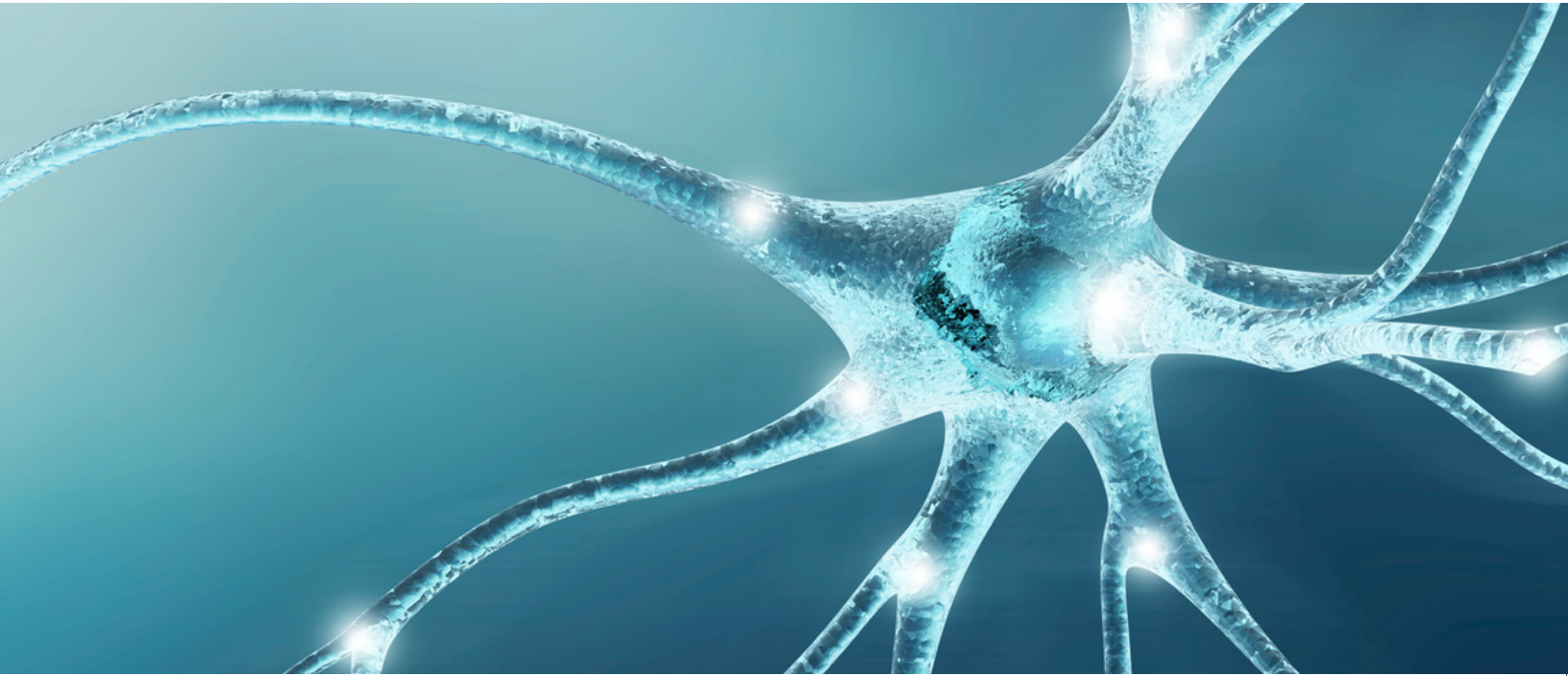




AIM LEADERSHIP



The Neurobiology of Relationships and Leadership

Our neurobiological wiring impacts the actions we take and our path forward. It is essential to understand how this wiring drives our actions and to build the muscles needed to reflect before automatically reacting.

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The Neurobiology of Relationships and Leadership

While we all like to believe we make choices, our neurobiological wiring is so strong, it inevitably impacts the actions we take and our path forward. As a result, it is essential to understand how this wiring drives our actions and to build the muscles needed to reflect before automatically reacting.

The SCARF model is a powerful and accessible place to begin this exploration.



The SCARF model, developed by Dr. David Rock who founded the NeuroLeadership Institute (NLI), is based on a premise that our brains compel us to behave in certain ways in order to minimize threats while maximizing rewards.

