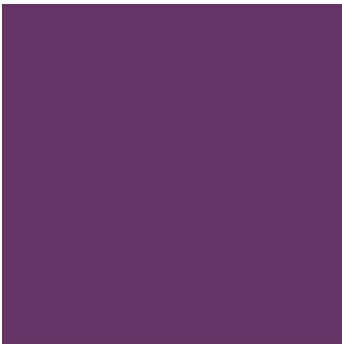


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**Demystifying the
Consciousness Quotient**



Consciousness is gathering a tidal wave of momentum across the world. It is spoken of as “the new currency”^{1,2} and one of the ‘megatrends’ of 2010³. To be involved in the field of consciousness right now is to be at the leading edge of a shift in thinking that is sweeping across the globe, including laypersons and the business world alike.

As recently as June 2009, Ovidiu Brazdau, a Romanian psychologist, coined the term ‘Consciousness Quotient’⁴ and we have since seen an abundance of websites, research and conferences catching this wave of momentum.

Because this wave is recent and still forming, understanding exactly what we mean by CQ, and consciousness in general, is still uncharted territory. The word ‘consciousness’ retains an air of mystery and inexplicability and there is a lot to be done to translate what we mean by consciousness, and its benefits, into real world terms, never mind making it applicable and acceptable to a business world driven by hard fact.

This article aims to begin to do just that.



What do we mean by consciousness and CQ?

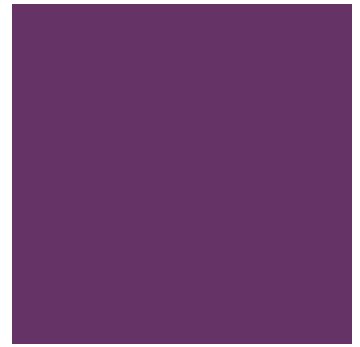
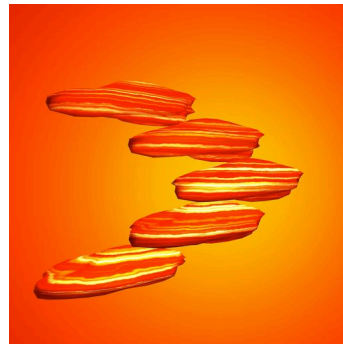


Human beings have a unique ability to be conscious of their consciousness. A simple way of viewing consciousness is: that of which we are aware. However, consciousness is not just self-awareness. It also includes a vast field of possibility - that which we are not aware we are not aware of. The more conscious we become, the greater access we have to this limitless field of potential to use and create with in our daily lives, whether this be for individuals or for organisations.

Brazdau's CQ measures the amount of access we have simultaneously to information from this vast field of possibility. Someone with a high CQ can access plenty of information simultaneously, whereas someone with a lower CQ can access less information. Hence, someone with a higher CQ will usually have a broader perspective, as long as this information is processed and understood. And this forms the link to IQ: IQ relates to the speed of a person's ability to process information. CQ is the ability to access more of this information, which then leads to being more conscious generally, especially when this state of consciousness is maintained over a period of time. (Brazdau pitches your CQ mark at your level of consciousness 1/2 - 1 hour after waking up after a refreshing sleep without being exposed to any stimulus such as coffee, TV etc).

We would like to make the notion of consciousness and CQ more dynamic than simply defining it as a gently undulating state. To do so, let's get back to the idea of awareness. In our working definition of a high CQ we would see it as being not just the ability to access greater amounts of information simultaneously, but also as having a high level of awareness - in other words having colonised greater parts of the field of possibility and therefore being more aware of the things that you didn't know that you didn't know.

What does this greater awareness give you? Greater choice. Being more conscious gives you the capacity for deliberate choice over the things of which you are aware. This might be your belief system, your automatic programmes that often upload and sabotage your efforts, or it might be your skill in 'operating consciousness' which has its own set of tools and techniques⁵. Greater consciousness (or a higher CQ) enables us to be in creation of the kind of life we want, rather than being in reaction to our limited field of information. So, greater awareness equals great choice - or, in Brazdau's terms, greater access to information. And, conversely, no awareness = no choice.



The importance of CQ for business

In today's unpredictable and turbulent business world, 21st century businesses need to operate on a completely different level from their predecessors. Recent events leading up to the global economic recession point fingers to the way we do business and preventing a repetition of these patterns in the future is critically important. Conjointly, businesses are more competitive, less differentiated and have employees who have changing expectations, wanting to be more personally connected with their work and their organisation's values and vision. Together, these factors highlight the need for business leaders who are not only able to operate skillfully in a squeezed, competitive space, but who are able to adopt a profoundly different approach to the way they do business and lead their employees. This turns conventional economic models on their head. What is required is a new business

paradigm which embraces complexity and integrates a much more humanistic approach with ethical and sustainable business practices⁶.

