

MIND THE GAP

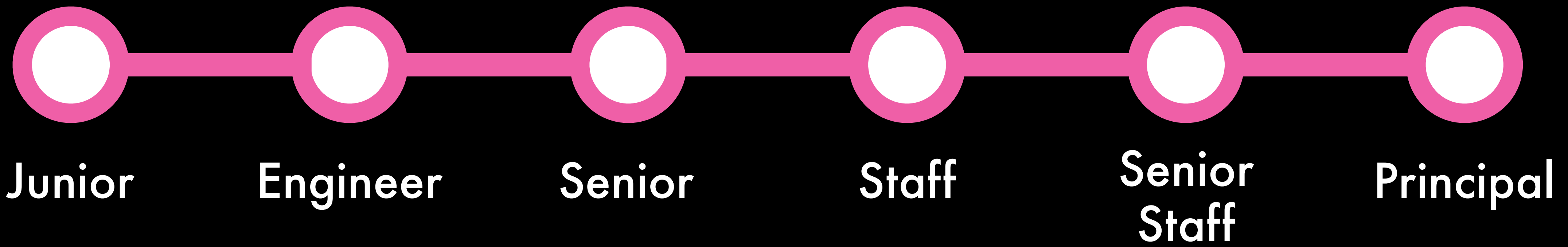
NAVIGATING THE STAFF+ PERFORMANCE CLIFF

KATIE SYLOR-MILLER

PRINCIPAL ENGINEER - WEB TECH LEAD @ SQUARE









Junior

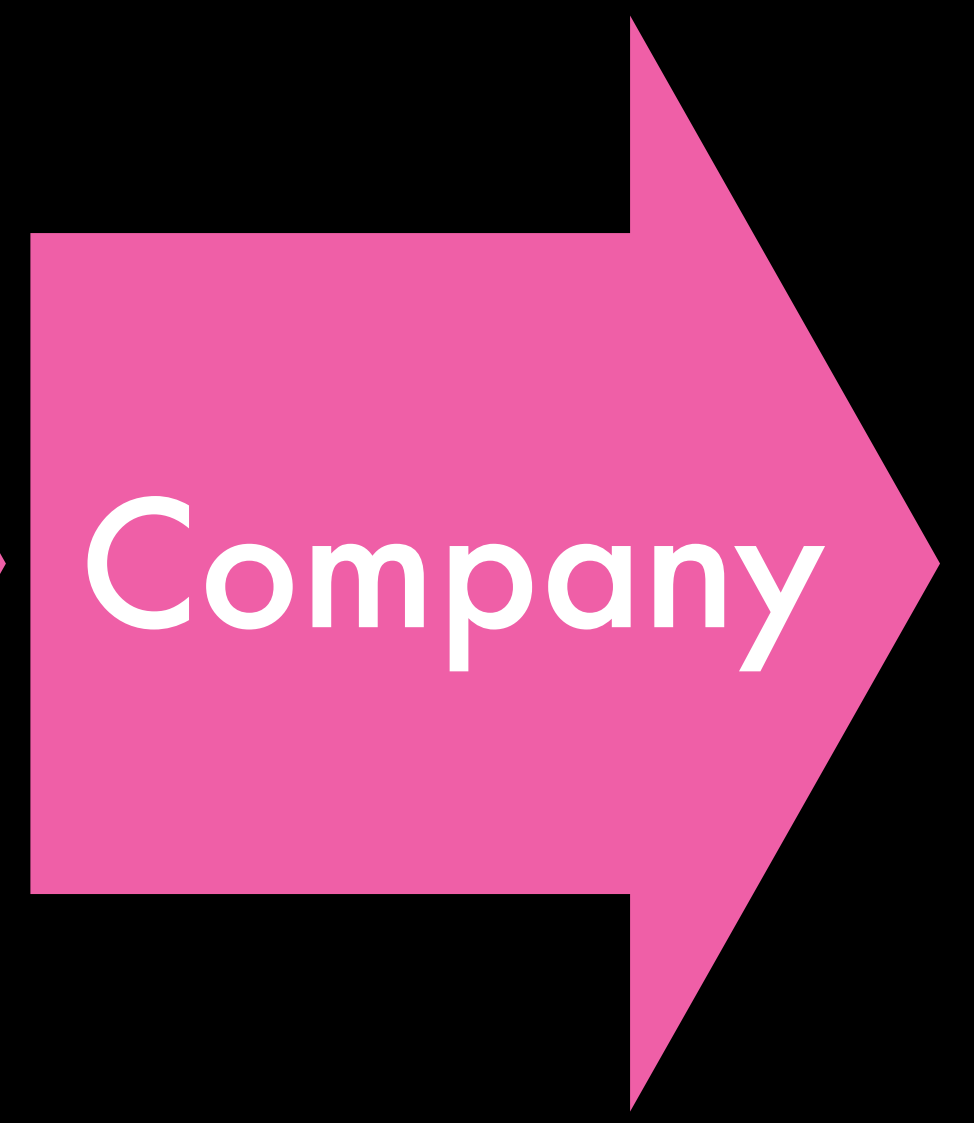
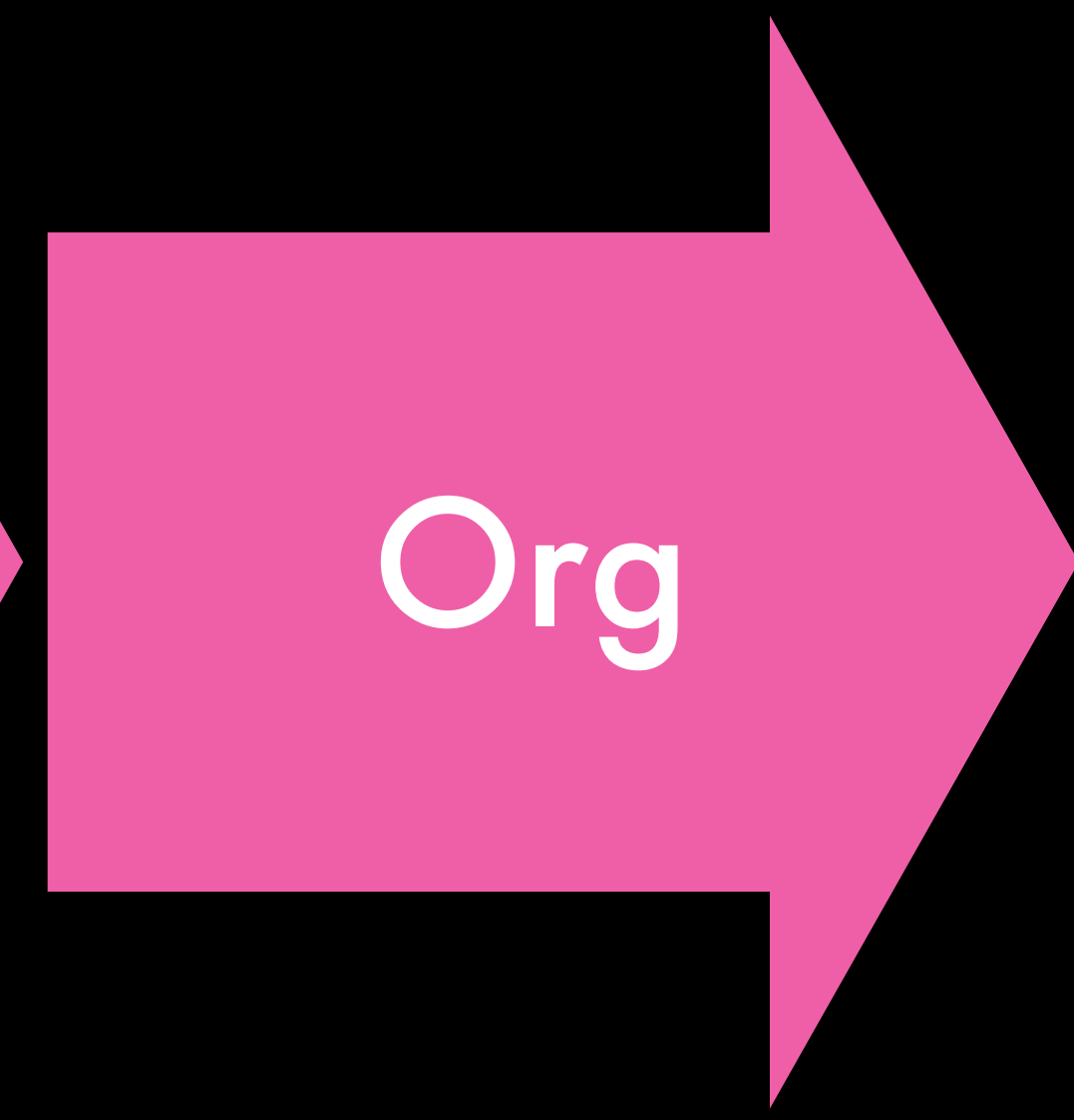
Engineer

