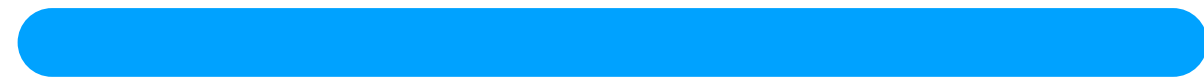
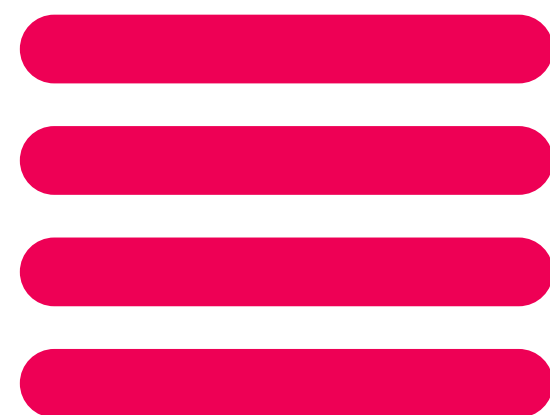


Time is your most precious asset.

How you spend it is the purest representation  
of your values and value.

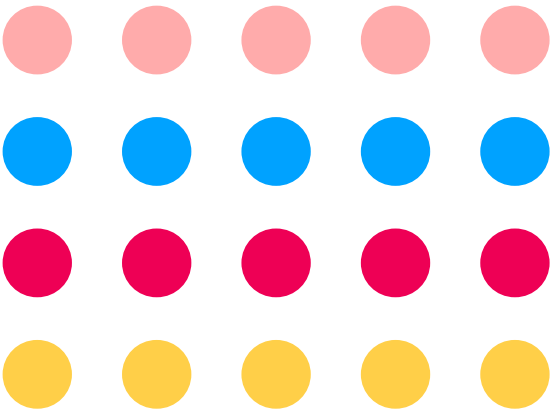
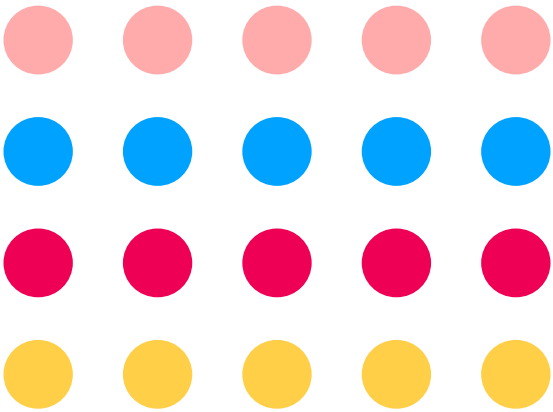
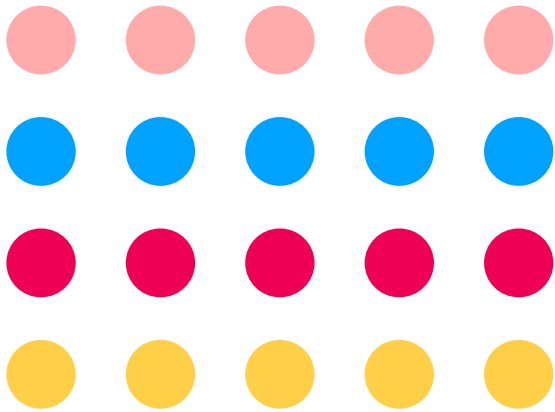


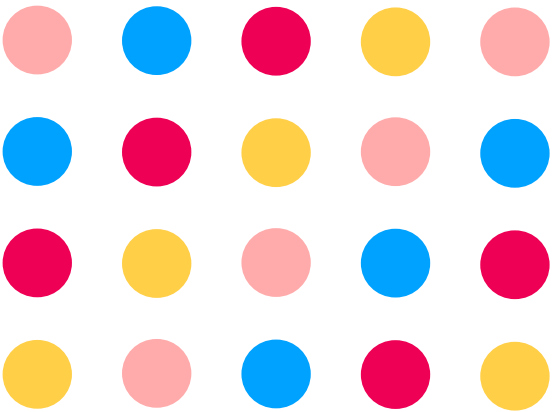
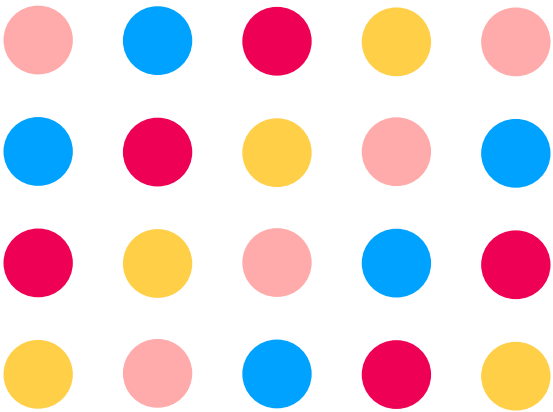
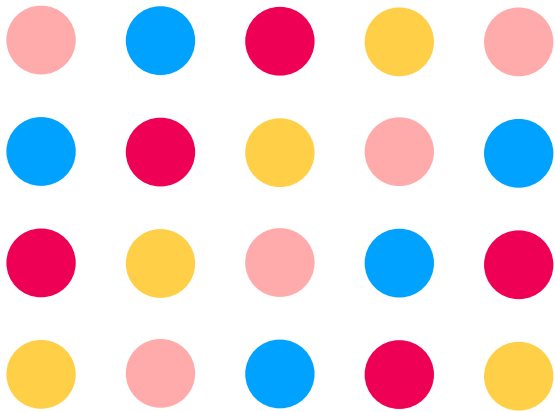
How will you spend it?

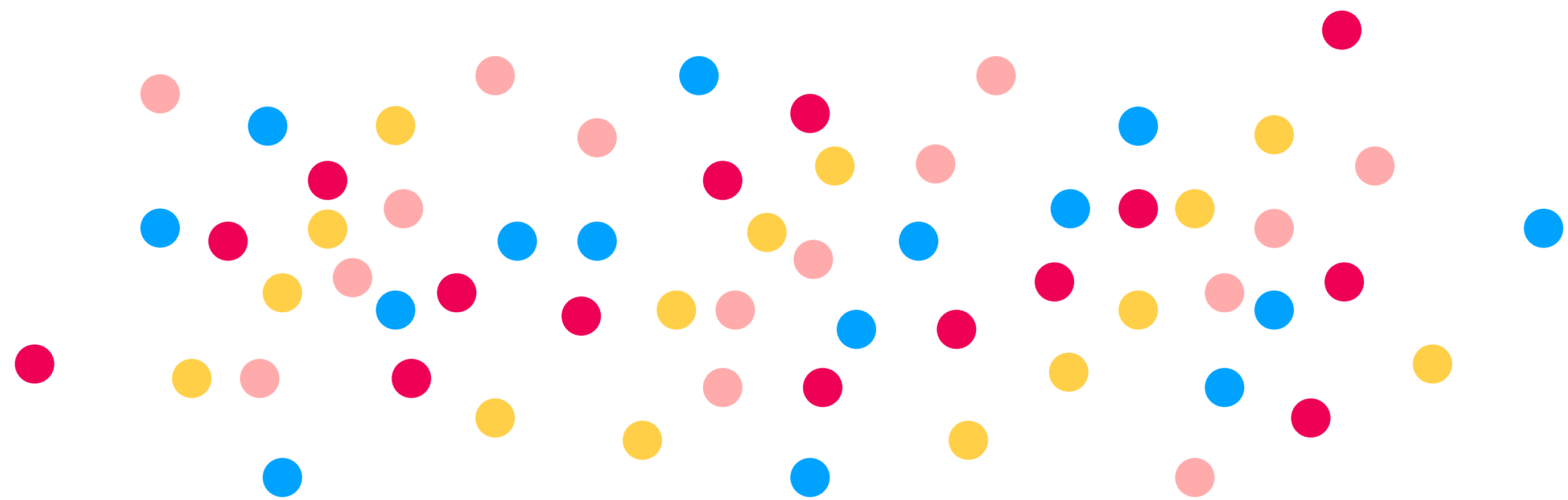




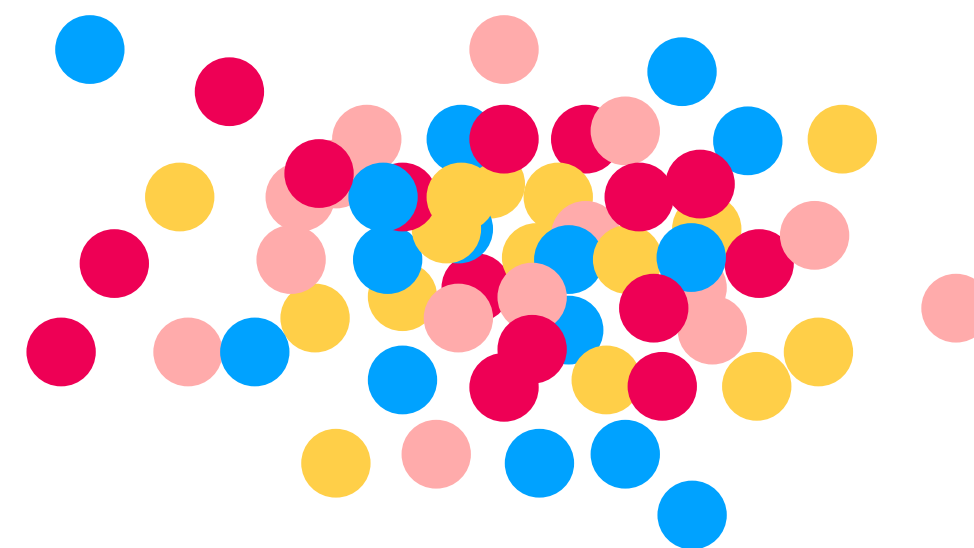








With intention.













