

LESSONS IN INCREASING INTELLIGENCE **From Yale's Robert Sternberg**

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Bottom Line Personal interviewed Robert Sternberg , Ph.D, IBM professor of psychology and education in the department of psychology at Yale University and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

He is author of many books, including *Successful Intelligence: How Practical and Creative Intelligence Determine Success in Life* (Simon & Schuster -- \$22.50).

The belief that intelligence tests can predict business and personal success has always been flawed.

Reason: Standard IQ tests measure a very narrow range of abilities, and the abilities measured by such tests are inert -- they don't predict or lead to actions or common sense mental skills necessary to achieve life's important goals. They also don't measure your ability to think.

More critical to achievement is what I call successful intelligence.

NEW WAYS OF THINKING

Successful intelligence is gauged by your ability to think in ways that will help you develop personal excellence and excel at work. The keys to successful intelligence include...

- o Analytical thinking -- the ability to solve problems and judge ideas.
- o Creative thinking -- the ability to formulate new or clever solutions to problems.
- o Practical thinking -- the ability to use your ideas and implement them effectively.

Successful intelligence is most effective when these three aspects are in balance. People who possess successful intelligence know how to make the most of what they do well and are able to find ways to work

around their limitations. They are motivated, controlled, persevering and independent.

Here's how to develop your successful intelligence...

ANALYNICAL INTELLIGENCE

Analytical intelligence involves conscious direction of our mental processes to find thoughtful solutions to problems.

Six steps to better problem solving...

1. Recognize that there is a problem. If you aren't able to spot a problem, you won't make the effort to solve it.

If you suspect that you have a problem, look for the following symptoms...

- o Things aren't working as they should.
- o People-including yourself -- are feeling uneasy.
- o Techniques that once produced one set of results are now producing other, less desirable results.
- o Your competitive business position is declining.

2. Define the problem. If you don't correctly define the problems that you have, you may waste a lot of time, trying to solve problems that don't exist.

Example: A supervisor and a subordinate -- or a married couple -- who continue to have the same argument may not both have the same problem in mind.

3. Represent information about a problem accurately and focus on how to use that information effectively.

4. Invest resources. Formulate a strategy by investing significant resources -- time and money -- in long-term planning. Think long-range, and be willing to delay gratification.

5. Allocate resources wisely. Think carefully about what resources you want to allocate to solve the problem both for the short and

long term. Write out your plan.

Consider the risk-reward ratio. Then allocate resources that will maximize your return.

6. Track your progress during the problem-solving process. Evaluate the quality of that process and the solution you come to.

Successfully intelligent people don't always make the right decisions, but they correct their errors as they discover them.

CREATIVE INTELLIGENCE

A very important aspect of successful intelligence is "creative intelligence" -- the ability to go beyond the given to generate new and interesting ideas.

This usually happens when the crowd goes one way and you go the other, trying to find a smarter way to accomplish a goal.

Doing things differently often comes at a price, however. Those who seek new solutions usually encounter barriers. Realize this will happen, and ask yourself, "Am I willing to persevere?"

You can develop creative intelligence by...

- o Actively seeking out and planning to become a role model. The most powerful way to develop creative intelligence in your employees, students and/or children is to serve as a creative role model.
- o Recall the teachers who most influenced you. They probably weren't the teachers who crammed the most content into their lectures, but rather those whose ways of thinking and acting served as models.
- o Question assumptions and encourage others to do so too. Without the impetus of those who question assumptions, little or no progress would ever be made in any human endeavor.
- o Take sensible risks and encourage others to do the same. You have to take risks to produce the work that others will

admire and respect.

- o Allow yourself and others to make mistakes. Creativity comes with a price. The result is worth the risk.

PRACTICAL INTELLIGENCE

Practical intelligence is the ability to translate theory into practice and abstract ideas into practical accomplishments.

To develop practical intelligence...

- o Recognize your pattern of strengths and weaknesses. Ask Yourself, "What do I do well? Consider not going into activities that are outside of your strengths.
- o Be honest with yourself. Do you have a flair for solitary work but not for working with teams? Perhaps becoming a desktop publisher is more realistic than becoming a management consultant.
- o Strengthen those skills in which you excel. And find a way around those skills in which you don't do well.

Example: If you recognize that you re not good at taking tests, get yourself a tutor or enroll in a pretest class.

- o Believe in yourself. "Can do" attitudes succeed. Conversely, if you think you can't, you probably won't.

Most authors can wallpaper a room with the rejection notices they received during the inception of their careers. But many have persevered and then have gone on to sell the very works that were originally rejected.