

**STSi**<sup>TM</sup>



# CONNECT THE DOTS

## The Case for Systems Thinking

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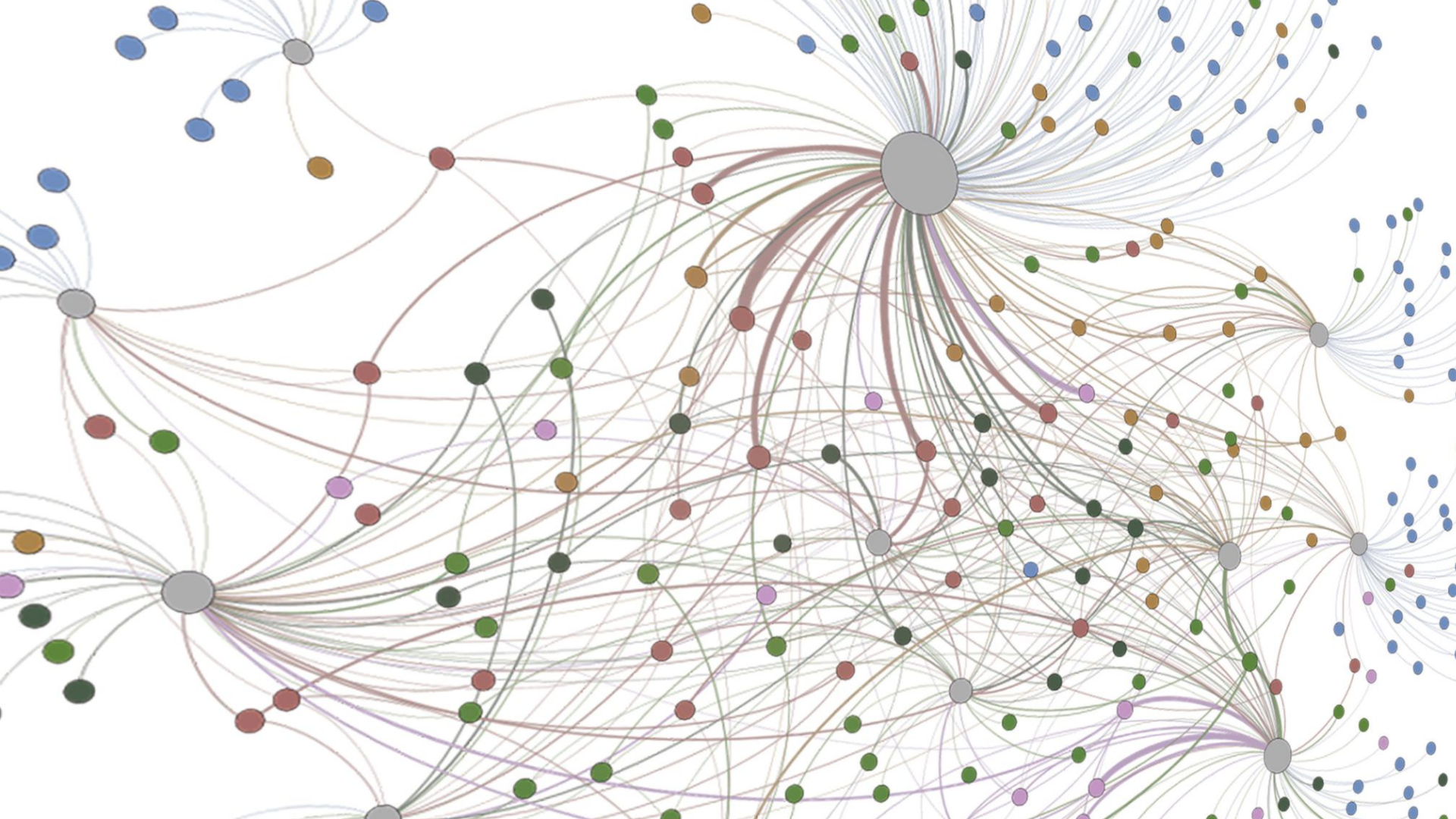
[dac66@cornell.edu](mailto:dac66@cornell.edu)  
[lac19@cornell.edu](mailto:lac19@cornell.edu)



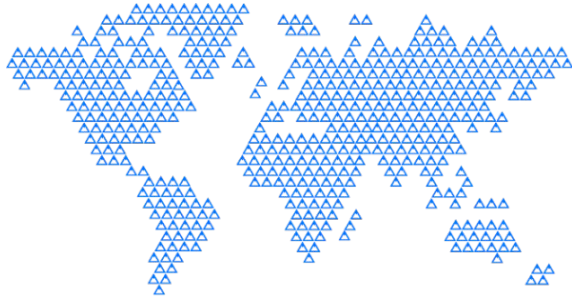
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8 BILLION SYSTEMS THINKERS

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S T A N D A R D

The logo for Forbes, featuring the word "Forbes" in a blue, serif font.

**"Today's Most Crucial Leadership Skill Is Systems Thinking"**

Source: Forbes 2025

The logo for the World Economic Forum, featuring the words "WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM" in a blue, sans-serif font, with a blue arc below the text.

**"Systems Thinking is a Top 10 Future Job Skill"**

Source: World Economic Forum, Future of Jobs 2030 Report

The logo for Autodesk, featuring a blue square icon with a white diagonal line and the word "AUTODESK" in a blue, sans-serif font.

