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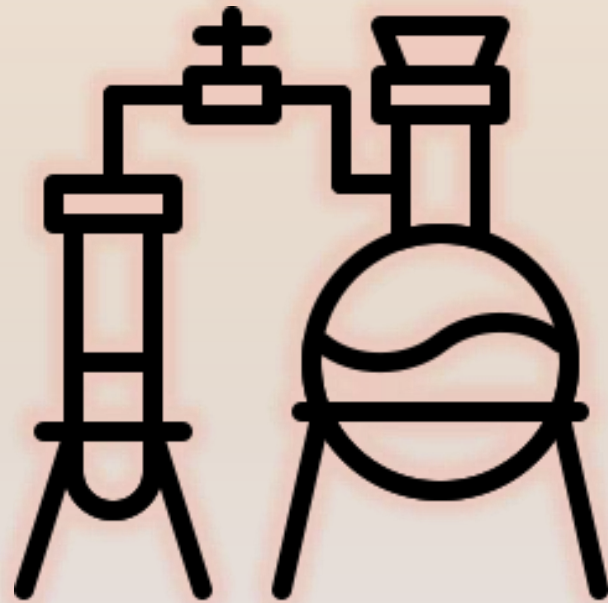
# Diamonds on the Soles of Your Shoes

Gracie Koester

Agile Prague 2018



Leadership Alchemy : Recognizing the Under-Valued





## How does DISSATISFACTION show up?

### SOUNDS LIKE:

- Complaining
- Whining
- Frustration
- Annoyance
- Irritation
- Being stuck, apathy

### FEELS LIKE:

- Being taken advantage of
- Under-utilized
- Inefficiency
- Mis-allocation
- Under-resourced
- Under-estimated

*...and how do you respond to it?*



# Birthing a future



## “Do I have to listen to that?”

*“Leadership behaviors are often mimicked throughout an organization, and just as incivility and spiral, so too can respect.”*

- --Kristie Rogers, professor of management, Marquette University



*Barrier: “Why do I need to pay for retrospectives? I already know what they’ll say.”*



*Rated U.S.’s best larger employer  
(employee satisfaction)*

+

*Rated U.S.’s favorite retailer  
(customer satisfaction)*

# Cost of Complaining

When dissatisfied at work,  
we:

- complain to others (78%),
- do extra/unnecessary work (66%),
- ruminate about the problem (53%),
- get angry (50%).



As a result we lose (per  
worker):

- Average of 7 days/year of work time
  - 40% lose 14 days/year
- \$7500 per year for costs associated with not speaking up
  - 20% estimate cost of more than \$50,000

# Johnsonville's New Moves : "I let my people lead."

Dissatisfaction

*"What worried me more than the competition, however, was the gap between potential and performance."*  
– Ralph Stayer, Johnsonville Sausage

