



LEVERAGING
THE
POWER

OF **TEAMING**

IN A
V.U.C.A.
WORLD

CONFRONTING VUCA: *WHAT IF WE TOOK THIS SERIOUSLY?*

- **Volatile:** Rapid changes, ups & downs/big swings
- **Uncertain:** Difficult to predict future events/values
- **Complex:** Multiple interconnected elements
- **Ambiguous:** Unclear meaning of signals/events

= V.U.C.A.



OVERVIEW

Part 1: Why Psychological Safety is Necessary in Effective Teams

Part 2: How to Use Teamwork to Rebuild and Reinvent

Part 3: What Leaders do to Build a Culture for Teamwork & Innovation

OVERVIEW

Part 1: Why Psychological Safety is Necessary in Effective Teams

Part 2: How to Use Teamwork to Rebuild and Reinvent

Part 3: What Leaders do to Build a Culture for Teamwork & Innovation

THE WORK ISSUE

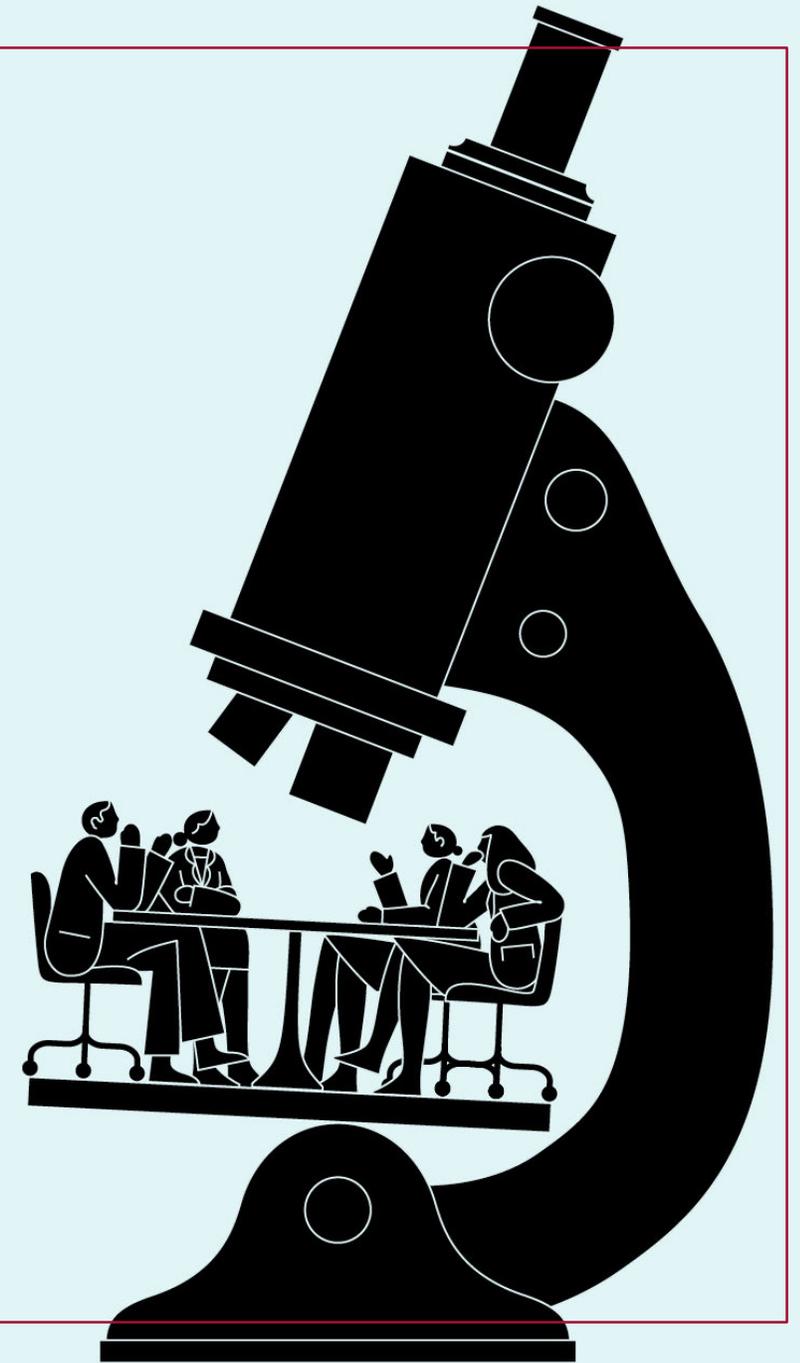
What Google Learned From Its Quest to Build the Perfect Team

New research reveals surprising truths about why some work groups thrive and others falter.



“When [Julia] Rozovsky and her Google colleagues encountered the concept of **psychological safety** in academic papers, it was as if everything suddenly fell into place”

Source: *NY Times*



THE SUBTLE NATURE OF INTERPERSONAL RISK AT WORK

No One Wants To Look

It's Easy To Manage!

