



# Strategic Thinking

Focus on the right things so you can pivot  
and accelerate to achieve goals

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# Today's webinar

*How can I learn to be a strategic thinker?*

## **Mindsets**

How do you develop a different mindset?  
Shifting focus, behaviors and discipline

## **Ways of Working**

How can you work differently with your team?  
Shifting how you work together so you can deliver results

## **Tools**

Are there tools that can help?  
Trying some new tools to help solve problems in new ways

## **Building a Roadmap**

How will you get there?

For each section there will be:

- Brief Lectures
- Instructions
- Exercises
- Q&A

There will be a 10-minute break about half-way through

## **Today's goal**

- Identify ways you can shift from reactionary fire-fighting, to proactive and strategic
- Begin a shift in mindset to put yourself in a position to lead
- Try a few new approaches to the ways of working with your team
- Experiment with a couple of tools for strategic thinking

# This webinar

*This webinar is built on what we've seen that works. Not all exercises work for everyone, the idea is to pick the ones that work for you and to start with one thing and build new behaviors, skills and habits.*

*I've tried to credit others when I've used or built on their work.*

For exercises we will do during the webinar, I will give live instructions as we go.

You will need a couple of sheets of paper and a pen or marker.



Detailed instructions for doing exercises with your teams will be in a separate box like this. I won't go through these in the webinar, they are to help you use this on your own after the webinar.

Instructions Box for *AFTER* the Webinar



How the exercise links to the characteristics of strategic thinking



1. Focus on What Matters

# \*Recognizing the time we are in

*We are in an unprecedented time. First and foremost, stay safe and healthy..*

*It may be that managing this crisis is your full-time job right now.*

*This may change how we work. We just don't know how things will be at the other end.*

*Here are a few things we see:*

- The biggest challenges for organizations BC (Before Covid) have become glaring problems DC (During Covid)
- Digital capabilities create clear advantages – prioritize and keep key IT projects going
- Significant changes in supply chains are already occurring – Sourcing closer to markets, customers, manufacturing, building inventories and warehousing *AND* smarter global supply chains
- Logistics networks will become more integrated and automated so it's easier to ship by any combination of planes, trains, and trucks

# Why is strategic thinking important?

The pace of change is accelerating and world events are impacting companies of all sizes. Organizations are overwhelmed by speed, chaos, volatility, and uncertainty.

Technology is disrupting every industry.

Competition can come from anywhere.

Problems are harder and pressure is intense



In a complex world, it takes new mindsets, ways of working and tools to thrive.

# What it's not

## Strategic thinking is NOT

- Not about your organization's strategy
- Not a measure of how smart you are
- Not long term over short term focus
- Not “a plan”
- Not a one-time event
- Not an overnight change



# So what is strategic thinking?

A way of ***thinking*** and ***taking action*** to achieve goals. It involves generating and applying unique insights to make decisions and create a competitive advantage.

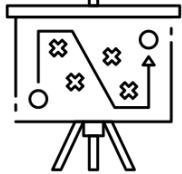


It is the ability to see both the forest and the trees.

It is the opposite of tactical, fire-fighting work. It is spending the right time on the right things.

# Some definitions

## Strategy or Strategic Plan



A plan for how an organization reaches its goals, including priorities and initiatives.

This answers the question: How do we get to our goals?

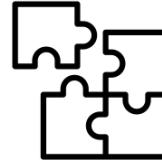
## Critical Thinking



Analyzing and evaluating issues and data to make decisions and solve problems.

This answers the question: How do we make decisions?

## Systems Thinking



Asses how parts of a system relate and work together. You might use this to design roles and processes.

This answers the question: How do we work together and how do we solve complex problems?

## Design Thinking



A process for creating solving problems with a focus on human-centered solutions.

This answers the question: How can we quickly develop and test ideas?



## Strategic Thinking

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# What it's not

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# Why strategic thinking is important

Strategic, adaptive + resilient companies perform better

**Key to success**  
Companies that are adaptive, innovative and resilient outperformed the rest of the S&P 500 by 200%.



**Key to survival**  
In 1960, companies spent an average of 60 years in the S&P 500 index. Today, it's less than 20

# The key to that value is people

*“The real competitive advantage in any business is one word only, which is “people”.*

Kamil Toume  
Writer and thought leader



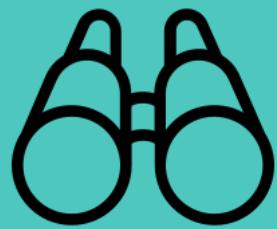
**People** are the key to successful organizations

- Better performance in a complex world
- Adapting, pivoting and accelerating
- Stronger competitive position
- Desired place to work

# What is Strategic Thinking

A way of ***thinking*** and ***taking action*** to achieve goals.

It involves generating and applying unique insights to make decisions and create a competitive advantage. It is the opposite of tactical, fire-fighting at work. It is spending the right time on the right things.



Focus on What Matters



Connect Ideas

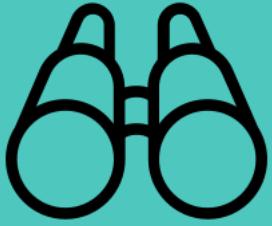
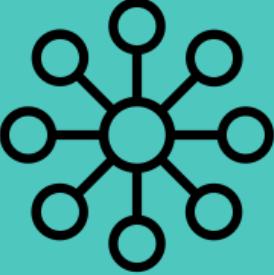


Embrace Possibility



Be Adaptive & Resilient

# What is Strategic Thinking

			
Focus on What Matters	Connect Ideas	Embrace Possibility	Be Adaptive & Resilient
<p>Be curious, learn and know what's important</p> <p>Know how you contribute or pivot to contribute</p> <p>Get the stuff done that moves the needle</p>	<p>Connect the dots across your organization</p> <p>Work in teams and across silos</p> <p>Spot the opportunities and black holes</p>	<p>Be open to ambiguity and new solutions</p> <p>Ask questions so you can navigate the chaos</p> <p>Build trust and <b>trust others</b></p>	<p>Work in an iterative, agile way</p> <p>Innovate how you get things done</p> <p>Test with actual customers</p> <p>Learn from mistakes</p>

# Create a score sheet



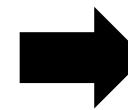
1	2	3	4
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Score sheet

On the following page there are a series of statements under each category.

**For each one that is true** for you and your organization, put a check mark.

Please consider your current remote, hybrid or in-person working situation.



1 ✓	2 ✓	3 ✓	4 ✓
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Your completed scoresheet might look like this.

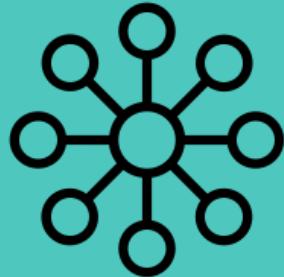
# Mindsets

## Characteristics of Strategic Thinkers



### 1. Focus on What Matters

I think about our long-term goals as I plan how I spend my time  
I try to learn as much as I can so I make the best decisions  
I take ownership and deliver on what I promise  
I get stuff done, and I don't get mired by busy work and indecision



### 2. Connect Ideas

I actively reach across functions and levels to build networks internally  
I seek professional relationships outside my company and my industry  
I look to connect ideas and solve problems  
I approach problems with curiosity and try not to jump to conclusions



### 3. Embrace Possibility

I am comfortable with ambiguity and know that new problems and new solutions will emerge  
I embrace and build on the ideas of others  
I feel safe asking for help and asking "what if..."  
I ask questions frequently to make sure I understand and to frame ideas



### 4. Be Adaptive & Resilient

I take risks and experiment so we can move forward faster  
I sincerely seek input so I can improve and learn from mistakes  
I assess and adjust constantly so I improve  
I trust my colleagues and don't try to tell them how to do their work

# Poll Question

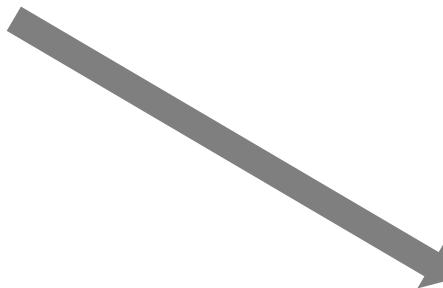


Which of the four areas do you have the FEWEST check marks?

