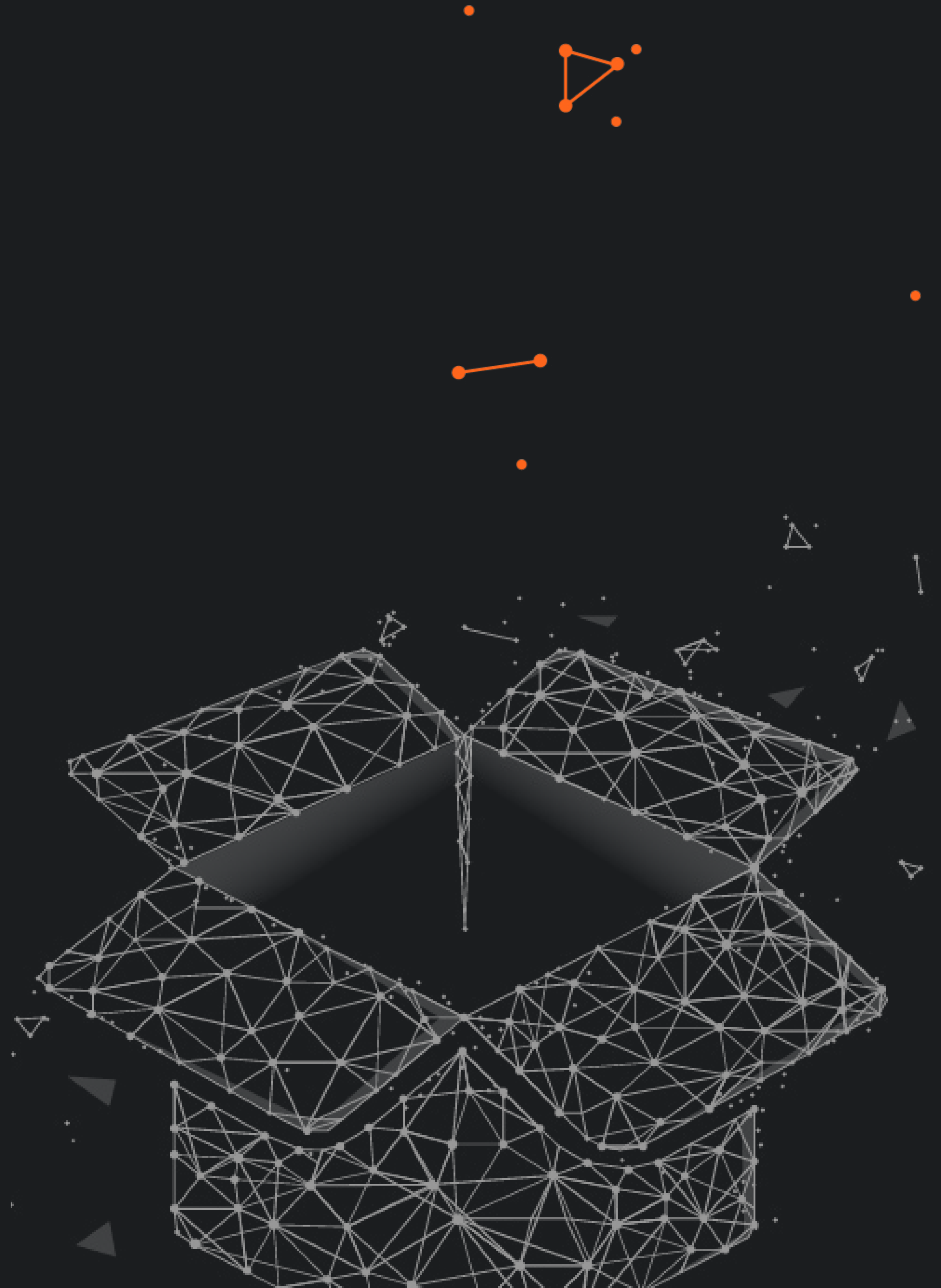




Addressing the SD-WAN skills shortage.



Software-Defined Wide Area Network (SD-WAN) has been around for a little while now, but what is evident is the sheer number of vendors currently offering this capability. With the rise of vendors offering competing products and features it is easy to forget that the more options you have available, the harder it is to find a skilled professional with the right expertise in SD-WAN.

