

PUTTING THE FUN BACK IN DYSFUNCTION



Applying The Five Dysfunctions of a Team + Practical Solutions for
Education Foundation Boards

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FOUNDATION
Innovation

TODAY'S AGENDA

- Why team health matters
- The Five Dysfunctions framework
- Board-specific examples
- Practical solutions
- Action plan & resources



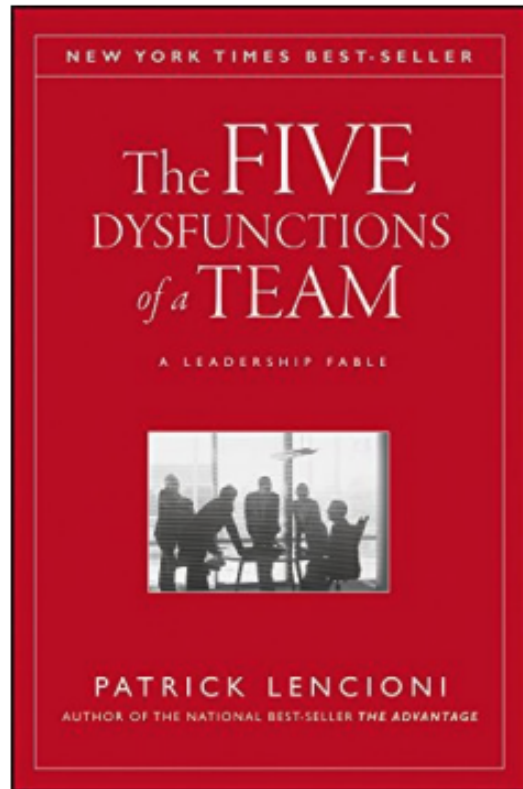
WHY BOARD “HEALTH” MATTERS

PIXAR

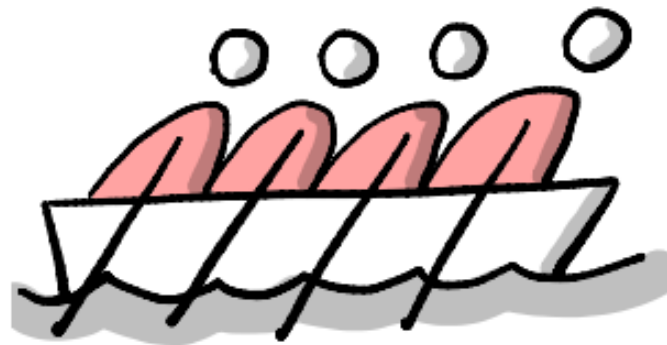


- Drives:
 - Fundraising
 - community trust
 - strategy execution
 - long-term sustainability
- Board **cohesion** directly impacts outcomes for students and teachers

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



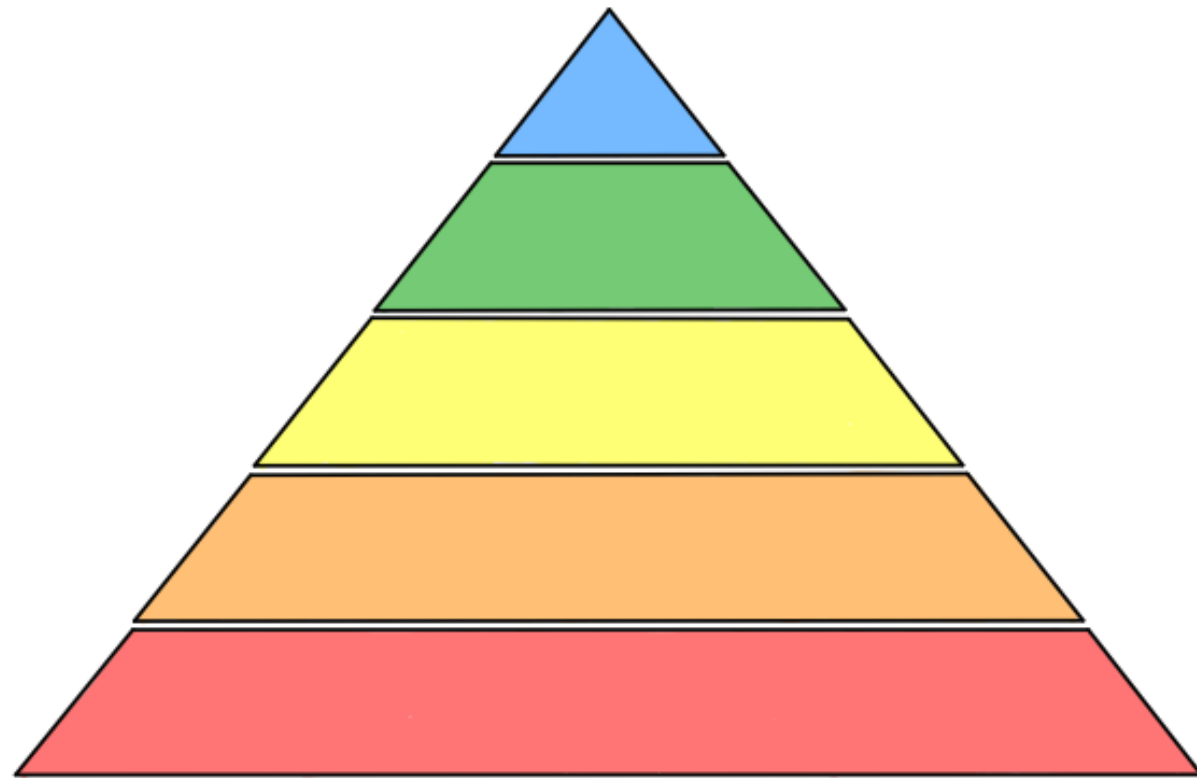
“If you could get all the people in an organization rowing in the same direction, you could dominate any industry, in any market, against any competition, at any time.”