1. Focus on What Matters
2. Connect Ideas
3. Embrace Possibility
4. Adaptive & Resilient

# How to use the results

Each of the exercises in this webinar are useful, but you may wish to prioritize how you start by using the icons in the bottom right corner to help you to solve specific issues



People and teams change a step at a time, so try an exercise a few times and then come back and try another one.

Many of the exercises have more than one icon because they help you in multiple ways.



Nearly all of them help you with Adaptive and Resilient



# Spend the right time on the right things

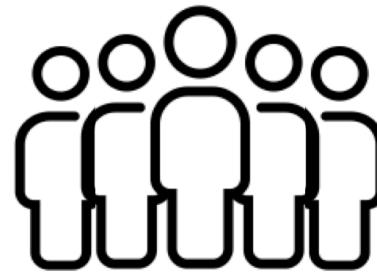
Strategic thinking requires new mindsets for us, new ways of working with our teams and new tools to solve problems in new ways.

Brings together some competencies and practices



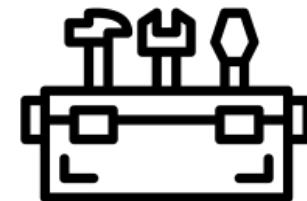
**Mindsets**

Build new behaviors, approaches, perspectives, a new culture



**Ways of Working**

Ways of working, processes, activities and interactions



**Tools**

Tools to solve problems in new ways, the beginning of a toolbox

# Mindsets



*“Dedicate yourself to a core group of values. Without them you will never be able to find personal fulfillment and you will never be able to lead effectively.”*

Kenneth Chenault  
Former CEO of American Express

# Mindsets

*In the future, what are you doing differently?*

Goal: A vision of what you want for the future helps you begin to create a roadmap to getting there.

EXERCISE specific instructions given during webinar

You will need a piece of paper and a marker.

Draw your future state of you as a leader - Specific instructions from the Webinar leader

Don't make your drawing about a title or a specific organization. For this kickoff exercise, think about what you want to be doing.

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When you look at your picture, think about what mindsets, skillsets and toolsets need to change for you to get there.

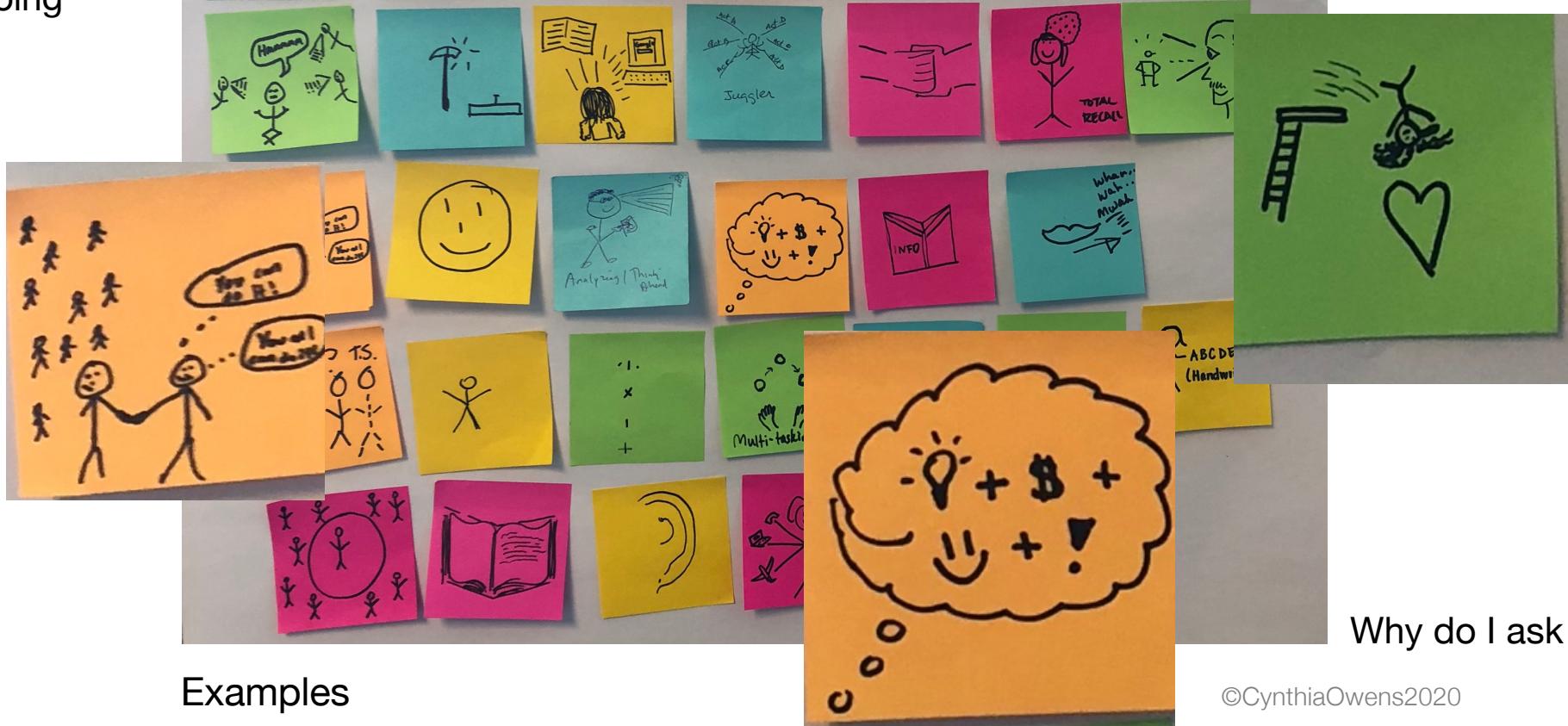
What can you do differently tomorrow? What do you need to learn? Where can you learn that? When will you start?

Personal Future State



3. Embrace Possibility

What are you doing differently?



Why do I ask you to draw?

Examples

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# Mindsets

*How do I know where I stand now? How can I improve?*

Goal: Get a clear picture of where we are at right now, so you know how you need to change.

## The Personal 360

Set up 30-minute conversations with 5 people in different parts of your organization. Choose a mix of people and roles.

Ask the following questions.

- What do I do well?
- What could I do differently that would help me be more successful?
- What could I do differently that would have the greatest impact on our success as an organization?

Listen and take notes as though you are a neutral 3<sup>rd</sup> party. Don't react, don't agree or refute any comment. It can be good to ask for examples.

Take your notes and see what themes emerge. Make a plan to begin addressing the key themes.

What can you do differently tomorrow?

Get Useful Feedback



1. Focus on  
What Matters



4. Be Adaptive  
& Resilient

# Mindsets

*How can I see things differently?*

Goal: Change a few of the stories you tell yourself so you get unstuck.

We all tell ourselves stories that become our beliefs.

- “That team doesn’t get anything done.”
- “My boss always favors him.”
- “I work harder than anyone on my team.”

Many of these stories either aren’t the whole story and contain only a nugget of truth.

Collect your stories in a notebook over 1-2 weeks.

Example: “That department slows everything down.”

Paint a bigger picture.

“That team has some antiquated software and their boss doesn’t empower them, so they move slowly.”

Flip the story

“If I made an effort and spent some time with one person on that team I could understand some of their challenges and maybe together we could find a solution.”

QUESTION What is one story you tell yourself that is probably not 100% correct?

Change Your Stories



4. Be Adaptive  
& Resilient

# Mindsets

*How can we improve communication and collaboration?*

Goal: Build a conversation

Part 1:

“Yes and...” vs “No but...” or “But...”

