



The Strategy Gap

Stop Grinding and Start Growing

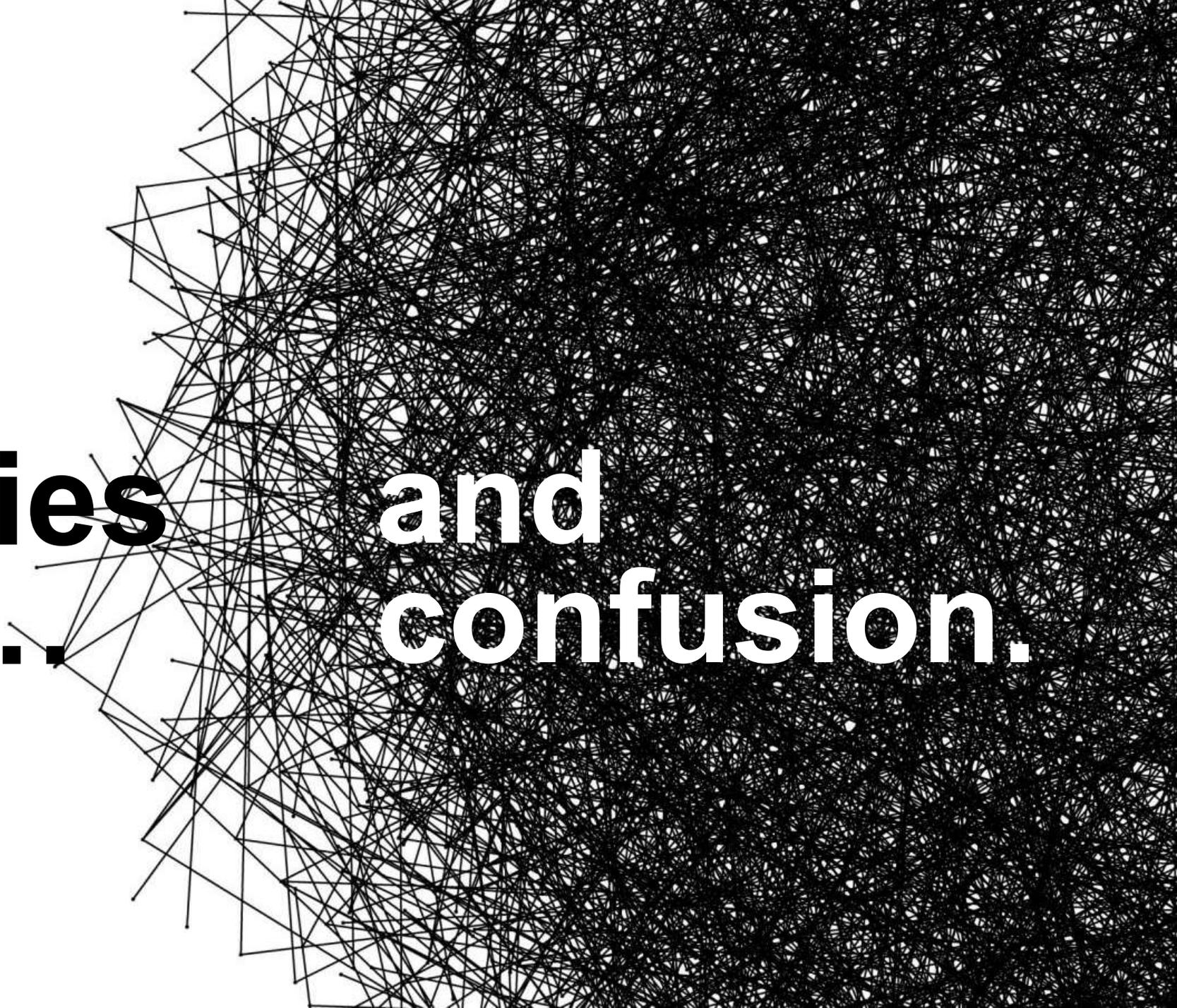
Brandon Zietsman



The Paradox of
Effort, Capability & Growth

**Effort
multiplies
clarity...**

**and
confusion.**





**Success brings
complexity.**



**Most firms
don't lack
effort.**

They lack
restraint.



Four failure modes.

Gap between effort and
outcomes as complexity
increases.

