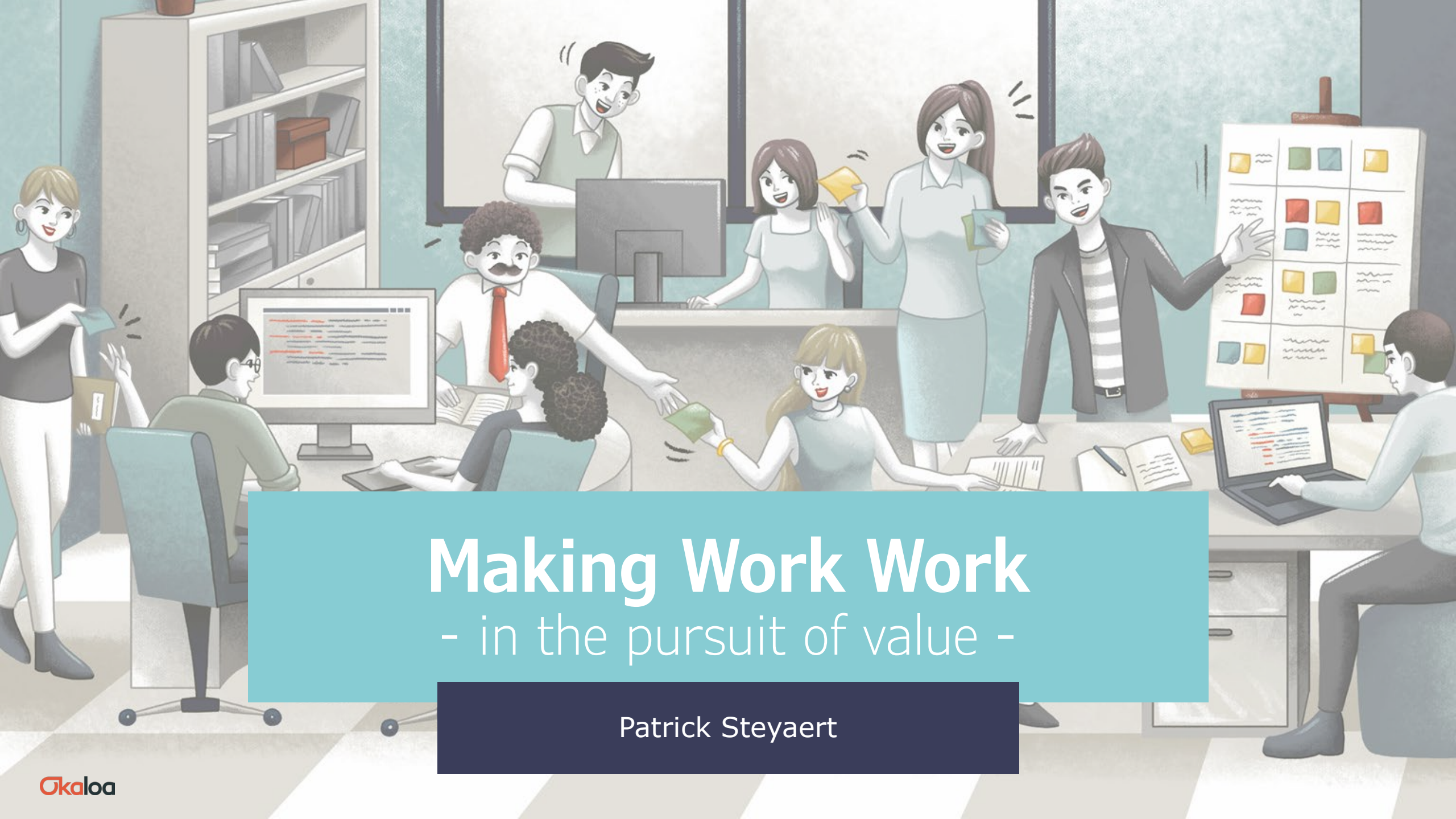




Making Work Work

- in the pursuit of value -

Patrick Steyaert

If the **purpose** of an organisation is to **pursue value**, then what **sets the stage**?

Paradox



Counter-measures to deliver better results, often lead to worse results

Work design

Sets the stage to **pursue value**



by **intentionally shaping work** at different levels scale,



so that the work of today **enables the work of tomorrow.**



Threads

1

Pursuit of value — the reason work design matters at all; and the context(!) in which its results are validated

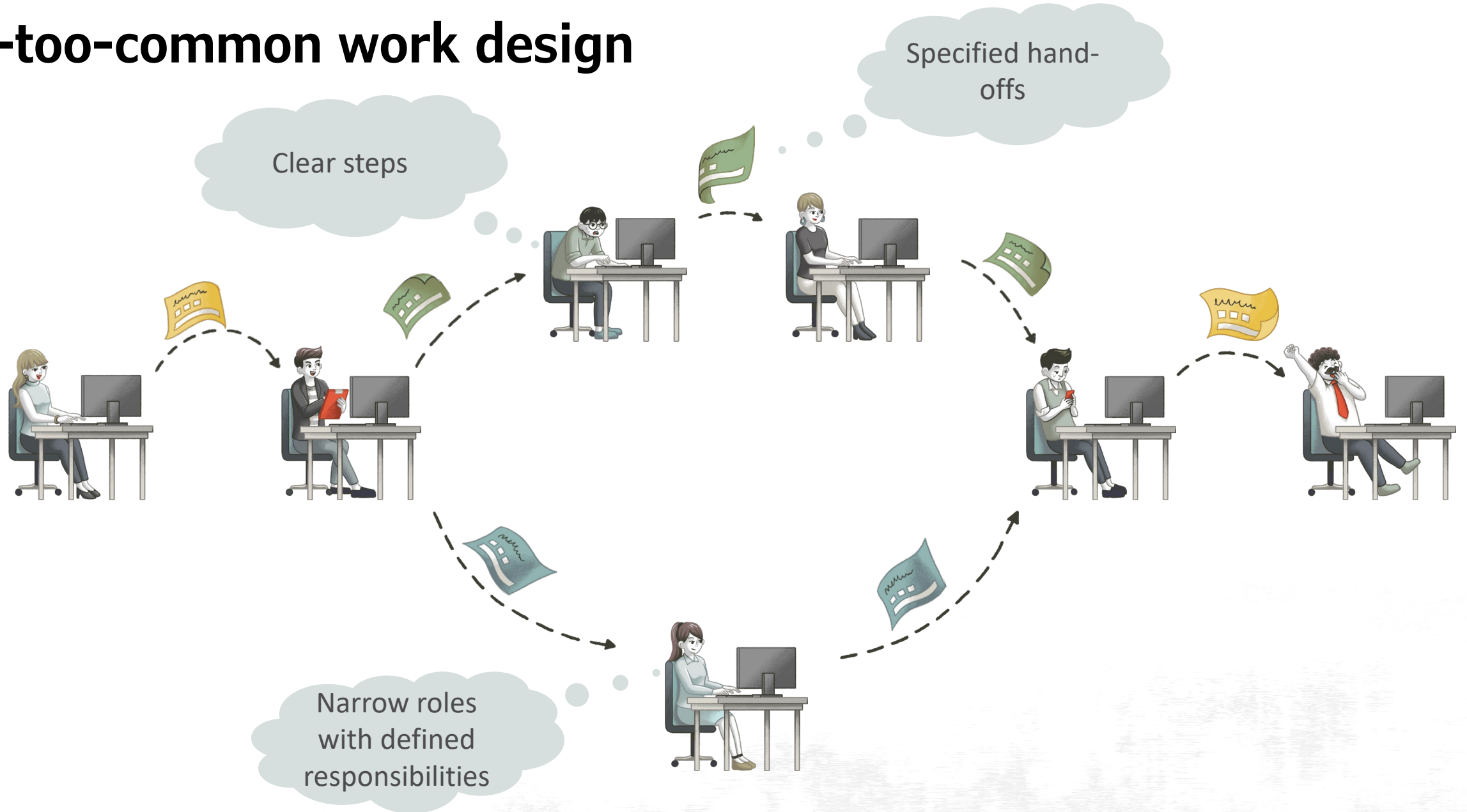
2

Work Design Framework — not a checklist; not a prescription; lenses to look at work and a map to guide design

