Developing graduate employability – The CareerEDGE model and the importance of Emotional Intelligence

Introduction

This chapter discusses a model of graduate employability development, the CareerEDGE model (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007) which includes Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a key component. Although previous models and theories of employability (e.g. Fugate, Kinicki & Ashforth, 2004; Knight & Yorke, 2004) have alluded to adaptive emotional functioning as an aspect of employability, CareerEDGE was the first to give EI such prominence. There is scope for EI to have a direct impact on graduate employability but also an indirect impact via other aspects of employability development.

Graduate employability has been termed a 'slippery concept' due to difficulties with definition and conceptual clarity (Pegg, Waldock, Hendy-Isaac & Lawton, 2012; Sewell & Dacre Pool, 2010). One of the key difficulties is the frequent conflation of the terms 'employment' and 'employability' and as pointed out by Pegg, et al., (2012) a distinction needs to be made between 'employment' as a graduate outcome (measured using employment destinations data) and 'employability' which is viewed as a much broader concept, related to Higher Education pedagogy, personal and career development activities. Another issue is the overemphasis on generic skills development, which alone is not an adequate answer to the challenge of graduate employability (Tomlinson, 2012).

A number of definitions attempt to capture the broader conceptualisation of graduate employability including, *'Employability is having a set of skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes that make a person more likely to choose, secure and retain occupations in which they can be satisfied and successful.'* (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007; 2012).

This conceptualisation of graduate employability also shares much with the concept of 'graduate attributes', defined as, '*The qualities, skills and understandings a university community agrees its students should develop during their time with the institution. These attributes include but go beyond, the disciplinary expertise or technical knowledge that has traditionally formed the core of most university courses.'* (Bowden, Hart, King, Trigwell & Watts, 2000, quoted in Barrie, 2004, p262).

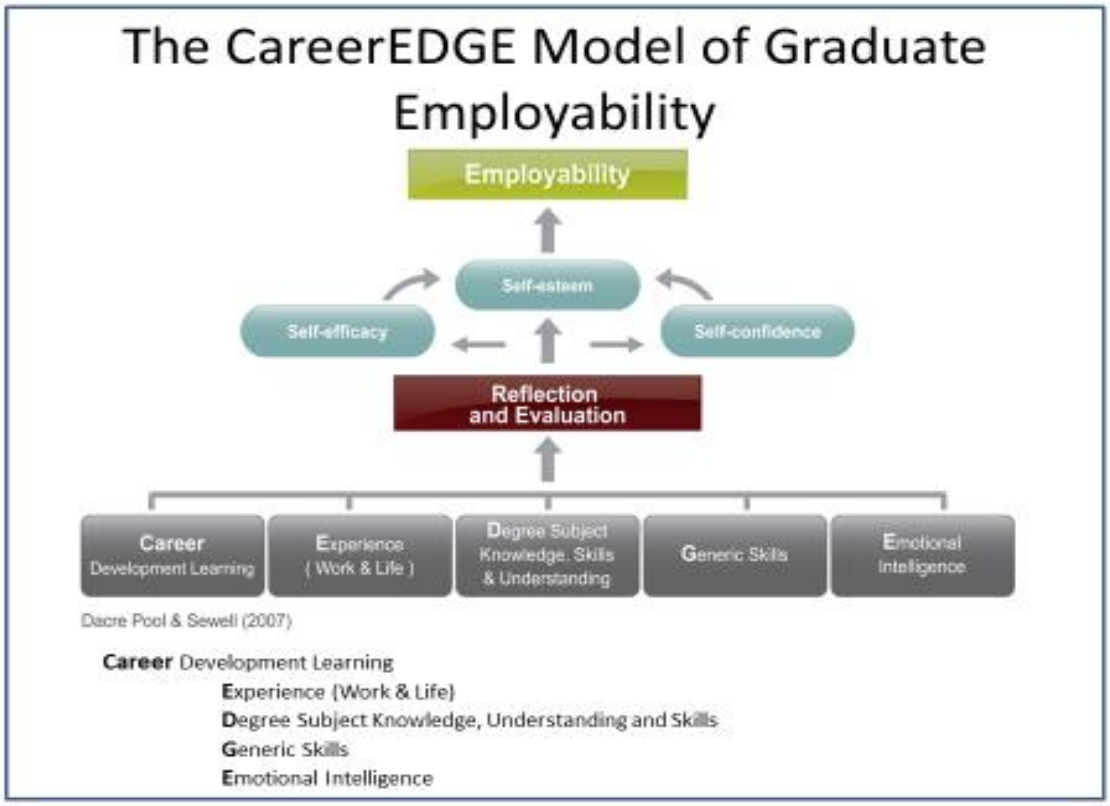
This would also concur with Hallett (2012) who wrote:

'It is refreshing to think that 'employability' might grow into something broader than a particular set of skills and competencies, into a richer idea of graduate readiness involving a moral capacity to work with other people with an integrity that fits not only the workplace but also other contexts of engagement and dialogue.' (p 30).

The CareerEDGE model of graduate employability was developed in order to provide a clear, practical model that would allow this multi-faceted concept to be explained easily

and could be used as a framework for working with students to develop their employability. It is an attempt to bring together the earlier work of researchers in this field into one comprehensive, coherent model that could be used to explain the concept to academics, careers guidance professionals, students, their parents and employers.

The design of the model (see Figure 1) reflects an assertion that each component is essential to the development of graduate employability. The mnemonic CareerEDGE is used as an aid to remember the five components on the lower tier of the model: **Career** Development Learning; **E**xperience (work and life); **D**egree Subject Knowledge, Skills and Understanding; **G**eneric Skills; and **E**motional Intelligence. The authors suggest that whilst students are within HE, they should be provided with opportunities to access and develop everything on this lower tier and essentially, for reflecting on and evaluating these experiences. This should result in the development of higher levels of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem – the crucial links to employability. The pathways may not be as direct as depicted, with areas of overlap acknowledged. This is particularly the case with Emotional Intelligence, which plays an important role in its own right but has the potential to impact on all the other elements of the model.



Career Development Learning, Experience (Work and Life), Degree Subject Knowledge, Understanding and Skills; and Generic Skills. This is followed by a more detailed discussion of the EI component and how this impacts on the other elements of employability development.

Career Development Learning

Career Development Learning (CDL) in the context of Higher Education has been described as being,

> *'…concerned with helping students to acquire knowledge, concepts, skills and attitudes which will equip them to manage their careers, i.e. their lifelong progression in learning and in work.'* (Watts, 2006, p. 2).

Bridgstock (2009), using the term 'career management' suggests that this may not have been given the prominence it deserves within the graduate employability agenda and argues for careful integration into courses from an undergraduate's first year at university. Knight and Yorke (2004, p. 25) also include 'skilful career planning and interview technique' as one of the 'seven meanings of employability' that have the greatest appeal to them.

The most widely recognised model of CDL is known as the DOTS model (Law & Watts, 1977). This acronym describes planned experiences to help develop:

- **S**elf-awareness – in terms of interests, values, motivations, abilities etc.
- **O**pportunity awareness – knowing what work opportunities exist and what requirements they have.
- **D**ecision learning – decision making skills.
- **T**ransition learning – including job search and self-presentation skills, such as application form completion, curriculum vitae preparation and interview techniques. (Watts, 2006). [1]

As with all the elements of the CareerEDGE model, CDL is essential. A student may gain an excellent degree classification and develop many of the required generic skills, but if

[1] The letters 'DOTS' are arranged in this order to aid recall of the four stages. However these are presented here in their more logical order. For example, a person needs to have self-awareness, in terms of their interests, motivations, etc. and some idea of the opportunities available to them, before they can make an informed decision about which careers might suit them.

they are unable to decide what type of occupation they would find satisfying, or be unaware of how to articulate their knowledge and skills to a prospective employer, they are unlikely to achieve their full career potential.

