

# Stakeholder Communication

(OR, HOW TO REALLY CONNECT WITH YOUR AUDIENCES)

JUNE **arrow** 2023

# Hi, I'm Dave.

# Agenda

- 1 › Storytelling
- 2 › Issues Management
- 3 › Crisis Communications





1

# Storytelling







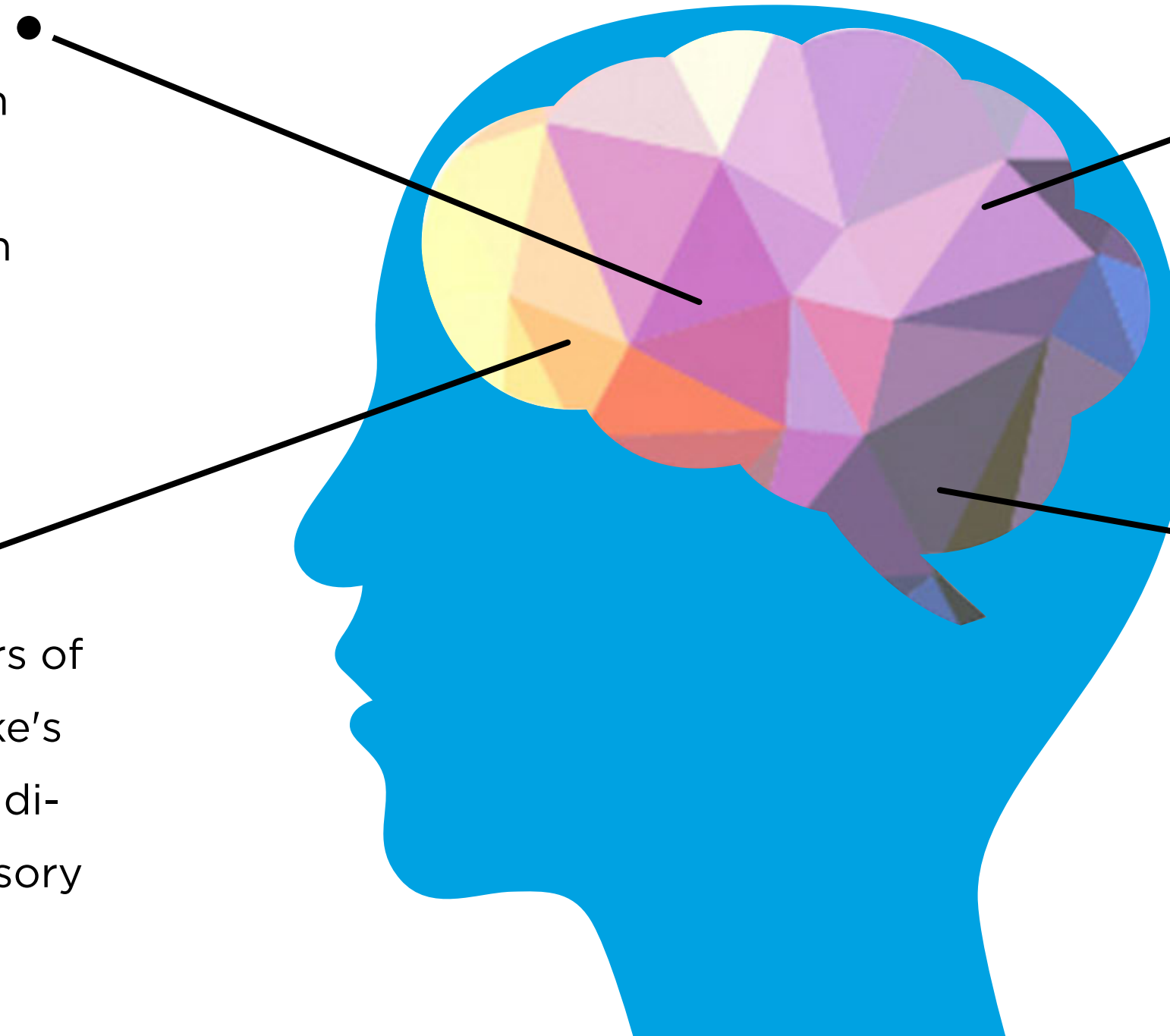
# How storytelling affects the brain

## **DOPAMINE**

The brain releases dopamine into the system when it experiences an emotionally-charged story, making it easier to remember and with greater accuracy.

