

5 Simple & Effective Steps to Problem-Solving



Step 1 – Define The Problem

What is the exact
problem we're
trying to solve?



Our Problem Definition Answers These Questions...

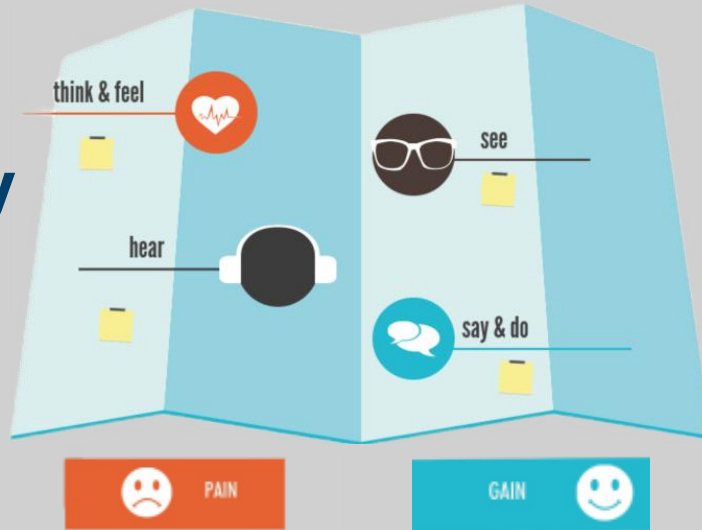
- ? **What** is happening?
- ? **Who** is it affecting?
- ? **When** does it happen?
- ? **Where** in the process is it visible?
- ? **How** often does it occur?
- ? **Why** is it a problem?



Tools That Help Us Define the Problem

1

Empathy Maps



2

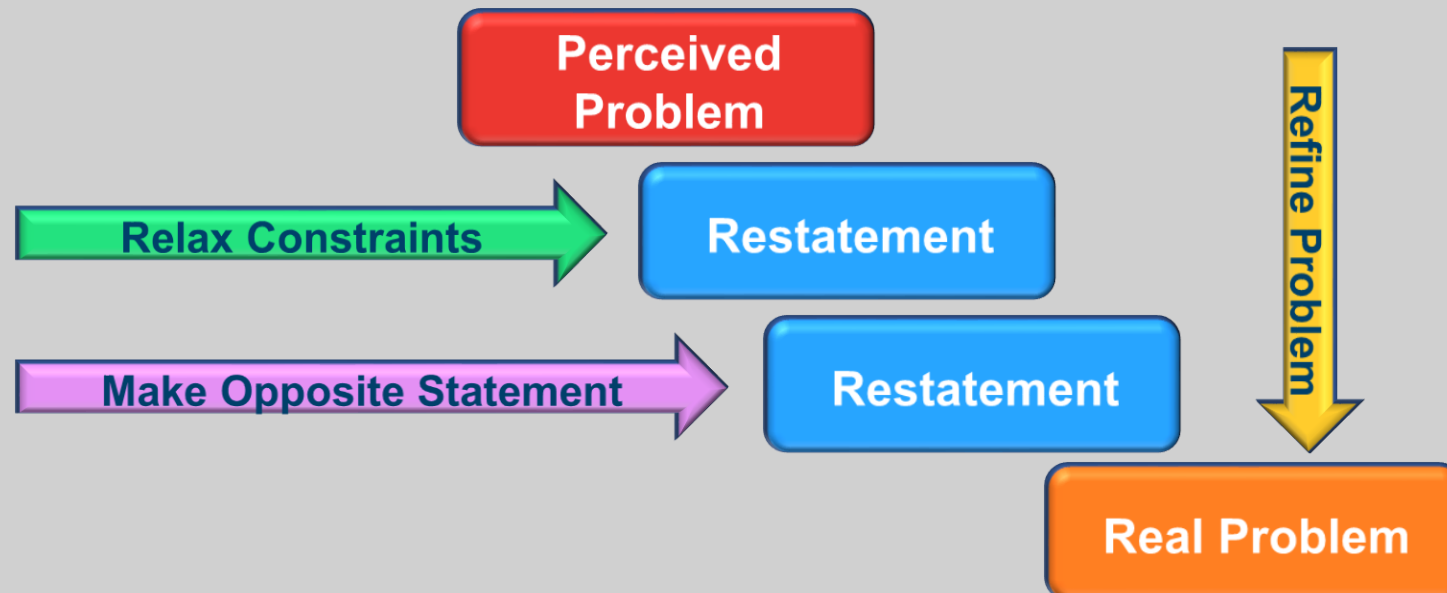
5Ws & 1H

Also known as the "Journalistic Six"



