Collaboration and Leadership Skills: A Review for Team Leads of All Titles

Overview
"Our Conversations Invent Us"
Why Collaboration?
Trust
Communication Basics: Self-Assessment
Credibility

Communication Basics
Collaborative Work Norms
Non-Verbals, Listening
Asking Questions Effectively
Offering Suggestions, Providing Clear Requests
Praise/Apologizing

Being Other-Focused
Adult Learning Assumptions
World Views
Gen Savvy
SCARF Model
Collaboration Questionnaire

Linguistic Agility/Emotional Strength
Quick Scripts
Responding to Conflict
Managing It Personally

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About the Presenter

Jennifer Abrams is an international educational and communications consultant for public and independent schools, hospitals, universities and non-profits. Jennifer trains and coaches teachers, administrators, nurses, hospital personnel, and others on new employee support, supervision, being generationally savvy, having hard conversations and collaboration skills.

In Palo Alto USD (Palo Alto, CA), Jennifer led professional development sessions on topics from equity and elements of effective instruction to teacher leadership and peer coaching and provided new teacher and administrator trainings at both the elementary and secondary level. From 2000-2011, Jennifer was lead coach for a five-district Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program.

In her educational consulting work, Jennifer has presented nationally at annual conferences with Learning Forward, ASCD, NASSP, NAESP, AMLE, ISACS and the New Teacher Center Annual Symposium, as well as working internationally at the leadership conferences for EARCOS, NESA, ECIS, AISA and Tri-Association of American Schools, and at schools across Asia and Europe. She is a former Principals Training Center for International School Leadership facilitator of the 'Instructional Supervision' course and the designer of the Teacher Training Center course, 'The Heart of Teaching.' Jennifer's communications consulting in the health care sector includes training and coaching work at the Community Hospital of the Monterey Peninsula and Stanford Hospital.

Jennifer's publications include *Having Hard Conversations*, *The Multigenerational Workplace: Communicating, Collaborating & Creating Community* and *Hard Conversations Unpacked – the Whos, the Whens and the What Ifs*, Her newest book is *Swimming in the Deep End: Four Foundational Skills for Leading Successful School Initiatives*. Other publications include her chapter, "Habits of Mind for the School Savvy Leader" in Art Costa's and Bena Kallick's book, *Learning and Leading with Habits of Mind: 16 Essential Characteristics for Success*, and her contribution to the book, *Mentors in the Making: Developing New Leaders for New Teachers* published by Teachers College Press. Jennifer writes a monthly newsletter, *Voice Lessons*, available for reading at and subscribing to on her website, www.jenniferabrams.com and is a featured columnist, writing about personal development at www.eschoolnews.org.

Jennifer has been recognized as one of "21 Women All K-12 Educators Need to Know" by *Education Week's* 'Finding Common Ground' blog, and as entrepreneur of the year for the International Academy of Educational Entrepreneurship. She has been a featured interviewee on the topic of professionalism for ASCD's video series, *Master Class*, hosted by National Public Radio's Claudio Sanchez, and in the lead article, "Finding Your Voice in Facilitating Productive Conversations" for Learning Forward's *The Leading Teacher*, Summer 2013 newsletter; as a generational expert for "Tune in to What the New Generation of Teachers Can Do," published in *Phi Delta Kappan*, (May 2011), and by the Ontario Ministry of Education for their *Leadership Matters: Supporting Open-to-Learning Conversations* video series.

Jennifer considers herself a "voice coach," helping others learn how to best use their voices - be it collaborating on a team, presenting in front of an audience, coaching a colleague, supervising an employee and in her role as an advisor for Reach Capital, an early stage educational technology fund. Jennifer holds a Master's degree in Education from Stanford University and a Bachelor's degree in English from Tufts University. She lives in Palo Alto, California. Jennifer can be reached at jennifer@jenniferabrams.com, www.jenniferabrams.com, and on Twitter @jenniferabrams.

Our conversations invent us. Through our speech and our silence, we become smaller or larger selves. Through our speech and our silence, we diminish or enhance the other person, and we narrow or expand the possibilities between us. How we use our voice determines the quality of our relationships, who we are in the world, and what the world can be and might become. Clearly, a lot is at stake here.

Harriet Lerner, The Dance of Connection

Quadrant Partners

1	**2**
3	**4**

Professional Learning Communities
Why Collaborate?

The most promising strategy for sustained, substantive school improvement is building the capacity of school personnel to function as a professional learning community. The path to change in the classroom lies within and through professional learning communities.
-Milbrey McLaughlin

Improving schools require collaborative cultures...Without collaborative skills and relationships, it is not possible to learn and to continue to learn as much as you need to know to improve.
-Michael Fullan

Creating a collaborative culture is the single most important factor for successful school improvement initiatives and the first order of business for those seeking to enhance the effectiveness of their schools.
-Eastwood and Lewis

Ultimately there are two kinds of schools: learning enriched schools and learning impoverished schools. I have yet to see a school where the learning curves...of the adults were steep upward and those of the students were not. Teachers and students go hand in hand as learners…or they don't go at all.
-Roland Barth

Are Good Social Relationships Key To School Improvement?

Gordon, David T., *Fuel for Reform: The Importance of Trust in Changing Schools*, Harvard Education Letter, July/August, 2002, Vol. 18, #4

A lesson learned from Chicago's decade of school reforms, according to a new book by Anthony S. Bryk and Barbara Schneider. In Trust in Schools: A Core Resource for Improvement, the University of Chicago researchers examine the role of social relationships in schools and their impact on student achievement. Their conclusion? That "a broad base of trust across a school community lubricates much of the a school's day-to-day functioning and is a critical resource as local leaders embark on ambitious improvement plans."

Bryk and Schneider contend that schools with a high degrees of "relational trust," as they call it, are far more likely to make the kinds of changes that help raise student achievement than those where relations are poor.

Bryk and Schneider take the bold step of seeking empirical evidence that links trust and academic achievement.

Teachers' relationships with each other can often be more challenging than those between teachers and their bosses, the authors found.

The evidence from Chicago suggest that while not all schools with high levels of trust improve – that is, trust alone won't solve instructional or structural problems – schools with little or no relational trust have practically no chance of improving.

In top-quartile schools, three-quarters of teachers reported strong or very strong relations with fellow teachers, and nearly all reported such relations with their principals. By contrast, at schools in the bottom quartile, a majority of teachers having little or no trust in their colleagues, two-thirds said the same about their principals, and fewer than 40 percent reported positive, trusting relations with parents.

Bryk and Schneider found that schools with strong levels of trust at the outset of reforms had a 1 in 2 chance of making significant improvements in math and reading, while those with weak relationships had a 1 in 7 chance of making gains.

Good relationships and trust won't compensate for bad instruction, poorly trained teachers or unworkable school structures, as Bryk and Schneider are careful to note. But by the same token, reform efforts are bound to fail if they ignore the importance of how teachers, principals, parents and students interact.

Trust – Research by Bryk and Schneider

Organizations with a high degree of trust are more likely to make changes that help the group achieve. According to these researchers, there are four vital signs for identifying and assessing trust.

Respect: Do we acknowledge one another's dignity and ideas? Do we interact in a courteous way?

Competence: Do we believe in each other's ability and willingness to fulfill our responsibilities effectively?

Personal regard: Do we care about each other personally and professionally? Are we willing to go beyond our formal roles and responsibilities to go the extra mile?

Integrity: Can we trust each other to put the interests of students first, especially when tough decisions have to be made? Do we keep our word?

What are your thoughts about the degree of trust in your department/school? What do you think are some of the changes that you could personally make to increase the trust?

Self-Assessment – Participation in Community

Participation in collaborative efforts to improve the organization.

- Do I "show up"? Show up on time or late?
  Show up at staff meetings? At team meetings? At events that are related to the district?

- Do I know, understand, respect and follow the objectives for the department?
  The goals of the district?

- If asked to complete some paperwork or attend a meeting on behalf of the department or do some work for the team, do I get it done?

- Do I share an enthusiasm for the work I do? If so, how?

- Do I look like I enjoy my work? Enjoy my colleagues? If so,
  how?

- Do I communicate with colleagues in a timely fashion? If so,
  how? Answer calls?

- Do I hold myself to a high standard for what I do and produce? If so, how?

- Do I continually refine and work to improve my practice? If so, how?

Demonstration of the interpersonal skills needed to work on a team with colleagues.

- Am I aware of the district's values, norms, the way the organization sees itself? Do I work well within those values? If so, how? Do I embody them or just give them lip service?

- Do I understand the explicit code of dress for employees and wear appropriate clothing?

- Do I hone my communication and process skills as well as my academic or professional work?

- Do I show consideration for the feelings of others? Say "Hello," say "Thank you," say "I'm sorry," say "What can I do to help?"

- Do I gossip? Talk poorly of colleagues in front of others or to parents?

Self-Assessment – Participation in Community

- Am I aware of my assumptions and values and know when they are getting in the way of moving forward with my colleagues?
- Am I able to stand outside myself and see how I might be impacting others or be seen by others? If so, how?
- If I am given feedback, do I listen to it and react appropriately, changing behavior if necessary? If so, how?
- Am I open to rational and intuitive ways of thinking? If so, how?
- Am I open to doing things in a way other than my way?
- Am I open to hearing all perspectives? If so, how? And when hearing all perspectives do I honor them or shut down?
- Do I cooperate with other departments effectively so that services are provided to the students? Do I fill out reports and do the required/suggested paperwork with a positive attitude?
- Do I manage my anxiety in a way that is appropriate? Not yelling at or crying in front of all staff or students/parents?
- Do I know of the hierarchy of positions in the organization? Do I know where to go to the appropriate person for the appropriate concern? Do I look for solutions rather than sit with the problem and complain in the parking lot?
- Do I want to work in a group and do I show that through my body language, contributions, and attitude?
- When communicating with other adults, do I ask for other perspectives? Seek to understand the other's point of view?
- Do I show an ability to listen for understanding and empathy?
- Do I manage impulsivity or interrupt more often than not, inserting my Point Of View?
- Do I use positive presuppositions when coming together with a given group – presuming positive intention and potential?

