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Self-assessment in Self-Directed Learning: Can we trust it? Do we have a choice?

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Overview

- Self-assessment theory and research
- Self-assessment and self-directed learning
- Implications for continuing professional development

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How would you rate your ability to get along with other people?

A. Much better than the norm
B. Better than most
C. About the same as everyone else
D. I have issues with people in general

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How many state capitals can you name?

A. All 50
B. 40 to 50
C. 30 to 40
D. 20 to 30
E. 10 to 20
F. Fewer than 10

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Which of the following problems is easiest for you to solve:

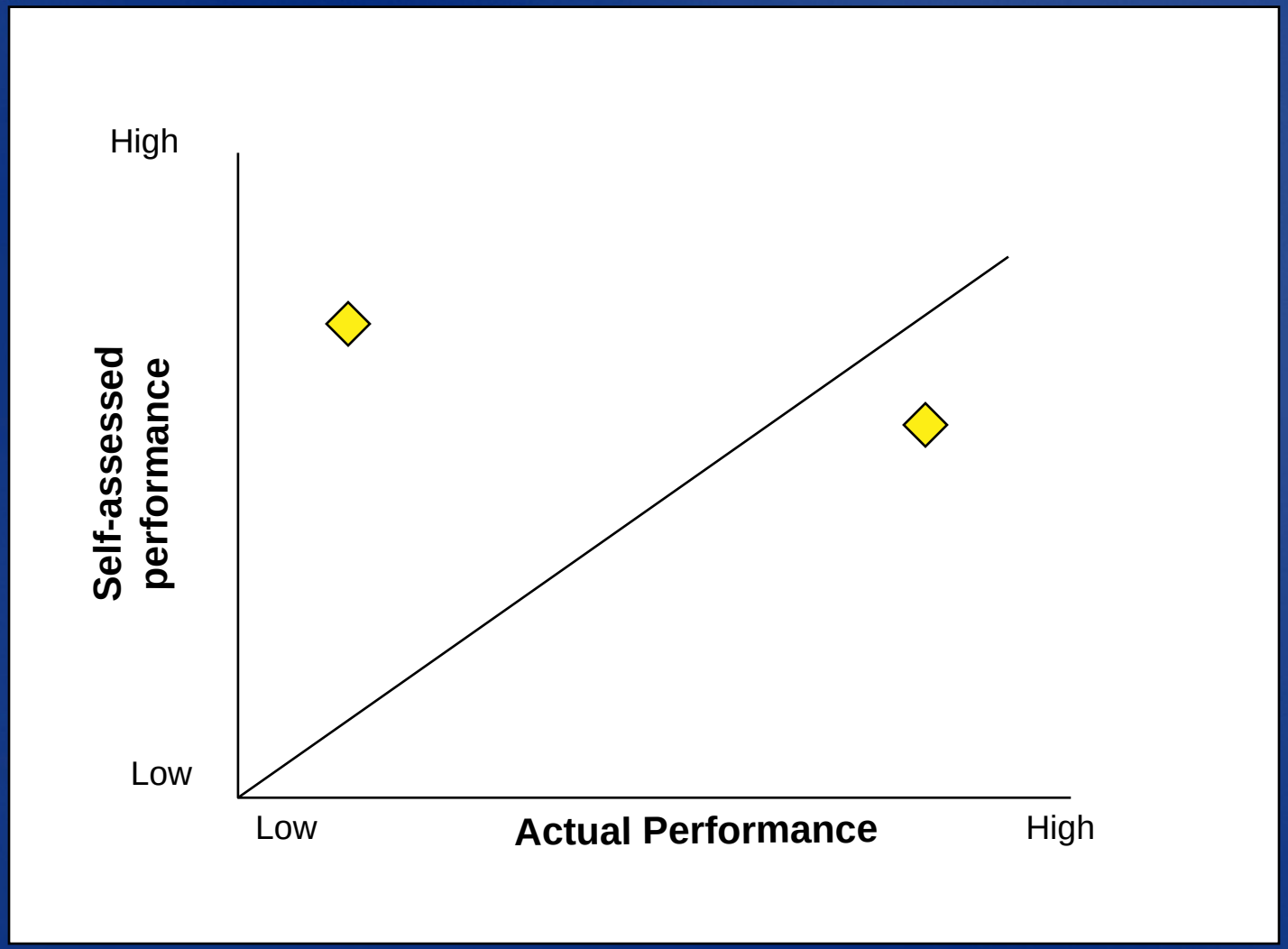
A. Fixing an internet connection that won't work
B. Advising my best friend on relationship problems
C. Planning for retirement (soon!)
D. Selecting a better play than the coach just called
E. Organizing a dinner party for 10 guests

