

MARK **S** KENNY

# Optimizing Work Processes

markskenny.com | mark@markskenny.com

# Definition: Optimizes Work Processes

Knowing the most  
effective and efficient  
processes to get things  
done, with a focus on  
continuous improvement.



Great things are done by a series of small things  
brought together.

Vincent Van Gogh - Dutch Painter

# Optimizes Work Processes: Skilled Behaviors

- ✓ Identifies and creates the processes necessary to get work done
- ✓ Separates and combines activities into efficient workflow
- ✓ Designs processes and procedures that allow managing from a distance
- ✓ Seeks ways to improve processes, from small tweaks to complete reengineering.

# Optimizes Work

# Processes: Less Skilled Behaviors

- ✓ Works in a disorganized fashion
- ✓ Has difficulty figuring out effective and efficient processes to get things done
- ✓ Accepts processes as they are; pays little attention to process improvement
- ✓ Doesn't take advantage of opportunities for synergy and efficiency.

# Optimizes Work Processes: Possible Causes of Lesser Skills

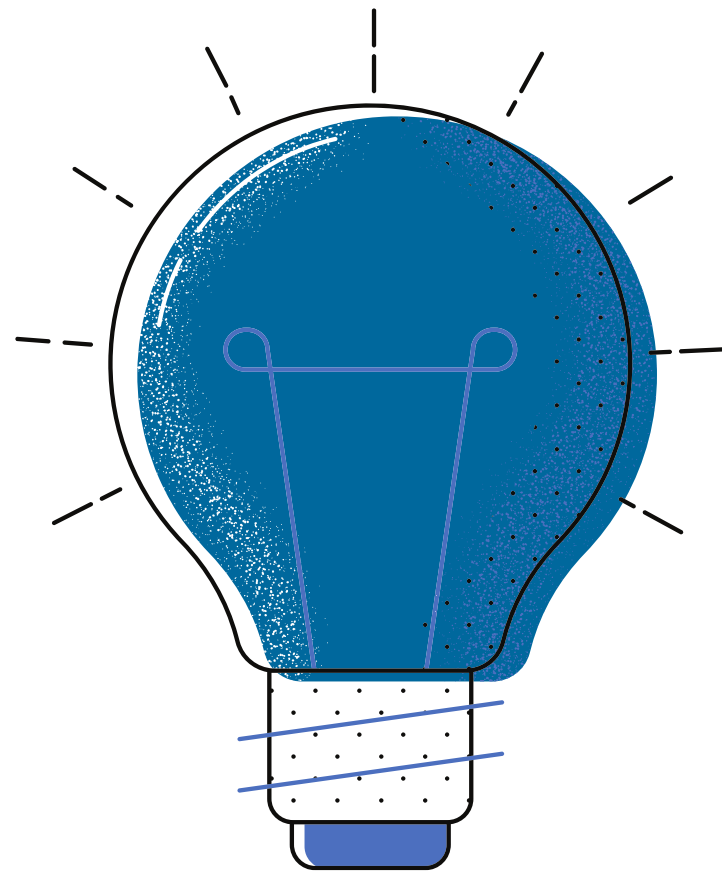
- ✓ Not focused on improvement.
- ✓ Doesn't view things in terms of systems.
- ✓ Disorganized.
- ✓ Stuck in old ways; rejects emerging science and technology.
- ✓ Too autonomous or independent.
- ✓ Lacks knowledge of process tools (mapping, PDCA/Lean basics, metrics).
- ✓ Resists learning and change.
- ✓ Dislikes structure and routine; bias for action over systems thinking; impatience with design and testing.

Key Skill

Listen and Ask  
Questions

# On Your Own

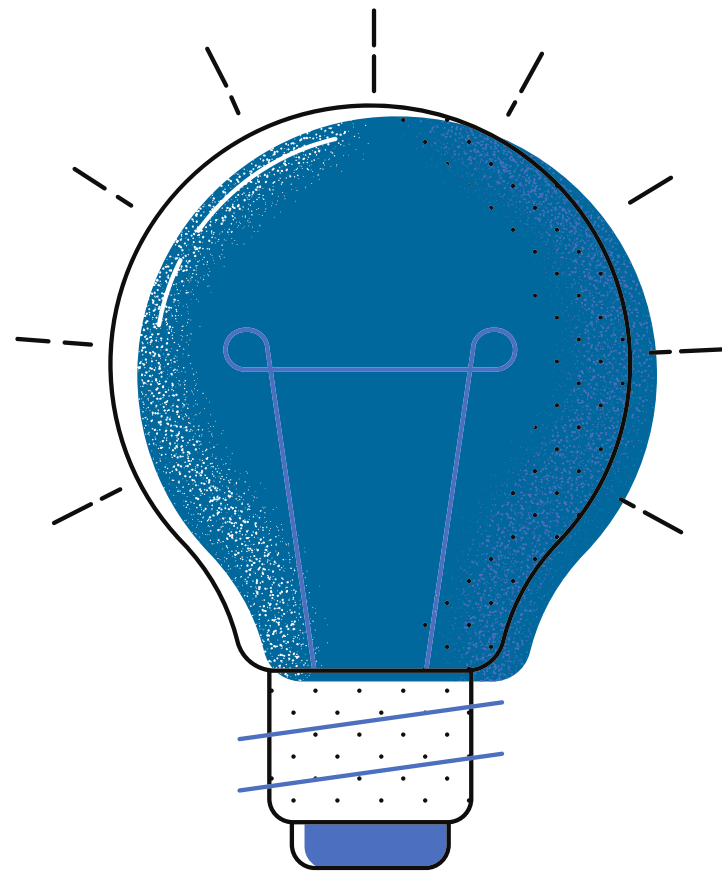
Write down the answer the following questions:



1. What part of Optimizing Work Processes comes most naturally to me?
2. Where do I most often struggle?
3. What process that I'm currently work with might need optimizing?
4. What conversations with my leader or peers could improve how I optimize work processes?



# In Pairs



Share one strength you already demonstrate and one challenge.

# The Steps

1 Choose Which  
Process to Optimize

.....

2 Map Out the  
Process

.....

3 Analyze the  
Process

.....

4 Improve the Process

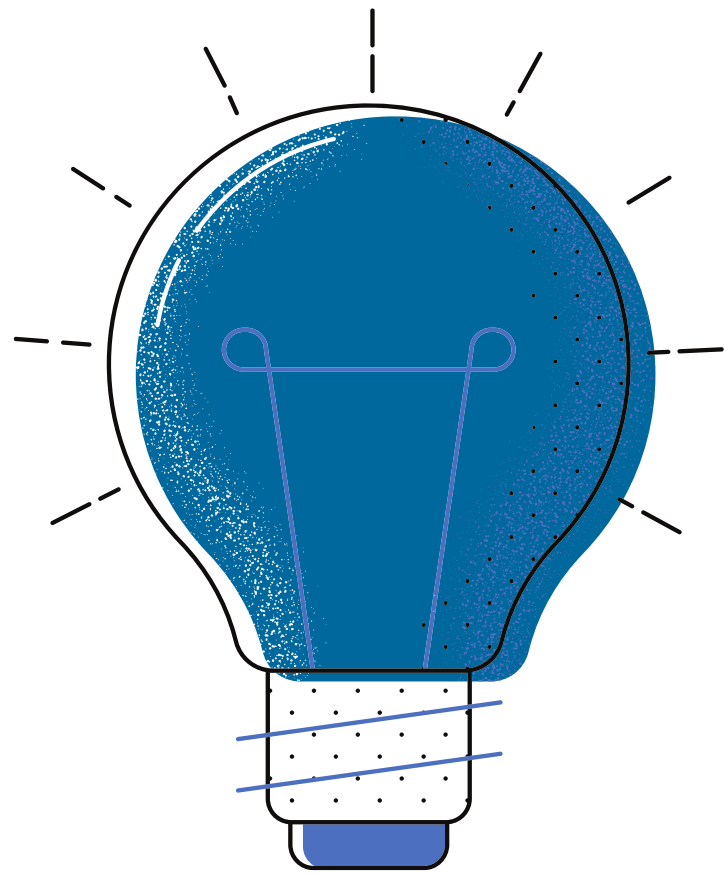
.....

5 Implement and  
Communicate Change

.....

6 Get Others to Optimize  
and Maintain Processes

.....



# Groups of Three

Make a list of processes you *could* optimize.

