



Effective Leadership in Times of Turmoil

Applying Lessons from Neuropsychology

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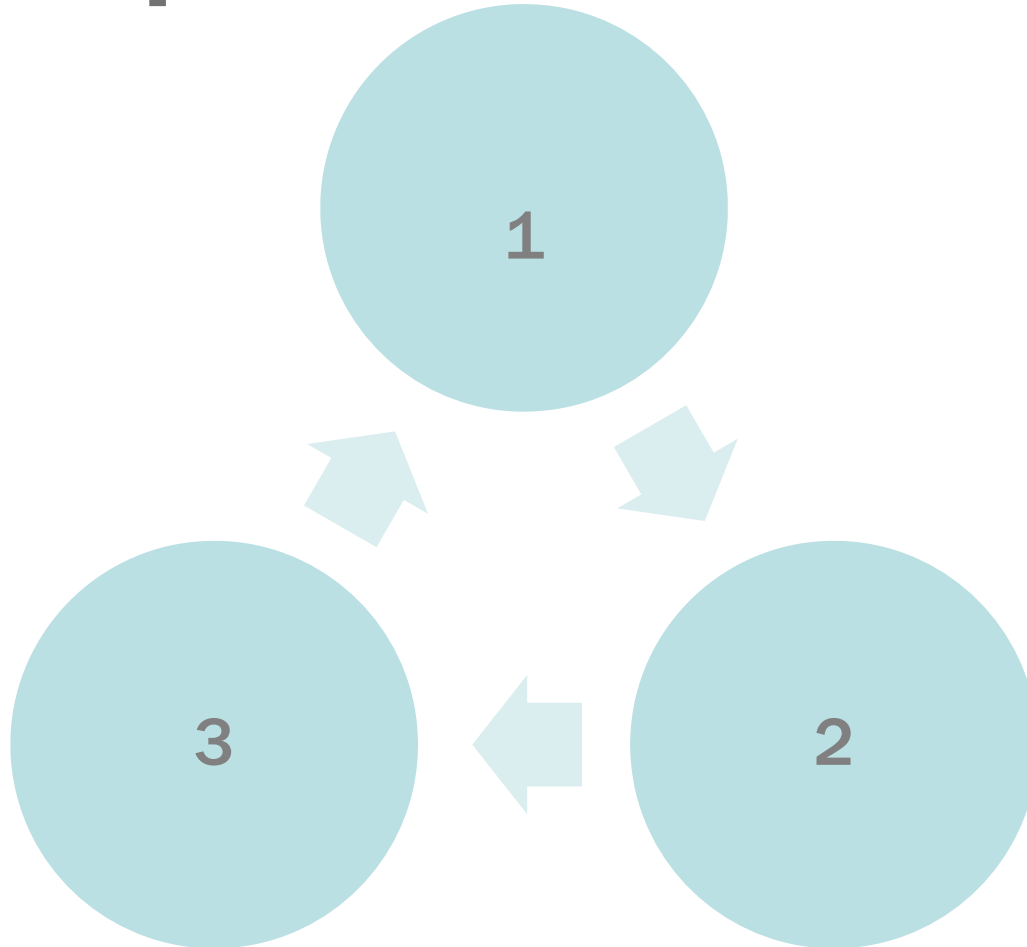


A Question to Begin

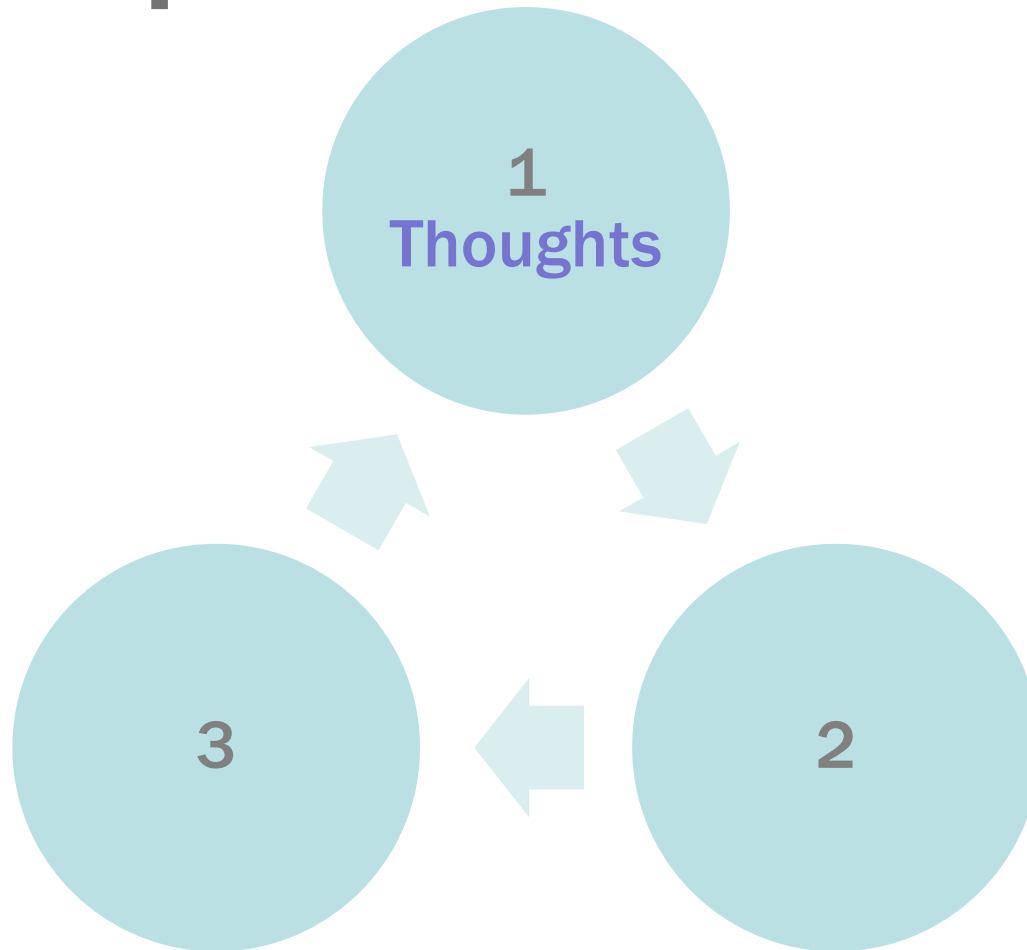
Raise of Hands.....

