



September 2025 Roundtable

Walking The Line

When Policies and Practice Don't Align

Welcome to today's peer -to-peer learning
and collaboration session.

We are excited to have you with us!

Setting The Stage

- ✔ **Policies are written for clarity**
But, the workplace is rarely black & white
- ✔ **The handbook is the guide for all employees**
But, employees often hear something different from their manager
- ✔ **HR supports the organization and employees**
But, HR can be caught in the middle when policies and practices do not align



Why it Matters...

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Mixed Messages Erode Trust

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Inconsistency damages morale

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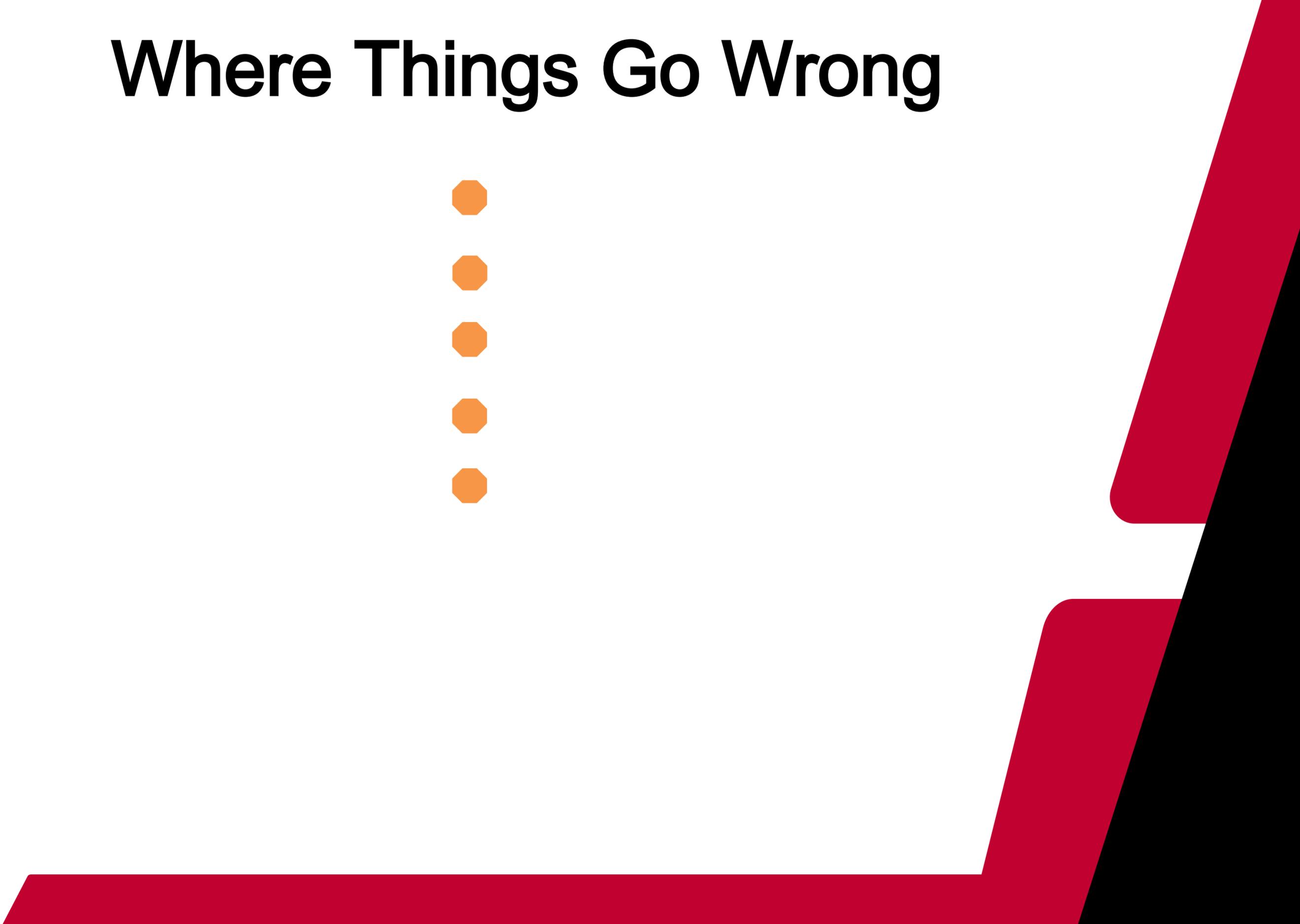
Employees test boundaries

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HR risks being seen as 'the bad guy' instead of a partner



Where Things Go Wrong





Where Things Go Wrong

● Overtime & Timekeeping

● FMLA / Medical Leave Administration

● Discipline / Corrective Action

● Harassment & Discrimination Reporting

● Workplace Safety

● Recognition & Rewards

● Attendance

● Remote / Hybrid Work

● Dress Code / Appearance Standards

● Performance Management

● Merit Increases / Compensation Program

● Promotions / Internal Movement

● Training & Development

● Paid Time Off / Vacation

Unpacking the Disconnect

- ✔ Why the Disconnect Happens
- ✔ The Employee Experience
- ✔ The Role of HR
- ✔ Defining True Consistency





Unpacking the Disconnect

✔ Why the Disconnect Happens

Where do you see the biggest gaps between what's written in policy and what managers actually do?

If you had to trace one “root cause” of misalignment in your organization, what would it be —and why is it so hard to fix?

✔ The Employee Experience

What mixed messages do employees notice most, and how does it impact their trust or engagement?

Think of a time when an employee came to you confused about a policy. What would their version of “the handbook” look like if they rewrote it based on lived experience?

✔ The Role of HR

How can HR help managers align their day-to-day decisions with what's on paper without sounding like the “policy police”?

If HR had zero authority to enforce policy, how else could you influence managers to stay consistent?

✔ Defining True Consistency

What does “consistency” really mean—does it mean the same for everyone, or fair based on context?

When have you seen “rigid consistency” actually backfire, and how did your organization adjust?

Key Takeaways

- ✔ Policies only work if they are practiced consistently
- ✔ Inconsistency erodes trust faster than “bad” policies
- ✔ HR’s role: Coach, align, and guide managers
- ✔ Goal: Create clarity employees can trust





THANK YOU!

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