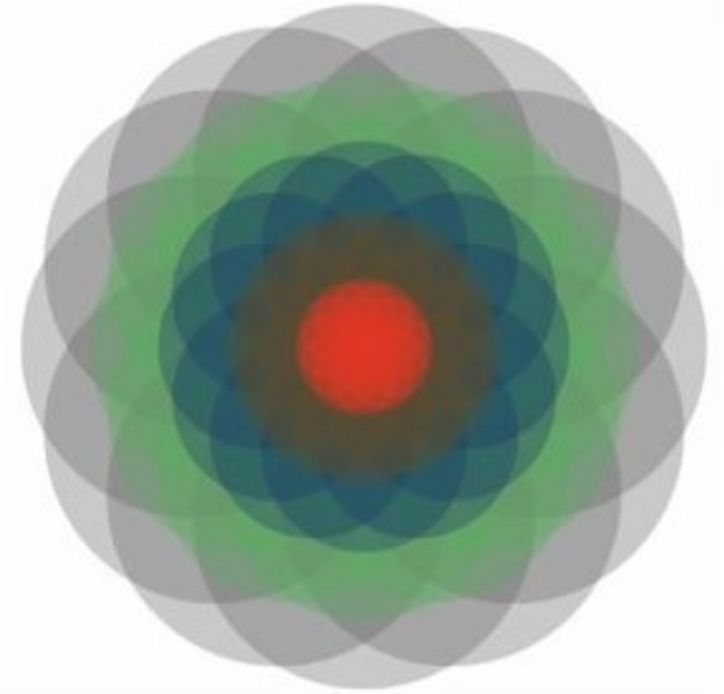


Welcome to 'Creating Healthy Orchestral Work Environments'



Jane Booth

Guildhall Ignite, Head

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Montana State University,
Professor

Founding Members of
Coalition of Musicians for
Ethical Change (CMEC)





Working Agreement



Unethical Behavior



Orchestra Context



Contest Culture & Cultural Change



Exercise



Case for Coaching Skills



Call to Action & Wrap up

A Working Agreement

CURIOSITY

RESPECT

CONSENT

ANONYMITY

BELIEVE THE VICTIM

Presenters' Agreement

Respectful Disagreement

Share Our Time

Make Space For Questions



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Unethical Behavior

Workplace
Harassment

Workplace Bullying

Sexual Harassment

**Equivalent to
Combined
Populations of
These 10 States**

**74.8 Million
U.S. Workers
Affected by
Workplace
Bullying**

**From the WBI 2024 U.S. Workplace Bullying Survey
of Adult Americans**

2025 Workplace Harassment and Misconduct Statistics

Four Gaps that Prevent Employees from Speaking Up

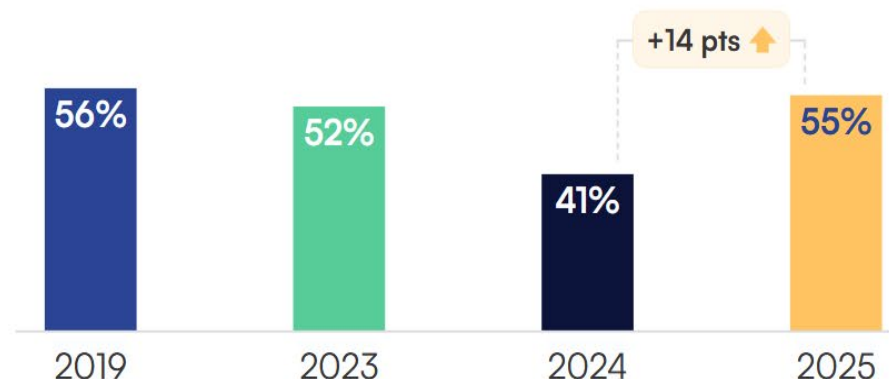
Workplace misconduct hit a near seven-year high.

