

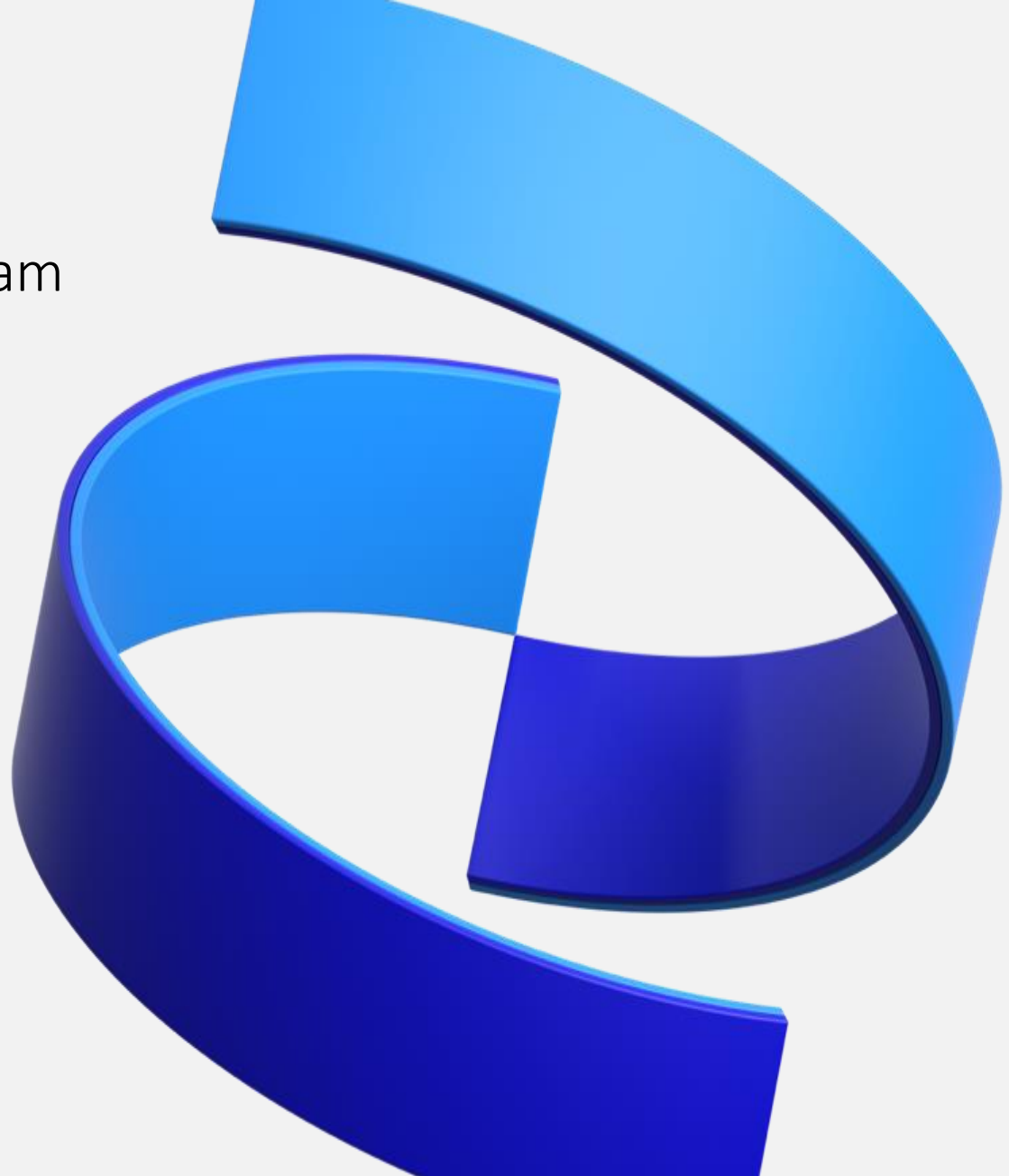


LI04 - What a Good One Looks Like – Building a Team of Internal R Experts

Mike K Smith

Lead, R Centre of Excellence & SWAT team,
Pfizer R&D UK Ltd

Presented at PhUSE EU Connect, November 2025



Everyone's busy,
right? The work
never stops...



