

The **G** Quotient

Why Gay Executives Are Excelling  
as Leaders . . . and What Every  
Manager Needs to Know

KIRK SNYDER

## What Do Managers from Barclay's Bank, Citicorp, Deloitte Consulting LLP, Disney, Ernst & Young, General Electric, and Morgan Stanley Know About *The G Quotient*?

Kirk Snyder's new book, *The G Quotient*, is based on a five-year study into the beliefs and behaviors of more than three thousand managers and employees across major economic sectors. The result is the identification of a new paradigm for successful business leadership that is generating unparalleled levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and workplace morale from Fortune 500 companies to entrepreneurial enterprises in all types of fields and industries.

Chronicling the dramatic changes of the new world of work, Snyder explains why employees of gay executives are responding to a new ethos of business leadership with record high levels of job commitment. *The G Quotient* provides *all* managers, whether managing teams of a few or a few thousand, with vital information and insight about fully engaging the strengths and talents of today's workforce.

---

### *The G Quotient*—Named to *Harvard Business Review's* 2006 Reading List

---

"*The G Quotient* is a clarion call to all leaders wanting to successfully lead others and build winning twenty-first-century organizations. It is a call to authenticity, to presence, and to leading by being fully human."

—**Andrew Fenniman**, principal, The Exetor Group, LLC

"*The G Quotient* is for any executive, regardless of gender or sexual orientation, because Snyder's insights will help to improve everyone's leadership skills. It's a must-read not only for those interested in diversity issues but also for anyone who seeks to understand the secret of successful executive leadership in today's rapidly changing workplace."

—**Kevin Jennings**, founder and executive director, GLSEN


Jacket design by Adrian Morgan

LEADERSHIP

U.S. \$24.95

Canada \$31.99 | U.K. £16.99

[www.josseybass.com](http://www.josseybass.com)

JOSSEY-BASS™  
An Imprint of  
 WILEY

ISBN 0-7879-8246-6



9 780787 982461

correlation between the leadership behaviors evidenced in organizations managed by these gay executives and the significantly higher-than-average rates of job engagement, satisfaction, and workplace morale reported by their employees. Ultimately, this new phase of research provided the title for this book by putting the “G” in *The G Quotient*, resulting in what some cautioned was a leadership book too controversial to be published.

### Making the Connection

From 2003 through 2004, I studied (empirically as well as through field research) what I will refer to throughout this book as the *reconstruction of contemporary employees*. Without getting too far ahead of myself, the practical implication of this new term is essentially a recalibration of employee beliefs, values, and expectations. It’s also a primary contributor to the leadership success of gay executives—and therefore an important part of *The G Quotient*. A natural by-product of what is often referred to as the Digital Age, the world itself gave today’s employees their key tool for reinvention—instant access to specialized, work-related *knowledge*.

Along with the reconstruction of contemporary employees, the meaning of successful leadership has been simultaneously and unavoidably recalibrated as well. The end result is a message that resonates across a diverse spectrum of business playing fields from the Fortune 500 to entrepreneurial enterprises in virtually all fields and industries. Today’s workforce is the most knowledgeable, diverse, and empowered in recorded history, and old leadership paradigms no longer apply. Why? Because the business world they originally served no longer exists.

### Defining the G Quotient

While corporate America is seemingly baffled by the steady decline in across-the-board levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and workplace morale, employees under the leadership of gay executives

*The following chart details the percentages of employees who report higher levels of job engagement, job satisfaction, and workplace morale under the leadership of gay male managers, compared with nationally reported statistics. (For more detail on the G Quotient results, see Appendix D.)*

	G Quotient	Nationally
Engagement	85.30	21 <sup>1</sup>
Job satisfaction	81.39	45 <sup>2</sup>
Workplace morale	84.82	40 <sup>3</sup>

utives in the four major business sectors I studied are the collective exception. In all four sectors, employees in these environments report significantly higher levels of job engagement, job satisfaction, and workplace morale than comparative national averages.

My research found that in organizations and working units under the direct leadership of non-closeted gay executives, an environment is created where employees care about their work, demonstrate a deep commitment to professional excellence, and feel individually connected to advancing the success of the organization itself. Because these executives approach their leadership role with a worldview that places primary value on the individual, they believe each employee has the right to a place of foremost importance within the organization. This belief fosters a workplace climate based on a foundation of inclusion, which in turn breeds a type of employee engagement rarely seen in other professional environments.

