

Leading Through Scarcity: How to Build Capacity in The Team You Have

Irina Stanescu

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It's one of the **toughest times**
to be a manager in Tech.



What's been going on

Economic downturn, Cost cutting, Priorities shifting



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Layoffs, Reorgs, Flatter organizations



What's been going on

Economic downturn, Cost cutting, Priorities shifting



Layoffs, Reorgs, Flatter organizations



Increased pressure & anxiety



Meta

Update on Meta's Year of Efficiency

March 14, 2023

Mark Zuckerberg just shared the fo

Source: <https://about.fb.com/>

Here's the timeline you should expect: over the next couple of months, org leaders will announce restructuring plans focused on flattening our orgs, canceling lower priority projects, and reducing our hiring rates. With

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Message from CEO Andy Jassy: Strengthening our culture and teams



Written by Andy Jassy, CEO of Amazon

Source: www.aboutamazon.com/

So, we're asking each s-team organization to increase the ratio of individual contributors to managers by at least 15% by the end of Q1 2025. Having fewer managers will remove layers and flatten organizations more than they are today. If we do this work well, it will increase our teammates' ability to move fast, clarify and invigorate their sense of ownership, drive decision-making closer to the front lines where it most impacts customers (and the business), decrease bureaucracy, and strengthen our organizations' ability to make customers' lives better and

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Updated Jan. 18, 2023 at 7:50 AM

Microsoft CEO Says Tech Industry Will Have to Do More With Less

By Yusuf Khan

Source: www.wsj.com



Big tech companies will have to get used to becoming more productive with fewer resources, Microsoft Corp. Chief Executive Satya Nadella said, as [layoffs mount across the tech industry](#) amid economic uncertainty.

So, w
indiv
2025
more
team
own

impacts customers (and the business), decrease bureaucracy, and
strengthen our organizations' ability to make customers' lives better and



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Tech's new business model: 'Do more with less'

PUBLISHED THU, MAY 11 2023•5:17 PM EDT | UPDATED THU, MAY 11 2023•6:53 PM EDT



Hayden Field
@HAYDENFIELD

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Source: www.cnbc.com



**Your success as a manager is
now contingent on your ability
to “do more with less”.**



IMAGINE THIS

**LESS STAFF, MORE WORK, THINGS
WILL BE GREAT!**

makeameme.org

WE WILL DO MORE WITH LESS..

**...UNTIL WE CAN DO EVERYTHING
WITH NOTHING.**

makeameme.org



How to Do More with Less as an Engineering Manager



Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Add more work

Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Add more work

Reduce quality to deliver faster

Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Add more work

Reduce quality to deliver faster

Cancel all 1-1s & most meetings

Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Add more work

Reduce quality to deliver faster

Stop helping
other teams

Cancel all 1-1s & most meetings

Doing more with less

Work longer hours

Add more work

Reduce quality to deliver faster

Stop helping
other teams

Cancel all 1-1s & most meetings

Never say no to your leadership team



If you do all this...





