



University of Wisconsin
Stevens Point



Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Entrepreneurial Ecosystems in Action

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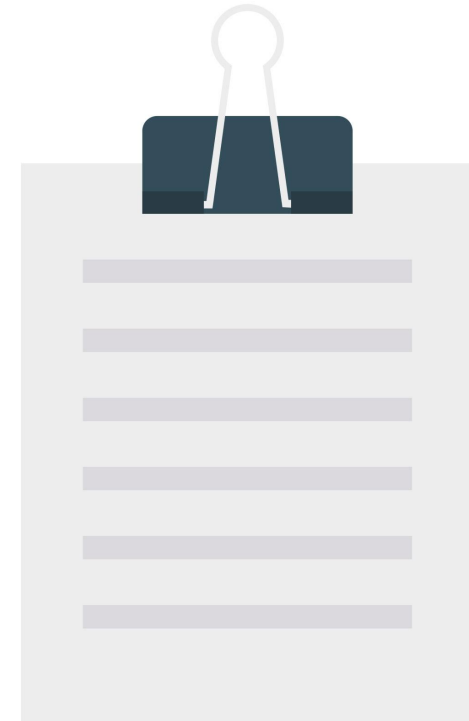


June 17th, 2025
Track 3, Session 3
3:30-4:30 pm
B's Tap House



What we are covering today

- ❑ Strategic Doing methodology
- ❑ Build the Basin Initiative
- ❑ Lessons Learned and Next Steps



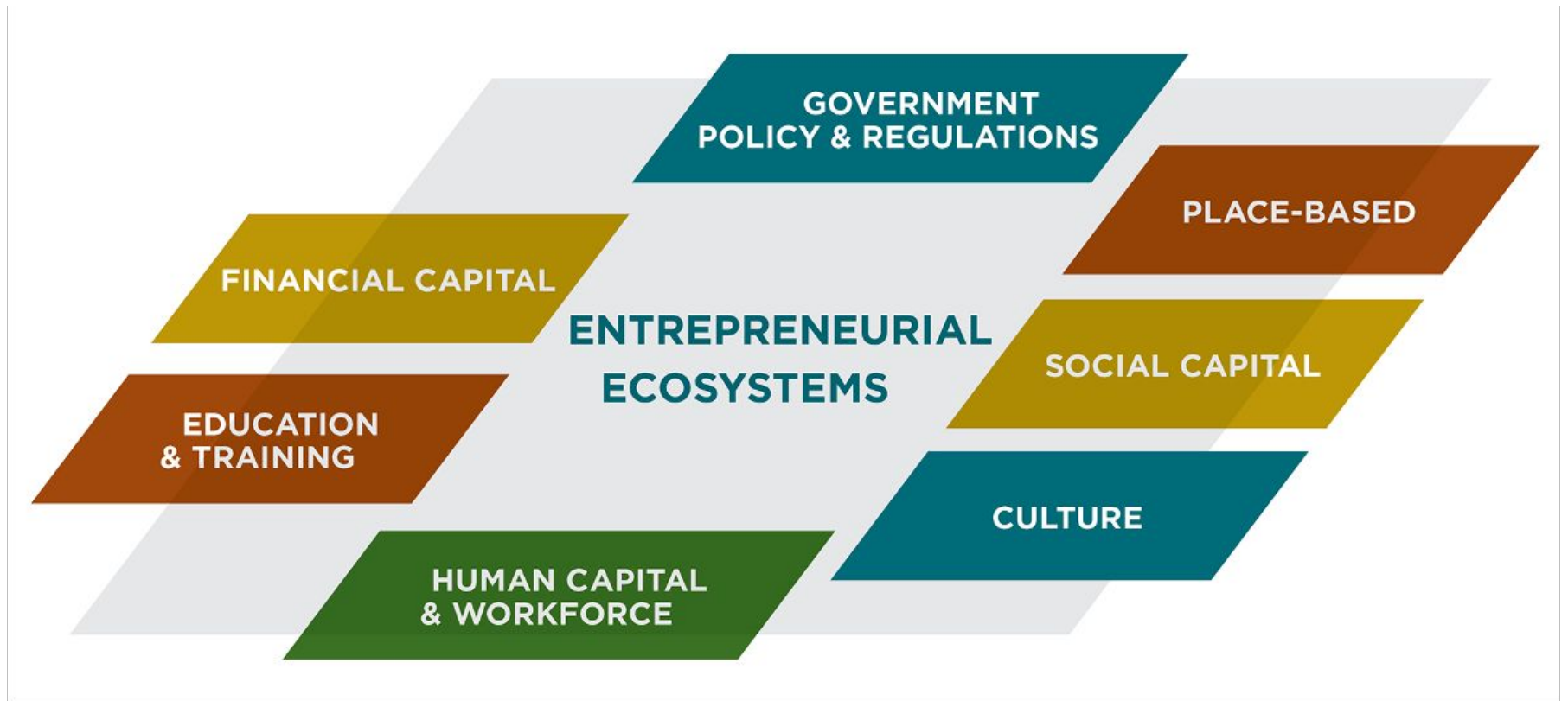
What is an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem?

