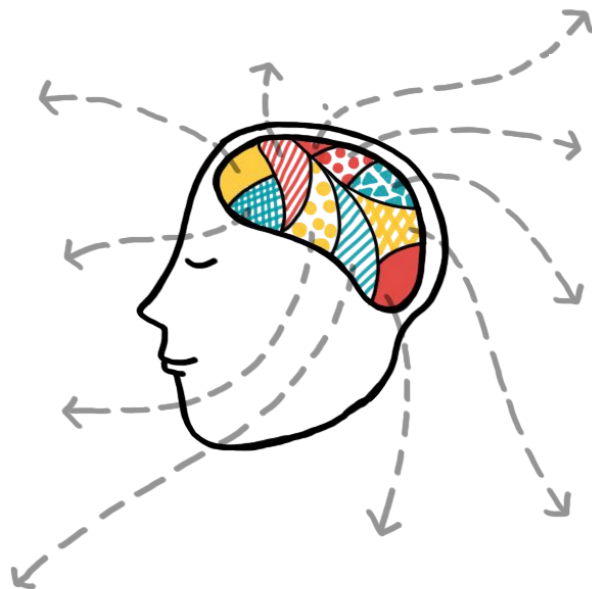




IS AN ORGANISATION'S CULTURE A
PRODUCT OF THE STRUCTURE?



**SYSTEMS
THINKING**





WHAT IS A SYSTEM?

A MARRIAGE

A FOOTBALL TEAM

A BOWL OF FRUIT

Are all systems, but why?

"IN THE MOST BASIC SENSE, A SYSTEM IS ANY GROUP OF INTERACTING, INTERRELATED, OR INTERDEPENDENT PARTS THAT FORM A COMPLEX OR UNIFIED WHOLE THAT HAS A SPECIFIC PURPOSE"

Daniel Kim
thesystemsthinker.com



THE PURPOSE / GOAL SHOULD BE A THING
WHICH A SYSTEM CAN BE DESIGNED TO
DEFINITELY AND DIRECTLY ACHIEVE





(NOT WISHES LIKE
INCREASED MARKET
SHARE OR
CONSTRAINTS LIKE
REDUCED COST)

WHY DO WE CARE?



LESS SYSTEM GOALS

Company level optimisation
for the following...



TO WORK ON CONTINUALLY
NEWLY-DISCOVERED HIGHEST VALUE ITEMS

A low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a tall wooden tower structure. The tower has a spiral slide that winds down its side. The structure is made of light-colored wood and is surrounded by tall evergreen trees. The sky is blue with some white clouds. The text is overlaid on the top half of the image.

'TURN ON A DIME FOR A
DIME'

