



*Aitkin County*

**Workout Workshop**



# Revitalization Process



## Superpowers

Appreciating your collective talents and identifying where the energy lies; what you find most meaningful about work.



## Space

Creating space (time, resources, and mental energy) for meaningful and engaging work that draws on your natural gifts and passions.



## Strategy

Aligning your collective superpowers, talents, and energy with a people-driven, integrated strategy for county prosperity.

# 2023



## Stories of Excellence

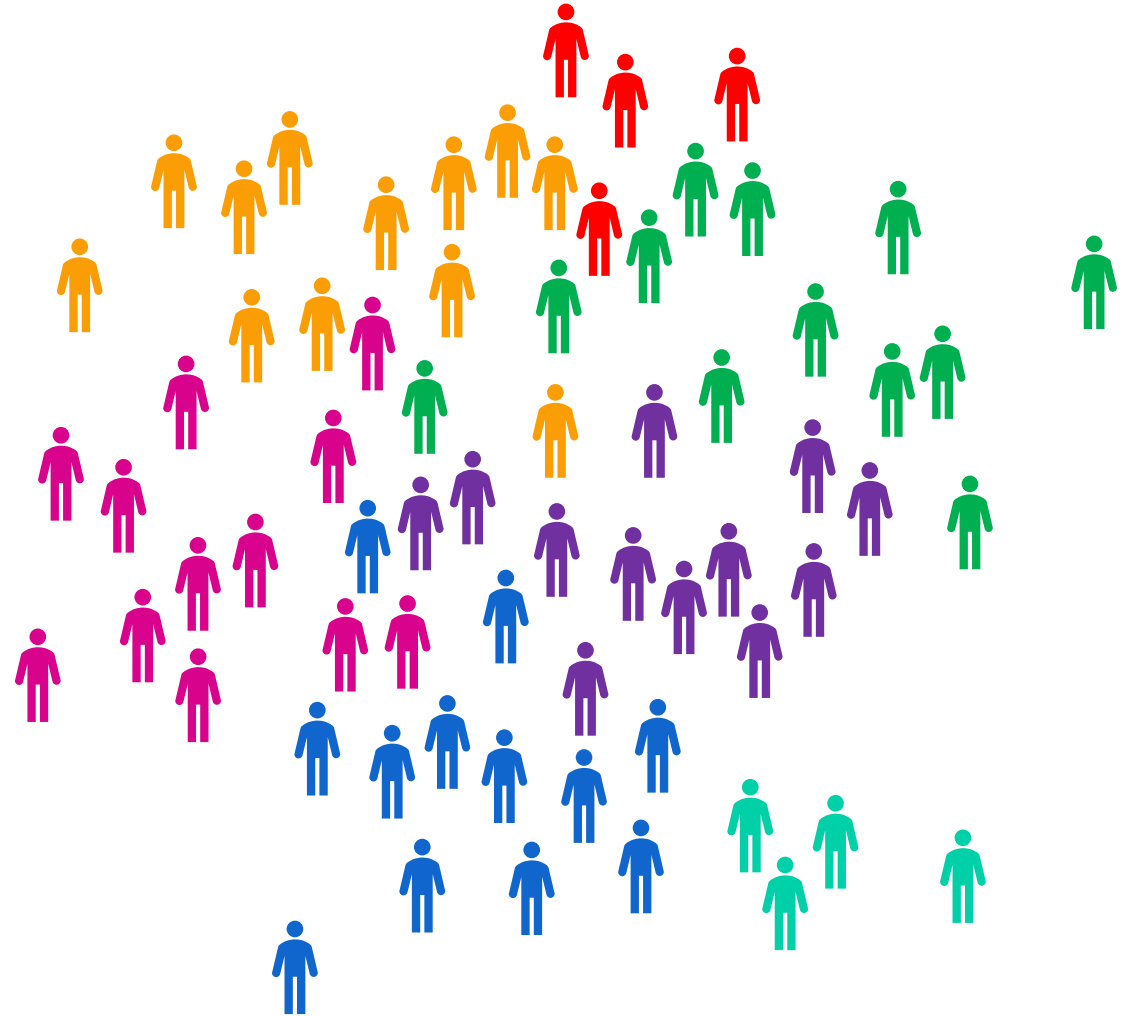


### Intrinsic Rewards

- Being part of a Team
- Growth & Learning
- Service & Dedication
- Empathy & Connection
- Resilience & Adversity
- Community Engagement
- Passion & Dedication
- Ethics & Integrity
- Relationships & Trust
- Pursuit of Excellence
- Empowerment

# Revitalization Initiative

1. Cultivate an organizational **culture** marked by inspiration and engagement, and evidenced by employees who work together to support the health and well-being of colleagues and citizens.
2. Develop **capabilities** that create space for meaningful, high-impact work, and draw upon the unique strengths and hopes of our great talent!
3. Create a clear and compelling **strategy** built through consensus building and commitment amongst key stakeholders.



# Revitalization Team

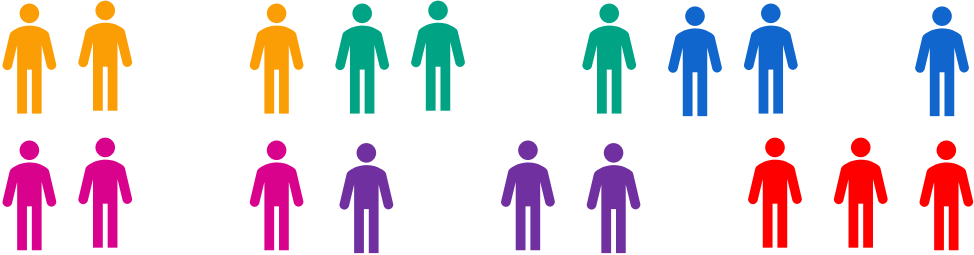
## Part 1: Workout



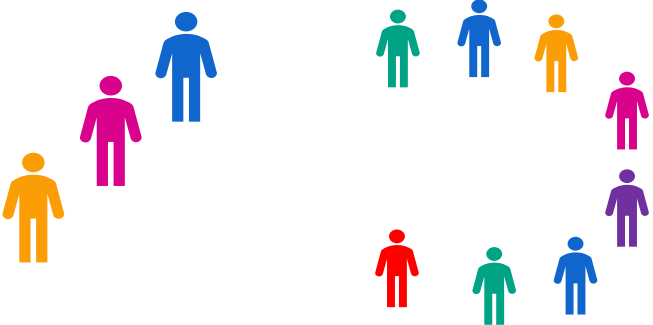
- ✓ A process that empowers employees to create meaningful, vision-centered, and engaging work by reducing burdensome, wasteful, and ineffective processes that we often inherit.
- ✓ Includes a series of structured meetings and discussions that bring together employees from different levels and departments of the organization.
- ✓ The goal is to identify and eliminate wasteful activities and processes that do not add value to the organization's mission and vision.

