

Month 1: The Foundation – "Translating Tech" & Group Dynamics

- **Skill Type:** Soft / Power Skill
- **The Focus:** Learning how to explain complex technical concepts to non-technical campus partners (faculty, students, administration) and building trust within the peer group.
- **Why it cascades:** Before tackling bigger issues, the group needs to establish a shared vocabulary and understand each other's diverse IT backgrounds.
- **Step 1: Silent Prep (5 mins)**
 - Every member independently chooses a complex technical project, system, or issue they recently worked on (e.g., migrating a database, deploying MFA, upgrading Wi-Fi access points).
- **Step 2: The Pitch & The "Jargon Police" (20 mins)**
 - Go around the group. Each person gets **90 seconds** to explain their project to the group as if they are talking to a university Dean, business leader, or a non-technical faculty member.
 - After each pitch, **for 2-3 minutes**, the rest of the group acts as the "Jargon Police." If the speaker used an acronym or technical shorthand (e.g., *SaaS*, *API*, *provisioning*, *endpoint*), listeners must raise a hand (physically or using the Zoom feature). The speaker must translate that word or technical piece into plain English.
- **Step 3: Group Reflection (10 mins)**
 - Which words were the hardest to explain simply? What are 3 standard IT terms or acronyms your department uses that campus users almost certainly could misunderstand?
- **Step 4: Personal Improvement (Post-Meeting)**
 - Think of a recent time you had to explain a technical project or change to a non-technical user. What worked, and what backfired? Based on your group session, what can you improve upon this month to better bridge the 'tech-to-human' gap on campus?"

