

Conscious Intelligence for Investment Professionals

Conscious Intelligence (CQ) is a new offering from the FCG team. It is the next level up from IQ and EQ (Emotional Intelligence).¹ All investment professionals are smart (IQ), or they wouldn't make it in the industry. Some of them have added people skills (EQ) to their skill set. We like to say, "IQ gets you in the door, but EQ gets you to the winner's circle." EQ involves strong self-awareness, plus an awareness of others (i.e. an ability to read others), the ability to manage yourself, and finally the ability to put these skills to work in a social setting, like leading a team or participating on one.²

CQ is the next level up. It requires some mastery of EQ but moves beyond it. The goal of CQ is to replace Ego as our primary driver. The framework is simple: we all create a sense of self as children and teens, called the ego. These early life perceptions become our unconscious strategy for surviving in the adult world and in our careers. In this sense, there is nothing unusual—or "wrong"—about being Ego driven. It's natural. However, as we develop professionally, being unconsciously driven by our childhood perceptions of life and self naturally limit our potential. We are hindered in our maturing as leaders with less effectiveness and wisdom. CQ invites us to become more conscious and more successful as leaders. For example, if we have used "friendliness/helpfulness" as our main strategy as a young professional (i.e. be nice and helpful at work to gain approval), we will eventually find that strategy limiting. Top professionals and leaders need to make tough decisions. Seeking approval in the form of friendliness will interfere with making objective, difficult choices. A broader set of choices is required: more tools in the tool kit, if you will. The benefit of CQ is precisely this ability to expand one's range of choice.

In simple terms, we can operate from Ego—call it "auto-pilot"—or we can move to CQ where we unwind the grip of the Ego and begin to operate with more options. The solution to unwinding the Ego is developing CQ. A working definition of CQ is:

The ability to behave with wisdom and compassion, while maintaining inner and outer peace, regardless of the situation.³

FCG has found that professionals who attain this level of CQ enjoy much greater success.⁴ They avoid falling into Ego behaviors like intimidating, procrastinating, micromanaging, people pleasing, and the like. When faced with tough situations or decisions, they can step back, take a broader perspective, consider multiple points of view, invoke their intuition, and remain calm and rational as they address problems. Without a sufficient level of CQ, leaders under stress fall back into Ego strategies, i.e. auto-pilot.

The development of CQ is a skill building process. The tools listed below are designed to help professionals move from Ego to CQ.

¹ For more on EQ, see Daniel Goleman's book, "Emotional Intelligence"

² For a longer discussion of EQ, read FCG's book, "Lessons on Leadership." Available on our website, www.focusgroup.com

³ SQ 21 by Cindy Wigglesworth, pg 8.

⁴ For more on successful leaders and their mindsets, see FCG's book, "[Money, Meaning, and Mindsets](#)"

Skill	Questions to guide you
Awareness of your Worldview	Do you understand your own Worldview? Can you explain to others the impact of your culture, your upbringing, and your mental assumptions on how you interpret the world around you? Do you understand your own “hardwiring?” (i.e. innate personality)
Awareness of Life Purpose	Can you explain your life purpose to others? Do you stay focused on it consistently?
Awareness of Values Hierarchy	Can you name and rank your top 5 personal values? Do you keep them in mind when making important choices?
Complexity of Inner Thought	Can you hold conflicting perspectives on the “right thing to do” simultaneously? Can you make decisions in the face of uncertainty?
Awareness of Ego self vs. CQ self	Can you consistently access your CQ to avoid falling into Ego/auto-pilot?

The skills listed above comprise the first five in the curriculum. There are twenty-one in all. Working sessions involve pre-work and then facilitated discussions and practice of each skill. An important tool that FCG uses in learning and developing EQ skill is the Enneagram Personality System (EPS). This tool examines the nine basic Ego strategies that people use to survive and navigate life in their early years. Each of the nine types would answer the questions above in fairly predictable ways. For example, one type would describe the world as a fairly dangerous place which would drive a life purpose of “create a safer and more secure world.” Another would describe the world as a competitive challenge in which “winning is the goal.” Understanding one’s own Ego motivation allows for a focused approach to unwinding the auto-pilot behaviors which it drives.

As one learns and masters the skills involved in CQ, one uncovers a much greater capacity for freedom of choice and the compassion and wisdom mentioned above. The FCG facilitators are all on this journey to CQ. We can attest personally to the benefits described above, not the least of which is a greater sense of well-being. We have all facilitated the process in our coaching practices and seen profound results.

The invitation from FCG is to consider joining us on this path to greater personal and professional success via learning the skills of CQ. If you are at all curious, let us know. Meanwhile, continue reading these blogs which explore the topic in more detail.