Businesses and business leaders can develop a sustainable competitive (and cooperative) business advantage by incorporating a thorough understanding and management of human consciousness⁷ - in other words, having leaders who possess a higher CQ. Superior leadership in this new generation of leaders will include those who are able to access multiple sources of information simultaneously, and who also have greater awareness, who know how to access and operate in a more conscious way, who can lead their businesses to consider the triple bottom line - people, planet and profit - and, of course, who incorporate a genuine human concern in the way they lead.



Further exploration of conscious business and conscious leadership will be presented in subsequent papers, but for the moment we are concerned to present our view of what a higher CQ may mean in terms of actual behaviour, be this for the layperson or the business leader.

It seems that the current trend when looking at the relevance of CQ in business leaders is to focus on the information accessing advantages of Brazdau and the information processing advantages of IQ. Therefore, the benefits of a higher CQ for the business leader are deemed to be the ability to use instinct and intuitive behaviour to make quick and accurate decisions, often with imperfect information sets⁸. Presumably, this honours Brazdau's definition that someone with a higher CQ would have access to a wider range of information which would help him or her with the intuitive decision-making process. It is true that strengths in these areas come at the right time as levels of change in the 21st century speed up at an exponential rate and predictability and forecasting become based on assumption rather than on past information⁹. Einstein's quote springs to mind in this regard: "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

However, a higher CQ has also been linked, rather loosely in our opinion, to a range of leadership qualities which don't necessarily accurately reflect the qualities of a more developed consciousness. These loose connections have been stated as being "more creative", "more productive", "more appropriate", "more accurate"¹⁰, as well as "insight, intuition, instinct, creativity and confidence"¹¹.

In our opinion, if we are to develop the credibility of CQ in the world at large, it is important to stay true to what we understand to be the nature of consciousness (an understanding that is in its infancy and is growing all the time) and to describe accurately what more conscious behaviour would look like, in leaders and in the population in general.

There is similarly an implication that leaders with higher CQ have the "uncanny ability to transcend the behavioural capabilities of their peers repeatedly"¹². However, what these behavioural capabilities are that are displayed is not described, and this leaves one guessing as to how a more consciously developed leader would behave.

What we are certain of is that it is not a call for leaders to act on their "base instincts"¹³. To do so would mean a leader who acts in reaction to his or her base instincts, and a leader who is in reaction rather than coming from a place of deliberate and conscious choice is, in our view, not a more conscious leader.

"We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them."

Einstein



Conscious leadership behaviours

So what then are the qualities of a more conscious leader?

Yes, it does entail the ability to access information more quickly and broadly than someone with a less-developed CQ. However, if we follow Brazdau's view, this information can be drawn from the physical, emotional, mental, spiritual, social/relational and self-conscious/self awareness realms, making the conscious leader's ability

to 'transcend the behavioural capabilities of their peers' easier to pinpoint.

Building on Brazdau's thinking, here is our view of the domains in which a leader with a higher CQ would operate. We have attempted to classify the conscious behaviours according to Brazdau's realms: Physical (PH); Emotional (EM); Mental (ME); Spiritual (SP); Social/Relationship (SR); and Self-conscious/Self-awareness (SA).

Self-awareness

- of body
- of streams of thought and emotion
- of personal journey

Being in creation (more than in reaction)

Focus on materiality (more than on story)

Heightened intuition

Heightened energy

Fewer energy drainers

Clarity of future focus and purpose

Constructive interpersonal relationships and communication

A mindset of abundance

Interconnectedness

Self-awareness

- Awareness of your body (or body-state proprioception) e.g. noticing immediately a change in your body's state through stress, an adrenalin surge etc; (PH)
- Awareness of your stream of thoughts, emotions and mental activity (what might be termed mental proprioception) e.g. being aware of and observing the commentating voice in your head; (ME)

- Awareness of your personal journey of self-development e.g. having insight into your personality and being conscious of your self and the way you are evolving and developing. (SA)

Creation (more than Reaction)

Having a heightened ability to exercise deliberate choice and live from creation, rather than reaction. This requires not being run by your automatic and well-worn habits and reactions (your 'programmes') when

your buttons are pushed by circumstances, but rather having the ability to consciously choose a deliberate path of action. This, of course, requires awareness of your programmes, because without this awareness (greater consciousness) you have no choice over the matter. (SA; ME)

Materiality (more than Story)

Dealing directly with the facts and actuality of any given situation, rather than your interpretation of the facts.