3

Laws of work design — simple insights with far reaching consequences

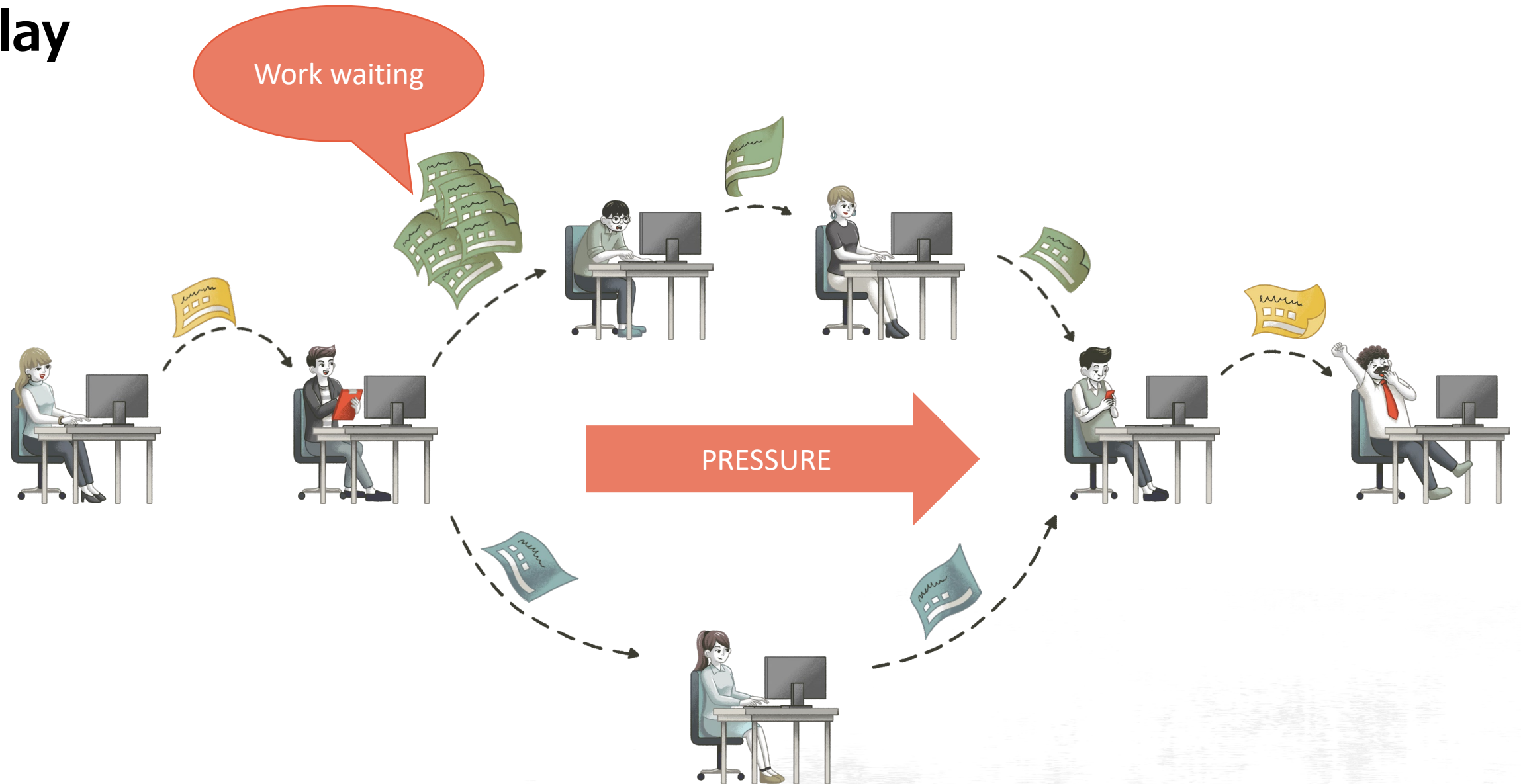
All-too-common work design



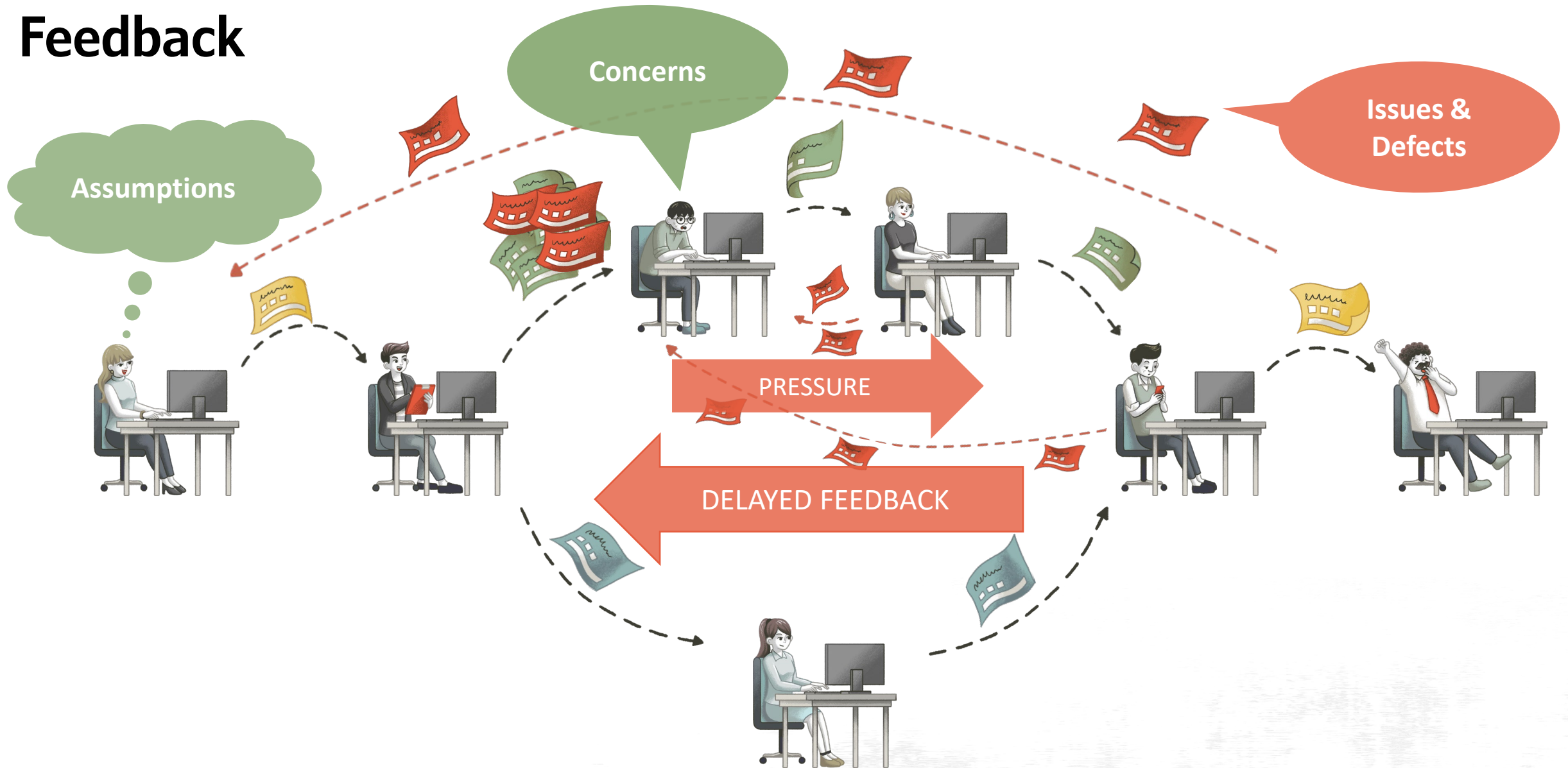
Common sense, right...

