

BEYOND THE BASICS

Clarity Over Chaos:

Eliminate Hidden Friction and Scale with Confidence

Presented by:

Mike Dennison

Dennison Leadership Group

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Clarity Over Chaos

Eliminate Hidden Friction
Scale with Confidence

Mike Dennison
Tallahassee Chamber - Sep 2025



A real-world playbook for eliminating friction and scaling with confidence



Mike Dennison

- Founder, Dennison Leadership Group
- 35+ years eliminating friction and fueling growth orgs
- Led teams totaling ~1,000 people across my career
- #1 Bestselling author of Clarity Principles
- Creator of the Clarity Principles framework
- Advisor to top companies and scaling teams of all sizes

Just a few...

Amazon, IBM, General Motors, Disney,
Walmart, Warner Brothers, Harley
Davidson, Bank of America, Chrysler,
MetLife, UnitedHealth Group, Google, SAP,
VMware, Safeco, AT&T, Nestle, many more,
(along with numerous startups and SMBs)





Dennison Leadership Group

Help leaders cut complexity, scale with clarity, and strengthen execution, culture, and leadership through the Clarity Principles framework.

A real-world playbook for eliminating friction and scaling with confidence



Bottom line?

We help you simplify the complex FAST
so you can scale your business without
burnout!

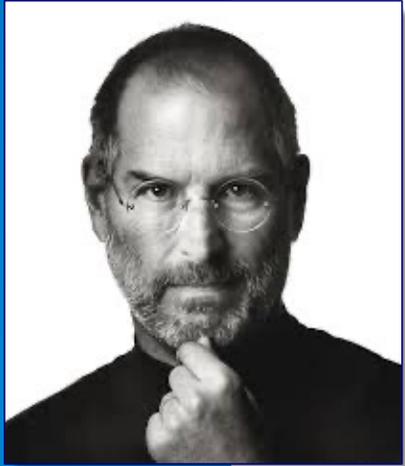
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“

Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication.

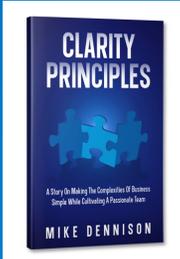
— Leonardo da Vinci



“

Simple can be harder than complex: you have to work hard to get your thinking clean to make it simple. But it's worth it in the end because once you get there, you can move mountains.

— Steve Jobs



What Led Me to Create Clarity Principles

- **35+ years** across SMBs to Fortune 100s – 15M to 130M to IBM
- "Smokejumper" at IBM **rescuing high-stakes, failing projects**
- Saw the same **patterns everywhere: misalignment, drag, burnout**
- Distilled 1,000+ pages and 70+ principles into a **usable framework**
- Built Clarity Principles to **reduce friction, scale businesses with confidence WHILE creating passionate teams**

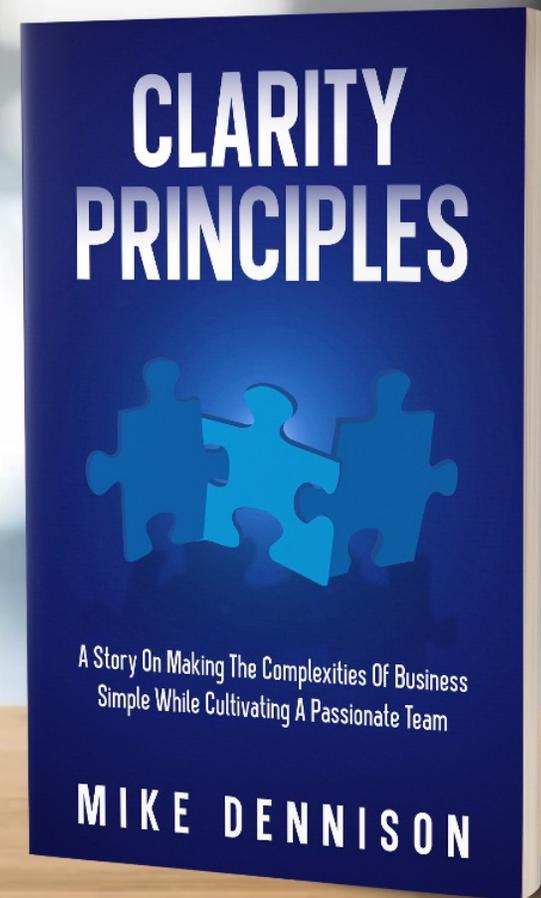


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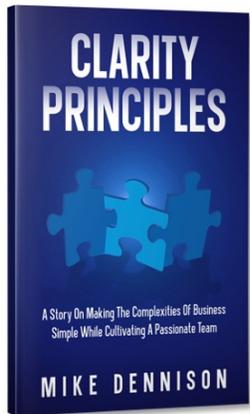
#1 Best Seller - #1 New Release

Ranked #1 in the following
leadership categories:

Business Systems and Planning
Business Communication Skills
Strategy and Competition
Strategic Management
Workplace Behavior
Workplace Culture
Business Teams



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Kegan

★★★★★ **Great book**

Verified Purchase

Clarity Principles is an essential read that I highly recommend. The content is both concise and direct, making it easy to grasp the key concepts. I've decided to purchase multiple copies to share with my corporate team because I believe these principles can significantly enhance our operations. The insights provided are not only practical but also highly effective, making them invaluable for anyone looking to improve clarity and efficiency in their work.