Senior

Staff

Senior
Staff

Principal



Junior Engineer Senior

Team

Org

Company





I'm overwhelmed
by all the work on my
plate

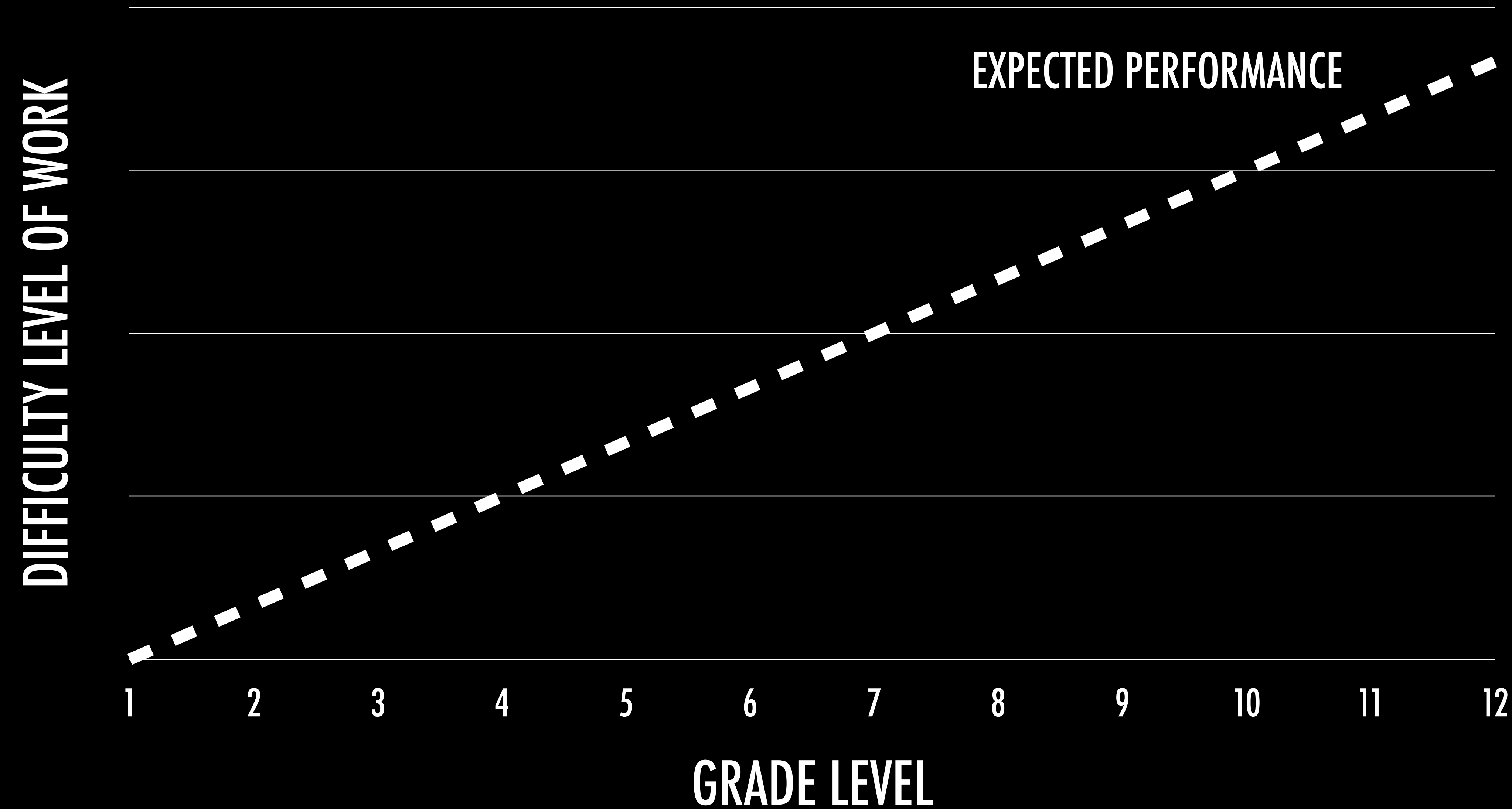
I feel like I'm failing

I have no idea what
I'm doing

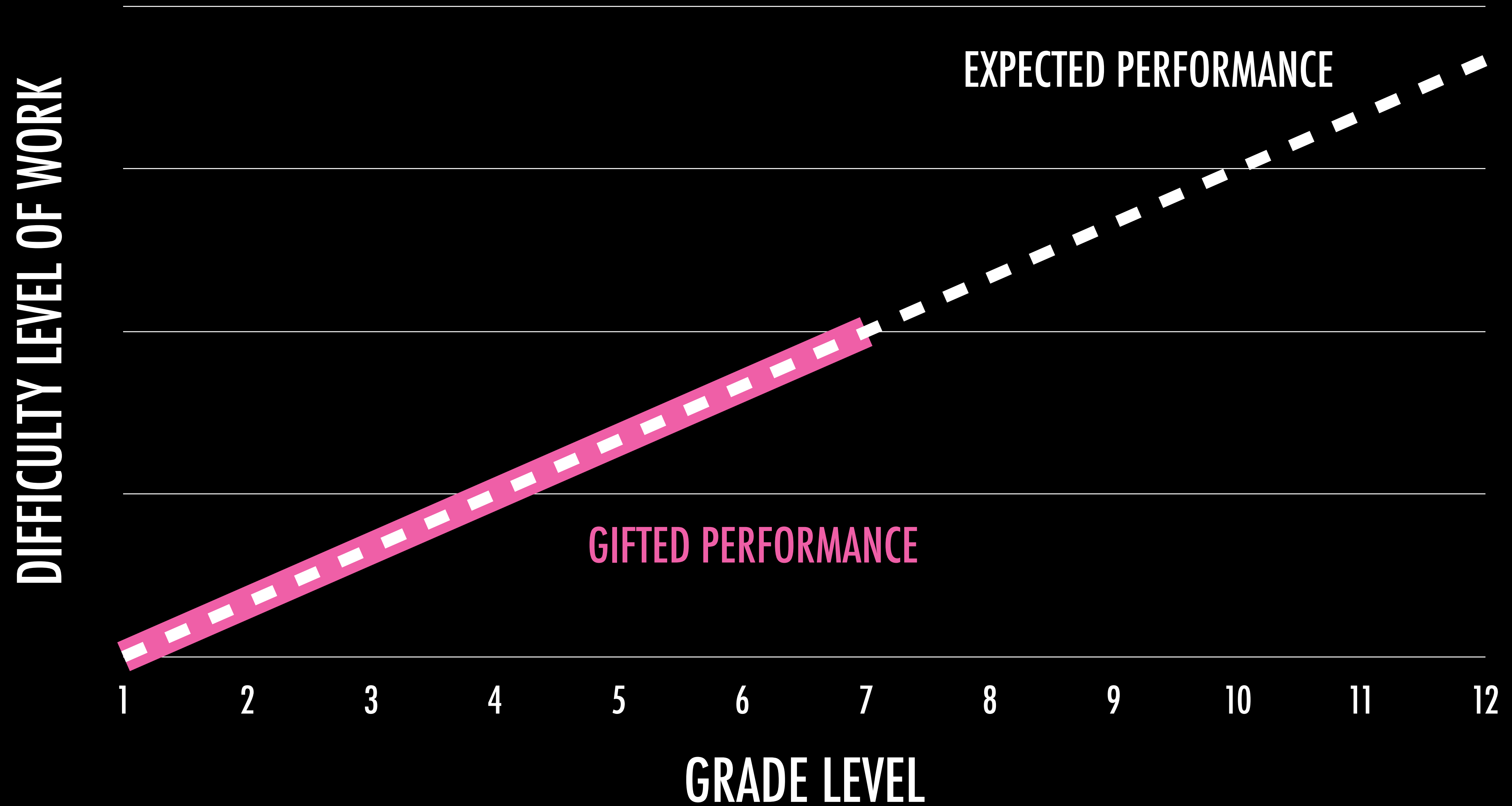
Maybe I should go
back to my old role

I feel so lost and
alone

