

Risk Communication: Module 4

The Need for Pre-crisis Communication Planning and your Risk/Crisis Communication Team

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**FOREIGN ANIMAL & ZOO NOTIC
DISEASE CENTER**

**NATIONAL CENTER FOR
FOOD PROTECTION AND DEFENSE**
A HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER OF EXCELLENCE

Best Practices

- 1. Risk/crisis communication is ongoing process**
- 2. Conduct pre-crisis planning**
- 3. Foster partnerships with the public**
- 4. Listen to the public's concerns and understand your audience(s)**
- 5. Demonstrate and communicate with honesty, candor and openness**
- 6. Collaborate and coordinate with credible sources**
- 7. Meet the needs of media and remain accessible**
- 8. Communicate with compassion, concern and empathy**
- 9. Accept uncertainty and ambiguity**
- 10. Provide messages that foster self-efficacy**

Learning Objectives--Organization

- **Pre-crisis communication planning**
 1. **Appreciate the benefits of a team approach to risk/crisis communication**
 2. **Identify potential team members within your organization**
 3. **Describe roles and responsibilities for effective risk/crisis communication teams**

Effective Crisis Communication

- **Is a critical individual competency**
- **Is a critical public health competency**
- **Requires broad expertise & insight**

- **Teams representing the necessary expertise are essential**

How do we Process Information?

Ladder of Inference

FACTS & BIAS?

Teams expand data pools and experiences and help overcome personal biases

Make Decision/Take Action

Adopt Beliefs

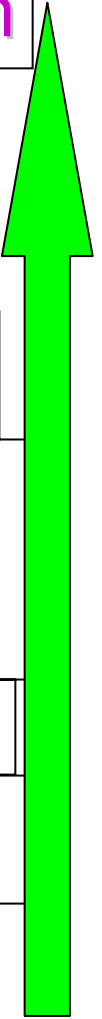
Draw Conclusions

Make Assumptions

Add Meanings from Your Experience

Select Data to Use

Available Data Pool



Value of Teams?

- **When they function well they create....**
 1. **Better quality decisions**
 2. **Better acceptance and implementation by those participating in the decision**

= Better Outcomes!

Experience in team activity

RE: Dread & Control scales

- What worked well?
- What didn't?

Process
Content

	Process	Content
Listening—one person spoke at a time		

Being skilled at process is as important in team settings as having content expertise

Decision Making

(after Interaction Associates Essential Facilitation Manual 1997)