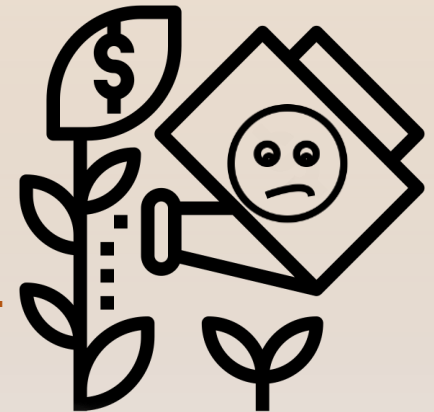


Change

**LEADERS:** take responsibility for the culture  
**WORKERS:** take responsibility for their role

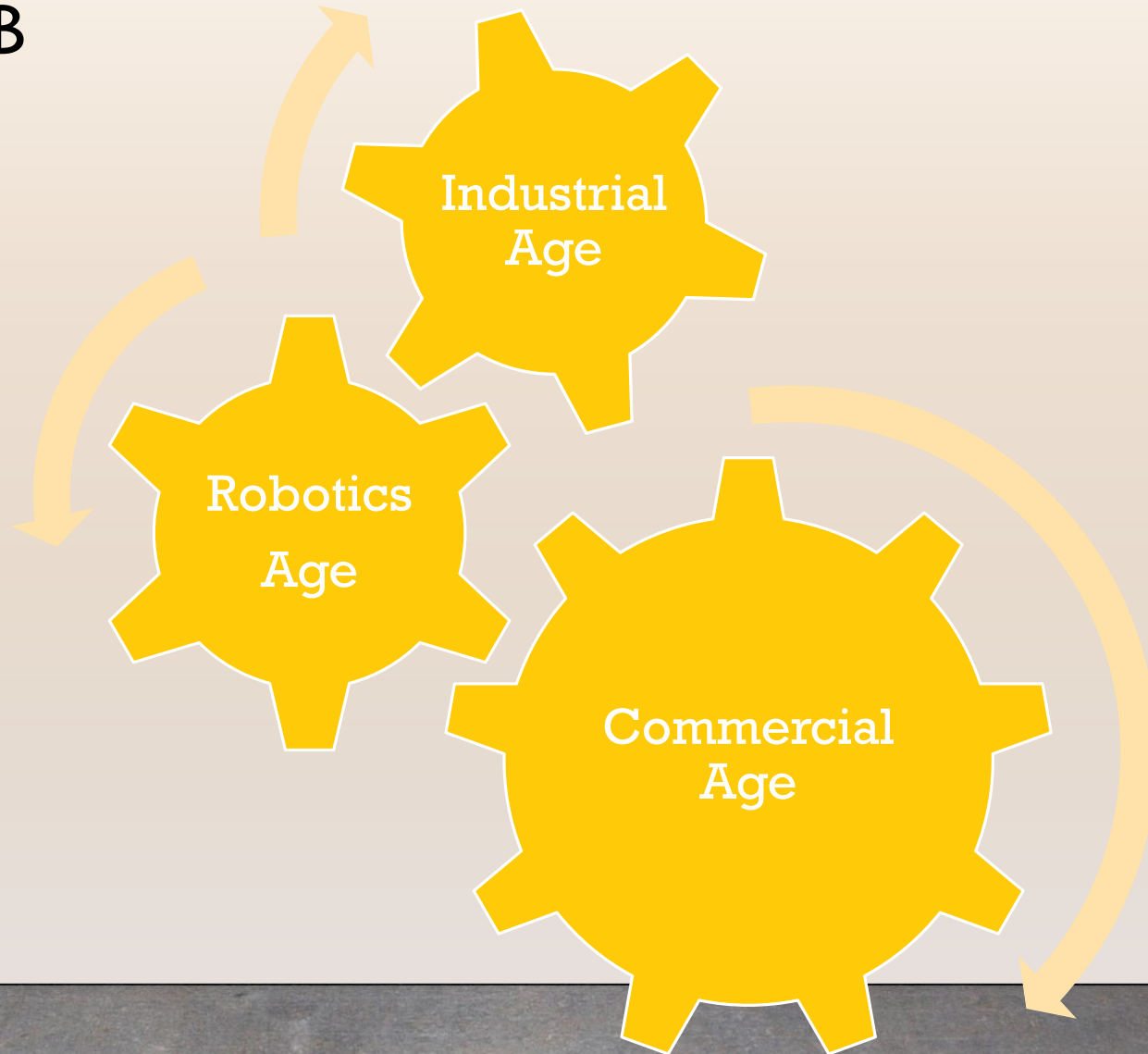
Results

- Rejects fell from 5% to less than 0.5%.
- Cut machine downtime by 30%
- Got rid of need for weekend work
- Increased: return on assets, margins, and quality
- Able to take on more new business, grow





Input A  Output B





## How Lighting Affects Productivity

One of the most striking factors influencing how we work is the color temperature — measured in Kelvin (K) — of the light sources we're exposed to on a regular basis.



**Use in:** Intimate settings, break rooms

Creates a sense of comfort and relaxation.

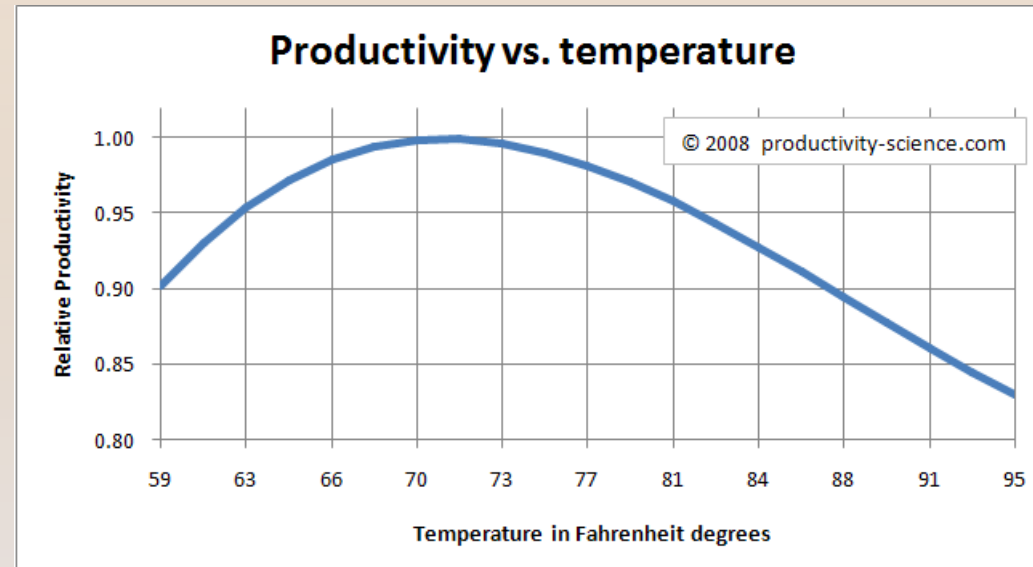
**Use in:** Conference rooms

Welcoming but still cool enough to promote alertness.

