brighton SEO. September 2023

Flip The Script

Overcoming Negativity Bias for Positive Growth

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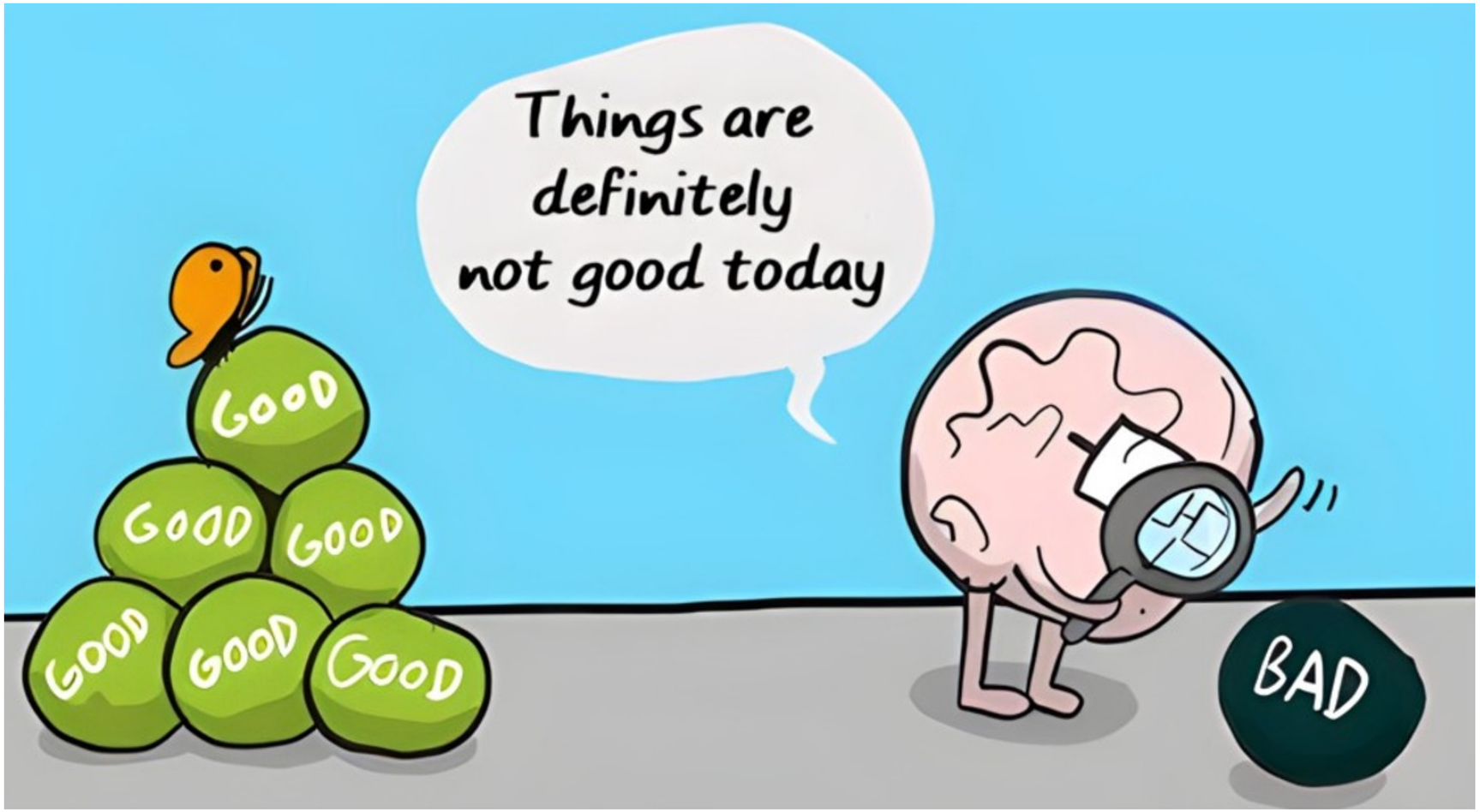
Negativity Bias



Influences Perception
Information Processing/Retrieval
and
Decision Making

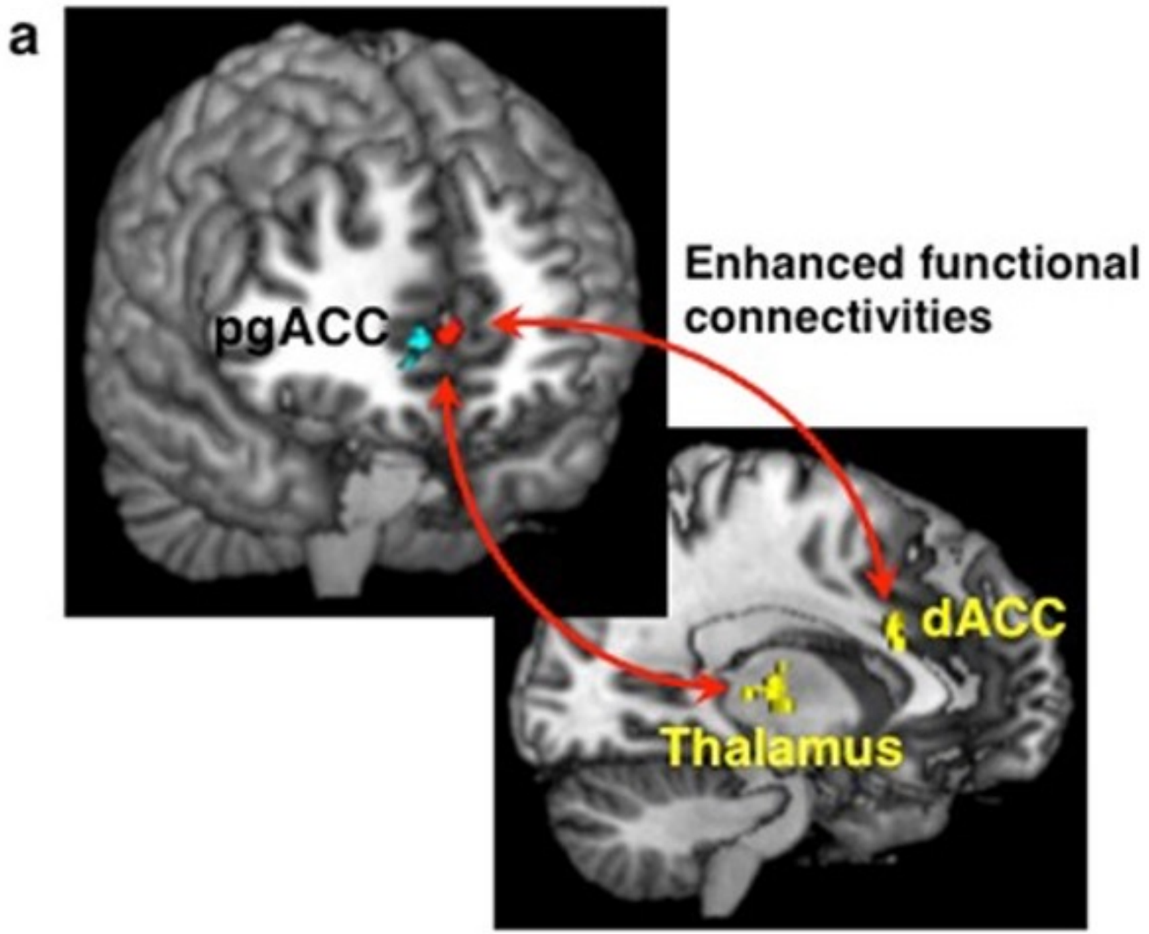
🧠 Did you know that the human brain is simply not capable of seeing the negative. It cannot physically comprehend it.

Source: Daily LinkedIn Doomscroll

Except...