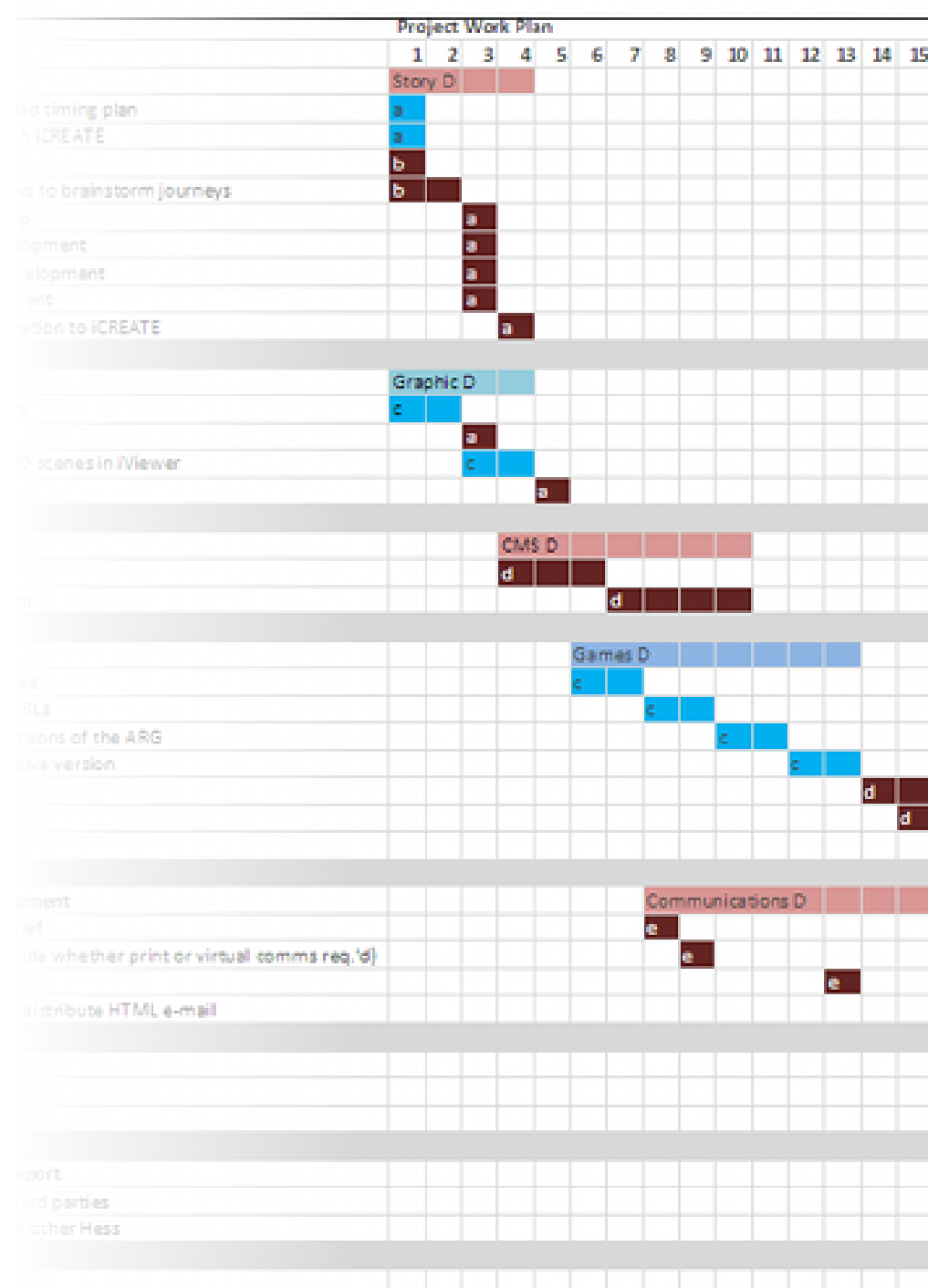
How do we provide input to big things like AI adoption or moving a whole business workflow to open source?



How do we avoid solving problems more than once in different parts of the organisation?



And how do you
balance spending
time on these
problems as well as
delivering project
work?



We have experts,
but they are
embedded within
different
departments and
business groups
within the
organisation...