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Self-Assessment Process

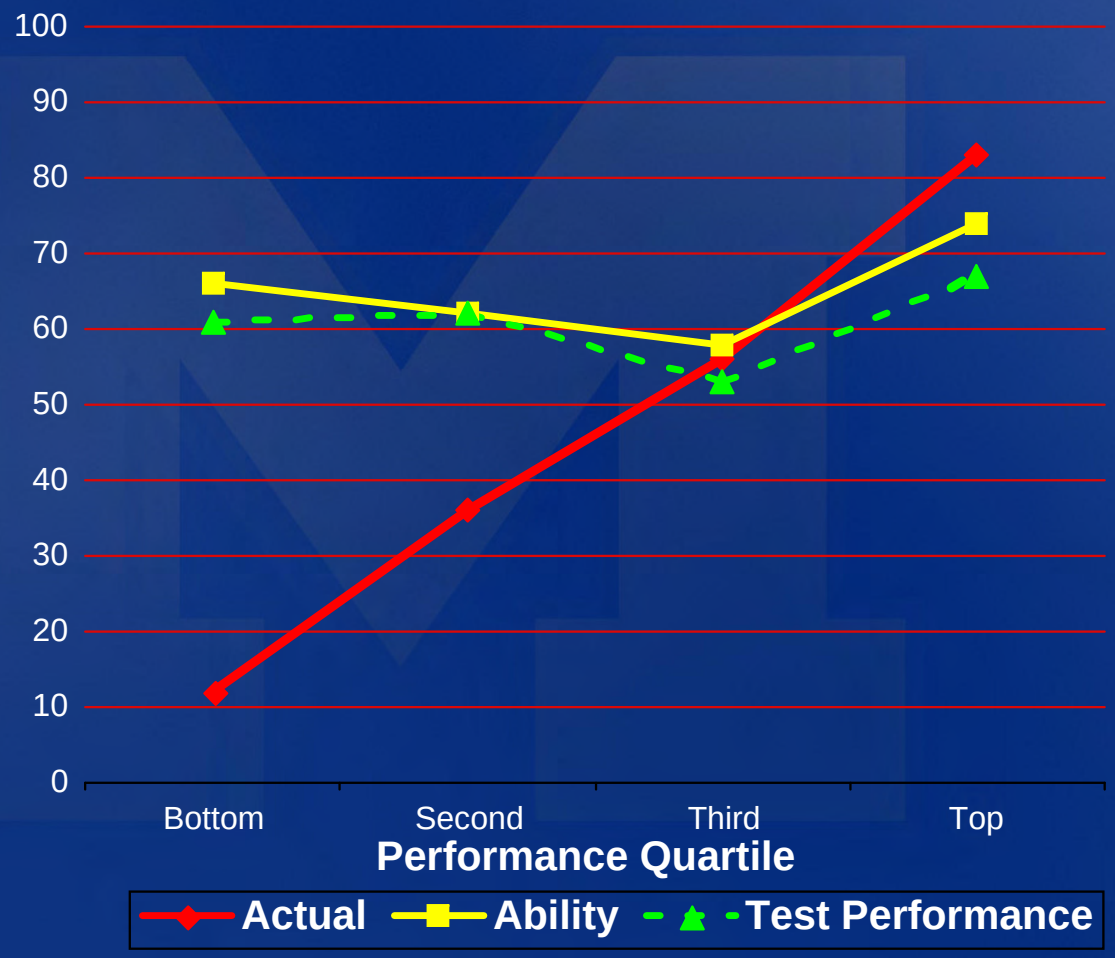
- Metacognitive judgment of some aspect of self
  - Potential (knowledge, ability)
  - Reality (performance)

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Logical Reasoning Study



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Self-Assessment: College Students

- Self-Rated Athletic Ability
  60% “above average”
  34% “average”
  6% “below average”
- Self-Rated Leadership Ability
  70% “above average”
  28% “average”
  2% “below average”
- Self-Rated Ability to Get Along with Others
  all respondents rate self at least “average”
  60% rate selves in “90th percentile and up”
  25% rate self in the “99th percentile”

College Board Survey 1976-1977

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Self-Assessment: Faculty

- Among college professors
  94% say they do above average work
- 68% rated themselves in the top 25% for teaching ability.

