

# THE AMBITION PLAYBOOK™

POWERED BY

## The Science Of Ambition

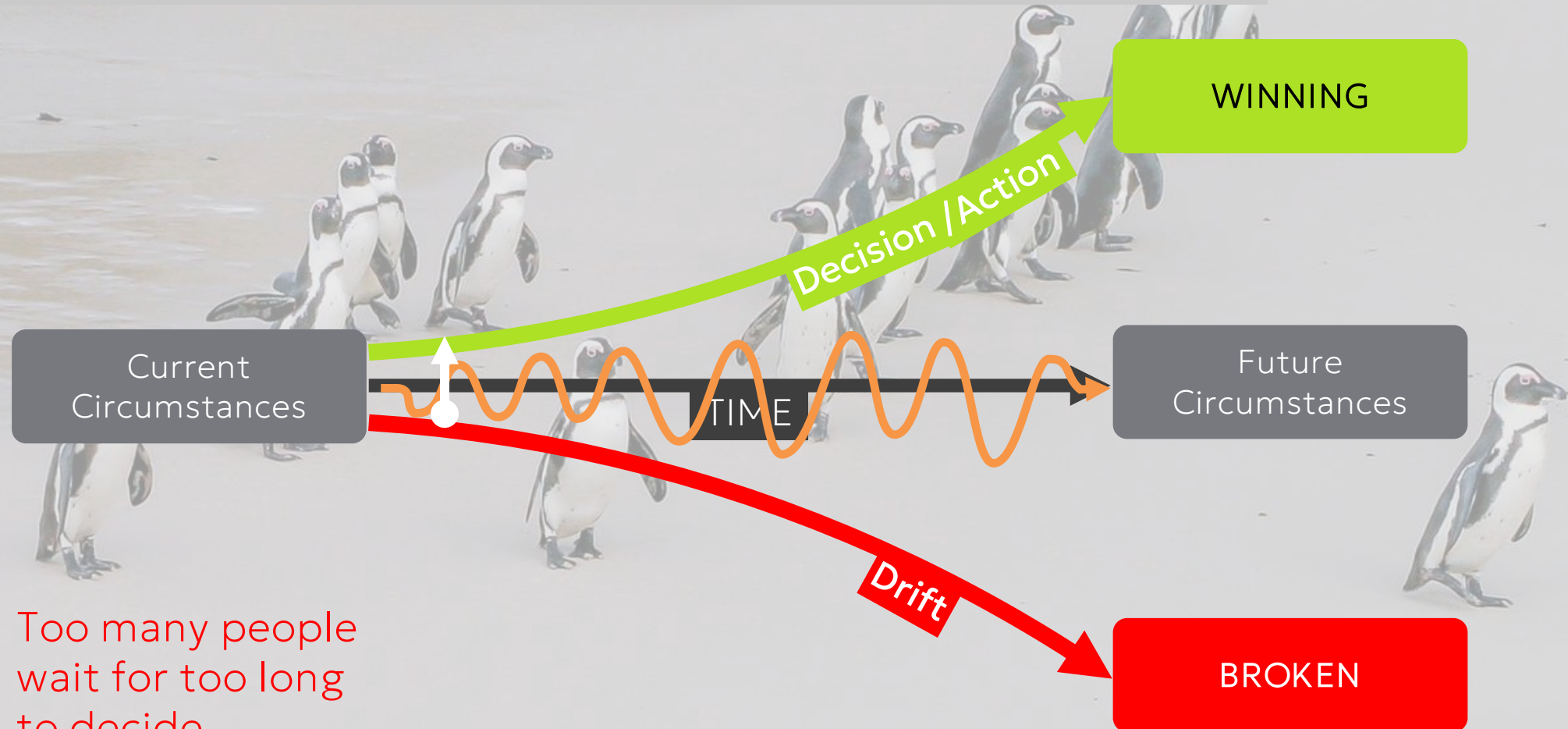
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# THE BUSINESS LEADER'S CHALLENGE:

- Get on the Green Line
- Stay on the Green Line



Too many people  
wait for too long  
to decide.

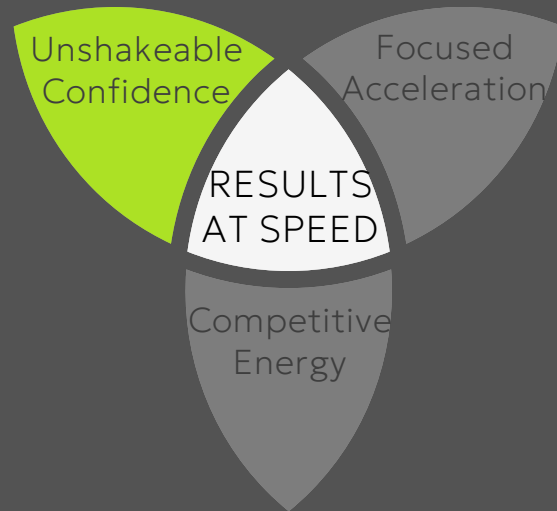


**CHANGE**

- **Unshakeable Confidence**
- **Competitive Energy**
- **Focused Acceleration**

**BOLD LEADERS  
ACHIEVE  
RESULTS AT SPEED**

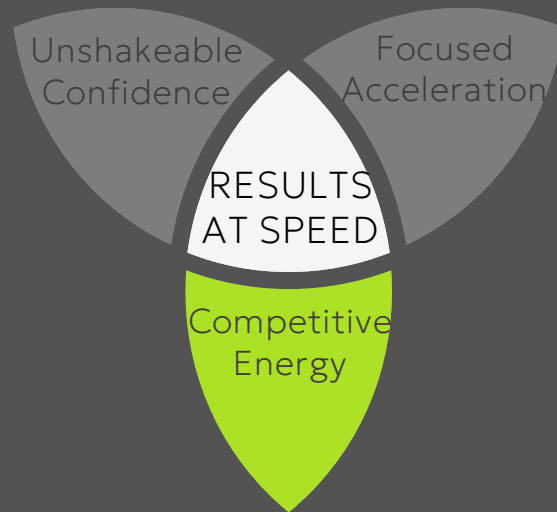
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## OBSERVABLE OUTCOME #1 UNSHAKEABLE CONFIDENCE

Do we have the **highest level of conviction** in our insights, predictions and decisions that will enable us to **move rapidly with determination**?

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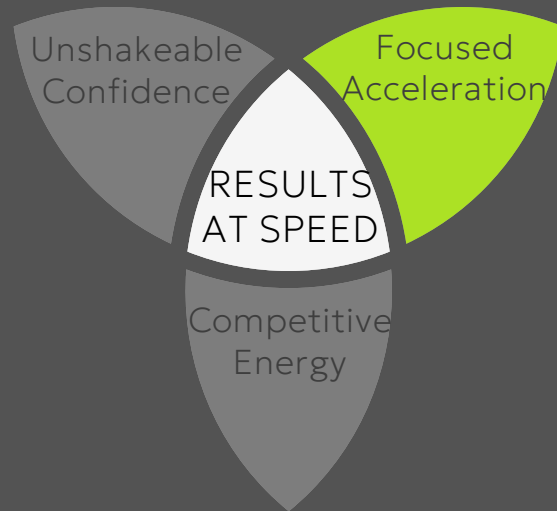


## OBSERVABLE OUTCOME #2 COMPETITIVE ENERGY

Am I going to **win** with the **attitudes and competitive energy** that I'm seeing right now across my team or organization?

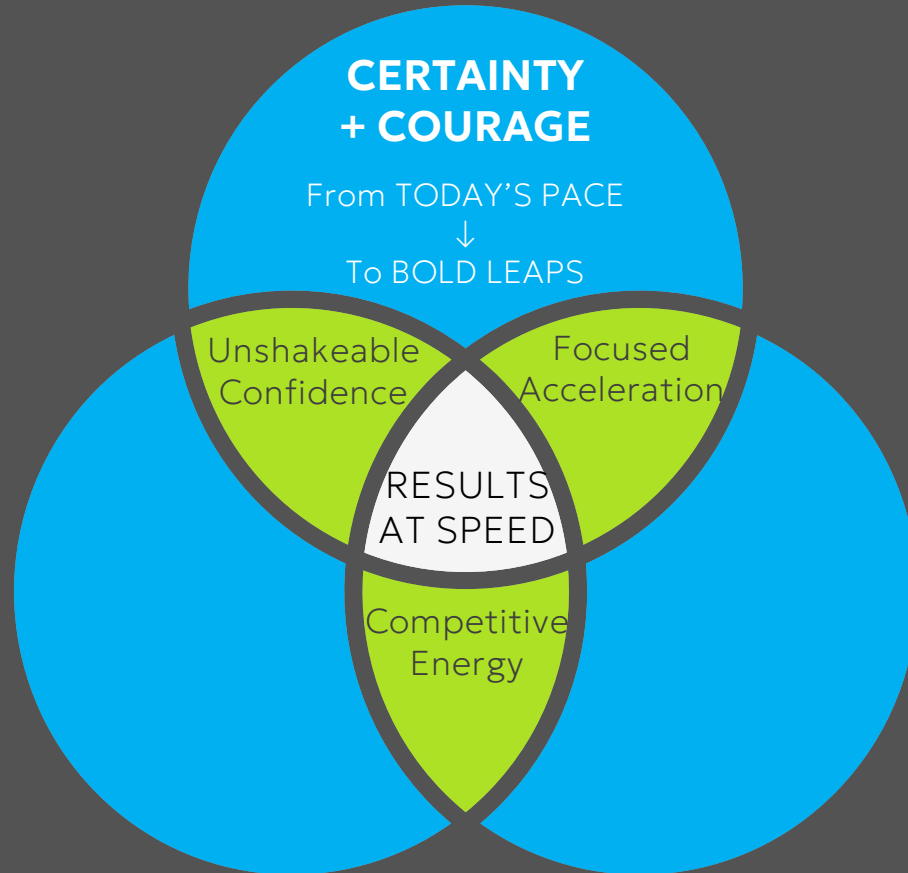
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## OBSERVABLE OUTCOME #3 FOCUSED ACCELERATION

