

Attack the Gremlins in Your Gears:

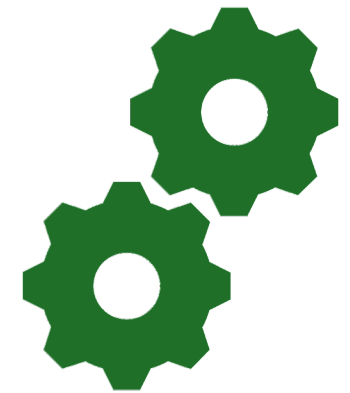
Use Interference Diagramming to diagnose what's really going on under the hood.

Presented By:

- **Anita Smith**, Director of Business Transformation and Rapid Process Improvement
- **Terry Everett**, TWC Process Improvement Project Manager
- **Jeremy Cervantes**, TWC Process Improvement Project Manager

Division: Information, Innovation, and Insight (I|3)

- **Jennifer Colehower**, Division Director



TWC Annual Conference December 2025

Who we are and what we do...



TWC Business Transformation and Rapid Process Improvement (BT-RPI) Team



Our program's mission is to drive operational excellence and innovation by improving the agency's efficiency, effectiveness, and customer service.

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Business Transformation and Rapid Process Improvement

- Eliminating inefficiencies
- Streamlining processes & systems
- Implementing data-supported improvements
- Guiding teams through change management
- Fostering a culture of continuous improvement and transformation

This session is for you if...



You want to get your team on the same page... focused on a common goal



You are desiring methods and language to help improve teamwork



You want to jumpstart brainstorming within your team and stop inertia



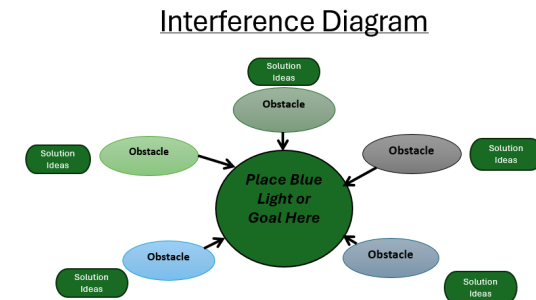
You are looking for a method to find winning solutions



You want to build your knowledge of Continuous Improvement

Interference Diagram

- Tool used to visualize and identify obstacles or **interferences** that hinder or block the achievement of a goal



- **Interference Diagramming helps** teams to:
 - Clarify a desired outcome (“Blue Light”)
 - Discuss why the desired outcome is not being achieved
 - Develop ideas for addressing the interferences (Solutions)



"Blue Light"

- Your core work or the core work of your team
- The work or outcomes that matter most (especially from the customer's perspective)
- The goal or mission of your team or system
- The work you or your team were hired to complete



