



# Legal Ops & Organizational Change: Practical Examples & How to Succeed

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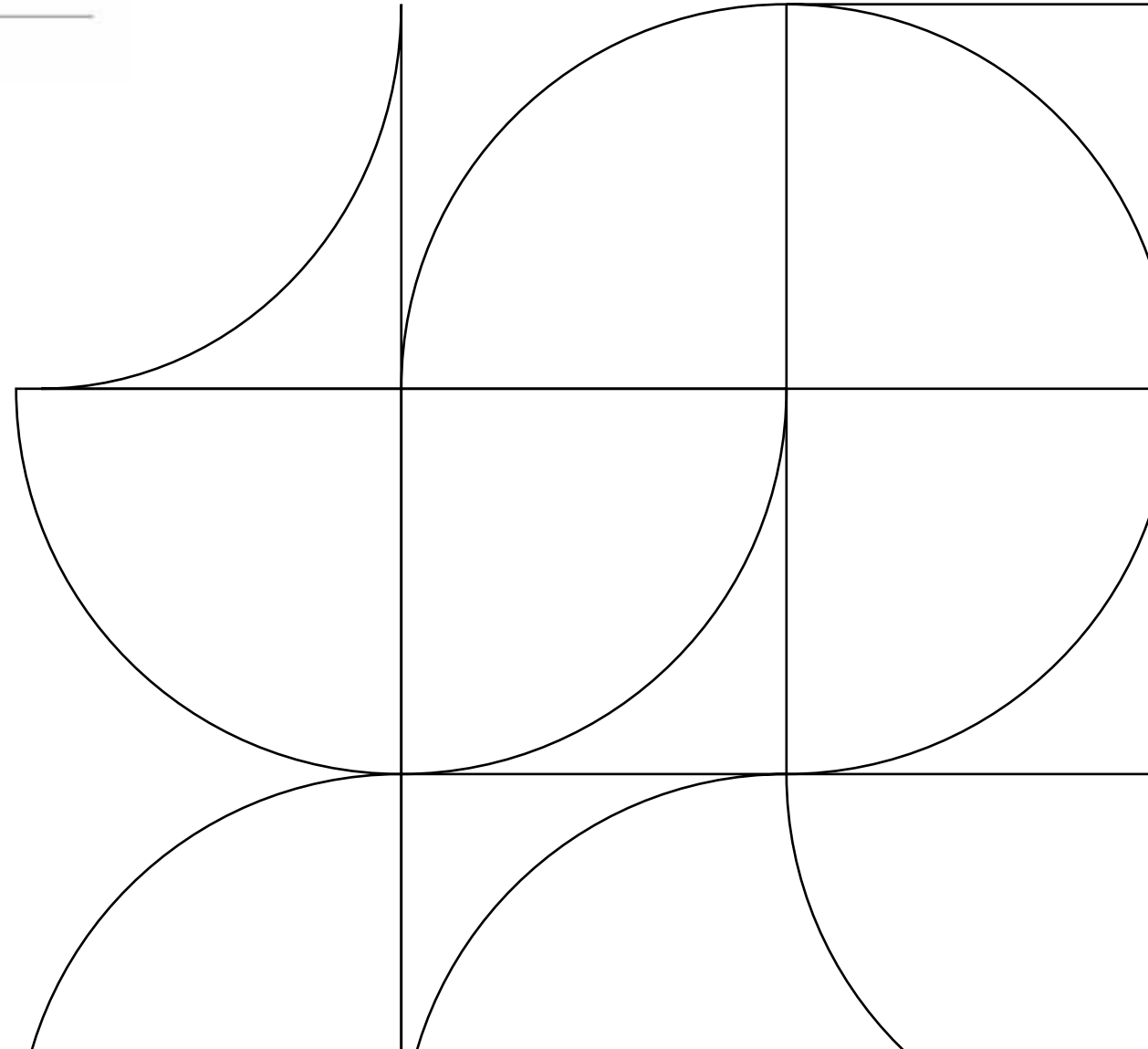
Rachel DiGiacomo

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**Seyfarth Shaw LLP**

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# Speakers

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# Agenda

- 1 | Change Management 101: A Brief Overview
- 2 | Implementing a Centralized Request & Intake Platform
- 3 | Outsourcing Low-Touch Work
- 4 | Standing Up Self-Service Resources
- 5 | Refining Team Culture & Dynamics
- 6 | Introducing Artificial Intelligence Resources

# Change Management 101: A Brief Overview



## What is Change Management?

- Human side of change
- Utilization of process, tools, and techniques to achieve change
- Goal is to sustain a desired business outcome
- It's not new – there are many methodologies seeking the same outcome.

# Key Change Management Principles

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**Create Buy-in**



**Communicate  
Early and Often**



**Lock-in the  
Change**

# Create Buy-in

- Identify Key Stakeholders
  - Leaders and influential team members
- Delegate
- Understand the Culture and Work with It
- Deal with Resistance