**"Total systems thinking is your ultimate shield against the AI takeover."**

Source: Andrew Anagnost, CEO of Autodesk (2025)

# SYSTEMS THINKING



**Systems Mapping**



**Systems Leadership**

① **Why** systems thinking?

② **What** is systems thinking?

③ **How** do you do systems thinking?

④ How do you apply systems thinking to your work & life?

# Thinking isn't what you think it is.

Common Sense, Critical Thinking, Emotional Intelligence, Creative Thinking, Growth Mindset, Design Thinking, Leadership Thinking, Problem Solving Thinking, Strategic Thinking, Systems Thinking, Analytical Thinking, General Intelligence, Interpersonal Intelligence, Intrapersonal Intelligence, Grit, Resilience, Anti-fractility, Scientific Thinking, Fast/Slow Thinking, Convergent/Divergent Thinking, Lateral Thinking, Reflective Thinking, Abstract Thinking, Inductive Thinking, Deductive Thinking, Situational Thinking, Clear Thinking, Complexity Thinking, Ecological Thinking, Adaptive Thinking, Enterprise Thinking, Thinking Like a Scientist, Synthetic Thinking, Interdisciplinary Thinking, Prosocial Thinking, Bias.

**Thinking**

**THINKING** = THE WAY WE ORGANIZE  
INFORMATION TO MAKE MEANING

We **DISTINGUISH (D)** between one thing and an *other* thing.

We sort things into parts and wholes or **SYSTEMS (S)**.

We see the **RELATIONSHIPS (R)** between and among things (how they act upon and react to each other).

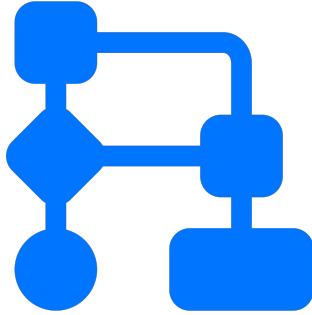
We take **PERSPECTIVES (P)** – that is from the point of one thing, we view another thing.

## Sample



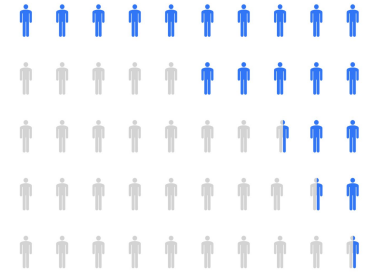
N=34000

## Task



Asked to map  
their thinking

## Findings

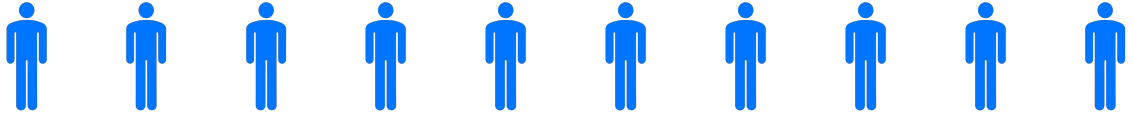


0 in 10 think  
systemically.



## Imagine Your Team.

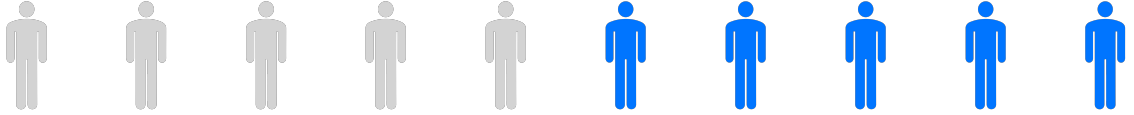
Tasked to Think Through a Problem...



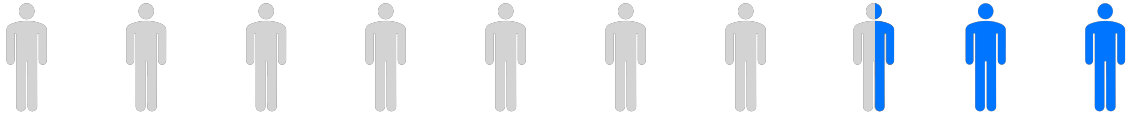
**5 out of 10** get stuck and do nothing.

**5 out of 10** identify things.

**0 out of 10** consider alternatives.

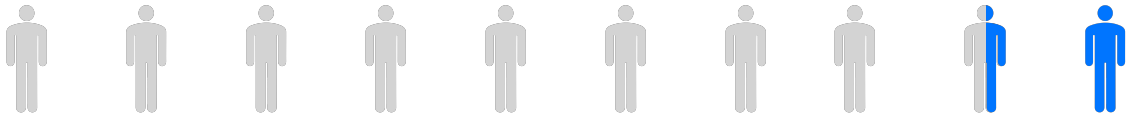


**2½ out of 10** break the problem down into parts (i.e. zoom in). **0 out of 10** consider the context (i.e., zoom out).



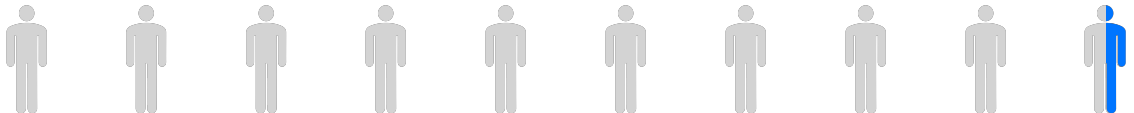
**1½ out of 10** consider how the elements of the problem are related.

