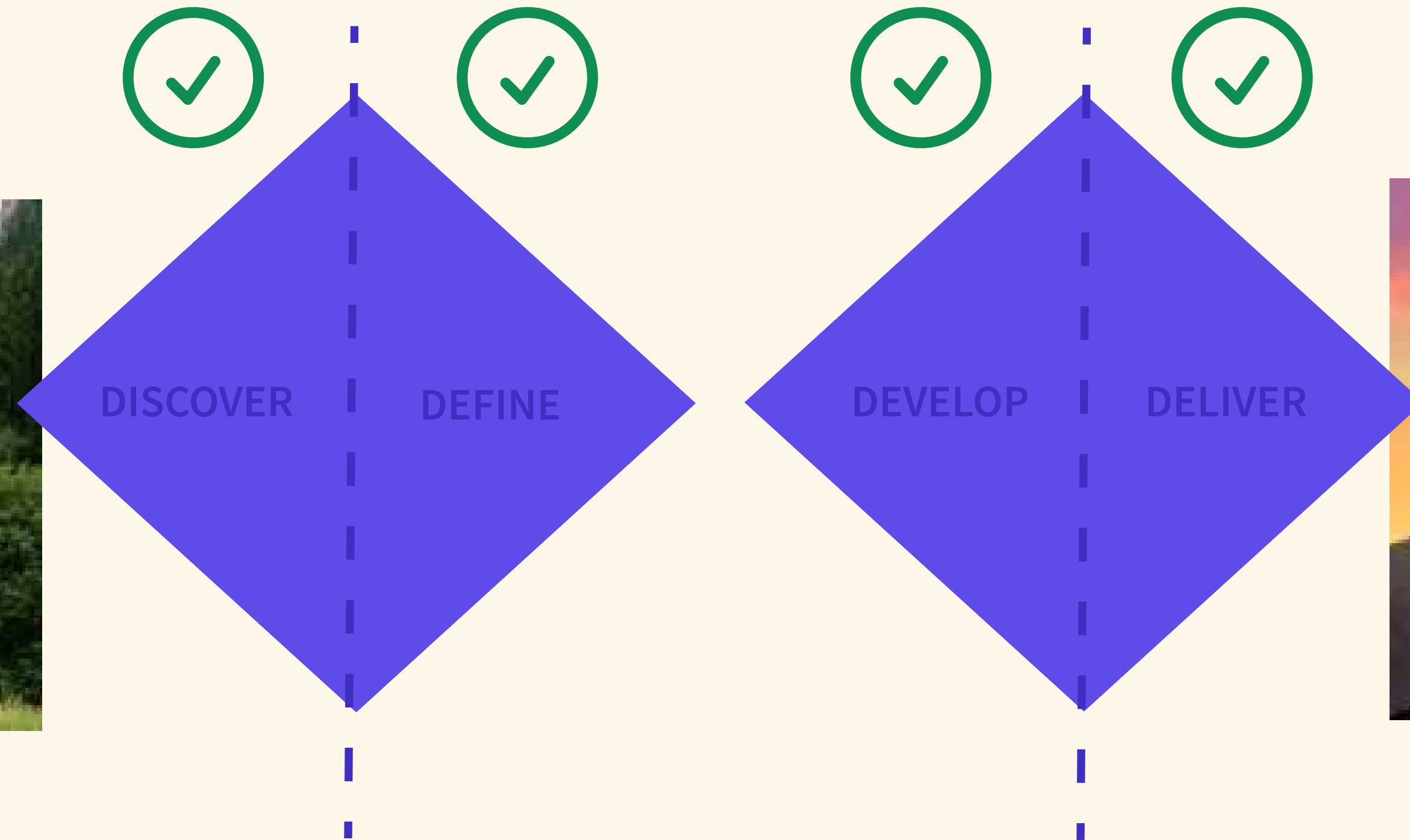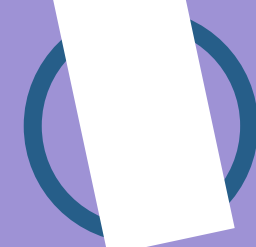# Scaling User Research with founders in the ~~foothills~~ *(mountain peaks)*

