



British Computer Society
The Chartered Institute for IT

HOW TO BE A CONSULTANT

a programme for new and aspiring consultants

**Interviews, fact-finding
and evidence**

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Interviews, Fact-finding and Evidence

→ The Terrain

→ The Tools

→ Technical [review] assignments

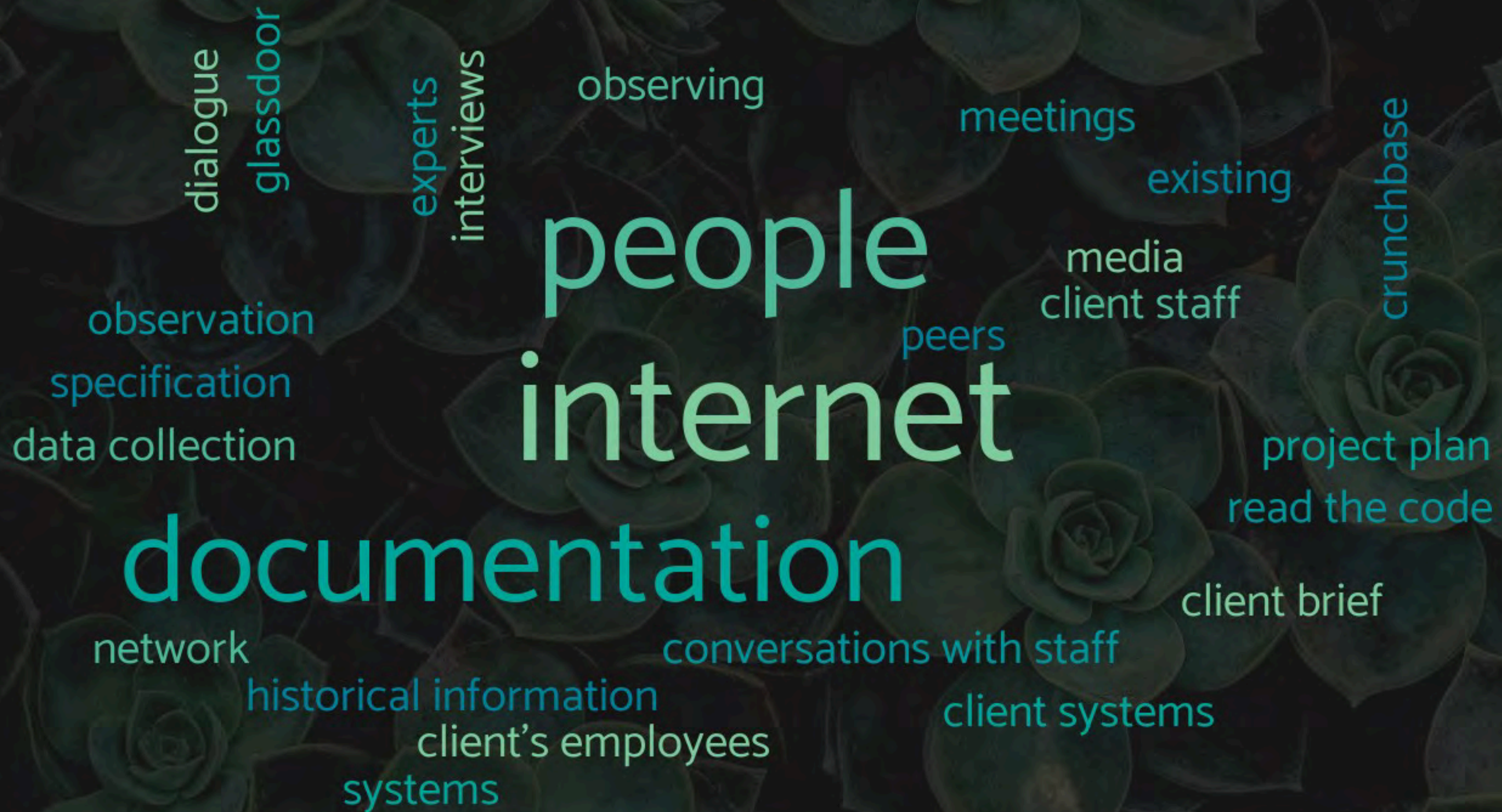
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Sources of information?



