When Change Derails:
How to Get Back on Track

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Change Reflection

Think of a time when a change effort lost momentum…

- What happened?
- What stories were told about the stall?
- How did it feel to see progress slow?

When Change Derails

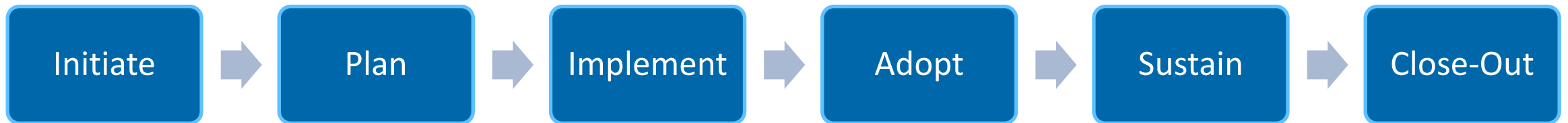*When change derails, it's the **system** talking*

*When change stalls, its **feedback**…not failure*

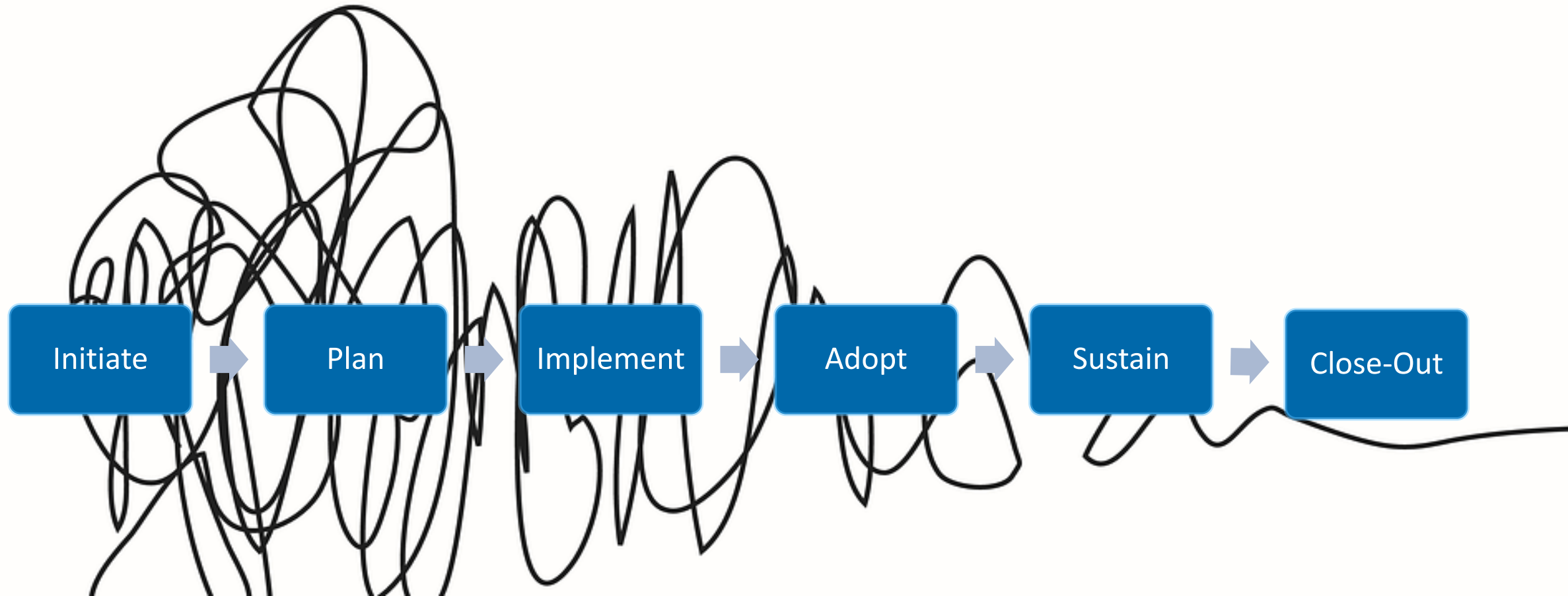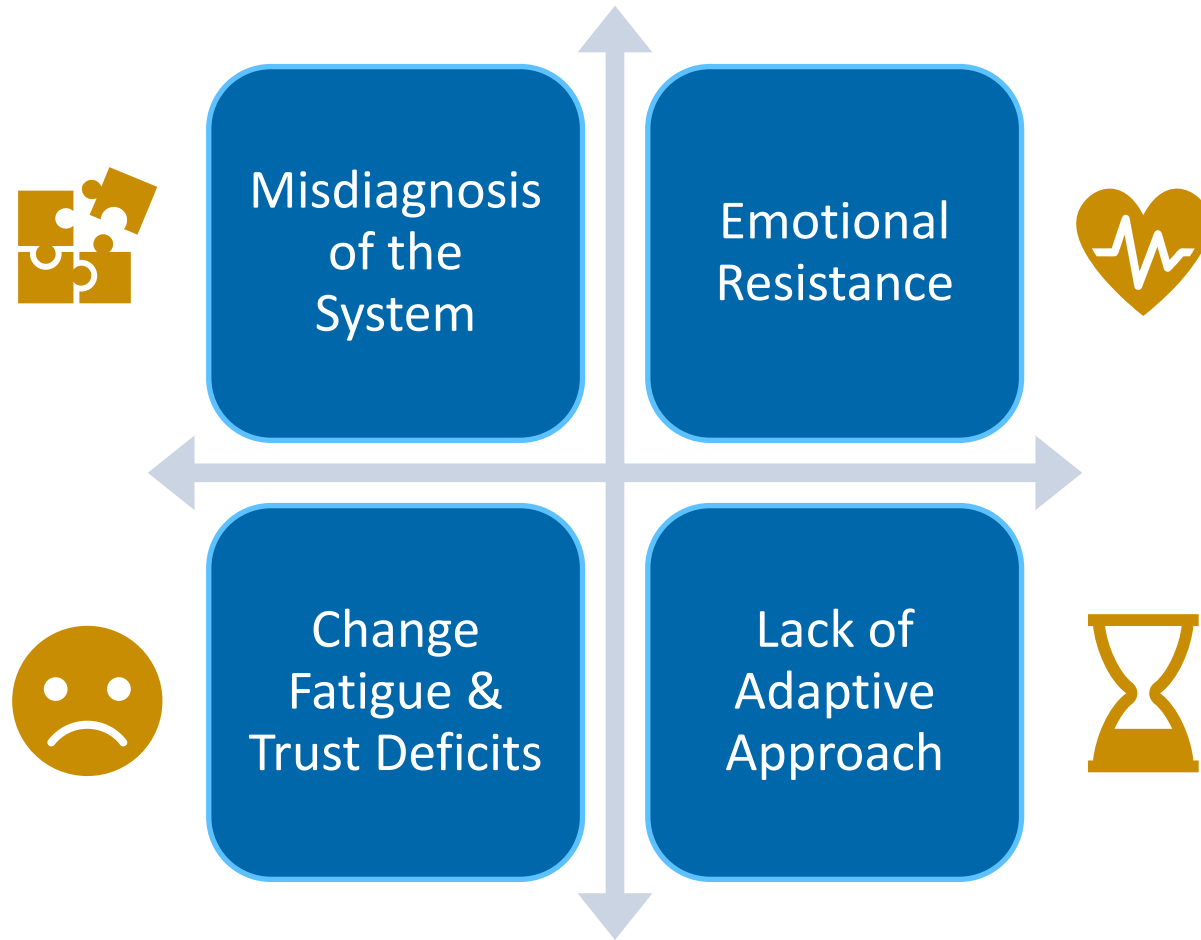*Leaders who listen, can translate that feedback into action*

