Sparking Disruption

There is no Spotify model

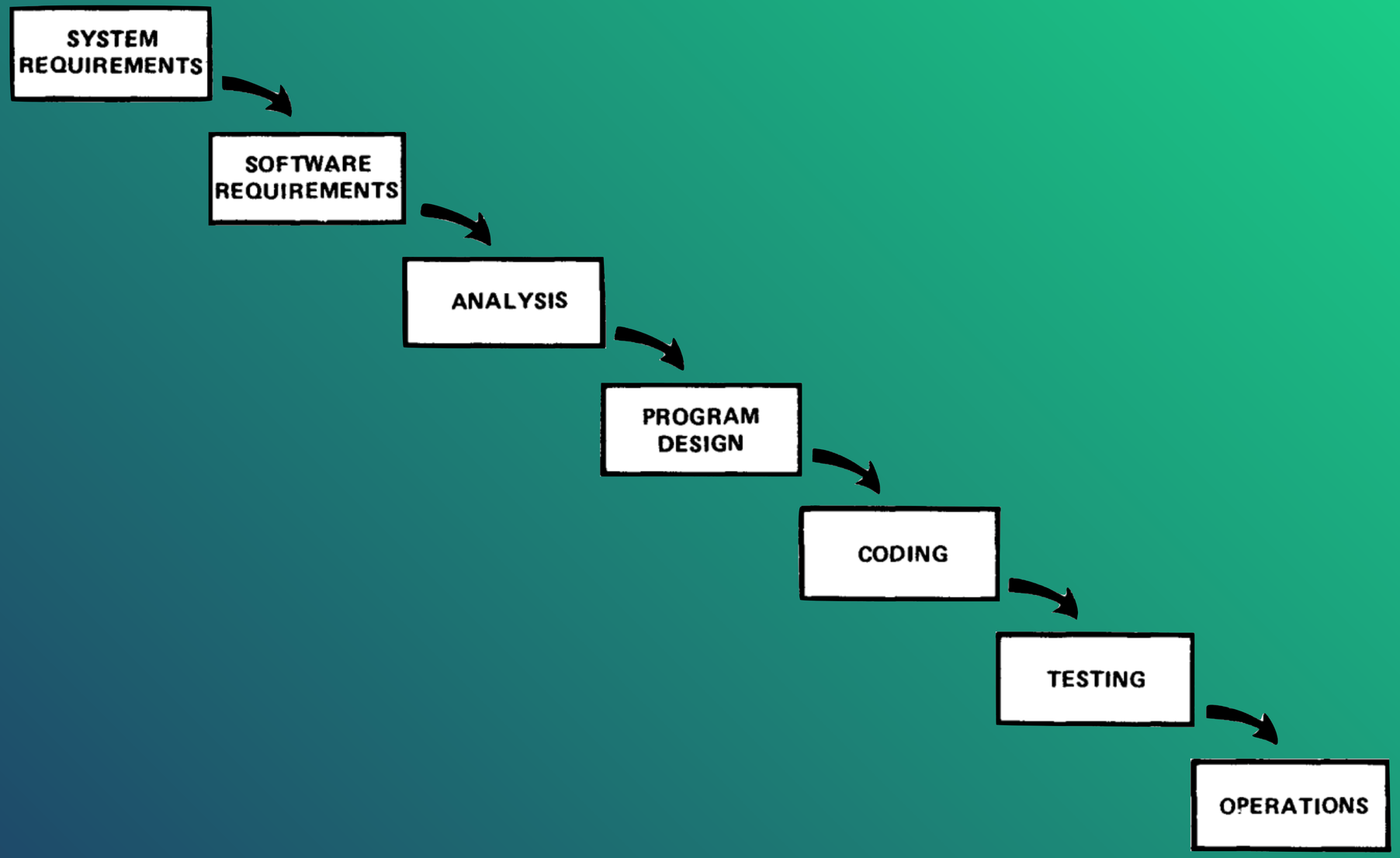
Spark The Change 2016

Spotify®

#SparkConf

#SparkLondon

Spotify®


SYSTEM REQUIREMENTS
SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS
ANALYSIS
PROGRAM DESIGN
CODING
TESTING
OPERATIONS

“I believe in this concept, but the implementation described above is risky and invites failure.”

Dr. Winston W. Royce

The Scrum Guide™

The Definitive Guide to Scrum:
The Rules of the Game

July 2013

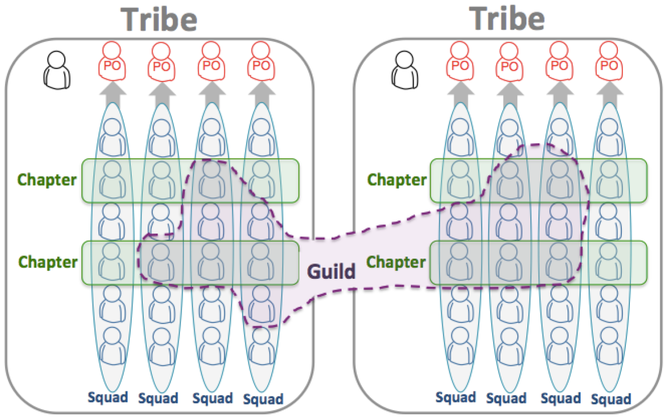
Developed and sustained by Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland

“Scrum is not a process or a technique for building products; rather, it is a framework within which you can employ various processes and techniques.”

The Scrum Guide

Scaling Agile @ Spotify
with Tribes, Squads, Chapters & Guilds

Henrik Kniberg & Anders Ivarsson
Oct 2012



Dealing with multiple teams in a product development organization is always a challenge!

One of the most impressive examples we've seen so far is Spotify, which has kept an agile mindset despite having scaled to over 30 teams across 3 cities.

Spotify is a fascinating company that is transforming the music industry. The company has only existed 6 years and already has over 15 million active users and over 4 million paying. The product itself can be likened to "a magical music player in which you can instantly find and play every song in the world".

Alistair Cockburn (one of the founding fathers of agile software development) visited Spotify and said "Nice - I've been looking for someone to implement this matrix format since 1992 :) so it is really welcome to see."

So how is this managed?

We have both presented at conferences and been caught in engaging discussions around how we work at Spotify and how the company handles agile with hundreds of developers. Many people are fascinated by this, so we decided to write an article about it.