**Use in:** Brainstorming rooms

Improves alertness, mood and productivity. Lowers melatonin, which reduces fatigue.

Sources:  
<http://www.westinghouselighting.com/color-temperature.aspx>  
<https://www.jcircadianrhythms.com/articles/10.1186/1740-3391-5-2/>



## Ergonomics: How Office Chairs Are Affecting Work Productivity



Ideal Office Furniture  
 PO Box 333  
 West Pennant Hills  
 NSW 2125  
 02 9629 6666

# Responsive Approach

The customer  
is always  
right!



The  
employee is  
always right?



## Neuro-Insight : Feedback is High-Stakes

We are Hard-Wired to SURVIVE. Survival = Belonging to a Group

• Bad feedback

• Not valuable to group

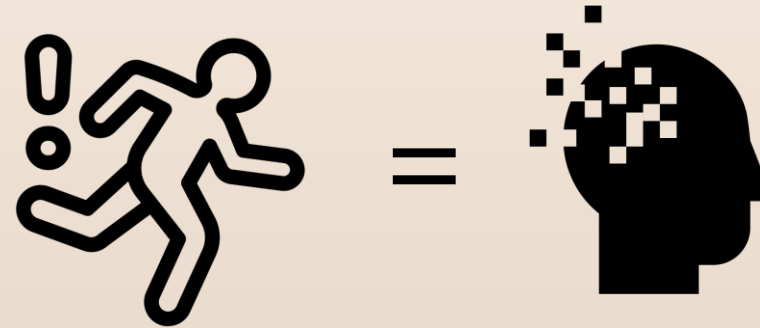
• Outcast

• Death



  
 **Neuro-Insight : Our Brains Shut Down Under Threat**

We "flee" the threatening idea;  
We maintain self preservation by  
explaining away the critique



*“Our faces flush, our hearts race, and our brains shut down. No matter if we’re giving a speech to thousands or coming face-to-face with a jungle cat, our body’s response is the same: We want out...In West and Thorson’s study, participants’ heart rates jumped as much as 50 percent during feedback conversations.”*

*–NeuroLeadership Institute*

## Social Norms Hinder Feedback



Giving  
feedback  
is mean

*“There’s a strong culture of being very nice to people, and it’s hard to be critical of someone in those conditions.”*

--Tessa West, New York University psychologist



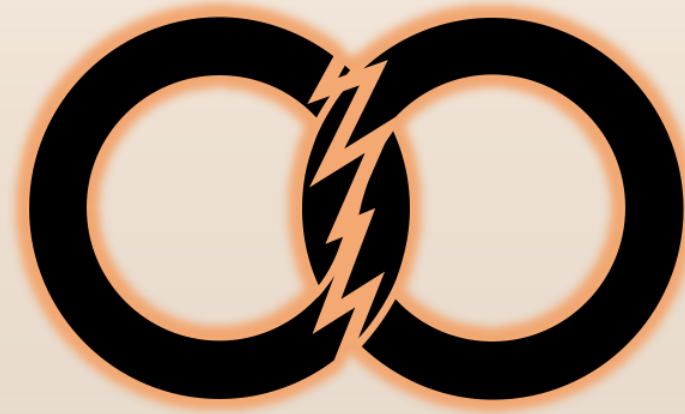
Asking for  
feedback means  
we’re dumb

*“Asking your team how you’re doing can show a lack of self-confidence.”*

--Lior Rachmany  
CEO, Dumbo Moving

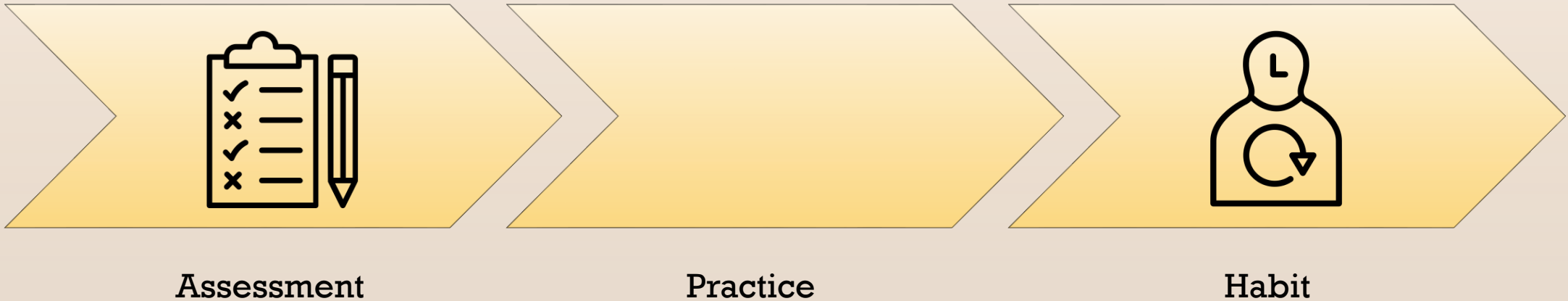


I propose divorce!



