

TEAM UP

British Computer Society
Improving Meetings for Project Managers

23rd April 2026

George Karseras and Team Up

Let's 'PORT-In'

Purpose: Support your development and promote Team Up

Outcomes:

1. Understand Implications of Working in Extreme Times
2. Learn new ways to improve meetings

Responsibilities

Me: Prepare pack and manage the process to time

You: Be present and open minded

Timed Agenda

1. Meeting Challenges (20)
2. New Solution: Extreme Teaming – Pressure Proofing – Humanity (40)
3. Q&A (20)

Resilience

Pressure
Proof

Execution under pressure

Bouncing
Back

Recovering when things don't go so well

Adapting
Over Time

Learning from experience

Ubuntu: “I am because we are.”

Which of these predicts the greatest resilience?



Being Purposeful



Clarity of Goals



Clarity of Roles



Agreed ways of working



Team Learning Conversations



Listening Skills



Questioning Skills



Empathy



Vulnerability



Helpfulness



Positivity and Optimism

What's most important for adaptability?

Team 'Process' Learning is the LOWEST scoring item

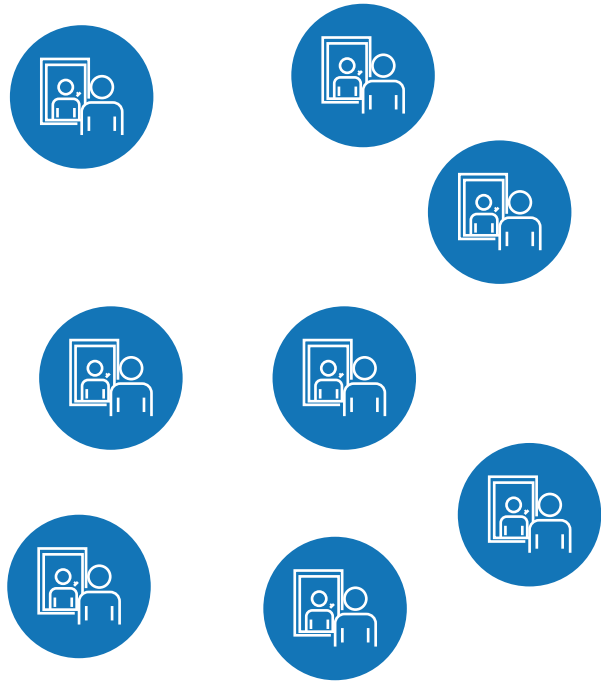
The Top 5 Scoring Team Behaviours

Set	Mission	Our purpose is clear to us and to our stakeholders.	4.11
Safe	Empathy	We build an optimistic and positive climate through humour and by being courteous, supportive and appreciative.	4.01
Set	Mission	We share a vision of what we are trying to achieve.	3.93
Set	Disciplines	We all have sufficient 'skin in the game' to ensure we are motivated to collaborate on our shared goals.	3.81
Safe	Empathy	We are emotionally sensitive, responding thoughtfully and respectfully to what people might be thinking and feeling.	3.79

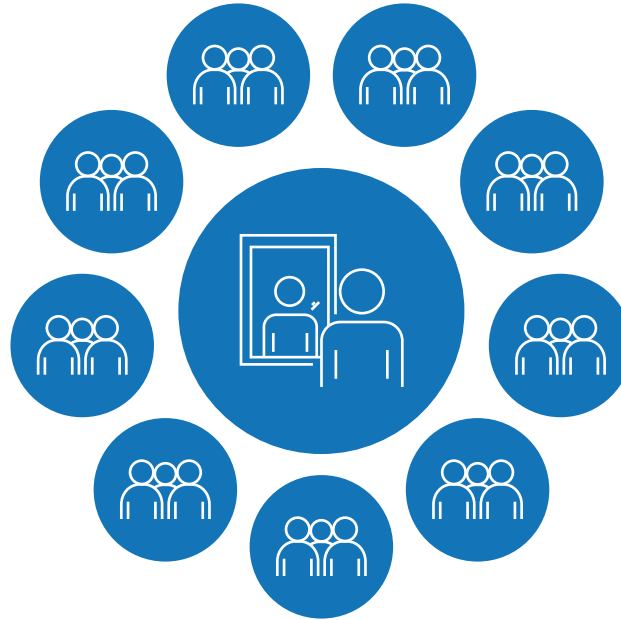
The Worst 5 Scoring Team Behaviours

Success	Trusted	We profoundly trust each other.	3.39
Set	Disciplines	Our meeting structures are fit for purpose and enable us to assess and manage progress towards our most important shared goals.	3.38
Success	Adaptation	We are adept at converting our creative thinking into innovation and value.	3.38
Strong	Experimentation	We experiment in how we relate to others, especially those with whom we share goals who are not so collaborative.	3.32
Safe	Learning	We continually extract useful learning by reflecting how well we are actually working together, in this team and in our sub-teams.	3.21

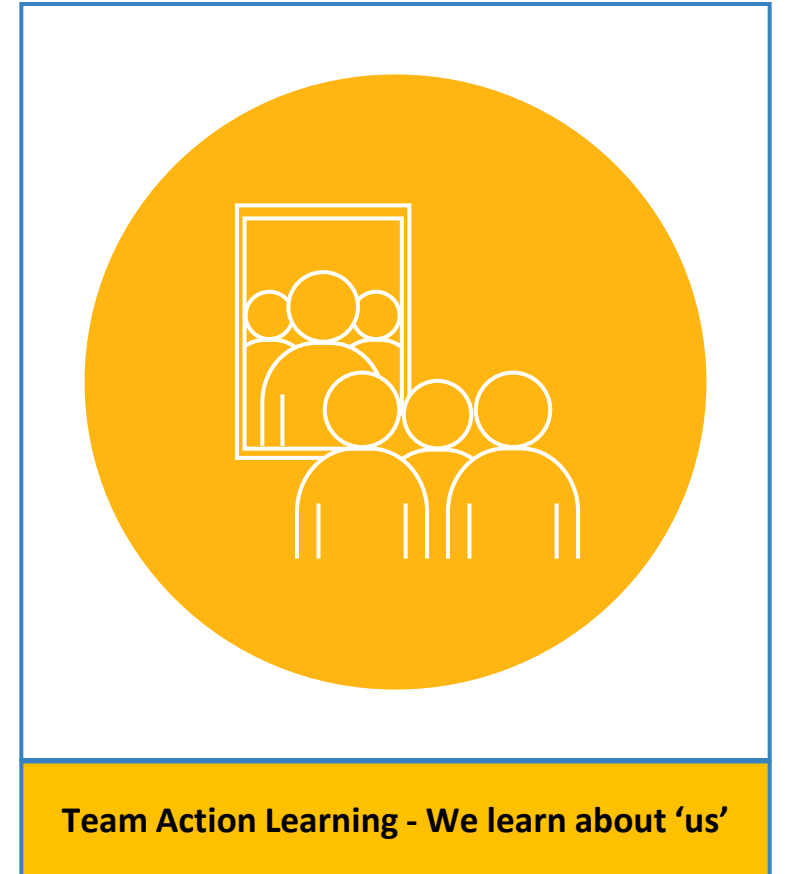
Principal One: Discussions about 'Us' are Transformational



We all learn alone



I share my learning with the team



Team Action Learning - We learn about 'us'

Increasing **impact**

TEAM
UP

Meeting Mediocrity

George Karseras and Team Up

Meeting Effectiveness Drives Delivery Effectiveness



Effective meetings were the single most powerful predictor of team effectiveness ($r=0.418$)

Biggest Complaint About Meetings?

Typical Complaints

- + unclear objectives
- + go off topic too easily
- + hidden agendas/politics
- + slow decision making
- + rushed decision making
- + too many people
- + go on too long
- + talking shops
- + Cliquey, laddish
- + mainly benefit the leader
- + people don't express how they 'really' feel or think
- + 1 or 2 voices dominate
- + dry, unenjoyable, tedious
- + the 'elephants' stay in the room
- + run out of time
- + unnecessary detail
- + end without clarity

The Games Played



Secrecy

Not sharing thoughts or feelings



Passive Aggressive

Leaking instead of sharing thoughts and feelings



Passive Defensive

Agreeing but not following through



Not completing

Starting another trail of thought before completing previous



Distracting

Changing the subject



Keeping it Vague

Not committing to a time frame



Gossiping

Talking about someone not to someone



Pretending

'present' but not present



Ostrich Syndrome

Avoiding a conversation



Deflecting

Making a joke out of something important



Hijacking

Answering the question someone else has been asked or interrupting a conversation already underway

