

Leading Agile Teams Through Influence and Coaching

Guest Speaker:

Anupama Kinatukara, PgMP, PMP
PMI NJ Chapter

Introductions!

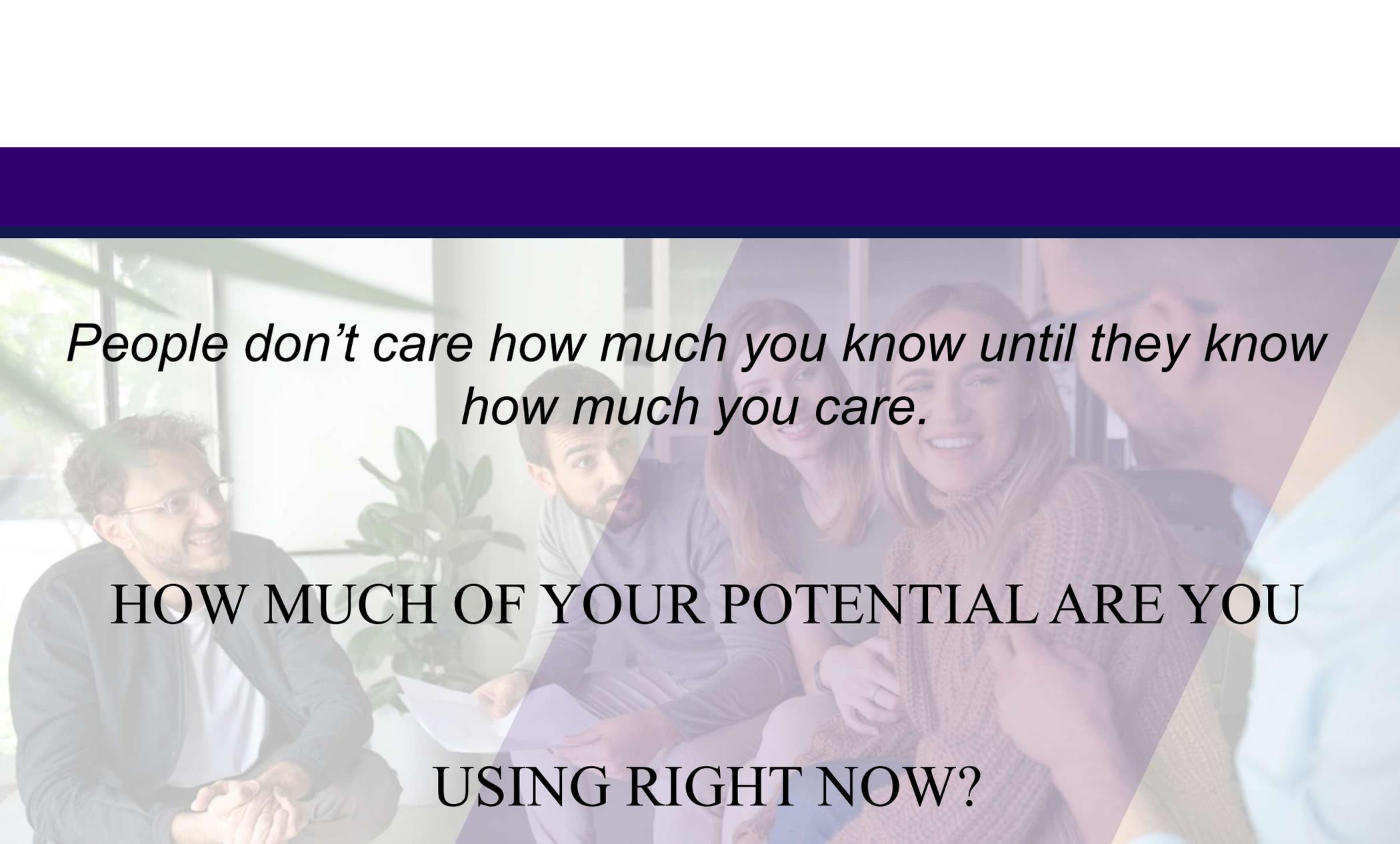


Let's Connect on LinkedIn:



Anupama Kinatukara is an experienced Agile practitioner and coach with a strong background in project and program management. She specializes in applying coaching skills to Agile Project Management to help teams improve collaboration, adaptability, and delivery outcomes.

With a passion for people-centric leadership, Anupama works with leaders and teams to build trust, enable continuous improvement, and successfully navigate change. She brings a practical, coaching-driven perspective to Agile that aligns delivery excellence with sustainable team performance.