**Results**



**Retention**





# Why your ~~design~~ team is **quitting**... and how to **fix it**.

Liam Thurston

*Senior Director of User Experience*

 @LiamThurston

**Loblaw**  
Digital



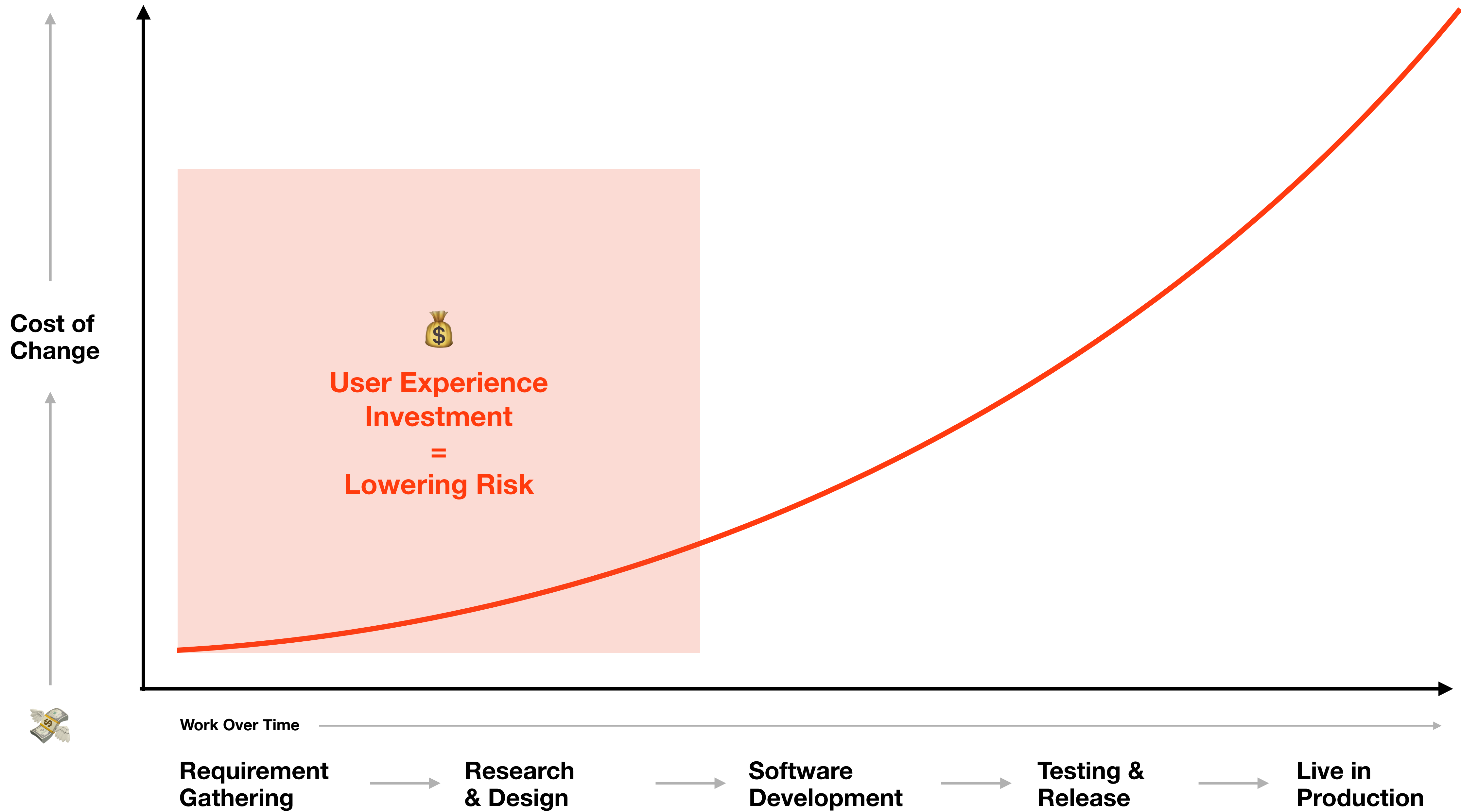
- 1. Lay the Foundation**
- 2. Ideate & Create**
- 3. Test & Learn, Repeat**

Liam Thurston

*Senior Director of User Experience*

 @LiamThurston

**Loblaw**  
Digital











NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

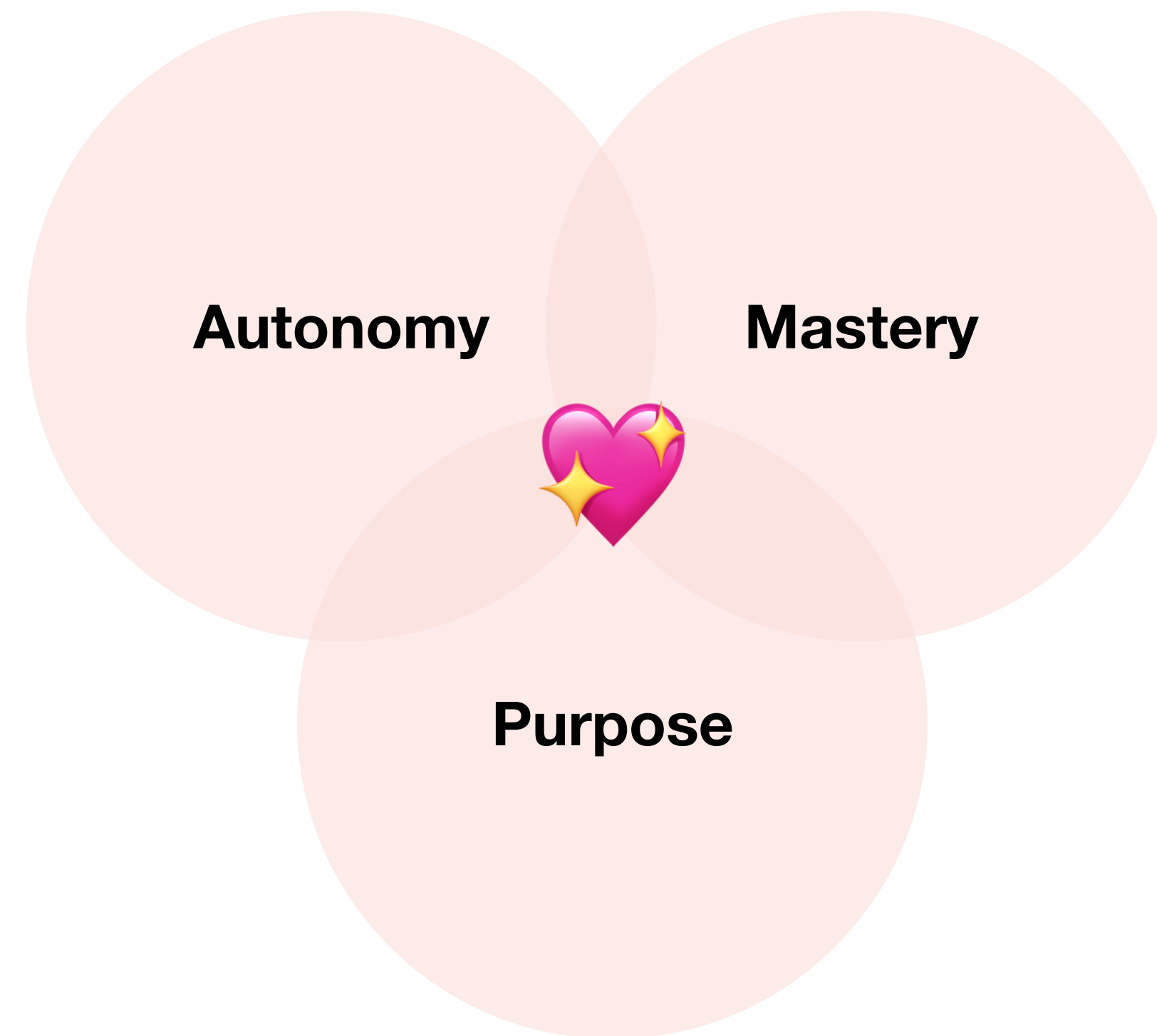
"Provocative and fascinating." —MALCOLM GLADWELL

Daniel H. Pink

author of *A Whole New Mind*

**DRIVE**

The Surprising Truth  
About What Motivates Us





NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

"Provocative and fascinating." —MALCOLM GLADWELL

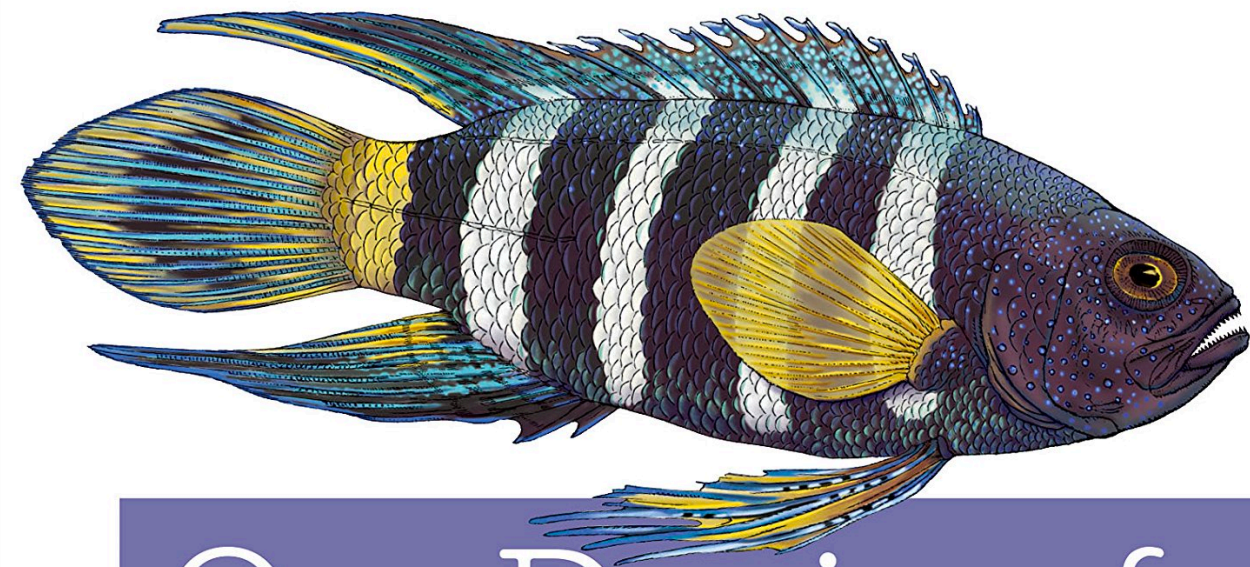
Daniel H. Pink

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DRIVE

The Surprising Truth  
About What Motivates Us

O'REILLY®



Org Design for  
Design Orgs

BUILDING AND MANAGING IN-HOUSE TEAMS



Peter Merholz & Kristin Skinner

WALL STREET JOURNAL BESTSELLER

"Are you a new manager? Are you a little scared? Fear not. Julie Zhuo is here to help. This book will get you on the right track and keep you there."