Self-Assessment – Participation in Community

- Do I seem to have a sense of humor? Can I laugh at myself?
- Do I have a sense of personal space, body language and appropriate sense of decorum in a given setting? With both adults and students/parents?
- Am I aware that I am not allowing equitable participation by talking too much at meetings or talking too little and not contributing?

What Else?

12 Factors that Influence Credibility

- The extent to which you immediately establish an inviting learning climate.
- How you convey respect and understanding toward the participants' world.
- How masterfully you communicate content to meet participants' levels of development
- How deftly you have customized the content to fit your context
- The quality of the learning activities you have devised
- How satisfactorily you deal with participants' questions and comments
- The way you deal with unexpected events
- The quality of the training materials
- How well you integrate participants' ideas into the whole experience
- The degree to which you show you have "real world" experiences similar to the participants
- The credentials that you possess which are of value to the participants
- The reputation you have earned from others whom participants respect

Insights? Questions? Notes to make to yourself as you plan your session?

from Learning the Craft of Training, Robby Champion, NSDC, 2000

The Seven Norms of Collaborative Work

Pausing: Pausing before responding or asking a question allows time for thinking, enhances dialogue, discussion and decision-making.

Paraphrasing: Using a paraphrase starter that is comfortable for you: "So…" or "As you are…" or "You're thinking…" and following the starter with a paraphrase that assists members of the group to hear and understand each other as they formulate questions.

Probing: Using gentle open-ended probes or inquiries such as, "Please say more…" or "I'm curious about…" or "I'd like to hear more about…" or "Then, are you saying…?" increases the clarity and precision of the group's thinking.

Putting ideas on the table: Ideas are at the heart of meaningful dialogue. Label the intention of your comments. For example, you might say, "Here is one idea…" or "One thought I have is…" or "Here is a possible approach…".

Paying attention to self and others: Meaningful dialogue is facilitated when each group member is conscious of self and of others and is aware of not only what she/he is saying, but also how it is said and how others are responding. This includes paying attention to learning style when planning for, facilitating and participating in group meetings. Responding to others in their own language forms is one manifestation of this norm.

Presuming positive intentions: Assuming that others' intentions are positive promotes and facilitates meaningful dialogue and eliminates unintentional put-downs. Using positive intentions in your speech is one manifestation of this norm.

Pursuing a balance between advocacy and inquiry: Pursuing and maintaining a balance between advocating a position and inquiring about one's own and others' positions assists the group in becoming a learning organization.

From Bill Baker and Adaptive Schools

Key Rapport Skills
For Better Colleague-Colleague Conversation

Watch Your Rapport

Physical

- **Muscle Tension**
- **Posture**
- **Gesture (hands)**
- **Eye Contact**
- **Physical Space between you**
- **Where you sit/stand in the room**
- **Which room you are in**

Vocal

- **Intonation/Pitch (approachable vs. credible)**
- **Pace**
- **Word Choice**

Breathing

- **Depth**
- **Duration**
- **Rate**

Attend to Rapport If

- **You anticipate tension or anxiety**
- **Tension or anxiety emerges**
- **You are having difficulty understanding the other person**
- **You are distracted**

Adapted from Mentoring Matters: A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships by Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman

Be Aware of "I" Listening

Personal Referencing – autobiographical

Personal Curiosity – gossip, etc.

Personal Certainty – solution-oriented

Ask yourself: What are my reasons for saying this?
Does it serve for my colleague to hear this?

Paraphrasing

Pause

Using wait time before responding to or asking a question allows time for more complex thinking, enhances dialogue and improves decision-making.

Paraphrase

Lets others know that you are listening, that you understand or are trying to understand them and that you care.

<u>Inappropriate Paraphrases</u>

- **No paraphrase**
- **Too often (too frequent)**
- **Too long**
- **Same words (parroting)**
- **Wrong pronoun (using "I" – so what "I" hear you saying is…)**

<u>Possible paraphrasing stems…</u>

So…
In other words….
What you're suggesting is…
You're saying…

Key Questioning Skills
For Better Colleague-Colleague Conversations

Pause

Leave space after you ask a question
Leave space after they finish answering
Leave space before you respond

Have an Approachable Voice

Rise at the end of a statement
Use a credible voice when you are "consulting"

Use Plural Forms

To increase thinking and not block it use plural forms.
"What are some of your goals?'
"What ideas do you have?"
"What changes are you considering?"

Use Tentative Language

To reduce need for absolutes/surety
"What hunches do you have?"
"What might be some of the possible solutions?"
"What may the tuveentsOqbsfoutOufbdi fst think of this idea?"
"How might you go about doing that?"

Use Positive Presuppositions

Presumes our colleague is capable of thought and is willing to reflect.
"As you think about this with your expertise…"
"Considering you know the department well…."
"As you plan for this project, what are some of the things that are important to you?"
"As you move through the work, what are some of the indicators you will look for to see the work is progressing?"
"What do you make of…"
"What leads you to believe...?"
"What are some other ways you have thought about looking this challenge?"
"How do you see/envision this working out….?"

Presuppositions Exercise

Identify the presupposition(s) in each question. Describe the possible impact on the person's (a) feelings and (b) cognition. Then write an improved question.

1) Why did you do that?

2) What could you have done to make it more successful?

3) Why don't you try?

4) How could I help you improve?

Open Suggestions

- **Are offered in the spirit of support and are expressed with invitational, positive language and voice tone**
- **Offer choices to encourage ownership**
- **Are often expressed as a question or include a "tag question" to invite further thinking**
- **Are achievable and offered in brief – enough to encourage but not to overwhelm**

Suggestion stems

- **One thing I've noticed is….**
- **Something to keep in mind when dealing with….**
- **There are a number of approaches….**
- **From the work I have seen others do, one thing I think has worked for others is…**

Try following a suggestion with a question that invites the colleague to imagine/hypothesize how the idea might work in his/her context.

- **How do you think that would work?**
- **Which of these ideas do you think makes most sense for you?**
- **What do you think of trying that idea out?**

Adapted from NTC and Lipton and Wellman

Outcome Mapping
Garmston and Wellman

What is the problem?
What do you want to see instead?
What does it look like/sound like?
Why might the person not be doing the behaviors?
What supports might you offer?
What supports do you need?

The Five Languages of Appreciation

Communicating appreciation in work-based relationships can be difficult, and ineffective, if you don't understand the languages and actions that are important to your colleagues. ***The 5 Languages of Appreciation in the Workplace*** shows you how to "hit the mark" in encouraging with your coworkers.

Grounded in the conceptual foundations of the NY Times #1 bestselling book by Dr. Chapman, ***The 5 Love Languages***, the ways that appreciation are demonstrated in the workplace can differ significantly from personal relationships. The languages are the same (in name), but their practical application in work-based relationships is quite different. Let us explain each:

Words of Affirmation. Words, both oral and written, can be used to affirm and encourage those around us. Some people prefer personal one-on-one communication, while others value being praised in front of others (but it is important to know that relatively few people like to receive public affirmation in front of a large group.)

Quality Time. Personal, focused time and attention with their supervisor is highly affirming for some. But others enjoy different types of time — "hanging out" with their coworkers, working together as a team on a project, or just having someone take the time to listen to them. And the type of time desired can differ significantly depending on whether it is with colleagues or with their supervisor.

Acts of Service. Assisting in getting a task done can be extremely encouraging to a colleague. Helping a teammate "dig out" from being behind, working collaboratively on a project that would be difficult to do alone, or just working alongside with them on a task, are all ways to demonstrate appreciation for their efforts.

Tangible Gifts. The key to an effective gift in the workplace is the "thought," not the amount of money spent. Taking time to notice what your colleagues enjoy (chocolate, coffee, cashews), observing their hobbies and interests (sports, books, crafts) and buying them a small related gift shows that you are getting to know them as a person and understand what is important to them.

Appropriate Physical Touch. While we acknowledge that physical touch is less important in work-based relationships, and the potential for abuse exists, we still find that appropriate physical touch is meaningful. Usually, it occurs spontaneously and in the context of celebration — a "high five," fist bump, slap on the back, or congratulatory handshake. To not touch one another at all often leads to a cold, impersonal environment.

So…What's The Right Way to Offer an Apology?

- **Correctly identify the party(ies) to whom the apology is owed**

- **Acknowledge the offending behavior in adequate detail**

- **Recognize the impact the behaviors had on the victim**

- **Confirm that the grievance was a violation of a social/moral contract by showing shame, remorse, humility and sincerity and a wish to reclaim trust**

- **Make reparations – offer to do something, buy something, change something**

A sample apology

Maria, I am sorry for cutting you off in our meeting today. I snapped at you and didn't allow you to continue with your idea for helping Matthew. My behaviors were belittling and disrespectful. All the explanation in the world for my responses today and my reasons for acting inappropriately don't matter. What matters is that I messed up, I feel bad about my actions toward you, and I will not do so again. I am sorry.

Does this fulfill the "requirements" of an apology?

