RedQuadrant

Cadenced culture:
the key to high-performing teams based on trust

Rituals and practices that help teams to stay focused, productive, and aligned



Benjamin Taylor
antlerboy.com

StretchCon at
Compass Tech Summit

©RedQuadrant 2023
Benjamin Taylor
+4479 3131 7230
benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com

What I'll say

1. It's all about the people
2. There's a deep underlying pattern for success
   - Segment
   - Blend
   - Empower
   - Harmonise
3. That pattern brings human and organisational needs together

4. If you understand that deep pattern, you can use it to diagnose…
5. …and to fix!
6. With the right application of rituals and practices

If there's time… case studies and deep theory…

RedQuadrant

Cadenced culture:
the key to high-performing teams based on trust

Rituals and practices that help teams to stay focused, productive, and aligned



Benjamin Taylor
antlerboy.com

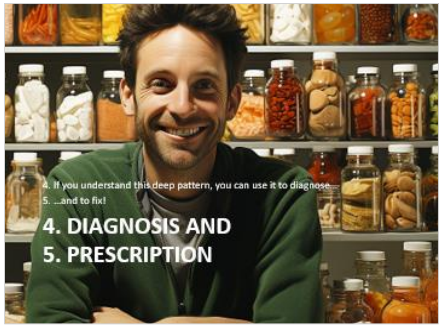
StretchCon at
Compass Tech Summit

©RedQuadrant 2021
Benjamin Taylor
+4470 3131 7230
benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com















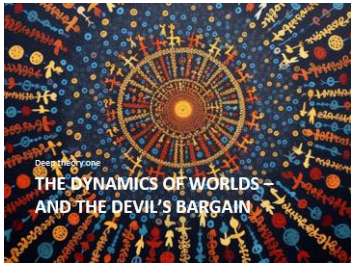

What I said (probably)

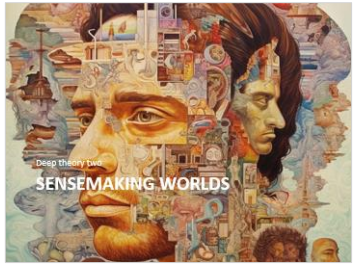
1. It's all about the people
2. There's a deep underlying pattern for success
   - Segment
   - Bond
   - Empower
   - Harmonise
3. That pattern brings human and organisational needs together

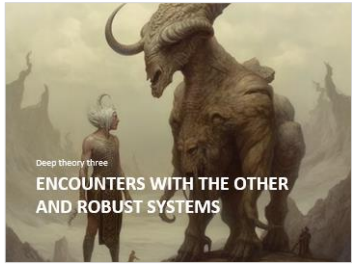
4. If you understand that deep pattern, you can use it to diagnose...
5. ...and to fix!
6. Using the right application of rituals and practices

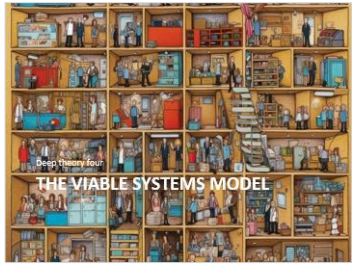
I bet there wasn't time for case studies and deep theory...

RedQuadrant

















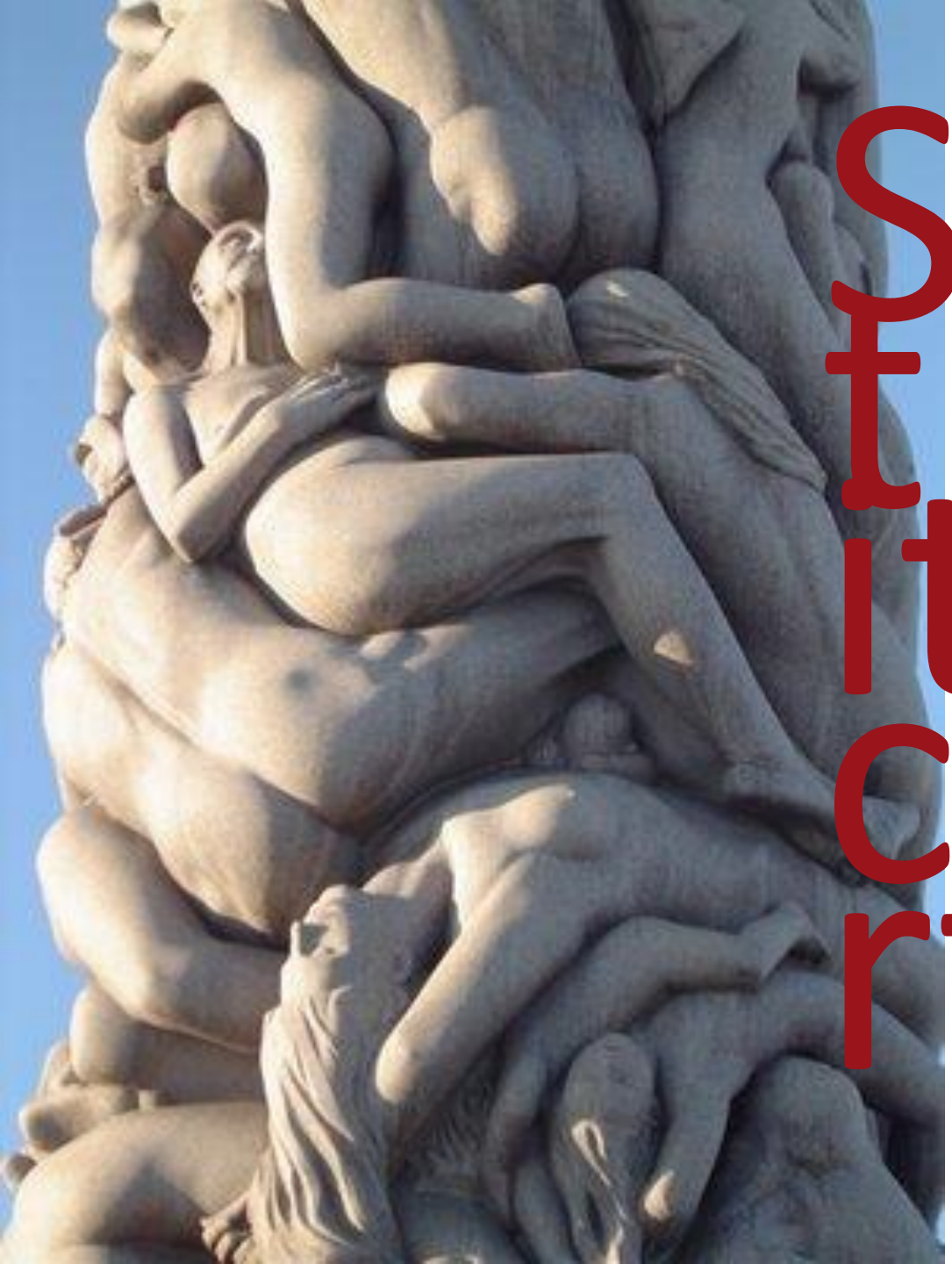





1.
IT'S ALL ABOUT
THE PEOPLE



Organ-isations are made up of people



Sometimes it isn't comfortable

Have you seen any of these dynamics?

Turf warfare -> explosion



Functional teams know who the enemy is – THE OTHER TEAMS. Eventually the organisation will tear itself apart.

Everyone does everything



It's like 'schoolyard football' – wherever the ball is, there are 22 players there. Everyone is in everyone else's business, or are they? Nobody knows.

Every person for themselves!



Like desperate passengers leaving a sinking ship, everyone is simply doing their thing regardless of anyone else – or what might be needed.

Total groupthink



Welcome to the Borg. You will soon be absorbed and be part of us. We are the same. We are unified. We are completely undifferentiated.

Or just this?



It requires four dynamics

2. THERE IS A DEEP UNDERLYING PATTERN OF SUCCESS

Segment



Divide people into groups based on skills, interests, background to develop diverse specialised capabilities.

Blend



Come together to break bread. Share knowledge, learning and experiences. Understand commonalities and overlaps.

Empower



Empower each person to use their unique skills and perspectives and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Harmonise



Bring everyone together to work towards a common goal, unifying and aligning efforts around a shared mission and purpose.

You need a zestful balance of these dynamics

Segment



Divide people into groups based on skills, interests, background to develop diverse specialised capabilities.

Blend



Come together to break bread. Share knowledge, learning and experiences. Understand commonalities and overlaps.

Empower



Empower each person to use their unique skills and perspectives and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Harmonise



Bring everyone together to work towards a common goal, unifying and aligning efforts around a shared mission and purpose.

If one of these dominates…

Segment



Turf warfare



Blend



Everyone does everything



Empower



Save yourself!



Harmonise



Total group think



And it's the same when either one is weak – it's all in the BALANCE

RedQuadrant

So, once you know we need these four in balance…

Segment



Divide people into groups based on skills, interests, background to develop diverse specialised capabilities.

Blend



Come together to break bread. Share knowledge, learning and experiences. Understand commonalities and overlaps.

Empower



Empower each person to use their unique skills and perspectives and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Harmonise



Bring everyone together to work towards a common goal, unifying and aligning efforts around a shared mission and purpose.

You can do a lot with that! But first… what's it's not, and human needs

What I am not offering you

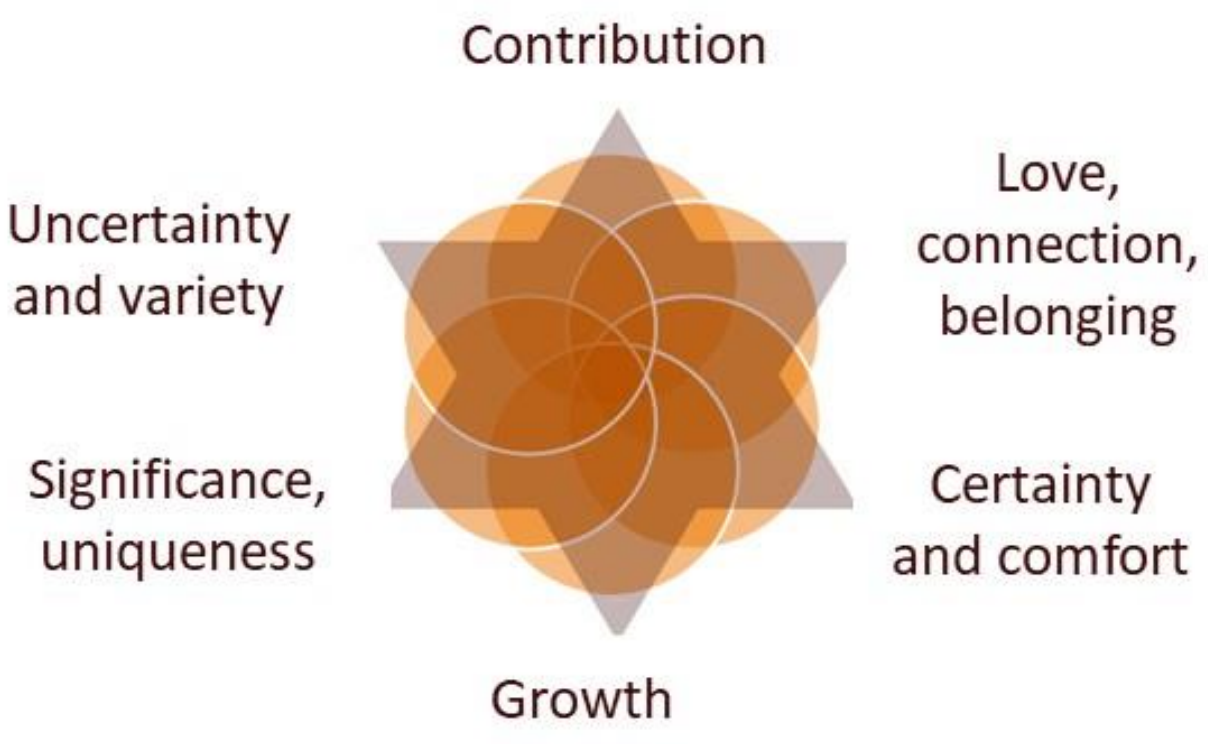
- A model where you pick a quadrant
  (there are cultural models like this – they tend to normalise disfunction)
- A prescription for a 'best way to work'
  (that would be against the agile principles 😊)
- An approach for 'teams' or for 'organisations'
  It's about both – human organisation

Not a framework for scaling agile… 😉



3. THE PATTERN MEETS HUMAN AND ORGANISATIONAL NEEDS

Humans have needs…



Core human needs

- Multiple sources – I re-developed this myself, but/and, it turns out it totally maps to the model used by Tony Robbins (https://www.habitsforwellbeing.com/6-core-human-needs-by-anthony-robbins/),
- Apparently originated by Chloe Madanes: https://cloemadanes.com/2016/10/12/the-6-human-needs-for-fulfillment.
- See also https://pollackpeacebuilding.com/blog/conflict-6-core-human-needs/
- and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Optimal_distinctiveness_theory

RedQuadrant

Humans have needs…

Core human needs
Our needs for…
Uncertainty and variety
Certainty and comfort
Significance, uniqueness
Love, connection, belonging

And learning/growth,
and contribution to value in the world.

Organisations have needs…

Core human needs	Organisational needs
Our need for…	*The need to…*
Uncertainty and variety	Differentiate and increase ability to adapt
Certainty and comfort	Homogenise and create stability
Significance, uniqueness	Individuate and maximise autonomy
Love, connection, belonging	Integrate, feed and support each other, moderate behaviours

And learning/growth,
and contribution to value in the world.

Organisational needs

- at a human dynamics level, from Barry Oshry's Organic Systems Framework: differentiation and homogenisation of the whole; and individuation and integration of the parts
- at a functional level, from Stafford Beer's management cybernetics: adaptability and stability of the whole; and autonomy and integration of the parts

The four dynamics meet human needs

Core human needs	Dynamics
Our need for…	*…is achieved when we*
Uncertainty and variety	Segment
Certainty and comfort	Blend
Significance, uniqueness	Empower
Love, connection, belonging	Harmonise

Creating such a context meets the final two human needs—learning/growth, and contribution to value in the world.

The four dynamics meet organisational needs

Organisational needs	Dynamics
The need to…	*…is achieved when we*
Differentiate and increase ability to adapt	Segment
Homogenise and create stability	Blend
Individuate and maximise autonomy	Empower
Integrate, feed and support each other, moderate behaviours	Harmonise

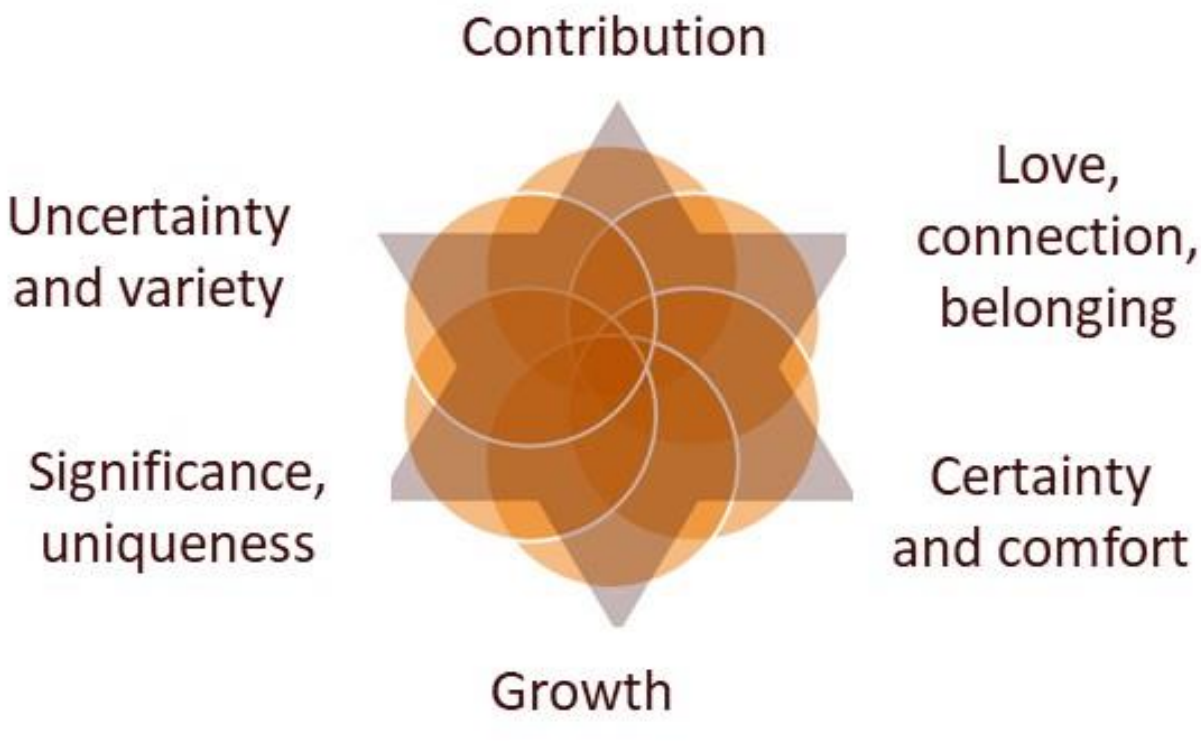
Meeting human and organisational needs

Core human needs	Organisational needs	Dynamics
Our need for…	*Is met by, and contributes to, the organisation's need to…*	*And is achieved when we…*
Uncertainty and variety	Differentiate and increase ability to adapt	**Segment**
Certainty and comfort	Homogenise and create stability	**Blend**
Significance, uniqueness	Individuate and maximise autonomy	**Empower**
Love, connection, belonging	Integrate, feed and support each other, moderate behaviours	**Harmonise**