# The Steps

**1** Choose Which  
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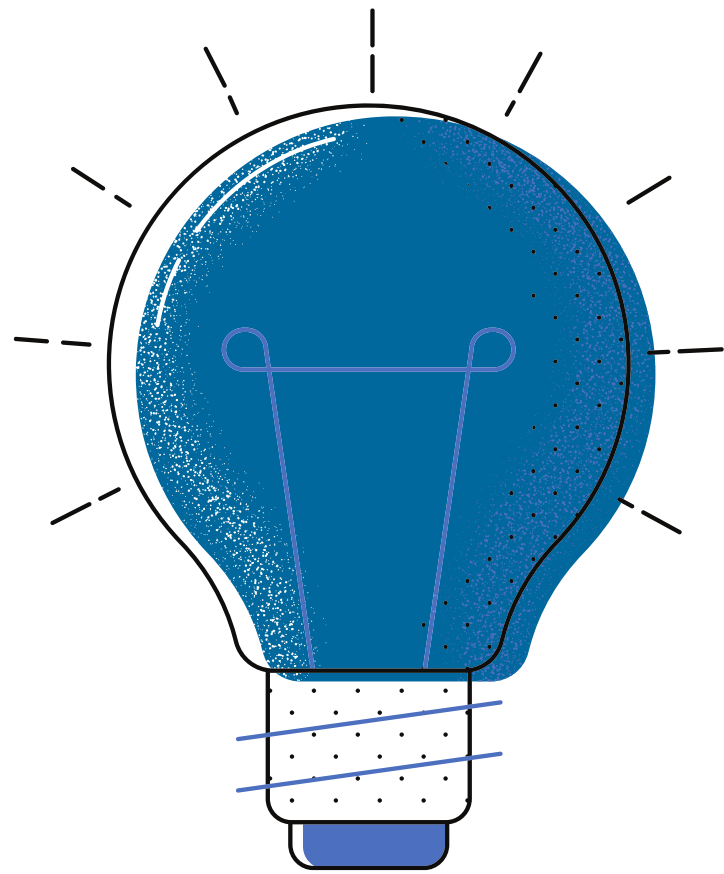
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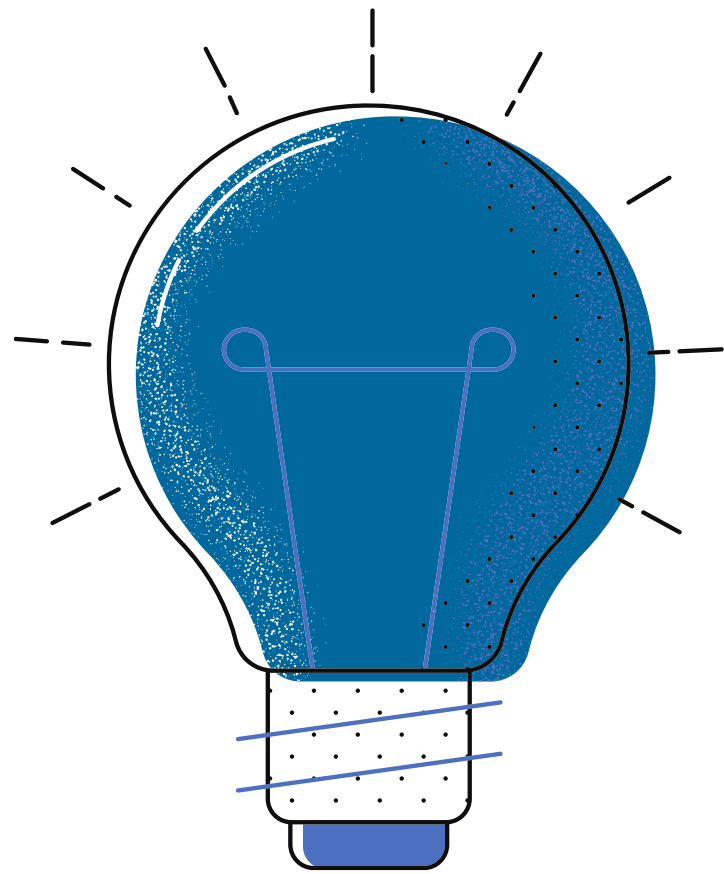


# Groups of Three

Make a list of criteria we should use to choose which process to optimize?

## Questions to Ask

1. What's not working? (a problem)
2. What are people complaining about?
3. What is best for the customer (what does the customer want)?
4. What process has bottlenecks resulting in deadlines missed?
5. What aligns with the DOH Strategic Plan (gets us closer to our big goal)?



# Groups of Three

1. Ask questions to decide which of your processes should be optimized.
2. Choose one process, per group of three, to optimize today.

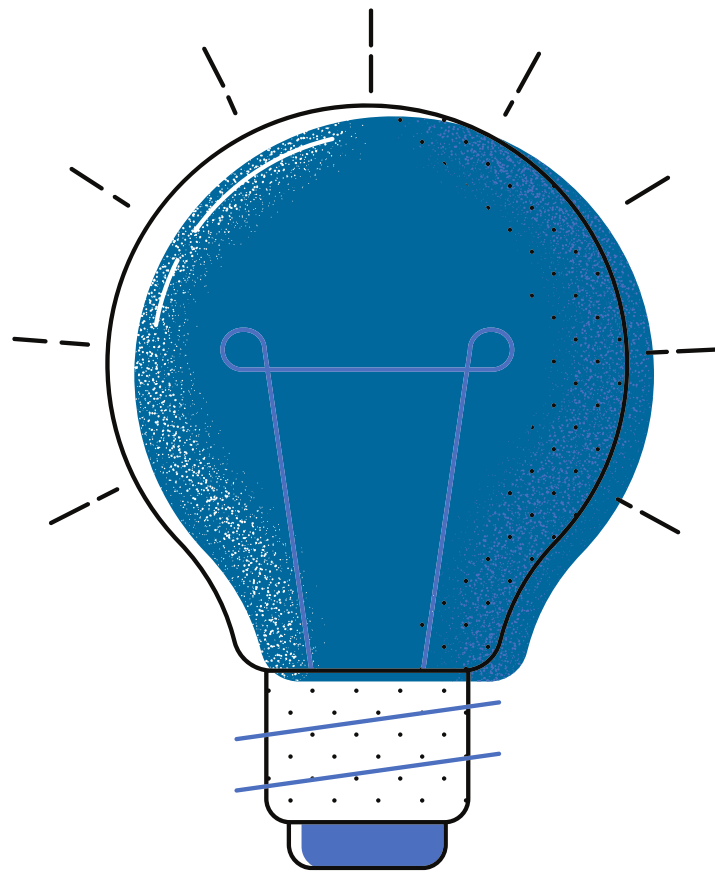
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# Perspective Meeting

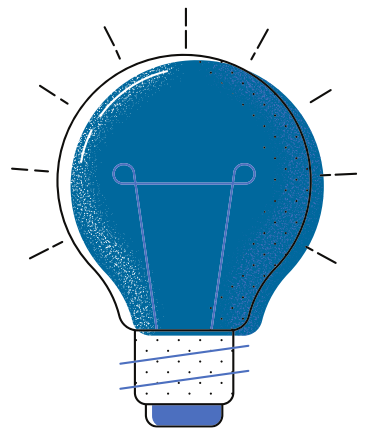
Find someone who is in a different level than yourself (central/region/local) and ask each other the following questions:



1. What does a “good week” look like in your world (and what usually makes it a “hard week”)?
2. What’s one thing you wish people in other parts of the department understood about your work?
3. When work comes to you from other locations, what makes it easiest to succeed (and what makes it harder)?
4. How do you prefer to hear about changes—what format/timing helps you feel ready rather than surprised?
5. What’s one small thing we can do differently that would make your job easier?

From “Why?” to “How?”

# Flip the Script



A sudden policy change is announced with a 30-day compliance deadline.

