

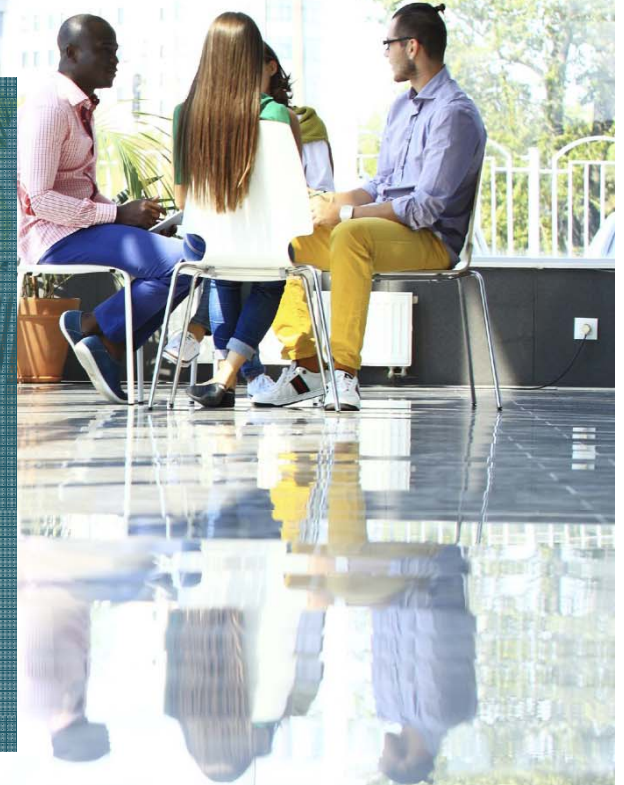


Connected  
Commons



Leadership

High Performers  
Manage The Innovation  
AND The Network  
Simultaneously



# Leading A Cross-Functional Project To Create Services Innovation



Stephan  
Individual Contributor &  
Senior Technical Leader

Led effort that cut across technical support and consulting functions

**“There was historically a divide between the two, little cross-sharing or collaboration.”**

**“How could we maximize our impact? How could we capture our knowledge from one group and apply it to the other?”**

**“It was a very open-ended question. We could take it in any direction.”**

The Result: A new platform for knowledge sharing, integrated tools for servicing clients—and accepted processes and culture for co-creation across functions.