Human and organisational needs

Segment

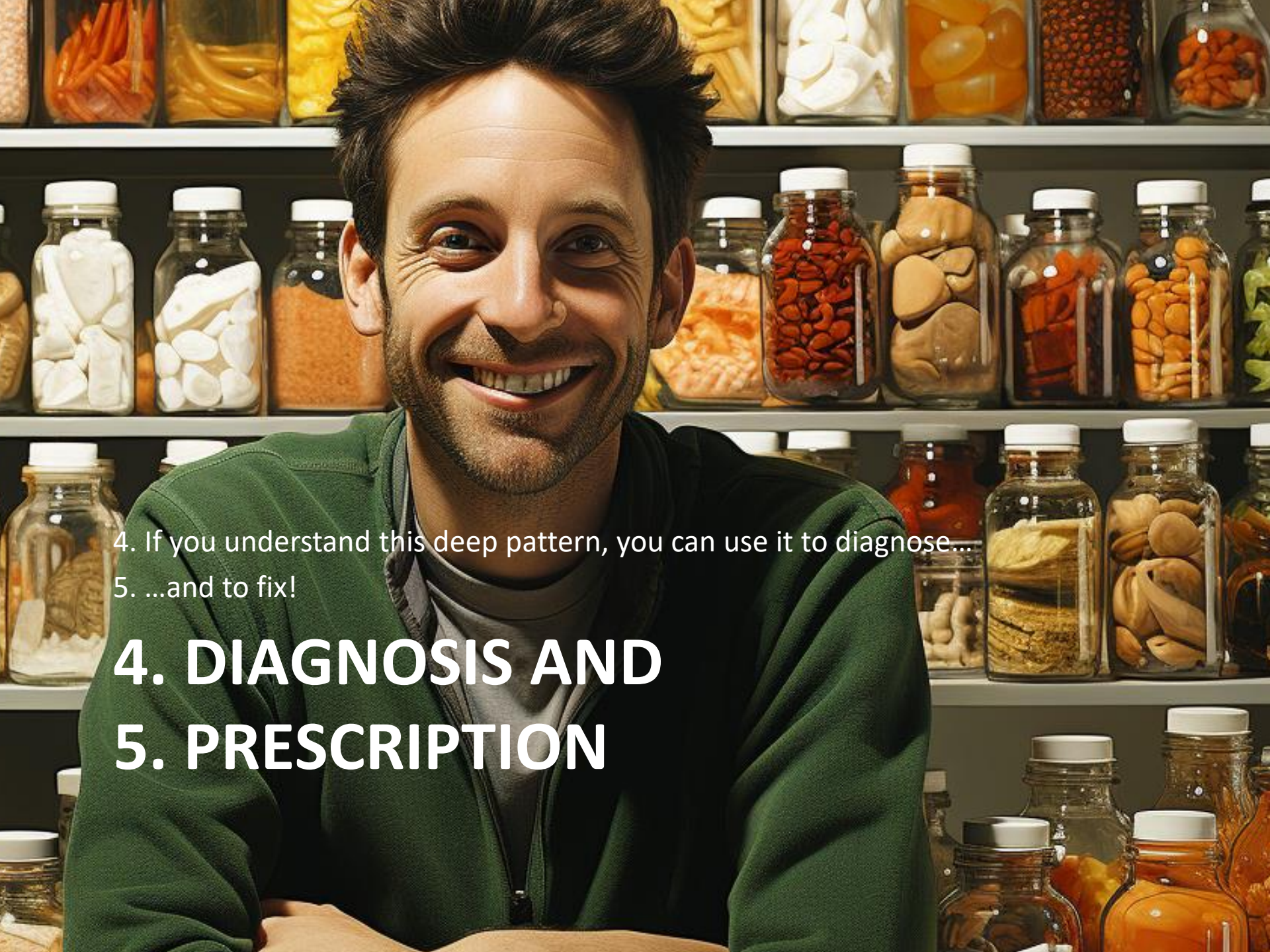
Blend



Empower

Harmonise

RedQuadrant



4. If you understand this deep pattern, you can use it to diagnose…

5. …and to fix!

4. DIAGNOSIS AND 5. PRESCRIPTION

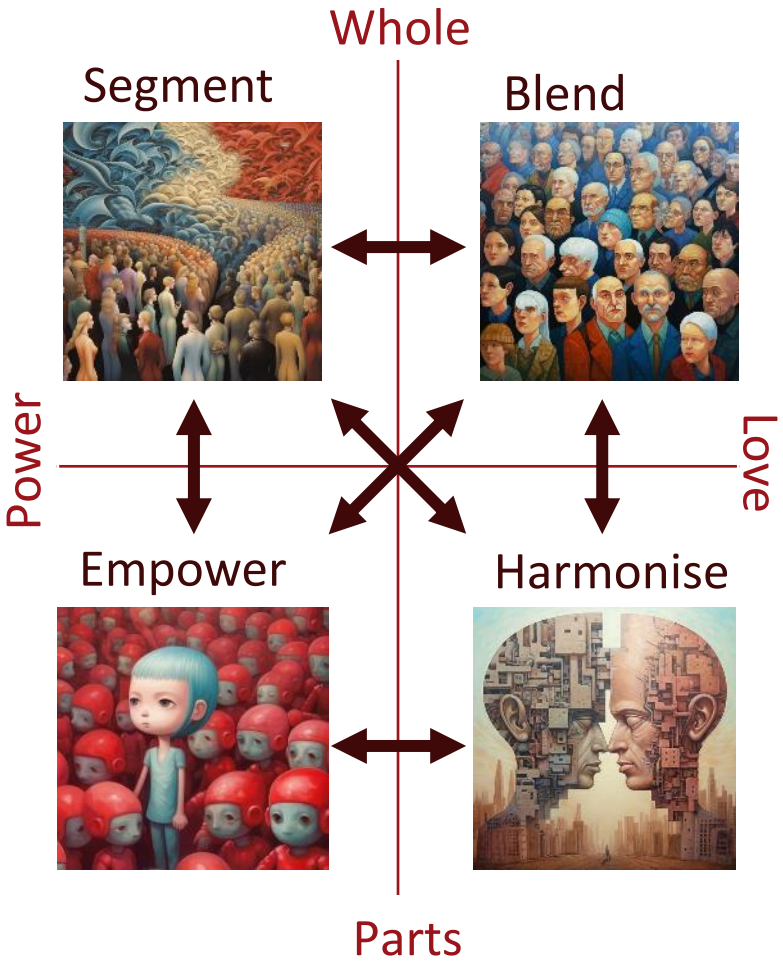
4. Diagnosis – how to see what's wrong

Dynamic / identity	Too much	Too little	Imbalances
Segment I am… my group / profession / task	• Silos – even 'UDI' • Can't see the bigger picture • Teams blame each other, don't collaborate	• Not enough expertise • Too generalised • Unable to bring deep expertise to bear	• If Segment > Blend, even good blending can't overcome separate sense of identity
Blend I am… an expert, dancing well with other groups	• Loss of unique perspectives • Overemphasis on consensus • Limited innovation and risk-taking	• Not able to share knowledge, communicate • No sense of community end belonging • Limited innovation capability • Fragmentation	• If Blend > Segment, even strong segmenting can't overcome endless consensual decision-making
Empower I am me… a special snowflake, the main character	• Focus on individual goals, not aligned to organisation • Conflict between team members • No trust and respect	• Lack of initiative • Low satisfaction • Not empowered to take decisions and risks	• If Empower > Harmonise, even good harmonisation can't get away from individuals' destructive behaviour
Harmonise I am… part of something bigger	• Groupthink – focus on conformity • Suppression of dissent	• Lack of alignment • Fragmented culture • No sense of overall purpose or direction	• If Harmonise > Empower , even strong empowerment can't overcome numbing focus on group harmony

Multiple forms of diagnosis and engagement recommended (more soon)

5. Prescription – how to fix what's wrong

- Too little of a dynamic? Introduce more.
- Too much of a dynamic? Reduce it.
- Imbalance? Balance it with the opposite dynamic.
- Advanced:
  - The diagonal dynamic also has an impact – like the left-right relationship but less strongly.
  - The up-down relationship is important too – and needs to be balanced



There's a deeper pattern here we don't have too much time to go into

RedQuadrant

How to apply this

- It's a different experience for different people, so there is no real substitute for **engagement** – this can be done explicitly with teams.
- **Weight maps** focus on the overall balance of what people experience across the four dynamics – quick, rough and ready, risk of 'static' picture.
- **Rhythm maps** focus on cadence – how much time is spent with what dynamic – takes more time, more likely to pick up symbolism.
- Can be used when **making changes** to focus on how to do work on each of the dynamics – necessary – in a way that *includes* the opposite dynamic. E.g. personal development aligned with company objectives, setting up a new team and building connection rituals to other teams from the start.
- Look out for **rebounds and squeeze-out effects** – too much of one thing can produce people rebelling into the opposite!
- **Constellations work** – dynamically moving around a space – can be used to good effect here.

Must not be limited to 'HR'! And it is a continual, ongoing process…



6. RITUALS AND PRACTICES

To **segment** for specialisation and expertise…

- Silos (teams, departments, projects) –
  NB grouping can be expertise or purpose-based
- Expertise directories
- Skills development
- Team or departmental meetings
- Mentorship, communities of practice
- Professions / Tribes
- Recognition in specialist categories
- Specialism-based feedback
- Acknowledgement of the needs of one group
- Carrying out tasks mandated by one specialist group
- The imposition of the needs of one group on another



At heart, allocation of responsibilities: (dis)empowerment

To **blend** for shared learning and working together…

- Cross-functional teams (but…)
- Hackathons, special short-term projects
- Lunch and learns / brown bag lunches
- Whole-organisation development
- Town Halls
- Team-based feedback
- Marketplaces
- Knowledge sharing platforms
- Group appreciation
- Cross-functional team building / social activities
- Recognition and reward of cross-specialism support
- The ‘how’ of whole-organisation strategy



See how much harder this one is? Building community: break bread

To **empower** to enable unique skills and perspectives…

- 360-degree feedback
- Coaching and mentoring
- Employee recognition (as individuals)
- Personal feedback
- Personal appreciation
- Flexible working
- Innovation and experimentation programmes (e.g. 20% of personal time, side hustles)
- Personal Development Plans and training programmes
- Good management and delegation, with clear boundaries and discretion



The most advocated – so why are we so bad at it?

To **harmonise** for focus on common goals, purpose…

- Company-wide engagement
- Strategy work on the ‘what’ and ‘why’
- Company vision, mission, and values… but
- Whole-organisation celebrations
  (can work in each dynamic)
- All-hands meetings
- Rewarding overall contributions
- Community service projects which reflect mission and values



- Symbolism, belonging, identity, story, true rituals
  (always at work in each dynamic)
- Alignment of individual and team objectives with organisational strategy and priorities, regular tracking and reporting on progress and outcomes

Think carefully about symbolism, and relationship to ‘blending’ dynamics

Confabulated, anonymised…

CASE STUDIES



Case study – SaaS startup

- **Situation:** a rapidly growing SaaS startup was facing challenges in collaboration between specialised teams.
  The engineering team was highly specialised but isolated from the marketing team, leading to a lack of understanding and alignment.
- **Implications:** if this situation continued, the disconnect between teams would have led to conflicting goals, inefficient product development, and a potential 'war' between departments.
- **Intervention:** we implemented regular cross-functional meetings, joint projects, and team-building activities to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing. We had to use and mix rituals and symbols.
- **Outcome:** the blending of groups led to more shared understanding, improved communication, and alignment between specialised teams. Product development became more customer-focused, and the organisation's overall efficiency and innovation increased.

Sounds simple – a lot of ritual and symbolism involved!

Case study – e-commerce platform

- **Situation:** an e-commerce platform had strong blending of groups but lacked harmonisation around shared goals.
  The company's open-office layout, intended to foster collaboration, became a symbol of chaos and lack of direction.
- **Implications:** the imbalance threatened to create confusion and hinder the company's growth.
- **Intervention:** a 'homeopathic' intervention was applied by introducing a weekly 'Harmony Ritual.'
  This ritual involved a symbolic rearrangement of the open office into different configurations, reflecting the company's goals for the week.
- **Outcome:** The symbolic act of rearranging the office, coupled with the unity ritual, created a tangible connection between collaboration and shared goals.
  The company experienced improved alignment, efficiency, and growth.

Space has a big impact (if you aren't yet fully virtual!)

Case study – FinTech Company

- **Situation:** a growing FinTech company had highly specialised teams, but the siloed nature led to a lack of collaboration. The company's logo, symbolising individual excellence, inadvertently reinforced this division.
- **Implications:** the continued isolation of teams threatened to create inefficiencies and hinder innovation.
- **Intervention:** monthly rituals were introduced, where teams would present their work, challenges, and learnings. The ritual was designed to foster curiosity, appreciation, and collaboration, and to expose them to new ideas and perspectives. They also used certificates, badges, and stickers, to recognise and reward achievements and contributions. They also subtly altered the company's logo to include interconnected elements, symbolising collaboration, and changed office layouts
- **Outcome:** the company saw improved cross-team communication and innovation, without losing expertise

Very often the 'founding story' drives imbalance – here, the logo!

Case study – global tech corporation

- **Situation:** a global tech corporation had a strong focus on harmonisation, aligning all efforts around shared goals. However, this overemphasis on unity led to suppression of individual creativity and unique perspectives.
- **Implications:** if this overemphasis continued, it would have stifled innovation, hindered adaptability, and led to a homogenised culture lacking diversity of thought. Some say that was already happening!
- **Intervention:** we introduced practices to balance harmonisation with empowerment. This included innovation labs, flexible work arrangements, and recognition of individual achievements, and – symbolically – flexible working, volunteering, side projects.
- **Outcome:** the interventions revitalised the organisation's culture. Employees felt free to contribute unique ideas, leading to increased creativity, adaptability, and better results.

Comparisons to other organisations were used to help the shift

Case study – healthcare

- **Situation:** a healthcare organisation was struggling with low employee morale and engagement. Despite having diverse capabilities, employees felt disempowered and unable to contribute fully to their teams.
- **Implications:** continued lack of personal empowerment would have led to high turnover, low productivity, and a failure to leverage individual talents.
- **Intervention:** an HR intervention – we introduced personalised development plans, open feedback channels, and empowerment workshops. Leaders were trained to recognise and nurture individual talents. Took a lot of time to shift the culture and was partially successful.
- **Outcome:** employees felt more empowered and engaged, leading to increased job satisfaction, retention, and overall organisational performance. Some instances of 'whistleblowing' (small scale) came out.

Many external factors were holding this imbalance in place

Case study – global tech business

- **Situation:** a global tech enterprise faced challenges in empowerment and harmonisation. Employees felt disconnected from the company's mission, and the existing rituals emphasised hierarchy over individual contribution.
- **Implications:** the lack of personal connection and alignment could lead to disengagement and inefficiency.
- **Intervention:** we transformed the existing hierarchical rituals. The annual company conference was redesigned to celebrate individual stories and align them with the company's mission, turning a symbol of hierarchy into a symbol of empowerment and unity.
- **Outcome:** the clever transformation of a traditional ritual into a symbol of empowerment and alignment led to increased employee engagement, alignment with the company's mission, and overall organizational success.

Using existing rituals in a new way can be powerful

Case study – non-profit

- **Situation:** a non-profit organisation that had a strong dynamic of harmonisation, but a weak dynamic of empowerment. The organisation had a clear and compelling mission to improve the lives of disadvantaged communities. There was a hierarchical structure, where the leaders set the goals, strategies, and policies for the organisation, and the staff followed them without much input or autonomy.
- **Implications:** staff were committed and loyal to the mission, but felt frustrated, bored, and undervalued. They lacked the opportunity to express their creativity, initiative, and diversity. The organisation was missing out on the potential of its staff to generate new ideas and solutions.
- **Intervention:** we created a bold symbol of personal empowerment, in the form of a golden ticket. The golden ticket was a voucher that gave each staff member the chance to propose and implement a project of their choice, related to the mission of the organisation. The staff could use the golden ticket to request resources, time, or support from the organisation for their project. The staff could also collaborate with others who had similar interests/skills.
- **Outcome:** staff felt more motivated, engaged, and valued by the organisation. They used their golden tickets to launch various projects that enhanced the impact and reach of the organisation. They also developed their own talents and abilities, and enriched the culture of the organisation.