Sherwin Hilario

★★★★★ **Essential Guide for Transforming Team Focus and Efficiency**

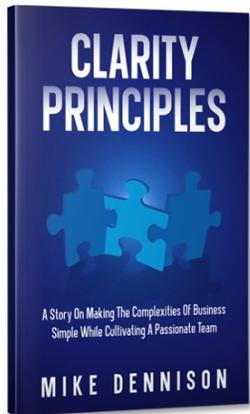
Verified Purchase

Clarity Principles offers a refreshingly clear and insightful approach to business strategy that makes complex concepts feel surprisingly accessible. This book brilliantly shines a light on common organizational challenges, helping leaders identify and address key issues that often go unnoticed. The principles presented are straightforward, actionable, and highly relevant, providing a toolkit for managers and entrepreneurs who want to create a more focused, motivated, and aligned team.

For small business owners and corporate leaders alike, Clarity Principles lays out practical steps to streamline operations and improve communication. The guidance here resonates as both intuitive and effective, allowing readers to recognize patterns in their work environments and implement the book's recommendations for impactful change. This is more than a guide—it's a powerful catalyst for building momentum and fostering a culture of clarity.



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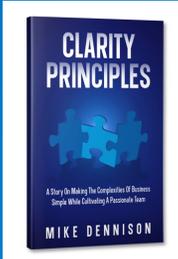
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The missing key for businesses struggling to maximize growth at any level. In Clarity Principles, Mike delivers a true staple for operators wanting seamless execution in daily operations and strong team culture.

— DeVory Darkins
CEO, Entrepreneur & Consultant

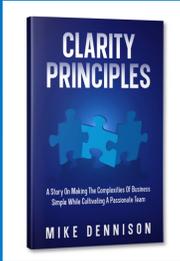


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✗ What Clarity Principles ISN'T

- Another complicated system or layer to install
- Some new theory-driven management fad
- A generic checklist or one-size-fits-all template
- Empty "rah-rah" motivation with no substance
- A rip-and-replace methodology that blows up what's already working
- A distraction from execution or a burden on your team

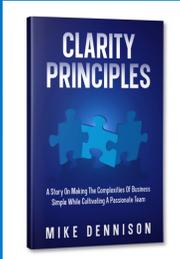


✓ What Clarity Principles IS

- A real-world framework to eliminate hidden friction
- A cheat code to align teams, processes and leadership
- A practical playbook built from experience, not theory
- A structure for scaling with confidence, not chaos
- A simple system to surface what's slowing you down
- A path to operational clarity and an energized culture

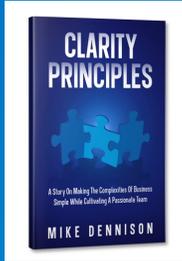


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Why Businesses Get Stuck

- **Friction gets normalized** and worked around
- **Misalignment quietly builds** across teams
- **Execution slows**, rework and delays pile up
- **Leaders stay reactive**, not strategic
- **Too much dependency** on a few key people
- **Complexity grows** faster than clarity
- **Morale fades**, culture takes a hit, performance declines

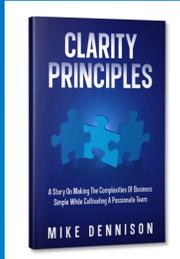


Quick pause:

**What are some other areas
you've seen businesses
get stuck?**



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How can we quickly assess whether
a company could benefit from
Clarity Principles?



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Your Clarity Assessment

Business Owners, Executives and Leaders...

Is Lack of Clarity Holding Your Business Back?

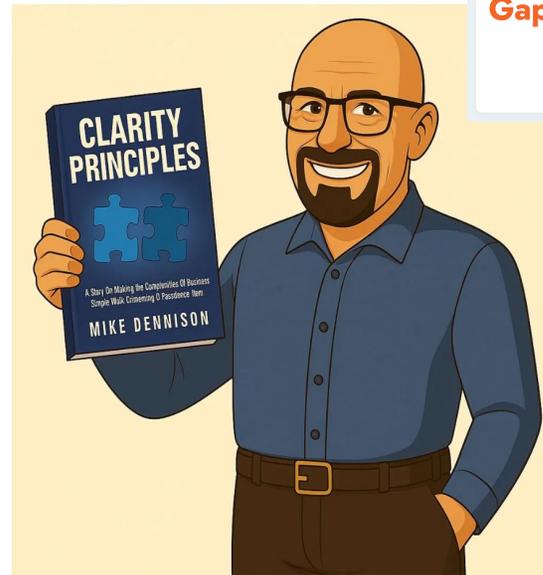
→ Take TWO minutes to go through the 10 warning signs and get your FREE personalized Clarity Assessment

Chaos. Constant firefighting. Slow growth. Frustrated teams.

If that sounds familiar, it's not just a bad week. It's a clarity issue.

The **Clarity Assessment**, based on the #1 bestselling book *Clarity Principles*, helps you spot what's actually slowing your business down.

