communication amongst team members to obtain warmer and more effective interactions (De Mio 2002). Group cohesion is generally regarded as crucial when working in virtual teams and it is claimed that group cohesion is reached by establishing a high level of group emotional intelligence (Druskat and Woolff 2001).

The HRD community can to some extent embrace new ideas and concepts like EI without seeking appropriate challenge. For example Landy (2005) suggests there is a "commercial wing" to EI that seeks to lay wide-ranging claims about its place in successful business interactions (e.g. Goleman and EI's wide ranging impact on workplace performance) and the "academic wing" who seek to offer a more robust challenge to the notion of EI and its claims. For example, Bradberry and Su (2006) criticised EI as being unable to prove a clear link to EI measures and job performance. There is an argument that the introduction of performance-based measures rather than self-reports has eliminated much of this issue.

So what is EI's place in managing talent? To support this it is important to understand the nature of talent in 2020.

Writing about young Americans, Twenge et al (2008) suggested that those born in the 70s, 80s and 90s are members of the Generation 'Me' who are characterised by a self-centred indeed egostitical range of behaviours underpinned by a notion of entitlement. The suggestion is that this "Narcissism" has come about as a consequence of American self esteem programmes in schools (eg Baumeister et al, 2000). If this is indeed true (Trzesniewski et al (2008) suggest the methodology of Twenge et al's meta-analysis is unsound) then this has potential issues for the HRD professional as Generation 'Me' enter the workforce. It could be that these new workers are unable to deploy a range of EI capabilities as they will be too focused on their own emotional needs. One interesting point to note is that virtual EQ is not an issue here as Bergman et al (2011) found that Social Networking Activities undertaken by this generation were not strongly related to narcissism.

This dissonance with real life has also meant that Generation 'Me' are distancing themselves from the emotions of a difficult task - things as complex as breaking up with a significant other are conducted via a text message, email or Facebook message - this is referred to as a "techno brush-off". With this trend set to continue business needs to be aware of the lack of emotional skills from staff and their increasing inability to deal with difficult situations effectively. The virtual world allows people to de-friend or block individuals, not something easily achievable in the workplace. If businesses continue to virtualise, as customer demand and expectations appear to want, then businesses need to react to the change in

interpersonal skills and the challenges these create in virtual networking with customers, clients, suppliers and workplace colleagues.

This seems to paint a somewhat negative picture of those entering the workforce as the 'talent' of the future. On a more positive note, Robin (2008, p224) highlights online skills these future employees (current students) already possess:

"Digital literacy—the ability to communicate with an ever-expanding community to discuss issues, gather information, and seek help;
Global literacy—the capacity to read, interpret, respond, and contextualize messages from a global perspective

Technology literacy—the ability to use computers and other technology to improve learning, productivity, and performance;

Visual literacy—the ability to understand, produce, and communicate through visual images;

Information literacy—the ability to find, evaluate, and synthesize information."

Technological, Visual and Information literacy are to some extent taken for granted in this population. Digital literacy suggests a positive perspective for future interaction in online communities of practice. Global literacy is where individuals gain knowledge though global networks providing an opportunity for new generations to access the "simultaneity of the lifeworlds" Köchler (2010, p8) of others on the planet. Whether these individuals have the EI skills to capitalise upon these opportunities is as yet unclear. It seems a rather ambitious inclusion in Robin's list at this point in time.

It is stated that the increase in the prevalence of technology and its use could mean that users begin to suffer from what is termed as the 'Google Effect' (Brabazon 2006). This is described as a user's inability to learn or conduct scholarly activity using their own imagination and creativity. The 'sufferers' place great reliance upon search engines and easily (commonly) accessible information - such as can be found with the Google search engine. The largest problem is a user's inability to determine the quality of the information as they place reliance upon the ranking of the returned search hits. The web provides information regarding every conceivable concept, but it does not provide the information on how to use it - this causes superficial learning that cannot be applied to unknown situations - to the point where users will not remember information if they believe they can find it online (Sparrow et al 2011).