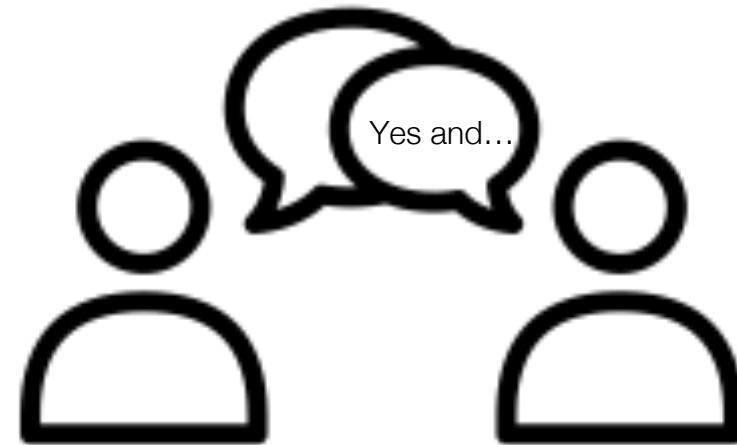
Saying “yes and” does two important things.

1. It builds on ideas and explores solutions
2. It makes you think differently

Try “Yes and...” for one week

1. Instead of shutting down a conversation or killing the ideas of others, “yes and” builds on ideas and explores solutions
2. To say “yes and” you have to pay attention to what the person is saying, not plan your next statement to supersede anything that’s been said.

Change the Conversation



Search: Two words that can change the world, YES AND TEDxOrlando



2. Connect Ideas



3. Embrace Possibility

# Mindsets

*How can we improve communication and collaboration?*

## Goal: Build a conversation

### Part 2:

Having the answer vs having the question

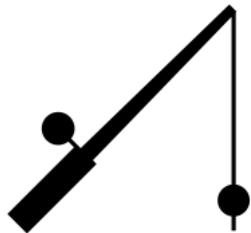
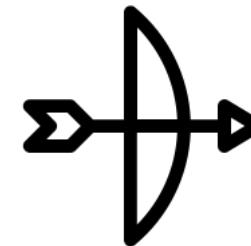
In school, having the right answer got you points. In organizations, having a good question be more insightful and can transform a conversation.

Be curious. Think about what question might open the conversation. This is how you can begin to learn more and to connect ideas.



Focus on the fishing questions.

Tip: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How



## Change the Conversation

Hunting questions are specific and closed. Use when searching for a specific or “yes” or “no” answer

- Did you finish the project?
- When is that due?
- What was the feedback?
- When are we meeting with the customer?

Fishing questions are open ended. Use when searching for information and starting conversations

- Can we improve on this?
- How can we make this better?
- What did you learn when you did that last project?
- What kind of customer feedback will be most useful?
- How could we work with other teams to solve this?
- What if we tried it another way?



2. Connect Ideas



4. Be Adaptive & Resilient

# Mindsets

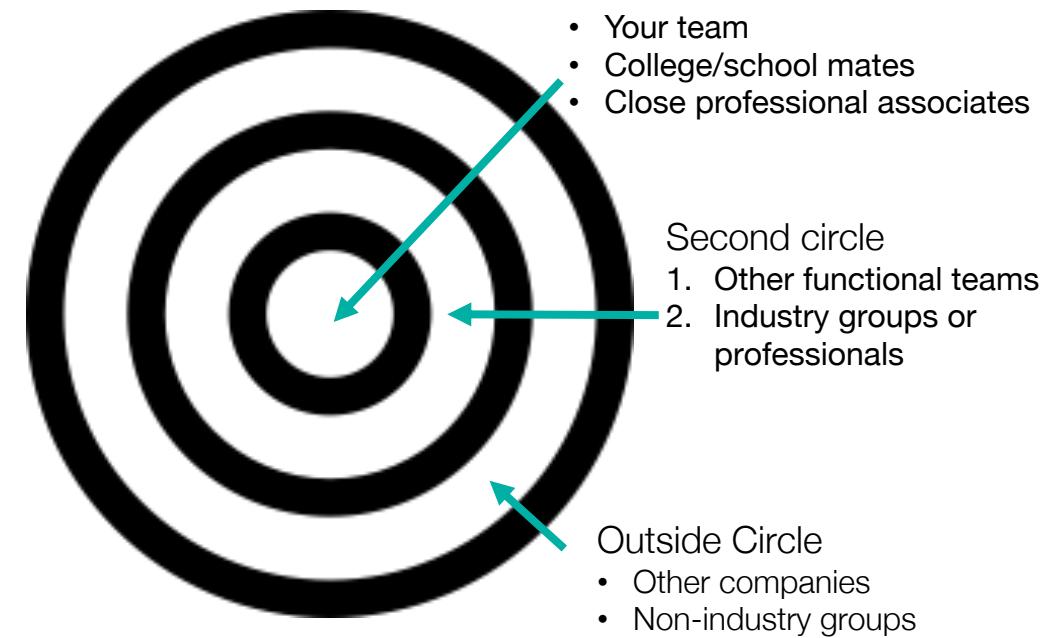
*How can I build connections?*

**Goal:** Expand your network to learn more and connect people and ideas

Actively reach across functions and levels to build networks internally

Seek professional relationships outside your company and your industry

Make More Connections



Draw this set of concentric circles, make sure it's big enough so you can write names in each ring.

The inner ring is likely crowded – so build connections in the other rings

# Mindsets

*How do you contribute?*

**Goal:** Be clear about how your work contributes to your organization.

Strategic thinkers focus on the right things, that means focusing on things short or long term that are strategic for the organization.

And, importantly, has your organization reviewed and updated priorities (and KPIs) since Covid?

**Try This:** Make 2 lists:

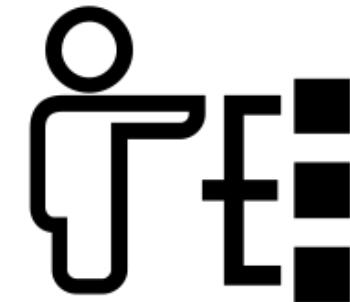
1. List the 3-5 strategic priorities for your organization
2. List the 3-5 strategic priorities for your team

Draw a line to connect any team priorities to an organizational priority.

Now circle the team priorities that you are directly contributing to.

How are you contributing to those team or organization strategic priorities? How can you spend more time on those important tasks?

How You Contribute



Organization

- Double-digit growth
- Improve CX with better CRM software
- Cut production time by 10%
- Rebranding campaign
- Reduce carbon footprint

Marketing team

- Create new sales enablement tools
- Cut campaign development time in half
- Develop customer success stories
- Reduce waste



1. Focus on What Matters

# Mindsets

## What do we do?

### Goal: Articulate your value to customers and to your business.

This exercise helps you articulate your value proposition. It's great for teams to align on a consistent message. It can help your team talk about how it contributes. Or you can use it as an individual.

You may have a value prop – but it's worth checking to see if it's still right.

Print and fill out this exercise.

Don't use corporate marketing terms – be brutally honest.

For statement #4, genuinely think about customer feedback and what differentiates your organization.

If you are in a supporting function – use more space to complete statements #6 and #7. Connect what you do to the work that serves the customer.

Test this with colleagues, other teams and with a customer. Revise and improve it. Do this once a year to make sure it's up to date.

## Our Value

1. Our company is in business to \_\_\_\_\_.  
[what purpose]
2. Our \_\_\_\_\_ is a \_\_\_\_\_.  
[name of product/service] [solution description]
3. It helps \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_,  
[target customers/users] [key value proposition]
4. Our customers say our product/service is unique because \_\_\_\_\_.  
[how your offering is unique]
5. For our approach/strategy/solution to succeed, it must be true that  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
[what must be true for success].
6. My team supports this ambition by \_\_\_\_\_.  
[jobs your team does]
7. I \_\_\_\_\_ serve customers by \_\_\_\_\_.  
[directly/indirectly] [work you do]



2. Connect Ideas



3. Embrace Possibility

# Mindsets

*How should I spend my time? Should vs could?*

**Goal:** Be more deliberate about how you spend your time and schedule your day.

Many people spend more time than necessary answering email, in unproductive meetings and doing work that doesn't contribute in a meaningful way.

Stop. Re-plan your day.

