

TIP Publication Date

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Technology Management Consultant (TMC)

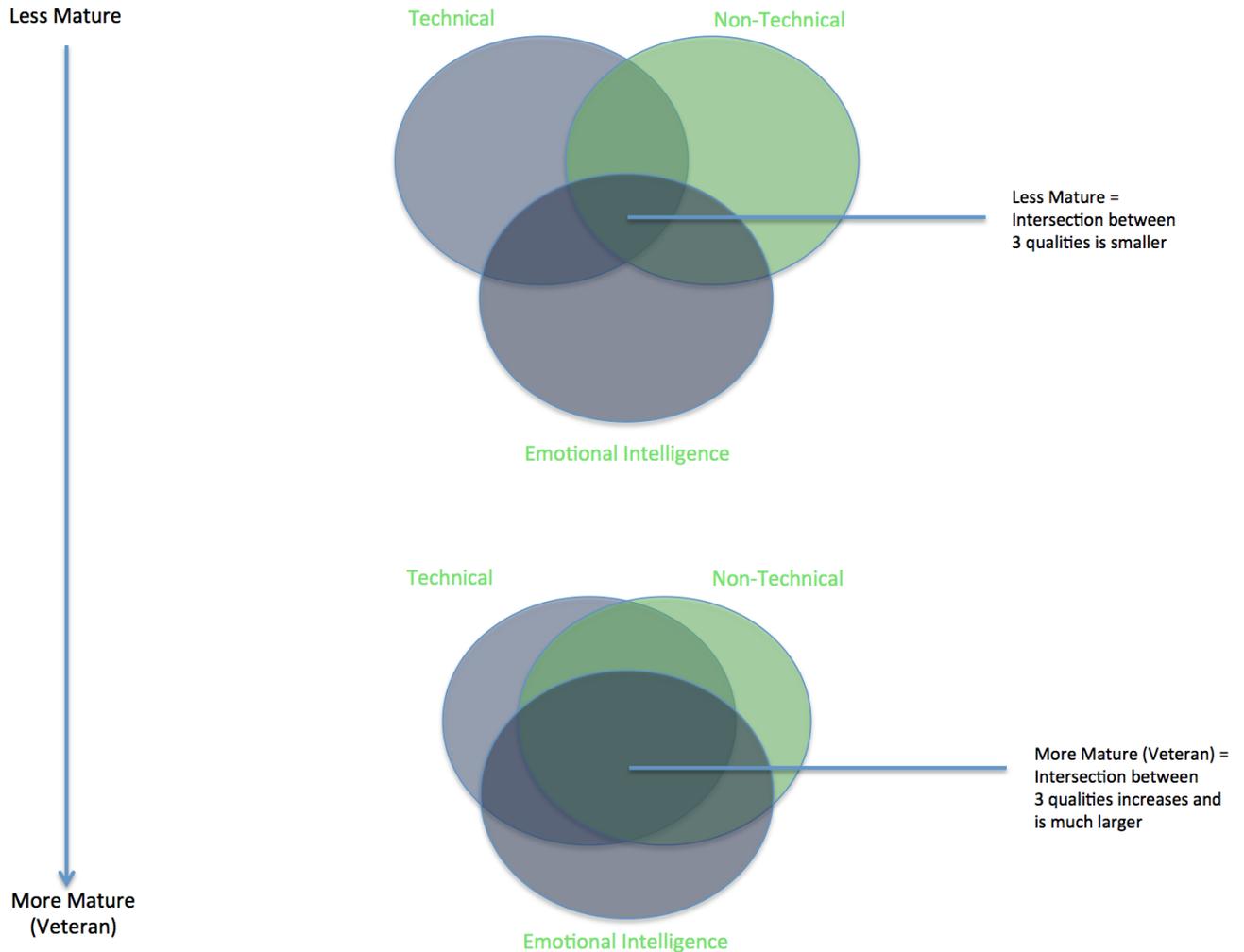
What it means to be truly capable

At Trexin (like so many other companies), we pride ourselves on our Human Capital. Our people are what we provide to our clients. Their expertise gathered over many years of practical ‘hands-on’ experience, acquired knowledge and stories from the ‘trenches’, defines them, and who we are as a company.

