PROSPER ACCELERATE | THINK TANK BREAKOUT #3

What Are You Missing?

The science of reading nonverbal signals



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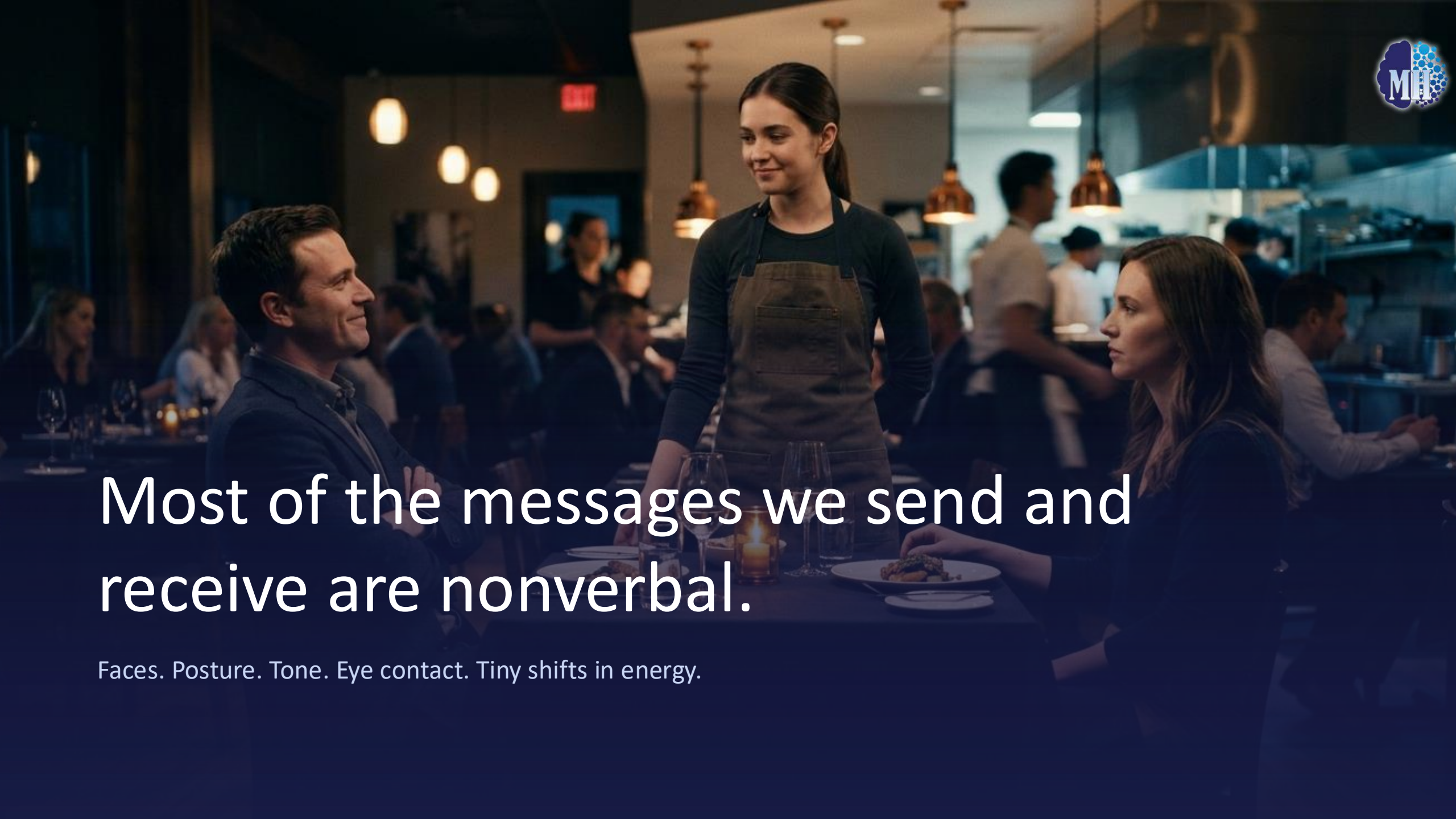


Most of the messages we send and receive are nonverbal.

Faces. Posture. Tone. Eye contact. Tiny shifts in energy.

THE SPEED OF A FIRST IMPRESSION

Your brain reads people in a blink.