# Communicate EARLY and OFTEN

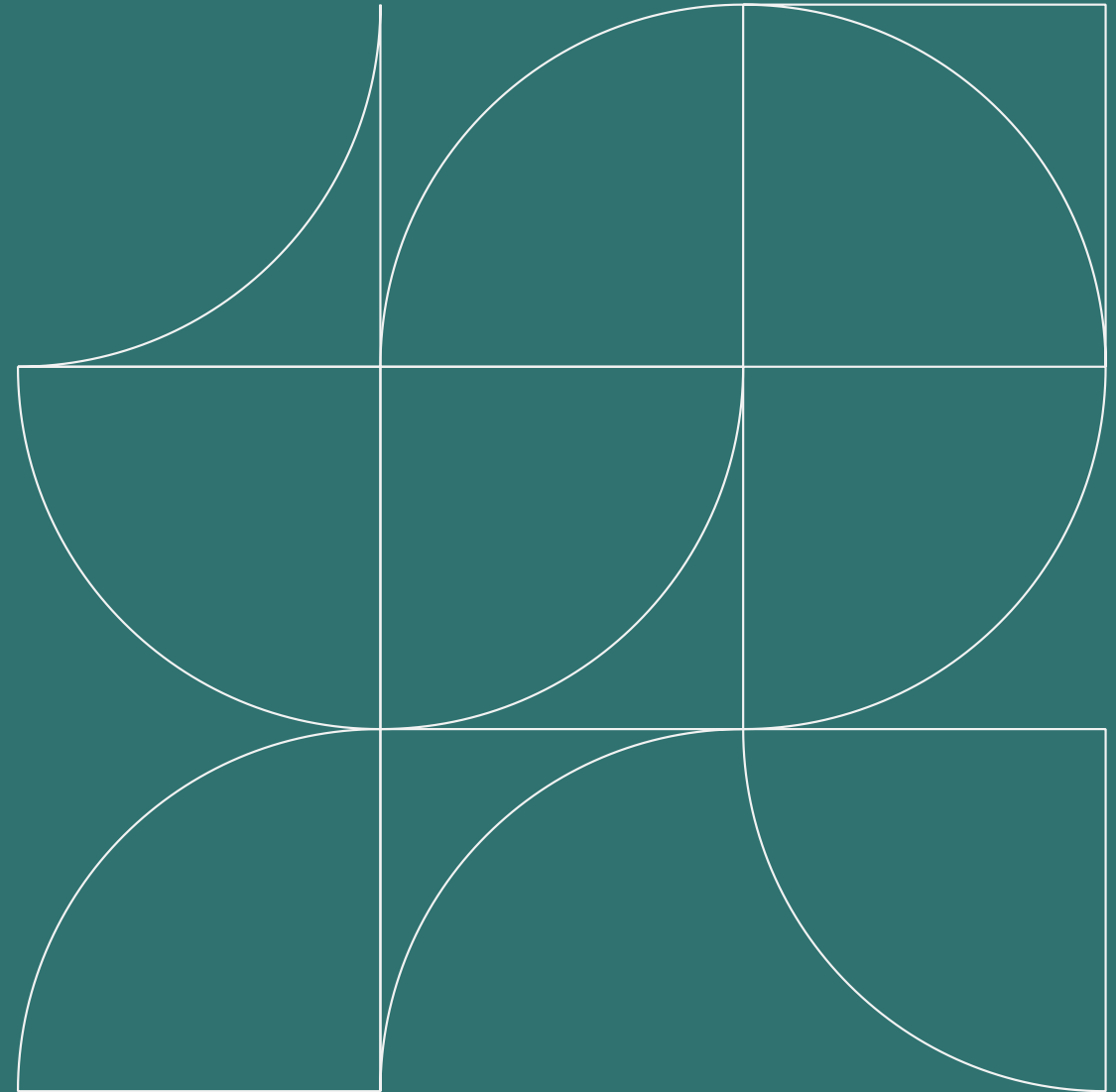
- Create a communication plan
- Properly Translate the Vision
- Acknowledge that change affects different stakeholders in different ways.
- Reinforce the changes being made with continual messaging that ties back to why the transformation is necessary.

# Lock-in the Change

- Embed Changes
- Monitor and Measure
- Celebrate Successes



# Implementing a Centralized Request & Intake Platform



# Centralized Request & Intake Platform

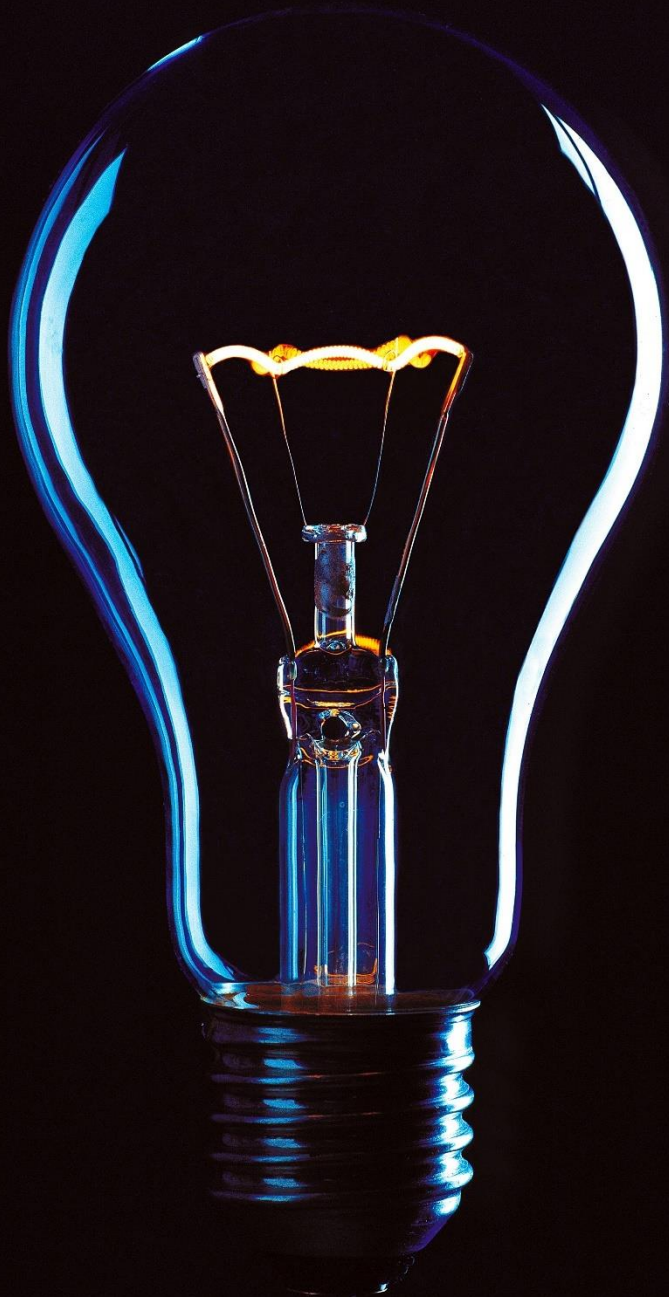
- Starting state was fractured, siloed intake – all via email
- Created “Legal Central Intake” in August 2021 for contract operations and independent contractor agreement requests
  - Homegrown in Smartsheet by LegalOps
- Three years later, all commercial- and contract- related requests originate at the intake
  - In addition to Privacy, Compliance + Ethics, General Questions requests
- Saturation and brand recognition across the organization – people know “the LCI”
- 20,000 requests since 2021



