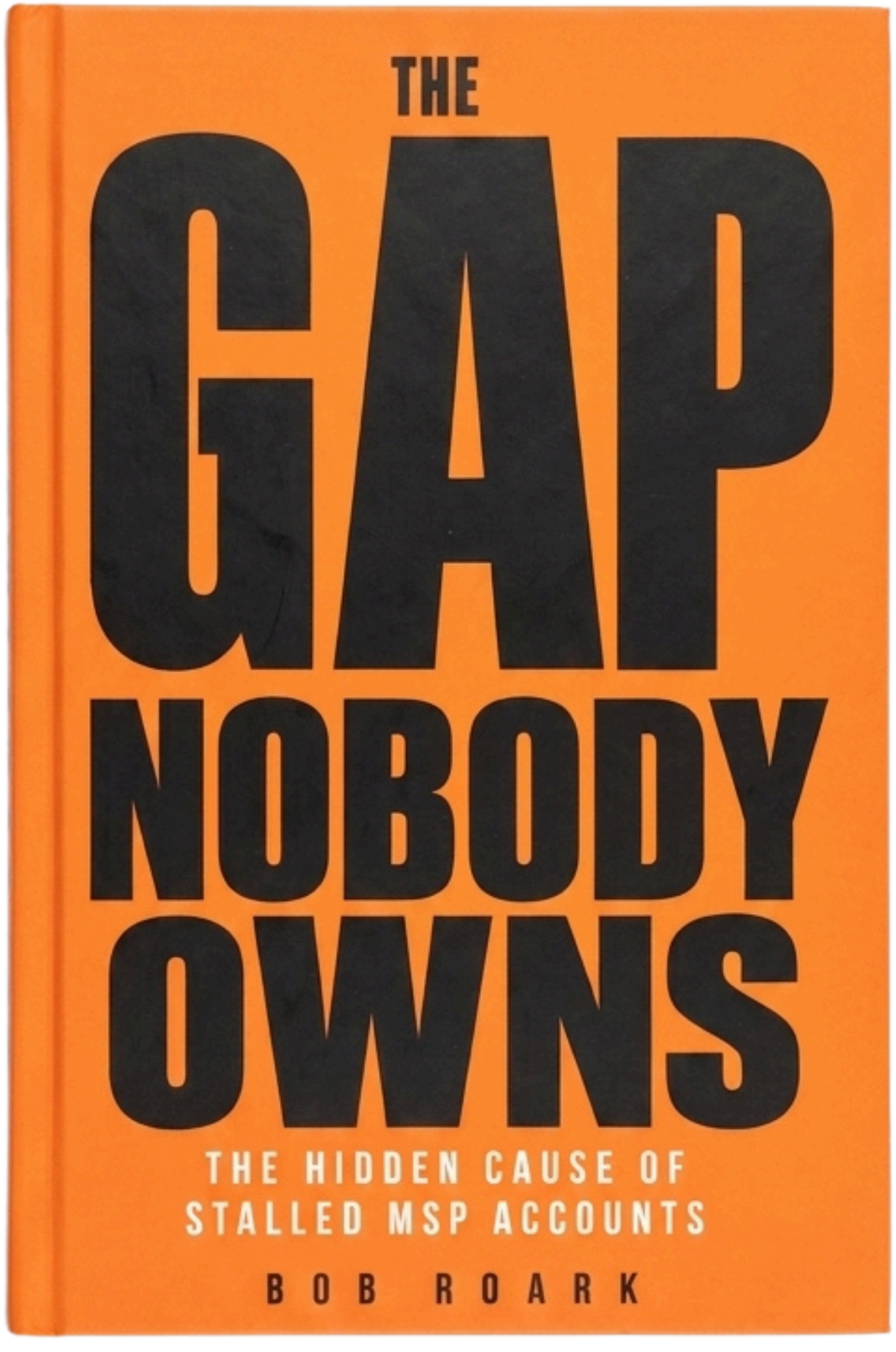

THE
GAP
NOBODY
OWNS
THE HIDDEN CAUSE OF
STALLED MSP ACCOUNTS
BOB ROARK

The contract asked:

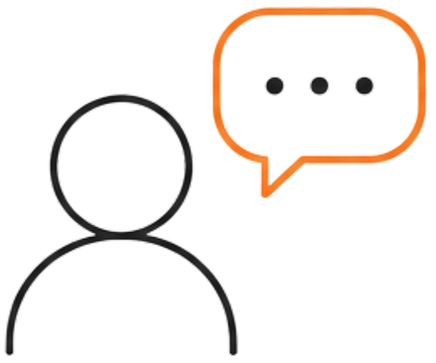


DID WE MEET OUR OBLIGATIONS?

- Measured in SLAs.
- Reported in dashboards.

≠

The customer asked:



ARE YOU HELPING US SUCCEED?

- Measured in outcomes.
- Felt in every interaction.

The contract defined our obligations. The customer defined success.
Those two things were not the same.

DOWNLOAD THE

OUTCOME EXECUTION TOOLKIT

Download the worksheets, templates, assessments,
and implementation tools used throughout this book.

bobroark.com/gapnobodyowns

HOW TO READ THIS BOOK

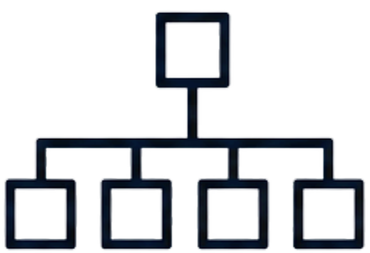
PART ONE



UNDERSTAND THE GAP

Expose the Outcome Execution Gap™—why it exists, why metrics lie, and why strong operations are not enough.

PART TWO



LEARN THE SEVEN LAWS & FIVE STAGES

Learn the framework the Five Stages of the Customer Relationship and the Seven Laws that make predictable growth repeatable.

PART THREE



PUT THE FRAMEWORK TO WORK

Use the tools, templates, and conversations to apply what you've learned with your team and your customers.



