CREATE CHANGE: HOW TO APPLY INNOVATION IN AN ERA OF UNCERTAINTY

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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Here's the best way to get the most out of this book:

Turn the pages.
Read some, think some, do some.
Open the book wherever you like.
That's it.
Try stuff out.
See what happens.

Work with others on it.

Talk about it, adapt, respond, adjust.

There are no rules here about 'read this part first' or 'don't race ahead'. Pffft to that!

Respond to the crazy world out there with style, creative action and uniqueness.

As you lead change through your team, organization, department … and your own life, do it with creativity, with engagement, inspiration and an approach that takes risks and experiments. Above all, be curious and open to the possibilities.

OK. Go and get on with it then...!

CREATE
CHANGE

CREATE CHANGE

Create Change is about leading change, in teams in a creative way.
It's about leadership. It's about teams. It's about change.

Leaders need to lead. And in most roles and in most organizations and environments, there is change and transformation to lead. Every freakin' day!

We need to adapt - regularly. The days of an organizational change coming along, happening and winding up, are gone.

Change continues to happen in organizations and in the words of the 1979 singing god Roger Voudouris, 'You'd better get used to it.' Roger sang into his microphone while Beyonce-style electric fans blew his shoulder-length mullet around. His arms waved about in his tight red

jumper. 'You'd better get uuuuuuuuuuused to it.' Roger now rests in peace, so take heed of his advice – his legacy lives on; we've certainly gotta get used to it.

If you give Roger's mullet a short back and sides you have Navy SEALS and other armed and Special Forces who have been heard to utter 'get comfortable being uncomfortable'! They feel discomfort in many situations – they have to get used to it – because they still have to perform their role to the highest standards and focus on the task at hand.

It's a little the same for us in workplaces and communities around the world.

As world circumstances change, we need to change with them, more rapidly and frequently.

If organizations and businesses want to be innovative, they need leaders who will reinvent, reposition and re-ignite themselves often (also known as 'growth') - so that they can continue to lead others.

Those who can anticipate organizational change requirements and can lead on that change will win the race to innovation, to market performance and to their own career success.

on the FRONT FOOT
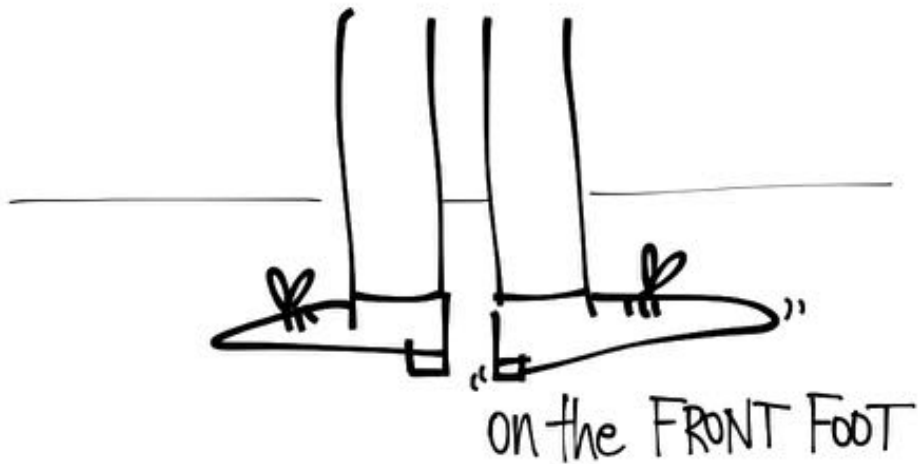
It is a race out there. It's a race to the office (have you seen how fast people are driving!), it's a race to the morning tea event thingy where there's a farewell for someone who didn't adapt quickly enough. It's a race to the muffins, or the best sandwiches on the lunch table or to the best curry in that new place down the road! It's a race to get a table, a drink, a car space. It's a race to get, have, do.

This doesn't mean you need to run, rush, speed or be silly or dangerous about it.

It's about who can innovate and adapt the fastest.

Think of it like being on the front foot. Being ready.

Think of it like who is first to market, and who's playing catch up.

These crazy fast times in business demand fast leaders. Not panic-fast leaders, but productive-fast leaders. Leaders who can do stuff. Quickly. Leaders who will act, implement, put into practice, do and create. And leaders who will adapt and respond swiftly.

This is about leaders who are 'open'. People who are open to new ideas by demonstrating their flexible thinking and their adaptive behaviour. How willing are you to react and respond in a way that helps you adapt to change?

I enjoy seeing and reading about world-class swimmers who spend hours of training time jumping off the starting blocks! It's about training their reaction times at one of the most critical parts of the race. Practice, practice, practice. Jump. Jump. Jump. Splash, get wet, no swimming, hop out.
Jump again.

Let's jump into it.

By the way… where you see the white space in this book, use that space to capture your thoughts, ideas and wonderings. I'm all for writing in books. Write here…

thoughts...

THE FOUR REALITIES

WHAT THE VUCA?

'Fast changes arriving. Slow changes are moving out.' – Seal, Singer, songwriter and former Mr Heidi Klum

It was the US Army War College who got to grips with the **V**olatility, **U**ncertainty, **C**omplexity and **A**mbiguity of the world before the rest of us. They were onto it after the end of the Cold War. What? You mean they were talking 'VUCA' in the early 1990s?

It's almost a relief to have an acronym (an FLA - four letter acronym) for the constant state of flux and upheaval we've been experiencing since the day each of us realised the world could be a little changeable.

Because VUCA first appeared in military environments gives us a sense of their sense of their views of volatile and uncertain, complex and ambiguous.

It was not just that there might be a new organizational structure or a new leader or a new way of processing customer payments. No, in military situations, that could mean there were volatile behaviours of opponents or uncertain actions of military threats in different cultures, time zones and countries.

A new photocopier? New processes for getting expenses approved? What are we really worried about? With VUCA in military settings, people could die, countries could be placed in dangerous and perilous situations and millions of people could be impacted through global instability. Not good.

Then VUCA really came into play after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack. But well before that, the folks at the US Army War College were all over complexity. They're a practical bunch at the College. They're into exercises, simulations, scenarios and possibilities. They delve into strategy, bureaucracy and play out the practicalities of decisions and indecisiveness.

VUCA applies to the military because opponents can't always be 'seen'. The 'other side' might be stockpiling some new technological weapons. I can only think of the Iron Man movies, 1, 2 and 3 and Robert Downey Jnr as his heads-up display tells him in his iron suit how fast he's

going, whether approaching objects are friendlies or foes and how he can fire weapons out of his digits.

Yes military environments are turbulent, changing, unpredictable. The thousands and thousands of officers, staff and uniformed operatives are challenged daily to think about new ways of working, thinking and doing. When a unit or team is out in the thick of it, they have to respond, adapt and do something quick - for the love of life and survival.
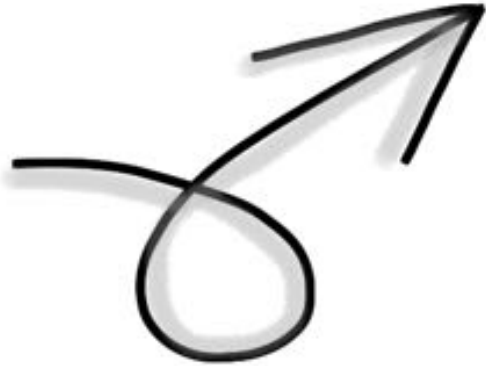
Being in VUCA has given military circles the opportunity to get used to handling these challenging environmental realities that us in the business world have only just been given a name for.
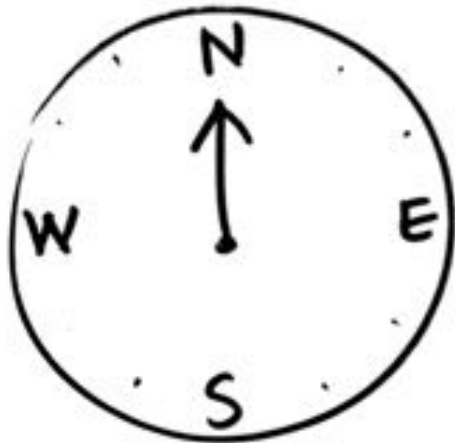
And if they've been dealing with this VUCA thing for awhile, I want to know what else they've got up their khaki and camouflage sleeves!

VUCA is....

VOLATILITY

You just don't know what's coming next. Think shifting sands in the desert. Once day it looks like this, the next day it's a different landscape. It may not be tricky to understand but it sure keeps changing.

One of my first careers was in public relations and when there was a time of crisis (natural disaster, infection outbreak) it was always a time of volatility. We just didn't know how long this 'fast changing, issues rich environment' was going to continue on for.

People are volatile and so are events, circumstances, environments, systems and processes. Combine them all and you have some potentially explosive situations.

Things can get volatile in violent situations or in highly litigious or legal situations, but the main volatility I'm talkin' about is how organizations change. There is upheaval, constantly. Reactive restructures. Again and again.

A project team in a global business just waiting for what the new CEO will change. Rather than carrying on with their work, their roles, fulfilling their purpose and achieving organizational goals, they're waiting. They anticipate the next volatile change.

'There's no point doing anything; the new CEO is sure to restructure again.'

In this environment clear communication is vital. Yet it's still so often missing.

Face to face is a strong communication medium. And it's still too often avoided.

You need to validate team member's concerns, views, issues and opinions when things are volatile.

To handle and respond in a volatile environment, there is plenty you can do.

Take a wander through the rest of this book in your hands and you'll find some ideas about how you can engage with people and inspire them to create the change in the organization that's needed.

VOLATILITY INDEX

Oh yes, there's a volatility index that reports on how volatile things are… and it's off the charts right now. No wonder we're feeling all …. 'aaarrgggghhh!'

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UNCERTAINTY

'There has been an alarming increase in the number of things you know nothing about.' – anonymous

What? A quote about uncertainty and we don't even know who said it!? Uncertainty is when you just don't have the information you need. You know you need to do something but what that is… is uncertain right now. What is certain is that we do not know everything.

Job security is rare, medium rare! Restructures are overcooked and not many people feel totally 'safe' in their roles, no matter their position or seniority. This uncertain feeling is disruptive. It stops people taking risks, contributing greatness and doing their best work.

Who wants to contribute in an environment where morale is dropping and productivity is a game of who can do the least but make it look like you're doing the most?

There's simply too much tale telling; leaders need to be more truthful about what they can say and what they can't. 'Tell it all and tell it fast' is a strong public relations maxim I would live through years of studying, lecturing, training, consulting and working in communications. But today, not enough is told and certainly not quickly enough. Speculation builds and that just feeds the uncertainty circus.

Giving people a clear 'picture' of what's going on is vital. Yet so few organizations actually use visuals to create, capture and convey that picture. They prefer a spreadsheet, a 32-page PowerPoint 'pack' of arrows, models, squares and chevrons to communicate phases of zzzzzz, yawn.

What I'm certain about is that we can all boost our communication and engagement capability when we're leading in uncertainty.

COMPLEXITY
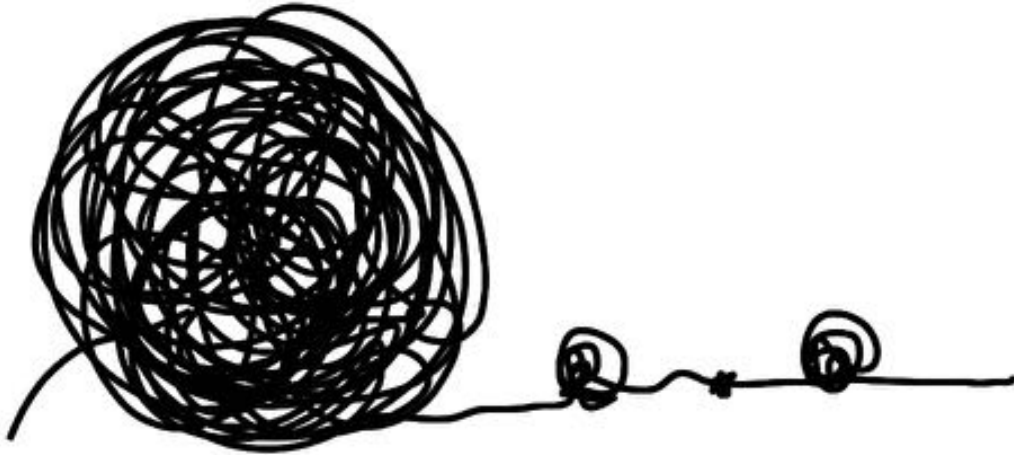
…it's when there's a lot going on. Many different moving parts. Many things changing. I think of an international organization that has offices across the globe, trying to handle all of the detail and connections and interlinks between what they know, what they're doing and who's doing what. It can feel like a huge ball of knotted wool or string… or like trying to get your headphones untwisted when you've dragged the knotted twisted clump of head and phone out of a bag or suitcase!

Complexity stems from four main areas.
- o Us
- o You
- o Me
- o Them

Yep, that's it. We humans are contributing to higher levels of complexity.

It's on us to simplify and sort it out!

Organization structures keep changing; new products and services keep hitting the shelves; businesses change the way they're doing things; and I too am guilty of 'mucking around' and wasting time, procrastinating and over complicating what can be simpler processes, steps and actions. So many of our behaviours as managers and leaders are time wasters.

It's time the humans among us acknowledged they we are the monsters creating the complexity and agree to find ways to make things swifter, simpler, clearer and cleaner. There are so many useless, time wasting processes and procedures and unnecessary work-arounds that are tying people and processes in knots.

I think that prioritising is a lost art. We have lists of things to do and may start at the top and work down or just start somewhere where it looks interesting to start. Next thing, a whole bunch of other tasks have found their way onto the list. I too am guilty!

It's a little like the GPS system on your smart phone, tablet or vehicle. It will find you the shortest, quickest, most direct route... or you can take the longest, scenic route. Get rid of the scenic route and really, truly save that for holidays!

We're so worried about being called out for bullying or 'pushback' that we don't speak up when we see or experience a process or procedure that's less than smooth. We leave things alone and think that it's 'their area' or 'their responsibility' but we are all contributing to the complexity... even by letting complexity go unreported, unnoticed and un-reviewed.

What's clear is our need to get better at clarifying – what we think, need, want and do.

AMBIGUITY

'Are we all clear what we mean by the word 'ambiguity'?' – Quote from Meeting last week

Ambiguity is when you don't know what is impacting or affecting what. What do you do? What plan do you follow? It's time to experiment and try something out. You've got to learn quickly!

Ambiguity is often revealed as indecision, uncertainty in big doses and vague outcomes or discussions. Think non-committal.

Think that film of the book *'He's Just Not That Into You'* and all of the excuses we might make for why the love of our life is not asking us out, asking us to marry them or spend forever onward with them.

They're not the commitment type.

There may be leaders in your organization - look around, is there one close to you right now who are ambiguites?

There's no firm commitment.

And then comes inaction.

If we don't know what we're doing, then we don't do much. And then we don't know what we're doing with what we are doing… so we don't do much more.

People need to see a clear path. Clarity. If there is poor direction and diluted focus, no wonder people 'pfaff' about and not know what to do.

As soon as you see someone not sure what to do, check on their levels of ambiguity around their role, purpose, direction and task… and you can go from there.

Clear instructions help. Definite decisions are good too. And a dose of self confidence that 'yes' you can decide and implement, given the level in the organization and the responsibility you have.

We need to be more spontaneous, able to think on our feet and respond to what happens.

It looks a bit like this infinity loop…
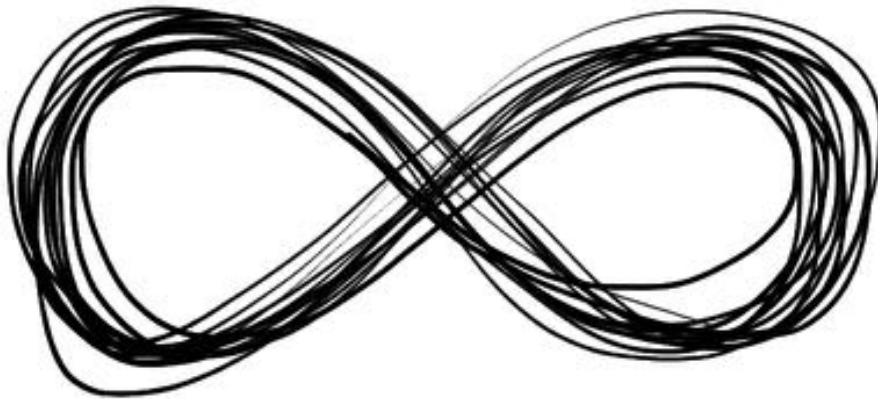
SO... DON'T JUST SIT THERE!

We can't take this volatility and uncertainty lying or sitting down, or by ignoring it.

We must respond, act, do something.

Panic perhaps?
How about procrastinating – I'm great at procrastinating!
What about dealing in some tiny detailed thing way over here so that I can take my eye off the BIG stuff that's going on over there…?
Maybe some gossip and chat and oh, yeah, I go have coffee now.

Actually, you'll need to move. And quick. Jack? Jill? Are you there? Be nimble!

BEING NIMBLE MATTERS
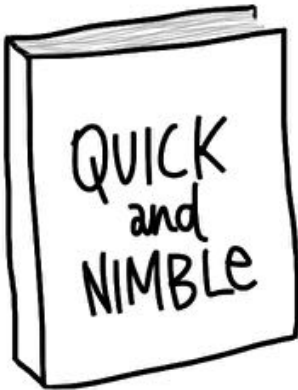
Adam Bryant in his 2014 book *'Quick and Nimble'* talks about the responsiveness that leaders require.

Bryant interviewed more than 200 CEOs on their thoughts about creating a culture of innovation - it's a great read of quotes and stories from the mouths of leaders.

There's a great lesson to learn from many start-up businesses - they're able to respond to what's happening in markets, communities and situations and deal with cultural, political and competitive stuff swiftly. They're in early, start up mode, and if they don't shift, pivot, change and adapt, they're gone!

Bryant also says leaders of firms must think about the cultures they create because they're in a war for talent – to get talent and to hold on to it! Add to that a need to tap into the deeper passions of employees and you've got a handful of 'must dos' when you're responding to volatility, uncertainty, complexity, ambiguity and being a good leader.

- [ ] Be nimble
- [ ] Stay competitive
- [ ] Tap into the passions of employees
- [ ] Attract good people
- [ ] Keep good people
- [ ] Stay relevant
- [ ] Reward and recognise
- [ ] Be competitive
- [ ] Stay calm
- [ ] Keep learning
- [ ] Adapt
- [ ] Respond
- [ ] Make good stuff
- [ ] Be kind to animals… and people
- [ ] …
- [ ] …
- [ ] …

IN ESSENCE...

The world is changing and evolving. And people, teams, groups, units, products and processes need to evolve and adapt if they have a hope of staying up with the global change, let alone getting in front of it.

I think our workplaces, customers, communities need us to:

BE INNOVATIVE

Being creative, designing things, being curious and challenging. You can reinvent things, look at options and possibilities. Take a risk, be courageous, test things out and leverage what you never thought possible.

GET MOVING
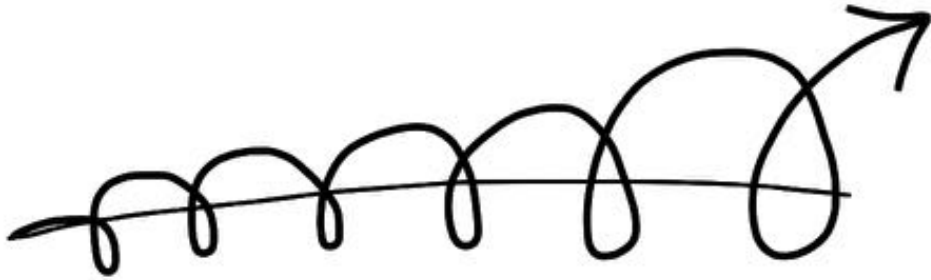
This is about building some momentum, being focused on something good, giving it your attention and being determined to produce something. To show excellence (not perfection), to use your capability and maturity.
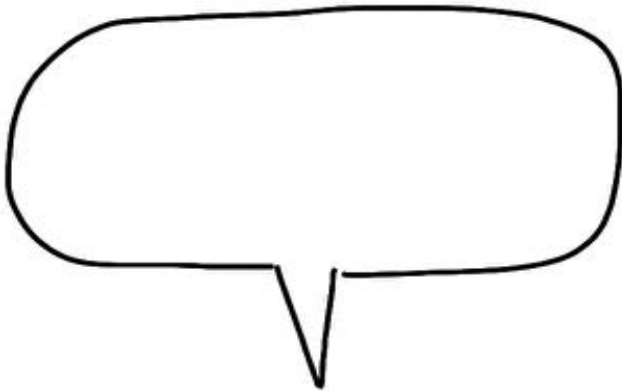
PLAY WELL WITH OTHERS

Connecting with the crowd, working with the team, strengthening links and finding compatibilities – or opposites! It's about what links us, what will build a relationship and what brings people together to make some hefty changes (or handle the changes that are happening.) It really requires us to collaborate on so many things.

STAY FLEXIBLE
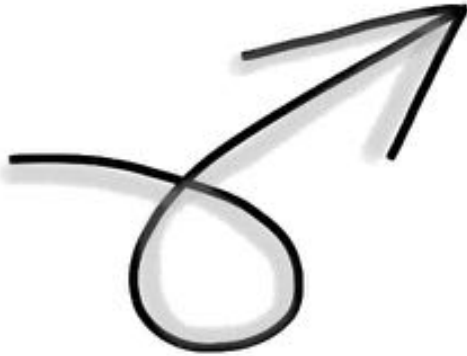
Flexible means adaptability, responsiveness and coping with change.

Aligning to one thing and then being able to shift and pivot, to morph and respond to something different. Being able to create something bespoke in an uncertain environment and bringing super-cool creativity to bear on design, delivery and creation.

DELIVER

It's about achievement and progress. Shipping it. About completing things – the proof is in the delivery. Accepting that perfect isn't needed, but something that works is. It's putting outcomes on the table, cranking up the output and measuring some success… not just thinking about success. Executing on the thinking, being motivated enough to produce something. That's pretty empowering!
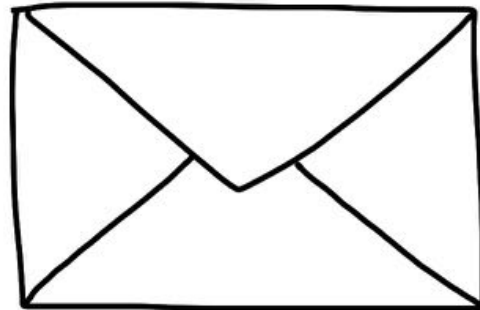
PSSST!
HOW INSPIRING
ARE YOU
AS A LEADER?

HOW INSPIRING ARE YOU AS A LEADER?

Before we get in to the 'what's going on' and 'here's what you need to do about it', I wanted to have a quiet word. How inspiring are you as a leader?

Television's Dr Phil McGraw often asks guests getting some pop-psych on his Oprah offshoot program *'Dr Phil'*, 'How much fun are you to live with?'

It's a brilliant question that will put you in the shoes of your partner. But the same can apply to workplaces, organizations, teams, leaders and groups.

So how much fun are you to work for? Work with? Collaborate with? Communicate with? Do you even know? Do you need to have a chat to someone?

Think of it like a bellows that fuels a fire with air. At the historic re-enactment tourism village in regional Victoria, Australia, about 90 minutes from Melbourne, there's a place called *Sovereign Hill.*

Here you can buy boiled sweets, watch people wear clothes of the pioneer days or get your name printed on a bushranger 'WANTED' poster. On a school-day visit in years gone by, I remember seeing the impact of the bellows at the town blacksmith. The Smithy would be

operating the bellows using a foot-pump to stoke, feed and 'air' the fire and then he'd be tapping, belting and chinking out horseshoes and other historic items of metal blacksmithing in between whooshes of air.

When you look at bellows, you see they have two actions: first they draw air IN ... before they can blow it OUT.

Are you the sucking-air-in kind of person… the one who brightens a room just by leaving it? Do you leave people deflated and flat, beaten and feeling hopeless? Oh how depressing! No no!

Rather… be the one who gives with air and energy and possibility and hope. Make the environment, space, team, project and business feel fired up with air and energy because of you. Whooosh – blow fresh air and energy into the environment. Be inspiring!

When you're leading change in a team, you have to fill the air and the environment with possibility and hope and 'yes we can do this.' This is not 'ra ra' but rather a great feeling of capability, high likelihood and a sense of 'we're gonna do this because….' and 'we can do this because…'

CLIMBING A LADDER OF ENGAGEMENT

Leading teams through change requires a steady dose of High Impact Leadership. And that type of leadership is not going to happen by accident.

