Learn fast, lean forward: practical deployment of CI thinking, tools and capability in the Department for Education

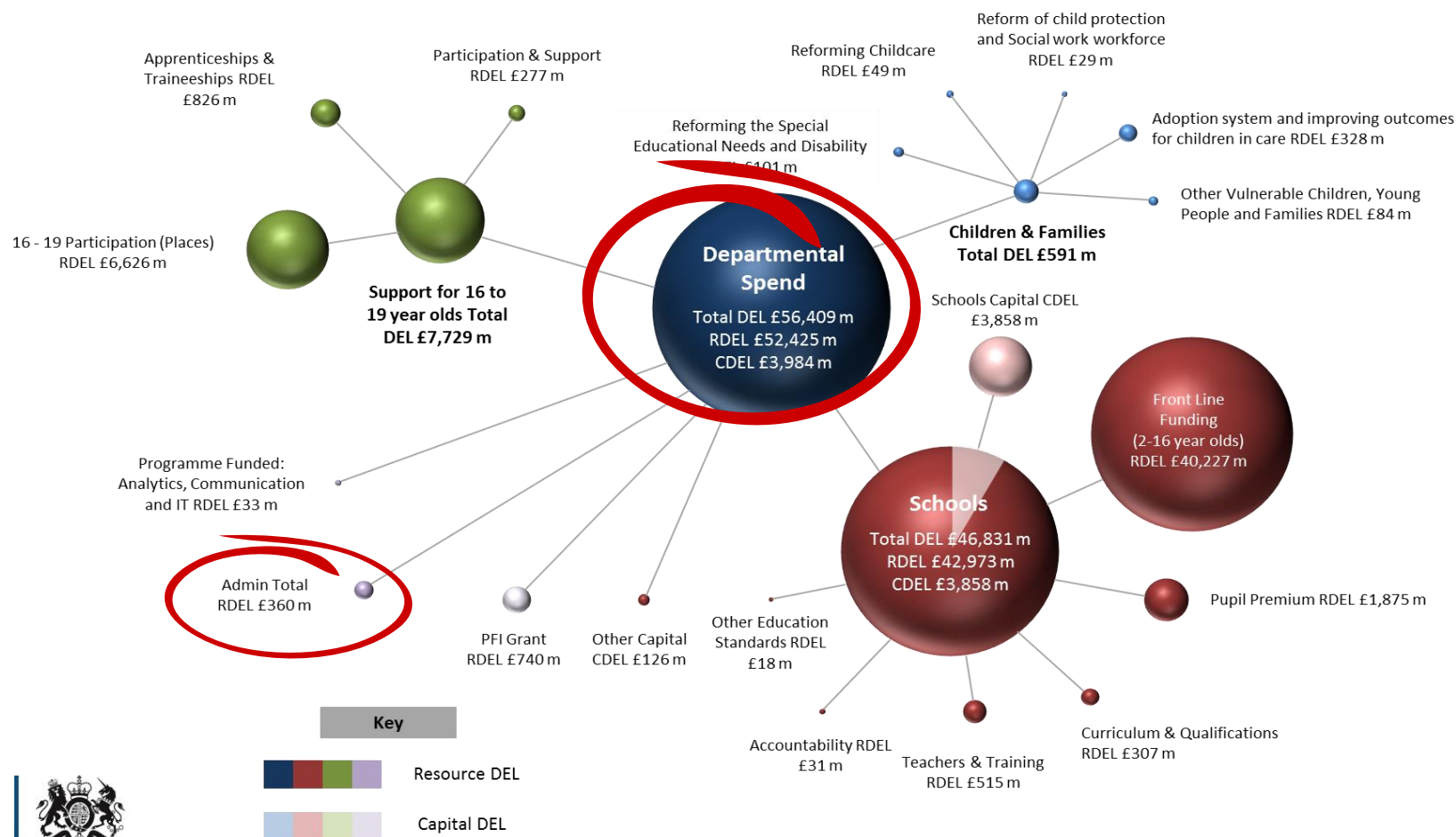**Simon Bullett**

Organisational Development Team

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DfE Background

Apprenticeships & Traineeships RDEL £826 m

Participation & Support RDEL £277 m

Reforming Childcare RDEL £49 m

Reform of child protection and Social work workforce RDEL £29 m

Adoption system and improving outcomes for children in care RDEL £328 m

Reforming the Special Educational Needs and Disability RDEL £101 m

16 - 19 Participation (Places) RDEL £6,626 m

Support for 16 to 19 year olds Total DEL £7,729 m

Departmental Spend
Total DEL £56,409 m
RDEL £52,425 m
CDEL £3,984 m

Children & Families Total DEL £591 m

Other Vulnerable Children, Young People and Families RDEL £84 m

Schools Capital CDEL £3,858 m

Front Line Funding (2-16 year olds) RDEL £40,227 m

Programme Funded: Analytics, Communication and IT RDEL £33 m

Schools
Total DEL £46,831 m
RDEL £42,973 m
CDEL £3,858 m

Admin Total RDEL £360 m

PFI Grant RDEL £740 m

Other Capital CDEL £126 m

Other Education Standards RDEL £18 m

Pupil Premium RDEL £1,875 m

Accountability RDEL £31 m

Teachers & Training RDEL £515 m

Curriculum & Qualifications RDEL £307 m

Key

Resource DEL

Capital DEL

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How do you describe CI?

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Levels of CI capability

Expert level (1:1,000)
Central CI Team

Practitioner level (1:100)
8 days training
Run CI projects, raise capability, lead CI
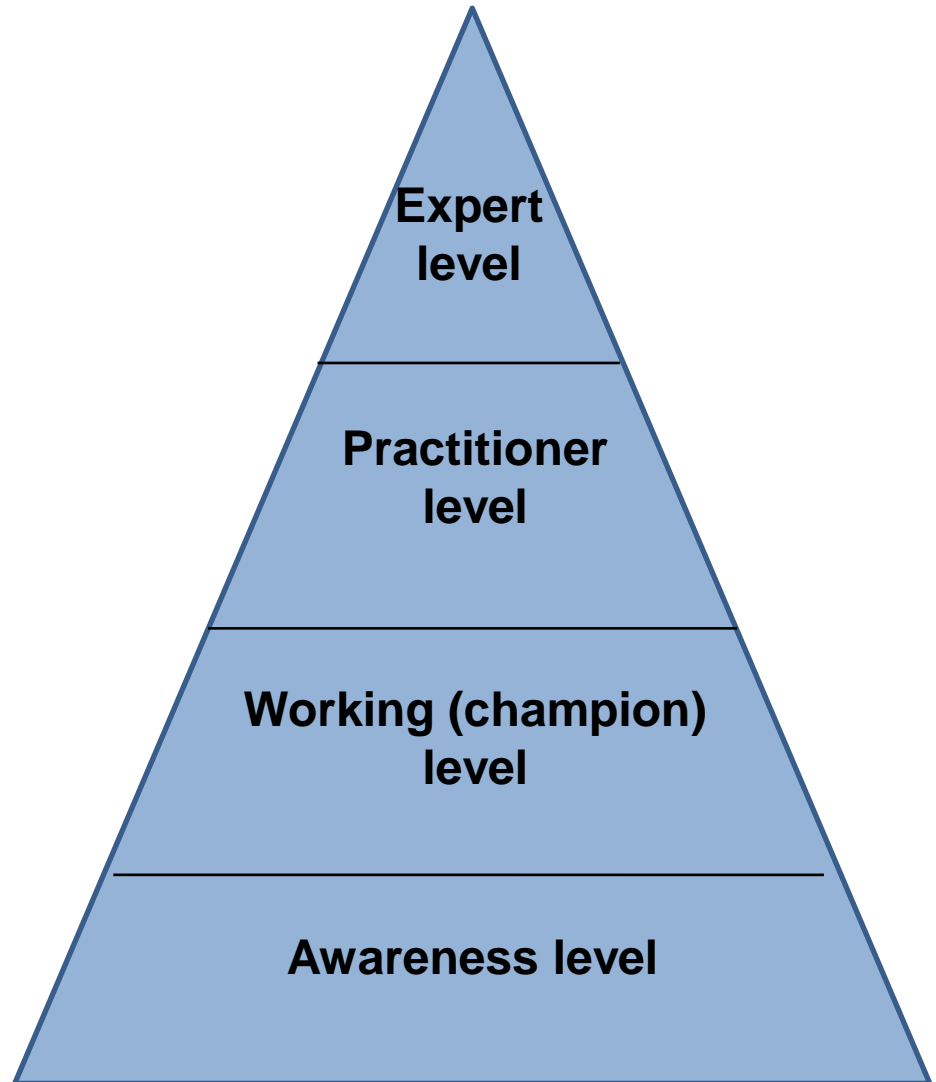
Working (Champions) level (1:10)
2 days training
Work on CI at a team level
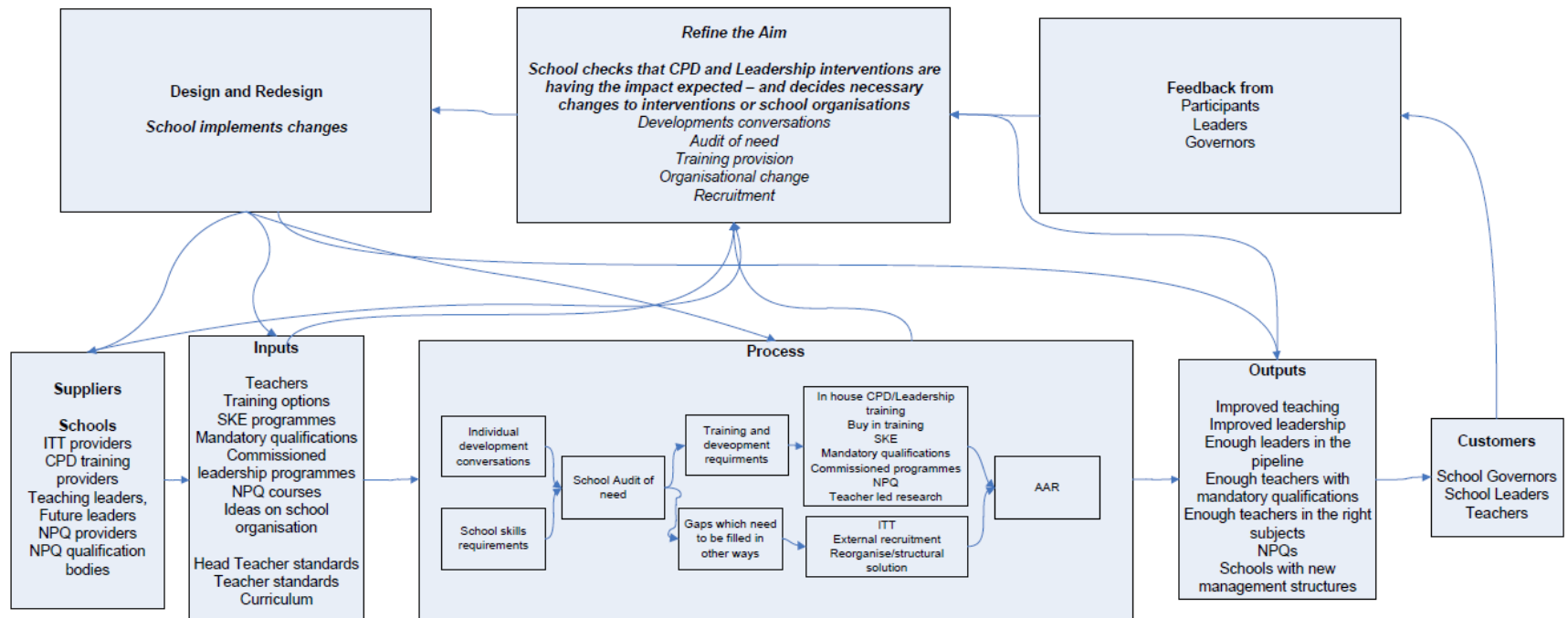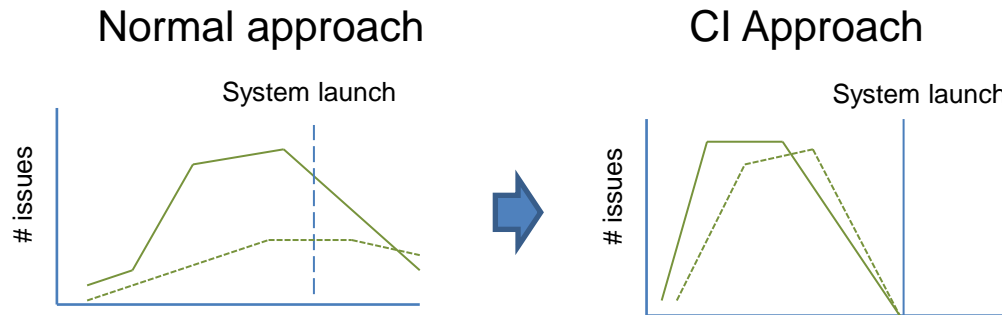
Awareness level (All)
Awareness of core CI concepts and tools
Use in day job

