

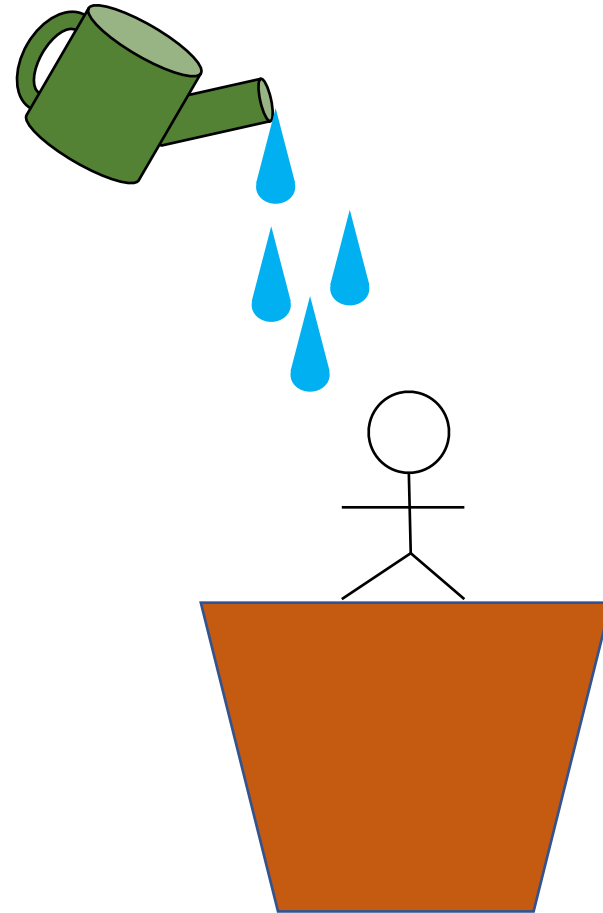
Grow your own tech leads

@KenScambler

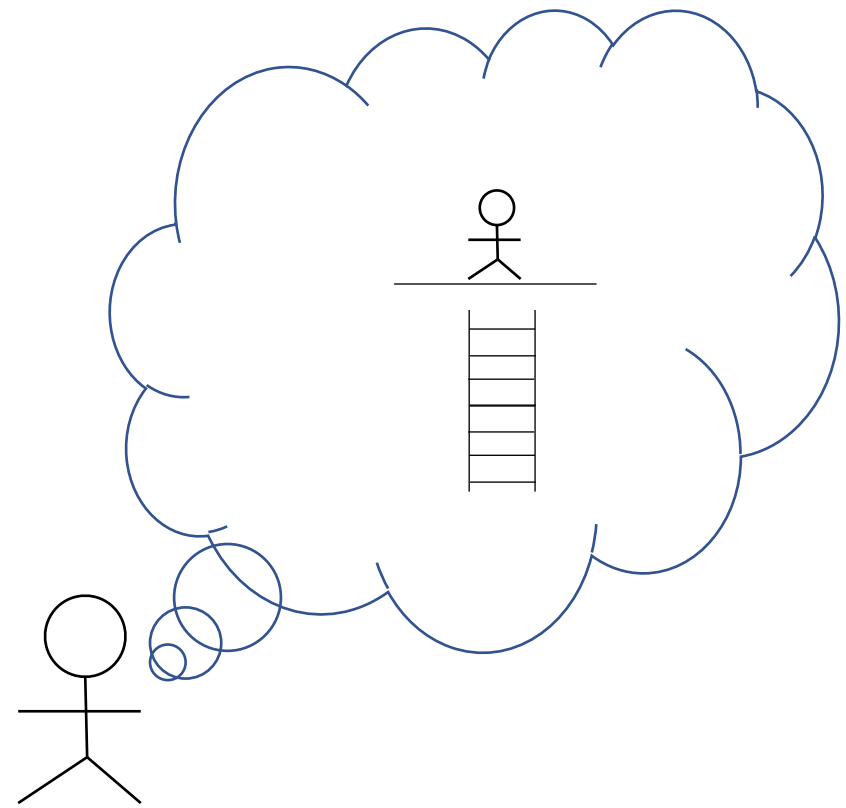
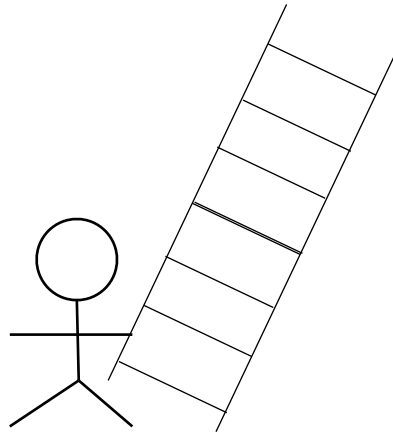
myob



We're hiring!
Come work with me & my
friends on cool stuff



Gaps



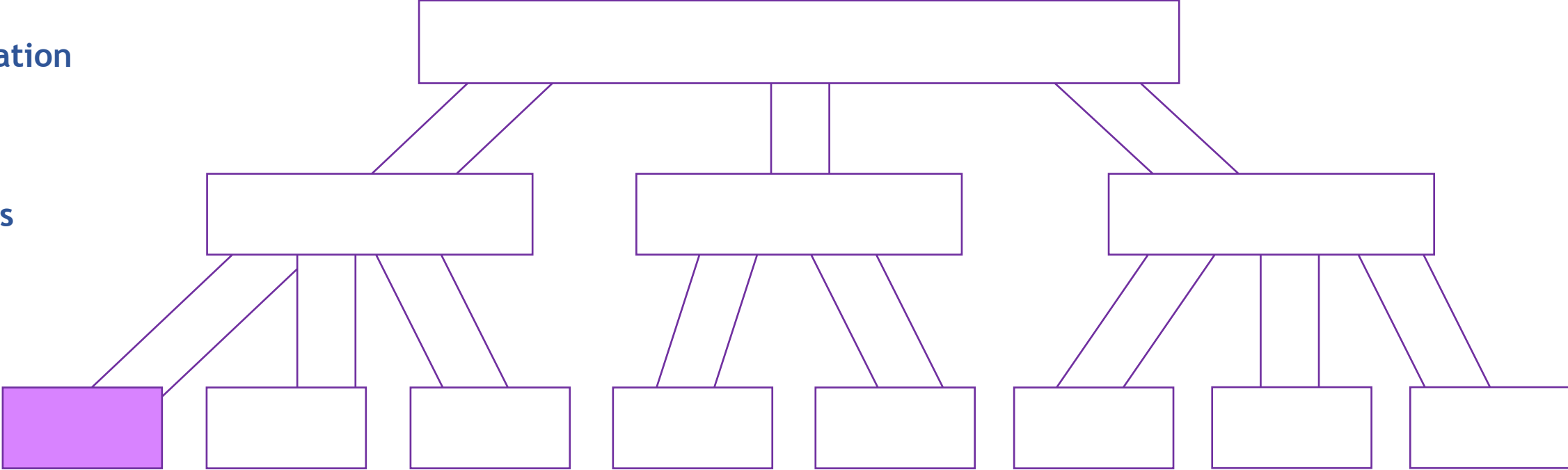
- There's a big difference between the skill sets of an effective developer and an effective tech lead.
- How does an individual bridge the gap?
- How can we help them?