Start the Assessment, it's free



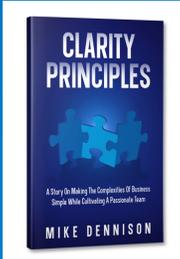
YOUR OVERALL CLARITY SCORE

53%

Gaps Identified, Refinement Needed



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What You'll Get From Today's Session

- **Spot hidden friction** slowing down your growth
- **Eliminate drag** that drains team energy
- **Identify misalignments** (people, process, leadership)
- **Learn the framework** from *Clarity Principles*
- **Finally see what you've felt** but couldn't explain
- **Gain practical tools** you can use immediately



A real-world playbook for eliminating friction and scaling with confidence

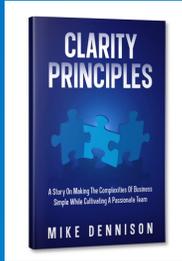
Let's Step Inside

a Clarity Principles simulation

It's your business now
Everyone's looking to you
The problems are hidden
The friction is real



A real-world playbook for eliminating friction and scaling with confidence



Let's Step Inside

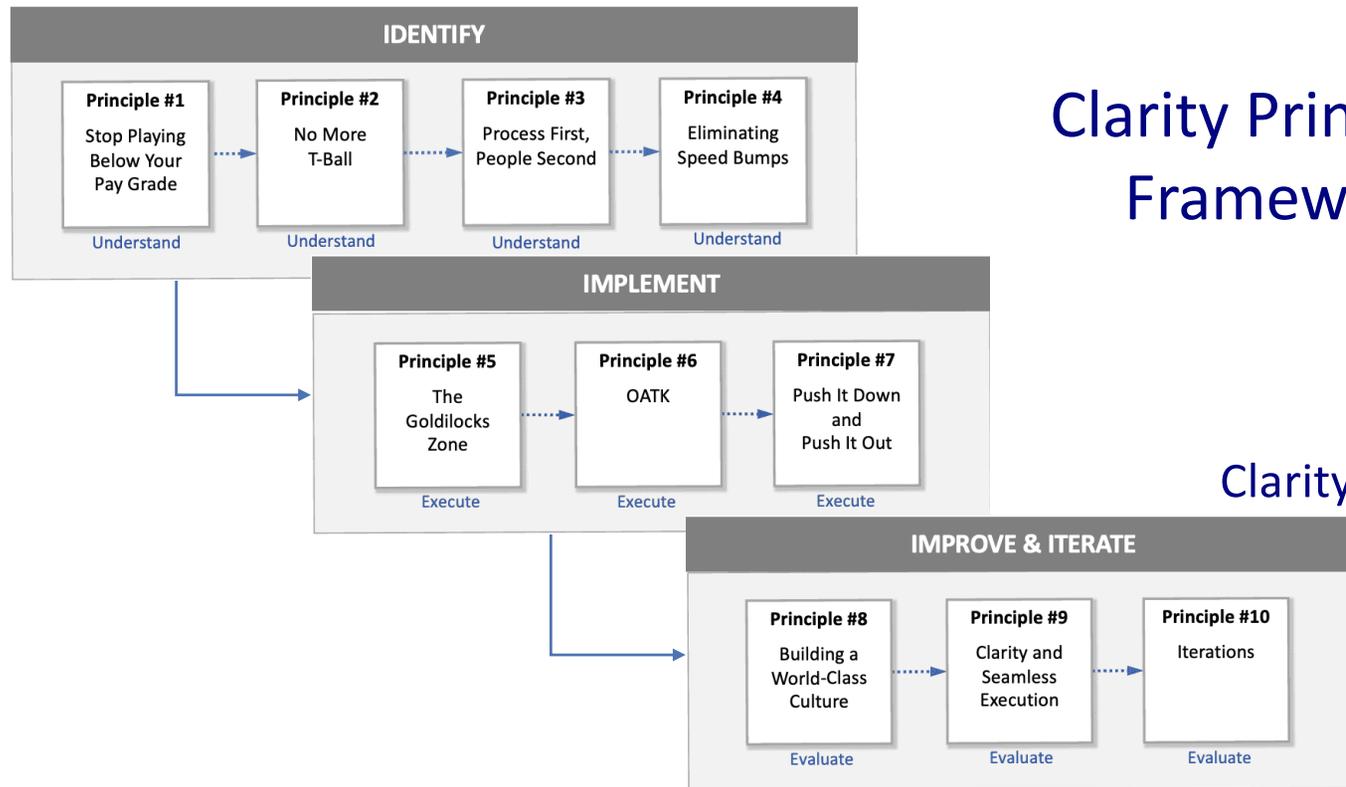
- You lead a growing business
- On paper, things look solid
- But progress feels harder lately
- Long hours, slow decisions, rising tension
- Teams are frustrated, energy is shifting
- You sense misalignment and drag, but can't name it

You're on a mission to get this figured out!



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Confusion



Clarity Principles Framework

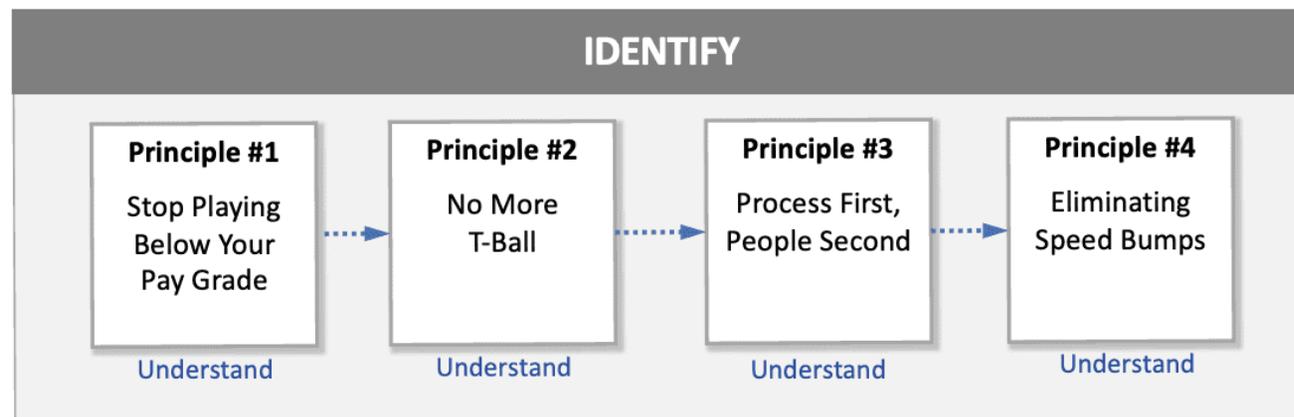
Clarity



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IDENTIFY phase

In the Identify phase, you slow down and get clear on what's not working. Before jumping to quick fixes, you uncover the hidden friction and misalignments quietly stalling your business. This clarity sets the foundation for everything that follows.