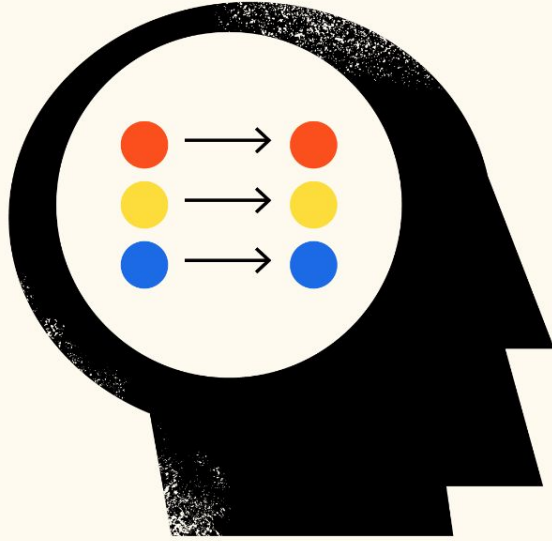
**0 out of 10** specify the action/reaction.



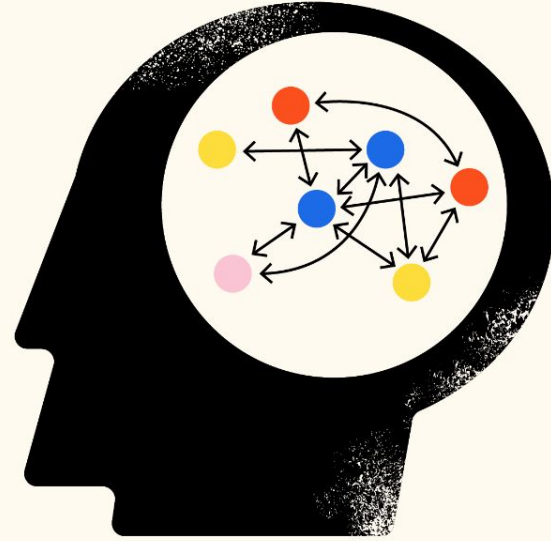
**<1 of 10** identify more than their own perspective.

**0 out of 10** identify theirs as biased.





TEND TO DO



NEED TO DO

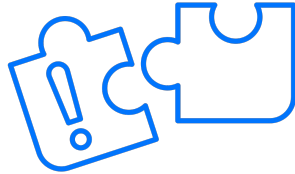


## Sample



N=1200  
Representing  
general US  
population

## Pre



Given a  
problem  
scenario

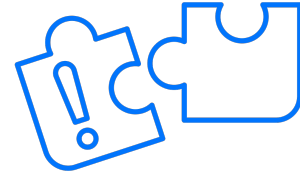
## Treatment



Shown a <1  
minute video

- of Big 6 DSRP moves
- Is/Is Not Move
  - Zoom In
  - Out Move
  - Part Party! Move
  - RDS Barbell Move
  - P-Circle Move

## Post



**250% to 550%**  
**380% avg**

improvement in critical  
thinking and problem  
solving ability



99.9%  
confidence in results



6

MOVES

# DISTINCTIONS (D)

We **DISTINGUISH (D)** between one thing and an *other* thing.

# Is / Is Not List Move

X is

X is not

the distinction the distinction the distinction the distinction

What is \_\_\_? What is NOT \_\_\_?

# Is /Is Not List Move for Litigation Abuse

## Litigation Abuse IS

Third-Party Litigation Funding

Jury Anchoring

Attorney Advertising

...

...

## Litigation Abuse IS NOT

Plaintiff representation

judicial independence,

routine defense cost inflation

...

...

the distinction the distinction the distinction the distinction

Pattern & Elements Tested	Mental Move Tested	Increase in problem solving, higher order thinking, & emotional intelligence
<b>Distinction (D)</b> = <i>identity (i) ↔ other (o)</i>	<b>Is/Is Not List Move</b>	<b>551% increase</b>



# SYSTEMS (S)

We sort things into parts and wholes or **SYSTEMS (S)**.

# Zoom In/Out Move

What are the parts of \_\_\_?

What is \_\_\_ a part of?