Think of a ladder of engagement – there's one on the next page! You need to get your teams and people out of any chance of **stagnating** down in the depths of 'we may never get out of here', to step up, beyond simply **tolerating** changes and transformations. You need to take your teams a step further.

While plenty of teams in organizations are **participating** in change, they sure have a grumpy look on their face about it! Plus, it's not a sweet environment to be working in, to try and be creative if you're just tolerating or barely participating in change.

You've got to help teams step up further… over a tipping point of sorts on this ladder. Then you're into the place where people are **enrolling** in the change; it's something they know is needed, they're on board and they're coming along with you.

But wait. I don't think that's enough. You need to go still further. You need to bring a number of people to a level where they will naturally champion the cause and change, and begin to **advocate** for it, to explain it to help you lead the change.

And there will be a few (you'll know who they are – or they might surprise you by stepping forward with great energy!) to be **activated** in the change and transformation. These people are not just participating or enrolling or advocating. They are doing so much more. They are engaging others, helping others up the ladder and helping pave the way for the positive impacts of the change and transformation.

They're switched 'on', they're brightly lit up and they're on the course of change for all the good reasons. These great ladder climbers will be problem solving, identifying potential hot

spots before they combust (the problem, not the person) and you'll be so pleased you have at your side, on the team, out the front, at the rear, on the sidelines or in the spotlight doing their stuff. Encourage your team to take as high a place on the ladder as they can, as they will, as they want to. The higher they are, the greater their performance, the greater the team's performance, the smoother the path of change.
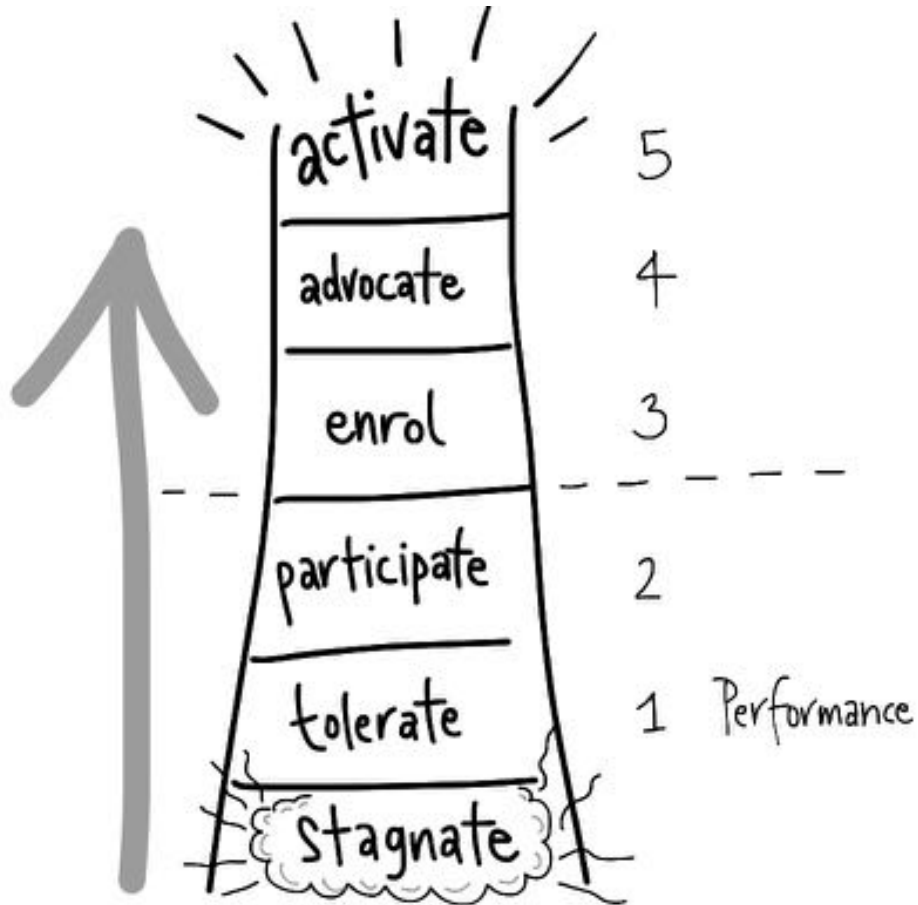
HIGH IMPACT LEADERSHIP

Leaders who work to be high on engagement and high on outcomes are what I think are 'high impact' leaders.

They themselves are engaging. And they're engaging to others around the organization, to customers, clients, suppliers, industry leaders – even competitors. They have an expertise that is beyond their subject matter, and they know how to inspire, engage and connect with people in a way that produces great work.

Think of a horizontal scale or continuum: at one end are leaders who suck the life force out of their team or organization on one end with **low engagement**, and at the other, are leaders who are **high engagement**, inspiring, collaborative and make great things happen around them.

Crossing that continuum is another one, a vertical continuum. This scale is about **outcomes**. Shifting from not achieving anything, **low outcomes** to achieving high levels of productivity and delivery, achieving **high outcomes**.

High impact leaders work to be high on both scales. High engagement + high outcomes.

Because here's what happens...
If you're in a meeting, workshop or a team environment where there is low engagement and nothing much gets done, it's a **yawn fest.** Who'd want to be in that environment?
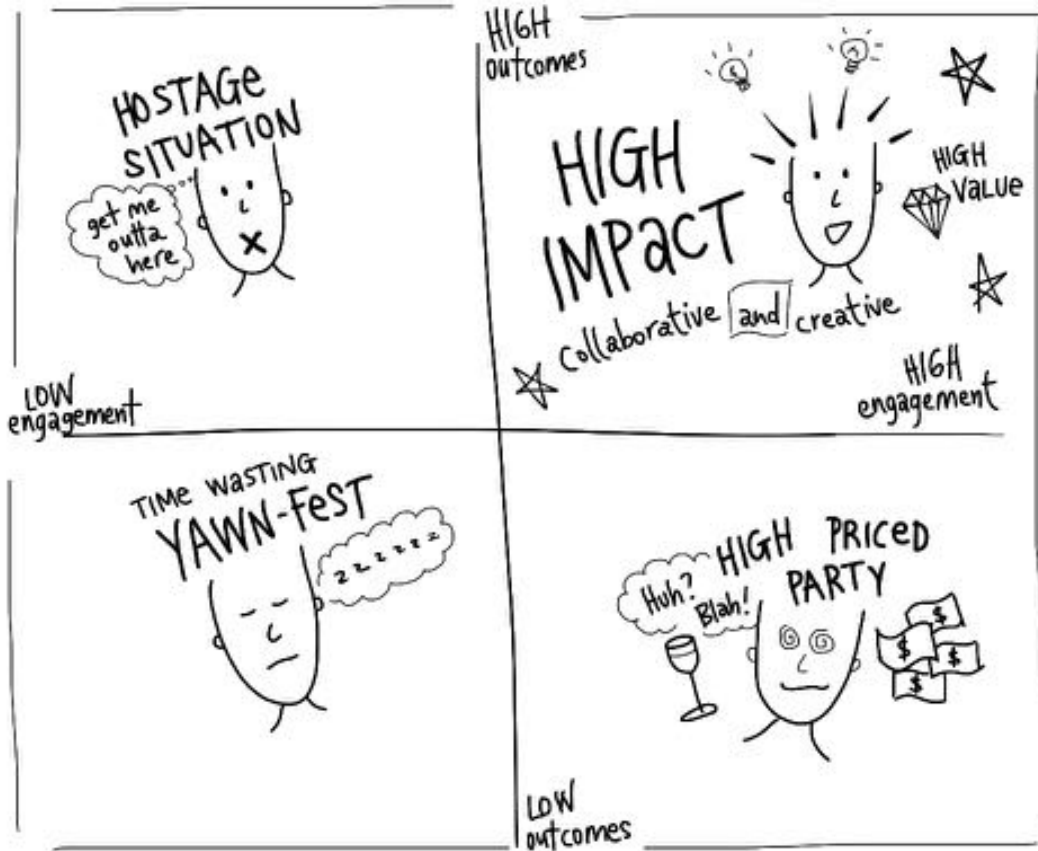
HIGH IMPACT LEADERSHIP

It's gotta be high on engagement and high on outcomes!

Actually... I was! We've all had a stint in a team, project or group where it wasn't fun, it wasn't engaging and nothing much was achieved.

I remember working on a project for a government team. There were six of us, of varying levels of experience and expertise. The highlight of the day was completing our time sheets – what time we started, what time we finished. Seriously. Also, there was a wonderful view of the city and the river from our floor to ceiling windows. So time would be wasted, not many meetings would be attended and no one was really working on anything.

You might think it's fun... for a few hours. But day after day it was soul destroying. We are meant to have purpose, to achieve things and create so that our mark is left on the world. So a few days of this environment was enough to make me realise it was time to leave and find the next adventure. This was a typical low engagement environment. (Who was the leader anyway? We never really saw him or knew who she was – they were leader in title only!)

It was certainly a low outcome environment too. It really was a yawn fest. So uninspiring, so unproductive, so low on purpose and outcomes. I just had to get outta there!

Similarly, if you're still low on engagement but you're achieving things as a unit, team, project or organization, it's still not the best place to be. There can be this 'forcing' and pushing to get things done. A type of command and control approach. I call it a **hostage situation**. People don't really want to be there; they're not engaged, they're not inspired and they're not bringing their best creative or innovative selves to the team or the organization and what it does. People shut down, don't see any point in contributing and you're headed for a downward spiral.

This could be so many organizations, teams and units around the globe. I think this is the situation in many more instances than the research data on engagement reveals and more than what people will reveal.

'Engagement is low but we're producing or achieving.' Ineffective and delusional leaders might think this is an OK second prize to high levels of productivity, outcomes and engagement, but it's not sustainable. It's short term thinking to believe that simply hitting some targets and producing things is acceptable.

So for my thinking, this hostage situation is having an impact on the individuals and damaging their capacity to give, do, contribute or perform to the levels they are capable of – and would like to.

Many people bear the scars of working in an environment that was either low engagement and low outcomes, or low engagement and high outcomes, but it was painful, harsh, hurtful, depressing and ... it injured them.

This scar tissue gets aggravated when the hint of that type of leader or environment is presented. It can manifest as 'pushing back' on a request – resisting collaboration, lack of willingness to contribute ideas and suggestions, cynicism to whether things will really change this time... and on and on and on.

Hostage situations and yawn fests are to be avoided, no matter the environment. Whether it's a project team a flight crew on board a plane, a hospitality team at a five star resort, a manufacturing team making technological goods, an organic baker making bread.

But what of high engagement leaders who don't produce or deliver much? They're on the right side of engagement that's for sure. But I liken it to a **party** environment. *'We all get along so well,'* can be a telltale sign that you have a team that's highly engaged but there could be other issues lurking below.

I worked in a highly engaged team in a consulting environment. We were developing programs, services and products to sell across the business and beyond and we did a fair bit of work and produced 'stuff', but oooo-eee it was a great time!

Friday night drinks. Actually, why wait; let's go for Thursday night drinks. And Friday lunch. And oh, let's be social and 'let's all hang out after work.'

The manager would put the corporate credit card on the bar for drinks. 'Team building it's called,' he would say. And it did build the team. But it didn't impact our ability to deliver things, to shift the way we were working or what we were producing. Most of us had hangovers two or three days of the week, thanks to the boss and the party environment.

I think it's just 'a party'. Woo hoo! Rock on! It's all about having a good time. Hang the productivity, sustainability or responsibility.

No, there is somewhere else to be on the high impact leadership quadrant. And that is where the leader and team create an environment where there is high engagement as well as high outcomes. The team is engaged, connected to the vision, wanting to work well and feeling a part of it all. Additionally there is an approach in that team that means they are delivering,

achieving, contributing and making an impact on customers, clients, stakeholders, the wider community because of what they do.

This is the magic space to be in: achieving great work, feeling like it's a good place to be. You're able to do your best work. The team is producing. They're engaged.

It's not easy to get there, but it is aspirational. It's a place to be aiming for and without something to aim for you're just marking time, not getting anywhere in particular.

Aspire for high impact leadership with high outcomes.

To get there, you need to be agile, adaptive, responsive and willing to shift, change, pivot, yield and ... well, morph. Teams in this space provide high levels of value to their organization. It's a stellar environment for high performers and can deliver a brilliant competitive advantage.

HOW TO RESPOND TO ALL THIS THEN...

As you go further into the ideas in this book and you're getting your game on to respond to the volatile world of change out there, think first about **how involved** you want people to be.

How involved do you want people to be in the change, transformation or piece of work you're leading?

You may want them fully empowered. Or perhaps this is about some consultation. Or something else. At each step or stage or leading change, keep asking yourself questions like:

- o   Is this a briefing or transfer of information? (inform)
- o   Is it a consultative thing - I want to ask some questions and find out what they think? (consult)
- o   Do I need to involve them in the design or development of a process, product or service? (involve)
- o   Is it about collaboration: 'let's work on this thing together'. (collaborate)
- o   Do I want them to pick up the ball and run with it, to empower them so that they act and decide? (empower)

Whichever of these you'd like to make happen – and you may want to achieve several on one piece of work - you need to be clear, otherwise it can get awkward, disengaging and cause some further hiccups.

Here's a continuum or scale that can guide you.

Get your goggles on: how low do you wanna go?
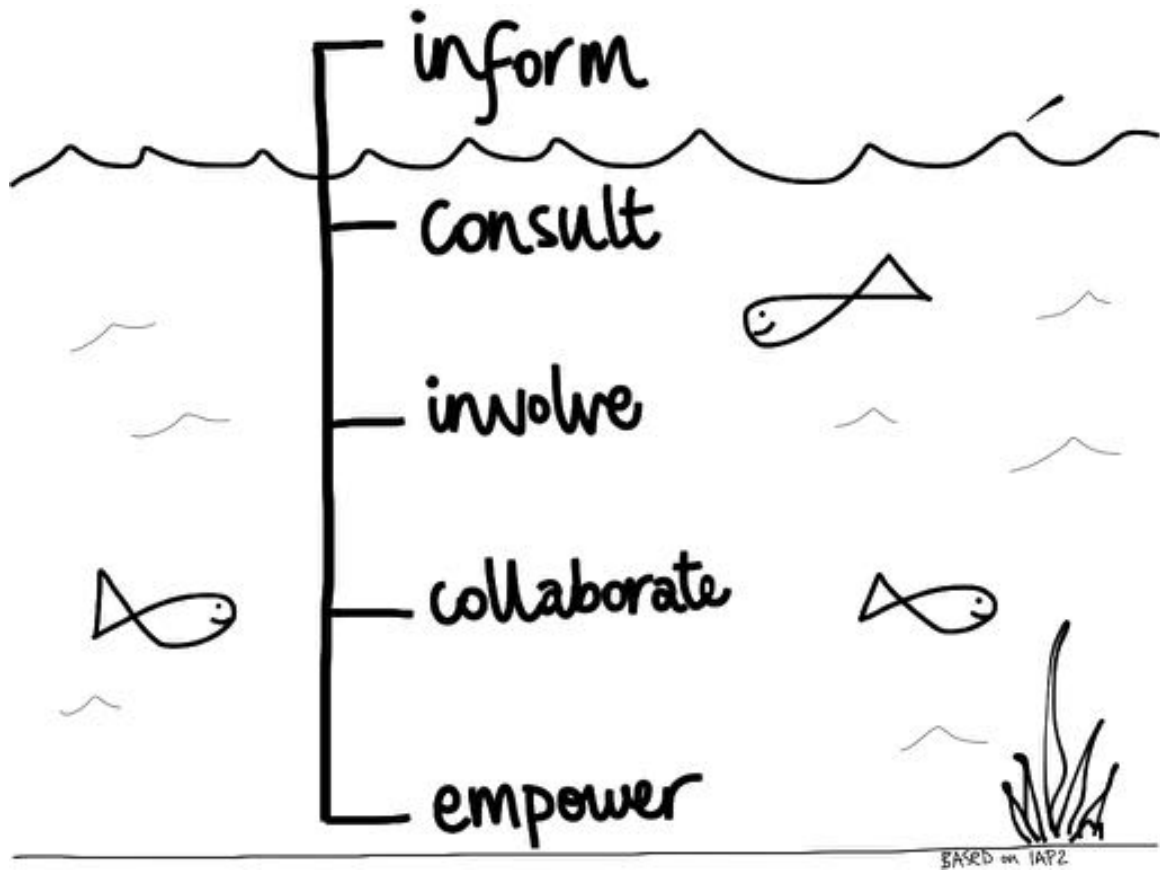
A DEPTH GAUGE: HOW LOW DO YOU WANT TO GO?

Based on the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) continuum of participation

Informing people about change is very much on the surface. You tell them, they listen. You move on.

But you can go further. When you **consult** with people, you're getting under the surface, you're asking them what they think, you want their views and those views may well impact the shape and size of things to come.

To go deeper is to **involve** people. How do they see things? What would they do? What do they think needs to happen? Get their ideas, their thoughts, their ways of thinking and seeing and bring them into the change.

Oh, yes you can go further. To **collaborate** with people, you go deeper. 'Co' means to work together. Now you're talking, listening, meeting, co-creating, co-designing and co-delivering this thing together. Regularly. Often. Most of the time.

And even further you can go where people are **empowered** to design, create, deliver or implement a change or initiative. Give them power, decision making, financial, resource, timing: it's theirs for the making.

I regularly use these five levels and 'depths' of involvement and participation (adapted from the International Association for Public Participation, or IAP2) to guide me in:
- o how to prepare for engaging with a team,
- o how to set up and design an environment a team is going to meet or work in,
- o what processes they'll work through when I'm facilitating a meeting or workshop, and
- o how to handle the stuff that happens during that team's meetings, work, conversations and projects.

What you do as a leader makes a b-i-g difference in how well a group or team goes towards achieving an outcome. And how you set the scene is super important.

It's not 'their fault' or 'up to them'. It's on you. If you've called a meeting, are facilitating a workshop, leading a piece of work or responsible for getting the outcome, it really helps to get clear about what you're going to do when and how you'll engage them to make something good happen.

Those crusty old days of workshops, meetings or conversations to 'discuss, decree and demolish' are gone. That's disengaging and ineffective. It's super low engagement.

Start with MY 'depth gauge' of participation and swim down to the levels that suit the outcome you're after and the people you're leading. If it's just about informing – stay on the surface. If it's about collaboration, you're going to have to go deeper, do more, design more and set things up so that people do indeed collaborate.

Just as a trained scuba diver plans their dive, maps out the use of their oxygen supplies and prepares their equipment, leaders too need to plan the depth of involvement and engagement with their teams, colleagues and stakeholders during times of change.

thoughts...

THE
FIVE
CAPABILITIES

1. START BEFORE YOU'RE READY

START BEFORE YOU'RE READY

'The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.' – Walt Disney

There's a message here from the Director of Your Life; don't wait for the script to arrive.

Get on with it.

Everyday life is the biggest improvisation of all. No script. No rehearsal. Get straight out on to the stage of life and start performing!

Ray Bradbury, the science fiction, horror and fantasy writer, said, 'First you jump off the cliff and you build your wings on the way down'. And although some believe the quote attributable to Kurt Vonnegut, another equally interesting and creative author, the message is the same: leap and the net will appear, you will adapt, you'll work it out and you'll be moving!

SPUR OF THE MOMENT IS OFTEN GOOD ENOUGH

For many planners, strategists and forward thinking folks, planning is a part of their everyday life. They plan their morning; they plan their lunch; they plan their afternoon; and they plan family holidays, expeditions and adventures. But to deal with the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous life which is how the world is now operating, to plan can sometimes be too slow.

I love the idea of starting before you're ready and making things up as we go along.

I joke with friends and family that there are some cities and towns in the world that if I had the opportunity to visit them again, you could take me to the airport right now. With nothing more than a credit card in my hand and my passport in my back pocket, I would work it all out as I went.

That idea can freak some people out. But I really would be willing to do that.

Starting before you're ready is a response based on a theory around improvisation. Step into any community or public theatre on any night of the week in almost any city around the world and you will be able to discover the talents and prowess of improvisers. They step onto stages, performing for paying public and they are able to create and deliver an incredible performance almost every time.

At the end of an improvised show, many theatergoers ask, 'can we come back tomorrow night and see this performance again?' Some audiences don't realise that the show they just saw was fully improvised. Perhaps, a suggestion was given from someone in the audience to start a scene for the performance. Perhaps, one of the performers has added their own ideas. In fact, this is what improvisation is. It's cutting loose your censor and setting free the inhibitions in your mind to deliver creativity.

When I first learned the skills of improvisation with Impro Melbourne and was encouraged to step onto stage as a performer, I always felt that I needed to rehearse a bit more or prepare in my mind what I was going to do. Just as improvisers step onto a stage without a script so must we in workplaces today.

The idea that we can start before we are ready, gives us permission to just have a go, to not have a plan, to not have a script, to not have a structure and to not have any clue where this might go! This of course can be terrifying for those who like to plan, for those who like certainty, for those who like unambiguous situation and for those who like steady and calm environments. This is a little different to the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity that are now in full swing in most industries across the globe.

Start before you're ready says don't worry about planning fully. If you are 80% ready to go, then go. If you are 40% ready to go, then go with something. If you are 20% ready to go, then go with that.

Start before you're ready. If you continue to plan out every single step of your idea, of your business opportunity, of your entrepreneurial thoughts or of your team's actions, your capacity to respond to volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity are minimized. To be able to start at anytime - particularly before you're ready - gives you the opportunity to respond, to adapt, to be agile and to be flexible.

Over the longer term starting before you're ready helps reduce your inhibitions, your structures, your limitations and your beliefs about what can be possible, what you can create and what you can do. And for the procrastinators among us (yes, me too), starting before you're ready is a very cool way to get some momentum, to get something 'out there' and get over your need for it to be finished, perfect or better before you put it out there.

Have a crack. Try it out. Start before you're ready and then document what happens. You could be on to something truly life changing for you and those you impact with your thinking, creativity and work.

LET GO, NOT KNOW, BE OK WITH IT

I was facilitating a workshop recently with a client and it was just the two of us. Just two brains in the room: Lisa and I.

My role was to extract and capture information, thinking, ideas and possibilities from her. Her role was to give, to let it flow, let it go, to speak, think, take risks and ... whatever! 'Let go, not know, be ok with it,' I said.

Lisa initially wanted such a detailed structure for every moment of the session. She wanted to know what was coming up next ... so she could be prepared for it.

But this wasn't a test. It was ok to not know. It was the perfect environment to throw an idea around, to think out loud, to talk about stuff ... and isn't that what 'workshop' means? I think when many teams set up a 'workshop' they want to hold on so very tight to the structure, format, what is said and what isn't said.

They can't seem to let go, they don't like not knowing and they're often not ok with it! With a great facilitator in the room, you can let go and not know. And you will be ok. Everyone will be ok. And if you don't have a facilitator in the room, then be that facilitator. Act with a facilitator's intent and let the group start before they're ready.

Cut to the end of the day and the output of my facilitated session with Lisa was a wall of completed flip charts that captured the thinking, the ideas, the strategy, the plan and the outcomes. She was excited and 'pumped' as she said, given what we'd achieved.

Her closing words were that she didn't think we'd get where we needed to go. And she'd certainly wanted to direct things more at the start of the day. The outcome surprised her given what she thought she would need to do to get to the end of the day.

I see this as a common trait of many leaders who think holding tight is what will get you your outcomes. It might, but you'll have a team of deflated folks around you whispering 'control freak' as you leave the room.

Let go, not know, and you will be ok with it... you never know what awesome might come of it that you just weren't planning!

A CHECKLIST OF SOME OF THE THINGS TO GET GO OF:

- [ ] Your view on that topic
- [ ] Your opinion on that issue
- [ ] The tension in your neck and shoulders
- [ ] The lungful of air you're holding
- [ ] Your normal way of doing that task
- [ ] The first idea you had about how you'll do that thing
- [ ] Your plan for the day, week, year
- [ ] Your beliefs about a team member's capabilities
- [ ] Your thoughts about the best way to accomplish a goal or task
- [ ] How you look at problems, issues, situations
- [ ] How you handle interruptions
- [ ] How you prioritise stuff
- [ ] Your outlook on today
- [ ] Your perspective on…
- [ ] Your opinion that…
- [ ] Your assumption that…
- [ ] Your belief that…
- [ ] …

SOMETIMES YOU NEED TO FREESTYLIN'

There's a TV show about Mike and Frank and their business Antique Archaeology. It's called *'American Pickers'*. Two American guys who drive around in a white van and they go 'picking'; they stop and look and pick out old items, antiques, retro gear, and old mechanical things to sell in their store.

Sometimes they respond to advertised sales, but a lot of the time... they're **freestylin'**. They're just seeing where the road takes them.

