

## Emotional Intelligence and Propensity to be a Teamplayer

**Elisa Ilarda**

Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn VIC 3122 Australia  
Swinburne University of Technology

**Bruce M. Findlay (bfindlay@swin.edu.au)**

Faculty of Life and Social Sciences  
Swinburne University of Technology, Hawthorn VIC 3122 Australia  
Swinburne University of Technology

### Abstract

The present study is one of the first to investigate the role of emotional intelligence in the predilection for teamwork. One hundred and thirty-four respondents, all working in teams, were administered Palmer and Stough's (2001) measure of emotional intelligence, the NEO-FFI and the Team Player Inventory (Kline, 1999). In line with expectations, the strongest correlations with teamwork were found to be with extraversion, total emotional intelligence and agreeableness. Neuroticism correlated negatively with teamwork and no relationship was found between conscientiousness and predilection for teamwork. Additionally, this research challenged the argument that emotional intelligence is little more than personality by showing that the construct of emotional intelligence added predictive power to that of personality. Limitations and implications for future research are also discussed.

*Keywords: Emotional intelligence, Teamwork, Personality*

### Teams in the Workplace: An Introduction and Definition

Social psychologists have been interested in the dynamics of small groups for many years, however, it has only been in recent decades that attention has turned to teams. Attention has particularly increased in recent times as teams have become an integral part of work life in the 21st century. Teams are a growing phenomenon in today's workplace and an extremely popular work design in all types of organisations (Stevens & Campion, 1994). In fact, a strong trend in management over recent years has been to re-organise companies into teams. Many organisations rely upon successful teamwork to achieve goals and meet the needs of their clients (Luca & Tarricone, 2001). Hence, when teams are successful, they have the potential to provide many benefits to organisations (Weisner & Kichuk, 1998). It is therefore particularly important that organisations aim to maximise the

probability of team success by paying careful attention to selecting individuals who are likely to function effectively in a team environment.

Teamwork is defined by Harris and Harris (1996) as "a work group with a common purpose through which members develop mutual relationships for the achievement of goals/tasks" (p. 23). A team's probability of success is believed to be reliant upon having members of the team who work well together and each contribute to the overall purpose, goal or task at hand. Research has revealed that teams are more creative and productive when they can achieve high levels of participation, co-operation, and collaboration amongst members (e.g., Druskat & Wolff, 2001). Druskat and Wolff present three basic conditions that are considered important to be present in teams: trust amongst members, group identity and group efficacy. At the heart of these conditions are an individual's emotions. Thus, the conditions considered essential for effective teamwork can only arise in environments where emotion is well handled amongst team members. Druskat and Wolff argue that emotional intelligence is critical for a team's effectiveness and summarise their findings by stating that "just like individuals, the most effective teams are emotionally intelligent ones" (p.32). Cooper (1997) argues that emotional intelligence skills extend individual and team capacities, and individuals high on emotional intelligence experience more career success and stronger personal and work relationships.

### The Relationship between Personality and Teamwork

Research conducted on emotional intelligence in organisational contexts is limited (for an exception, see Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005). However, studies relating personality to team effectiveness are more extensive and can present a much more widely researched link between these constructs. As there has been a current shift away from working in isolation to working in

teams, research within the organisational context has concentrated on how personality can predict work related behaviours such as job performance, identifying those members capable of working in a team and also identifying optimal combinations of people to ensure a good working relationship amongst team members (e.g., van Vianen, & De Dreu, 2001; Weisner & Kichuk, 1998).

Molleman, Nauta and Jenh (2004) examined the moderating role of team task autonomy on the relationship between three personality traits in a team (conscientiousness, emotional stability and openness to experience) and two job outcomes (job satisfaction and learning). They concluded that team attributes, personality characteristics of the individual member, and team task autonomy explained differences in individual outcomes and were helpful in predicting the effectiveness of teamwork.