# Potential Pitfalls & Challenges

- Going around the system and creating special exceptions
- Echo chamber / not listening to stakeholder feedback or the input of the team members responsible for the work
- Attempting 100% coverage / bespoke options – accommodating every allegedly unique use case
- Perception of the “Legal Black Hole” and loss of personal relationships
- Ignoring the story told by the data – one of the biggest benefits to centralized intake is the additional insight

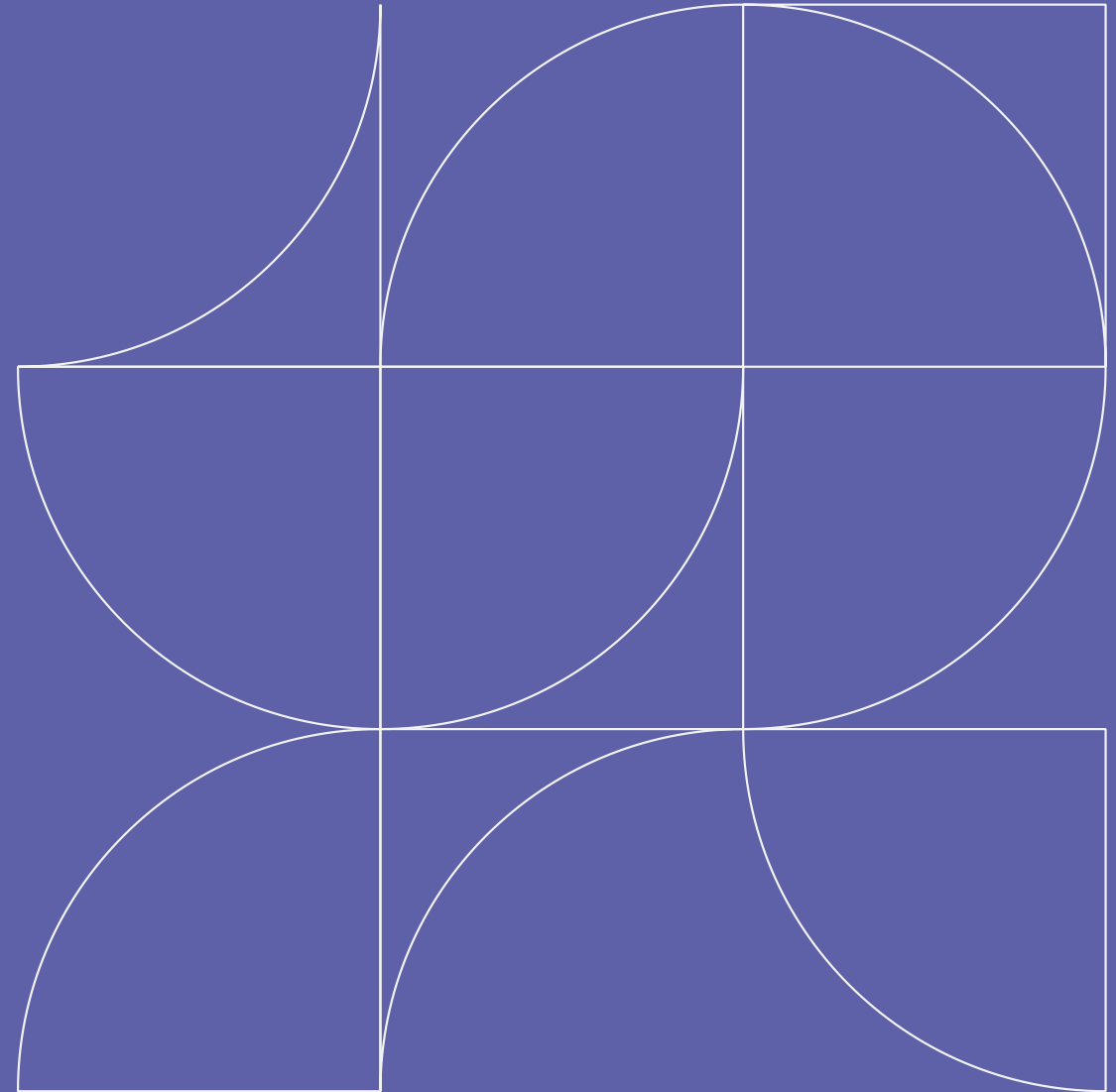




# How to Succeed

- Clear communication about benefits (not just “easier for Legal”)
- Ensure a united front – be clear about roles and responsibilities
- Go slow and iterate, vs. fast and fully baked
- Use language that stakeholders can understand
- Provide as much visibility as possible into the request lifecycle (submitted, assigned, in progress, need info, etc.)
- Establish avenues for help and questions