What makes G Quotient leadership different? When leadership is based on absolute inclusion, meaning that all employees are viewed by their managers as having the value and authority to play a key role in the success of the organization because of who they are as human beings, it cements a positive, equality-based connection between employees and their managers. Without this type of authentic personal connection, today’s employees will typically disengage from their work because they feel their employers view them

simply as laborers rather than as fully participating and meaningful contributors to the organization.

### Getting Over the "G" Word

Do you have to be a gay male to be a G Quotient leader? Absolutely not.

G Quotient leaders come in all mixes of gender and sexual orientation. (See Appendix C for the range of G Quotient scores among various demographic groups.)

However, because this is the first business leadership book of its kind—based on the first large-scale research of its kind—I believe it's necessary to further address the "G" word and the role sexual orientation does or does not play in G Quotient leadership.

The G Quotient is not a gay management style. However, for a variety of reasons explored in detail in the Introduction, gay executives are in the right place at the right time to achieve beyond the status quo as business leaders. Several phenomena combine to explain the development of G Quotient leadership among this particular group of professionals: employee needs, learned social skills, and the convergence of documented sociocultural factors and trends. As identified in my research, it's a group that, as a collective whole, face no additional types of oppression other than their sexual orientation. Primarily white, middle-class, and college-educated, these gay executives bridge the traditional world of business, historically run by straight white males, and the new business world where diversity, creativity, and empathy are viewed as professional commodities.

In Part One of this book, you will meet the namesakes of G Quotient leadership, and later, many of their employees. It's important to note that for the purposes of my research, the gay executives identified throughout this book all carry out their leadership roles in friendly and affirming environments and are non-closeted in their professional lives. Listed at the end of this Preface, the organizations they serve range from global household names to government agencies and successful entrepreneurial business enterprises.

In Part Two, I delve more deeply into the reasons why G Quotient leadership is here to stay, and what all managers (whether straight or gay) need to know about how integrating the G Quotient in their approach to leadership can benefit their career, organization and employees. At the conclusion of the book, Appendix A offers you an opportunity to take a quick assessment to see how your own beliefs and behaviors about management align with the seven principles of G Quotient leadership.

Because the G Quotient is indeed breaking new ground in the study of business leadership, I would be remiss not to comment on the existence of certain societal obstacles that will no doubt prevent some people from finding the freedom to learn from gay executives. Primarily born out of conservative politics or religious ideology these obstacles represent beliefs and behaviors that no longer have relevance in the new world of work. As a university educator who has moderated many charged classroom discussions, I guarantee that strong emotions can also make for great dialogue. When accompanied by open minds, such dialogue can serve to enlighten all parties involved.

*The following companies and organizations, in whole or within specific working units, have managers identified as G Quotient leaders who participated in my research and are featured throughout the book.*

A. T. Kearney  
Bain & Company  
Barclay's Bank  
Citicorp  
Deloitte Consulting LLP  
Disney  
Ernst & Young  
General Electric  
Hampshire College  
IBM

State of Massachusetts  
Mitchell Gold +  
Bob Williams  
Morgan Stanley  
PepsiCo  
Quest Diagnostics  
Replacements, Inc.  
University of California  
University of Southern  
California

provide context and meaning to all of the concepts presented throughout this book, and play a central role in explaining why gay executives are the first group of managers to be identified as practitioners of this new leadership paradigm. I invite you to refer back to this list often as a point of reference as you move forward in *The G Quotient*.

### **Principle One: Inclusion**

Inclusion is viewed as the fundamental source of organizational success in G Quotient environments. Gay executives inspire their employees to become engaged in their work and committed to excellence through a demonstrated respect for the individual value of each employee. As shown in Appendix D, in these settings, employee motivation stems from leadership that inspires rather than rules, with 84 percent of employees reporting that they are always treated fairly by their manager.

Employees describe their gay managers as motivators rather than dictators, and my research found that, as a principle of leadership, inclusion is much more about acts and behavior than language and organizational policies. In G Quotient environments, gay executives frequently convey respect and value for their employees through a variety of employee-centered programs and benefits. Believing that investing in the value of their employees' lives is not just the right thing to do but also advantageous to their organizations, gay executives use their collective and deeply held convictions about equality to successfully drive all the processes of work within their own organizations.

