Project Recovery

Navigating the Bumps and Getting Back on Track

Anne Ruskamp

Principal Engineer

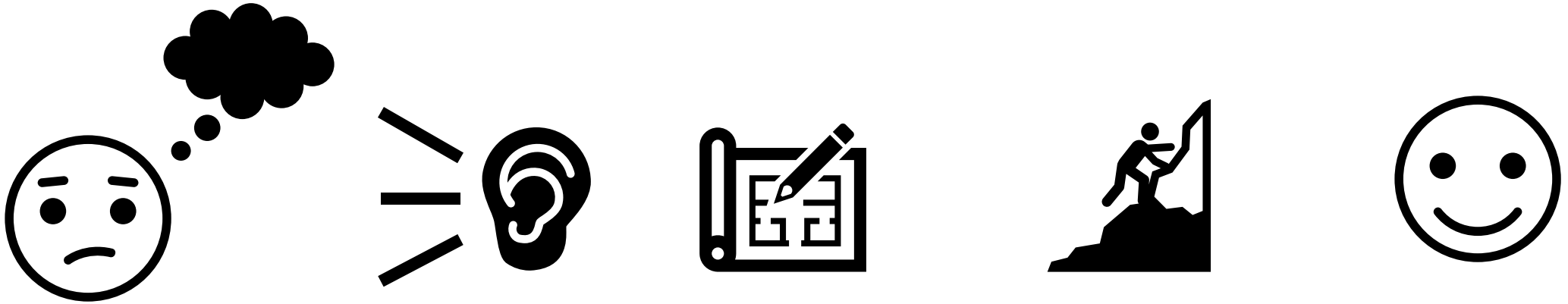
Don’t Panic Labs

But first, a story...

What is project recovery?

Project Recovery

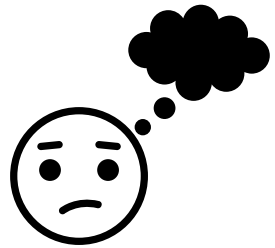
The **process of rescuing a software development initiative** that has lost stakeholder confidence to deliver on-time, on-budget, with zero defects and regains trust through listening with humble curiosity, collaborating on a plan, and incremental follow-through.