Agility driven by learning



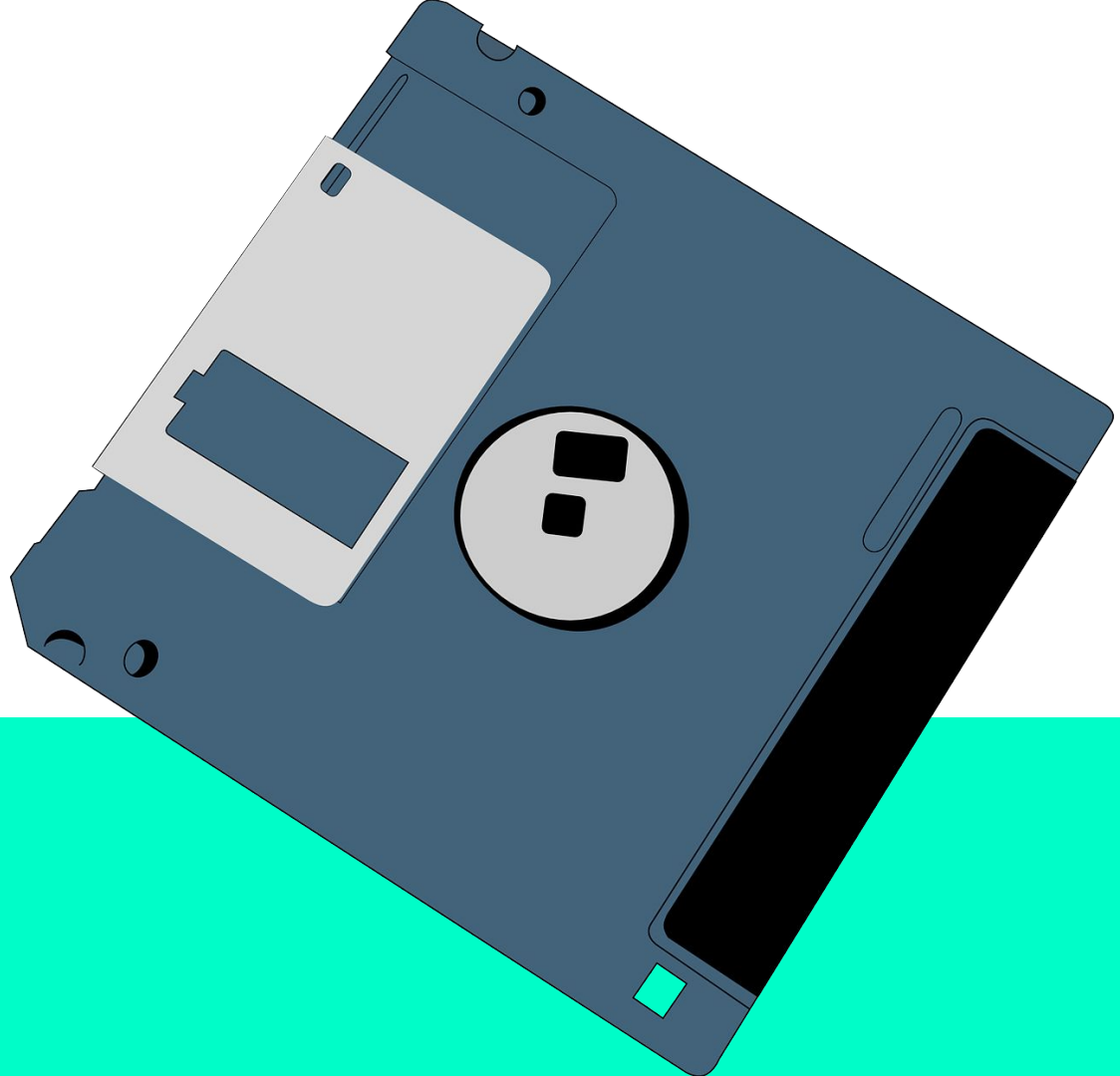
"ESSENTIALLY ALL
MODELS ARE
WRONG...
BUT SOME ARE
USEFUL"

WE SHOULD MODEL TO HAVE A CONVERSATION,
EXPOSE OUR MENTAL MODELS, TEST ASSUMPTIONS,
GENERATE NEW INSIGHTS AND CREATE A...

SHARED UNDERSTANDING



Our working
memory is
limited,
modelling helps
us work around
this



PAIR UP (OR THREES IF NECESSARY)

No of Unit tests
written

What would go up?

Systems Modelling (Causal
Loop Diagrams)

In your pair create at least
1 variables for a thing that
would go up if the “**No of
Unit tests written**” were to
go up.

PROBABLY...

DEFINITELY...

No of Unit tests
written

What would go up?

Is the link correct by
definition?

I.e. Story points done in a
Sprint **increases**, Velocity
increases
OR

The link is showing
something that is probable,
potentially correlated.
I.e. not true by definition
“It would probably go up”

Systems

Modelling

(Causal Loop
Diagrams)

If each were
to increase,
what would
happen?

No of Unit tests
written

What would go up?

No of direct
instructions given
to team by
manager

What would go down?

Systems
Modelling
(Causal Loop
Diagrams)

If each were
to increase,
what would
happen?

No of Unit tests
written

What would go up?

No of direct
instructions given
to team by
manager

What would go down?

No of new teams
created

What would take time to see.

Systems
Modelling
(Causal Loop
Diagrams)

If each were
to increase,
what would
happen?

No of Unit tests
written

What would go up?