Adult Learning Assumptions

- **Adults have a drive toward competence, which is linked to self-image and efficacy. (Stereotype Threat-Steele)**

- **Learning is enhanced when adults are active, involved and self-directed.**

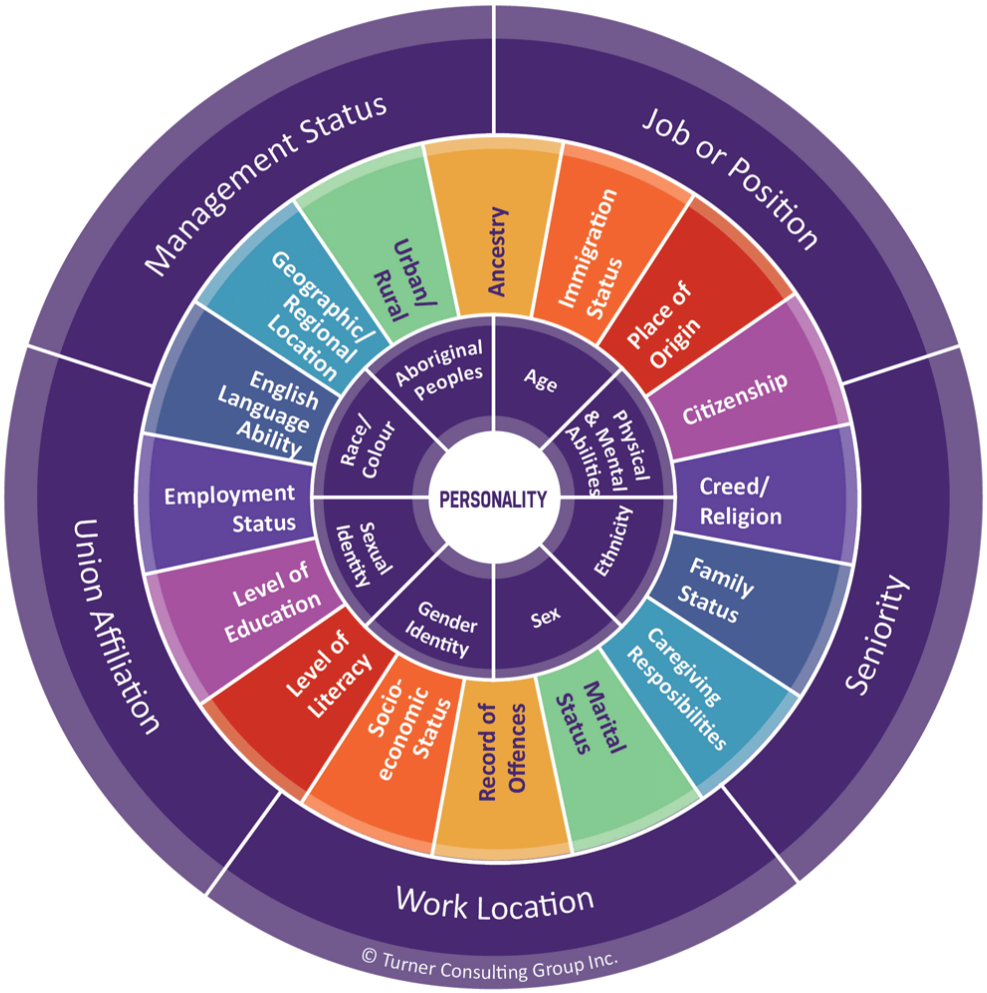
- **What is to be learned must hold meaning; it must connect with current understandings, knowledge, experience and purpose.**

- **We don't learn from experience as much as we learn from processing our experience – both successes and failures. Self-reflection, self-assessment, and self-direction are critical to learning and development.**

- **Learning is both an opportunity and a risk; it requires dissonance and change. (Growth Mindset-Dweck)**

- **Learning is the continual process of identity formation, or growing into more of who we are becoming**

Adapted from the work of Linda Lambert, Professor, Department of Educational Leadership, California State University, East Bay


Management Status
Job or Position
Union Affiliation
Seniority
Work Location
Urban/ Rural
Ancestry
Immigration Status
Place of Origin
Citizenship
Creed/ Religion
Family Status
Caregiving Responsibilities
Marital Status
Record of Offences
Socio-economic Status
Level of Literacy
Level of Education
Employment Status
English Language Ability
Geographic/ Regional Location
Aboriginal Peoples
Age
Physical & Mental Abilities
Ethnicity
Sex
Gender Identity
Sexual Identity
Race/ Colour
PERSONALITY
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The Six Dimensions: In Summary

POWER DISTANCE
The degree of inequity among people, which they consider normal.

UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE
The degree to which people prefer structured over unstructured situations.

INDIVIDUALISM vs. COLLECTIVISM
The degree to which people prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups.

LONG TERM vs. SHORT TERM
The degree to which people values "future" such as thrift and perseverance, as opposed to "present and past" as in respect for tradition and fulfilling the social obligations.

MASCULINE vs. FEMININE
The degree to which values like assertiveness, performance, success and competition prevail over values like quality of life, maintaining warm personal relationships, service, care for the weak, and solidarity.

INDULGENCE vs. RESTRAINT
The degree to which a society allows for a relatively free gratification of basic and natural human drives related to enjoying life and having fun versus a society that suppresses gratification of needs and regulates it by means of strict social norms.

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_66.htm

Understanding Different Countries

Imagine this scenario: Sayid's boss has asked him to manage a large, global team. In this new role, he'll be working closely with people in several different countries. He's excited about the opportunities that his connectedness will present, but he's also nervous about making cross-cultural faux pas.

He knows that cultural differences can act as a barrier to communication, and that they could affect his ability to build connections and motivate people. So, how can he begin to understand these differences and work effectively with people from different cultures?

Learn how to work with teams and co-workers from around the world.

In this article, we'll explore how you can use Hofstede's Six Dimensions of Culture to work effectively with people from a range of cultural and geographic backgrounds.

Hofstede's Six Dimensions of Culture

Psychologist Dr Geert Hofstede published his cultural dimensions model at the end of the 1970s, based on a decade of research. Since then, it's become an internationally recognized standard for understanding cultural differences.

Hofstede studied people who worked for IBM in more than 50 countries. Initially, he identified four dimensions that could distinguish one culture from another. Later, he added fifth and sixth dimensions, in cooperation with Drs Michael H. Bond and Michael Minkov. These are:

1. Power Distance Index (high versus low).
2. Individualism Versus Collectivism.
3. Masculinity Versus Femininity.
4. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (high versus low).
5. Long- Versus Short-Term Orientation.
6. Indulgence Versus Restraint.

Note: in the original version of the book "Long- Versus Short-Term Orientation" was described as "Pragmatic Versus Normative."

Hofstede, Bond and Minkov scored each country on a scale of 0 to 100 for each dimension.

When Hofstede analyzed his database of culture statistics, he found clear patterns of similarity and difference along the four dimensions. And, because his research focused solely on IBM

employees, he could attribute those patterns to national differences, and minimize the impact of company culture.

Tip:

By its nature, a theory like this only describes a central tendency in society. Different organizations, teams, personalities, and environments vary widely, so make sure that you're familiar with cultural leadership intelligence and etiquette and do extensive research into the country you'll be working in (our Managing in… articles will help here).

Let's look at the six dimensions in more detail.

1. Power Distance Index (PDI)

This refers to the degree of inequality that exists – and is accepted – between people with and without power.

A high PDI score indicates that a society accepts an unequal, hierarchical distribution of power, and that people understand "their place" in the system. A low PDI score means that power is shared and is widely dispersed, and that society members do not accept situations where power is distributed unequally.

Application: According to the model, in a high PDI country, such as Malaysia

(100), team members will not initiate any action, and they like to be guided and directed to complete a task. If a manager doesn't take charge, they may think that the task isn't important.

PDI	Characteristics	Tips
High PDI	• Centralized organizations. • More complex hierarchies. • Large gaps in compensation, authority and respect.	• Acknowledge a leader's status. As an outsider, you may try to circumvent his or her power, but don't push back explicitly. • Be aware that you may need to go to the top for answers.
Low PDI	• Flatter organizations. • Supervisors and employees are considered almost as equals.	• Delegate as much as possible. • Ideally, involve all those in decision making who will be directly affected by the decision.

2. Individualism Versus Collectivism (IDV)

This refers to the strength of the ties that people have to others within their community.

A high IDV score indicates weak interpersonal connection among those who are not part of a core "family." Here, people take less responsibility for others' actions and outcomes.

In a collectivist society, however, people are supposed to be loyal to the group to which they belong, and, in exchange, the group will defend their interests. The group itself is normally larger, and people take responsibility for one another's well-being.

Application: Central American countries Panama and Guatemala have very low IDV scores (11 and six, respectively). In these countries, as an example, a marketing campaign that emphasizes benefits to the community would likely be understood and well received, as long as the people addressed feel part of the same group.

IDV	Characteristics	Tips
High IDV	• High value placed on people's time and their need for privacy and freedom. • An enjoyment of challenges, and an expectation of individual rewards for hard work. • Respect for privacy.	• Acknowledge individual accomplishments. • Don't mix work life with social life too much. • Encourage debate and expression of people's own ideas.
Low IDV	• Emphasis on building skills and becoming master of something. • People work for intrinsic rewards. • Maintaining harmony among group members overrides other moral issues.	• Wisdom is important. • Suppress feelings and emotions that may endanger harmony. • Avoid giving negative feedback in public. • Saying "No" can cause loss of face, unless it's intended to be polite. For example, declining an invitation several times is expected.

3. Masculinity Versus Femininity (MAS)

This refers to the distribution of roles between men and women. In masculine societies, the roles of men and women overlap less, and men are expected to behave assertively. Demonstrating your success, and being strong and fast, are seen as positive characteristics.

In feminine societies, however, there is a great deal of overlap between male and female roles, and modesty is perceived as a virtue. Greater importance is placed on good relationships with your direct supervisors, or working with people who cooperate well with one another.

The gap between men's and women's values is largest in Japan

and Austria, with MAS scores of 95 and 79 respectively. In both countries, men score highly for exhibiting "tough," masculine values and behaviors, but, in fact, women also score relatively highly for having masculine values, though on average lower than men.

Application: As we've highlighted, Japan has the highest MAS score of 95, whereas Sweden has the lowest measured value of five. Therefore, if you open an office in Japan, you should recognize you are operating in a hierarchical, deferential and traditionally patriarchal society. Long hours are the norm, and this, in turn, can make it harder for female team members to gain advancement, due to family commitments.

At the same time, Japan is a culture where all children (male and female) learn the value of competition and winning as part of a team from a young age. Therefore, female team members are just as likely to display these notionally masculine traits as their male colleagues.

By comparison, Sweden is a very feminine society, according to Hofstede's model. Here, people focus on managing through discussion, consensus, compromise, and negotiation.

MAS	Characteristics	Tips
High MAS	• Strong egos – feelings of pride and importance are attributed to status. • Money and achievement are important.	• Be aware of the possibility of differentiated gender roles. • A long-hours culture may be the norm, so recognize its opportunities and risks. • People are motivated by precise targets, and by being able to show that they achieved them either as a group or as individuals.
Low MAS	• Relationship oriented/consensual. • More focus on quality of life.	• Success is more likely to be achieved through negotiation, collaboration and input from all levels. • Avoid an "old boys' club" mentality, although this may still exist. • Workplace flexibility and work-life balance may be important, both in terms of job

MAS	Characteristics	Tips
		design, organizational environment and culture, and the way that performance management can be best realized.