3

Statement Restatement Technique



Step 2 – Determine The Root Causes



Getting to the Root Causes



Involve people with first hand experience of the problem



Gather together subject matter experts who understand current systems and processes



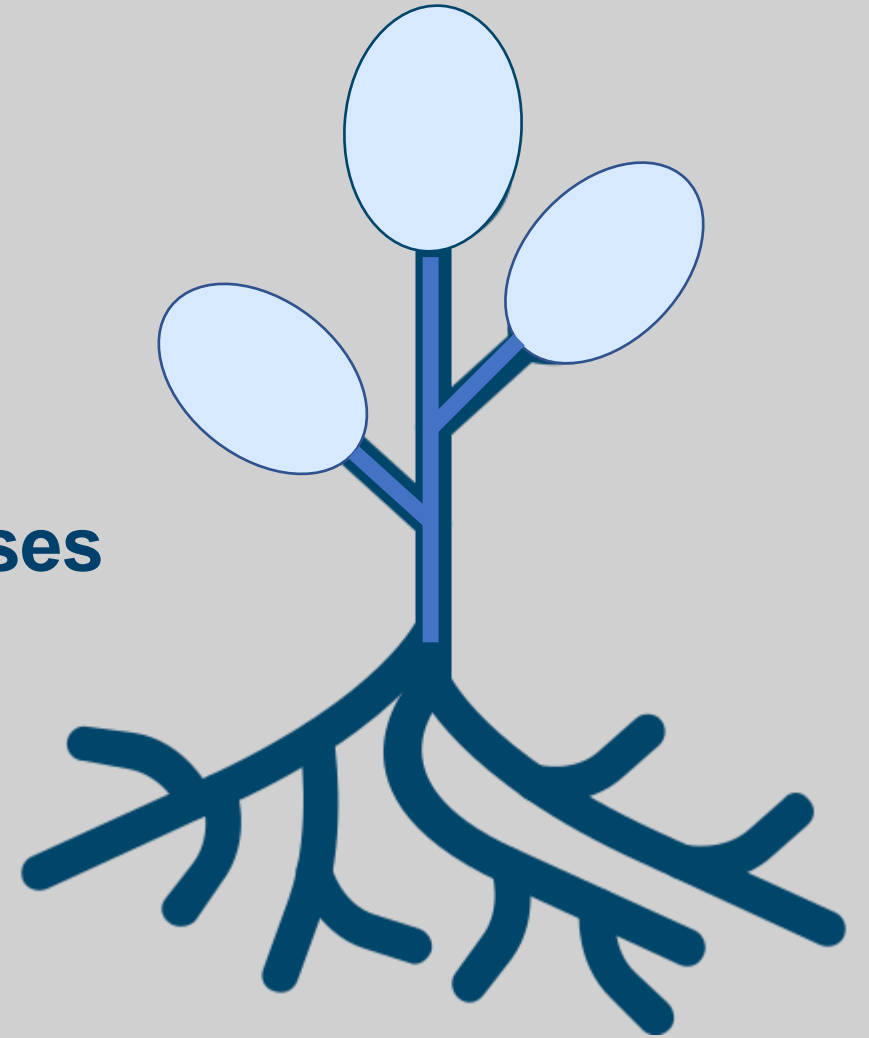
Deep dive into the underlying causes of the problem to ensure we solve the real issues rather than simply addressing the symptoms



