

Local Government **REIMAGINED** CONFERENCE

MAY 10-12, 2023 LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

The Surprising Science of Public Input

Kevin Lyons

Chief Scientist, Governance Sciences Group

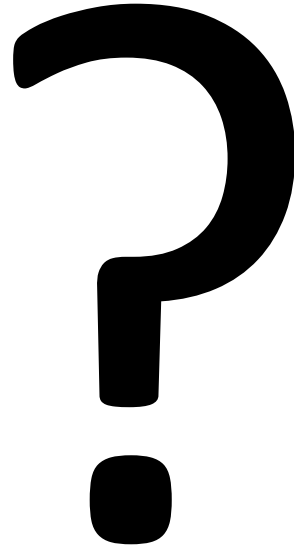
kevin@flashvote.com

ICMA | conference



What Do You Want to Know?

- *“Don’t tell me what you know... tell me what I want to know”*



Where Are We Going?

- Introduction: How input helps decisions (10 min)
- Part 1: Some science of public input (20 min)
- Part 2: What goes wrong with input? (15 min)
- Part 3: Choose your adventure (5 min)
- Conclusion plus Q&A (10 min and throughout)

INTRO: HOW INPUT HELPS DECISIONS

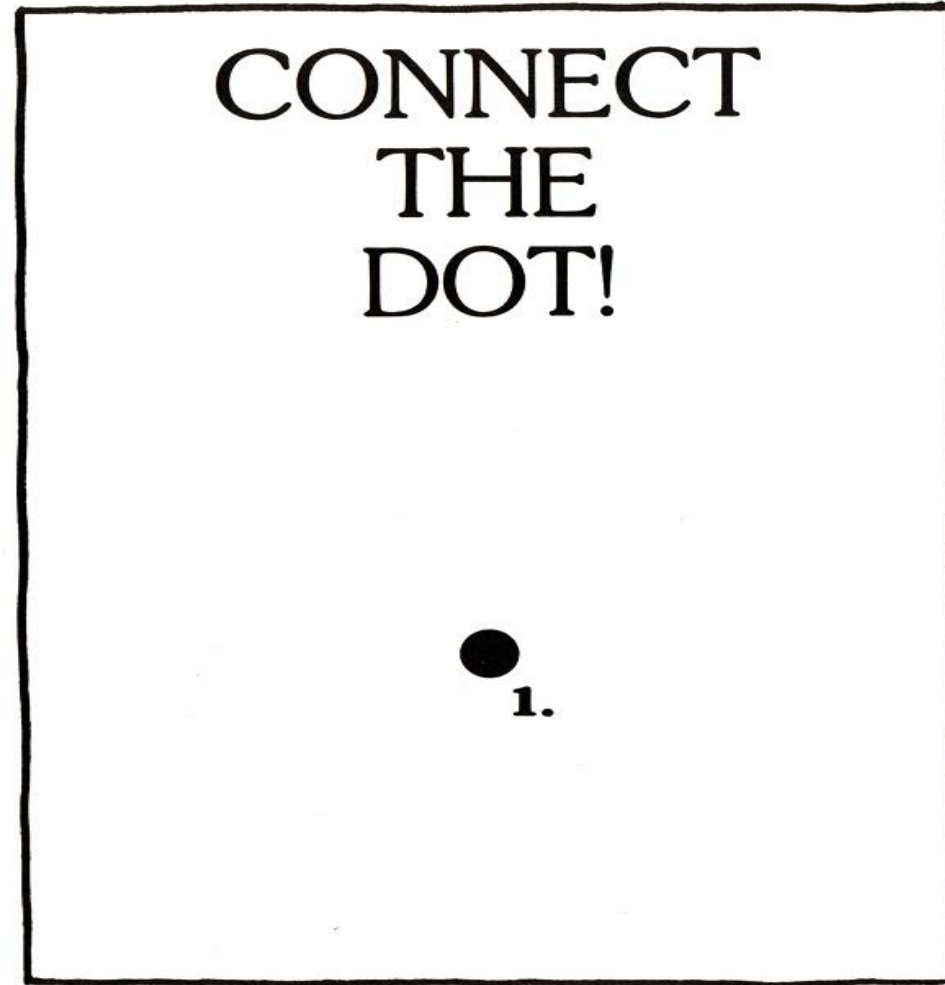
INPUT AS DATA FOR DECISIONS

Lets Get Started

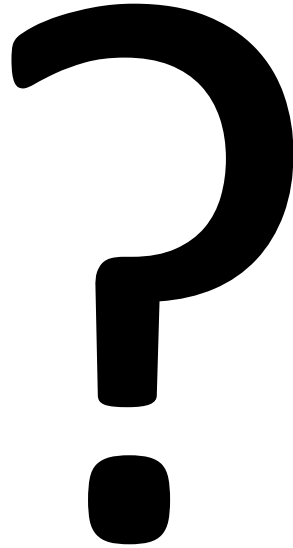
$$\tilde{G}_n = \frac{\sum_{j=1}^N R_j W_j G_j}{\sum_{j=1}^N R_j W_j} = \frac{E_J[\tilde{R}_J G_J]}{E_J[\tilde{R}_J]}.$$

$$\begin{aligned}\tilde{G}_n - \bar{G}_N &= \frac{\text{Cov}_J(\tilde{R}_J, G_J)}{E_J(\tilde{R}_J)} = \rho_{\tilde{R}, G} \sqrt{\frac{V_J(\tilde{R}_J)}{E_J^2(\tilde{R}_J)}} \sigma_G \\ &= \rho_{\tilde{R}, G} \times \sqrt{\frac{1 - f + CV_W^2}{f}} \times \sigma_G,\end{aligned}$$

More Like This?

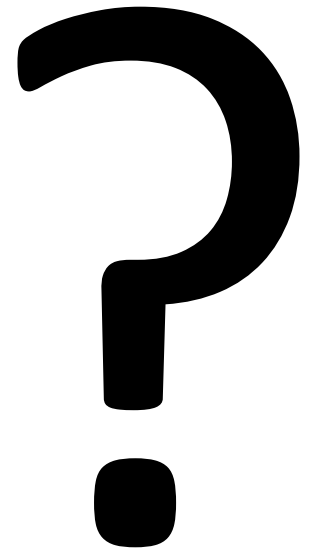


What's the Point of Community Input?



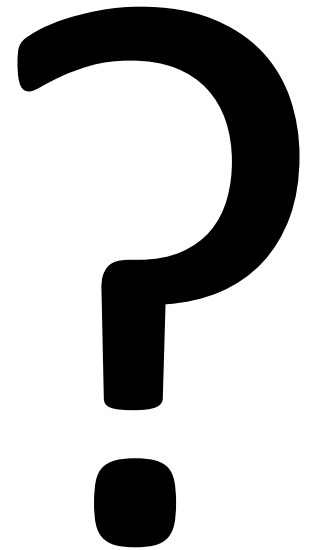
What's the Point of Community Input?

- You learn **facts** you didn't know?
- You get some **ideas** you didn't have?
- You hear **questions** you hadn't asked?



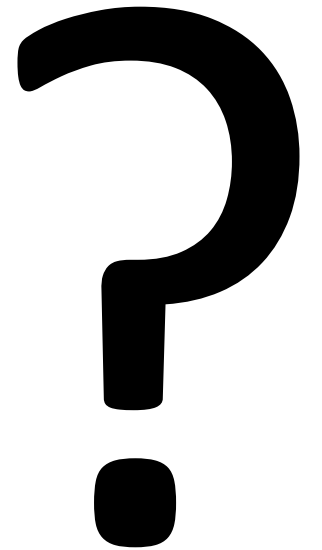
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- You learn **what the community wants**?



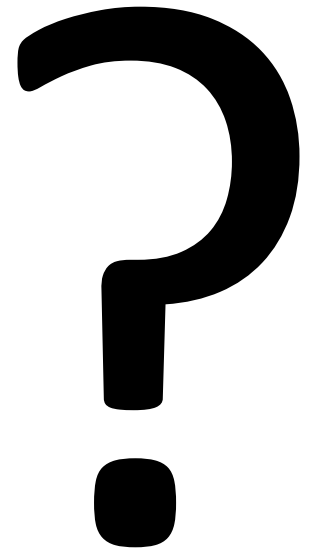
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- You build **trust** through interaction?
- You **look like you care**?



New Facts/Ideas: Data for Decisions

- You learn **facts** you didn't know?
 - You get some **ideas** you didn't have?
 - You hear **questions** you hadn't asked?
-
- You learn **what the community wants**?
 - You build **trust** through interaction?
 - You **look like you care**?

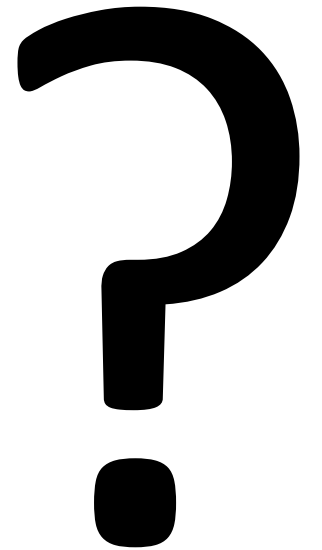


Public Preferences: Data for Decisions

- You learn **facts** you didn't know?
- You get some **ideas** you didn't have?
- You hear **questions** you hadn't asked?

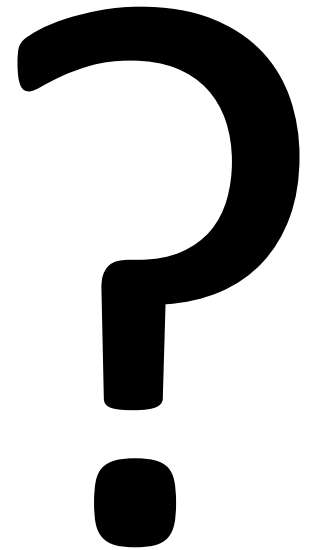
- You learn **what the community wants**?

- You build **trust** through interaction?
- You **look like you care**?



Interaction: Trust Building

- You learn **facts** you didn't know?
 - You get some **ideas** you didn't have?
 - You hear **questions** you hadn't asked?
 - You learn **what the community wants**?
- You build **trust** through interaction?
 - You **look like you care**?



Two Useful Types of Input Data

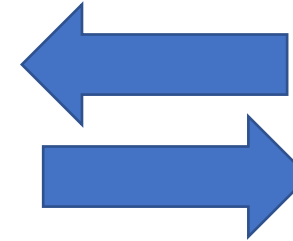
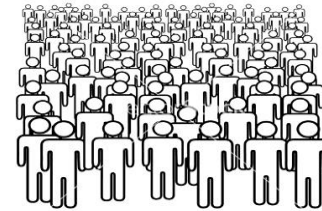
- “New facts/ideas/feedback” for decisions

- Tool => Engagement Input



- “Community preferences” for decisions

- Tool => Scientific Surveys



- “Interaction” to build trust

- Tool => Interactive Forums



WHICH INPUT FOR WHICH DECISIONS?

Two Ways to Move Rocks



A

Two Ways to Move Rocks



A



B

Working Harder vs Smarter

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

1 extra hour = ?

Working Harder vs Smarter

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

1 extra hour = 1 extra hour

Working Harder vs Smarter

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

1 extra hour = 1 extra hour

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”

1 extra hour = ?

Working Harder vs Smarter

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

1 extra hour = 1 extra hour

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”

1 extra hour = **Many hours/\$ saved**

Smarter Wins! (Duh)

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

✗ 1 extra hour = 1 extra hour

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”

✓ 1 extra hour = Many hours/\$ saved

Ex: \$4.8 million saves \$15 million

over 4 years (*Denver Peak Academy*)

But... What About “Working Wiser”?

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

How much you do

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”



How you do it

Wiser =



But... What About “Working Wiser”?

Harder = “*More time and effort*”

How much you do

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”



How you do it

Wiser = “*Better knowledge/judgment*”



What you do

Work Smarter vs Wiser

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”

Ex: \$4.8 million saves \$15 million (3x)

over 4 years (*Denver Peak Academy*)

Work Smarter vs Wiser

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”

Ex: \$4.8 million saves \$15 million (3x)

over 4 years (*Denver Peak Academy*)

Wiser = “*Better knowledge/judgment*”

Ex: \$5 thousand saves \$7 million (1000x)

by changing one decision (*Survey Data*)

Work Smarter vs Wiser

Smarter = “*Better processes/tools*”



Ex: \$4.8 million saves \$15 million (3x)

over 4 years (*Denver Peak Academy*)

Wiser = “*Better knowledge/judgment*”



Ex: \$5 thousand saves \$7 million (1000x)

by changing one decision (*Survey Data*)

But How Do You Get Wiser?



Better Input Data for Better Decisions



“What To Do” Matters Most



“What To Do” Requires Input



Summary: How Input Data Helps Your Decisions

“Work Smarter” = **How** to do



Summary: How Input Data Helps Your Decisions

“Work Smarter” = **How** to do



“Work Wiser” = **What** to do



Summary: How Helpful Is Input Data?

“Smarter” = **2x to 10x+ Returns**



“Wiser” = **100x to 1000x+ Returns**



And... Decisions Without User Input



THREE DATA CHALLENGES TO KEEP IN MIND

#1: We're Not Natural Statisticians

5 out of 4 Americans Do Not Understand Statistics

**Science-Based
Medicine**

#2: We're Misled by What We See

*“Well, who ya gonna believe,
me or your own eyes?”*



-Chico Marx

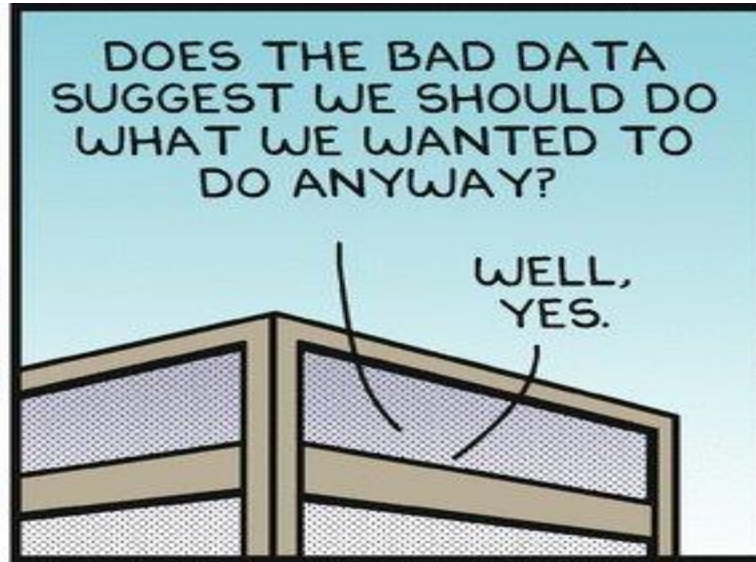
#3: What We See Is...???!!!



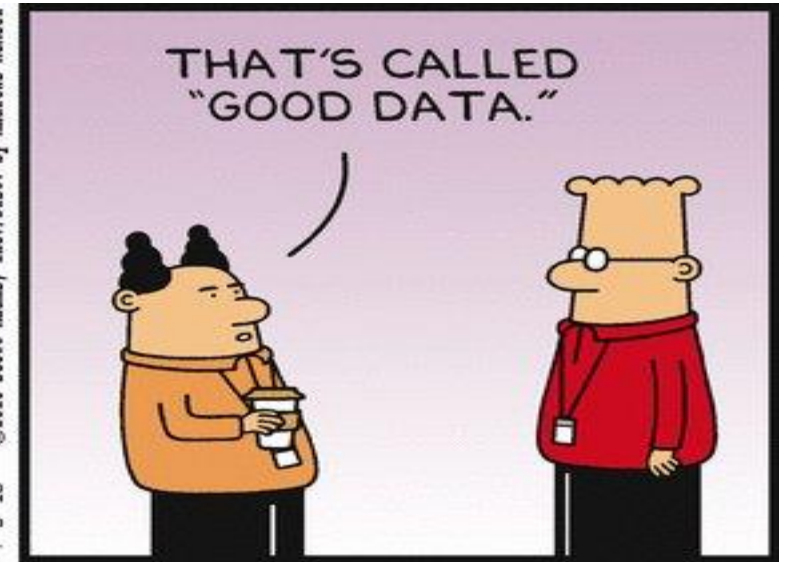
So... Hard to Know “Good Data” from “Bad Data”



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PART 1: SOME SCIENCE OF PUBLIC INPUT

INPUT AND GOVERNMENT DECISIONS

Etymology of The Word “Input”

“input” (n.)

- 1753 "a sum of cash put in, a sharing contribution"

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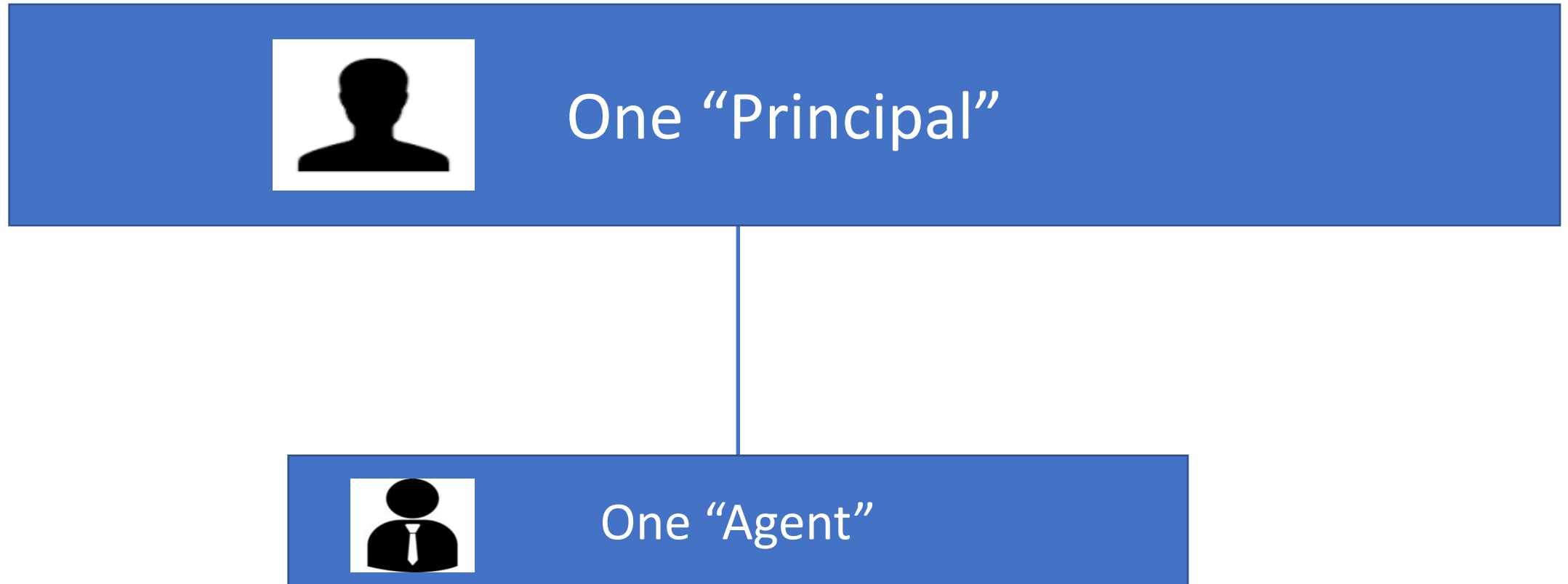
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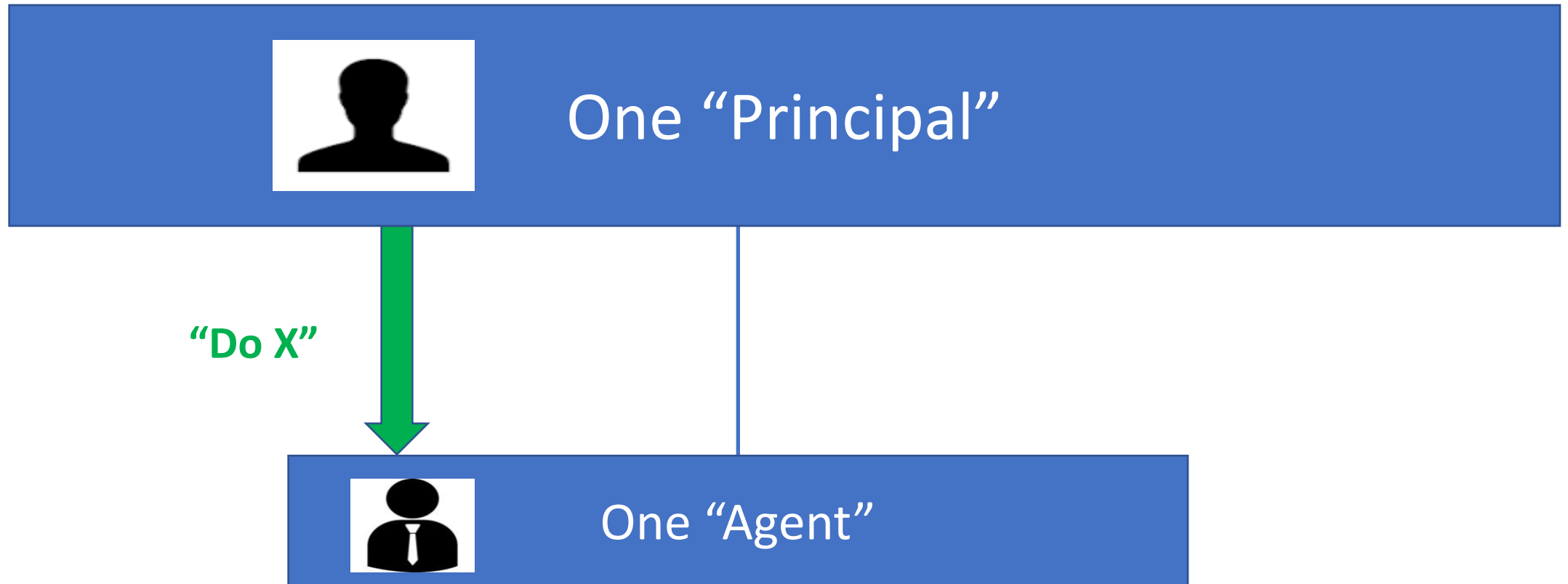
- 1753 "a sum of cash put in, a sharing contribution"
- 1902 "energy supplied to a device or machine"
- 1948 "data fed into a machine"