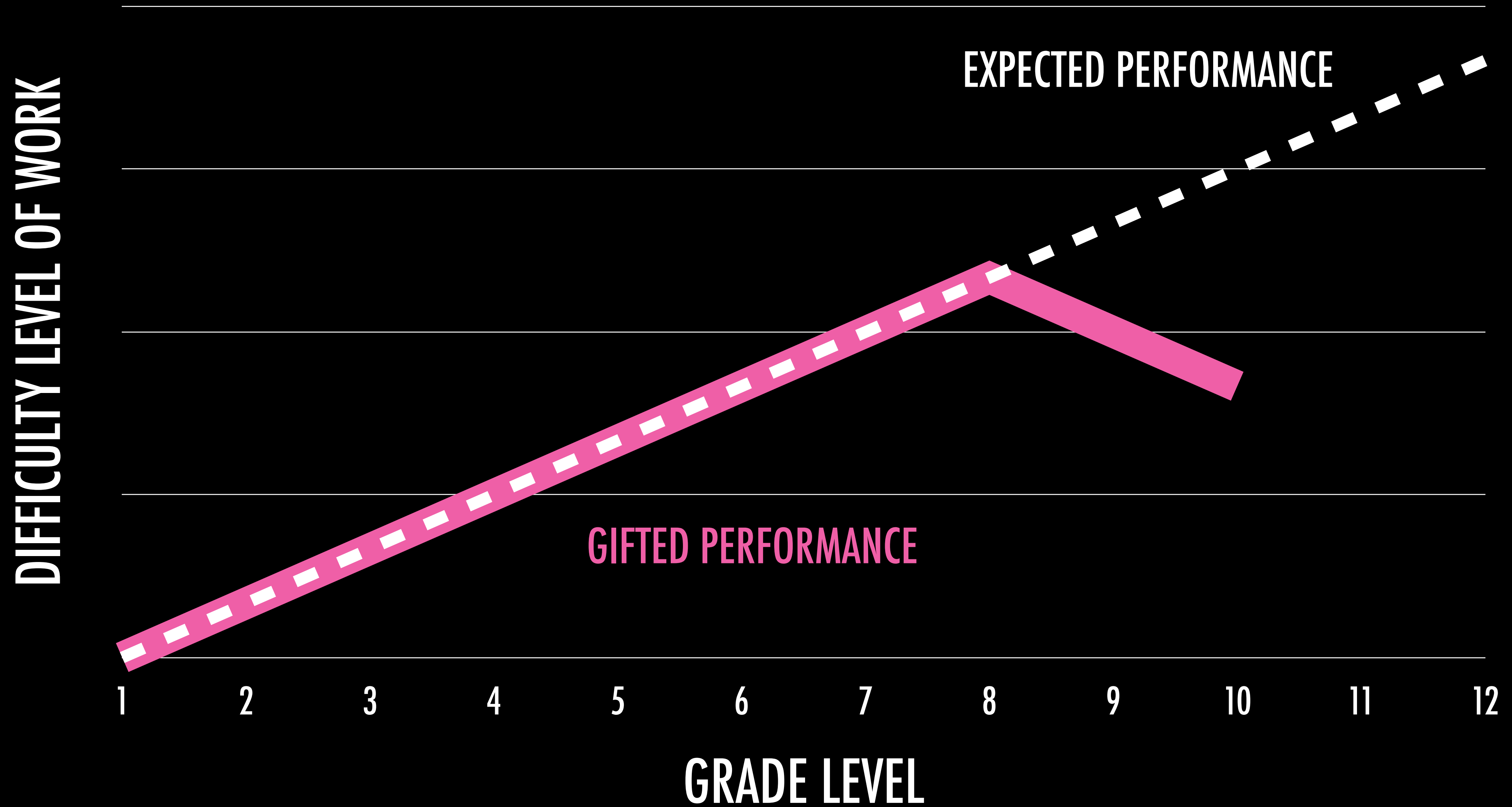
The Performance Cliff



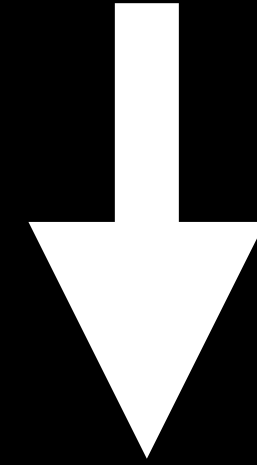
The Performance Cliff



The Performance Cliff



What got you here



Junior

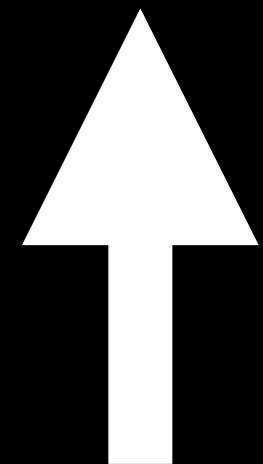
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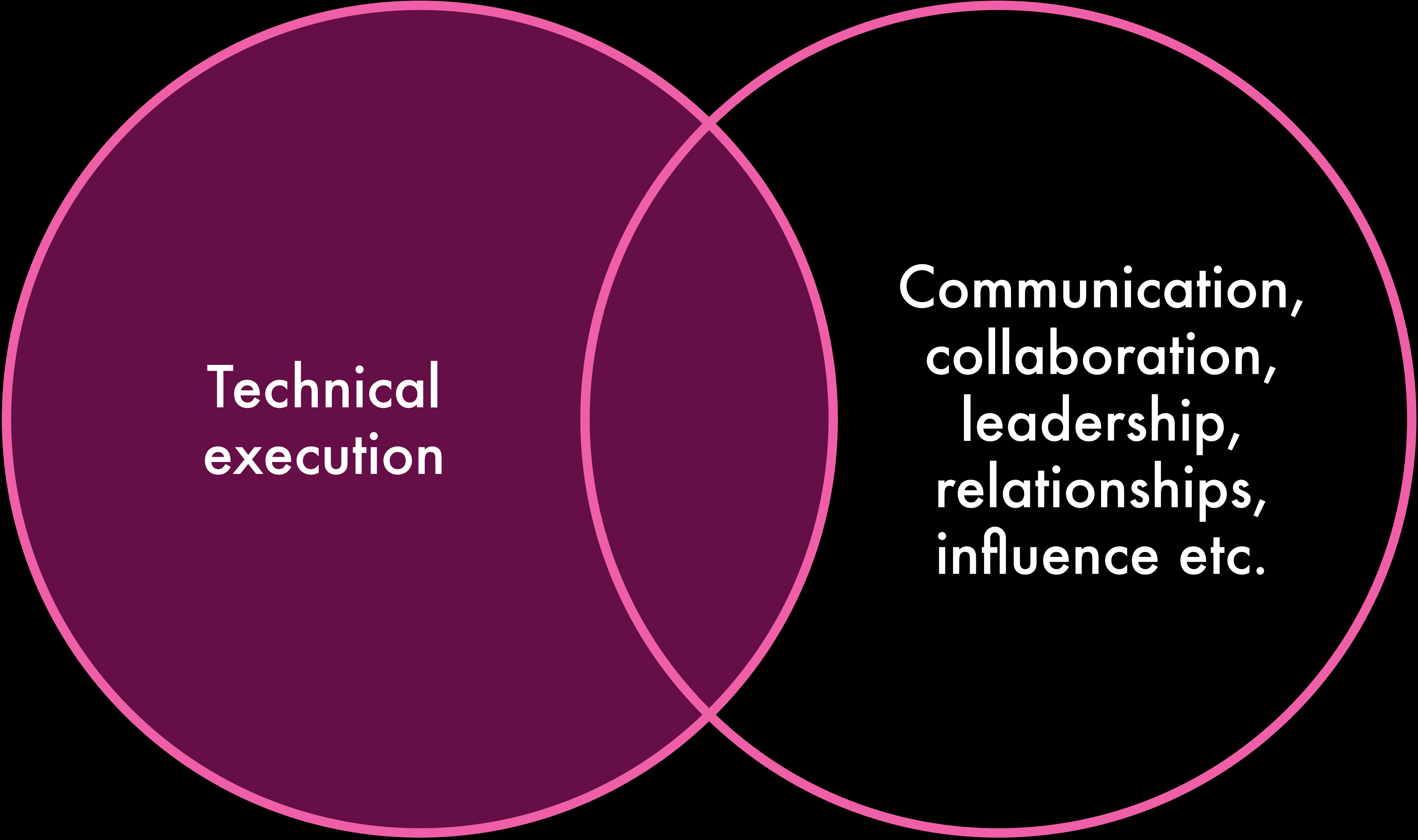
Senior
Staff

