What This Moment Affords You: Critique vs. Attack

Part I
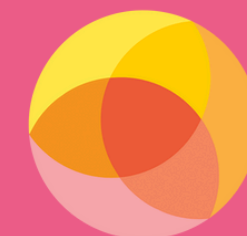
My Approach
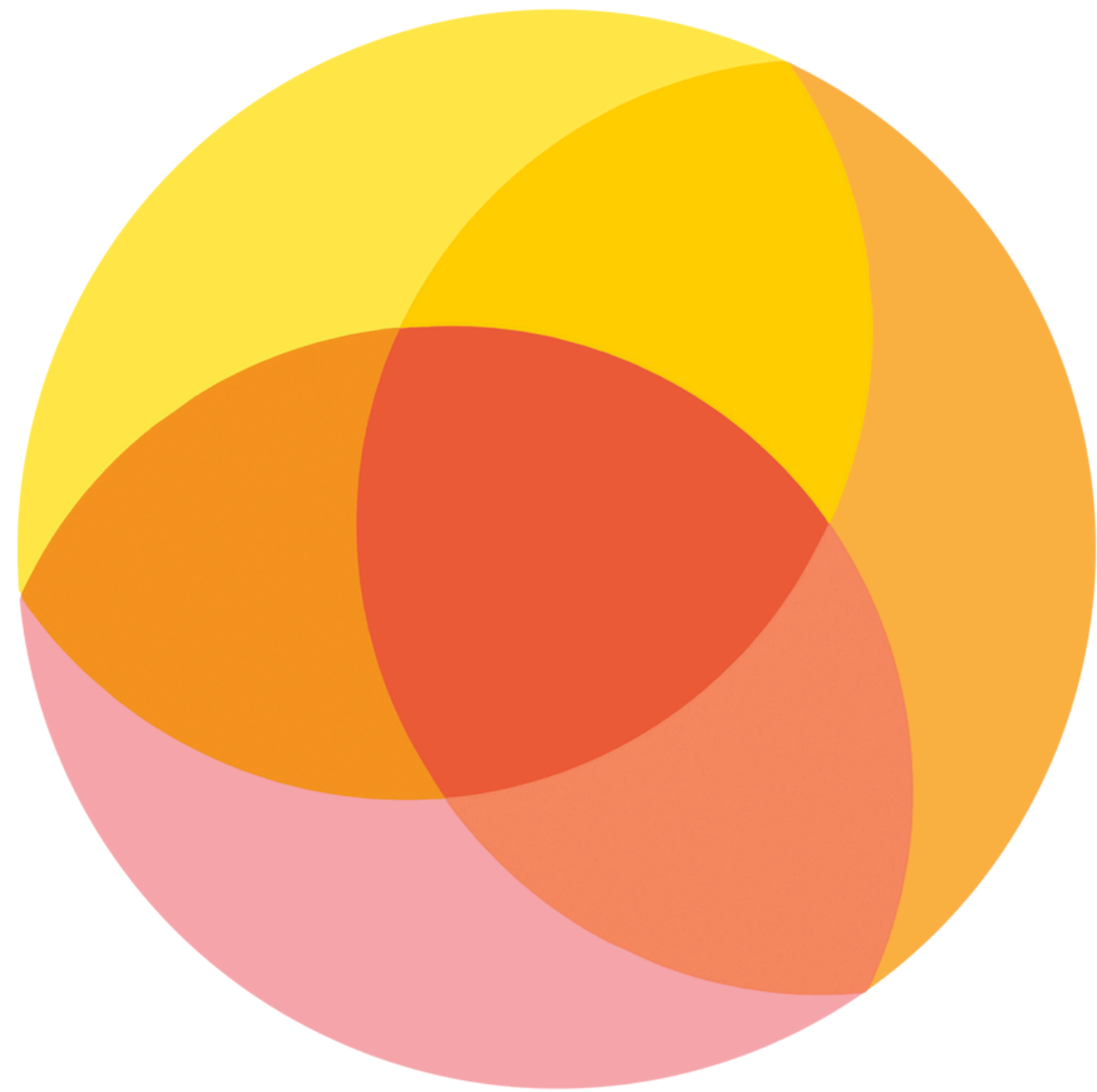
Years of research and direct experience leads me to the following consultative approach...