Whole X belongs to

X

Part of X

Part of X

# Zoom In/Out Move - Long Tail Exposure

Media pressure

Long-Tail Exposures

Law change

Claim Reopening

Reinsurance Response

Reserve Impact

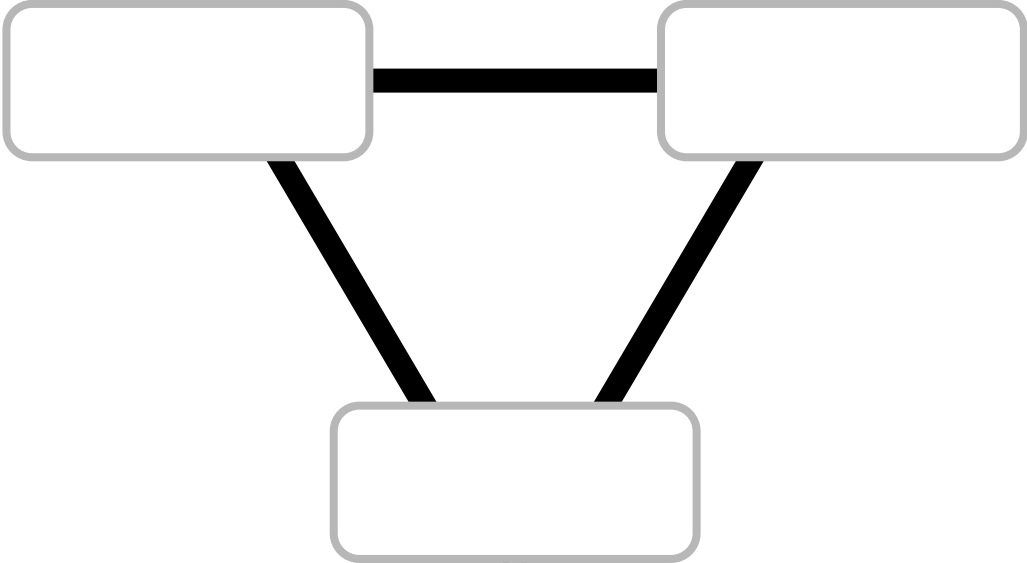
Premium Adjustment

Pattern & Elements Tested	Mental Move Tested	Increase in problem solving, higher order thinking, & emotional intelligence
<b>Distinction (D)</b> = <i>identity (i) ↔ other (o)</i>	<b>Is/Is Not List Move</b>	<b>551% increase</b>
<b>Systems (S)</b> = <i>part (p) ↔ whole (w)</i>	<b>Zoom In Move</b> <b>Zoom Out Move</b>	<b>266% increase</b>



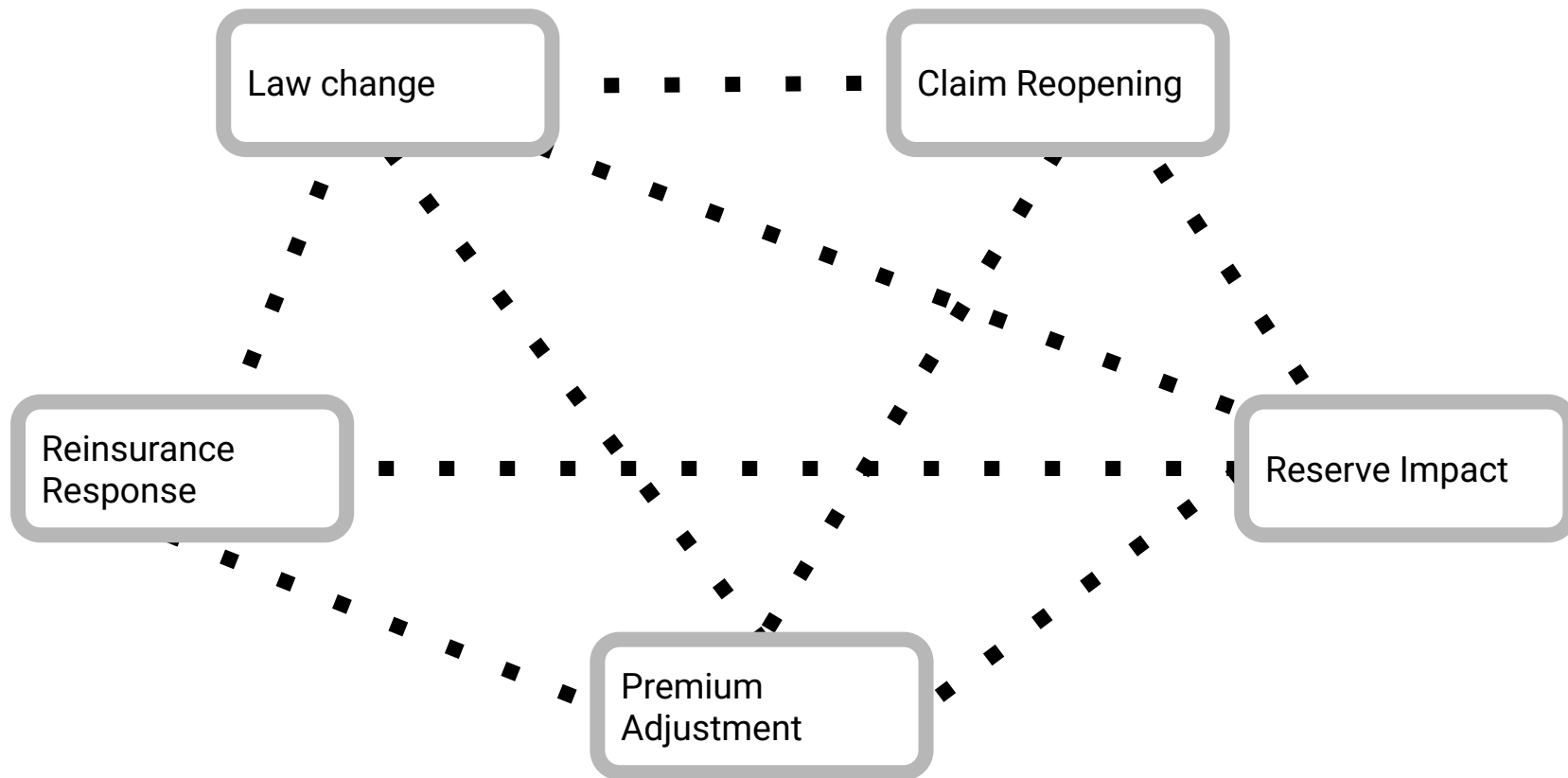
But, wait, there's **more**...

# Part Party! Move



Are the parts of \_\_\_ related?

