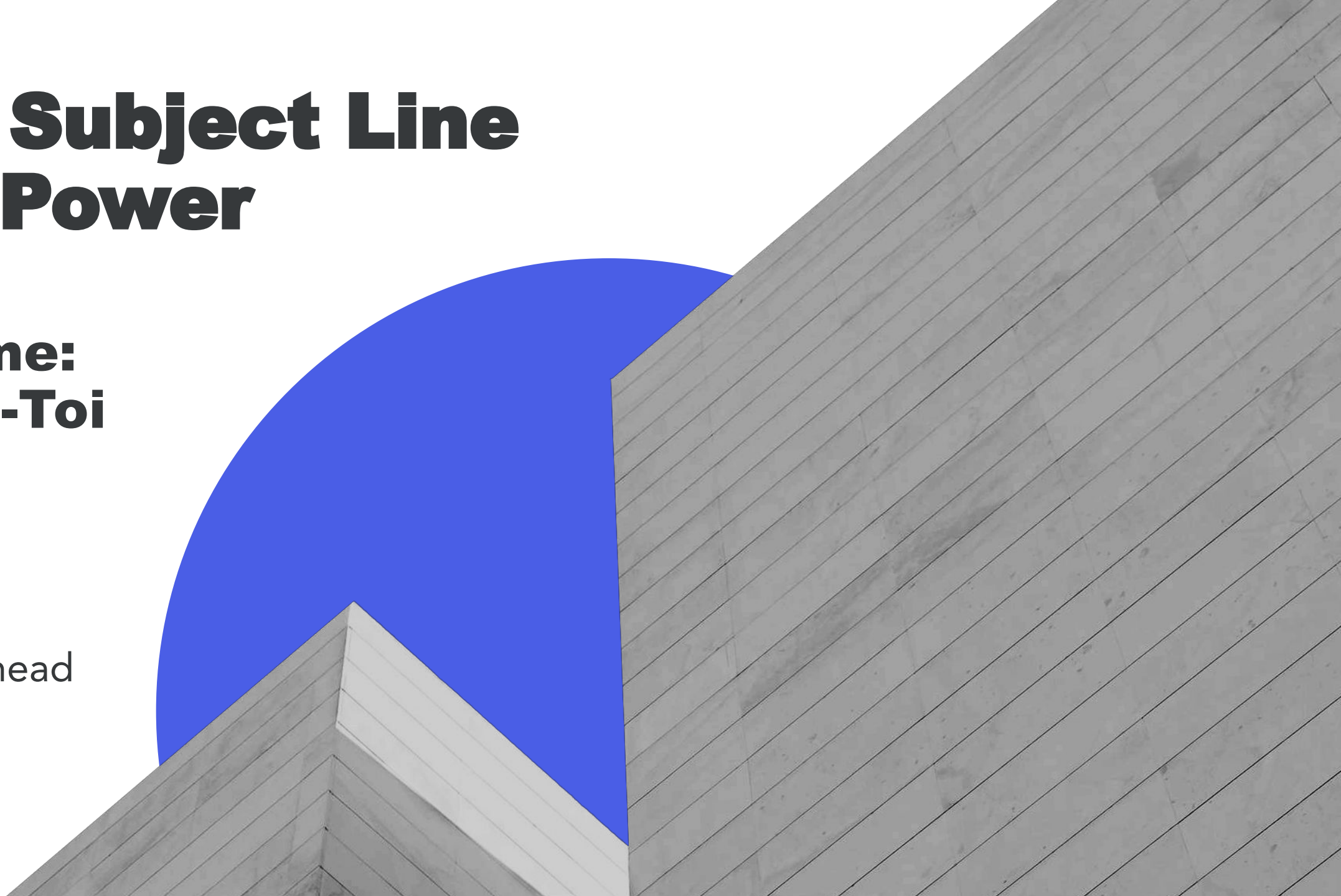
