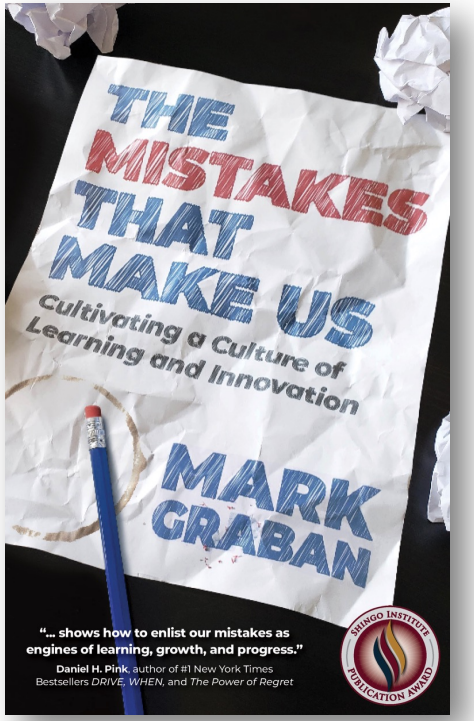
WHY PEOPLE AREN'T SPEAKING UP

What Every Lean Leader Needs to Know... and Do



Slides, Links, Poll Results & More:

MarkGraban.com/GLS2025

Scan for Polling:

"Number of Incident Reports"

"**Psychological safety** is a **belief** that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with

- ideas
- questions
- concerns or
- **mistakes**."

Amy Edmondson
Harvard Business School
The Fearless Organization

SOUTH ENTRANCE

DON'T MAKE US LOOK BAD!

ANDON
CORD

1ST TOYOTA FORKLIFT
SOLD IN THE USA
TOYOTA
TOYOTA
MATERIAL HANDLING

Last Updated: Tuesday, 27 February 2007, 00:00 GMT

The triumph of lean production

By Steve Schifferes
Globalisation reporter, BBC News, Georgetown, Kentucky

On the assembly line at Toyota's giant plant, Laura Wilshire is not happy.

There is something wrong with a seatbelt fitting on the Camry she is working on.

Laura pulls a cord, stopping the production line - and prompting her five fellow workers on trim line three to crowd round.

Toyota workers talk about their experience on the assembly line

DRAMATIZATION

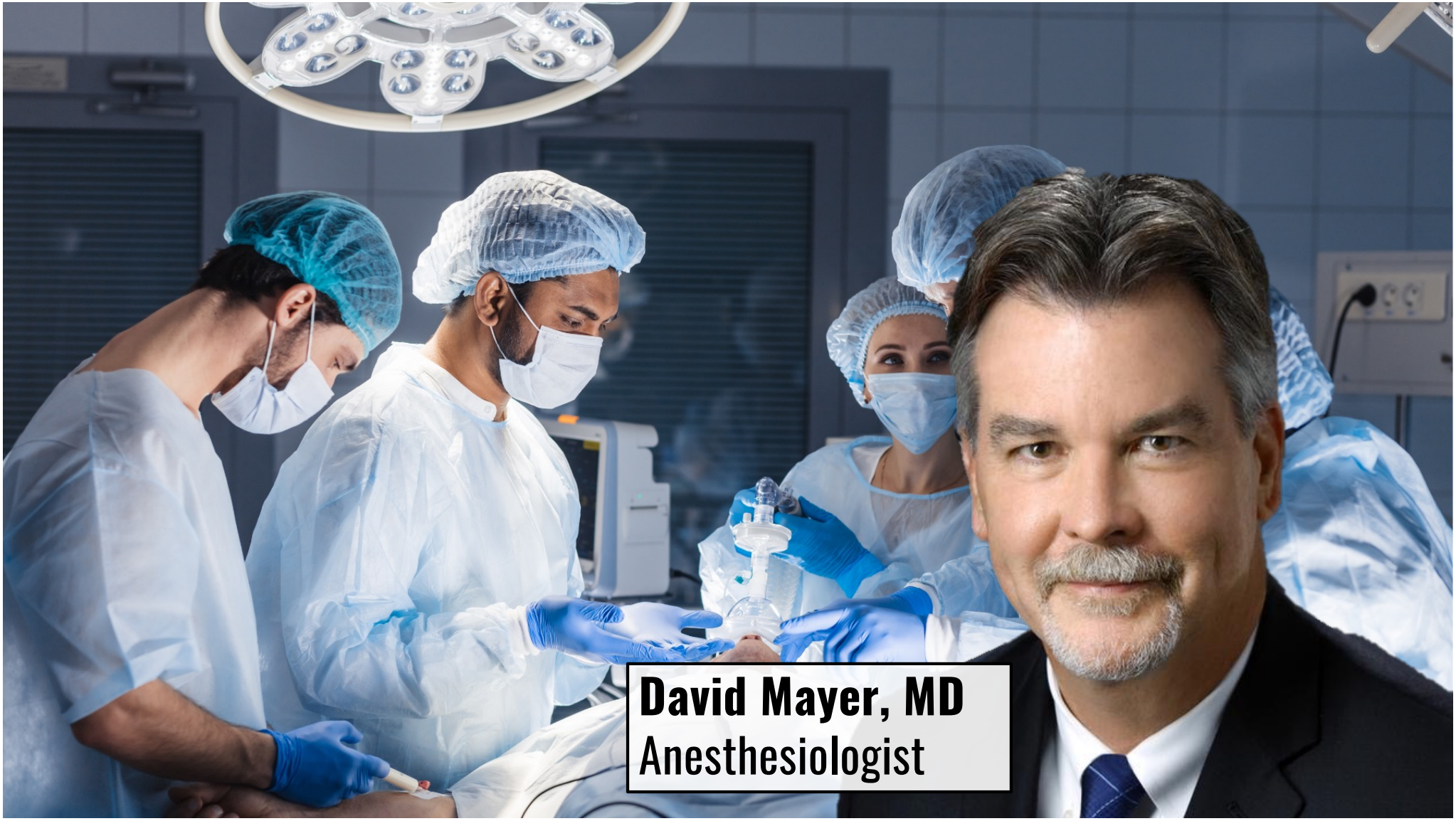
"TWICE A WEEK"
(OVERDRAMATIZATION)