Level of Involvement

Buy-In

X

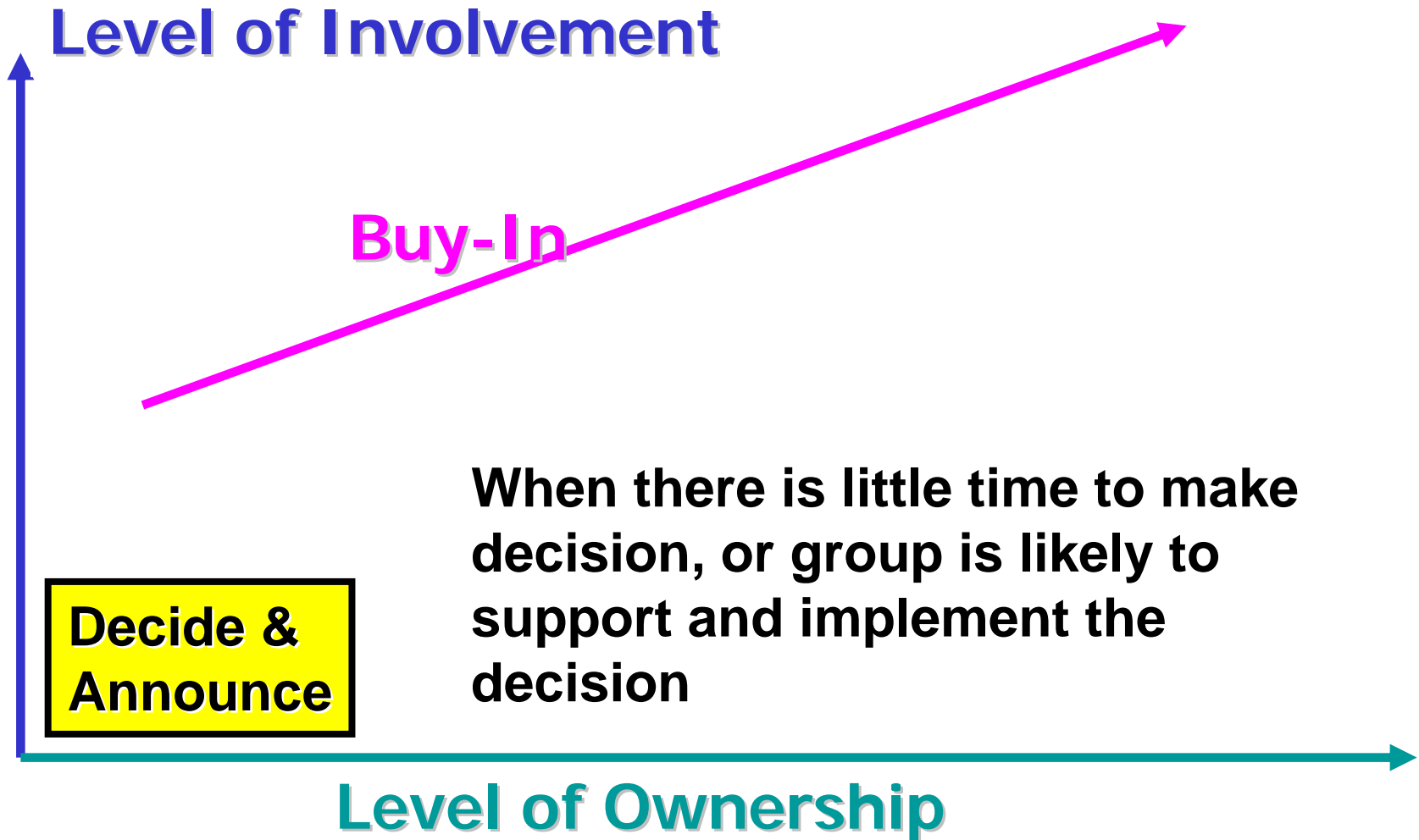
Level of Ownership

Y



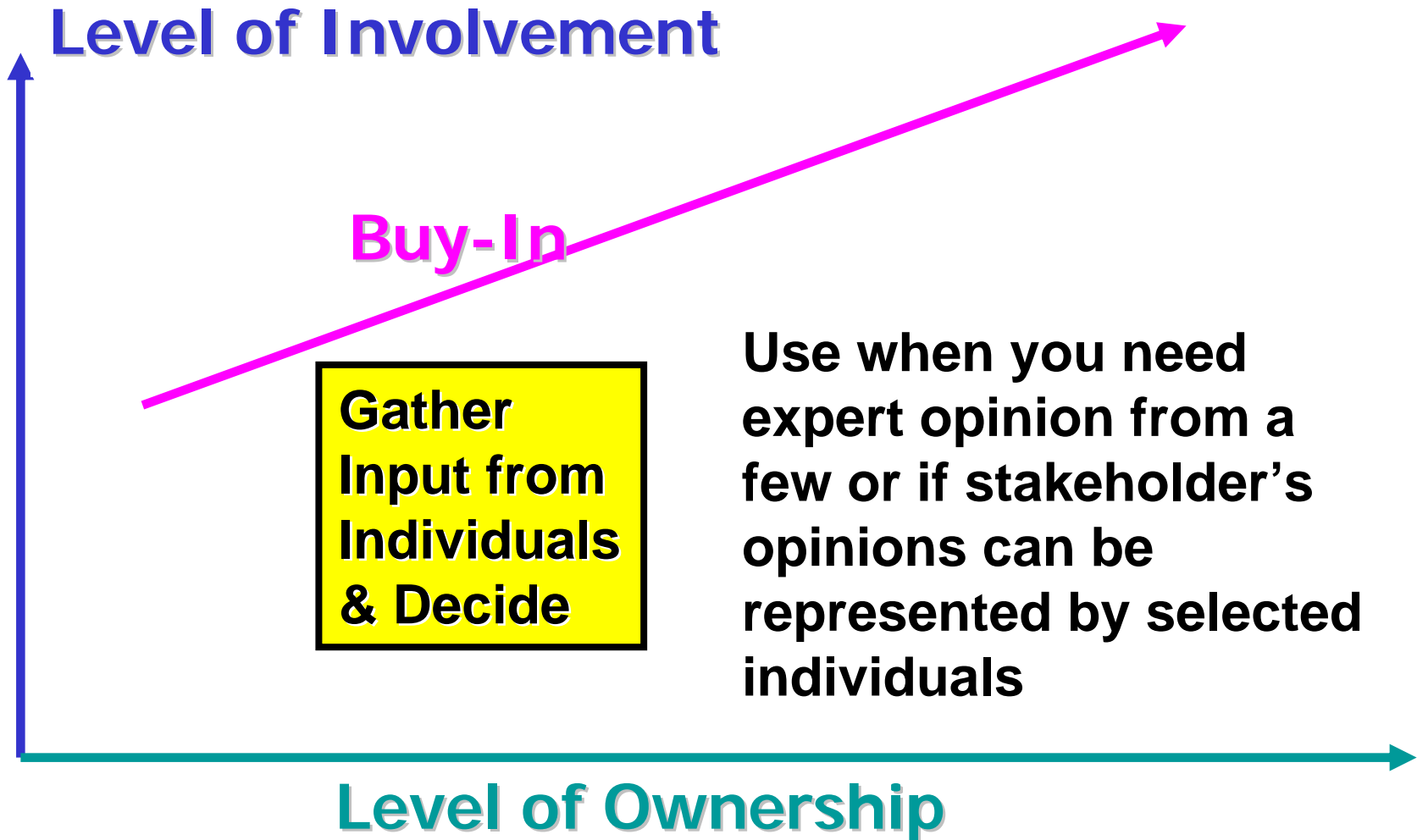