"An ecosystem is a community of living organisms (biotic factors) and their nonliving environment (abiotic factors) **interacting** as a unit. It encompasses all the physical and chemical conditions in an area, along with the plants, animals, and other organisms that inhabit it."

"In essence, an Ecosystem is a **self-regulating** system where living things and their **environment interact** to create a **balanced** and functional **unit.**"

What is an Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

A complex network of individuals, institutions, and policies that collectively support and promote the creation and growth of new businesses in a specific geographic region.





What role do you play in your local entrepreneurial ecosystem?

- Entrepreneur (*current or future*)
- Ecosystem Builder (*Academics/Government*)
- Service Provider (*i.e. SBDC, lenders, etc.*)
- Community Leader (*Non profits*)
- Other?

Show of hands...

Who is familiar with:  Strategic Doing™ ?

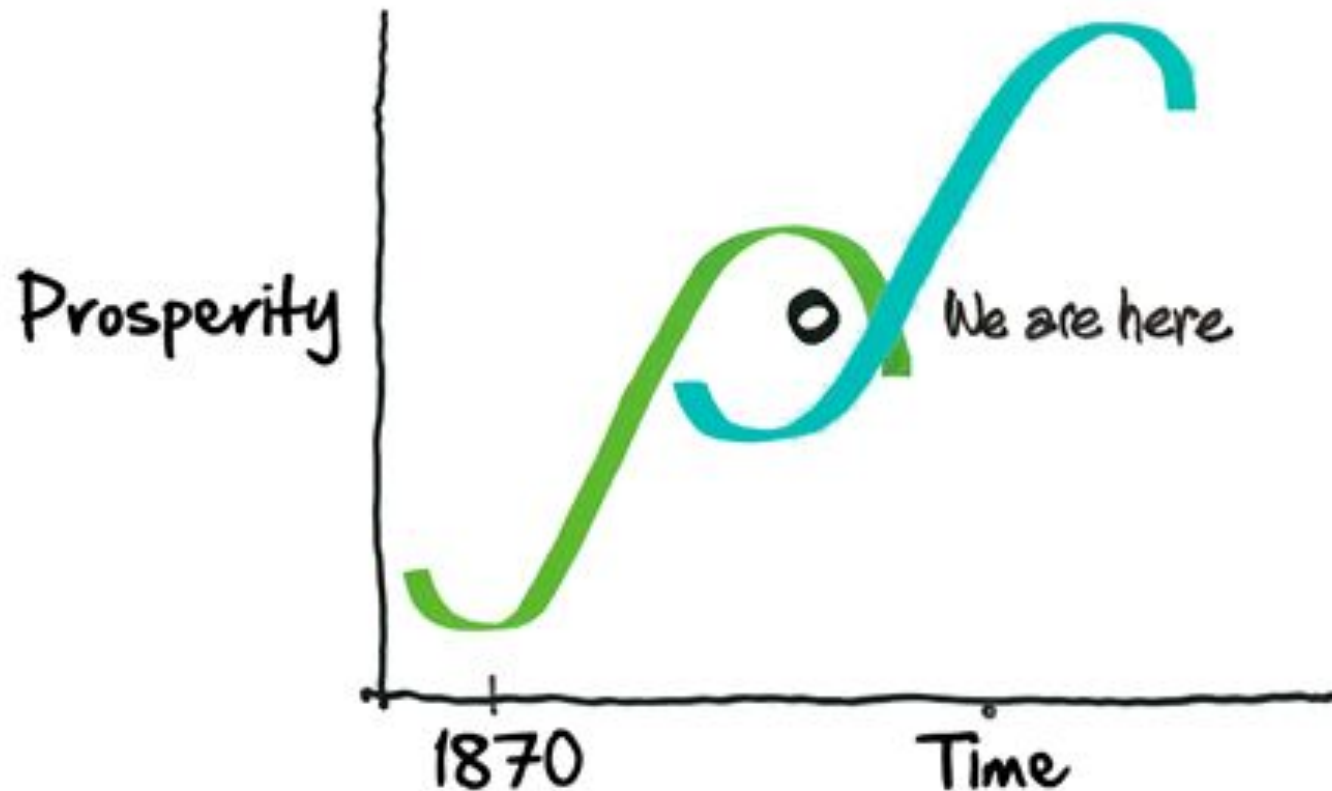




Strategic Planning

- Designed for predictable environments
- Assumes hierarchy and centralized control
- Too slow and rigid for today's complexity
- Doesn't work well in open, loosely connected networks

We need tools to enable us to move into the future



- Fast-paced change
- Interconnected problems (e.g., talent retention, innovation, economic transition)
- Need for **collaborative, adaptive responses**
- Leadership is shared and distributed