Patrick Lencioni



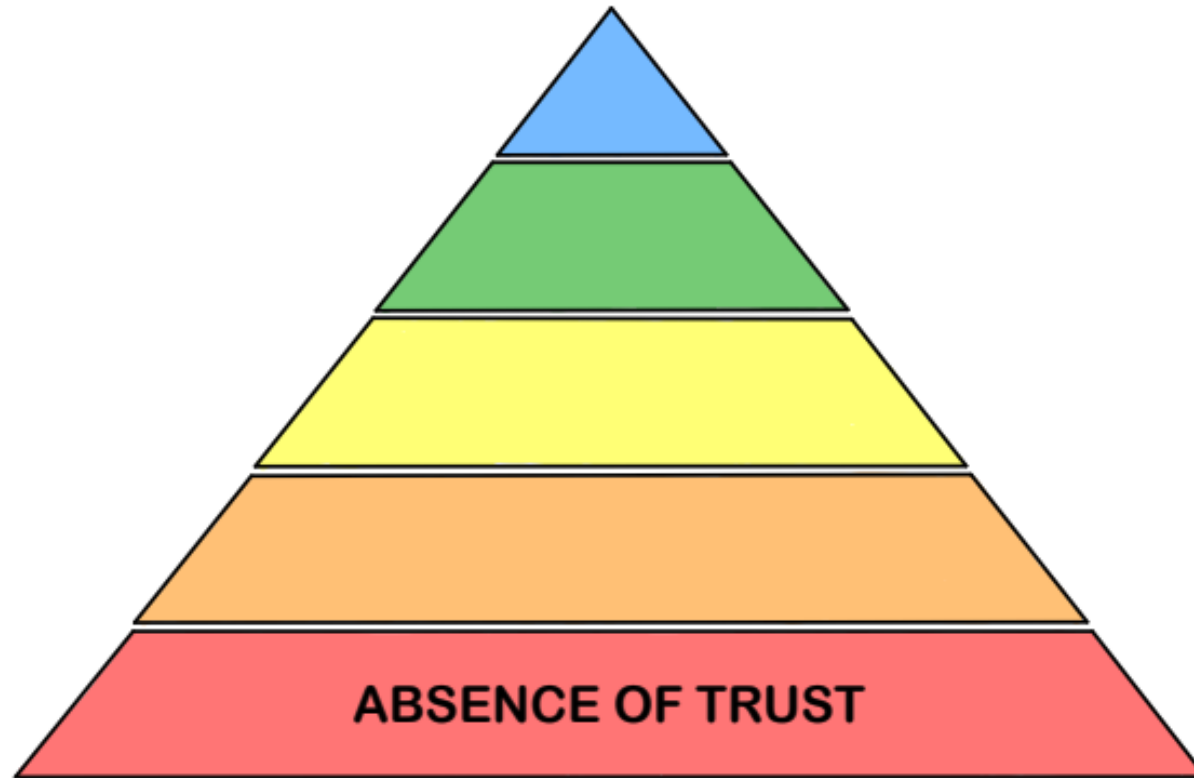
The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

