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MIRRORING



EVROPSKÁ UNIE
Evropské strukturální a investiční fondy
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MINISTERSTVO ŠKOLSTVÍ,
MLÁDEŽE A TĚLOVÝCHOVY

INTRODUCTION

It has been nearly thirty years since the Italian psychologist Giacomo Rizzolati and his team first encountered the fascinating function of our brain, which was later called mirroring, or mirror neuron function. Like many other discoveries, his discovery was a bit of coincidence. In the early 1990s professor Rizzolati was in charge of research dealing with the functioning of motor centers in the brain of primates.

INTRODUCTION

One day one of his assistants came with an ice cream to the research lab. The monkey being researched, which was at that moment connected to a brain-tracking device, watched an assistant who was enjoying a delicious scoop of ice cream. Something unprecedented began to happen.

INTRODUCTION

The machine monitoring activity in the motor centers of the monkey brain began to report on the movement activity of the monkey, despite the monkey was sitting still, but watching the assistant licking the ice cream. This finding led to other series of investigations that later definitively proved the existence of mirror neurons in the human brain.

INTRODUCTION

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ORIGIN OF MIRROR NEURONS

The existence of these neurons in our brain is not by no means accidental. Let's go back to old times when there was no language or script. At that time, our species could learn new things in just two ways. Own experience and observation of others. If every individual had to discover stuff again and again through his own experience, people would never have evolved into their present form.

ORIGIN OF MIRROR NEURONS

The ability to learn by following other individuals in a particular activity is one of the basic pillars of human development as an individual, but also as a species. This ability to learn through observation is the result of existence of those mirror neurons.

ORIGIN OF MIRROR NEURONS

More advanced research in the field of mirroring in recent years has revealed that we have at least two types of mirror neurons. Nowadays, we can divide mirror neurons into sensory-motor and emotional. This means that a person is able to learn by means of mirror neurons not only tasks related to physical activity, but also because of them perceive the social context of the situation and the emotional state of the individual. In other words, it makes them empathetic.

HOW MIRROR NEURONS WORK

The function of mirror neurons works on the principle of creating templates. When we observe another person doing an activity, our brain creates its template, which later serves as a model for repeating that activity.

HOW MIRROR NEURONS WORK

If we ever want in the future to achieve a similar goal or find ourselves in a similar situation we have witnessed, our brain will automatically use this template. Interestingly, we use these templates unconsciously and often for no apparent reason. This can be attributed to the already mentioned empathy.

HOW MIRROR NEURONS WORK

Man is connected with people around him/her and has a natural tendency to ape. A citizen living in one city will very quickly lose his accent in another city. The girls in the cinemas shed thousands of tears in romantic movies. Fan of one football club rejoice at a goal that has fallen into the opponent's goal, while a fan of opponent's club wheeps, and so on...

HOW MIRROR NEURONS WORK

All these manifestations and experiences are the product of mirror neurons. Through them we identify with the people around us and experience with them what they experience in reality.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

Finding the proper and effective use of mirroring is one of the best ways to reach the customer.

Success is based on two steps:

- Adjust the customer's mirror in which he/she can see himself/herself
- Adjust the customer's mirror in which he/she wants to see himself/herself

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

Setting up a real mirror means creating a message that is as close as possible to what we actually offer our customer. For example, when we promote a newly opened club on the radio, it's a good idea to play music in the background, people laughing, and clinking of glasses. At that moment, we set up a „real“ mirror of dance, entertainment and drink, and the customer can reflect and identify with the message. But if the customer hears a mere voice on the radio, there is nothing he can reflect, and thus the message becomes significantly less effective.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

There are as many ways to set up a „real“ mirror as there are products, but the principle remains the same. The customer must be able to feel through our message as if he/she has already consumed our product or service. Recall the research that revealed the existence of mirroring. The monkey saw everything, did nothing, but the brain still worked as if the monkey was doing what it saw. We have to work with our customers in the same way. Their brain must think that what it see, hear, and feel is also doing.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

Adjusting the customer's mirror in which he/she wants to see himself/herself is not as difficult as actually adjusting the mirror. Here we come partly to the area of market segmentation and knowledge about our target group. We simply need to know our customer to set up the mirror he/she wants to see. The director of the bank will not simply be affected by the same mirrors as a ten-year-old girl.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

In this context, however, it is worth mentioning another important thing concerning mirror neuron theory. For example... One of the reasons why we apologize to others is our subconscious effort to fit into society and thereby increase our chances to pass our genes.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

Why is this important? Because if, for whatever reason, we make our customers unwilling to mirror our messages that they might otherwise mirror, we are taking down an avalanche of failure. In other words, if a part of our target group does not accept our product for whatever reason, the rest of the target group is likely to know and will not accept it as well.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

A beautiful example is so called „the empty pub syndrome“. The empty pub syndrome is that no customer comes to the empty pub just because it is simply weird that there are no people.

USE OF MIRROR NEURONS IN PRACTICE

At this point, the restaurant sets the customer's mirror in which he/she can see himself/herself (if there are people), but does not want (because people are not there). Such an effect can occur for many reasons and should be avoided at all costs, as it can have catastrophic effects.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

An amazing opportunity to enable our customers to reflect on our message is to connect the brand with a famous person, whether real or fictitious. Celebrities, thanks to the media, are representatives of certain qualities and values in society, and people like to identify with them because they can easily express their life preferences and values.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

All you need to do is find a celebrity that holds the values that are inherent to our target group and associate this celebrity with our brand to highlight and enhance the content of our message. Everything else will be arranged by the brain, which adds our product to the already existing combination of life preferences and the famous person.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

Cindy Crawford for Deichman, who represents a shoe stores in the Czech Republic, is one of the most successful brand connections to celebrity. As a model, Cindy Crawford represents beauty and style in society, which is why women buy boots and shoes. They want to be beautiful. All of this will come together in one, and the female brain will think that if she wears Deichman's shoes... I will be like Cindy Crawford.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

Another successful use of the celebrity can include the advertising spots of Fernet Stock, featuring Ivan Trojan or Jan Macháček. Both, Ivan Trojan and Jan Macháček, are perceived by society as a charismatic, mature and intelligent men, who know what they want. This is exactly how the liqueur itself is profiled. Drink for real men who know what's good.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

Both of these examples work right in the way with their target audience, allowing customers to identify with famous celebrities in the ad. But let's imagine for a moment that we would switch these celebrities. Suddenly there is a mirror that we wanted customers to set away. No woman can identify with Ivan Trojan in boots, nor can any man feel the model of drinking a glass of Fernet at the bar. Here too, the customer must be able to see himself in the mirror we set.

FAMOUS PEOPLE AND MIRRORING

It is not possible to use any celebrity at any advertisement. The Celebrity we choose must represent in society values we want to communicate to our target group. If this is not the case, we can lose not only a lot of money, but also a lot of customers that will be discouraged.

CONCLUSION

Mirror neurons are a remarkable and powerful communication tool that can be used for both instant and long-term goals. Their use, however, must always be thought out and tightened to the last detail to fulfill its purpose. Mirror neurons are a living organism that can change very quickly and it is up to us how we use it. We need to be creative, move our goals forward and set our customers constantly new mirrors in which they can see.

Q&A

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