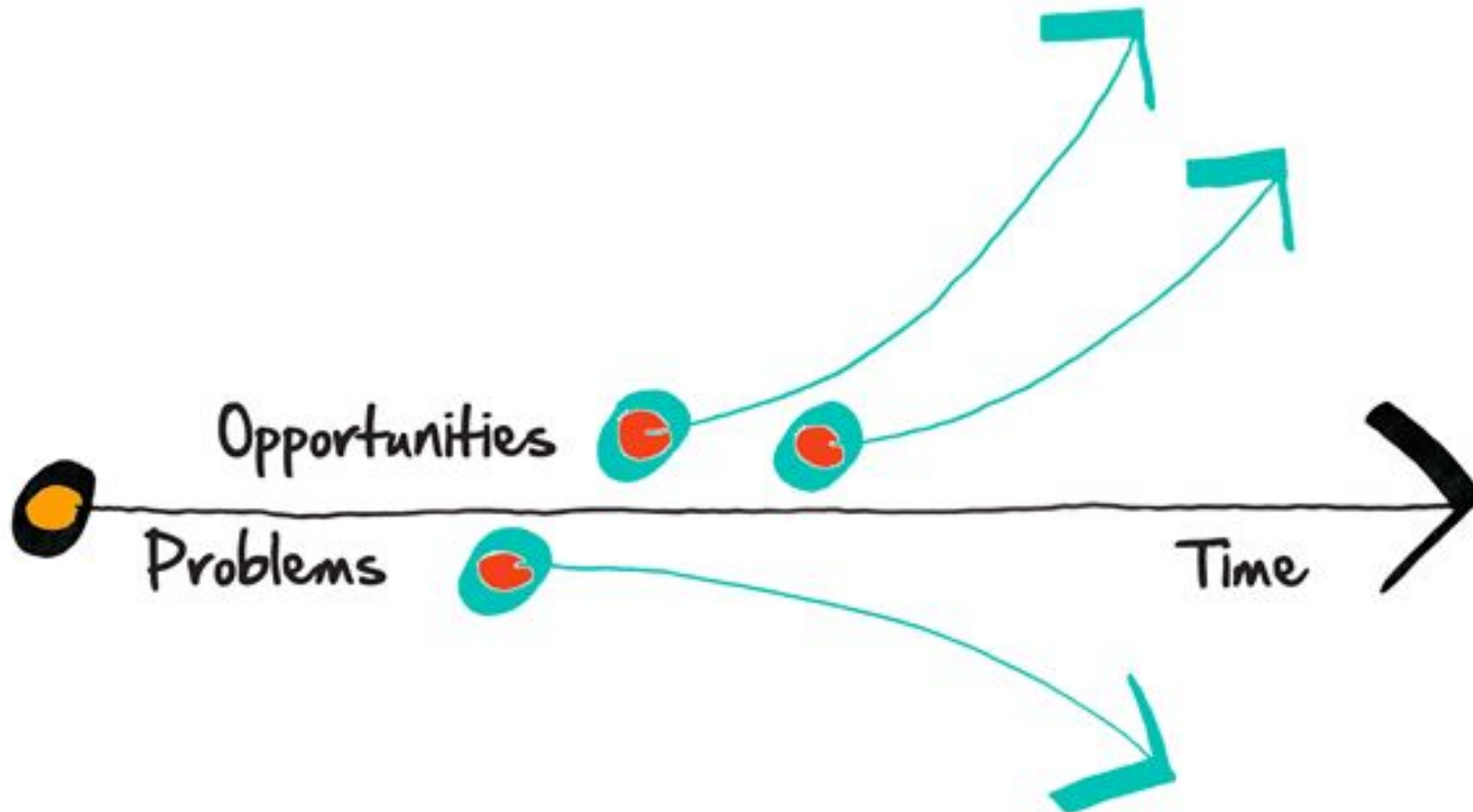


Strategic Doing™

Strategic Doing enables people to form action-oriented collaborations quickly, move them toward measurable outcomes, and make adjustments along the way.

- A discipline for **collaborative strategy** in open networks