- DEI work is about organizational health
- Power is at the core
- DEI is messy, a-linear and essential

André Withers
Consultant, Coach, Thought Partner

Previewing Our Time Together

Observation

Judgment

Industry

Indiv School

A Look Back

We wanna be diverse

We have an interest in including more brown and black faces in the community

We wanna be anti-___

There is a pedagogical need to de-center dominant voices, stories, perspectives and expectations

We wanna be inclusive

We have a cultural/societal obligation to be a school representing a host of cultural differences

We wanna exhibit belonging

We want everyone to feel that they have a kinship to the school

Residual Affect

National Association of Independent Schools

We've pressed independent schools to move quickly from "table stakes" to "exemplar" without an organizational development approach

ISACS
independent schools association
of the central states

The Dynamic Continuum for Diversity and Multiculturalism
Some Examples...

Admissions
AWARENESS: Evaluating demographic data and recruitment practices in terms of diversity.

COMMITMENT: Revising recruitment and admissions practices.

ACTION: Including multiple voices on the admissions committee and initiating practices for achieving greater diversity.

Publications and Visual Environment
AWARENESS: Evaluating print and visual materials for attention to diversity.

COMMITMENT: Increasing diversity in visual materials, including photos, and reviewing topic coverage in light of multiculturalism.

ACTION: Reflecting an inclusive and accepting environment in publications, displays, bu public spaces.

Student Life
AWARENESS: Addressing individual concerns and questions of harmful languag

COMMITMENT: Addressing group concerns for equity and multiculturalism in the Reviewing the code of conduct to include equity issues.

ACTION: Empowering all students by creating a comfortable, inclusive culture for all students.
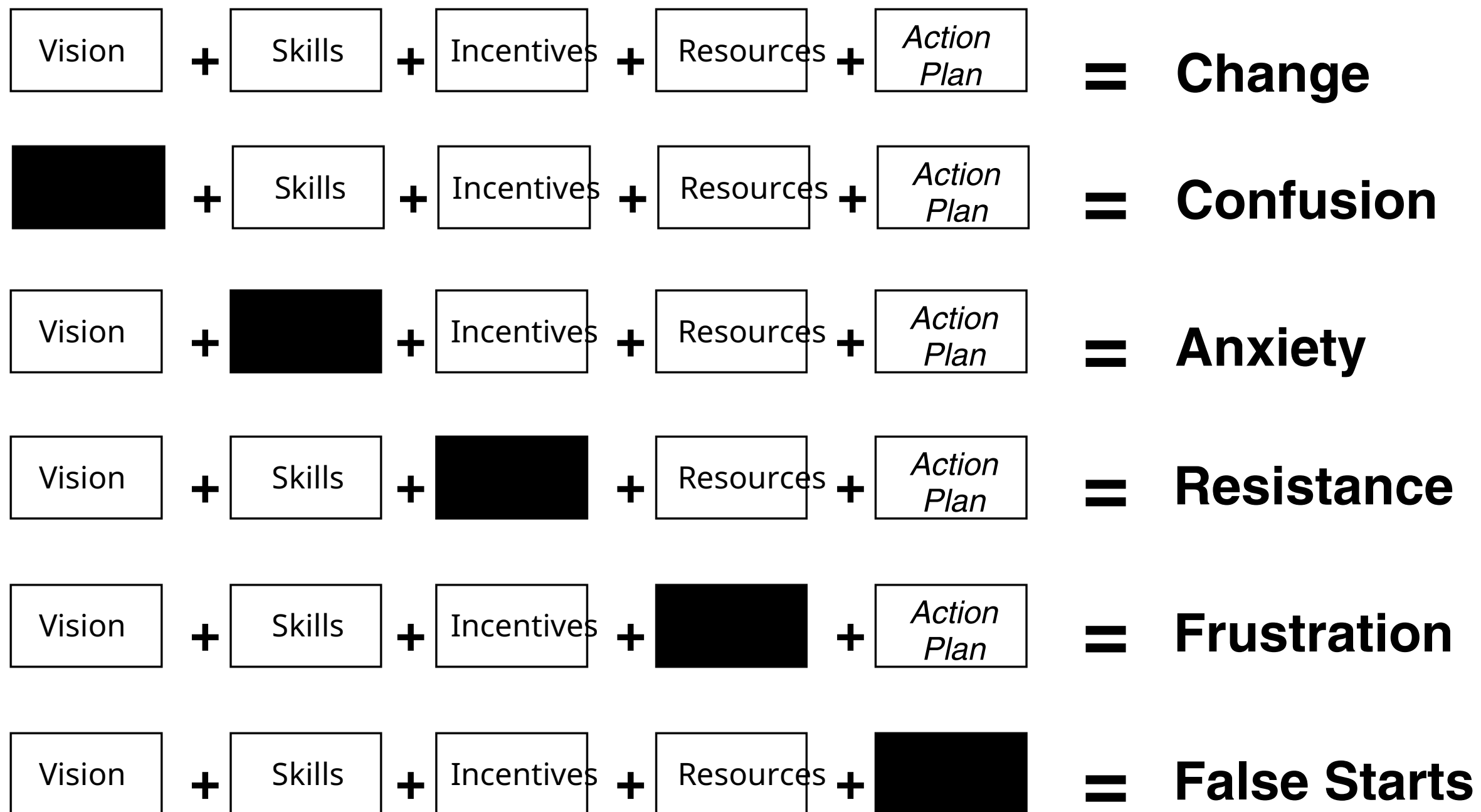