- » **Split the work** so that work can be performed by the person or team that has the **competence** to do the work
- » **Work to full capacity**
- » Avoid making the same mistake twice, try to get it **first time right**

Delay



Feedback



The value equation

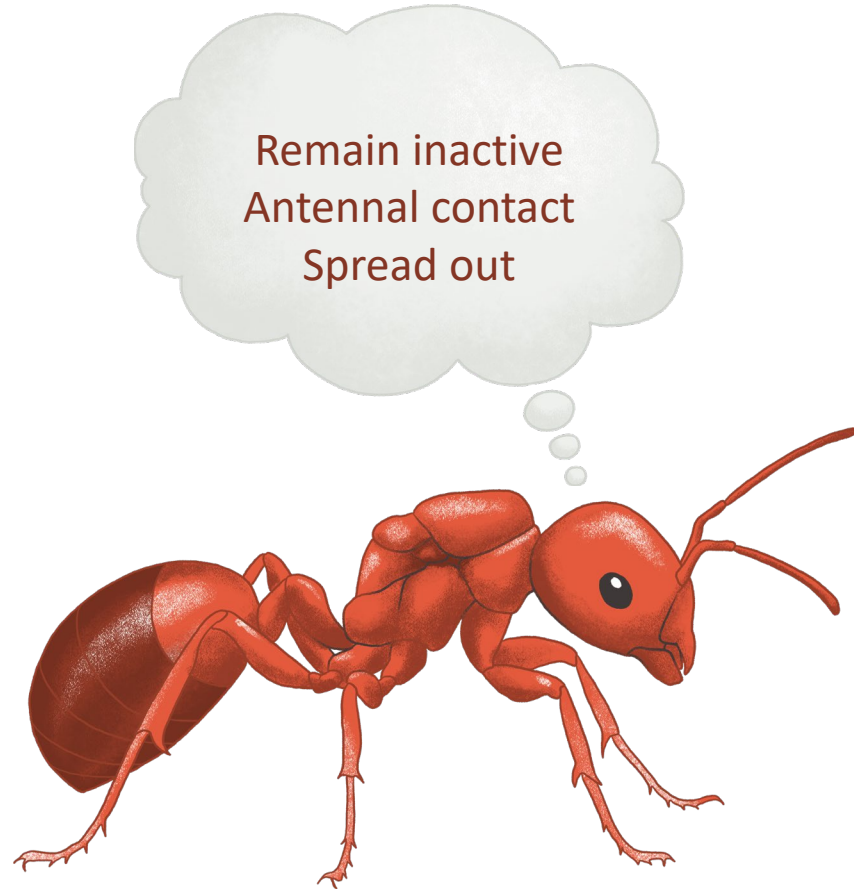


First law of work design



**The way work is broken down, shapes
how people collaborate and learn**

Ant(agonist)s at work



Harve

Pogonomyrmex barbatus



Stephy

Cephalotes goniodontus

Context matters!



Home of Harve



Home of Stephy

Second law of work design

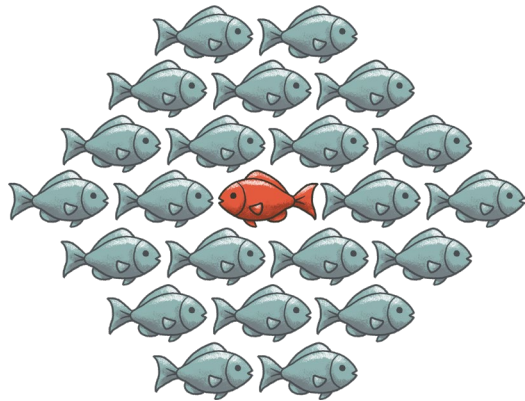


There is no universal best work design
not even within the same organisation!

Value strategies

Insurgents

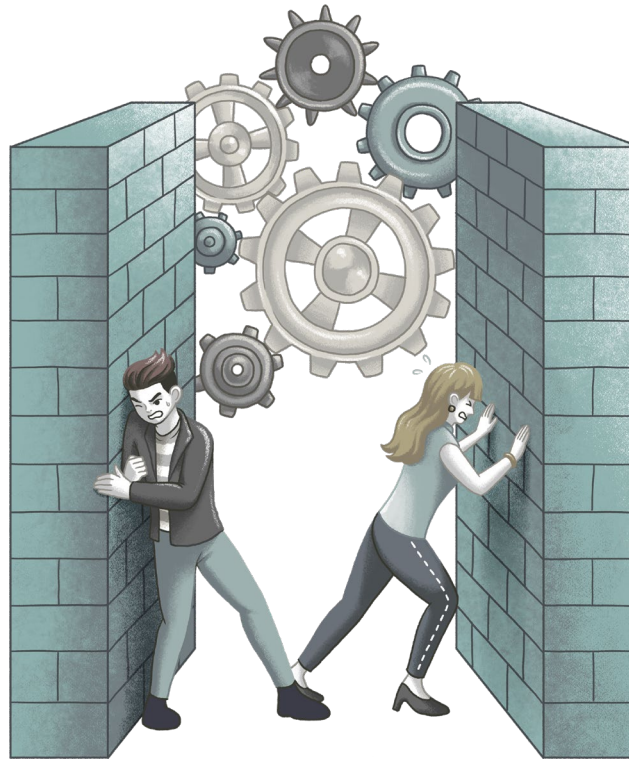
Start-ups and scale-ups



Differentiate

Incumbents

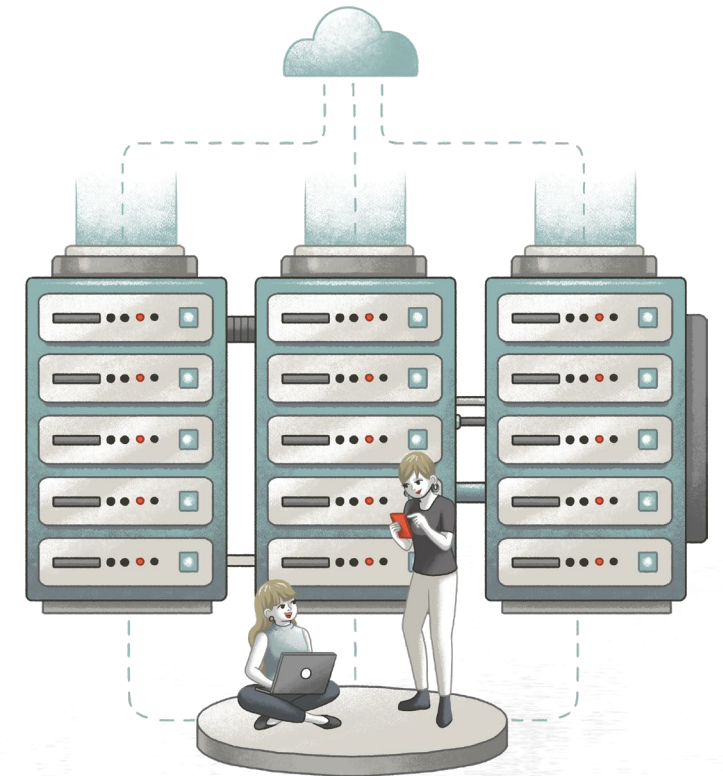
Established market players



Scope

Giants

Digital monopolies



Scale

How to pursue value?