The Devil of **Distraction**

The Collapse of **Context**

The Illusion of **Innovation**

The Price of **Ambiguity**

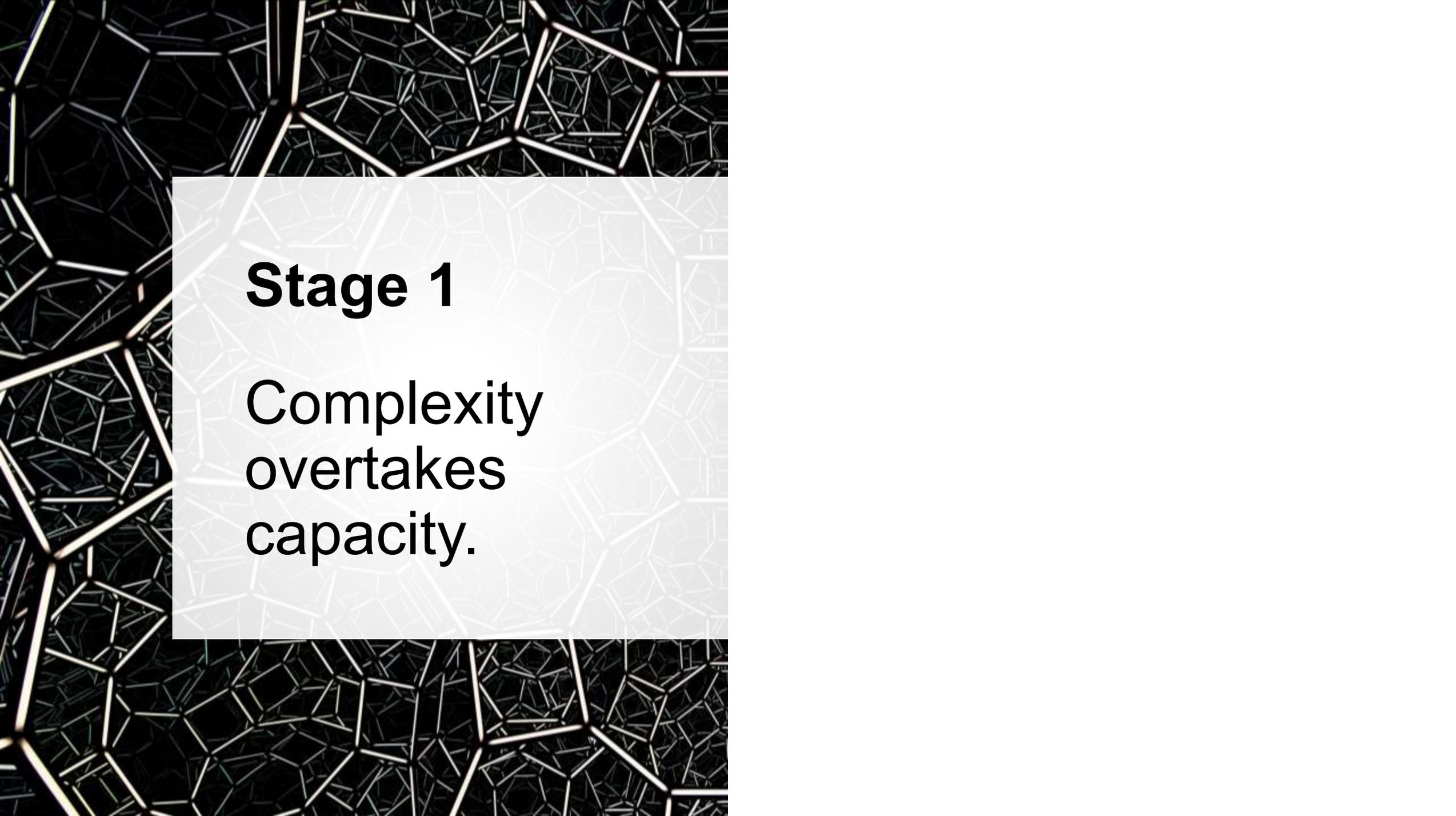
The Devil of Distraction

Time is not the
problem.





Distraction has a life cycle.



Stage 1

**Complexity
overtakes
capacity.**



Stage 1

**Complexity
overtakes
capacity.**

Stage 2

**Capability
outpaces
clarity.**



Stage 1

**Multitasking
becomes normal**

Stage 2

**Attention fragments
across priorities**

**The best
work gets
crowded out.**

An aerial, high-angle photograph of a busy city street. The pavement is dark and textured, with white dashed lines indicating a pedestrian crossing. Numerous people are walking across the street, but they are heavily blurred due to a long exposure or motion blur effect, conveying a sense of rapid movement and urgency. The colors of their clothing are muted and streaked. The overall atmosphere is one of a fast-paced, crowded urban environment.

If everything is

URGENT

Nothing is **strategic**.