**na
i
S** | **National Association
of Independent Schools**

Principles of Good Practice:

1. The school establishes the foundations for its commitment to equity and justice in its defining documents (mission, core value, and/or philosophy statements).
2. The school respects, affirms, and protects the dignity and worth of each member of its community.
3. The board of trustees and the head of school articulate strategic goals and objectives that promote diversity, inclusion, equity, and justice in the life of the school.
4. The school develops meaningful requirements for cross-cultural competency and provides training and support for all members of its community, including the board of trustees, parents, students, and all school personnel.
5. The board of trustees and the head of school keep the school accountable for living its mission by periodically monitoring and assessing school culture and ongoing efforts in admission, hiring, retention, financial aid, and curriculum development.
6. The school works deliberately to ensure that the board of trustees, administration, faculty, staff, and student body reflect the diversity that is present in the rapidly changing and increasingly diverse school-age population in our country.
7. The head of school ensures that diversity initiatives are coordinated and led by a designated individual who is a member of one of the school leadership teams, with the training, authority, and support needed to influence key areas of policy development, decision making, budget, and management.
8. The school uses inclusive language in all written, electronic, and oral communication.
9. The school adopts a nondiscrimination statement applicable to the administration of all of its programs and policies, in full compliance with local, state, and federal law. That said, the school makes the law the floor — not the ceiling — for establishing itself as a diverse, inclusive, safe, and welcoming community for all students, staff, and families.

Managing Complex Change

Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	*Action Plan*	= **Change**
■	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	*Action Plan*	= **Confusion**
Vision	+	■	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	*Action Plan*	= **Anxiety**
Vision	+	Skills	+	■	+	Resources	+	*Action Plan*	= **Resistance**
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	■	+	*Action Plan*	= **Frustration**
Vision	+	Skills	+	Incentives	+	Resources	+	■	= **False Starts**

Adapted from Knoster, T., Villa R., & Thousand, J. (2000). A framework for thinking about systems change.InR.villa & J. Thousand(Eds.),

Restructuring for caring and effective education: Piecing the puzzle together (pp. 93-128). Baltimore: PaulH.Brookes Publishing Co.

Areas of Reflection

How It Looks In Practice

- A means to an end...not an end all be all
- The skill-based gain for ALL children

The Scaffolding

- SDLC
- Integrated and spiraled learning

The Language/Narrative

- Common Language
- "Social Justice Warriors"
- Leaving those behind who needed more

Adolescent Desire vs Adult Reality

- Black @
- In/Out...With/Against
- Lack of Nuance

Residual Affect

National Association of *Independent* Schools

We've asked independent schools, who have traditionally been quite quiet, to make declarative and moral stands. Doing so, has them in unfamiliar territory

