Meetings and Conflict

SOFPM

Meetings

When your organization reaches the size where meetings are necessary in order to work on projects and to create quality communication, you will quickly learn to hate group meetings if you don't manage them very carefully.

EntreLeadership
Dave Ramsey

Meetings

According to an article in MIT's Sloan Management Review, the average executive spends **23 hours a week** in meetings.

Source: Inc.com

Three Types of Meetings

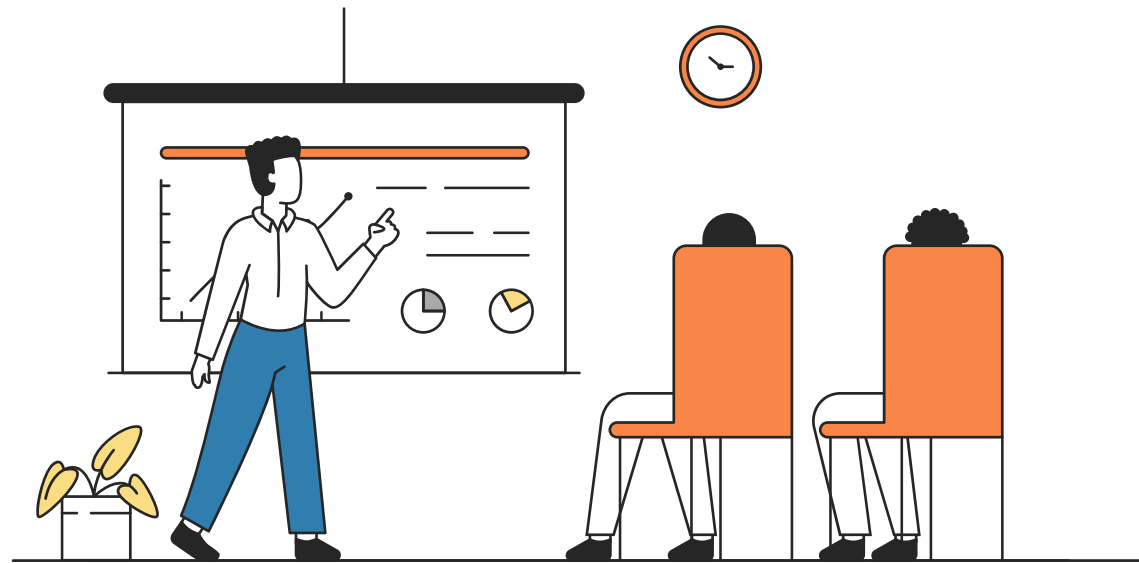Get the results you seek

Information Exchange

Brainstorming

Decision Making

Information Exchange

Status Reports

Progress Updates

Strategy Sync

Usually one person presenting to a group.
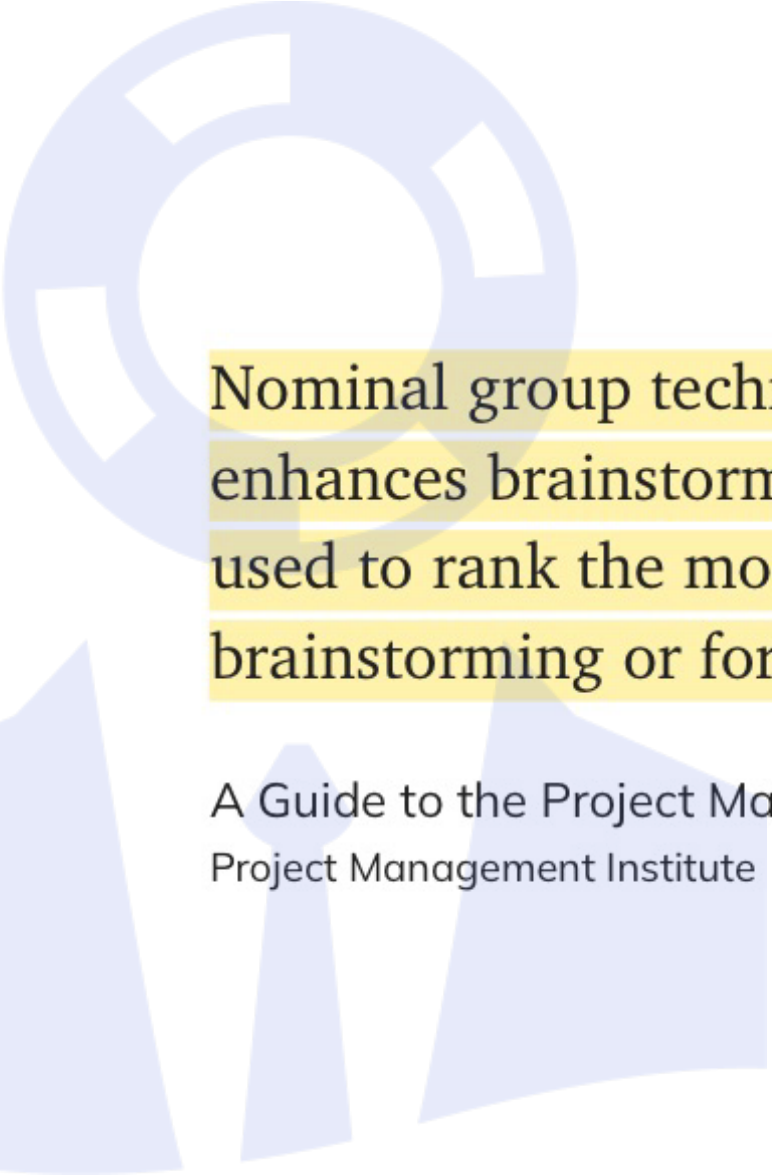
BrainStorming

Ideating

Problem Solving

Innovation efforts

Usually a group effort.

Nominal group technique. A technique that enhances brainstorming with a voting process used to rank the most useful ideas for further brainstorming or for prioritization.

A Guide to the Project Management Body of K...
Project Management Institute

Decision Making

Course of Action Approvals

Project approvals and authorizations

Approvals for change efforts or defect repairs

Success depends on ensuring the decision maker is armed with enough information to make a decision.

Purpose

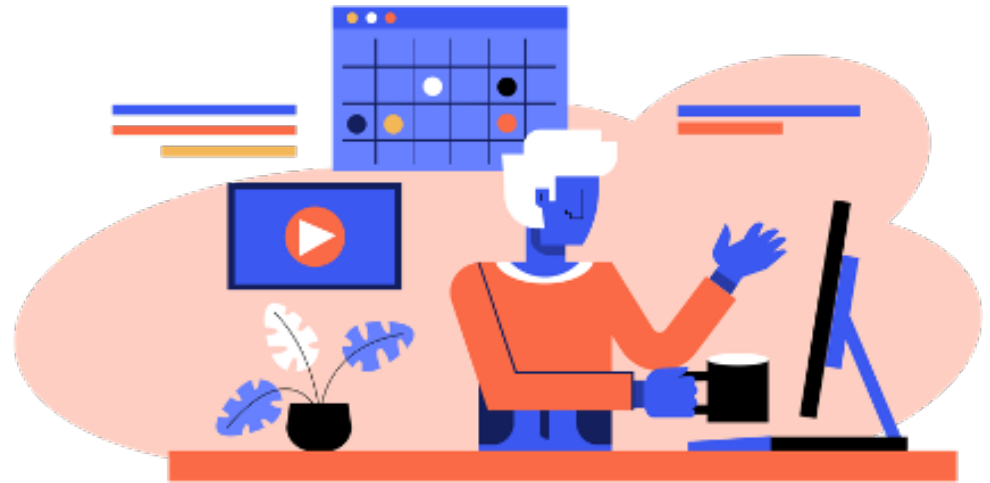The "WHY" of the meeting.