Distraction exposes
prioritisation problems.

The Collapse of Context

The background and foreground
matter.

You can't optimise a
system you don't see.

Depth of field.

What you see shapes our
grasp of context.



Strategy and execution trade-offs.

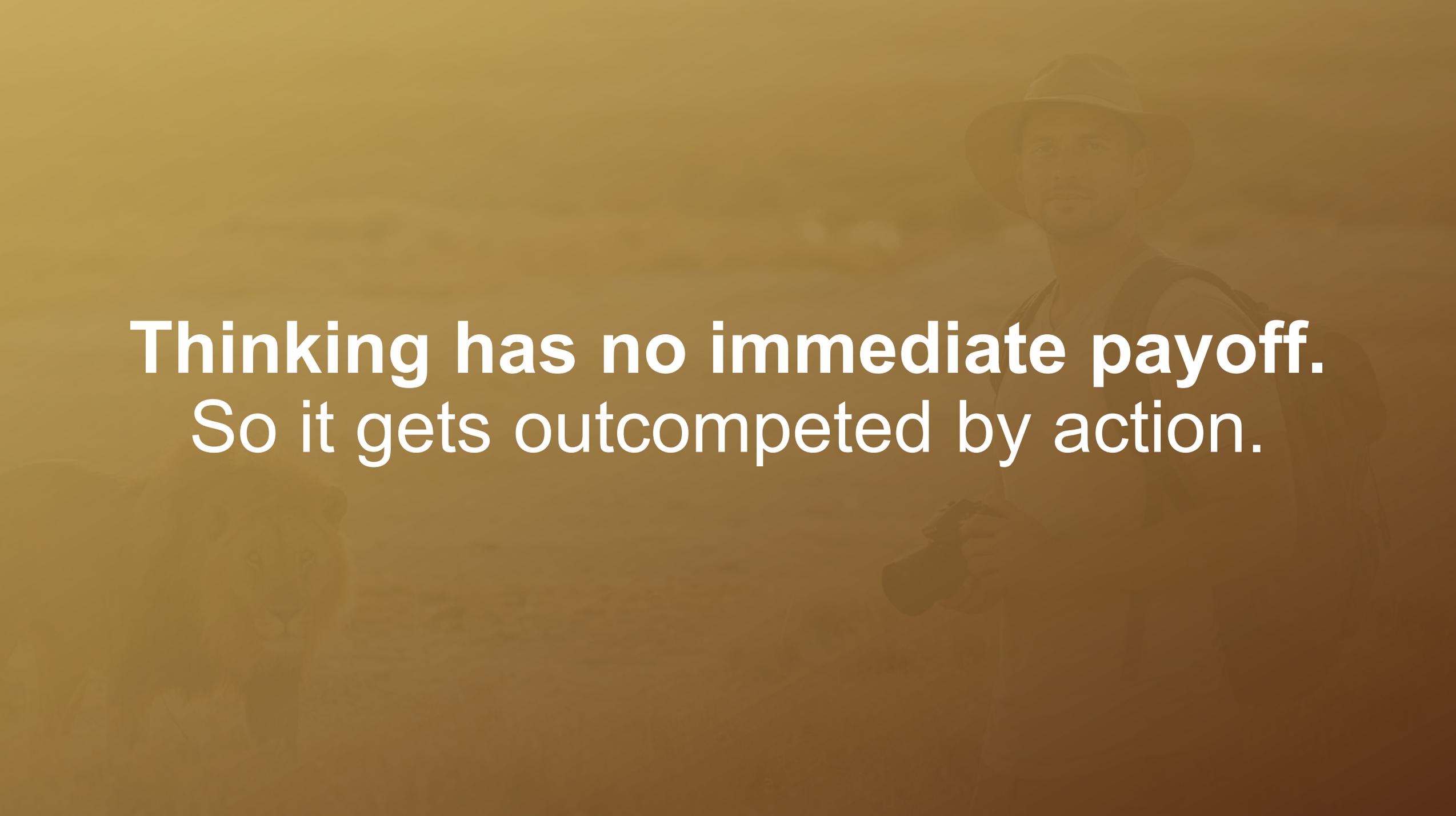
What you see shapes our
grasp of context.

**Under pressure,
we focus too
narrowly.**



**More depth
reveals
relationships.**





**Thinking has no immediate payoff.
So it gets outcompeted by action.**



**Context collapse exposes
fragmented thinking.**

A hand is shown holding a glowing lightbulb. The hand is positioned at the top, with fingers curled around the base of the bulb. The lightbulb is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The background is a solid, deep blue color. The overall image conveys a sense of an idea being held or presented.

