

# Ability to Execute (A2E)

Notecards



# Understanding what our Big Rocks are can help us focus on the things that matter most

## What are your Big Rocks?

(your biggest priorities aligned to your goals)

## What is your Sand & Water?

(things that waste your and / or others' time)

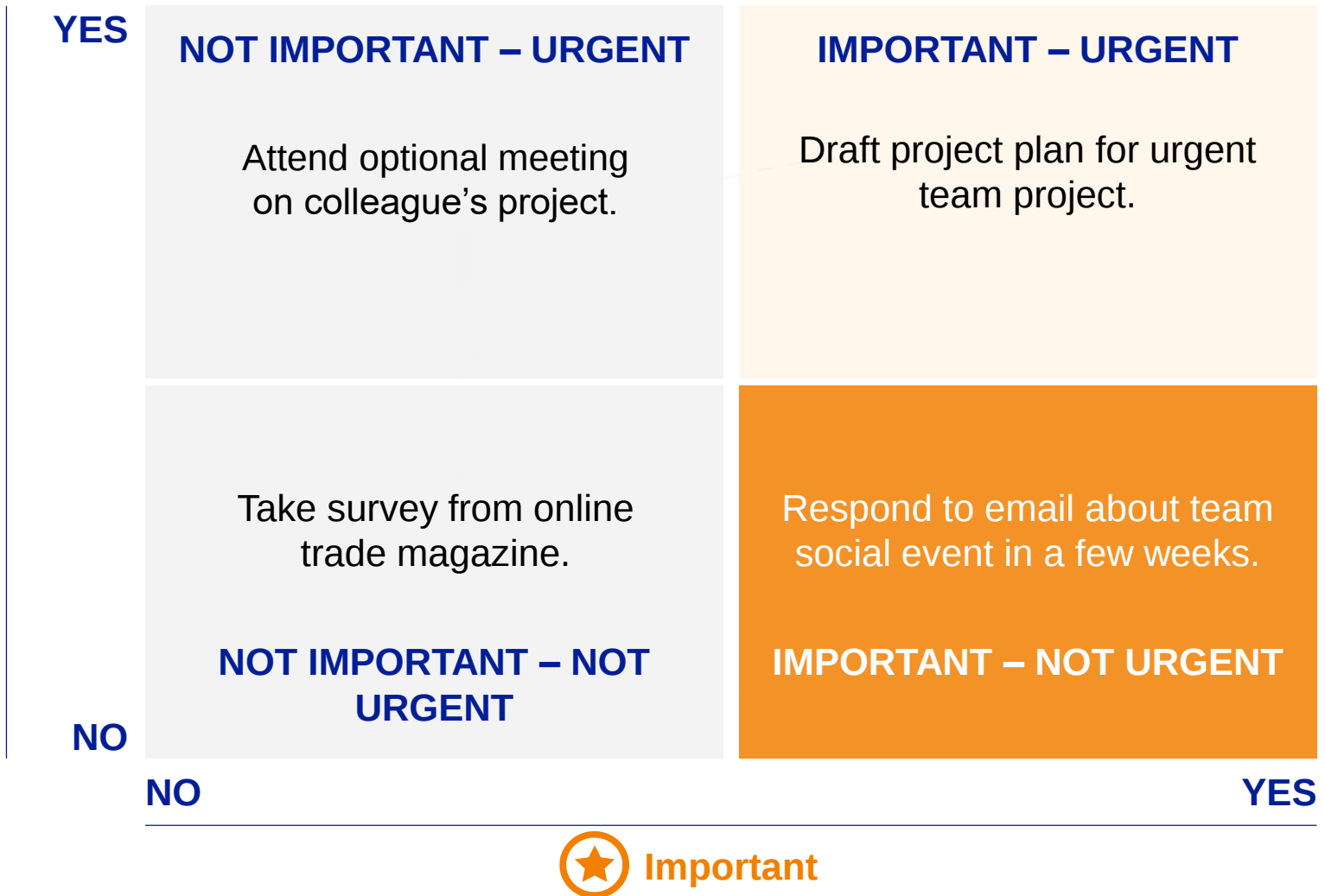


## What are your Pebbles?

(tasks that need to get done, but shouldn't be your biggest priorities)