Realize there is a problem

Project Design

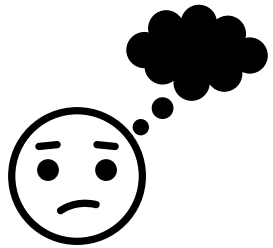


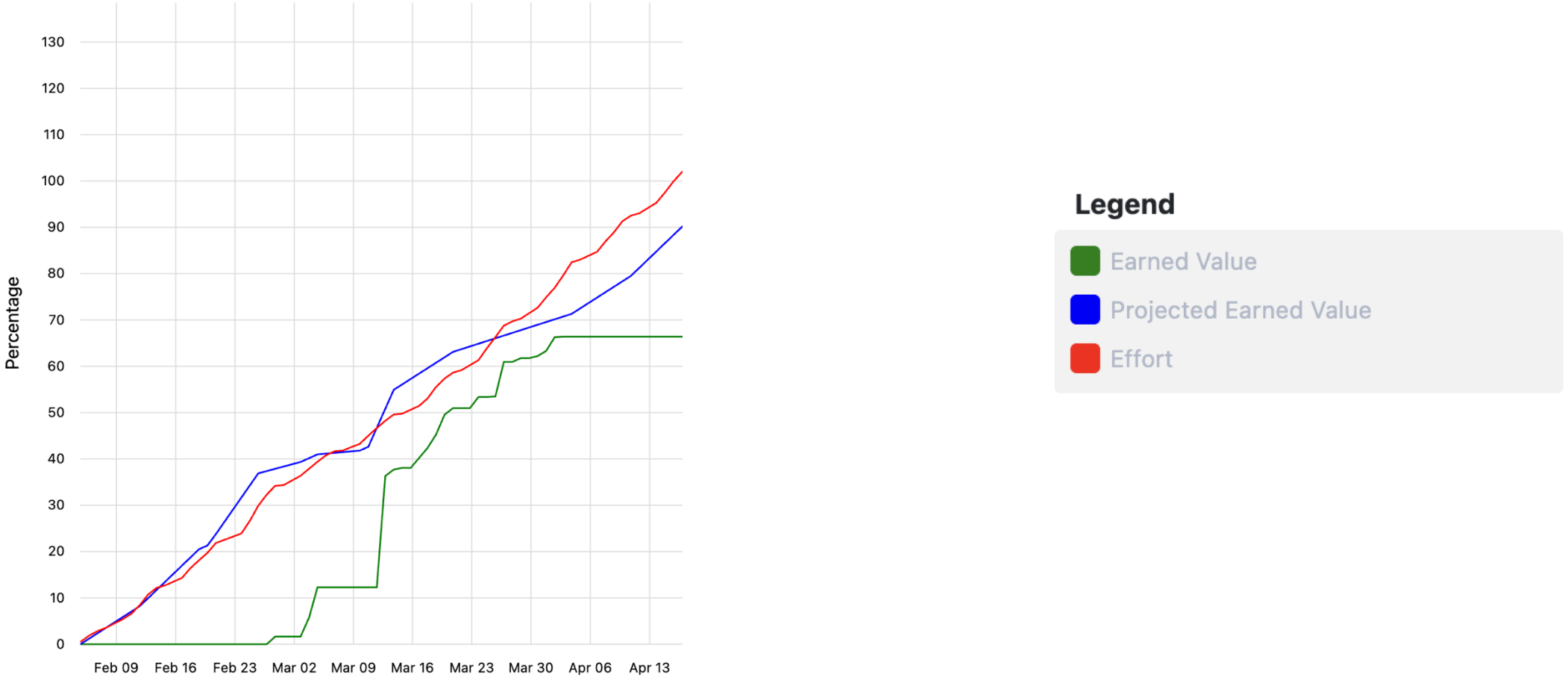
Project design allows you to shed light on dark corners – that is to have up-front visibility on the true scope of the project. Project design forces managers to think through work before it beings, to recognize unsuspected relationships and limits, to represent all activities, and to recognize several options for building the system.

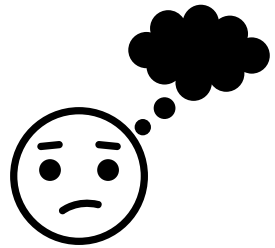
Juval Löwy

Righting Software: A Method for System and Project Design

Tracking Project Design







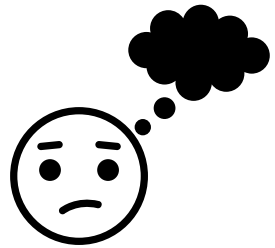
High rework

High WIP

Slow time-to-market

Declining client satisfaction

Increasing PR time or decreasing merge frequency



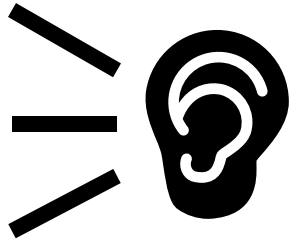
SSPN

Something-something people-ness



Listen with humble curiosity

Crucial Conversations

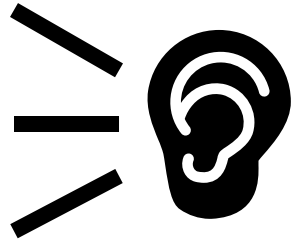


… not simply challenging, frustrating, frightening, or annoying – is that the results could have a huge impact on the quality of your life… By definition, crucial conversations are about tough issues.

Patterson, Grenny, McMillan

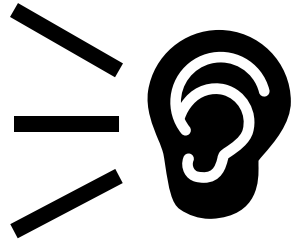
Crucial Conversations: Tools for Talking with the Stakes are High

My reminders



- Drop your shoulders
- Lean in
- Take a breath
- Do not defend. Remember your goal is to learn.