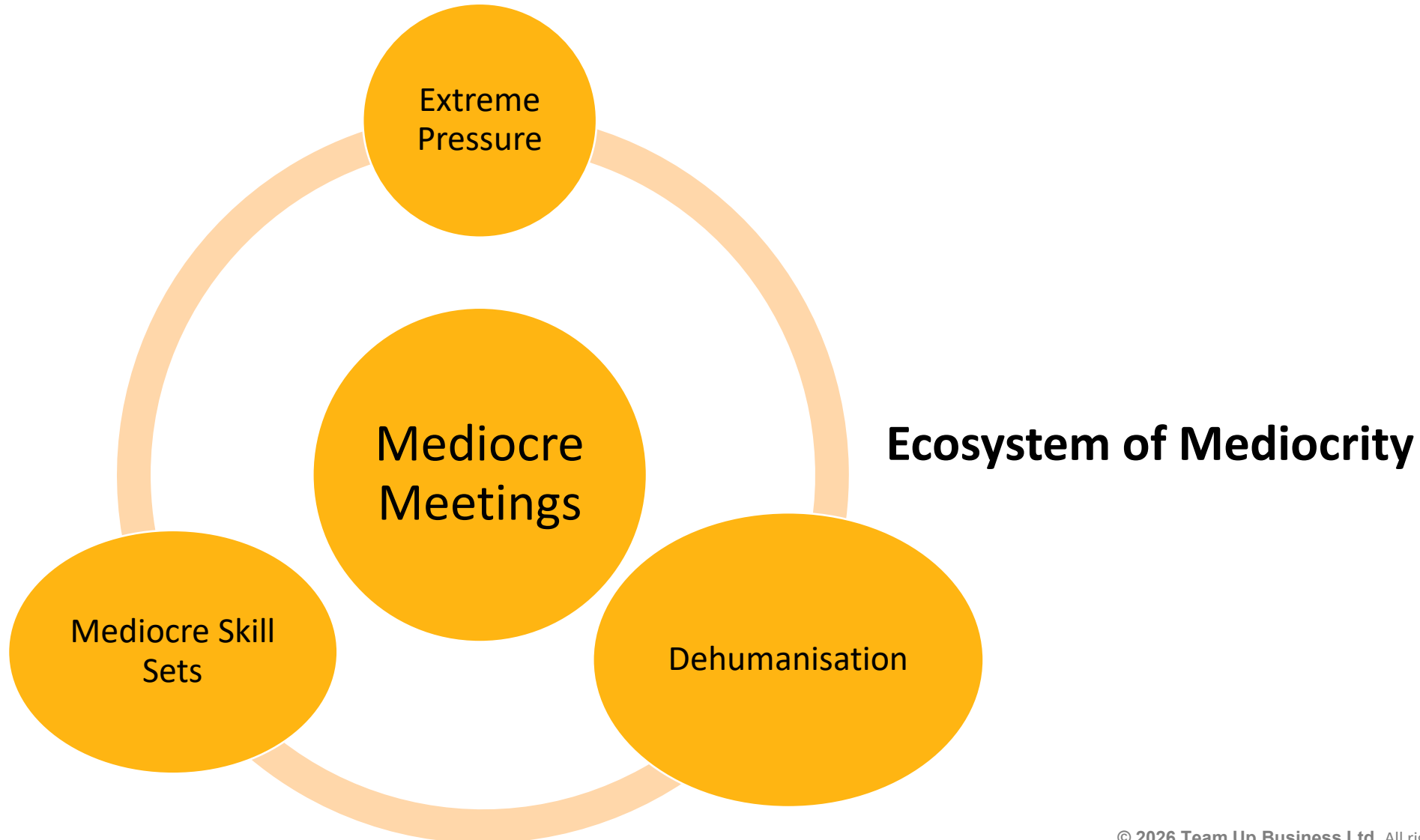


Subterfuge

Revealing your 'truth' then contradicting it.

What methods do you use to improve them?

The Current Reality



Technology

Regulation



**Extreme
Pressure**

Diversity

AI

Individualism



De-Humanisation

**Virtual
Working**

Dehumanisation

'Joy' - 'Connection' - 'Flow'

Or

'Frustration' – 'Isolation' – 'Stress'

... meetings offer us an OPPORTUNITY to be HUMAN

Very High Complexity

Inevitable People Conflict...

Different Interpretations

'The games'

Fragile Egos

Unpredictability of Emotions

Incompetence

Personal Blind-spots

Political Agendas

Inevitable Tensions...

Exploring v Decisive

Autocracy v Consensus

Short Term v Long Term

Structured v free flowing

Compassionate v Forcing

Detailed v big picture

Challenging v Trusting



Mediocre Skill
Sets

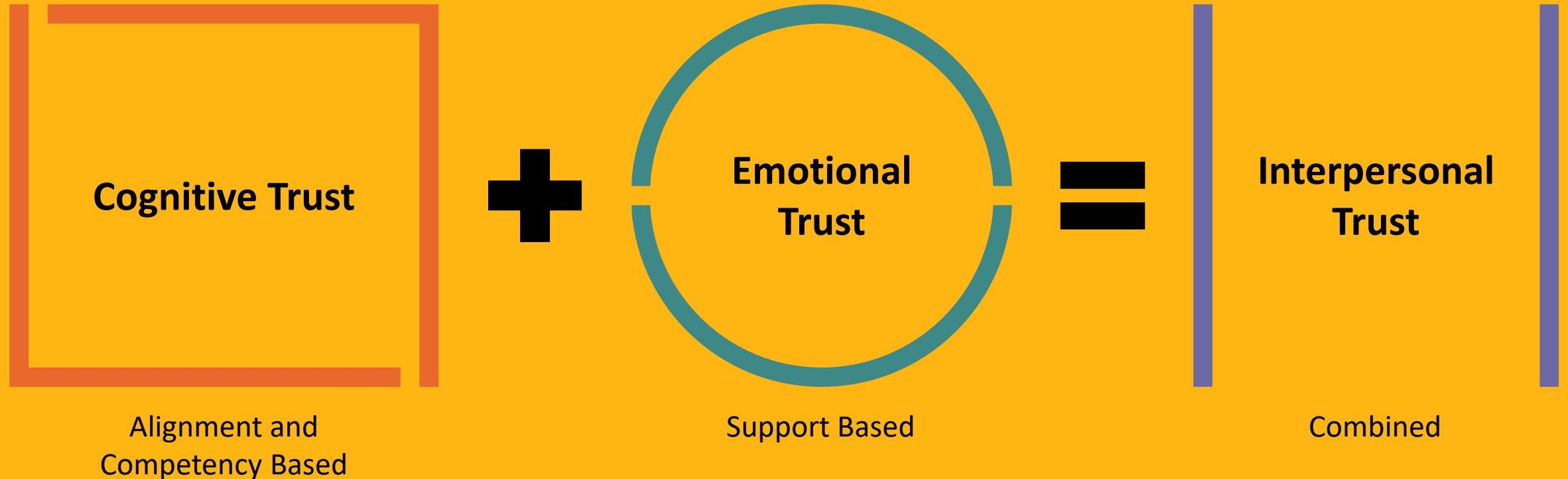
Now to face into this Ecosystem



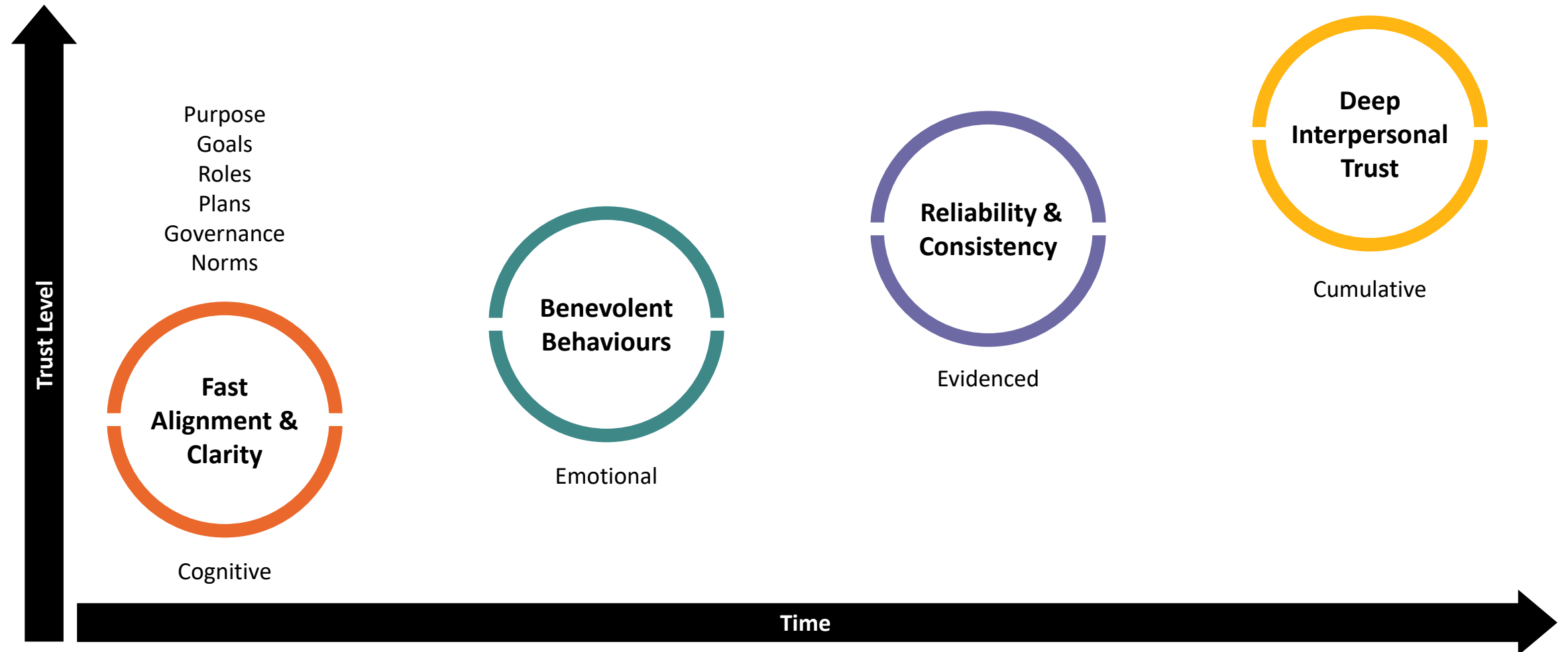
We can learn a lot from Extreme Teams



We found, initially, Cognitive Trust Matters Most...



