

path with signs saying “*doom, doom, ‘ere be doom*”. Of course, you might still decide that this is the best path for you. Maps don’t tell you what to do, they help explain the landscape.

Common failures of sensible executives

With that in mind, I buried several common failures of sensible executives within the Phoenix scenario in the previous chapter. It’s worth going through those now. Do remember, that people aren’t daft. Executives don’t make these mistakes because of a lack of wit. The problem is blindness. If you cannot see the board whether visually or through some mental model then you cannot learn patterns and you are moving in the dark, stumbling from one step to another as though it’s the first step you or anyone else has ever taken down that well trodden path. It may be well sign posted with “*doom, doom, ‘ere be doom*” and a hundred other companies may have walked along that path and met “*doom*” but without a map, you’re going to feel it’s an undiscovered path to future success. This is especially true if you’re unfortunate enough to attend that one conference with a CEO talking about how they built a successful company by travelling down that path and it wasn’t “*blind luck*”. One person’s survivorship bias can be a killer to others.

We often bemoan CEOs over their pay or lack of performance and whilst in some cases it is justified, many are caught in a world not of their making, trying to navigate without any understanding of the landscape whilst bombarded by inertia & magic solutions. This is also why leadership requires fortitude. Being in a position of having to