- Focuses on doing (not just planning)
- Light structure to guide **thinking, conversation, and action**
- Grounded in *practice*, not theory

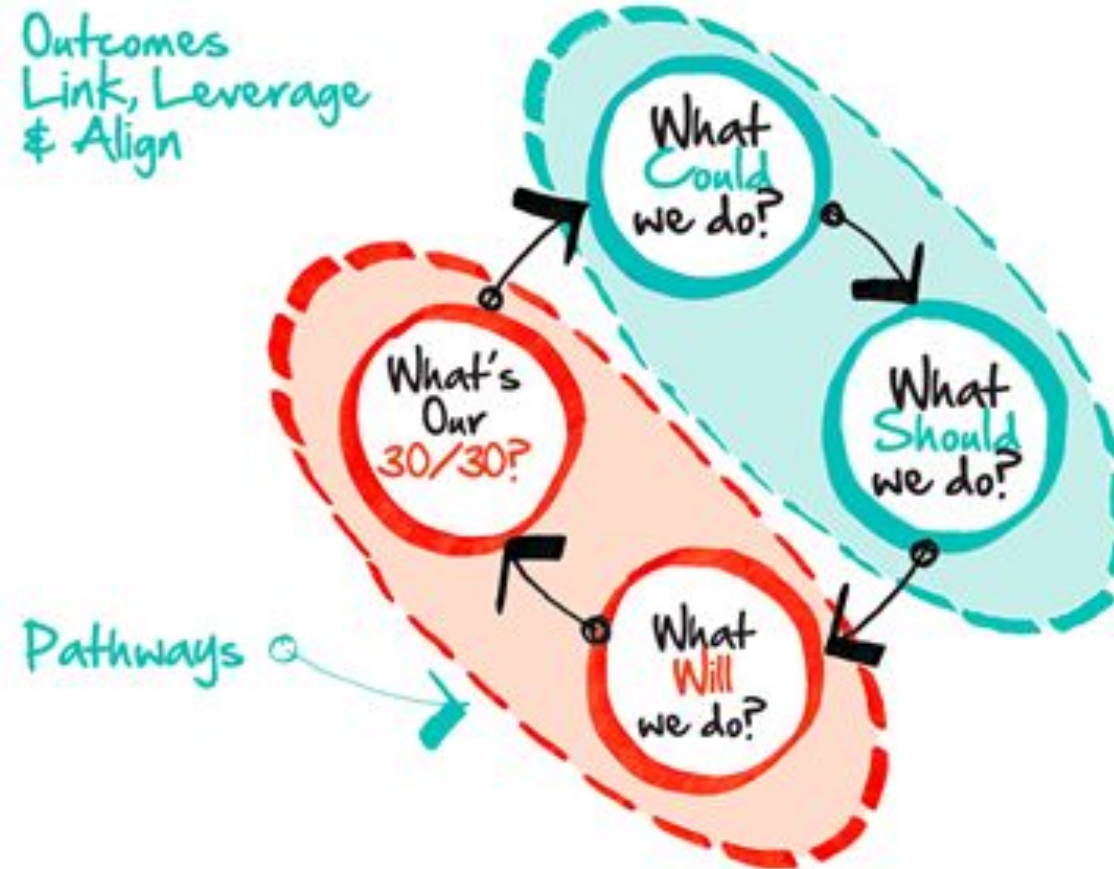
We move in the direction of our conversations



