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Triangulation

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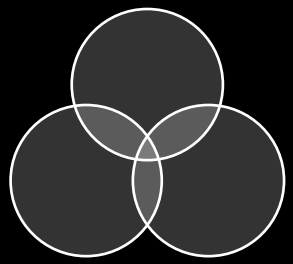
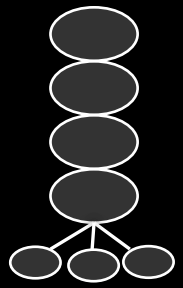
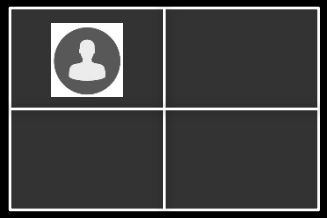


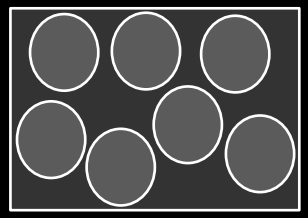
triangle



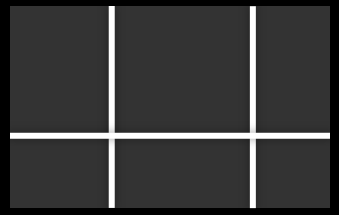
story



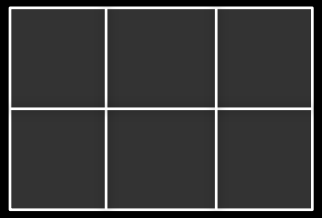
persona



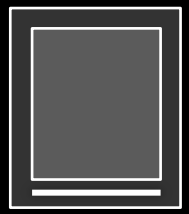
topic map



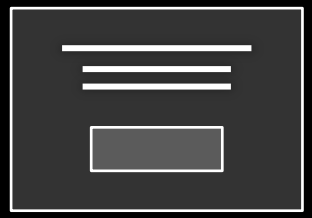
radiator



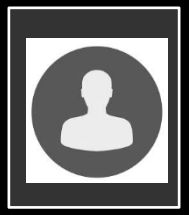
six pack



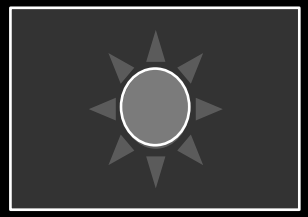
UVP



validation

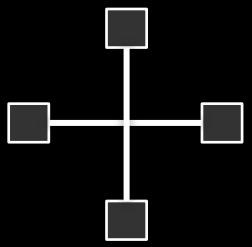


HRB

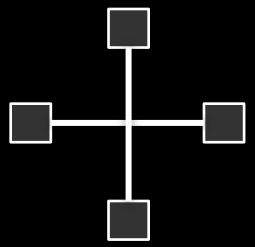


sunny day

proto

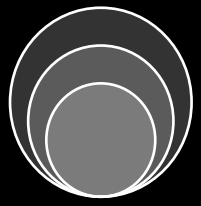


compet’n



MVP

USP



TamSamSom

funnel

pitch

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What makes Innovative Products?

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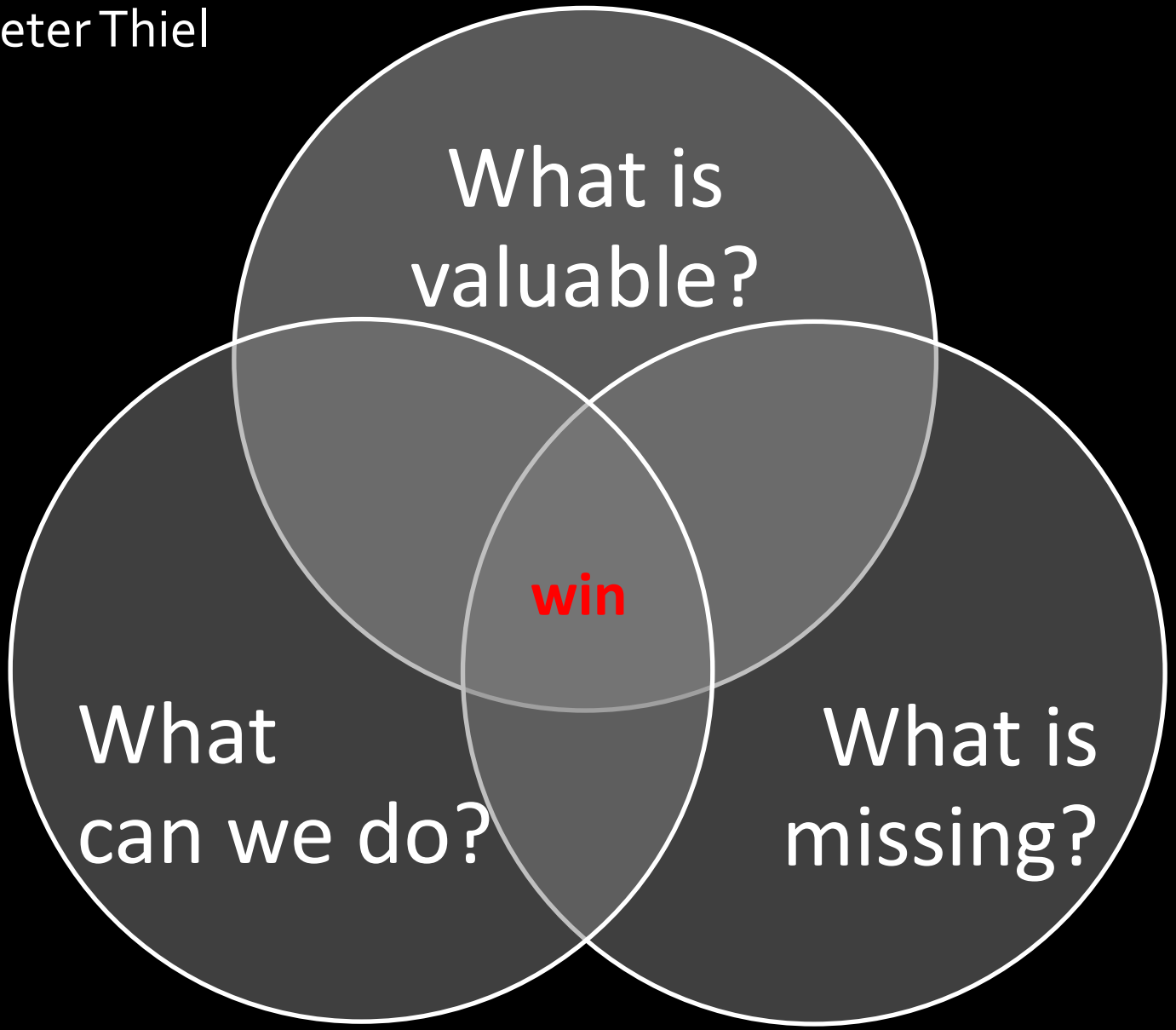
Peter Thiel



