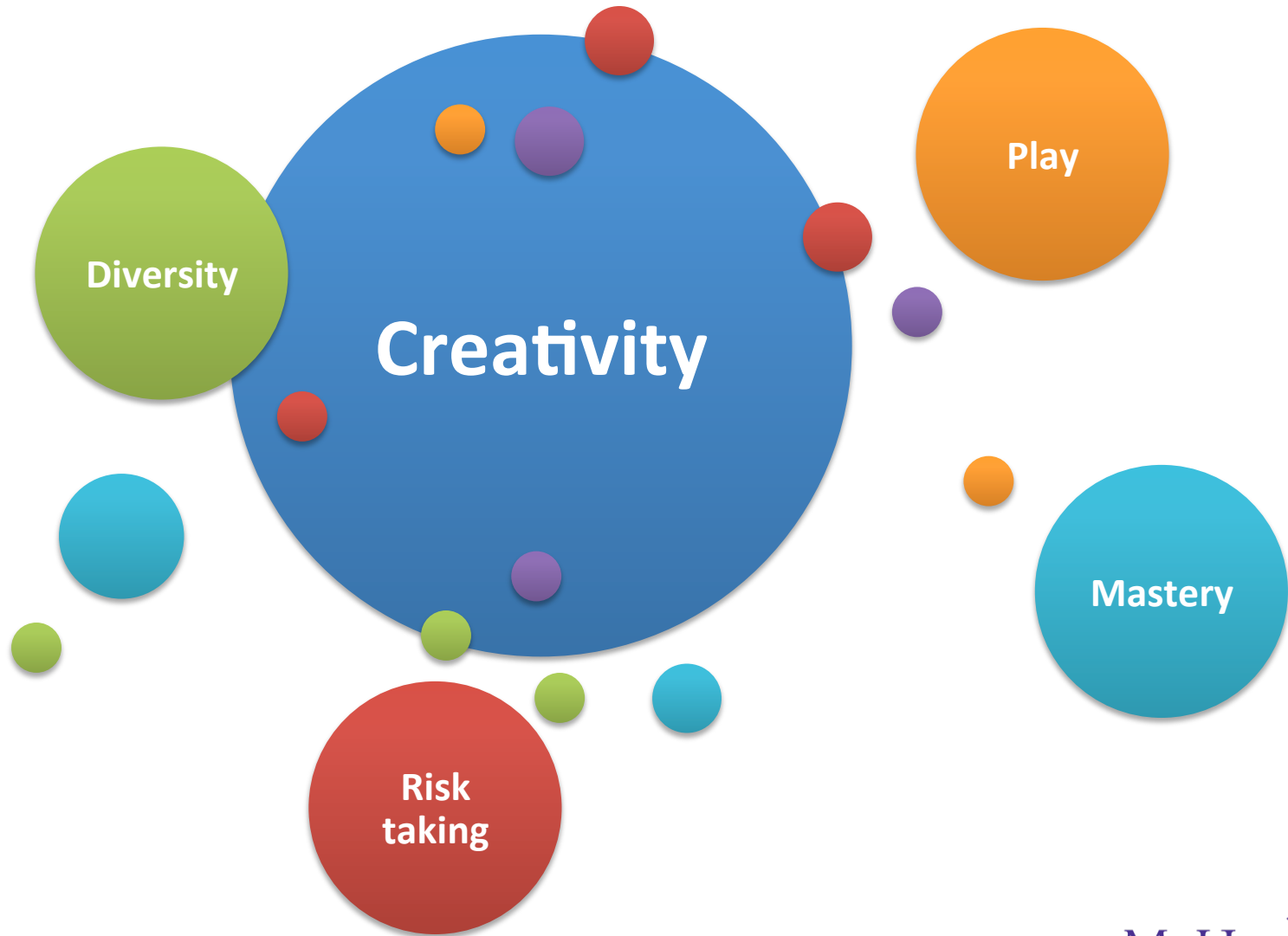




Creativity in the Workplace

*A Leaders in Action Workshop
with Laura Power,
Instructor of English at McHenry County College*