No of direct
instructions given
to team by
manager

What would go down?

No of new teams
created

What would take time to see.

Number of
corporate value
statements on walls

What would go down and take
time to see?

Systems
Modelling
(Causal Loop
Diagrams)

If each were
to increase,
what would
happen?

No of Unit tests
written

Probably

% of unit test code
coverage

Direct
Causation

No of direct
instructions given
to team by
manager

0
Definitely

Team empowerment
and autonomy

Inverse
Causation

No of new teams
created

||

Level of
psychological
safety within teams

Delayed
Causation

Number of
corporate value
statements on walls

0 ||

Level at which
employees live by
them

Inverse
Delayed
Causation

Systems
Modelling
(Causal Loop
Diagrams)

Notation

Time to stretch



LARMANS LAW NO 5

5. CULTURE FOLLOWS STRUCTURE.
OR, CULTURE/BEHAVIOR/MINDSET FOLLOWS SYSTEM &
ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGN.

i.e. If you want to really change culture, you have to start with changing structure, because culture does not really change otherwise.



Structure

How the parts are arranged



CULTURE

‘How we do things around here’

CULTURE COMES LAST

The image features a large, irregular cluster of colorful gears of various sizes. The gears are in shades of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, pink, and purple. They are set against a solid black background. The entire graphic is framed by a bright cyan border on the right side. Overlaid on the right side of the gear cluster are three white rectangular boxes containing text.

Exercise

What is the link
between culture and
structure in your
organisation?

Agree between
yourselves whose
organisation to
model

YOUR ORGANISATIONAL GOAL

AN ENGAGED WORKFORCE WHERE CONTINUOUS
IMPROVEMENT IS THE STATUS QUO



COLOUR CODING OR VARIABLES

ARTIFACT/THING

PERSON/TEAM/GROUP

ACTIVITY/ACTION (AND EFFORT IN THOSE)

TIME/DURATION (IF NOT EFFORT OF ACTIVITY)

**Just to help you see what's there, don't follow it
if you do not want to**

POLICY DEFINITION

A guiding principle that helps set the direction of the
organisation

PROCESS DEFINITION

Series of steps that create adherence to a policy

VARIABLES SET ONE

(+) # ROLES

(+) # PEOPLE

(+) # PROCEDURES

(+) TOTAL SALARY BUDGET (CONSTRAINT)

(+) # POLICIES

(+) AMOUNT OF FEEDBACK FROM EMPLOYEES (OF ANY KIND AT ANY TIME)

(+) DEGREE TO WHICH PEOPLE OWN AND IMPROVE PROCESSES

(+) SPEED OF DECISION MAKING

(+) COMPLEXITY OF ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

Goal: To achieve Organisational purpose

WHAT DECREASES THE SPEED OF
DECISION MAKING?