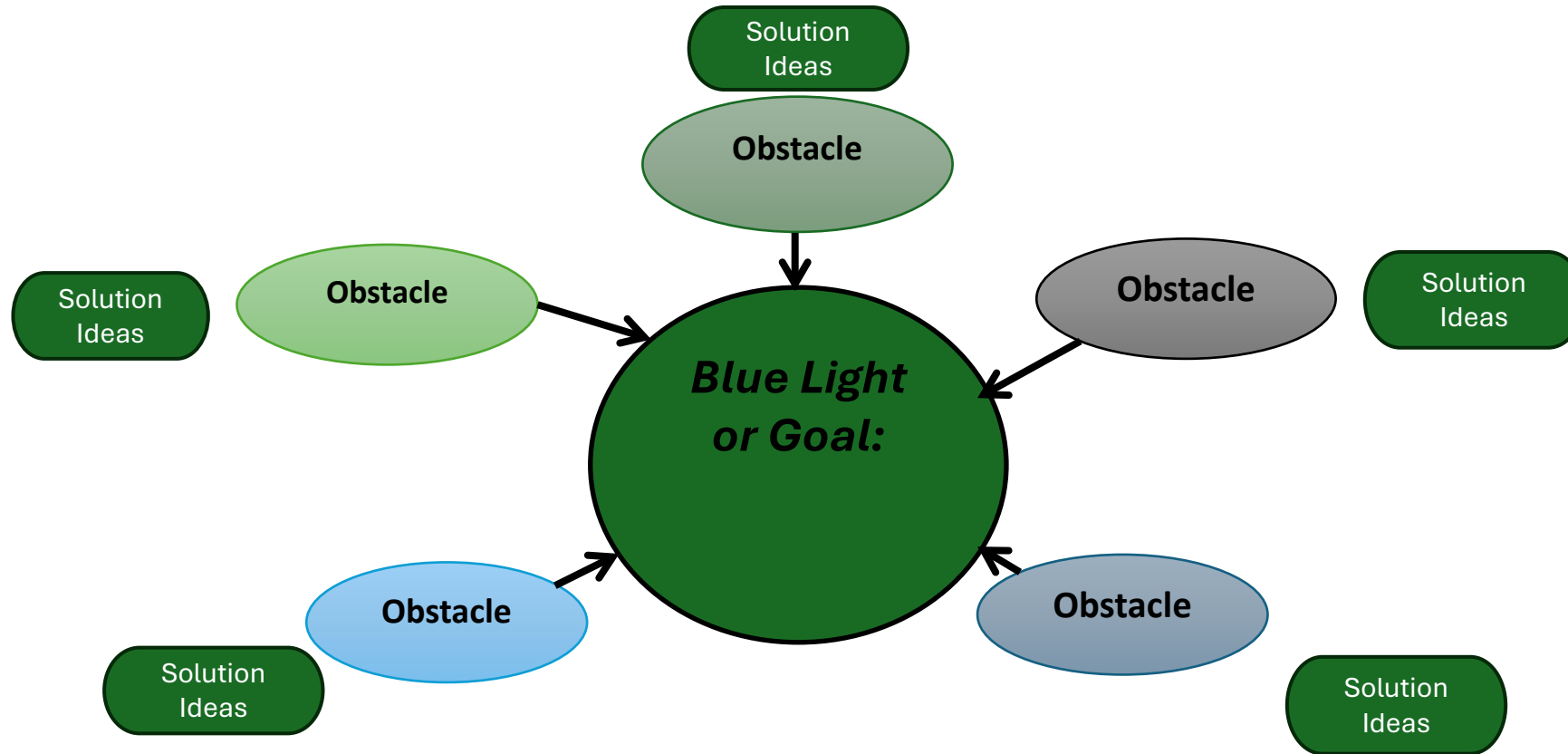
What is your
Blue Light?

Today's Blue Light
Statement:

*“To Help People
Enter or Re-enter
the Workforce”*



Interference Diagram Build



Step 1. Assemble a group of SMEs unless you already have feedback.

Step 2. Put the goal in the middle of the diagram.

Step 3. Identify obstacles to goal. Try to identify major obstacles that are agreed to.

Step 4. Brainstorm potential solutions and write them down.
Optional Step 4. Root Cause Analysis

Parking Lot List

[illegible]

Let's build an
Interference Diagram!