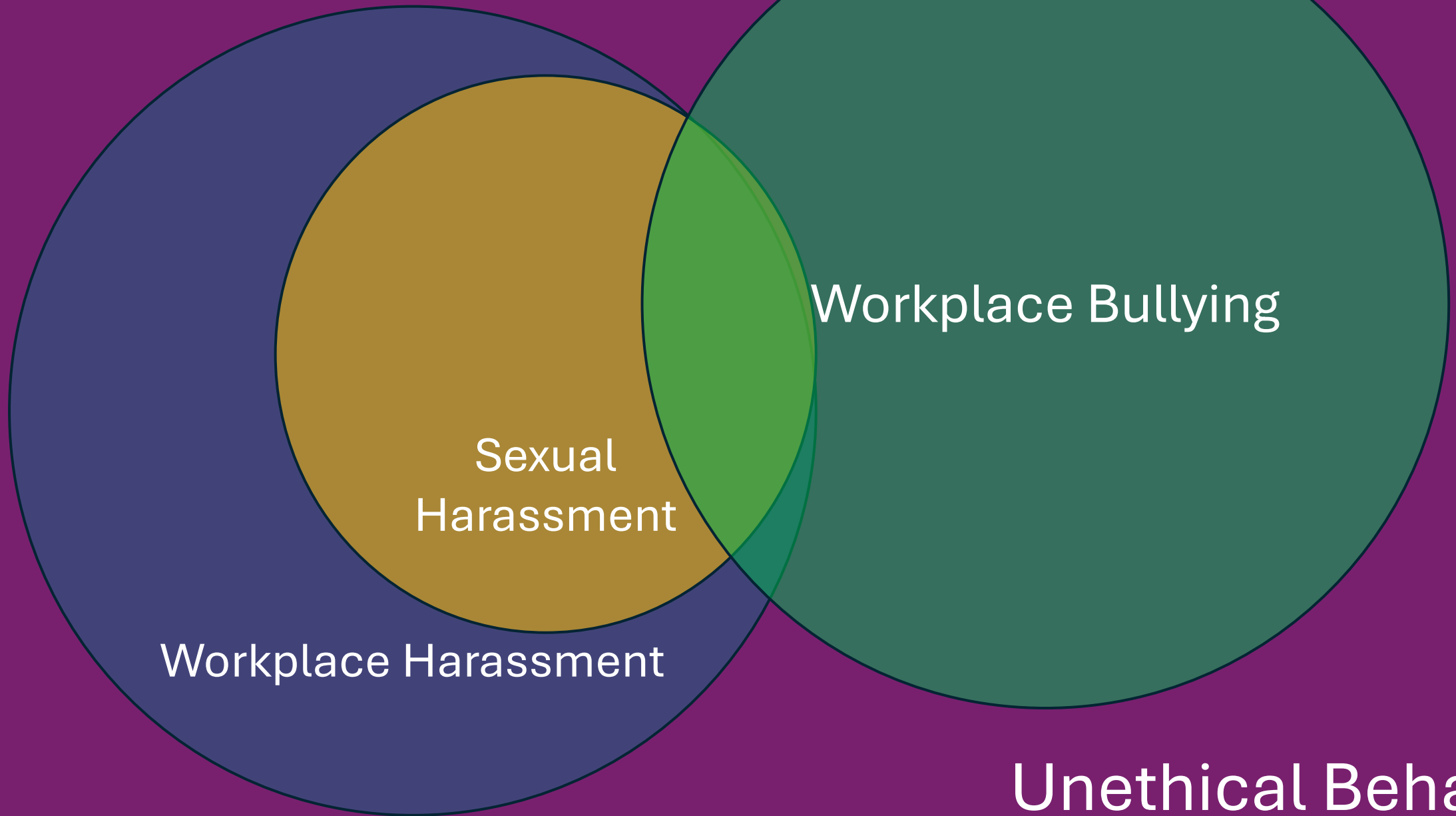
In the years following #MeToo, organizations invested in the structural foundations of employee relations, including stronger processes, updated policies and expanded training. Progress followed. Misconduct rates fell 15 points over five years.

Then 2025 happened. 55% of employees experienced or witnessed misconduct, a near seven-year high, signaling that structural foundations are not enough. Lasting change depends on employees feeling safe to raise concerns and seeing issues investigated, resolved and addressed with accountability.