Principal



Won't get you there

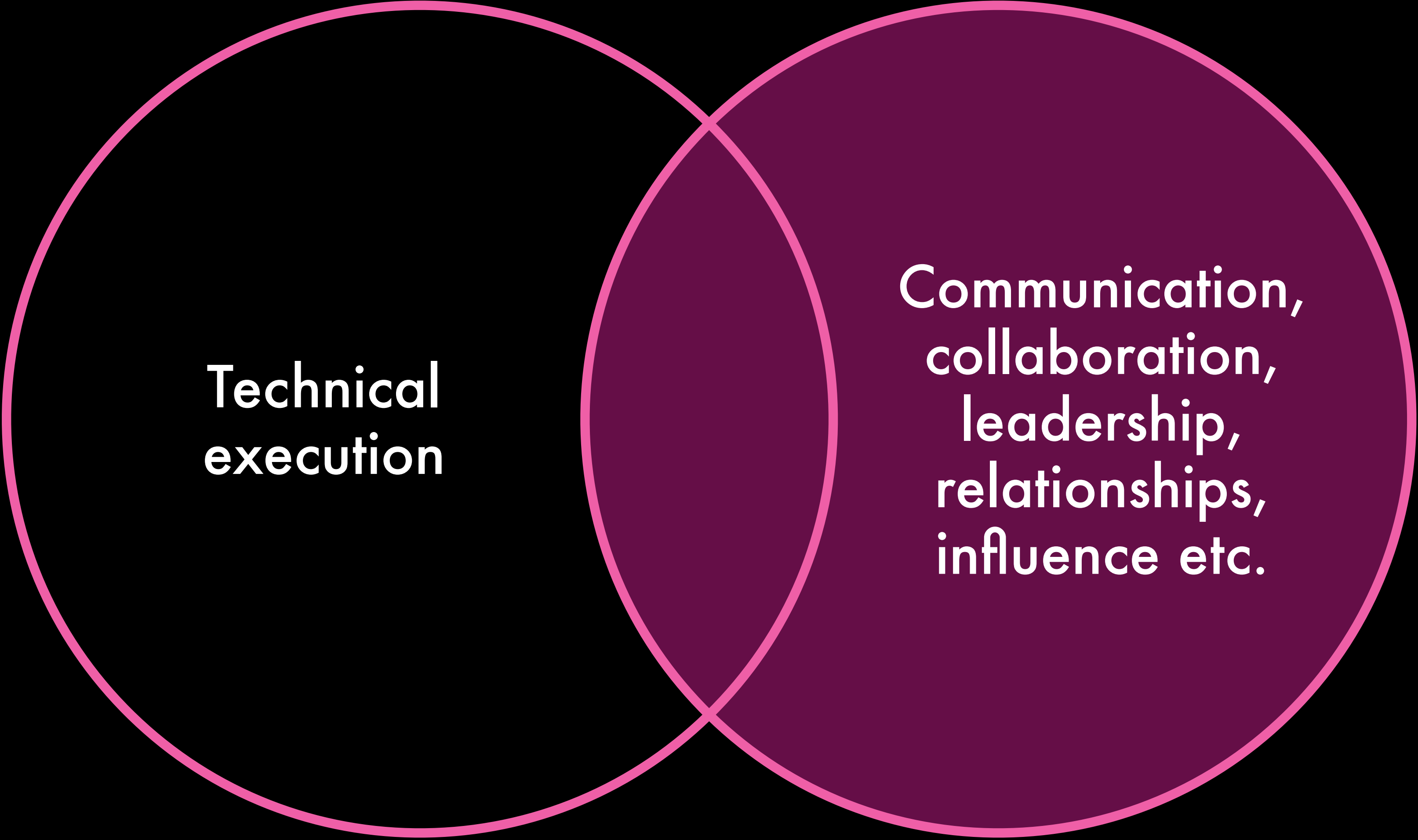

```
SELECT team_success  
FROM tech_skills t  
LEFT JOIN influence i
```



Technical
execution

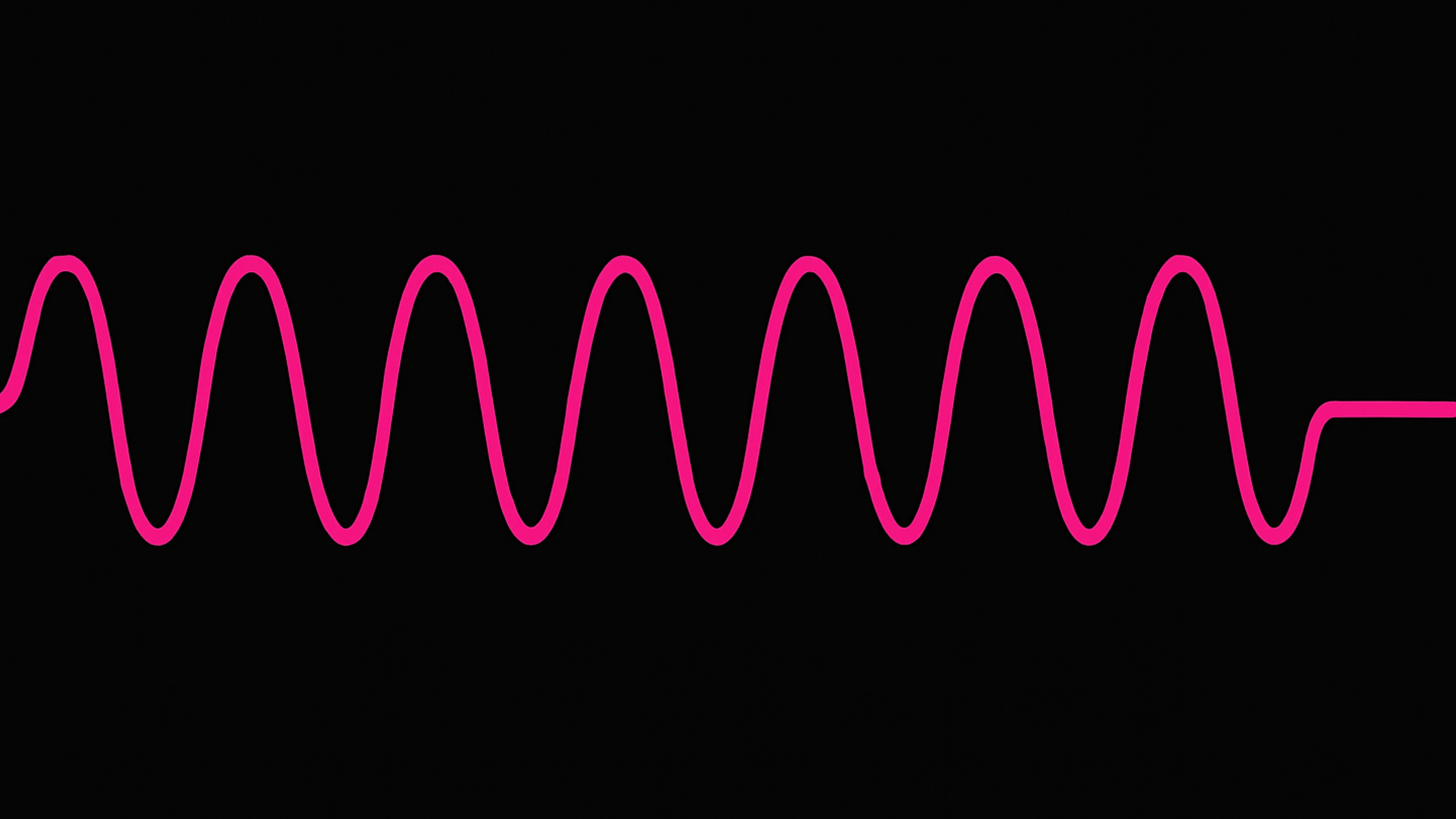
Communication,
collaboration,
leadership,
relationships,
influence etc.