Speaking up isn't a matter of ***character*** or ***courage***…

Speaking up isn't a matter of ***character*** or ***courage***…

it's a function of

CULTURE


David Mayer, MD
Anesthesiologist

Mistakes at Toyota

Isao Yoshino

Japan

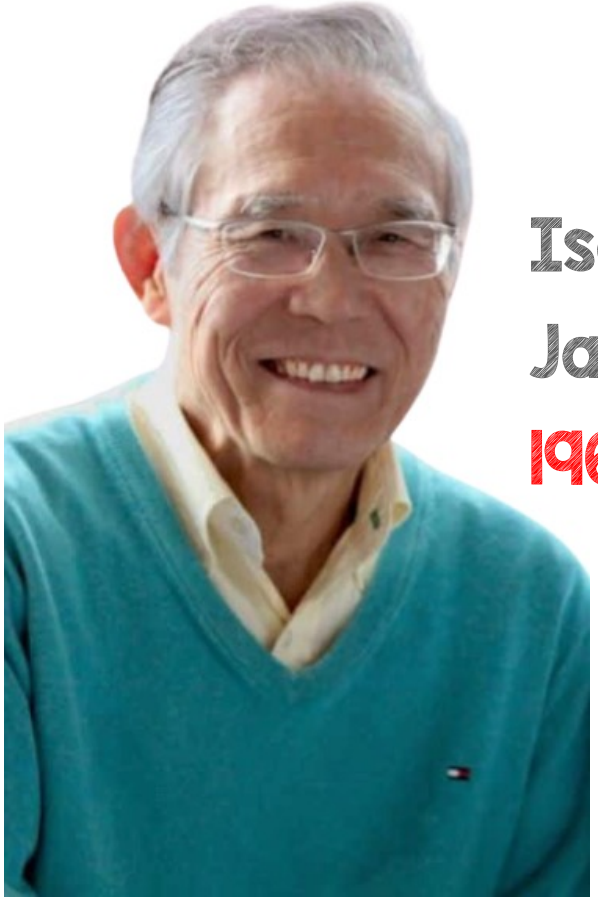
1960s

David Meier

Kentucky

1980s

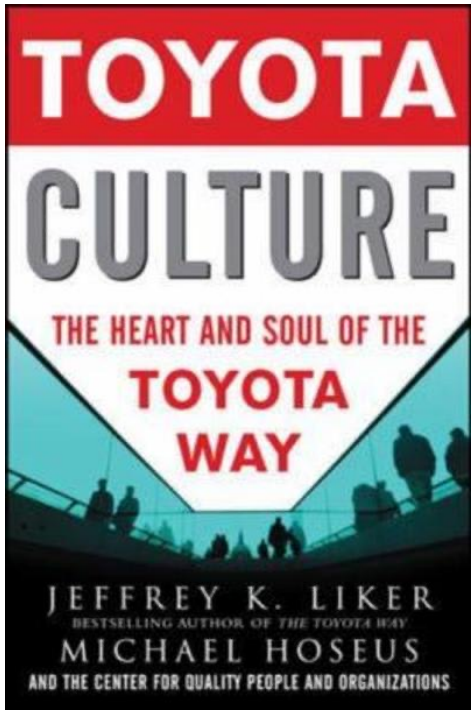
Mistakes at Toyota

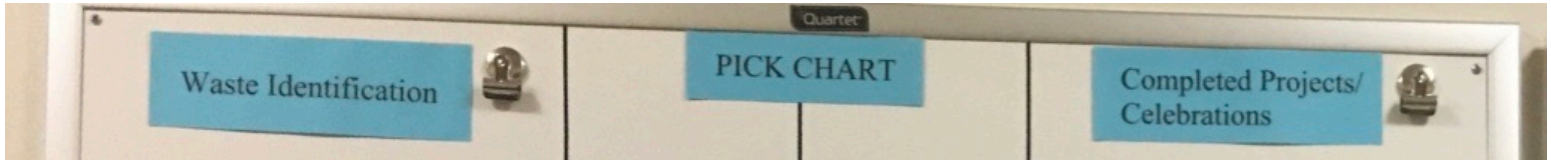


Isao Yoshino
Japan
1960s

David Meier
Kentucky
1980s

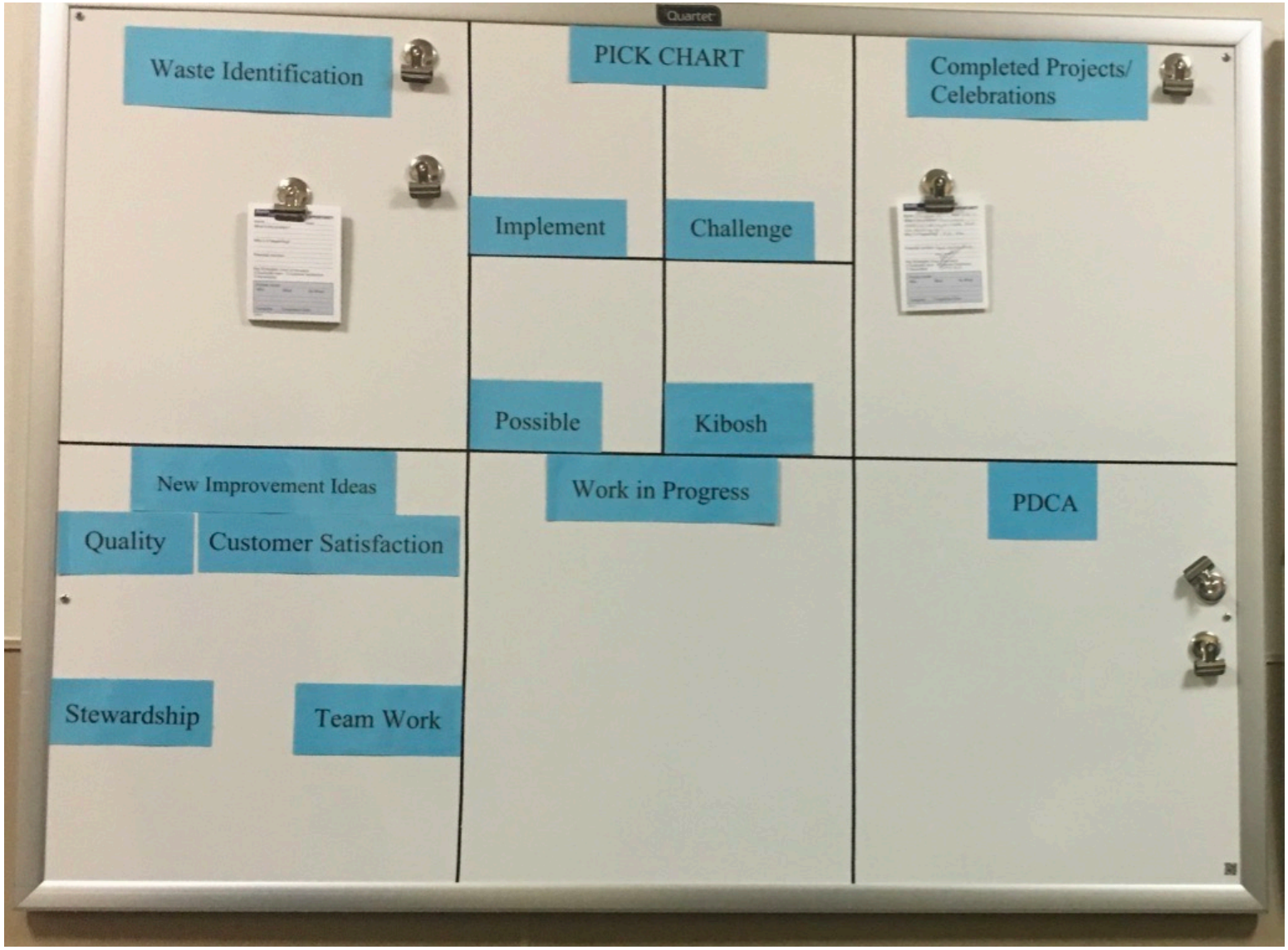
"[Toyota believes] people must … feel **psychologically** and physically safe … they must believe that any concerns they have will be taken **very seriously**"