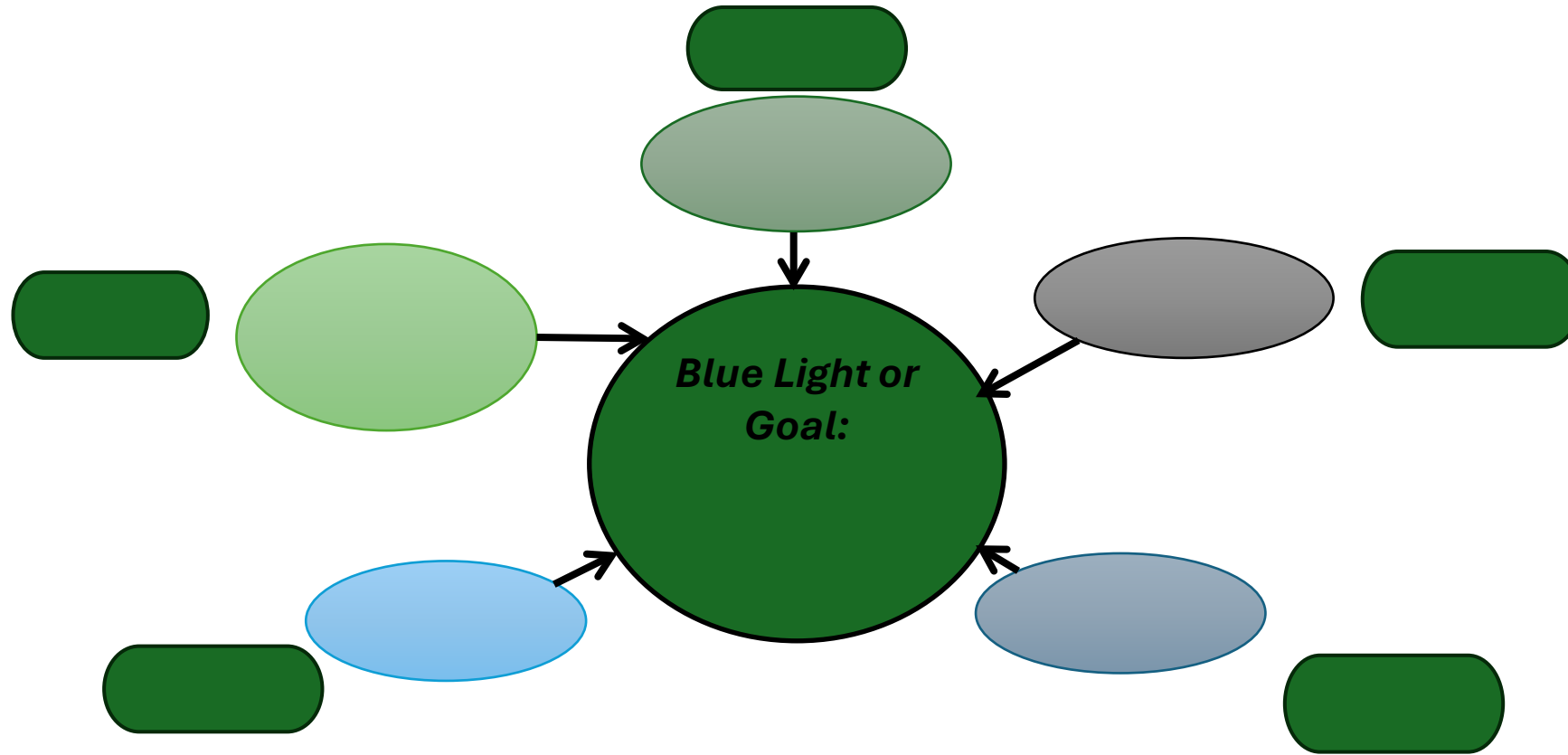


Today's Blue Light

***“To Help People
Enter or
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Interference Diagram Template



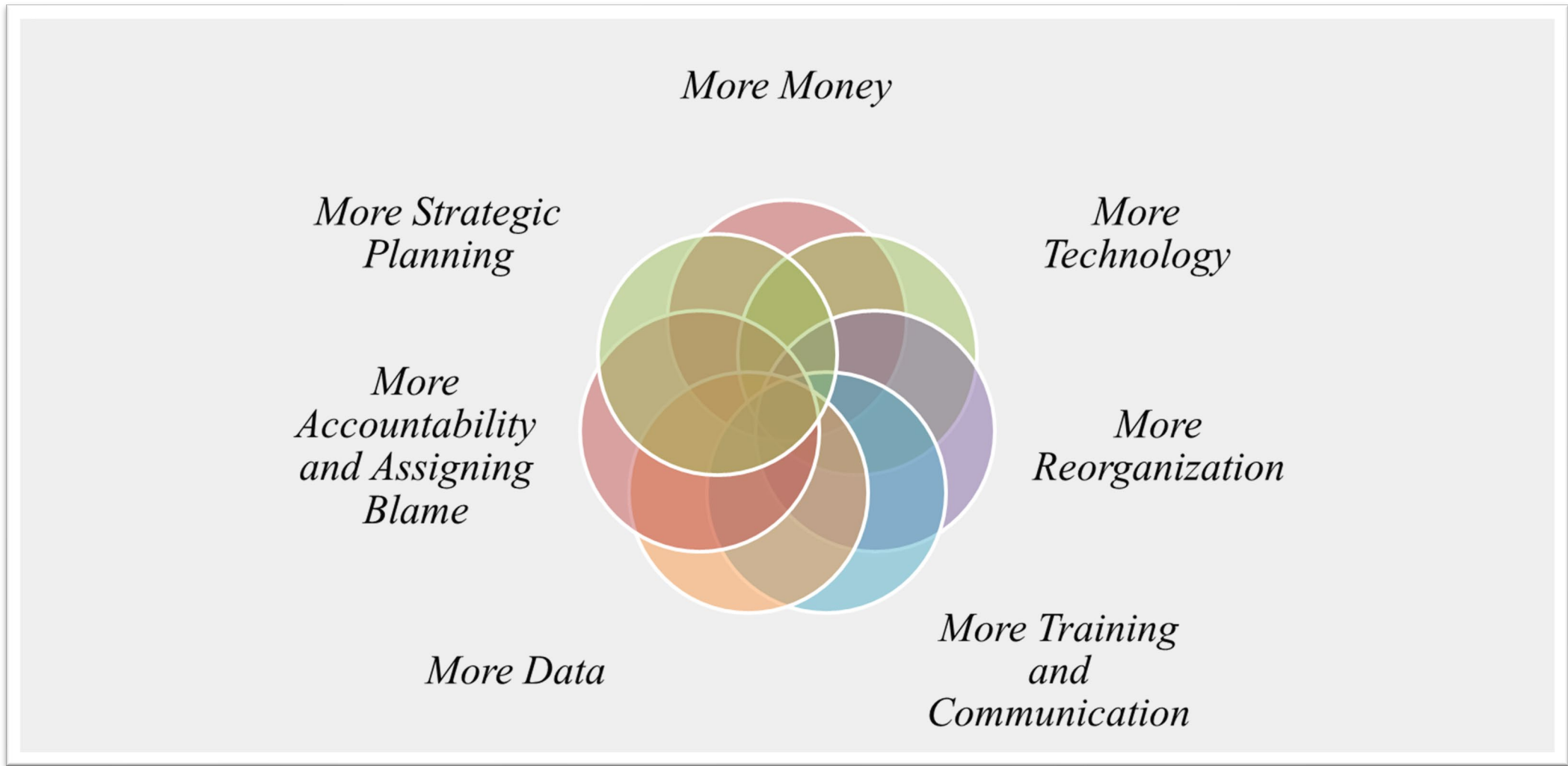
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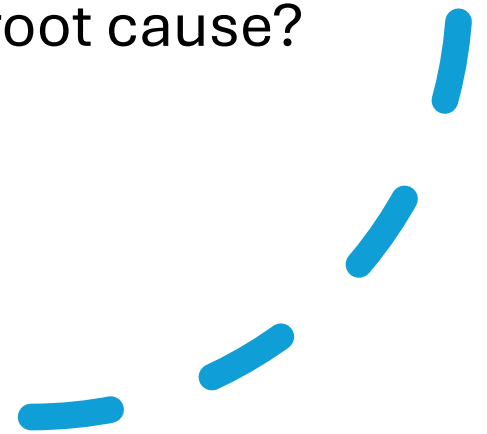
Optional Step 4: Root Cause Analysis