Similarly, a study by Anhalt (1995) tested the hypothesis that personality characteristics would have an effect on overall teamwork behaviours and that certain individuals would function more effectively in a broad range of teams than others, regardless of the type of task being performed. In this research, newly formed teams performed different tasks that required different levels of interdependence. After completing each task, team members provided a self and peer rating of teamwork. Following this, trained observers viewed videotapes of the task session and provided feedback, and ratings were compared. Results indicated that personality characteristics are predictive of teamwork ratings and that this relationship is not influenced by the task being performed. The personality characteristics of ambition and sociability emerged as significant predictors of teamwork. Other results indicated that teamwork behaviour is significantly linked to organisational citizenship behaviour suggesting that the same behaviours that contribute to organisational functioning are important to functioning in a team environment.

A meta-analysis conducted by Hough (1992) proposed a nine-factor taxonomy derived from the well-known Five Factor Model and including some additional factors such as potency and dependability. Teamwork was defined as "ratings of cooperativeness with other coworkers/team members, ability to work with others in joint efforts, quality of interpersonal relationships and constructive interpersonal behaviour" (p.151). Results from the meta-analysis found that agreeableness and emotional stability were related to teamwork. Individuals who scored high on these characteristics were found to be better able to cooperate and work effectively with others than those who scored lower.

Mount, Barrick & Stewart (1998) conducted a meta-analysis which examined the degree to which dimensions of the Five Factor Model of personality related to performance in jobs involving interpersonal interactions. The meta-analysis was based on studies in which interaction with others was a critical component of the job. Each study used the Personality Performance Inventory (PPI) which was developed specifically to evaluate the Five Factor Model traits in a work setting. Results showed that agreeableness and emotional stability were positively related to enhanced performance in jobs which require interpersonal interactions, and were more strongly related to performance in jobs that involve teamwork (interacting with co-workers), than those involving dyadic service interactions where employees provide direct service to customers and clients. Although all of the five personality factors were related to both criteria in the study, it was found that those who are conscientious, emotionally stable and agreeable interacted best with others (e.g., customer service). However, when jobs involved teamwork, the importance of agreeableness and emotional stability increased, whilst the importance of conscientiousness decreased somewhat. Thus, the study indicated that when work is to be accomplished in situations where teamwork is vital, it is particularly important that individuals be co-operative, trusting and friendly (agreeable) as well as being calm, steady and secure (emotionally stable).

A study by Barrick, Stewart, Neubert & Mount (1998) studied the intra-group interactions which take place among team members such as communication patterns, personal disclosure, conflict and social cohesion. The major purpose of this study was to examine how member characteristics such as personality, ability, and team processes related to team effectiveness, teamwork functioning and viability. Results indicated that team viability (which indicated the capability of a team to stay together over time), was found to be high in teams with higher cognitive ability, teams who scored high on extraversion and teams who were emotionally stable. Overall, these characteristics were found to be predictive of successful teamwork. Hence, teams that were high on extraversion and emotional stability were found to experience more positive group interactions which led to enhanced group cohesiveness and ability to remain working well together, over time. These results were found to have important implications for staffing of work teams in organisations.

## Emotional Intelligence

It has become increasingly clear that a huge influence in creating successful teamwork in today's corporate world is emotional intelligence (e.g., Luca & Tarricone, 2001). Since the early 1990's, a number of different models and measures of emotional intelligence have emerged (e.g., Bar-On, 1997, Goleman, 1995; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). One of the most theoretically advanced of these models is that of Salovey & Mayer's ability model (Ashkanasy & Daus, 2005; Palmer & Stough, 2001).

Salovey and Mayer (1990) first coined the term emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate between positive and negative effects of emotions and to use emotional information to guide one's actions and thinking processes. Due to the inconsistent ways the term "emotional intelligence" was being used, Mayer and Salovey (1997) were prompted to clarify the concept further. They published a model of emotional intelligence that presented the abbreviated definition of the construct as "the ability to perceive emotions, to access and generate emotions so as to assist thought, to understand emotions and emotional knowledge, and reflectively regulate emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth" (p.5). Fitness (2001) summarises their findings by stating that emotionally intelligent people know when they and others are experiencing emotions and are able to accurately identify and discriminate between different emotional responses. Mayer and Salovey acknowledged that their earlier definition appeared vague, since, although they included one's ability to perceive and regulate emotions, they omitted the ability to think and have insight of one's feelings (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). They refer to emotional intelligence as heightened emotional or mental abilities and they provide separate descriptions of the constructs and define emotion and intelligence separately. They conclude by stating that using emotions during one's thinking processes, and thinking with emotions themselves, may be related to important social competencies in everyday life.