HARASSMENT & MISCONDUCT RATES BY YEAR



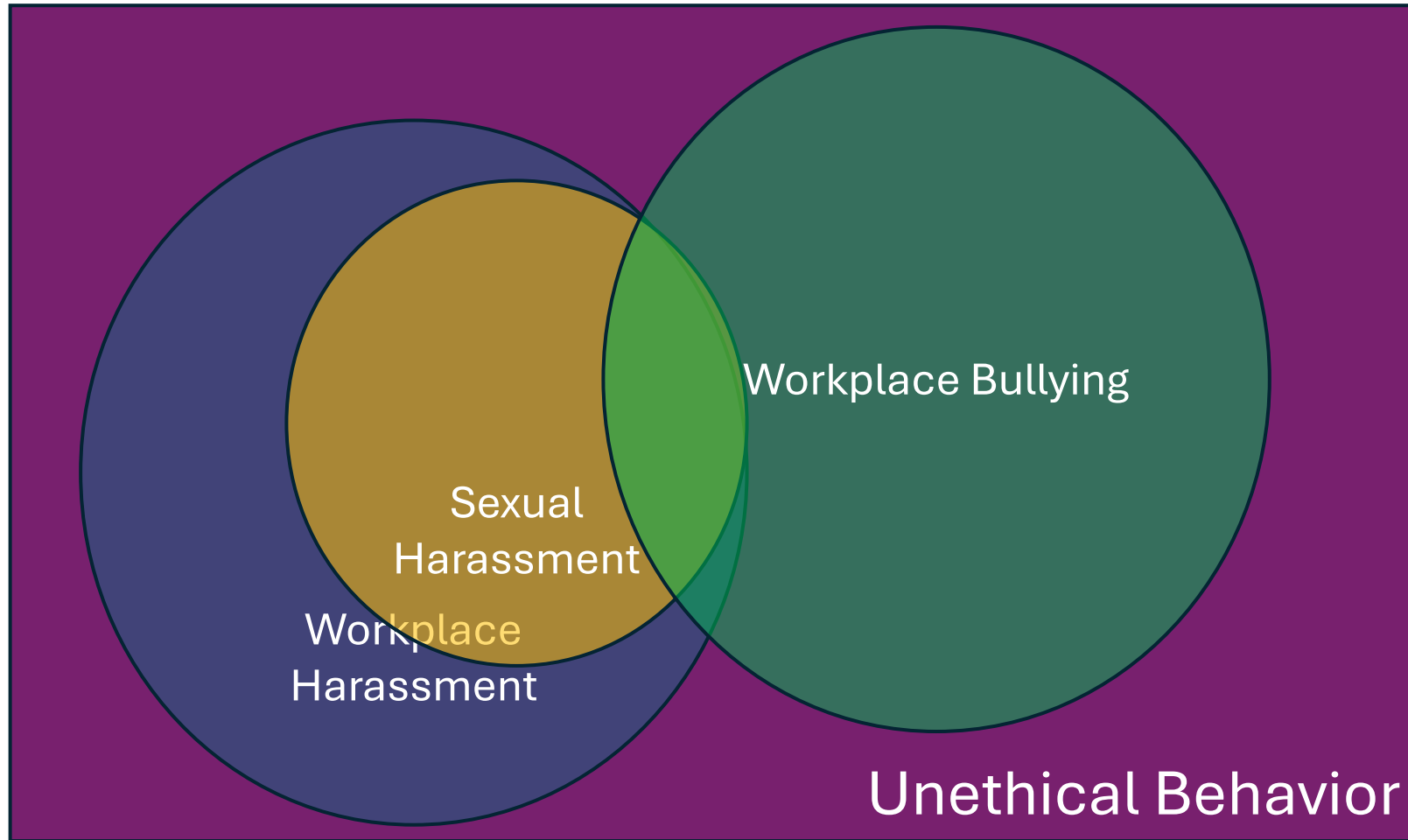


Workplace Harassment

Sexual
Harassment

Workplace Bullying

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Contest Cultures



- ✓ Zero-sum game competition
- ✓ Winners exhibit stereotypically masculine traits
- ✓ Often leads to organizational dysfunction & hyper competition among employees

4 Norms of Contest Cultures that Correlate with Organizational Dysfunction



1

show
no
weakness



2

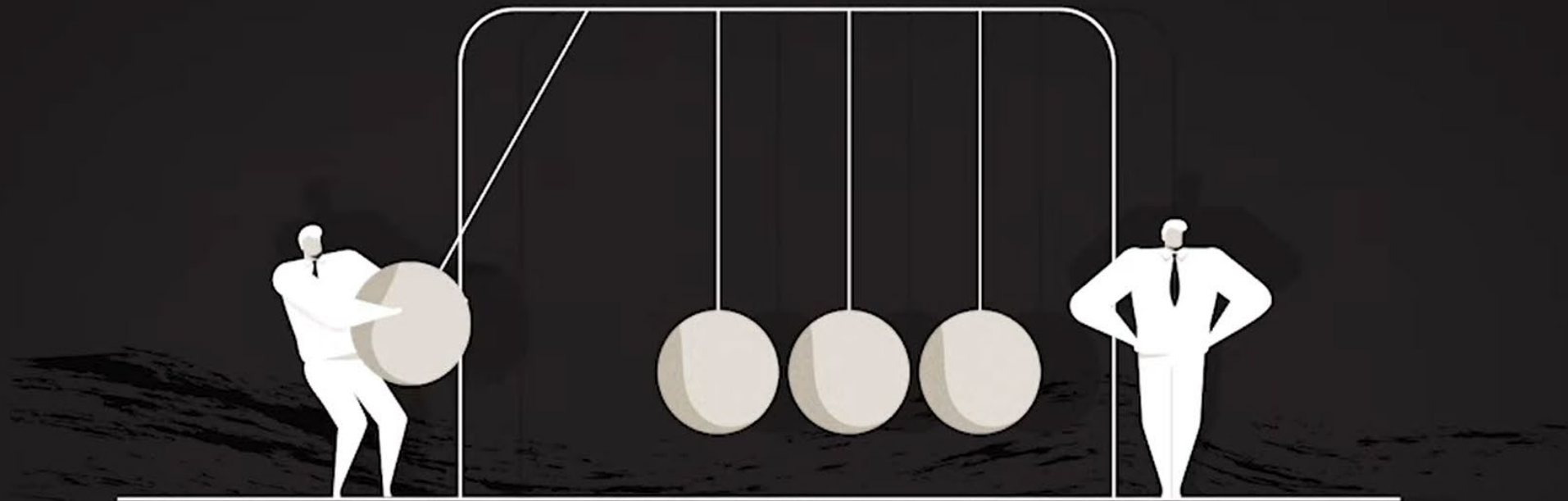


strength and stamina

3 put work first



4



dog-eat-dog



Might Orchestras Exhibit Contest Culture Traits?

Image Credit: Image generated with ChatGPT

Healthy Orchestral Environments require industry-wide behavior change

People need to find their way to choose to change their behavior and learn new behaviors



Healthy Orchestral Environments require industry-wide behavior change



Requires people to

- voice when behavior is not ok – more people will need to have a voice
- challenge small acts of discrimination that may be disguised as humor
- question *how we do things round here*

Easier said than done.



