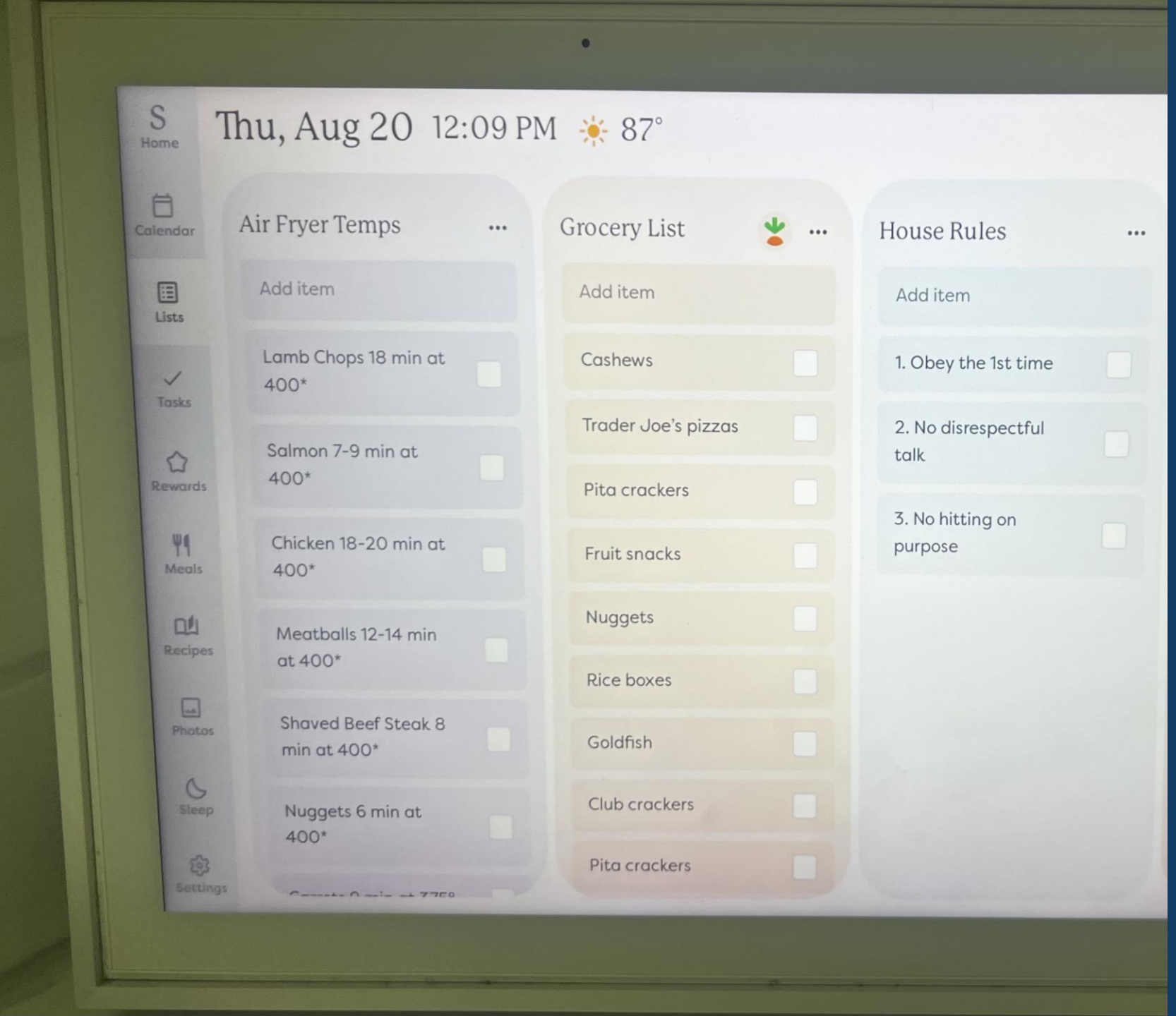
Better, Not Just Faster.

