

# Why Transformation Feels So Hard - Four Behavioral Hotspots

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# What's Missing in This Transformation Plan?

## Stage-by-Stage Transformation Plan for Infrastructure and Operations

### 1. Adopt Public Cloud Services



Design Cloud Strategy



Establish Adoption Framework

### 2. Modernize Infrastructure



Enable Programmatic Control



Optimize Platform Delivery



Assess Infrastructure Placement

### 3. Optimize Workloads



Assess Application Placement



Architect and Implement Workloads

### 4. Enable Hybrid Integration



Select and Establish Connectivity



Federate Identity and Security

### 5. Automate and Govern



Define Policies



Evaluate DevOps



Broker Services

### 6. Operate and Protect



Design for Continuity



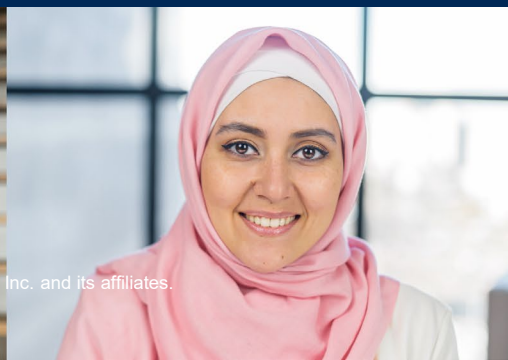
Evolve Operations Tools



Monitor and Analyze Applications



# The Humans Are Missing!



# When Humans Get Involved, Things Get Messy



# The Emotional Life of Transformation Is Messy

## Stage-by-Stage Transformation Plan for Infrastructure and Operations

1. Adopt Public Cloud Services



Ops team not on board

Define a Cloud-First Framework

2. Integrate

Training complete: We got mad skills



Optimize Platform Delivery

Assess Infrastructure Placement

3. Optimize Workloads



MVP wasn't viable

Architect and Implement Workloads

4. Enable Hybrid Integration



Select and Enable Connectivity



Establish Identity and Access

5. Automate and Govern



Define Policies



Evaluate DevOps

6. Operate and Protect



We did it — Pizza party!

Enable Operations Tools



Monitor and Analyze Applications

**Assume Irrationality, but in Predictable Places**



# Your People Are Feeling Transformation Fatigue.



**Transformation contains the perfect behavioral storm to impede change.**



# Address 4 Behavioral Hot Spots

**Dissonance**



**Triggers**



**Delay**



**Effort**



# Hotspot No. 1 — Cognitive Dissonance

**Cognitive Dissonance** is the psychological conflict resulting from incongruous beliefs and attitudes held simultaneously.

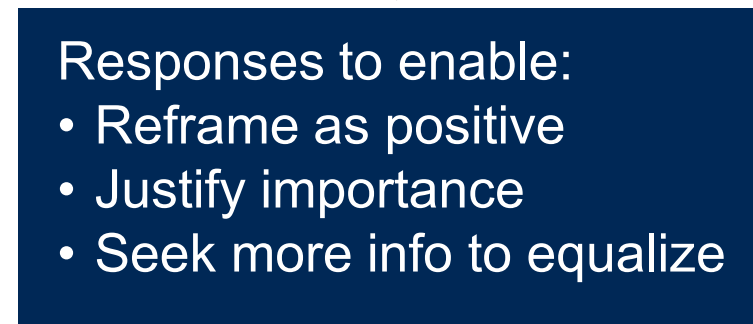
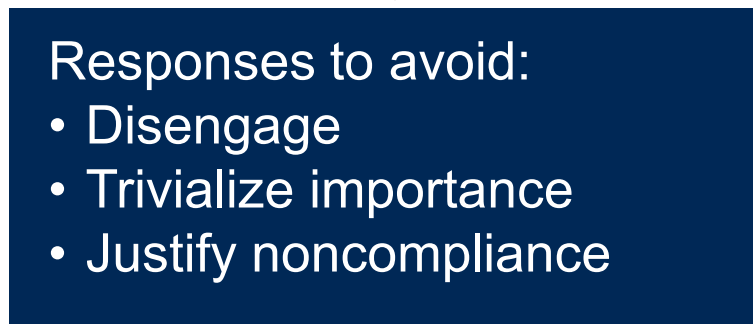
— Merriam Webster Dictionary

Specifically: What we understand intellectually doesn't reflect what we feel emotionally.



