THE SINGLE MOST-IMPORTANT SKILL EVERY AGILIST NEEDS

Agile 2015

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Have you ever been…

- a change agent?
- asked to coach a team?
- new to a group?
- recipient of feedback?
- in conflict?
- asked to create a solution?

Congratulations! You've had an opportunity to use active listening

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WHAT IS ACTIVE LISTENING?

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Intake

Meaning

Significance

Response

Hidden

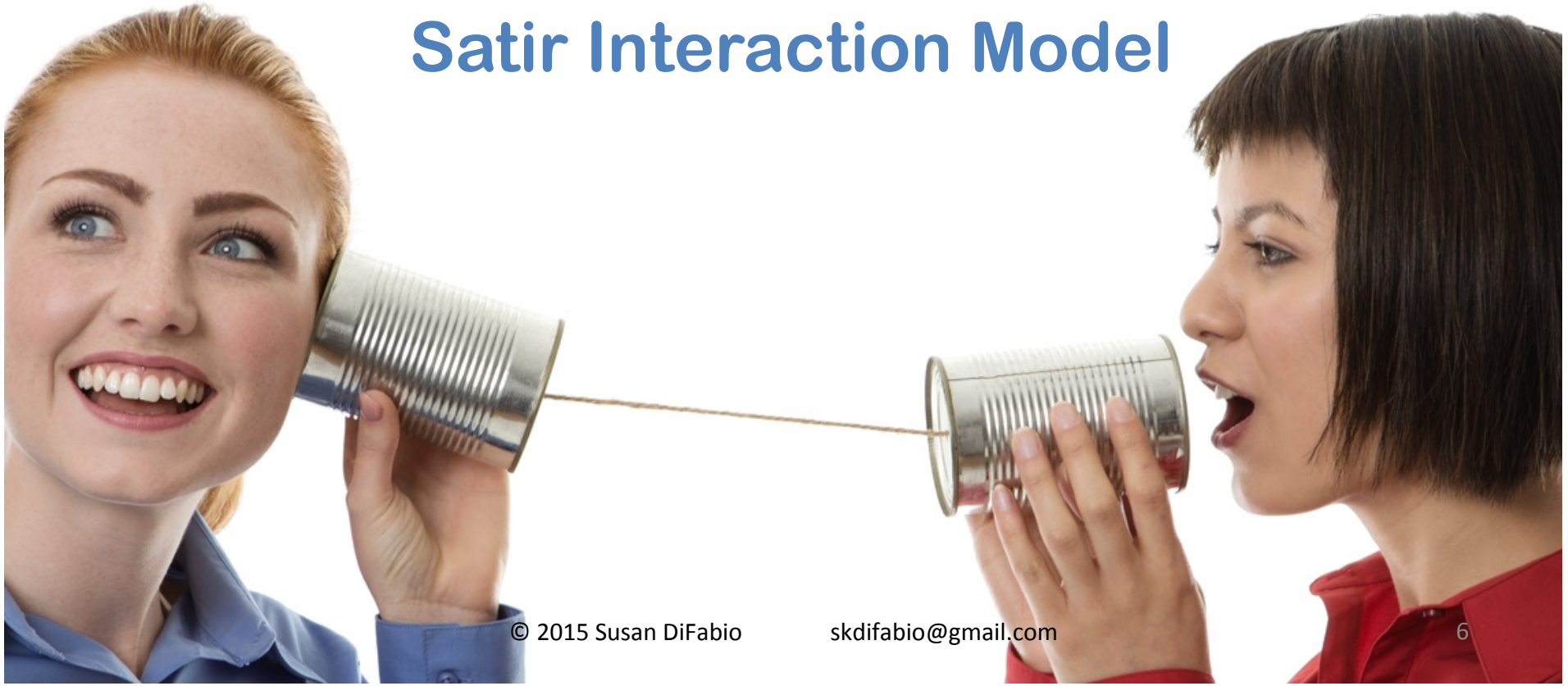
Intake

Meaning

Significance

Response

Satir Interaction Model



Behavior that fosters…

Accurate, thorough message receipt

Confirmed, shared understanding

Continued communication

Behavior that conveys your…

Authenticity

Acceptance

Appreciation

REFLECTIVE LISTENING

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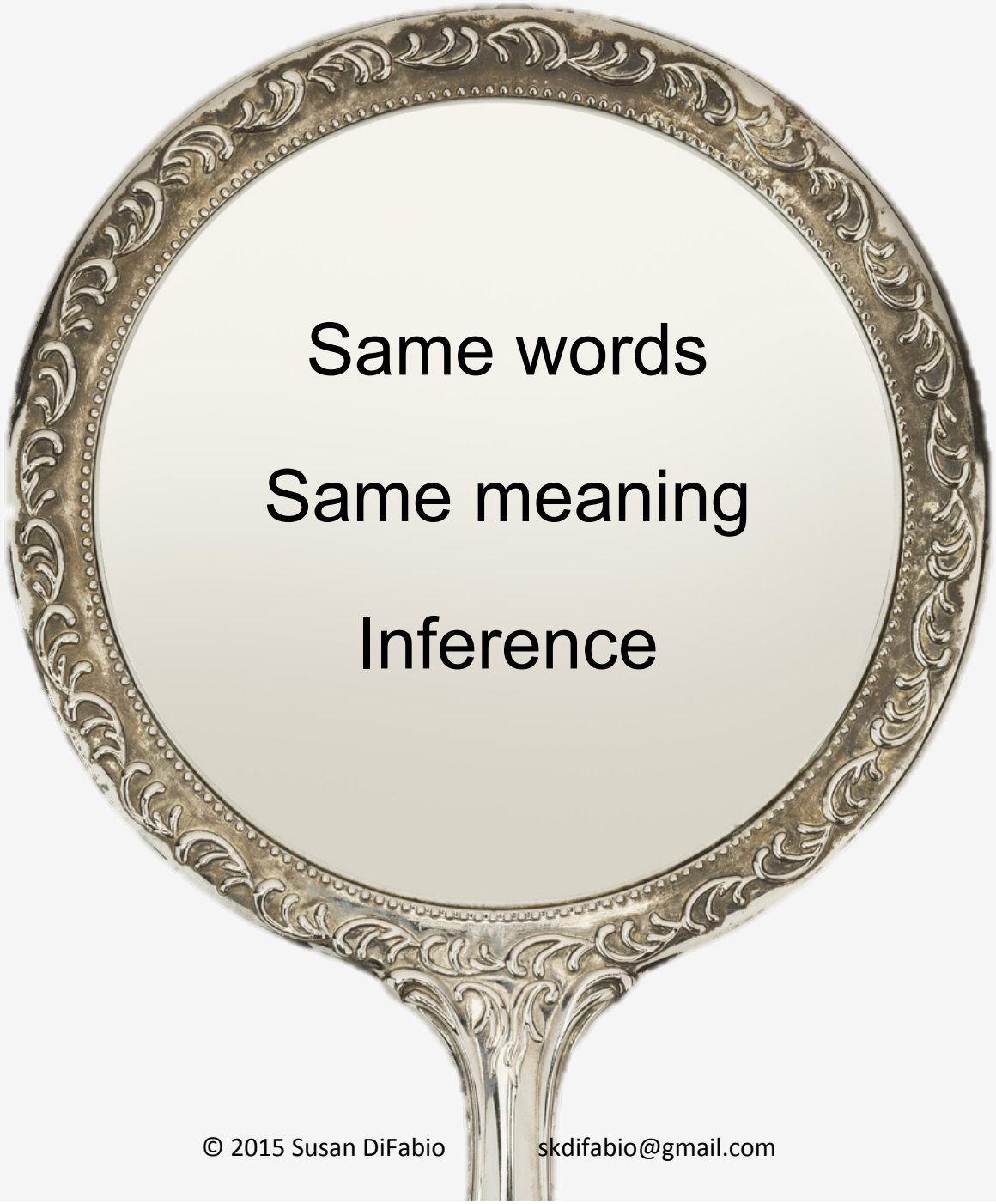