THE GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS MACHINE

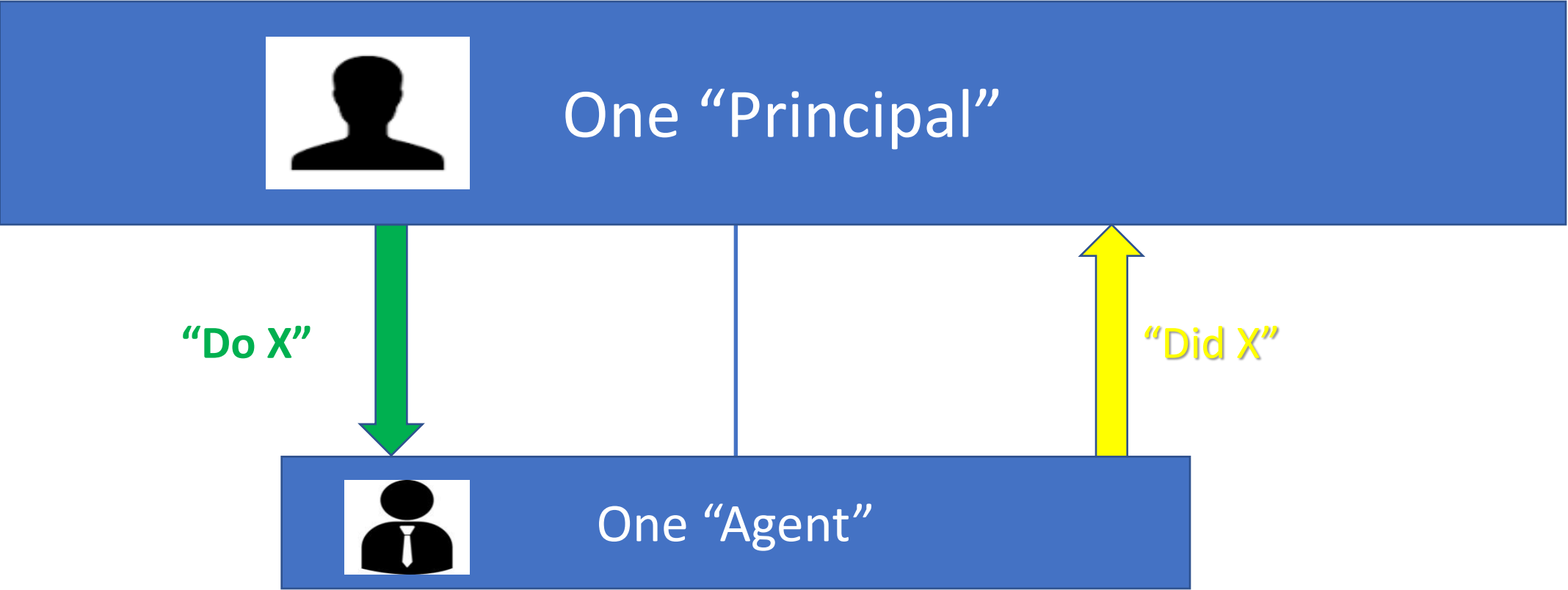
Basic Fiduciary Organizational Chart



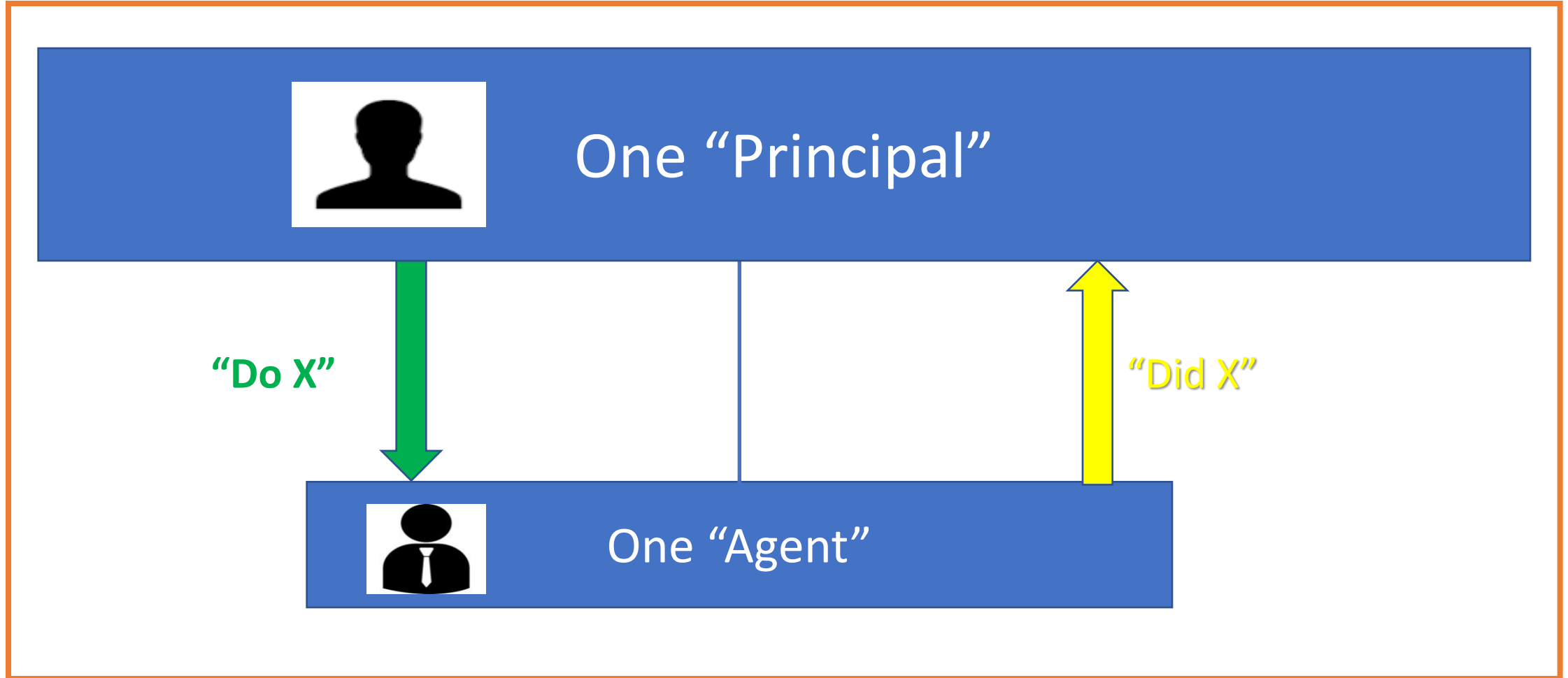
Give Instructions



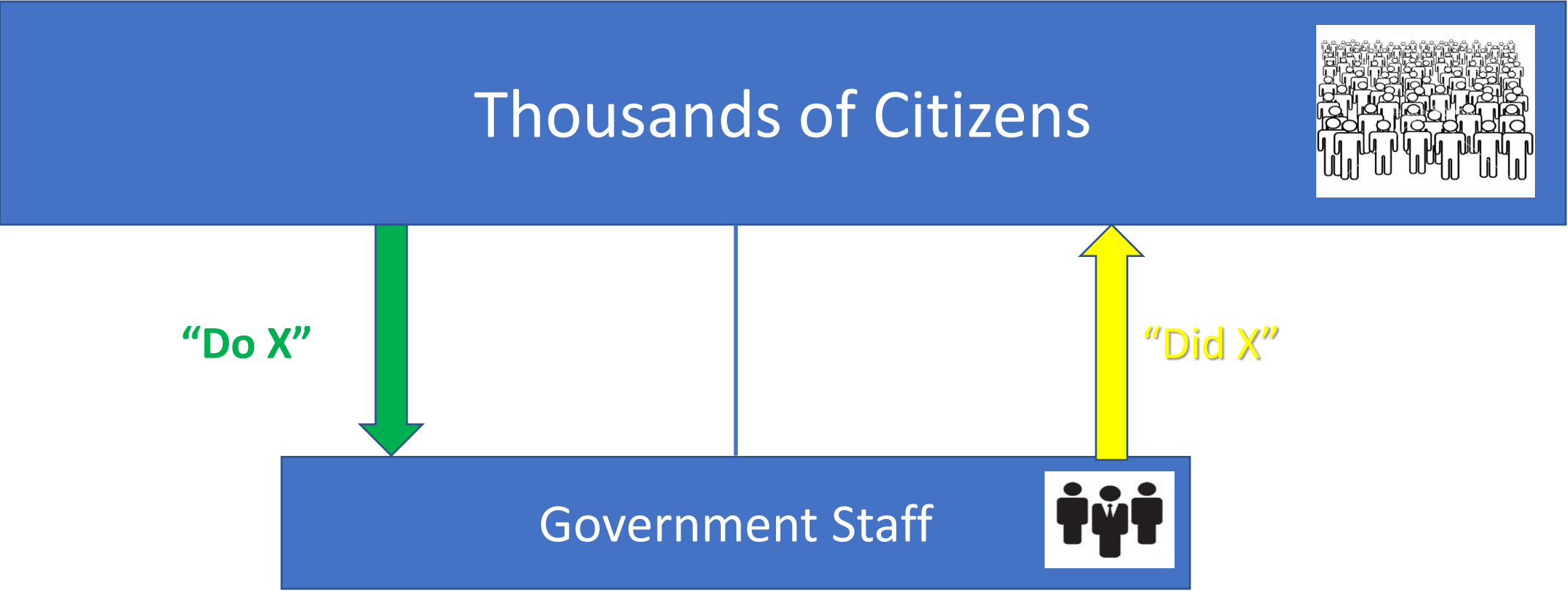
Get Reports



Complete Communication Loop



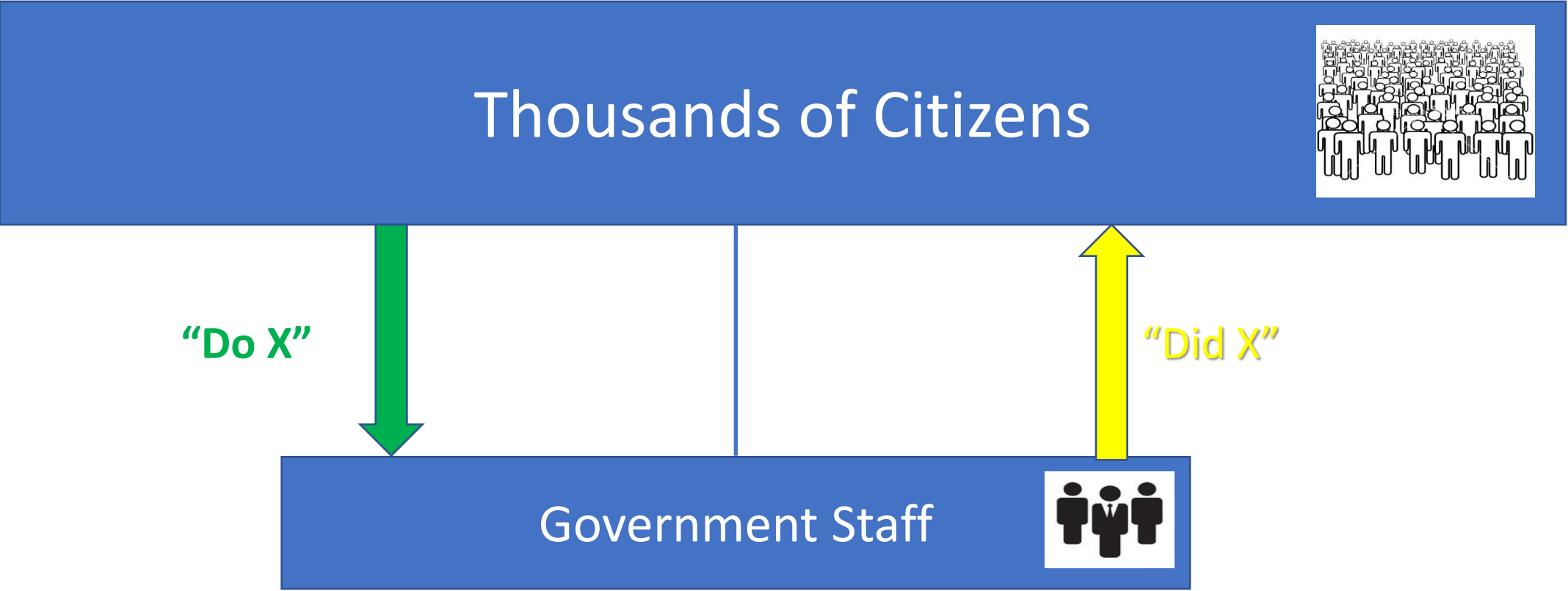
Government Organizational Chart



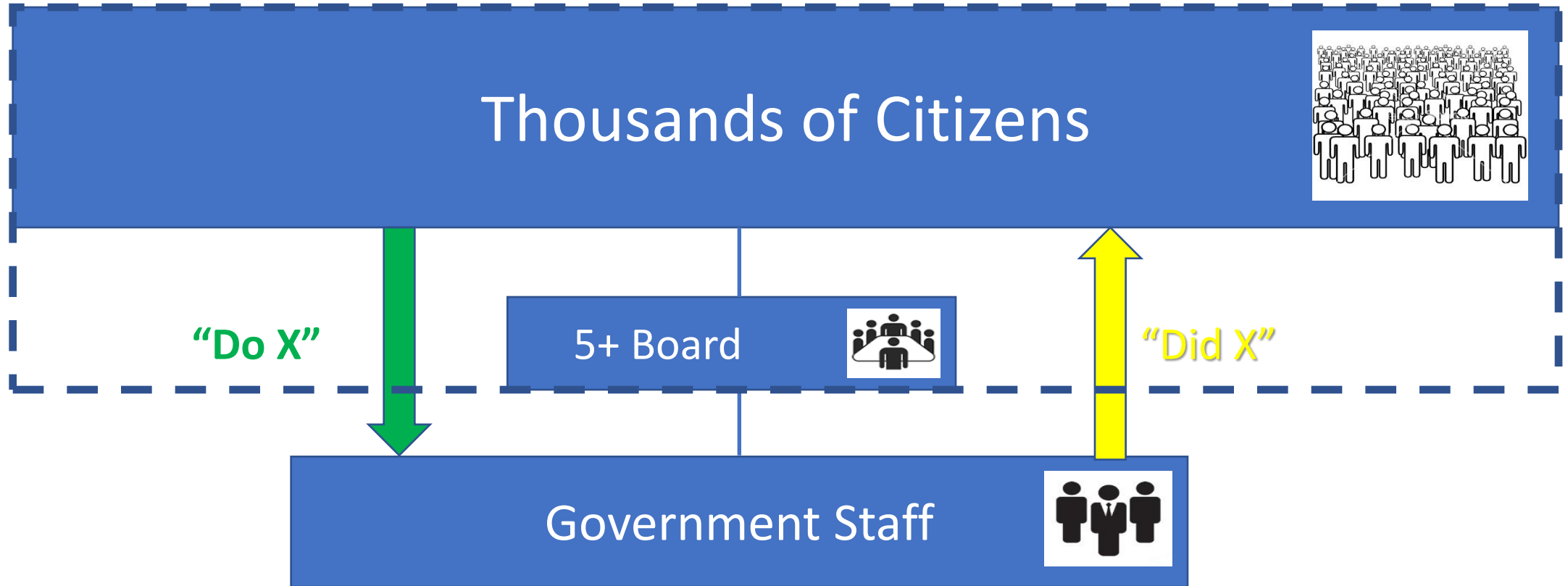
See Any Problems Yet?



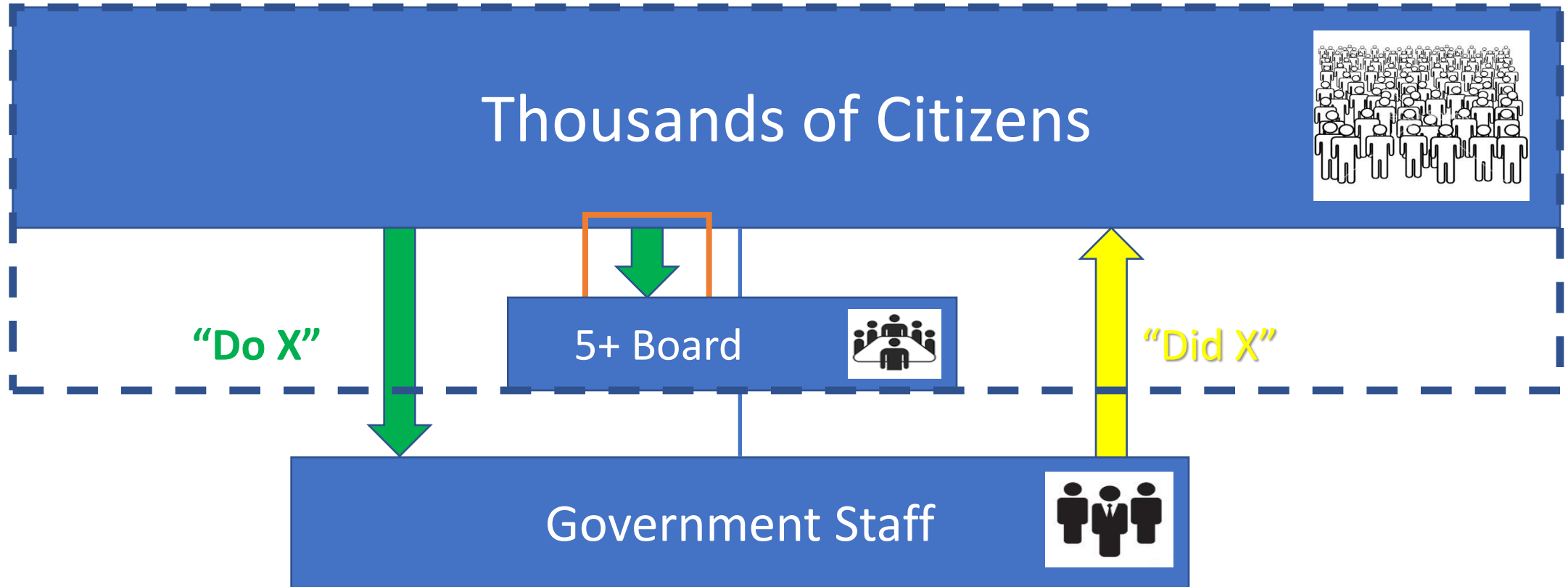
Government Organizational Chart



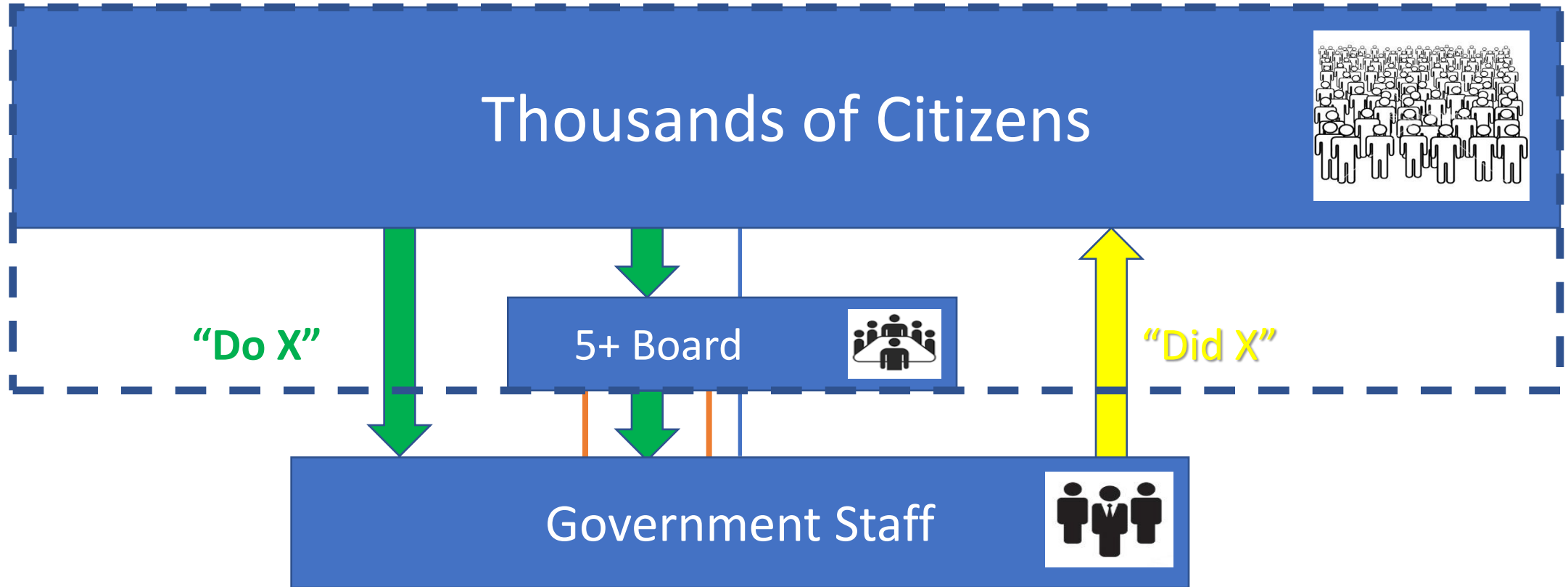
Expanded Organizational Chart



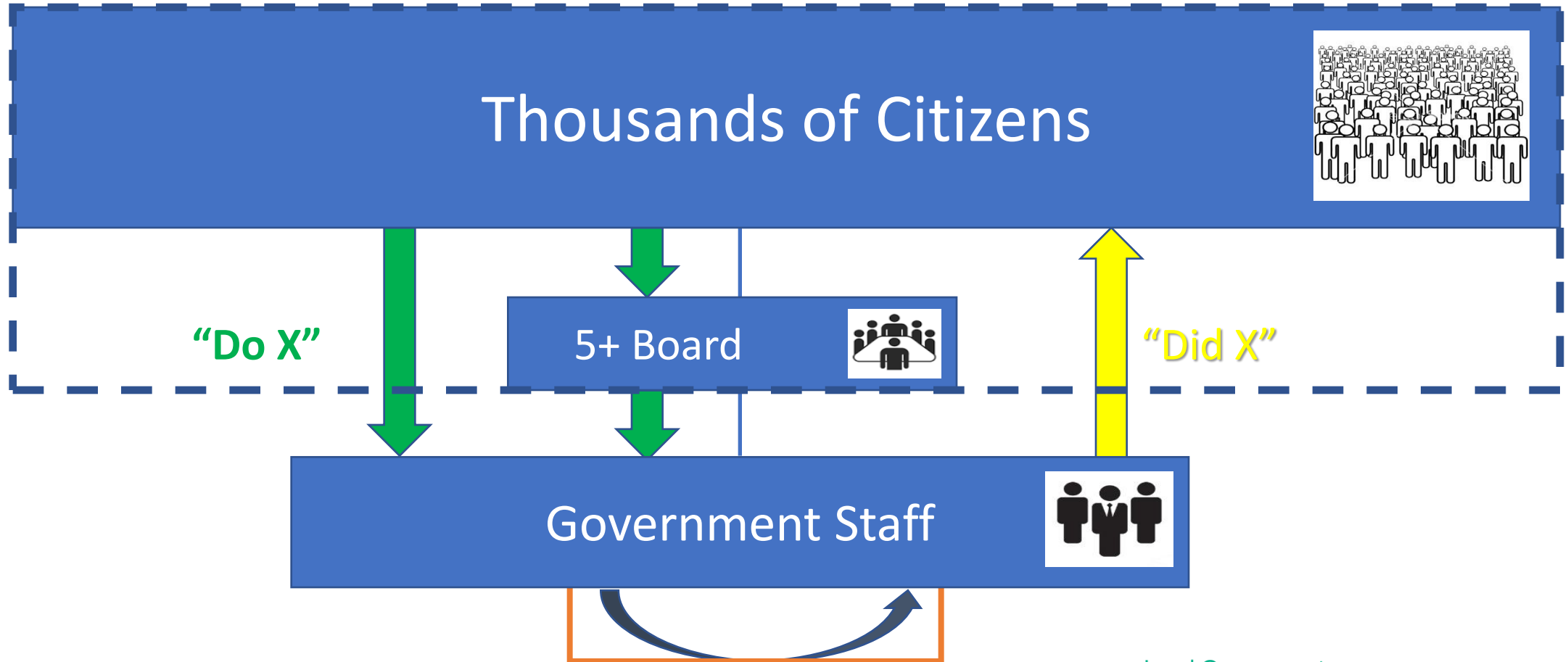
Expanded Communications



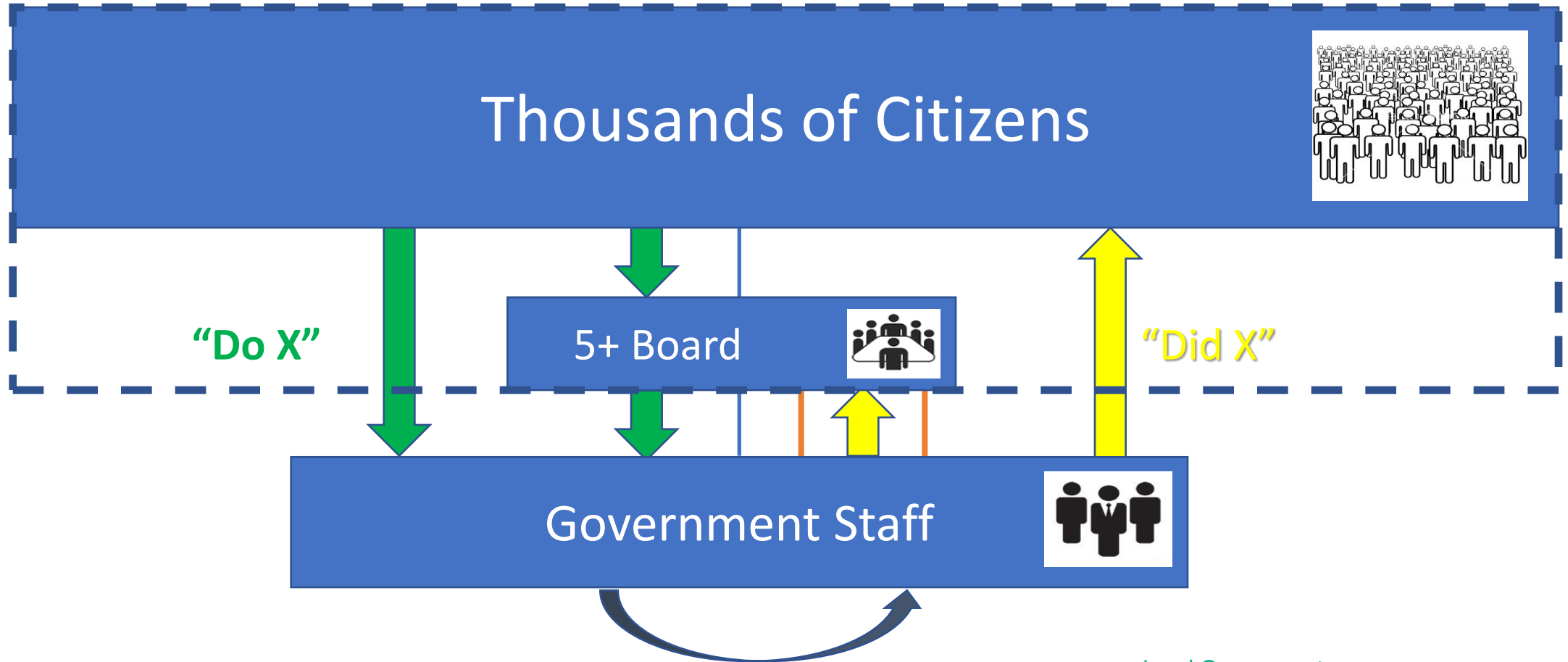
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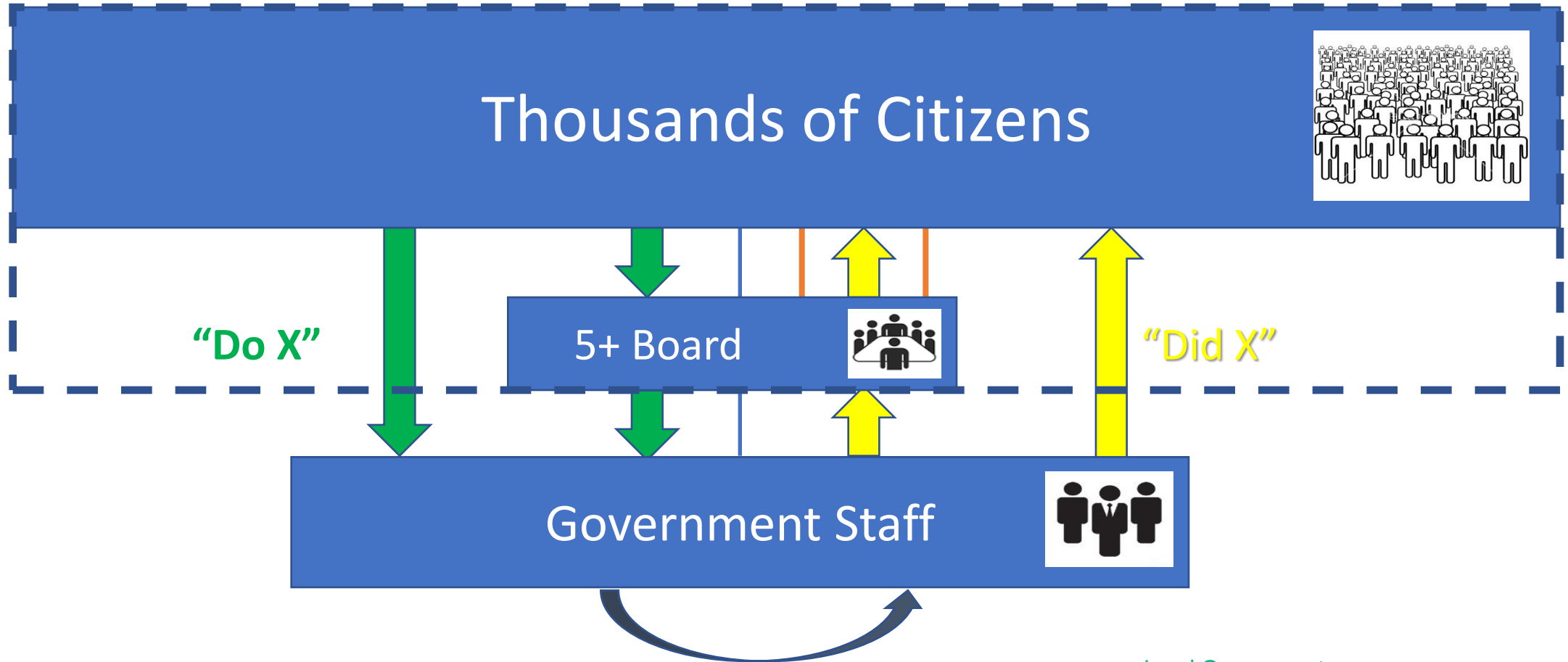
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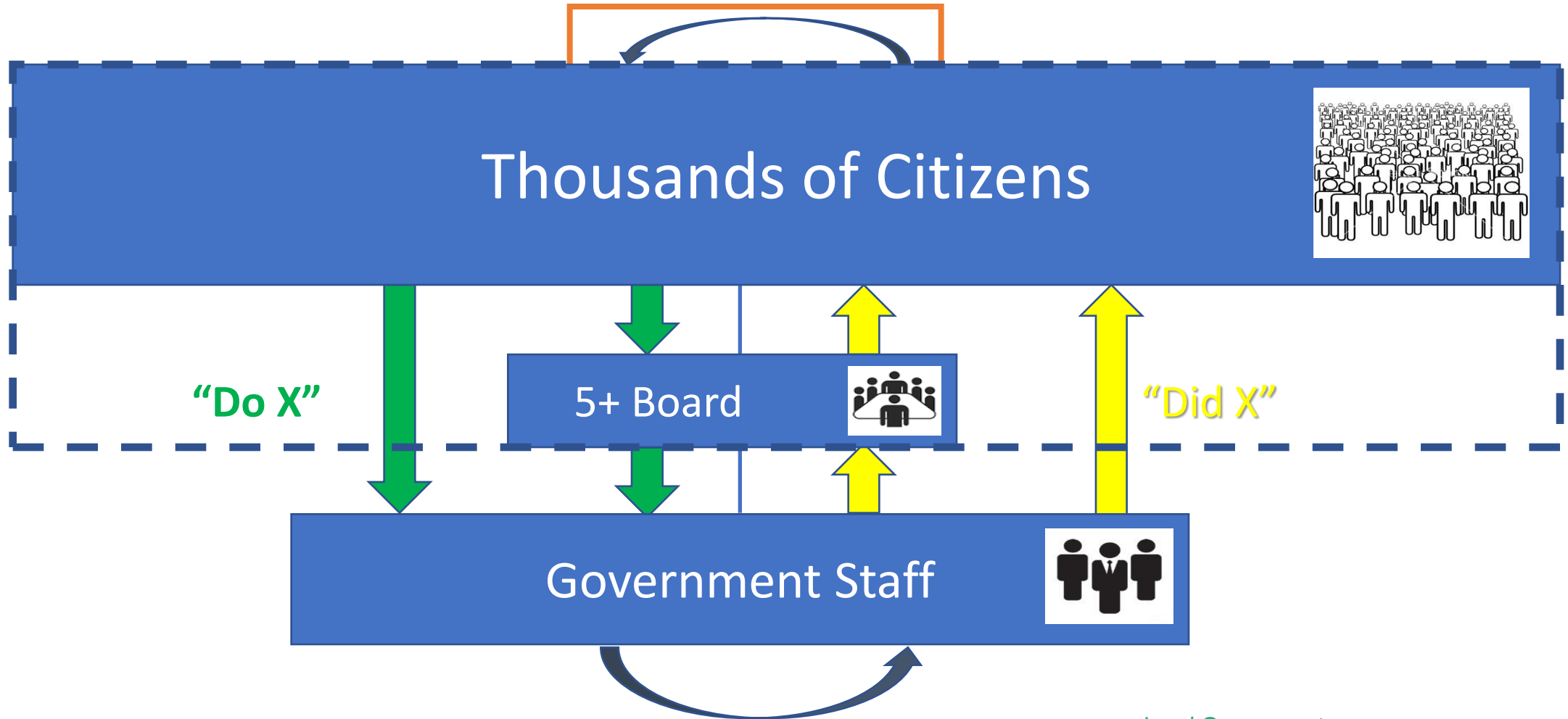
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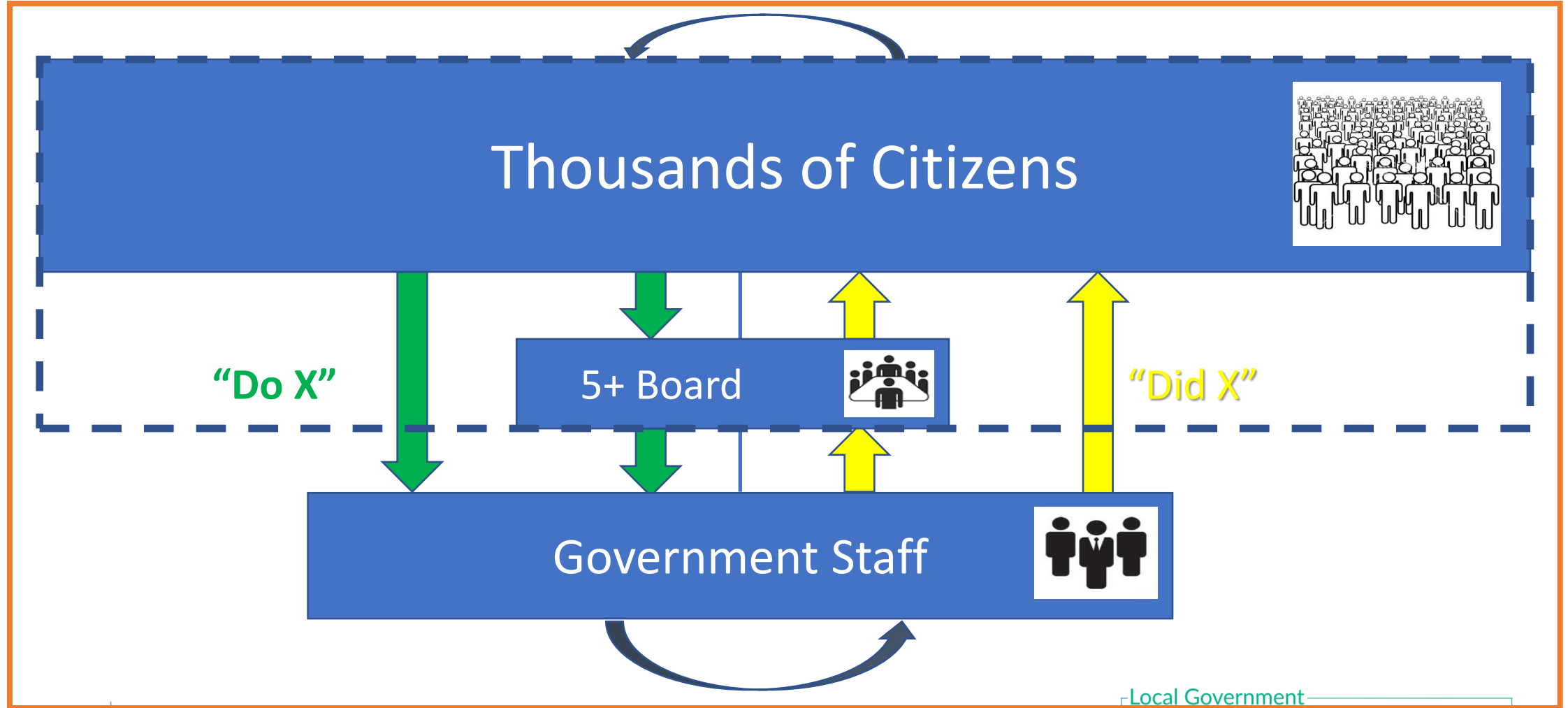
Expanded Communications