Image Credit: Travis Foster (11/1997) for Changing the Way
We Change *Harvard Business Review*

*In all three organizations, the 800-pound gorilla that
impaired performance and stifled change was "culture."*

Resistance to Change (Katz and Kahn, 1978)

Organizational Sources	Examples
Overdetermination	Employment system, job descriptions, evaluation and reward system, culture
Narrow Focus of Change	Structure changed with no consideration given to other issues (e.g. jobs, people)
Group Inertia	Group Norms
Threatened Expertise	People move out of areas of expertise
Threatened Power	Decentralized decision-making
Resource Allocation	Increased use of part-time help

Resistance to Change (Katz and Kahn, 1978)

Individual Sources	Examples
Habit	Altered tasks
Security	Altered tasks or reporting relationships
Economic Factors	Changed pay and benefits
Fear of the Unknown	New job, new boss
Lack of Awareness	Isolated groups not heeding notices
Social Factors	Group norms

Two basics types of change

1 REACTIVE change

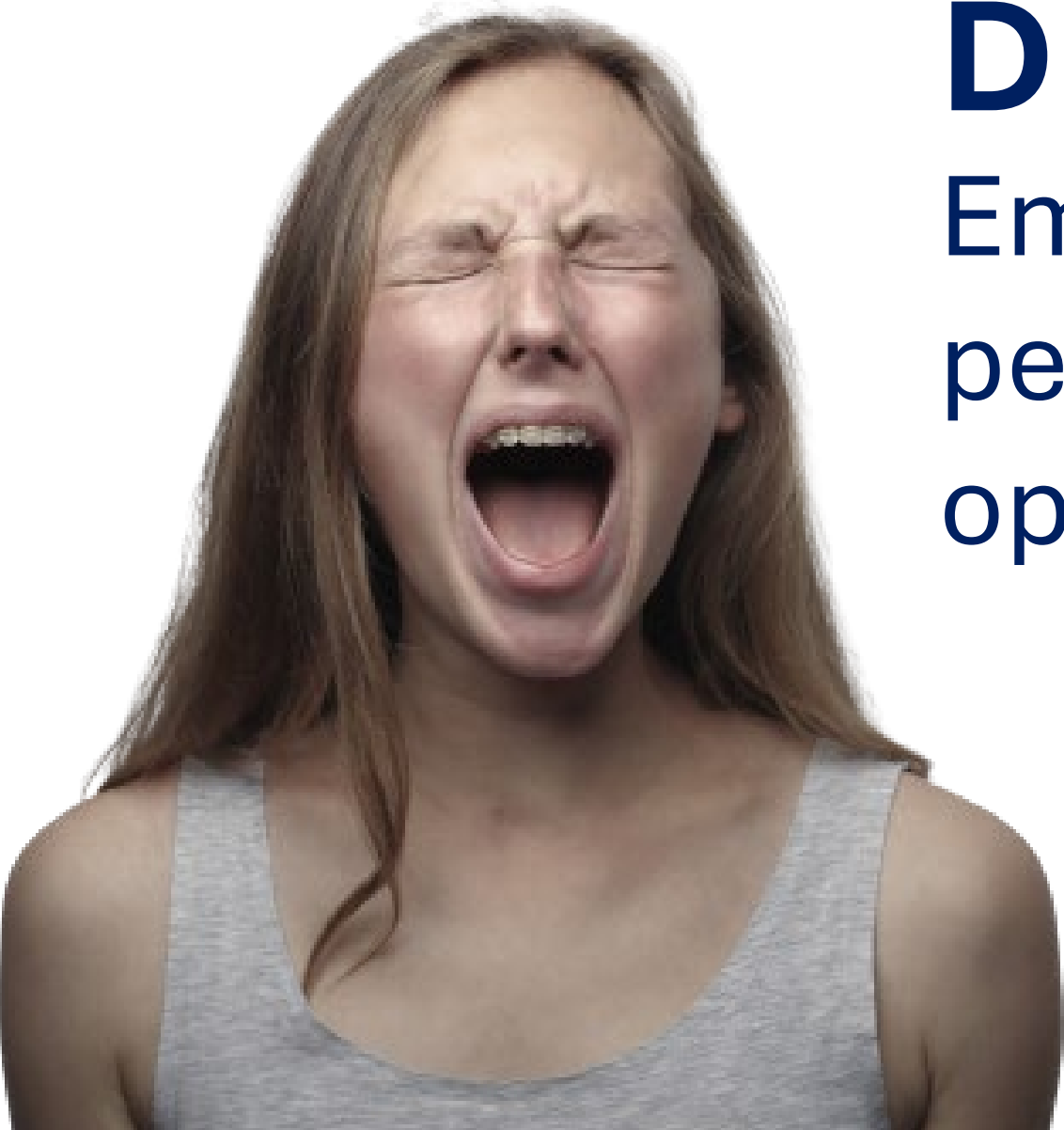


Two basics types of change

2 PROACTIVE change



**Raising dissatisfaction
is KEY to implementing
change**



DISSATISFACTION

Emotional energy about
performance or
opportunity gaps

Communicate
NEED for change
and **COSTS** of not
changing



Effective Models / Visions

- 1 Desirable
- 2 Feasible
- 3 Relevant



PACE

determined

by the

NATURE of

the change



Moving from change at an organizational level to a human level.



I observe two specific kinds in my coaching: change imposed upon us, and change we choose for ourselves.

