

I started to explore the map further, looking for other ways we could exploit.

*Context specific play: Innovate, Leverage and Commoditise*

I have frequently been told that it is better to be a fast follower than a first mover. But is that true? Using the map told me a slightly more complex story. Certainly when exploring an uncharted space, there was lots of uncertainty and huge costs of R&D. It certainly seemed better to let others incur that risk and then somehow acquire that capability. But researchers and companies were constantly creating new things and so there was also a cost of discovering that new successful thing in all the noise. We wouldn't be the only company trying to play that game and any acquisition cost would reflect this. If we wanted to play that game, then somehow we need to be able to identify future success more effectively than others.

By comparison, when taking a product to a utility then the component was already quite well known. It was defined, there was an existing market but yes there would be inertia. I realised there was a connection between the two and we were sitting on the answer. Our pioneer — settler — town planner structure had enabled us to cope with evolution and connect the two extremes. The settlers role was simply to identify future successful patterns and learn about them by refining a product or library component. In 2005, we actually referred to our settlers as the *framework team* and their success came from understanding the patterns within what the pioneers — our *development team* — had built. The pioneers were our gamblers.