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Using process design principles to build a school led system

Normal approach

System launch

issues

CI Approach

System launch

issues

The impact of failure of a school-led CPD and leadership system would be hugely detrimental to DfE objectives and the quality of education – this gives a clear rational to ensure the transition is as controlled as possible.

Design and Redesign

School implements changes

Refine the Aim

School checks that CPD and Leadership interventions are having the impact expected – and decides necessary changes to interventions or school organisations
Developments conversations
Audit of need
Training provision
Organisational change
Recruitment

Feedback from
Participants
Leaders
Governors

Suppliers

Schools
ITT providers
CPD training providers
Teaching leaders,
Future leaders
NPQ providers
NPQ qualification bodies

Inputs

Teachers
Training options
SKE programmes
Mandatory qualifications
Commissioned leadership programmes
NPQ courses
Ideas on school organisation

Head Teacher standards
Teacher standards
Curriculum

Process

Individual development conversations

School skills requirements

School Audit of need

Training and deveopment requirments

Gaps which need to be filled in other ways

In house CPD/Leadership training
Buy in training
SKE
Mandatory qualifications
Commissioned programmes
NPQ
Teacher led research

ITT
External recruitment
Reorganise/structural solution

AAR

Outputs

Improved teaching
Improved leadership
Enough leaders in the pipeline
Enough teachers with mandatory qualifications
Enough teachers in the right subjects
NPQs
Schools with new management structures

Customers

School Governors
School Leaders
Teachers

Improving delivery functions with appropriate process typology

- **Appropriate standards**
- **Moving from a bespoke model to a modular approach**
  - Standardising to guarantee consistency in core outputs (Runners)
  - Additional elements for specific problems (Repeaters)
  - Strangers dealt with by exception
- **Quality boundaries to ensure consistency of output internally**
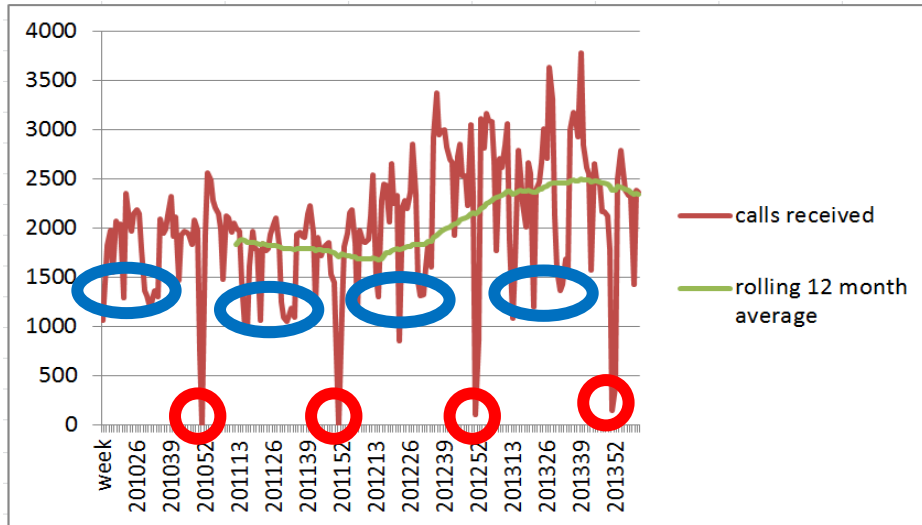- **Common entry and exit for customer**

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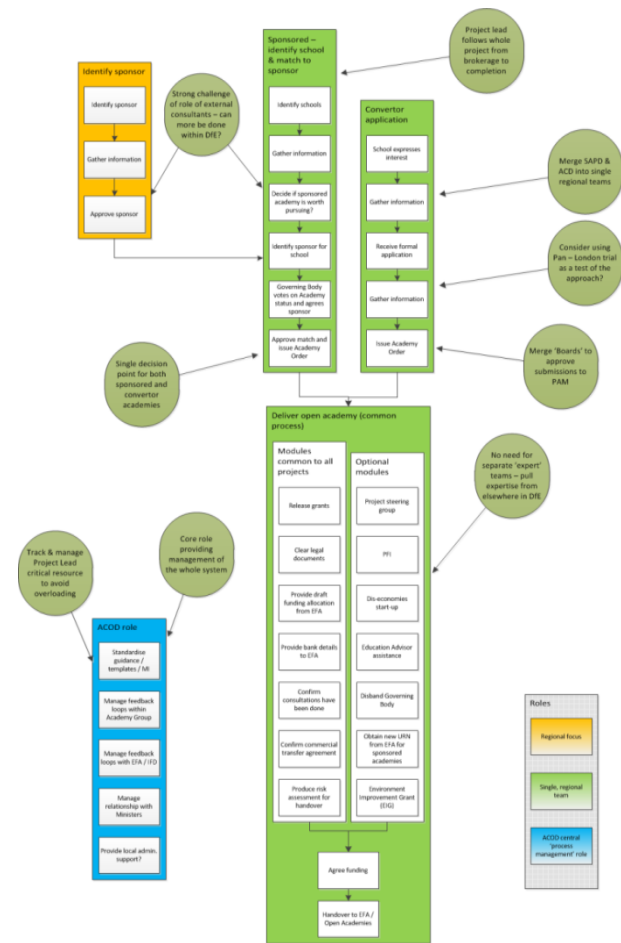
Opening Academy schools 'Common framework'

Improving our Department of State Functions with better evidence and data

Data shows the very low level of queries received during Christmas, New Year and school holidays – this enabled us to design 3 processes to cater for different demands on the process.