Shout out

VARIABLES SET TWO

(+) AMOUNT EMPLOYEE'S IDENTITY, VALUES AND BELIEFS ARE ALIGNED TO ORGANISATIONAL VISION & PURPOSE

(+) AMOUNT EMPLOYEE'S BEHAVIOURS ARE ALIGNED TO ORGANISATIONAL VISION & PURPOSE

(+) NO OF PEOPLE REWARDED FOR BEHAVIOURS ALIGNED TO ORGANISATIONAL VISION & PURPOSE

(+) LEVEL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY WITHIN TEAMS

(+) LEVEL OF TRUST AT ALL LEVELS

(+) # CONVERSATIONS

(+) DEGREE THAT PEOPLE FEEL VALUED

(+) # UNWRITTEN RULES AND NORMS

(+) ORGANISATIONAL GOAL BEING ACHIEVED

****OPTIONAL**** VARIABLES SET THREE ****OPTIONAL****

(+) LEVEL OF FAITH

(+) LEVEL OF OPTIMISM

(+) LEVEL OF HOPE

(+) LEVEL OF ANXIETY

(+) LEVEL OF FEAR

(+) LEVEL AT WHICH EMPLOYEES FEEL INSPIRED

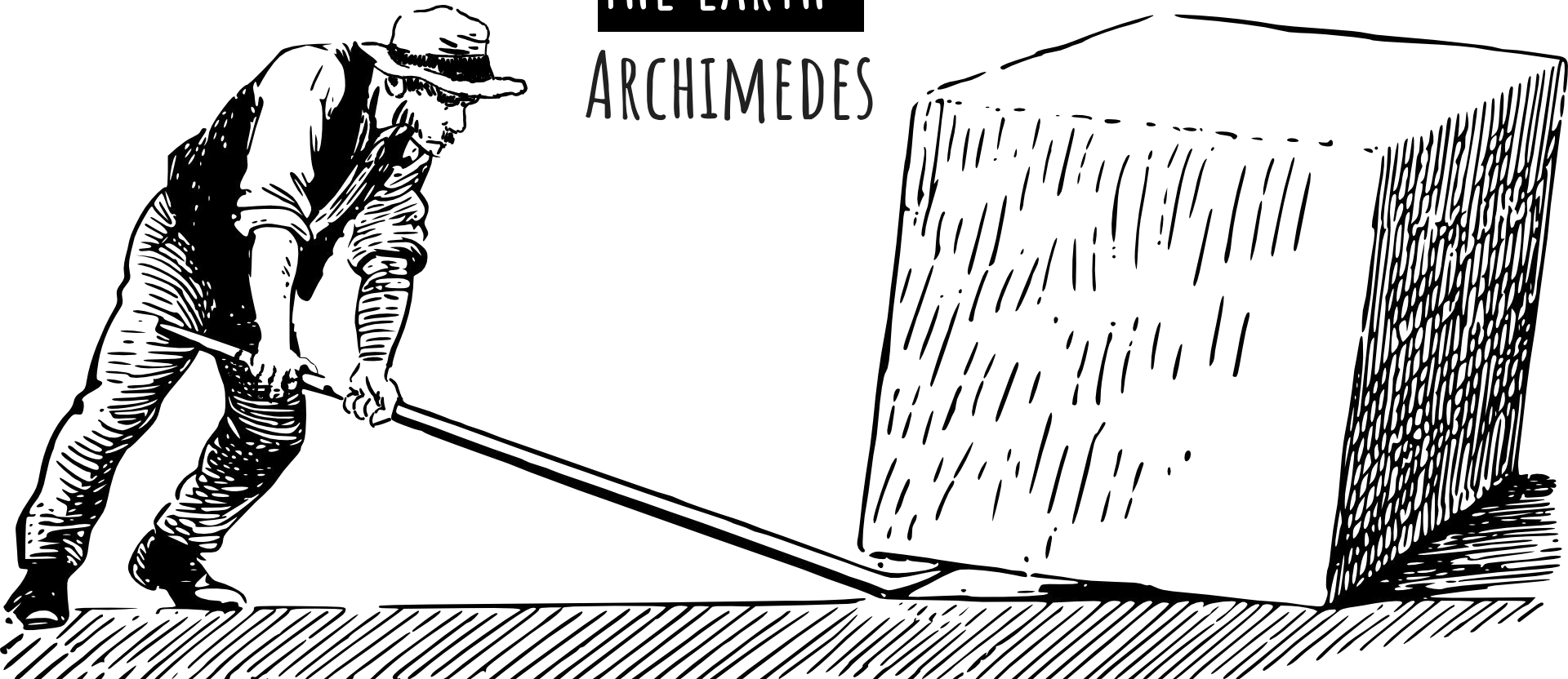
(+) LEVEL OF EXHAUSTION (CHANGE FATIGUE)

THERE ARE NO 'GOOD' OR 'BAD' ORGANISATIONAL SYSTEMS

But if the observed behaviour is not consistent with the
articulated goal, it is inconsistent

"GIVE ME A LEVER AND A PLACE TO STAND AND I WILL MOVE

THE EARTH"
ARCHIMEDES



GOAL

“WE WANT TO BE AGILE”



What are driving variables we should experiment with effecting?

Which variables are equal to or **strongly** related to the goal.

Table conversation,

3 minutes.