Meeting Agendas

Must have:

What, who, how long

Outcomes - outputs
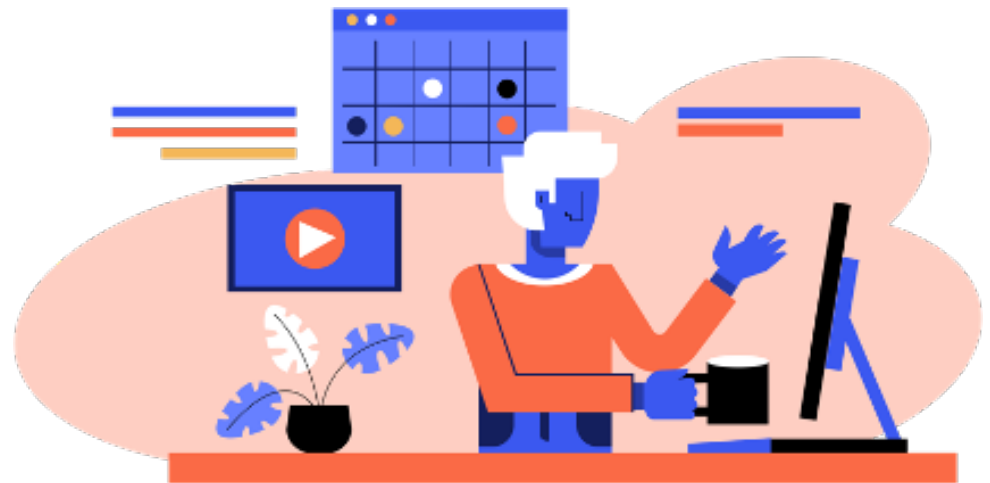
Objectives

Appropriate stakeholders

How will we measure success?

"Agenda Theater"

Focus Your Meetings on Outcomes

Focus on what you hope to achieve in this meeting

Other Considerations

Risks – what could possibly go right / wrong?

Resources – have a plan

Location – what makes the most sense?

Scope – what are we NOT talking about?

End meeting with *SMART* action items.

Where we meet

Accessible

Natural light / fresh air

Comfortable facilities

Regular (catered) breaks

Encourage movement

How we meet

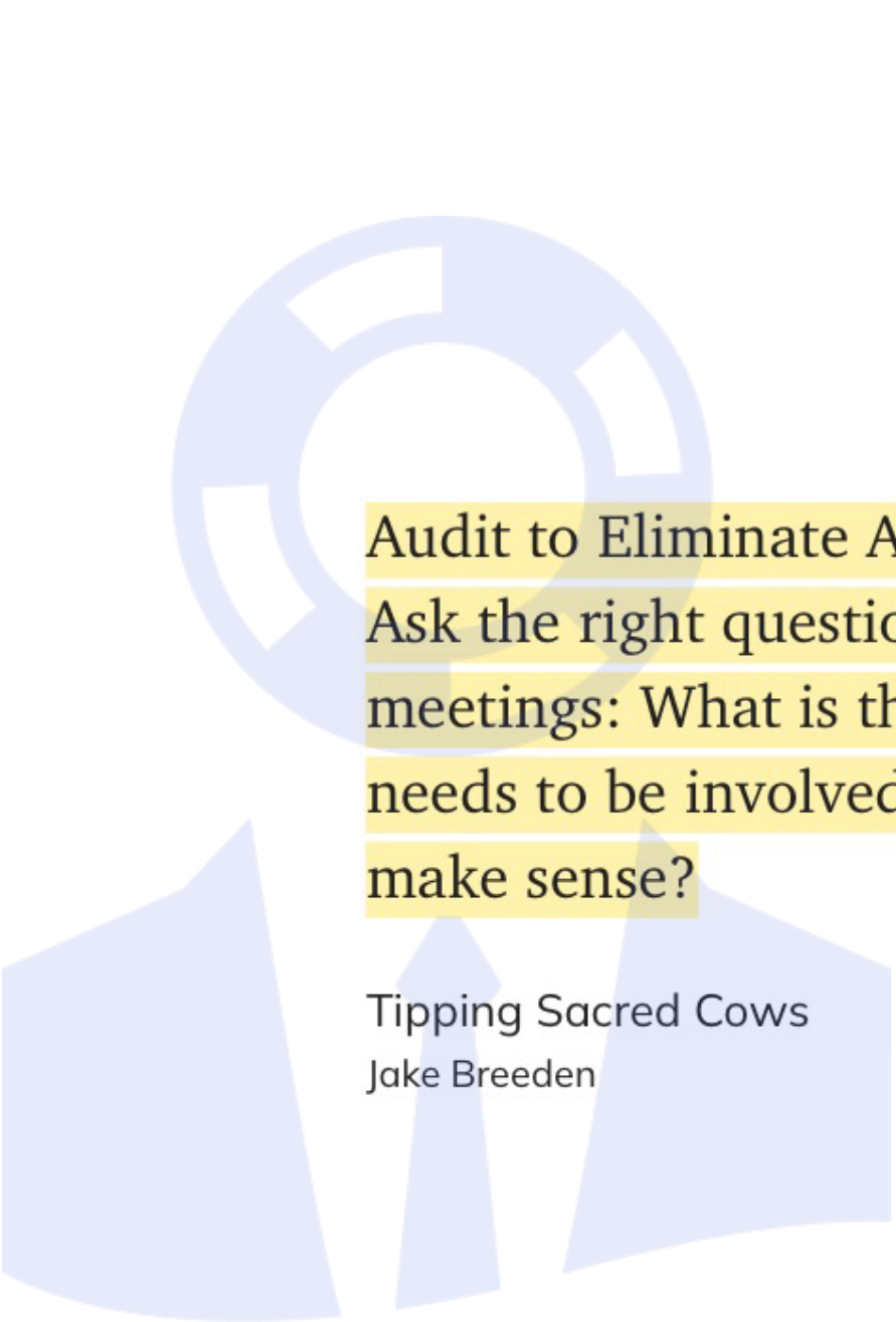**Set ground rules (especially for usage of technology)**

Encourage participation

Manage etiquette / conflict

Visibly record meeting

Summarize & share results: "The Scribe"

Audit to Eliminate Automatic Collaboration. Ask the right questions about teams and meetings: What is the purpose? Who really needs to be involved? Does this team still make sense?

Tipping Sacred Cows

Jake Breeden

Informal Meeting: Scrum

What did I do yesterday (or since we last met)?

What will I do today (or until we next meet)?

What is in my way (issues / blockers/ risks)

The DOL Scrum Approach

Use this to ensure project success

Past

What has transpired since the last sync?

Future

What do they hope to accomplish before the next sync?

Blockers

ANYTHING that will prevent them from achieving their FUTURE goals.

Formal Meeting

Agenda

Welcome

Attendance / apologies

Minutes of the previous meeting

Business of the meeting

Agenda item 1

Agenda item 2

Agenda item 3...

