

First comes scale...

The background is a solid light orange color. It features several abstract geometric shapes: a yellow circle in the upper left, a teal triangle in the upper left, a large pinkish-red blob in the upper right, a yellow circle in the middle right, a large orange shape with a white semi-circle cutout in the lower right, and a teal triangle in the lower right. There are also several thin, dark grey lines scattered across the background. A stylized illustration of a person with yellow hair and a blue shirt is in the upper right, with one arm raised in a gesture.

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mrfrisby.com/public/ldlon.pdf

First comes scale...



**First comes a love
letter to the Barbican.**





Barbican
Centre

A low-angle, black and white photograph of the Barbican Centre in London. The image shows a tall, textured concrete building with a large, stylized logo on its facade. The logo consists of a stylized 'B' and 'C' intertwined, with the words 'Barbican' and 'Centre' written below it. To the left, a section of the building features a grid of small, rectangular windows. To the right, a curved section of the building with multiple balconies is visible. The sky is a uniform light gray.







99designs



**CITY
OF
LONDON**





→9

270-7

→8A

5

6



281-1

M





C3	Cinema 3	Level 9
C2	Cinema 2	Level 9
CR	Conference Rooms	Level 9
AG	Art Gallery	Level 8
C	Conservatory	Level 8
E	To Exhibition Halls	Level 8
SC	Sculpture Court	Level 8
LB	Library	Level 7
TF	Terrace Foyer	Level 5
LT	Lakeside Terrace	Level 5
W	Waterside Café	Level 5
SF	Stalls Foyer	Level 3
C1	Cinema 1	Level 1
P	The Pit	Level 1
BH	Barbican Hall	
BT	Barbican Theatre	
L	Lifts	

Whitecross
Street

SILK STREET ENTRANCE

Silk
Street

The most exhilarating thing about the Barbican is the sheer scale of its ambition and that they actually got the whole damn thing finished

-Piers Gough








FRONSHER
CRESCENT EC2



 FROBISHER
CRESCENT EC2





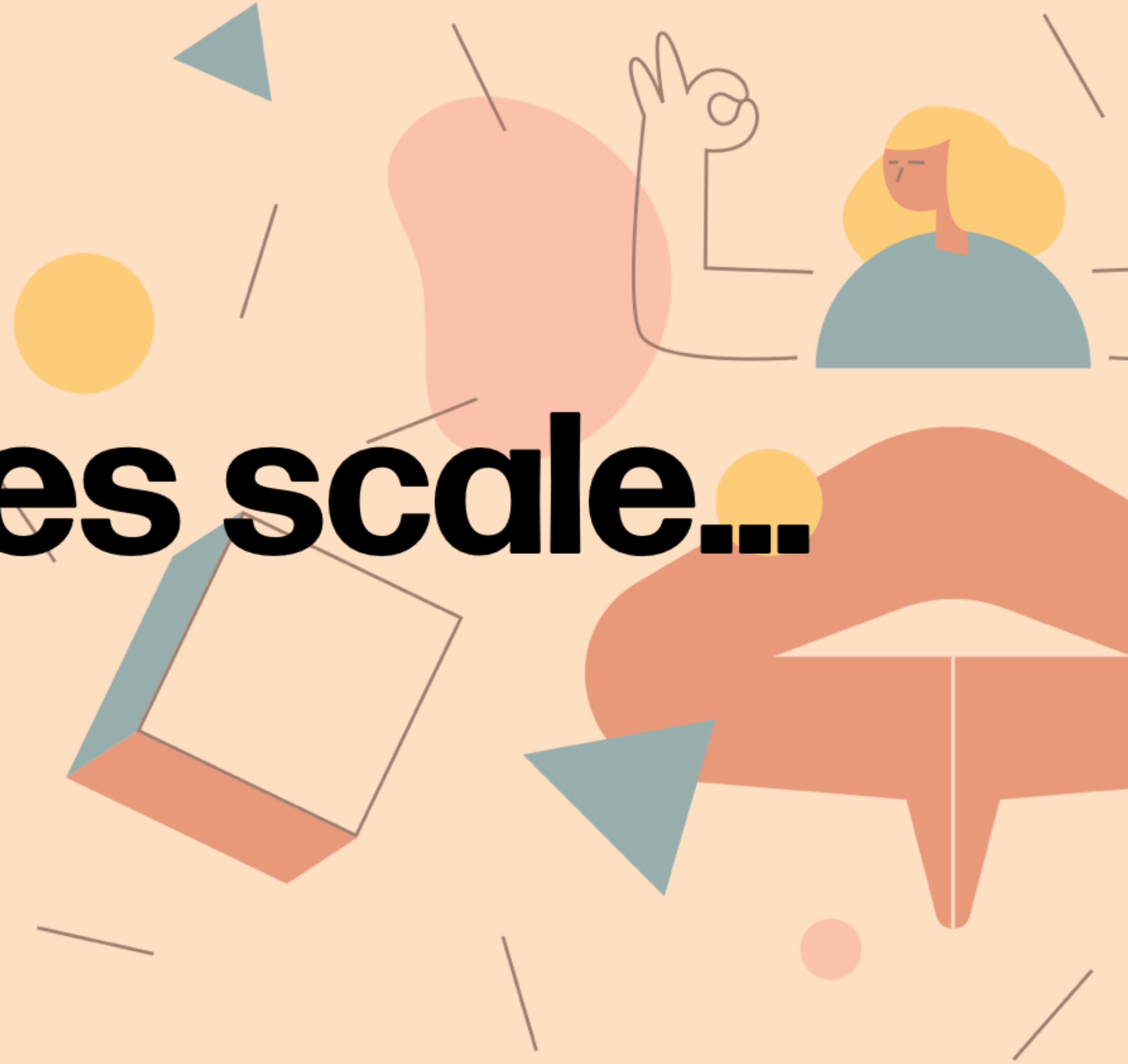




LAUDERDALE
PLACE



Second comes scale...