Perspective - developer

Organisation

Divisions

Teams

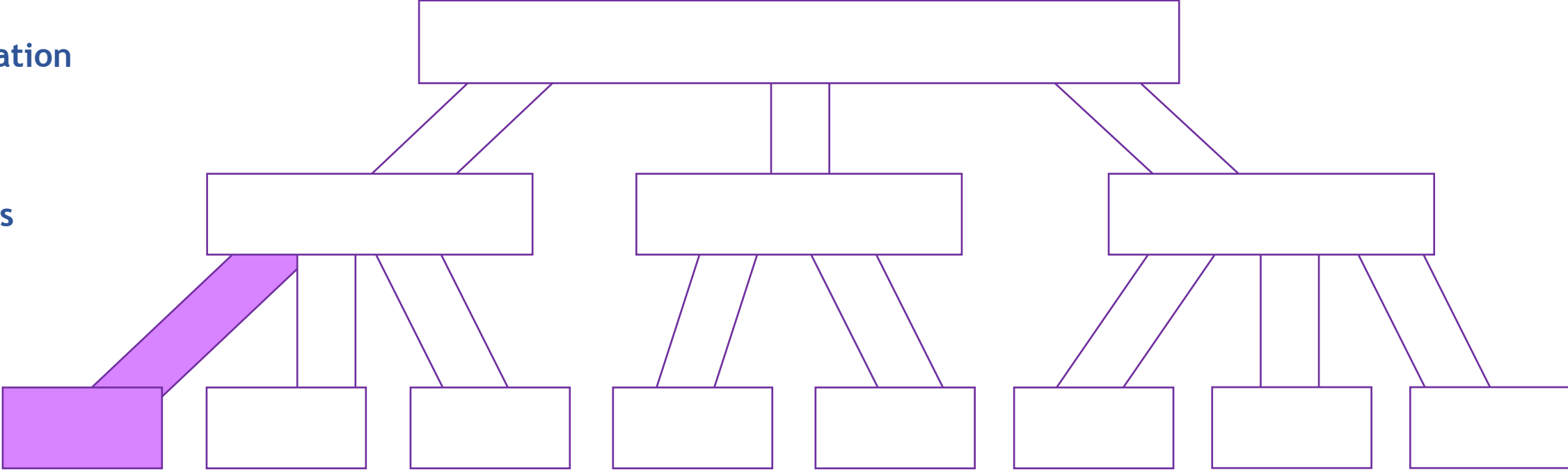


Perspective – senior developer

Organisation

Divisions

Teams

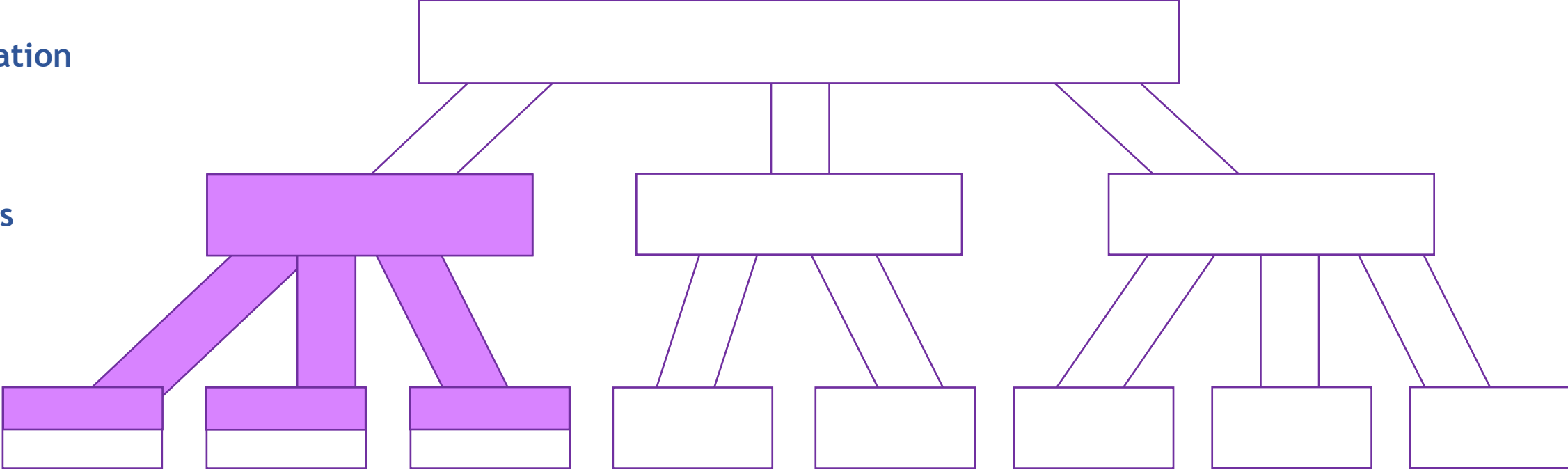


Perspective – tech lead

Organisation

Divisions

Teams

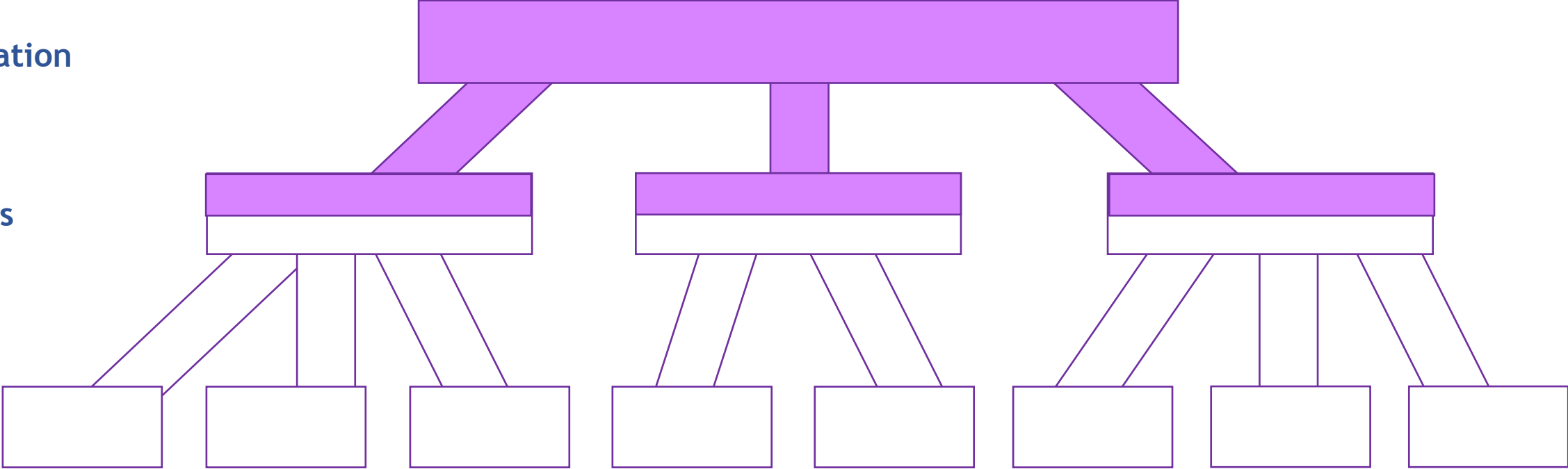


Perspective – CTO, etc

Organisation

Divisions

Teams

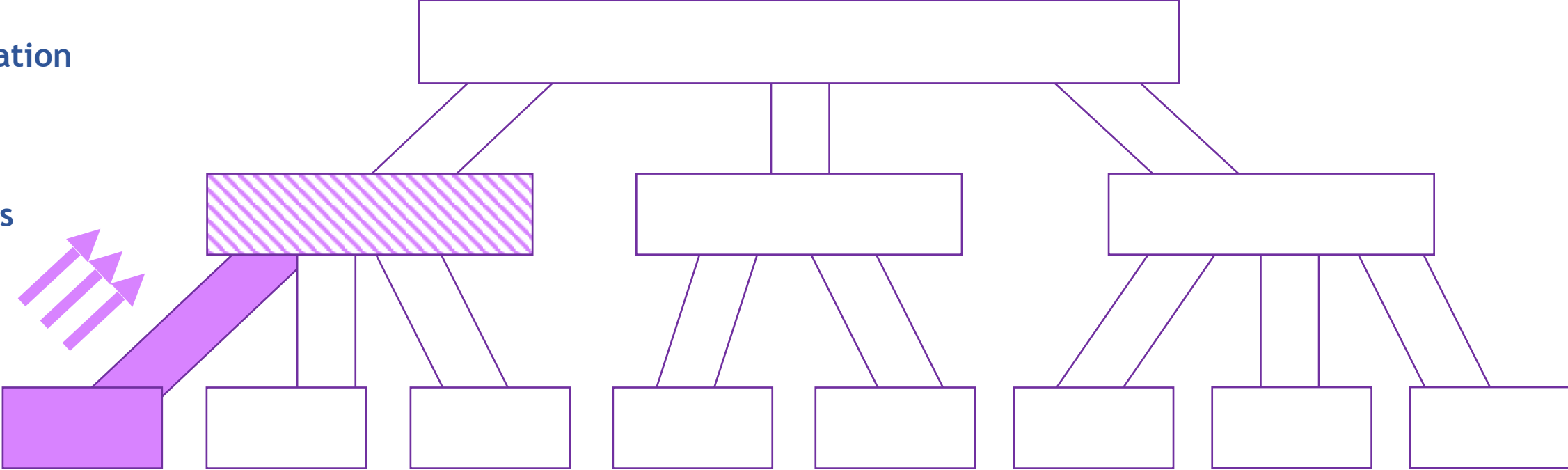


Helping senior developers grow

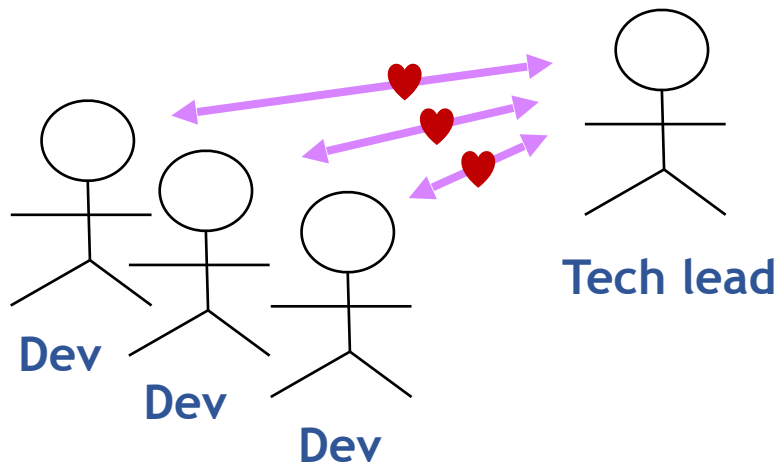
Organisation

Divisions

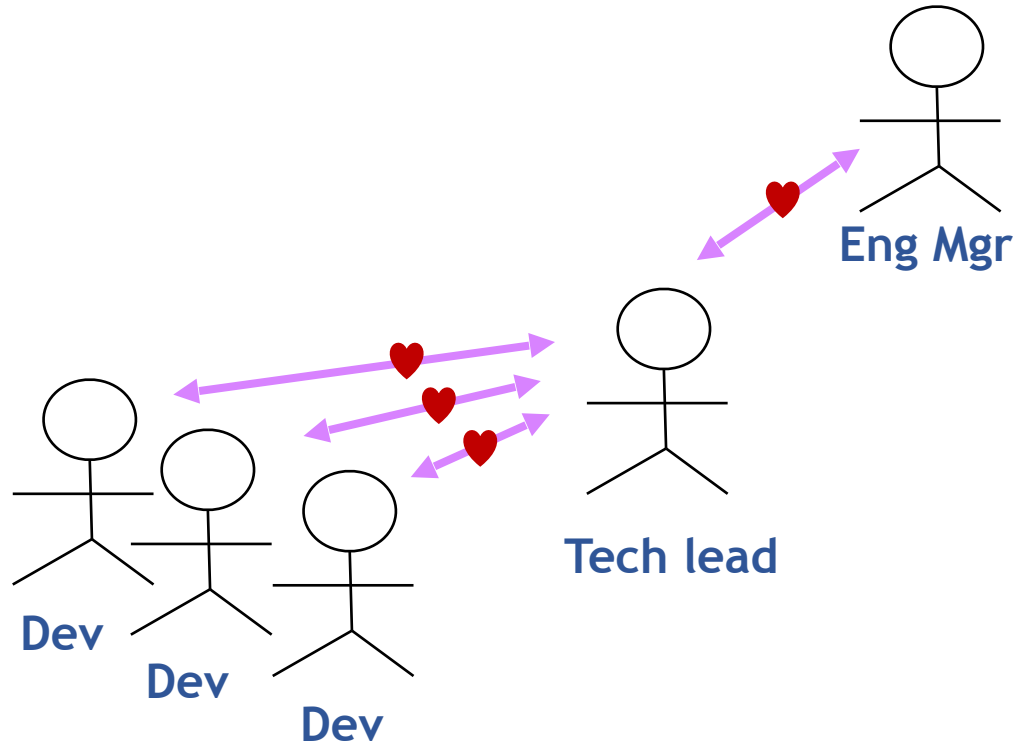
Teams



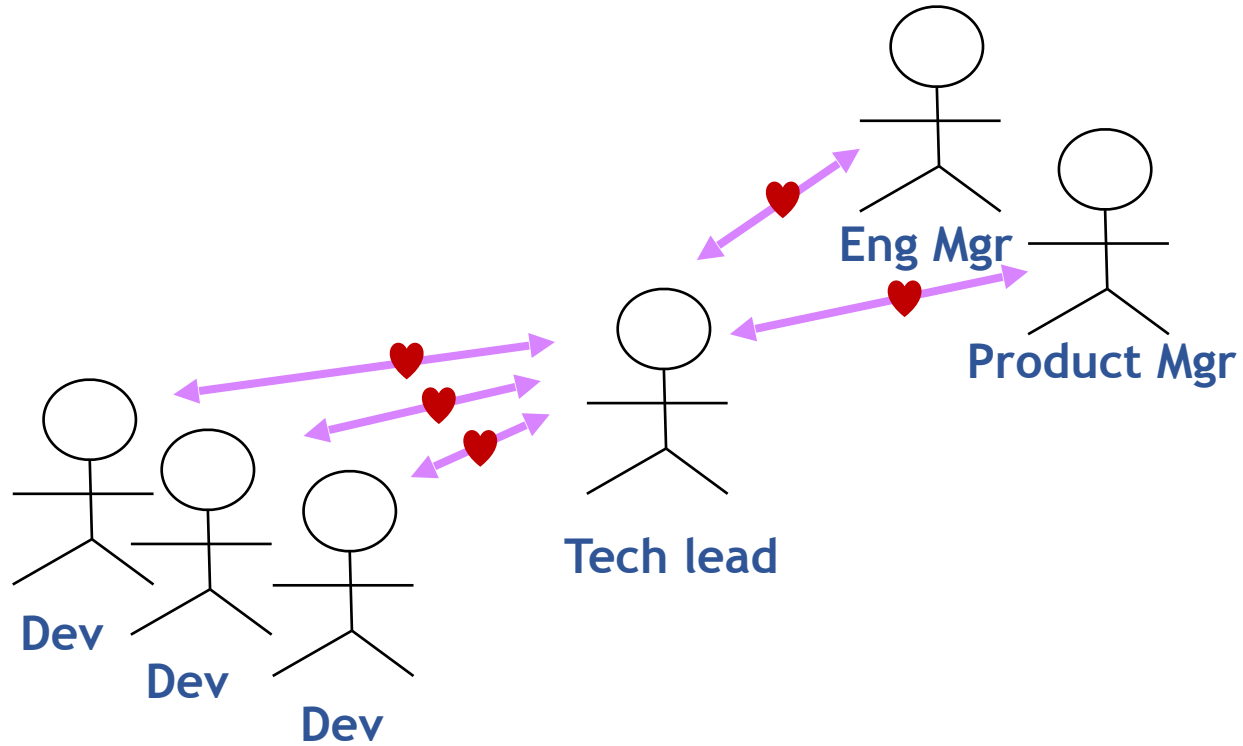
Expanding trust networks



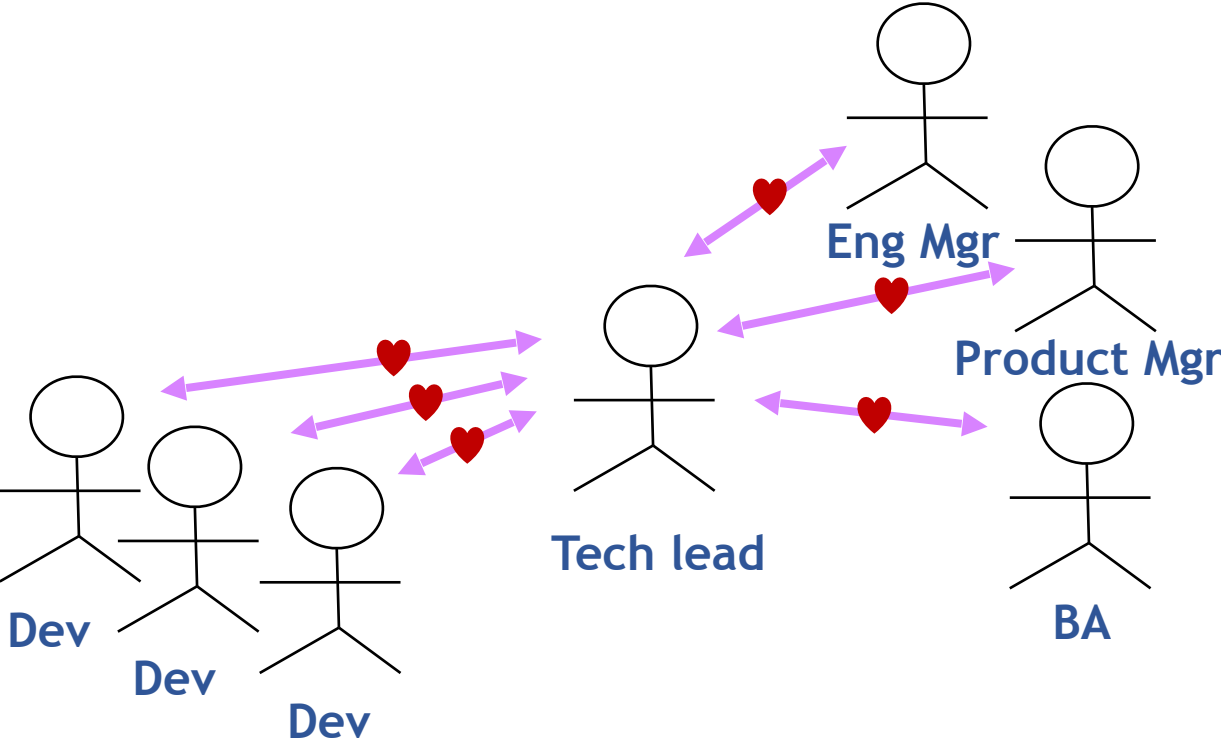
Expanding trust networks



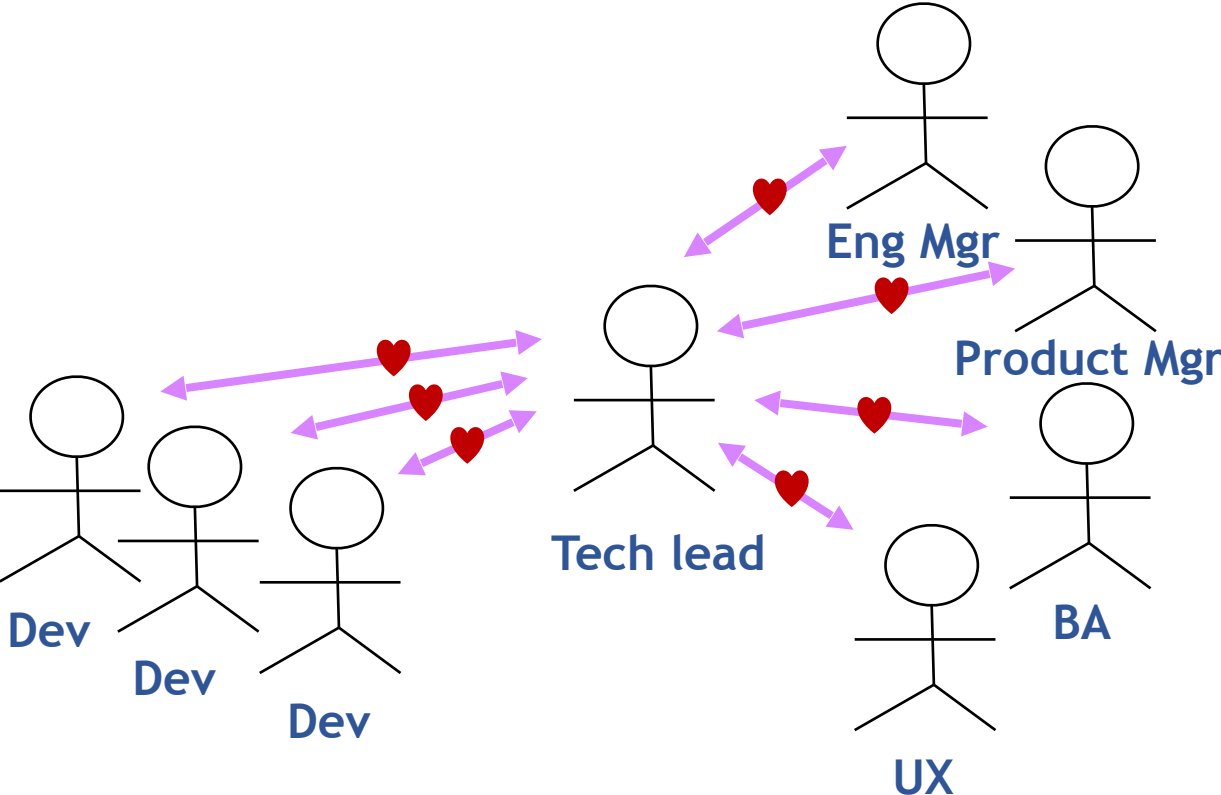
Expanding trust networks



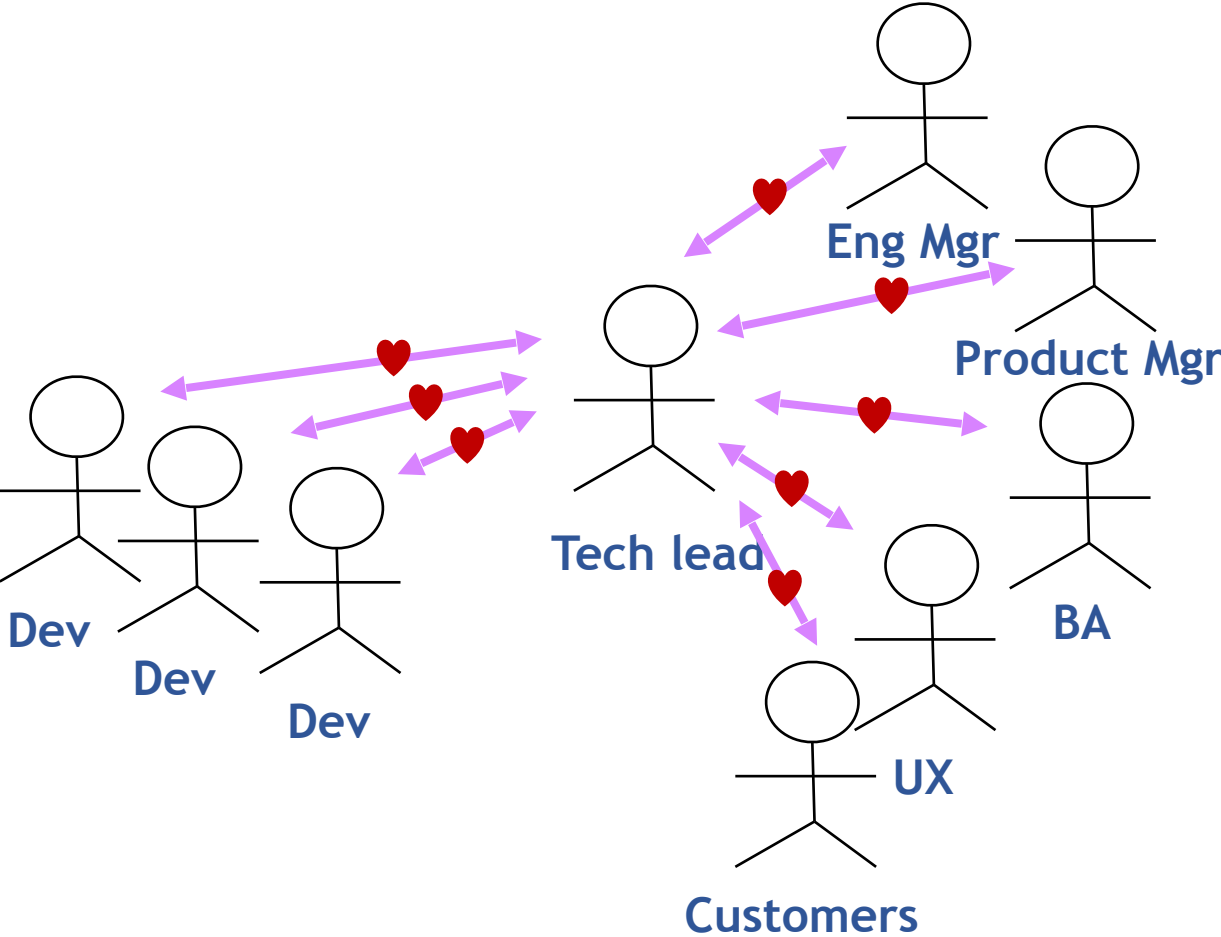
Expanding trust networks



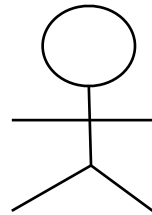
Expanding trust networks



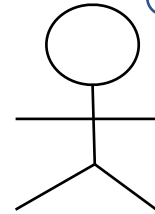
Expanding trust networks



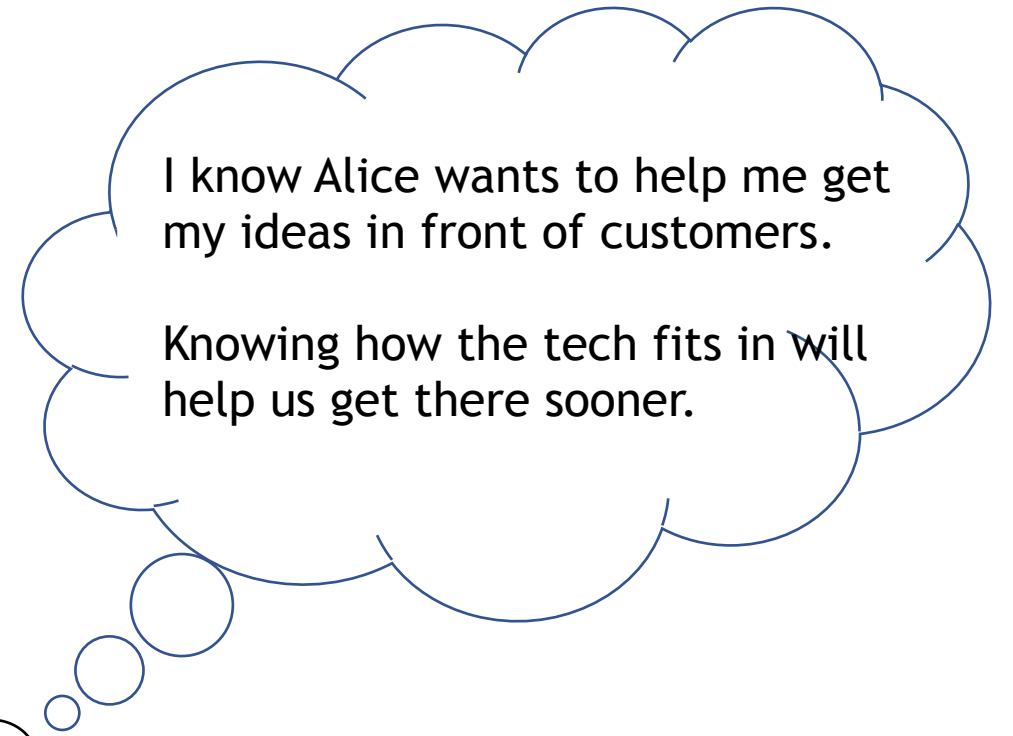
What happens with trust



Alice



Product Manager



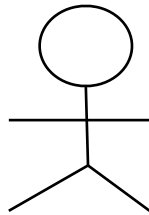
I know Alice wants to help me get my ideas in front of customers.

Knowing how the tech fits in will help us get there sooner.

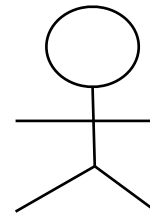
What happens with trust

Look, the spaceship is really hard, it'll take 10 years.

But... if we drop the laser guns we can do a quadcopter in a month.



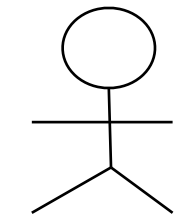
Alice



Product Manager

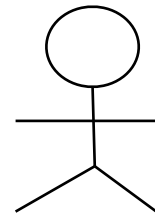
What happens with trust

Look, the spaceship is really hard, it'll take 10 years.
But... if we drop the laser guns we can do a quadcopter in a month.