How can you ensure AI makes teams better, not just faster?

Naphtali Bryant,
Managing Principal RAC Leadership

LINKEDIN TALENT CONNECT 2026

dry beans
canned vegetables
Minute
BROWN RICE
GARLIC PARMESAN
JASMINE RICE
BASMATI RICE
WHITE RICE
RICE A RONI
279



Skylight can plan the whole week.

I only use it to make me faster.

I still decide what better looks like.

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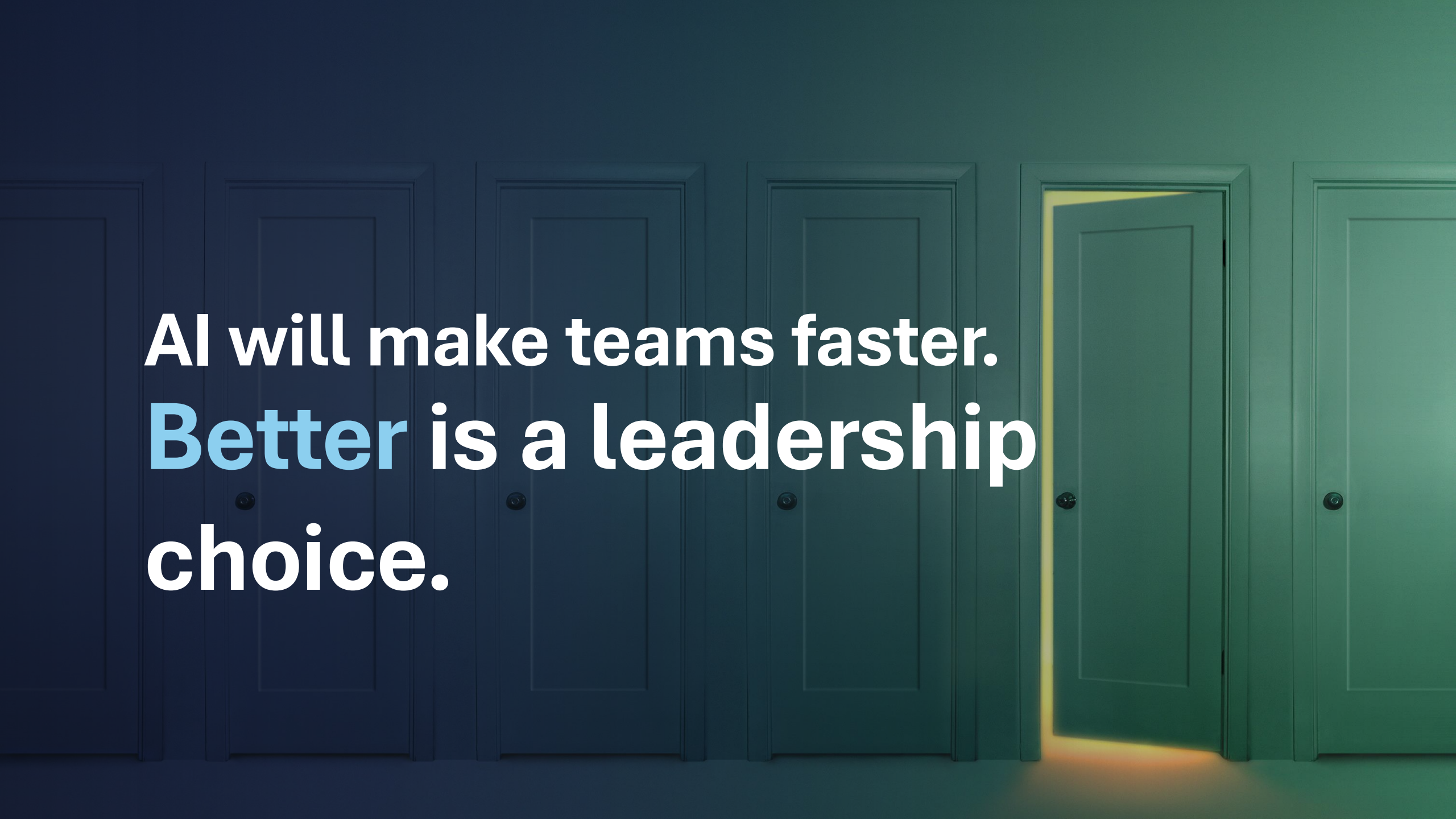
THE QUESTION ISN’T WHICH ONE WINS.