# Aitkin Revitalization Team

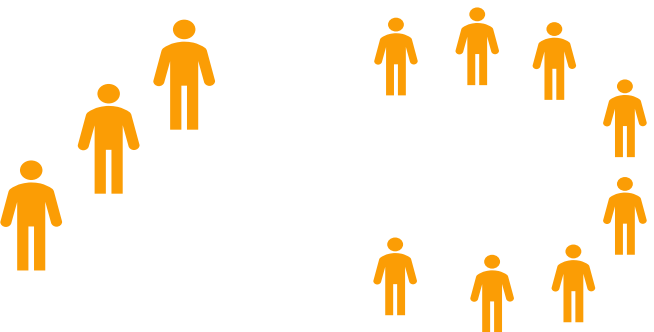
## Workout Bench



**Type 1**  
Workout on burdensome Aitkin-  
Wide Processes & Systems



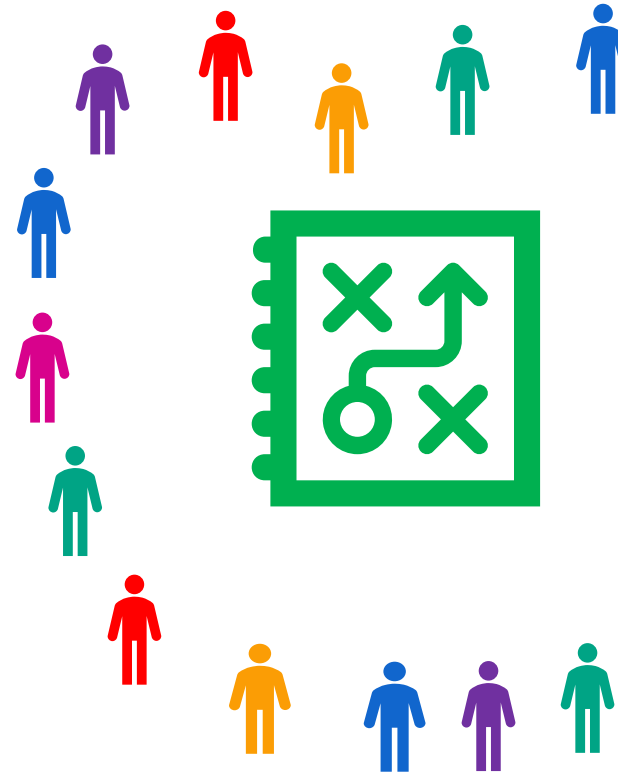
**Type 2**  
Workout on Department  
Specific Processes & Systems



# Aitkin Revitalization Team

## Part 2: Strategic Planning

# SOAR



1. **Strengths:** What are Aitkin's current internal strengths? This is about recognizing and appreciating what the organization does well and what unique resources it can leverage.
2. **Opportunities:** What are the external opportunities available to Aitkin? This could relate to trends, industry shifts, or other external factors that the Aitkin can capitalize on.
3. **Aspirations:** Where does Aitkin want to go in the future? This is about understanding the organization's vision, mission, and the impact it wants to make on its citizens.
4. **Results:** What measurable results will show that Aitkin is succeeding in achieving its aspirations? These could be key performance indicators, milestones, or other tangible outcomes that demonstrate progress.

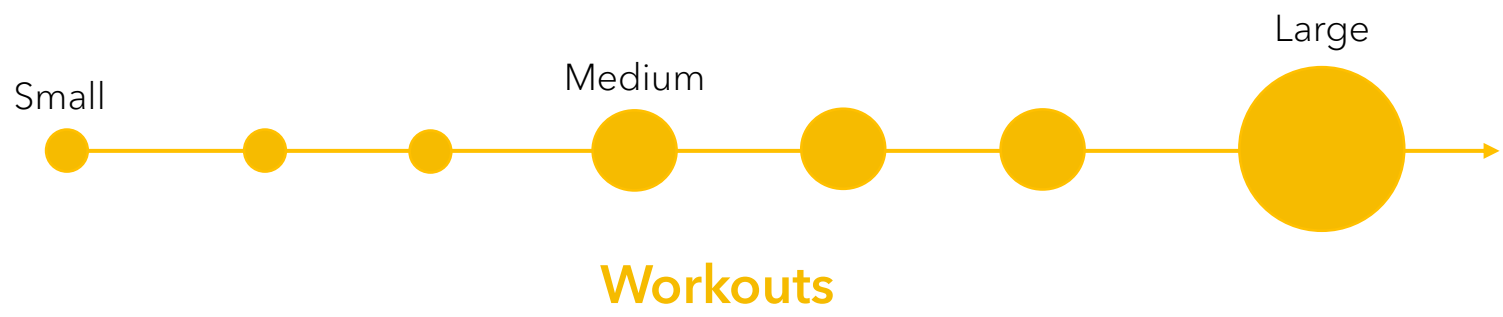
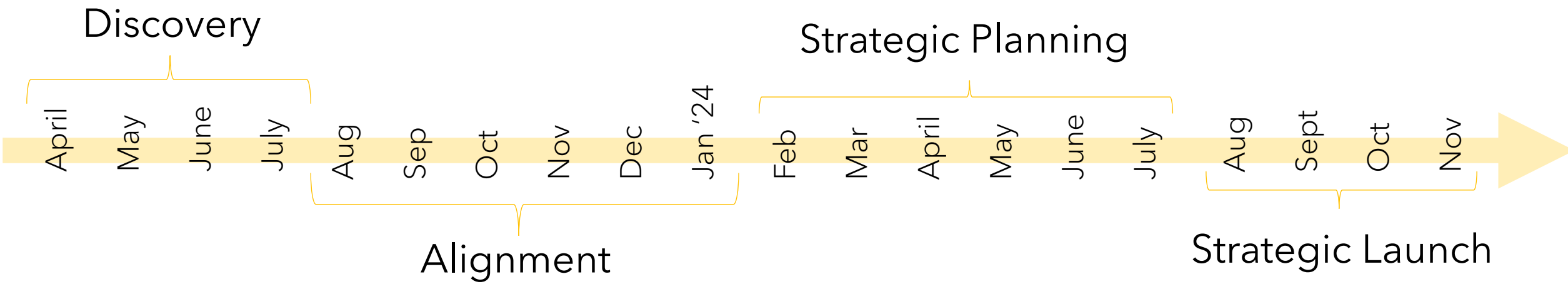
# Aitkin Revitalization Team

## Part 3: Strategic Launch

- ✓ Strategic Playbook
- ✓ Strategic Anchors
- ✓ Strategic Imperatives
- ✓ First year Goals and Roles
- ✓ Benchmarks & Milestones
- ✓ Performance Indicators
- ✓ Continuous Improvement







The Revitalization Primer does not represent actual strategic initiatives or projects that have been decided upon, discussed, or suggested by Aitkin County Administration, Department Heads, or Commissioners.

County-Wide & Department-Specific:

Instead, they are merely hypothetical and at times intentionally provocative to help prime your creativity and accelerate a consensus driven approach to identifying desirable, feasible, and practical Workout projects!





## Overview

Introductions,  
History, Uses,  
Examples, and Basic  
Process



## Decision Making & Teams

Taking teams from forming to  
performing as quickly as  
possible and equipping with  
decision making protocol.



## Facilitating Work-Out

From idea  
generation  
to action planning.



## Work-Out Tools

Numerous tools and  
frameworks for making  
progress practical.



## Designing a Work-Out

Identifying opportunities  
and challenges suitable for  
workout and arranging the  
right people.



# Housekeeping



## Parking Lot

Items that are off-topic are captured in the Parking Lot and discussed later, or in the appropriate forum.

Work-Out is a team-based approach, therefore it is important that you only leave the room for bio breaks or emergencies. Turn phones to silent or vibrate.

## Questions

Questions occur to you during the breaks/lunch and/or you are not comfortable asking in front of the large group.