The Illusion of Innovation

What happens when strategy starts at the wrong level.

colours

A hand holding a lightbulb against a blue background. The hand is positioned at the top, with fingers gripping the base of the lightbulb. The lightbulb is oriented vertically, with its base pointing downwards. The background is a solid, deep blue color. The text "How we get seduced." is overlaid in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered horizontally and positioned in the upper half of the image. A faint watermark "colours" is visible near the bottom right of the hand.

**How we get
seduced.**

A hand holding a glowing lightbulb against a dark blue background. The lightbulb is the central focus, emitting a soft glow. The hand is positioned around the bulb, with fingers visible. The background is a solid, dark blue color. The text is overlaid on the image in a white, sans-serif font.

Innovation is necessary,
It's not automatically progress.

colours

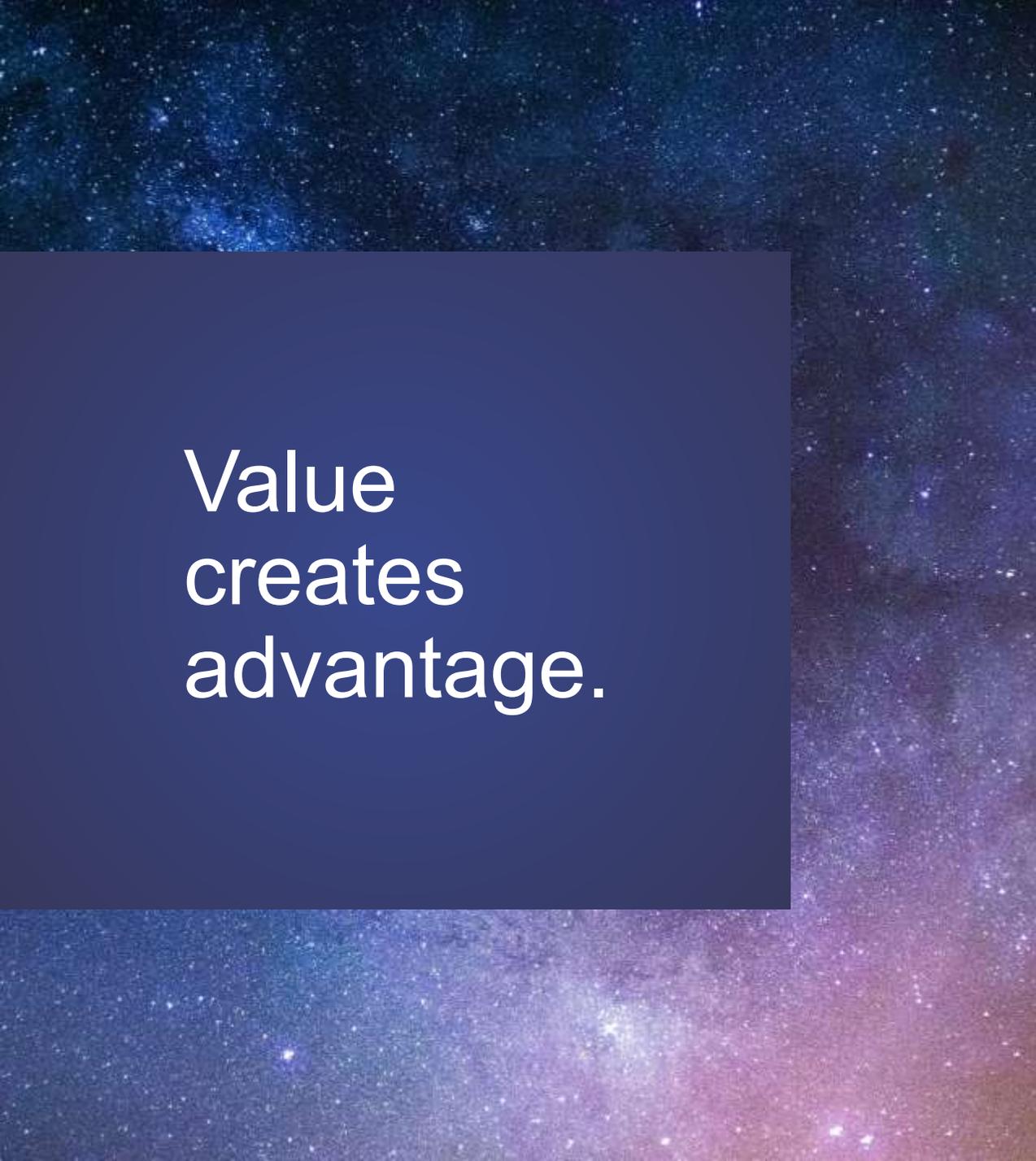
**When
momentum
stalls, we reach
for novelty.**



**Activity will
increase.
Giving birth to ideas
has consequences.
Clarity may
decrease.**

A close-up photograph of a lit sparkler, with numerous bright orange and yellow sparks radiating outwards against a dark background.