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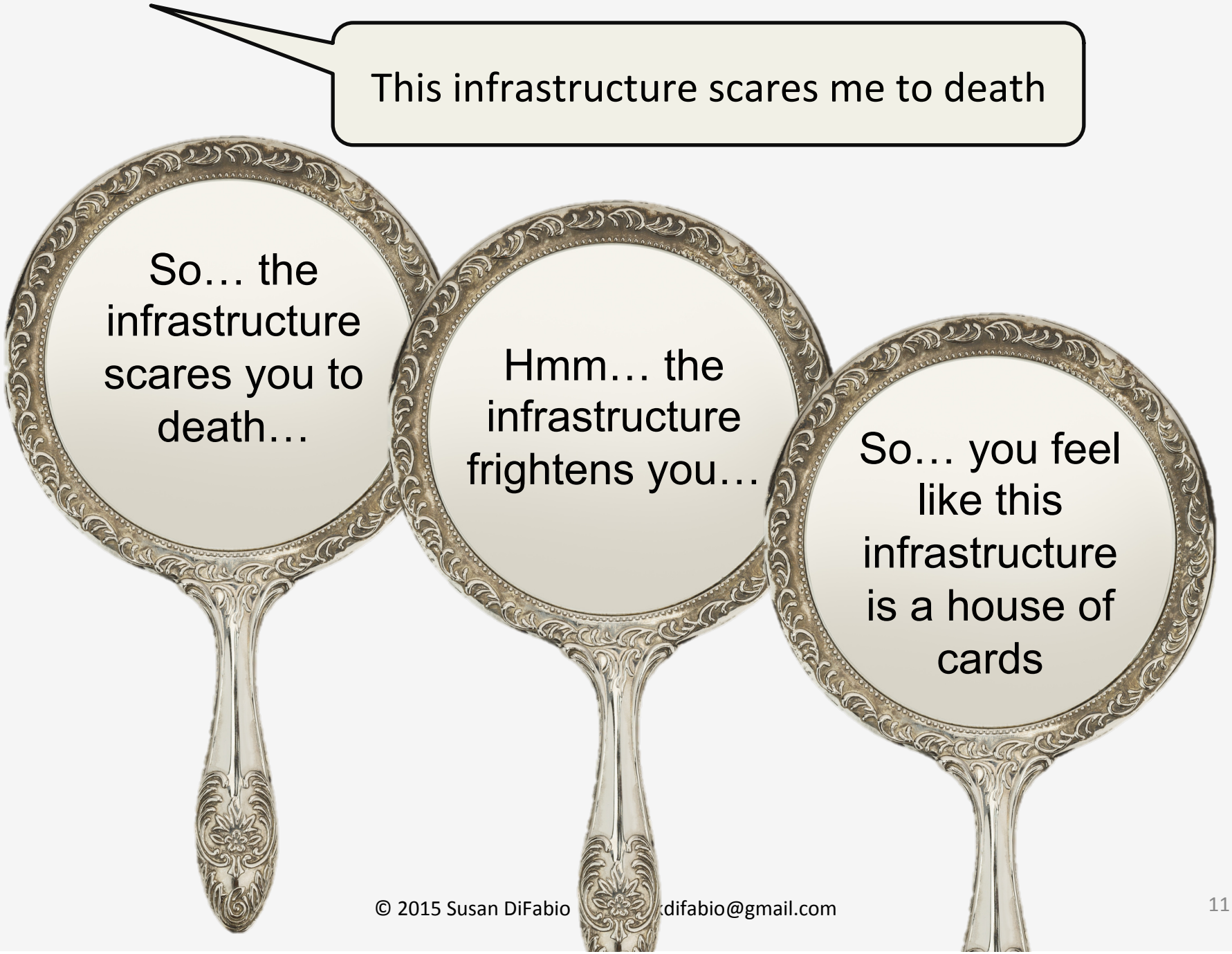
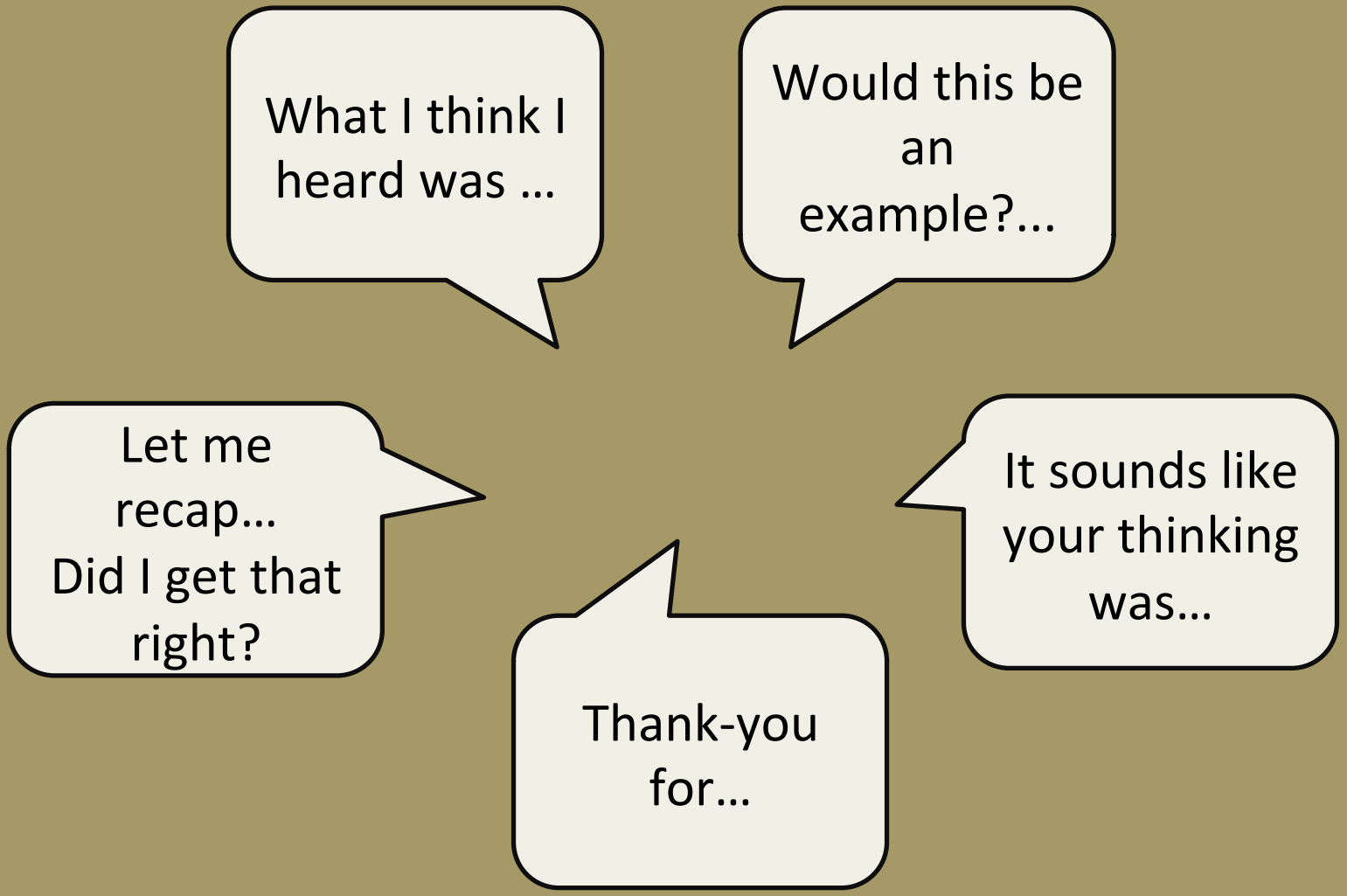