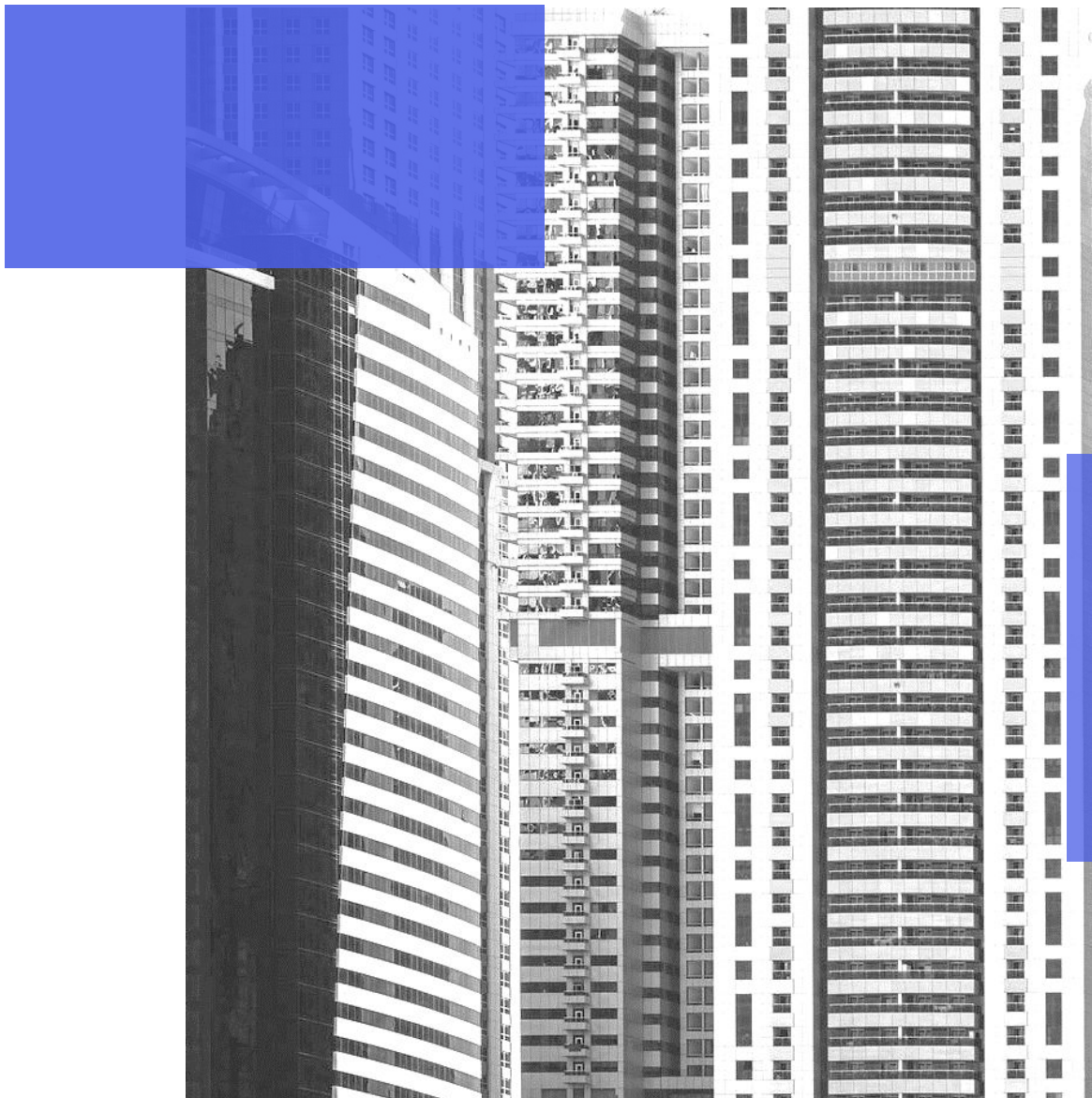