## **CORTEX ACTIVITY**

When processing facts, two language centers of the brain are activated (Broca's and Wernicke's area). A well-told story can engage many additional areas, including the motor cortex, sensory cortex and frontal cortex.



## **NEURAL COUPLING**

A story activates parts of the brain that allow the listener to turn the story in to their own ideas and experience thanks to a process called neural coupling.

## **MIRRORING**

Listeners will not only experience similar brain activity to each other, but also to the speaker.





ST. EDWARD'S<sup>®</sup>  
UNIVERSITY







MIGRANT FARM WORKER,  
NIGHT SCHOOL STUDENT





A group of five people, three men and two women, are standing together and smiling. They are all wearing dark blue academic regalia with gold tassels and gold circular emblems on the chest. The man on the far left is wearing glasses and has a blue outline around his head and shoulders. The woman on the far right is holding a small black bag. The background is a simple indoor setting with a blue curtain and a doorway.

ST. EDWARD'S UNIVERSITY  
MEMBER, BOARD *of* TRUSTEES





“

IF I LOOK AT THE MASS,  
I WILL NEVER ACT.  
IF I LOOK AT THE ONE, I WILL.

— MOTHER THERESA

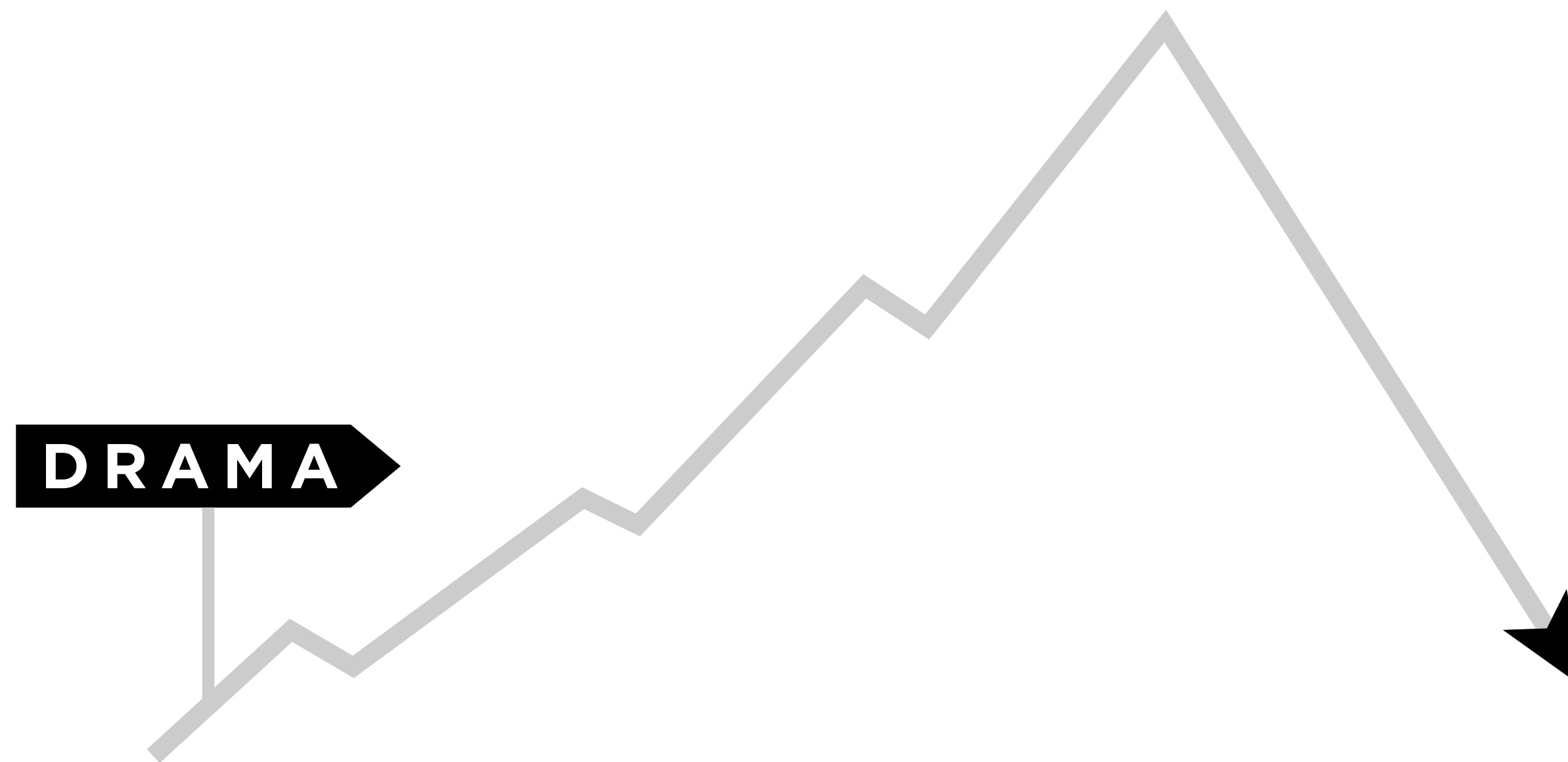


# Five Tips for Storytelling

- 1 › Keep a story log.
- 2 › Meet the moment.
- 3 › Practice.
- 4 › Don't try to be perfect.
- 5 › Use narrative structure.