AI will make teams faster.
Better is a leadership
choice.

THE WORK IS CHANGING...

AI is making **individual work faster** before organizations see broader value.

Teams are using AI **before clear rules exist** for where human judgment belongs.

People can **produce more** without necessarily thinking more deeply.

AI is removing some of the work **people once learned from**.

AI is **creating time** without clear decisions about where that time should go.

AI capability is **developing unevenly** across teams.

WHAT DOES BETTER LOOK LIKE NOW?

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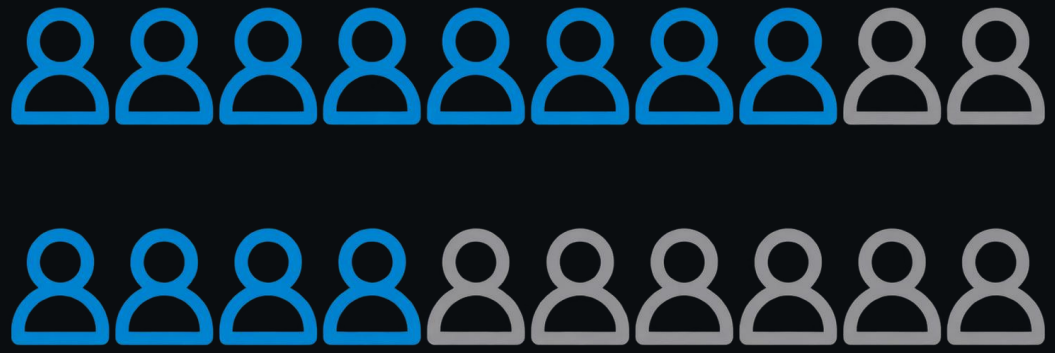
THE GAP

80%



say AI improves individual productivity

37%

report positive EBIT impact

FASTER IS HAPPENING.
BETTER IS HARDER.

McKinsey, The State of AI, 2026

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WHAT DOES **BETTER REQUIRE FROM LEADERS?**

01 REDESIGN THE WORK

Choose where AI belongs.

02 SHARPEN JUDGMENT

Keep thinking and ownership visible.

03 ELEVATE THE HUMAN

Turn saved capacity into capability.

THE MINDSET UNDERNEATH ALL THREE — **RUN TOWARD THE TENSION.**

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REDESIGN THE WORK · THE FOUR WORK CHOICES

WHERE SHOULD AI BELONG IN THE WORK?

ELIMINATE stop work.

AUTOMATE hand off repeatable work.

AUGMENT think with AI.

PROTECT keep judgment human.

Start with the outcome. Then choose where AI belongs.

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A PATTERN I SEE IN MY COACHING

AI can help a leader
prepare faster.

It can't decide who that leader needs to become.

Preparation can be faster. Growth still has to be led.

THE JUDGMENT TEST

THINK.

What do I think first?

CHALLENGE.

What might AI be missing?

OWN.

Who owns the call?

Form a point of view before AI weighs in.

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SHARPEN JUDGMENT

WHEN DOES AI HELP, AND WHEN CAN IT HURT PERFORMANCE?