If they see an old barn on the side of the road with lots of old junk lyin' around, well they'll head on in and see if that nice owner in there would like to sell them something from their collection or junk pile.

They've found old classic relics, signs, toys and arcade games… and some of the quirkiest items that have been a big hit in their store.

How cool are they? They're taking the approach that anything is possible, anything goes. Anything is welcome. If you plotted their level of freestylin' on a freestylin-o-meter, they'd be way over on the 'high' side.

Is this high risk? Possibly. Do they get massive returns? Absolutely!

Have a go at freestylin… !
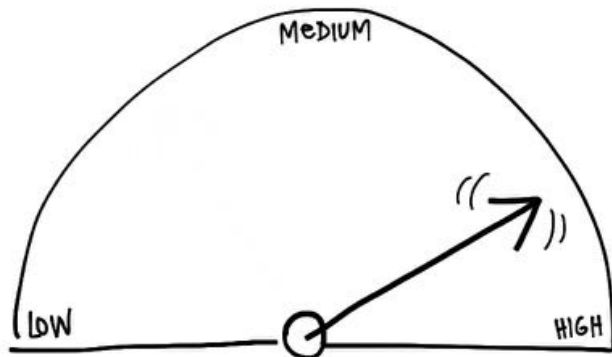
thoughts...

2. LIKE SURPRISES

SURPRISE!!!

Once you've started before you're ready and you're in motion, something exciting is going to happen: you're going to get some surprises.

There will be the unexpected, the unknown and the uncertain. Yes, some more uncertain.

You may think that starting wasn't a good idea; BUT you are in motion and have momentum and that is going to make you more able to respond than being at a standstill.

It's time to welcome 'spontaneity' to the stage of leading change.

Spontaneity is a natural tendency or impulse, of being unconstrained and unplanned. Our daily conversations so often can't follow a script. A guide or a structure, yes, but you can't know totally what someone else is going to say, react or respond. You have to have some capability to improvise. We all do.

WELCOME CHANGES

Do you put the welcome mat out during change or are you running off down a path with the gate locked behind you?

Once you've started and let go, and the surprises are coming, you've got to tune in, listen to and request feedback, changes and reviews.

Welcome changes from customers, clients, end users, no matter what stage of the process of design, development, delivery or sale of your thing, product, change, transformation or service.

Welcoming changes is a philosophy of the software development field of agile. They welcome changes because they are on a path of iterating and editing and reviewing and releasing changed and improved versions of the software, website, app or technology. Even if it's later in the process, changes, comments, and responses are welcome. That means what they're creating will be more useful, more suitable.

This is about acceptance, flexibility, adaptability. It's this input that keeps people engaged in what you're doing and makes what you're doing more tailored to the people who are using it.

ENJOY BOLTS FROM THE BLUE

One of the client projects I had a super fun time working on was with a sales team of over 1800 sales people.

A project we worked on was to boost their capabilities when they're with prospective clients. They were high performers with their technical and product knowledge and they were always keen to learn more about how to sell, engage with clients, lead their teams, build their businesses and adapt to the changing nature of their industry and the sales environment.

In one of the sales training programs, the team was asked to think about how they might explain their value to these prospects. What would they say? How would they say it? When might they step in to the conversation to explain that value?

Most of the sales team in the room that day wanted 'the script'. They wanted 'the track' as some of them named it.

'Tell us what to say and how to say it', '… and when to say it,' added another member of the team.

When we probed and asked questions further about what would be on this sales track or script, they said they wanted the words to know how to:
- o   start off the sales conversation
- o   identify the customer's needs
- o   ask the right questions that would lead them to getting a sale

- o handle the question about 'what do I get for that price?' and
- o respond to challenges, objections and flat out 'no' answers to their request for the business.

But a script or sales track wasn't going to save them!

These conversations are not rehearsed theatre.

Leadership - no matter whether you're a sales person, a consultant, a leader of a new team, a project manager, a parent or a pastor or a teacher - is spontaneous. Every freakin' day! Leadership and communication is spontaneous.

We can apply some structure or framework to guide and advise with an essence, style or theme, but to think that a script or track is going to give you the secret answer and remove the discomfort about not knowing what to say, is foolish.

You need to add your own style… to the organization's context and the team's situation, and the purpose that you're working towards and the goals you want to achieve and the needs of the client or customer.

The sales team protested: 'But why can't you just tell us what to say?'

That was the whole point of the exercise. The activity was about working through positioning your value, how you'd respond to what the customer said and how you would handle the situation. Every situation could be different, every client or need could be unique.

We did work out some of the key points they were going to communicate, the ones that are important, in line with the business philosophy and connected to values. Those were delivered, in the individual's style, and in the moment.

When we try and minimise uncertainty by wanting more structure or a 'track' or something we can be more certain of, I think capability development in handling the uncertainty is what's needed; not a script.

Tony Robbins in one of his audio CD sets (that I bought by dialing a toll free number at about 2.30am) talked about how we fluctuate in life with wanting uncertainty (so life isn't too boring) and certainty so that we don't freak out with not knowing what's happening.

If you've moved house recently, just think of how unsettling it all is. If you don't know where you're living from day to day, week-to-week, month-to-month, the uncertainty can be immense, so unpalatable that all we crave is certainty. Home. A place to fall and sleep safely and wake up tomorrow and know that everything is okay.

Perhaps this is more about our basic needs. Think Maslow and the Hierarchy of Needs.

But I think you need to be able to 'do surprises'. You need to be okay with not knowing what's going to happen, what you're team is going to come to you with, what your client is going to say and how you might handle or respond to what happens.

Do surprises. You'll be able to handle what happens.

Some of the best leaders handle spontaneity, uncertainty and unconstrained environments and situations. It's actually quite natural.

WHAT'S YOUR SQ?

Can you guess by now that I'm pretty pumped about spontaneity? I think it's one of the greatest capabilities that a team needs. And their leader too!
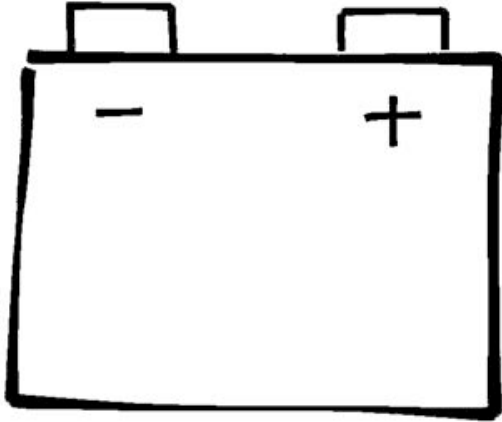
I don't think we're all born with a fully tweaked, full capacity spontaneity spirit – despite being free and fun loving kids.

And I know for sure that we all grow up and develop in environments that both nurture and limit our capacity to be spontaneous. There are school, family, community, cultural and societal happenings that boost our spontaneity and others that reduce or compress it.

So I reckon there is a need for not just an IQ (human intelligence), or an EQ/EI (emotional intelligence) but an SQ – a spontaneity intelligence or spontaneity quotient.

I think it's in direct proportion to your ability to handle change, shifts and frightening, fear-inducing situations. You need to ramp it up or fade away.

We have a spontaneity switch inside us but often we turn to that 'off' due to fear, or following rules, avoiding conflict or not stepping out of line. We need to trust our spontaneity switch. We're able to do lots of things in the spur of the moment. So flick your switch to spontaneity and you brain will run a 'transderivational search'. It's looking for vague or fuzzy matches to what you're asking for. Whatever the situation, question, query, project or task, you brain will

find you something. Switch your spontaneity switch to 'on'; your mind will dig up something that will be just fine!

AUTHENTIC LEADERS ARE SPONTANEOUS

Being spontaneous is about being authentic.

There's so much for leaders to read and listen to in today's on being:
- o authentic
- o present
- o real and
- o in the 'now'

… there just has to be a big place for spontaneity in teams, in workplaces and in times of change and uncertainty.

Apparently our social brain responds quite well to people who are spontaneous, natural, authentic people.

When we're looking for a partner and for the love of their life we often say they we're looking for someone who is 'down to earth'. It means being genuine and real.

I think it's when people hold stuff in, act like all is well when it isn't, that our radar picks up on those subtle cues of incongruence. Our old lizard brain inside probably responds with 'look out, threat ahead, you're gonna die!' and we interpret that as 'hmmmm, don't think I can trust this person' or 'not sure I like working with them'.

But spontaneity isn't about being crazy, out of control, chaotic, erratic, lightweight or a super-jokester. Focus is critically important.

Remember - what's the purpose, where are we headed, why are we doing this? What's this change all about?

TAKE A B-I-G HINT FROM THE PROFESSIONALS

Theatrical improvisers know all about spontaneity. These performers get up on stage and deliver some of the most entertaining, amusing, emotional and collaborative performances you've ever seen!

They may not have a script they're following, but they certainly work within a philosophy. There are a number of different principles or operating procedures that improvisers use. And while these principles are not written down on the stage door, on the wall in the dressing room or on the floorboards at the front of the stage, most improvisers know what they are.

They are principles that have become deeply embedded in the way improvisers think, the way they work, the way they communicate with others and the way they perform and live – on and off the stage.

Leaders, business teams, project people, groups and communities could learn a lot from how improvisers are able to just turn up, start before they are ready and like… even love surprises! (And that's to be expanded in my next book!)

BUT vs AND

In the 'but' versus 'and' battle, 'and' is the winner, yet somehow, 'but' continues to prevail in workplaces, conversations and goings on.

'So, team, what are your ideas for our end of year party?'
'We could go on a river boat cruise...'
'Oh, but some people might not like boats...'
'Ok, how about a theatre restaurant?'
Yeah, but you don't get very good value for money there.'

'Let's go and have a games afternoon of bowling, ice skating and retro arcade games'
'Yes, but that will just eat away at the budget we've got!'

Gee... thanks for the inspiration and encouragement dear leader, team member, person whoever you are!

Thou doesn't know the power of thine but!

The power your 'but' has to censor, restrict and stifle creativity.

Try instead to 'yes... and...'

Though I reckon many leaders fear that agreement is implied with 'yes and...'
It's not. What you're saying is 'that's great, keep the ideas coming... what else... what do you like about the river boat cruise... what is so much fun about the theatre restaurant?'

The 'but' negates all that came before it. It sounds like an argument when the environment is asking for creativity, contribution, collaboration and widening views and vision.

It truly is improviser rule number one! Accept what is said. Accept that this is someone's view. It may not be yours, but it is theirs. And you can make something awesome from this… together.

Important note: Some people, I'm not saying who, but 'some people', get carried away and think they need to remove 'but' from their entire vocabulary by the way. There are many, many times when the word 'but' is needed and vital. It's when 'but' is used after 'yes...'; when it's used in response to someone's idea that problems occur.

As a leader who 'buts' all over their team, you are putting up verbal challenges. You're saying 'here, jump up over this barrier' and 'ha ha – you won't get over this high tower of my

leadership ego' or worse 'I am the leader and I don't think I want to hear what you say so I'll say.... yes but...'.

Pooh pooh to the leader who says 'yes but'.

It's so yesterday.
It's so 'command and control' of old-school managers.
It's an old operating system and it needs deleting and upgrading with a new one.

The new system is 'yes... and...'

'Yes and' is collaborative. It invites possibilities. It allows room to move from what has been offered, to what else can be added to it and it is SO what leaders need to do in today's workplaces to encourage involvement, contribution, collaboration and innovative thinking. Yes... and... creates a productive environment for people to contribute and give.

Accept offers and say 'yes'. This builds momentum. Think superhighway rather than traffic jam. Blocking people's offers or rejecting them is what slows your responses, collaboration and productivity down.

Receive the contribution or idea graciously. Say 'yes... and...what else could we do while we are on the boat?' or 'yes.. and... what sort of food or entertainment would be good?'

This invites contributions. 'But' shuts them down, closes the gate and says 'goodbye.'

Yes... and... says 'what else do you have there?' 'Give us some more of your thinking', 'continue...'

I repeat: the word itself 'but' is ok; keep it in your vocabulary.

HOW ABOUT THIS?

Jason Geary has become known as a bit of a character on Australian TV as the 'Iselect' guy - which is an insurance company - and he has become their quirky and entertaining spokesperson.

Jason is a fantastic improviser. He has performed in marathon soap opera improvisations, in comedy festivals and in improvised long-form performances where a suggestion is received from the audience and the cast then proceeds to put on a performance of two-hours duration! Phew!

Jason also teaches people improvisation. One of the greatest games I've seen Jason play in his classrooms or in his practical application of learning improvisation is a game called *'How about this?'* Jason acts like a big Hollywood screen director, producer, or filmmaker and he encourages students and participants in the session to pitch their ideas to him.

You start by pitching your idea and saying 'how about this?' and then you then lead in with your idea for your big blockbuster movie.

So… 'how about this? Two guys are driving in a car and they pass an airport and they see that there is a private jet with the door open. So they drive in to the airport car park, they run across the tarmac, and they hop in the plane. The rest of the film is about their adventure.' If the audience claps and applauds and says, 'Yes, yes we like that' then the performers will perform that scene. If they do not like it, you have to **fail happily**, sit down and the next person gets up and pitches their idea.

'How about this?' is a wonderful way for people to put their ideas forward and to be encouraged to bring these to fruition. But if the ideas are not accepted or these are not such great ideas, then these can be easily put to the side rather than deleted. There's no need to go on about them or debate them for hours.

These ideas can simply be saved or you can press pause on them so they'll be available for future use.

'Yes...and' is one of the most flexible, adaptable and encouraging techniques when you've got a group of people who need to communicate and collaborate with each other.

And 'how about this?' is a cool way to take the metaphor of movie pitching and bring the idea of failing happily to bear on liking surprises.

thoughts...

MAKE YOUR PARTNER LOOK GOOD

For many people in workplaces today, it feels like a race, a competition, and an opportunity to outwit, outlast, and outperform your colleagues. Unfortunately, with Key Performance Indicators, salaries, bonuses, long-term and short-term incentives, the race is on for many people to get what they can get now and screw the rest of 'em.

The improvisation principle of **making your partner look good** turns this rat race on its head. Make your partner look good is an underlying principle of collaboration, of working together, and of achieving something that we can all be proud of; that we've all contributed to; and that might have truly lasting impact on a group, a community, a business or the world.

To make a partner look good on stage in improvisation means not making your partner look stupid. So if your partner has suggested something for a scene or contributed an idea, you don't denigrate it, you don't doubt it, you don't disagree with it. You say 'yes'. You say 'yes...and' and you add to it. In this way, you are making your partner look good because they contributed a suggestion. If their suggestion really isn't that good, you do what you can to work with it.

Some of the ways that people don't make their partners look good is by **'blocking'**. Blocking involves knocking, saying no or disagreeing with what the performer has suggested.

When I walk in to any workplace or any meeting room, I find blocking goes on constantly. It's an action that we have which is almost an unconscious reaction. It is an instinctive, reactive response that I believe we use as a survival mechanism. Our old lizard brain says 'I need to survive, I can't let that person think that they are better than me; I can't let that person be better than me; I am going to need to cut down, flatten or squash their idea'.

So blocking is born. Blocking is about disagreeing, denying or deleting or rejecting someone's idea… outright.

'Topping' is its evil cousin. It's another principle of improvisation that gets translated to the workplace and that puts the brake on collaboration and creativity is topping.

Topping is … when you hear what someone says, you've got something bigger and better to offer or you've done something more important.

In a conversation it might go like this:
'Hi, how are you going? You're off on holidays soon aren't you? Where are you heading?

'We're having our holidays in a country town on the river. '
'Oh ok, well we're going to Hawaii this year for a couple of weeks.'

Another person might join in with:
A couple of weeks in Hawaii?! We're off for eight weeks around Europe.'

And still another person might chime in with:
'Eight weeks around Europe?! Oh we're going for three months and then we're touring the world.'

As each suggestion comes, it's topping, increasing or bashing down on the previous one. It's doing it in a way that is denigrating, dissing, or deleting the previous person's comment or contribution. This doesn't make your partner look good. This makes your partner look small. It's a belittling move and it doesn't contribute to collaboration, cooperation or contribution.

Think about how you or others in your team might be topping each other in an effort to make each other NOT feel good. It's not productive, it's not helpful and it's not going to contribute to collaboration and working together in an uncertain environment.

Psychologists might refer to topping as leveling. An action where you squash someone, try to level them or bring them down to a size about one quarter of you!

It might make you feel better because it makes you feel more important. But in fact, the impact is worse. It doesn't make you feel better, it makes someone else feel worse and that's not a helpful team-thing.

TINA SAYS...

Super clever, funny and entertaining Tina Fey has published some *Rules For Improv* and she too says you need to respect what your partner or colleague has created.
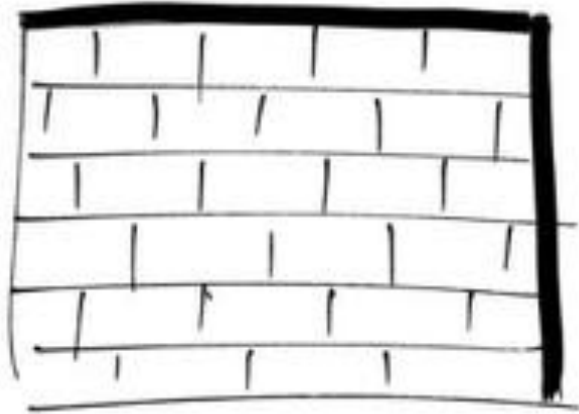
Even if you don't agree with it.

Otherwise you're heading for a stall, a stop or a dead end. That's no way to prosper, grow or develop.

Keep it positive.

Tina Fey encourages us to build on what's put forward, to add your piece and to help shift and shape the things you're working on together.

SAY 'BYE-BYE' TO THE BLOCKERS

So, stop it ok? No blocking. No being a brick wall, or a 'no through road' sign or a 'dead end'. Be a freeway…!

Improvisers are out to avoid blocking their fellow improvisers so that scenes are flowing, productive and engaging. They make the most of the team's knowledge and energy.

Same for our workplaces.
Unblock.
Open up to a magical performance.

Take time to reflect on what in your language, behaviour and expression might stop and hinder communication, engagement, collaboration and performance during times of change.

Let go of the 'butter'.
Yes... but...
Yes that's a great idea Sandra but....
Yes thanks for that contribution Damon but ...
Yes but you don't know how difficult it was when we tried that last time...

Say yes more often... it keeps enthusiasm.
Accept first; assess later.

EDIT THE SMARTASS

Being responsive, adaptive and handling volatile environments isn't about being a smartass, hog or know-it-all.

Rather, be smart, sassy and classy, quick, responsive and creative.

Viv McWaters, an improviser and creative facilitator in Melbourne ran an improv workshop in Melbourne a couple of years ago and I had the pleasure to be in the room, taking part. She shared small business-card sized cards with participants that had some of the key principles of improvisation printed on them.

I picked up one of the cards and it said 'put down cleaver'. I thought yes, good advice for leaders. Put down your weapons. Don't cut people down. Put down your cleaver.

Actually, it read 'put down clever'. Minus the 'a'. It wasn't about putting down your big meat knife; no, it was about putting away your smarty-pants, know-it-all attitude.

I think of it as us needing to edit the smartass that lives inside us. Because asking a seemingly dumb question can create the greatest intelligence – for all.

Edit your smart ass before you say it.
Edit the master know-it all. Be open to what you might learn, like and leverage from others.

POSSIBILITY LIVES ON THE PERIPHERY

There was a team of talented behavioural optometrists I had the pleasure of working with a few years ago. Behavioural optometrists? These professional people are optometrists, yes, but their view on optometry is much broader than just what your eyes see. These folks are in to everything that works to control your vision: your eyes, your brain, your thinking, cognition and motor skills… and probably more.

I had a walk and talk with Jill, a behavioural optometrist, one fine day. We were outdoors, walking through one of Melbourne's green parks. We were both wearing glasses and as the transition lens in our multifocal spectacles began to darken to adjust to the sunlight, Jill said to me: 'Lynne, did you know that our focus slows and our vision narrows as we get older?'

As I tripped on some uneven concrete I hadn't seen out of the corner of my eye, I said 'What? You mean I'm like an old horse and my blinkers are getting even thicker?'

'Yes,' she replied. 'This means you're less able to see the peripheral possibilities out there.'

Not just physically, but metaphorically, there are so many possibilities, ideas, options and choices, that we can't possibly see them all.

Jill's comment reminded me of watching a thick and clunky VHS video (on personal development at a workshop in the 1980s. The presenter remains nameless to me at this point, 30 years later, but the message doesn't.

The program spoke about 'scotoma' – a technical (and Greek) term for a blind spot in our vision. We all have them. It's where no photoreceptor cells are. And you know what? We don't know that we have them! We just don't know.

Less visual information gets in to those areas. And psychologists refer to a scotoma as a type of personality trait that we can't see in ourselves, but others pick it up in us quick smart!

Whatever or wherever your scotomas and blind spots are, and as your peripheral vision narrows, remember they you have these blocks, spots and limits to what you can see. You're never ever seeing everything that's possible. You're just not!

We need to always be looking for other areas, locations and ways where we can pick up ideas, thoughts and possibilities.

Ask others what they see, think, wonder and know. What they say may surprise you… but by now you like surprises don't you?

Together we can build up a bigger picture of things that will help us do the important work we have to do when there's change underway.

thoughts…

3. TRY SOMETHING ELSE
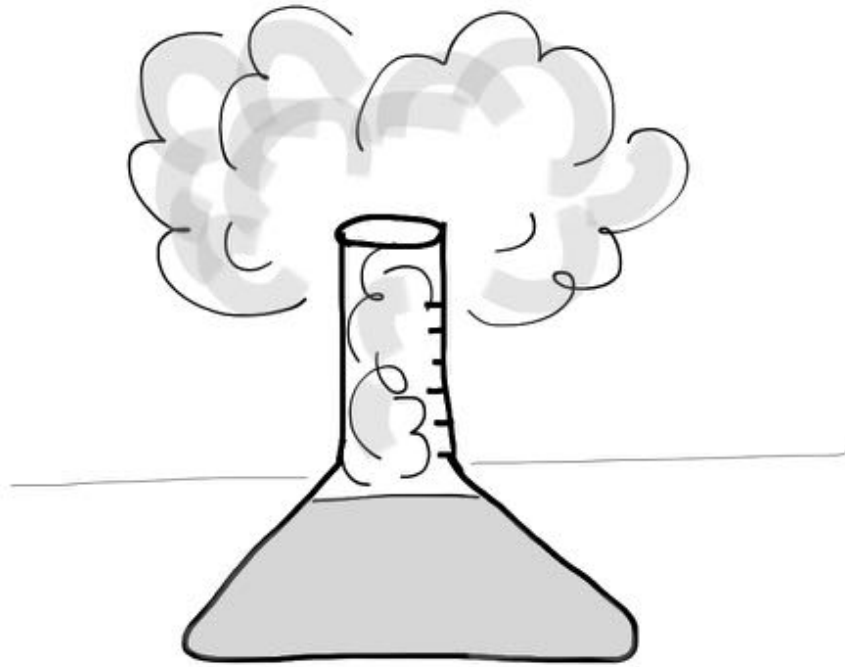
'The real measure of success is the number of experiments that can be crowded into 24 hours.' – Thomas Edison

EXPERIMENTATION

Experimenting helps you refine, edit and alter your offers, service, design or idea.

It would be rare for a product, service or idea to not be shaped by an experiment. Some of the best ideas that reach retail outlets and the shelves in our homes have been through plenty of experiments - many in labs and test environments. It's about seeing what works as well as what goes wrong.

Working with a global manufacturer over a number of years, I remember heading off to training rooms with team members and walking past the room labeled 'test kitchen'. It was an area of the business where clients, customers and users of their products were brought in and let loose.

Experimenting for them was about seeing what the customer did, and how they responded. And if you can watch your customer working with your product, or interacting with your service, all the better. If you can't see it and test it, then you're probably guessing and wondering about it. You're just 'hunching'.

GO AGAIN!

Building on the happy lessons of improvisers who say 'yes and' and who make their partners looks good, experimenting is also being willing to let go of your first idea. What else can you cook up?

At an improvisation workshop where performers were learning the tools, techniques and philosophies of improv, the phrase 'again' was shouted with joy when a scene was 'stuffed up' and they were lining up to have another go at it.

And live improvisers on stage will 'go again' with something else if what they just did didn't work so well. If the story didn't progress or their playing partner didn't pick up the line and run with it, they can 'go again', have another try and say or do something else. Anything else. Do something!

That's all we're talking about here. Go again. Have another crack at it!

Google applies experimenting to its employees with their 70/20/10 model where 70 percent of employee time is lined up against the core business, 20 percent to adjacent products and the remaining ten percent... well that's about experiments and innovations for the future, in the longer term.