- Moved to telephony or standardised letters for simpler queries from citizens

- Pull system to flatten peaks and troughs of activity

- 7 wastes activity reduced re-work, over-processing and waiting

- Runners, repeaters and strangers activity identified different responses required – less 'stranger' activity

- Quality checklists to increase consistency to customer requirement

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Results so far…

Cost
- **21%** more projects per member of staff in Academies Delivery
- **25%** reduction in unit costs of consolidating Academies funding
- **25%** productivity improvement using simplified letters to Citizens and **~75%** where telephony used

Process
- **6 month reduction** in time taken to resolve all testing maladministration
- Reduction in average time to Academy Order stage from **50 to 30 days**
- **50%** reduction in time taken for schools to accredit to become teacher training providers

Organisation
- **72%** of staff agreed they have two jobs (day job and improving their day job) against falling wider engagement
- Over 1,500 people received training
- Considerable savings in learning through in-house delivery vs procuring externally – over **£300k**

Customer
- **30%** reduction in customer enquiries on the 2013 Spring School Census
- Satisfaction of Academies **up 18% (93%)**
- **97%** Parliamentary Questions were answered on time now compared to 35%

But….

Evidence from NAO…'Improvement Programmes on their own do not lead to continuous 'organisation wide' improvement'

Figure 10 – Improvement programmes have limited impact on maturity
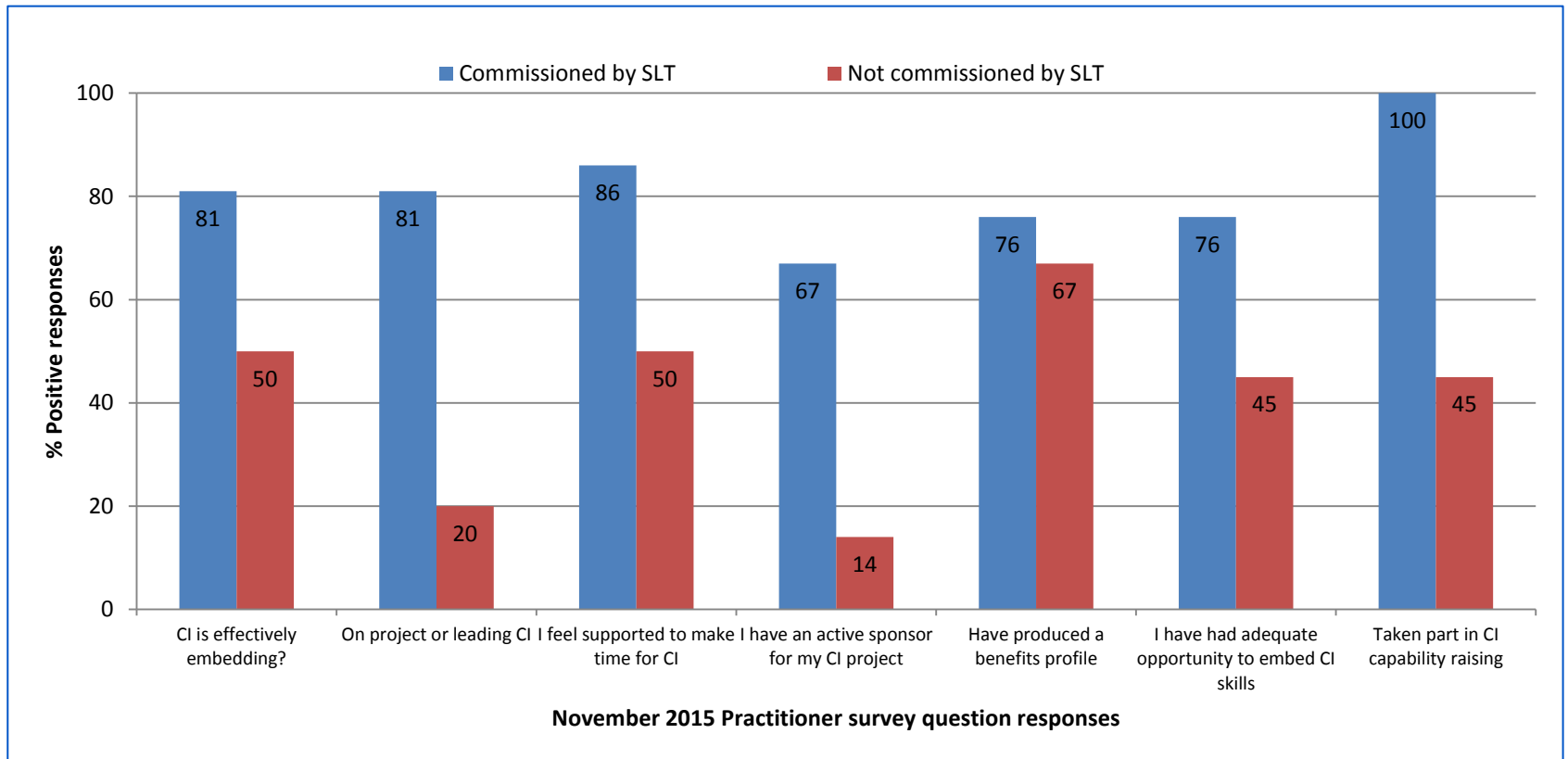
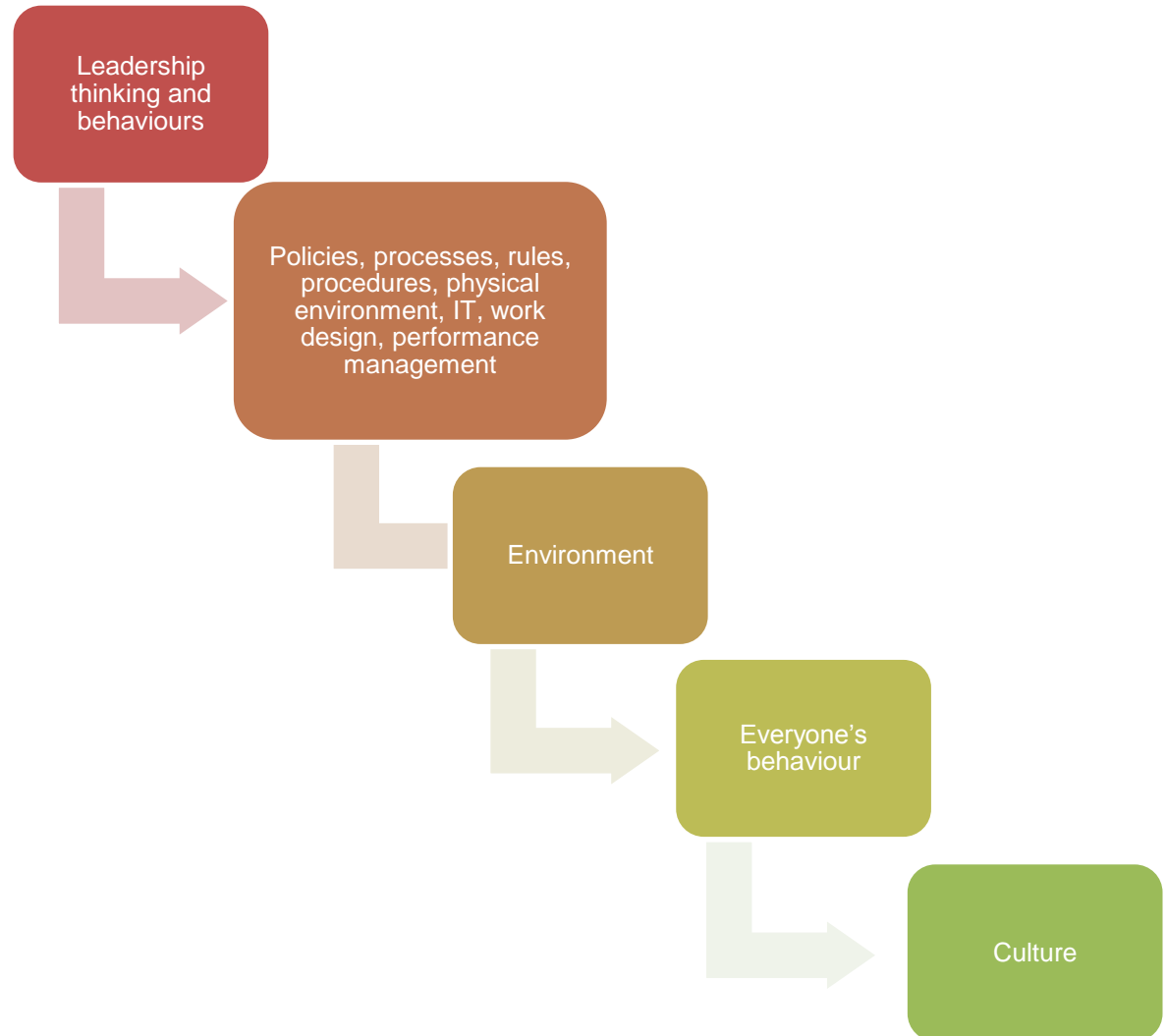Average process management maturity

Percentage (%)

