

The Promise of Accountable Performance

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UMassBoston

Edward J. Collins, Jr. Center for Public Management
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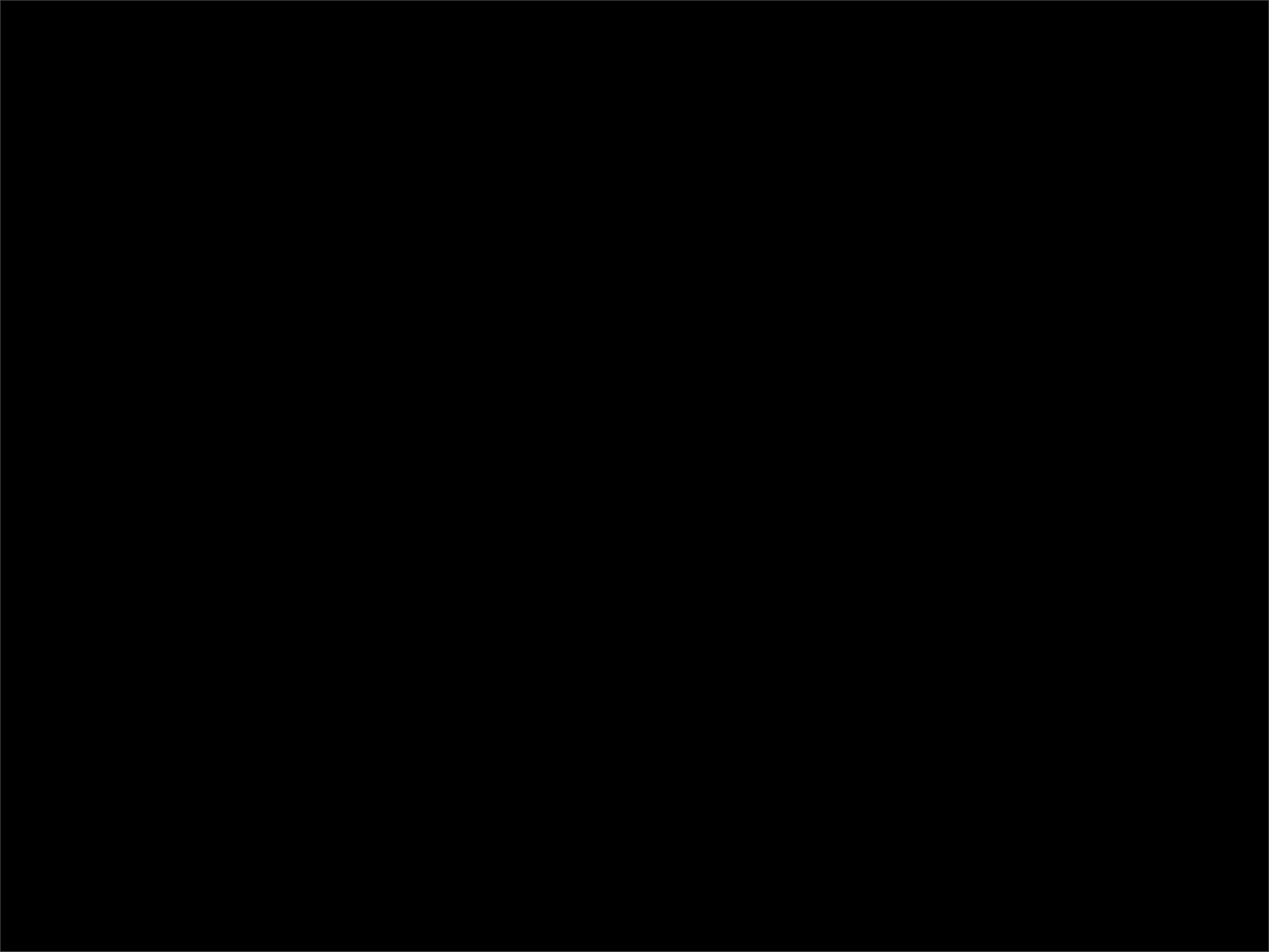
“age of accountability”