And Amazon founder and CEO Jeff Bezos is big on experimenting too. He said 'If you double the number of experiments you do per year you're going to double your inventiveness.'

Amazon embraces experimenting as a normal part of business. They've tested whether to advertise on television, how to change shipping prices and all the while listening to customers and what ideas they had for Amazon to experiment and play with.

SO HOW TO EXPERIMENT?

JUST START IT!

It's just as I've advised here in *'Create Change'*; start before you're ready. What do you want to test? Think about how it might help the team, project, business or customer. And then you're setting out to check whether it will work. If you remember a science experiment from school days you were proving and disproving a hunch or hypothesis. Measure what happens and be clear what you're measuring... and that you can actually measure it!

KEEP IT GOING

With that measuring going on, you don't want to totally scrap things that aren't flying, or persist with something that isn't going well. It's about refining, adjusting, and continuing to learn. I often hear about how learning isn't shared across organizations so it's vital to share the results around, close the loop and learn. It's a way to avoid repeating 'mis-takes' or wasting time on a cycle of repetition.

THIS IS HOW WE DO THINGS AROUND HERE

Ok, now you're underway, this is a great opportunity to make experimenting and testing just a way of doing things, that it's the norm. It can actually be a way to line up future successes, funding, projects and people. Experimenting can be a booster to progress, innovation and success rather than a blocker or a brick wall.

CALL IT!

Call it an experiment, a test, a pilot a pre-something, a first cut, a dry run, a dress rehearsal, or an entrée; let people know this is your first (or subsequent) pass at trying something out.

REFLECT, TUNE, ADJUST... THAT'S AGILE

There are plenty of technology teams and businesses that know all about experimenting and responding to results, by being nimble. So I often wonder how far it's spread into other sectors and industries, and if it's spreading swiftly enough.

At a recent meeting with the CEO of a retail merchandising business, the message was getting through to them. They have to step ahead, be innovative, be responsive and adapt more swiftly than they have before. It's happening… but it's not happening overnight!

I've enjoyed learning from and working with some of the teams who use the 'agile' approach or philosophy to developing software. It really is about being responsive, adapting, iterating, improving and acting. And you can see it in action when these teams work together.

In early 2014 I headed off to Bangalore, India to the Agile India conference. I was sitting in my hotel room on the first night of arriving in this throbbing, busy city and spied the coffee table book which was…. curiously, on the coffee table! Simply titled *'Bangalore'*, the book's cover was adorned with bright, colourful culturally diverse images of this bustling and growing city.
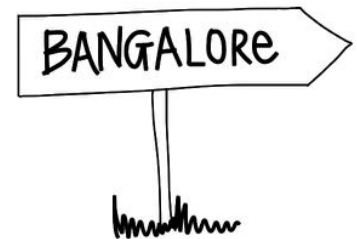
In the first few pages, the book declared that Bangalore calls itself the back office of business – or words to that effect. So many big corporates, blue chips and growing brands and names we know and use everyday, have an office in Bangalore. There are customer service teams and many technology development, software, website and application development teams that crank out and deliver some brilliant stuff.

So what a great location for a technology and software conference!

AGILe

So agile? It's a methodology that software development and other project teams use, but 'agile' is also an adjective. It describes something. To be agile… like a cheetah or other quick moving and swift thinking animal.
To be agile or nimble.
To be swift, sprightly, to be alert and responsive.

'Why agile matters' was a slide in a presentation one of the speakers at the Agile India conference in Bangalore. It was also some helpful information for selling the conference to your leader or boss if you couldn't get them to support you to go!

Why being agile matters was summed up like this:

> *We live in a dynamic world that is constantly changing and evolving. Our teams, products and processes also need to adapt to stay ahead of the change. Flexibility and agility – is embracing change and working with evolving needs… It is an integral part of agile software development.'*

Think this type of philosophy belongs in so many other fields beyond software and technology.

If the government department I was working with last week could be a little more flexible or evolving or agile, they could have achieved so much more in a shorter time. They could have responded to community needs, they could have implemented things and truly, they could have… saved lives.

Being able to respond, change and evolve is a human condition. We do it to survive.

We need to take that and apply it deliberately to our work, our communication, our leadership, collaboration and our communities so that they survive, thrive and reach higher levels of performance.

In that way, the work, the deliverables, the output will be more rewarding, more interesting, more inspiring, more purposeful and it will matter.

This is what experimenting is. Putting something out there, reflecting on it, tuning, adjusting it, putting out another version of it, testing that… and onward.
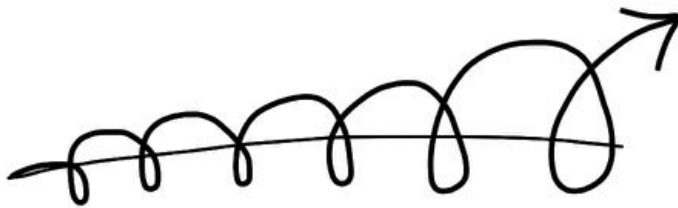
Several colleagues in my network are releasing manifestos - a declaration of their intentions or views on the philosophies behind their thinking and their business.

Some of them are lists of statements, others are beautifully designed slides or photo images perfect for Pinterest!

My favourite manifesto is the Agile Manifesto and for those who work in the project or software development world, this may be well known to you. But for those who aren't living in project-land, Agile has so much to offer other fields and industries.

Here's why... the Agile manifesto lists positive philosophies about how teams and groups can work together to create, design and deliver. It includes things like:
1. Reflect, tune and adjust
2. Build projects around motivated individuals
3. Changing requirements are welcome
4. Early and continuous delivery...

These can be the hallmarks of an innovative team, a capable leader and a collaborative group of folks who are open to what's going on. No matter what field you're in or what you're working on, whether it's your own business ideas, a new project or piece of work or a whole new career, adopting just some of the agile principles from the manifesto can give you a new take on some of your old practices.

This is my take on the Agile Manifesto – in a visual form.

Look, think, let it marinate... how might you bring some of this agility and experimentation to your current ways of working, thinking, collaborating and creating?

BUILDING IN THE QUALITY

With an agile approach, quality isn't an add-on or a 'later thing'. It's built in, because you're testing, developing, measuring, looking and learning, and you're adjusting so many things that the quality has the potential to be awe-some.

When you get people working collaboratively, across functions, teams and units, and you have some early testing or demonstrations of what you're creating, you have the potential to build and improve the quality. You'll reach better quality early, rather than ultimately. Ultimately will be too slow. You make quality a part of how the whole process, life cycle and iterative approach works. 'It's just how we do things around here.'

Agile is visible. See it, do it. See how it is being done. It's not squirreled away in a cupboard. It's open for the team, collaborative, clear and visible. That means stakeholders, sponsors, people who have been involved or collaborated have the opportunity to continue to be involved and continue to collaborate. It's clear and transparent.

Walk around an agile development room or team area. So much of their work will be visible. Either on monitors:
- o   this is what part of the website is live,
- o   this is what we're testing,
- o   this is what we are sampling

… or on the walls and whiteboards –

- o   this is what we are working on,
- o   this is who for,
- o   this is what we are doing,
- o   this is what we will do next,
- o   this is what's done.

DO SOMETHING … AND THEN DO SOMETHING ELSE

'Do something rather than having lengthy discussions about doing something.' – Keith Johnstone, teacher & awesome godfather of improvisation

Forward progress and momentum is a wonderful thing. Once you're in movement you can change direction, shift and adapt even quicker.

It's like a dancer with their feet in position one – toes pointing outwards – able to shift off in any direction. It's about being decisive, not right. It's about momentum and action.

This type of action, movement and momentum reminds me when I was sailing for 15 + years with my father, Noel. We sailed on a high performance dinghy called a Tasar on the waters of Port Phillip Bay in Melbourne, Australia.

In the races we sailed in each weekend, you would sail up wind, sailing and tacking or zig zagging into the wind and then be craving for when you could really fly... turn around the marker buoy and then go across the wind.... Woo hoo! You could get the boat up on the plane and get a-splashing! Zoom! Fast and exhilarating. Powerful progress.

Sometimes this type of sailing would feel uncontrollable: you might veer off course, but there was such power, progress and momentum from the wind being channeled through sails and the design elements of this Frank Bethwaite-designed boat. From this speedy position you were able to catch up on the competition, speed away from others, and most of all, blow the cobwebs out!

Get that 'planing' feeling in your team, work and innovation. Catch a wave and do something with it. Then another wave… and another.

SOME SOONER IS BETTER THAN ALL LATER

As a child I remember when my mother Shirley (who just turned 80 last week!) would whip up a tasty cake on a Saturday afternoon.
The ingredients would come out and then one by one they'd go into the mixing bowl. After the 'mix' and the 'pour' into the cake tin, the bowl and the beaters were mine... all mine! <evil laugh>

Tasty cake mixture that hadn't seen the oven yet!
Some cakes mixture leftovers were tastier than others but it was a hint of the saying 'some sooner is better than all later.' Sure, I would have a little of the cake once it was cooked, but there was always that test or taste of what was to come, with some baking time.

It's the same with projects, ideas you're working on and pieces of work on your 'to do' list. It's also one of the quickest ways to get ideas into action.

Get it out there so people can have a taste of some of it sooner, rather than waiting and giving them the whole finished thing later ... which they may not like the taste of. Gone! All that time working on something that wasn't to their taste.

Many software developers and other types of technology workers use this approach often. They deliver smaller working pieces of their projects quickly so that people can test them out and give feedback. Changes are made and the next working version or piece is tested and delivered.

The Lean StartUp Movement, in the book popularised by Eric Ries calls it a 'minimum viable product'.

Quality gets built in, overall delivery to market will be quicker and you'll stay more competitive. And there is the 'buzz' of getting something shipped that helps motivate and inspire us to action... and then more action.

Ok ... so what have you got sitting there on your list or the 'not quite done' project file that could be put out there now? Today. As it is.

Give people a taste of it now. Ask and listen to feedback. Make improvements. And then keep that conversation going about what they want and how they'd like it. Mmmm tasty. Yum!

WORK IT BABY, MAKE IT WORK

Continuing on the theme of experimenting, delivering and doing something, it's super motivating measure progress by the delivery of working solutions.

This is about productivity, about output, about doing something. It's about building momentum, helping people see that progress is being made.

I recall reading about a team connected with Design Thinking who got together and created a book in 12 hours. Yep, 12 hours. Done, discussed, planned, written and laid out. Ready to go.

Barcamp is a conference model that runs in locations all around the world over a weekend where focus is targeted to the purpose of designing, creating and delivering something, usually a product or a software program.

Do something,

Work it and make it work.

Success. Delivery. Done.

I DIDN'T THINK... I EXPERIMENTED

If you haven't experimented recently, then kick off every day or week with a dose. There's no need to over think, ponder for too long or wonder.

Just start. Try something out. Then try something else. Keep on experimenting.

'I didn't think; I experimented,' is exactly what Wilhelm Rontgen did.

If you've ever had an x-ray, you can thank Wilhelm, maybe not for what caused your need to have an x-ray but for the possibility of the x-ray. It was he who discovered and detected the wavelength that we know today as x-rays, or 'Rontgen rays'.

A Nobel Prize later and he was recognised as truly having changed the future of health care and medicine.

And if you're a fan of the TV show *'Big Bang Theory'*, you'll understand how cool it is that Wilhelm was also recognised by having one of the elements named after him. Number 111, Roentgenium.

He didn't just sit, gazing out the window thinking about how x-rays might work. He got to it, experimenting, testing, trying things out. Wilhelm took notes after each of his experiments and kept on testing and investigating. He too was human... and he was worried that his ideas may have been seen as a bit too out there or in error.

Without his experiments, our health care and medical diagnoses could be so very different. Wilhelm is a brilliant inspiration and a reminder that few pieces of truly impactful work are created by just thinking. Sure, start with a thought, an idea... but then go and test it out. Talk to someone about it. Get a minimum viable product up and out there to see how it might be received, how it could work, what else needs to happen to make it work in times of change.

THINK CRITICALLY – SMARTEN UP

'The unexamined life is not worth living.' – Socrates

We are the only creatures on earth who can think about how we think, deserves some attention. Some time to think about it in fact!

Now if you're an over-thinker, or you dwell too long thinking about your thinking, take a dip inside the brilliant *'Stop Thinking, Start Living'* book by Richard Carlson. He has some tips about how you can think in a positive and productive way as well as get on with your life.

I think we can improve how we think. We can do more to think about the processes we use to think, how we can use our thoughts and how with more insight, impact and influence we can really do some brilliant stuff.

Critical thinking is about being alert to the intelligence we have to study ourselves and our thinking. Heck, there's even a Council for Excellence in Critical Thinking and they reckon that critical thinking is a disciplined process where we actively and skillfully conceptualise, apply, analyse, synthesise and evaluate information. This information we're giving focus to may have been observed, experienced or it may have come through reflection or reasoning or communication.

Above all, we think critically when we are guiding ourselves, disciplining ourselves and we're trying to find higher levels of quality in our thinking.

So we're thinking about how we're thinking when we're confronted with a problem or a topic or a challenge or an issue. And we need to be aware that if we aren't thinking about how we think, our capacity to think better will deteriorate. We're beautifully flawed creatures aren't we? We do need to think about how we think!

Even the best of thinkers can improve. You can always improve on your capacity to reason: to move away from bias, prejudice, irrationality or other hiccups like distortions, social rules and our deeply vested interests in the things that make us human.

But it's still a complex thing to do this thinking thing! It's not about just simplifying things and making it super easy for digestion. Particularly when issues or problems are wicked and complex. Simplifying just doesn't do.

Instead, it's about thinking so we can ask questions, identify problems and home in on them with clarity and precision. You want to hunt and gather information, interpret it, develop conclusions, test those conclusions and keep moving it along.

Oh, and look out for those assumptions you might be making.

The best critical thinkers are able to do all of this AND then package it up and communicate well. Particularly when there are complexities in the information.

THINKERS LIKE...

Thinking critically is about thinking ahead.

You could try mapping out some scenarios.
Or weighing up some different options.

Or you could just hang around some smart people and absorb like a sponge!
Learn from other critical thinkers.

There are plenty of critical thinkers from our history. People like:
- o   Sigmund Freud
- o   Henry Ford
- o   Albert Einstein
- o   Isaac Newton
- o   Bill Gates

Aaaah, where are the ladies?

- o   Thomas Edison
- o   Steve Wozniak
- o   Carl Sagan
- o   Jack Kerouac....

Hang on, where are the chicks? The ladies?

- o   Nelson Mandela
- o   The Wright Brothers
- o   Marie Curie.... Aaaah, there she is!!

I was reading through an article on *'Critical Thinkers Through History'* and so it seems the author thought not many women should be acknowledged for their thinking prowess in ages gone by.

And that needs to change.

Brilliant scientists, researchers, development workers, business owners, entrepreneurs and problem solvers put critical thinking to work every day.

Sheryl Sandberg. Diana Laufenberg. Maria Popova. Rosabeth Moss Kanter. Lucy Marcus. Cheslea and Hilary Clinton.

Take Tina Fey again, improvisation guru, funny lady and smart, smart thinker.

I'll add another of her thoughts to the improvisation guidebook:

Rule#4 There are no mistakes... only opportunities

In improv there are no mistakes, only beautiful happy accidents. And many of the world's greatest discoveries have been by accident.

The lesson then is: stay positive, learn to adapt

If you do work of any meaning, mistakes are going to happen. Imagine the difference one simple change in attitude like this can make on having a positive work environment. Just like improv, not every project will go as planned. You can take the amateur approach; stop the scene, destroy the momentum, and start over. Or you can be a pro; adapt to the change, make it your own, and do something greater.

4.
GOCO
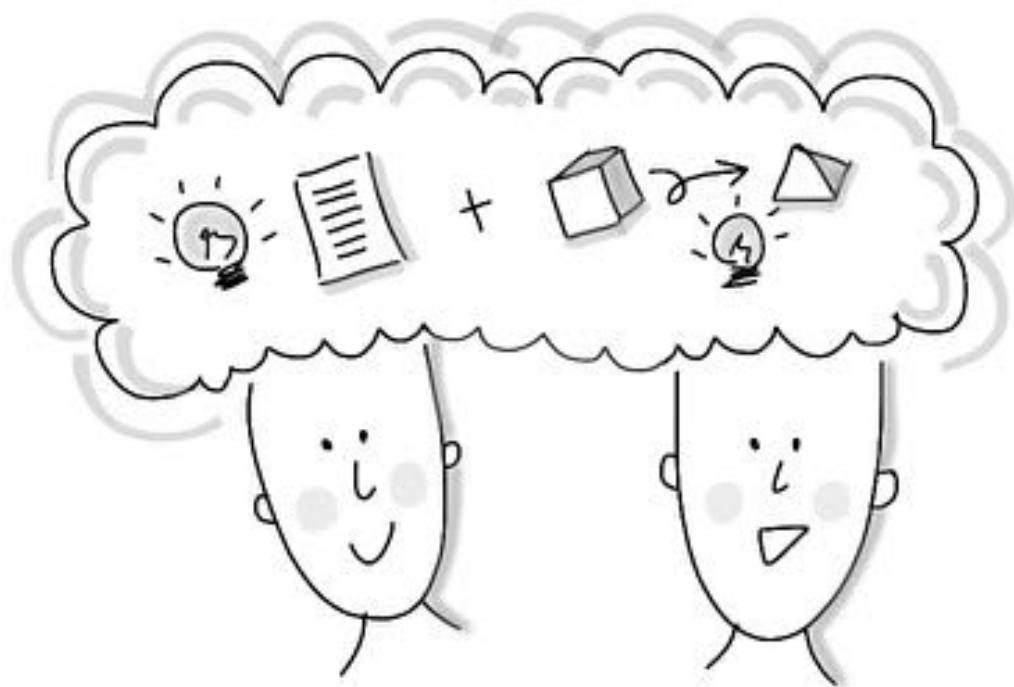
IT'S A CO-BRAINER

'No matter what accomplishments you make, somebody helped you.' - Althea Gibson

Sometimes I read quotes that people include at the start of chapters in books and I think 'Ok, nice quote, but who's that person?'

When I read the above quote and saw it was by Althea Gibson, I looked into it. I read up on her.

She lived from 1927 – 2003 and was an American tennis player and professional golfer and the first black athlete of either gender to cross the color line of international tennis. In 1956 she became the first person of color to win a Grand Slam title.

All athletes share stories about the people around them that support them - family, coaches, fitness and nutrition specialists. What must Althea have experienced? How did she persist? What drove her on? Who was at her side, on the wings, on the sidelines supporting her in her endeavours? Cheers to them too, because no doubt it was a collaborative and cooperative effort over many years.

That really is a 'grand slam'!

COME TOGETHER, RIGHT NOW

Interactions like co locating, buddying and pairing people can make awesome stuff happen - learning, collaboration, problem solving, knowledge sharing. Why do we need to sit in stables, stalls, pods and cells all on our lonesome? Share a desk and go co!

There's a reason why co-working spaces like the Hubs across the world are a boon; there's a reason why agilistas working on software development – a highly technical output – sit next to each other and do a piece or aspect of work called 'pair programming'.

As Althea Gibson said, it's pretty likely you're going to achieve things with others. In the workplace, it's almost impossible to go it alone. So it's a 'co-brainer'. You'll need to be doing something with someone, sometime.

I'm disappointed at how little planning some people do to make any type of 'co' activity creative, engaging or dare I say ... enjoyable!

Over recent weeks I've heard about b-o-r-i-n-g teleconferences, 'all talk' workshops and supposedly consultative sessions that were really a presentation of what had already been decided. That's not 'co'. It's time wasting and disengaging.

To step up the productivity, inject some creativity and get the outcomes you need. Working together with others is a 'co-brainer' when you know how.

Henry Ford is often quoted for his insight and progressive thinking; I've always liked this one: *'Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success.'*

CO-CREATION : CHOOSE LIFE

The software developers and agile project people I spoke of earlier in the book have as one of their principles in the Agile Manifesto:

Choose interactions with individuals and groups of individuals, over working on processes and tools.

I love it!

You'll be more human, agile and responsive if you interact with other humans to find solutions and take a collaborative approach. The processes and tools stuff can fall in behind, to be your system, your way of bringing it to fruition or your way of creating a repeatable process.

But co-creation is about connection, engagement and relationship.

That's why I get so worked up when people send emails to each other across the pod or small group of desks rather than speaking! Aargh!

LOOK OUTSIDE

'If you want to see the future coming, 90% of what you need to learn you'll learn from outside your industry.' - Gary Hammel, author, 'Leading the Revolution'

To keep up with the pace of change and all that volatility and uncertainty, learning from others is critical. And have a go at learning from people outside of your current field of vision: outside your industry, outside your sector, outside your current thinking.

Co-creation is what this is truly about. It helps bring big smarts into your team, organization and business. It can be quick, economical and all sorts are diving into it - the big players and the sharp startups.

Co-creation is more than collaboration. It's about finding interesting souls to bring in to your fold. Think of new product development. You hook up with some customers, some suppliers perhaps, some regulators, other industry innovators and pool the thinking. You collect thoughts, evaluate and shape them and before you know it, you be co-creating man!

Your capacity to innovate goes skyward and you're tapping into resources that don't need to be installed on your team. Plus it's super quick. No need for a lengthy recruitment process, or pesky appointments or for getting people up to speed. In workshops that are collaborative and well designed, you can be getting a concept scoped up in hours and days rather than weeks and months.

John Baxter is a co-creation advocate and a big part of CoCreate Adelaide in Australia which is 'a community and an incubator to inspire and realize the futures we care about.'

He says that better connected, stronger communities are better able to make visions real. This is true individually as well as collectively.

Importantly, CoCreate Adelaide emerged from conversations about the city Adelaide and the visions and ideas of the people of Adelaide. Their blog at www.cocreateadl.com says:

> *'Every day, people like us sweep their ideas under the carpet because they don't know what to do, or because they have been taught that to act they need permission or that they need to know all the answers. Their passion is wasted. We resolved to create a forum where people can bring the visions that they hold, and connect with others like them.'*

When you get people with ideas and opportunity working together, the results truly are brilliant.

I've worked with several industries on co-creation projects: consumer goods, community festivals, retail, IT, transport and logistics … and when you delve into their backlog of ideas or their list of possibilities, it's big! There's plenty to draw on and revisit if you don't get around to them on the first pass or first development.

Teaming up with a global product developer to run a co-creation day brought a deep pool of ideas. We invited groups of suppliers, stakeholders, customers and team members into the room and away we went, thinking, scoping, sharing, talking, ideating, evaluating and refining. It was a full day and a boost to the business' plans for how they might make savings, redesign some of their approaches and make better products and services.

Above all, it's an adaptive and agile practice that helps you get to market with your offer sooner. I love the agility of running my own business in the same way. You take an idea that's got legs and make it run, not walk.

Always be thinking diversity … invite varied views, talents, experiences, cultures and backgrounds to the table or conversation to co-create goodness!

FACILITATING CO

When you need to facilitate or lead a collaborative, creative and co-creation environment, it doesn't happen by 'winging it' or some harried preparation on the way into a meeting room. I think you need to focus on four key elements:

YOU

The way I see it – and have experienced it – you need to firstly get your own 'sh*t' together.

You won't be great at facilitating, responding, leading, designing, guiding or being open to what happens if you've got 'pre-existing conditions' about the group, team, topic or situation.

I like to spend some time focusing on how I will need to be; what type of style, approach and energy I will need to bring to the room, situation and group to get the best out of them. And given people are working in this uncertain and volatile environment, there will likely be a bunch of pressures and challenges you'll need to deal with, understand and handle.

ENVIRONMENT

Once you're sorted and ready to facilitate, you need to focus on building a strong platform of environment; an environment that's suitable for co-creation, co-design and collaboration.

When people are comfortable, safe and have a clear view of why they're there, their input, suggestions and ideas will be more forthcoming and they'll be more open to contributing. Remember that different things motivate people. For some it's about recognition of their contribution or ideas; for others it's the opportunity to give; for others, it's about working with other people.

You're responsible for the environment created; and you can change it. Work on that, remember that.
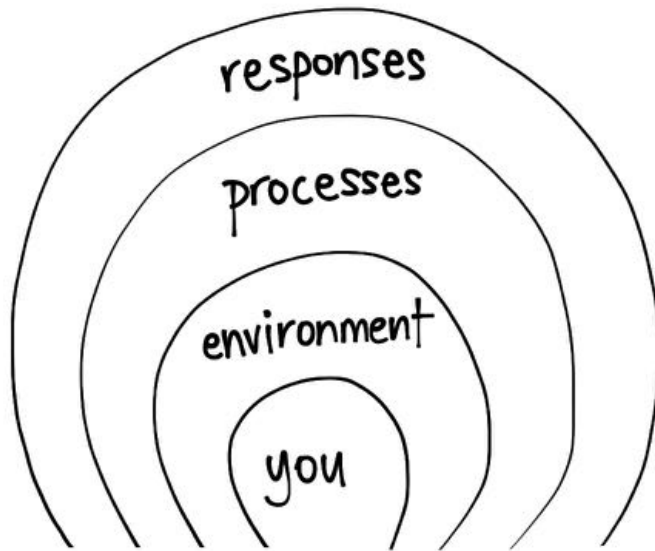
PROCESSES

There are so many different models, techniques, approaches and processes you can use when you bring a team together. 'Just talking' may be one of them, but I don't let people 'just talk'. I'll create an agenda or process that has talking time in it, dialogue, conversations, wonderings… but there will be other things in that agenda too. Like facts, data, stories, visual mapping, scenario planning, group work, ideation, prioritizing, action lists… and whatever they want to do!