# Ground Rules

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# Work-Out Overview



**Quality**  
Six Sigma



**Acceptance**  
Work-Out  
& C.A.P.



**Effectiveness**

# Big Picture

Identify issue or opportunity

Design the Workout Session

Cross-functional Team Idea Generation & Consensus Building

**Born**

**Growth**

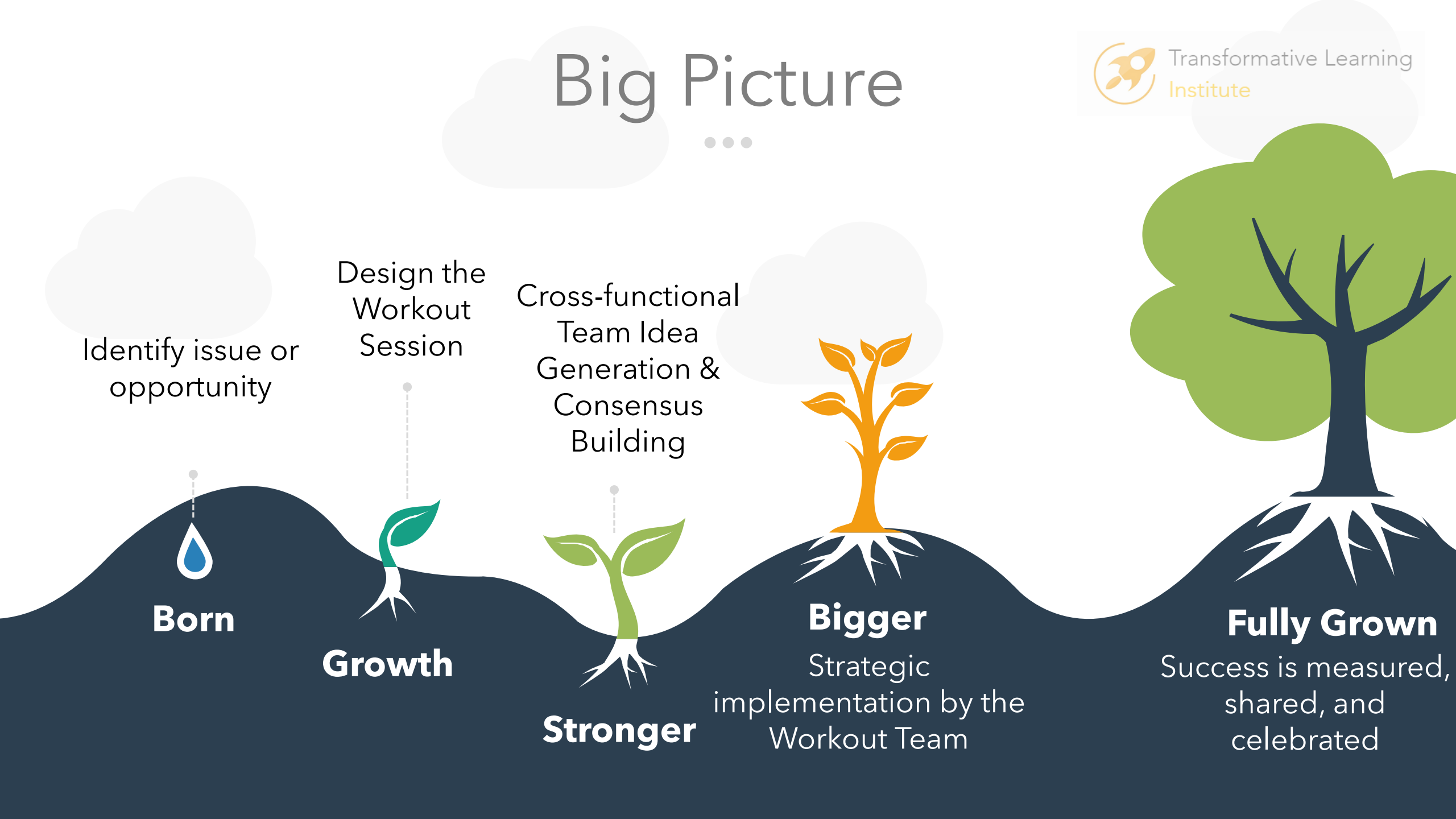
**Stronger**

**Bigger**

Strategic implementation by the Workout Team

**Fully Grown**

Success is measured, shared, and celebrated







## Innovation

Work-Out can be used to bring your people together with customers or suppliers to develop innovative ways of doing business together. No matter what the challenge, the process remains the same.



## Empowerment

Empower people to carry out the solutions in a highly structured fashion, holding members accountable for the strategies *they* develop



## Drive Decisions

Make yes or no decisions on the solutions immediately in a public forum. With a more responsive organization, problem solving becomes a shared responsibility rather than relying on a more traditional top-down approach.



## Right People

Work-Out is a highly facilitated meeting that gets the right people in the room at the same time.



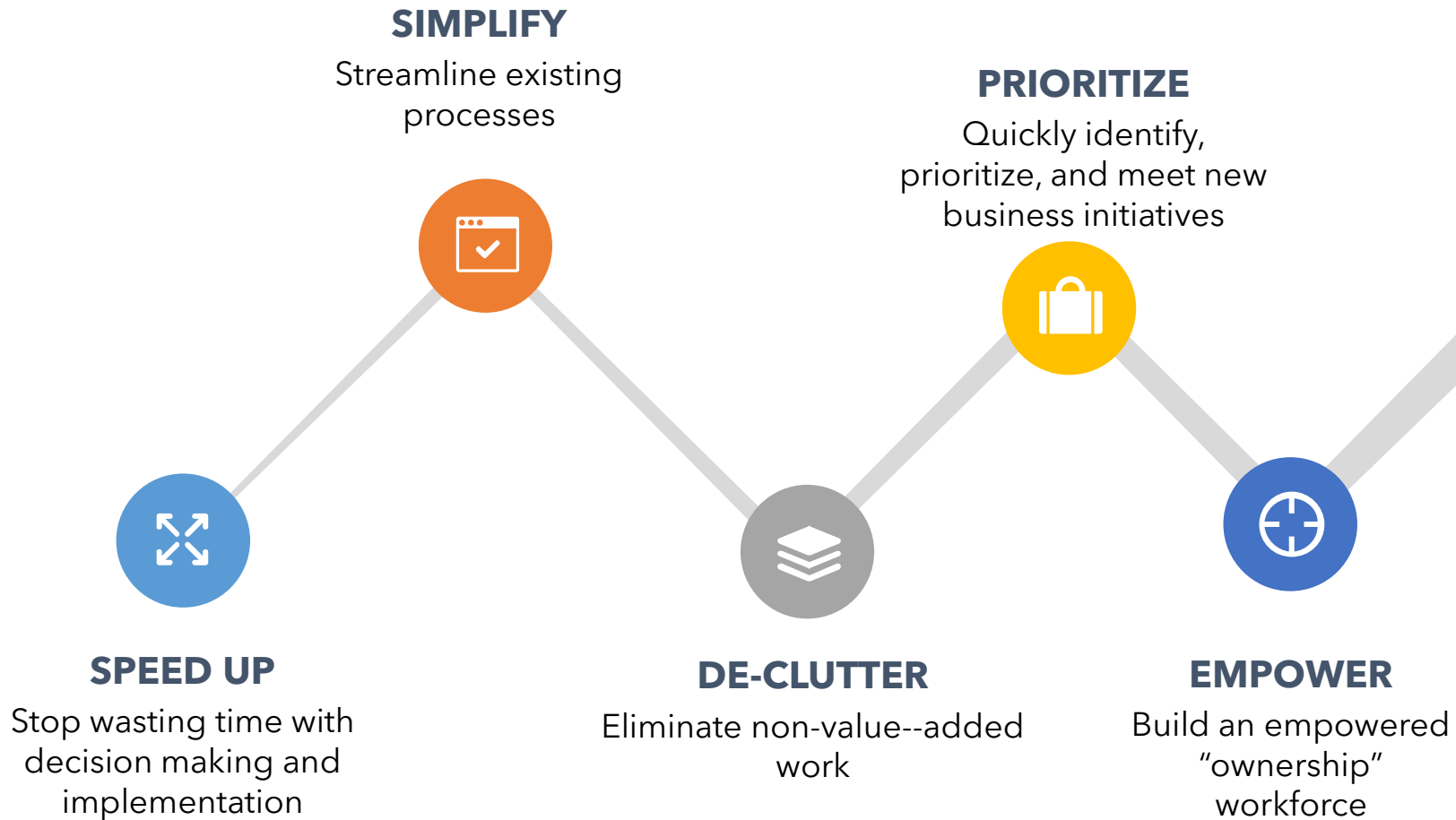
## Successful History

Work-Out was first used at GE to harvest the low-hanging fruit of overgrown bureaucracies by reducing meetings, reports, and the number of approvals needed to make a decision.

# Workout Overview

# Aim

...



# Wasteful Practices

1. Describe a work practice that you or your people have been doing in the past month or two whose value might be questionable.
2. What's your guess about how many people are involved in this work practice across your organization?
3. How much total time would you estimate is spent on the practice?

# Characteristics

It is the people who are closest to the problem that make the suggestions for improvement. Work-Out is set up so that the decision-makers are present, every issue has a sponsor, and the quick-hit issues are identified and resolved. No complaining or blaming.

## **PASSION**

Participants and their peers feel passionate about them.

## **PARTICIPATION**

They stimulate actions by the participants and their peers.