## TRY ASKING

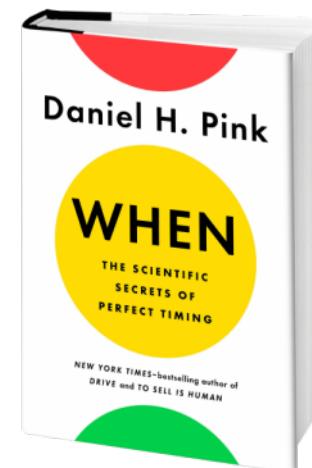
When am I most productive?

What work requires thinking vs. doing?

What will contribute to strategic goals? What will help you build connections and cross-functional teams? What will bring the most value for customers?

- **Carve out time**
- Say no to meetings
- Cut your email time
- Shift from asking what should I be doing to what could I be doing?

Spend Time on the Right Things



Resources [www.danpink.com](http://www.danpink.com)



1. Focus on  
What Matters



4. Be Adaptive  
& Resilient

# Mindsets

## Goal: Re-plan your days.

Spend time on the things that matter, and organize your days so you do the most important things in your most productive, most focused time.

### Try This:

#### For week 1

1. Keep track of what you actually do. Use a piece of paper labeled with 15-minute increments.
2. Include the interruptions, trips to the coffee machine, small talk with a colleague, time in meetings, time you spent focused on a task, and the time you were distracted

#### For week 2

1. Put together a new plan.
2. Think about your most productive times of day and **carve out some time to focus.**
3. Carve out time and ruthlessly protect it.
4. Look at the previous exercise, how much time are you spending getting work done on the critical strategic priorities?
5. The goal isn't to cut out all conversations and meetings, but to find time to focus on accomplishing important work.

## Spend Time on the Right Things

Monday – Now		Monday – Future	
8:00 am		8:00 am	
8:15 am		8:15 am	
8:30 am		8:30 am	
8:45 am		8:45 am	
9:00 am		9:00 am	
9:15 am		9:15 am	
9:30 am		9:30 am	
9:45 am		9:45 am	
10:00 am		10:00 am	
10:15 am		10:15 am	
10:30 am		10:30 am	
10:45 am		10:45 am	
11:00 am		11:00 am	
11:15 am		11:15 am	
11:30 am		11:30 am	
11:45 am		11:45 am	
12:00 noon		12:00 noon	
12:15 pm		12:15 pm	
12:30 pm		12:30 pm	
12:45 pm		12:45 pm	
1:00 pm		1:00 pm	
1:15 pm		1:15 pm	

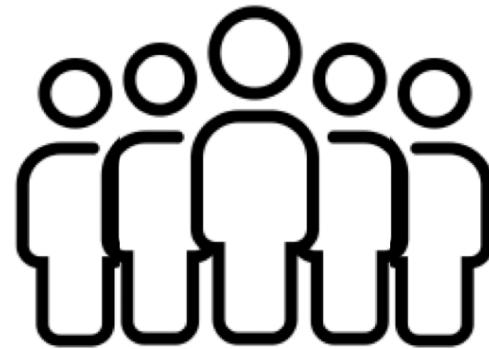


### 1. Focus on What Matters



### 4. Be Adaptive & Resilient

# Ways of Working



*“Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.”*

Michael Jordan

\*Best basketball player of all time

*\*Personal opinion*

# Ways of Working

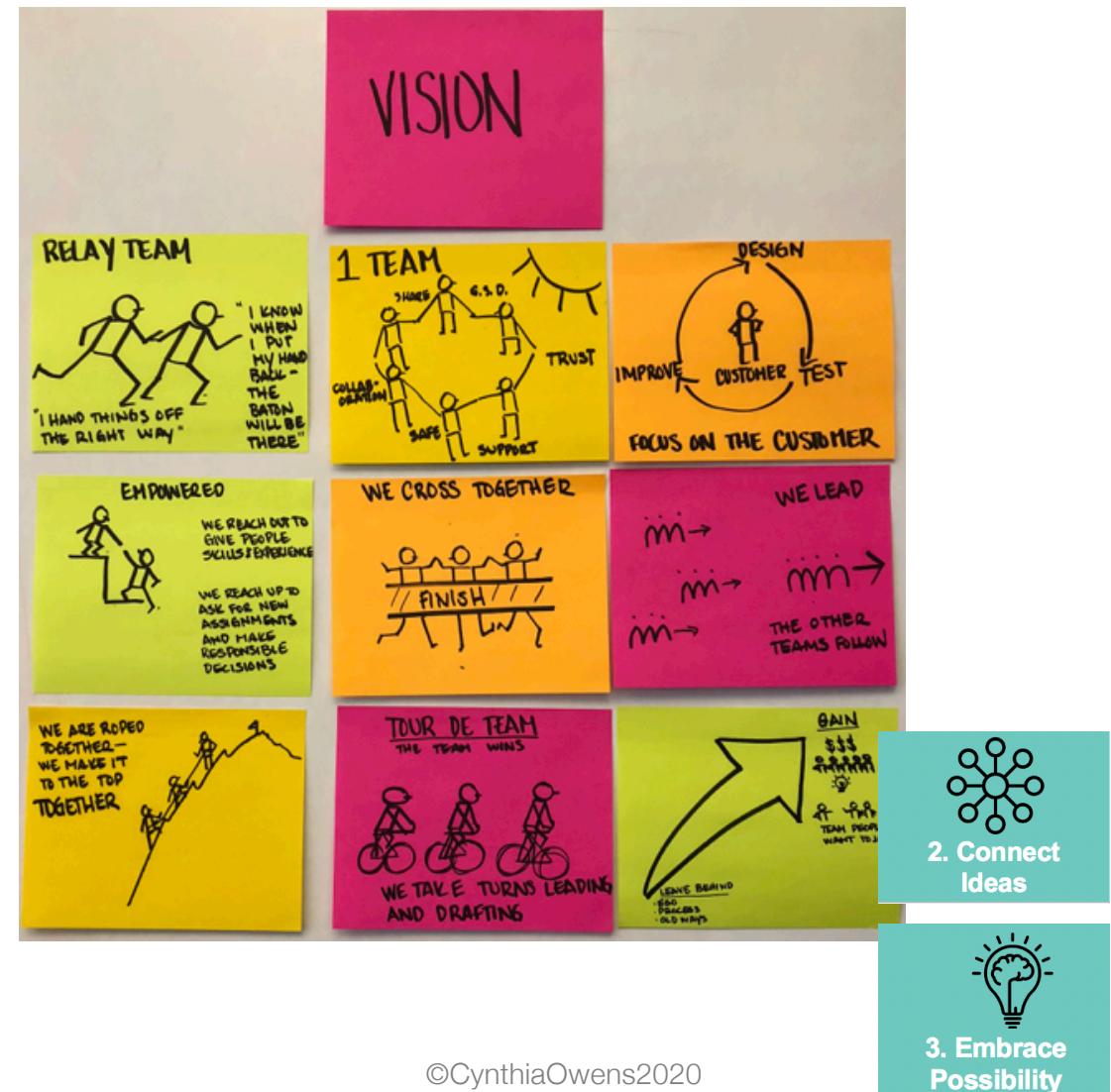
*How can we build a vision of the future for our team?*

Goal: Help a team create a vision for how they work or the conclusion of a project

Team Vision Drawings (similar to personal future state)

- Give everyone a piece of letter-size paper or large sticky note and make colored markers or pencils available.
- Pose this question: "Just suppose it's a year from now and everything we hope for this project (this team) comes true. What would that look like? What would we be doing differently. Please draw this."
- Ask everyone to present his/her drawing and tell the story. Take notes and make a gallery of the drawings.
- Then have a discussion: What is most compelling? What commonalities do people see? What solutions do they see? .

Vision Drawings



# Ways of Working

*How can my team be more innovative?*

Goal: This quick brainstorming exercise surfaces dozens of good ideas and gets your team out of the box

Bring together a cross functional team of people.