Audit analytic - operational question
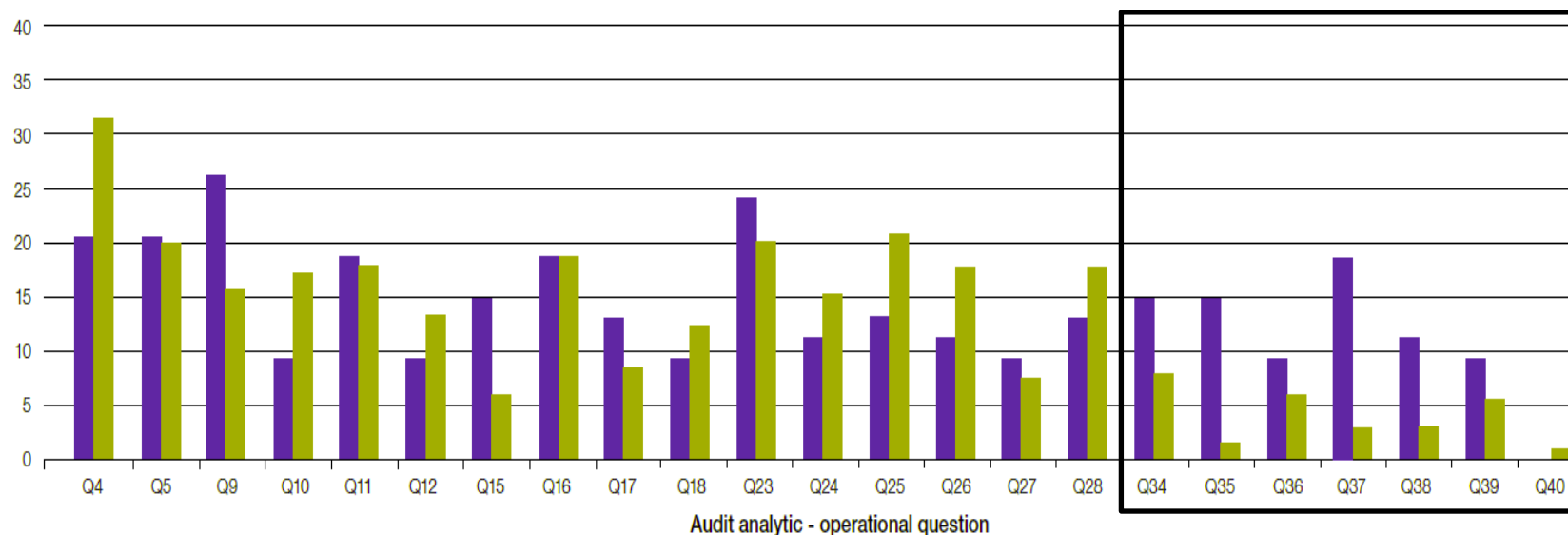
■ Improvement programme

■ No improvement programme

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Evidence from DfE…

Chart legend: ■ Commissioned by SLT ■ Not commissioned by SLT

% Positive responses

Question	Commissioned by SLT	Not commissioned by SLT
CI is effectively embedding?	81	50
On project or leading CI	81	20
I feel supported to make time for CI	86	50
I have an active sponsor for my CI project	67	14
Have produced a benefits profile	76	67
I have had adequate opportunity to embed CI skills	76	45
Taken part in CI capability raising	100	45

November 2015 Practitioner survey question responses

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Without sustained leadership engagement it will not sustain

Leadership thinking and behaviours

Policies, processes, rules, procedures, physical environment, IT, work design, performance management

Environment

Everyone's behaviour

Culture

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Therefore, stop doing "CI" – start doing 'systemic leadership'. How many strands do you have control of or can influence?

"CI programme"

CI will always compete with other 'change' or 'improvement' priorities to do what it needs to do

Push

CI programme

Digital

PPM

NEW Implementation Units

How do we manage risks and issues/problems?

How do we make changes and improve?

What skills do our people and leaders need?

What and how do we measure?

Designing the Management System

Pull
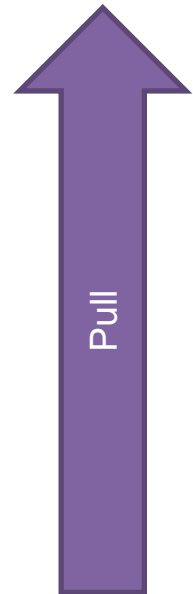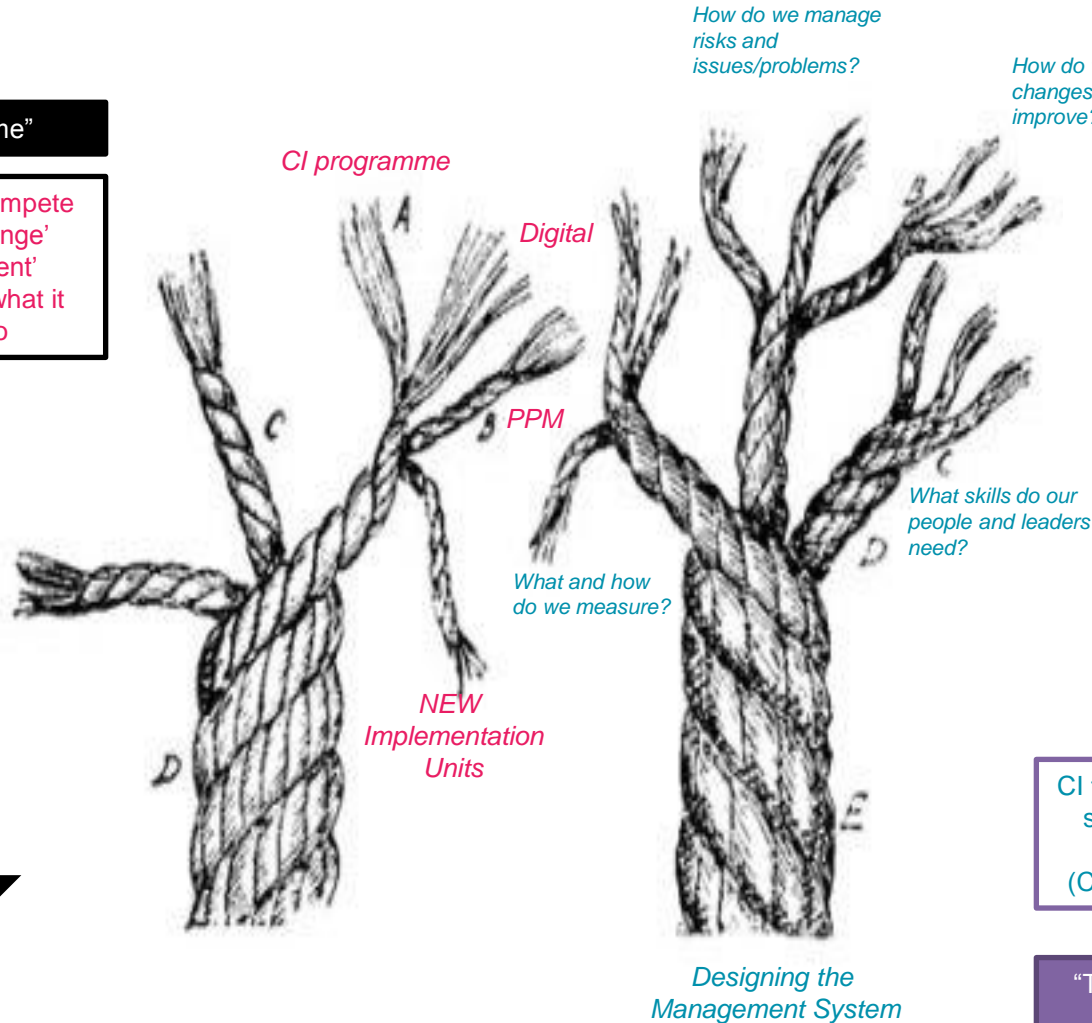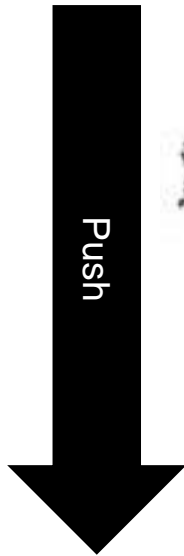
CI thinking weaving other strategies and activity together
(Controlling 'true north')

"The way we do things round here"

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Some ideas and approaches that help you to move towards the culture of continuous improvement……

- **Systems thinking**
- **People & psychology**
- **Learning**
- **Understanding variation**