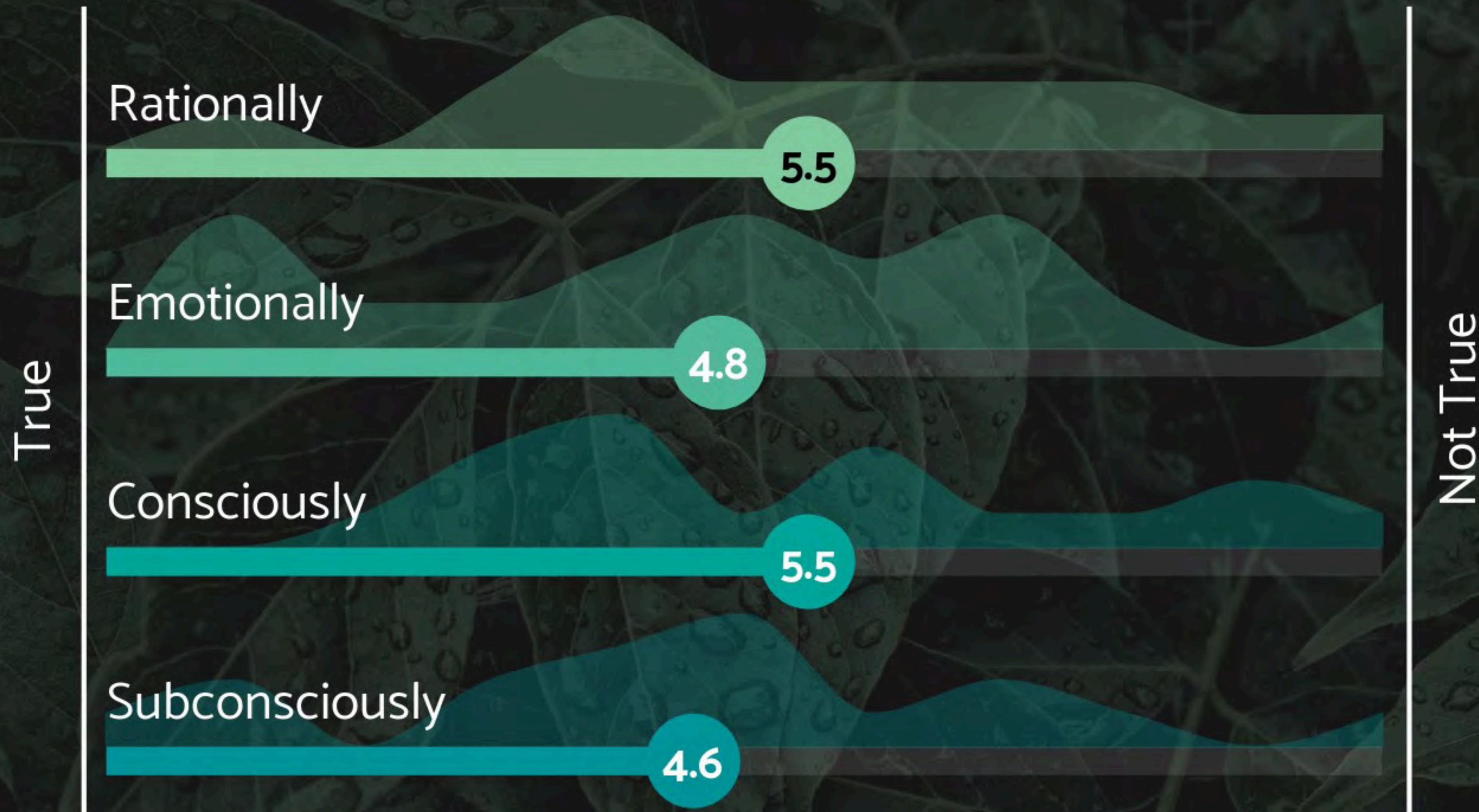
Sources of Information

- Surveys
- Modelling
- Experiments
- Observation
- Interviews
- Documentation

The Terrain

- Emotions
- Assumptions
- Interpretation

How We Make Judgements and Decisions?



