

Soft skills for the new world (Summary of research work discussed in Episode 16 and Pod Resource 1 of Collective Intelligence's ' Stuff that Matters Now ' podcast)	
Introduction	<p>This paper summarises qualitative research conducted by Business Genetics with Generation Z respondents qualified as future management executives. Some were in intern roles but all had management positions forecast within an 18 month period. The context was primarily commercial, that is small or corporate New Zealand businesses, but included respondents with NFP or public sector ambitions. These sub-samples were perfectly consistent with overall findings.</p>
Purpose	<p>The purpose was to understand the characteristics of young managers that would make them effective in core management roles over the next ten years.</p>
The learnings	<p>Key learnings are shown below. The left hand box states the particular desired characteristic which is then described more fully on the right.</p>
Agility	<p>The notion of <i>agile</i> has widened through popular use to mean any nimble, rapid-decision company. Here 'agility' has a meaning specific to <i>dexterity</i>, that is the capability to shift from one state to another, recognising and driven by market, social or political changes of importance. Agility includes responsiveness to affect these shifts rapidly.</p>
Ambiguity	<p>Information overload and big data often brings confusion rather than clarity to company decision making. Confusion usually mutates into ambiguity especially where multiple optional choices face a manager. Here, the learning is about the capacity to manage ambiguity in business or social relationships <i>while avoiding paralysis</i>.</p>

Emotional intelligence	Much discussed and rarely defined, emotional intelligence is in danger of losing its legitimacy through devaluation. Here it means empathy with and the understanding of another person that is based on a real identification with another that <i>transcends</i> commercial or pragmatic job requirements.
Failing	Usually anathema to commercial business, failing is considered here in a positive light because the aptitude to handle failure, to learn from it by <i>understanding causality</i> and to form principles for future behaviour, leads to future success.
Flexibility	Again an overworked term. Its contemporary value lies in the practice of elasticity in work relationships and teams. Specifically in the avoidance of <i>rigidity</i> in thinking or behaviour, or in the avoidance of automated responses to commercial situations.
Forming trusted enduring relationships	This is significant distinguishing characteristic. See Distinguishing Characteristics below. It entails the ability to build a completely dependable and <i>trusted</i> relationship beyond the normal state of expected commercial behaviours.
Integrity	Usually overpromised then overlooked, integrity is defined as consistent behaviour by an executive who acts <i>always</i> with honesty, transparency and with absolute clarity in communications.
Judgement	A second significant distinguishing characteristic. Here it is defined as converting experience into principles that guide the provision of <i>sound counsel</i> in matters of complexity, ambiguity or lack of precedent.
Distinguishing characteristics	Two characteristics are singled out for comment. They are <i>forming trusted and enduring relationships</i> and, secondly, <i>judgement</i> . These are relatively rare qualities and considered by all respondents as the most difficult to find in future managers. They tend to be difficult to detect even when present. They are sometimes described by respondents as dealmakers when looking for outstanding candidates for management roles. They represent a defensible preference for one candidate over another when hiring for effective future managers.
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