

WELCOME TO THE:

# GAPSWORK STARTER KIT



# Gapswork starts here

If you could improve just one thing, improve yourself as a problem solver. It's the one improvement that would improve everything else.

This Starter Kit introduces two basic lessons to get you going. **You can learn by reading through the lessons here in the reader or watch the Starter Kit Video.** Or do both to really reinforce your learning. Then there are practice exercises for you to try it yourself.

Gapswork syncs you up to a deep and simple pattern underlying all problems (gaps). It may seem obvious. You already know the pattern intuitively without fully realizing it. Gapswork simply draws it out for you, so you can see and use it.

**Get to the Core of problem solving.  
Solve More. Contribute More.**

If you knew what you do ....  
When you do your natural best ....  
You could do it more often

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**Support your Gapswork.**  
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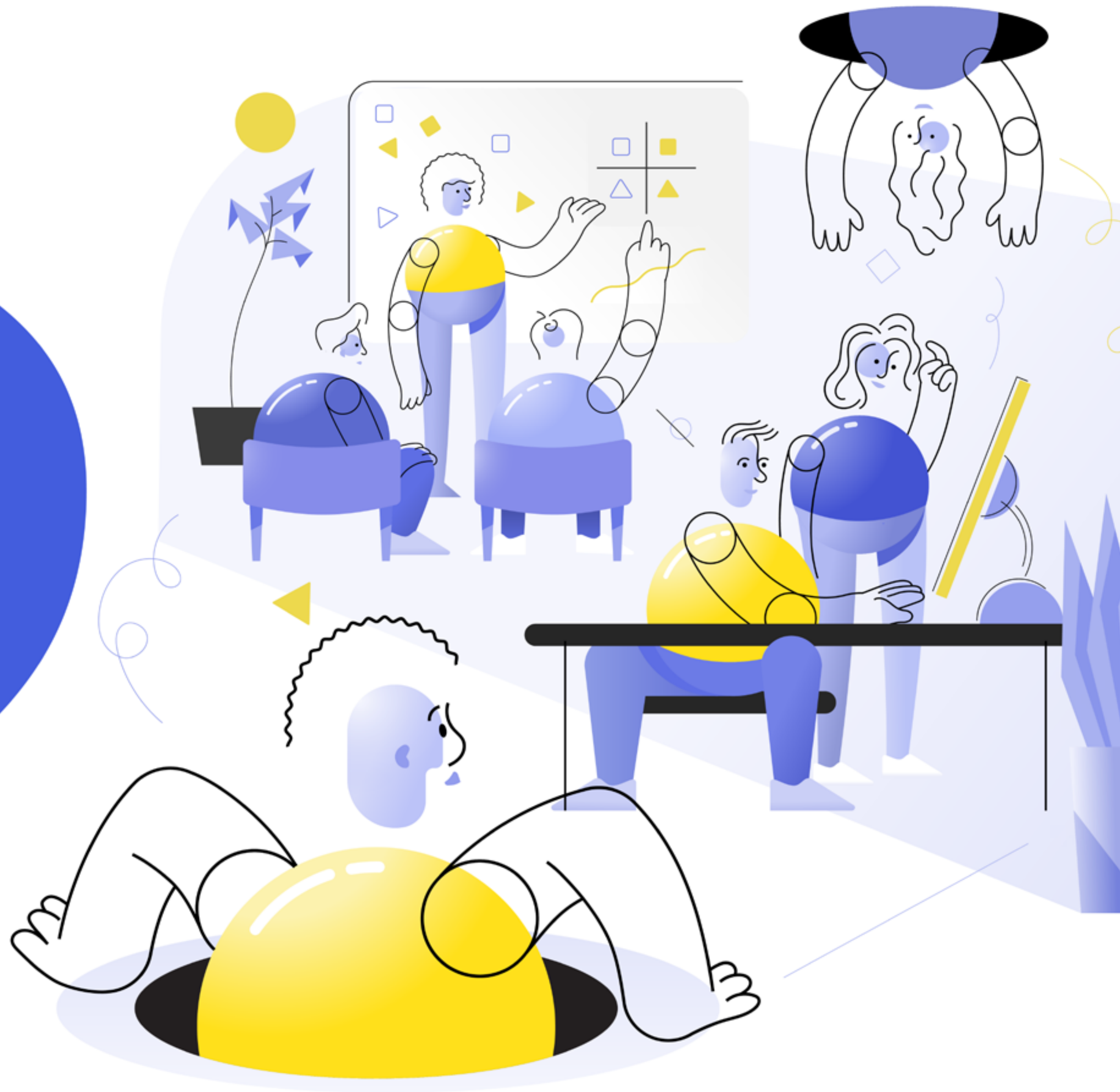
# **Starter Kit Video Lessons**



**PRESS PLAY. TAKE NOTES. CLOSE GAPS.**

**All the lessons from this reader are also here in video format**

# WHY GAPSWORK

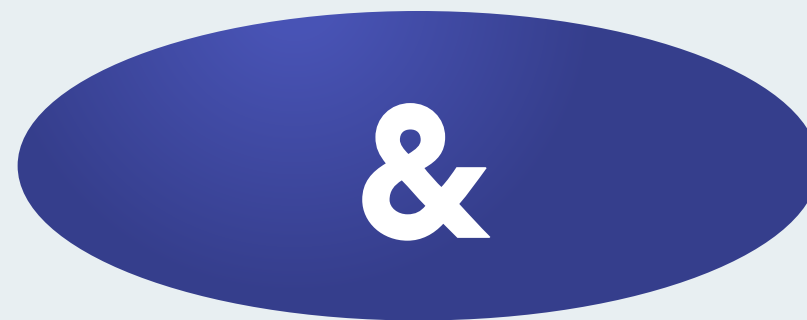




# Life and Work are about Gaps.

**Gaps are spaces between**

**← Existing**



**Better →**

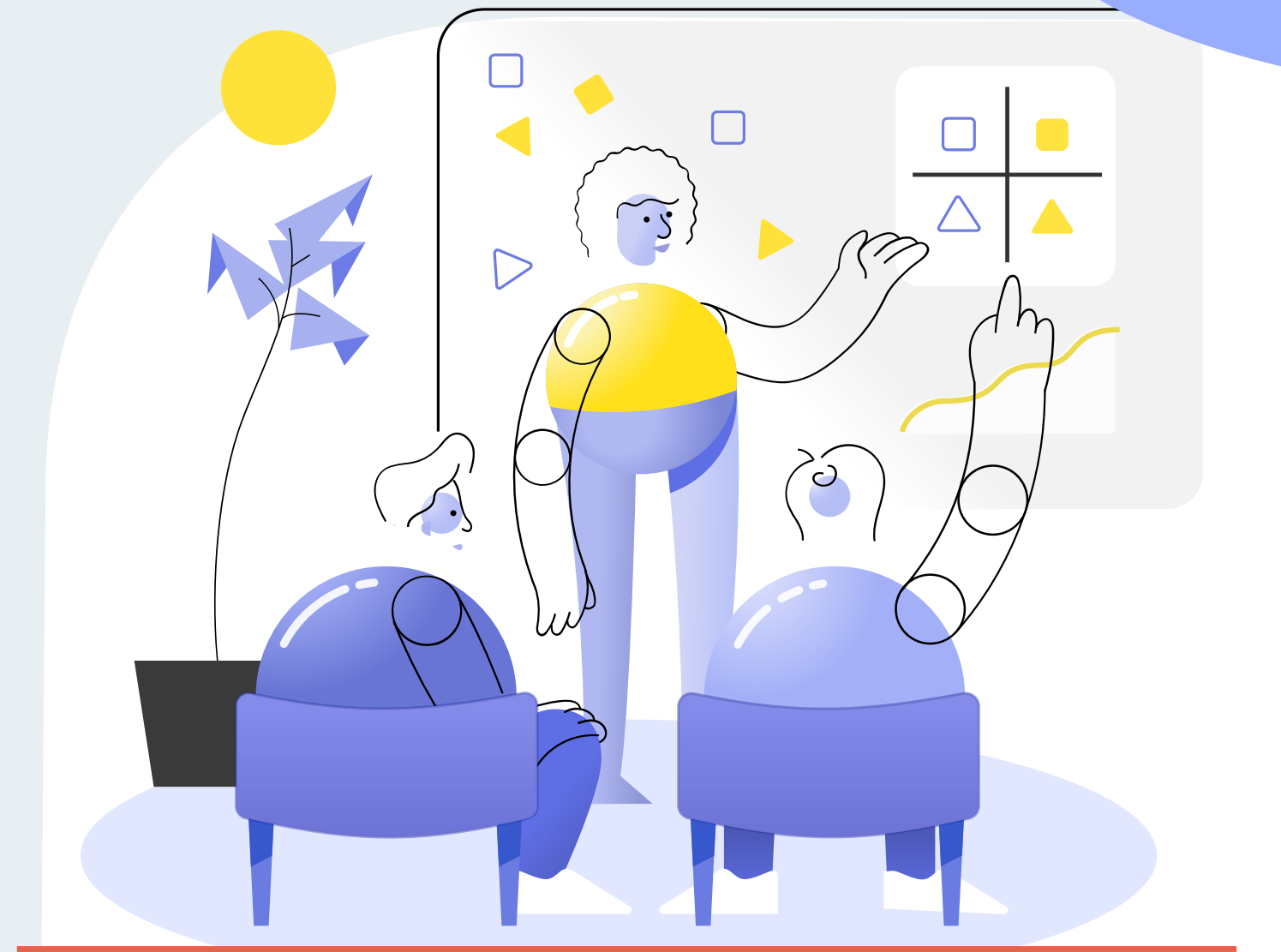
**... from bad to good  
and from good to great.**