# The Steps

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3 Analyze the  
Process

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2 Map Out the  
Process

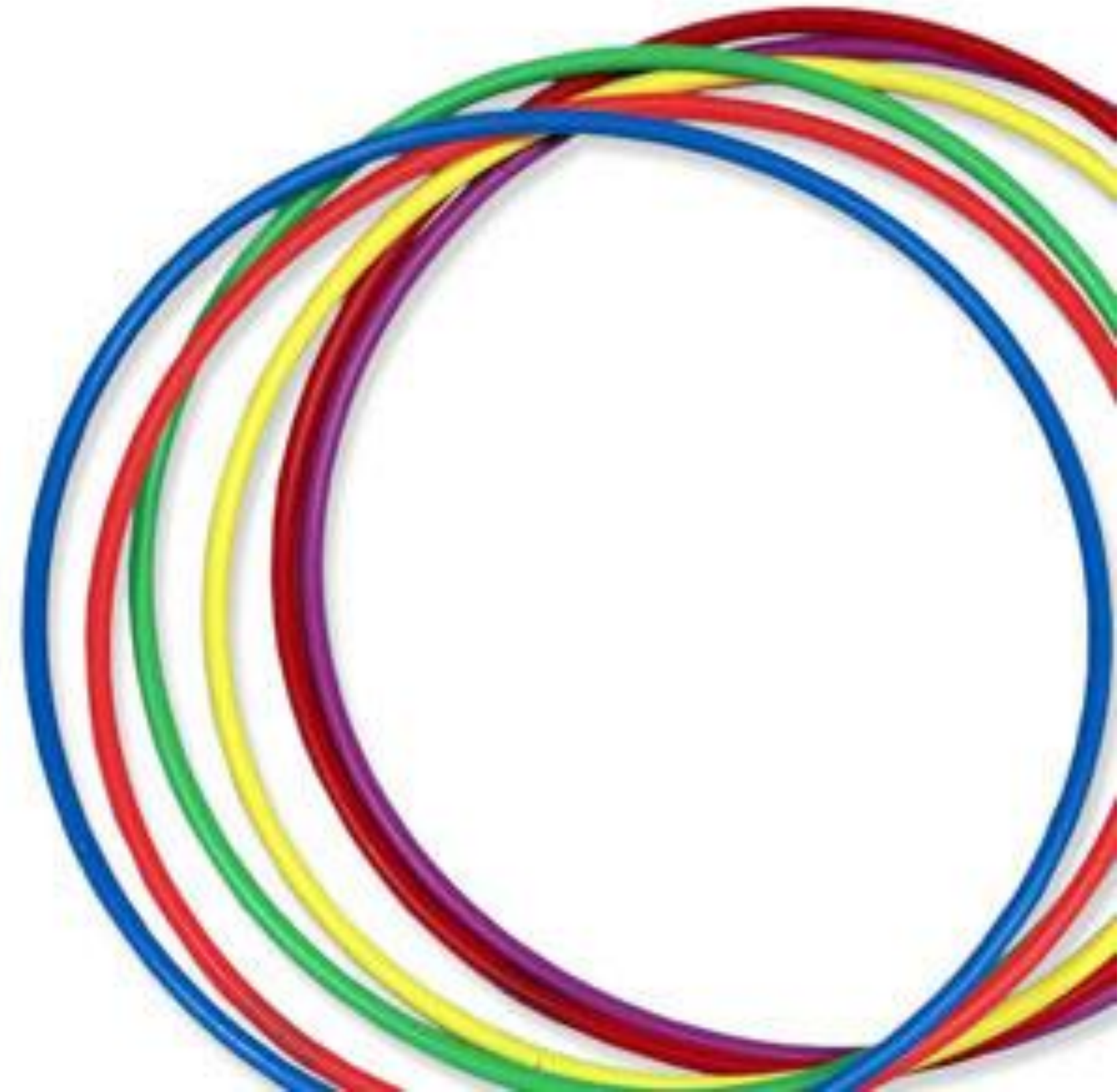
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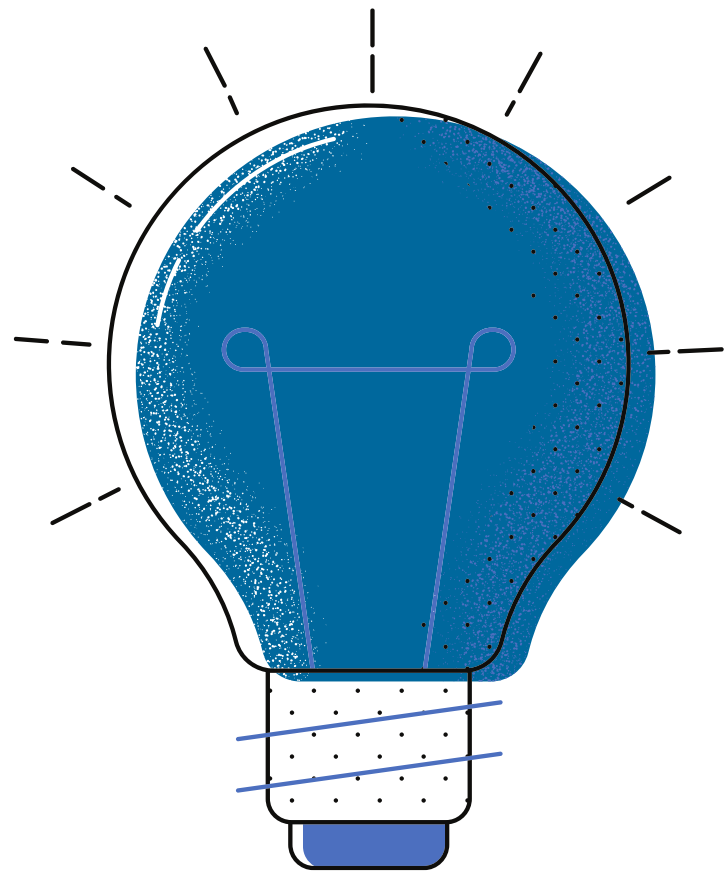
4 Improve the Process

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# Map the Process

Map out the process to get the hula hoop onto the floor.

# Process Map

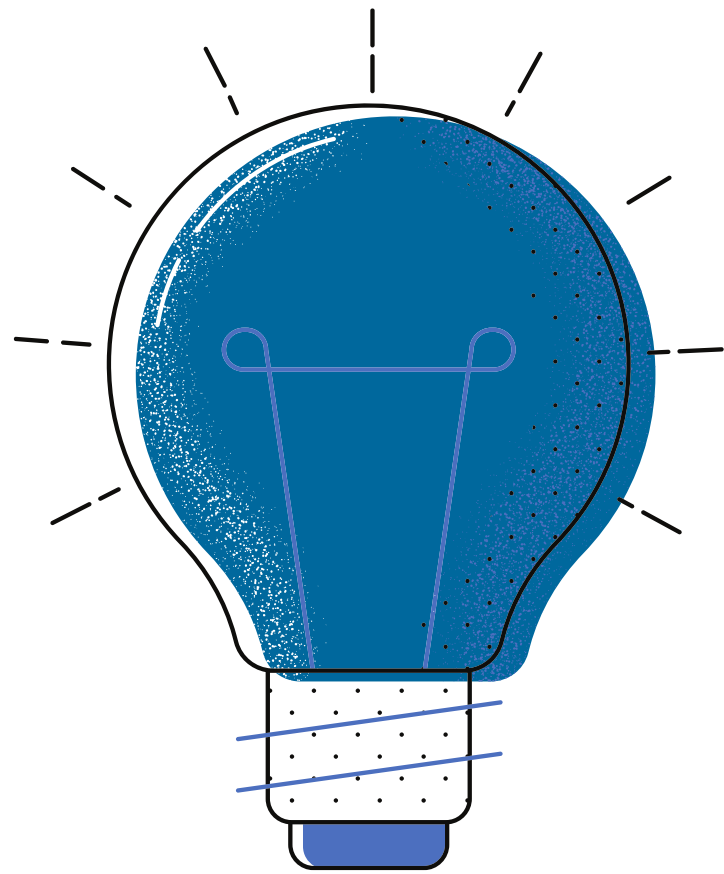
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**#1: Frame It**

**#2: Draw It**

---

**#3: Add the Minimum Data**



# Groups of Three

Create a map of the one process you chose.



# Process Map

---

**#1: Frame It**

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**#2: Draw It**

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**#3: Add the Minimum Data**

# The Steps

1 Choose Which  
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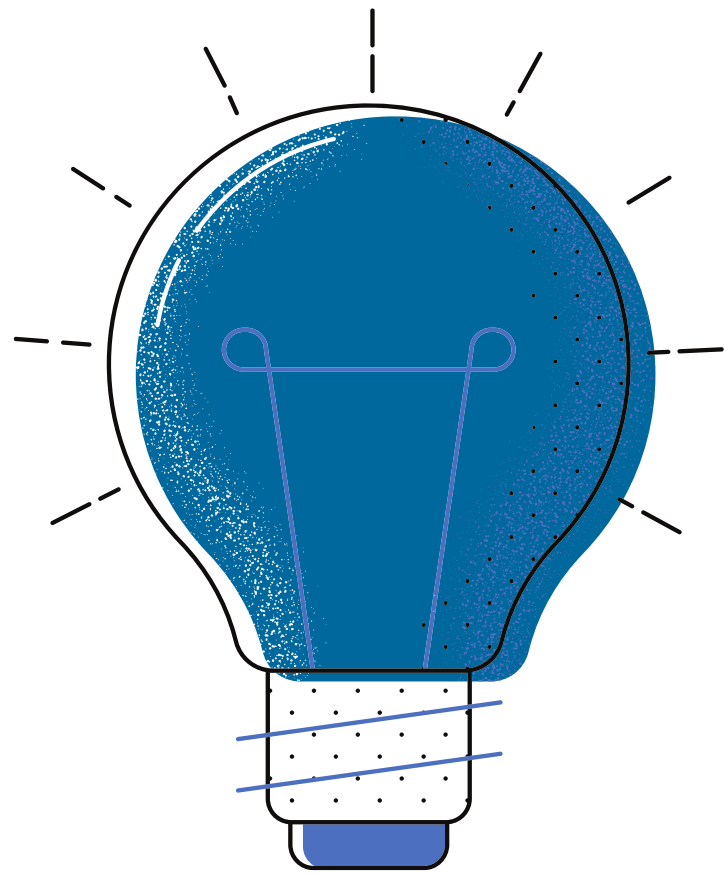
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# Analyze the Process

Analyze the process to get the hula hoop onto the floor.