Novel
creates
movement.

A photograph of a starry night sky, featuring a prominent band of the Milky Way galaxy stretching across the frame, with various colors of stars and nebulae visible.

Value
creates
advantage.

If you can't
articulate what you
are reinforcing,

+

**you are
probably
just adding.**

A hand holding a lightbulb against a blue background. The hand is positioned at the top, with fingers gripping the base of the bulb. The bulb is oriented vertically, with its base pointing downwards. The background is a solid, dark blue color. The text is centered over the image.

Innovation drift exposes
unclear strategic intent.

colours



The Price of Ambiguity

How unclear messaging kills pricing power.



Symptoms of ambiguous messaging

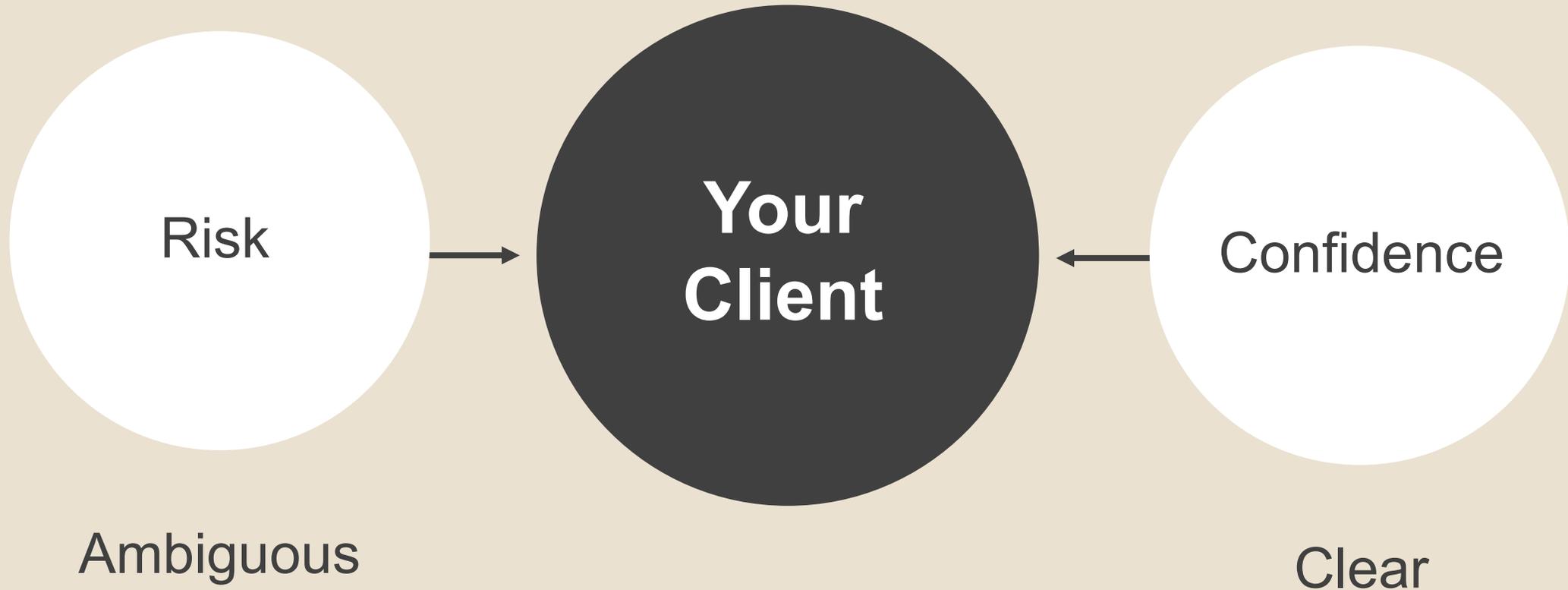
Inconsistency

Confusion

Delay

Drift

Ambiguity transfers risk to your client
Clarity transfers confidence



**Unclear value
becomes**



**discounted
value**

Clarity reduces cognitive load.