**Designing stuff for 18 years
Lead Design at Booking.com for 8
Had a baby
Started at Deliveroo 3 months ago
Moving back to England at a time of great
political and societal stability when the
future is one of sunlit uplands and not at
all an epoch-defining national
embarrassment.**







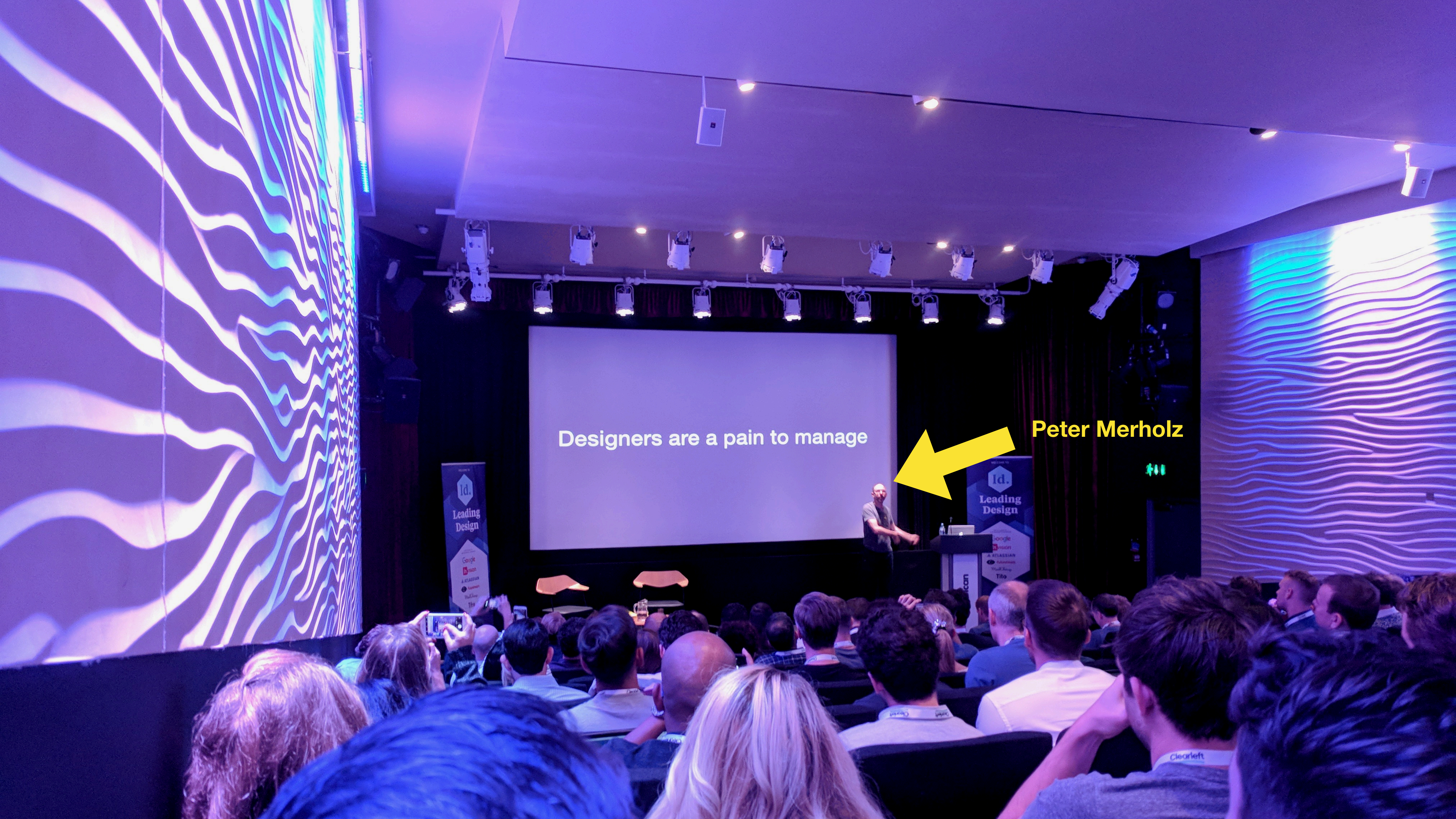
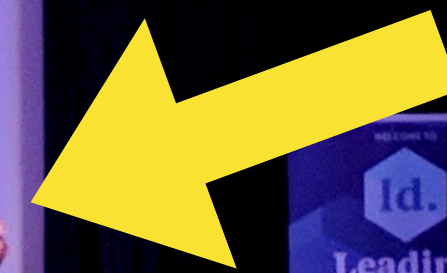