- **+ PURPOSE!**
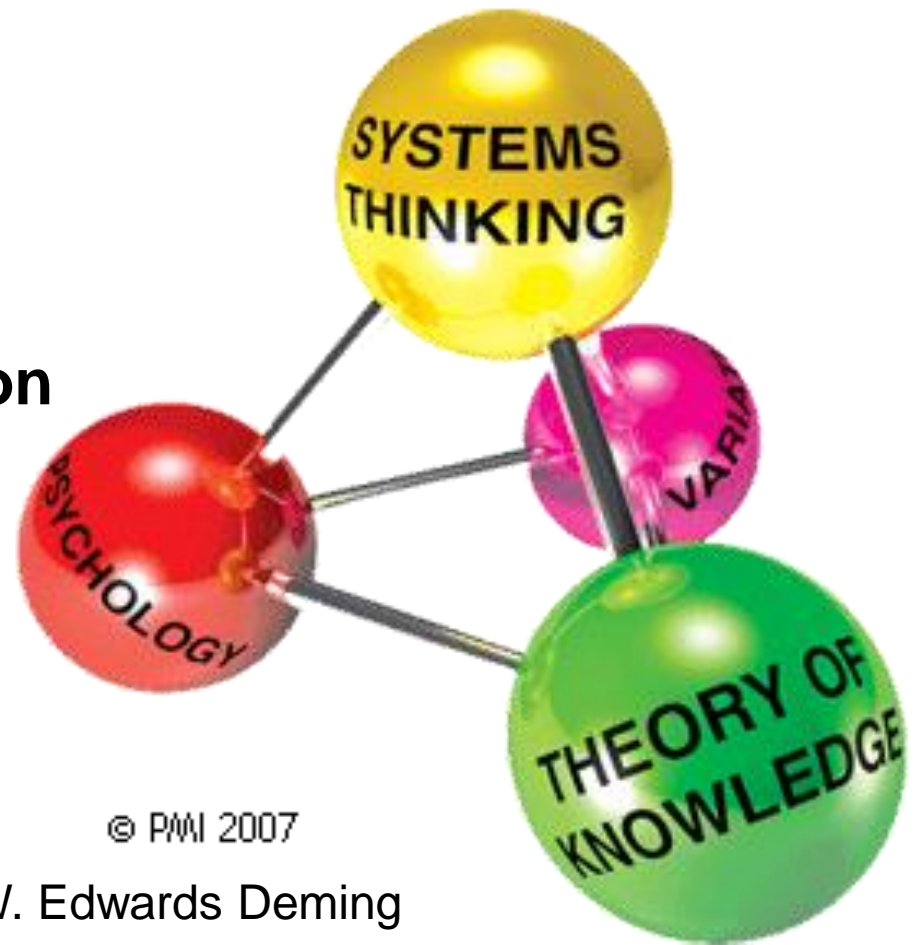
W. Edwards Deming

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Systems thinking
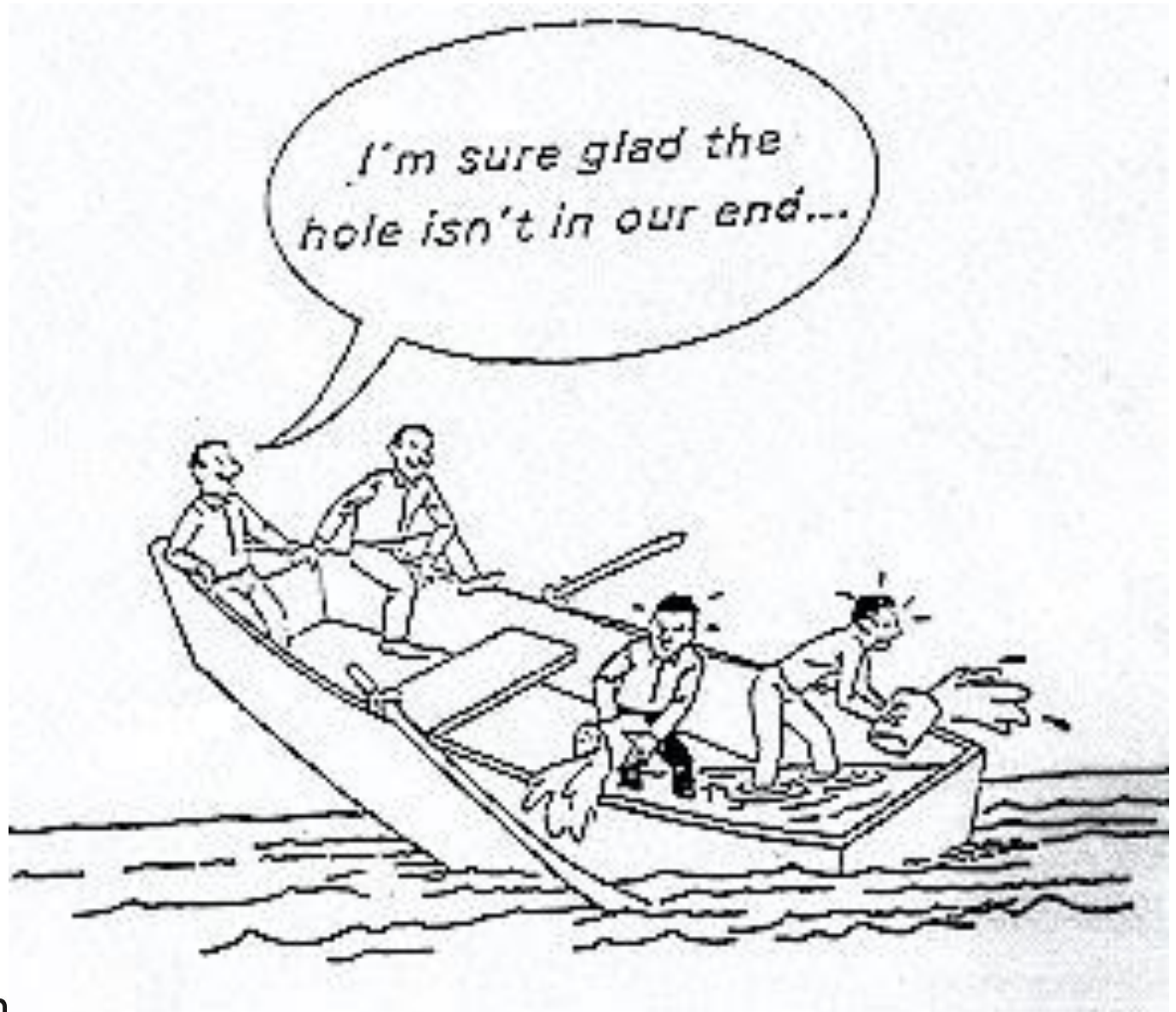
Simple system

The hand of policy

A simple system

The goal

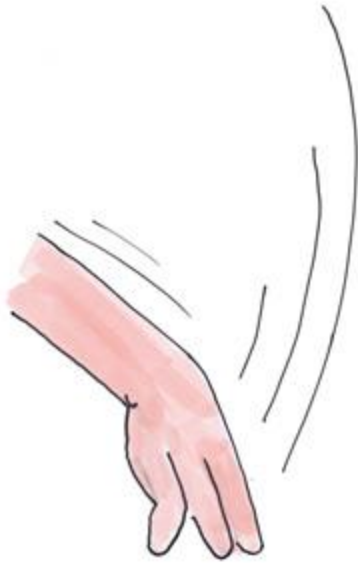Department for Education

Complex system

**The hand
of policy**

**A
complex
system**
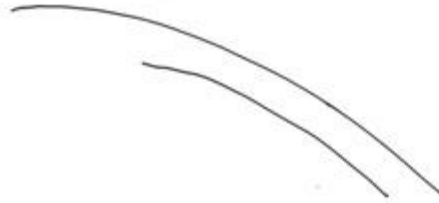
The goal

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Controlling a complex system?

The hand of policy

A complex system forced into the mechanical approach

The goal

Optimising a complex system

The hand
of policy

A complex system

The goal

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Systems thinking to 'solve' problems

- **The whole is more than the sum of its parts**
- **Interactions & inter-dependencies are more important than independent actions**
- **Must understand feedback loops**
- **We should seek to be holistic, not reductionist**

- **Ackoff's four problem solving approaches:**
  - **Absolution -** *the act of ignoring the problem in the hope that it will resolve itself or be resolved by someone else.*
  - **Resolution -** *address the symptom and make it go away (for now!)*
  - **Solutions -** *seek the root cause & the optimal solution.*
  - **Dissolution -** *prevent the problem by dissolving or eliminating it through system redesign*

RUSSEL ACKOFF

Our approach to system/process improvement


Developing clear feedback loops from stakeholders and system measures drives good system leadership and improvement

Ensure changes to the system are communicated to the whole system, including suppliers

Service Redesign

Refine the aim

Customer Feedback

Suppliers

Inputs

Core processes

Outputs

Stakeholders

Identify enabling processes and ensure they don't dictate how the core processes operate

Enabling processes

System measures

Sustainable management & improvement requires us to focus on the <u>WHOLE</u> system at all times

System stakeholders define purpose and, therefore, what adds value

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Cinema manager exercise

- *You are the general manager for a large, successful, multi-screen cinema.*

- *Every Monday morning you expect all of your team leaders to e-mail you the key measures and data that will tell you what you need to know to ensure that you stay successful.*

