

Synergy

TEAMWORK MAKES THE DREAM WORK

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“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts.”

-ARISTOTLE

What does Synergy Mean?

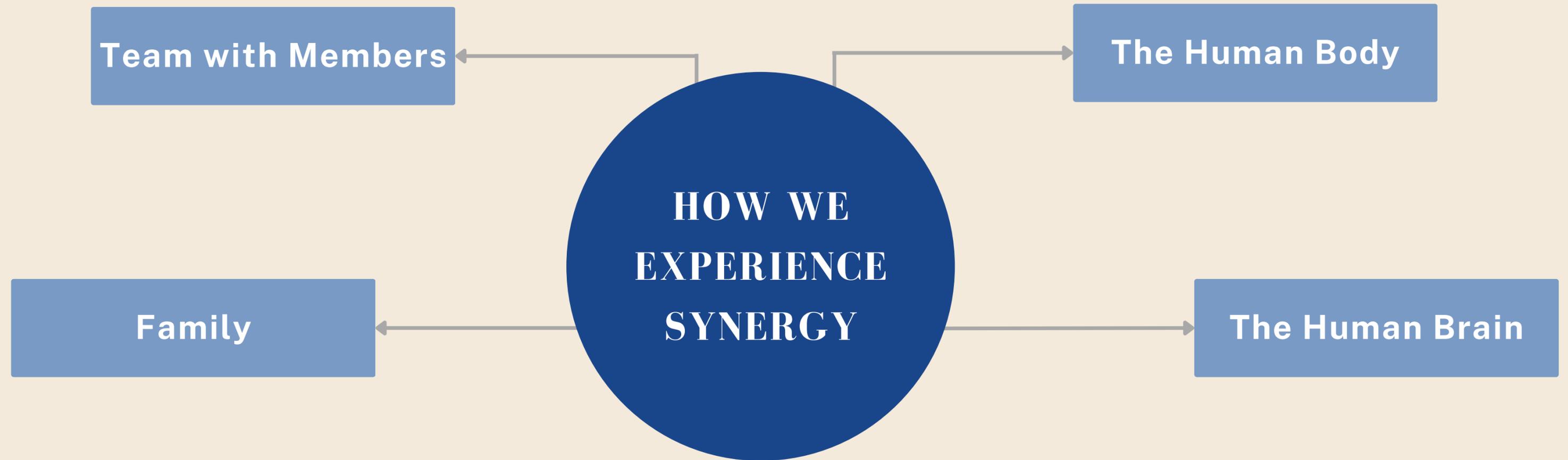
“Alone we can do little but together we can accomplish a lot.”

-STEPHEN COVEY

“Imagine investigating the personality of cucumbers to discover why they had turned into sour pickles without analysing the vinegar barrels in which they had been submerged.”