The Journey of Trust Starts with Alignment and Clarity



The Fast Teaming Formula™ – The Science behind Fast Teaming



1. R^2 numbers reveal the likelihood of predictive validity as they indicate the percentage of the variance in one phase that can be explained by changes in the preceding phase.
2. Data taken from 584 team members in 73 separate teams

The Fast Teaming Formula™ is Endorsed by Teaming Experts



Amy Edmondson

... insightful...refreshingly grounded in the academic research on what makes teams effective... offers leaders a compelling and practical team building 'code' to optimize team performance



Make Meetings Pressure Proof



Complex Skills become more pressure proof when they exist in a 'process'

Disciplines

Habits

Practices

Feedback Routines

Simple processes are easier to:

Recall

Action

Review

Repeat

The answer is to make this complexity simple

Why Not Apply the Fast Teaming Formula™ at Meetings



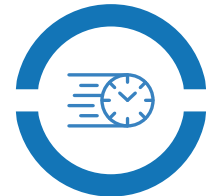
And use the science behind it to transform more than **Meetings**



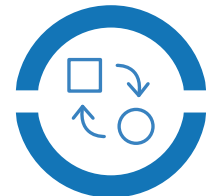
Get Set – Provide Clarity



Get Safe – Build Pysch Safety

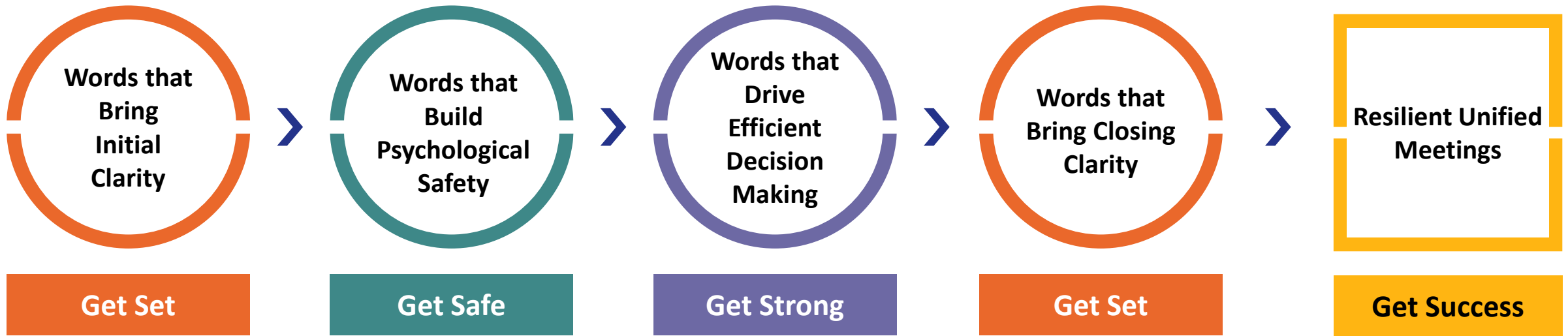


Get Strong – Drive Efficiency



Get Success –Execute Actions

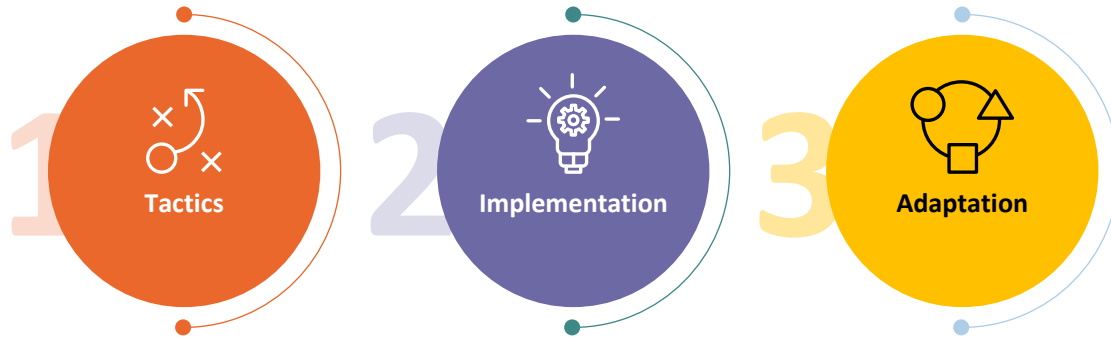
And create this 'verbal' sequence at Meetings?



And transform it into a simple memorable pressure proof process?

Let's start with Simple Metaphor...

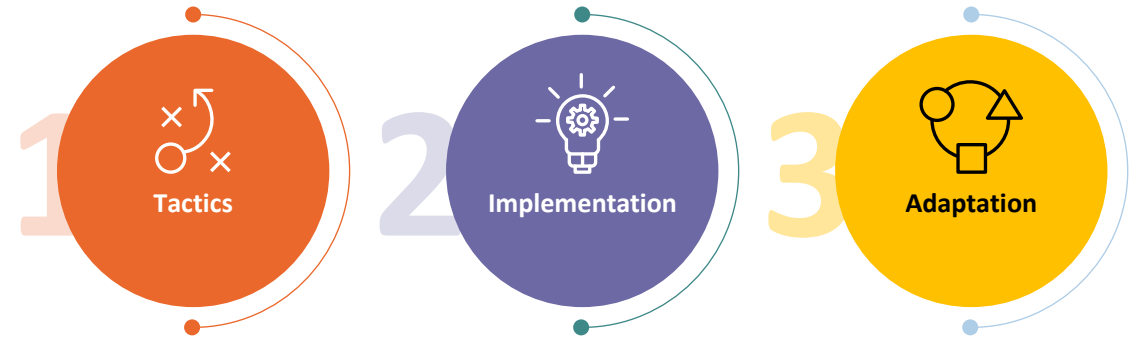
Racing Yachts collaborate to Win



When a **Yacht** enters the Ocean from the Port, the clock immediately starts ticking and the race to win starts

Yachts Win if they are the quickest at Racing Safely to Port

Workers collaborate to Add Value



When **workers** enter a meeting, the clock immediately starts ticking and the race to create value starts

Work Teams Perform Better if they have collaborators who SAFE RACE to PORT

Now let's break this down into 3 key component parts...



PORT

Clear starting point
and end



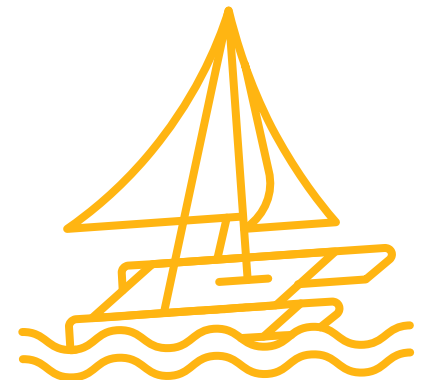
SAFE

Feelings of security



RACE

Making good headway



What is the most important part of a meeting?

'Vehicle'	% Accidents at Start	% Accidents at End
Marine	10-15	30-40
Aeroplane	20	60
Meetings	Cost of Poor Start	Cost of Poor Close
	25-60% of Time Wasted	Additional 200-500% on top of cost of original meeting