Rosie Lidington | Lead UX Researcher & Designer

MY CAREER WORKING IN UX RESEARCH & DESIGN

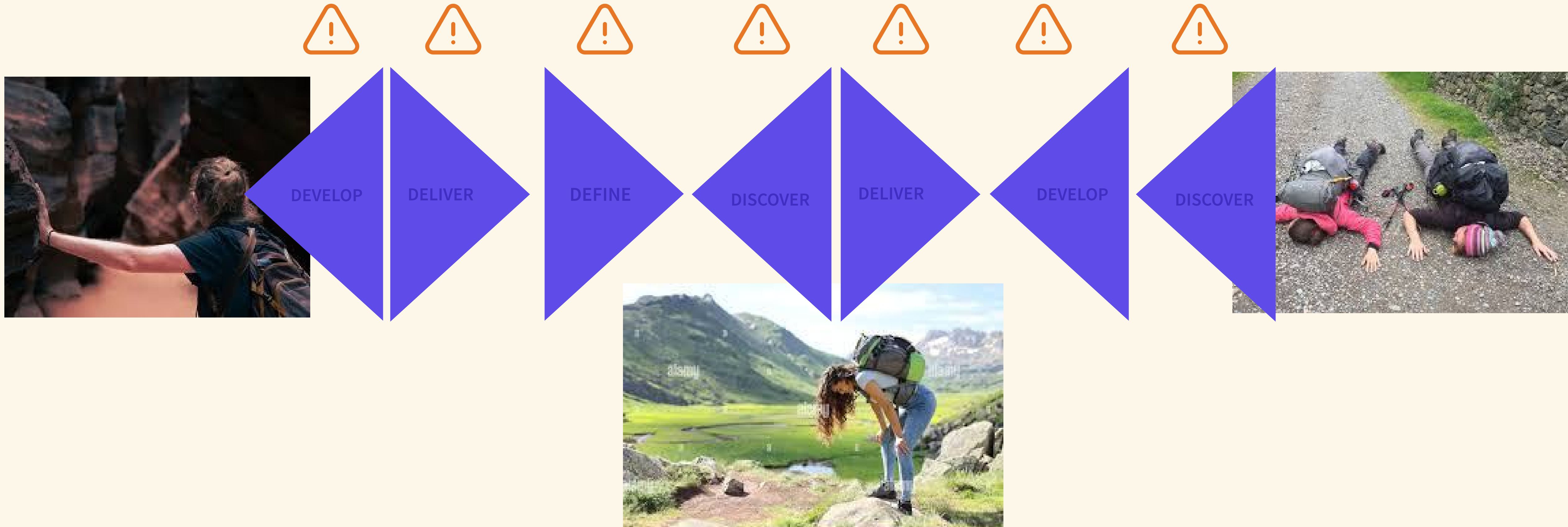DISCOVER DEFINE   DEVELOP DELIVER

MY CAREER WORKING IN UX RESEARCH & DESIGN

DISCOVER   DEFINE   DEVELOP   DELIVER

JUST KIDDING!