Experience – Work and Life

Another element from the lower tier of the CareerEDGE model is that of 'experience'. The work experience component of this is crucial (e.g. Jackson, 2014), but it is important for students to realise that they often have a lot of other life experiences that can be drawn upon in order to enhance their levels of employability. This is particularly likely to be the case for mature students.

One study carried out in the United States found that gaining work experience through internships was a key factor in the enhancement of students' self-perceived employability (Qenani, MacDougall & Sexton, 2014). The necessity for students to gain work experience now seems to be accepted by employers and most HE staff alike; indeed this was one of the major points made by the Wilson Review of Business-University Collaboration (2012).

Merely having experience of the workplace is not enough to enhance a student's employability; it is the learning from the experience that really matters. According to Harvey (2005) learning from work experience is effective if it has meaning and relevance to future career development and has been planned and intentional from the outset.

Work experience should also be assessed or accredited and integrated into undergraduate programmes with the quality being monitored and all those involved, i.e. the employers, academics and students, committed to it. A process to enable the student to reflect on and articulate their learning is also a necessity.

However, these suggestions are in the main related to structured work experience provided by the HEI, for example sandwich placements. Students may also be able to enhance their employability through a range of work related experiences, for example, summer placements, short job tasters, gap year work, summer internships, short term project placements, part-time casual work – e.g. bar work or temping, work shadowing, voluntary work, or student union roles. Research carried out by Gbadamosi, Evans, Richardson and Ridolfo (2015) found a positive relationship between engaging in part-time work and career aspiration. Students who worked part-time were able to optimise these experiences to inform their career aspirations.

It is sometimes suggested that part-time working during term time is likely to interfere with academic work (Harvey, 2005) and students do have to get the balance right. However, most universities now actively support students, often providing 'job shops' advertising part-time work available to them. This is likely to be partly due to the recognition that students can learn significantly from their experiences in the workplace but also because,

'…of pragmatic acceptance of students' need to work while studying because state support is no longer sufficient. Rather than ignore it or regard it negatively, academics are trying to get students to think positively about what they learn from their part-time work' (Harvey, 2005, p. 21)

Degree Subject Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

This element is central to the model. For many students the main motivations for entering HE are generally perceived as to study a specific subject in depth and to gain the degree qualification which should then lead to enhanced employment prospects. There are also some occupations, for example social work, nursing and computing, where expertise in that subject is incredibly important but others, such as retailing and general management where it appears to be a general 'graduateness' that employers value (Yorke & Knight, 2006). What is clear is that when considering graduate employability, the degree subject alone is not enough to ensure the graduate stands the best possible chance of gaining the employment they desire. Brown, Hesketh & Williams (2003) report one employer as saying they view academic qualifications as something now taken for granted that merely provide the first tick in the box for an applicant. Thus, it seems that the degree subject knowledge, understanding and skills are a crucial element of the model but *alone* are unlikely to secure occupations in which graduates can find satisfaction and success.

Generic Skills

There are issues concerning nomenclature where both the terms 'generic' and 'skills' are concerned. The term 'generic' has also been known as 'core', 'key', 'personal', 'transferable', 'common', 'work' or 'employment-related'. Additionally the term 'skills' is often used interchangeably with 'capabilities', 'competencies', 'attributes', 'levels' or 'learning outcomes' (Lees, 2002).

According to Bennett, Dunne & Carré (1999) the term 'core skills' is often seen by academics as the skills central to their particular discipline and it is therefore confusing to use it in this context. They suggest the term 'generic skills' is used to represent the skills that can support study in any discipline and may be transferable to a range of contexts, both within HE and the workplace.

A large amount of literature has been published detailing the generic skills employers look for in potential graduate employees. The Pedagogy for Employability Group (2006), proposed the following list which they suggest research over a quarter of a decade has established as the generic skills employers expect to find in graduate recruits: imagination/creativity; adaptability/flexibility; willingness to learn; independent working/autonomy; working in a team; ability to manage others; ability to work under pressure; good oral communication; communication in writing for varied purposes/audiences; numeracy; attention to detail; time management; assumption of responsibility and for making decisions; and planning, coordinating and organising ability. Dacre Pool and Sewell (2007) added the skill 'ability to use new technologies' to

this list and also suggest that many of the terms often referred to as 'enterprise skills', for example, initiative and responding to challenges, could be included here. Commercial awareness is also something that many employers state is an essential attribute in potential graduate employees (e.g. CBI, 2009).

