

# "Your understanding of reality is wrong"

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Or: How not to change  
people's minds

# I. What we're up against

Applied philosophers in  
denial

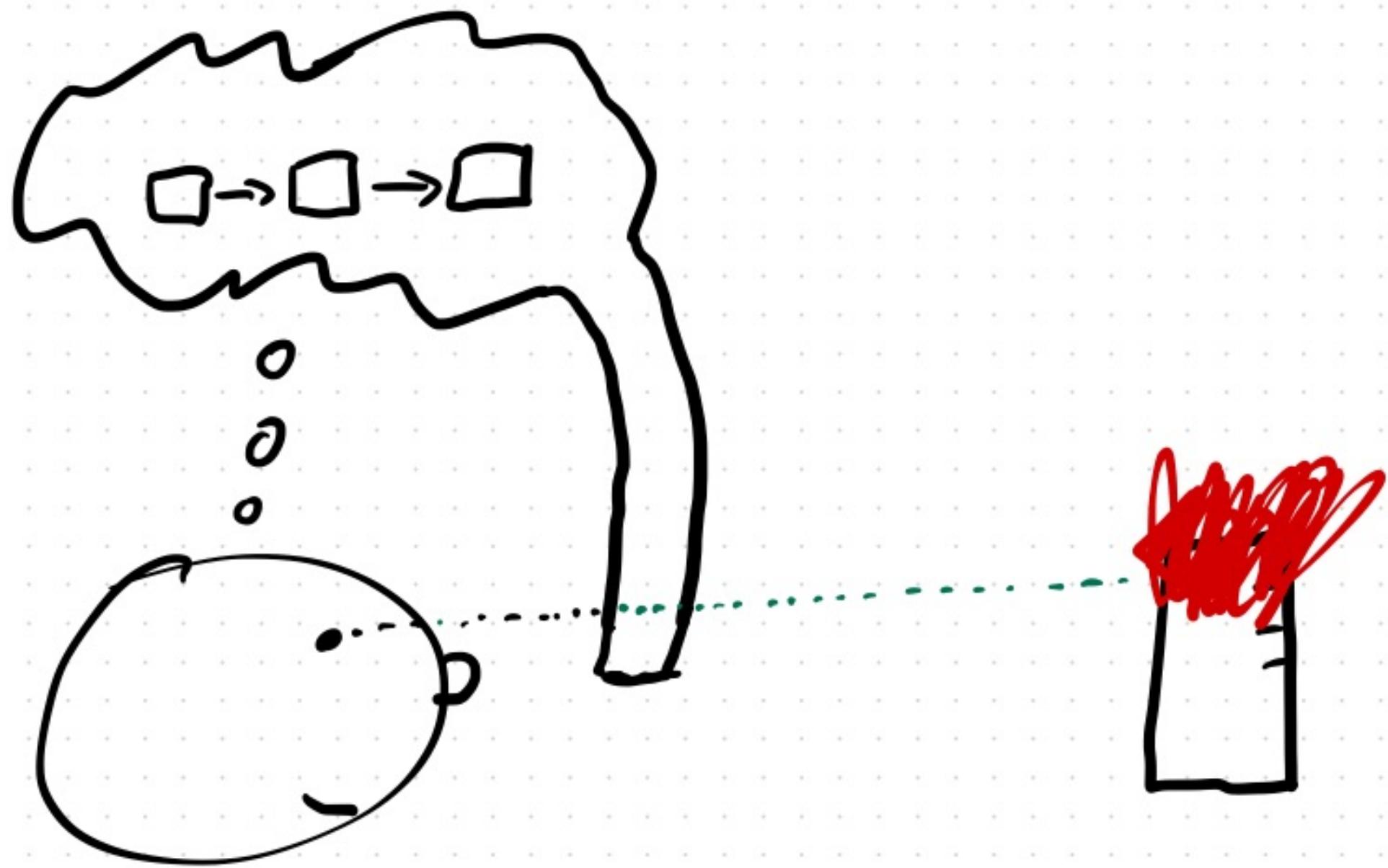
Identity

A black and white photograph of a large, multi-masted sailing vessel, likely a clipper ship or a similar sailing vessel from the 19th century. The ship is shown from a low angle, looking up at its massive sails which are partially unfurled. The masts are tall and intricate, with many ropes and structural elements visible. The background is a dark, overcast sky with some faint clouds. The overall mood is dramatic and historical.