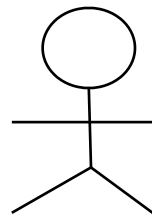
Alice

Ah that's a shame. Let's go for the quick win then, we can iterate from there.

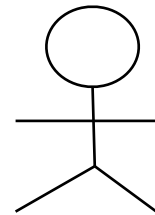


Product Manager

What happens without trust



Alice



Product Manager

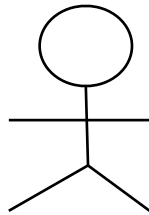
Let me guess. Alice can't deliver on time because of techie blah blah.

If she loved customers half as much as shiny tech, we'd have delivered by now.

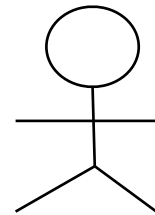
What happens without trust

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But... if we drop the laser guns we can do a quadcopter in a month.



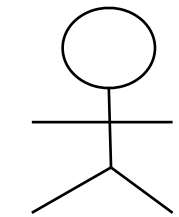
Alice



Product Manager

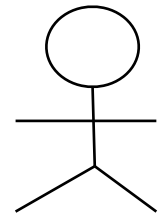
What happens without trust

Look, the spaceship is really hard, it'll take 10 years.
But... if we drop the laser guns we can do a quadcopter in a month.



Alice

Did you try this? Did you try that? We really need to be delivering spaceships.
I'm going to need you & the team to really dig deep and BELIEEEEE.



Product Manager

YOW! 2019 EXCLUSIVE

**THE SECRET TO
BUILDING TRUST
AND ADVANCING
YOUR CAREER**

YOW! 2019 EXCLUSIVE

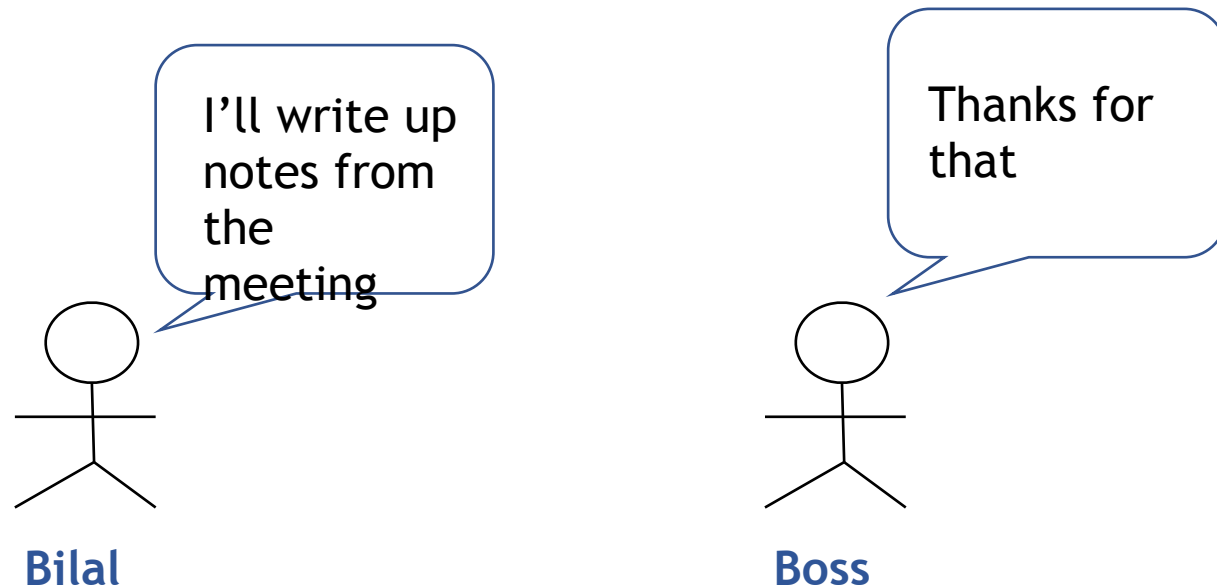


YOW! 2019 EXCLUSIVE

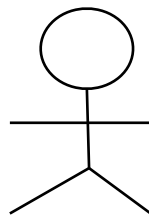
Don't be terrible



“I trust you to keep promises”



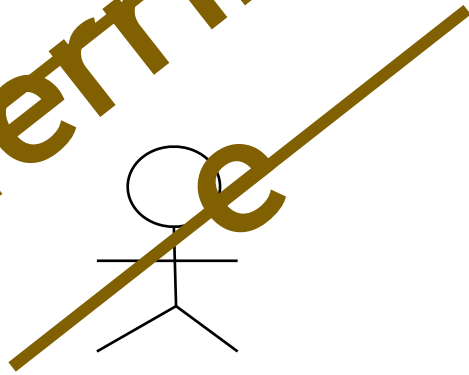
*Doesn't write up
notes*



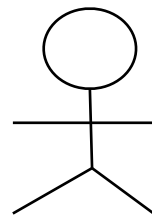
Bilal



~~Terribt~~



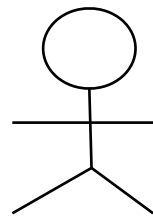
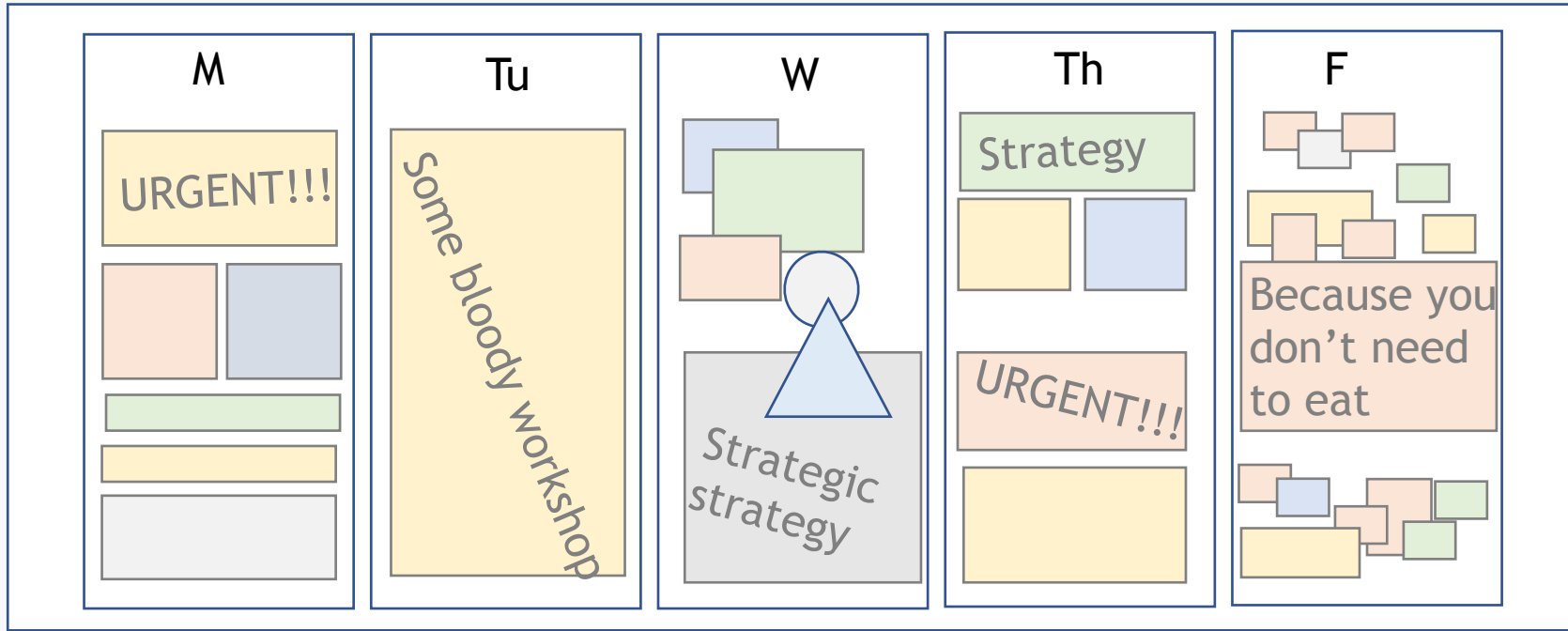
Bilal



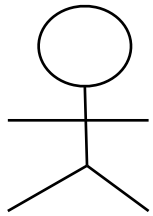
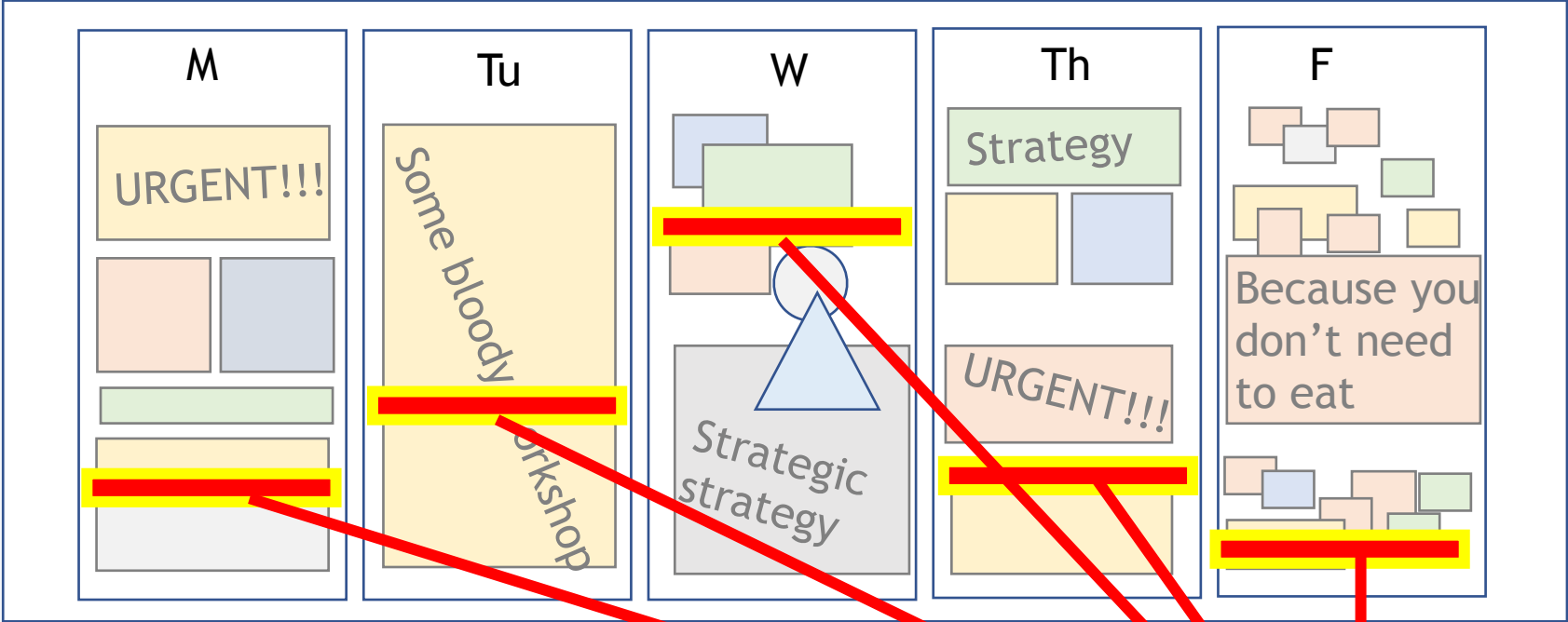
Bilal

Seriously?? Come on!

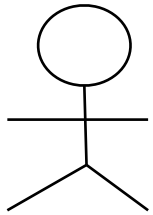
I have important things to do and no-one reads the notes anyway!



Boss

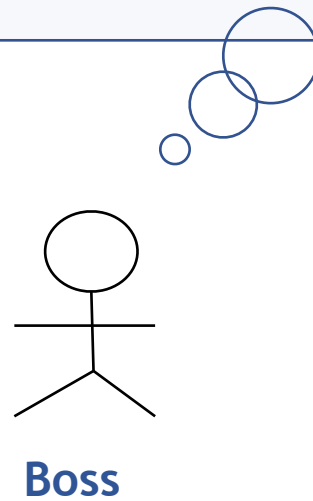
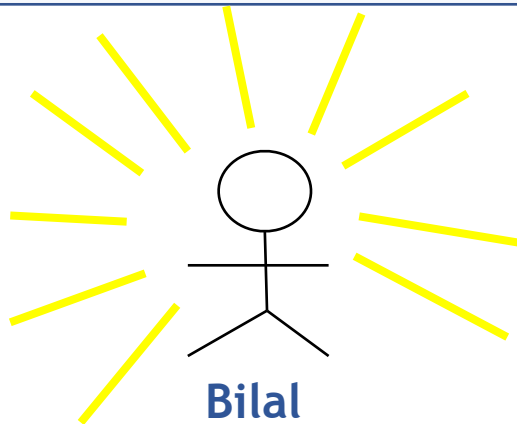
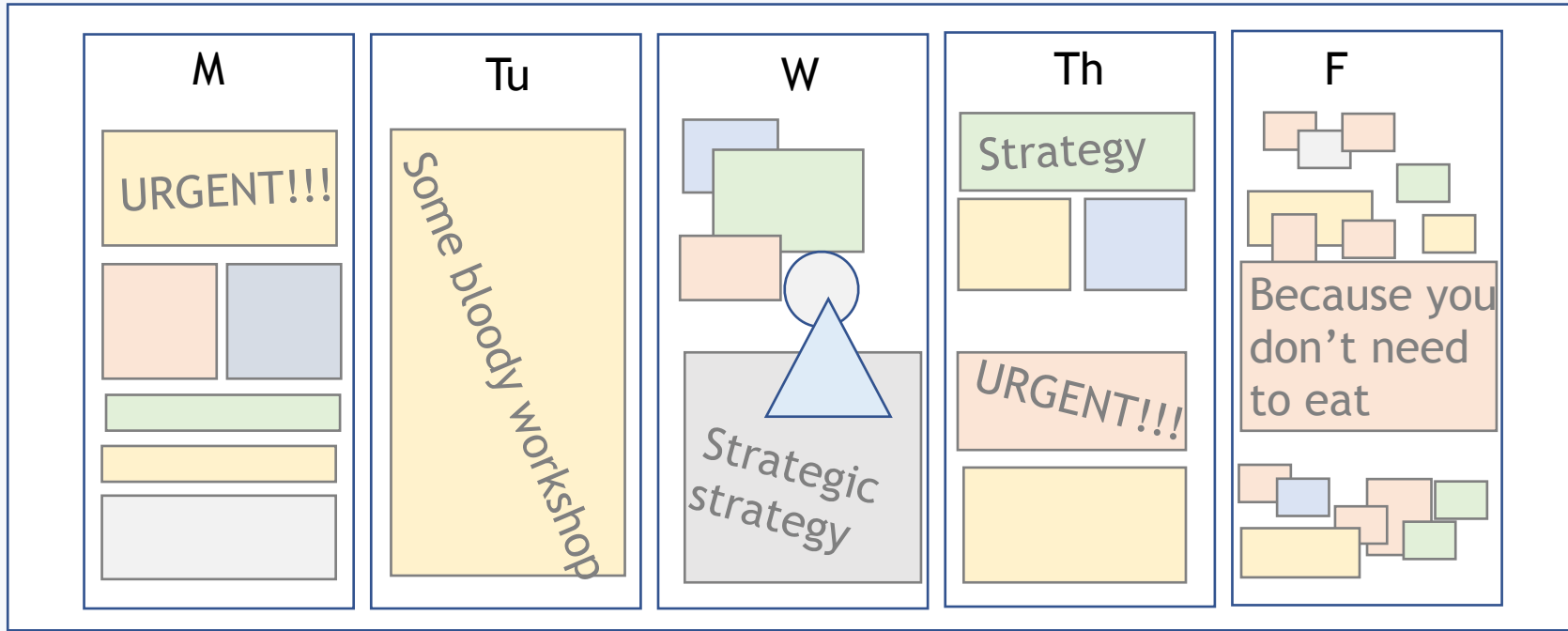