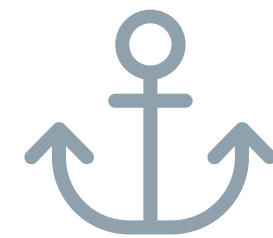


The key challenges driving the skills shortage within SD-WAN:



Rapidly Evolving Technology:

The technology is constantly evolving, with new features and capabilities being added regularly. This makes it challenging for some professionals to keep up with the latest developments and stay current with their skills.



Lack of Commitment to Certification Programs:

There is a lack of commitment by some individuals to undertake standardised training and certification programs, making it difficult to stay at the forefront of technological developments.



Limited Industry Experience:

Theoretical and hands-on experience are often very different when it comes to choosing or getting the right experience, and the simple fact is that with so many vendors and options there are only a limited number of professionals with extensive industry experience in designing, implementing and managing the technology.



Skills in High Demand:

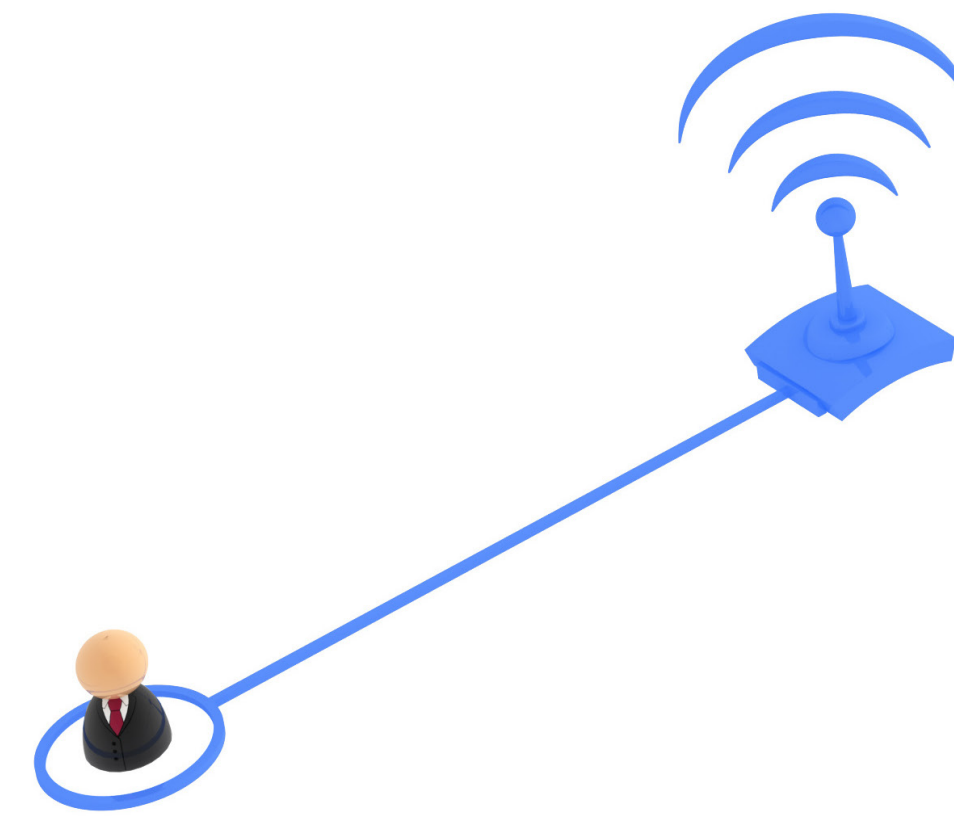
The demand for SD-WAN professionals is high, with many organisations still looking to adopt the technology to improve network performance and reduce costs. This has resulted in a competitive market and the net result is a shortage of skilled professionals available to fill these positions.