This requires being able to differentiate between your mental commentary, assumptions, interpretations and justifications about a situation (your story about it) and not taking this story as reality, but rather dealing in what is actually happening in that moment. This enables you to live in the present moment, rather than the past or future, and look for what would be the next authentic action under the circumstances. (ME)

Heightened intuition

Realising instantly, without much need for thinking and analysis. This includes being open to new experiences and being conscious about new information at all levels and from all sources. Greater consciousness would mean the ability to avoid filtering information through habitual lenses of perception about what is and isn't important and, instead, see data afresh. (ME)

Heightened energy

Many studies on leadership report the presence of high energy levels in leaders. Leaders with a higher CQ have increased energy automatically available to them, because they have less 'drag' in the form of regrets, concerns, or other incomplete business (see next point). (PH)

Fewer energy drainers

These exist in the form of relationship discontentments, past regrets and other 'incompletions' such as broken

promises, which cause a drag or drain on the amount of conscious awareness available to the leader in the here-and-now. Reducing these energy drainers requires having dealt with and resolved the clutter of your past (emotional regrets, unfinished business etc), thereby streamlining the drag effect. (SR, ME)

Clarity of future focus

This requires having clarity on who you are as a leader, what you stand for, your purpose, your legacy and the life you are living into or creating. Clarity here represents your perceived purpose in life, meaning the context in which you make your life and business choices. (ME, SP)

Constructive interpersonal relationships and communication

This is akin to EQ and relationship intelligence: being able to read others accurately and being quick to notice changes and respond accordingly, as well as dealing in direct communication. (SR)

A mindset of abundance

A mindset of abundance rather than scarcity requires being less on your guard against losing out and adopting instead a mindset of abundant possibility which makes being a creator of your life an easier position to uphold and the notion of creating your future an exciting venture on which to embark. (ME)

Interconnectedness

A deeply held awareness of the oneness of all things and that one set of actions affects all other things. This leads to the conscious leader taking greater responsibility for his or her actions. (SP)

So, as we can see, CQ entails not only the qualities of instinct, intuition and inspiration that benefit leaders, but a much broader spectrum of advantages that would transcend the behaviour of their peers and evolve them into the leaders to manage a more complex and uncertain future.

Classification of Brazdau's 6 dimensions of consciousness:

PH = Physical

EM = Emotional

ME = Mental


SP = Spiritual

SR = Social/Relationship


SA = Self-consciousness/Self-awareness

+ Developing your CQ


Short of embarking on a monastic pilgrimage of consciousness development or attending the valuable programmes that are available the world over¹⁴ to raise your consciousness quotient, there are some actions that practise the above qualities and which can be used every day. If you bear in mind that the key to consciousness is awareness, because with greater awareness you have greater choice, then consciousness-raising efforts are geared to help you become aware of and step away from your automatic programmes and reactions which trap you into habitual ways of responding, enjoying greater freedom of action, choice and information as a result. For the leader, the potential advantages of this are obvious.



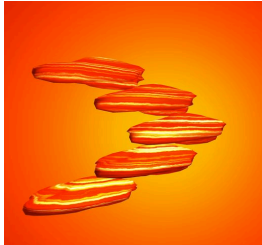
Regular check ins. Checking in with your self (body, mind and emotions) several times a day - becoming *present* - presence being a term for describing being in the here-and-now, not carried away by your thoughts or emotions or lost in other mental activity. See Eckhart Tolle's texts¹⁵ for excellent descriptions of presence. Meditation techniques teach this skill of becoming present to yourself and it's interesting to note Tolle's advice that several momentary check-ins per day can be just as effective as one long meditation session - which leaders may struggle to fit into their schedule. Mindfulness training for executives and leaders is available¹⁶.




Seek feedback. This is, of course, always a reliable way of gaining self-insight and being aware of your developmental journey as a leader, which adds to your self-awareness. Feedback takes you usefully into the territory of that which you didn't know that you didn't know about yourself.




Develop your powers of observation. Observing your reactions to situations from a mental 'arms-length' and acknowledging that these reactions are attempts to control a situation or to survive - psychologically speaking. Our identities (or our egos) are single-mindedly invested in their survival - which is why we hold on so dearly to our views, practise divide-and-conquer tactics and like to make ourselves look better than others. We often do this entirely unconsciously. Being more conscious doesn't imply that you give up your ability to take action or make choices, but rather that you do this through conscious choice instead of unconscious, automatic programming or reaction to your circumstances.