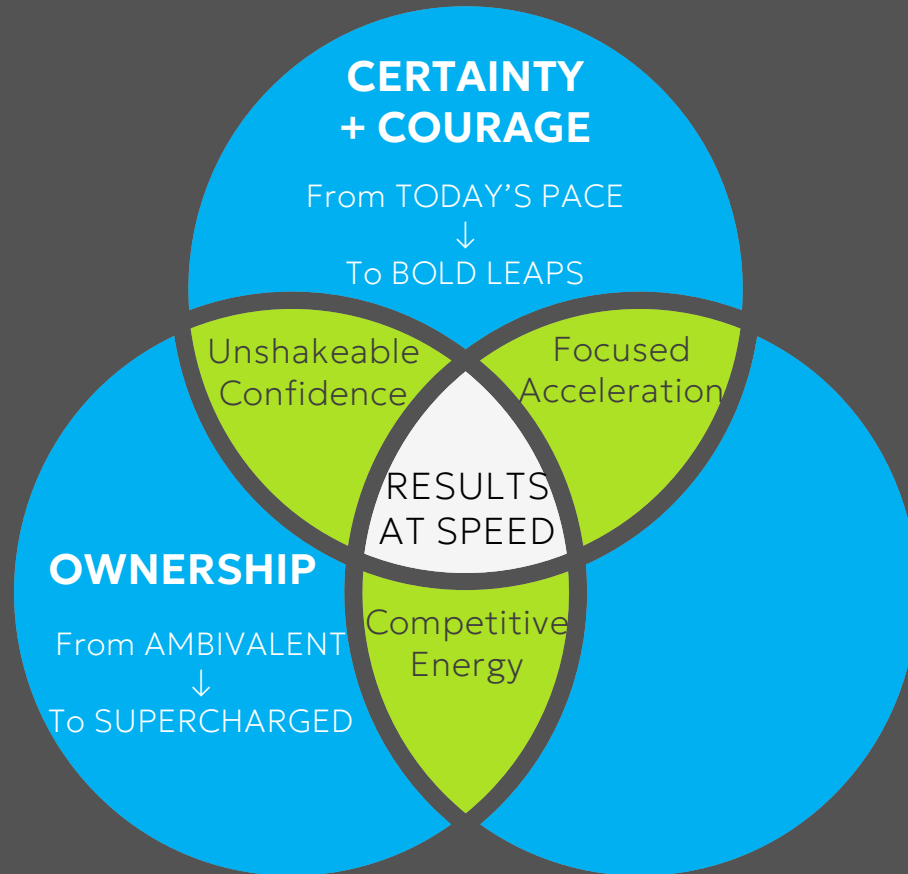


Are we able to **swiftly** and **consistently** deliver what we **promise**?

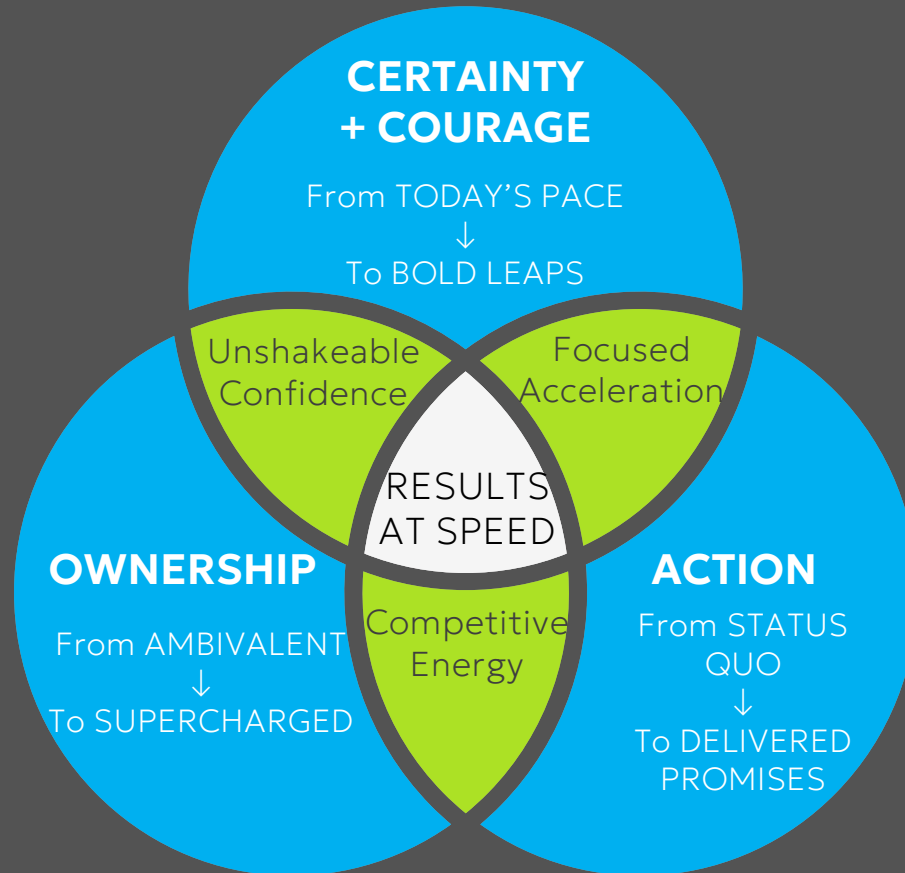
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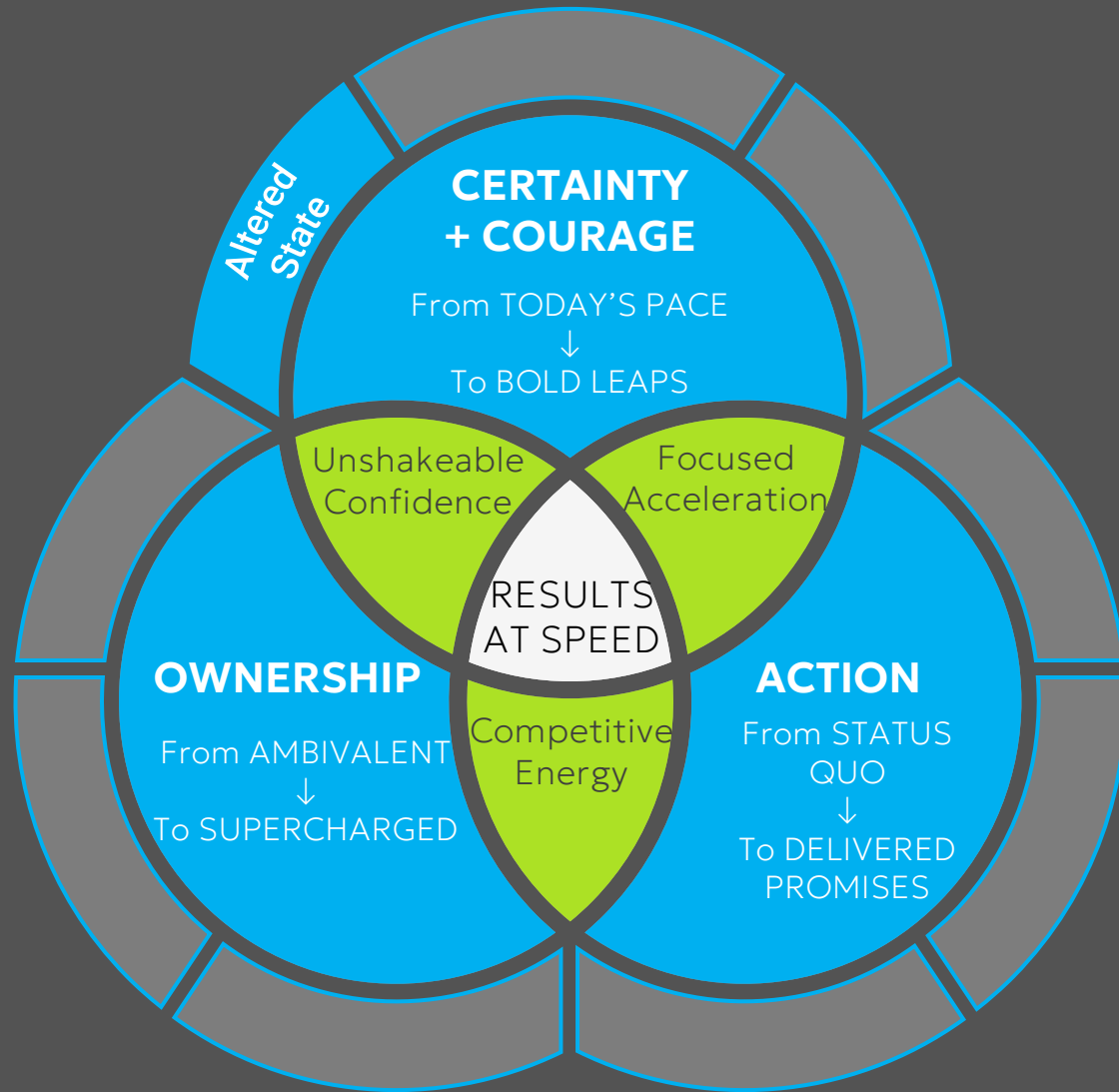
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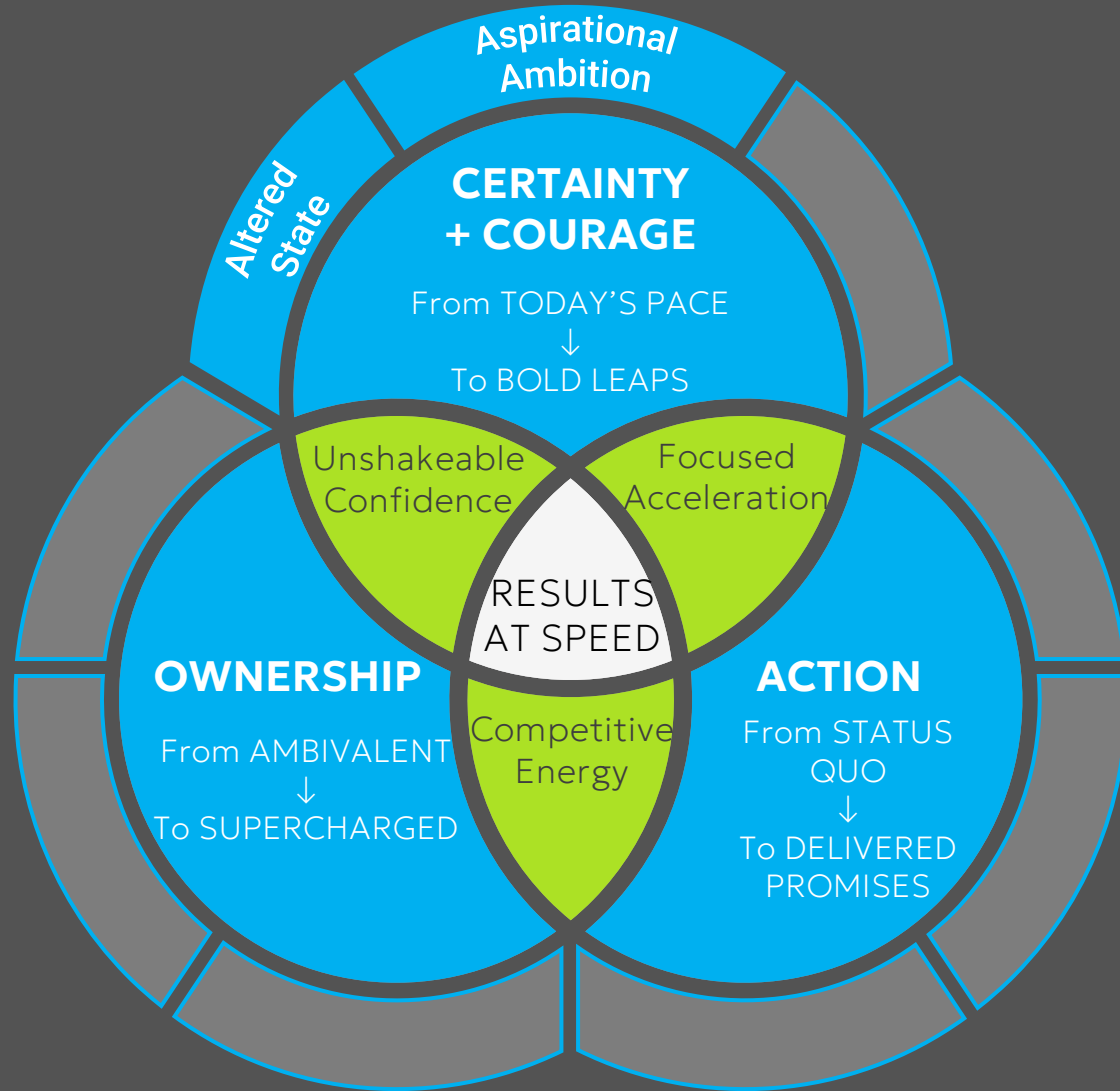


