

NOG.FI HELSINKI 2025

Lost in Translation: A Philologist Tries to Decode the Tech-Sales Interface

A story about language, trust, and telecom

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From Words to Wires

FROM HUMANITIES TO TELECOM - A CAREER PLOT TWIST

- **“What is the Internet?”** - my infamous interview question
- **5+ years later** - I’m still translating between two worlds
- **Curiosity + Kind colleagues** = Survival kit



Parallel worlds: Engineers vs. Sales

THE DIVIDE I FOUND FAMILIAR

Secret door between departments →
secret translator between worlds

Now in telecom: same dynamic, new jargon.

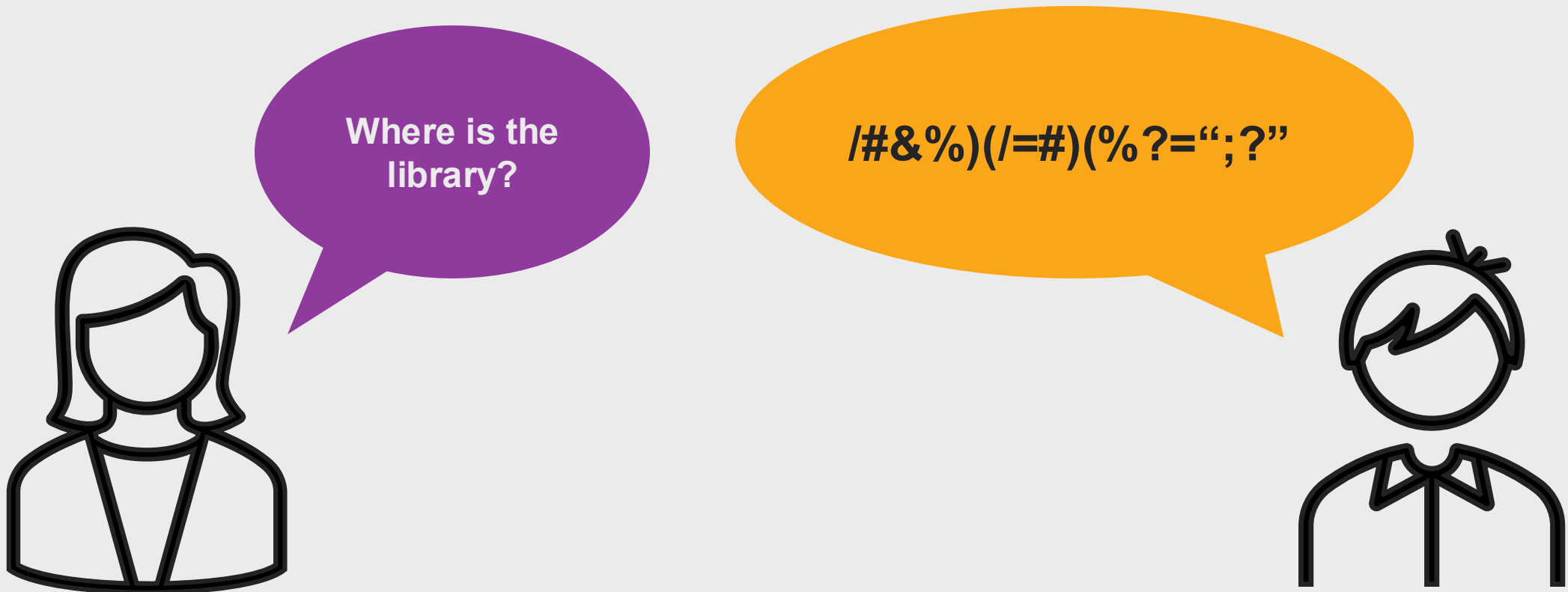


First Encounters with Technical Language

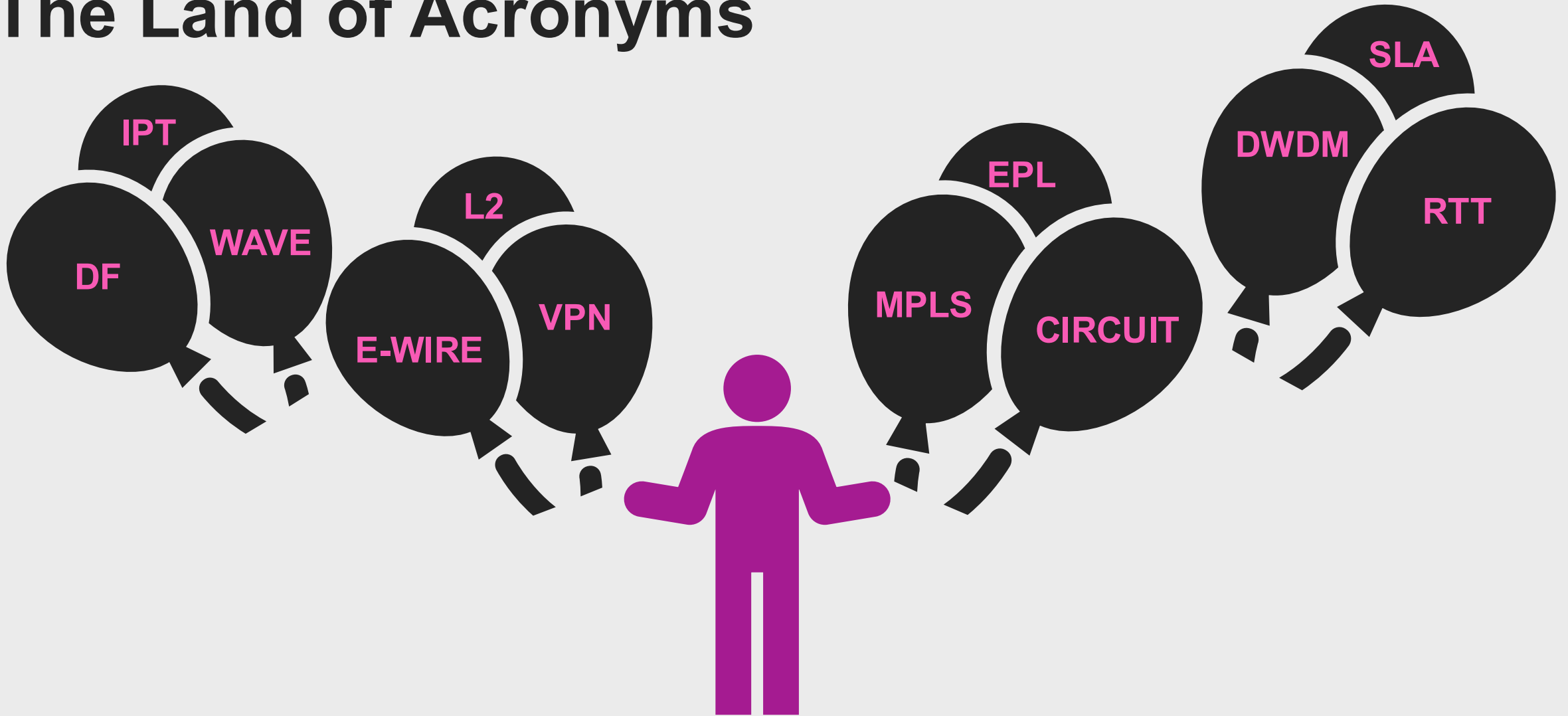
THE ART OF ASKING QUESTIONS (AND SURVIVING THE ANSWERS)

- A well-phrased question is half the battle
- Decoding the answer is another challenge
- A translator between sales and tech is essential

First Encounters with Technical Language



The Land of Acronyms



How Being a Teacher Helps in Tech

TEACHER MINDSET → EMPATHY + ADAPTABILITY

- **Preparation** is everything
- Know your audience: **"Who's who"** before asking
- Everyone needs their own approach

God forbid you ask a DWDM engineer how to configure a BGP session.