Why Change Derails

Statewide Approach to Change

Initiate → Plan → Implement → Adopt → Sustain → Close-Out

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Statewide Standard for Change

Initiate → Plan → Implement → Adopt → Sustain → Close-Out

Why Change Derails

Misdiagnosis of the System

Emotional Resistance

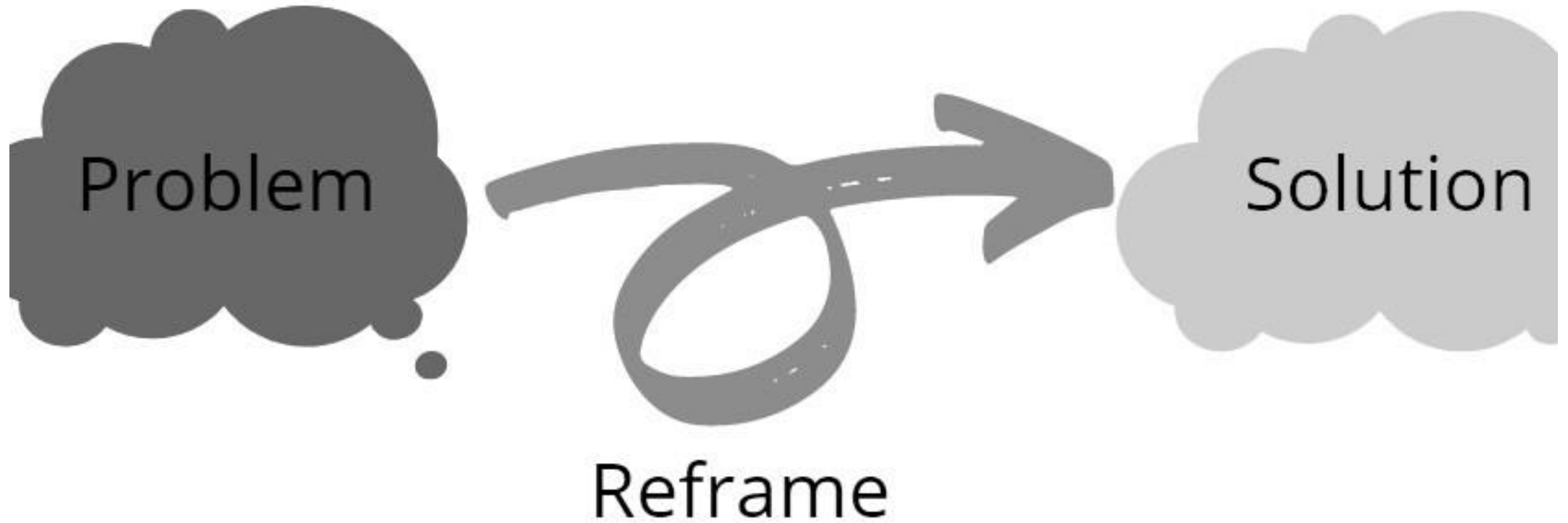Change Fatigue & Trust Deficits

Lack of Adaptive Approach

The Reality of Change

When change derails, it's often the system talking to us...