Disclaimer: We didn't invent this model. Spotify is (like any good agile company) evolving fast. This article is only a snapshot of our current way of working - a journey in progress, not a journey completed. By the time you read this, things have already changed.

Marcin Floryan

Chapter Lead in Media Path tribe

Spotify®

Disclaimer

Not official

Spotify®

Model *(noun)*

- a three-dimensional representation of a person or thing or of a proposed structure, typically on a smaller scale than the original
- a thing used as an example to follow or imitate
- a simplified description, especially a mathematical one, of a system or process, to assist calculations and predictions
- a person employed to display clothes by wearing them
- a particular design or version of a product

Oxford Dictionary of English

Model *(noun)*

- a three-dimensional representation of a person or thing or of a proposed structure, typically on a smaller scale than the original
- **a thing used as an example to follow or imitate**
- a simplified description, especially a mathematical one, of a system or process, to assist calculations and predictions
- a person employed to display clothes by wearing them
- a particular design or version of a product

LOGICNOW

Spotify 2016

- 10 years old
- 100M users
- 30M subscribers
- 59 markets
- 5 dev offices
- 2000+ employees
- 100+ squads

Spotify®

Model *(noun)*

- a three-dimensional representation of a person or thing or of a proposed structure, typically on a smaller scale than the original
- ~~a thing used as an example to follow or imitate~~
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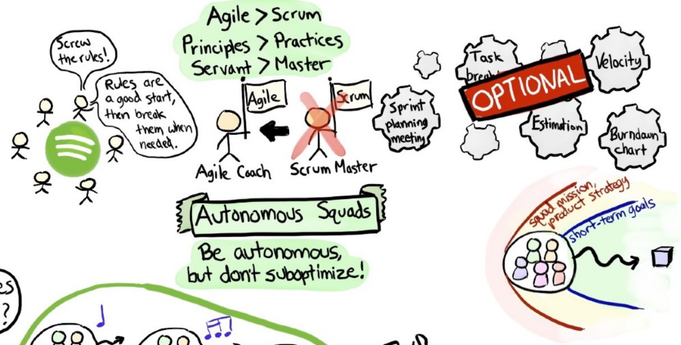
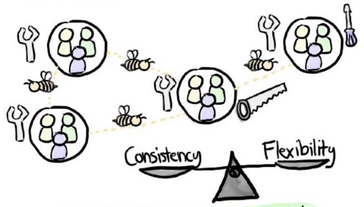
Spotify Engineering Culture

Part 1 of 2

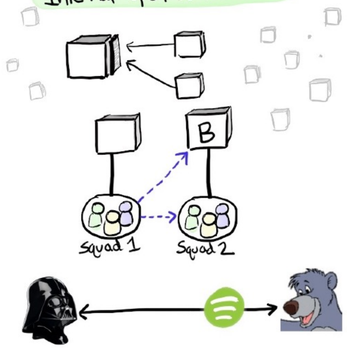
Henrik Kniberg
Jan 2014

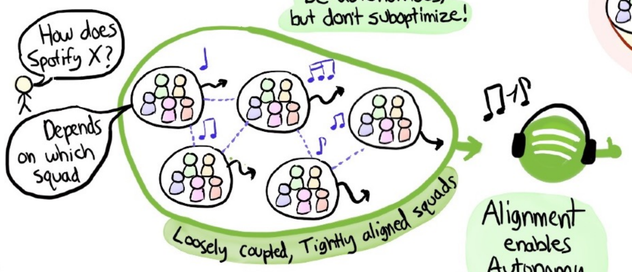


Cross-pollination > Standardization

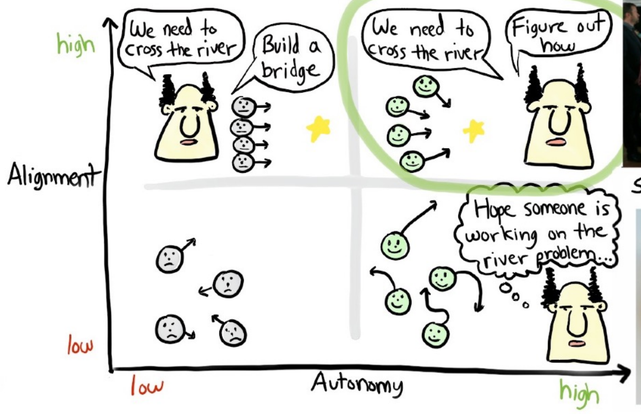


Internal Open-source model

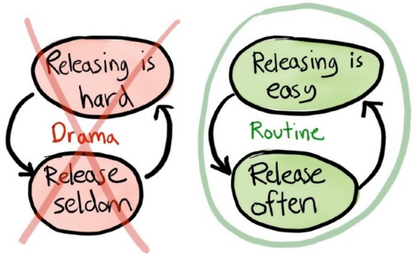




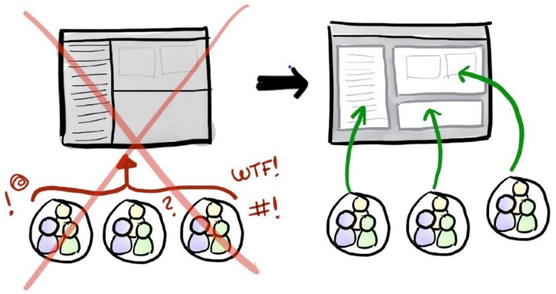
Alignment enables Autonomy

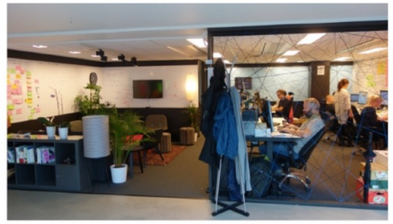


Small + frequent releases

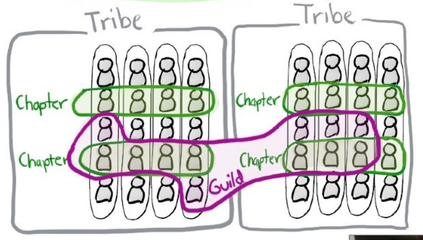


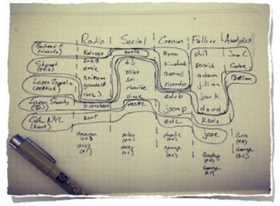
Decoupled releases





Community > Structure



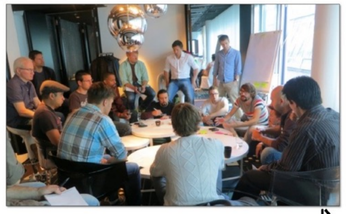


Leader's job: Communicate what problem needs to be solved. And Why.