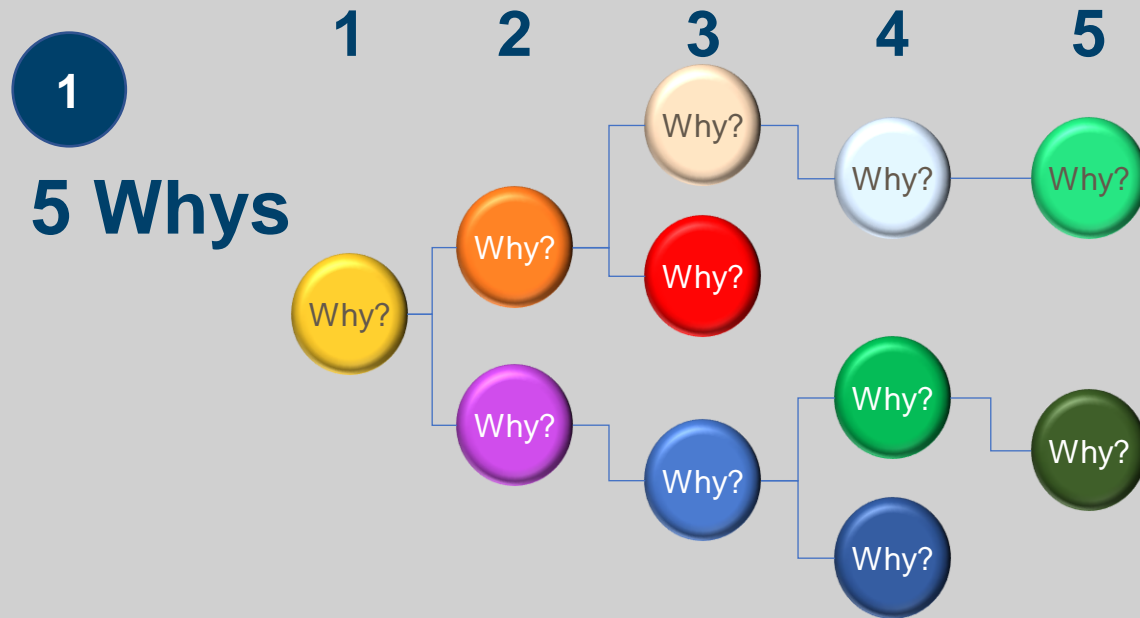
Separate fact from opinion



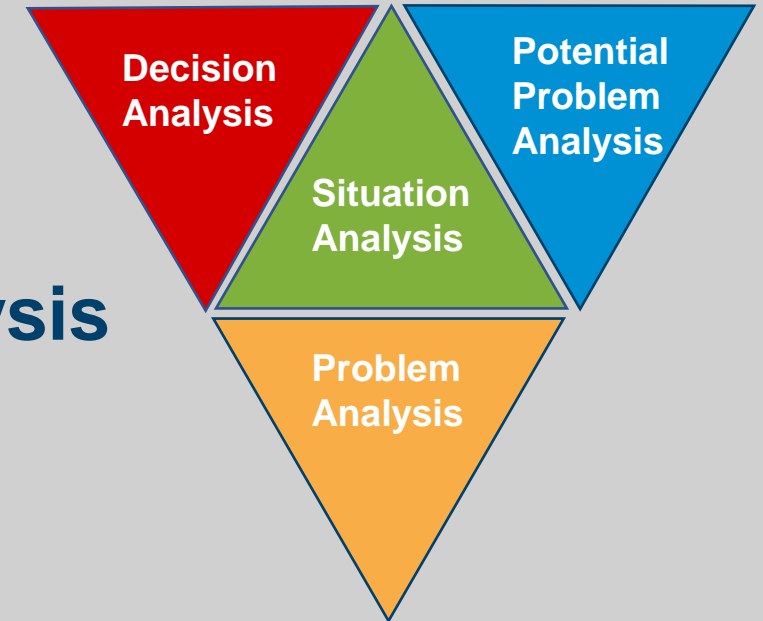
Be data-rational



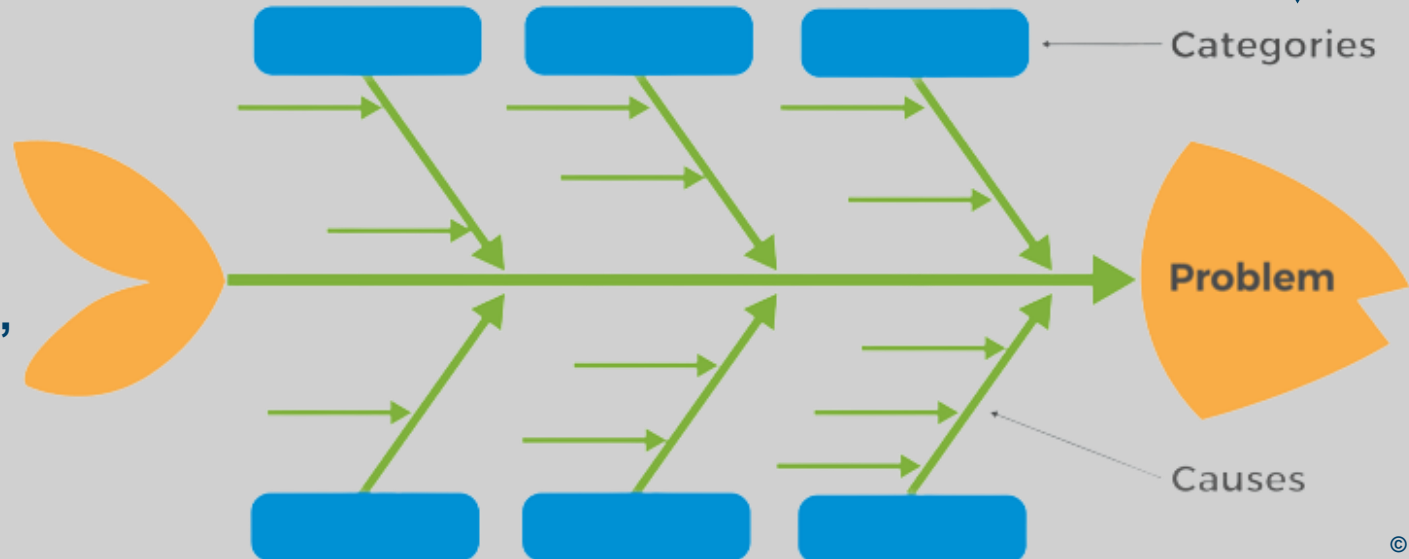
Tools That Help With Root Cause Analysis



2
KT Analysis



3
Ishikawa
Also known as the
“Fishbone Diagram”



Step 3 – Identify Possible Solutions



A photograph showing two men in a meeting room. They are standing in front of a large whiteboard covered with numerous yellow and blue sticky notes. The man on the right, who has a beard and is wearing a light blue shirt, is pointing at a sticky note with a red pen. The man on the left, seen from the back, is wearing a striped shirt. The sticky notes contain handwritten text in French, such as 'TELEPHONE', 'EMAIL', 'AGENCE', and various phrases related to a business process. The whiteboard also has some printed documents pinned to it. The scene is brightly lit, likely from a window on the right.

Chris Dunn Consulting

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Identify & Prioritise Possible Solutions



Brainstorm potential solutions (also known as “hypotheses”)