Who in Here Has a Personality?

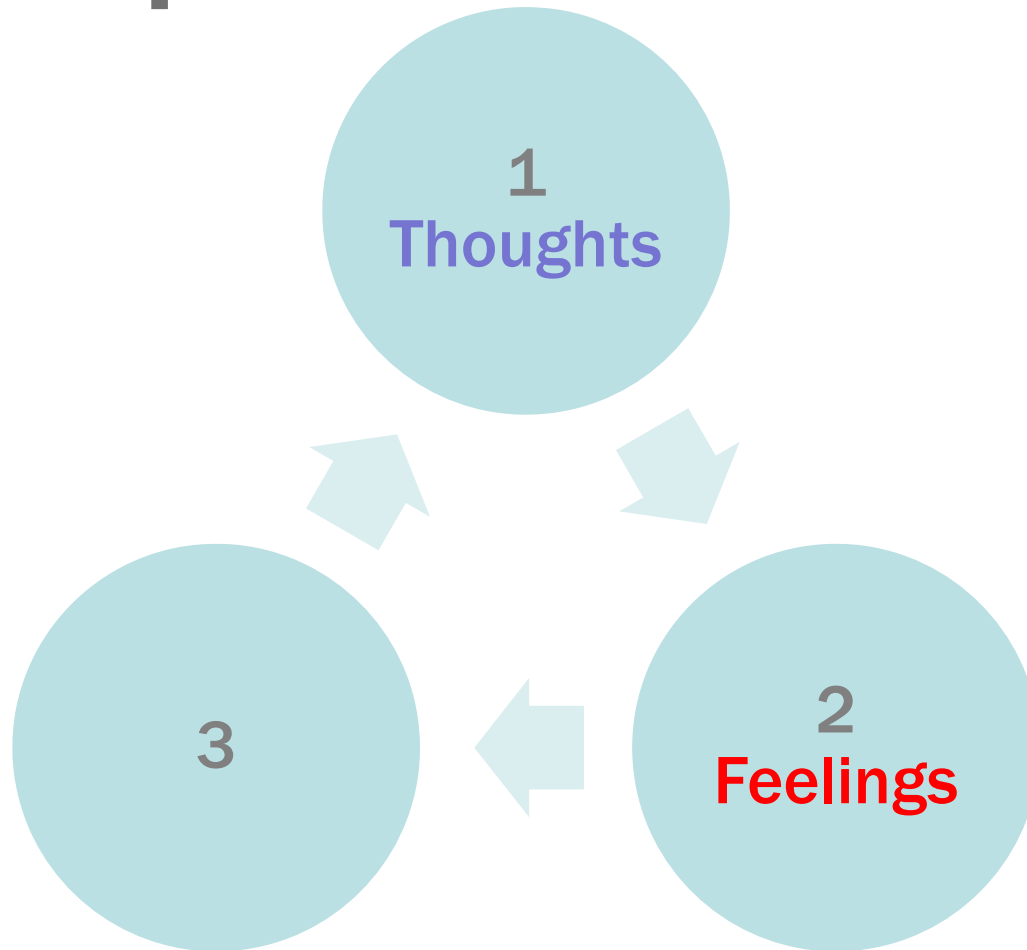
Components of Personality



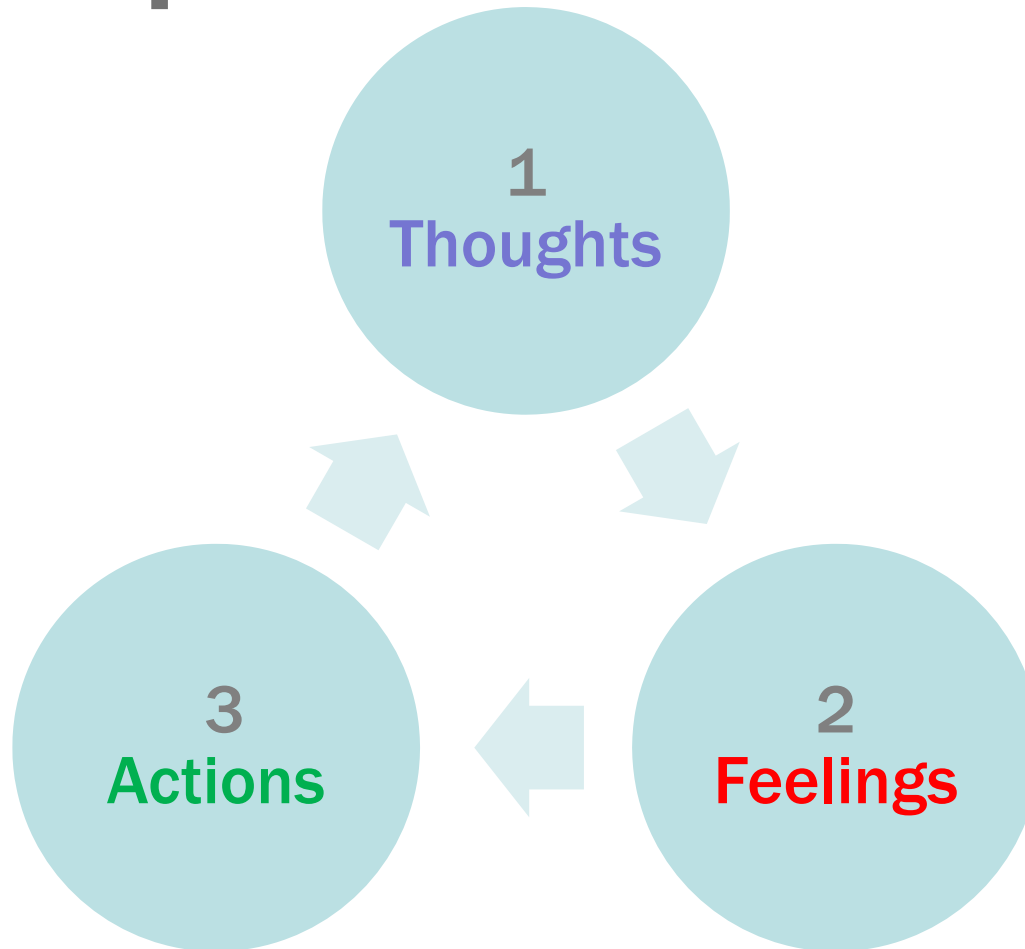
Components of Personality



Components of Personality



Components of Personality



What is Neuropsychology?

- ▶ The science of brain–behavior relationships that seeks to understand:
 - ◆ The *thought processes* that impact how we approach being successful – **Our Thinking**
 - ◆ How *emotions* can either help or hinder our efforts to be successful – **Our Feelings**
 - ◆ How to effectively *execute* on decisions and tasks to maximize success – **Our Actions**

Neuropsychology Lesson One:

- **The brain forms “mental maps” for everything it can with regard to how we think, feel, and act!**