We Begin Discussions with PORT

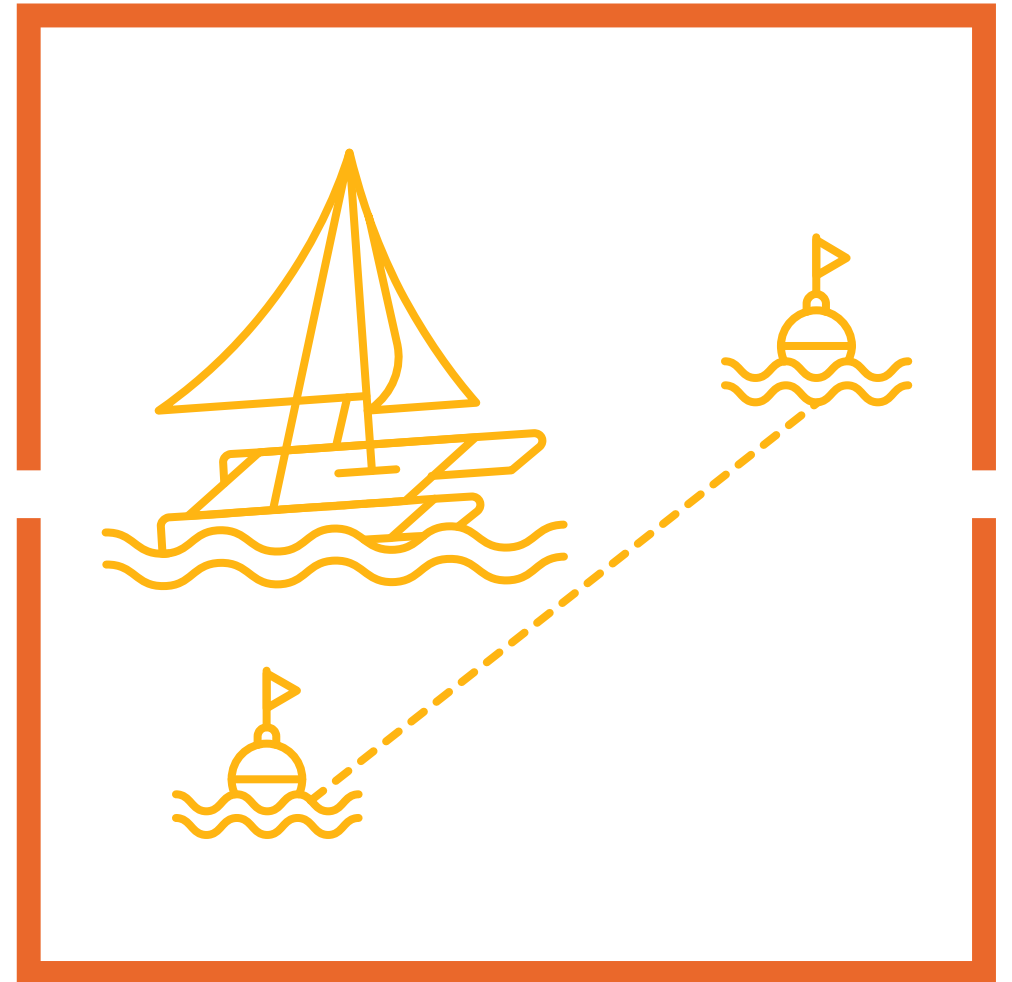
PORT – In
Talking that creates Clarity

P Purpose

O Outcomes

R Responsibilities

T Timings



We End Discussions with PORT

PORT – Out

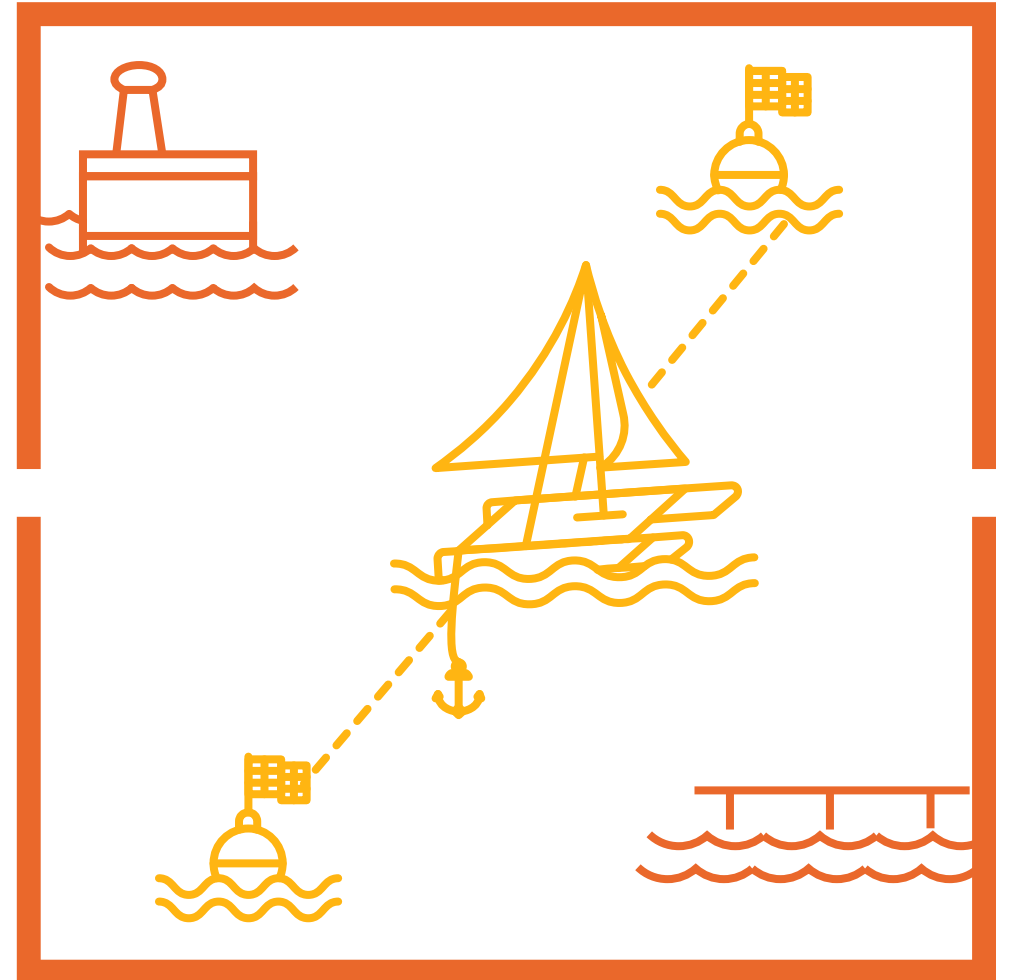
Talking that Concludes with Clarity

P Plan

O Outcomes

R Responsibilities

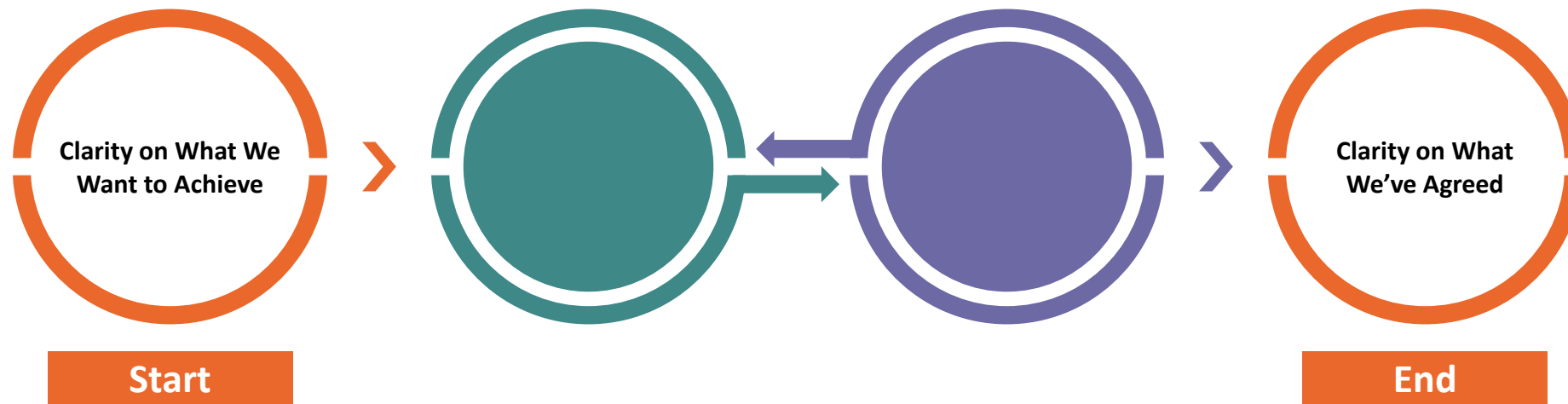
T Timings



So... We PORT 'In and Out' of Discussions

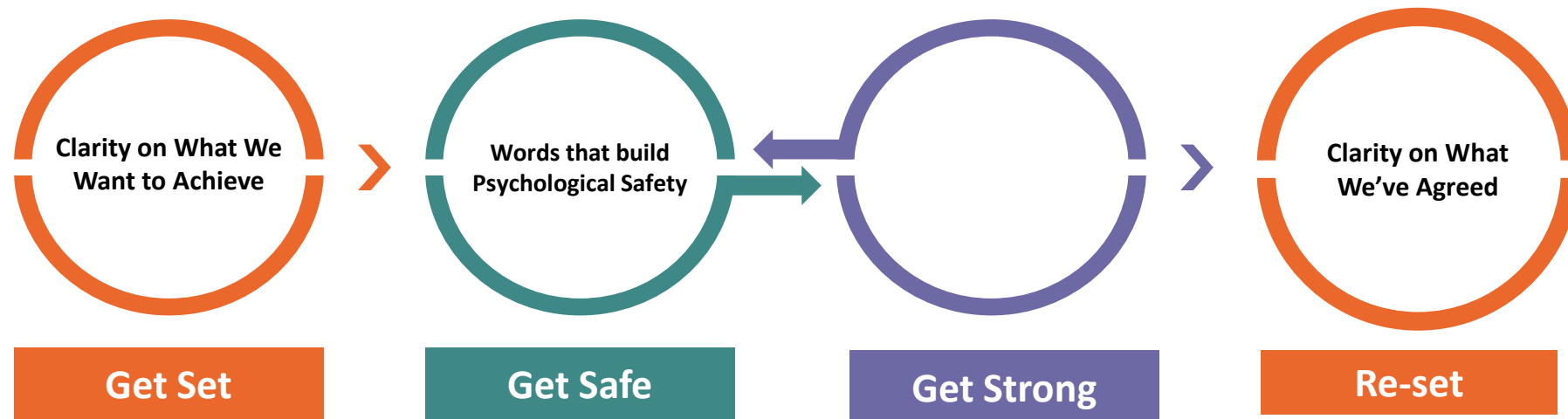


You've 'book ended' the discussion with certainty, creating trust.



How do you get from the start to the finish line as efficiently as possible?

Immediately Create Psychological Safety... Humanity part 1



Psychological Safety

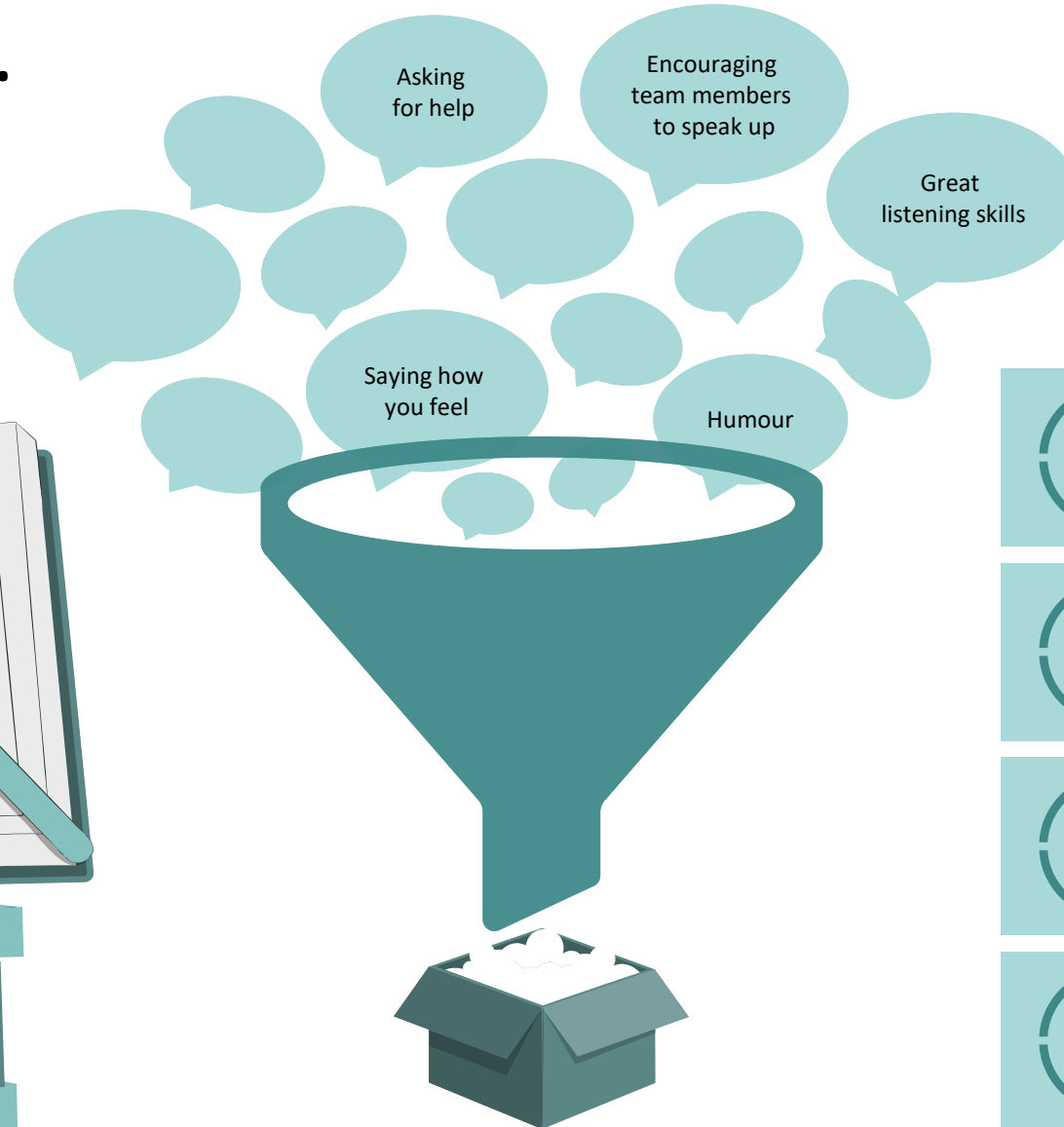
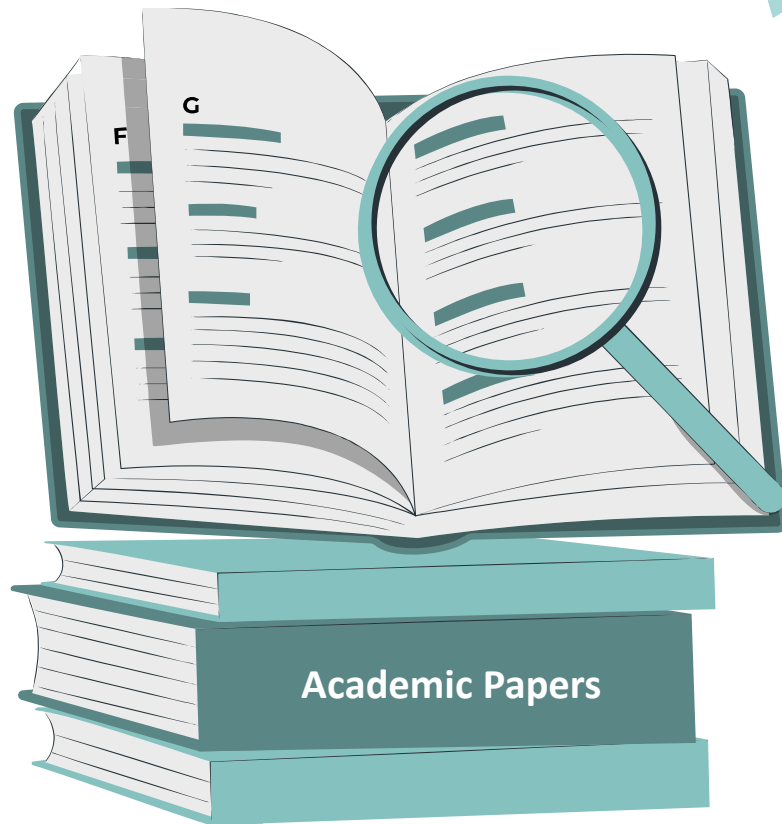
...a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking.