“age of **actual** accountability”

“age of ~~actual~~ accountability”

“age of rhetorical accountability”

“age of **iconic** accountability”





<less cynical>

“age of aspirational accountability”

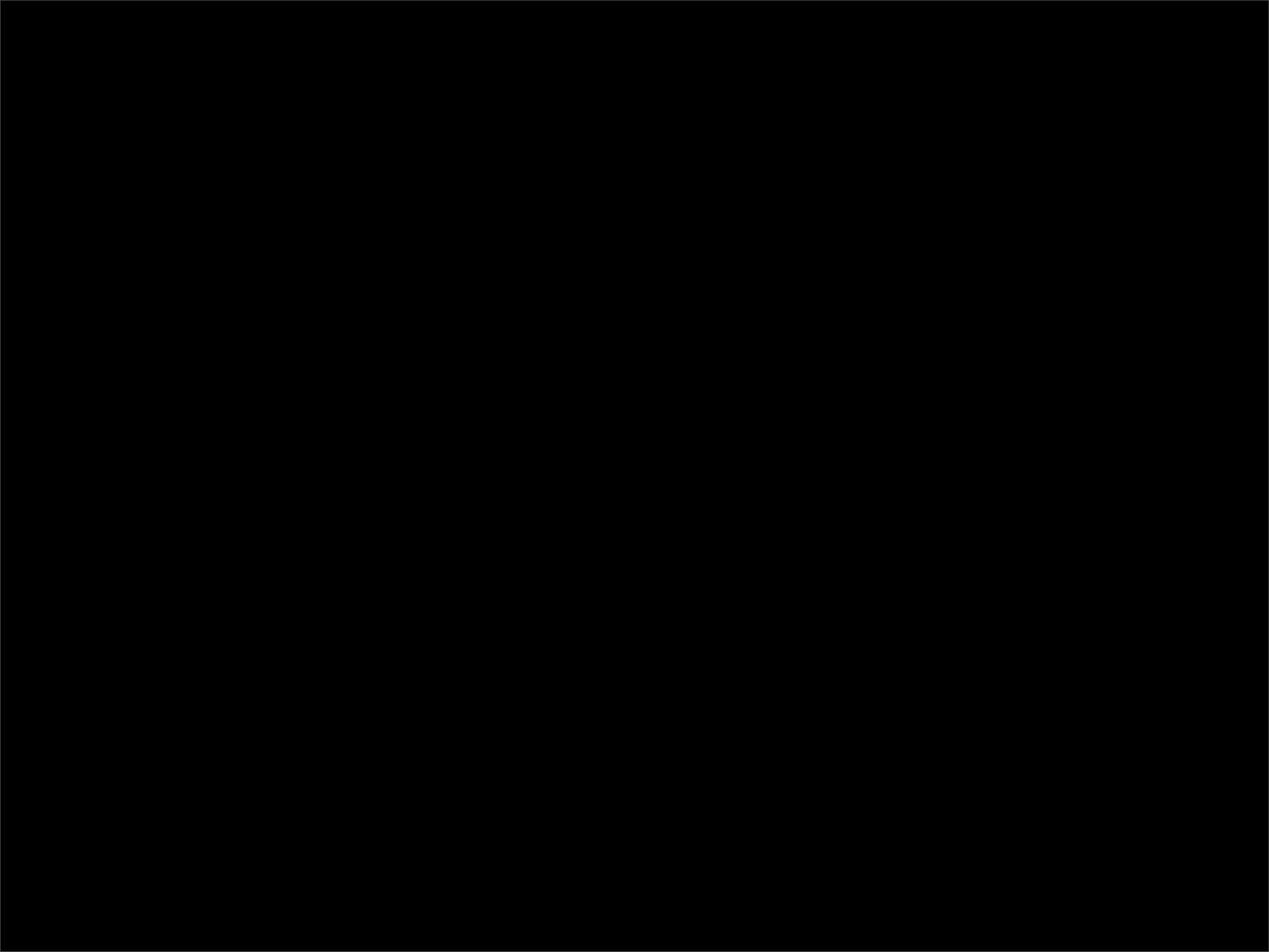
in “accountability”