# Part Party! Move - Long Tail Exposures



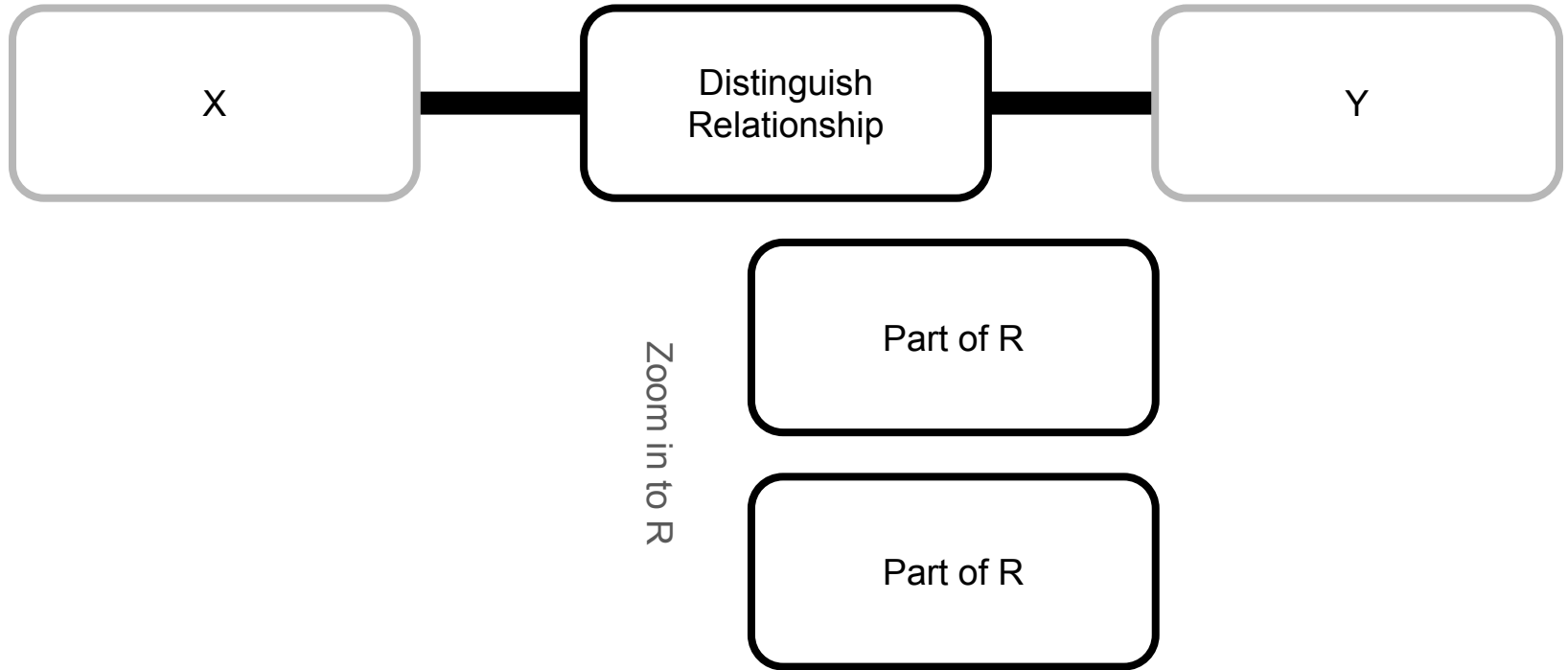
Pattern & Elements Tested	Mental Move Tested	Increase in problem solving, higher order thinking, & emotional intelligence
<b>Distinction (D)</b> = <i>identity (i) ↔ other (o)</i>	<b>Is/Is Not List Move</b>	<b>551% increase</b>
<b>Systems (S)</b> = <i>part (p) ↔ whole (w)</i>	<b>Zoom In Move</b> <b>Zoom Out Move</b>	<b>266% increase</b>
<b>Relationships (R)</b> = <i>action (a) ↔ reaction (r)</i>	<b>Part Party! Move</b>	<b>247% increase</b>



# RELATIONSHIPS (R)

We see the **RELATIONSHIPS (R)** between and among things.