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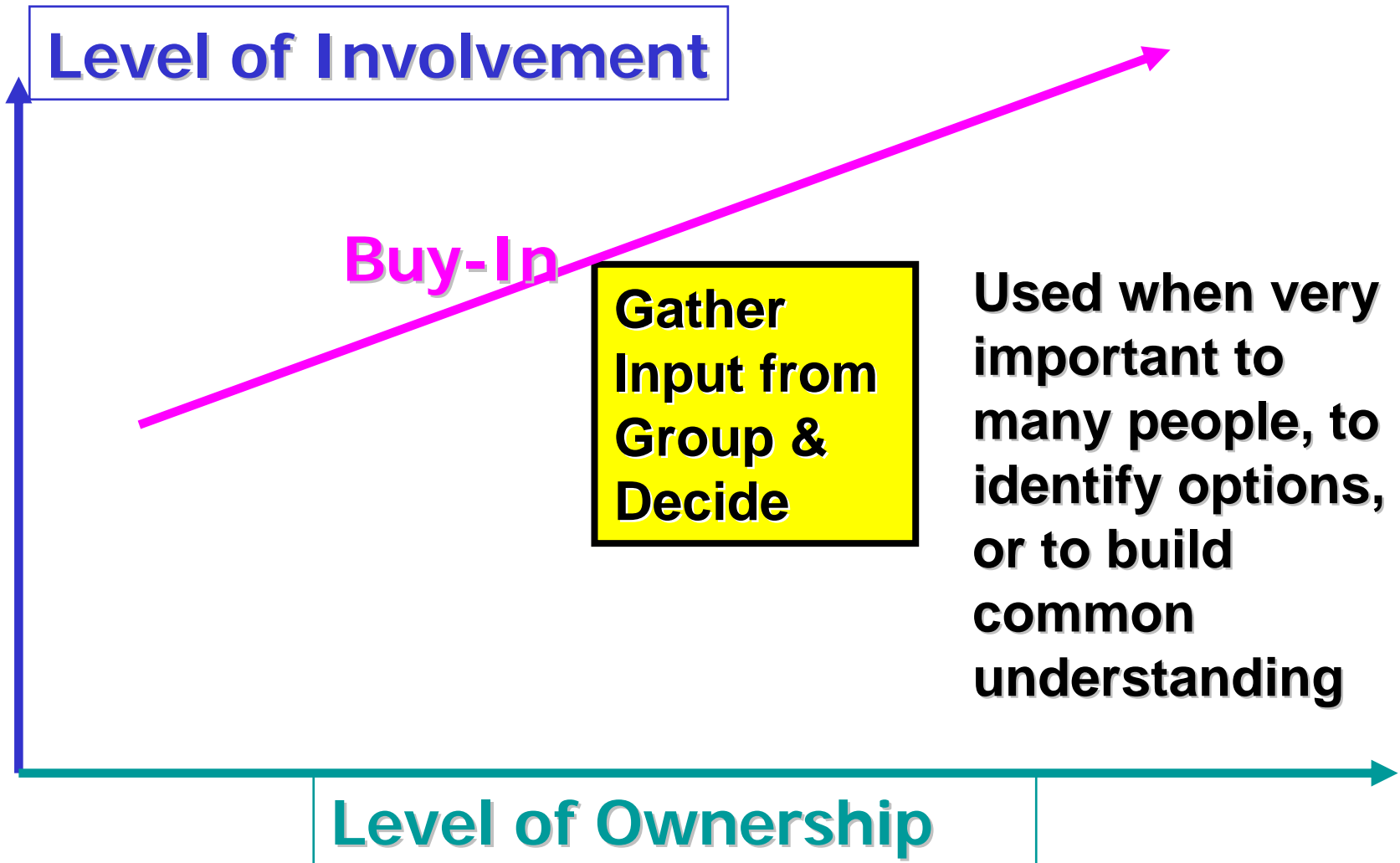