Don’t Stop Unbelieving



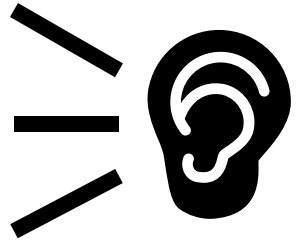
As I’ve studied the process of rethinking, I’ve found that it often unfolds in a cycle. It starts with ***intellectual humility*** *– knowing what we don’t know. We should all be able to make a long list of areas where we’re ignorant… Recognizing our shortcomings open the door to doubt. As we* ***question our current understanding****, we become curious about what information we’re missing. That search leads us to new discoveries, which in turn maintain our humility by reinforcing how much we still have to learn.* ***If knowledge is power, knowing what we don’t know is wisdom.***

Scientific thinking favors humility over pride, doubt over certainty, curiosity over closure.

Adam Grant

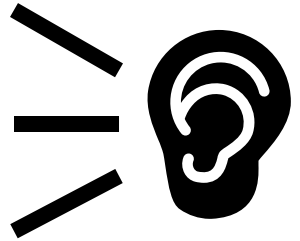
Think Again

How to start the conversation?



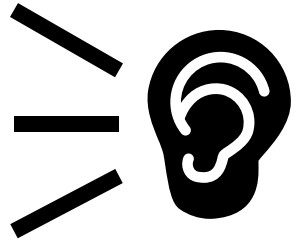
- State your intent
- Set baseline expectations
- Create an invitation
- Remind yourself that your goal is to learn

How to respond?



- Stay calm
- Restate what you heard
- Ask clarifying questions
- Affirm their experience, not necessarily their conclusion

Understanding the problem



Whether chemists, physicists, or political scientists, the most successful problem solvers spend mental energy figuring out what type of problem they are facing before matching a strategy to it, rather than jumping in with memorized procedures.

David Epstein

Range: Why Generalist Triumph in a Specialized World



Collaborate on a plan

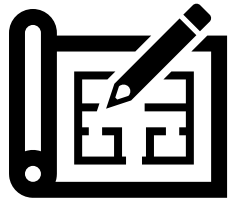
Project Design Revisited



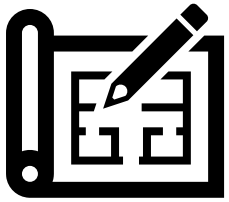
No project has infinite time, money, or resources. All sound project plans always trade some time for money, or vice versa.

Juval Löwy

Righting Software: A Method for System and Project Design



But what if there are no good options?

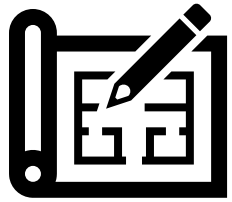


But what if I don’t have the requirements, architecture, or development activities?

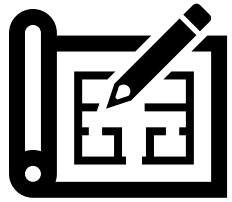
Impacts = why does this system exist?

Outcomes = how will we know it is successful?

Outputs = what are we building?



But doesn’t that take a long time?



But what if we’re Agile?