4. Uncertainty Avoidance Index (UAI)

This dimension describes how well people can cope with anxiety.

In societies that score highly for Uncertainty Avoidance, people attempt to make life as predictable and controllable as possible. If they find that they can't control their own lives, they may be tempted to stop trying. These people may refer to "mañana," or put their fate "in the hands of God."

People in low UAI-scoring countries are more relaxed, open or inclusive.

Bear in mind that avoiding uncertainty is not necessarily the same as avoiding risk. Hofstede argues that you may find people in high-scoring countries who are prepared to engage in risky behavior, precisely because it reduces ambiguities, or in order to avoid failure.

Application: In Hofstede's model, Greece tops the UAI scale with 100, while Singapore scores the lowest with eight.

Therefore, during a meeting in Greece, you might be keen to generate discussion, because you recognize that there's a cultural tendency for team members to make the safest, most conservative decisions, despite any emotional outbursts. Your aim is to encourage them to become more open to different ideas and approaches, but it may be helpful to provide a relatively limited, structured set of options or solutions.

UAI	Characteristics	Tips
High UAI	• Conservative, rigid and structured, unless the danger of failure requires a more flexible attitude. • Many societal conventions. • People are expressive, and are allowed to show anger or emotions, if necessary. • A high energy society, if people feel that they are in control of their life instead of feeling overwhelmed by life's	• Be clear and concise about expectations and goals, and set clearly defined parameters. But encourage creative thinking and dialogue where you can. • Recognize that there may be unspoken "rules" or cultural expectations you need to learn. • Recognize that emotion, anger and vigorous hand gestures may simply be part of the

UAI	Characteristics	Tips
	vagaries.	conversation.
Low UAI	• Openness to change or innovation, and generally inclusive. • More inclined to open-ended learning or decision making. • Less sense of urgency.	• Ensure that people remain focused, but don't create too much structure. • Titles are less important, so avoid "showing off" your knowledge or experience. Respect is given to those who can cope under all circumstances.

5. Long- Versus Short-Term Orientation

This dimension was originally described as "Pragmatic Versus Normative (PRA)." It refers to the time horizon people in a society display. Countries with a long-term orientation tend to be pragmatic, modest, and more thrifty. In short-term oriented countries, people tend to place more emphasis on principles, consistency and truth, and are typically religious and nationalistic.

Application: The U.S. has a short-term orientation. This is reflected in the importance of short-term gains and quick results (profit and loss statements are quarterly, for example). It is also reflected in the country's strong sense of nationalism and social standards.

PRA	Characteristics	Tips
Long-Term Orientation	• People often wonder how to know what is true. For example, questions like "What?" and "How?" are asked more than "Why?" • Thrift and education are seen as positive values. • Modesty. • Virtues and obligations are emphasized.	• Behave in a modest way. • Avoid talking too much about yourself. • People are more willing to compromise, yet this may not always be clear to outsiders; this is certainly so in a culture that also scores high on PDI.
Short-Term Orientation	• People often want to know "Why?" • Strong convictions. • As people tend to oversell themselves, others will assess their assertions critically. • Values and rights are	• Sell yourself to be taken seriously. • People are less willing to compromise as this would be seen as weakness. • Flattery empowers.

PRA	Characteristics	Tips
	emphasized.	

6. Indulgence Versus Restraint (IVR)

Hofstede's sixth dimension, discovered and described together with Michael Minkov, is also relatively new, and is therefore accompanied by less data.

Countries with a high IVR score allow or encourage relatively free gratification of people's own drives and emotions, such as enjoying life and having fun. In a society with a low IVR score, there is more emphasis on suppressing gratification and more regulation of people's conduct and

behavior, and there are stricter social norms.

Application: According to the model, Eastern European countries, including Russia, have a low IVR score. Hofstede argues that these countries are characterized by a restrained culture, where there is a tendency towards pessimism. People put little emphasis on leisure time and, as the title suggests, people try to restrain themselves to a high degree.

PDI	Characteristics	Tips
High Indulgence	• Optimistic. • Importance of freedom of speech. • Focus on personal happiness.	• Don't take life too seriously. • Encourage debate and dialogue in meetings or decision making. • Prioritize feedback, coaching and mentoring. • Emphasize flexible working and work-life balance.
High Restraint	• Pessimistic. • More controlled and rigid behavior.	• Avoid making jokes when engaged in formal sessions. Instead, be professional. • Only express negativity about the world during informal meetings.

Tip: Visit Hofstede's website for a list of dimension scores for each country, and for more detailed information about his research.

Key Points

Cultural norms play a large part in interpersonal relationships at work. When you grow up in a certain culture, you take the behavioral norms of your society for granted, and you don't have to think about your reactions, preferences and feelings, provided that you don't deviate too much from the central tendency in your society.

However, when you step into a foreign culture, things suddenly seem different, and you don't want to cause offense. By using Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions as a starting point, you can evaluate your approach, your decisions, and your actions, based on a general sense of how people in a particular society might think and react.

Of course, everybody is unique, and no society is uniform, but you can use this model to make the unknown less intimidating, avoid making mistakes, and to provide a much-needed confidence boost when you're working in an unfamiliar country.

Apply This to Your Life

Take some time to review your own country's scores, and those of the countries or cultures that you deal with regularly. Think about some interactions you've had with people from those countries. Were you involved in critical events, and do they now make more sense, given your additional insights?

Challenge yourself to learn more about one culture in particular, compare Hofstede's scores with what you discover, and determine their accuracy and relevance for yourself.

The next time you work with a person from a different culture, make notes about your approach, what you should be prepared to discuss, and why you feel the way you do. Also, read specific information about that culture (the "Culture Shock!" books and recommended reading section of this article will help). Afterward, evaluate your performance and carry out further research for next time.

Above all, make cultural sensitivity a daily part of your life. Learn to value people's differences, and how to respect the things that make people who they are.

With Thanks To:

The source of this article is www.geerthofstede.com and Geert Hofstede, Gert Jan Hofstede, Michael Minkov, "Cultures and Organizations, Software of the Mind", Third Revised Edition, McGrawHill 2010, ISBN 0-07-166418-1. Quoted with permission.

Identifying People's Generational Profiles

Think about each generation's "take" on the following concepts:

The Delineators	Boomers	Xers	Millennials
Perspective on work	Career	Job	There will be many careers
Communication style	Diplomatic	Blunt	Easy and open Don't hurt me
View of authority	Impressed	Unfazed	Wants it
Need for approval	Seek validation	Indifferent	Needs it a lot
Perspective on resources	Abundant	Scarce	No worries or lots of worries
Response to policies and procedures	Protective	Mistrustful	Need help with protocols
Relationship to team	Team-oriented	Self-reliant	Been on 'em Can do them
Work ethic	Driven	Balanced	Multi-Task
Focus on work projects	Relationships and results	Tasks and results	Lots of fun and lots of results
Relationship to technology	Acquired	Assimilated	In the DNA
Entitlement	Experience	Merit	Assumed

Adapted from The Xers & The Boomers

Processing Prompt

Think about how all the generations of educators you work with would relate to these ideas. What are some of the implications of this thinking for you in your work?

Understanding the SCARF Model *adapted from D. Rock, SCARF 360*

STATUS	CERTAINTY	AUTONOMY	RELATEDNESS	FAIRNESS
If status is your biggest driver, you are naturally competitive. You love winning but hate coming second. It might be having the highest sales record, or the owning the latest technology or throwing the most exuberant party that drives you. It could be beating your personal best. Whatever it is, being top is key. If status rates high in your life, you might need to watch your natural competitive spirit. You might find yourself continuing the argument simply for the sake of winning. Or you might easily be bored if the challenge is missing. You might need to remember to 'just be.' You are however motivated by a good contest so look for ways to bring this into your working and personal life. Competition is the norm in sales environments, the legal profession, and sporting clubs. Focus on areas where you have natural ability and can continue to improve.	If certainty is your biggest driver, you like things planned well in advance and you don't like last minute changes. You have a natural affinity with systems and processes. You are a list person and often find yourself the organizer in social and work situations. With certainty as your biggest driver, be aware that you may naturally limit yourself from doing new (and therefore uncertain) things, even those that could be good for you, like learning new tasks or travelling. You may also react very strongly when people leave things to the last minute or constantly change their mind. Remember they are not doing this just to annoy you! To feel more reward and less threat with certainty as your key driver involves asking questions to make sure you are clear on expectations. Don't wait for others to come to you.	When autonomy is important, you like being in the driver's seat. You like calling the shots and don't like being told what to do or how to do it. Be aware that you may say no to things simply because they are not your idea. You may also need to remember to give other people the opportunity to choose from time to time! If autonomy is your biggest driver, find ways to create more choice, even if you have to stick within defined parameters. Ask for where you can have clear autonomy so you can exercise this. And watch out for tasks where you have to follow other people's orders precisely.	If relatedness is your biggest driver, you find it easy to remember things about other people. You always make the effort socially and hate it when others don't. You find it easy to connect with others and love doing things that make others feel important and special. When relatedness is your biggest driver, be aware that you may expect more from your friends and colleagues that they can give. You may find yourself easily offended when people don't respond to invitations or get back to you with answers. To increase reward and reduce threat around relatedness look for opportunities to connect with others who are important to you. This could be joining a sporting team, organizing an interest group, or phoning family at a certain time each week. Watch out for long terms situations that isolate you from others – such as working on your own.	If fairness is your biggest driver, you are happy if beaten by a better player but hate someone who cheats the system. People who jump the queue really get under your skin, but you'll sign up to a roster that ensures everyone contributes equally. When fairness is important to you, you might find yourself always speaking up for others when sometimes it's okay just to let things slide. Fairness tends to dominate all areas of our lives, so in your relationships make room for other feelings such as simply caring for others. To create more reward and less threat around the domain of fairness, look for ways to get involved. Knowing how decisions are made, or having a say in the process will help. This might be through a career in HR, social justice or policy creation, or getting simply joining in at a community level.

SCARF: a brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others

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In a world of increasing interconnectedness and rapid change, there is a growing need to improve the way people work together. Understanding the true drivers of human social behavior is becoming ever more urgent in this environment.

