



Greenwood
Village South

Creating Problem-Solving Minds



A LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT COMPANY

Greenwood Village South

2026 Workshop Series

All sessions are in-person

**Building a Culture of
Trust & Accountability**

March 19
1-4 PM ET

**Lean In When Others
Dig In**

May 7
1-4 PM ET

**Creating Problem-Solving
Minds**

August 6
1-4 PM ET

Between Sessions:

application exercises, follow-up, and reminders

A Quick Look Back at Lean In

Last time, we practiced three moves for moments when we feel challenged:

- **Ask** without steering
- **Reflect** what you heard to build understanding
- **Share** your experience (carefully) instead of jumping straight to persuasion

Think of one conversation since then when you used even one of these—even imperfectly. Talk to a partner about it using this formula:

- I was tempted to...
- Instead, I...
- What I noticed next was...

Today's Objectives



- Understand the brain-based rationale for building problem solvers on your team
- Build the thinking capacity of the people around you

Think of a time someone came to you with a problem, and you knew immediately what they should do.

Share with your table group:

- What was the problem?
- What did you do?
- What happened next?

Stay with your table groups
and discuss this question:

If a similar problem came up
tomorrow, would that person
be better equipped to handle it
without you?

Expertise does not reliably
produce growth.

Most managers are promoted
because they're good at
solving problems.

- Leadership success depends on helping others solve problems.
- Those are not the same skill.

The Problem-Solving Paradox

The more problems you solve **FOR** people...

...the fewer problems they learn to solve
WITHOUT you.

The Helpful Leader Trap

Sometimes the behaviors that make us feel most helpful create the least growth.

The Intention	The Hidden Impact
"I'll just handle it quickly."	They don't practice solving.
"I'll just give them the answer."	They learn your answer, not the process.
"I'll jump in before mistakes happen."	They don't build judgement or learn from mistakes.
"I'll always be available."	You become the bottleneck.

The Goal is Not to Stop Solving Problems.

The goal is to know the difference between:

A problem that needs your answer
and

A moment that needs their thinking.

Activity: Solve or Build?

A resident's family member is angry and waiting for a response. Your employee doesn't know what to say.

Probably solve/support first.

Why? High stakes, urgency, resident experience.

Activity: Solve or Build?

An employee says, "Can you just tell me how you want me to handle scheduling conflicts?" for the 5th time.

Build.

Why?

Activity: Solve or Build?

Two departments are blaming each other for a recurring communication breakdown.

Build
Why?

Activity: Solve or Build?

A newer employee asks how to complete a process they've never done.

Probably both: Teach first, then transfer

Solve or Build?

What determines whether you step in/solve or build?

Solve when the situation needs your
expertise.

Build when the person needs to build
theirs.



How many animals did
Moses bring onto the ark?

Your Brain Moves Quickly

- Recognizes patterns
- Generates solutions
- Seeks to close the gap of “unknown/uncertain” ASAP
- **Creates a hidden cost**

Expertise solves the immediate problem.

But it weakens growth and creates dependency.

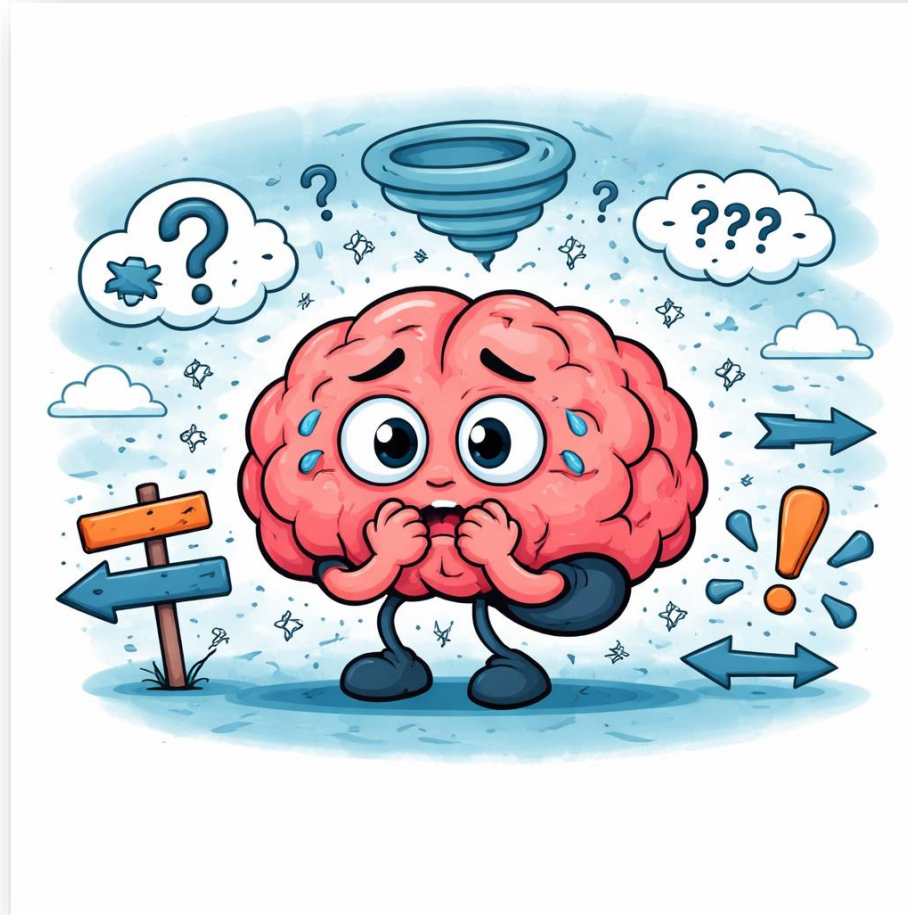
Are you creating people who bring you problems,
or people who think through problems?