Dissatisfaction is not the same as dislike!

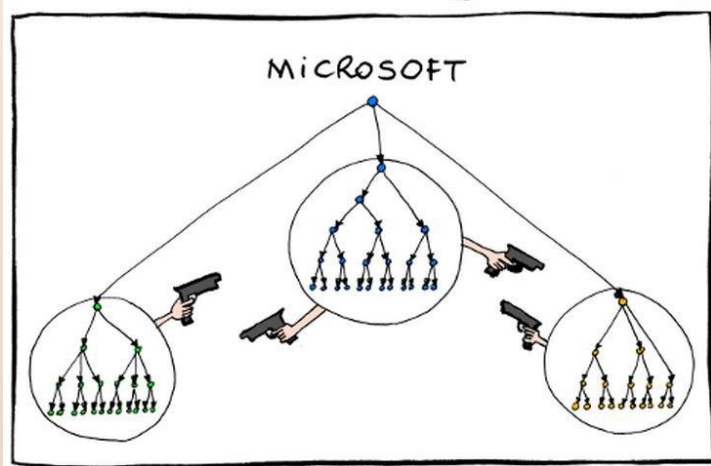
## Make Dissatisfaction Work For You :



*“Change might not be fast and it isn't always easy. But with time and effort, almost any habit can be reshaped.”*

— Charles Duhigg, *The Power of Habit: Why We Do What We Do in Life and Business*

# Microsoft : Facing Irrelevance ➤ Cover of 'Fast Company'



*"How do we build a culture of learn-it-alls, as opposed to know-it-alls?"*

Stock price stalling



\$250 billion market value increase in 3.5 yrs

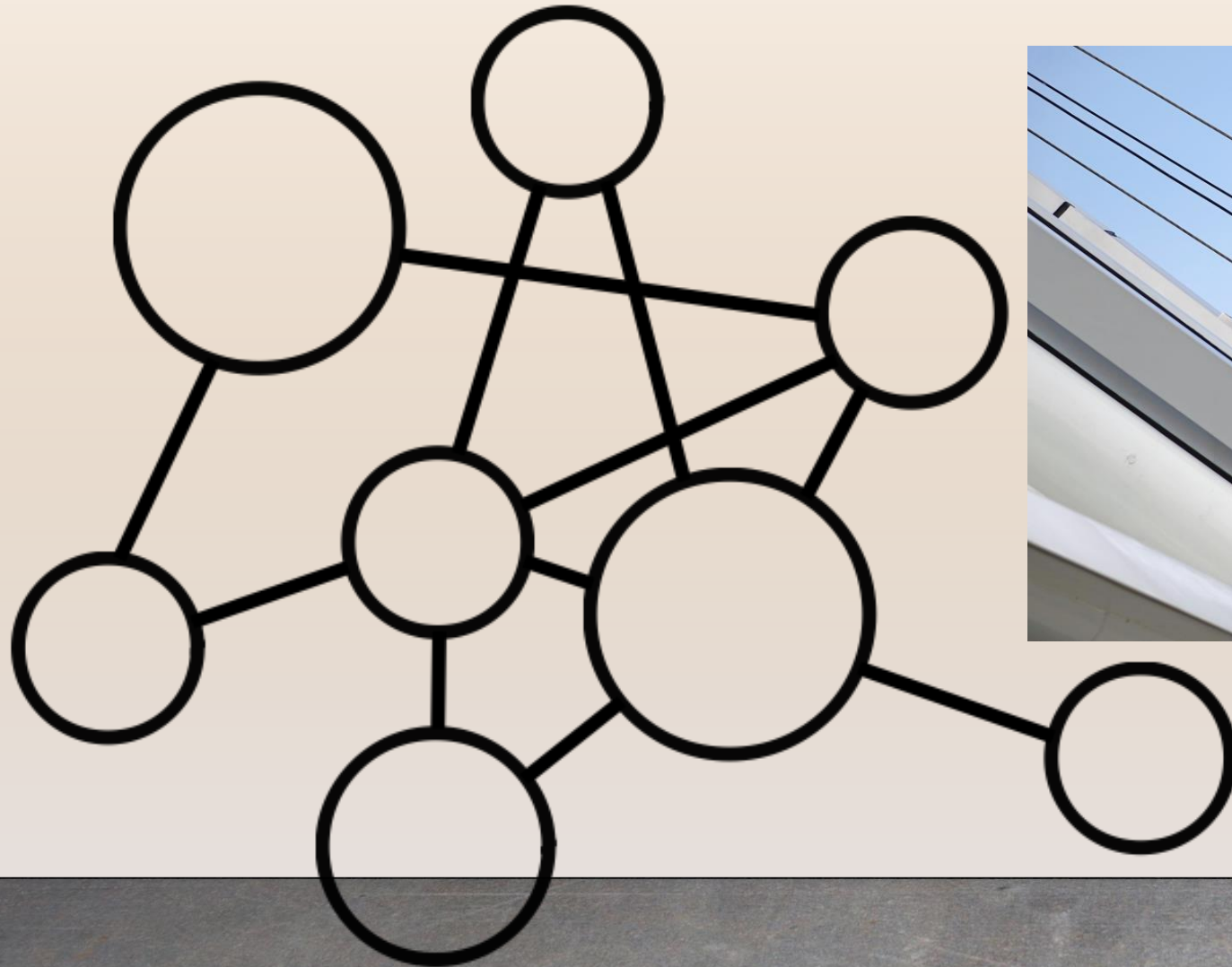
Culture = show off how smart you are, know the answers before the meeting