Functional asymmetries have been isolated at the neural level

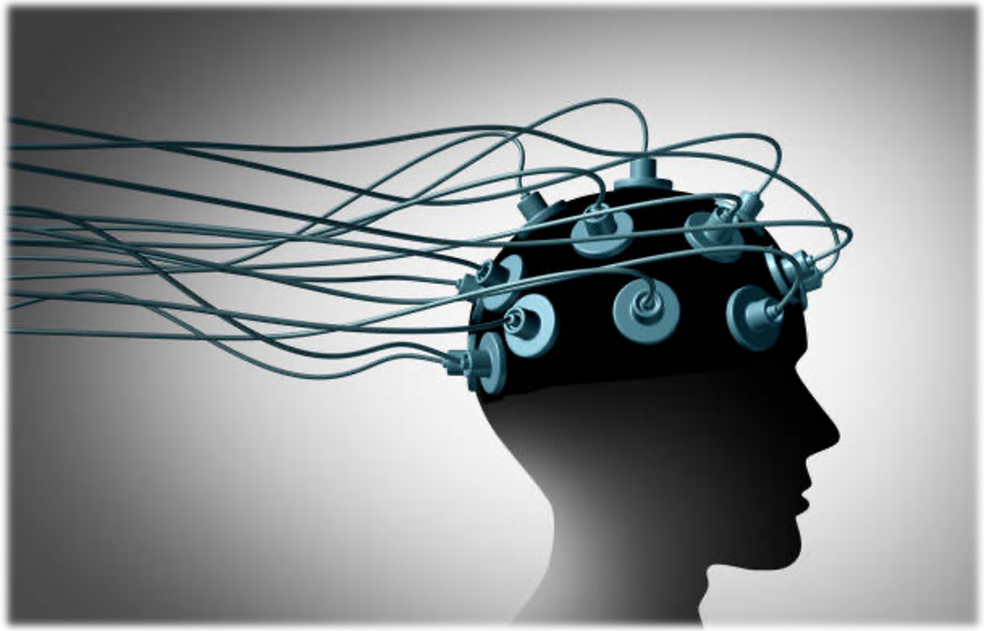
(Lewis et al., 2007; Winston et al., 2005)



pgACC hyperactivity

(Ito et al., 2017)

Larger LPP amplitudes for negative stimuli (ERPs studies)



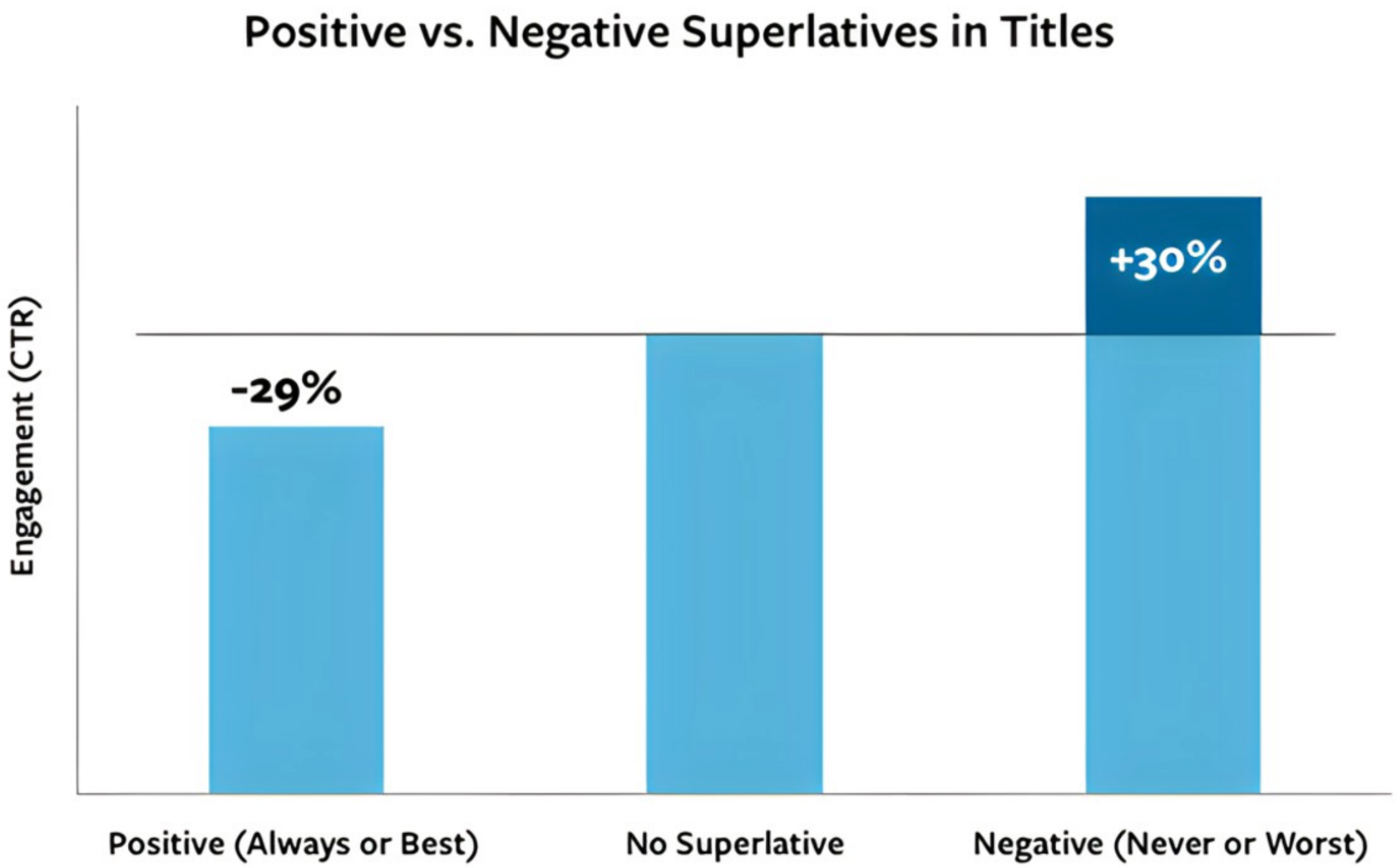
And at a behavioral level, from a very early age

Overattention to the negative made sense from an evolutionary perspective

And impact different areas in our daily life, including our online behaviour…

From the first touchpoints…

Source: seoClarity



☆ ***free bag* Mahé in £440s-£500s return in May-February (…**

☆ The world's most dangerous hike … THE DETOUR …

☆ **Lima, Peru in £460s-£510s return in January 2024 (Air Fr…**

In some languages, the dial is way up

🇮🇹🇮🇹🇮🇹

Ettore Bassi, il grande attore se n'è andato: l'addio è dolorosissimo per tutti | Una vera tragedia

😭☠️

- ‘He’s gone’
- ‘The goodbye is very painful’
- ‘A real tragedy’

Non si vede più da qualche anno in televisione e l’addio è dolorosissimo per tutti, ma da diverso tempo Ettore ha allentato i suoi ritmi lavorativi, dedicandosi principalmente al **teatro**, passione che coltiva da diversi anni.

Not dead - He just left TV for theatre!

Lily Ray 😏 @lilyraynyc · 8m

The Twitter algorithm really seems to be prioritizing "moral outrage" above all else in recent months. It was bad before but it's much worse now.

It's not surprising that "moral outrage" ranks the highest in terms of tactics to keep users engaged & addicted