Encourage creative thinking



Generate as many solutions/hypotheses as possible



Evaluate all solutions/hypotheses without bias



Rank the solutions and decide which hypotheses to test



Tools That Help With Solution Finding

1

Brainwriting



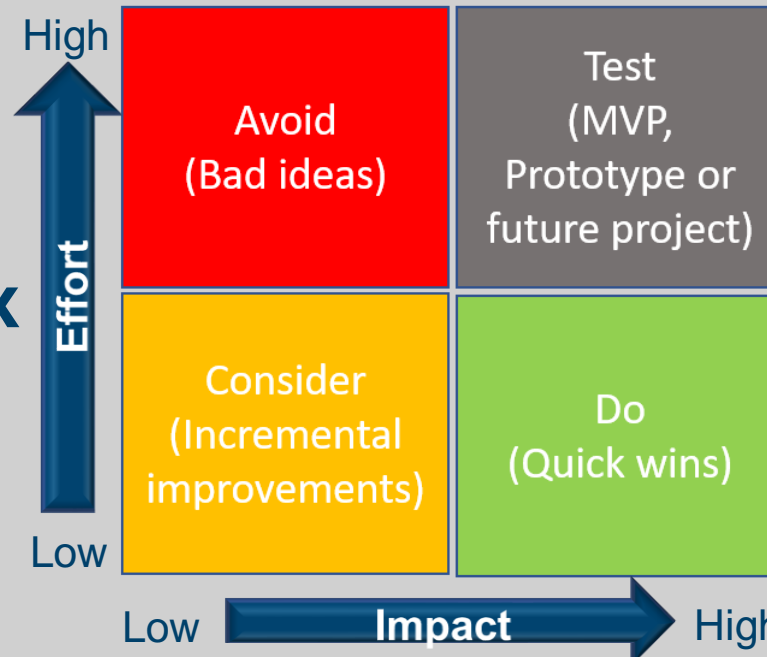
2

SWOT Analysis

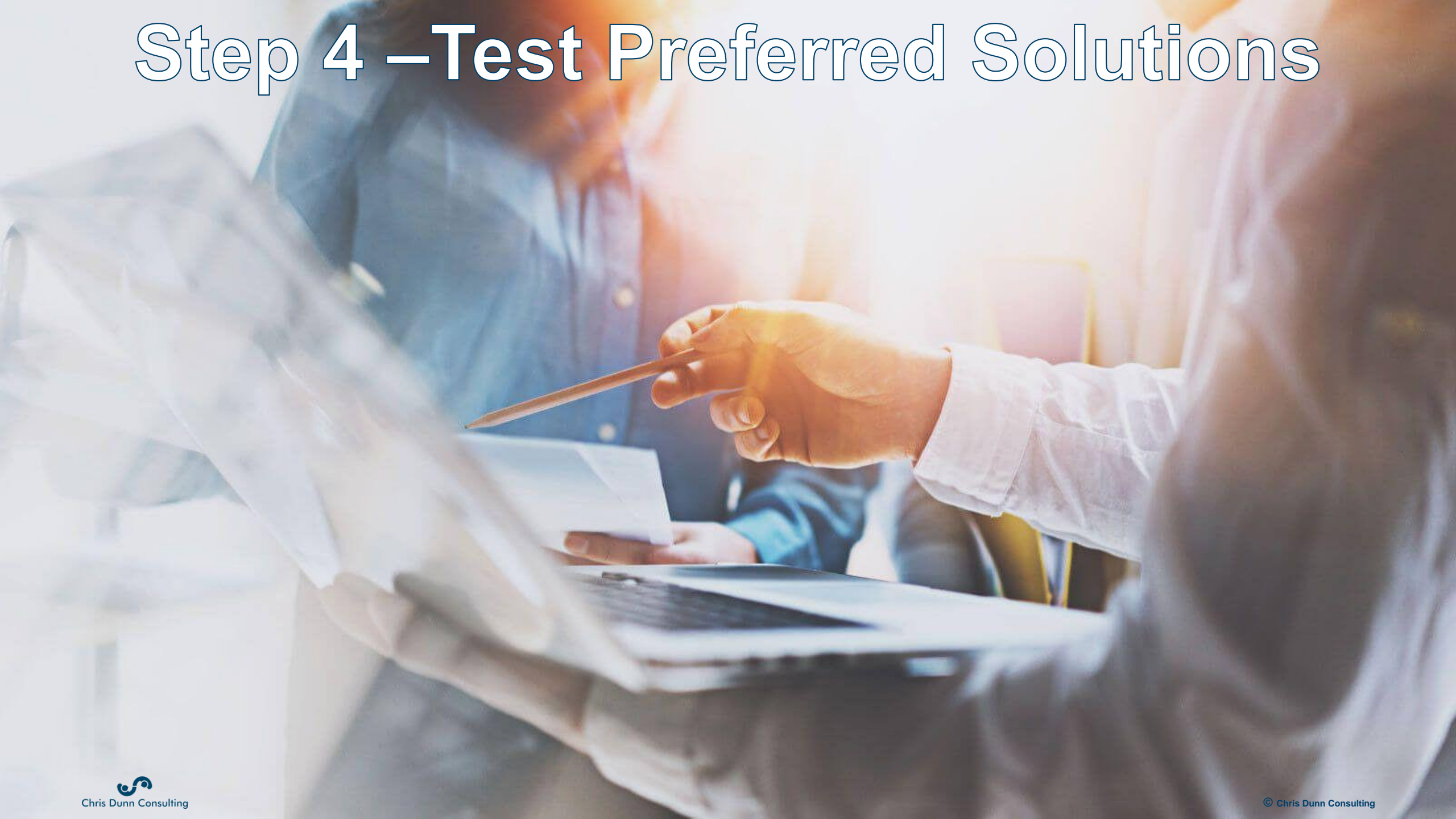


3

Impact & Effect Matrix



Step 4 – Test Preferred Solutions



Testing Our Preferred Solutions



Plan and implement a pilot test of each potential solution designed to validate or invalidate our hypotheses



Establish measures of success and monitoring procedures



Gather feedback & data from the test



Evaluate results



Either abandon (hypothesis not validated) or iterate and improve (hypothesis validated)