## Crazy 8s

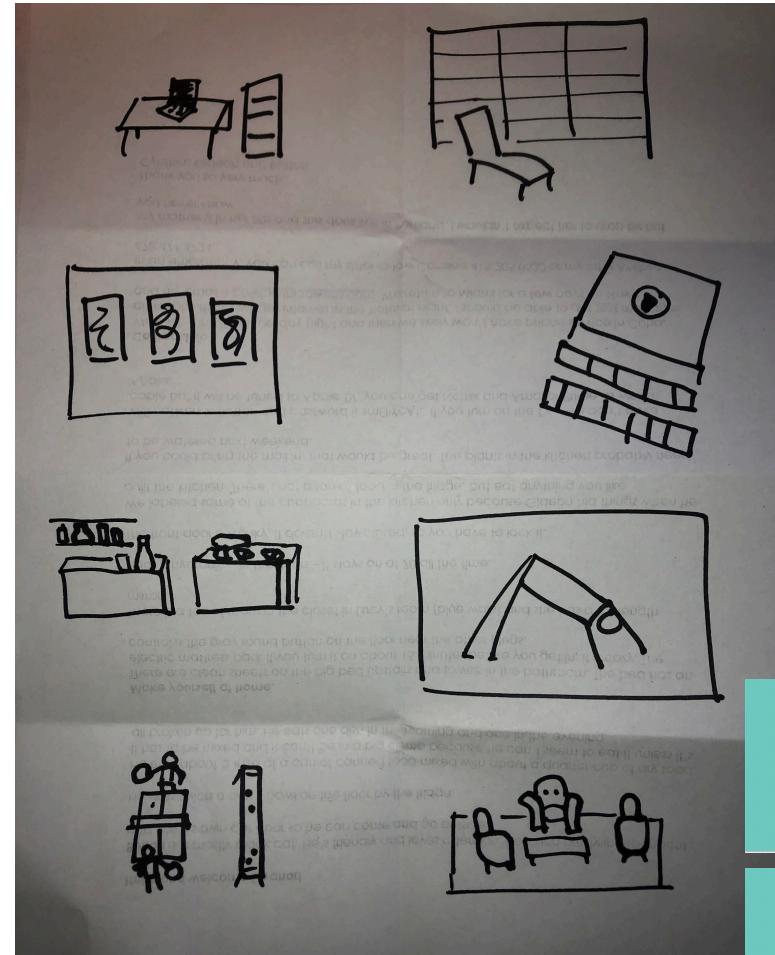
- Give everyone a piece of letter-size paper. Have a timer ready
- Ask them to fold it 3 times, so they have 8 rectangles on the paper.
- There are eight rounds of 30 seconds in Crazy 8s.
- Each square is one round. In each round you will ask people to draw a solution to a question in one square.
- Pose your question. For example: "How would we reinvent customer service." Or "What new product/service should we add?"
- There is a 10 second break between rounds.
- In each subsequent round, people draw a new way to answer the question.

At the end, have each person has a page with 8 ideas.

- They share their ideas in groups of 3.
- Then the groups should share their best 4-5 ideas.



## Ideation Exercise



## 2. Connect Ideas



## 3. Embrace Possibility

# Ways of Working

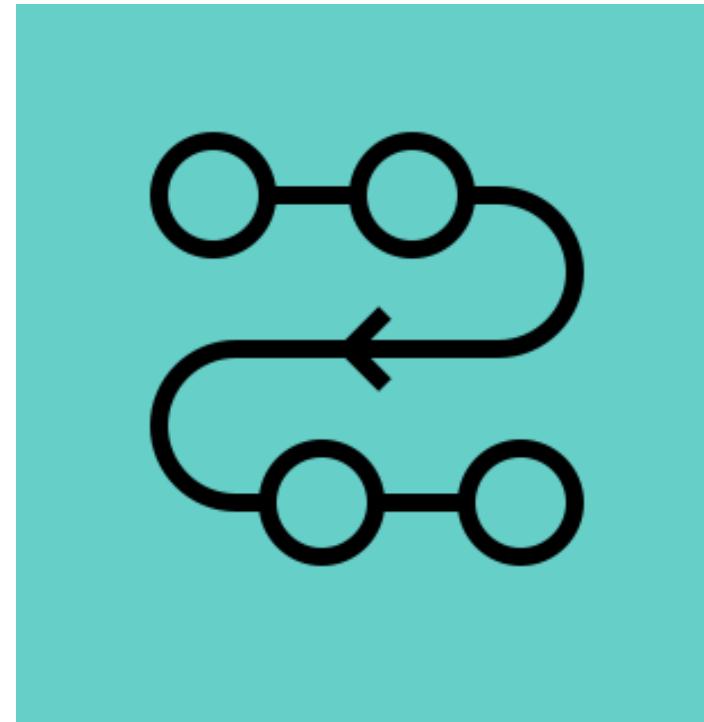
The world – and your competition – are moving fast, your team needs a process that keeps up.

When teams choose ways of working it can help save time, it establishes some norms without necessarily prescribing how people do individual tasks. It provides the guardrails for getting to your objectives.

Methodologies help you onboard new people faster.

Not all methodologies work for all organizations and nearly all of them are better when modified for your team.

Value of a Process



1. Focus on  
What Matters



4. Be Adaptive  
& Resilient

# Ways of Working

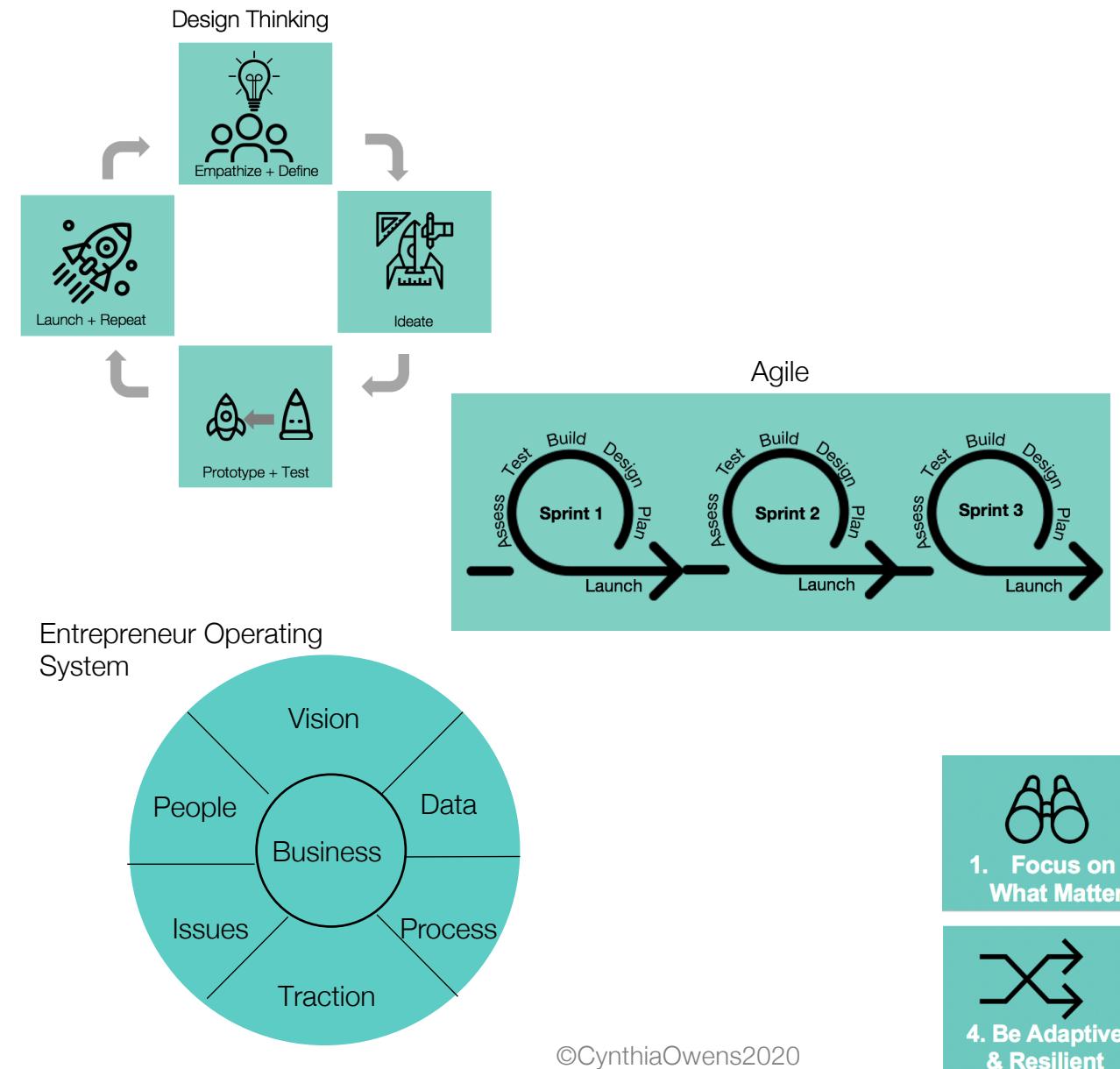
*Some approaches to working*

Goal: Set projects up in a more iterative and collaborative framework to move faster

The world – and your competition – are moving fast, your team needs a process that keeps up.