You will be **successful**




If success
means



imgflip.com

Let's try **again**





How to Do More with Less as an Engineering Manager *(the right way)*

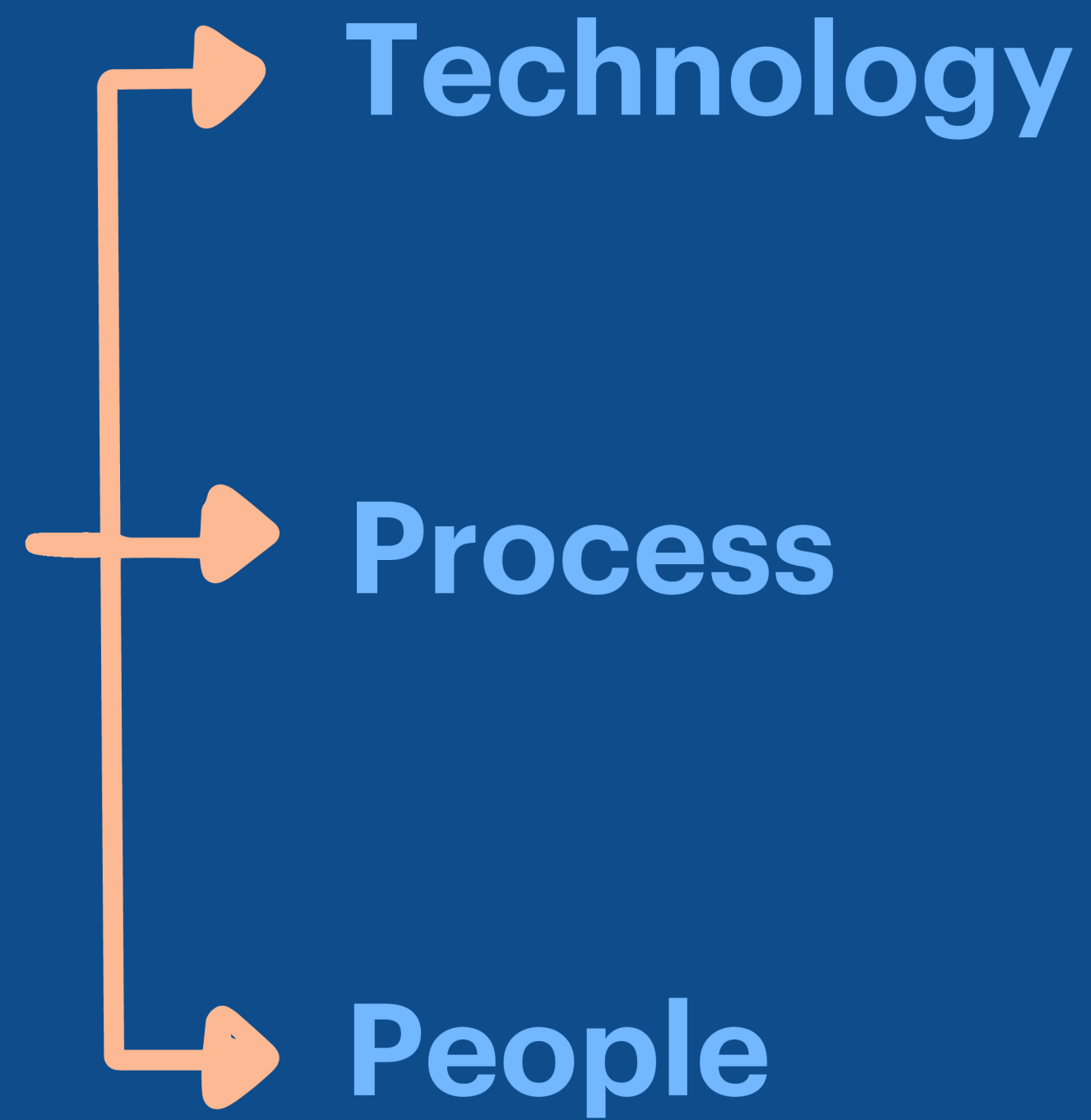




The key to doing more with
less is **to build capacity.**



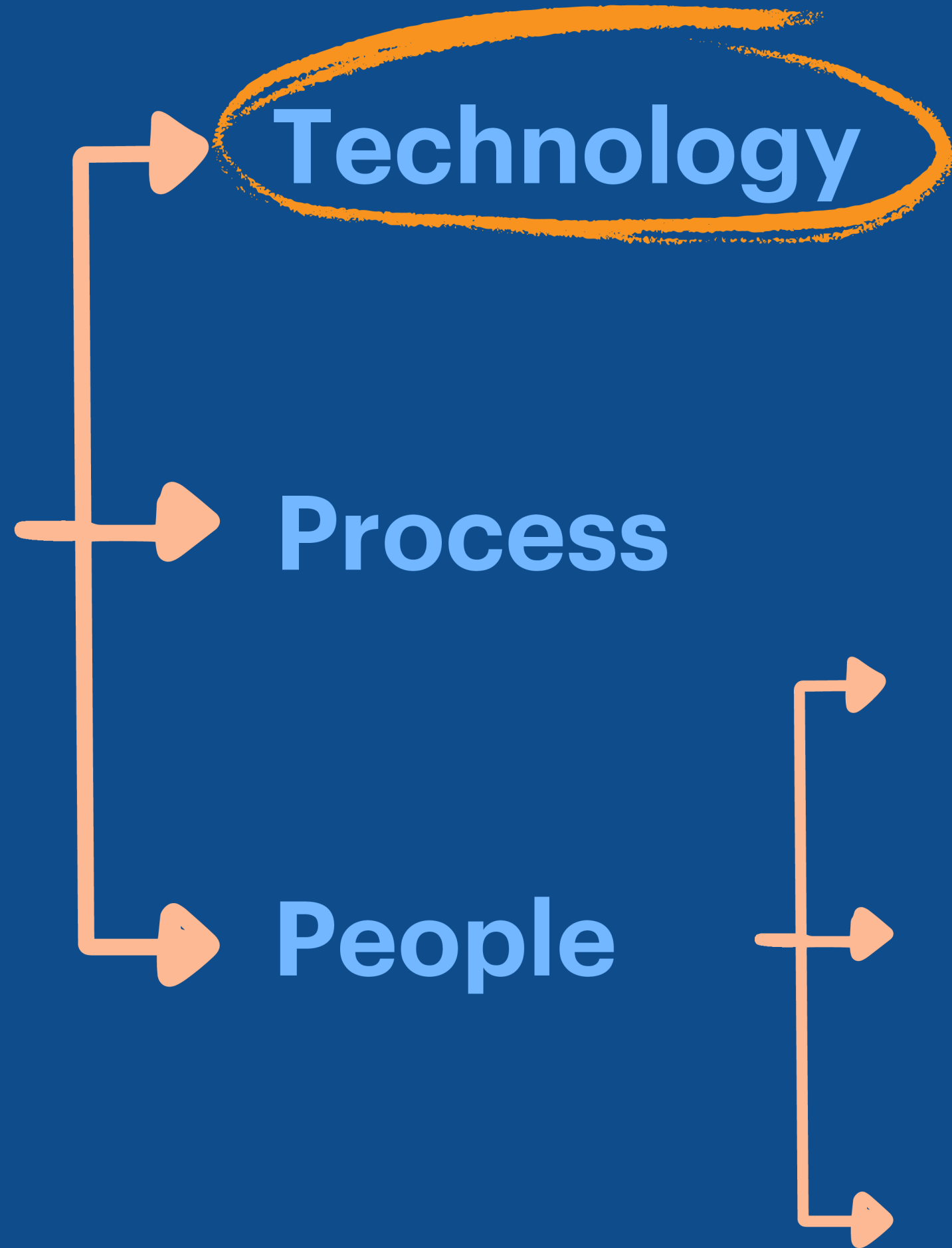
Building Capacity



Building Capacity



Building Capacity



Technology

- **Audit & address inefficiencies**
 - Tech Debt
 - Automate
 - Build vs Buy



Technology

- **Audit & address inefficiencies**
 - Tech Debt
 - Automate
 - Build vs Buy
- **What about AI?**



Building Capacity



Process

- Audit & address inefficiencies
 - Streamline



Process

- Audit & address inefficiencies
 - Streamline
- Ruthless prioritization



Process

- **Audit & address inefficiencies**
 - Streamline
- **Ruthless prioritization**
 - Get in the details