# Outsourcing Low-Touch Work





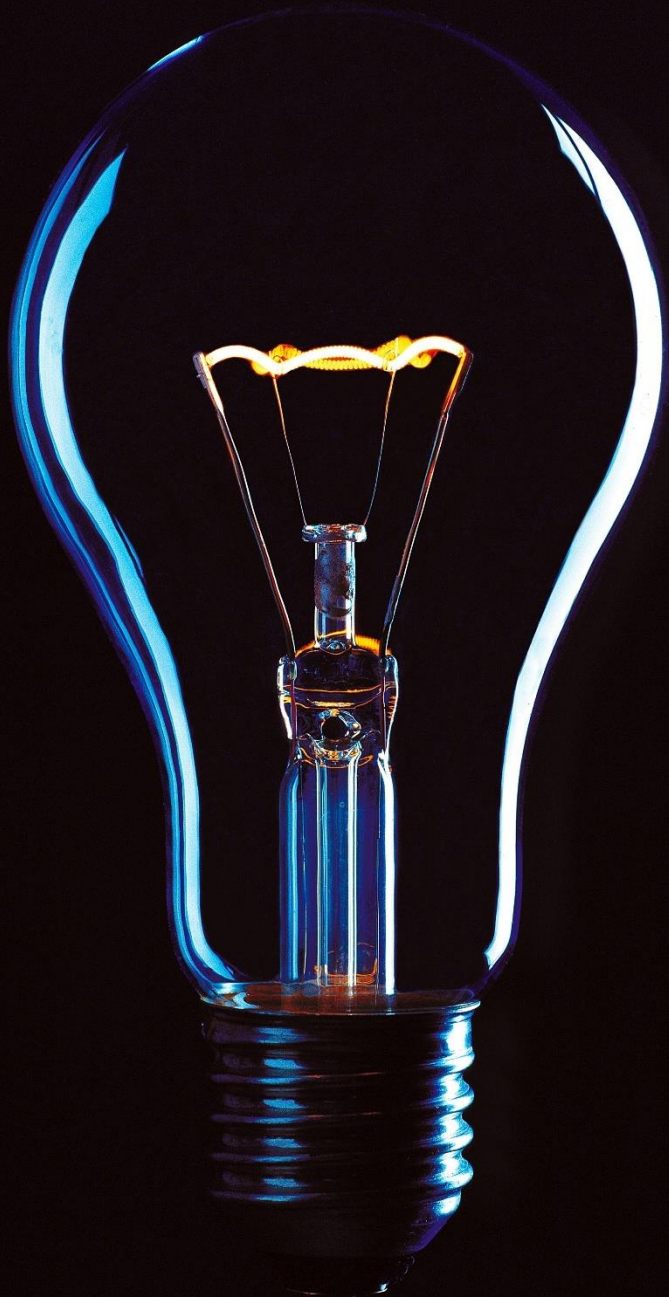
# Outsourcing Low-Touch Work

- Contracting work was fractured across the Legal team
  - Drafting handled by different individuals based on contract type, contract-related administrative work handled by ContractOps
- Summer 2023, our organization went through a cost reduction / continuous improvement effort
  - Partnered with a consultant to identify functions within Legal that could be shifted to a third-party vendor with the goals of:
    - Creating flexible, scalable legal operating model
    - Increasing in-house capacity
    - Cost savings over time
- Over the next year, we worked through the process of that assessment including: a project pilot, process mapping, due diligence, knowledge transfer and training to facilitate that decision
- September 2024, 8 offshore resources fully operational and working as a single, integrated team managing the contracting work vs. the work being split across two teams

# Potential Pitfalls & Challenges

- Setting unrealistic expectations (expecting instant results/improvements, over-estimating cost savings, not considering possible disrupters/roadblocks)
- Cultural misalignment (corporate, human/social, etc.)
- Failing to retain a sense of humanity, both for impacted employees as well as the outsourced team
- Underestimating the internal effort required for a successful transition (avoiding loss of institutional knowledge)
- Missing opportunities for change and innovation due to “paving dirt roads”