How do we help
solve problems for
parts of the
organisation who
DON'T have an
expert on hand?



Breakthroughs that
change patients' lives

Scientific
Workflows &
Analytic
Tools





Ages/edades
6+
40328

HOW TO BUILD

A Master Model Builder

Want to build with LEGO bricks all day?

Find out what you have in common with the Master Model Builders at LEGOLAND Discovery Center and how to train for one of the best jobs you can imagine!

Creative

Artistic builders tend to see and do things differently, pay attention to details and daydream.



Organized

Do you store your bricks by size or color? Master Model Builders find it easier to become inspired and create when they can stay organized.



Personable

There will be times you will demonstrate techniques to complete strangers. Staying comfortable enough to convey your message or instructions is important!



LEGO Passion

Do what you love and spread it to others! It's easy to keep up with LEGO facts and trends as an enthusiast.



Mechanically Inclined

Do you like to take things apart and put them back together? Builders tend to be interested in and patient with how things work.



Tech Savvy

Some of your time will be spent on the computer using basic software or advanced programs.



Team Leader

Do you know when it's time to step up? Don't be afraid to take the lead!



Team Player

Cooperating with fellow members is critical to reach goals - For yourself and as a team!



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- 3x 6173959
- 2x 302421
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- 1x 6177507
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- 3x 6092565
- 1x 303426
- 1x 6029946
- 1x 6251292
- 2x 6248078
- 1x 306821
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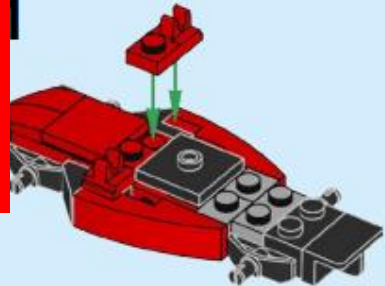
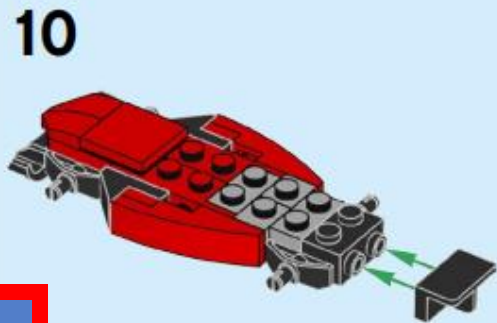
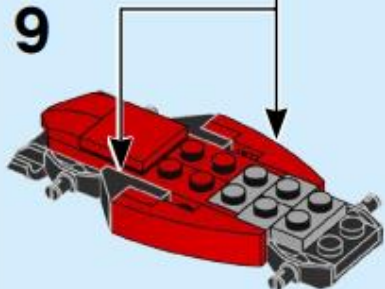
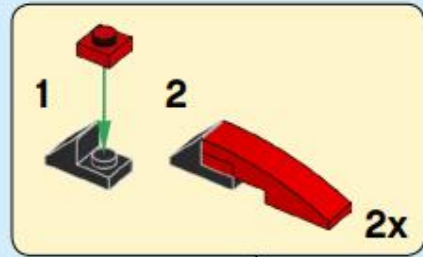
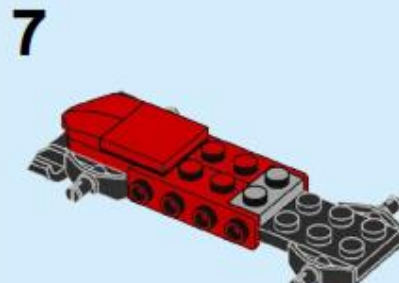
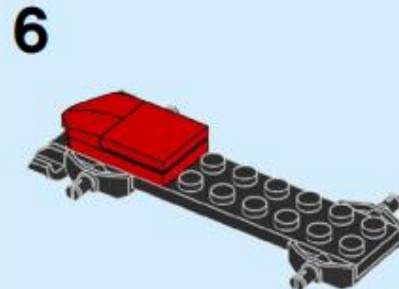
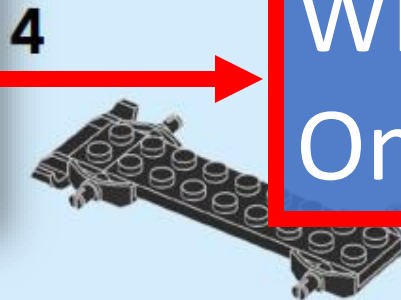
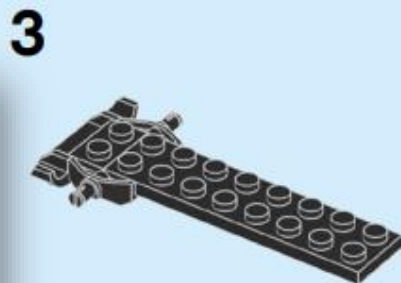
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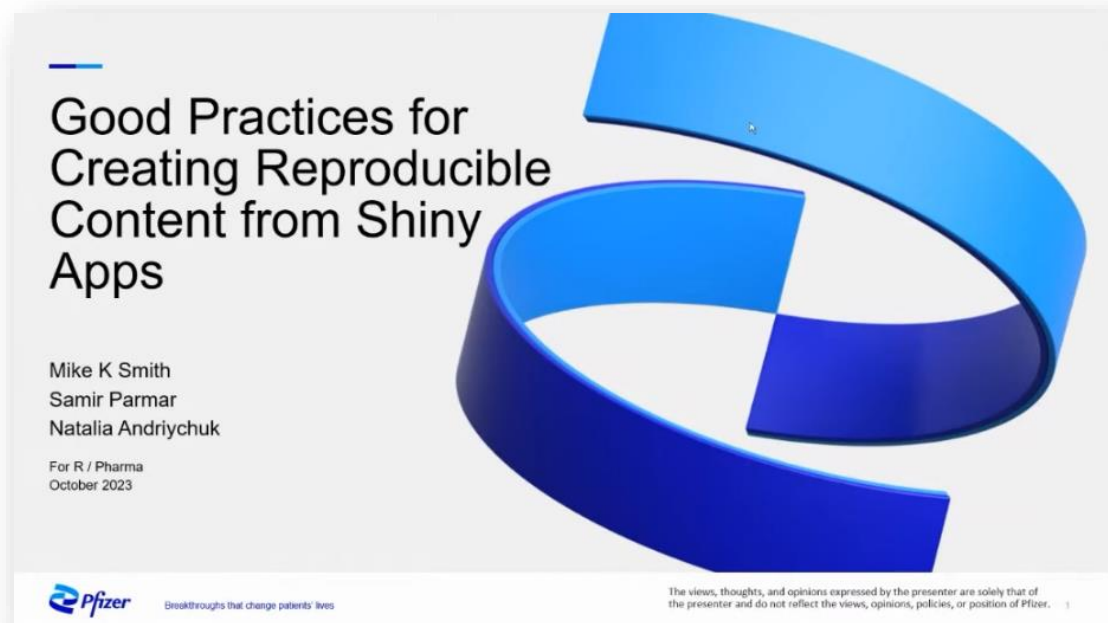