Because of their prominence in the employability literature, there is a real danger of thinking that employability is just about the acquisition of various generic skills but it is clearly more complex than this. Bridgstock (2009) states that although employer driven lists of skills may form an important subset of employability, they do not address the complete picture of what graduates facing the prospects of the labour market need to have developed. Knight and Yorke (2004) would concur and suggest there is a *'widespread belief that employability is assured by the possession of skills. It is not.'* (p. 24).

Therefore, although the CareerEDGE model acknowledges the importance of generic skills and sees them as a key element of graduate employability, it also stresses the importance of other contributing elements, for example Emotional Intelligence to which attention now turns.

Emotional Intelligence

Goleman (1998, p. 4) states that:

> *'In a time with no guarantees of job security, when the very concept of a 'job' is rapidly being replaced by 'portable skills', these are the prime qualities that make and keep us employable. Talked about loosely for decades under a variety of names, from 'character' and 'personality' to 'soft skills' and 'competence' there is at last a more precise understanding of these human talents, and a new name for them: emotional intelligence.'*

This relates to Goleman's (1996; 1998) rather broad conceptualisation of EI and many would argue that this 'variety of names' does not exactly equate to EI. Despite this, there is good evidence to support the notion that even if these things are not the same as EI, they are likely to be influenced by it.

Mayer, Salovey & Caruso (2004) define EI in the following way:

> *'…the capacity to reason about emotions, and of emotions to enhance thinking. It includes the abilities to accurately* ***perceive*** *emotions, to* ***access and generate*** *emotions so as to assist thought, to* ***understand*** *emotions and emotional knowledge, and to reflectively* ***regulate*** *emotions so as to promote emotional and intellectual growth.'* (p. 197).

This definition is derived from their four-branch model of EI (Mayer & Salovey, 1997) which is an ability model as opposed to a personality trait model which some researchers support (e.g. Petrides & Furnham, 2001). The model suggests that EI consists of four related abilities: perceiving emotion (in oneself, others and other stimuli such as art and music); using emotion (to help with thinking and decision making); understanding emotion (how emotions develop and change); and managing emotion (in oneself and in others) (Mayer, Roberts & Barsade, 2008). Some researchers have argued that there is little support for including the second branch (using emotion) and now refer to the model as simply the Mayer-Salovey model of EI (MacCann, Joseph, Newman & Roberts, 2014). The ability viewpoint sees EI as an individual difference and something that develops in early childhood, then throughout life. EI as an ability is something that can be developed and improved through learning activities (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2012; Peter & Brinberg, 2012).

There is good empirical research evidence available to suggest that EI, as defined by the ability model and when measured validly, can predict significant outcomes such as better social relationships (Lopes, Brackett, Nezlek, Schutz, Sellin & Salovey, 2004), workplace performance (Côté & Miners, 2006; O'Boyle, Humphrey, Pollack, Hawver & Story, 2010), better decision making (Yip & Côté, 2013), stress resilience (Schneider, Lyons & Khazon, 2013), academic achievement (Qualter, Gardner, Pope, Hutchinson & Whiteley, 2012) and effective leadership (Walter, Cole & Humphrey, 2011). These

outcomes are all likely to be important contributors to the overall employability of a graduate. The ability to form better social relationships will, for example, result in more harmonious working relationships with managers and peers. It will also help graduates to develop their 'social capital', described as the 'goodwill inherent in social networks' (Fugate, et al., 2004). Improved psychological well-being and stress resilience help to protect graduates from some of the negative aspects of organisational stress and a graduate's potential for leadership is often considered important by employers. Additionally, a study by Nelis et al., (2011) concluded that EI might be a key element in securing a job, particularly in relation to the way people behave in interview situations. Candidates who were part of an experimental group provided with EI training were more likely to be hired that those who were not.