Me

Designers are a pain to manage

Peter Merholz

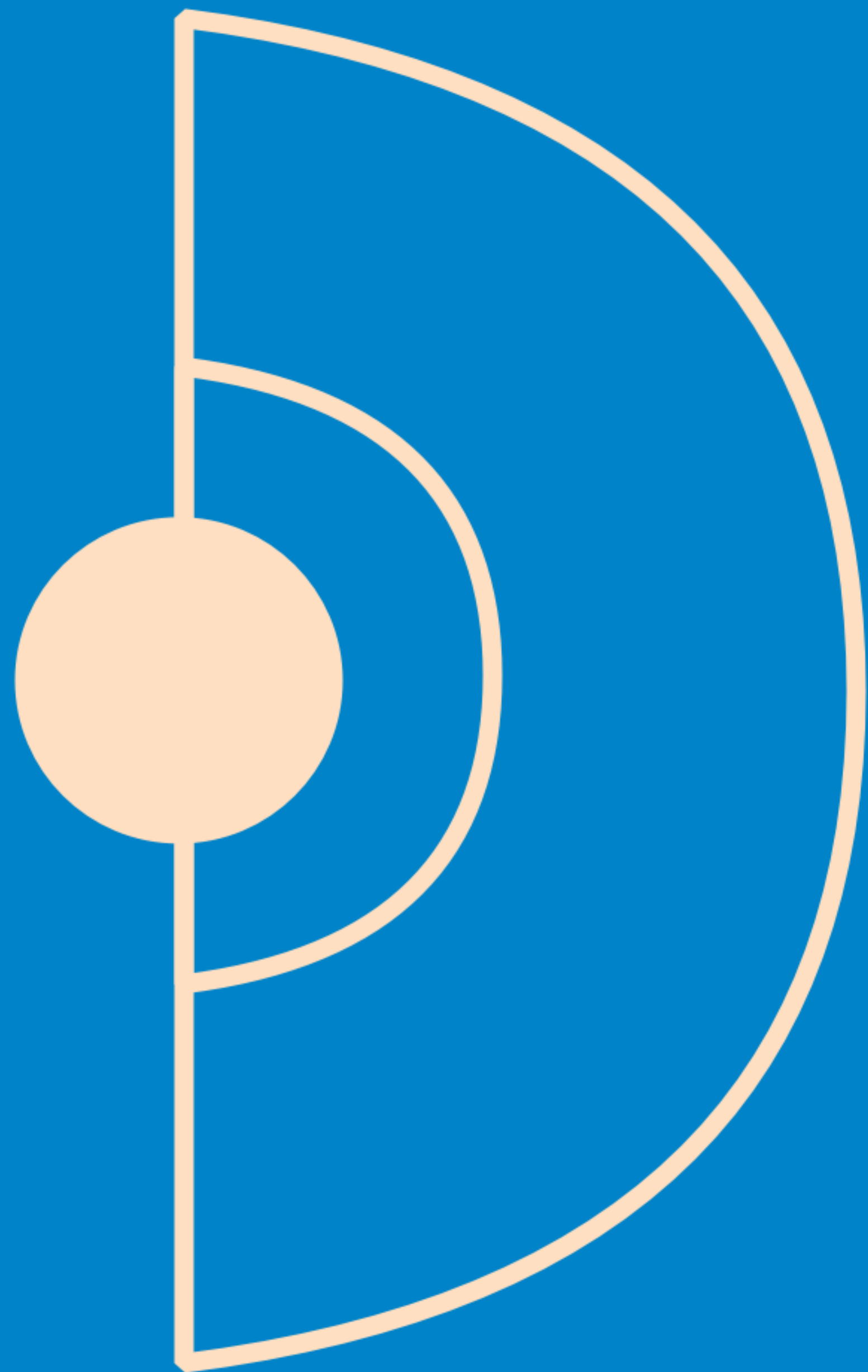


Managing through layers of abstraction
Evangelism & advocacy
Scaling beyond your own abilities
From service to strategic asset
Design more than stuff
Design leader as translator
The contrarian voice
Creating good jobs





Managing through layers of abstraction



**The Work
The People
The Environment**

The Work

Being a good designer is what got you here, but that's not what your team needs from you anymore.

The People

Learn from your peers in
Product & Engineering.
They're much better than us
at this transition.

The People

The good news is,
management is not an art, it's
a science. You can learn to do
it well.

The Environment

Here you can put your design hat back on. Design a culture, it's rituals, it's artefacts & it's language.

The Transition

Be transparent about where you are on this spectrum. The way you spend your time will change massively. Manage expectations.



Evangelism & Advocacy



**You are
successful when
your team are
successful.**



**Shine a light on
the work which
exemplifies the
ideal.**

Broadcasting

Find low cost ways to tell as many people as possible about all of the great design work happening in your team.

Broadcasting

1. Monthly Newsletters
2. Print stuff off, stick stuff up
3. Share work in progress
4. Ask for feedback

Targetting

Connect disconnected efforts, and connect people through the work.

Framing

This is how you reframe what design is away from nudging bits of UI, to a process of collaborative problem-solving.

Profile-Raising

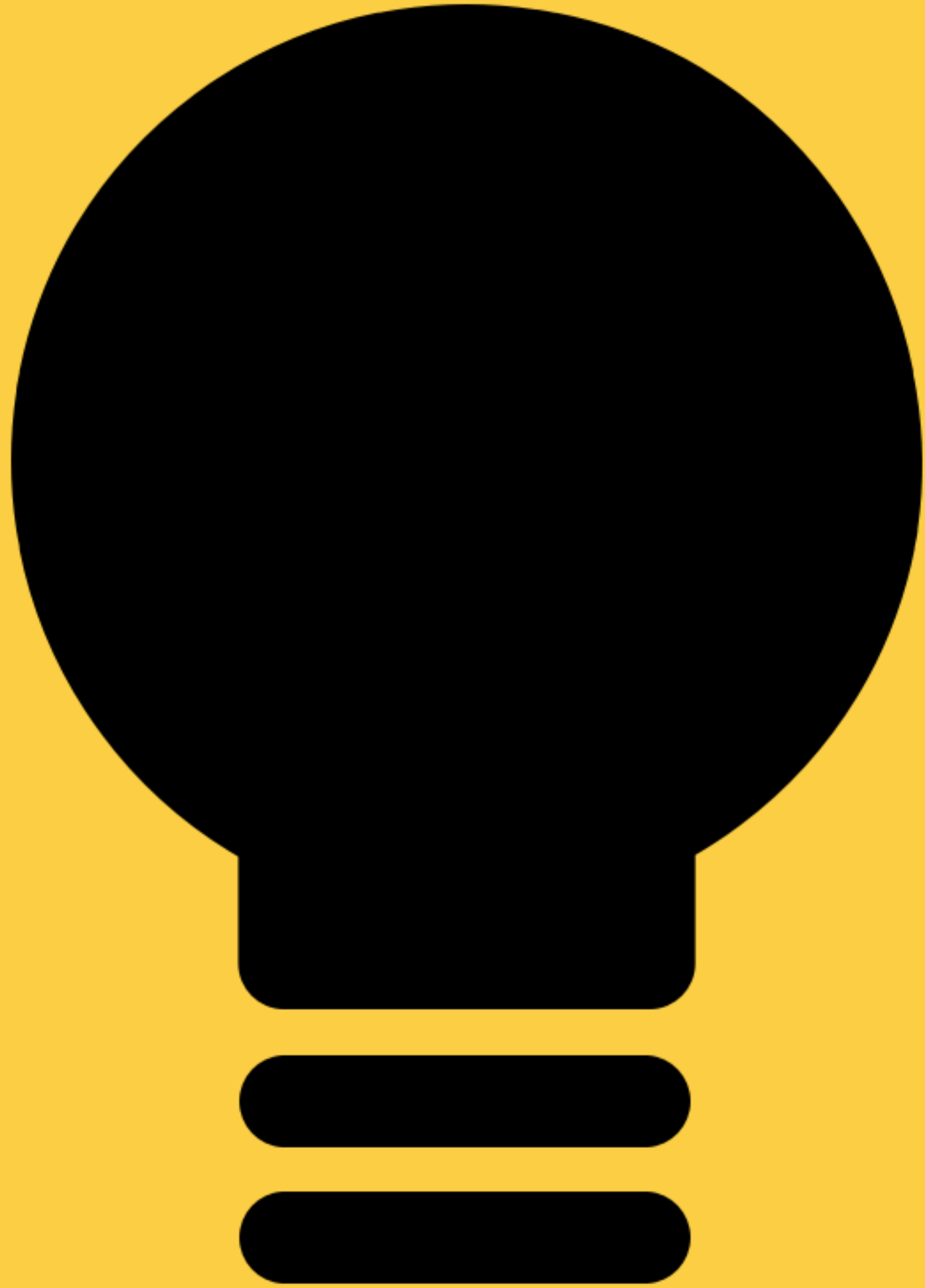
Show people what your team can do, so that when you want to give them a raise, or a promotion, the convincing is already done.