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we believe we have found

“solutions” to many of our problems

esp: governance and management problems



“believe”

“believe”

we “assume”

we “take for granted”

“believe”

we “assume”

we “take for granted”

that accountability=solution

“promises of accountability”

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managers	promise of control

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anti-corruption reformers	promise of ethical behavior

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those seeking a government or economy they can trust	promise of integrity
those who want more productive and efficient services	promise of performance

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promise of performance

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Accountability

promise of performance

Accountability



promise of performance

Accountability

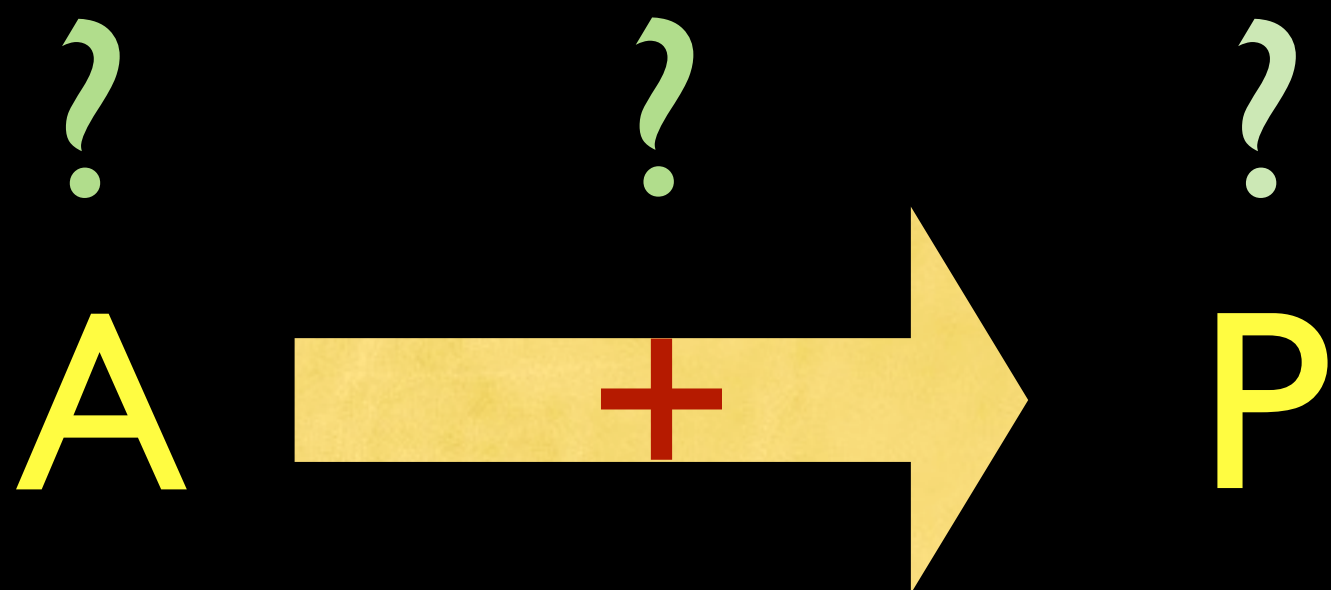


promise of performance



promise of performance



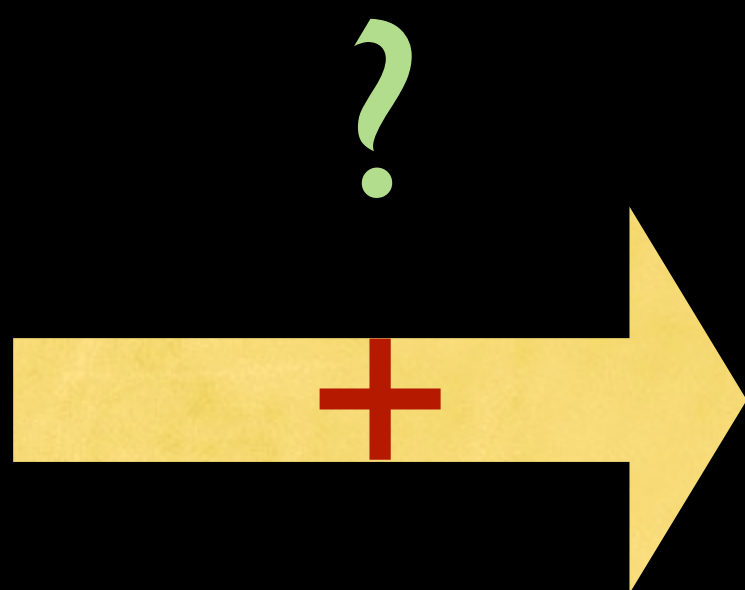


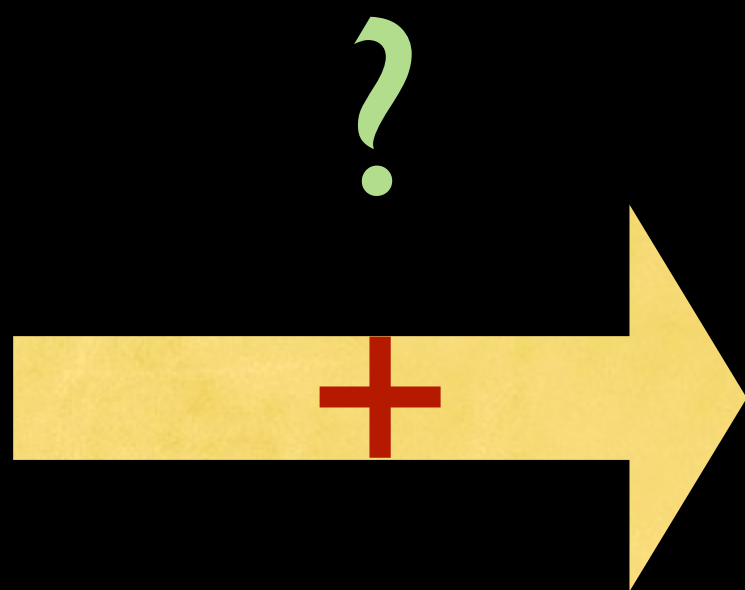
A = ?

reporting
citizen feedback
measures
audits

P=?