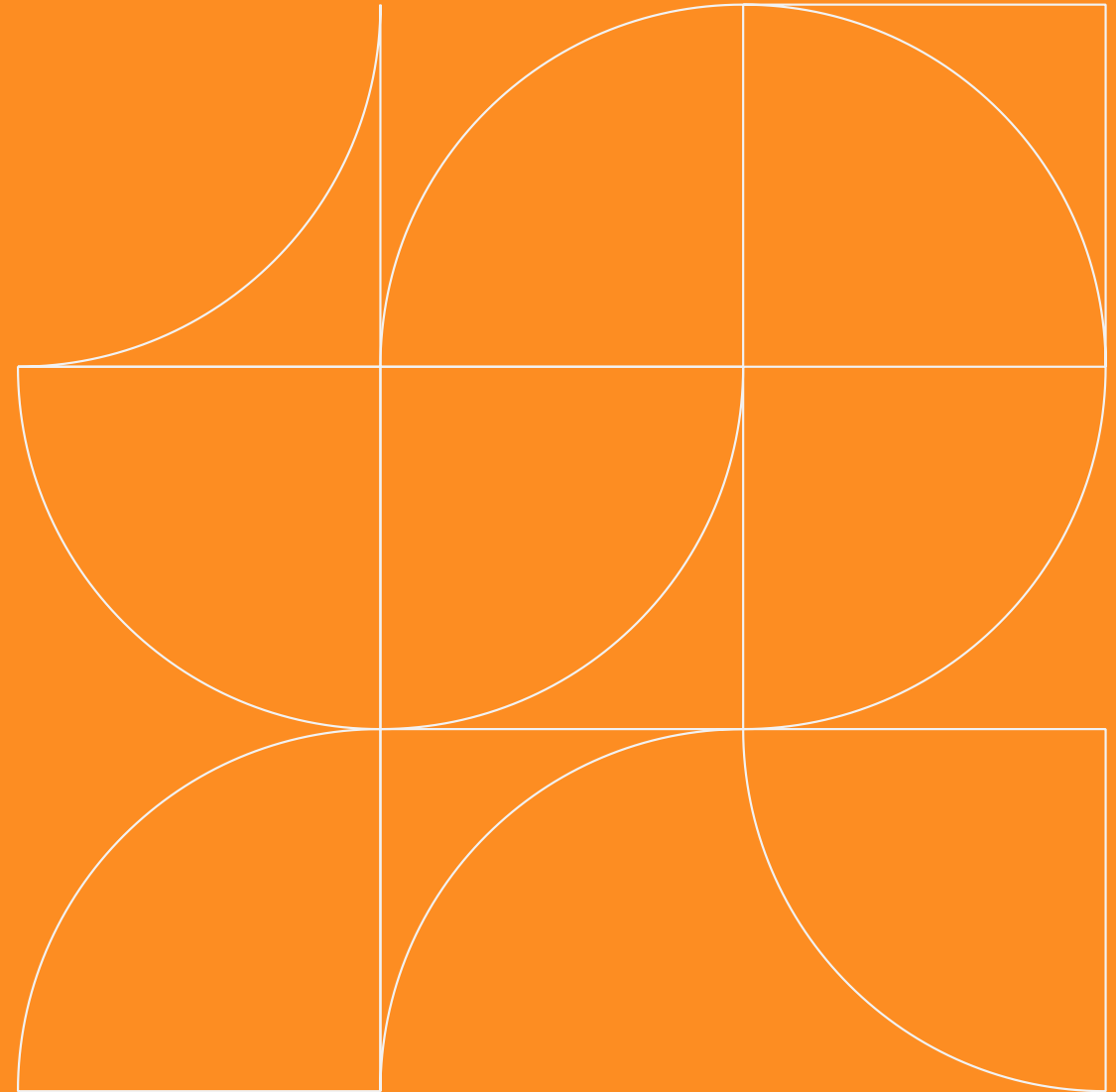


# How to Succeed

- Move ahead at 75% -- don't let perfection be the enemy of good – while celebrating milestones and successes
- Execute with empathy – important for exiting employees as well as new extended team members
- Spend time developing a comprehensive, structured transition and knowledge transfer plan
- Capitalize on opportunities for growth and push past the urge to give into “we’ve always done it this way”
- Maintain flexibility and adaptability to tackle adversity as it appears
- Find the vendor that fits your needs but that also shares your values and approach to culture, respect, etc.



# Standing Up Self-Service Resources



# Standing Up Self-Service Resources

## *Self-Serve RFP and Bid Support for Sales Teams*

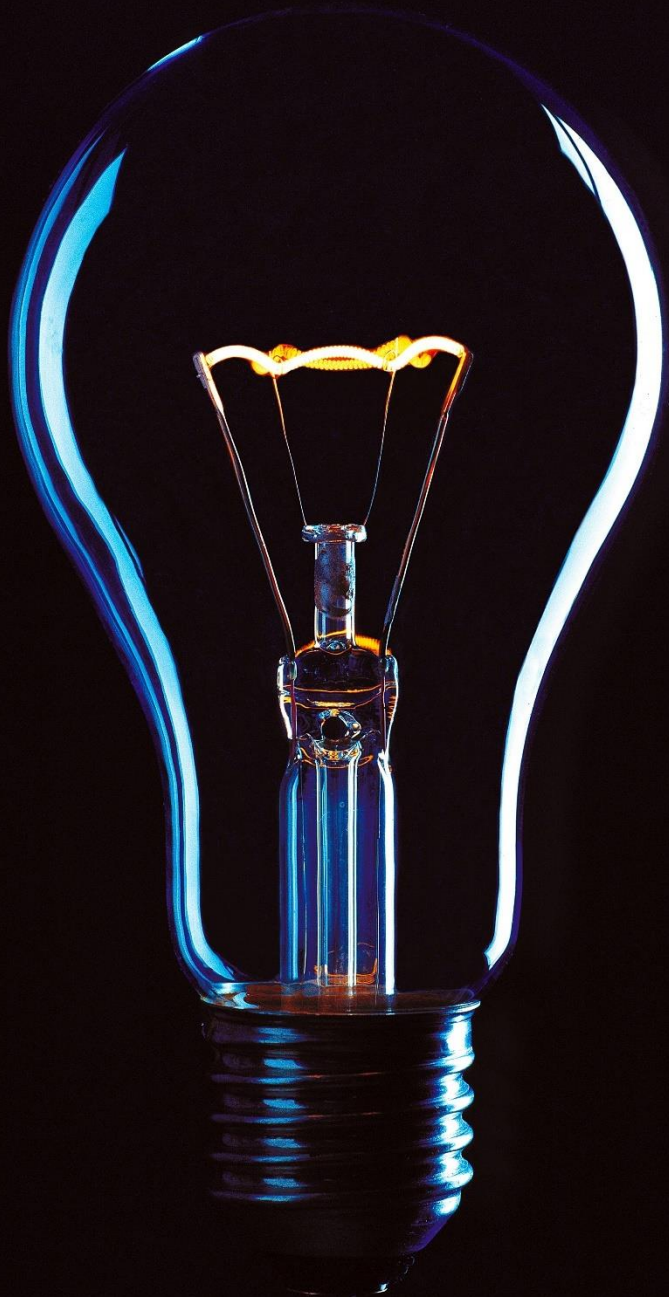
- Lack of centralized bid support / sales enablement teams created additional burden on Legal
  - Repetitive questions relating to who can sign, where to go for certain info
  - No repository for corporate/company profile information created another bottleneck and burden for Legal, especially the Corporate Counsel
  - Lack of clarity around what Legal is responsible for vs. the business units
- Created a collection of living resources that are self-serve:
  - Smartsheet database of Corporate information
  - Enterprise “Who to Call” list
  - Repository of forms the BU’s can approve independently
  - Clear guidelines to create accountability on what the business owns vs. what Legal is responsible for
  - Expectations regarding turnaround times