MISTAKE:

ASSUMING PEOPLE WILL USE A HUDDLE BOARD


Quartet
Waste Identification
PICK CHART
Implement
Challenge
Possible
Kibosh
Completed Projects/
Celebrations
New Improvement Ideas
Quality
Customer Satisfaction
Stewardship
Team Work
Work in Progress
PDCA

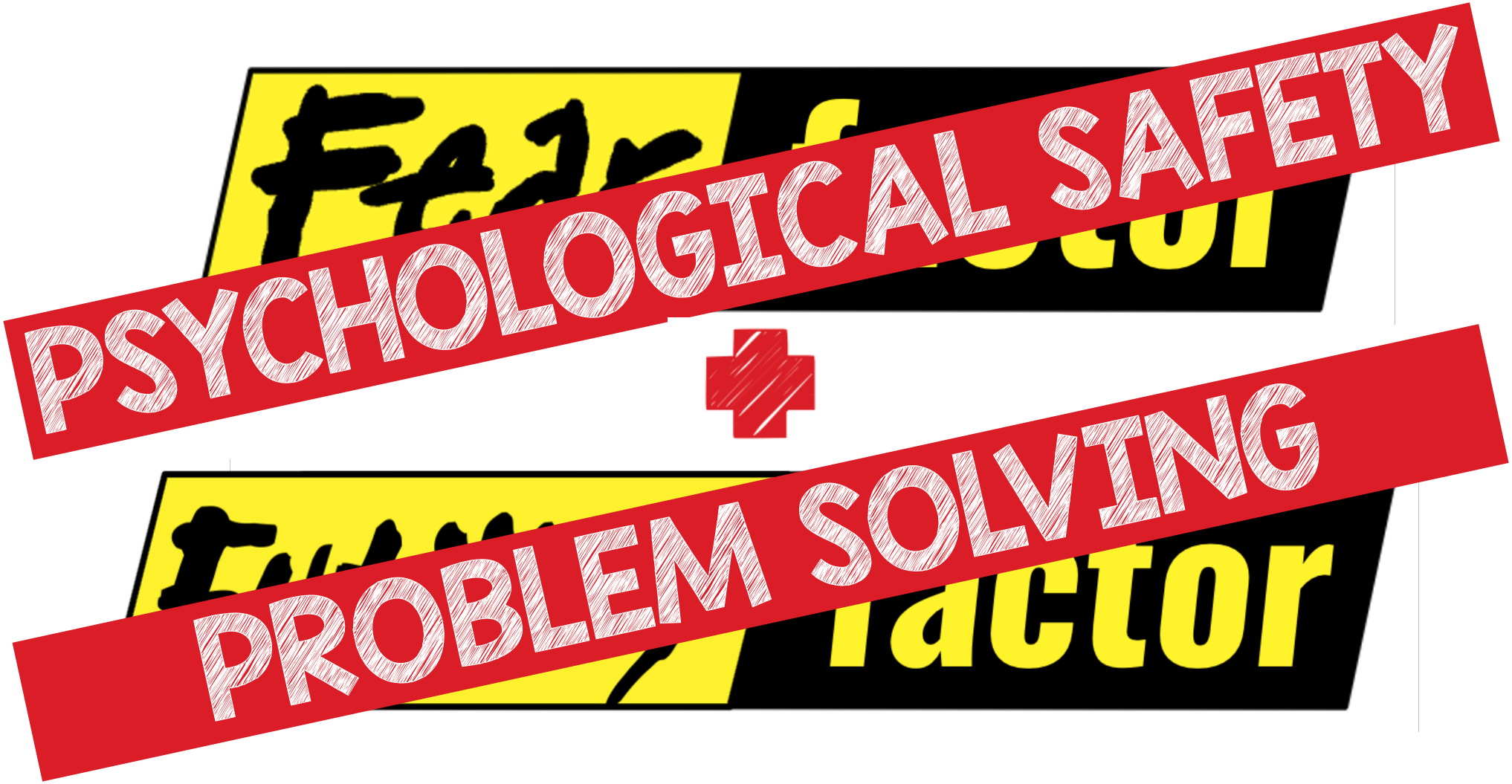
WHY?

Fear factor

Futility factor

Futility factor

Fear factor


PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY
PROBLEM SOLVING

“A problem-solving culture is far more effective operationally than a finger-pointing culture.”

Larry Culp
CEO of GE Aerospace

HOW DO WE HELP PEOPLE FEEL SAFE?

You CAN Improve Psychological Safety

Encouraging

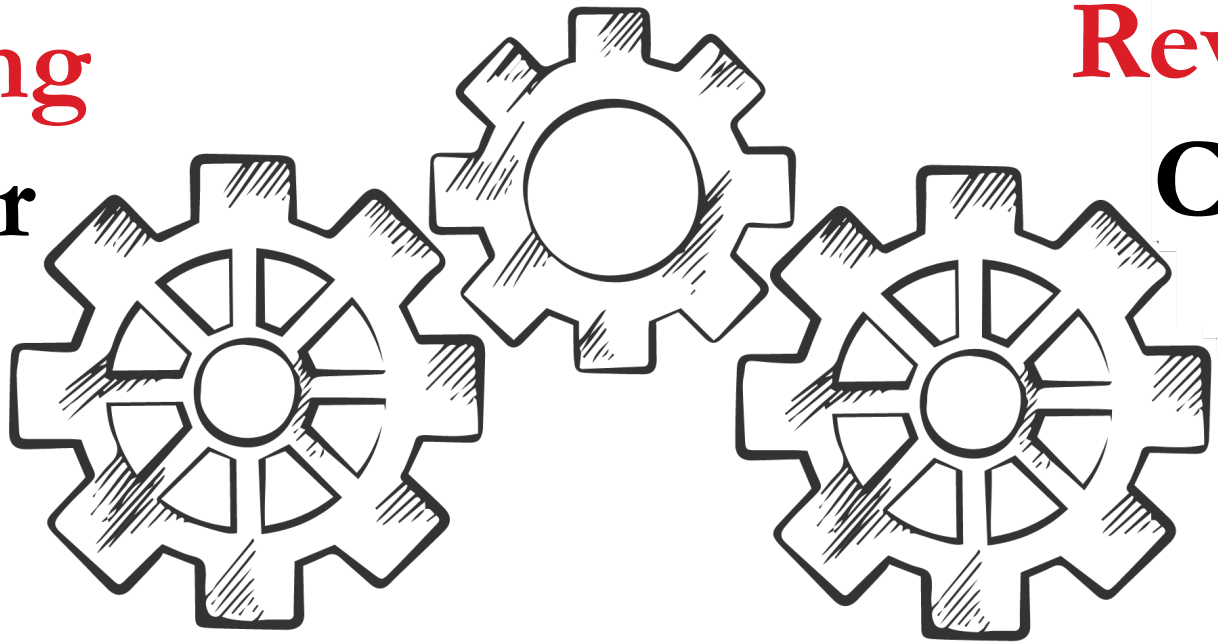
Candor

Modeling

Candor

Rewarding

Candor



I MADE A
MISTAKE

I MIGHT
BE WRONG

LET'S RUN A
SMALL TEST

WHAT CONCERNS
DO YOU HAVE?