Cross (1977)

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SA Research Findings

- The number of studies do not reflect educational significance of phenomenon
- Low SA validity and accuracy in most studies
- Different raters use different criteria for assessments

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SA Research Findings

- Self-assessment of knowledge less valid than self-assessments of performance
- Global self-assessments reflect stable personality dimensions & self-concept rather than assessments of skill, knowledge, or performance

Gordon (1991)

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The Double Burden

- Difficulty in produce correct responses (cognitive tasks)
- Difficulty in recognizing when accurate judgments have been made (meta-cognitive tasks)
- individuals with a lower IQ rate selves as more intelligent than those around them

(C. L. Downing)

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SA Research Methods

- Problems with group-level analyses
  - Assumption that every individual in the group is comparable in self-assessment ability
  - Ignores individual differences

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Do self-assessment abilities vary with individual characteristics or task characteristics?

- SA accuracy does not appear related to:
  - Academic performance
  - Ethnicity
  - Gender
  - Academic background or preparation
- Accuracy MAY be slightly higher with more familiar tasks, but this is ambiguous

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How does clinical experience influence the development of self-assessment?

- Early experience may increase confidence faster than it does competence

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How stable are self-assessment abilities over time?

- Comparable to stability of actual performance
- Suggests it is an individual characteristic

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Do self-assessments influence subsequent self-regulated learning?

- SA influences SRL in different ways for individual students
- SA influenced by SRL in expected direction (generally)
- SA accuracy, per se, may be less important than the behavioral consequences of self-assessment

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Summary

- Students vary widely in the accuracy of their self-assessments
- Self-assessment accuracy appears to be a stable characteristic of the individual
- Early experience may decrease accuracy by increasing overconfidence
- The relationship of self-assessment with self-regulated learning is complex and individualistic

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Self-Assessment and Self-Regulated Learning

- If self-assessment generally inaccurate, why bother with it?
  - Because self-regulated learning depends on it (at least in part)

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Why Should We Care?

- Role in education
  - Motivation for learning
  - Development of metacognitive skills
  - Source of educational problems

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Why Should We Care?

- Role in practice
  - Error detection and correction
  - Information-seeking and decision support
  - Augmenting knowledge and skills
  - Professionalism, self-monitoring and self-management
  - Source of complacency