Differentiate

Start-up/Scale-up

**Create / grow a new
market (niche)**

Uncertain and unstable

**Focussed bets with
affordable loss**



Discovering the new

Scope

Incumbent

**Maintain and improve
market position**

Big and complicated

**Protective calculated
risks**



Purposeful creation

Scale

Giant

**Dominance across
markets**

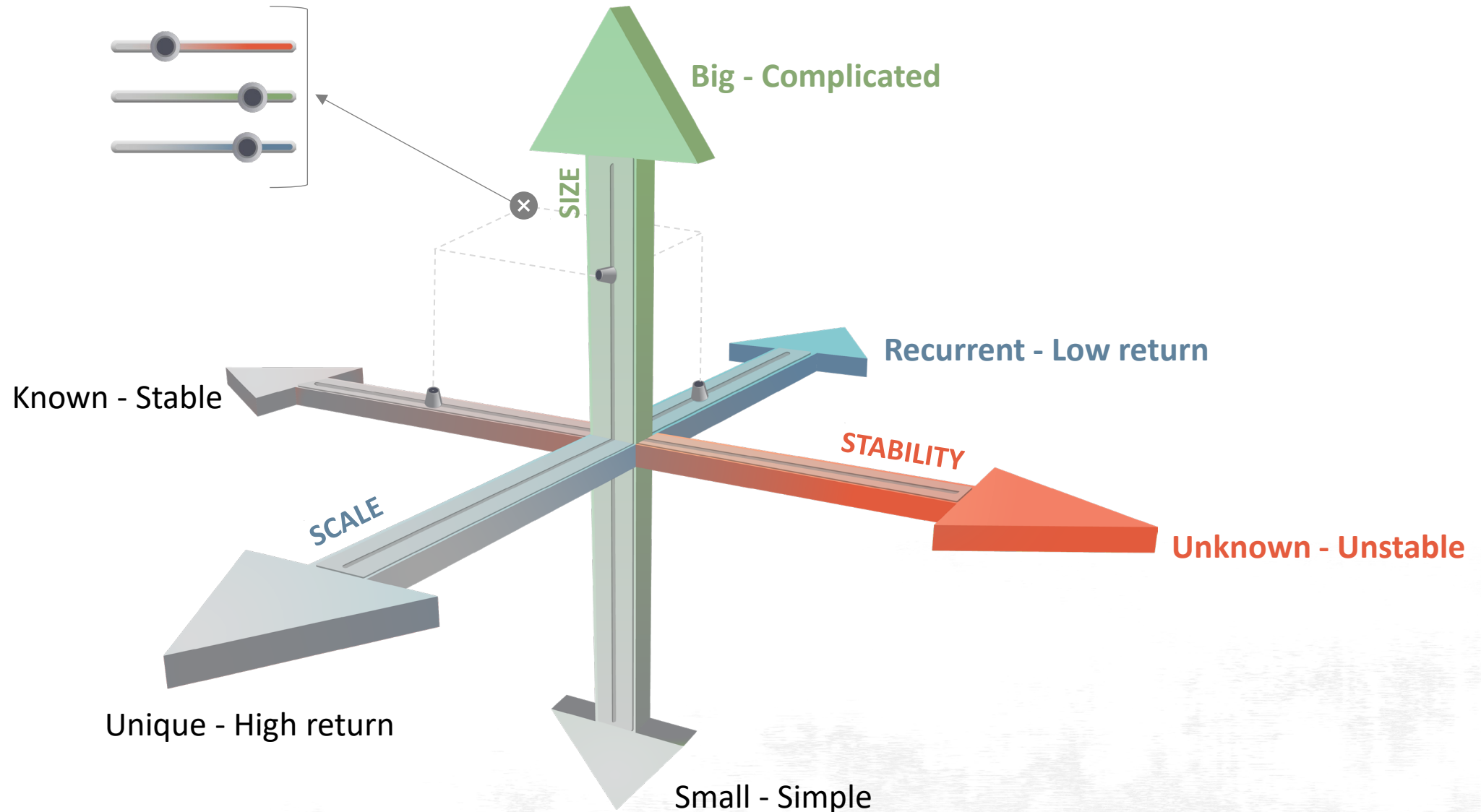
Recurrent low return

**Near-zero marginal
cost**

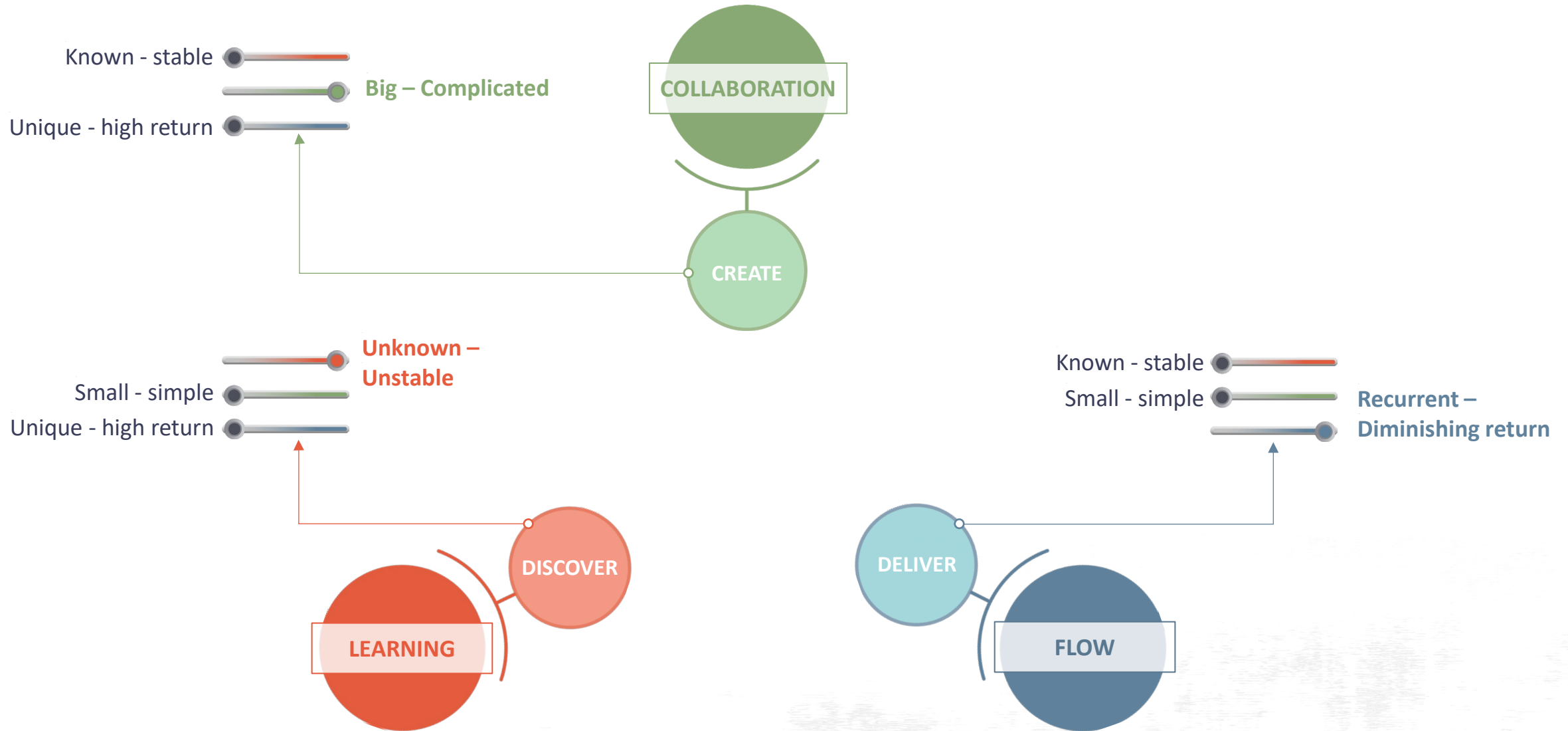


Recurrent delivery

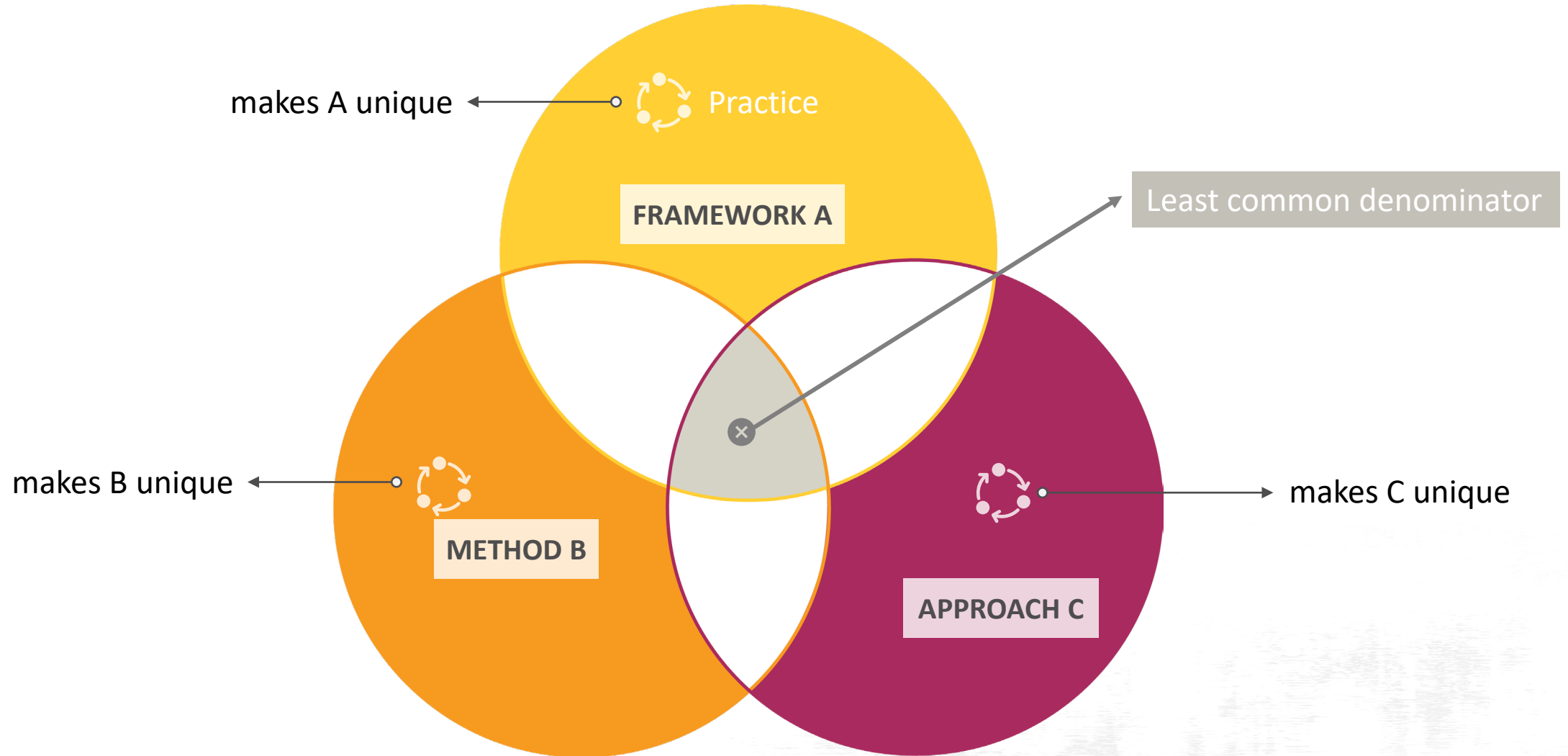
The work design challenge



Models of work