MY CAREER WORKING IN UX RESEARCH & DESIGN

The challenges of influencing stakeholders as a contractor

1. Persuading the value of research

2. Getting stakeholders on board

3. Conducting the research

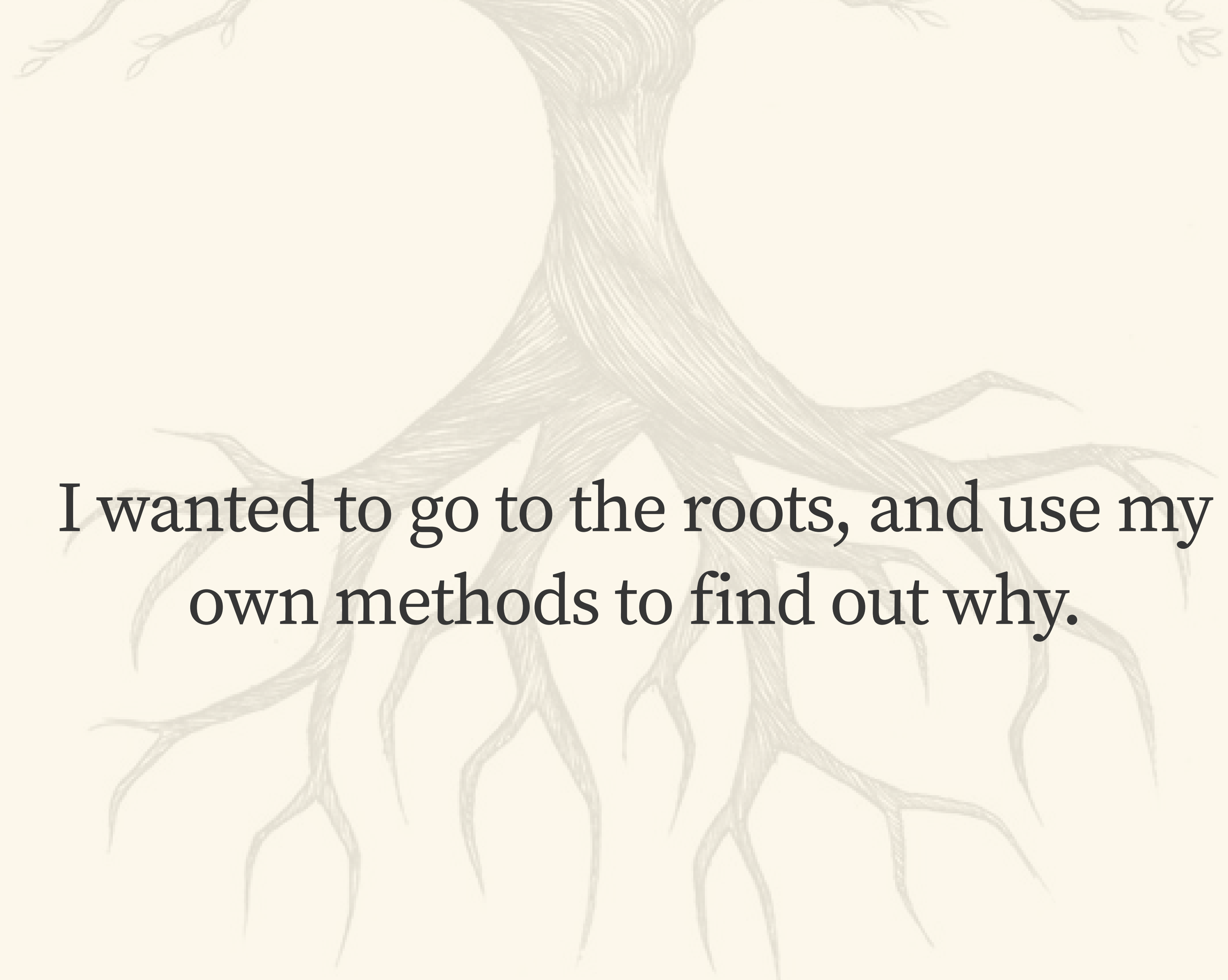4. Having impact with research findings

I wanted to go to the roots, and use my own methods to find out why.

I needed to understand stakeholder mental models better.

Interviews with Investors

Interviews with Founders

Tech incubator seminar sessions

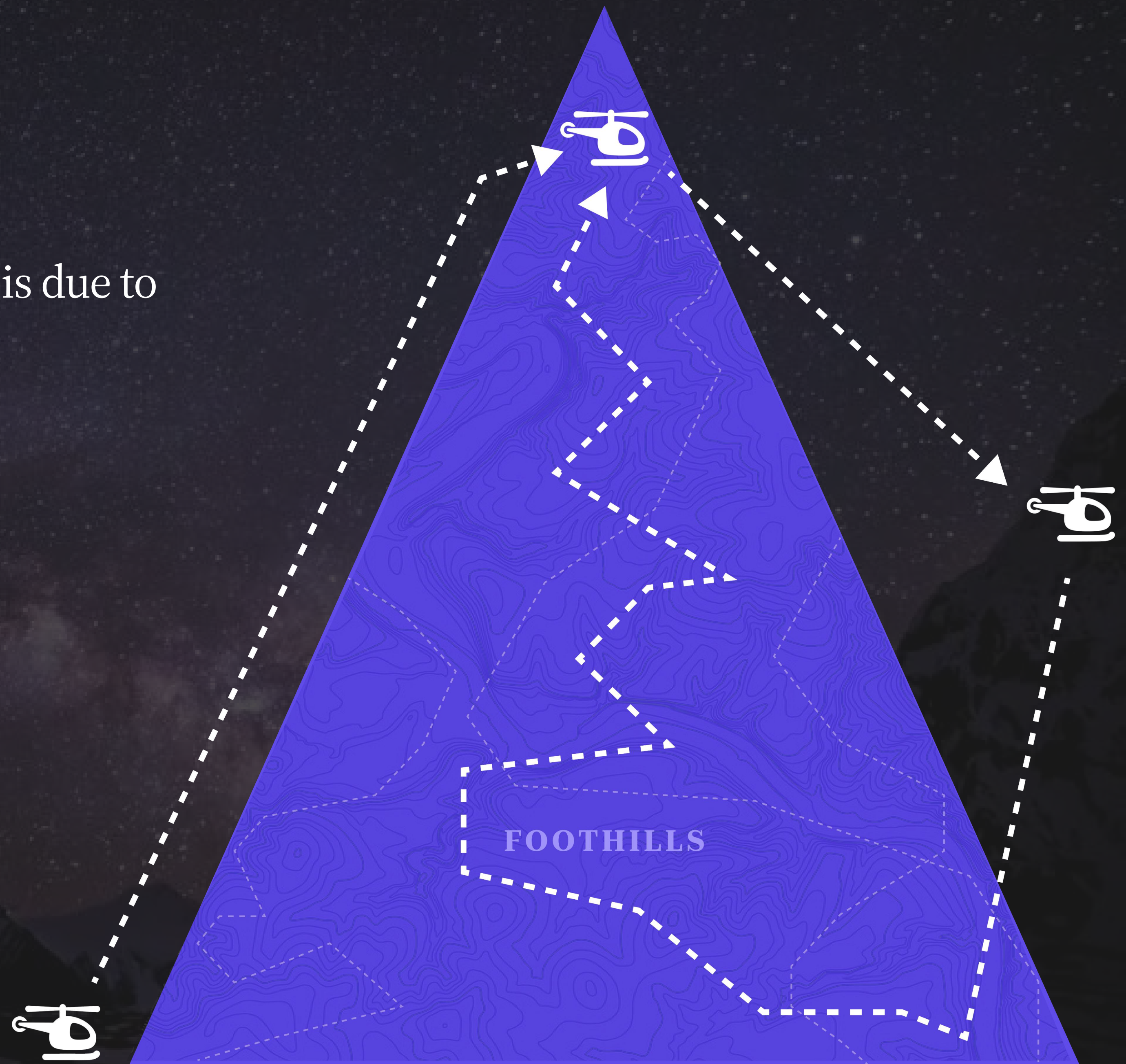I wanted to go to the roots, and use my own methods to find out why.