Stop Playing Below Your Pay Grade

1: Key stakeholders find themselves spending too much time fighting daily fires and it is pulling them away from the strategic needs of the business

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Stop Playing Below Your Pay Grade

It's 10:37 a.m. on a Monday.

You've already handled three issues no one else could seem to own... a signoff, a client fire, and a vendor delay.

Your strategy meeting? Pushed again.

You're surrounded by smart people but everything still rolls up to you.

And you can't help but think: **This isn't sustainable... and it's going to cost us everything if we don't get this figured out."**



What to Look For...

Stop Playing Below Your Pay Grade

- **Leaders pulled in** too often to resolve basic execution issues.
- **Teams escalating problems** instead of solving them independently.
- **Strategic priorities pushed aside** for urgent daily tasks.

No More T-Ball

2: Process breakdowns are occurring and it is creating frustration in areas of the business or across the entire organization

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

No More T-Ball



No More T-Ball

It's just after lunch and yet another crisis is brewing.

Once again, half your team is being redirected to this next flare up.

Priorities keep shifting, and your best people are stuck reacting, not executing.

It feels like a T-ball game... everyone's chasing the ball, no one's holding their position.

You can't help but think: **“We can't keep operating like this and expect to win.”**



What to Look For...

No More T-Ball

- **Top performers constantly pulled off course** to handle the "next" crisis.
- **Roles blurred** as team members constantly cover for gaps around them.
- **High-value work delayed** while urgent chaos takes priority.

Process First, People Second

3: The business is relying too heavily on the expertise of certain individuals in order to execute on the day-to-day needs of the organization

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Process First, People Second

You pull your top people into a quick huddle to regroup.

They're sharp, committed, doing their best... but the processes aren't holding up to the pressure and you see their frustration.

Judgements made on the fly, filling gaps with duct tape and hustle.

You realize the chaos isn't because of your people...

It's because they're being forced to compensate for what's missing.

And it hits you: **“We've been leaning on talent to solve what structure should prevent and that won't scale.”**



What to Look For...

Process First, People Second

- **Inconsistent results** caused by reliance on individual heroics.
- **Inefficient processes** preventing teams from performing at their best.
- Talented people set up to fail by **gaps in structure**.

Eliminating Speed Bumps

4: There are current processes that are viewed as slow and inefficient in parts of the organization or across the entire business

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Eliminating Speed Bumps

The fire's out (for now) but momentum is gone.

What should have been a 2-hour task took all day.

You keep tripping over the same friction: gaps, delays, confusion.

Every little bump slows the team down... death by a thousand cuts.

They're not lazy... they're navigating a constant obstacle course.

And you think: **“We're not stuck because of effort; we're stuck because of the drag in the system that we've accepted.”**