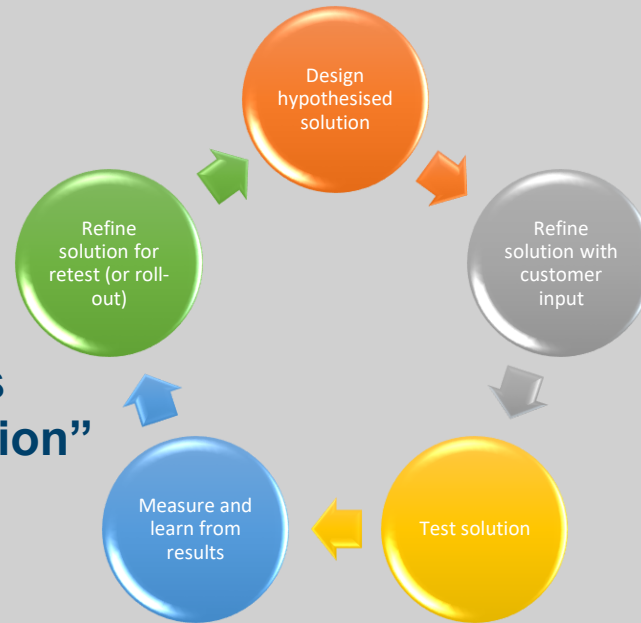


Tools That Help With Solution Testing

1

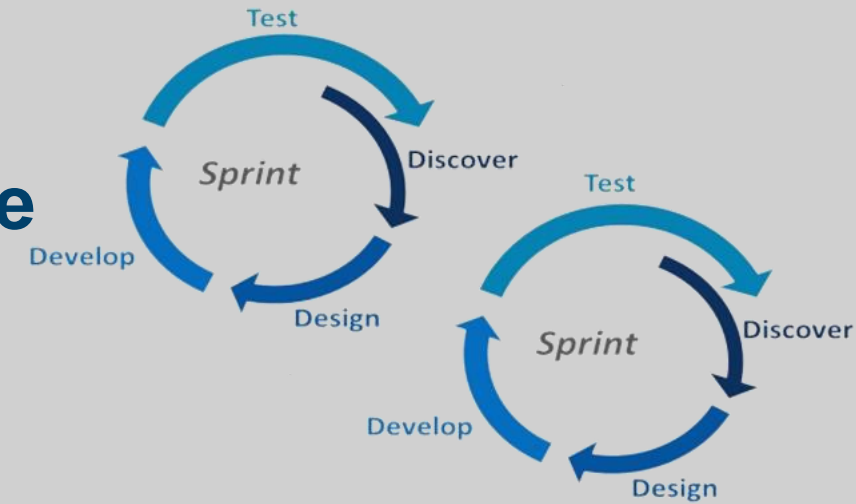
Test and Learn

Also known as
“Experimentation”