Creativity

- “Having or showing an ability to make new things or think of new ideas” (*Merriam-Webster*)
- “Conjunction of novelty, utility and surprise” (Dean Keith Simonton, psychologist)
- “Combinatory play” (Albert Einstein)
- “Creativity is a byproduct of mastery of the sort that is cultivated through long practice” (Matthew Crawford, philosopher & motorcycle repairman)

Creativity Is

- Diversity
- “Better recipes, not just more cooking” (economist Paul Romer)
- Taking Risks
- Being okay with small failures



“Chance favors only the prepared mind.”
(Louis Pasteur)

Read—To increase creativity, diversity, efficiency

- Topics to help understand your team
- Topics to help understand your customer/patron
- Topics to improve your business
 - A new skill or technology?
 - A new approach to sales or marketing?
 - A new system to use for filing, doing books, organizing the office?
 - A new way of bringing customer service?

Listen

- To your team
- To your customer/patron
- To the community
- To your competitors
- To yourself—"Hire hard, manage open, fire hard"
says the software company SAS Institute

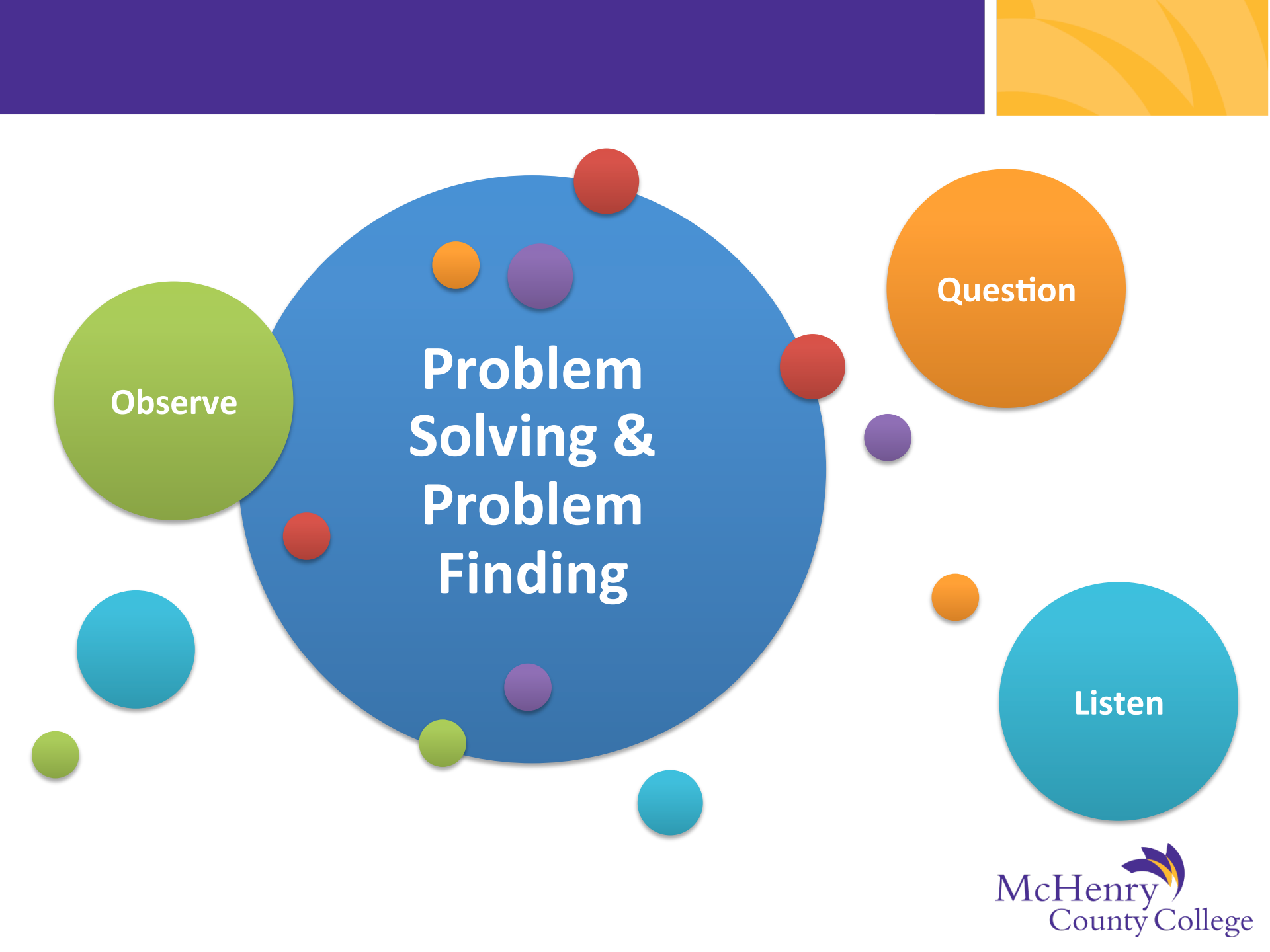


Ask Questions

- Of your team
 - Ask what works and what doesn't
 - Check in frequently to identify issues quickly
- Of your customer
 - Be specific for better results
 - Analyze your assessment (survey)
 - Analyze the answers
- Of yourself!

Communicate with Your Audience

- ***Tell*** them you're going to use the information
- Close the loop (***use*** the information)
- Make visible changes based on feedback
- Follow up



Problem Solving & Problem Finding

Observe

Question

Listen

Problem Solving

Analyze the Cause By trying to figure out what led to the problem, we can sometimes find a solution

Identify Solutions Use the if... then... approach
Make sure solutions won't cause more problems

Identify Actors Always include yourself
What questions will other actors have?
What tools will they need?
What direction can you give?

Outline a Plan "Plans are worthless, but planning is everything"

Problem Finding

- Observing
 - Team members
 - Peers in the industry
 - Customers/patrons
- Questioning
- Listening



