SCARF – David Rock

Status - positive sense of self

Certainty - known and clear purpose

Relatedness - social skills getting on

Autonomy - sense of control

Fairness - an equal partnership

Threat

Reward

SCARF is a brain-based model developed by David Rock, a leadership expert from NY who specialises in neuroleadership – understanding the brain to improve leadership skills. SCARF stands for the five elements that affect us deeply when we are in any kind of collaborative relationship. The model argues that when one of these things are threatened, it causes a ‘fight or flight’ response in our brain that severely hinders our ability to operate effectively, solve problems and make decisions – anxiety, sweating, aggression. However, when one of these five are rewarded, it enhances our abilities.

The SCARF elements will differ in any situation – different collaborations will have different effects on an individual’s sense of status, feelings of certainty, etc. It is a tool to help move from I to we smoothly.

Purpose of the model:

1. Person formalising the collaboration could take this into account when designing it
2. People in the collaboration could be aware of this in maintaining the relationship – ensure there are no clear problems in any of these factors before starting the collaboration
3. Diagnostic tool when the collaboration falls apart

Detailed info at <https://peopleleaders.com.au/scarf-model/>

**Activity - think of a time you have engaged in collaboration that did or didn’t work. Can you use the SCARF model to ‘diagnose’ why it was successful or unsuccessful?**