People commonly mistake the need for a “seasoned TMC with .NET skills” to be simply someone who can program in one of the .NET languages. So is a developer with seven plus years of experience in C#.NET a good fit as a TMC? The answer is usually ‘no’; they probably are not the right resource you are looking for. A good TMC is someone who can participate in a sales conversation and on the plane ride home is already designing and/or building a prototype in whatever language. The next morning, they may even switch gears and build out a work breakdown structure for an effort and already have estimates on duration with how many resources the project will take.

Maybe when you return to the client the following week to present your proposal, this individual then presents the team’s recommendations in a highly articulate manner, with as much confidence and passion to an audience ranging from CIOs to program and project managers and finally, developers.

So now that we have a general perspective of what this individual is capable of, let us further qualify. First we will list out the Non-Technical attributes, followed by Technical and finally the level of Emotional/Social Intelligence that clients and employees alike are looking for these days.



Non-Technical – A Capable Technology Management Consultant should....

- **Actively** listen, understand and re-communicate the needs of the client
- **Decompose** a requirement until it cannot be further decomposed
- **Group, Categorize** and **Communicate** requirements – This is critical! Knowing the difference between non-functional, functional, business and technical requirements is imperative to understanding and determining the scope of a problem and ultimately its solution
- **Formulate** and **synthesize** technology solutions with little or no assistance from the client
- **Develop** ideas, models and frameworks that are **flexible** in a chaotic changing environment

Technical – A Capable Technology Management Consultant should....

- First and foremost, be able to create and succeed on their own if need be. A true technology management consultant can deliver on the idea. Whether it be to envision a marketing plan, develop wireframes in a creative suite or compile programming code for a varied set of platforms
- Have the ability to learn and develop enough skills in a short amount of time to be productive towards a project's goal
- Surmount all sorts of technical and operational obstacles across varying client environments
- Develop new skills quickly – e.g. Java on Google App Engine versus .Net on Azure Cloud. A seasoned veteran should be able to translate ideas across technology boundaries
- Be experienced in build/configuration processes – A veteran should not just be able to compile code, but build frameworks that scale development across teams
- Have a sound understanding of all architectural layers that span both software and hardware elements
- Enjoy creating and developing a craftsman attitude towards quality

Emotional Intelligence (EI)¹

Is something the industry is seeing a growing need for in the workplace. In short, Emotional Intelligence refers to the ability to perceive, evaluate and control emotions.

Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer have been the leading researchers on Emotional Intelligence. In their influential article “Emotional Intelligence,” they defined Emotional Intelligence as, “the subset of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one’s thinking and actions” (1990).

Salovey and Mayer proposed four branches of Emotional Intelligence. These are very prevalent within consulting and other professional careers and are characteristics expected from a veteran consultant:

- **Perceiving Emotions:** The first step in understanding emotions is to accurately perceive them
- **Reasoning with Emotions:** The next step involves using emotions to promote thinking and cognitive activity

¹ <http://psychology.about.com/od/personalitydevelopment/a/emotionalintell.htm>

- **Understanding Emotions:** The emotions that we perceive can carry a wide variety of meanings. If someone is expressing angry emotions, the observer must interpret the cause of their anger and what it might mean. For example, if your boss is acting angry, it might mean that he is dissatisfied with your work; or it could be because he got a speeding ticket on his way to work that morning or that he's been arguing with his wife
- **Managing Emotions:** The ability to manage emotions effectively is a key part of Emotional Intelligence. Regulating emotions, responding appropriately and responding to the emotions of others are all important aspects of emotional management

Most consultants, even seasoned ones, are constantly evolving aspects of the Emotional Intelligence skill. By far, it is the quality that most people find challenging. Non-Technical and Technical skills are more easily acquired. Emotional Intelligence may adapt and change based on day-to-day fluctuations in all of our lives. This makes it a more difficult skill for anyone, including a veteran, to hone.



This TIP was written by Paul W. Ford, who specializes in Systems Integration and Development. Paul welcomes comments and discussion on this topic and can be reached at paul.ford@trexin.com