—DANIEL H. PINK, author of *When and Drive*

THE  
MAKING  
OF A  
MANAGER

WHAT TO DO  
WHEN EVERYONE  
LOOKS TO YOU

JULIE ZHUO



# April 2021

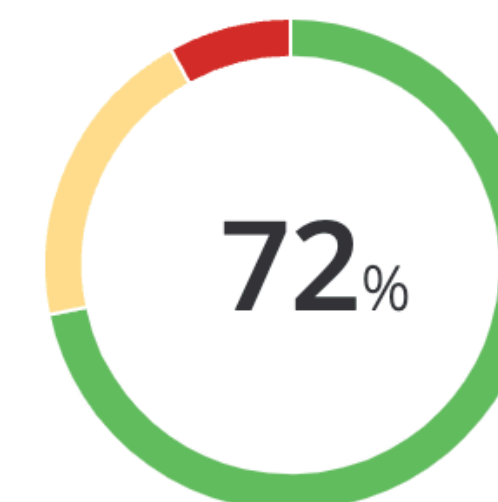
I receive feedback that helps me improve my performance.



I am satisfied with the opportunity to get a better job at my company.

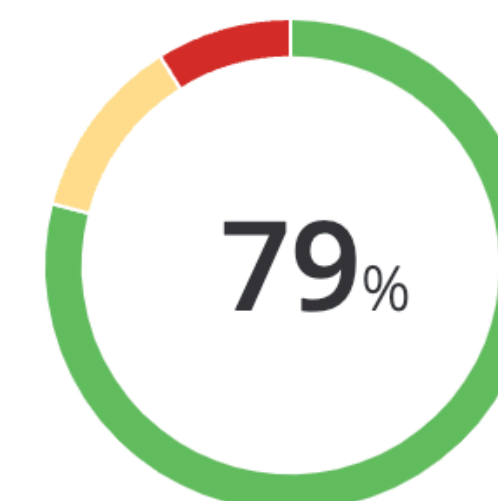


Engagement Rating ⓘ ⚠



October 2020 73% May 2020 77% Store Support Overall 83% Retail 90th -

Leadership Effectiveness Rating ⓘ ⚠



October 2020 78% May 2020 71% April 2019 89% Store Support Overall 86% Retail 90th -



What can be improved	Votes
<p>Uncertainty/ambiguity when it comes to level-ing up -----</p> <p>Could use more clear definitions on role expectations, product designer vs senior product design vs lead vs director etc -----</p> <p>More visibility into product design team initiatives</p>	14
Visibility in pay and opportunity for raises, compensation, and promotion	10

# Why?

1

## Team Purpose Statement

Why do we get out of bed in the morning? What does a good day look like? What's the legacy we want to leave in the world?

Why?

2

## Our Principles

Are there a set of rules that ensure we are living our purpose? Guidelines that focus our work to align to our values?

Why?



# How?

3

## Design & Research Operations

How we work together, how we get work done, and how our work creates impact. Things like:

- Our Design System
- Team Rituals
- Process Standardization
- Project scoping and tracking

How?

4

## Career Ladder

How are we tracking growth consistently across the team? How are each of us being intentional and pragmatic about what hard and soft skills we invest in?

How?

5

## Organizational Structure

How is the team structured for scale, efficiency, and clarity? How do we ensure that each team member benefits from focused mentorship and management.

How?

# What?

6

## Our Portfolio

What are the products that we're shipping? How do we share them? Do we have case studies that demonstrate our value?

What?

7

## Measuring Success

How do we measure success across our team and business? Which outcomes do we feel we can own and invest in improving?

What?

8

## Thought Leadership

What do we share with the design and research communities? How are we contributing to the broader conversation about human centred design in software.

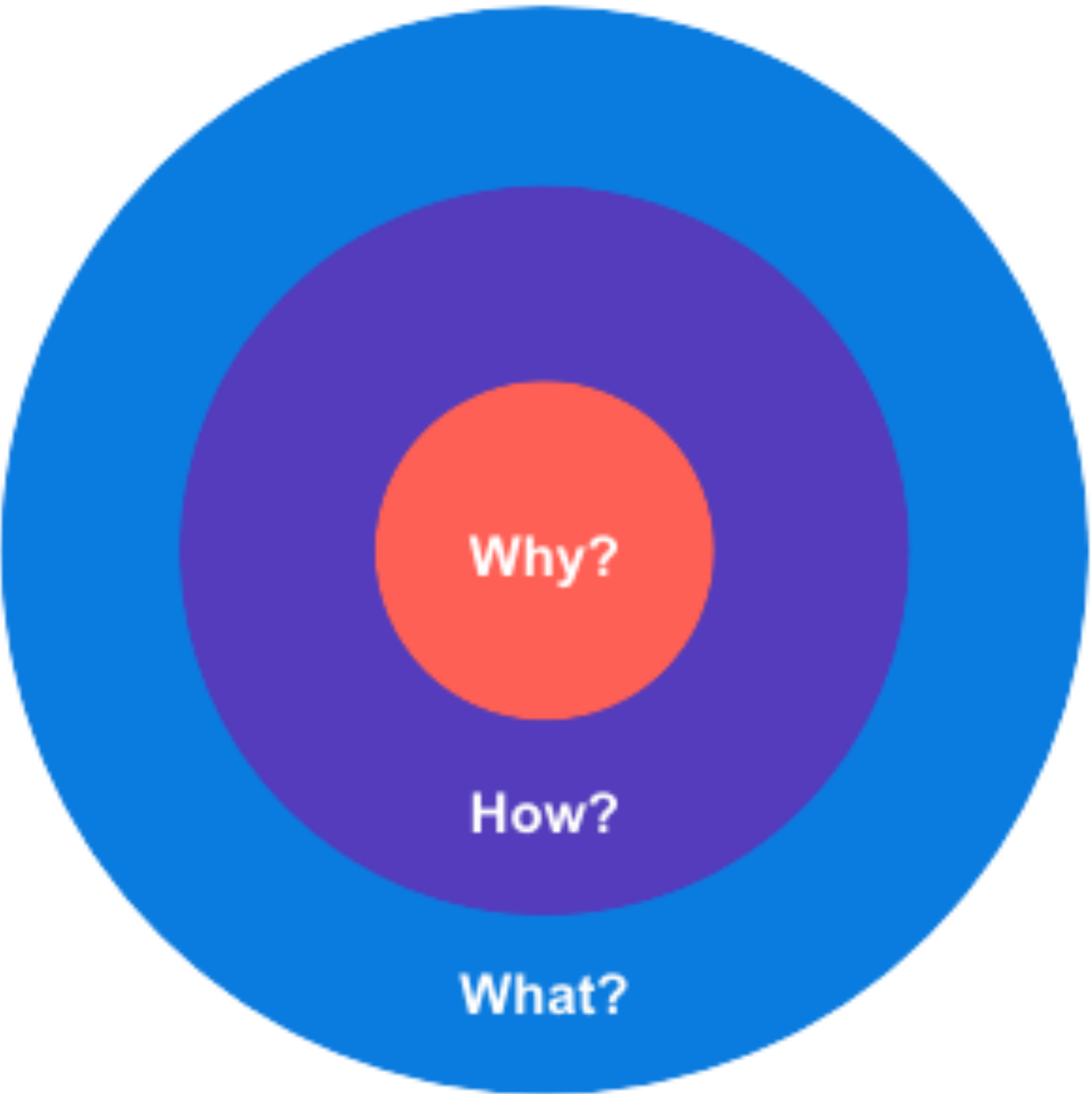
What?

9

## Recognition

How have we been recognized by the team, business, and community as a successful organization?

What?



Here’s where our collaborations will start, based on our votes:



Why?

How?

What?



## Purpose Statement Template

We \_\_\_\_\_  
What?

by \_\_\_\_\_  
How?

so that \_\_\_\_\_  
Why?



### What?

Create the  
best product  
experiences  
possible

Make data-  
informed  
decisions

deliver cx  
excellence

build  
meaningful  
experiences  
for our users  
and teams

add some  
ease into  
Canadians'  
day

Design  
meaningful and  
inspiring  
digitally enabled  
experiences

### How?

By including  
our customers'  
needs in  
everything we  
do

by integrating  
user research  
and analytics

working  
as a  
team

collaborating  
to understand  
their values  
and pain  
points

designing  
simple digital  
experiences  
they can use

by understanding  
how Canadians  
access and  
engage with our  
products and  
services

### Why?

So that we  
solve essential  
problems for  
all Canadians.

so that we  
have  
confidence in  
the direction  
of our designs



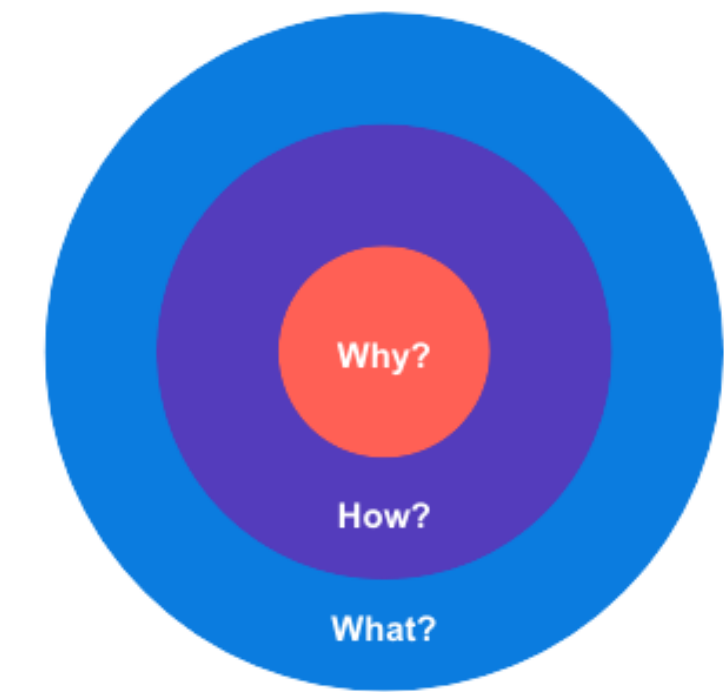
we can have  
a positive  
impact in  
their lives

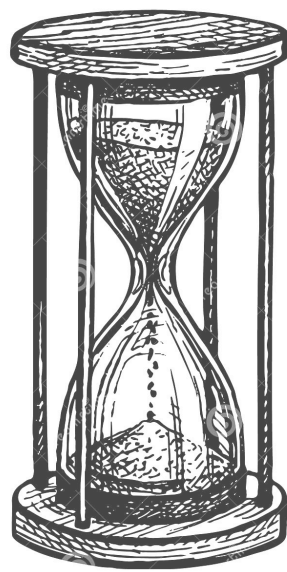
to minimize  
stress in  
people's  
lives

improve and  
enrich the well-  
being of  
humans across  
Canada.

## Our Purpose

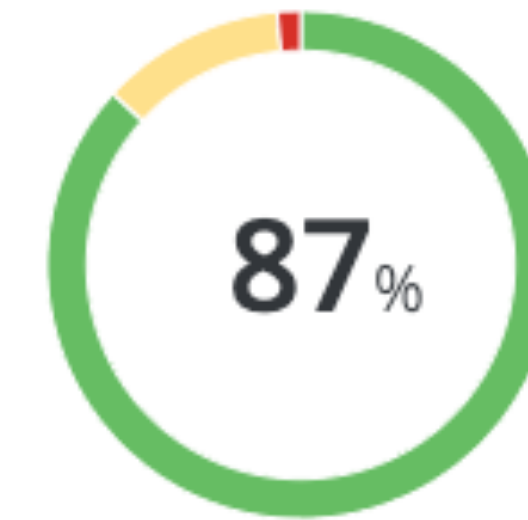
**We create valuable digital experiences by empathizing with human needs in order to improve the well-being of all Canadians.**





# October 2021

Engagement Rating ⓘ



+15%

April 2021 72%    October 2020 73%    May 2020 77%    Store Support Overall 83%    Global 90th 88%

I receive feedback that helps me improve my performance.



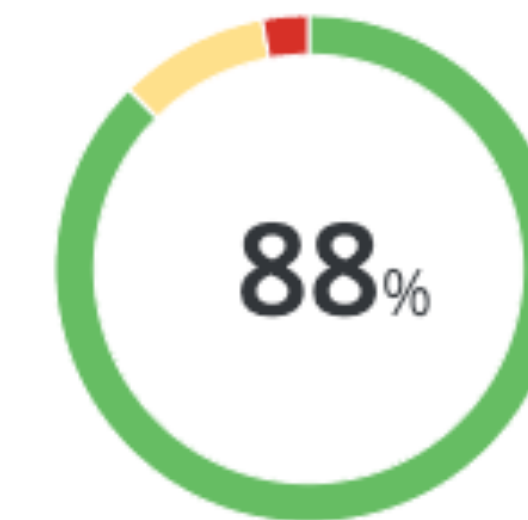
+23%

I am satisfied with the opportunity to get a better job at my company.



+36%

Leadership Effectiveness Rating ⓘ



+9%

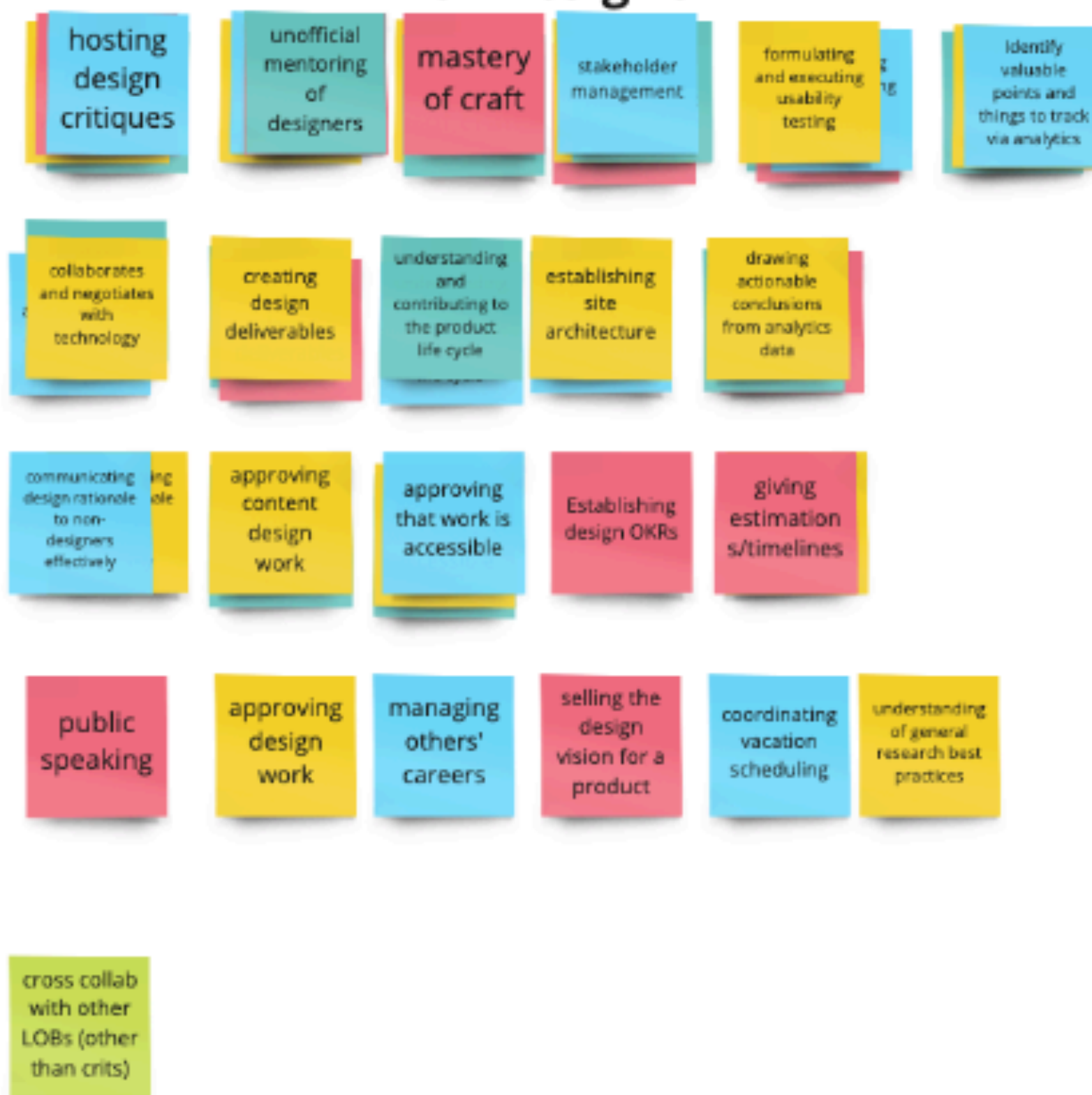
April 2021 79%    October 2020 78%    May 2020 71%    Store Support Overall 85%

# Laying the Foundation



Whats missing?  
Add your own points

## Sr Designer



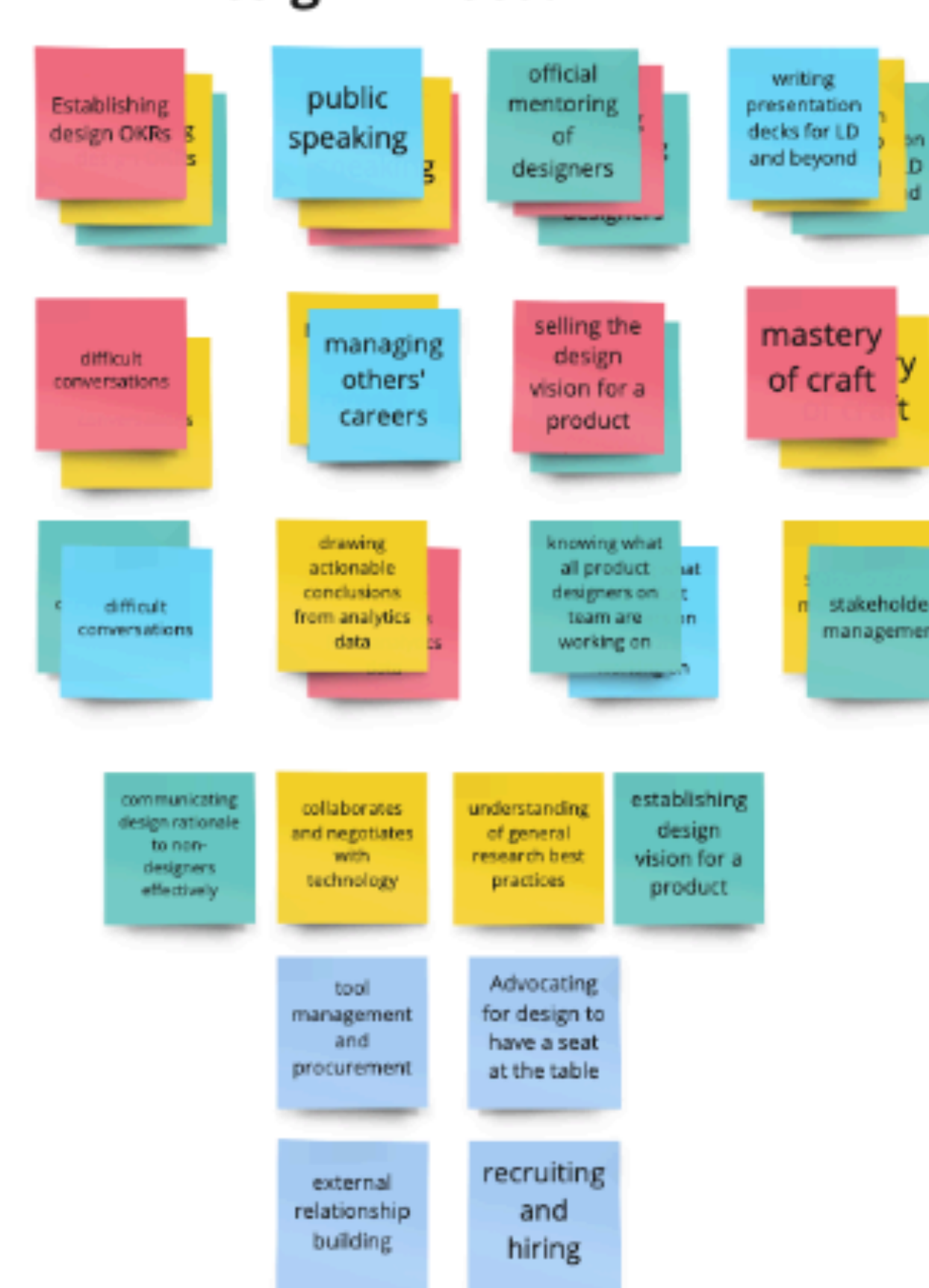
Whats missing?  
Add your own points

## Design Lead



Whats missing?  
Add your own points

## Design Director





# Figma Product Design Ladder

There are 6 levels as a Product Designer at Figma. As we're still a small company, there are no official titles yet. We're all just "Designers", just as Engineers here are all "Engineers". There are however expectations at different levels of seniority in your career that we recognize with appropriate pay scales and responsibilities. We do not yet have a separate manager track, or a communication design track yet; hierarchy is simple and flat. There are 6 themes that we use across each level to adequately recognize the breadth of responsibilities we have as Designers, plus room for one additional focus area:

- ▶ 🧠 **Product Strategy** (*Before you work*) — Designing the right thing
- ▶ 🛠️ **Craft + Quality** (*While you work*) — Designing the thing, right
- ▶ 🌈 **Communication + Collaboration** (*Working together*) — Being clear
- ▶ 🚀 **Action + Impact** (*Shipping*) — Being efficient and productive
- ▶ 👥 **Leveling Up Others** (*Internal Influence*) — Improving design team
- ▶ 🧲 **Independence** (*Self-sufficiency*) — Working proactively without s
- ▶ 🧙 \_\_\_\_\_ (*Bonus*) — Community, Figma / Tooling expertise, Subj

### Skills chart

Aa Skills	≡ Level 1	≡ Level 2	≡ Level 3
🧠 <b>Product Strategy</b>	You ask good questions to clarify objectives of the project. You understand basic project goals.	You can read and interpret product requirements, and present multiple paths forward early on	You deeply understand the current industry landscape, and can identify missing pieces in your project

### Individual Contributor Step Placement

Level	Step 1	Step 2
Level 1 Entry	Ownership: No ownership, receives instructions on nearly all tasks	Ownership: No ownership, receives instructions on nearly all tasks
	Initiative: None expected, does work as directed	Initiative: Low initiative expected, does work as directed
Level 2 Developing	Ownership: Works on individual tasks mostly independently  Initiative: Begins deeper questioning of processes in order to improve them	Ownership: Works on individual tasks completely independently  Initiative: Deep questioning of processes; begins to suggest improvements

## 1. People

How you lead and manage people and teams in order to grow their impact and scale their effectiveness as the company grows.

Competencies	Design Manager I	Design Manager II <i>In addition to Design Manager I</i>	Senior Design Manager <i>In addition to Design Manager II</i>	Design Director <i>In addition to Senior Design Manager</i>
1.1 Leadership	Start having impact through people by developing great relationships with designers, helping and challenging them to succeed	Help designers grow their skills, expertise, knowledge, and understanding of how they can level up	Grow and deliver outstanding designers by guiding them through many levels of career progression	Uplevel the team by defining performance standards, strategy, and evolving the team to scale
2.1 Product Strategy				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide clear feedback, coaching, and guidance across the Design function</li><li>• Grow the team's performance, set clear expectations and goals, ensure we reach them</li><li>• Inspire and motivate the team to deliver the once-in-a-career opportunity we have</li></ul>
3.1 Design Process				<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Design the org structure/shape to meet the business needs</li><li>• Create clear definitions of responsibilities at all levels</li><li>• Recruit people at senior levels, influence R&amp;D headcount planning with a hiring strategy</li><li>• Ensure our process is delivering good work for customers and company, highlight ways it needs to evolve</li></ul>

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Featured frameworks

PM/Design Career Ladders

View framework →

Engineering Competency Matrix

View framework →

Engineering Ladder Template

View framework →

Kristin Skinner

	Level 4	Level 5
1. Business Context	Establish the business context, develop strategy	Articulate a compelling vision; help run the company
2. Content Strategy	Lead Designer, Lead Content Strategist, Lead UX Researcher	Principal Designer, Design Director, Creative Director, VP of Design
3. Achievements	Delivered successful work at the scope of 'product areas,' roughly 10-15 years experience	Lead teams in framing and solving hard problems; has driven innovative efforts that uncovered new value with new kinds of experiences
4. Scope	Leading the solution of undefined problem spaces (e.g., "How do people complete a transaction?")	Entire user experiences (e.g., "What is the end-to-end shopper experience?")
5. Process	Develop the process/approach for tackling a problem	Establish a philosophy/mindset for how the team approaches its work (e.g., The Double Diamond)
6. People	Creating the team you need; defining the problem with cross-functional leads	Establishing the organizational structure, defining roles, opening headcount
7. Cross-functional Meetings	Driving the meeting	Stakeholder for whom the meeting exists

# hard skills

technical skills

# soft skills

professional skills

hard skills

**Hard skills are those talents and abilities that can be measured. They are usually specific to a particular job, and they can be learned through schooling or on the-job-training.**

- **Tasks & Tactics**
- **Specific**
- **Measurable**
- **Results-oriented**

**“What you do.”**

## **soft skills**

**Soft skills are less defined skills that often apply not only to one specific job but are universal.**

- **Professional Traits**
- **Harder to Measure**
- **Leadership Behaviours**
- **Universal**

**“How you do it.”**

**ux  
soft  
skills**

**product  
design**

**user  
research**

**customer  
support**



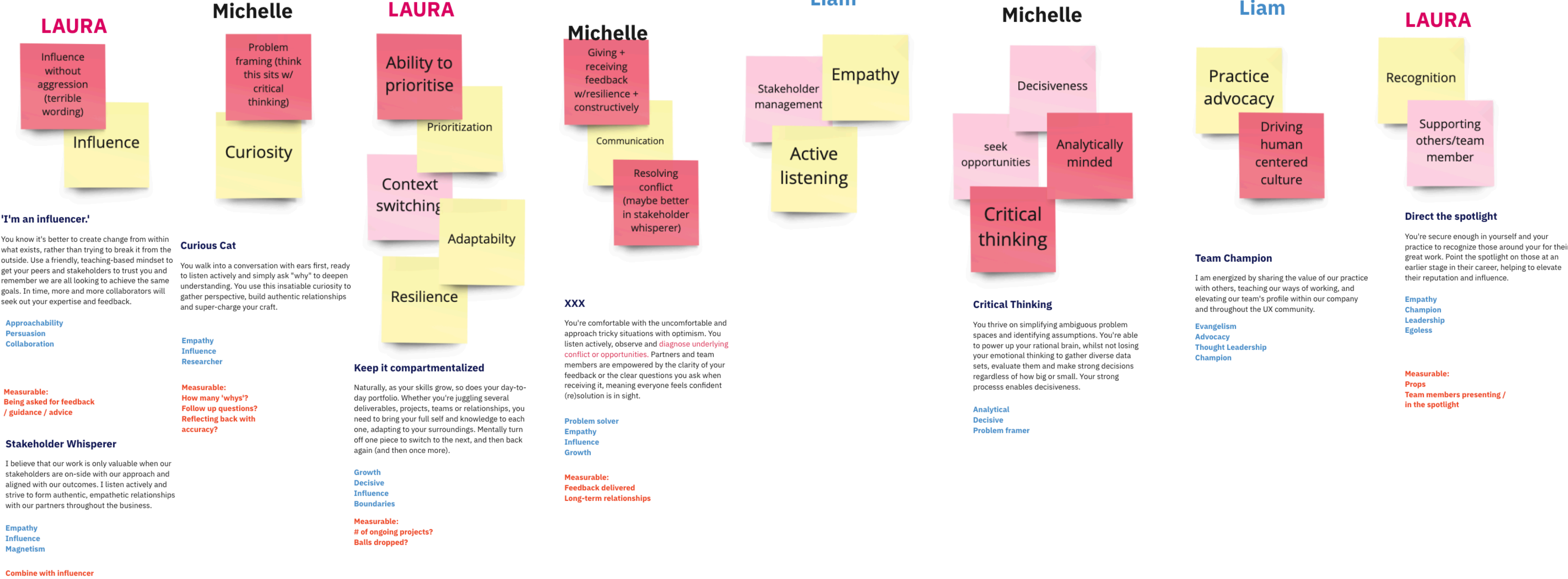


# Ideate & Create



- Act like an owner
- Customer at the centre
- Powered by data
- Raise the bar
- Further together
- Ship often


SOFT SKILLS





# Universal Soft Skills

**Influence: The Stakeholder Whisperer**

You know that it's more effective to create change  within by treating our partners and stakeholders as equals. You build trust with others by leading with curiosity and empathy, then helping set and achieve shared outcomes with our team. Over time, more people seek you out as a subject

**Organization: The Context Switcher**

You are energized by juggling several initiatives, deliverables, teams, or relationships. You bring your full self and expertise to each one by adapting to the context required with ease, and create healthy boundaries between them.

**Communication: Being Radically Candid**

You provide clear and direct feedback regularly, which benefits your partners and team members. You're comfortable with the uncomfortable and approach tricky situations with optimism. You care personally, while challenging directly.


**Strategy: The Critical Thinker**

You ask questions to simplify ambiguous problem spaces, and listen actively in order to understand. Your curiosity helps you gather evidence that exposes the 'why' and leads to rational thinking. You have emotional, empathetic instincts and a strong process that enables decisiveness.

**Reputation: Team Champion**

You are energized by sharing the value of our practice with others, teaching our ways of working, and elevating our team's profile within our company and throughout the UX community. You are seen as a practice and thought leader for your discipline.

**Recognition: Direct the Spotlight**

You're secure enough in yourself and your practice to recognize those around you for their  at work, and self-aware enough to play to your own strengths and weaknesses. You point the spotlight on those at an earlier stage in their career, helping to elevate their reputation and influence.

**Leadership: The Conductor**

You step into the tough conversations fearlessly. You advocate for ideal conditions for success but recognize when compromise and change is needed. You create focus and clear priorities when pivots happen. You own this, but share feedback and accountability with your team in order to help them grow.

**Change: Growth Mindset**

You know that change is the only constant, and are constantly learning and challenging the norms around you. You are invigorated by change, and embrace a love of life-long learning and resilience that is essential for great accomplishment.

**Culture: The Inclusive Connector**

You create inclusive, safe, and equitable spaces for folks to collaborate, and ensure that your team are treated as equals. You empower and teach others by connecting them to the right resources, and cultivate the right relationships to be resourceful within our organization.

New additions based on the last round of feedback and discussion with the team:

Change: Growth Mindset  
Culture: The Inclusive Connector

## Product Design Hard Skills

## Universal Hard Skills

## Management Hard Skills

### Execution

**Interaction Design**

Knowing when and why to apply the following interaction design processes, and doing it with care and craft:

- Information architecture: Creating the blueprint for the experiences and content that users will interact with.
- User Flows: Defining the linear flows of the user's experience. Happy paths, dead-ends, omnichannel consideration and documentation.
- Wireframes: Creating the architecture of components and content within each experience.

### Strategy

**Problem Discovery, Definition & Goal Setting**

Collaborating with your team to ensure that problems and associated initiatives and outcomes are well-defined and documented based on objective data.

**Customer & Commercial Understanding**

Understanding your customer segments, mindsets, and problems in concert with how your team's success metrics create outcomes for the business.

### Collaboration

**Facilitation**


Leading cross-functional discussions, running workshops and connecting the right people that help teams align on goals, approach and expectations. This also involves intake & scoping: identifying, receiving, assessing, and scoping new work for you and your team.

**Feedback & Critique**

Providing structured feedback on work in progress and shared experiences with peers inside, and outside, the design discipline. Also the ability to solicit, gracefully receive and prioritize feedback from

### Management

**Diversity & Inclusion**

Ensuring equal opportunity access and equitable compensation, fostering erse viewpoints and teams. Our design teams reflect the communities we are designing for.

**Recruiting & Hiring**

Attracting and retaining high-performing talent to Loblaw Digital by developing your professional brand within the community (thought leadership, relationship management).

**Team Culture**

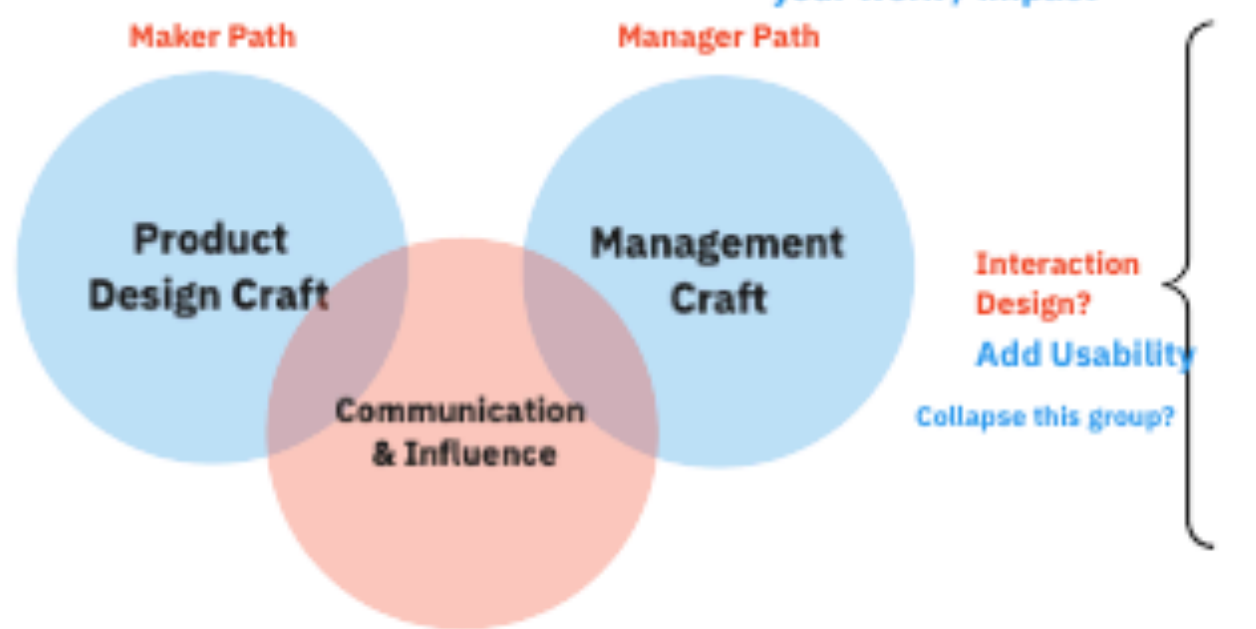
DE&I is mentioned in hard, soft, and management skills. I like that, but am happy to be corrected.

Optional people leadership path



# Product Design

## Hard Skills



What are hard vs soft skills?

Facilitation of cross-functional discussions  
Running workshops

## UX Soft Skills WIP

Influence  
The Stakeholder Whisperer

Organization  
The Context Switcher

Communication  
Being Radically Candid

Strategy  
The Critical Thinker

Reputation  
Team Champion

Recognition  
Direct the Spotlight

Incorporate collaboration / team player into soft or hard skills?

Leadership = soft skills?

Add Experimentation?  
Does evaluative research / experimentation / analysis  
Design Validation?

More relevant at senior tiers

Tracking success of your work?  
Not Core Expectations?

Product Design – Hard Skills Matrix

Spheres of Influence over time / teams / products / roadmaps

Description	Co-Op / Junior	Intermediate	Senior	Lead
Product Design Craft	I know this exists You need to contribute to 5 of these 11 rows	I have some experience doing this You need to contribute to 7 of these 11 rows	I lead these activities You need to contribute to 9 of these 11 rows	I lead, teach, and m
Problem Discovery, Definition & Goal Setting Collaborating with your team to ensure that problems and associated initiatives and outcomes are well-defined and documented based on objective data.				
Information Architecture Creating the blueprint for the experiences and content that users will interact with.				
User Flows Defining the linear flows of the user's experience. Happy paths, dead-ends, omnichannel consideration and documentation.				
Wireframes Creating the architecture of components and content within each experience.				
Visual Design Rendering the high-fidelity interfaces that we will code. Layout, typography, general graphic design, and motion design proficiency.				
Design System Thinking Ensuring that design solutions utilize and contribute to the team's design system.				
Design Research Contributing to and leading user research activities and synthesizing their results.				
Process & Project Management Planning, prioritizing, tracking, and accounting for the tasks, deliverables, and timelines for product design work.				
Accessibility Ensuring that our experiences are built with accessibility as a priority. Add Usability?				
Data Proficiency / Fluency? Fluency Leveraging various sources of data to derive insight and help prioritize work.				
Content Design Creating and consulting on the right functional language to guide the user through the flow.				
Service - level Thinking Helping document and plan the overall end-to-end service we are creating.				
Communication				
Design Transparency soft skill? Designing in the open by actively sharing work in progress with peers and stakeholders to ensure a cross-functional and collaborative process.				



## UX Soft Skills

### 1. The Team Champion

- You build trust with your team, partners, and stakeholders by leading with curiosity and empathy, treating them as equals, and setting and achieving shared outcomes. You are energized by sharing the value of our practice with our teams, teaching our ways of working, and elevating our team's profile within the UX community. You are seen as a thought leader, and people seek you out as a subject matter expert.

**INFLUENCE**

## UX Soft Skills

### 2. The Candid Collaborator

- You provide clear and direct feedback regularly, which benefits your partners and team members. You're comfortable with being uncomfortable, and approach difficult situations with optimism. You care personally, challenge directly, and communicate with candor and courage.

**C O U R A G E**

## UX Soft Skills

### 3. The Critical Thinker

- You ask questions to clarify ambiguous problems, and listen actively in order to understand opportunities to improve experiences and processes. Your curiosity helps you gather evidence that exposes the 'why' and leads to rational thinking. You have emotional, empathetic instincts and a strong process that enables disruption, innovation, and decisiveness. You are resilient to change, invigorated by growth, and are constantly learning and challenging the norms around you.

**G R O W T H**



## UX Soft Skills



### 4. The Conductor

- You hold yourself and your team accountable for your work and outcomes. You advocate for ideal conditions for success, lean into difficult conversations about priorities, and recognize when compromise and change is needed. You create focus and clear priorities when pivots happen, and share feedback and accountability with your team in order to help them grow. You are energized by juggling several initiatives, relationships, and deliverables, and create healthy boundaries between them in order to advocate for work / life balance for you and your team.

**LEADERSHIP**

## UX Soft Skills

### 5. The Coach & Connector

- You ensure that your team members are treated as equals by creating inclusive, safe, and equitable spaces for folks to collaborate. You recognize those around you for their great work, and are self-aware enough to recognize your own strengths and weaknesses. You direct the spotlight on those at an earlier stage in their career, helping to elevate their reputation, influence, and skills. You coach and teach others to advance their skills based on your experience, and connect them to the right people and resources to cultivate the right relationships to be successful within our organization.

**CULTURE**



Test &  
Learn,  
Repeat

# Developing Your Career With the UX Shared Skills Matrix 🎯

---

**Authors:** Michelle Robb, Laura Schaefer, Eiko Kawano, Liam Thurston, and the UX Practice

**Last Updated:** July 27th, 2021

**Total Length:** 18 Pages

## Introduction & Opportunity Summary 🎯

The **UX Skills Matrix** is a list of **Soft Skills** (leadership behaviours) and **Hard Skills** (tactics and outcomes) that are organized into a shared document (spreadsheet or doc) that all team members use to track their career growth and development within LD's User Experience practice. The Skills Matrix will enable managers and their reports to have structured and candid coaching conversations about their expectations and performance.

A consistent set of Hard and Soft Skills will be shared across all disciplines in the UX Practice (Product Design, UX Research, Content Design), and each discipline will have their own unique set of Hard Skills. To plot a team member's relative aptitude within each row of their skills matrix spreadsheet they will conduct a self-evaluation to discuss with their manager, who will then collect similar assessments from peers and stakeholders to compare, discuss, and identify gaps and opportunities for growth within the set of skill ratings. Team members and their managers will use this document on a period-to-quarterly basis to plan for learning, growth, and job transition decisions.

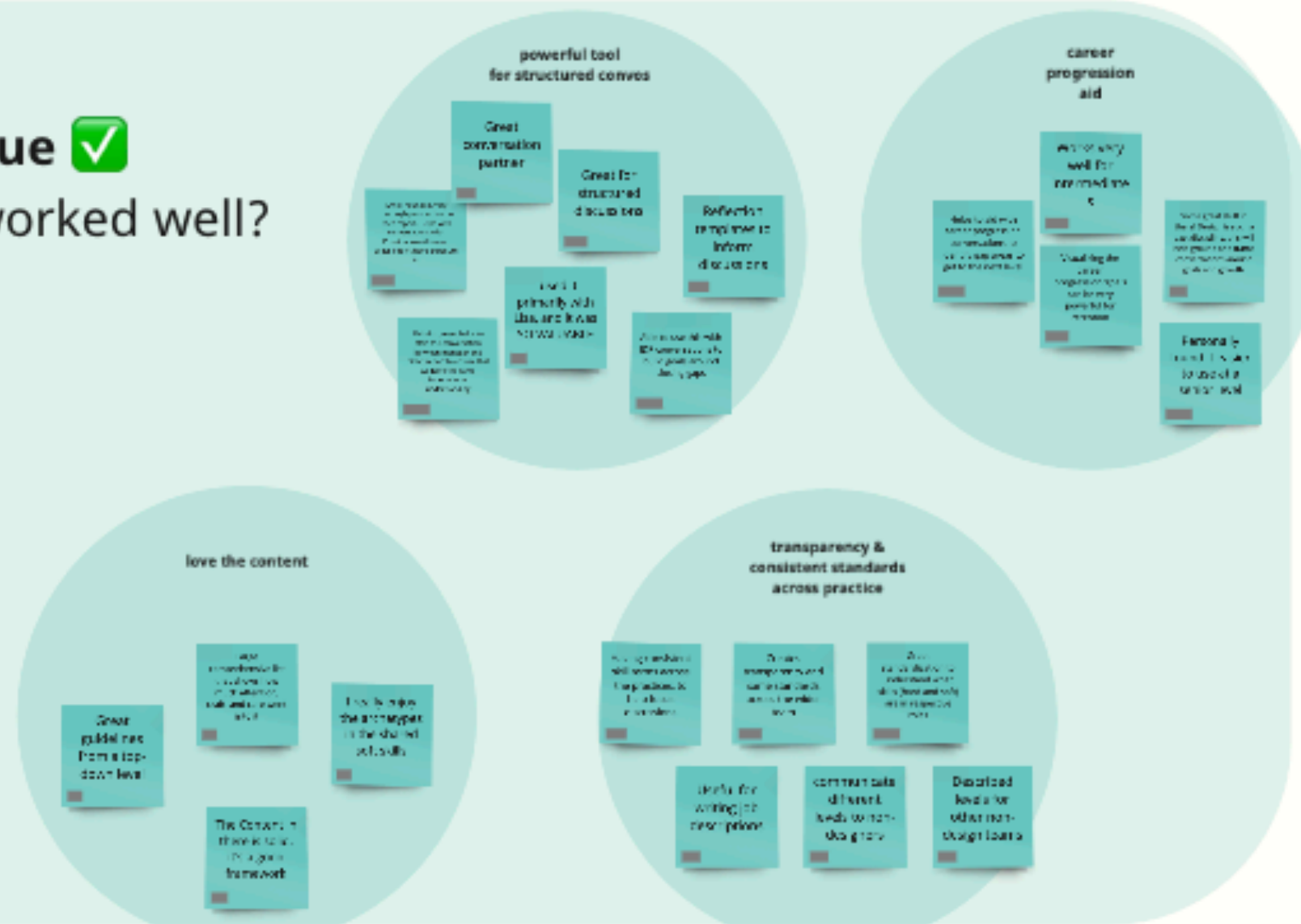
## 📖 Skills Matrix Contents

- [00 – How to Use the UX Skills Matrix](#)
- [01 – UX Skill Competency Levels – Definitions](#)
- [02 – UX Soft Skills – Shared](#)
- [03 – UX Hard Skills – Shared](#)
  - [Strategy](#)



