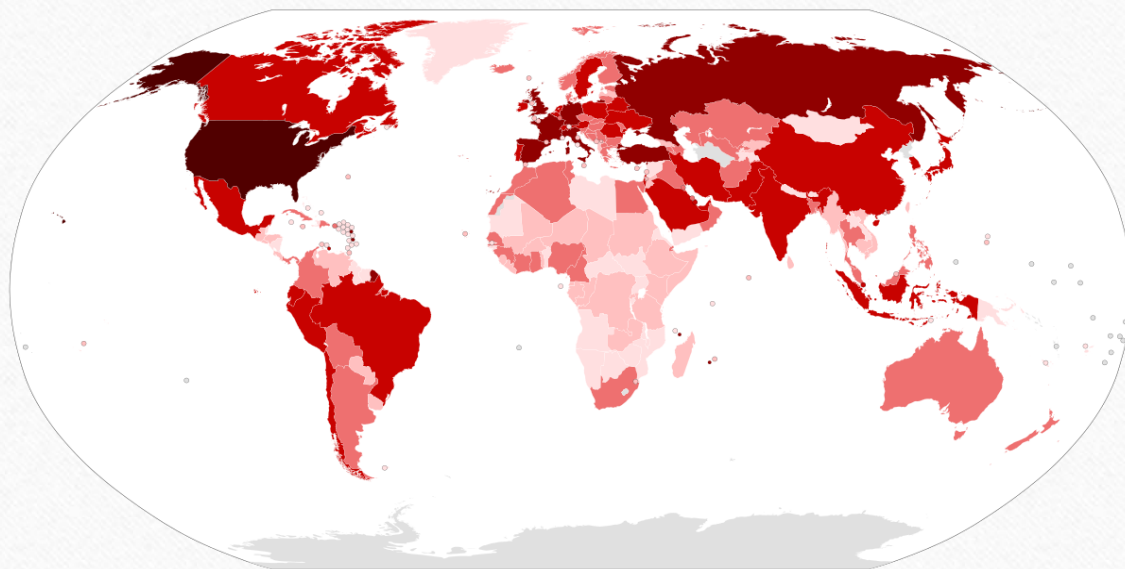
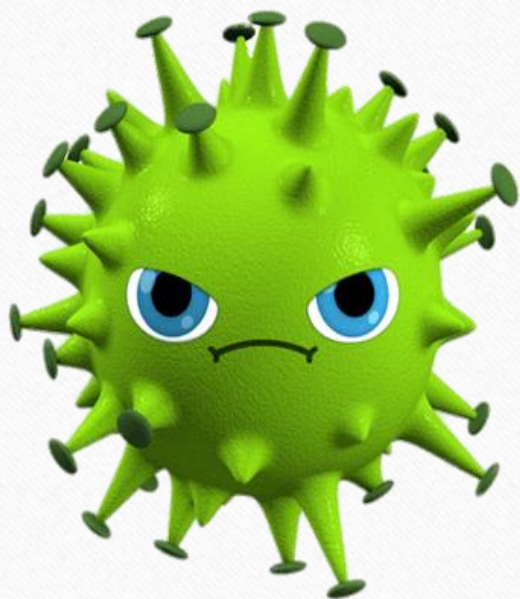


Supervising Remote VR Counseling Service Providers

Sandy Hardy-Smith
Chief Operating Officer
Imagine Enterprises, Inc.
sandy.smith@imagine-enterprises.org