# Ship of Theseus

# Devs have to get on with the work

```
class Ship extends Vehicle {  
    String owner = "Theseus";  
  
    @Override  
    public boolean equals(Object obj) {  
        // actual code goes here  
    }  
}
```



# Causality

A → B → C

**"What was the root  
cause?"**

Ontology

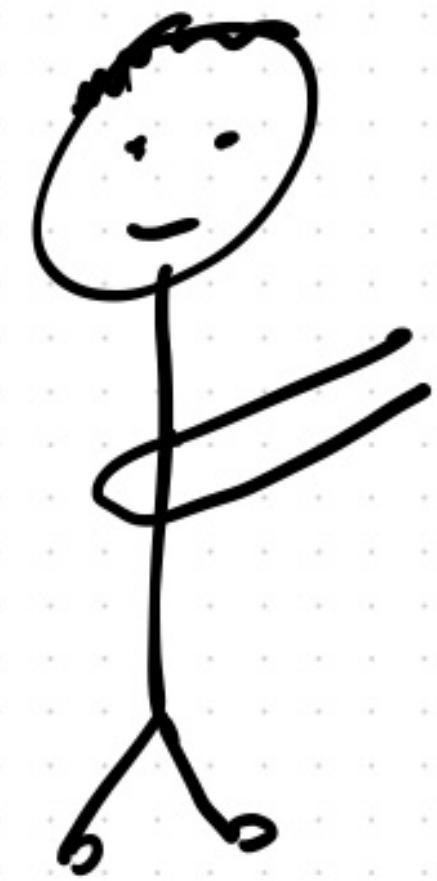


**"Which service broke?"**

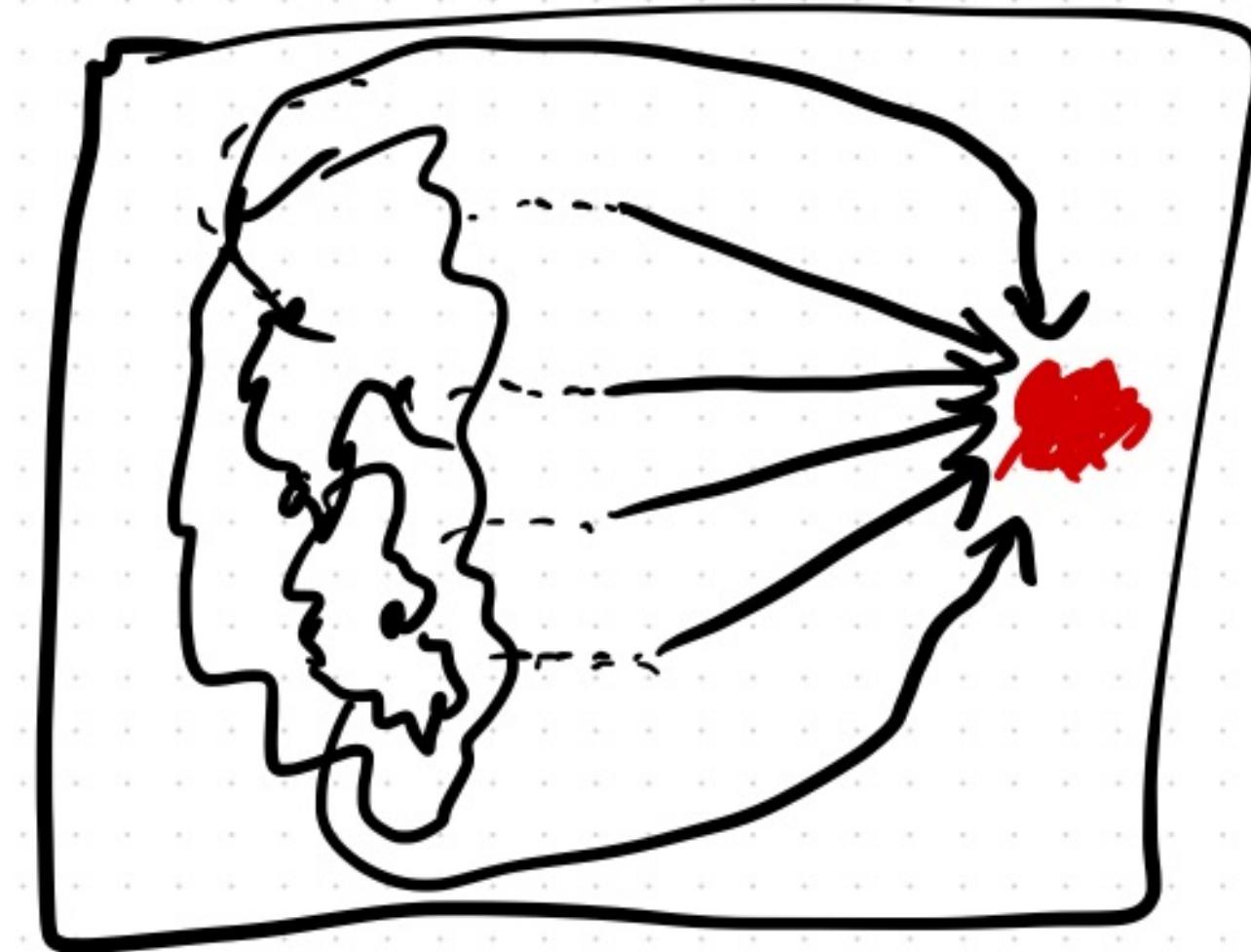
Seeing what one believes  
and not seeing that for  
which one has no beliefs are  
central to sensemaking