The study of the brain, particularly within the field of social, cognitive and affective neuroscience is starting to provide some underlying brain insights that can be applied in the real world (Lieberman, 2007). Social neuroscience explores the biological foundations of the way humans relate to each other and to themselves and covers diverse topics that have a different degree to which they can be operationalized and unambiguously tested. Topics include: theory of mind, the self, mindfulness, emotional regulation, attitudes, stereotyping, empathy, social pain, status, fairness, collaboration, connectedness, persuasion, morality, compassion, deception, trust and goal pursuit.

From this diversity, two themes are emerging from social neuroscience. Firstly, that much of our motivation driving social behavior is governed by an overarching organizing principle of minimizing threat and maximizing reward (Gordon, 2000). Secondly, that several domains of social experience draw upon the same brain networks to maximize reward and minimize threat as the brain networks used for primary survival needs (Lieberman and Eisenberger, 2008). In other words, social needs are treated in much the same way in the brain as the need for food and water.

The SCARF model summarizes these two themes within a framework that captures the common factors that can activate a reward or threat response in social situations. This model can be applied (and tested) in any situation where people collaborate in groups, including all types of workplaces, educational environments, family settings and general social events.

The SCARF model involves five domains of human social experience: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness.

Status is about relative importance to others. Certainty concerns being able to predict the future. Autonomy provides a sense of control over events. Relatedness is a sense of safety with others, of friend rather than foe. And fairness is a perception of fair exchanges between people.

These five domains activate either the 'primary reward' or 'primary threat' circuitry (and associated networks) of the brain. For example, a perceived threat to one's status activates similar brain networks to a threat to one's life. In the same way, a perceived increase in fairness activates the same reward circuitry as receiving a monetary reward.

The model enables people to more easily remember, recognize, and potentially modify the core social domains that drive human behavior. Labelling and understanding these drivers draws conscious awareness to otherwise non conscious processes, which can help in two ways. Firstly, knowing the drivers that can cause a threat response enables people to design interactions to minimize threats. For example, knowing that a lack of autonomy activates a genuine threat response, a leader or educator may consciously avoid micromanaging their employees or students. Secondly, knowing about the drivers that can activate a reward response enables people to motivate others more effectively by tapping into internal rewards, thereby reducing the reliance on external rewards such as money. For example, a line manager might grant more autonomy as a reward for good performance.

Before exploring the domains of SCARF individually a brief context of the underlying science of the SCARF model, Namely, the approach (reward)-avoid (threat) response and the impact of this response on mental performance, is provided.

Foundations of the SCARF model

The approach (reward)-avoid (threat) response: a survival instinct

According to Integrative Neuroscientist Evian Gordon, the 'minimize danger and maximize reward' principle is an overarching, organizing principle of the brain (Gordon, 2000). This central organizing principle of the brain is analogous to a concept that has appeared in the literature for a long time: the approach-avoid response. This principle represents the likelihood that when a person encounters a stimulus their brain will either tag the stimulus as 'good' and engage in the stimulus (approach), or their brain will tag the stimulus as 'bad' and they will disengage from the stimulus (avoid). If a stimulus is associated with positive emotions or rewards, it will likely lead to an approach response; if it is associated with negative emotions or punishments, it will likely lead to an avoid response. The response is particularly strong when the stimulus is associated with survival. Other concepts from the scientific literature are similar to approach and avoidance and are summarized in the chart below.

The approach-avoid response is a survival mechanism designed to help people stay alive by quickly and easily remembering what is good and bad in the environment. The brain encodes one type of memory for food that tasted disgusting in the past, and a different type of memory for food that was good to eat. The amygdala, a small almond-shaped object that is part of the limbic system, plays a central role in remembering whether something should be approached or avoided. The amygdala (and its associated networks) are believed to activate proportionally to the strength of an emotional response.

The limbic system can processes stimuli before it reaches conscious awareness. One study showed that subliminally presented nonsense words that were similar to threatening words, were still categorized as possible threats by the amygdala (Naccache et al, 2005). Brainstem – Limbic networks process threat and reward cues within a fifth of a second, providing you with ongoing nonconscious intuition of what is meaningful to you in every situation of your daily life (Gordon et al. Journal of Integrative Neuroscience, Sept 2008). Such studies show that the approach-avoid response drives attention at a fundamental level – nonconsciously, automatically and quickly. It is a reflexive activity.

It is easy to see that the ability to recognizing primary rewards and threats, such as good versus poisonous food, would be important to survival and thus a part of the brain. Social neuroscience shows us that the brain uses similar circuitry for interacting with the social world. Lieberman and Eisenberger explore this finding in detail in a paper in this journal entitled 'The Pains and Pleasures of Social Life' (Lieberman & Eisenberger, 2008).

The effects of approaching versus avoiding

The significance of the approach-avoid response becomes clearer when one discovers the dramatic effect that these states can have on perception and problem solving, and the implications of this effect on decision-making, stress-management, collaboration and motivation.

In one study, two groups of people completed a paper maze that featured a mouse in the middle trying to reach a picture on the outside. One group had a picture of cheese on the outside, the other a predator – an owl. After completing the maze both groups were given creativity tests. The group heading towards the cheese solved significantly more creative problems than those heading to the owl (Friedman and Foster, 2001). This study, supported by several other similar studies, shows that even subtle effects of this approach-avoid response can have a big impact on cognitive performance.

Translating this effect to the social world, someone feeling threatened by a boss who is undermining their credibility is less likely to be able to solve complex problems and more likely to make mistakes. This reduced cognitive performance is

Response	Synonyms in literature	Which traditional primary factors activate the response	What social factors/situations activate the response
Approach	Advance, attack, reward, resource, expand, solution, strength, construct, engage.	Rewards in form of money, food, water, sex, shelter, physical assets for survival.	Happy, attractive faces. Rewards in the form of increasing status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, fairness.
Avoid	Withdraw, retreat, danger, threat, contract, problem, weakness, deconstruct.	Punishment in the form of removal of money or other resources or threats like a large hungry predator or a gun.	Fearful, unattractive, unfamiliar faces. Threats in the form of decreasing status, certainty, autonomy, relatedness, fairness.

driven by several factors. Firstly, when a human being senses a threat, resources available for overall executive functions in the prefrontal cortex decrease. There is a strong negative correlation between the amount of threat activation, and the resources available for the prefrontal cortex (Arnsten, 1998). The result is literally less oxygen and glucose available for the brain functions involved in working memory, which impacts linear, conscious processing. When feeling threatened by one's boss, it is harder to find smart answers because of diminished cognitive resources. Secondly, when threatened, the increased overall activation in the brain inhibits people from perceiving the more subtle signals required for solving non-linear problems, involved in the insight or 'aha!" experience (Subramaniam et al, 2007). Thirdly, with the amygdala activated, the tendency is to generalize more, which increases the likelihood of accidental connections. There is a tendency to err on the safe side, shrinking from opportunities, as they are perceived to be more dangerous. People become more likely to react defensively to stimuli. Small stressors become more likely to be perceived as large stressors (Phelps, 2006). When the boss appears threatening, perhaps they just do not smile that day, suddenly a whole meeting can appear threatening and the tendency can be to avoid taking risks.

Clearly the threat or avoid response is not an ideal state for collaborating with and influencing others. However, this response is the default situation that often occurs in teams. Due to the overly vigilant amygdala, more tuned to threats than rewards, the threat response is often just below the surface and easily triggered. Just speaking to one's supervisor, or someone of higher status is likely to activate this response. Thus it is much easier to cause aggravation (activate an avoid response) than it is to help others think rationally and creatively (the approach response). Many psychological and brain studies now support this idea, showing that the avoid response generates far more arousal in the limbic system, more quickly and with longer lasting effects than an approach response (Beaumeister, 2001). This discovery that our brain is inherently attuned to threatening stimuli helps explain many disquieting parts of life, from why the media focuses on bad news to why people are self-critical. It also points to the need to understand the social nature of the brain and proactively minimize common social threats.

On the other hand, an approach response is synonymous with the idea of engagement. Engagement is a state of being willing to do difficult things, to take risks, to think deeply about issues and develop new solutions. An approach state is also closely linked to positive emotions. Interest, happiness, joy and desire are approach emotions. This state is one of increased dopamine levels, important for interest and learning. There is a large and growing body of research which indicates that people experiencing positive emotions perceive more options when trying to solve problems (Fredrickson, 2001), solve more non-linear problems that require insight (Jung-Beeman, 2007), collaborate better and generally perform better overall.

In summary, the SCARF model is an easy way to remember and act upon the social triggers that can generate both the approach and avoid responses. The goal of this model is to help minimize the easily activated threat responses, and maximize positive engaged states of mind during attempts to collaborate with and influence others.

The SCARF model

While the five domains of the SCARF model appear to be interlinked in many ways, there is also value in separating out and understanding each domain individually. Let's look now at some of the supporting research for each domain then explore how threats and rewards might be managed in each.

Status

In researcher Michael Marmot's book **The Status Syndrome:** How Social Standing Affects Our Health and Longevity, Marmot makes the case that status is the most significant determinant of human longevity and health, even when controlling for education and income. This finding is supported by Sapolski's work with primates (Sapolski, 2002). Sapolski found that in primate communities, status equals survival: higher status monkeys have lower baseline cortisol levels, live longer and are healthier.

Status is about relative importance, 'pecking order' and seniority. Humans hold a representation of status in relation to others when in conversations, and this affects mental processes in many ways (Zink, 2008). The brain thinks about status using similar circuits for processing numbers (Chaio, 2003). One's sense of status goes up when one feels 'better than' another person. In this instance the primary reward circuitry is activated, in particular the striatum, which increases dopamine levels. One study showed that an increase in status was similar in strength to a financial windfall (Izuma et al, 2008). Winning a swimming race, a card game or an argument probably feels good because of the perception of increased status and the resulting reward circuitry being activated.

The perception of a potential or real reduction in status can generate a strong threat response. Eisenberger and colleagues showed that a reduction in status resulting from being left out of an activity lit up the same regions of the brain as physical pain (Eisenberger et al., 2003). While this study explores social rejection, it is closely connected to the experience of a drop in status.