ACCELERATOR #1

## THE ALTERED STATE

How well articulated and understood is the need for **doing something new and different**, and what will happen if you do not address these challenges **immediately**?

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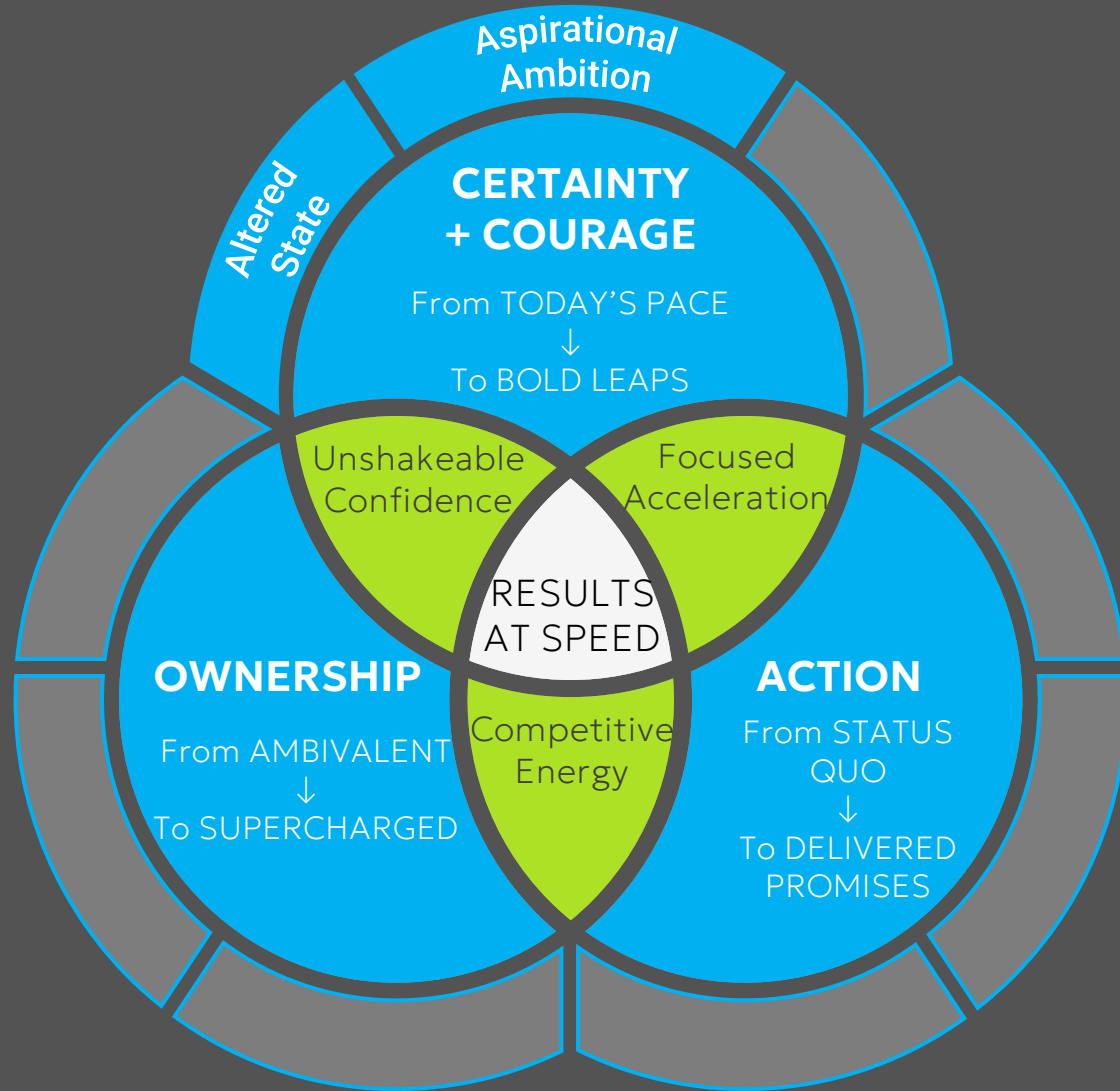


## ACCELERATOR #2

### ASPIRATIONAL AMBITION

How **confident** are you that everyone in your organization **understands the aspiration** and is **excited** about playing a role in making it happen?

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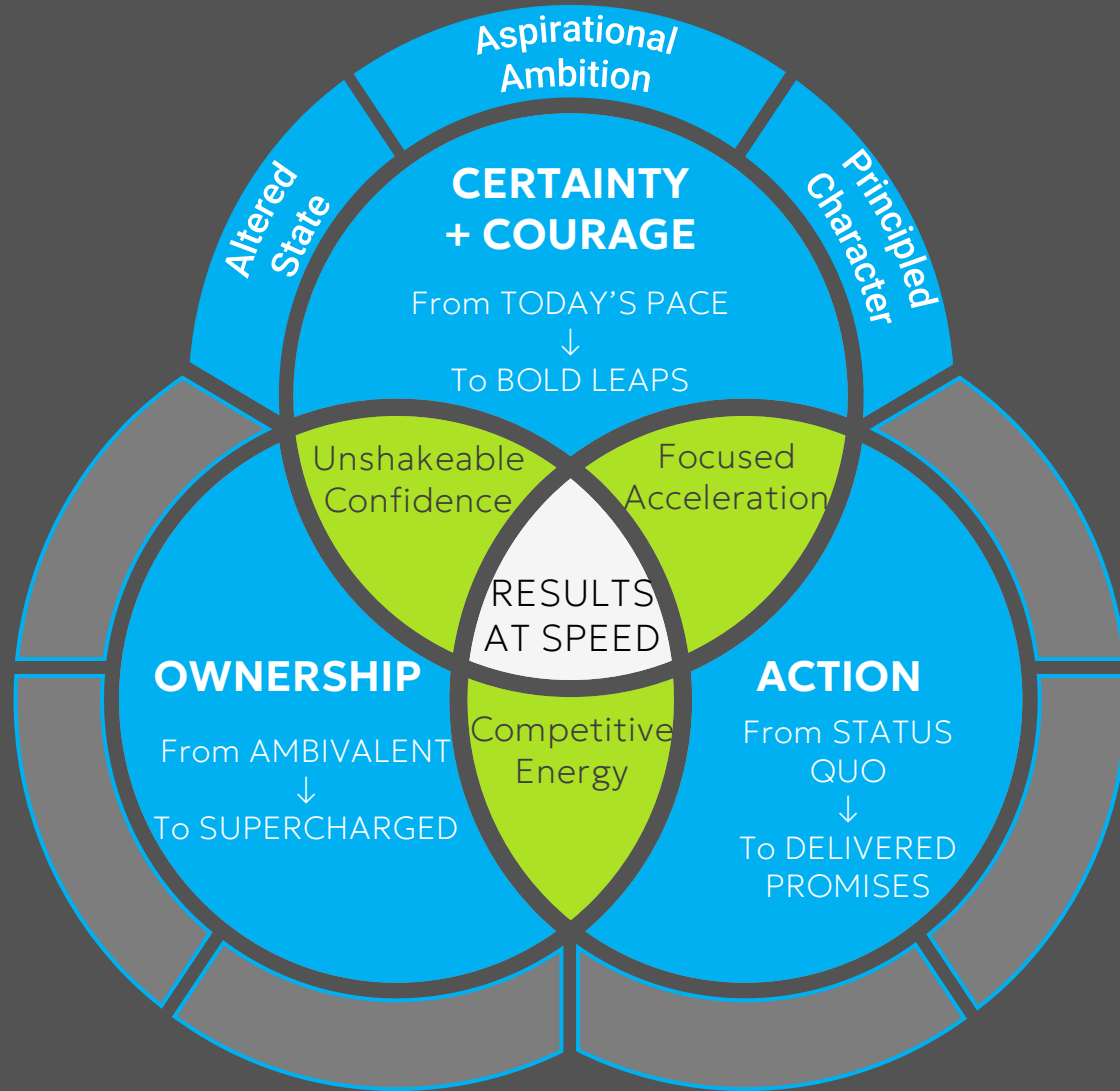
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ACCELERATOR #2