"

"The **#1** reason why startups fail is due to misreading market demand."

— CB INSIGHTS

FOOTHILLS

High confidence, no experience

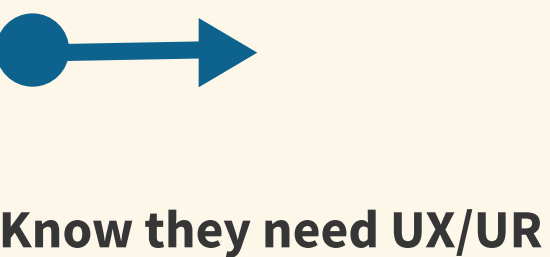**Doesn't know how to approach UX**

Builds real product in code

Product doesn't resonate or work

Begins a path of UX learning

Feels out of their depth

Doesn't understand UX

Wants to learn

Feels overwhelmed

Seeks path of learning

Experienced in tech but not UR/UX

Know they need UX/UR

Wants to learn

UR not well executed

Seeks a path of learning

Experienced and ready

Know they need UX/UR

High confidence, no experience

Doesn't know how to approach UX

Builds real product in code

Product doesn't resonate or work

Begins a path of UX learning
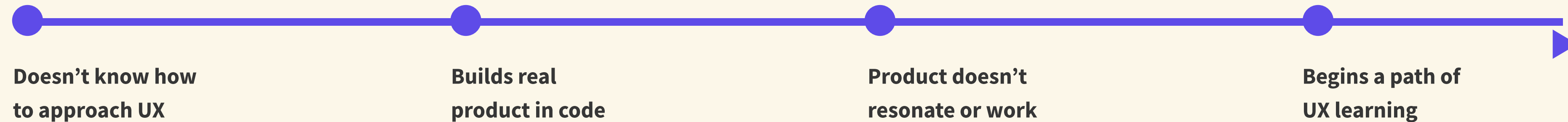
"I don't have much knowledge about UX."

"The prototype was more driven by proving what was technically possible."

"(The users) didn't know how to use it."

"I've learned that before building... check whether people want that."