A big, bold moved (backed up by lots of other changes)

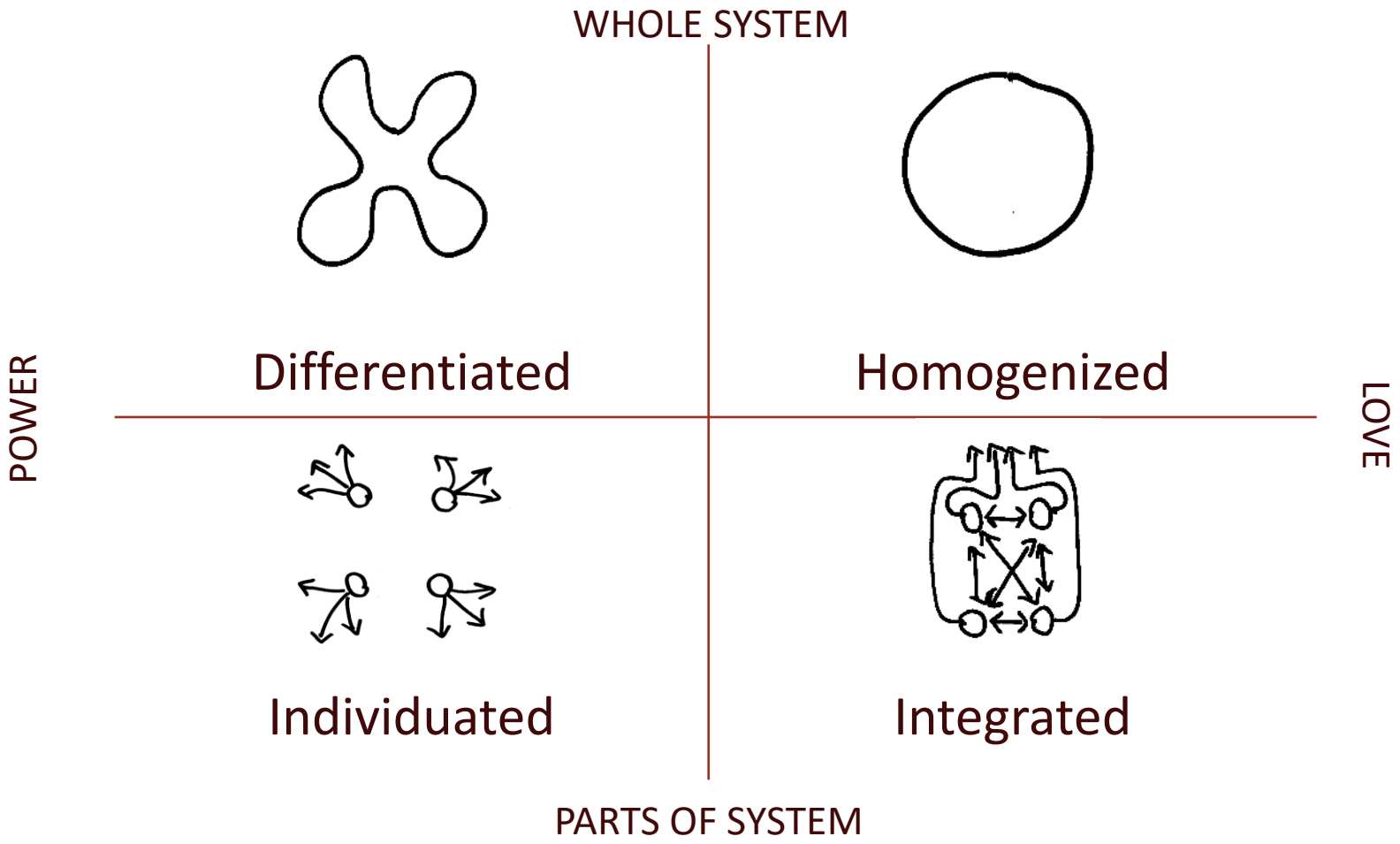
Case study – media company

- **Situation:** the company had a culture of openness, diversity, and inclusion, where everyone was encouraged to share their opinions, experiences, and stories. They had a flat structure, where everyone worked as generalists, covering different topics and formats. The company prided itself on being a platform for diverse voices and perspectives.
- However, the company also faced some challenges in terms of quality, credibility, and differentiation. The company lacked the expertise and depth to produce high-quality content on specific topics or niches. The company also struggled to establish its reputation and identity in a crowded and competitive market.
- **Intervention:** each staff member would choose one topic or niche that they were passionate about or knowledgeable about, and focus on developing their skills and content on that topic or niche. Communities of interest were then clustered, and achievements and contributions of each staff member on their chosen topic or niche were celebrated. A database of expertise was developed.
- **Outcome:** the staff became more confident, productive, and satisfied with their work. They produced more quality content that attracted more audience attention and engagement. They also established themselves as experts or influencers on their topic or niche.

Sometimes a gentle, gradual approach is needed


DEEP THEORY TASTER

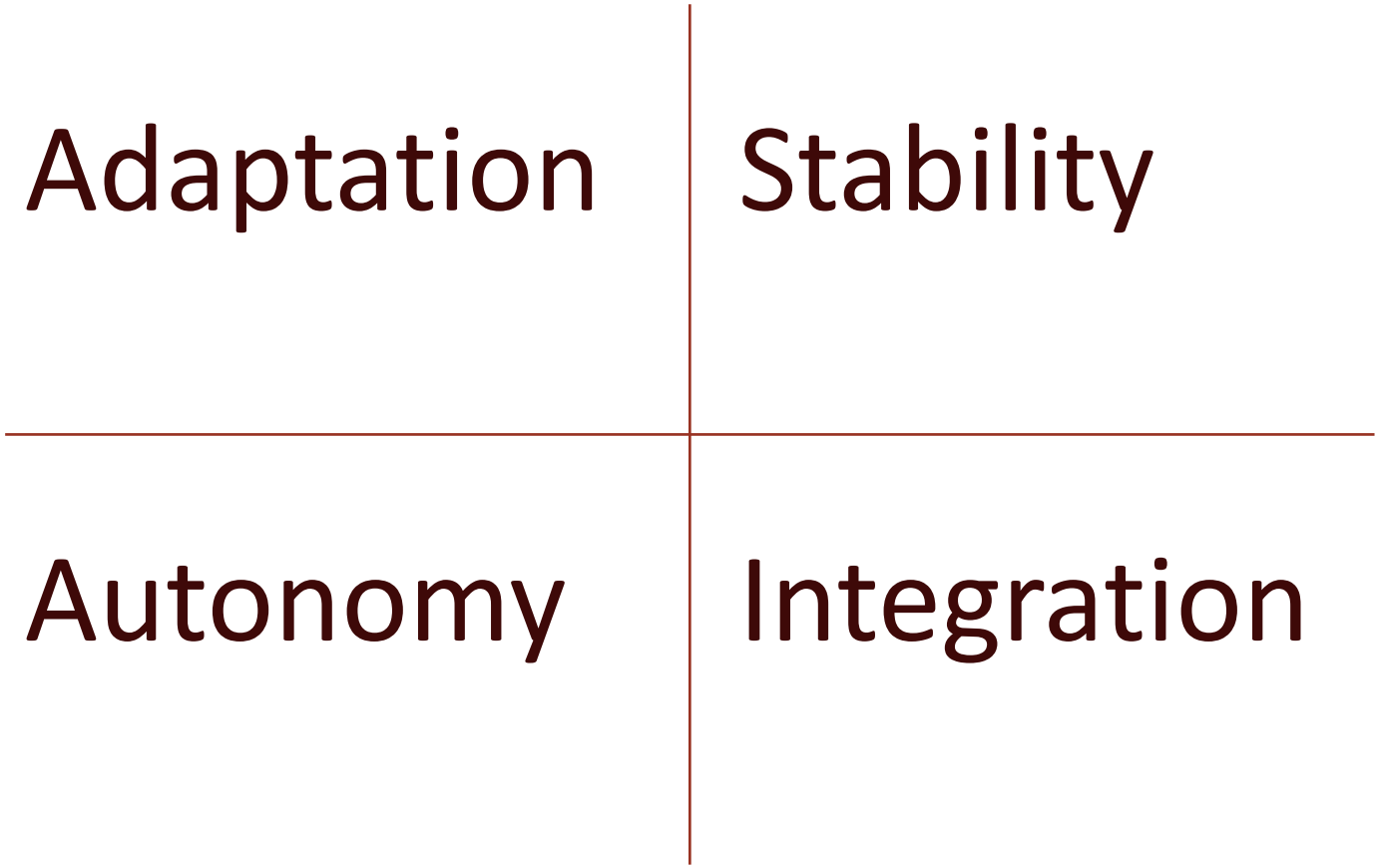
Robust systems are those that balance



Barry Oshry, Organic Systems Framework

RedQuadrant

Viable systems are those that balance



Stafford Beer, management cybernetics / the viable systems model

RedQuadrant

Cadenced culture dynamics

Segment



Divide people into groups based on skills, interests, background to develop diverse specialised capabilities.

Blend



Come together to break bread. Share knowledge, learning and experiences. Understand commonalities and overlaps.

Empower



Empower each person to use their unique skills and perspectives and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Harmonise



Bring everyone together to work towards a common goal, unifying and aligning efforts around a shared mission and purpose.

What I said (probably)

1. It's all about the people
2. There's a deep underlying pattern for success
   - Segment
   - Blend
   - Empower
   - Harmonise
3. That pattern brings human and organisational needs together

4. If you understand that deep pattern, you can use it to diagnose…
5. …and to fix!
6. Using the right application of rituals and practices

I bet there wasn't time for case studies and deep theory…

Thank you!

RedQuadrant

Benjamin Taylor – @antlerboy in LinkedIn Twitter Mastodon BlueSky, Farcaster, T2 etc

public service transformation academy

www.publicservicetransformation.org

Systems community of enquiry: www.syscoi.com

Blog: chosen-path.org / antlerboy.medium.com

SCiO

Systems and complexity in organisation
www.systemspractice.org

systems | cybernetics | complexity

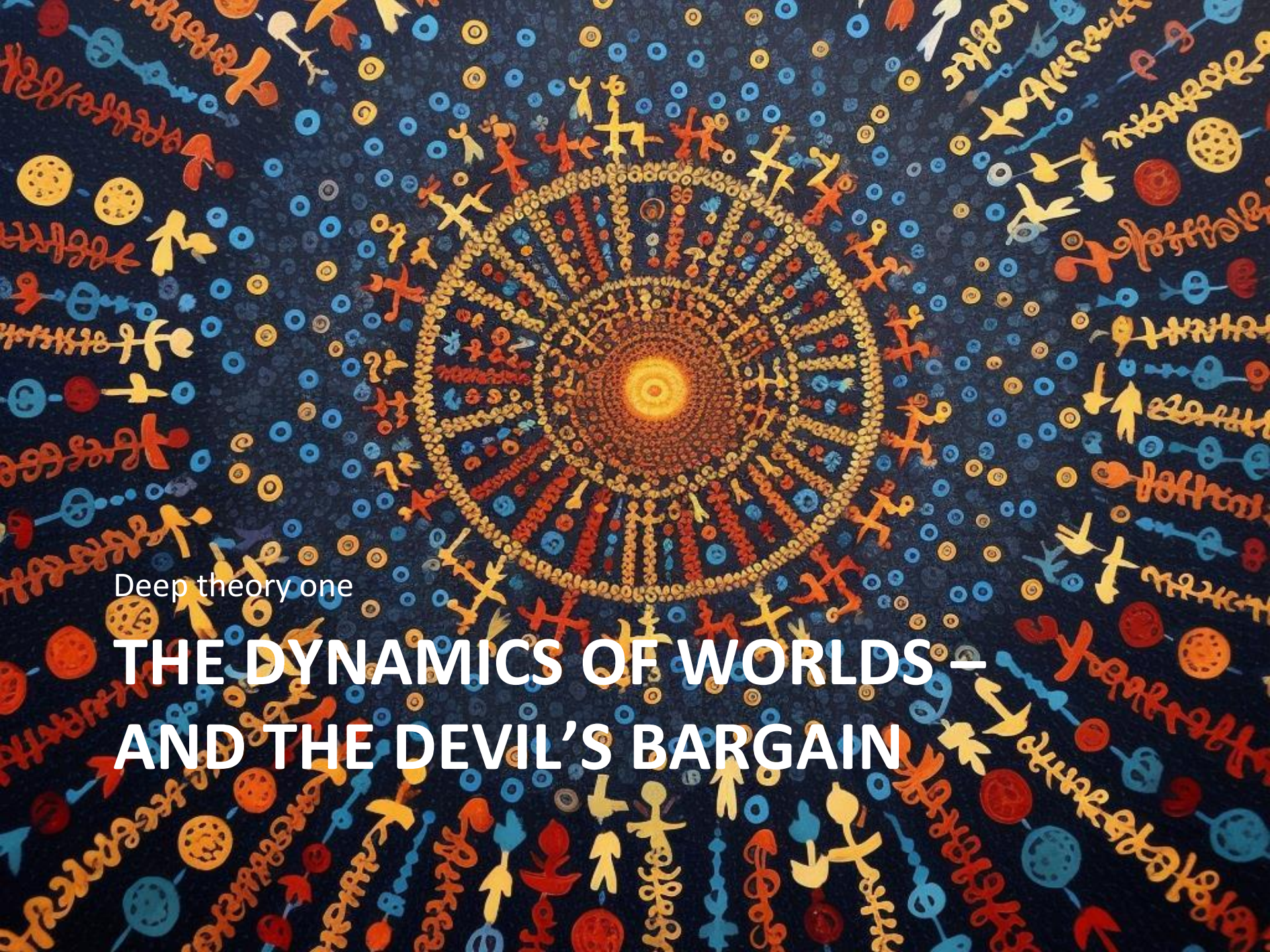
business evolutionary | avid learner

Learn with me in the RedQuadrant tool shed

FEEDBACK PLEASE
bit.ly/ccstretchcon
or slido.com
#ccstretchcon

All my links are at antlerboy.com

RedQuadrant



Deep theory one

THE DYNAMICS OF WORLDS – AND THE DEVIL'S BARGAIN

In an organisation, we don't know what is happening in other people's worlds



RedQuadrant

Power Systems

First rule of organisational life:

'Stuff' happens!!!

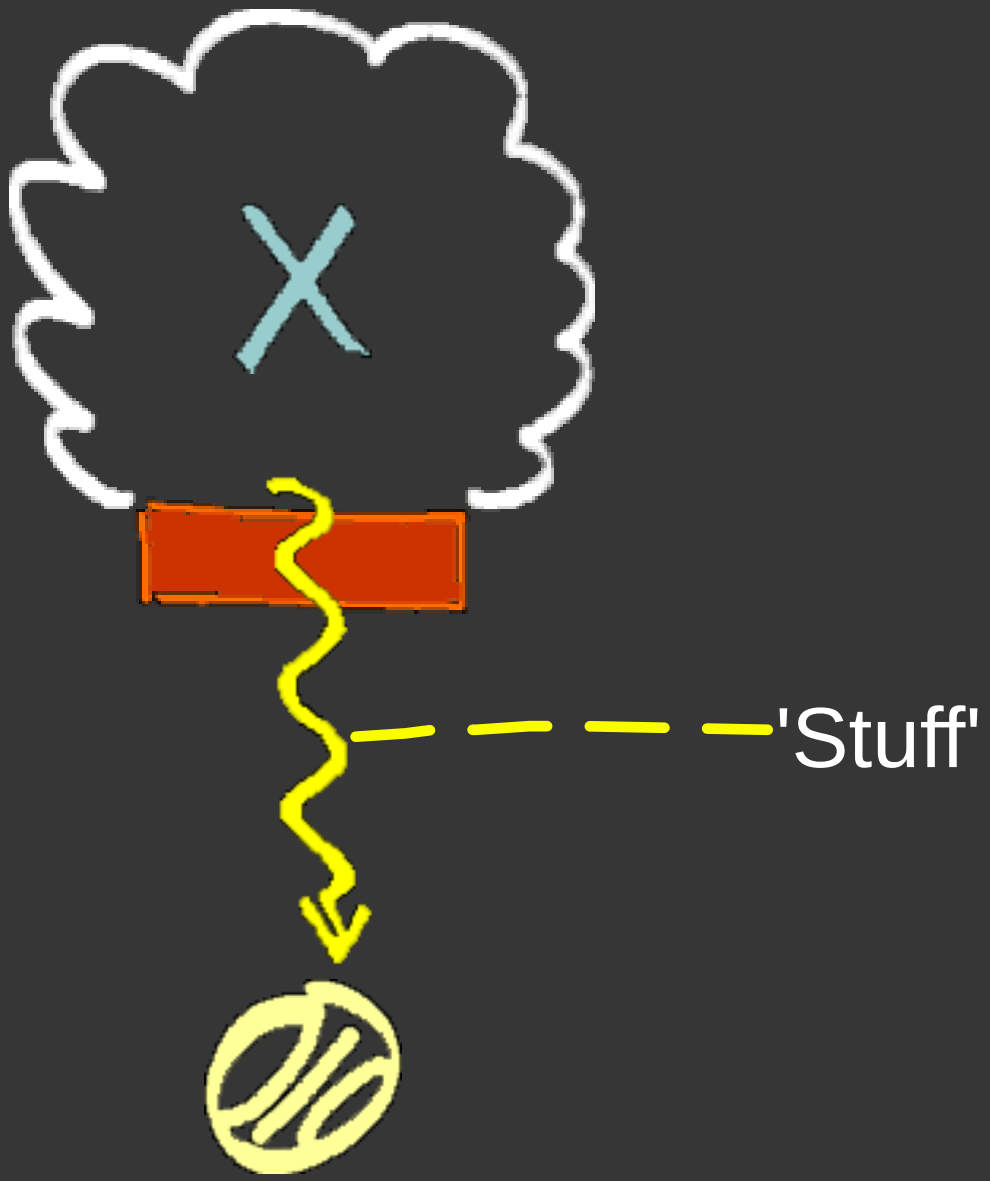
sometimes **good** stuff...

sometimes **bad** stuff...

sometimes **mysterious** stuff...

sometimes bad **and** mysterious stuff...

sometimes nothing: **minus stuff**...