# RDS Barbell Move

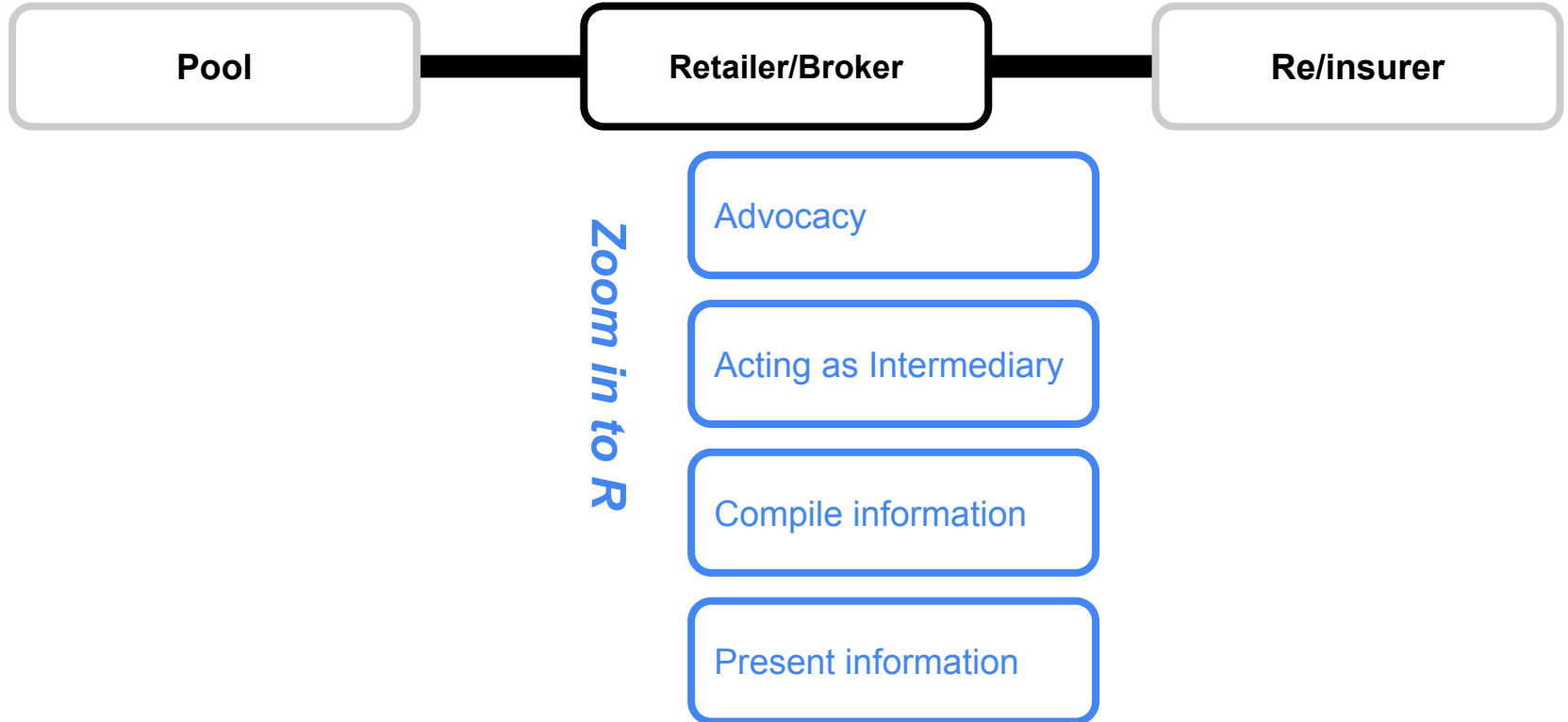


How is \_\_\_ related to \_\_\_ ?

# RDS Barbell Move on Re/Insurance



# RDS Barbell Move on Re/Insurance



<b>Pattern &amp; Elements Tested</b>	<b>Mental Move Tested</b>	<b>Increase in problem solving, higher order thinking, &amp; emotional intelligence</b>
<b>Distinction (D)</b> = <i>identity (i) ⇔ other (o)</i>	<b>Is/Is Not List Move</b>	<b>551% increase</b>
<b>Systems (S)</b> = <i>part (p) ⇔ whole (w)</i>	<b>Zoom In Move</b> <b>Zoom Out Move</b>	<b>266% increase</b>
<b>Relationships (R)</b> = <i>action (a) ⇔ reaction (r)</i>	<b>Part Party! Move</b>	<b>247% increase</b>
	<b>RDS Barbell Move</b>	<b>508% increase</b>



# PERSPECTIVES (P)

We take **PERSPECTIVES (P)** – from the point of one thing, we view another thing.