# We can prioritize better by considering the urgency & importance of tasks

## Impact framework



# Following the 6 Ds will help us prioritize effectively

## The 6Ds



### Do smarter

- Reconsider the objective of each particular task and meeting, ensure it is being done in a time efficient manner



### Delete

- Delete unnecessary tasks that do not add value to the final team objective



### Decline

- Do not accept too much work or the wrong type of work
- Decline meeting invitations where you are not essential



### Delegate

- Delegate tasks to colleagues. Spend time coaching so that their work can be trusted and the need for review reduced



### Decrease

- Change scope of the tasks or reduce the frequency/duration (e.g., meetings)



### Defer

- Defer tasks and meetings that are not urgent

# There are many approaches for generating ideas in a team

## Idea generation approaches

### Activity

### Description

#### Brainstorming

- In group setting individuals take turns providing new ideas (quantity over quality) with no criticism or evaluation

#### Brain-writing

- Participants develop 3 initial ideas. Then each participant develops 3 additional ideas based on neighbor's set of initial ideas. Process continues to build off of core ideas to develop solutions

#### Creative provocation

- Similar to brainstorming but pushes towards the absurd and nonsensical
- to develop creative ventures with continual debate

#### Analogy

- Tie problem to other industry/field/situation and develop solutions based on new environment e.g., Running a business is like managing a theatre production

#### Multi-voting

- In silence, each participant chooses up to 1/3 of possible solutions. List is halved after voting and process continues again until target number of items remain

#### 6 thinking hats

- Separate participants into distinct roles including process, facts, creativity, feelings, benefits, and cautions that utilizes parallel thinking to provide creative ideas

# Adopting six behaviors will enhance ownership over our work

## Owner's mindset

| As an Owner, I...                                                                                                          | This means I...                                                                                       | Example of when I or my team did this                         |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Invest wisely</b>                      | Invest resources (such as money or time) as if they were my own, ensuring they are “fit for purpose”  | Found cheaper supplier and recommended to supervisor.         |
|  <b>Act now</b>                            | Ask myself “what is stopping me from doing this right now given that the cost of delay is real?”      | Researched suppliers to find better deal.                     |
|  <b>Hold myself and others accountable</b> | Am accountable for responsibilities – not just mine but also those that will support our organization | Routinely assess what will make my team run more effectively. |
|  <b>Challenge with respect</b>             | Feel obligated to respectfully share my opinion, even if it goes against the consensus                | Spoke up to improve safety.                                   |
|  <b>Stay solution focused</b>            | Make decisions with clear outcomes and offer solutions, not just criticisms                           | Recommended specific new policy to improve safety.            |
|  <b>Go the extra mile</b>                | Exceed what is expected of me to ensure my team and my organization are successful                    | Spoke to others about opinions on safety protocol.            |

