



THE GAZETTE

Published by Rasmussen Consulting

[JUNE 2012]

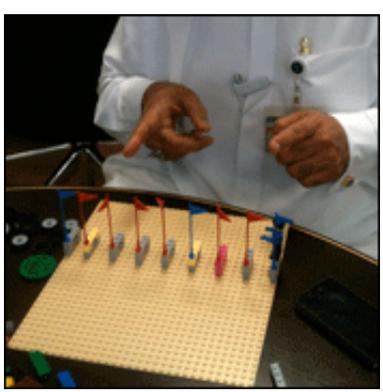
Brain Science Helps Us Better Understand Why the LEGO SERIOUS PLAY process Works

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Many of us know of LSP's power to break down barriers between people and get to the heart of what matters in record time. The relatively new body of research known as social neuroscience is providing insights on just why LSP is so effective.

Social neuroscience explores the biological foundations of the way humans relate to each other and to themselves and includes topics such as the theory of mind, the self, mindfulness, emotional regulation, attitudes, stereotyping, empathy, social pain, status, fairness, collaboration, connectedness, persuasion, morality, compassion, deception, trust and goal pursuit. From this diverse range of topics, two themes have emerged. Our brains guide us to minimize risk and maximize reward. Whether on conscious or subconscious levels, almost all of our behaviors are motivated by one of these two themes.

Threats to Status

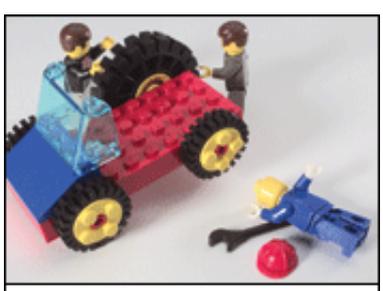


With the LEGO SERIOUS PLAY method, tasks, goals and behaviors become **"objectified"**, thereby making information and feedback less personal and less threatening

Common factors impacting workplace performance better understood using the minimize-risk-maximize-reward, or "approach-avoid", framework are Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness, abbreviated by the acronym **SCARF**.

Let's look at Status in the approach-avoid framework. The brain thinks about status, or relative importance in the "pecking order", using similar circuits to those used to process numbers. And in primates, status is directly linked to health and longevity. One's sense of status goes up when one feels better than another person. Winning, whether it be a race or a game "feels" good. A real or imagined threat to our status, such as being left out of an activity, lights up the same regions of the brain as physical pain. Status can be easily and unintentionally threatened, causing a threat response, by giving advice or instructions or simply suggesting someone is ineffective at a task.

Not Fair!



Forgive an honest mistake

Research (Tabina & Liberman. 2007) has proven that unfair exchanges impact the insular section of the brain, activating a strong threat response. The response is so strong, people will die to change perceived injustices, such as in political struggles. When we see others as "unfair", we don't feel empathy for their pain, and, in some instances, will feel rewarded when unfair others are punished. We emotionally "disengage".

We all know how routinely workers feel they are treated unfairly. There are always co-workers who seem to get away with more

Fairness and value are complex concepts and everyone defines them somewhat differently. Building three-dimensional models of what fairness and value mean to you and your colleagues is a good place to start.

than employees following the "rules". Compensation systems, especially executive compensation, are catalysts for generating feelings of being treated unfairly. (S/he is younger, or has less experience, or less education, or less commitment, or is friends with the boss, or always leaves at 5 p.m. AND makes more money than I do.)

Fairness and value are complex concepts and everyone defines them somewhat differently. Building three-dimensional models of what fairness and value mean to you and your colleagues is a good place to start.

More about SCARF



Information about other elements of the [SCARF](#) model is available in "SCARF: a brain-based model for collaborating with and influencing others" by David Rock.

Check out our new website with the latest [LEGO SERIOUS PLAY training calendar](#) and [news](#) about LEGO SERIOUS PLAY

In the News!

If you have a particular interest in applying the LEGO SERIOUS PLAY method to elementary/primary education you might want to check out this press release from LEGO EDUCATION [LEGO\(R\) Education BuildToExpress Transforms the Learning Process ...](#)

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Rasmussen Consulting (formerly Robert Rasmussen and Associates) specializes in using the LEGO SERIOUS PLAY methodology to effectively harvest an organization's collective intelligence to enhance strategic behavior for better and faster decision-making. We are based in Denmark with offices in US and Japan. www.rasmussenconsulting.dk.

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