



# Putting Passion in Its Place: Leading a Nonprofit Team Through Challenging Times



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EXPECTATION SETTING

WE WILL FOCUS ON PEOPLE

Developing Your Board

Onboarding Staff

Management & Feedback

Leadership Development

Creating Culture

Create strong support.

Make managing easier.

Retain staff. Gain expertise.

Empowers independence. Creates support. Enables succession planning.

People stay. Relationships deepen.

Public trust attracts support.

Collaboration is expedited.

# AGENDA

01 Welcome & Transition Exercise

02 Preparing and Managing Yourself

03 Preparing and Managing Your Board

04 Preparing and Managing Your Team

05 Special Issues: Social Media

06 Sharing of Best Practices

07 Closing

# HOUSEKEEPING

01 Feel free to get up and move around

02 Sign up for post-event info on Storyb.co



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL 'storyb.co'. The page features logos for 'Hartford MAGAZINE', 'HARTFORD BUSINESS JOURNAL', and 'We-ha.com'. Below the logos is a sign-up section titled 'Stay Connected.' with the text 'Occasional News & Updates that won't clutter your inbox.' The form includes three input fields: 'First Name', 'Last Name', and 'Email Address', followed by a 'Sign Up' button. At the bottom of the form, there are social media icons for Instagram and LinkedIn.

# TRANSITION



PREPARING & MANAGING  
YOURSELF

# PREPARE YOURSELF

storyb.co



## ACKNOWLEDGE REALITY

Most nonprofit leaders are engaged with work that is intersectional. You can do your part, but you are not likely to solve the problem you seek to address in its entirety. That would require a simultaneous, systemic shift in other major areas of our social, financial, and political system. You can “run your leg of the race,” and do it well, but you are likely “passing the baton” to other teams.

## PRIORITIZE A MOVEMENT PRACTICE

The most effective leaders have a movement practice, and it’s almost always early in the morning. That is the time block that is easiest to maintain. Go to bed earlier. Get up earlier. Move. Request that people wait until after 7AM to text or call you. Effective leaders have boundaries. Effective leaders understand that movement is part of preparing for and managing executive work. Effective leaders model healthy practices.

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## ENJOY A HOBBY

Effective leaders have something outside of work and family that brings them joy. Without that, you increase the likelihood that you will be bitter, resentful, grumpy, and off balance. Your personal relationships and health will suffer, and you will not likely be someone your team wants to be around. All work and no joy is a sacrificial approach to work, and it leads to burnout.

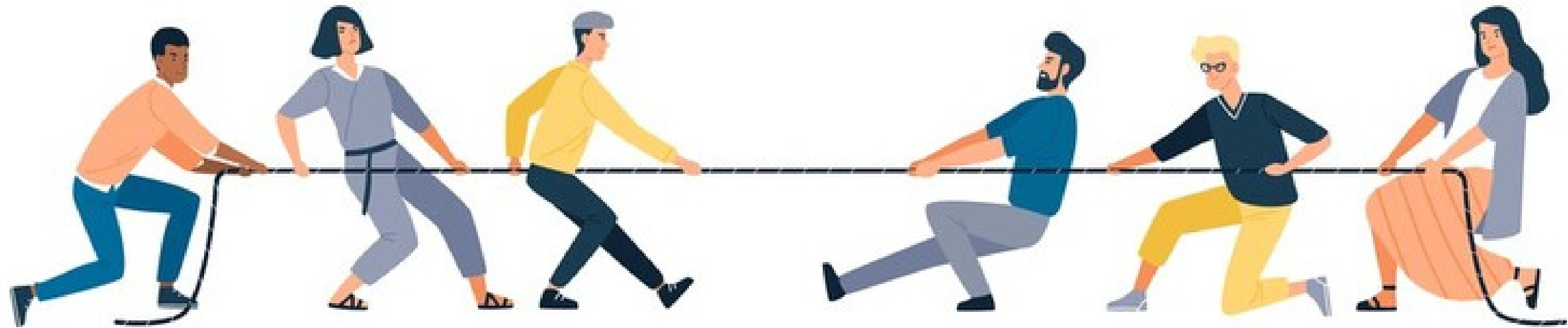
## BLOCK YOUR TIME

When you are at the office, prioritize the people in front of you. Block time at the beginning and end of your day, ideally off site, to manage emails and priority communication. You need ample time to do this, and you will be more efficient if you do it during consistent time blocks. Communicate this to your team and schedule meetings accordingly.