# Conducting pre-mortems help us mitigate risk

## Pre-mortem framework

Project title

### Why did the project fail?

01

02

03

04

05

06

07

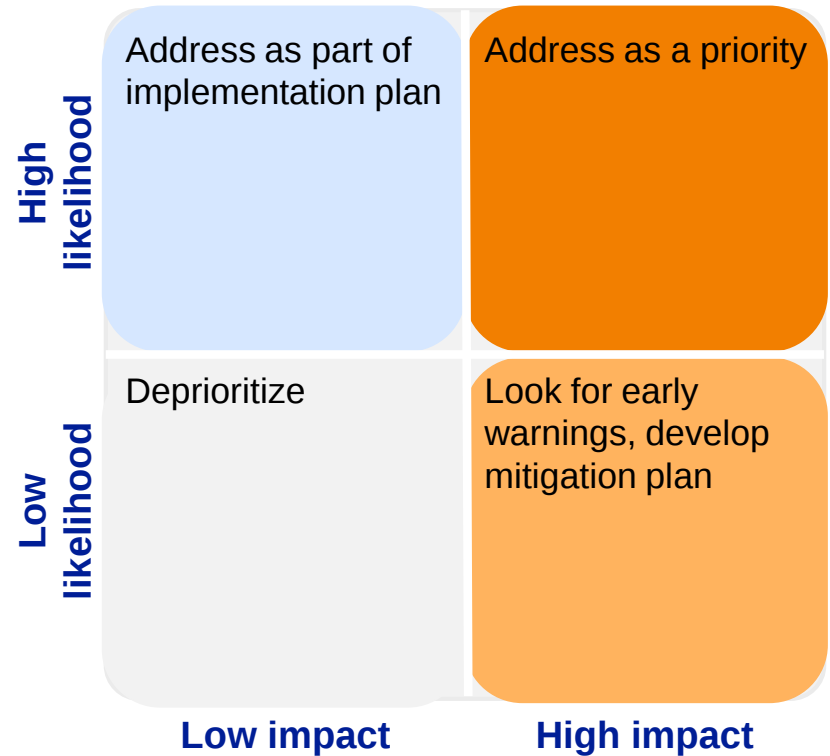
08

09

10

### Plot the risks / reasons for failure on the two-by-two matrix

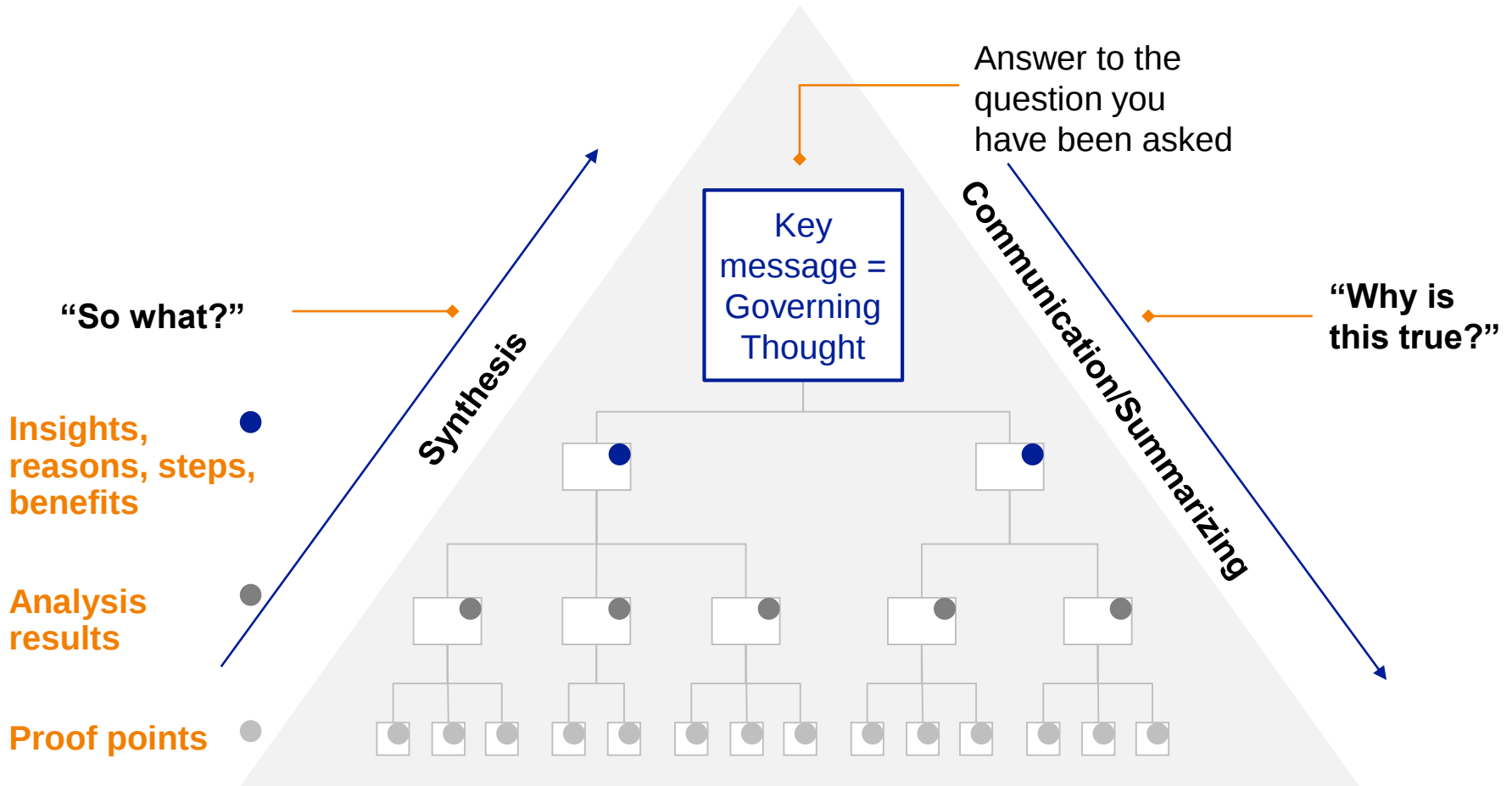
**Likelihood** —  
What is the  
likelihood of  
this risk /  
reason for  
failure?