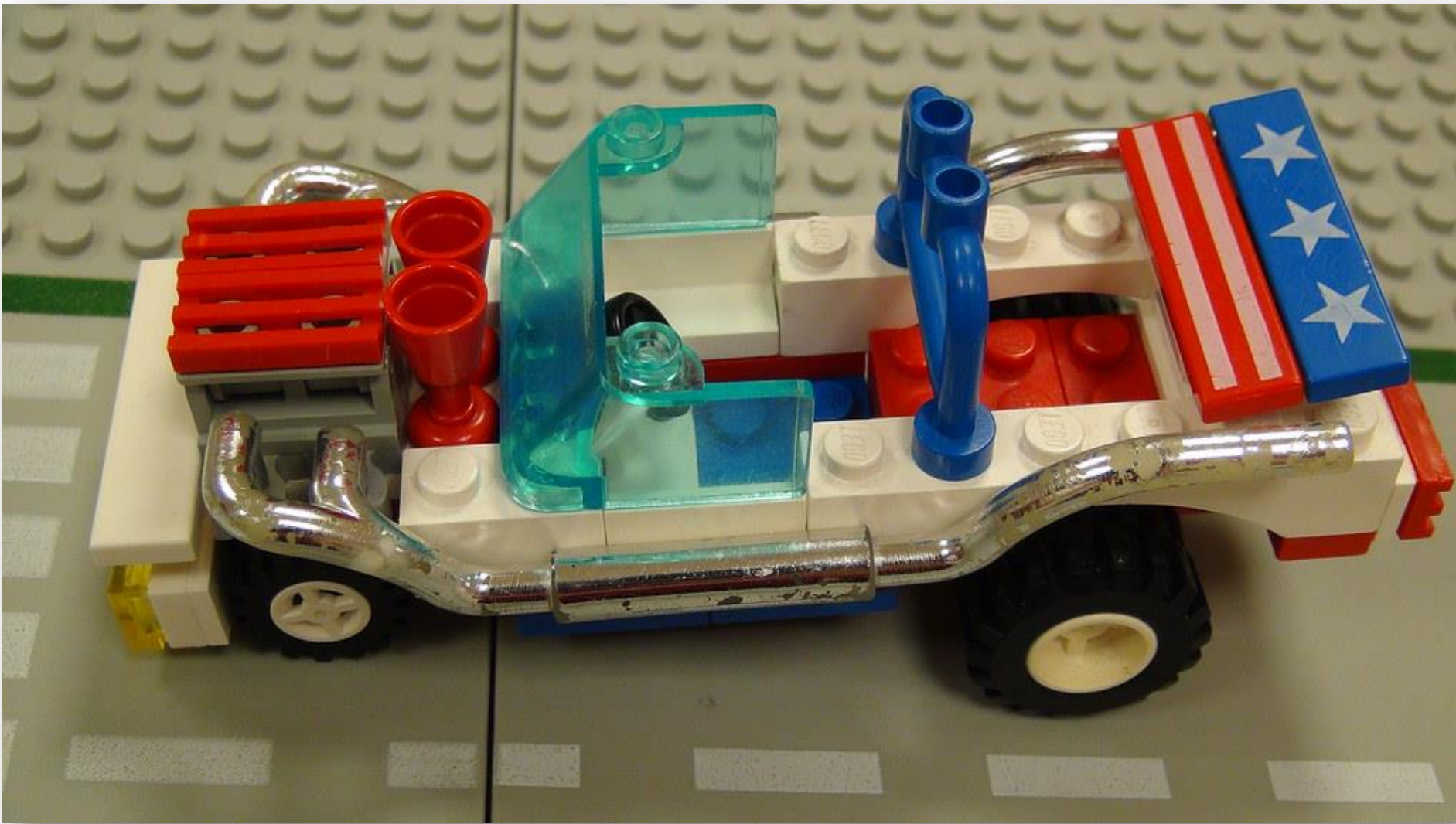
What A Good
One Looks Like

Case Study: Shiny Good Practices

- Defining good practices for building Shiny apps that could be used in a Production setting.
- Uses “What A Good One Looks Like” principles
- Internal guidance on how (and when) to QC Shiny apps.
- <https://github.com/pfizer-opensource/shiny-framework>



See the R in Pharma presentation: [Mike Smith & Sam Parmar - Good Practices for Creating Reproducible Content From Shiny Apps](#)





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Specifies which components are required and designs where necessary

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Case Study: {voxr}

- At Pfizer we have an internal LLM API wrapper (VOX) that ensures security of Pfizer IP.
- Sam Parmar wrote an R package that interfaces with VOX API so we can then exploit other AI tools like {ellmer}, {gander}, {vitals} etc.
- Build it once, use it across many applications...



R Centre of Excellence Core Team of SMEs



R in Pfizer Teams Channel

- >1300 colleagues
- Largely Stats and Stat Programming groups
- But also colleagues from other groups

R in Pfizer Teams Channel

- **Build community**
- Engage through formal and informal presentations
- A place to showcase examples and work
- A place to just come and chat about using R / OpenSource
- “No dumb questions” – everyone is a beginner at some stage. Learn out loud.