The Workplace Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test developed in Australia by Palmer and Stough (2001) used a battery of emotional intelligence measures which was highly representative of, and thus covered all the different measures of the concept currently available. A large factor analytic study with a sample that was representative of the Australian population was used, involving six of the predominant measures of emotional intelligence. Five dimensions of emotional intelligence were identified and presented

along with their operational definitions. This measure was used in the present study to operationalise aspects of emotional intelligence as it relates to teamwork.

Recently, the growing empirical interest in emotional intelligence has led to a debate regarding any potential overlap between emotional intelligence and personality. Studies such as that conducted by McCrae (2000) have argued that there is a substantial common ground and intersection between emotional intelligence and personality. The argument has been that emotional intelligence is a construct made up of personality traits and that emotional intelligence is little more than personality re-packaged.

## How Emotional Intelligence Differs from Personality

Taking into consideration that the most effective teams are those which quickly and effectively adapt to change (Cooper, 1997), Vakola, Tsaousis and Nikolaou (2003) explored how emotional intelligence (the role of emotions) and the Five Factor Model of personality can facilitate organisational change. It was proposed that emotionally intelligent employees would be more likely to be adaptable to change in an organisation. The relationship between extraversion, openness, agreeableness, conscientiousness and attitude were all found to be linked to being adaptable to change in an organisation, but most importantly, the added value of using an emotional intelligence measure above and beyond the effect of personality was found. In other words, the use of emotions for problem solving and their ability to use and assess their own emotions appropriately in a work setting was found to be particularly important. The skills that were noted to be essential in relation to organisational change were also equally important in working well together with others in a team setting. These include the use of emotions to handle conflicts, solve problems, and adapt quickly to a new environment.

Similarly, in the research by Kickul and Neuman (2000), emergent leadership behaviours and their relationship to teamwork processes and outcomes were investigated. Results indicated that conscientiousness and cognitive ability of the emergent leader were related to enhanced group performance. This was further explained by highlighting that conscientiousness describes individuals who are responsible, persistent, dependable and task focused. However, measures which predicted successful teamwork were found to be interpersonal areas such as conflict resolution, collaborative problem solving and communication. These characteristics are more closely linked to emotional intelligence skills rather than personality traits. These interpersonal skills were found to be

necessary in order for the team members to react to each other with respect for ideas, emotions, and differing viewpoints.

Similarly, in a recent study by Varvel, Adams, Pridie, Bianey and Ulloa (2004), the Myers-Briggs Type indicator was given to engineering senior design students who were completing a design project at University. The test was administered during the first week of the formation of the team. At the end of the teaching semester, team effectiveness was measured using the grade score obtained and completing a team effectiveness questionnaire. Findings did not reveal a significant correlation between personality type and team effectiveness and the researchers therefore concluded that personality alone did not predict effective teamwork. It was found however, that training helped participants to enhance their communications skills, conflict resolution skills, trust and interdependence which are prominent characteristics of emotional intelligence skills.

These latter studies reveal few significant correlations between broad measurements of personality and teamwork. However, they emphasise the importance of interpersonal characteristics such as the ability to communicate effectively and resolve conflict. These are characteristics which are closely related to emotional intelligence skills and which, as the authors suggest, can be enhanced through training. Conversely, personality dispositions such as most of those described by the Five Factor Model are quite stable in adulthood and there is evidence which reveals a genetic basis for much of these traits (Costa & McCrae, 1992). There is a strong consensus on the other hand, that emotional intelligence is a developable trait or competency that can be learnt at almost any age (Cooper, 1997).