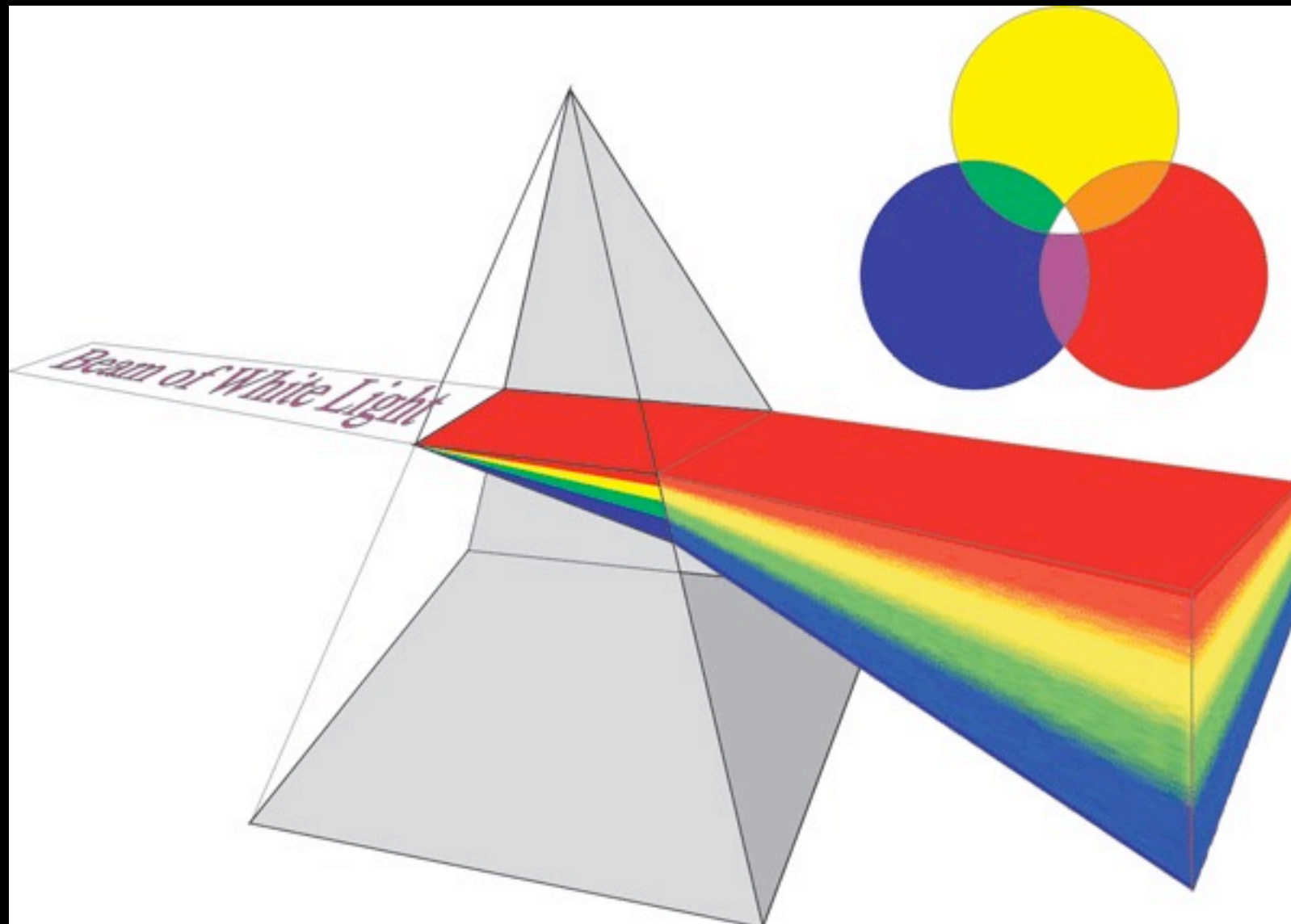
behavior (performances)
competence
production
productivity





H. George Frederickson

accountability are the prisms through
which we are seeing public sector
performance



The “prism” effect: examples:

in theory	in practice
provides answers	raises questions
is based on facts	requires interpretation
is used to inform & guide policy	is used as “weapons” in policy debates
designed to enhance long-term improvements	is applied for short-term gains
reflect goal of overall improvements	radically alters/distorts policy objectives & mission
etc.	

Cases galore!