# P-Circle Move

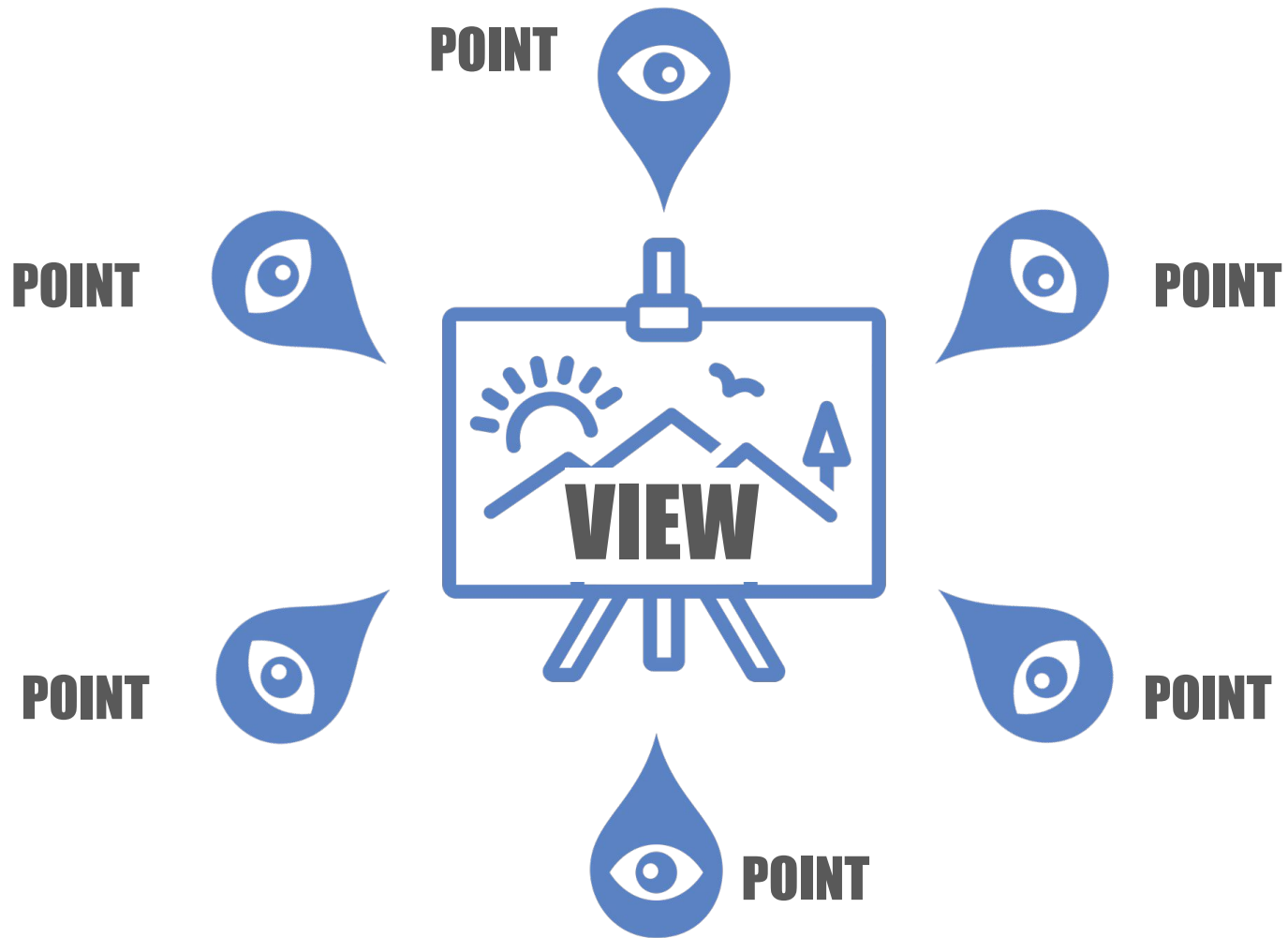
point

point

point

X (view)

From which points of view should we look at \_\_\_\_\_?



**POINT: CLAIMS ADJUSTER**



**POINT:  
UNDERWRITERS**



**POINT:  
BROKER**



**POINT: WHAT OR  
WHO IS MISSING?**



**POINT:  
CLIENT**



**POINT:  
REINSURERS**



**Economic**

**Historical**

**Health & Safety**

**Emotional**

**Security**

**Cultural**

**Organizational**

**Technological**

**Social**

**Political**

**Moral**

**Ecological**

**Legal**

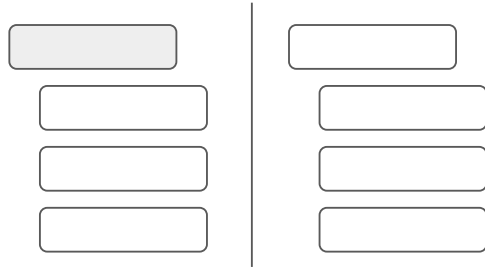
**Ethical**

Pattern & Elements Tested	Mental Move Tested	Increase in problem solving, higher order thinking, & emotional intelligence
<b>Distinction (D)</b> = <i>identity (i) ⇔ other (o)</i>	<b>Is/Is Not List Move</b>	<b>551% increase</b>
<b>Systems (S)</b> = <i>part (p) ⇔ whole (w)</i>	<b>Zoom In Move</b> <b>Zoom Out Move</b>	<b>266% increase</b>
<b>Relationships (R)</b> = <i>action (a) ⇔ reaction (r)</i>	<b>Part Party! Move</b>	<b>247% increase</b>
	<b>RDS Barbell Move</b>	<b>508% increase</b>
<b>Perspectives (P)</b> = <i>view (v) ⇔ point (ṗ)</i>	<b>Perspective Circle Move (P-Circle)</b>	<b>447% increase</b>

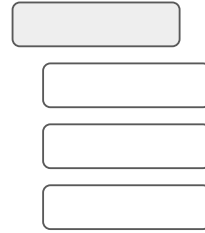


# THESE MOVES ARE MENTAL!

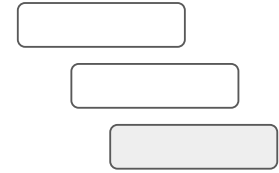
The science tells us to practice the first 6 Mental Moves to get the MOST results for the LEAST effort.



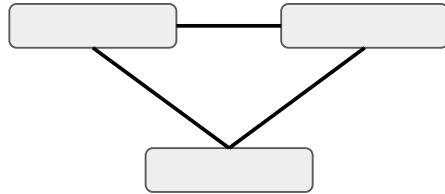
Is/Is Not List



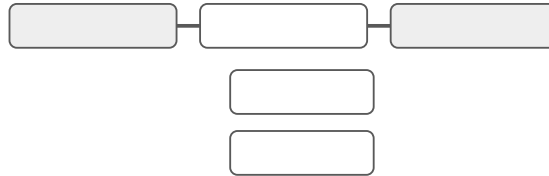
Zoom In



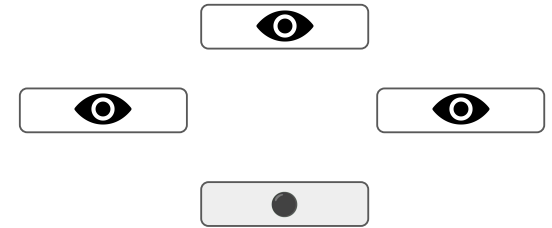
Zoom Out



Part Party!



RDS Barbell



Perspective Circle

<b>Move Name</b>	<b>Question(s)</b>
<b>Is/Is Not List</b>	What is ___? What is NOT ___?
<b>Zoom In</b>	What are the parts of ___?
<b>Zoom Out</b>	What is ___ a part of?
<b>Part-Party!</b>	Are the parts of ___ related?
<b>RDS Barbell</b>	How is ___ related to ___ ?
<b>P-Circle</b>	From which points of view should we look at _____?