Learning Objectives

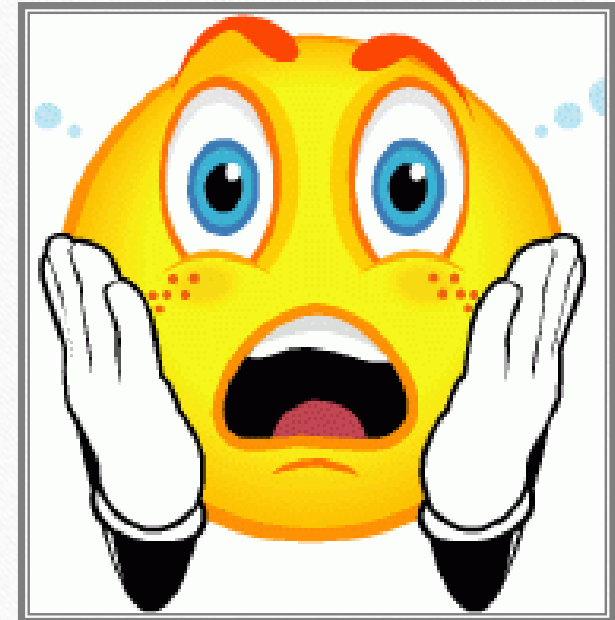
- At the end of this webinar, attendees will be able to understand:
 - tips and tools for supervising remote/virtual
 - Team members
 - Set-up
 - Communication
 - Production
 - Technology
 - Unified teams

**CHANGE
AHEAD**



Virtual Teams

- Supervising a virtual team is
 - not for the faint of heart;
 - a new mind-set; and
 - a new way to plan
- A whole new way to think about supporting, leading and supervising





A Pit Fall to AVOID

Think that working from home is just like working from an office

- That can lead to:
 - misunderstandings
 - inability to clearly communicate goals, targets, and outcomes
 - lack of clarity, direction, and flexibility of the process
 - lack of proper tools and technology
 - different work ethics and different learning styles
 - not recognizing when team member is struggling
 - not giving team members a sense of ownership, commitment and support
 - difficulty with delegation
 - not recognizing incompetence and handling it
 - distrust and lack of personal connection







~~Plan A~~
~~Plan B~~
Plan C

Temporary or Permanent

- Will this temporary change be permanent?
- Is there a plan to start bringing staff back?
- Many businesses are moving toward home offices
- How do you plan?
 - Especially hiring remote staff for the first time