Yorke and Knight (2006) state that studies of what employers are looking for in graduate recruits tend to agree that it is the 'soft' 'generic' abilities and personal qualities that are important and they suggest that EI is of significance for successful interactions with other people. Some employers now include psychometric tests of EI in their recruitment and selection processes in addition to the more traditional cognitive intelligence and personality tests. This would suggest a growing recognition that actively recruiting individuals with good levels of EI will be of some benefit in terms of improved relationships for all organisational stakeholders, i.e. employees, managers and customers. In the UK, the Chief Assessor and Chief Psychologist who is responsible for recruiting individuals to the sought after Civil Service Fast Stream graduate programme, was recently quoted as saying, 'We want people with good interpersonal skills,

emotional intelligence … But of course we need people with intellectual capacity as well.' (Leach, 2015)

The model proposed by Fugate et al. (2004) also includes a mention of EI within the 'human capital' dimension as something that influences employability. Additionally, 'corporate sense', one of the dimensions of employability included in the Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006) model, is described as being built upon social networks, social skills and EI. Morley (2001) is quite explicit about what she views as the omission of EI in much that has been written about graduate employability. She states that,

> *'An area that has been excluded from the discussion relates to the affective domain. In the employability discourse, the world of work is represented in a highly sanitised and rational way. Graduates are hardly thought to require emotional intelligence, political skills or self-care in the face of occupational stress.'* (p. 135)

Research by Nelis, et al., (2009, 2011) provides empirical evidence that lasting improvements in levels of EI can be achieved through HE teaching interventions. Dacre Pool and Qualter (2012) demonstrate that EI and self-efficacy in EI ability can be improved through teaching and learning in a university setting. Their research involved the delivery and evaluation of a taught module designed to develop students' EI knowledge, skills and emotional self-efficacy through a process of theory, practice and

reflective learning. This was done through a specialised academic module but it should also be possible for students to develop their EI through activities embedded within their subject discipline. For example, any activities which include students working collaboratively, where they have to listen and understand the viewpoints of others and possibly manage their anxiety or frustration, can be great opportunities for the development of EI ability.

The inclusion of EI in the CareerEDGE model of graduate employability would appear to make a lot of sense. Not only is it an important element in its own right, but it is likely to underpin a number of important factors in the other elements. For example, considering the generic skill 'communication', if a person finds it difficult to perceive emotion in others, the first of Mayer and Salovey's factors, then how will they know how to react appropriately during an interaction? If a person is unable to manage their emotions effectively, there could be potentially serious consequences for team working, another generic skill cited as important by most employers.

Therefore, there appears to be some very good arguments for raising the profile of EI from something that is alluded to or mentioned as one of many personal qualities employers may be looking for, to an essential element in the development of graduate employability. Providing opportunities for students to develop their EI, and reflect on these experiences, results in improvements in their EI and emotional self-efficacy (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2012). Emotional self-efficacy predicts graduate employability which in

turn results in greater career satisfaction (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2013). However EI and emotional self-efficacy also affect employability indirectly through their impact on other aspects of the CareerEDGE model.

Emotional Intelligence and other aspects of CareerEDGE

EI has an important role to play in career development learning (Puffer, 2015). For example, in order to make sound decisions about the future, students need to develop their self-awareness. Knowledge of the self, including personality, motivations and interests in relation to possible career options is practically impossible without considering the emotional aspects of career development learning. Students need to identify how they *feel* about any careers under consideration, in particular going beyond pay and benefits to identifying how they might *feel* in a particular role. EI is associated with less career choice anxiety (Puffer, 2011) which should also contribute towards better career outcomes.