"I want to hear the bad news. I want to hear it fast."

Larry Culp, CEO of GE Aerospace

"The moment of truth: Do you shoot the messenger, or do you listen even if you are unhappy?"

Larry Culp, CEO of GE Aerospace

You CAN Improve Psychological Safety

Encouraging

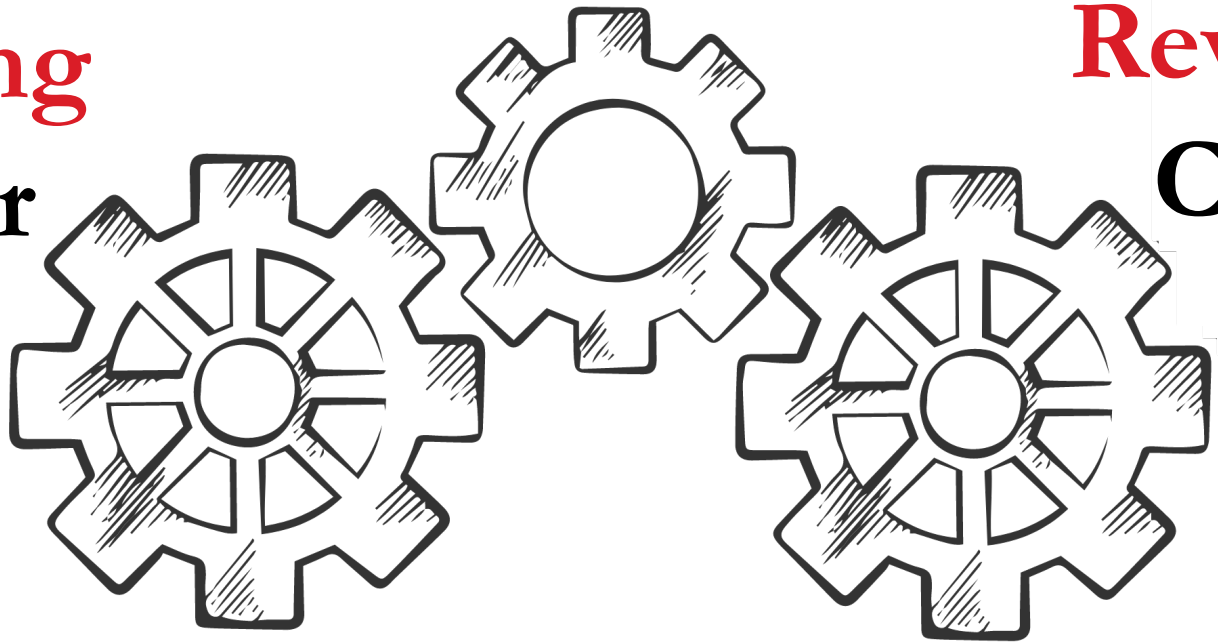
Candor

Modeling

Candor

Rewarding

Candor



I MADE A
MISTAKE

PUNITIVE

NICE

KIND

Can We Be Candid Experimentalists?

Is it Safe to Say?

WE COULD BE WRONG

LET'S TEST IT AND SEE...

THAT DIDN'T WORK AS...