Assumption alert. Being on your toes about the assumptions you make and making a point of delving deeper to check in with information at source. At a practical level, this could mean asking others about the thinking behind their views which led them to their conclusions. It could also be listening to your own gut feeling and observing the assumptions you make.




Pursue actuality. Discovering what lies hidden within our stories about events¹⁷. Making assumptions is one form of falling into story. It makes acting powerfully more difficult because we try to effect change based on our interpretations, judgements and denials connected to circumstances. Better to accept and work with the material facts of what is actually true in this moment, without resisting them, denying them or deluding ourselves about them. A good question to ask yourself from this place of the actuality of 'what is', is: "What can I acknowledge?" And from there: "What can I decide and act upon? And what can I let go of?"¹⁸. One may continue to be in denial about a situation (although this is unlikely once it is recognised), but at least this choice for denial is a more conscious form of action.



Allow your emotions to breathe. Acknowledgement works equally well with our feelings as it does with the facts of a situation. One way of growing more conscious is to acknowledge and express (even if only to yourself) your denied and judged feelings (this is often called the shadow side of ourselves), and to give space to these feelings through verbal expression, experiencing yourself moving through your internal judgements and walls of fear and shame¹⁹. Like a good wine, allowing our emotions to breathe enables all the facets of ourselves to be available for expression and results in a richer and more well-rounded end result. Consider that denied aspects of ourselves take up space in our consciousness and continue to be part of us, while we use up the energy of consciousness to keep them hidden, from ourselves and from others. A leader who is aware of, and has faced up to and accepted, more aspects of him- or herself is a leader who is more available to lead, spending less time and energy in denial and hiding himself from others. Ultimately, these leaders are more accessible to their followers, because they appear to be more human.



Decrease 'drag'. One way of doing this is to carry out a broad scan of everything living within your awareness that feels incomplete, is nagging you or for which you feel guilty. And then take action to complete these items. Have the conversation you need to have to bring about closure of unresolved issues, take action on the items of unfinished business that are taking up space in your consciousness. The freed-up energy this provides can be put to better use in the act of creation as a leader. And make it a habit to abide by your word and keep to your promises, keeping the decks clear of more incompletions as you go to prevent losing more energy in the future²⁰.



Practise abundance. Choose to practise and experiment with an abundant mindset: that there is enough to go around, that giving is a better practice than taking, and that giving out rather than hoarding (money, information, accolades) tends to encourage circulation of the same, including back to you. Experiment - and see what happens.

View relationships as mirrors. To develop your relationship consciousness, practise viewing others as a mirror of yourself in such a way that what you see in them may be a reflection of you demonstrated in your interactions with them²¹.

Oneness. It might sound trite to say that an appreciation of interconnectedness or ‘oneness’ develops from all of the above, but it is true. When the barriers (mental and emotional habits) that cause us to feel separate from and unaffected by others are decreased (through all of the above practices), we naturally experience a greater sense of connectedness with all things. As a leader, this implies connectedness with our colleagues, our team, our employees, our organization, our competitors, our industry, regional economy, country politics, world trends.... The greatest practice to develop a sense of oneness is meditation.



+ Summary

In this paper we have explored how the new thinking that is developing around the consciousness quotient and conscious leadership is at risk of being defined too loosely and we have aimed to contribute to the understanding of what is meant by these terms. We believe that doing a thorough job of demystifying the consciousness quotient in actual behaviour terms and defining the qualities of the conscious leader will help to build a picture of the kind of leader we so urgently need for business in the 21st century and will encourage the development of this new brand of leadership.

We believe that, in addition to the often-mentioned benefits of heightened intuition and inspiration, conscious leaders behave in ways that demonstrate

the following qualities: spending much of their time located in the present moment, rather than being transported away by their thoughts, feelings and other mental activity; because of this, they have the ability to operate from a stable core which keeps them at arm's length from their reactions and enables them to enjoy more creativity and freedom in their choices for action; and a tendency to deal in actuality (‘what is’) rather than their interpretations and assumptions about situations, which means they can act powerfully to effect change because they are less constrained by their perceptions and habits. Furthermore, conscious leaders experience a significant sense of oneness and interconnectedness with the world around them and as such are motivated to act responsibly toward the triple bottom line of profit, people and planet. They

enjoy more available energy to lead because they have less 'drag' due to carrying incomplete business and relationships around with them in their consciousness. In all, they have greater access to the field of possibility - to that which we are not aware we are not aware of - and, with this, more creative and collectively responsible action becomes possible.

Our aspiration is that by refining and building on our understanding of the consciousness quotient and conscious leadership we are contributing to the development of leaders who can create the way into a positive and conscious future.

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