READ IT IN ORDER. | REFERENCE IT AS NEEDED. | REPEAT IT EVERY YEAR.

THE OLD REALITY

What used to be enough

Meet the SLAs.
Document the work.

Respond fast.
Resolve the ticket.

Report the numbers.
Show you're in the green.

Rely on the relationship you built.

THE NEW REALITY

What customers expect now

Understand our business.
Align to our outcomes.

Anticipate needs.
Prevent problems.

Prove impact.
Drive measurable results.

Earn trust every day.
Make it easy to do business.

WHAT YOU MEASURE

Assessments

Metrics

WHAT DRIVES THE DECISION

Confidence

WHAT THE CUSTOMER DOES

Wins (Buys) | Renews | Expands | Refers | Stays

METRICS DESCRIBE PERFORMANCE.

CONFIDENCE DRIVES CUSTOMER DECISIONS.


CUSTOMER
SALES
DELIVERY
LEADERSHIP
ONE SHARED DEFINITION
OF SUCCESS

MORE TOOLS

↓

MORE PROCESSES

↓

MORE DASHBOARDS

↓

?

PREDICTABLE GROWTH

OPERATIONAL HEALTH

What we can measure

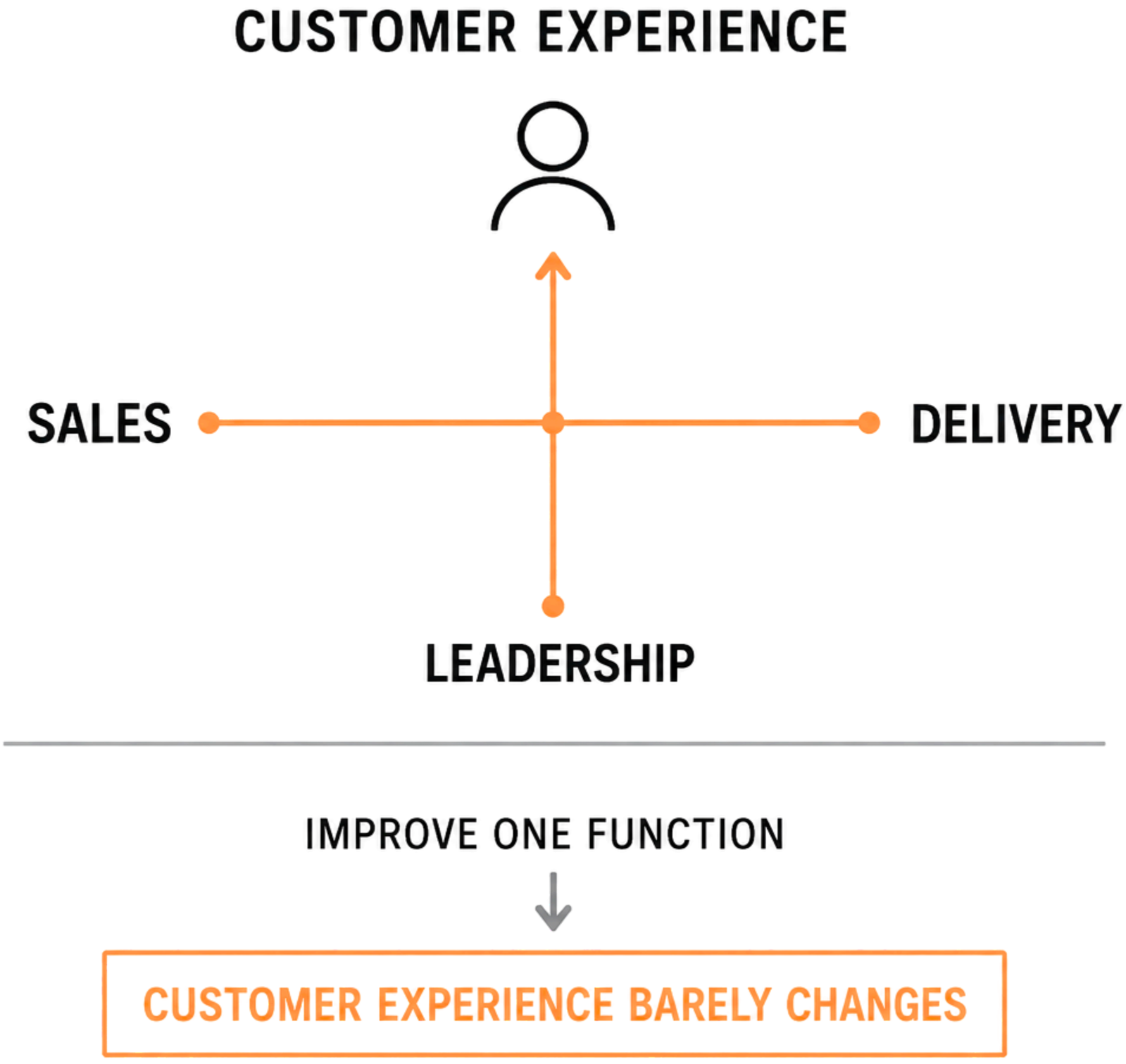
- SLA Compliance
- Response Time
- Ticket Metrics
- Process Adherence

RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

What matters most

- **Confidence**
  Do they believe we have their back?
- **Trust**
  Do they trust us to do what's right?
- **Expansion**
  Do they see us as a partner in their future?
- **Renewal**
  Do they choose to stay with us?

Metrics tell you how you performed.
Confidence determines what they do next.