Strategy answers two questions...



Divided into 4 questions



Strategic Doing



4 QUESTIONS



10 RULES

Core Principals - From What's Wrong to What's Strong

- Start with what you have
- Connect and leverage assets
- Collaborate with shared leadership
- Build trust through small wins
- Learn fast with 30/30 reviews



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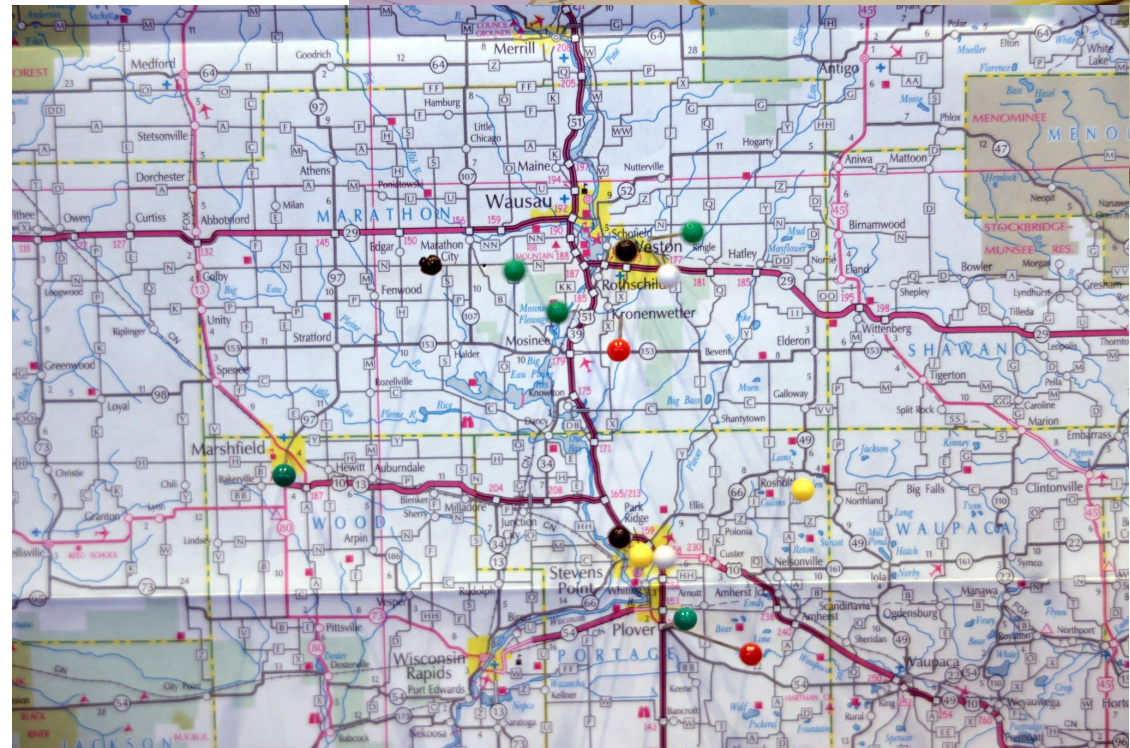
History: How we got here