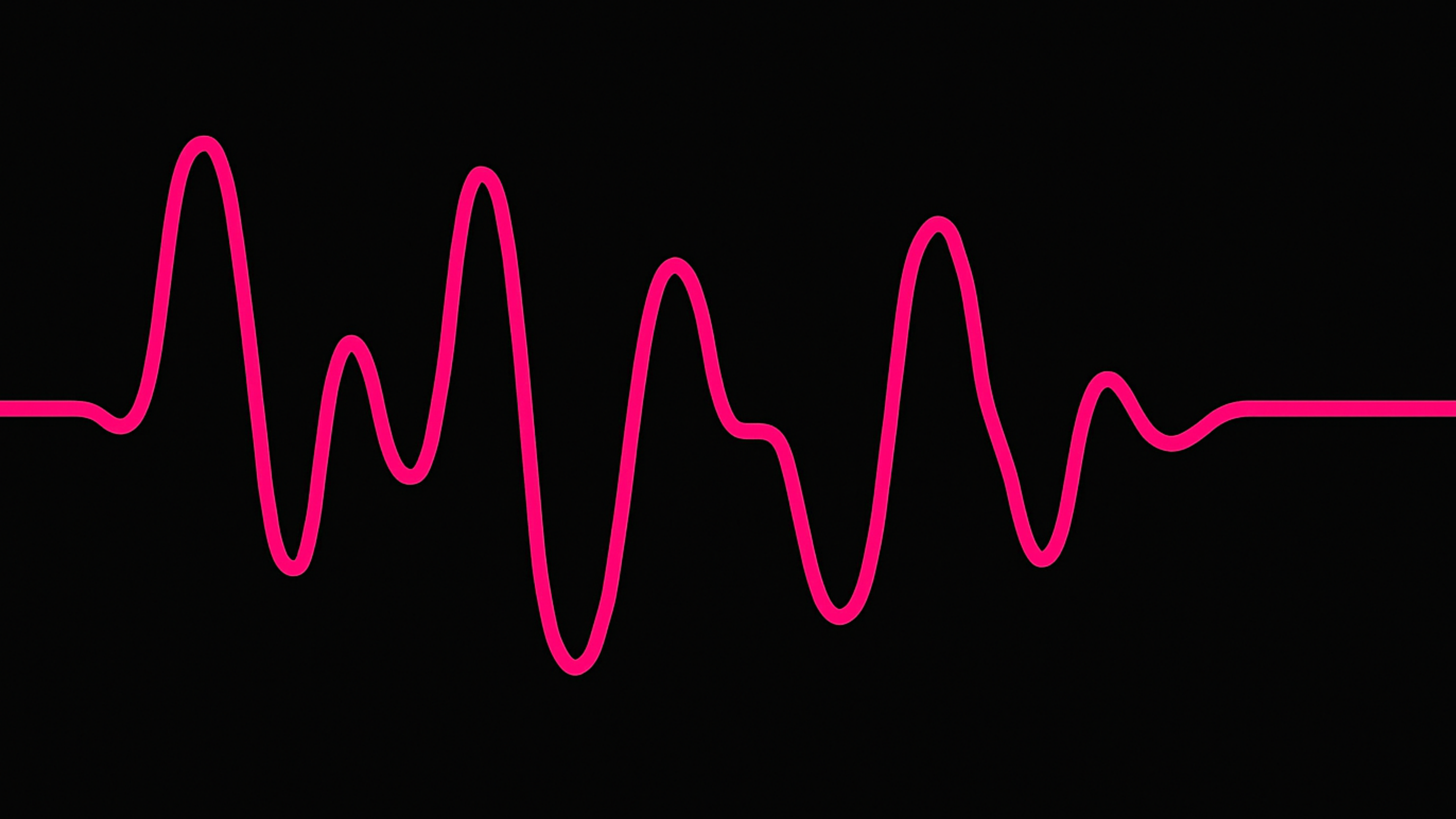

```
SELECT org_success  
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RIGHT JOIN influence i
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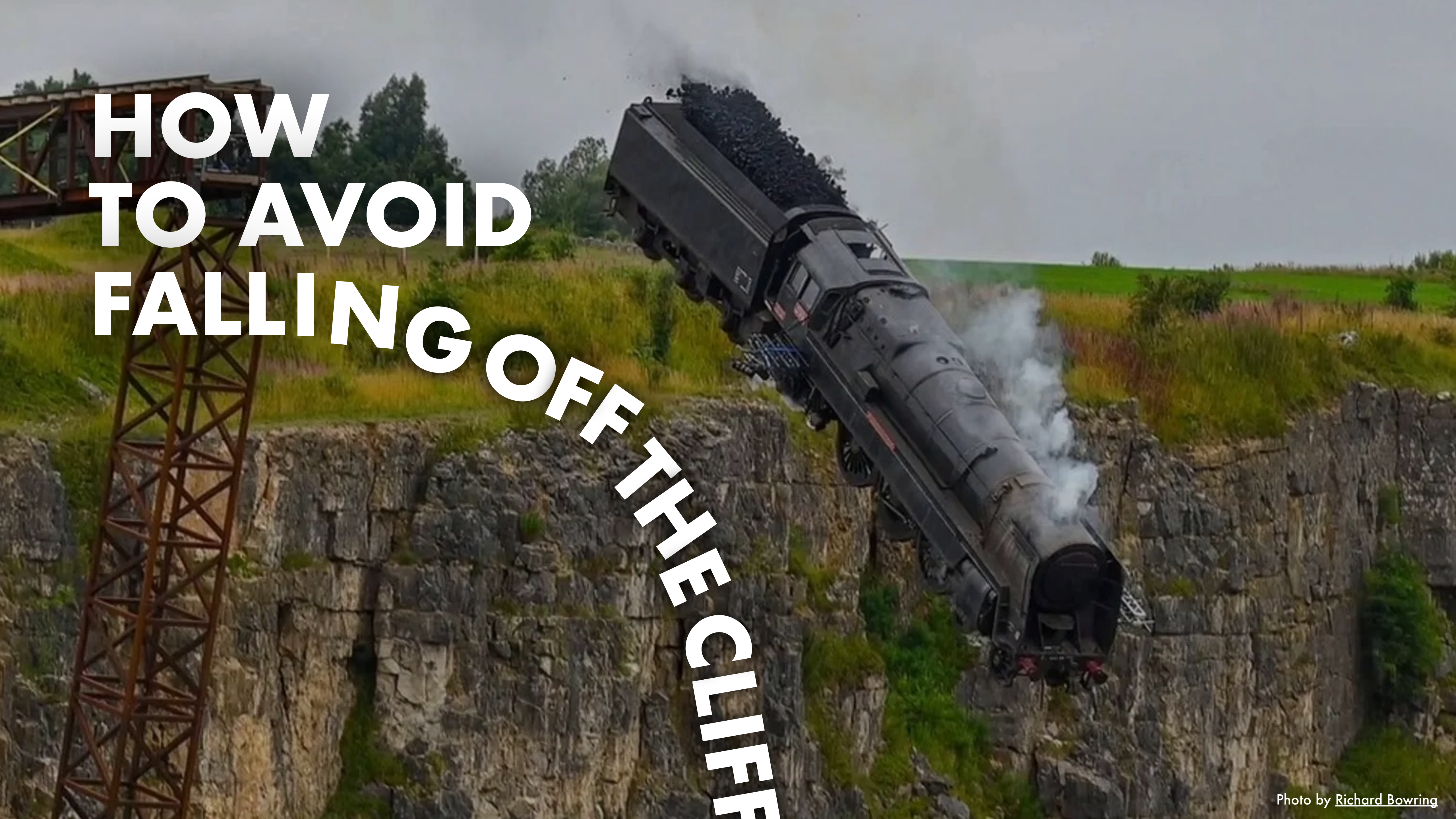


Technical
execution

Communication,
collaboration,
leadership,
relationships,
influence etc.







HOW TO AVOID FALLING OFF THE CLIFF

20 BAD HABITS THAT HOLD LEADERS BACK

From “What got you here won’t get you there” by Marshall Goldsmith

1. Winning too much
2. Adding too much value
3. Passing judgement
4. Making destructive comments
5. Starting with no, but, or however
6. Telling the world how smart we are
7. Speaking when angry
8. Negativity, or let me explain why that won’t work
9. Withholding information
10. Failing to give proper recognition
11. Claiming credit we don’t deserve
12. Making Excuses
13. Clinging to the past
14. Playing favorites
15. Refusing to express regret
16. Not listening