A Network will emerge

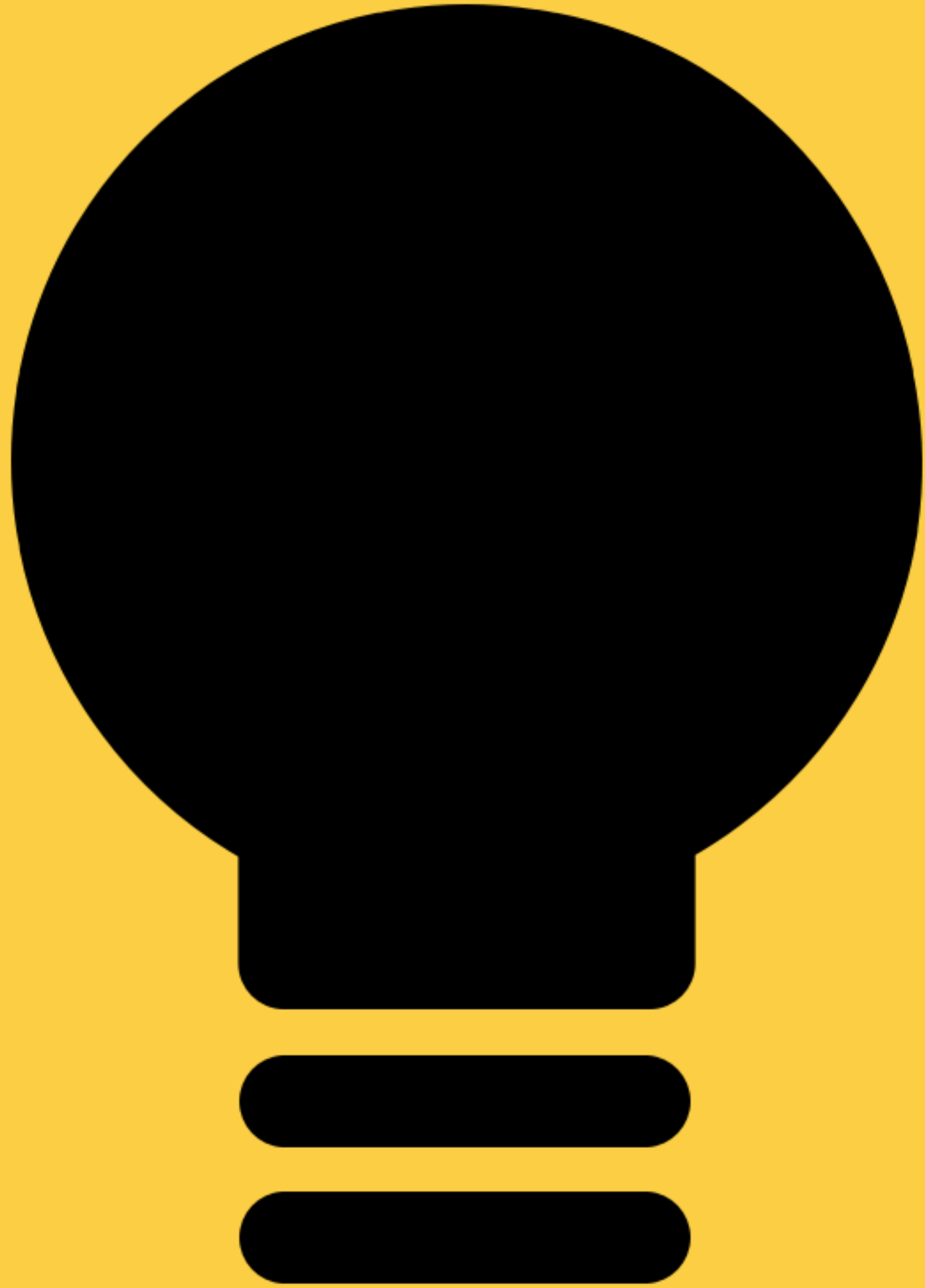
With the work shared regularly to a large audience, people will start to connect without you being the matchmaker.



Scaling beyond your own abilities



**You don't have
to be the
smartest person
in the room.**



**Make room for
your team to
grow in number,
and ability.**

You're not helping

If it's always you solving the most pressing issues, then you're a liability not an asset.

Hire above your ability

Identify your weaknesses, and the weaknesses of your team, and plug those gaps with teacher-practitioners.