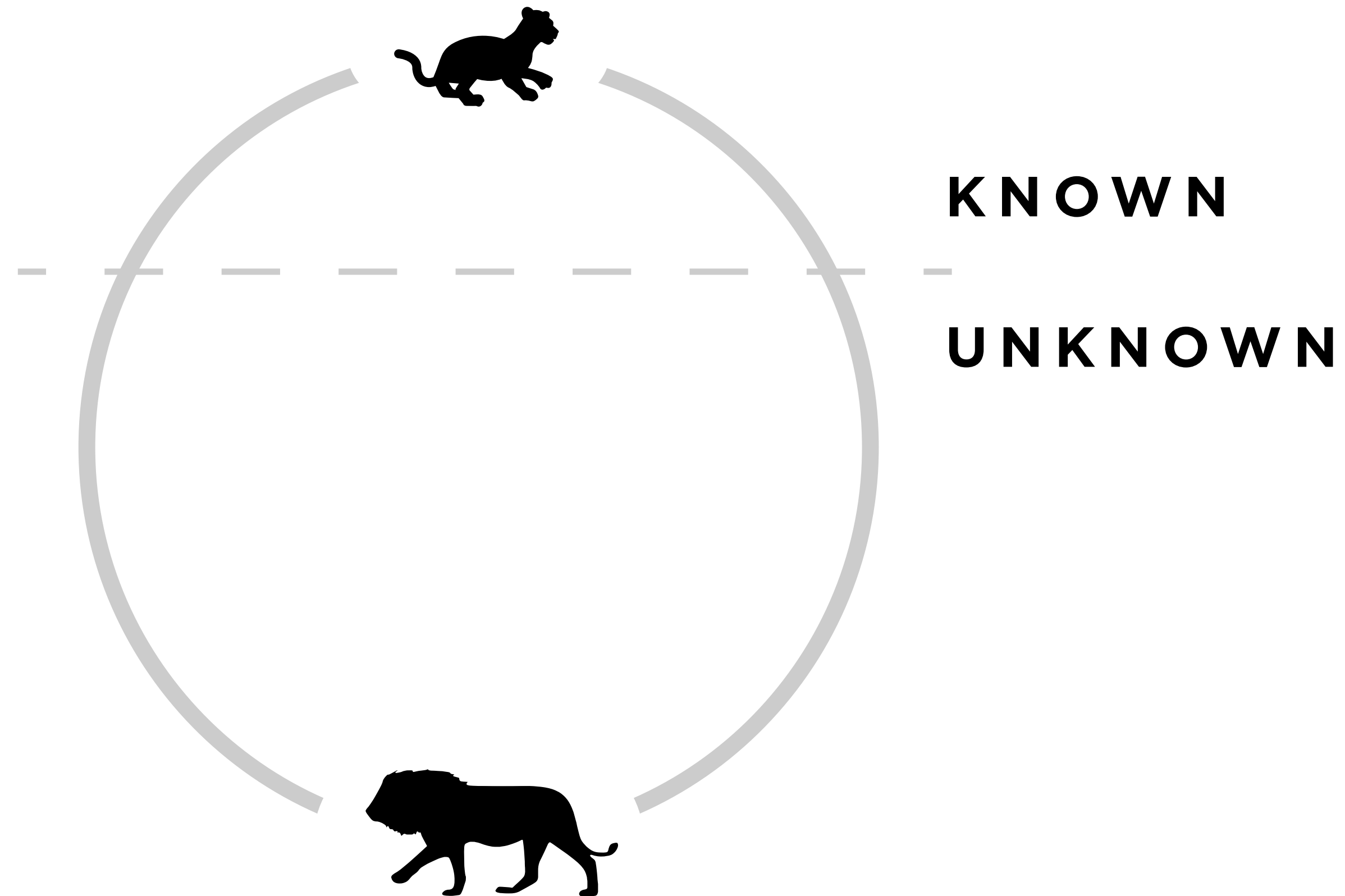


# The Mountain



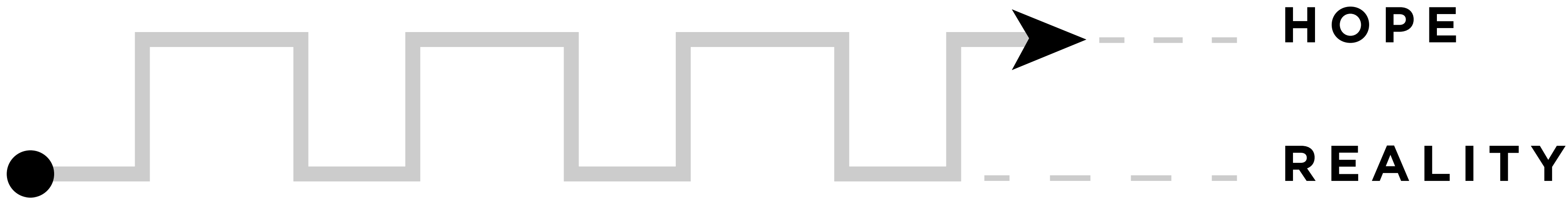


# The Hero's Journey

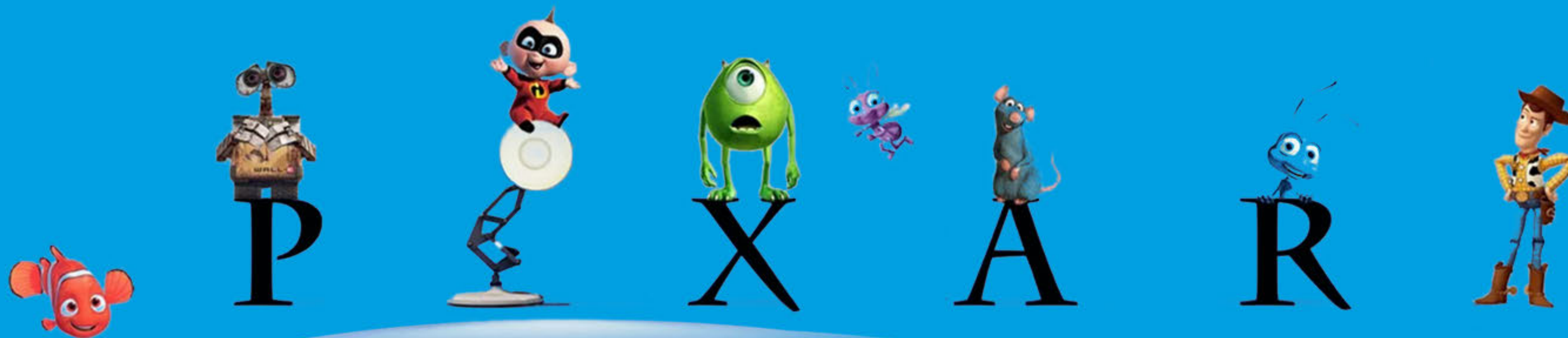




# Sparklines









# The Pixar Pitch

ONCE UPON A TIME...

EVERY DAY...

ONE DAY...

BECAUSE OF THAT...

BECAUSE OF THAT...

UNTIL FINALLY...



## ONCE UPON A TIME...

*Establishes context*

## EVERY DAY...

*Habits of daily life*

## ONE DAY...

*The catalyst for change*

## BECAUSE OF THAT...

*The protagonist does something different*

## BECAUSE OF THAT...

*Moving toward a good outcome*

## UNTIL FINALLY...

*Story climax and meaning*

There was a widowed fish named Marlin who was overprotective of his young son, Nemo.

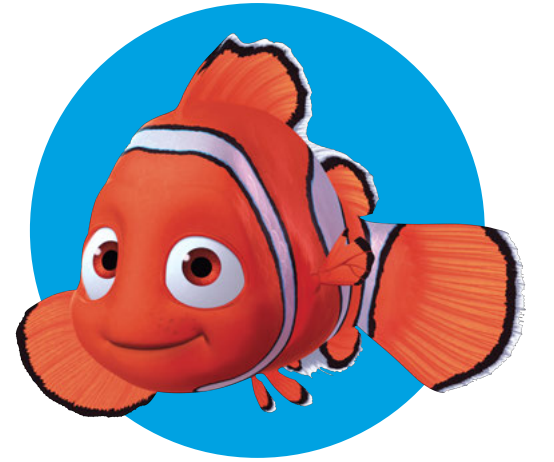
Marlin warned Nemo of the ocean's dangers and implored him to never swim too far away.

In an act of defiance, Nemo ignores his dad and swims out into the open water.