IMPROVE ONE FUNCTION

↓

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE BARELY CHANGES

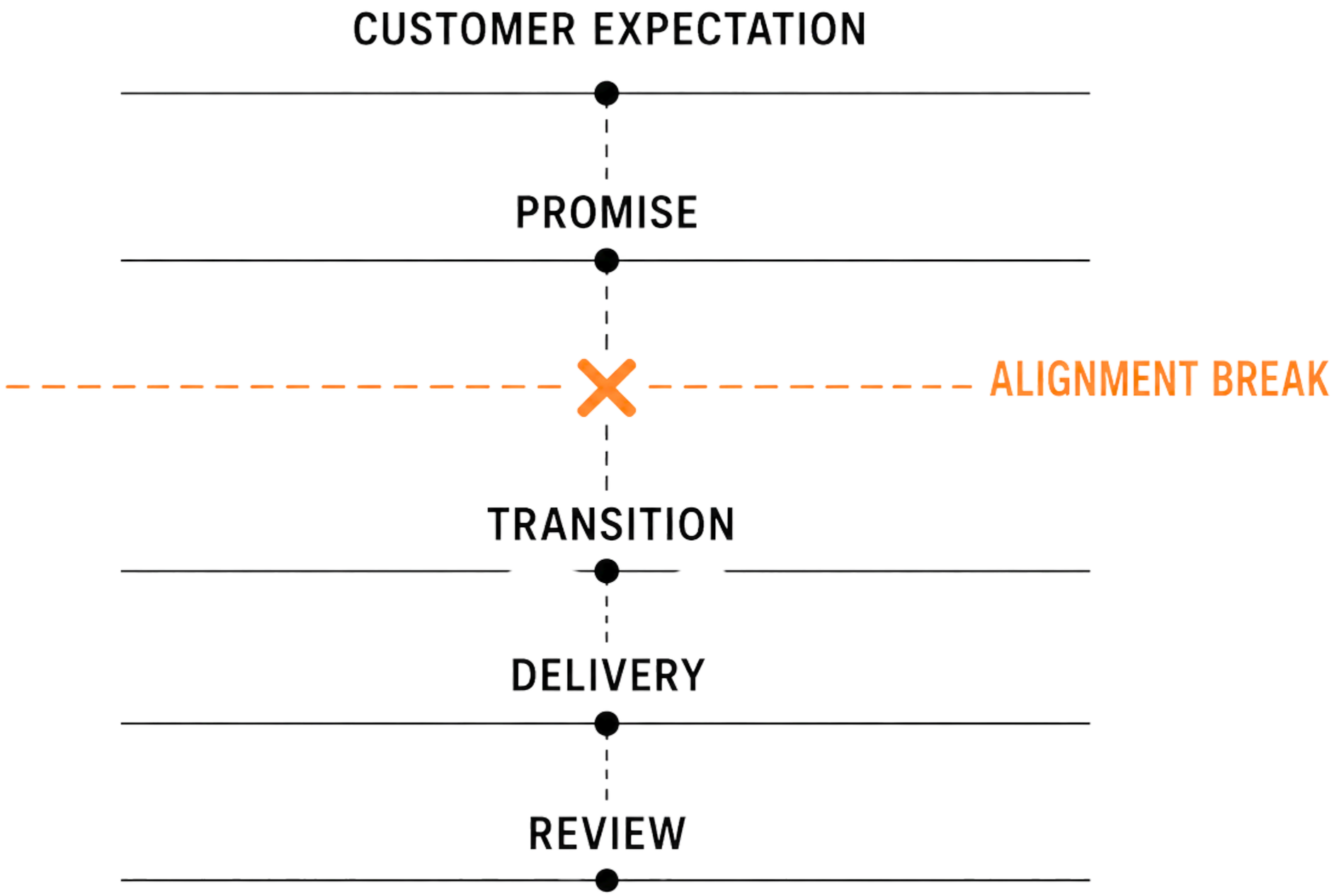
WHAT YOU MEASURE

- SLA Compliance
- Response Time
- Resolution Time
- CSAT Score

WHAT PREDICTS RENEWAL

- Confidence
- Trust
- Business Value
- Future Plans

METRICS TELL YOU HOW YOU PERFORMED. CONFIDENCE PREDICTS WHAT HAPPENS NEXT.



INSTEAD OF ASKING
"WHOSE FAULT?"

ASK
"WHERE DID ALIGNMENT BREAK?"

THE TRUTH

What drives the relationship

CONFIDENCE

↓

EXPANSION

↓

RENEWAL

THE ILLUSION

What most companies believe

RENEWAL

↓

CONFIDENCE

Confidence precedes renewal.
It doesn’t come from it.

CUSTOMER

ONE SHARED STANDARD

(The Seven Laws of Predictable MSP Growth)

SALES

Win the right customers.

DELIVERY

Deliver what matters most.

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

Build confidence. Drive value.

LEADERSHIP

Create the conditions for growth.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

↓

EXPANSION

↓

RENEWAL

↓

REFERRAL

↓

PREDICTABLE GROWTH

TODAY

Four scorecards.
Four different priorities.

SALES	**REVENUE** Hit the number.
DELIVERY	**SLA** Keep it green.
CUSTOMER SUCCESS	**RENEWAL** Get it signed.
LEADERSHIP	**MARGIN** Protect the margin.

TOMORROW

One standard.
One priority that unifies.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

Build it.
Measure it.
Grow it.

ONE STANDARD. ONE SCORE. ONE GOAL.

Measure every decision against what matters most:
CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE.

