

Welcome back to WUN Drive



Module two: Speaking Up & Leaning In





Lean In: Sheryl Sandberg

- Inequality still exists
- Women noticeably not in leadership positions
- Talk, use the data and identify ways to close the gap
- Fake it 'till you make it!
- Navigate your career like a 'jungle gym'
- Being like versus professional achievement
- Work life balance
- Kids means a pause or end to your career
- Having it all – or not?

LEAN IN

WOMEN, WORK, AND
THE WILL TO LEAD

SHERYL SANDBERG

THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

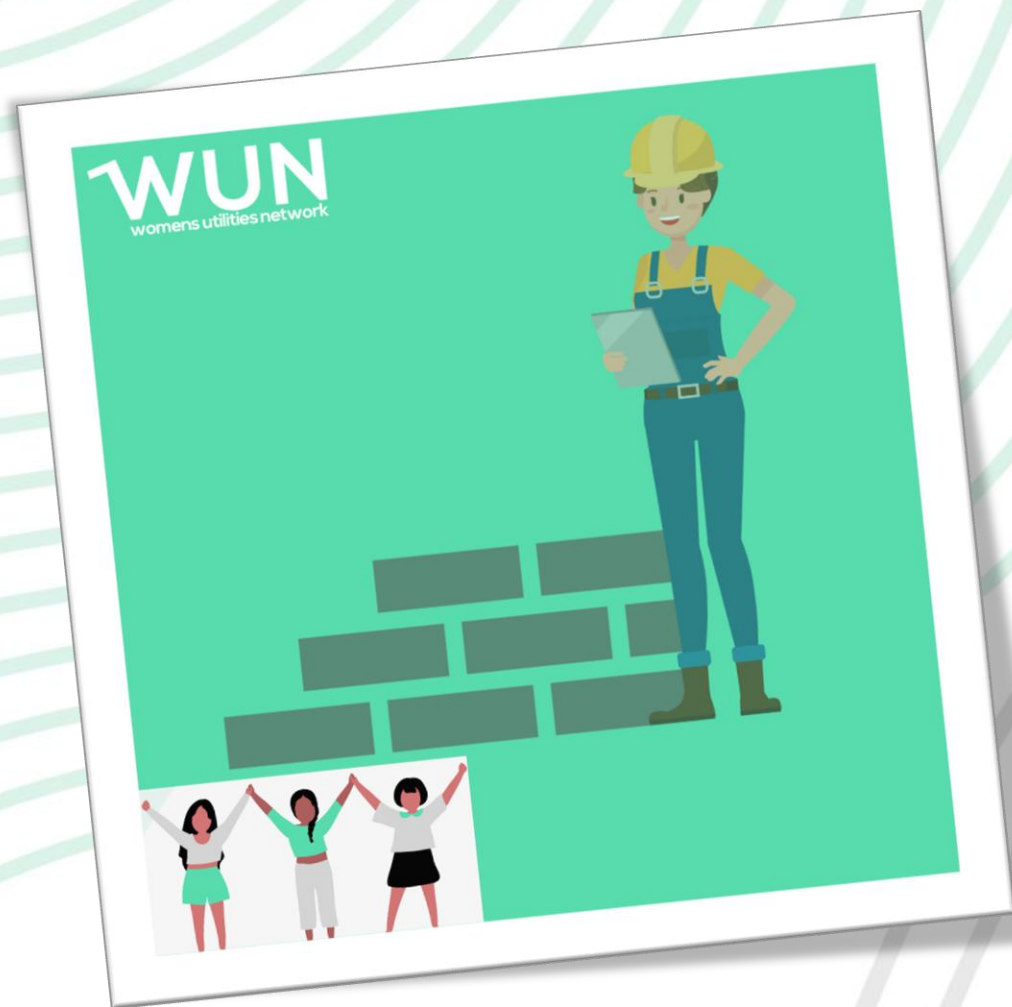
WUN
womens utilities network

Learning objectives

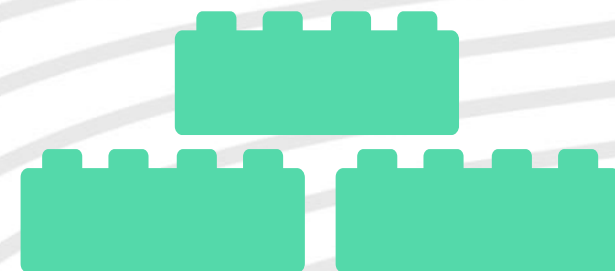
Empowering emerging leaders to ditch self-doubt and develop core competencies to lead with confidence, courage and empathy – to be able to speak up and lean in to more challenging situations.