# Process Map

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#1: Frame It

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#2: Draw It

---

---

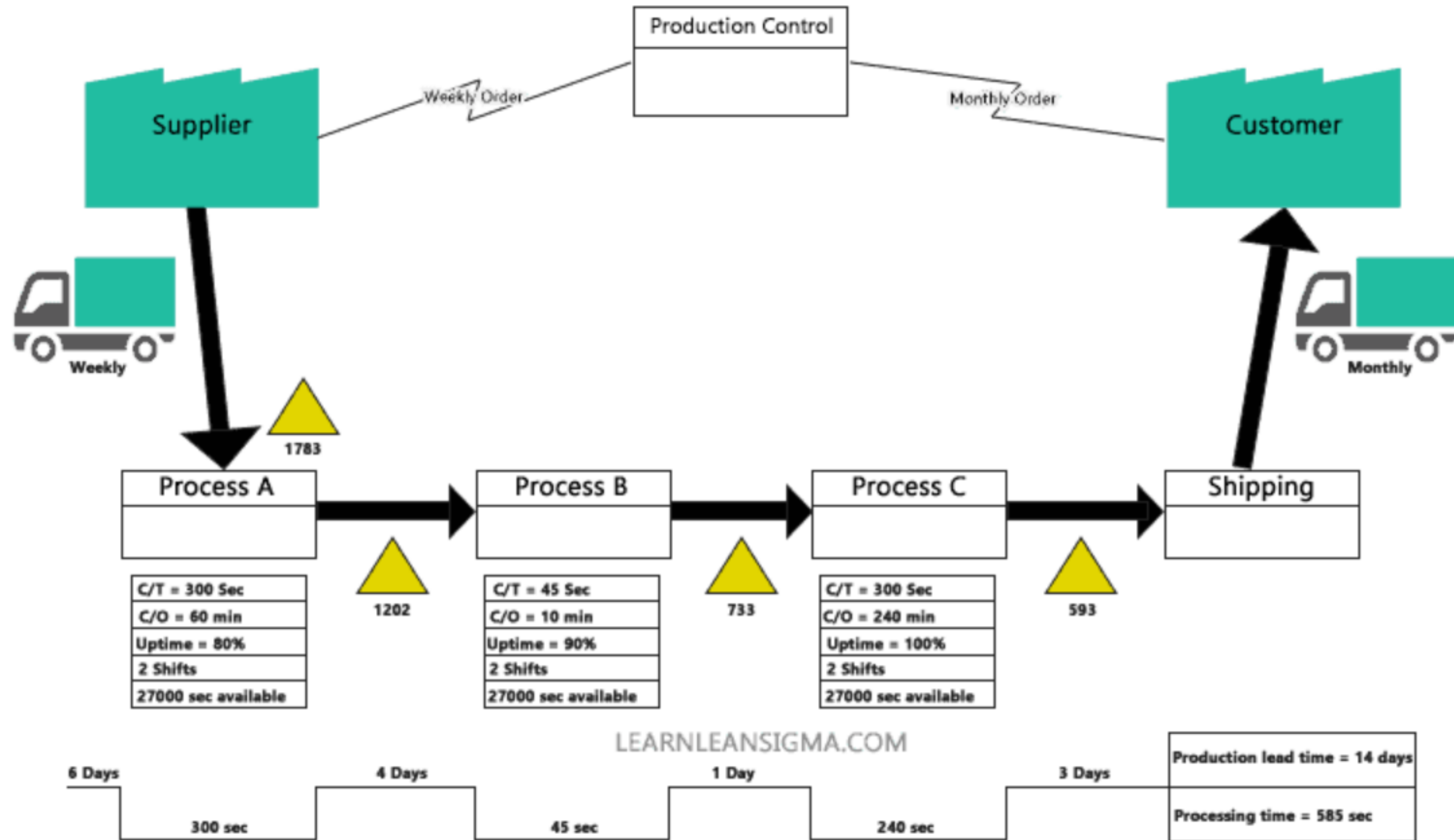
#3: Add the Minimum Data

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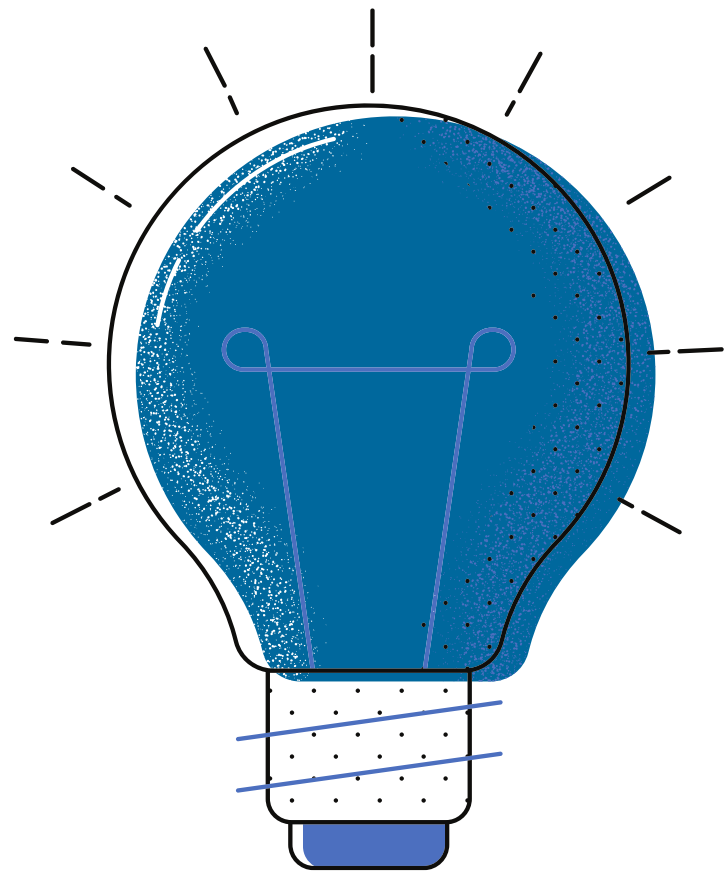
#4: Mark Trouble

---

#5: Add a Timeline Bar



Credit: LearnSixSigma.com



# Groups of Three

Analyze the one process you chose.

# Process Map

---

#1: Frame It

---

#2: Draw It

---

---

#3: Add the Minimum Data

---

#4: Mark Trouble

---

#5: Add a Timeline Bar

# Write a problem statement about a bottleneck / problem.

## 1. State the Problem Clearly

- What's wrong? Why is it an issue?

## 2. Explain Why It Matters

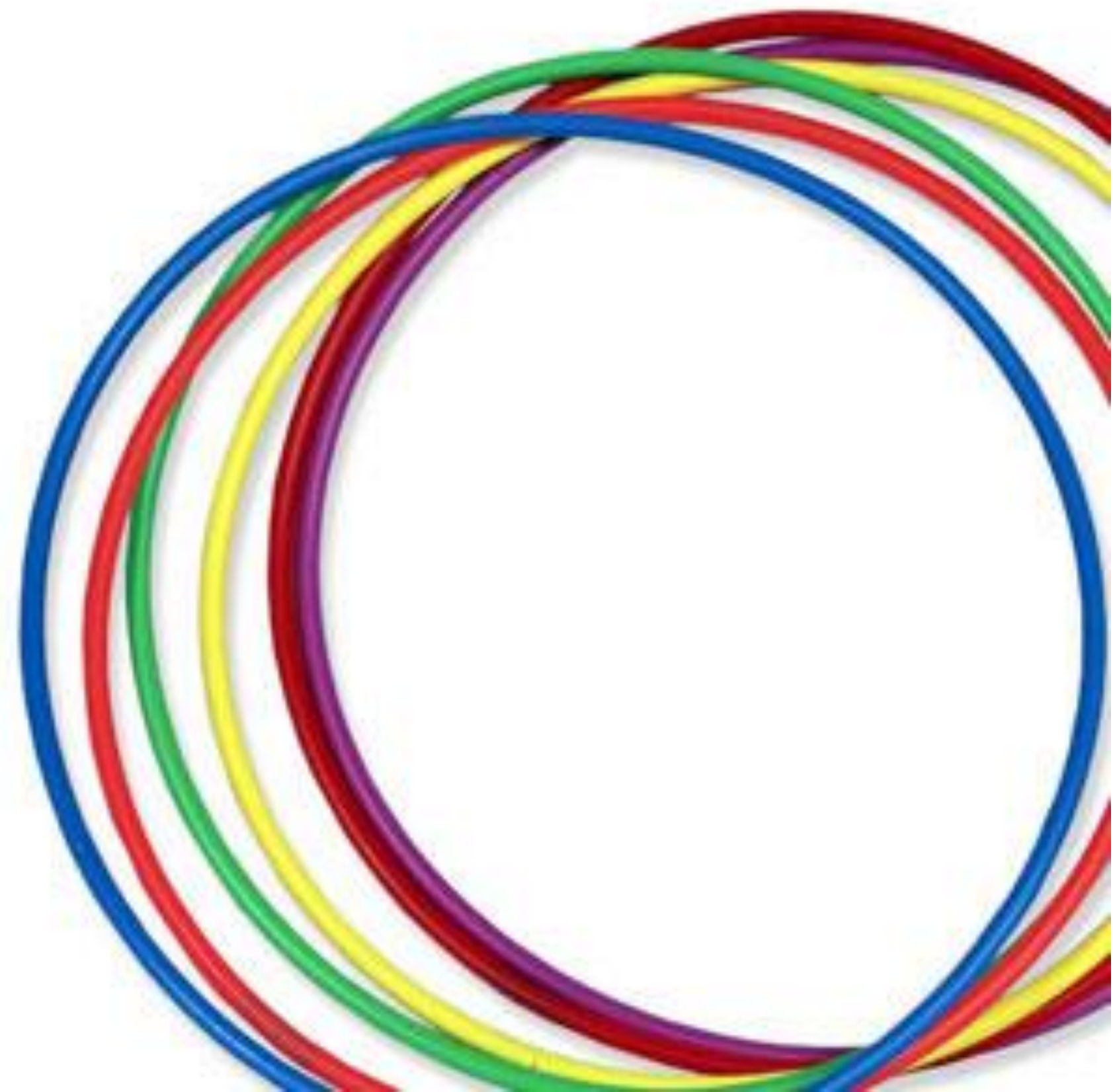
- What's the impact of this problem?

## 3. Describe the Ideal Outcome

- What should things look like instead?