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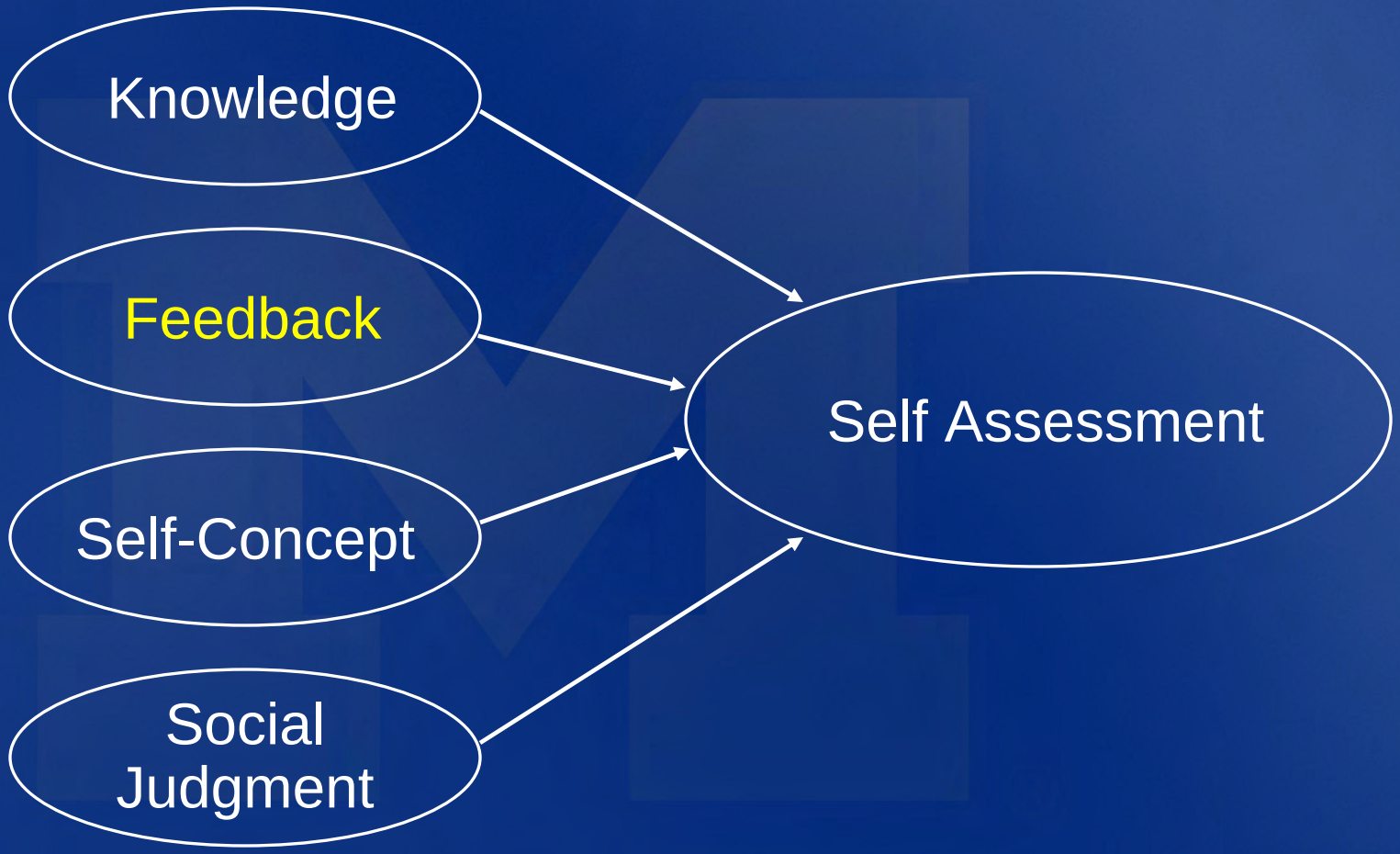
Self-Regulated Learning

- Three elements
  - Controlling available resources (time, learning sources)
  - Controlling self-efficacy related to learning
  - Controlling cognitive learning strategies

Pintrich (1995, 1999)