Lifestyle/family/relationships/career moves



All require a journey rather than a single step. Not always straight forward

Even with the best of intentions

Directive

Urgency or crisis

High dissatisfaction

Low resistance

High level of support

Change agent has relevant info

Changes are clear

Persuasion

Not a crisis

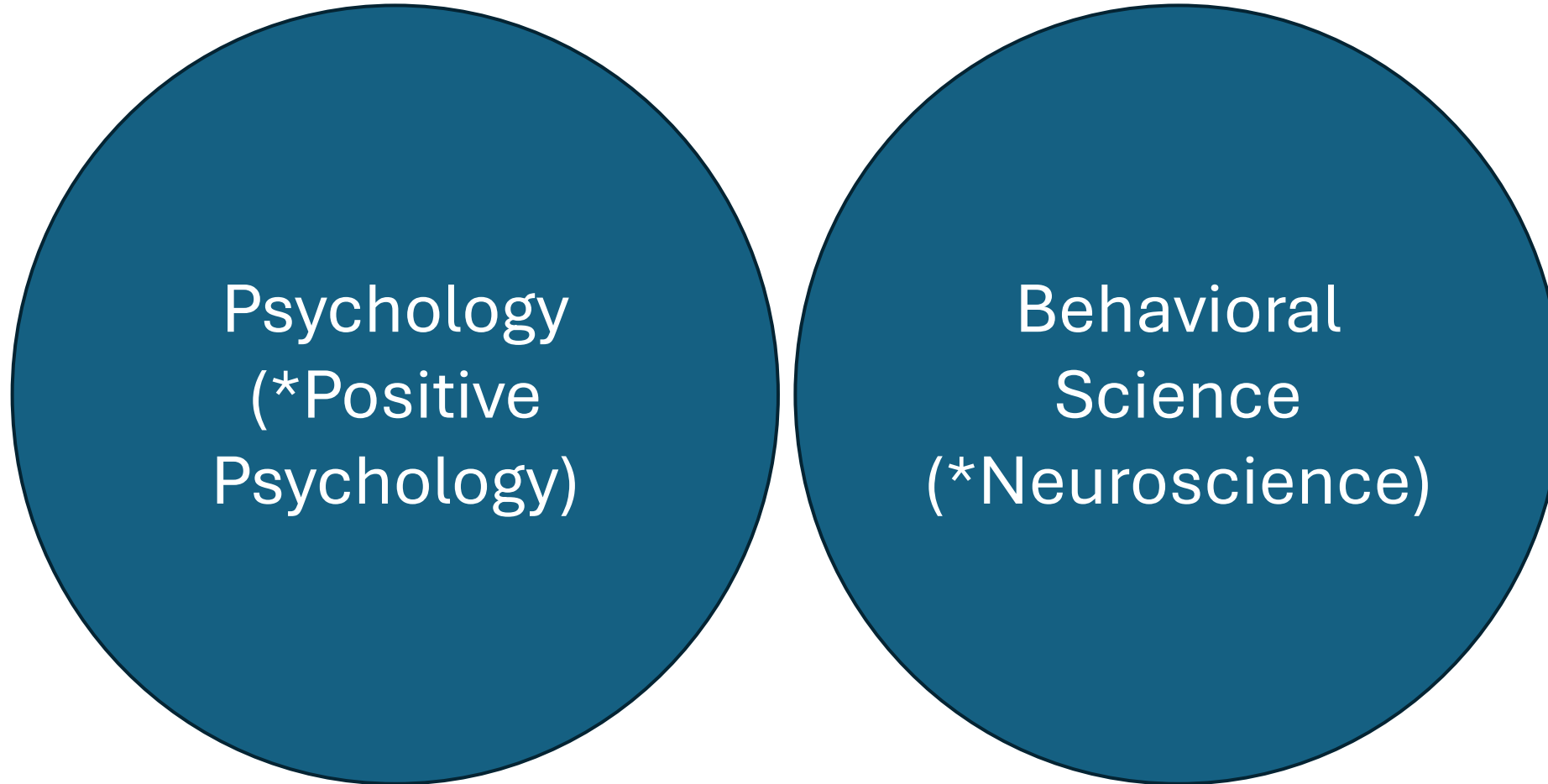
High need for commitment to engage in change

Change is not clear

Change is complex

Need support from key constituents

This is where Coaching skills can help



Research into how our brains work in relation to social and physical pain along with reward!

Fundamental organizing principle of the brain is to

Minimize danger & **Maximize reward**
(Evian Gordon, Neuroscientist)

The brain's job is to keep the host alive

It does this by prioritizing the limbic system – comprising emotional processing, behaviors, motivation and memory - over our Executive Functioning





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Call to Action & Wrap up

Know Your Brain, Transform Your Performance

Your Brain at Work

STRATEGIES FOR OVERCOMING
DISTRACTION, REGAINING FOCUS, AND
WORKING SMARTER ALL DAY LONG

David Rock

Foreword by Daniel J. Siegel, M.D.

The SCARF model was devised by neuroscientist, David Rock in 2008.