EI also has the potential to contribute to the 'transitions' aspects of CDL. A student or graduate who is adept at reading emotions in others will be able to react appropriately during employer selection activities. A good level of emotion management will also be helpful for dealing with the stress and anxiety of applying for positions. Nelis et al., (2011) found that they were able to improve emotional competence in students which then had a significant effect on their success in an interview situation (as judged by human resource professionals). They suggested that during the interviews the students

who had benefitted from EI training tended to refer more often to their feelings and took the feelings of others into account. They were also better able to manage the stress of the situation which resulted in calmer responses to the interviewers' questions.

In relation to work experience, EI could impact in any number of ways, including gaining access to work experience opportunities as a result of positive relationships, succeeding in selection processes and achieving good working relationships during the experience. People demonstrating higher levels of EI are more socially competent, enjoy better quality relationships and are viewed as more sensitive to others than those lower in EI (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2008). Such positive interpersonal relationships developed during work experience activities will result in students being able to develop and maintain networks that will keep them 'in the know' in relation to future career opportunities (Dacre Pool & Qualter, 2013).

Higher levels of EI are important in relation to successful academic performance (e.g. Qualter et al, 2012) and will therefore impact on degree subject knowledge, skills and understanding. The managing emotions branch of EI in particular is strongly related to problem-focused coping skills, which are associated with academic success. Students more able to manage their emotions show a tendency towards using problem-focused coping (as opposed to emotion-focused or avoidant coping), which is associated with higher academic grades (MacCann, Fogarty, Zeidner & Roberts, 2011). EI has also been shown to predict success in medical school students in relation to 'interpersonal

academic performance' described as the ability to communicate well with others and awareness of the social dynamics of a situation (Libbrecht, Lievens, Carette & Cote, 2014), vital abilities for future healthcare professionals.

Many of the generic skills sought after by employers are influenced by EI. This is particularly the case for those often classified as 'soft skills' such as communication and negotiation skills (Mueller & Curhan, 2006), public speaking effectiveness (Rode et al., 2007), the ability to work in teams (Chien Farh, Seo & Tesluk, 2012), leadership (Côté, Lopes, Salovey & Miners, 2010; Walter, Cole & Humphrey, 2011) conflict management (Clarke, 2010) and interpersonal decision making (Fernandez-Berrocal, Extremera, Lopes & Ruiz-Aranda, 2014).

Reflection and Evaluation

Providing students with the opportunities to gain the necessary skills, knowledge, understanding and personal attributes through employability-related activities is obviously of great importance. However, without opportunities to reflect on these activities and evaluate them, it is unlikely that this experience will transfer into learning and much may be wasted. Reflection allows the student to evaluate and make sense of experiences, contributing to more effective learning. Experiential learning in particular has the potential to enhance a student's employability and reflection is the vehicle that enables the student to transform the experience into learning (Kolb, 1984). If we consider a group of marketing students working to an employer's brief of designing

some marketing materials, the experience in itself is likely to be helpful in terms of adding to their subject knowledge. But reflecting on the activities, including their emotional reaction to events and other people, will lead to a much deeper understanding of themselves and others, which is essential for success in the workplace (Finch, Peacock, Lazdowski & Hwang, 2015).

Within the context of employability initiatives, reflection often involves students identifying situations (either class-based or extra-curricular) from which they can learn something. They describe and analyse the experience, including their thoughts and feelings, trying to identify exactly what can be learnt from it and how they can use this learning in future. This type of reflective learning often takes the form of written learning logs or reflective journals but could also include audio, video and e-portfolios. Reflection can be seen as a key contributor to employability, both in its own right and in the way it underpins other employability achievements (Moon, 2004). There would also appear to be strong links here with EI, as being able to reflect on feelings and behaviours is crucial for a person to be able to manage emotion appropriately (e.g. Mayer et al., 2004).

Reflection can help a student to gain employment, by providing a means by which they can become aware of and articulate their abilities. But additionally it is an ability that will help them in their employment and as a contributor to lifelong learning skills; as

such it is an essential element both in relation to HE learning and in the employment context (Moon, 2004).

