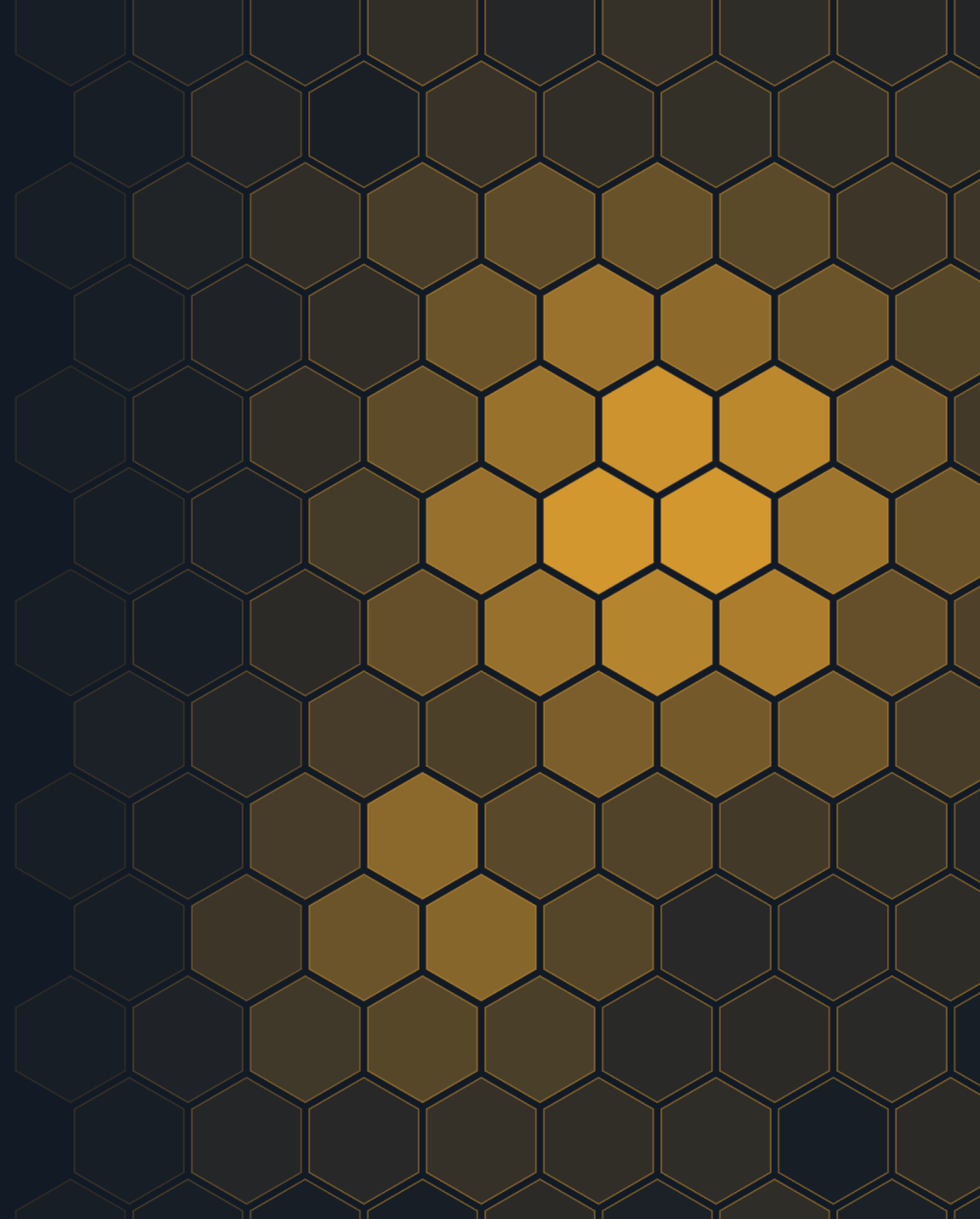


THE HONEYCOMB APPROACH

Language Is the Leading Indicator

An approach for program managers: flip the reporting to show what's actually moving.

Developed by Sascha Roae · North Light Path · © 2026



WHY LANGUAGE

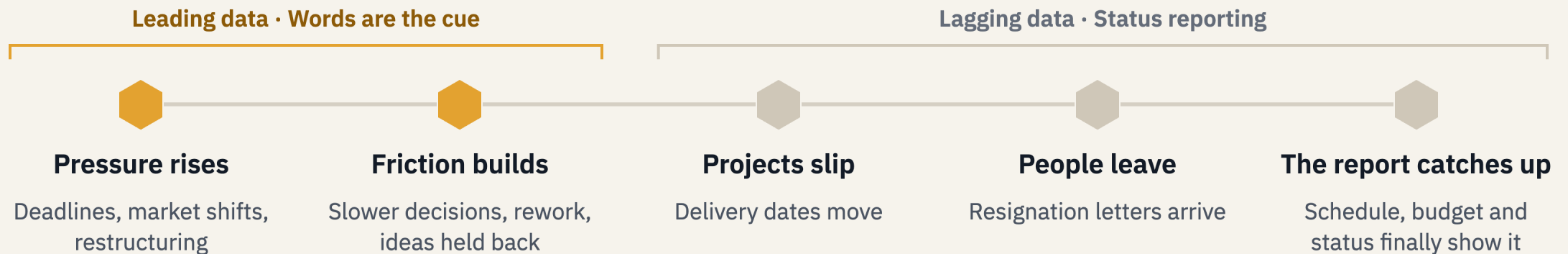
At one organization, “regrettable hires” was part of everyday language.