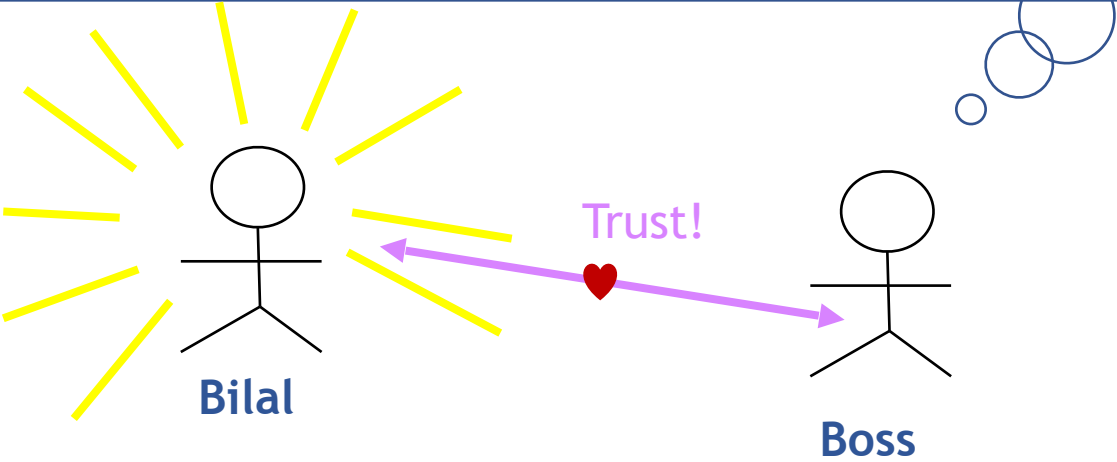
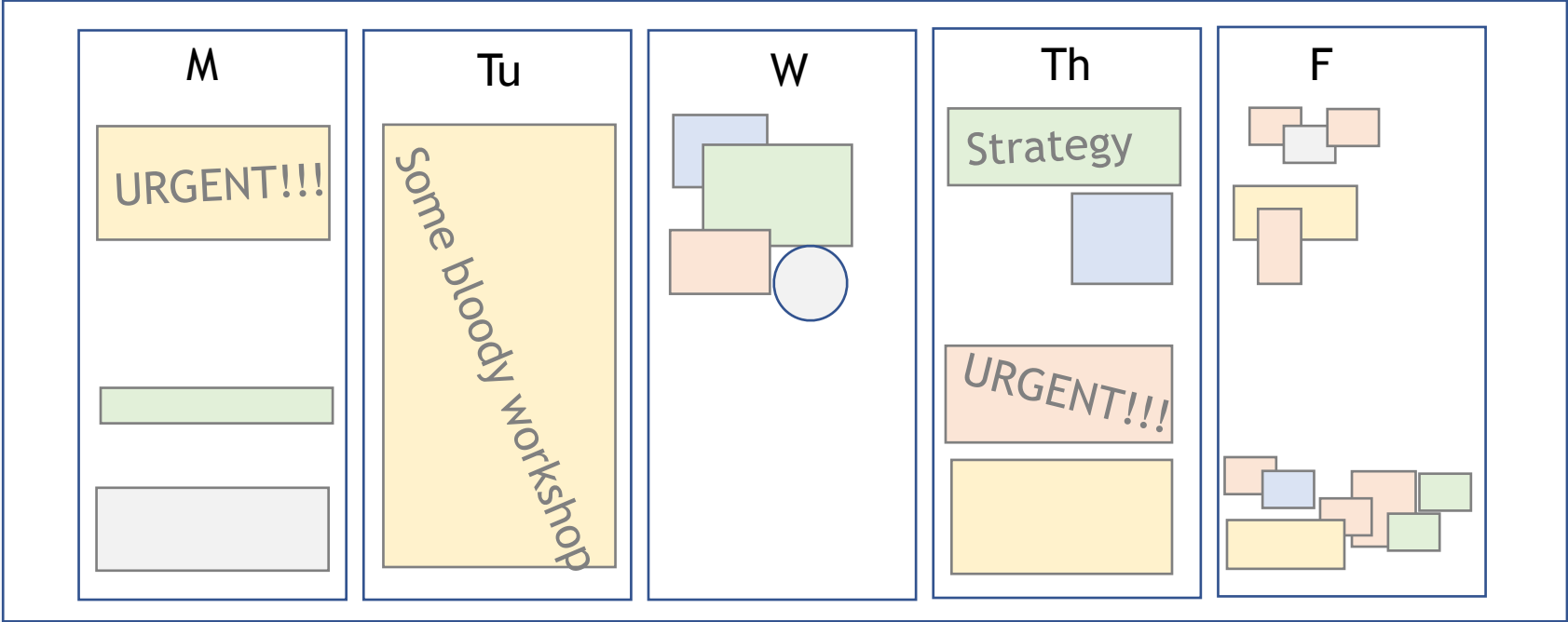
Bilal

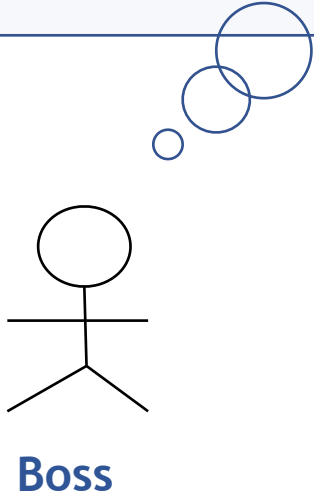
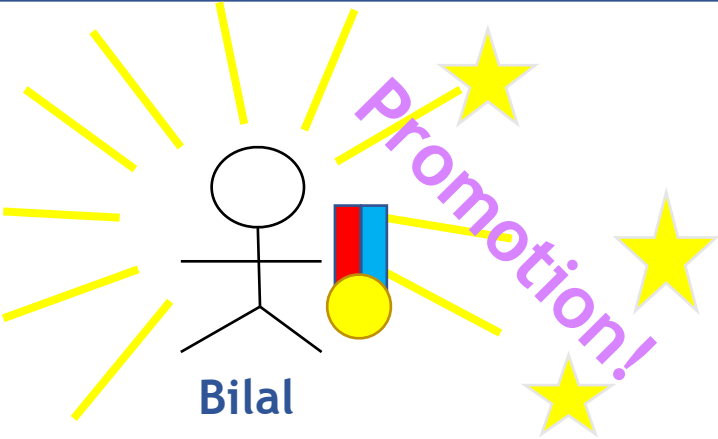
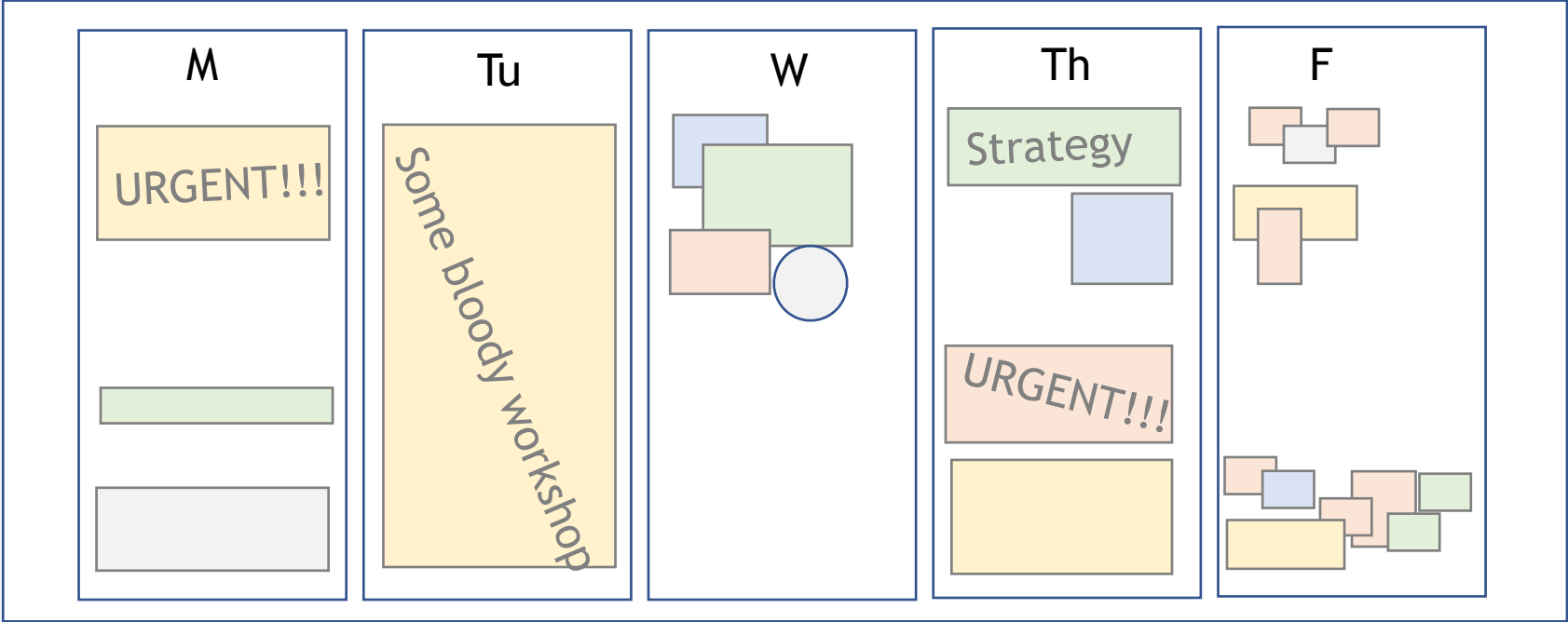


Boss

TODO: Check up on Bilal

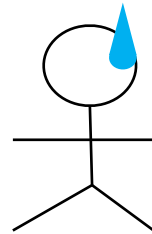






“I trust you to communicate openly”

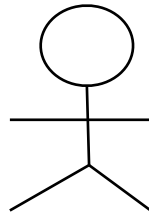
*WORKING HARD
ON A PROBLEM FOR
WEEKS BUT KINDA
STUCK*



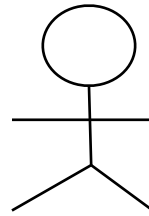
Carla

How's that task going?
We're all blocked.
Need help?

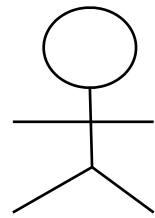
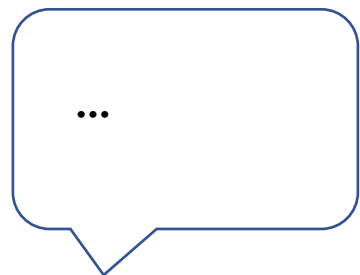
Nah I'm
good.
80% done



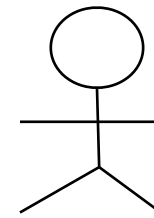
Carla



Boss

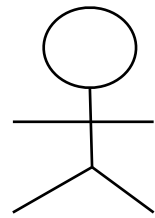


Carla



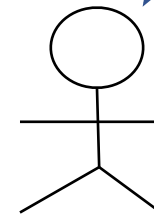
Boss

...



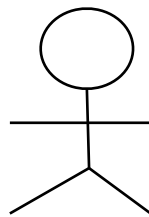
Carla

Time's up,
what have
you got so
far?

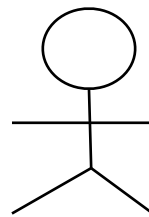


Boss

Actually

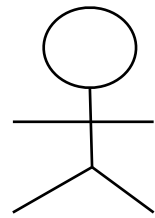


Carla



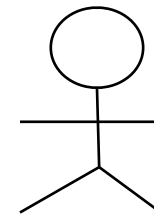
Boss

It would seem I've
been stuck for some
time



Carla

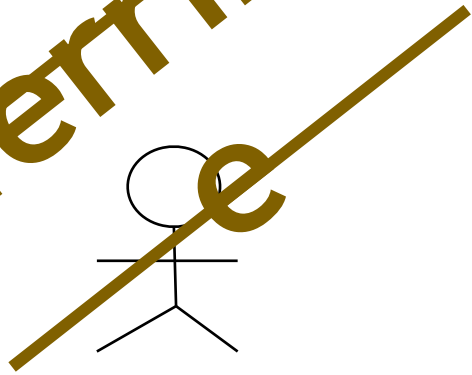
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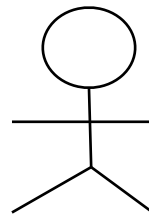
Boss



~~Terribt~~



Carla

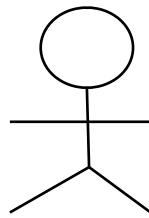


Boss

You can't be serious!

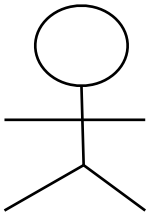
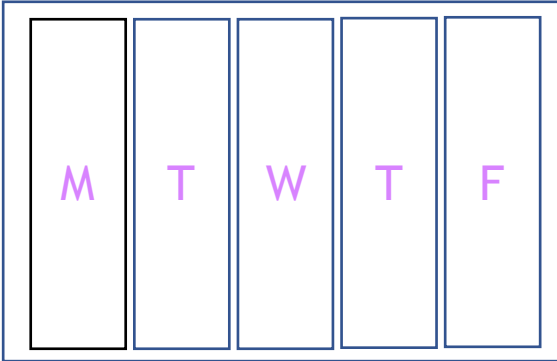
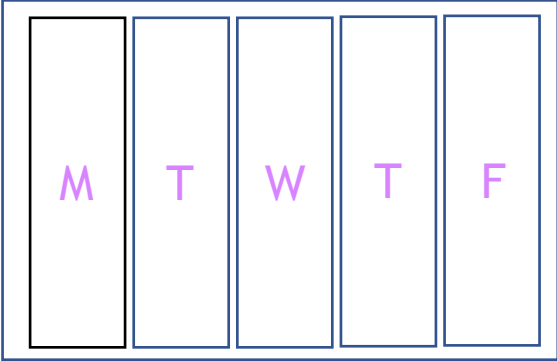
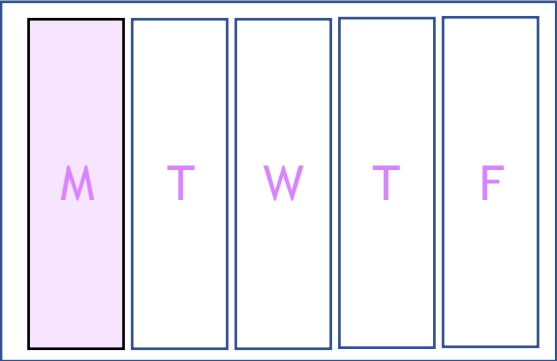
It's done when it's
done.

I don't know what I
don't know.



Carla

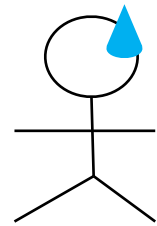
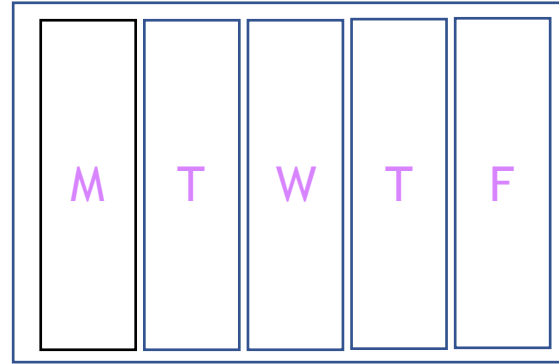
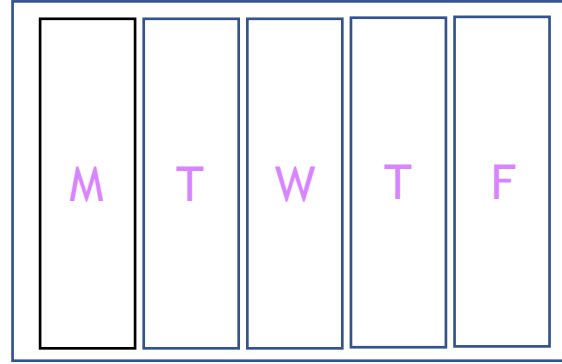
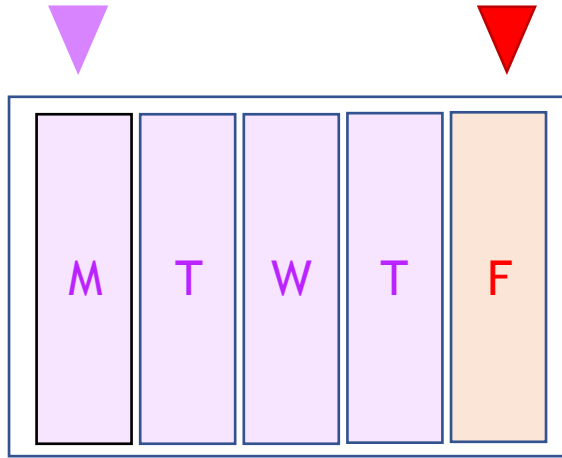
Started work



Carla

Started work

Got stuck

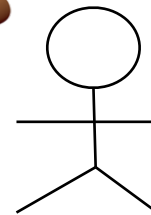
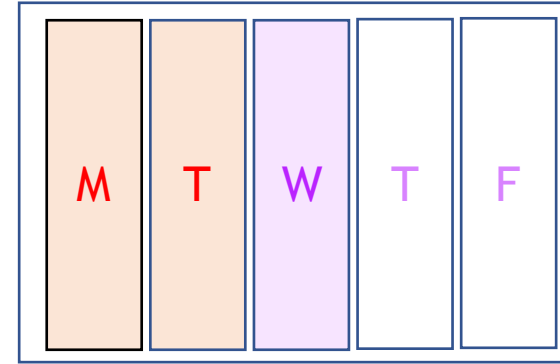
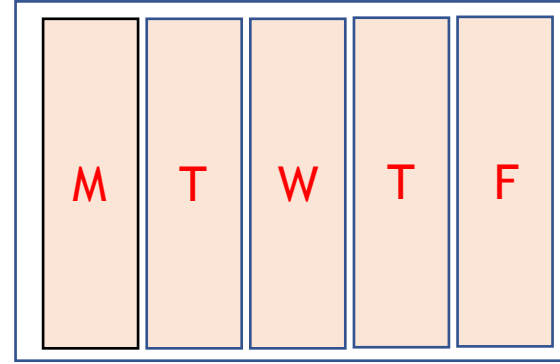
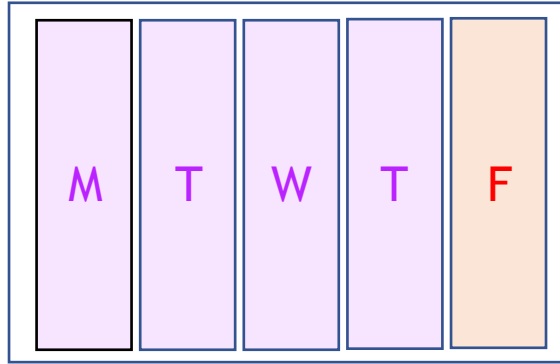


Carla

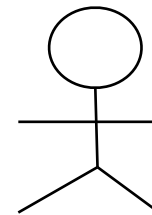
Started work

Got stuck

Help!