Squads' job: Collaborate with each other to find the best solution.

Focus on Motivation

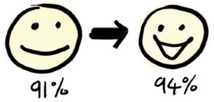
If you need to know exactly who is making decisions, you are in the wrong place.



Hi everyone,
Our employee satisfaction survey says
91% enjoy working here,
and 4% don't.

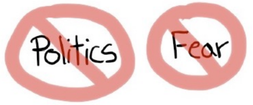
This is of course not satisfactory,
and we **want to fix it.**

If you're one of those unhappy 4%,
please contact us.
We're here for your sake, and nothing else.



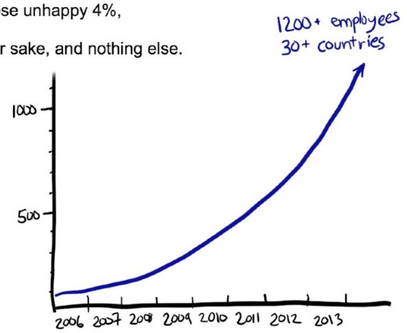
Trust > Control

Agile at scale requires Trust at scale



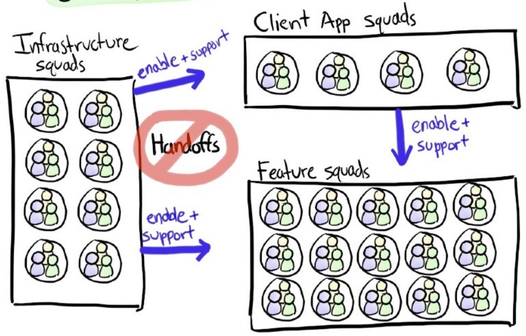
People > *

My colleagues are awesome!

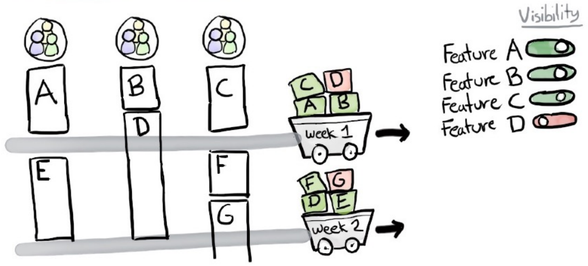


Self-service model

enable > serve



Release Trains + Feature Toggles



Spotify Engineering Culture

Part 2 of 2

Henrik Kniberg
Apr 2014

Continuous Improvement

Driven from below, Supported from above

~~Who's fault was it?~~

What did we learn?

What will we change?

Fail Fast → Learn Fast → Improve Fast

Daniel Ek

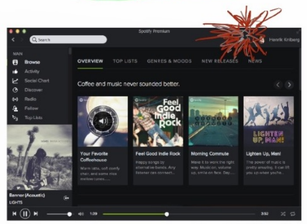
We aim to make mistakes faster than anyone else

Fail-friendly environment

Failure Recovery > Failure Avoidance

Limited Blast Radius

via Decoupled Architecture



via Gradual Rollout

Experiment-friendly Culture

A or B?

Let's try both and compare

~~opinion-driven... ego-driven... authority-driven...~~

Data-driven decisions

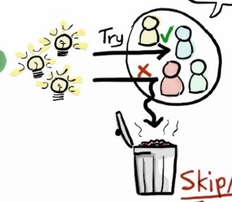
What's the hypothesis?

What did we learn?

What will we try next?

Waste-repellent Culture aka Lean

If it works, keep it. Otherwise dump it.



Keep
- Retrospectives
- Daily Standup
- Google Docs
- GIT
- Guild Unconferences

Skip/dump
- Time reports
- Handoffs
- Separate test teams or test phases
- Task estimates
- Useless meetings
- Corporate BS

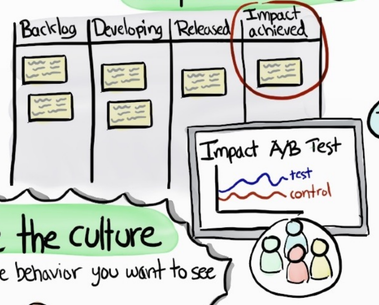
Chaos > Bureaucracy

Lean Startup

Idea/problem → Narrative + Prototypes → Build MVP → Release → Analyze Data → Tweak

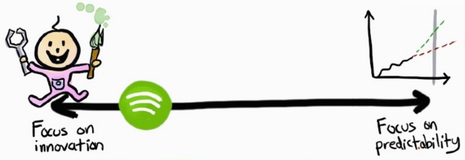
"Radio you can save!"

Impact > Velocity



Innovation > Predictability

100% predictability = 0% innovation



Value delivery > Plan fulfillment

I think of my squad as a group of volunteers that are here to work on something they are super-passionate about.

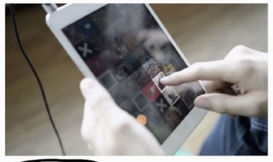
You are the culture

Model the behavior you want to see

Hack Time

≈ 10%

People are natural innovators

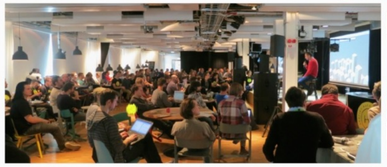


Spotify Hack Week

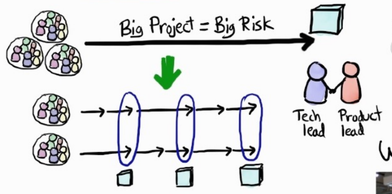
Do Whatever! With Whoever! In Whatever way!

Make cool things real!

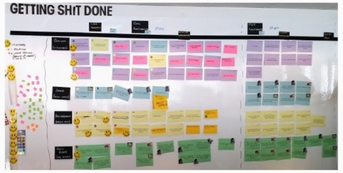
Demo + Party on Friday!