Overarching theme

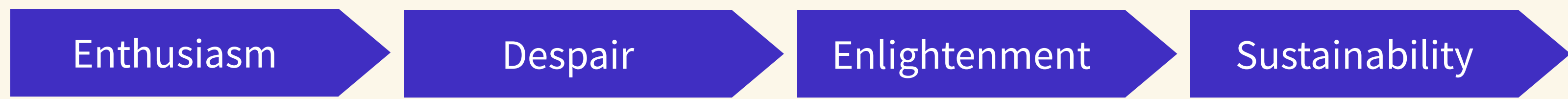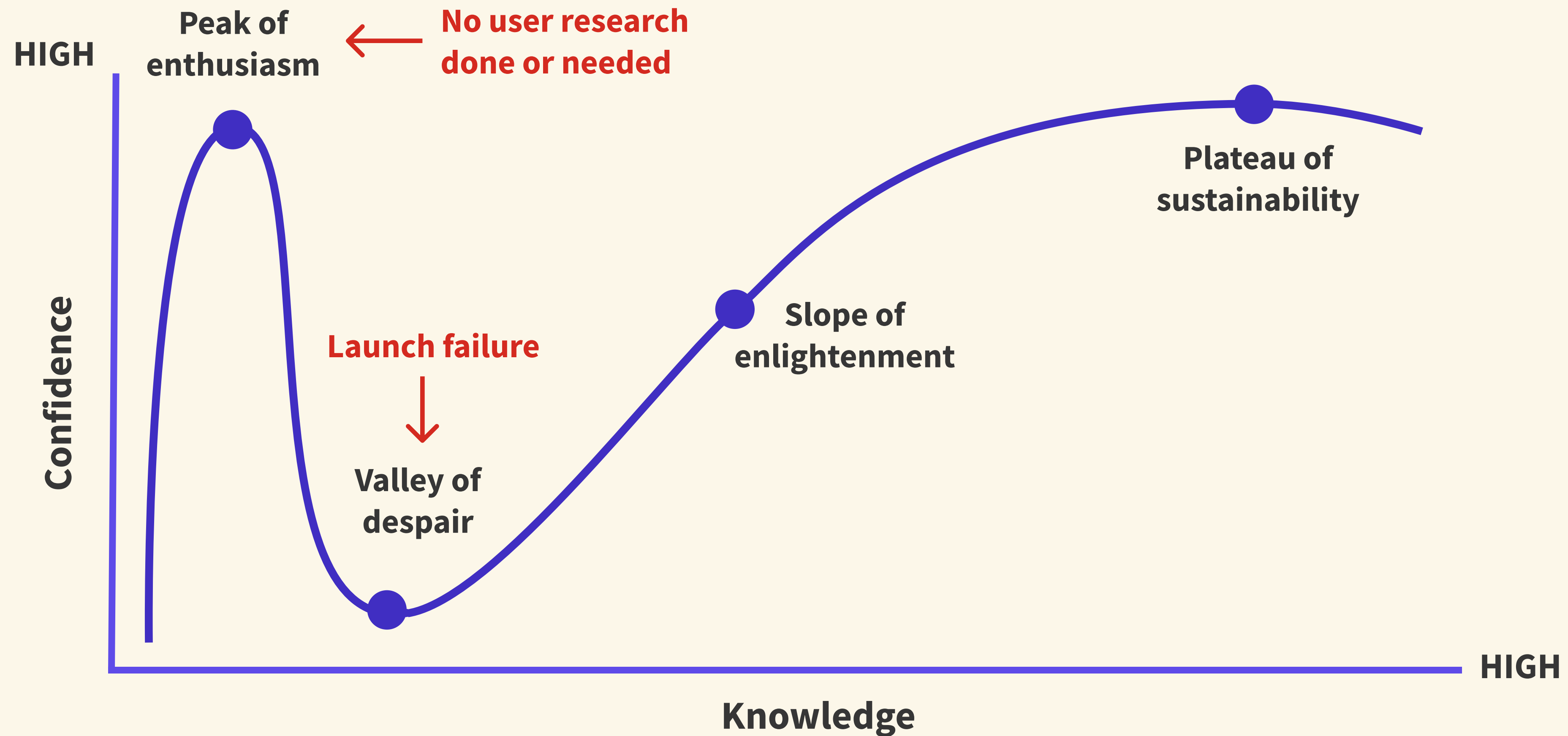UX seemed overwhelming and they lacked the experience to know what they needed.

*"I don't have **any background** in UX."*

*"**I don't have** much **knowledge** about UX."*

*"[UX is] at the **bottom of our priorities.**"*

*"You just **don't know** what you don't know**.**"*

DUNNING KRUGER EFFECT

Peak of enthusiasm

No user research done or needed

HIGH

Confidence

Launch failure

Slope of enlightenment

Plateau of sustainability

Valley of despair

HIGH

Knowledge

Enthusiasm → Despair → Enlightenment → Sustainability

This is not unique to start up founders.

It's embedded in tech culture.

The Lean Startup

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING SENSATION

THE LEAN STARTUP

How Constant Innovation Creates Radically Successful Businesses

ERIC RIES

'Mandatory reading for entrepreneurs' Dan Heath

Fail Fast, Fail Often

"If you're not occasionally failing, you're not trying hard enough. *Fail Fast, Fail Often* offers helpful tactics for conquering paralyzing fear and taking the strategic risks necessary for success."
—Todd Henry, author of *Die Empty* and *The Accidental Creative*

FAIL FAST, FAIL OFTEN

How Losing Can Help You WIN

Ryan Babineaux, Ph.D., and John Krumboltz, Ph.D.