When **stuff** happens, we **react:**

- Make up a story
- Evaluate the others
  - Malicious
  - Insensitive
  - Incompetent
- Take it personally
- React
  - Get mad
  - Get even
  - Withdraw
- Lose focus
- Partnership



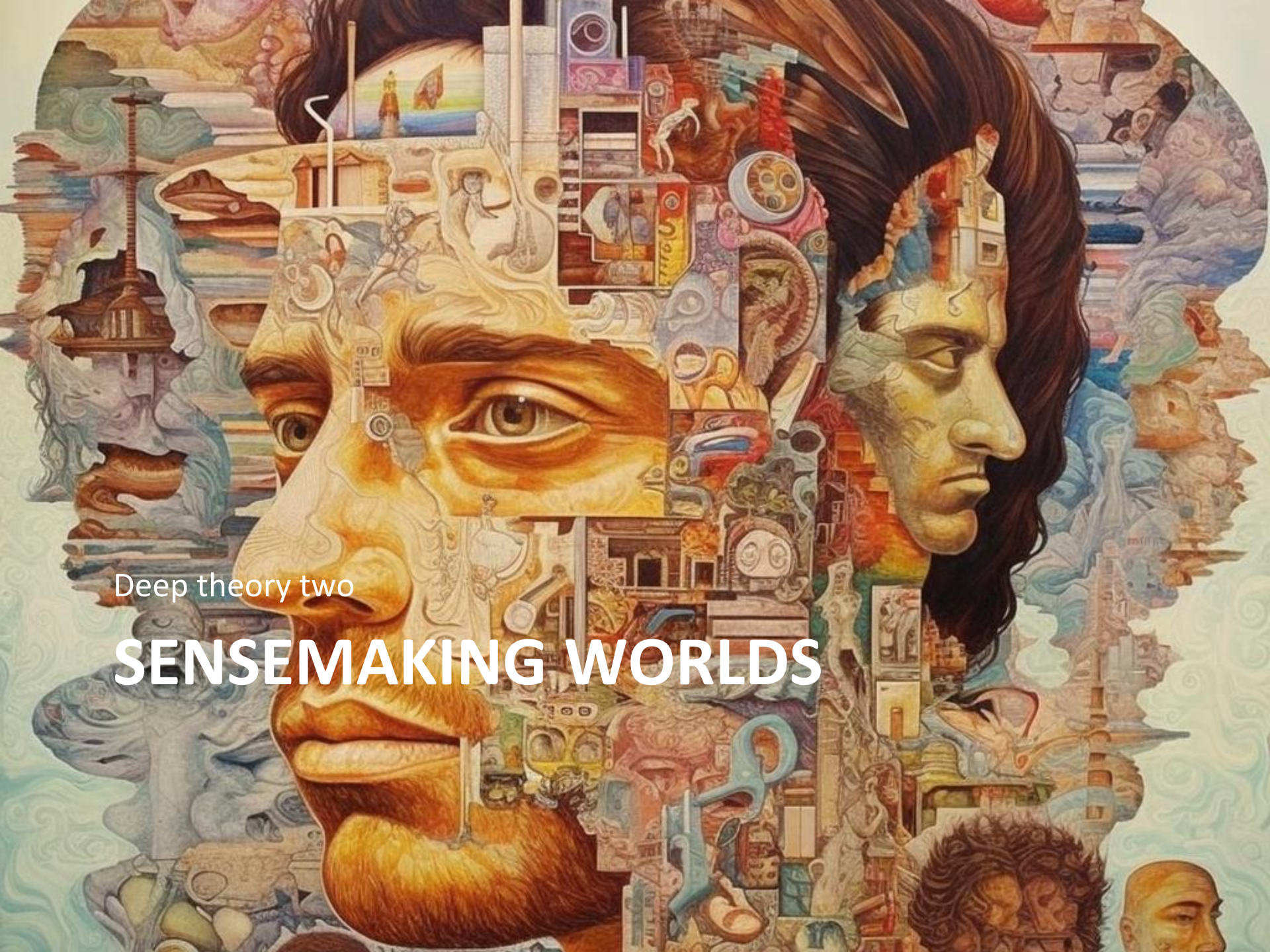
(What role do we give **ourselves** in our stories?)

RedQuadrant

Power Systems

The side show is predictable,
but not inevitable.

The center ring is not predictable,
but it is a human possibility.



Deep theory two

SENSEMAKING WORLDS

TRANSDUCTION is the word we need: 'leading across'. Each red blob is a *transducer*, and it has this function:

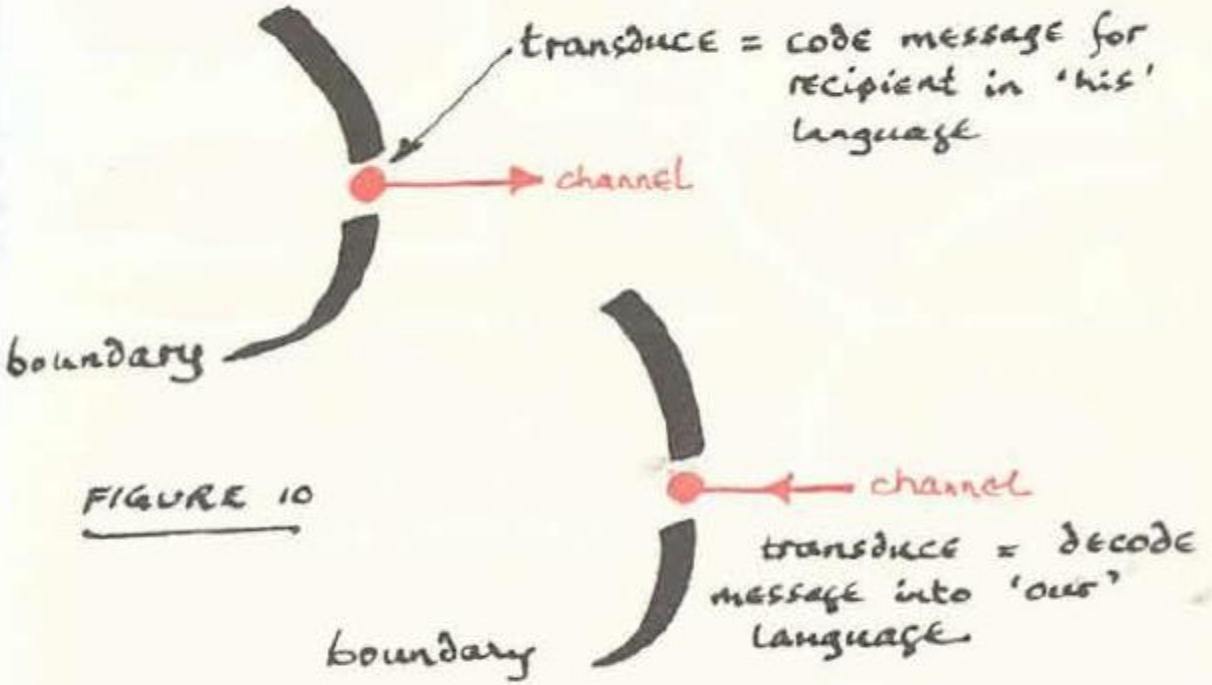


FIGURE 10

The Third Principle of Organization

Wherever the information carried on a channel capable of distinguishing a given variety crosses a boundary, it undergoes transduction; the variety of the transducer must be at least equivalent to the variety of the channel.

STAFFORD

BEER

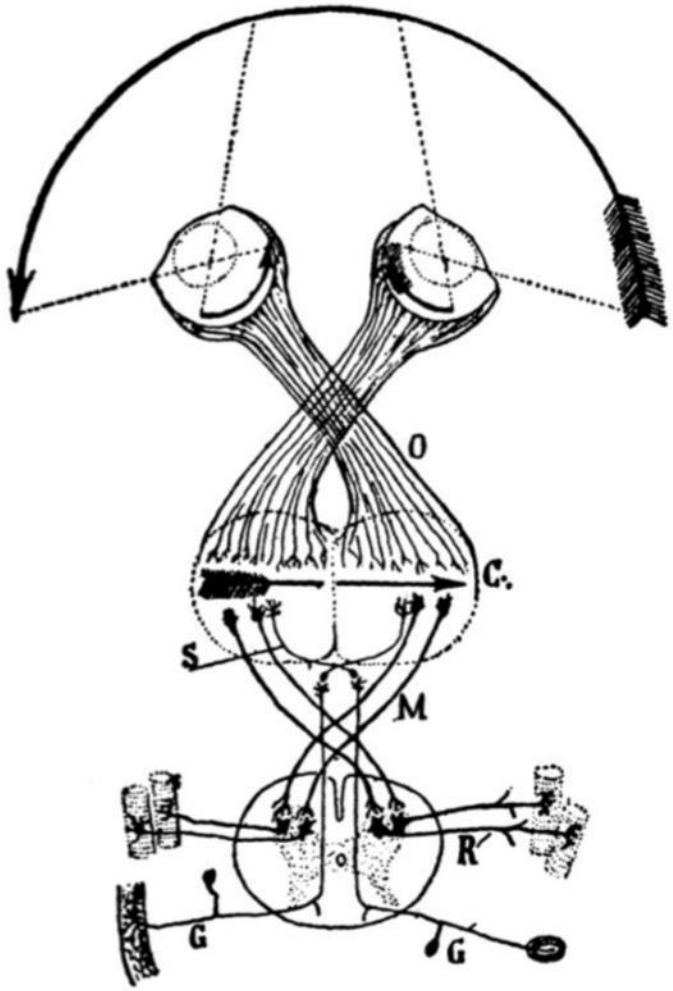


DIAGNOSING THE SYSTEM FOR ORGANIZATIONS

What the Frog's Eye Tells the Frog's Brain*

J. Y. LETTVIN†, H. R. MATURANA‡, W. S. McCULLOCH||, SENIOR MEMBER, IRE, AND W. H. PITTS||

Summary—**In this paper, we analyze the activity of single fibers in the optic nerve of a frog. Our method is to find what sort of stimulus causes the largest activity in one nerve fiber and then what is the exciting aspect of that stimulus such that variations in everything else cause little change in the response. It has been known for the past 20 years that each fiber is connected not to a few rods and cones in the retina but to very many over a fair area. Our results show that for the most part within that area, it is not the light intensity itself but rather the pattern of local variation of intensity that is the exciting factor. There are four types of fibers, each type concerned with a different sort of pattern. Each type is uniformly distributed over the whole retina of the frog. Thus, there are four distinct parallel distributed channels whereby the frog's eye informs his brain about the visual image in terms of local pattern independent of average illumination. We describe the patterns and show the functional and anatomical separation of the channels. This work has been done on the frog, and our interpretation applies only to the frog.**



INTRODUCTION

Behavior of a Frog

A FROG hunts on land by vision. He escapes enemies mainly by seeing them. His eyes do not move, as do ours, to follow prey, attend suspicious events, or search for things of interest. If his body changes its position with respect to gravity or the whole visual world is rotated about him, then he shows compensatory eye movements. These movements enter his hunting and evading habits only, *e.g.*, as he sits on a

Current Biology *16*, 1428–1434, July 25, 2006 ©2006 Elsevier Ltd All rights reserved DOI 10.1016/j.cub.2006.05.056

Report

How *Much* the Eye Tells the Brain

Kristin Koch,[1] Judith McLean,[1] Ronen Segev,[2] Michael A. Freed,[1] Michael J. Berry II,[2] Vijay Balasubramanian,[3] and Peter Sterling[1,*]
[1] Department of Neuroscience
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104
[2] Department of Molecular Biology
Princeton University
Princeton, New Jersey 08544
[3] Department of Physics
University of Pennsylvania
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104

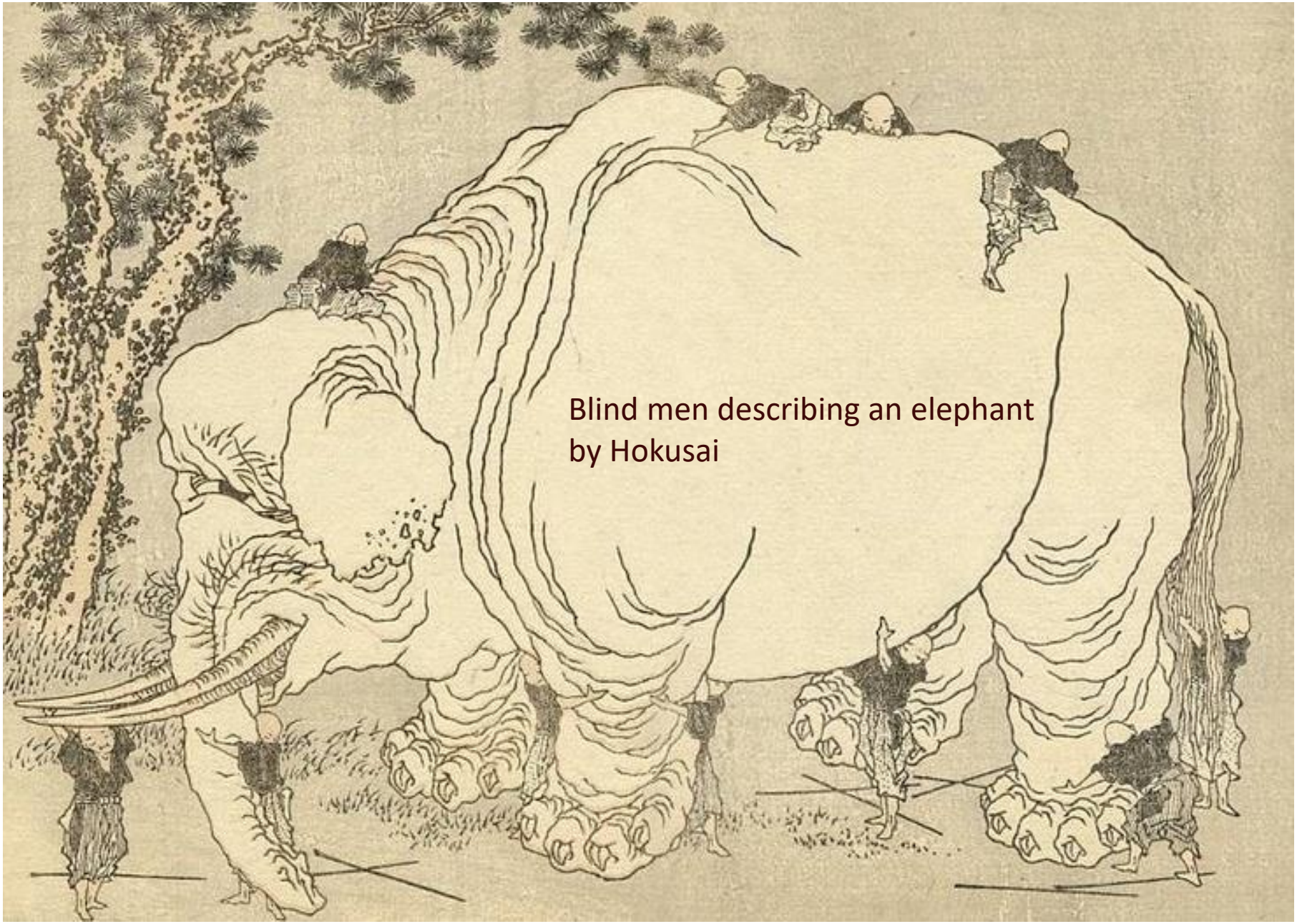
Summary

In the classic "What the frog's eye tells the frog's brain," Lettvin and colleagues [1] showed that different types of retinal ganglion cell send specific kinds of information. For example, one type responds best to a dark, convex form moving centripetally (a fly). Here we consider a complementary question: how *much* information does the retina send and how is it apportioned among different cell types? Recording

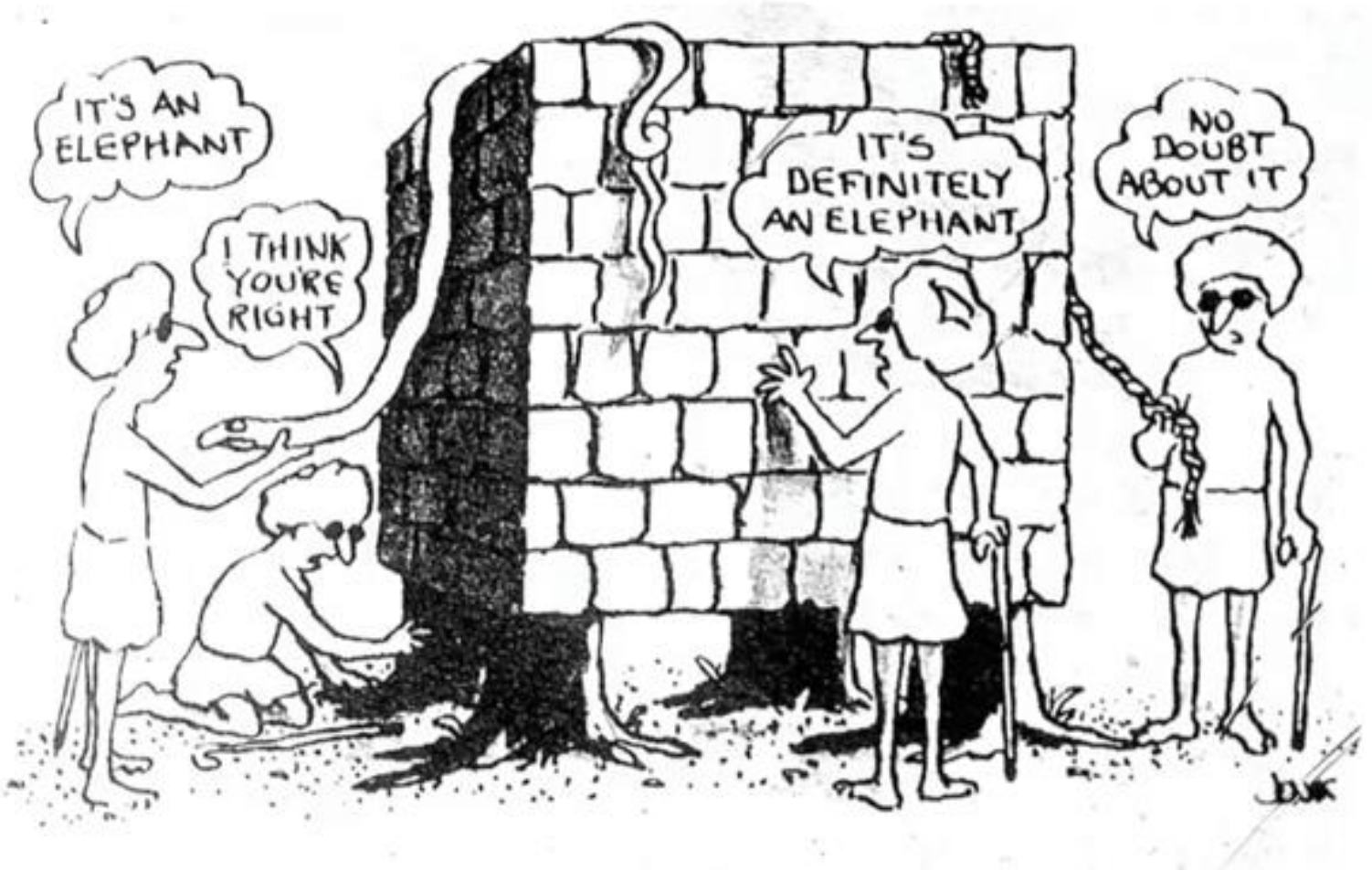
motion, and fixational eye movement. For these stimuli, the intensity distributions and the spatial and temporal spectra differed strikingly from white noise (Figure 1). Instead, like the distributions typical of natural images, they were skewed toward low intensities and low spatial and temporal frequencies.