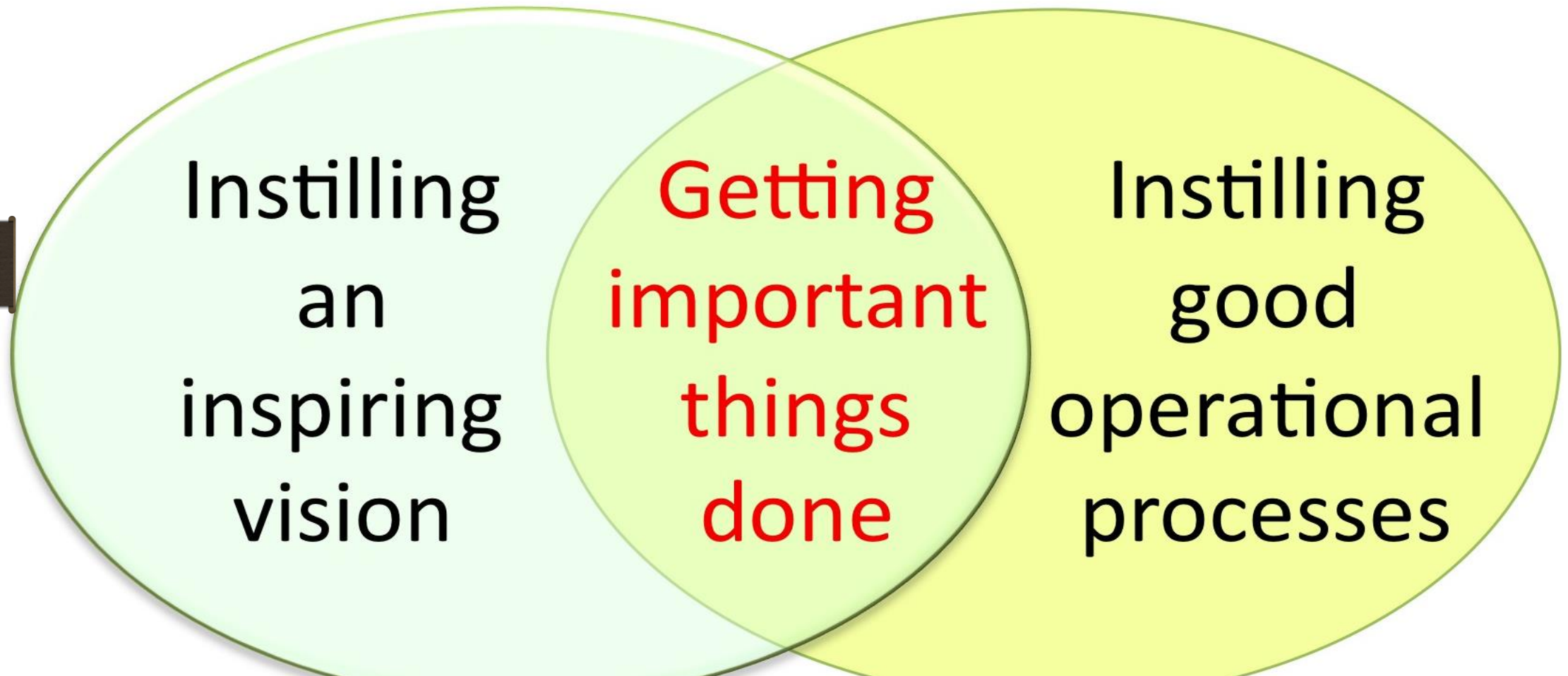


Interviewing and Hiring Virtually

- Look for people who are the right fit for virtual work
 - Self-motivated
 - Trustworthy
 - Good problem-solving skills
 - Good communication skills
 - Good time-management skills
- Match mission, values, outcomes and role
- Similar expectations and experience
- They have that “thing” ... you know it ... you feel it!



Leadership & Management



Be the kind
of leader
that you
would
follow.





Set- Up Make Sure Everyone has the Proper Tools

- To:
 - be efficient and effective
 - be comfortable
 - decrease stress
 - provide proper security
- Will you pay for their home internet/secure fax line and other expenses to do their job



So, what do they need?

- Desk and chair
- Great computer and internet access
- Ability to encrypt documents and emails
- Locking file cabinet/Encrypted flash drive
- All-in-One
- Criss-cross shredders
- Sufficient office supplies
- Organizational items





Kinks and Barriers

- Not in the budget?
 - What budget-items can you switch around?
- Proactive and common-sensed advocating
- Think out of the box
 - What in their current office can they take home



Remote Security

- Protect each participant's Personal Identifying Information (PII)
 - Paper case files double locked
 - Online files saved to encrypted location
 - All email correspondence must be encrypted
 - Do not share PII with anyone, unless
 - they have a need to know and
 - participant has given their written consent