Incrementally follow-through

Agile Manifesto

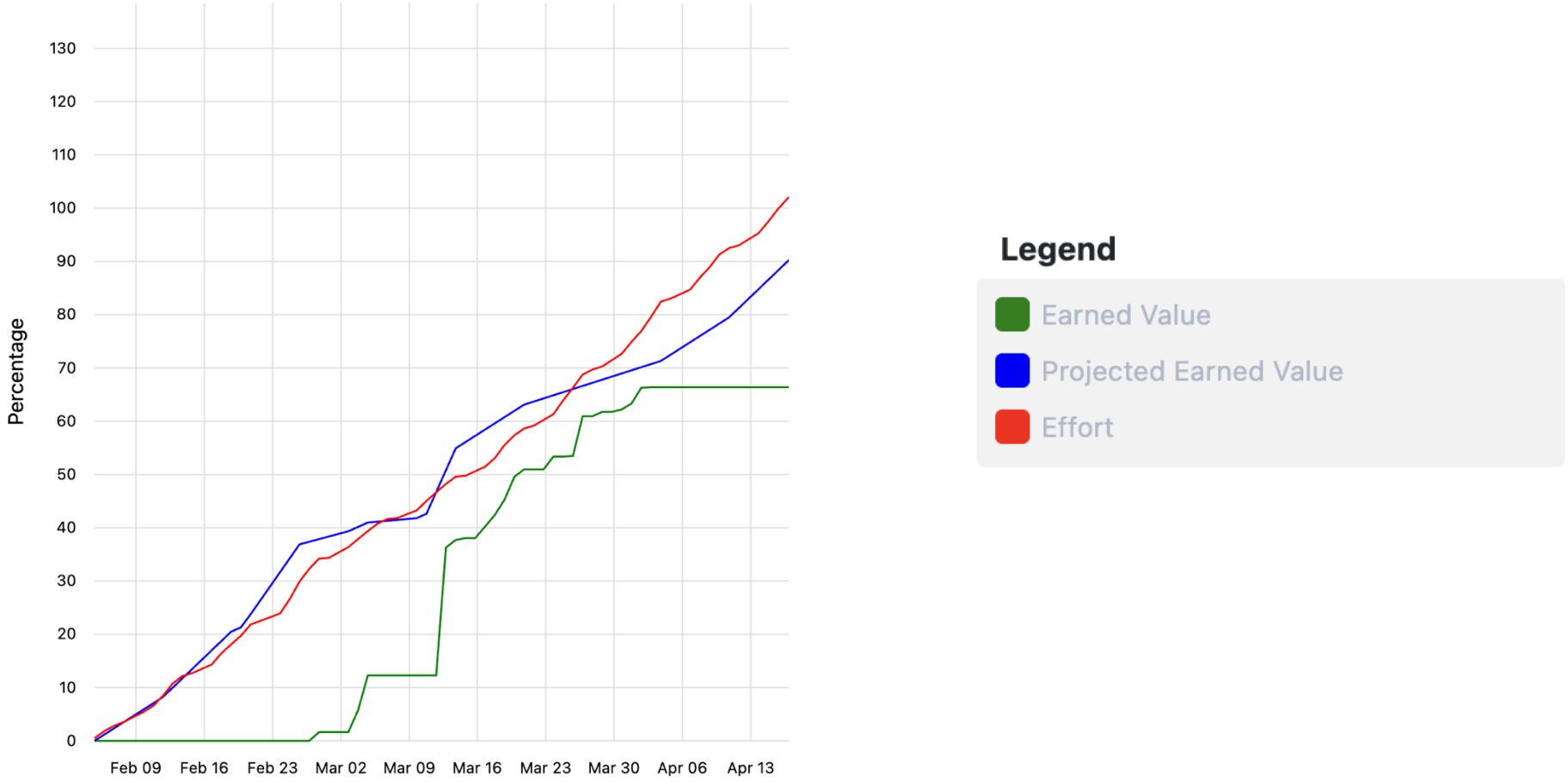


Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through early and continuous delivery of valuable software.

Deliver working software frequently, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