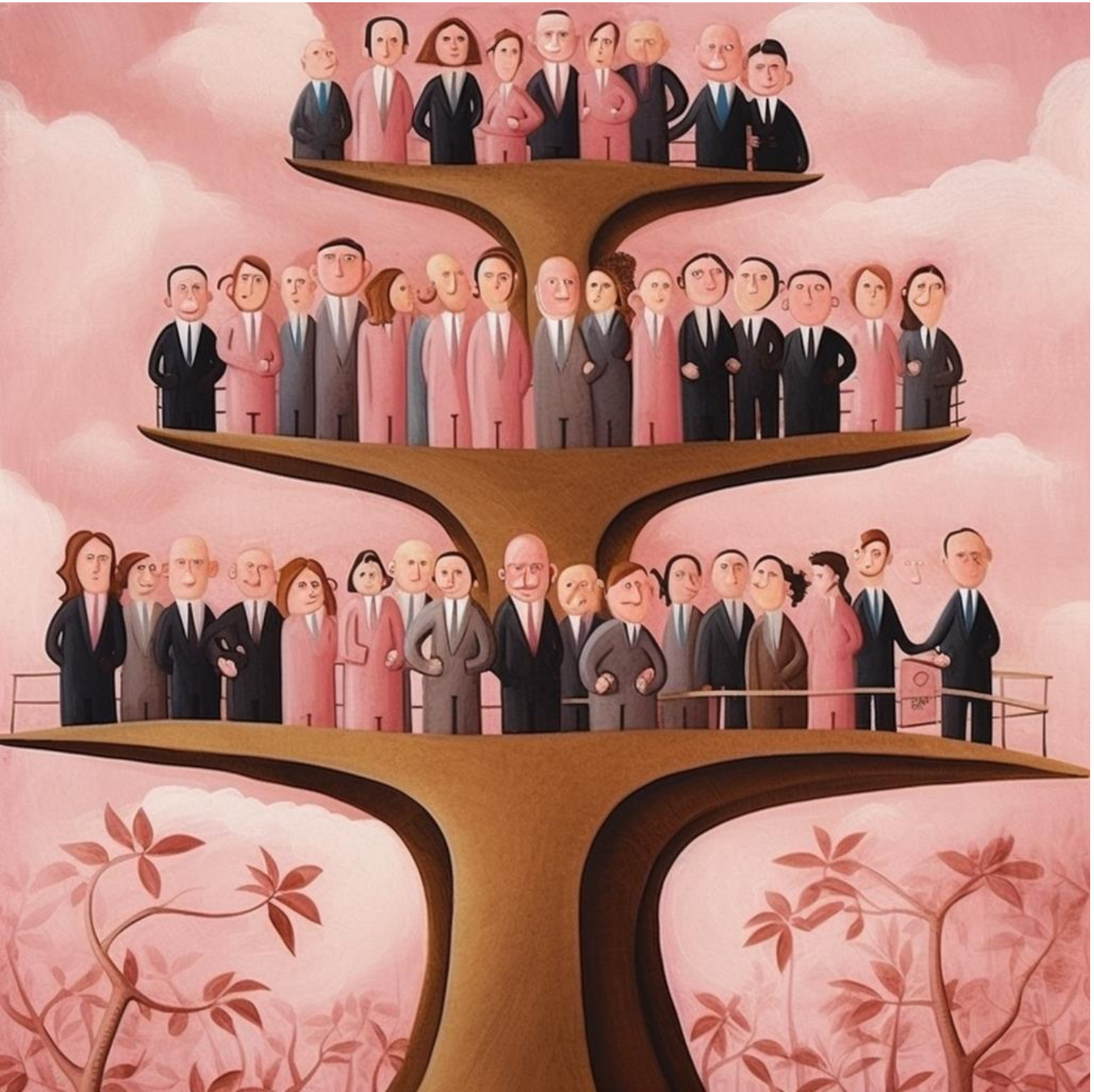
Responses Depended on Cell Type

Various cell types were recorded simultaneously on a multi-electrode array [7] or singly with a loose patch electrode [2] and identified by their characteristic reverse correlograms and autocorrelograms (see Figure S1 in the Supplemental Data available with this article online) [8–10]. Comparing responses to a given stimulus across seven cell types, we found a characteristic response pattern for each type (Figure 2). For example, in response to the saccade stimulus, brisk-transient cells (both ON and OFF) fired spike bursts that peaked high in the PSTH (>300 spikes · s^{-1}), whereas brisk-sustained cells (both ON and OFF) peaked lower (~150 spikes · s^{-1}) and fired for longer periods (Figure 2). ON-OFF direction-selective cells fired with low jitter in spike timing across trials, whereas local-edge cells fired with considerable jitter (Figure 2 saccade, standard deviation of



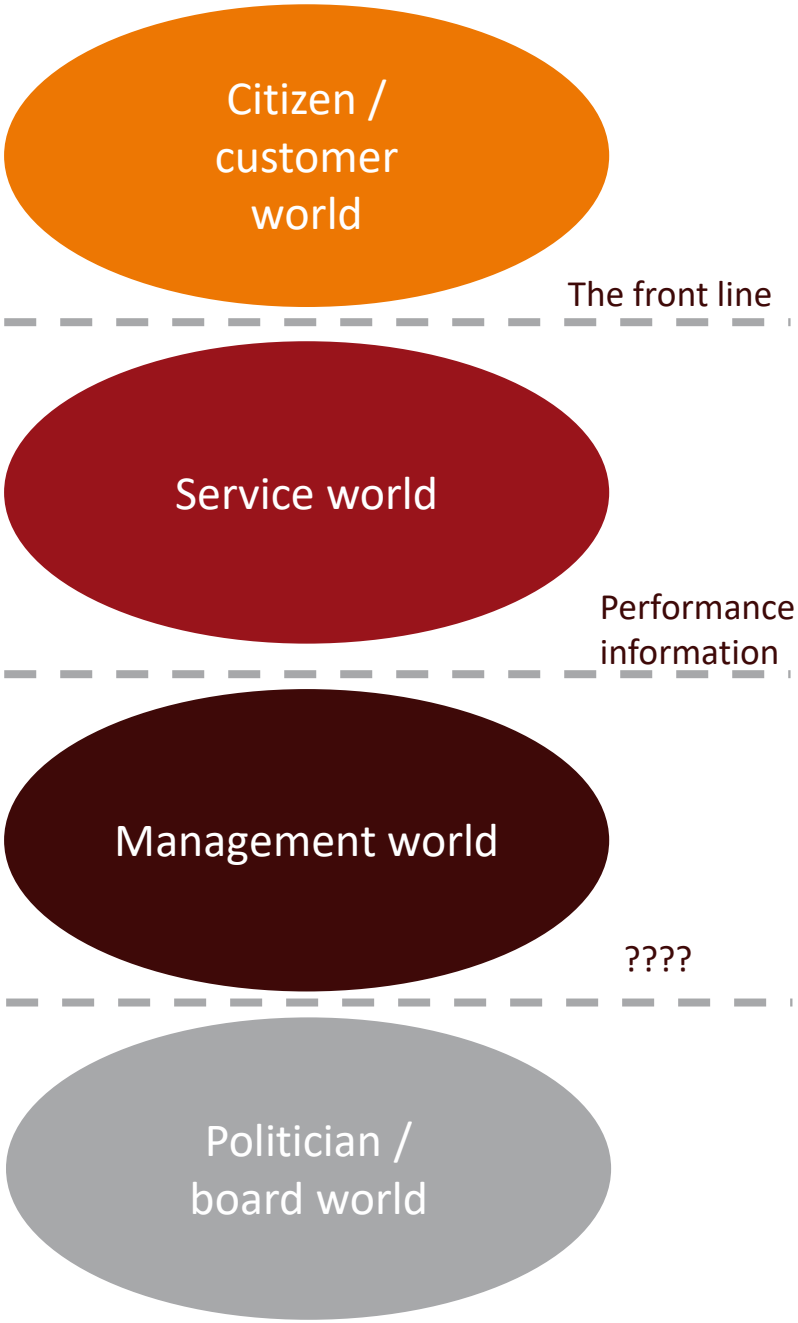
Blind men describing an elephant
by Hokusai


IT'S AN ELEPHANT
I THINK YOU'RE RIGHT
IT'S DEFINITELY AN ELEPHANT
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT



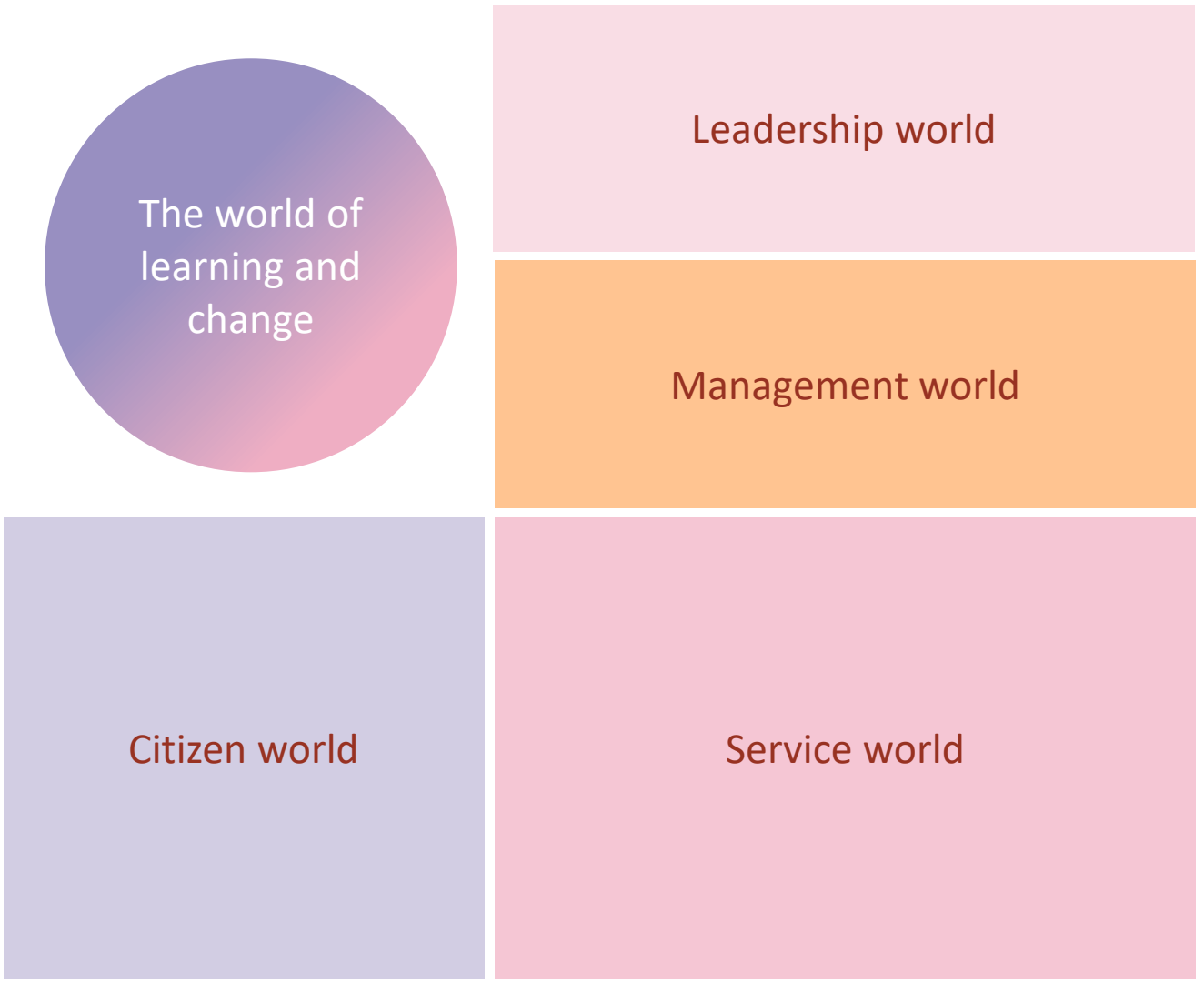
RedQuadrant

Worlds matter



RedQuadrant

Five worlds



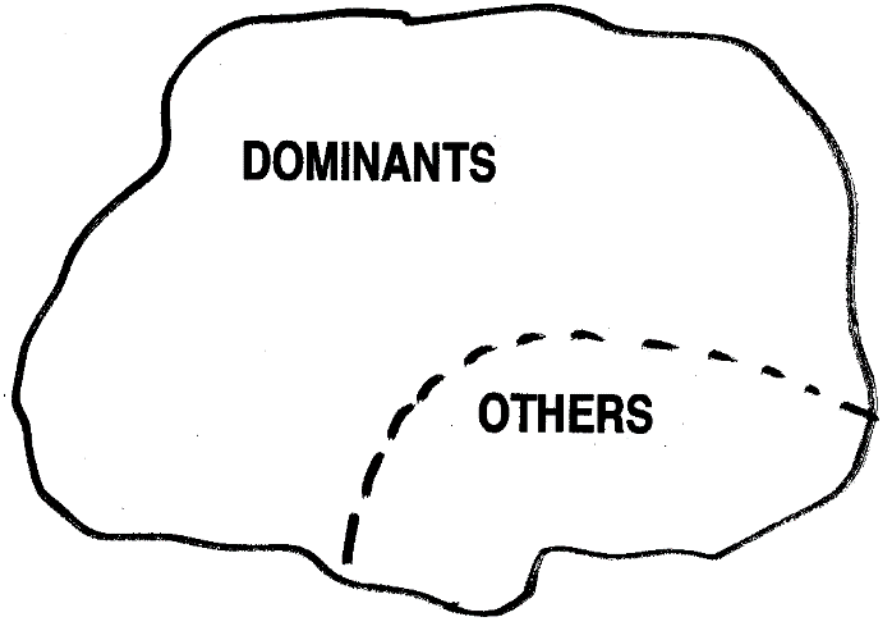
RedQuadrant



Deep theory three

ENCOUNTERS WITH THE OTHER AND ROBUST SYSTEMS

The dominants and the others



The predictable condition – the predictable response – the familiar disempowering experience… arguably even worse consequences