# Potential Pitfalls & Challenges

- Resistance to change / overcoming muscle memory on the part of Legal's stakeholders (and Legal team members!)
- Don't over do it – too much of a good thing will overwhelm end users and complicate processes meant to be simple (and create a maintenance burden on Legal)
- Misuse of materials due to inadequate of training / understanding of resources, use cases, etc.
- Applying self-service paradigm to concepts that are too complex/technical/variable
- Organizational awareness of available resources

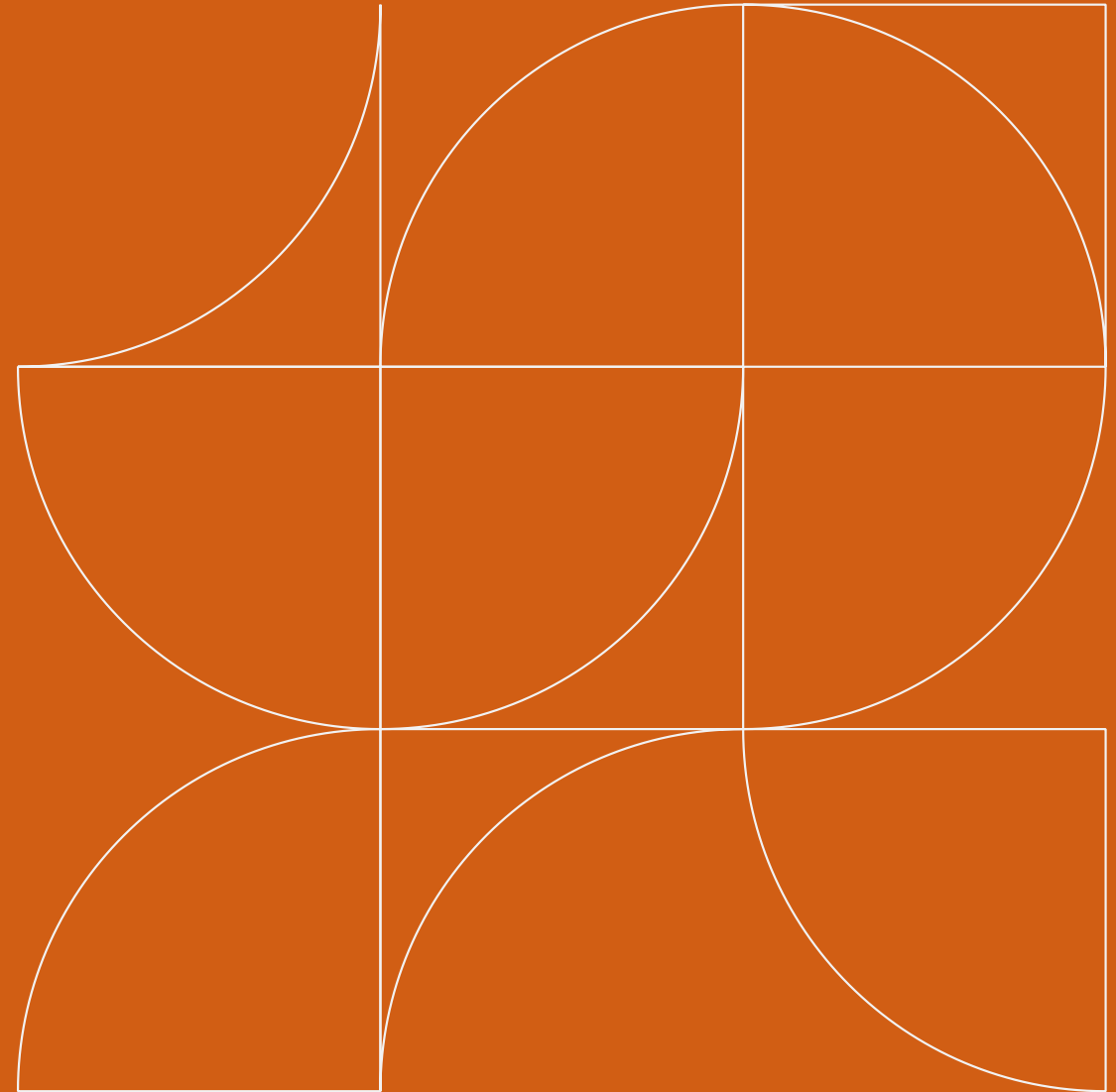




# How to Succeed

- Ensure resources are kept up to date and establish clear accountability for doing so
- Make resources easily accessible for stakeholders – meet folks where they work (leverage existing platforms)
- Establish avenues for help and questions
- Remain consistent in directing stakeholders to use the available resources (don't give in)
- Communicate benefits to stakeholders / end users in ways that they can see direct impact to their work
- Maintain flexibility – update/add/change resources as you get feedback from stakeholders (you're never “done”)

# Refining Team Culture & Dynamics





# Refining Team Culture & Dynamics

*“Culture eats strategy for breakfast.”*  
-- Peter Drucker

Focusing on quantity over quality as success indicator



Intentionality and building partnerships

Legal as the “Office of No” leading to over-indexing on “Customer Service”