Ignorant

Don't Ask Questions

Incompetent

Don't Admit Weakness or Mistakes

Intrusive

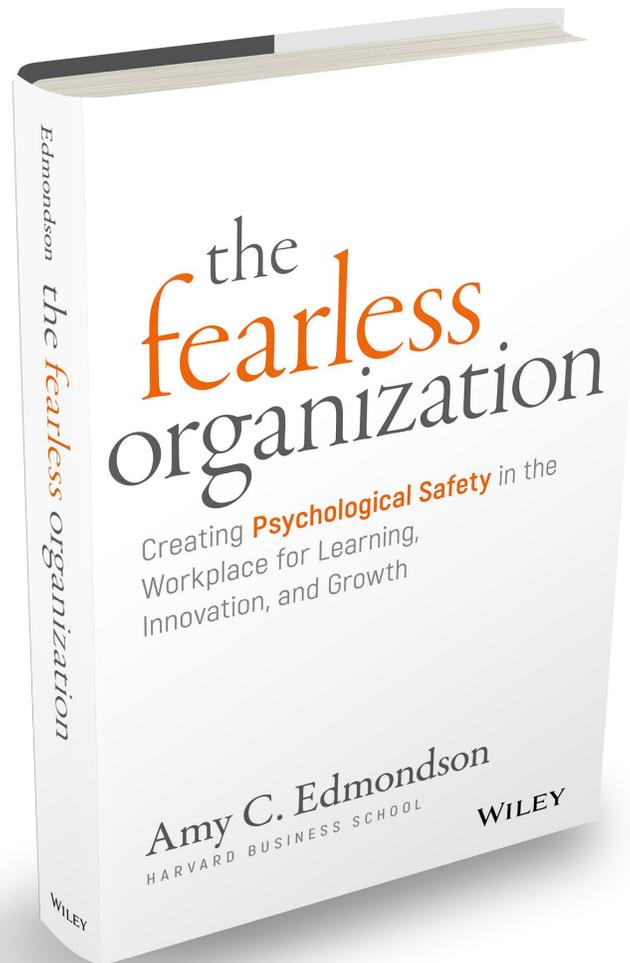
Don't Offer Ideas

Negative

Don't Critique the Status Quo

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT IS SECOND NATURE...

WHEN IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT TAKES A BACK SEAT: PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



A belief that the context is safe for interpersonal risk taking – that speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes will be welcomed and valued.

THINK OF IT AS FELT PERMISSION FOR CANDOR.



PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY IS NOT:

- A personality factor
- Being nice
- Freedom from conflict
- A guarantee that all your ideas will be applauded
- Permission to slack off
- A license to whine
- Oversharing
- Nirvana
- *The goal...*

**FAILURES OF
COURAGE?
OR A FAILURE OF
LEADERSHIP?**



WHAT'S THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY AND COURAGE?

Does psychological safety take away the need for courage?

Or does courage take away the need for psychological safety?

In a word?

No.



- Psychological safety and courage are two sides of the same (precious) coin.
- A culture characterized by psychological safety and courage is – and will continue to be – needed in a complex and uncertain world.

CONSIDER THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORK YOUR TEAMS DO:



ROUTINE OPERATIONS



COMPLEX OPERATIONS

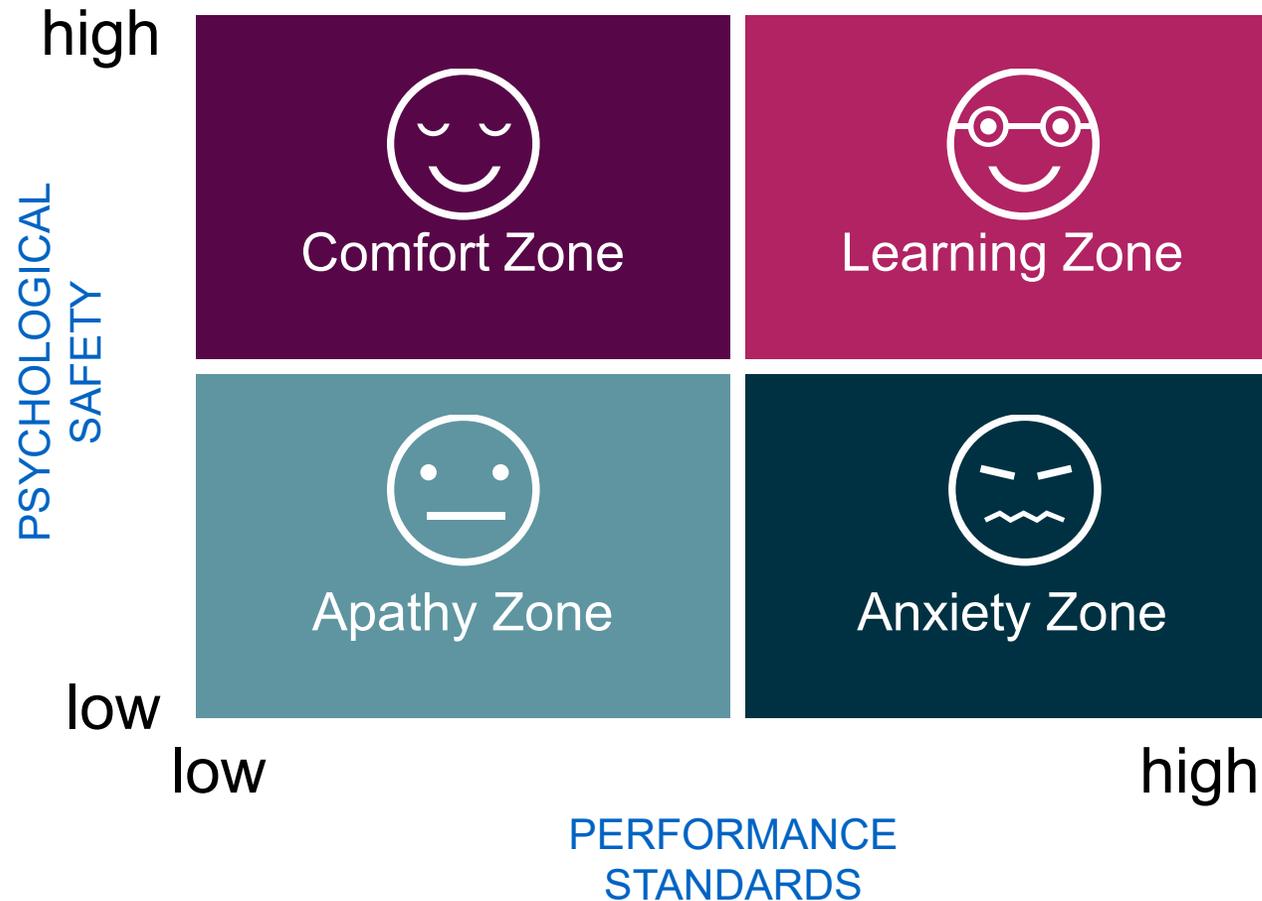


INNOVATION OPERATIONS

Uncertainty

As uncertainty increases, psychological safety is more and more important to success...

NO TRADEOFF BETWEEN HIGH STANDARDS & PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY



Prior to Covid-19, which quadrant do you believe your teams found themselves in most often?