Nemo was captured and ended up in a dentist's fish tank in Sydney.

Marlin sets off on a journey to find Nemo bringing other sea creatures with him along the way.

Marlin and Nemo find each other, reunite and learn that love depends on trust.





## ONCE UPON A TIME...

*Establishes context*

## EVERY DAY...

*Habits of daily life*

## ONE DAY...

*The catalyst for change*

## BECAUSE OF THAT...

*The protagonist does something different*

## BECAUSE OF THAT...

*Moving toward a good outcome*

## UNTIL FINALLY...

*Story climax and meaning*

There was a young boy named Geronimo who worked as a migrant farm worker.

Geronimo worked picking fruit in the fields from sun up to sun down after which he would go to night school.

Geronimo missed the bus to school and became very angry with himself for missing class.

He promised himself he would never miss school again, and he committed to his studies.

His guidance counselor encouraged him to apply to St. Edward's University where he graduated with honors.

Geronimo returned to St. Edward's as a member of the Board of Trustees so he could pay it forward to similar kids.





# Now, it's Your Turn..

## Craft your Pixar Pitch story





2

# Issues Management



# What is an Issue?

An issue is any internal or external trend, event, controversy or public development that might affect an organization. Issues typically have a public policy orientation and often require closing the gap between an organization's actions and stakeholder expectations.



# What is a Crisis?

A crisis is a significant threat to operations that can have negative consequences if not handled properly. A crisis can create three related threats: **1 public safety**, **2 financial loss**, and **3 reputation loss**. Some crises can result in injuries and even loss of lives.