## **STRATEGY**

They have a positive impact on business objectives.

## **CULTURE**

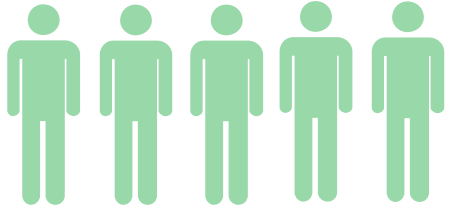
They have a positive impact on the cultural strengthening process.



# Work-Out Basics

# Structure

## Planning Team



- Department Heads
- Embrace Empowerment
- Desire Opportunity to Sponsor



## Sponsor



- 1 Member of Planning Team
- Agrees on Critical Business Issue
- Gathers information/data

## Coach



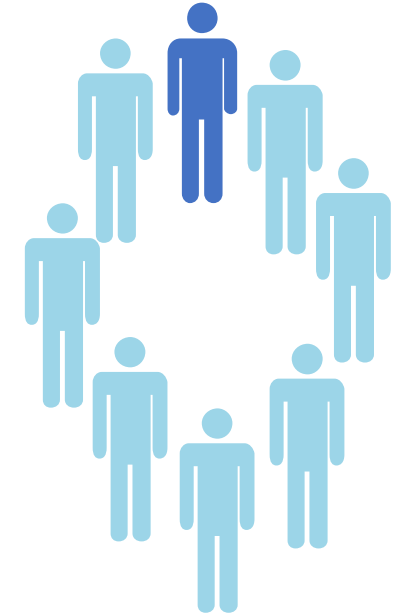
- Work-Out Expert
- Helps Sponsor/Champion
- Hands-on Scoping & Quality Control

## Revitalization Team Member



- Emerging Leader
- Selected by Sponsor
- Trained in Work-Out
- Facilitates Work-Out

## Change Champions



- Represent all areas effected
- Selected by Sponsor & Champion
- Understand Work-Out Process
- Participate in Work-Out Session

# Sponsor Agrees on Critical Issue



## Smaller Issues

Reduce meetings, reports and approval levels

Reduce time for expense reimbursements, travel arrangements, office supplies, personnel data, taking educational courses.



## Larger Issues

Improving strategy

Operational efficiency

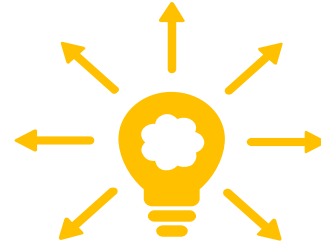
New business development

Policies and Procedures development

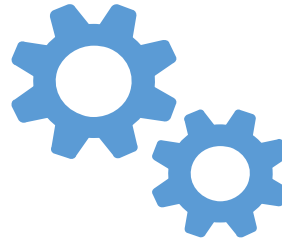
# Coach Assists with Scoping



Develop a brief statement that clearly captures the “Whats and Whys” of the Work-out.



This must represent realistic stretch goals in a part of the business recognized by participants to be an important opportunity area.



May focus on productivity, increasing customer satisfaction, and reducing costs, or improving the waiting experience for customers).



Gather information that supports the need or opportunity.

Identify the main areas of the organization who are involved and how much stake each has in the process.

Create boundaries and guardrails: clarity around what the participants should not consider (e.g. longer term systems fixes, or capital investments over a stated amount).



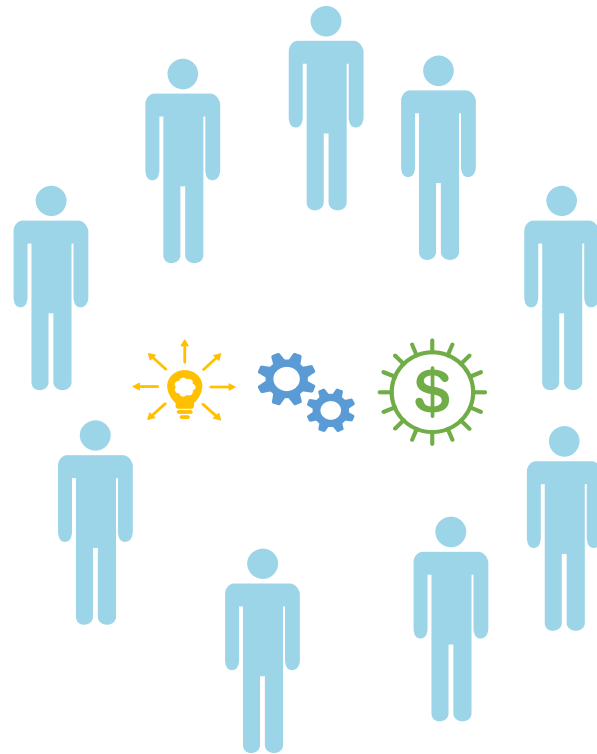
# Selecting Revitalization Team Members

- ❑ **Communication skills:** Look for individuals who are skilled communicators, able to articulate their ideas clearly, and can listen to others.
- ❑ **Facilitation skills:** Identify individuals who have experience leading teams or facilitating groups, and who are comfortable with managing group dynamics and encouraging participation from all team members.
- ❑ **Leadership skills:** Look for individuals who have a strong leadership style, who can inspire and motivate their team members, and who are comfortable making difficult decisions.
- ❑ **Critical thinking skills:** Identify individuals who have demonstrated the ability to analyze complex problems, break them down into manageable parts, and develop effective solutions.
- ❑ **Interpersonal skills:** Look for individuals who have demonstrated the ability to build strong relationships with others, work collaboratively, and are able to influence and persuade others in a positive way.
- ❑ **Change management skills:** Identify individuals who have experience managing change initiatives and can adapt to changing circumstances.
- ❑ **Strategic thinking skills:** Look for individuals who have demonstrated the ability to think strategically, identify long-term goals, and develop plans to achieve them.
- ❑ **Project management skills:** Identify individuals who are skilled at managing projects, including planning, budgeting, and tracking progress.
- ❑ **Results-oriented:** Look for individuals who are focused on achieving results, and who can set and achieve ambitious goals.
- ❑ **Ability to learn:** Identify individuals who are committed to learning and developing their skills and who are open to new ideas and approaches.

# Revitalization Members Plan & Facilitate Work-Out

Lead Work-Out team in systematically analyzing the challenge, generating recommendations to meet the goals, defining costs and benefits of recommendations, creating action plans to be implemented in the next 90 days.

Helps team prepare recommendations to the Sponsor for immediate approval (on the spot).



Plans logistics for the workout session: Booking room for 1 - 3 Days depending on issue, preparing participants, scheduling, materials and follow-up.

Conducts sensing session with Sponsor to determine whether the team is on the right track.

Helps orchestrate the execution of strategy once it is approved by the Sponsor.

**1.Immediate Decision Making:** One of the hallmark features of the Workout is that senior management attends the end of the session to provide immediate yes-or-no responses to the teams' proposals. This ensures rapid decision-making and eliminates the delay that often stifles organizational improvement initiatives.

**2.Implementation Plans:** Once a proposal is approved, an implementation plan is quickly developed. The teams responsible for the proposals often take the lead on this, detailing how the decision will be operationalized, who will be responsible, what resources will be needed, and what the expected timeline will be.

**3.Communication:** The outcomes of the Workout sessions, especially the decisions made by senior management, are communicated throughout the organization. This fosters transparency and can also serve as a motivational tool by showcasing that the organization is committed to change and values input from its employees.

**4.Tracking and Accountability:** There's a focus on accountability post-Workout. The approved initiatives are tracked, often using dashboards or other monitoring tools, to ensure they are progressing as planned. Regular check-ins and updates ensure that the momentum from the Workout session isn't lost.

**5.Feedback Loop:** As the changes are implemented, it's essential to gather feedback to understand the effectiveness of the initiatives and to make any necessary adjustments. This feedback can come from employees, stakeholders, or even metrics that measure performance.

**6.Learning and Continuous Improvement:** One of the core tenets of Organization Development (OD) is the emphasis on learning and continuous improvement. After the implementation of Workout decisions, organizations often undertake a reflective process to understand what went well and what could be improved. This feeds into future Workout sessions and other organizational improvement initiatives.