1 1 155

To the very end of the funnel

Slow or overwhelming flow

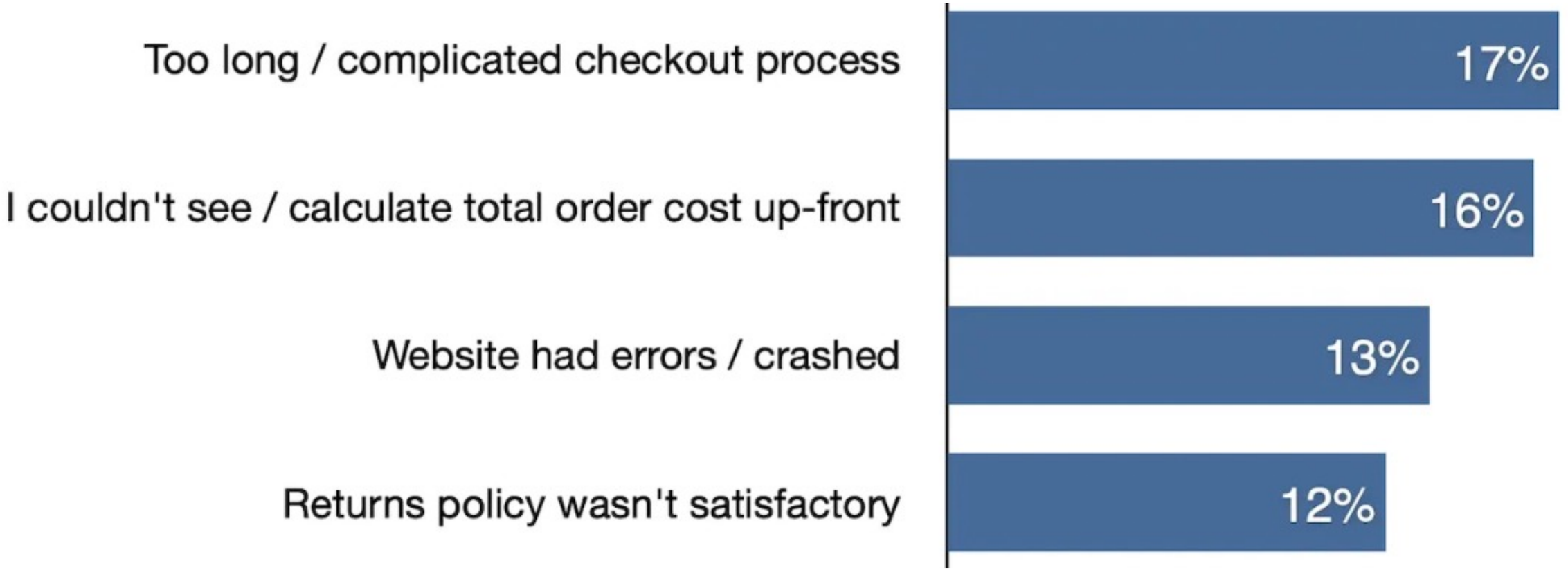
Unclear or contradicting information

404 pages

Reasons for Abandonments During Checkout

4,384 responses · US adults · 2022 · © baymard.com/research

"Have you abandoned any online purchases during the checkout process in the past 3 months? If so, for what reasons?"
Answers normalized without the *'I was just browsing'* option



Negative VS Positive Website Reviews:

46% VS 27%

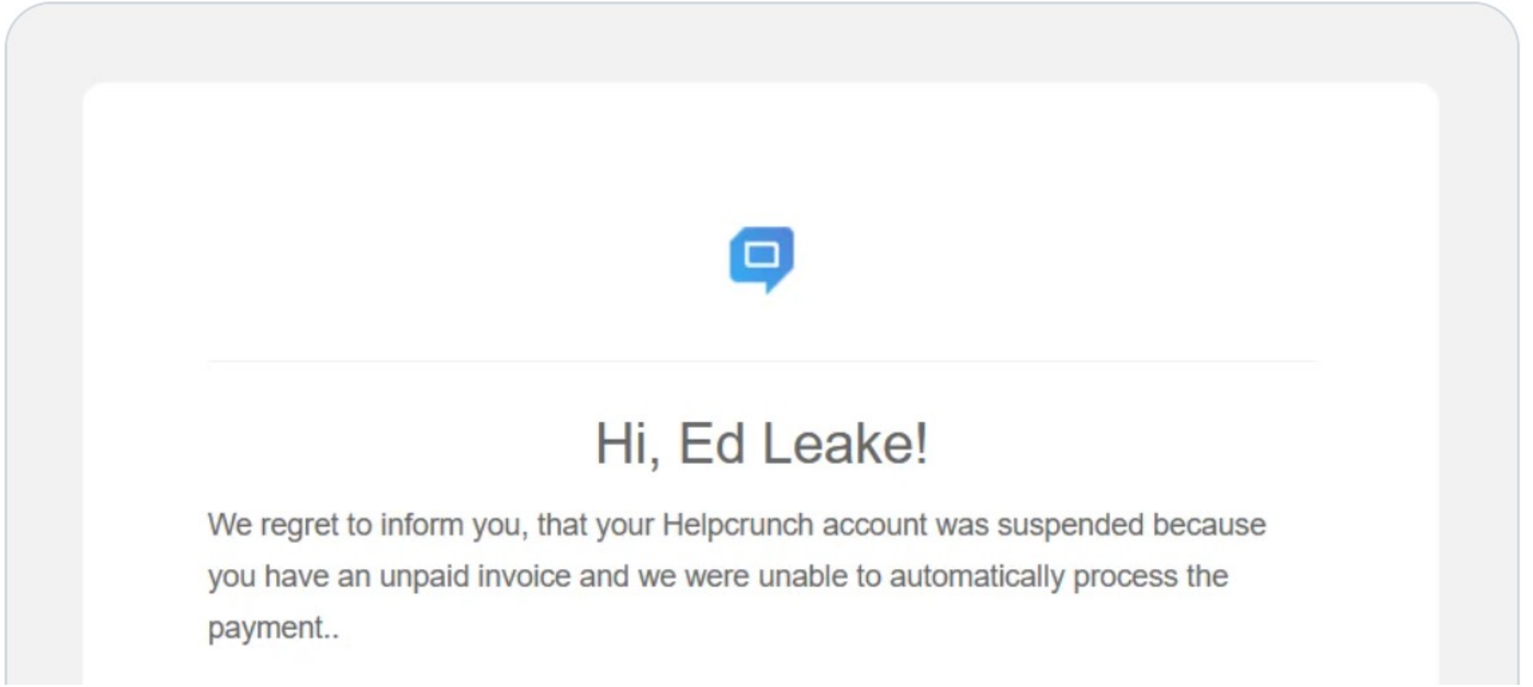
Source: Zendesk, 2023

Ed Leake @EdLeake · Jun 9

How do you turn a loyal customer into a reluctant customer?

Suspend their account 1 minute after their card expires... with ZERO warning or courtesy.

💩



So we're
hardwired for negativity,
and this can spare us some
unpleasant scenarios

But in a non-threatening situation, the bias can can become maladaptive

Meet:

✨Pessimism✨

Implications on self-perception, performance and health

This one guy absolutely HATED my training 😬

Kirsty Hulse
Founder Roar! Training | Creator Confidence Live | Award Winning Keynote Speaker | Ex agency owner and agency adviser

28 articles + Follow

July 21, 2023

How about our professional life?