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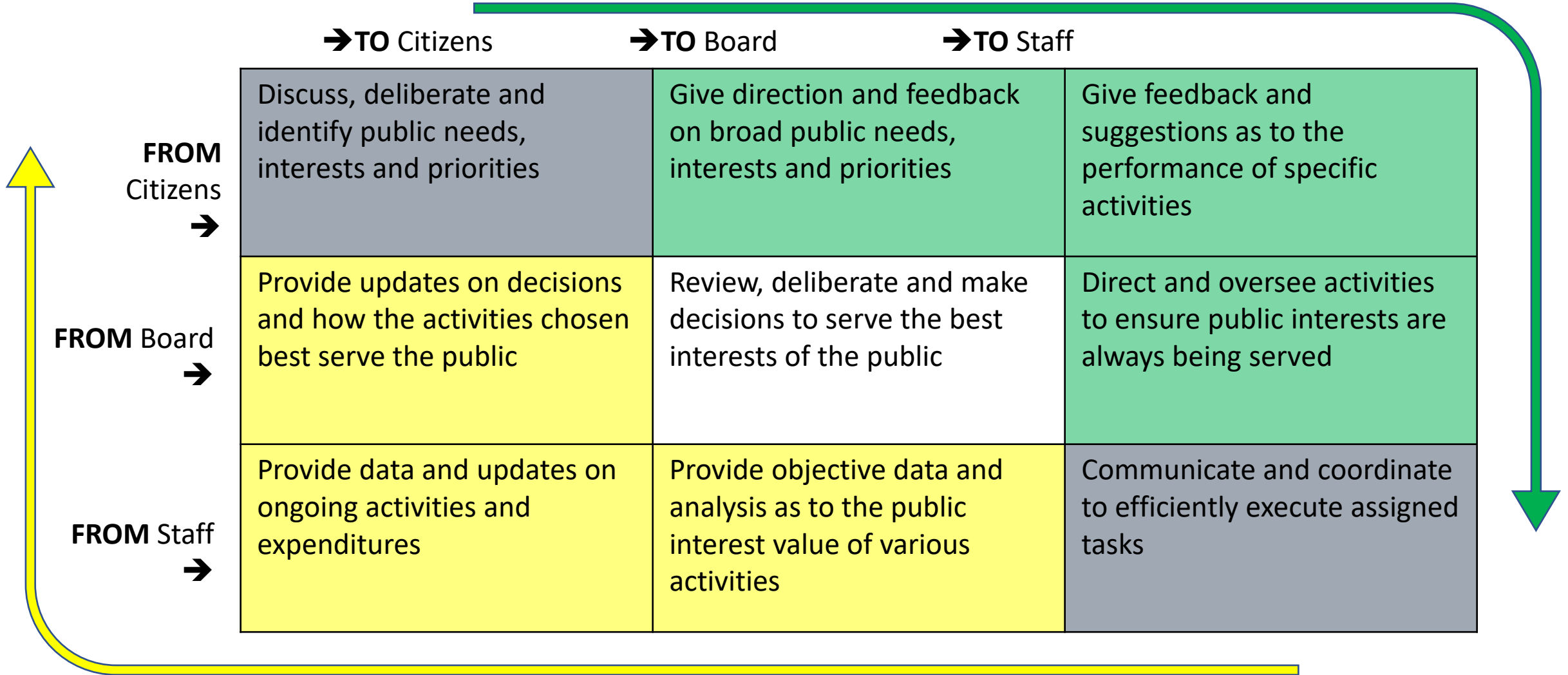


Full Communications Loop

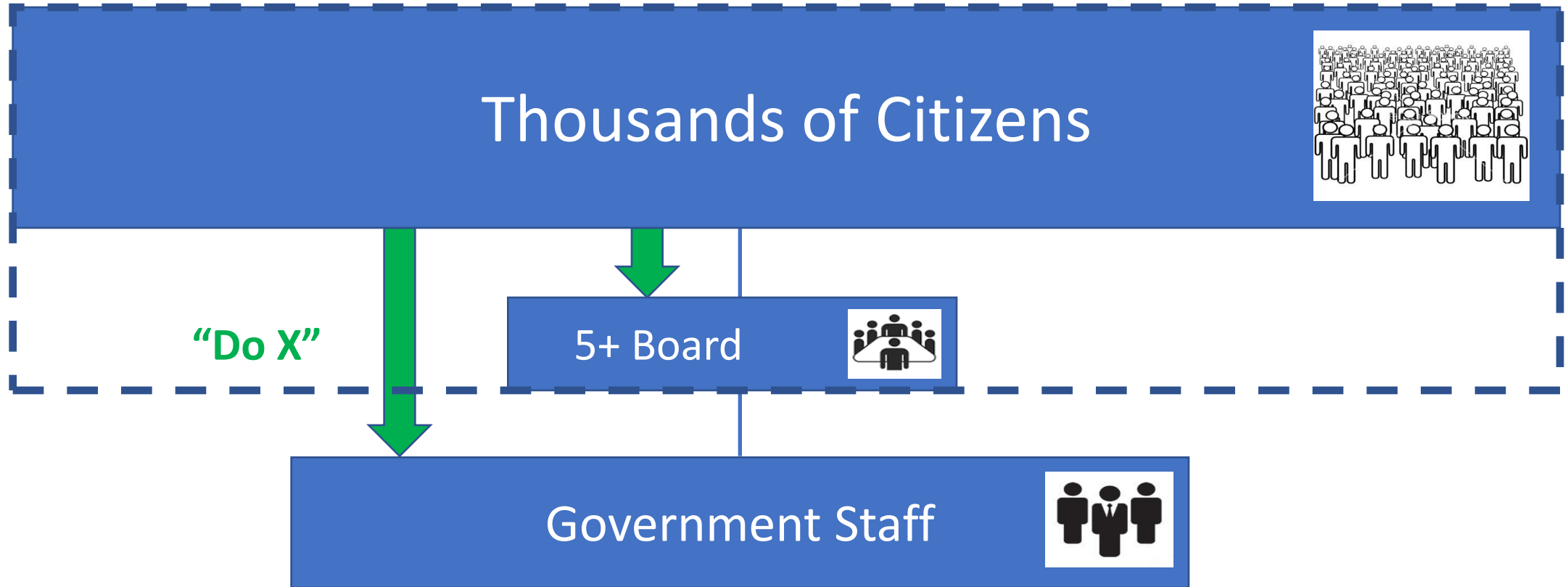


FUNCTIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNICATIONS

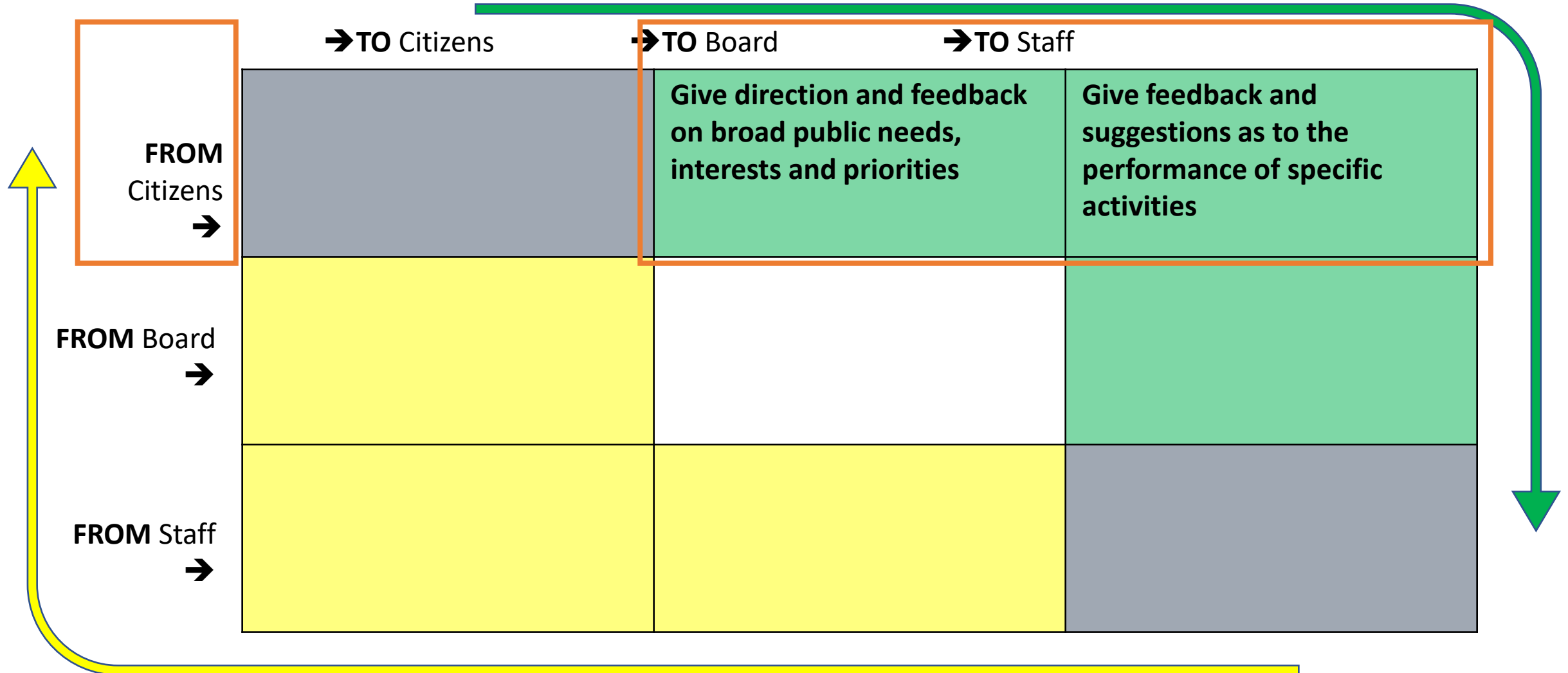
Core Communications Purposes (All)



Core Communications Purposes (“Input”)



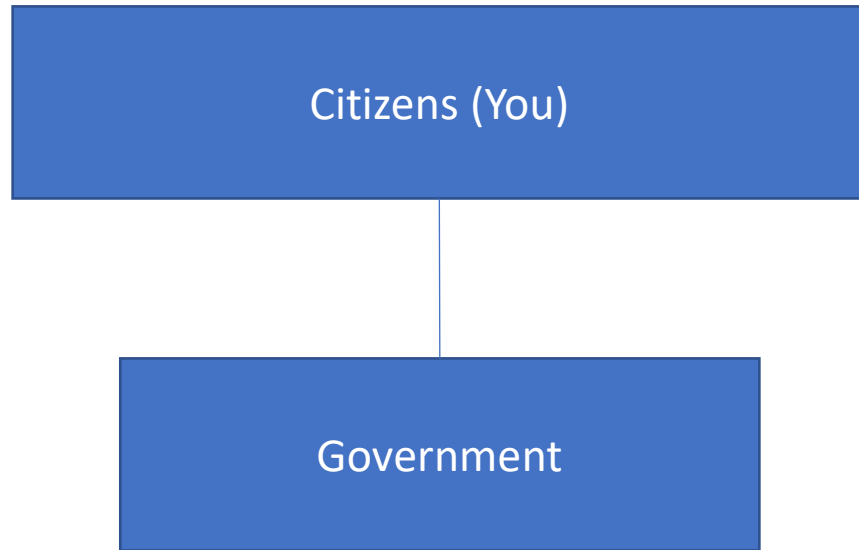
Core Communications Purposes (“Input”)



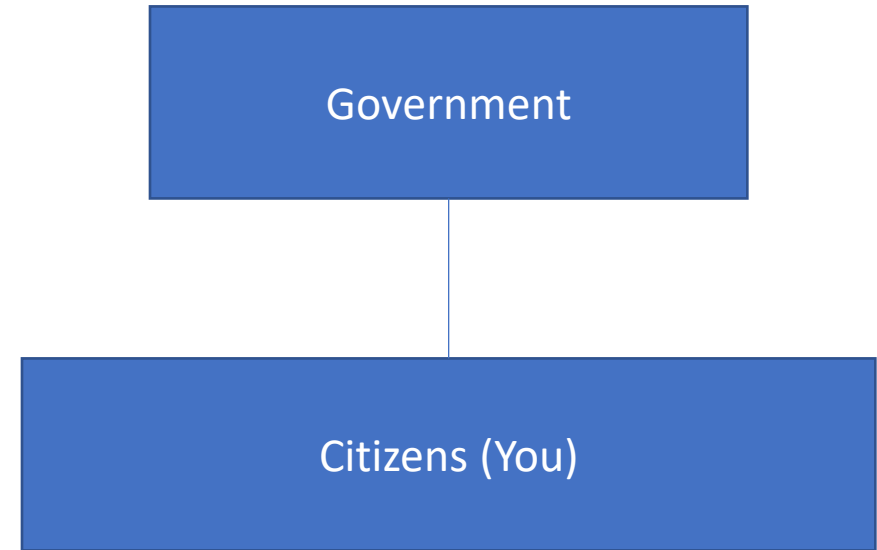
WHY DO WE NEED GOOD INPUT DATA? RESIDENT PERSPECTIVE

Government Basics

Which org chart would you rather be in?



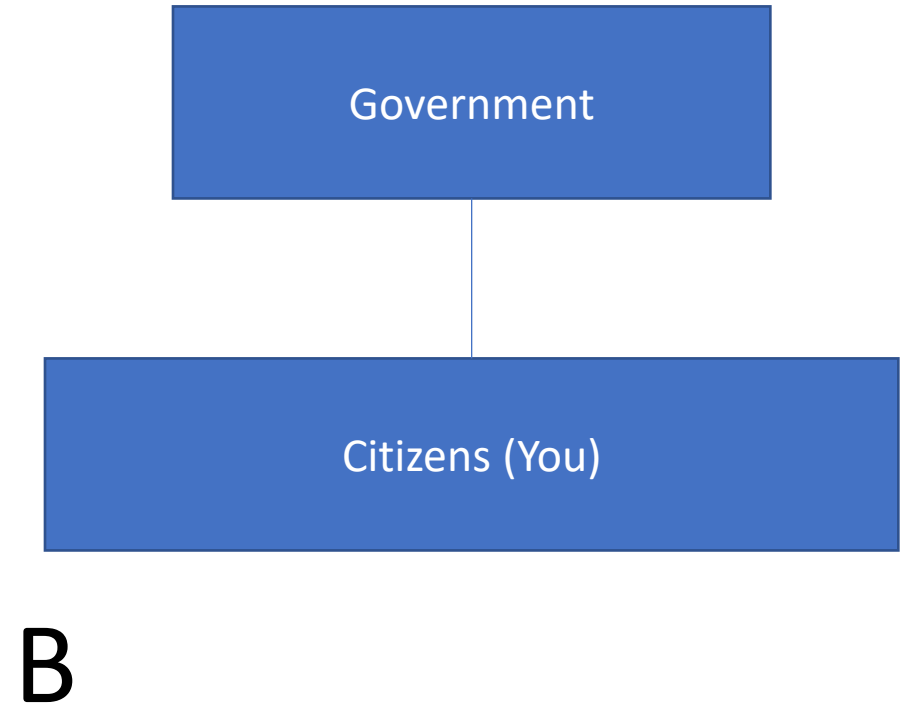
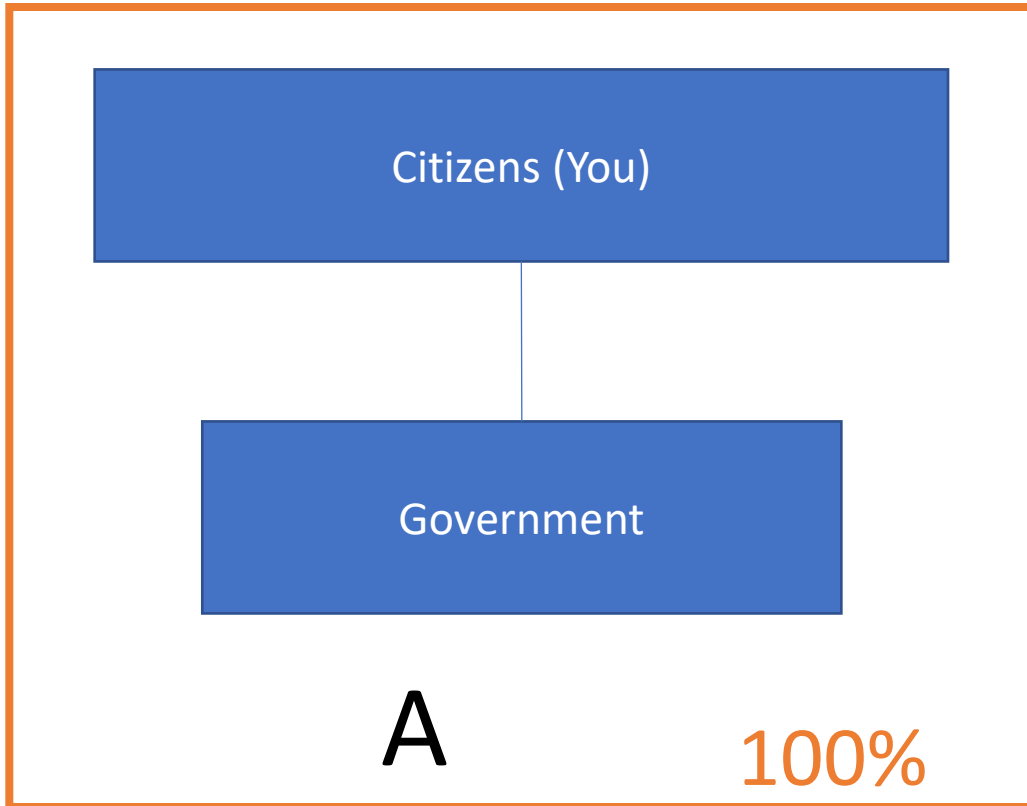
A



B

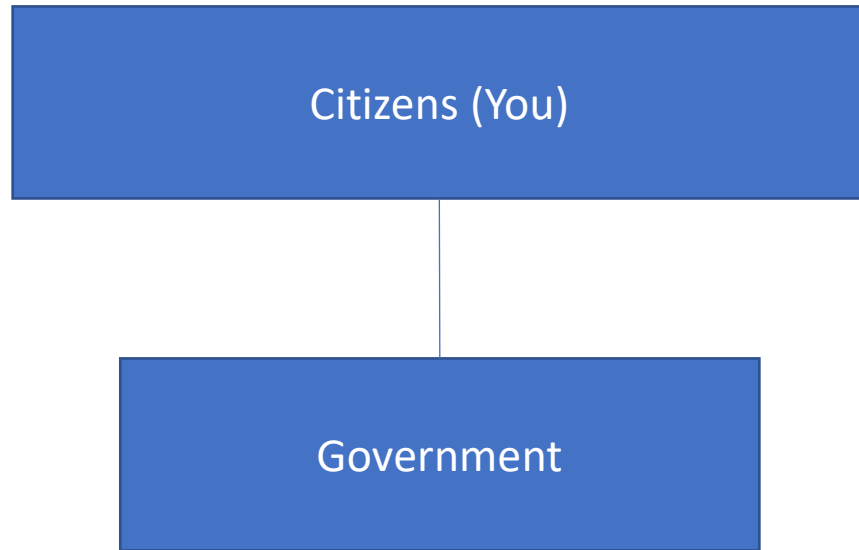
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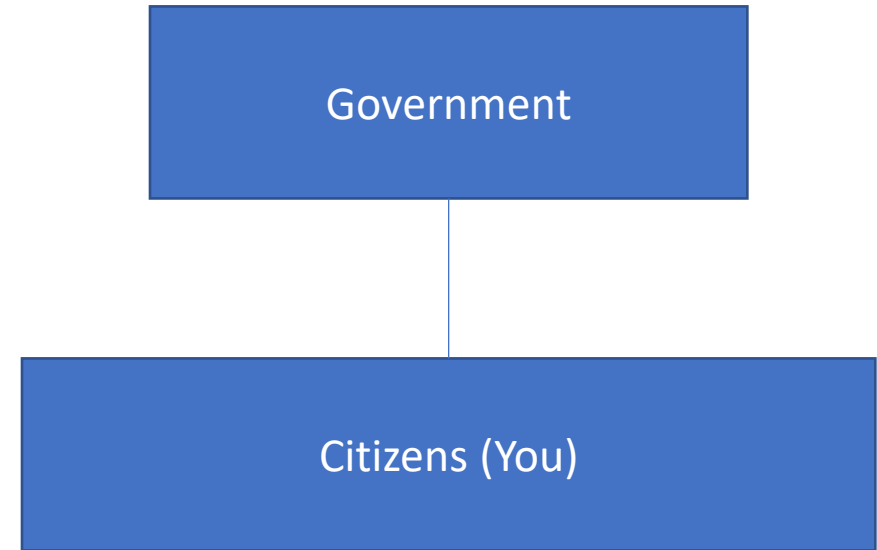


Government Basics

Which org chart is “Democracy”?