# To Reduce Cognitive Dissonance, Something Has to Give

Assuming this is fixed ... ... we need to work on this



# Tactics for Cognitive Dissonance

## Preventative Maintenance

Provide learning zones to train and engage in new roles and behaviors.

## Early Warning Signs

Prepare people for negative emotions and acknowledge their validity.

Reexamine rewards, incentives, and expectations for new behaviors.

## Late Stage Crisis Avoidance

Build up immunity by repeated exposure.

## **Key Issue Take-Away:**

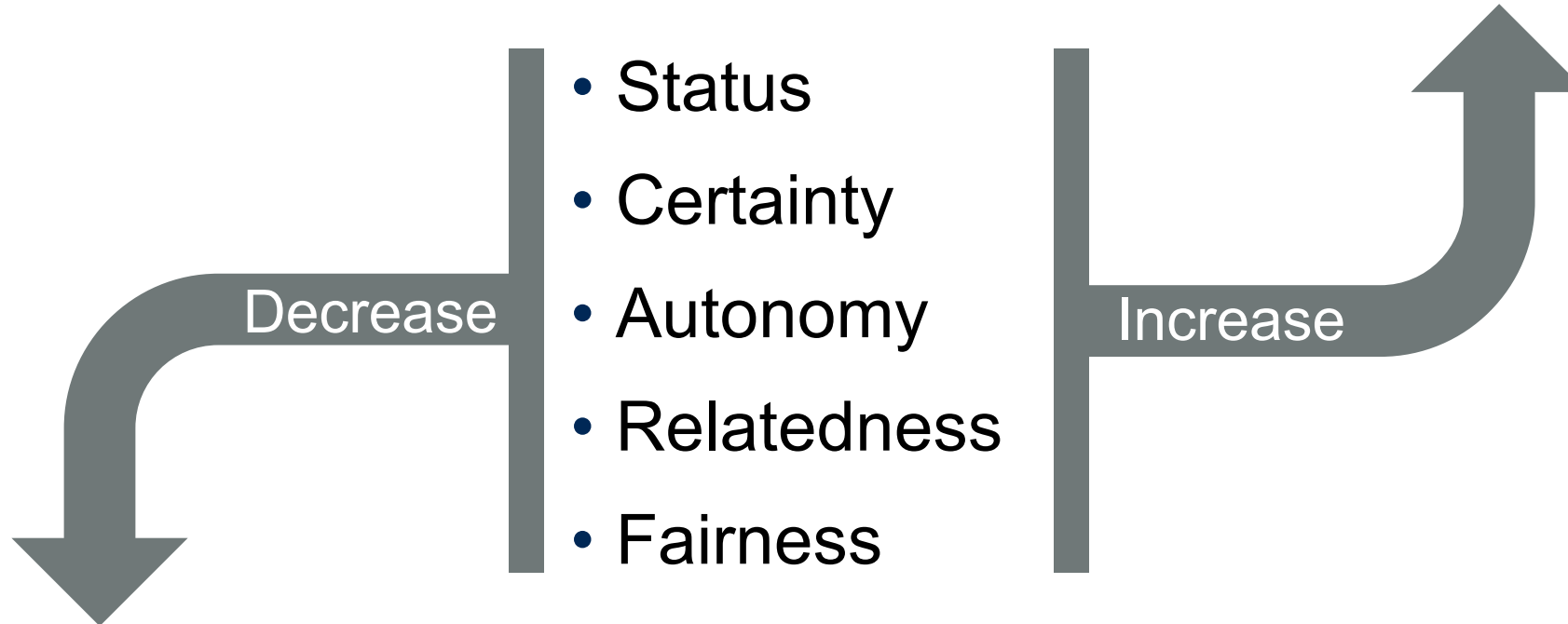
Look for cognitive dissonance wherever you are asking for a 180-degree shift in behavior. From hierarchical to flat, or from risk-averse to innovative, for example. These areas will trigger dissonance. Plan to spend more time there.