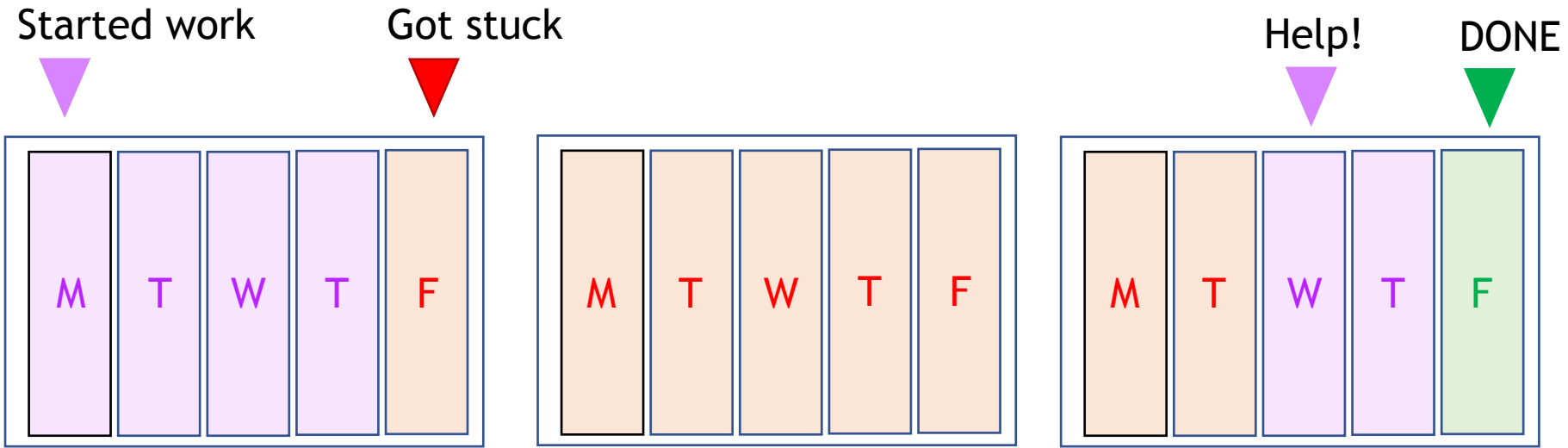


Carla



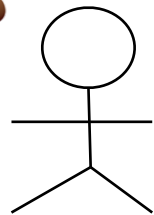
Boss

EMERGENCY!
Let's rope in
the experts

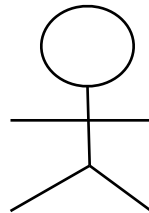


Domain specific knowledge

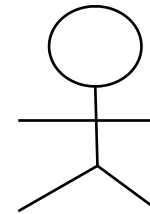
Technology specific knowledge



Carla



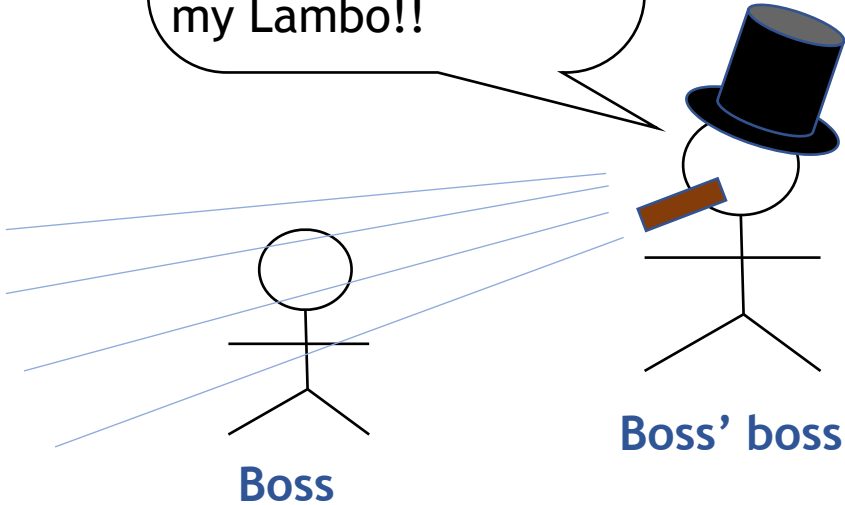
Expert1



Expert2

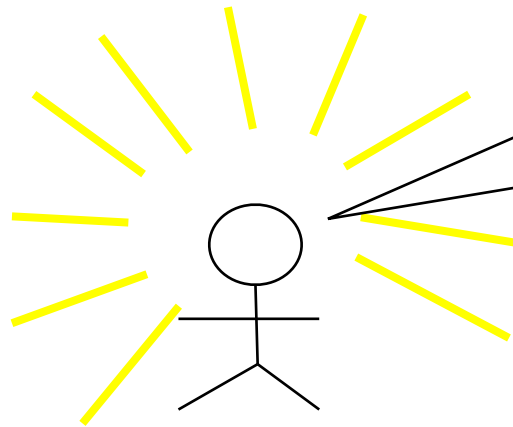
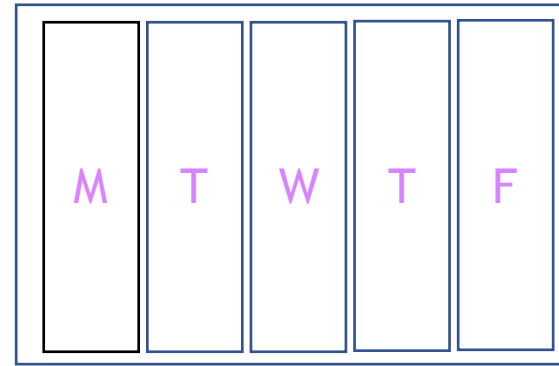
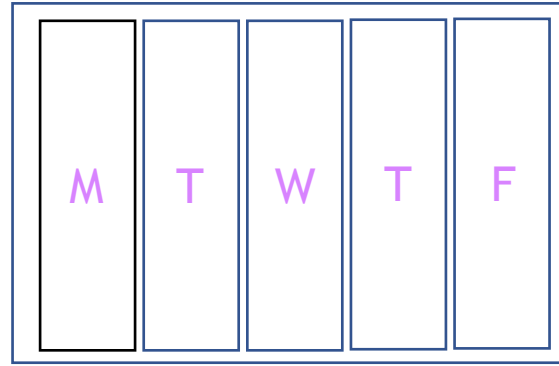
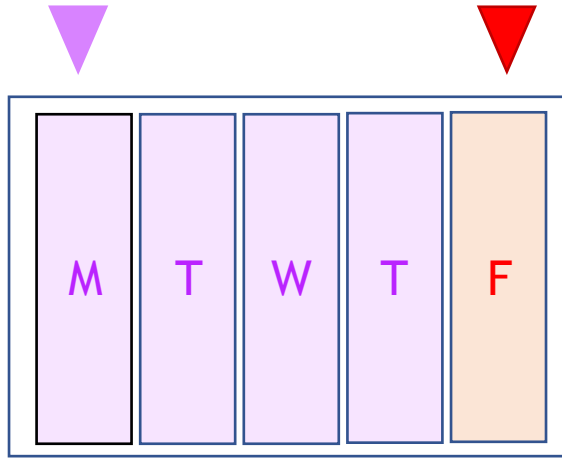
We had to drop everything, but we're here

HIGGINS YOU FOOL!
Because of your
MISCREANTS I had to
settle for platinum
ALLOY hubcaps on
my Lambo!!



Started work

Stuck



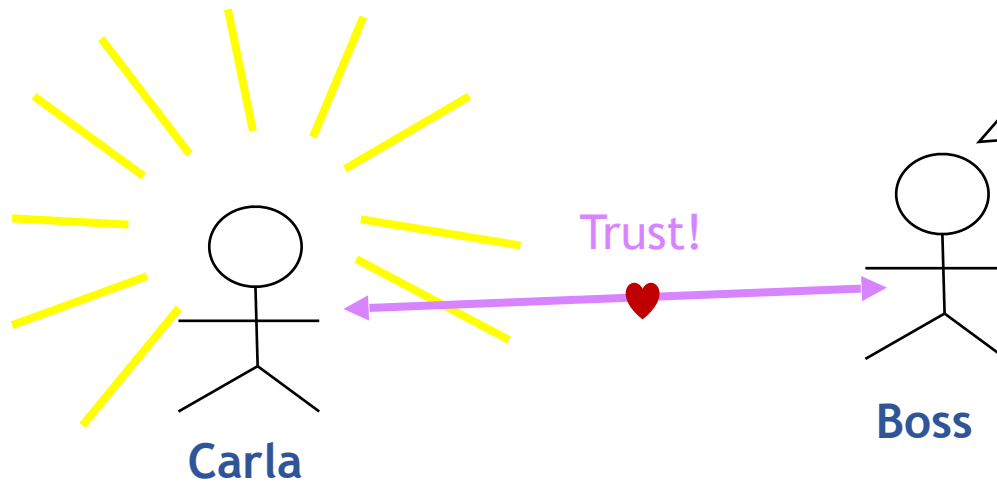
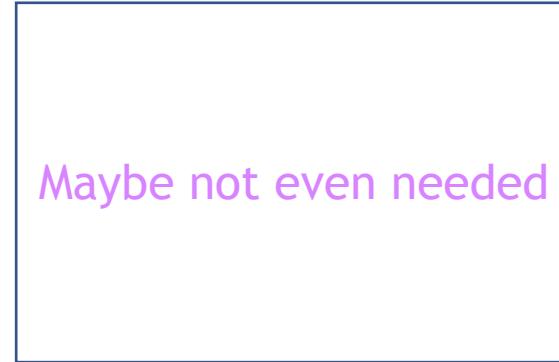
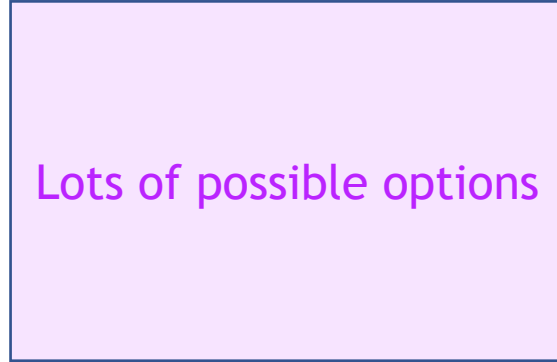
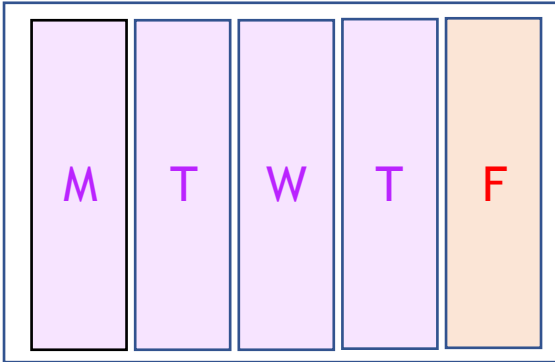
Carla

I was off to a good start, but it's harder than I thought.

Started work

Stuck

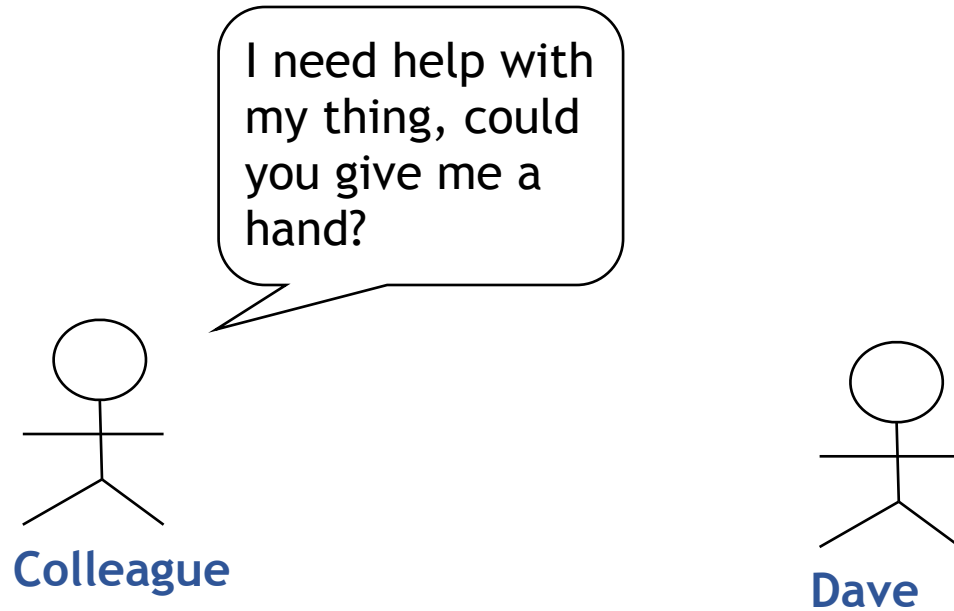
Open communication

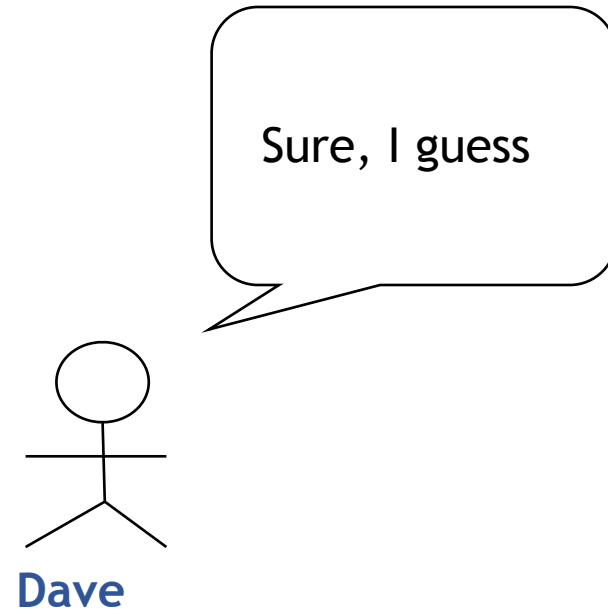


No sweat, plenty of things we can do from here.

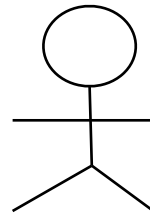
Lmk what you need

“I trust you to care about my work too”

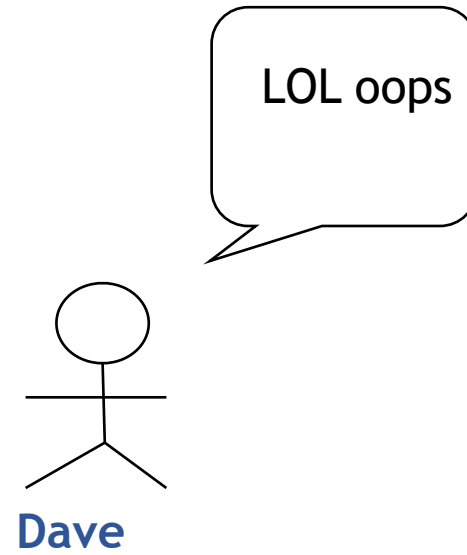
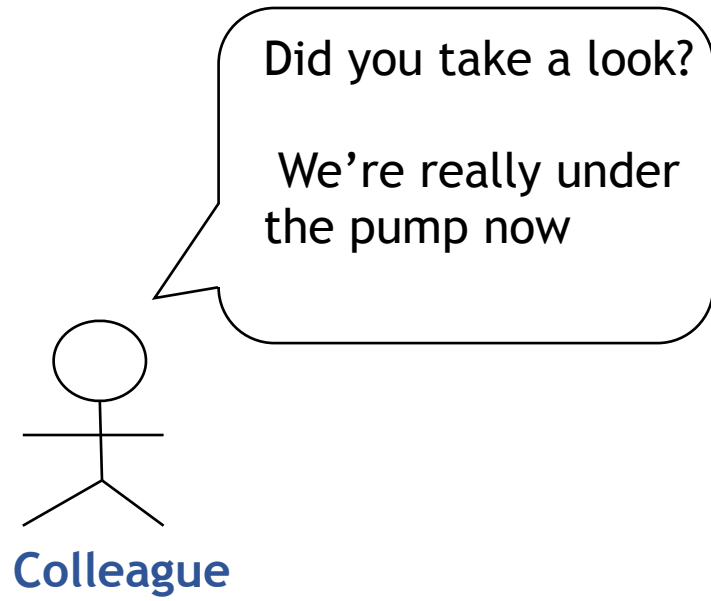




***Weeks
pass***

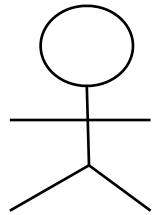


Dave





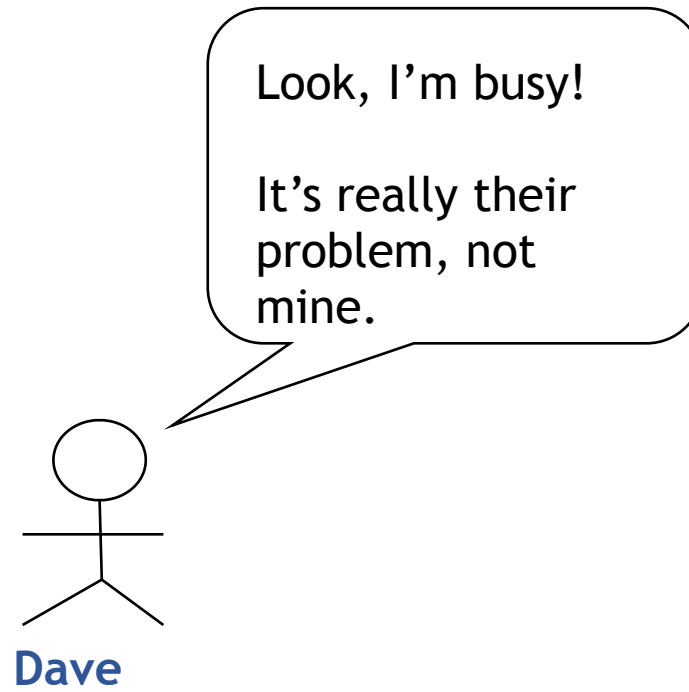
~~Terribt~~



Colleague



Dave



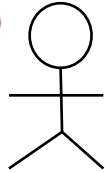
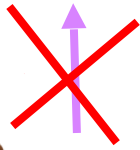
Look, I'm busy!

It's really their
problem, not
mine.