Other business

Due outs/ action items
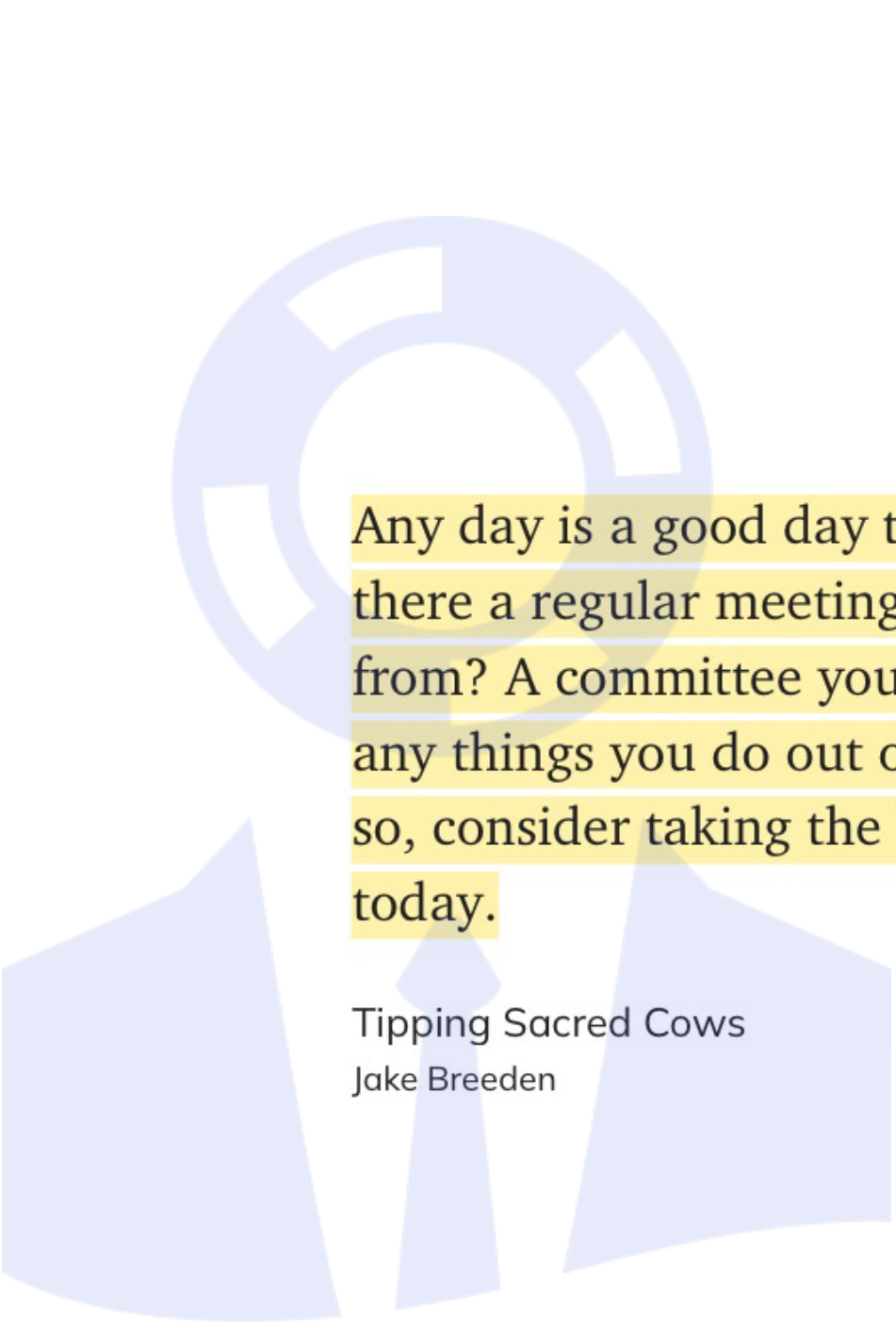
Next meeting time & date

VIRTUAL MEETING SUCCESS

Remote work isn't going away.

Be Specific As To the WHY

Ensure the meeting is necessary and stay on time.

Omit Unnecessary Participants

Any day is a good day to make a stop doing list. Is there a regular meeting you can excuse yourself from? A committee you can drop out of? Are there any things you do out of a sense of fear or guilt? If so, consider taking the bold risk to stop doing them today.

Tipping Sacred Cows

Jake Breeden

Active Facilitation

Active Facilitation:

Gentle intervention

Persuasive intervention

Directive intervention

Active Listening

Active Listening:

Stop

Observe

Go

Groupthink

SOFPM

Groupthink

Groupthink occurs within a group of people when the desire for harmony or conformity in the group results in
an irrational or dysfunctional decision-making outcome.

Groupthink

Beware of:

Cascade effects
Polarization
"Common knowledge"

"None of us is as dumb as all of us" –Mark Kelly, NASA
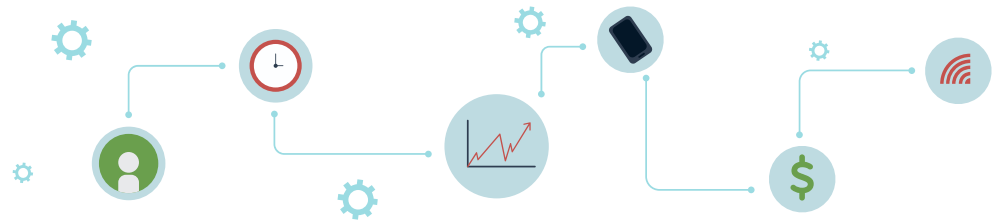
Preventing Groupthink

Expect groupthink

Engage **diverse** groups

Engage outsiders / experts

Define group values

Allow ample **time**

Managing Groupthink

Don't shoot the messenger

Consider alternatives

Challenge assumptions

Manage conflict

Appoint a devil's advocate
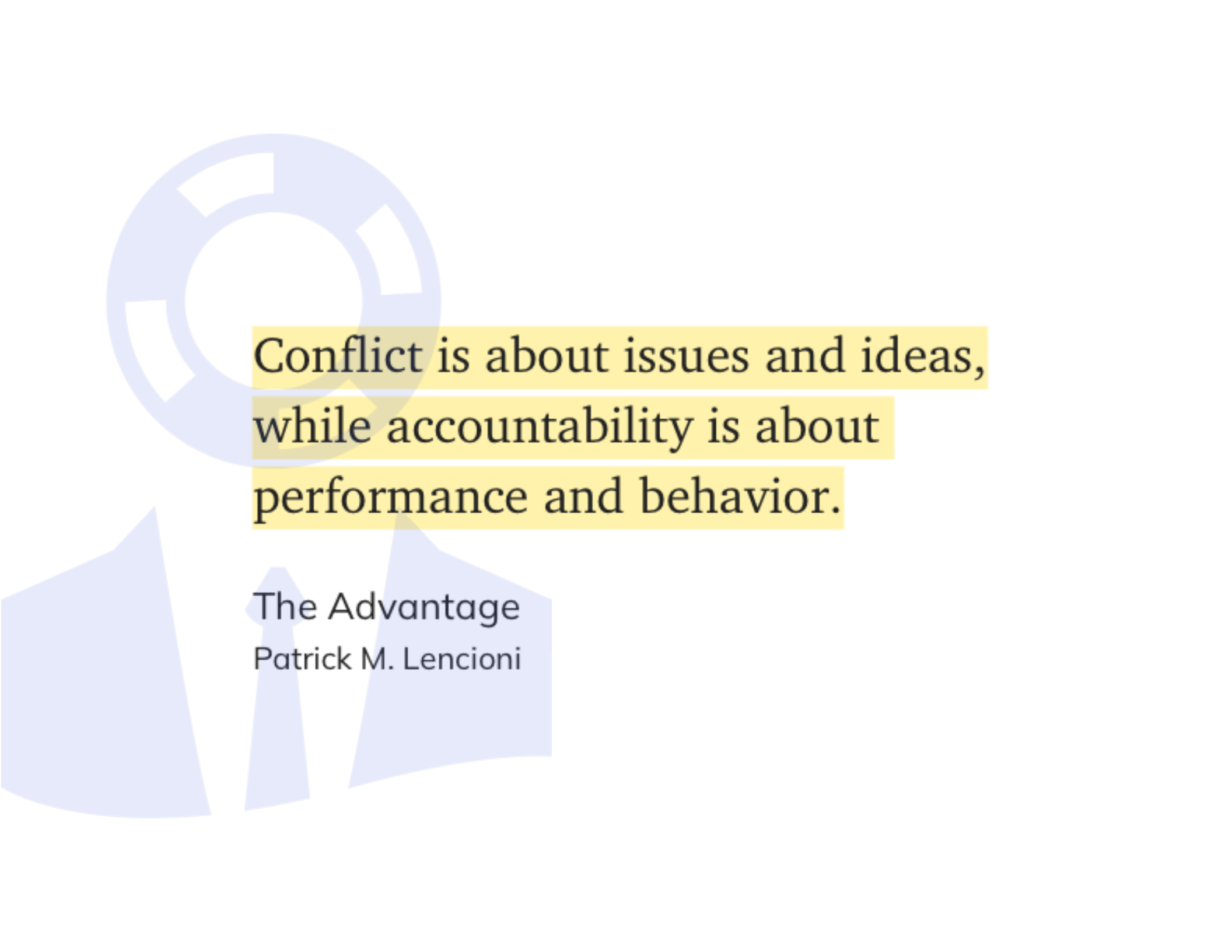
Speak last

Test decisions outside the group

Project Conflict

SOFPM

Conflict is about issues and ideas, while accountability is about performance and behavior.

The Advantage
Patrick M. Lencioni

When is conflict ok?

Finding project inefficiencies

Understanding team member concerns

Generating new ideas

And more...