### **Principle Two: Creativity**

In G Quotient environments, creativity is considered a primary source of forward organizational movement, centered on three focus points identified as *concepts*, *possibilities*, and *people*. My research found that gay executives typically define creativity as the ability to

look at ideas in fresh new ways and define innovation as the economic by-product it yields. In this context, creativity is acknowledged as an employee process and innovation as an organizational product. Creativity is also a professional goal for employees within these environments across all four business sectors. Among employees reporting to gay managers, 85 percent reported that people with different ideas are valued in their workplace environment. Comparatively, the 2005 Towers Perrin study mentioned earlier found that only 41 percent of employees think their senior management supports new ideas and new ways of doing things.

Connecting these three focus points together has become a proven route to innovation within these environments. Other organizational benefits associated with creativity as a principle of G Quotient leadership include enhanced problem-solving capabilities and more effective bridges with organizational stakeholders, as well as higher employee retention and increased workplace morale.

### **Principle Three: Adaptability**

As the third principle of G Quotient leadership, adaptability addresses the willingness and capacity to adapt to change, particularly in the greater economic, social, and political landscapes of the world. My research found that gay executives believe their organizations must develop an awareness and appreciation for the concept of change or face difficulty in developing and building new strategies to remain competitive. In G Quotient environments, being able to adapt to the concept of change has guarded against organizational groupthink and contributed to significantly higher levels of employee engagement and commitment to excellence.

In these organizations, the ambiguity that often accompanies change is considered an acceptable state of professional being. Ambiguity or "living with gray" is viewed as a necessary component of forward organizational movement. In this context, gay executives and their employees regularly respond to new opportunities with a state of professional readiness, accepting that it may be necessary to

move quickly in a new direction as appropriate for the particular situation or event.

#### **Principle Four: Connectivity**

Connectivity is considered to represent the functional network on which G Quotient environments are assembled, supported and advanced. As a principle of leadership, connectivity follows adaptability because change mandates a subsequent need to acquire new perspectives and professional tools in order to maximize organizational success. In G Quotient environments, connectivity takes on two forms: external networking and internal awareness. And in G Quotient environments, connectivity is viewed to be the mechanism that keeps gay executives and their employees in touch with both organizational and industry movement, providing a competitive edge.

Employees in G Quotient environments report less professional isolation, enhanced job performance, and significantly higher levels of workplace happiness and contentment. My research found that gay executives believe their organizations must continually draw from outside sources of knowledge to reach their full potential.

#### **Principle Five: Communication**

G Quotient environments are based on a foundation of authenticity and trust. As a principle of leadership, communication as an open system actively develops and nurtures interaction in order to create a culture that encourages and supports trust, facilitates organizational candor, and promotes cohesiveness. My research found that authenticity actually provides gay executives with the type of internal credibility that ultimately allows them to promote communication with their employees, using the strength of their own individuality.

In these settings, gay executives consistently and freely share information with their employees about the course and direction of

the organization. As a result, employees report, this extremely high level of professional disclosure contributes to greater trust within the workplace environment. Among employees reporting to gay managers, 90 percent reported that information and knowledge are shared openly in their environment. Nationally, the Challenger, Gray & Christmas Report notes, only 36 percent of employees think senior management communicates the reasons for important business decisions effectively.

#### **Principle Six: Intuition**

Intuition as a principle of G Quotient leadership is about gut instinct based on perceived truth. In G Quotient environments, intuition plays a positive role in decision making on issues ranging from personnel matters to developing new business relationships to committing to new deals and projects. Gay executives view intuition as a business asset and encourage their employees to develop and apply their own set of professional instincts.

In G Quotient environments, integrating intuition into the decision-making process has resulted in better hires, greater utilization of employee talent, and increased workplace harmony because people are assembled into teams that complement individual strengths. Gay executives typically use their ability to collect information through indirect as opposed to direct sources, enabling them to effect greater reasoning and processing of all types of business information in their organizations.