# **The Subject Line has Power**

**Sésame:  
Ouvre-Toi**

Sandra  
Hollingshead





# Agenda

Introduction Primary Goals

Best Practices

Tailoring your Subject Line

Conclusion and Key Points

# Introduction:

## Why use emails?

We need emails for:

- Official record keeping
- Accountability, transparency and legality
- Communication and information sharing
- Task management, and
- Making and documenting decisions

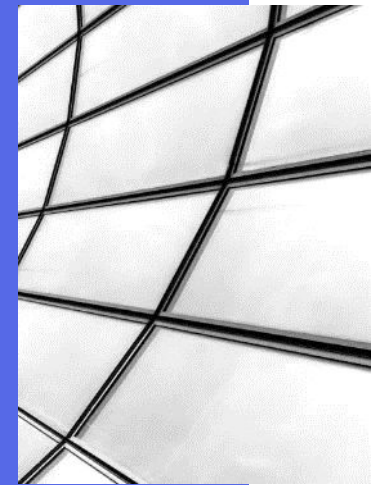
# Did You Know:

- 47% of recipients open emails based on only the subject line
- 69% of recipients open emails with a personalised subject line or a call to action
- 69% report spam based on subject lines

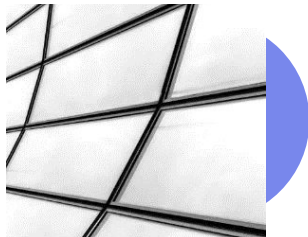


# Subject Line Best Practices

- Keep it clear and concise
  - 50 characters max
  - Put the most important information first
  - Summarise the email's content
- Be relevant and time-sensitive
  - Use action verbs (review, reply)
  - Give a deadline (By 5 PM on Friday)
- Personalise when possible
  - Name a person, unit or project
  - Use keywords
- Avoid spam triggers
  - Limit all caps, excessive punctuation or vague language



# Tailoring your Subject Line to Your Audience



## Managers

- Focus on making decisions and strategic input.
- Example: "Strategic Plan Feedback Needed by 5 PM on April 5".



## Peers and Colleagues

- Focus on collaboration and shared goals.
- Example: "Use the best web services to get the best results".



## Broadcast Messages

- Explain why this matters to everyone.
- Example: "New Cybersecurity Policy Effective April 1".

# Use Tone and Formatting Effectively

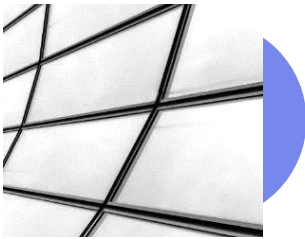
## Tone

- Be respectful, professional but conversational
  - Example: "Please Review" not "Review"
  - Avoid words like "Free" or "Urgent"
- Use inclusive language to promote collaboration
  - Example: "Let's work together"
- Ask engaging questions
  - Example: "Ready to Improve Departmental Efficiency?"

## Formatting

- Use numbers or lists to be specific.
  - List item or actions in order of importance
- Limit the use of excessive punctuation and all caps.
  - Avoid 'URGENT!!! READ IMMEDIATELY!!!'
- Use emojis and punctuation sparingly and carefully.

# More Examples: Tailoring your Subject Line



## Managers

- Bad Example:
  - Important Actions for Managers
- Good Example:
  - Q2 Budget: Approval needed by March 31



## Peers and Colleagues

- Bad Example:
  - You Need to Do This ASAP!!!!
- Good Example:
  - Project X: Team Input Needed for Next Steps by March 31



## Broadcast Messages

- Bad Example:
  - Notice to Everyone about Bed Bugs
- Good Example:
  - All Staff: New Building Security Procedures Effective on March 31

# Showing the Work: Turning Bad into Good

| Audience             | Bad Example                   | Good Example                                              | Improvements                                                                                                                                                                    |
|----------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Management           | URGENT!!! READ IMMEDIATELY!!  | Budget Review: Executive Summary Due Friday               | Removed all caps and excessive punctuation, which can trigger spam filters. Added specific content and a clear deadline, making the urgency clear without being unprofessional. |
| Peers and Colleagues | Quick question                | Project X Update: Team Feedback Needed by 3/25            | Replaced vague language with specific project information and a clear call to action. Added a deadline to create urgency without being pushy.                                   |
| Broadcast Messages   | FWD: FWD: FWD: Important Info | All Staff: New Building Security Procedures Effective 4/1 | Eliminated forwarding prefixes, which look unprofessional. Added clear indication of the audience and specific content, with an effective date to show relevance.               |

# Subject Lines calling "Action"

| Audience             | Action-Oriented Subject Line                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Management           | "Budget Proposal: Immediate Review Required"<br>"Urgent: Strategic Plan Feedback Needed by Friday"<br>"Critical: Quarterly Report Review and Approval"            |
| Peers and Colleagues | "Project Update: Action Items for Team Review"<br>"Interdepartmental Meeting: Agenda and Prep Materials"<br>"Training Opportunity: Enhance Public Service Skills" |
| Broadcast Messages   | "Important: New Cybersecurity Protocols Effective June 1 "<br>"Department-wide Survey: Your Feedback Matters "<br>"Upcoming Changes to Employee Benefits Program" |