Culture = "Asking 'Where is this person coming from?', 'What makes them tick?', 'Why are they excited or frustrated by something that is happening?'" – Satya Nadella



Feedback is How We Stay Alive

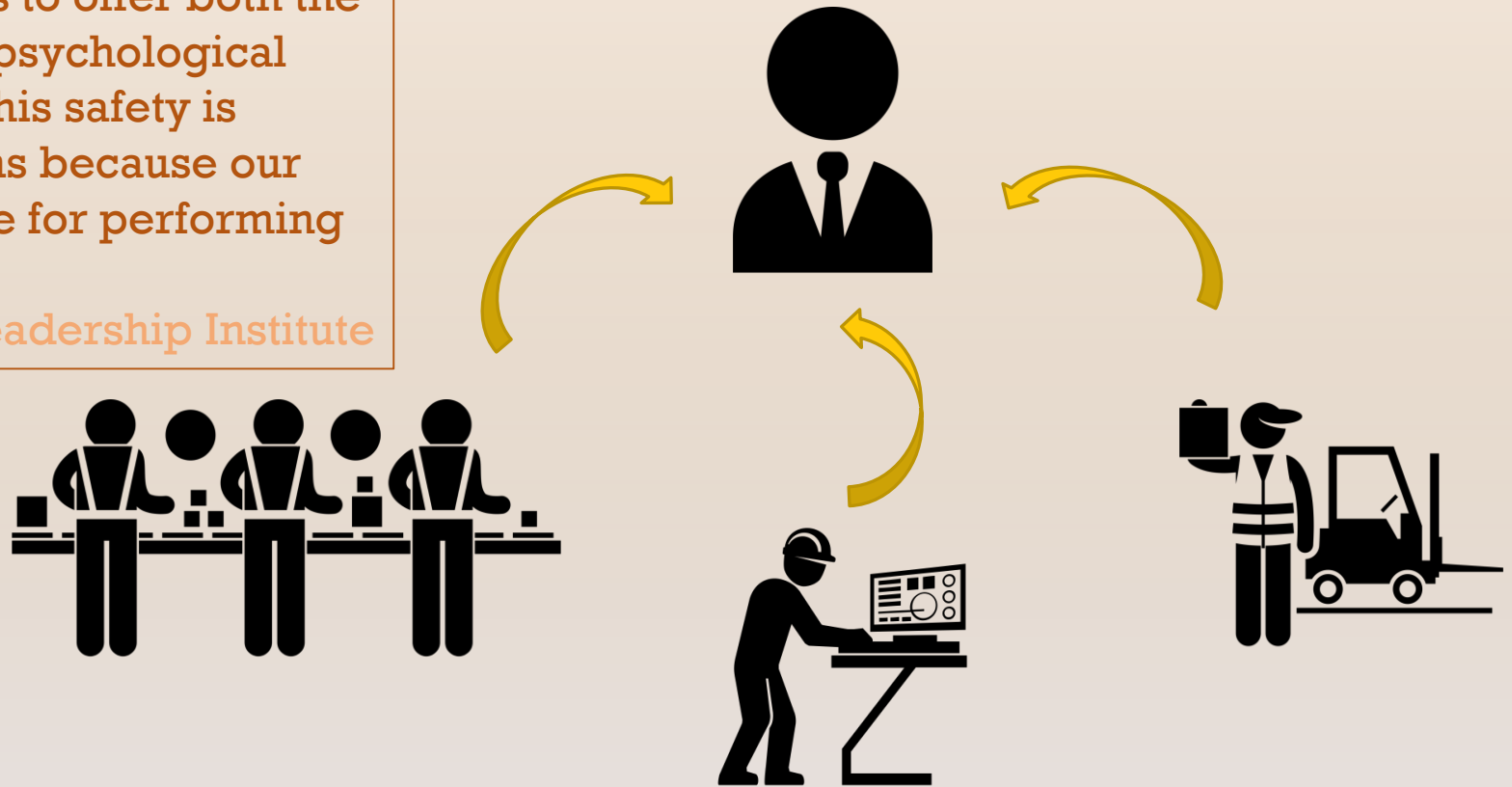


...but sharing it can be risky!

# Agility Master Move : Ask for Feedback

“Asking for feedback is the path to get to minimal threat response, because it appears to offer both the receiver and the giver much more psychological safety than a giver-led approach. This safety is crucial during feedback discussions because our brains will be in a much better state for performing complex cognitive functions.”