### **Emotional Intelligence and Effective Teams: A Link**

In recent times research has revealed a link between emotional intelligence and effective teamwork. In an Australian case study conducted by Luca and Tarricone (2001), the effect of emotional intelligence on successful teamwork was investigated. A group of final year multimedia students at Edith Cowan University were studied while completing a project where they had to develop web sites. Online tools were provided which helped facilitate teamwork and collaboration. Students had to complete online weekly journals designed to encourage them to carefully consider their own and their peers' contribution and performances. Students were asked to indicate a rating based on task completion, quality of input from team members and contribution to team dynamics. Whilst one team did not experience difficulties, the interactions within the other team became problematic and it was forced to split.

Efforts made by the project manager to help resolve issues amongst team members were found to be unsuccessful. Focus group interviews were carried out using a questionnaire based on Goleman's work, a week following the team's split. The questionnaire aimed to determine aspects of emotional intelligence present within each of the teams. Results indicated that the successful team had a strong awareness of the impact of emotions and team success. Conversely, the results from the unsuccessful team showed a lack of emotional intelligence skills. Team members appeared surprised that they had upset other team members, appeared inconsiderate of others' situation and problems and lacked communication with each other which led to resentment and disruption. Inevitably, this caused a lack of team cohesion and co-operation and eventually led to the split of the team.

Luca and Tarricone's (2001) study indicated that the lack of emotional intelligence was the main reason for the team being unsuccessful. The overall outcome of this study showed a compelling relationship between students' emotional intelligence and their ability to work effectively within a team. It revealed a strong correspondence between students' emotional intelligence and team harmony.

A recent Australian study by Jordan and Troth (2004) examined the usefulness of emotional intelligence for predicting individual performance, team performance, conflict resolution and team outcome. Participants, working in teams, completed the self-reporting section of the Workgroup Emotional Intelligence Profile (Jordan, 2000), a survival situation exercise and also an interpersonal conflict measure which was used to assess the tactics that participants individually employed to resolve team differences during the problem solving exercise. Participants were randomly allocated into teams and given the survival exercise to complete. Best and worst performing teams were chosen following this activity.

Results indicated that individuals with higher levels of emotional intelligence used more integrative and collaborative techniques when resolving differences during the team task. Overall, teams with higher levels of emotional intelligence also performed better than teams with lower average levels. One explanation for this is that teams composed of individuals with high emotional intelligence, particularly the ability to deal with their emotions, may be more likely to listen to alternative view points, and look for solutions. Additionally, team members were found to be more effective if they could manage, or control, their emotions and become task and goal focused. Conversely, those participants with less ability to deal with their own emotions were found to be more likely

to engage in use of avoidance tactics and therefore negatively affect the process of effective teamwork activities. As the above research evidence shows there is strong indication that teamwork may be enhanced by increased emotionally intelligent levels.

### Aims and Hypothesis

Based on the above literature and theoretical review, the present study primarily aimed to examine the relevance of emotional intelligence for a predilection for teamwork. Additionally, an investigation on which aspects of personality are related to predilection for teamwork was completed. It was hoped that this study would examine and shed further light on the argument surrounding any overlap between emotional intelligence and personality. It was hypothesised that people who are higher on emotional intelligence would perceive themselves to be better team players, and that the personality constructs of agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness and extraversion would be positively related to propensity for effective teamwork. Neuroticism, on the other hand, was expected to be negatively related to effective teamwork. Finally, the present study aimed to test how well emotional intelligence can predict predilection for teamwork above that predicted by personality.

## Method

### Participants

The sample consisted of 134 participants currently or previously working in a team. Of the participants, 127 (94.8%) were working in a team and seven (5.2%) were not working in a team but had previously done so. There were 84 females whose ages ranged from 19 to 61 ( $M = 31.1$ ,  $SD = 9.2$ ) and 50 males whose ages ranged from 20 to 59 ( $M = 36.7$ ,  $SD = 10.1$ ). Their occupations ranged from 26.9% with a mental health/healthcare background, 17.9% security, 11.9% management, 11.2% education/teaching, 9.7% students, 8.2% business, 7.5% administrative and 6.7% involved in customer service. The largest group of participants (21.6%) possessed a postgraduate degree. A fair proportion of respondents (24.6%) indicated that the longest period of time they had worked in a team was between 2 and 4 years. Seventeen percent of the sample indicated that they worked in a one-discipline team, whilst 80.6% worked in multi-discipline teams. Of the sample 60.4% also indicated belonging to a secondary team with 22.4% indicating their secondary team to comprise 6-8 other team members.