Not all practices are created equal (Third law of work design)



Unique perspectives

LEARNING

Hidden assumptions

Viability, Desirability, Feasibility

Slice for feedback

E.g. MVP



Time-box constraint

Sprint time-box (Scrum),
Cadenced integration points (Lean PD)

COLLABORATION

Culture, leadership, governance

Controls, structures, mindsets

Shared goals and tasks

E.g. Sprint goal



Collaboration policy

Pair programming (XP),
Stop-the-line (Lean)
Pacemaker team (Lean PD)

FLOW

Bottlenecks

Individuals, teams or resources

Work breakdown

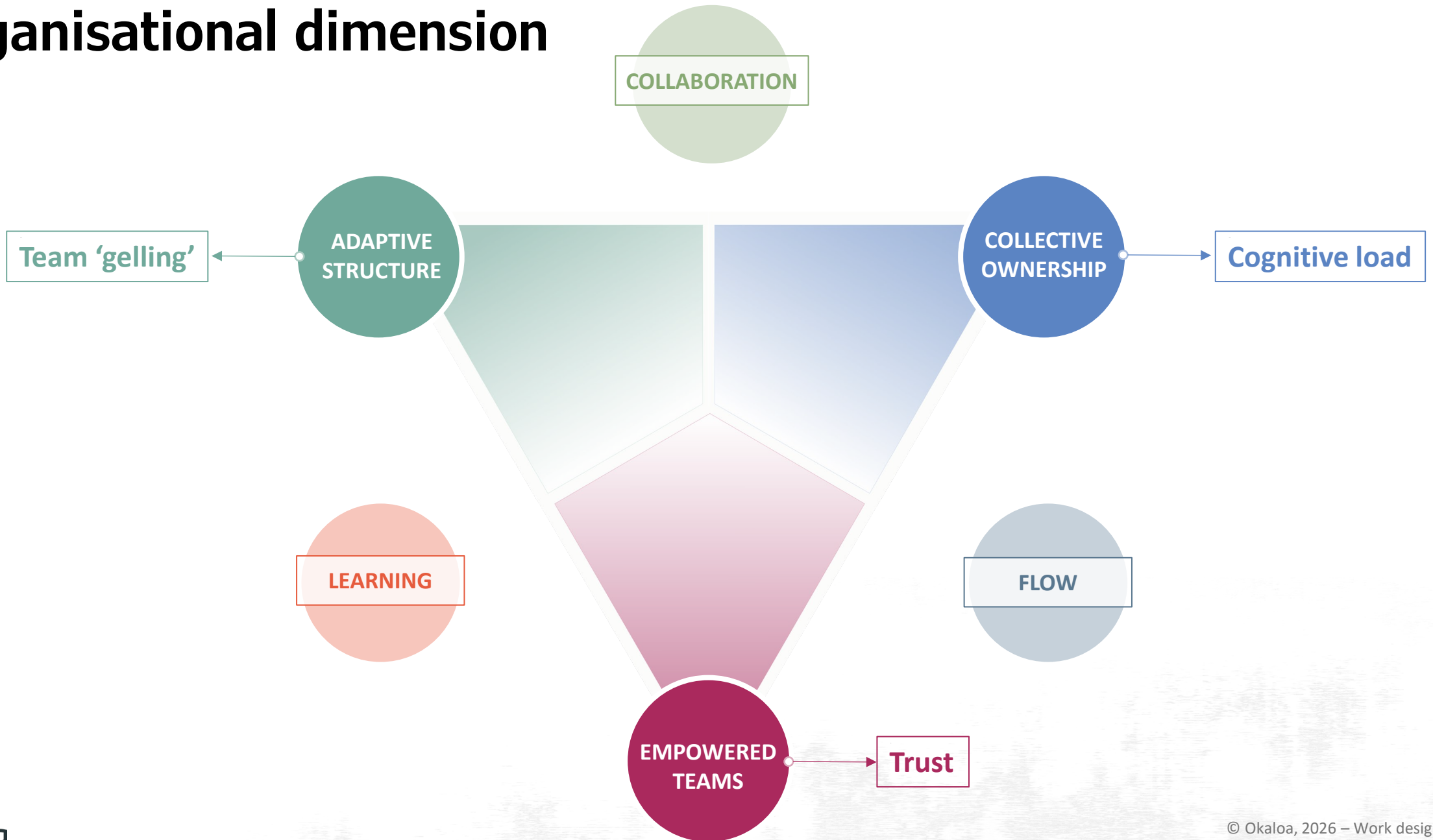
E.g. Bike -> Frame, Wheels, Gears, ...