-- NeuroLeadership Institute





# Neuro-Insight: Asking for Help Gets People Motivated



*“What would you do if you were me?”*  
--Paul Brown, Arby's



*“I spent the first 90 days on planes traveling to various offices and listening to anyone who had a perspective on what was wrong with the company.”*

--Anne Mulcahy, Xerox



Leadership Move :  
Reinforce Feedback, Every Time

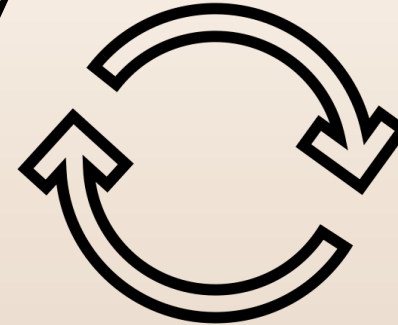
“Thanks for asking.”  
“Thanks for sharing.”  $\neq$  “I agree with  
you.”



*“For Tim Cook there are no dumb questions. When he answered me he spoke to me as if I were the most important person at Apple. Indeed, he addressed me as if I were Steve Jobs himself. His look, his tone, the long pause...that’s the day I began to feel like more than just a replaceable part, I was one the the tens of thousands of integral parts of Apple.”*

--Apple sales associate

## Complete the Loop : Responding is Key



Feedback is an Exchange

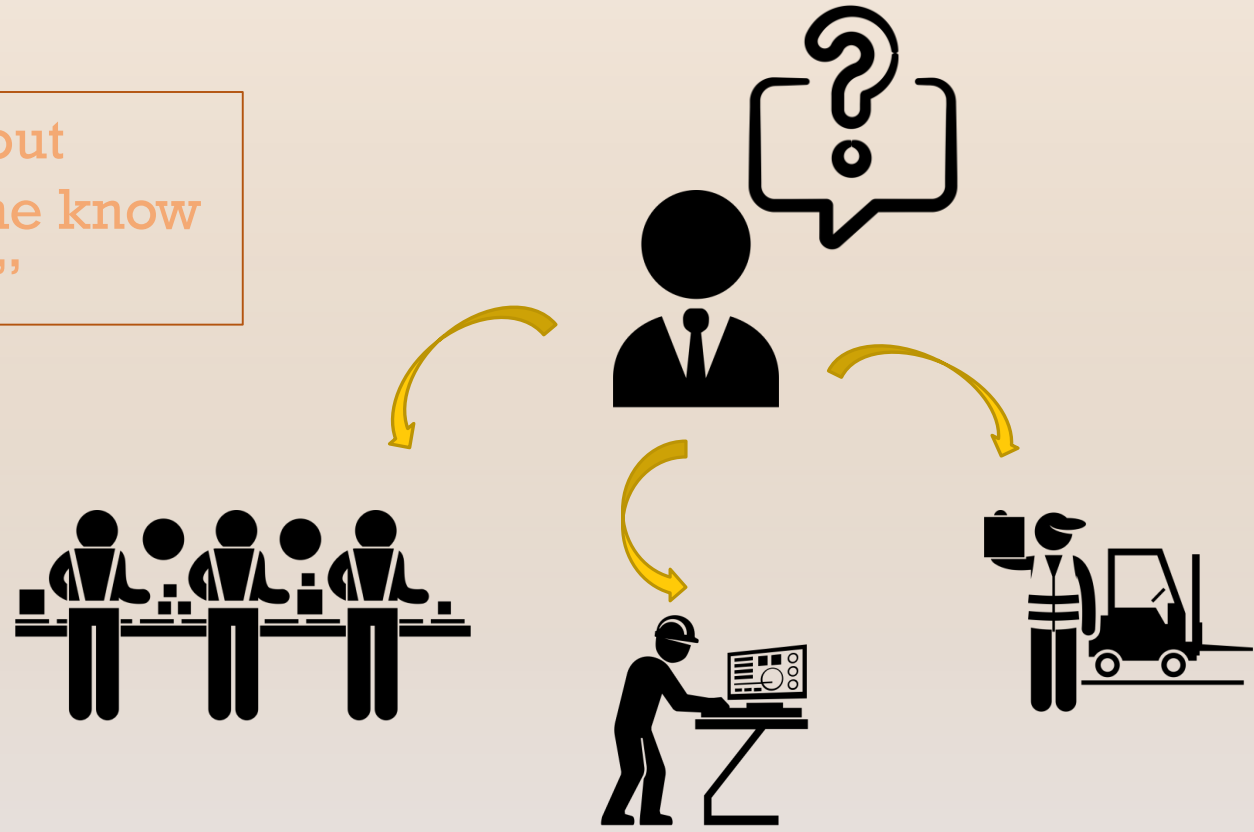
Responding keeps the feedback loop alive, healthy, and of good quality

Responding maintains dignity

Make time for feedback!