Feelings at Work Questionnaire August 2023

124 responses

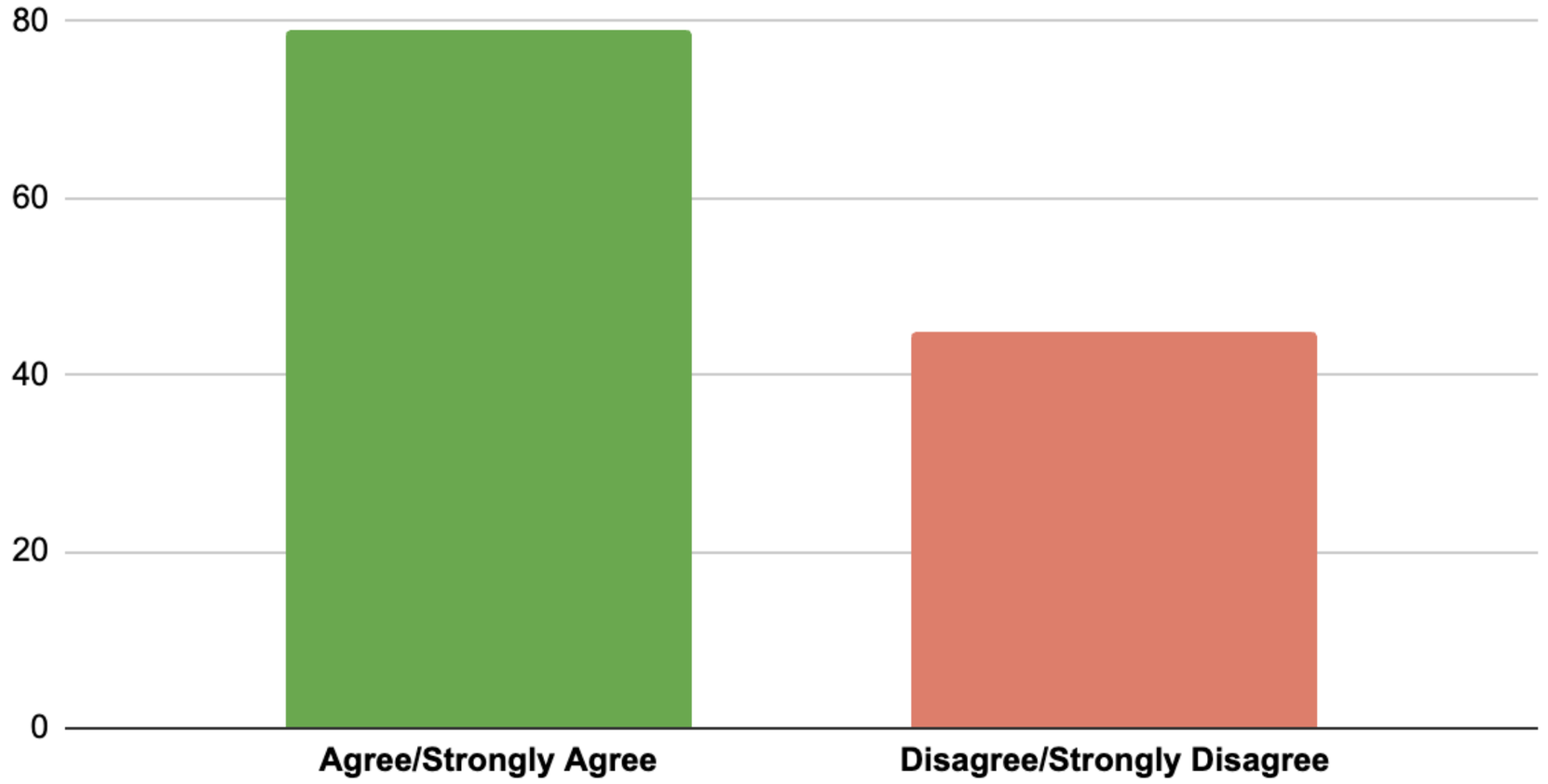
3 myths that were debunked (+ 1 that wasn't)

1.

“No news is good news”

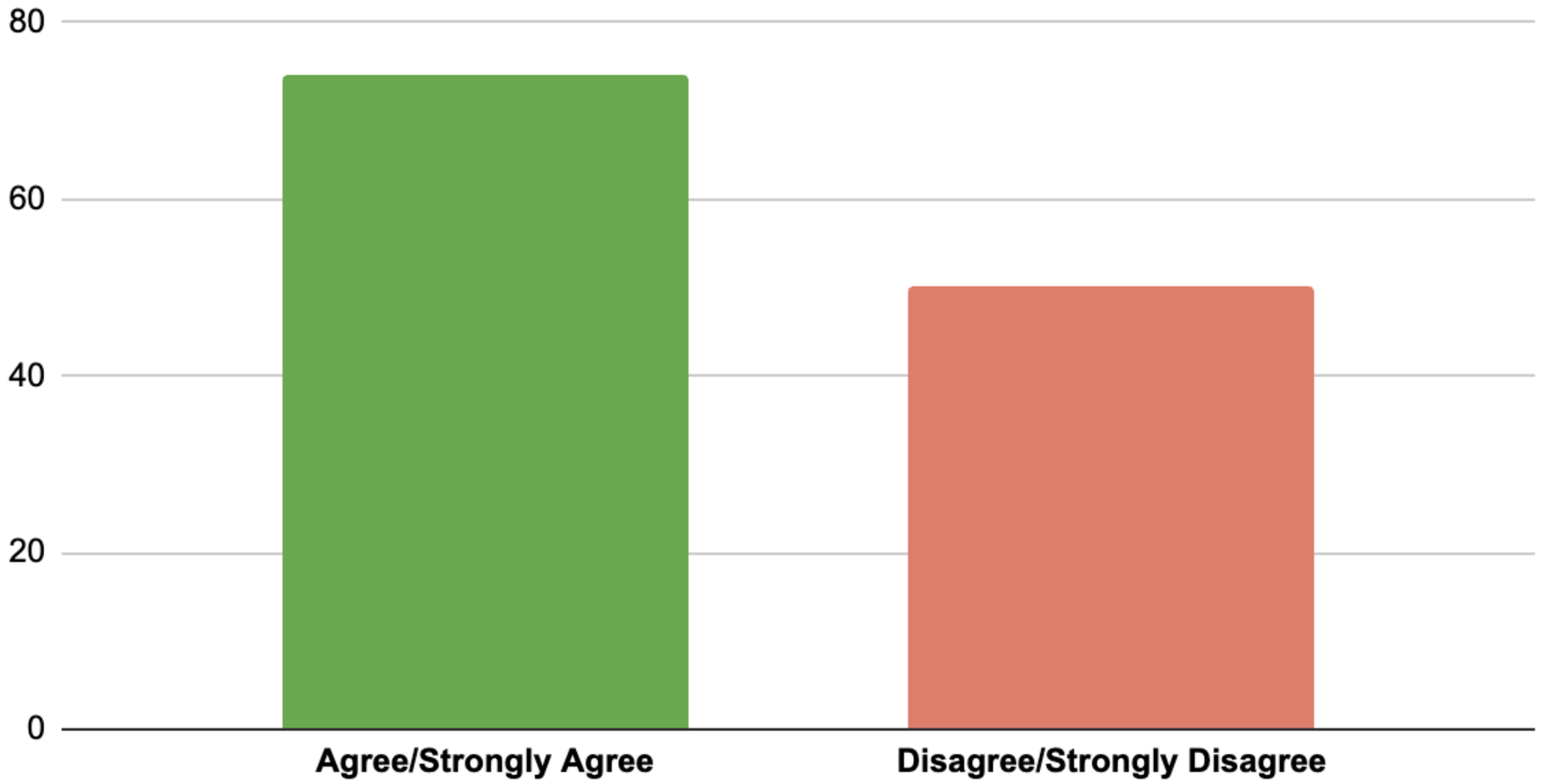
Lack of feedback:

64% anticipate negative

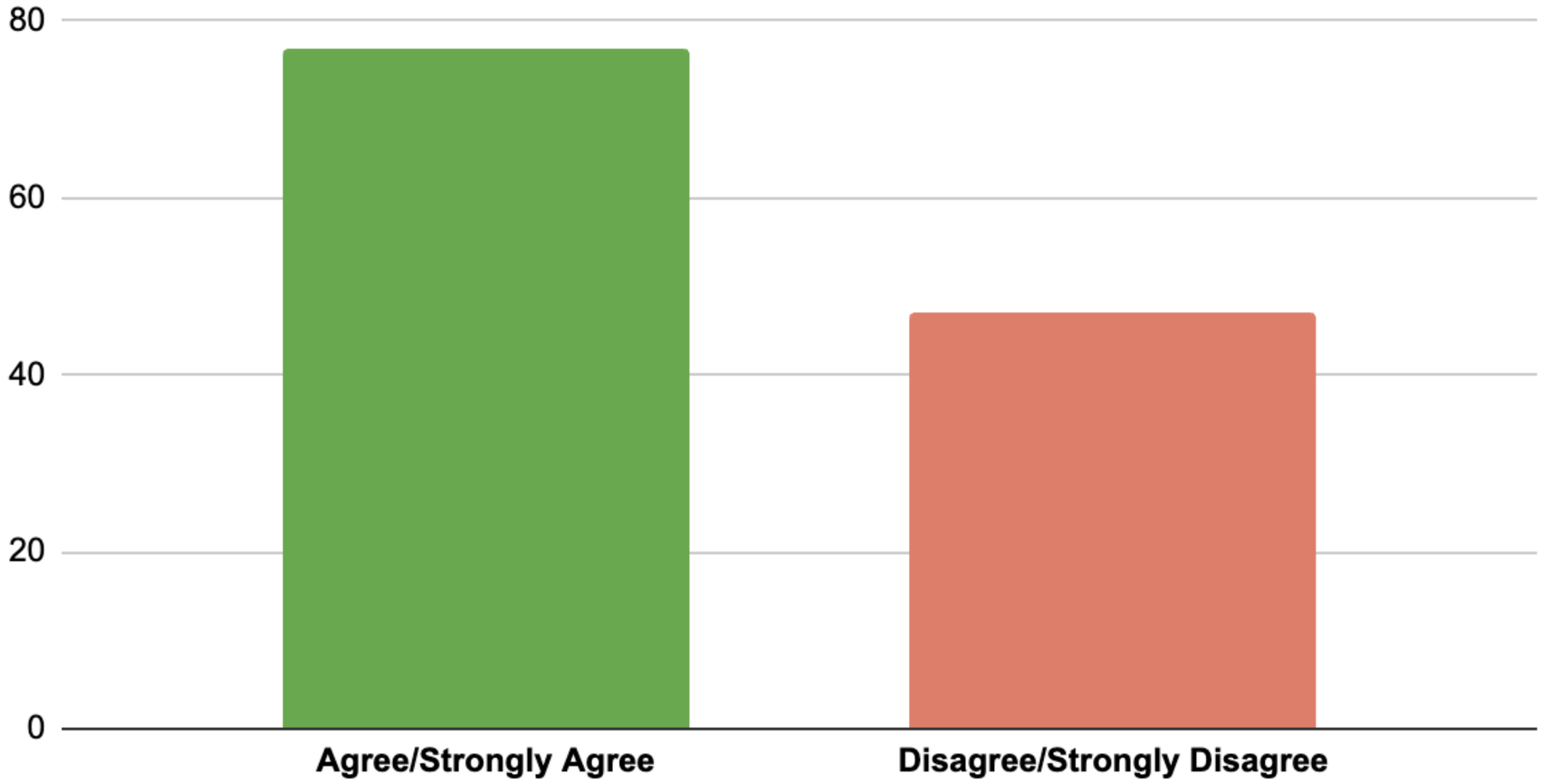


Context Ambiguity = Negative

for 60% of participants



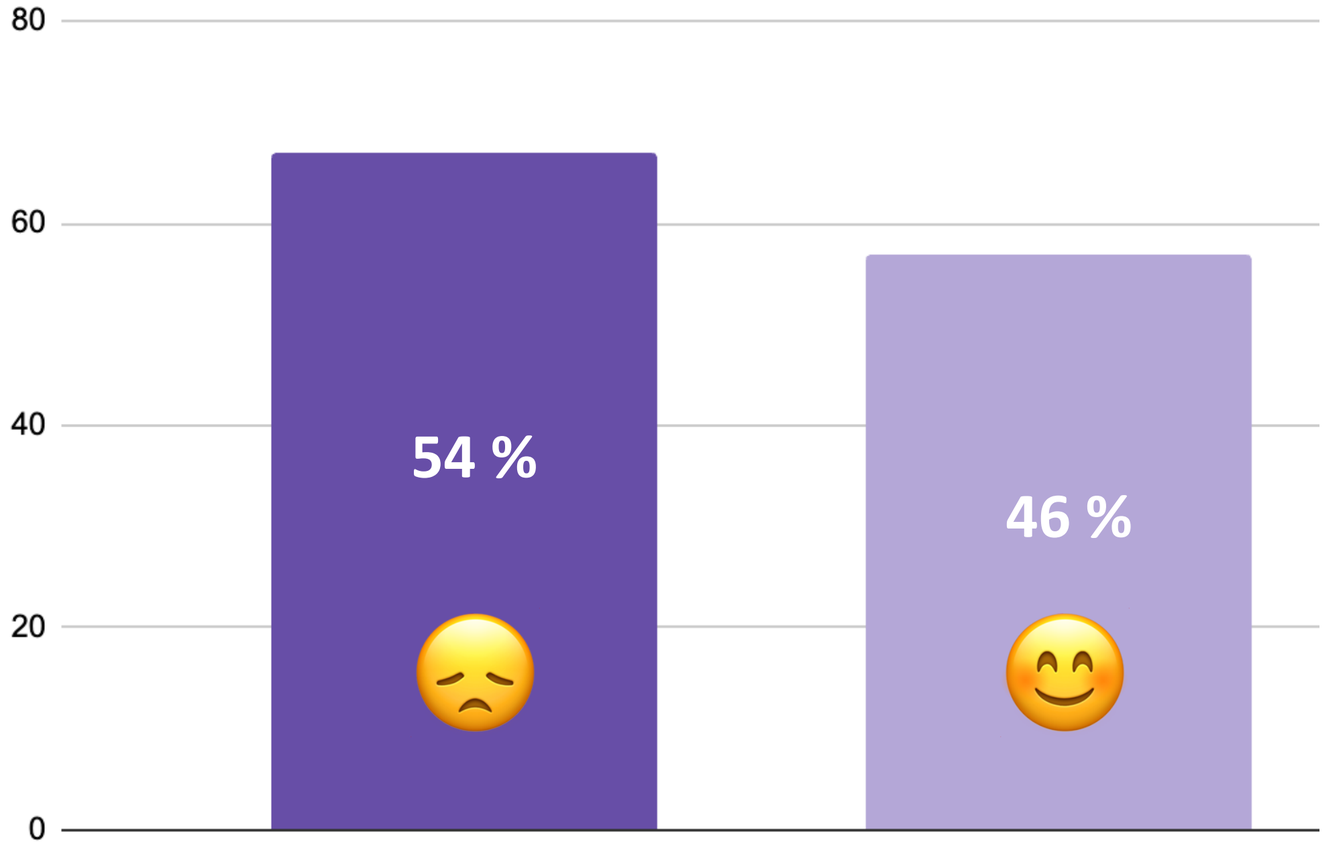
Career Ambiguity = Negative
for 62% of participants



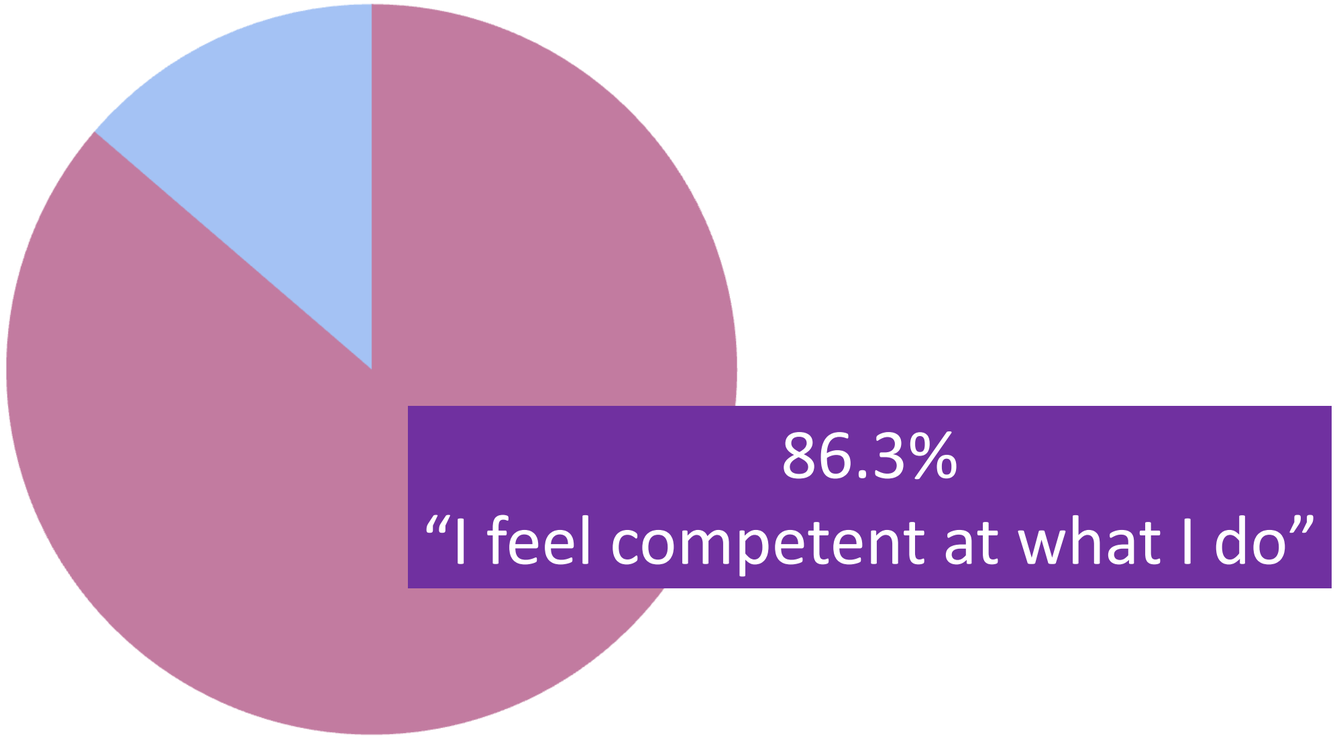
2.