17. Failing to express gratitude
18. Punishing the messenger
19. Passing the buck
20. An excessive need to be “me”

20 BAD HABITS THAT HOLD LEADERS BACK

From "What got you here won't get you there" by Marshall Goldsmith

EGO

1. Winning too much
2. Adding too much value
3. Passing up opportunities
4. Making negative comments
5. Starting arguments
6. Telling the truth
7. Speaking when angry
8. Negativity
9. Withholding information
10. Failing to give proper recognition
11. Claiming credit
12. Making excuses
13. Clinging to the past
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17. Failing to explain
18. Punishing the messenger
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“Successful people become great leaders when they learn to shift the focus from themselves to others.”

- Marshall Goldsmith





Your boss

Sr. Leads

Managers

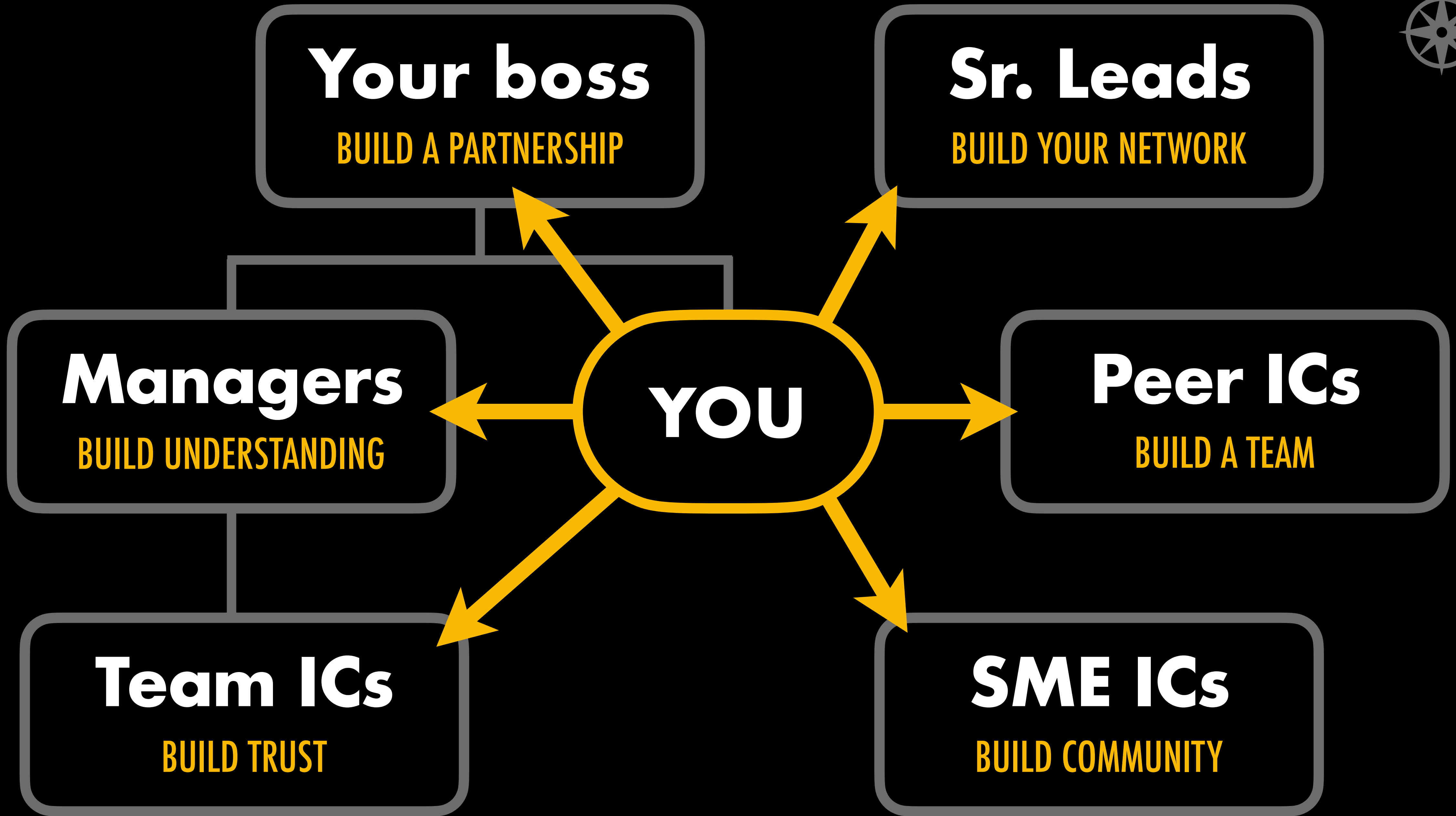
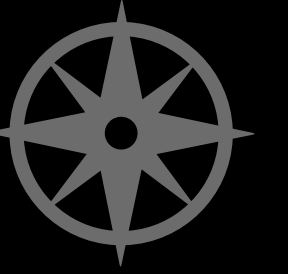
YOU

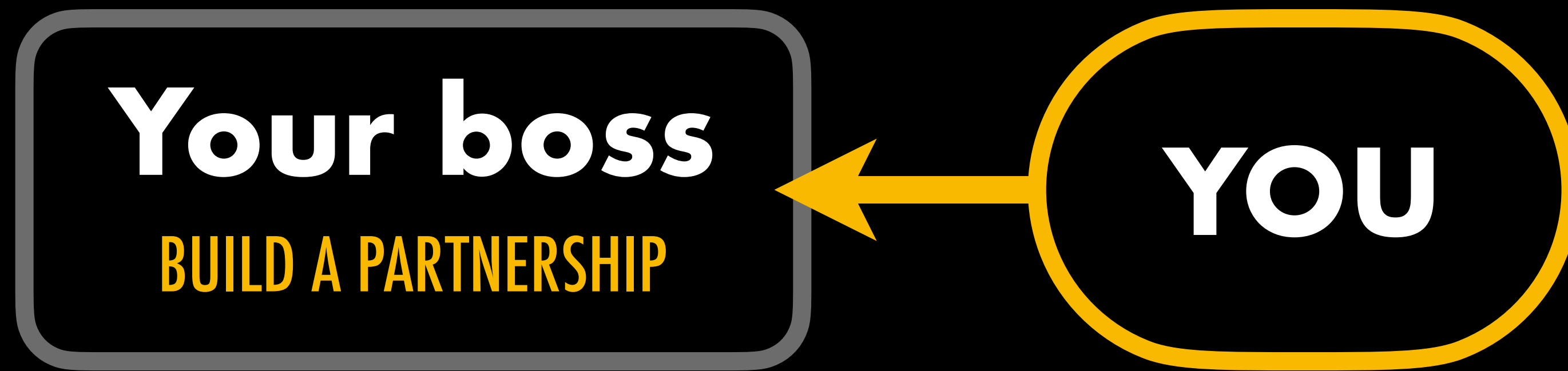