Design iteratively and deliver incrementally





Project Design

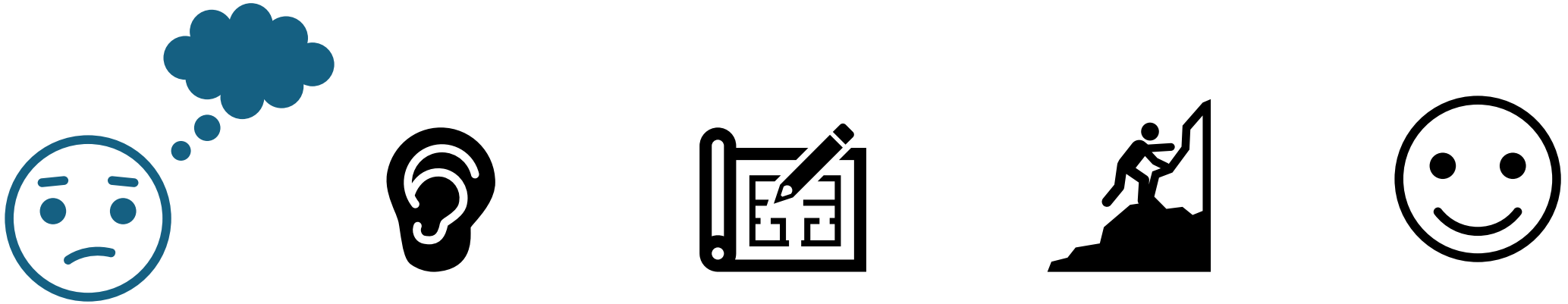


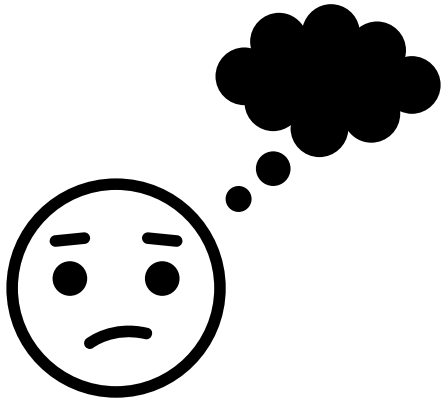
Once project design is in place, you eliminate the commonplace gambling with costs, development death marches, wishful thinking about project success, and horrendously expensive trials and errors. After work commences, a well-designed project also lays the foundation for decision makers to evaluate and think through the effect of a proposed change on the schedule and the budget.

Juval Löwy

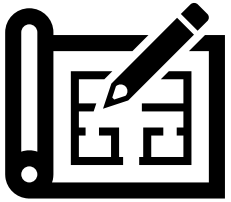
Dream of what’s next?