Karl E. Weick, Sensemaking in Organizations



better model!



Multiple contributing  
factors

# Interactions

# History

Local rationality

# Uncertainty

# Goal conflicts

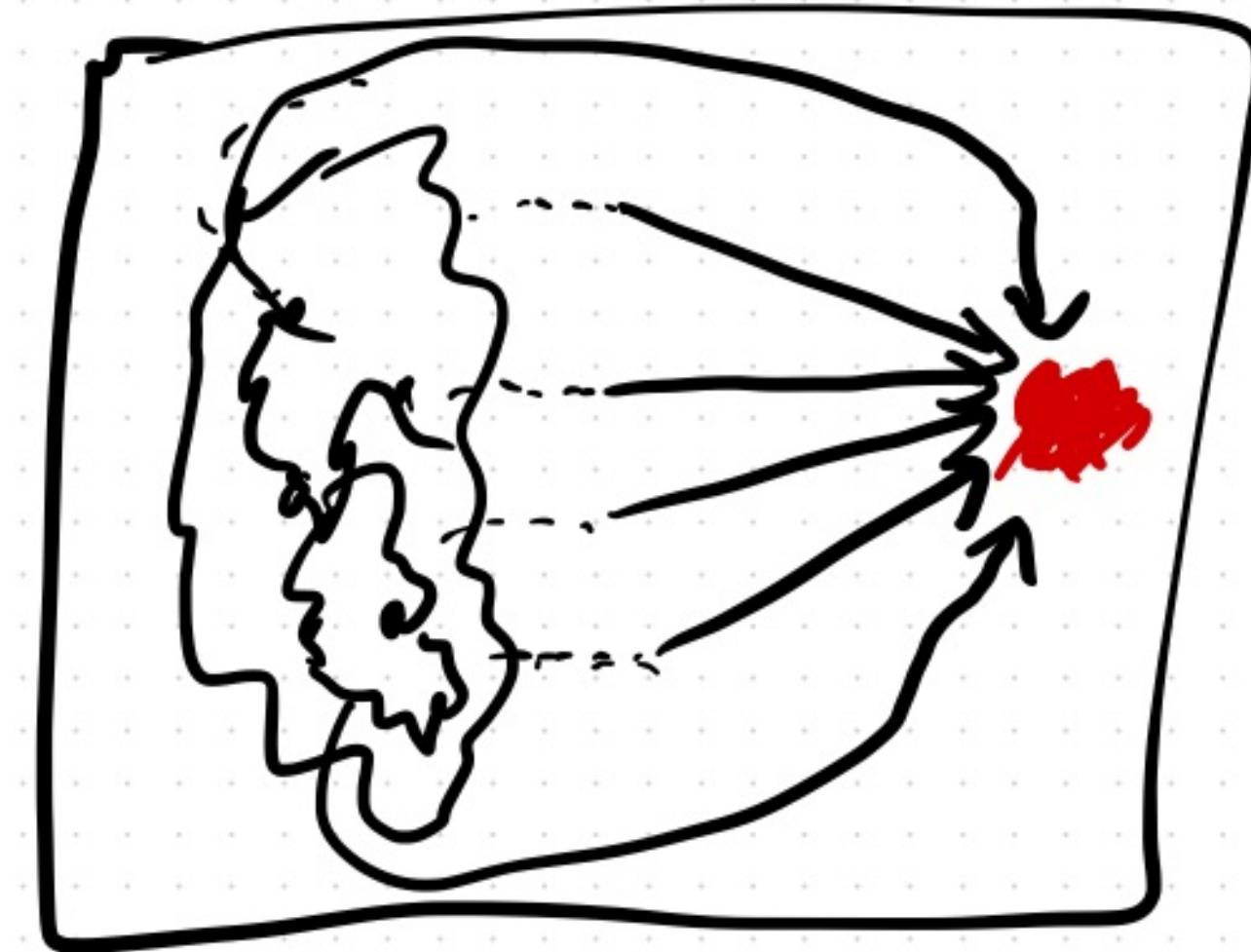
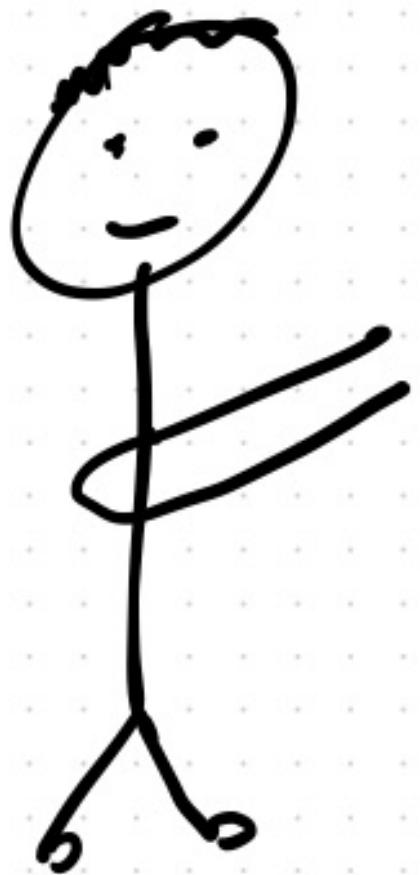
Production pressure