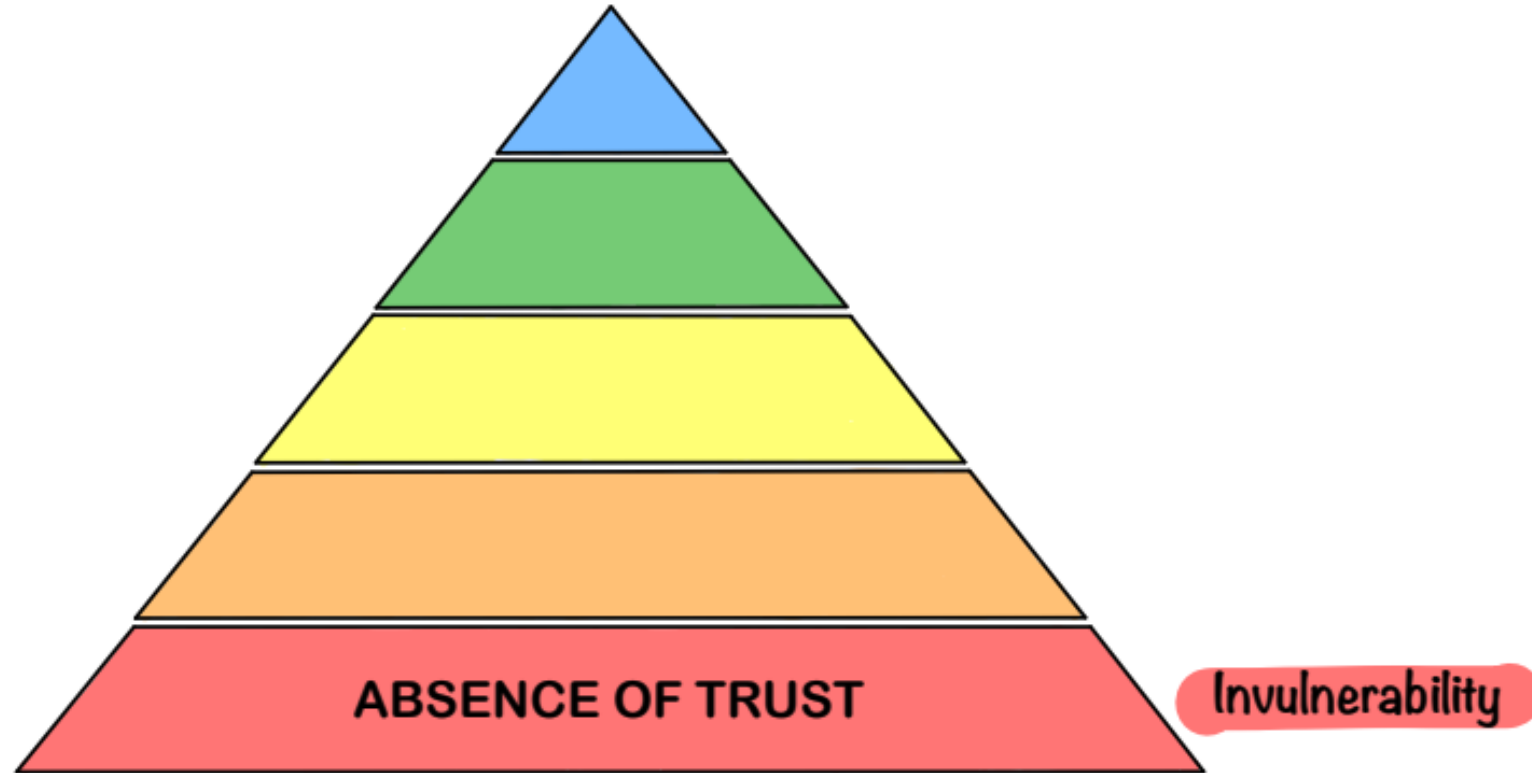


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ABSENCE OF TRUST:

- Board Members conceal weaknesses
- avoid admitting mistakes
- low vulnerability
- siloed relationships

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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FOR EFs:

- reluctance to admit lack of fundraising skills
- hiding mistakes about donor communication

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

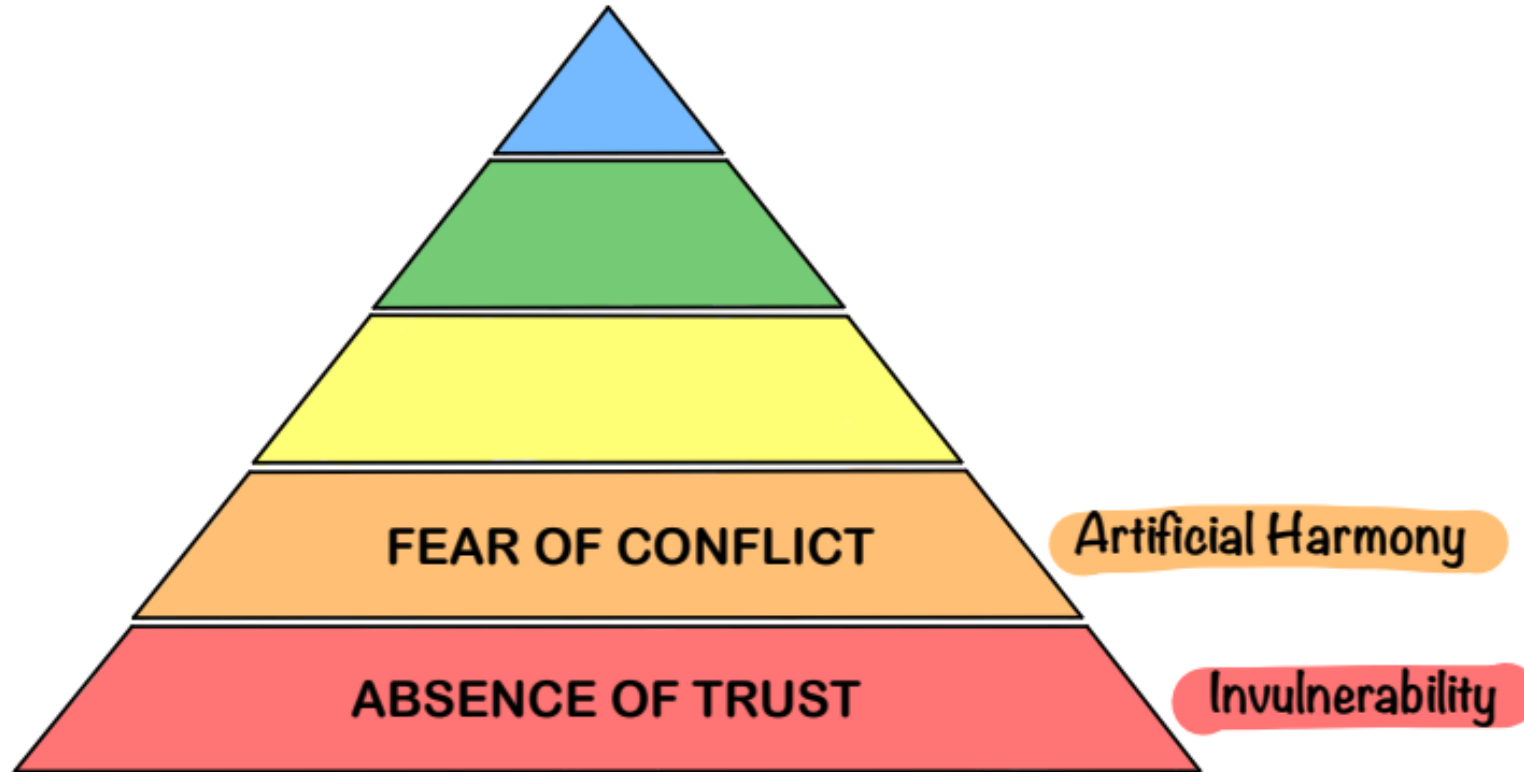


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FEAR OF CONFLICT:

- Artificial harmony
- guarded input
- meetings that avoid hard topics
 - budget shortfalls
 - ED performance

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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FOR EFs:

Note the cost:

- poor decisions
- unaddressed risks
- demotivated staff when tough topics are swept under rug

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

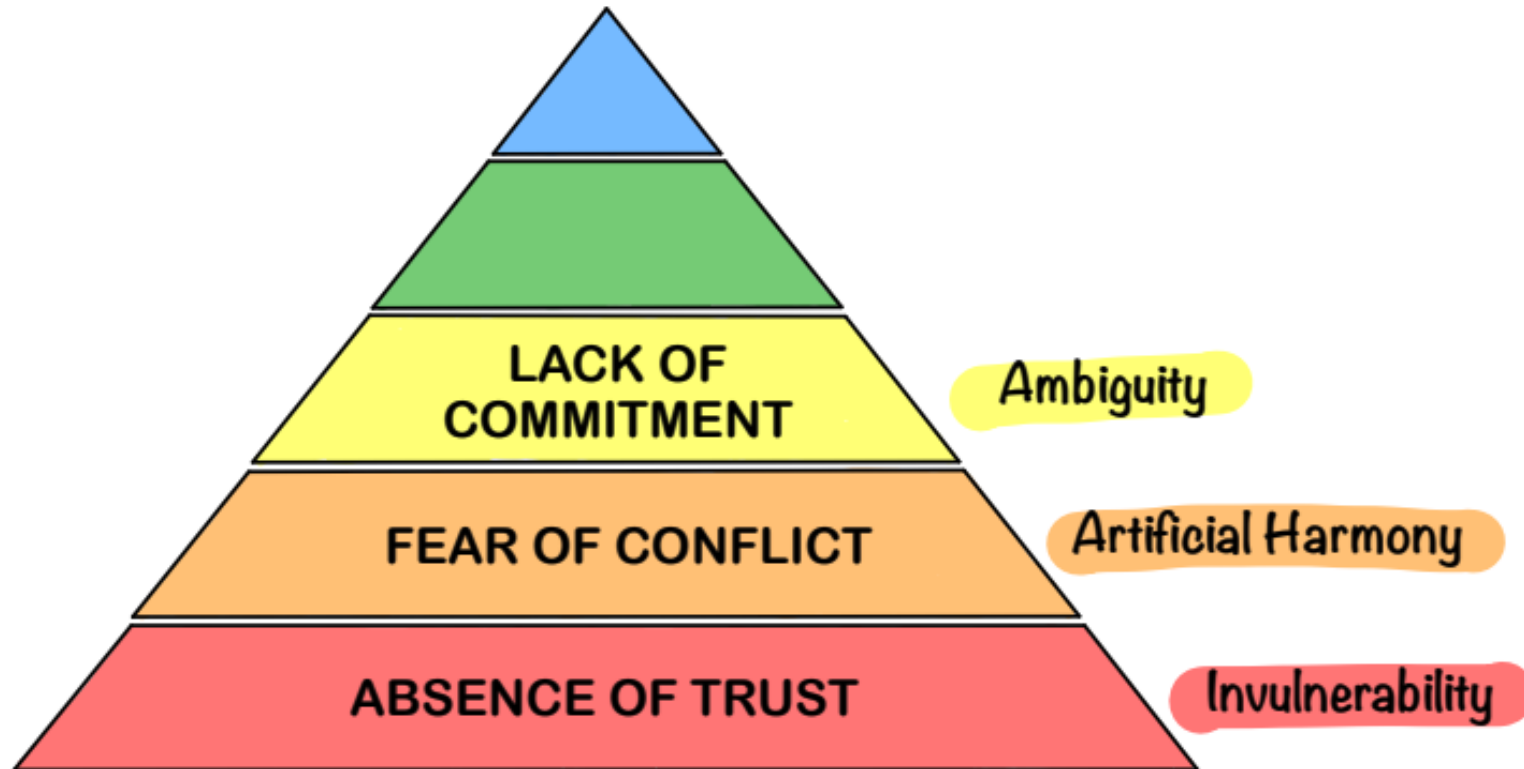


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LACK OF COMMITMENT:

- Ambiguity about direction
- missed decisions
- members second-guess choices
- no clear follow-through

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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FOR EFs:

- Ties to conflict — commitment suffers when issues aren't debated.
- For boards, this shows in missed fundraising targets or mission drift.