Reflection:

- 1. What were the implications for your company's performance?*
- 2. How might this affect your ability to (re)build the future?*

HOW GENUINE IS YOUR COMPANY'S COMMITMENT TO EXCELLENCE?

In many successful companies people drift away from playing to win... and begin **playing not to lose**

PLAYING TO WIN VS. PLAYING NOT TO LOSE

WHEN YOU PLAY TO WIN, YOU:

FOCUS ON THE UPSIDE

SEEK OPPORTUNITIES

EXPERIMENT WITH NEW WAYS

WHEN YOU PLAY NOT TO LOSE, YOU:

FOCUS ON (AVOIDING) THE DOWNSIDE

SEEK TO AVOID FAILURES

STICK TO TRIED-AND-TRUE WAYS

When you play not to lose, you're likely to succeed (in not losing).

But chances are you will be playing small. You'll miss opportunities to pursue a bigger vision. (When you don't take chances where you might fall on your face some of the time, you miss opportunities to grow, to innovate, to make a difference, and to experience a deeper fulfillment).

But, when you MAKE UP YOUR MIND to play to win, the rules change. Yes, you might fall flat on your face in a public way sometimes. But you also are poised to contribute to something that makes a huge difference...

PLAYING TO WIN = EMBRACING A GROWTH MINDSET

People who **believe their talents can be developed** (through hard work, good strategies, and input from others) have a **growth mindset**

- They achieve more than those with what's called a **fixed mindset** (those who believe their talents are innate gifts).
- They worry less about looking smart and put more energy into **learning** – absolutely essential in a VUCA world.
- **When entire companies embrace a growth mindset, their employees report feeling far more empowered and committed; and have more support for collaboration and innovation.**
- In contrast, people at **primarily fixed-mindset** companies report more of only one thing: **cheating and deception** among employees (presumably to gain an advantage in the talent race).

<https://hbr.org/2016/01/what-having-a-growth-mindset-actually-means>



Carol Dweck, PhD.

GROWTH MINDSET + PSYCHOLOGICAL SAFETY TOGETHER FUEL FEARLESS TEAMING

- **Growth mindset** describes an individual stance that embraces learning behavior and lessens defensiveness
- **Psychological safety** describes a group climate in which people believe their voice is welcome and interpersonal risks are worth taking

GM + PS → Teaming & Innovating

FEAR THAT IS SHARED IS PRODUCTIVE

Interpersonal Fear at Work	Fear Related to COVID-19
Subtle/Hidden	Obvious/Explicit
Experienced Alone	A Shared Experience
Concerned with What Others Think	Concerned with What We Can Do
Inhibits Innovation	Promotes Innovation

To the extent that your team/employees have felt more comfortable than usual expressing their concerns and questions, how will you keep that transparency and vulnerability alive in the future?

FOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

- **Where or when in your organizations might people feel unable to speak up?**
- **What risks does this pose for you:**
 - Historically?
 - Currently?
 - In the future?
- **How well-developed is your own growth mindset? What kinds of things do you do to bolster it – thus bolstering your ability to take smart risks and keep developing as a leader?**

OVERVIEW

Part 1: Why Psychological Safety is Necessary in Effective Teams

Part 2: How to Use Teamwork to Rebuild and Reinvent

Part 3: What Leaders do to Build a Culture for Teamwork & Innovation

USING TEAMWORK TO REBUILD AND REINVENT

teams (n.) and team • ing (v.)

- You cannot be expert on everything
- Most projects/goals require multiple sources of expertise
- Bringing them together is vital

I just have this feeling... If our two departments could just collaborate, we could come up with something that's truly amazing.



QUESTION:

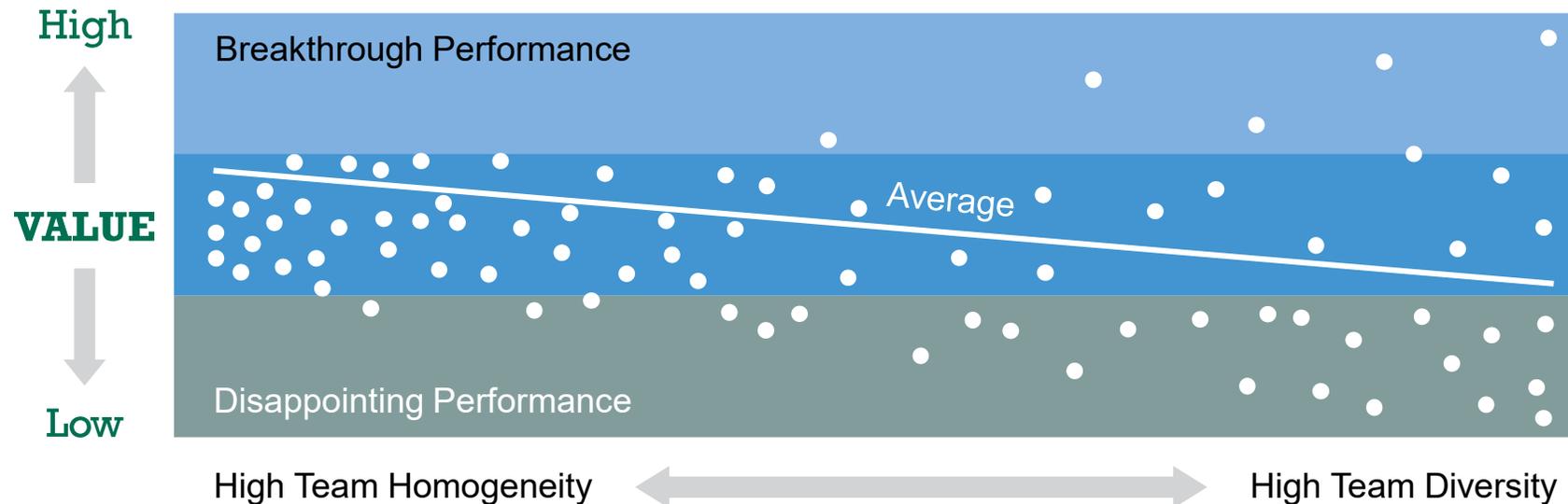
On average, which team performs better?