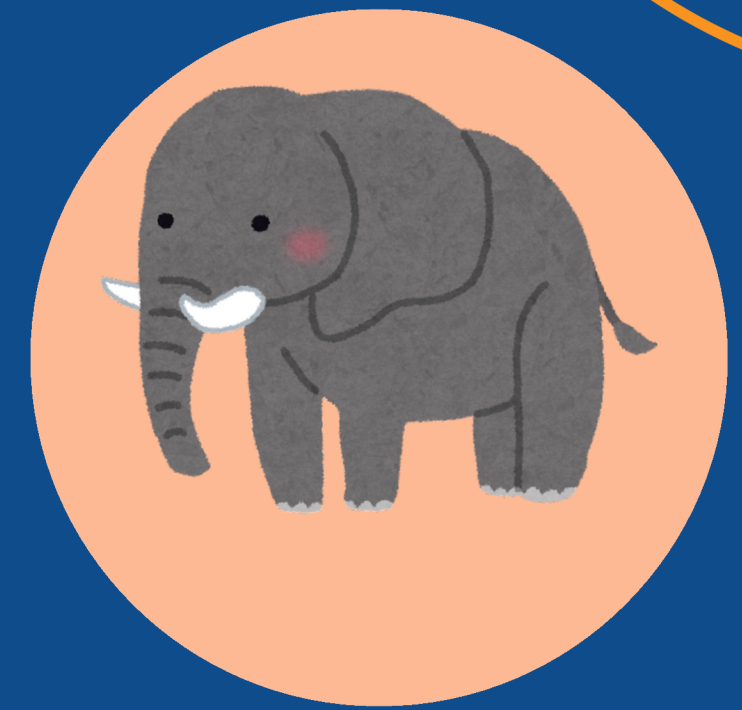
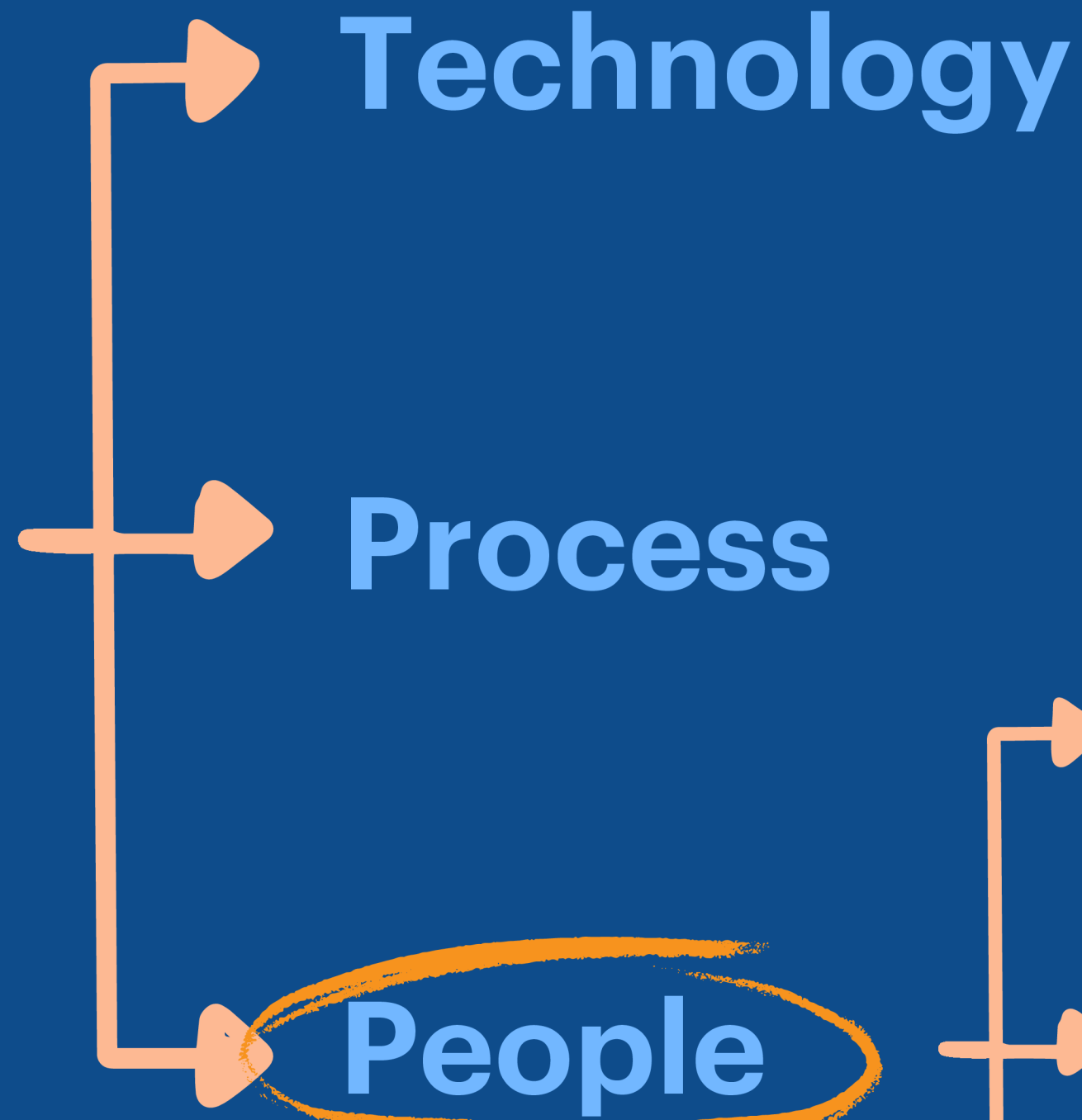


Process

- **Audit & address inefficiencies**
 - Streamline
- **Ruthless prioritization**
 - Get in the details
 - Say “no” faster