World Class Performance

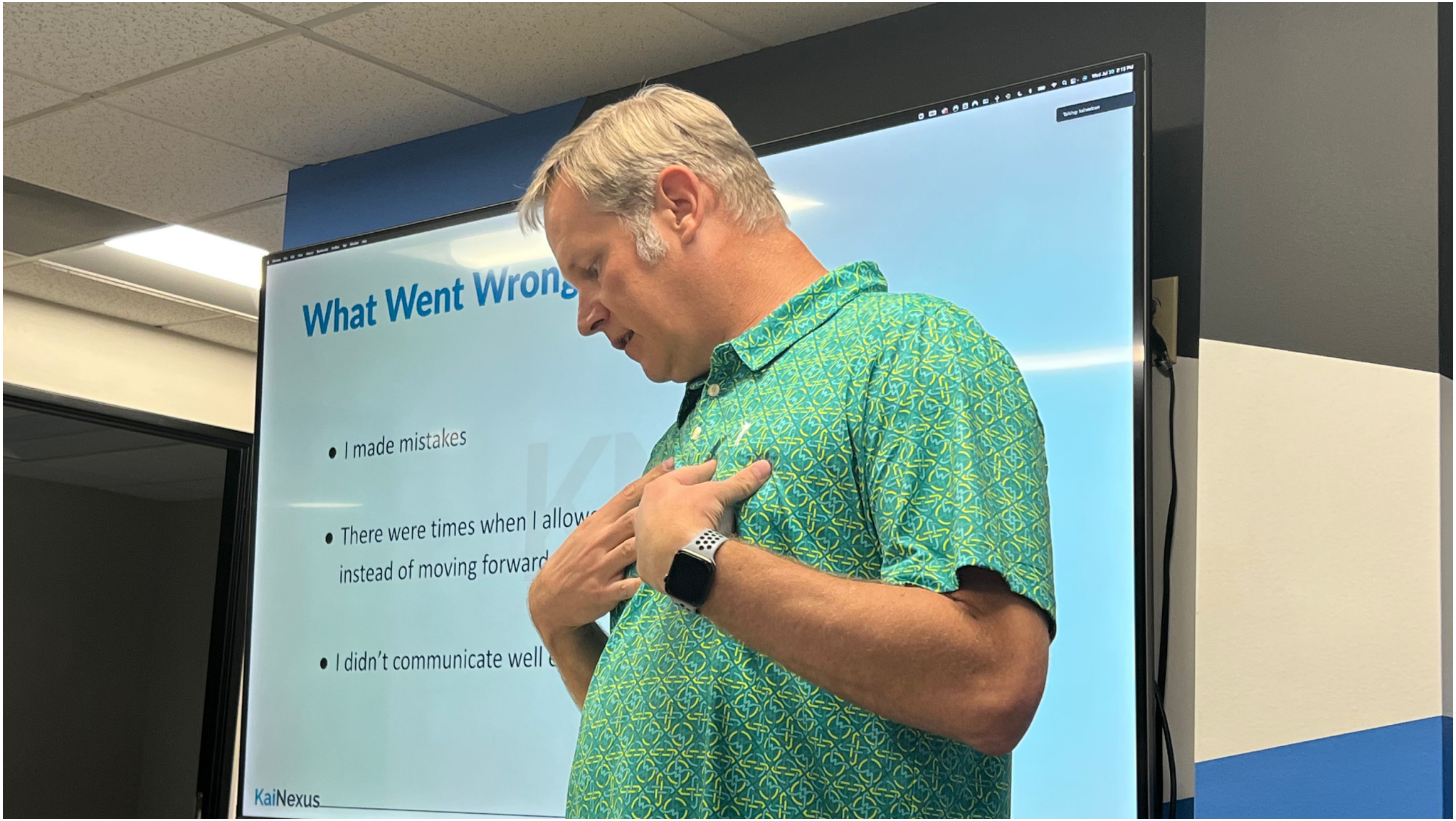
Culture of Improvement

Culture of Learning from Mistakes

Culture of Psychological Safety

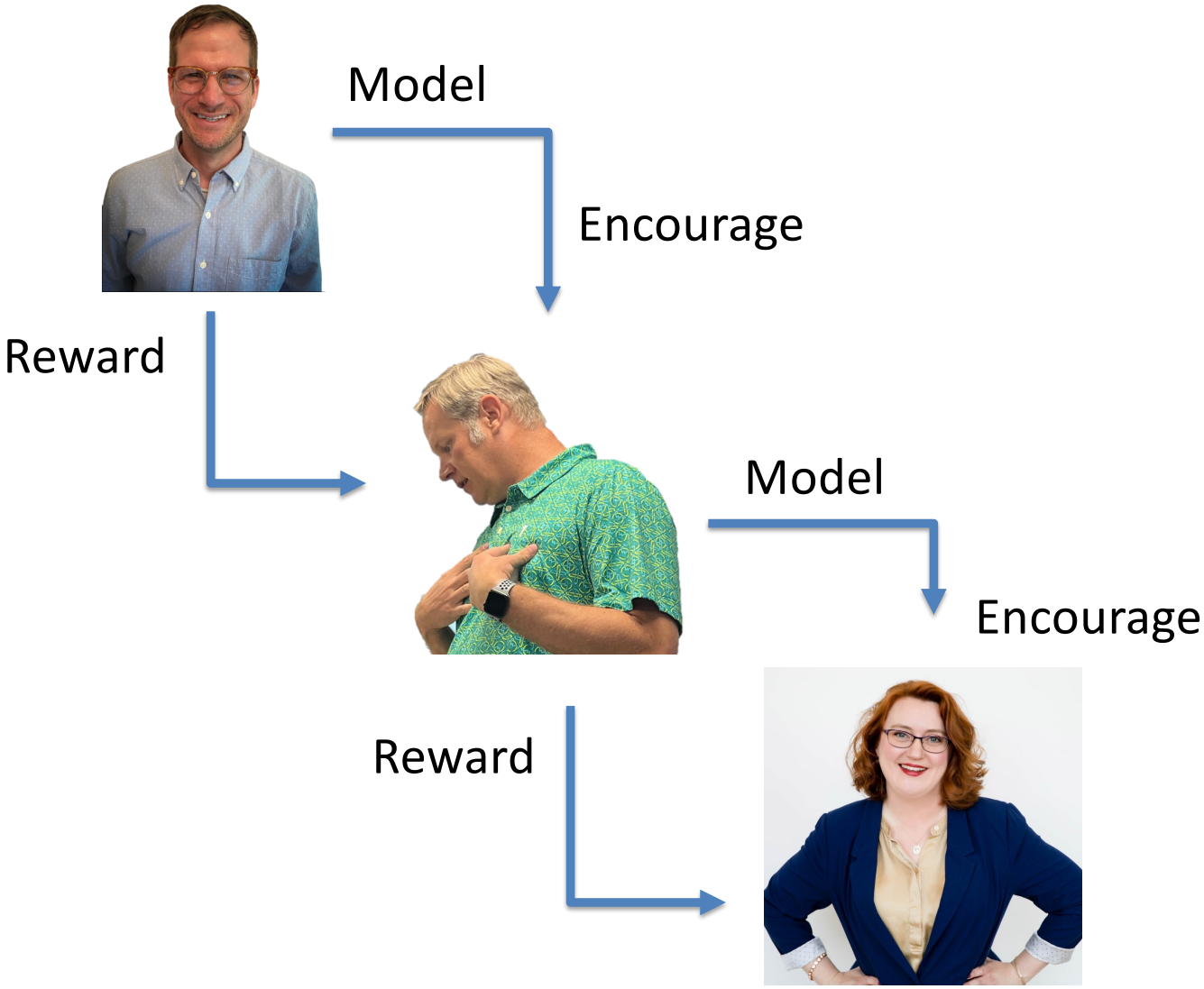
Leader Behaviors

Mindsets


What Went Wrong
I made mistakes
There were times when I allow
instead of moving forward
I didn't communicate well
KaiNexus

“You can’t have a culture of continuous improvement without learning from mistakes.”

Greg Jacobson
CEO and co-founder, KaiNexus

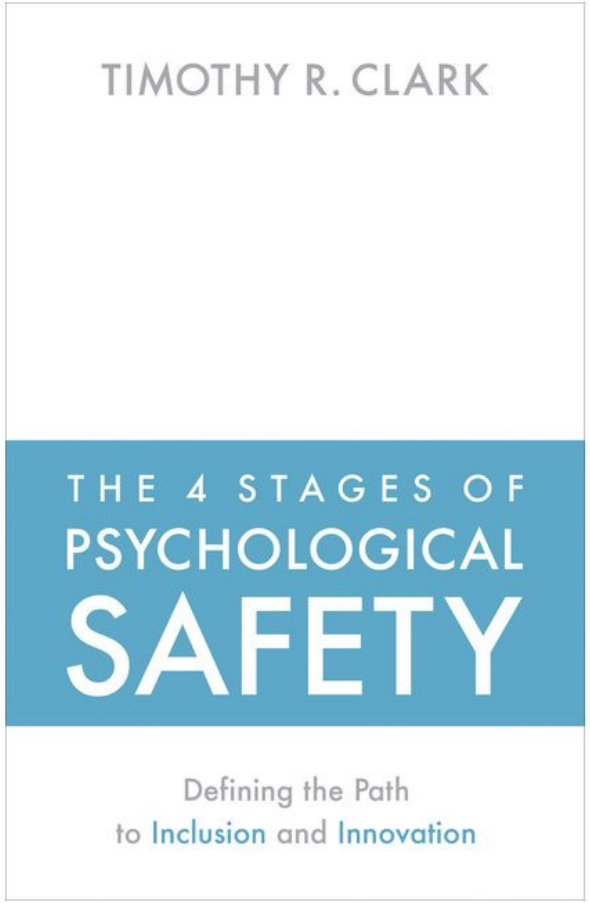

Model
Encourage
Reward
Model
Encourage
Reward

Stephanie Hill, MPH, MBB (She/Her) • 1st 1d •••

Sr. Lean Strategist at KaiNexus -/- Owner of Light Bulb Mom...

I THOUGHT I had a pretty significant “failure” yesterday at work. And I told everyone who might want to know. Instead of pointing fingers at me, my leader, a VP, and an executive all rallied around me to help “right the ship.” At no time did they imply I had done wrong. All they said was, “WE learned.” In fact, all complimented me about how I handled the situation. It encouraged me to continue trusting them with my mistakes.