Agility Master Move :  
Ask for Permission Before Offering Feedback

“I have some thoughts about yesterday’s meeting. Let me know if you want to talk about it.”



# The Bedrock of These Gems : Respectful CURIOSITY

## Curiosity Results in :

- Less confirmation bias
- More innovative behaviors
- Less defensive reactions
- Reduced team conflict
- Better team performance

-- research by Francesca Gino



WONDER vs ASSUME

## Curiosity = Respect

“Employees who say they feel respected are more satisfied with their jobs and more grateful for—and loyal to—their companies.”

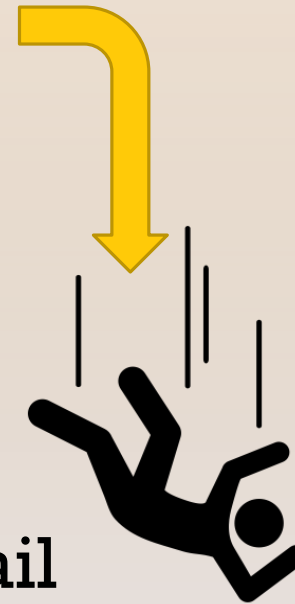
-- Kristie Rogers

Harvard Business Review Jul-Aug 2018

Caught in the Web : Assuming Without Inquiring



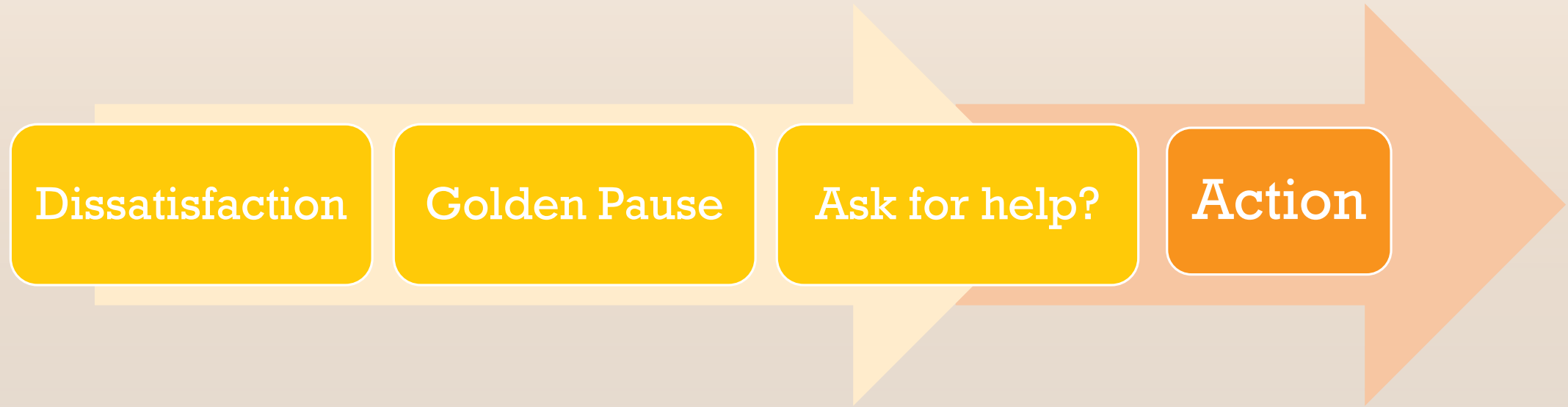
Resentment  
&  
Resignation



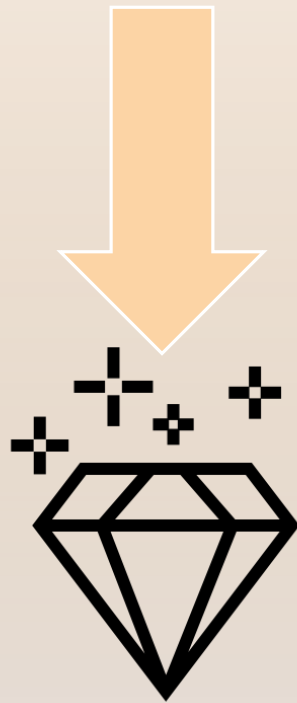




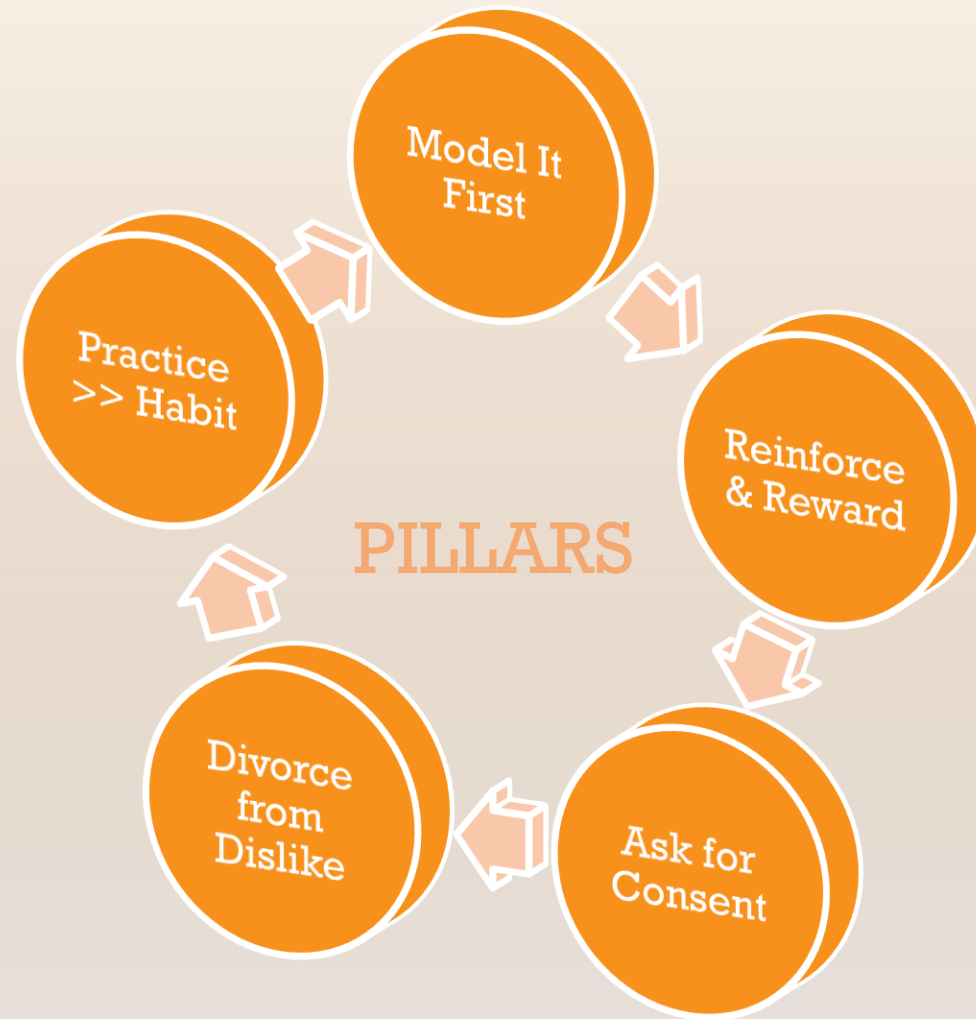
# The Way Out is the Way Through



# Foundation of Curiosity



Mine the gems of Dissatisfaction





## Thank you.


Special gratitude to those who have pioneered the way, offered inspiration, guidance, and learning. Most especially Vicky York & Marsha Shenk.



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[www.bestwork.biz](http://www.bestwork.biz)



## Resources & Credits:

- Slide 1: <http://www.freakingnews.com/Diamonds-on-the-Soles-of-Her-Shoes-Pictures-21955.asp>
- Slide 6: Joseph Genny and David Maxfield, [VitalSmarts](#), survey of 1,025 managers and employees