**Impact** — How much impact does this risk / reason for failure have on my project?

# The Pyramid Principle helps you structure communications – build your point from the bottom and communicate from the top

## The pyramid principle



# There is a four step process to writing effective emails

## Steps of an effective email



- When it is appropriate to email, and when does a phone call or meeting make more sense

- Who should be included
- Who should be Cc'd
- When Bcc should be used

- Structured
- Scannable
- Succinct

- Actionable subject lines
- Top-down structured paragraphs
- Clear next steps with owners and due dates
- Bullets and lists wherever applicable
- Include contact information

Time spent up-front planning & structuring emails is vital,  
but most often skipped



# Following SMART guidelines will help you define problems better

## Elements of a SMART problem statement

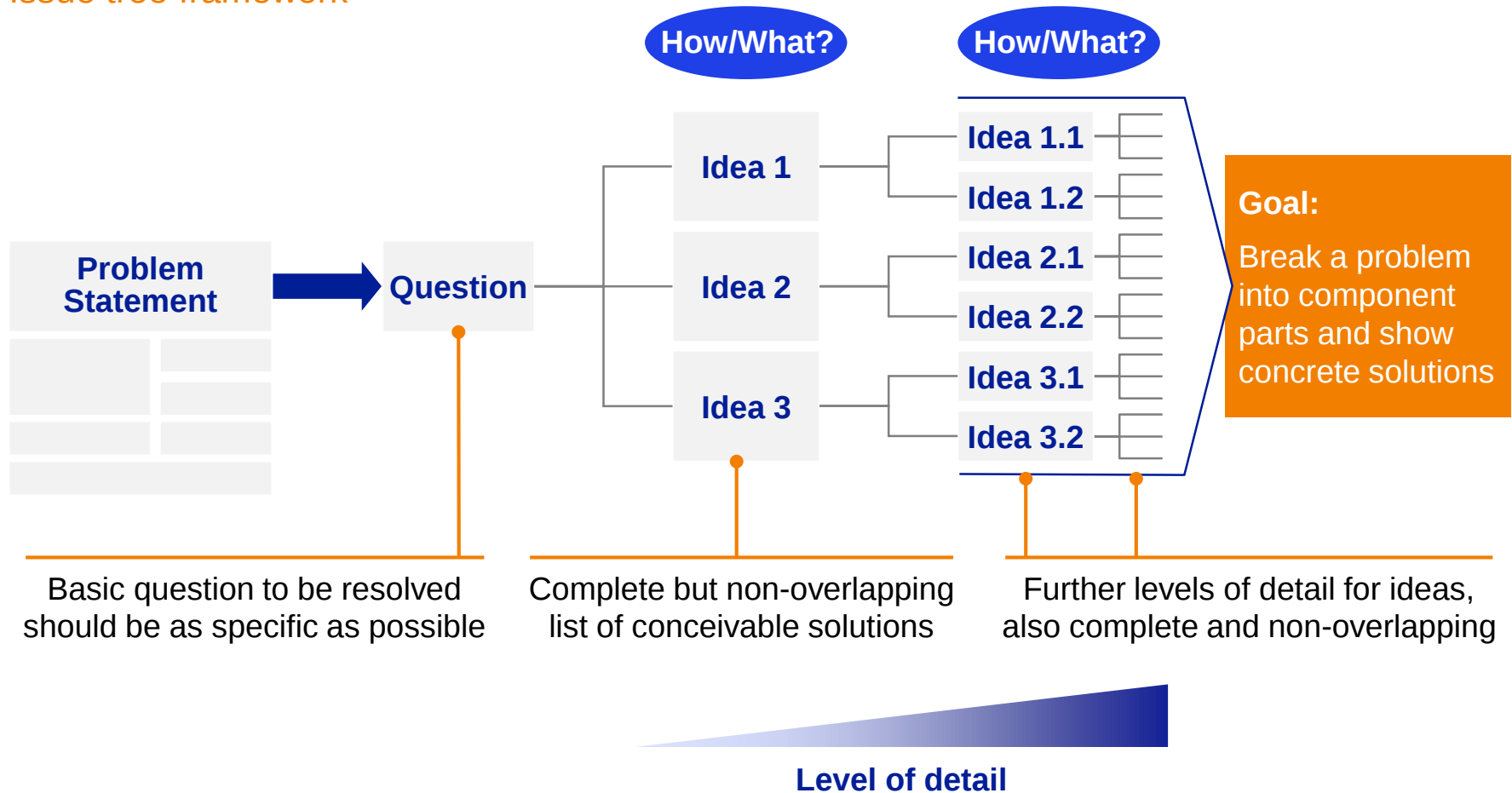
| Element           | Some questions to ask in defining SMART problem statement...                       |                                                                                                                                                                               |
|-------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Specific</b>   |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Has the scope of the problem been appropriately narrowed?</li> <li>▪ Is the problem now more “bite-sized” and clear?</li> </ul>      |
| <b>Measurable</b> |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Which metrics are we using to measure progress?</li> <li>▪ Can we collect the data we need? How?</li> </ul>                          |
| <b>Actionable</b> |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What are the main drivers of the problem?</li> <li>▪ Do we have a path to finding and addressing the root causes?</li> </ul>         |
| <b>Realistic</b>  |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Is our proposed solution achievable?</li> <li>▪ Can we convince others to help us?</li> </ul>                                        |
| <b>Time-bound</b> |  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ By when will we know that we have been successful?</li> <li>▪ What are the intermediate milestones we are working toward?</li> </ul> |