- *What measures and data would you like to receive in the e-mails?*

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People and psychology
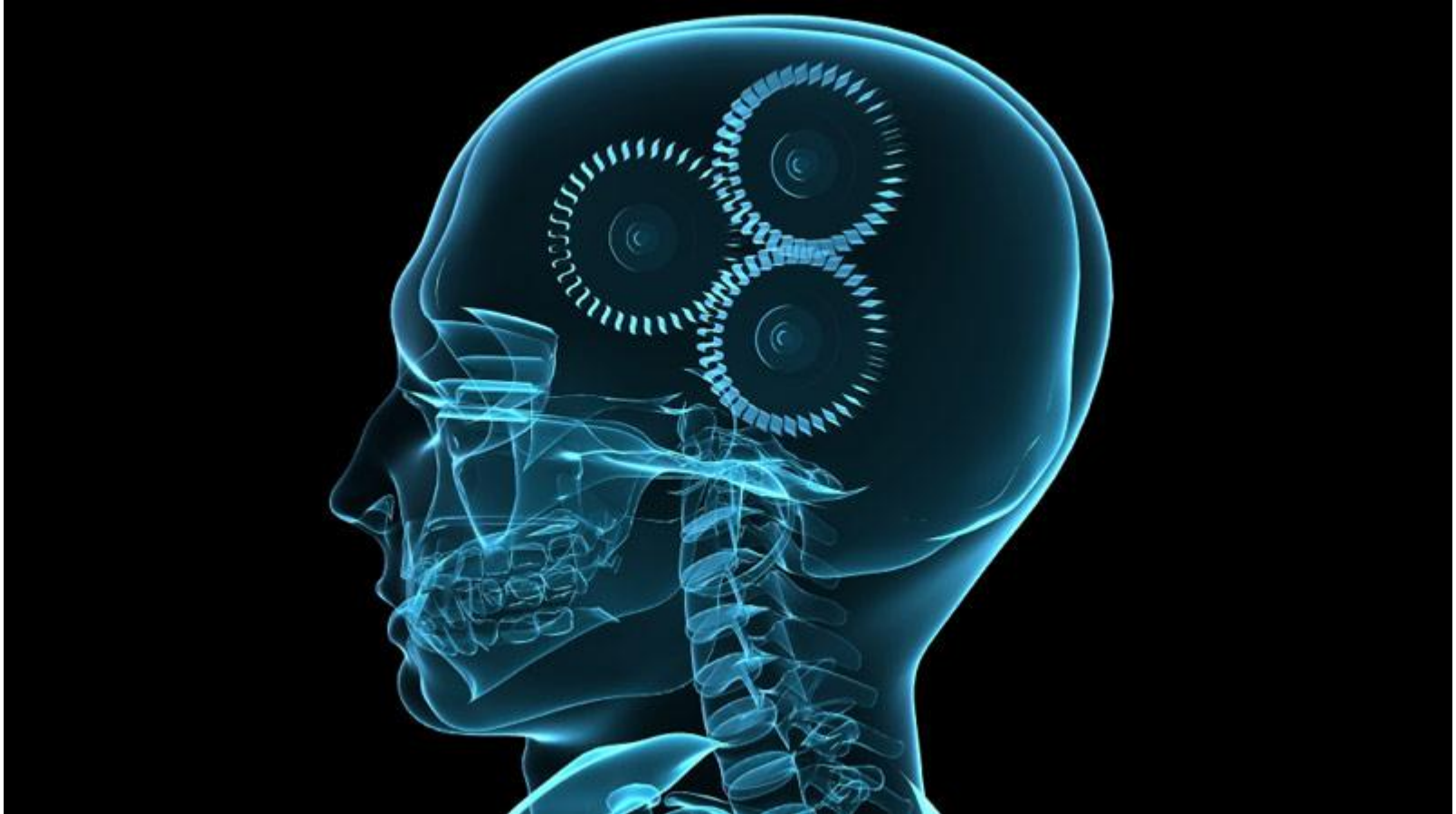
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System or person?

- **W. Edwards Deming:**
  - "I should estimate that in my experience, most troubles and most possibilities for improvement add up to the proportions something like this:
    - 94% belongs to the system
       (responsibility of management)
    - 6% special (people)"
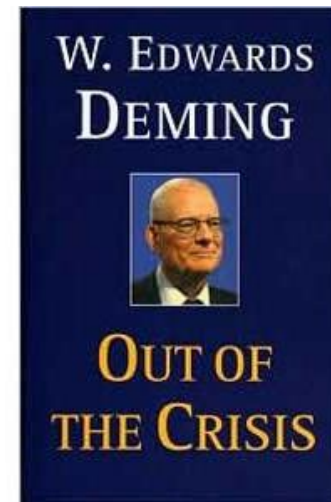
Neuroscience of intrinsic motivation

- **SCARF model (David Rock)**
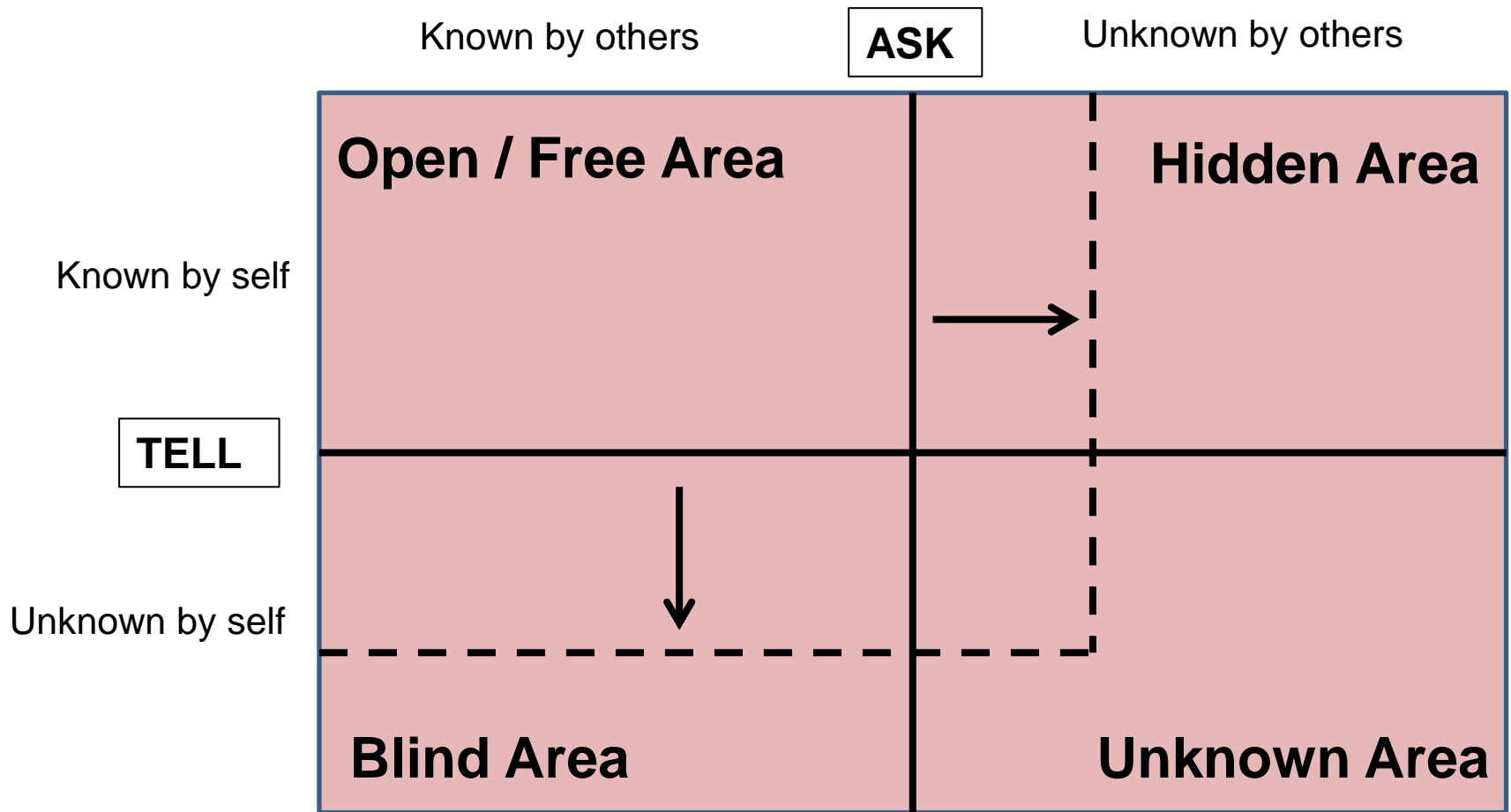 - Status
  - Certainty
  - Autonomy
  - Relatedness
  - Fairness