## Template:

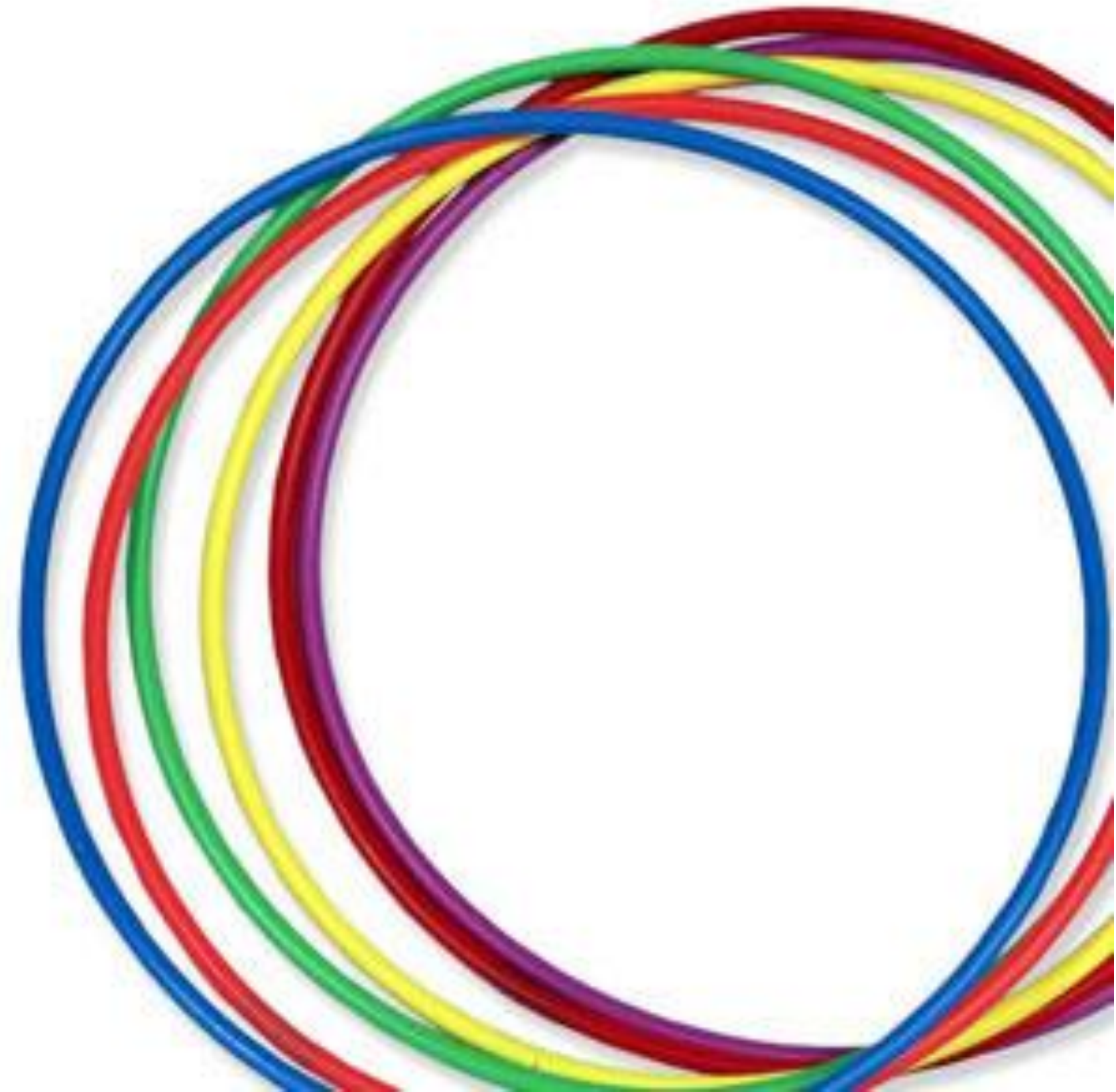
- “Right now, [the problem]. This leads to [the impact]. If solved, we could [ideal outcome].”





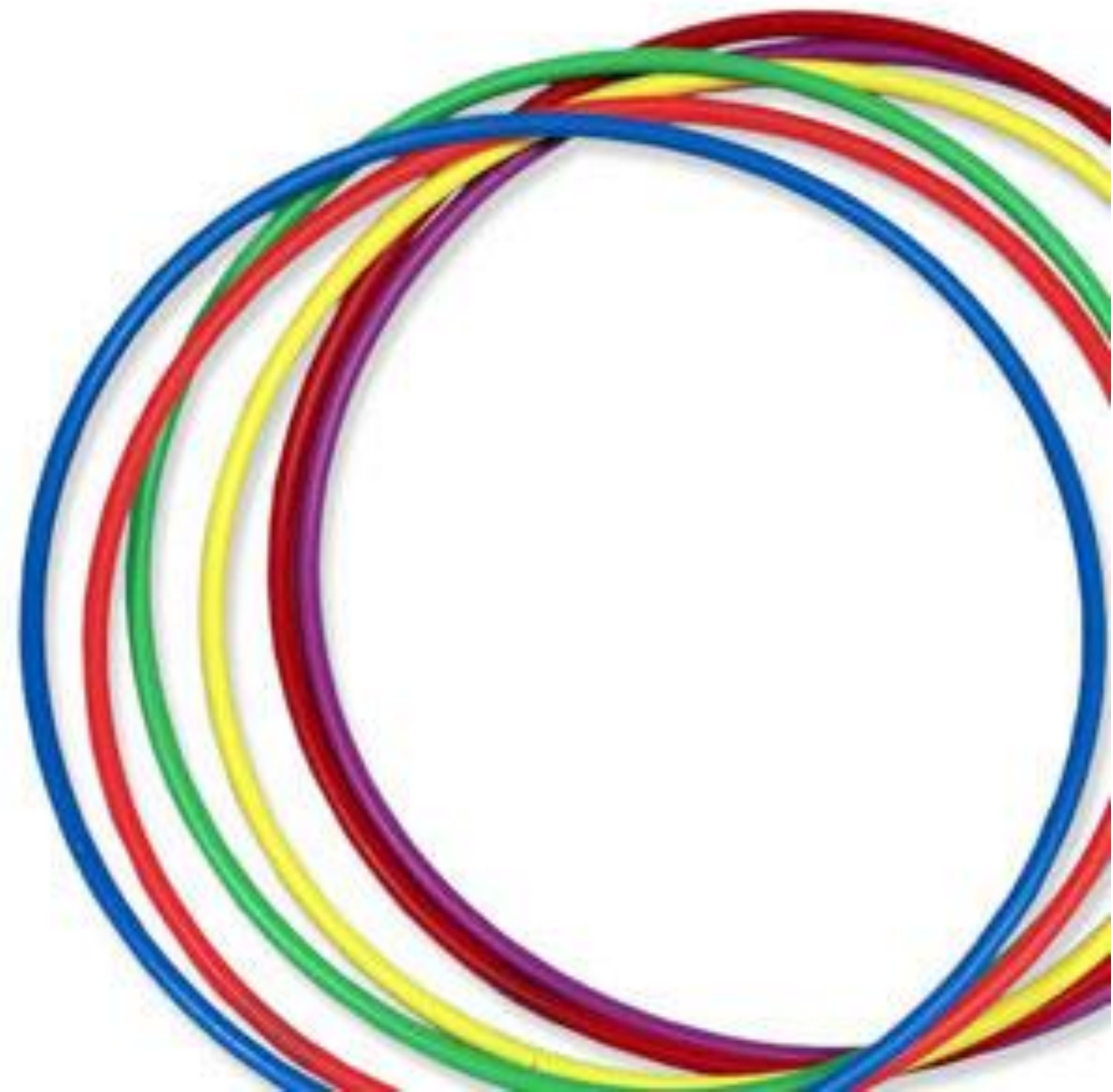
# Do a FOG Analysis about the bottleneck / problem:

FOG: What are Facts, Opinions, Guesses?



# Ask better questions.

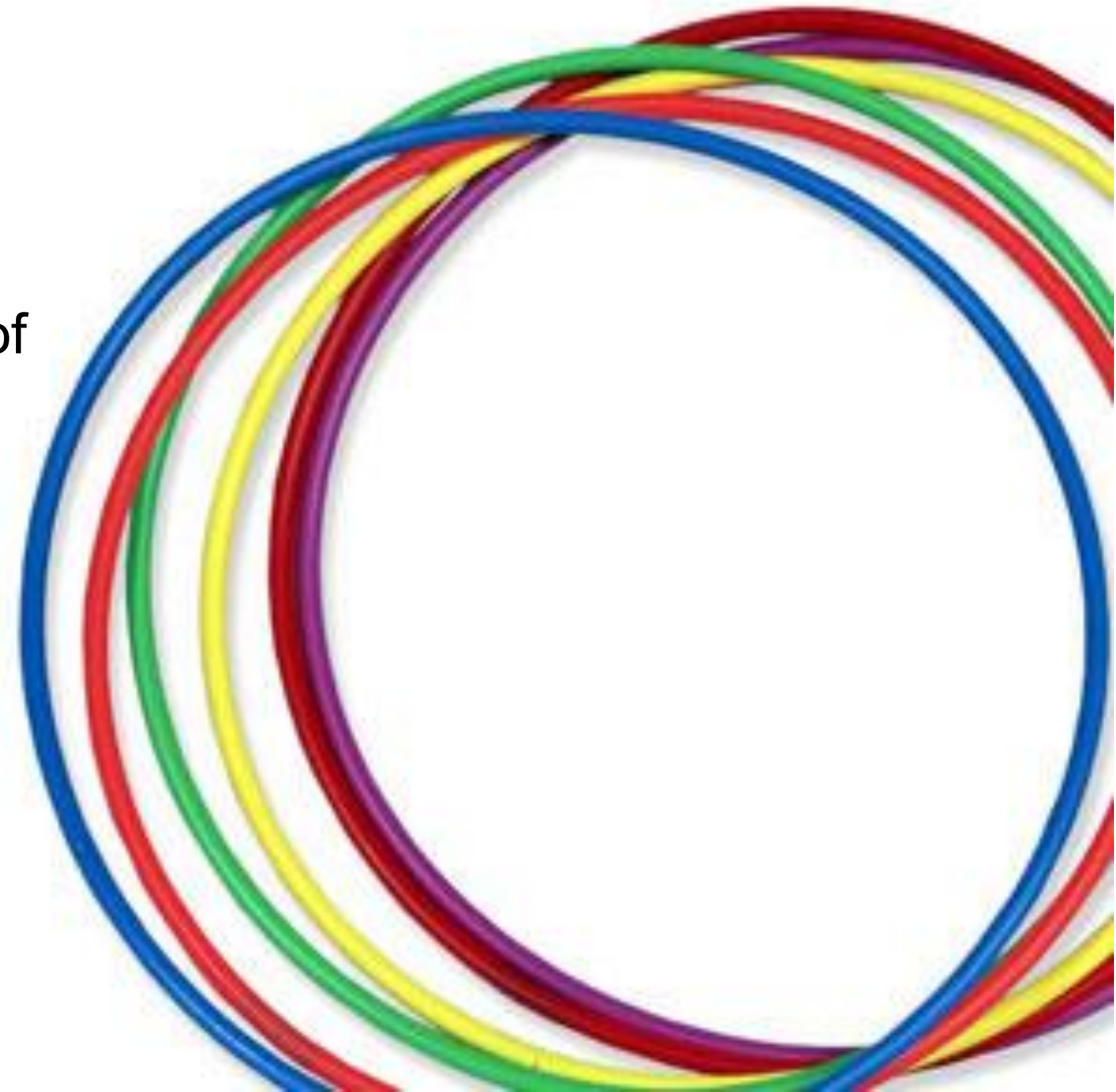
What questions should we be asking about a bottleneck / problem? (choose three useful questions to ask from the question guide)