The goal is to:

1. Be aware of how we are wired to respond to specific threats;
2. Be able to track how we react and the impact; and
3. Build awareness about our choices.

The SCARF model focuses on five domains of human social experience:

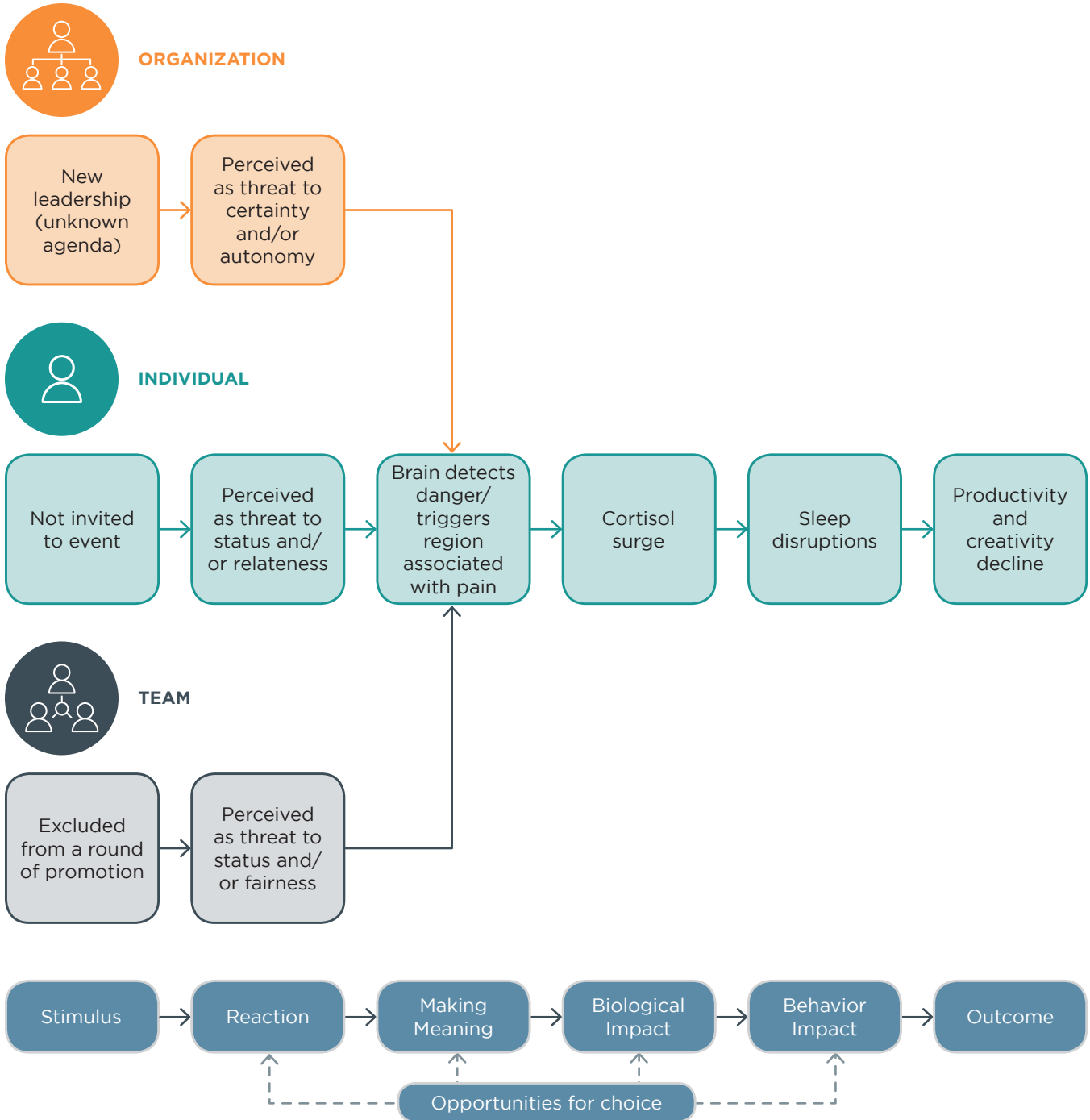
	What it is	Why it matters	Threats from it	Rewards from it
Status	Perception of where you stand in relation to others	Maintains social standing (-) Exclusion (+) Sociality	Lead to exclusion Reduce threat by: - Engaging others - Focusing on your strengths - Encouraging self-feedback	Greater social status Enhance rewards by: - Growing social status - Increasing public recognition - Providing positive feedback
Certainty	Ability to predict the future	Connected to stability and safety	Lead to feeling unsafe Reduce threat by: - Setting clear expectations - Engaging in over communication - Breaking down big projects into small parts	Consistency Enhance rewards by: - Creating clear systems - Building strong habits
Autonomy	Sense of control over events	Perception of control is vital.	Lead to stress being perceived as inescapable. Reduce threat by: - Presenting more options.	Clear expectations with options for decision making Enhance rewards by: - Allowing individuals to determine workflow - Adopting flexible work hours - Empowering individuals to choose work environment
Relatedness	Sense of safety in relation to others	Promotes investing in relationships with others	Lead to feeling lonely Reduce threat by: - Creating new structures for interaction	Connection Enhance rewards by: - Building a stronger container - Promoting new connections - Engaging in team-building activities - Sharing openly
Fairness	Perception that exchanges between others are equal	Fair exchanges feel intrinsically rewarding	Lead to strong conviction (i.e., a willingness to do anything to right a wrong) Reduce threat by: - Increasing transparency - Consulting all stakeholders - Stepping into others shoes	Heightened transparency Enhance rewards by: - Assessing and aligning on values - Promoting equity