- Strengthen your sense of self and confidence
- Tackle challenges female leaders face
- Speaking up – Increase your influence and impact
- Leaning in – Communicate confidently in challenging situations



Let's get started!



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Activity

- Reflect on one recent moment when you felt empowered to speak up and one where you felt less confident or hesitant.
- What influenced each?

**"Confidence comes not
from always being right,
but from not fearing to
be wrong."**

Peter T McIntyre

Psychological safety

Being able to:

Be
yourself

Ask
questions

Raise
concerns

Take
risks

Disagree

Make
mistakes

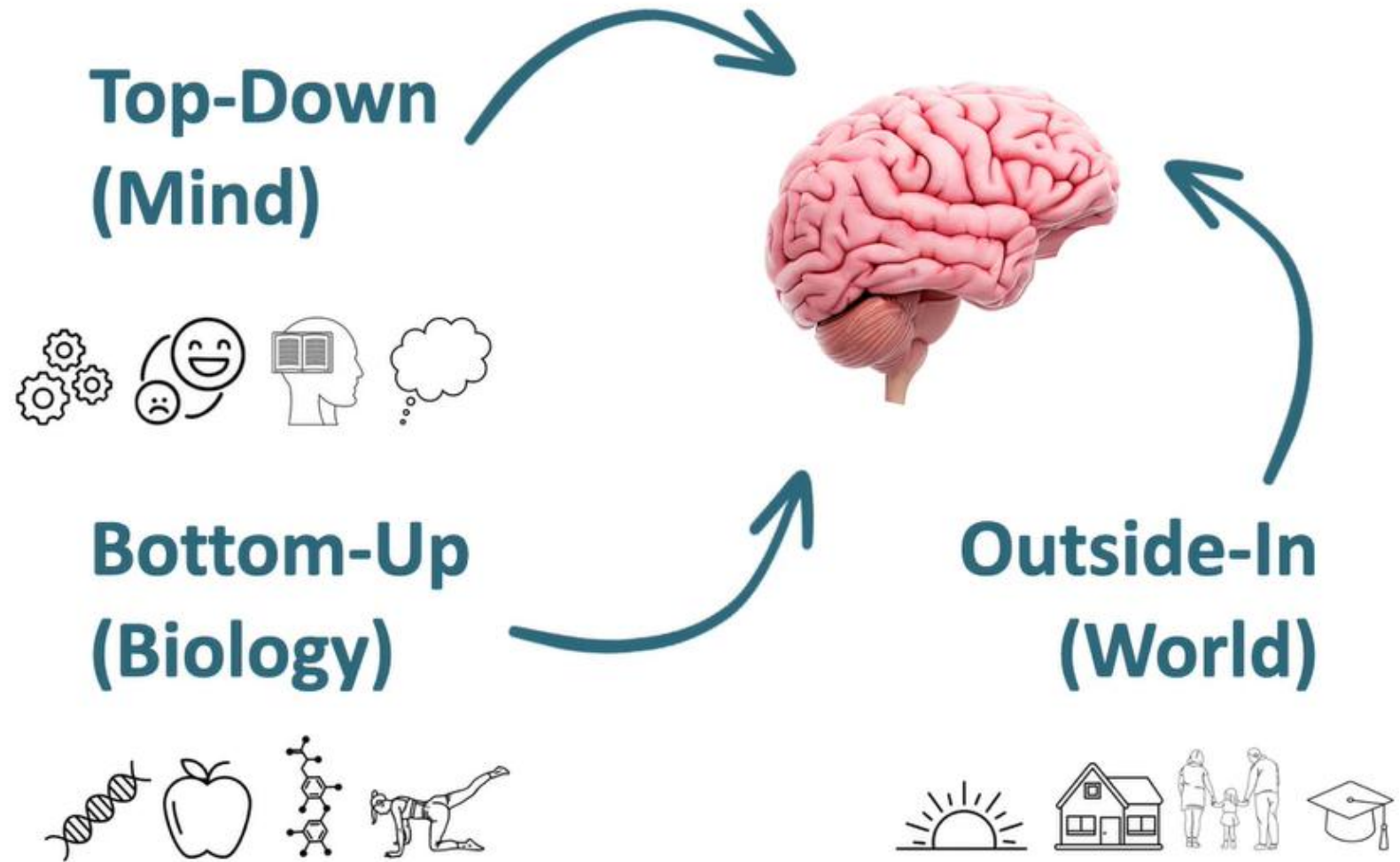


Breakout

- Three groups
- Three scenarios

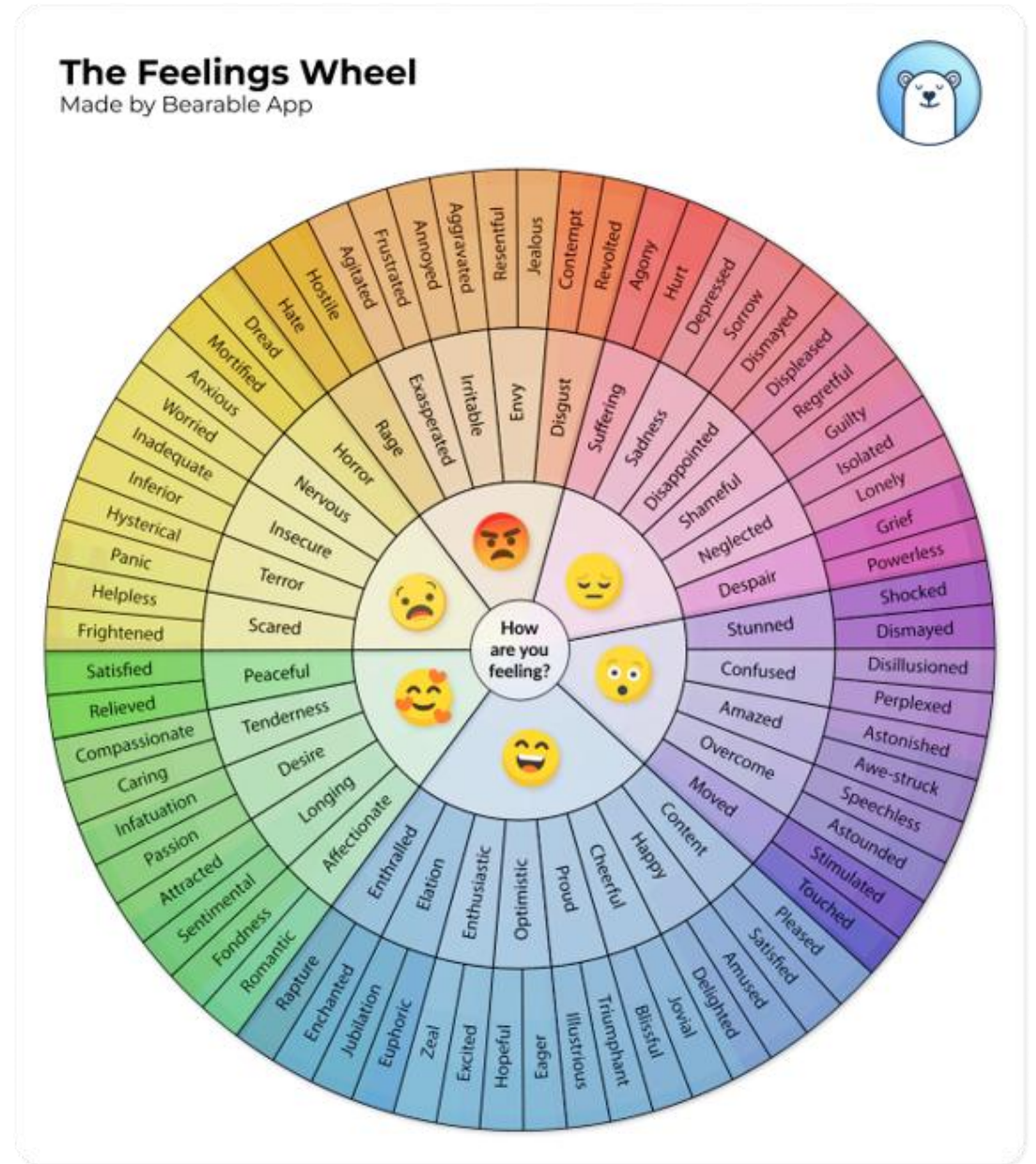


Mind-body response



Source: Dr Sarah McKay

Wheel of emotions



Breakout – The wheel of emotions

Map a recent stressful event on the wheel:

- Think of a recent 'stressful' situation and use the wheel to identify which emotions were at play?
- Notice if your emotions were layered



Emotional Intelligence

“The ability to recognise, understand, and manage our own emotions, while also recognising, understanding, and influencing the emotions of others.”

Daniel Goleman



EQ components

- **Self-Awareness:** Recognising our emotions and their impact
- **Self-Regulation:** Managing emotions and impulses
- **Empathy:** Understanding and sharing others' feelings
- **Motivation:** Using emotions constructively
- **Social Skills:** Building and maintaining healthy relationships



Your personal EQ strengths

Breakouts



EQ tips

- Learn to listen
- Pause before responding
- Get self-aware
- Learn to motivate yourself
- Analyse your emotions



Identifying confidence barriers



Common barriers

- Self-doubt
- Imposter syndrome
- Societal expectations and biases



Introducing neuroplasticity

- Our brains can rewire with repeated actions
- Confidence can be strengthened through practice

Take a moment and think about a time you overcame a confidence barrier...

Practical tools

- **Reframe Criticism:** Turn feedback into growth opportunities
- **Confidence Statements:** Write a statement celebrating a recent success
- **Confidence Journal:** Record daily moments of confidence