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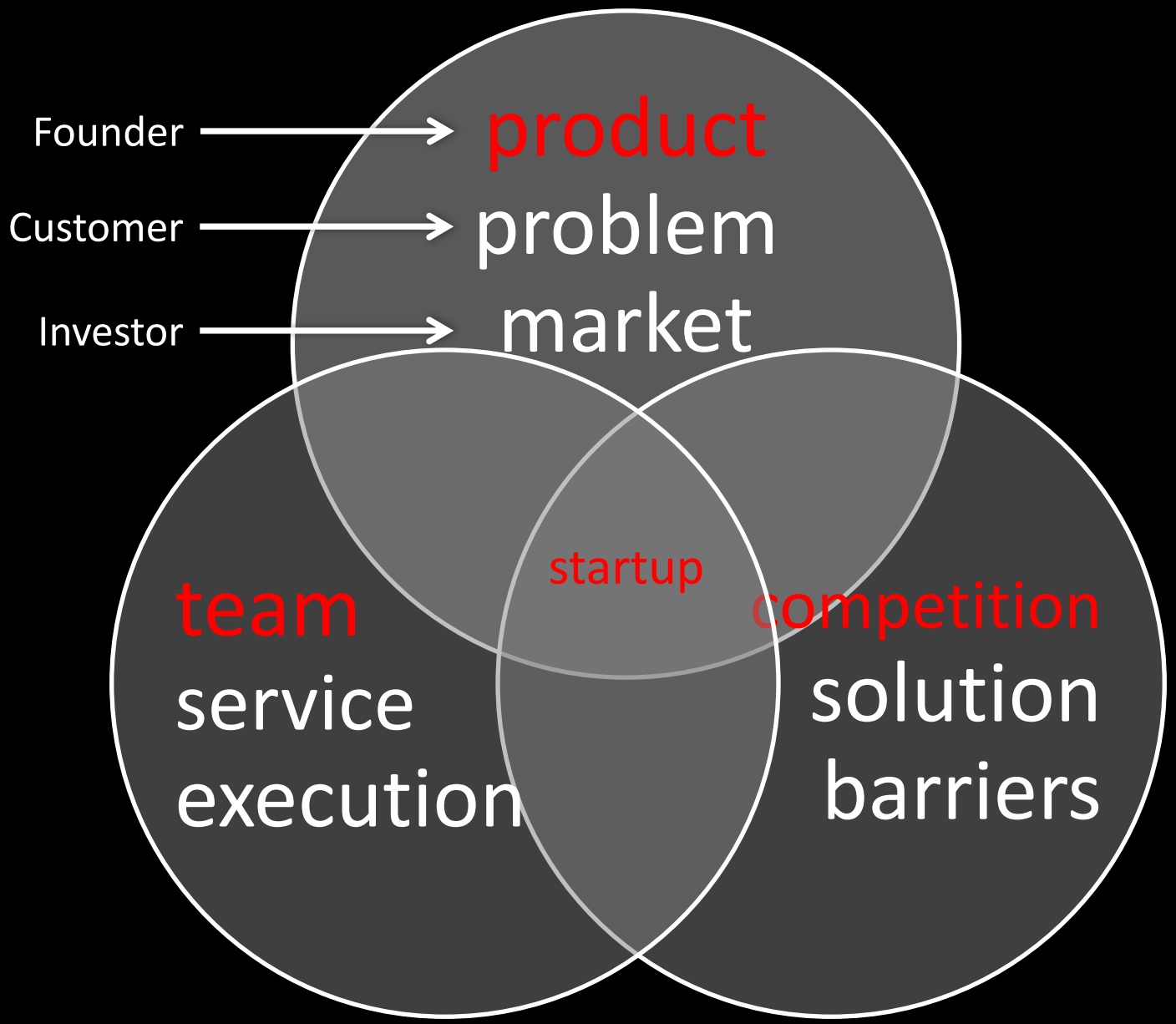

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Make something people want

Paul Graham

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Paul Graham

make something

idea
problem
market

team
service
execution

competition
solution
barriers

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Paul Graham

people want

idea
problem
market

team
service
execution

competition
solution
barriers

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Knowing what
People Want
is harder than
Making Something

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(a) Find simple solutions
(b) to overlooked problems
(c) that actually need to be solved, and
(d) deliver them as informally as possible,
(e) starting with a crude version 1, then
(f) iterating rapidly.