Celebrate · 4 | Reply



4. CHALLENGER SAFETY

Can I be candid about change?

3. CONTRIBUTOR SAFETY

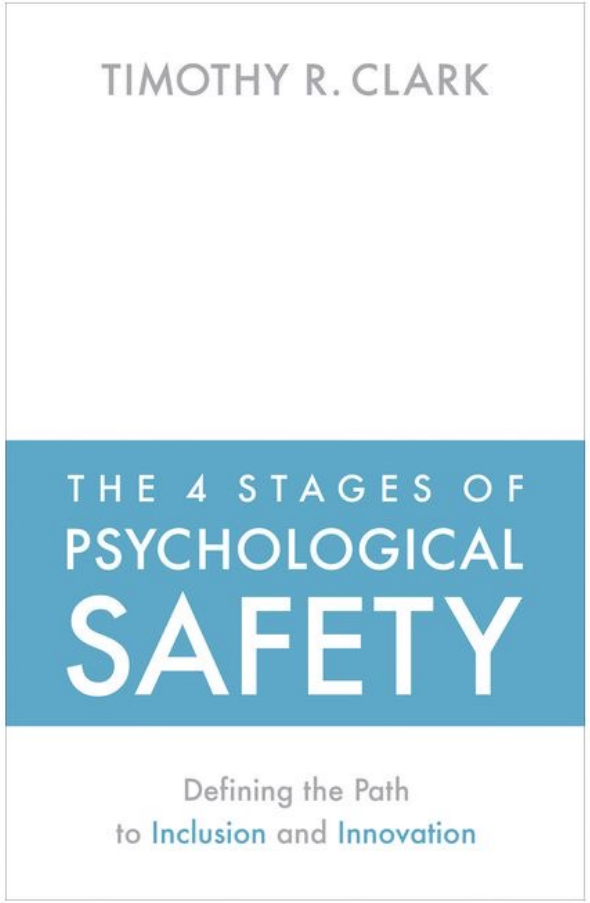
Can I contribute and create value?

2. LEARNER SAFETY

Can I learn and grow?

1. INCLUSION SAFETY

Can I be my authentic self?



4. CHALLENGER SAFETY

Invite people to poke holes in a plan

3. CONTRIBUTOR SAFETY

Define guardrails; remove needless approvals

2. LEARNER SAFETY

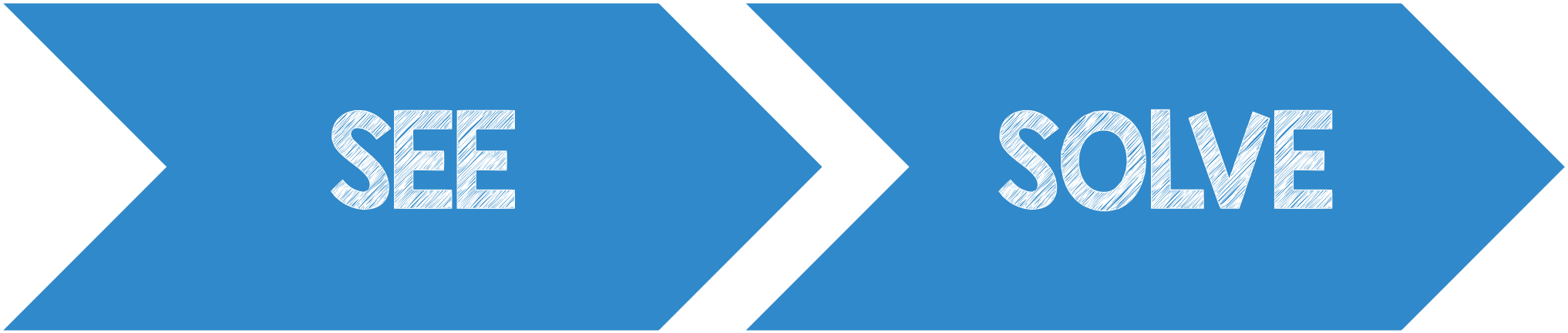
Praise effort and progress (not just outcomes)

1. INCLUSION SAFETY

Use names, invite them into discussions

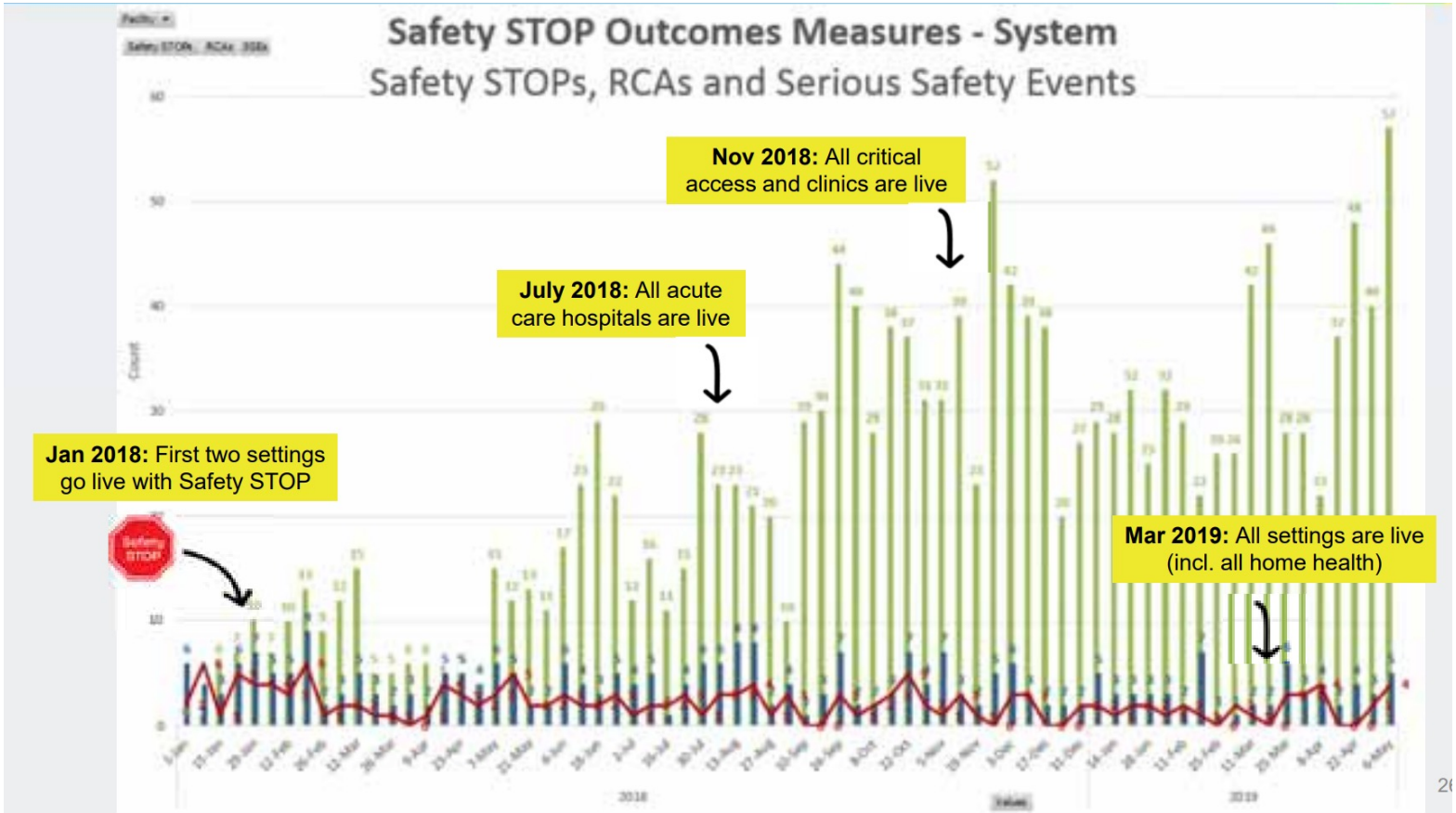
3 Reminders for Daily Engagement

Name It	State the problem without blame or assumptions
Frame It	Frame a mistake as an opportunity to learn
Tame It	Fix the system so it doesn't happen again