Cognitive load



Confidence

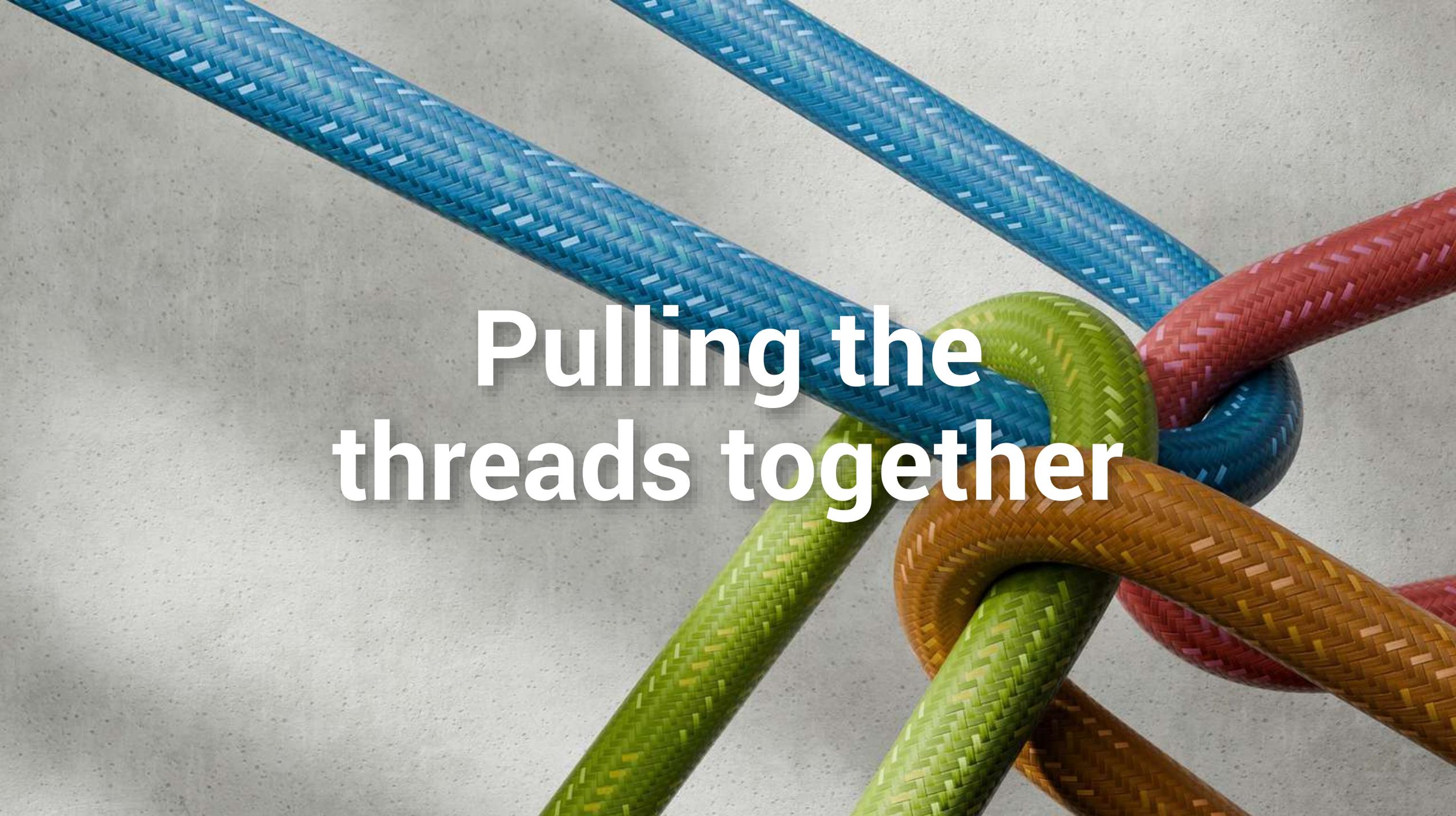


Decision speed

The message that must be crystal clear.