Paul Graham

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What can go wrong?

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What breaks the Product?

http://www.paulgraham.com/startupmistakes.html

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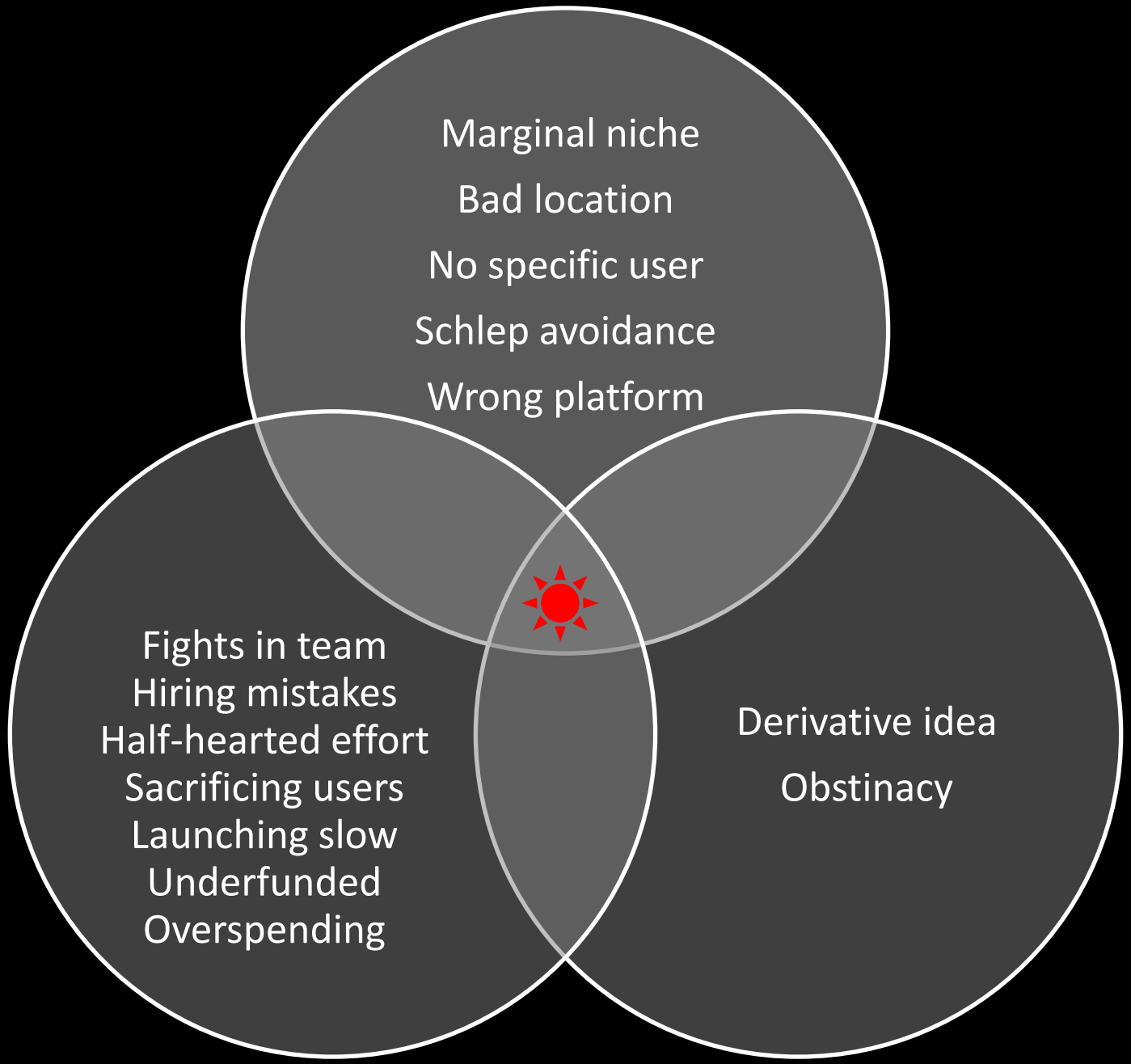

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Rookie mistake:

Starting with cool/ego/itch idea

Product development equivalent of convenience sampling

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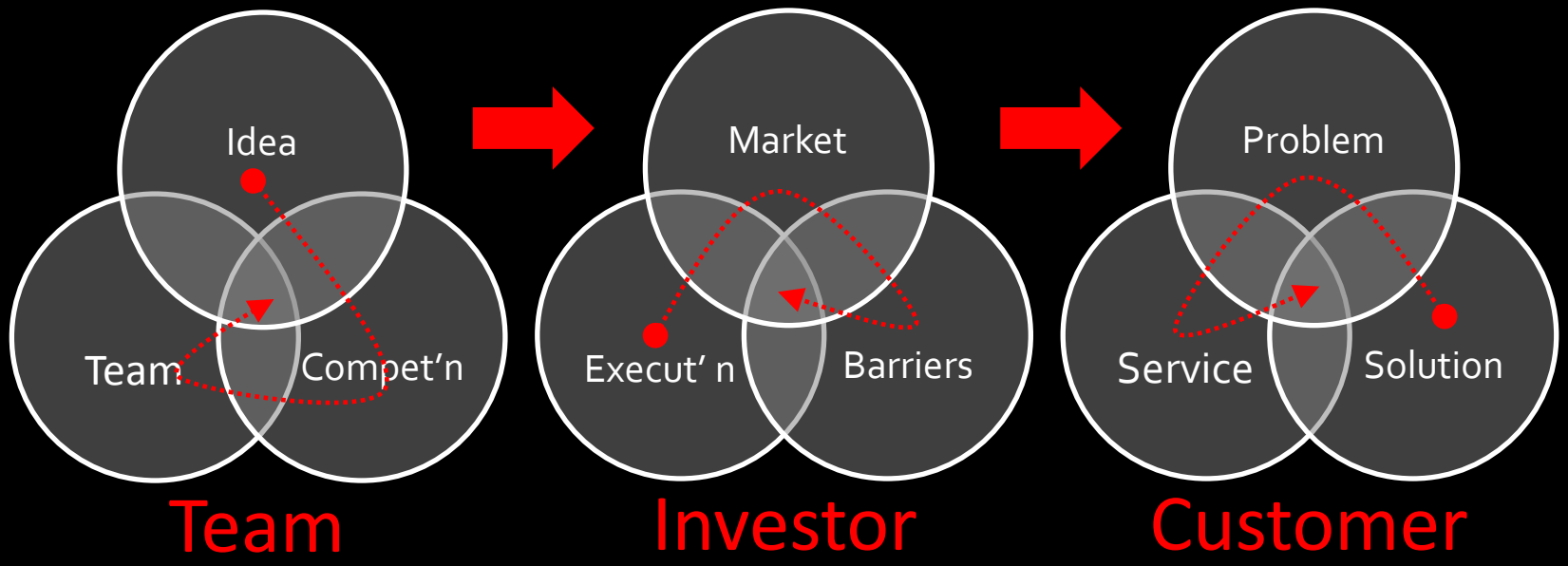
Rookie Mistake



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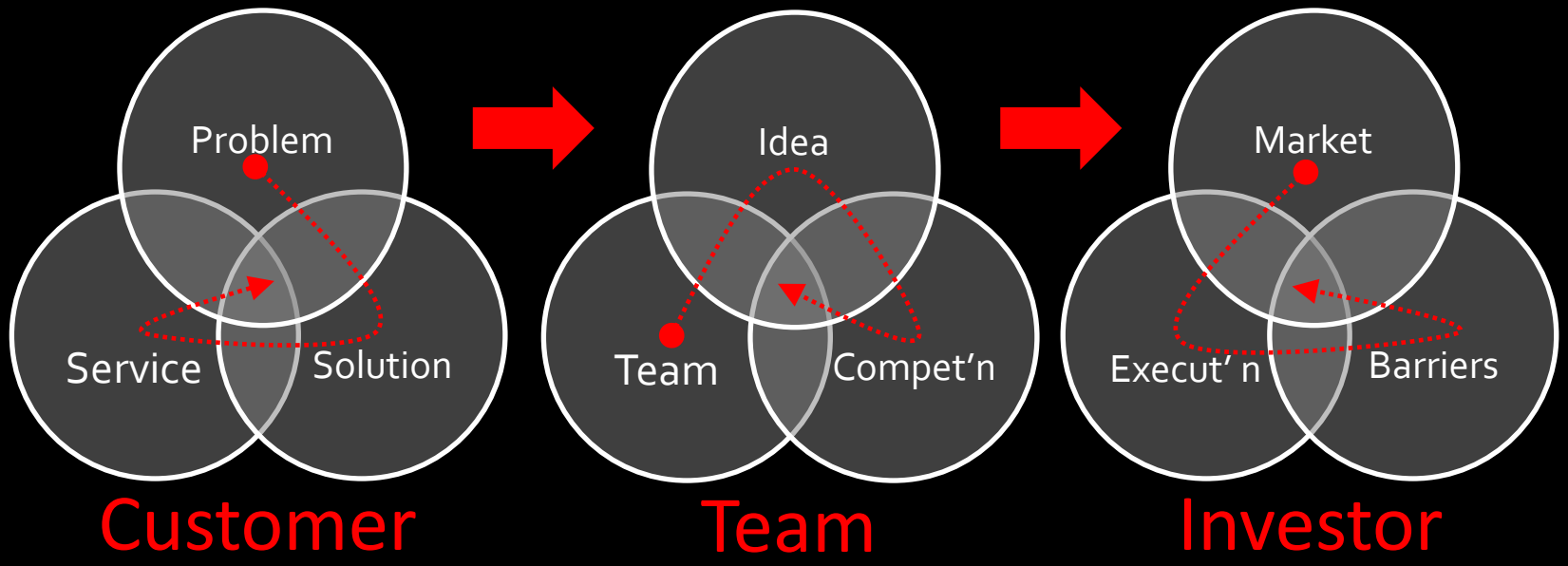
Better Path



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If you had to start with an Idea, then what are the attributes of Great Ideas?