# GAPS ARE EVERYWHERE.

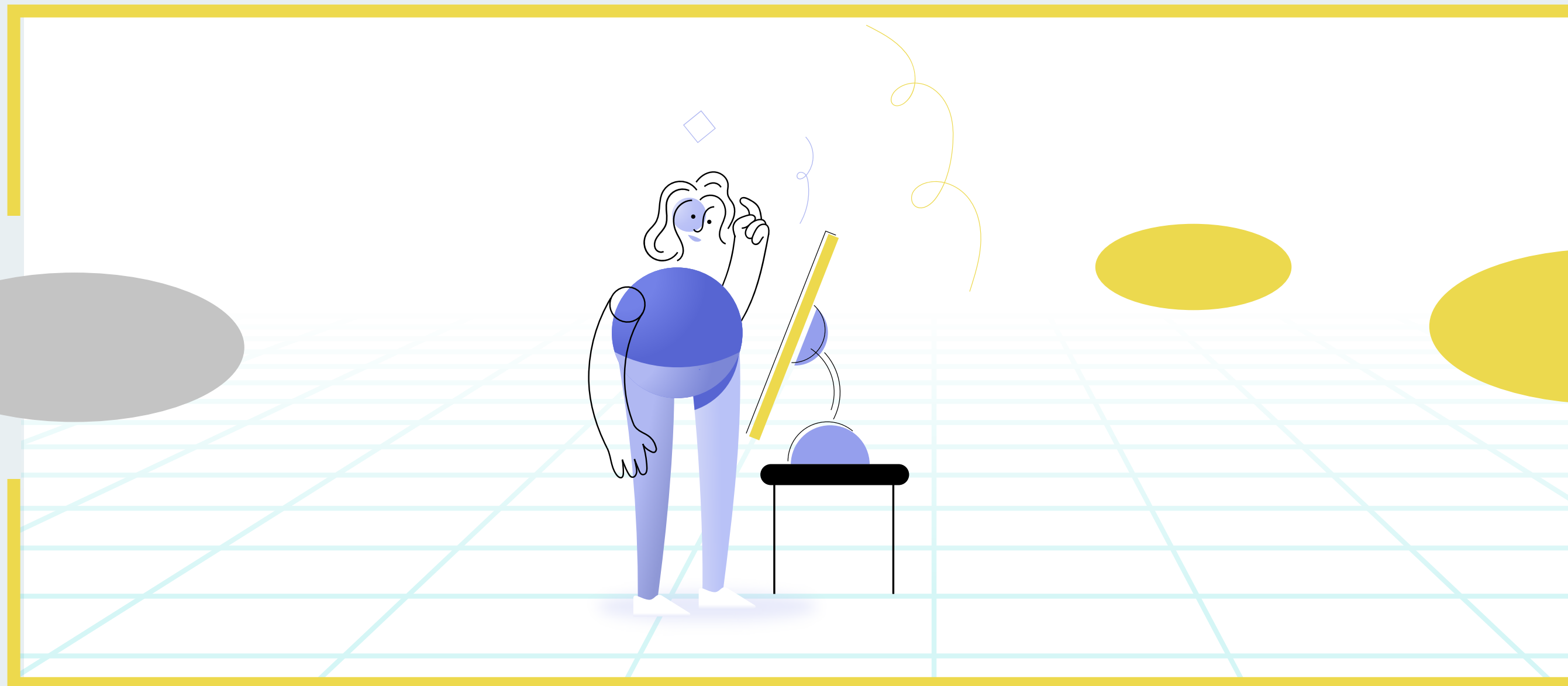
Gaps are whatever should or could be better; that might be results, processes, behaviors, capabilities; that might be in employees, teams, organizations or yourself.

**GAPS**



# YOU CLOSE GAPS.

**GAPS COME IN.  
SOLUTIONS COME OUT.  
THAT'S YOU IN THE MIDDLE.**



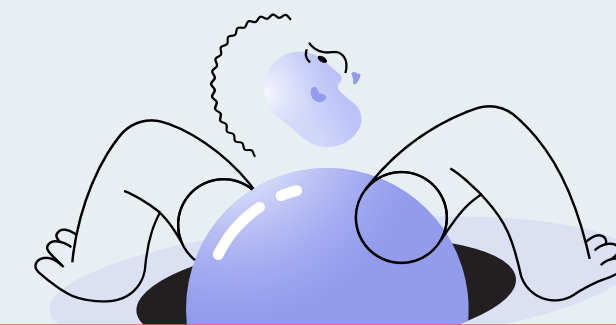
## **YOUR WORK IS GAPSWORK**

You fix and prevent problems. You make improvements and changes.  
You think and talk about gaps all day long. You're probably pretty good at it.  
Hundreds of times a day, you solve gaps just by intuitive, quick thinking.





# GAPS ARE COMING BIGGER. TOUGHER. FASTER.



**It's getting harder.** Too often lately, quick thinking doesn't cut it, doesn't produce solutions you feel proud of. You're having to take time, slow down more, to think things through.



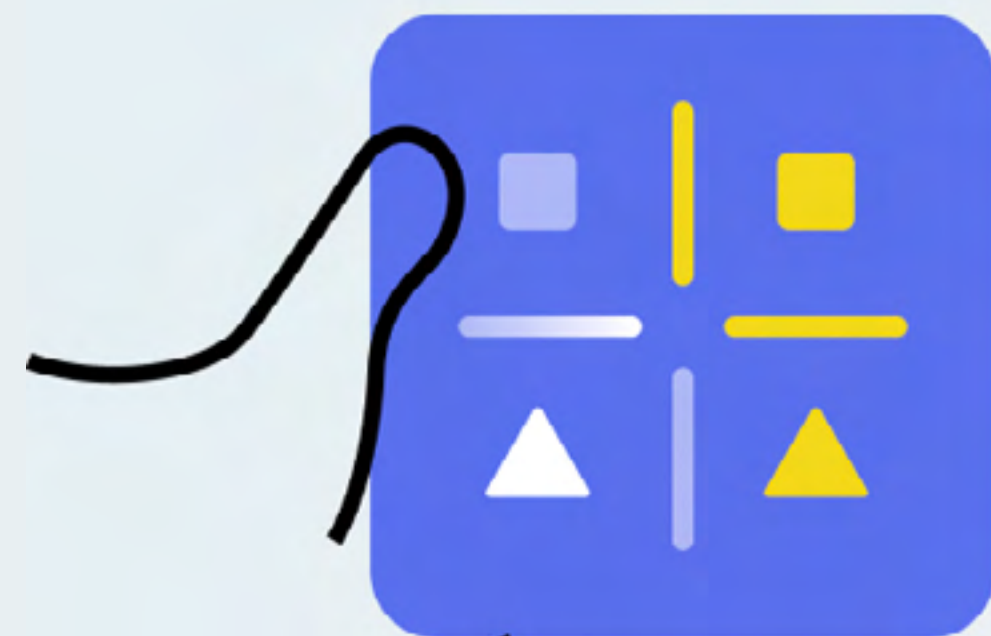
# Gapswork makes it easier.

Gapswork gives you one core map  
and a playbook of ways to run through it.



When you use Gapswork, you strengthen as a problem solver. You can keep up with faster gaps and take on bigger, tougher gaps. **You can solve more.**