Be prepared with what processes or structures you'll have running in the background of any meeting, workshop or environment that is aiming to get people contributing, collaborating and co-creating.

RESPONSES

And then once you're sorted, the environment is great for co-creation, you've got a process that's running… you'll be free to respond and handle what happens. You really need to be able to 'like surprises' as I outlined earlier in the book and to handle the uncertainty that group and team conversations and workshops can bring up, particularly when change is on the agenda or a reason for why you're all there. You've got to be able to focus on that which happens and bring your best leadership to the situation.

Be present. Be spontaneous.

responses

processes

environment

you

It looks like this...

My four step model of facilitating 'co'

*Start at the bottom there, with **you**. Get your own stuff together, create a strong and safe **environment**, design and set out a **process** that will be used and then be ready, on the front foot, to **respond** and handle what happens.*

WHAT IF THEY'RE NOT HERE IN THE ROOM?

There's often that 'yeah but' response when there are remote, distributed or other time zoned people. How do you collaborate and co-create when a team is split across countries, continents and time zones?

Whether it's a video hookup or audio only, there are plenty of tricky challenges:
- o how do you keep people engaged
- o how do you know if they're engaged
- o how do you achieve what you need to do in the time available
- o how do .... <insert your challenge and question here!>

I am an occasional listener (weird as it may be but thanks to my father's careers and keen interest in all things mechanical) to the air traffic control radio feed of the international airport in my home city of Melbourne, Australia.

Think about it: hundreds of people flying through the air at speed in the airspace above you, in big metal tubes, with a couple of people 'up front' in control of the metal tube. On the ground, air traffic controllers observing, managing and directing traffic through and around the airspace.

I think this is the ultimate in remote and distributed collaboration and communication.

Heights, speed restrictions, approaches, departures, angles, gate allocations, weather advice, wheelchair requirements for passengers (yes, they arrange this in the air) and many other key pieces of information are communicated, resolved, discussed and arranged. Shorthand, codes and abbreviations are used as part of their operational jargon. It's efficient.

Questions are asked by pilots: 'Can we cancel our speed restrictions?' And they are answered by air traffic controllers.

Controllers ask questions of pilots: 'Can you use runway 27 or do you need 35?'
And problems are solved: 'Our headset for arrivals transmission is not operational. Can you relay please?'

If day in and out these critical pieces of information are able to be encoded, communicated and decoded in what can be perilous environments, a phone or video hookup with the team in another city shouldn't be so hard!

Put simply, when you're collaborating and co-creating over distance, time and space, you just have to allow for:
- more time than you think you'll need for a topic
- time to introduce, engage, map out the agenda, take questions
- opportunities for problem solving, information sharing and collaborating : these are different activities and so they need a different approach, and
- time and space for general discussions and 'wonderings' by participants too.

In your haste to get 'stuff done', you might be communicating some messages you had no intention of conveying! The consequences could be far reaching and the rework may be costly and time consuming.

I'll often check understanding – and check again for questions.

And I'll wait…. <pause>, before I jump in.

Play air traffic controller at your next remote meeting and focus on clear communication and great collaboration.

ON S-O-N-G!

Don't hold on too tight to your team or group during times of change. You can let go and let people organize themselves. It's also known as a SONG: A Self Organizing Network or Group.

Self-organizing teams are not new but hey, they can be great fun and effective.

When it's holiday time in my life, my husband Michael and I often head off in our four-wheel drive and travel through outback Australia seeing red dust, sand dunes and remote areas. It's not around the bitumen roads of Australia, but 'off the black top', to places where there are only wheel tracks leading off into the distance.

A few years ago, a group of us, about six vehicles, designed and organized our own trip. We'd been travelling with an organized tour group called Great Divide Tours and using their wonderful tour leaders, mechanics, itineraries and campsite know-how. But one year we chose to organize a trip ourselves.

From all parts of the country we travelled and we met up at a central location. We mapped out an itinerary and the trip quickly became known as

the Across Oz Mystery Tour. It's not that we didn't know where we were going, but that perhaps we may not come back!

In fact it is so beautiful and peaceful out there in the remote areas of Australia's outback country that once we'd been out there for a few weeks, we truly didn't want to come back!

We were absolutely a self-organizing group. It was brilliant to see what a group of people can do to get where they want to, across this harsh and unforgiving country – people do perish out there in remote deserts and outback areas – but we had a well-planned, organized and successful trip. We were truly 'on song' as a self-organizing group.

This year we reconnected with the tour group and tackled another challenging outback trip with the safety of the professionals - just as successful, if not a little different than a self-organized trip.

How could you apply this to your workplace, your team, or one of your projects coming up? How might you be able to let the team or group do their own thing, work things out and set up their agenda or itinerary and do their own planning based on what they've already learned and already experienced?

Self-organization is an empowering and motivating approach to leadership.

Often people will know what to do if given the opportunity. Why not let them do it. Let them sort out who, what, when and where. Most times they will not disappoint. If things don't quite go to plan, there is great learning to be had.

It's about independence, interdependence, empowerment and choice.
It builds trust, a track record and the learning and experience can be built on, added to and importantly, debriefed!

ADD SOMETHING

To keep momentum in collaboration going, you'll need to add something.
You'll need to hit the ball back over the net, bat back to the other person or people so there is some flow, forward motion and momentum.

I heard from a colleague about how Qantas airlines had put a number of their staff through improvisation training. Why? So they could put on performances when the onboard entertainment system was re-booting? Nah! It was so their interactions with customers would be richer.

It's about customer service and the in-flight experience remember … as well as taking off, landing and being on time and other important flying stuff.

When I next had the opportunity to travel on Qantas, I was eyes wide open on the look out for how their behaviour or responses might have had some improvisation attached.

And I've certainly noticed, they are absolutely adding something. They started interactions, they added personal anecdotes, quips and cute responses. They were inspiring, settling, mood changing and service building.

Like the time I was boarding a Qantas flight in Melbourne with my big roll of visual facilitation paper under my arm in a black plastic bag.

I'm walking down the aisle with my big, long black round thing under my arm and a flight attendant greets me. It goes like this:
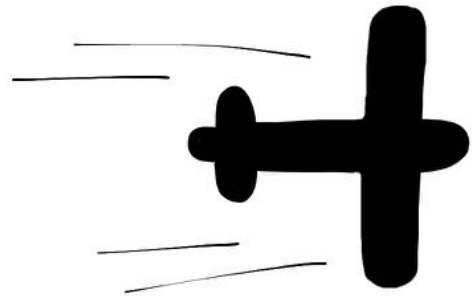
Flight Attendant: Hello, welcome aboard?

Lynne: Hi, there, thank you.

Flight Attendant: Hey I hope that isn't a bazooka under your arm there?! (Oops, making inappropriate bomb-related comment while on board a plane)

Lynne: Oh no, it's just a roll of paper (avoiding inappropriate bomb-related comment while on board a plane)

Flight Attendant: Oh ok.

Lynne: No danger here. Best I could do is give the pilot a paper cut!

Flight Attendant: But hey, yes there could be a big danger with that! A friend of mine got a small paper cut on her hand one day and in a couple of weeks it had gone all gangrenous and she was close to having to have her hand amputated! It was all gross and …

Lynne: Oh what?! Poor thing. Hey, what's for lunch today by the way…

Flight Attendant: <laughs> Welcome aboard!

We fly for 90 minutes and then as I'm disembarking…

Flight Attendant: Watch out for those paper cuts!

Lynne: Will do… thank you, boom, errr, I mean bye.

Conversations, collaboration and co relay on 'co' – together. Keep playing and hit the ball back over the net. Boom !

FACE OFF TO SWITCH ON

The best form of communication is face to face, preferably co-located.

I find it interesting that agile and software development methodologies, even though they are often about creating technology and software, favour face-to-face communication. And co-locating people.

It might seem ironic that the people developing the technology that makes use of less and less human interaction, face to face, should prefer face-to-face communication. And although we communicate across vast distances with the tap of a few buttons on Skype on our mobile or send off an instant message to someone in the next booth, pod or 'cell' at work, the teams who developed these apps, programs and software have most likely been sitting next to each other. Yes some of their team might have been located in another country, culture and time zone but they are super conscious of the impact and power of communicating and how face-to-face is the winner.

Sitting next to each other, located near/next to each other is right up there on these technology developer's to do list. Meet, talk, collaborate, communicate, resolve, ideate, implement – in close proximity.

You'll switch on higher levels of communication and collaboration when you face off. That is... look at each other, see each other and hear each other.

And with the rise in co-location venues and environments like Hub co-working spaces around the world, it's no wonder hanging out with other people is a productive and collaborative things to do.

Jurgen Appelo who is a great advocate of creative, engaging and inspiring workspaces, commented in a presentation in London at the Spark Conference, that co-location is about shortening the mental distance between people, not necessarily the physical distance.

Working in the proximity of others can make great things get done. This doesn't preclude quiet time, quiet reflection or solitary working when it is needed, required, craved or warranted; but don't isolate people.

Allow them space, opportunities, possibilities and potential to co-create and co-laborate.

Co – lab – orate : get together in an experiential environment and talk with each other!

FIRST IN... BEST SEATS...LOWER OUTPUT

While the benefits of facing off are being recognized in many organizations, it's disappointing to see that some 'old hands' and big corporates in their new state-of-the-art buildings in big cities providing a fair dose of 'first in, best seats'.
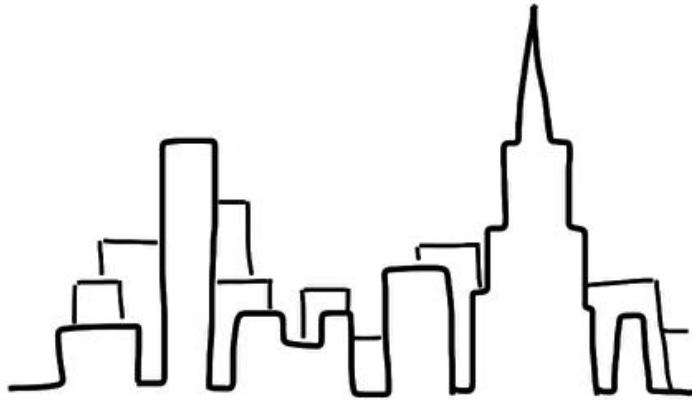
No organized team or unit areas; you sit where you sit. Hot desks. This is contra to a company like, say, Flight Centre who organize their teams in pods of six or so team members to boost high levels of engagement, interactivity and performance.

But hot desking? That's about having fewer desks than the total number of employees who are stationed in that building. The lower number is set at a level that accounts for those who are away on leave or ill, travelling elsewhere to branches or interstate offices for work, meetings or conferences. And of course, those who choose to telework, work remotely or work at home. It's just like how there are never enough bunks on a ship or submarine for the number of sailors on board. That's because some of them are up on deck, others are working, eating, some are sleeping. Oh that's not hot design; that's warm bunking!

Who's been sleeping in my bunk?

Actually, it's 'who's been adjusting my chair? I like the arms here, the back-rest there, the bum part there and the back there. Now those people who used this workstation yesterday have gone and changed everything. I should send them my physiotherapy bill!'

I spoke with some of the team members who were coming out of a hot desk building one day and asked them about the first come, best seats arrangement. How does it help the team? Can they still communicate, engage and collaborate well?

Well... err, no!

It's great for business efficiencies and financial bottom line but it totally 'sucks' for collaboration. Their words.

I step on to my soapbox now and wonder with great disappointment – what the hell were they thinking? How does it help the team? And don't go and dress it up as 'enabling you to network across the organization' or 'connect with other teams and departments'. I disagree.

Help the team? It helps the business with their dollars and they're losing out in the end because of the additional time it takes to find people, connect with the people you work with and create collaborative environments for spontaneous conversations, problem solving and taking initiative.

Team members arrive in the morning; one sits on level three, two on level four, one on level six and four on level eight, three more on level nine. They spend the rest of the day setting up their emails, checking their emails and trying to find nearby meeting spaces to gather together and meet. And don't pass off those 'informal' meeting places as meeting rooms.

A 2008 study from the Institute of Work Psychology at the University of Sheffield in England suggested that hot desking makes workers feel less connected to their team and may limit knowledge-sharing across the company.

Picture this: *'I'm on level four, near the bathrooms, oh I'm on level six, you know near that guy who is the triathlete. Oh ok, is Vicki in today? Don't know. I thought I saw Gary down at the café. He's been trying to sit near that window that faces the water on level three. He loves that spot. He didn't get that area because it was filled with trainers from interstate. What's that about?'*

Foolish inefficiency. Foolish.

Contrast that to a sole practitioner, a coach in her own business who works alone. And struggles with bouncing ideas off people she can talk with or feeling the 'vibe' of a collaborative environment.

A colleague of mine Andrea, was exactly this person, struggling in her coaching practice. After some months feeling alone and a little lost, she chose to co-locate at a Hub in a major city in Australia. And off went her business! Boom! She was inspired and she found opportunities to begin working with others around her. It's still her own business, but finding a way to be inspired by those around her was a stepping stone to tapping into opportunity, building on ideas, collaborating with others and coming up with brilliant ideas and immediate action.

Go co. It's a must. Why separate people and make them work harder to find each other and work together. Put them in spaces and places where they will work together.

Yes there also needs to be some time and space for quiet, focused and individual work. Work isn't always all about working with others. It's also about as an individual being able to focus.

Bottom line: it has to suit the team, the context, the task of the individual, the roles, the visions... what needs to be done, let's set things up for that type of success.

5. BE CURIOUS

BE INTREPID IN UNCERTAINTY

'I have no special talents. I am only passionately curious.' – Albert Einstein

Being a risk taker and brave explorer in times of uncertainty can feel like it's of great risk, but it can also reap huge reward.

What do I mean – act without knowing?

Even though you don't know what the outcome might be, act anyway?

Be the first at this.

And what if it doesn't work?

Go ahead and insert here the 13 other excuses that the procrastinator and safe-player applies to life to stay safe. Do you have a bunch of excuses as to why you're not going to take that action, try something new or move off in a direction that's not on your normal path?

BEING HEROIC...

Heroes react and respond with confidence, flair, finesse ... and derring do! There is art in agility. Put your courage and creativity on show.

It's how superheroes respond to unknown situations: they just fly out there and know they'll be able to tackle it.

BEING BOLD

Leadership speaks of leading, setting up the environment where others can succeed. That means stepping into some uncertainty, some unknown and some 'unsure'.

But Go. Step into it. That is what bold is. It's being brave and courageous.

Be intrepid.

To be the opposite is to be cowardly, weak, pusillanimous – yup, that's a big word that will stop you being a leader.

RISKS AND RISK TAKING

It's the businesses that support risk taking that can achieve great, innovative things. That risk mentality helps support and drive others to be more creative, more adventurous more bold and courageous. But of course there are risks to risk taking!

Financial risks, stakeholder and shareholder risks, and leading to even higher levels of uncertainty.

There's risk in implementing various strategies and paths of action. New products, bringing new ideas to market - ooh, now that is scary and risky!

There are competitive risks - keeping your eyes on what they're doing, or not giving a rats and just getting on with the ideas and innovation of your business.

Responding to competitive actions and strategies is risky; how do you know what will work?

But we all take risks every single day of our lives. Even before we've stepped into the workplace. Taking public transport, driving to work, dropping children at school, eating eggs for breakfast, drinking water from the tap, breathing influenza germs, touching the escalator handrail. Pass me the anti bacterial gel, stat!

Working with the unfamiliar is familiar to us. We've done it all our lives. First day at school, first kiss, first fight, first beer, first marriage, first home, first first...!

We assess and evaluate, we measure and test, we check and decide. You keep some things, you let other things go. It's a great opportunity to look at what you're doing and how you're doing it. How habitual are your actions and behaviours? But how risky is not taking any risks? Or just staying the same? How risky is it to implement … nothing?

Says Judy Neal, author of '*Edgewalkers: People and Organizations That Take Risks, Build Bridges, and Break New Ground,*'
'*… the courage to take risks that divert from the mainstream and pursue less predictable paths is critical in dealing with increased globalization and the speed at which modern business operates as a result of technology.*'

Yeah Judy, you tell 'em. That's so true. Risk it people, risk something. Anything. Do something!

Forge new ground, set a new trend, build a new product, change the way the world works. That could be awesome work. You DO get better at it. Our instincts really get sharpened up the more we risk. We'll be better at assessing priorities, opportunities and possibilities.

Ralph Heath, author of '*Celebrating Failure: The Power of Taking Risks, Making Mistakes and Thinking Big,*' says that when we take risks, coupled with informed decisions and a dose of sound judgement, our leadership skills get a boost. With that will come a jump in confidence

and that is super inspiring to others when it comes to getting people on board for your vision or goal.

On the other side of that, Ralph says if we play it a little too safe or wait too long (waiting for affirmation, confirmation, assurance or the go-ahead from others) we can be more imitator than innovator.

When you're leading change, you need to challenge your own and your team's mental limits, views and paradigms. Creativity is best when it's applied to bridge a gap between what's possible and what's practical.

We can think of it like the approach of Design Thinking. It's about asking:

- o What is?
- o What if?
- o What wows?
- o What works?

John W. Holt, author of *'Celebrate Your Mistakes: And 77 Other Risk-Taking, Out-of-the-Box Ideas From Our Best Companies,'* says stagnation takes companies into a lull of thinking that what they're producing or creating or delivering will always knock our socks off. So employees put fewer new ideas out there - even if it's those very ideas that could shift the business, its performance, the returns to employees and customers and a billion other possibilities. Shame really.

Yes, risk. It will be good in the long run.
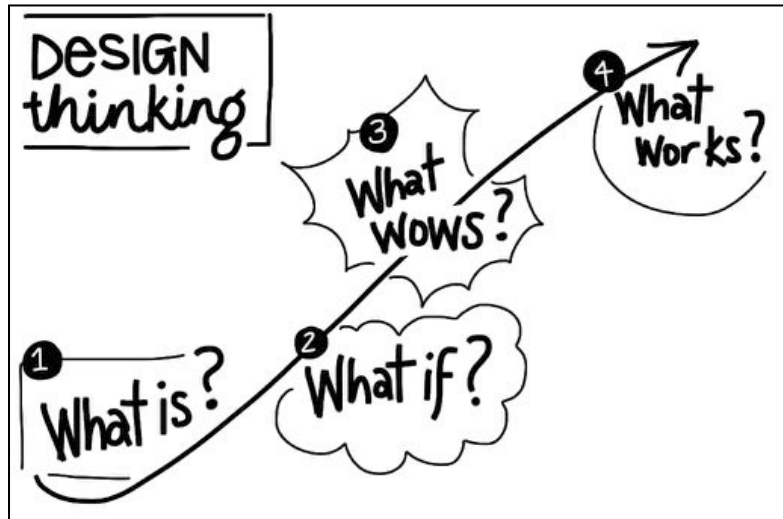
DOES YOUR CULTURE SAY 'NO'?

If you've seen the coughing and unhelpful travel agent character, Carol Beer, (played by David Walliams in the comedy sketch show *'Little Britain'*) say 'computer says no' to most customer's requests, you can extend that meme to workplaces with a 'culture says no' response to risk taking, applying innovation and other adaptive responses.

Culture says 'no' when there is little support for risk, innovation, creativity and stepping out of the everyday.

It's 1974 and the Hues Corporation sang the lyrics 'Rock the boat, don't rock the boat baby, rock the boat, don't tip the boat over...'

And I think it's a reality in many workplaces. Through subtle facial expressions, verbal sound effects or rejection in meetings and workshops, off-the-cuff comments that are a part of the organizational nomenclature or blatant silence, real human beings too often squash other human being's ideas and innovations … all because of culture and the fear that it will change the situation beyond our comfort zone.

'What got you here won't get you there', the book by Marshall Goldsmith has great hints and insights, not just for individuals plotting out their career path. Organizations can learn from the advice that just because you were successful up until now, those circumstances and environmental factors are changing and that same pair of shoes just won't carry you through the rest of the rocky journey. Other businesses are innovating, researching, prototyping, testing and reviewing while you're assessing a list of ideas from a workshop. You'll have to get on it and fast!

Follow the Lean StartUp method of 'Build - Measure - Learn'. Data from that process and experience will help you make decisions on what to do next. Without that information, well, it's just a hunch, a wonder and a possibility.

Ash Maurya of Spark 59, says to have a Plan B in his book *'Running Lean'*.

If your team, organization or project is shell-shocked by the failure of a one and only option… that's when a little setback can occur. And sometimes that setback gets bigger than what was initially created or risked. It grows!

Have some Plan Bs and Cs, or get ready to spontaneously create them in response to what happens to your first attempts.

Go again!

thoughts…
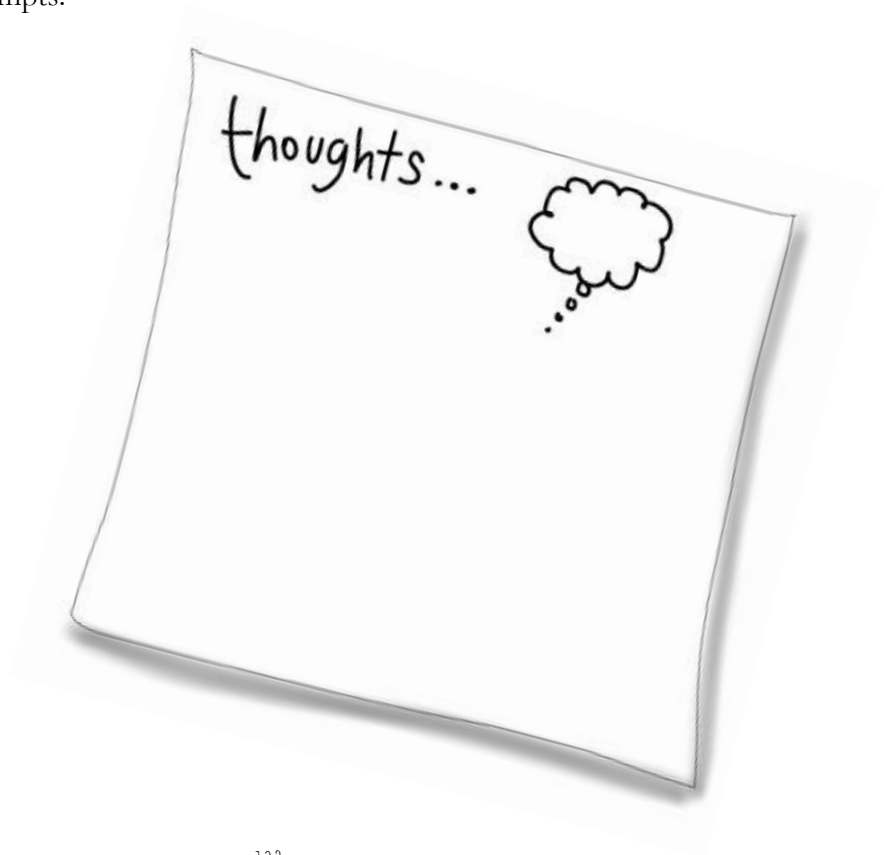
CURIOSITY KEEPS FEAR AT BAY

I have a phobia. You probably do too. Most of us have a fear, a terror a sweat inducing trigger. Be it spiders, snakes, heights, flying, or as a dear friend has... a fear of buttons. Yes, buttons. My phobia is spiders.

So how to conquer the fear?

In a neuro hypnotic repatterning workshop with Australian practitioner Clayton Perks, a prodigy of Richard Bandler and his neuro linguistic programming technology for communication, engagement and influence … I saw the reverse of fear.

I saw curiosity.

A participant in the program had a fear of snails. Another had a nasty habit of biting his fingernails. Another smoked and wanted to give up. Phobia, fear, bad habit... the opposite of these challenging behaviours is... curiosity. Once we unlock the area of our mind that builds intrigue, interest and desire to learn, curiosity is built. Fear is minimized. Change is possible.

If you fear the idea of spontaneity, risk, agility or of not having thing quite planned as you'd like, unlock curiosity. How much more could you find out, learn, read and wonder about to shift from 'oh no not me' to 'well… this could be interesting'.