- **DRIVE (Dan Pink)**
  - Autonomy
  - Mastery
  - Purpose

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Gibb Model

The task, or work, to be done

Process start → The task, or improvement, process → **Vision of future**

The socio-emotional process

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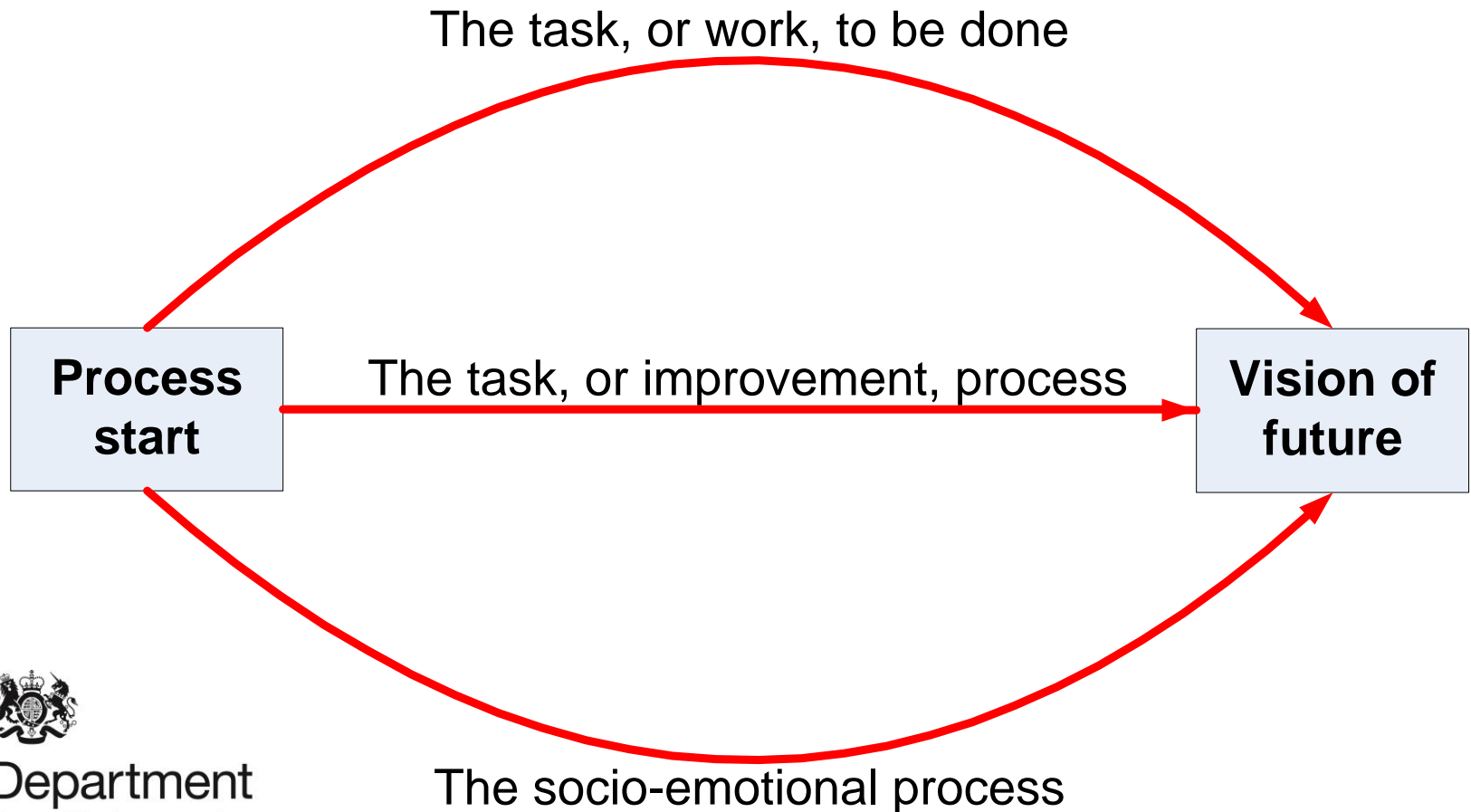
Johari's Window

Learning

Our experiences tend to become assumptions that we all rely on, whether right or wrong

CI is about learning

- **Strategies for survival**

  - Homo erectus first walked upright on this earth **1.8 million years ago**

  - The abacus was introduced only **2,300** years ago
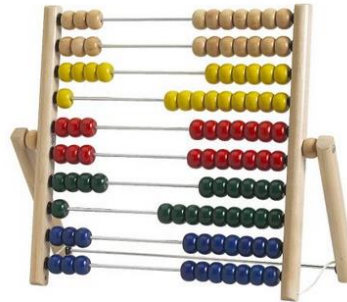
  - So, for **99.88%** of the time hominids have been walking upright we've relied on our instincts to get us out of trouble……

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Option 1?

Fight – win some, lose…er, just the one

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Option 2?

Flight - live to fight or flight another day.

Option 3?

Stop, reflect, think about it…get eaten!

We might like to believe otherwise but…
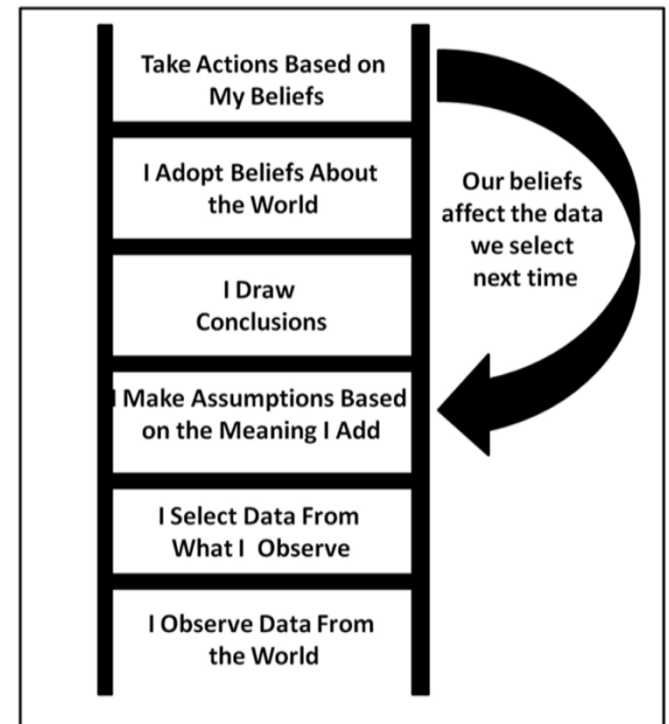
…taking time to think really doesn't come that naturally.

Option 4 ?

Consequences

- **We are <u>strongly</u> driven to find an explanation other than chance**
- **We ignore facts that don't support our view**
- **We're hopeless with probabilities**
- **We make the 'wrong' decision more often if we fear 'loss' – we're risk averse**
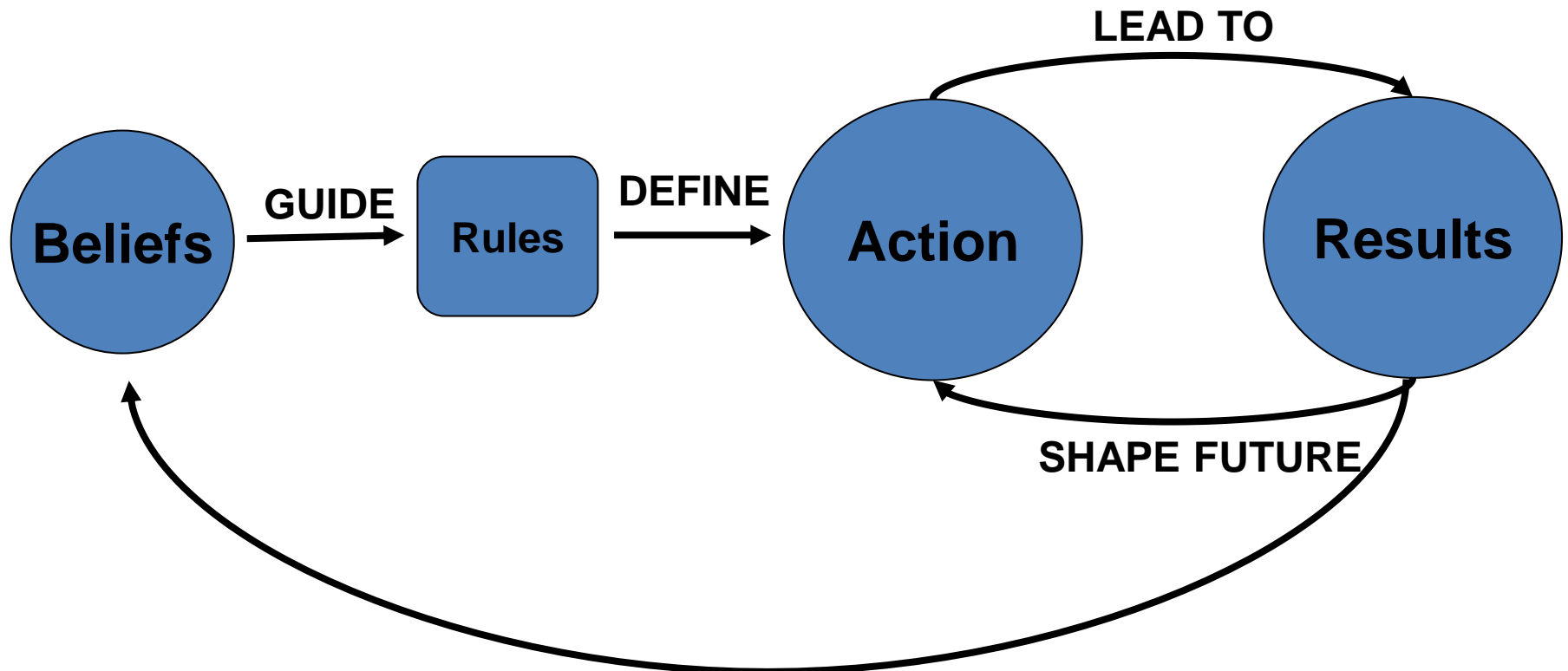- **Planning fallacy – we over-rely on 'best case scenario'**