Some sources of conflict within project teams:

Divided loyalties (matrix organizations)

Scarcity of resources

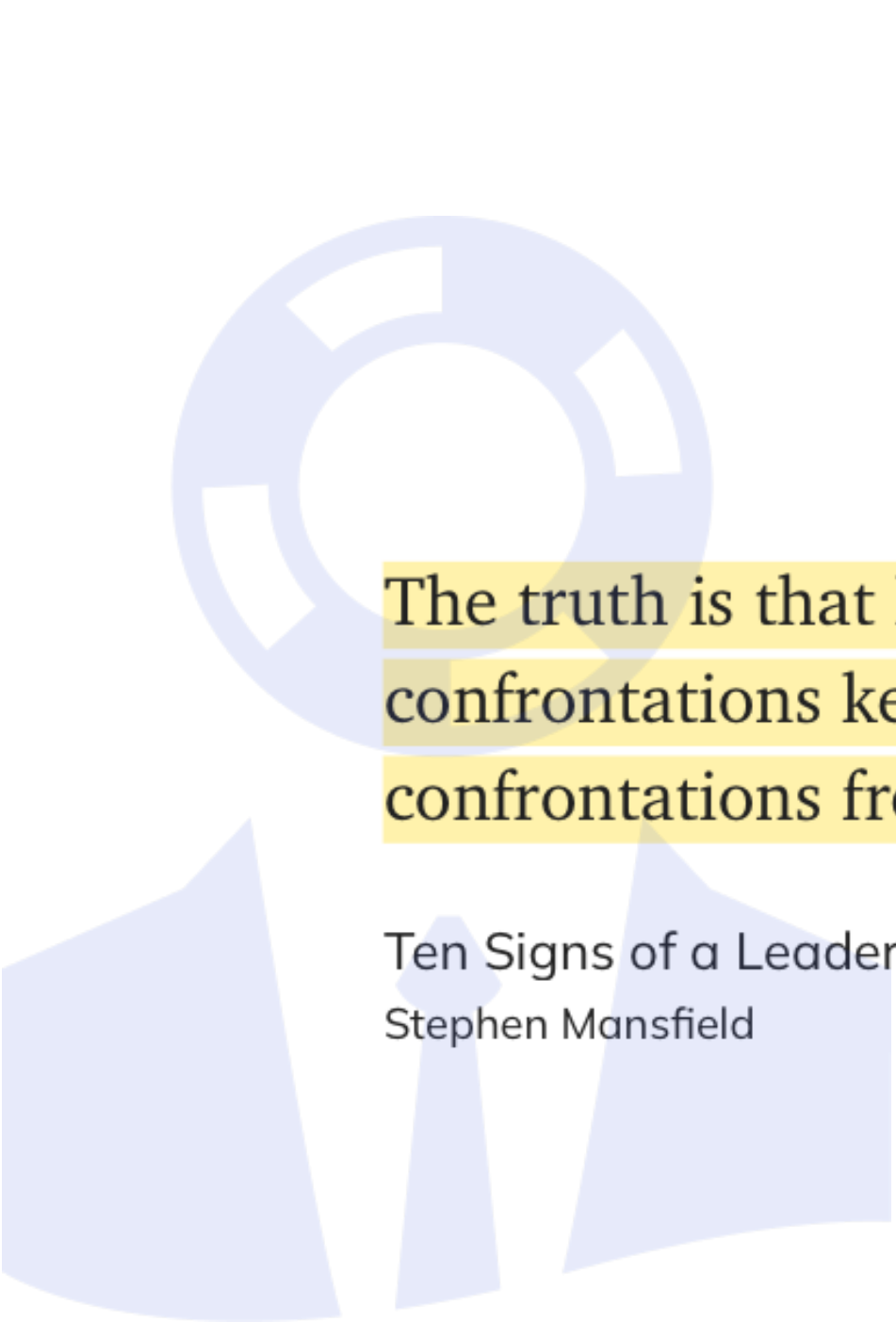Prioritization of scheduled tasks

Personal work styles

Poor **communication**

Lack of openness and **honesty**
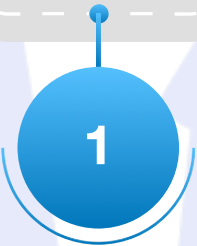
Failure to address commitments

The truth is that low-level confrontations keep the big confrontations from being necessary.

Ten Signs of a Leadership Crash
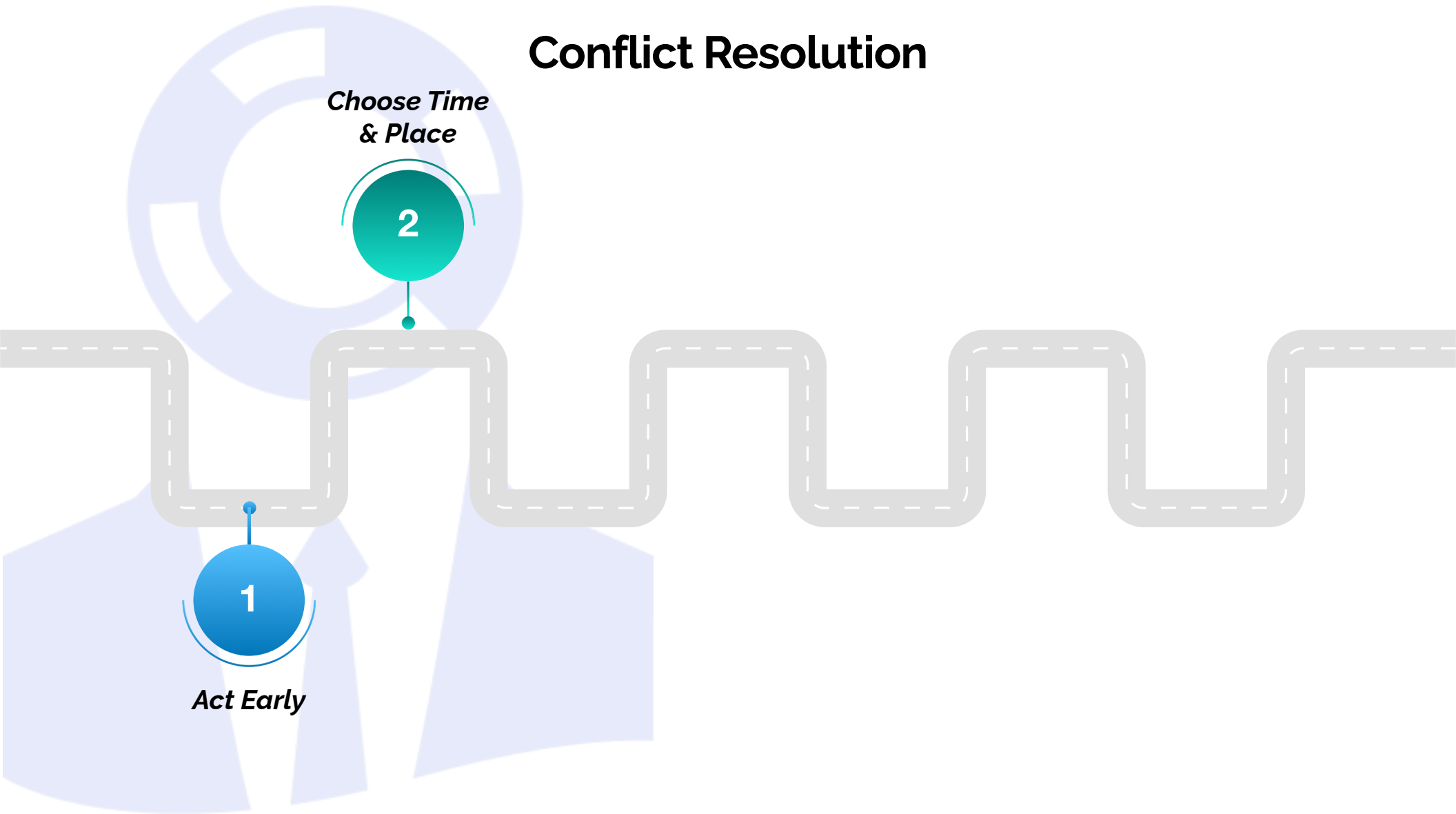Stephen Mansfield