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Dynamics of Self-Assessment



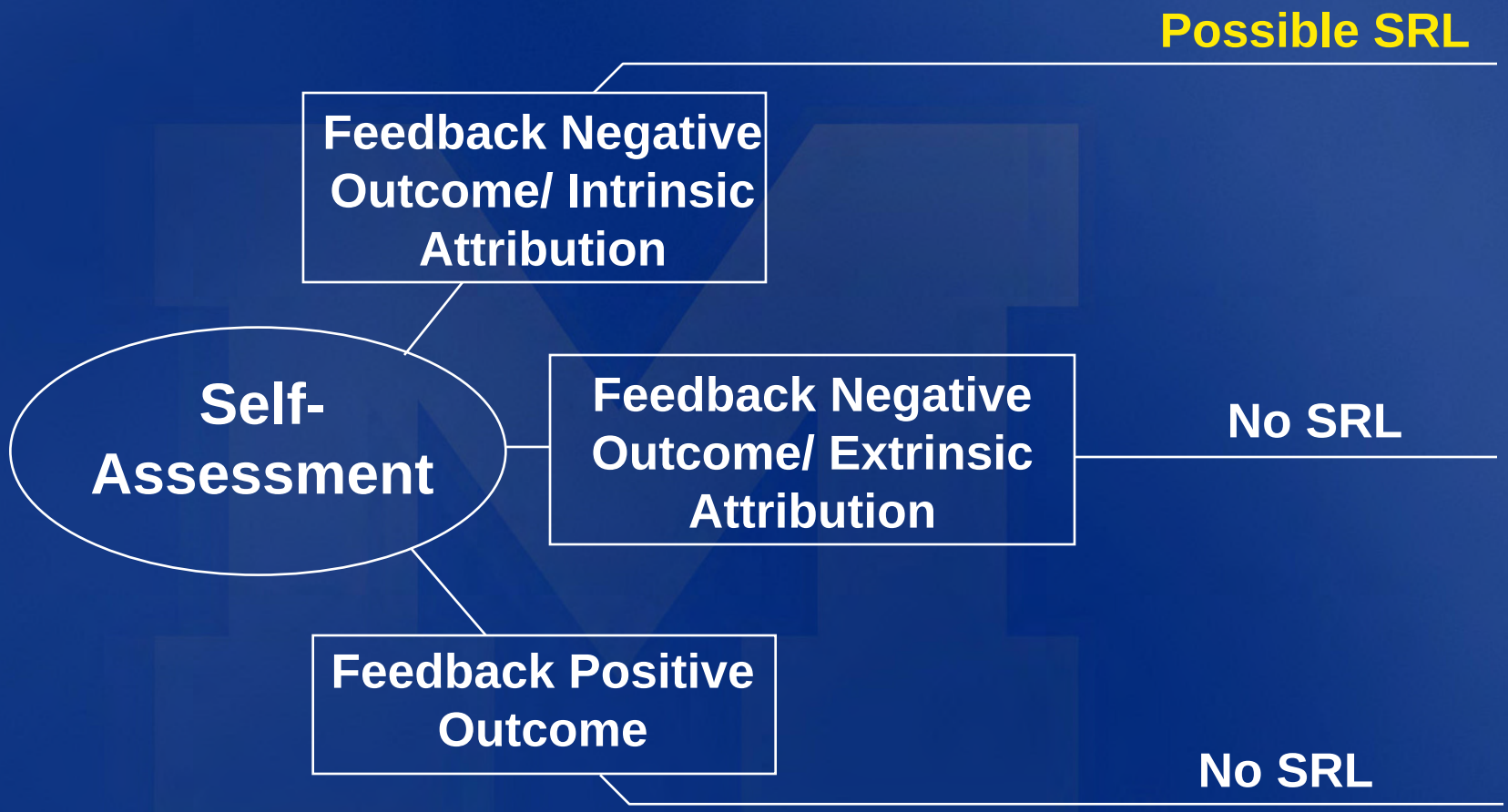
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Interpreting Feedback

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Stable	ability difficulty	
Unstable	effort	luck

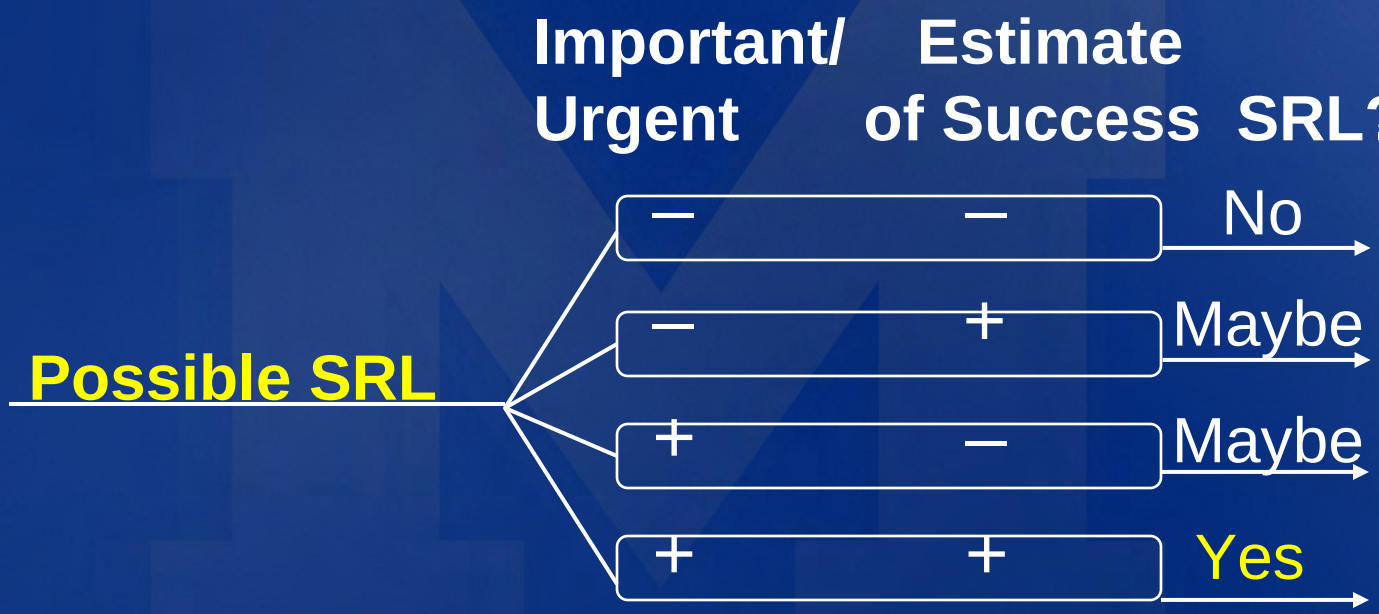
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From SA to SRL