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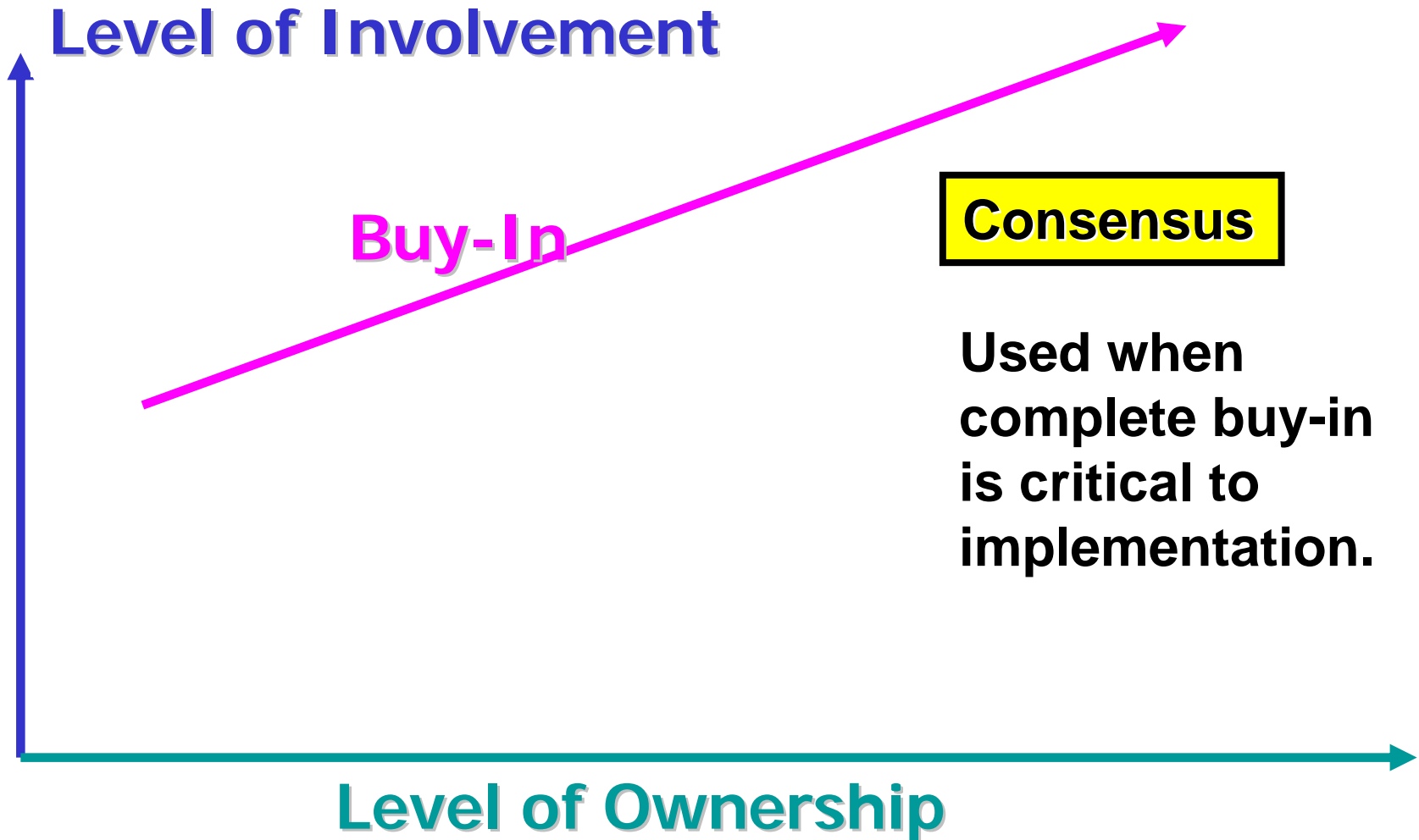
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