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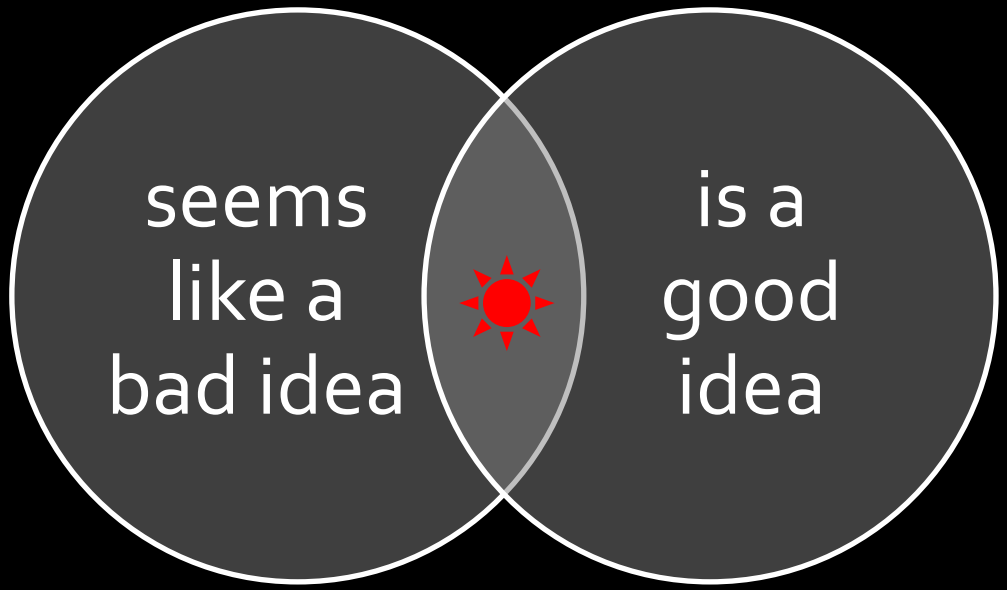
They seem bad initially

look for:



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They challenge social norms and touch taboos

Taboo = wrong answer +
most of us believe

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Best opportunities are in places where taboos cross schlep

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Powerful people initially dismiss them as silly toys

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They seem weird, niche, and kind off hipster

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They originate as Hobbies

Near past: AI, VR, bitcoin, drones
What are current hobbies?

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They attack or create large, crowded markets

either way, team can’t avoid competition

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They Unbundle and Rebundle

universities, newspapers, TV, telcos

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Great ideas are about reordering existing + connecting together + with right timing

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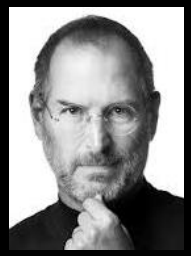
Creativity is just connecting things. Creative people feel a little guilty because they just saw something obvious



Steve Jobs

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How does one get Product Ideas?

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Trick to get product ideas = don’t think of product ideas

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Start with Problems you experience or observe

Ensures the problem *really* exists

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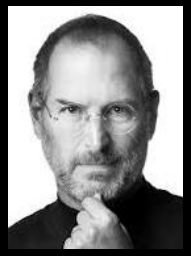
Keep living with the problem and you will arrive at very elegant and simple solutions



Steve Jobs

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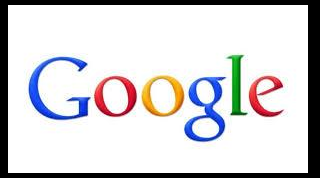
Wozniak wanted a computer =

Larry and Sergei couldn't find stuff online =



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Get to the edge of

a. rapidly changing field

and/or

b. slow-moving industry

and observe

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Build the idea maze

Balaji Srinivasan's concept:
http://bit.ly/1dmxWj4

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Then cultivate Secrets

Secret = you believe in it +
most others don't +
you are right

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Live in the future and look back

Paul Graham

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Solve a problem
for few users who
want a solution a lot

instead of ‘many users want a little’
narrow+deep trumps wide+shallow

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Start small and grow in concentric circles

Like an onion

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Is the initial solution
a lifestyle niche or germ
of a giant company?

Nobody can know

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Solution must be 1st in performance dimension that matters

E.g. Google 1st in page rank
Facebook 1st in actual identity

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Solution must Outperform 1 OoM

Beat the next best thing by 10x or go home

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What are the attributes of a worthy problem?

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(a) Find simple solutions
(b) to overlooked problems
(c) that actually need to be solved, and
(d) deliver them as informally as possible,
(e) starting with a crude version 1, then
(f) iterating rapidly.

Paul Graham

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1. Hard
2. Schleppy
3. Unsexy
4. Frequent
5. Urgent

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1. Hard
2. Schleppy = Overlooked
3. Unsexy
4. Frequent
5. Urgent

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Hard = Both Meanings of Hard

Like lifting weights, *and* solving a puzzle

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Hard = Worry+Suspense

if you worry you won't be able to understand, and solution will come out badly, then it’s hard

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1. Hard
2. Schleppy
3. Unsexy
4. Frequent
5. Urgent

= Overlooked

= Needs solution

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Frequent + Urgent= Complaints + DIY

if problem a. makes them complain, and b. forces them to hack a DIY solution, then it's Frequent+Urgent