a) A diverse-expertise team

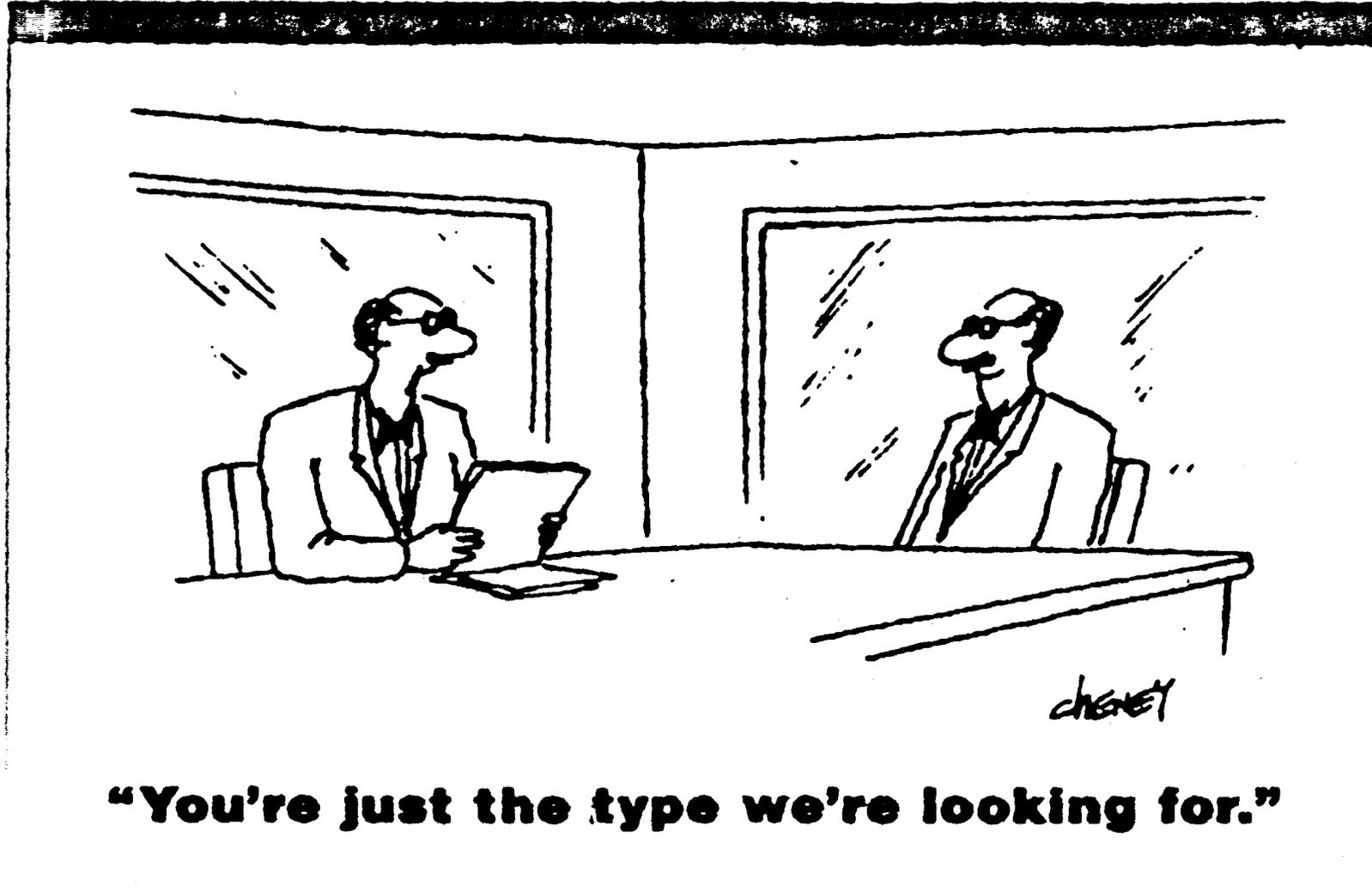
b) A homogeneous team?

LEADING DIVERSE TEAMS

All other factors being equal, on average diverse teams under-perform homogenous teams. Diverse teams have **greater potential** but face **greater challenges** as well... Overcoming the challenges requires building the **right performance climate** and **deliberate learning routines**....



BUILDING GREAT TEAMS?



CONSIDER HOW AN EMPLOYEE IN YOUR COMPANY WOULD RESPOND:

- Think about the people to whom you report and those who report to you:
 - Let's call these “vertical” relationships.
- Now think of people in other units, functions, or locations whose work responsibilities may touch, overlap with, or depend upon yours.
 - Let's call these “horizontal” relationships.

Which relationships get prioritized in your day-to-day work?

Which relationships matter most for creating & delivering new value?

IN MOST ORGANIZATIONS, PEOPLE STRUGGLE WITH HORIZONTAL COORDINATION AND COLLABORATION

“In a survey of nearly 8000 employees in over 250 companies, only 59% of respondents reported they can rely on people in other units all or most of the time to follow through on what they promised to do.... This compared to 84% reporting they can rely on people upward and downward within their chain of command.”

-Sull et al, (*HBR*, March 2015) “Why Strategy Execution Unravels—and What to Do About It.”