Peer ICs

Team ICs

SME ICs







Align early, align often

- It's a two-way street
- Communicate like they do

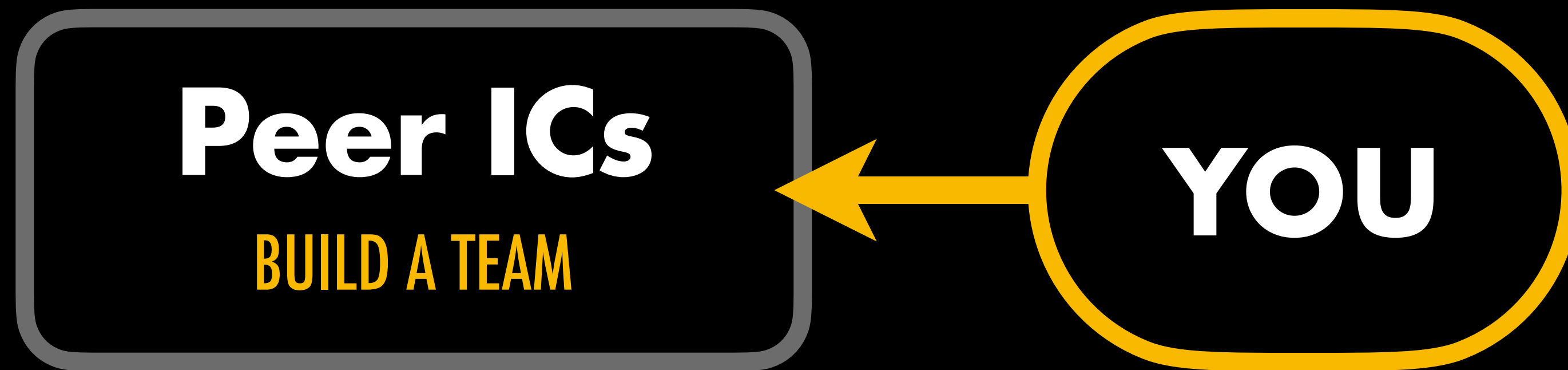


Align early, align often

- It's a two-way street
- Communicate like they do

Surprise! Managers are your peers!

- How do they think?
- Help them help their team



If you don't have a team, make one!

- Regular meetings (daily standups?)
- Nemawashi



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Demystify yourself

- Office hours
- Tech Lead/Staff Eng syncs
- Be humble



Training, learning,
knowledge sharing.

- Community hour
- Spider in the center
of the web



Photo by [M. Donnelly](#) via Flickr



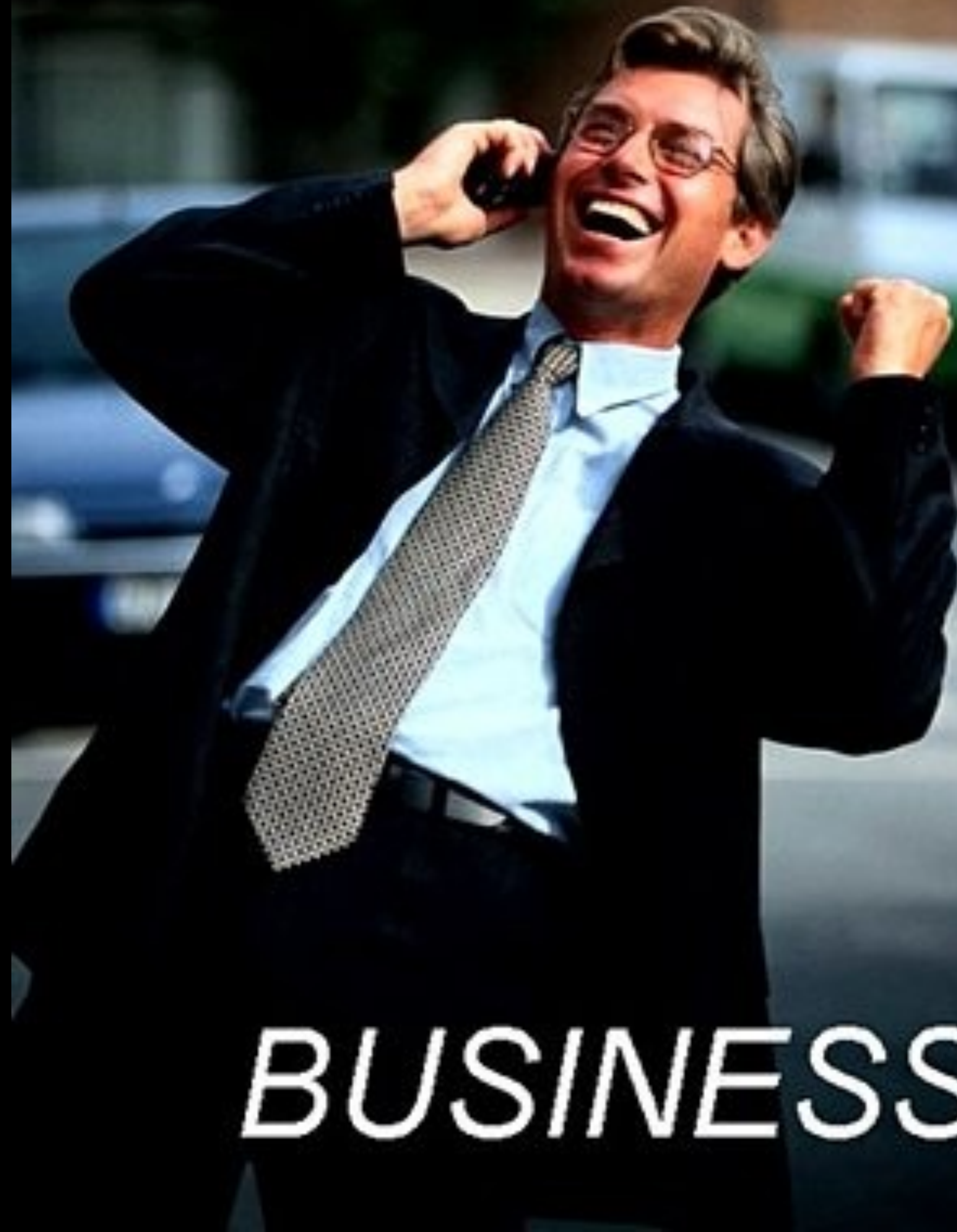
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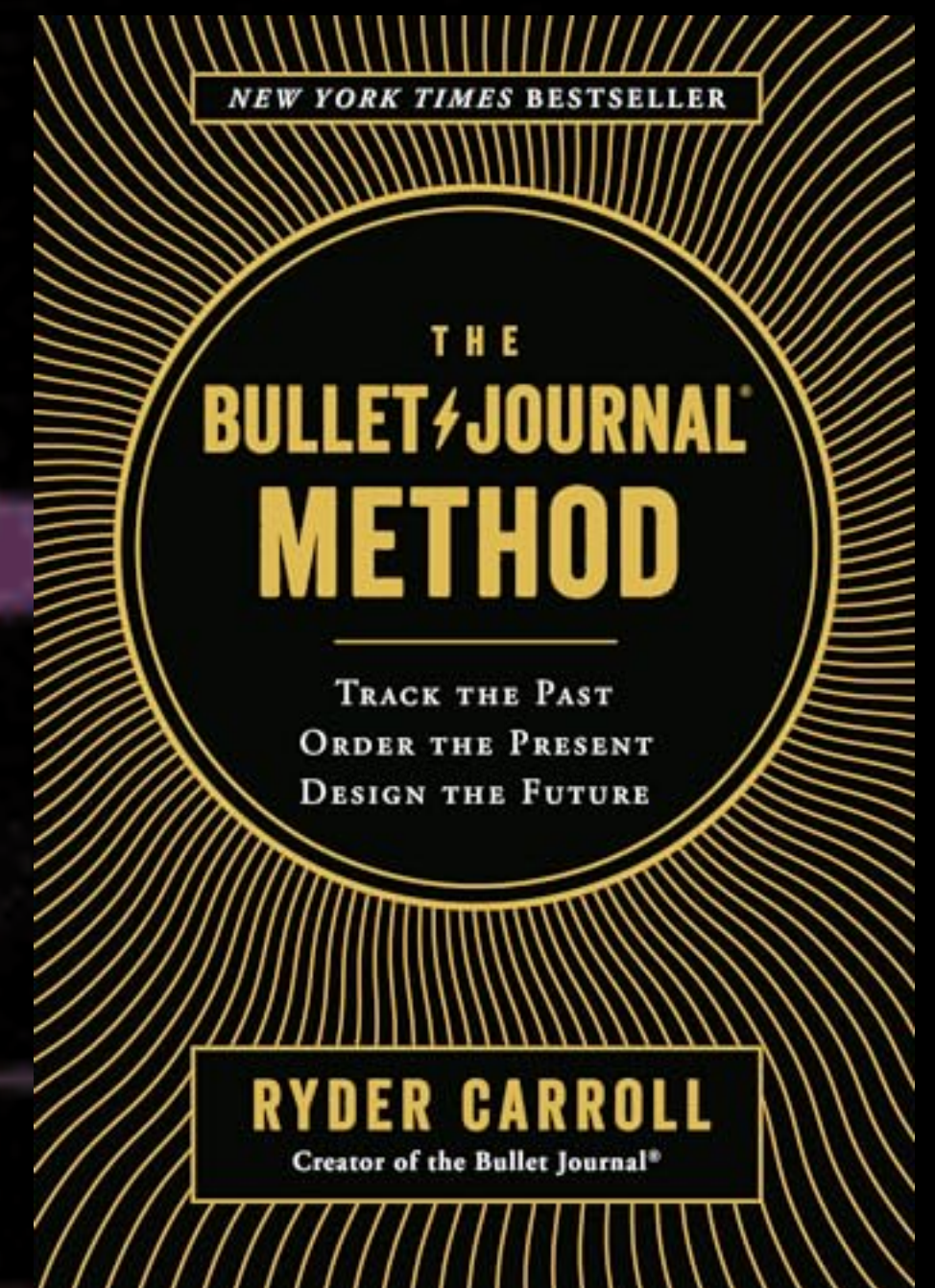
“Politics” is the art of
getting things done.

- Relationships are
leverage
- Convincing and
being convinced

HA HA!



BUSINESS



Q How do you measure