Reframing Failure as Feedback

Reframing Failure as Feedback
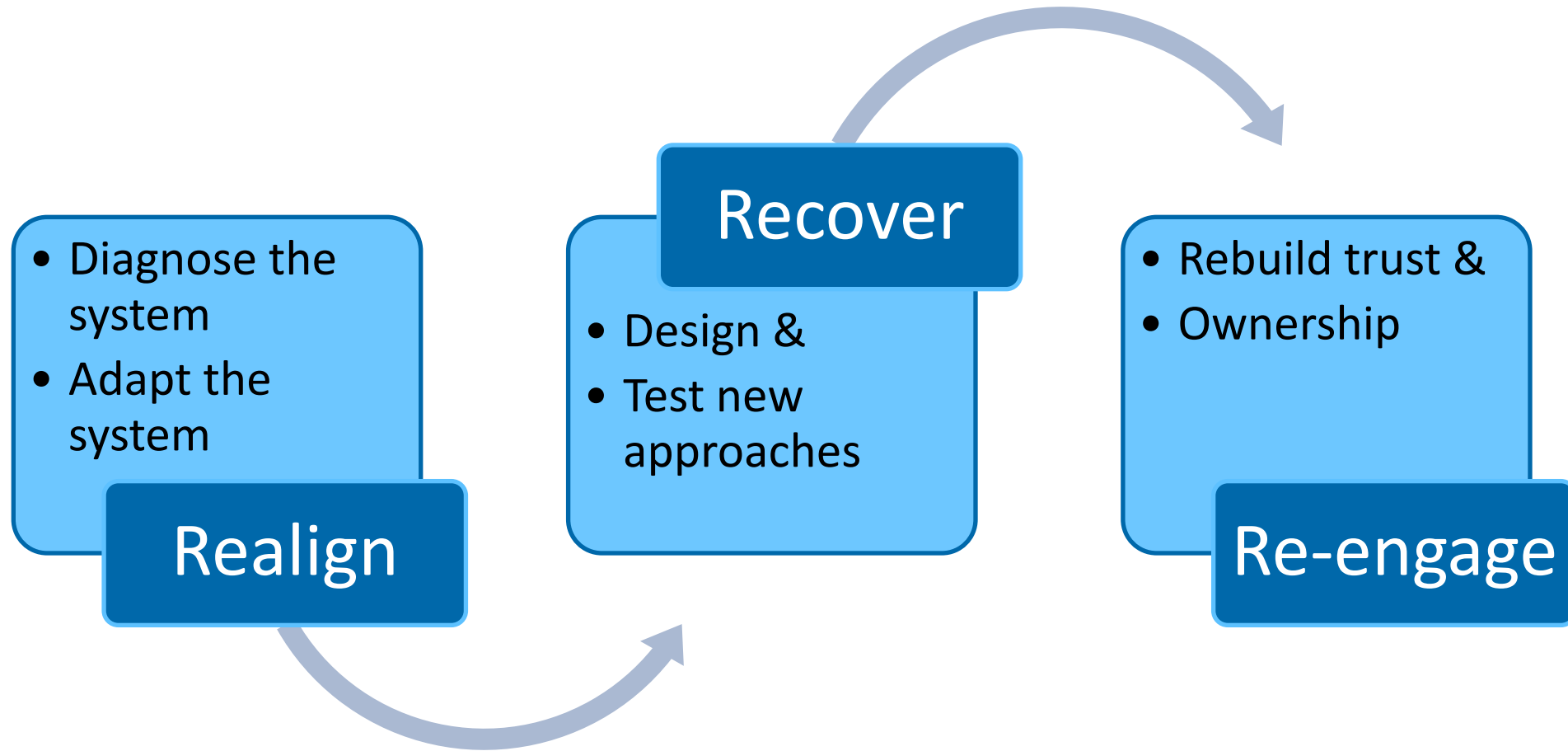
Statewide Approach to Change

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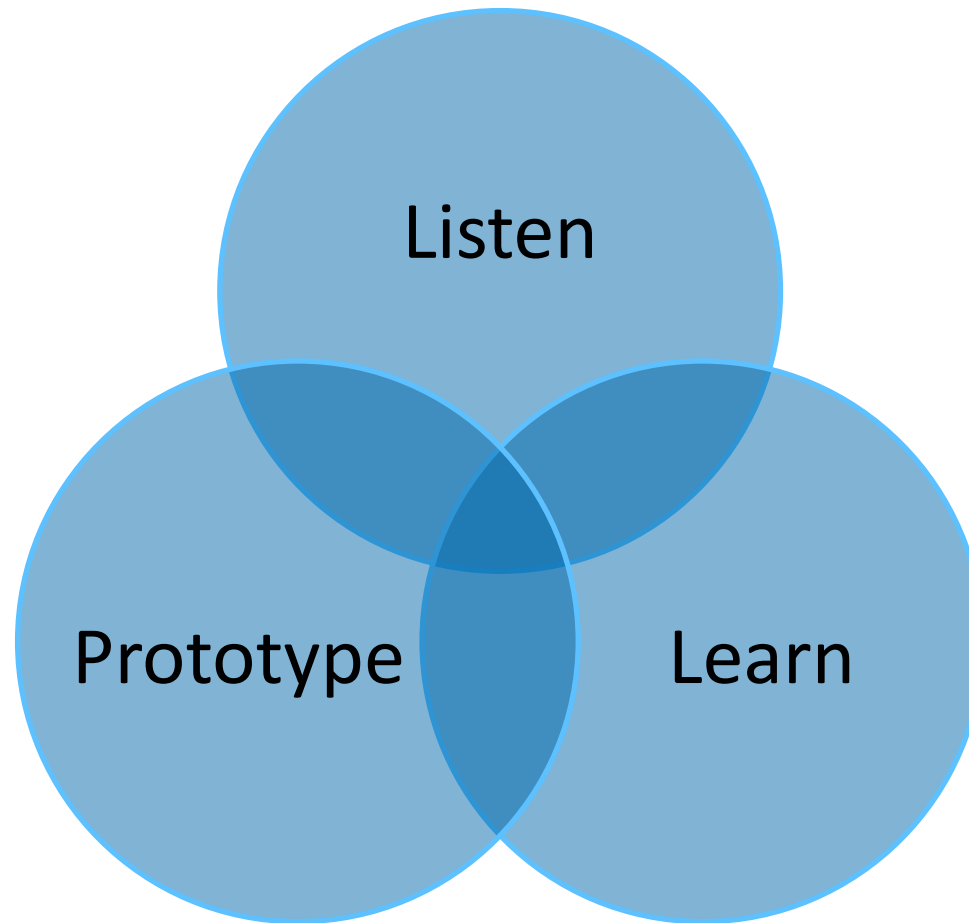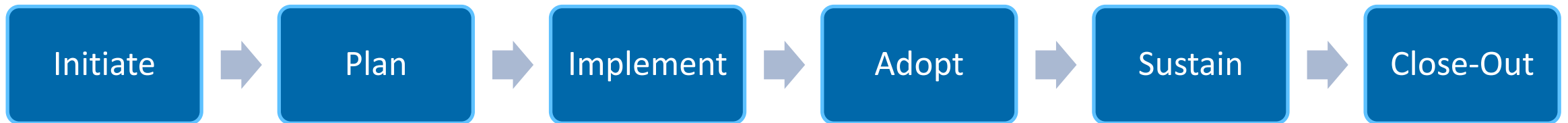
The Feedback Loop