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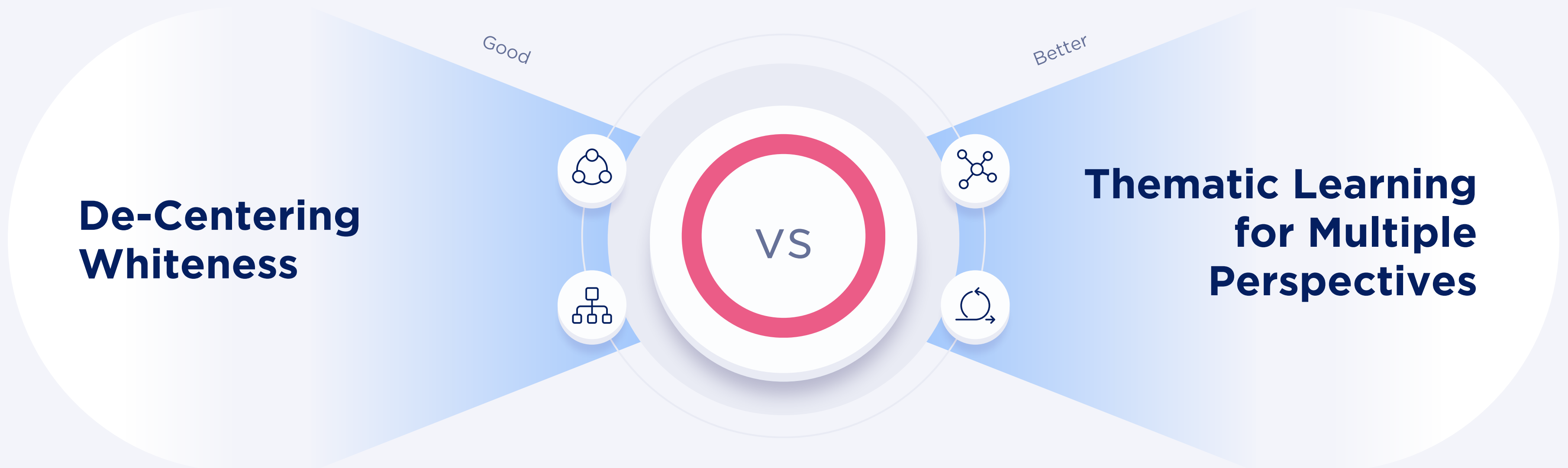- Leaving those behind who needed more

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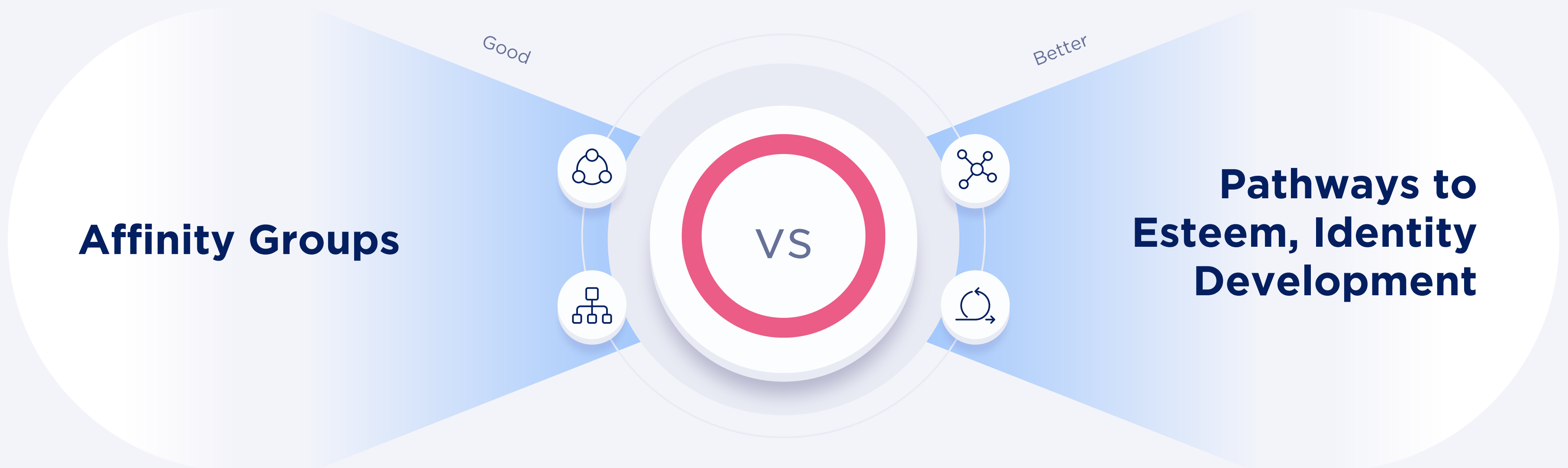
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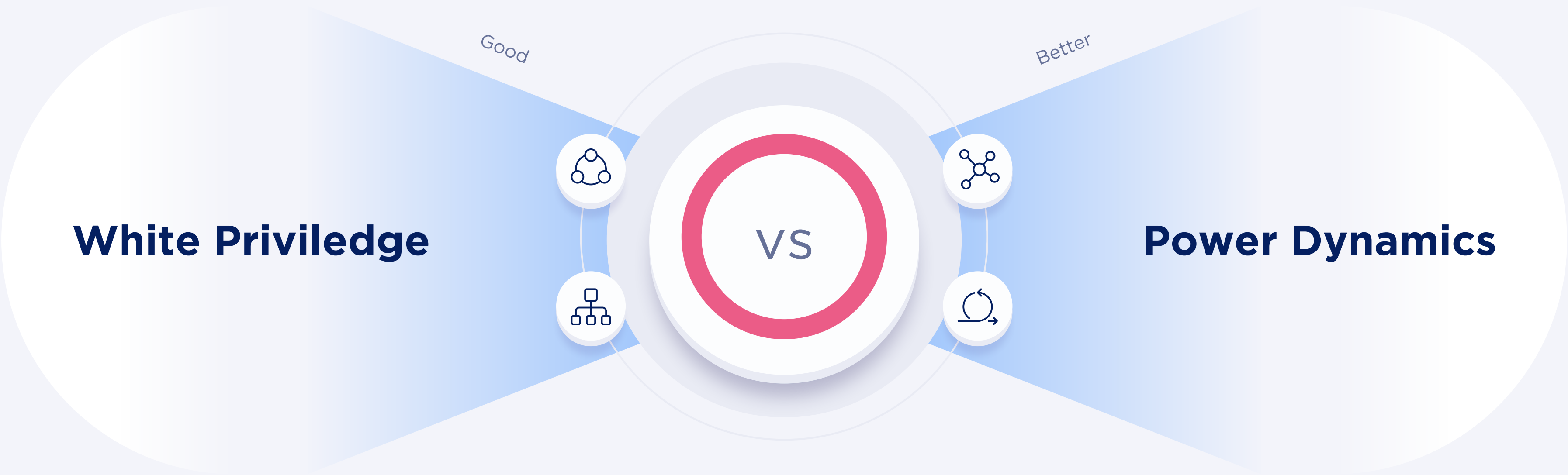# Reframing Language