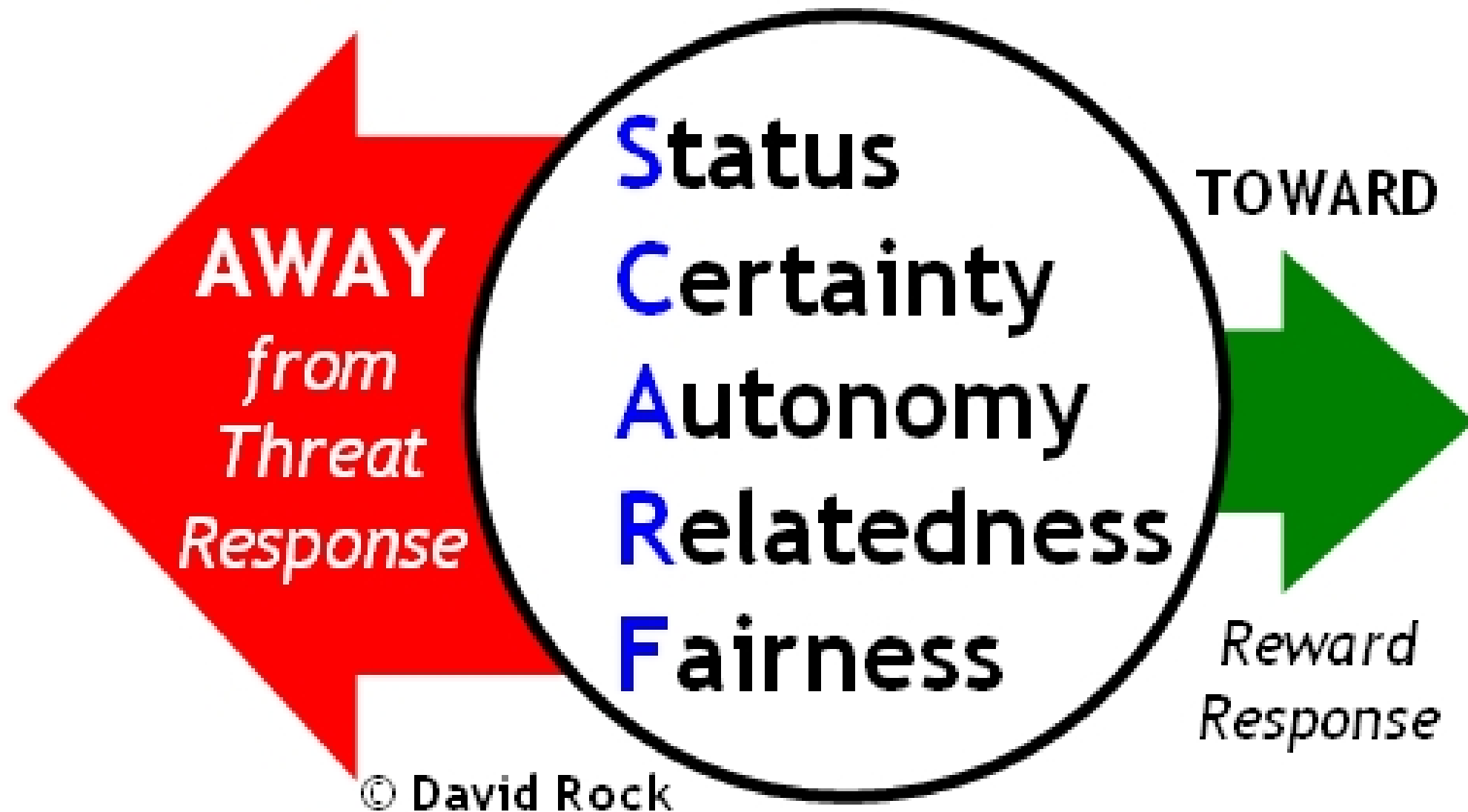
It represents human social interaction, and it is beneficial to understand how this works in relation to changes we want to make in the orchestral work

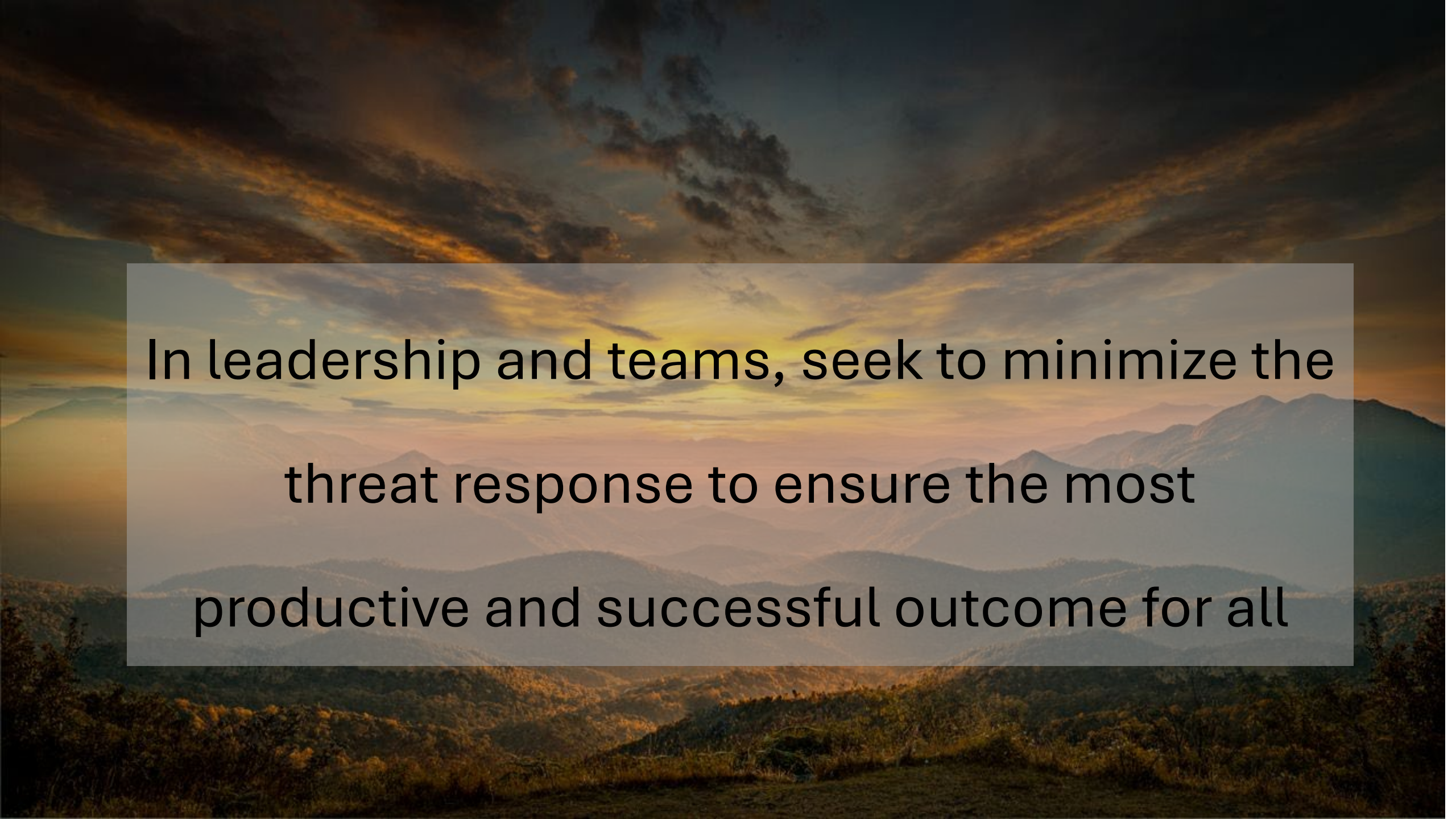
The brain responds to social threats and rewards in the same way and in the same intensity as physical ones