### Materials

The participants were administered a self-report questionnaire package comprised of an introductory

letter, a demographics questionnaire, the Workplace Swinburne University Emotional Intelligence Test, Self Report Version (Palmer & Stough, 2001), NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and the Team Player Inventory (Kline, 1999).

**Demographics.** Participants' sex, age, occupation, education level, whether they were working in a team, length of time, longest time working in a team, type of team (single- or multi-disciplinary), number of people comprising the primary team, cohesiveness of team, overall outcome of team, secondary team and number of people in secondary team were requested.

The Workplace Swinburne Emotional Intelligence Test (SUEIT; Palmer & Stough, 2001) was used to measure an individual's perceptions of the way they think, feel and behave at work. It consists of the five factors of emotion recognition and expression, emotions direct cognition, understanding of emotions external, emotional management and emotional control. The SUEIT consists of 64 items to which participants respond asking them to indicate the extent the statements are true of the way they typically feel, think and act at work using a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 = 'never' to 5 = 'always'. An example of one of the items used was "I can tell how colleagues are feeling at work". The Emotion Recognition and Expression factor is measured by 11 items assessing the ability to identify one's own feeling and emotional states and the ability to express emotions to others. The Understanding of Emotions, External factor is measured by 20 items assessing the ability to understand and identify the emotions of others and in the external environment. The Emotions Direct Cognition factor is measured by 12 items measuring the extent to which emotions are incorporated in problem solving or decision making. The Emotional Management factor is measured by 12 items assessing the ability to manage positive and negative emotions within oneself and others. Lastly, the Emotional Control factor is measured by 9 items measuring how effectively strong emotional states such as anger, frustration, anxiety and stress are controlled. Participants' scores are derived by summing the item scores after reverse coding the negatively worded items. Higher scores indicated greater emotional intelligence. This scale has been found to have high levels of reliability. An alpha coefficient of .87 was obtained for the full scale reliability (total emotional intelligence) and coefficients ranging from .75 to .87 for the subscales (Palmer & Stough, 2001).

**Personality.** The NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) was developed as a condensed version to be administered when time constraints exist and global information on personality is considered sufficient. The

NEO-FFI is a 60 item scale comprising Neuroticism, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Openness. Respondents were required to respond on a five point Likert scale – ranging from 1 = ‘strongly disagree’ to 5 = ‘strongly agree’ indicating the degree to which the statements provided represented their opinions. The scores were calculated by adding the item numbers after reverse coding the negatively worded items. The scoring range for each personality trait varied from 12 to 60. Reliability coefficients of an employment sample (N=1,539) and were .86, .77, .73, .68 and .81 for Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness and Conscientiousness, respectively (Costa & McCrae, 1992).

**The Team Player Inventory.** The Team Player Inventory (TPI, Kline, 1999) was used to assess how well a person is predisposed toward team working environments in organisations. Overall results indicated that the items on the TPI measure one single construct, that of a “team player”. The TPI consists of 20 items on which participants rate their responses on a Likert-type scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 = “completely disagree” and 5 = “completely agree”. An example is “I enjoy working in team/group projects”. Ten of the items were reverse coded such that a higher overall score on the TPI refers to a better predisposition to working in a team.

### Procedure

Participants were a sample of convenience recruited from such diverse workplaces as the corrections service, real estate and banking. It was a prerequisite of participation in this study that all participants were either working in a team or had worked in a team environment previously. Participants were informed that the study was investigating the relationship between emotional intelligence and teamwork, and involved completing a self-report questionnaire which would take approximately 30 minutes. Upon completion of the questionnaires, participants were asked to return their responses in the reply paid, self-addressed envelope. The response rate was 67%.