Sometimes this can translate to **failing monumentally**

> "My background **cost me a million pounds.** Not just me, but also the investor. That's the pain point."

I believe the roots of the industry need a new approach

The startup community doesn't talk enough about the power of strategic discovery research for true innovation.

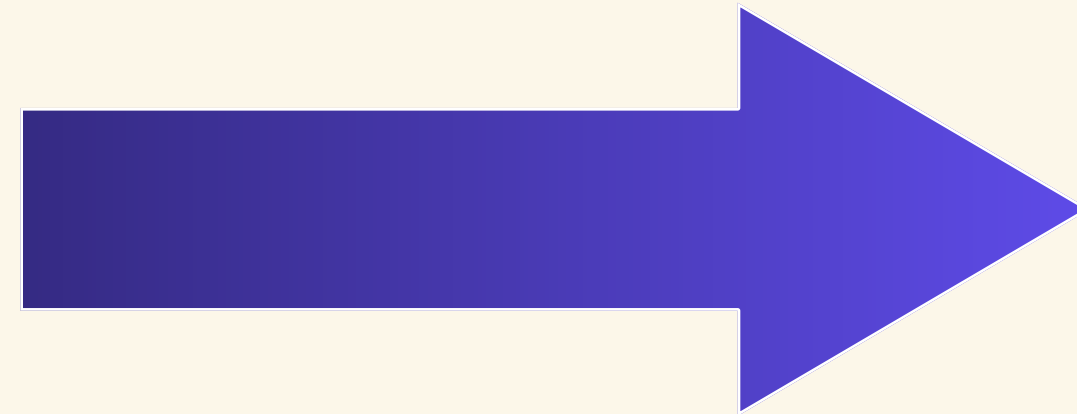My research also showed me that the founder users **wanted to learn**

*"If there was...something that could **bring clarity** to a confusing topic."*

*"I was looking for a **templates** and **guides**."*

WHAT

WHY

Playing back
insights

Influencing
stakeholders with
teaching methods

Steps to create a journey map

Motivation

e.g 'I want to apply for funding'

Existing behaviour

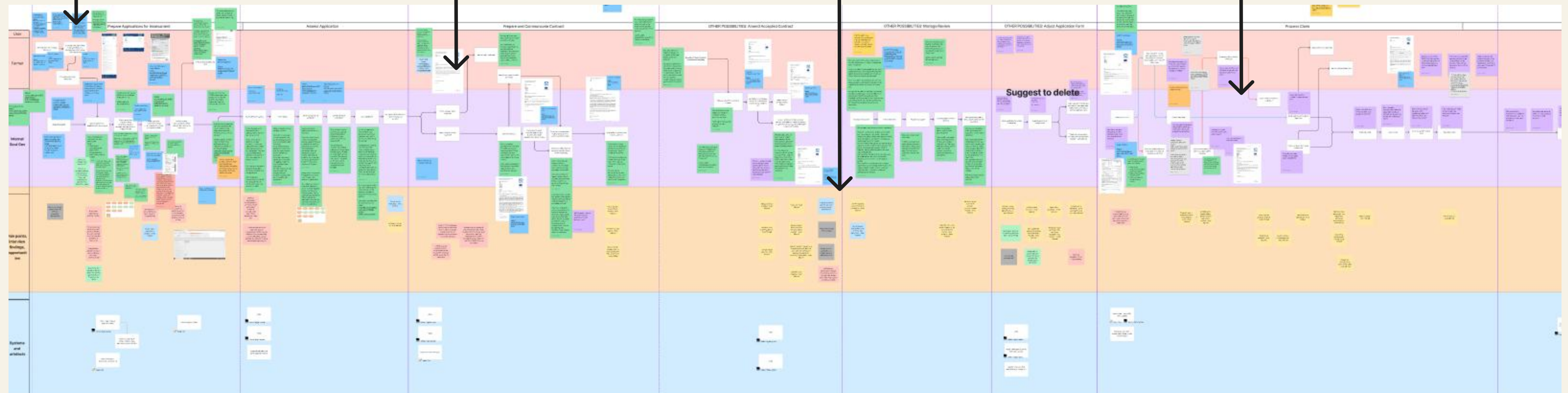e.g 'I send a letter to the apply for the grant'