What “Impossible” Really Means

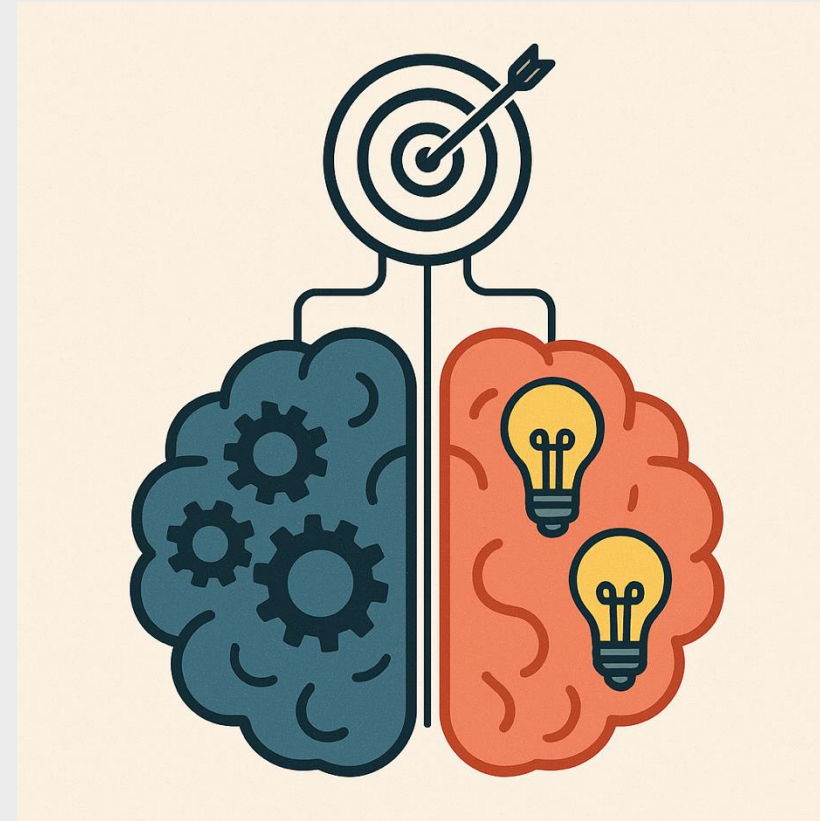
- “*It’s impossible*” ≠ impossible
- Could mean: expensive / time-consuming / approvals needed

Engineer: **“Too difficult.”**
Me: **“So... this will cost us 5-7k?”**
Engineer: **“Yeah, roughly.”**

Engineer says	Sales hears	Real meaning
“Impossible”	“Expensive”	“Possible with effort”
“That’ll take a while”	“Forever?”	“3-6 months”

Why We Misunderstand Each Other

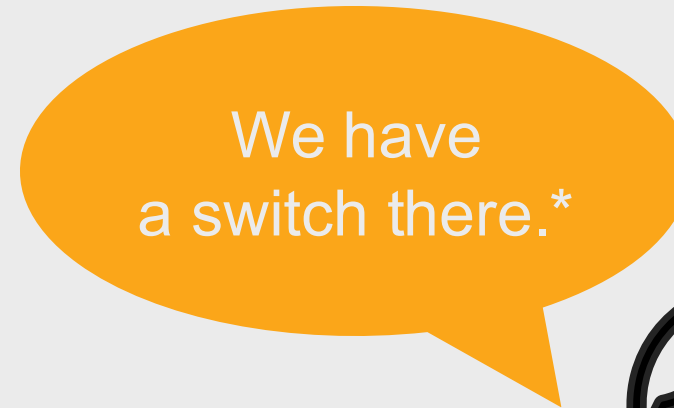
ENGINEERS
structure
precision
reliability