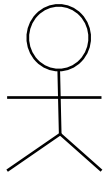
Dave



Goal



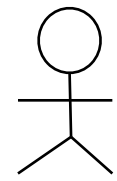
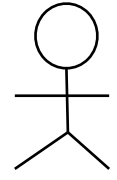
Dave



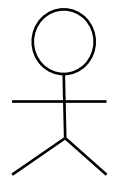
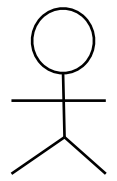
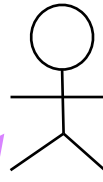
Colleague



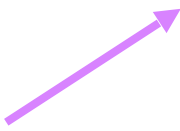
Goal

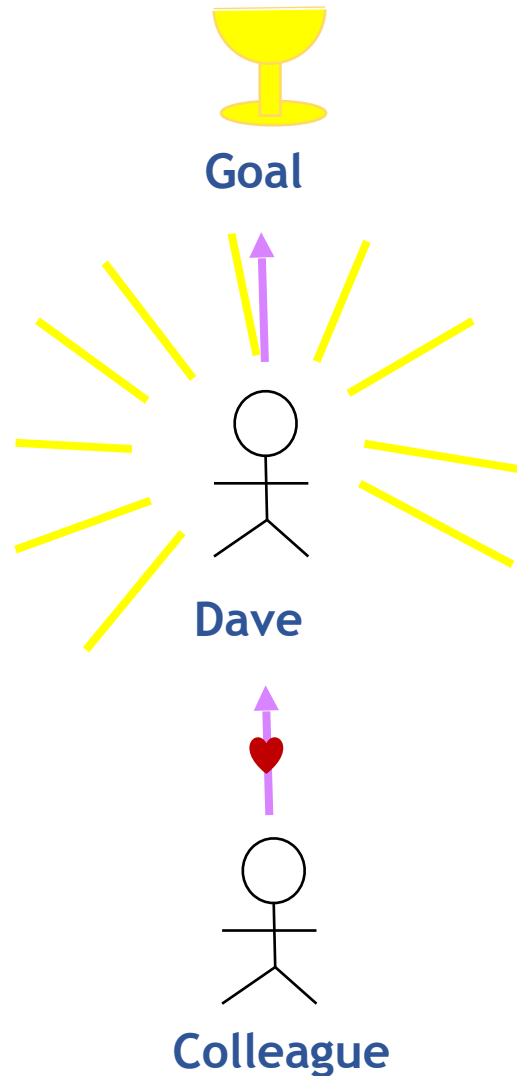


Dave

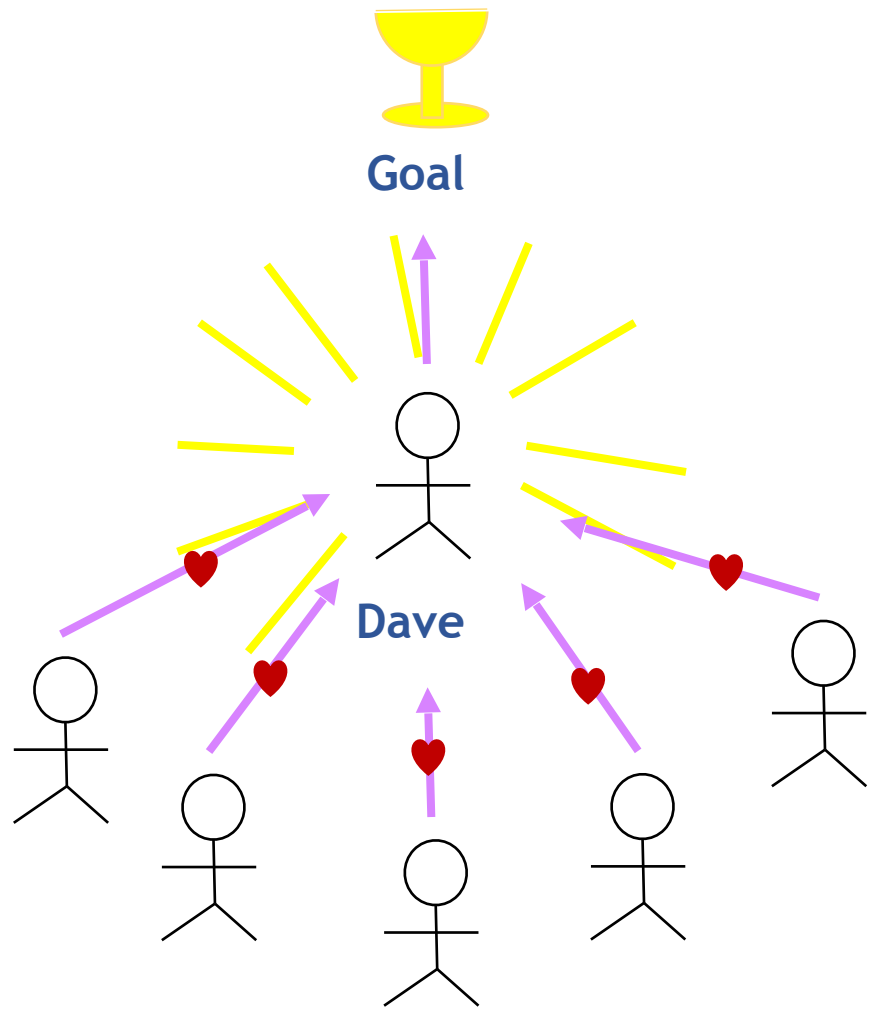


Colleague

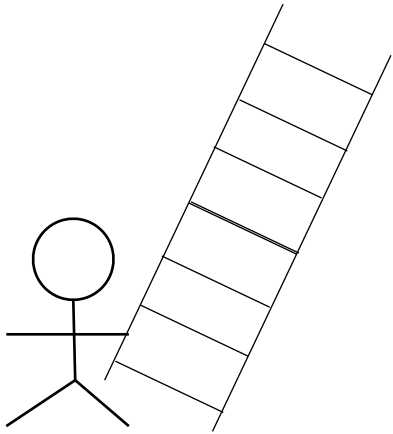




- Sure! Here you go
- I'll set aside some time to help
- I don't have time, but here's some people who might help
- Not sure, but try reading this

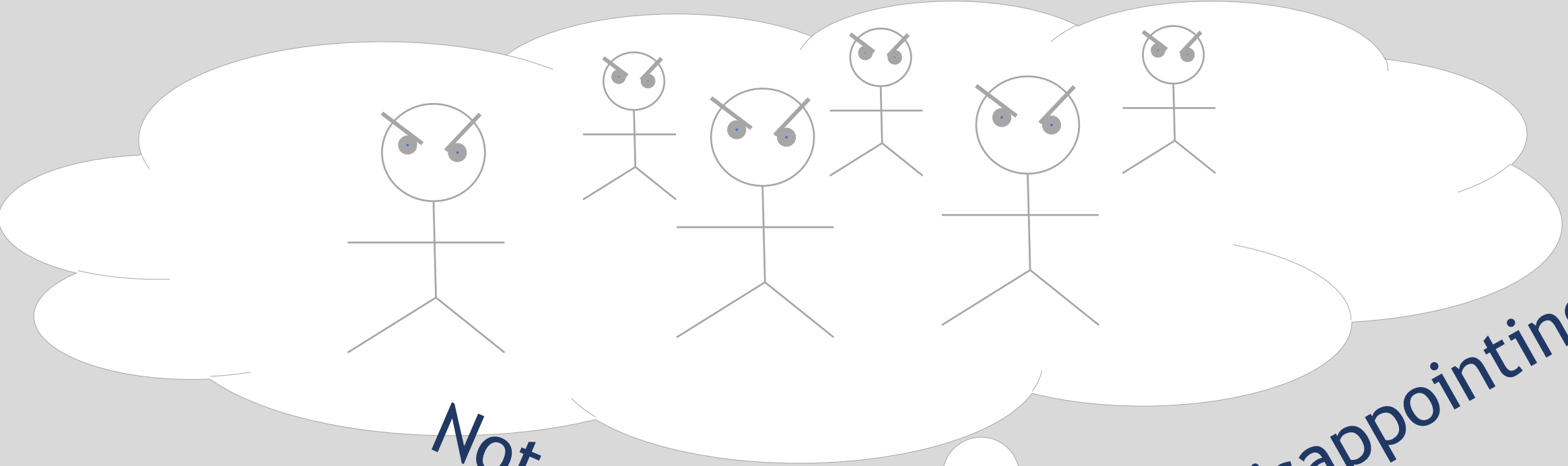


Helping others build trust

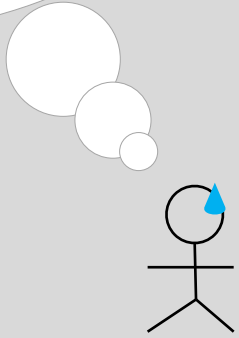


- "Don't be terrible" needs fixing in a shockingly high number of people
- Doesn't mean they lack talent
- Often just a lack of self-awareness
- Easy to mentor

Insecurities around leadership



Not good enough
Everyone knows



Disappointing
Don't belong

Feeling insecure:

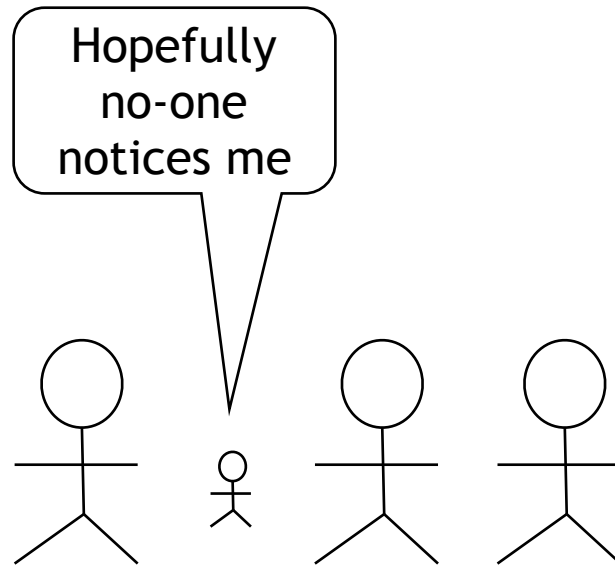
- Does not in any way indicate a lack of talent
- Does not in any way indicate a lack of leadership potential

BUT

- Learning to manage insecurities is essential
- Consequences are exacerbated by seniority

“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I will not even put my hand up in the first place”

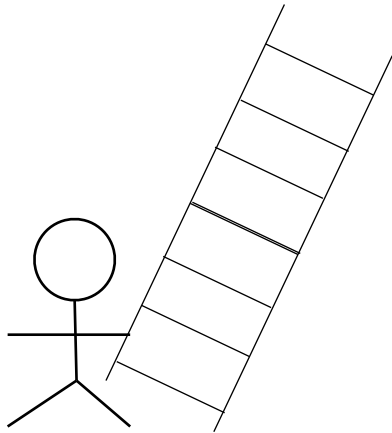


“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I will not even put my hand up in the first place”

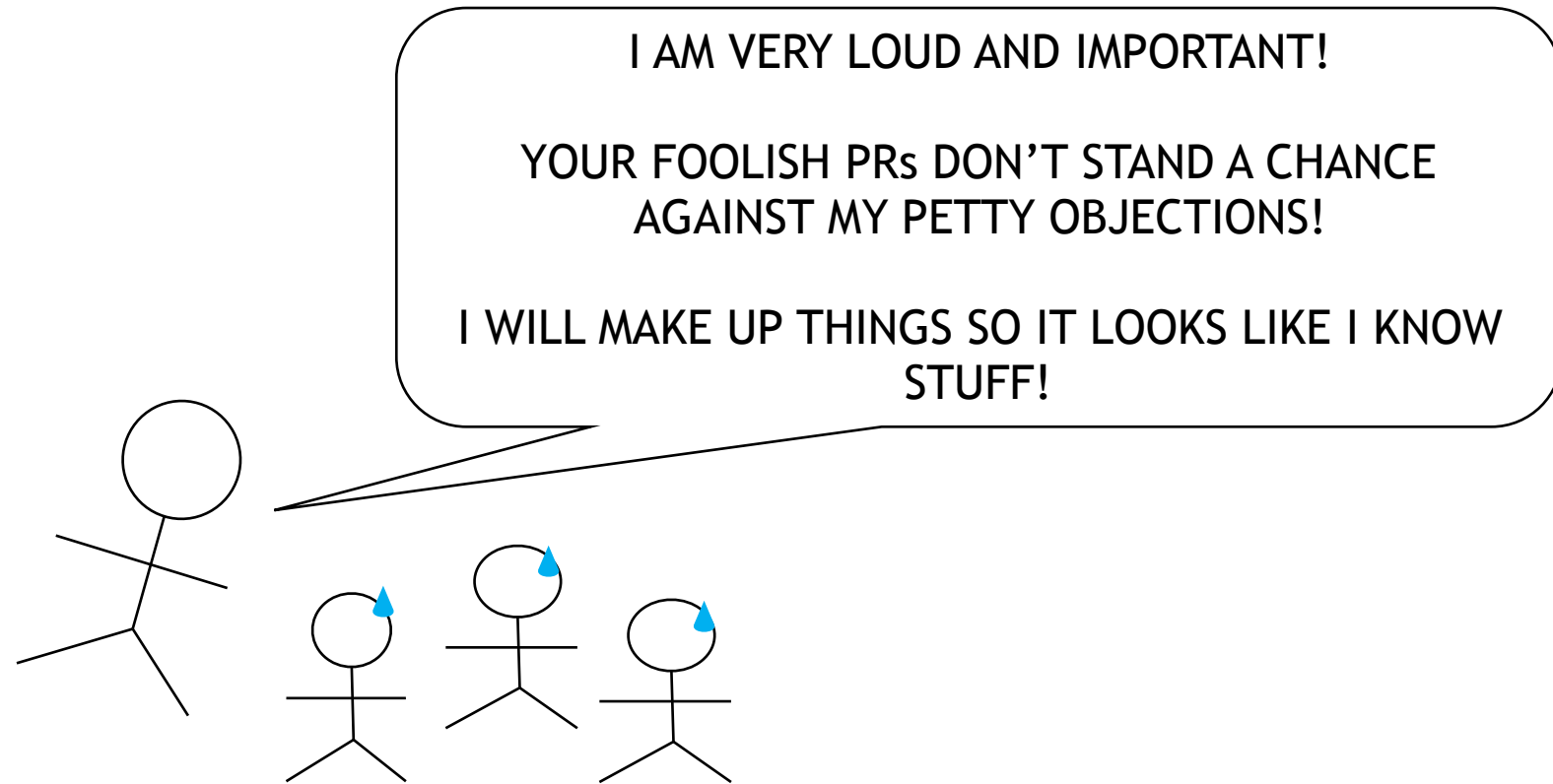
Mentor suggestions:

- Personal reassurance, encouragement
- Cultivate general personal safety
- Reduce cost of speaking up
- Seek out quiet voices at meetings, balance loudest
- Be aware of various forms of privilege



“I’m not actually good enough...

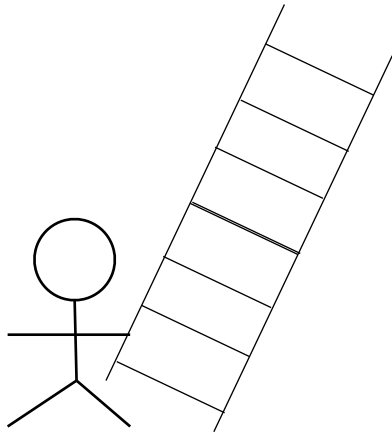
Therefore I will massively overcompensate by any means”



“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I will massively overcompensate by any means”

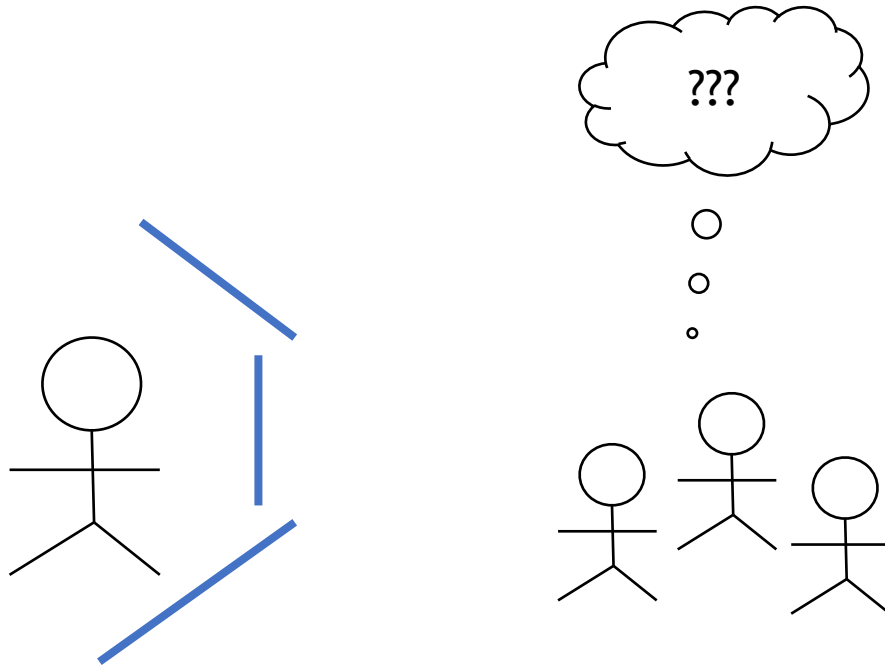
Mentor suggestions



- Immediate 1-1 advice to tone it down, increase self-awareness
- Reassure
- Requires strong trust to avoid defensive reaction
- May require removal of responsibility

“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I must be as defensively opaque as possible so people don’t ask questions”

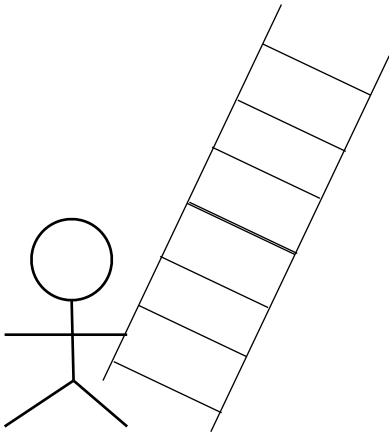


“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I must be as defensively opaque as possible so people don’t ask questions”

Mentor suggestions

- Can be hard to detect until it’s too late
- Personally encourage habits of openness

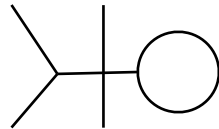


“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I am doomed and will freeze and wait for inevitable failure”



There's no point trying

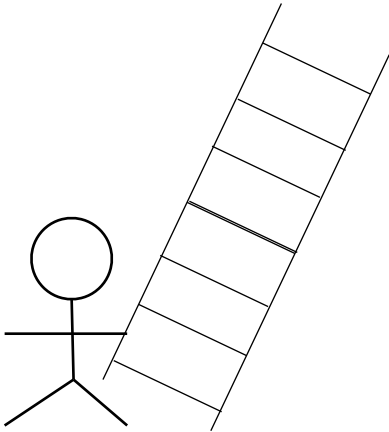


“I’m not actually good enough...