# Workarounds

# Expertise

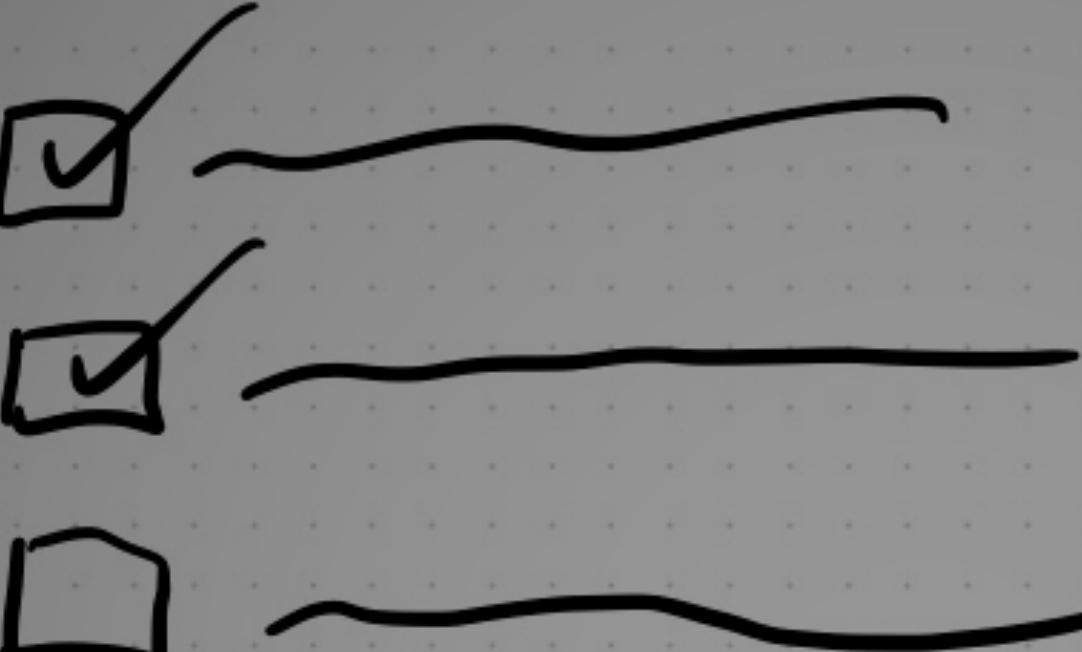
# Coordination

better model!



No thanks





Engineers see action items

Management sees the org  
chart

II. What we can do

Show, don't tell

Over and over and over

**Changing language isn't  
enough**

If you're arguing, you're  
losing

**"Yes, and..."**



**Focus on outcomes**

**Everybody appreciates risk  
as a concept**

Identify meaningful  
patterns

### III. Our advantages

Neverending supply of  
relevant examples

The insights are real

No useless arguments over  
causes and categories

**This stuff is fascinating**



# Image credits

- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sailing\\_ship#/media/File:John\\_C.\\_Munro\\_off\\_Hong\\_Kong.jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sailing_ship#/media/File:John_C._Munro_off_Hong_Kong.jpg)  
(James Laing)
- <https://www.pexels.com/photo/two-assorted-color-padded-chairs-near-side-table-1350789/> (Eric Mufasa)
- <https://www.pexels.com/photo/sliced-cake-on-plate-291528/> (Abhinav Goswami)