These are just 3 examples

Remember: choose a process and then adapt it to your needs.  
Stick with it long enough to give it a real test.  
Put someone in charge of keeping you on track.  
Assess and make it better.



# Ways of Working

*If you are stuck or have no visibility – break down work into sprints*

Goal: Set projects up to move faster

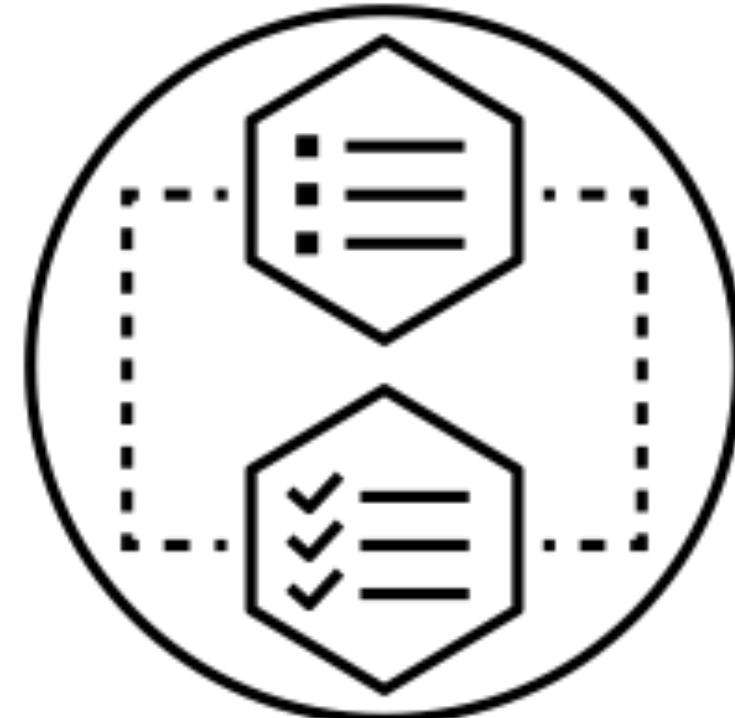
Things are changing quickly, this identifies critical work that needs to get done, creates smaller bites of work people can accomplish.

Sprints are broken down into smaller goals for teams and then smaller daily tasks.

Be flexible, sprints may need to be adjusted daily depending on what's happening with the team members.

Find a sprint approach and adapt it to your work. Use the sprint planning and stand-up rituals to keep you moving.

Start with one-week sprints and as your teams get more visibility, move to 2-week sprints.



1. Focus on What Matters



4. Be Adaptive & Resilient

# Ways of Working

*Carve out time for strategic thinking*

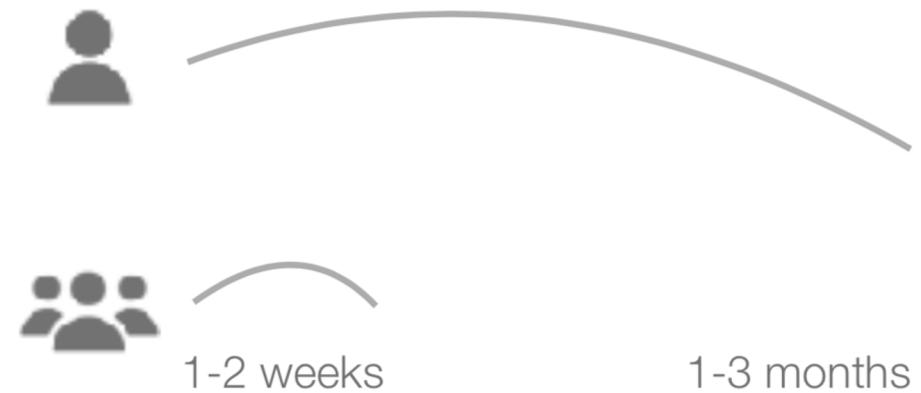
**Goal:** Leaders spend 10%-20% of your time looking out ahead

Your team needs to be heads-down, so you need to look out for the hurdles or barriers that will get in their way.

Dedicate time to looking ahead, what do you need to watch out for, what can you plan for, how will work look in 1 month and in 3 months.

## How to focus

- Schedule this on your calendar — turn off email and IM and focus what will we need, how can we get things done
- Spend a little of that time every week talking to your peers leading other teams on what they see ahead — what are potential barriers and what are opportunities
- Spend 5 minutes at the end of team meetings asking what your team members see looking out 1-2 months
- Create a communications channel for your team to share ideas, trends



# Ways of Working

*How can you build trust on your team?*

What are your team agreements?

To move fast team members and teams need to trust each other.  
Trust can start with one person.



Start showing trust to build trust

- Stop checking up on people, judge outcomes
- Stop blaming, look for solutions
- Treat every deadline like a group deadline, pitch in
- Share a problem with your team or even one person. Ask for help solving something
- End sarcasm
- Make other teams your allies
- Celebrate accomplishments of team members – genuinely! Stop celebrating every small step if it doesn't deserve a celebration.
- Give credit to others



3. Embrace Possibility

# Ways of Working

## *Empowering Teams*

Leaders and employees see empowerment very differently.



Leaders want people to step up and take responsibility



Employees want managers to stop micromanaging and trust them to get stuff done

Here's what they say:

I have to double check everyone's work		My boss is always micromanaging me
People don't volunteer for projects		The last person who took on a project ended up leaving
I can do it faster because I know all the background		Leaders don't ask for input or share information
Things take forever to get done		It takes forever because 9 people need to sign off on this
I don't have anyone with the skills to take this on		My boss won't help us learn the skills we need



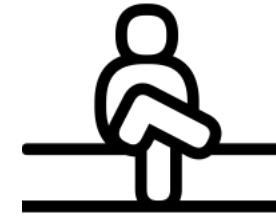
2. Connect Ideas



3. Embrace Possibility

# Ways of Working

Empowerment is a 2-Way Street



## Leaders:

- Pick a team member who could take on more, ask them, “What would you need to lead this project?”
- Give the person the skills to succeed
- Let people stretch
- Provide clear permission and guardrails for decisions
- Delegate and make yourself unavailable
- Answer questions with questions, let people try to find answers
- Ask them what they need
- Hold frequent, short 1x1 meetings, not to check up but to ask what the person needs to be successful

## Team members:

- Pick a project where you would like to take ownership or more responsibility and ask to lead it
- Ask for the skills you need to lead the next project
- Go online and learn skills on your own
- Resist going to your manager to ask a question if you think you know the answer – NEVER ask a question for brownie points
- Help a peer complete a project
- Ask for leaders to CLEARLY define the guardrails you have for decision making – make specific asks to expand guardrails



## 2. Connect Ideas



## 3. Embrace Possibility

# Ways of Working

Goal: Be clear on what you are trying to solve

Figure out the question you are trying to answer is crucial to actually solving the problem.

Often teams get deep into conversations without really aligning on what they are trying to solve. We give our own meaning to words and business terms.

Create a big bullseye on a whiteboard or flipchart  
Give everyone a marker and some sticky notes

State the goal  
Ask people to think about what they need to do to contribute  
Using at least 3 sticky notes, ask everyone to write down

1. What success looks like
2. What *might* be part of the project
3. What's out of scope

Align on Your Goal



# Ways of Working

Goal: Run more effective meetings, make them a good use of time.