Therefore I am doomed and will freeze and wait for inevitable failure”

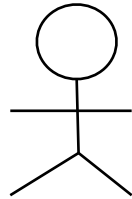
Mentor suggestions

- Super bad news
- Pretty hard to reverse at this point
- Removal of responsibilities likely to be a relief to all



Mistakes of inexperience: too rigid

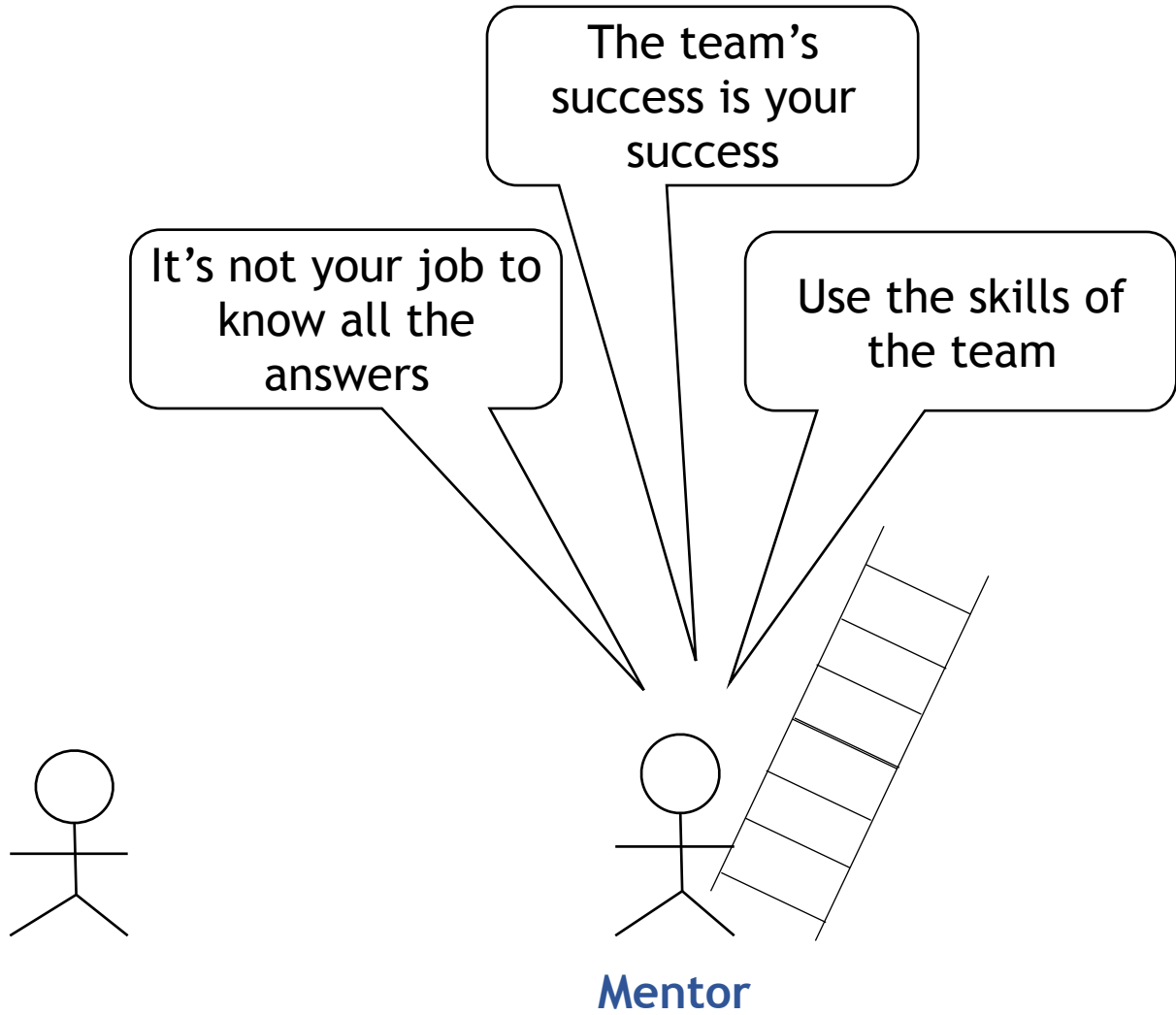
Do it this way, or else!



I'm supposed to know more than everyone else!

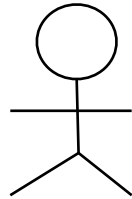
No-one will listen to me unless I make a lot of noise

I need to advertise my leaderiness, or my prestige will evaporate!



Mistakes of inexperience: too flexible

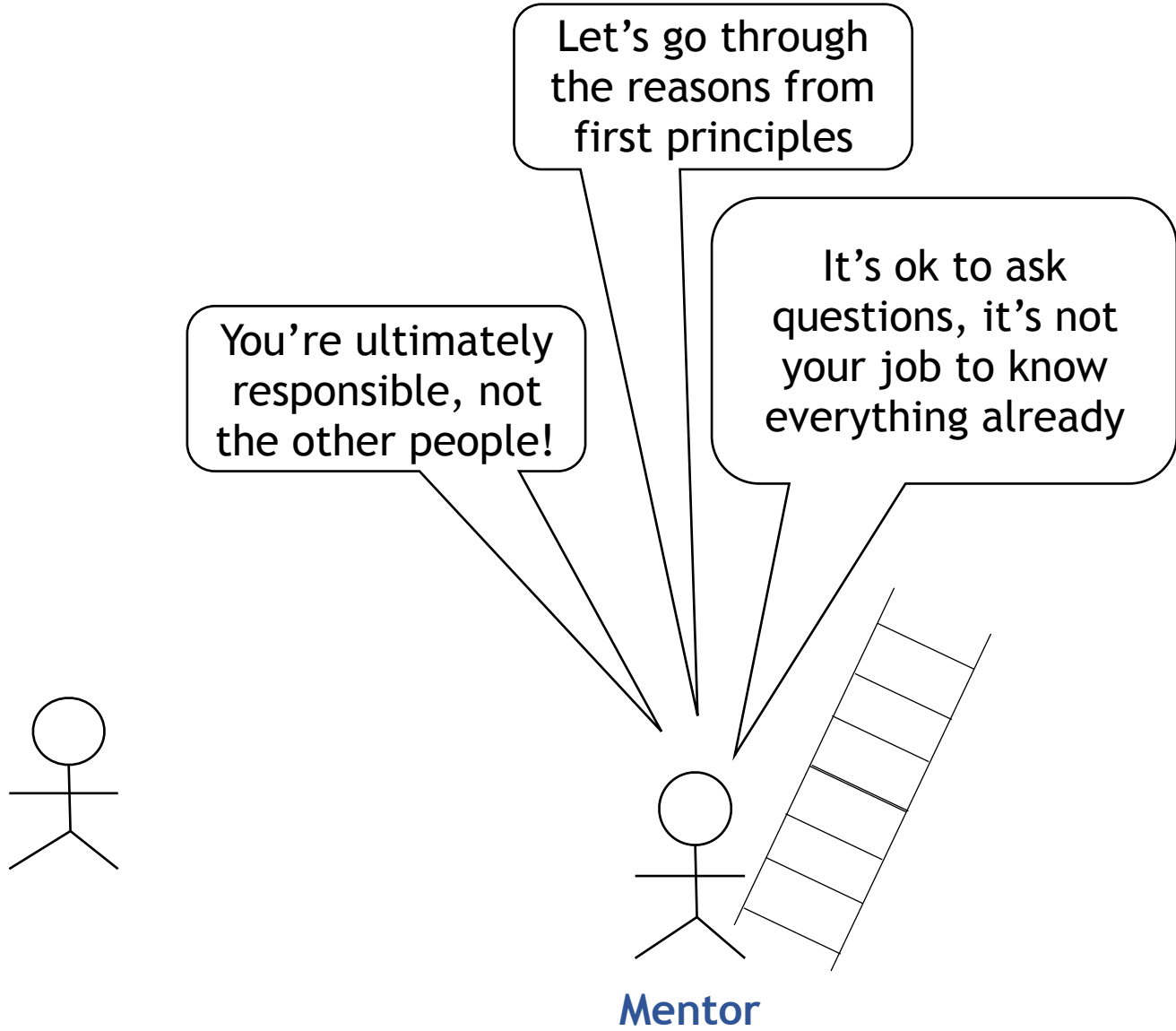
Sure, I guess, let's do what you want, it's probably fine.



Who am I to disagree?

They seem really confident.

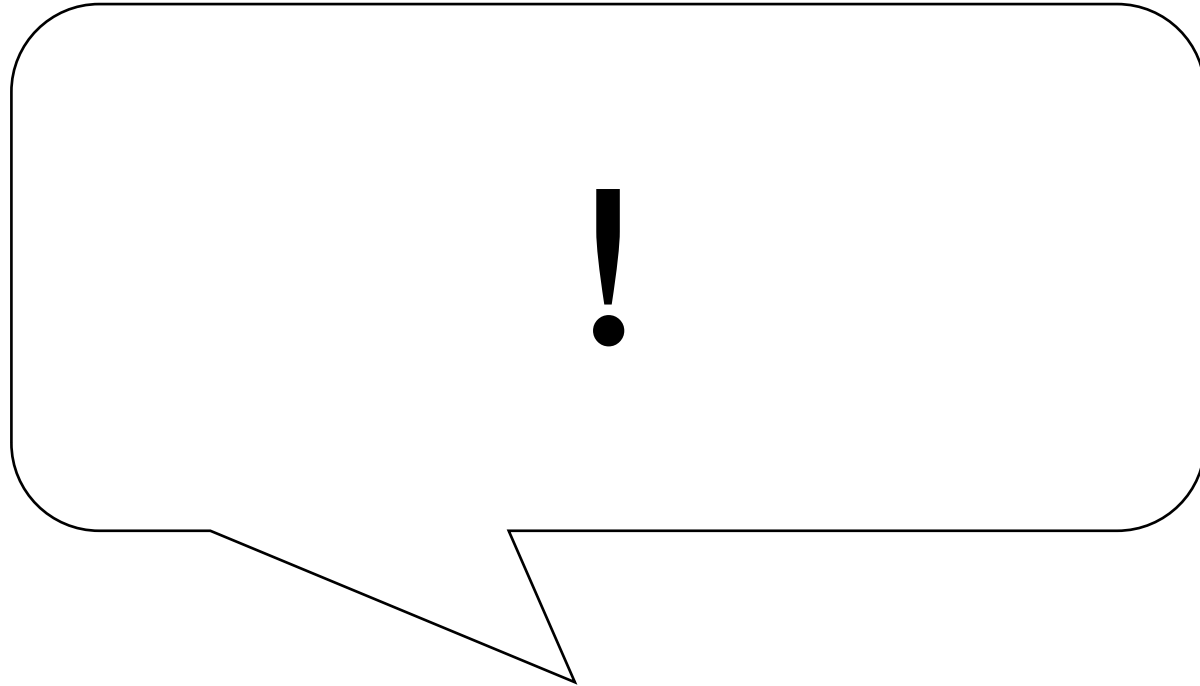
I'm not a real leader

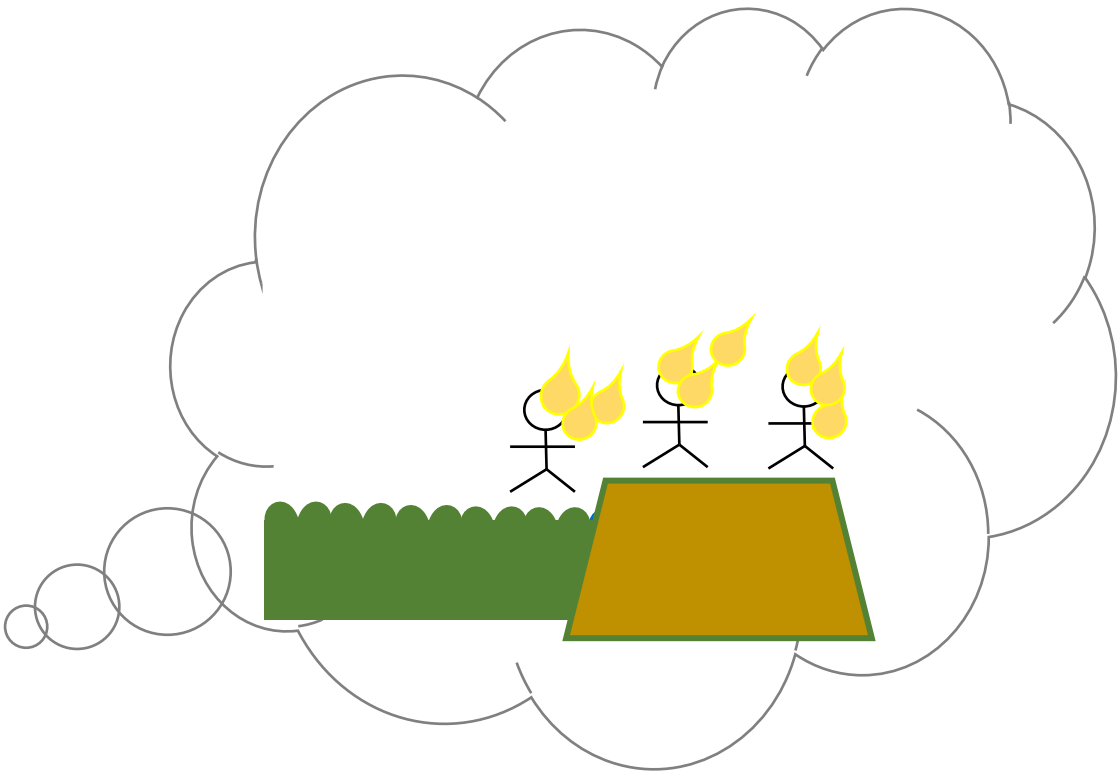
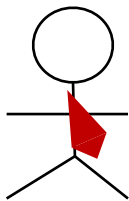
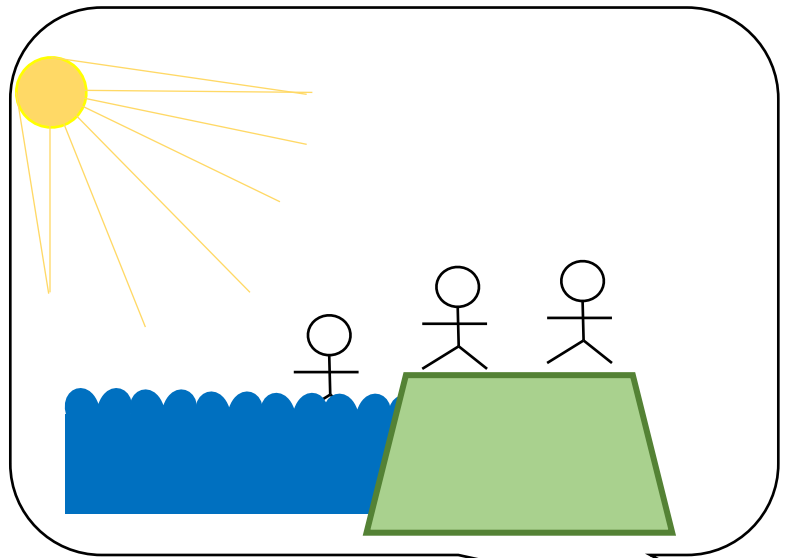


Handling insecurity

- Nothing to be ashamed of per se
- Harmful flow-on effects best pre-empted with cultural change
- Strong trust bonds necessary for frank individual feedback
- Senior leaders should set an example for openness

