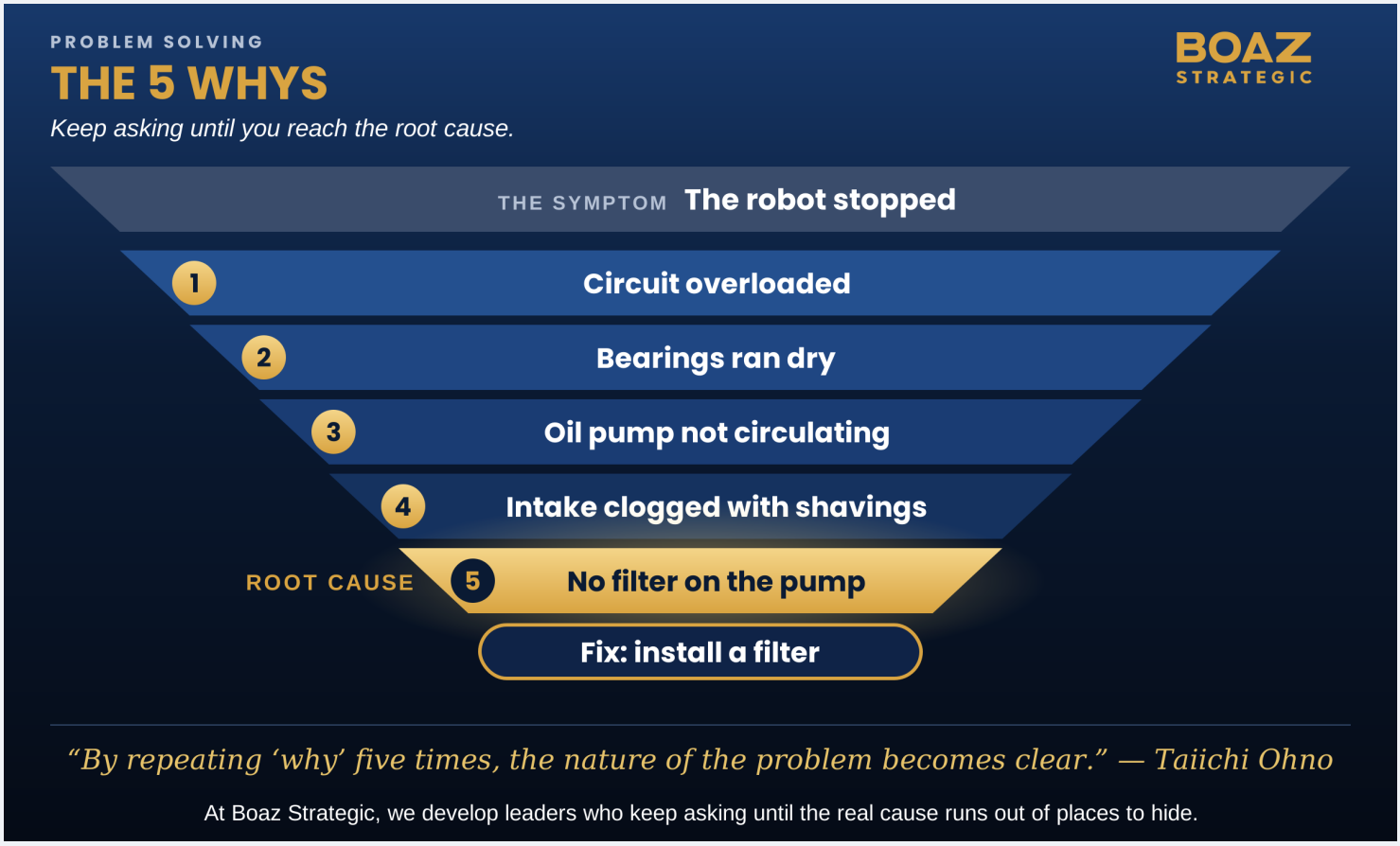


Solving the problem, or just *the symptom?*

> *"By repeating 'why' five times, the nature of the problem becomes clear. — Taiichi Ohno*

In the 1930s, Sakichi Toyoda began pushing his engineers past their first explanation for a defect. Taiichi Ohno later built the habit into the Toyota Production System.

The first answer is rarely the real one.

Toyota's classic example: a robot stops mid-weld. A fuse blew. Why? The circuit was overloaded. Why? The bearings weren't getting enough oil. Why? The pump wasn't circulating it. Why? Its intake was clogged with metal shavings. Why? There was no filter on the pump.

Five questions took a blown fuse to a missing filter. Stop at question one, and you'll be replacing fuses for the rest of your career.

The tool works the same way off the factory floor. A salesperson misses quota. Why? Bad leads. Why? Marketing changed the targeting. Why? No one told sales. Why? There's no process connecting the two teams.

Notice what's missing from that chain: nobody's name. The method stays productive only when it hunts for a broken system, not a person to blame.

Most teams stop at the first plausible answer. Toyota's edge was refusing to.

At Boaz Strategic, we develop leaders who keep asking until the real cause runs out of places to hide.