# Issue v. Crisis

## ISSUE

May impact, may not be critical or immediate

Decisions can be thoughtful and considered

Sustained over time

Managed in the course of business operations

May not be tied to a specific incident

## CRISIS

Immediate critical impact

Urgency: decisions must be made immediately

Clear start and end

Not business as usual, all hands on deck

Usually tied to a specific incident

**POORLY MANAGED ISSUES CAN BECOME CRISES, AND POORLY MANAGED CRISES LEAD TO LONG-TERM DAMAGE TO BUSINESS & REPUTATION.**



# Seven Principles of Issues Management

- 1 ▶ Honor your organization's core values.





DISNEY  
SPEAK  
OUT

OUR CHILDREN  
KINDNESS  
AND INCLUSION

PROTECTED  
LGBTQ+  
KIDS  
SPEAK OUT

STAND  
LGBTQ  
FAMILIES

STAND WITH  
LGBTQ  
FAMILIES

OPPOSE  
DON'T SAY GAY  
STAND UNITED

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# Seven Principles of Issues Management

- 1 › Honor your organization's core values.
- 2 › Know your audiences.**



# Seven Principles of Issues Management

- 1 › Honor your organization's core values.
- 2 › Know your audiences.
- 3 › Craft a consistent framework for decision making.**



# Decision-Making Framework





# Seven Principles of Issues Management

- 1 › Honor your organization's core values.
- 2 › Know your audiences.
- 3 › Craft a consistent framework for decision making.
- 4 › Messenger matters.**



# Seven Principles of Issues Management

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- 5 › Remember that actions speak louder than words.**



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- 6 › Don't feed the trolls.**



# Seven Principles of Issues Management

- 1 › Honor your organization's core values.
- 2 › Know your audiences.
- 3 › Craft a consistent framework for decision making.
- 4 › Messenger matters.
- 5 › Remember that actions speak louder than words.
- 6 › Don't feed the trolls.
- 7 › Predict. Prioritize. Prepare.**



# Survey Question

What are the most challenging communication issues you expect to face in the coming academic year?



# Top Five Responses

## **Presidents**

DEI and racial equity

Cost and value of a college degree

Institutional financial stability

Freedom of speech on campus

Mental health of students

## **Communications Officers**

Cost and value of a college degree

Mental health of students

Declining enrollment

DEI and racial equity

Freedom of speech on campus



# Issues Threat Matrix

LIKELIHOOD		POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES				
ALMOST CERTAIN	Medium	High	Very High	Very High	Very High	
LIKELY	Medium	High	High	Very High	Very High	
POSSIBLE	Low	Medium	High	High	Very High	
UNLIKELY	Low	Low	Medium	Medium	High	
RARE	Low	Low	Low	Low	Medium	
	INSIGNIFICANT	MINOR	MODERATE	MAJOR	SEVERE	

MONITOR

PREPARE

ACT



# Now it's *your* turn...

**A** ▶ Predict

**B** ▶ Prioritize

**C** ▶ Prepare



3

# Crisis Communication



# Three Kinds of Crises

- 1** ▶ Human Caused  
*Cyber Breach, Active Shooter, Bomb Threat, Campus Violence, Financial Scandal, Deaths in Transit, Hazing*
- 2** ▶ Natural Disaster  
*Floods, Winter Storm, Pandemic*
- 3** ▶ Failure to Appropriately Respond to #1 or #2



# Three Phases to Every Crisis

- 1 ▶ Pre-Crisis
- 2 ▶ Crisis Response
- 3 ▶ Post-Crisis



# Pre-Crisis

- 1 ▶ Anticipate needs and conduct a vulnerability audit.