The impact of a lack of proven SD-WAN skills can negatively affect organisations looking to achieve large scale transformations:

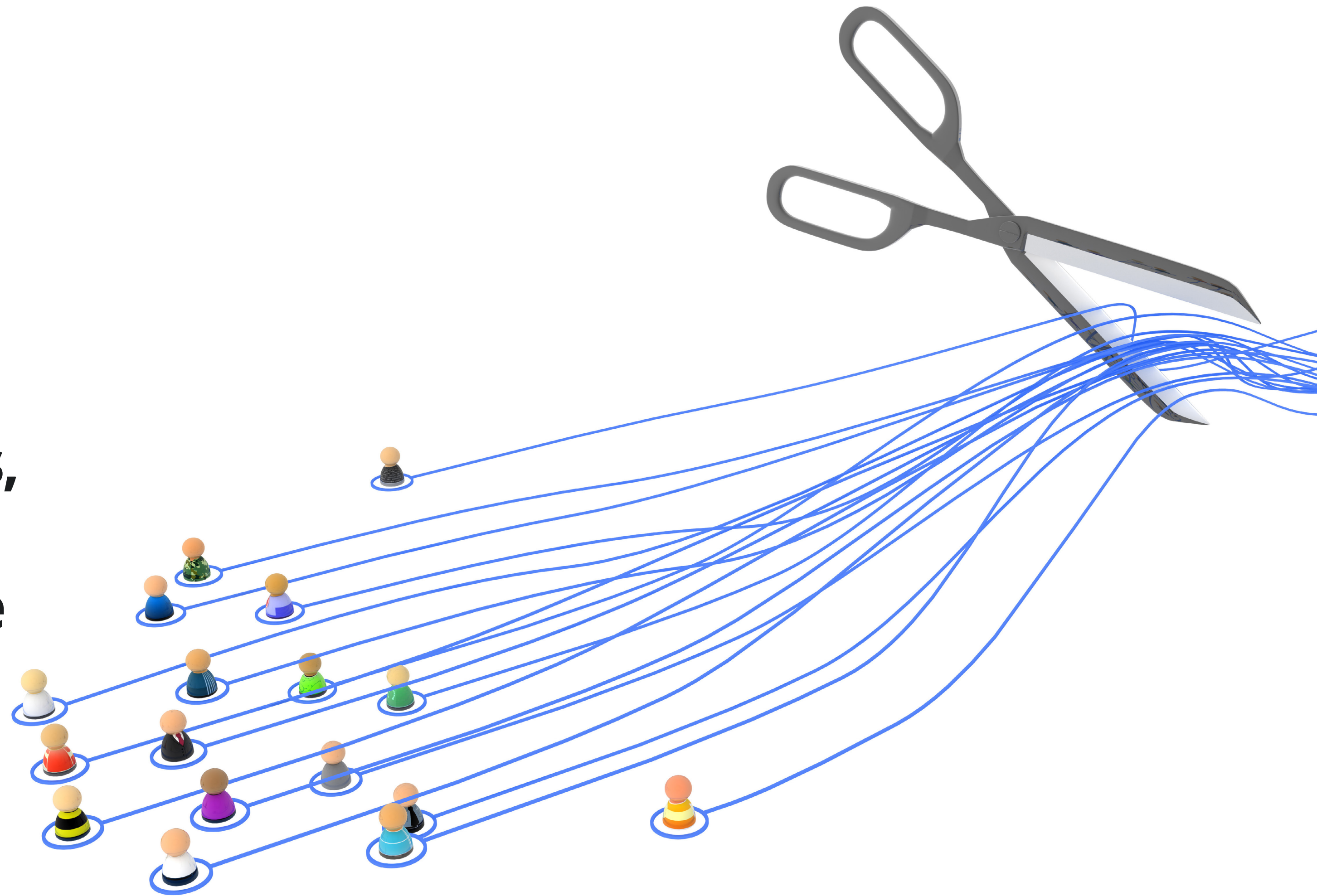
Confidence:

It is hard to overcome the pitfalls associated with the deployment of new technologies and their features, especially if the experience is not there to leverage.



Delays:

Can often result in missed opportunities for organisations, which in effect means the business takes longer to realise the original return on the investment.