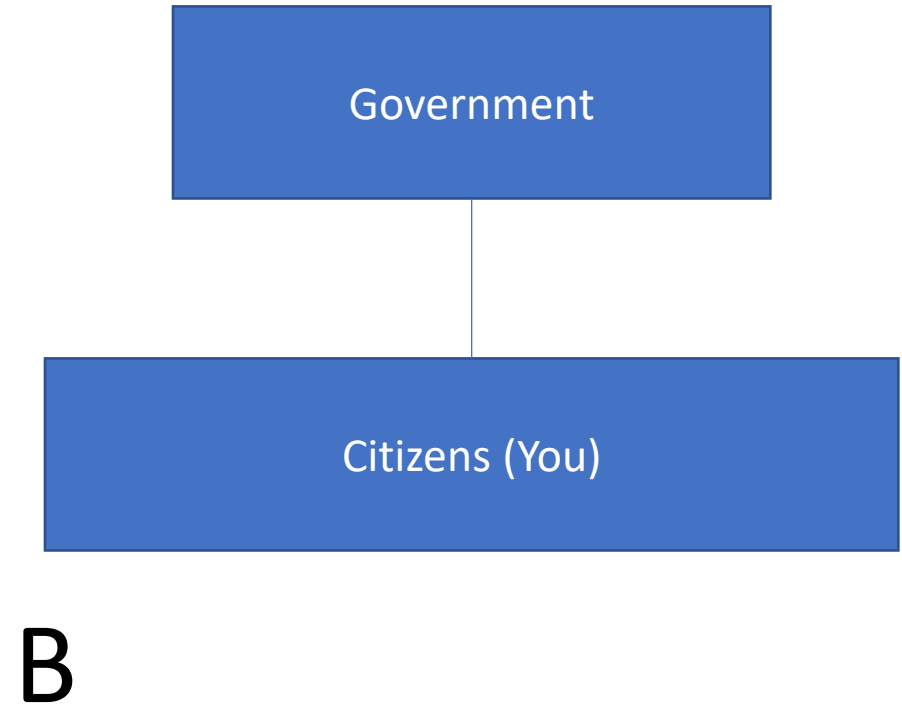
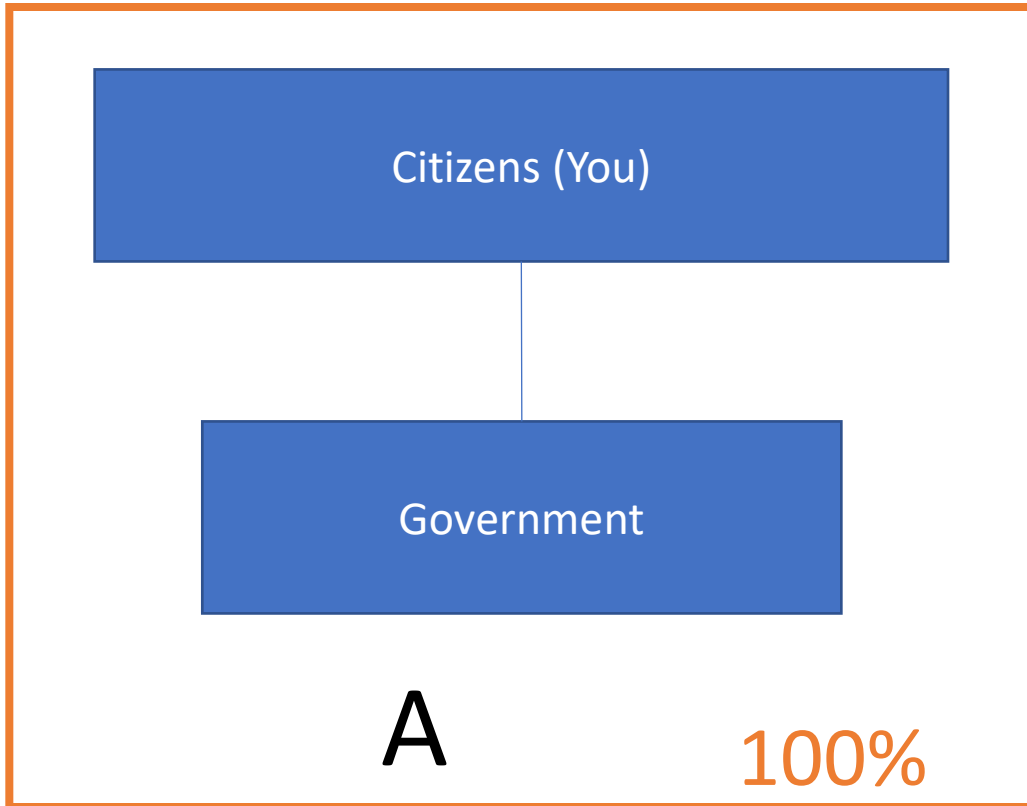
A



B

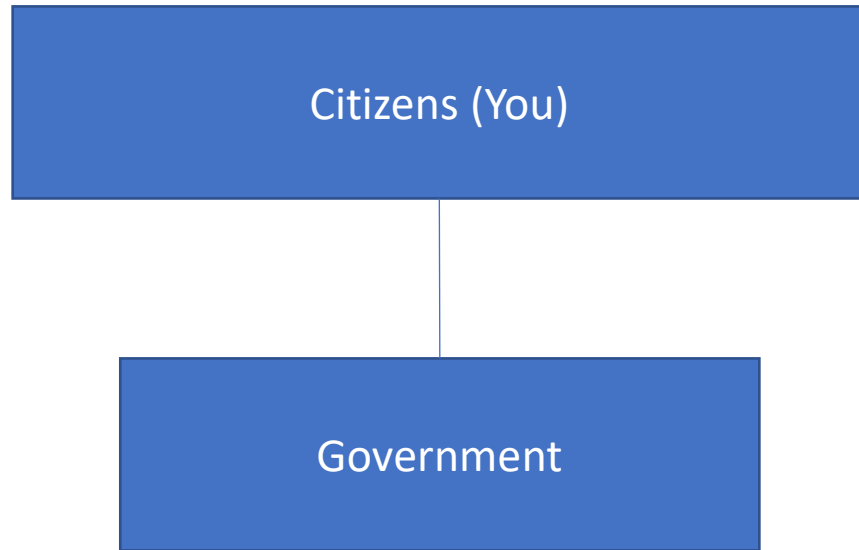
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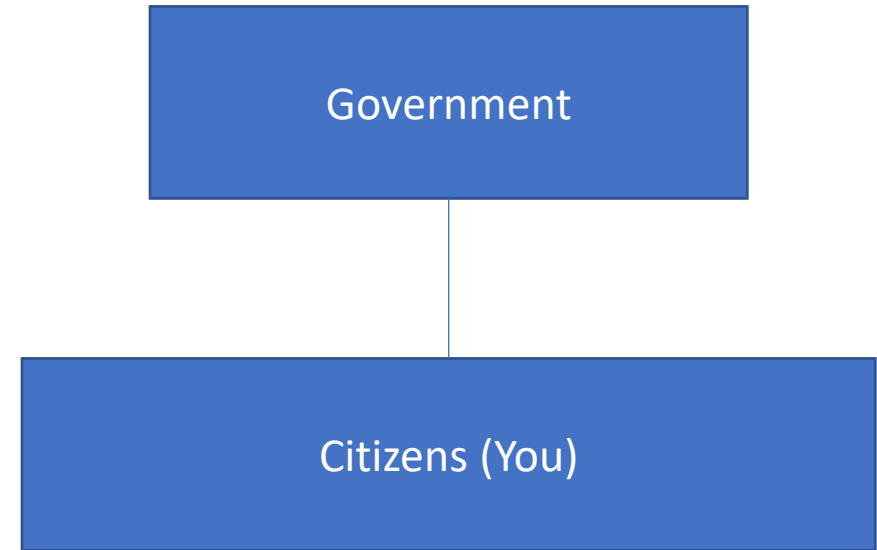


Government Basics

Which org chart feels most like reality?



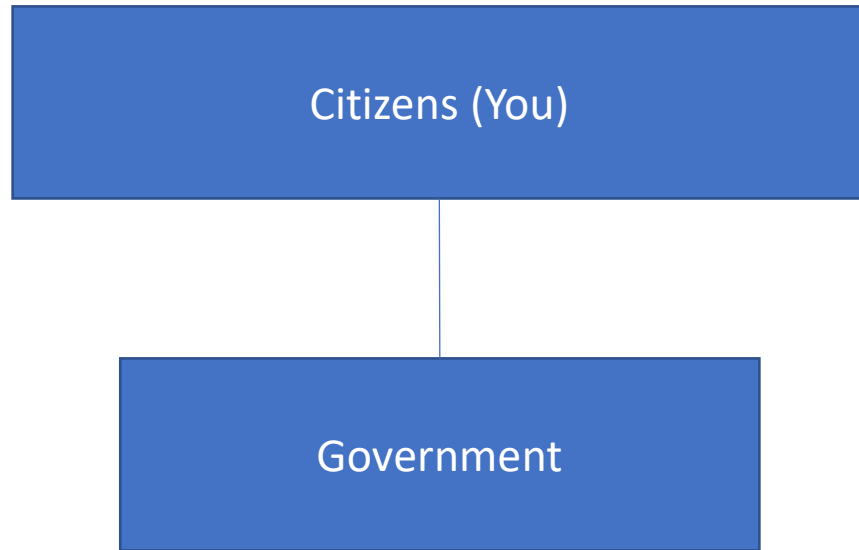
A



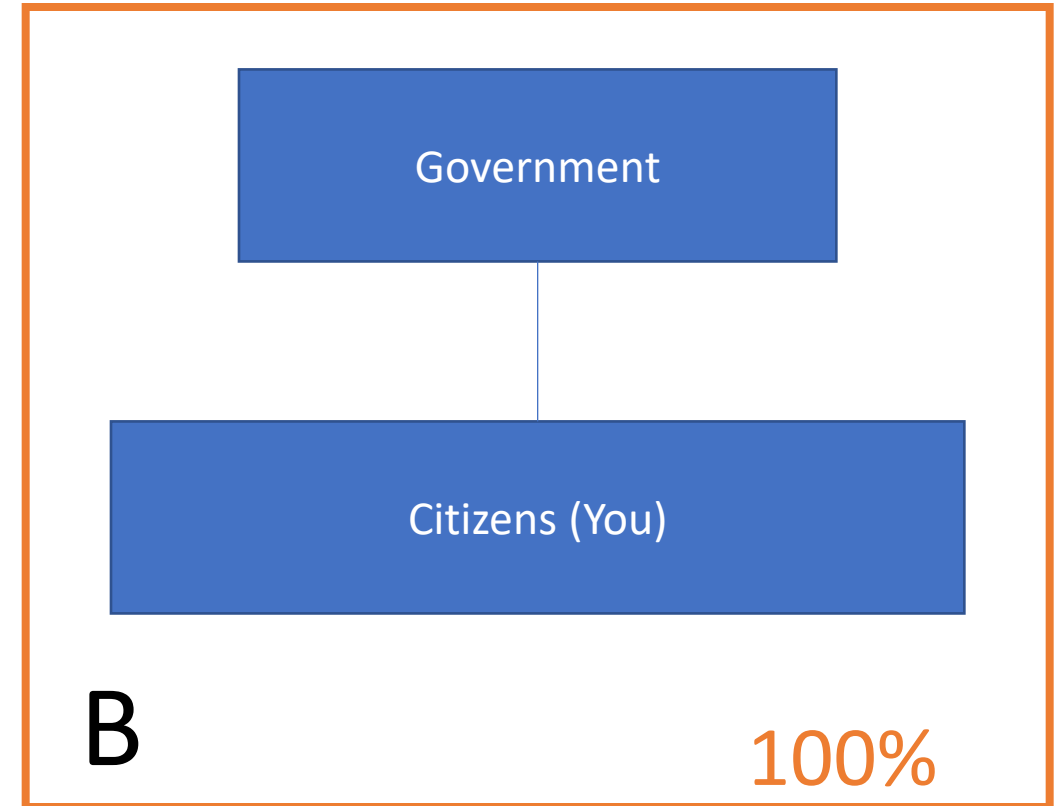
B

Government Basics

Which org chart feels most like reality?



A

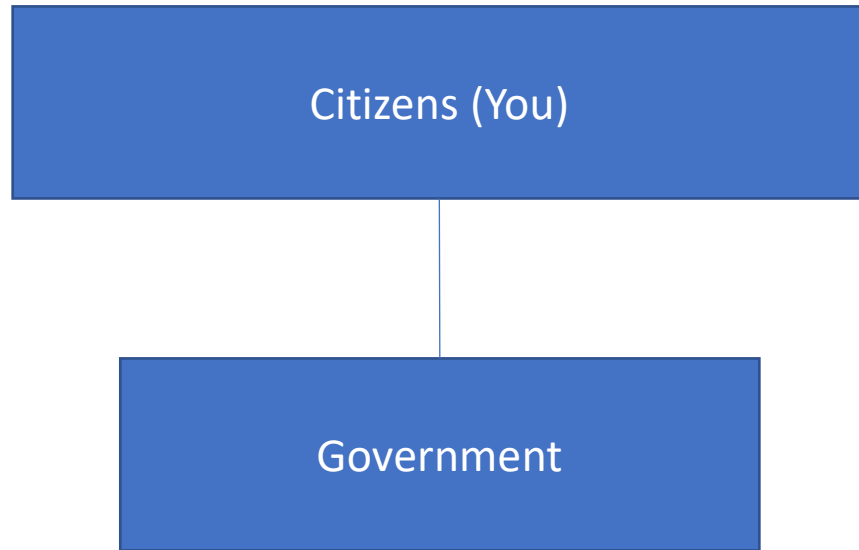


B

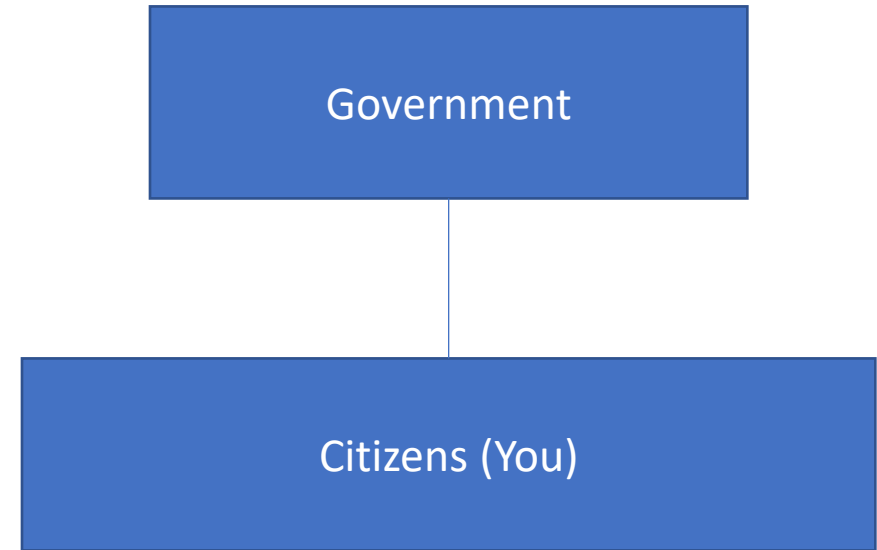
100%

Government Basics

Which org chart is established by law?



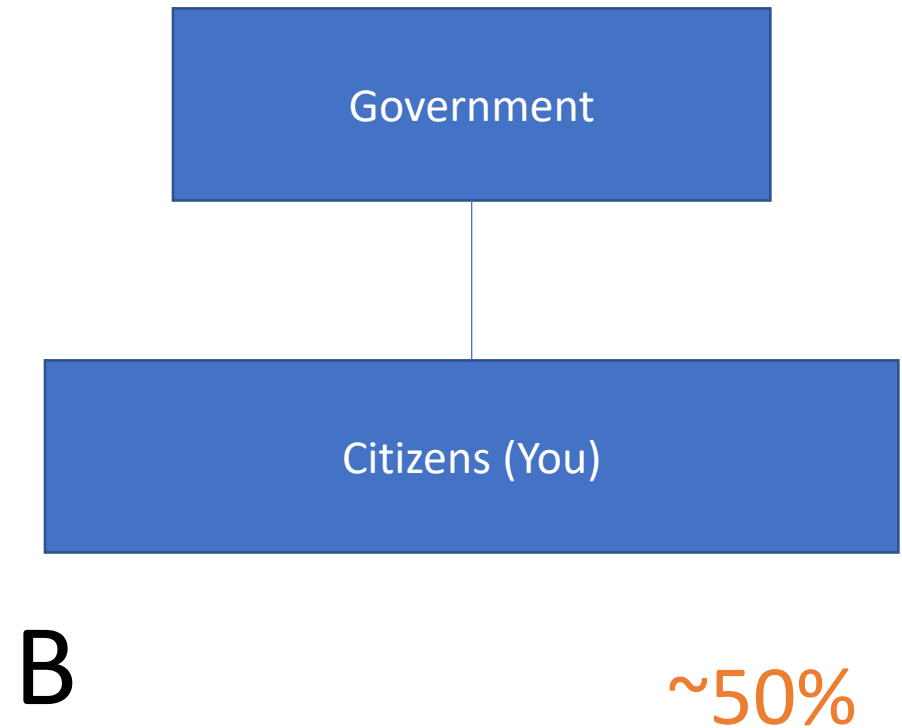
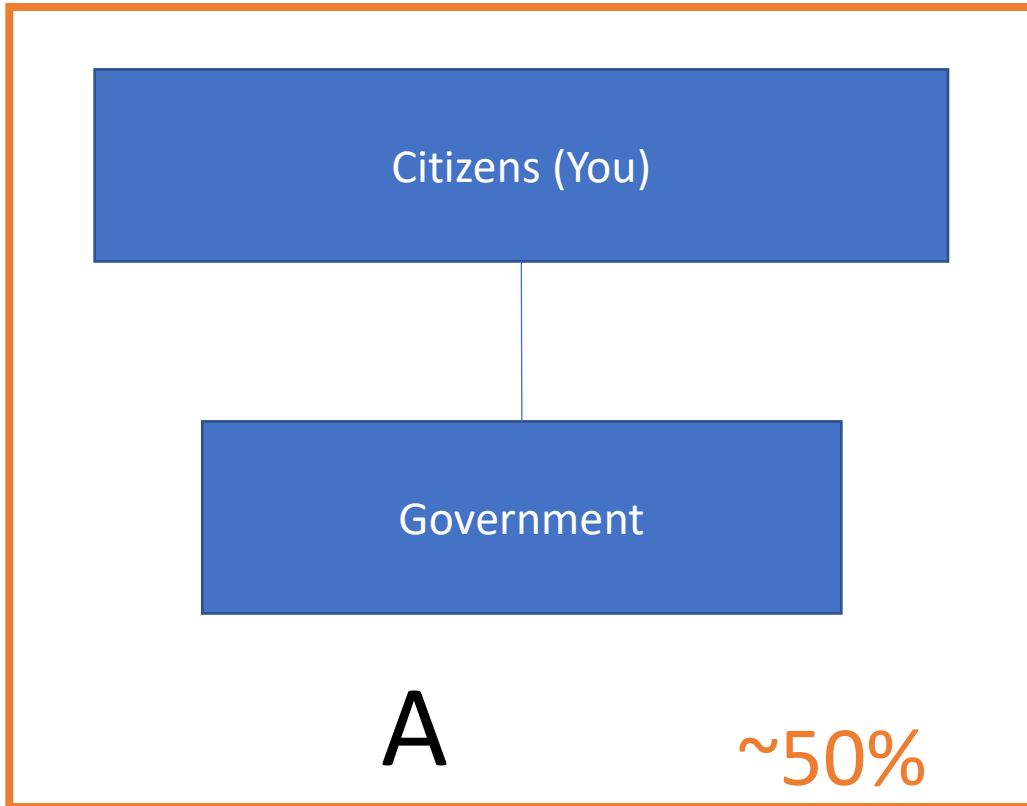
A



B

Government Basics

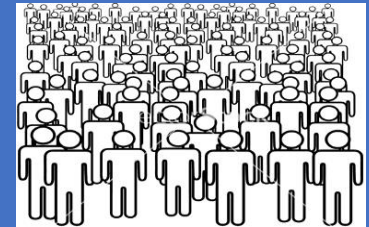
Which org chart is established by law?



What Everyone Wants

We all want “A” to be reality...

Citizens (Public Masters)



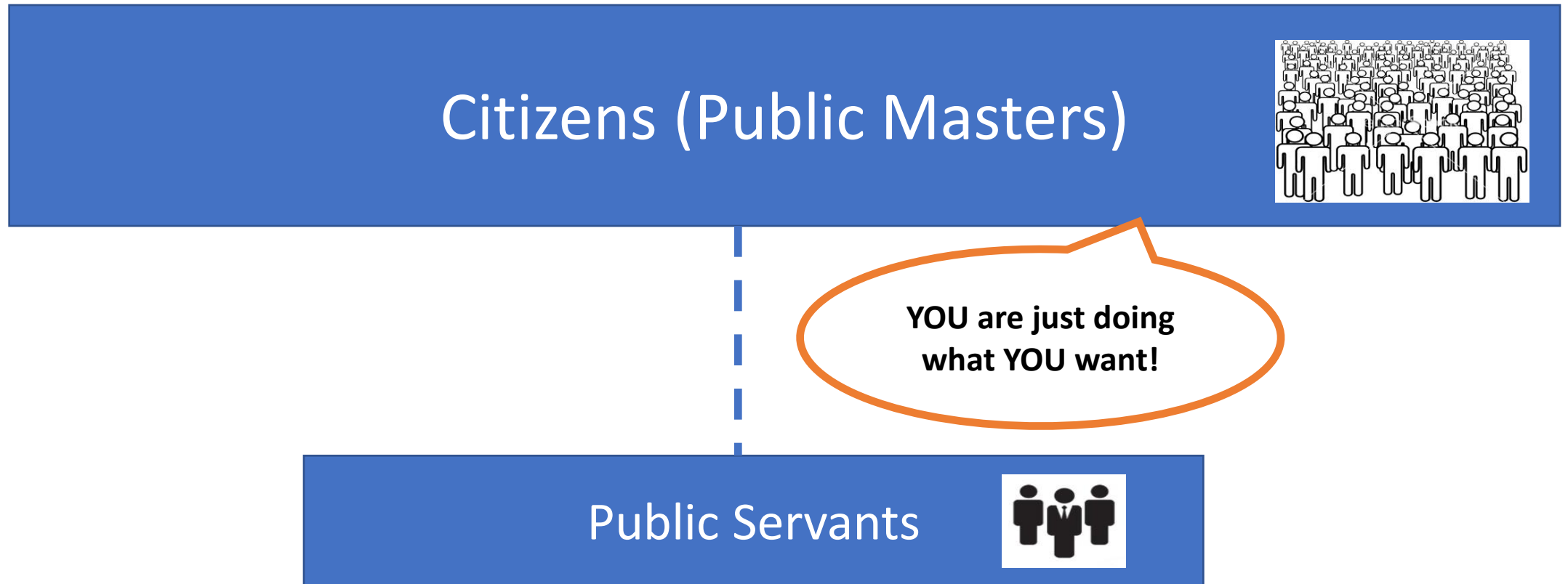
WE'LL do what Y'ALL
want

Public Servants



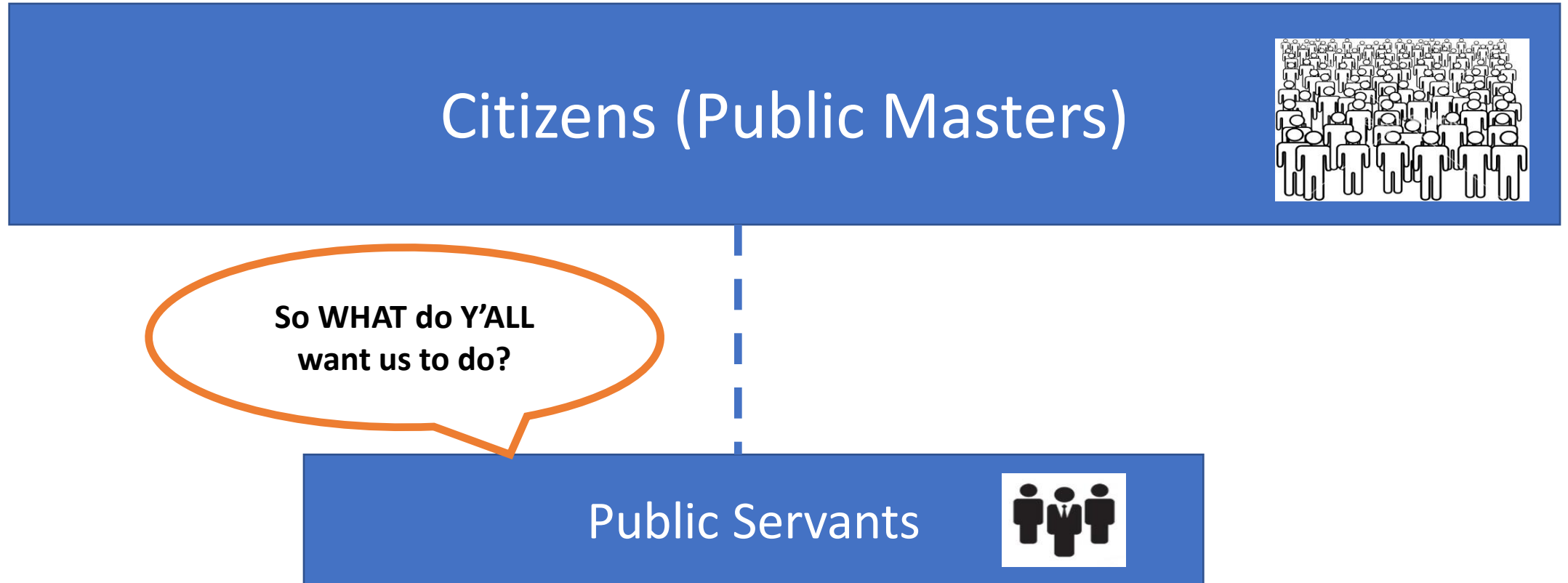
What Everyone Gets

Unrepresentative input (or none) leads to perception of “B”



What Everyone Needs

Good “representative” input can solve the problem



Been Influenced By The Noisy Few?

- What percent of local governments have had decisions influenced by a few noisy people?

Been Influenced By The Noisy Few?

- What percent of local governments have had decisions influenced by a few noisy people?

97%

Been Influenced By The Noisy Few?

- What percent of local governments have had decisions influenced by a few noisy people?

97%

- What percent of local government decisions *should be* influenced by a few noisy people?

Been Influenced By The Noisy Few?

- What percent of local governments have had decisions influenced by a few noisy people?

97%

- What percent of local government decisions *should be* influenced by a few noisy people?