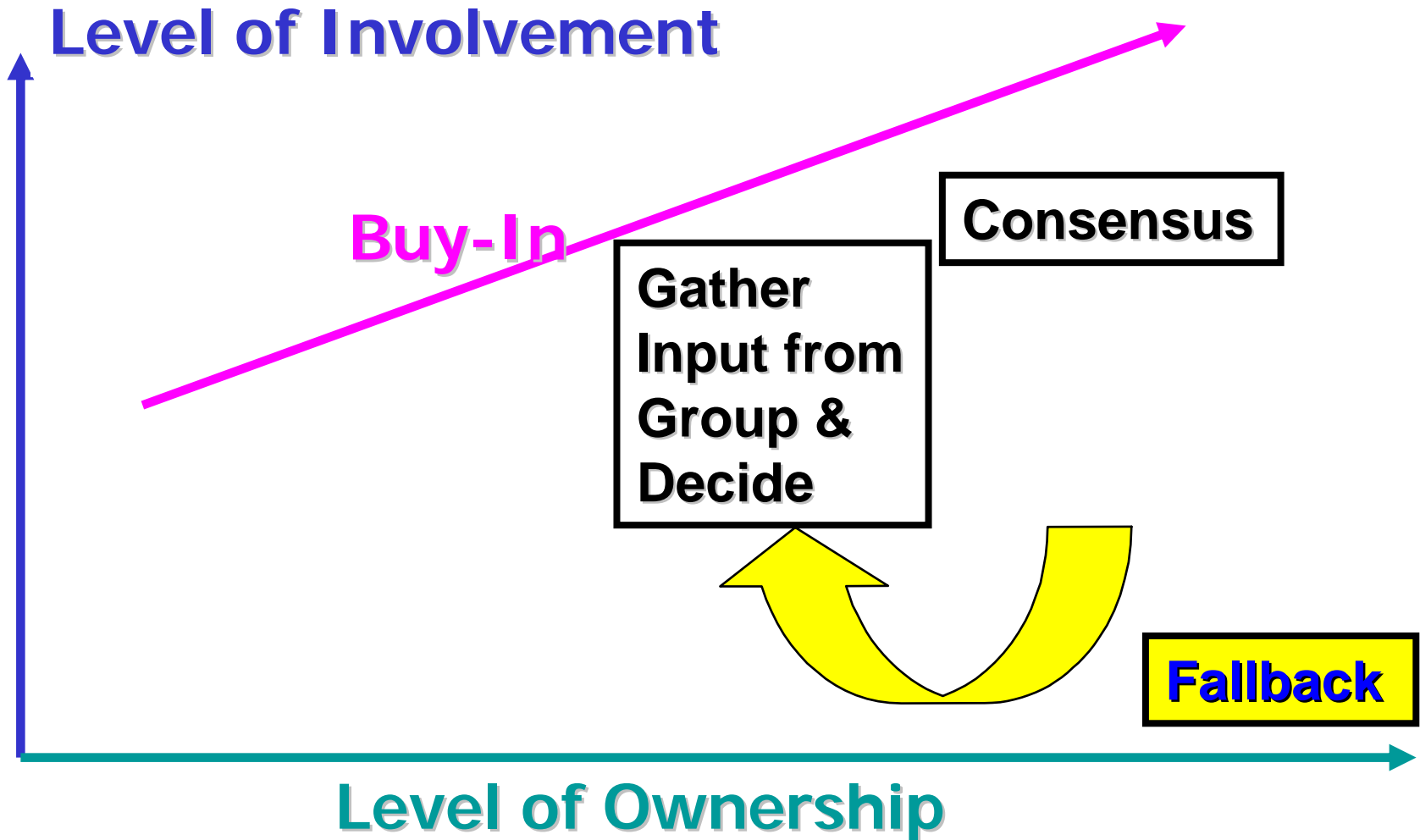
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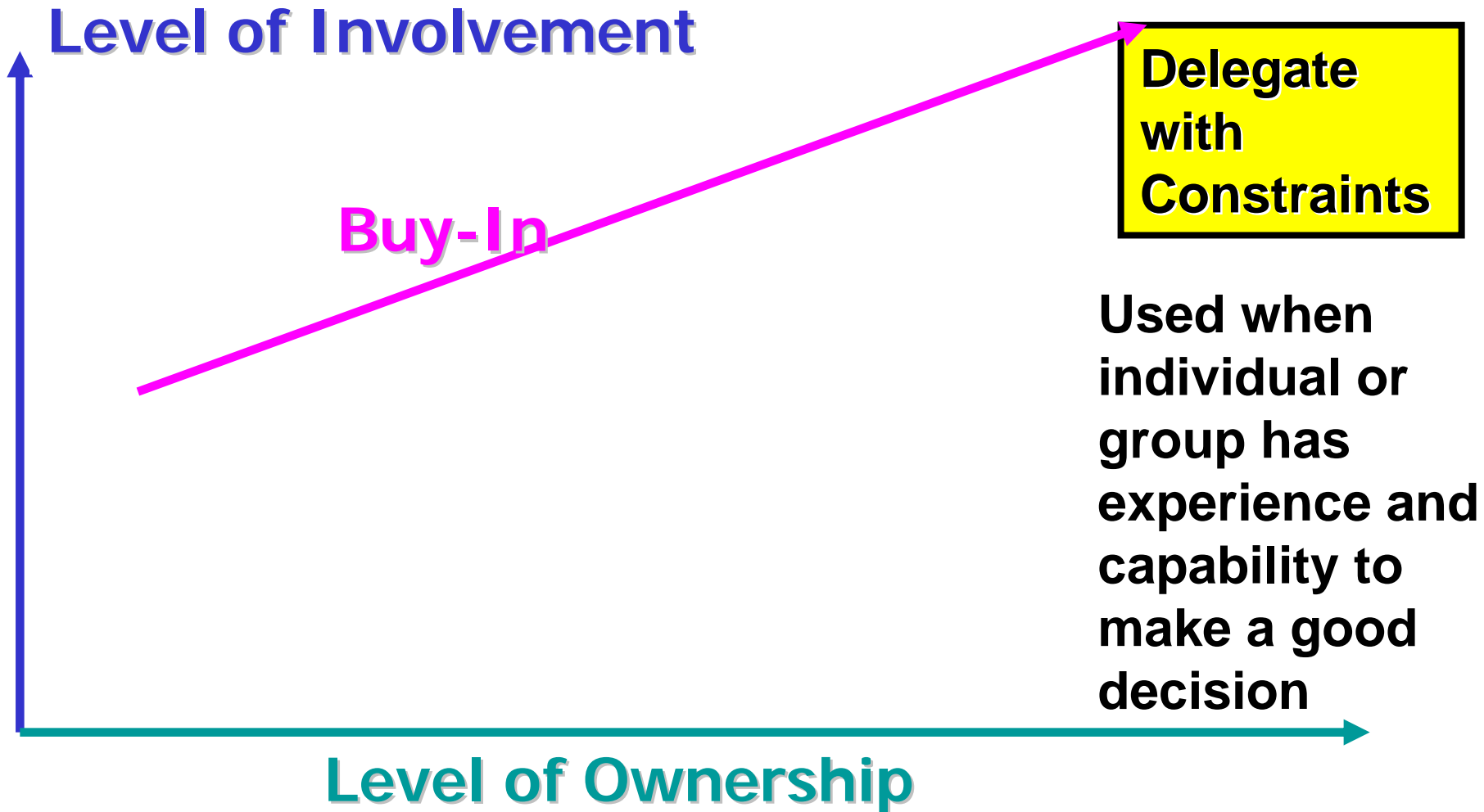