“Confident people don’t experience negativity bias”

54% ruminate on perceived failures at work



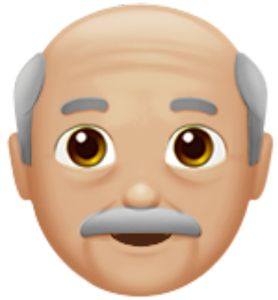
These are all people that know they can do their job well

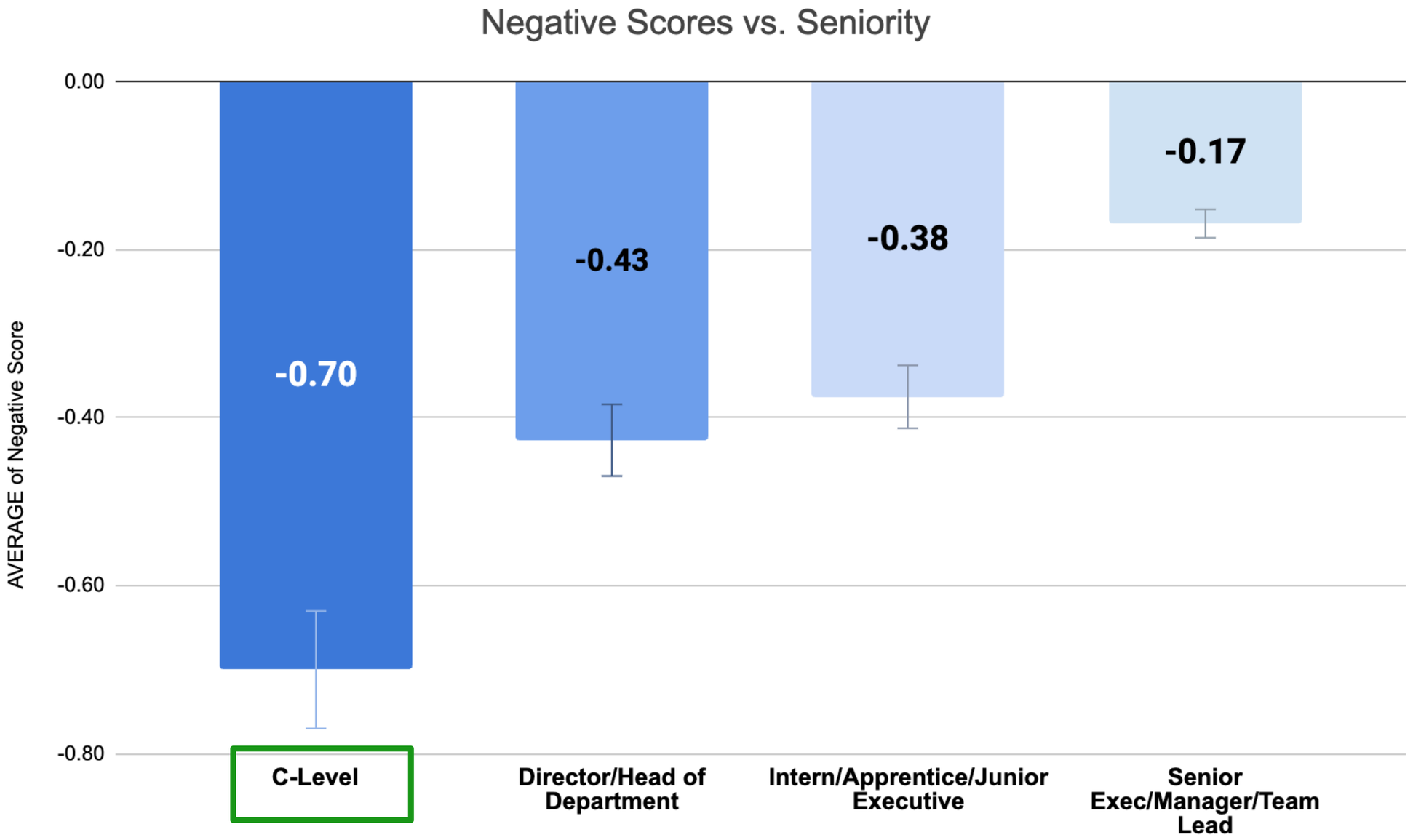


And report healthy ways to face challenges

3.

“> Senior = > Positive”

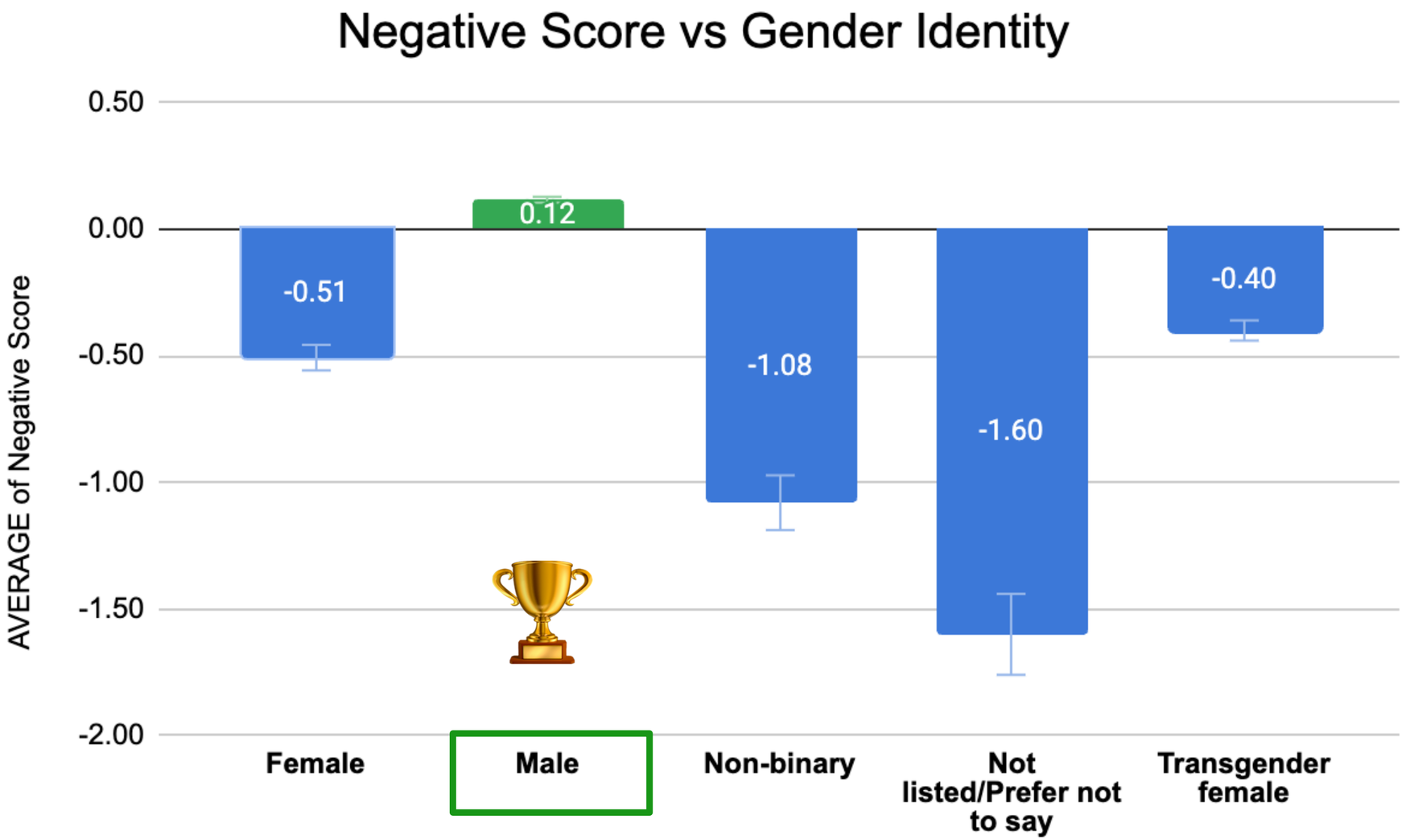



Negative Scores vs. Seniority
AVERAGE of Negative Score
0.00
-0.20
-0.40
-0.60
-0.80
-0.70
-0.43
-0.38
-0.17
C-Level
Director/Head of Department
Intern/Apprentice/Junior Executive
Senior Exec/Manager/Team Lead

4.