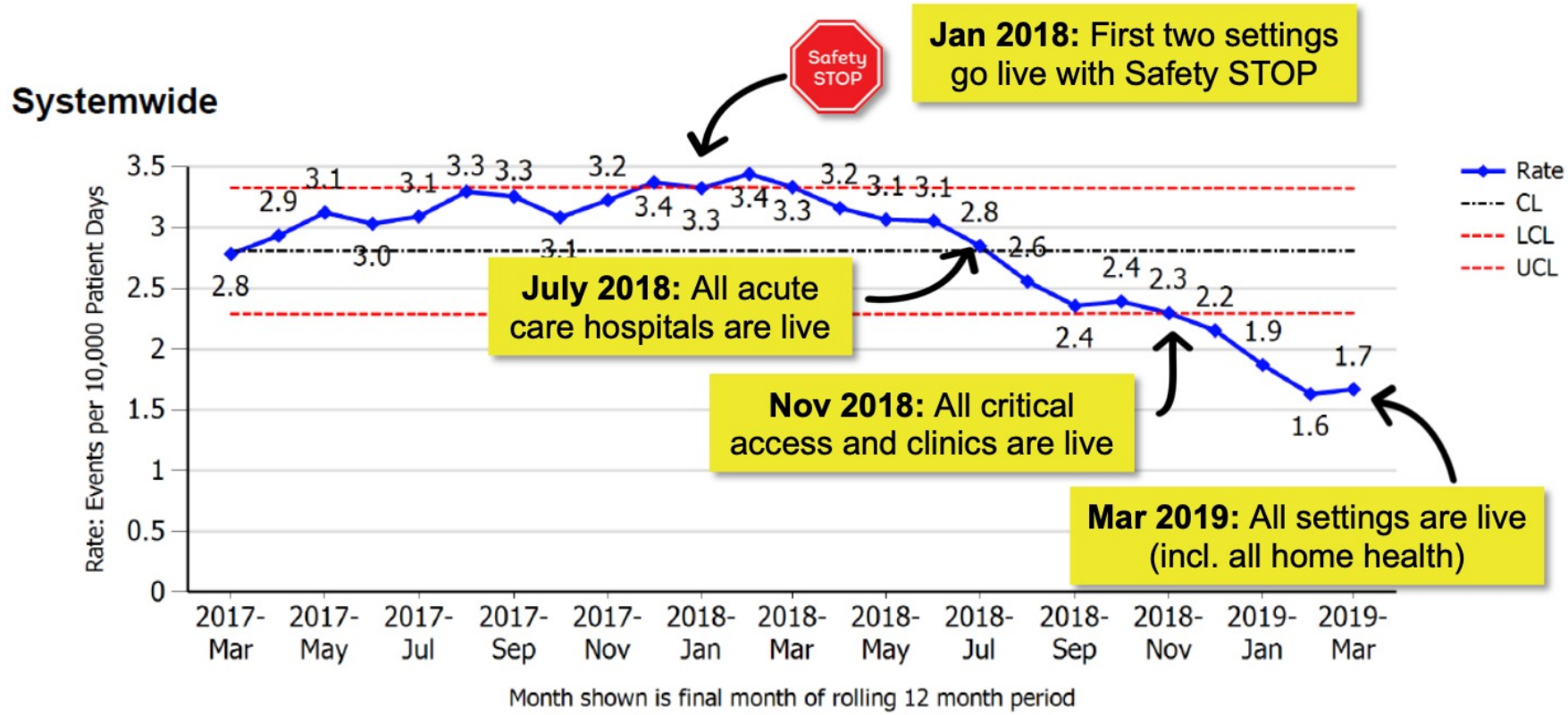

SEE
SOLVE

SEE
SPEAK UP
SOLVE

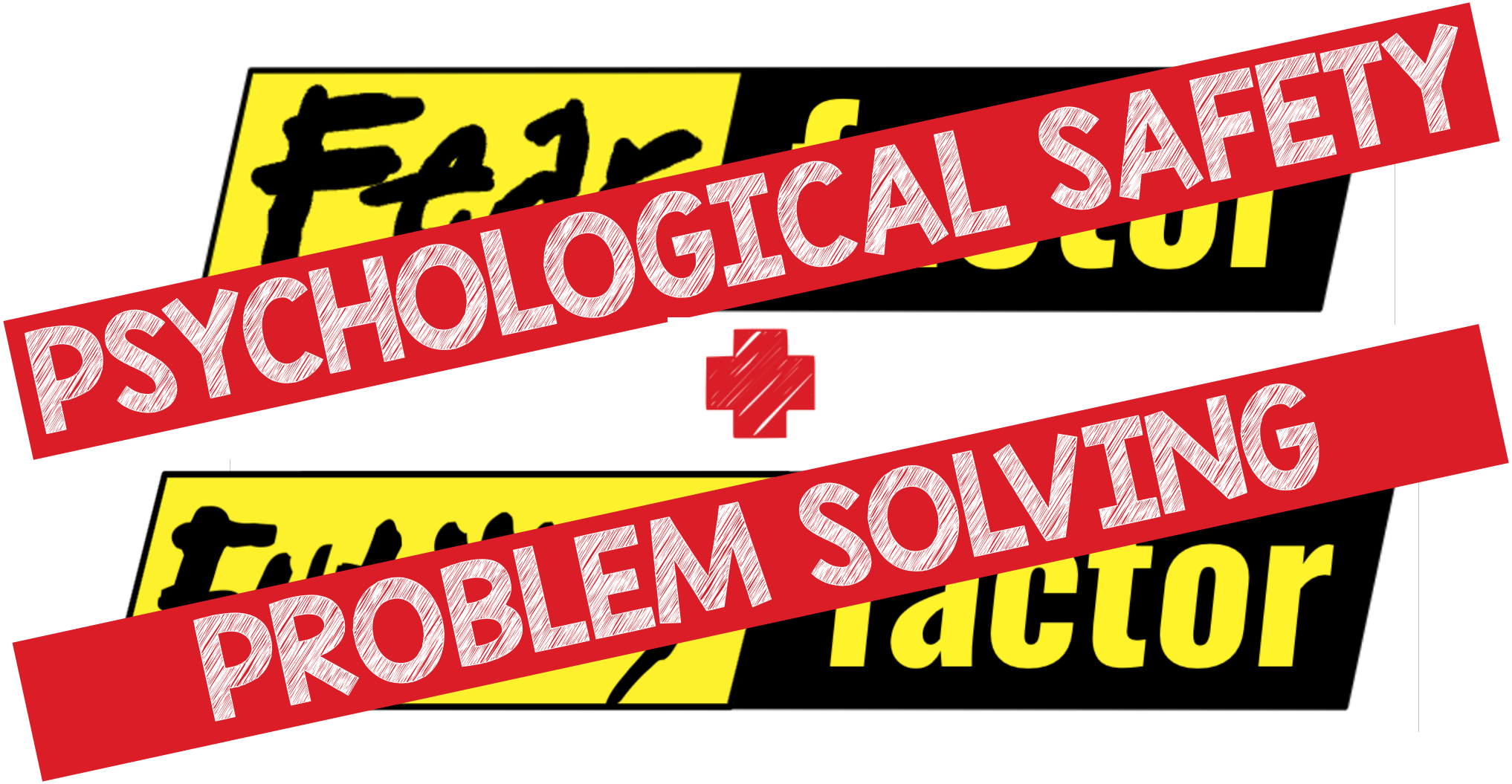
Safety Reports (U.S. Hospital)