EXPECTATIONS vs. REALITY





Staff Mental Health and Burn-Out

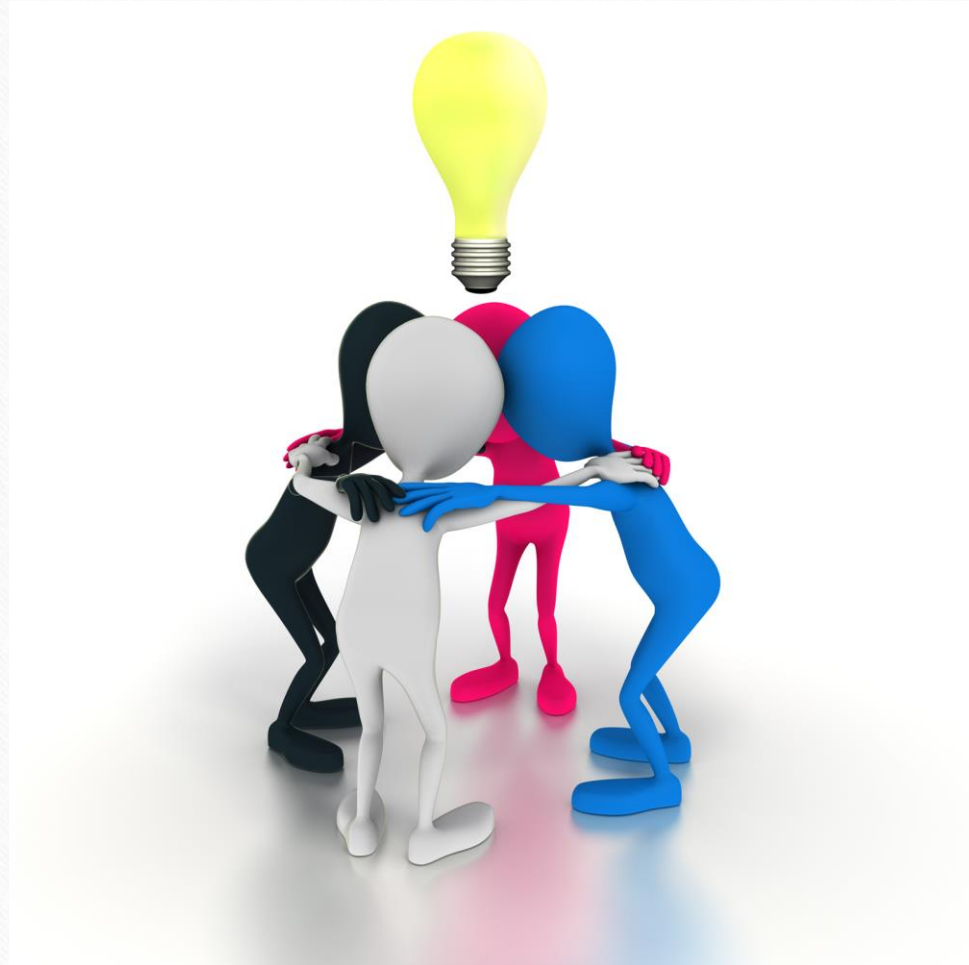
- Isolation
- Insufficient tools
- Unclear expectations
- Financial hardship
- Change
- Fear of the unknown

THESE ARE REAL THINGS!
Have Resources AVAILABLE



Communication

- **Planning, flexibility, organization and follow through includes all team members!**
- Remote communication is very different from face-to-face
- To be successful, remote staff must
 - understand expectations
 - up-to-date resources and federal/state exemptions
 - practice self-care
 - know they can call you with questions and suggestions.