**Your Problem Statement**

...

# Issue trees can help structure the problem

## Issue tree framework



### Why use hypothesis / issue trees?

- Break problem into component parts
- Ensure integrity of the problem solving is maintained
- Build common understanding within the team
- Focus and align team efforts

# GROW model questions you might explore in a coaching conversation

## GROW model



### Goal

- What do you want to achieve long-term?
- What does success look like?
- How much personal control or influence do you have over your goal?
- What would be a milestone on the way?
- By when do you want to achieve it?
- Is that positive, challenging and attainable?
- How will you measure it?



### Reality

- What is (really) happening at the moment? (what, when, where, how much, how often)
- Who is directly and indirectly involved?
- If things are not going well, what happens to you?
- What have you done about this so far? With what results?
- What is missing in this situation?
- What is really going on here?



### Will

- Which course of action do you choose?
- To what extent does this meet all of your objectives?
- What will your first step be?
- When will you start?
- What personal resistance do you have to taking these steps?
- What commitment (1–10 scale) do you have to taking agreed actions?
- What could you do to alter or raise your commitment closer to 10?



### Options

- What options do you have to resolve this issue?
- What would someone who handles this kind of issue really well do?
- What if you had more/less time? What might that force you to try?
- What advice would you give to someone else in this situation?
- What if you could start again?
- What are the costs and benefits of each of these ideas?