Serious Safety Events (Same Hospital)



ONLY PAST
THIS POINT
TOYOTA
TOYOTA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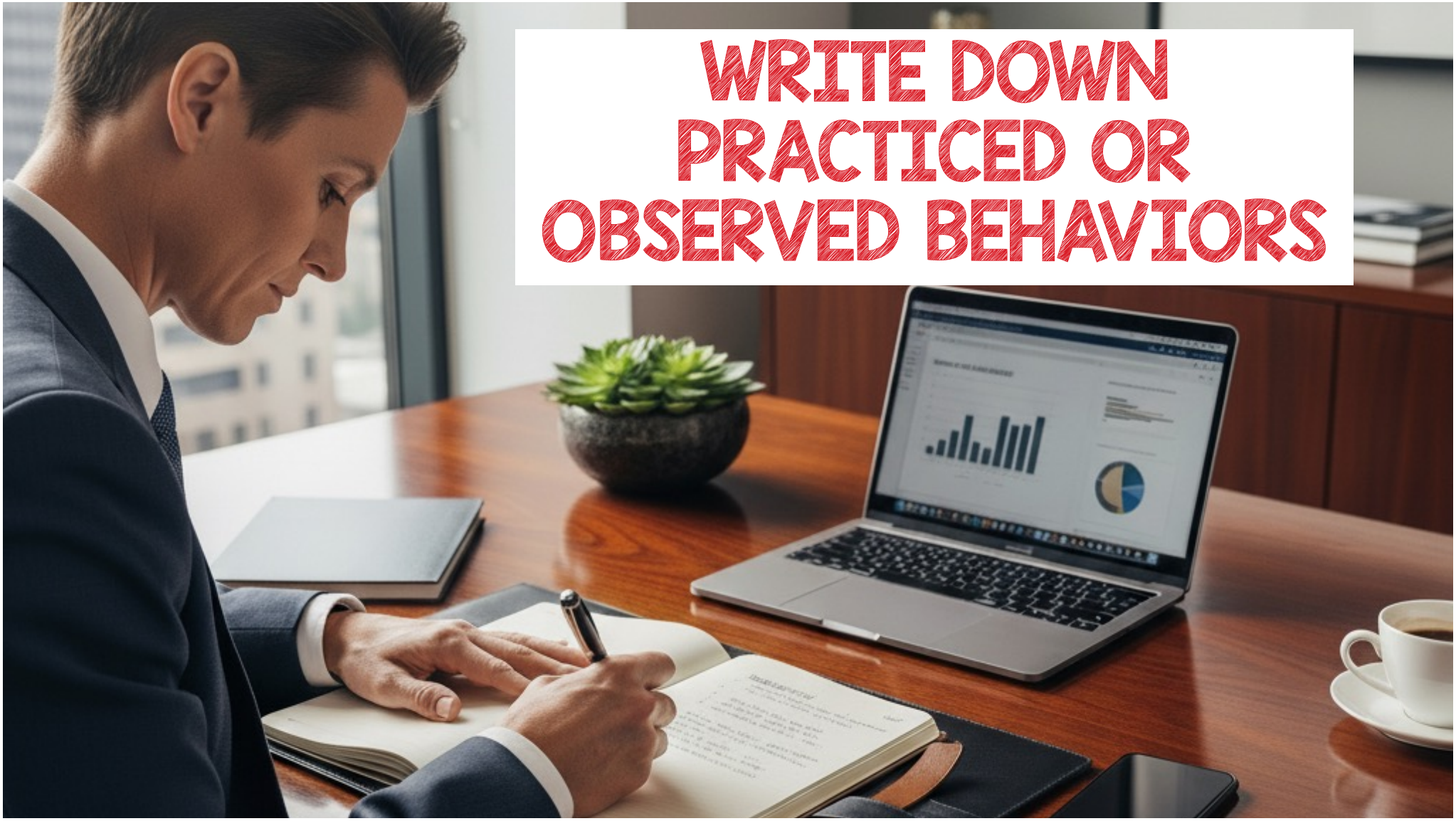
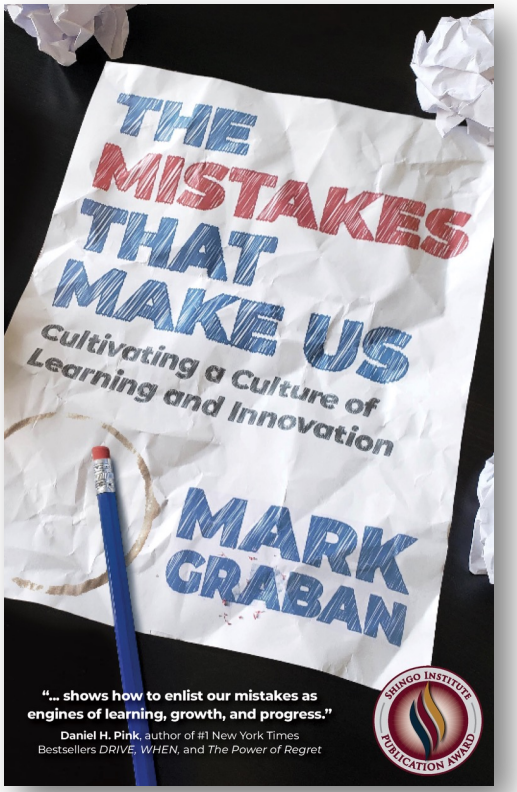
PROBLEM SOLVING


WRITE DOWN
PRACTICED OR
OBSERVED BEHAVIORS

Q&A TIME

Slides, Links, Poll Results & More:

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