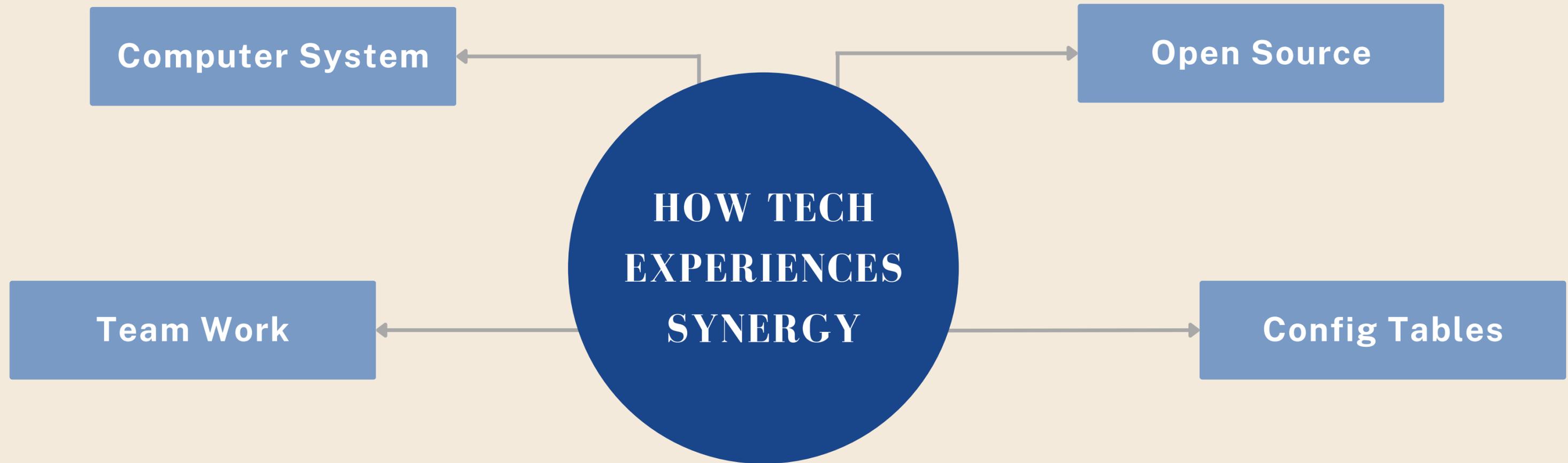
-CHRISTINA MASLACH

HOW WE EXPERIENCE SYNERGY

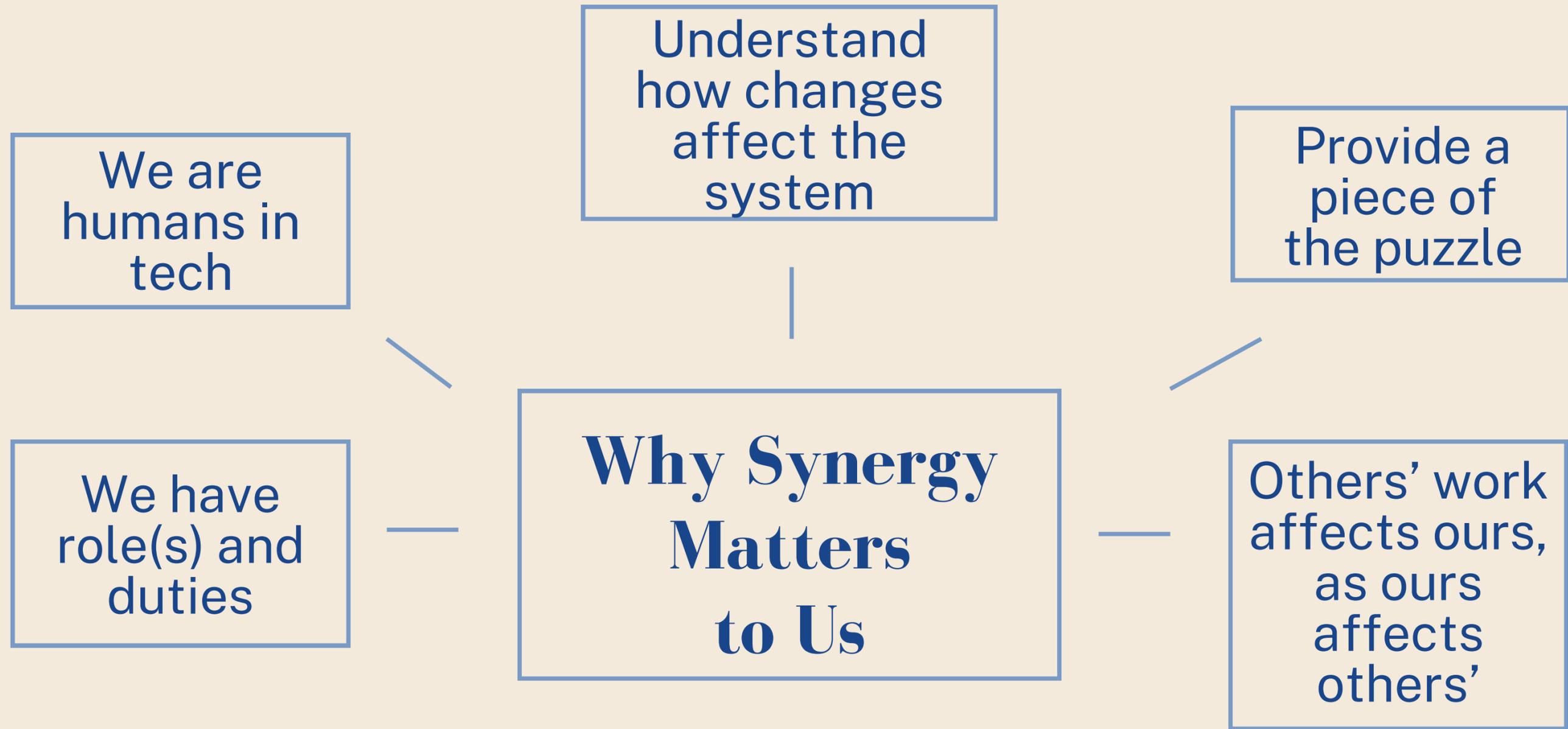


We're wired to notice when it's absent.