WHEN HORIZONTAL TEAMING SUFFERS – VALUE IS LOST



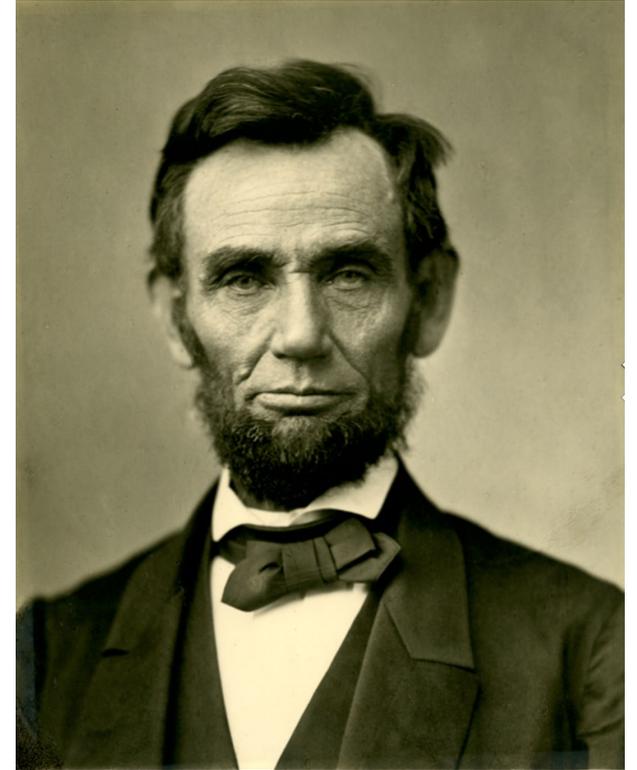
FOSTERING TEAMING ACROSS SILOES

1. Call attention to the organization's **purpose** or mission
2. Be explicit that diverse perspectives are a **resource** – that allow joint problem-solving in support of that purpose
3. Create **forums** for cross-silo sharing to build mutual understanding and empathy



“I don’t like that man. I must get to know him better.”

- Abraham Lincoln



BUILDING PRODUCTIVE WORK RELATIONSHIPS

“Seek first to understand” (asking)

- **Goals/hopes**
- **Barriers/concerns**
- **Skills/knowledge**

Then seek to be understood (telling)

- **Goals/hopes**
- **Barriers/concerns**
- **Skills/knowledge**

A TEAMING EXERCISE YOU CAN USE WITH EMPLOYEES

Quick Rounds of Paired Sharing on:

- ***What is*** Your current highest-priority work goal or deliverable
- ***What are*** The key barriers/obstacles you face
- ***What are*** The resources and capabilities you bring

This simple exchange of relevant work information builds instantly useful connections

FOSTERING TEAMWORK WITHIN TEAMS

1. Mission Clarity

- *Ensure understanding of the team's objectives*
- *Generate options for how to make progress toward the objectives*

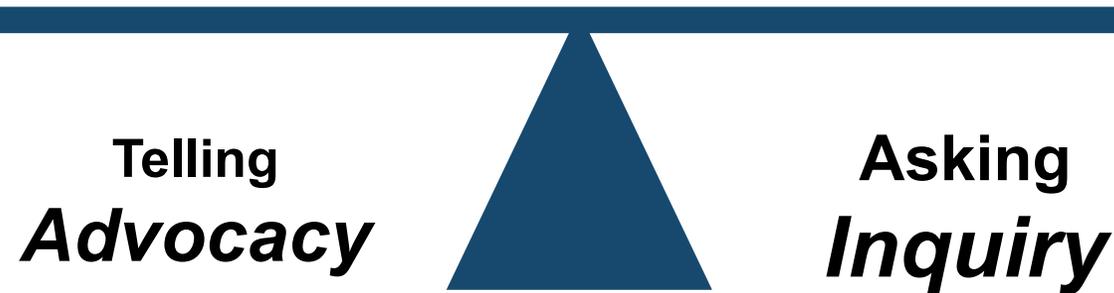
2. Rounds

- *Ensure that every voice is heard with rounds of brief, relevant input from each person*

3. Consent over Consensus

- *By the end of the meeting, the team or leader needs consent from everyone (not consensus)*
- *If someone withholds consent, try to understand why...*
- *Then ask, “is it safe to try” → exercise a “bias toward action”*
 - *If it's not safe to try, it's good that you've avoided the failure. If it is, you're experimenting.*

GREAT TEAMS BALANCE ADVOCACY & INQUIRY



Why might balance matter?

Why might balance often be lacking?

GREAT TEAMS CONTAIN ALL 4 ESSENTIAL CONVERSATIONAL FUNCTIONS

- **Proposing**
- **Building**
- **Challenging**
- **Observing**

= Ingredients of a Healthy Team Discussion

GREAT TEAMS REFLECT (ROUTINELY)

After Action Review Questions used by the U.S. Army

- 1. What did we intend to do?**
- 2. What actually happened?**
- 3. What is the difference and why?**
- 4. What will we do going forward (do the same/do differently)?**

TEAMING WITHOUT A BLUEPRINT: “EXECUTION-AS-LEARNING”

It’s agile, collaborative & iterative:

- Your teams face many **UNKNOWNNS**
- Team members must bring in different **EXPERTISE** at different times.
- They lack a fixed set of **DELIVERABLES** or fixed **ROLES**.
- They must do **NEW** things that haven't been done before.
- They must **ACT** – to learn.
- They will **FAIL** along the way... (and that’s ok)



FOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

- **What are the most important opportunities for teaming in your company today?**
- **How will you help people form effective work relationships to team up to pursue innovation together?**
- **How will you ensure that teams can take intelligent risks and share the lessons quickly and widely?**