### Results

Data screening revealed no outliers and that assumption of statistical analyses were met. Since the Team Player Inventory (TPI) has not been widely used, all the items originally reported were subjected to a maximum likelihood exploratory factor analysis in order to test their applicability in the current sample. This confirmed that one factor provided the most interpretable solution, explaining 31.6% of the variance. Removing items 3 and 9 which had very low communalities improved the Cronbach’s alpha reliability slightly to .88.

Cronbach’s alpha reliabilities were also calculated to investigate the internal consistency of the emotional intelligence and personality measures. Means and standard deviations were also computed and are displayed with reliability coefficients in Table 1. Table 2 displays Pearson’s correlations between emotional intelligence, personality and predispositions to teamwork. The strongest (though still modest) correlations with TPI were found to be with extraversion, total emotional intelligence and agreeableness. Weak positive correlations were found between TPI score and emotional control, emotional recognition/expression and understanding emotion, external. Emotional management and openness correlated weakly, yet significantly with TPI. Neuroticism correlated negatively, though weakly, with TPI and no significant correlation was found between TPI and emotions direct cognition or conscientiousness.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and alpha reliabilities of emotional intelligence, personality and teamwork.

	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Theoretical Range	$\alpha$
Total Emotional Intelligence	220.59	16.47	64 - 320	.85
Emotional Recognition/Expression	38.73	5.36	11 - 55	.81
Understanding Emotions Ext	75.27	7.2	20 - 100	.84
Emotions Direct Cognition	34.10	4.75	12 - 60	.69
Emotional Management	40.58	4.58	12 - 60	.71
Emotional Control	31.89	4.4	9 - 45	.75
Neuroticism	30.05	7.43	12 - 60	.85
Extroversion	43.52	5.66	12 - 60	.72
Openness	41.24	6.97	12 - 60	.79
Agreeableness	44.65	5.68	12 - 60	.75
Conscientiousness	46.56	6.04	12 - 60	.80
Teampayer	64.14	8.51	18 - 90	.88

A series of hierarchical multiple regressions were calculated predicting TPI score, with personality entered at the first stage and various combinations of emotional intelligence subscores or total score entered at the second stage. The final analysis, including only the significant predictors is shown in Table 3. It was found that the personality factors of agreeableness and extraversion explained 22% of the variation in the TPI score ( $F(2,131) = 18.44, p < .001$ ). At stage 2, the addition of total emotional intelligence added a further 4%, which was significant ( $F(1,130) = 6.99, p < .01$ ). See Table 3 for details.

Table 2: Correlations of emotional intelligence, personality and predisposition to teamwork.

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)
(1) Emotional Recognition and Expression	-											
(2) Understanding Emotions (Ext)	.46**	-										
(3) Emotions direct Cognition	.15	.04	-									
(4) Emotional Management	.27**	.45**	-.09	-								
(5) Emotional Control	.16	.33**	-.28**	.62**	-							
(6) Total Emotional Intelligence	.69**	.81**	.25**	.71**	.56**	-						
(7) Neuroticism	-.20*	-.27**	.18*	-.52**	-.46**	-.39**	-					
(8) Extroversion	.25*	.36**	-.01	.26**	.24**	.37**	-.32**	-				
(9) Openness	.09	.10	.26**	.07	.11	.20*	-.05	.16	-			
(10) Agreeableness	.22**	.24**	.24**	.02	.04	.26**	.09	.20*	.19*	-		
(11) Conscientiousness	.03	.28**	-.14	.33**	.30**	.28**	-.40**	.14	-.03	-.04	-	
(12) TPI score <sup>a</sup>	.27**	.25**	.14	.22*	.27**	.37**	-.22*	.40**	.30**	.18*	.04	-

N = 134, \* =  $p < .05$ , \*\* =  $p < .01$  <sup>a</sup> = Team Player Inventory score

Table 3: Hierarchical regression analysis examining the effects of emotional intelligence and predisposition to teamwork.