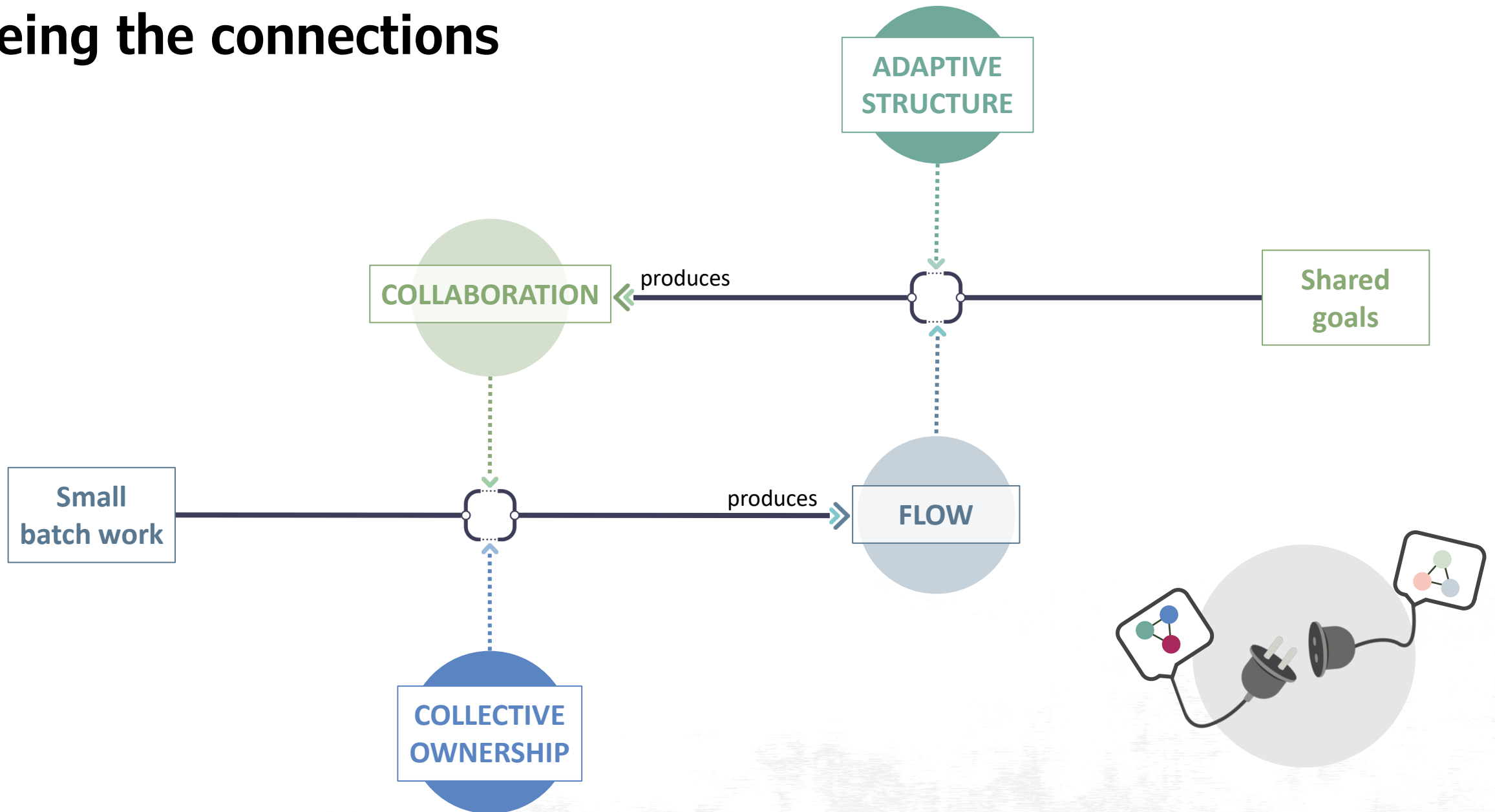
WIP limit

Column WIP limits (Kanban),
Drum-Buffer- Rope (ToC),
POLCA tokens (QRM),
Capacity tokens (Upstream Kanban)

