**Breakout 1 - Arriving**

**Ensure you split the time equally for all of you**

**Introduce yourselves briefly**

**NO solving, just presence and curiosity!**

1. **Why is this topic (prioritization) important to you?**
2. **What were your key insights from the screencasts and readings?**

**Remember:**

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**BREAKOUT 2 - Case Study: “Too Many Priorities, Not Enough Clarity”**

Ravi is a 5G Field Engineer and Technical Support Specialist working for a global company that designs and manages advanced mobile network infrastructure. His team, six engineers distributed across two time zones, is responsible for firmware rollouts, remote diagnostics, urgent customer escalations, and field feedback for the R&D team.

Now 18 months into the role, Ravi has become the go-to person for late-night outages and thorny deployment issues. He’s trusted, technically strong, and rarely complains. But recently, he’s grown frustrated. The days feel reactive. Wins go unnoticed. And despite working long hours, Ravi isn’t sure whether he’s advancing anything that matters.

**Monday: An overloaded backlog**

The week kicks off with the usual 9:00am planning sync. Lata, the team lead, screenshares a list of around 30 tasks, pulled from their internal ticketing tool, customer escalation tracker, and various inboxes. The list is vaguely grouped into “firmware deployment,” “field triage,” and “customer requests,” but there’s no effort to stack or score priorities.

Some tasks are marked as critical because someone senior flagged them via email. Others carry ambiguous tags like “ASAP” or “Next 48hrs.” By the end of the call, Lata says, “You’ve all done this long enough. Use your judgement. Just keep things moving.”

By Tuesday morning, Ravi has already spent hours troubleshooting a firmware compatibility issue flagged as “urgent,” only to learn that another team closed the same case over the weekend. The ticket was never updated.

**Tuesday: No context for what matters**

This quarter, the company is heavily focused on expanding its programmable network capabilities, rolling out new APIs that help clients unlock differentiated services and streamline operations. A major regional firmware release is central to this push. Ravi’s team is meant to support it.

But no one has explained what success looks like, or why this specific rollout is a top priority. Is it about reducing churn? Gaining market share? Meeting SLAs? Ravi’s only input was a forwarded thread from Product. Without clear context, he puts the firmware work on hold and instead resolves some easier legacy cases in the queue, things he knows how to fix, and that won’t bounce back from QA.

**Wednesday: Work without connection**

Company-wide messages have started to emphasise customer centricity, automation, and digital transformation. A glossy video from the CEO talks about empowering engineers to “drive value at the edge.” But Ravi’s day-to-day is still full of patching log errors, deciphering crash reports, and answering generic “please investigate” tickets.

He doesn’t see how his effort moves the dial on uptime, customer satisfaction, or platform adoption. There’s no dashboard or report showing how fixes feed into larger business outcomes. There’s no shared “North Star” to help weigh trade-offs. Without a clear link to value, even the complex work starts to feel like checking boxes.

**Thursday: Inconsistent systems, inconsistent focus**

Officially, task tracking is done in a ticketing platform, but in practice, urgent requests come through Teams, email, and sometimes voice notes. Lata tries to triage incoming noise, but with multiple stakeholders bypassing the system, Sales, Customer Success, and even Engineering leadership, there’s no reliable queue.

Stand-ups are brief: each person lists what they did yesterday and what they’re doing today. There’s no time for framing work in terms of goals or progress. If something big changes, like a ticket being deprioritised or reassigned, it often isn’t communicated. Ravi has started keeping a private notebook just to stay sane. “The tools say one thing,” he jokes, “but real priorities come through side doors.”

**Friday: No celebration, no feedback**

Late Friday night, Ravi gets pinged about a potential outage affecting a government client. After several hours, he identifies a rare configuration conflict and patches it before service is disrupted. His quick thinking likely averted serious reputational and financial damage.

On Monday, the Sales team receives a thank-you note from the client. They forward it to Lata. In the next team sync, she casually mentions, “Great job, whoever handled that.” A thumbs-up emoji is added to the chat. There’s no team debrief, no post-mortem, no shared story about what was learned, or even who solved it.

Ravi didn’t expect a bonus. But he did expect someone to notice. Ravi isn’t disengaged, yet. But he’s getting close. He wants to do meaningful work. He wants to make smart decisions. He wants to contribute to something bigger. But to do that, the environment around him needs to change.