# Hotspot No. 2 - Emotional Triggers



# Do You Perceive a Threat or a Reward?

“Toward” State — Reward

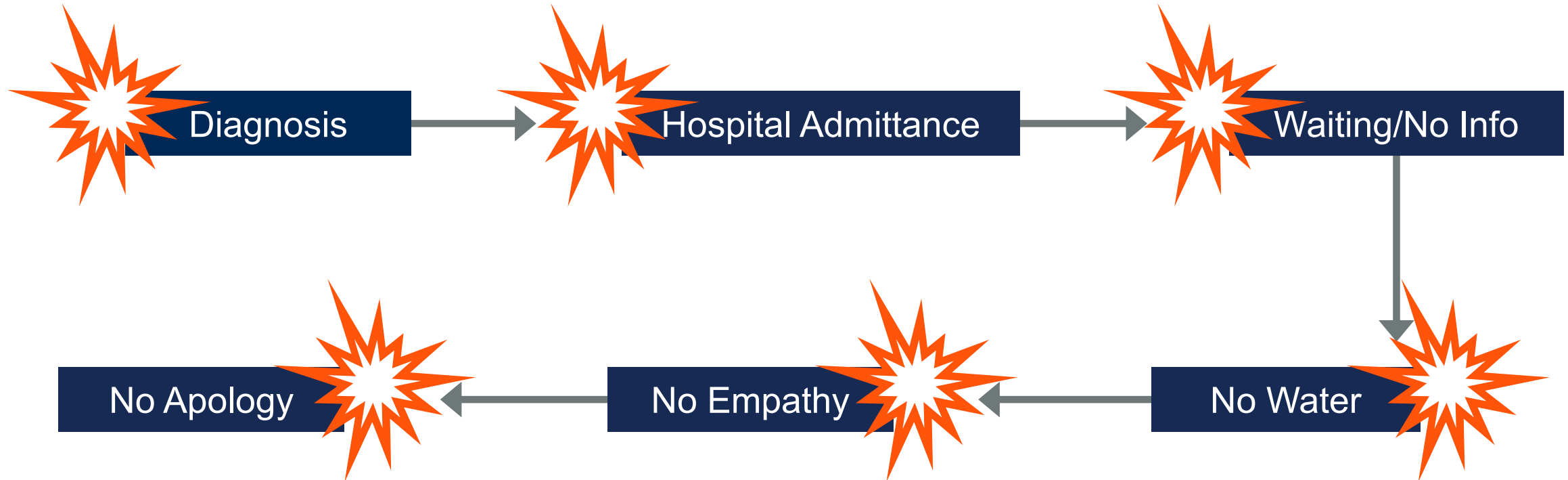


“Away” State — Threat

Source: D. Rock. “Your Brain at Work: Strategies for Overcoming Distraction, Regaining Focus, and Working Smarter All Day Long.” HarperCollins Publishers. 2009.

# Emotional Triggers Occur When High Uncertainty and Big Consequences Coincide

Common emotional triggers on a patient journey through disease and treatment:





# Tactics for Emotional Triggers

## Preventative Maintenance

Communicate the goals and the plan:

- What is and what is **not** changing.
- What will happen and when.

## Early Warning Signs

Banish “never” phrases like “get on board.”

Leave 50% of communication time for questions.

## Late Stage Crisis Avoidance

Respond quickly and early to strong emotions, acknowledging their validity. Respond honestly.

Provide choices in how people can respond.

## **Key Issue Take-Away:**

When someone is dealing with negative emotion, especially loss or grief, avoid becoming toxically positive. Allow them to express negative emotion. Avoid starting a sentence with the words, “At least...”

# Hotspot No. 3 — Delayed Gratification





**Reality:  
Humans Don't Do Things  
Just Because They Should**

# Chocolate Is ...

- Unexpected for user
- Easy to do for you
- Not at the top of an ROI-prioritized list
- Sparks joy or resolves persistent frustration for user

# Tactics for Delayed Gratification

## Preventative Maintenance

Practice delaying gratification by starting small, with something that doesn't matter much.

## Early Warning Signs

Make a “chocolate list” of products and experiences the team can deliver quickly and relatively easily. Sprinkle the “chocolate” throughout the transformation, as a motivator.

## Late Stage Crisis Avoidance

Build habits toward long-term ROI (kale) to fall back on in times of stress.

## **Key Issue Take-Away:**

Keep a list of “chocolate items” in your back pocket. Sprinkle in chocolate among the kale, to give people a sense of gratification in the moment.

# Hotspot No. 4 — Cognitive Strain vs. Ease





# Laziness Is Built Deep Into Our Nature



**“A general ‘law of least effort’ applies to cognitive as well as physical exertion ... if there are several ways of achieving the same goal, people will eventually gravitate to the least demanding course of action.**

**Laziness is built deep into our nature.”**

Daniel Kahneman in “Thinking Fast and Slow”

# Cognitive Ease

**Clear  
Display**



**Feels  
Effortless**

# Cognitive Strain

**Poor  
Design**



**Feels  
Effortful**

# How Many Calories Does a Grand Master Chess Player Burn?



# Tactics for Reducing Strain and Increasing Ease

## Preventative Maintenance

Define exactly what people have to do first, when they encounter something new.