# BREAK TIME





# Team Building & Decision Making



# Goal Clarity & Cohesion



Performing

Norming

Storming

Forming

# Ice-Breaker



# Team Roles



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## Process Checker

Makes sure people stay on task with the specific activity. When members stray off process, the process checker nudges them back into the process..



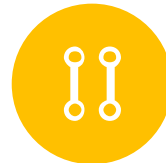
## Historian

Takes notes on what is being discussed for sharing at a later time.



## Facilitator

Moves team through the process but not content.. Encourages dialogue and consensus building.



## Time-Keeper

Ensures that key agenda items are covered in a timely fashion. Cautions the group when they are running low on time and need to wrap up.



# Fist-to-Five Technique



Fist = No

Very  
Concerned



Concerned



Somewhat  
Agree



Mostly  
Agree



Totally  
Agree





# Facilitating Workout

# Major Tasks

**STEP 1:** Plan

**STEP 2:** Conduct

**STEP 3:** Implement

When Planning:

- Select Topic
- Charter Work-Out
- Develop Clear Problem/Opportunity Statement
- Collect Background Data
- Design Topic Questions
- Design Agenda and Approach
- Plan Logistics and Contract Resources
- Identify Meeting Participants (Change Champions)
- Coach Sponsor

# Success Criteria

- Preparation before the event
- Change Champions are the people who do the actual work
- Topic/issues are clear, specific, and well defined
- Participants responsible for implementing the recommendations
- Key decision makers available to set the stage and provide recommendations (decisions made)
- Non-threatening environment
- Facilitated by a trained individual
- Management willingness to make decisions - not be paralyzed
- Sense of urgency and need to act
- Follow-up on open items
- Implementation within 30 - 60 days

# 90%

is in the planning

# Key for Planning

- Begin planning 30-60 days before the actual Work-Out
- Revitalization Team Members should become familiar with the issue and understand the problem as much as possible.  
Preparation is important!
- Conduct sensing sessions, if needed, with the Sponsor and key stakeholders to gather data and define a statement of what you want to accomplish at the Work-Out
- Involve the sponsor in defining the agenda
- He or she will enter the meeting at the beginning and the end, but not in the actual problem-solving portion of the meeting
- The Sponsor is responsible for identifying the location and who should be involved in the meeting
- The Revitalization Team Member is responsible for making things happen during the Work-Out
- Preparation is important (they should ask lots of questions!)
- Sponsors should be coached to expect questions prior to the Work-Out
- Change Champions should expect to ask questions to define the issue and make sure that they understand the goals of the Work-Out



# BREAK TIME



# Role Play

Prepare what you will say and how you will act by assuming the identify of a likely sponsor at your organization. Be realistic! Some Sponsors will know what they want, and others won't.

## Sponsor



## Revitalization Team Member

Prepare for your meeting with the Sponsor using the Agenda Planning Tool. Develop a list of questions to ask in order to complete each of the items in the template.

## Observer

Think about what you should be looking for in order to know whether the meeting was successful. Take note of which approaches worked and which could be improved.

# The Work-Out Session



- Kick-off and Introductions
- Team Building
- Review/Define the Problem
- Problems/Issues Identification
- Problems/Issues Categorization
- Problems/Issues Prioritization
- Solutions/Recommendations
- Action Plans and Report-Out















# Work-Out Tools

# RAMMPP

Control/Where Clutter Exists

| Category  | Self | Department  | Group   | Company   | External |
|-----------|------|---|---|---|----------|
| Reports   |      |   |  |    |          |
| Approvals |      |    |  |    |          |
| Meetings  |      |    |   |   |          |
| Measures  |      |   |   |   |          |
| Policies  |      |  |   |   |          |
| Practices |      |   |   |  |          |

In order to reduce waste and simplifying process, could it be:

1. Fully or Partially Eliminated?
2. Delegated Down?
3. Done Less Frequently?
4. Simplified?
5. Done with Less People?
6. Automated?

# Problem → Process



**PROBLEM:** We have too much inventory

**Process:** Production scheduling, inventory management, order entry and fulfillment.



**PROBLEM:** Our service response rate is too slow!

**Process:** Citizen service inquiry resolution, order tracking and fulfillment.



**PROBLEM:** It's taking us too long to bring new services to our citizens.

**Process:** Service development and product communication.





**PROBLEM:** Our strategic plans take too long to develop and aren't very helpful.

**Process:** Strategic planning and budgeting.



# Affinity & Gallery Walk

| Category  | Self | Department | Group   | Company   | External |
|-----------|------|------------|---|---|----------|
| Reports   |      |            |  |  |          |
| Approvals |      |            |   |   |          |
| Meetings  |      |            |   |   |          |
| Measures  |      |            |   |   |          |
| Policies  |      |            |   |   |          |
| Practices |      |            |   |   |          |

## Policy Paralysis

Overreaching  
Confusing  
Some outdated  
Some can be more efficient

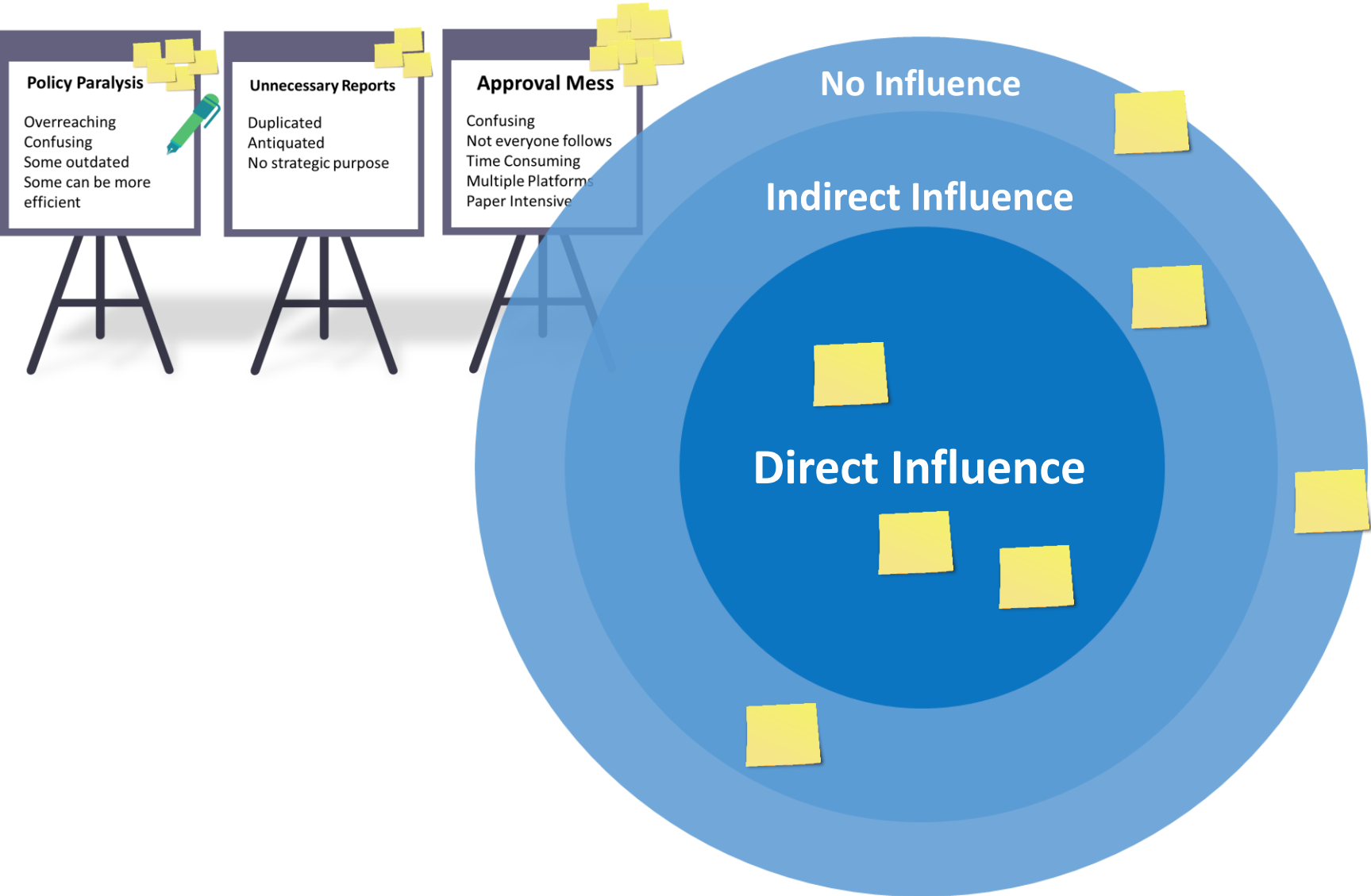
## Unnecessary Reports

Duplicated  
Antiquated  
No strategic purpose

## Approval Mess

Confusing  
Not everyone follows  
Time consuming  
Multiple platforms  
Paper intensive