Self-Efficacy, Self-Confidence, Self-Esteem

Each of these three closely-linked elements of the CareerEDGE model has a huge literature of its own. The intention of the remainder of this chapter is to focus on those aspects that are of most relevance to employability. For example, one meta-analytic review found a strong positive relationship between self-efficacy and work-related performance (Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998a) and another found self-efficacy and self-esteem to be significant predictors of job satisfaction and job performance (Judge & Bono, 2001).

Self-Efficacy

Perceived self-efficacy refers to a person's beliefs concerning their ability to successfully perform a particular behaviour (Bandura, 1977, 1995). The importance of self-efficacy for employability was demonstrated by a longitudinal study which measured academic self-efficacy in adolescents (age 12 to 15) and then their job satisfaction (age 21). This found that higher self-efficacy beliefs were related to a lower risk of unemployment and greater job satisfaction (Pinquart, Juang & Silbereisen, 2003).

Self-efficacy may have a vital role to play within graduate employability as people who have greater efficacy in their ability to meet educational requirements for particular

occupational roles, tend to give more consideration to and show greater interest in a wider range of career options. They also tend to prepare themselves better educationally for these roles and show greater persistence when faced with challenging career pursuits (Bandura, Barbaranelli, Caprara & Pastorelli, 2001). It is highly likely therefore that this attribute will help a graduate to choose and secure occupations that will give them satisfaction and success.

Efficacy beliefs influence the way people think, feel, motivate themselves and behave and these develop through a number of different sources (Bandura, 1995). The ones particularly pertinent to developing graduate employability are mastery experiences, vicarious experiences provided by social models, and social persuasion (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007).

Mastery experiences occur when people are given the opportunity to try a particular task for themselves. Work-related learning experiences would be a good example of the type of mastery experiences incorporated into employability activities. It makes perfect sense that if a student is given the opportunity to spend some time in a 'real' workplace and does this with a degree of success, they are likely to feel more efficacious about their chances of success in a job after graduation. Bandura (1995) suggests that mastery experiences are the most effective way of creating a strong sense of self-efficacy, and so play a vital role within employability.

Vicarious experiences provided by social models could occur when students are able to see others who have achieved the success they desire. The closer the others are in similarity to themselves, the more effective the experiences are. An example of this type of experience would be when successful recent graduates return to the university to give talks or meet with current students to discuss how they achieved their goals. Seeing how people similar to themselves have succeeded in the workplace, particularly graduates from their own university who quite recently sat in the same classrooms and lecture theatres, helps current students to feel that they can achieve this too. This can be a powerful motivator for putting their own plans into action. Social persuasion occurs when people are persuaded that they possess the capabilities needed to master a particular activity. This encourages them to put in more effort and stay motivated in order to successfully achieve their goals. There is an important role for tutors to play here, particularly in the way they provide feedback to their students.

Therefore by providing the opportunities for mastery experiences, vicarious experiences and social persuasion, then encouraging reflection on and evaluation of these experiences, self-efficacy can be increased (e.g. Schunk & Hanson, 1985). A study by Saks and Ashforth (1999) demonstrated that graduates' self-efficacy in relation to job-searching was positively correlated with employment outcome. This could be because having a belief that your actions will result in the outcome you are hoping for, results in an increased motivation to carry out the necessary tasks to achieve the outcome. A lack

of self-efficacy could result in a person viewing the task as not worth the effort, thereby almost ensuring failure.

Self-Confidence

If self-efficacy is seen as a belief that one can make some impact on situations and events, as defined above, then self-confidence could be seen as the way this is projected to the outside world (Dacre Pool & Sewell, 2007). Self-confidence appears to be something that can be observed and identified from a person's manner and behaviour. According to Goleman (1998, p. 68), people with self-confidence are able to present themselves with self-assurance and have 'presence'. This may be of particular significance in a recruitment situation where a candidate who presents themselves in a confident manner is likely to be perceived as more competent and therefore more appointable than a candidate who does not have the same degree of self-assurance.