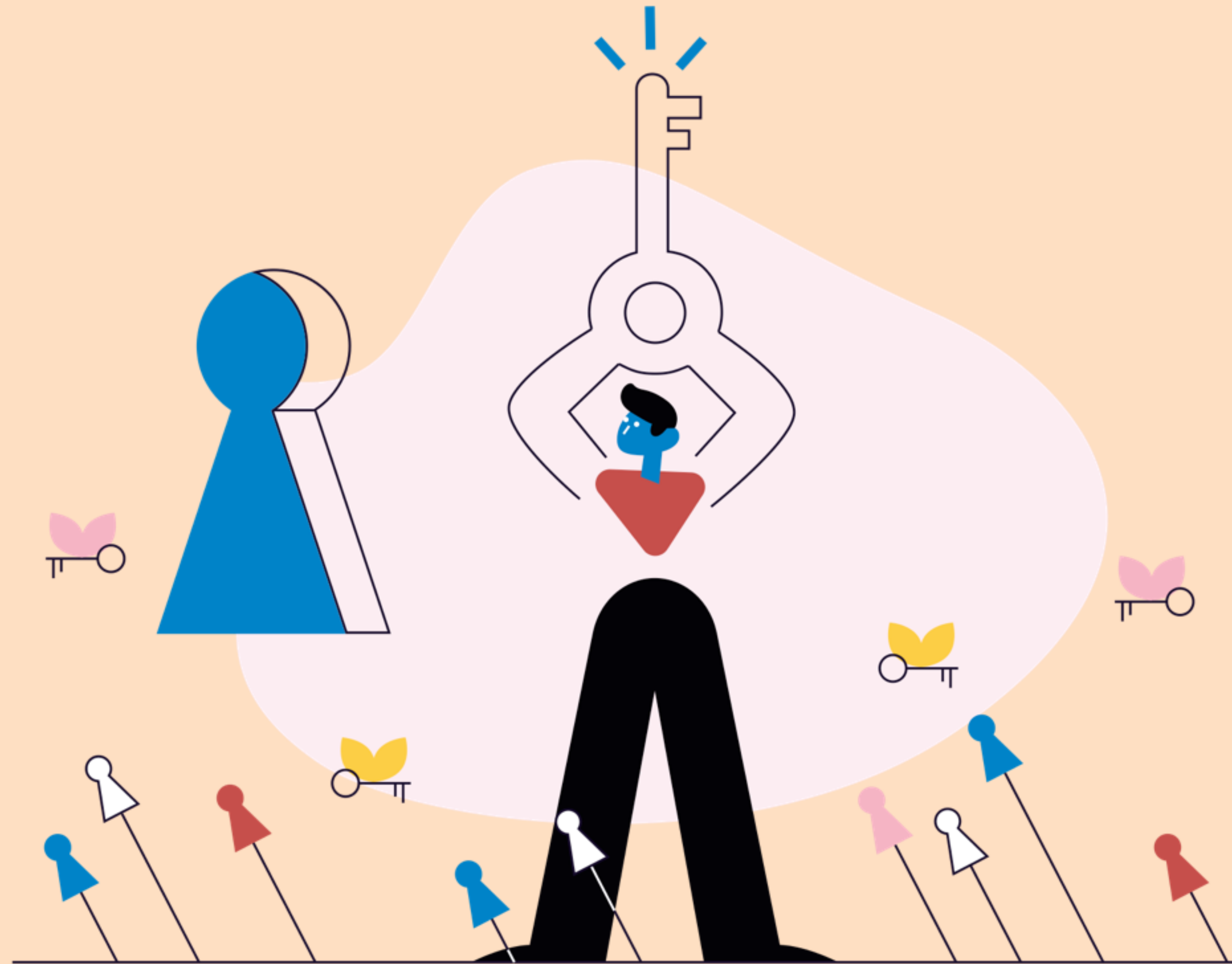
Senior Hiring is different

Be explicit with your org.
about why senior hiring looks
different to core hiring - and
what the mandate is for these
new folks.