ASPIRATIONAL AMBITION



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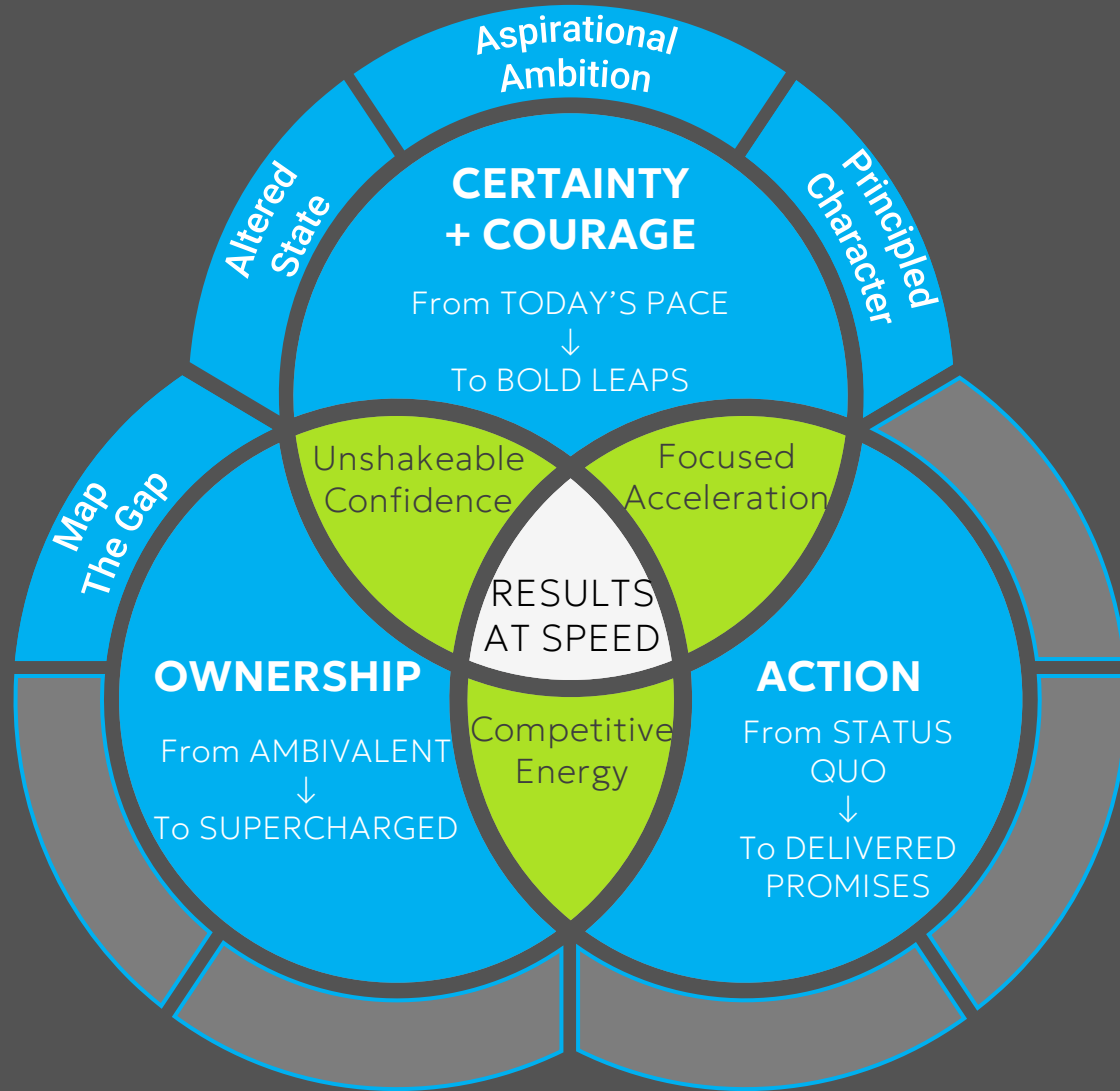


ACCELERATOR #3

## PRINCIPLES CHARACTER

How certain are you that your **operating philosophy**, your **non-negotiable virtues**, and the ideal **way you want to work** are clear and understood by everyone?

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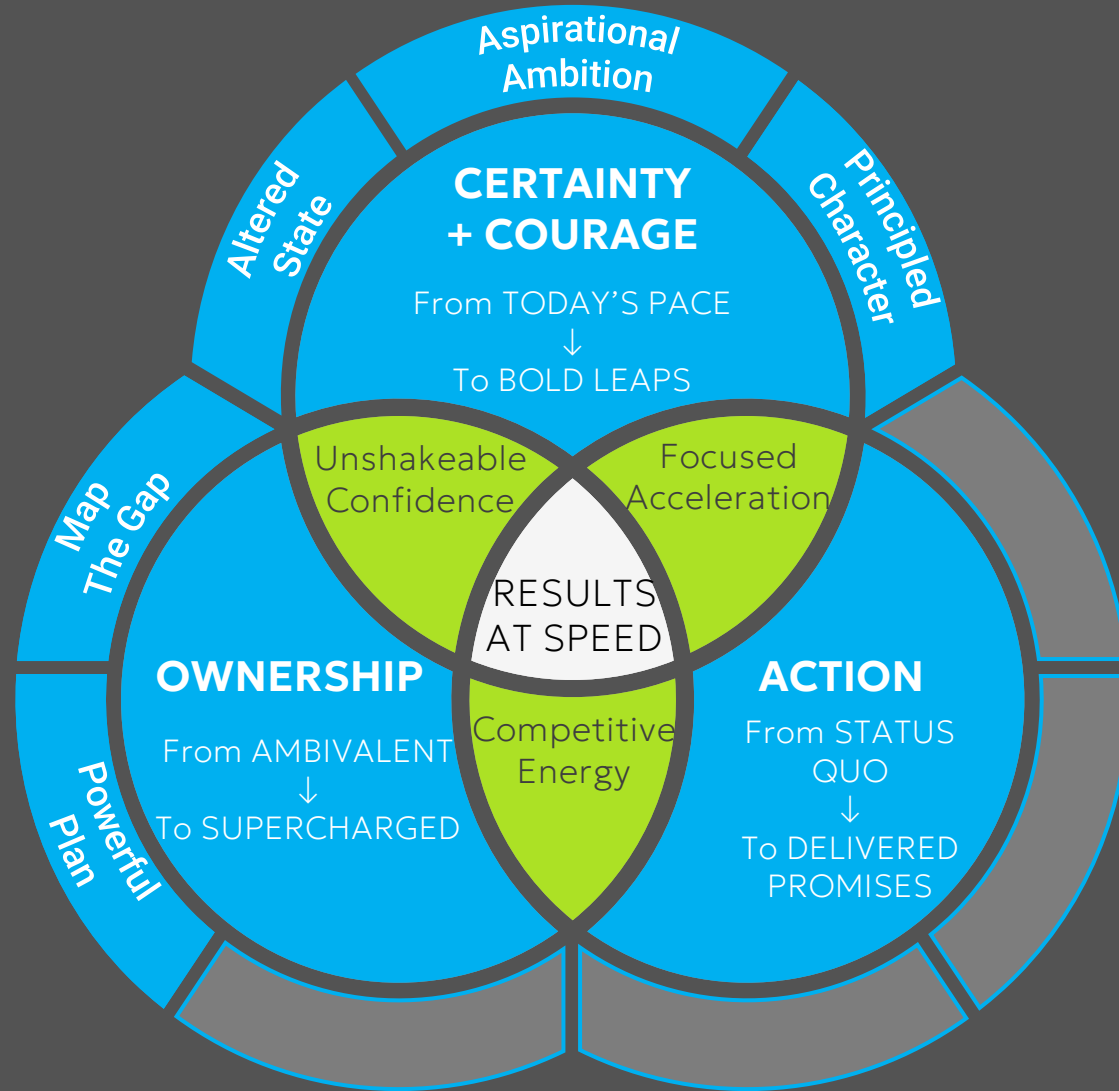
ACCELERATOR #4

## MAP THE GAP

How clearly defined are the **areas of impact**?

Can you easily express **how far you are** from your desired state in all dimensions of your business?

