

# 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.

19Aug2016, author: Valerie Patrick, PhD, *How to Increase Your Creative Ability*

## Quotable (*Key Message*)

Creative ability and the confidence to effect change can be improved in many easy, incremental ways.

## Quantify (*The Science*)

Dr. Albert Bandura, psychology professor at Stanford University, developed the guided mastery technique for behavior modification (Bandura, A., 1969, *Principles of Behavior Modification*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston). For example, Dr. Bandura was able to help a woman conquer her fear of snakes through a series of guided small steps to dispel her fears. First, the woman was shown a snake in a room through a window. Gradually, the woman was brought to the door of the room which was opened so she and Dr. Bandura could look at the snake from a distance. Next, Dr. Bandura brought the woman just inside the room to look at the snake still from a distance. These small steps continued to progress until the woman was close enough to touch and pet the snake. Dr. Bandura also found that the people who overcame their phobias ended up having less anxiety about other things in their lives as well - they

tried harder, persevered longer, and were more resilient in the face of failure. Dr. Bandura described this outcome as “self-efficacy” which is self-confidence and the belief that you can affect change.

In their book *Creative Confidence*, David and Tom Kelley apply Dr. Bandura’s principles of guided mastery and self-efficacy to creativity. They write: “Doubts in one’s creative ability can be cured by guiding people through a series of small successes. And the experience can have a powerful effect on the rest of their lives. The state of mind Bandura calls self-efficacy is closely related to what we think of as creative confidence.”

## Qualify (*Put into Practice*)

Dr. Keith Sawyer’s book *Zig Zag* is full of simple techniques to improve your creative ability. One that I have just adopted consists of the following simple steps:

- Write down a challenge in the form of a “how might” question.
- Starting on a Monday, write down 6 ideas to address the challenge when you are most creative (for me, I am most creative when I first wake up early in the morning, for others it is around lunchtime or late in the evening).
- Repeat the process of writing down 6 ideas each day through Friday (read previous ideas to not repeat ideas; try to think of new categories and new perspectives when you get stuck).
- On Saturday, evaluate the 30 ideas by placing each one into one of the following 4 different buckets: highly useful or impactful and highly feasible or implementable, highly useful or impactful and low feasibility or implement-ability, low utility or impact and highly feasible or

implementable, and low utility or impact and low feasibility or implement-ability.

- On Sunday, review the ideas in both the highly useful or impactful buckets to decide on next steps.

David and Tom Kelley's book *Creative Confidence* also offers simple creativity challenge exercises under Chapter 7 Move.

## Quip (*Fun*)



Just because you have creative ability doesn't mean all your ideas are good as Caractacus Pott shows here, but having more ideas means you will have more good ideas.

## Quest (*Resources*)

The sharing of knowledge and experience through the time-honored tradition of professional storytelling is as valuable to the speaker as it is to the audience. At least this is the case for speaker Dr. Valerie Patrick, President of Fulcrum Connection LLC and CTM (Certified Toastmaster). Dr. Patrick has been

called an “engagement mastermind” and speaks on a variety of social intelligence topics including closing the gender leadership gap, improving creativity, social skills for career success, collaboration, change management, innovation, thriving on a steep learning curve, and adopting a systems mindset. Dr. Patrick’s speeches equip listeners with perspectives, practices, principles, and ideas that can help transform them to be better agents of change for ways they can contribute to a better world. Contact Dr. Patrick to book her as a speaker for your next event (412-742-9675 or [valerie.patrick@fulcrumconnection.com](mailto:valerie.patrick@fulcrumconnection.com)).

Fulcrum Connection LLC believes that barriers to working together can be eliminated. To do this, Fulcrum studies and applies behavioral and cognitive science to our products and services (see [www.fulcrumconnection.com](http://www.fulcrumconnection.com)).

Listen to Episode 19 of “Science of Success: Social Secrets” podcast on how organizations can nurture the kind of creativity required for game-changing innovations 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.