"There's a gender imbalance in experiencing negativity"

Well...yeah


Negative Score vs Gender Identity
AVERAGE of Negative Score
0.50
0.00
-0.50
-1.00
-1.50
-2.00
-0.51
0.12
-1.08
-1.60
-0.40
Female
Male
Non-binary
Not listed/Prefer not to say
Transgender female

Why should organisations care about the negativity bias?

Negative thoughts create resistance to change

(Richard Boyatzis)

And impair decision making

(Richard Metzger)

Also, emotions spread like wildfire

(Emotional Resonance)

And a pessimistic organization is not set up for success

The curious case of

VS

In 1986

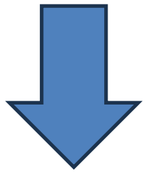
Explanatory Style

Permanence

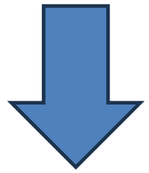
Pervasiveness

Personalisation

Optimistic explanatory style > skills/talent



Optimistic explanatory style > skills/talent



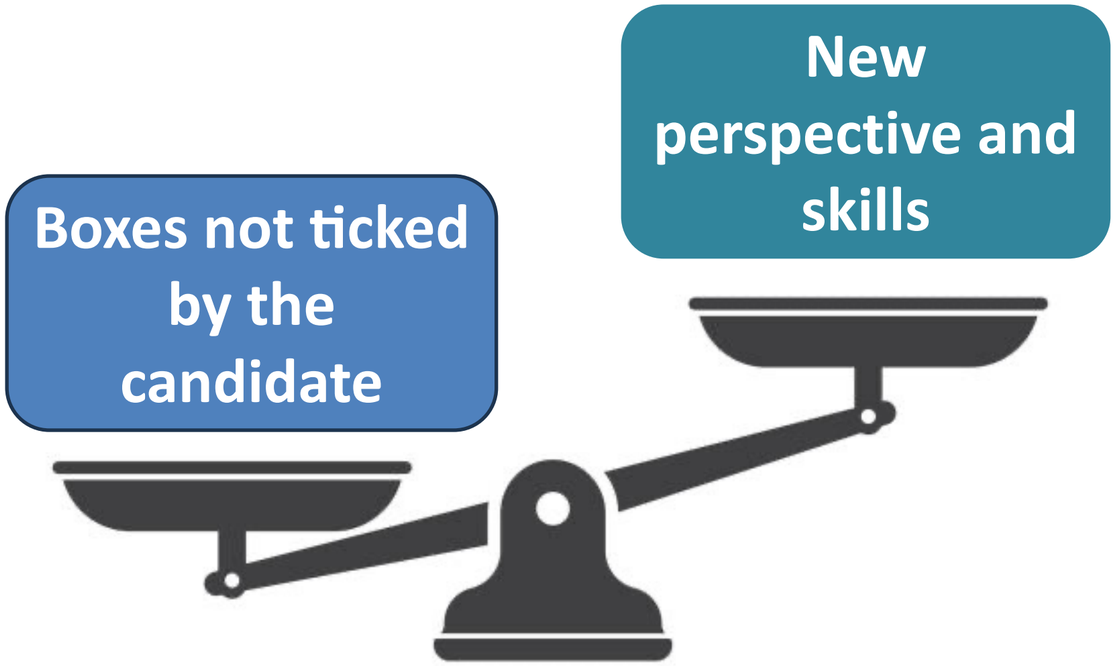
Predictor of performance across a number of personal and professional domains

(M. Seligman)

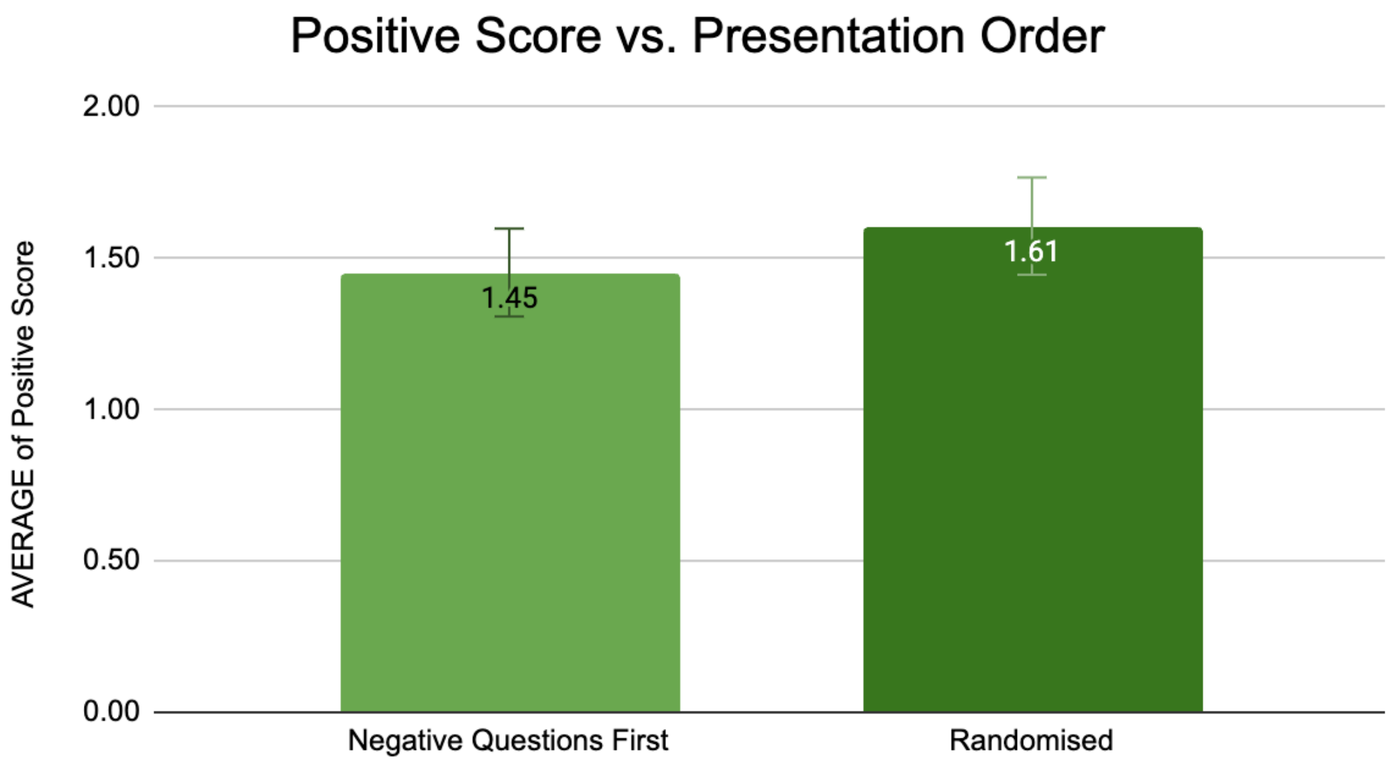
What small tweaks can organisations make?