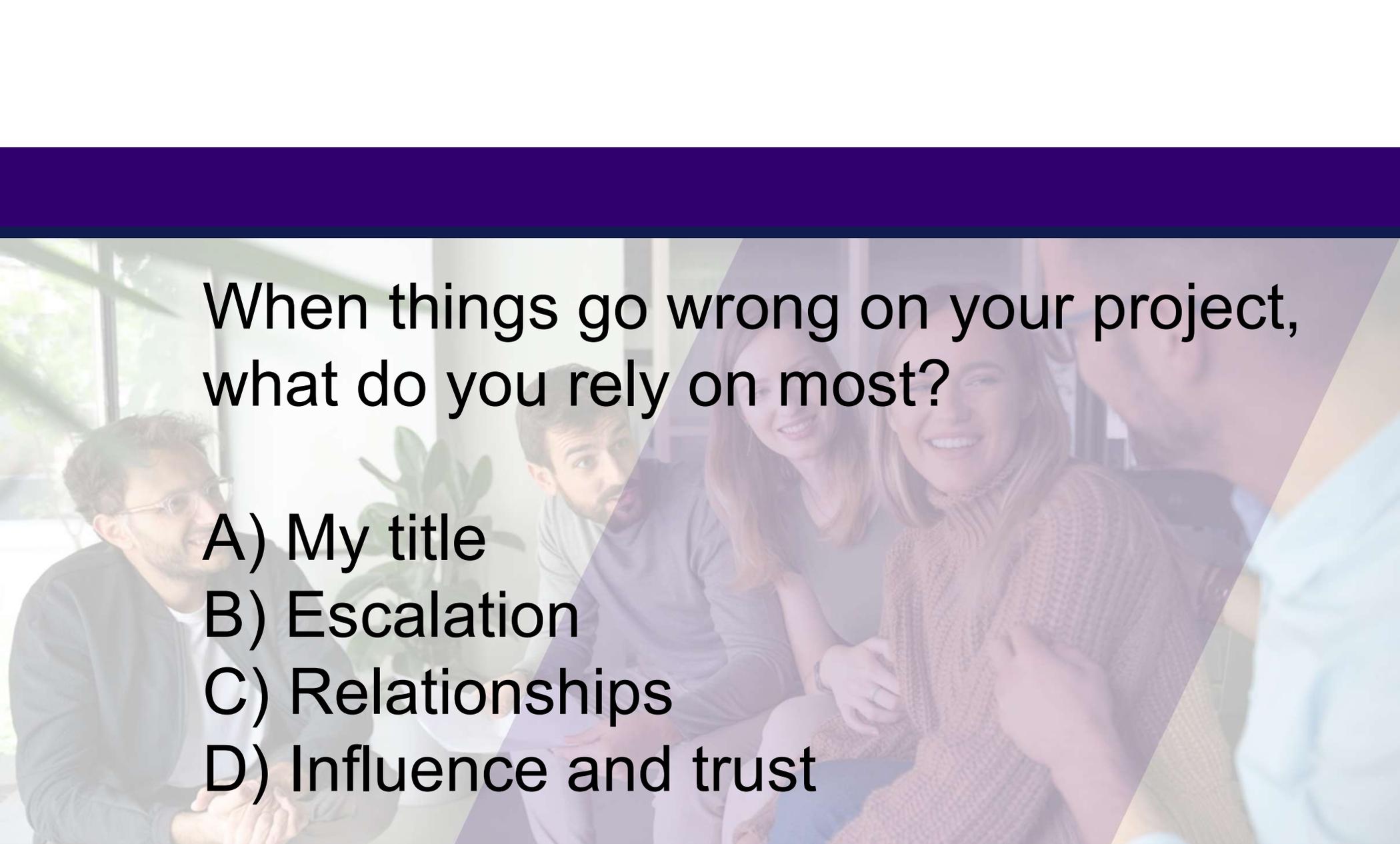


People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

**HOW MUCH OF YOUR POTENTIAL ARE YOU
USING RIGHT NOW?**



WHY IS LEADERSHIP SO IMPORTANT?



When things go wrong on your project,
what do you rely on most?

- A) My title
- B) Escalation
- C) Relationships
- D) Influence and trust



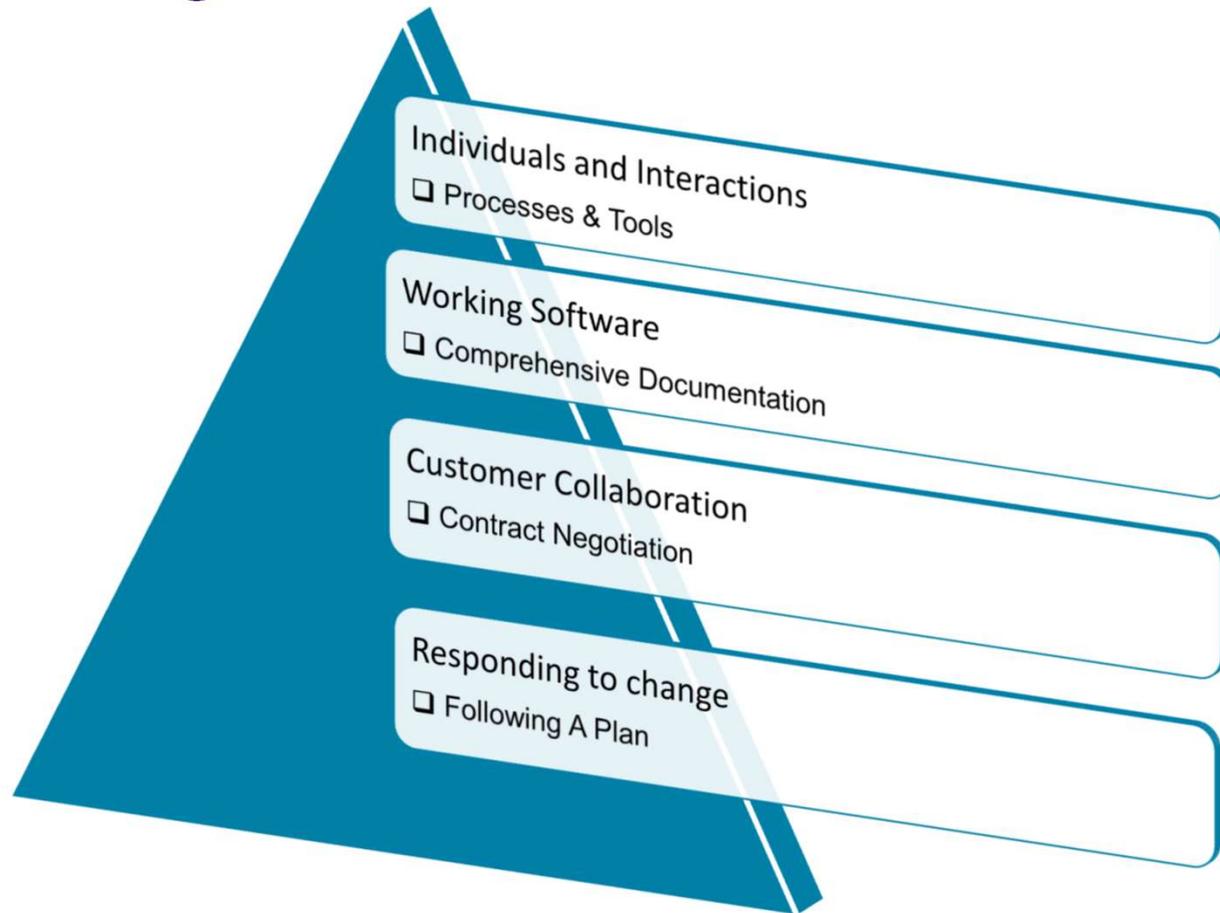
WHAT IS AGILE LEADERSHIP?

“

**EVERYTHING RISES AND FALLS ON
LEADERSHIP.**

–JOHN C. MAXWELL

Let's Discuss Agile Manifesto



Let's Look: Agile Manifesto (Core Values)