0%

One Interesting Citizen Perspective

American People Hire High-Powered Lobbyist To Push Interests In Congress

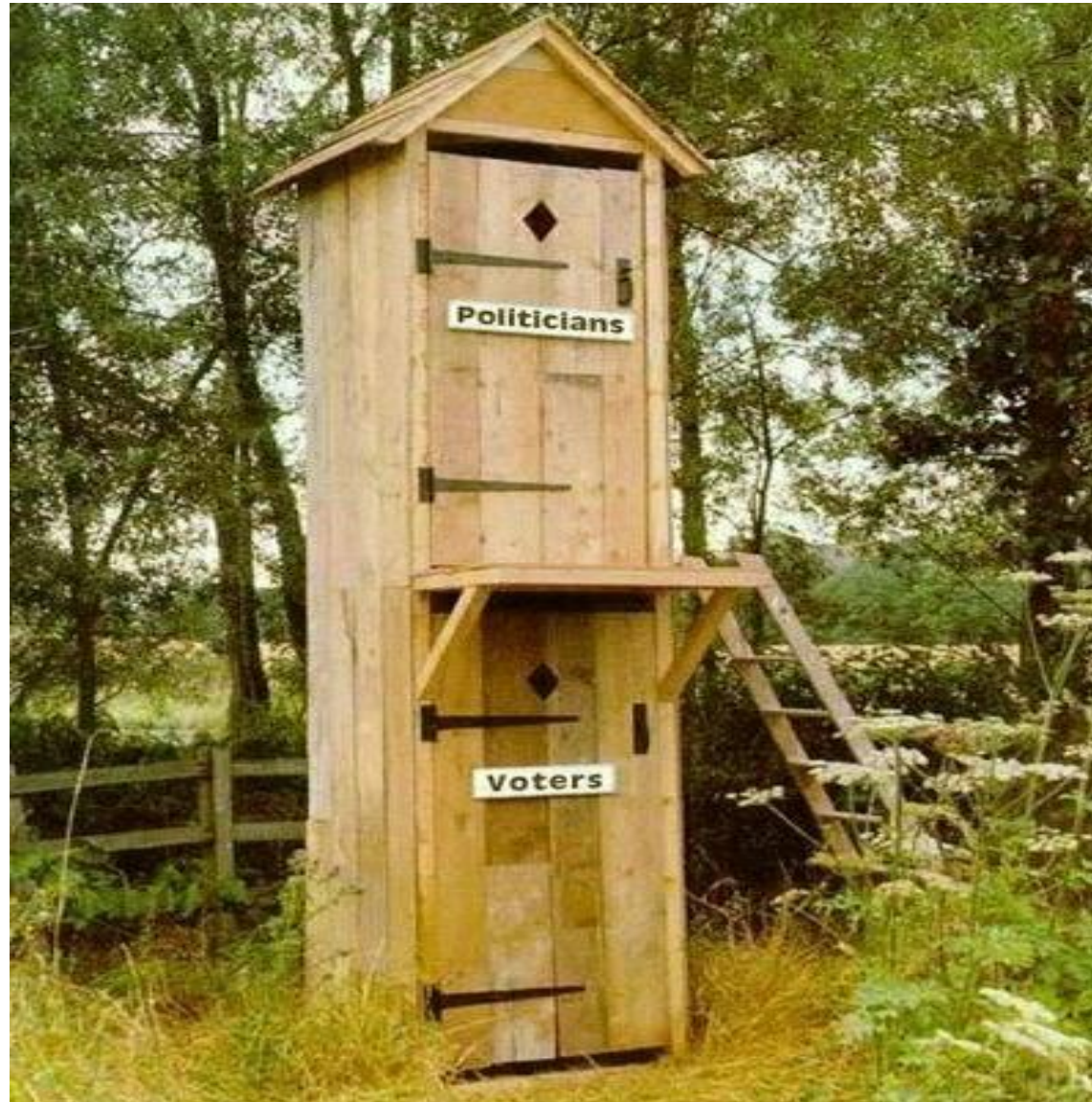


Americans hope lobbyist Jack Weldon will finally give them a voice in Washington.

WASHINGTON—Citing a desire to gain influence in Washington, the American people confirmed Friday that they have hired high-powered D.C. lobbyist Jack Weldon of the firm

the **ONION**®

Another Interesting Citizen Perspective



WHY DO WE NEED GOOD INPUT DATA? YOUR PERSPECTIVE

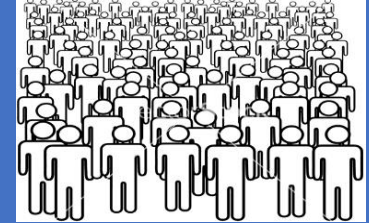
10,000 People Chip In For Pizza

- YOU have to figure out which toppings to get



How Do You Figure This Out?

10,000 People



You



Pizza Chefs



Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?

Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?

Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call a meeting?

Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call a meeting?
- Read social media posts?

Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call a meeting?
- Read social media posts?
- Start an online engagement forum?

Which of These Work?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call a meeting?
- Read social media posts?
- Start an online engagement forum?
- Do an online survey?

None! They Are All Unrepresentative

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call them?
- Read social media posts?
- Post on an online comment forum?
- Launch an online survey?



So What Is the Right Answer?

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friend?
- Call the city?
- Read social media posts?
- Post on an online comment forum?
- Run an online survey?
- Take everyone's order



Or... Also Good and Representative

- Order what you want?
- Ask your friends?
- Call your friends?
- Read social media posts?
- Post on an online comment forum?
- Run an online survey?



-
- Take everyone's order
 - Take a **scientific survey** of orders

PART 2: WHAT GOES WRONG WITH INPUT?

AN ENGAGEMENT CASE STUDY

QUICK POLL #1

Which best describes how you feel about online polls/surveys?

- ☐ Good data, glad we can get it
- ☐ Probably not great, but better than nothing
- ☐ Bad data, would never use it
- ☐ Not Sure

Harvard Case Study

INPUT METHODS MATTER: How Legacy Community Input Methods Lead to Biased Policy Decisions

Justin de Benedictis-Kessner,
Tomohito Okuda, Connie Liu,
Emily Mello, Henrietta Cho, and
Carly De La Hoz



HARVARD Kennedy School
TAUBMAN CENTER
for State and Local Government

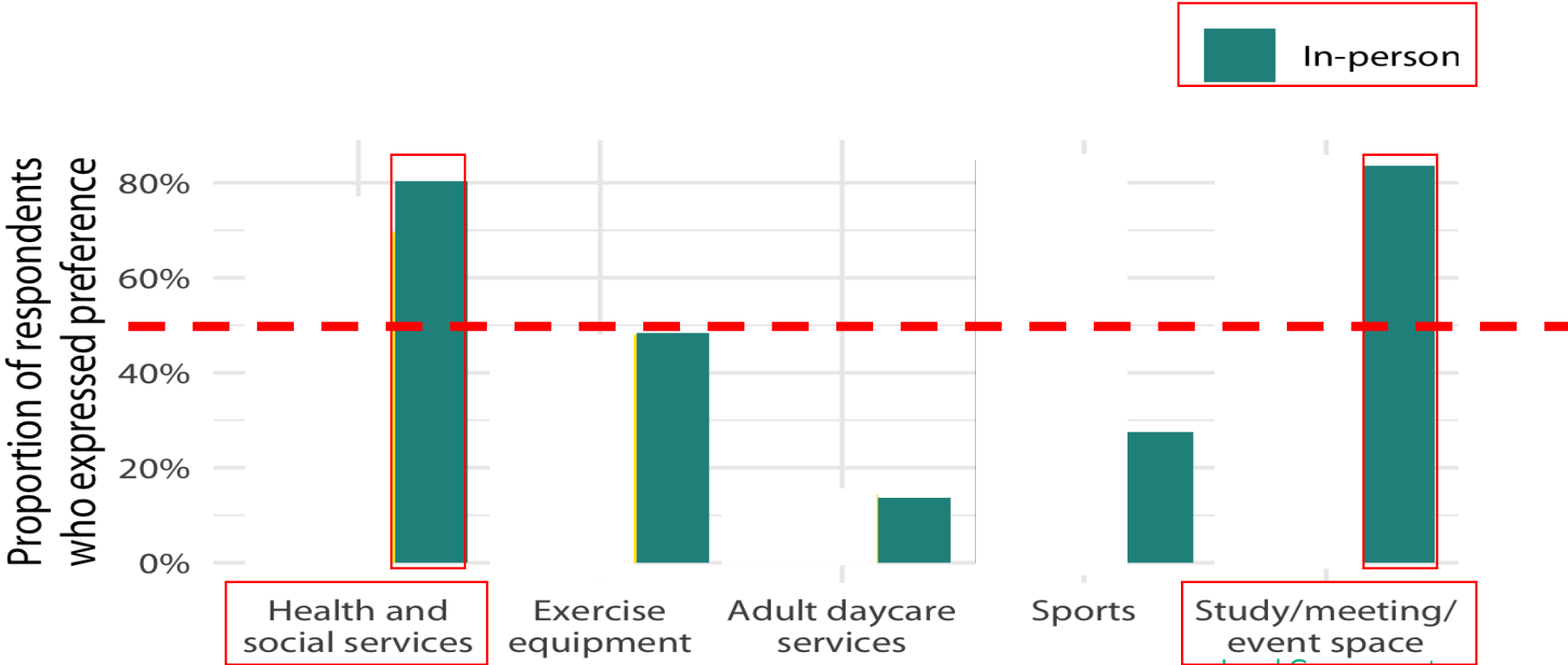


HARVARD Kennedy School
RAPPAPORT INSTITUTE
for Greater Boston

Meeting Input

INPUT METHODS MATTER: How Legacy Community Input Methods Lead to Biased Policy Decisions

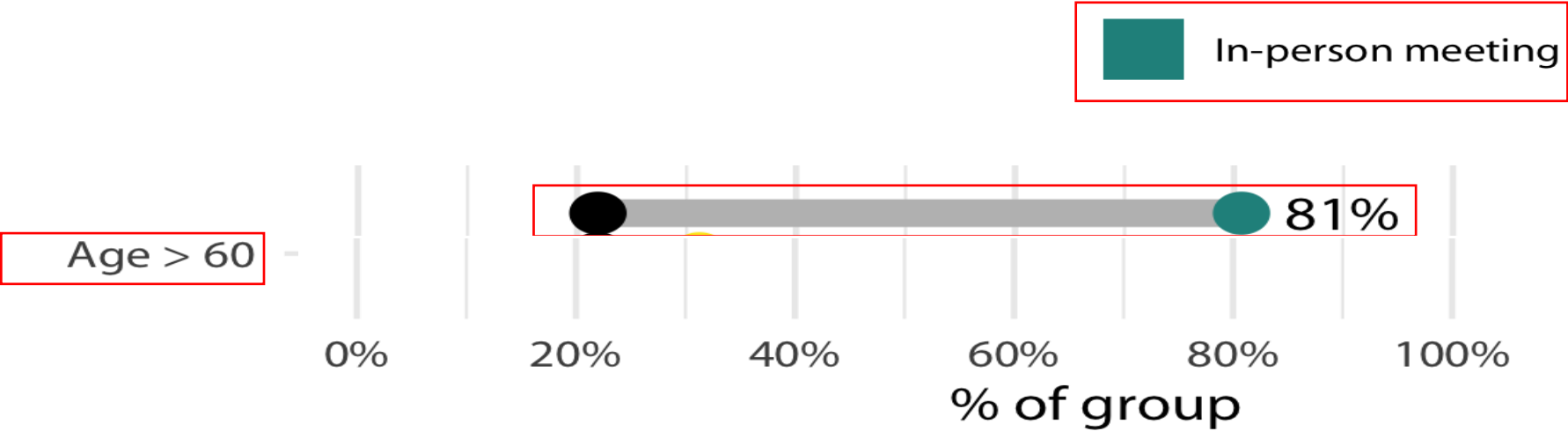
Justin de Benedictis-Kessner,
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Meeting Demographics

INPUT METHODS MATTER: How Legacy Community Input Methods Lead to Biased Policy Decisions

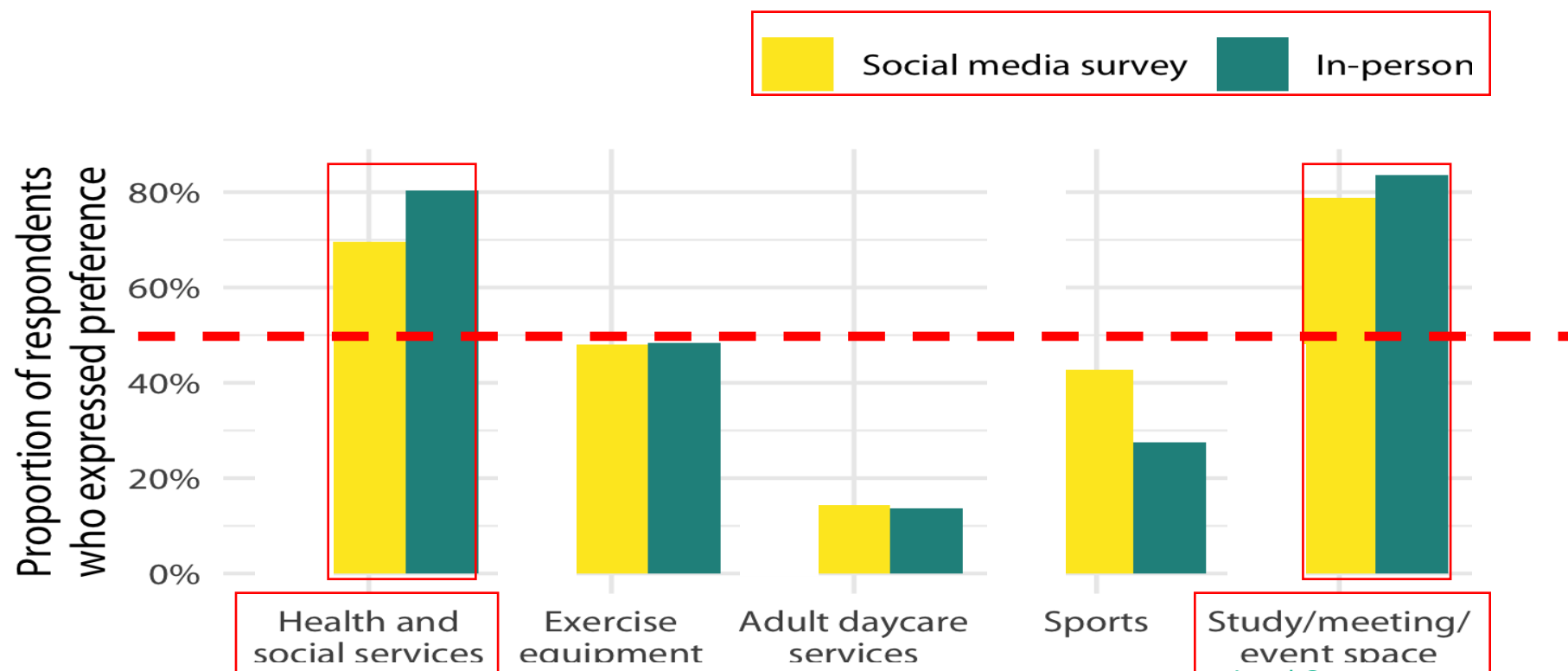
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Online Survey Input

INPUT METHODS MATTER: How Legacy Community Input Methods Lead to Biased Policy Decisions

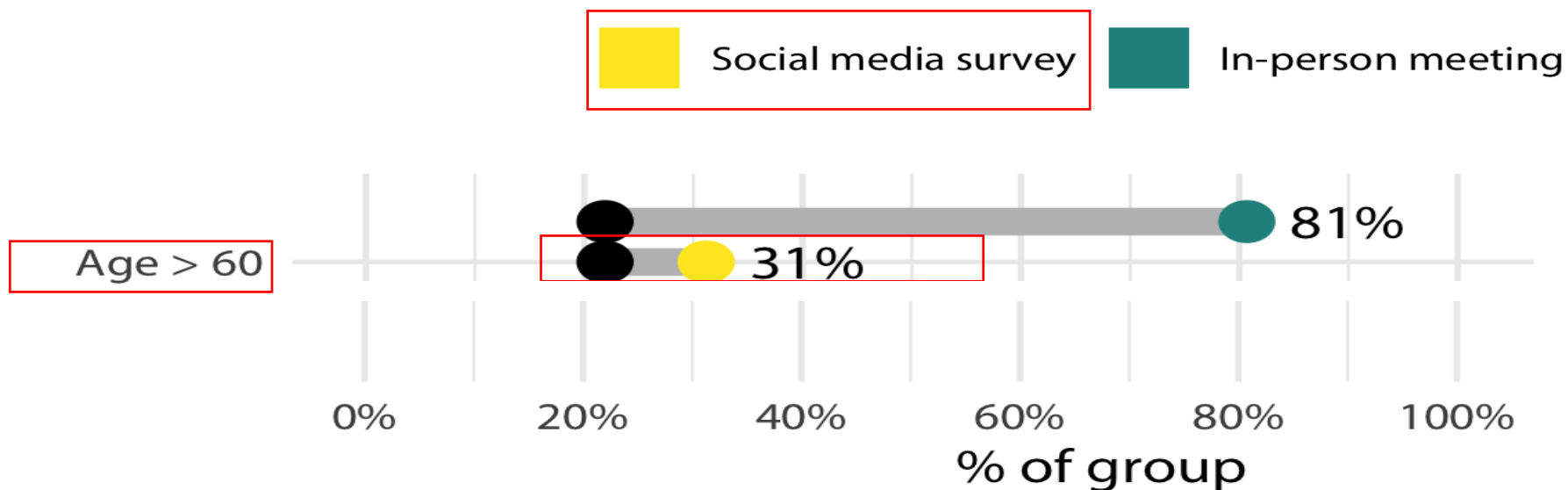
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Online Survey Demographics

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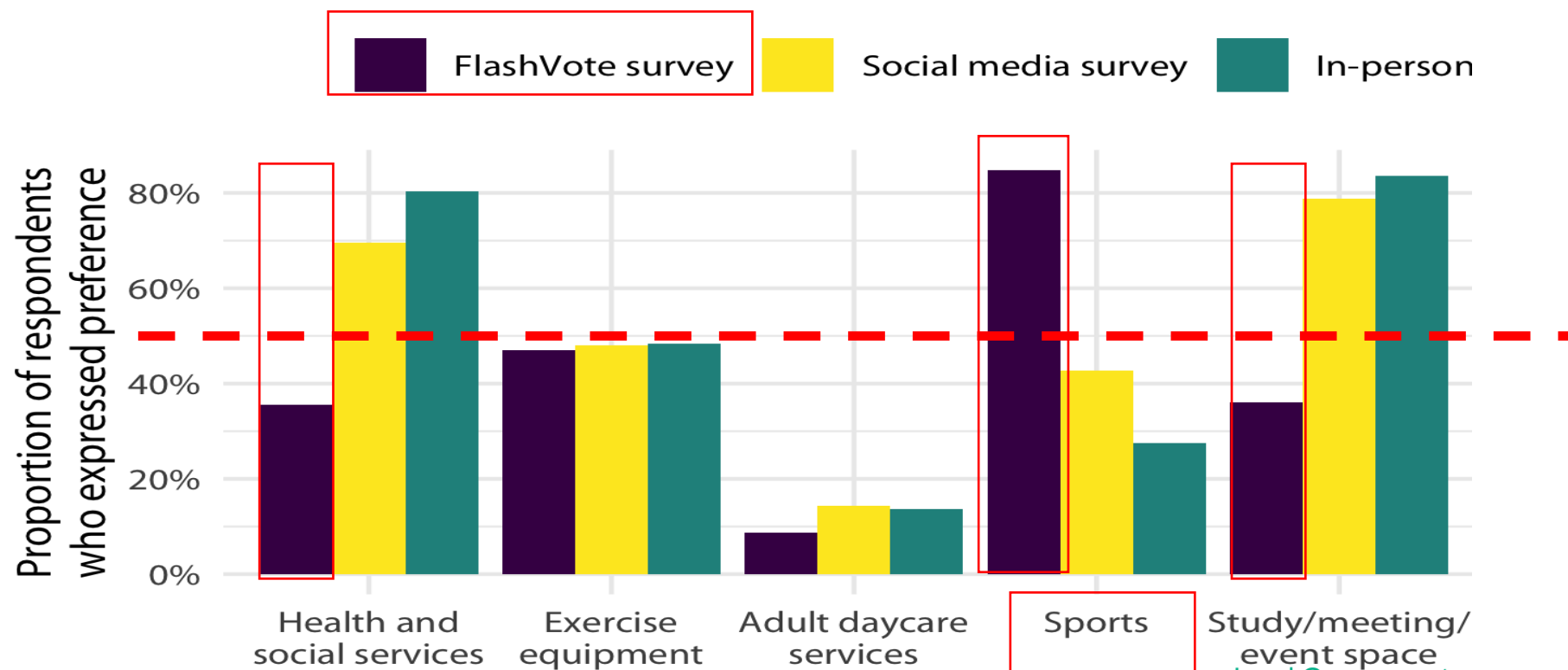
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Carly De La Hoz



Scientific Survey Input

INPUT METHODS MATTER: How Legacy Community Input Methods Lead to Biased Policy Decisions

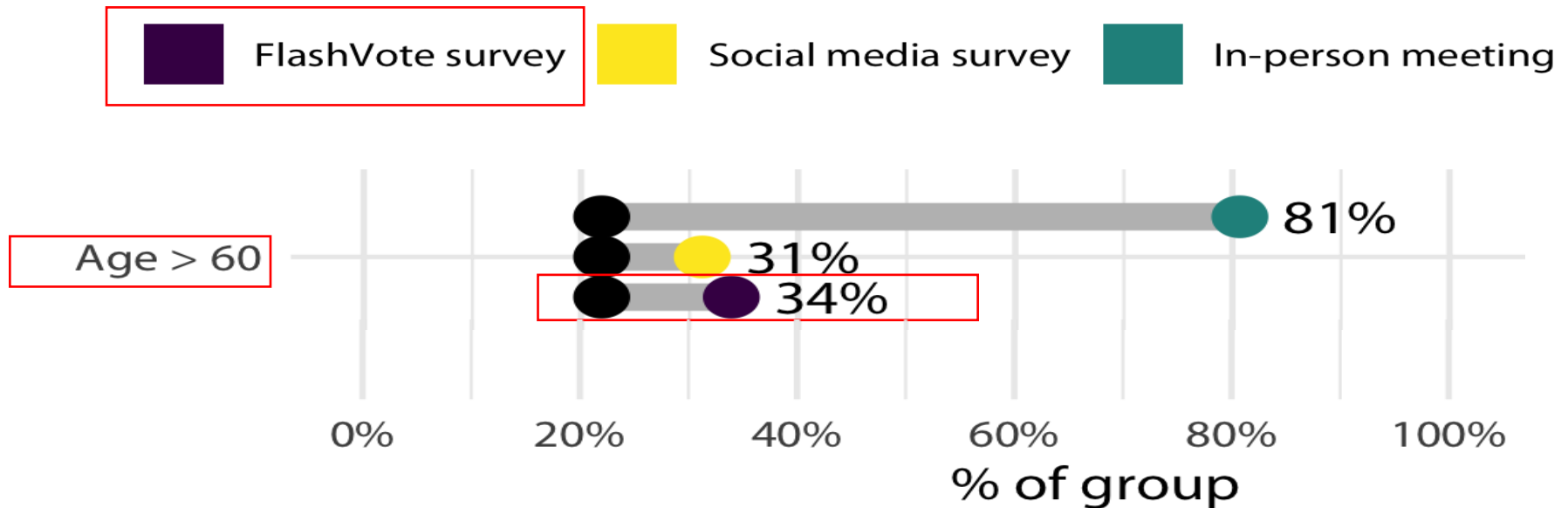
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Scientific Survey Demographics

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The Invisible Problem: “Self-Selection”

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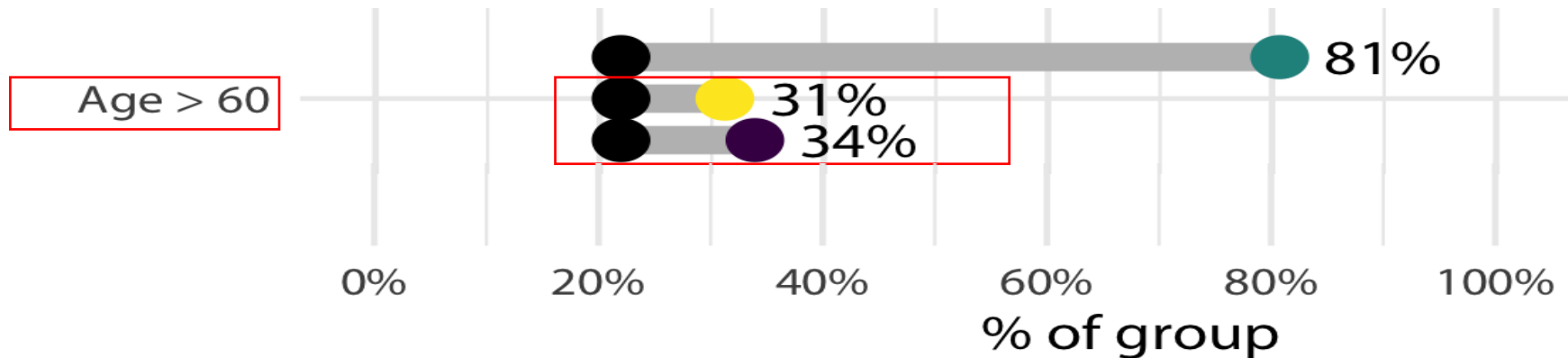
FlashVote survey



Social media survey



In-person meeting



Case Study Conclusion

**INPUT METHODS MATTER:
How Legacy Community Input Methods
Lead to Biased Policy Decisions**

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**TRADITIONAL METHODS OF
COMMUNITY INPUT ARE BIASED**

THE BROADER PROBLEM

Public Input vs True Public Opinion

How often do you think public input sentiment...



Public Input vs True Public Opinion

How often do you think public input sentiment...



matches whole community sentiment?

Public Input vs True Public Opinion



Public input sentiment is
the same as public sentiment

Public Input vs True Public Opinion

~5%

Public input sentiment is
the same as public sentiment

Public Input vs True Public Opinion

~25%

Public input sentiment is
exaggerating public sentiment

Public Input vs True Public Opinion

~70%

Public input sentiment is
the **opposite** of public sentiment

Elected Officials: Public Input vs True Public Opinion

How often do elected officials think
public input sentiment...



matches whole community
sentiment?