Minimise ambiguity and foster transparency at the company level

Balance your interview focus during recruitment



Effect of Negative Priming



Modify language and encourage your team to do so too

‘issue’	⟹	‘opportunity’
‘problems’	⟹	‘solutions’
‘failures’	⟹	‘redirection’

Celebrate wins regularly

Reminder: " ⭐ **It's Winning Wednesday** ⭐

Use this thread to brag. share and celebrate an accomplishment or WIN, big or small!

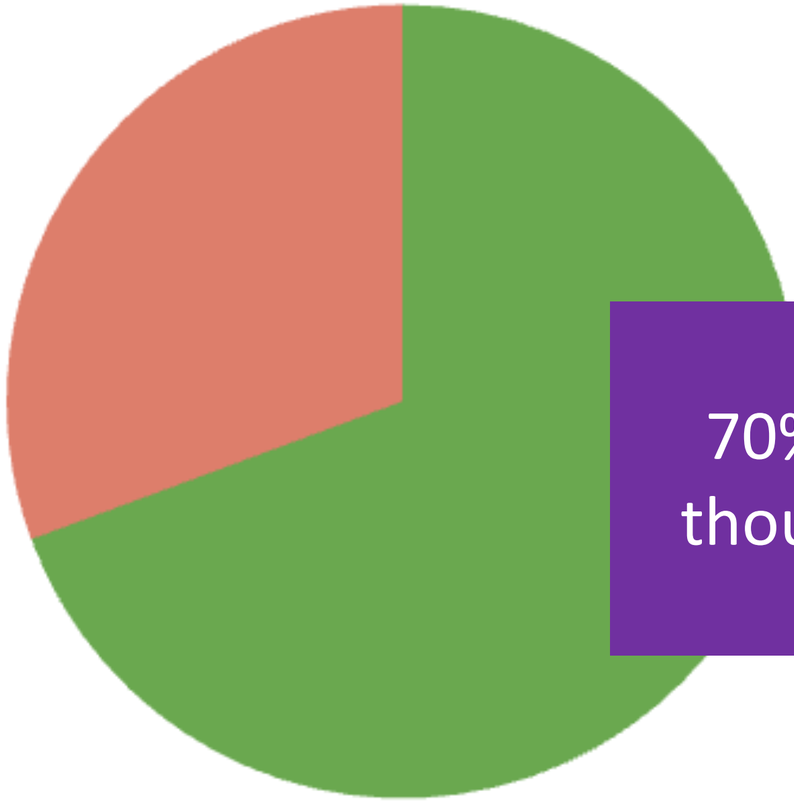
Enable two-way feedback

Helplessness comes from perceived lack of control

Provide mentorship opportunities

We've seen what work can do to flip the script

And work is a massive part of our life



70% carry negative work thoughts into personal life

But what else can we do as individuals to flip the script in our daily life?

Learning and Neuroplasticity

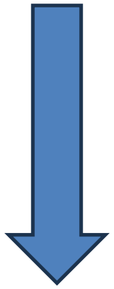
A utomatic

N egative

T houghts

We might be born with
negativity in our veins (and brains),
but we've also got the ability of
changing that

Neuroplasticity



Learning rewires our connections

We can learn some techniques to change our thoughts, behaviours and our responses to adversity

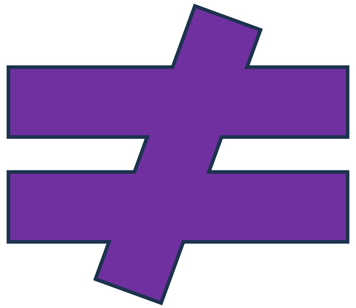
The ABC(DE) Model

By Albert Ellis

A Adversity

B Beliefs

C Consequence

Beliefs  Truth

Now it's your turn

A An adverse / unpleasant situation

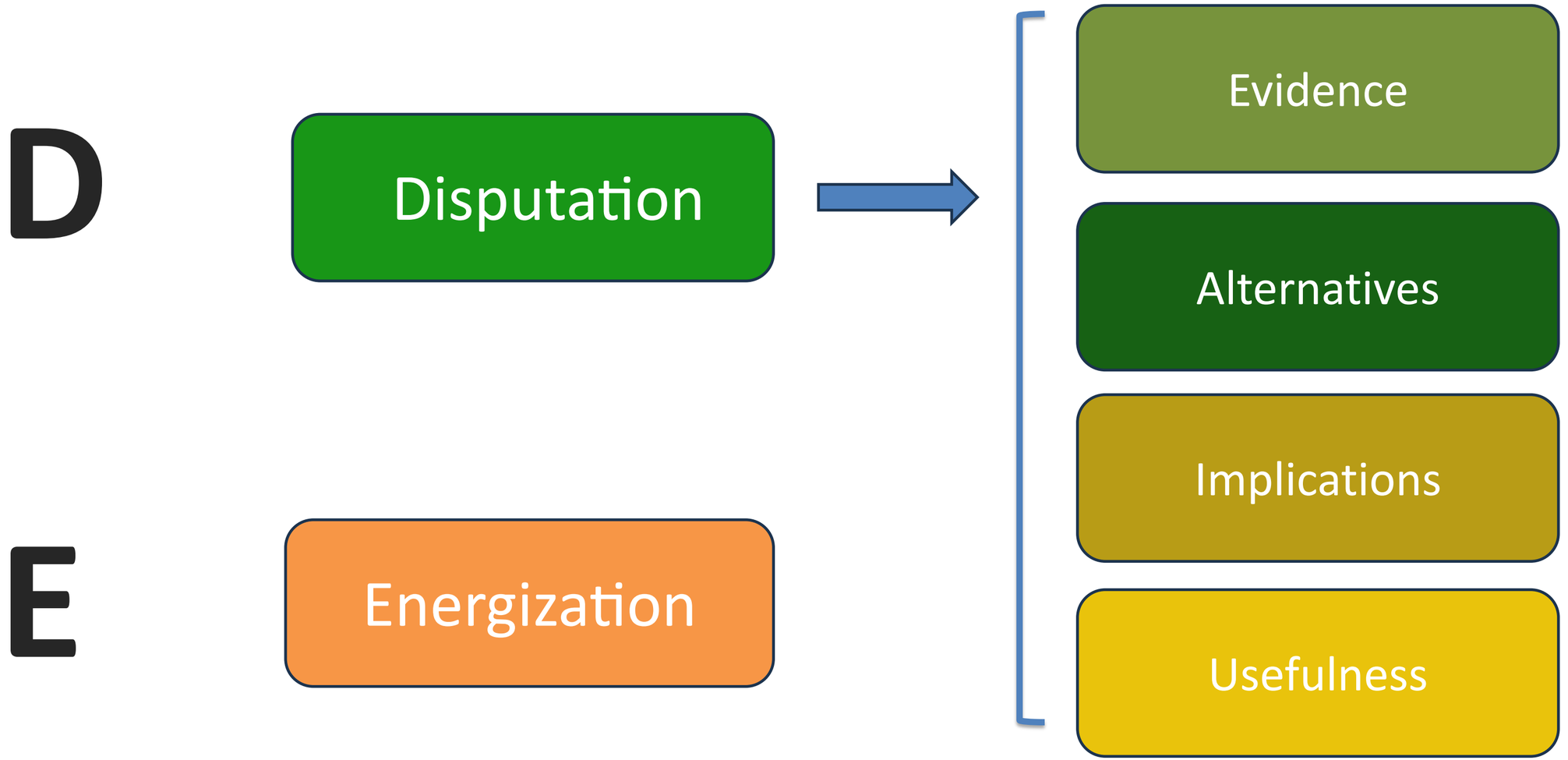
B What you think

C What you feel or do as a result

How do we cope?

Distraction & Disputation

The ABC(DE) Model

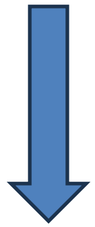


Let’s not forget that negative emotions are useful

Flexible VS Blind Optimism

Not ignoring the negative, but providing ways to adapt to challenges

When NOT not apply ‘learned optimism’



When the cost of failure is high

Remember that it starts with you

Areej
@areej_abuali

"Nobody can make you feel bad about yourself, if YOU feel good about yourself."

8:35 PM · Apr 30, 2023 · **92** Views

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Thank you!

@SequinsNsearch

/giulia-panozzo/

neuroscientive.com