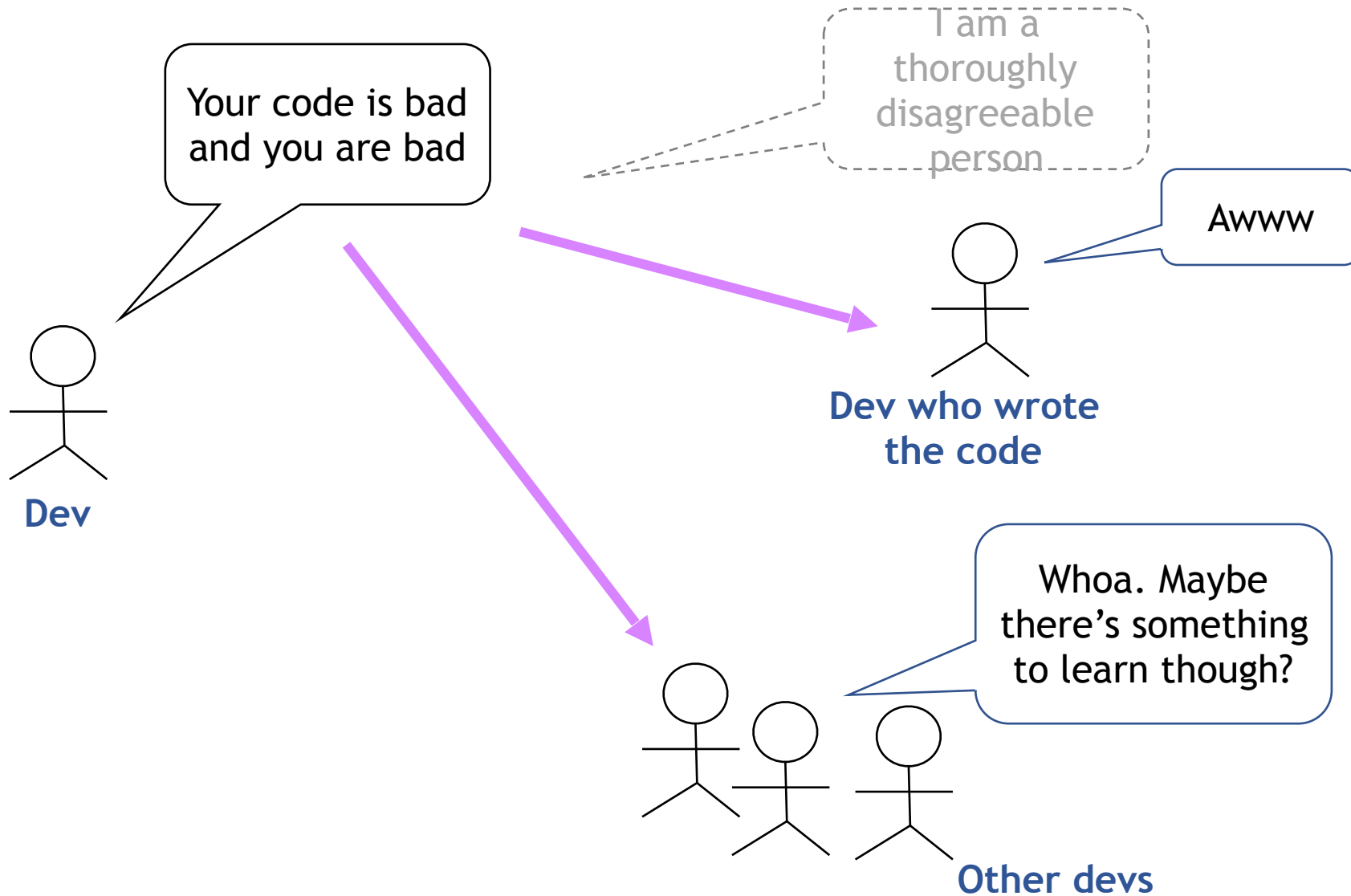
Words are actions





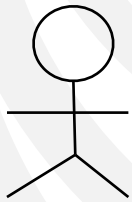
Words

Actions



Words

Your code is bad and you are bad



Very senior tech lead

Actions

I am a thoroughly disagreeable person

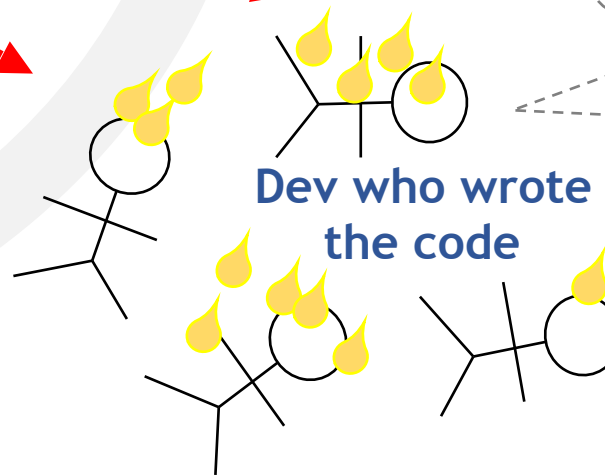
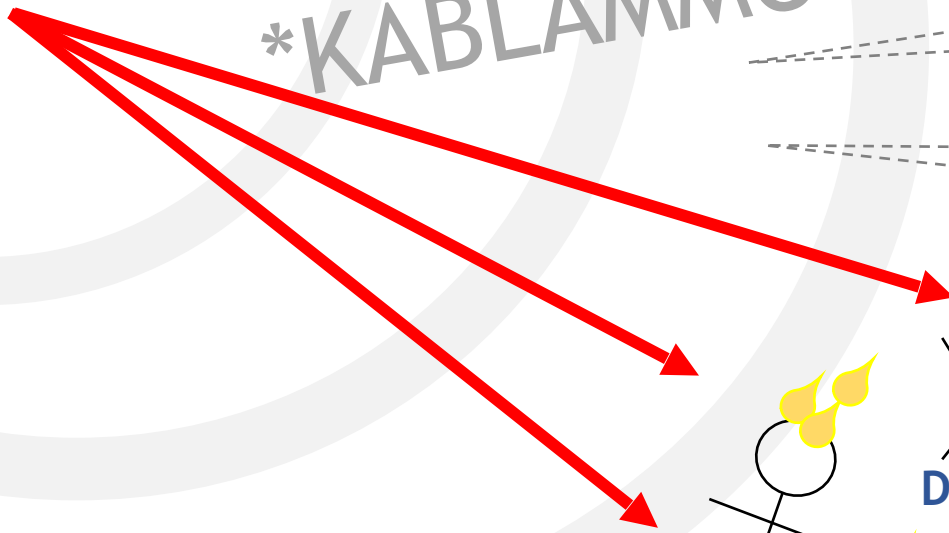
This is how leaders behave here

Stick your neck out, this will happen to you too

Big loss of face in front of peers

ARGHGH!!!!

KABLAMMO*

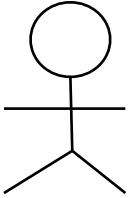


Dev who wrote the code

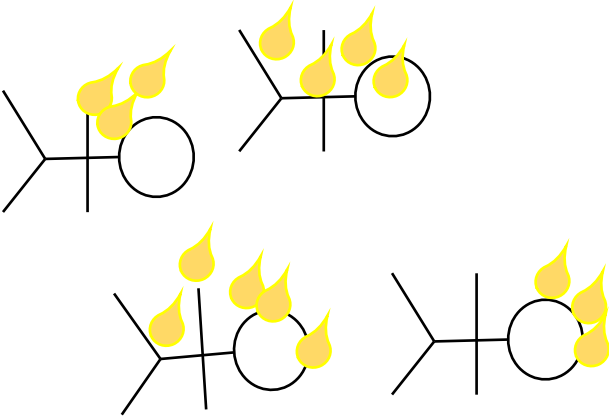
Everyone else

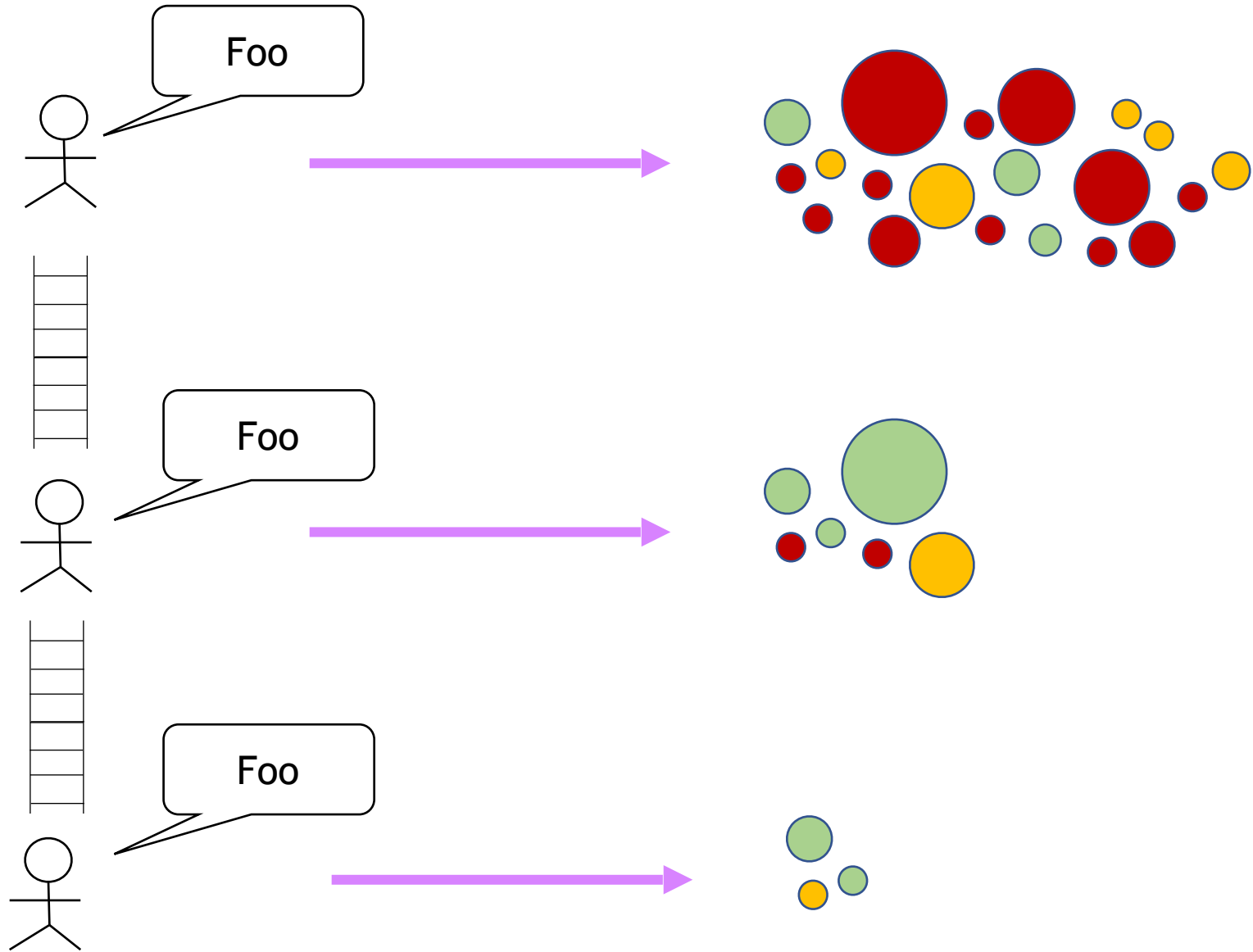
But they're the exact same words!

I'm just calling it like I see it

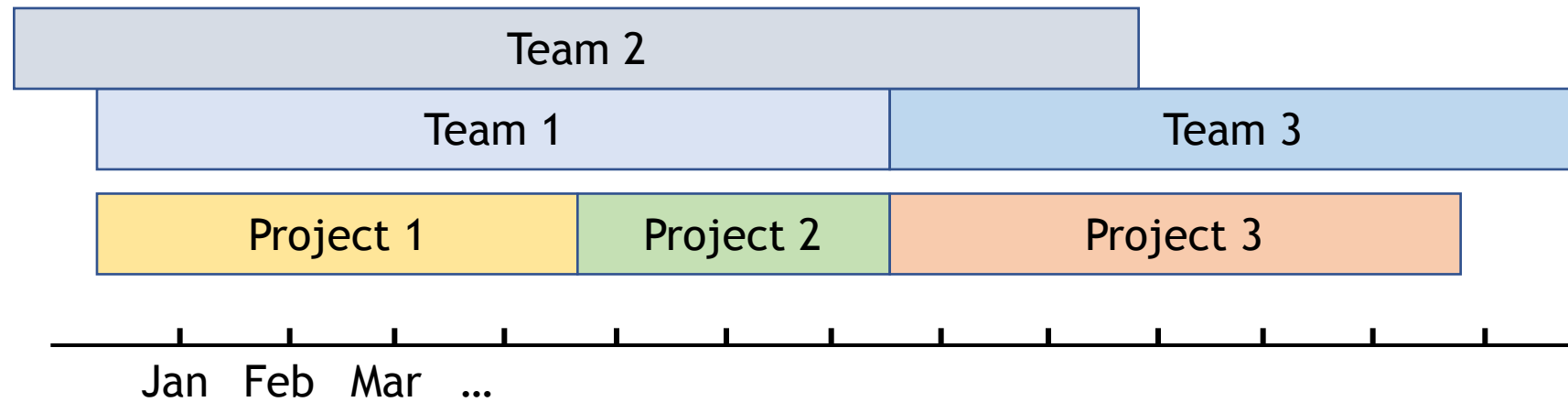


Very senior
tech lead

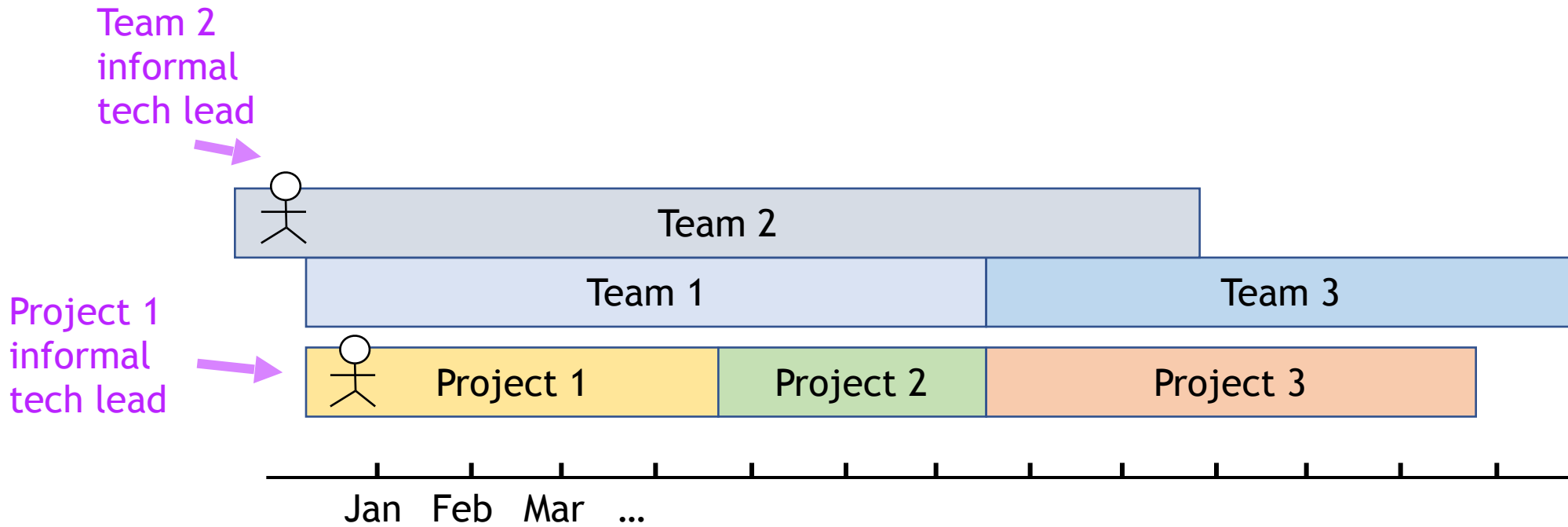




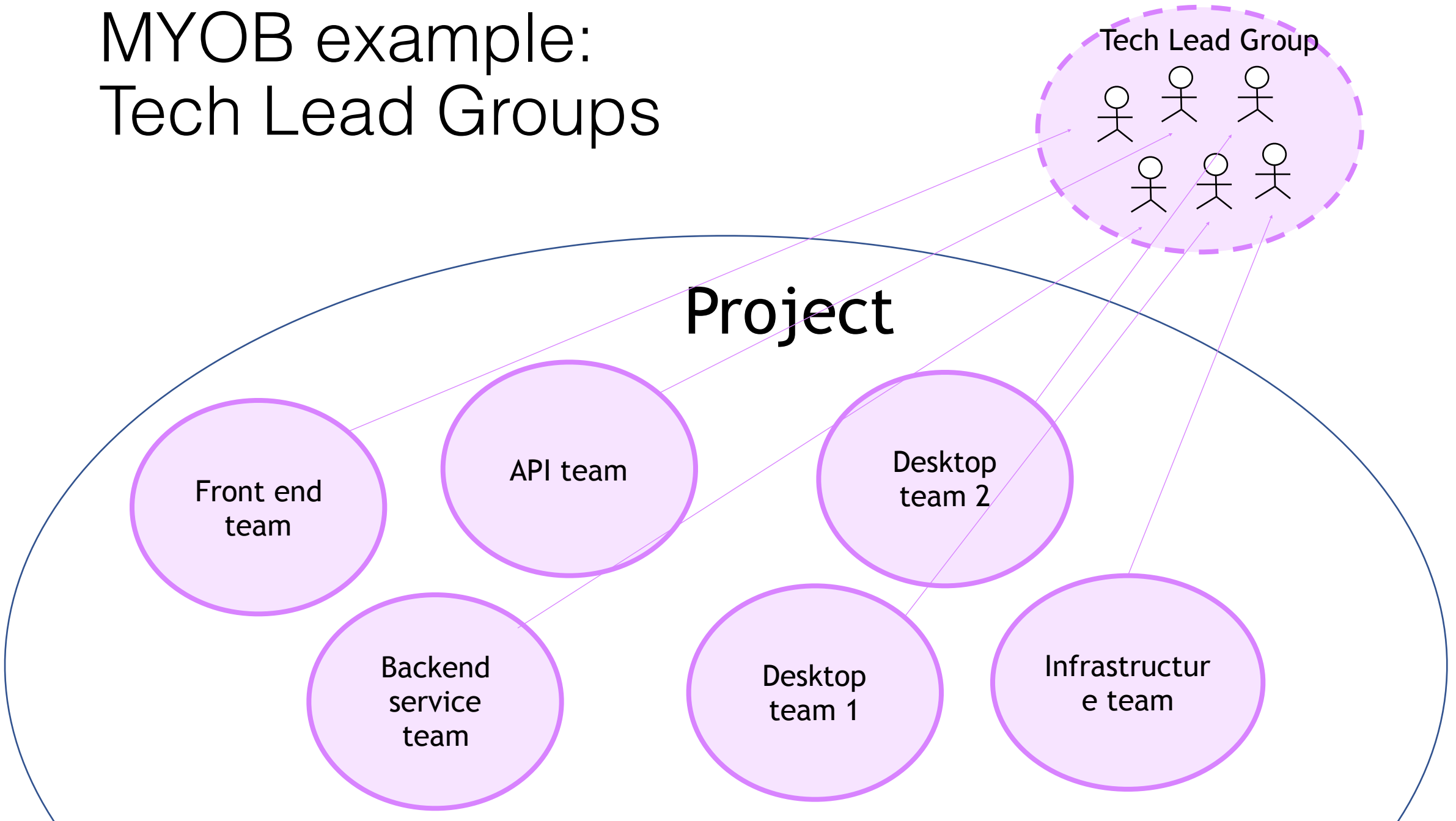
Creating opportunities



Creating opportunities



MYOB example: Tech Lead Groups

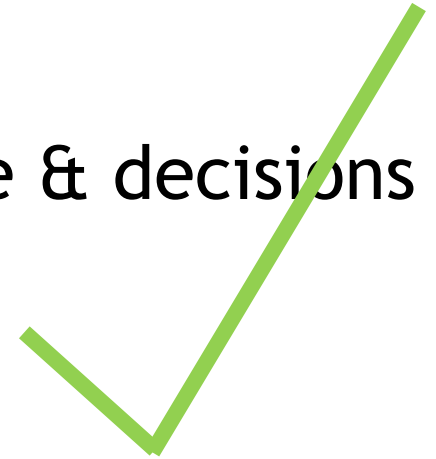


Tech Lead Group

- Reduce decision-making workload for architects
- Increase architect visibility into teams
- Increase teams' access to fast architecture advice & decisions
- Grow new tech leaders

Tech Lead Group

- Reduce decision-making workload for architects
- Increase architect visibility into teams
- Increase teams' access to fast architecture advice & decisions
- Grow new tech leaders



However:

- Confusion around scope of responsibility
- Decision-maker?
- Hard to balance team-work with TLG-work
- There are a range of situational pros & cons to all the different ways you can do this

Conclusion

- Growing tech leaders in-house is a Good Thing
- Bridging non-technical gaps is a big deal
 - Wider perspective
 - Building trust & relationships
 - Managing insecurities appropriately
 - Understanding words as actions
- Good mentoring makes a huge difference
 - 1-1 coaching
 - Setting an example
 - Timely intervention
 - Creating opportunities with informal org structure