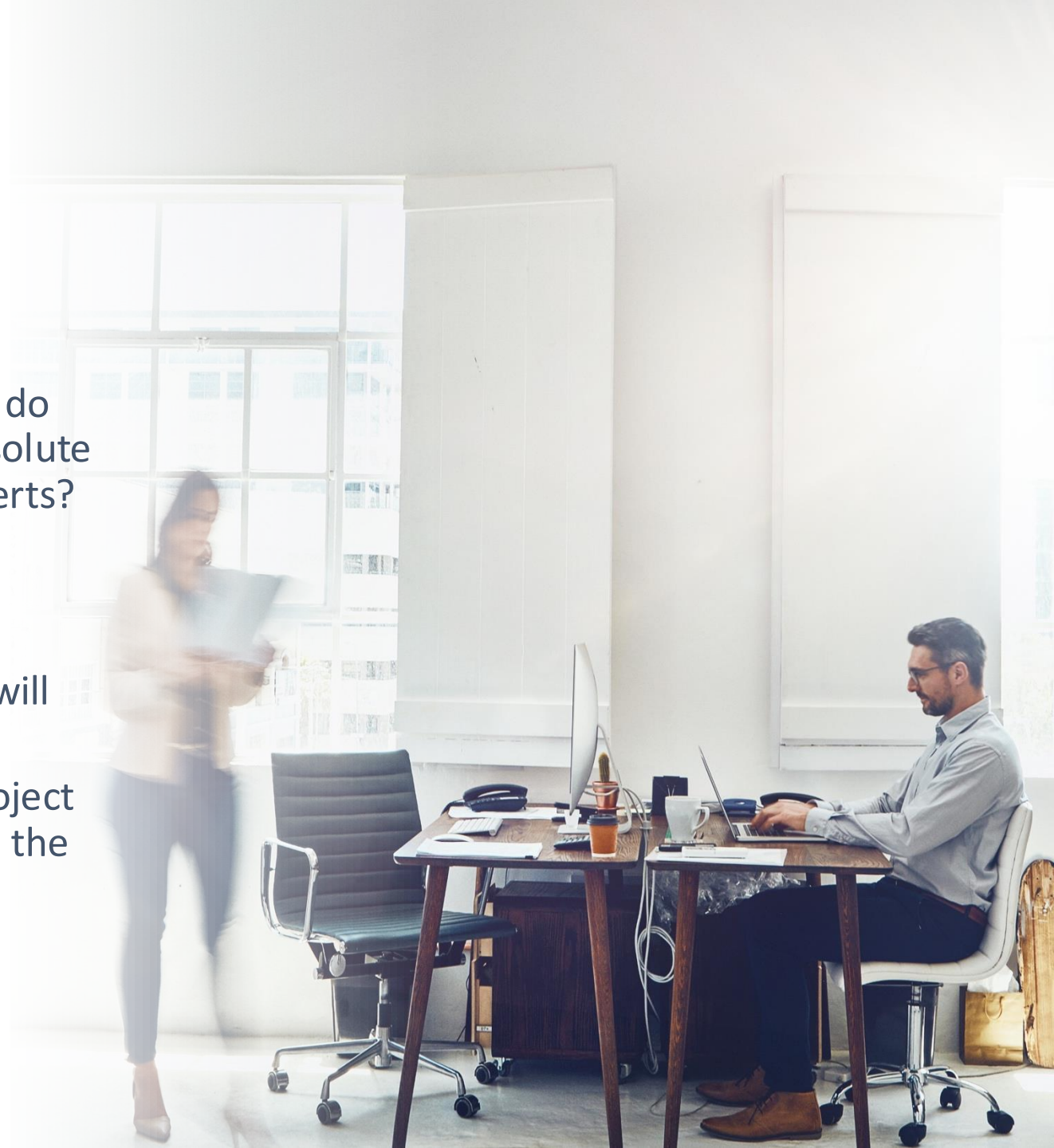
R in Pfizer Confluence

- “Single source of truth”
- Tools and processes documentation
- How-to articles
- Quick start guides
- Best practices guides
- AI chat using this source as the reference