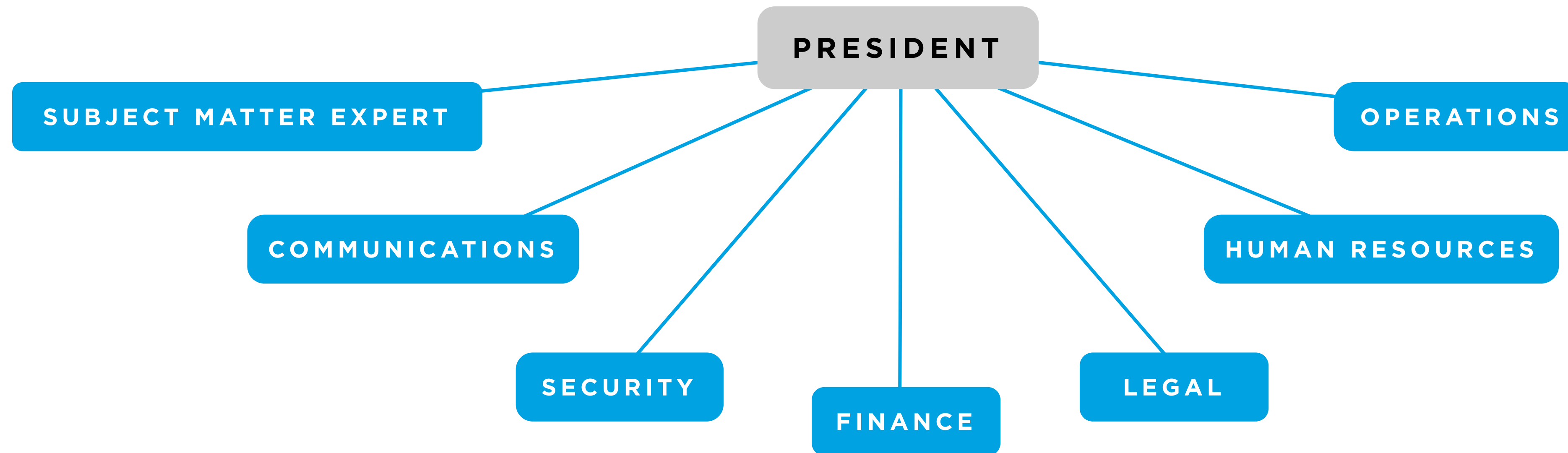
# Pre-Crisis

2 ▶ Craft a crisis response plan.