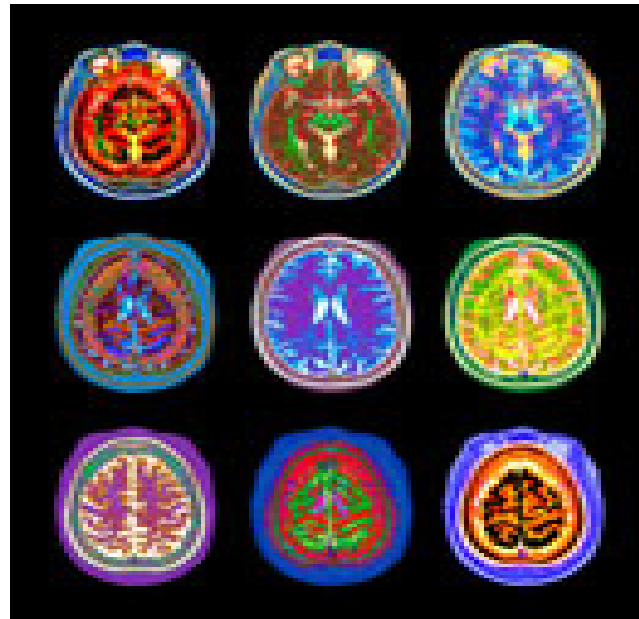


Neuropsychology and Leadership

- ▶ One role of neuropsychology in leadership is to help leaders know how to best develop their follower's *thinking*, *feeling*, and *actions* in a way that maximizes success for them and the organization

Neuropsychology Lesson Two:

- ▶ **Our personalities are all very different because our brains are all very different.**



Effective Leadership in Times of Turmoil

► The Reality

- ◆ Leading in times of turmoil is really no different than any other time - You must direct your leadership in a way that ensures your follower's actions are in alignment with the mission of the organization.