PREPARING & MANAGING  
YOUR BOARD

# Who is Managing Whom?



# What Type of Board Do You Have?



Management Board  
(New or Underdeveloped)



Governance Board

## **BOARD MEETINGS**

75% IN PERSON  
25% VIRTUAL

## **SUB-COMMITTEE WORK**

70% VIRTUAL  
30% IN PERSON



COMMUNICATION &  
ALIGNMENT



Mission

VOTE

Vision

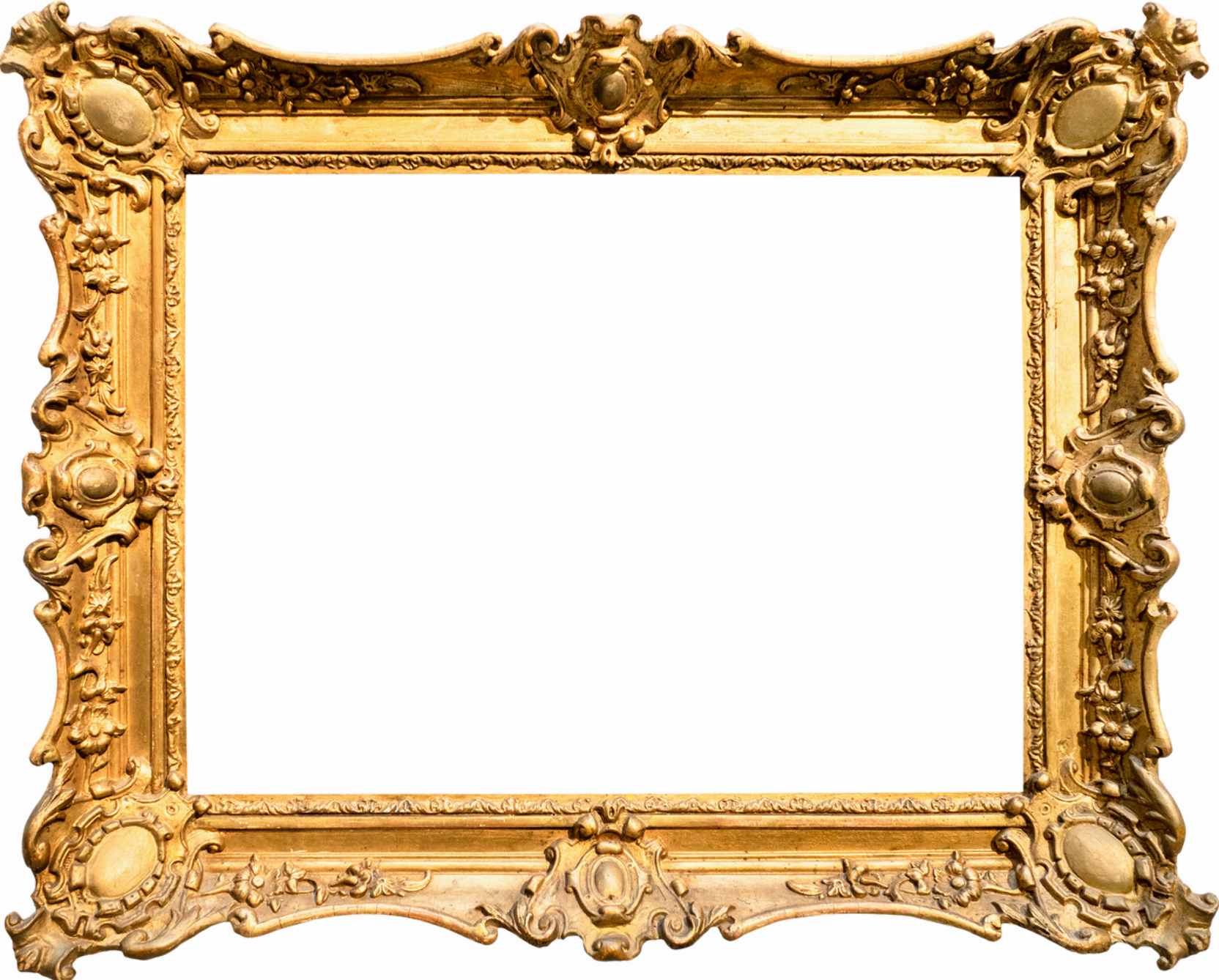
VOTE

Pace

STRATEGIC PLAN

Disruption