Curiosity can be the opposite of fear. Ask powerful, curious questions that challenge where things are at right now.

Simply find out ... and you can flip fear off. Bugger off fear. Get outta here. Go!

Curiosity: it's a powerful step towards courage, bravery and bold leadership during change.

YES, THERE'S SOMETHING TO SEE HERE

SOMETHING TO SEE HERE... AND THERE... AND OVER THERE TOO

Technical excellence and good design deserve continuous attention. That will help keep the goodness in.

There's no 'Move it along, move it along, nothing to see here folks...'

Aah … there is something to see here! When a smart team is working with some technically excellent activities, producing, performing and working well, it deserves attention. Stop and look. Learn and yearn for what they're doing. So go ahead and shine a spotlight on what you're doing.

I remember reading a book back in the 1980s, when I was looking at my next steps in my career. It was called the *'PO PO Principle'*. It was based on how you can feel 'pissed on and passed over', seriously, when you miss out on opportunities, promotions, advancement and acknowledgement because no one knows what you're doing.

The book's premise was about highlighting the things you want to draw attention to. You do need to highlight, market, position and communicate the stuff you're doing as a team. Get on with it. Or you'll get pissed on and passed over.

You need to tell the story about the project or achievement.
You need to share the learning, the winning and the failures.
You need to show that there really is something to see here... in this team.

SHOW YOUR VISUAL MOJO
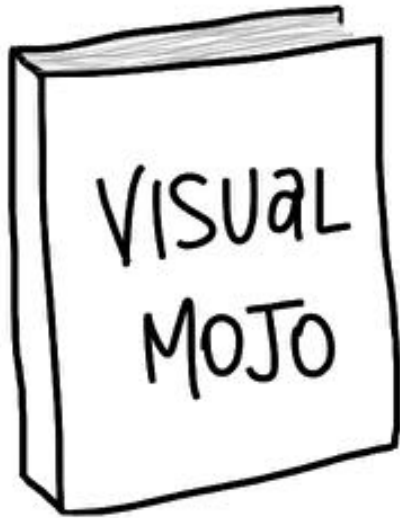
OK, so here's the plan: I want you to show your work, to share your thinking, to draw others in to what you're working on, to truly 'create change'.

In 2013 I wrote and published a book called *'Visual Mojo: How to capture thinking, convey information and collaborate using visuals.'*

It's designed as a workshop in your hands; to write and draw in the book and break all of those school and library rules of not being allowed to write in a book. I want you to.

It's about helping you rediscover your visual mojo and visual confidence to use quick sketch visuals to get a hold of your thinking, to deliver and convey your message to other people and to make working with others when you're collaborating and co-creating a lot easier and way more enjoyable. Fun even!

And as Leonardo Da Vinci said: 'Simplicity is the ultimate sophistication'. Unfortunately, sometimes we seem to act as if 'complexity is the ultimate way of trying to appear smart'. We have just a few seconds to get our message across. I think we've got to get our Visual Mojo back and quick!

It looks like this:

UNTANGLE
THINKING
© Lynne Cazaly
www·lynnecazaly·com

GET THINGS
STRAIGHT
©Lynne Cazaly   www·lynnecazaly·com
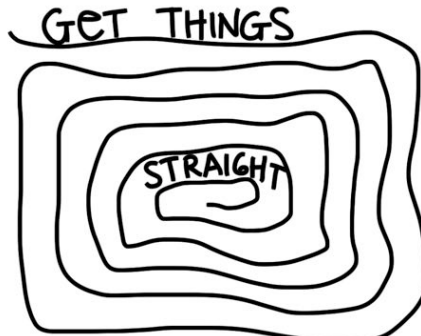
Make
Something of it.
©Lynne Cazaly
www·lynnecazaly·com

DON'T DO PICTURE CHARADES THOUGH...

Visual Mojo, visual thinking, graphic recording, sketchnoting - whatever you want to call these visual things, they have a common thread; they involve words and pictures, or words and images or words and symbols. It's the 'and', the 'also', and the 'as well as'.

But keep using words. Don't go cold turkey and drop words ok? Pictures alone won't get the job done. Words are still an important partner in communication and thinking.

It's not picture charades. And you can relax because the 'I can't draw' paradigm was born for many people in their earlier years. I think we also picked up the (less than helpful) belief that you have to write everything down.

Many grown-ups I advise, train and mentor still think they have to write everything down! It could be about butt-covering too, in case questions are asked or accusations are made. But even then, visuals can come to the rescue and give you great recall, reference and detail.

Keep using words – in fact, when you put visuals to work, you can use fewer words than you do now.

USE VISUAL MOJO TO MAKE GOOD... AWESOME!

Visuals and words help people communicate quicker and more clearly and can help you create awesome when you're working with others. Here's how to make good stuff greater:

CAPTURE

Use Visual Mojo to collect, capture or catch conversations, discussions, ideas and thoughts. Whether these are your own thoughts and ideas or those of others, Visual Mojo is captivating, engaging and memorable.

You can use Visual Mojo to capture at conferences, workshops, seminars, school classes, presentations or brainstorming sessions.

CONVEY

Pull the plug on PowerPoint (or at least hit 'B' on the keyboard and the screen will go to black) and communicate your key points and messages using visuals. You'll be more engaging and it will really make you think about what YOU need to communicate to THEM. Visual Mojo is impactful when you're conveying information in meetings, presentations, pitches, sales conversations and speeches. Turn off clinical and hi-fi; turn on human and low-fi.

COLLABORATE

When people get together to talk, discuss, decide, ponder, problem solve or create, Visual Mojo is at its best. Generate ideas, solutions and possibilities. Don't let the thinking,

exchanges and conversations vanish into thin air; collaborate with others and 'see' what you're all thinking, 'see' what's possible and 'see' where you're heading.

VISUAL MOJO...

capture convey

collaborate
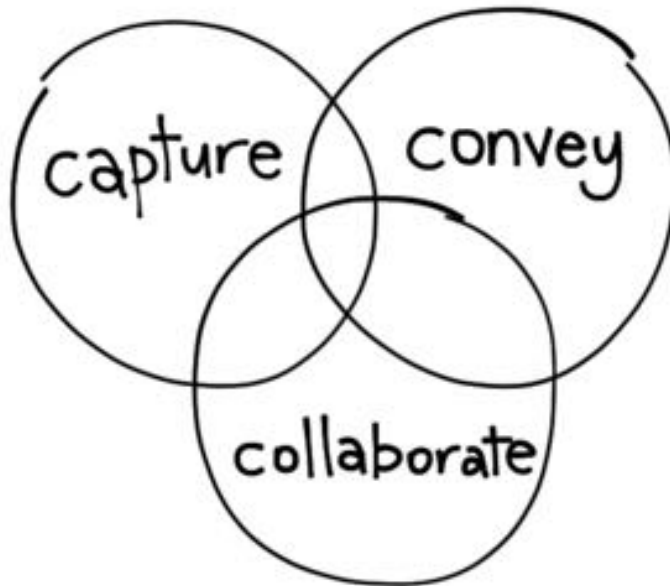
VISUAL MOJO

Everyday ways to make communicating things quicker, clearer, cleaner
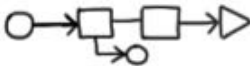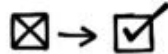
THINKING

CONVERSATIONS

FEEDBACK

LEARNING

a story

IDEAS

Get things done

Map out a PROCESS

PROBLEM SOLVING

a FUTURE VISION

QUICK SKILLS OF VISUAL MOJO

For the longer story, get a hold of my book *Visual Mojo* and you'll have these skills embedded in your muscle memory in no time. But for the short story…

Visual Mojo is essentially about shapes… using shapes as containers for important words and information, so that people can see what you mean, see what you're thinking and see what you're working on.
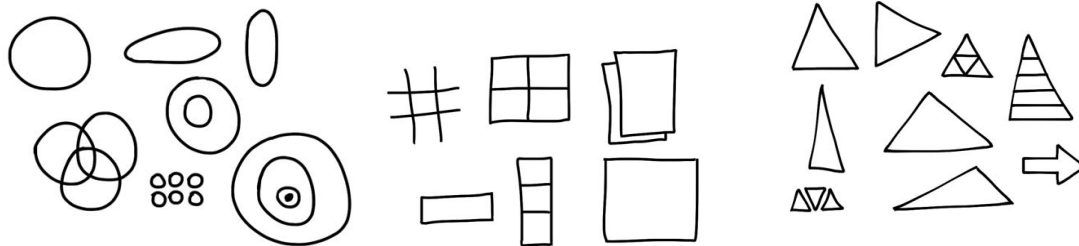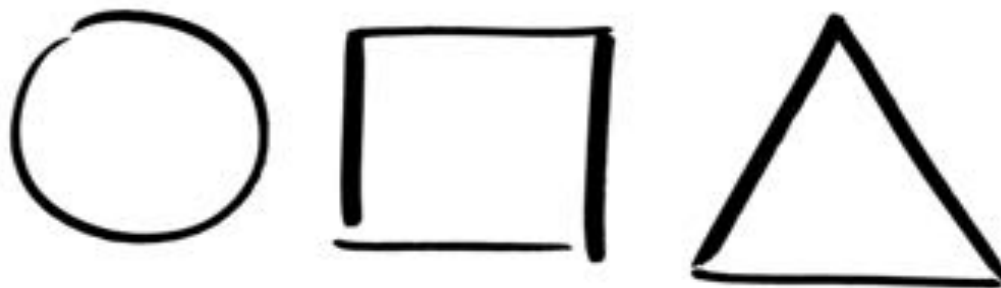
NOW ... MAKE YOUR WORK VISIBLE

Walking past a tall city building recently I noticed data on TV screens showing how much CO_2 they were producing, how much electricity was being used and how much water was being consumed. There were other measures too but these were the big numbers. All on show. Their consumption and production...visible.

The TV screens and information caught my eye because I'd just finished a meeting at a client business who uses techniques of 'visual management' throughout the organization, but on the inside of the building!

Here's what they make visible: the key tasks that teams are about to work on (to do), the tasks they are working on (doing), and tasks just completed (done). This info is visible throughout the business.

You never have to wonder what they do in any team or units because you can see it! Pictures on the walls, sketches on notice boards, data on monitors, handwritten information and post-it notes on charts.

So here is a tool for you to lead change, to help you get to grips with what's going on and to make sure you're doing something!
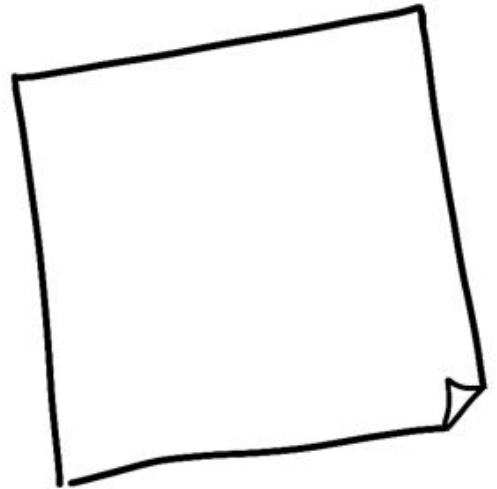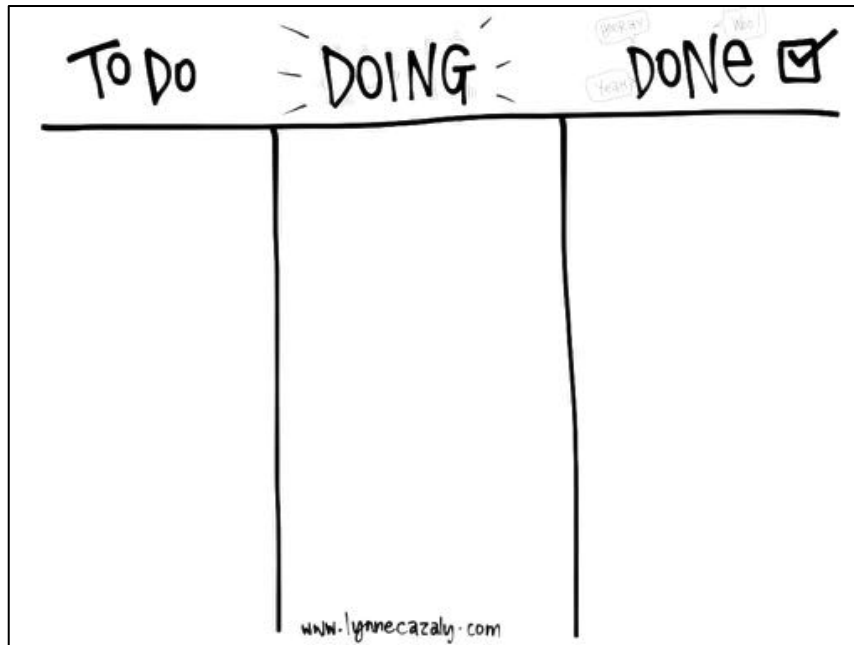
This visual tool is one that will help you manage your: To do, Doing, and Done.

The approach of making work visible is based on a technique called Personal Kanban, adapted from the lean manufacturing world of building cars and running production lines.

You make your work visible and minimize the number of tasks you're juggling!

In his book '*Personal Kanban*', Jim Benson guides you to be more productive and effective, and transform tasks that can appear conceptual... into actionable steps.

It brings clarity to overloaded desks and those crazy-long 'to do' lists.

So the mini Kanban visual above is a template the sketch out or put up on a whiteboard.

Start putting a couple of items on your 'To Do' column. Write each task on a post it note. Move a task over to 'Doing' and start doing it.

When you're done, move it to the 'Done' column.

Then move another item over from 'To Do and start doing that.

I use this type of Kanban approach often - particularly when there is too much to do. And my business manager, Myra uses it and shares it with me at the end of every few days. Great clarity, focus and super-productive for us both It keeps work visible, it lets you and others know what you're working on. It's transparent, communicative and clear.

Niiiice! See? It's like a map to help you work out where you are, what you've got on and where you're heading.
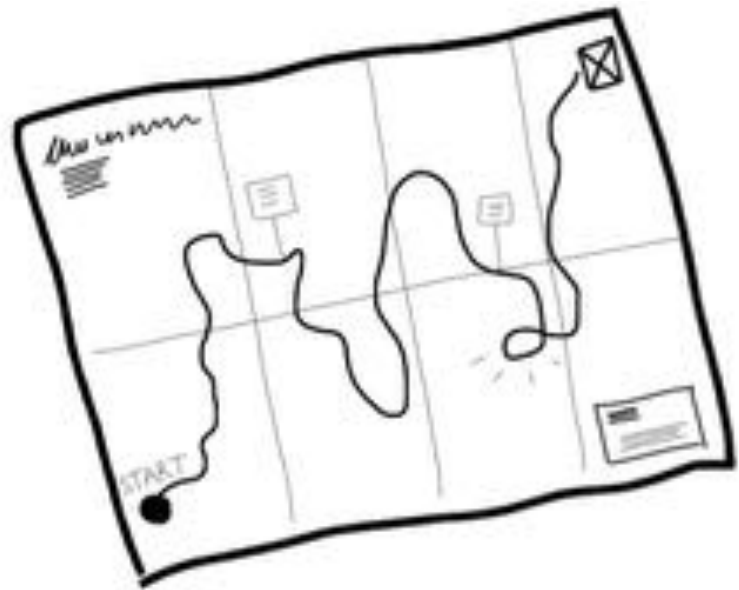
VISUAL TEMPLATES & CANVAS THINKING
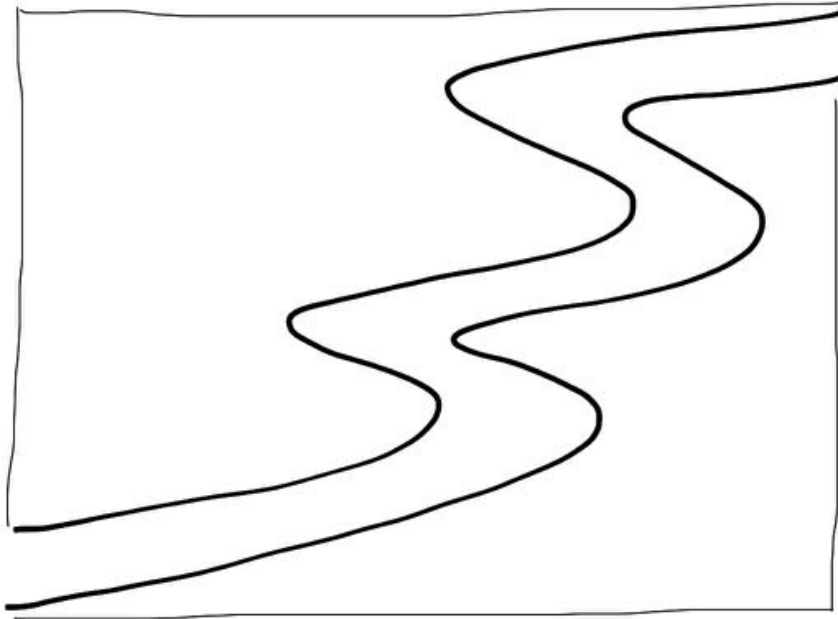
Once you've got some Visual Mojo on your team, you can put it to use to think critically and capture your thinking. Visual skills are powerful when it comes to delivering information or making presentations. And a visual toolkit is a real winner when people get together to collaborate, problem solve, ideate or plan.

There's a big disconnect between what organizations need to get done and what the team will contribute to or participate in. We hear so much about 'engagement levels', 'engagement scores' and the overall 'employee engagement survey'.

Sometimes employees aren't even engaged enough with the business, purpose, team or role to complete the freakin' engagement survey! Here's their chance to comment ... and they don't.

When it comes to bringing the team together, you must do more to boost engagement, contribution, collaboration and input.

Let me share with you a powerful tool I've been using for many years: the visual canvas.

Over recent years there's been a rapid increase, production and interest in the 'canvas' approach to thinking, contributing, creating and visualising the plan or approach.
I see this as an opportunity to cross the chasm that is the disconnect between the work we need to get done and the amount and quality of contribution from the team.
So let's cross the chasm with a canvas.
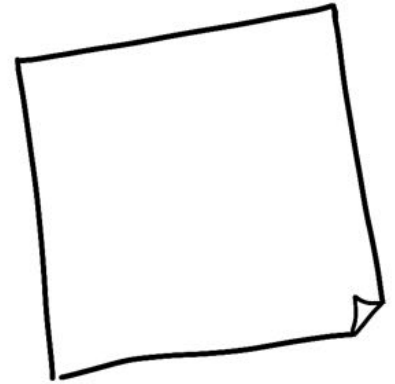
The rise in business model canvas templates are helping people think focus, collaborate, decide and implement. The impossible or the unknown become and clear and possible. People can see what's possible. They can see where they can go. They can see what you're thinking. They can see a possible new future come closer to where they are now.

There's the Business Model Canvas, the Value Proposition Canvas, the Lean Canvas, the Future Value Framework, the Happy Start Up Canvas and so many more…

Use these... or better still, create your own!

Some canvasses (or canvii?) are a little 'boxy' for my liking but once they're populated with post-it notes, visual sketches, dot points and group contributions, they truly come alive! They

move from being a blank page to being a work in progress, a live piece of thinking that can be implemented, acted on and built on to become a reality.

I LOVE the canvas; the large scale format, framework or visual template that will give people the opportunity to put their thinking in, to contribute to something that has form and shape, to collaborate with others on a task or activity that has scope, focus and meaning.

They're powerful because they give focus.
They're powerful because they are visible.
They are powerful because they have process, logic or framework in them.

And most of all, they are powerful because they exist beyond the conversation, beyond the meeting.

They capture the 'hot air' that is the conversation, the ideation, the contributions.

They are artifacts.
They are souvenirs.
They are a snapshot of thinking at that time.
They are part of the story, process and growth of that team, project, industry, organization, thinking.
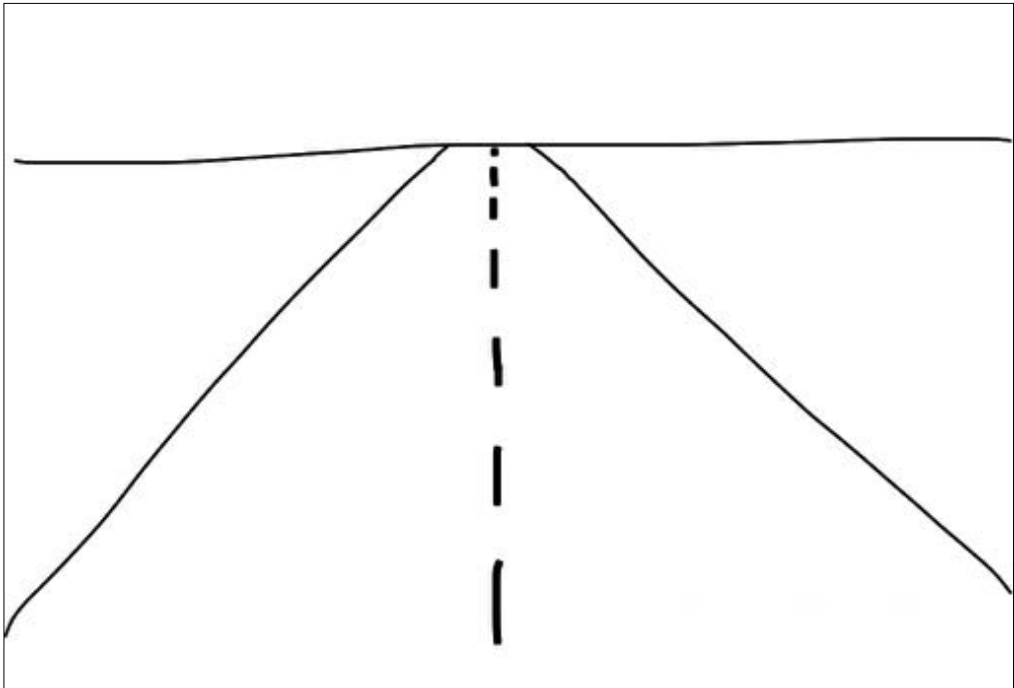
They are G-O-L-D. Use them. Even if they are not your preference, they will work wonders with others in your team, group or project. Go ahead and create your own.
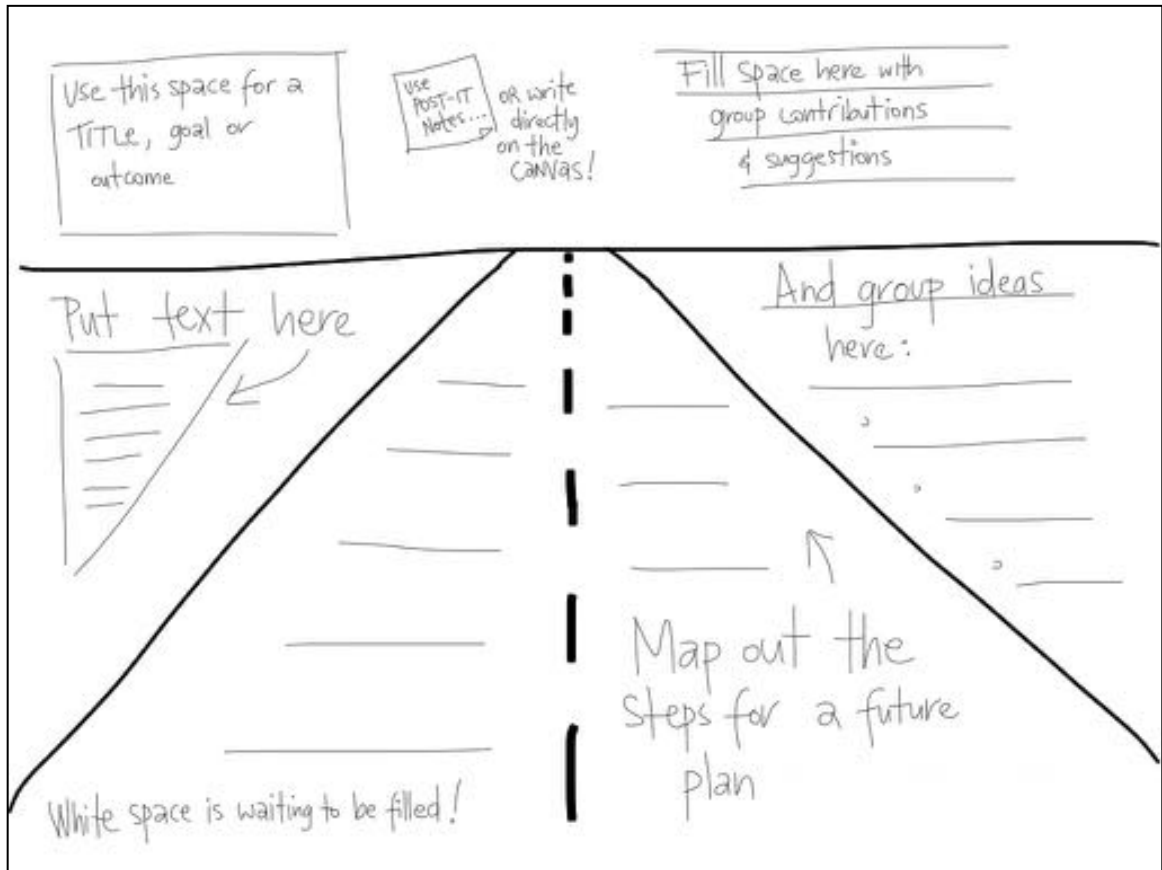
A few of my favourite things

Here are eight of my favourite metaphors, maps, models, canvas thingys, that I use with groups to help them see change, see possibilities, contribute, collaborate, communicate and get shit done! It's a creative way to get people engaged and contributing. Turn off PowerPoint, turn on people's eyes, minds and creativity and get them working together!
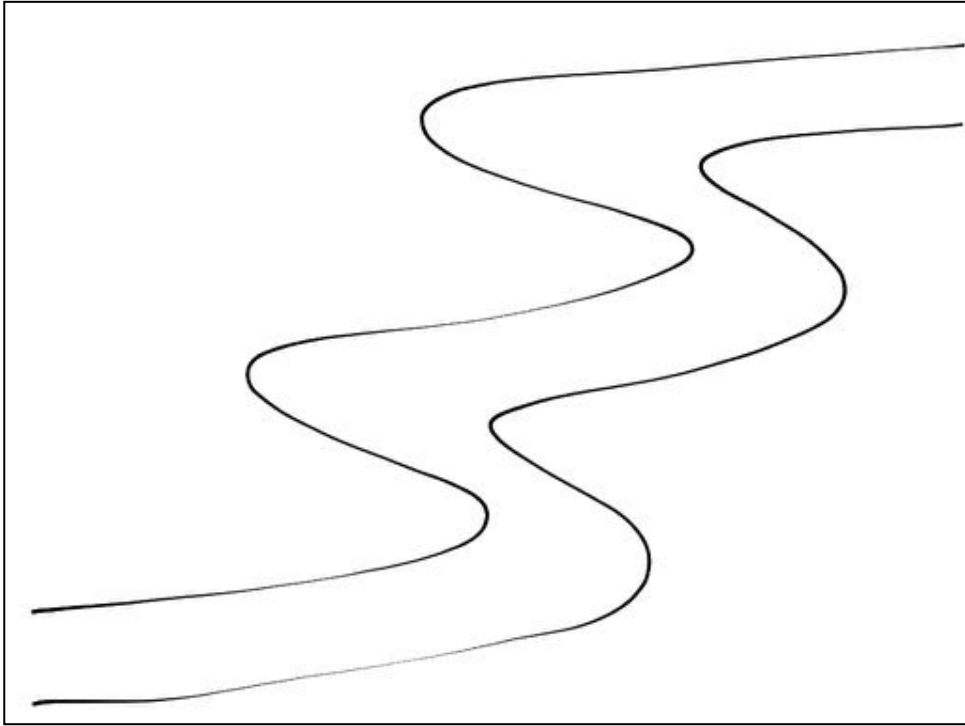
1. Straight Road/Horizon

HOW TO USE THIS AND OTHER TEMPLATE IDEAS...