Set agendas with clear goals

Be clear about inform, contribute and decide

Stick to time

SHORTER meetings

No more than 6 slides

## Try This:

1. Set a clear goal or outcome for the meeting
2. Set an agenda with times for each item – send it out before the meeting and STICK TO THE AGENDA
3. Only invite people who really need to be there
4. Define whether a topic is INFORM, CONTRIBUTE or DECIDE
5. Have the most skilled facilitator run the meeting – don't have the most senior person run it
6. Spend the last 5 minutes of the meeting summing up decisions and next steps

Tip: If you are in a meeting that someone else organized start asking: "What is our goal? What do we want to do today?"

Run Better Meetings



3. Embrace Possibility



4. Be Adaptive & Resilient

# Ways of Working

*How can I be more effective in meetings?*

Goal: Learn to whiteboard effectively

Sketching helps create clarity. Visuals build understanding and alignment to accelerate teams.

\*As long as people recognize your stick figure as a person and you label shapes...then your drawing is good enough.

## EXERCISE

Practice: Take “visual notes”

Start with the things common to your business and commonly discussed in meetings (people, computers, buildings, documents, products,

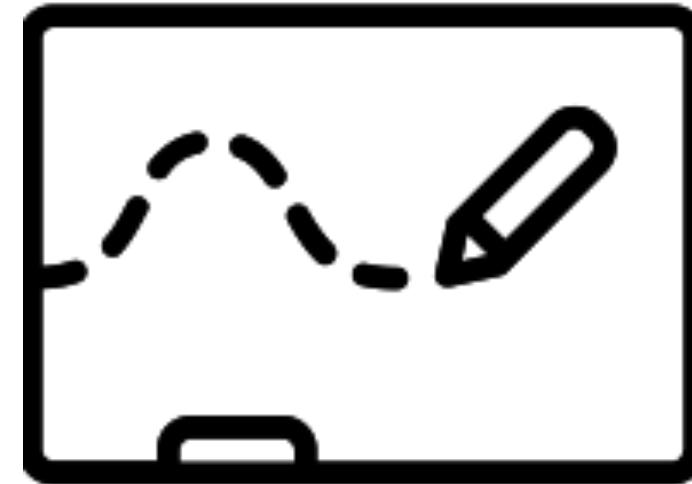
## **Virtual meetings**

Give remote participants a local buddy

Try online whiteboarding



Get Alignment in Meetings



## Resources

The Noun Project <https://thenounproject.com>

Mural <https://mural.co>

Miro <https://miro.com>

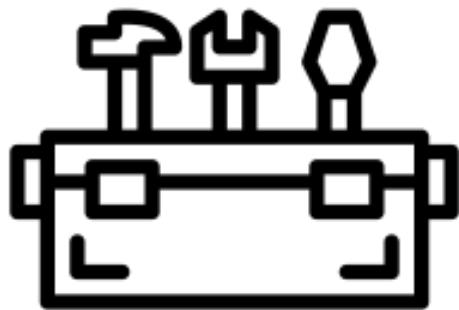


**2. Connect Ideas**



**3. Embrace Possibility**

# Tools



*“Give ordinary people the right tools, and they will design and build the most extraordinary things.”*

Neil Gershenfeld  
Professor at MIT  
Director of MIT's Center for Bits and Atoms, a sister lab to the MIT Media Lab.

# Tools



*How can I understand my colleagues?*

**Goal:** Understanding other perspectives so you can be more effective

It can be hard to see things from another person's perspective.  
And there is almost always one person who pushes all your buttons.

The canvas can be used to gain empathy with customers, other teams, and employees.

## EXERCISE

### Empathy map

The purpose is to understand the context of an issue for someone else.

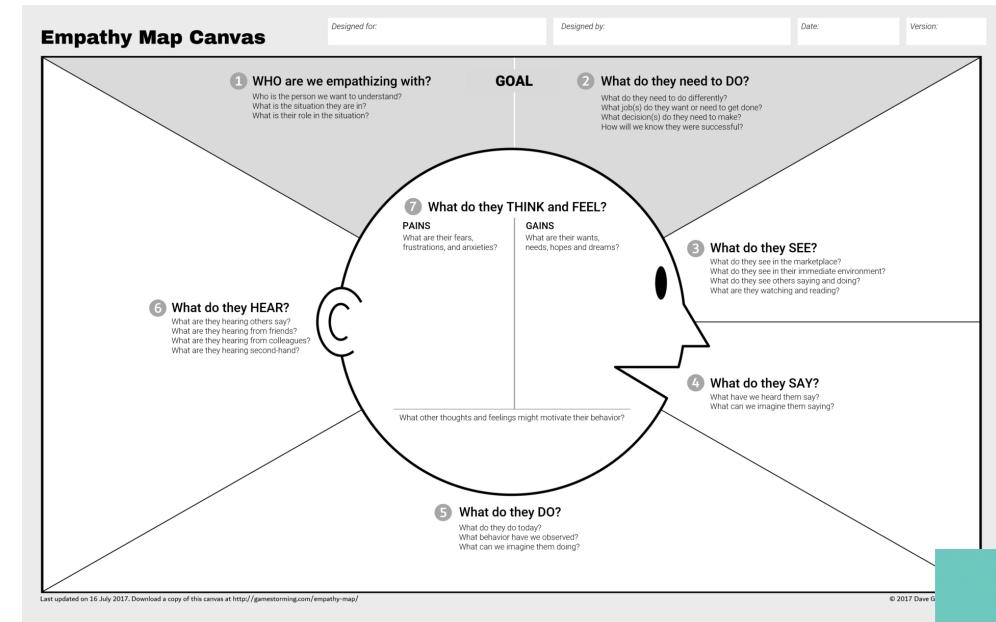
For each section, ask yourself, what is this person doing, saying, seeing, hearing, thinking, and feeling.

Don't be cynical, stand in their shoes.

### Resources

<http://gamestorming.com/empathy-mapping/>

Build Empathy



2. Connect Ideas



3. Embrace Possibility

# Tools

## Six Thinking Hats™

*How can we look at things from new perspectives?*

The Six Thinking Hats from Edward de Bono are designed to help you look at different perspectives by asking a series of questions. It follows a distinct process so you don't skip over things.

Teams often print cards and use them in meetings setting time limits for the discussion in each section.

Use these when you are working on a project.

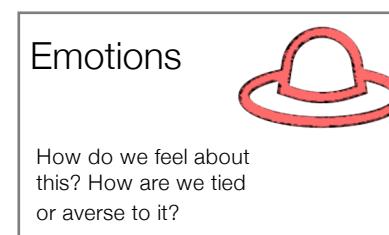
Use these with a team, make it a standard practice.

### Resources:

Edward de Bono, "Thinking Methods"

<http://www.debonogroup.com>

## Look at Ideas From All Angles



1. Focus on  
What Matters



2. Connect  
Ideas

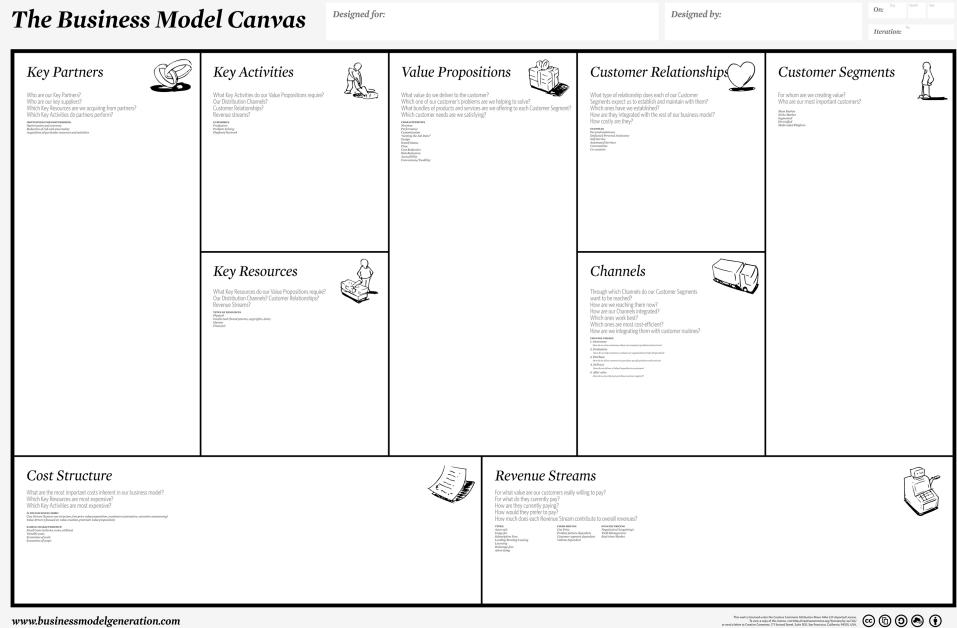
# Tools

## Additional tools

### Business Model Canvas

<https://strategyzer.com/canvas/business-model-canvas>

The Business Model Canvas



Great questions to ask internally to make sure you focus on the right things  
Can be used in whole or in parts

Thanks to Alex Osterwalder at Strategyzer

### The 5 Whys – “Fishbone”

Keep asking why. Ask it 5 times.