Conflict Resolution

1

Act Early

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

2

1

Act Early

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

2

1

Act Early

3

Agree on the problem

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

2

Differentiate wants & needs

4

1

Act Early

3

Agree on the problem

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

2

Differentiate wants & needs

4

1

Act Early

3

Agree on the problem

5

Provide an open And fair hearing

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

2

Differentiate wants & needs
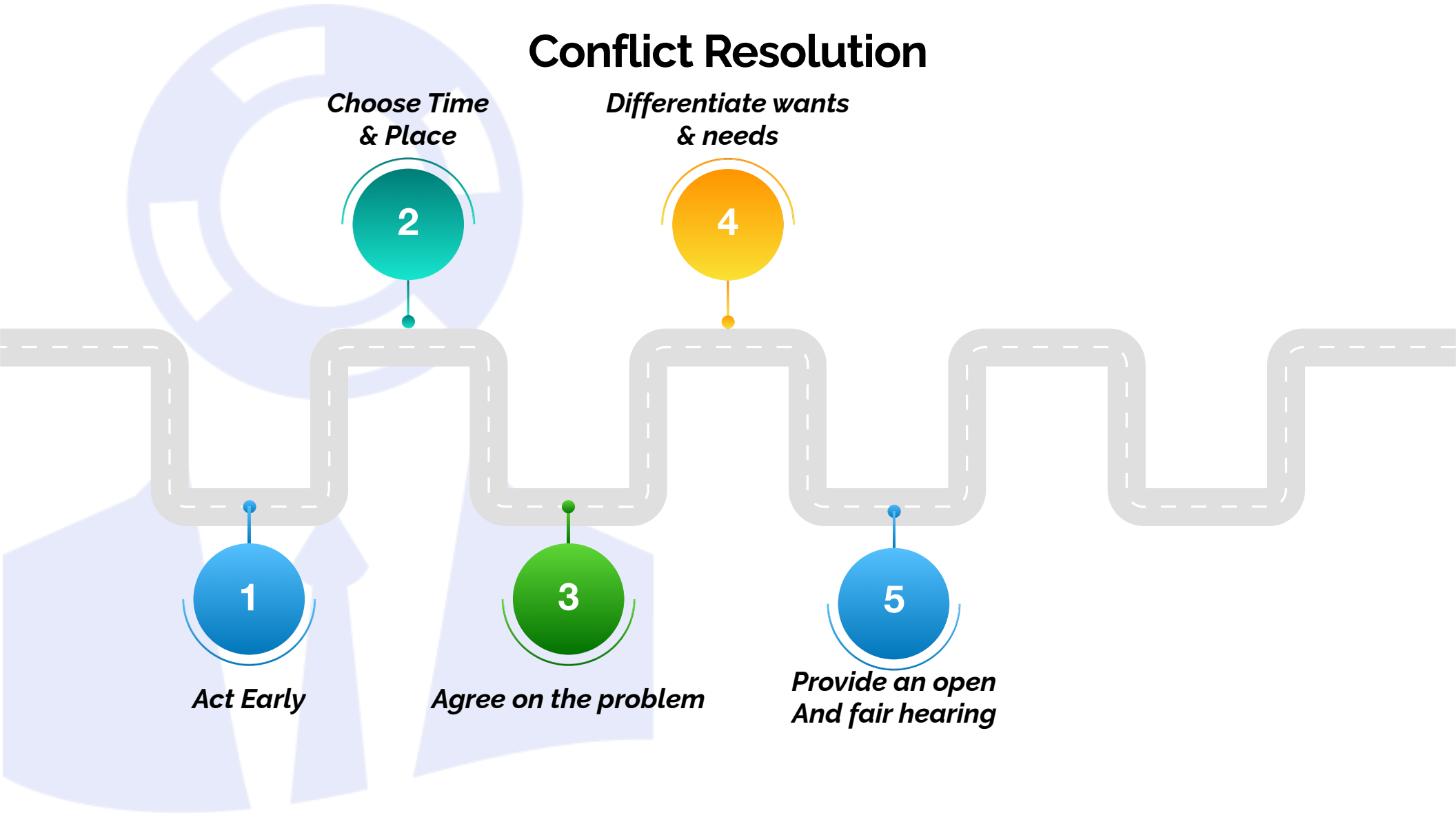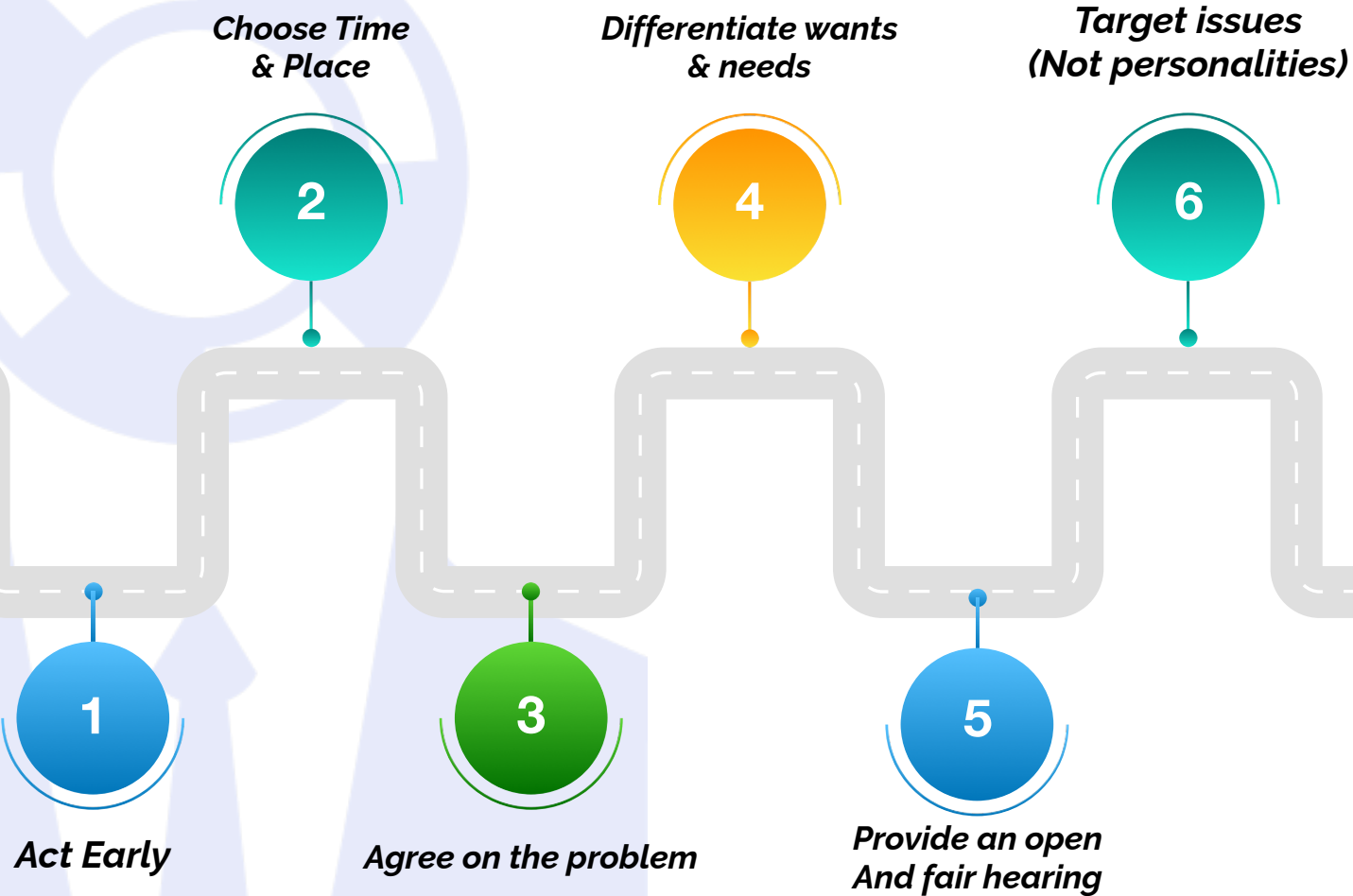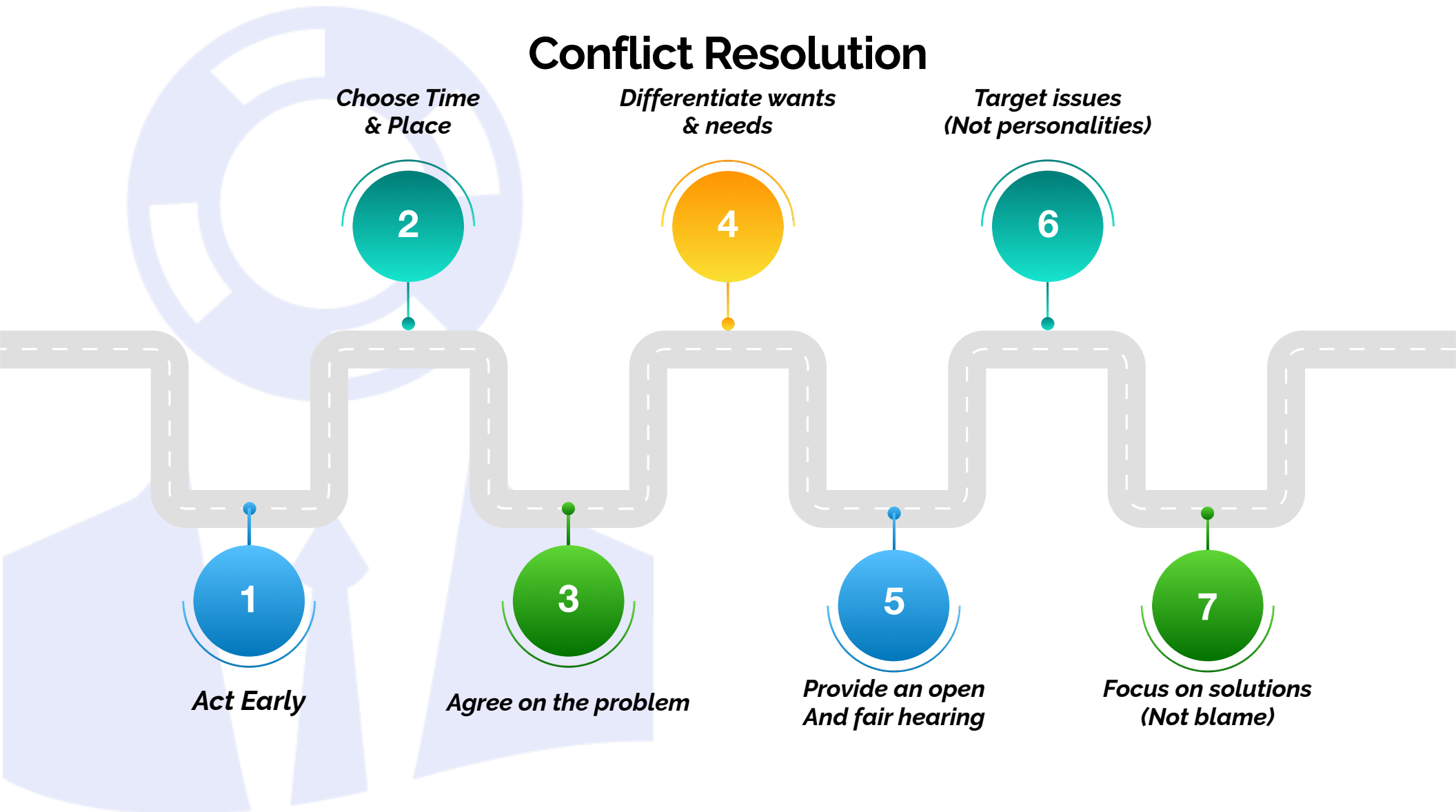
4

