

Coaching Beyond the Team

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Why coaching beyond the team?

- Engage people outside the team to adjust the external environment that is hampering the team.
- Depict underlying issues without jumping to solutions prematurely.
- Avoid habitual thinking and expand options beyond the current level of thinking.
- Gain a holistic view.

Agenda

- Frame the Issue
- Share Tools
 - Shape of the Problem
 - Finding Factors
 - Influence Diagram
- Practice with Your Issues
- Wrap Up and Questions

Shape of the Problem

A method to

- show ripple effects and interconnectedness of issues that may seem simple on the surface.
- illustrate how other people and groups are affected by a problem that may seem local
- Allow others to see the scope and impact of problems beyond the team

Choose a Scenario to Work with at Your Table

- People don't finish their work on time and prioritize other work over sprint work.
- Bugs escape to production.
- Team members worry about getting a good bonus.
- [fill in the blank with your scenario]

Working with Shape of the Problem

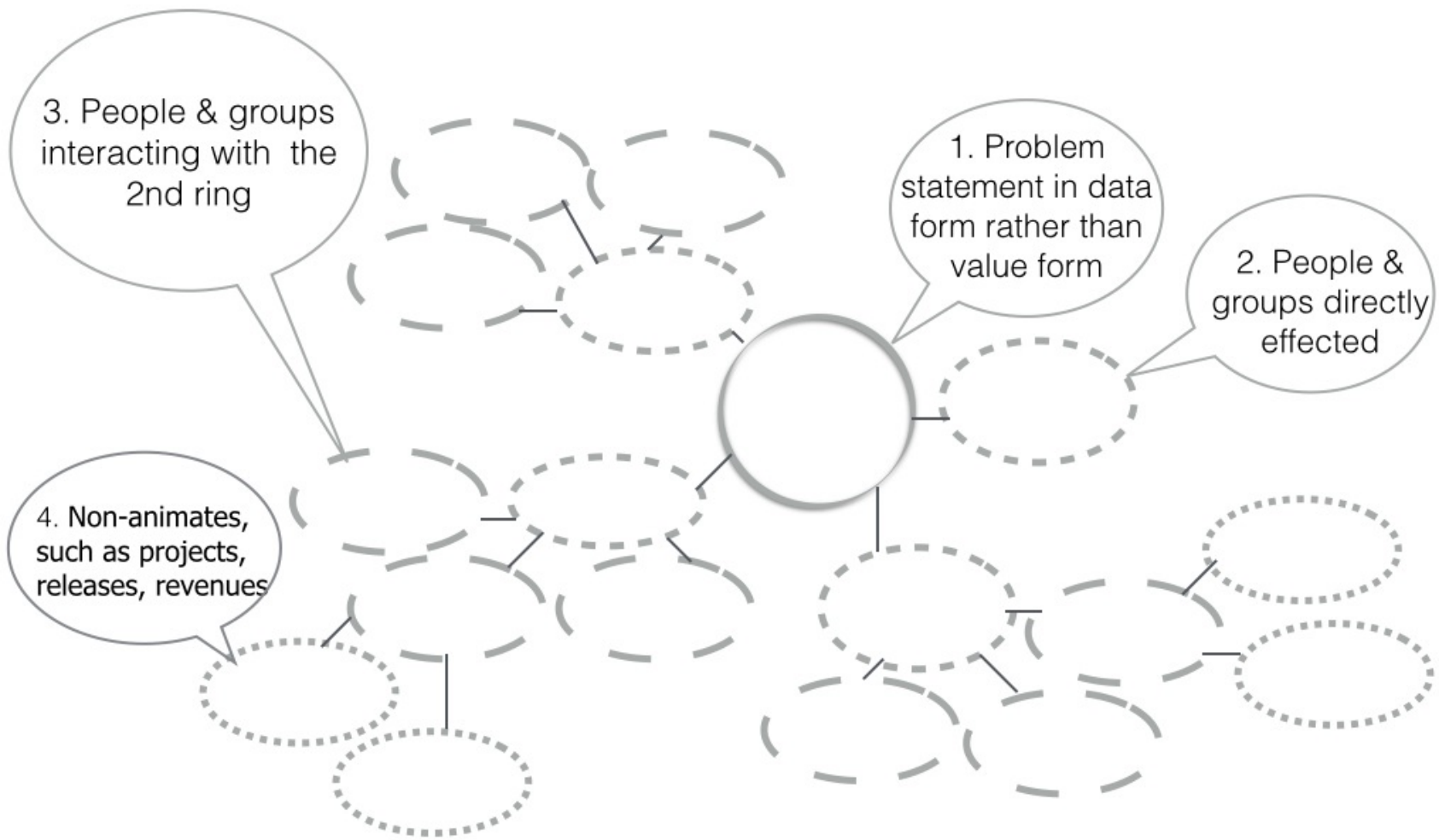
State the problem in data form not value statement:

- “Late for meetings” not “disrespectful”
- “Multitasking” not “doesn’t care”



- Find who is affected by the problem.
- These could be individuals, groups or containers.

(Containers “hold things together,” e.g., teams, departments, specialties, functional groups, projects, revenue.)





When & How

Use this method...

- when you suspect there are ripple effects but others aren't seeing them.
- when the problem is pegged to individuals, but you suspect their behavior is part of a larger pattern.

Develop an initial sketch, then invite the people you want to influence expand it with you.

Finding Factors

A method to...

- Think more broadly about what factors might influence the problem.
- Develop a sense of what factors are mostly closely associated with the problem.
- Set the stage for reasoning about causality and interconnections.
- Identify which factors you might want to observe or measure.