CUSTOMER

Need Help

EASY TO REACH

Problem Solved

HARD TO REACH

Customer Gives Up

CUSTOMER ISSUE

↓

ESCALATION

↓

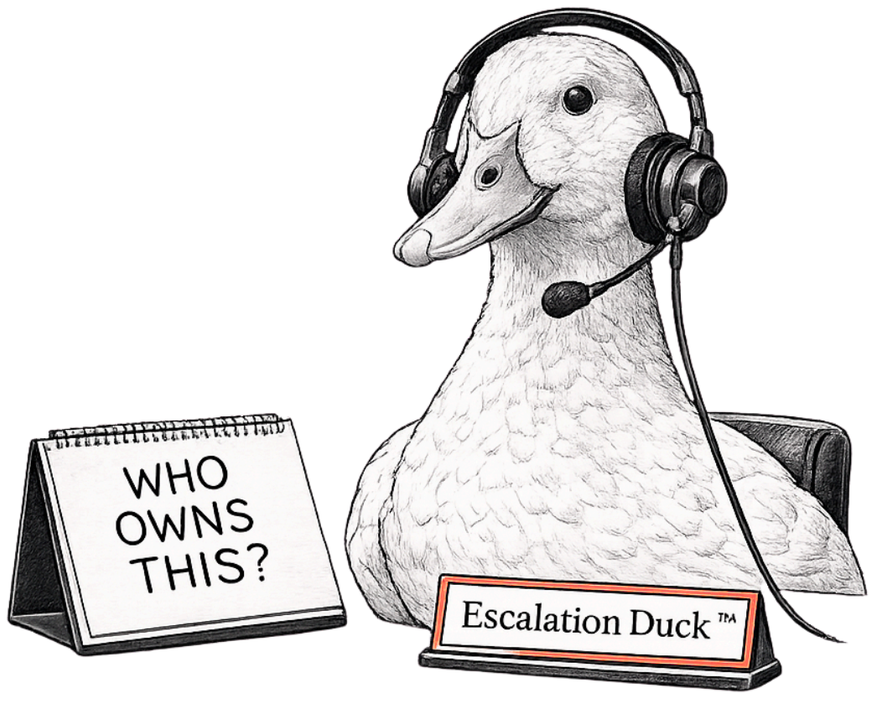
Sales
Delivery
PMO
Manager
Engineer
Director

↓

NO DECISION

↓

Customer Still Waiting



TODAY

Sales	✓
Delivery	✓
Customer Success	✓
Leadership	✓

CUSTOMER

?

GROWTH STALLS

TOMORROW

Sales

Delivery

Customer Success

Leadership

SHARED STANDARD

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

GROWTH

ONE ACCOUNT

SALES

PROMISED

We sold a result.
Faster response.
Modernized environment.

CUSTOMER

EXPECTED

We heard the promise
through our pressures.
It means our team stops
getting blamed and
things finally improve.

DELIVERY

EXECUTED

We read the contract.
Built to what the
agreement supports.

OUTCOME EXECUTION GAP

The distance between what Sales promised,
what the Customer expected, and what Delivery executed.

SALES

DELIVERY

CUSTOMER SUCCESS

RENEWAL

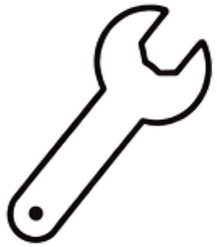
?

WHO OWNS
THE SPACE
BETWEEN?

OWNERSHIP GAP

The organizational vacuum where
the most expensive drift happens.

HIGH CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE



GRACE

Time to recover.



LOYAL

• Stay • Expand • Refer

LOW PERFORMANCE

HIGH PERFORMANCE



PROBLEMS ARE VISIBLE

Problems are visible.



THE CONFIDENCE GAP

You deliver.
They don't believe.

Highest renewal risk.

LOW CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

THE FIVE STAGES
OF PREDICTABLE MSP GROWTH

The customer travels one road.

1
WIN



Sales and Delivery align before any commitment gets made.

2
TRANSITION



Knowledge, expectations, relationships, and accountability move from Sales to Delivery without losing context.

3
STABILIZE



Execution becomes predictable, everyone agrees on success, friction goes away, and confidence builds.

4
EXPAND



Earned confidence turns into a wider footprint, stronger executive relationships, and new business.

5
RENEW



The partnership continues, because renewal was earned in every interaction since Day One.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

Built over time. Tested in every interaction.

ONE CUSTOMER. FIVE STAGES. MANY OWNERS.

The customer never experiences your org chart.

THE CUSTOMER JOURNEY	1 WIN	2 TRANSITION	3 STABILIZE	4 EXPAND	5 RENEW
WHO TYPICALLY OWNS IT	Sales	Sales + Delivery	Delivery	Delivery + Account Management	Customer Success
WHAT THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES	They're sold a future.	They expect a seamless start.	They want predictable results.	They look for opportunities to do more.	They decide whether to continue.

ALIGNMENT HOLDS HERE.

When nobody owns the transitions, the promise, expectation, and execution answer to three different bosses.

SOMEONE MUST BE ACCOUNTABLE FOR ALIGNMENT HOLDING AS THE CUSTOMER MOVES FROM STAGE TO STAGE.

THREE THINGS. THREE DIFFERENT PURPOSES.

Know them. Use them. Lead with them.

1 THE FIVE STAGES

Tell you where the customer is.

1	2	3	4	5
WIN	**TRANSITION**	**STABILIZE**	**EXPAND**	**RENEW**
Align before any commitment gets made.	Handoff of knowledge, expectations, relationships, and accountability.	Predictable execution. Agreed success. Confidence builds.	Earned confidence drives wider footprint, stronger relationships, and new business.	The partnership continues, because renewal was earned every day.

2 THE SEVEN LAWS

Tell you how to behave at every stage.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Sales Wins Them. Delivery Grows Them.	The Customer Defines Success.	Customers Don't Buy Technology. They Buy Confidence.	Renewals Begin on Day One.	You Can Meet Every SLA and Still Lose the Customer.	Delivery Starts Before the Sale.	The Easiest Company to Do Business With Usually Wins.

3 THE SEVEN LAWS STANDARD

Tells you how leadership measures whether the laws are actually happening.

DEFINE	MEASURE	ACT
What good looks like for each law.	Collect account-level evidence consistently.	Address gaps, reinforce what works, and adjust.

CONFIDENCE ACROSS THE JOURNEY

Map where confidence was built—and where it was spent.

	1 WIN	2 TRANSITION	3 STABILIZE	4 EXPAND	5 RENEW
WHERE CONFIDENCE WAS BUILT *(What went right?)*					
WHERE CONFIDENCE WAS SPENT *(What caused friction or doubt?)*					
WHAT WE WILL DO DIFFERENTLY *(Next time)*					

DO THIS.