# The OILS framework can help us provide others with high-quality feedback

## OILS framework

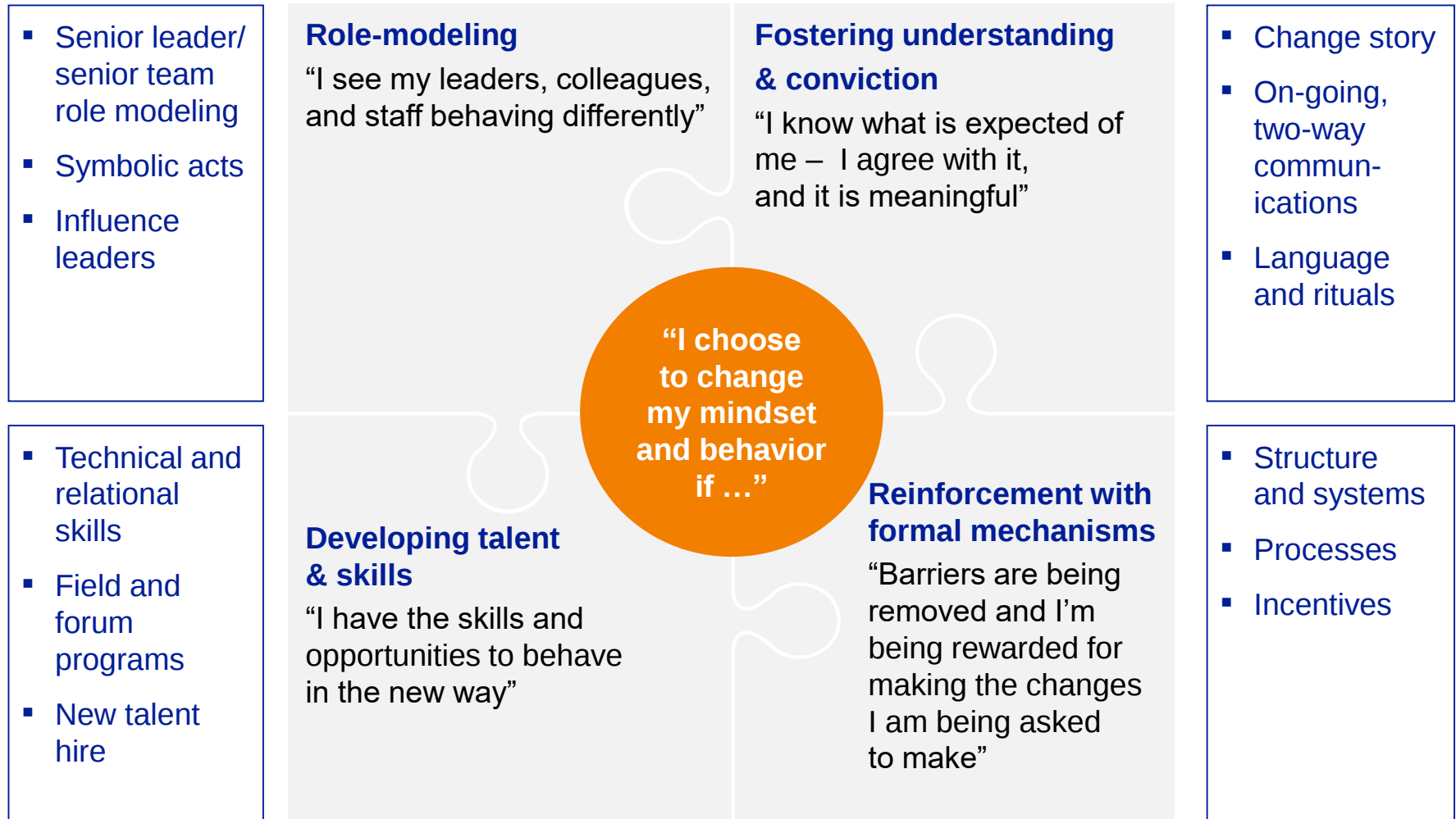
| Step                                                                                              | Definition                        | Tip                                                               | My example                                                                                 |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Observe</b>   | Describe the concrete observation | Be objective<br>'I notice that <fact>...'                         | I notice that you lose track of some tasks you are supposed to complete by the end of day. |
|  <b>Impact</b>    | Explain the impact/ effects       | Use an "I-statement"<br>Be subjective<br>'I feel...'              | This made me feel like you don't think these are important.                                |
|  <b>Listen</b>    | Engage in dialogue                | Ask for input/ probe for understanding<br>'What do you think?'    | Why do you think you lose sight of these tasks?                                            |
|  <b>Suggest</b> | Make a suggestion or request      | Co-create with others<br>'I suggest that ..., what do you think?' | Perhaps you can start writing down to-dos and prioritizing them with an Impact Matrix.     |