Target issues (Not personalities)

6

1

Act Early

3

Agree on the problem

5

Provide an open And fair hearing
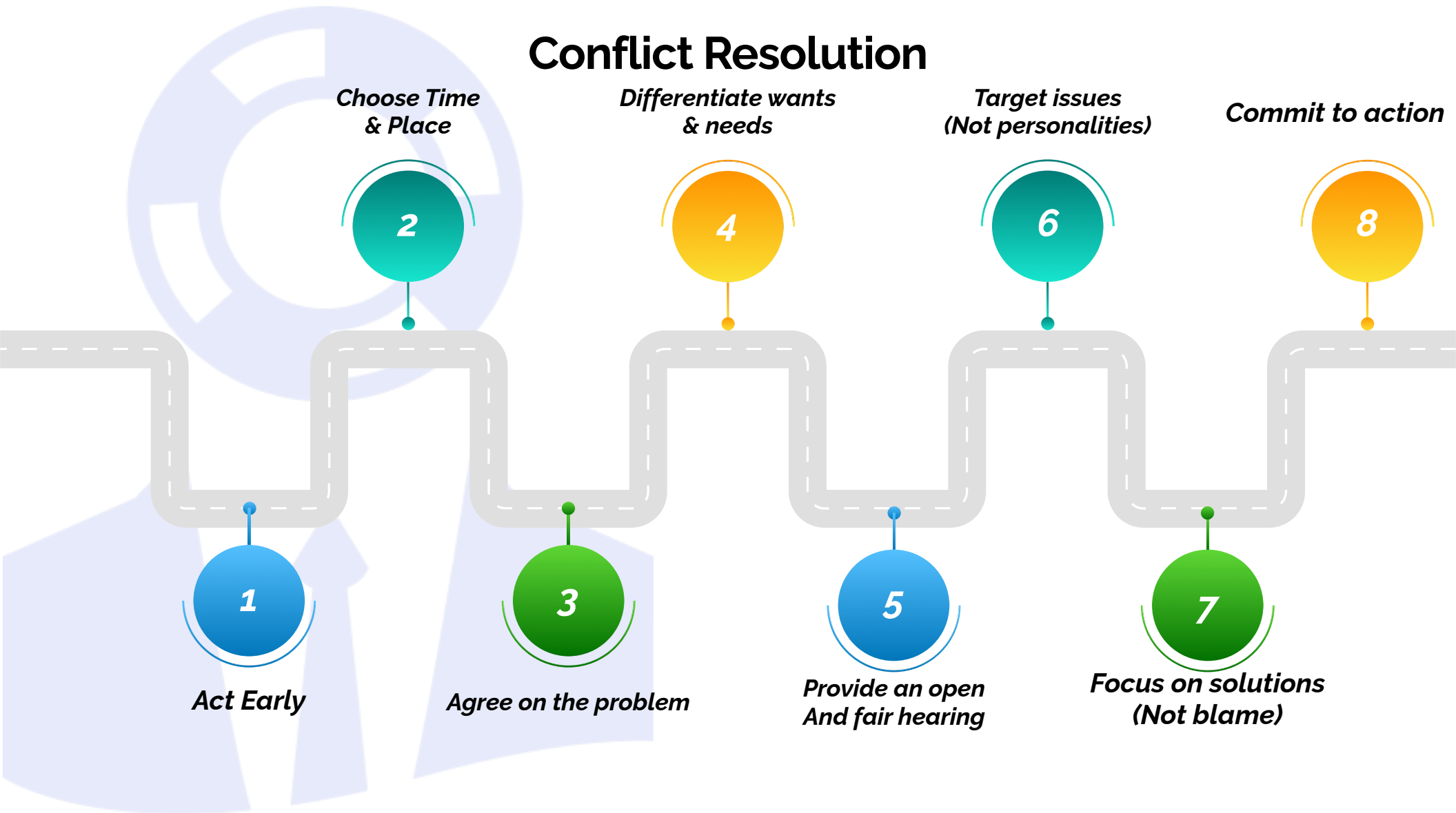
Conflict Resolution

1 — *Act Early*

2 — *Choose Time & Place*

3 — *Agree on the problem*

4 — *Differentiate wants & needs*

5 — *Provide an open And fair hearing*

6 — *Target issues (Not personalities)*

7 — *Focus on solutions (Not blame)*

Conflict Resolution

Choose Time & Place

Differentiate wants & needs

Target issues (Not personalities)