Walk your largest account through each stage. Be honest. Do not average, round up, or give yourself credit for intentions.

ROADS LEAK AT THE SAME SEAM. YOURS WILL SHOW YOU WHICH ONE.

TWO DIFFERENT PATHS. TWO VERY DIFFERENT OUTCOMES.

Fixing operations is not the same as rebuilding confidence.

OPERATIONAL RECOVERY

What most organizations focus on.

CORRECT DEFICIENCIES
Address what's listed in the notice.

↓

IMPROVE METRICS
Drive the numbers in the right direction.

↓

MEET SLA
Hit the targets. Close the gaps.

↓

CONTRACT MAY SURVIVE.
But confidence is still missing.

≠

CONFIDENCE RECOVERY

What actually rebuilds the relationship.

LISTEN
Understand their mission,
their reality, and their concerns.

↓

ADAPT
Adjust the plan together.
Prove you are responsive.

↓

BUILD BELIEF
Show progress early and often.
Be transparent. Be accountable.

↓

EARN TRUST
Deliver on commitments.
Stay aligned. Keep improving.

↓

CONTRACT AND CONFIDENCE ARE EARNED.
The relationship gets stronger.

**OPERATIONS CAN FIX TODAY.
CONFIDENCE BUILDS THE FUTURE.**

**YOU DON'T JUST NEED TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM.
YOU NEED TO RESTORE THE BELIEF.**

FOUR CONDITIONS THAT RESTORE CONFIDENCE

These four things must be true at the same time.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

The ultimate outcome.

4 | **LEADERSHIP DECISIONS**

Leaders make the tough calls, remove roadblocks, and align the organization around the customer.

3 | **SHARED DEFINITION OF SUCCESS**

One definition of success, in the customer's words, replaces competing scorecards.

2 | **OWNERSHIP OF ALIGNMENT**

One named person owns the space between promise, expectation, and execution.

1 | **CONFIDENCE IS MEASURED FIRST**

Confidence is tracked as its own thing, ahead of the SLA and operational metrics.

ACCOUNT READINESS CHECK

Do you have these in place for **your largest account?**

1	**OWNERSHIP OF ALIGNMENT** One named person owns the space between promise, expectation, and execution.	☐
2	**SHARED DEFINITION OF SUCCESS** One definition of success, in the customer's words, drives how everyone is measured.	☐
3	**CONFIDENCE IS MEASURED FIRST** Confidence is tracked as its own thing, ahead of the SLA and operational metrics.	☐
4	**LEADERSHIP DECISIONS** Leaders remove roadblocks and align the organization around the customer.	☐



HOW MANY ARE TRUE TODAY?

The more you can check, the stronger your foundation. The fewer you can check, the more likely confidence will erode.

4	You're building a relationship that lasts.
2–3	You're at risk. Strengthen the gaps.
0–1	Confidence is already under pressure.

★ STRONG FOUNDATIONS MAKE THE SEVEN LAWS WORK. ★

THE SUCCESS QUESTION

“If this relationship is wildly successful, what does success actually look like for you?”

↓

Write it exactly
as they say it.

↓

Everything else
aligns from here.

LISTEN BEFORE YOU MEASURE

Alignment follows understanding.

1 LISTEN
Ask the success question.
Then listen.

↓

2 CUSTOMER WORDS
Write their answer exactly
as they say it.

↓

3 SHARED DEFINITION
Create one clear definition of success
in the customer's words.

↓

4 ALIGNED DECISIONS
Sales, Delivery, and leadership
make decisions against the same target.

↓

5 CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE
When they see alignment,
confidence grows.

YOU CAN'T ALIGN AROUND A TARGET NOBODY HAS SAID OUT LOUD.

THREE DEFINITIONS OF SUCCESS

Write them down. Compare them. Align on what matters.

CUSTOMER

The definition of success.

"My engineers stop working weekends."

SALES

What was promised.

"We'll reduce response times."

DELIVERY

What we believe we're responsible for.

"Meet SLA."

LEADERSHIP

What leadership believes success looks like.

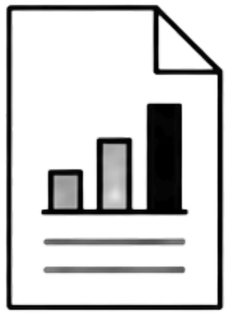
"Profitable growth and higher customer retention."

?

DO THESE DESCRIBE THE SAME OUTCOME?

→ Alignment starts with the customer's words.

READ BEHAVIOR, NOT REPORTS.



REPORTS

What *already* happened.



BEHAVIOR

What customers expect
will happen *next*.



CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

Moves *before* either.

THE HIDDEN OPERATING SYSTEM

Documented process vs. actual behavior.

OFFICIAL PROCESS

CUSTOMER

↓

ACCOUNT MANAGER

↓

DELIVERY TEAM

↓

REPORTS

ACTUAL BEHAVIOR

CUSTOMER → SENIOR ENGINEER

CUSTOMER → DIRECTOR

CUSTOMER → PRIVATE EMAIL

CUSTOMER → SIDE CONVERSATION

Customers always reveal the system they actually trust.

THE CONFIDENCE THERMOMETER

Behavior is the earliest leading indicator.

CONFIDENCE RISING

- More executive conversations
- More strategic questions
- More future planning
- More people brought into the room
- Direct engagement offered in good faith

Customers act like they believe in you.

They will give you room when you have a bad month.

NEUTRAL

- Transactional communication
- Questions limited to today's issues
- Limited strategic engagement

Watch closely. Momentum is flat.

CONFIDENCE FALLING

- Private conversations
- Workarounds and side channels
- Bypassed processes and people
- Short, transactional emails
- Fewer questions, less engagement

Customers act like they don't trust the system or you.

They are spending confidence *now*.

Read the behavior. See the signal. Change the outcome.

FRICTION IS WHAT CUSTOMERS FEEL.

Every interaction either removes effort or adds it.