LESS



HEAD OF PRODUCT GROUP



TEAM #1



TEAM #2



TEAM #N



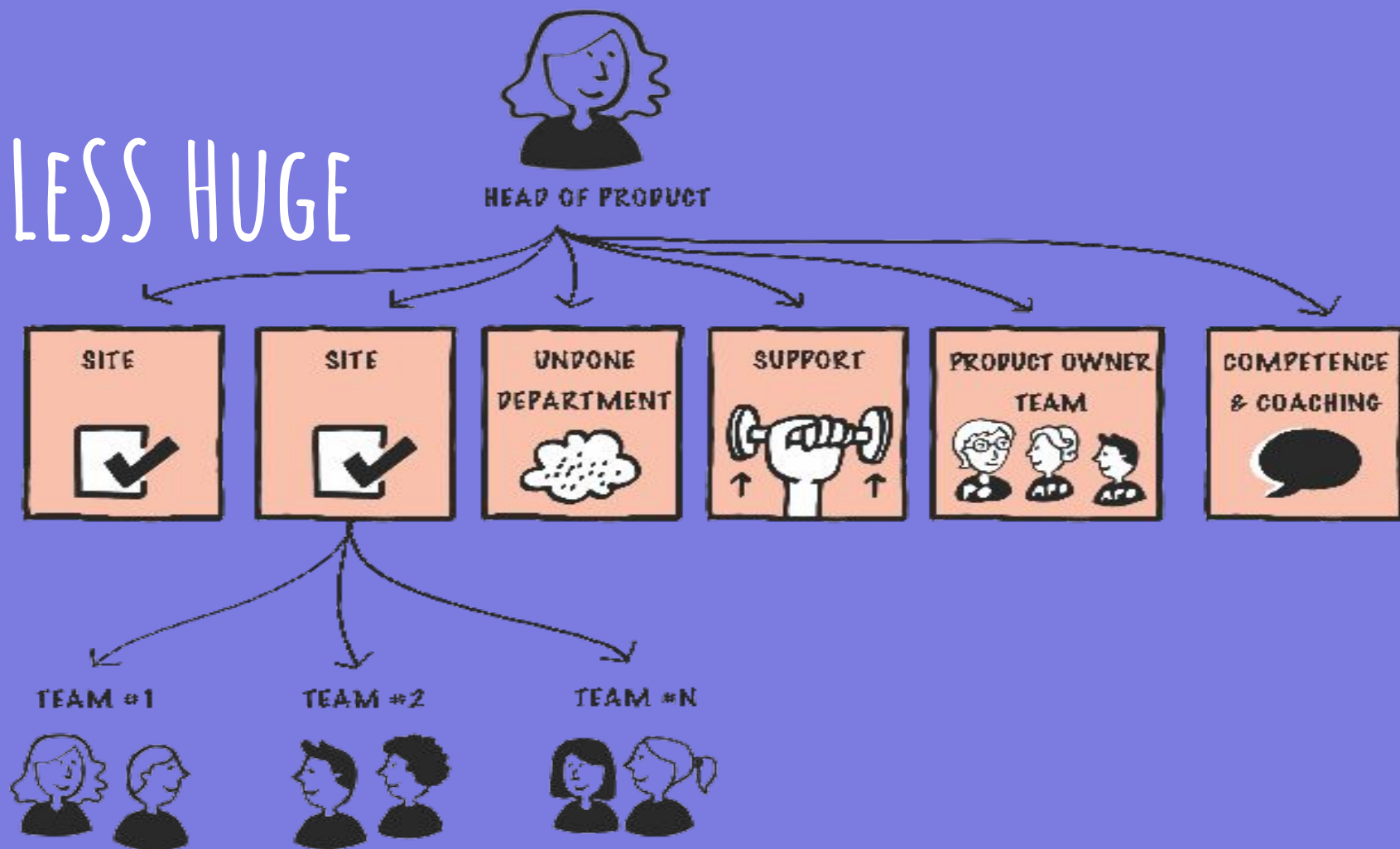
PRODUCT
OWNER



UNDONE
DEPARTMENT



LESS HUGE





BEN MAYNARD

FATHER, NERD, COACH, TRAINER & MENTOR