Commit to action

2

4

6

8

Act Early

Agree on the problem

Provide an open And fair hearing
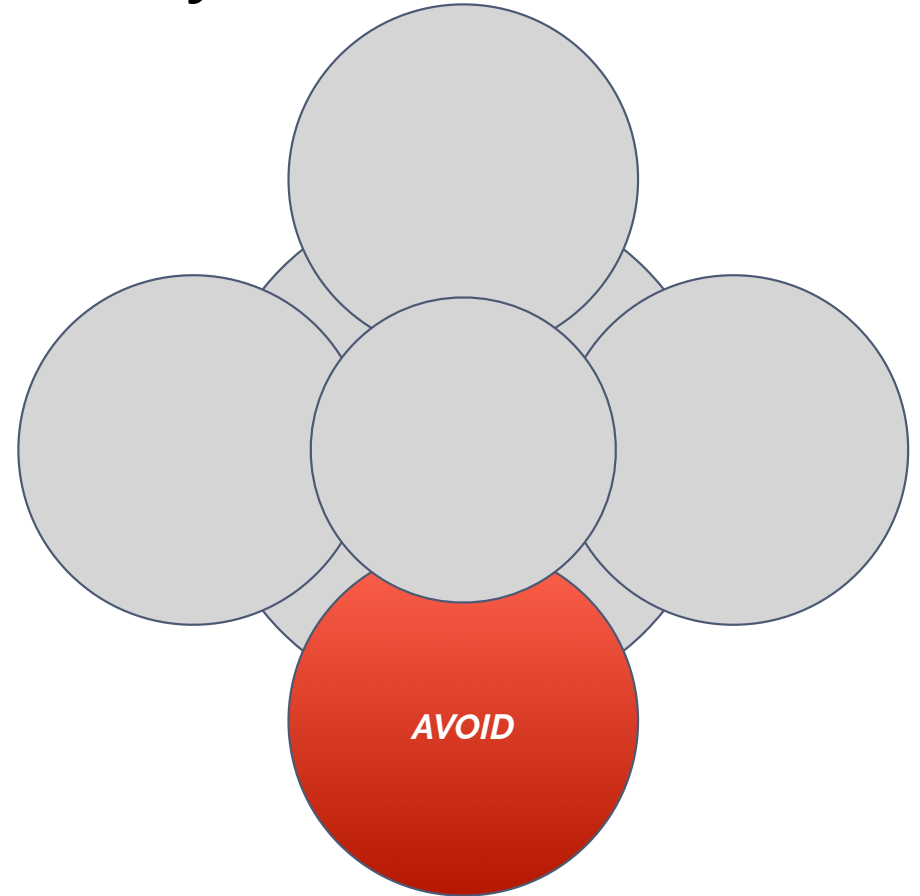
Focus on solutions (Not blame)

1

3

5

7

Conflict Management Style: Avoid

The conflict doesn't exist!

This style is typified by delegating controversial decisions, accepting default positions, and not wanting to hurt anyone's feelings.

Weak for the PM to go this route

AVOID

Conflict Management Style: Compete

People who tend towards a competitive style take a firm stand - and know what they want.

They usually operate from a position of power, drawn from things like position, rank, expertise, or persuasive ability.

Often leaves people feeling bruised, unsatisfied and resentful when used in less urgent situations.

COMPETE

AVOID
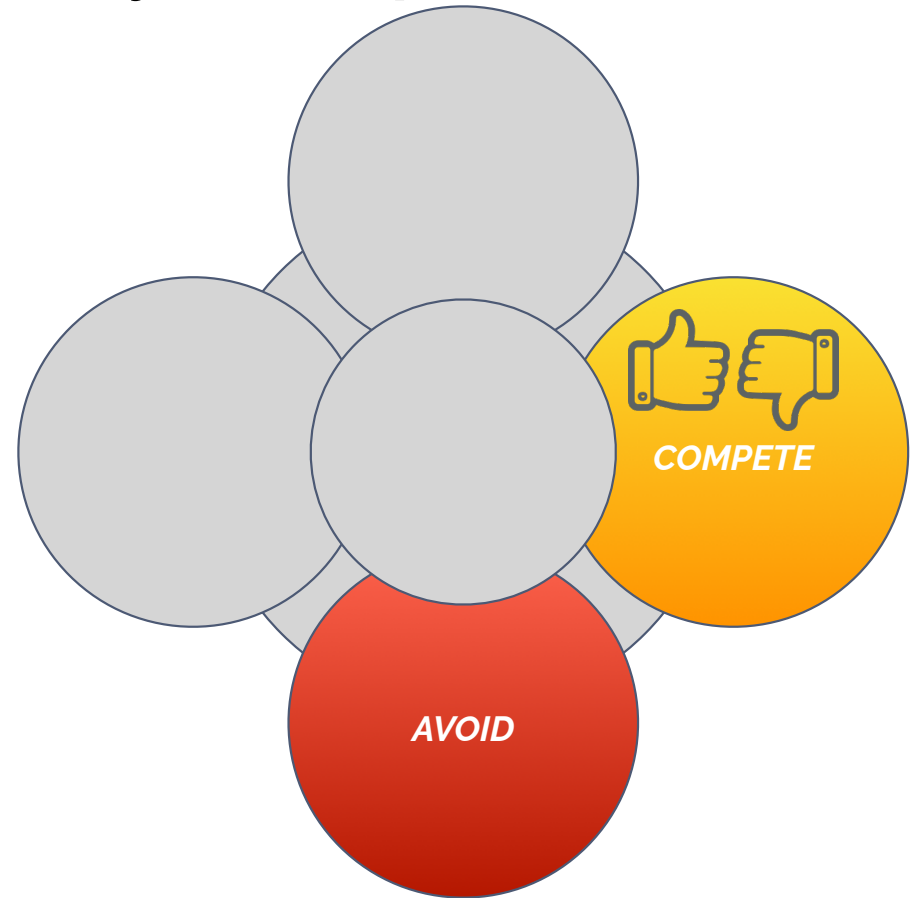
Conflict Management Style: Accommodate

Accommodating indicates a willingness to meet the needs of others at the expense of the person's own needs.

The accommodator often knows when to give in to others, but can be persuaded to surrender a position even when it is not warranted.

However, people often don't return favors, and overall this approach is unlikely to give the best outcomes to the accommodator.

ACCOMODATE

COMPETE

AVOID
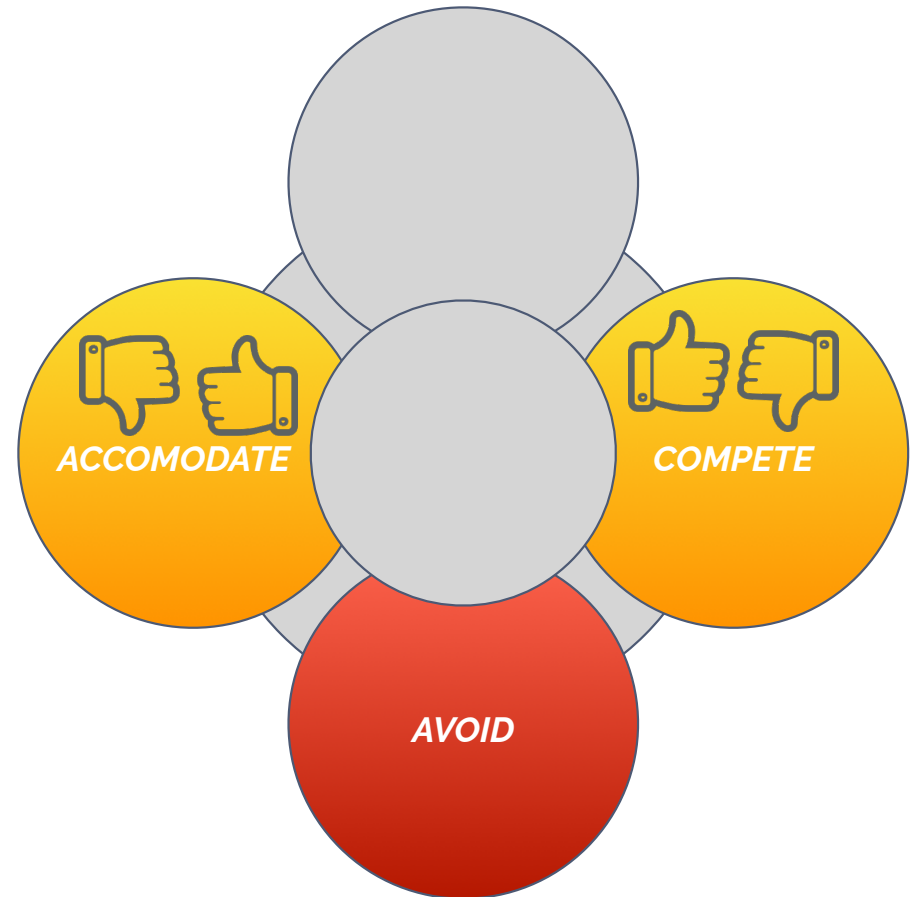
Conflict Management Style: Compromise

People who prefer a compromising style try to find a solution that will at least partially satisfy everyone.