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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AVOIDANCE OF ACCOUNTABILITY:

- Low follow-through
- reliance on executive team to police progress
- tolerance of underperformance

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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FOR EFs:

this might be unclear expectations for committee chairs or unaddressed board member absences

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



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INATTENTION TO RESULTS:

- Focus on personal status or sub-goals over mission outcomes
- short-term wins prioritized over student impact

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

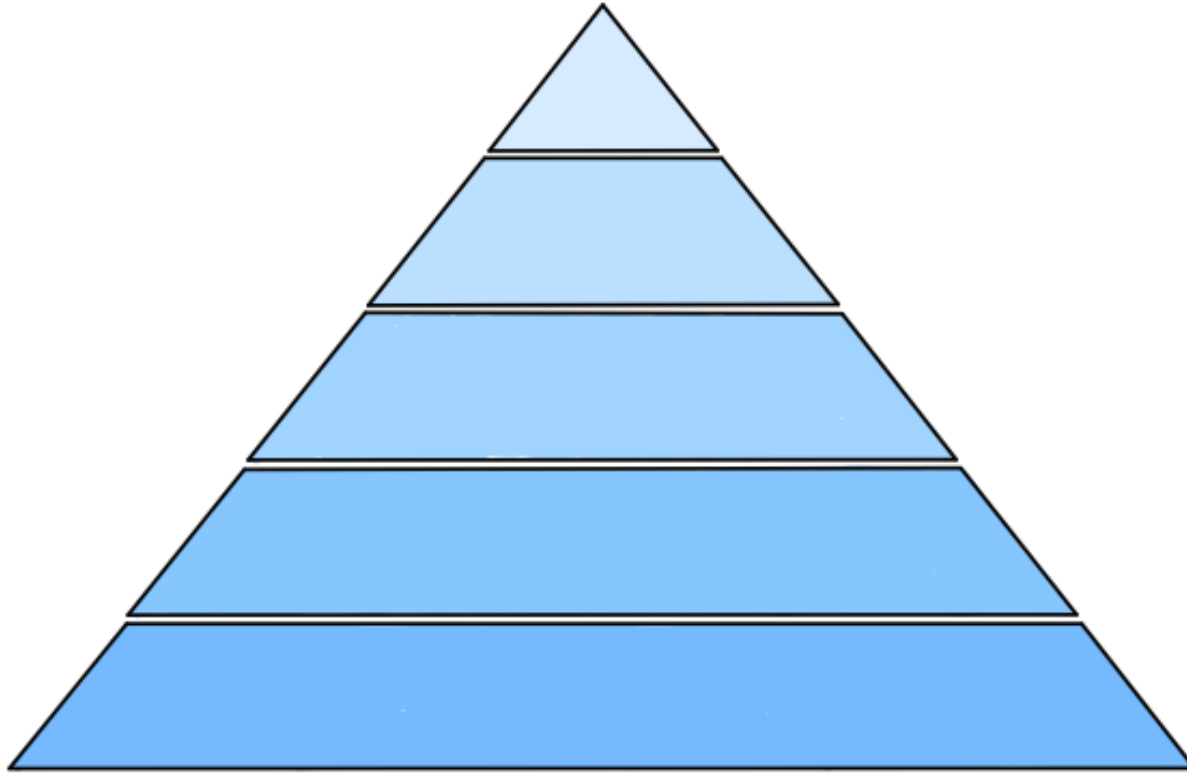


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Risks:

- Comfortable status quo wins over bold mission-driven decisions
- Boards that chase prestige harm outcomes