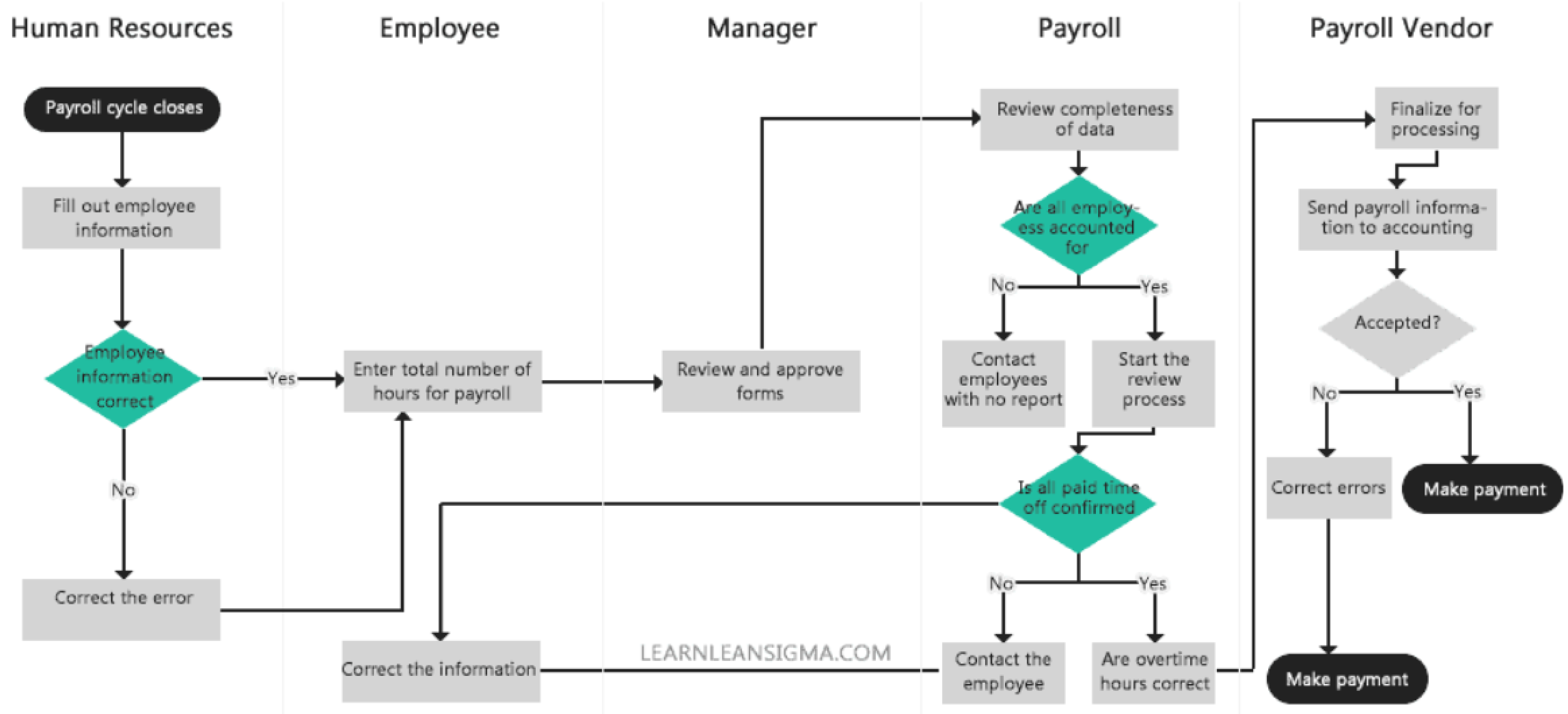
# Drill down to root causes about a bottleneck / problem: 5 Why's.

1. Ask “why does this occur?”
2. After the first answer, ask “Why” again for a total of five times.



Swimlanes

# Cross Functional / Swimlane Process Map



Credit: LearnSixSigma.com

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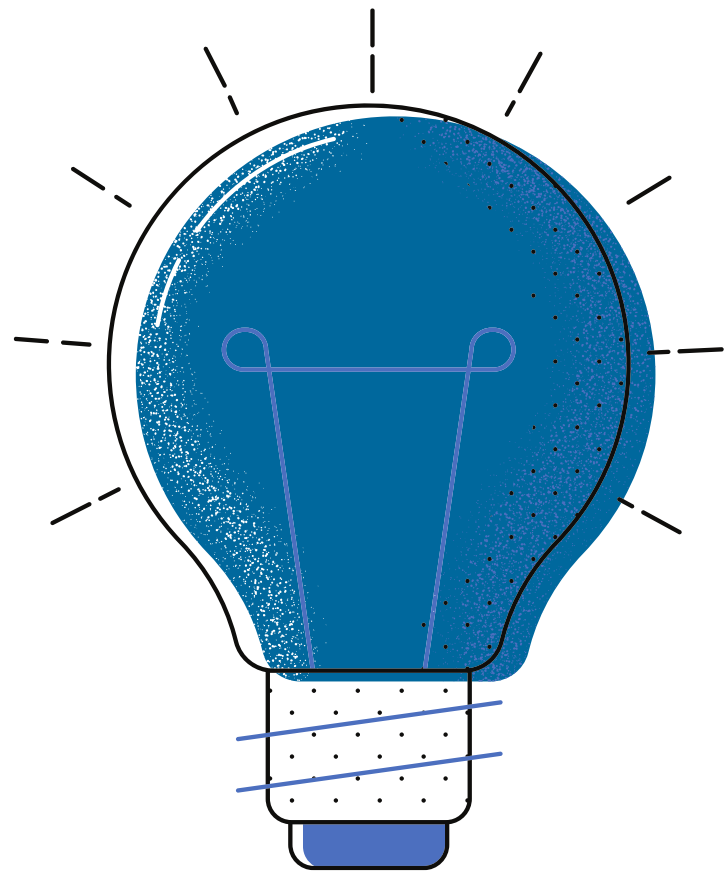
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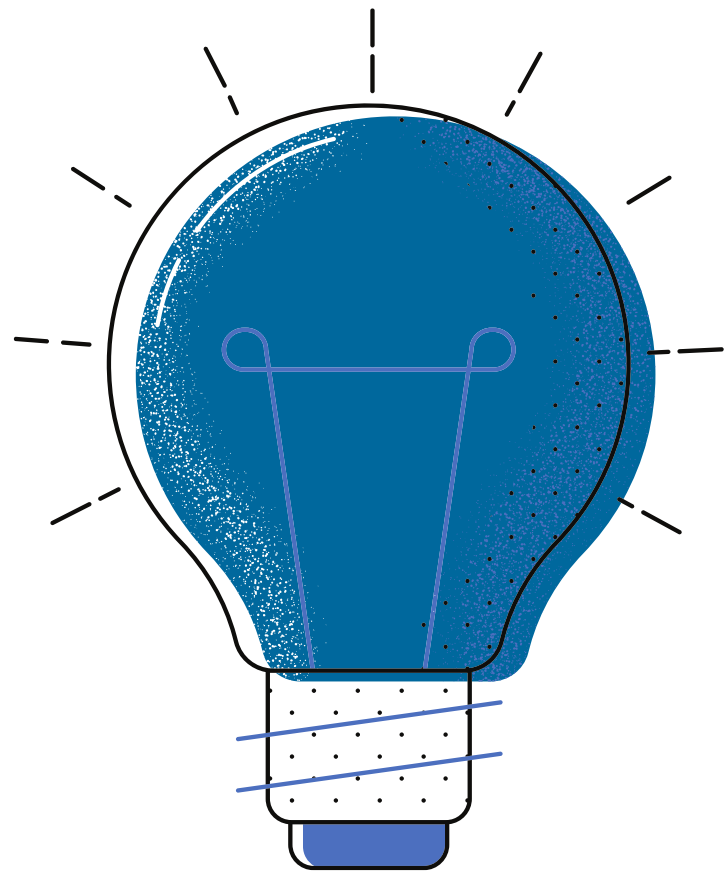
Narrow the List using ICE  
(Impact/Confidence/Ease)



# Groups of Three

Make a list of potential improvements you could make to your process.





# Groups of Three

Use ICE to identify one improvement you could make to improve the process.