OCM Phase	Feedback Question
Initiate	What signals reveal readiness?
Plan	How are stakeholders responding?
Implement	Where do communication appear?
Adopt	What barriers persist?
Sustain	How is trust maintained over time?
Close-Out	What did the system teach us?

The Change Recovery Path

The 3R's of Change Recovery

Realign
- Diagnose the system
- Adapt the system

Recover
- Design &
- Test new approaches

Re-engage
- Rebuild trust &
- Ownership
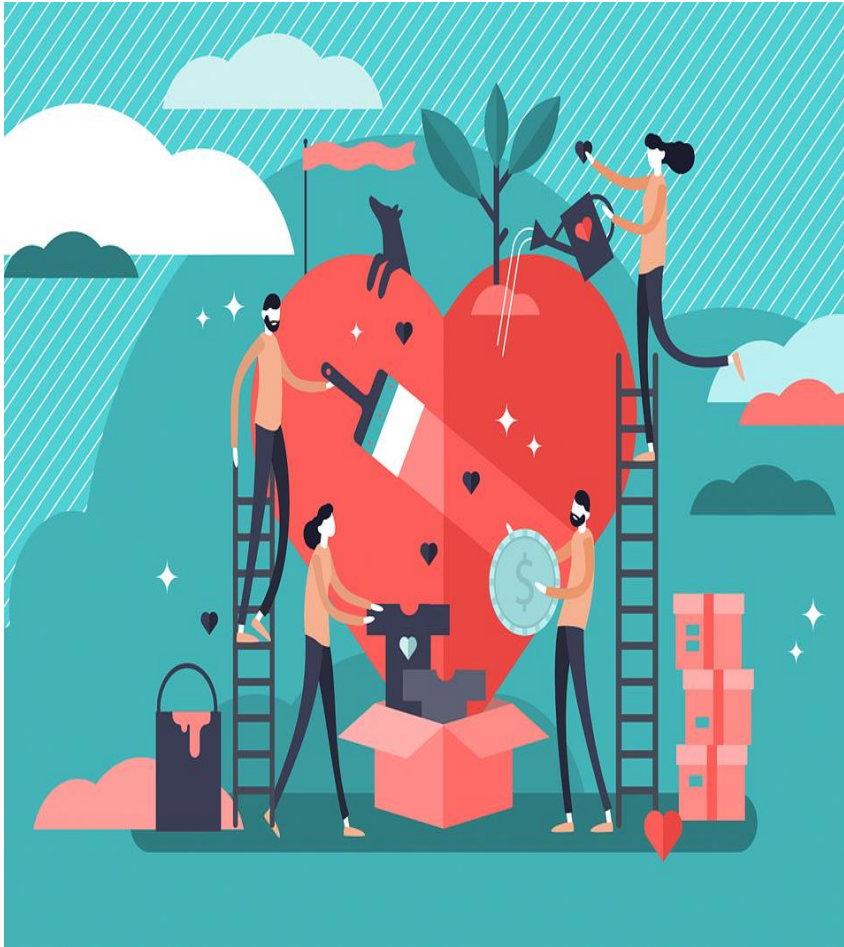
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Realign: Adapt
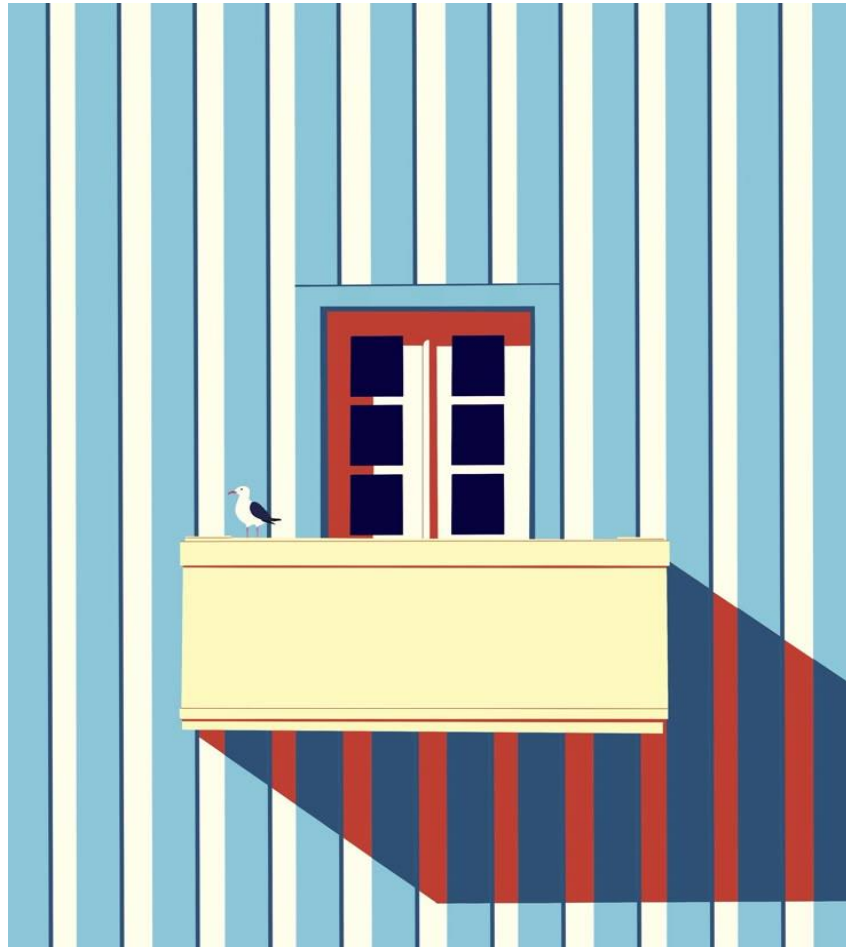
- Get on the balcony