Building Capacity



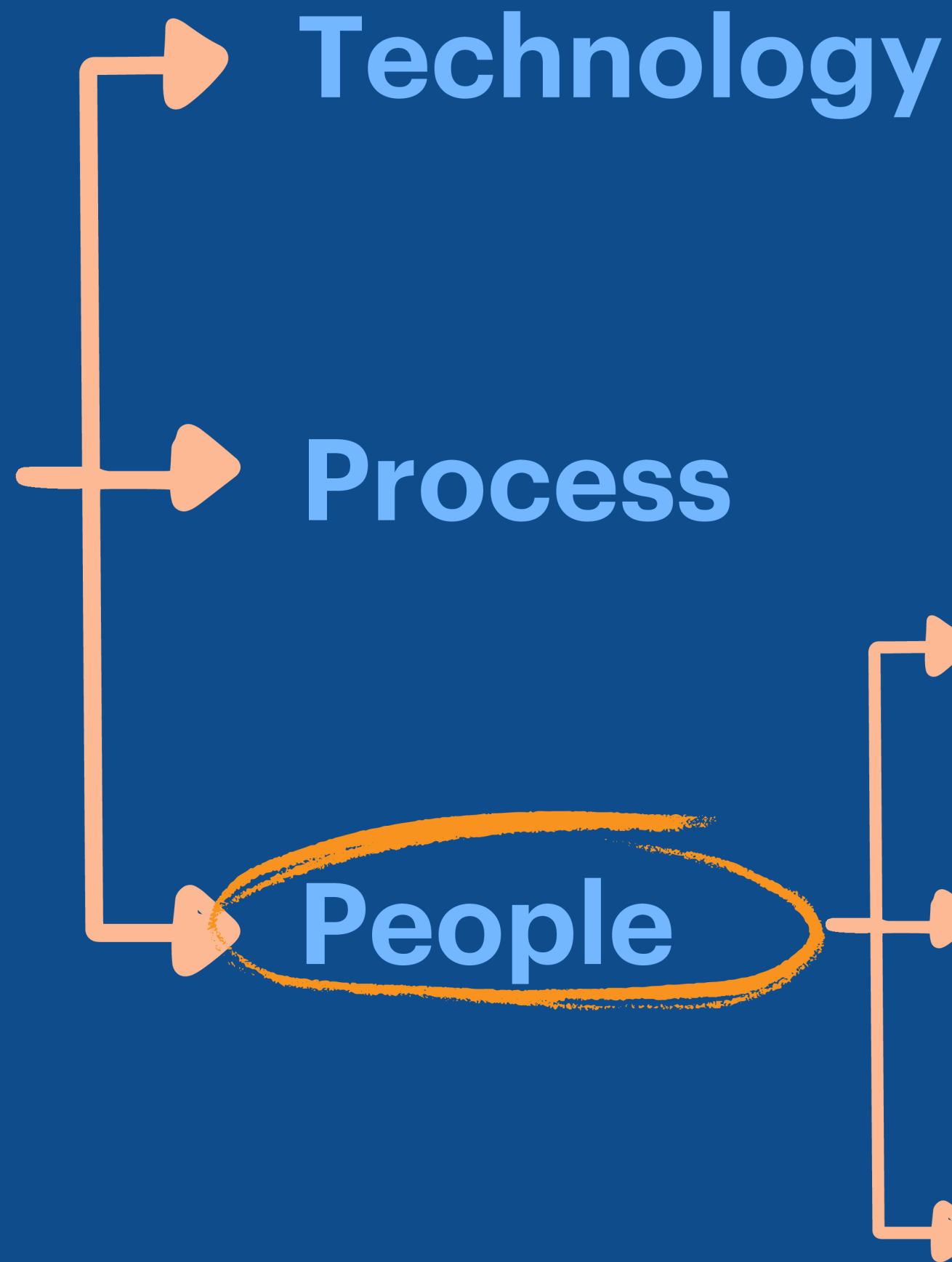
Ourselves

Our leaders

Our reports



Building Capacity



Ourselves

Our leaders

Our reports

Poorer
problem
solving skills

Memory
problems

Always
feeling on
edge

Lack of
motivation

Effects of anxiety on the brain

Inability
to focus

Decreased
creativity

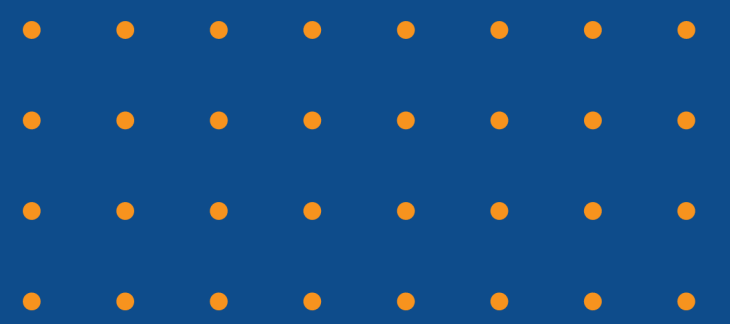




We must not let **anxiety**
become our **invisible enemy**.



Building Capacity




Building your own capacity

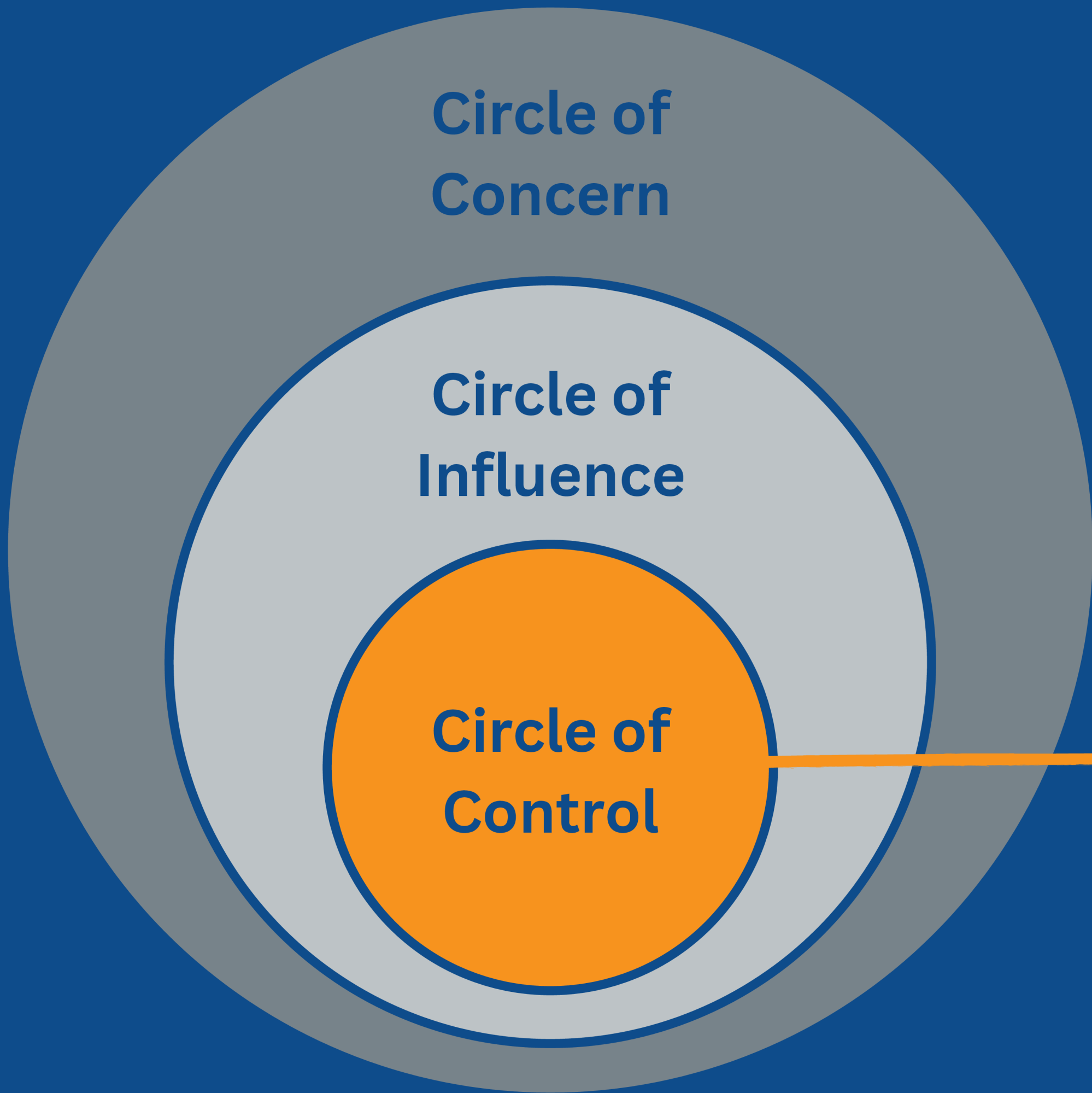
- Put your oxygen mask first
 - Self-care
 - Personal boundaries
 - Seek out support



Building your own capacity

- Put your oxygen mask first
 - Self-care
 - Personal boundaries
 - Seek out support
- Manage  using circles of control/influence/concern