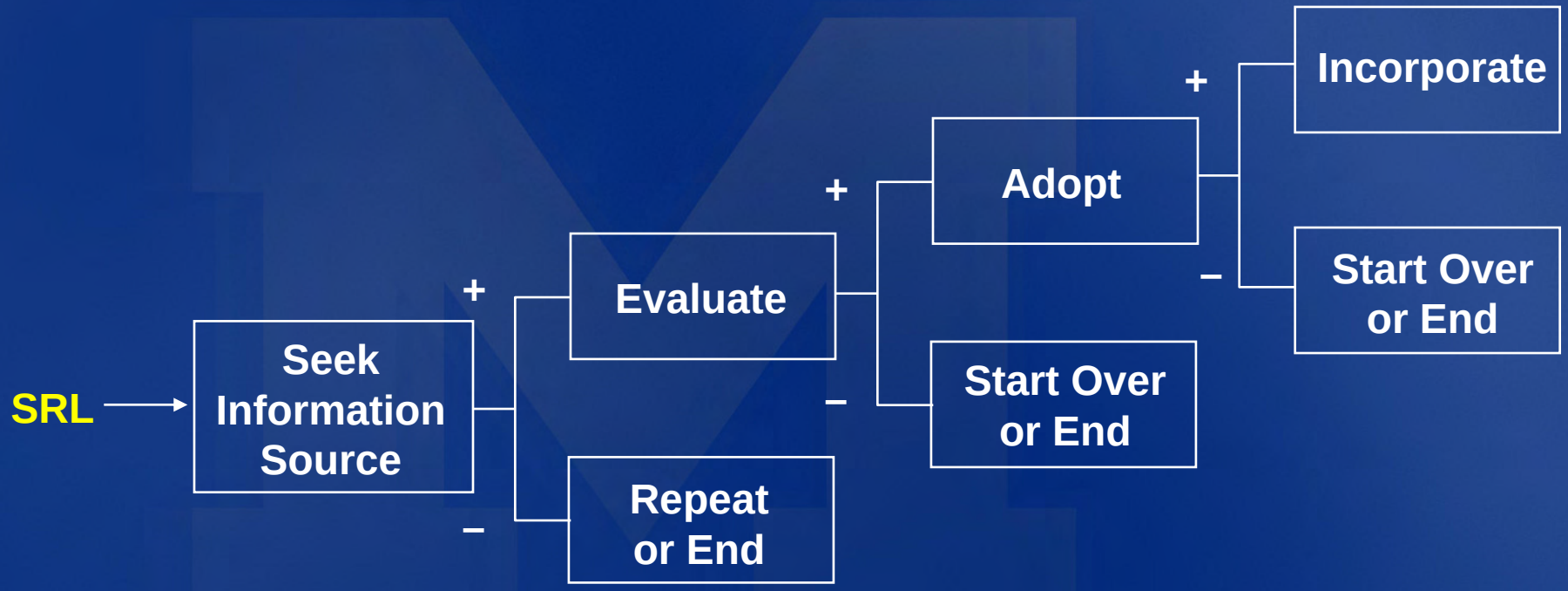
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From Possible to Actual SRL



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From SRL to Behavior Change



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Implications

- Self-assessment and SRL needs to be viewed as an individual rather than group characteristic
- SA accuracy may be largely irrelevant
- Need for studies of self-assessment and self-regulated learning in actual practice

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Implications

- Educational interventions that impact SA and SRL
- What is the relationship of SA to the larger issues of professional- and self-identity

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Oh wad some power the giftie gie us
To see oursel's as ithers see us!
It wad frae monie a blunder free us,
And foolish notion.

To a Louse -- Robert Burns