## Early Warning Signs

Remove any friction between the user and the first step they have to take. For example, make login details easy to find, at all times.

## Late Stage Crisis Avoidance

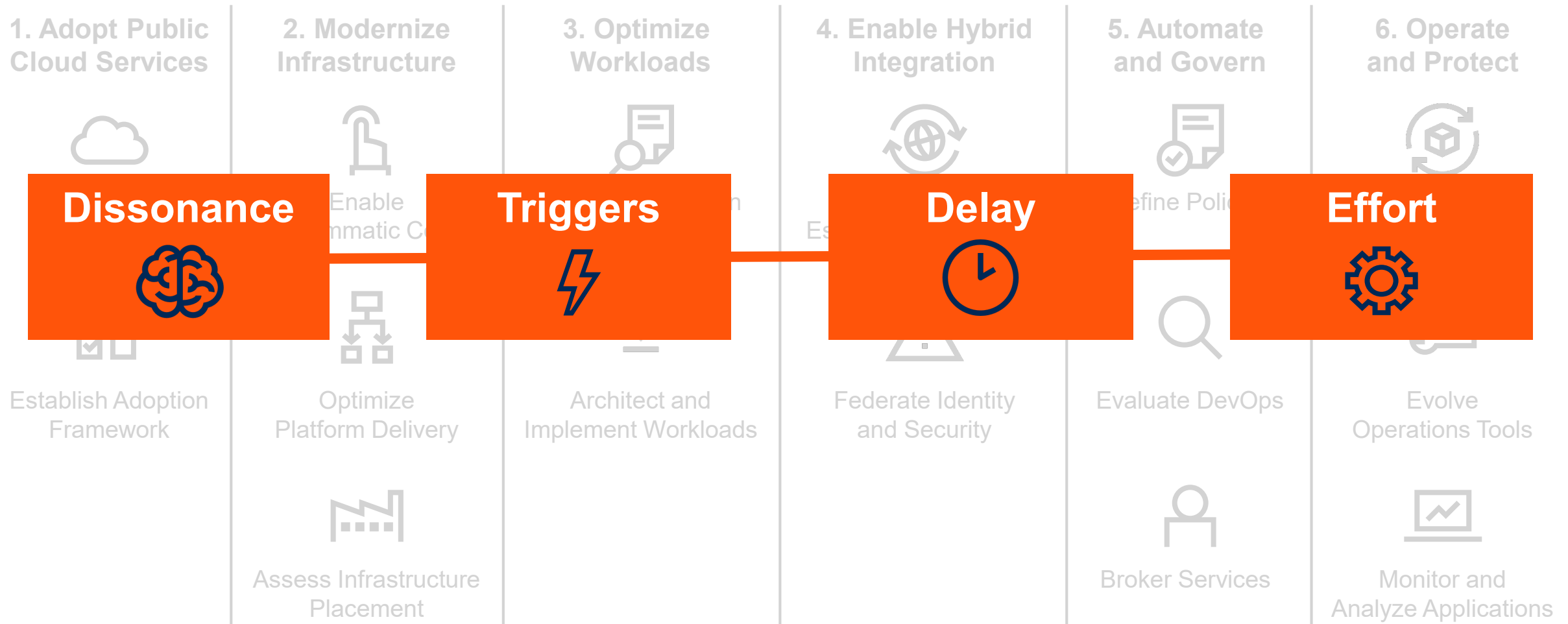
Script the full path so that people are ready to prepare and practice.

## **Key Issue Take-Away:**

Hunt for, and remove, friction. Friction is any non-systemic obstacle standing between the user and the behavior you want them to adopt.

# The Emotional Life of Transformation Can Be Planned

## Stage-by-Stage Transformation Plan for Infrastructure and Operations





# Recommendations

- ④ Adopt a behavioral-science approach to transformation.
- ④ Raise your EQ and that of your colleagues by planning for the emotional life of a transformation journey from the start.
- ④ Focus on the four hotspots of dissonance, triggers, delay and effort.
- ④ Be as rigorous about cultural change and adaptation as you are about project goals and completion.