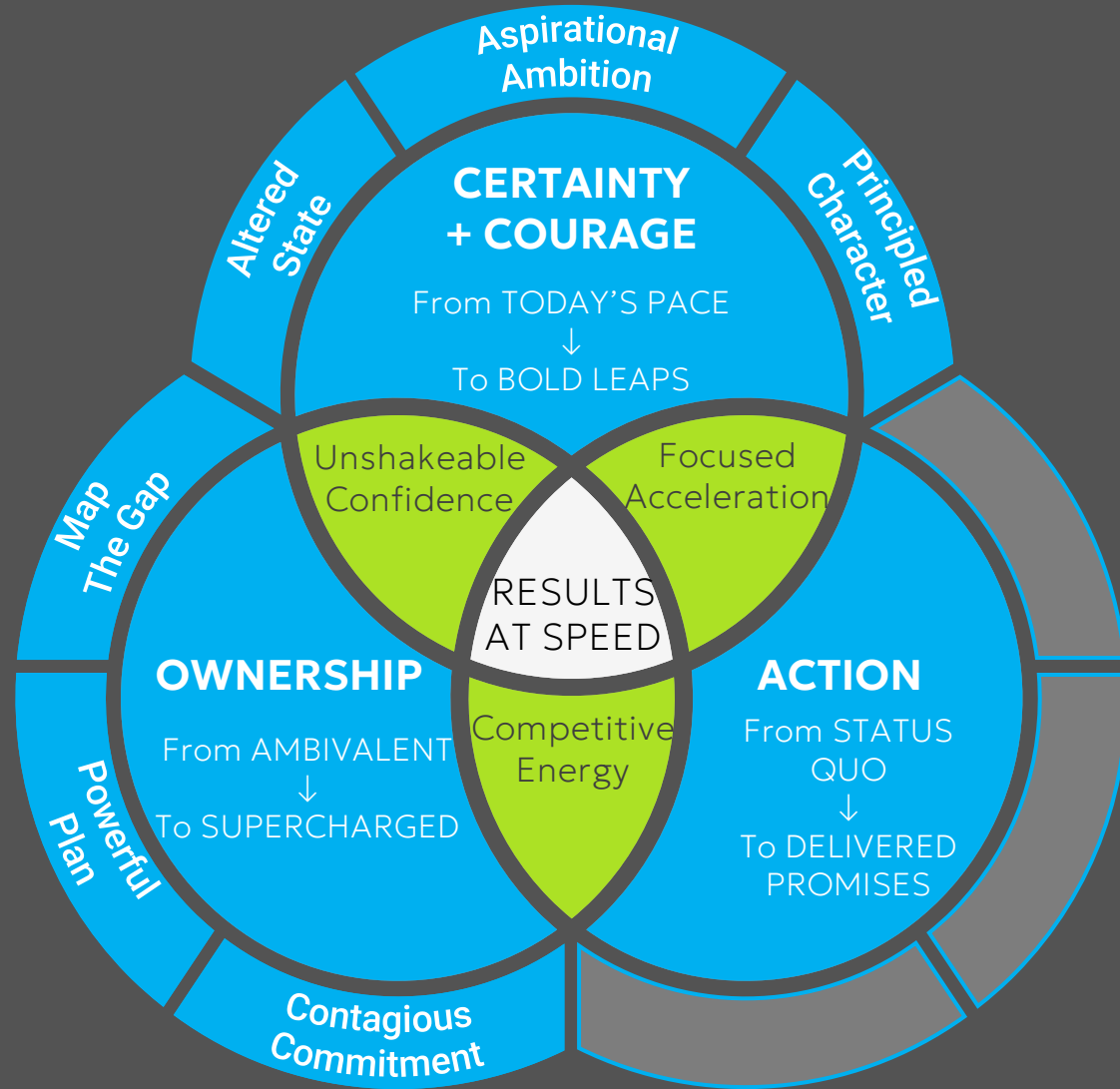
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## ACCELERATOR #5 POWERFUL PLAN

How confident are you that **you can communicate** - with a high degree of conviction - the **line of sight and path to achieving your ambition** to your organization?

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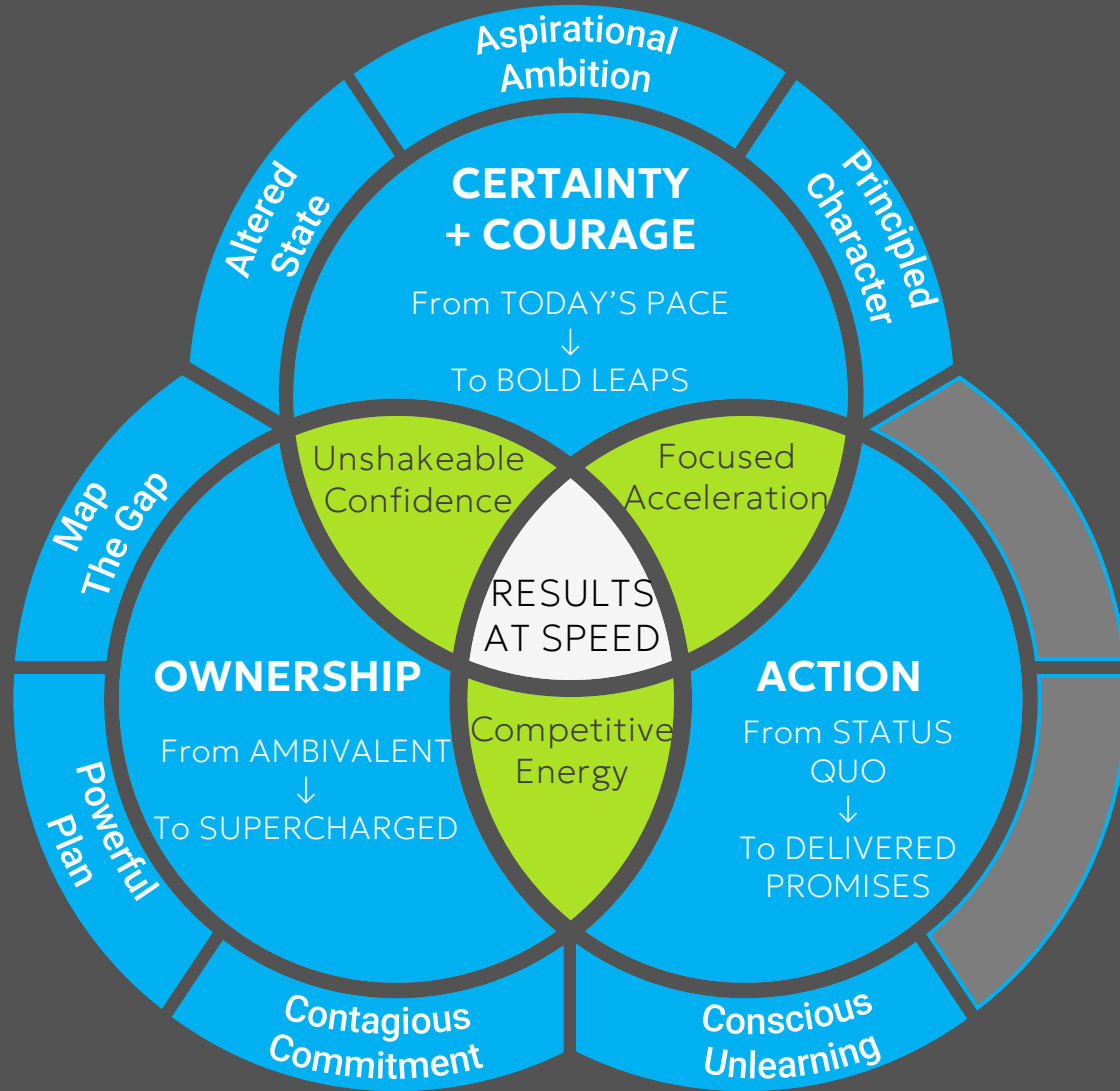


ACCELERATOR #6

## CONTAGIOUS COMMITMENT

How confident are you that the **critical mass** of your employees are embracing the drive to succeed as much as you, creating a **force multiplier effect** that compounds energy and action?

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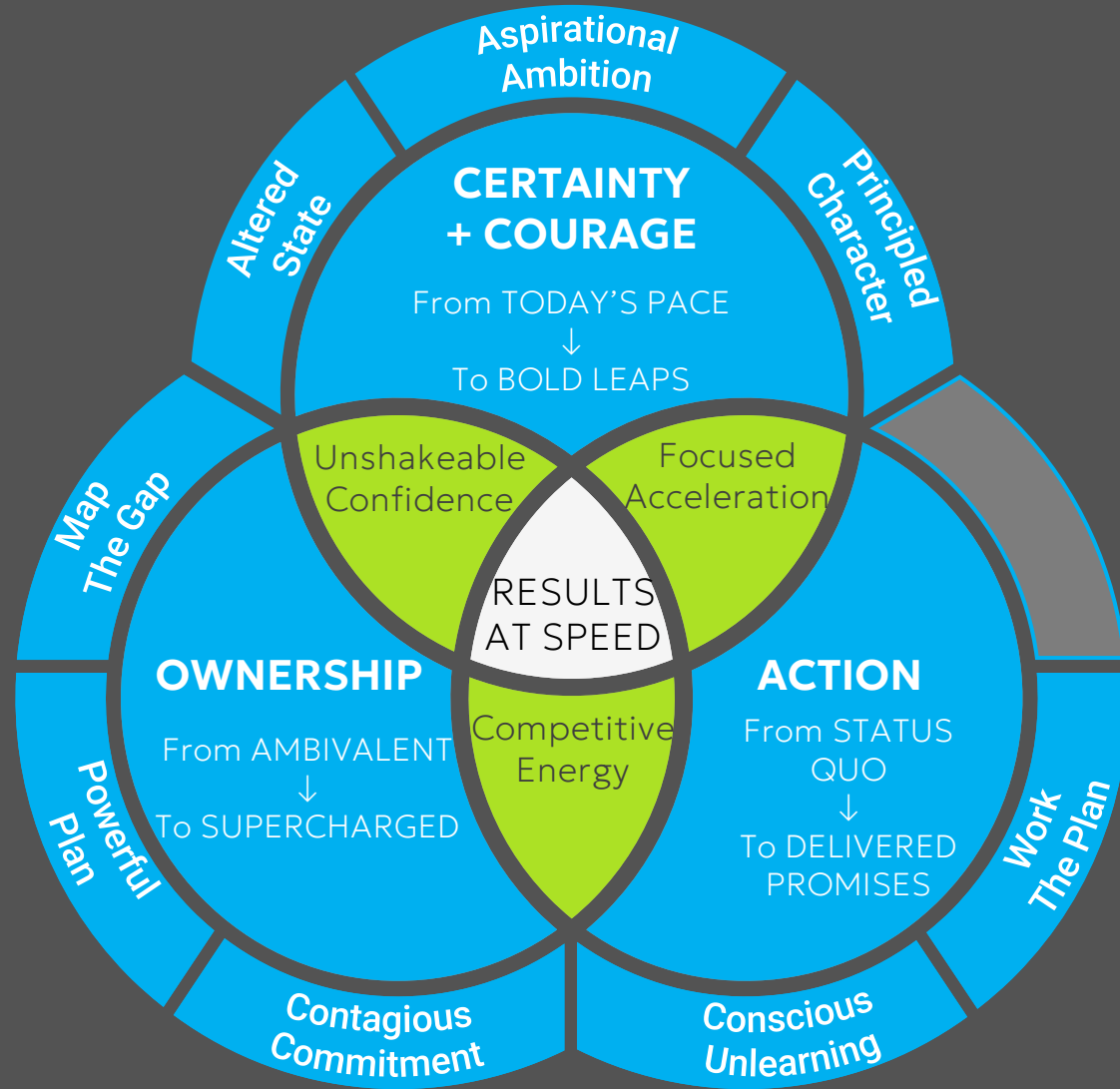
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ACCELERATOR #7

## CONSCIOUS UNLEARNING

How positive are you that **everyone** in your organization has the self-awareness to **identify and then replace unconstructive behaviors** with new behaviors that power the performance you want?