2

Agile

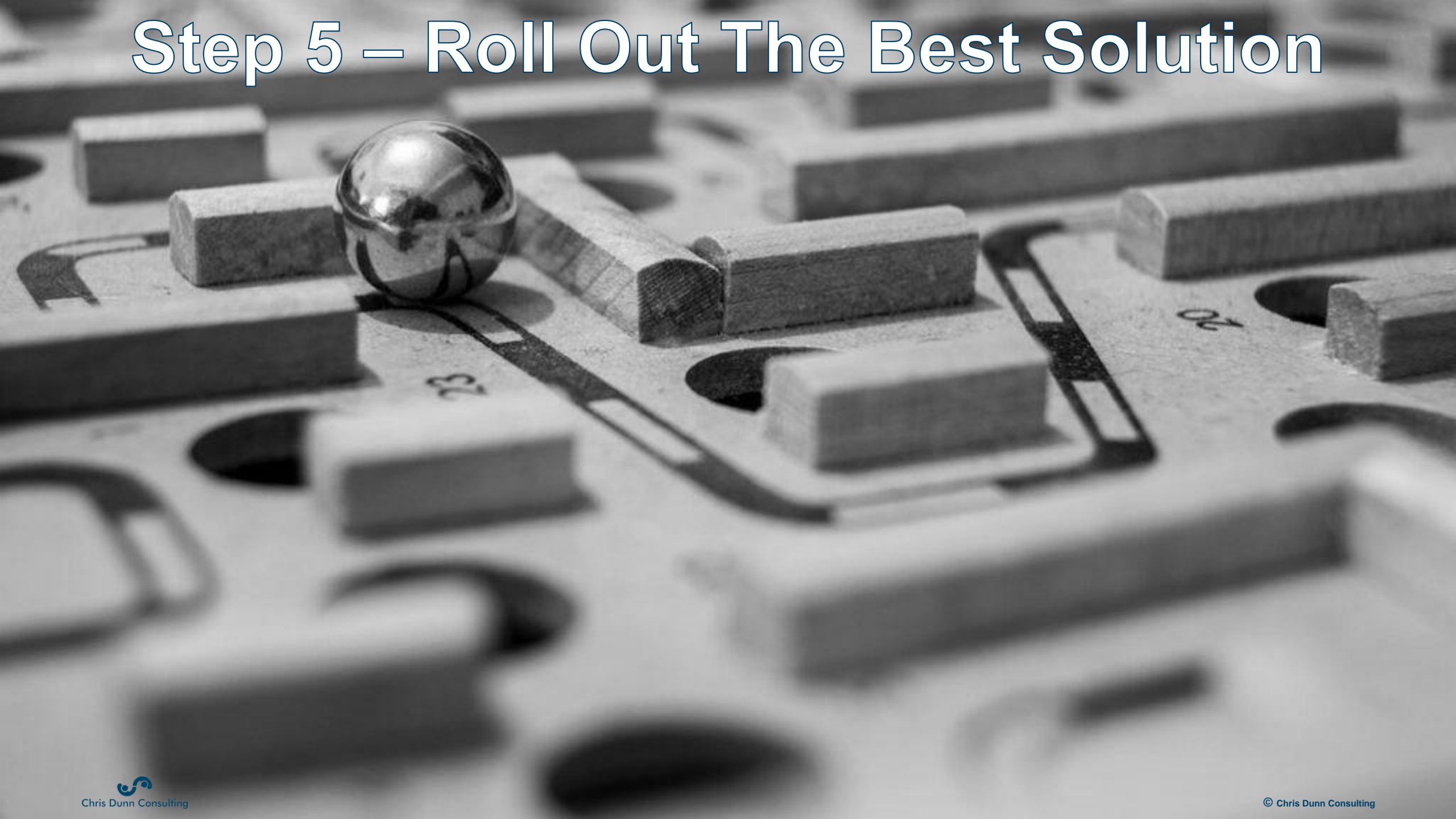


3

Focus Groups



Step 5 – Roll Out The Best Solution



Roll Out The Best Solution



NB: Roll out is likely to involve new challenges compared to testing. These include:



Change management



Resource allocation



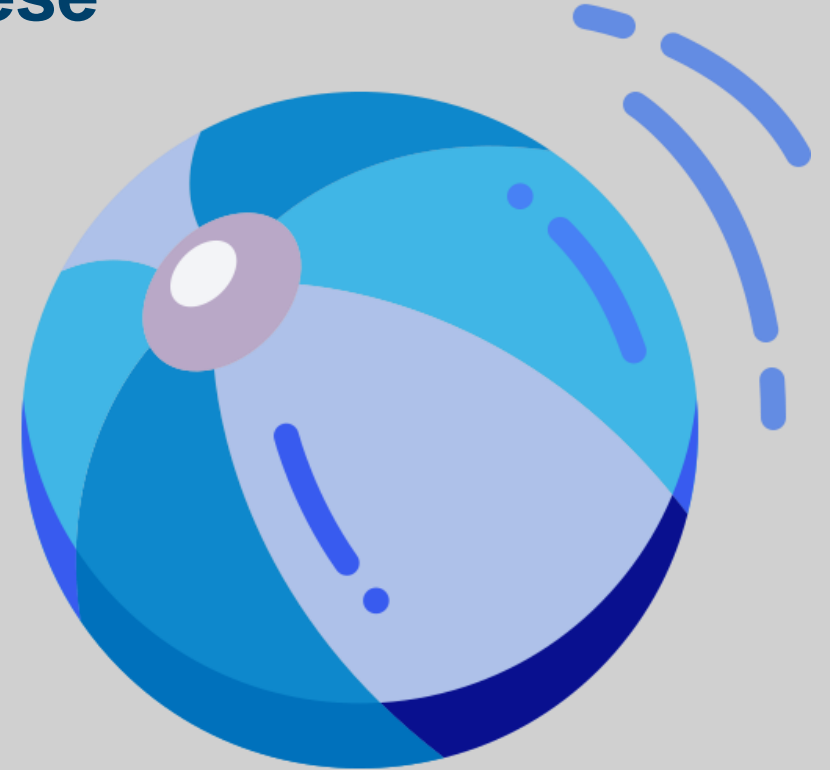
Communication planning



Training



Progress & results monitoring

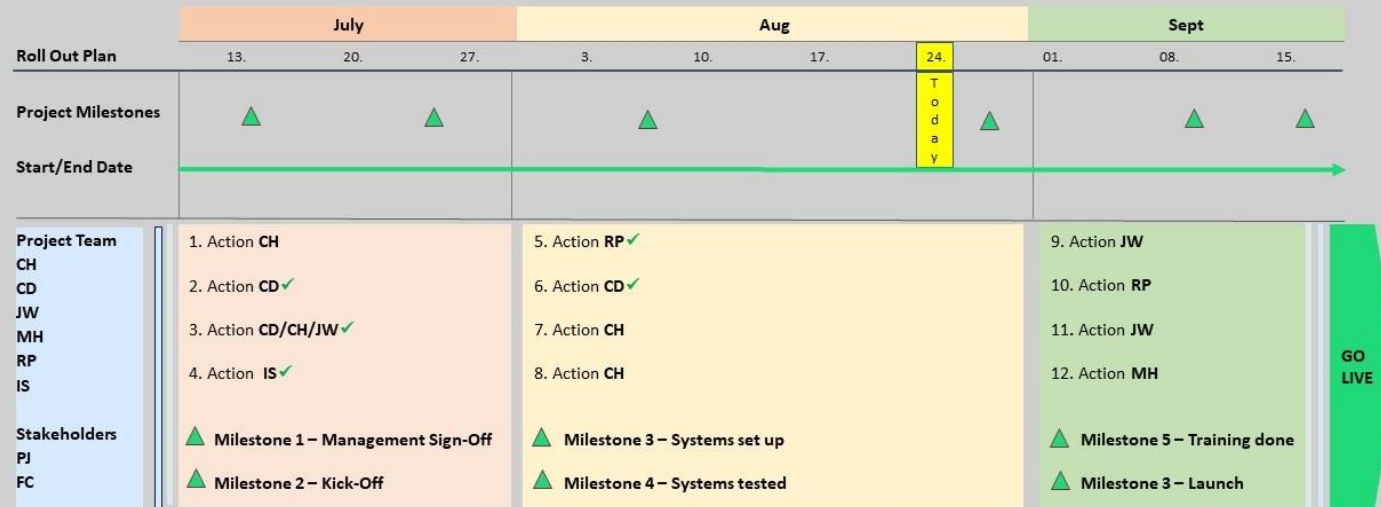


Tools That Help With Solution Roll-Out

1

Implementation Plan

Also known as a
“Milestone Chart”



2

RACI Matrix

	Responsible	Accountable	Consulted	Informed			
Project tasks	Product Owner	Business Analyst	Financial Lead	Design Director	Design Lead	CRM Lead	
1. Research							
Econometric model	C	C	A	I	I	C	
Strategic framework	A	C	C	I	I	C	
2. Define							
Product concept	A	C	I	C	I	C	
User testing	A	C	I	I	I	C	
User journey	A	C	I	I	I	C	
Design framework	C	C	I	R	A	I	
Technology recommendations	C	A	I	I	I	I	
Measurement framework	R	C	A	I	I	C	
Product backlog	A	R	I	C	I	C	
Delivery roadmap	A	R	I	R	C	C	

3

RAG Status

Dimension	RAG Status	Guidelines
Schedule	Green	Schedule is on target.
	Amber	There are likely to be minor delays in the schedule up to 30 days.
	Red	There will be delays of greater than 30 days.
Scope	Green	Scope is in line with agreed business case.
	Amber	There are likely to be minor changes in scope to original business case.
	Red	There will be a significant change in the scope delivered by the project.
Cost	Green	Cost is on target
	Amber	There is likely to be a cost overrun to the originally agreed budget by up to 10% or <£50,000 or and underrun of up to 10% or <£100,000
	Red	There is highly likely there will be a cost overrun to the originally agreed budget by > 10% or <£50,000 and underrun of > 10% or <£100,000
Benefits	Green	Benefits are on target.
	Amber	There is likely to be a reduction in benefits of up to 10% or £50,000
	Red	It is highly likely that there will be a reduction in benefits of >10% or £100,000

Looking for Problem-Solving Help?

Chris Dunn Consulting:

- 💡 **Business Coaching**
- 💡 **Business Change**
- 💡 **Business Development**

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