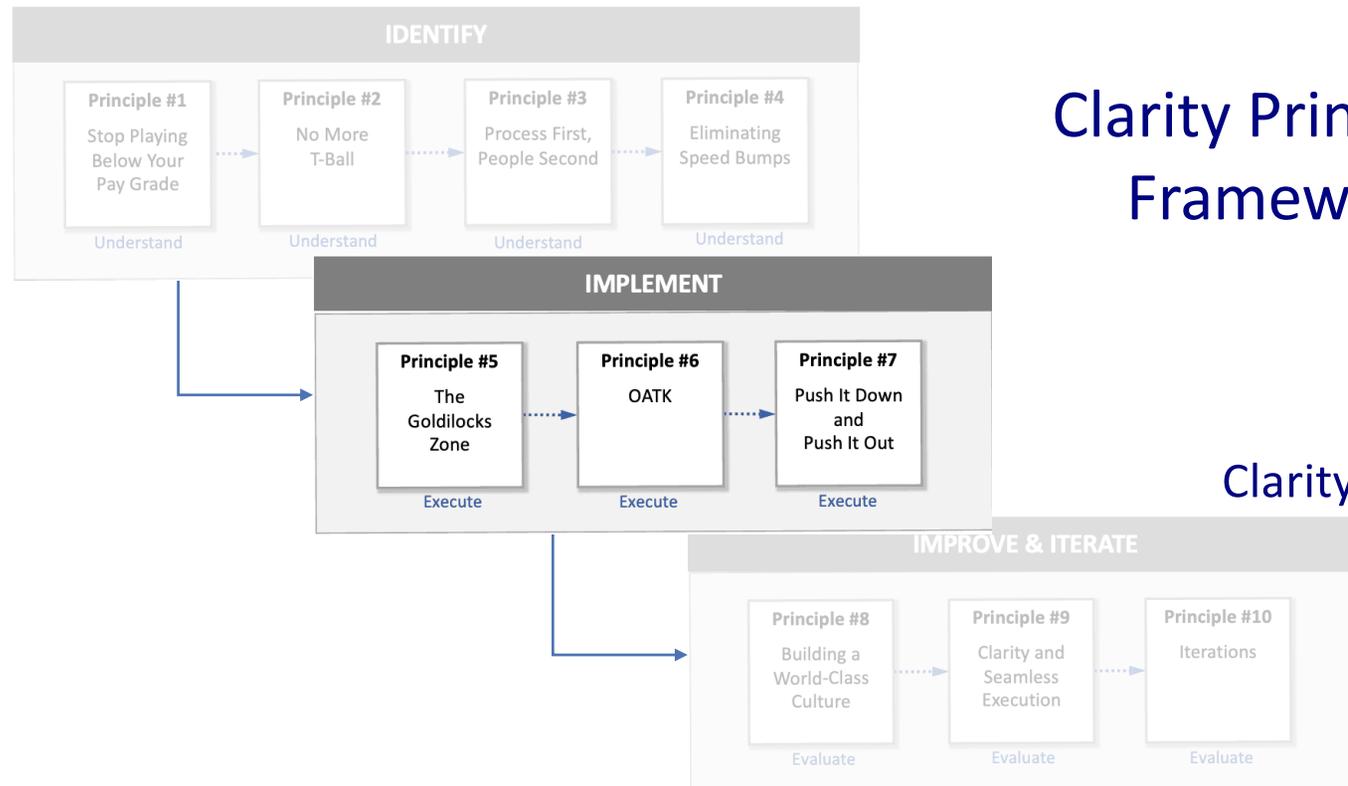


What to Look For...

Eliminating Speed Bumps

- **Workarounds and one-offs** replace outdated formal processes.
- **Bloating in process** causes unnecessary steps and slowdowns.
- **Teams frustrated by friction** that stalls otherwise simple execution.

Confusion



Clarity Principles Framework

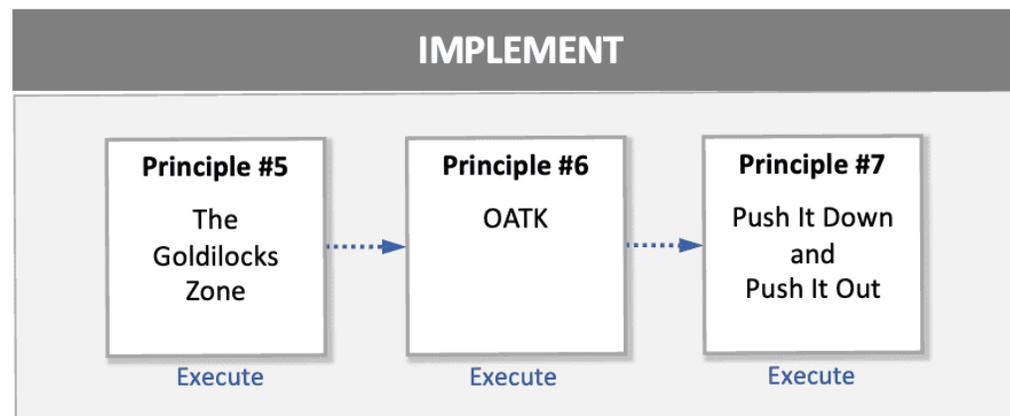
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IMPLEMENT phase

In the Implement Phase, you act on what you uncovered in the Identify Phase. You close gaps, strengthen execution, and build aligned systems that replace friction with flow across people, process, and leadership.



The Goldilocks Zone

5: There can be a **struggle to implement** new processes, or change existing ones, quickly and effectively, leading to inconsistent results, delay and confusion

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

The Goldilocks Zone

You sit down to review some "broken" processes.

One process is too light and the team keeps improvising around it.

Another is too complex and no one wants to follow it.

You're stuck knowing you have to find the middle ground that's properly aligned to be effective.

You know, **"If we don't invest the time to get this right, it won't last."**

It's time to create the structure that actually fits the work.



What to Look For...

The Goldilocks Zone

- **Processes too loose**, causing confusion, improvisation, and inconsistent results.
- **Overbuilt systems** no one's following in real-world conditions.
- **Frequent tweaks and workarounds** signaling ineffective processes.

OATK (One Ass To Kick)

6: There may be a lack of clearly defined owners for all the processes and process points, creating uncertainty at times about exactly where to go during each step of the process

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

OATK (One Ass To Kick)

It's 2:45 p.m. and progress has stalled again.

Three people thought someone else was handling it... no one was.

You're chasing down answers that should already be clear.

Slack is a maze, inbox is worse, and decisions are circling.

A small issue just turned into a fire because ownership was fuzzy.

And you realize: **“Until processes are clear and owned, we're stuck.”**



What to Look For...

OATK (One Ass To Kick)

- **Tasks stall** because ownership is unclear or constantly shifting.
- **Issues resurface repeatedly** due to lack of clear accountability.
- **Decision bottlenecks increasing** because ownership not always properly defined.

Push It Down and Push It Out

7: There may be “information hoarding” happening with individuals, departments, or geographies due to a lack of seamless, natural knowledge transfer throughout the business

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Push It Down and Push It Out

You're stuck answering questions that shouldn't be on your desk.

Your managers hesitate... afraid to own what's not crystal clear.

At other sites, things are even messier... no one's on the same page.

Small decisions are taking way too long to make.

People on the ground feel handcuffed, or worse, ignored.