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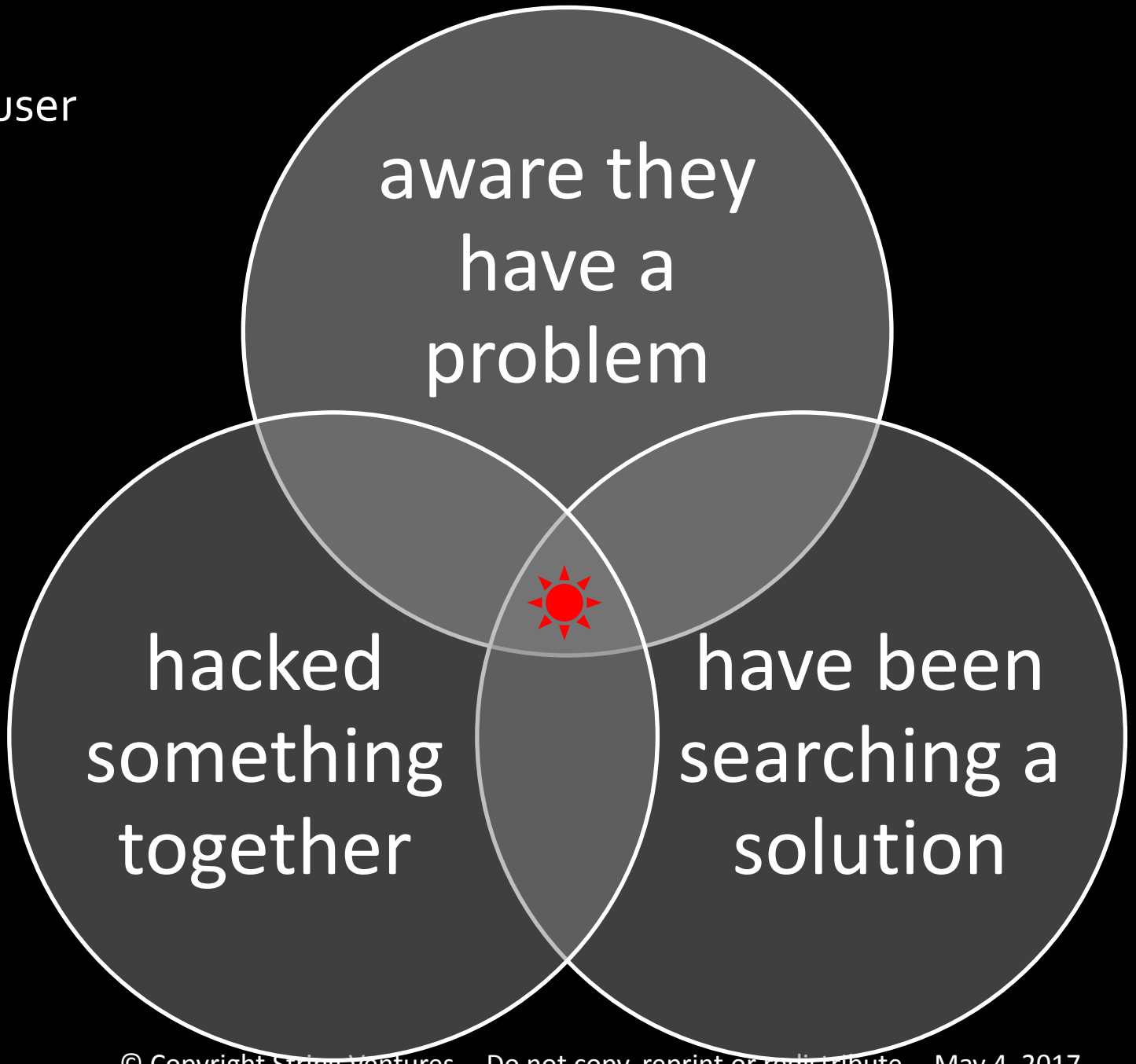
user



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How does one notice product-worthy problems?

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Best way to
get a good idea is
to get a lot of ideas

