

6 INSIGHTS OF THE BRAIN

In order to understand ourselves as teachers, and our students in a more effective manner – the knowledge of our brain and how it works can go a long way. It helps understand the dynamic way in which learning happens, and the role our emotions play in learning and cognition. David Rock's six insights are central to understanding how and why coaching works. Here is a brief summary of the six insights. We will consistently refer to these insights during our workshop.

1. THE BRAIN IS A CONNECTION MACHINE

Our goal is to unlock an individual's highest potential. We achieve that by driving reflection, improving thinking habits, building self-accountability and creating an intrinsic drive for positive change.

When we have a new idea, the brain is “creating a map of that idea in our mind, and then compares it subconsciously in a fraction of a second to our existing maps.” The creation of this new map releases energy motivating us to take action. It is important for someone to think things through for themselves so they can make their own connections and become motivated to take personal action.

2. NO TWO BRAINS ARE ALIKE

Each person has a unique set of connections for how they think about things. We each have more than “300 trillion constantly changing connections,” which means that each person's mental map is different from others. Everyone has their own experiences, learning and information and each brain encodes it differently. This information helps us understand that our solution for someone else is usually not the right one for them.

3. THE BRAIN HARDWIRES EVERYTHING IT CAN

New ideas or behaviours use what is called “working memory” which is a very limited resource in the brain. The brain therefore, likes to automate actions, thoughts or behaviours that are repeated by hardwiring them, “so we literally don't have to pay any attention.”

4. HARDWIRING DRIVES AUTOMATIC PERCEPTION

We perceive the world according to our mental maps which are hardwired. As a result we “perceive the world according to our beliefs and attitudes, rather than seeing things as they are or as they could be.” So it is natural for people to fight hard to hold on to their view of the world especially during times of change because there is a fear that their “whole world might collapse.”



5. IT'S PRACTICALLY IMPOSSIBLE TO DECONSTRUCT OUR WIRING

Many of our connections are firmly embedded into our subconscious mind so changing a habit will be very difficult to do. In fact, the more a person focuses on the habit they want to change, the deeper the connections will be made. The solution is rather than changing a habit, it is easier to create a new habit with new thinking.

6. IT'S EASY TO CREATE NEW WIRING AS THE BRAIN CREATES NEW CONNECTIONS ALL THE TIME.

Every time we do something new, meet a new person, or understand a new idea, new connections are made which create a new mental map. If we want to create a new map, "we need to pay it lots of attention in the form of quality and quantity (seconds) of focus. This is what changes the brain over time."

Source: Quiet Leadership, David Rock.

WAYS EMOTIONS AFFECT BEHAVIOR