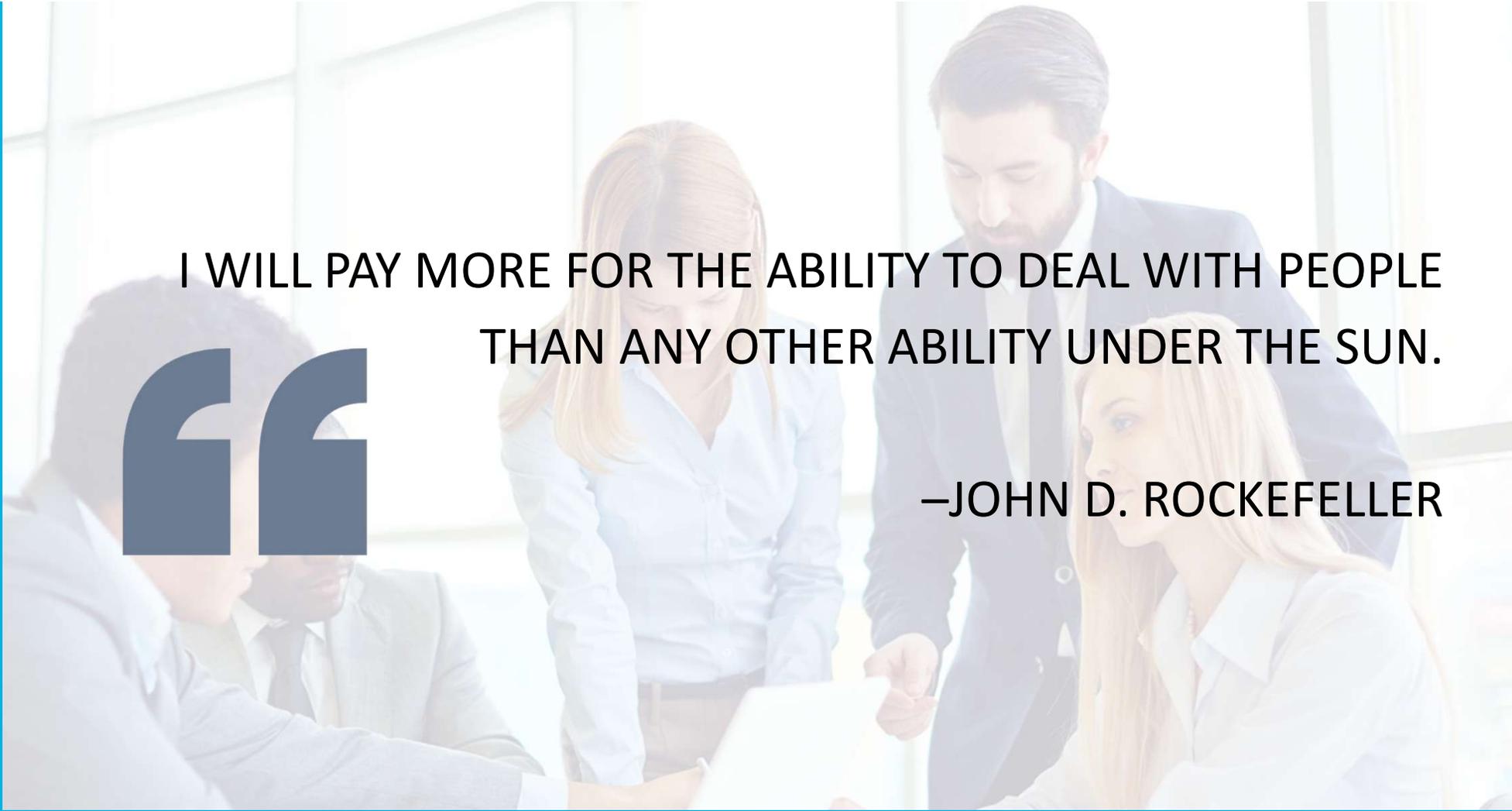
1. Individuals and interactions → processes and tools
2. Working software → comprehensive documentation
3. Customer collaboration → contract negotiation
4. Responding to change → following a plan



IF ALL YOU HAVE IN YOUR

TOOLBOX IS A HAMMER

EVERYTHING LOOKS LIKE A NAIL



I WILL PAY MORE FOR THE ABILITY TO DEAL WITH PEOPLE
THAN ANY OTHER ABILITY UNDER THE SUN.

“

–JOHN D. ROCKEFELLER

If I went back to college, I'd concentrate on two areas:
Learning to write and to speak before an audience.

“

Nothing in life is more important than the ability
to communicate effectively.

—GERALD R. FORD

People Don't Quit Companies — They Quit People

Agile Values



Individuals & Interactions



Customer Collaboration



Responding to Change

“Delivered through leaders”



People Don't Quit Companies — They Quit People

“Your team doesn’t experience Agile through frameworks. They experience it through you.”

“This is the organization... to your team.”



Director - Agile Learning
Bob Phillips, PMP



Nitin
Khanna

When Leadership Breaks Down, Agile Breaks Down

Agile Values



Individuals & Interactions → *Ignored*



Customer Collaboration → *Transactional*



Responding to Change → *Resisted*

“Values stated... but not felt”

Employees don't quit companies—they
quit leaders who devalue them.

- 
- Do you care about me?
 - Can you help me?
 - Can I trust you?