# The Gaps Diagram:

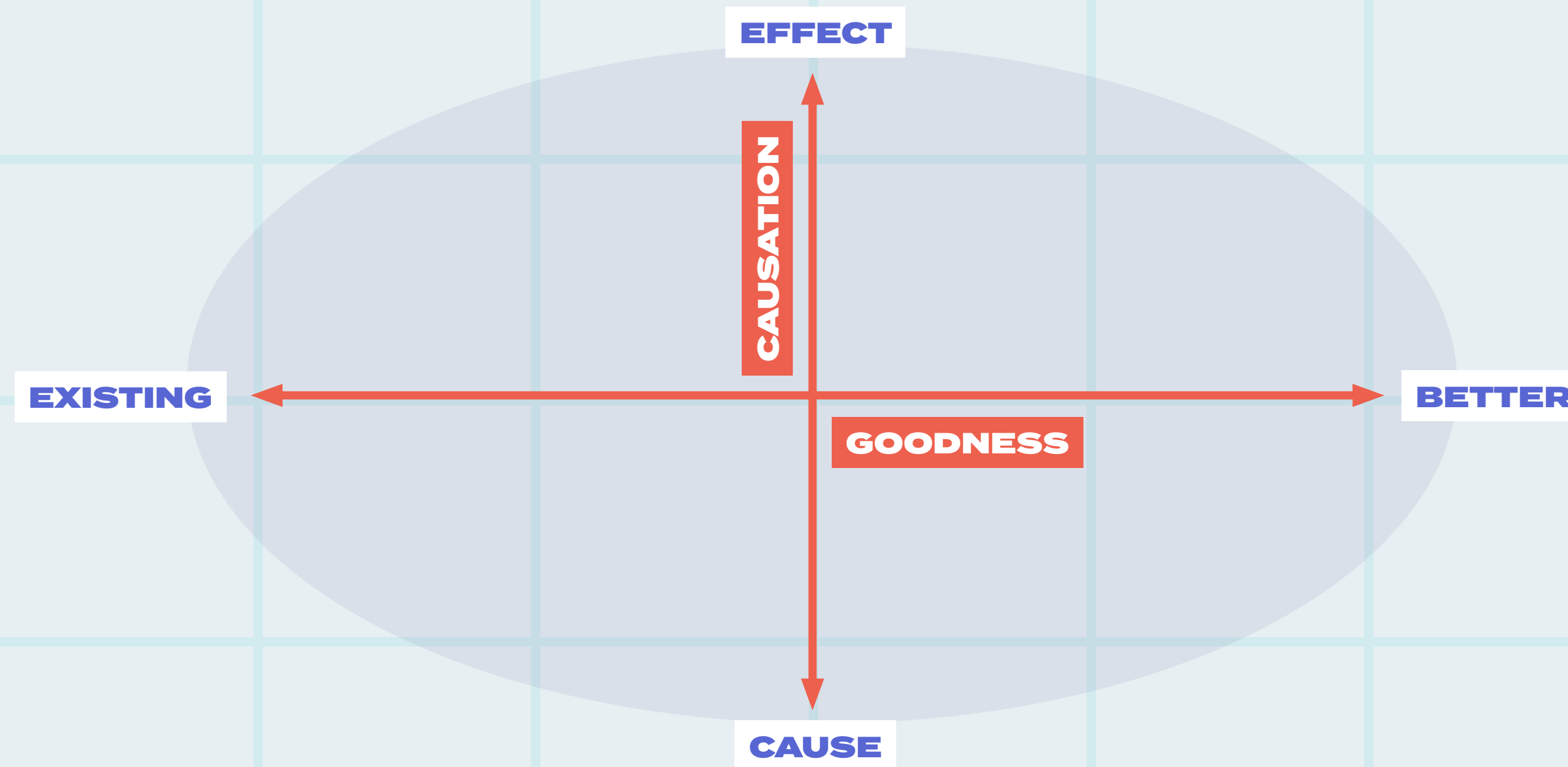


**A Core Map.**



# The Core Map

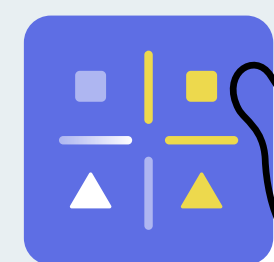
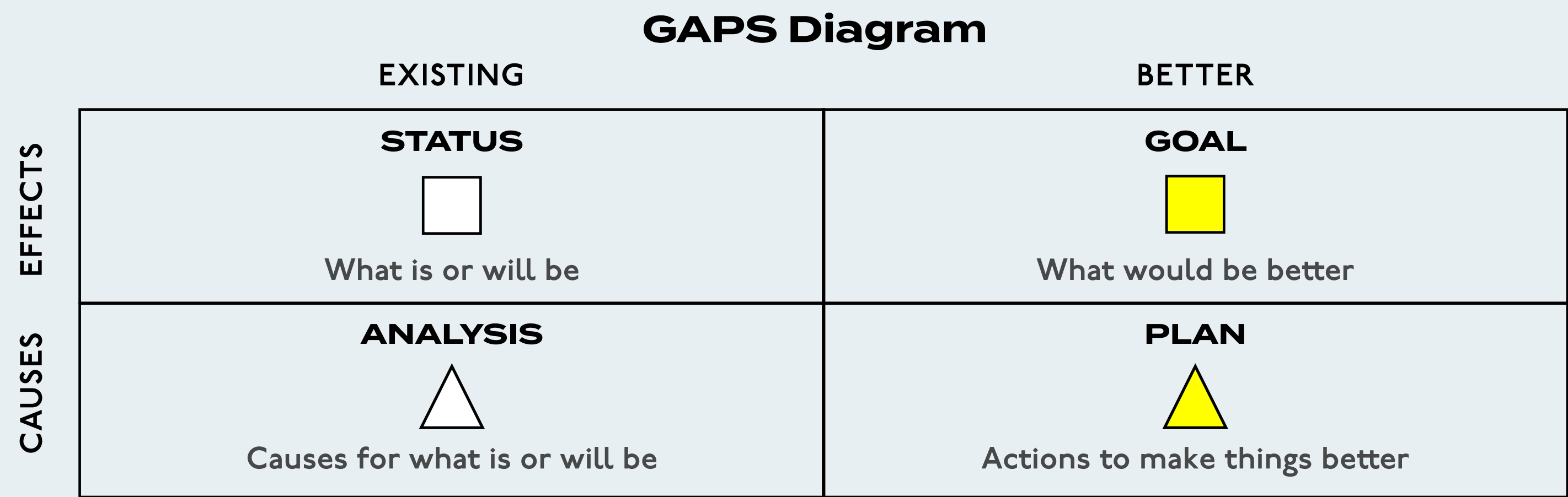
**A gap is the space between Existing and Better.  
Inside the space is a deep and simple underlying pattern.**



All thoughts about any Gap can be mapped on to two axes.  
A **Goodness** axis categorizes thoughts as **Existing** versus **Better**.  
A **Causation** axis categorizes thoughts as **Causes** versus **Effects**.  
That makes spaces for four types of thoughts.

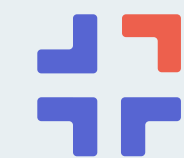
# The Gaps Diagram syncs your mind to the core map.

It draws out the core map so you can see and use it. It organizes and displays thoughts in four boxes and gives them symbols and labels.



“Effects” are symbolized as squares and “Causes” as triangles.

Symbols for **Existing** are colored white and for **Better** are colored gold.



# You're seconds away from a Gaps Diagram anytime, anywhere.

**With two swipes and four labels** you can clearly see any gap and get started solving more.  
Use it by yourself, in a group, on paper, on whiteboard, onscreen or in your mind's eye.





# THE GAPS DIAGRAM SETS YOU UP FOR SOLVING.

The Gaps Diagram helps you map your thoughts, think problems through, makes hard things easier.

From the Core Map springs a Playbook of natural best ways to think and talk about Gaps. With two swipes and four labels you are ready for the first Play.

## One Core Map



## One Core Playbook



# The First Play:



**FORMING**



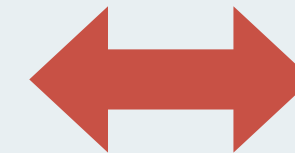
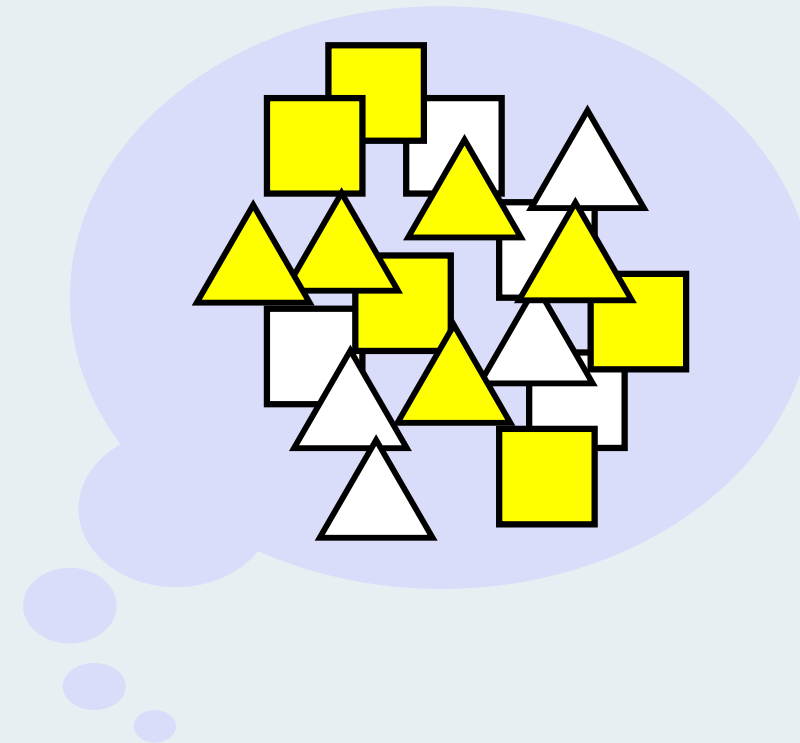
## FORMING

**The Gaps Diagram gives Form to your thoughts.**

When gaps get harder, quick, intuitive thinking won't do it. Thoughts may be obscured in your subconscious. Thoughts may be streaming in your consciousness. You feel the need to gather your thoughts. it's time for the Forming Play.