RedQuadrant

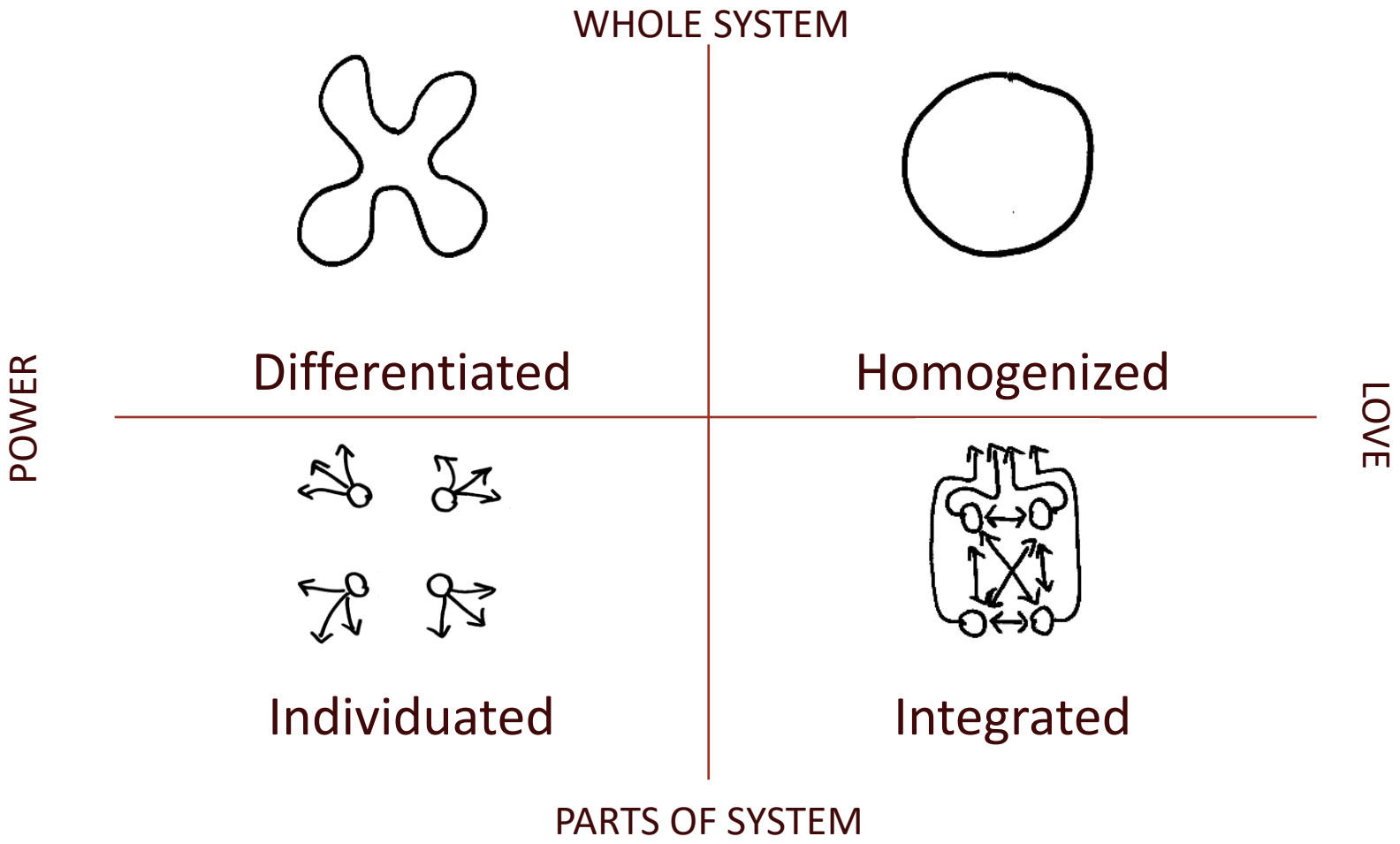
Encounters with the Other

Power + Systems

DOMINANCE SYSTEMS Tension of preserve/protect and allow/adapt. Both ultimately sterile.	• evaluated • feared • defended against • controlled
ROBUST SYSTEMS Dynamic balance of adaption, stability, autonomy, and integration	• studied • welcomed • valued • utilized

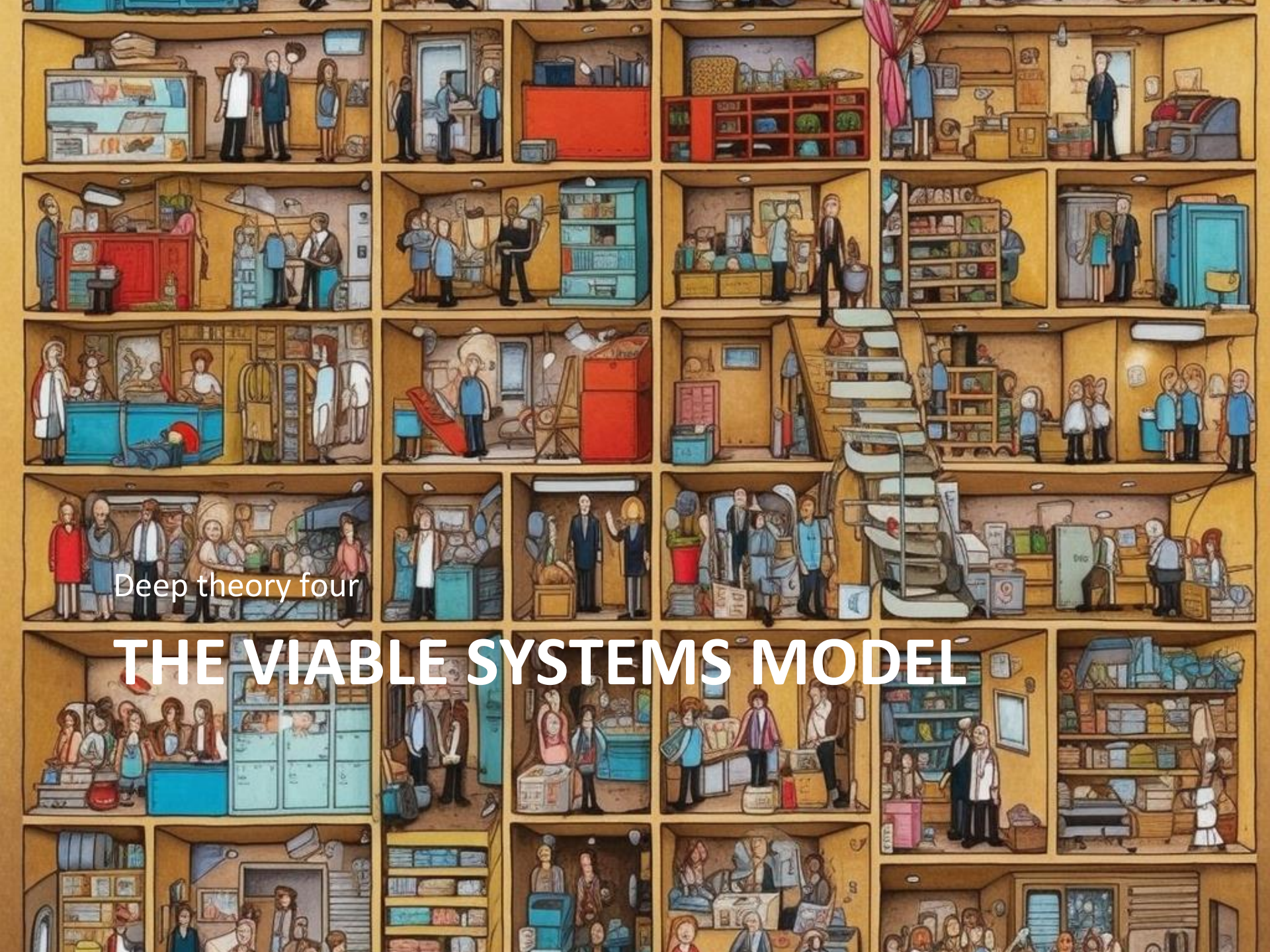
RedQuadrant

Robust systems are those that balance



Barry Oshry, Organic Systems Framework

RedQuadrant



Deep theory four

THE VIABLE SYSTEMS MODEL

Stafford Beer's Viable Systems Model

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATION. Organizational effectiveness is a function of the balance maintained along two dimensions:

1. Autonomy of organizational units versus integration of the business as a whole.
2. Stability of operations versus adaptation to changing conditions.

NOTES

Too much autonomy of organizational units results in lack of overall purpose, loss of cohesion and synergy, loss of identity, and typically generates a demand for 'centralization'.

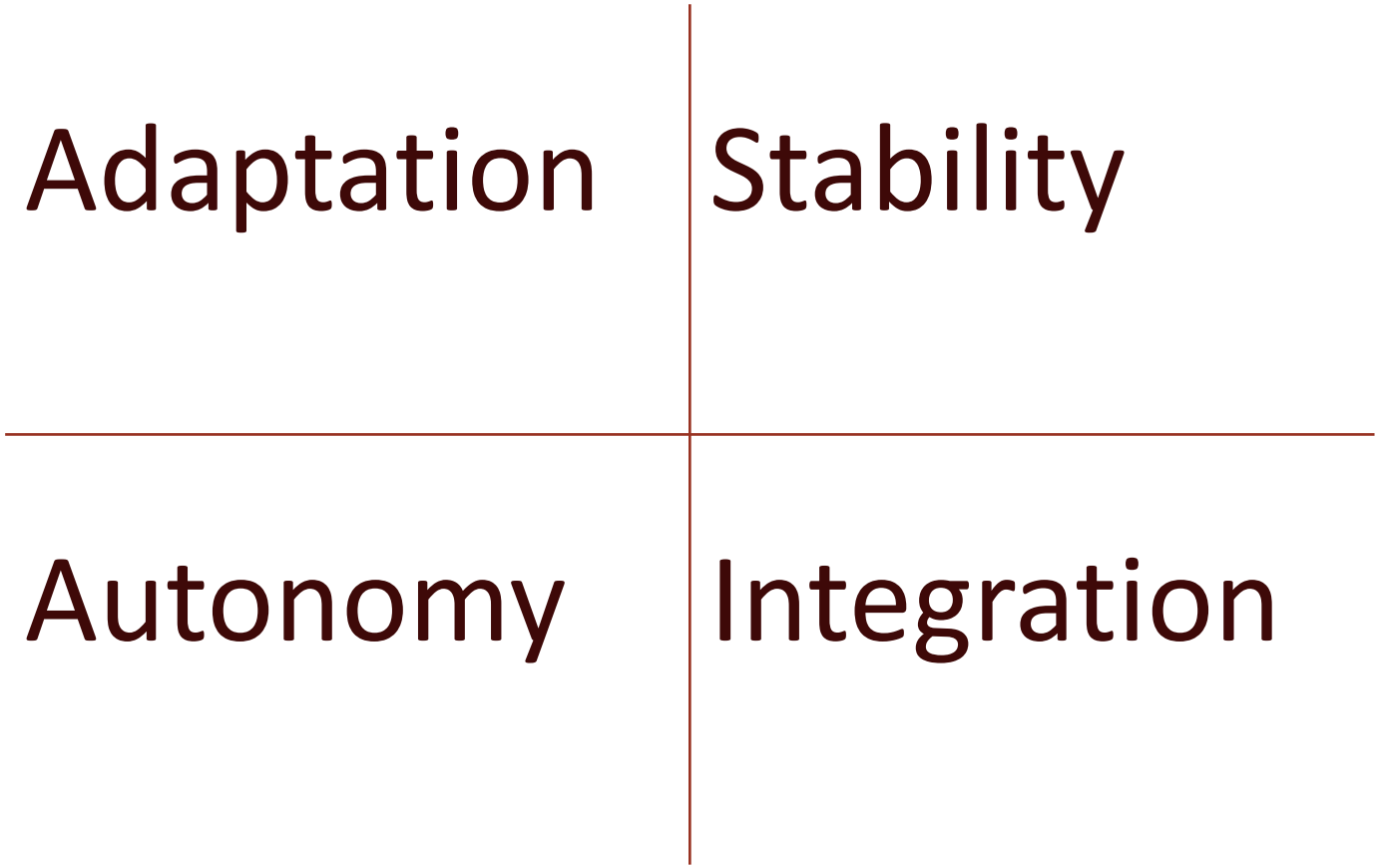
Too much integration results in loss of flexibility and initiative by the units, much red tape, loss of morale in the units, and typically generates a demand for 'decentralization'.

Too much stability results in an organization that is increasingly obsolete.

Too rapid a pace of adaptation results in chaos and massive inefficiency.

Cybernetics: A New Management Tool – Barry Clemson, 1984

Viable systems are those that balance



Stafford Beer, management cybernetics / the viable systems model

RedQuadrant



Deep theory five

POWER AND LOVE IN PARTS AND IN WHOLES

Cadenced culture dynamics

Segment



Divide people into groups based on skills, interests, background to develop diverse specialised capabilities.

Blend



Come together to break bread. Share knowledge, learning and experiences. Understand commonalities and overlaps.

Empower

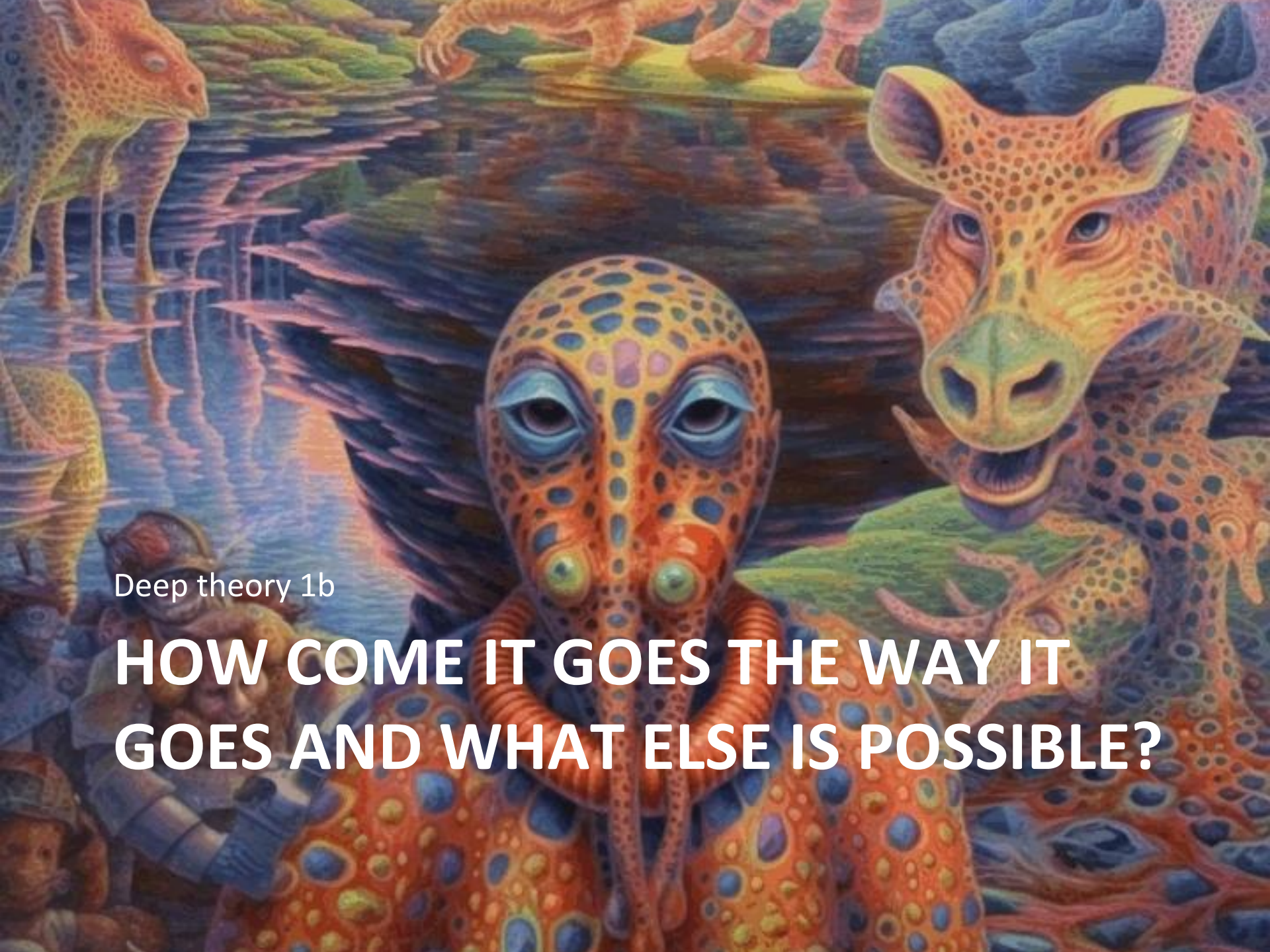


Empower each person to use their unique skills and perspectives and develop their unique talents and abilities.

Harmonise



Bring everyone together to work towards a common goal, unifying and aligning efforts around a shared mission and purpose.

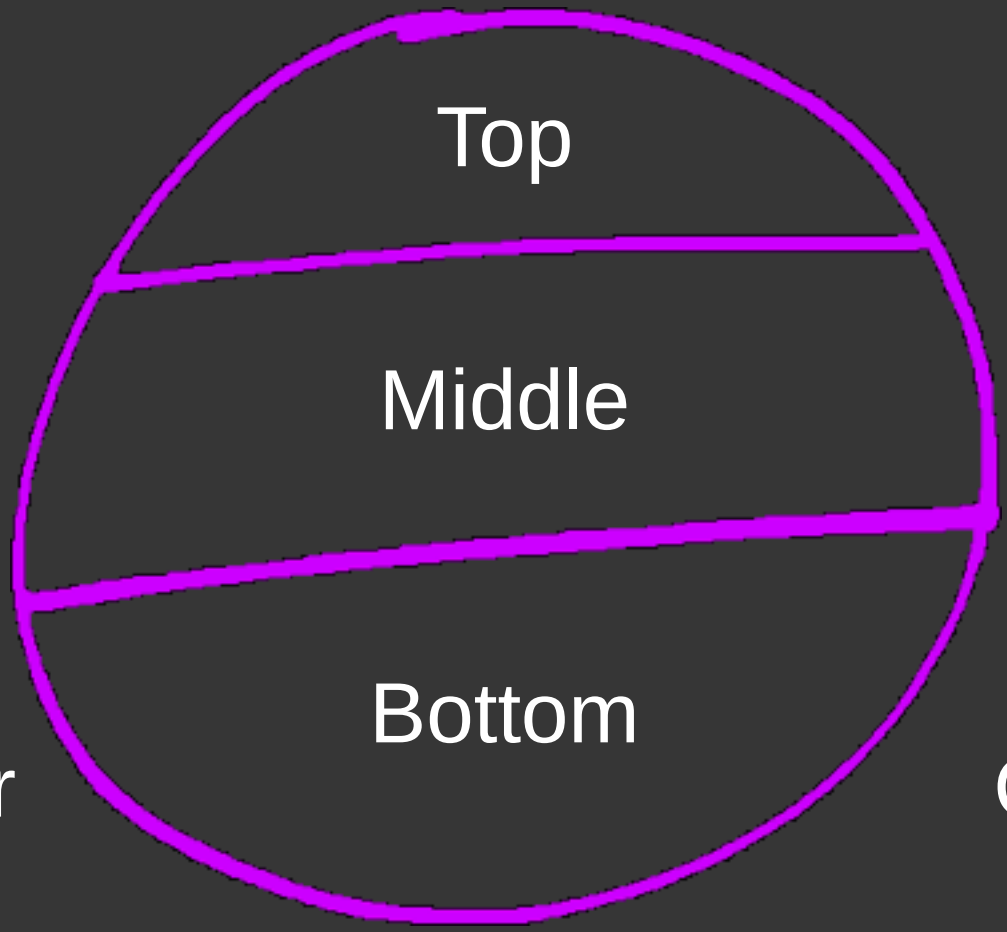


Deep theory 1b

HOW COME IT GOES THE WAY IT GOES AND WHAT ELSE IS POSSIBLE?