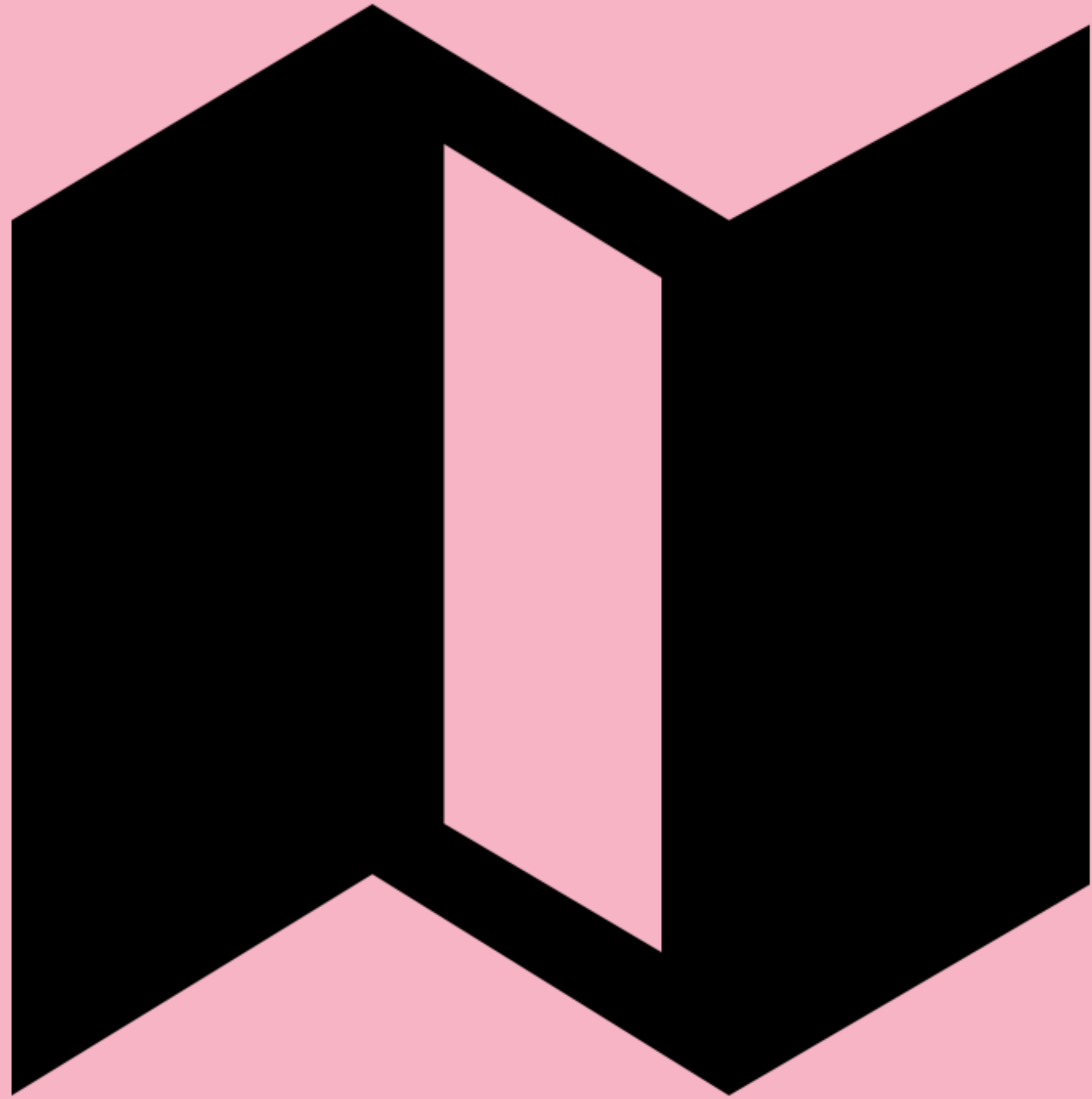
Hire away energy-sinks

It's okay to hire someone to
do the stuff you don't want to
do.

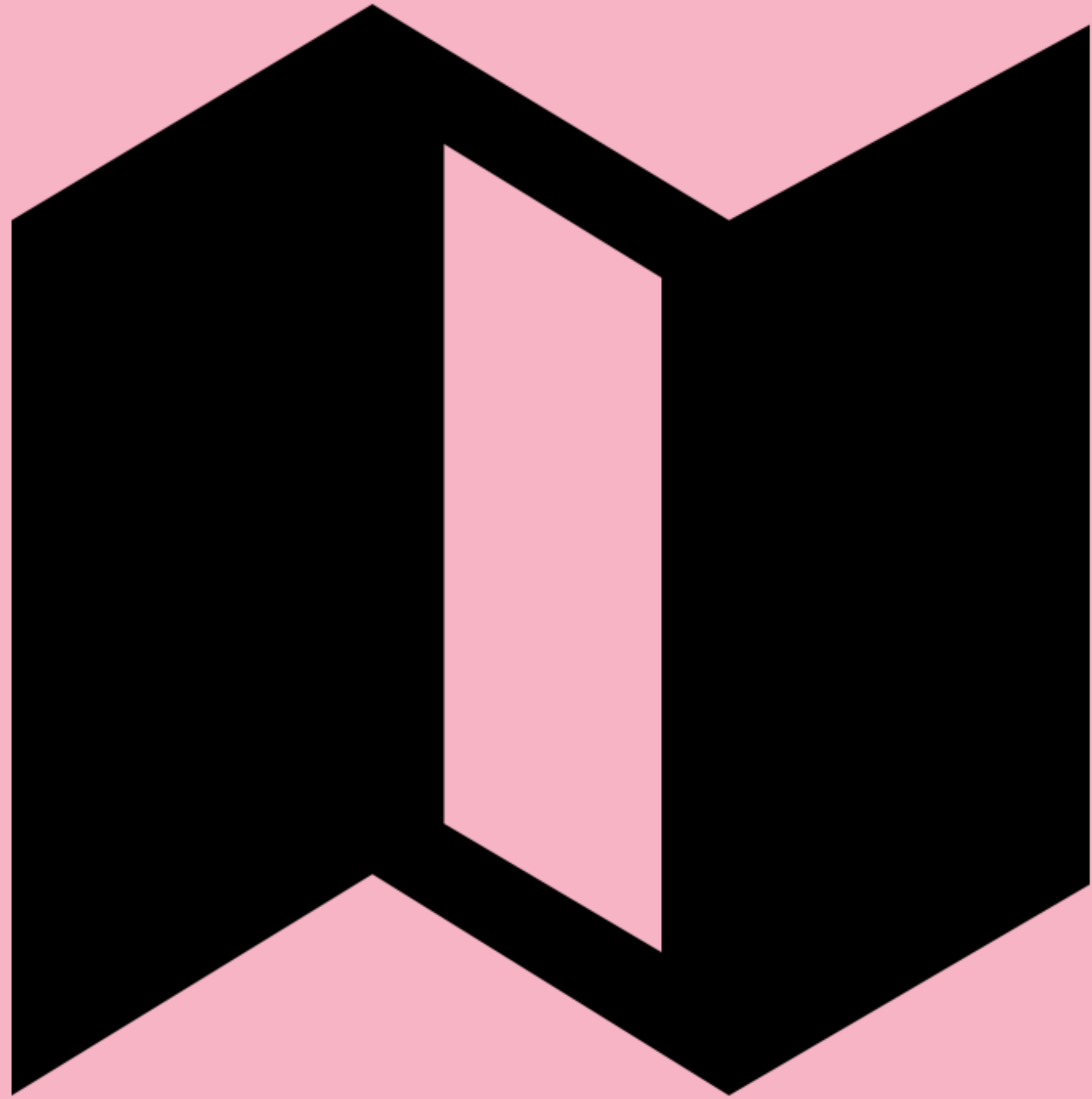
SOMEONE LOVES THAT STUFF.



From Service to Strategic Asset



**Design is what
you say it is.**



**Make space for
real, impactful,
significant
design work to
happen.**

Build alliances

Be the people who take a positive and optimistic approach to solving gnarly problems.

Strategise proactively

Don't wait to be asked, make time and offer direction through best-in-class design & research execution.

Offer without expectation

Be humble, be realistic, and be prolific. Don't be dogmatic, and don't get married to your solutions.