**People don't
buy your products
and services.**

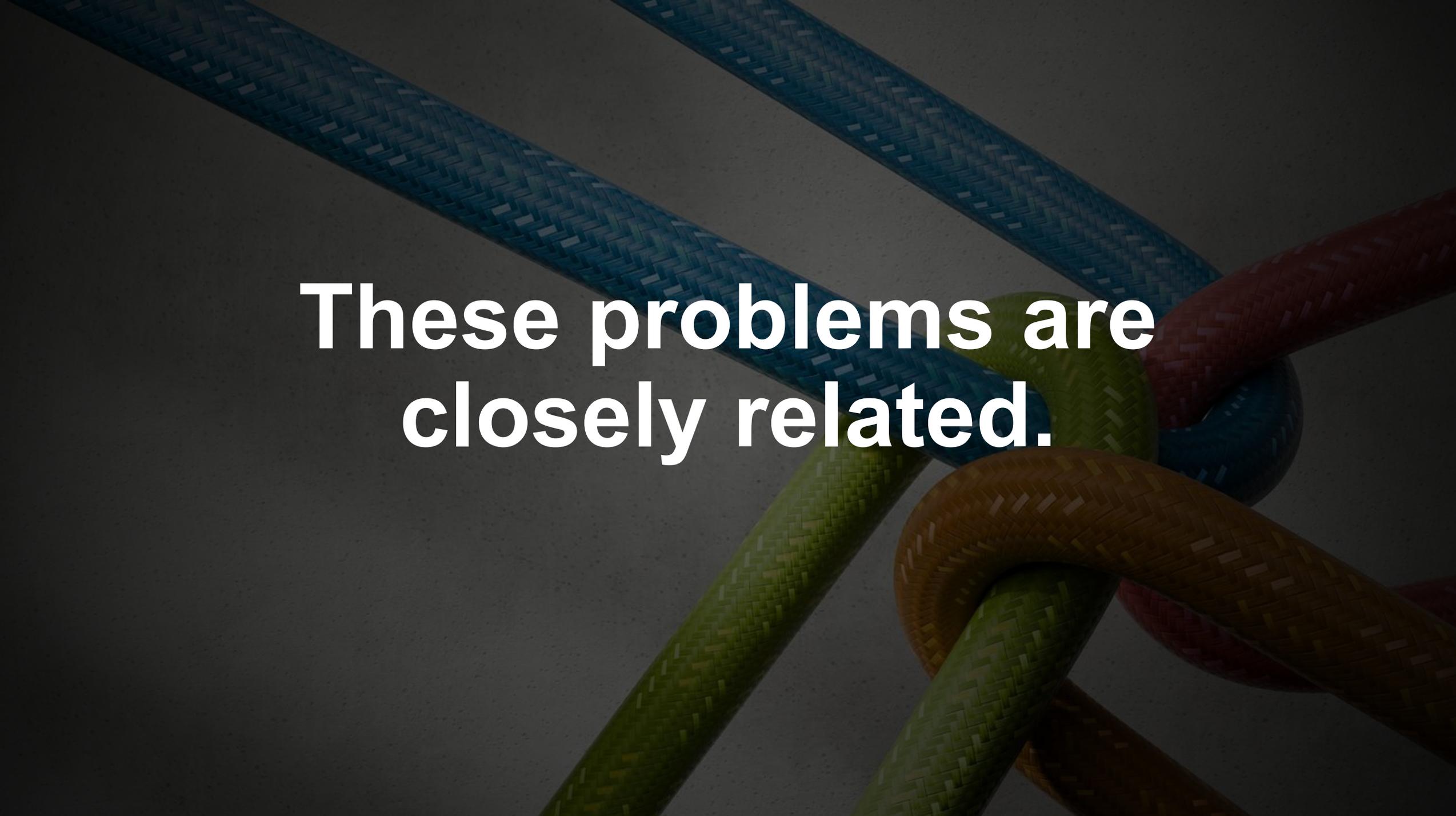
**Pricing power is the market's
verdict on your positioning.**



**Pulling the
threads together**

What we have covered.

In the City of London, the City of London Corporation has been established since 1800. It is a unique body, a local authority with a special status. It is a body that has been established to manage the City of London, which is a financial centre. It is a body that has been established to manage the City of London, which is a financial centre. It is a body that has been established to manage the City of London, which is a financial centre.



**These problems are
closely related.**

How we sabotage our progress.

~~We waste time for~~
~~not doing time~~

Hoe meer haas
hoe minder spoed.



Growth is a function of what your effort is multiplying.

The formula is simple.

$$\text{Growth} = \text{Effort} \times [\text{Clarity} - \text{Distraction}]$$

When clarity is protected.

Clarity drives prioritisation — and distraction shrinks.

Clarity restores context — and fragmentation reduces.

Clarity sequences thinking — and innovation compounds value.

Clarity sharpens positioning — and pricing power returns.

The background features a complex, abstract pattern of thin, wavy lines in shades of blue and purple, creating a sense of depth and movement. Small, bright dots are scattered throughout the composition, adding to the digital or data-like aesthetic.

**Great businesses
invest in thinking.**

What they do differently.

repeatedly asked people
on the street to describe
everyday good & evil

Three basic questions



Three basic questions

Does this strengthen our positioning?

Does it sharpen our identity?