Minimize the need for Big Projects



Visual Progress



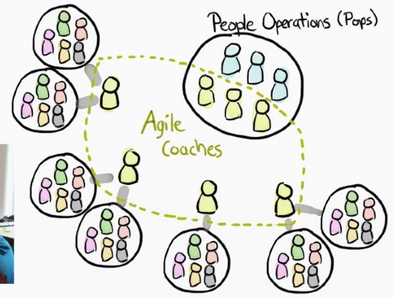
Weekly Demo

Daily Sync

Storytelling

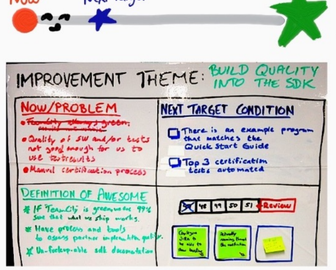
Boot Camp

Culture-focused Roles



Healthy Culture heals Broken Process

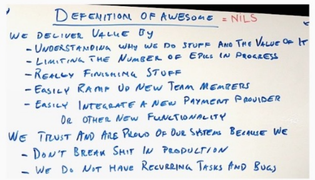
Toyota Improvement Kata



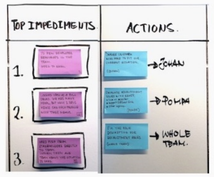
Definition of Awesome

Awesome Architecture

- I can build, test, and ship my feature within a week.
- I use data to learn from it and my improved version is live in week two.



Improvement Boards



“Shout it out and I’ll tell you how it doesn’t quite work that way”