25%

FASTER

when the task fits AI's strengths

19%

LESS LIKELY TO BE CORRECT

when the task falls outside AI's strengths

Dell'Acqua et al., Organization Science, 2026 · Harvard Business School / Boston Consulting Group

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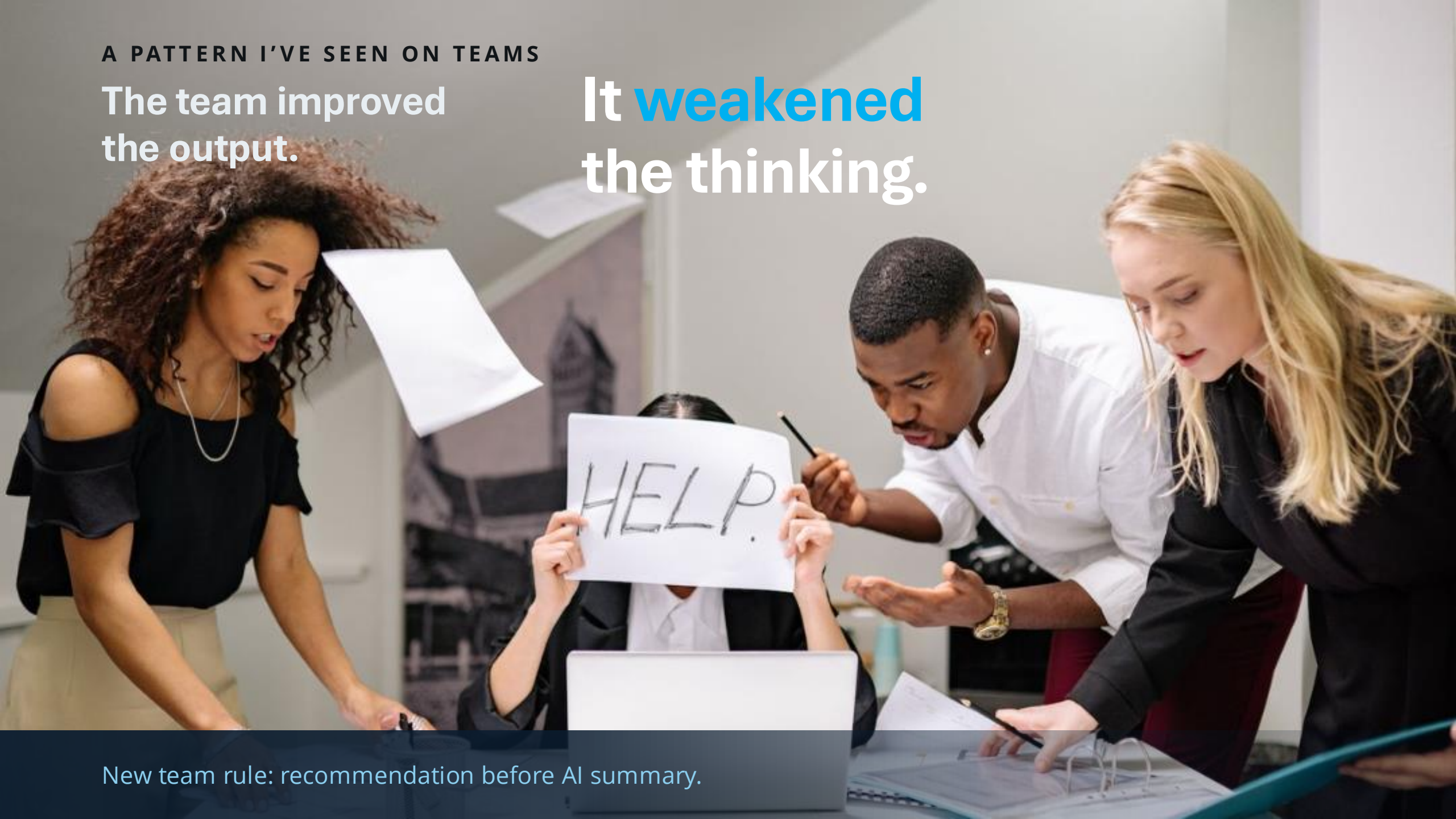
A PATTERN I'VE SEEN ON TEAMS

The team improved the output.