People's ability to problem solve, collaborate, make decision and perform at our best increases with a reward response and decreases with a threat response

The threat response is more powerful than the reward response.

SCARF Model of Social Threats and Rewards





In leadership and teams, seek to minimize the
threat response to ensure the most
productive and successful outcome for all



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Call to Action & Wrap up

A large orange circle on the left side of the slide.

Coaching Principles

Coaching is about change

People are creative & resourceful

In coaching, people are equals –
not seeking to exert positional
power

Coaching skills increase
resourcefulness (in contrast to
giving advice)

It's a collaborative relationship

It's a whole-person approach



Why?

Coaching works because it is based on psychologically proven principles – our need for Autonomy, Relatedness and Competence.

Jenny Rogers (Deci & Ryan Self Determination Theory, 1985)



Coaching – power **with**, not power **over**

- Builds trust & rapport by listening without judging too soon
- Facilitates other people's thinking
- Challenges people's self-imposed barriers & opens new possibilities
- Offers / receives honest, constructive feedback
- Holds people accountable
- Shares responsibility – reduces stress for self & increases ownership for others

What we know from research

Human beings:

Rely more on **emotion** than logic for the really important decisions in life

Resist externally-imposed requests for behavioral change

Can't be controlled by leaders through hierarchy

React to being told and directed with a “flight”, “fight” or “freeze” reaction

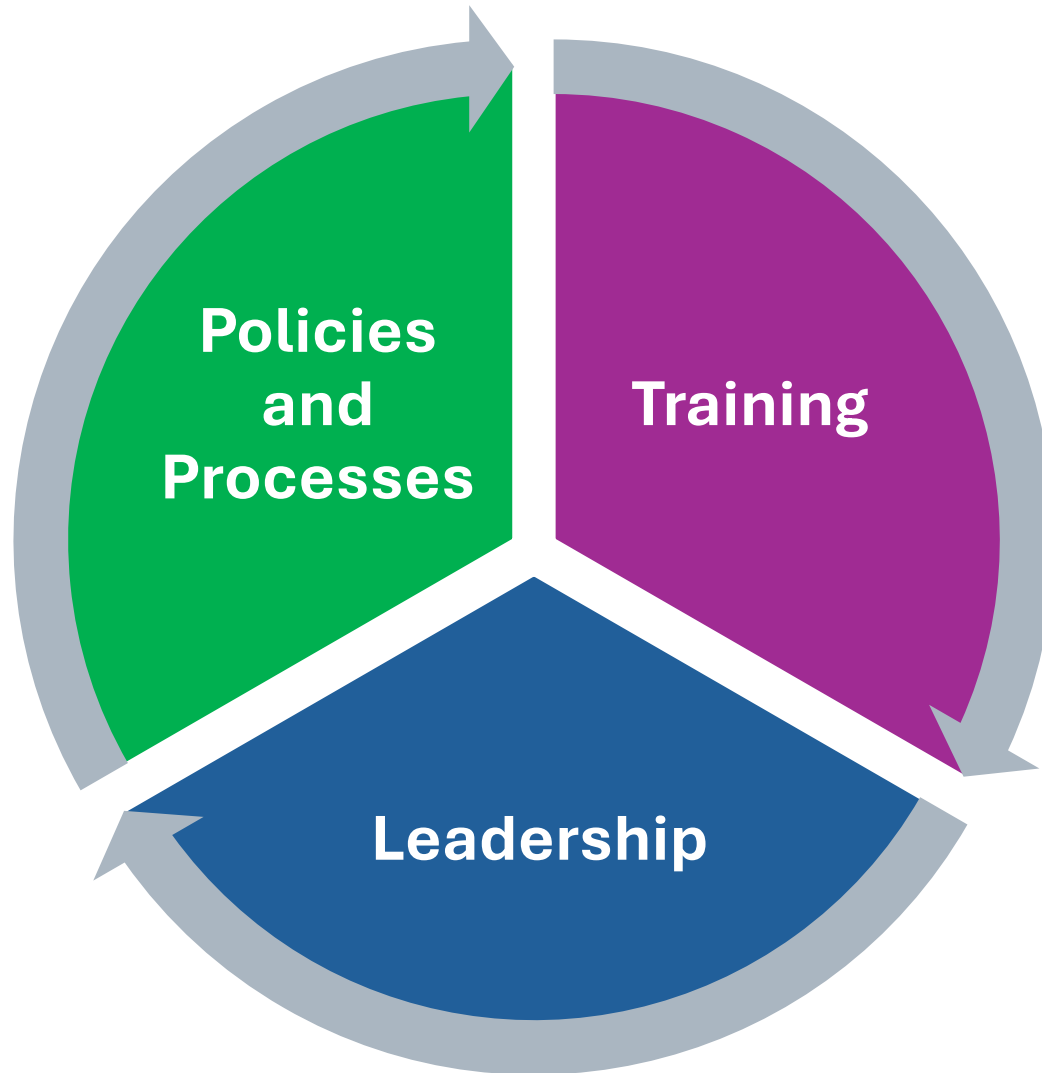


The Importance of working with Emotion

People don't always remember what you say or even what you do, but they always remember how you make them feel.

Maya Angelou

A Framework for Cultural Change



Update & Revise Policies & Processes



Co-created with the workforce:

- ✓ Organizational values: honor every member
- ✓ Clear expectations: safe channels for voice
- ✓ Clarity: roles, processes, investigations
- ✓ Compassion & support
- ✓ Safe work environment

Three questions from Coaching Psychologist, Dr Sarah Brooks:

What do you want
to say?

Who needs to hear?

What do you want
to happen?



Industry-specific training

- ✓ Build self-awareness
- ✓ Clarify leadership roles & responsibilities
- ✓ Establish regular leader-member dialogue
- ✓ Grow communication & conflict management skills
- ✓ Learn from mistakes



The culture of any organization is shaped by the worst behaviour the leader is willing to tolerate (Gruenter & Whitaker, 2023).

Inclusive Leadership – On and Off Stage



- ✓ Listen often, listen deeply