		$\beta$	$t$	Sig.	$R$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$
Stage 1					.47	.22	.22**
	Agreeableness	.24	3.0	.002			
	Extraversion	.36	4.6	.000			
Stage 2					.51	.26	.04**
	Agreeableness	.21	2.7	.007			
	Extraversion	.28	3.5	.001			
	Total Emotional Intelligence	.21	2.6	.009			

$N = 134$ , \*\* =  $p < .005$

### Discussion

The present study explored the link between emotional intelligence and predilection for teamwork using Palmer and Stough's (2001) self-report emotional intelligence questionnaire (SUEIT) and Kline's (1999) Team Player Inventory (TPI). The findings confirmed a relationship among these variables as total emotional intelligence was found to have one of the strongest correlations with self-reported predilection for teamwork.

The study also provided evidence confirming the relationship between personality and teamwork. It was hypothesised that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness and openness would correlate positively with effective teamwork, and neuroticism would correlate negatively with effective teamwork. The study affirmed that extraversion and agreeableness related moderately to teamwork and openness related weakly. The hypothesis that neuroticism would correlate negatively with teamwork was also supported. However, no support was found for a link between conscientiousness and teamwork. Finally, the hypothesis which takes into account the overlap between emotional intelligence and personality was also verified, showing that the construct of emotional intelligence adds predictive power to that of personality. Emotional intelligence was found to add a further 4% of the variation of the TPI score. Despite adding only a small degree of predictive power, these results still yield some contributions to research in the field and toward strategies to enhance the success of organisational functioning and effectiveness.

The findings support the existing theory and research about the positive implications of emotional intelligence and teamwork effectiveness. This study is consistent with the findings of Australian studies by Luca and Tarricone (2001) and Jordan and Troth (2004). These studies substantiated a compelling

relationship between teamwork and emotional intelligence. The study also supported previous well documented research between the role of extraversion in predicting and contributing to successful teamplayers (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991; Barrick, Stewart, Neubert & Mount, 1998; Barry & Stewart, 1997; Jong, Bouhuys & Barnhoorn, 1999; Kickuck & McMaster, 1999). Similarly, the positive link between agreeableness and teamwork also supported previous research (e.g., Hough, 1992; Kickuk & McMaster, 1999; Mount et al, 1998).

The current research did not support a relationship between conscientiousness and teamwork. Previous literature also suggests that conscientious individuals do not necessarily work well in team environments. Findings by Mount et al. (1998) indicated that when jobs involved working in a team environment, the importance of conscientiousness decreased somewhat, and that of agreeableness and emotional stability increased. Similarly, the study by Barry & Stewart (1997) did not reveal a correlation between conscientiousness and teamwork at an individual or group level. A review of research literature conducted by Weisner and Kichuck (1998) highlighted that conscientiousness, also referred to as the "need for achievement" or "achievement orientation" is best accounted to be important in group performance and outcome rather than process. Thus, they summarised their review of existing literature by suggesting that conscientiousness is positively related to team performance rather than teamwork. In contrast, in the studies reviewed (e.g., Barrick & Mount, 1991; Driskell, Hogan & Salas, 1987) agreeableness did not reveal a relationship to group performance, since a group member's "likeability" did not impact or contribute on performance, although findings suggested that agreeable people could perform well in social settings such as training or serving others. These are social gatherings where teamwork contributes to the activities at hand.

The moderate link in the present study, between openness and teamwork also supported the recent study by Molleman, Nauta and Jenh (2004). Similarly, the present study supports literature suggesting that neuroticism is negatively related to successful teamwork (e.g., Kickuck & McMaster, 1999). A number of research studies support the positive impact of emotional stability (the opposite of neuroticism) on successful teamwork (e.g., Barrick, Stewart, Neubert & Mount, 1998; Hough, 1992; Kickuk & McMaster, 1999; Molleman, et al; Mount et al., 1998).

The current study also countered the argument that has long plagued advocates of emotional intelligence, namely that emotional intelligence is little more than personality (e.g., McCrae, 2000). McCrae (2000) argues that in order to identify successful employees, valid measures of neuroticism, openness and conscientiousness should be used instead of relying on a single, global measure of emotional intelligence. In contradiction to this, the measure of total emotional intelligence correlated as strongly with teamwork as the personality characteristics of extraversion and agreeableness. Hence, the strong influence of using a single measure of emotional intelligence was supported in the current study and although providing a limited amount of extra knowledge in addition to that of personality, these results still demonstrate significant findings for the field.