Pain point
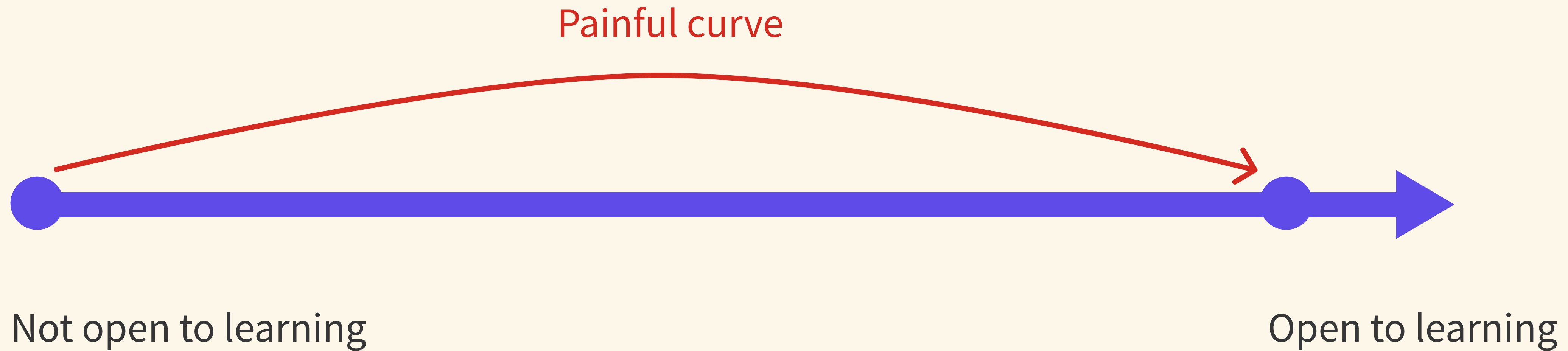
e.g I currently have to read through a lot of guidance.

Need

e.g I need to be able to see the progress of my application.

Dunning Kruger Effect and being ready to learn

Painful curve

Not open to learning

Open to learning

+ Stakeholder management effect

"

Imagine yourself as a maze builder.

— KAREN GREEN - MAPPEN
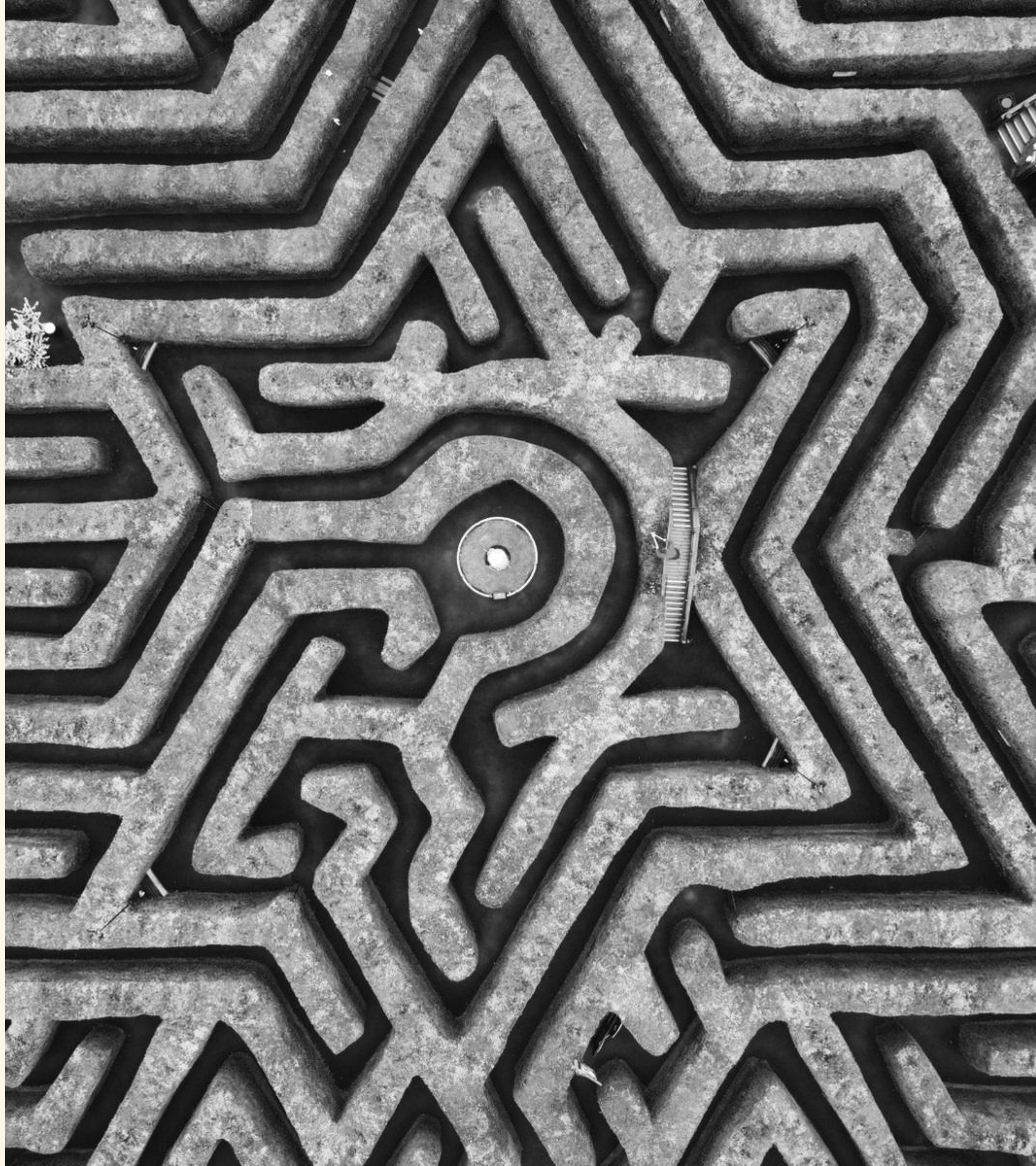
Guided Inquiry methods allow students to:

- Discover content for themselves

- Practice skills

- Make their own mistakes

- Form their own language around the experience

— KAREN GREEN - MAPPEN FOUNDER & CURRICULUM SPECIALIST

"It was great to actually see what I had the vision for on sort of on paper."

— FOUNDER INTERVIEW

In this session

1. Journey mapping explained
2. Who is this design for? Discussion
3. Deciding on the needs for the journey first
4. Journey Map the experience for users as a group
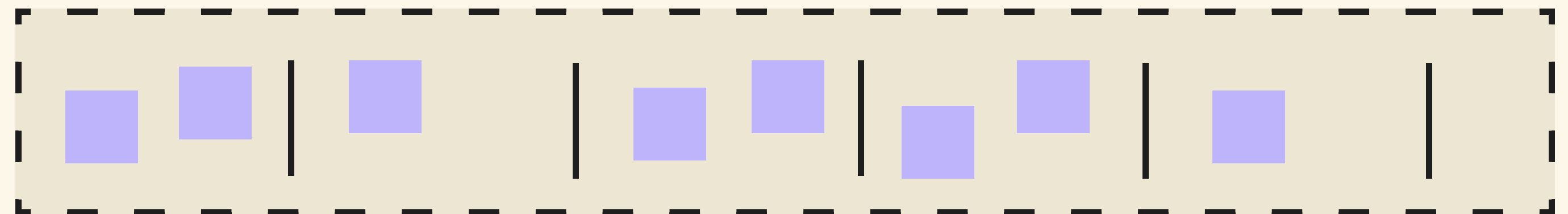5. Create individual journey maps

Stakeholder 1 flow
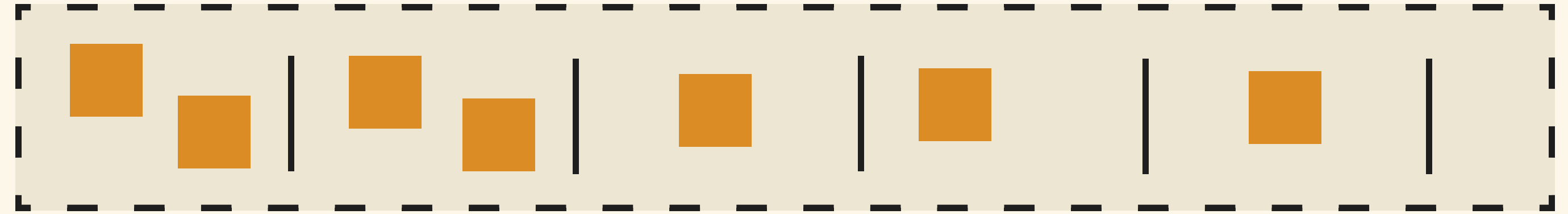
Stakeholder 2 flow

Stakeholder 3 flow

KEY THINGS I'VE LEARNED ON MY FOOTHILLS JOURNEY

4

Giving (certain) stakeholders structure to learn at the right points allows them to engage with User Research more effectively

3

When ready founder stakeholders are open to learning, they just don't know where to start

2

Failing fast is misunderstood, sometimes leading founder stakeholders to fail monumentally

1

Founder stakeholders often don't know enough about User Research & Product Design to utilise it well. User Researchers can learn from this

Thank you.

Rosie Lidington | UX Researcher & Designer

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