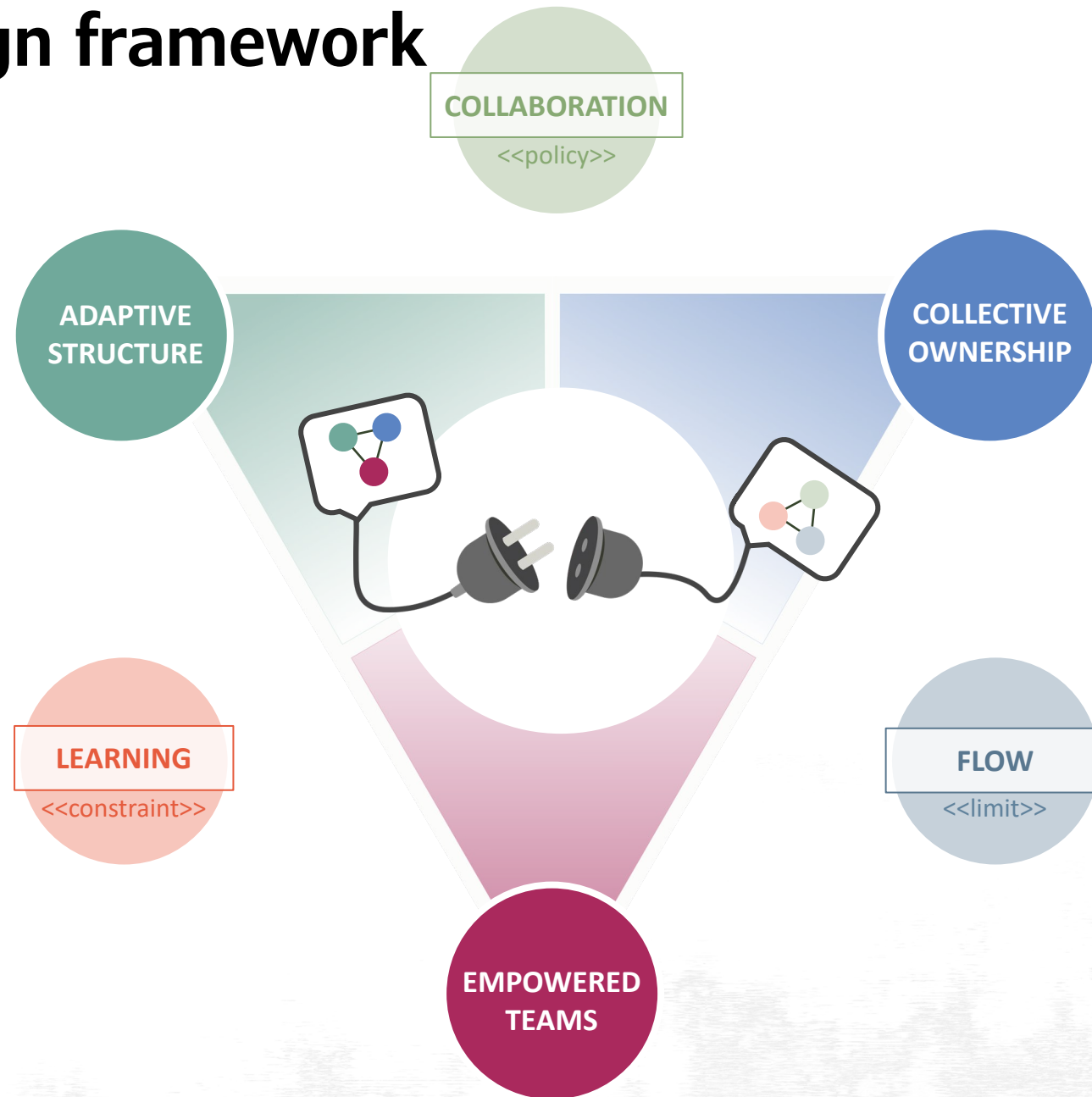
Organisational dimension



Seeing the connections



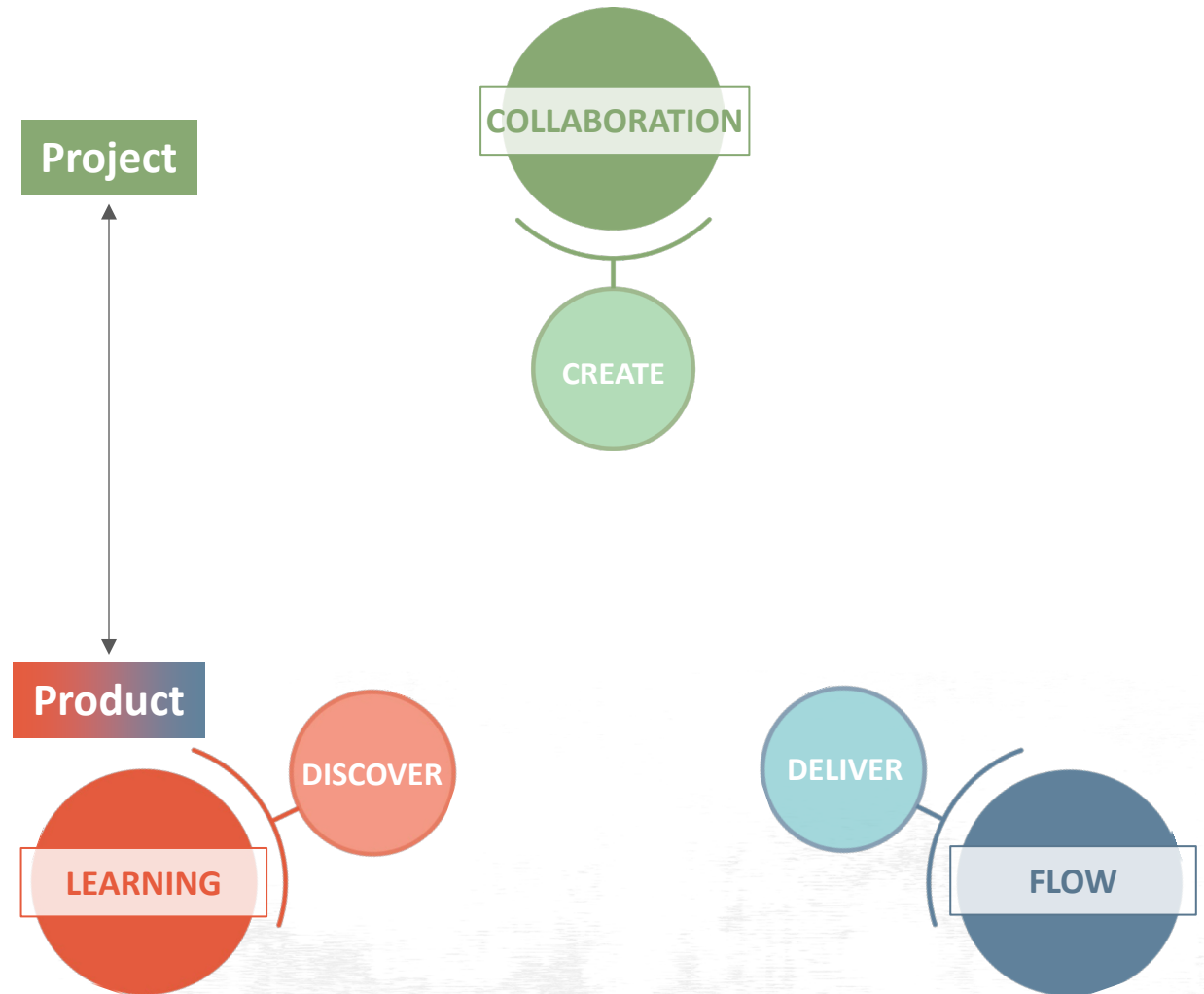
The work design framework



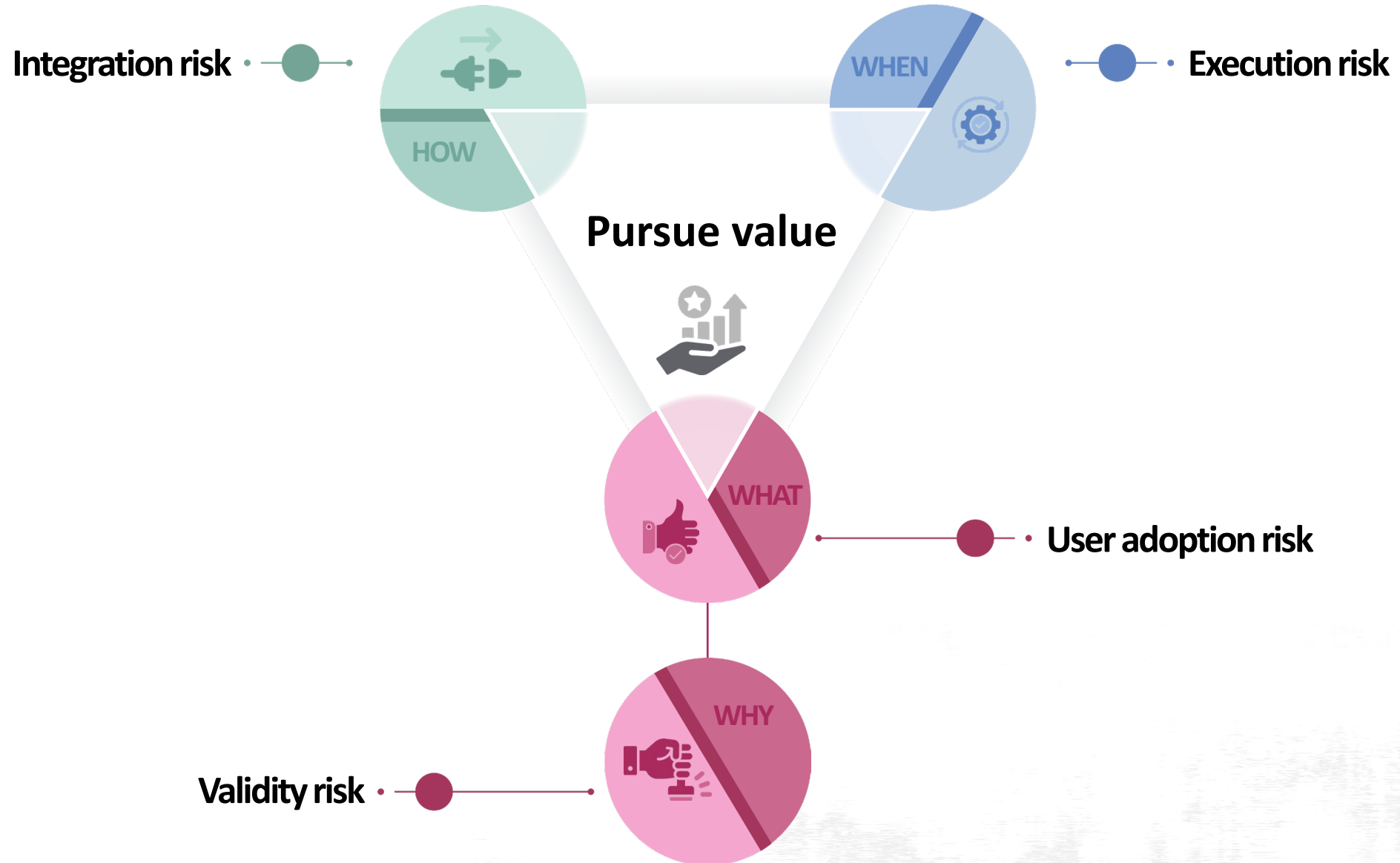
Project or product?

Projects are the primary vehicles through which organizations **create value**.
(incumbents)

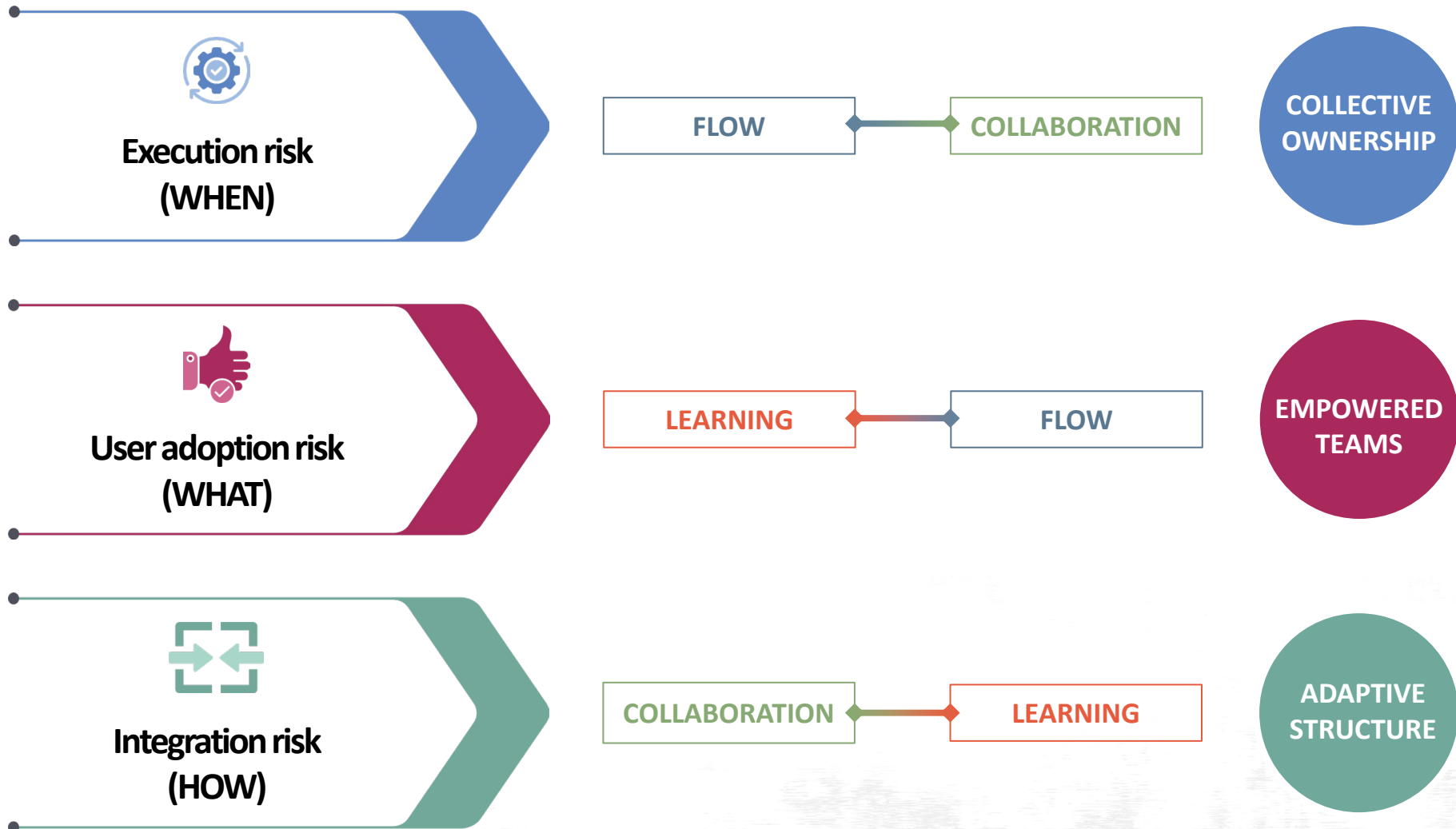
Products are the primary vehicles through which organizations **discover & deliver value**.
(insurgents & giants)