Balancing business vs. Legal interests & prioritizing value

Prioritizing stakeholder wants over needs

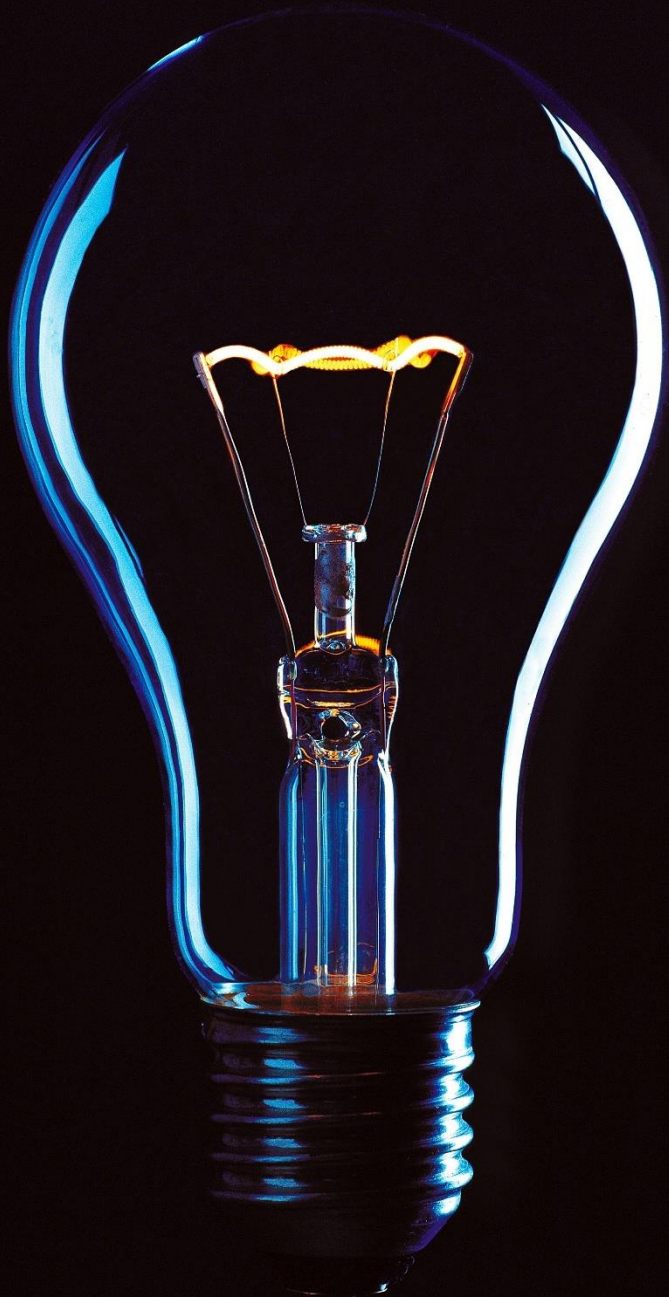


Discovering underlying motivation and root cause

# Potential Pitfalls & Challenges

- Ignorance is bliss mentality leading to stalled professional development / growth and hindering innovation
- Personal resistance to change – fear of becoming obsolete “they won’t need me anymore” clouds ability to contribute to the collective success of the team
- Fear of failing which can erode trust and cohesion within the team ultimately damaging performance





## How to Succeed

- Design processes with the intended audience in mind – this requires understanding of stakeholders in the context of the business and roles
- Provide more than what was “asked” - read between the lines of what your stakeholder's request is, ask for additional context and provide guidance on what their next 2-3 steps of the process will look like, along with your conclusion
- Foster a strong baseline of psychological safety which encourages open communication, a strong sense of personal autonomy, reframes mistakes as opportunities, and contributes to a culture of mutual trust
- Remember that no change can be successful without stakeholder buy-in





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## CLE: NEW PROCESS

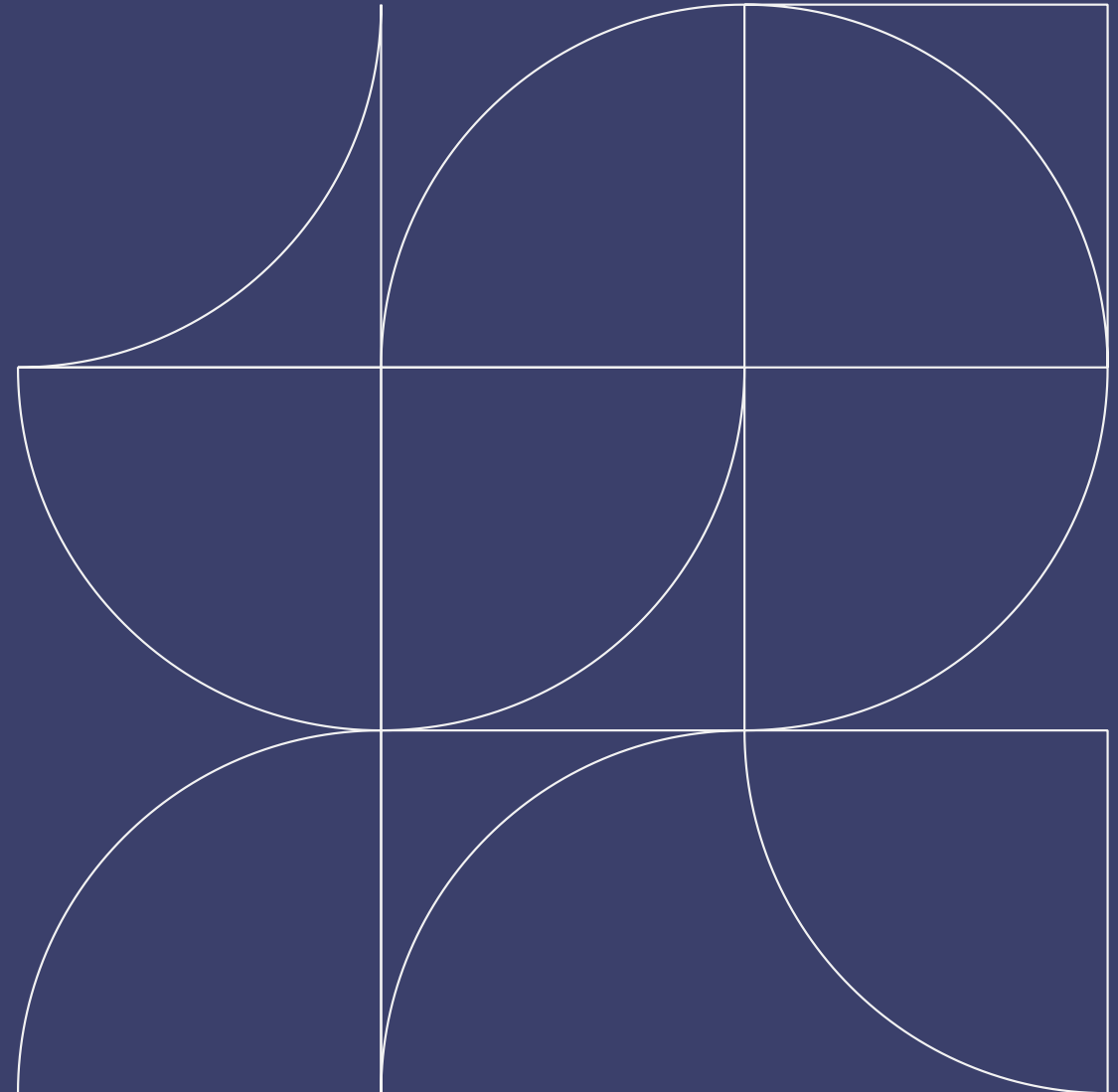
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# Introducing Artificial Intelligence Resources



