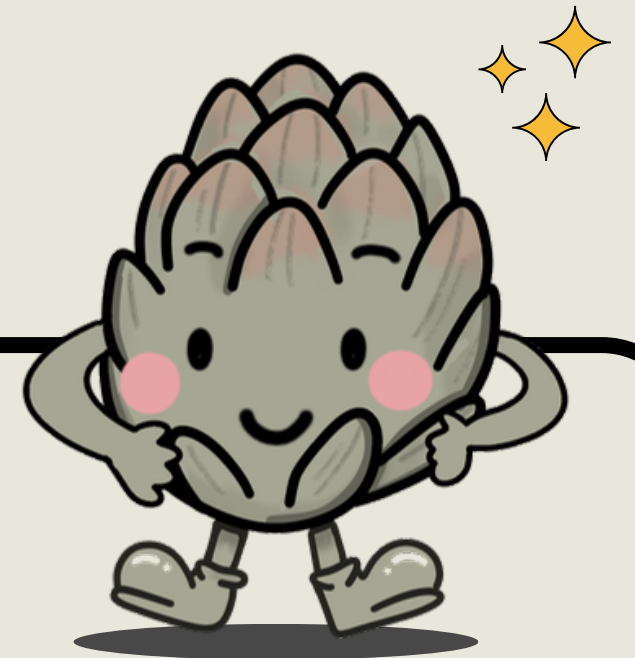


Open Community Leadership

Module 01



The Experience is the Community

Workshop for open source community leaders to map why people stay, why they leave, and what to improve next.

POPCOM INDEX

CONNECTION

PARTICIPATION

Introduction

Who you are
One liner about yourself
(maintainer, conference organiser, meetup leader, etc)



How the room works

Honest does not mean unsafe.

- Work on a real community.
- Share only what you are comfortable sharing.
- No naming people or communities without consent.
- Small changes is beat perfect plans.



Workshop outline

The workshop moves through five parts.



Open Community Leadership

Open Community Leadership

FRAMEWORKMODULESRESOURCESRESEARCHBADGES

Open Community Leadership

Helping communities create future contributors and leaders

Open Community Leadership (OCL) is an open-source project that turns community knowledge into practical frameworks, tools, and learning resources. Through POPCOM, it helps communities understand how people join, contribute, take responsibility, build relationships, and grow into future leaders.

[Explore the framework](#)[Start a module](#)

A FRAMEWORK FOR OPEN COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

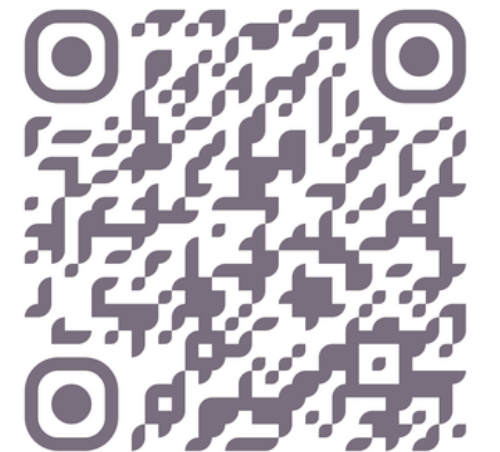
What OCL gives you

A framework

POPCOM gives you a shared language for community health.

A module path

Each module turns one part of community leadership into practice.



opencommunityleadership.dev

The 3 Learning paths

SELF GUIDED

*Work through the modules at
your own pace.*

WORKSHOP

*Work through the modules at
your own pace.*



MENTOR

*Work through the modules at
your own pace.*

POPCOM

Six dimensions that shape how people join, participate, grow, and take responsibility.



