

SCARF Model Summary

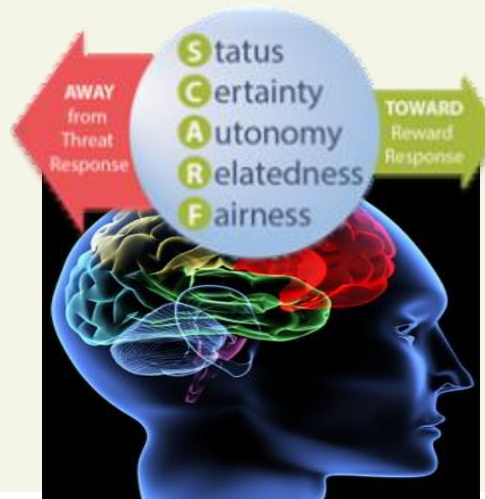
NeuroLeadership Handbook - David Rock

Status : your perception of where you are in relation to people around you. Brain science tells us when you experience a drop in status, your brain networks lights up just as if you were experiencing physical pain. And an increase in status it activates a reward circuitry. Giving feedback to people can be seen as a threat to their status, at an unconscious level. One way to overcome this is to have people give their own feedback through questions about themselves. However this needs to be done skilfully as people can perceive this a trap.

Relatedness : feeling safe with people
When we are surrounded by new people, our stress level typically rises. Just seeing some people we know can reduce the stress level dramatically. Bonding with people through a conversation or handshake triggers an oxytocin response. An implication for a leader is to determine if they need to help create these bonding opportunities for people – to feel more in the 'friend' rather than 'foe' state. E.g virtual teams or teams with people from different cultures may need help to connect and build bonds with others.

Certainty : your perception of how well you can predict the future Brain science shows that ambiguity can trigger a 'danger' response. The brain is a certainty creating machine always trying to predict what happens. When we provide clear expectations about what we expect from people it helps create more certainty. In times of change, letting people know when we might be able to communicate more information about the change can help reduce some uncertainty.

Autonomy : a feeling of having choices, being able to make choices. When we feel like we have no say, choice or control, our stress level rises. Giving some autonomy, choice or control dramatically reduces stress. Helping people to identify and focus on those things they have control over will decrease threat response and increase creativity. This is even more important when people feel that there aren't any really great options.



Fairness : feeling of fair connections and exchanges with others A 'fair exchange' activates the brain's 'reward' circuitry. An 'unfair' exchange activates a danger response. Leaders need to be conscious, open and obvious about treating people equally, more than may seem necessary at times. It may also be useful for leaders to share motivation and intention and process so that even if the end behaviour does not seem fair to everyone they can find fairness in the motivation or process.

Hampshire Workforce Development Corporate Shared Services