This infrastructure scares me to death
So… the infrastructure scares you to death…
Hmm… the infrastructure frightens you…
So… you feel like this infrastructure is a house of cards

Tentative, Clarifying, Confirming



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“You should/shouldn’t…”

“I know exactly how you feel…”

“Ain’t it awful…”

Your similar story

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Get comfortable with silence…

One tool of many

PRACTICE

Practice

- Form Triads
- Identify worksheet responses as
  - Same words
  - Same meaning
  - Inference
  - other
- Add your own responses

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Mark doesn't have a clue about technology; he is totally unqualified for the PO role

Same Words, Same Meaning, Or Inference?

Hmm… Mark is clueless about technology…	
I see… you think Mark is unqualified as the PO…	
Ahh… Mark's lack of skill makes it impossible for him to be effective in the PO role…	
So.. You're stuck working with an ineffective PO; You must be really frustrated….	
I know what you mean; my PO doesn't have a clue either.	
Maybe you could find him a different job.	
So… being technical is a pre-requisite for the PO role?	

EXPLORATORY LISTENING

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Context

History

Motivation

Intent

Aspirations

Emergent ideas

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Questions

- Clarifying
- Open/Closed
- Curious/Leading
- Inquiry/Inquisition
- Powerful

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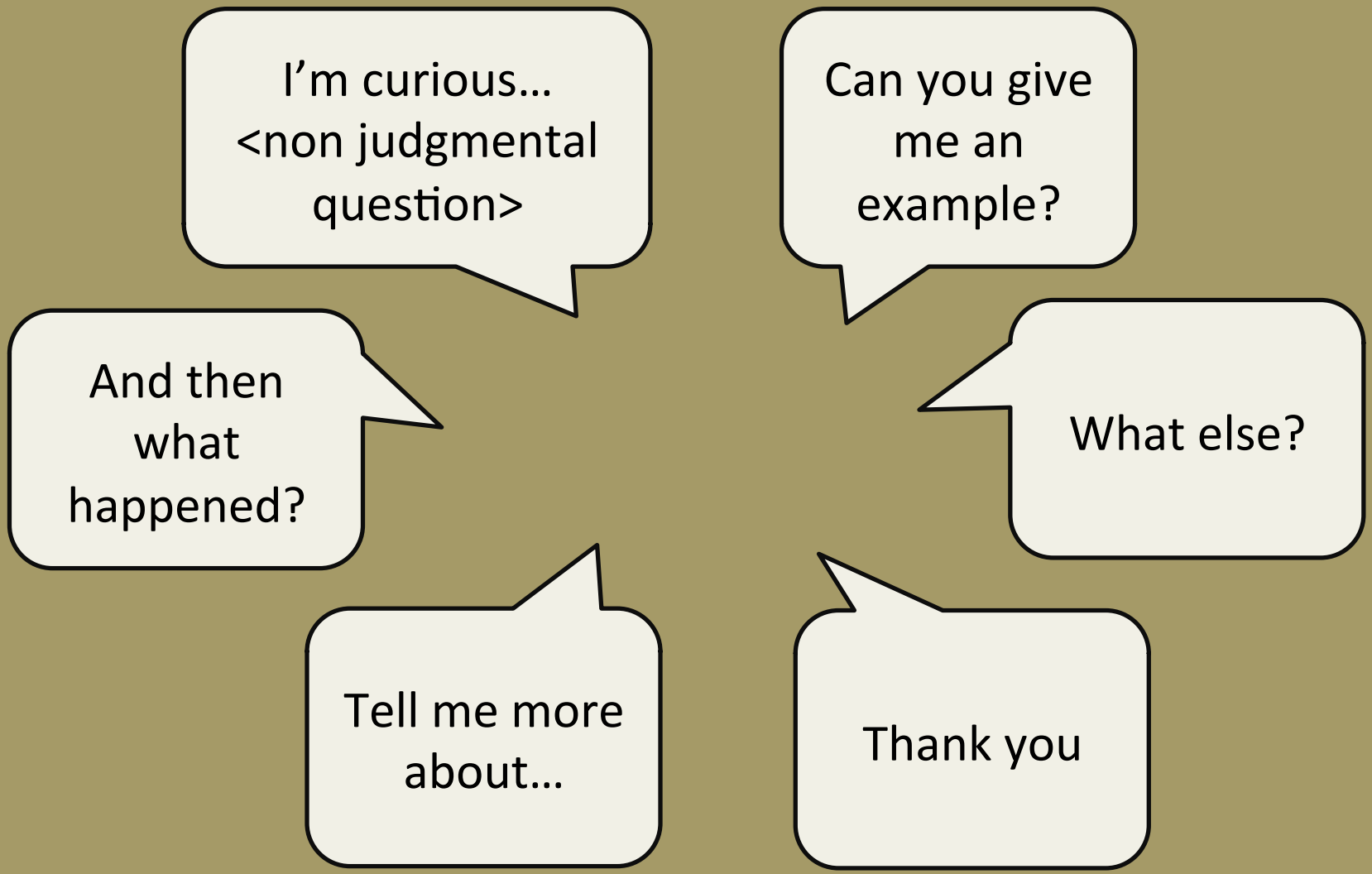
Curious, Clarifying, Non-Judgemental