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## ACCELERATOR #8 WORK THE PLAN

Do all of your employees understand their role and responsibility in taking action, and are they equipped and ready to start?

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## ACCELERATOR #9 WORK THE PLAN

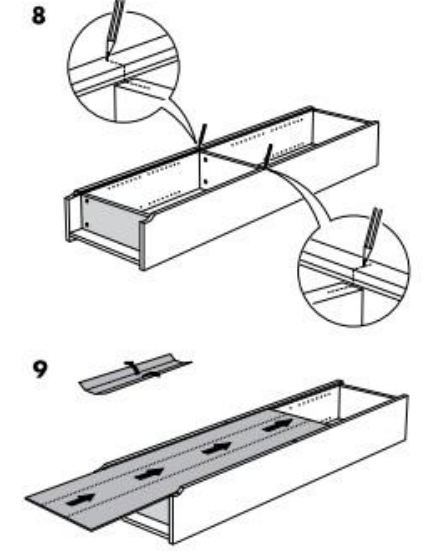
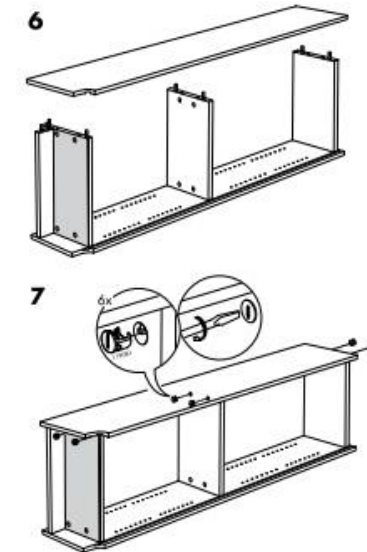
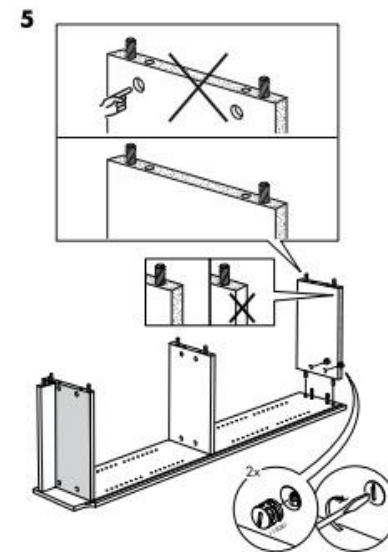
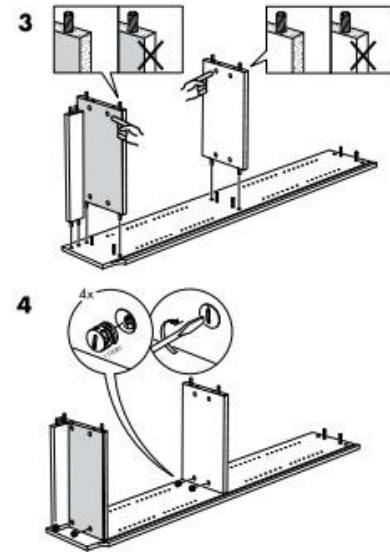
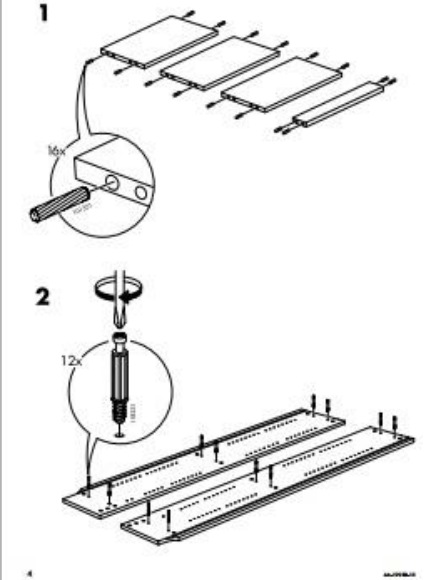
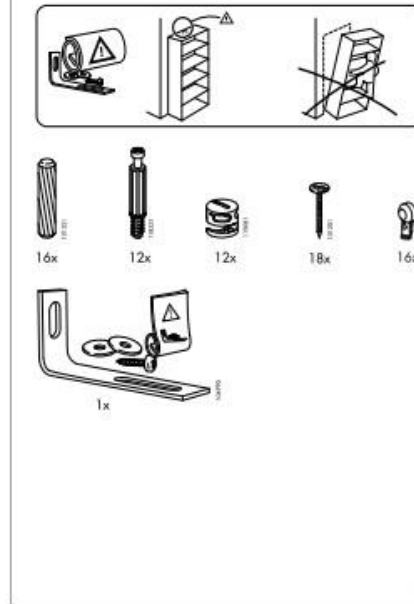
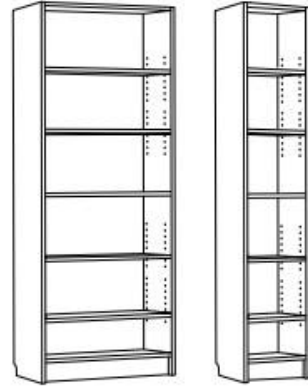
How **proficient** and **disciplined** is your organization in identifying and **tracking outcomes**, and **resolving** performance-impeding **items** before they become bigger issues.

# ACCELERATOR #6

## BUILDING CONTAGIOUS COMMITMENT

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### BILLY

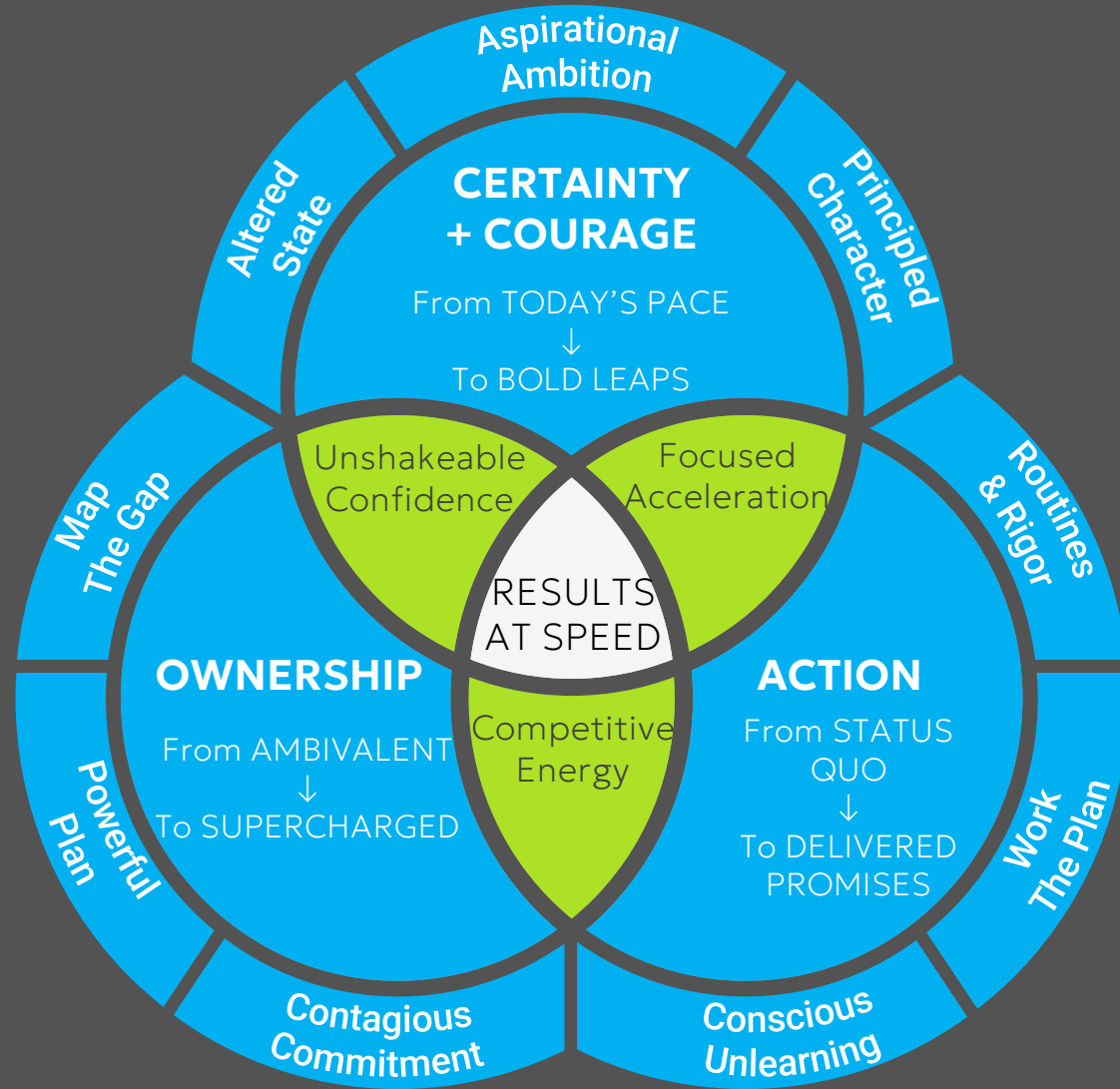


# IKEA EFFECT

INVESTED EFFORT → INFLATED (PRODUCT) VALUATION

- Have **positive feelings** (including feelings of competence because YOU DID IT)
- Sharpen the **focus on product/idea's positive attributes**
- Paradoxically, solidifies the **relationship between effort and liking**

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# Our brains & change.