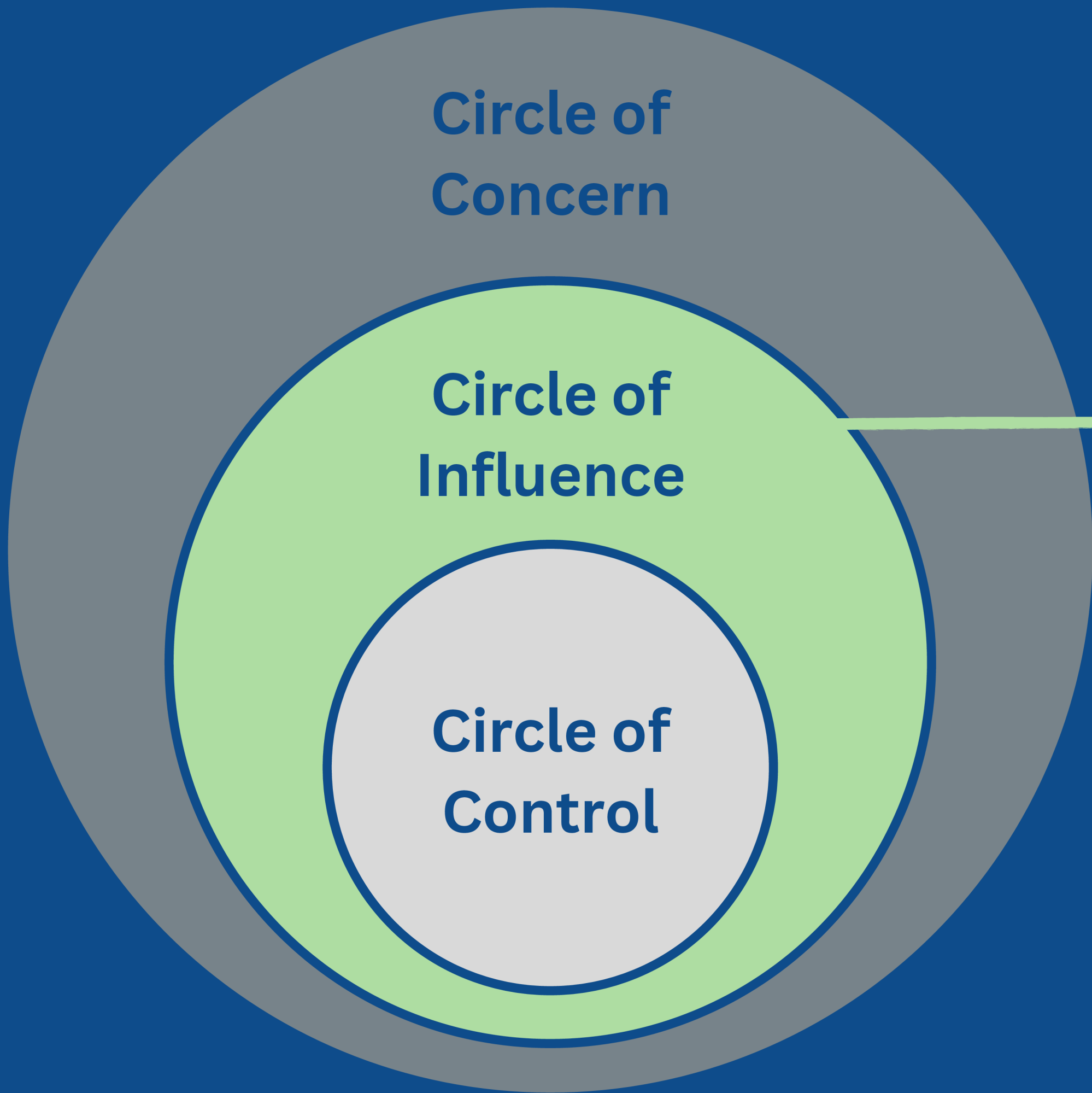


Circle of Concern

Circle of Influence

Circle of Control

- Our thoughts & actions
- How we communicate
- How we respond to challenges

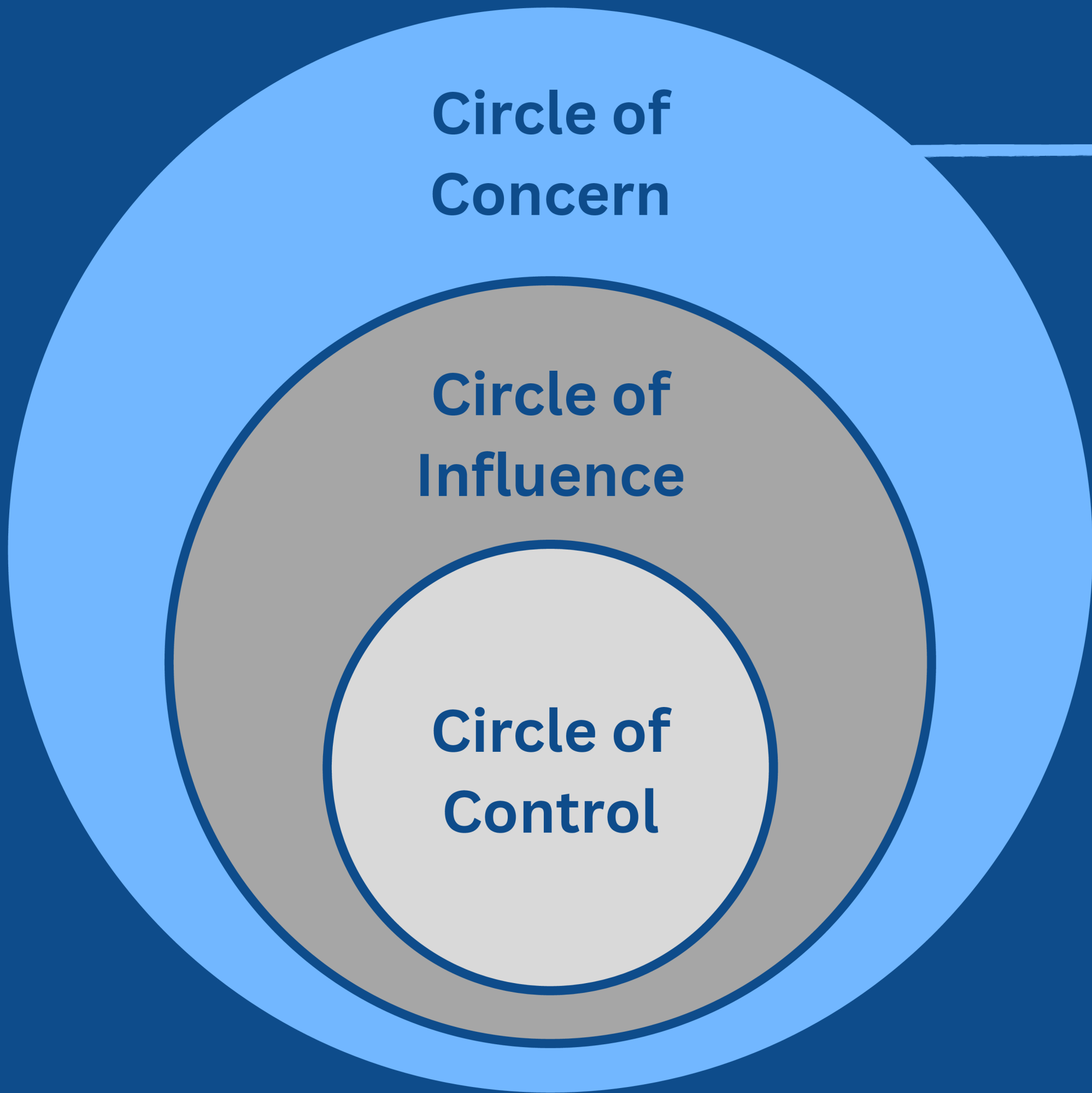


Circle of Concern

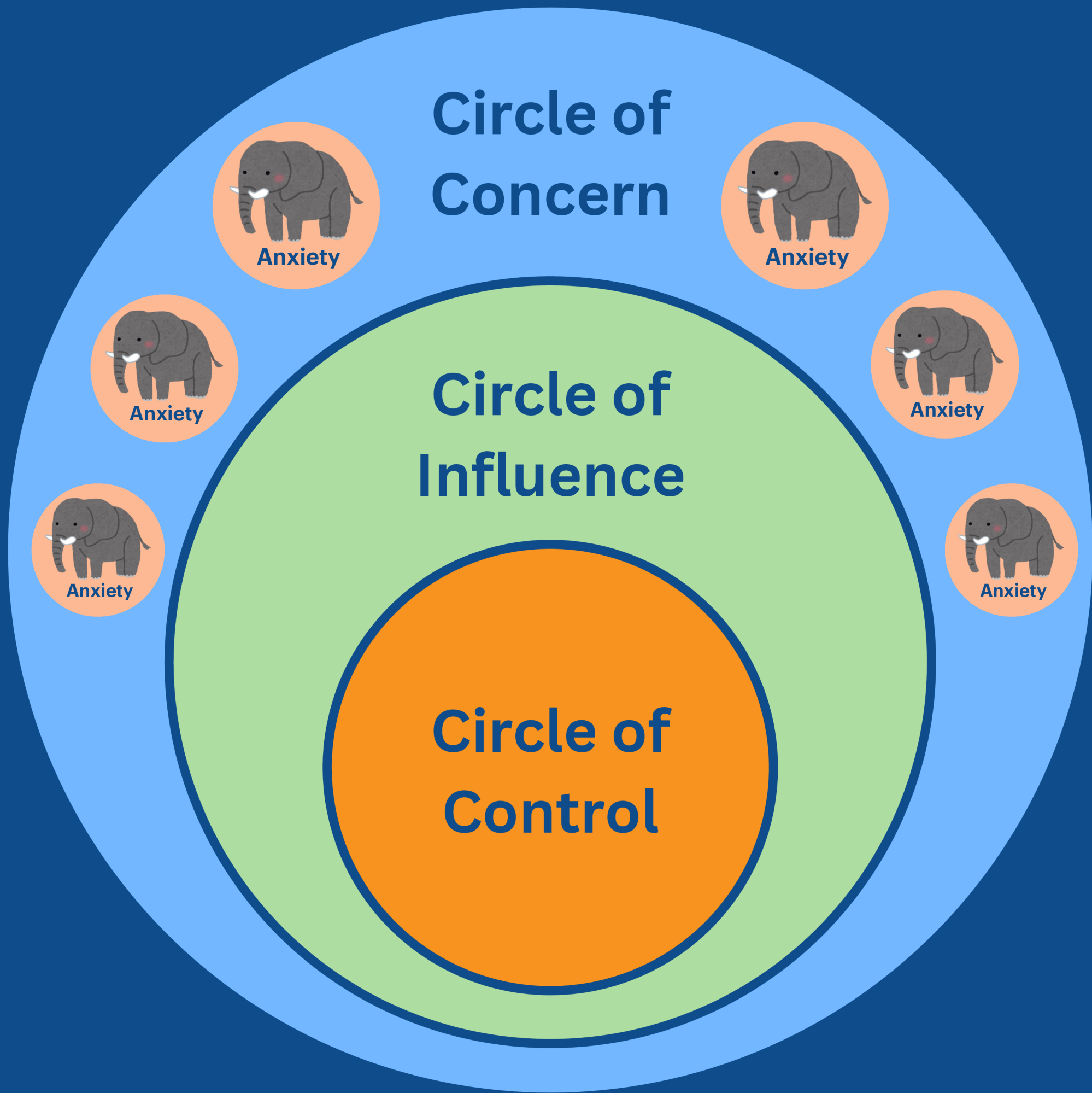
Circle of Influence

Circle of Control

- Others' behaviors
- Getting buy-in on ideas
- Alignment
- Team morale



- Economy
- Industry changes
- Executive decisions

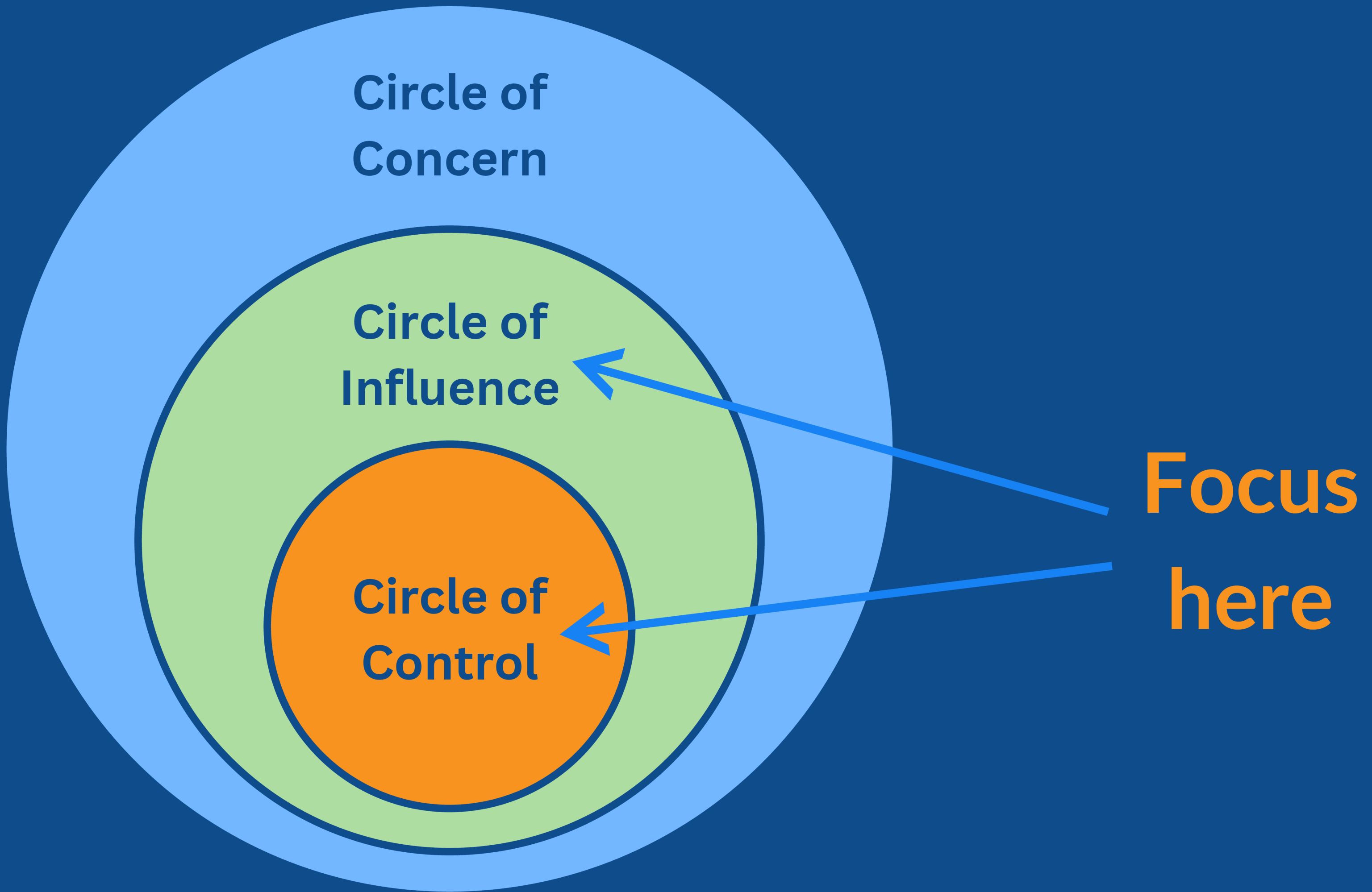


Circle of Concern

Circle of Influence

Circle of Control





Circle of
Concern

Circle of
Influence

Circle of
Control