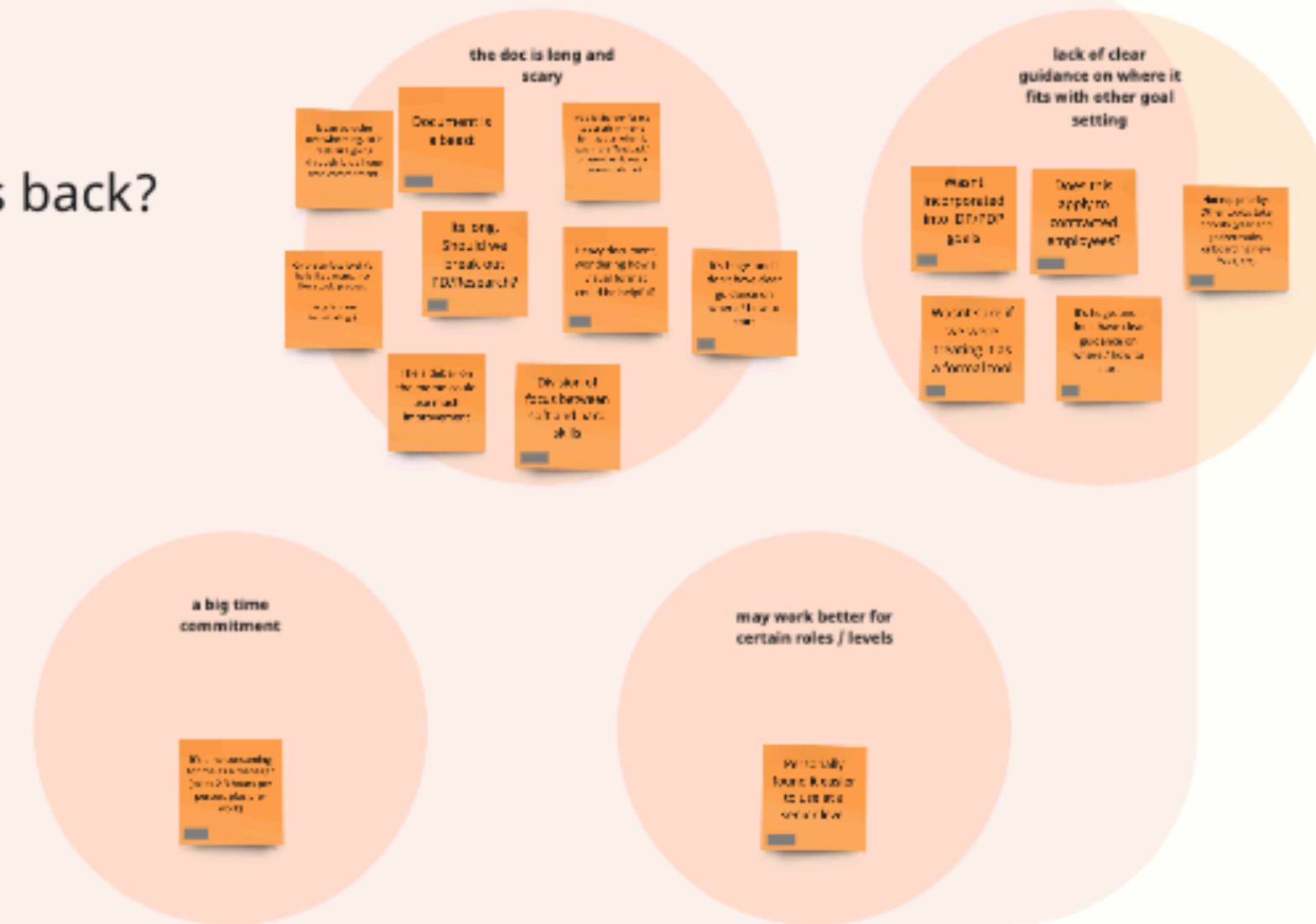
## Continue

### What worked well?



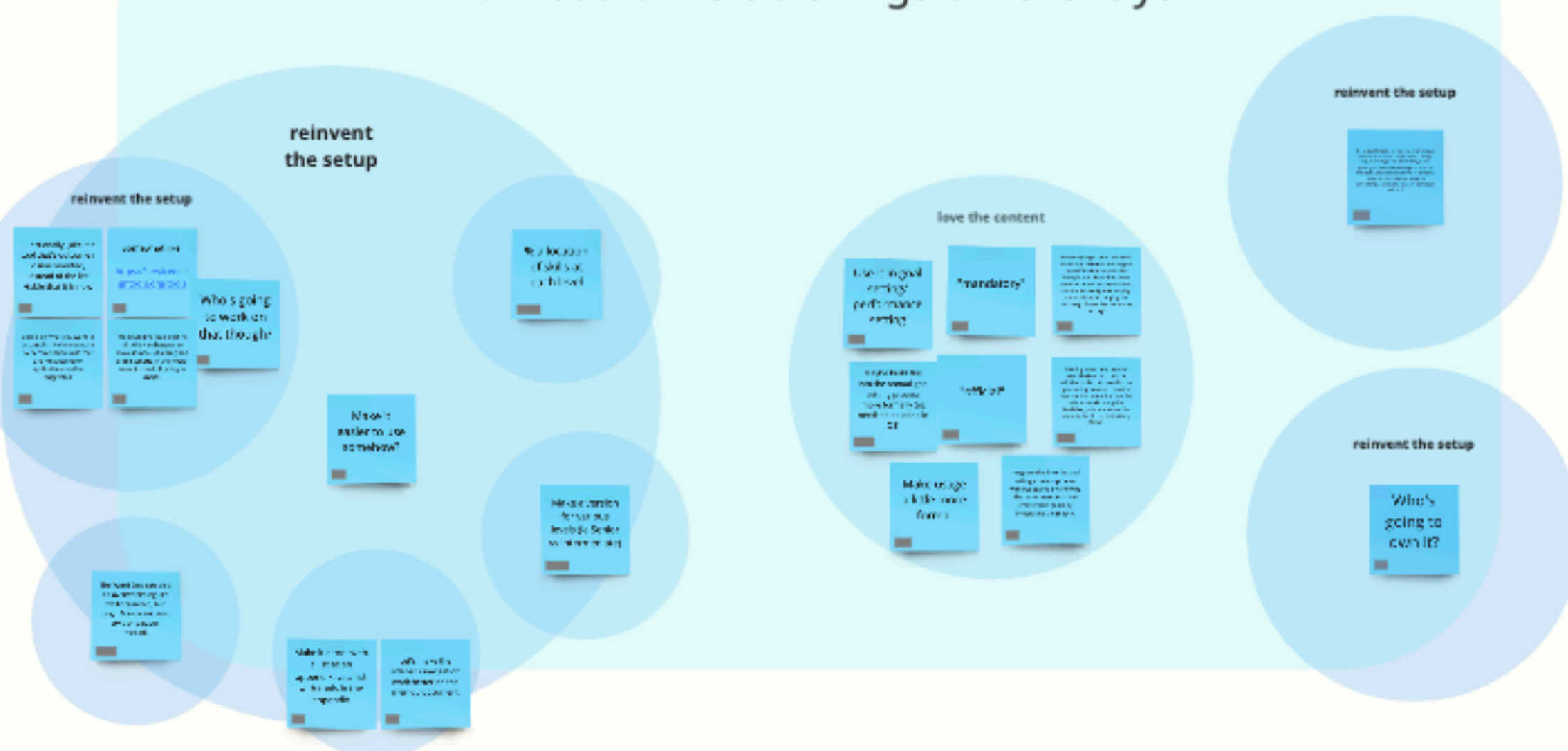
## Stop

### What held us back?



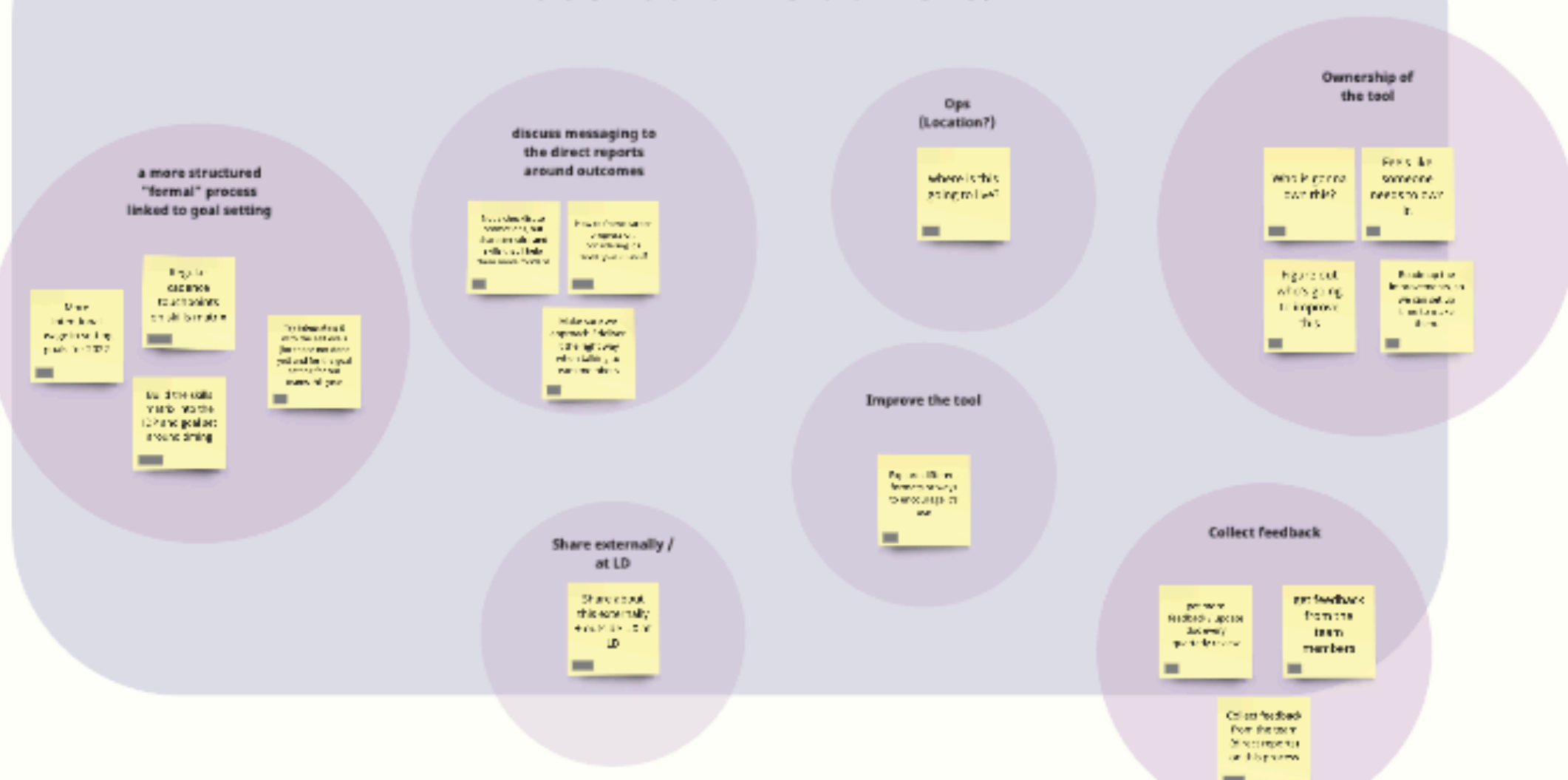
## Invent

### How could we do things differently?



## Act

### What should we do next?

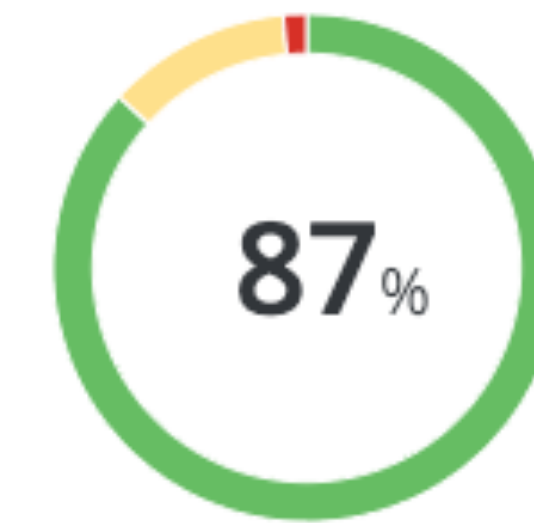






# October 2021

## Engagement Rating ⓘ



**+15%**

April 2021 72%    October 2020 73%    May 2020 77%    Store Support Overall 83%    Global 90th 88%

I receive feedback that helps me improve my performance.



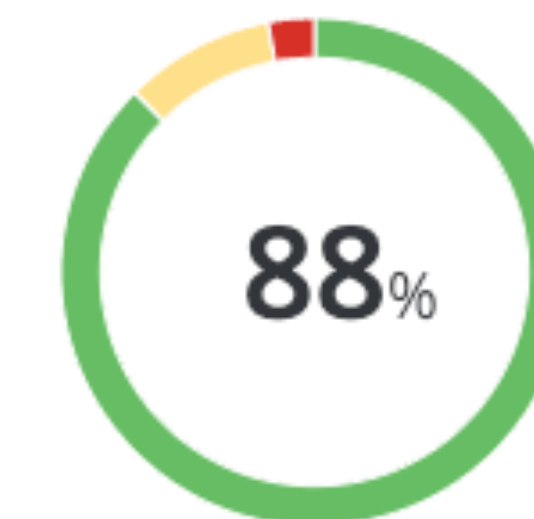
**+23%**

I am satisfied with the opportunity to get a better job at my company.



**+36%**

## Leadership Effectiveness Rating ⓘ



**+9%**

April 2021 79%    October 2020 78%    May 2020 71%    Store Support Overall 85%

●● Medium



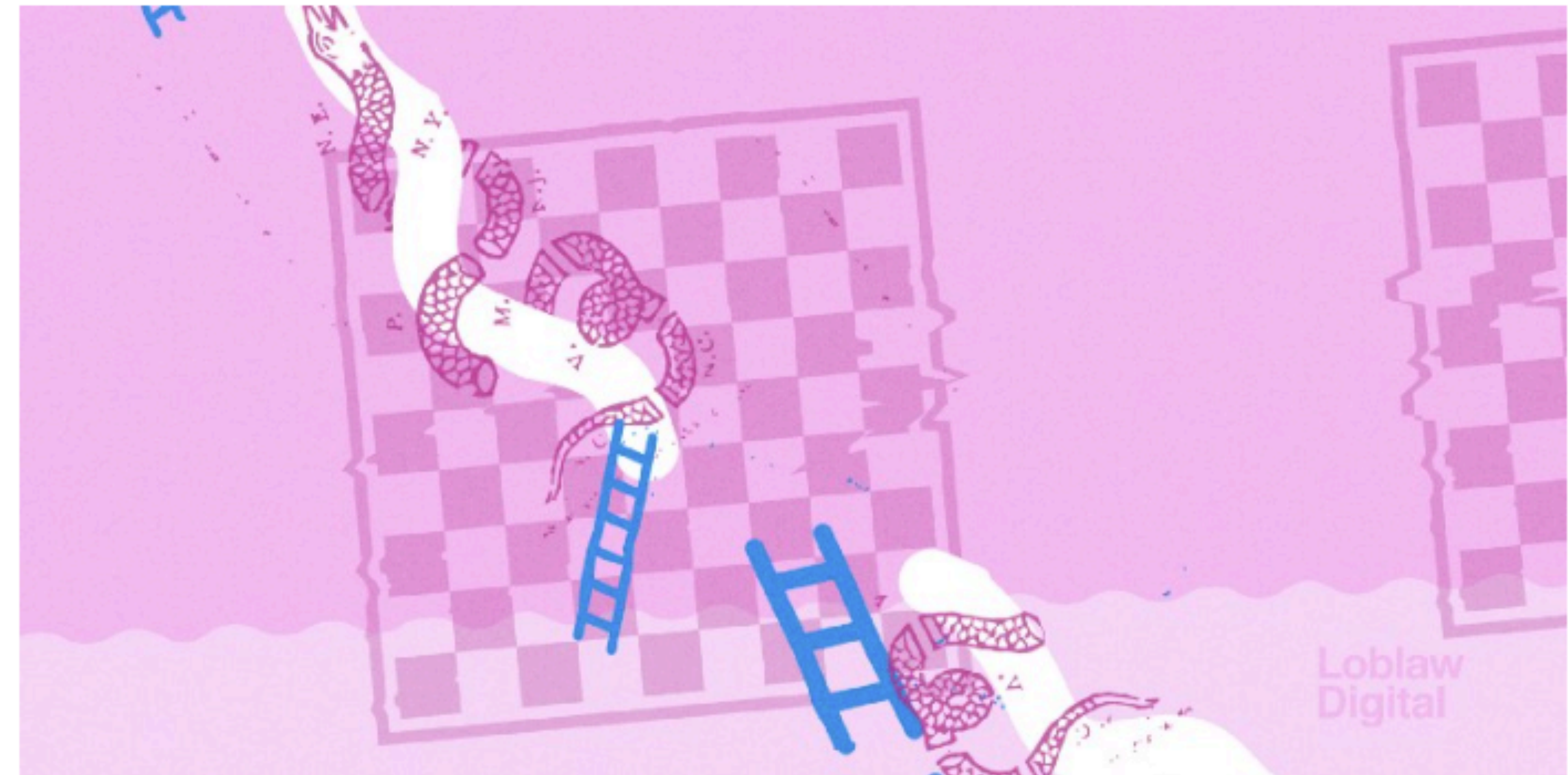
Liam Oscar Thurston

683 Followers

Senior Director of User Experience at Loblaw Digital,  
ex Creative Director @TWG, building human-  
centered software for all.



@LiamThurston



Let's help our teams navigate the Snakes & Ladders of their career progression.

## Why your UX team is quitting, and how to fix it.

The way we live and work has transformed completely. Our shared pandemic experience reframed how we work, whether it fulfills us, and our relationship with our teams and employers. You can feel it, I can feel it, and we know that the light at the end of this twisted tunnel is way brighter and healthier than it was before. It's one of those UV desk lights that makes you happy, not the neon tubes baked into the drop ceiling of a carpeted cubicle.





# Thank you!

Liam Thurston

*Senior Director of User Experience*

 @LiamThurston

**Loblaw**  
Digital