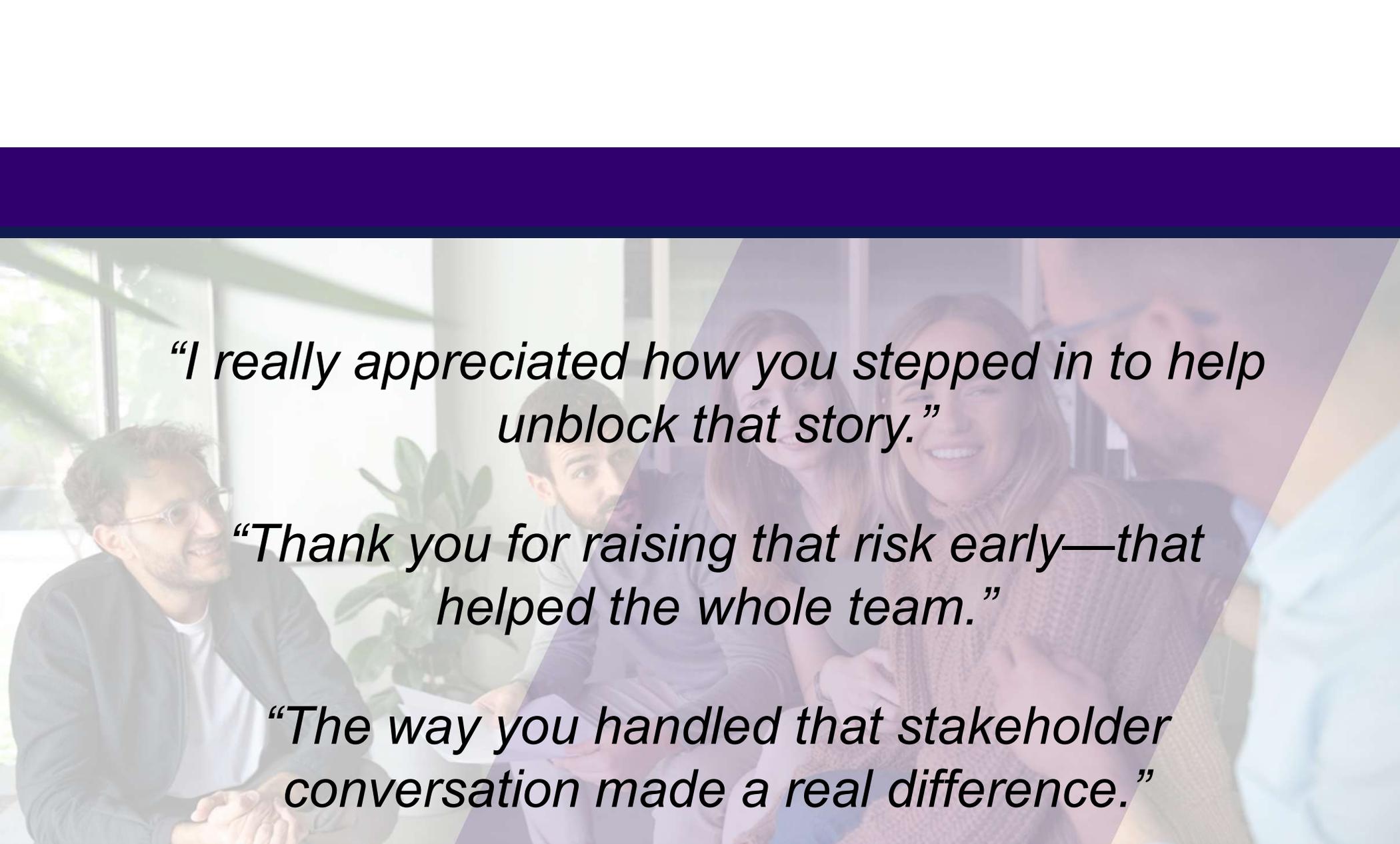
PEOPLE WANT
TO KNOW



Agile leadership isn't about grand gestures.
It's about small, consistent moments of
valuing people.

Because when people feel valued, trust
grows.

When trust grows, influence grows.



“I really appreciated how you stepped in to help unblock that story.”

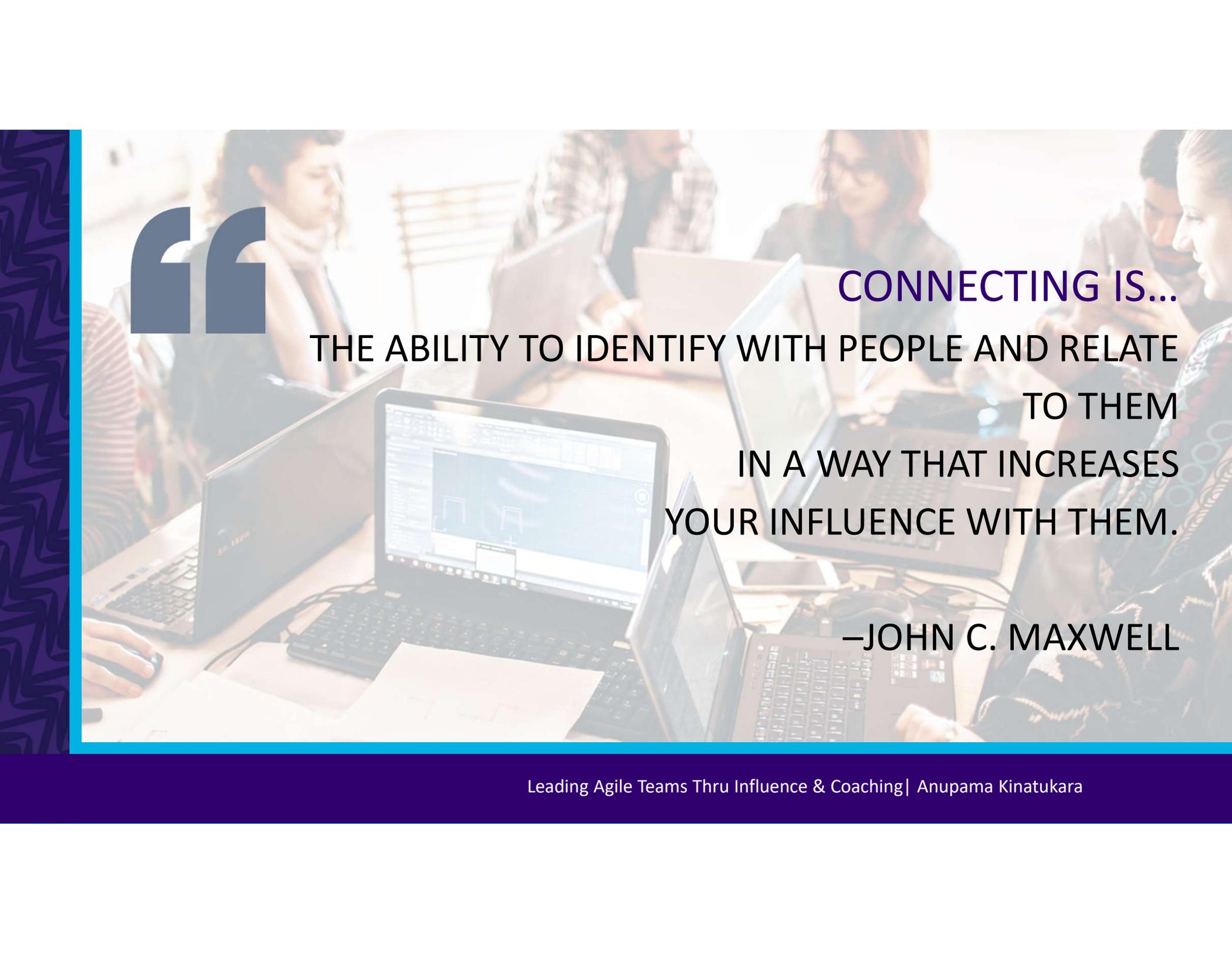
“Thank you for raising that risk early—that helped the whole team.”

“The way you handled that stakeholder conversation made a real difference.”

That's Agile leadership in action



And when influence grows—Agile actually works.

A group of people are sitting around a table in a meeting room, working on laptops. The scene is brightly lit, and the people appear to be engaged in a collaborative work session. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white box containing text and a quote icon.

“

CONNECTING IS...
THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY WITH PEOPLE AND RELATE
TO THEM
IN A WAY THAT INCREASES
YOUR INFLUENCE WITH THEM.

—JOHN C. MAXWELL

Agile Leadership is the ability to guide and influence without relying on authority.