It weakened the thinking.



New team rule: recommendation before AI summary.

ONE HOUR

AI just gave it back.

Where does it go?

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WHERE COULD THE HOUR GO?

COACH.
Develop people.

LEARN.
Build new capability.

THINK.
Improve judgment.

CONNECT.
Strengthen relationships.

THE MINDSET UNDERNEATH ALL THREE

RUN TOWARD THE TENSION

The tension = the benefit you want + the human value you refuse to trade away.

EFFICIENCY	DEVELOPMENT
CONFIDENCE	CORRECTNESS
AUTOMATION	CONNECTION
SCALE	WISDOM

What benefit do we want, and what can’t we afford to lose?

Name both sides. Design for both.

WHAT BETTER AI-ENABLED TEAMS DO DIFFERENTLY.

1 | REDESIGN THE WORK

- **START** with the outcome.
- **INTERROGATE** before you automate.
- **CHOOSE** where AI belongs.

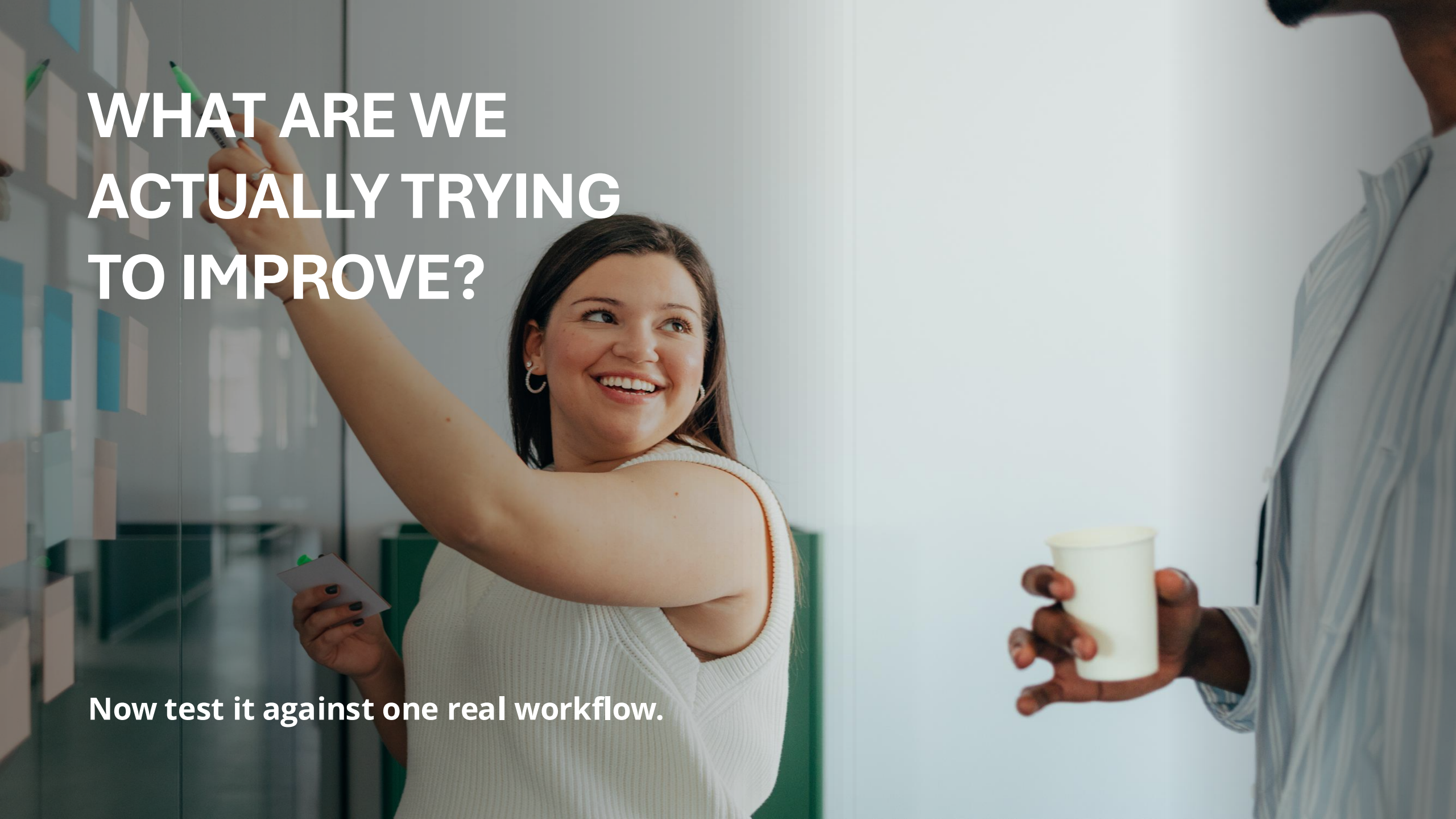
2 | SHARPEN JUDGMENT

- **THINK** first.
- **CHALLENGE** the output.
- **OWN** the decision.

3 | ELEVATE THE HUMAN

- **REINVEST** the time.
- **DESIGN** for development.
- **MAKE ROOM** for people.

RUN TOWARD THE TENSION


WHAT ARE WE ACTUALLY TRYING TO IMPROVE?
Now test it against one real workflow.

THE BETTER TEAM BLUEPRINT

One workflow. One tension. One guardrail.

HERE'S HOW YOU'LL WORK

START Connect + choose

Where is AI already changing how work gets done in your function?