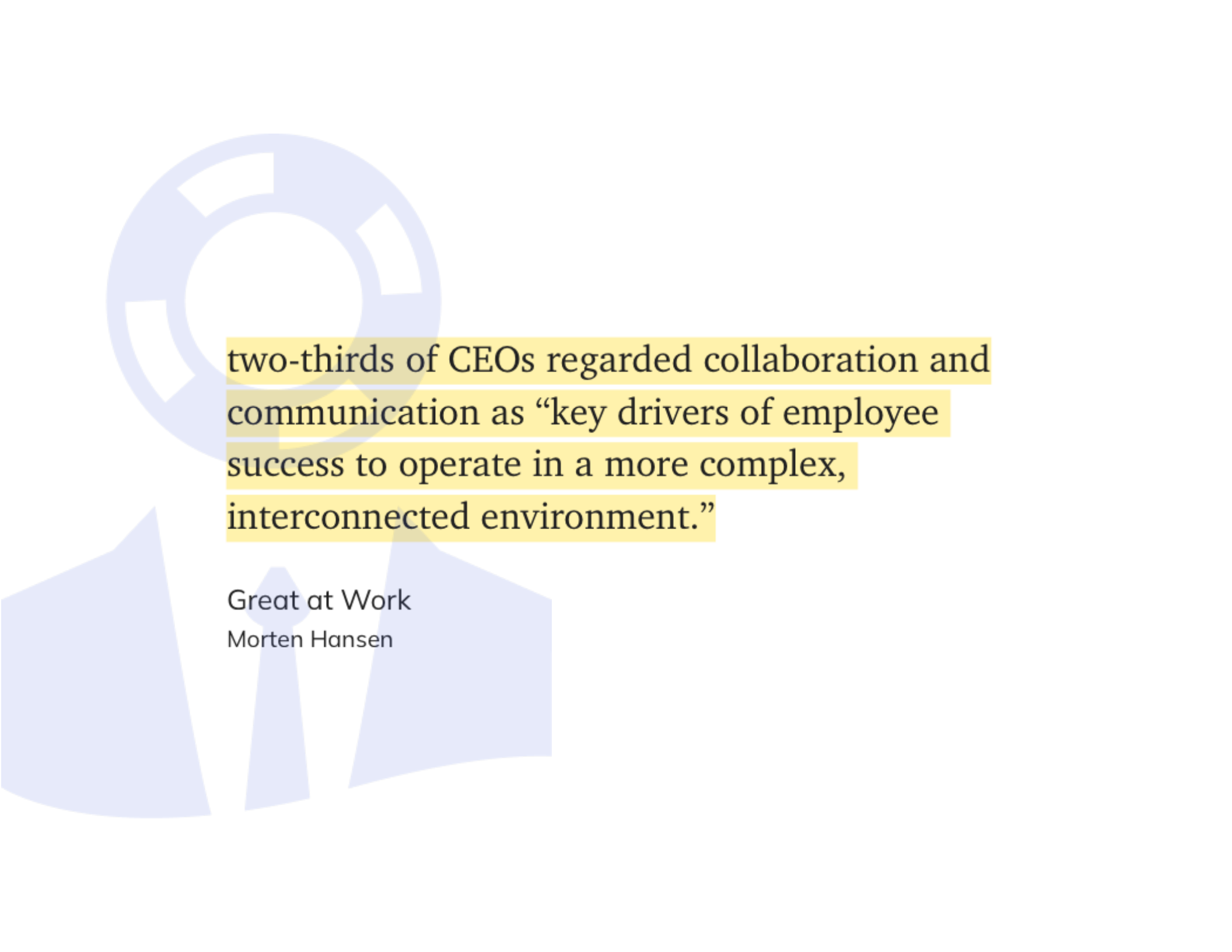Everyone is expected to give up something, and the compromiser themself also expects to relinquish something.

However, it may come at the cost of 'dumbing down' ideas

COMPROMISE

ACCOMODATE

COMPETE

AVOID
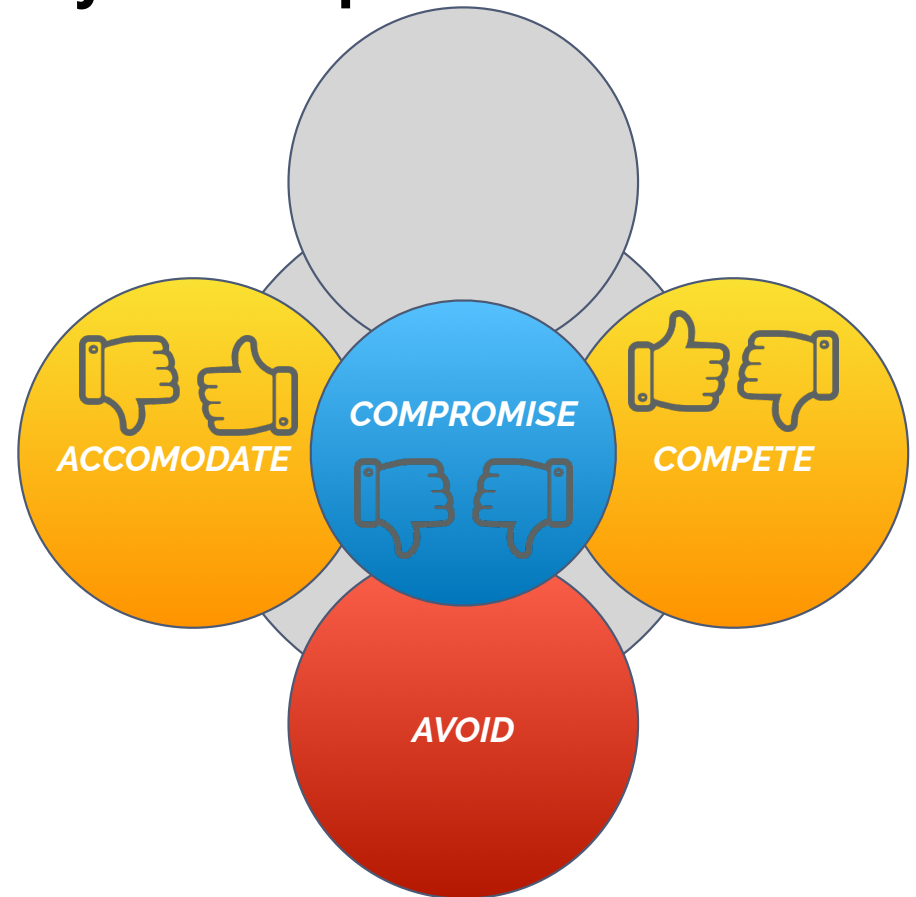
Conflict Management Style: Collaborate

Adopting an approach that meets the needs of the situation, resolves the problem, respects people's legitimate interests and mends damaged working relationships.

COLLABORATE

COMPROMISE

ACCOMODATE

COMPETE

AVOID

two-thirds of CEOs regarded collaboration and communication as "key drivers of employee success to operate in a more complex, interconnected environment."

Great at Work
Morten Hansen

Take-aways from Meetings

◆ Too many of us spend TOO MUCH time in meetings - learn to say no.

◆ Use Meeting Agendas or be sure to define their outcome.

◆ Conflict resolution is an important, but tricky, skill to learn and use.

Questions?