- ✓ Lead **through people, not titles**
- ✓ Build **trust** across teams
- ✓ Embrace **adaptability** in changing environments
- ✓ Commit to **continuous improvement**



Let's introduce Maxwell's Leadership Philosophy

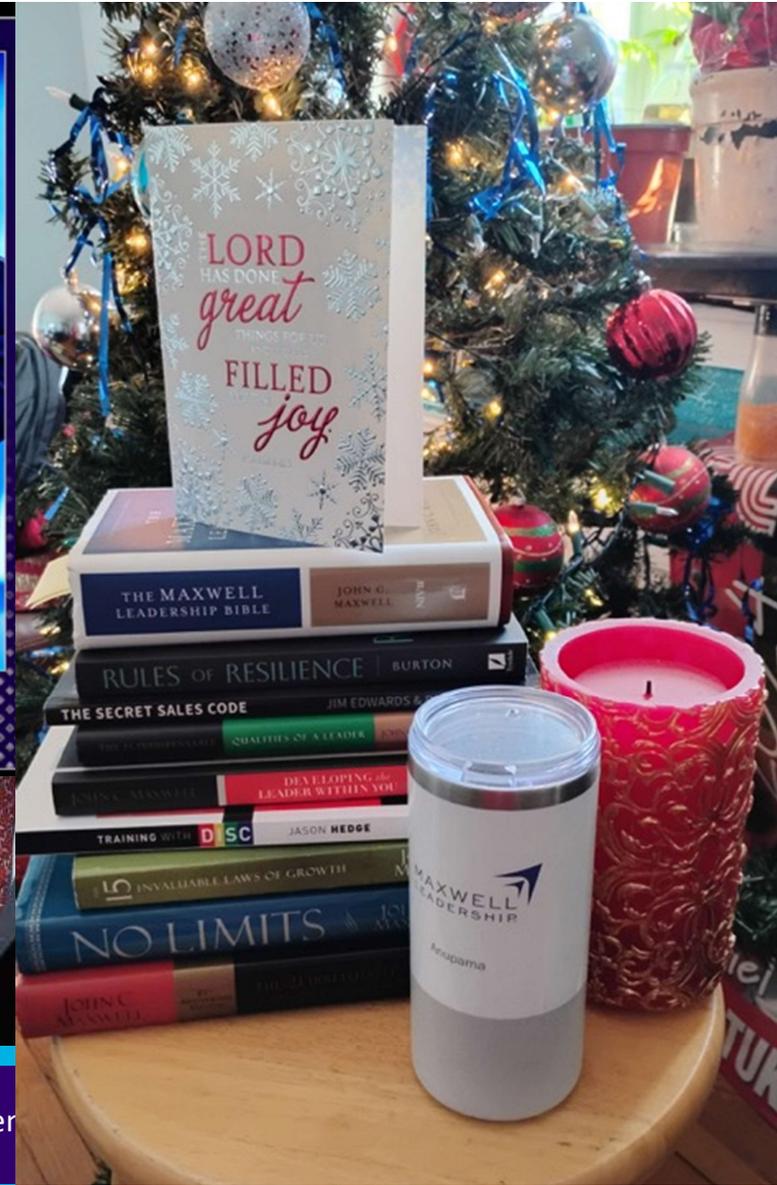
“Leadership is influence — nothing more, nothing less.”



ANUPAMA KINATUKARA
PROFESSIONAL SPEAKER

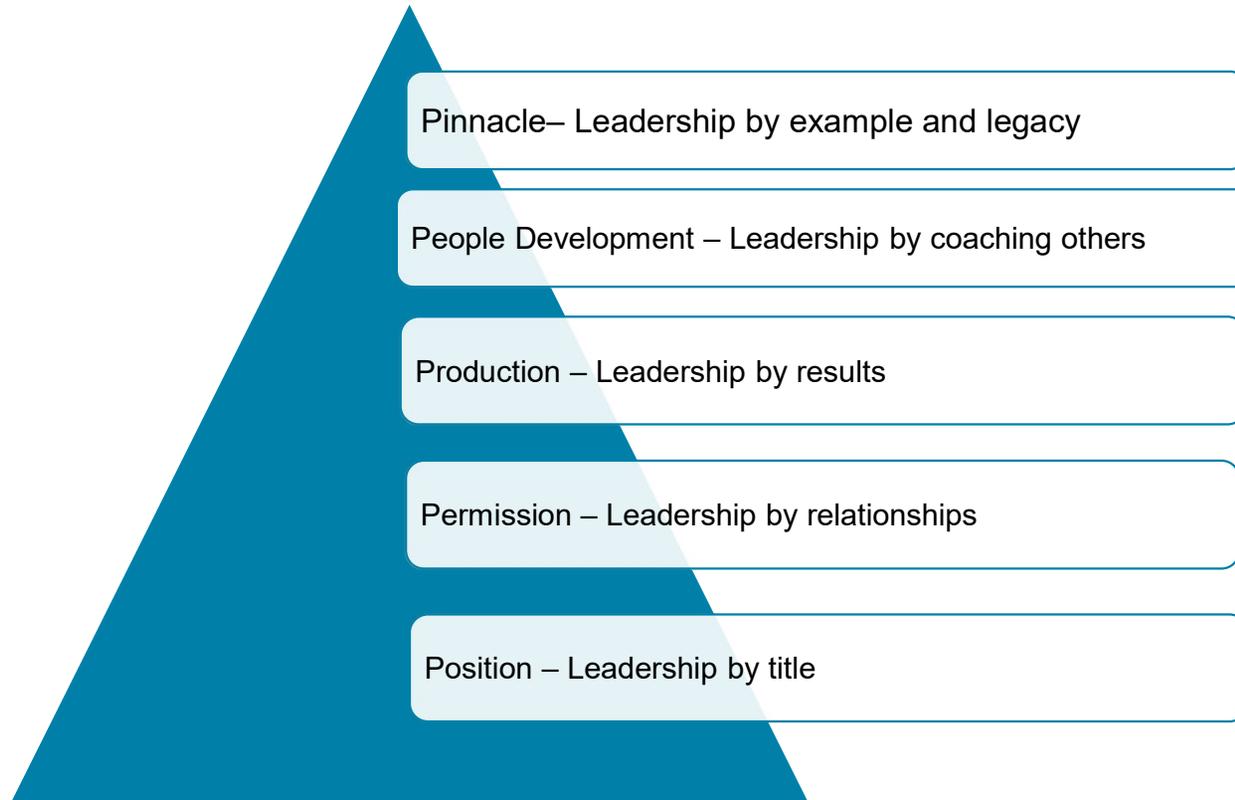


JOHN MAXWELL
LEADERSHIP EXPERT



Leading Agile Teams Thru Influencer

Maxwell's 5 Levels of Leadership



Let's Ask: Why it fits Agile Leadership

- ✓ **Self-Organizing Teams** 
Teams decide how to work and collaborate
- ✓ **Shared Authority** 
Decisions are distributed, not enforced
- ✓ **Influence Drives Results** 
Alignment, motivation, and performance come through guidance, not command

INFLUENCE INSIGHTS: A LEADER'S PRAYER:

1. Leadership is INFLUENCE

❖ God, when I am wrong, make me willing to change.