0.1 sec

That's all it takes to decide whether a face looks trustworthy. More time barely changed the judgment. It just made people more confident in their assessment.

WILLIS & TODOROV, 2006



THE SPEED OF A FIRST IMPRESSION

Thin Slicing

2 sec

of silent classroom video. Strangers' snap ratings of the teachers closely matched the students' own end-of-semester evaluations.

AMBADY & ROSENTHAL, 1993



THE CATCH

Fast isn't the same as accurate.

Win or lose?

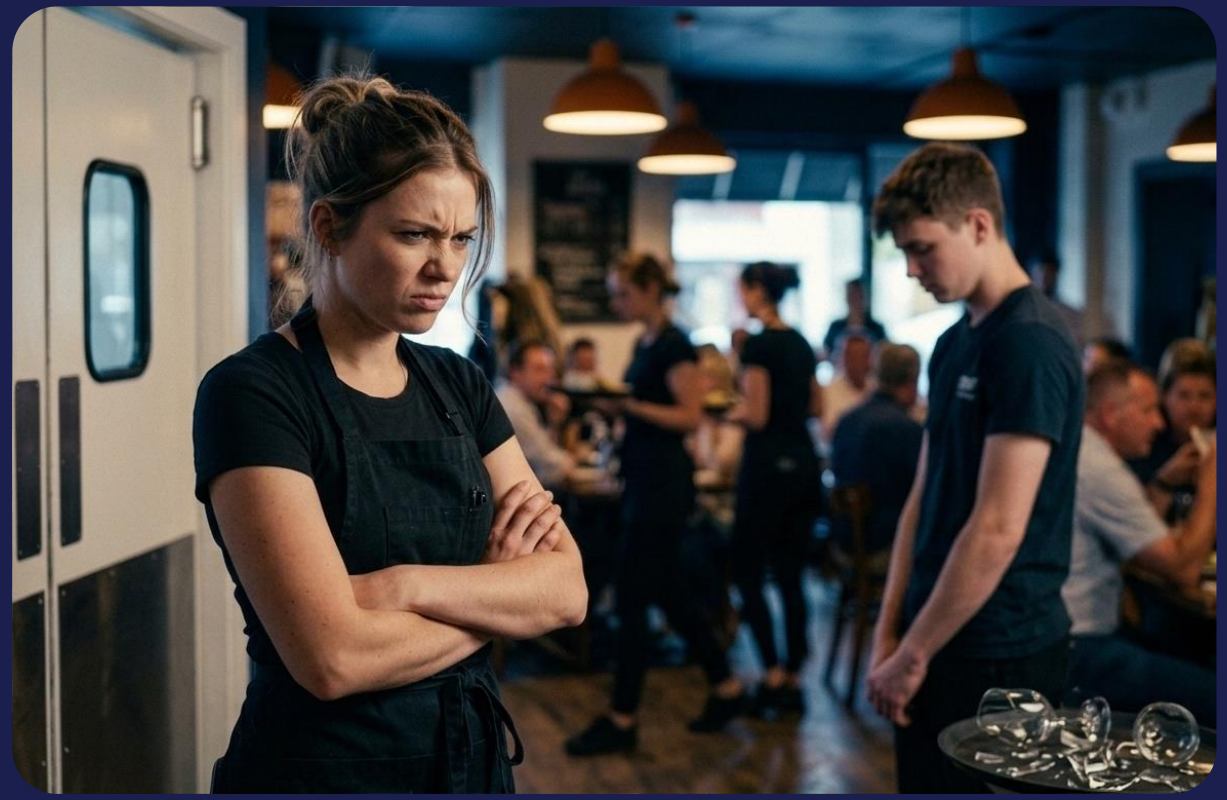
At the peak of winning or losing a point, pro tennis players' faces were nearly impossible to tell apart. People read the body and believed they'd read the face.

AVIEZER, TROPE & TODOROV, 2012



THE CATCH

Fast isn't the same as accurate.



Scowl or focus?

The same face can mean anger, concentration, confusion or a headache. Faces don't map neatly to one emotion. Context does most of the reading.

BARRETT ET AL., 2019

QUICK GUT CHECK

What do you see?