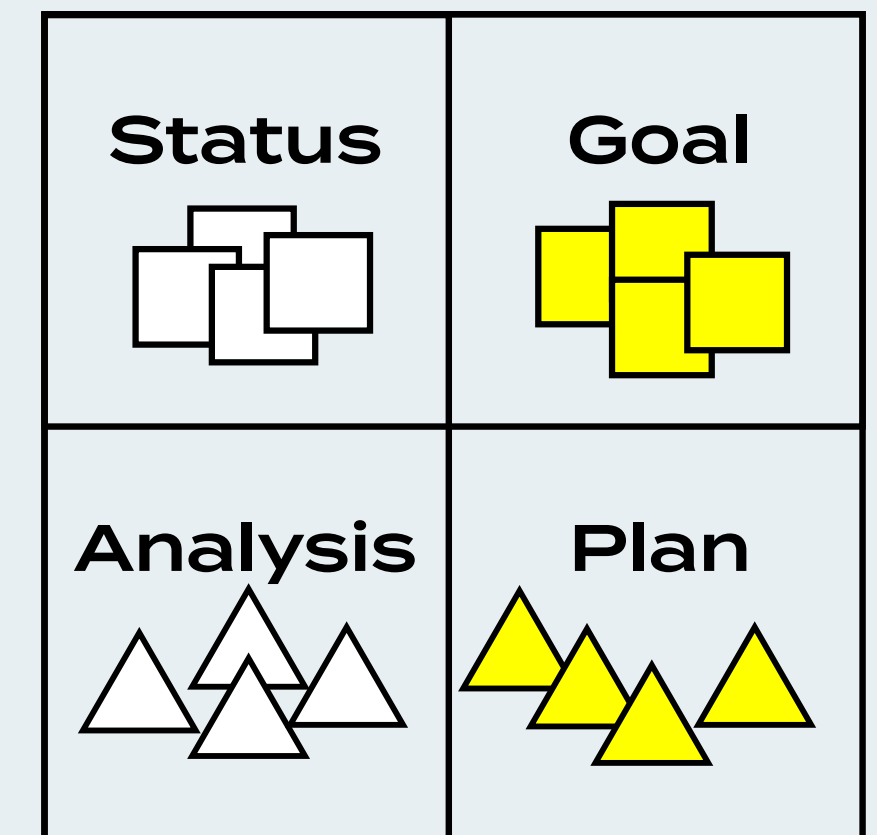
**FOGGY**

**Thoughts.**



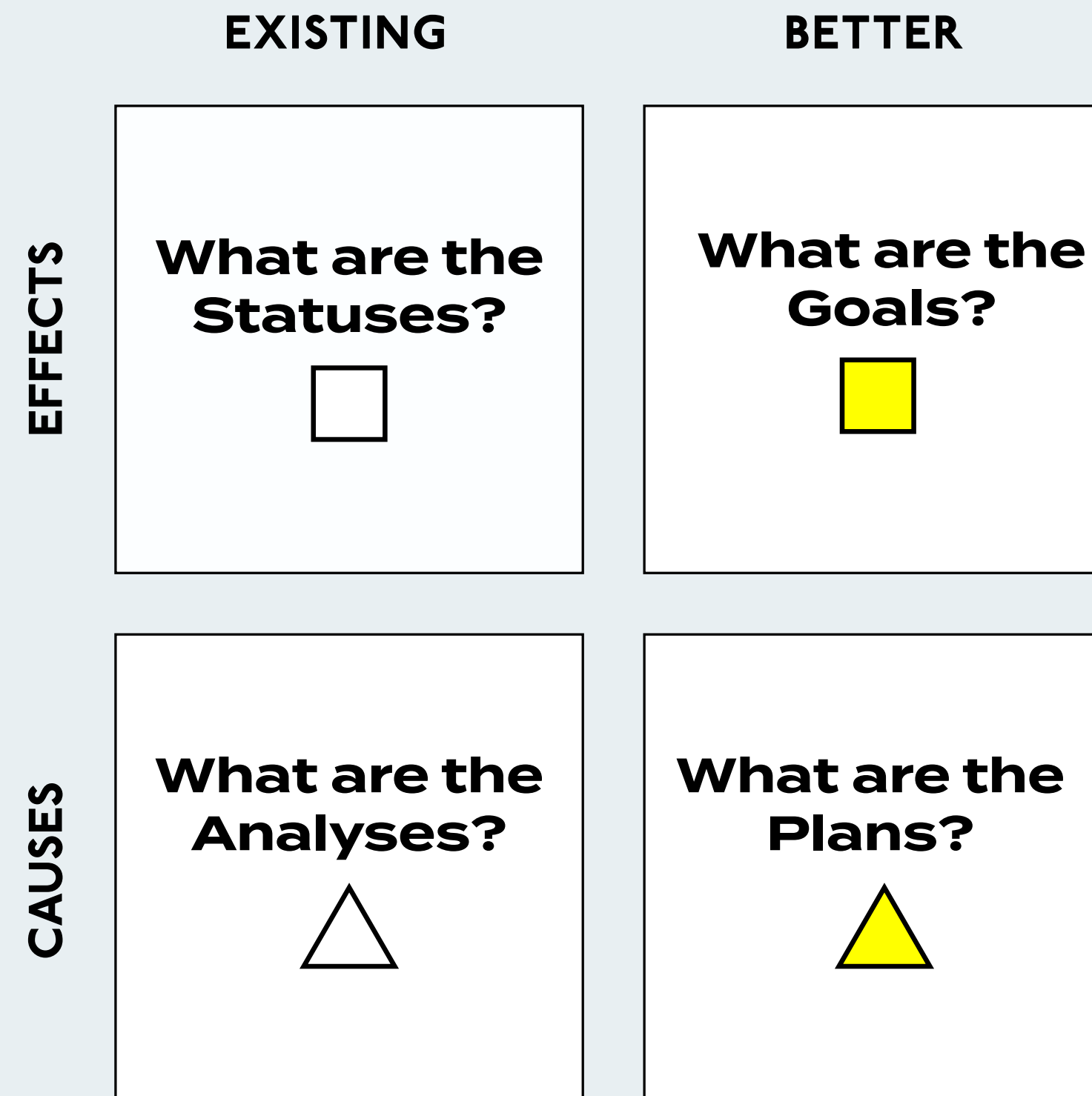
**FORMED**

**Boxes**



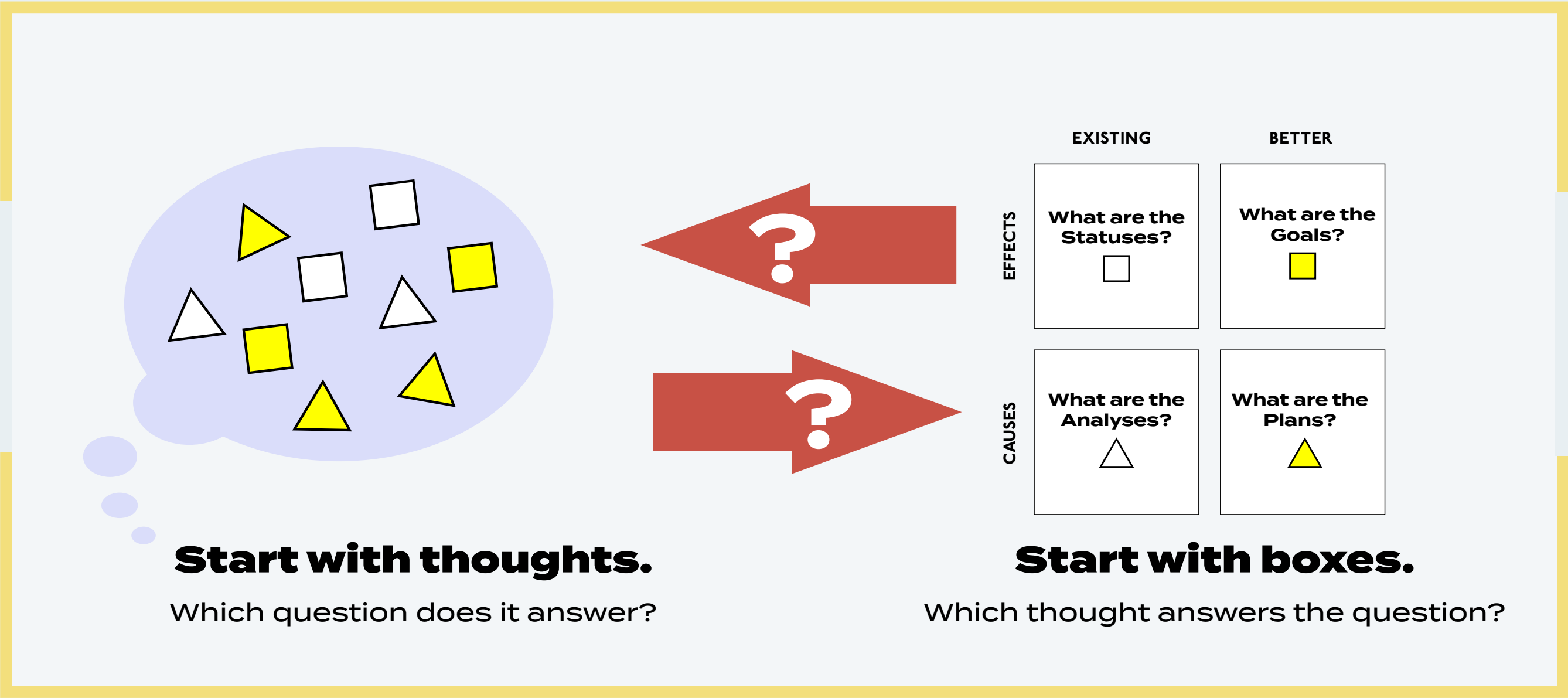
# The Forming Play uses four natural questions.