Linus Pauling

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Enter Dump & Sort

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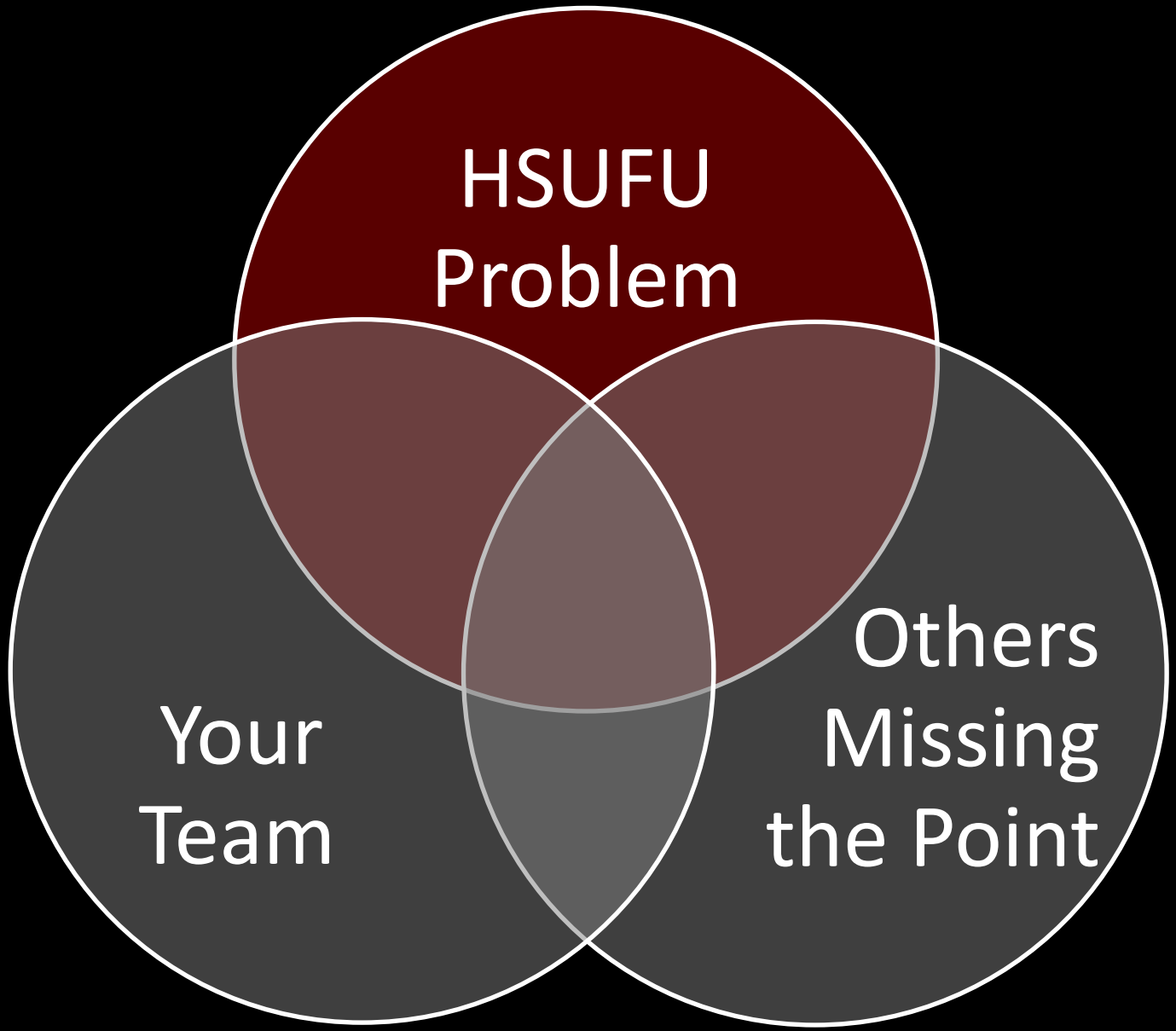

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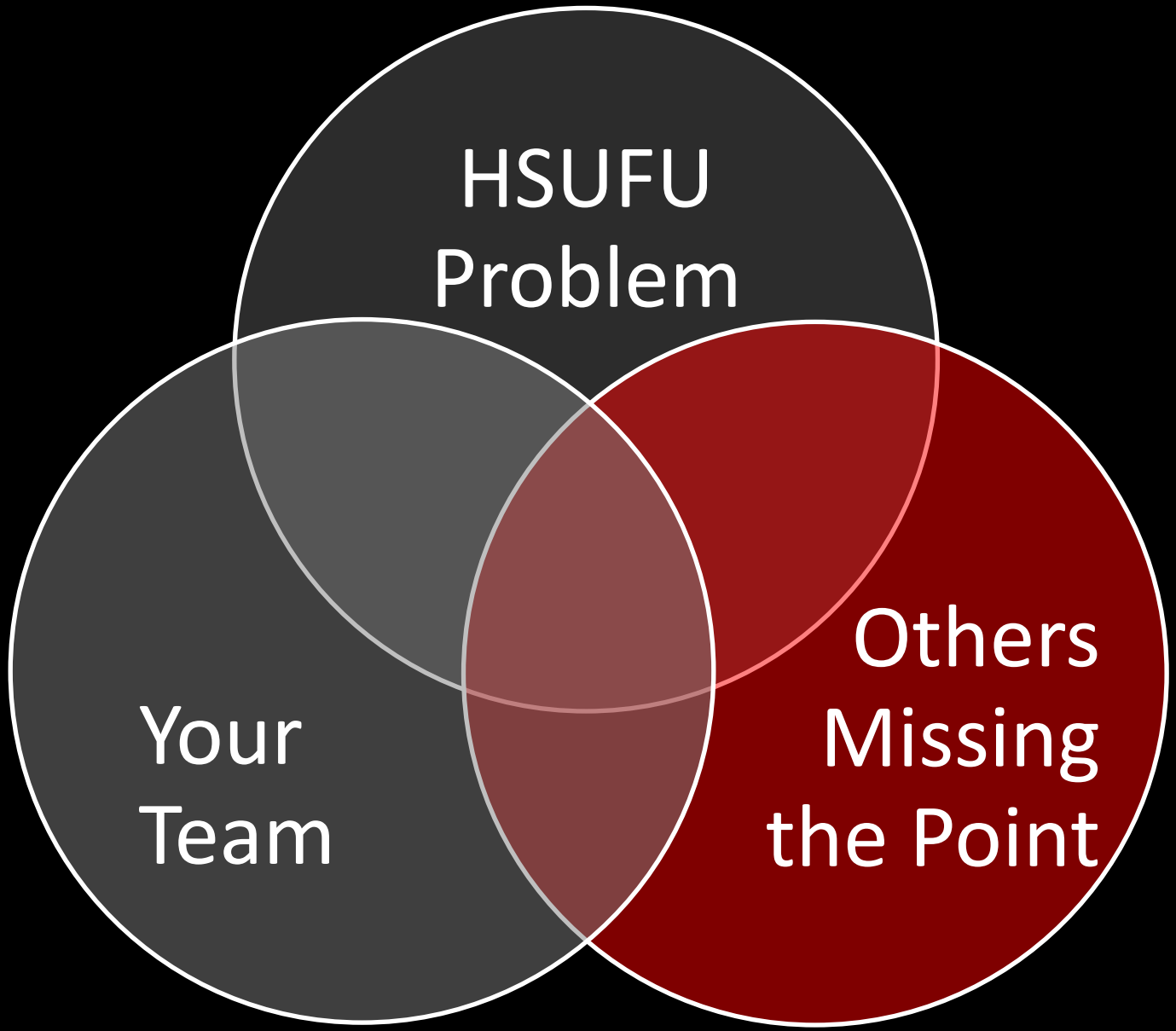
Dump & Sort Problems

- Dump hard, schleppy, unsexy, frequent, urgent (HSUFU) problems
- Write one problem per sticky

do it

Internal questions to help

- What problem keeps you awake at night?
- What complaints (better yet, rants) do you observe firsthand?
- Where do you observe massive waste?
- B2B: For which schleppy jobs do they attempt to hire and fail?