HOW TECH EXPERIENCES SYNERGY



ERROR



As a leader, you want everyone working together toward a common goal

Mental Exercise

I experience synergy when...

I add to synergy when...

Robber's Cave Experiment

Introduction

- Led by Muzafer Sherif in the 1950s
- Researchers studied intergroup conflict and cooperation among 22 boys
- They initially separated into two groups, which developed group identities
- Introducing competitive tasks led to hostility between groups
- Introducing cooperative tasks reduced this conflict



Methodology

In Group Formation

- Members of each group got to know one other
- Social norms developed
- Leadership and group structure emerged
- Groups identified themselves the Eagles and Rattlers



Methodology

Group Conflict

- The now-formed groups came into contact with each other
- Competing in games, challenges, and control of territory
- One group was given food, while the other had to wait
- Us vs. them emerged
- One group burned the other's flag; the other responded by raiding the cabin and stealing items
- Some violence occurred

Negative thoughts on out-group were formed



Methodology

Conflict Resolution

- Various methods for reducing the animosity and low-level violence between the groups
 - Food truck
 - Water access
 - Movie Night

Reduction in negative association with previous out-group members



Results

The Robbers Cave experiment established Realistic Conflict Theory:

- Resource Scarcity and Competition
 - Perceived competition for limited resources can evoke hostility
- Formation of Ingroup and Outgroup Dynamics
 - Competition promotes a strong sense of “us” (ingroup) versus “them” (outgroup)
- Superordinate Goals
 - Intergroup hostility can be reduced with cooperation toward collaborative goals