And it hits you: **“We'll never move fast enough if we don't get decision making at the levels it needs to be.”**

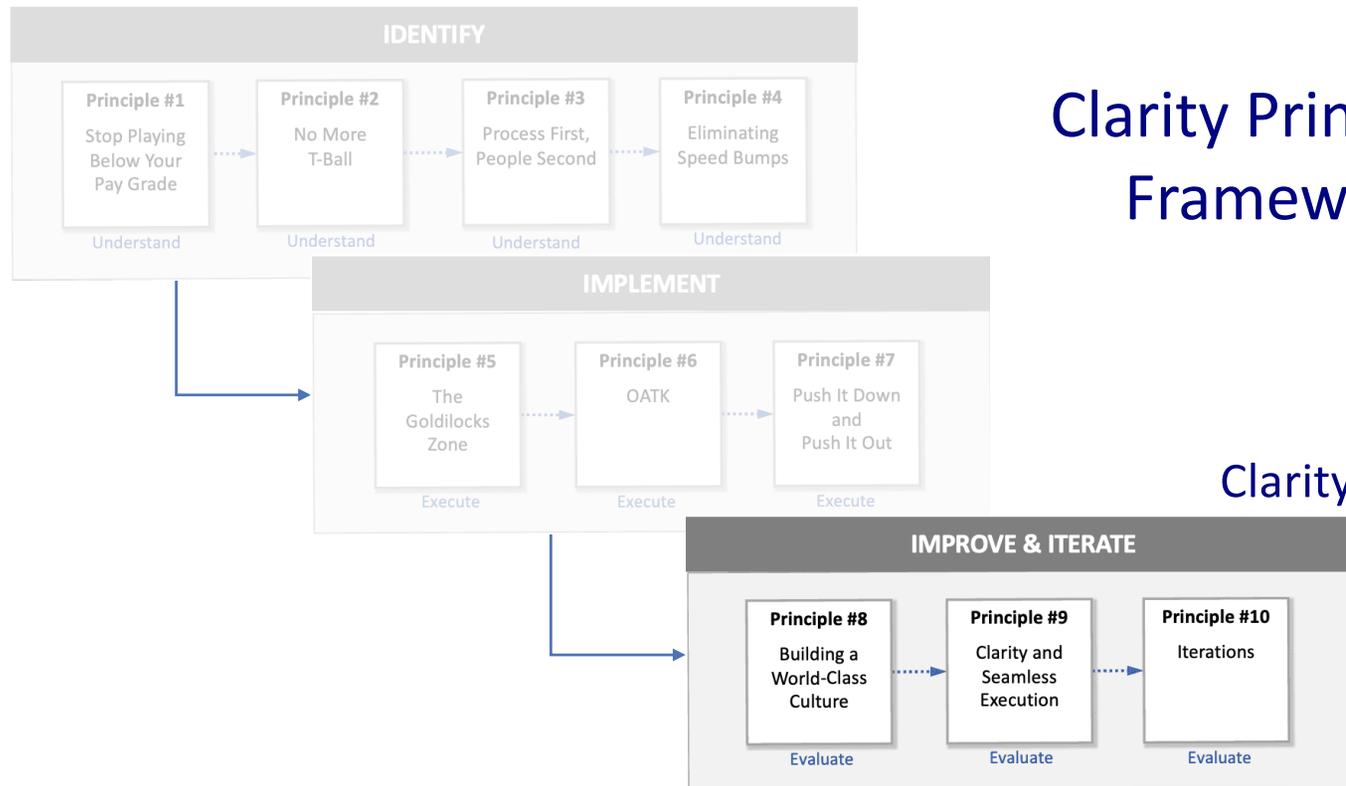


What to Look For...

Push It Down and Push It Out

- **Frontline teams unclear** or hesitant about what they can decide.
- **Process gaps** force constant upward escalation for routine issues.
- **Key info controlled by a few**, creating bottlenecks or delays.

Confusion



Clarity Principles Framework

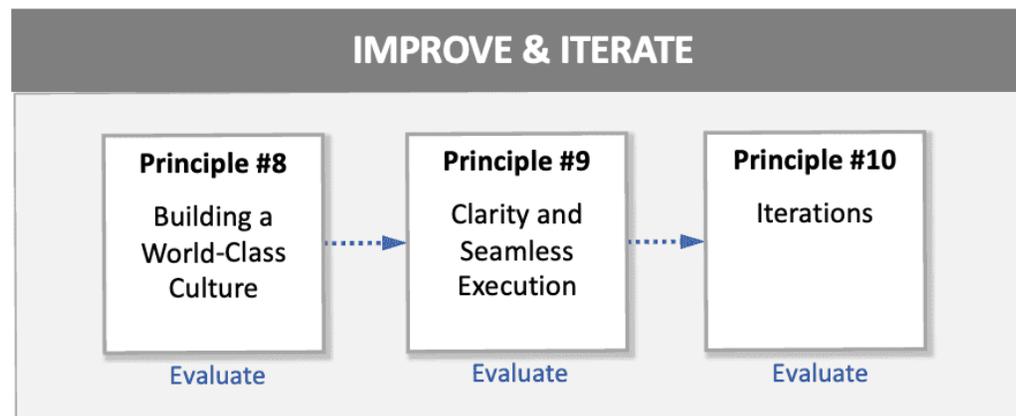
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IMPROVE & ITERATE phase

In the Improve & Iterate phase, you measure the impact of earlier changes through two key indicators: Execution and Culture. This phase turns clarity into a mindset and momentum into sustainable growth.