CUSTOMER

REMOVES EFFORT

↓

Confidence ↑

↓

Easier to stay

ADDS EFFORT

↓

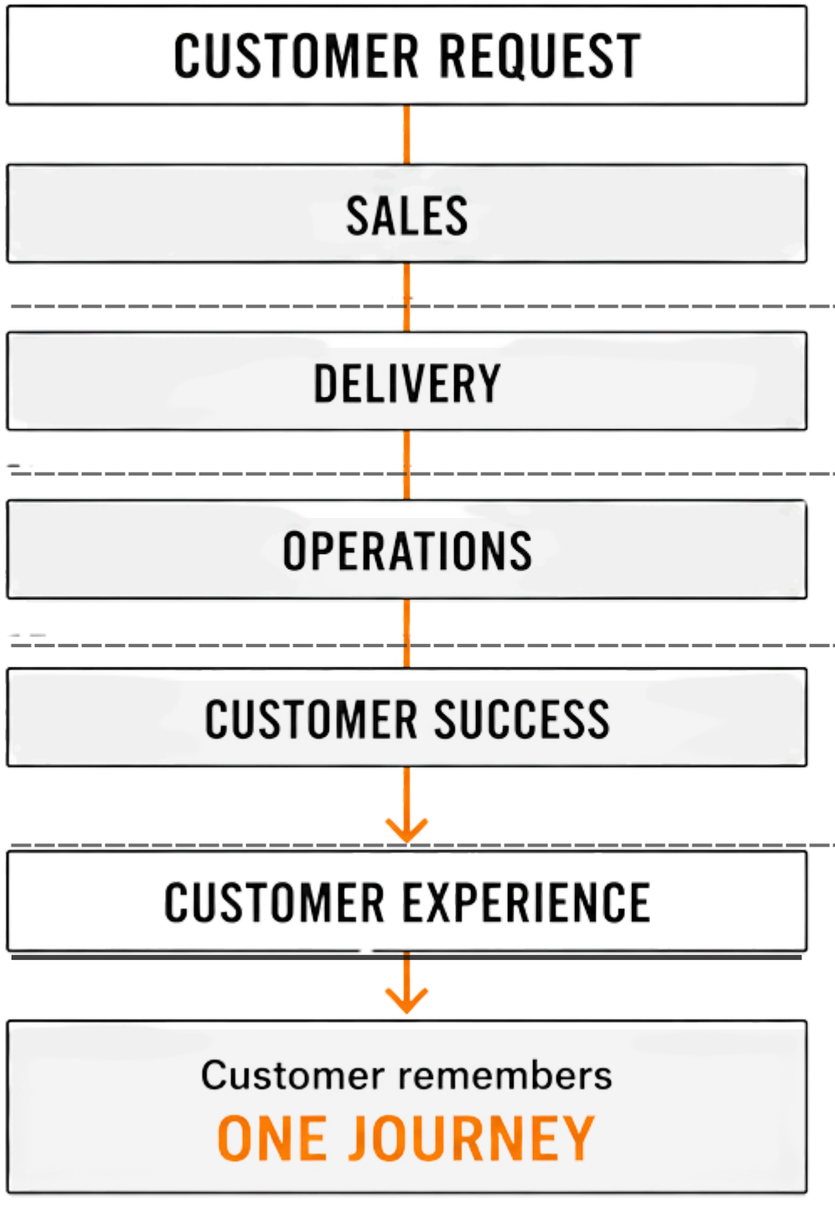
Confidence ↓

↓

Harder to stay

THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES ONE JOURNEY.

Departments see handoffs. Customers feel friction.



FRICTION IS CREATED AT EACH TRANSITION.

HANDOFF

The customer has to pass their need to someone new.

DELAY

The customer waits without knowing why.

REPEAT

The customer repeats information you should already have.

APPROVAL

The customer must navigate your process, not their need.

CUSTOMERS FEEL THE SEAMS.

MEASURE CUSTOMER EFFORT.

Map one request. Count the friction.

CUSTOMER REQUEST JOURNEY

- ☐ 1 | Submit request _____
- ☐ 2 | Wait _____
- ☐ 3 | Repeat information _____
- ☐ 4 | Follow up _____
- ☐ 5 | Ask again _____
- ☐ 6 | Escalate _____
- ☐ 7 | Receive answer _____

COUNT THE MARKS.

That's your *Customer Effort Score*.

CUSTOMER EFFORT SCORE

0 1 2 3 4 5 6+

EASY TO DO BUSINESS WITH

HARD TO DO BUSINESS WITH

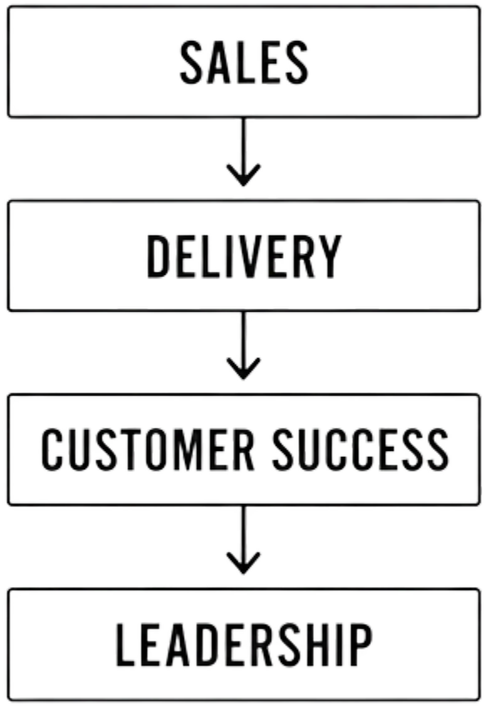
REMOVE ONE THIS WEEK.

Small steps. Every month. Easier to stay. Easier to grow.

WHAT ARE YOU ACTUALLY MANAGING?