Once words like that are in use, few people speak up. The language has set a baseline that needs to be moved.

SUMMARY

Reporting What's Actually Moving

Status reports, milestones and budget show where a program arrived. Its language shows what's moving now, while there's still time to steer.



Words are the cue. The leading data is already in the language a program produces: how people describe their work, what meetings record, what leaders announce. The approach reads it at three layers: individual, team and organization.

Signal Integrity & Decision Latency

The individual’s capacity to execute and make clean choices under high pressure.



One cell

Each person in the system

LANGUAGE SOURCE

A short check-in

How each person describes their role and the work they’re actually doing.

DESTINATION LANGUAGE

“Where am I supposed to arrive?”

PROCESS LANGUAGE

“What’s moving now?”

90-SECOND SCAN

 Stability
20

 Momentum
80

This pattern is frantic. Don’t push harder: support Stability first, and let Momentum settle until it warms instead of burns.



 Four readings, each 0 to 100

BUSINESS IMPACT

Analysis paralysis and bottlenecks set in. Decision latency rises: work queues behind choices that should be quick.

Collective Resonance & Velocity Attrition

How well a team collaborates, stays aligned and keeps sharing ideas under pressure.



One cluster

Each team and its handoffs

LANGUAGE SOURCE

Meeting minutes

Read for what the record leaves out:

- What isn't being said
- What moved the needle without being spoken
- What came crashing in after moving slowly

COMMENT FILTER

"This is obviously wrong and I'm tired of explaining basic logic."

Control • Respect-Lost

"I see this differently, can we walk through the data?"

The point remains. The respect returns.

BUSINESS IMPACT

Misread requirements and duplicated work. Velocity erodes gradually, and high performers burn out or quietly disengage.

Adaptive Capacity & Corporate Governance

The ability to absorb market shifts or restructuring without the internal culture collapsing.



The whole comb

The organization as a system

LANGUAGE SOURCE

Outcome messaging

Mission statements, program goals and announcements, read for the source they draw on.

WELLS

Fear, control, shame

FOUNTAINS

Peace, harmony, collaboration

PATTERN DECODER

"We will leverage AI to optimize human capital and reduce operational drag."

Control • Mission-Drift

"We'll cut jobs to hit targets, not to empower people."

Not nicer. Honest.

BUSINESS IMPACT

Compliance drifts and corners get cut. Invisible liabilities build up, then surface as audit, quality or safety failures.

From Status Meeting to Steering Meeting

A status meeting recites what’s done and what’s next. A steering meeting resolves what’s in the way.

1 • SCAN

Read what’s moving

Stability
steady under load

Bandwidth
emotional room

Clarity
room to think

Momentum
energy to act

Plus the language from all three layers.

2 • NAME

Numbers, not colours

Score each workstream by its lowest reading. Rank the scores and split them into four equal tiers. No one debates a colour.

TIER 1

TIER 2

TIER 3

TIER 4

3 • SUPPORT

Support the lowest

Start with Tier 4, the bottom quarter. Steady the weakest reading instead of pushing the strongest.

80

20 SUPPORT

4 • MOVE

Leave with a next move

Adjust workload, roles or process. Set clear goals and low-friction feedback. Re-scan next time to see what held.

BACK TO
1 • SCAN

SCORING A WORKSTREAM

The Floor Method

A workstream’s score is its lowest reading. An average lets a frantic team hide in the middle of the pack.

WORKSTREAM A Balanced and steady	WORKSTREAM B Frantic and burning	WHAT THE STEERING GROUP SEES	
The four readings	50 50 50 50	20 50 50 80	B is in a crisis of signal integrity and decision latency.
The average	50 mid-pack	50 mid-pack	Both look the same. B’s stability risk is invisible.
The floor	50 mid-pack	20 Tier 4	B drops into Tier 4 and gets support first.

RELATIVE PERFORMANCE MAPPING

Steering by Leading Signals

Rank every workstream by its score and split the list into four equal tiers. There is always a bottom quarter, even when every score is high.

TIER	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	IN THE MEETING
TIER 1 Top quarter	High stability, clear runway, strong alignment.	Observe and maintain: protect their focus and let them run.
TIER 2 Mid-high quarter	Healthy momentum, minor friction building.	Monitor: watch for rising decision latency.
TIER 3 Mid-low quarter	Visible friction: slower decisions, shifting clarity.	Pre-empt: clear roadblocks before milestones slip.
TIER 4 Bottom quarter	The lowest readings: high friction, low stability.	Support the lowest: the steering group steadies the work, adjusts workloads and clears roadblocks.

THE MEETING RULE

Flipping the Agenda

Instead of reviewing projects alphabetically or by size, the steering meeting starts at Tier 4.

TODAY • WHERE IT ARRIVED

- 1 Projects in order**
Alphabetically or by size
- 2 Status in colours**
Green, amber or red, and a debate about which
- 3 Milestones and budget**
Where each project has landed
- 4 Risks**
From the risk log



FLIPPED • WHAT'S MOVING

- 1 Tier 4 first**
The bottom quarter, by its lowest reading
- 2 What the words show**
The language cues causing friction
- 3 Support**
Targeted help to steady the work
- 4 A next move**
Each leaves with one; then Tiers 3, 2 and 1

Individuals see their own readings; the program sees the roll-up. The approach reads the program's language, not individual people.