Work in
Groups

Collaborating

With
with
Peers

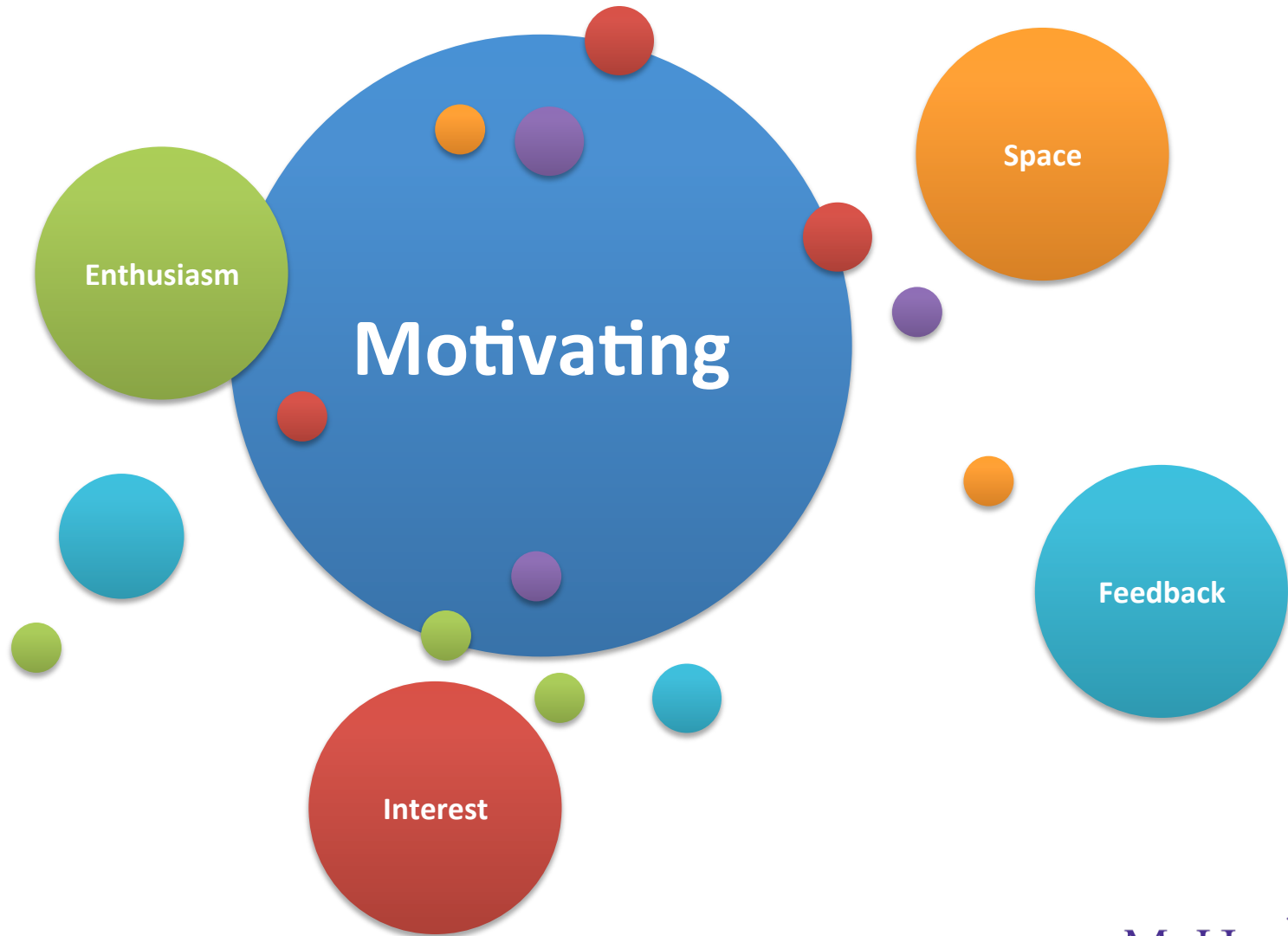
Working in Groups

- Give team members a task (information gathering)
- Allow the group to break into pairs
 - Think, pair, share
 - Foster Dissent
- Assign an *a#*-hole* to the group:

”For any group to work, every team needs at least one asshole, who doesn't give a shit if he or she gets fired, or exiled, or excommunicated.” (David McRaney)

Working Peer-to-Peer

- Give new hires a **coach**
- Give team members the opportunity to learn new skills with a **mentor**
- Give team members opportunities to **brainstorm** together
- Give team members opportunities to **shadow** each other



Enthusiasm (!)

- Get people to do what you want by showing excitement
- Don't be afraid to show passion in your work
- Showing enthusiasm about work helps others feel comfortable participating
- Don't be afraid to get your hands dirty



Photo Credit: [Pop Sugar](#)

Give Your Team Physical Space

- How is your workspace organized? (and how can you improve it?)
- Do you have places for people to gather & share ideas?
- Do you have a central area/meeting space?
- Do you have cubicles or something more mobile?

Give Your Team Creative Space

- How much freedom does your team have to work on creative projects?
- How much more can you do?



Atlassian Software

Faculty Development Day Spring 2015

A Day of Autonomous Creative Work for Faculty Members At McHenry County College