SALES
flexibility
creativity
client focus

DIFFERENT BRAINS, SAME GOAL

We think differently



**That's actually a yes.*

Building Trust

(AND WHY DUMB QUESTIONS MATTER)

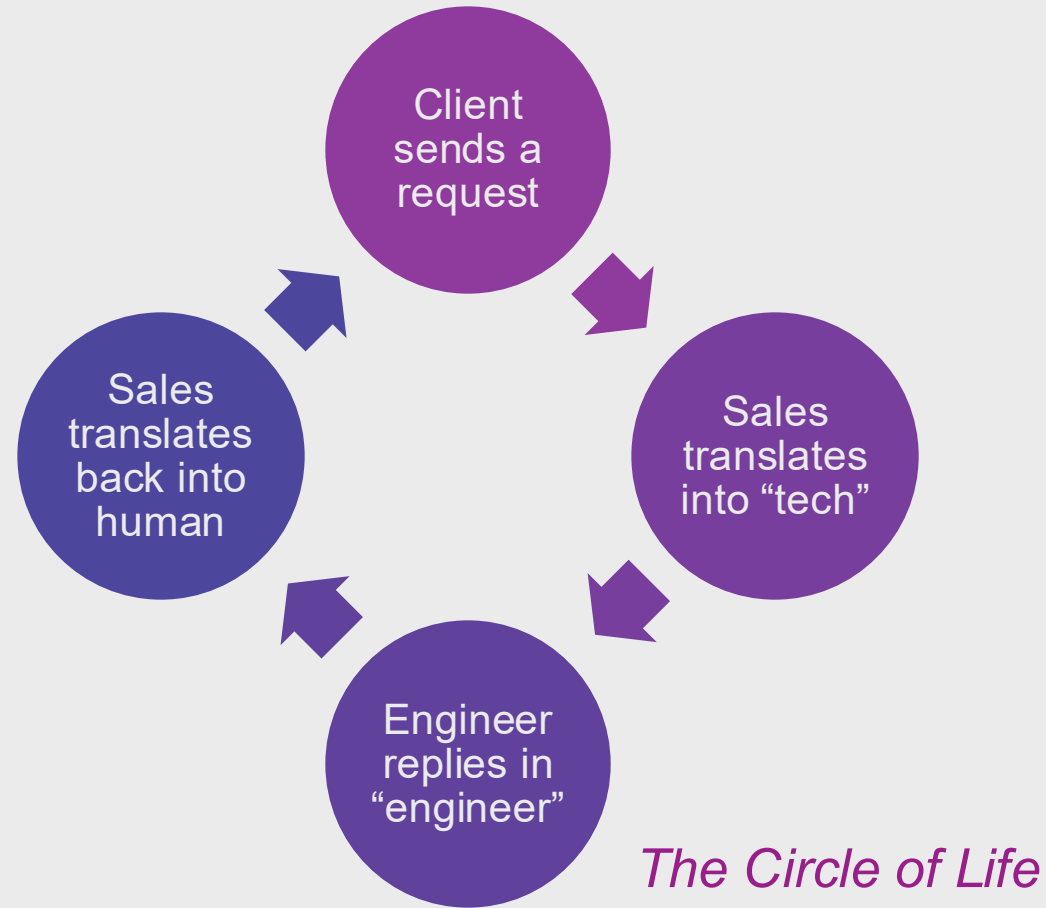
- Be **transparent** - share details
- **Curiosity** shows respect: ask “dumb” questions (they save projects!)
- Engineers appreciate genuine effort
- Don't sell what you don't understand – or haven't checked