Use this space for a TITLE, goal or outcome

USE POST-IT Notes... OR write directly on the canvas!

Fill space here with group contributions & suggestions

Put text here

And group ideas here:

Map out the steps for a future plan

White space is waiting to be filled!

2. WINDING ROAD

Because change can be more of a winding path or bumpy journey, the road isn't always straight or direct. Try this type of template. Use it to:
- o   Map out or indicate change milestones
- o   Flag the past, present and future and what's planned for each stage (or my preferred labels, 'then, now, next')
- o   Get input from team members on what barriers might get in the way of change

Show alternate routs, potholes, sidetracks or signposts along the way to bring it to life!

3. STEPS
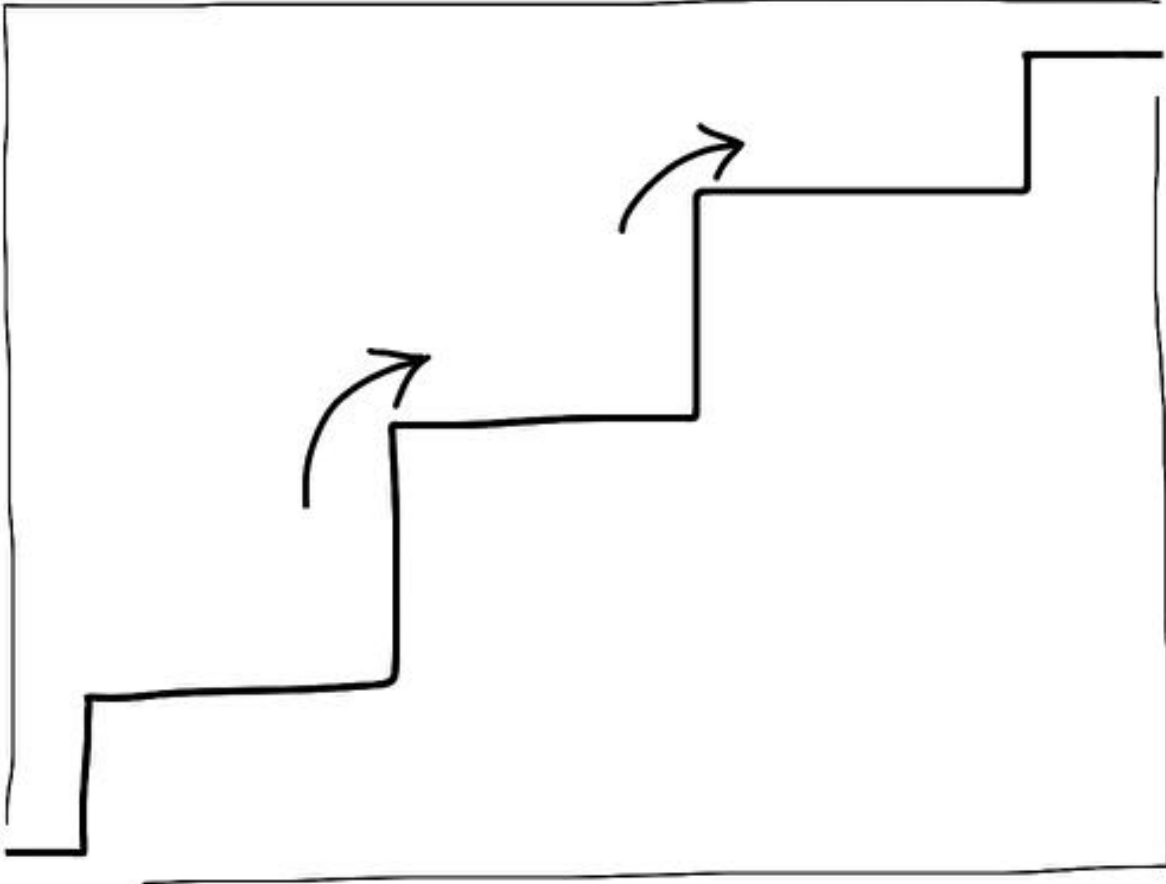
Using the steps metaphor, you can break down a big program of change into some bite-sized chunks. That's easier on digestion and way more engaging than a huge, frightening, seemingly impossible path.

Show what's first, what's next and what will happen later.

It's inspiring and strong leadership to:
   o Share progress
   o Show step by step
   o Communicate the plan for the future
   o Deal with 'this part' first, and 'that part' next
   o Show what's in scope and what's not
   o Co-create the future
   o Label the steps together
   o Get input on what to do when
   o Prioritise from a list of to do
   o Paint a picture of what's ahead.

thoughts...
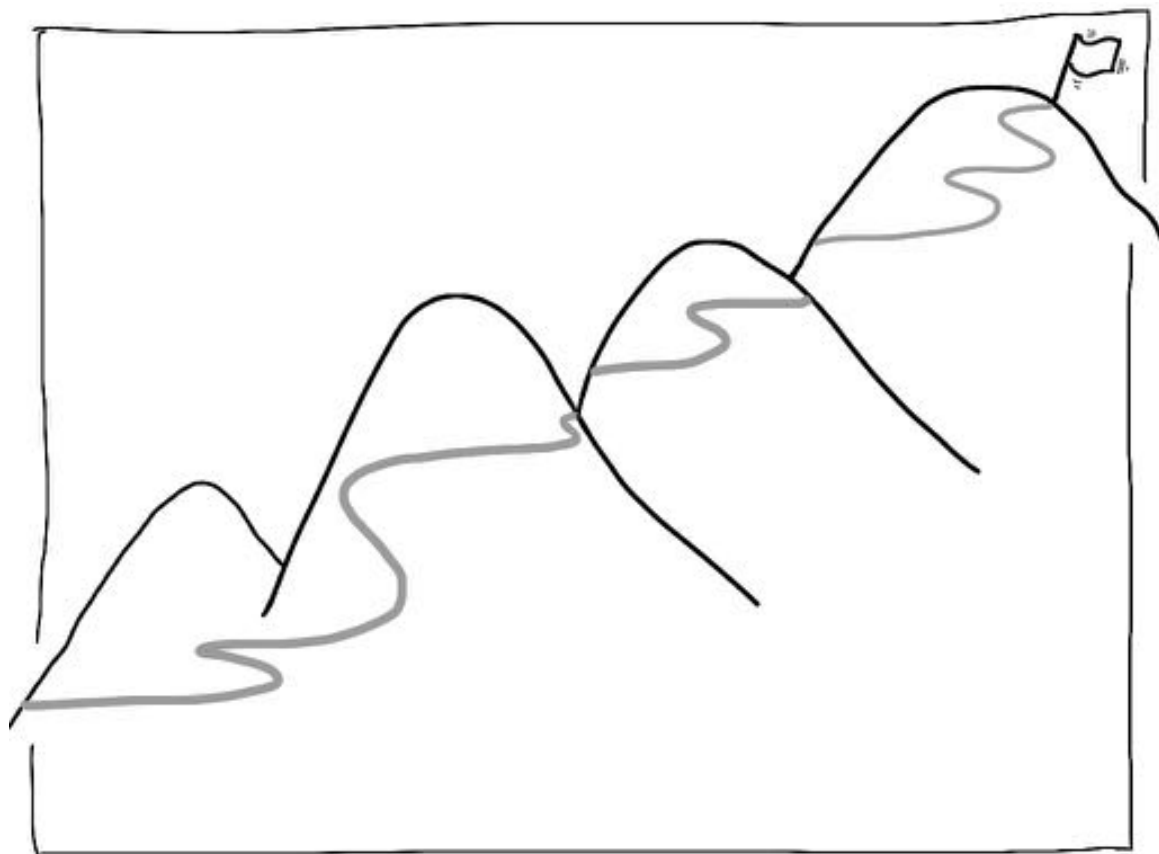
4. MOUNTAINS

Take a stroll along the tracks towards the mountaintops. Here you can combine the metaphor or visual story of a path or journey with some great heights or steps to scale.

What's one of the first targets or goals in your process of change? Perhaps that's mountain #1.

Follow the path onward for subsequent 'adventures' of change, challenges and obstacles to clear to get to the top.

Success and celebration is an input and a part of getting along the path of change.

Get the team's input: what will they need to do to reach each peak or to achieve each target or goal? What might they find along the way? How will they handle this?
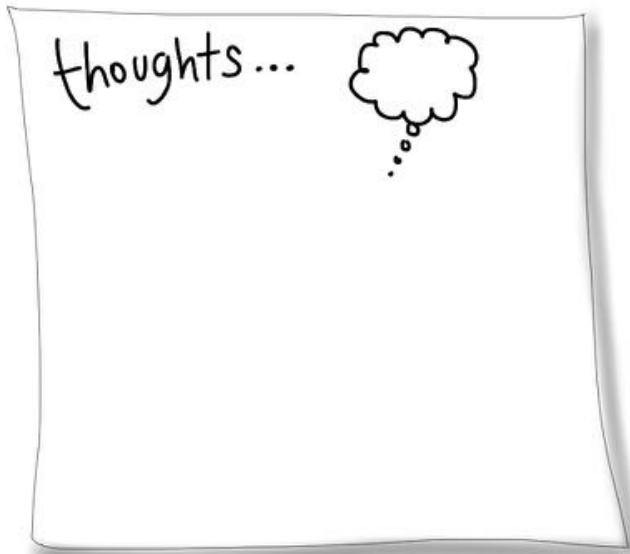
thoughts...

5. TARGET OR BULLSEYE
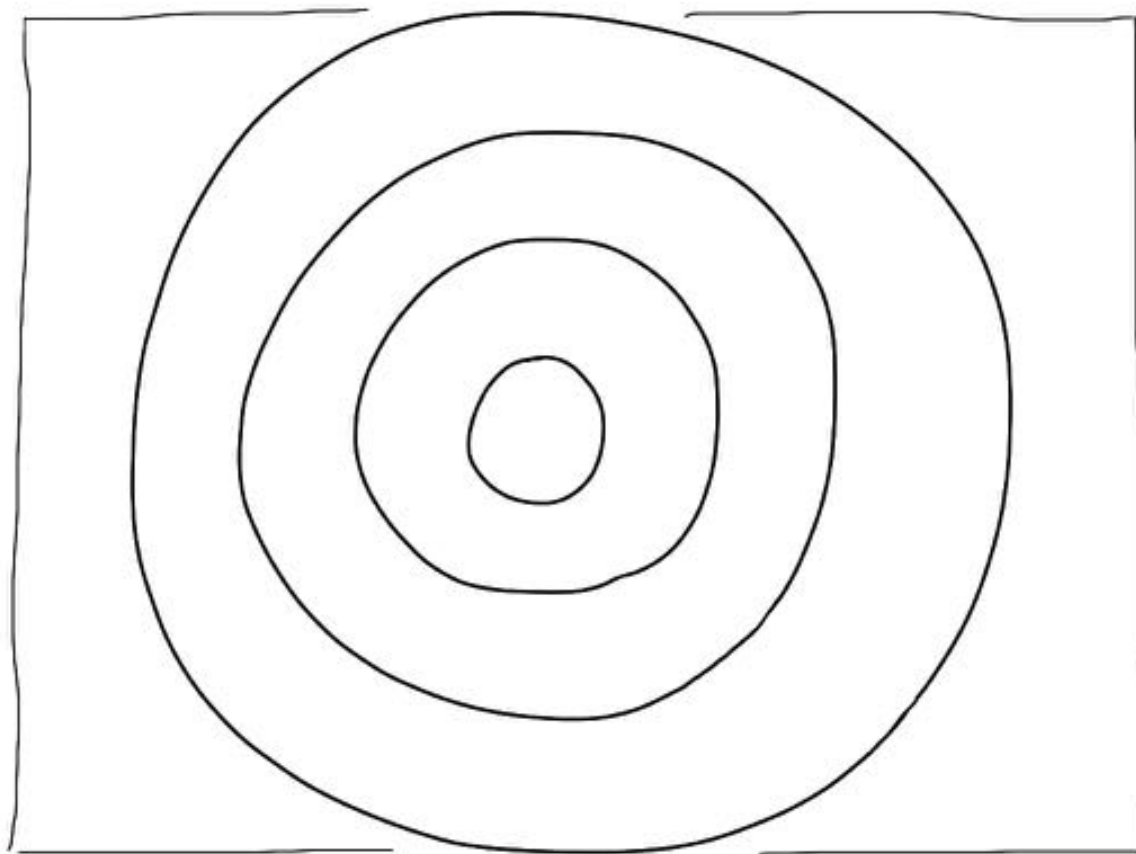
Are we there yet?
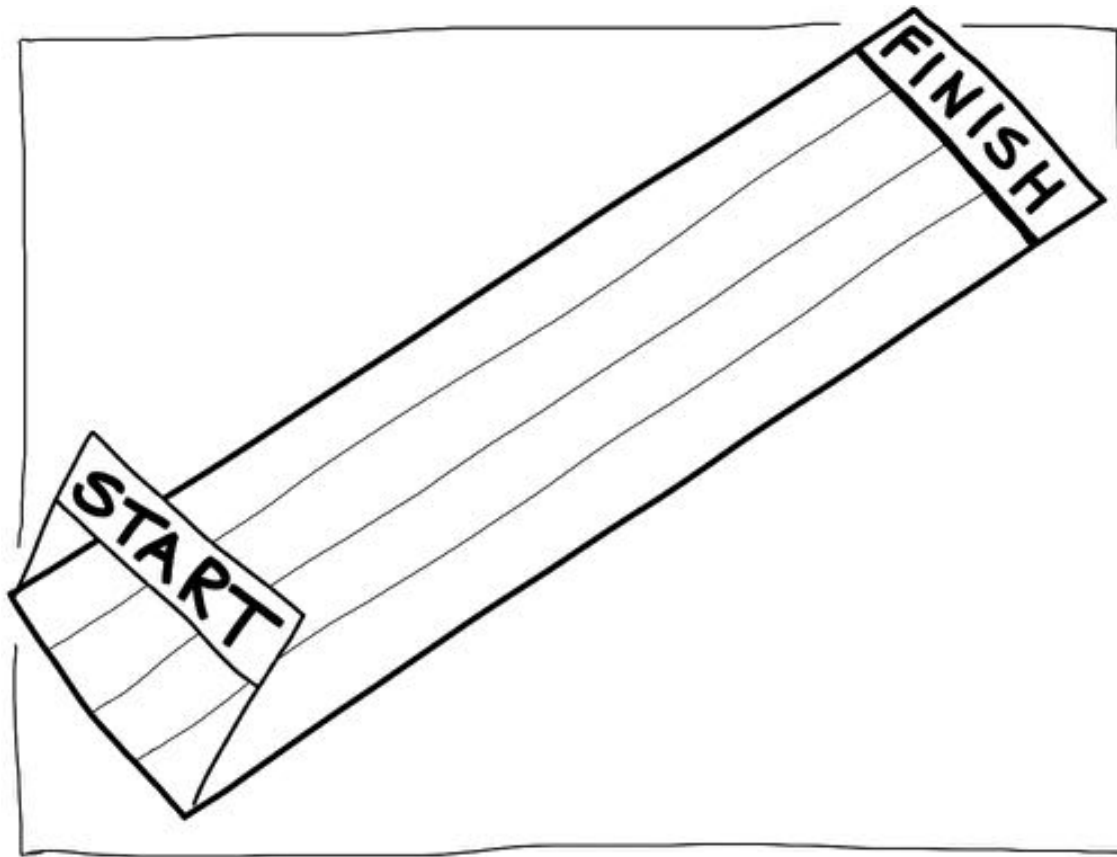
When do we get there?

The bullseye or target is a strong metaphor for helping people see how close we are to the goal.

Outer rings can help you keep score or can build focus and momentum towards the ultimate goal in the centre.

We're getting closer; we can see it!

thoughts...

6. SPRINT TRACK

Pick up the pace!

In some teams, projects or pieces of work, a 'sprint' brings focus, productivity and intense performance for a set period of time.

Think about how you can build on the metaphor to boost engagement, contribution and co-creation:

- o How long is the sprint?
- o What happens at the start line?
- o What are the markers along the way?
- o Who's on the team?
- o What time or duration are we aiming for?
- o Will we need to change batons or switch tasks or roles to get to the finish?
- o What's our training program like?
- o Are we fit for the event?

thoughts...

7. TREE … OR INDEED, A FOREST
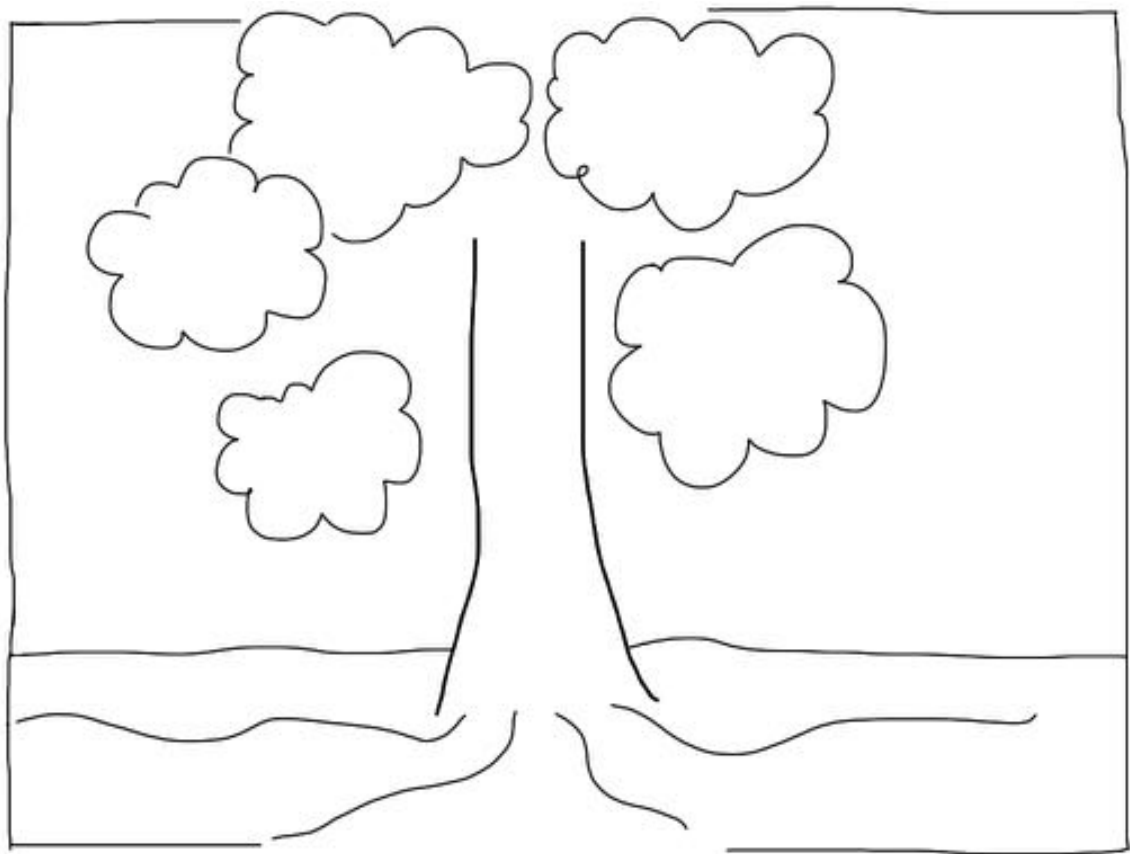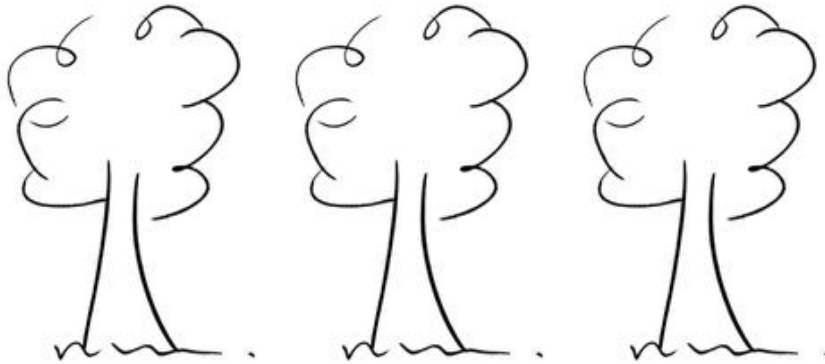
Get growing!

Show the trunk of a tree is about our strength, foundations or 'ladder' of progress.

The branches can represent new ideas, areas of work, sections of the business or team.

Use a tree template or metaphor to show your thinking or:
- o Plan a new product or service
- o Identify 'low hanging fruit'
- o Segregate tasks or bunches of actions
- o Tell the story of who your team is and how you've grown!