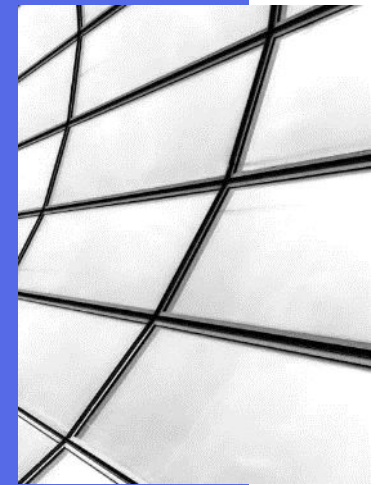
# Aide-memoires

- Key Points:
  - Strong subject lines improve open rates and use of emails
  - Tailor your tone, content and formatting to your audience
- Be relevant and time-sensitive
  - Use action verbs (review, reply)
  - Give a deadline (By 5 PM on Friday)
- Personalise when possible
  - Name a person, unit or project
  - Use keywords (budget, feedback)
- Avoid spam triggers
  - Limit all caps, excessive punctuation or vague language



# Aide-memoires

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# Subject Lines

## Do's and Don'ts

| Do's                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Don'ts                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Keep it concise (5-7 words, under 50 characters)</p> <p>Be clear and specific about email content</p> <p>Use action-oriented language</p> <p>Use plain language language and design</p> <p>Personalize when possible</p> <p>Field-test different subject lines</p> | <p>Use all caps or excessive punctuation</p> <p>Include spam trigger words (e.g., "free," "cash")</p> <p>Write vague or overly general subject lines</p> <p>Use emojis in professional contexts</p> <p>Make false promises or misleading claims</p> |



**And finally...**

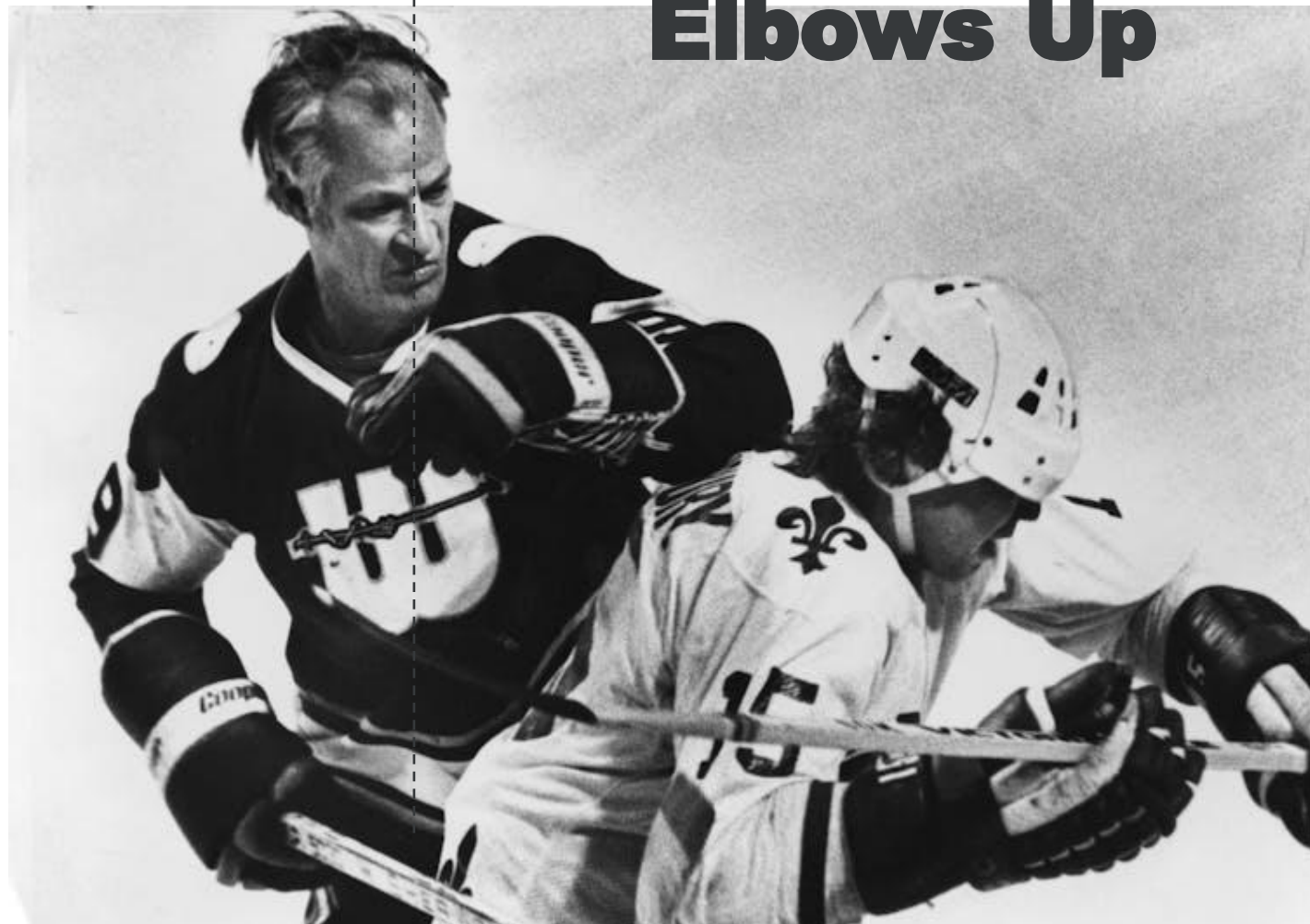
**Use Plain Language  
Techniques And  
Design Principals**