Effective Leadership in Times of Turmoil

The Challenges are Greater!

“Anyone can steer the ship when the sea is calm”

Publius Syrus

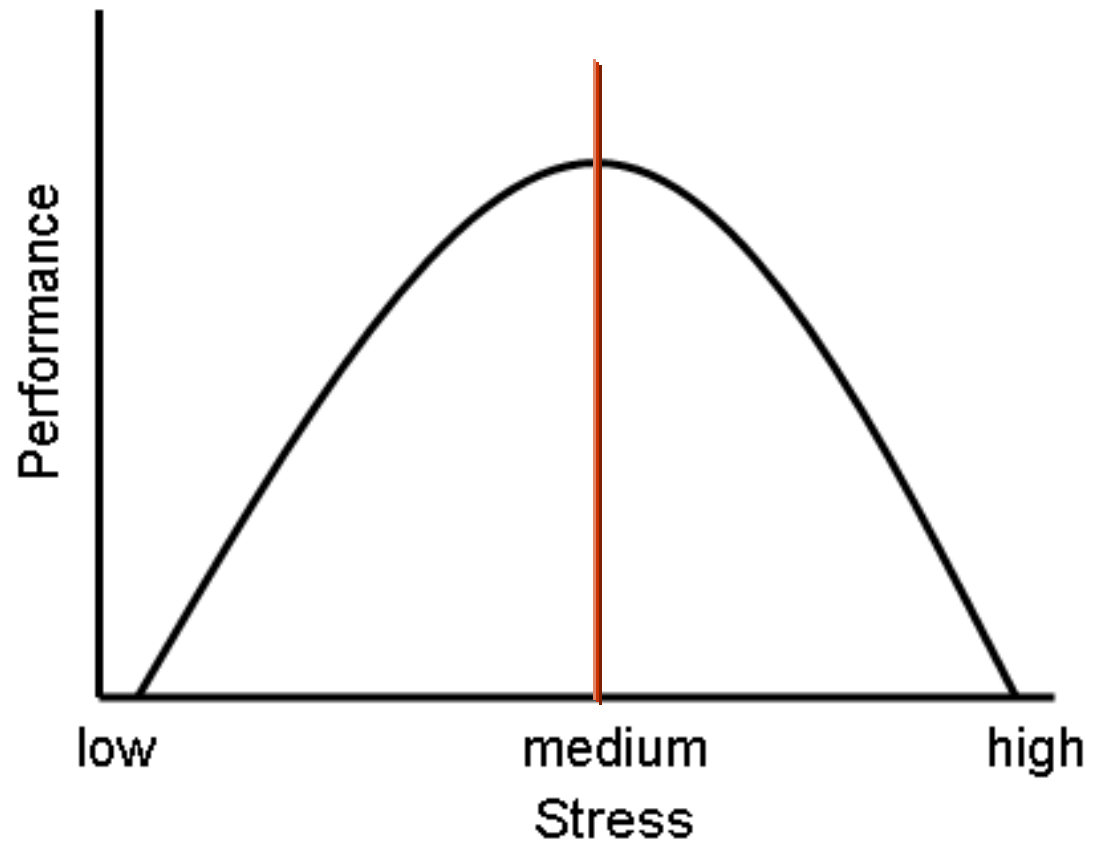
- ◆ Limited financial resources due to budget cuts
- ◆ Limited human resources due to layoffs/attrition
- ◆ Disagreement on priorities
- ◆ Changing job roles
- ◆ **Stressed out employees**

Impact of Stress on Employee Performance?



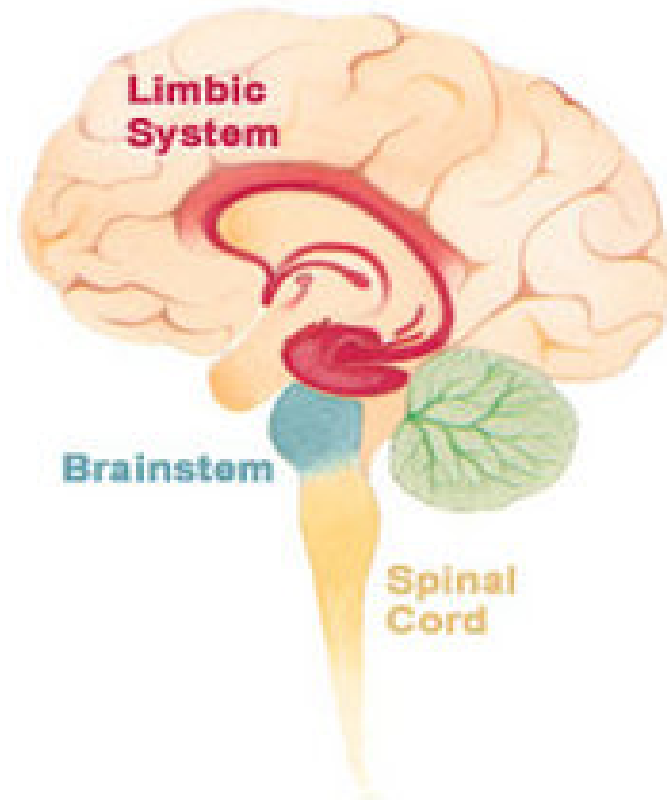
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As challenges increase stress levels rise beyond the optimal levels.