OVERVIEW

Part 1: Why Psychological Safety is Necessary in Effective Teams

Part 2: How to Use Teamwork to Rebuild and Reinvent

Part 3: What Leaders do to Build a Culture for Teamwork & Innovation

WHAT LEADERS DO TO BUILD A FEARLESS CULTURE



- 1. FRAME THE WORK**
- 2. INVITE ENGAGEMENT**
- 3. RESPOND PRODUCTIVELY**

FRAME THE WORK

COGNITIVE FRAMES

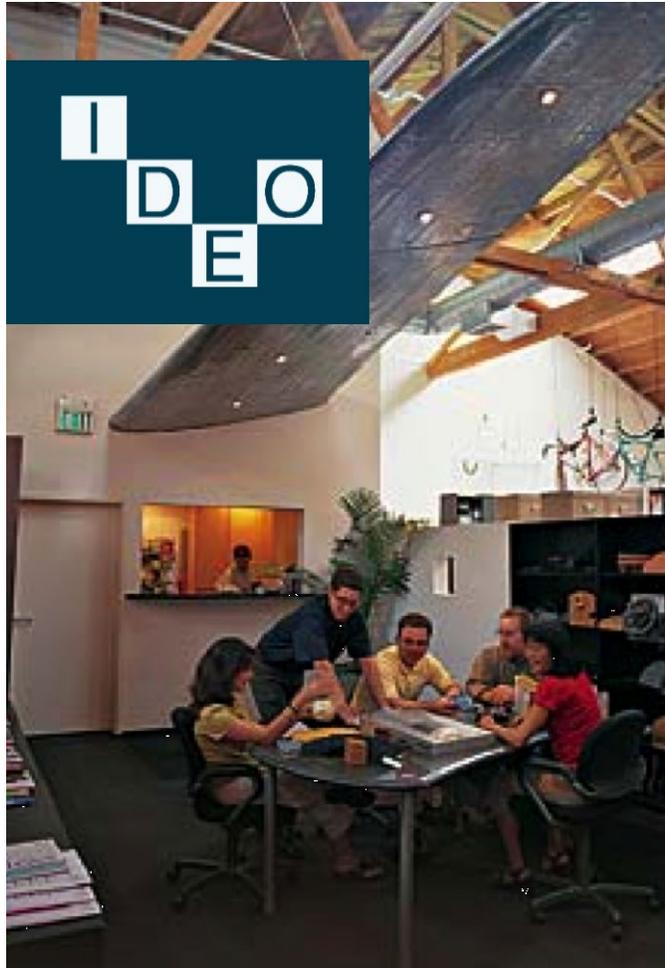
Implicit beliefs that shape how people make sense of a situation and influence how they act and respond... = a mindset

(RE-)FRAMING

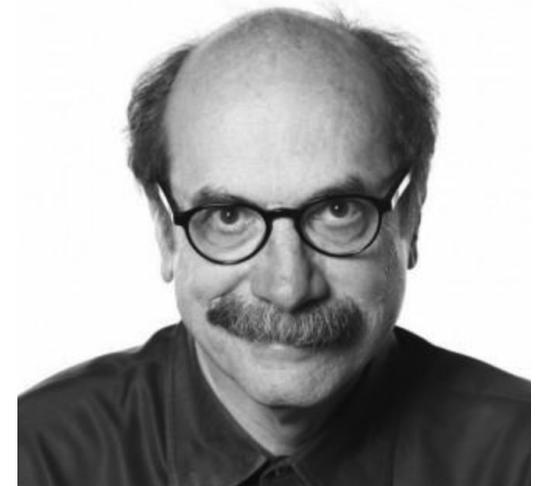
Words and actions that shape others' frames (mindsets) about the work in productive ways.



FRAMING THE WORK: INNOVATION REQUIRES FAILURE



“ Fail often in order to succeed sooner...”



FRAMING THE WORK: SUCCESS THROUGH COURSE-CORRECTION



Source: New York Times, Corner Office, August 12, 2016

I said, “Early, often, ugly. It’s O.K. It doesn’t have to be perfect because then I can course-correct much, much faster.”

No amount of ugly truth scares me. It’s just information to make a decision.

FRAMING THE WORK: COMPLEX SYSTEMS BREAK DOWN...

(speaking up saves lives)

CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND CLINICS

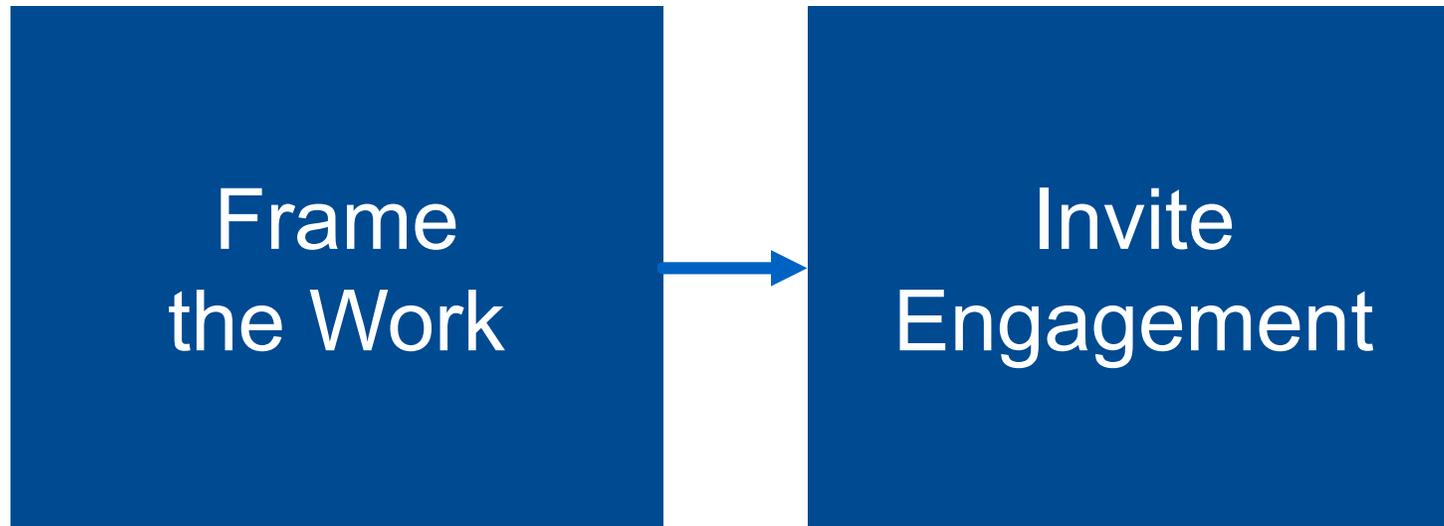


“Healthcare by its nature is a complex, error prone system”

FRAMING STATEMENTS: FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- **How much uncertainty does your organization face in “normal” times? How much do you face now?**
- **What are the implications of that level of uncertainty? How easy/difficult is it for people to team fearlessly?**
- **What framing statements will help create the right climate – of risk taking, engagement, etc. – for your company?**

WHAT LEADERS DO TO BUILD A FEARLESS CULTURE



INVITE ENGAGEMENT: INSIST ON DISSENT

“ Gentlemen, I take it we are all in complete agreement on the decision...

