

Practically apply systems thinking

When teams feel stuck, face recurring challenges or experience complex problems that just won't go away, it's time to think systemically. Why? Because most teams rush to fix problems on the surface.

One powerful and practical way to do this is using the OII Framework: Observe, Interpret, Intervene.

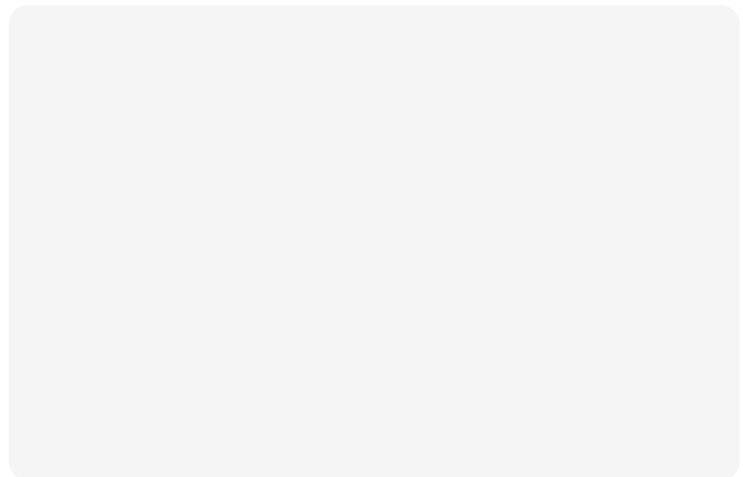
This simple three-step approach helps leaders understand what's really going on and find smarter, system-level responses.

Observe (What's happening?)

Start by looking at the system with fresh eyes. Resist the urge to jump to conclusions or try to fix anything too quickly. This stage is about gathering information, not opinions.

Your role is to be a neutral observer:

- What patterns or recurring events are you noticing?
- What's happening in behaviours, processes, and outcomes?
- What's showing up in meetings, communication, or decisions?

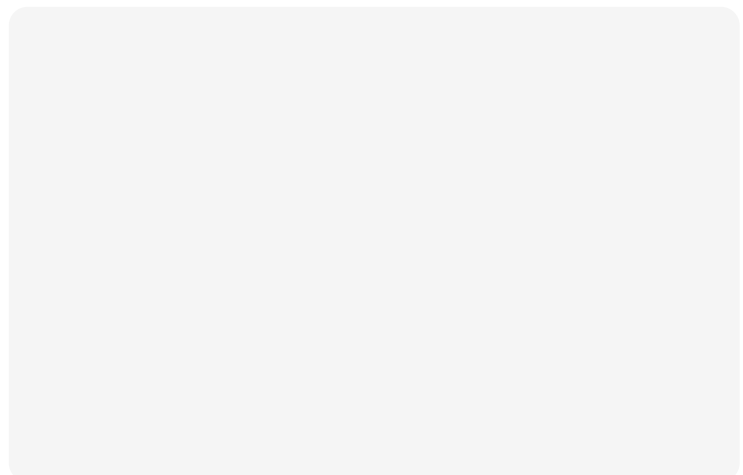


Interpret (What might this mean?)

Now you move from "what's happening" to "why might this be happening?" You're not assigning blame - you're exploring what's driving the system.

Your role is sense-making:

- What's influencing the behaviours you observed?
- Are there hidden structures, incentives, or routines at play?
- What assumptions, beliefs, or habits might be shaping outcomes?



Intervene (What can we shift?)

Finally, think about where and how you can take action - not by blaming people, but by changing the system around them.

Your role is about taking action:

What's a leverage point you could adjust?

Could a small change in communication, roles, expectations or processes shift the outcome?

What new conversations or experiments might unlock better results?