And why not a forest? One team I worked with were so inspired by their visual stories and collaboration on using a tree to convey critical information, they decided one tree wasn't enough; they created a whole orchard!
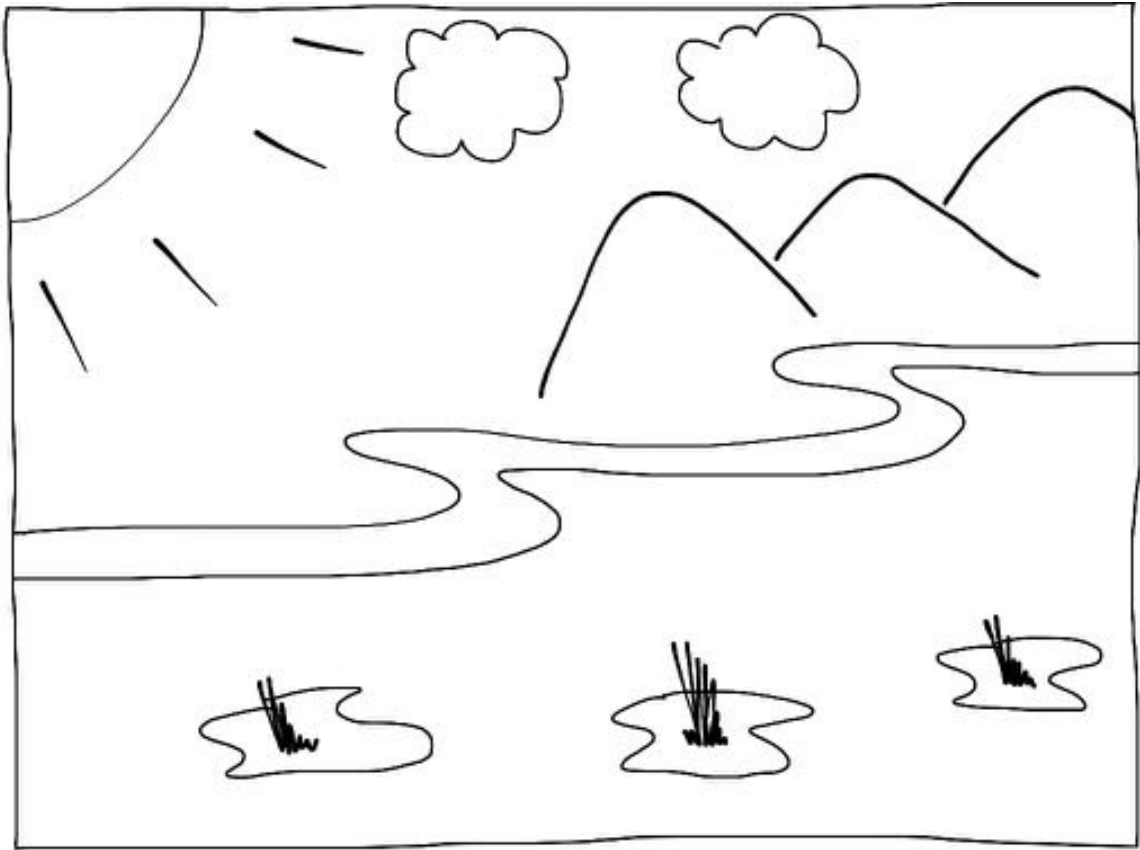
Weave templates and metaphors together to bring multi-dimensional thinking.

Heaven and hell is a powerful visualization tool and template:

- o Put positive thoughts and views, hopes, opportunities or appreciations in the high blue sunshine-y skies (where there may be rainbows and unicorns!)

- o Map out the path or journey through hurdles, challenges and tricky landscapes

- o Be alert to the swamps, bogs and muddy places that could slow you down, be a spanner in your works or cause risks to be bigger than they need to be.

thoughts...

CREATE YOUR OWN CANVAS OR BYO (BUILD YOUR OWN)
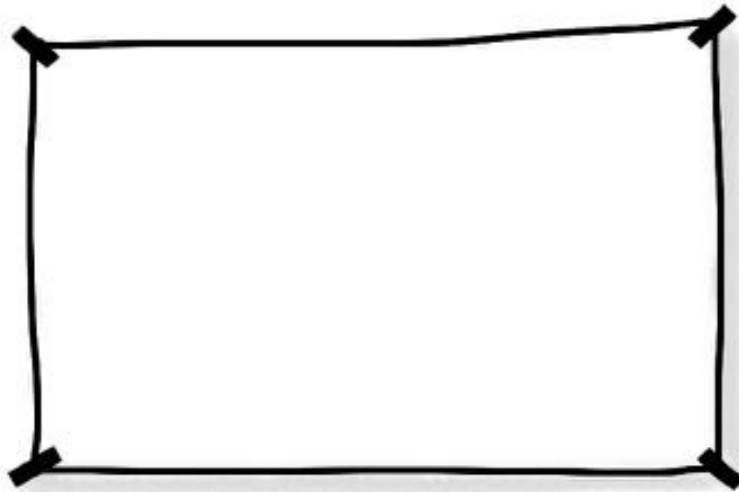
Whatever the challenge, situation, need or change you're looking to tackle, a visual story or canvas can help you leverage the message, the collaboration and the co-creation you're aiming for.

How about this?
Nature makes great metaphors:
- o   An island and the mainland
- o   A river or lake
- o   The ocean
- o   Weather
- o   The solar system or outer space
- o   An animal or zoo

Structures make great metaphors:
- o Bridge
- o Vehicle
- o House
- o Space ship
- o Ship or boat
- o Plane
- o Racetrack

Concepts make great metaphors:
- o Family
- o Journey or trip
- o Recipe and ingredients
- o Clothing, accessories and footwear
- o A movie or soundtrack
- o A band or orchestra
- o A book or newspaper or other media

Some metaphors get a bit overdone; I think icebergs and jigsaw puzzles are little cliché.

Tune in to the team. What are they talking about? How do they describe what's happening, where they're going and what they want to do?

BECAUSE ... IT'S NOT ABOUT MEETINGS; IT'S ABOUT DOINGS

It truly is time to stop meeting like this. There have been some valiant attempts to get us to reinvent how, when, why and if we need to meet over recent years but it's not changing quickly enough.

I think if you're leading change, you just need to 'step in'. Put your hand up, step up and say 'yep, I'll facilitate this one.'

Say: 'We're making this a 'doing' not a meeting!'

Yep, meetings should be called 'doings'. So you get stuff done.

Otherwise, our meetings will continue to be dysfunctional. Too much time. Too little output. Too much talk. Too little listening. Too few actions. Too little impact. Too big a cost.

I worked with a team recently to facilitate their team planning and strategy days and they were amazed at what they achieved in the time available. A day here. A day there. Yes that's what good facilitation will do for a group and the clear objective they had!

But it is also about HOW the meeting was set up, what the agenda looked like, how they worked together, what they did throughout the sessions and how there was a strong bias for action.

I'm all for setting aside some time for talk but that's what I do - set aside some time. Timebox it. You say 'this is how much time we have to talk about this topic.' Then go. Talk about it. I capture the key points raised, the key arguments and the main ideas and agreements. But we are always thinking about forward movement and progress. Doing.

TIMEBOX IT

I worked with some cool technology developers in Sydney, Australia who were creating a top-secret project for a major supermarket chain. Prior to the important client work, the team got together, to get their sh*t together. Smart team!

They had their strategy and planning day. And they were used to working together so what they did was use a clock with short timeframes to keep them moving, keep them progressing and keep them active. One of them was a keen runner, so they used a running clock on their iPad to segment out time for tasks throughout the day. Short intervals of just a couple of minutes.

It was brilliant to see. This team, pushed to decision making, action and prioritizing in two minutes. What!? Yes, they did it. Time and time again throughout the day. Plenty of time to talk and discuss, but then it was down to action to decide and prioritise and they did it super-quick. Genius!
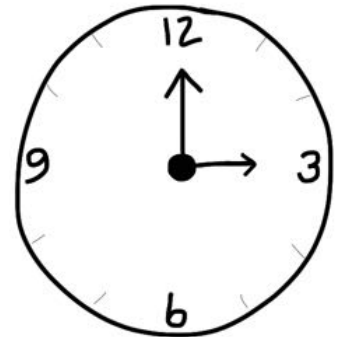
OPEN SPACE: THE NO-AGENDA MEETING

The Groupwork Institute in Melbourne, Australia – who run some brilliant training on collaboration and facilitation – talk about 'Gather, Sort, Do' as an approach to collecting topics to talk about, sorting them into order or priority and then gettin' on and doing them.

Too often meetings and conversations spend time gathering, and then so long sorting and debating and discussing which one first! Aaarrgggh! Get on with it. Do Something! Then do something else. Get some momentum. Make some progress dammit!

Open Space Technology starts with no set agenda. Topics are contributed by participants and a timetable or schedule is set up. People move around to the topics that appeal to them based

on their interests, contributions, questions. The law of two feet (and other cool guidelines) is in place to help you move on from one area to another if it's not meeting your needs. (See also Lean Coffee as a similar technique).

STAND UPS

Technology teams using the scrum methodology or agile practices will have daily 'stand up' meetings. You gather in the workspace in the morning, stand up and talk through the things you're working on, barriers or obstacles and anything you're specifically seeking or needing help with.

This ritual sets a team up for success and builds a strong bias for action, because there's gonna be another meeting like it tomorrow… and you don't want to be repeatin' yourself now do you?
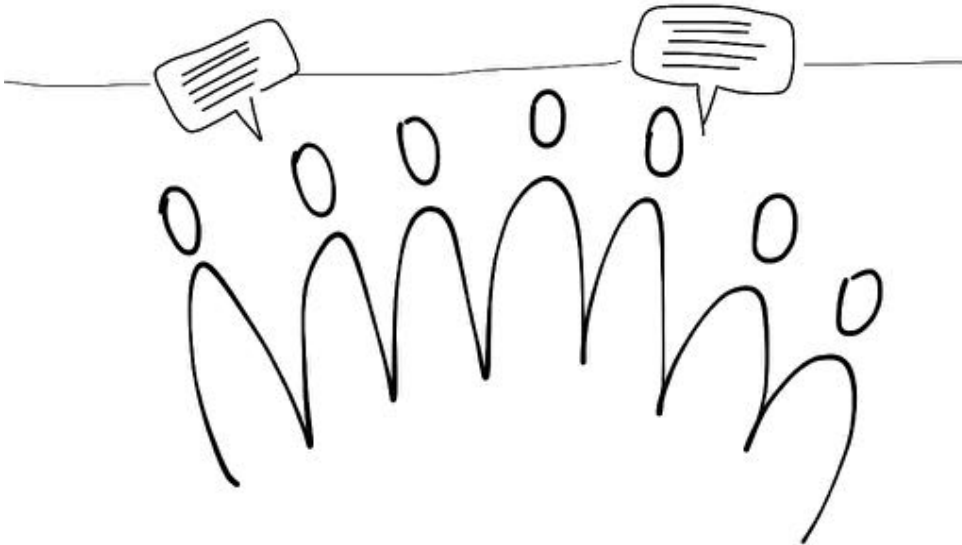
LEAN COFFEE

A little like Kanban outlined earlier, a little like 'Gather Sort Do', a little like Open Space, Lean Coffee is another version of an agenda-less meeting. The people around the table (or standing up) create the agenda and then they get underway! And it's highly engaging because the people built the agenda; you don't foist it on them, impose it or tell them what to cover.

Mmmm tastes so good!

WORLD CAFE

World Café is an open and creative approach to conversations. It's about collecting the knowledge and wisdom in the room, seeing what comes to the surface and sharing ideas and insights. I'll often edit the orthodox method of World Café (my apologies to the creators) for a group's benefit, for the goals they want to achieve or for the time available or environment we're in.

You can get people moving around tables (like cities in cafes around the world) to discuss different topics, questions, perspectives or views.

The 'harvesting' and reporting back is a beautiful thing. Hearing what was discussed – and then visually capturing that using some Visual Mojo; now you've got some creative change going on!

MOVE !!
Did your meeting pass the 'motion activation' test today?

Have you been in a workplace in a green, energy conscious building, and noticed how lighting switches on and off based on movement in a room?

For some buildings it's the bathrooms or kitchen areas that have this feature. For brave workplaces, it's in meeting rooms too.

Next meeting, check whether you would pass the motion activation test.

If the lights switch off - you're too still..., dead still ! Dull meeting. Disengaged participants. Poor outcomes.

And note... passing the motion activation test doesn't mean waving madly at the sensors so that the lights switch back on!

It means you need to have a stand-up, sit-down, stand-up, move around, collaborate and really 'work' meeting. A doing!

A meeting that's active, engaging, physical, creative and collaborative.
If the lights switch off, you MUST switch things up, fire up the content, style and agenda. You have to make that meeting and conversation environment one that people want to be in. And more importantly, an environment and a piece of work that they want to contribute to to create change.

So move!

CLIMATE CHANGE

'WE'VE GOTTA GET OUT OF THIS PLACE, IF IT'S THE LAST THING WE EVER DO.' – ERIC BURDEN & THE ANIMALS

SHIFT

To create change, you need to think differently to boost engagement.
Now, not to put a dampener on hotel conferencing, when you do have to get people together, hotel function rooms can be great for this. But I challenge you to break the cycle when you gather as a team or for an off-site. Meet in a different venue for a change. Shift the agenda, change what people are expecting and reap rewards with renewed interest and connections. Here are some thought starters:

COMMUNITY THEATRES

Not only are these great for practical activities - I use them for public speaking training and improvisation skills workshops - but they are unique and different to a stuffy auditorium. Try a team-planning day with no PowerPoint. Use the stage, lighting, props, costumes and theatre setting to communicate and develop plans and strategies. I've used six different theatrical venues in Melbourne in the past year alone and love their rustic, creative and rich environment. How many characters have walked the boards there?

Theatres are great venues to talk about change, performance, stepping up, or running through or rehearsing large-scale communication plans and strategies.

No catering hassles. Bring in your own catering or have the team eat local.

SPORTS OF ALL SORTS

Tennis courts, basketball courts, netball, volleyball... team building activities, sure. But these venues are wonderful creative platforms to stage and facilitate team events, meetings and planning sessions.

You can set tables up on the court - pending the venue's rules - but they help take the team out of the staid hotel environment and put them in another space, physically and mentally.

I've made great use of
- o   Football club rooms and social rooms
- o   Rowing clubs
- o   Life saving clubs
- o   Yacht clubs
- o   Golf clubs

RESTAURANTS AND CAFES

Hotels and clubs often have function rooms but so many restaurants do too. Depending on group sizes, I've used a few different restaurants. The food is often very good (it's what they do after all), and some venues can often have the most wonderful outlooks. Get natural light into your rooms. You owe it to the humans participating. Too many big function rooms are windowless, soulless, urgh, dull!

MUSEUMS, STUDIOS AND GALLERIES

When there are pieces of art or exhibitions adorning the walls, use the floor space. Set up tables in an environment reeking of creativity, history, intellect and insight.
So inspiring! Link in to a theme and you're away! A memorable conference event and meeting in a motor museum comes back to my mind!

COMMUNITY LINKS

Connect to the local community by hiring community facilities like art centers, community centers and community halls, visit hospitals, childcare centers and other community providers in your catchment area or local neighborhood.

We could get religious for a moment and that would open a whole range of other opportunities - and cans of worms - but many religious halls, churches and meeting spaces are brilliant!

IF IT'S BIG...

If you're saying, yes but our group of 2000 delegates won't fit in a community theatre, then book out the CBD arts theatre that holds 2000! Book the sports stadium that seats 2000. A memorable conference dinner for me was in Barcelona, a gala dinner on the grounds that Olympic football had been played on just weeks earlier. Now that was BIG and it was cool.

OUT THERE... WAY OUT THERE

Take your 2000 delegates outdoors. It can be done regardless of the weather. Like the financial institution that took its team of a few hundred into the harsh Australian outback. It can be done.

I've been to a wonderful training workshop and meeting in a shearing shed in regional Australia complete with flip charts and post it notes on the corrugated iron walls.

There was another rough outdoor community conversation held in a big wall-less shed in outback Australia. It was soon to be a cow shed, to keep the cows cool in summer and warm in winter so they could chill out and produce better prices at market. The cows weren't arriving for another two weeks. It was ours before it was theirs. Most memorable! And the topic need not be about cows or farming. It could be about expanding markets, sustainability,

connecting with our customers. Or helping our customers chill out so we get a better price at market!

WAREHOUSES, FACTORIES, DISTRIBUTION CENTRES, STORAGE FACILITIES

Think laterally and creatively. If you're going to the trouble to dress a hotel venue and theme up gala dinners and presentations, then create the meeting space wherever you like. A local venue that is vacant and up for lease proved to be a wonderful space for a design thinking, collaborative team workshop. They were able to work in an environment where 'anything goes'. We were able to break the conventions of how you need to behave when you're seated at a table in a posh hotel.

PLANES, TRAINS & AUTOMOBILES

There's an old steam train you can hire in my city, Melbourne that is so cool for a team event – not just a party, but talk about the journey of change, shifting focus, staying on track... aaah the puns!
An old DC3 plane also takes off from our city airport for a wonderful perspective. Talk about a 'helicopter' view or taking a bigger perspective! Get the team up there so they can get the view! You can always have a mobile meeting on a bus or a boat or enjoy a slow and strategic cruise up a river, across a bay or simply anchor in a safe harbour.

ALL QUIET NOW

Libraries, meditation retreat venues and other types of retreats in the hills can be inspirational, quiet, reflective. A pleasant shift from the 'blah blah blah' of all-talk workshops and conferences.

Anything is possible with some creative thinking and the willingness to get outta the office or hotel.

Go on!

Inspirational environments are waiting for you and the team to truly create change.

thoughts...

GO MAKE MORE AWESOME

WHAT NOW MY LEADER?

If you've done nothing else since we started chatting a few pages ago now, I'd encourage you to upgrade your leadership operating system – from any hint of rigidity to … agility

Rigidity is not just about being tied to one place, one view or one style. It's also about holding tight to 'things'. Your views, your behaviours, you way of doing, thinking and being.

There's a stiffness or a firmness that can almost be seen in the pursed lips of the rigid! Those little lines at the top of your lips that get an extra workout when you use a straw! Or in the great Australian humour, the 'cat's arse' face!

Being a rigid leader is one who holds so firm to ways of doing things that you don't even want to wander up and suggest something, contribute an idea or give input at a meeting, workshop or session. It's too scary to approach a rigid leader.

The rigid leader, communicator, team member is inelastic. Inflexible. Unmoving. Tired.

Tired of keeping it all tight and moving at the same pace and speed.

It's time to let go of this tightness, to relax the 'cat's arse' and see what might be possible.

It's time for agility. Responsiveness. Adaptability. Flexibility.

Aaah but don't go so far as being floppy. We still need some form to our thinking, behavior and being.

LEAD WITH YOUR THINKING

It would be remiss of me to not flag the area of thought leadership in a book about leadership, change and innovation!

When you've got great ideas about how things could be in your team, project or organization… or you've got some thinking about your area of expertise, it's the perfect time to 'lead with your thinking'.

The growth of thought leadership - as a method to sell your thoughts, position your expertise and market your organization – has been phenomenal in recent years. Thought leaders aren't just experts in something; they're known for knowing that something.

And that's something they are passionate about… could talk about all day!

In Australia, I'm part of the Thought Leaders community and the successful Thought Leaders Business School, a year-long program that helps clever people be commercially smart.

If you're reading this, and you're leading change, you're smart. Why not build on your smarts by commercializing what you know to:
- o Grow your profile
- o Position your expertise
- o Map out your career path
- o Market your team or organization
- o Grow the business.

Thought leadership applies to people who start and

own businesses (entrepreneurs), to individuals who run their own business or practice (infopreneurs) and high potential leaders in organizations who are doing great work (intrapreneurs).

For each type of 'preneur', there's an opportunity to unpack what you know, package it up for commercial application and help grow a movement or change the way the world works… all because of your thinking, knowledge and expertise.

When you're in a leadership role, you have the capacity and opportunity to influence.

So think beyond the initial change program you're working on; there are bigger changes to create and more widespread impacts to achieve when you take a bigger picture view.

- o   What have you been thinking about?
- o   How will you take that thinking to market?
- o   How is what you know applicable to teams, organizations, workplaces and communities?
- o   What will you do to commercialise your thinking and spread your impact?

CHANGE FIRST

Of all the races in the world, of all the changes happening, be the winner by being the one to change first.

Don't wait for the team to be better, different, faster, more accurate or more economical.

You change first.

Be agile.

Let go and change...

Get out of linear.

Stop following the process.

Stop being a stickler for right and wrong and inside the lines.

Go out there and be organic.

Stop using Excel spreadsheets for a few days.

Grab a marker. Stand up. Write what you're thinking about.

Go for a walk. Grab someone and make 'em come with you on that walk.

Talk, think, wonder, then come back and 'do'.

IS THIS THE BEST USE OF YOUR TALENTS?

I heard the phrase 'impact judgement' recently... that is, you make a judgement about the impact you're having on people, things, places, the world.

Last week, many of the technical wizards I met at a technology conference were being encouraged to measure the value of the features they're building.

In every app on your smart phone or software program on your computer or device, there are heaps of features, buttons and things that the program is capable of doing, but people simply don't use.

'Oooohhh, I didn't know it could do that.'
'Pffft. Yeah, don't need it.'
'I only use it for....'

It's a bit of a waste really! All that development time creating cool things that people don't need, don't know exist or don't add any significant value to what that product does.

So I wanted to get you to think about your impact this week (and beyond).
Is this the best use of the brilliant things you do and can do?
Are the people you're working with, hanging around with, are they getting the best out of you?
Are you giving the best you have?
I think it's vital that we check on the value of the things we provide; to not wait until it's performance review time to find out that 70% of the 'stuff' we did this year didn't have an impact! <Ouch!> Or that the products we're working hard to design and create aren't needed or won't be purchased.

Ask yourself: 'is this the best use of my talents?'

Oh, and just as you might be wondering about the impact <u>you</u> are having, help out others around you by letting <u>them</u> know the positive impact they're having on you.

Some encouragement, feedback, responses and a 'thank you, that was brilliant' really do give us the pep up to keep creating, working, delivering and achieving a strong purpose, creating things people want, need and will use.

DON'T FIGHT STUPID – MAKE MORE AWESOME

Ask any of the talented improvisers around the world and they'll tell you that 'yes' is an almost magic word – as I've ranted about already. When they're on stage, making things up, for the entertainment of an audience, they live for hearing a 'yes' from their fellow performers.

'Yes...' allows them to build on, add to and develop a story line, an idea, a thought. Whereas a 'no' hits them like a bat over the head! Thud! Momentum stopped. It's harder to be creative, innovative or do your best work if you keep bumping into 'no'.

At the Agile India conference I attended and spokes in early 2014, keynote speaker Martin Fowler mentioned in his presentation on *'Software Design in the 21st Century'* the sweet phrase of 'don't fight stupid; make more awesome'.

Looking into the phrase more, I found that Jesse Robbins, from the same sort of technology field said this and uses it as somewhat of a philosophy.

Jesse said:
'If you keep bumping into 'no,' and the organization makes it hard to get to 'yes,' you are going to have a long, slow, painful death. Get out of there! 'Every time I tried to win over stupid, I regretted it. On the other hand, every time I've gotten people to swing around and build a movement, I remember all those moments and felt good every day, no matter how hard I worked.'

If you're battling against some no's where you are at the moment: Yield. Shift. Pivot.

Head off over there, in that direction and make awesome things happen, using your expertise, your capabilities and your knowing that you are on to something brilliant.

Yes. Go for it. Make more awesome. We're waiting for it.

thoughts...

ABOUT THE AUTHOR – LYNNE CAZALY

Lynne Cazaly is the author of the book you're holding, *'Create Change'* and the book *'Visual Mojo: How to capture thinking, convey information and collaborate using visuals'* .

With an extensive background in communications, she is an expert in helping leaders in organizations:
- o   lead change,
- o   think critically and
- o   apply innovation.

Lynne facilitates programs, workshops, training and advice in:
- o   change leadership
- o   thought leadership
- o   team engagement & communication
- o   agile project communication & collaboration
- o   leadership content distilling and
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Lynne is a speaker, facilitator and trainer. She is a Thought Leaders Global mentor and a member of the faculty of Thought Leaders Business School.

She lives in Melbourne, Australia.

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Create Change

Change is here to stay. The world is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous.
When leaders need to lead teams through change, it's vital they create an environment that brings people along ...
to leverage the transformation, rather than blocking or fighting it.
To boost competitive advantage, career success and team performance, it's all about how well you can 'create change.'

Create Change is about:

- having a spirit of spontaneity
- experimenting
- co-creating
- and having an intrepid curiosity.

Together the capabilities, techniques and approaches outlined in 'Create Change' will help you lead through change, leverage it and ... even like it.

Author and leadership communications expert Lynne Cazaly gives you the capabilities and thinking to strengthen your ability to respond, adapt and lead teams through change and transformation.

Building on the success of Lynne's first book 'Visual Mojo : How to capture thinking, convey information and collaborate using visuals', 'Create Change' takes engagement, communication and collaboration further.

Packed with tips, advice, insights and tried and tested creative lessons, Create Change will show you how to:

- lead change
- think critically
- apply innovation

Lynne Cazaly

Great leadership communicators aren't born; they are made. Whether you are leading a team through change or are on the receiving end of a corporate transformation, this book will help you think and act creatively to make change a process you welcome, thrive in and leverage for stellar performance.