One question for each box to draw out and sort out thoughts for placement on the Diagram. That brings order to your thinking.



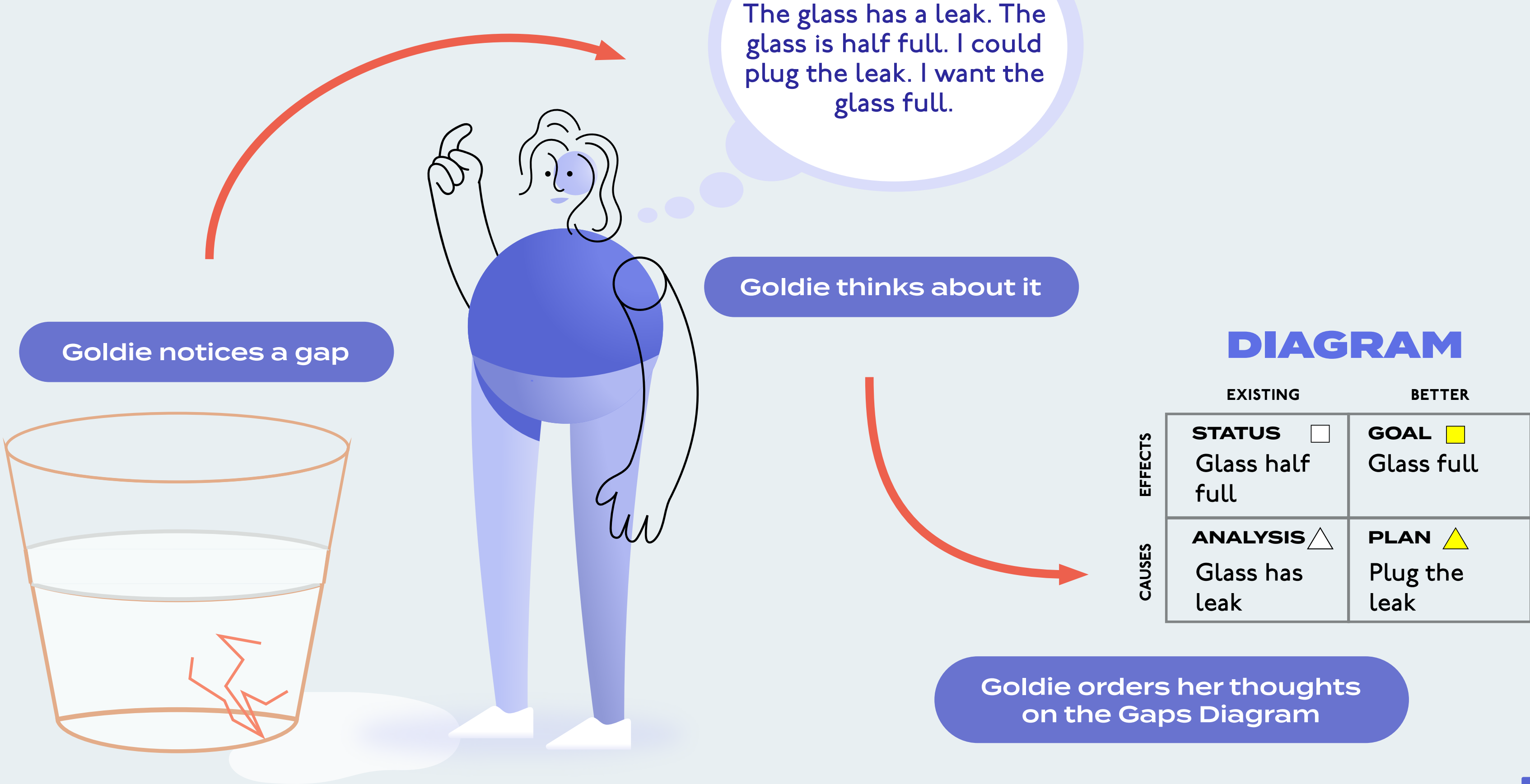
# Use the Forming Play to match thoughts to boxes

You can start with loose thoughts or start with empty boxes, even go back and forth.



# Let's see an example. Here's a simple one.

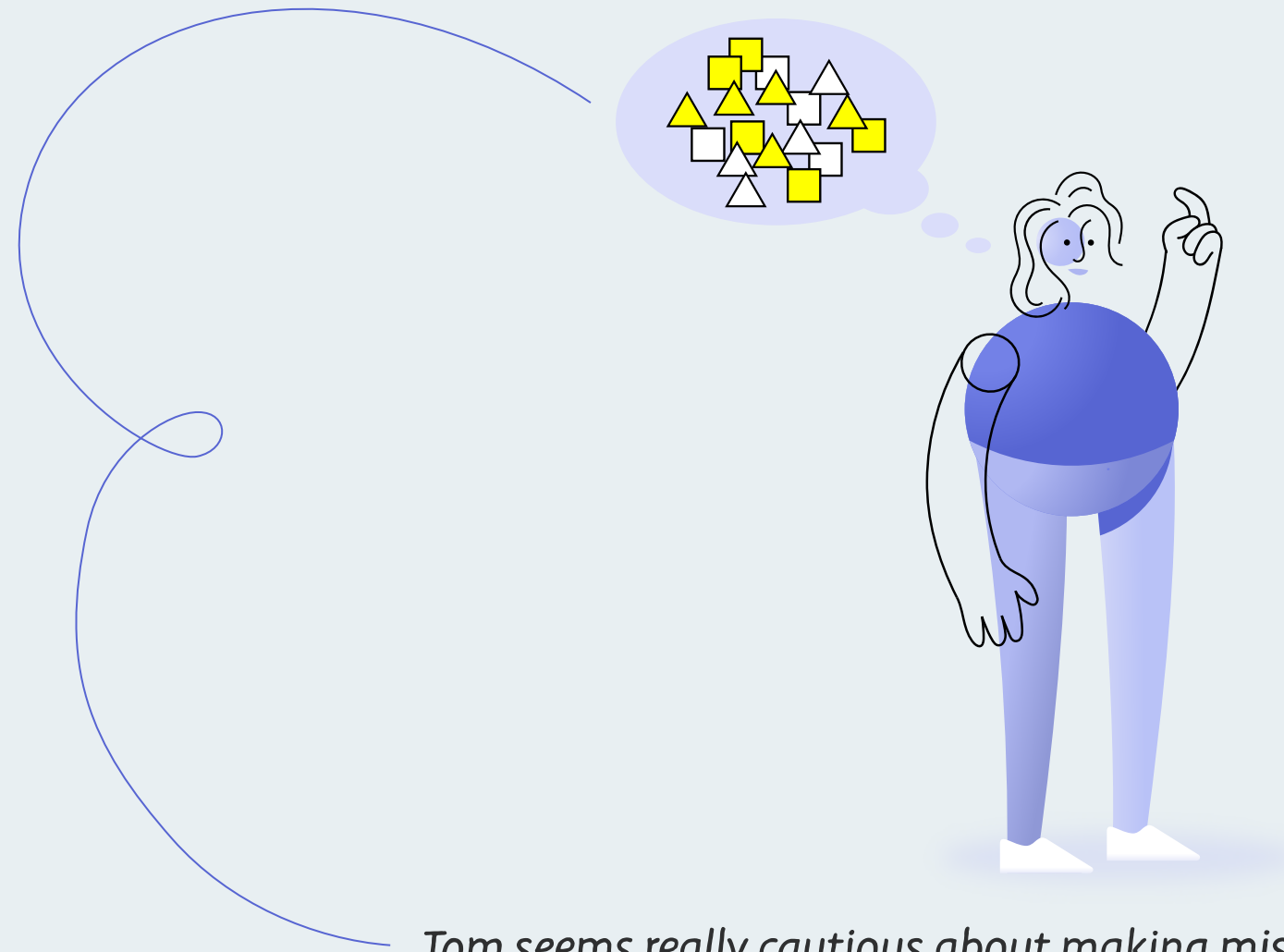
Meet Goldie! She's a manager just like you.  
Watch her give Form to her thoughts.