# Circle of Influence



# Form Teams



**Policy**

Process Efficiency

**Reporting**

Strategic purpose  
Alignment

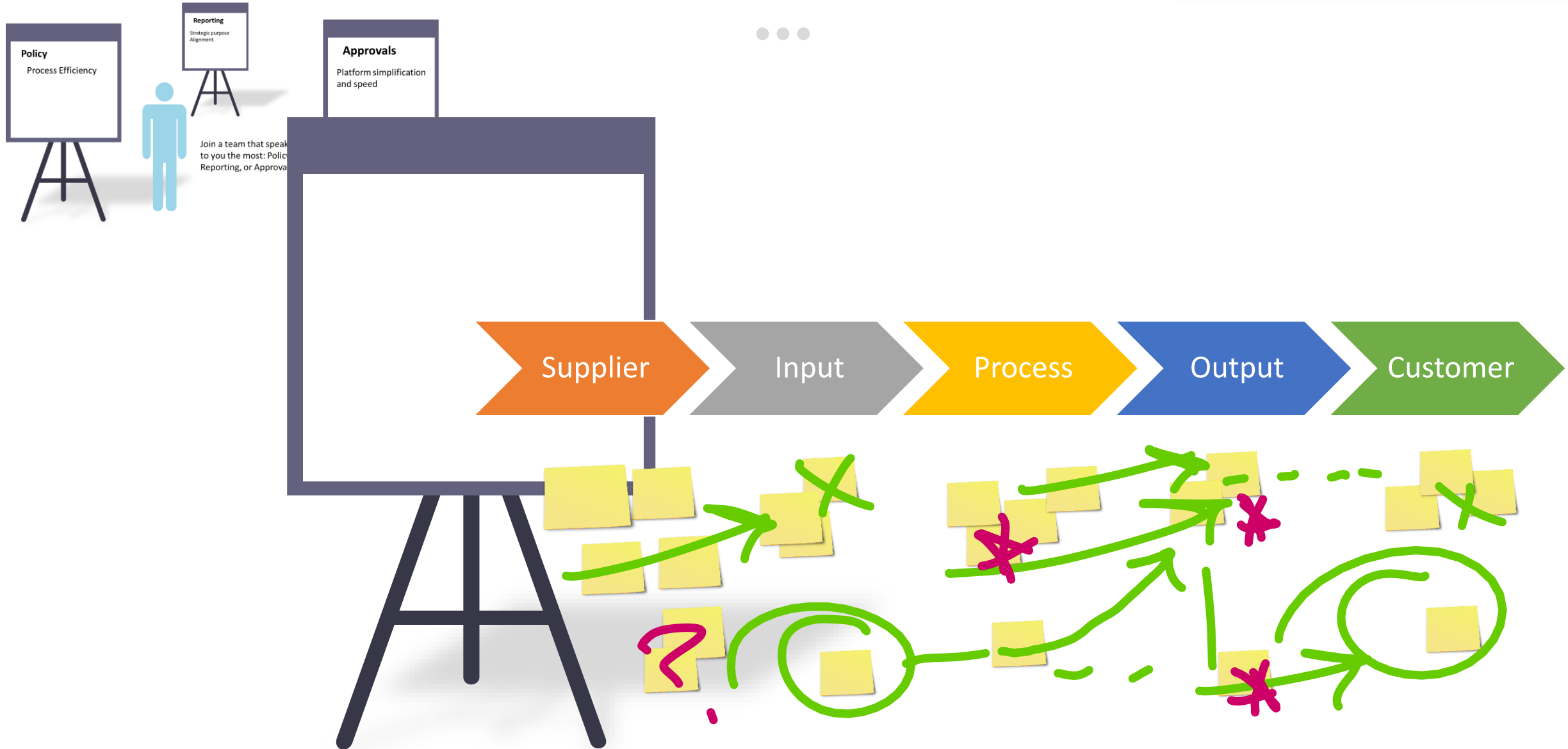
**Approvals**

Platform simplification  
and speed



Join a team that speaks to you the most: Policy, Reporting, or Approvals.

# Process Mapping



# N/4



**ISSUES**  $\frac{3}{4} = 1$   
each member gets  
1 vote with sticky dot

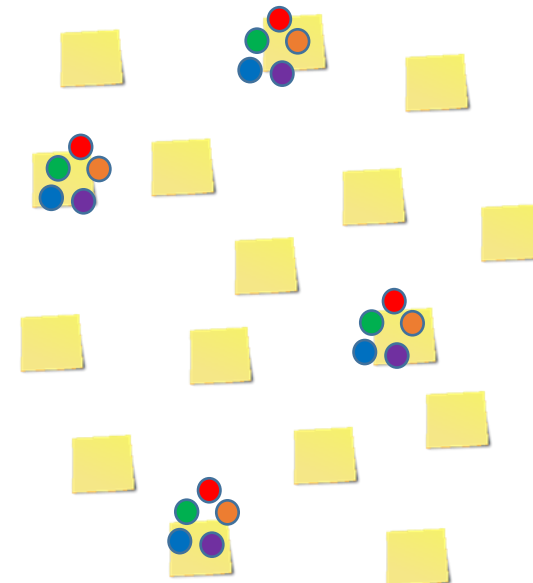
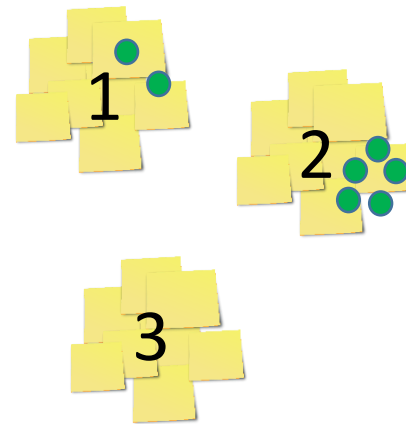
**SOLUTIONS**  $\frac{16}{4} = 4$   
each member  
gets 1 vote