# CONTACT:

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## Elbows Up



# THANK YOU

Mirjam Nilsson

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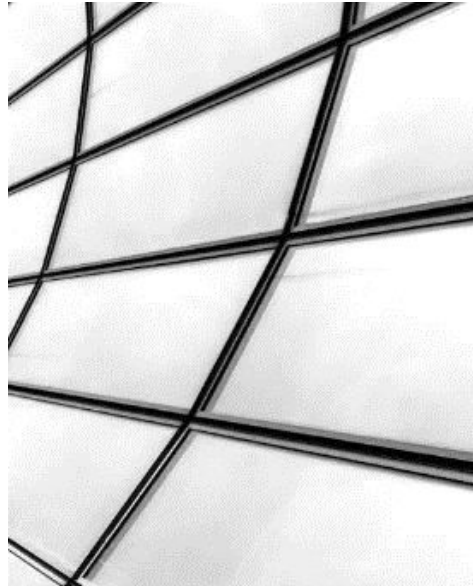


“BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES ARE LIKE BUSES.  
THERE'S ALWAYS ANOTHER ONE COMING.”

Richard Branson



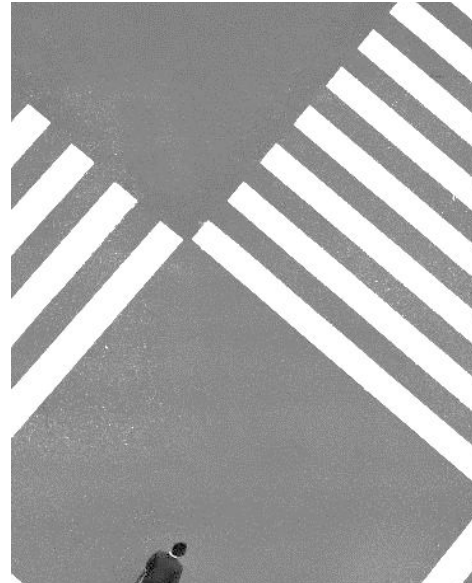
# AREAS OF FOCUS



Develop winning strategies to keep ahead of the competition

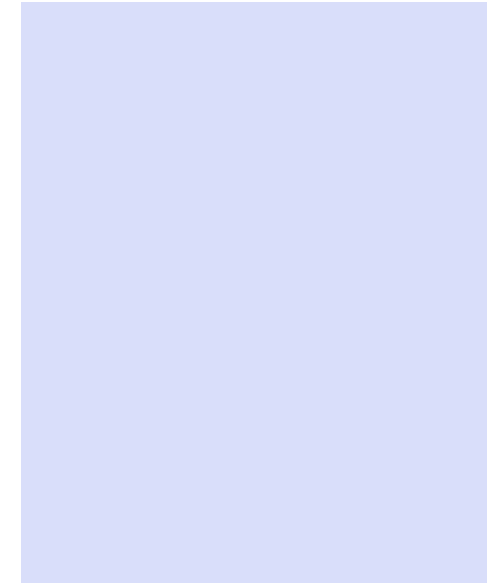
Capitalize on low-hanging fruit to identify a ballpark value

**B2B MARKET SCENARIOS**  
Business to business  
convergence



Iterative approaches to corporate strategy

Establish a management framework from the inside  
CLOUD-BASED OPPORTUNITIES



# SUMMARY

At Contoso, we believe in giving 110%. By using our next-generation data architecture, we help organizations virtually manage agile workflows. We thrive because of our market knowledge and great team behind our product. As our CEO says, "Efficiencies will come from proactively transforming how we do business."