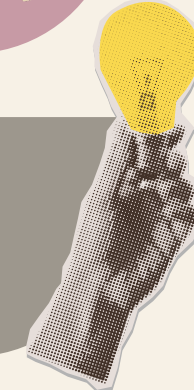
Participation

How people join



Ownership

How people gain responsibility



Purpose

Why people stay



Connection

How relationships form



Opportunity

How contributors grow



Mentorship

How communities reproduce



Stay / Leave

Write one reason per sticky note. Then cluster themes on the wall

Stay

*What made you
return?*

Left

*What made you
stoppe?*

- One reason per note
- Cluster similar reasons
- Look for repeats across the room



Map your community

You are mapping your own community. The table helps you think, but the canvas is yours.

7 min

Write alone

First pass. Mark what works, breaks, or remains open.

Bell

Discuss

Compare patterns with your table. Keep filling your own canvas.

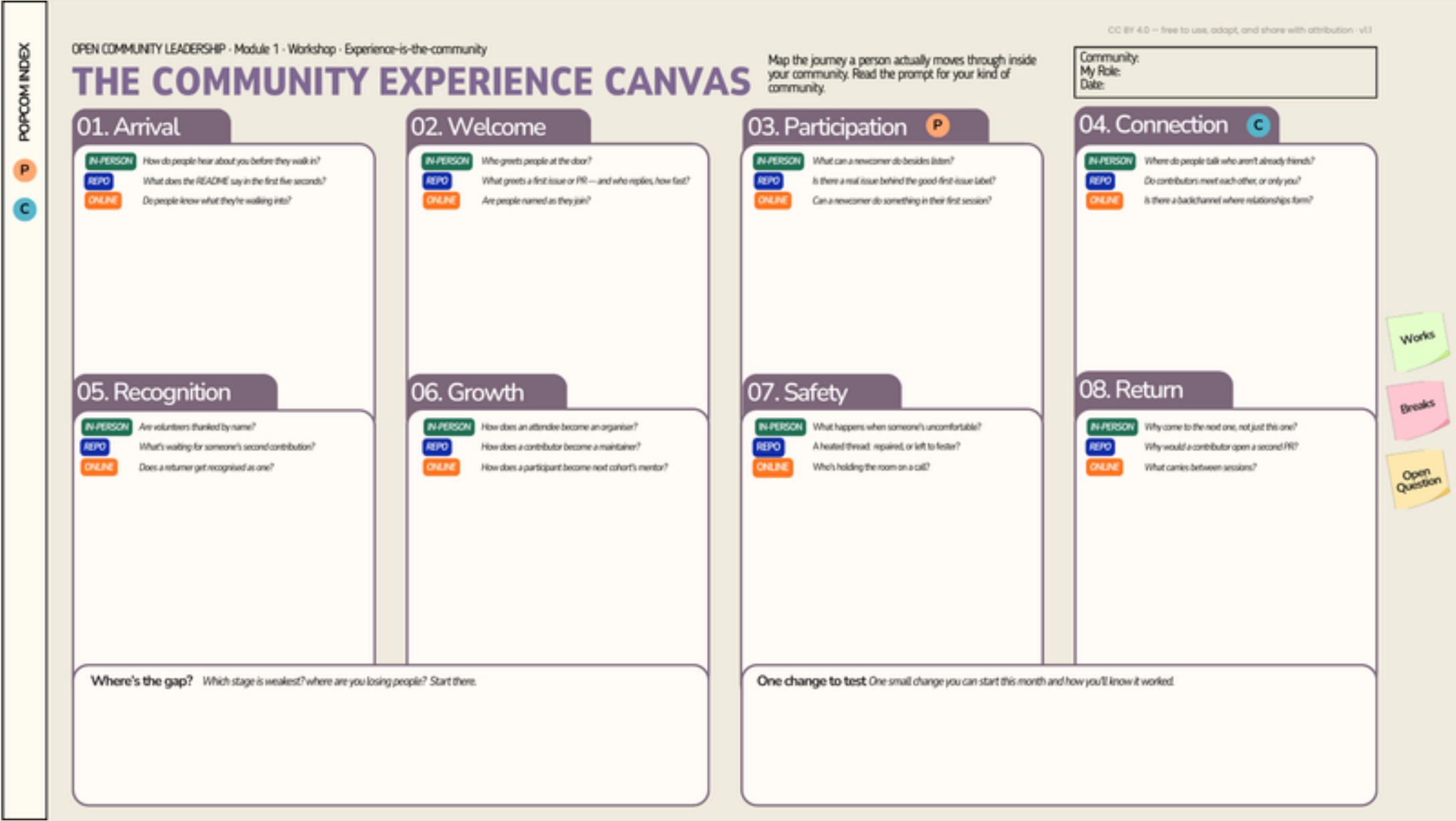
Finish

Decide

Choose the stage you most want to change.

This is a first diagnostic pass, not a perfect map.

The Community Experience Canvas



Use the prompts for your context: in-person, repo, or online live.

THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE CANVAS

Map the journey a person actually moves through inside your community. Read the prompt for your kind of community.

Community: *PyBridge Rotterdam*
My Role: *Co-organiser*
Date: *July2026*



01. Arrival

- IN-PERSON** How do people hear about you before they walk in?
- REPO** What does the README say in the first five seconds?
- ONLINE** Do people know what they're walking into?

Meetup.com + word of mouth works –
~10 new faces every event

No idea how people who AREN'T on
Meetup.com would ever find us

05. Recognition

- IN-PERSON** Are volunteers thanked by name?
- REPO** What's waiting for someone's second contribution?
- ONLINE** Does a returner get recognised as one?

Volunteers helped packed up 3 times.
Nobody thanked them by name

First-time speakers get applause,
then... nothing. No follow-up

02. Welcome

- IN-PERSON** Who greets people at the door?
- REPO** What greets a first issue or PR — and who replies, how fast?
- ONLINE** Are people named as they join?

Lisa greets everyone at the door –
first-timers get a hello

...but when Lisa is away, nobody does
it. It's a person, not a practice

06. Growth