Does it simplify or complicate?



Make drift expensive

Make drift expensive

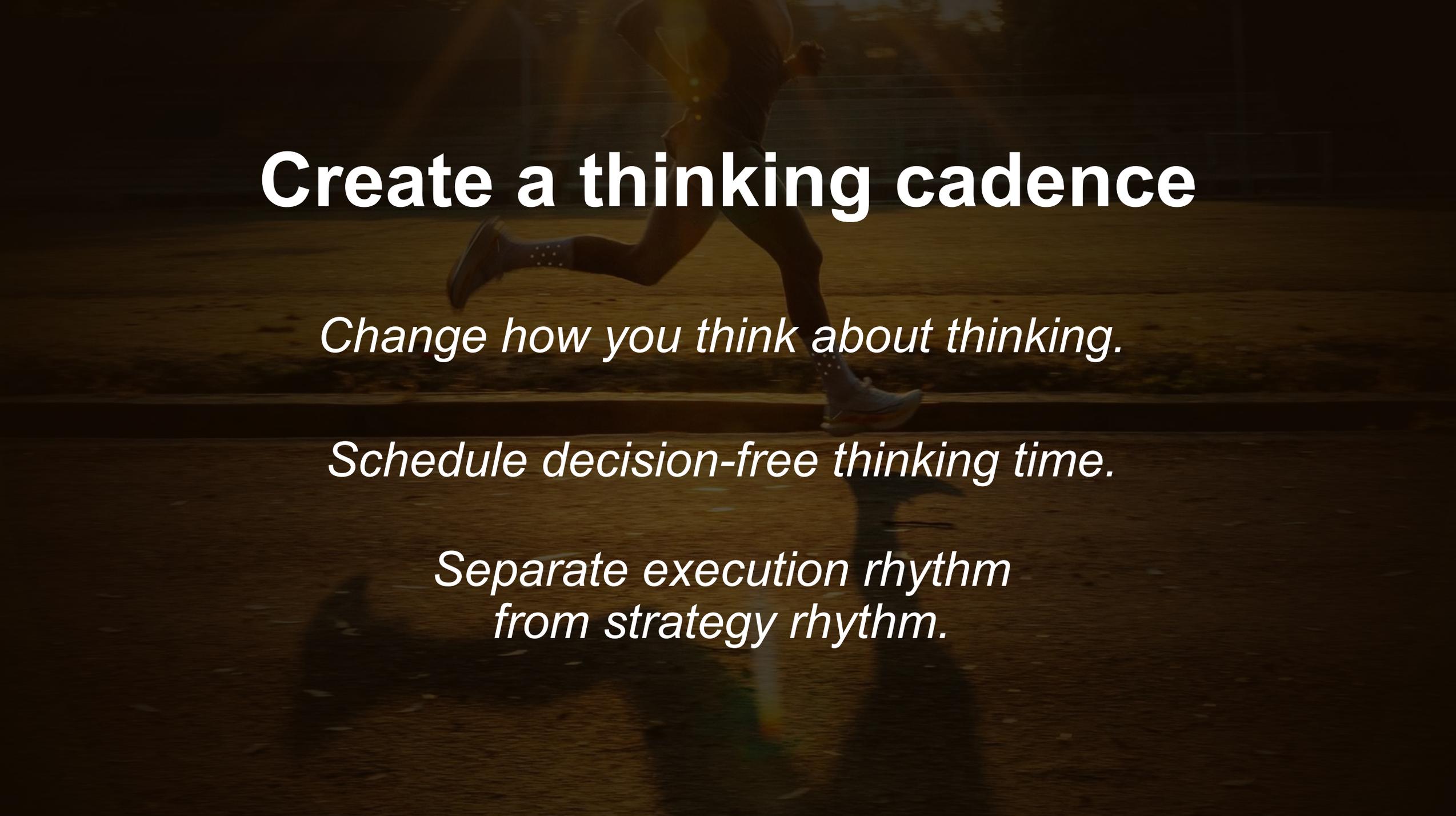
No new initiative without a written problem statement.

No project without stating what it displaces.

No messaging change, no new words,
without a positioning test.

Create a thinking cadence





Create a thinking cadence

Change how you think about thinking.

Schedule decision-free thinking time.

*Separate execution rhythm
from strategy rhythm.*

A high-angle photograph of several surfers in the ocean, waiting for a wave. The water is a deep blue with gentle ripples. The surfers are scattered across the frame, some closer to the foreground and others further away. The lighting suggests a late afternoon or early morning setting, with a soft glow on the water's surface.

Go slow to go fast.

Thank you.



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