Customer

Customer



Customer

Customer

RedQuadrant

Power Systems

Tops... live in a world of complexity and accountability.

How will inputs likely be received in top world?
As more complication.
And how are we likely to react?
By falling out of partnership

Bottom world is a world of vulnerability.

How will inputs likely be received in bottom world?
As more 'being done to'.
And how are we likely to react?
By falling out of partnership

Middles live in a world where they are torn between top and bottom.

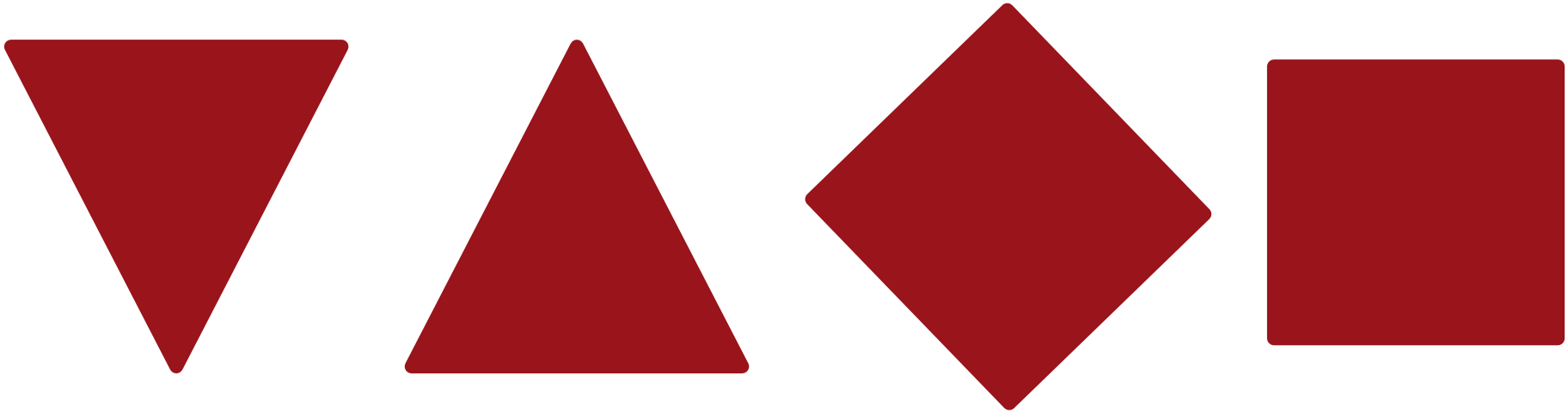
How will inputs likely be received in middle world? More tearing
And how are we likely to react?
By falling out of partnership

Customers live in a world of neglect.

How will inputs likely be received in customer world?
As an irrelevant insult.
And how are we likely to react?
By falling out of partnership

These are relational not role-based

Which pattern of top/middle/bottomness is your life usually in?



But of course roles shape patterns of interactions!

How come it goes the way it goes?

Power+Systems

Predictable condition	Predictable response	Familiar realities	Leadership stands
Top overload	Suck it up	**Burdened** by circumstances	Be a top who **creates responsibility throughout the organisation**
Bottom disregard	Hold **them** responsible	**Oppressed** by **them**	Be a bottom who takes on responsibility not only for your condition but for the whole thing
Middle crunch	**Slide** in **between** and get **torn**	**Torn** between **them** and **them**	Be a middle who **maintains your independence of thought an action**
Citizen neglect	**Stay aloof** and hold **it** responsible	**Righteously screwed** by the delivery system	**Be a citizen** who **gets in the middle** of delivery processes and **helps them work for you**
Helper ignorance and multiple expectations	To be of **immediate** value as expert of servant	**Abused** and **misused**	**Say** no **to being of immediate value.** Develop a co-learning relationship

And what else is possible?

Power+Systems logo and works ©2008-2013 Power+Systems Inc. All Rights Reserved.

RedQuadrant

Power+Systems

The space of service

Predictable Condition	Predictable Response (DOOR A)	Familiar Disempowering Experience	DOOR B
Ignorance (There is much about this system that I do not understand.) **Multiple Expectations** (There are likely to be lots of different people with lots of different agendas.)	To be of immediate value as either: **'Expert'** (I am the solution to your problems, the answer to your prayers.) Or **'Servant'** (You ask, I do.)	**Abused** and **Misused**	**Say no to being of immediate value. Develop a co-learning relationship with the Customers.** (Using your separate areas of expertise.)

Power+Systems

Is the blue dot stuck in one place?



In the dance of responsibility, look out for the old familiar patterns.
Am I feeling:

Overwhelmed? Am I being Top – taking on all the responsibility and disabling the system?	→ How can I change the responsibility dance?
Disappointed, angry, resentful at 'them'? Am I being Bottom – holding them responsible, holding myself outside the system?	→ How can I make this a project I can take on?
Unsupported? Am I an End and holding the Middle responsible for solving the problem I have with the other End?	→ How can we do it ourselves?
Can't please anyone? Maybe I'm a Middle, taking responsibility for THEIR problems?	→ How can I maintain my independence of thought and action, and help them to sort out their problems?
Unfairly judged? Am I taking responsibility for making the Customer happy?	→ How can I involve them more in their delivery process?
Neglected and done to? Righteously screwed? Have I abandoned all personal responsibility for getting the service I want?	→ How can I get more involved in helping the system give me what I need?

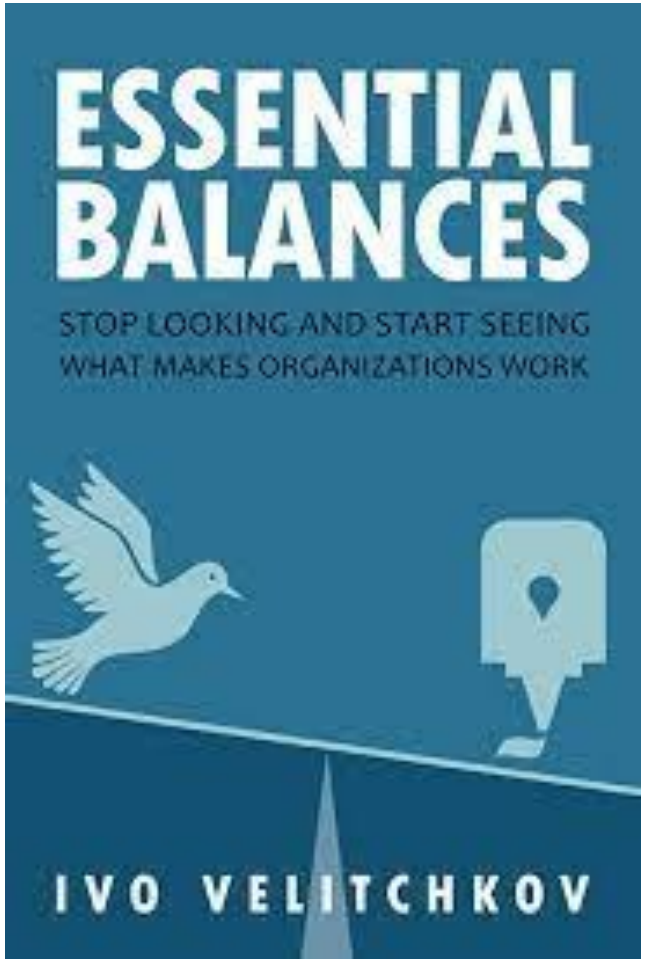
©2017 RedQuadrant benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com 079 3131 7230
Power+Systems logo and works ©2008-2017 Power+Systems Inc. All Rights Reserved.



Deep theory annex

AFFINITIES AND DIFFERENCES

Essential Balances

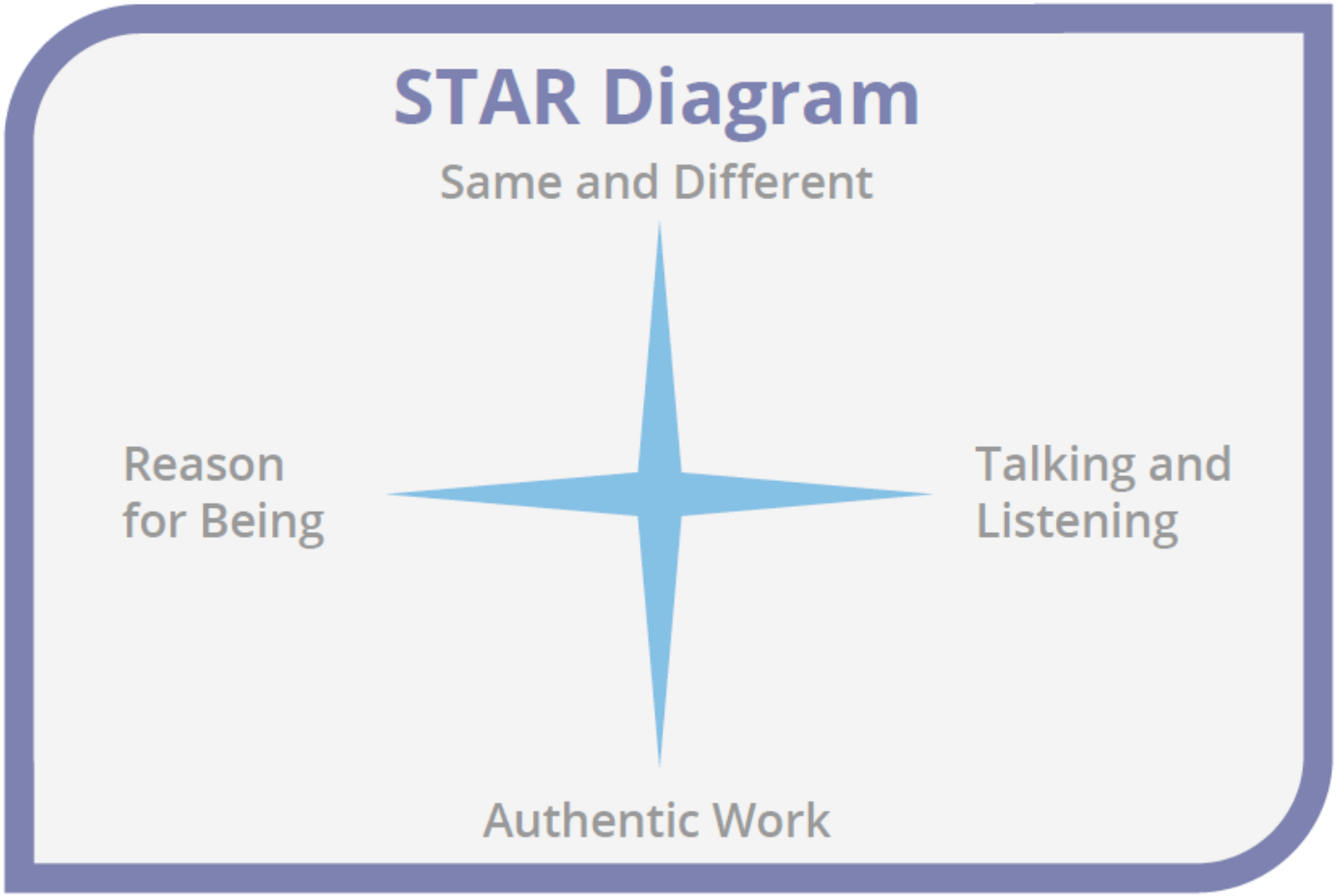




www.essentialbalances.com

RedQuadrant

Brenda Zimmerman's STAR model

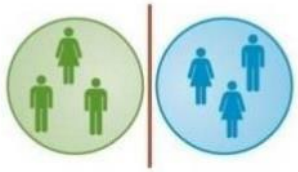


As developed in Liberating Structures liberatingstructures.com/26-generative-relationships-st/

RedQuadrant

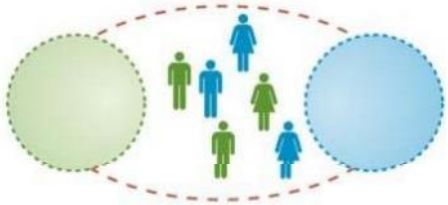
Help the system to become high-performing

Grouping for specialisation



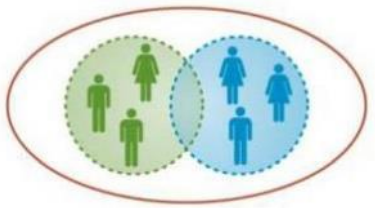
Strengthen boundaries
for safety and security

Blending of groups



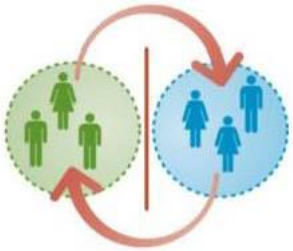
Suspend boundaries
for confidence and trust

Unification (and remixing…)

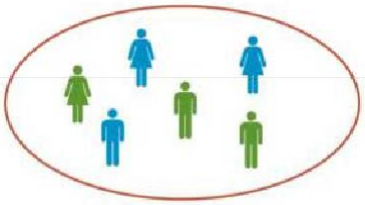


Cross-over boundaries
for interdependence and
collective learning

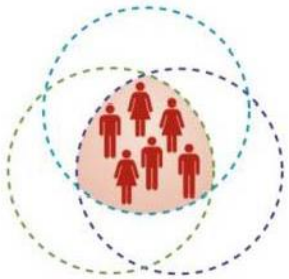
Personal empowerment throughout



Understand boundaries
for awareness and respect



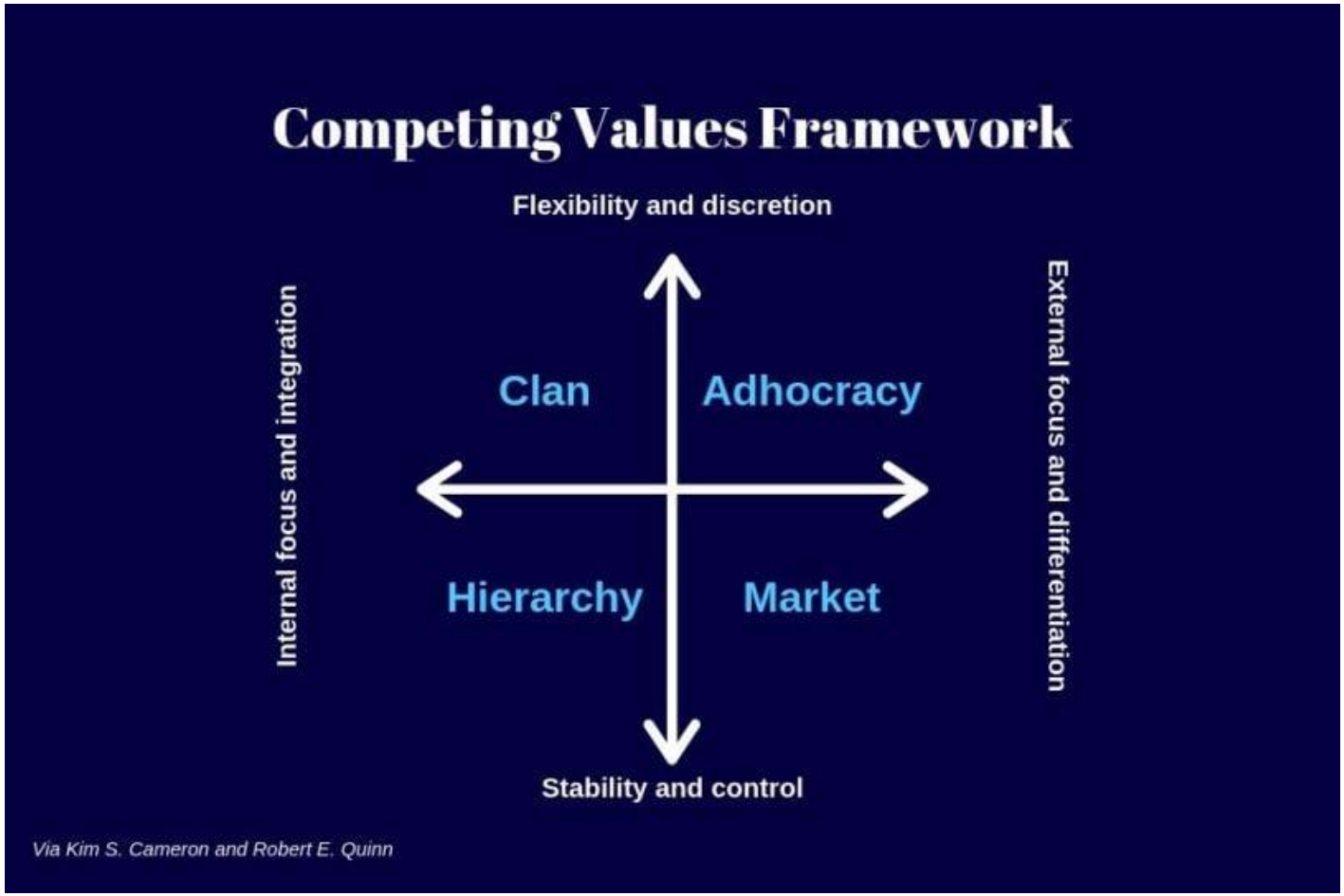
Reframe boundaries
for shared ownership
and accountability