- IN-PERSON** How does an attendee become an organiser?
- REPO** How does a contributor become a maintainer?
- ONLINE** How does a participant become next cohort's mentor?

How did WE become organisers?
Someone asked. No path ... just luck

Two people probably wanted to help
more. But we didn't ask them.

03. Participation

- IN-PERSON** What can a newcomer do besides listen?
- REPO** Is there a real issue behind the good-first-issue label?
- ONLINE** Can a newcomer do something in their first session?

Lightning talks open to anyone:
low bar, works well

Same 6 people give all the full talks.
New speakers don't come forward

07. Safety

- IN-PERSON** What happens when someone's uncomfortable?
- REPO** A heated thread: repaired, or left to fester?
- ONLINE** Who's holding the room on a call?

CoC exists, linked on every event page

Has anyone ever actually reported
anything? Would they know how?

04. Connection

- IN-PERSON** Where do people talk who aren't already friends?
- REPO** Do contributors meet each other, or only you?
- ONLINE** Is there a backchannel where relationships form?

Pizza break is long on purpose :
real conversations happen

Regulars cluster together. Newcomers
stand alone by the wall.

08. Return

- IN-PERSON** Why come to the next one, not just this one?
- REPO** Why would a contributor open a second PR?
- ONLINE** What carries between sessions?

Core group of ~25 returns every
month like clockwork

Of ~10 new faces, maybe 2 come back.
We lose about 8/month and never
ask why

Where's the gap? Which stage is weakest? where are you losing people? Start there.

Recognition. And it leaks into Return. People help, nobody notices, they quietly stop coming. The 8-of-10 newcomers we lose were probably standing alone at pizza too (Connection).

One change to test One small change you can start this month and how you'll know it worked.

Thank every volunteer and first-time speaker by name from the mic at the end of each event. Costs 2 minutes.
Owner: me. Review after 3 events: did any of them come back?

Works

Breaks

Open
Question

THE COMMUNITY EXPERIENCE CANVAS

Map the journey a person actually moves through inside your community. Read the prompt for your kind of community.