#### **Principle Seven: Collaboration**

In G Quotient environments, collaboration contributes to employee engagement and job satisfaction because it contributes to the equilibrium of the organization as a whole. Gay executives build cultures where collaboration enhances all the conceptual and physical processes associated with organizational development and management. My research found that this type of collaboration lessens "me

first” antagonism, which often takes over in those settings where everyone feels that their own success must come at the failure (or diminished success) of others. In this context, gay executives use collaboration to create environments that are more welcoming, affirming, and balanced.

As the final principle of G Quotient leadership, collaboration depends upon and grows out of the practice of each of the other six. Without inclusion, creativity, adaptability, connectivity, communication, and intuition, *collaboration* will always struggle for existence because in order to be effective, an organization requires a new ethos of leadership that fully takes advantage of the potential of today’s empowered employees.

### A New Quotient for a New Age

The G Quotient is not an intelligence quotient (IQ), nor is it emotional intelligence (EQ). While IQ and EQ encompass potentially infinite influences, “GQ” is derived from a finite set of seven influences—identified in this book as leadership principles. An IQ is traditionally considered to be a reflection of an individual’s cognitive capacity in comparison to the general population. It’s a measure of ability to understand concepts and solve problems. EQ on the other hand, as it implies, is about *emotions*. First defined by professors Peter Salovey of Yale University and John Mayer of the University of New Hampshire in 1990, it is (in its originators’ phrase) “an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them.”<sup>12</sup>

Uniquely relevant to the workplace, GQ measures one’s propensity toward G Quotient leadership based on the seven identified leadership principles. The purpose of this measurement is to gain a better understanding about one’s own approach to leadership in the context of today’s workplace. As noted, Appendix A offers an opportunity to take the new GQ assessment at the end of this book.

The G Quotient reflects the leveling of knowledge in workplaces where employees no longer view themselves as “less than.” A step beyond understanding one’s emotions and the ramifications of those emotions, G Quotient leadership actually unites employees and their managers through practical and meaningful connections based on a communication platform of equality. Moving into the first section of the book, I believe it’s important to consider that the significant success of G Quotient leadership signals what is likely the final shift in the need for management to focus on the processes of work rather than the final product—180 degrees opposite the focus of leadership paradigms still rooted in Industrial Age principles.

first” antagonism, which often takes over in those settings where everyone feels that their own success must come at the failure (or diminished success) of others. In this context, gay executives use collaboration to create environments that are more welcoming, affirming, and balanced.

As the final principle of G Quotient leadership, collaboration depends upon and grows out of the practice of each of the other six. Without inclusion, creativity, adaptability, connectivity, communication, and intuition, *collaboration* will always struggle for existence because in order to be effective, an organization requires a new ethos of leadership that fully takes advantage of the potential of today’s empowered employees.

### A New Quotient for a New Age

The G Quotient is not an intelligence quotient (IQ), nor is it emotional intelligence (EQ). While IQ and EQ encompass potentially infinite influences, “GQ” is derived from a finite set of seven influences—identified in this book as leadership principles. An IQ is traditionally considered to be a reflection of an individual’s cognitive capacity in comparison to the general population. It’s a measure of ability to understand concepts and solve problems. EQ on the other hand, as it implies, is about *emotions*. First defined by professors Peter Salovey of Yale University and John Mayer of the University of New Hampshire in 1990, it is (in its originators’ phrase) “an ability to recognize the meanings of emotion and their relationships, and to reason and problem-solve on the basis of them.”<sup>12</sup>

Uniquely relevant to the workplace, GQ measures one’s propensity toward G Quotient leadership based on the seven identified leadership principles. The purpose of this measurement is to gain a better understanding about one’s own approach to leadership in the context of today’s workplace. As noted, Appendix A offers an opportunity to take the new GQ assessment at the end of this book.

The G Quotient reflects the leveling of knowledge in work places where employees no longer view themselves as “less than.” A step beyond understanding one’s emotions and the ramifications of those emotions, G Quotient leadership actually unites employees and their managers through practical and meaningful connections based on a communication platform of equality. Moving into the first section of the book, I believe it’s important to consider that the significant success of G Quotient leadership signals what is likely the final shift in the need for management to focus on the processes of work rather than the final product—180 degrees opposite the focus of leadership paradigms still rooted in Industrial Age principles.