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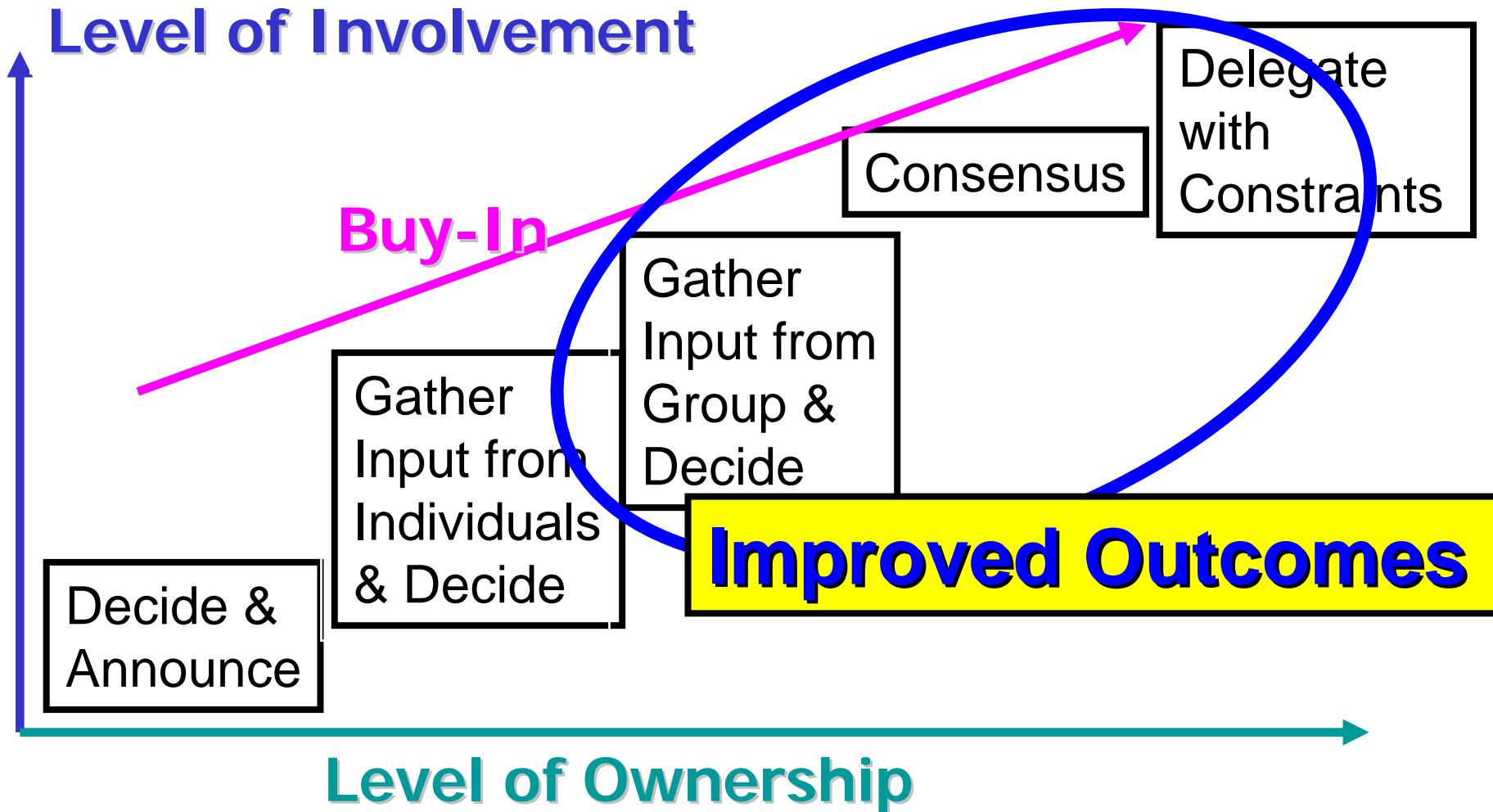
Decision Making