Community: *ClariPy*, open source Python library that
My Role: *single main maintainer*, helps write error messages
Date: *July2026*



01. Arrival

- IN-PERSON** How do people hear about you before they walk in?
- REPO** What does the README say in the first five seconds?
- ONLINE** Do people know what they're walking into?

Ranks well for "python error messages". 60% of new contributors say Google

People who arrive from social posts don't stick around. No idea why

05. Recognition

- IN-PERSON** Are volunteers thanked by name?
- REPO** What's waiting for someone's second contribution?
- ONLINE** Does a returner get recognised as one?

CHANGELOG credits everyone by handle, always

Second PRs get less attention than firsts. Reviewed the data — of 40 first-time contributors last year, 6 opened a second PR. Six.

Nobody has ever been thanked outside the changelog. No emails, no shout-outs

02. Welcome

- IN-PERSON** Who greets people at the door?
- REPO** What greets a first issue or PR — and who replies, how fast?
- ONLINE** Are people named as they join?

We have a welcome bot on first PR — but do people actually read the auto-message? No data

First-issue response time is 5-7 days when I'm busy. First-timers usually don't come back after week two of silence

06. Growth

- IN-PERSON** How does an attendee become an organiser?
- REPO** How does a contributor become a maintainer?
- ONLINE** How does a participant become next cohort's mentor?

Undefined. I've been "planning to add a co-maintainer" for a year

Two contributors have done 10+ PRs. I've never asked either of them

03. Participation

- IN-PERSON** What can a newcomer do besides listen?
- REPO** Is there a real issue behind the good-first-issue label?
- ONLINE** Can a newcomer do something in their first session?

good-first-issue label has 8 real issues, curated monthly

Docs contributions are hard — no writing guide, formatting quirks, PRs sit while I figure out the right template

07. Safety

- IN-PERSON** What happens when someone's uncomfortable?
- REPO** A heated thread: repaired, or left to fester?
- ONLINE** Who's holding the room on a call?

CoC in the repo, contact email works

Had a heated issue thread last month. Locked it, moved on, never repaired. Original reporter hasn't been back

04. Connection

- IN-PERSON** Where do people talk who aren't already friends?
- REPO** Do contributors meet each other, or only you?
- ONLINE** Is there a backchannel where relationships form?

Should there be a Discord? Would anyone come?

No. Everyone talks to me. Contributors have never talked to each other

08. Return

- IN-PERSON** Why come to the next one, not just this one?
- REPO** Why would a contributor open a second PR?
- ONLINE** What carries between sessions?

6 of 40 (15%) is the number that hurts

The 15% who do return — what did they have in common? Haven't looked

Where's the gap? Which stage is weakest? where are you losing people? Start there.

Recognition + Growth are the same problem: people contribute once, get a changelog line, and there's nothing structured waiting for them — no personal reply, no invitation to take on more, no path visible. The 15% return rate is the symptom; second-PR silence is the cause.

One change to test One small change you can start this month and how you'll know it worked.

Reply personally to every second PR within 48 hours, and name the contributor in the release notes (not just the changelog) as "returning contributor: @handle." Costs 10 minutes per release. Owner: me. Review after two releases — did any of those returning contributors open a third PR?