Get Buy-In

Co-Create

# Blending Agendas

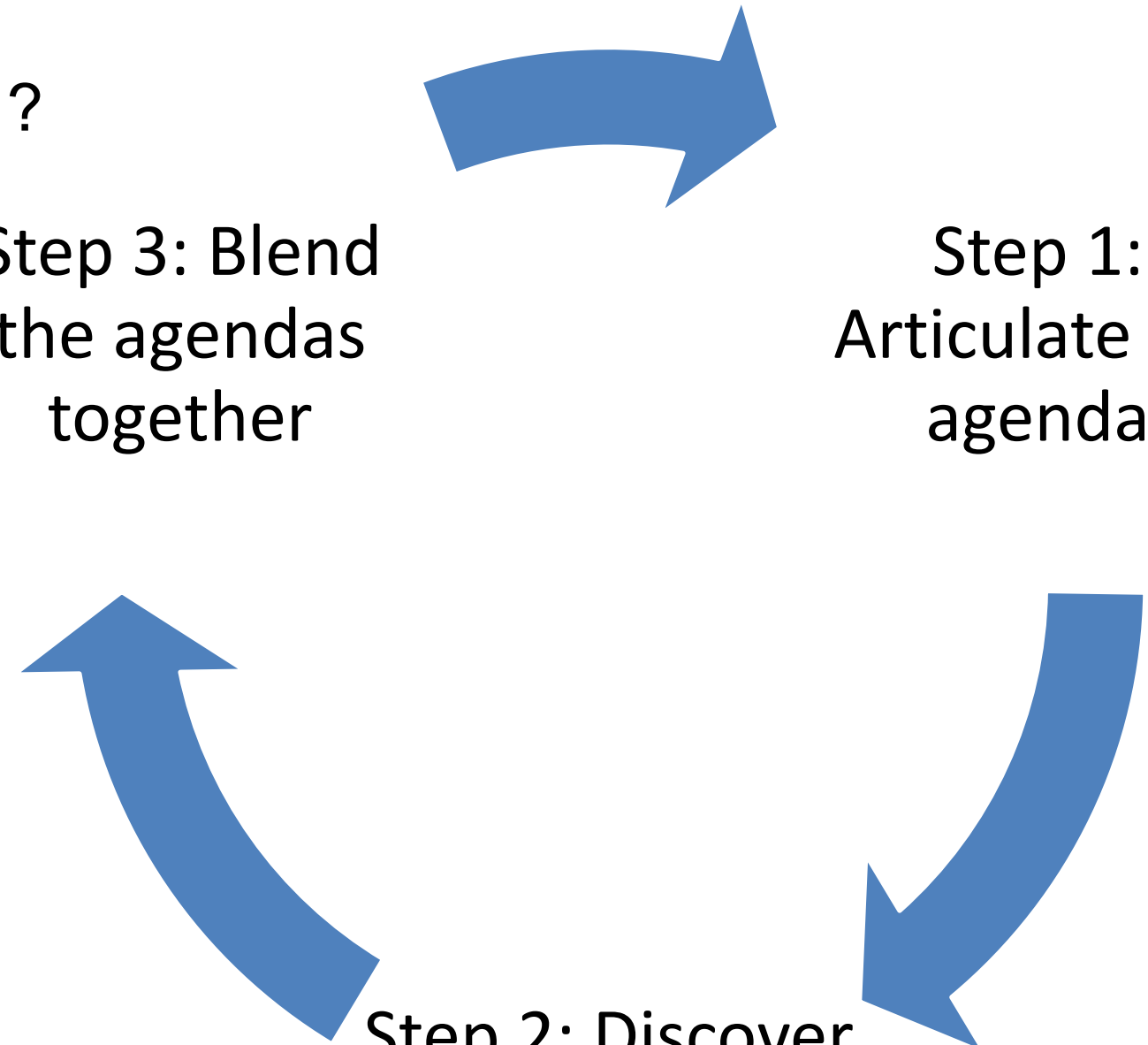
- What would it look like if ...?
- How might we work together to ...?

Step 3: Blend  
the agendas  
together

Step 1:  
Articulate my  
agenda

Step 2: Discover  
their agenda

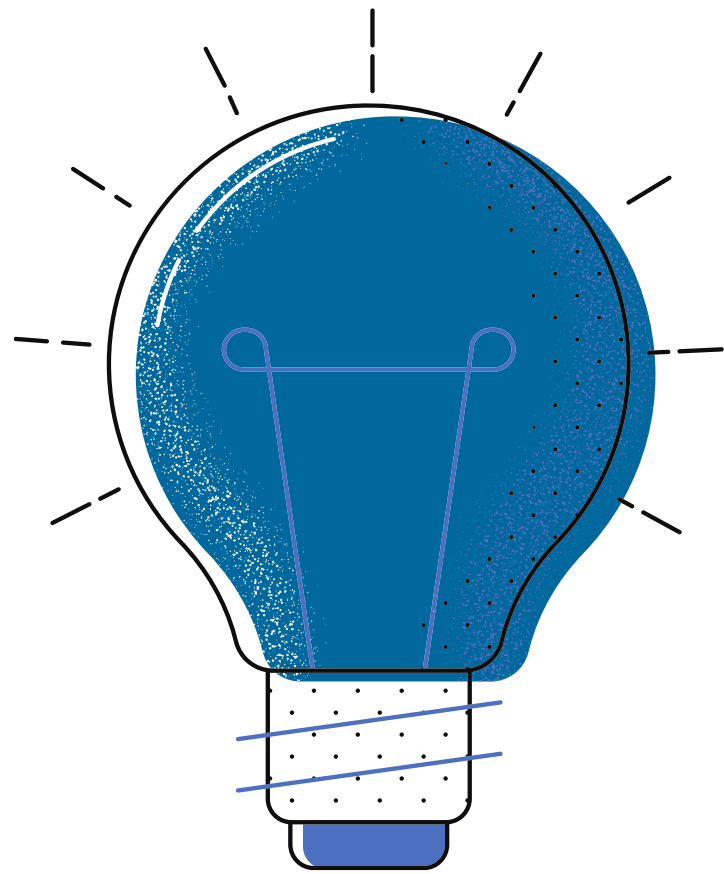
- How does this impact you?
- What would make this easier for you?
- What questions does this raise for you?



Use a RACI

# RACI Matrix — Reportable Disease Case Reporting

Activity	Accountable (A)	Responsible (R)	Consulted (C)	Informed (I)
1) Identify reportable case & trigger notification	REL	LCN	CPE	LDC, CDS, IT, PIO
2) Complete local case form (clinical details)	LCN	LCN	REL	LDC, CPE
3) Enter case into regional intake / secure portal	REL	LDC	LCN	CPE, CDS
4) Validate data (required fields, coding)	REL	LDC	CPE, CDS	LCN
5) Assign investigation & start timeline	REL	<div>↓</div> REL	CPE	LCN, LDC, CDS



# Groups of Three

Create a simple RACI matrix for your process.

Ask Lots of Questions



# Questions to Ask

1. What's the least we can change and still learn?
2. Who else downstream (and upstream) will feel this?
3. What could go wrong—and how would we know fast?
4. What's the first visible behavior that proves buy-in?

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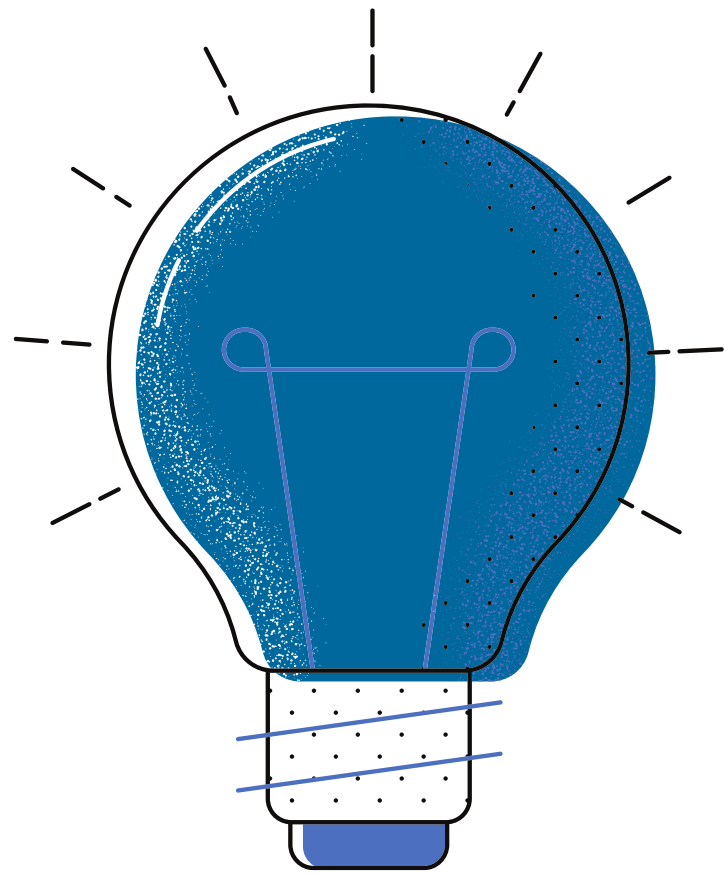
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# Groups of Three

Where could you post your improvement so that other regions can copy?