Jason Yip, Agile Coach at Spotify

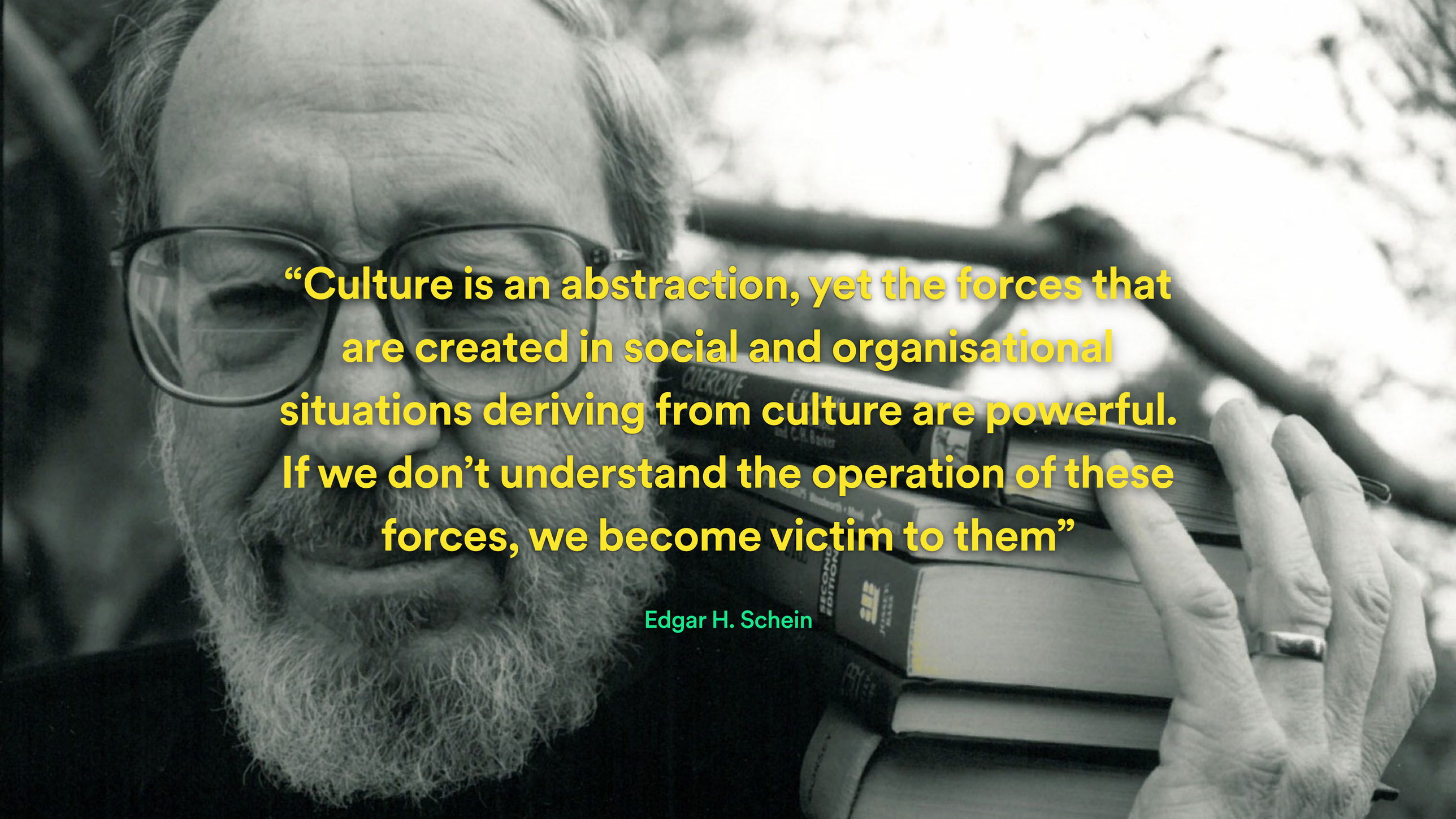
Collaborative

Passionate

Innovative

Sincere

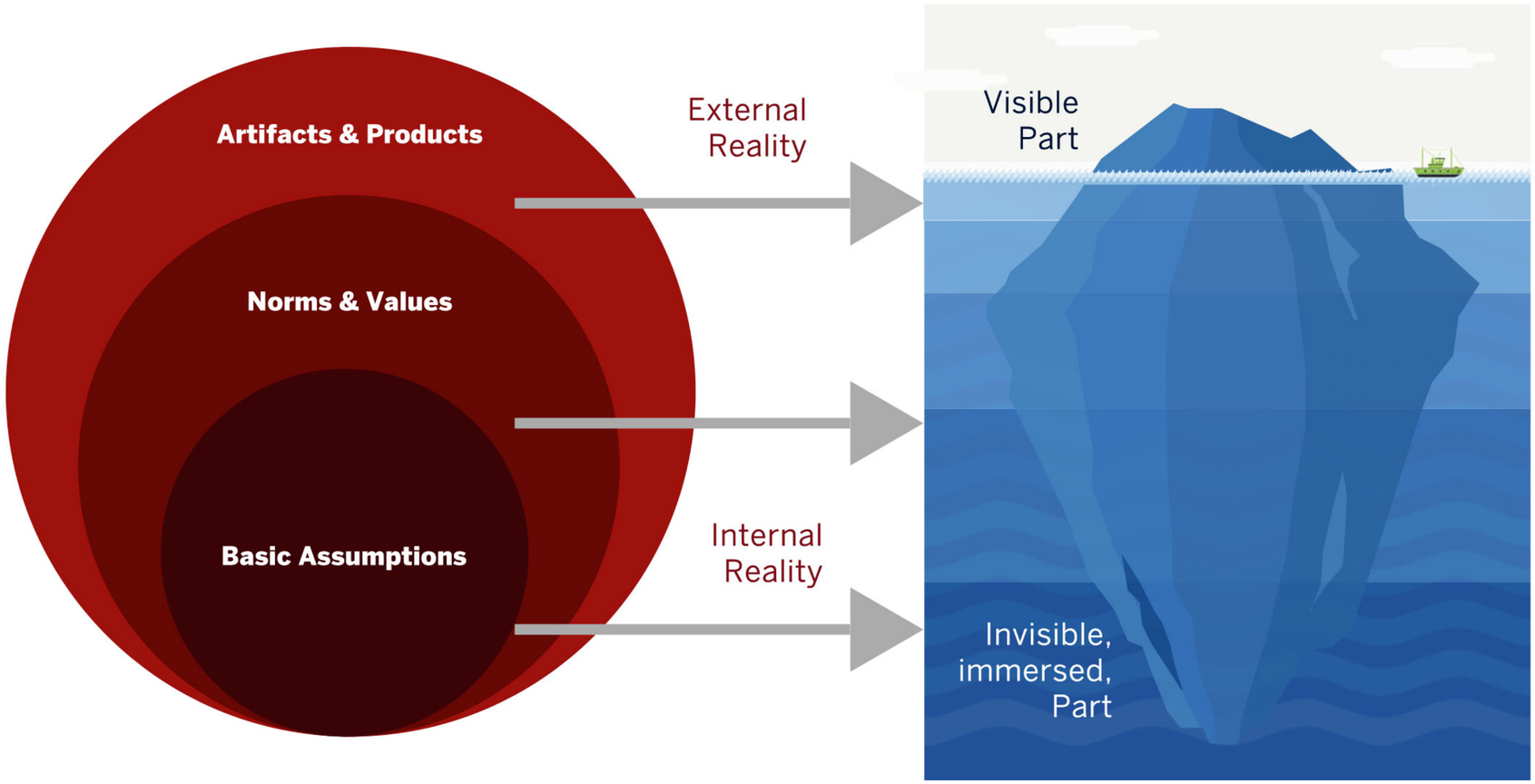
Playful



“Culture is an abstraction, yet the forces that are created in social and organisational situations deriving from culture are powerful. If we don’t understand the operation of these forces, we become victim to them”

