

agility at scale – a meeting of mindsets

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part I

a tale of two mindsets

the digital product mindset vs the industrial mindset



Martha Lane Fox

higher uncertainty,
need for learning

results measured
by customer impact

organised by product,
rewards generalists

maximise discovery
through experimentation

low uncertainty,
well-understood

results measured
by output

organised by function,
rewards specialists

minimise variance
through strict controls



Isambard Kingdom Brunel

digital product mindset introduces new habits

- 1 Don't slow down delivery — automate all along the value stream
- 2 Decisions when they're needed, at the right level — know that we don't know, defer decisions
- 3 Do it with the right people — “you build it, you run it” - teams support their own apps
- 4 Go see for yourself — team members interact directly with customers
- 5 Only do it if it adds value — delivery, discovery, kaizen
- 6 Trust and verify — “hire smart people and get out of their way”

industrial habits clash with digital product principles

- 1 Don't slow down delivery — release coordination: CAB as gatekeeper
- 2 Decisions when they're needed, at the right level — up-front technical and visual design, work breakdown
- 3 Do it with the right people — specialist activities happen outside of the team
- 4 Go see for yourself — separation of "Business" and "IT"
- 5 Only do it if it adds value — following the process "because that is what we do"
- 6 Trust and verify — introduce more process when things go wrong

agility at scale requires both mindsets

product teams *build and run*
their own products

tech ops teams build and
run *runtime-as-a-product*

empower teams to
adapt to local conditions

harvest and amplify
components for reuse

teams track and report
on their own *progress*

leadership defines
overall expectations

autonomy through alignment



Martha Lane Fox



Isambard Kingdom Brunel

part 2

autonomy through alignment

alignment (n): in line with or agreement with others

of

owned by

shared through

product vision

product leadership

product strategy

technology vision

technology leadership

technology strategy

approach

practice leadership

ways of working

focus

delivery leadership

OKRs

structure

direction

autonomy (n): independent of other organisms or parts

autonomy requires

- an objective
- constraints
- accountability

demand side

- capability
- resources
- authority

supply side

autonomy liquidity

each element is an **asset**

- objective, constraints, accountability, capability, resources, authority

each asset has **liquidity**

- how easy is it to obtain or change?

use liquidity to guide **strategy**

- remember, liquidity changes with time!

is it easy to obtain?

- go and get some!

is it harder to obtain?

- try to “borrow” some

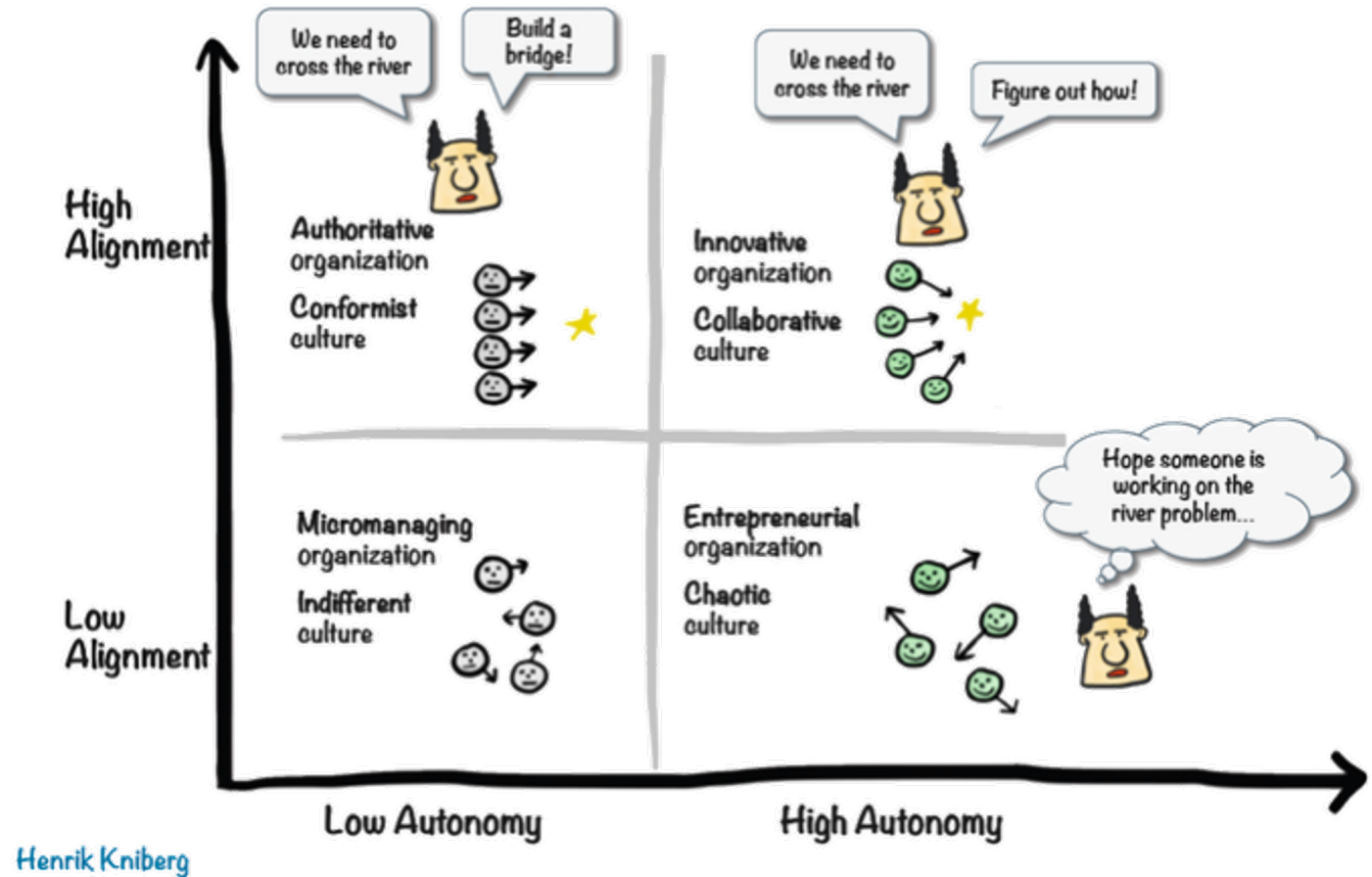
is it impossible to obtain (for now)?