Risk



De-risking



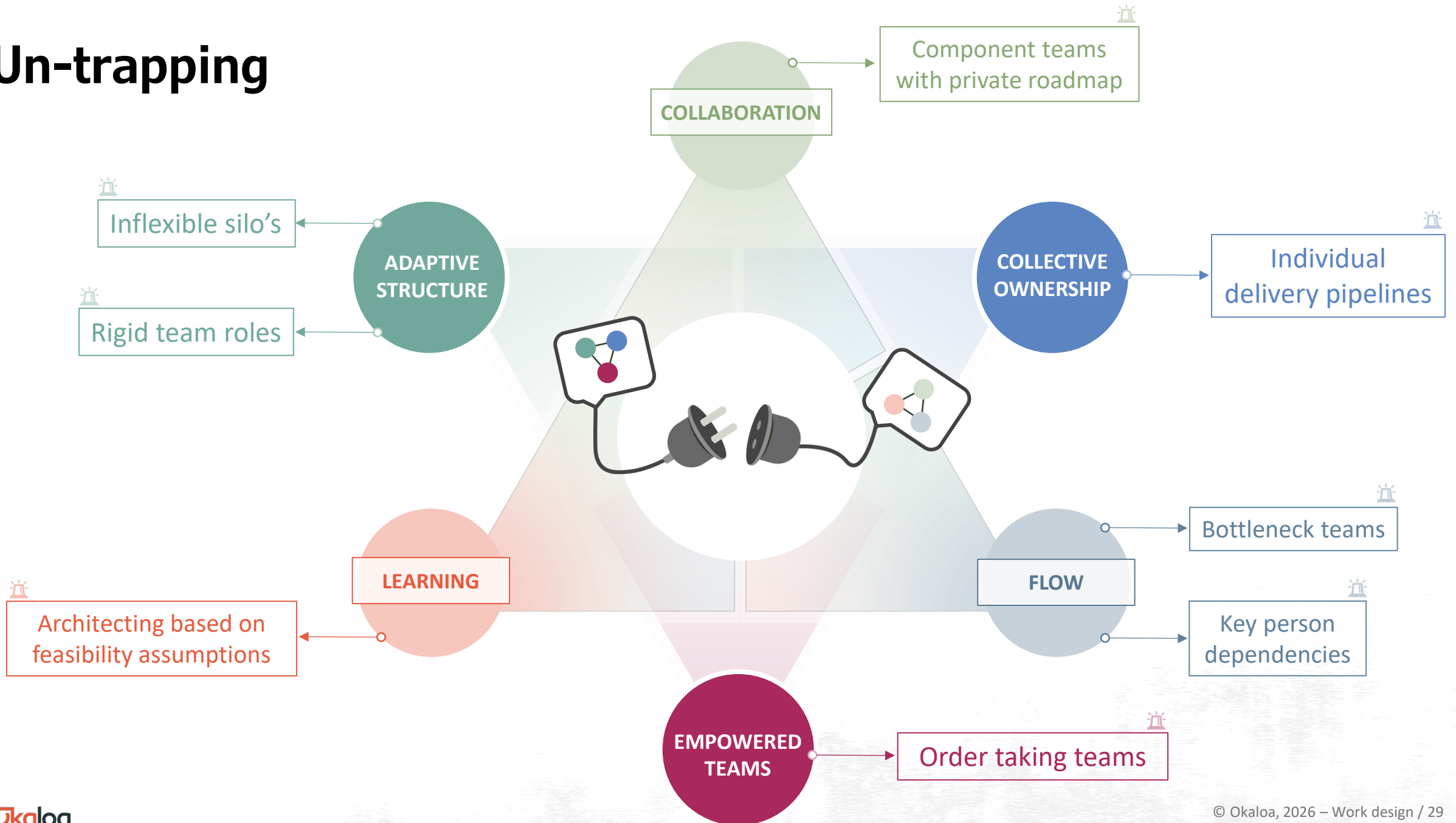
Design for change



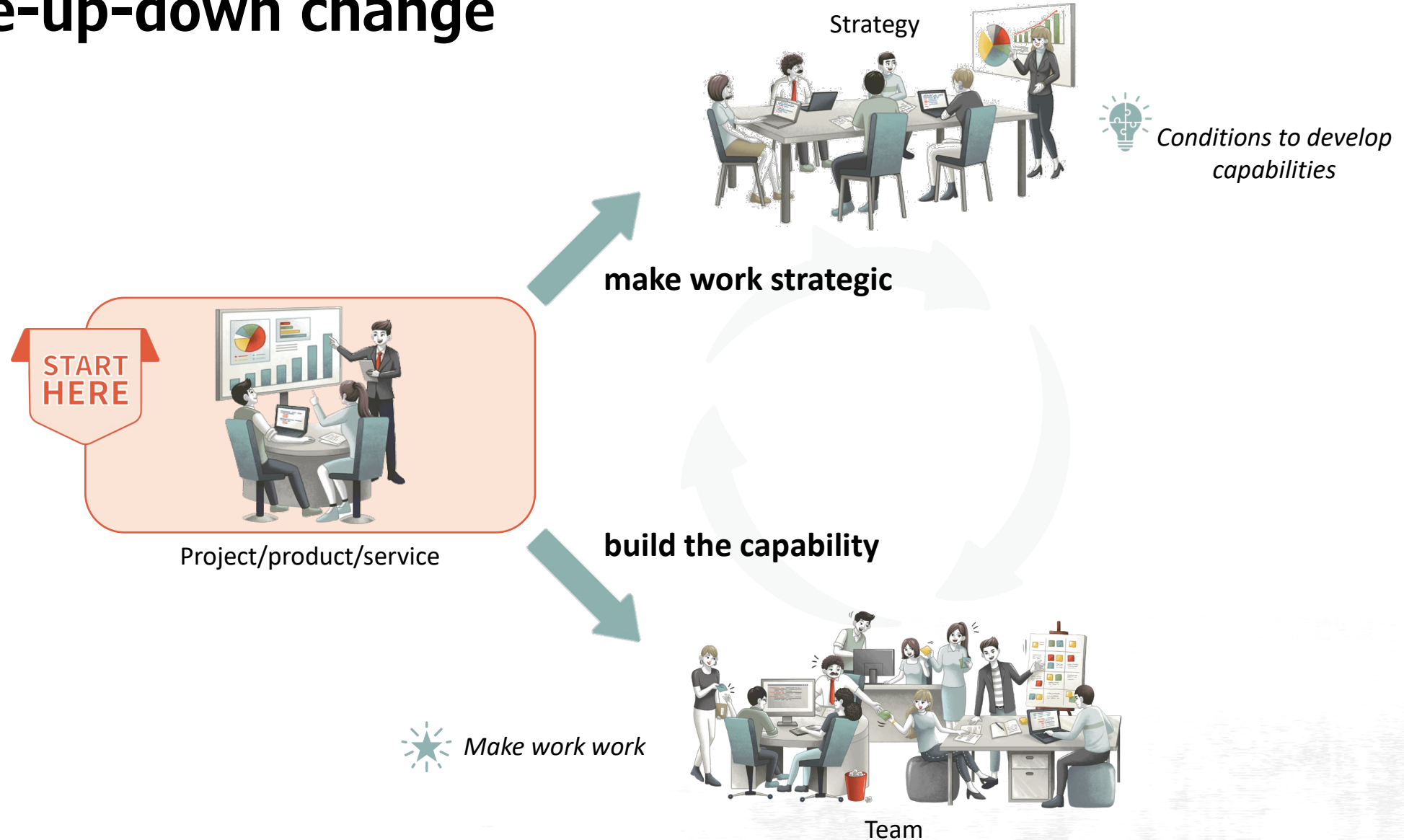
The trap



Un-trapping



Middle-up-down change



**An organisation is what it does,
not what it intends**