influence without authority?

Q How do you measure influence without authority?

A You can't!
...but, you can *document* it.

WEEKLY UPDATE TEMPLATE

1. Executive summary
2. Key technical contributions
3. Strategic influence & alignment
4. Next week's priorities
5. Risks / Concerns
6. Requests

Hop on the Learning Train



YOU ARE HERE



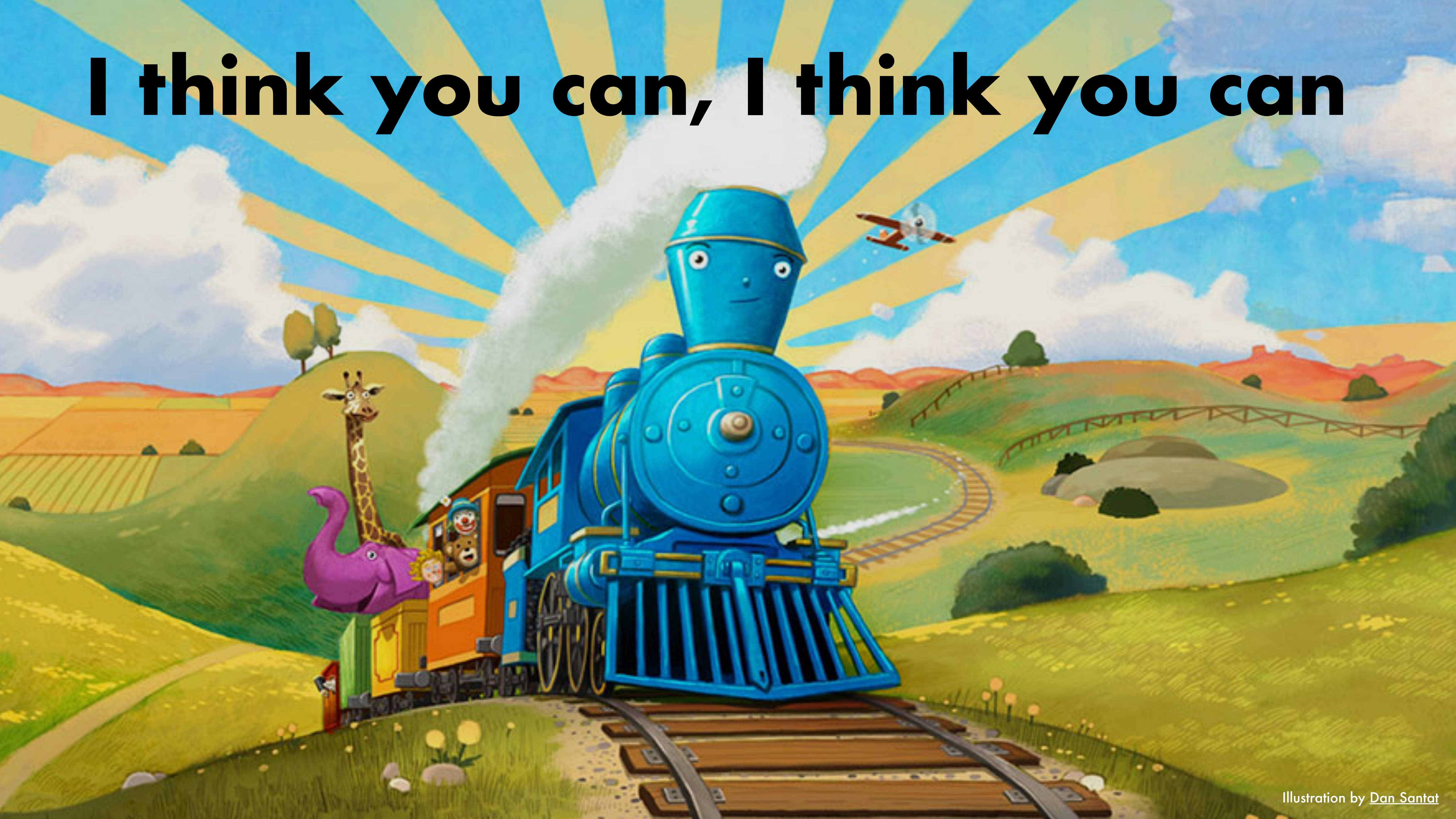
HOW TO AVOID FALLING OFF THE CLIFF

1. Let go of your ego
2. Find/create community with your peer ICs
3. Build trust with humility
4. Learn how managers think
5. Get good at “politics”
6. The business is your business
7. Use an external brain
8. Document everything
9. Invest in your new skillset
10. Bring the next generation up behind you

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I think you can, I think you can



THANK YOU!

Find me on the internets:

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sylormiller.com

ohshitgit.com

Come work with me:

