



THE  
**HOWELLS**  
GROUP

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HELPING PEOPLE & ORGANIZATIONS FLOURISH

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# Today's Session

## Goals:

- 1. Understand one important model on basic brain science and the impact on change & leadership*
- 2. Acknowledge how we must address the 2 “operating systems” at play in organizational change*
- 3. Key mindsets and principles that can help leaders foster lasting change*

- Introduce your self – 5 mins total
- A time when a leader made it safe for you?

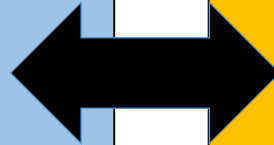
# Operating system defined:

- ✓ Often described as “culture”
- ✓ Persistent behavior patterns; how people work, decide to deal with failures and breakdowns
- ✓ Unseen, implicit rules shape and govern behaviors of an organization
- ✓ These rules create unexamined boundaries for what can be done, or said, or even thought
- ✓ Without impact, only incremental change is possible.
- ✓ Efforts at the superficial transformational change fail miserably.
- ✓ **As in any living system, it is the underlying place and conditions that behavior and thinking emerge**

# Functional operating states require both aspects to be integrated

## OBJECTIVE

Behavior  
Measure and Metrics  
Systems  
Required Effort  
Priorities  
Accountability  
Programs and Process



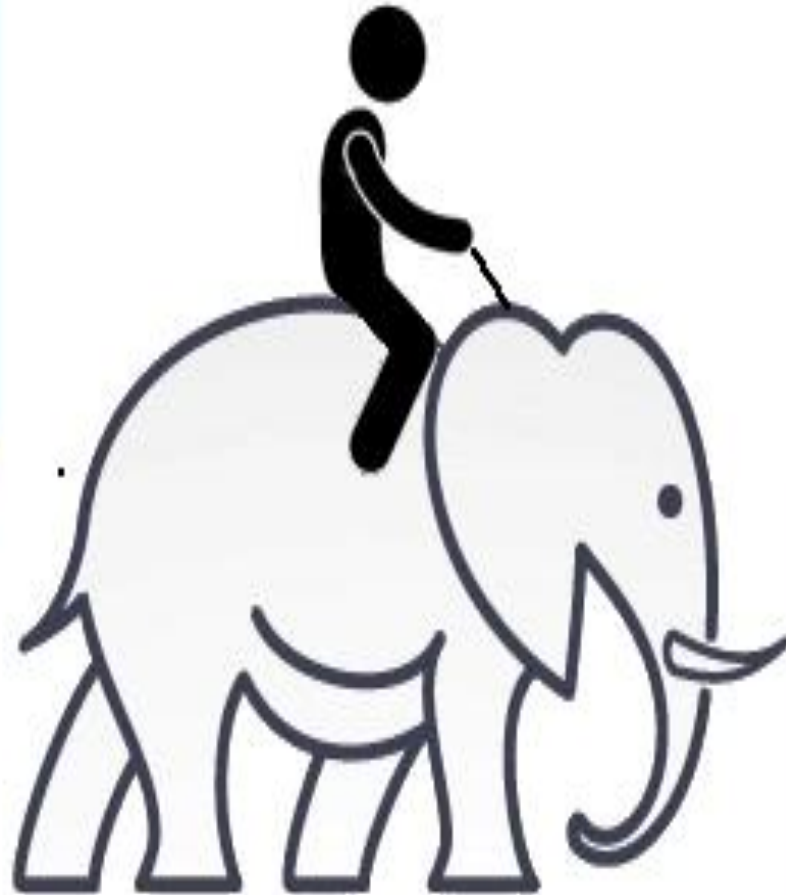
## SUBJECTIVE

Intentions  
Interpretation/Meanings  
Culture  
Discretionary Effort  
Values  
Responsibility  
Commitment and Caring