Rock's model is based on the observation that when confronted with potential threats and rewards, our brains seem to react in fairly predictable ways.

Processing Social Threats

When we're excluded (e.g., from a social function or something more significant such as a round of promotions) or face something new (e.g., a new leader), we might perceive a threat. Neuroscience research has found that this perceived threat may also stimulate the region of the brain associated with physical pain. This explains why social threats often result in a release of cortisol (a stress hormone), which can interrupt our sleep cycle, and in turn, negatively impact our creativity and productivity.

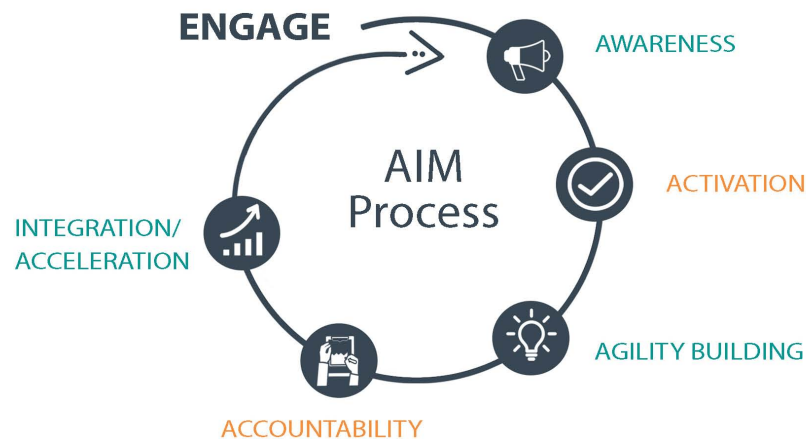
Examples of Perceived Threats at the Organizational, Team, and Individual Levels



Why EQ Is Essential?

One needs the self awareness (EQ) to notice what is happening, physical intelligence (PQ) to see how it is showing up in the body, and self-regulation to identify and make the very best choices. Said differently, we are wired to move towards reward and away from threats. As a result, we often confuse benefits based on shorter desires with long-term benefits.

Ideas into Action



AWARENESS

Notice your triggers

- When do you get triggered and why?
- What are your options?

ACTIVATION

Choose your response

- Are you reacting or making choices?
- How could you reduce threat?
- How could you enhance reward?

AGILITY BUILDING

Apply awareness to different areas

- Where else do you experience triggers?
- How can you avoid reacting spontaneously?
- Where can you be more at choice?
- How can you rewire to slow down?

ACCOUNTABILITY

Notice response time

- How can you track your process progress?
- Can peers create more accountability?
- How are you making better choices?

INTEGRATE/ACCELERATE

Track your progress

- What will success look like?
- How will you hold yourself accountability over time?

Curious to learn more about the neurobiological foundations of leadership, and how it can help you and your team? Let's continue to the conversation.

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