

To thine own self be true

Chapter 14

12 min read

The hardest thing about mapping is coming to terms with a simple fact that there is no right answer. Mapping enables you to observe the environment, the constant flow of evolution and moves of other players but it won't tell you what to do. There are alas no simple steps for you to follow to success. There are no plans that guarantee to bring you a fortune. I face this obstacle regularly when companies ask *"how will mapping benefit me"* to which the answer that *"it depends upon what you observe and then what you do"* is seldom welcome. They often want the concrete, the definite and a world of levers you can pull or buttons you can press. I long to say *"By turning this mapping dial you will save 12% of costs"* or *"press the mapping button to increase your rates of successful innovation by 34%"* but it just isn't true. The benefits are context specific and they depend upon you.

The journey of mapping is one of abandoning the simple mechanistic world and embracing an iterative path of learning. Yes, there are patterns we can learn. Yes, there are universal principles we can apply. Yes, there exists context specific gameplay. Despite this and in spite of our ability to observe the environment, it is still awash with uncertainty. The uncharted is uncertain, the timing of various patterns are uncertain and the actions of others are uncertain. Even the future value of something is inversely proportional to the certainty we have