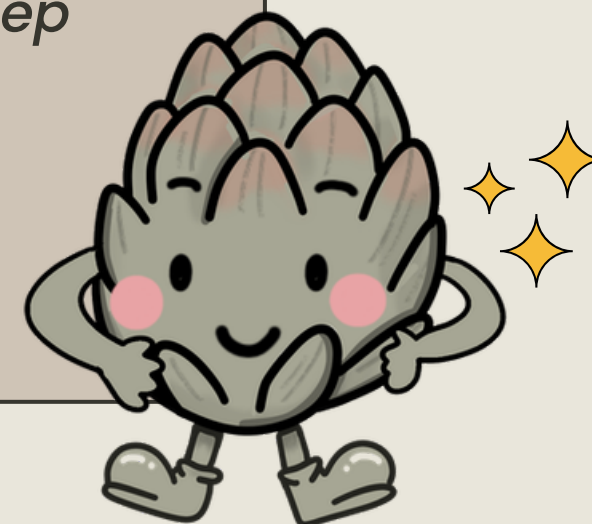
Works

Breaks

Open Question

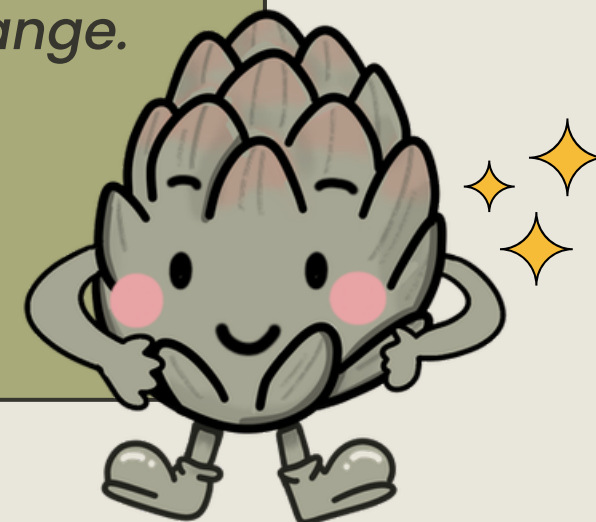
Discuss

*Compare patterns with your table. Keep
filling your own canvas.*



Decide

Choose the stage you most want to change.



Activity 3

Share. Listen. Resolve.

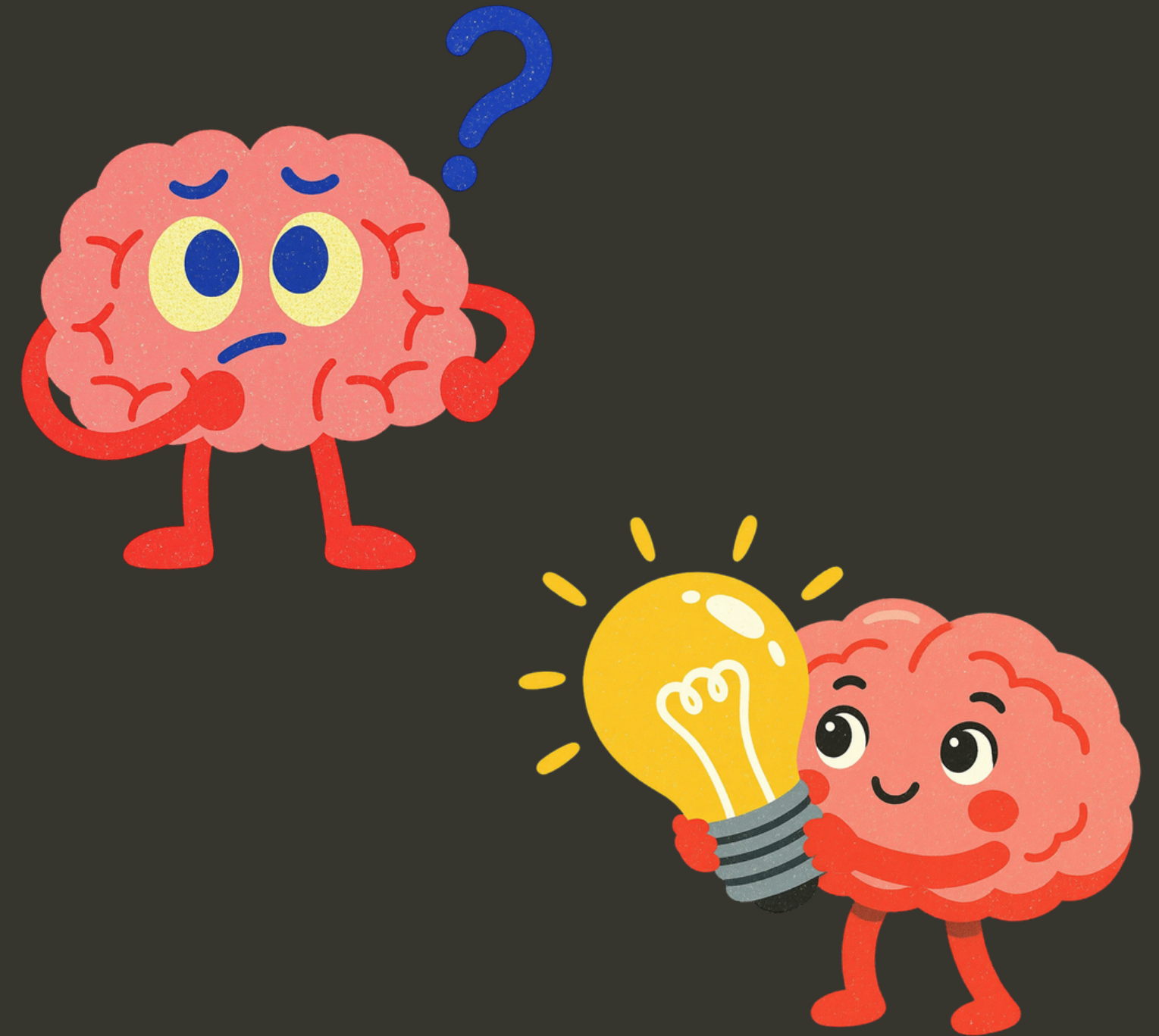
What's missing?