**The line of sight ladder:** To improve alignment, teams must climb a ladder of five levels.

* Clarity: Goals and expectations are visible and understood.
* Context: Everyone understands why the work matters now.
* Connection: Everyone can link tasks to team and enterprise outcomes.
* Consistency: Priorities are reinforced in rituals and systems.
* Celebration: Aligned success is noticed, shared, and rewarded.

This ladder helps both contributors and leaders assess where they stand and where they need to move next.

**Review – Discuss in your group**

1. **What are the top 3 issues in the case as you see it?**
2. **If you had 30 minutes with Ravi, what would you coach him on or offer as supportive feedback?**
3. **What are four practical actions Lata could take this month to better engage Ravi and the team?**
4. **How close is this to your own world and what will you take away from this case and discussion?**

**BREAKOUT 3 – How do you prioritise in your world?**

**In your breakout, describe what makes you successful at prioritising**

**What is your go to:  
  
Techniques: How do you actually do the prioritisation?  
  
Routines: When do you actually do this? (end of week for next, start of week, start of day?)**

**Tools: What software or simpler tools do you use?  
  
What is working for you and what are you struggling with?  
  
What are your TOP tips for your peers?**

**BREAKOUT 4 - Priority Path habits diagnostic**

**Rate yourself from 1 (Rarely) to 5 (Consistently)** for each statement. **Be honest as the goal is to reflect and learn, not score**.  
Total your score in each area and then review the reflections in the bottom, right hand panel together. Supporting tactics on following pages.

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| 1. **Focus – Directing energy where it matters most** 2. I start my day knowing the single most important outcome I need to move forward 3. I give my best focus hours to meaningful work, not leftover time 4. I pause to prioritise before jumping into tasks or email 5. I protect deep work time by avoiding unnecessary switching or multitasking   **Facet sub score:** | 1. **Cut – Saying no to make room for what matters** 2. I question whether each new task truly adds value before saying yes 3. I use clear, respectful language to push back on low-priority asks 4. I notice when I’m being busy just to feel productive 5. I make conscious trade-offs instead of trying to do everything   **Facet sub score:** |
| 1. **Simplify – Making important work easier to do** 2. I look for ways to streamline or automate regular tasks 3. I group similar tasks to avoid starting from scratch each time 4. I remove steps, tools, or processes that slow things down unnecessarily 5. I spend time improving how I work, not just completing more work   **Facet sub score:** | 1. **Protect – Guarding time, focus and energy** 2. I schedule high-value work into my calendar like I would a meeting 3. I switch off distractions when I need to focus deeply 4. I communicate clearly when I need space to do high-quality work 5. I build in recovery time to avoid burnout and stay sharp   **Facet sub score:** |
| **Scoring per facet**  16 to 20: You are working with clarity, discipline, and purpose. Keep refining your edge. 11 to 15: Strong foundations with room to strengthen one or two core habits. 6 to 10: You’re likely working harder than you need to. Focus here can unlock major gains. Below 6: This area may be blocking your performance. Small shifts can lead to big results | **Priority Path: Reflections**   1. Which of the four areas: Focus, Cut, Simplify, or Protect, feels most natural for you, and which feels most challenging? Why? 2. When you think about the last week, how much of your time was spent on work that truly moved the needle? What got in the way? 3. What’s one habit you could let go of that would create more space for meaningful work? 4. What is one specific action you can take to protect your time or energy better this week? 5. Read through one appropriate section on the following pages and from that one area, choose THREE tactics you can this week. |

**Focus Path tactics – Part 1**

“It is not daily increase but daily decrease. Hack away at the unessential.” – Bruce Lee