# Let's see a real work example.

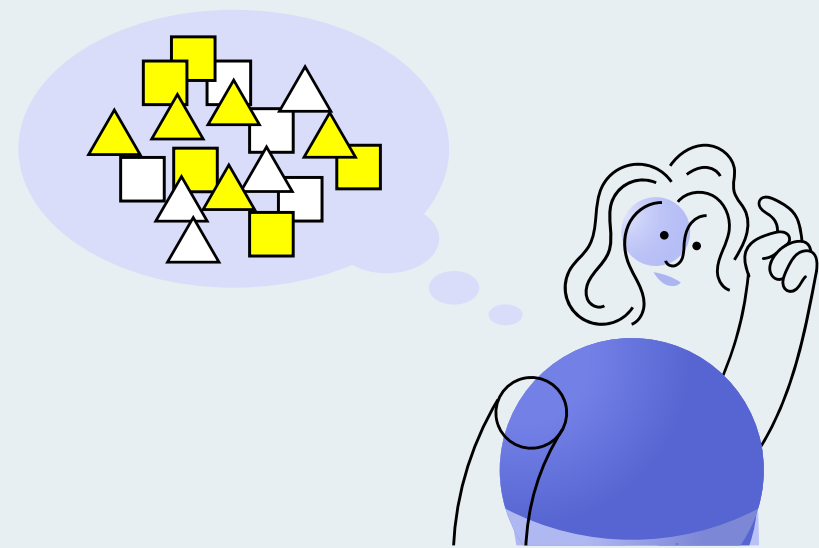
Let's take a harder example (Goldie could have done the last one in her head.) Goldie wants to address a gap with her employee Tom. Before she does this though, she tunes into her **stream of consciousness**. There are a lot of thoughts swirling around her mind...



*Tom seems really cautious about making mistakes. He works hard and wants to do the right thing, but when problems come up in his work, he brings them to me. It's costing me time. I get that there are a lot of unusual situations to figure out. It's tricky. He could take more risks. Mistakes aren't the end of the world. Maybe I should close my door. He should solve things on his own. Sometimes he has some beginning ideas. But I often find his thinking hard to follow. I want him to at least bring me possible solutions. Maybe he needs to learn some problem-solving skills.*

# Goldie slows down.

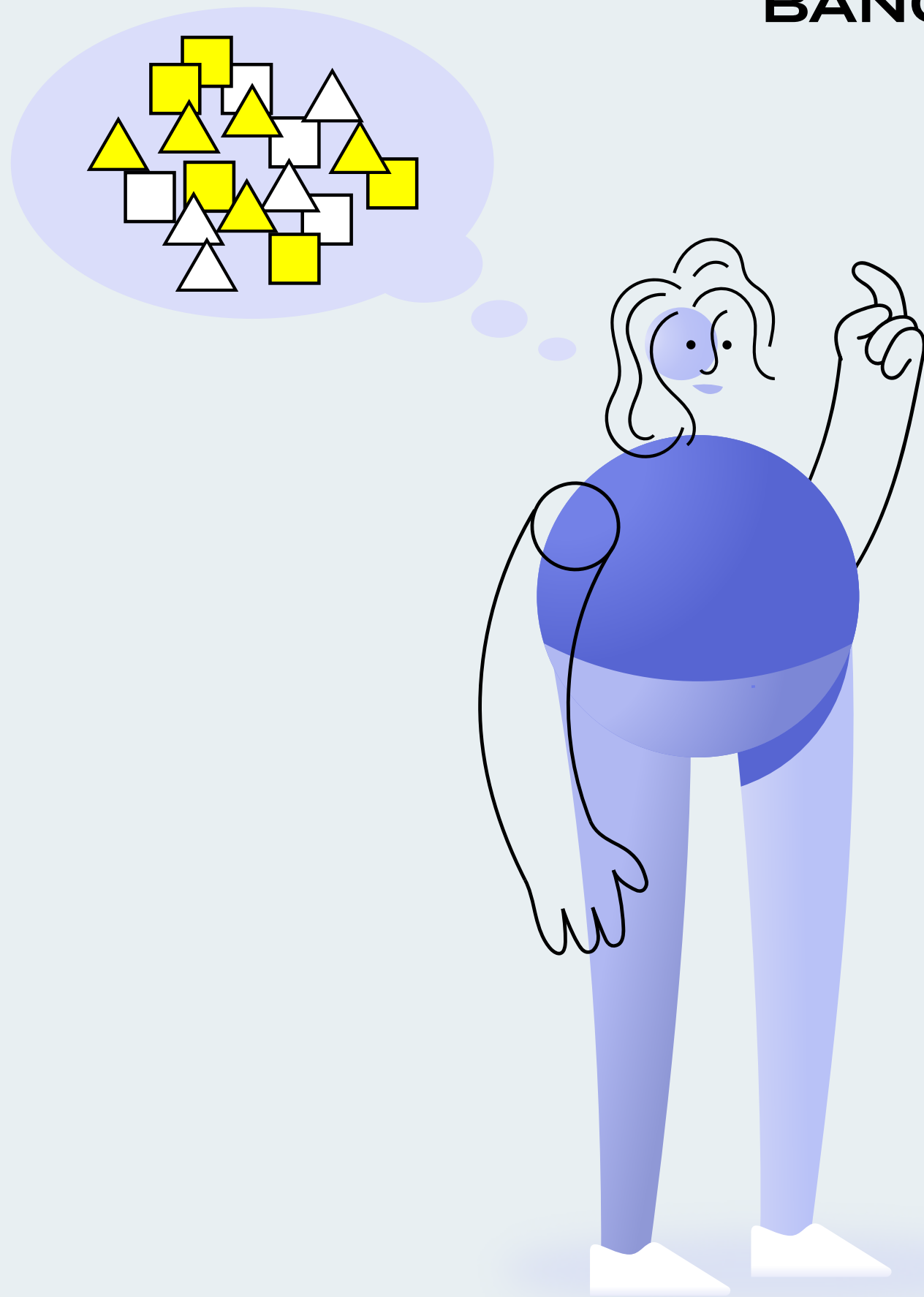
She considers her thoughts one by one.  
Which Box of the Gaps Diagram does each thought go in?  
Which Forming Question does each thought best answer?



LIST OF THOUGHTS	Goal Better Effect	Analysis Existing Cause	Plan Better Cause	Status Existing Effect
1 He seems really cautious about mistakes		●		
2 Tom works hard		●		
3 Tom wants to do the right thing		●		
4 He brings problems to me				●
5 It's costing me time				●
6 Lot of unusual situations to figure out, it's tricky		●		
7 He could take more risks.			●	
8 Mistakes aren't the end of the world.		●		
9 I should just close my door.			●	
10 He should solve things on his own	●			
11 His thinking hard to follow		●		
12 Should bring me possible solutions	●			
13 He needs to learn some problem-solving skills			●	

# Goldie forms a Gaps Diagram.

Goldie enters key words into the diagram boxes and  
**BANG!** The gap becomes crystal clear.



## **STATUS**

Brings problems to me  
It's costing me time

## **GOAL**

Solve problems on own  
Bring possible solutions

## **ANALYSIS**

< cautious about mistakes  
> works hard  
> wants to do right thing  
< lots o unusual situations  
> mistakes not the end  
of world  
< thinking is hard to follow

## **PLAN**

Tom take more risks,  
Close my door  
Tom learn problem-solving

# Compare foggy to formed.



*Tom seems really cautious about making mistakes. He works hard and wants to do the right thing, but when problems come up in his work, he brings them to me. It's costing me time. I get that there are a lot of unusual situations to figure out. It's tricky. He could take more risks. Mistakes aren't the end of the world. Maybe I should close my door. He should solve things on his own. Sometimes he has some beginning ideas. But I often find his thinking hard to follow. I want him to at least bring me possible solutions. Maybe he needs to learn some problem-solving skills.*