We are stuck	
Why?	We can't get the new product to market
Why?	Need to fix a number of problems
Why?	Fixes take too much time
Why?	Not enough people working on this
Why?	Not enough resources to hire the right people

- Can be valuable in making sure you are solving the right problem
  - Requires a next step – which is finding the right solution
  - Make sure you are asking the right questions
- \*Be careful that it isn't used as a way of searching for blame



1. Focus on What Matters



3. Embrace Possibility

# Tools

*How can you anticipate potential problems?*

## Goal: Anticipate problems

It's easy and almost inevitable that teams fall in love with their own ideas.

### Pre-Mortem

This exercise helps you see flaws and anticipate risks.

With your team, leap into the future one year. Assume you proceeded with a "million-dollar idea." Now, assume it failed.

Write the obituary for this great idea. What went wrong? What proved not to be true? What mistakes were made? What did you learn? How did customers act differently than you expected?

Have each person present his or her premortem obituary. Discuss these risks. Discuss where you may be able to overcome or anticipate these challenges?

## Assessing What Could Go Wrong



# Tools

*How can you make sure you see the larger picture for your project or your organization?*

**Goal:** See the bigger picture, get some perspective

Make sure you are asking all the questions.

This is valuable to align teams internally and to share context with other teams or leaders.

## Snapshot

This should be a giant canvas of posters or a wall-sized white board. The goal is to get all of the different factors out in front of the group.

Use sticky notes and invite everyone to write as many as they want.

Discuss what's important and what you still might need to learn. Talk about how you might mitigate or capitalize on some of the trends.

## Understanding The Larger Picture

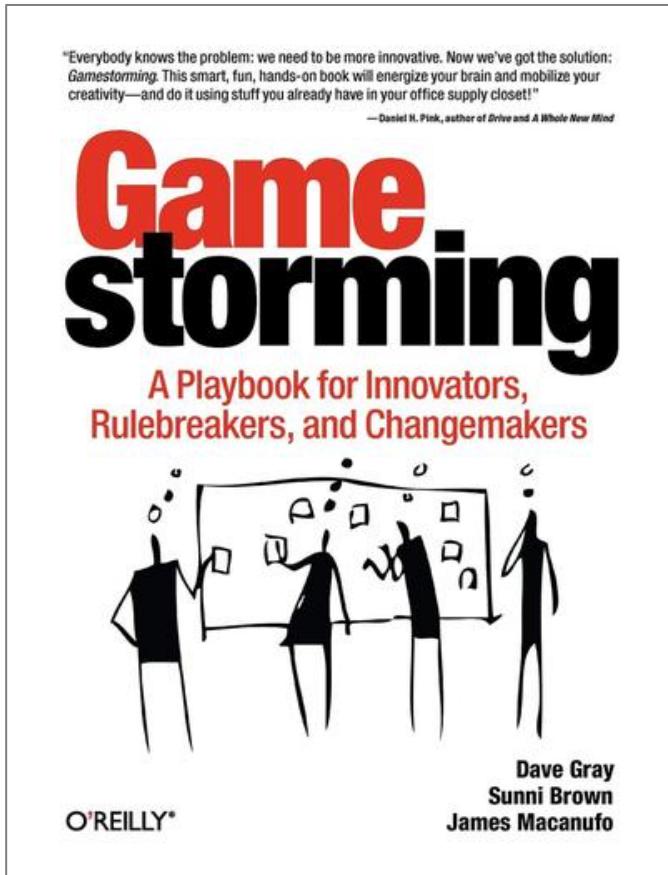
CONTEXT MAP		
<i>Trends</i>	<i>Customer Segments</i> What types of customer segments do we serve now?  <i>What other customer segments exist?</i>	<i>Market Opportunity</i>
<i>Competition</i> Who are the current competitors?  <i>Who are the future competitors?</i>		<i>Risks</i>
	<i>Customer Needs</i>	<i>Uncertainties</i>

Context Map from “Gamestorming”  
<https://gamestorming.com/context-map-2/>

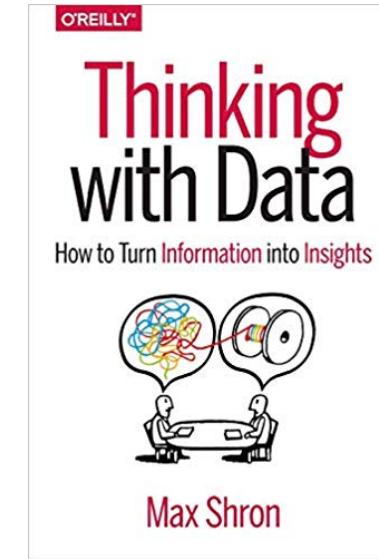
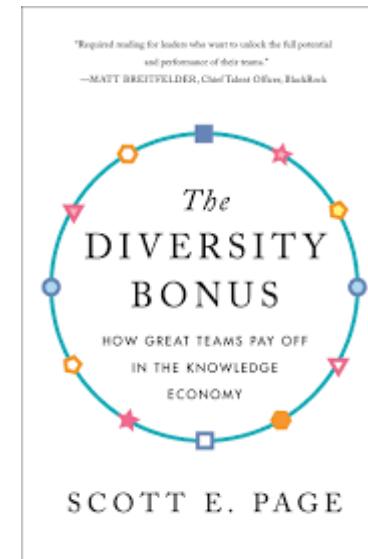


# Tools

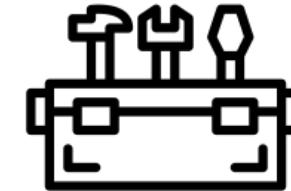
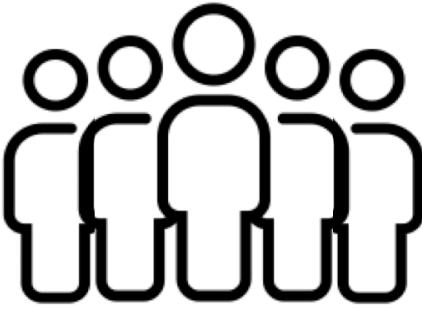
Be curious – Read a couple of books, get online, figure out what you need.



<https://gamestorming.com>



# Where to Start



## *Be informed, be observant*

*Read about your company, your industry*

## *Expand your circle*

*Join a new team, make 2-3 connections with peers outside your silo*

## *Find a role models*

*Find someone you admire, how can you emulate them?*

## *Run excellent meetings*

*Demonstrate leadership by running effective meetings*

## *Prioritize ruthlessly*

*Focus on the important work, refocus every day*

## *Find time to focus*

*Plan time into your day to do focused work on important projects*

## *Learn something outside your comfort zone*

*Take a class, find a club, join a team*

## *Focus on what you want to be doing*

*Titles don't mean much, do the work you are meant for*

# Where to start?



What do you want to start doing differently tomorrow to get you to your vision of the future?



Set a time at the end of next week to check in on this roadmap.

Ask:

- What's going well?
- What's my next step?



3. Embrace Possibility

# What's your first step?

Thank you.

Cynthia Owens

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