# EXPECTATION SETTING





# ALIGNMENT





PREPARING & MANAGING  
YOUR TEAM

# GOAL: CONSISTENCY



# PREDICTABLE SCHEDULE / HYBRID FORMAT



# GREET EACH PERSON WHEN YOU COME IN

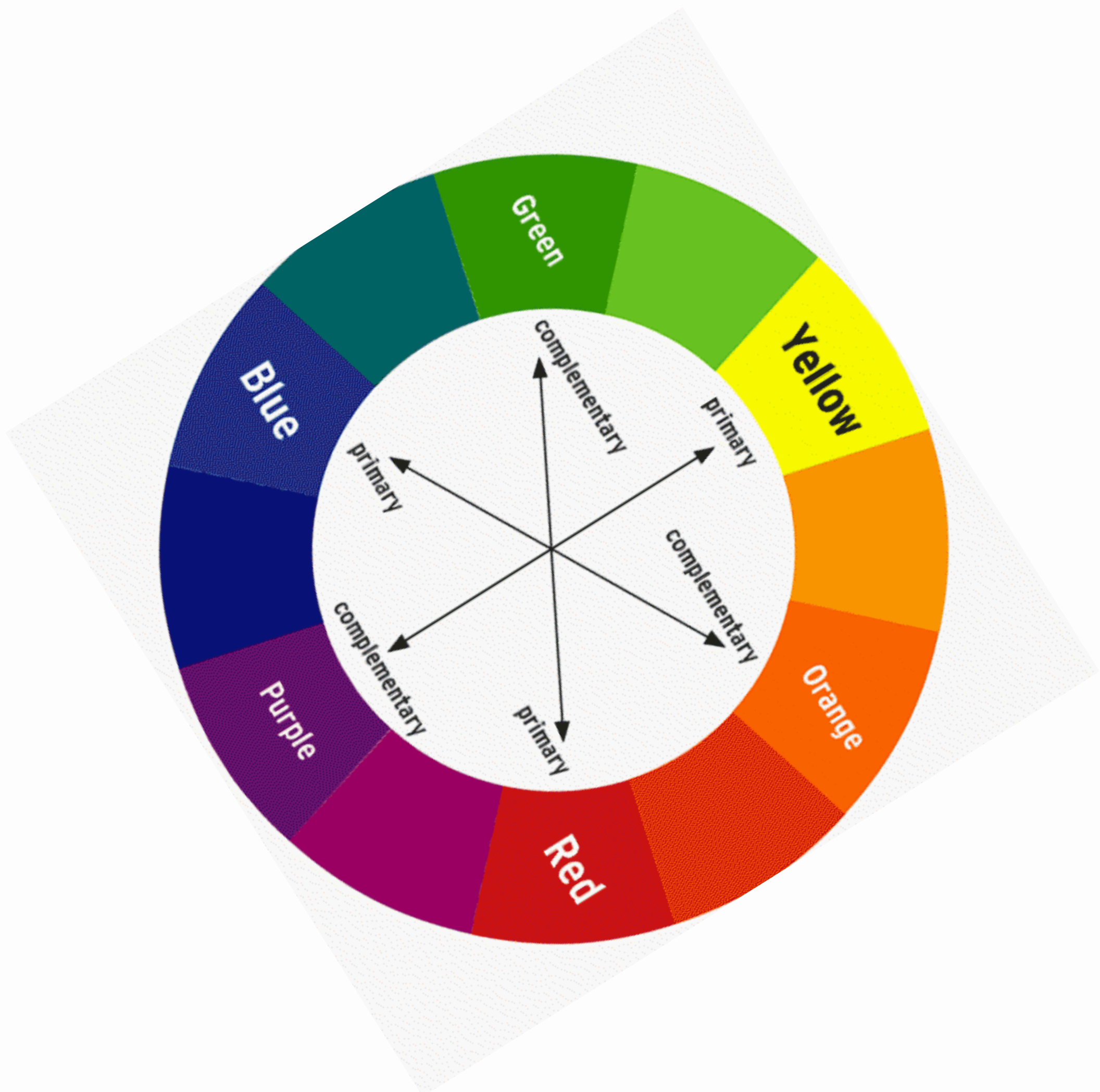


- SIGNALS TO STAFF THAT THEY ARE YOUR PRIORITY
- OPPORTUNITY TO ASSESS MOOD
- PROVIDES A PREDICTABLE WAY TO SHARE THINGS WITH YOU
- ENCOURAGES MORE ORGANIZED MEETING TIME FOR BIGGER ISSUES

“READ THE ROOM”