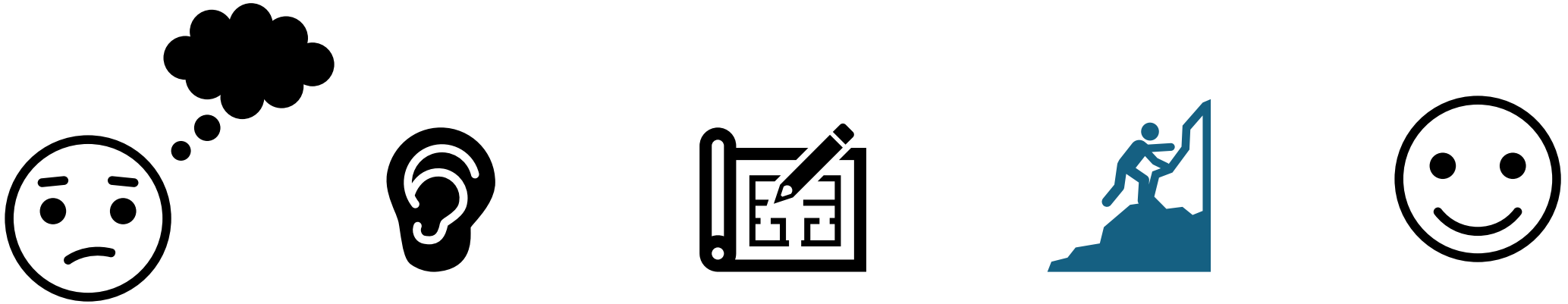


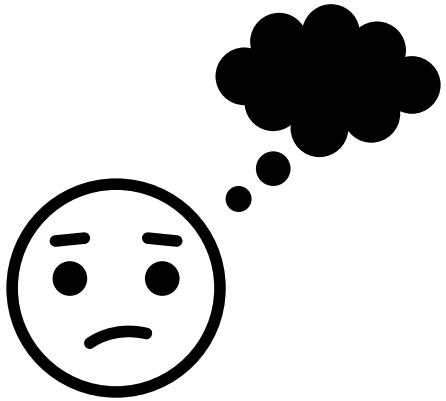


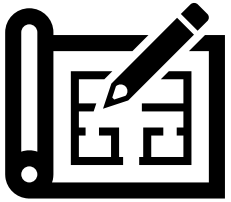




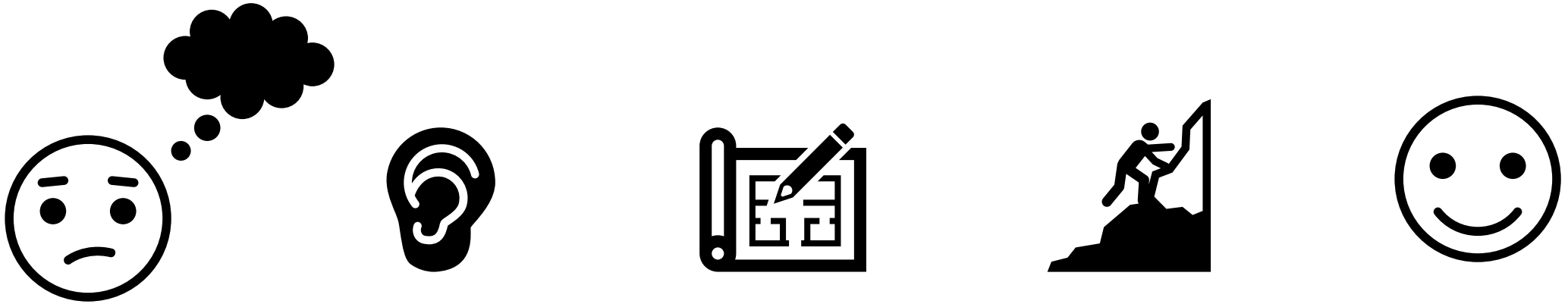






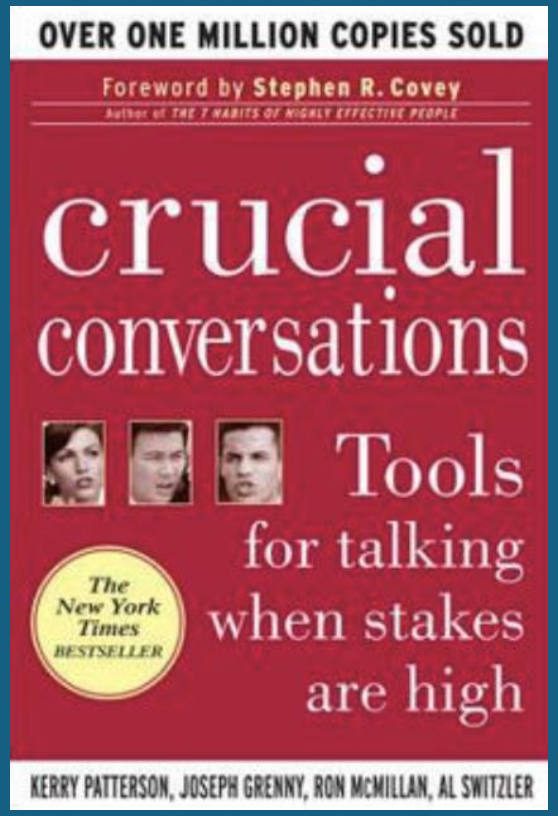


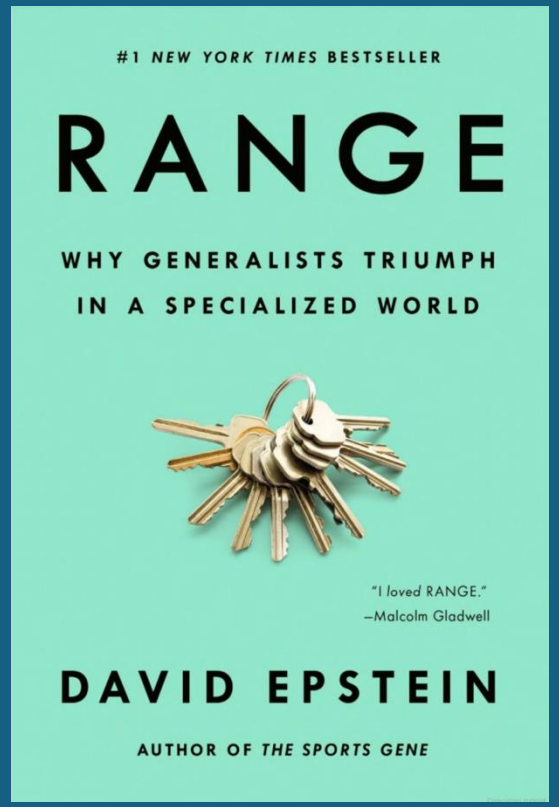


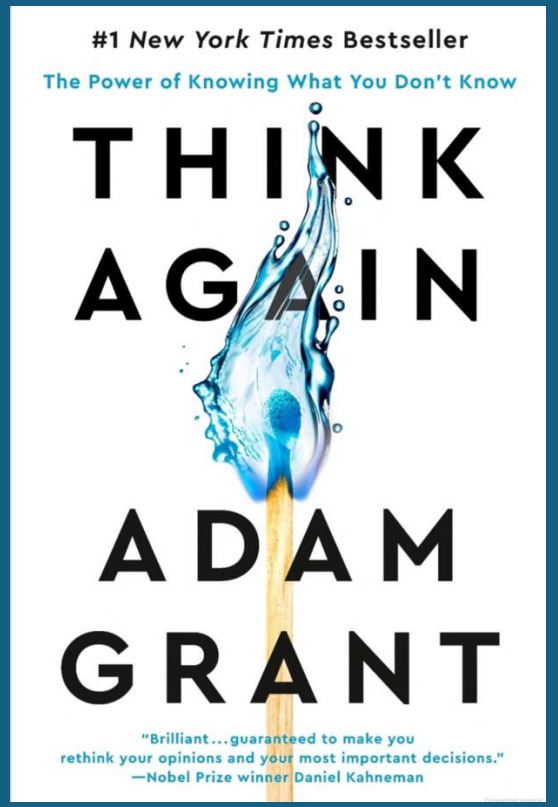


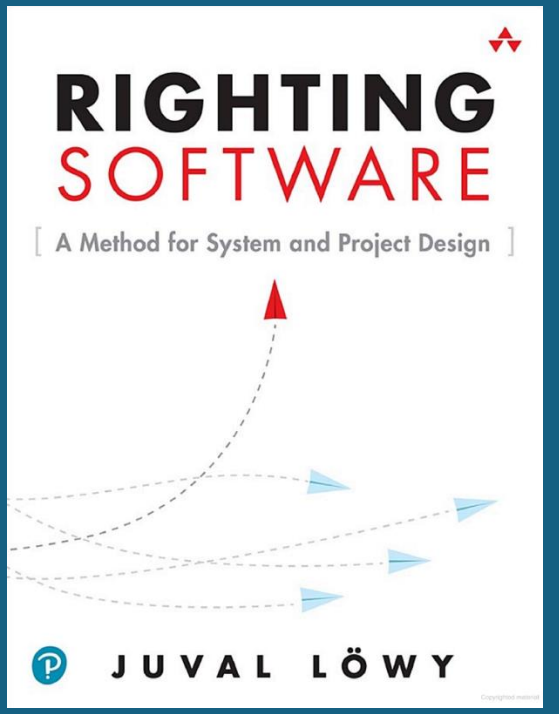
What are your next steps?

- Self-assessment
- Intentional response to smaller bumps
- Be trusted


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RIGHTING SOFTWARE
[A Method for System and Project Design]
JUVAL LÖWY

PROJECT RECOVERY

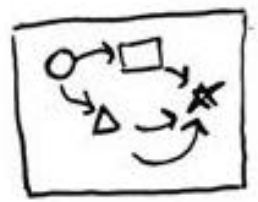




INITIAL STATE



LISTEN & CRUCIAL CONVERSATION



CREATE A PLAN

G



INCREMENTAL FOLLOW-THROUGH & REBUILDING TRUST



START DREAMING ABOUT WHAT'S NEXT TOGETHER



IF AT ALL POSSIBLE, OVER-DELIVER & AT LEAST OVER-COMMUNICATE FOR FIRST DELIVERABLE