Reducing status threat

It can be surprisingly easy to accidentally threaten someone's sense of status. A status threat can occur through giving advice or instructions, or simply suggesting someone is

slightly ineffective at a task. Many everyday conversations devolve into arguments driven by a status threat, a desire to not be perceived as less than another. When threatened, people may defend a position that doesn't make sense, to avoid the perceived pain of a drop in status.

In most people, the question 'can I offer you some feedback' generates a similar response to hearing fast footsteps behind you at night. Performance reviews often generate status threats, explaining why they are often ineffective at stimulating behavioral change. If leaders want to change others' behavior, more attention must be paid to reducing status threats when giving feedback. One way to do this is by allowing people to give themselves feedback on their own performance.

Increasing status reward

Organizations know all about using status as a reward and many managers feel compelled to reward employees primarily via a promotion. This may have the unfortunate side effect of promoting people to the point of their incompetence. The research suggests that status can be increased in more sustainable ways. For example, people feel a status increase when they feel they are learning and improving and when attention is paid to this improvement. This probably occurs because individuals think about themselves using the same brain networks they use for thinking about others (Mitchell, 2006). For example, when beating one's own best time at a task or sporting activity, the reward circuitry from a sense of being 'better than' is activated, but in this case, the person one is 'better than' is oneself in the past.

Many everyday conversations devolve into arguments driven by a status threat, a desire to not be perceived as less than another.

Status can go up when people are given positive feedback, especially public acknowledgment. One study showed activation of the reward circuitry in children being as strong as money as when told 'that's correct' by a repetitive computer voice. (Scott, Dapretto, et al., 2008, under review). Leaders can be afraid of praising their people for fear of the request for promotion. However, given the deeply rewarding nature of status, giving positive feedback may reduce the need for constant promotions, not increase it.

Finally, status is about one's relative position in a community of importance such as a professional group or social club based on what is valued. While society, especially advertising and the media, would have people spend money in order to be 'better than others', it doesn't have to be a zero-sum game. Status can be increased without cost to others or an effect on relatedness. As well as playing against oneself, one can also change the community one focuses on, as when a low level mailroom clerk becomes the coach of a junior baseball team. Or, one can change what is important, for example deciding that the quality of one's work is more important than the quantity of one's work.

Certainty

The brain is a pattern-recognition machine that is constantly trying to predict the near future. For example, the motor network is useless without the sensory system. To pick up a cup of coffee, the sensory system, sensing the position of the fingers at each moment, interacts dynamically with the motor cortex to determine where to move your fingers next. Your fingers don't draw on fresh data each time; the brain draws on the memory of what a cup is supposed to feel like in the hand, based on expectations drawn from previous experiences. If it feels different, perhaps slippery, you immediately pay attention (Hawkins, 2004). The brain likes to know the pattern occurring moment to moment, it craves certainty, so that prediction is possible. Without prediction, the brain must use dramatically more resources, involving the more energy-intensive prefrontal cortex, to process moment-to-moment experience.

Even a small amount of uncertainty generates an 'error' response in the orbital frontal cortex (OFC). This takes attention away from one's goals, forcing attention to the error (Hedden, Garbrielli, 2006). If someone is not telling you the whole truth, or acting incongruously, the resulting uncertainty can fire up errors in the OFC. This is like having a flashing printer icon on your desktop when paper is jammed – the flashing cannot be ignored, and until it is resolved it is difficult to focus on other things. Larger uncertainties, like not knowing your boss' expectations or if your job is secure, can be highly debilitating.

The act of creating a sense of certainty is rewarding. Examples are everywhere in daily life: music that has simple repeating patterns is rewarding because of the ability to predict the flow of information. Meeting expectations generates an increase in dopamine levels in the brain, a reward response (Schultz, 1999). Going back to a well-known place feels good because the mental maps of the environment can be easily recalled.

Reducing the threat from uncertainty

Any kind of significant change generates uncertainty. Yet uncertainty can be decreased in many simple ways. This is a big part of the job of managers, consultants and leaders. As people build business plans, strategies, or map out an organization's structure, they feel increasing levels of clarity about how an organization might better function in the future. Even though it is unlikely things ever go as planned, people feel better because certainty has increased. Breaking a complex project down into small steps does the same. Another key tool involves establishing clear expectations of what might happen in any situation, as well as expectations of desirable outcomes.

Increasing the reward from certainty

Some examples of how increase certainty include making implicit concepts more explicit, such as agreeing verbally how long a meeting will run, or stating clear objectives at the start of any discussion. In learning situations, the old adage is 'tell people what you are going to tell them, tell them, then tell them what you told them', all of which increases certainty.

The perception of certainty can be increased even during deeply uncertain times. For example, when going through an organizational restructure, providing a specific date when people will know more information about a change may be enough to increase a sense of certainty. Much of the field of change management is devoted to increasing a sense of certainty where little certainty exists.

Autonomy

Autonomy is the perception of exerting control over one's environment; a sensation of having choices. Mieka (1985) showed that the degree of control organisms can exert over a stress factor determines whether or not the stressor alters the organism's functioning. Inescapable or uncontrollable stress can be highly destructive, whereas the same stress interpreted as escapable is significantly less destructive. (Donny et al, 2006). The difference in some rodent studies was life and death (Dworkin et al, 1995).

An increase in the perception of autonomy feels rewarding. Several studies in the retirement industry find strong correlations between a sense of control and health outcomes (Rodin, 1986). People leave corporate life, often for far less income, because they desire greater autonomy.

A reduction in autonomy, for example when being micro managed, can generate a strong threat response. When one senses a lack of control, the experience is of a lack of agency, or an inability to influence outcomes.

Reducing autonomy threat

Working in a team necessitates a reduction in autonomy. In healthy cultures, this potential threat tends to be counteracted with an increase in status, certainty and relatedness. With an autonomy threat just below the surface, it can be helpful to pay attention to this driver. The statement 'Here's two options that could work, which would you prefer?' will tend to elicit a better response than 'Here's what you have to do now'.

Increasing rewards from autonomy

Providing significant autonomy in an organization can be difficult. Yet even a subtle perception of autonomy can help, for example by having self-directed learning portals, where employees get to design their learning curriculum, and self-driven human resource systems.

Allowing people to set up their own desks, organize their workflow, even manage their working hours, can all be beneficial if done within agreed parameters. Sound policy establishes the boundaries within which individuals can exercise their creativity and autonomy. Sound policy should enable individual point-of-need decision-making without consultation with, or intervention by, leaders. In this regard, sound policy hard-wires autonomy into the processes of an organization.

Relatedness

Relatedness involves deciding whether others are 'in' or 'out' of a social group. Whether someone is friend, or foe. Relatedness is a driver of behavior in many types of teams, from sports teams to organizational silos: people naturally like to form 'tribes' where they experience a sense of belonging. The concept of being inside or outside the group is probably a by-product of living in small communities for millions of years, where strangers were likely to be trouble and should be avoided.

In the absence of safe social interactions the body generates a threat response...

The decision that someone is friend or foe happens quickly and impacts brain functioning (Carter & Pelphrey, 2008). For example, information from people perceived as 'like us' is processed using similar circuits for thinking one's own thoughts. When someone is perceived as a foe, different circuits are used (Mitchell, 2006). Also, when treating someone as a competitor, the capacity to empathise drops significantly (Singer et al, 2006).

Neuroscientist John Cacioppo talks about the need for safe human contact being a primary driver, like the need for food (Cacioppo, 2008). In the absence of safe social interactions the body generates a threat response, also known as feeling lonely. However, meeting someone unknown tends to generate an automatic threat response. This explains why one feels better at a party knowing three people rather than one. Alcohol helps to reduce this automatic social threat response, enabling strangers to communicate more easily, hence its use as a social lubricant the world over. In the absence of alcohol, getting from foe to friend can be helped by an oxytocin response, an experience of connecting with the other person. Oxytocin is a hormone produced naturally in the brain, and higher levels of this substance are associated with greater affiliative behavior (Domes et al, 2007). Studies have shown far greater collaboration when people are given a shot of oxytocin, through a nasal spray. (Kosfield, 2005). A handshake, swapping names and discussing something in common, be it just the weather, may increase feeling of closeness by causing the release of oxytocin (Zak et al, 2005). The concept of relatedness is closely linked to trust. One trusts those who appear to be in your group, who one has connected with, generating approach emotions. And when someone does something untrustworthy, the usual response is to withdraw. The greater that people trust one another, the stronger the collaboration and the more information that is shared.

Reducing threats from lack of relatedness

Increasing globalization highlights the importance of managing relatedness threats. Collaboration between people from different cultures, who are unlikely to meet in person, can be especially hard work. The automatic foe response does not get diminished by social time together. This response can be mitigated by dedicating social time in other forms. For example, using video to have an informal meeting, or ensuring that people forming teams share personal aspects of themselves via stories, photos or even social-networking sites. In any workplace it appears to pay off well to encourage social connections. A Gallup report showed that organizations that encourage 'water cooler' conversations increased productivity (Gallup, November 2008).

Increasing the rewards from relatedness

Positive social connections are a primary need; however, the automatic response to new social connections involves a threat. To increase the reward response from relatedness, the key is to find ways to increase safe connections between people. Some examples include setting up clearly defined buddy systems, mentoring or coaching programs, or small action learning groups. Small groups appear to be safer than large groups. The Gallup organizations research on workplace engagement showed that the statement 'I have a best friend at work' was central to engagement in their 'Q12' assessment (Gallup Organization). Perhaps even having one trusting relationship can have a significant impact on relatedness.

Fairness

Studies by Golnaz Tabibnia and Matthew Lieberman at UCLA showed that 50 cents generated more of a reward in the brain than $10.00, when it was 50 cents out of a dollar, and the $10 was out of $50 (Tabibnia & Lieberman, 2007). This study and a number of others illustrate that fair exchanges are intrinsically rewarding, independent of other factors. The need for fairness may be part of the explanation as to why people experience internal rewards for doing volunteer work to improve their community; it is a sense of decreasing the unfairness in the world.