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External questions to help

- What important truth do you hold that a few people agree with?
- What is a wrong answer you observe but can't talk about? (taboos)
- What are competitor/substitute's unexpected failures? (bombed launch, zombie product, near miss)
- Where does regulation, demographic and tech shifts make life harder?

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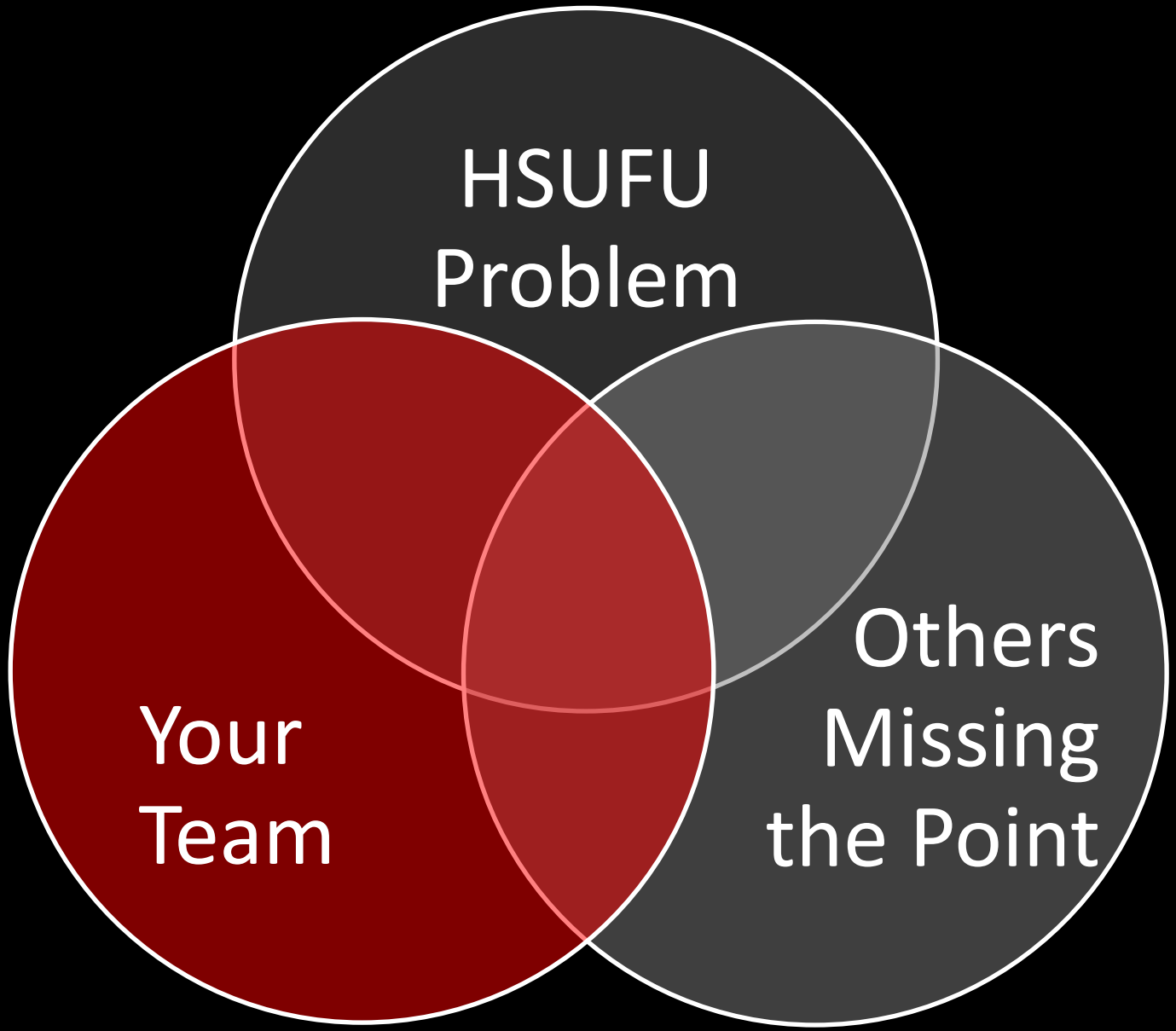

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Questions to help

- What tools do you know better than anyone? What have you built in a similar domain?
- What changes in adjacent domain make the hsufu problem solvable?
- What are competitor/substitute's unexpected successes?
- What would you like someone to build for you?

Consolidate and Dot Vote

- Pick contrarian idea that would outperform next best thing by one order of magnitude
- Combine on an A4 as a team

do it

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Teams: Rotate clockwise, quite read, give feedback

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There is nothing
more powerful than an
idea whose time has come

Victor Hugo

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Triangulation

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