...a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes.

Professor Amy Edmondson Harvard Business School

How do you CREATE psychological safety in a meeting?

Research tells us how...



- S** Share
- A** Ask
- F** Facilitate
- E** Energise

4 Ways to Build Psychological Safety in a Meeting...

SAFE



Share feelings, observations, interpretations and vulnerabilities



Ask questions with an open, enquiring and curious mind

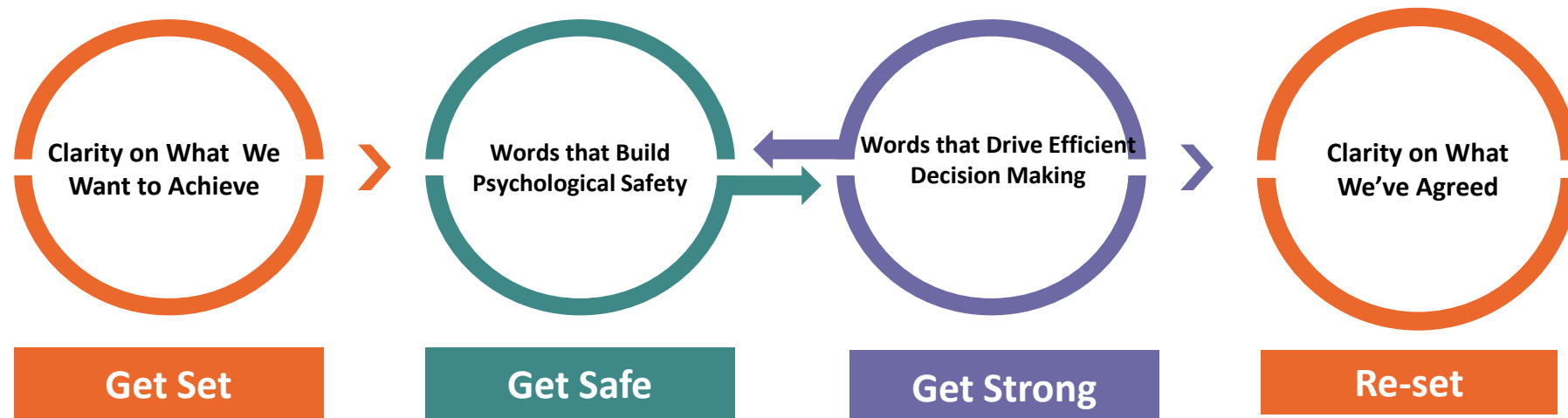


Facilitate by summarising, restating or bringing others in

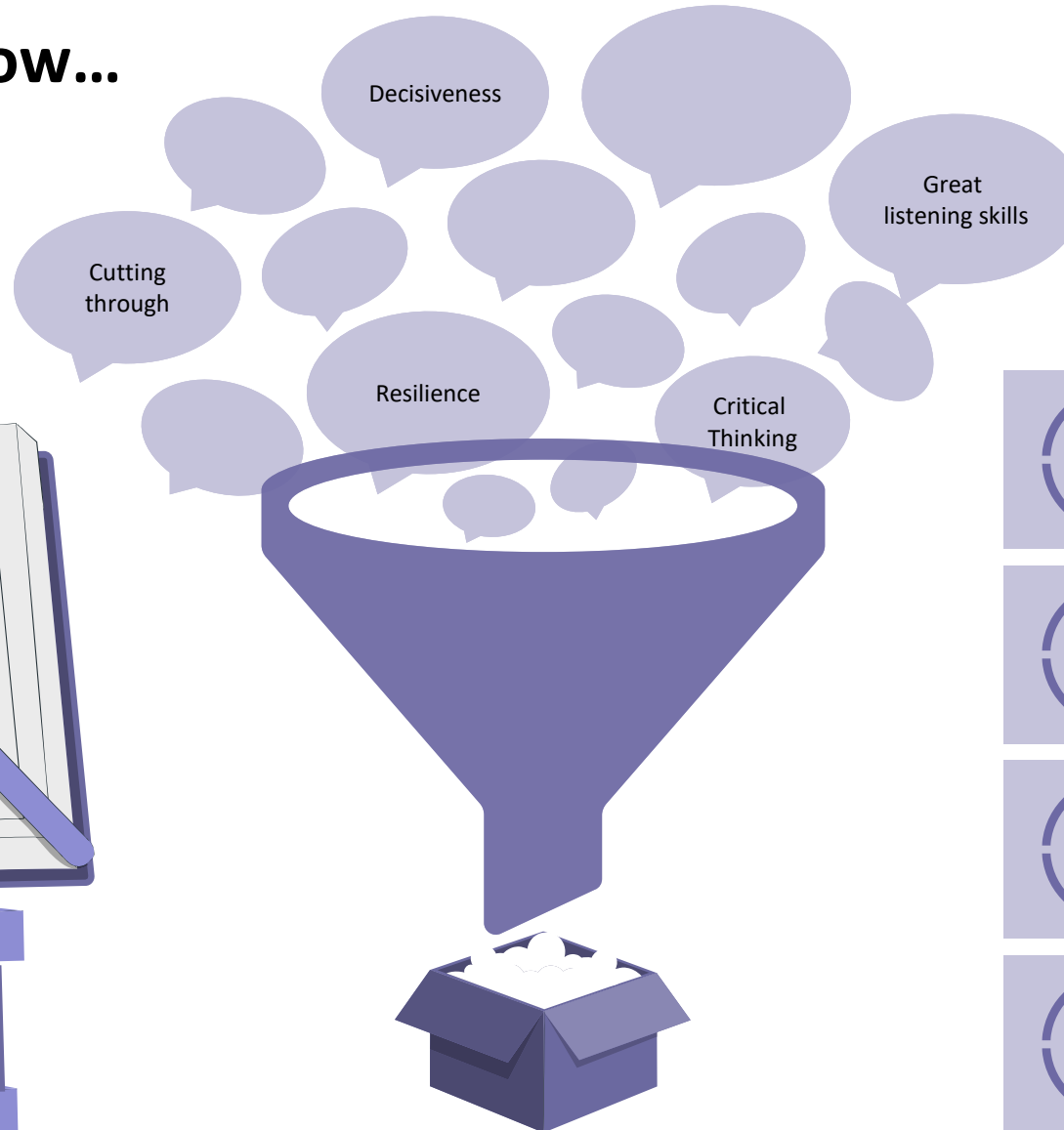
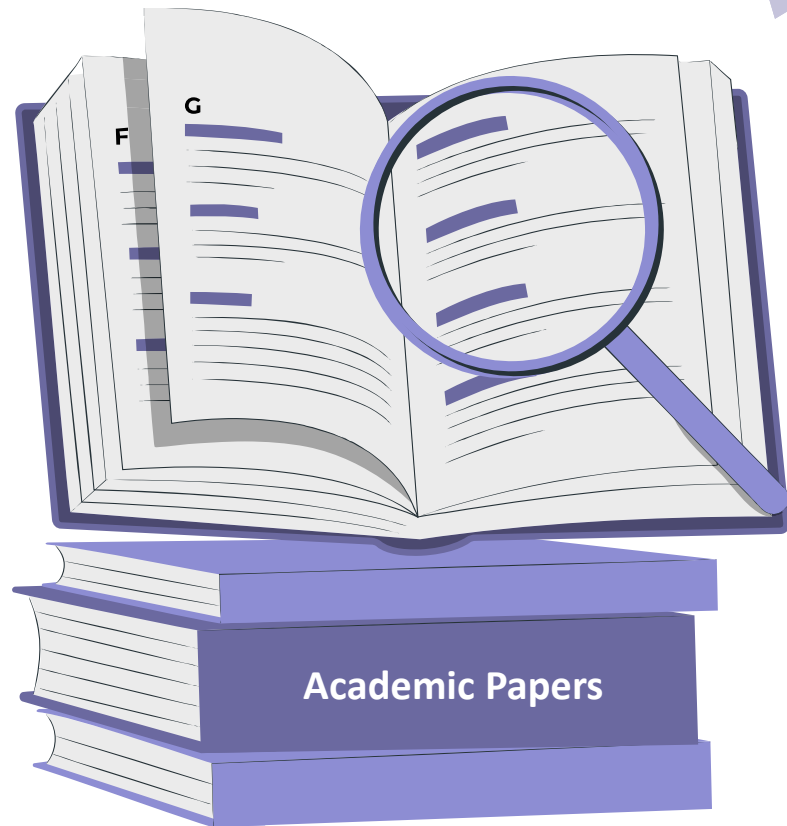


Energise with appreciation, positivity, courtesy and humour

Now... as we know... Use CLARITY and SAFETY to drive EFFICIENCY



The research tells us how...