Then I propose we postpone further discussion of this matter until our next meeting to give ourselves time to develop disagreement and perhaps gain some understanding of what the decision is all about. ”

– Alfred P. Sloan (1946). *My Years with General Motors.*



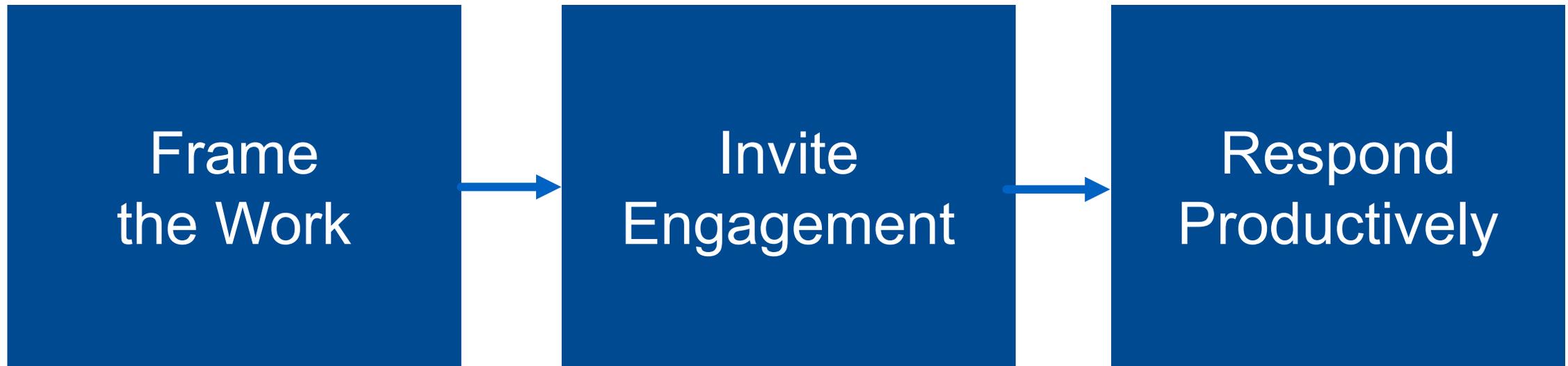
INVITE ENGAGEMENT: ASK GOOD QUESTIONS

- To broaden the discussion
 - What do others think?
 - What are we missing?
 - What other options could we consider?
 - **Who has a different perspective?**
- To deepen the discussion
 - What leads you to think so?
 - What's the concern that you have about that?
 - Can you give us an example?
 - Can you explain that further?
 - What do you think might happen if we did X?

Good questions focus on what matters, invite careful thought, and give people room to respond.

Jot down one good question of each type to use next week

WHAT LEADERS DO TO BUILD A FEARLESS CULTURE



WHAT HAPPENS TO MESSENGERS?

*“You have to make honest feedback a positive experience. It has to be that the red is a **gem**. I had to demonstrate with my behavior that I welcomed it.”*

Alan Mulally, to Diane Brady, *Business Week*. April 12, 2012



Good leaders are fluent in ongoing framing

MULALLY'S FLUENCY IN FRAMING

- “the red is a gem”
- “*you* weren’t red; the *situation* was red”
- “data set you free”
- “you can’t manage a secret”
- his reaction to the “rainbow” of charts:
 - “I knew at that moment that we were going to make it”
- **These small acts of framing reinforce the behaviors YOU NEED to thrive in these times...**

A PRODUCTIVE RESPONSE

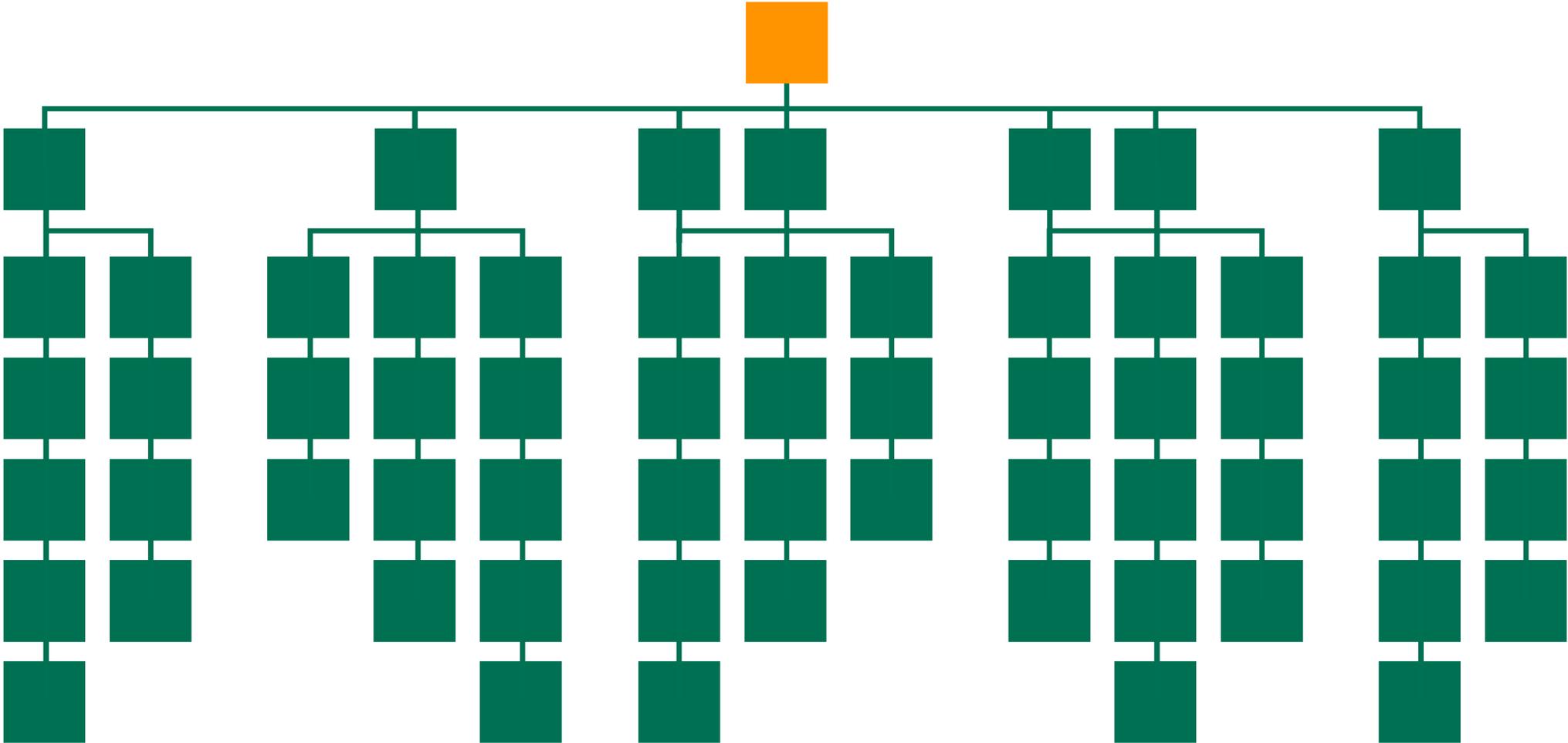
- **Appreciative** (*thank you for that clear line of sight*)
- +
- **Forward looking** (*how can we help?*)