Edgar H. Schein

Schein culture model



Culture as a Onion Slice

Culture as an Iceberg

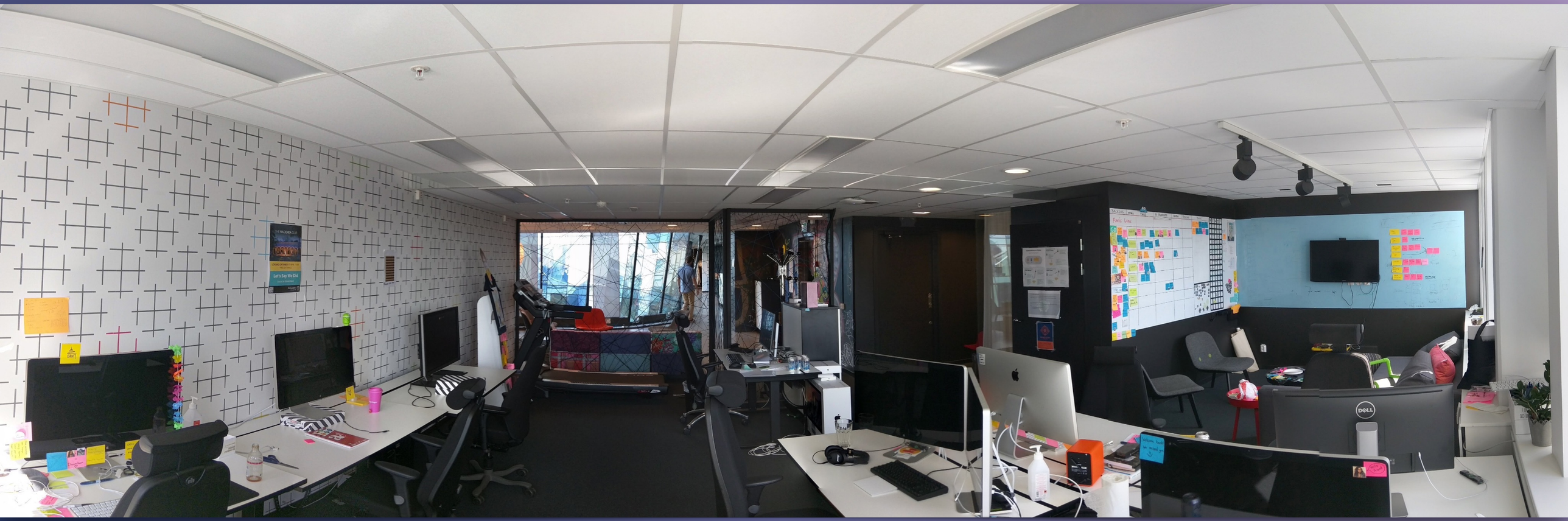
Under the surface

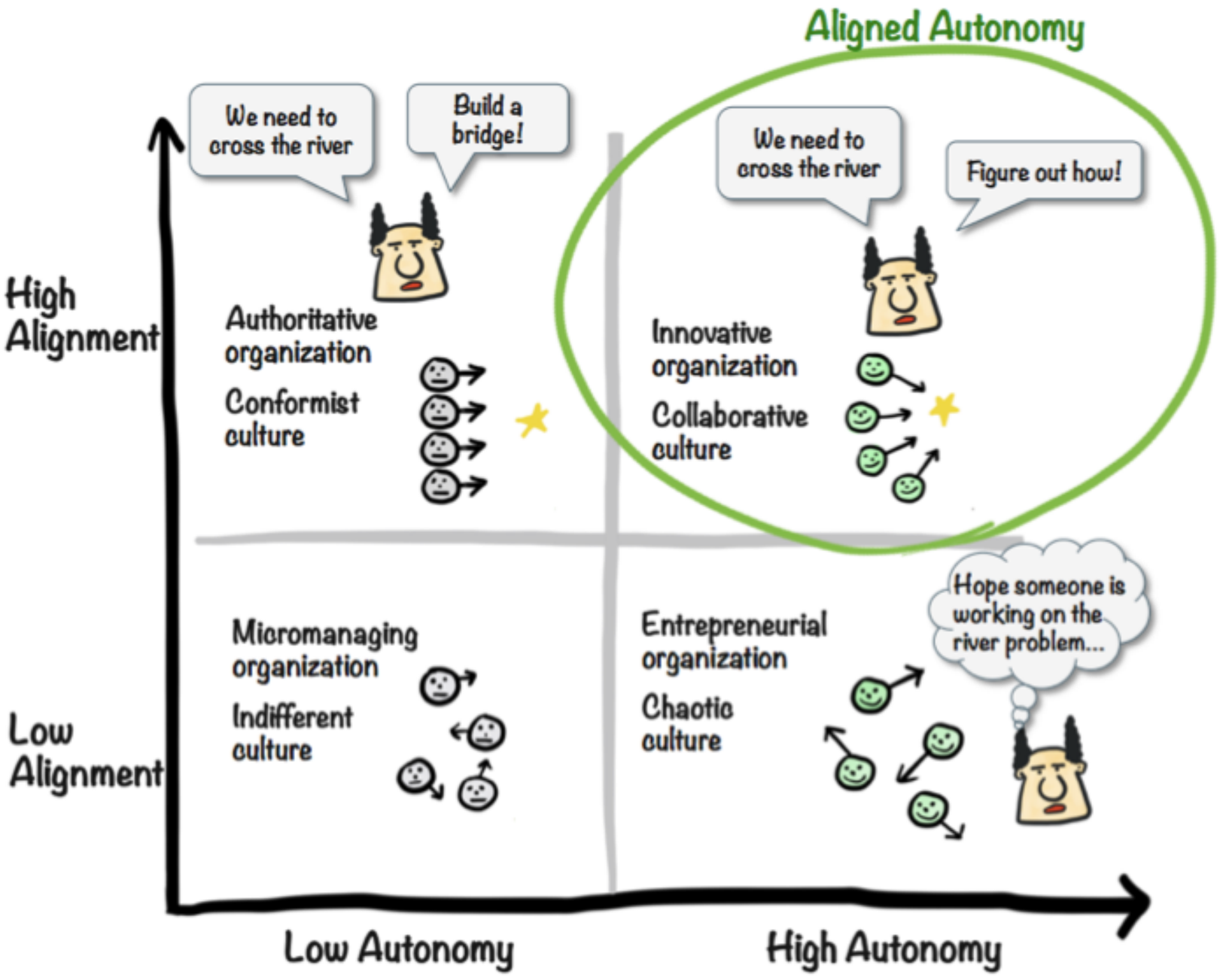
Spotify®

We assume...