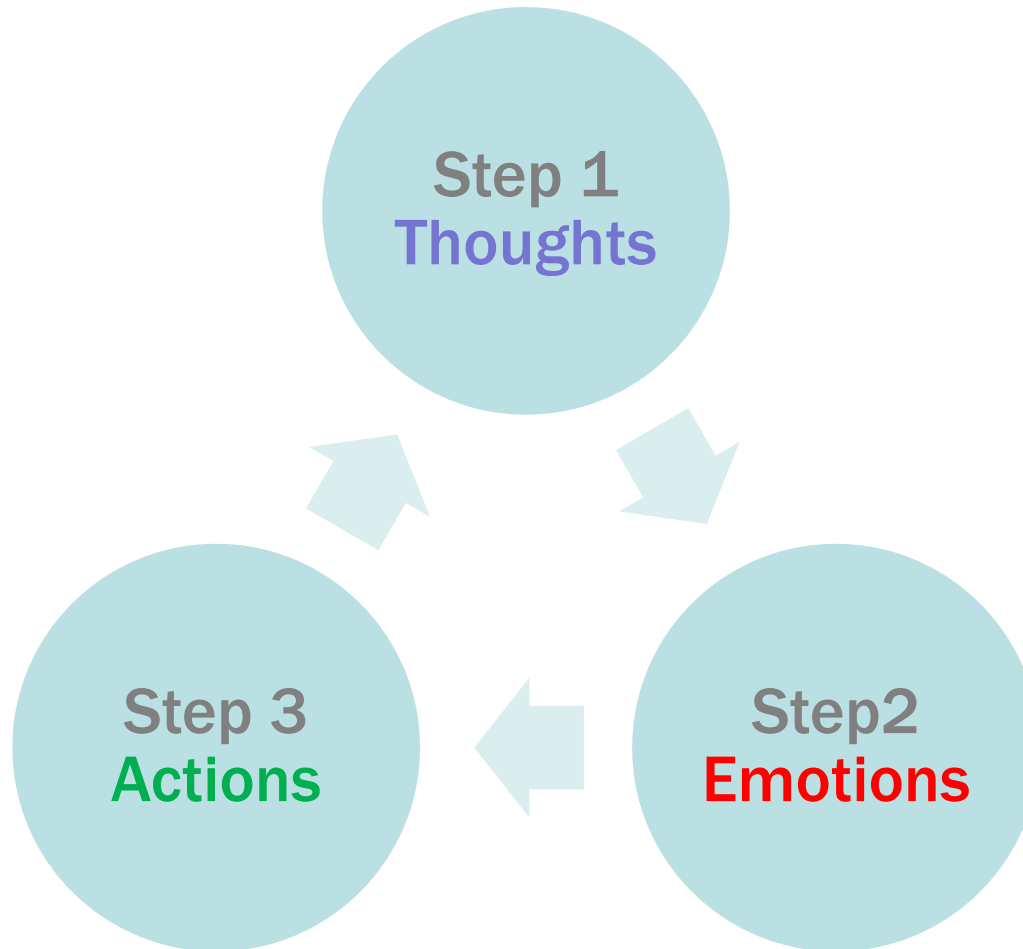


Neuropsychology Lesson Three:

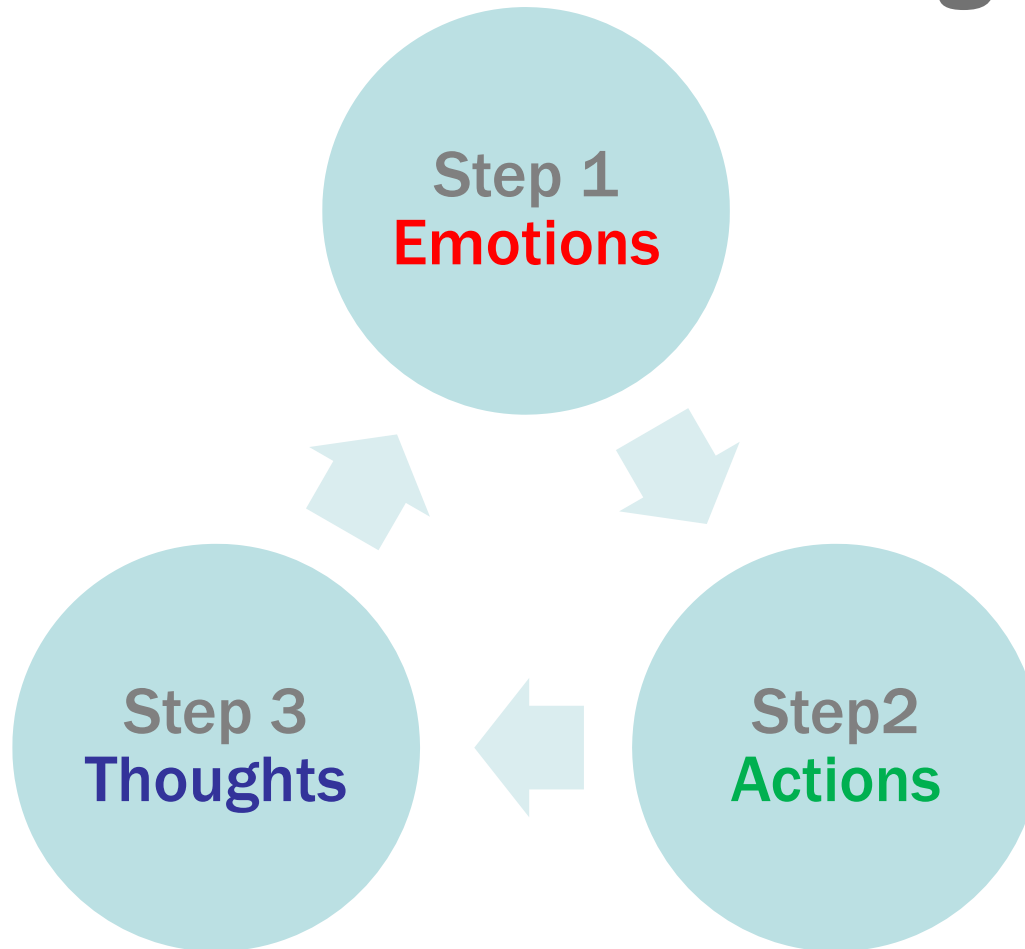
- ▶ When fear strikes, our actions are driven by a different part of our brain – a primitive part designed for physical survival, not creative problem solving.



Non-Stress Functioning



Stress Functioning



Neuropsychology Lesson Four:

▶ **Negative emotions generate behaviors and thoughts that interfere with execution.**

- ◆ **Fight Response – Frustration, Anger**
- ◆ **Flight Response – Worry, Anxiety**