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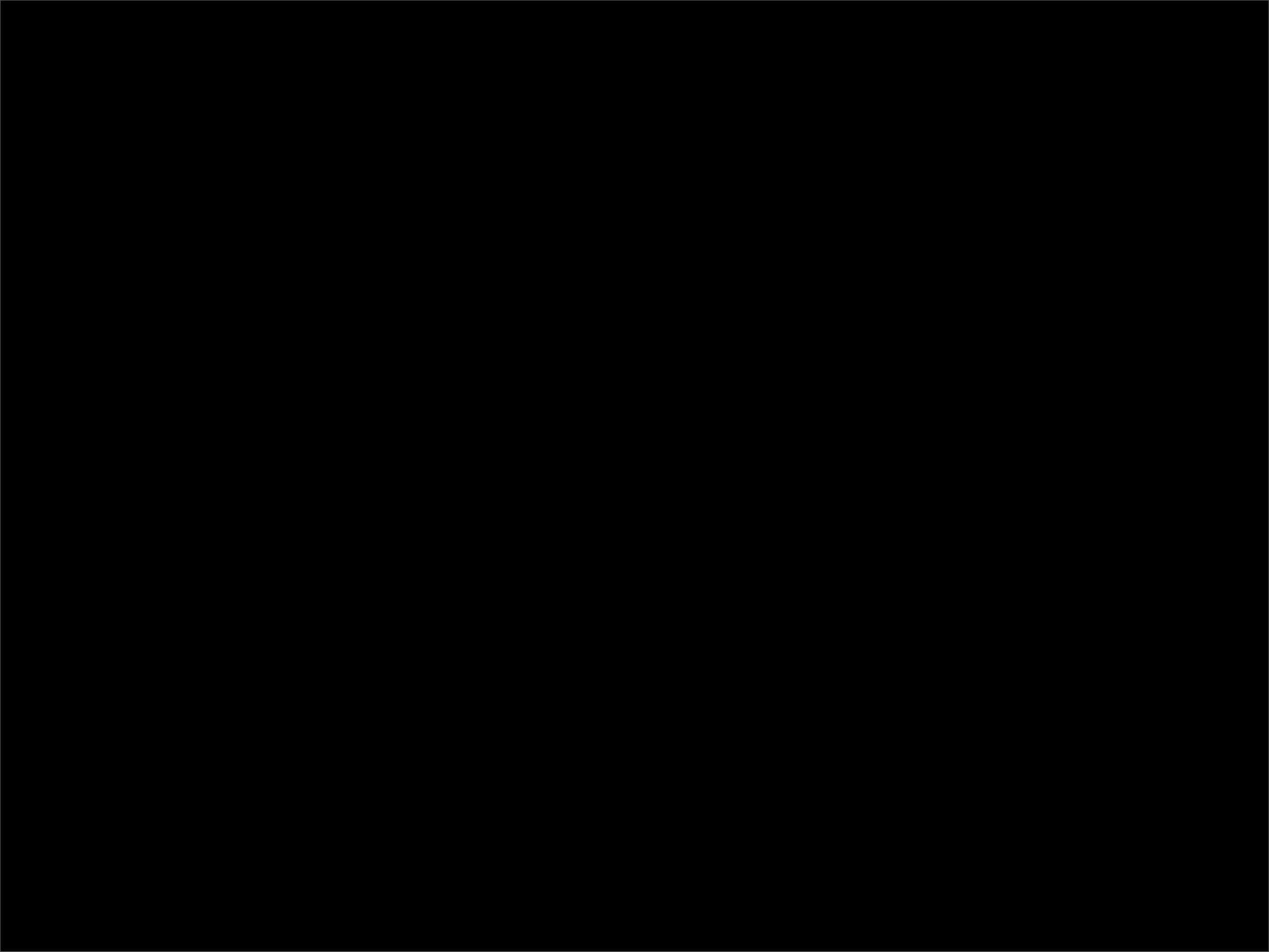
No Child Left Behind!

Cases galore!

Cases galore!