- R** Resolve
- A** Action
- C** Challenge
- E** Economise

RACE dialogue moves the dial and raises standards

RACE!



Resolve by standing firm and influencing what matters most



Action by initiating or proposing ideas and solutions

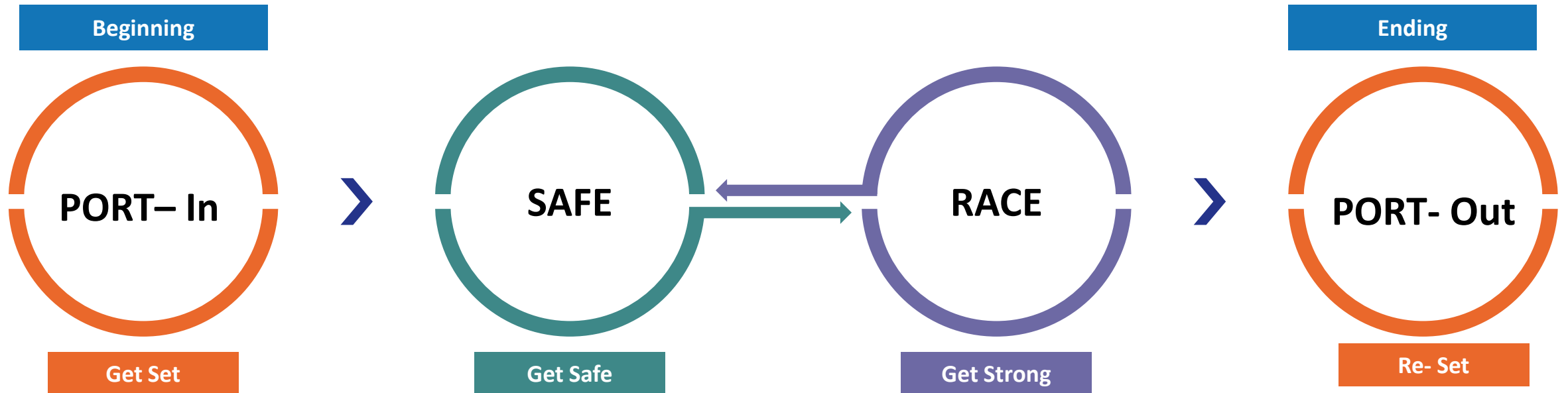


Challenge others thinking and behaviours

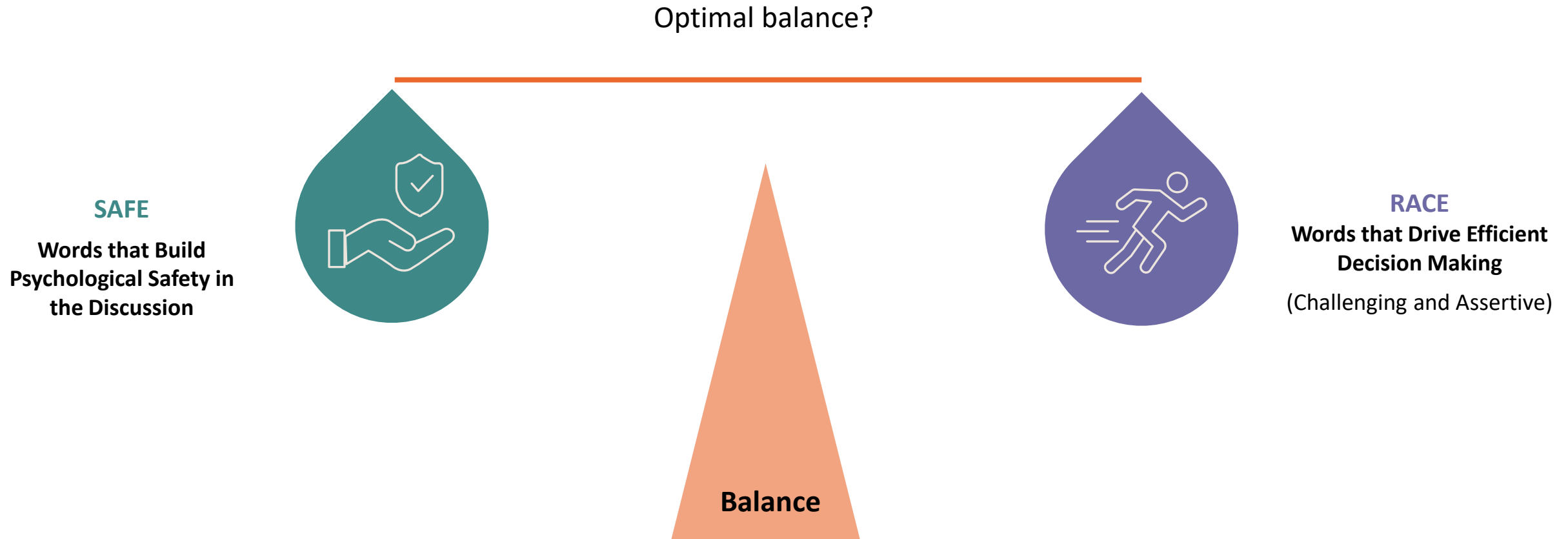


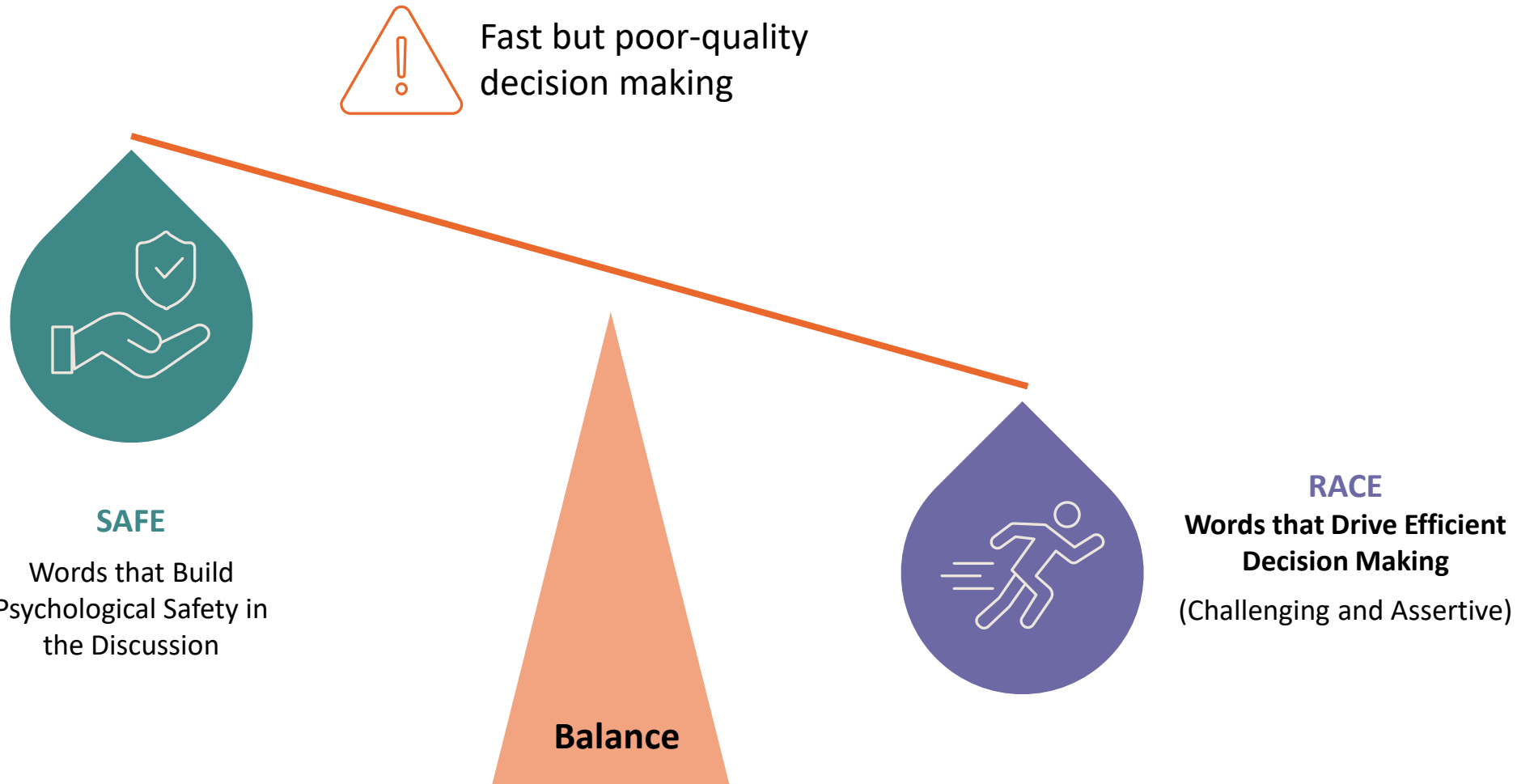
Economise by redirecting conversations back on track