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Decision Making

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Tuberculosis in Minnesota cattle

Score TB Best Practices

Excellent
Average
Needs Improvement

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	TB	

Risk/Crisis Communication Teams

- Thinking only of your organization or intended organizational affiliation what roles need to be included on your pre-crisis planning team?

Organization _____

1. ***Subject matter experts***
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

Subject Matter Experts

- **Internal, external, or mixed teams of “ad hoc” expertise**
- **Regular ongoing meetings to meet the science/data needs in the crisis**
- **Value exists in including an expert in risk communication as part of the SME team**

Spokesperson/Spokespeople

- Capable of effectively using *Best Practices*
- Expected to be effective with various audiences
- Skilled working with media
- Contributes to message development

- Higher position of authority useful when dealing with more visible and critical issues
 - TB Minnesota Not Governor, but State Vet
 - 9-11 President
 - Jack-in-the-Box CEO/Public Health
 - Others?

“Internal” Stakeholders

- **Organizational leadership**
 - **Need to know how committed the supervisors/bosses/CEO’s are to the issue, and what their expectations are...**
 - Often these groups are in need of education about risk/crisis communication—its unique format, its value to the organization, what it can and cannot do
 - **Tangible demonstration of commitment?**

Other Internal Stakeholders

- ??????????????????

Employees

- **Represent a critical internal stakeholder for R/C communication**

and

- **Act as unofficial spokespeople for your organization**

Crisis Team

- **Leader(s)**
- **Members**
 - **Spokesperson**
 - **Public Relations**
 - **Legal Counsel**
 - **Operations/Facilities**
 - **Marketing**
 - **Communication**
 - **Phone, website, fax, advertisement, flyer, etc**
 - **Employee information**
- **SME's**

Organizational Barriers

- To forming teams
- To allowing teams to function

Crises are

- High stress
- Often emotional
- Include overwhelmed and tired people
- Full of unknowns
 - Decisions are made without having all the information desired
 - Great places for “meltdowns” between people and organizations
- Benefit from pre-planning

R/C Communication Teams

- **Purpose?**

- Provide for broad input to identify issues
- Develop & maintain trust-based relationships
- Create effective communication plans & processes
- Practice/drill

Process Issues with R/C Teams

- Who leads the team?
- Who/how are decisions made?
- Who pays?
- Where do you meet (turf)?
- How often?
- How are meetings conducted (process— e.g., are the personalities and issues such that you should bring in a neutral facilitator?)

More Process Issues with R/C Teams

- **Why, What, Who, When, Where, How?**
 - How to develop trust?
 - When & how do intra team communications occur?
 - Who maintains the team contact list? Who is the backup? How do you keep the lists current?
 - How does team overcome disagreements?
 - How does team avoid “group think”?
 - How do you make use of various forms of communication?
 - How do you avoid “over communicating”?

Module 4, Part II

Learning Objectives—Dairy Visit

- **Pre-crisis communication planning**
 - **Gain exposure to the farm component of the food system**
 - **Explore R/C communication with an industry spokesperson**

Module 4, Part II

Learning Objectives—Dairy Visit

- **Pre-crisis communication planning**
 - Describe Matt's role on the dairy risk communication team.
 - Where does he get his information?
 - How will he handle media requests?
 - How does the industry handle other dairy farmers speaking out who have not been trained?
 - Who are the stakeholders within your organization?
 - Time to prepare? How often do you practice?