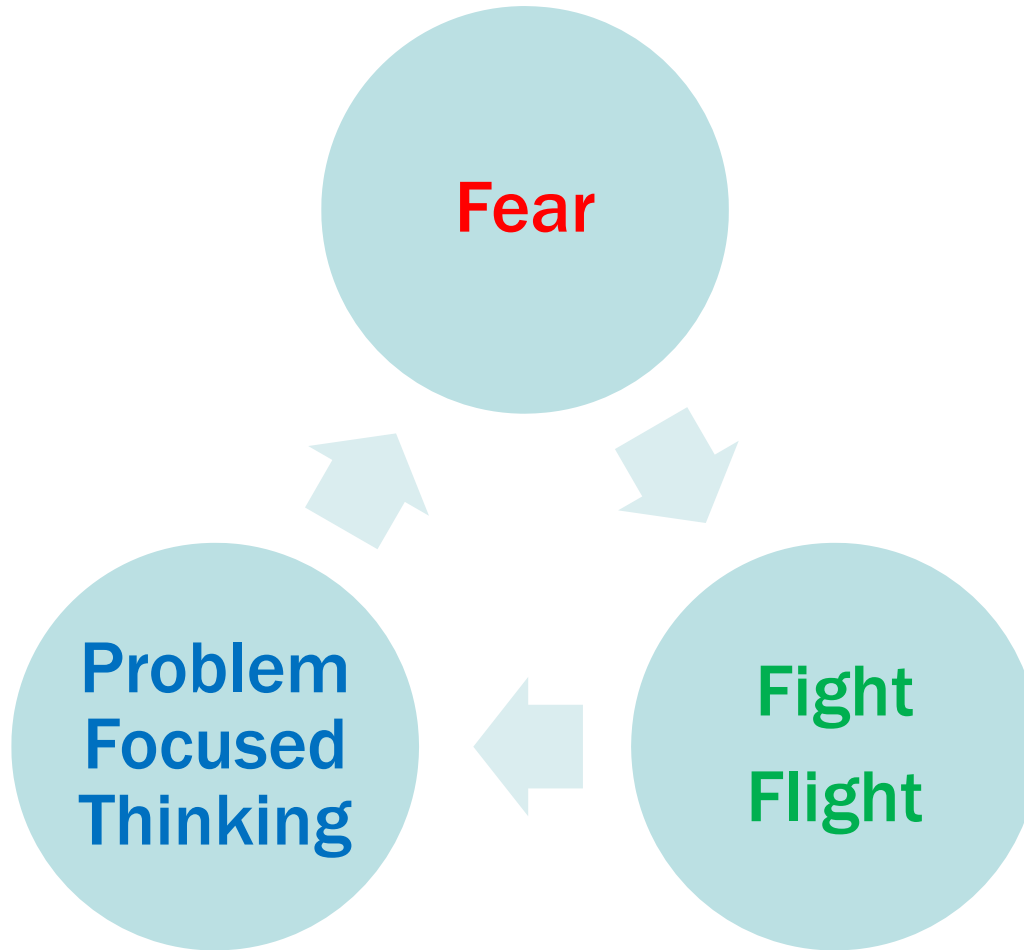


Medium-Stress

High-Stress



The Problem Focused Cycle



Effective Leadership in Times of Turmoil

The Objective

Help your followers move away from emotionally charged problem focused thinking to **solution focused thinking**

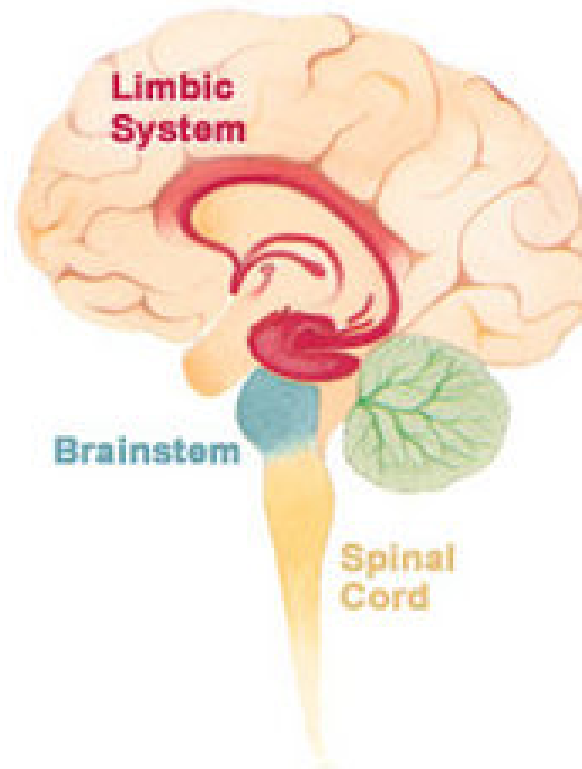
The Strategy

Balanced use of three key skills as strategies

1. Active Listening
2. Open Ended Questions
3. Assertive Feedback

Neuropsychology Lesson Five:

- ▶ **Active Listening re-engages the thinking part of the brain.**



What is Active Listening?

- Gathering information to understand the other person's perspective
- **DON'T try to "solve the problem"**
- Reflecting back what they are telling us

Active Listening

Only after the emotion is diffused should you move to the problem solving mode and begin to look for solutions.

Neuropsychology Lessons Six & Seven:

- ▶ Solutions to problems occur when new mental maps are formed.



- ▶ Open ended questions are an effective way to create new *solution focused* mental maps.

What are Open Ended Questions?

- **What could you do differently?**
- **What ideas do you have to solve this?**
- **What would be your next step?**
- **What are some additional possibilities?**



Making Open Ended Questions Work

- **Focus on the solution, not the problem**
- **Create as many solution options as possible**
- **Avoid solving the problem for them**
- **Guide them to their own solution**

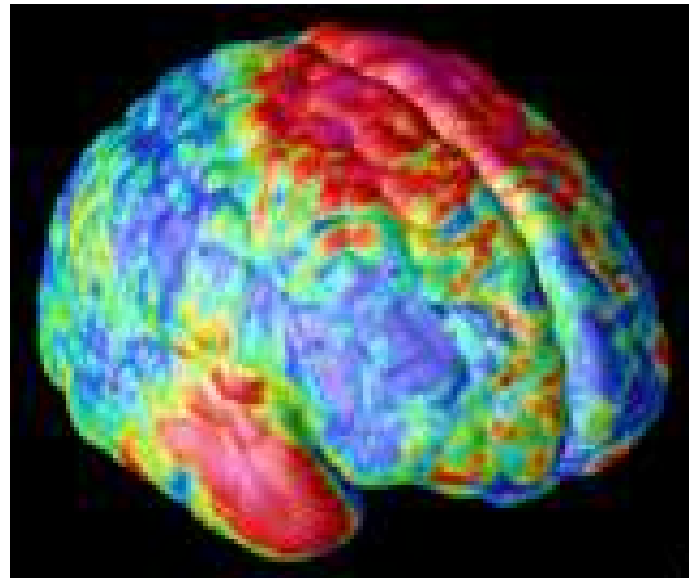
Neuropsychology Lessons Eight & Nine:

- ▶ Execution occurs when sufficient attention is focused on the task – attentional density.
- ▶ Ongoing feedback focuses attentional density