Elected Officials: Public Input vs True Public Opinion

> 50%





Public input sentiment is
the same as public sentiment

“DATA-DRIVEN” DECISION MAKING AND TRUST GAPS





How To Make Bad Decisions

Data for Decisions	Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%
	Flip a coin	
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	





How To Make Bad Decisions

Data for Decisions	Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%
	Flip a coin	50%
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	





How To Make Bad Decisions

Data for Decisions		Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%	D
	Flip a coin	50%	C
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%	B
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data		A





How To Make GOOD Decisions

Data for Decisions	Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%
	Flip a coin	50%
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	<5%





How To Destroy Trust

Data for Decisions		Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%	F
	Flip a coin	50%	
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%	
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	<5%	





How To Destroy Trust

Data for Decisions		Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%	F
	Flip a coin	50%	F
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%	
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	<5%	

How To Destroy Trust

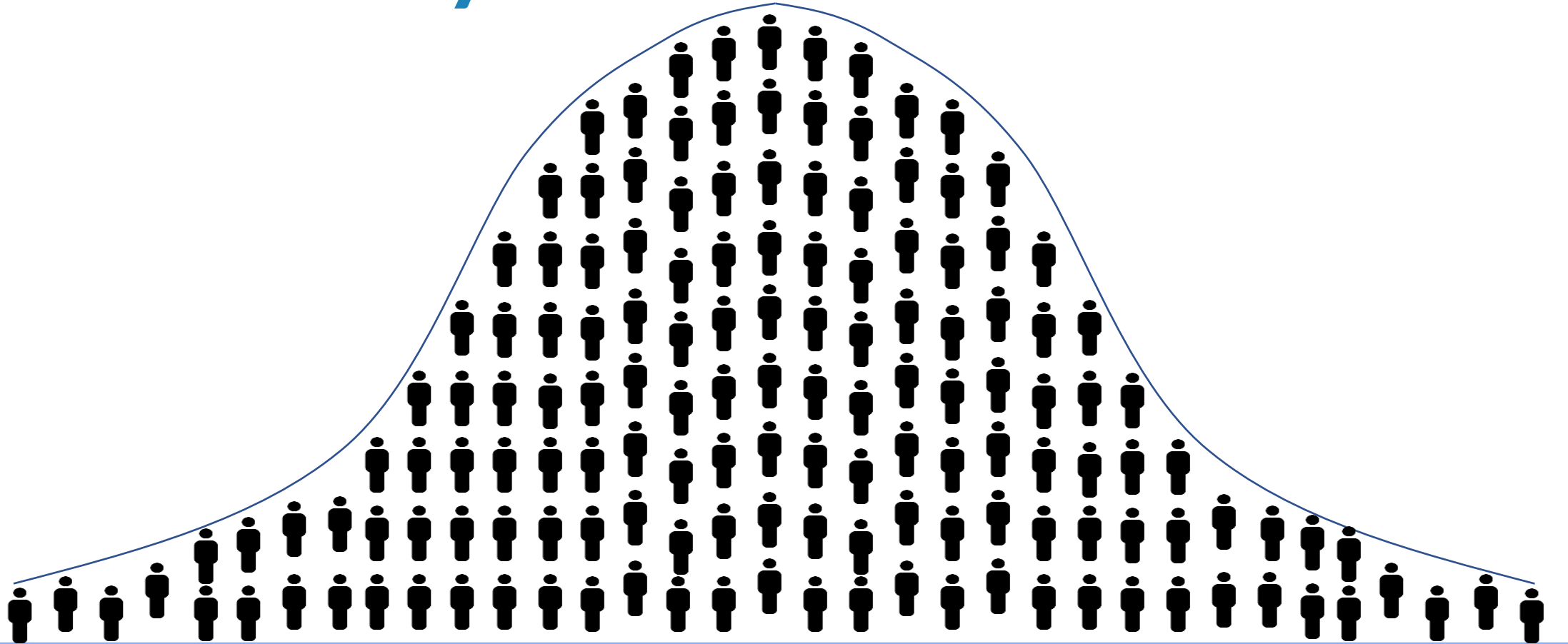
Data for Decisions		Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%	F
	Flip a coin	50%	F
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%	C-
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	<5%	

How To BUILD Trust

Data for Decisions		Error Rate	Trust Grade
	Make decisions based on public input sentiment	70%	F
	Flip a coin	50%	F
	Make decisions opposite to public input sentiment	30%	C-
	Make decisions based on scientific survey data	<5%	A

SO WHAT IS GOING ON?

Your Community



← "Hate!"

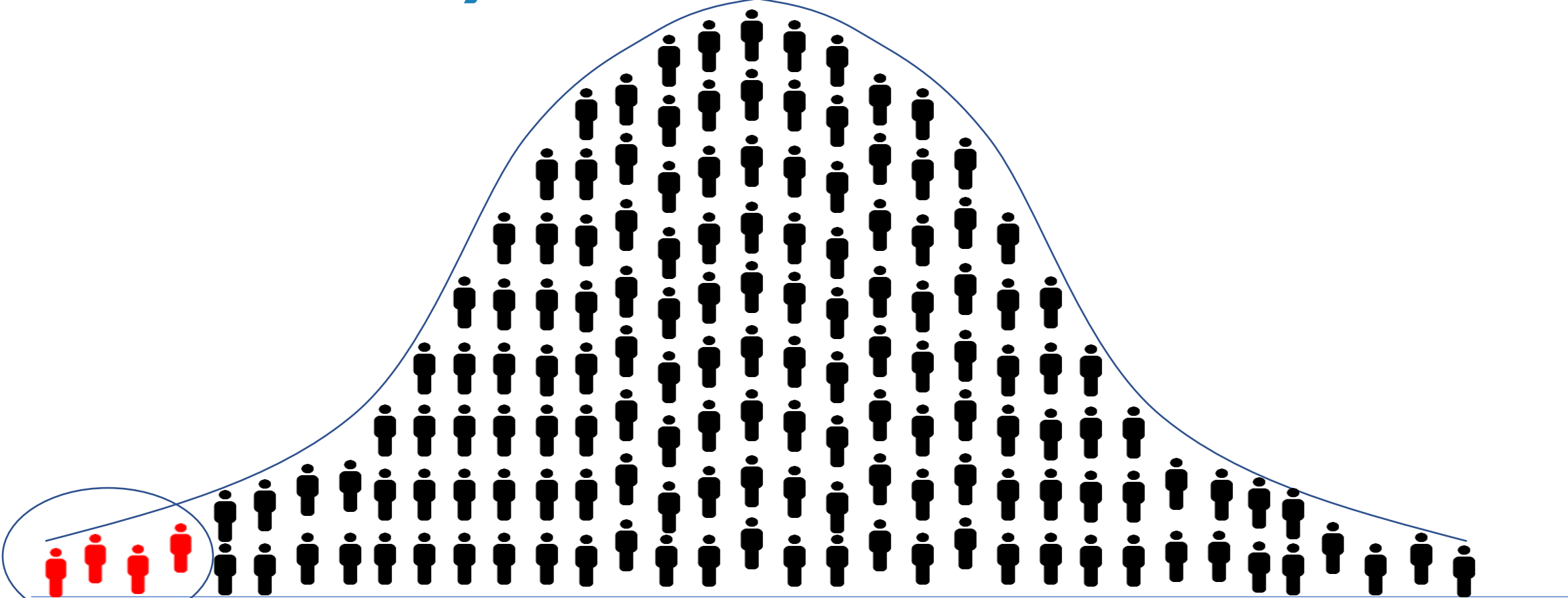
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→ "Great!"

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Who You Usually Hear From



“Hate!”

“Great!”

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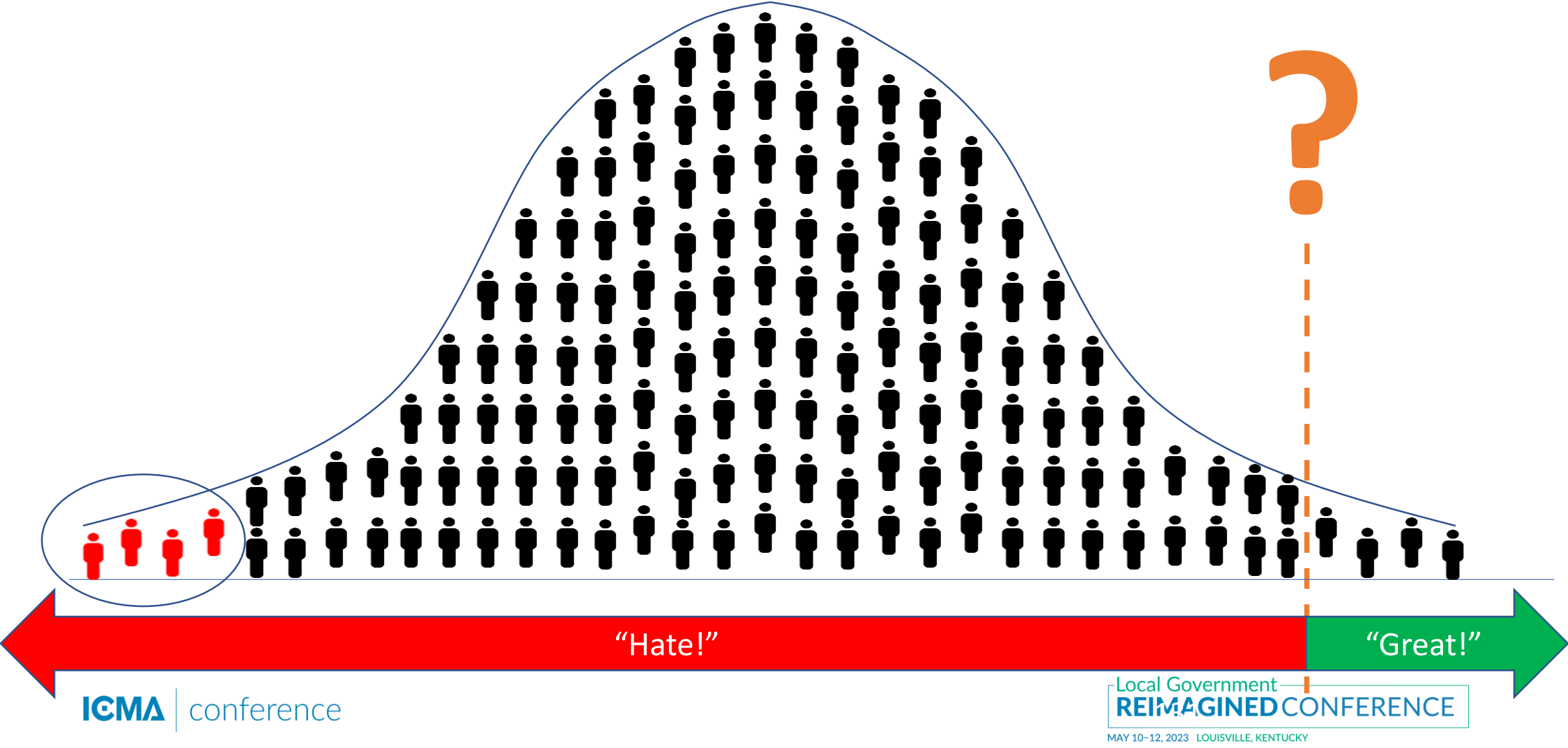
This Guy?



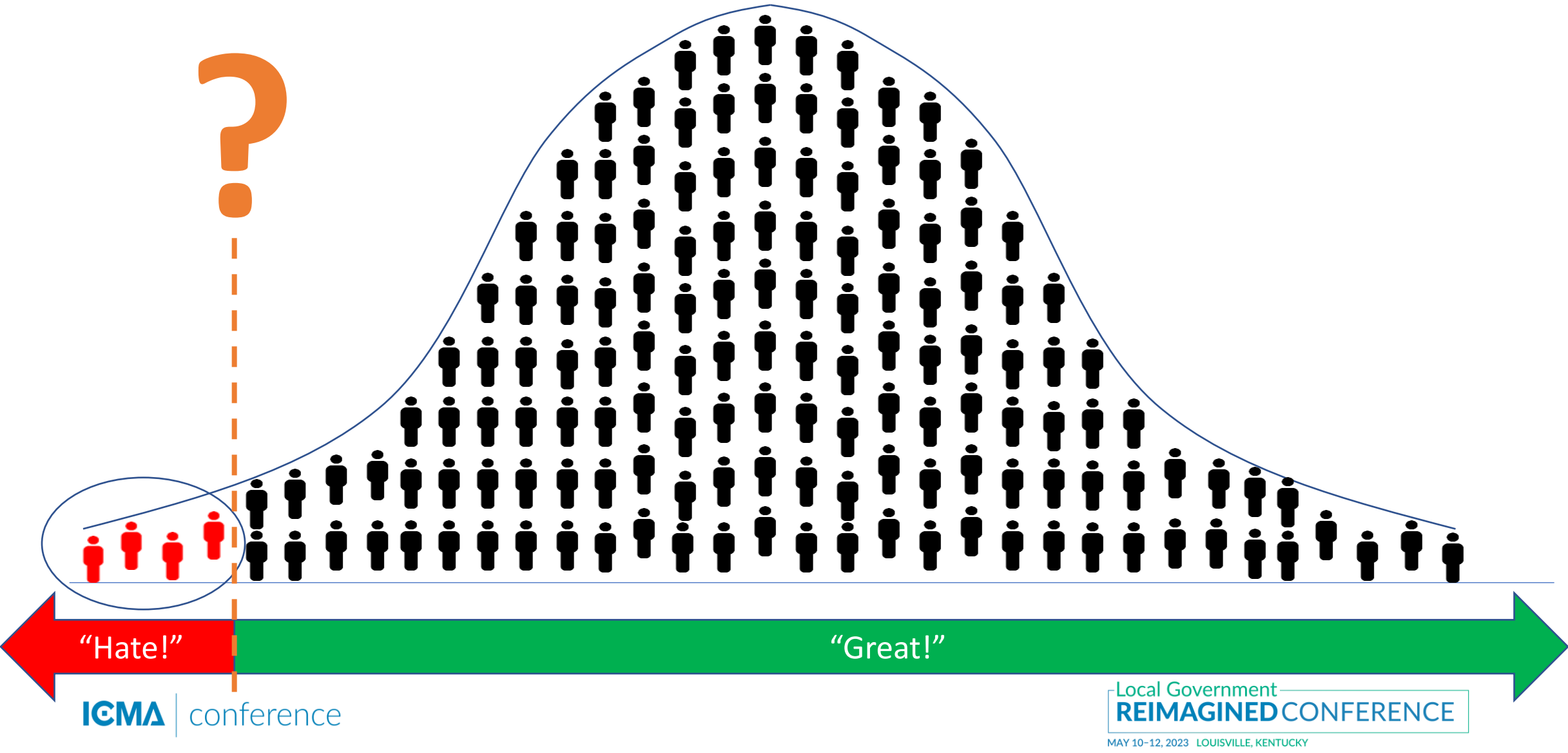
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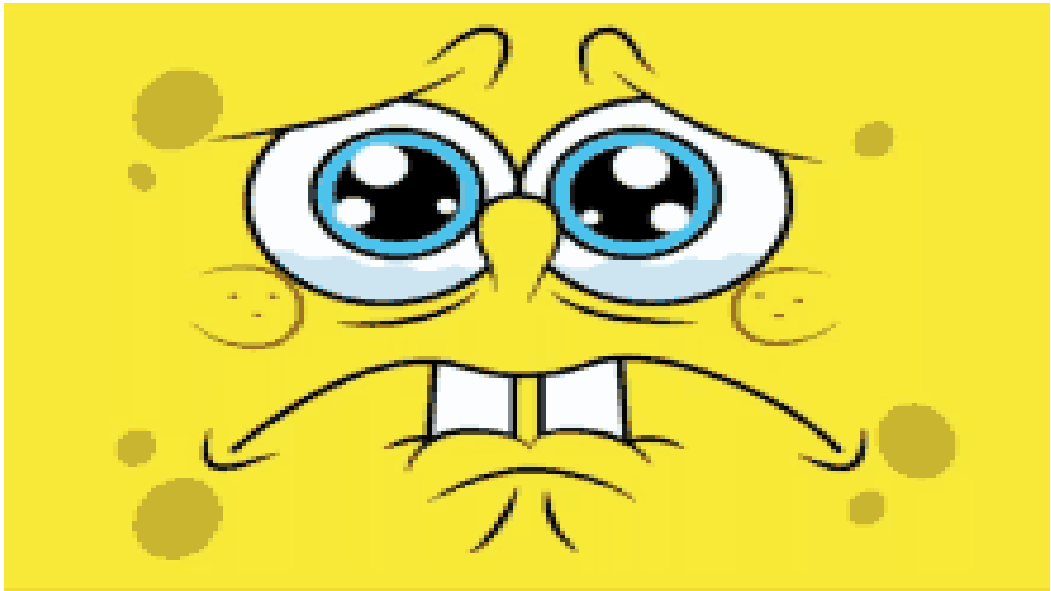
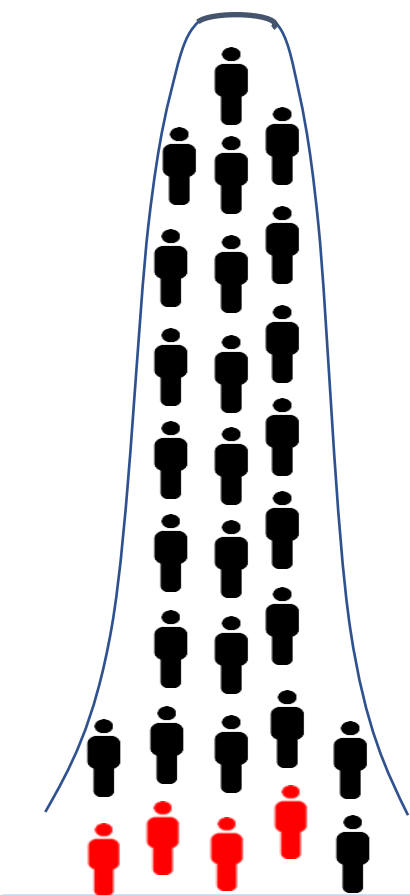
Does The Community Think This?



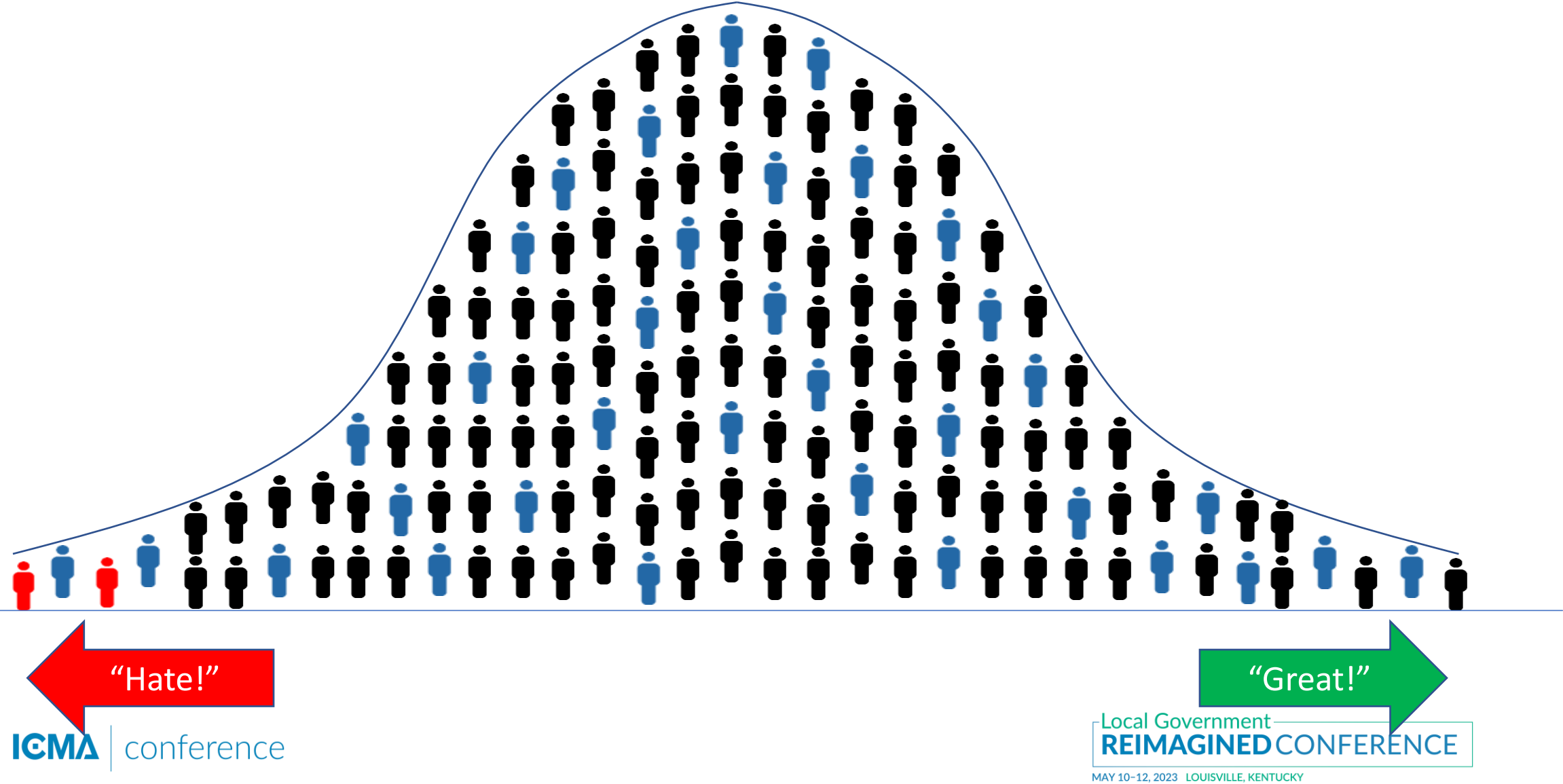
Or This?... You Have No Idea!



But You Know What It Feels Like

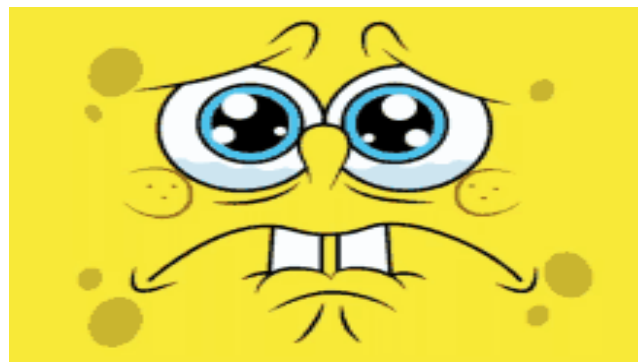
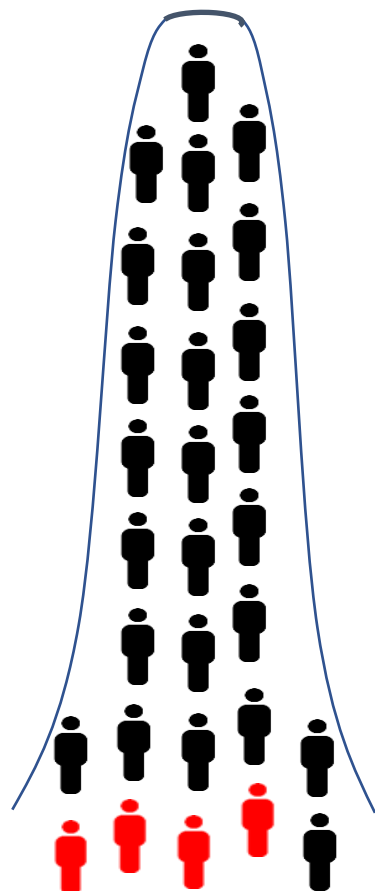


Missing: Representative Reality



COMPLAINTS GET AMPLIFIED

Perception: Park Quality

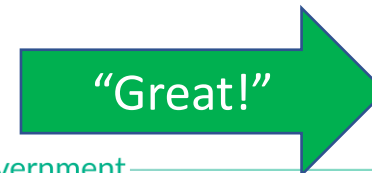


“Nothing but complaints”

“Everyone hates our parks now!”



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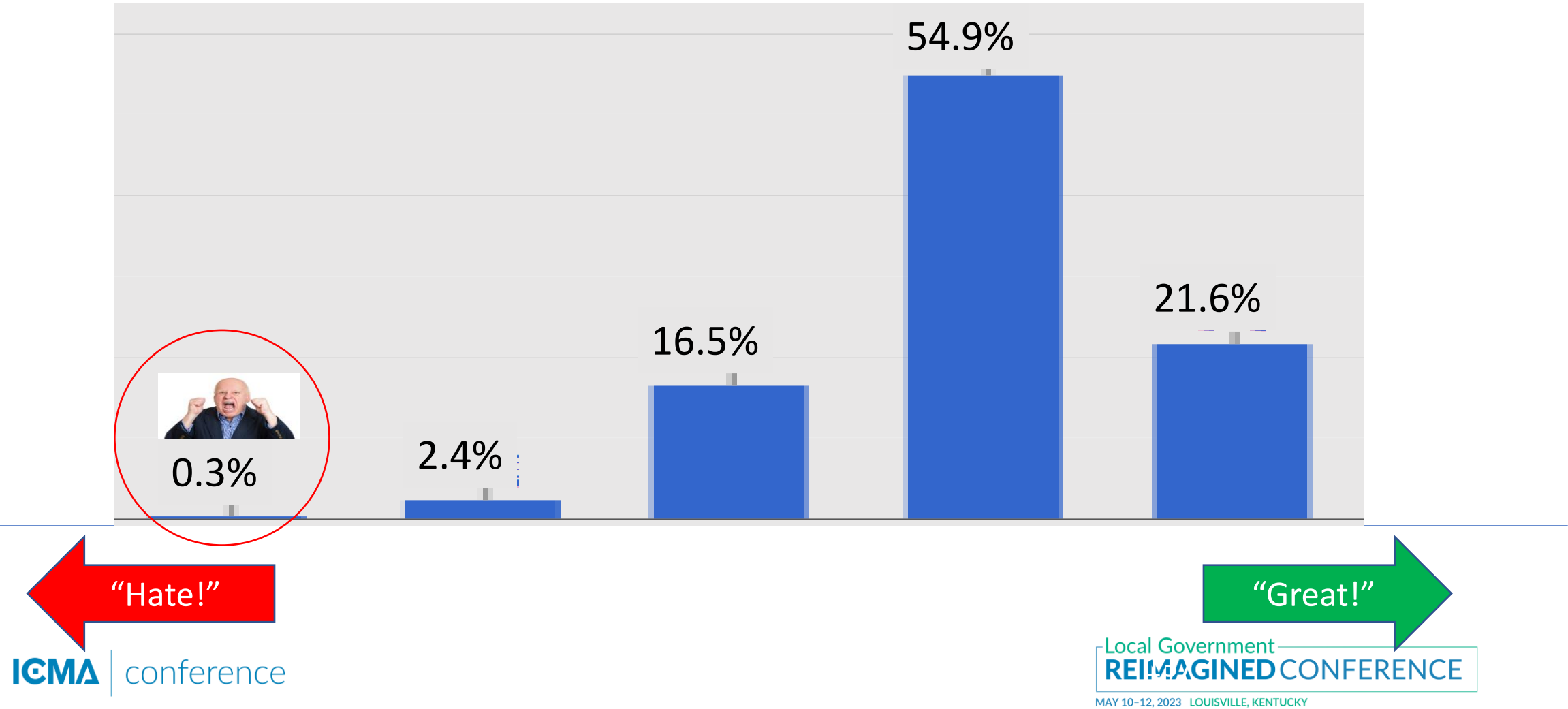


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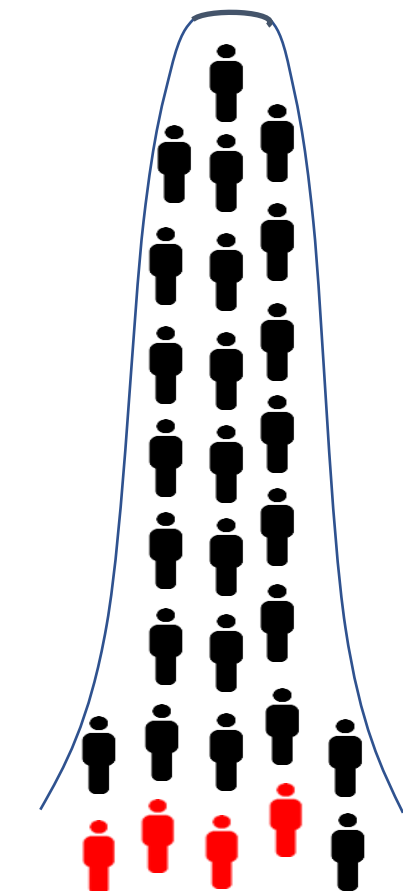
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Reality: Park Quality

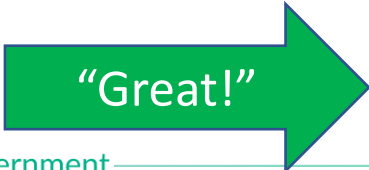
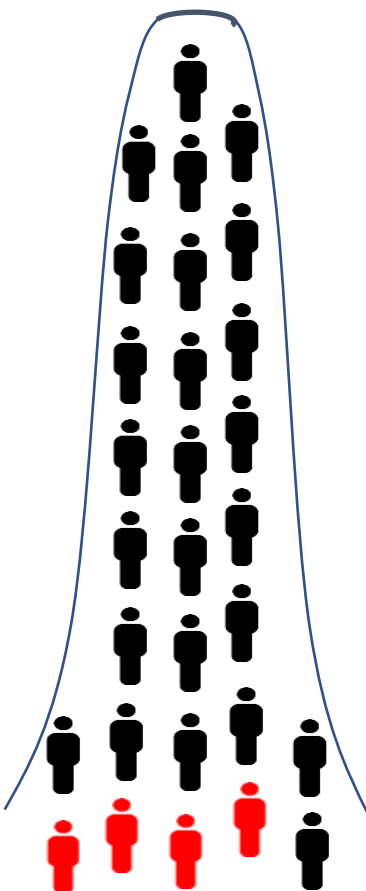
4.0 out of 5: “Love, love, love the parks!”