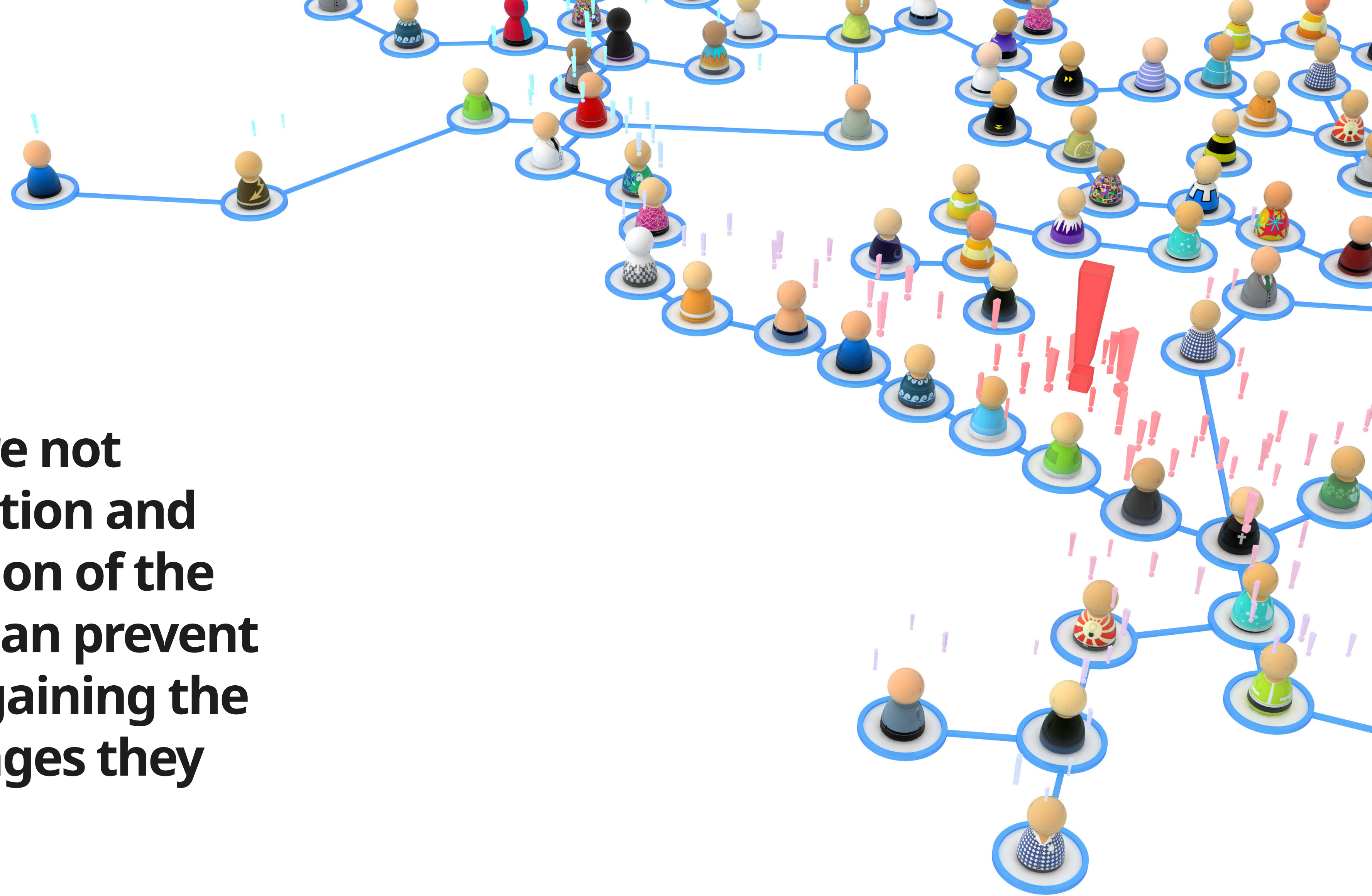
Complexity:

A poorly designed and implemented solution can lead to more complex deployments that may result in future misconfigurations and errors, impacting the overall network performance.



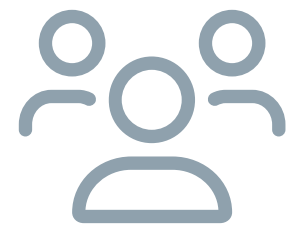
Stagnate:

If the right people are not championing innovation and driving the progression of the solution lifecycle, it can prevent organisations from gaining the competitive advantages they expected.



Automation:

With less skills and experience, elevating an SD-WAN deployment using automation is often an afterthought. In today's software defined era, automation needs to be given greater priority at the early stages of adoption. To address this area of skills shortage, organisations can take several steps:



Investing in people:

Organisations can invest in training and development programs for their employees to help them acquire the necessary skills and stay current with the latest SD-WAN technology.