Translating Between Client and Engineer

Context is everything

One clear channel = sanity



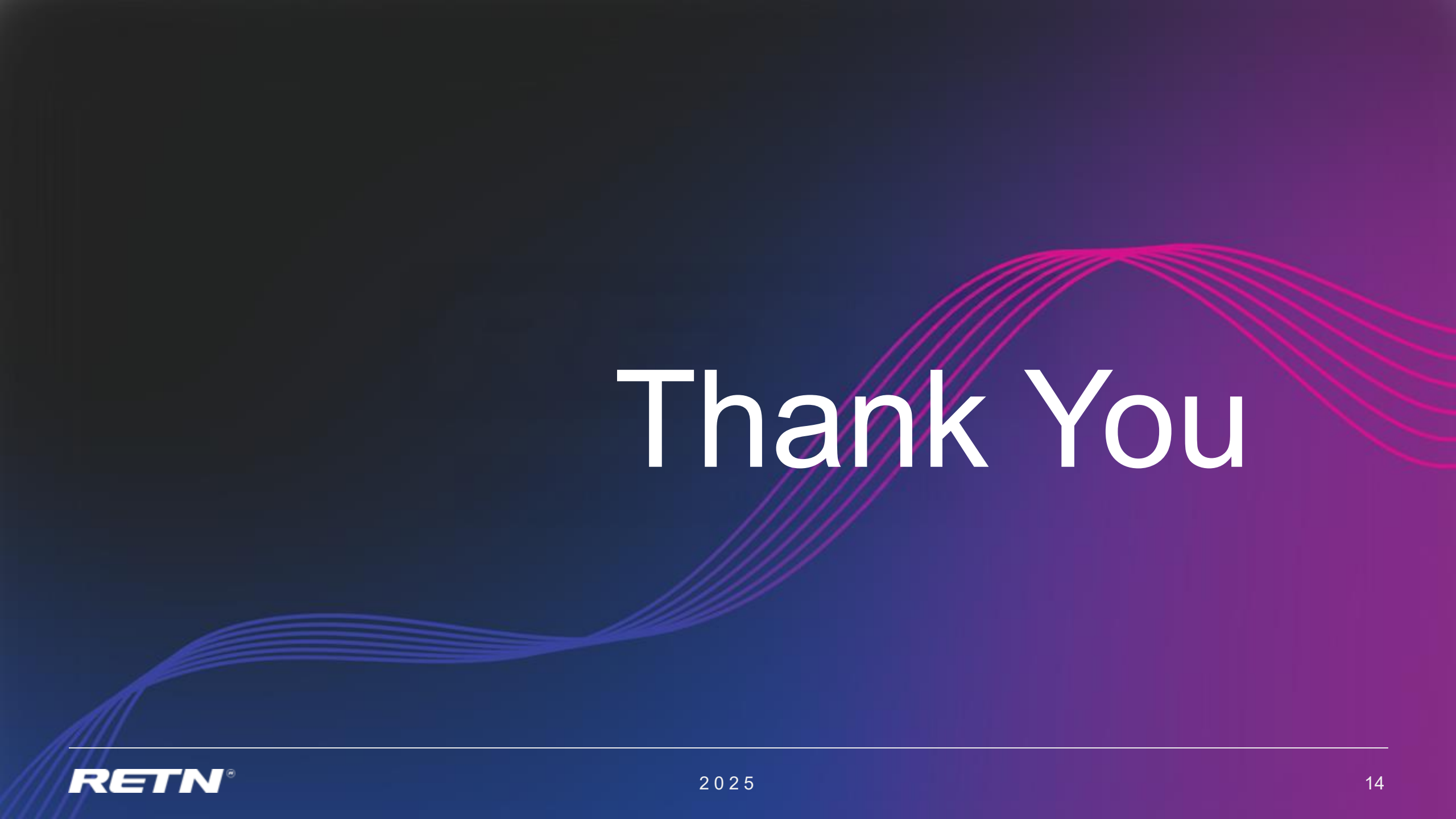
Bridging the Gap - and Why It's Worth It

SHARED GOALS = SHARED LANGUAGE

Practical takeaways:

- Joint meetings
- Shared KPIs
- One goal, one team

The secret ingredient is TRUST



Thank You