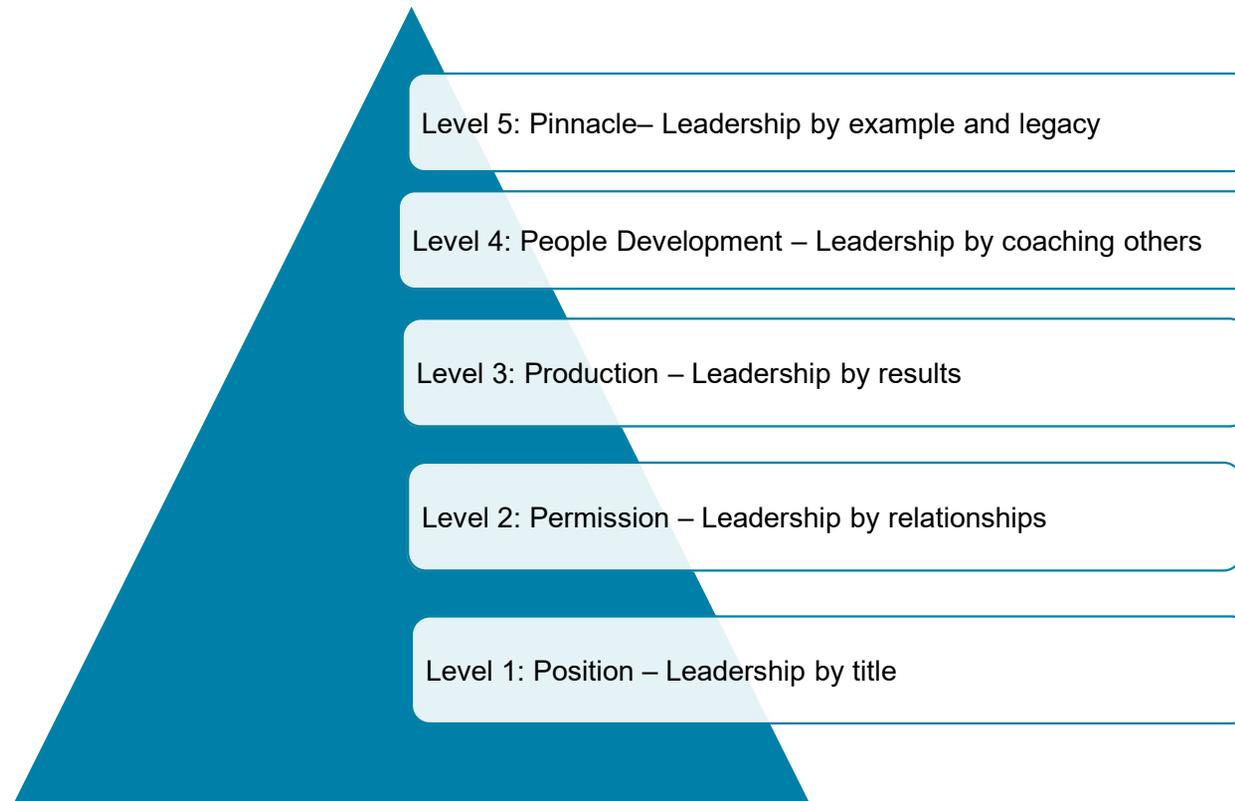
❖ When I am right, make me easy to live with.

❖ So strengthen me that the power of my influence

Will far exceed the authority of my position.

By Pauline H. Peters

Let's Discuss Maxwell's 5 Levels of Leadership





Level 1: Position → Minimal Agile Impact

- Agile teams don't follow titles — they follow trust, credibility and behavior

“I'm the Project Manager”



Level 2: Permission → Trust & Psychological Safety

- Building trust with the team
- Active listening
- Creating psychological safety

Focus: Relationships



APPLICATION Level 2: Permission

Coaching Mindset:

- * Ask powerful questions
- * Encourage team voice
- * Remove fear of failure



This is where Agile leadership truly begins



Level 3: Production → Influencing Through Results

- Delivering value consistently
- Helping the team remove impediments
- Improving flow, velocity, and quality

Focus: Results



APPLICATION Level 3: Production

Influencer Mindset:

- ❖ “How can I help the team succeed?”
- ❖ Leading by example, not pressure



Results build credibility — credibility increases influence

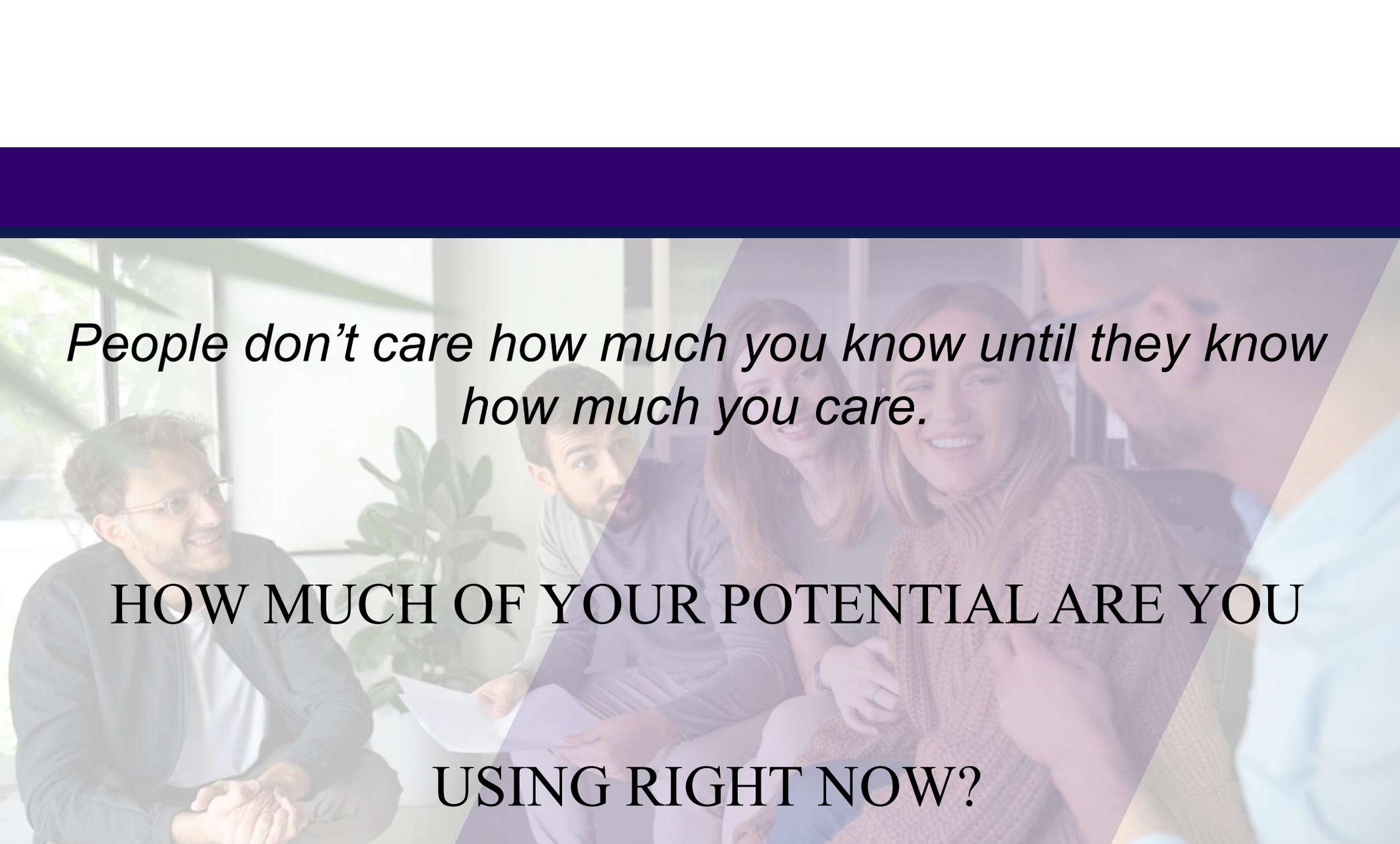


REFLECTION TIME

What's your first move?

- A) Push harder on deadlines
- B) Escalate to management
- C) Ask the team what's blocking them
- D) Re-plan quietly and hope it improves





People don't care how much you know until they know how much you care.

**HOW MUCH OF YOUR POTENTIAL ARE YOU
USING RIGHT NOW?**

HOW TO INCREASE YOUR INFLUENCE

*When we add value
to ourselves, we
become more
valuable to others.*

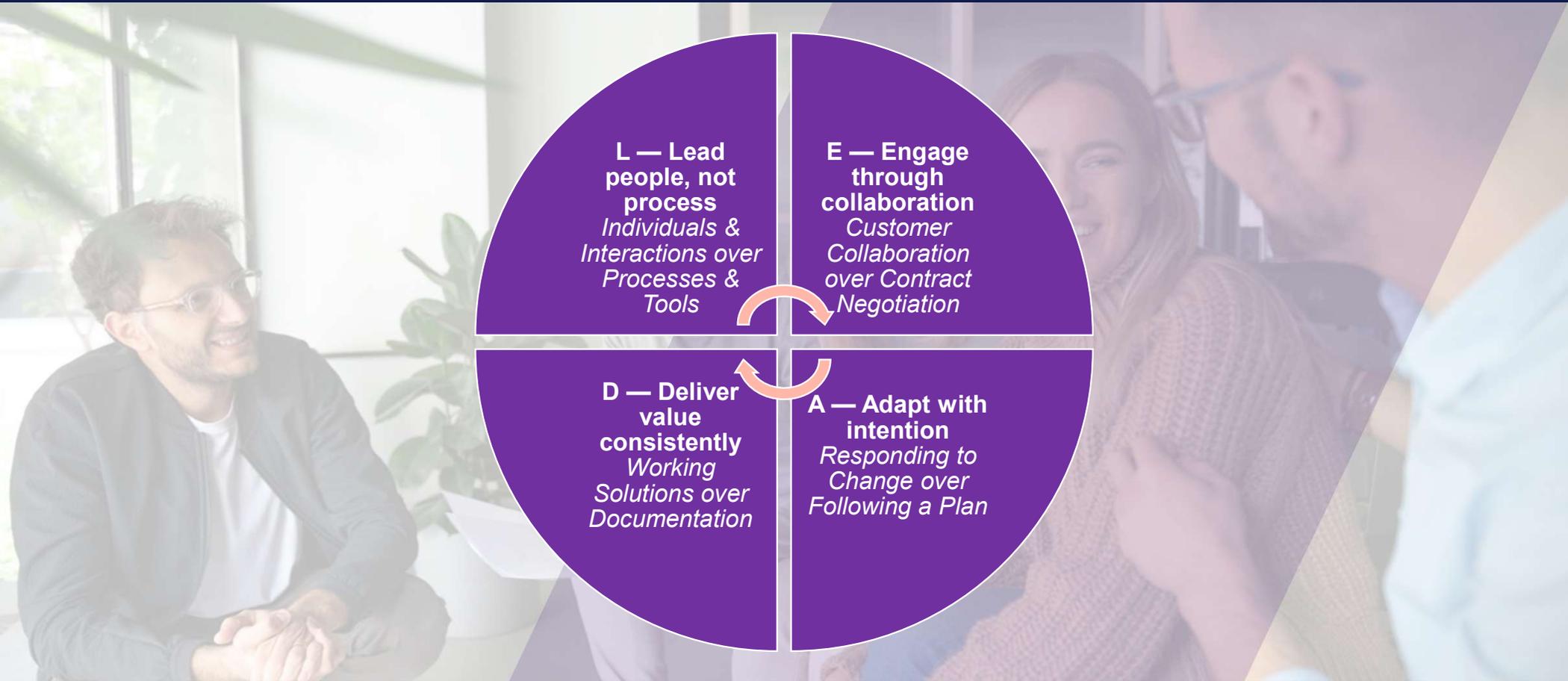




Let's Discuss Influence in Agile Leadership

I'm the Agile Project Manager

- * Influence is earned, not demanded
- * Comes from trust, competence, and care





Level 4: People Development → Coaching-Centered Agile Leadership

- Coaching team members
- Developing future Scrum Masters, Tech Leads
- Encouraging ownership and autonomy

Focus: Growing Leaders



APPLICATION Level 4: People Development

Coaching Tools:

- ❖ One-on-one coaching conversations
- ❖ Retrospective facilitation
- ❖ Feedback and mentoring



This level creates sustainable Agile teams



REFLECTION TIME

What's your best next move?

- A) Decide for the team
- B) Appoint them publicly
- C) Coach and grow them
- D) Step back completely





Level 5: Pinnacle → Agile Leadership Culture

- Foster continuous improvement
- Empower Teams to lead themselves
- Spread Leadership mindset beyond the project

Focus: Legacy & Inspiration



APPLICATION Level 5: Pinnacle

Impact:

- ❖ High-performing teams
- ❖ Leadership at every level
- ❖ Organization-wide agility



Few reach it — but Agile teams strive for it



REFLECTION TIME

What's your best next move?