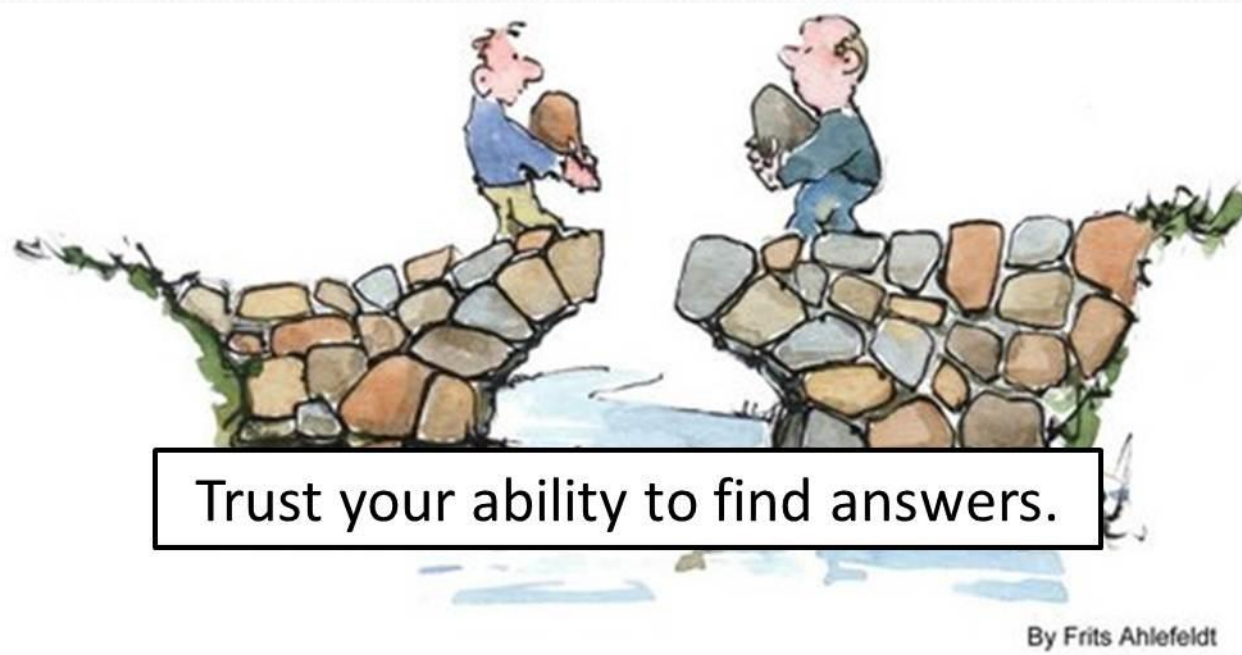




Communication

“Talk to share - Listen to understand”

- Always be aware that tone in remote communication sets the stage.
- Pay attention to the different learning styles
- Meet regularly with the entire team and individually
 - Each meeting should have the same consistent flow
 - Include all staff – everyone contributes and everyone has a role (no silent “partners”)
 - Check how each person (and their loved ones) is holding up
 - Ask about biggest concerns and questions they have
 - Keep them up-to-date on changes/future
 - Solicit ideas
 - Praise more than correct
 - Offer feedback



Trust your ability to find answers.

By Frits Ahlefeldt

Communication (con.)

- Trust your team
 - Percentage of those who take advantage are very low
- Find strengths
- Identify weakness and work on it right away – Do not avoid this!
- Establish close bonds - help and support frequently
- Practice grace and patience – they will have unproductive days (HINT: so will you) and that is ok.
 - Watch overall performance and no hovering
 - Isolation is a real thing - watch for it and support them through it



Production

“You are the frame of *this* picture”



- Stay focused on the goal (team and individual)
- Implement systems and monitor work output
 - Staff should **NOT** develop their own process to track and complete their work
 - Have **one** way to track, document, and report information
 - Identify due dates – send out a “sweet” reminder
- Virtually post and collaborate on caseloads, documents and spreadsheets – make sure it is secure!



Production

- You have a new product to manage – **your remote staff**
 - Working from home takes a person who is
 - self-motivated person
 - independent
 - a decisionmakers
 - a good communicator
 - trustworthy
 - honest, and
 - **wonderfully imperfect**





Production

- **FLEXIBILITY**

- You
 - The team
- Allow flexible work hours within reason
- Everyone has their own distractions at home
- Implement and use a 1:1 peer support
 - (you are **NOT** a part of this)





Technology

- Use technology to build the team
 - Use video-based meetings
 - Use screen sharing tools
- Have a line of communication and collaboration always open, available, monitored, and secure.
- **DIRECT** is best (limit chatrooms and emails)



Technology Options



- Use video-based meetings
 - Zoom Meeting
 - Go-To-Meeting
 - Microsoft Team
 - Cisco Webex Meeting
 - SLACK
 - Skype
- Use screen sharing tools
 - Google Docs
 - Google Drive



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA-NC

Supervising Remotely

- Regular:
 - case reviews
 - peer reviews
- Track outsourced services: vendors, assessments, invoices and payments
- Ongoing quality assurance:
 - do staff still have the tools they need?
 - including ongoing training





BE KIND
— for —
EVERYONE
YOU MEET *is*
FIGHTING
a **HARD BATTLE**

Create a True “Team” Feeling

- Be mindful
- Make extra effort to
 - solicit their ideas
 - stay connected
 - be flexible
 - praise/recognize
 - be open



Create a True “Team” Feeling

Some ways to achieve this are:

- Non-work related communication
- Keep your team informed about how the whole organization is doing.
- Get everyone on your team involved
- Remember birthdays and special occasions
- Anything to create a feeling that they are valued and not working separately



Phew!!

You Have A Lot of Important Responsibilities

- I went over your various responsibilities so that you can
 - think through each step from the perspective of it being a virtual service;
 - determine what you and they need to be successful;
 - be patient and move at the pace that is manageable;
 - see how important it is to be organized and focused; and
 - see what a critical and important role you play in the life of every person on your team and their caseload.
- I am sure I missed a ton of your responsibilities, but **YOU** know themand you know that **you've got this!**





**TAKE CARE OF
YOURSELF**

Seasoned or Brand New - This is Tougher Than It Looks!