Building a World Class Culture

8: There may be an issue with the culture of the business where overall morale is not as strong as it should be in some areas—or across the business as a whole

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Building a World Class Culture

You start to notice a shift. You feel it across the organization.

People are speaking up more AND stepping up faster.

They're clearer, energized, solving problems before they escalate.

The blame game is gone, and pride is showing up in the work.

There's pressure, but it feels different... the team's pulling together.

And you think: **“THIS is what culture should feel like... and it's real.”**



What It Should Look Like...

Building a World Class Culture

- Team members feel valued, supported, and set up to succeed.
- Everyone knows their lane and how they contribute to the whole.
- The culture attracts top talent and repels poor fits.
- There's visible pride, ownership, and energy across the organization.
- Growth and excellence are sustained without burnout or chaos.

Clarity and Seamless Execution

9: Confusion and ambiguity may exist making it **difficult to make hard, effective decisions quickly** necessary for scaling and growth

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Clarity and Seamless Execution

Work is getting done AND it's getting done right.

No spinning in place, no second-guessing, no one stuck waiting.

Every handoff, every action, every next step is clear.

People moving with confidence knowing what's expected of them.

Leadership isn't hovering... they're trusting, because visibility is real.

And you can feel it: **"This is what execution should feel like... clear, fast, focused, and finally working"**.



What It Should Look Like...

Clarity and Seamless Execution

- Leadership has real-time visibility without chasing updates or needing to dig through noise
- Teams execute confidently with clean handoffs and no guessing
- Decisions happen quickly with trusted data and clear ownership
- Execution feels repeatable and stable... even under pressure
- Leaders free to focus on strategy, not stuck in day-to-day triage

Iterations

10: The business may lack an effective framework for identifying ongoing gaps and applying a consistent approach for addressing any of the issues previously highlighted

YES, this is a critical concern

Only sometimes

No, this does not happen

Iterations

You've come full circle... real gains, clear wins, measurable traction.

But now comes the moment most teams skip... the decision point.

Do we revisit this area and go deeper?

Or do we shift focus and apply the Clarity Principles somewhere new?

Clarity isn't all-or-nothing. It's iterative, surgical, and scalable.

And you think: **“We're not guessing anymore. We can see exactly what to do next. And everyone's on the same page.”**

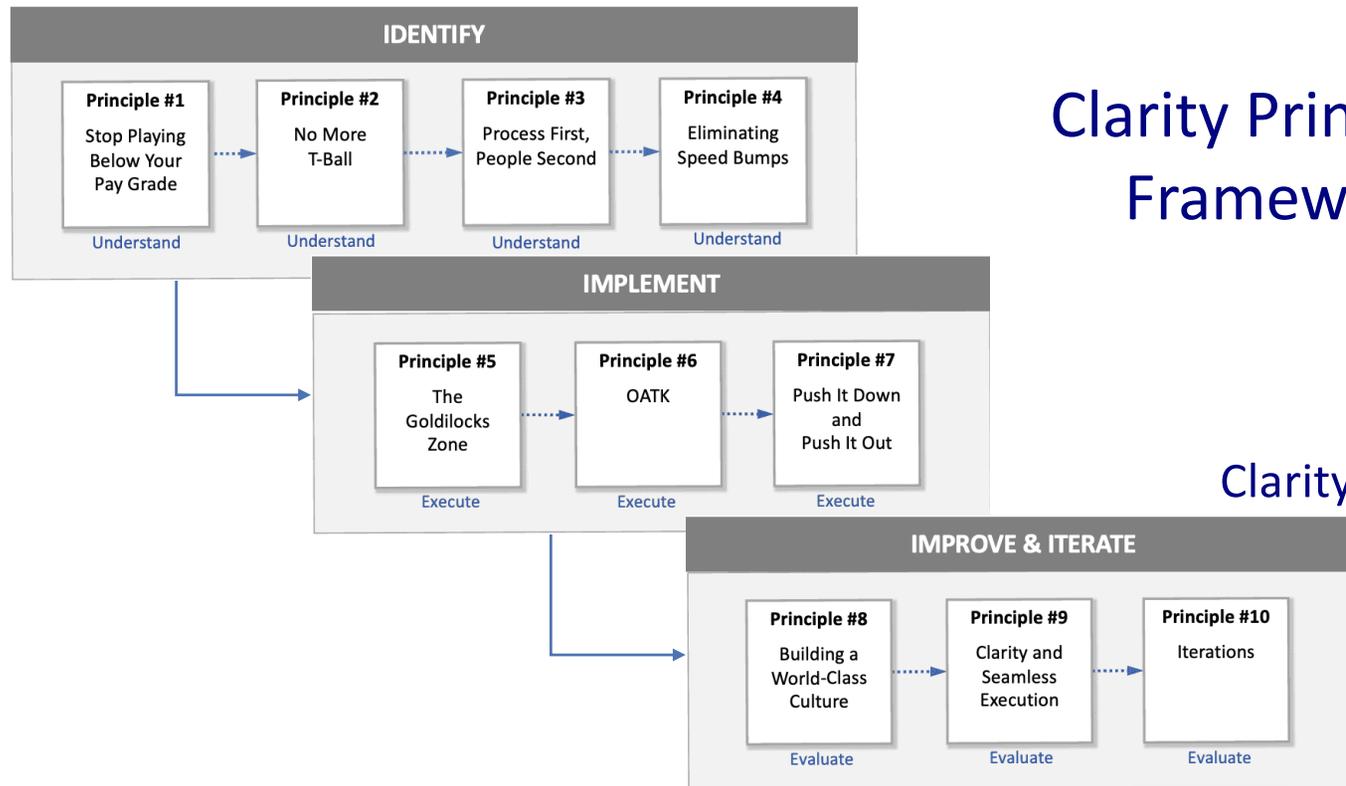


What It Should Look Like...