Your Mind is a Machine for Jumping to Conclusions

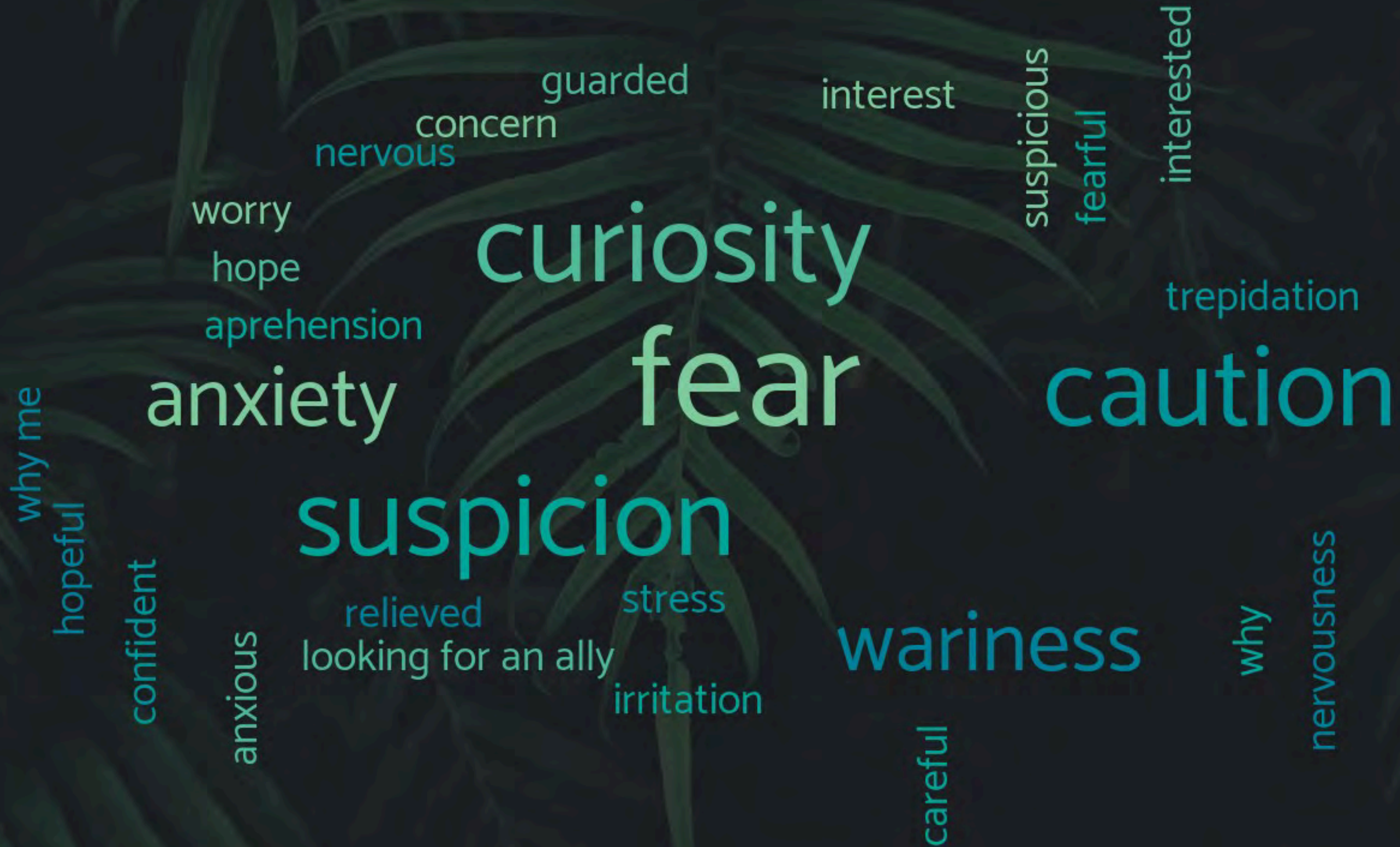
- Daniel Kahneman, Nobel Laureate



2



Your interviewee's predominant emotions



Fear of Change is Completely Rational

Evolution has wired us to beware of change

The Terrain

- Emotions
- Assumptions
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Where Do You Find Assumptions?

reasoning
in my head

interviewees
written down
documentation
the management
in your biases
business cases
im people heads

everywhere

in your head

industry folklore
project manager
data analysis
project planner
meetings
project brief
risk statment

Mind Reading

Untested assumptions

1

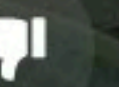


Business Case

How can we test assumptions as cheaply and quickly as possible?

The Terrain

- Emotions
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PROOF

They were hostile to the proposal

Interpretation Versus Observation

Sources of Information

- Surveys
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Tools

- Six Interrogatives
- Five Why's
- Clean Language
- Empathy

The Six Interrogatives

1. What?
2. Why?
3. Who?
4. Where?
5. How?
6. When?



The Five Whys

Get to the root by asking why five times



Clean Language

- Is there anything else about X?
- What would you like to have happen?
- What comes before X?
- What comes after X?

1



2





Empathy is paying attention to another human being, asking what they are feeling, and making a commitment to understanding their world.

- Chris Voss, Former FBI Chief Hostage Negotiator

Listen

- Open questions
- Pause
- Ask follow ups
- Go off script



Seek out the complainers

1





British Computer Society
The Chartered Institute for IT

Consultancy Specialist Group

Webinar

**Managing Expectations -
Achieving harmony between
client and consultant**

Martin White FRSC FBCS HonFCLIP

18th March 2021



Summary

Sources of Information

- Surveys
- Modelling
- Experiments
- Observation
- Interviews
- Documentation



The Terrain

- Emotions
- Assumptions
- Interpretation



Tools

- Six interrogatives
- Five Why's
- Clean Language
- Empathy