Calm

Lethargic

Angry

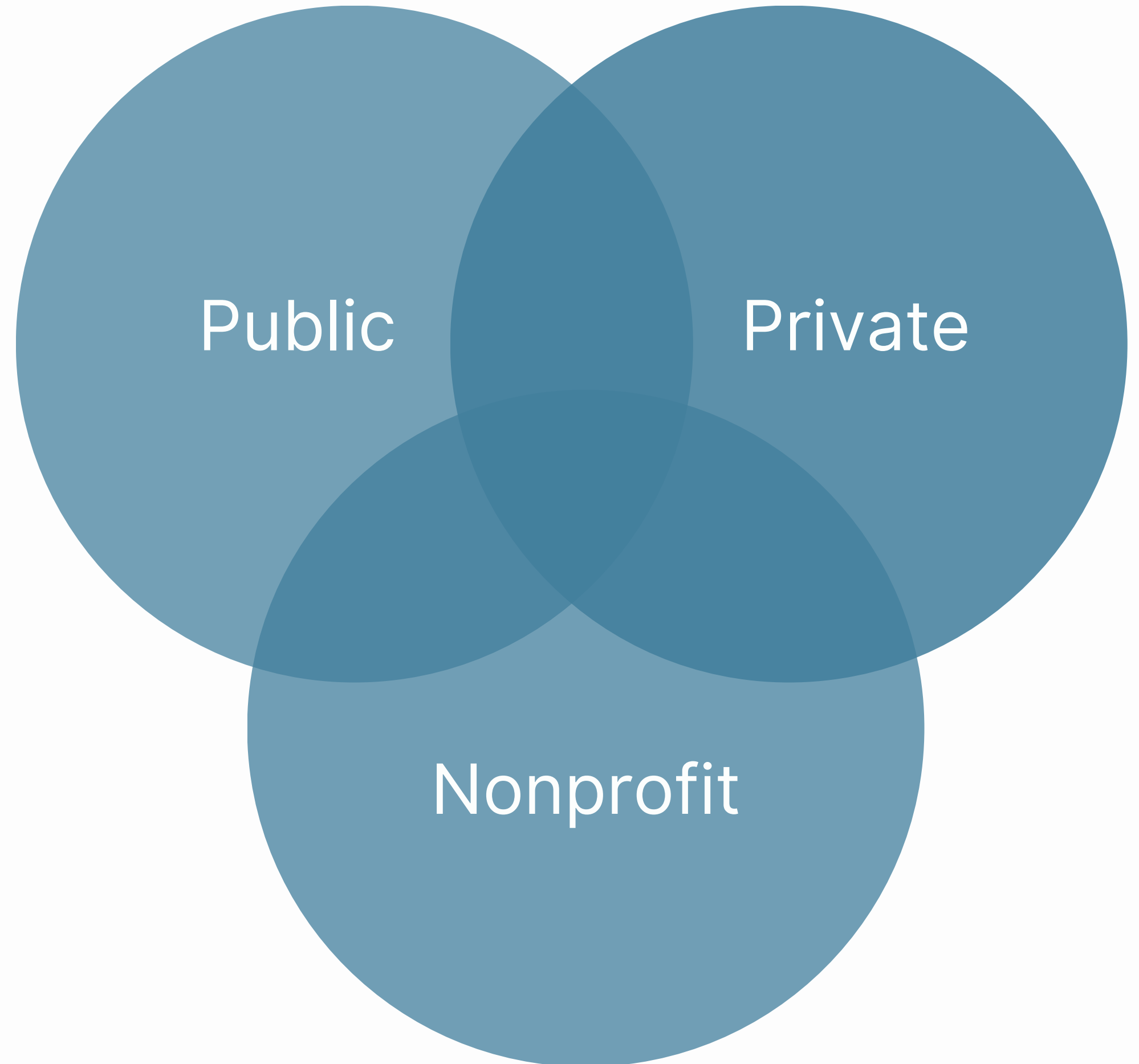
Energetic

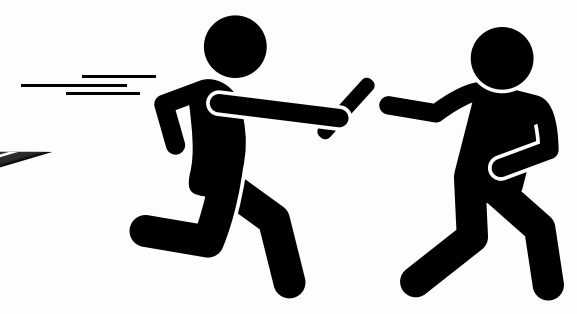
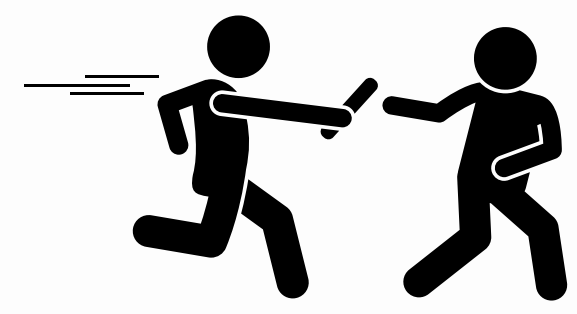
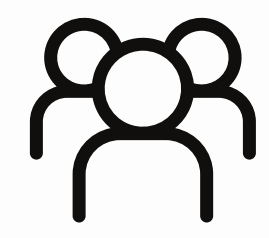
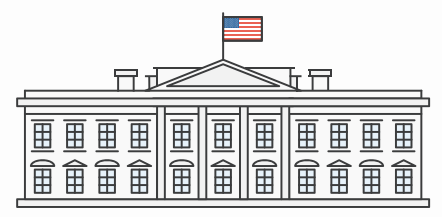
LONG GAME VS.  
SHORT GAME