From the "What" to the "Why"

Good

Better

De-Centering Whiteness

VS

Thematic Learning for Multiple Perspectives

Reframing Language

From the "What" to the "Why"

Good

Better

VS

Affinity Groups

Pathways to Esteem, Identity Development

Reframing Language

From the "What" to the "Why"

Good

Better

White Priviledge

VS

Power Dynamics

Reframing Language

From the "What" to the "Why"

Good

Better

VS

I don't want to say the wrong thing"

"I'm curious how best to convey"
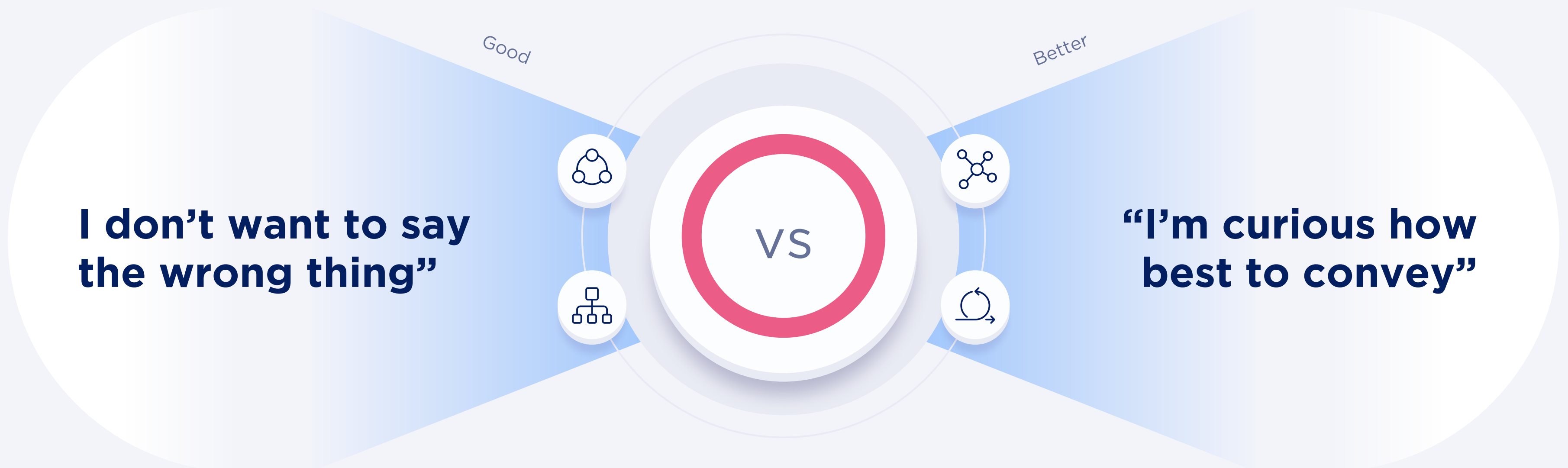
1   Finding their way to seeing DEI work as a way to pursue Mission