Designing more than stuff



**There are design
problems
everywhere in
your org.**



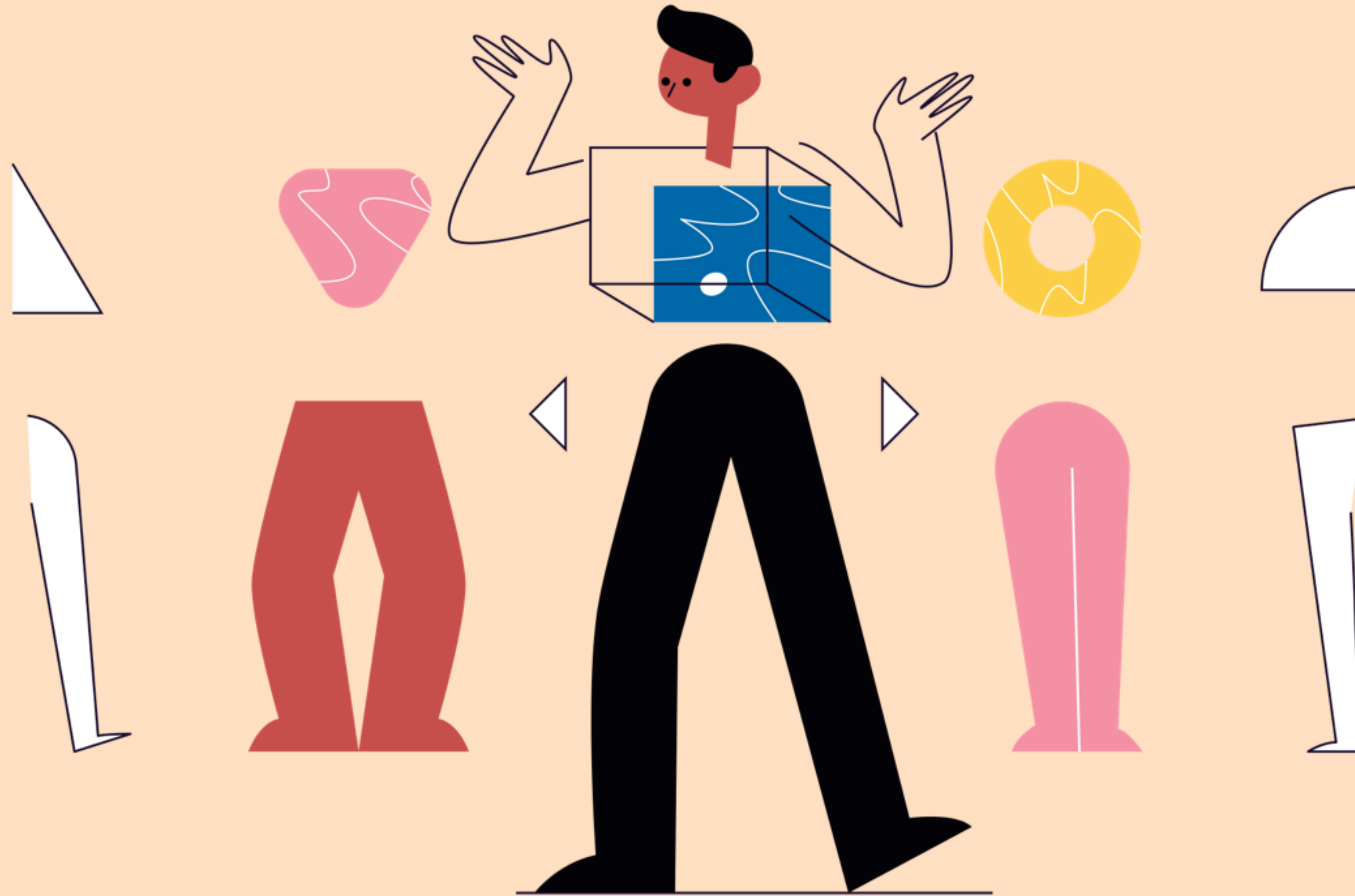
**Go forth to the
dark lands of
Finance & HR.**

Deploying Tooling

These are the ideal places to deploy a design system or a new way of doing stuff - a proving ground for the trickier spots.

Disproportionate Impact

Lots of zero-to-one challenges which have real business value & help build credibility and good will.



Design Leader as Translator



**Learn to speak
Product,
Engineering &
Design for non-
designers.**



Learn to teach
Product,
Engineering &
Design for non-
designers.

P&L Statements
Earnings Reports
Quarterly Guidance
Investor Updates
Product Roadmap
Strategy Memos

Performance Data
Tech Roadmap
Architecture Specs
API Documentation
Code Reviews
Outage Reports



The contrarian voice



**If you aren't the
most vocal
advocate for
users, then who
is?**



**All that goodwill
you've created
makes doing this
waaaaaawaaaaaay
less risky.**

Data is our friend, too.

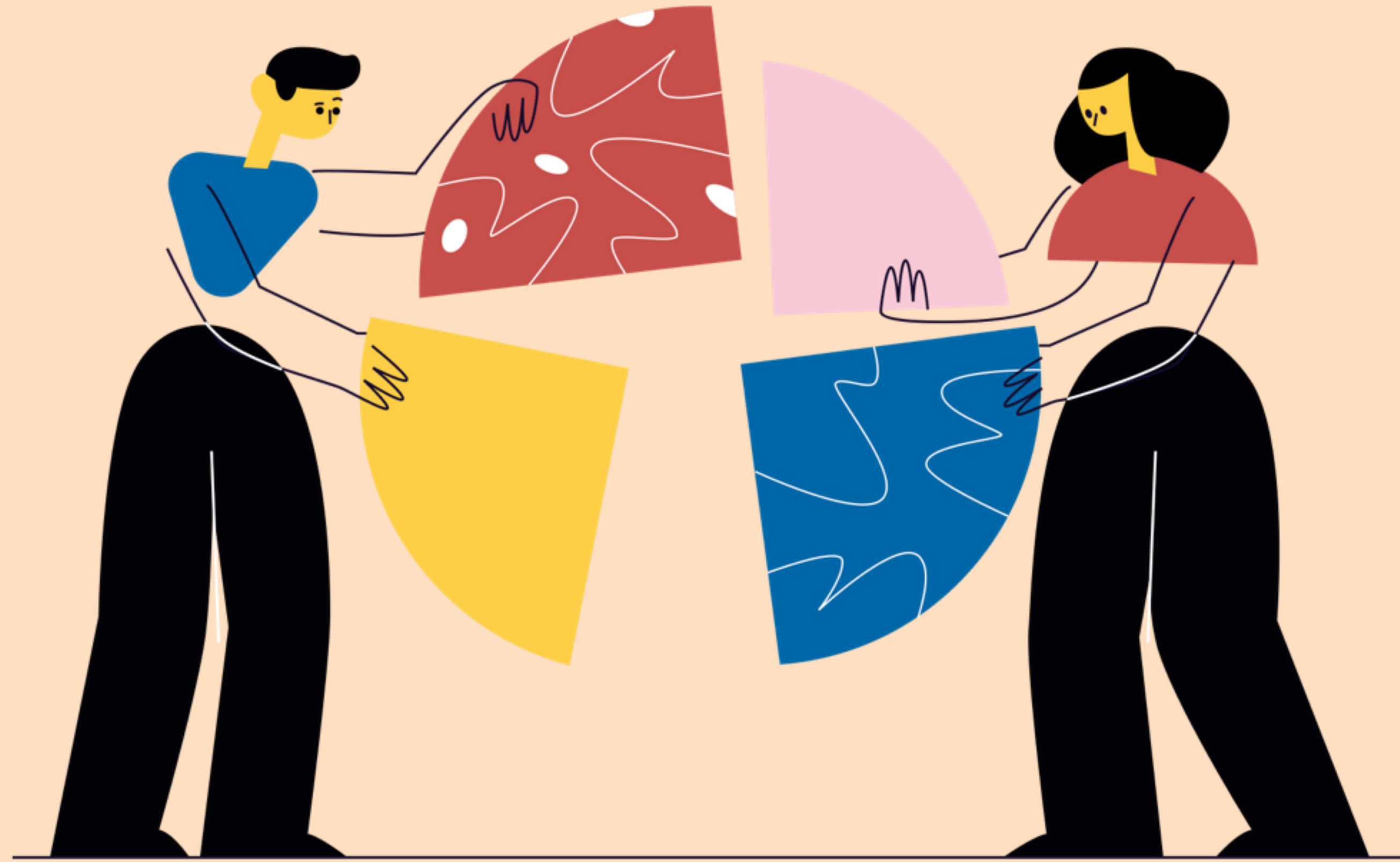
Use your research findings to support your position. Be blunt, be empassioned and be persistant.