The Seductive 7

Summary and Next steps

1. Identify your **blue light** or main goal.
2. **Brainstorm what interferes** with your blue light.
3. *Look for **root causes** of your main obstacles or interferences.*
4. **Brainstorm potential solutions** for your blue light obstacles.
 - Does your solution address the root cause?
 - Avoid Seductive 7



Questions and Answers

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Business Transformation/RPI Team: BIO



Anita Smith (anita.smith2@twc.texas.gov) currently serves as the Director of the Business Transformation and Rapid Process Improvement Dept, within the Information, Innovation and Insight Division at TWC. She has spent the last two decades leveraging Continuous Improvement Methodologies to address fundamental issues within organizations across both nonprofit and for-profit sectors. Her extensive project portfolio encompasses a wide range of areas including optimizing operational workflows, mitigating asset theft, enhancing employee retention, elevating customer service standards, and fostering a superior employee experience, among others. Anita earned her MBA from Texas State University and her Bachelor's degree in Agribusiness Management from Alcorn State University. Additionally, Anita possesses professional accreditation as a Certified Lean Six Sigma Blackbelt, affirming her expertise in process improvement methodologies.



Jeremy Cervantes (jeremy.cervantes@twc.texas.gov) is originally from Austin Texas and earned his Bachelor's degree in Business Administration from St. Edward's University, his Master's degree in Business Administration from The University of Texas at Tyler, and is in his second year earning his Ph.D., in Human Resource Development. He is a veteran with over 12 years of active service in the US Army as an Infantry Officer, with multiple deployments in support of the Global War on Terrorism. He has over 25 years of experience in managing and leading organizations, as well as conducting process improvement operations, for both the public and private sectors. He joined TWC in 2023 and has been committed to bringing his expertise and drive for Process Improvement to the Texas Workforce Commission.



Terry Everett (terry.everett@twc.texas.gov) has been with TWC since March of 2018 with nearly all that time as a Rapid Process Improvement (RPI) Project Manager in the Business Transformation department. He has over 35 years of experience in the private sector supporting and leading efforts in continuous improvement, team development, leadership development, project management, and quality management. Terry earned his bachelor's degree from St. Edward's University and enjoys guiding teams and individuals through the process of improving their work, while creating an environment of empowerment and engagement.