Perception: School Sex Ed Curriculum



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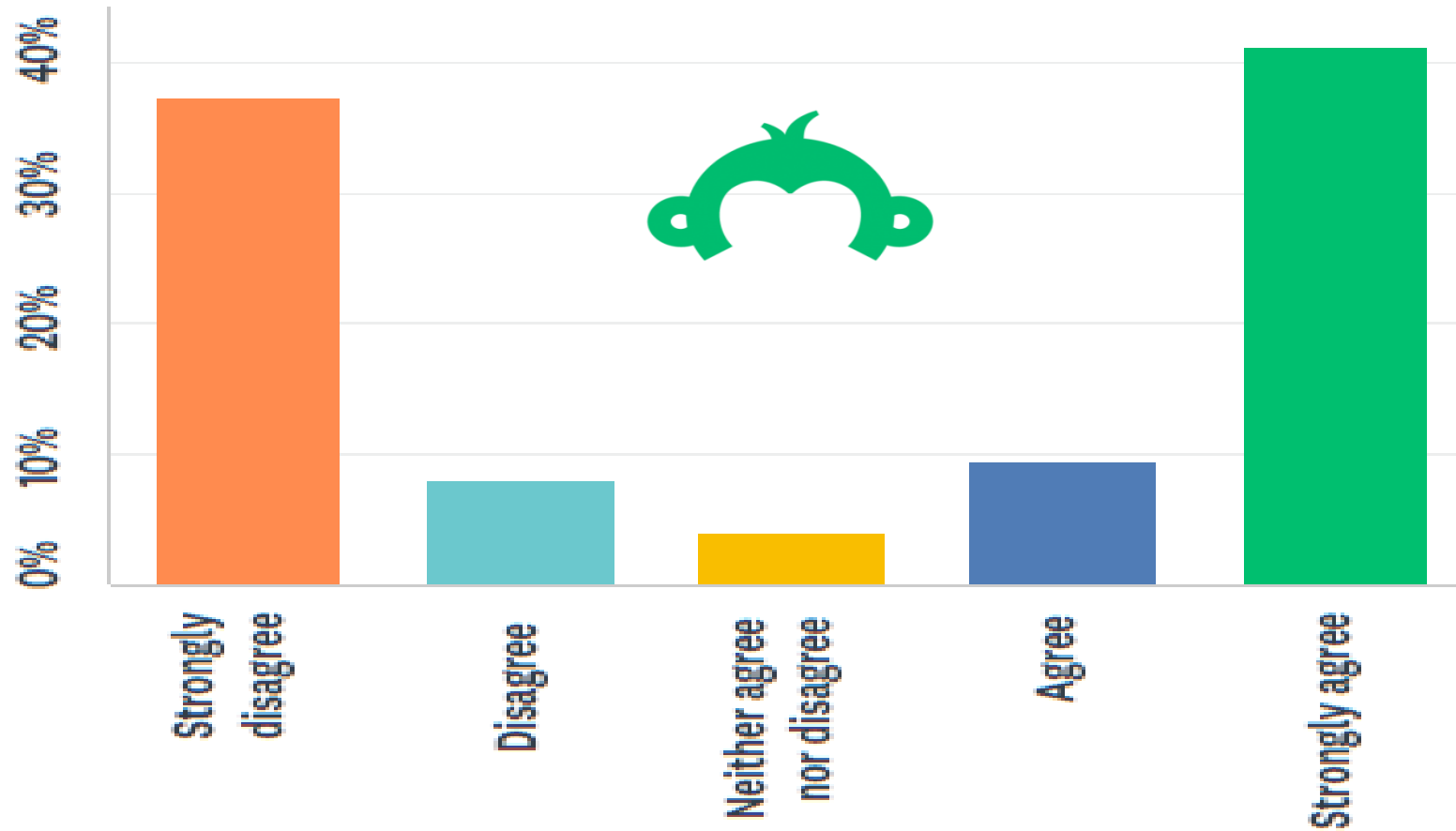


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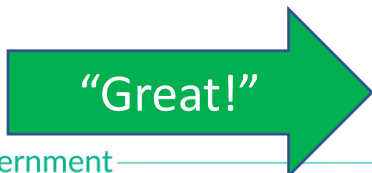
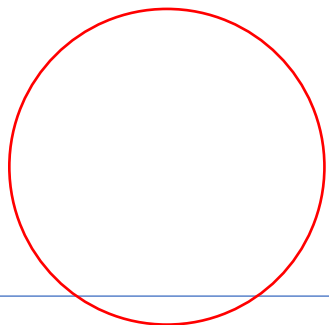
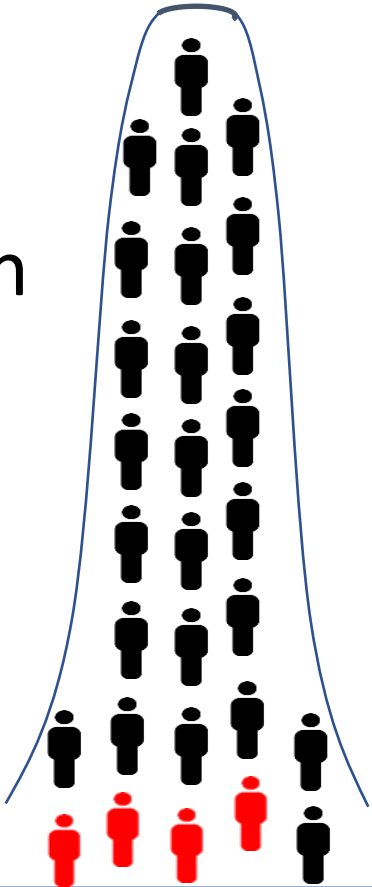
The Actual “Barbell” Distribution

Q4 How much do you agree or disagree that the topics presented in the proposed curriculum are appropriate for high school age students (ages 14-18)?



Reality: School Sex Ed Curriculum

About **90% support** for each element on average



HOW QUICKLY DOES INPUT GO BAD?

Online Survey Example: Backyard Chickens



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<https://www.flashvote.com/videos#online-engagement>

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SUMMARY: ENGAGEMENT INPUT VS SCIENTIFIC SURVEYS

Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

So what is the difference?



Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

So what is the difference?

Engagement = Input from people **especially**
interested in a topic

Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

So what is the difference?

Engagement = Input from people **especially** interested in a topic

Scientific Surveys = Input from people **NOT** especially interested in a topic

Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

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Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

So what is the difference?

Engagement = Input from people **especially** interested in a topic



Scientific Surveys = Input from people **NOT** especially interested in a topic



Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

What is each one good for?

Engagement → Open-ended questions to get individual **facts/ideas/feedback**

Engagement Input vs Scientific Surveys

What is each one good for?

Engagement → Open-ended questions to get individual **facts/ideas/feedback**

Scientific Surveys → Multiple choice questions to get **preferences/priorities %**

The Big Mismatch...



And Biggest Waste of Everyone's Time

Don't do this:

Engagement →



→ Multiple choice %

Statistics in a Nutshell: Two Questions To Ask

- Are the people in my sample *the same* as the people not in my sample?
- How might they be *different*?

REMEMBER QUICK POLL #1?

Which best describes how you feel about online polls/surveys?

- ☐ Good data, glad we can get it
- ☐ Probably not great, but better than nothing
- ☐ Bad data, would never use it
- ☐ Not Sure

REMEMBER QUICK POLL #1?

Which best describes how you feel about online polls/surveys?

☒ (x) Good data, glad we can get it – If Facts/Ideas/Feedback

☐ () Probably not great, but better than nothing

☒ (x) Bad data, would never use it – If Preferences (%)

☐ () Not Sure

WHEN DO YOU NEED INPUT?

Quick Question

- Do you want something that is awesome?

Yes

Quick Question

- Do you want something that is awesome?

Yes

- Do you want to pay more taxes?

No

Tradeoffs Matter

- Do you want to pay for something that is awesome?

Maybe

Tradeoffs Matter

- Do you want to pay for something that is awesome?

Maybe

- 1) What is the awesome thing?
- 2) How much does it cost?

What Does Your Community Want?

Get More

Get Less

Pay More

Maybe

No!

Pay Less

Yes!

Maybe

Find Out What To Do Here

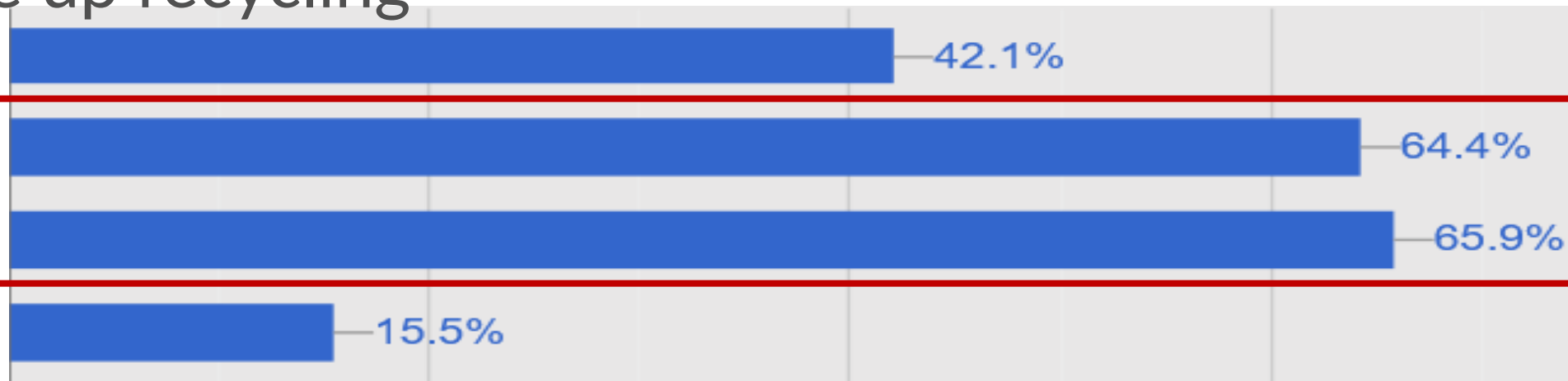
	<i>Get More</i>	<i>Get Less</i>
<i>Pay More</i>	<div>Ask About Tradeoffs</div> <div>Maybe</div>	<div>No!</div>
<i>Pay Less</i>	<div>Yes!</div>	<div>Ask About Tradeoffs</div> <div>Maybe</div>

Example: Recycling

- Pay more to keep service the same
- Pay the same, but do more sorting myself
- Pay the same, but cut from weekly to 2 weeks
- Give up recycling

Example: Recycling

- Pay more to keep service the same
- Pay the same, but do more sorting myself
- Pay the same, but cut from weekly to 2 weeks
- Give up recycling



WHEN YOU DON'T NEED INPUT

Delegation to Expertise (and Pizza)

✓ What they want



- Pick toppings
- Pick crust (thin/thick)
- Pick flour (gluten free)

Delegation to Expertise (and Pizza)

✓ What they want



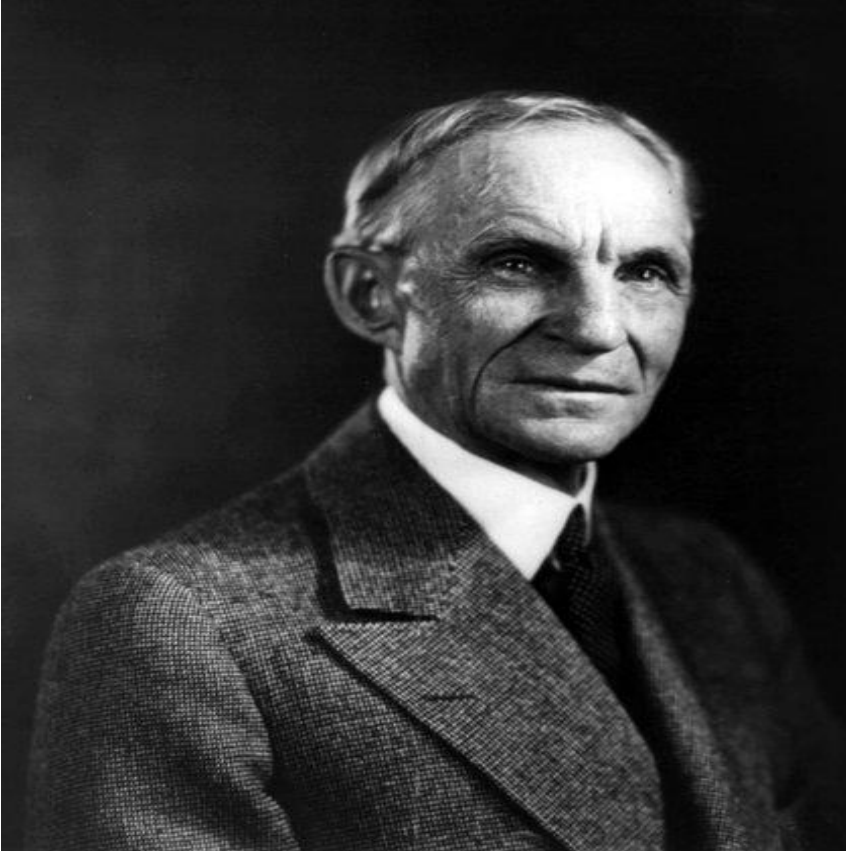
- Pick toppings
- Pick crust (thin/thick)
- Pick flour (gluten free)

✗ How to make it



- Pick good recipe
- Pick flour producer
- Pick oven type

Objections to Using The Wrong Input



“IF I HAD ASKED PEOPLE
WHAT THEY WANTED,
THEY WOULD HAVE SAID:
FASTER HORSES...”

Henry Ford

Don't “Engage to Enrage”



Delegation to Expertise (and Pizza)

✓ What they want



✗ How to make it



✓ How it comes out



- Pick toppings
- Pick crust (thin/thick)
- Pick flour (gluten free)
- Pick good recipe
- Pick flour producer
- Pick oven type
- Tastes good?

PART 3: CHOOSE YOUR ADVENTURE

Choose Your Adventure...

- () #1: Why do residents need representative community input?
- () [#2](#): How to easily explain this stuff to colleagues and electeds
- () [#3](#): How to get more valuable input with less effort

[Skip](#)

CHOICE #1: WHY DO RESIDENTS NEED REPRESENTATIVE COMMUNITY INPUT?

QUICK POLL #2

In the year 1972, in the US South, what percent of whites do you think favored segregation?

☐ 0% to 20%

☐ 21% to 40%

☐ 41% to 60%

☐ 61% to 80%

☐ 81% to 100%

The Year is 1972 in the US South

- What percent of whites favored segregation?

The Year is 1972 in the US South

- What percent of whites favored segregation?
- What percent of whites believed a majority of whites in their area favored segregation?

The Year is 1972 in the US South

- What percent of whites favored segregation?

15%

- What percent of whites believed a majority of whites in their area favored segregation?

The Year is 1972 in the US South

- What percent of whites favored segregation?

15%

- What percent of whites believed a majority of whites in their area favored segregation?

72%

CHOICE #2: HOW TO EASILY EXPLAIN THIS STUFF TO COLLEAGUES AND ELECTEDS

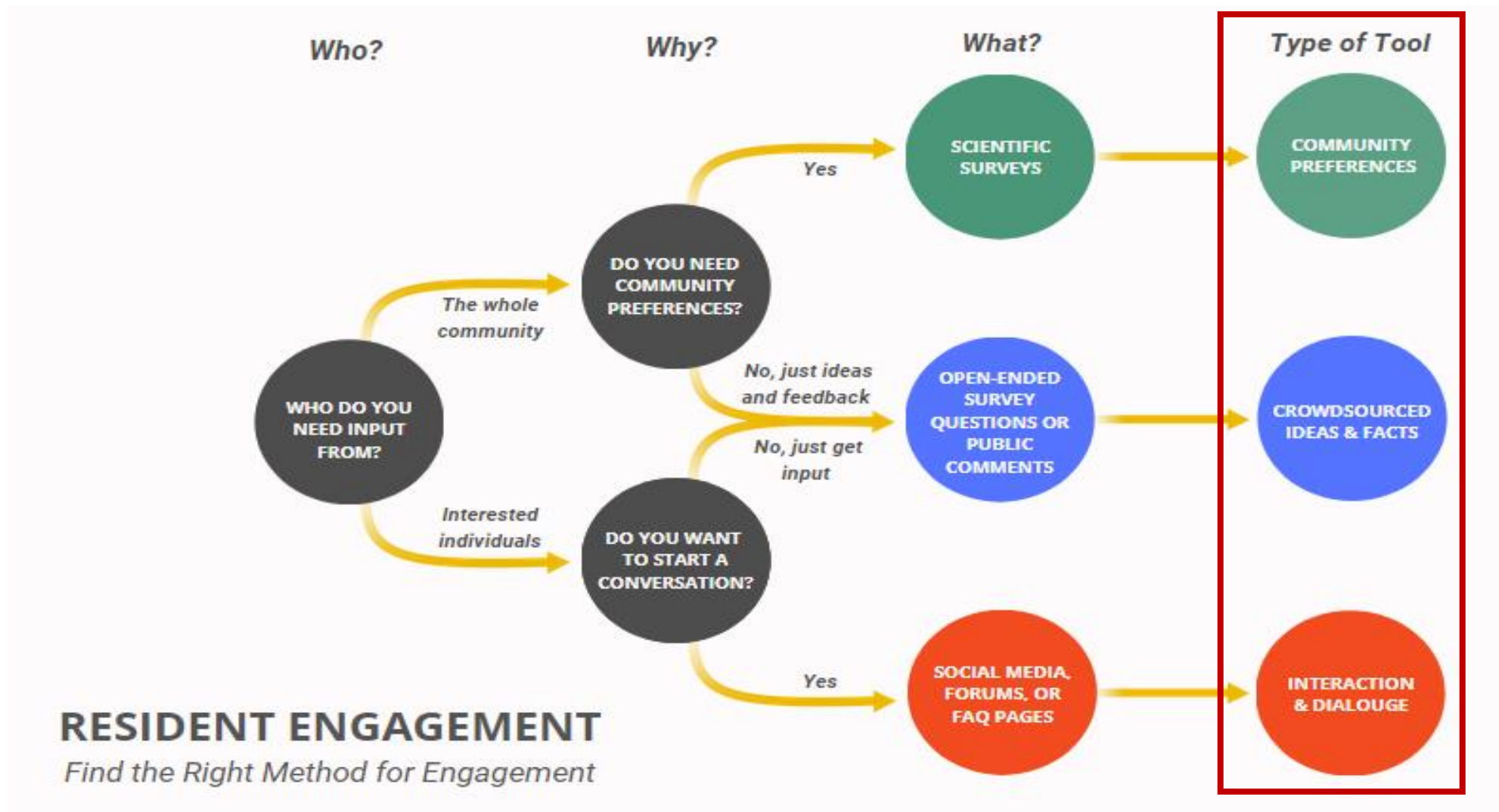
Explaining to Others: Red Cards Trick



Use An “Intake Questionnaire”

- What do you want to know?
- From who?
- For what?
- OK, then we need to _____

Decision Wizard Guide



CHOICE #3: HOW TO GET MORE VALUABLE INPUT WITH LESS EFFORT

Common Engagement Options

- Meetings
- Social Media/Online Forums
- Online Surveys



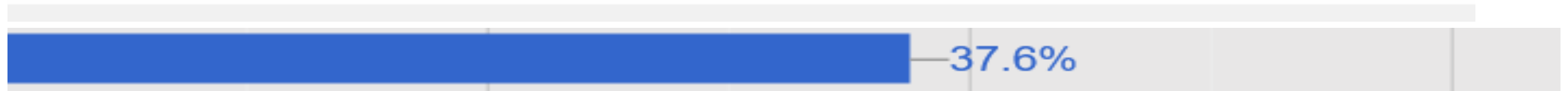
MEETINGS

Perception: Lockdown Sentiment (Remember the Video?)



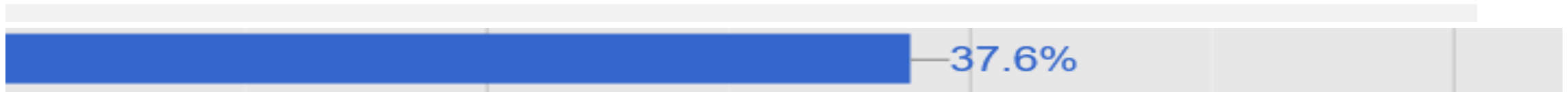
Reality: Lockdown Sentiment

Things will open up too slowly, and the economy will get a lot worse

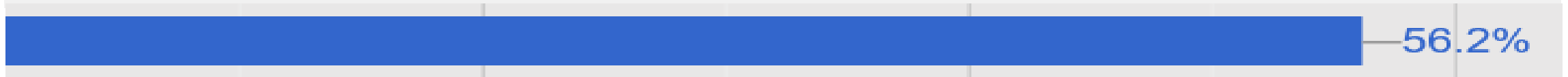


Reality: Lockdown Sentiment

Things will open up too slowly, and the economy will get a lot worse



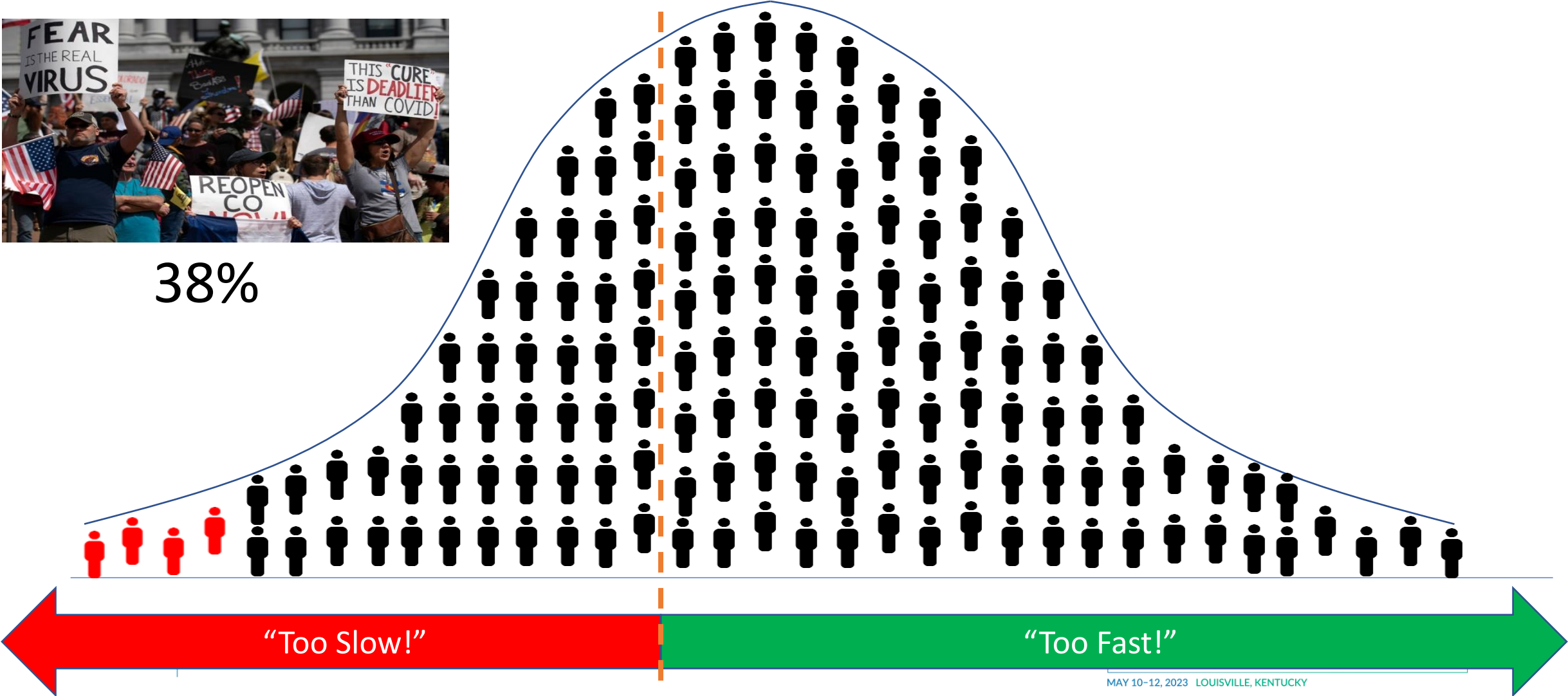
Things will open up too fast, and the outbreak will get a lot worse



Lockdown Noise Was Misleading



38%



Meeting: Don't

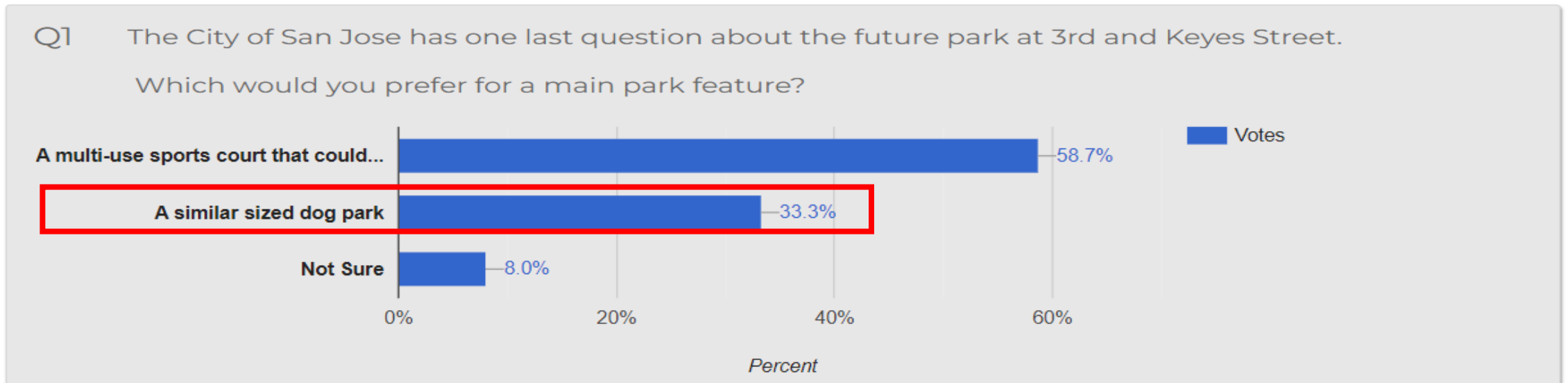
- Never count the number of people for or against anything

Meeting: Don't

- Never count the number of people for or against anything
- “We want a dog park there!!!”