Module 4, Part II

Learning Objectives—Dairy Visit

- **Pre-crisis communication planning**
 - In Matt's opinion is there a difference in R/C communication between an accidental and intentional event?
 - Impacts of a hoax?

Module 4, Part III

External Networks & Partnerships

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Learning Objectives

- **Pre-crisis communication planning**
 1. **Recognize the importance of external networks and partnerships for effective risk/crisis communication**
 2. **Strategize approaches to expanding external networks and building partnerships**

Brainstorm Round-Robin

- For an attack on the milk supply who are the people outside of the organization who need to be involved in risk/crisis communication planning?

Consumers & Publics

- Provides your team with insight into their fears, anxieties, priorities, and expectations
 - Advisory boards
 - Provide the organization with input/insight (Listen to them!)
 - Serve as great resource for testing messages
- Lasker's report on the public's probable response to government declarations in two crisis examples

Lasker's Results

- **Smallpox**
 - Proportion going for vaccination 2/5
- **Dirty Bomb**
 - Proportion staying in shelter 3/5

Smaller proportions in those cultures that have higher feelings of distrust for government

Involve public to understand what their reactions are likely to be

External Stakeholders

- A person or group who can affect or is affected by an action
- “Stakeholder Theory” supports the need to look beyond the organization’s members and expand critical relationships to include other groups
 - A pre-crisis component exists—and requires mutually beneficial relationships AND shared responsibility to meet key expectations before the crisis
- Strong stakeholder relations will not avert a crisis but can play a role in resolution

Stakeholders

- **Benefits of establishing functional pre-crisis relationships with stakeholders**
 - **Stakeholders with a vested interest in the success of the organization are likely to be supportive during a crisis**
 - **Stakeholders that are not involved are more likely to withdraw organizational support in the face of a crisis**

Subject Matter Experts

- **Science data, statistics, up-to-date knowledge**
 - **Source of “independent credible” statements, facts, images, etc.**
 - **Epidemiologists, risk assessment experts, various academics, health educators, risk communication experts, etc.**

Media

- **More to follow**

Others?

- **Food distribution**
- **Food retail, including restaurants**
- **Nutritionists**
- **Physicians, veterinarians, public health practitioners, Cooperative Extension**
- **Commodity organizations (e.g., DMI)**
- **Politicians & public policy influencers (lobbyists, "Watchdog Organizations", etc.**

Barriers to Engaging Stakeholders?

- Failure to identify relevant stakeholders
- Failure to ask for their opinion
- Failure to provide information
- Being perceived as an advocate
“marketing” to them rather than
dialoguing with them

CASE STUDY:

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)

- New disease in captive deer and elk discovered in 1967 in Colorado, USA
- TSE like BSE...
Spread to free-roaming (wild) deer and elk outside endemic area!
- Diagnosed in WI in ~March 2002



Minnesota recognized concerns

- Large farmed deer & elk industry
- Confusing regulatory situation (Agriculture, Animal Health, Natural Resources)
- Strong hunting culture and large deer population
- Public confusion over CWD, BSE, FMD...
- Strong emotions!!!

Created CWD Task Force

- **Broad representation from hunting organizations as well as farmed deer L& elk**
- **Participation by MN Departments of Agriculture, Health, Natural Resources, and Board of Animal Health**
- **Open meetings with independent facilitator (University faculty member)**

Team

- **First meeting early August, 2002**
- **Agenda focused on two items**
 - **Response plan if CWD identified in MN**
 - **Legislative agenda for 2003**
- **Established ground rules & mutual respect**
- **Started the meeting by invited participants to state their expectations for outcomes**

CWD hits MN August 15, 2002...

- CWD identified in farmed elk
- Announced at joint press conference with all involved state and Federal agencies & university
 - Reviewed key messages **BEFORE**
 - Handled questions with candor!

Follow-up to initial announcement

- **Subsequent Task Force meetings provide detailed updates, reviewed response and discussed changes needed**
- **Developed joint informational pieces – web site, brochure, TV shows**
- **Collaborated on risk communication opportunities...**

Risk communication portfolio

- Deer hunters host CWD forum...
- Agencies hosted town meetings, press interactions, radio, TV
- University outreach "*It's no game*"
- Responded to requests by developing diagnostic testing on demand by hunters

...Postscript

- **By the beginning of deer season, CWD risk understood sufficiently by majority of hunters – little change in license sales**
- **Successful collaboration among agencies has stimulated more cooperation**
- **Second positive in farmed elk not news!**
- **Planning begun for next deer season**

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Summary

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Panel on Creating & Maintaining Effective Teams

- **Will Hueston**
- **Tom Tavantzis**
- **David Pelzer**

- **2 minute max summary of their experiences & insights**
- **Q & A**