Change boundaries
to reinvent or find
alternative futures

From the Centre for Creative Leadership

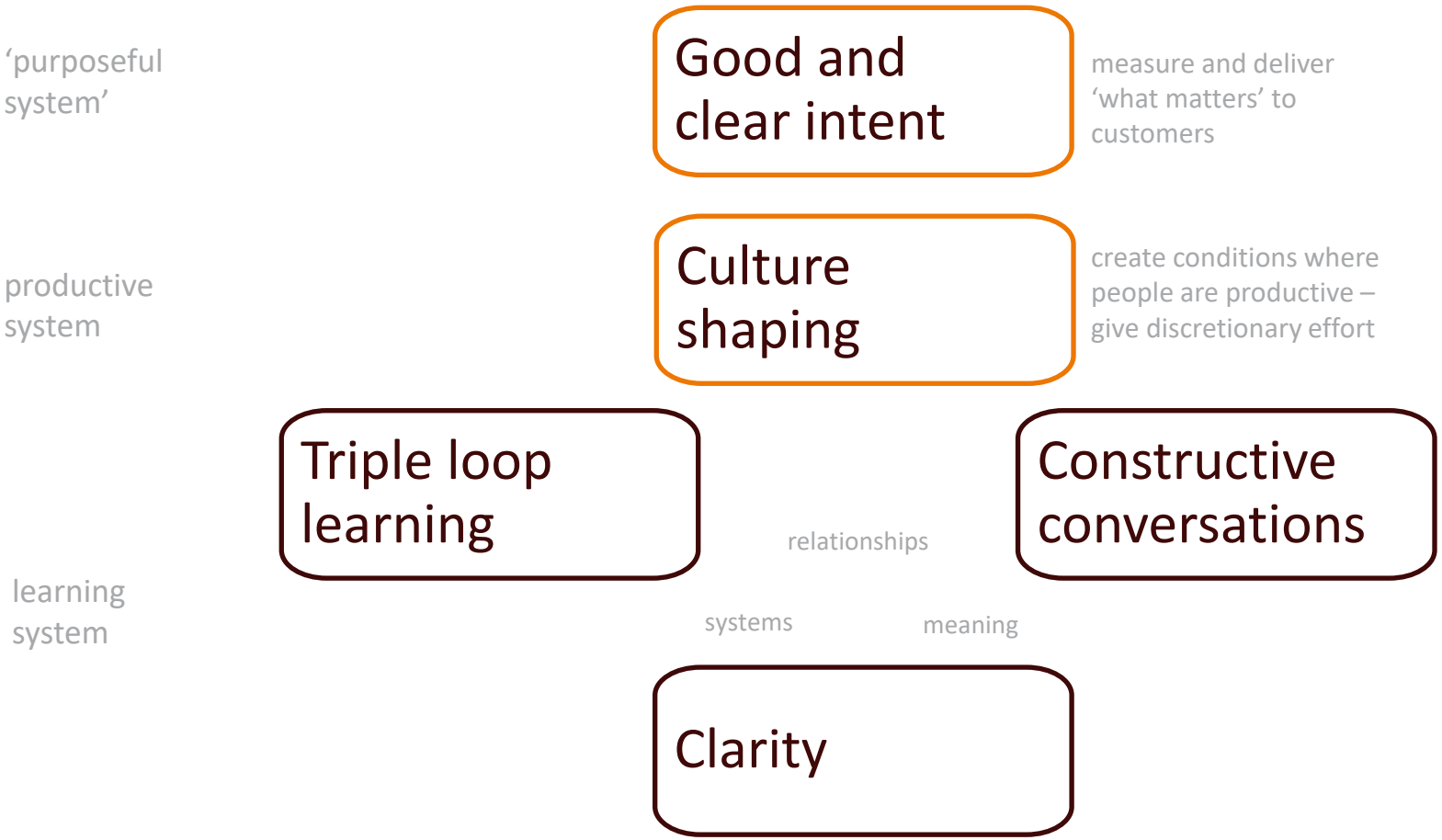
It’s not this – a more definitive, fixed model



Definitely some alignment but this isn’t about being in a box!

RedQuadrant

Core management and leadership practices



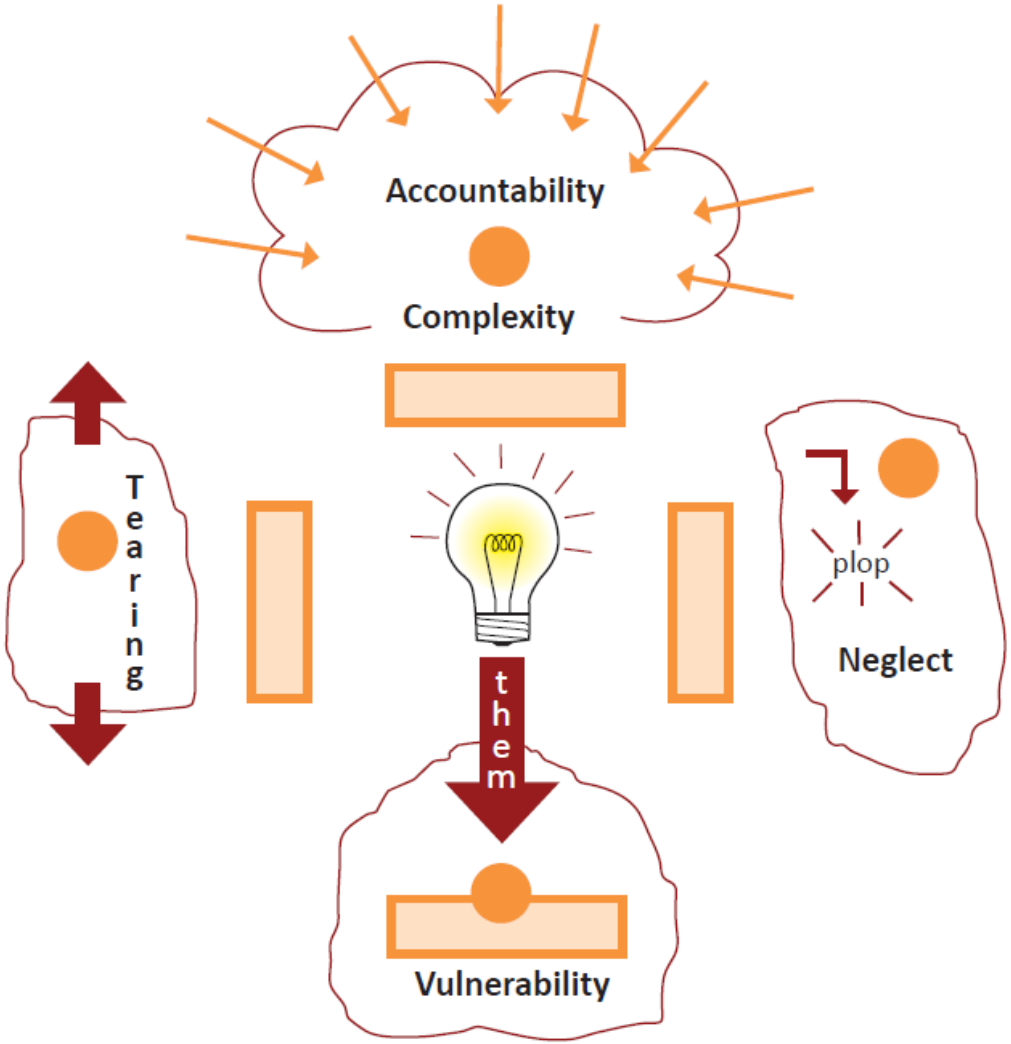
Address danger / confusion / conflict / deficit / development as they arise

RedQuadrant



Annex - tools

EASY REFERENCE / EMPOWERING STRATEGIES



In the **Top** world your great idea may show up as **more complications** or as a **complaint**.

In the **Bottom** world your great idea may show up as **'Them' trying to do it to us again.**

In the **Middle** world your 'simple' and 'reasonable' request may show up as **more tearing** between you and others.

In the **Customer** world your intentions to please may show up as **more neglect**.

‘Stuff’ happens

The side show	The centre ring
● Make up a story about it ● Evaluate others: malicious/ insensitive/ incompetent ● Take it personally ● React – get mad/ get even/ withdraw ● Focus on the ‘stuff’	● Have understanding/empathy for others ● Stay focused on what you want to have happen ● Don’t get hooked on ‘stuff’ ● Be strategic – take their worlds into account ● Ease their condition

Top leadership strategies

Informing

- Share high quality information
- Provide feedback

Developing

- Invest in training and development
- Invest in relationships

Involving

- Involve others in the BIG issues
- Make others Top; you coach
- Ask for help

Structuring

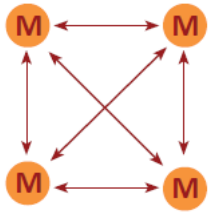
- Create and use teams
- Create enrolling visions
- Reduce the differences between Tops and Bottoms
- Support Middle integration

Customer strategies

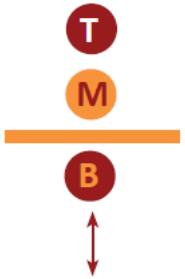
- Contract with the supplier to build a relationship / partnership
- Know how it works
- Set clear demands and standards
- Get into the process early as a partner, not late as a judge
- Stay close to the producer

Be a middle who maintains your independence of thought and action

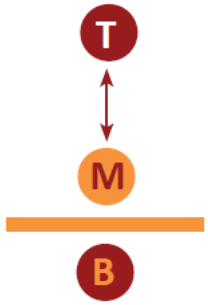
1. Integrate with your peers



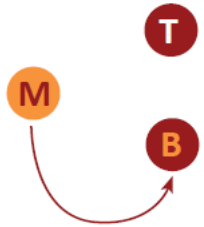
2. Be Top when you can



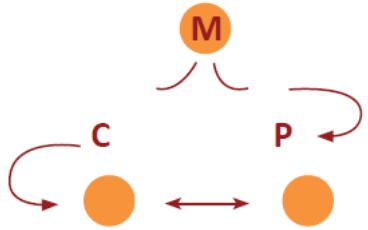
3. Be Bottom when you should



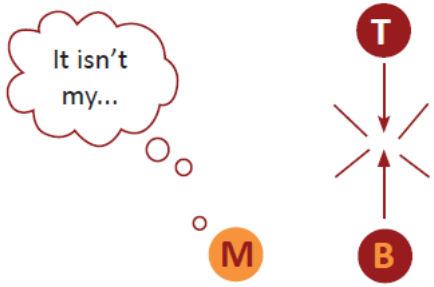
4. Be Coach



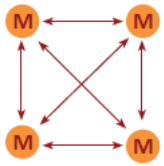
5. Be Facilitator



6. When they're fighting, remember:



Integration



- Share information
- Work the information
- Coordinate
- Problem solve
- Support one another
- Look for new possibilities/synergies

We say that the reason we don't integrate is how we feel about one another, and that if we felt differently about one another, then we would integrate; the truth is: it's just the other way around.

We feel the way we feel about one another because we don't integrate; and if we did integrate we would feel very differently.

To get integration going

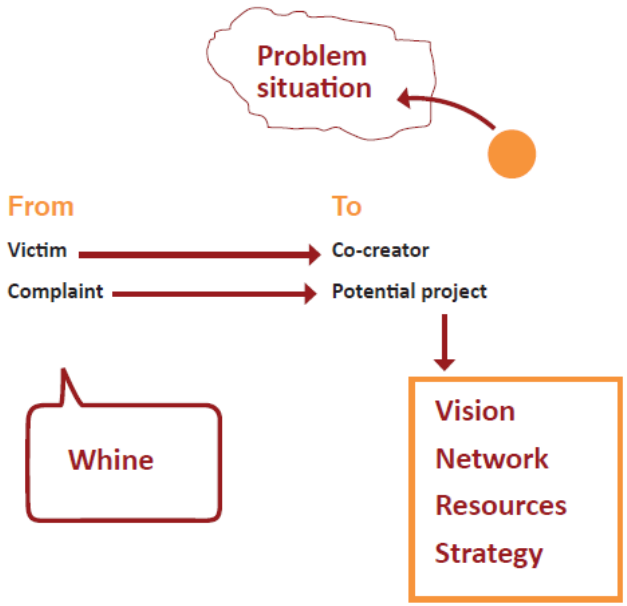
- Give it a try
- Share intelligence about the system
- Bring an issue
- Rotate responsibility
- Bring lunch

Tips for successful middle integration

- Create a powerful and compelling mission
- Make meetings sacred commitments
- Meet without Tops
- Keep Tops informed
- Coach and support one another
- Hold each other accountable for action
- Rotate leadership
- Work with tough issues

Bottom empowerment shift

Note: This is not about 'Bottoms';
this is about us and our bottomness in whatever positions we are in.





Annex

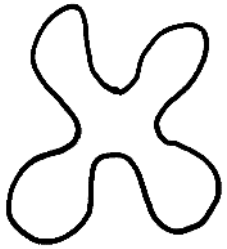
MY ORIGINAL MODEL

Four things you need to do to create a robust system

POWER

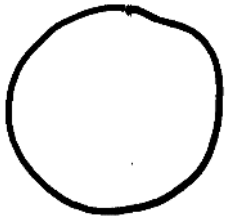
LOVE

Differentiate: increase ability to adapt



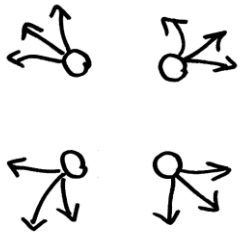
Use the different strengths and capabilities of the different cultures and organisations.

Homogenise: increase stability



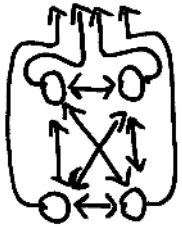
Actively learn about all the cultures and organisation.
Share knowledge, best practices.
Incorporate aspects of one another's cultures and practices.

Individuate: increase autonomy



Put your unique talents on the line.
Identify and encourage the full use of the talents of all.

Integrate the system as a whole



Create a compelling system mission.
Feed and support one another.
Modulate behavior in the service of the whole.

Barry Oshry (Organic Systems) and Stafford Beer (Viable Systems)

RedQuadrant



Annex

DIFFERENTIATION AND INTEGRATION

Differentiation and integration

- A facilitation superpower is to sense and manage the flows from differentiation to integration and back again, and again
- Critical aspects:
  - When there is too much integration, differentiate
    - Look for and reinforce dissenting, different, divergent voices
    - Consider different aspects of the issue
  - When there is too much differentiation, integrate
    - Build blended groups and let them find their own integration
    - Look for commonalities and shared points – the deeper the better
  - When you're not sure where to go next, review the above

This is an interpersonal, group process and a transpersonal process

Two faces of differentiation and integration

	☺	☹
Differentiation	to distinguish and classify (i.e. to group similar things together)	to isolate, ostracise and segregate
Integration	to make one or harmonize	to centralise or orchestrate

- Differentiate without excluding
- Integrate goals without forcing unity

Tricky task = holding on to your differences and integrating towards a result bigger than either!

Accept differences and integrate capabilities for the good of all.

Some useful tools for differentiation

- Who sees what we are doing so far and has a completely different notion? Would you share it?
- Who has an idea that you haven't shared yet because it seems too different from the ones we are already considering? Would you share it?
- What about ideas that are different from these we are considering? Does anyone have something you think would work, even though it doesn't fit with these others?
- What do you see about ways to build something new out of these different approaches?
- How can these ideas (parts, plans, notions, visions) fit together to make something new?

Weisbord and Janoff

RedQuadrant

Cadenced culture:
the key to high-performing teams based on trust

Rituals and practices that help teams to stay focused, productive, and aligned



Benjamin Taylor
antlerboy.com

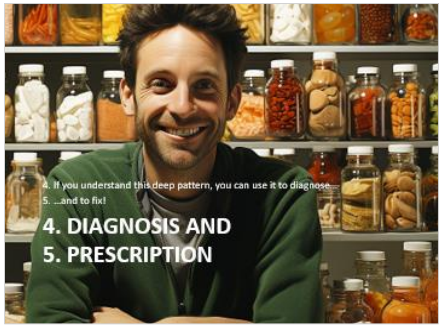
StretchCon at
Compass Tech Summit

©RedQuadrant 2021
Benjamin Taylor
+4470 3131 7230
benjamin.taylor@redquadrant.com
















What I said (probably)

1. It's all about the people
2. There's a deep underlying pattern for success
   - Segment
   - Bond
   - Empower
   - Harmonise
3. That pattern brings human and organisational needs together

4. If you understand that deep pattern, you can use it to diagnose...
5. ...and to fix!
6. Using the right application of rituals and practices

I bet there wasn't time for case studies and deep theory...

RedQuadrant