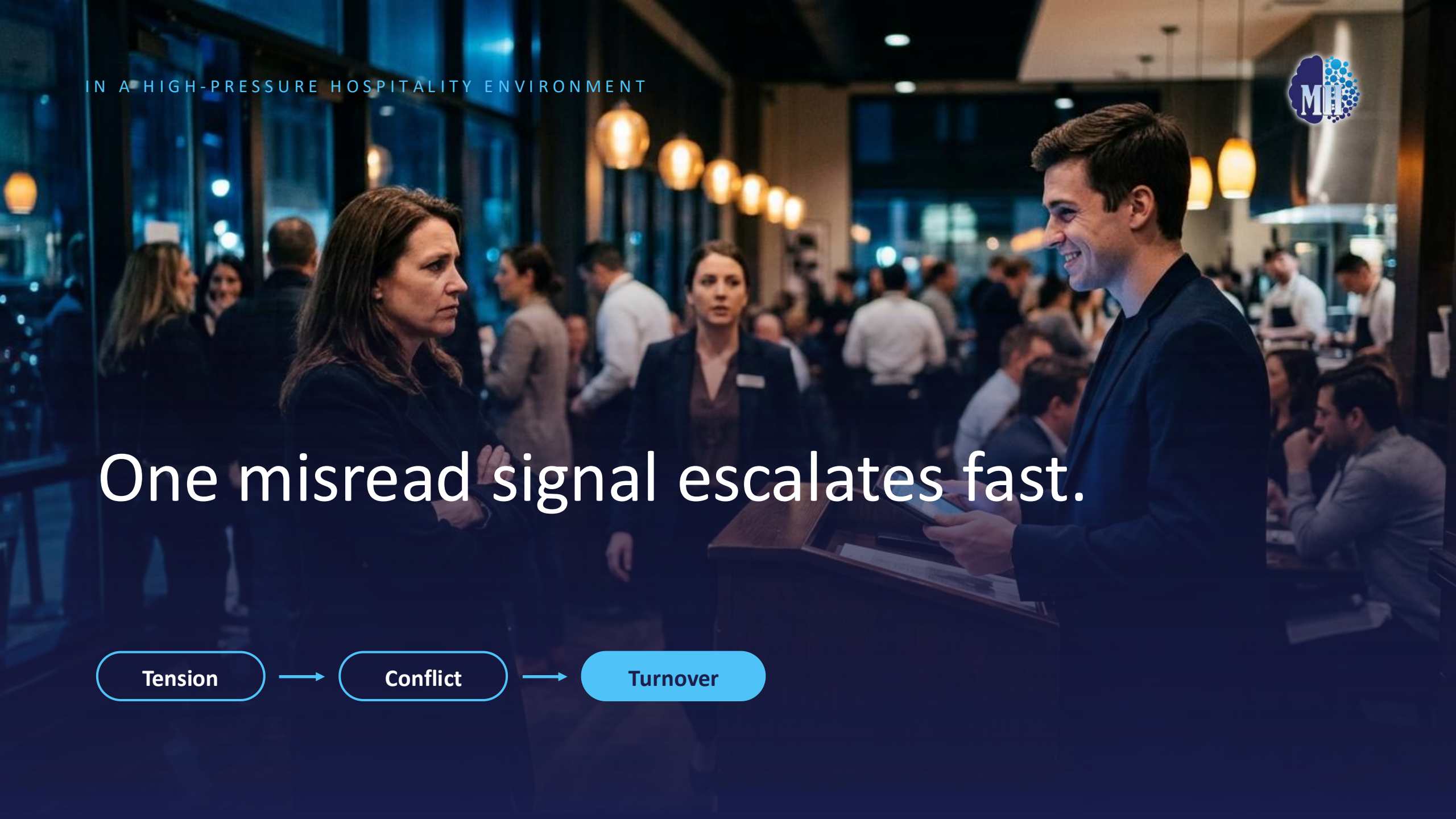




Your brain guesses first and checks later.

- Bias
- Stress
- Snap judgment

IN A HIGH-PRESSURE HOSPITALITY ENVIRONMENT



One misread signal escalates fast.

Tension → **Conflict** → **Turnover**

THE THINK TANK | 30 MIN

What do you think you saw?

Three real-world scenarios.
Your table decides what's really going on.

Name the cues you notice

Weigh two interpretations

Change the assumption. What happens?