- Slide 7: Ralph Stayer "How I learned to let my workers lead." [Harv Bus Rev.](#) 1990 Nov-Dec;68(6):66-9, 72, 74 passim.
- Slide 16: Harry Mccracken "[Satya Nadella Rewrites Microsoft's Code.](#)" Fast Company 2017 Sep 18
- Slide 19: Steve Goldstein "[How the CEO of Arby's Rescued His Company By Asking This 1 Question.](#)" Inc Magazine 2017 Dec 7. Lisa Vollmer "[Anne Mulcahy: The Keys to Turnaround at Xerox.](#)" Stanford Business 2004 Dec 1.
- Slide 20: Michael Grothaus. "[Tim Cook: my first-person impression of Apple's new CEO.](#)" Blog post 2011 Aug 25.



# Resources & Credits:

- Noun Project credits:
- 2: Alchemy Set by Ben Davis
- 6: Angry grandma shouting at phone by Gan Khoon Lay, General Costs by Anatolii Babii
- 7: Investment by dDara, Emotion 1020341 by Dinosoft
- 12: Run Away by Gregory Cresnar, Alzheimer's Disease by Luis Prado
- 13: Mean by Icon Island, Loggerhead by Arthur Shlain
- 14: Divorce by emilegraphics
- 15: Validation by ProSymbols, Yoga Pose by Oleksandr Panasovskyi, custom by Yu luck
- 17: Connections by Cyrille Largillier
- 18: Manager by Christina Angeline, Factory Workers and Warehouse Worker by Gan Khoon Lay, Engineer by jipangan
- 19: Follow by Adrian Coquet, Question by Delwar Hossain
- 21: Refresh by dilakuscan, Complaint Letter by Gan Khoon Lay
- 22: See slide 18, and Question mark by dyu
- 24: Spiral by Cedric Villiain, Falling by Laurent Canivet, Fall by Srinivas Agra
- 26: Diamond by faisalovers