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Beyond words

Draw – whiteboard, paper, flip charts

Build – Lego bricks, product box

You don’t need to agree, you do need to understand

PRACTICE

Let's Practice

- Triads – talker, listener, observer
- Talker, start the conversation
  - Issue, frustration, dilemma,…
- Observe listener's
  - Reflective responses
  - Exploratory responses
- Debrief

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FORMING NEW HABITS

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It's Difficult

- Reptile brain
- Corporate Culture
  - Efficiency
  - Prove-your-worth
  - Hierarchy

Recognize Your Cues

"To make a long story short…"

No one is hearing to you.

You are frustrated.

Actively listen now!

Intentional Practice

Coaching dojo

Coding katas

Improv “yes-and” games

Team mantra

KEYS: FEEDBACK & FUN

Game-ify

Infer correctly (2 points)

Same meaning (1 point)

Same words (0 points)

Infer incorrectly (-1 point)

Say what "*I*" want to say (-5 points)

Points
+10
+9
+8
+7
+6
+5
+4
+3
+2
+1
0
-1
-2
-3
-4
-5
-6
-7
-8
-9
-10

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"Yes, And"

I love this conference.

Yes, you love this conference. And it seems a lot of people do because it keeps growing every year.

Yes, it keeps growing every year. And now there are so many simultaneous sessions I don't know which one to pick.

Yes, you don't know which one to pick. And when that happens to me I just walk in the closest door.

Yes, you walk in the closest door, And I will follow you in.

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Re-Frame

Judgment → Curiosity

Advocacy → Common ground

Win-Lose → Yes, And

Solutions now → Solve the right problem

Tips

"Why" questions → "What" questions

Listen with your ears → Listen with your hands

Fill the silence → Count to 10

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Shape Your Path

Clean your whiteboards

Carry supplies with you

Write down your curious questions

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BENEFITS

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Active Listening

Trust

New insights

Collaboration

“Yes, and” results

It’s good for business!

Thank You

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