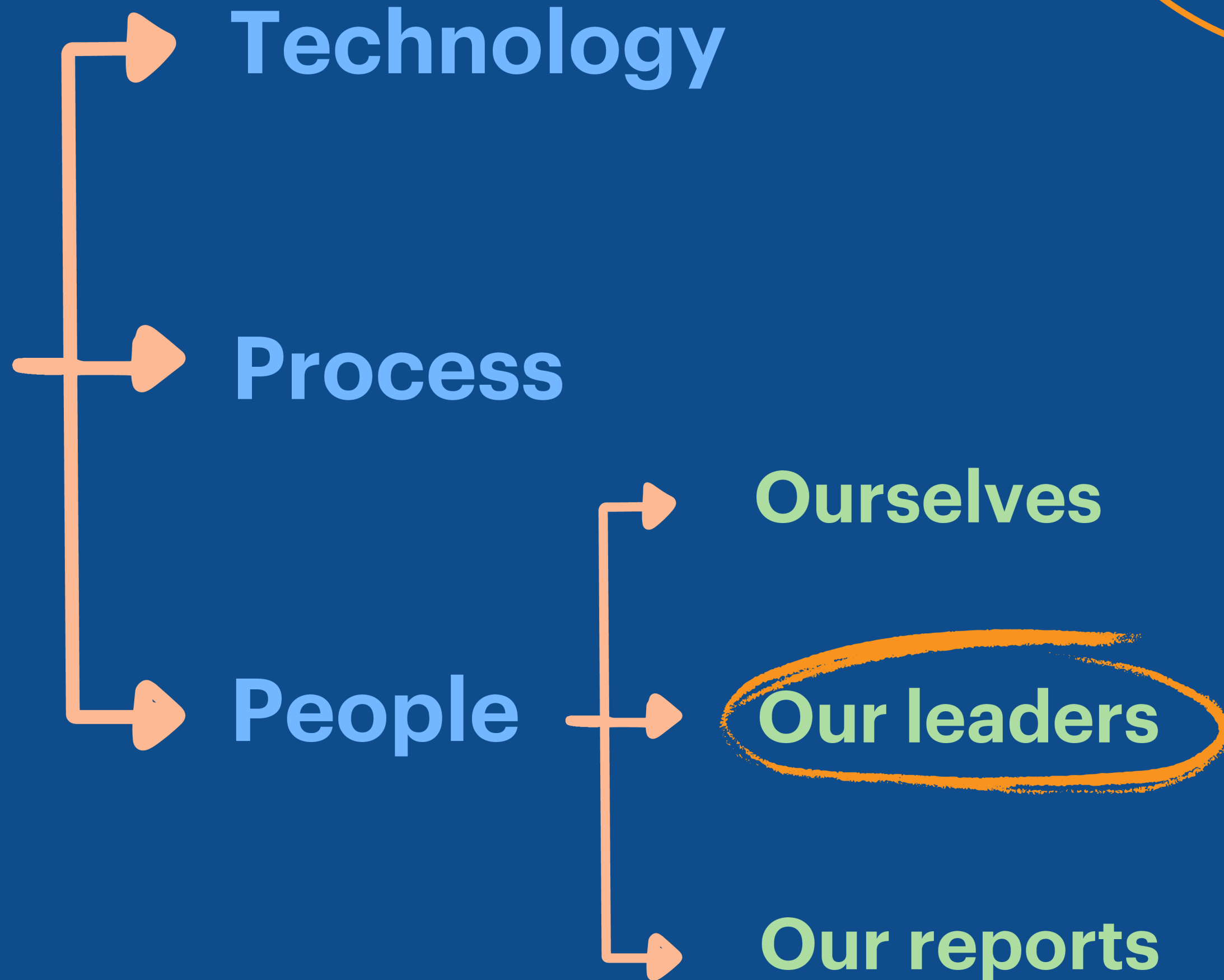
Focus
here



In difficult times, **the power** lies
in **knowing where to focus.**



Building Capacity



Build capacity via our leaders

- Upward visibility is paramount



Build capacity via our leaders

- Upward visibility is paramount
- Manage expectations
 - Helps reduce upward



Build capacity via our leaders

- Upward visibility is paramount
- Manage expectations
 - Helps reduce upward 
- Use data to justify priorities, risks, and resource needs



Building Capacity





The key is to **empower our team**
so we can **scale ourselves.**



Build capacity in our reports - Donts



Build capacity in our reports - Donts

- **DO NOT: Abandon your team**



Build capacity in our reports - Donts

- DO NOT: Abandon your team
- DO NOT: Compromise psychological safety



Build capacity in our reports - Donts

- DO NOT: Abandon your team
- DO NOT: Compromise psychological safety
- DO NOT: Create additional anxiety & fear



Do #1: Lead like a coach



Do #1: Lead like a coach



- Shift focus:
 - Delivery Development



Do #1: Lead like a coach



- Shift focus:

- Delivery

Development

- Directing

Enabling



Do #1: Lead like a coach



- Shift focus:
 - Delivery Development
 - Directing Enabling
- Let them take the wheel