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| **FOCUS – Directing energy where it matters most!**  Without focus, even your best efforts can be spread too thin to create meaningful results. Focus channels your time and energy toward what matters most, multiplying your impact rather than just your activity.   1. Use a personal “north star” phrase to focus decisions: Create a one-line filter like “move what matters forward” or “build clarity not clutter” to simplify daily choices 2. Name the impact not the task: Start the day by naming what result you want to drive not just what to do. This keeps you anchored in outcomes not output 3. Create a daily “avoid-at-all-costs” list: Write down 1 to 2 distractions you know will tempt you. Make avoiding them a conscious success metric for the day 4. Pre-rank your to-do list by impact and effort: Score each item. Prioritise high-impact medium-effort work that builds momentum early 5. Design your morning like a launchpad not a landing strip: Avoid checking email first thing. Start with proactive valuable work to build momentum before reacting to others 6. Time-box deep work instead of aiming to finish: Work in focused 30 to 60 minute sessions with clear starts and ends. Progress accelerates when perfection is not the goal 7. Visualise success before starting key tasks: Take 30 seconds to picture what completion will look and feel like. It engages purpose and primes your brain for clarity 8. Switch environments for your most important work: Create a focus zone physical or digital for your highest-leverage activity to increase intentionality and reduce autopilot behaviour | **CUT – Saying no to make room for what matters**  Saying yes to everything means saying no to excellence. Cutting low-value work is not selfish, it’s the only way to create space for strategic contribution and deep satisfaction.   1. Use a “Would I say yes again?” filter: Review recurring commitments and ask if you’d take them on again today. If not phase them out 2. Say “yes but with conditions”: When necessary accept with boundaries such as “yes if we can delay to next week” or “yes if I can shorten the scope” 3. Anchor every yes to a bigger yes: Only say yes to requests that directly support your top priorities. If it doesn’t serve your focus it’s a no 4. Pre-script your “polite decline” messages: Draft respectful phrases for pushing back such as “my current priorities won’t allow me to do this well right now” 5. Track your weekly “No Count”: Set a personal goal for the number of intentional no’s you will give. Visibility builds confidence 6. Run a weekly clutter review: Each Friday identify one thing you did that didn’t add value. Decide how to reduce automate or stop it 7. Schedule a “stop-doing” meeting with yourself: Once a month ask what have I outgrown or outpaced and remove it with intention 8. Adopt the 95 percent rule: If you’re only 95 percent sure something is worth your time treat it as a no. Reserve your energy for the 100s |

“You don’t have to be great to start, but you have to start to be great.” – Zig Ziglar

**Focus Path tactics – Part 2**

“What you don’t protect gets consumed, by meetings, messages, and other people’s priorities.”– Cal Newport

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| **SIMPLIFY – Making important work easier to do**  Complexity quietly steals time, energy, and clarity. When you simplify how you work, you reduce friction and free up capacity to solve bigger problems with less stress.   1. Adopt single-tool discipline per task type: Use one note app one to-do list and one collaboration space. Fragmented tools create fragmented thinking 2. Batch similar tasks to avoid context switching: Group repetitive or low-focus tasks so you stay in flow and reduce start-up time 3. Create a weekly structure with built-in focus rhythms: Segment time into repeatable deep work admin and meeting blocks. Predictability reduces decision fatigue 4. Document one task a week as a how-to: Build a simple reference template checklist or process guide to save future effort and support others 5. Use “last-time thinking” immediately: After completing a task ask “if I had to do this ten more times what would I improve?” and build that now 6. Templatise the last part of your thinking: Standardise how you finish reports close loops or wrap up tasks to reduce end-of-project drag 7. Run a friction audit: Pick a recurring task and ask where’s the slowdown. Remove one step or reduce complexity 8. Design for clarity not control: Simplification is about empowering others not micromanaging. The goal is ease without confusion | **PROTECT – Guarding time focus and energy**  Great work doesn’t happen by accident, it needs protection from distraction and overload. Guarding your time and energy ensures that what matters most actually gets done.   1. Turn off distractions when in focus mode: Switch off alerts close tabs and change status to reduce input overload during priority work 2. Block deep work time in your calendar and name it: Use labels like “strategy draft” or “client prep” so others see the time as untouchable 3. Reward protected time with a satisfaction ritual: After a deep work block pair completion with something small and positive such as a break or quick reflection 4. Create a “no meetings” window each day: Protect 60 to 90 minutes for high-value solo work. Use it for thinking not just doing 5. Write your personal “boundary scripts”: Create phrases like “I’d love to help but I need to stay on track with X” to reinforce limits respectfully 6. Signal when you’re in focus mode: Wear headphones update status or use a visible indicator so colleagues know not to interrupt 7. Track interruptions for 5 days: Tally internal and external disruptions. Use the data to reset expectations or build protective habits 8. Use future-you planning: Block time now for important work due next week. Get ahead of urgency before it arrives |

“Ideas are easy. Execution is everything.” – John Doerr

**BREAKOUT 5 - Departing**

**Ensure you split the time equally for all of you**

**Introduce yourselves briefly**

**NO solving, just presence and curiosity!**

* **What are you taking away from today?**
* **What will you do practically from today?**

**Remember:**

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