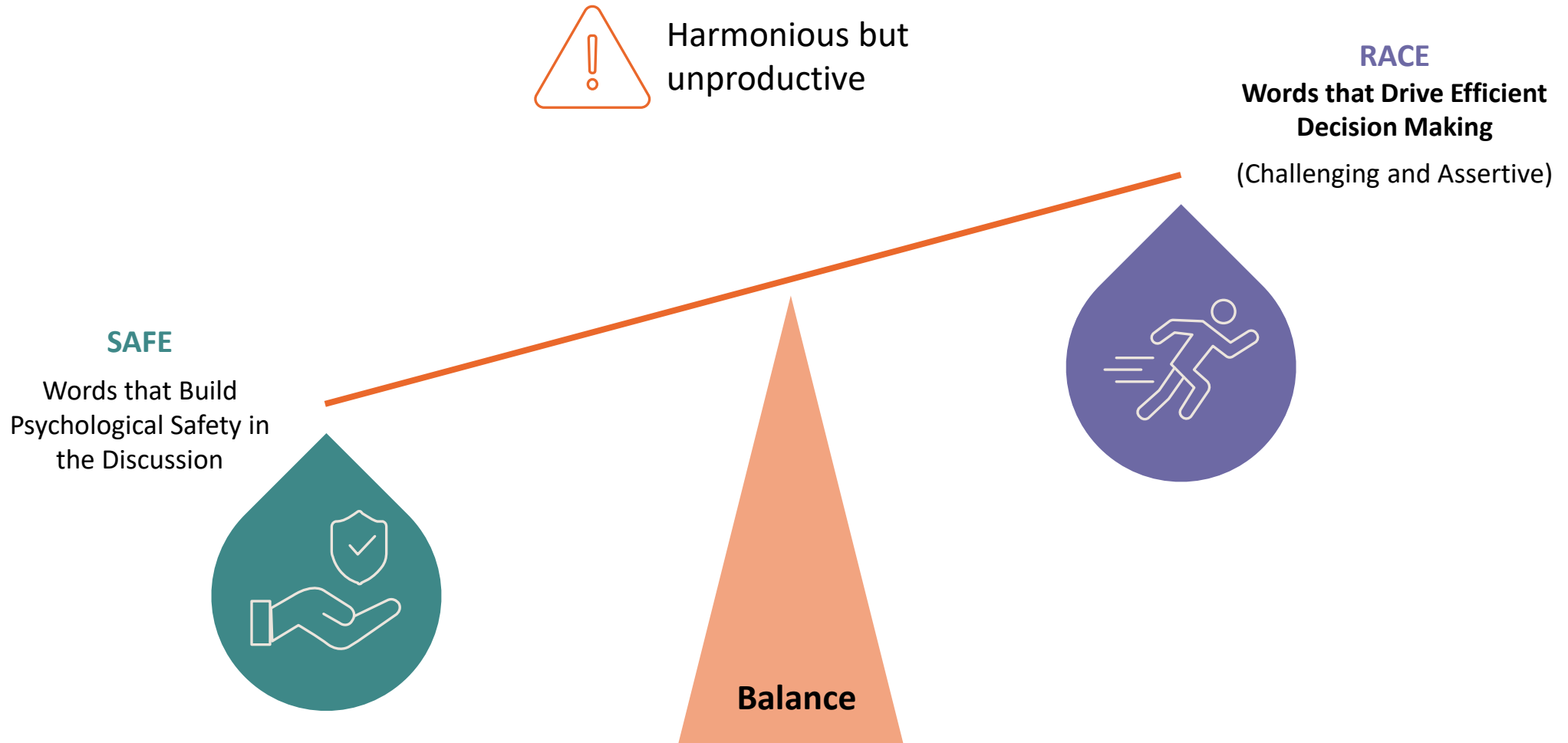
For Effective Meetings: SAFE RACE to PORT



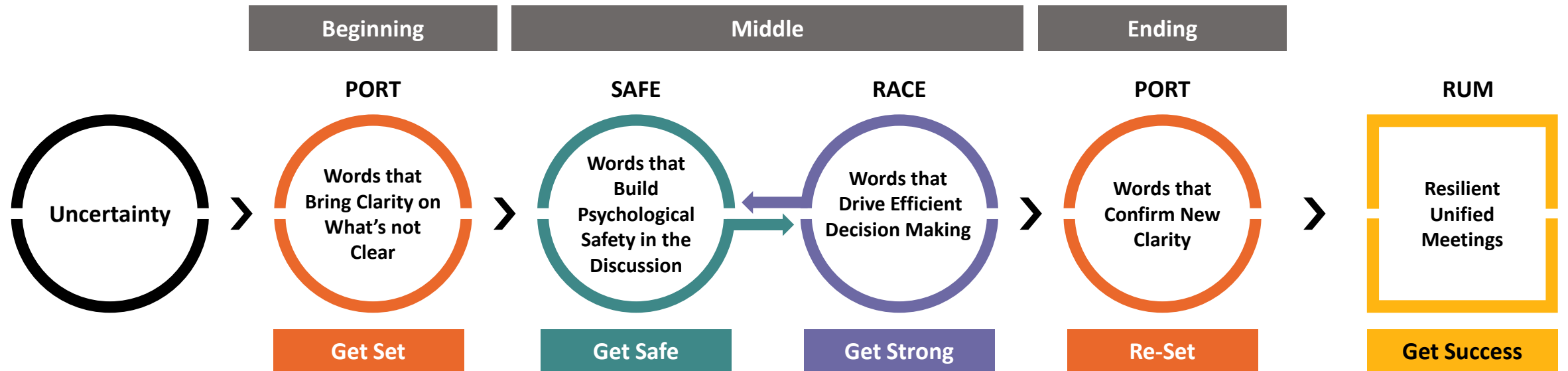
PORT to PORT Efficiency is Determined by a Variable SAFE-RACE Balance







When we RACE SAFE to PORT we deploy the Polaris Formula™

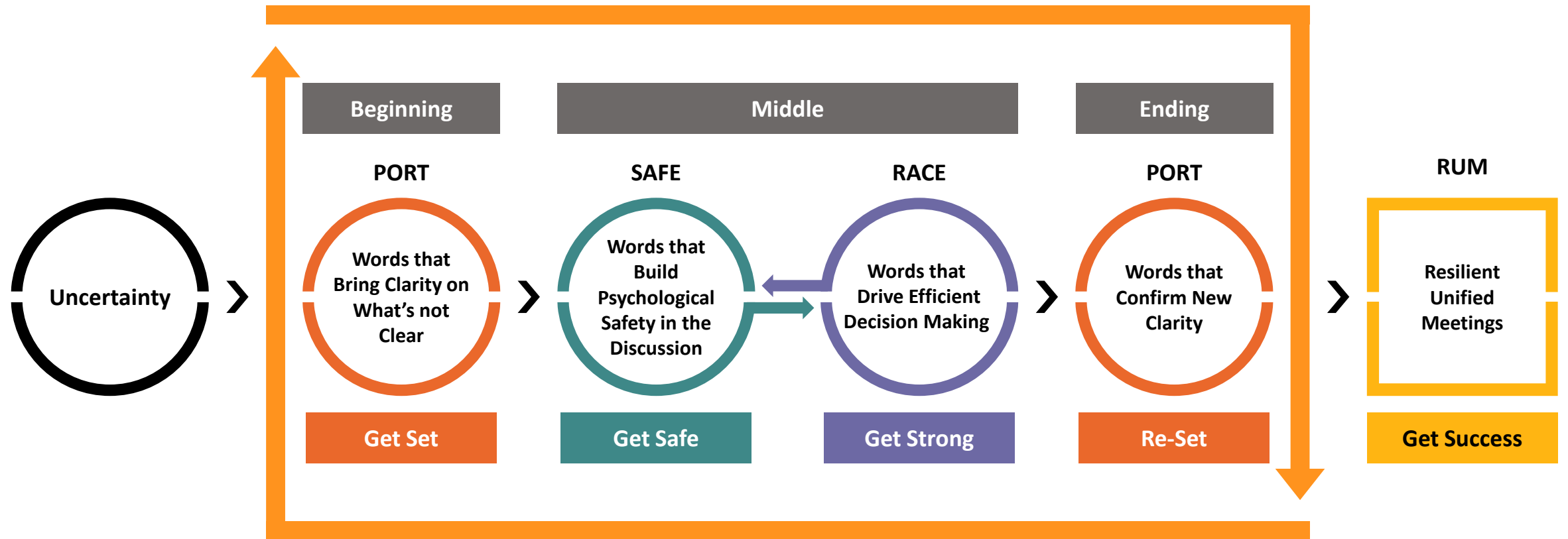


Now we Raise the Humanity Even Higher and Further Pressure Proof It

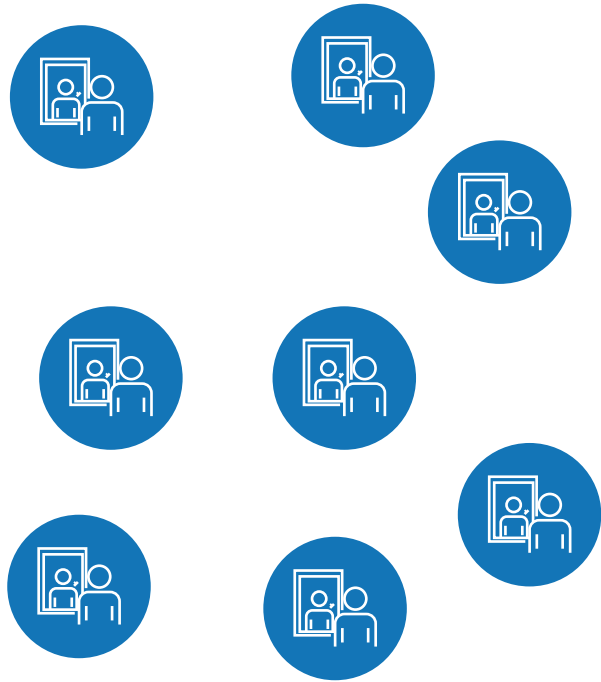


A Polaris MAP Enables the Resilience

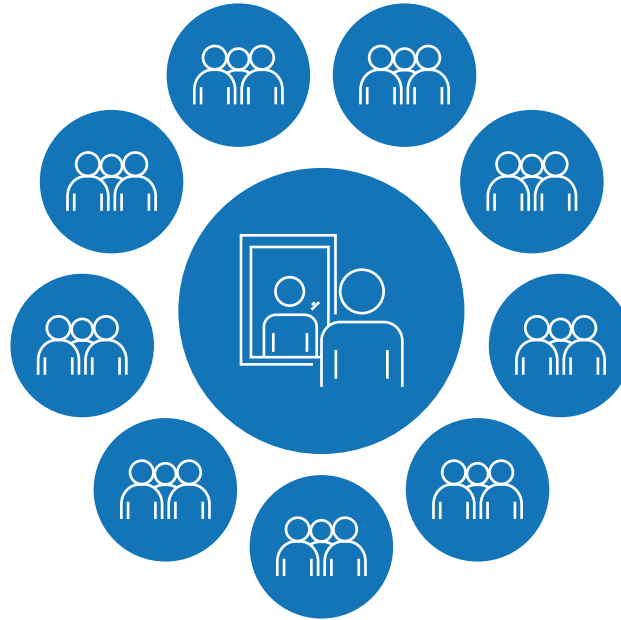
MAP (Mirror – Adjust – Progress)