Meeting: Don't

- Never count the number of people for or against anything
- “We want a dog park there!!!”



Meeting: Do (Part 1)

- **Make public comment shorter and more useful**
- “It is important to understand that **your comments on an agenda item are not a “vote” on whether an action should take place.** Similarly, all of the public comments and preferences taken together are not what “the community” wants or thinks.”
- “ Instead, your comments here are valuable to the extent that they provide new facts, new ideas, new questions or other information which 1) has not already been heard or received and which 2) helps us make a better decision for the public as a whole.”

Meeting: Do (Part 2)

- **Make public comment shorter and more useful**
- “Opinions and repetition are easily ignored, but useful new information is not - so to stand out, we recommend that you do not waste your time by repeating anything that has already been said.”
- “For example, you might briefly reference or agree with a previous comment but then focus on your new contribution, as in: “*I agree with the speaker(s) who said _____ but I would add the following information which has not been mentioned by anyone yet...*” Valuable comments like these will get everyone’s attention and have the best chance of impacting a decision.”

SOCIAL MEDIA AND OTHER ONLINE FORUMS

Social Media: Don't

- Never pay attention to comment sentiments

“The thorn in my side is when someone says something on nextdoor - and the council thinks that’s what the whole community thinks”

Social Media: Don't

- Never do social media polls

Poll: Is this app just all complainers?

Choose one:

<input checked="" type="radio"/>	Yes	100%
<input type="radio"/>	Yes	0%

Voted 3 votes

8 34 507

Social Media: Don't



Best of Nextdoor @bestofnextdoor · Jan 19

#polloftheday

Poll: Is this app just all complainers?

Choose one:

☒ Yes 100%

☐ Yes 0%

Voted

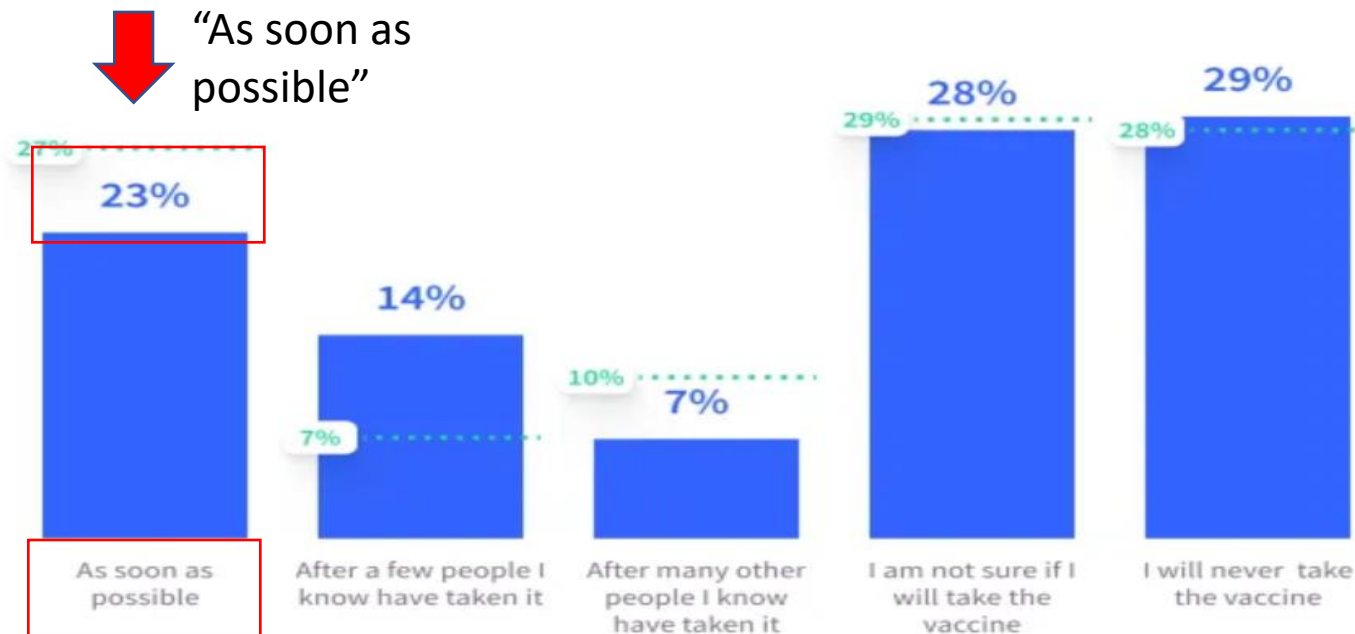
3 votes

8 34 507



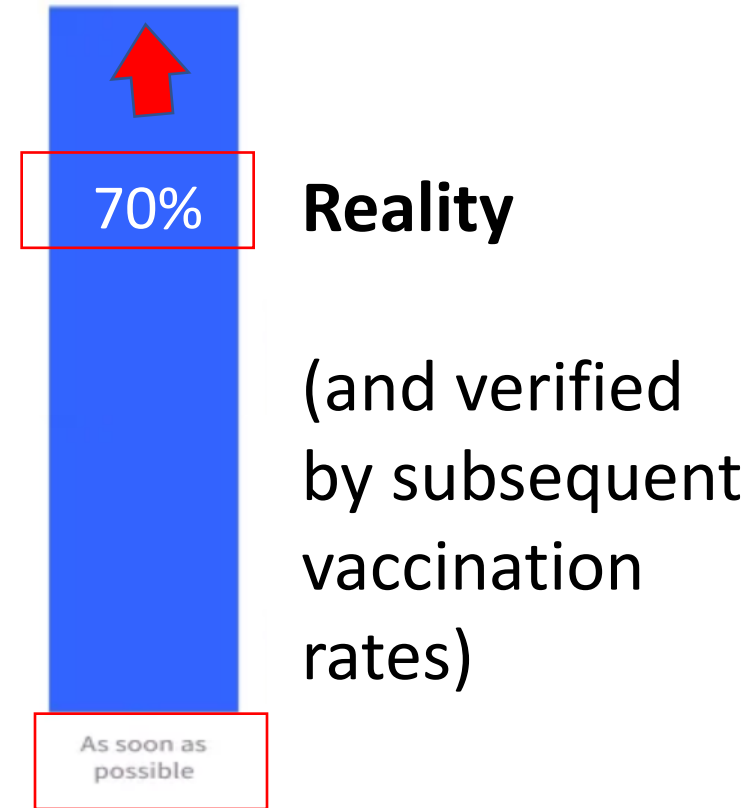
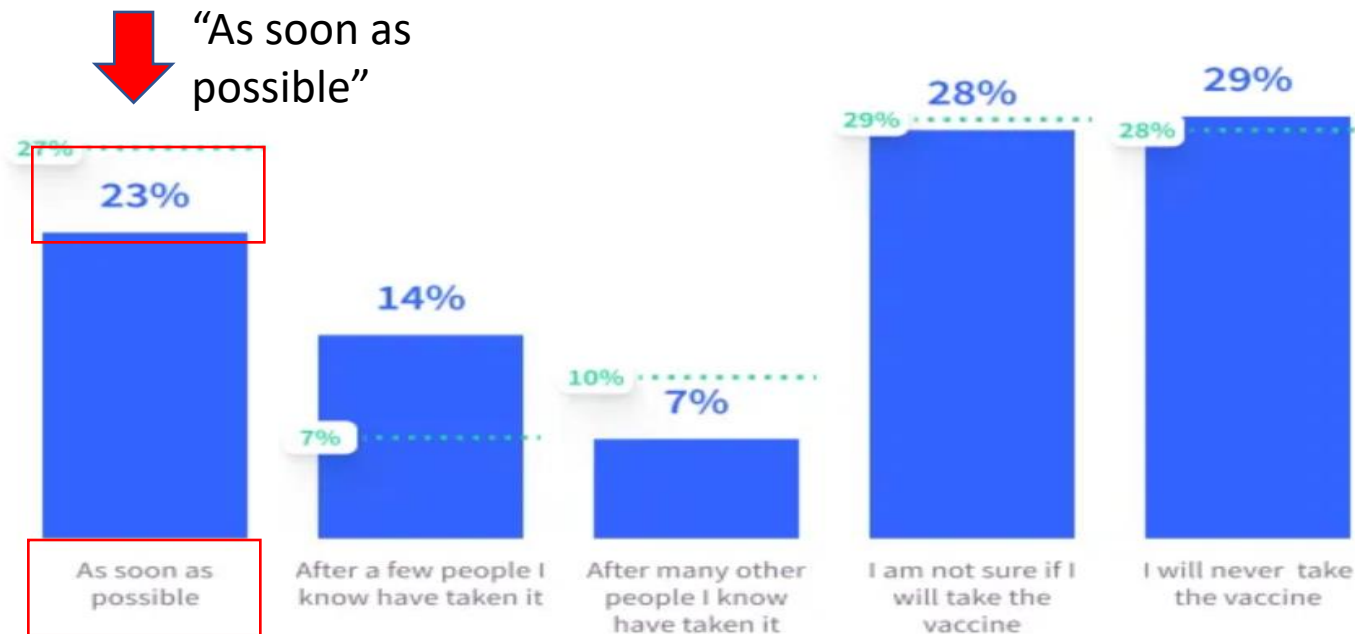
Social Media: Don't

- Not even if “demographically representative”
 - *When the vaccine is available to you, when do you think you would be most likely to take it?*



Social Media: Don't

- Not even if “demographically representative”
 - *When the vaccine is available to you, when do you think you would be most likely to take it?*



Social Media: Do

- Look at comments for new facts/ideas only



Social Media: Do/Don't

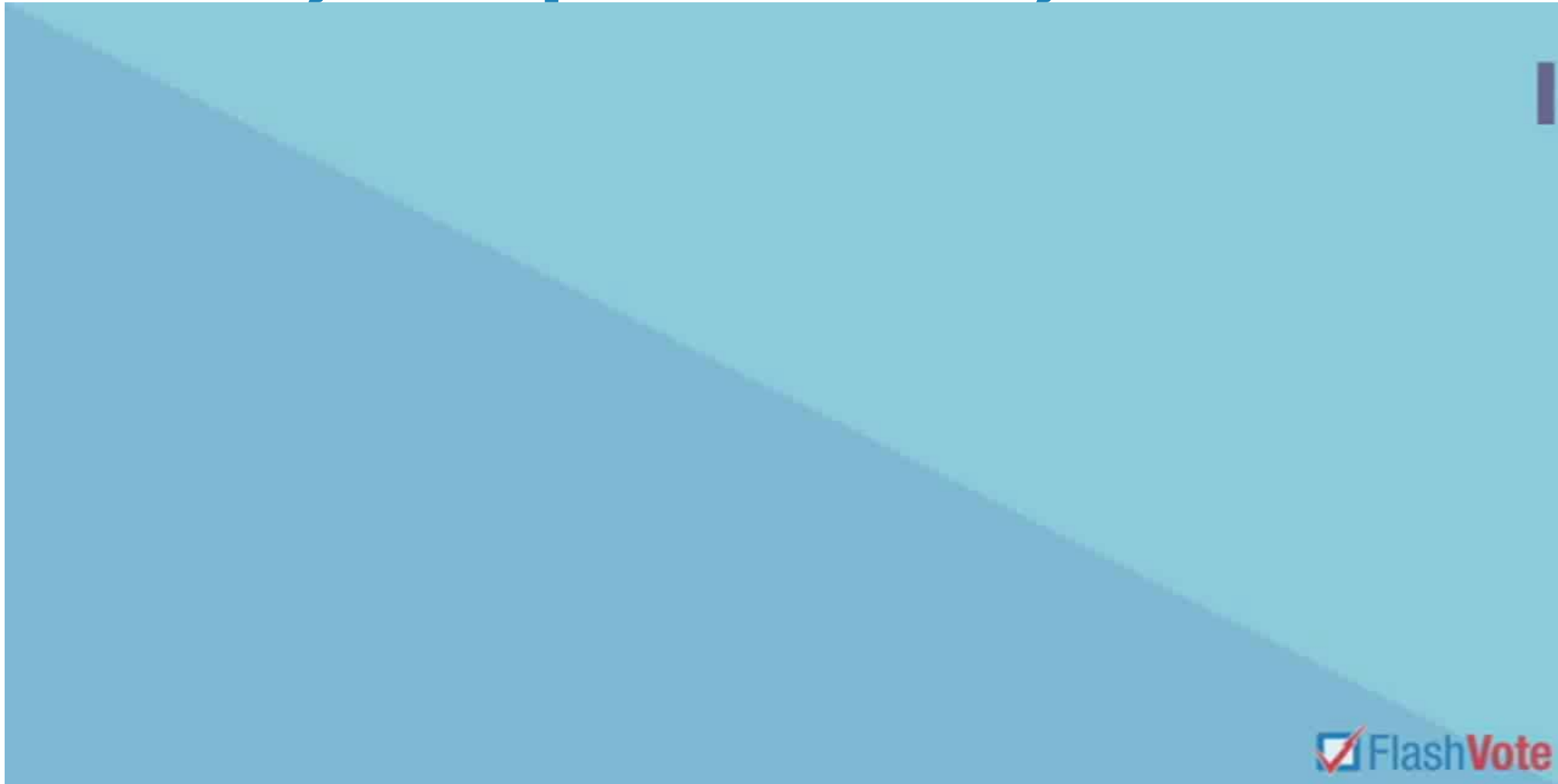
- Use nextdoor to push info (disable comments)



- But “NEVER” hide/delete comments made anywhere (illegal!)

ONLINE “SURVEYS”

Online Survey Example: Community Center



Online Surveys: Don't

- Don't ask multiple choice questions (% results)
- “Which would you prefer, A or B?”
- “Which of the following is most important to you?”
- “Do you approve or disapprove of ____?”

Online Surveys: Do

- Do ask open-ended questions:
- “If you could change anything about ____, what would you change?”
- “What would be one way to make ____ better?”
- “What concerns do you have about ____, if any?”

Online Surveys: Do

- Do use online survey forms for small well-defined groups with similar interests in a topic like “tennis players” or “short term rental owners” or even “employees”
- If you can get high response rates (50%+)

CONCLUSION: TAKEAWAYS PLUS Q&A

TWO USEFUL TYPES OF INPUT DATA

Remember These?

“Work Smarter” = **How** to do



“Work Wiser” = **What** to do

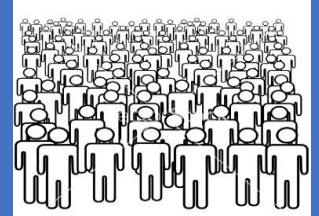


The Two Types of Useful Input

Individual Facts/Ideas

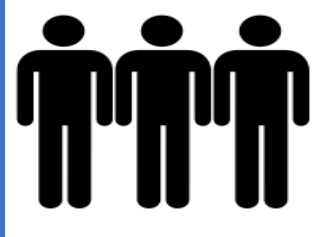


Community Preferences

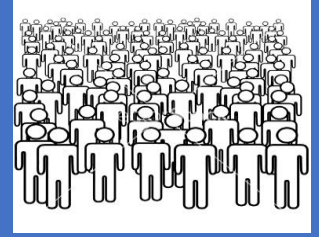


The Two Types of Useful Input

Individual Facts/Ideas

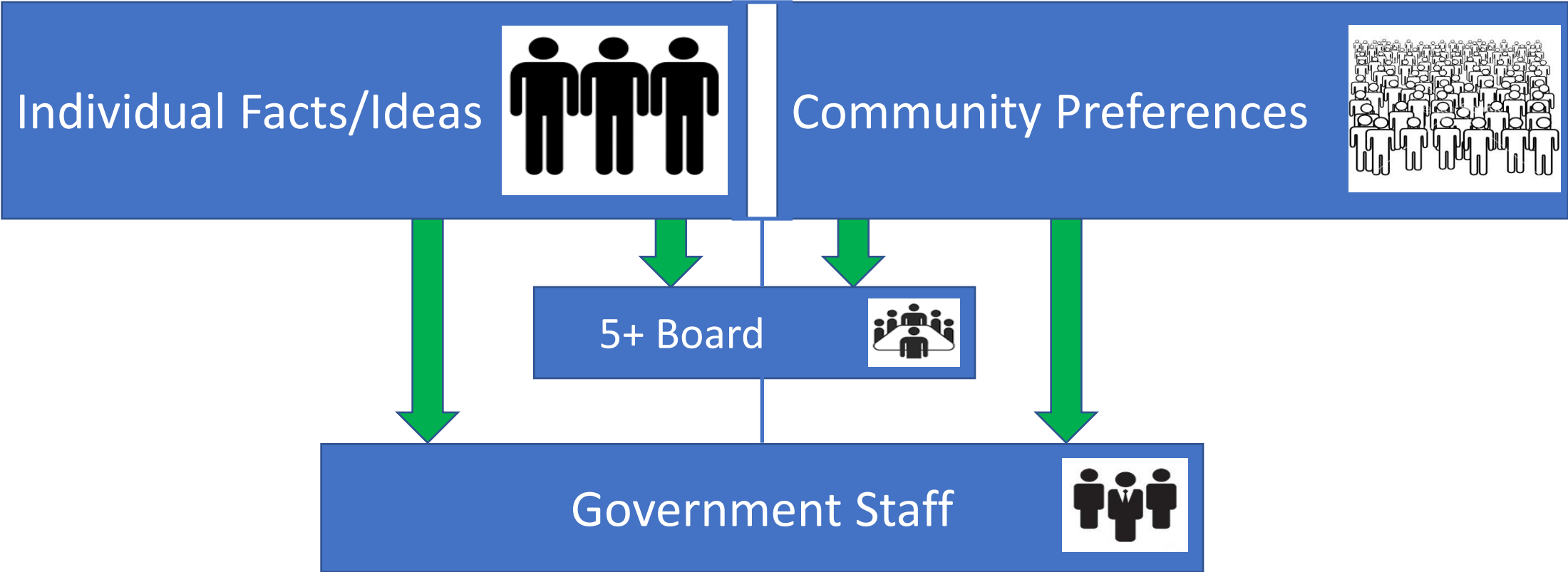


Community Preferences



Everything else is noise!

Both Can Be Helpful



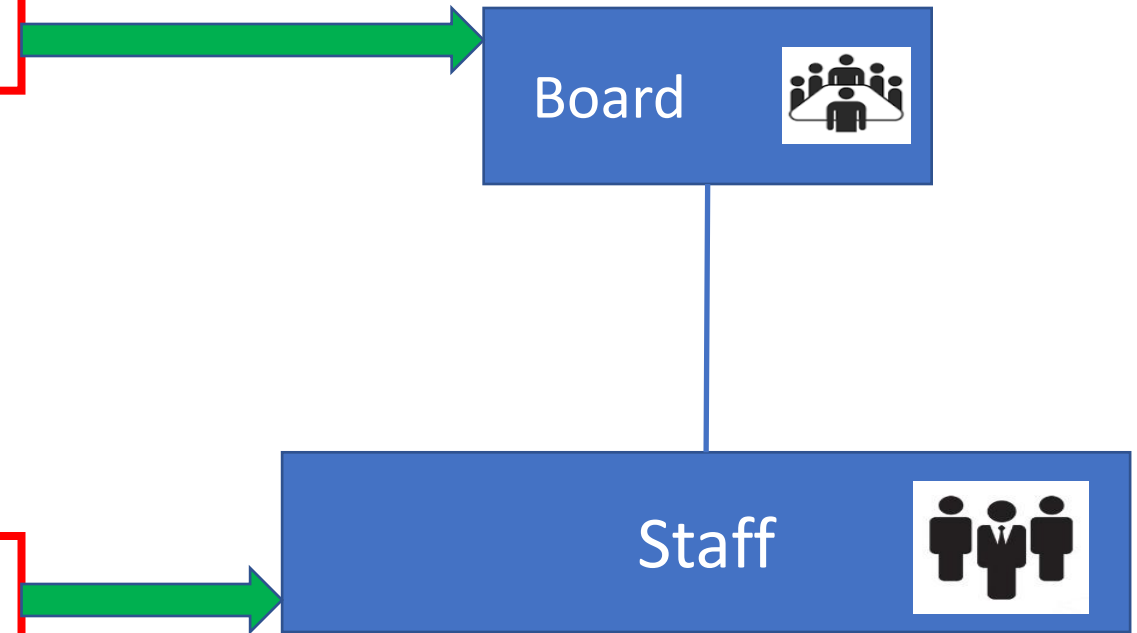
Usually You Want These

- What to Do?

- Community preferences
- Individual facts/ideas/feedback

- How to Do It?

- Community preferences
- Individual facts/ideas/feedback



But Don't Forget These

- What to Do?

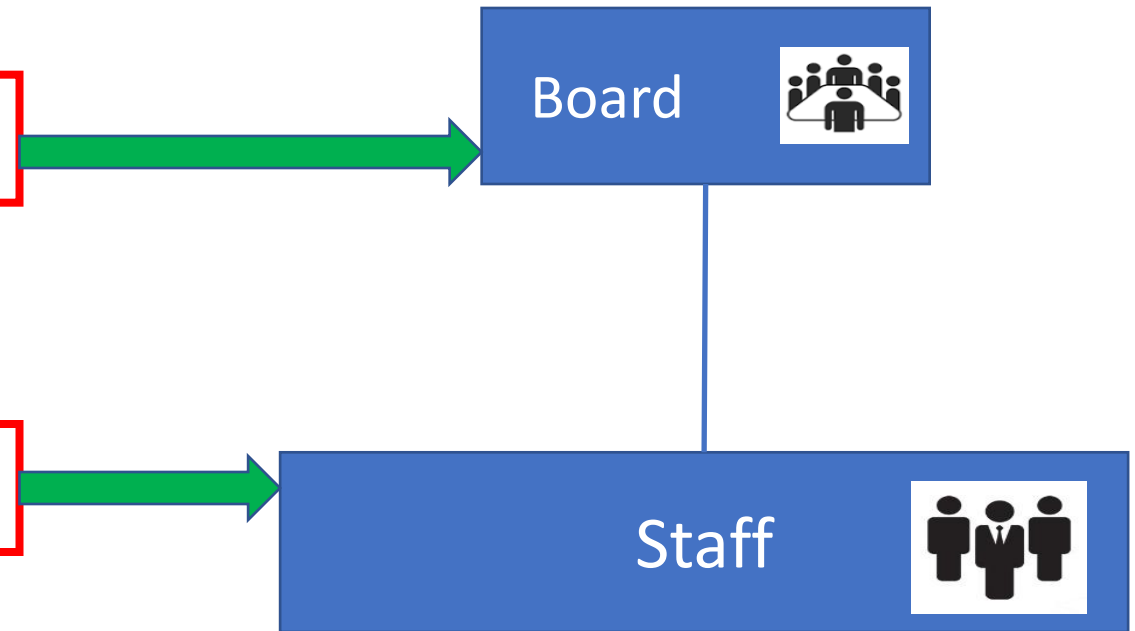
- Community preferences

- Individual facts/ideas/feedback

- How to Do It?

- Community preferences

- Individual facts/ideas/feedback



Need Valid Facts and Preferences

- Facts About Facts
 - Valid/true observations or ideas
- Facts About Opinions
 - Scientific community preferences



Not Opinions About Facts and Preferences

- Facts About Facts

- Valid/true observations or ideas



- Facts About Opinions

- Scientific community preferences



- Opinions About Facts

- Unverified/uninformed statements



- Opinions About Opinions

- Unscientific community preferences



TWO CHECKLISTS FOR USEFUL INPUT DATA

Filter Engagement Input: “New? True? For You?”

- Is it new?
 - Do you already know it? (Yes/No/Not Sure)
- Is it true?
 - Is it a statement of fact? (Yes/No/Not Sure)
- Is it for you?
 - Does it pertain to your activities? (Yes/No/Not Sure)

You Need All Three To Be Helpful

- Is it new?
 - Do you already know it? (Yes)
- Is it true?
 - Is it a statement of fact? (Yes)
- Is it for you?
 - Does it pertain to your activities? (Yes)

Need 3/3



Engage With Open Ended Questions Only

- Ask open-ended factual questions
 - Anyone know a good pizza place?
 - Any ideas for the vacant lot near the school?
- Never ask **preference** questions (percentages)
 - Who makes the best pizza?
 - Should we build a field or a playground?

What About True Community Preferences?

FACTS

- New? ☒
- True? ☒
- For You? ☒

COMMUNITY PREFERENCES

- Large Number?
- Not Self-Selected?
- Good Questions?

Filter Survey Input: Also Helpful if 3/3

FACTS

- New? ☒
- True? ☒
- For You? ☒

COMMUNITY PREFERENCES

- Large Number? ☒
- Not Self-Selected? ☒
- Good Questions? ☒

The Good, The Bad, The Ugly

- Facts about Opinions



- Facts about Facts



- Opinions about Facts



- Opinions about Opinions



- Misinformation about Facts



- Misinformation about Opinions



CHECKLIST FOR CHANNELS AND NEEDS

Remember: Different Types of Input Needs

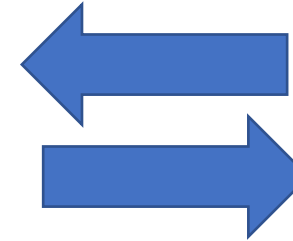
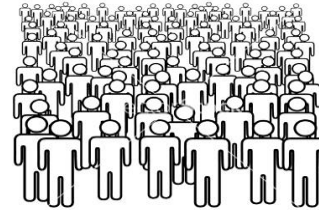
- “New facts/ideas/feedback” for decisions

- Tool => Engagement Input



- “Community preferences” for decisions

- Tool => Scientific Surveys



- “Interaction” to build trust

- Tool => Interactive Forums



Guide: Match Input Needs to Input Channels

	Meetings, Emails, Social Media, Online Engagement/Surveys	Scientific Community Surveys
New Facts, Ideas or Feedback	✓ YES	✓ YES
Community Preferences	✗ NO	✓ YES
Interaction (Q&A)	✓ YES	✗ NO

Guide: Match Input Needs to Input Channels

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QUESTIONS?

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THANK YOU!

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