## Navigating

Multiple Sectors  
Power Structures  
Competing Interests  
Different Paces





SPECIAL ISSUES  
SOCIAL MEDIA

# THE BRANDING OF INDIVIDUALS



# THE PASSION OF ACTIVISM

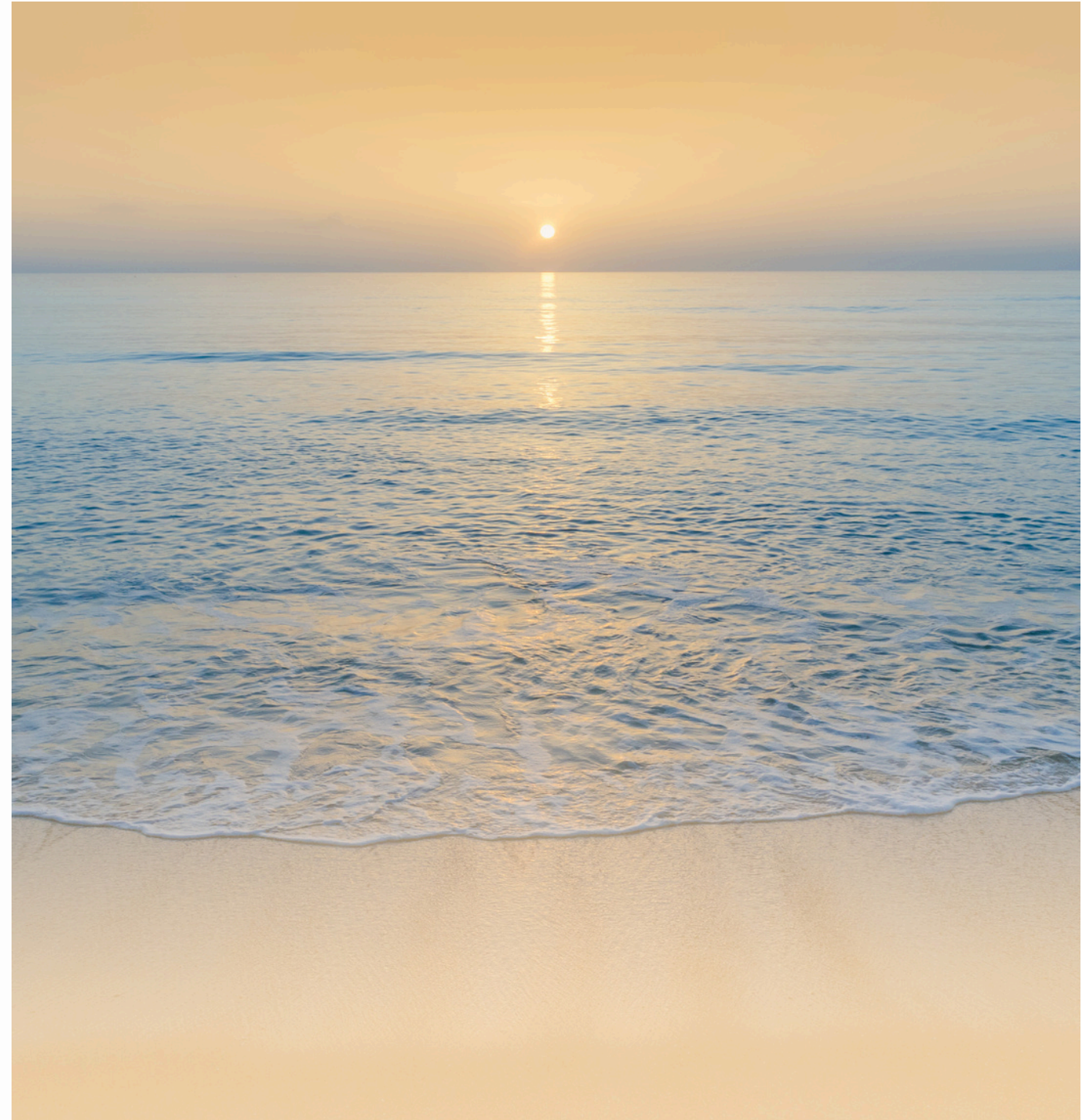


SOCIAL MEDIA AS A TOOL FOR  
MOBILIZATION & ENGAGEMENT

# INTENTIONAL USE OF VOICE FOR IMPACT



“EVERYTHING YOU DO HAS SOME EFFECT. SOME IMPACT”



# PRIVATE PLANNING. PUBLIC RESULTS.





*Is this action in alignment with our **shared understanding** of our strategic plan?*

**Mission**

**Vision**

**Place**

**Disruption**

*What is our long game?*

*Does this compromise the balance we need to manage multiple sectors?*



What is your motivation for  
posting or commenting?

Does it have to be you?

Are you preserving your  
power to affect change on  
this issue?