The goal of leadership isn't to have all the answers.
It's to build the thinking capacity of the people
around you.

If building the thinking capacity of others is so important, why don't more leaders do it?



Our Brains Don't Like Uncertainty

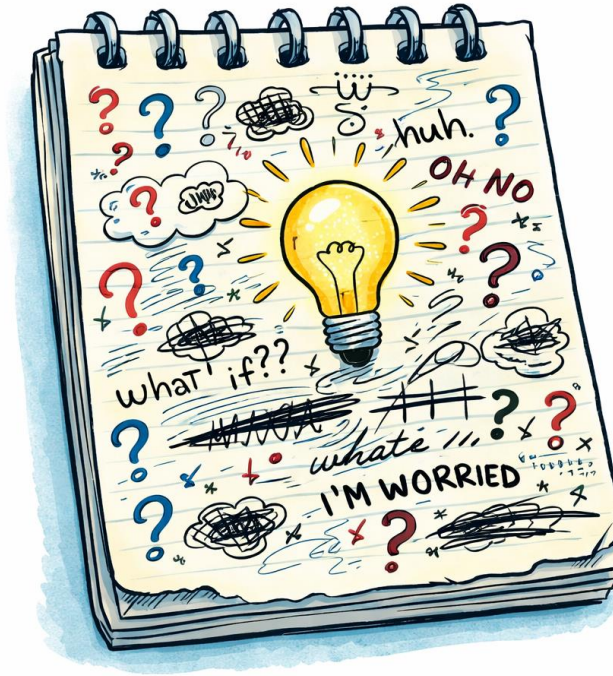


Uncertainty makes it harder for us to think well.

When we feel pressure or uncertainty, we default to fast, emotional thinking.

When we want to think more clearly, we need slower, more deliberate thinking.

Deliberate thinking requires working memory



Thinking Traps

Binary Thinking

Confirmation Bias

Binary Thinking

Assuming there are only 2 solutions to a given problem or challenge



Binary Thinking

Assuming there are only 2 solutions to a given problem or challenge

EX: “She’s either a good employee or a bad employee.”

What else could be true?

Confirmation Bias

The tendency to selectively search for or interpret information in a way that confirms one's preconceived ideas



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EX: "See? This proves nobody on that shift communicates."

What evidence could challenge that?

Creating problem-solving minds requires us to
change the conversation.

The new leadership challenge...

Can you pause long enough for **their**
thinking to emerge?

Volunteer

Deliberate Doubt

The practice of interrupting certainty with curiosity so our first answer doesn't become our only answer.

Questions That Build Thinking

- Clarify: What's the real challenge here?
- Expand: What options have you considered?
- Transfer ownership: What do you think is the best next step?
- Strengthen thinking: What might get in the way?

You're still guiding their
thinking—you're just not doing
it for them.

Problem Ownership Lab

With your table group, complete the Problem Ownership Lab activity in your handouts.

Final Application

Think of a problem that keeps landing on your desk (literally or metaphorically).

Ask yourself:

- Who actually owns this problem?
- Am I helping solve it or accidentally hanging on to ownership?
- What question could I ask instead of providing the answer?

Now share with a partner.

The measure of your leadership is not how many problems you solve.

It's how many people become better problem-solvers because they work with you.

Your Next Steps

- Use the Architect Question Sequence in one coaching conversation.
- Before providing an answer, ask at least one Architect Question.
- Identify one problem you need to stop owning so someone else can start growing.
- Read and discuss prompts from HRD-provided Discussion Guide.



Feedback is a Gift!



Questions?





Thank You