

Leading Through Change with SCARF

Our Brain Categorizes Actions or Events

- When something happens in our environment, our brain categorizes it into 5 key areas
- With change, our brain always interprets it first as a threat. Over time, it may come to realize it can be a reward.

S = Status

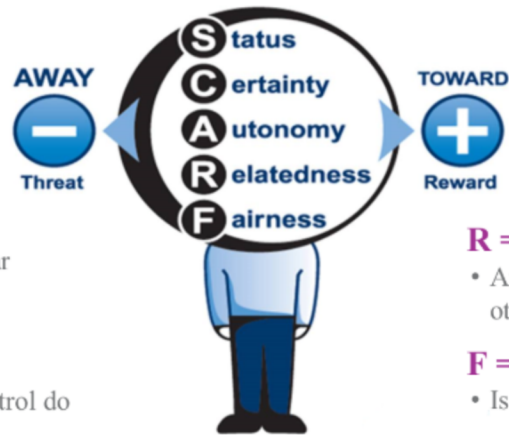
- How do I compare to others (position, salary, possessions)?

C = Certainty

- How ambiguous or familiar is the situation?

A = Autonomy

- How much autonomy/ control do I have?



Source: David Rock, Neuro Leadership Institute
"Your Brain at Work"

R = Relatedness

- Am I part of the group? Do others understand/align?

F = Fairness

- Is this fair to me or others?

To Identify a Threat State, use SCARF

S = Status

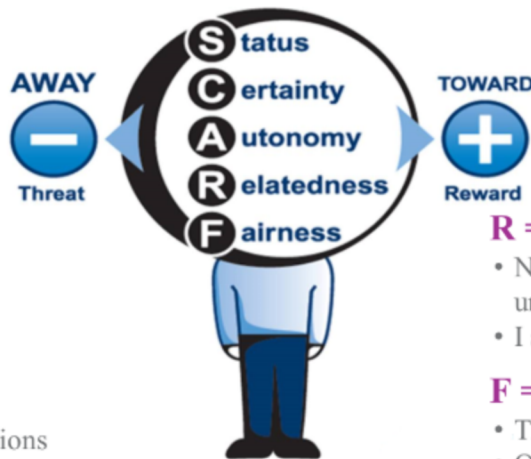
- I get less vs others
- I am losing status compared to others

C = Certainty

- This isn't familiar
- This is ambiguous

A = Autonomy

- I am losing control
- I can't make my own decisions



Source: David Rock, Neuro Leadership Institute
"Your Brain at Work"

R = Relatedness

- No one relates to me or understands
- I am alone

F = Fairness

- This isn't fair
- Others are treated better

- If you or someone close to you is reacting to change, get curious about the "self talk" to find out how the brain has categorized that change
- By naming it, you can tame it!

To Move to a Reward State, use SCARF

- When you identify the threat state, use specific strategies to help you and others move from the threat state into the reward state.
- By using these strategies over time, the brain get curious about the rewards of the change.



Source: David Rock, Neuro Leadership Institute
"Your Brain at Work"

S = Status

- Focus on what can be gained within the change
- Identify incremental improvements

C = Certainty

- Compare the change to a familiar situation
- Focus on what is already known or practiced

A = Autonomy

- Focus on what is within their circle of control
- Identify opportunities to make decisions or find a function/purpose within the change

R = Relatedness

- Find similarities so they can relate to others
- Think of the change in terms of "we/us" instead of "me/them"
- Imagine being in other's shoes

F = Fairness

- Ask questions
- Learn about the situation, process, decisions that were a catalyst for the change