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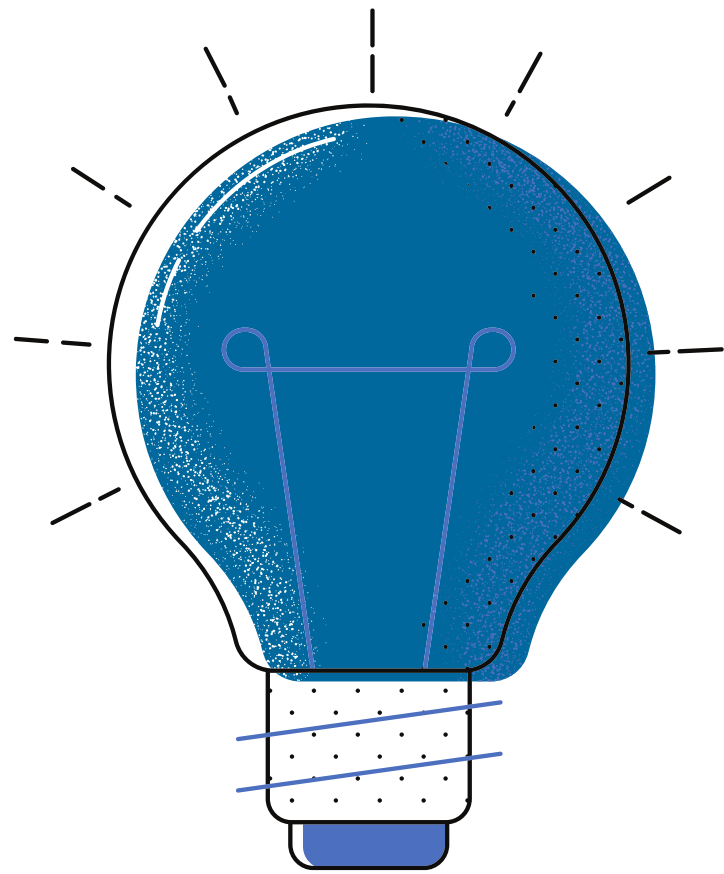
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# Discuss at Your Tables

What are some ways to get others to optimize and maintain processes without you?

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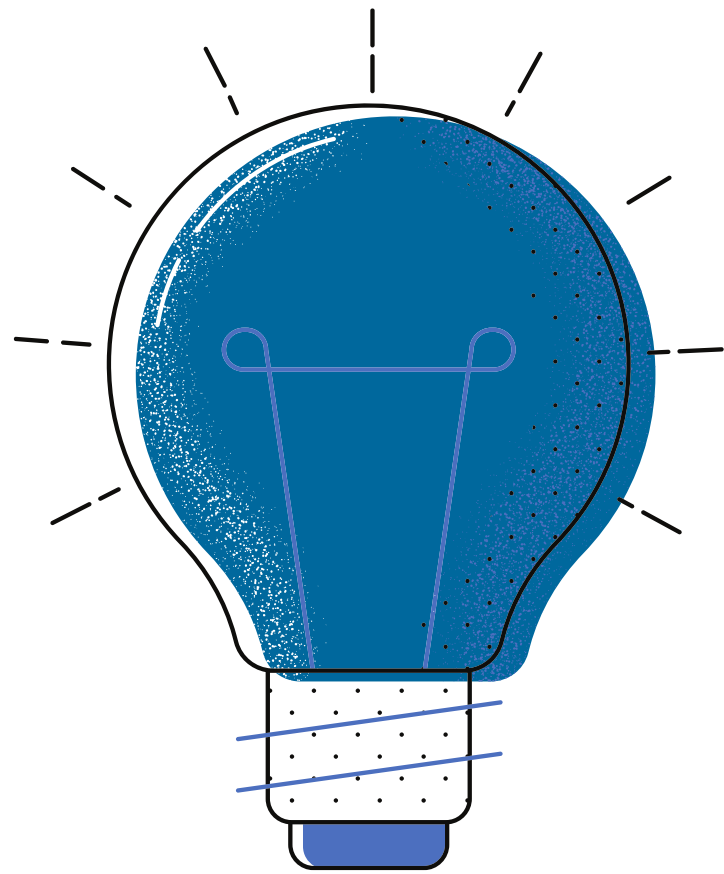
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# PDCA

Plan > Do > Check > Act

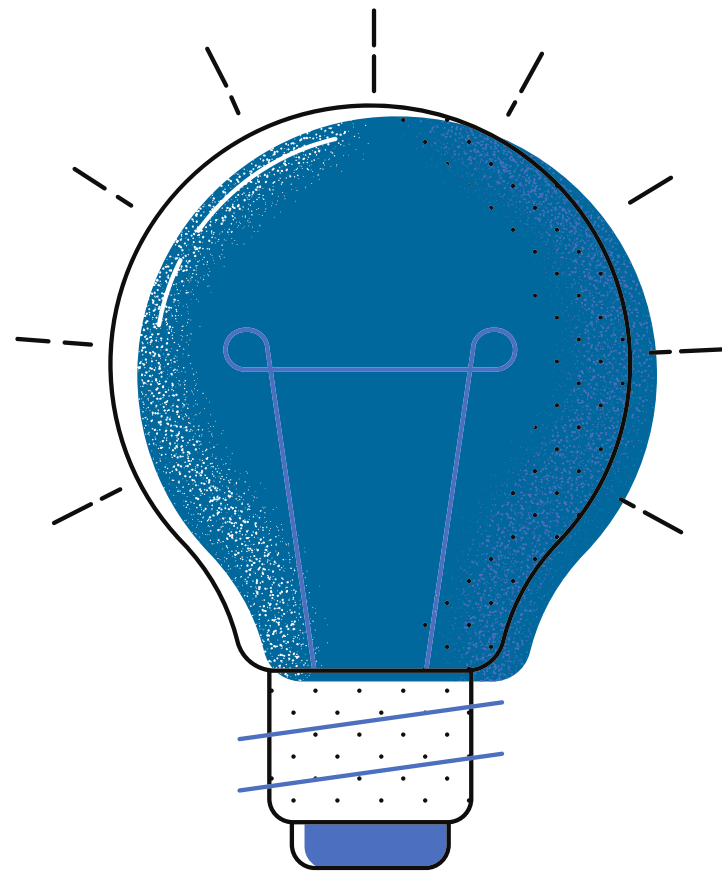


# Groups of Three

For your process, what activities would you do in each category: Plan > Do > Check > Act?



# “Speed Takeaways”

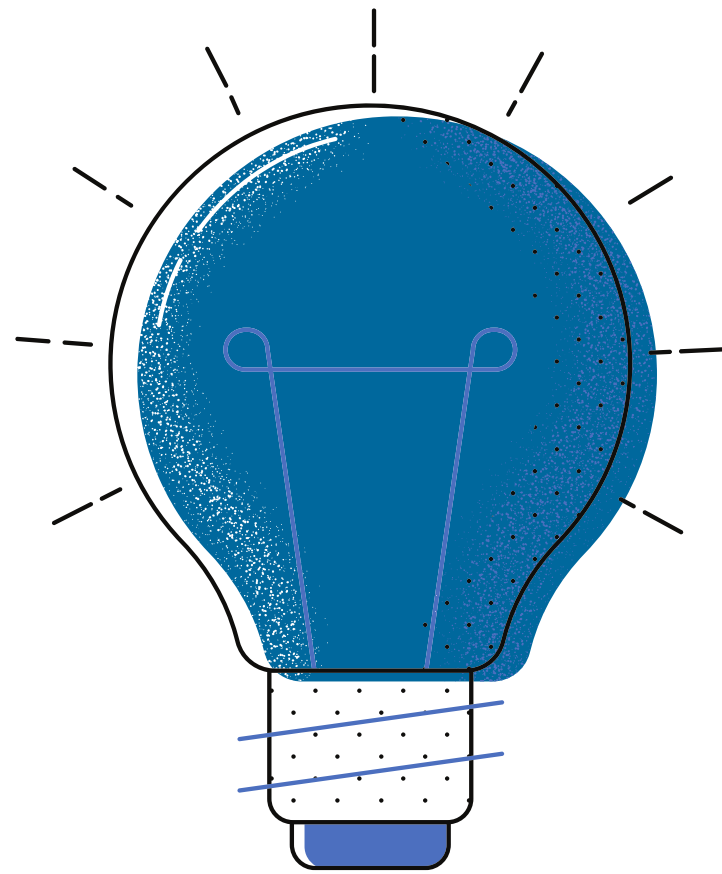


On your own, write down the following:

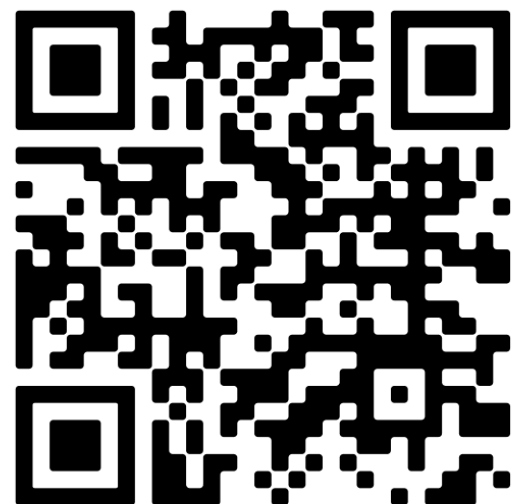
1. What surprised you the most today.
2. One action you will take to plan and align.
3. One tip you will share with your team about planning and aligning.

# “Speed Takeaways”

Share what you wrote down with 2 other people:



1. What surprised you the most today.
2. One action you will take to plan and align.
3. One tip you will share with your team about planning and aligning.



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[mark@markskenny.com](mailto:mark@markskenny.com)

# Get in touch with Mark

Text: (760) 271-8256  
Email: [mark@markskenny.com](mailto:mark@markskenny.com)

Retreat Speaker | Keynote Speaker | Team Advisor

[markskenny.com](http://markskenny.com)

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