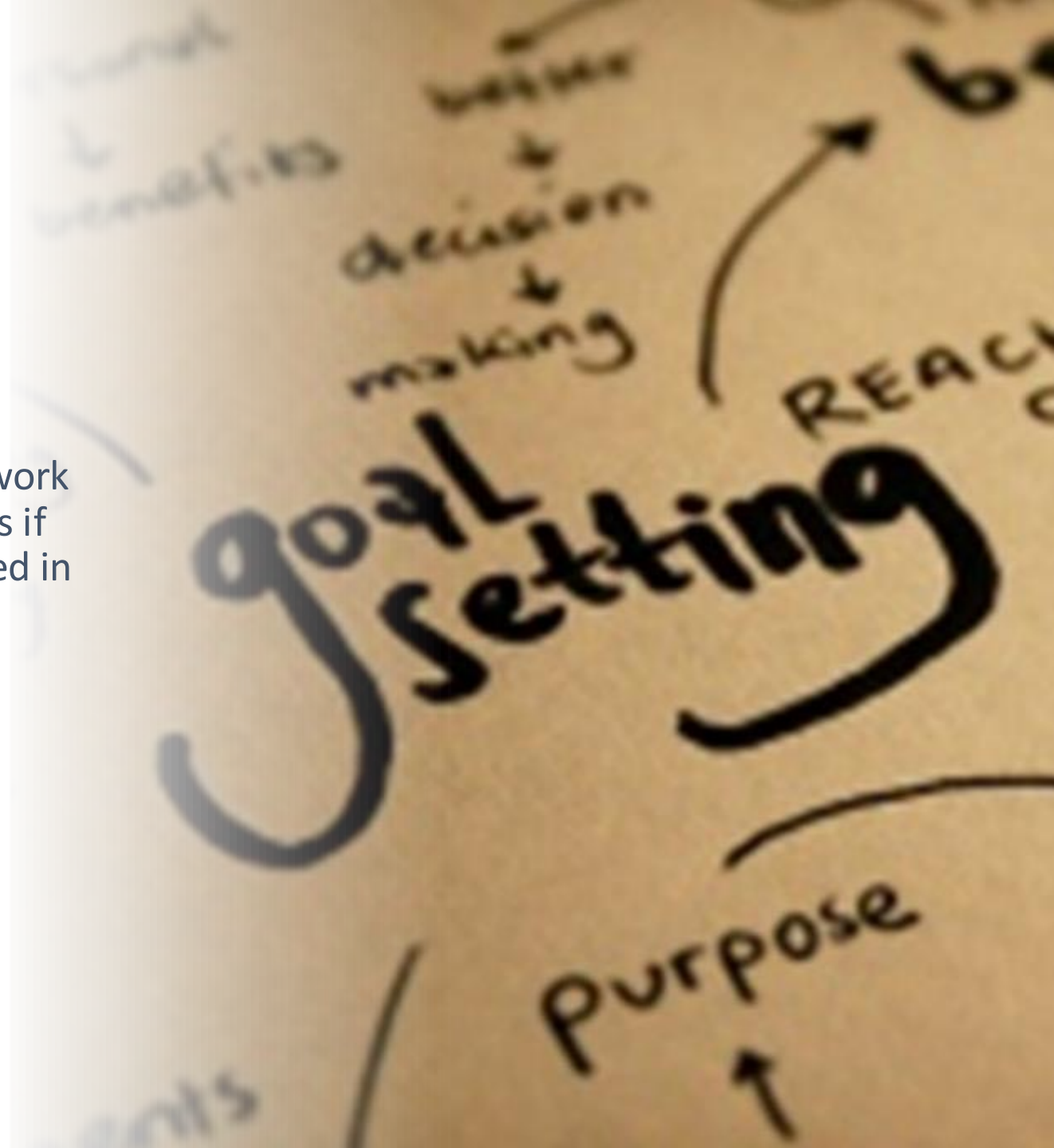
Challenges

- Wide range of experiences – how do you reach both absolute beginners and experts?
- You will have more people who will passively consume content than who will actively engage.
- Ebb and flow of project work often “gets in the way”



Challenges

How do you reward work on strategic initiatives if those are not reflected in goals?



Challenges

“If you build it, they will come...”

But what if they don't?

How do you reach people who just aren't listening?



People are people

- Some are excited about the move to open-source
 - Some feel uncertain or worse threatened
 - Most people are ***BUSY***.
-
- **Lead the way...**
 - **Support and be kind**
 - **Encourage and celebrate**



Lessons Learned

- Have a clear vision and define your goal
- Define the path to achieve the goal
- Communicate it to stakeholders
- Be patient!





Thank you!