most bringing into question
the basic belief in
 $A \Rightarrow P$

<that said>



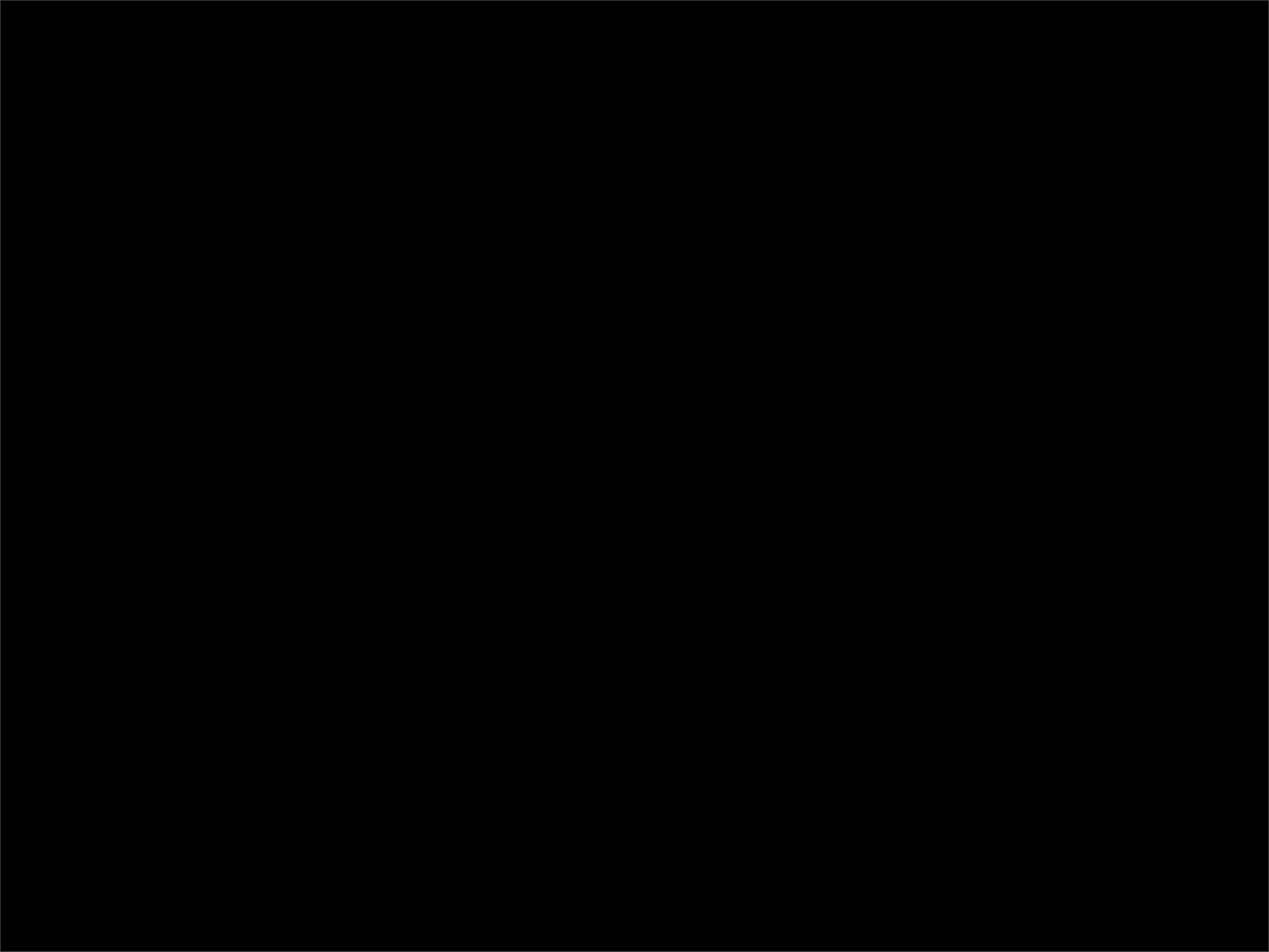




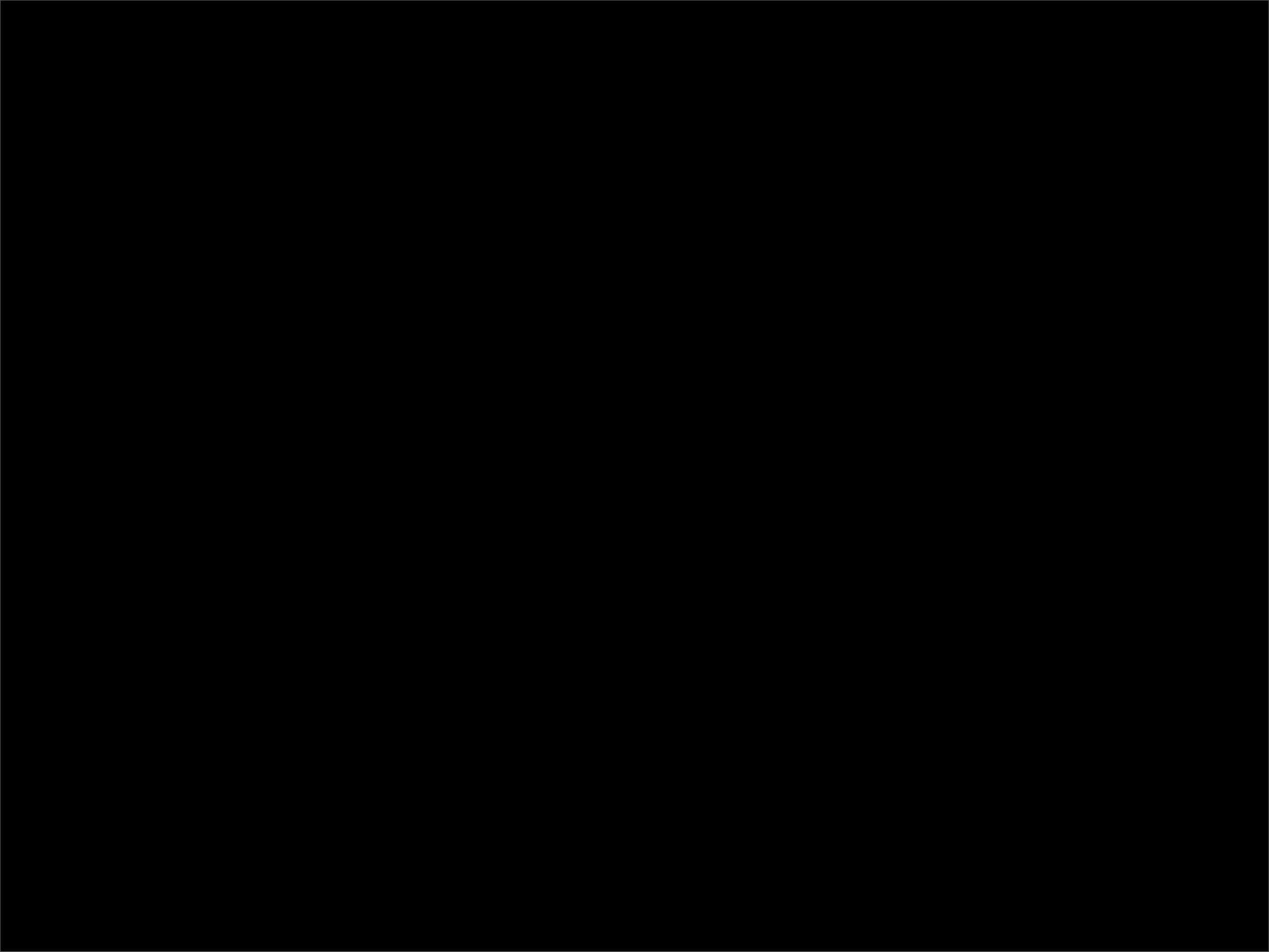
<rather>

rethinking & reframing

accountability as solution



accountability as problem

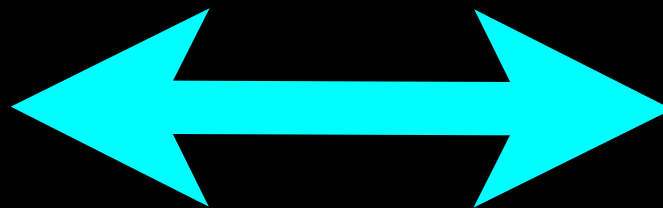


accountability as “design” problem

design problem perspective

academics

empirical studies
critical assessments
grounded theories



practitioners

critical and cautious
reflection

accountability-based
promise of performance

