

Quadrant II Newsletter

Research shows that the difference between leaders who derail in their career and those that soar to great heights is social skills. Social skills appear in the second quadrant of Stephen R. Covey's Importance-Urgency matrix: social skills are important to a career but not urgent (Covey is author of the top-selling business book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*). Quadrant II provides an opportunity for business and technical professionals to learn and try out new social skills based in science.

18May2016, author: Valerie Patrick, PhD, *Secret to Managing Knowledge Workers*

Quotable (*Key Message*)

Under-developed "Theory of Mind" skills may limit your ability to effectively manage knowledge workers.

Quantify (*The Science*)

There is scientific evidence that extrinsic rewards don't work for knowledge work (see http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_pink_on_motivation?language=en). Science shows that the way to maximize performance of knowledge work is through intrinsic rewards. According to Daniel Pink, author of three New York Times best-selling business books, knowledge work needs a new operating system for business. This, in turn, means that knowledge workers need a new type of manager.

According to Daniel Pink and others, intrinsic rewards fall under the three categories of autonomy, mastery, and purpose. Autonomy is about a sense of choice. Autonomy is the ability to choose how to work and to take responsibility for the results of your work. Mastery is about a sense of

competence and contribution. Mastery is the ability to get better and better at something that matters to the individual. Purpose is about a sense of meaningfulness. Purpose is investing time and energy into something larger than the individual that the individual considers to be worth the effort.

As a manager of knowledge workers, how are you supposed to figure out what type of intrinsic rewards will motivate your employees? This is where “theory of mind” comes into play. In his book, *Brain Rules: 12 Principles for Surviving and Thriving at Work, Home, and School*, John Medina defines “theory of mind” as follows: “the ability to understand the interior motivations of someone else and the ability to construct a predictable ‘theory of how their mind works.’” In fact, there are ways to measure and develop “theory of mind” skills.

Two psychology professors, Dr. Thalia R. Goldstein and Dr. Ellen Winner, conducted a study of high school students that showed role-playing can enhance both empathy and “theory of mind” skills (Goldstein, T.R.; and Winner, E.; “Enhancing Empathy and Theory of Mind,” *Journal of Cognition and Development*, 2012, 13(1), p. 19-37). The professors used two measures for assessing “theory of mind” skills. The first measure is called the “Reading the Mind in the Eyes Test” and consists of 36 questions. The second measure is called the “Empathic Accuracy Paradigm.” The second measure involves watching a 15-minute video of a woman having a discussion with her husband but only seeing the woman although hearing both the woman and her husband. The woman in the video has already identified what she was feeling at 15 different moments in the video. Participants are asked to identify what the woman in the video is feeling at those 15 different moments and then their answers are compared to what the woman in the video reported. Empathy was assessed with a measure called the “Basic Empathy Scale” which consists of 11 questions. This study showed that training in acting leads to growth in the

social cognitive skills of both empathy and theory of mind. The acting training was for 5 to 9 hours a week over a 10 month period.

Qualify (*Put into Practice*)

One thing to try to develop your “theory of mind” skills is role-playing with your spouse or a trusted friend or colleague before a scheduled meeting. You will need to create as detailed a picture as you can of the person you will be meeting with for your spouse/friend/colleague so they can really get into the role. To build a persona for the role-play, try answering the following questions:

- How old are they (approximately)?
- What is their role in their organization?
- How do they talk?
- What do they care about?
- What holds their interest?
- What pressures do they experience?
- What are their frustrations?

Once you have created the persona for your spouse/friend/colleague you are ready to role-play the meeting. When the role-play is over, jot down lessons learned. You may need to learn more about the person you are meeting from others or adjust your approach to the meeting as a result of what you learn from the role-play.

Quip (*Fun*)



Actually becoming someone else, as Tess Coleman (played by Jamie Lee Curtis) and her daughter Anna (played by Lindsay Lohan) do in the movie *Freaky Friday*, would not be considered role-playing.

Quest (*Resources*)

Interpersonal skills become more important than technical skills as you advance in your career.

Fulcrum Connection LLC believes that barriers to working together can be eliminated to unleash the power of collaboration for high performance in any group or organization. The way we eliminate these barriers is to use and make available tools, techniques, content, and training that are rigorously refined and validated with research findings and with repeated use in organizational settings.

Dr. Valerie Patrick, Founder and President of Fulcrum Connection LLC, is an expert on the people engagement side of technical project management. Dr. Patrick is a Certified Professional Facilitator who can collaborate with you to plan, prepare, and execute engagements that are productive and rewarding experiences for all concerned. Dr. Patrick also provides training, consulting, and keynotes on facilitation, teamwork, collaboration, creativity, innovation,

social intelligence, change management, and thriving on a steep learning curve. Contact Dr. Patrick (valerie.patrick@fulcrumconnection.com or text 412-742-9675) to set up an exploratory call. Ask about the new Performance Acceleration Package for technical teams.

Listen to the interview with Mary Adams in Episode 15 of “Science of Success: Social Secrets” podcast here: <http://scienceofsuccess.libsyn.com/podcast>. Also available on iTunes and Stitcher Radio and all comments are welcome and encouraged!

About Fulcrum Connection LLC

Fulcrum Connection specializes in instructional design, training, speaking, facilitation and consulting to develop skills in leadership, innovation, sustainability, troubleshooting teamwork, and managing technical professionals.