- Introduced to Strategic Doing by Liz Nilsen (Fall/22)
 - “a collaborative approach to strategy execution, especially useful in complex, rapidly changing environments where traditional top-down strategic planning is too slow or rigid”
 - Shoals Shift
- Formed core group
 - Placemaking and Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

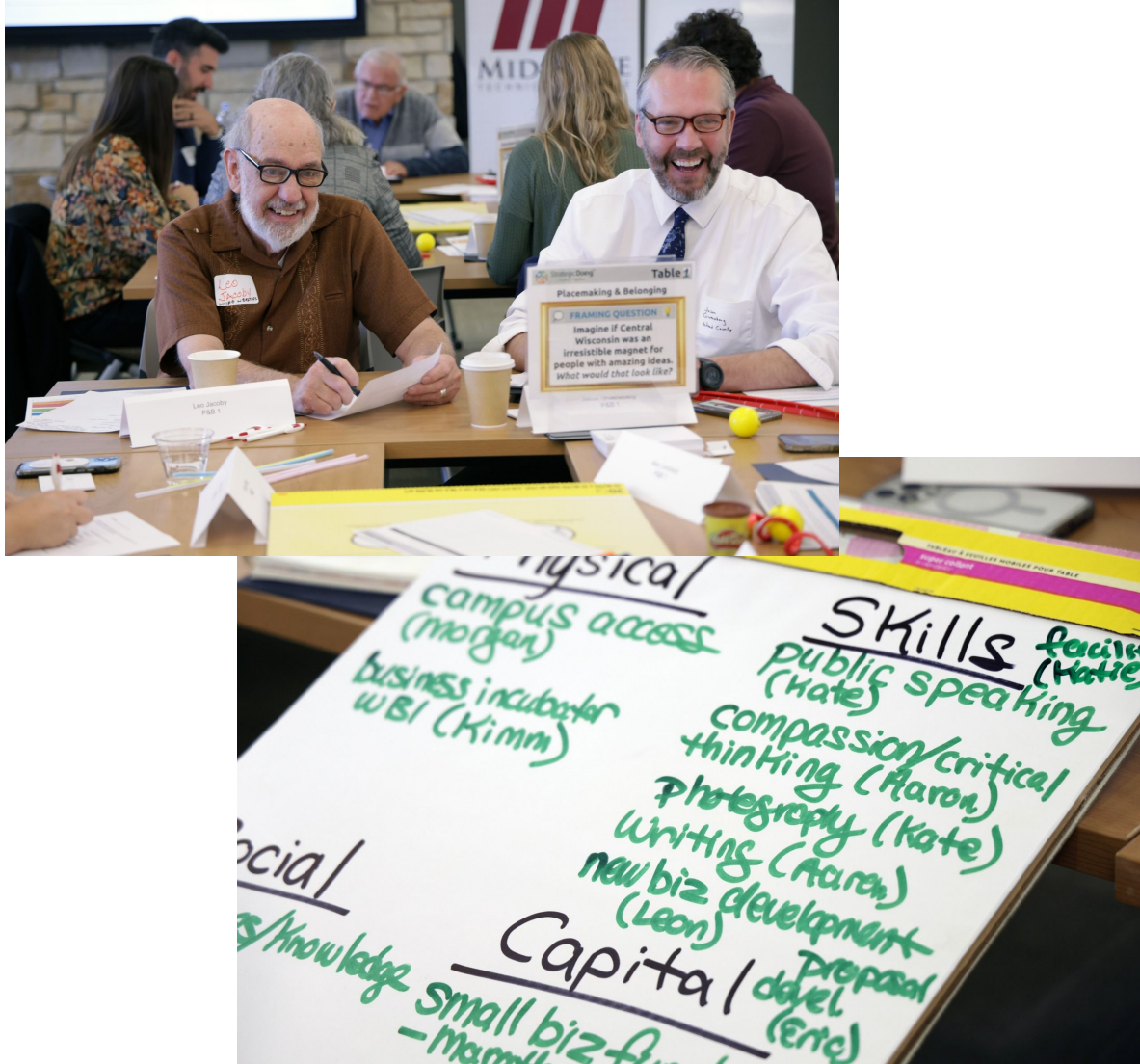


First SD workshop (May/23)

- Partnership with the Agile Strategy Lab
- "Imagine we joined together as the many diverse communities in North Central WI to become a hotbed for collaborative innovation and creativity"
- Broad participation and support
 - Public and private participation
 - Sponsorship by Church Mutual
 - Large geographic region
- Outcomes
 - Emerging Entrepreneurs Night
 - 21 events
 - 425 participants
 - Founders Network
 - First Pitch



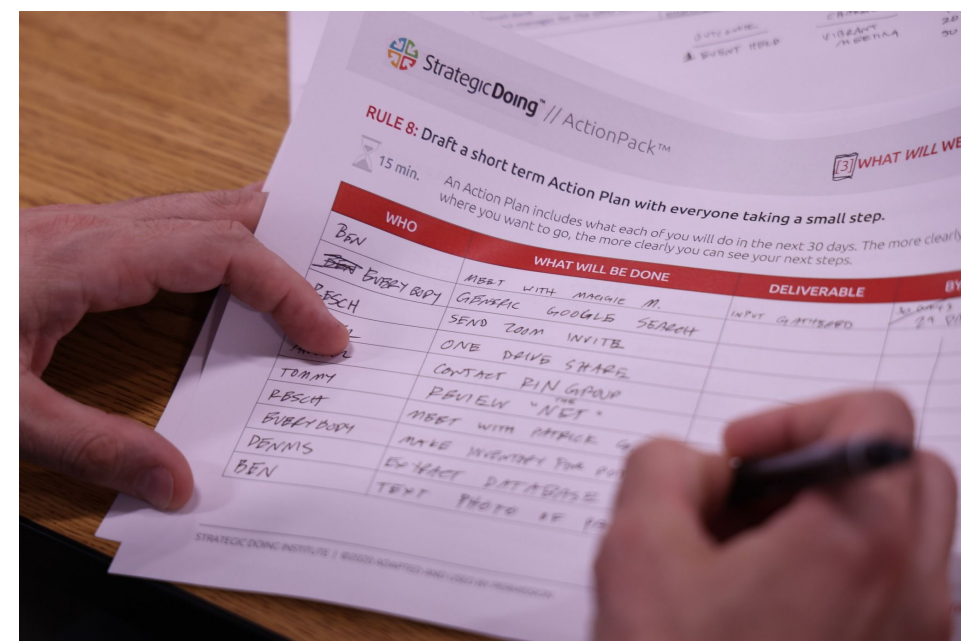
Second SD workshop (Fall/24)



- “Imagine if Central Wisconsin was an irresistible magnet for people with amazing ideas. What would that look like?”
- Facilitated internally
- Narrowed focus to Marathon, Portage, and Wood Counties
- Broad participation and support
 - UWSP and MSTC
- Duplication of table ideas
 - Resources for entrepreneurs

Our Strategic Doing Experience

Identification ---> Collaboration ---> Mobilizing





Key Challenges

- Alignment of capacity and roles
- Sustaining momentum
- Resource limitations
- Ensuring the right people are consistently engaged



Final Thoughts

- Ongoing learning and project development
- Speed of business today has changed
- This framework can be applied to multiple “wicked problems”
- We are planning for Fall 2025!

Thank you!

**What questions do you
have?**

Resources



strategicdoing.net

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