

# 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.

9Dec2015, author: Valerie Patrick, PhD, *Tapping Emotion to Make Your Message Memorable*

## Quotable (*Key Message*)

An emotionally-charged experience triggers brain chemistry that enhances memory.

## Quantify (*The Science*)

Dr. Michael Posner, a psychology professor who studies neural mechanisms and structures underlying selective attention, proposed a model for how we pay attention to things thirty years ago. The model involves what John Medina describes in *Brain Rules* as “three separable but fully integrated networks of neural circuitry in the brain.” The first is the Alerting or Arousal Network. This network makes a distinction between intrinsic alertness, the ongoing monitoring of the world around us, and phasic alertness, when something unusual triggers an alarm across the brain. The second is the Orienting Network. This network triggers reactions to gain more information about the stimulus that set off the alarm so the brain can decide what to do. The third is the Executive Network which controls what action to take in response to the

stimulus that set off the alarm. Posner's work formed the basis for what we today understand about emotions and attention.

According to Dr. Linda J. Levine (professor of psychology and social behavior) and Dr. David A. Pizarro (professor of psychology) in their 2004 review of emotion and memory research, they write: "Converging evidence from autobiographical memory studies, animal and human laboratory studies, and brain imaging studies shows that emotional events are remembered better than non-emotional events and that mechanisms specific to emotion underlie these effects." Dr. John Medina (a developmental molecular biologist) further explains in his book *Brain Rules* that when you detect an emotionally-charged event, your brain's amygdala triggers the release of a "brain post-it note" called dopamine. Dopamine has been shown to aid memory and information processing and marks that emotionally-charged event as something to remember and ponder. Medina points out that emotionally-charged events related to our survival are universal in their ability to capture our attention. Survival concerns include threats, reproductive opportunities, and patterns or content related to things we have seen before.

## **Qualify (*Put into Practice*)**

Try telling a personal story that taps into one or more of the universal emotional triggers to make a message memorable. For example, Acura has a crash-test dummy commercial in which the crash-test dummies look like real human beings that are incredibly still (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DfvpF4RRGAE>). The driver crash-test dummy looks eerily like the technician placing the crash-test dummies in the test car. You realize the technician is imagining the crash-test dummies are him and his family involved in a crash so that he can do everything possible to make the Acura as safe as possible. The commercial grabs your attention

because it is about the threat of a car accident which can happen to anybody. The commercial also reminds you of times when you have been with your entire family in a car – to go on vacation or to a family event like a birthday party or wedding. The commercial is a powerful way for Acura to convey its message that they are committed to passenger safety - putting people first. The commercial taps into the universal emotions associated with threats and patterns. The quip addresses the universal emotions associated with reproductive opportunity.

## Quip (*Fun*)



This portrayal of a model pose by Ben Stiller in Zoolander is not a good example of how to command attention through emotions associated with “reproductive opportunity.” It is funny but does not stir emotions associated with reproduction. So sorry Ben! We are very impressed with the mixture of emotions you are able to convey with this pose but none of them puts us in the mood for love...

## Quest (*Resources*)

Dr. Valerie Patrick, Founder and President of Fulcrum Connection LLC, 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](mailto:valerie.patrick@fulcrumconnection.com) or text 412-742-9675) to set up an exploratory call.

Check out the new “Science of Success: Social Secrets” podcast on iTunes here: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/science-of-success-podcast/id1063826280>. Please click on “ratings” in iTunes to provide your input. All comments are welcome and encouraged!

Read about why there are misconceptions about facilitation on the Competent Collaborator Blog here: <http://fulcrumconnection.com/blog/facilitation-perception-to-end-the-misconception/>.

## 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.