- Be kind to yourself if
 - your mind cannot focus
 - you are not productive
 - your child needs you
- The key is **NOT** to stay there
 - Walk away for a few minutes (go for a walk, shower, give the kids some attention)
 - Call someone to help you refocus – support is important

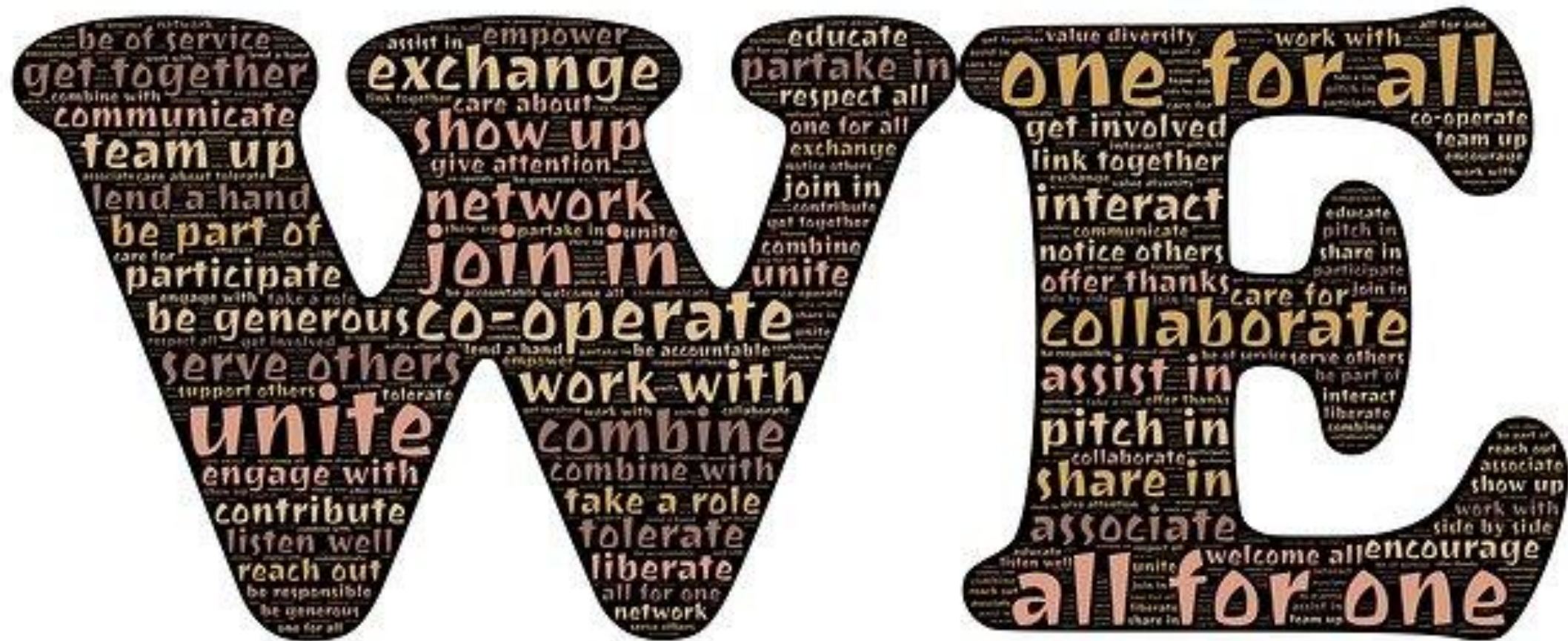




In Closing

- Explain ... clarify ... repeat
- Train ... train ... train
- Supply ... Now ... Effective
- Communicate ... communicate ...communicate
- Support ... support ... support
- Track review ... share
- Engage ... engage ... engage ... engage
- PRAISE!!! PRAISE!!! PRAISE!!!
- BREATHE!





Thank You – It has been an honor!