It has been suggested that self-confidence can be viewed as either trait or state specific. Norman and Hyland (2003) intimate that if self-confidence is a trait, which personality theorists suggest are relatively stable over time, then those who lack self-confidence would be unlikely to develop it through educational activity. If, however, it is viewed as a situation specific concept, then it would be possible for students to increase their levels of self-confidence for any given situation. This would appear to make a lot of sense and most people will be aware of examples whereby people demonstrate self-confidence in specific domains (e.g. sporting ability) but not in others (e.g. a job

interview situation). However, with preparation, support and practice, it is possible for people to show increased levels of self-confidence within a specific domain (Norman & Hyland, 2003). For example, a student who successfully gives their first ever presentation in front of peers and receives positive feedback, is very likely to experience increased self-efficacy for that particular task. The next time they give a presentation, it is quite possible that this will be with a much greater feeling of self-efficacy and display of self-confidence. An increase in self-efficacy would hopefully translate into an increase in demonstrated self-confidence.

Self-Esteem

People with global self-esteem have self-respect and a feeling of worthiness, but are realistic in their evaluations of themselves (Owens, 1993). Without this realism, a person is unlikely to reflect on areas for improvement, which is crucial to the process of lifelong learning. Dweck (2000) does not see self-esteem as an internal quality that increases with successes and decreases with failures. Nor does she think it is something we can give to people by praising them for their high intelligence. Instead, she considers it to be a positive way of experiencing yourself when you are using your abilities well in order to achieve something you consider of value. It is something people can be helped to get for themselves by teaching them to value learning and effort and use errors as a way of mastering new challenges. In terms of graduate employability, by giving students the opportunities to develop a range of skills and knowledge, then teaching

them how to reflect on these experiences and learn from them, this should also be an effective way to help them develop their self-esteem.

Respondents sampled from Foundation degree programmes in the study conducted by Mason, Williams, Cranmer and Guile (2003, cited in Yorke, 2004) which explored how much HE enhances the employability of graduates, reported the benefits they felt they had gained. Confidence, self-esteem and belief in their capacity to undertake degree-level study (self-efficacy) were all in the top five most prominently mentioned.

The three concepts of self-efficacy, self-confidence and self-esteem are difficult to distinguish and are often used interchangeably but for further reading Stajkovic and Luthans (1998b) provide some conceptual clarification.

CareerEDGE Model - An Individual Account of Employability Development

The CareerEDGE model approaches employability from the same perspective as Yorke (2006) who describes it as a multi-faceted characteristic of the individual. All of the components of the CareerEDGE model are important and necessary in order for a graduate to reach their full employability potential. Of course it is essential to point out that having employability does not *guarantee* a graduate a satisfying occupation, and Clarke (2008) draws attention to the fact that *'… even the most seemingly employable person may experience difficulty finding a suitable job in an unsympathetic labour market.'* (p. 269). As De Cuyper, Mauno, Kinnunen and Mäkikangas (2011) point out,

the word ‘employability’ is derived from the words ‘employment’ and ‘ability’. Universities may be able to influence the ‘ability’ element which refers to the person’s skills and competences but have no control over the ‘employment’ aspects which are dependent on a number of issues, particularly labour market demand. It is clear though, as Fugate et al. (2004) point out, that having employability will enhance an individual’s likelihood of gaining employment.

In conclusion, the CareerEDGE model of graduate employability is a straightforward, practical framework for use within HE that allows the concept to be explained to all the relevant stakeholders and the necessary strategies implemented. It raises the profile of the role of EI to a key component of employability development and attempts to ensure that employability is not mistakenly viewed as ‘just being able to get a job’ or solely about the development of generic skills. Developing emotional competence is something of vital importance to future graduates who, let us not forget, are our potential future leaders, both in workplaces and society in general and there is credible evidence to support the notion that EI ability is something that HEIs can teach and students can learn. Students receive a broad education within HE, including the teaching of skills such as research and critical analysis, in addition to their specialist subject knowledge, but they are rarely taught something that is a fundamental basis for all human communication – emotional intelligence.

Including opportunities for students to increase their knowledge, understanding, skills and efficacy in relation to EI will help them become 'emotionally smarter' and is something that all universities should consider incorporating into their curricula.

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