## System 1

Fast

Prone to error/bias



Thinking fast  
and wrong

## System 3

Fast

Accurate

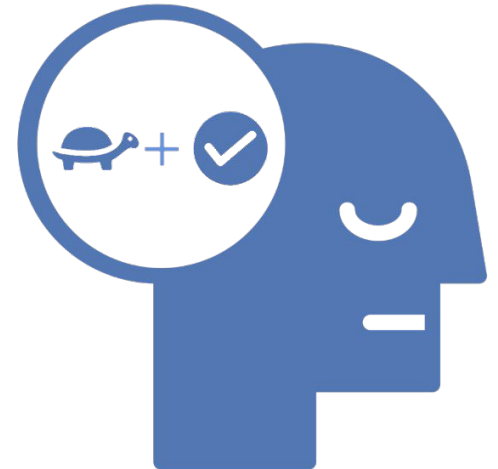


Thinking fast  
and right

## System 2

Slow

More accurate



Thinking slow  
and right

You are **already** & **always** doing the Moves.

BETTER Thinking is **purposefully**  
**applying** the MOVES  
to understand your thinking and **adapt to**  
**reality**.

# VUCA

Volatile Uncertain  
Complex Ambiguous



# LAMO

Linear Anthropocentric  
Mechanistic Ordered



# VUCA

## VUCA World

The real world is dynamic, adaptive, organic, and constantly evolving...

The real world is multivalent by nature (And-Both can be true)...

The real world is networked and nested and complex with a sprinkling of randomness...

The real world is nonlinear and includes feedback, webs of causality, and material relationships...

The real world is agnostic about human endeavors. (We are small and insignificant.)...

# LAMO

## LAMO Thinking

Yet, we tend to think mechanistically.

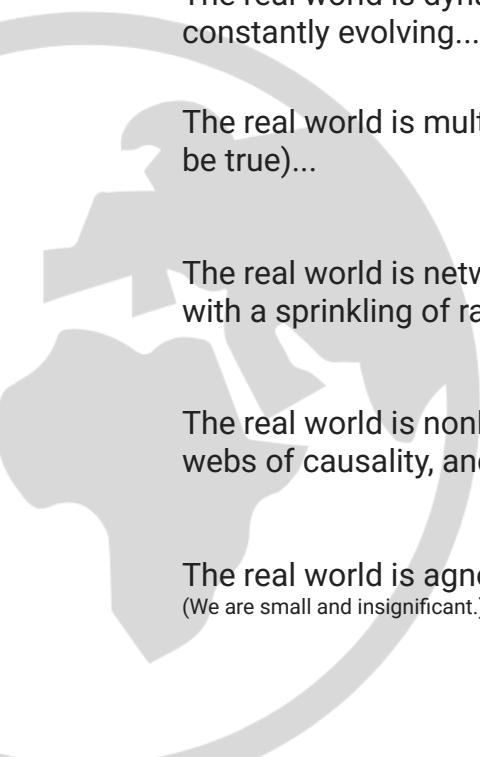
Yet, our thinking tends to be needlessly bivalent (Either-Or thinking)...

Yet, we think of things in ordered and static categories and hierarchies.

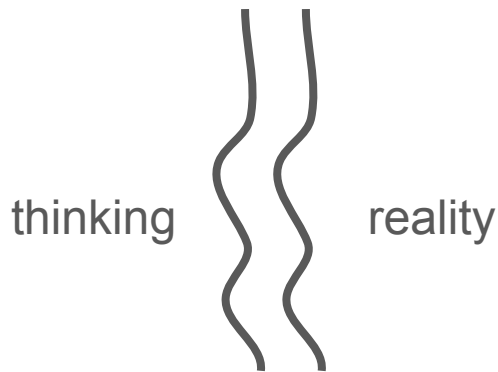
Yet, we think in linear and causal ways.

Yet, we tend to look at things through a human-centered (anthropocentric) lens. (Our world centers around us.)

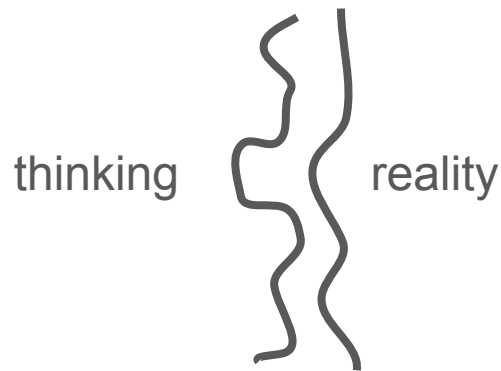
**SYSTEMS THINKING**



# L♥VE REALITY.



**aligned**  
**"right"**



**not aligned**  
**"wrong"**

L♥VE REALITY.

When

**WHAT YOU THINK**

matches

**WHAT IS REAL**

the decisions you make work out as planned

**PRACTICE**  
**PRACTICE**

**PRACTICE .**

# HIGH PERFORMERS

Performance Athletes, Musicians, Special Forces Operators, etc



# THE CORPORATE WORLD

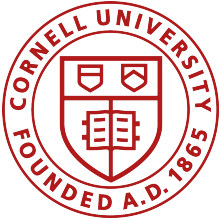


That one  
training day



- 1. Master advanced thinking skills**
- 2. Enhance leadership and decision-making**
- 3. Build shared mental models with your team**
- 4. Solve complex problems faster and with clarity**

**Q & A**



**STSi**<sup>TM</sup>



# CONNECT THE DOTS

## The Case for Systems Thinking in Clean Water

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