SCENARIO 01

Tension in the team huddle



SCENARIO 02

Frustration at table 14?



SCENARIO 03

The quiet one at close



USE IT TOMORROW

The Signal Check



01

Notice

See the signal. Don't label the person or assign intent.

02

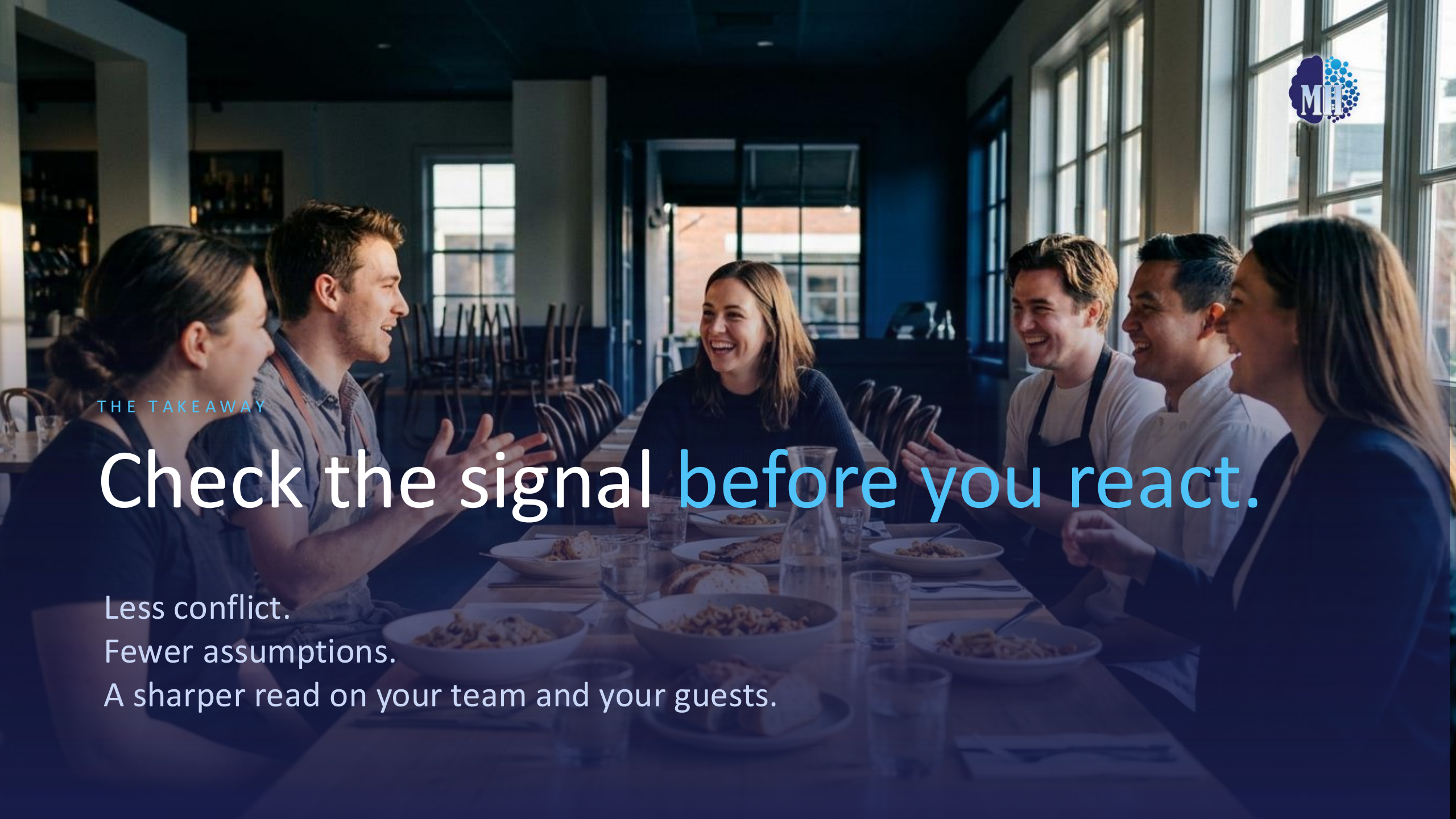
Context

Consider workload, fatigue, or stress before you decide.