- Diagnose the system, not the symptoms

- Regulate distress to create safety for honest feedback

- Give work back – empower teams to own solutions

Recover: Design

Reimagine through peoples experience:

- **What is?** – Understand the current state through empathy.
- **What if?** – Reframe the challenge and ideate alternatives.
- **What wows?** – Prototype new approaches.
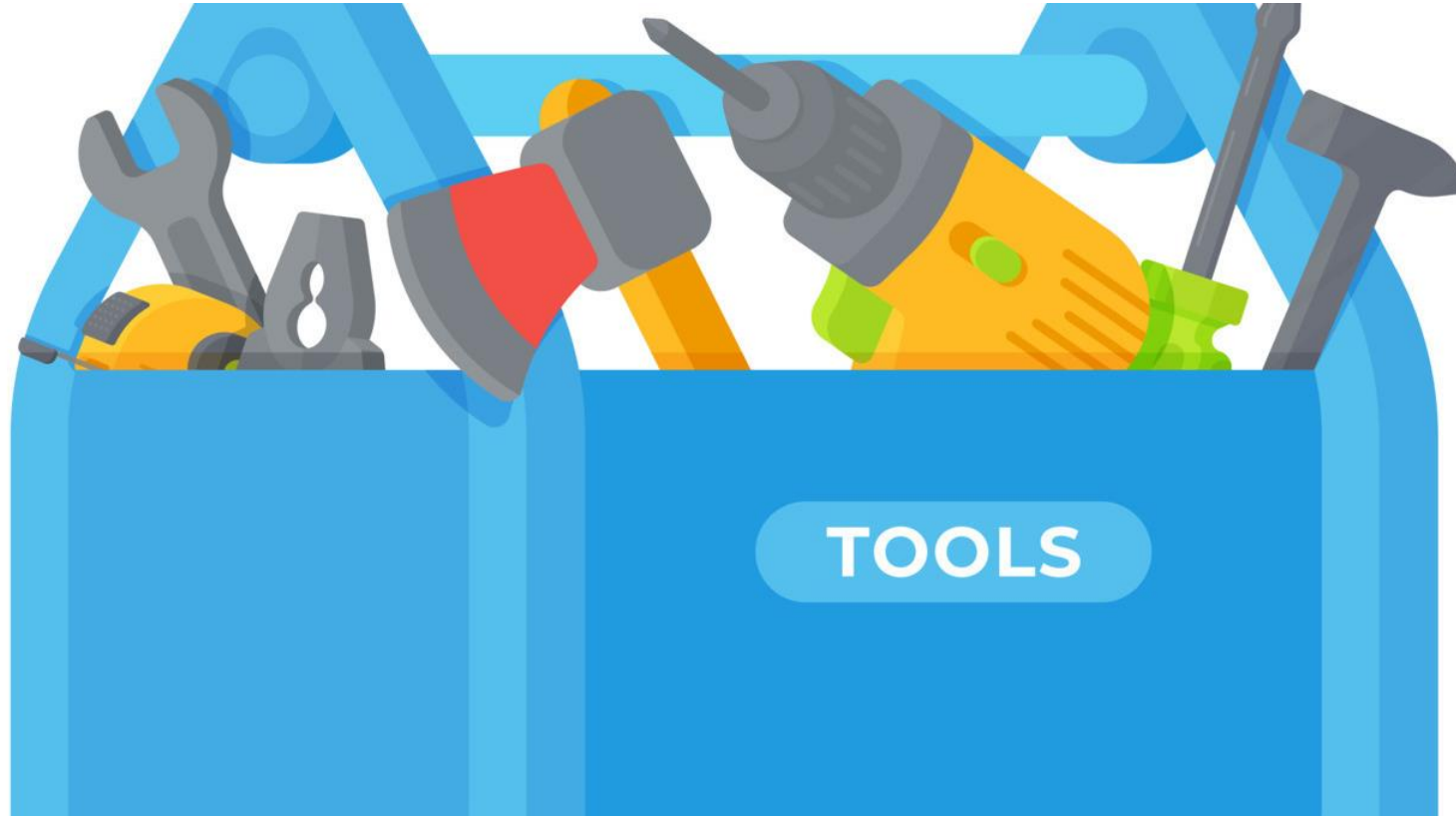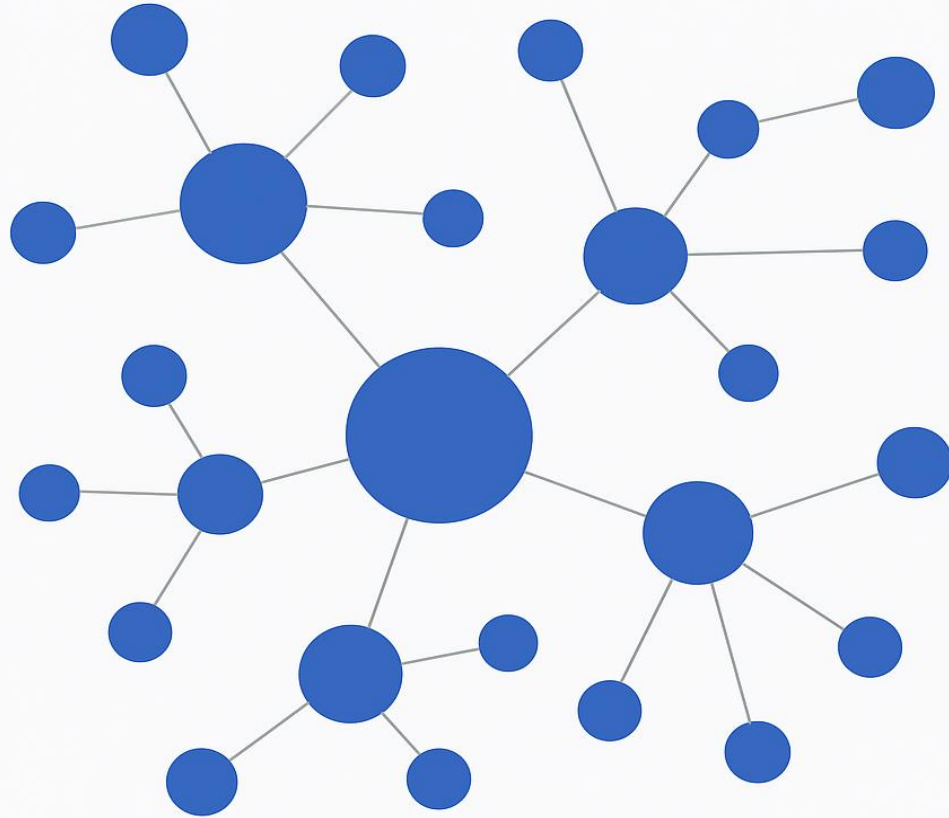- **What works?** – Scale what succeeds.

Re-engage: People

Rebuild trust through human connection:

- Communicate with empathy and transparency.

- Acknowledge change fatigue and "scars."

- Co-create small wins to rebuild confidence.

Tools for Change Recovery

Stakeholder Network

HR Team
- Lead training
- Supportive of change
- Resource constrained
- Need regular updates

IT Department
- Subject matter experts
- Concerned about workload
- Require clear requirements
- Prefers email communication

Change Initiative

Managers
- Critical for adoption
- Mixed buy-in levels
- Need coaching
- Focus on impact

Employees
- Primary end users
- Skeptical of change
- Worry about job impact
- Seek involvement