Iterations

- Leadership decides: move on, refine, or re-engage the area
- Framework is reused across teams, functions, and acquisitions
- Continuous improvement becomes a normalized leadership discipline
- Easily iterate framework with below standard or high-stakes areas
- Clarity gained is protected from slipping back into old habits

Confusion



Clarity Principles Framework

Clarity



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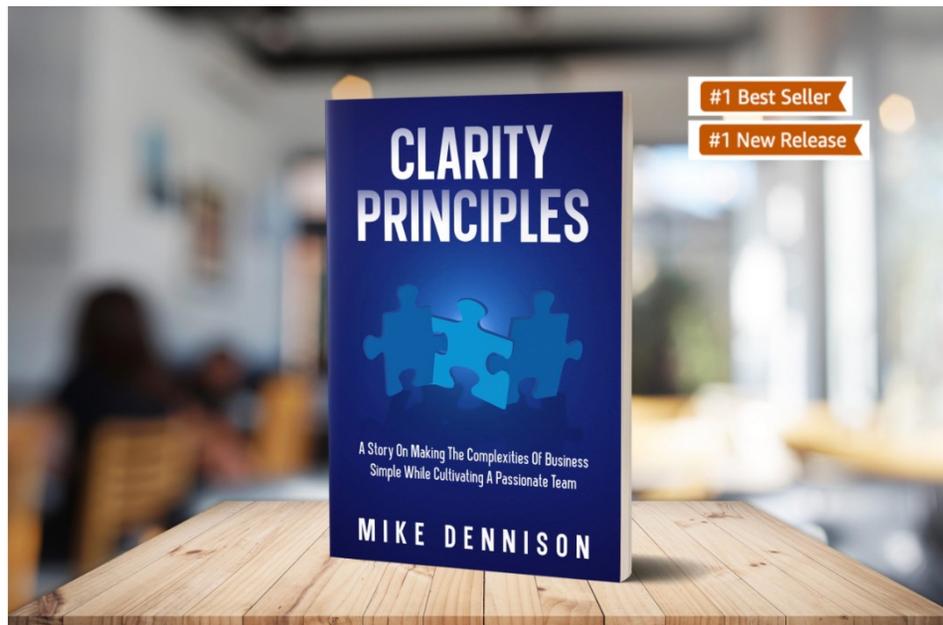
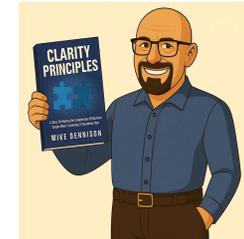


Let's Chat!

what have we learned?

Take the 2-minute Clarity Assessment

Get the digital copy of Clarity Principles for free!



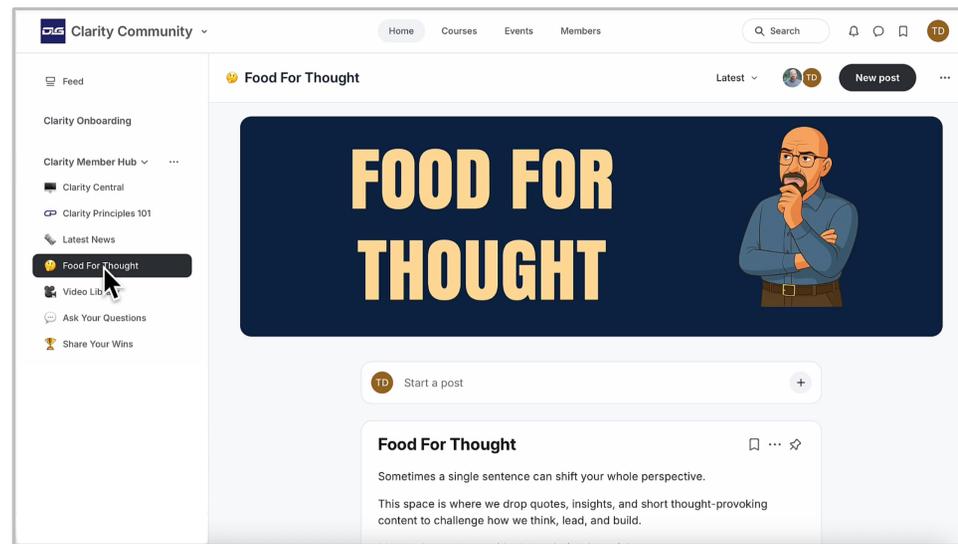
<https://scorecard.clarityprinciples.com>



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Clarity Community

Connecting like-minded leaders interested in Clarity Principles



<https://clarityprinciples.com/community>



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Know Someone This Could Help?

I'd love an introduction.

Ask me how the referral program works.

Let's help more leaders eliminate friction, scale with clarity, and build world-class teams.



Clarity Starts With a Conversation...

- ✓ Let's talk about what Clarity could look like inside your business.
- ✓ Start with the 2-minute Clarity Scorecard.
- ✓ I'll send you a free digital copy of *Clarity Principles*.
- ✓ From there, we'll explore the best next move for your team.



Thank You!



A real-world playbook for eliminating friction and scaling with confidence