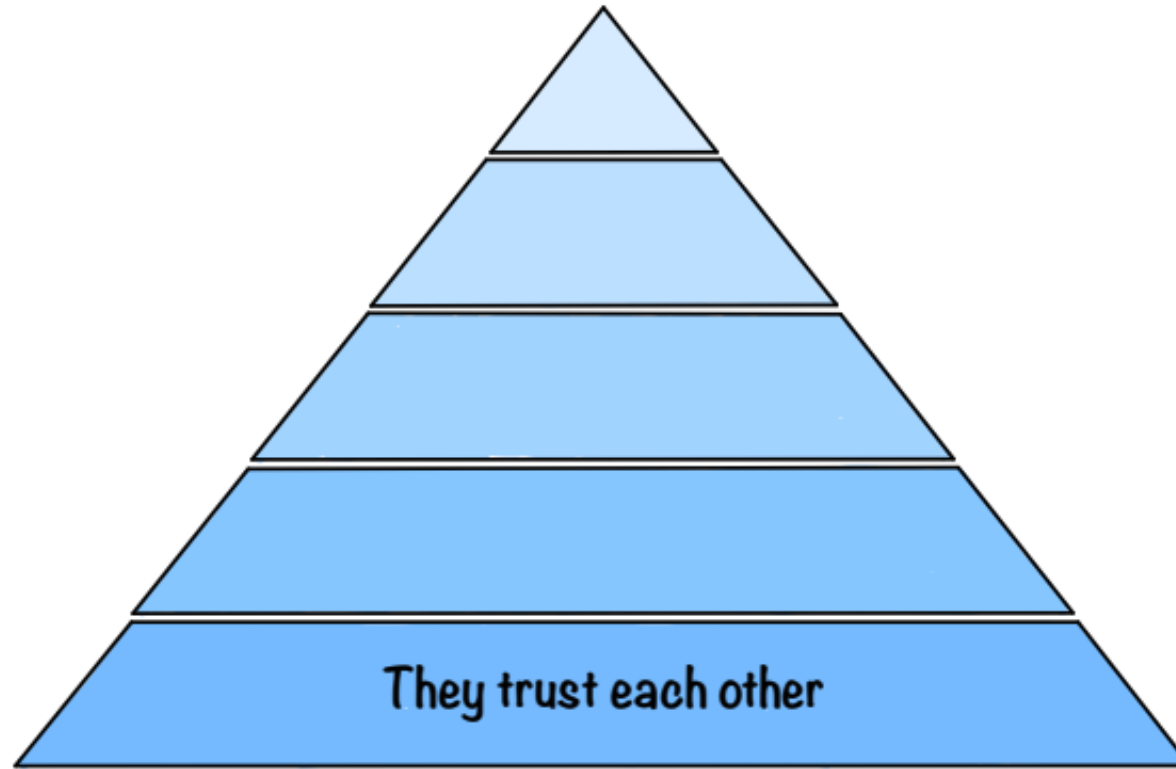
How members of cohesive teams behave



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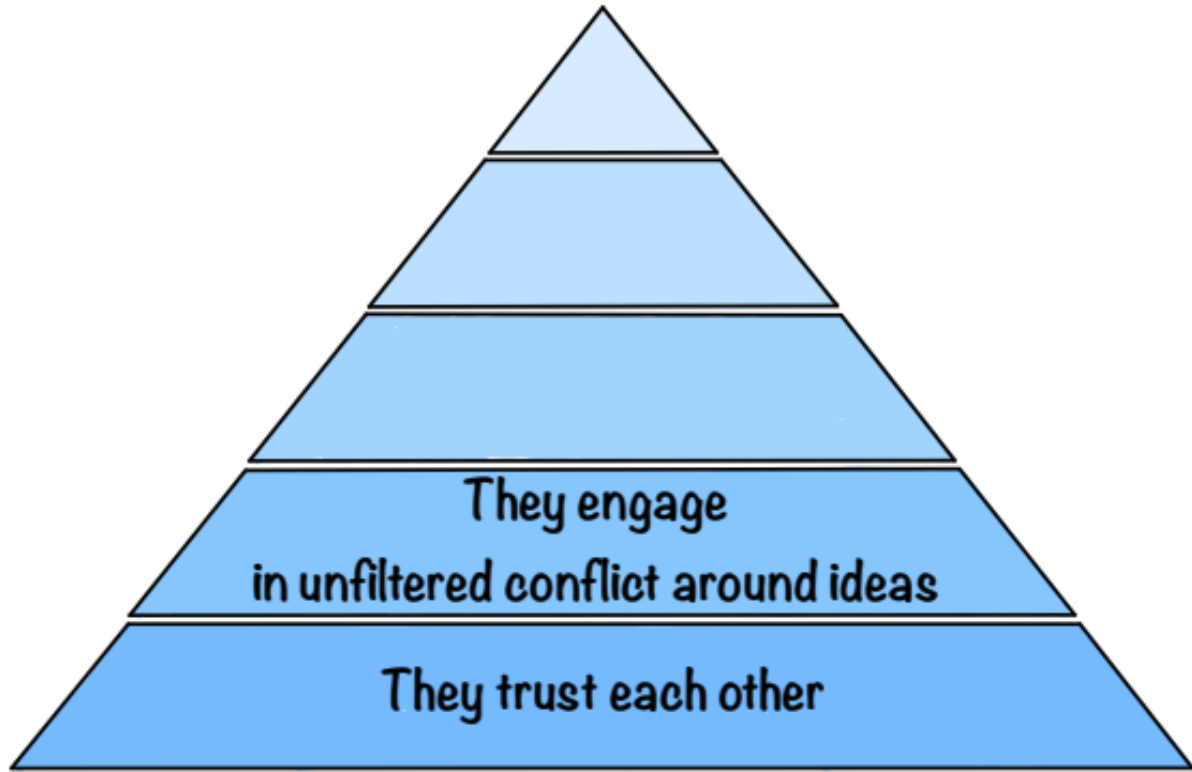
How members of cohesive teams behave.



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How members of cohesive teams behave



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How members of cohesive teams behave



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How members of cohesive teams behave