## STATUS

Brings problems to me  
It's costing me time

## GOAL

Solve problems on own  
Bring possible solutions

## ANALYSIS

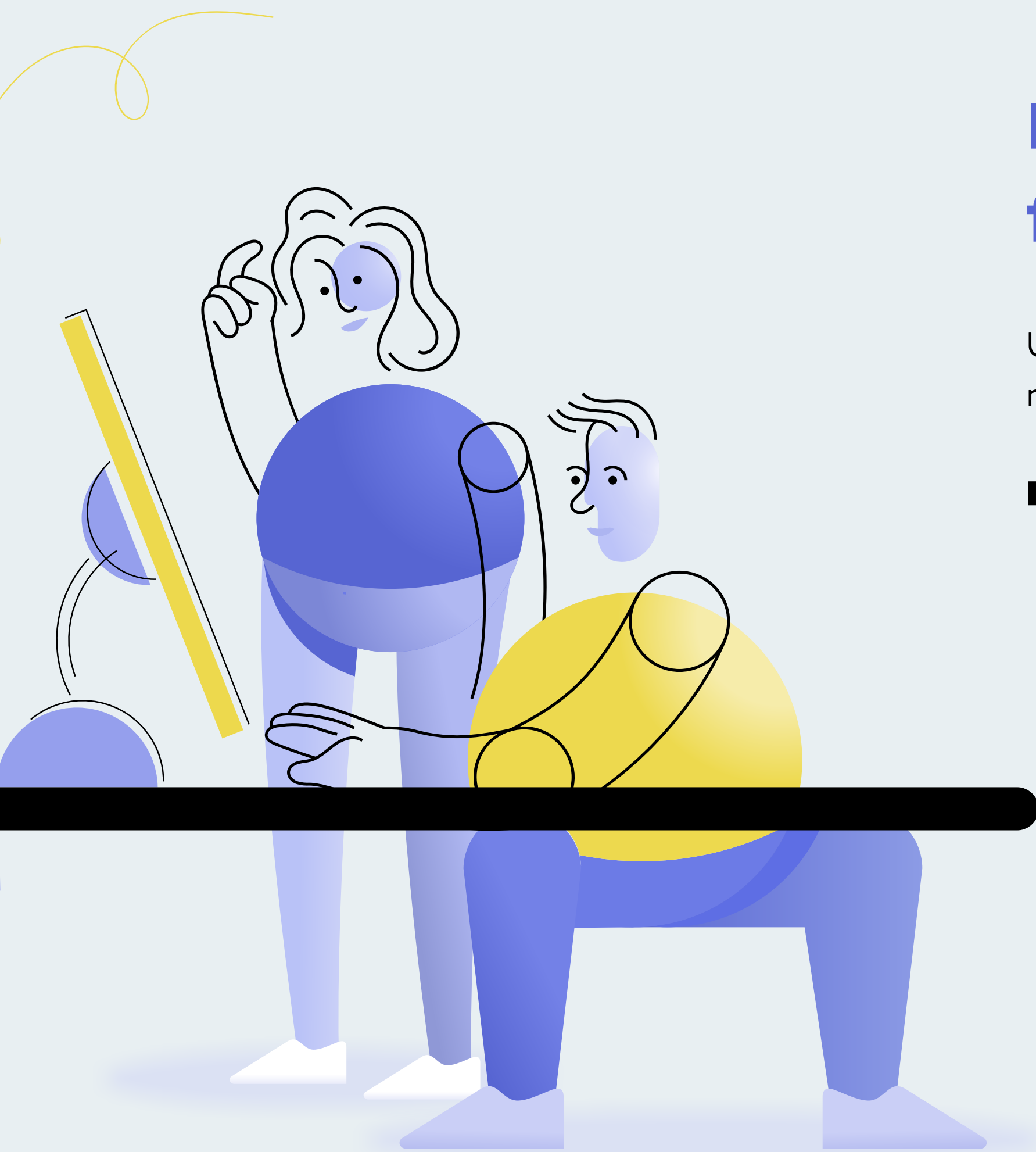
- < cautious about mistakes
- > works hard
- > wants to do right thing
- < lots o unusual situations
- > mistakes not the end of world
- < thinking is hard to follow

## PLAN

Tom take more risks,  
Close my door  
Tom learn problem-solving

**Goldie can think better.** She can see her thinking; see what thoughts make sense together; see what's missing and build on her thoughts. She concludes that her problem is well defined, but her Plan needs more work.

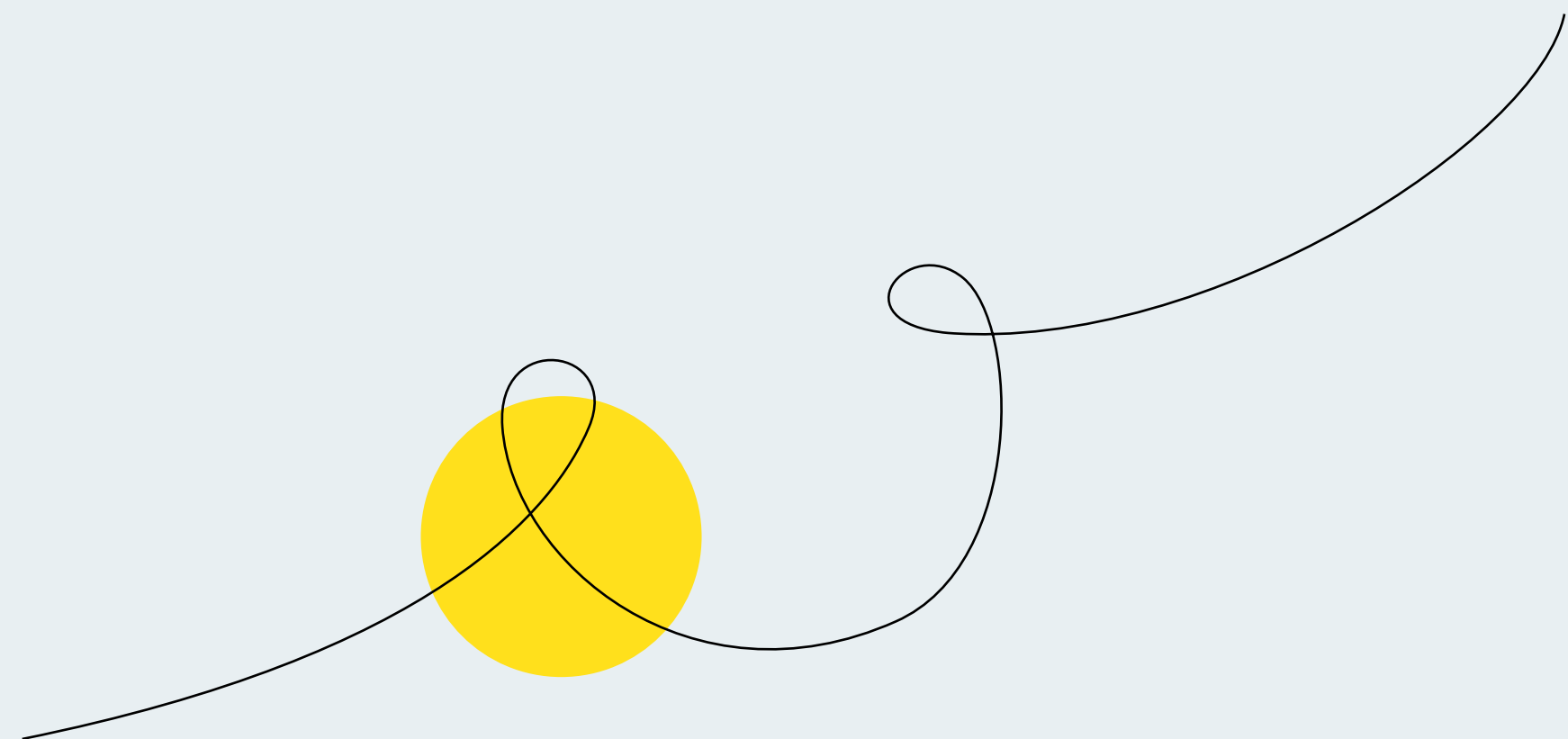
**Goldie can speak better.** Imagine two scenarios: in one she talks to Tom using her stream of consciousness; in the other she talks from her Diagram. Gapswork makes Goldie feel more confident and calmer and makes it easier for Tom to understand, consider and respond.



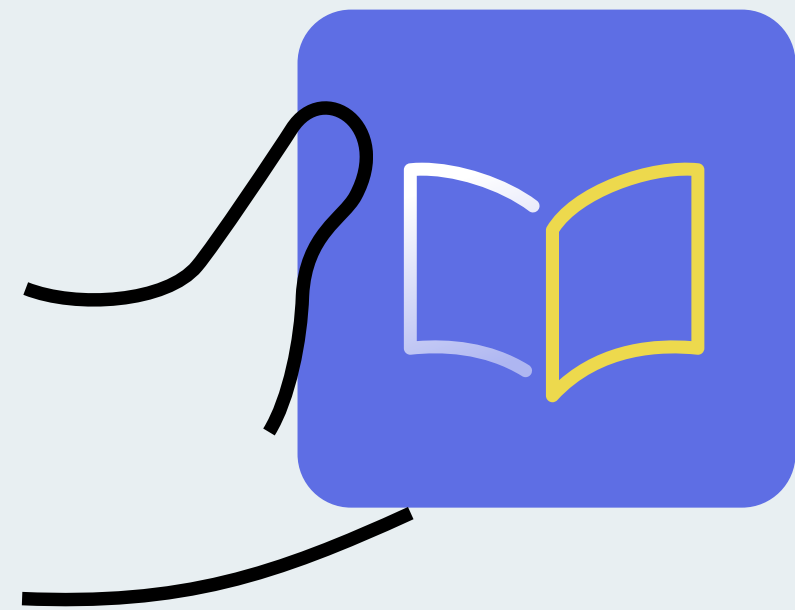
# Forming advances your gap from foggy to formed.

Use the Gaps Diagram and Four Questions. It's that simple. Just this much may get you to a solution or get you set up for further solving.

