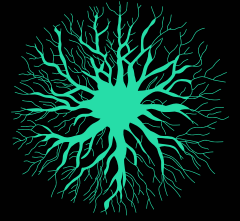


HOW I TEACH 'SOFT SKILLS' SO EVEN SKEPTICS ENGAGE



Without Over-Explaining or Second-Guessing Myself

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I've walked into rooms where people were already mentally checked out, and watched those same people lean in, engage, and actually use what I shared days later.

This Is For You If...

You're a coach, leader, or professional who knows your work is powerful, but you feel yourself:

- Over-explaining to get people on board
- Adding more context so they "get it"
- Second-guessing whether you said it the right way

And somehow... the more you say, the less it seems to connect.

So you assume: "I just need to explain it better."

That's not always the case.

The real issue? When someone's nervous system isn't available, more explanation can actually lead them to feel less connected, and less embodied, it creates distance.

Here are 2 things I do every week to create real buy-in and engagement, without over-explaining or second-guessing myself.

First Step

Create the conditions for openness before you introduce the idea.

Here's what that can look like:

→ **Biology over Explanation**

Why this matters: The brain has less access to resources that help it process long explanations under pressure. It can help if we find words or embodied activities that it can immediately resonate with. Biology is like a language or logic model that helps us find those words or activities.

→ **Mapping over Convincing**

Why this matters: When people can locate themselves in a map, they stop needing persuasion. You don't need them to agree, you need them to see themselves in it.

→ **Precision over Volume**

Why this matters: The nervous system filters for relevance, not length. More words $\neq$ more clarity. The more precise you are, the less you have to say.

→ **Self-Recognition over External Validation**

Why this matters: Self-recognition can lower a person's wall of skepticism. If they can truly recognize themselves in what you're saying, you've connected your idea with something logically sound for them.

The moment this clicked for me:

The first time I shifted this, someone interrupted me mid-session and said: "Wait... that's exactly what happens to me."

I hadn't even gotten to the 'teaching' yet. I didn't need to say more. I needed to help them access that sense of recognition before instruction.

What This Looks Like In Practice

Biology over Explanation, applied

An example: instead of explaining the experience of giving up as a motivation or mindset issue (although, yes I do explore mindset a lot!), I often infuse biology to help strengthen an embodied, human -shared DNA type of 'dialect' :

You know that moment when you've tried something multiple times, and something in you just... goes flat? Not dramatic. Not angry. Just done.

Your chest gets heavy. Your thoughts slow. Something pulls back inside you and says: What's the point.

Most people call that resignation. Or laziness. Or not wanting it enough. Your brain calls it survival math.

There's a small structure in your brain called the habenula. When you've experienced repeated failure, or when the gap between effort and outcome feels too large, your habenula activates. It

suppresses dopamine. Literally turns down your brain's motivation signal.

That flat, heavy, "forget it" feeling? That is often connected to our habenula running a cost-benefit calculation, and deciding the current path isn't worth the metabolic spend.

That flatness is embodied intelligence: an ancient, protective system that evolved to stop you from burning resources on a dead end.

The shift: When someone understands what's happening biologically, the feeling stops being evidence of failure, and starts being information about what their nervous system needs in order to try again.

That's the difference between over-explaining resilience as a mindset concept... and giving someone the biology of what's actually happening, so they can work with it instead of pushing through it.

Second Step

Design for resistance instead of talking your way around it.

Over-explaining is often a response to resistance. But here's a shift we can experiment with:

Resistance is something you understand and work with, long before better words come into it.

3 Things You Need to Make This Work:

1. **A Way to Decode Resistance in Real Time.** When you don't understand resistance, you compensate by talking more. When you do understand it, you adjust (and prepare for it) instead.
2. **Language That Connects.** The right phrasing reduces the need for follow-up explanation. It clicks the first time. Not so much about more words.. more about the ones that reach into something more deeply sensed about our experiences.
3. **Trust in Your Delivery.** Second-guessing fragments your message.. find ways to really think about how what you're saying is something you know and have lived.

If someone doesn't speak your language, you don't just keep repeating the same words, you find another way to reach them. Many people are just repeating themselves louder, or more often.

Soft skills aren't soft. They're brain science.

When you present them this way, something shifts. Resistance lowers.. people who might have dismissed your work start asking questions (a good sign!).. , because you've found a way of expressing your ideas in ways that their brain has a reason to 'trust'.

Put It Into Practice

The Soft Skills Aren't Soft Framework: How to Write a Post That Reframes a 'Soft Skill' as Brain Science

Use this five-step structure to turn any concept you teach into a post that creates instant credibility and buy-in, even with skeptical audiences.

1. **Name the Embodied Experience.** Start with the feeling people already know, before you name it. Visceral. Specific. Physical. Eg., *"You know that moment when you've tried to [do X] and something in you just goes flat..."*
2. **Name What Most People Call It.** Surface the label that's been keeping the experience stuck or shaming. This creates a moment of recognition, and sets up the reframe. *"Most people call this [laziness / resistance / not being a people person]..."*
3. **Give It a Biological Address.** Name what's actually happening in the brain or nervous system. One structure. One mechanism, not comprehensive. This is where skeptics go from resistant to curious. *"Your [brain-body system] is doing [specific thing], because [evolutionary, self-protective, attachment based, biological reason]."*
4. **Reframe the Meaning.** Shift what the experience means. From character flaw or personal failure to intelligent biological response. This can help co-create a moment of relief. *"What looks like [negative label] is your brain doing [function], which means [empowering implication]."*
5. **Point to the Opening.** What does this reframe make possible? What can they now do, understand, or approach differently? Leave them with movement, not just insight. *"Once you understand what's actually happening, you can [specific action or shift]."*

Before You Go

Reflection

Think of a concept you teach that gets dismissed as 'soft' or 'touchy-feely.' What's the biology underneath it? What is actually happening in the nervous system that makes this skill necessary, not nice to have?

Micro Action This Week

Pick one concept you teach. Use the 5-step framework to draft a post that opens with the embodied feeling and ends with a biological reframe. Notice who it reaches.

A next step worth exploring is how to integrate cutting-edge, embodied, systems-thinking science into a deeper understanding of human behavior, well-being and transformation. These Applied Neuroscience Micro-Courses are for that purpose.

Available Micro-Courses

Teach the Nervous System

Much of the field is still teaching "just breathe." Research has mapped a far richer landscape of states, and the people you work with can feel the difference.

→ [Explore Teach the Nervous System](#)

Mindset Science Teaching Framework

Mindset work keeps getting dismissed as a 'soft skill' by people who haven't seen the neurophysiological and performance effects of mindset research. Teach it so it holds up in front of the skeptics.

→ [Explore the Mindset Science Teaching Framework](#)

Reach the Resistant Brain

The people you most want to reach are often the ones tuning out. Research shows what their systems are actually responding to, and how to work with it so we resonate and engage with people who might otherwise dismiss our ideas.

→ [Explore Reach the Resistant Brain](#)

Optimize the Brain: Brain Science Toolkit

Brain myths keep circulating even though research has offered us updated ideas. Nine seminars to help you explore peer-reviewed science behind human behavior and transformation.

→ [Explore the Brain Science Toolkit](#)