Brainstorm

Identify Themes

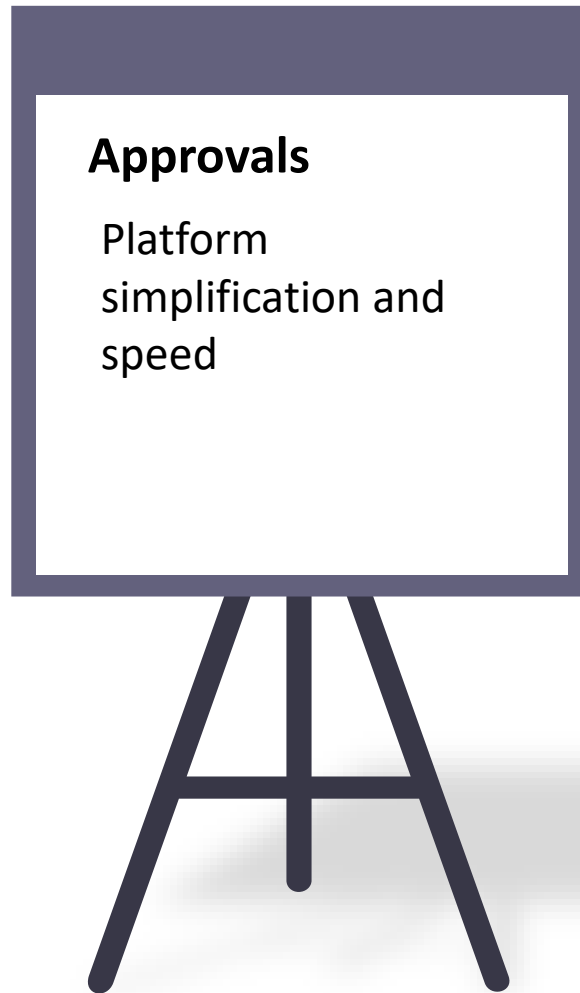
Diverge

Converge



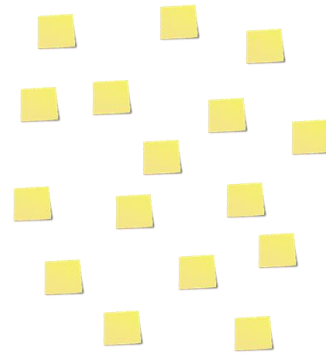


# Brainstorm

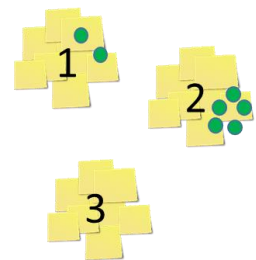


## Reporting Issues

Divergent

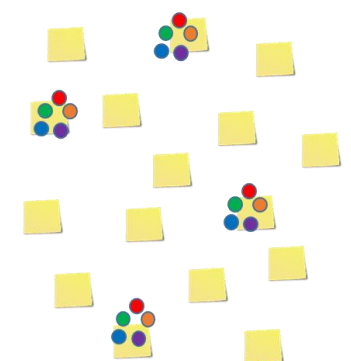


Convergent



## Solutions

Divergent

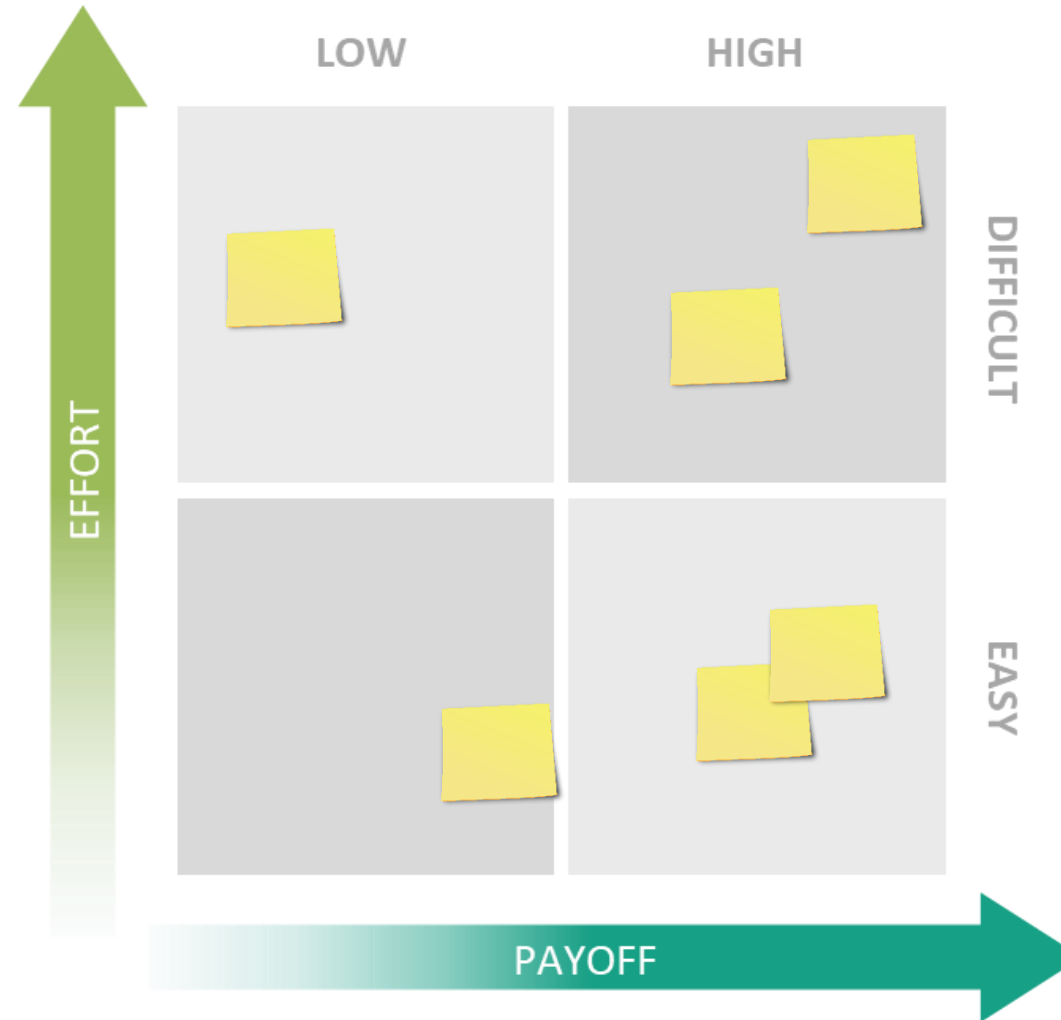


Convergent

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4






# Effort/Payoff Matrix

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# WWW



| Who | What   | When |
|-----|--|------|
|     |  |      |
|     |  |      |
|     |  |      |
|     |  |      |
|     |  |      |

# Creating the WWW



**Add**

01

Collect additional baseline data  
Get people interested/involved  
Policies, procedures, and workflow  
Measuring/Communicating Progress  
Overcoming obstacles that could arise

02

**Consolidate**



Consolidate related ideas and sequence the steps. Decide which steps to include in your plan and turn them into action steps

03



**Assign**

Assign accountability for each step. If more than one person will be involved in a step choose one person to accept prime accountability for getting it done.



05

**Test**



Test plan for completeness: (1) Are any steps missing? (2) What are the chances of success (can we increase them)? (3) Is the sequencing of steps realistic, given other commitments and priorities? (4) Have you considered key risks and weak spots, and can you build steps into the plan to address these?



**Decide**

04

Decide on a time frame to begin and complete each step.

| Who | What | When |
|-----|------|------|
|     |      |      |
|     |      |      |
|     |      |      |





TOOLS & PRACTICE

# DAY 2

Now that you've learned about Work-Out's history, philosophy, goals, roles, tasks (and a few tools), it's time to learn about designing and facilitating an actual workout session.



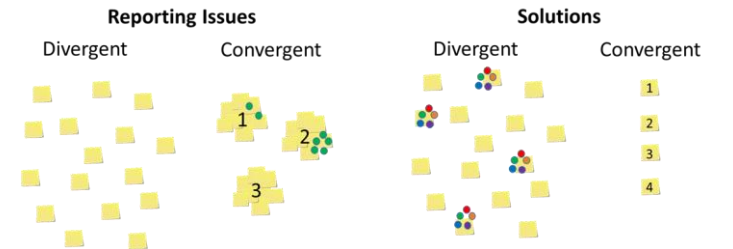
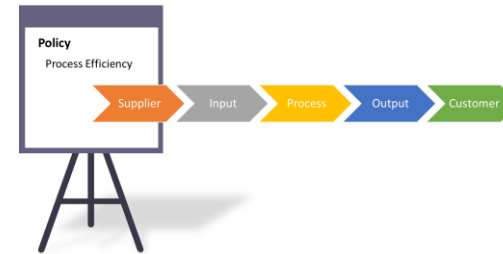
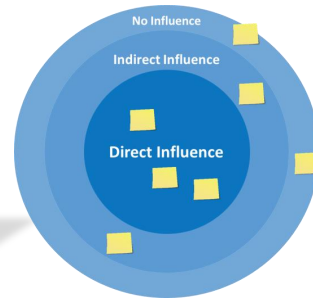
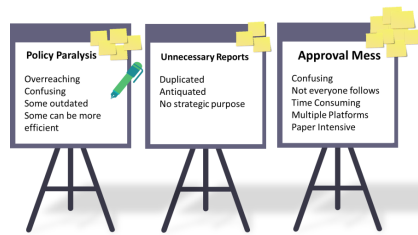
# Review