Form Coalitions

You don't have to be a lone voice shouting into the void, and your position is more credible when it is not yours alone.

Your team expects

Every designer in your organisation is counting on you to fight the good fight. Letting them down will cost you a lot of credibility.



Good jobs



**Occasionally, it's
okay for us to be
a little bit self-
serving.**



**Creating good,
well paid jobs for
people is a
special privilege.**

More designers

Apparently everyone is a designer now, so hiring should be super easy.

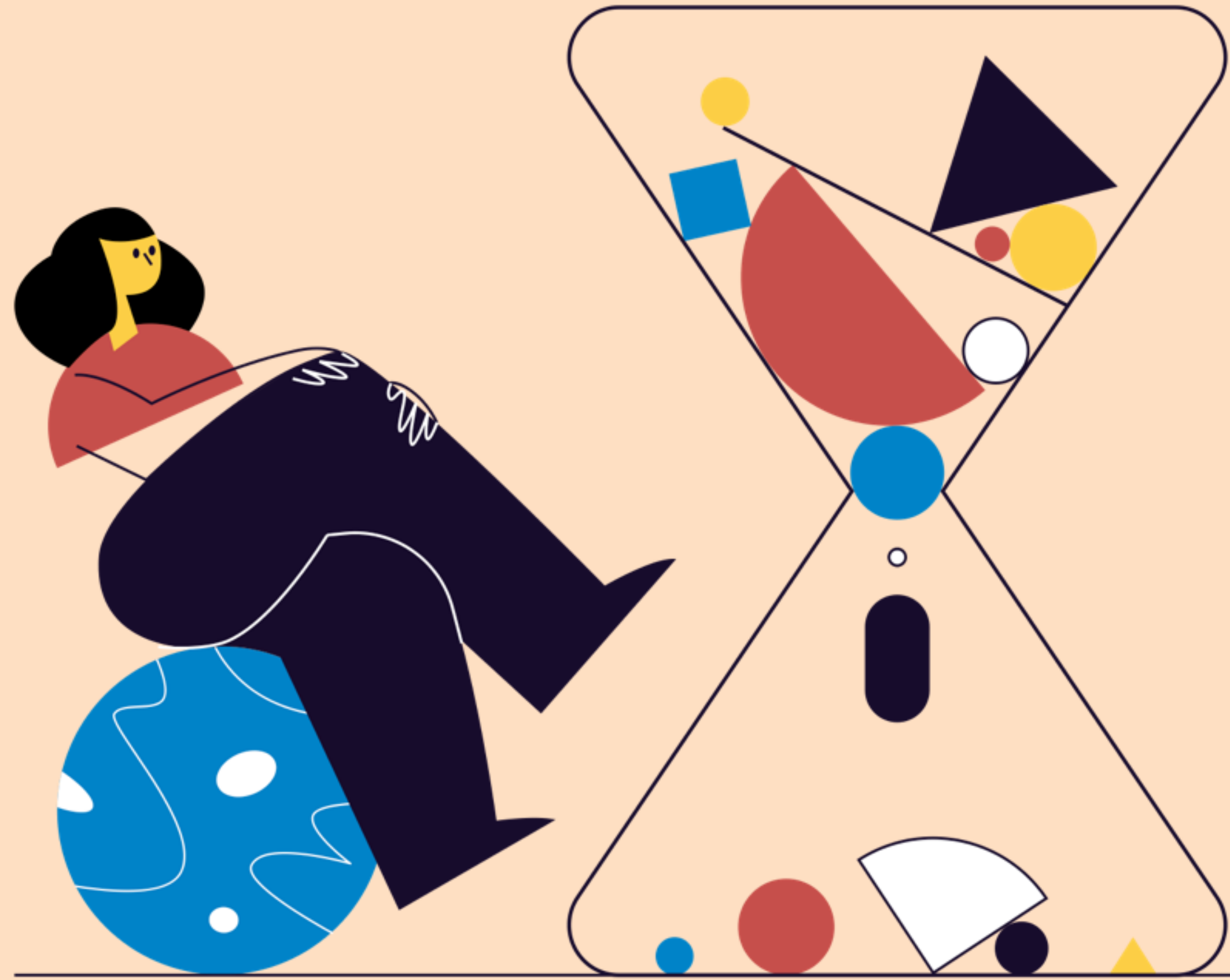


Lasting impact

The stuff we build is temporary, creating opportunities for people is permanent.

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Today will be your best ever opportunity



Thanks!

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