Leadership Development

# PREPARE YOUR TEAM

## HOW DO YOU WORK BEST WITH OTHERS?

The more you and your team know about each other's habits and triggers, the more you can manage relationships among one another proactively and with compassion. Go first, and then switch.

### Communicate How You Work Best:

- I write best in the morning;
- I get really tired between 2-4pm, so that's not usually a good time to ask me to write or edit something;
- I try to take a 10-minute walk after lunch to lift my energy. Anyone is welcome to join me;
- I get up early, so I need to eat lunch early. I don't do well when I'm hungry.

### Communicate Your Triggers:

- Timeliness is very important to me. I get really annoyed when people are late or don't meet deadlines;
- I get really annoyed when people don't bring me the small stuff and then we have to manage the big stuff.

## HOW CLOSE DO YOU FEEL TO THE MISSION?

*"I'm going to ask you a question, but first I want to tell you why I'm asking. The question is, **On a scale of 1-10, how close do you feel personally to our mission?** I'm asking you this, because nonprofit work is emotional. People who work here care about the mission. However, some of us have lived experience with it or have reasons why it feels very personal, and others care very much about the mission, but it doesn't feel as close to them personally. I'd like each one of us to build an awareness of where we fit into our work here. The world is intense right now, and this awareness will help us understand how vulnerable we are to burn out, emotional fatigue, or a sense of urgency when things come up. You don't need to go into any detail nor share anything personal with me, but knowing how close we both feel to our mission will help us understand each other's reactions to things as we work together." Share your number first and model how to explain your connection, using as much detail as you feel comfortable with sharing, our just share your number.*

**Trauma-Informed Leadership Reminder:** You may have a team member working on a health-related matter that the person feels is important, but has no personal connection to. On the flip side, you may be leading an organization that deals with a form of violence or life circumstance that the person has experienced. That person may experience situations at work very differently. Awareness of proximity to the mission is helpful to everyone involved.

# PREPARE YOUR TEAM

## HOW MUCH PRACTICE HAVE YOU HAD GIVING AND RECEIVING FEEDBACK?

Most people are uncomfortable giving and receiving feedback. Asking the question as stated above sets the expectation that giving and receiving feedback is something that needs to be practiced.--and that it is safe to do so in your workplace.

### Some Things to Keep in Mind:

- Everyone has had a personal experience with feedback. Some people grew up in spaces where feedback was not welcomed, or when given, was responded to with anger, resentment, sarcasm, or violence;
- Giving and receiving feedback requires a lot of trust that the relationship will not end after the feedback is given;
- Give a head's up when you need to have a tough conversation.
  - "We need to have a challenging conversation. Please book some time with me this afternoon."
  - "We need to have an uncomfortable conversation. When would be best for you today?"
  - "We need to talk about what happened yesterday. It will be helpful for both of us to talk today."
- State how you are going to give feedback before you begin.
  - "I believe clear is kind and that being direct is the best way for us to manage things as they come up. I also think it's the best way for us to figure out solutions together."
  - Provide feedback. Try to avoid "the sandwich" of positive/negative/positive, if possible. That creates confusion. You want to build up a tolerance for clear and direct communication. How you follow up with support will build trust that the person can make a mistake and move through it. People need to be clear about what the issue is and what needs to happen. That is the point of the meeting.
  - Remember, kind and direct communication is not the norm. You may be the first person helping someone practice receiving feedback in this way, and it can feel abrupt at first.
- It is helpful to cue that feedback is about to be offered.
  - "Would you like some feedback on that?"
  - "Are you in a place that I can offer you some feedback?"
  - "I'd like to offer you some feedback."
  - "How are you feeling about the feedback you received?"
  - "What are *your thoughts* on the feedback you received?"
  - "How are you going to implement the feedback you received? Do you need or want support?"
- Note when people are practicing working with feedback.
  - "I am trying to create better ways for our team to manage feedback."
  - "I noticed you are getting more comfortable offering and receiving feedback and then working with it. Do you feel this way? Thank you for helping us build a trusting feedback culture. It's helpful for us all."

SHARING OF BEST  
PRACTICES

Thank You for Your Work



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