Turning Feedback into Fuel

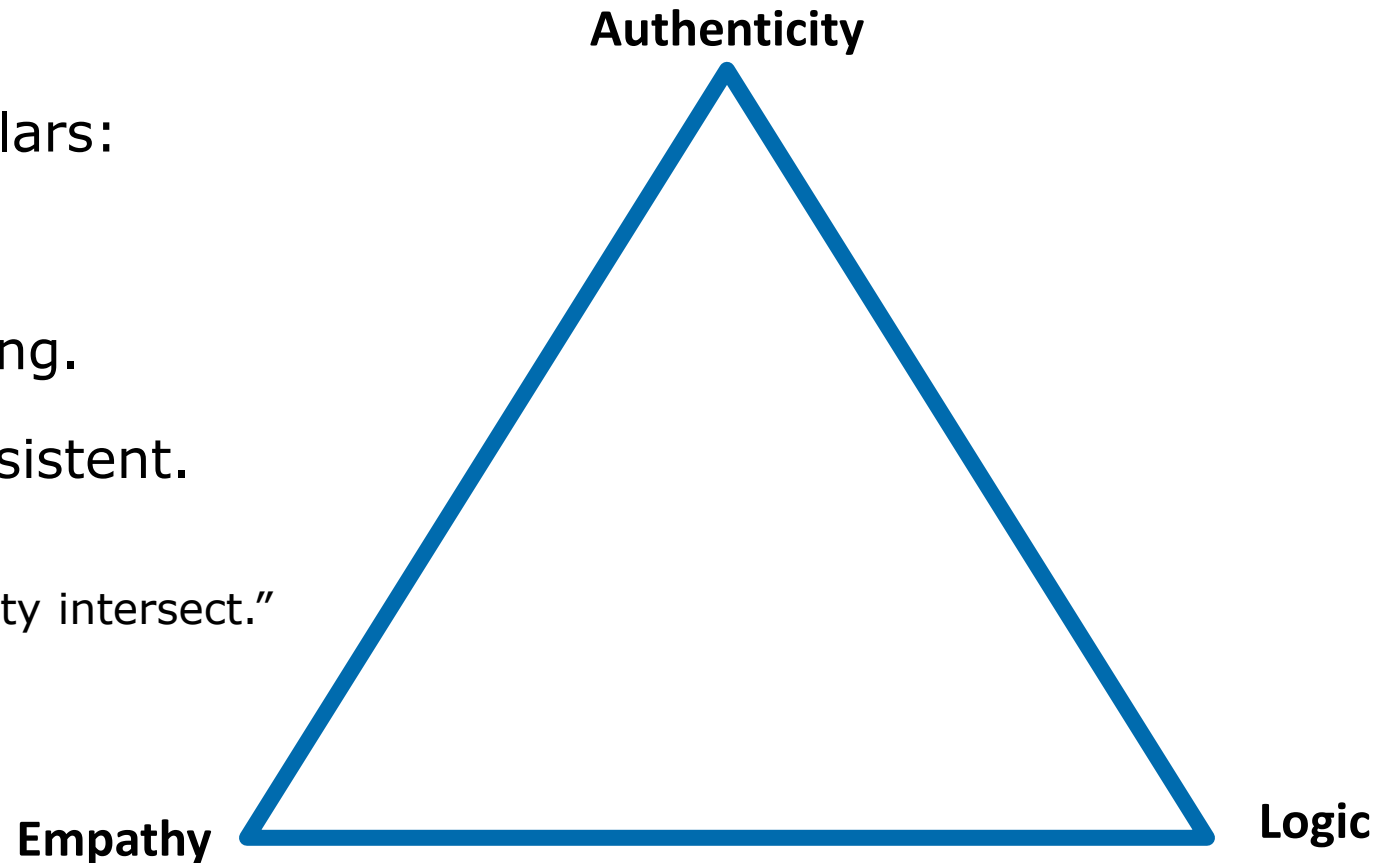| What Is?	What If?	What Wows?	What Works?
Understand what's happening	Explore new perspectives	Identify ideas that inspire and build energy	Turn successful tests into standard practice