Personality characteristics are well documented to be strongly influenced by genes and continuously persistent in adulthood (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1992; Eysenck, 1967). It is possible to change specific attitudes and behaviours, however, more pervasive and lasting changes in personality are far more difficult to change (Costa & McCrae, 1986, cited in McCrae, 2000). There is a growing emphasis in research that suggests that emotional intelligence skills can be learnt and that emotional intelligence is a developable competency (Cooper, 1997). The additional usefulness of measuring emotional intelligence to predict successful teamplayers, over that of using measures of personality alone, can prove to be particularly important when the issue of trainability in organisations is further explored.

### Limitations

In comparison to previous research studies, the present study used a reasonably sized community sample. The scales were all found to be reliable. However, one possible limitation was the lack of consistency in types of teams. Another possible limitation is that the TPI is a self-report measure and a difference may be found between what people report

they are like when working in a team environment, and how they actually behave either when observed or perceived by others. Another possible limitation is the use of this fairly new measure of aptitude as a team player which has not yet received much attention in research literature. Although factor analysis did suggest a single, reliable factor, further replication would be desirable.

### Further Research

Despite the relationship between teamwork and emotional intelligence being an exceptionally important one in today's organisational environment, it is unfortunately a research area which has attracted limited attention and some criticism (see Daus & Ashkanasy, 2005 for a rebuttal). It is particularly important that empirical investigation explores this relationship in more detail, in order for recommendations to be integrated into organisations' protocols and practice and consequently maximise performance, retention and satisfaction of staff. Hence, this area is in need of both qualitative and quantitative studies. It is recommended that future research in this area use performance appraisals and real-life observations and analysis to assess actual team performance and processes. This could be useful in discovering what makes a team effective and what derails performance and productivity. Hence, utilising these resources will enable a more accurate measurement of well functioning teams and individual attributes that are essential for people to work well together and consequently achieve better results.

### Conclusion

Understanding the attitudes and behaviours of staff in organisations is critical in determining the success of employees across all roles from front line receptionists to executive managers. Research in Australia by large companies clearly indicates that a large percentage of companies hire on skills and knowledge but fire employees on behaviour and attitude (Chandler Macleod, 2004). The responsibility for the success of companies therefore lies with people, their interactions and their behaviour. However, the process of changing personality traits that underlie individual behaviour can only be achieved through a lengthy process. On the other hand, what we know about emotional skills and responses is that they can be changed. This is where emotional intelligence plays a particularly important role in today's commercial environment. Organisations can hire employees by measuring them on emotional intelligence competencies or train them to become more emotionally intelligent. The advantage of this is that organisations can become more effective at selecting individuals above others for their distinct "people" capabilities or existing staff can enhance their skills and

learn how to work in teams more effectively. The relationship between emotional intelligence and the ability to work in teams is therefore particularly important to different aspects of organisational work today, particularly in relation to performance and productivity. The findings of the present study support this relationship, and present empirical evidence that at the heart of success are human interactions and most importantly the emotional intelligence of people working well together.

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**Correspondence to:** Dr Bruce Findlay  
Psychology Department  
Swinburne University of Technology  
PO Box 218, Hawthorn 3122  
Australia  
bfindlay@swin.edu.au

### Research Profile

Elisa Ilarda is a registered psychologist, who has worked in the correctional justice system for 7 years, has had her own practice for 4 years and currently works as a project manager for the Royal Melbourne hospital where her work involves the analysis of organizational issues and training development of staff.

Dr Findlay is a Social Psychologist who is interested in researching long-term relationships, including adult friendships and marriage, from an attachment theory perspective. He is also interested in the psychology of humour, personality characteristics and work-life balance. Dr Findlay has been involved in relationship education with Lifeworks, raising the consciousness of couples about the demands (and joys) of committed relationships and is the author of the successful book, *How to Write Psychology Research Reports and Essays*, which is widely used in universities in Australia, New Zealand and Japan.