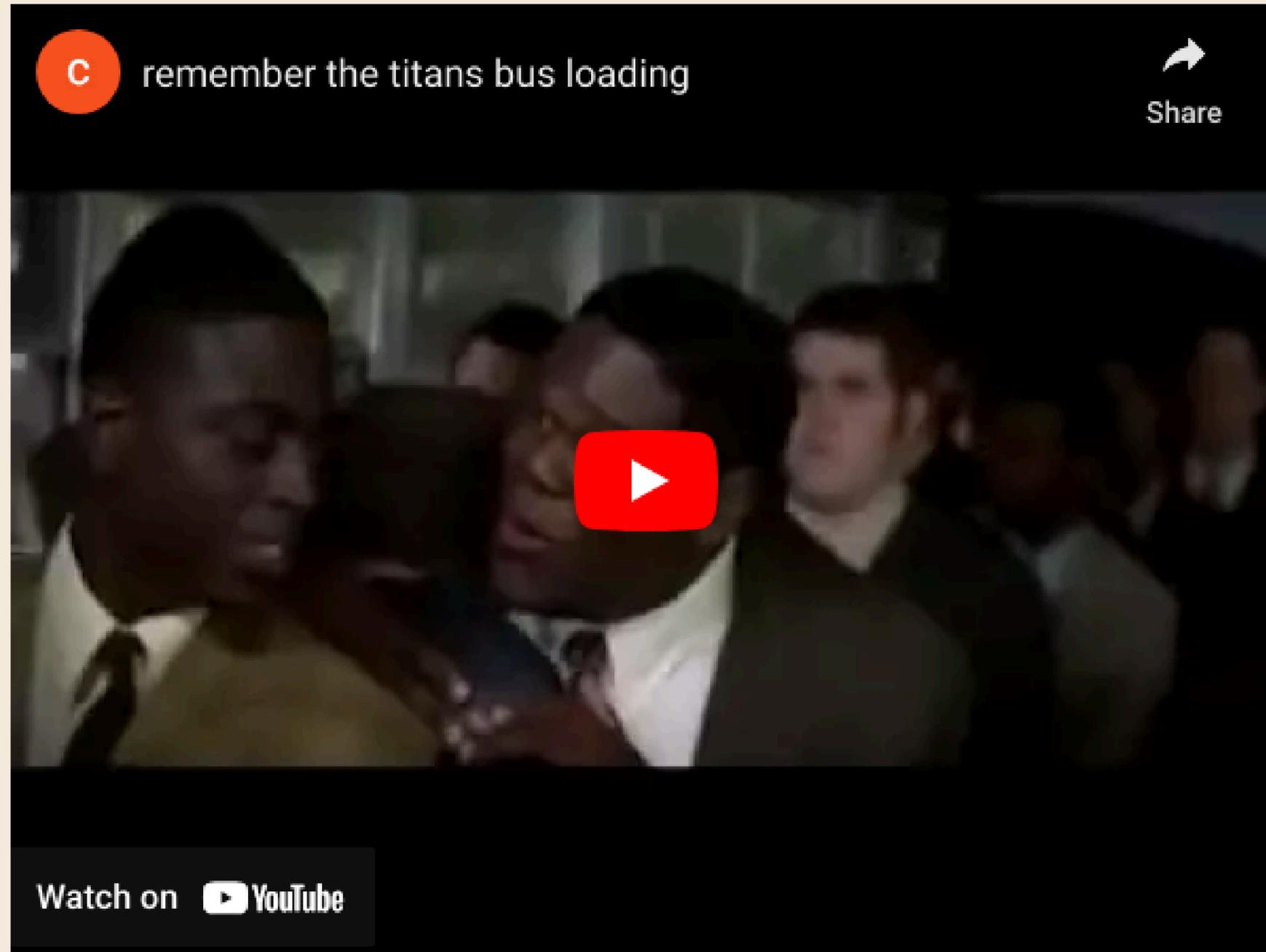


Realistic Conflict Theory

- Formed by Donald Campbell after this experiment
- Tension will arrive when competing for limited resources
 - Includes respect, power, & recognition
- Can lead to stereotyping and violence



Remember the Titans



PRACTICAL TOOLS FOR CREATING SYNERGY

Personal Side

- Get to know the person
- Please say *Thank You*
- Genuine compliments
- **Trust in your team**
- **STOP & Process**
- Find strengths
- **Feedback sandwich**

Professional Side

- Use the personal side - **Communication**
 - Offer transparency - Value review
 - **Dependability - Foster trust**
 - Delegating - Macro manage
 - Consider: What do they need to hear in this moment, **Golden --> Platinum**
- Rule**
- Remove selfish agenda
 - Benefit of the doubt

HOW TO MAXIMIZE SYNERGY

It looks different for different companies

- Sizes
- Products

Different leadership styles

- Personalities
- Experience
- Modality - Hands off vs on

Different team composition

- Skill sets
- Diversity

Postgres Conference is Synergy!

“The essence of synergy is to value differences-to respect them, to build on strengths, to compensate for weaknesses.”

- STEPHEN COVEY, *THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE*

RESOURCES

<https://www.commandprompt.com/>

<https://www.simplypsychology.org/robbers-cave.html>

Densley J, Peterson J. Group Aggression. *Curr Opin Psychol*. 2018 Feb;19:43-48. doi: 10.1016/j.copsy.2017.03.031. Epub 2017 Apr 10. PMID: 29279221.

Echebarria-Echabe A, Guede EF. Extending the theory of realistic conflict to competition in institutional settings: intergroup status and outcome. *J Soc Psychol*. 2003 Dec;143(6):763-82. doi: 10.1080/00224540309600429. PMID: 14658750.

Hendriks I, Lubbers M, Scheepers P. Individual change in rejection of equal opportunities for foreigners among adolescents and young adults in Switzerland: Testing realistic conflict theory from a dynamic perspective. *PLoS One*. 2024 Feb 7;19(2):e0296883. doi: 10.1371/journal.pone.0296883. PMID: 38324524; PMCID: PMC10849248.

Creasy T, Kinard J. Health care mergers and acquisitions: implications of robbers cave realistic conflict theory and prisoner's dilemma game theory. *Health Care Manag (Frederick)*. 2013 Jan-Mar;32(1):58-68. doi: 10.1097/HCM.0b013e31827edadd. PMID: 23364419.