## Remember to stay above the line



# The “influence model” is used to consider how best to influence others

## The influence model



# Eight key tactics can help us influence others

## Thought starters on how to influence

### Tactics

### Example

**1 Stating**



*"I need you to take ownership over..."*

**2 Persuading logically**



*"The data proves that..."*

**3 Legitimizing**



*"Janet has asked for this..."*

**4 Appealing to friendship**



*"Sameer, my friend, I need your help with..."*

**5 Exchanging**



*"If you help me with this, I'll help you with that"*

**6 Consulting**



*"My suggestion is this...What do you think?"*

**7 Appealing to values**



*"I believe this will help us to improve quality and get everyone home safe"*

**8 Building alliances**



*"I would like you to work with us on this..."*

***Know your audience!***

# Volume, pace and intonation can optimize voice variation



## Volume

- Deliberately focus people's **attention on key parts of speech** by varying volume
- Don't speak **too loudly or quietly**, which can distract attention from the presentation flow



## Pace

- Change your pace to **structure your presentation**, including the use of varying lengths of pauses
- Adjust your pace to **support content and activities**, such as quicker speech for energizers or slower for non-native speakers



## Intonation

- Intonation promotes comprehension, it is the **audible form of punctuation**
- Maintain vocal **tension up to the very last word** (e.g., don't trail off at end of sentence to suggest lack of confidence in your words)

# Elements that make the presentations effective

## Elements of impactful presentations

| Elements                                                                                                               | "I have a dream" examples                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | "Why do these techniques matter?"                                                                                                                                                                                            |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  <b>Make it personal</b>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Infused his message with <b>personal meaning</b> and <b>conviction</b>, using the word "I" throughout the speech, sharing his vision of society, and referencing his own "four little children"</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases trust and credibility with the audience, and builds authenticity</li> </ul>                                                                                                 |
|  <b>Take the audience on a journey</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Balanced <b>negative</b> messages with <b>positive</b> ones by shifting from negative imagery, such as "a lonely island of poverty," to positive imagery, such as "children joining hands"</li> </ul>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Negative messages can be effective at sparking action/grabbing attention, but to sustain change you need to balance positive to negative messaging at a three to one ratio</li> </ul> |
|  <b>Use rhetorical techniques</b>     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uses repetition: "together", "freedom ring", "free at last" &amp; "I have a dream".</li> <li>Imagery with "people sitting together at a table of brotherhood"</li> <li>Metaphors such as "a stone of hope"</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make the presentation more memorable and engaging</li> </ul>                                                                                                                          |
|  <b>Tell a story</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Incorporated <b>stories</b> to make the message specific and concrete, reminding people of Lincoln signing the Emancipation Proclamation</li> </ul>                                                                   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Studies show that humans are "hardwired" to remember stories and these can make for relatable and memorable communication</li> </ul>                                                  |

# There are four key steps to leading effective meetings

## Steps of an effective meeting



### 1 Planning

- D**efine purpose and the objectives of the meeting
- C**onsider stakeholders and audience
- C**reate an agenda

*“Today’s objective is to assign all tasks associated with our new project...”*

### 2 Opening

- P**urpose
- P**ay-off
- P**review
- P**rocess

*“Our goal is to get started on this project by assigning all key tasks.*

*I’m going to describe the tasks, and you can volunteer for the ones you’d like...”*

### 3 Running

- G**uide the discussion
- I**nfluence the outcome
- I**ntervene when necessary

*“Okay, so we don’t have any volunteers for this responsibility.*

*I propose that Ana takes this one on.*

*Ana, are you comfortable with that?”*

### 4 Closing

- R**evue and celebrate
- A**sk for feedback
- C**lose the loop on next steps
- T**hank participants

*“Okay, we’ve set out what we needed to accomplish.*

*Does anyone have any final thoughts or feedback?*

*If not the next action item is to place your name on our shared Excel sheet, next to your tasks, and make note of the deadline. Thank you!”*

# The 4Ps lay the groundwork for sound meeting leadership

## 4 Ps



### **Purpose** The reason for the meeting, and its goal

When we last met, we kicked off this project to reduce the total time required to launch a new product. Today, we'd like to think through the dashboard we need to drive this purpose



### **Payoff** What the team will gain

By the end of this meeting, we will understand in draft form our portion of the dashboard and how we can contribute to the agency's mission



### **Preview** The major points to be covered

We will discuss the format of the new dashboard, identify the 4-5 data points needed, and set next steps to make sure we are on track to provide and discuss this information



### **Process**

#### How you would like to run the session

We have one hour, so I'd like to make sure we keep our end objectives in mind and keep a parking lot for other issues