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Neurons are one of two cell types in our brains, and they are vital.

Receive, process and transferring information

The absolute number of neurons is not what matters

What matters is the connections between them.

# Neurons

For our brains, the goal is **survival**, and in order to survive, we need to do two things:

1. Avoid **key threats** (physical, personal, real and perceived)
2. Seek out **rewards** (food and shelter)

**Threat avoidance > Reward identification**

Threat avoidance physical response is more intense:

- Kicks in faster
- Is much stronger and lasts longer
- Increases our heart rate
- Increases cortisol (stress hormone)
- Reduces dopamine

## Two Primary Purposes



Subconsciously constantly looking for threats and rewards. But **especially threats**

Subconsciously constantly **trying to guess** what is going to happen to us.

**Predict** and **make sense** of the world.  
Because the brain wants to protect us.  
And if it can predict, it can protect us.

So we have **learned to predict**,  
Because prediction is useful for us.  
It helps us **make decisions**, and to **make them faster**,  
subconsciously.  
So we don't have to think long and hard about  
everything.

What Are  
Our Brains  
**Actually**  
Doing?

As a percentage,  
the brain constitutes

<< % >>

of the  
total mass of the body

2-3%



Of all the energy  
consumed by the body,  
the brain consumes



<< % >>

Uncertainty.  
Which **impacts our ability to predict.**

Because of how much energy brains consume, they want to conserve energy, and tend to be lazy.

Meaning they take the **path of least resistance.**

And because of that we are vulnerable because we look for shortcuts, or the less demanding route.

This can save us time and effort and remove the need for us to think through every decision,  
But this also means **we make decisions unthinkingly** –  
and sometimes these aren't the best for us.  
This is what happens when we **react.**

# The Clever Well- Optimized Lazy Brain

So – why don't we like change?

A large number of change efforts fail.  
Not because of the planning and resource and effort.

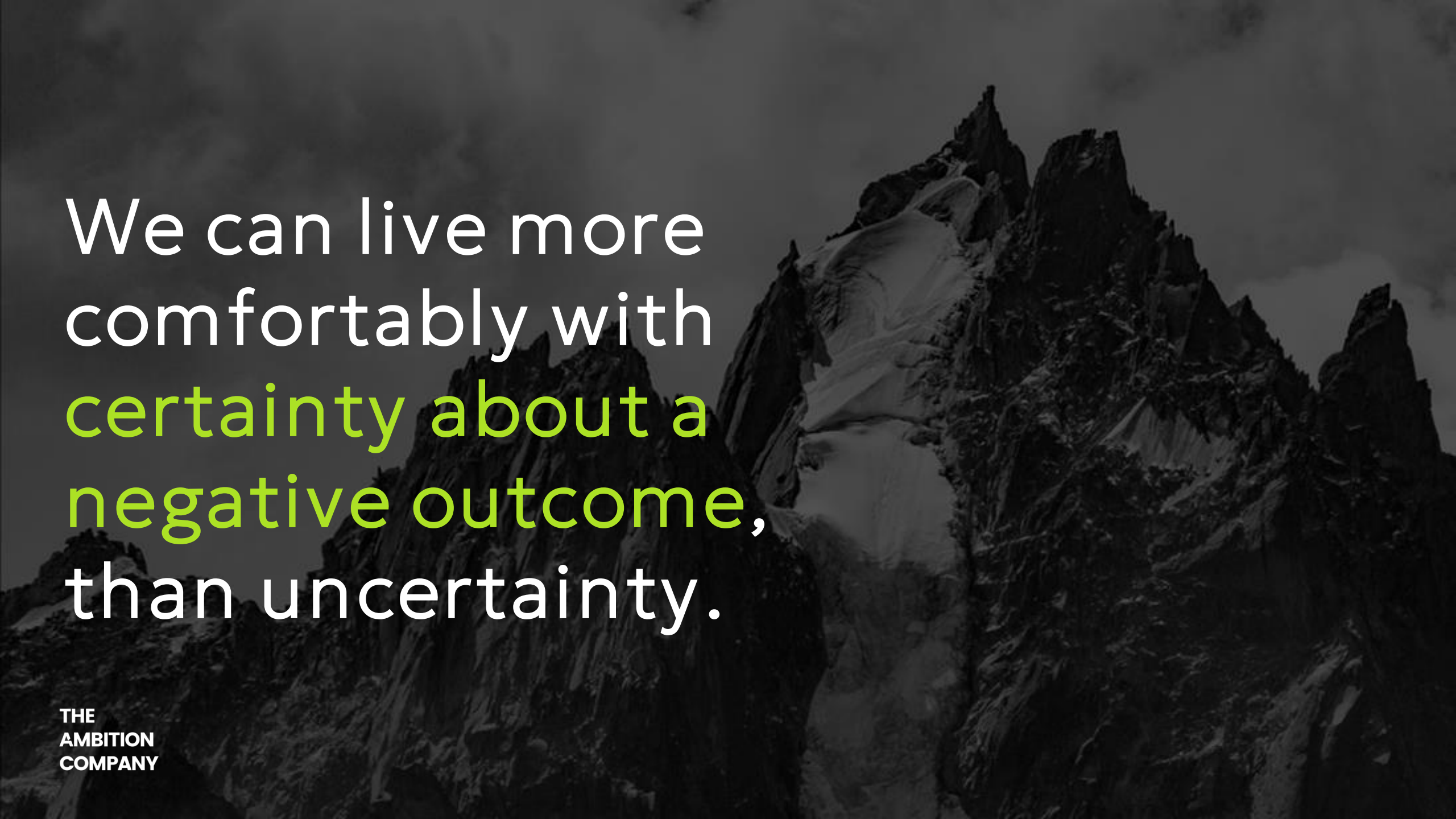
Remember that our brains are prediction machines.

And because **change means new and different** (and often unknown), we cannot meet our need to predict.


**We cannot predict what is going to happen  
And ambiguity is even worse for us.  
Our brains can't process it.**

We aren't preparing and training our brains for the future – the **Ambition**.

We Don't  
Like  
(Sustained)  
**Ambiguity**  
And  
**Uncertainty**



We can live more  
comfortably with  
certainty about a  
negative outcome,  
than uncertainty.



Once we have **certainty**, we can make **meaning**.  
If we don't have certainty, we don't know what the story is and we start to endlessly work through possibilities and alternatives and scenarios and impacts.

**Being certain removes psychological discomfort.**

Having certainty leads to the neurotransmitter dopamine being released – it is rewarding to our brain.

**Fight or flight // Flock or freeze**

Physical responses: blood flows away from the PFC, to prepare our bodies for fight or run.

Amygdala is aroused and **we see threats** as bigger than they are / and where they aren't.

How our  
**Neurons**  
Impact Us

# THREAT SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

- Fight or Flight // Flock or Freeze
- Anxious
- Distracted
- Less emotional control
- Think less clearly
- See threats where they don't exist
- See colleagues/workplace as more hostile than they are
- Narrower vision
- Reduced memory
- Poorer performance
- Cortisol up / dopamine down

- Focused
- Positive
- Willing to explore and collaborate
- Wider aperture
- More willing to learn
- Less resistance to trying something new
- More creative
- Dopamine up

# REWARD SYSTEM CHARACTERISTICS

Imagine: You walk into an office and a meeting is happening (without you)

Threat response means we begin to worry and think about adverse possibilities.

We speculate - and **we speculate negatively**.

Decision-making becomes more difficult.

We can't think clearly.

Even simple decision are hard to make.

Brains feel overwhelmed / fuzzy.

As uncertainty continues, we start even seeing colleagues as threats.

So we collaborate less, because we see each other not as collaborators, but potential foes.

**SPIRAL.**

# Uncertainty at Work

With threat and cortisol, **ability to process new ideas and information is reduced.**

- Less able to focus on the present
- Impairs thinking and creativity and problem-solving.
- Difficult to focus.
- Field of vision narrows
- Less resistant to stress and emotions
- Quicker to get angry, hard to reason with.

And past experience informs how we react – good and bad.

**Organization going through change is like an organization being run by teenagers.**

With stress in humans, the response to the stress becomes more damaging than the stressor itself