WHAT LEADERS DO TO BUILD A FEARLESS CULTURE

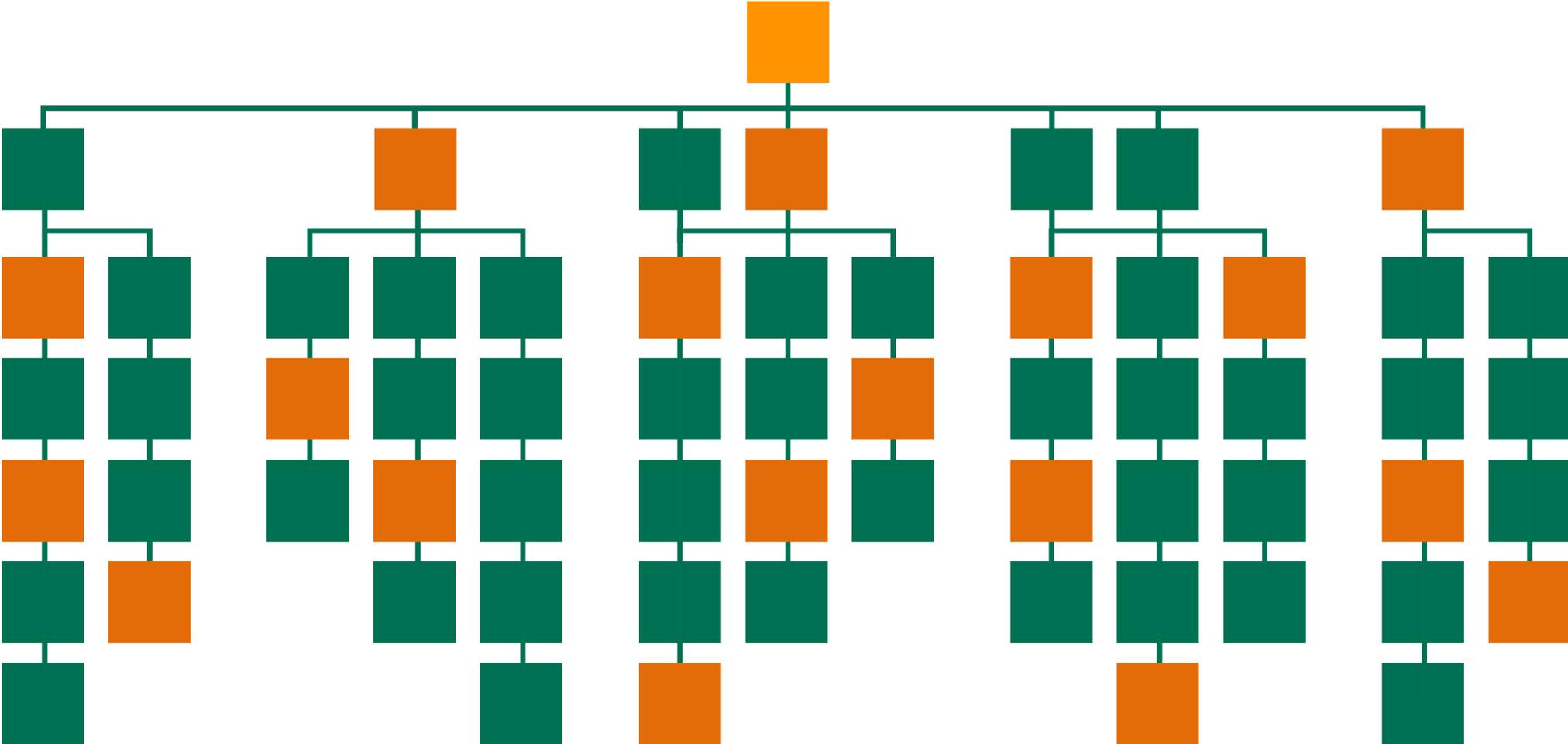


1. **Framing the work** accurately – ensuring shared understanding of the reality of complexity, uncertainty, novelty, and failure;
2. **Inviting engagement** by asking good questions;
3. **Responding** that welcomes messengers and promotes forward-focused problem-solving.

LEADERSHIP MYTH



LEADERSHIP REALITY



FOR DISCUSSION GUIDE

1. **Framing**: What will I do to clarify the importance of voice? How can I make sure everyone appreciates the level of uncertainty or interdependence we face, so that they recognize the necessity of relating fearlessly to each other?
2. **Inviting**: What can I do to model curiosity about what others see and bring? In what situations can I ask more, and better, questions, rather than just expressing my perspective?
3. **Responding**: What will I do to signal that what I am hearing matters? What will I do to acknowledge the effort it takes when people bring ideas or questions forward? What can I do to destigmatize bad news and intelligent failure?
4. **Purpose**: What can I do to build commitment to the longer-term shared purpose of our organization – helping to ensure that everyone understands why our work makes a difference, and for whom, and that it's worth fighting for?

WHAT
QUESTIONS
DO YOU HAVE?