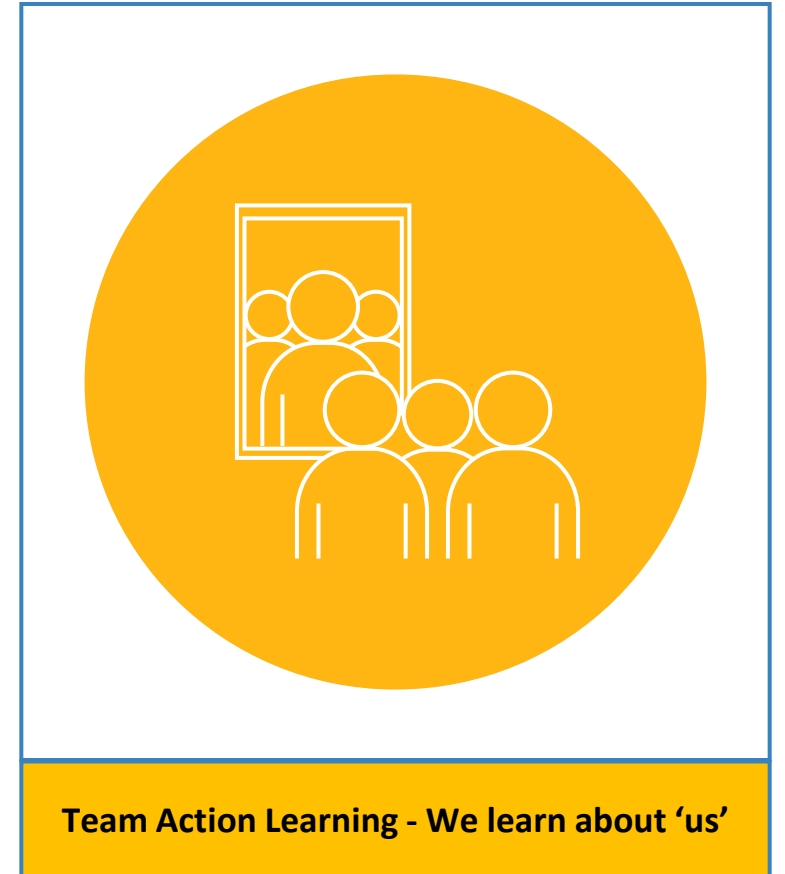
Remember: Discussions about 'Us' Enable us to be Human



We all learn alone



I share my learning with the team



Team Action Learning - We learn about 'us'

Increasing **impact**

The Importance of Team Maintenance

Organisational Teams	Impact of 1 hour a quarter of maintenance
Return on Time Invested (ROTI)	650%
Time Saved	260 hours/ year
Value <i>(based on just 5 hours of meetings between 8 team members costing org £250K/year)</i>	£57,720/year

MAPs Improve all 3...

Pressure
Proof

Execution under pressure

Bouncing
Back

Recovering when things don't go so well

Adapting
Over Time

Learning from experience

MAPS Endorse Humanity



Mirror

Trust



Adjust

Trust



Progress

Trust

Polaris MAP Cheat Sheet

Enter PORT	R	A	G
Purpose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

RAG Review

Exit PORT	R	A	G
Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outcome	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Timings	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

SAFE



Share (thoughts, feelings, vulnerabilities)



Ask (questions to clarify or with curiosity and open mind)



Facilitate (invite others in, paraphrase or summarise)



Energy (positivity, humour, courtesy, humility)

RACE



Resolve (stand behind what matters & Influence to protect it)



Action (propose solutions, ideas, help or a route forward)



Challenge (thinking, work standards, norms or behaviours)



Economical (redirect to exam question, tune into the clock)

What I noticed.. What I thought about what I've noticed... how I felt when it happened

Brief Polaris MAP – 5-10 Mins Monthly

- 1 **Select** an existing agenda item
- 2 **Scan** the Prompt Sheet for 30 seconds
- 3 Hold the **discussion**
- 4 The Team **collectively reviews**
 1. PORTs
 2. SAFE and RACEAnd a **few team** members use ‘See Imagine Feel’ to make the contact
- 5 **Commit** to improve 1 area next time

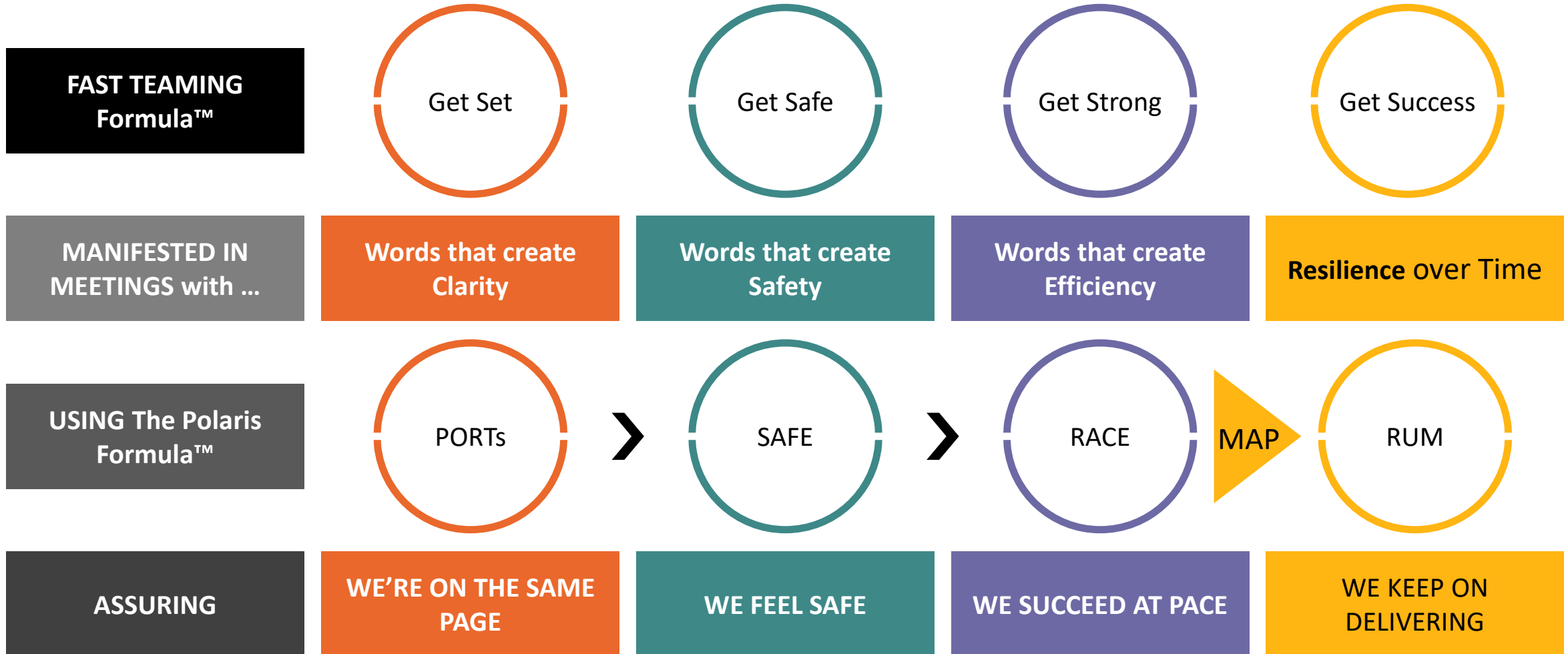
In Depth Polaris MAP- 45 Minutes (Qtrly)

- 1 **Select** an existing agenda item.
- 2 **Scan** the Polaris prompt sheet for 30 seconds
- 3 Hold the **discussion**
Use the Prompt Sheet to review
 1. PORTs
 2. SAFE and RACE
- 4 **all team members** use the ‘See Imagine Feel’ with other team members on SAFE and RACE and to make the contact
- 5 **Commit** to improve 1 area next time

At least 5-10 minutes monthly

What I **noticed**.. What I **thought about** it... how I **felt** when it happened


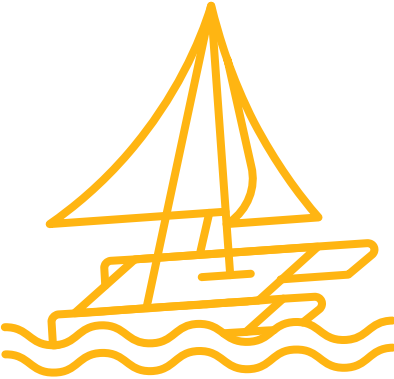
Work It – It's Worth it – it Works.



It's time we all Faced into this Ecosystem



The Polaris Formula™



PORT
Clear starting point
and end



SAFE
Feelings of security



RACE
Making good
headway



MAPs
Build Resilience



RUM
Resilient Unified
Meetings

Protection of Intellectual Capital

- + The Fast Teaming Playbook® is a proprietary strategy execution improving tool created by Team Up to speed up and improve execution and adaptability, whilst simultaneously increasing trust.
- + Permission is given for those trained by Team Up to use these materials with those with who they have been trained, however, you are forbidden to share, forward or distribute any part of this document with anybody else inside or outside your organisation, without the express, written permission of George Karseras of Team-Up.
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George Karseras

Founder Team-Up

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