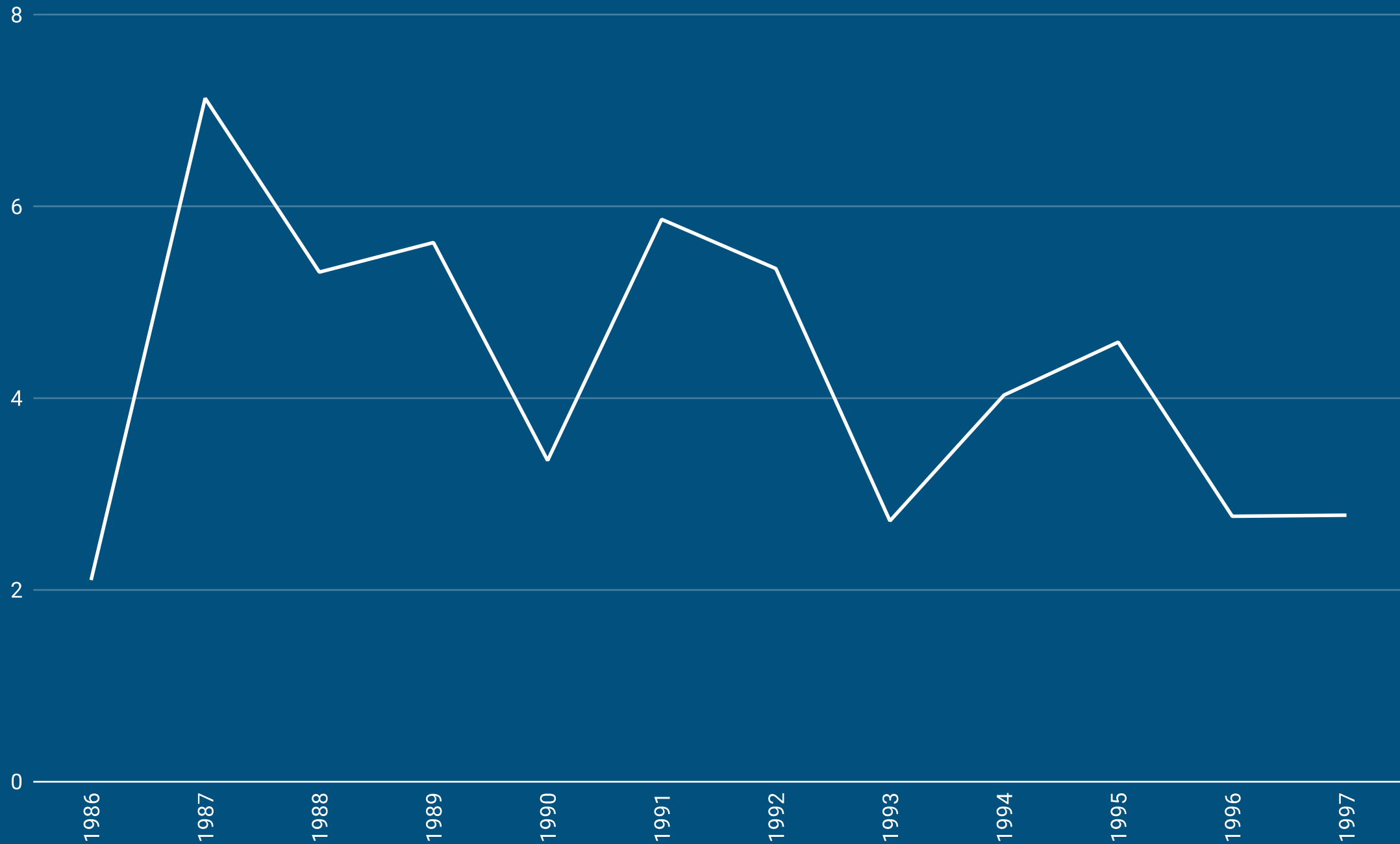
# Uncertainty at Work

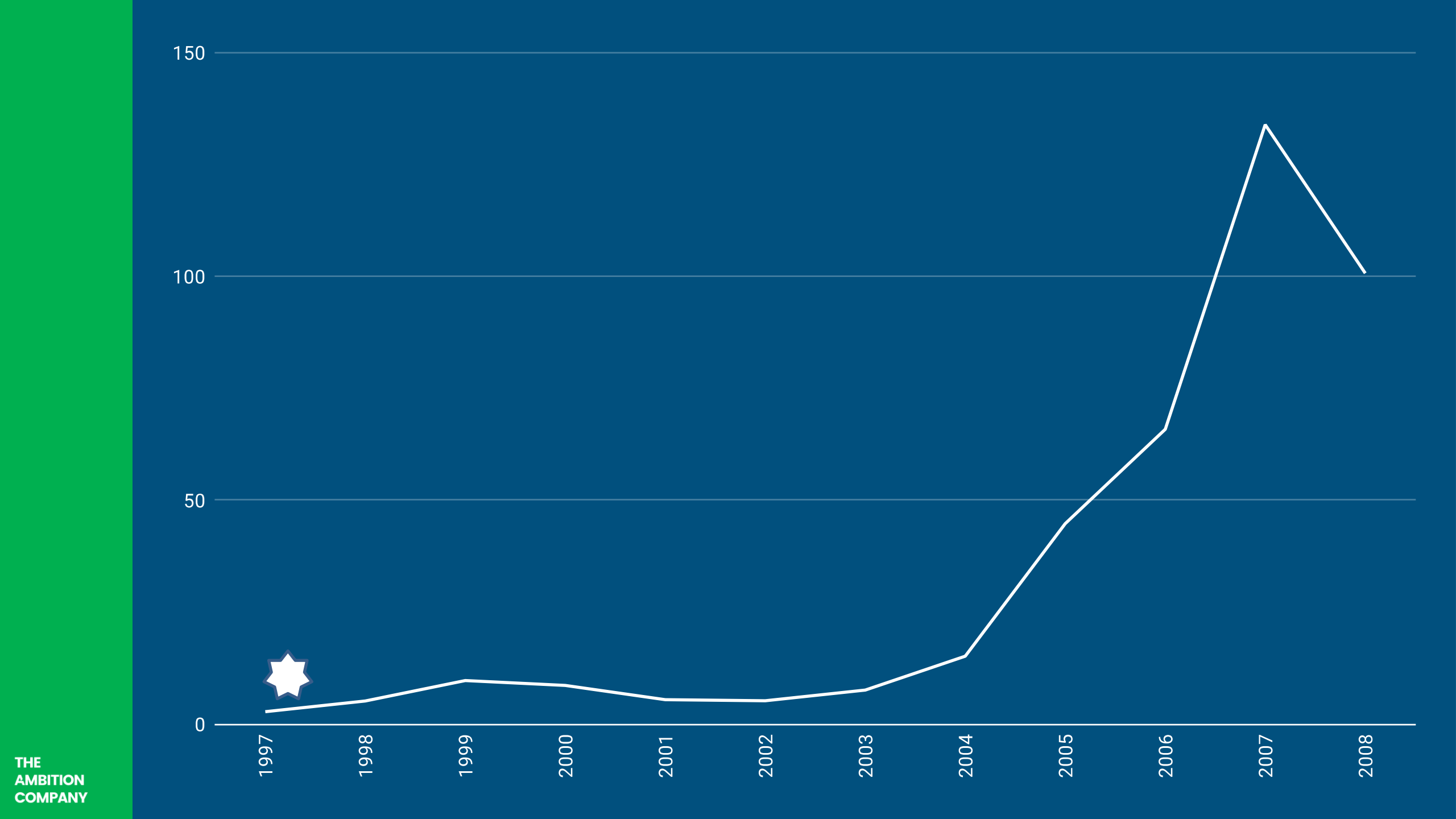


Ambition.

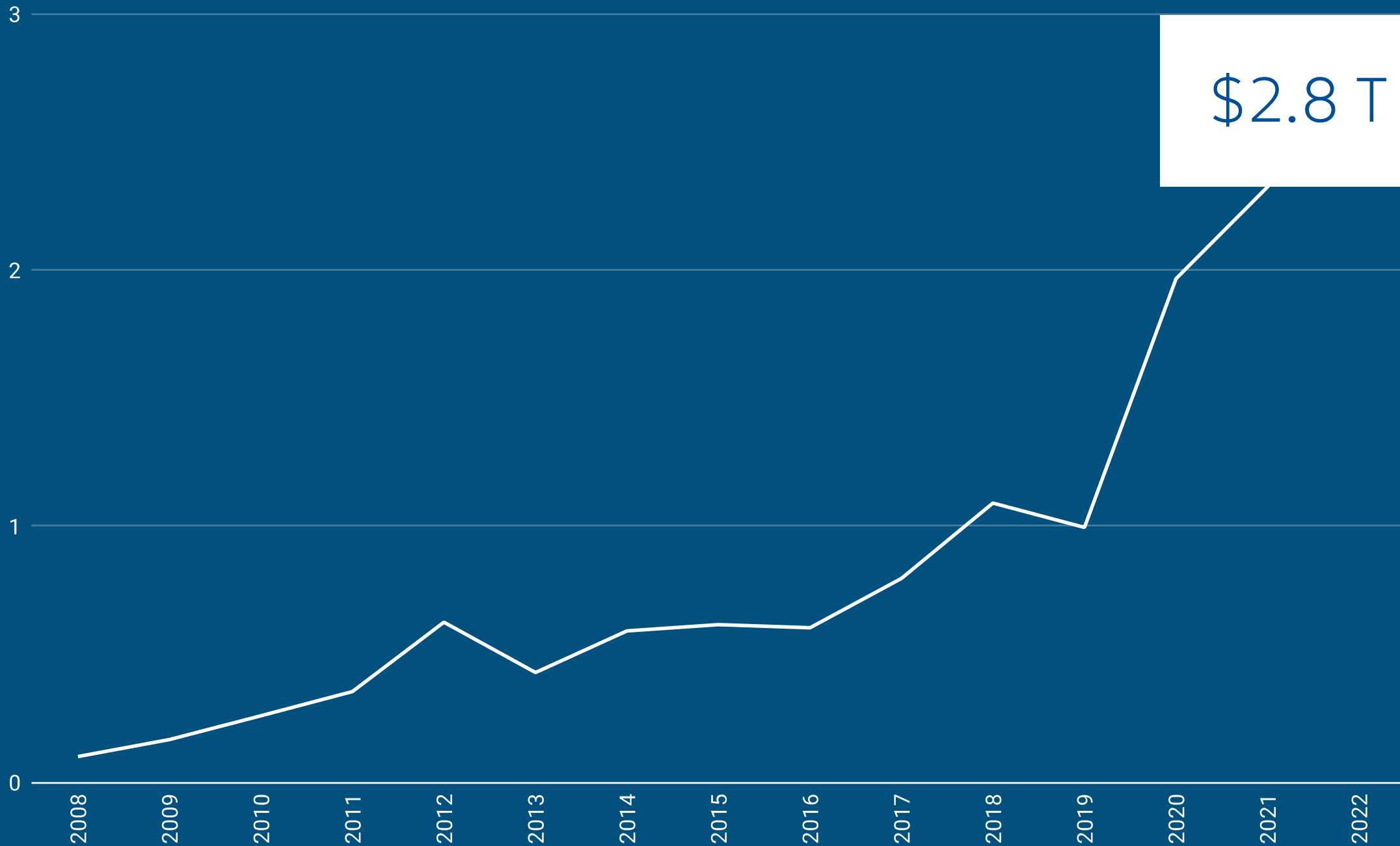
A brief case study.

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# Insights.

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Let's make  
something  
amazing  
happen



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