- A) Lead only your team
- B) Coach leaders across teams
- C) Train future leaders
- D) Influence organizational change



A man in a dark suit and tie is sitting at a desk, looking down and to the side with a thoughtful expression. He has his hand on his forehead. In front of him is a piece of paper and a pen. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office or meeting room with other people seated at tables.

REFLECTION

- What went right?
- What went wrong?
- What can I do differently?

REFLECTION

A man in a dark suit and light blue shirt is sitting at a desk, looking down and to the right with a thoughtful expression. He has his right hand on his chin and is holding a pen over a piece of paper. The background is blurred, showing what appears to be an office or meeting room with other people seated at tables.

Lead yourself better and
others will follow.



Influencing Agile Teams

Agile Influence Techniques

- ✓ Servant leadership
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Collaboration over control
- ✓ Leading change without authority



REFLECTION TIME

Who on my team would grow the most if I shifted from getting results through them to intentionally **developing leadership within them**—and what will I do this month to make that happen?





Coaching Agile Teams

Agile Project Managers act as:

- ✓ Coaches, not bosses
- ✓ Facilitators, not decision-makers
- ✓ Enablers, not controllers



REFLECTION TIME

Coaching Questions Example:

“What’s blocking progress?”

“What does success look like?”

“How can I support you?”



Practical Takeaways for Project Managers

- ✓ Move from Position → Permission → Production
- ✓ Focus on **developing people**, not managing tasks
- ✓ Lead with **influence, empathy, & coaching**
- ✓ Measure success by **team growth & value delivery**

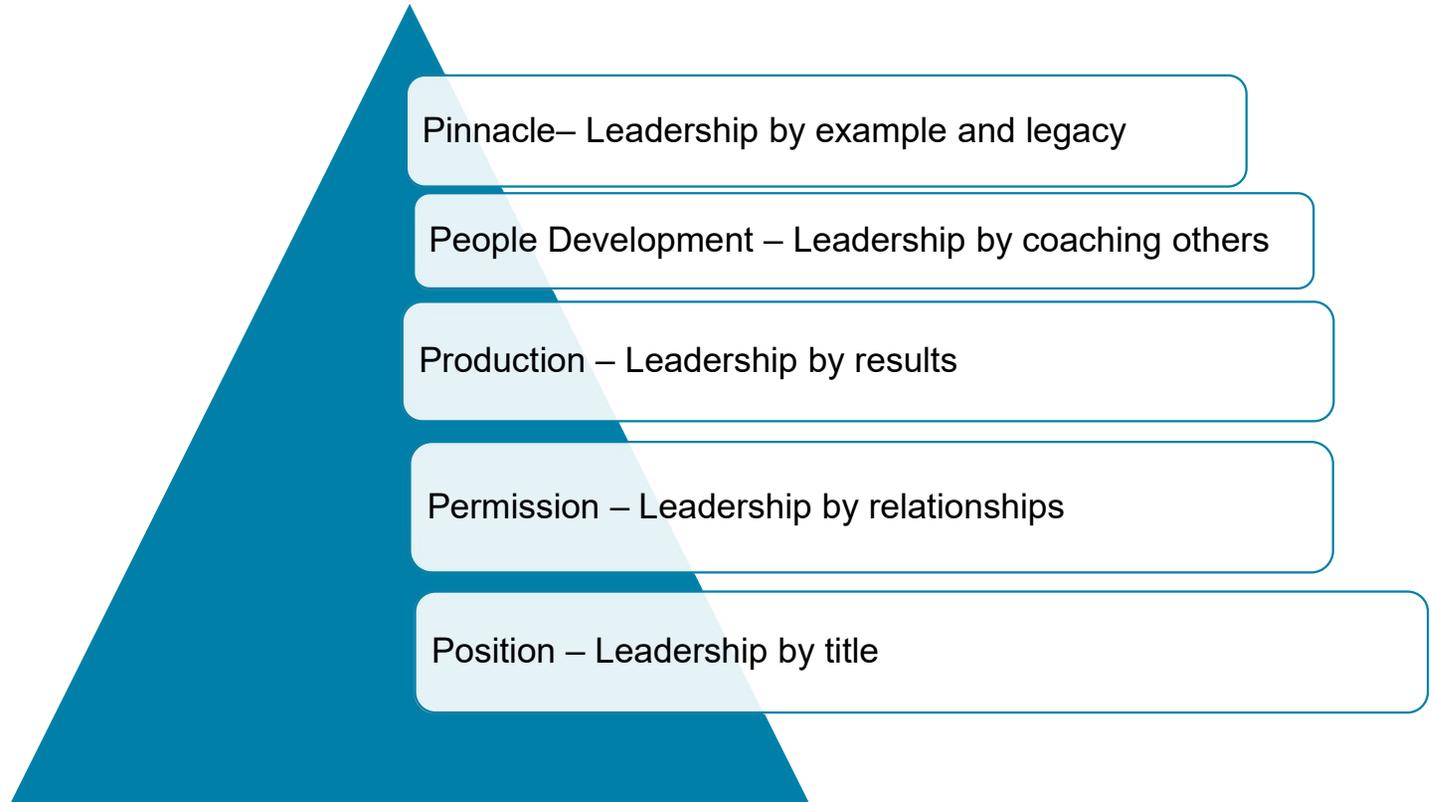




Agile Leadership is not about authority.

It is about influence, coaching, and
growing others.

Let's Reflect on the 5 Levels of Leadership





INFLUENCE IS NOT ABOUT POSITION.

www.linkedin.com/in/anupamakinatukara/

Let's get connected
on LinkedIn...



Leading Agile Teams Thru Influence & Coaching | Anupama Kinatukara

POSITION → EARN TRUST, NOT JUST TITLES

PERMISSION → CONNECT & INFLUENCE

PRODUCTION → DELIVER & INSPIRE RESULTS

PEOPLE DEVELOPMENT → GROW OTHERS

PINNACLE → LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY



THE SINGLE BIGGEST PROBLEM IN
COMMUNICATION IS THE ILLUSION IT HAS
TAKEN PLACE

—GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Questions | Open Forum





→ **Next Session: February 25, 2025** ←



THANK YOU

This presentation is eligible for:

- **PMI:** 1.0 PDU (Ways of Working)
PDU Claim Code: **0083C2XMTS**
- **Scrum Alliance:** 1 SEU (Learning)

PMINJ CONTACTS

John Tse: John.Tse@PMINJ.org

Nitin Khanna: Nitin.Khanna@pminj.org

Bob Phillips: Bob.Phillips@pminj.org

www.PMINJ.org