Unfair exchanges generate a strong threat response (Tabibnia & Lieberman, 2007). This sometimes includes activation of the insular, a part of the brain involved in intense emotions such as disgust. Unfair situations may drive people to die to right perceived injustices, such as in political struggles. People who perceive others as unfair don't feel empathy for their pain, and in some instances, will feel rewarded when unfair others are punished (Singer et al, 2006).

Reducing the threat from unfairness and increasing the reward from fairness

A threat response from a sense of unfairness can be triggered easily. The following statements are examples of what employees might say in reaction to a threat to fairness:

- 'He has a different set of rules for Mike and Sally than for the rest of us.'
- 'Management tell us that we need to lose headcount, but our sales are carrying the other division and they don't have to cut anyone.'
- 'They do all this talk about 'values' but it's business as usual at the top.'

The threat from perceived unfairness can be decreased by increasing transparency, and increasing the level of communication and involvement about business issues. For example, organizations that allow employees to know details about financial processes may have an advantage here.

Establishing clear expectations in all situations – from a one-hour meeting to a five-year contract – can also help ensure fair exchanges occur. A sense of unfairness can result from a lack of clear ground rules, expectations or objectives. Allowing teams to identify their own rules can also help. In an educational context, a classroom that creates the rules of what is accepted behavior is likely to experience less conflict. Examples of the success of self-directed teams in manufacturing abound (Semler, 1993). Much of what these self-driven teams do is ensure fairness in grass-roots decisions, such as how workloads are shared and who can do which tasks.

The issue of pay discrepancies in large organizations is a challenging one, and many employees are deeply unhappy to see another person working similar hours earning 100 times their salary. Interestingly, it is the perception of fairness that is key, so even a slight reduction in senior executive salaries during a difficult time may go a long way to reducing a sense of unfairness.

The wider implications of the SCARF model

Managing oneself

The SCARF model helps individuals both minimize threats and maximize rewards inherent in everyday experience. For minimizing threats, knowing about the domains of SCARF helps one to label and reappraise experiences that might otherwise reduce performance. Labelling (Lieberman et al, 2007) and reappraisal (Ochsner & Gross, 2005) are cognitive tools that have been verified in brain studies to be effective techniques for reducing the threat response. These techniques have been shown to be more effective at reducing the threat response than the act of trying to suppress an emotion (Goldin et al, 2007). Knowing about the elements of SCARF helps one understand issues such as why you can't think clearly when someone has attacked your status, instead of just trying to push the feeling aside.

Knowing the domains of SCARF also allows an individual to design ways to motivate themselves more effectively. An example might be focusing attention on increasing one's sense of autonomy during a time of uncertainty, such as focusing on the thrill of doing whatever you like when suddenly out of work.

Education and training

Successful educators, trainers and facilitators intuitively use the SCARF model. They know that people learn best when they are interested in something. Interest is an approach state. Teaching children who feel threatened, disconnected, socially rejected or treated unfairly is an uphill battle. For example, educators can create a nurturing learning environment by pointing out specifically how people are improving, which increases a sense of status. This is particularly important when learning anything new, which can create a threat response. Educators can also create certainty by presenting clear outlines of what is being learned, and provide a perception of some autonomy by introducing choice into the classroom. The key here is for educators, trainers and coaches to value the approach state as the necessary state for learning, and to put effort and attention into maintaining this toward state.

Coaching

Personal and executive coaching can increase all five SCARF domains. Status can be increased through regular positive feedback, attention to incremental improvements, and the achievement of large goals. Certainty can be increased by identifying central goals, and subsequently reducing the uncertainty inherent in maintaining multiple focuses. Breaking down large goals into smaller steps increases certainty about how a goal can be reached. Finding ways to take action when challenges appear insurmountable can increase autonomy. Relatedness can be increased through the relationship with the coach. Fairness can be reduced through seeing situations from other perspectives. The SCARF model helps explain why coaching can be so effective at facilitating change, and points to ways of improving its delivery.

The SCARF model points to more creative ways of motivating that may not just be cheaper, but also stronger and more sustainable.

Leadership development

The SCARF model provides a robust scientific framework for building self-awareness and awareness of others amongst leaders. Many new leaders may negatively impact the domains of SCARF by accident. They may know how things should be done, and subsequently provide too much direction and not enough positive feedback, thereby affecting people's status. They often don't provide clear expectations, impacting certainty. They micro manage, impacting autonomy. They want to maintain a professional distance, impacting relatedness. And, they may impact fairness by not being transparent enough. When the opposite happens and you meet someone who makes you feel better about yourself, provides clear expectations, lets you make decisions, trusts you and is fair, you will probably work harder for them as you feel intrinsically rewarded by the relationship itself. Spending time around a leader like this activates an approach response and opens up people's thinking, allowing others to see information they wouldn't see in an avoid state.

Organizational systems

SCARF has many implications for how organizations are structured, including reward systems, communications systems, decision processes, information flow, and

remuneration structures. In the space available in this article we will explore just one of these – reward systems. Techniques for motivating and rewarding staff are largely based on the carrot and stick principle, with the carrot mostly involving money or a promotion. The SCARF model points to more creative ways of motivating that may not just be cheaper, but also stronger and more sustainable. For example, success could be rewarded by increasing people's autonomy by allowing them to have greater flexibility in their work hours. Or, rewards could be provided via increasing the opportunity for learning new skills, which can increase a sense of status. Or, people could be rewarded through increasing relatedness through allowing more time to network with peers during work hours.

Summary

While the five domains of SCARF reflect core brain networks of greatest significance when it comes to collaborating with and influencing others. Understanding these drivers can help individuals and organizations to function more effectively, reducing conflicts that occur so easily amongst people, and increasing the amount of time people spend in the approach state, a concept synonymous with good performance.

Understanding the domains in the SCARF model and finding personalized strategies to effectively use these brain insights, can help people become better leaders, managers, facilitators, coaches, teachers and even parents.

In the early 2000s, the philosopher Theodore Zeldin said, 'When will we make the same breakthroughs in the way we treat each other as we have made in technology?' These findings about the deeply social nature of the brain, and the deep relevance of the domains of SCARF in everyday life, may provide some small steps in the right direction.

Suggestions for future research

An abbreviated list of potential research issues includes the following questions:

- Which of the domains of SCARF generate the strongest threats or rewards?
- Which domains have the longest-term impact?
- What are the links between the domains?
- How can studies be designed to identify individual domains?
- What are the best techniques for minimizing threat and maximizing reward in each of the domains?
- Do people vary in the importance of the 5 domains, and if so are there patterns across men and women, age groups or cultures?
- Is there value in assessing these domains in individuals or culturally in organizations?
- What are the organizational implications of this model for how systems are set up?
- Testing what aspects of the model are most effective to which individual leaders?

Acknowledgments

This article was written with the help of several reviewers, including Rachel Sheppard, Dr. Evian Gordon Joanne Capritti and Karen Jayne Eyre. I am grateful to the dozens of interviews with many of the scientists referenced for their input as well, with special thanks to Dr. Jeffrey M. Schwartz, Dr. Matthew Lieberman, Dr. Mark Jung-Beeman and Dr. Yi-Yuan Tang for their informal mentoring over recent years on these topics.

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Collaboration Questionnaire

WORK STYLE

- Describe your work style. Are you a 'get things done right away' or a 'give me a day or two to think about it' kind of worker?
- Which tasks do you enjoy doing with others? Which tasks do feel better doing things on your own?
- What are your strengths as a worker? What about as a co-worker? What do you feel are your learning edges?
- What motivates you at work?
- What situations/challenges/work assignments do you find fun? Which ones challenge you?
- How do you handle interruptions or a change of plans? How might someone work best with you in those types of situations?
- Do you consider yourself an introvert or an extrovert? In which situations?
- If you have taken any other personality/work style/learning style assessment, what learnings might be useful to share with others?

COMMUNICATION STYLE

- What are the best ways to communicate with you? Text, email, in person, phone?
- What is one thing about how you communicate that you would like to improve?
- Do you tend to write in brief or be detailed? What types of direction do you need when you go off and do an assignment? A bulleted list of to dos with deadlines or just the gist of what is to be done?

Collaboration Questionnaire

- How will others know you are hurt or upset? If you are upset, how do you want to be treated?
- How do like to handle mistakes? Yours or others?

TEAMING

- In a group situation, what are your strengths? What can you be counted on for? Keeping others on track, always bringing in another perspective?
- What types of acknowledgements do you like? Public or private praise, tangible gifts, etc.
- In what situations do you ask for help? How do you feel about asking for help?
- How would you like to receive feedback? In what forms?
- What does the ideal team member look like to you?
- What are your pet peeves in terms of team work/working with others/collaborating?
- Do you consider yourself a risk taker? In what areas of your life do you like to be spontaneous? In others where are you more cautious?

PERSONAL LIFE/PROFESSIONAL LIFE

- How much of your personal life do you like to share with those at work?
- Are you someone who socializes with colleagues from work? Lunch with those while at work?
- Anything else in any category above or any new category of info you would like to know in order to collaborate most effectively with your colleagues?

Quick Scripts for Requests and Feedback

From Crucial Conversations by Kerry Patterson

"State My Path Statement"

"This is what I have noticed…..
I am beginning to think…..
What is your take on it?"

Example: "I noticed you said, "What do you want?" in a gruff way when the student came to see you at your desk. If I was that student I might feel a bit intimidated about coming to ask you a question if I got that response. Did you sense that she was a bit shy in responding to you? What's your take on what happened?"

From "Management Shorts" by Andrea Corney (www.acorn-od.com)

"I Message Feedback Statements - Take One"

"When you do X (behavior), I think/feel Y (reaction).
It would be helpful to me if you could do Z (behavior) instead. Would that work for you? What do you need?"

Example: "When you come to our meeting late, I get the sense that the meeting isn't important to you and that you disrespect me in some way. It would be helpful for me if you would show up on time and that way I wouldn't feel defensive from the get-go. Is that something you could do?"

Seize the Moment

Exploring ways to speak up rather than tune out when presented with negatively racialized or generalized statements made by students or colleagues. Give yourself a voice and the power to affect change by addressing uncomfortable, untrue, generalizing, or negatively racialized comments when they're made.