- ✓ Model, reinforce policies & expectations
- ✓ Reward acts of positive change
- ✓ Honour organizational values
- ✓ Hold responsibility for own actions & behaviours

The success of an
intervention depends
on the interior
condition of the
intervenor
-Bill O'Brien



Leaders On And Off Stage

GUILDHALL
IGNITE

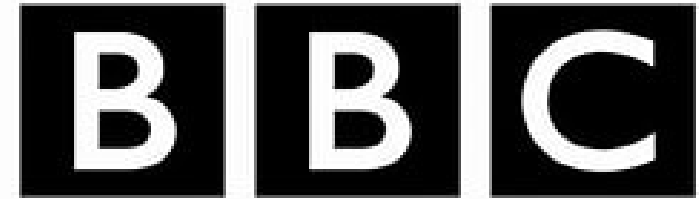
Executive and
Professional Performance

Musicians who took part have been incredibly positive about the experience...they found new language and skills to build even stronger relationships within their sections and teams.

Peter Garden, Chief Operating Officer, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Orchestra

*“I feel like I have **grown a new set of antennae**...to be more engaged with the individuals and more aware of what the group may need...when you influence the atmosphere in the room, and people realise they can talk, and they can suggest...they have agency. **You empower, they empower, everything feeds itself.**”*

**Zoe Beyers, Concert Master,
BBC Philharmonic Orchestra and
Britten Sinfonia**





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Call to Action & Wrap up



CALL TO ACTION!

Culture of the past has not served all.

We can do better and achieve *more*.

Everyone shapes a culture. Everyone plays a role in changing a culture.

How we work matters as much as *What* we work to produce!
Values play an important role.

We will never know the extent of a person's gifts until they feel safe to show themselves fully in the workplace.

Together, we can bring about a cultural revolution.

Resources

Coalition of Musicians for Ethical Change

<https://www.musiciansforethicalchange.org>

Safe Music Inc

<https://www.safemusic.ca/>

Backline Care, Inc

<https://backline.care/>

Guildhall Ignite

<https://ignite.gsmd.ac.uk/>



We'd like to hear from you!
We are conducting research on Contest Culture in orchestras. If you're interested in participating, you can find our survey at this QR Code and the following link through June 14:

https://montana.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ahK6x6pvygOazxY

This research is neither affiliated with nor completed in conjunction with the League of American Orchestras. If you have questions, please refer to Montana State University Research Protocol #2026-2689



What is one thing you will do differently to allow everyone you work with to feel safe, to do their best work, in the moments that matter most?

A row of eight light-colored wooden blocks, each with a black lowercase letter, spelling out 'thank you'. The blocks are arranged horizontally on a dark surface. The background is a soft-focus bokeh of warm, golden-yellow lights, creating a warm and appreciative atmosphere.

thank you

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