Two Types of Feedback

Constructive Feedback
Positive Feedback





Steps for Delivering Constructive Feedback

- 1. Deliver in private and timely manner**
- 2. Ask for permission**
- 3. Describe specific observed behaviors and consequences**
- 4. Get Confirmation**
- 5. Ask for a solution**

Steps for Delivering Positive Feedback

- 1. Deliver in private and timely manner**
- 2. Ask for permission**
- 3. Describe specific observed behaviors and consequences**
- 4. Get Confirmation and Reinforce**
- 5. Ask for the next step**

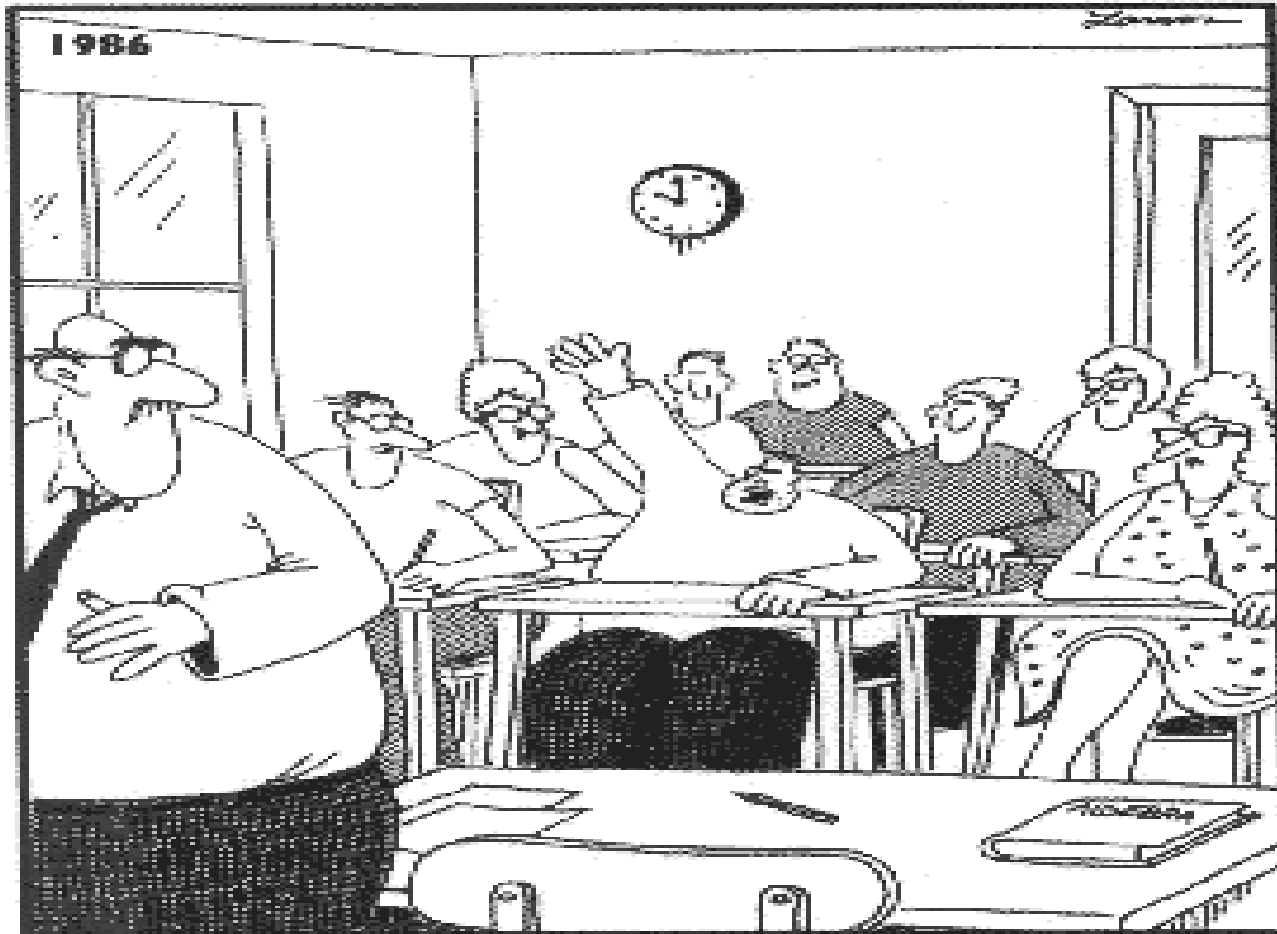


Effective Leadership in Times of Turmoil

- ▶ **Simple strategies with powerful results**
 - **Active Listening**
 - **Open Ended Questions**
 - **Ongoing Feedback**

- ▶ **Outcomes:**
 - **Employees and peers feel more valued**
 - **Motivation is improved**
 - **Greater collaboration occurs**
 - **Better solutions are developed**

Final Thought



"Mr. Osborne, may I be excused? My brain is full."



“The quality of an organization’s performance cannot exceed the quality of its leadership.”

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