Authenticity
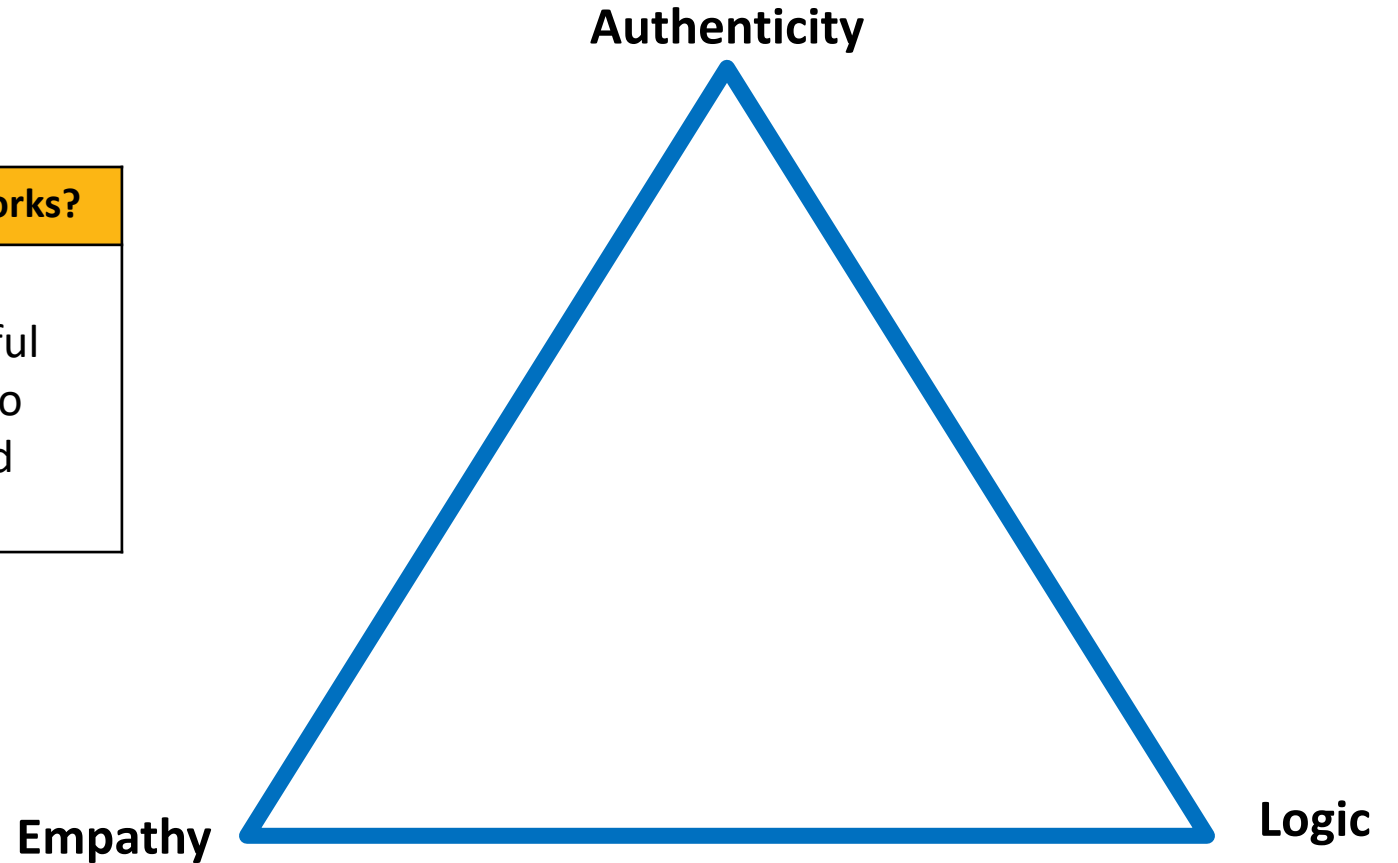
Empathy   **Logic**

Trust Triangle

Leadership credibility rests on three pillars:

- **Empathy** – Show you care.

- **Logic** – Demonstrate sound reasoning.

- **Authenticity** – Be genuine and consistent.

"Trust lives where empathy, logic, and authenticity intersect."

Authenticity

Empathy

Logic

Feedback Frame

🔍 **What Is?** Understand Current State	💡 **What If?** New Perspectives	✹ **What Wows?** Ideas; Inspire and Energize	⚙ **What Works?** Try, Succeed, Implement
• Adoption dropped from **80%** → **45%** after rollout. • Confusion about the *"why"* behind the change. • Managers cite **competing priorities** and unclear expectations.	• What if we paused tech fixes and focused on **listening sessions**? • What if staff helped **co-create performance metrics**? • What if leaders **modeled** the new process first?	• **Peer-led training** sessions build ownership. • "**Trust Tracker**" shows visible follow-through on feedback. • Recognition for managers who model adaptability.	