## THE RIDER

Logical  
Acts on thought  
Acts on analysis

Requires Direction  
Clarity is key  
Gets stuff done  
Weak



## THE ELEPHANT

Emotional  
Acts on Passion  
Acts on impulse

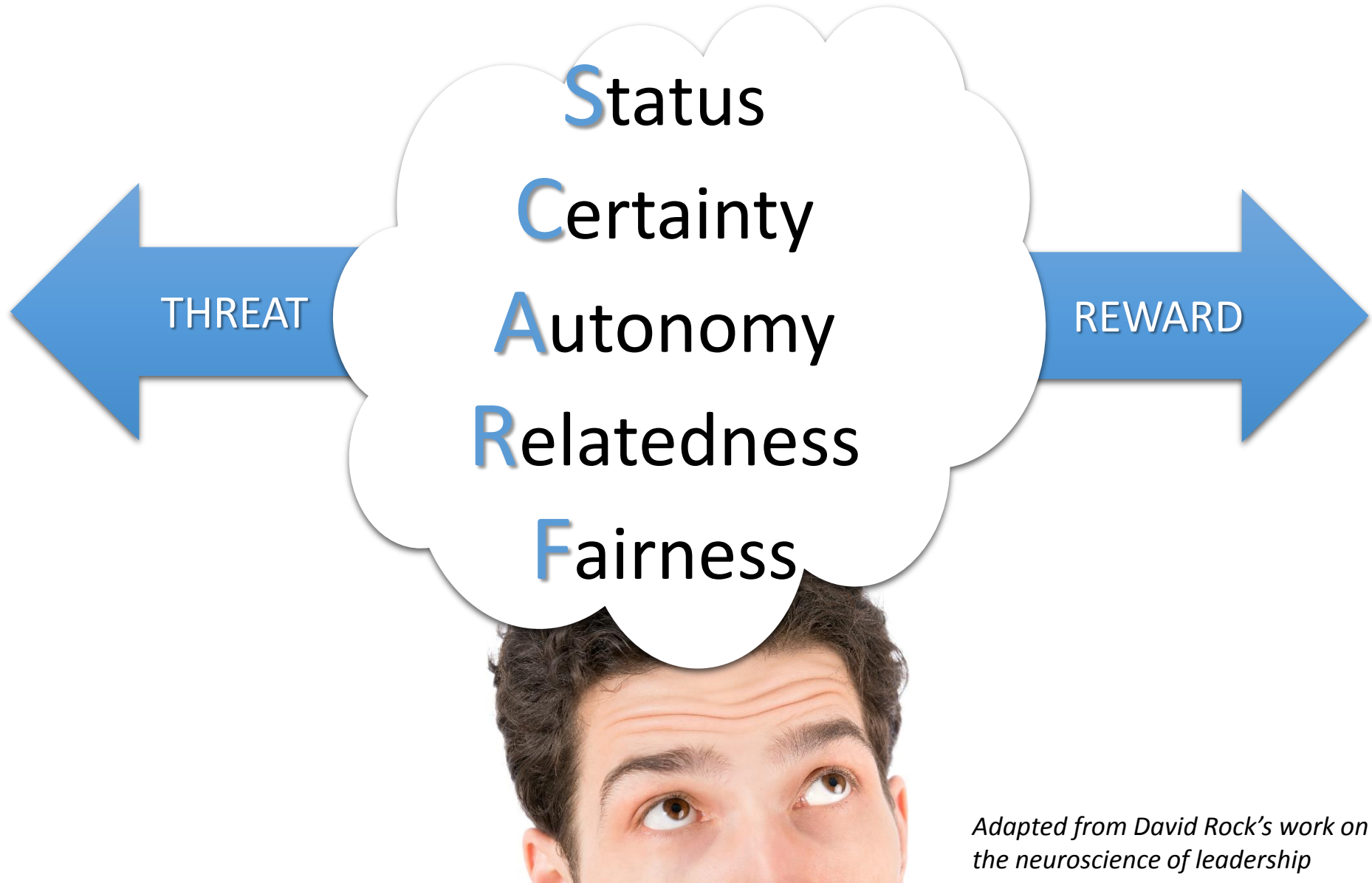
Requires moral purpose  
Stories are key  
Over thinker  
Strong

Adapted from "Switch" Chip and Dan Heath

So what's brain science  
got to do with change?