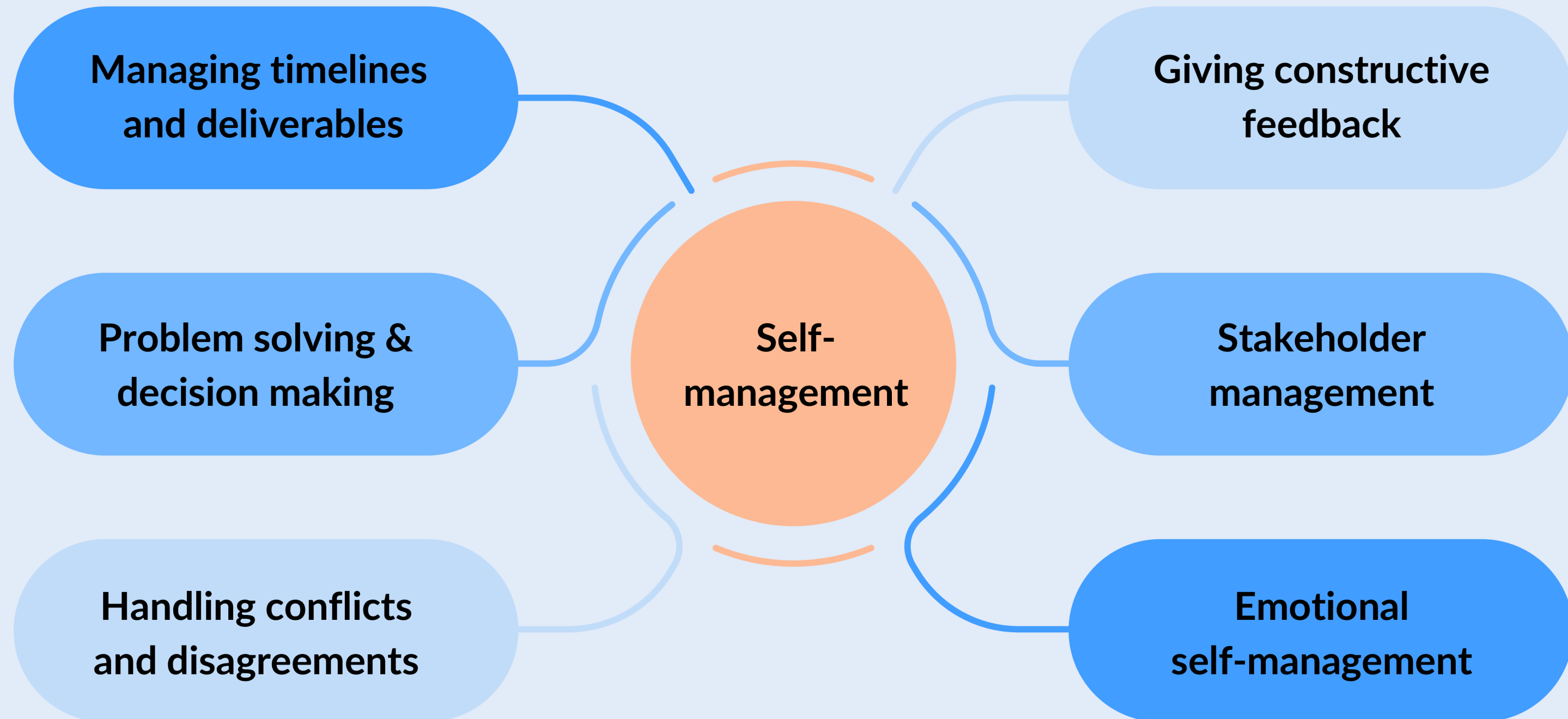
Do #1: Lead like a coach



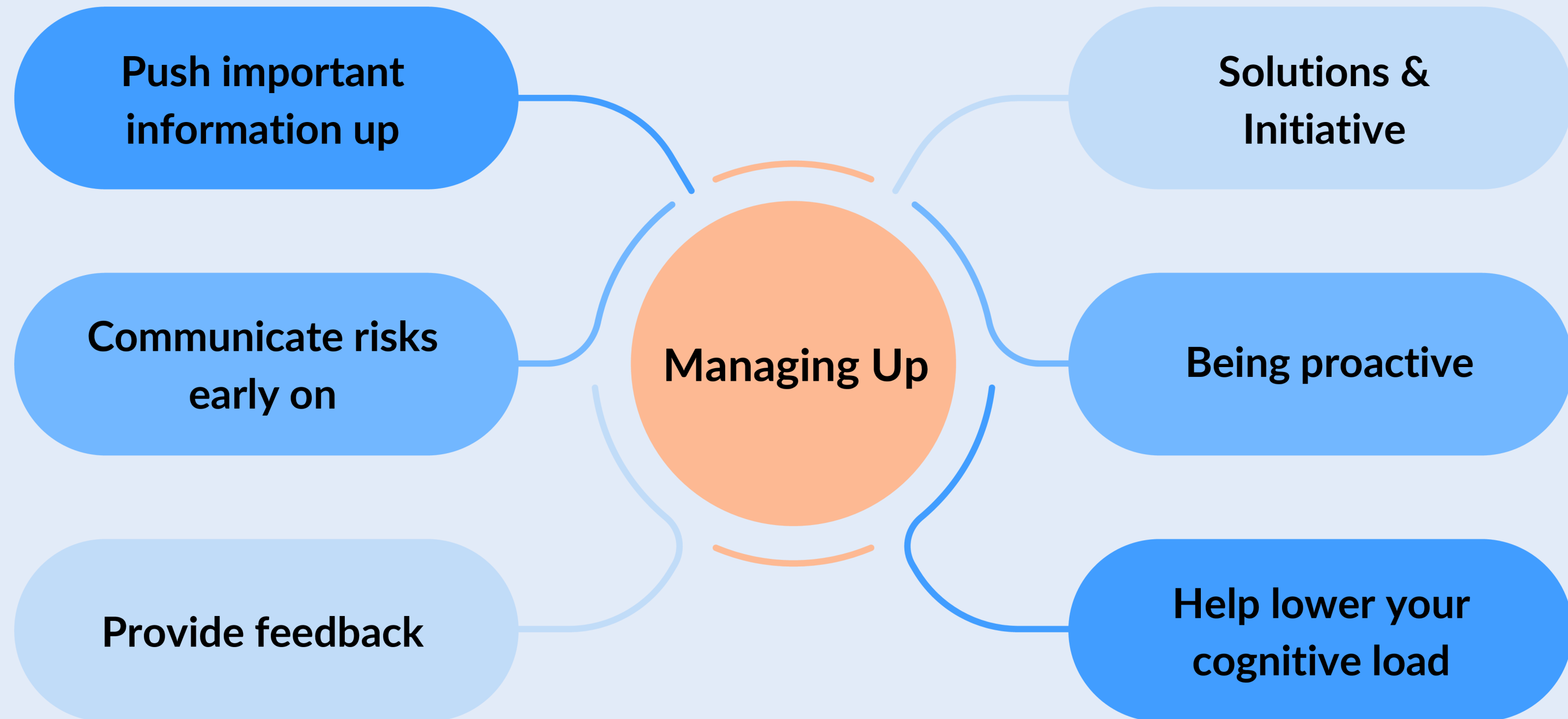
- Shift focus:
 - Delivery Development
 - Directing Enabling
- Let them take the wheel
- Make the team feel like a team



Do #2: Teach people to self-manage



Do #3: Teach people to manage up



Do #4: Help reduce anxiety



- Help people focus



Do #4: Help reduce anxiety



- Help people focus
- Provide clarity



Do #4: Help reduce anxiety



- Help people focus
- Provide clarity
- Listen & empathize



Do #4: Help reduce anxiety



- Help people focus
- Provide clarity
- Listen & empathize
- Be vulnerable



Do #4: Help reduce anxiety



- Help people focus
- Provide clarity
- Listen & empathize
- Be vulnerable
- Be transparent





Building Capacity





Irina's Secret Insights



**To do more with less,
do the same with less and
reinvest the savings into
expanding how much you can do.**



**Leadership practices that were
nice-to-have in good times are
must-have in scarce times.**

We need to level up.



People are still your biggest asset.

Lean on each other.

Care for each other.

We're all in this together.



Thank you!

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