



Momentum Matters

A framework for early learner retention success

A Philosophy Grounded in Self-Efficacy



- Self-Efficacy Theory: persistence improves when learners believe they can succeed.*
 - **Mastery Experiences**: Early wins build lasting confidence.
 - **Social Modeling**: Seeing peers succeed increases belief.
 - **Social Persuasion**: Encouragement from coaches and peers drives commitment.
 - **Emotional Regulation**: Lowering stress and fear keeps learners engaged.
- **How:**
 - Support **both learners + coaches** with streamlined resources.
 - Use **AI-driven tools and fresh data** to personalize nudges and keep content relevant.
 - Build toward a scalable playbook for consistent adoption.
- **Why**: Boost early confidence, lighten coach workload, and drive sustainable retention.

Early Retention Risks: IT Support Track



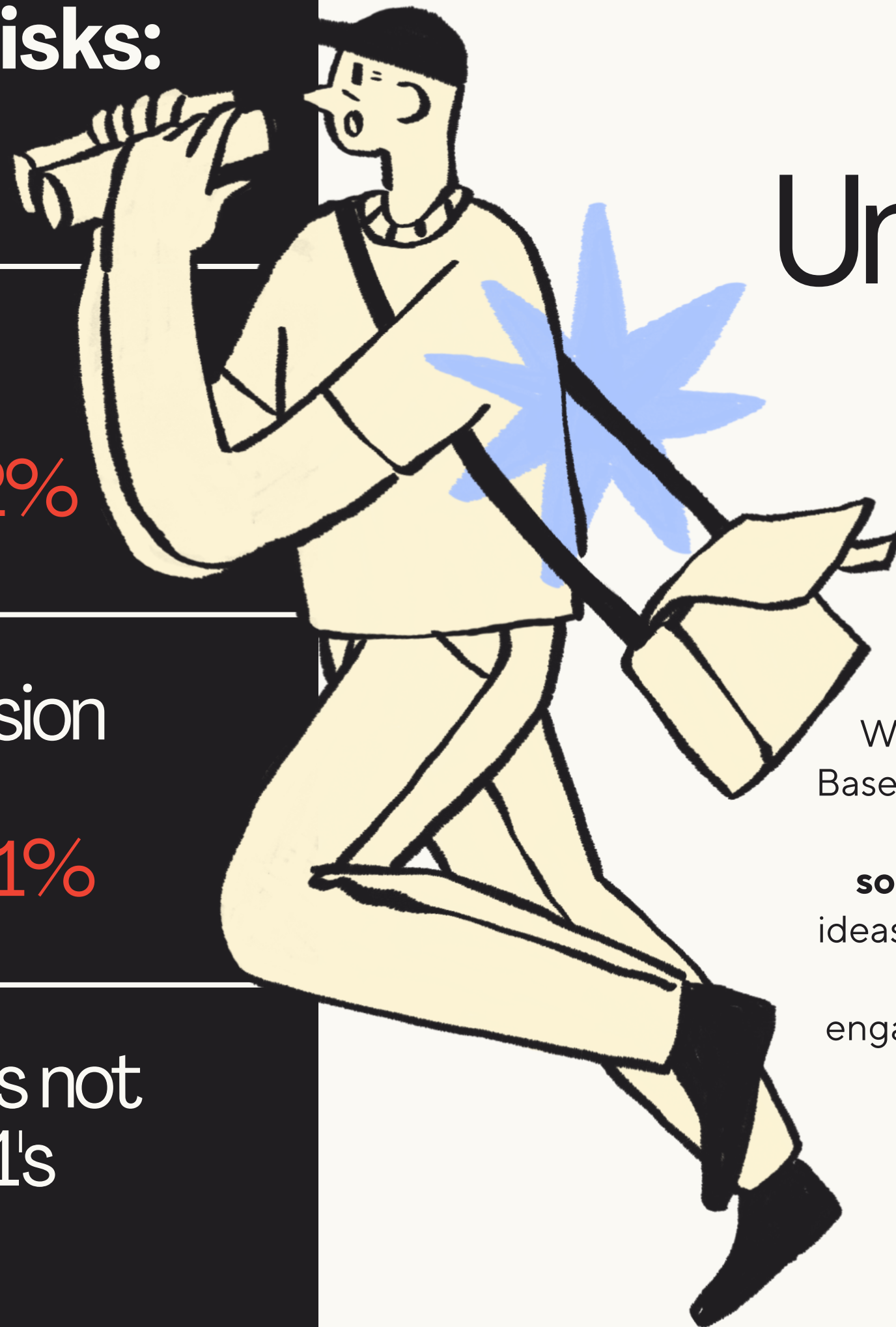