# Seeking And Engaging Diverse Perspectives



## WHO

Internal  
End-Users



Company  
Executives



Technical  
Consultants



Broad Group  
of Engineers



# Seeking And Engaging Diverse Perspectives



## WHO

Internal End-Users



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Broad Group of Engineers



## HOW



Shared Purpose,  
Trust & Energy



Broad Sponsorship

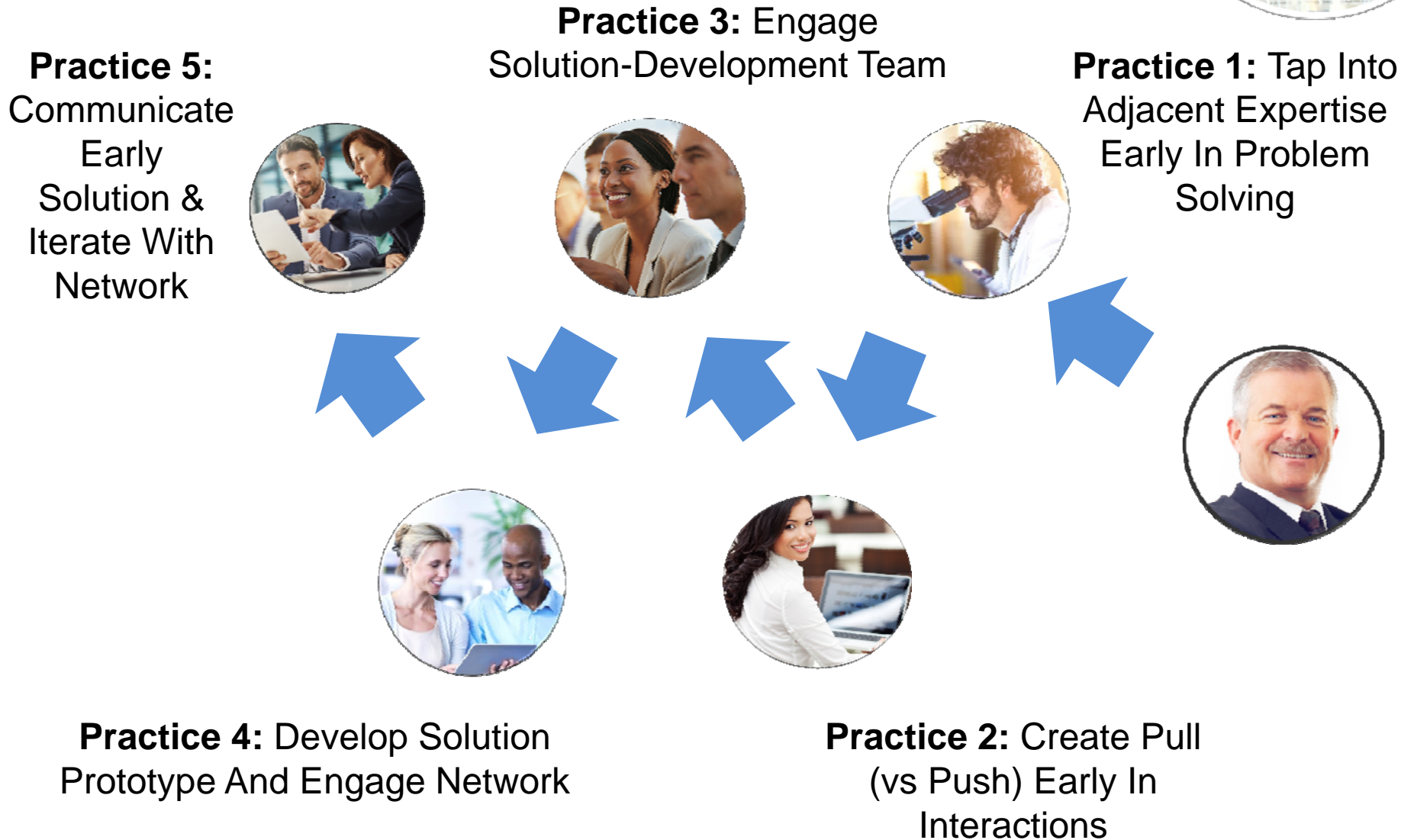


Core Team



Virtual Sessions

# Success Demands Both Product/Service Innovation AND Network Innovation



# Practice 1: Tap Into Adjacent Expertise And A Broad Network Early In Problem Solving



Pick 1 action that seems do-able and would have the most impact for you:

- Commit to making 2 new exploratory contacts every week for one month
- Attend a professional meeting or educational experience only tangentially related to current work in the next quarter
- Be transparent about your projects, interests and goals.
- Walk to your office, to lunch or for coffee a different way as often as possible
- Capitalize on “doorway” moments and stealing 5 minutes of colleagues’ time
- Employ networking tools to explore ideas or to search for contacts that can be rejuvenated for new purposes

## Practice 2: Create Pull (vs Push) Early In Interactions



Pick 1 action that seems do-able and would have the most impact for you:

- Re-balance what you ask for and what you contribute. Give more.
- Ask questions and look for ways to create mutual benefit.
- Be fully present in meetings and 1:1 conversations. Show interest through body language, voice inflection and focus.
- Engage in realistic possibilities that other people care about and create room for them to be a meaningful part of solution or evolving plan.
- Use humor – often at your own expense – to lighten moments and remove any perceived status or politics from interactions.
- Balance pushing toward a goal and welcoming new ideas that improve the project or the process for getting there.

## Practice 3: Identify, Organize and Engage Solution-Development Team



Pick 1 action that is do-able and would have the most impact for you:

- Use leaders and formal talent review processes to identify experts and influencers that should be part of your effort.
- Engage key opinion leaders and naysayers early. They bring needed information and insight to the project and later, as ambassadors, provide legitimacy and boost adoption.
- Create a safe context to freely explore the problem space and suggest alternatives. Put yourself and your ideas out there first.
- Foster team-member ownership early. Diffuse ideation and development among contributors to build pride of ownership.
- Build teams with purpose. Focus on the *why* of the work and identify share values around the work.



## Practice 4: Develop Solution Prototype And Engage Network



Pick 1 action that is do-able and would have the most impact for you:

- Facilitate both divergent thinking and convergent processes. This helps generate ideas *and* to get to a prototype.
- Set up team processes to maximize co-creation with stakeholders. Iterate to refine content and boost commitment as solutions evolve.
- Show prototype early to demonstrate viability and obtain feedback. This also builds trust in your intentions and your competence.
- Leverage network influencers to help communicate prototype to decision-makers. Acceptance is significantly affected by the legitimacy of network influencers.
- Employ a story-based narrative. Data and the business case matter, but rich stories of users' experience and possibility (rather than threat) are often the inflection point in decision-making meetings.

## Practice 5: Communicate Early-Stage Solution And Iterate With Network in Roll Out



Pick 1 action that is do-able and would have the most impact for you:

- Employ broad, inclusive and collaborative communication methods. Engage the network and adjust based on feedback.
- Set norms that support learning and sharing through regular team meetings, communities of practice, speaker series, team communication apps and idea-generation platforms.
- Tap external partners to become an essential part of the extended network. Look to consultants or outside organizations that have gone through something similar.
- Manage stakeholders through structured and regular meetings. Don't wait until launch to hear concerns and perspectives.
- Get influencers to tell stories that echo across the network. This amplifies interest and attracts critical stakeholder support.

## Summary of 5 Practices



### Make Sure to...

- ✓ Bring in a broad network early on
- ✓ Create pull in interactions
- ✓ Energize a solution -development team
- ✓ Develop a prototype to test ideas and engage network
- ✓ Communicate and roll-out in stages: get input, refine, repeat

### Avoid ...

- X Develop in isolation
- X Push your need or agenda as purpose
- X Rely on expected or loudest voices