Autonomy

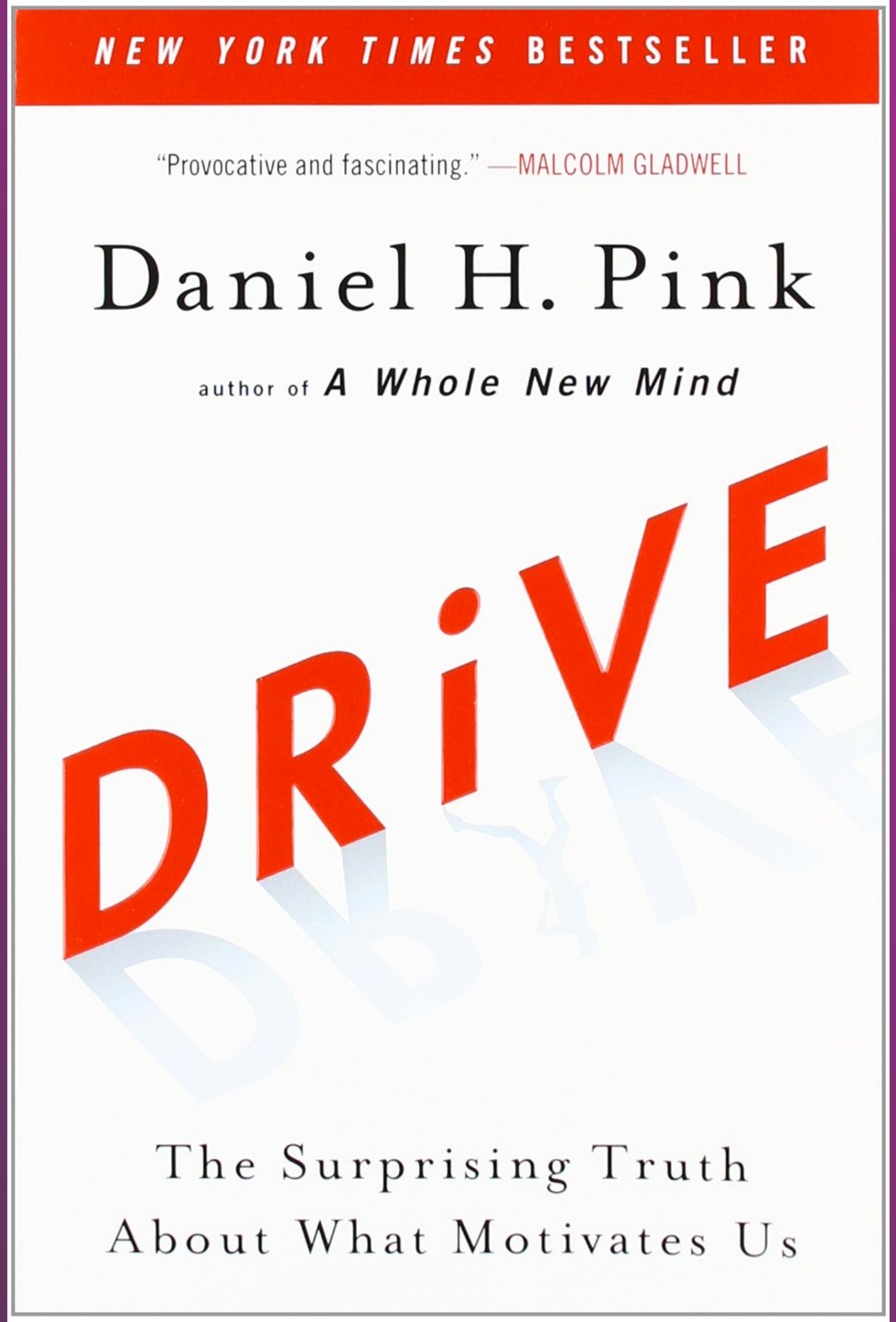
Spotify®


Let's Say We Did
Basic Line
DELL


Aligned Autonomy
We need to cross the river
Build a bridge!
We need to cross the river
Figure out how!
High Alignment
Low Alignment
Authoritative organization
Conformist culture
Innovative organization
Collaborative culture
Micromanaging organization
Indifferent culture
Entrepreneurial organization
Chaotic culture
Hope someone is working on the river problem...
Low Autonomy
High Autonomy

The IT Spot
Stockholm
Self-Service
Tech Gear
Feel free to take any item you need for work purposes.
If the item you need is not available here, try the entrance, order via Coupa or submit a hardware request at it.spotify.net
Please recycle used batteries in the nearest printer room.
AA BATTERIES
AAA BATTERIES
USB STICKS
Phone Charger
DVI

499 SEK
Apple Keyboard US-English
FT Featured in the Financial Times March 2016
LOKA
BATTERIES AA
BATTERIES AAA
USB STICKS
INT
399 SEK
Apple Keyboard SE
560 SEK
Laptop Stands
Phone Chargers
349 SEK
USB Mice
steelseries


NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
"Provocative and fascinating." —MALCOLM GLADWELL
Daniel H. Pink
author of A Whole New Mind
DRIVE
The Surprising Truth
About What Motivates Us

Autonomy

Mastery

Purpose

We assume...

Collaboration

Spotify®

Spotify
Spotify
HACKS
WEST

We assume...

Potential

Spotify®

CAN'T DRIVE
FIFTY-FIVE!

fatboy
fatboy
fatboy
fatboy
fatboy

"If you manage people or are a parent (which is a form of managing people), drop everything and read *Mindset*."
—GUY KAWASAKI, author of *The Art of the Start*

mindset

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY OF SUCCESS

HOW WE CAN LEARN TO FULFILL OUR POTENTIAL

"Will prove to be one of the most influential books ever about motivation."
—PO BRONSON, author of *NurtureShock*

*parenting
*business
*school
*relationships

CAROL S. DWECK, Ph.D.

"Failure is an opportunity to grow"

GROWTH MINDSET

"I can learn to do anything I want"

"Challenges help me to grow"

"My effort and attitude determine my abilities"

"Feedback is constructive"

"I am inspired by the success of others"

"I like to try new things"

"Failure is the limit of my abilities"

FIXED MINDSET

"I'm either good at it or I'm not"

"My abilities are unchanging"

"I don't like to be challenged"

"I can either do it, or I can't"

"My potential is predetermined"

"When I'm frustrated, I give up"

"Feedback and criticism are personal

"I stick to what I know"

We assume...

Diversity

Spotify®

DIVERSITY
SUMMIT
2016

Press Play for

PRIDE

Spotify®

We assume...

Long term

Spotify®

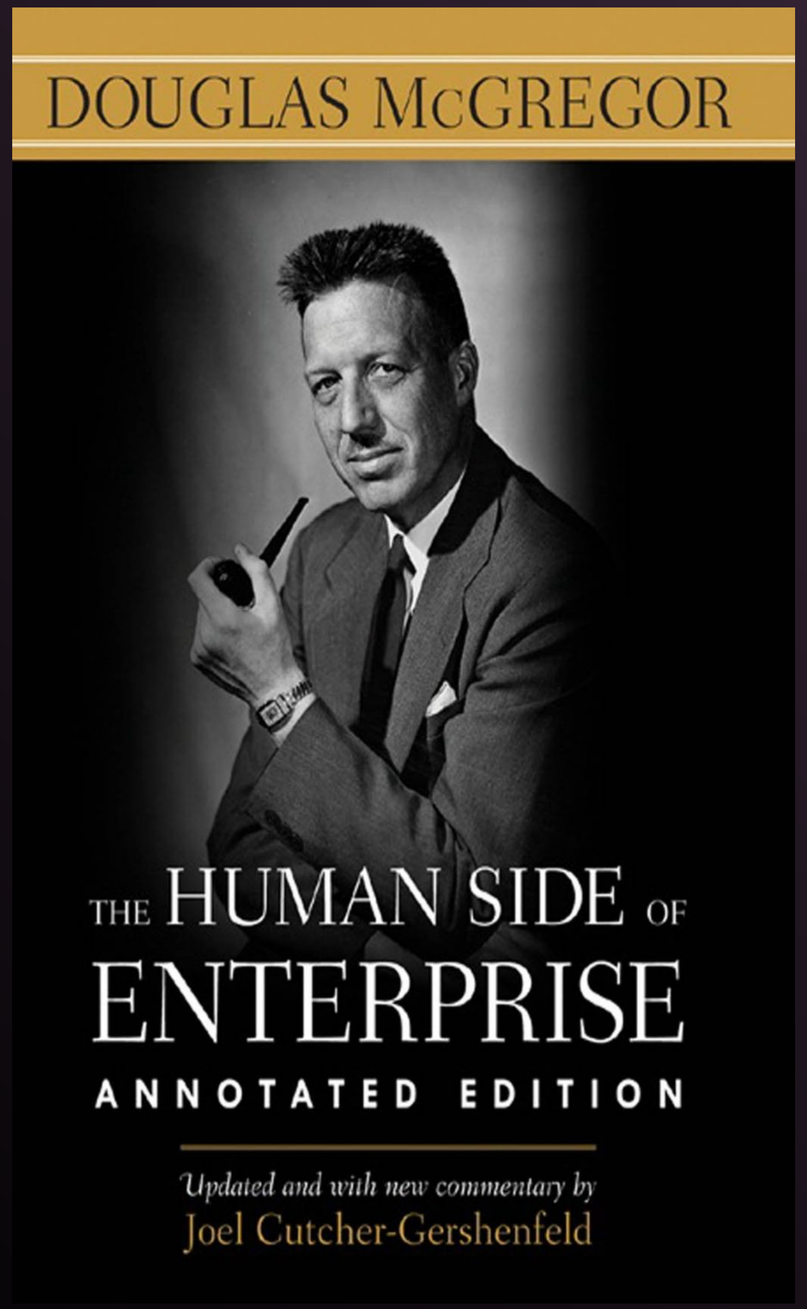
We assume...