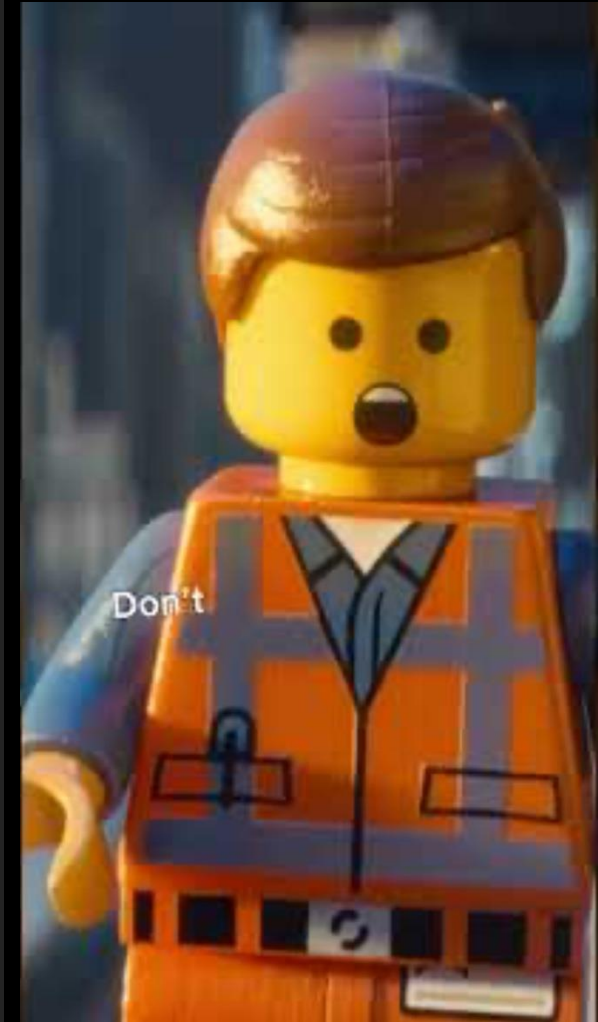
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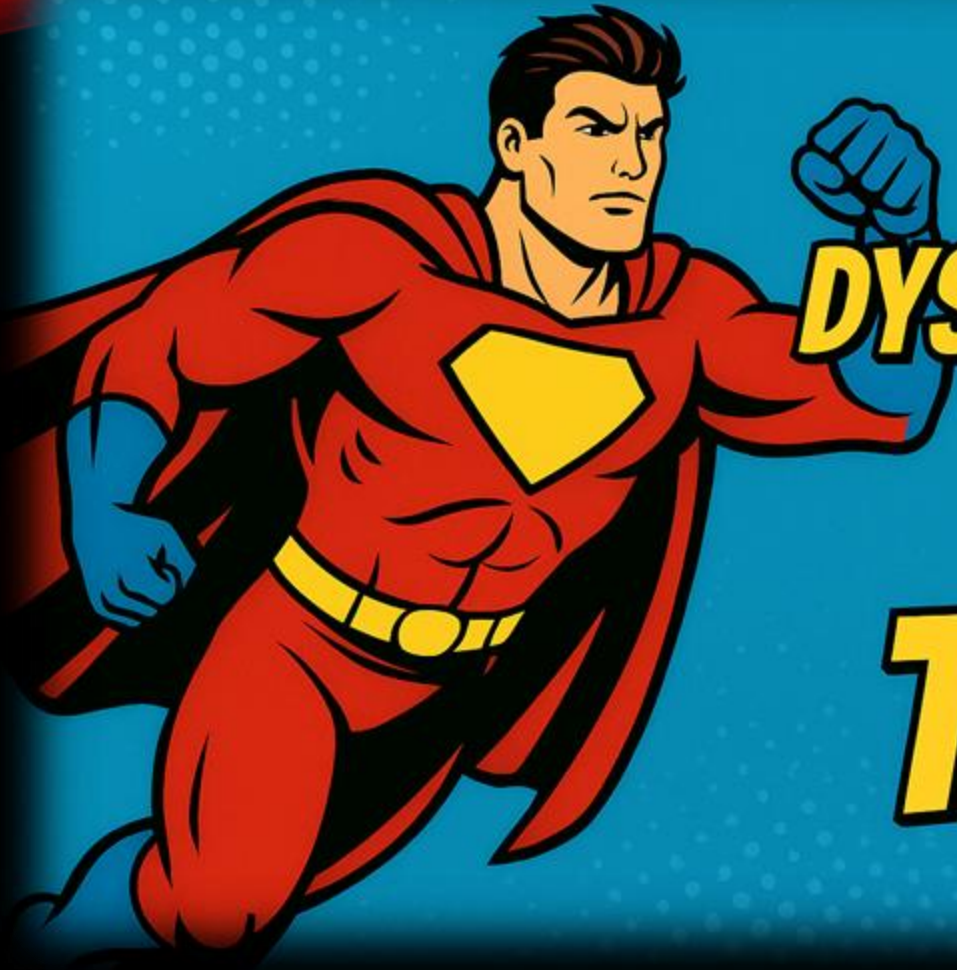


How members of cohesive teams behave



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THE 5 DYSFUNCTIONS OF A TEAM

Team Assessment

The Team Assessment



- A score of 8 or 9 is a probable indication that the dysfunction is not a problem for your team.
- A score of 6 or 7 indicates that the dysfunction could be a problem.
- A score of 3 to 5 is probably an indication that the dysfunction needs to be addressed.

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Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Invulnerability

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Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Be open, build relationship

Invulnerability

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FOR EFs:

- Vulnerability-based exercises
- board member profiles
- onboarding + mentorship
- structured team-building tied to mission
- 1-page bios with strengths/weaknesses
- personal storytelling in meetings
- facilitated retreats focused on trust

Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS
AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

FEAR OF CONFLICT

ABSENCE OF TRUST

Artificial Harmony

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Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team



Promote constructive disagreements

Artificial Harmony

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FOR EFs:

- Set norms for debate, use a 'devil's advocate' approach
- adopt decision protocols
- train on respectful feedback
- pre-read materials to allow robust debate
- rotate devil's advocate role
- use time-limited structured discussion.

Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS
AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

Ambiguity

FEAR OF CONFLICT

ABSENCE OF TRUST

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Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS
AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

FEAR OF CONFLICT

ABSENCE OF TRUST

Clarity and buy-in. Disagree and commit.
Ambiguity

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FOR EFs:

- Clear decision-making frameworks
- document decisions and rationale
- set deadlines & assign owners & reaffirm during meeting
- end each meeting with “decisions made” question and slide

Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS
AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Low standards

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

FEAR OF CONFLICT

ABSENCE OF TRUST

HOW TO APPRECIATE
ALL THAT IS AROUND
YOU
by Rat

Lower your
standards
immensely.

I JUST SOLVED LIFE.

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Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS
AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Peer pressure. Team goals and agreements.