Breakouts

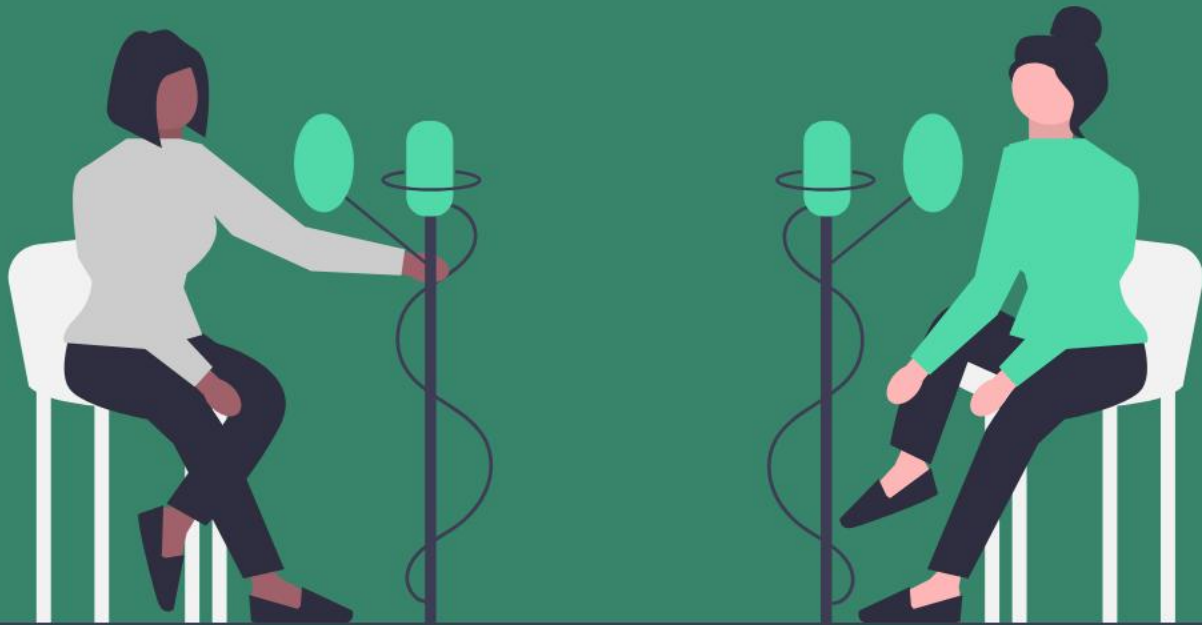
Using the tools



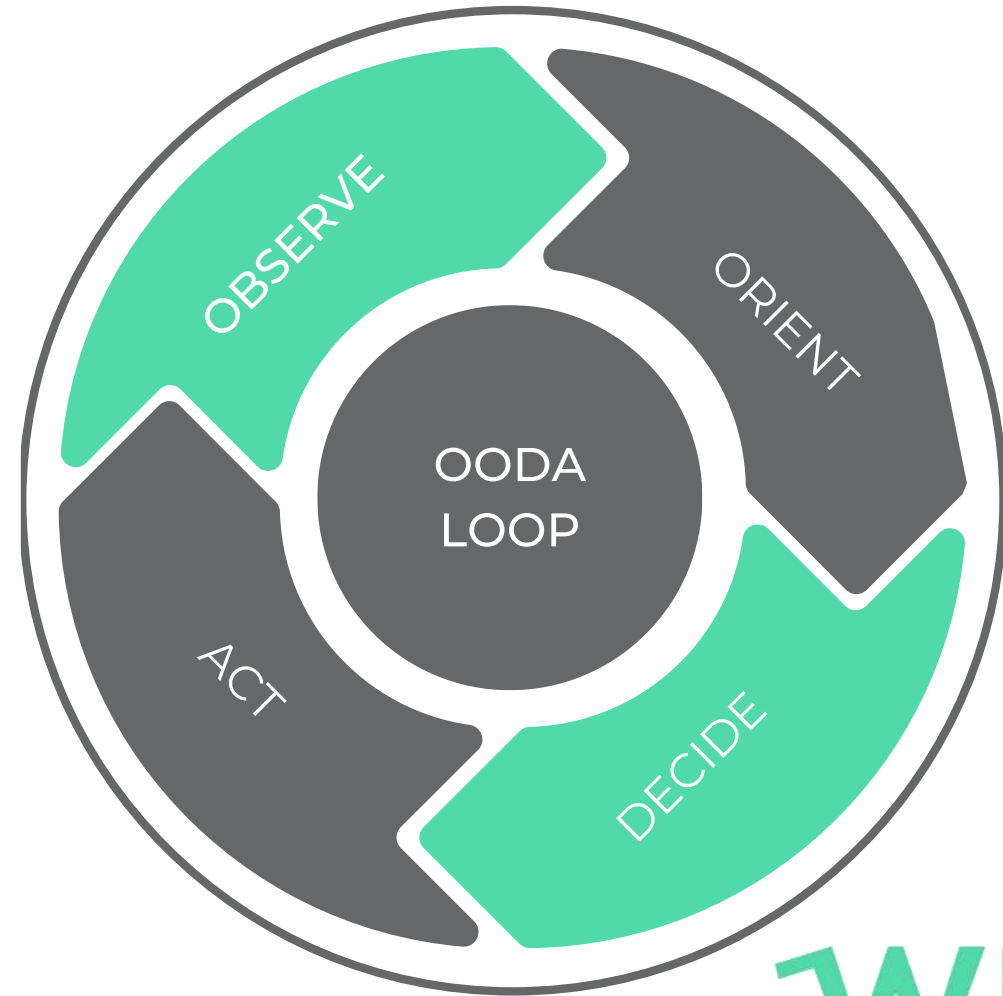


Speaking up

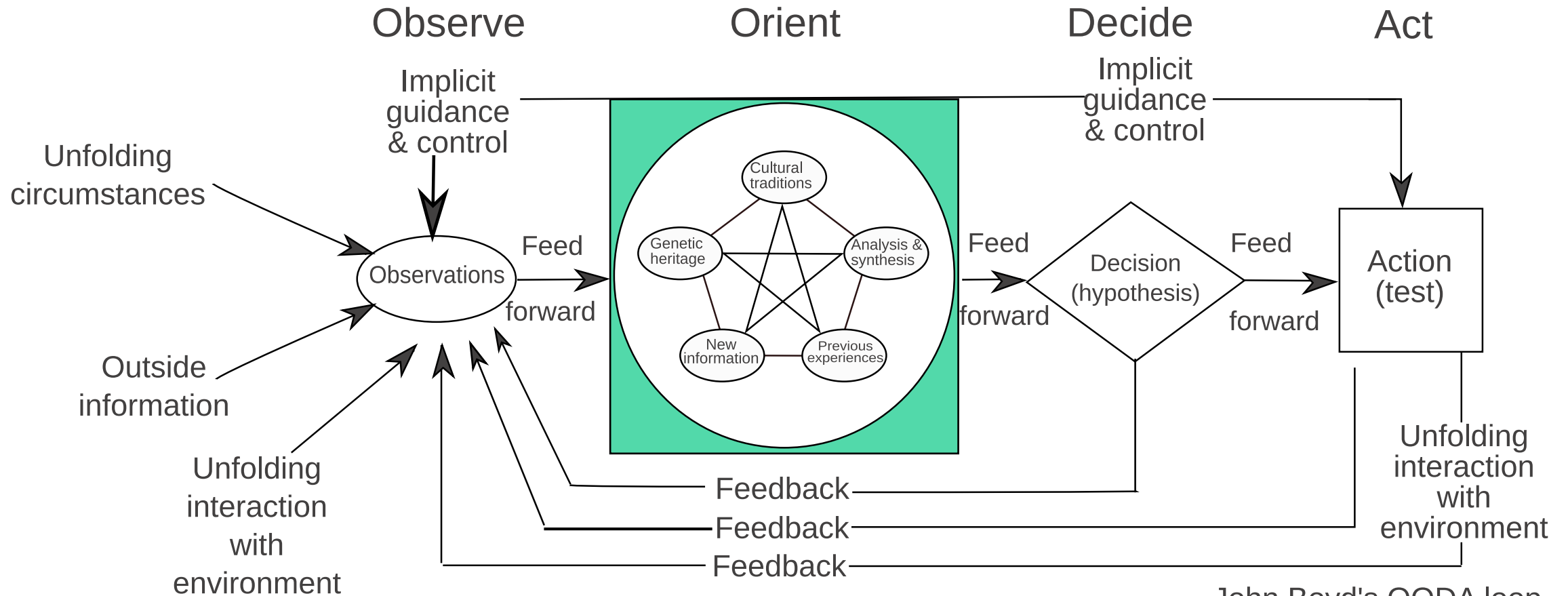
Enhancing influence and impact



The OODA Loop



The OODA Loop



John Boyd's OODA loop

Clear and assertive language

- Our words don't just share information
- They shape how others perceive us and how confident we appear

Avoid minimising language

Instead of this	Say this	Why it works
"I just wanted to check if this might be okay with you."	"I want to confirm if this approach works for you."	Removes hesitation and projects a sense of confidence.
"Maybe we should try something different."	"I suggest we try an alternative approach."	Signals ownership of the idea and decisive action.
"I think it could possibly work."	"I believe this will work."	Communicates certainty rather than doubt.

Be direct and specific

Instead of this	Say this	Why it works
"I kind of feel like we should maybe adjust this a bit."	"Let's make a small adjustment to improve this."	Eliminates vagueness and makes the action clear.
"What do you think of this idea? I'm not sure it's any good..."	"I'd like your thoughts on this approach. Here's why I think it works."	Positions you as confident and seeking input collaboratively.
"There might be an issue, but I'm not really sure."	"There's a potential issue I've identified, and here's what I suggest we do."	Balances clarity of the issue with a solution-focused mindset.