01 **Define better**

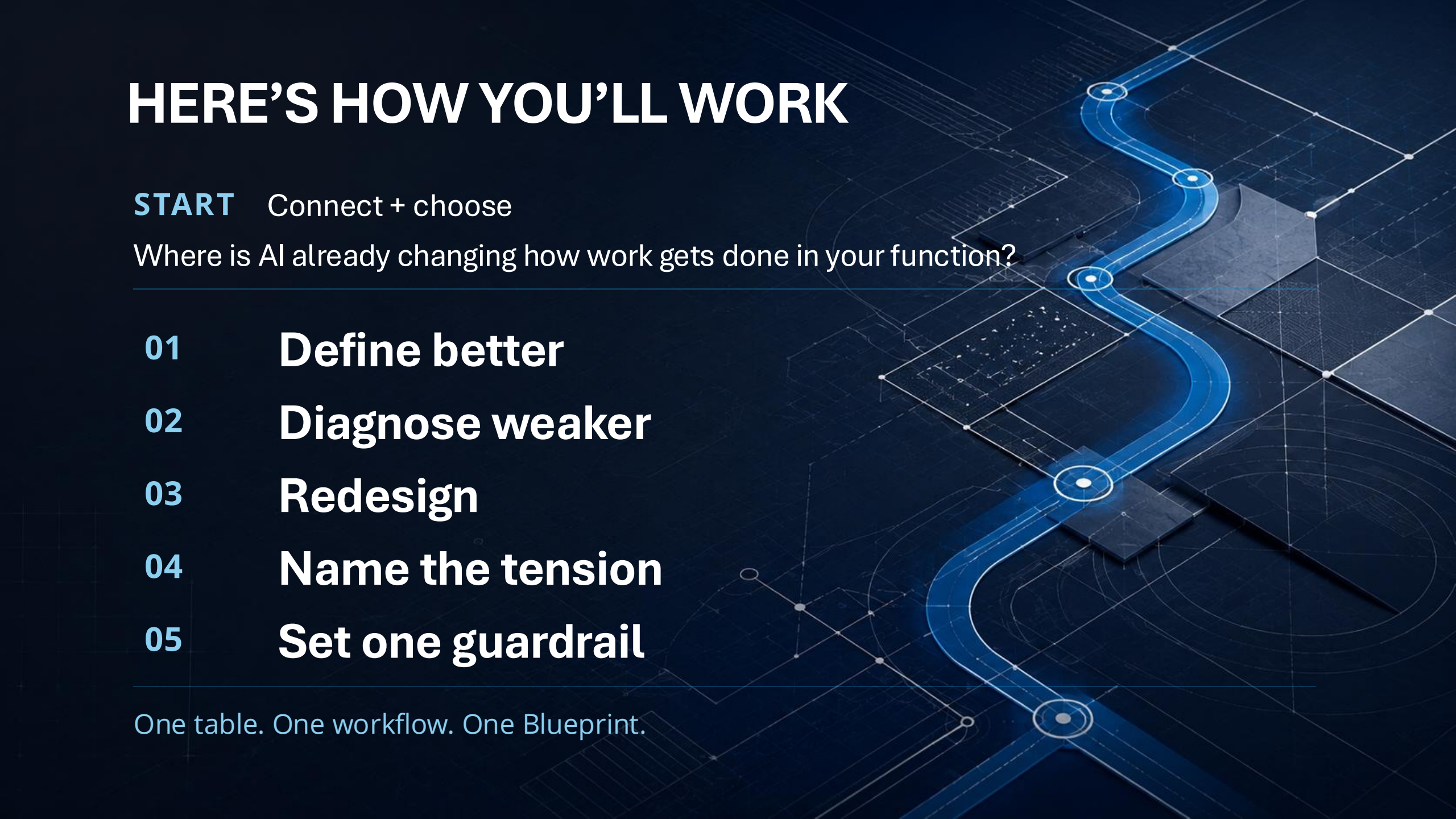
02 **Diagnose weaker**

03 **Redesign**

04 **Name the tension**

05 **Set one guardrail**

One table. One workflow. One Blueprint.



The Better Team Blueprint

Redesign one real AI-enabled workflow so it makes the team better, not just faster.

TALENT CONNECT 2026 · SOLUTION ROOM

THE WORKFLOW WE'RE REDESIGNING	TABLE	DATE

DIAGNOSE — WHAT ARE WE REALLY SOLVING?

1 Define "Better"

What are we actually trying to improve?

If AI made this team better, not just faster, what would improve? Think decision quality, trust, learning, or accountability.

2 Faster but Weaker

Where could faster quietly make the team weaker?

What capability, relationship, or outcome could deteriorate?

3 REDESIGN THE WORK — THE FOUR WORK CHOICES

Eliminate

What work should stop because it no longer creates value?

Automate

What repeatable work can AI reliably do?

Augment

Where can AI help people do better work?

Protect

Where must judgment, accountability, development, or connection stay?

RESOLVE THE TENSION & COMMIT

4 The Tension

We want the benefit of _____,
but we cannot afford to lose _____.

5 Operating Guardrail — test for 30 days

One behavior, rule, or decision the team will test to hold both sides. Specific enough to start next week and measure.

YOUR SHARE-BACK

REDESIGN
What changed?

HUMAN JUDGMENT
Where does it stay?

TENSION
What did you name?

GUARDRAIL
What will you test?

YOUR NEXT 30 DAYS

1

PICK

Choose one real workflow where AI is already changing the work.

2

REDESIGN

Use the Four Work Choices: Eliminate. Automate. Augment. Protect.

3

GUARD

Name the tension.
Set one human guardrail.
Make ownership explicit.

4

TEST

Run it for 30 days.
Ask what got better.

DID THE WORK GET BETTER?
DID THE TEAM GET BETTER?

START SMALL. LEARN FAST. KEEP JUDGMENT VISIBLE.

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Faster was never
the goal.
Feeding my family
well was.

What kind of team are you leading with AI?

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DON'T JUST ASK

What does AI help my team do?

ASK

What is this way of working helping my team become?

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KEEP THE CONVERSATION GOING

Pick one guardrail. Test it for 30 days.

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Run Toward the Tension.

LET'S STAY CONNECTED.

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