- Brainstorm a list of quantitative and qualitative factors that might influence the problem situation.
- Combine those that see like duplicates, and winnow out those you think are most important.
- Once you have a list, refine it:
 - nouns or noun phrases, not verbs. “distance” v. “walking between buildings”
 - potentially measurable. test that you can you gauge the level of, number of, size of...
 - neutral or positive. “meeting quality” v “poorly-led meetings”

Practice using the same scenario you worked on in the first exercise.

When & How

Use this method....

- when you want to move beyond blaming the usual suspects.
- to understand the dynamics and entwined causality of a situation.

Brainstorm a list with the people you want to influence. Worry about transforming the list into measurable and neutral descriptors after you have a good list of potential factors.

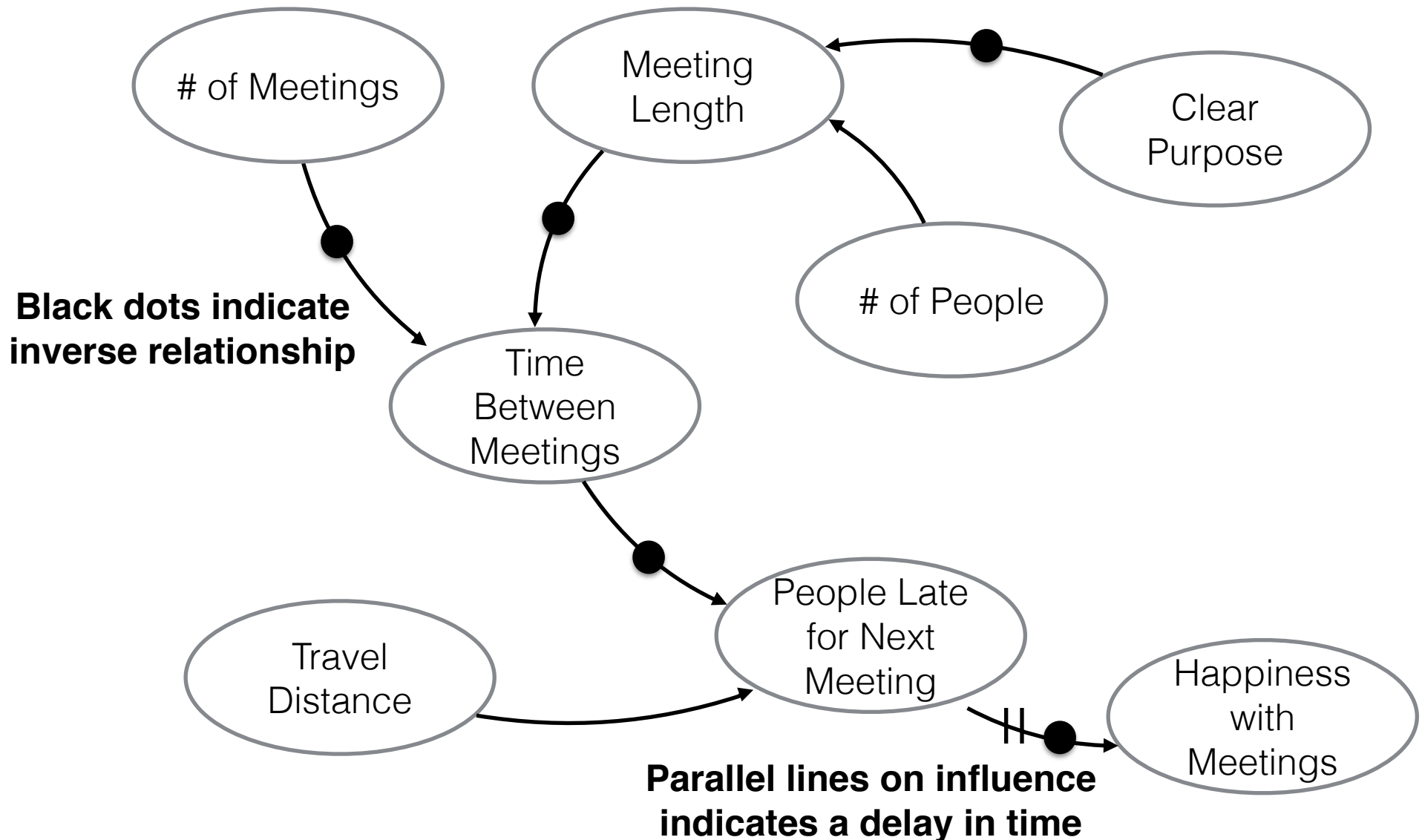
Influence Diagrams

A method to...

- Understand how factors relate to each other.
- Provide an clues about where to intervene for most benefit.
- Provide clues about effects and side-effects.

Factors Go In Ellipses

Arrows show influence





Practice using the same scenario you worked on in the first exercise.

When & Where

Use this method...

- to reason about non-linear, indirect causality.
- move beyond the usual suspects and understand the dynamics of a situation.
- find options for action.

Develop an initial sketch, then invite the people you want to influence expand it with you.

Observation & Gather Data

Before you take action...

- What can you count, gauge, or observe?
- Do you see evidence of the linkages you identified in your Influence Diagram? If not is it possible there is a delayed effect?
- Look for confirming and *disconfirming* evidence.
- How will you evaluate whether your intervention is working—or not working?

Choose an Intervention

- Fast feedback
- Cheap (so you don't need a big budget or lots of approvals)
- With in your control
- Safe to fail

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