• Peer-led pilots **doubled adoption** in 6 weeks. • "Trust Tracker" improved engagement scores. • Scale quick-win pilots and **embed reflection** in next rollout.

- Helps separate noise from signal - not just venting, pattern finding
- 15-minute huddle or 90 minute workshop

Final Thoughts: Change Recovery

Identify Your Stall Pattern

Think of a change that lost momentum…

- What feedback did you miss or misread?
- Which tool could help you reframe it?
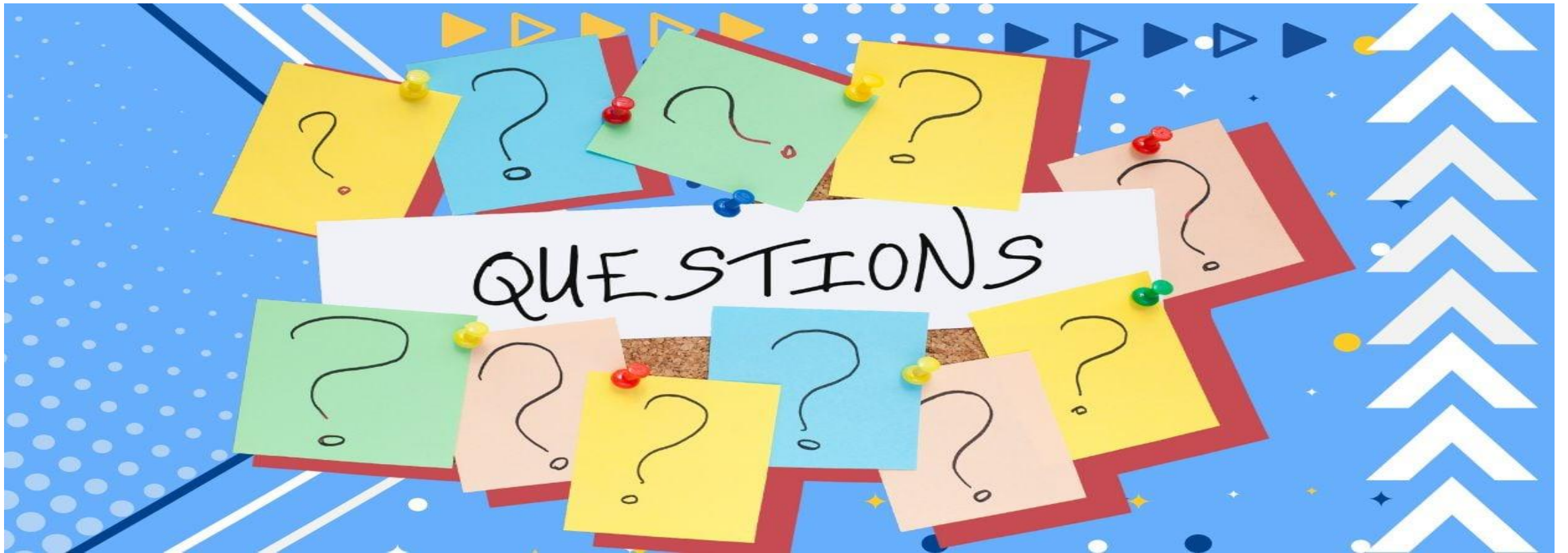
Restoring Momentum & Trust

Momentum builds where trust lives

- Communicate with transparency and empathy
- Celebrate small wins to counter change fatigue
- Reinforce readiness, adoption, and sustainment

Reflection & Potential Next Steps

- What conversation needs to happen to restart momentum?

- Where can you listen more – to people or to the system?

"When change speaks, we should listen"

Thank you...Question?