STEP 1: Plan

STEP 2: Conduct

STEP 3: Implement

| Category  | Self | Department | Group | Company | External |
|-----------|------|------------|-------|---------|----------|
| Reports   |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |
| Approvals |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |
| Meetings  |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |
| Measures  |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |
| Policies  |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |
| Practices |      | ■          | ■     | ■       | ■        |





# Designing a Workout

# Creating an Agenda

- Introduction
- Brainstorming with small teams
- Presenting the ideas
- Developing the top 3 – 4 ideas
- Decision making by Sponsor



| <b>Time</b> | <b>EXPRESS WORKOUT</b>   |
|-------------|--|
| 8:00 AM     | Business Update (manager)  |
| 8:30 AM     | Work-Out Overview, instructions to the teams, and warm up exercise (facilitator)   |
| 10:00 AM    | Work sessions (teams, meeting in breakout rooms)   |
|             | <p>Team 1: Time cards - do we need them? If not, what is the alternative for ensuring scheduling compliance and proper payroll?</p> <p>Team 2: Engineering time sheets - Do we need them? If not, how do we track engineering costs?</p> <p>Team 3: Appropriation requests - How can we streamline the process and reduce the cycle time for decisions?</p> <p>Team 4: Highlights reports: How can we report on our monthly activities more efficiently?</p> <p>Team 5: Meetings: Which ones do we need, and which ones can be eliminated or streamlined? How can we make all meetings more efficient?</p> |
| 12:00PM     | Working Lunch: sit with people from different teams, share ideas, and get input.   |
| 1:00PM      | Work Sessions: team meetings continue; main task is to prepare presentations.  |
| 2:30        | Town Meeting: each team will have up to 20 - 30m for presentation and discussion   |
| 5:00        | Adjourn  |

# Sensing Sessions

## Mapping the Challenge

1. The underlying process and the department units or functions that it cuts across.
2. Related areas that are not currently involved in the process but could or should be.
3. Who will benefit most from achievement of the challenge goal.
4. Who else may need to be involved in the thinking or implementation.

# Project Charter for:

## Problem Statement:

- Why is this project important to the organization?
- One or two sentences that describe the gap between expected performance and actual performance

## Aim Statement:

- Major goal(s) of project (limit 1-2)

## Measures of Success:

- Key metrics (how will you measure the goals?)

## Scope:

- What's in and out of scope? (Which pt types, which procedures, which test types, etc.)
- Process Begin & End

## Boundaries:

- Constraints (anything non-negotiable for the project such as "FTE neutral" or "no capital expenses > \$500")

## Start Date:

## Planned End Date:

## Sponsor(s):

- 

## Facilitator(s) / Practitioner(s):

- 
- 
- 
- 

## Coach(es):

- 

## Team Members:

- Names and roles/depts



# BREAK TIME

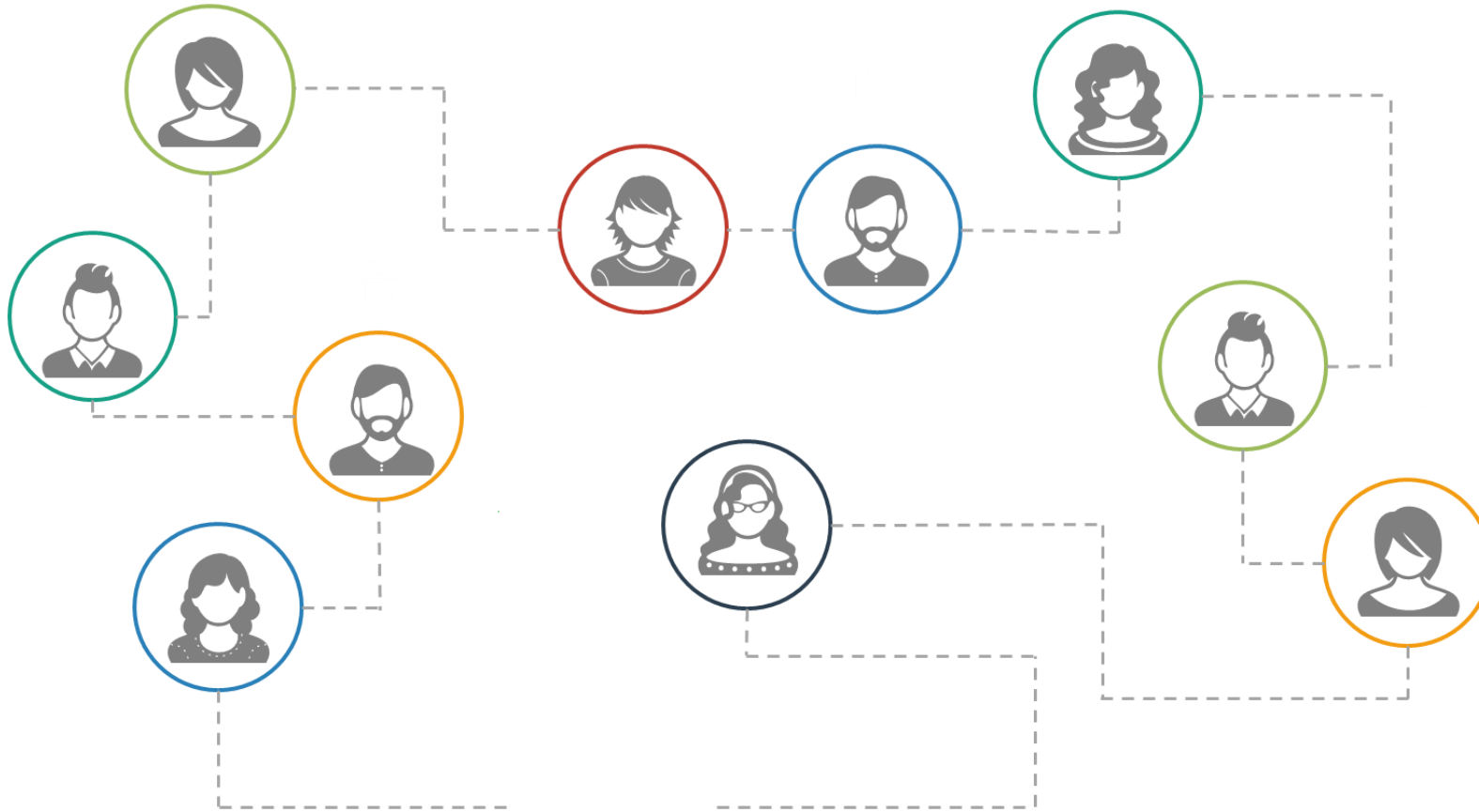
# Fishbowl

- The sponsor is here to be interviewed for a Work-Out session that will be conducted the next day.
  - The goals and objectives for the interview are to better grasp the situation, gain additional information, and clarity around needs and non-negotiables.
  - The sponsor will now give a brief explanation of the Work-Out topic so that you can begin developing scoping questions for your interviews.
- Break into table teams (10 minutes) -  
Develop interview questions to clarify the Work-Out topic.
- Designate one representative from your team to interview the sponsor

# Practice Designing a Work-Out

- Design a Work-Out session with your team - complete the following:
  - ✓ *Sensing Session Template*
  - ✓ *Workout Agenda*
- Identify what tools you would use, order, timing, high level facilitator steps.
- Be prepared to share your design with the full group (each will have 5m to present).
- The larger group will give you feedback on your design.

# Embed in Culture



## Steps

- Publicize Success
- Align your actions with commitment
- Reach the tipping point
- Share the knowledge you gain
- Apply Work-Out to other programs

# Next Steps

- You will refine and share ideas with me
- Department Heads will discuss
- Commissioners will review
- We will refine charters
- Workout Launch
- Strategic Change Workshop