3 rounds. Share one sentence problem. Give one practical suggestion. Then swap.

1 Share one problem that you want to change.

2 Receive one idea. Give one idea.

3 Swap roles when the bell rings.
Change seats when the bell rings again



You've completed Workshop 1!

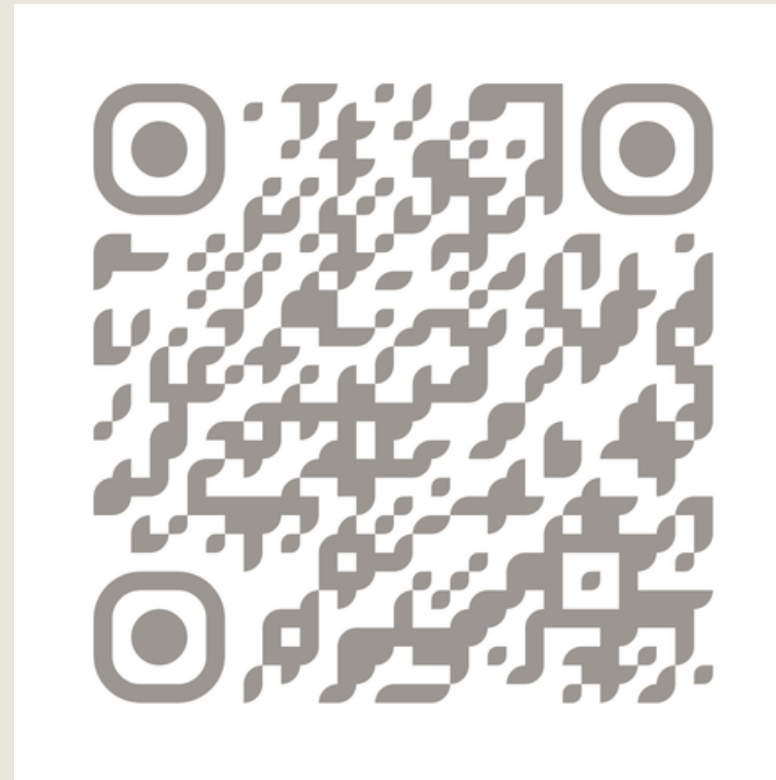
- Physical badge
- Digital badge: Badgecraft (Awero)
<https://awero.org/en/activities/23156>
- Completion evidence stays with you: canvas, action, reflection.



Time to try it out

Test your one change within one month..

Thank you!



Feedback form