

# 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.

31Aug2016, author: Valerie Patrick, PhD, *The Benefit of Emotional Ambivalence*

## Quotable (*Key Message*)

Leaders can leverage states of emotional ambivalence as a prime for creative thinking.

## Quantify (*The Science*)

Dr. Christina Fong, management professor at University of Washington's Foster School of Business, found that women in high-status positions experienced more emotional ambivalence than women in low-status positions (Fong, C.T. and Tiedens, L.Z., "Dueling Experiences and Dual Ambivalences: Emotional and Motivational Ambivalence of Women in High Status Positions," 2002, *Motivation and Emotion*, 26(1), p. 105-121). Emotional ambivalence is the experience of both positive and negative emotions simultaneously. Curious as to whether there were any benefits associated with this unique state of emotion, Dr. Fong studied the impact of emotional ambivalence on creativity. Dr. Fong found that people who experience emotional ambivalence are more creative than people who experience positive emotions, negative emotions, or no emotion at all (Fong, C.T., "The Effects of Emotional Ambivalence on

Creativity,” 2006, The Academy of Management Journal, 49(5), p. 1016-1030; and <http://www.washington.edu/news/2006/10/05/emotionally-ambivalent-workers-are-more-creative-innovative/>). Therefore, a benefit of emotional ambivalence is that it is a strong prime for creativity, stronger than being in a positive emotional state

([http://www.unc.edu/peplab/publications/Fredrickson\\_AmPsych\\_2001.pdf](http://www.unc.edu/peplab/publications/Fredrickson_AmPsych_2001.pdf)).

Most people tend to experience this state during important transitions: graduation, a new job, a promotion, a change initiative that impacts us, and so on.

## Qualify (*Put into Practice*)

When you assign someone a new and important project or when you promote them, try giving them a creativity challenge to go along with the transition since the transition will likely prime creative thinking. For example, for someone who gets a promotion, ask them to come back to you with some specific ideas for the following: In what new ways could we think about this position and what could be accomplished? If you ask someone to lead a change initiative, then ask them to come back to you with ideas on what benefits could be promoted to the people who are likely to be the most resistant to the change. In this way, you can help create emotional ambivalence for the people most resistant to the change by pointing out the positives and then solicit their creative input on how to make the change less disruptive and more beneficial.

## Quip (*Fun*)



Emotional ambivalence is not the same as cluelessness – cluelessness is the absence of rational thought while emotional ambivalence fires up the brain with a mix of positive and negative emotions the brain is trying to resolve and understand.

## 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. Dr. Valerie Patrick, President of Fulcrum Connection LLC and CTM (Certified Toastmaster), 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 power to be agents of beneficial change. 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 20 of “Science of Success: Social Secrets” podcast on social tactics for common leadership challenges here:

<http://scienceofsuccess.libsyn.com/podcast>. Also available on iTunes and Stitcher Radio and all comments are welcome and encouraged!

Read about The Art and Science of Emotion at Work here:

<http://fulcrumconnection.com/blog/art-science-emotion-work/>.

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