# Identifying activities that boost or drain our energy can help promote resilience

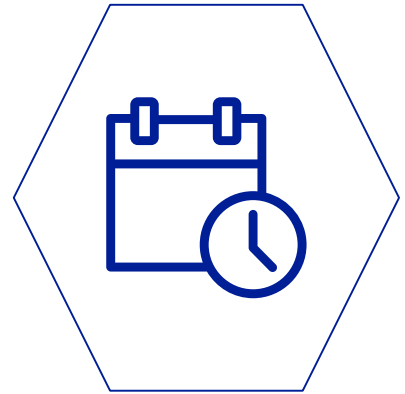
## Energy boosters & drainers

**Identify activities that make you feel highly energized or completely depleted at work and at home.**

|                                                                                                    | At work  | At home    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Energy boosters   | 15 minute walk in the afternoon to help me clear my mind.                                 | Cleaning! It sounds funny, but it picks me up and renews my energy when I have a clean house. |
| Energy drainers  | Too many emails. If I spent my day responding to emails I get exhausted.                  | Getting phone calls on my landline. I don't know why I don't get rid of it!                   |

# There are three essential elements of a closed-loop conversation

## Components of closed loop conversation



### Clearly articulated outcome ...



Exactly **What**

- Measurable
- Action-oriented
- Linked to priorities

### ... assigned to single owner ...



By exactly **Whom**

- One person is accountable
- Someone in the room who signs-up/commits

### ... with agreed deadline

By exactly **When**

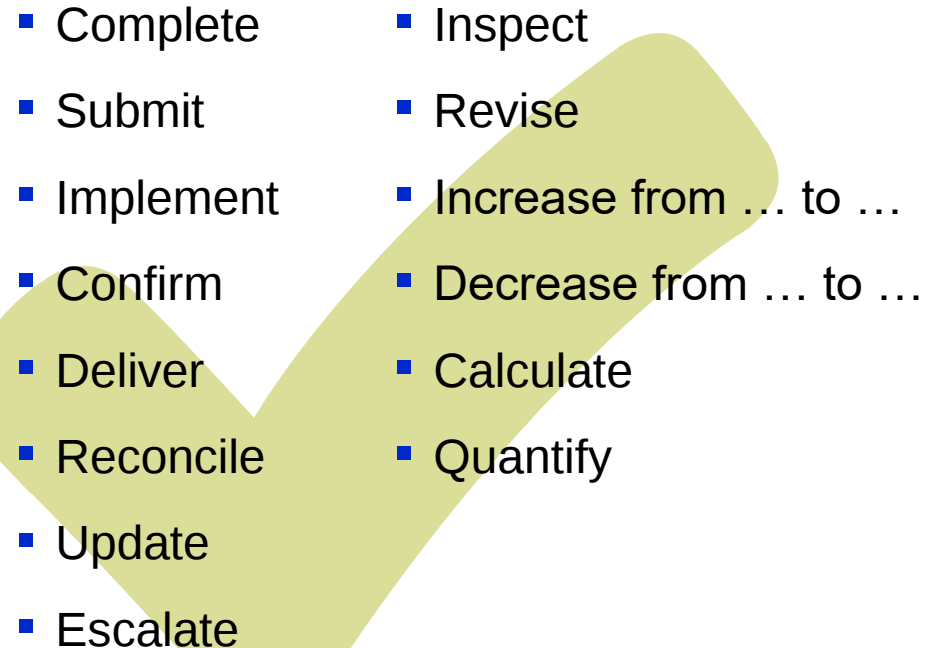
- Specific date for the outcome (“What”) to be delivered

## All verbs are not created equal...

### Ineffective verbs

- 
- Talk to
  - Discuss
  - Investigate
  - Assess
  - Debate
  - Understand
  - Incorporate
  - E-mail
  - Consider
  - Progress
  - Review
  - Check
  - Mobilize
  - Explore
  - Hope
  - Wait

### Effective verbs

- 
- Complete
  - Submit
  - Implement
  - Confirm
  - Deliver
  - Reconcile
  - Update
  - Escalate
  - Inspect
  - Revise
  - Increase from ... to ...
  - Decrease from ... to ...
  - Calculate
  - Quantify