# Pre-Crisis

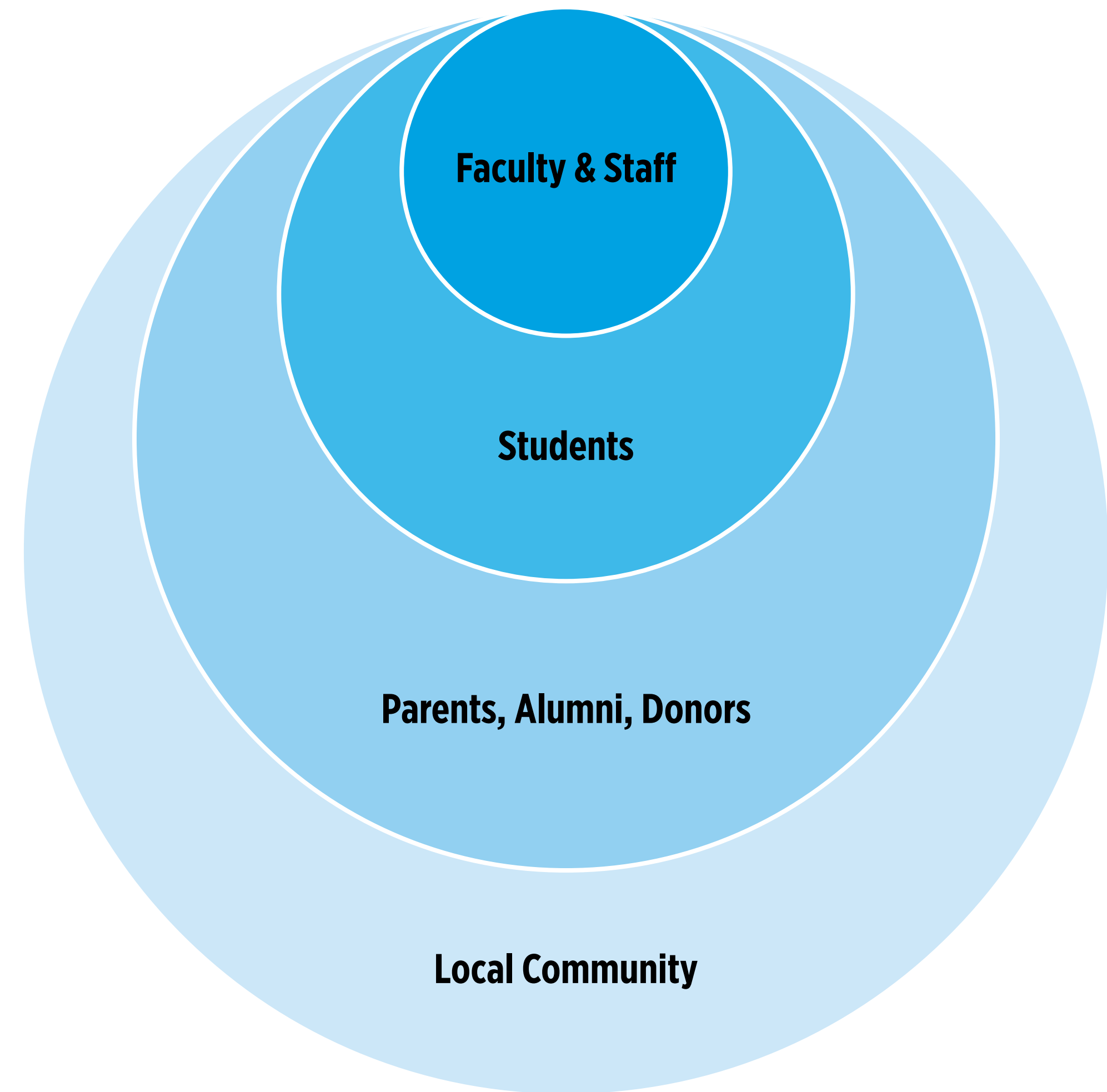
## 3 ▸ Establish a Crisis Management Team (CMT).





# Pre-Crisis

## 4 ▸ Identify stakeholders.





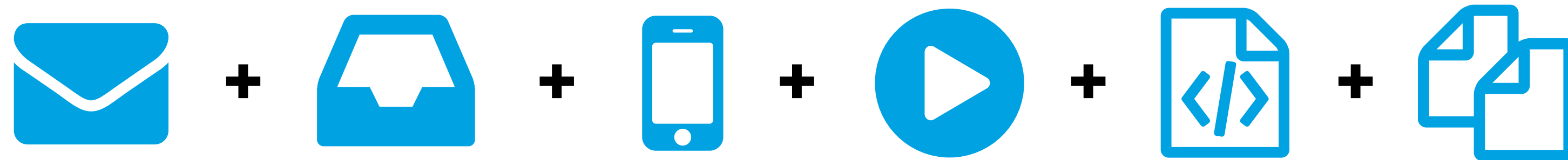
# Pre-Crisis

- 5 ▶ Identify and train spokespeople.



# Pre-Crisis

- 6 Establish multiple communication channels, notification systems, and monitoring systems.





# Pre-Crisis

7 ▸ Pre-draft holding statement messages.

# Crisis Response

- 8 ▶ Initial response:
  - Be quick, within the first hour
  - Be accurate
  - Make public safety the #1 priority
  - Use all available channels
  - Express concern & sympathy
  - Include employees in response
  - Be ready to provide resources



# Crisis Response

- 9A** ▶ Adapt messages to the crisis as it unfolds:
- Communicate often
  - Be honest and transparent
  - Keep it simple and direct
  - Think audience specific

# Crisis Response

## 9B ▶ Social media management during crisis:

- Be quick & proactive
- Keep messages clear, simple and honest
- Consider audience needs
- Monitor constantly
- Don't feed the trolls



# Post-Crisis

**10** ▶ Debrief and reputation repair.

# Your Turn...

## Crisis Scenarios.



# Thank you.

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