2   The pedagogical imperative for excellence in teaching and learning

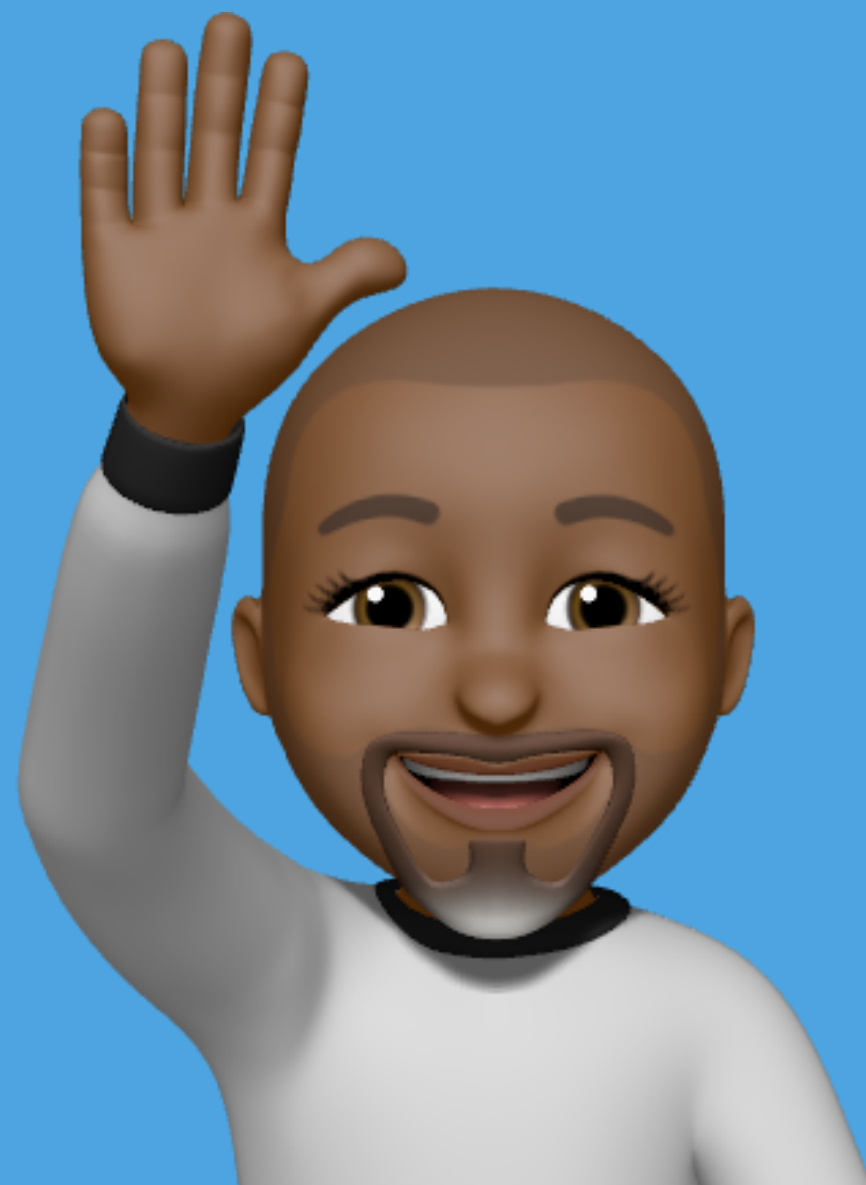3   Community Building at a time when more is needed not less

Can't attack, find fault or deny the school's mission-based pursuits

1   The "to what end?" is not clear

2   We have not connected the dots for people

3   When we haven't made space for people to see their net gain

Critique is warranted when...

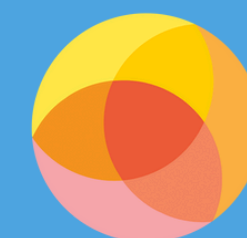**André D. Withers**

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COLLABORATIVE