Thursday, January 15, 2015

- **Problem Solving**—recruiting, marketing, preventing plagiarism
- **Learning**—lecture capture, new software
- **Collaborating**—political economy, learning communities
- **Creating**—new materials, presentations, courses

Can This Work for You?

- What kinds of creative freedom can you give your team?
- How much time can you devote to it?
- How will you follow up with projects?

Give Your Team Feedback

- Identify issues and provide suggestions for improvement
- Don't just "tell"—dialogue
- Give feed "forward" instead of feed "back"
- Collaborate on an action plan
 - Objectives
 - Training to Meet Objectives
 - Support (from supervisor/organization)
 - Target Date
- Recognize quality work and progress

Show Interest

- Get to know your team
- Find out how their outside interests connect to their work
- Give them the freedom to personalize



Suggested Reading

- *The Rise of the Creative Class Revisited* by Richard Florida
- *#GIRLBOSS* by Sophia Amoruso
- *How to Win Friends and Influence People* (in the Digital Age) by Dale Carnegie and Associates
- *You Are Not So Smart* by David McRaney
- “[Managing for Creativity](#)” by Richard Florida and Jim Goodnight (*Harvard Business Review*, July – August 2005)
- *Wiser: Getting Beyond Groupthink to Make Groups Smarter* by Cass Sunstein and Reid Hastie

Questions?

Visit my website for the full presentation:
www.lauraborkpower.com/community