Low standards

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

FEAR OF CONFLICT

ABSENCE OF TRUST

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FOR EFs:

- Publish board scorecard
- peer-to-peer accountability
- committee charters with KPIs
- regular performance reviews (board & ED)
- a simple scorecard: fundraising, meeting attendance, policy reviews
- Peer accountability is more effective than top-down

Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

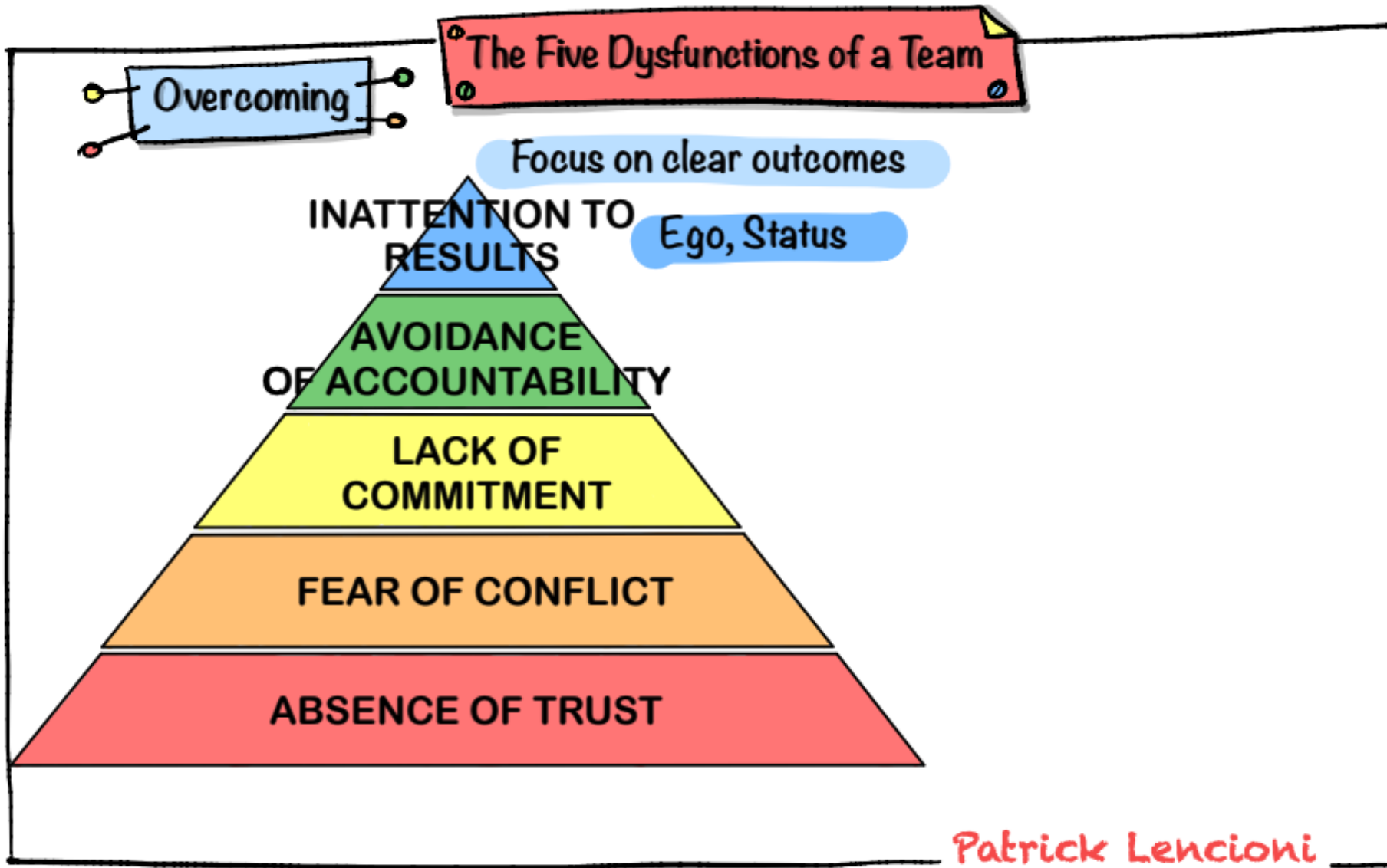


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“ego”

is the only requirement
to destroy any relationship

So, be a bigger person
skip the “e” and let it “go” !



FOR Efs:

- Mission-based metrics, board-level KPIs
- tie incentives/reputation to outcomes
- public scorecard for transparency
 - e.g., dollars to students
 - number of partnerships launched
 - graduation-related measures

Overcoming

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team

Focus on clear outcomes

INATTENTION TO
RESULTS

Ego, Status

Peer pressure. Team goals and agreements.

AVOIDANCE
OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Low standards

Clarity and buy-in. Disagree and commit.

LACK OF
COMMITMENT

Ambiguity

Promote constructive disagreements

FEAR OF CONFLICT

Artificial Harmony

Be open, build relationship

ABSENCE OF TRUST

Invulnerability

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- Small boards wearing many hats
- Volunteer bandwidth limits
- Fundraising fatigue
- Community politics
- Executive Director or President transition risks



WHAT NEXT??

- New member onboarding checklist
- Board member bio template
- Meeting norm charter
- Decision log template
- Board scorecard sample



3 Month Action Plan for Boards

Month 1: Trust-building + onboarding overhaul;

Month 2: Meeting norms + decision protocols;

Month 3: Launch board scorecard + accountability checks;

End of 90 days: retreat to reinforce commitments