- find another way (for now)

we need both **autonomy** and **alignment**

alignment without autonomy
is **autocracy**

autonomy without alignment
is **anarchy**



getting started

1. how **aligned** is your organisation?

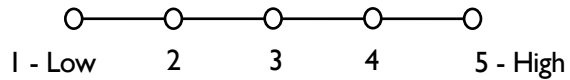
- does everyone understand its **product** and **technology** strategy?
- can teams **effectively share** methods, tools, and experience?
- do you have **OKRs** cascading down and rolling up?

2. how **autonomous** is your team, or the teams in your organisation?

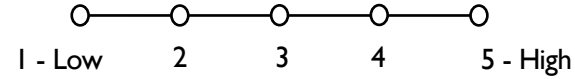
- assess yourself against **each element** of autonomy

assess your alignment

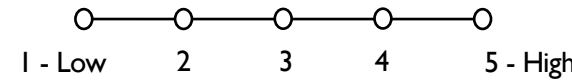
product vision



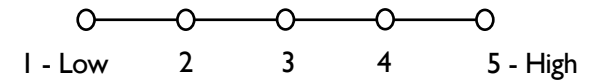
technology vision



ways of working

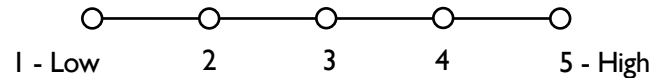


focus

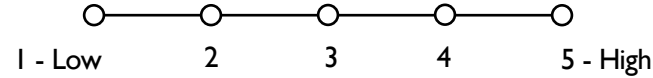


assess your autonomy

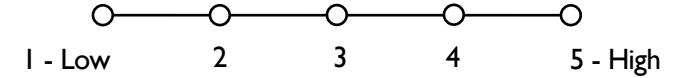
an objective



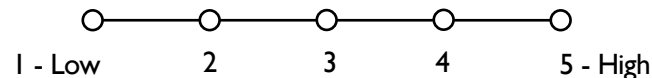
constraints



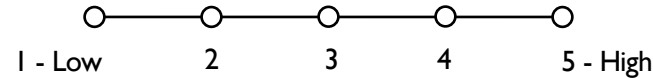
accountability



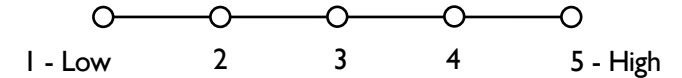
capability



resources



authority



which of these is your **biggest impediment**? how can you address this?

agility at scale – a meeting of mindsets

you don't “scale agile”; you *can't* scale agile

you *can* **enable agility at scale**, by **autonomy** through **alignment**

- this requires both **industrial** and **digital product** thinking

alignment comes through **structure** and **direction**

autonomy comes through **managing liquidity**

thank you, any questions?

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