



eldorado gold

Eldorado Gold Breaks New Ground by Cultivating Insightful Leaders

Leaders learn to apply the science of creating inclusion, speaking up, and mitigating bias



Impact
97% of leaders applied SCARF® signals to be more inclusive at least once a week

Scale
145 global leaders

Speed
3 x 30 day sprints

The challenge

Eldorado Gold has been operating its mines in a safe, innovative, and ethical manner for nearly thirty years. Commitment to those values has allowed them to break new ground—in a very real sense—across the world. At their mines in Canada, Turkey, and Greece, they're tapping into new geological formations and diverse geographic markets.

As their mining operations continue to expand and diversify, so does their workforce—which now consists of 4,300 employees spread across multiple countries and countless cultures.

But despite a wealth of diverse talent, leaders at Eldorado Gold recognized an opportunity to create a more cohesive and inclusive culture to unlock the benefits that diverse teams can create. Now Eldorado Gold is using neuroscience to leverage diversity intentionally by cultivating insightful and inclusive leaders.

The science

The SCARF® Model

- Every time we interact with someone, we use language and engage in behavior that either uplifts and motivates people, or causes them to withdraw or shut down—that is, we are either meeting or depriving them of their social needs.
- The SCARF® Model describes the five key domains of social threat and reward, and helps leaders and employees alike meet one another's needs.

The SEEDS Model®

- Bias affects everyone's decision-making, but certain strategies can mitigate the role bias plays.
- The SEEDS Model® sorts 150+ biases into five categories, to aid in recognition and mitigation in daily conversation.



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The SCARF® Model



The SEEDS Model®

How It Works



Executive Briefing:

Leaders learn cutting-edge research for a strategic competitive advantage.



High Impact Virtual Experience (HIVE):

Learning is scaled in 3 sixty-minute robust, facilitator-led virtual conversations.



Distributed Learning Solution (DLS):

Organization-wide behavior change is driven through virtual and social learning in 3 five-minute weekly videos, one sixty-minute webinar or discussion toolkit, with self-directed practice throughout.

The solution

In 2019, Eldorado Gold set out on a journey to create a culture where all employees could perform their best. They dubbed the effort “Valuable Leadership” and partnered with NLI to embed the critical habits leaders need to create inclusion, enable employees to speak up productively, and help teams mitigate bias.

Together, Eldorado Gold and NLI designed a multi-solution pathway consisting of NLI’s INCLUDE: The Neuroscience of Smarter Teams®, VOICE: The Neuroscience of Speaking Up™, and DECIDE: The Neuroscience of Breaking Bias® solutions. Each solution in the pathway supports and reinforces the company’s core values of collaboration, integrity, agility, drive, and courage.

Each solution has been rolled out to leaders around the world; beginning with an executive briefing to secure executive buy-in, then rolling out NLI’s HIVE to senior leaders, and NLI’s DLS to a larger group of leaders at different levels. To ensure that the content resonated with the local audience, the team created tools to help regional leaders tailor and implement the learning.



The SCARF® Model resonates globally. We are all human—no matter whether we work in operations in Turkey, Greece, Quebec, or at headquarters in Vancouver. We can all use SCARF® cross-culturally to collaborate more effectively, build psychological safety within teams, and navigate changes with greater agility.

— Lisa Ower,
EVP People & External Affairs

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The results

INCLUDE

81%

of direct reports say leaders are making an effort to be more inclusive at least once a week.

VOICE

98%

spoke up to share an idea, question a decision, or challenge a behavior at least once a week.

DECIDE

Coming Soon!



The journey is helping leaders at Eldorado practice inclusion more intentionally, speak up more productively, and mitigate bias more effectively—all by understanding and applying critical habits, backed by neuroscience.

“Understanding people through a lens of neuroscience is helping leaders from our Board-level to operational teams demonstrate Valuable Leadership more often,” said George Burns, President & CEO, Eldorado Gold. “We’re committed to our journey of improving Eldorado as a leading people-centric organization because it’s the passion people bring to **breaking new ground** that makes us safer, sustainable, and successful.”

Case in point

At Eldorado Gold’s operation in Kisladag, Turkey, a manager used the SCARF® Model to engage his team and address a traditional bottleneck in production that emerges when operating at higher rates.

Serdar Sahin, the Area Superintendent, used the SCARF® Model to facilitate a productive—and brain-friendly—exchange of ideas and input. His team used the habits from VOICE to speak up productively. They offered a novel solution that shaves one hour off the existing gold stripping process when operating at high rates, resulting in a 13% increase in the capacity of the circuit.

And the suggestions haven’t stopped there. As Serdar said, “Before, our workers weren’t talking too much, they were just doing their day jobs. Now our employees are coming to me, our General Foreman, and our Metallurgist with more ideas and opportunities for improvements—I’ve never seen it before, and now they are. They feel better now, and I see it in their performance and involvement.”

Justin Kapla, the mine’s General Manager, said of the new spirit of collaboration and innovation, “I’m a firm believer that the people closest to the work usually have the best solutions. If we don’t listen to them, we miss a lot of opportunities. I think that’s what the SCARF® Model is really promoting: we’re listening more to our employees ... It’s another set of tools in our toolkit that all our leaders will use in the future.”