Week 2 Squad
Attendance ↓22%



Delayed submission
of Week 3
Assignments ↑41%



29% of learners not
attending live 1-1's
by Week 4



Understanding the Problem

We're using data from the IT Support track in our Base Model to explore how we can **improve** learner retention. We're piloting some **small-scale solutions** with our largest track to generate more ideas and discussion around the **powerful role you, our amazing coaches**, play in keeping learners engaged. These initial interventions are a chance to practice and prepare for the more impactful solutions we'll **create together!**

Fear of Failure

learners delay or avoid engaging in squads and assignments.

Belonging Gap

no early “community anchor” to keep learners accountable.

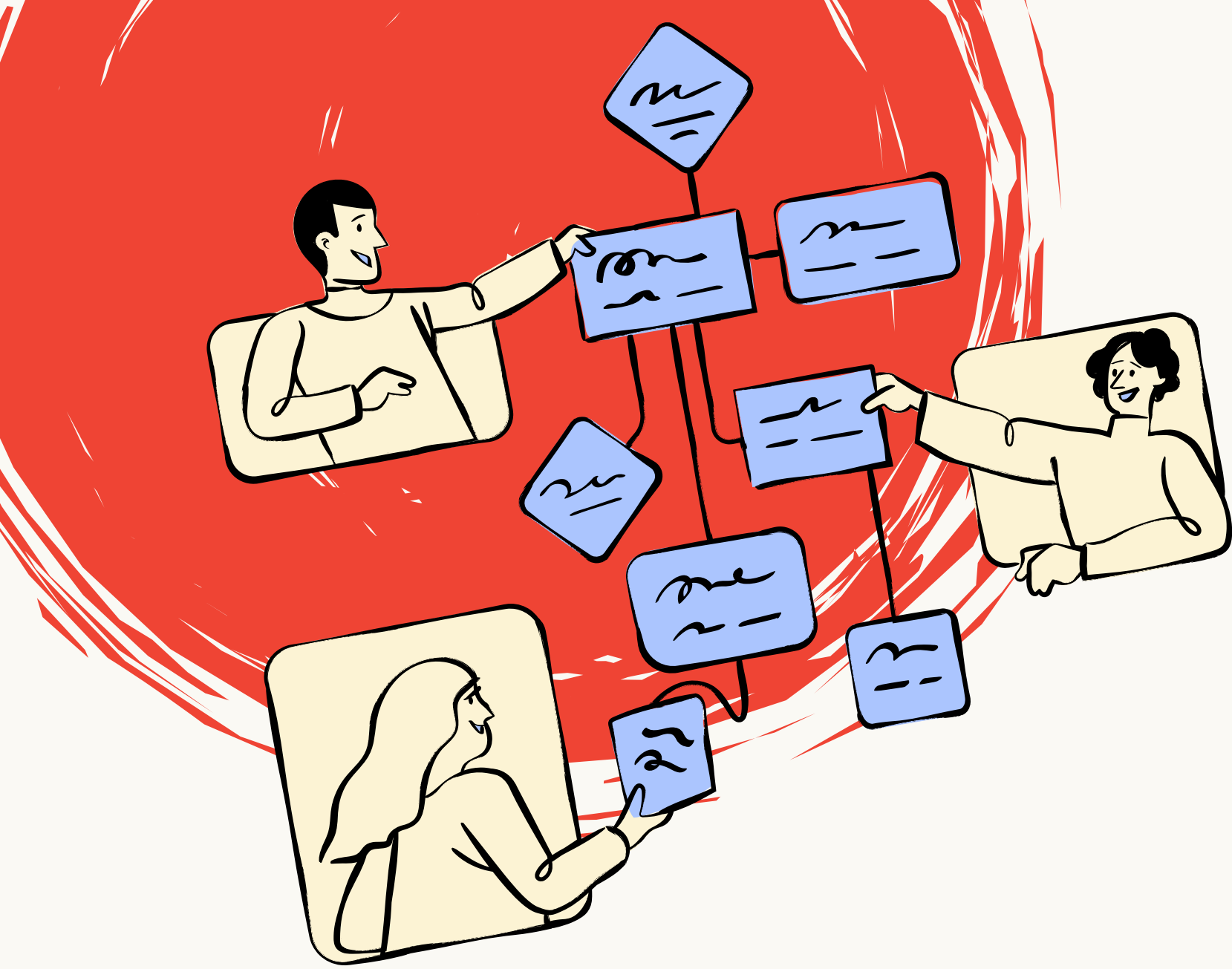


Limited early contact with coaches

learners miss critical encouragement & guidance.