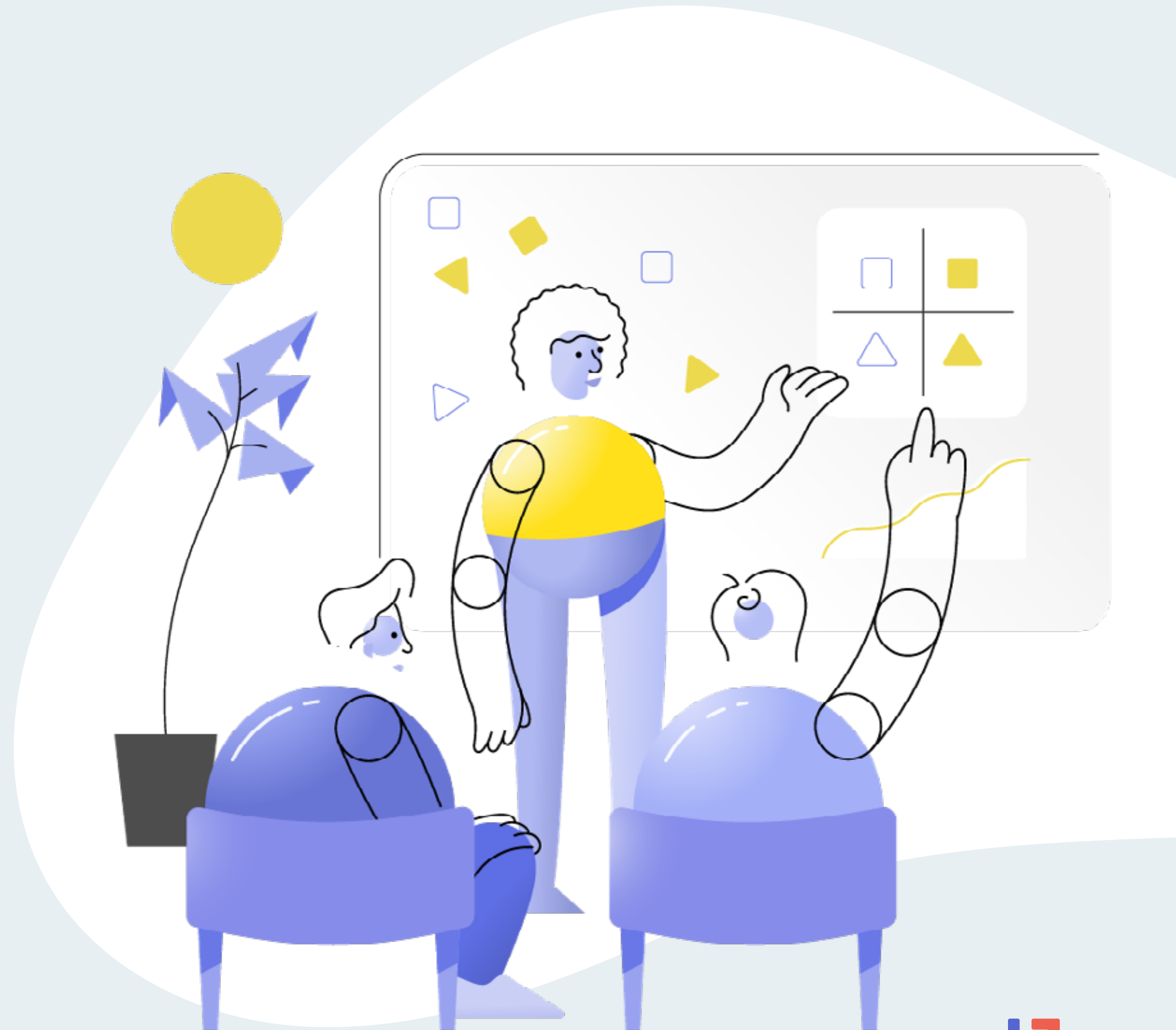
**Forming pays off.**



Now You  
Try It



**Practice  
Exercises**

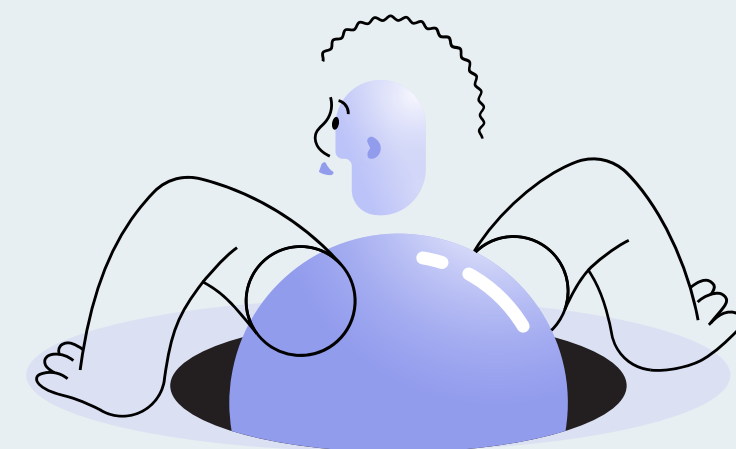




## Exercise 1 Gaps List

Name a few gaps you are working on. Just name them in a few words, like a title. Include a variety, one about your department or organization, one about coworkers (boss, employee, colleague), one about your own performance. Include something bad to fix and something already good to stretch.

GAPS	
	Ex. My employee talks too much
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	



## Exercise 2 List Thoughts

Pick one gap from your list, something interesting, hard to solve, possibly confusing. List 10 thoughts about the gap, in any order, whatever is swirling in your mind.

The Gap \_\_\_\_\_

LIST OF THOUGHTS	G-A-P-S
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	

Now fill out the diagram on the next page and see how much clearer your gap has become.

GAPS DIAGRAM PRINT-OUT

EXISTING

BETTER

EFFECTS

STATUS

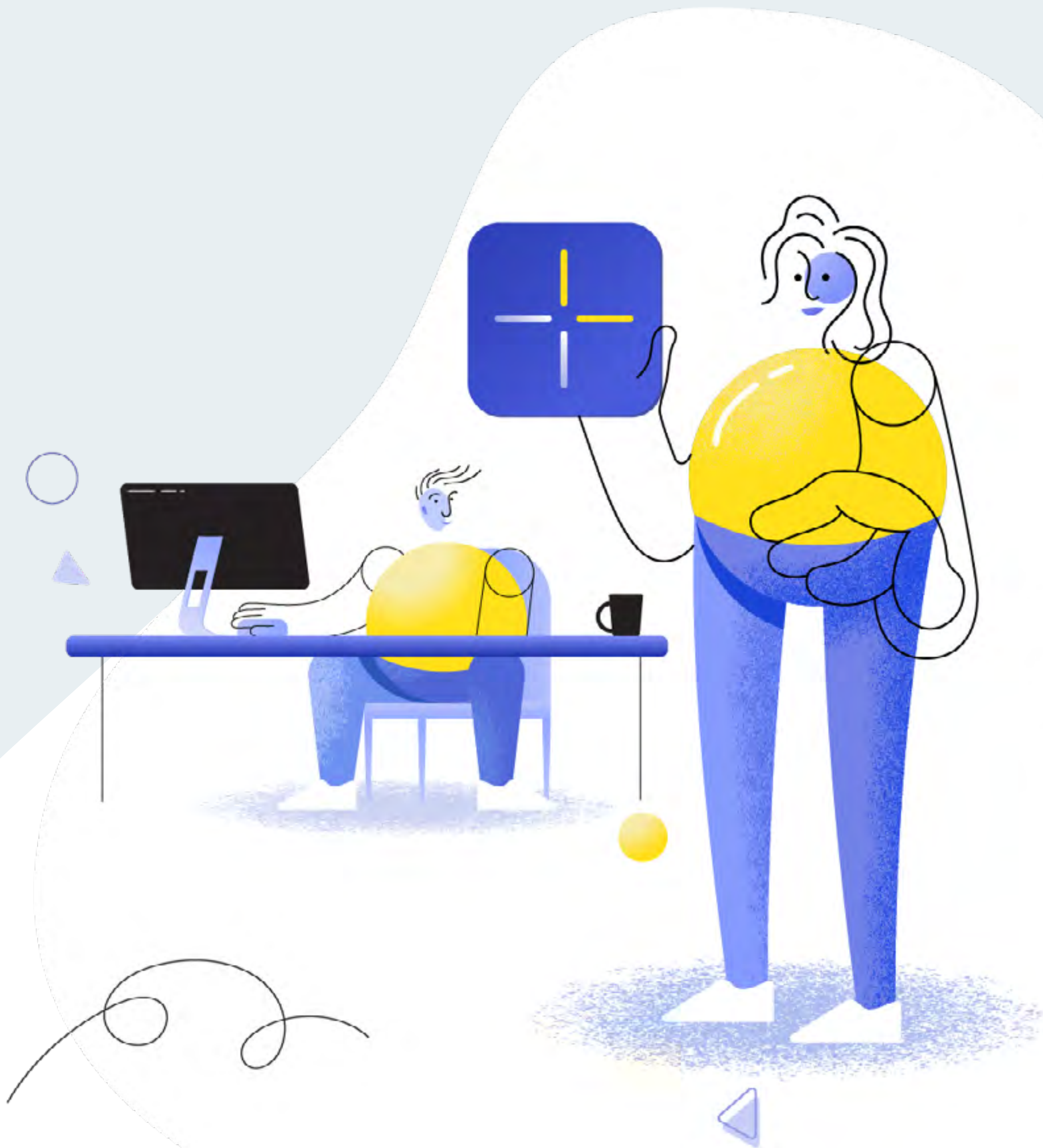
GOAL

CAUSES

ANALYSIS

PLAN





## So, What Now?

You now know the Gaps Diagram and Forming Play.  
Four Boxes. Four Questions. It's that simple.

Was it obvious? Or newly obvious? If you could see in slow motion what you do intuitively when you do your best solving, you would find Gapswork. Now that you are aware of it, you can do your natural best solving more often.

## Come back for more when you're ready.

This is just the first of ten Plays.

This is just the start of Gapswork

Gapswork gives you a method to your middle.

If you **get to the core**, you will **solve more**.

And if you solve more, you will **contribute more**.



GET TO THE CORE

**LEARN MORE**

about Gapswork at [Gapswork.com](https://gapswork.com)

**GAPS, the book**

will be available 2023