There are further issues with this reliance on a Google memory and the ability to quickly search out information. Warwick et al (2009) found that UK undergraduates developed search strategies that enabled them to finish their task as quickly as possible without considering the quality and credibility of the sources. The implication for future of business is that decisions may be made on tenuous information and that perhaps the talent of the future are those that take a more disciplined approach to research and consequent decision making.

Thus there seems to be a gap opening between those that 'learn' and those that 'search'. In terms of talent differentiation there is an argument that suggests that in social networks and roles that require a spark of original thinking those that 'search' offer little additional value. One potential area of talent differentiation could therefore involve HRD professionals actively seeking those that 'learn' (and consequently 'know') and those that 'search'.

If the HRD profession does decide that some of the new workforce entrants of 2020 need to develop their EI capability, (given their lack of experience particularly with face to face interactions), is it even possible? There have been mixed results when training in EI skills is evaluated. Slaski and Cartwright (2003) found that individuals became less distressed and gained an increase in morale and their perception of the quality of their working life followed by EI training. One wonders however, whether it is entirely ethical, could it be that EI training is some form of organisational brainwashing?

Peer mentoring could appear to be a simple option - a wiser EI skilled mentor supporting the new starters from both Generations 'Y' and 'Me' by helping them to develop these new face-to-face EI business competencies. Research from children transferring between junior and senior school suggests that peer mentoring for early starters (in this case first term at a 'big' school) can have a negative impact upon EI capabilities (O'Hara 2011). So the idea of a comprehensive induction that supports EI capability development via a mentoring scheme has the potential to face future challenges. More research in a business context is needed to see if this is a likely outcome.

7. Recommendations for the future

Our current research suggests that organisations are attempting to control the social networking activities of their knowledge workers in an attempt to limit the loss of Intellectual Capital to unrestricted networks. There is no research at this stage that tells us whether these attempts at limiting potentially damaging behaviours are successful. What we do know is that individuals are drawn to these platforms in an attempt to develop their e-social reputation. One area we need to be mindful of is whether the desire of an organisation to 'control' all of the online activities of their employees is appropriate? Is Big Brother extending too far? Indeed is this level of control even possible? Another is to speculate whether organisational practices like these, limiting access to these online communities of practice, are withholding free developmental opportunities and longer term network benefits.

The ability of the existing generation to network with an appropriate degree of emotional intelligence has not been called into question. However the newer generations entering the workforce by 2020 may offer a potential cause for concern for the HRD practitioner. Evidence suggests that the new workforce may have a measure of virtual EQ (online Emotional Intelligence capability) but that this is limited to appropriate behaviour patterns established in their existing virtual worlds.

Whether these new generations are able to transfer this capability to the workplace is questionable - after all, de-friending a colleague is not an option! It seems then that organisations may need to consider how to support this new generation in the development of appropriate EI behaviour patterns. This is not however an easy objective to secure. Generation 'Y' and beyond have also been characterised as having a "hypertext mindset" where they are comfortable interacting simultaneously across different platforms and with different people (Oblinger and Oblinger 2005). Experience of computer gaming is also suggested by Feiertag & Berge (2008) as encouraging a "learning style [which] is hands-on and not necessarily linear in fashion" though whether this is true for all needs to be considered. In addition it is speculated that both Generations 'Y' and Me' need extensive feedback, to fulfil their narcissistic need for external sources of affirmation. All of these are critical factors for the HRD practitioner of 2020 to consider.

One final question to consider is whether Virtual EQ is the only talent differentiator in 2020? For us the answer is no. It seems from this research that EI capability (Virtual EQ) may be one of a range of talent differentiators in 2020. Others include the ability to learn and the ability to evaluate the quality of information sources.   We have a new generation entering our workforce with a wide range of development needs and talents. More research is needed to ensure that we fully understand what these new employees bring to organisations and how we can support them, through talent development activities, in delivering the best in both the virtual and 'real' worlds.

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