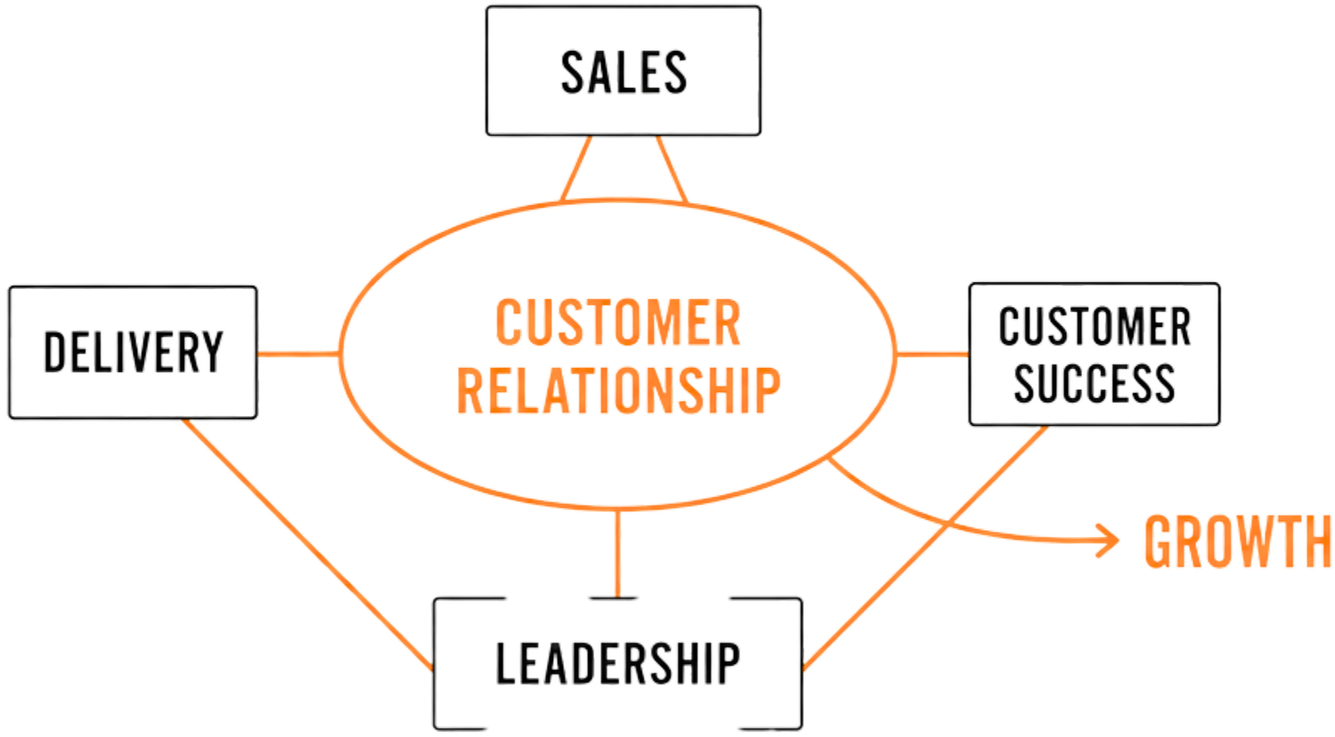
The shift is simple. The impact is everything.

TODAY



Each optimized separately.

TOMORROW



MANAGE THE RELATIONSHIP, NOT THE DEPARTMENTS.

ONE QUESTION.

Alignment creates confidence. Misalignment creates risk.

Would Sales, Delivery, and your customer define success the same way?

SALES _____

DELIVERY _____

CUSTOMER _____

DO ALL THREE ANSWERS MATCH?

YES

ALIGNMENT

Confidence builds.
Growth follows.

NO

OUTCOME EXECUTION GAP™

Confidence is spent.
Renewal is at risk.

WHAT ACTUALLY LASTS.

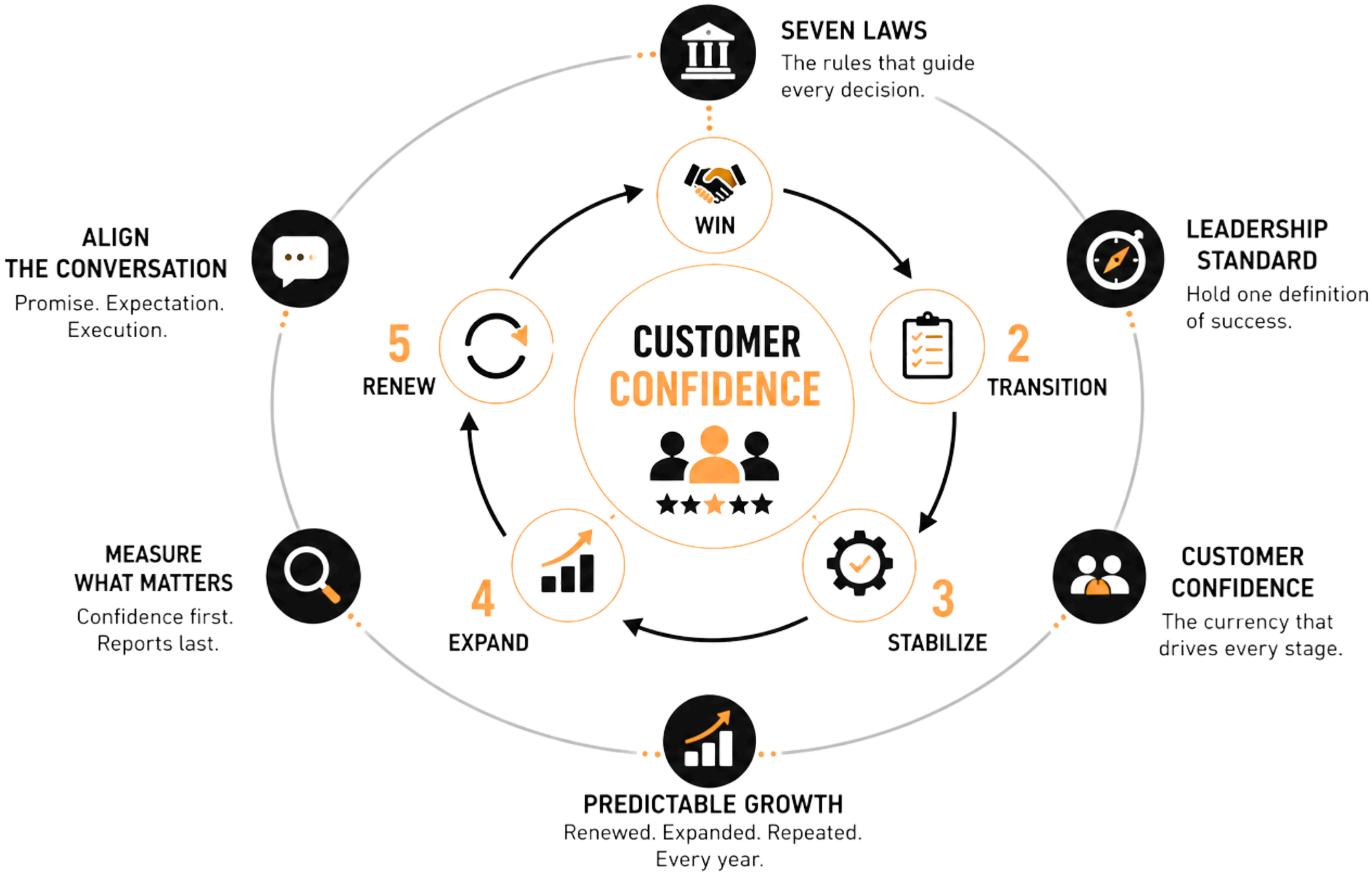
Systems change. Contracts end. People endure.