03

Clarify

Ask a curious question to check meaning before you respond.

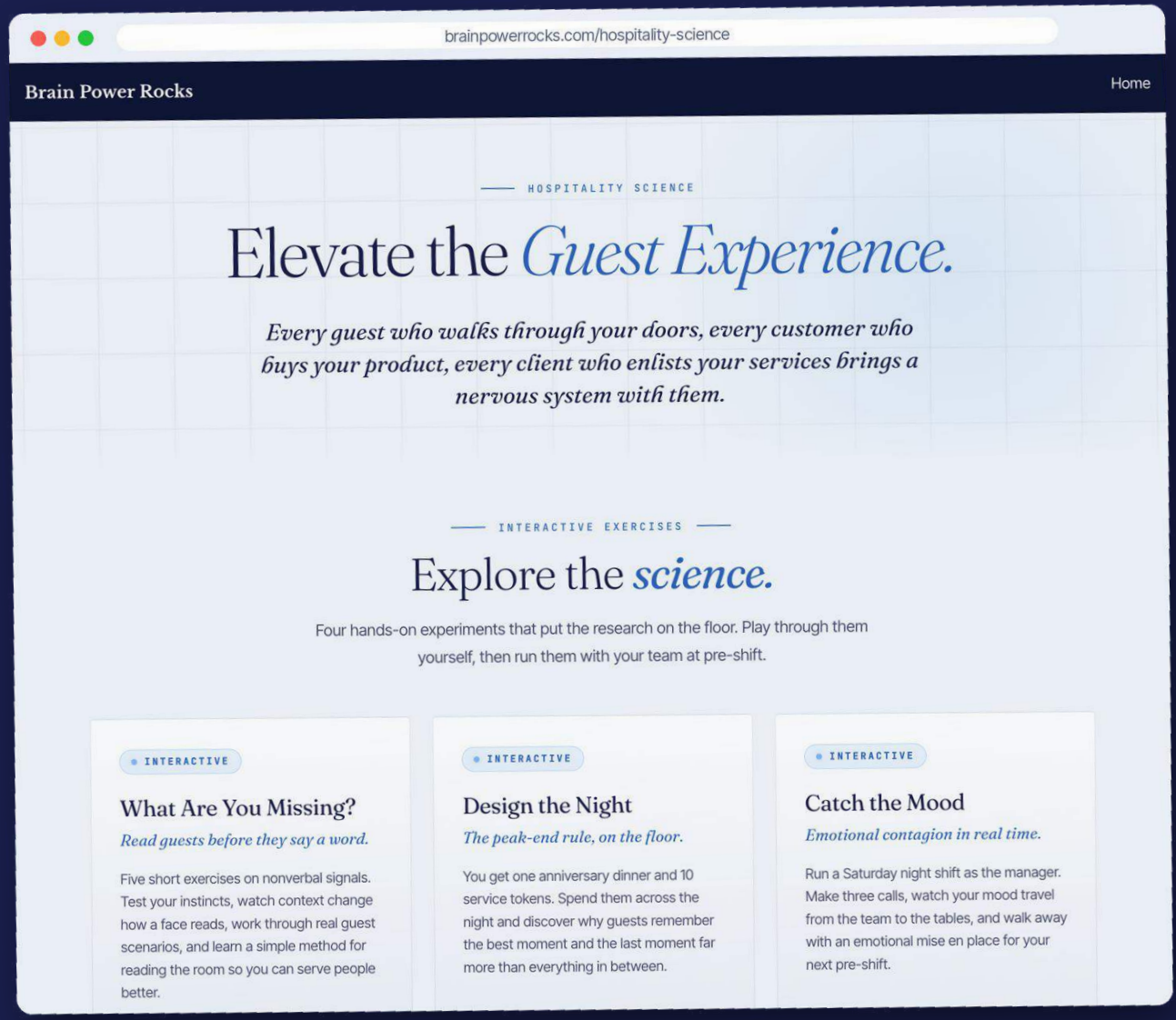


THE TAKEAWAY

Check the signal before you react.

Less conflict.
Fewer assumptions.
A sharper read on your team and your guests.

Keep the conversation going.





Keep the conversation going.

KEEP EXPLORING

The Hospitality Science Lab

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Thank you.

Taking brain science out of the lab and into real life.

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