Partnering with Professional Services Providers:

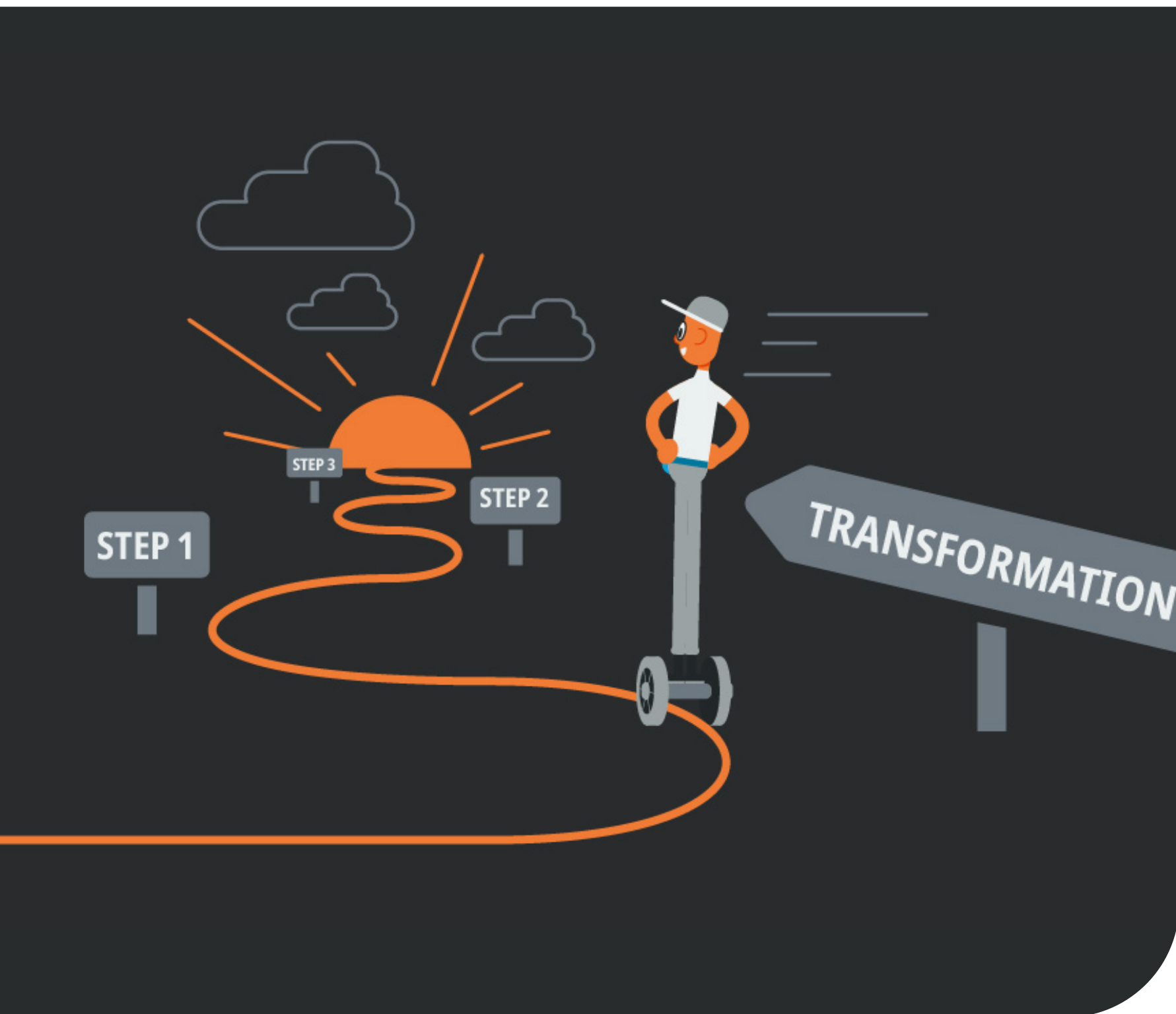
Organisations can partner with services providers like BestPath who specialise in SD-WAN and wider network and security products to leverage their expertise and fill any skills gaps in their IT teams.



Consider Managed Services:

Organisations can outsource the ownership and management to services providers who have the necessary skills and expertise.





By taking these steps, organisations can ensure they have the necessary skills and expertise to implement and manage SD-WAN effectively.



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