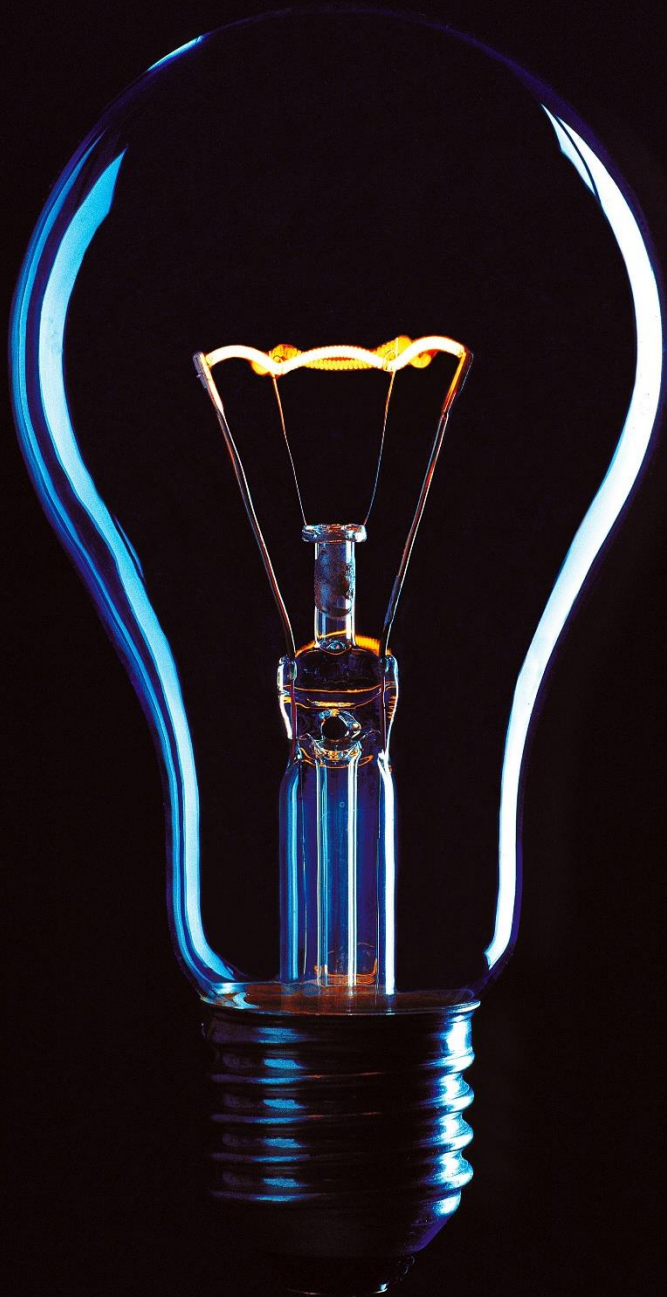
# Introducing Artificial Intelligence Resources

- **Problem Statement:** We onboarded a new client with thousands of SPLs filed across the US, split evenly between in-house and outsourced management by Seyfarth. Each SPL requires a unique client matter number for accurate tracking. The high volume of data entry needed to assign these numbers has necessitated the hiring of two additional staff members. This process is currently labor-intensive and may lead to inefficiencies and potential errors in data management.
- **Implementing the Change:** To streamline this, we developed an AI bot with our tech team to review and input data into our system. The bot requires just a single approval click to complete the data entry, freeing up resources for other tasks.

# Potential Pitfalls & Challenges

- Communication and Transparency
- Training and Skill Development
- Quality and Accuracy
- Process and Workflow Changes





# How to Succeed

## Create Stakeholder Buy-In

- Highlight Benefits
- Involve Stakeholders in Planning
- Showcase Quick Wins

## Communicate Early and Often

- Develop a Communication Plan
- Start Early
- Provide Regular Updates
- Solicit Feedback

## Lock-in the Change

- Formalize the Change
- Monitor and Measure Success
- Celebrate Successes:
- Address Challenges Promptly

thank  
you