Cognitive Overload

rapid pace without scaffolding creates early discouragement.



THE 10-DAY CONFIDENCE PLAYBOOK

Touchpoints to Build Belief & Belonging

Purpose:

Ensure learners feel supported before the first 1:1 with consistent early communication utilizing Slack, email & live interactions.

Structure:

Day 1: Belonging Boost (*welcome*)

Day 3: Confidence Check (*pulse survey issued in Slack*)

Day 5: Momentum Message (*resource share*)

Day 7: Peer Power (*in squad win-share*)

Day 10: Reflection Ready (*prep for 1:1*)

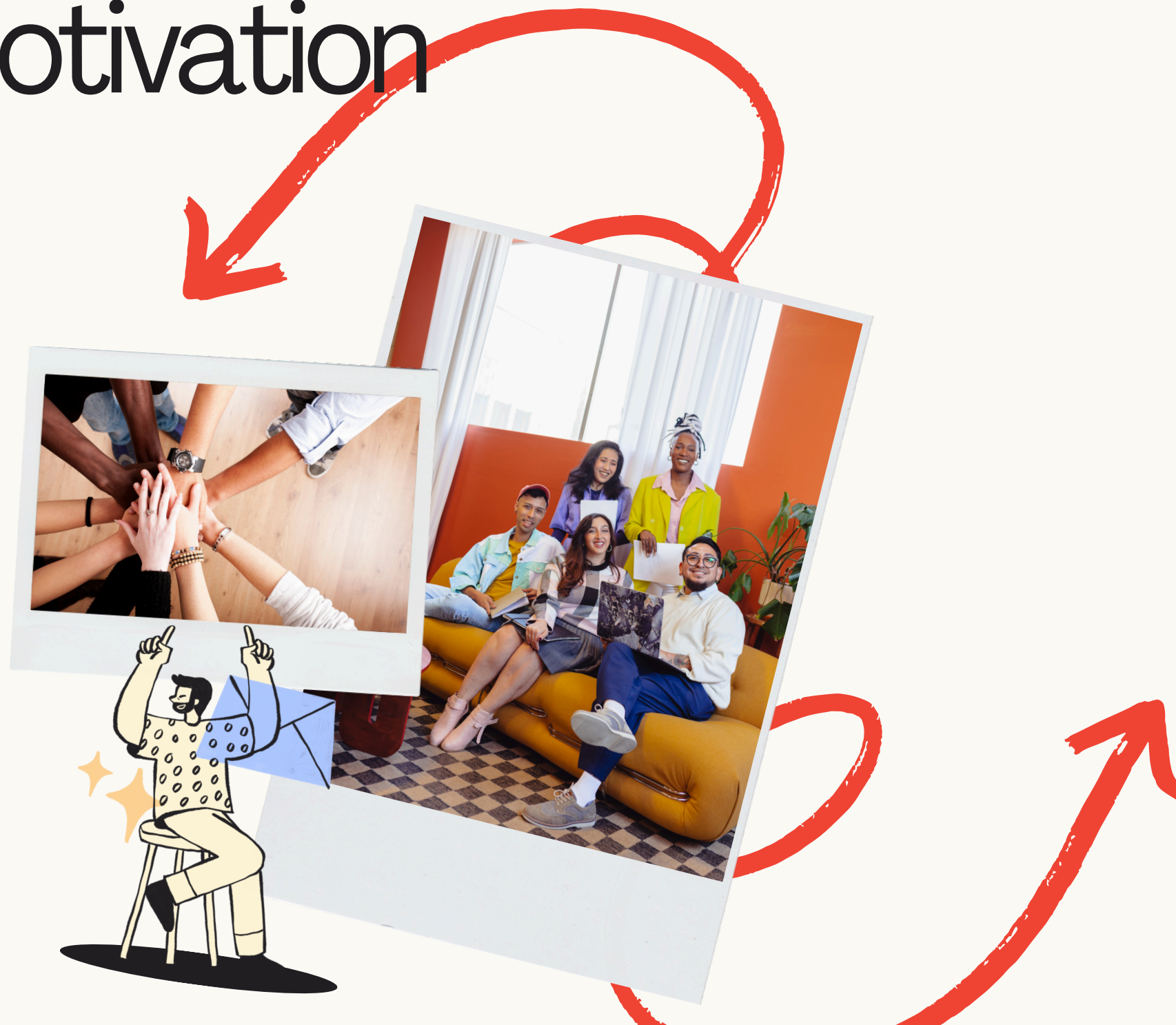
Benefits:

- **For Learners:** Reduces fear, builds confidence, fosters belonging.
 - **For Coaches:** Saves time, creates structure, identifies at-risk learners early.
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Projected Impact:

- ↑ Early 1:1 scheduling **by 20%**
- ↑ Week 2-3 learner confidence scores (self-report) **by 15%**
- ↓ Learner withdrawals in first month **by 10%**

Make Squads Stick: From Obligation to Motivation



Problem:

Squad attendance **decreased 22%** by Week 2

Solution:

- **Peer Spotlights:** Rotating learner-led shares based off weekly technical assignment.
- **Mini-Challenges:** Weekly micro-goals + recognition.
- **Coach Prompts:** Using AI tools like Chat GPT or Gemini to create career-linked discussion starters for squads or 1-1's .

Benefits:

- **For Learners:** Stronger accountability, social connection, and confidence.
- **For Coaches:** Easier facilitation, richer insights into learner progress.

Projected Impact:

- ↑ Week 2 squad attendance **by 15%**
- ↑ Peer-to-peer interaction by 20% (Slack + squad contributions) **by 15%**
- ↑ Learner-reported sense of community **by 18%**

Problem:

Learners are **41% more behind** on assignments by Week 3

Solution:

- **Personalized Nudges:** Build Slack/email pre integrated workflows or Canvas reminders tied to benchmarks using the Canvas API to attach custom applications with AI generated messaging .
 - **Resource Matching:** Direct learners to study guides or AI career exploration tools like Career Dreamer or CareersPro
 - **Celebratory Pings:** Shoutouts for on-time completion.
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Benefits:

- **For Learners:** Motivation through recognition, reduced overwhelm, timely help.
- **For Coaches:** Early visibility into risks, fewer surprises, targeted outreach.

Projected Impact:

- ↓ Learners falling 5+ hours behind **by 25%**
- ↑ On-time assignment completion **by 15%**
- ↑ Learner confidence in technical skills **by 10%**

ASSIGNMENT PROGRESS NUDGES

Early Signals →
Early Support



Potential Barriers

Coach Bandwidth: New touch points may feel like “extra work.”

- **Solution:** Provide templates, automated nudges, and playbooks for easy use.

Learner Responsiveness: Not all learners engage equally with digital nudges or squads.

- **Solution:** Layer communication channels (Slack + email + 1:1) to meet learners where they are.

Consistency Across Cohorts: Engagement strategies may vary by coach style.

- **Solution:** Standardize resources while allowing coach customization.



Measuring Success

10-Day Confidence Playbook

- **Metric:** % increase in early 1:1 scheduling, learner confidence survey scores, reduced first-month withdrawals.

Squad Engagement Boosters

- **Metric:** Squad attendance rates, peer-to-peer interactions (Slack + live), sense of community survey.

Assignment Progress Nudges

- **Metric:** % of learners falling behind >5 hours, on-time completion rates, technical confidence self-reports.

Next Steps: Piloting & Scaling for Impact



1. Pilot & Test (First 4 Weeks)

- Launch 10-Day Confidence Playbook with select IT Support cohorts.
- Run Squad Engagement Boosters in parallel to compare attendance vs. baseline.
- Collect real-time learner + coach feedback through short surveys.

2. Measure & Iterate (Month 2-3)

- Analyze key indicators: squad attendance, hours behind, % of learners completing 1:1s.
- Identify what's working best (ex: specific nudges, timing, templates).
- Refine playbook language and engagement tactics based on learner/coach response.

3. Scale & Standardize (Month 4+)

- Roll out refined playbook and boosters across all IT Support cohorts.
- Train coaches using quick onboarding modules in Insperity + on time support through a IT Support Coach Slack group running the pilot.
- Share best practices to drive consistency while allowing coach personalization.

By combining structured interventions with the power of AI and real-time data, we create a learner journey that *builds confidence, empowers coaches, and drives sustainable retention.*

This approach ensures that Merit America's solutions remain fresh, relevant, and scalable for the **future.**



#win&losetogether