Non-verbal communication

- Body language and tone often speak louder than words
- How we present ourselves physically can reinforce or undermine our message



Reinforcing words non-verbally

- Upright posture, open gestures
- Steady eye contact
- Controlled pace and tone



Breakouts

Applying the OODA Loop with
confident communication



Activity instructions

Apply the OODA Loop

Think of a decision you're facing at work or in life. You'll work through each OODA step together using the framework to organise your thoughts and gain clarity on your next steps.:

- **Observe:** What's happening around this decision? Gather the facts and external inputs.
- **Orient:** What do you think about it? Bring in your past experiences, biases, and what feels important to you.
- **Decide:** What's your next step or plan of action?
- **Act:** How will you confidently communicate or implement this decision?

Practice confident communication

As part of the **Act** stage, deliver a clear and confident statement to your partner about your decision. Use what we've learned:

- Upright posture
- Steady eye contact
- Clear, strong voice
- Assertive phrasing like 'I believe...' or 'I am confident...'



Managing challenging conversations



15 ways to challenge effectively

- If we put ourselves in their shoes, what changes?
- What's missing?
- Were you aware that...
- This is a tough conversation for me... (sometimes framing a conversation that is about to focus on challenging can help prepare everyone)
- What would X say if he/she was here? (brings in other perspectives)
- Let's challenge ourselves on why this might not be a good idea for a moment...
- What makes you say that? (getting others to explain what's behind their thinking can sometimes be enough...)
- I have a different perspective...
- Can we play Devil's Advocate here for a minute?
- What other alternatives have you considered?
- Looking at this, what have we not considered?
- Are there some assumptions we are making here that could be challenged?
- What are the potential risks?
- Can I build on that idea?
- Here's another angle to consider...

DESC

Describe

I've noticed that recently, I've been given projects with very short deadlines.

I feel concerned because this puts pressure on me to rush, which may affect the quality of my work.

Express

Specify

Could we discuss realistic timelines in advance, so I can deliver the best results?

This would allow me to produce quality work without compromising timelines.

Consequences

DESC

Describe

In team meetings,
I've noticed that I
often get interrupted
when I'm sharing my
ideas.

This is frustrating
because I feel my
contributions are cut
short, which impacts
my confidence.

Express

Specify

I'd appreciate it if I
could complete my
points before
opening the floor for
discussion.

This would help
ensure I can fully
contribute, which
benefits the whole
team discussion.

Consequences

Exploring DESC

Activity



A stylized illustration of a winding road through a landscape. The road is grey with white dashed lines and curves through green hills. There are several trees, including tall thin ones on the left and a single rounded one on the right. A road sign with a white top and orange bottom is visible on the left. A large green circle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text 'Summary & action planning' in white.

Summary & action planning

Summary

- Explored psychological safety and the power of neuroplasticity in building confidence.
- Strengthened confidence and communication skills.
- Explored emotional intelligence and overcoming confidence barriers.
- Learned practical tools for assertive communication and decision-making.
- Applied frameworks like the OODA Loop and DESC in group activities.



Action planning

- Write down two or three actionable steps that you will put into practice before our next session based on our work today
- Review your programme objectives and decide if there are any tweaks you want to make after module two
- Share with the group



Close & next steps



And finally...

- Next up is Impactful Conversations.
- Your feedback is important to us. Please complete our Drive survey to help us shape future modules and programmes.
- Any final questions?

WUN Drive Cohort 1 Feedback



WUN DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

WUN Arrive

A skills development programme designed specifically for women who are new into their careers in the utilities sector.

WUN Drive

A skills development programme designed specifically for women in utilities entering their initial management role.

WUN Thrive

A leadership programme designed for women in utilities looking for senior leadership progression.

WUN Strive

A programme designed to help understand how to amplify positive behaviours and values to create more inclusive workplaces.

WUN MBA

A university backed MBA programme focussed on environmental sustainability dedicated to women in utilities.

