

The Neuroscience of Change and the SCARF* Model Worksheet

The SCARF* model is a summary of five domains of human social experience, which are factors that can activate a reward or threat response in social situations. It is an easy way to remember social triggers that activate either the approach or avoid responses – this is critical for successful change. The SCARF* model points to ways to motivate others that are more successful and sustainable than other approaches.

	What it is	Key Points	What triggers my approach response?	What triggers my avoid response?
Status	Our relative importance to others	Status equals survival Perception of lower status reduces cognitive capability		
Certainty	Our ability to predict the future	The act of creating certainty is rewarding Even bad certainty is better than uncertainty		
Autonomy	Our sense of control over events	Even a small choice of anticipating making a choice is rewarding Micromanaging elicits strong threat response		
Relatedness	Our sense of safety with others	Lack of safe social interactions generates threat response Small groups and personal interactions promote trust		
Fairness	Our sense of fair exchanges between people	Fair exchanges are intrinsically rewarding Unfairness at work affects mental and physical health		

Adapted from: David Rock and his colleagues at the NeuroLeadership Institute - www.neuroleadership.com - The SCARF® Model is copyrighted by David Rock
 References:
 ☐ David Rock & Jeffrey Schwartz: *The Neuroscience of Leadership in Strategy+Business* - <http://www.strategy-business.com/article/06207?gko=6da0a>
 ☐ David Rock & Christine Cox. *SCARF in 2012: Updating the Social Neuroscience of Collaborating with Others* - http://www.davidrock.net/files/09_SCARF_in_2012_US.pdf

Now, apply the SCARF® model to your change. What can you as a leader do to reduce the threat (the “avoid” response) that may be posed by the change, and increase the sense of opportunity (the “approach” response) for your key stakeholders?

	What it is	What Leaders Often Do	What Leaders Could Do	Questions to Ask Yourself as a Leader	Specific Actions I Can Take as a Leader
Status	Our relative importance to others	Do not provide enough positive feedback Lack of two-way involvement	Make people feel good about selves Participate, don't dictate	How can we preserve people's status during the change? Can we provide positive feedback?	
Certainty	Our ability to predict the future	Fail to communicate or transmit unclear or ambiguous expectations	Set, share and reinforce clear expectations	How can we provide some degree of certainty during the change? Can we share plans or at least dates?	
Autonomy	Our sense of control over events	Make top-down decisions Micromanage with no input	Involvement in decisions Facilitate future-focused insights	How can we offer people control or areas of autonomy over aspects of the change? Can we engage more broadly in change planning/doing?	
Relatedness	Our sense of safety with others	Maintain professional distance Engage in task-focused interaction only	Foster personal relations and trust Build connections and teams	How can we promote connections, inclusion and sense of belonging during the change? Can we create shared goals between people and groups?	
Fairness	Our sense of fair exchanges between people	Make decisions that seem inequitable Fail to make processes transparent	Demonstrate fair process	How can we demonstrate fairness and transparency in the change process? How can we reduce potential inequities?	

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The Neuroscience of Change and the SCARF* Model: Worksheet #1

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Think about the current initiative underway. Name of Initiative: _____

What it is		How Are You Feeling?	
Status	Our relative importance to others	THREAT	REWARD
Certainty	Our ability to predict the future	THREAT	REWARD
Autonomy	Our sense of control over events	THREAT	REWARD
Relatedness	Our sense of safety with others	THREAT	REWARD
Fairness	Our sense of fair exchanges between people	THREAT	REWARD
Overall Threat/Reward Response:		THREAT	REWARD

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