Sentence Starters:

- "Tell me more about what makes you say that."
- "I'm not willing to agree with that generalization."
- "Do you think that's true generally? Do you have a specific person or example in mind?"
- "Some of the words you just used make me uncomfortable."
- "I don't agree with what you just said, could you please share more about what you mean?"
- "That makes me feel uncomfortable. Can we talk about it?"
- "That seems unfair to me. Do you really feel that way?"
- "Could you explain that to me please?"
- "Tell me more about what makes you say that."
- "I have a different opinion, but I'm willing to listen and share."
- "Here's an example of how I feel differently."

What If They Say? - Possible Responses from Hard Conversations Unpacked

"What gives light must endure burning." Viktor Frankl

The responses are a *starting* point. Mark Goulston, author of a Harvard Business Review blog, *Don't Get Defensive: Communication Tips for the Vigilant* might call these comments 'controlled confrontation' responses. Use them as ideas to work with; to push back at; to rewrite. Make them work for you.

Conflict Responses

When you are intimidated by someone shouting, name-calling, swearing, threatening.

"I am open to having this conversation and I know you are angry. And, I will not continue talking with you if you speak at that volume, swear at me, or use that language. Please stop and we can continue the conversation."

"I am having difficulty hearing your message because your tone of voice is too harsh for me to listen to. Would you please state your need in a more neutral tone?"

"You have every right to feel that way, but no right to express it in an offensive manner. Please restate your objection in a more polite way."

When someone responds with general words like "never," "always" or "every time" instead of talking about a specific situation.

"While it may seem true that this happens "all the time" or that I never respond. The truth is that is not true. It is an over-generalization. Let's try to focus the conversation on this specific situation…"

When someone attacks your personality or identity instead of trying to solve the problem.

"Remember that you agreed that you would focus on issues rather than personalities. If you can return to the issue at hand, we can continue this important discussion, otherwise I am going to ask that we stop now."

When someone bring things up from the past that have nothing to do with the present conflict.

"I understand that there were experiences prior to this one that you feel have a connection with what we are talking about. At this point, that information isn't the focus of this *current* conversation. Let's direct our attention on this *specific* situation."

When someone brings something up that is valid, but a completely different topic.

"I see two different topics are starting to be at play in this conversation. And I am not discounting your point. Both topics are important. Can we start with the topic we first started discussing and then, if we want, we go back to discuss the other?"

When someone refuses to listen and acts as if this issue isn't worth talking about.

"From your vantage point, this might not seem like it is worthy of discussion. However, the impact this action has had on others has made it difficult to…./challenging for _____ to do her job. I have a responsibility to bring it up and as a professional on the team, you have a responsibility to engage with this information."

When someone wants to be let off the hook

"Everyone is responsible for this work. While I understand your circumstances (share details), I also understand the need for the student (or the program) that this be finished. What can I do to support you because I am committed to making sure the work is done. Do you have some ideas as to how you can move forward?

When someone needs to push past the letter of the law to the spirit of the law

"I acknowledge you have done (explain what has been done). And as it was written, the expectation was 'fulfilled.' And, going beyond the expectation as it was spelled out in these ways (explain) would have this impact (on your colleagues, on the students, on the school). Here is a next step that would really make the work go up a notch in quality. (Explain). Is that doable?

When someone says, "They don't treat us like professionals."

"Many professions, ours included, have standards and are constantly held accountable to changing expectations and the newest research. Think about doctors and tax accountants and pilots. They are held responsible to doing the work in alignment the latest findings or policies. Professionals hold each other accountable to doing what is best practice. And holding ourselves up to standards is a professional practice."

When someone says, "The school always makes us…."

"We are the school All of us. I am included. If you are talking about the Administration, that is another discussion and yet we all have a voice. We can always ask our colleagues for clarification, seek support and ask that those working there address concerns we have. By stating that the school is making us do something gives away our power. We have a sphere of control and influence."

When someone says, "They don't give us enough time..."

"I don't disagree. There isn't enough time. I have found myself feeling the same way. I have found that this modification helped me make some time…. (add suggestion)…and when I did the positive impact was…And given that we did all agree that this was an expectation and that it isn't going off the table, what do you suggest what we do next?"

When someone who is doing the work is frustrated with others who aren't 'on board' and angry you haven't said anything

"It is frustrating when we feel that we are doing someone more than others are doing. Our fairness threat antenna is triggered. I relate. I might suggest you talk to the individuals yourself. We as a school need to hold each other accountable to doing the work and we collectively responsible to do it. We sometimes cannot wait for others to see our frustrations but manage them ourselves. Do you want some suggestions for how to talk to your colleague?"

When someone has really triggered you

"Let's each take a breath here because I'm feeling really reactive and I know until I calm down a bit, whatever I say or do now will only make this conversation worse."

When someone says "You have it out for me! You want me to fail!"

"That is patently false. I do not have it out for you nor do I want you to fail. I want you to succeed and I want the students to succeed too. I am committed to helping you and offering you help and I am also committed to making sure the students are taking care of and that we don't fail them. Let's talk about how you can succeed."

When someone says, "You know I have a point! I am right." (and they are)

You are right. You are correct. This isn't okay. This _____ was done poorly. And, I too am right. (State the facts on your end) And you too have a responsibility from where you sit to be a part of the solution. I don't disagree that this hasn't moved along the way it should have. The process could have been a better one. And we still need to get to the result. I will agree that… Will you also agree…?

When someone says, "You are always in the weeds. You don't see the big picture."

"We definitely see things from different perspectives and from different places. There is validity in looking at the bigger picture. It helps the district see where we have been and where we are going. It is your job to be up there looking at the organization at that level.

For some of us, we are doing the work of implementing that vision and the focus on detail we need to have is different. The 'micro' matters. We need to pay attention to precision and accuracy at our level and it would be helpful if you didn't call this way of thinking "being in the weeds," but instead 'focusing on the details.'

Or moving someone to the 'forest level' when all they can see is the 'tree level.'

"You are asking great detail questions. Let's look at the big picture for a minute. So if we were looking at things from the balcony and not the dance floor, another way to look at this would be…"

When someone says, "You are so emotional."

"I am emotional because I care so deeply about this issue. I realize my tone and my volume can get a bit 'much' for some and I will take a look at how my style might get in the way of getting my point across. And, I won't apologize for my level of concern when it comes to _____ because it is too important to be dismissed."

When someone says, "How can you change that? She's always been like that."

"I am not discounting that -----'s personality can be really difficult to sit with. And, we need to speak to her about her impact on others. Her personality isn't the topic of conversation as personalities are hard to change. We are discussing behavior; how behavior impacts us and our ability to work well together and that can change and we would like your help in addressing our concerns about the behavior.

I am not a Trekkie but Star Trek: Voyager's Lieutenant Tuvok said something wise. "Do not mistake composure for ease." This work isn't easy.

Strategies for Receiving Feedback More Effectively

"One of the greatest gifts is that of being good at disappointment: having non-persecutory, speedy, resilient, emotional digestion." – Alain de Button

"Others' views of you are input, not imprint. It's information, not damnation." – Douglas Stone and Sheila Heen

Physical

- Eat. Sleep. When you are physically depleted, you feel things in a different way.

- Watch Amy Cuddy's TED Talk and practice the 'Wonder Woman' pose before the meeting.

- If you are taken by surprise, take two DEEP breaths. Get oxygen to your brain.

- Remember: Squeeze your butt cheeks if you fear you are going to cry. Your focus will go downward.

- If you need a minute, sip a bit of water or coffee. Give yourself a second to get your brain in a space to paraphrase. That means bring water to the meeting.

- Put a mint in your cheek to stay in the moment. Physically stay in your body.

Strategies for Receiving Feedback More Effectively

Psychological

- Before you go into a situation you expect to be difficult, ground yourself. Deep breathes. Connect yourself to the earth.

- Create an oval 'bubble' of a strong boundary around you. At least one arm's length in front, behind and on either side of you. Stand firmly in this protective bubble and let the energy of others not penetrate. Hear their words; just keep a sense of self.

- Remember, different cultures listen and give feedback differently – be understanding when it comes at you in a way that isn't your style and try to accommodate for the styles of others.

- Friend failure, don't become it. I have heard many people say, "I'm such a failure." No, actually, you are someone who *has failed*. You, yourself do not *equate to failure*. Be wary of labeling yourself.

- Remember to be in the Learned Optimism (Martin Seligman) state of mind. Don't globalize, localize.

- Continually work on building a 'growth mindset' (Carol Dweck) about life. Don't be fixed in your thinking. Everything can be a learning experience. We are always growing.

- During the conversation, when you notice you are being triggered (perhaps you notice a nervousness in your stomach or tension in your jaw), say hello to the reaction in you, and invite it to sit beside you until the conversation is over. Instead of acting out, you can put the reaction on hold until you have the time and space to nurture it properly. With the time and space you need later, you can learn about what caused that reaction to arise and how you might work with it in the future (from work at http://www.focusing.org/)

Strategies for Receiving Feedback More Effectively

Verbal

- When someone says, "Can I give you some feedback?" Say, "I am open to feedback and respond best when it is humane and growth producing."

- You have permission to ask for clarification. If it is fuzzy, ask for clarity. If you don't understand, ask for more detail. Remember your tone but ask for clarification.

AND if it still stings…

- If you are still feeling awful, try a self-compassion or loving-kindness (metta) meditation.
- Give yourself a second score – the initial evaluation is not the end of the story. It is how you took a 'shot at figuring out what there is to learn' that also matters. (Heen and Stone)

Statistic about Feedback

The amount of time we need to recover from negative emotions can differ as much at 3,000 percent across individuals.
(Richard Davidson with Sharon Begley - The Emotional Life of Your Brain: How Its Unique Patterns Affect the Way You Think, Feel and Live - and How you can Change Them – Hudson Street Press, 2002, p. 41 and 49)

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Final Reflection Questions

- What is still alive for you as you end today?
- What crossroads are you at as we finish today's session?
- What has been worthy of your time?
- What has your attention at this point? What matters to you now?
- From today's learning what do you now know to reconstruct or interrupt the narrative at your school?
- What conversation can you have that will bring something new into the world?
- What was of meaning or value to you as a result of you being here?
- What flame do I want to I carry into all interactions from here on?
- What declaration do you want to make?
- What strikes you as important to share/discuss/reflect on at this time?