Learning

Spotify®

Daniel Ek
“We aim to make mistakes faster than anyone else”
16

THERE ARE TWO THINGS I DON'T LIKE
CHANGE AND THE WAY THINGS ARE

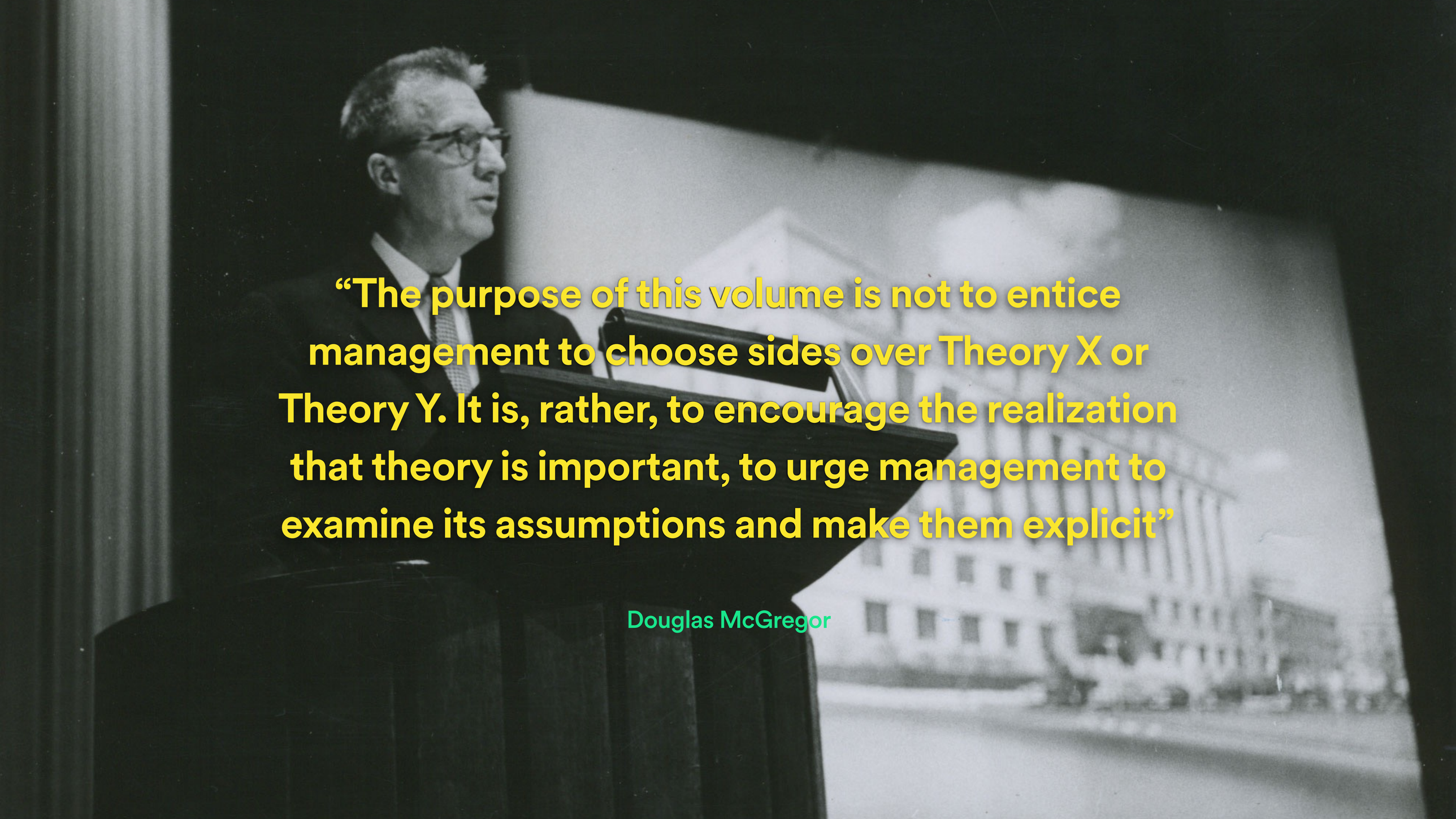

DOUGLAS McGREGOR
THE HUMAN SIDE OF
ENTERPRISE
ANNOTATED EDITION
Updated and with new commentary by
Joel Cutcher-Gershenfeld

McGregor - Model Y

- The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play or rest
- Man will exercise self-direction and self-control in the service of objectives to which he is committed.
- The average human being learns, under proper conditions, not only to accept but to seek responsibility.
- The capacity to exercise a relatively high degree of imagination, ingenuity, and creativity in the solution of organizational problems is widely, not narrowly, distributed in the population.
- Under the conditions of modern industrial life, the intellectual potentialities of the average human being are only partially utilized.

“Only as we examine and test our theoretical assumptions can we hope to make them more adequate, to remove inconsistencies, and thus to improve our ability to predict.”

Douglas McGregor



“The purpose of this volume is not to entice management to choose sides over Theory X or Theory Y. It is, rather, to encourage the realization that theory is important, to urge management to examine its assumptions and make them explicit”

Douglas McGregor

“Stop trying to borrow wisdom and think for yourself. Face your difficulties and think and think and think and solve your problems yourself.”
Taiichi Ohno

Thank you!

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Questions? @mfloryan

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