# Recognizing Conflict | SCARF Model



*Adapted from David Rock's work on the neuroscience of leadership*



# SCARF – A MODEL FOR COLLABORATING WITH AND INFLUENCING OTHERS

## Status

Importance in relation to others

The perception of a potential or real reduction in status can generate a strong threat response.

## Certainty

Ability to predict the future

The brain is constantly trying to predict the near future. Even a small amount of uncertainty generates an 'error' response.

## Autonomy

Perception of exerting control over one's environment

The feeling of having a choice greatly influences the level of stress.

## Relatedness

Feeling of security in relation to others – Whether someone is friend or foe

The sense of belonging to a group is important. Collaborating and sharing information are closely tied to the level of trust.

## Fairness

Transparency and clear expectations / Reward from fairness

Unfair exchanges generate a strong threat response. Greater transparency, communication, and participation can have a positive impact.

# SCARF Model

## Threat

## Reward

### Status

Giving advice or instructions, offering feedback, performance reviews

Beating one's own best time at a task or sporting activity, receiving positive feedback

### Certainty

Not knowing your boss' expectation  
Someone acting incongruently

Stating clear objectives at the start of a discussion, breaking projects down into small steps

### Autonomy

Being micromanaged

Allowing people to organise their workflow, working hours etc.

### Relatedness

Meeting someone unknown, meeting from a different culture

Setting up mentoring or coaching systems at work, having a friend at work

### Fairness

Lack of ground rules, expectations or objections

Transparency, doing volunteer work

# Required Attitudes for Systems Thinking

1. A very deep and persistent commitment to 'real learning.'
2. I have to be prepared to be wrong.
3. The need to triangulate. Listen for the "third story."

*Adapted from "The Fifth Discipline" – Peter Senge*

# Four Action Steps to Lead with the Brain in Mind

***1. Cultivate Identity***

***2. Share Power***

***3. Routinize Learning***

***4. Normalize Contention and Conflict***



# 4 Action Steps Leading With the Brain in Mind



## 1. *Cultivate Identity*

- Ask and listen for what people in your organization truly believe in
- Leverage the existing beliefs (we're a strong team, our organization has value, we work hard,
- I'm part of an efficient agency) toward the new opportunity
- Continually point towards each person's role in the success of the whole organization
- Use symbols, stories and actions that shift "turf" thinking
- Celebrate people taking personal accountability for organizational success

## 2. *Share Power*

- Celebrate people who persevere together to break through barriers
- Reward and circulate examples of people exercising initiative and discretion
- Publicly and privately reward all levels of staff for taking informed risks
- Show courage in taking informed risks yourself

# 4 Action Steps Leading With the Brain in Mind



## 3. *Routinize Learning*

- Identify and normalize “breakdowns” as part of progress – not mistakes to be punished!
- Make learning a priority for you, your senior staff and work to stamp out “not invented here” thinking
- Model and promote humility as key to organizational success; celebrate requests for help versus self sufficiency

## 4. *Normalize Contention & Conflict*

- Promote and train people to consistently surface issues to unblock the system
- Courageously model candor is a matter of personal integrity
- Create systems and leaders that expedites quality resolution – not perfection
- Model, hire for and promote diversity of thinking as a cultivated value

# Additional Tool - Organizational Self Assessment

(Page 7 in your handout packet)

## Organizational Self – Assessment



### POWER

Do employees believe they have both influence and agency to impact organizational performance?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Are staff resigned and cynical; or do they believe in a larger possibility and have conviction that they can make a difference?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### IDENTITY

Do team members source appropriate identity from their role in the organization?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

To what degree do team members define themselves narrowly by profession, working team or functional unit instead of the organization as a whole?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

### CONTENTION and CONFLICT

How competent are people to handle adversity and differences?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10