ORGANIZATIONS IMPROVE BECAUSE PEOPLE IMPROVE.

THE OUTCOME EXECUTION SYSTEM™

ONE RELATIONSHIP. FIVE STAGES. SEVEN LAWS. PREDICTABLE GROWTH.



OWN THE RELATIONSHIP. CONFIDENCE FOLLOWS. GROWTH BECOMES PREDICTABLE.

THREE MOVES. ONE RELATIONSHIP.

You can start Monday.

START HERE

COMPARE SUCCESS

Run the success comparison.

READ BEHAVIOR

Watch what people do, not what reports say.

REMOVE FRICTION

Find one point of friction and remove it this week.

CUSTOMER CONFIDENCE

Build it. Protect it. Grow it.

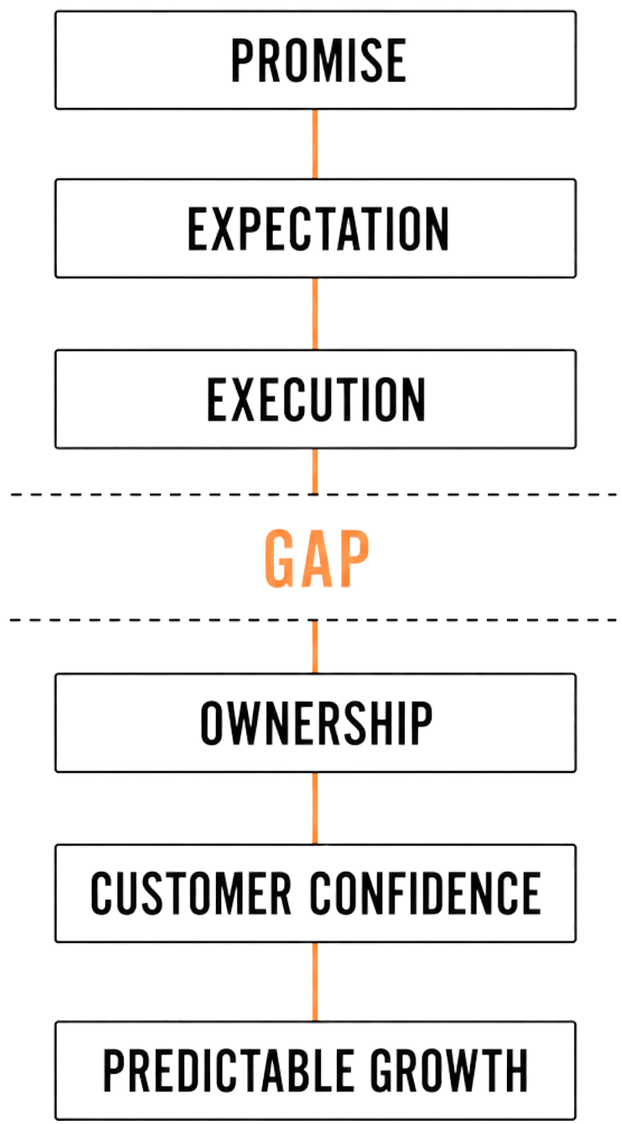
PREDICTABLE GROWTH

Renew. Expand. Repeat.

SMALL ACTIONS. REPEATED CONSISTENTLY.

OWN THE GAP.

This is where growth is won or lost.



The gap doesn't close because you understand it.
It closes because someone decides to **OWN IT.**

HOW THE CONVERSATION STARTS.

I map the customer's experience before I diagnose anything.

WHEN SOMETHING BREAKS
Where the conversation begins.

↓

WHAT HAPPENED?
The incident.

↓

WHAT DID THE CUSTOMER DO?
The behavior.

↓

WHAT DOES THAT BEHAVIOR SAY ABOUT CONFIDENCE?

↓

WHERE IS TRUST BEING BUILT OR SPENT?

BEHAVIOR TELLS THE STORY REPORTS CANNOT.

WHAT YOU LEAVE WITH.

A clear picture. Prioritized actions. Measured through your customer's eyes.

YOU BRING

One or two
real customer accounts.

WE MAP

Your Outcome
Execution Gap™.

YOU LEAVE WITH

- Confidence map
- Alignment priorities
- Next actions

NO PITCH. WORKING SESSION.