Patterns and pressure
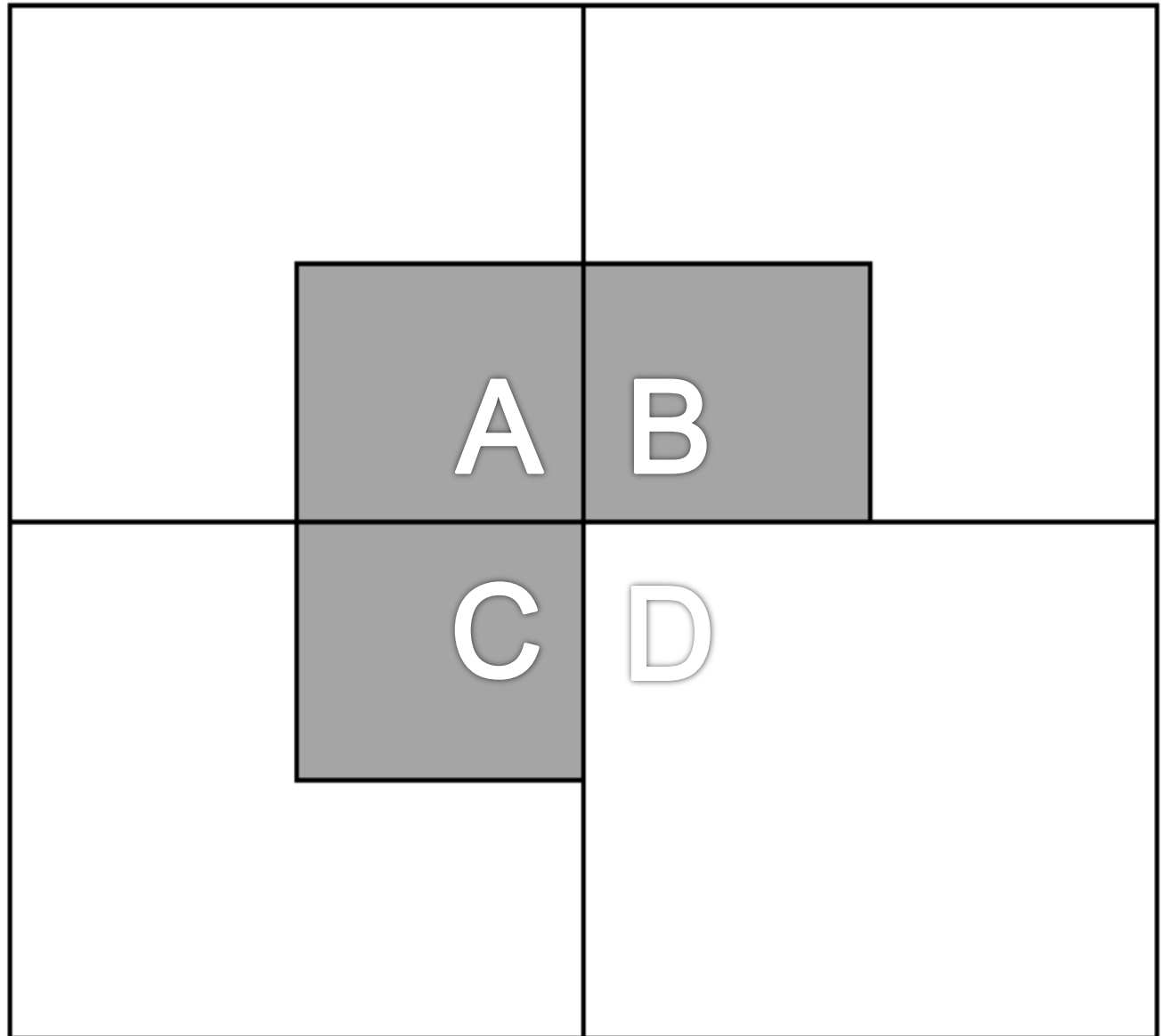
What's better, doing the right thing, or doing the wrong thing righter?

Learning model: Double Loop Learning

LEAD TO

Beliefs —**GUIDE**→ **Rules** —**DEFINE**→ **Action** **Results**

SHAPE FUTURE

LEAD TO MORE HELPFUL AND ACCURATE

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(Chris Argyris)

Learn Fast, Learn Forward

Implement your idea
Use the four hallmarks of good improvement to implement your idea

Seek advice from your line manager, DD or CI Practitioner

Are you sure your idea won't cause financial or reputational harm to DfE?

Are you sure your idea won't cause problems for other people or teams?

Can you test your idea quickly at a low cost?

Could the change be stopped easily if necessary?

Can you articulate the problem of improvement and how it was identified?

Do you know the root cause of the problem – does your idea fix it?

Can you demonstrate, with data, the impact of the improvements?

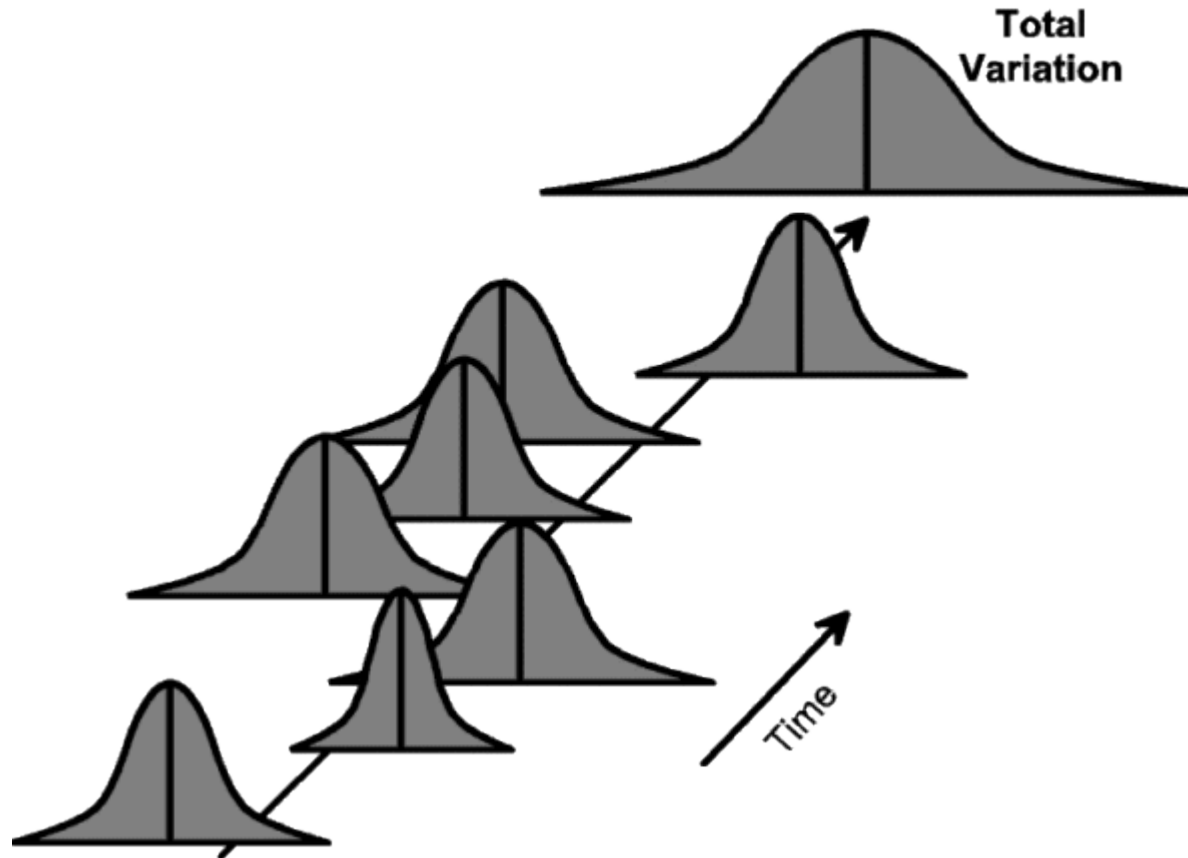Have you shared your learning with others who may benefit?

WOW
ne department
innovative

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Variation

UNSTABLE PROCESS

Total Variation

Time

Why measure?

- **Learn**
  - How is the process is performing now?
  - Can we spot potential problems?

- **Understand**
  - Are our customers' expectations being met (our purpose)?
  - What can we deliver (our capacity)?

- **Prioritise**
  - Establish priorities and
  - Set goals

- **Improve**
  - Have we made an improvement?
  - How big and is it sustainable?

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What is variation & why is it a problem?

- **People – customers and us**
- **Inputs – enquiries, forms, applications**
- **Methods – ways of working, interpretation**
- **Measurement – different start / end points**
- **Environment – temperature, noise**
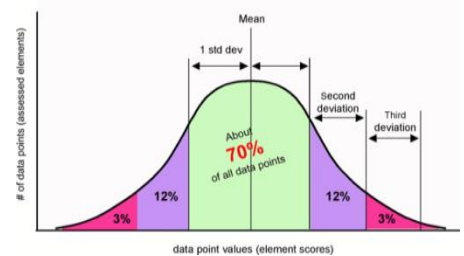
Why is it a problem?

- **We try and explain something that isn't there**
- **We waste time, effort and resources – under/overreact**
- **We blame and/or credit people for things they have n control over**
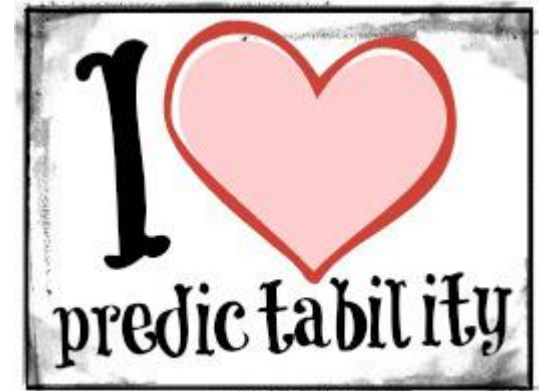- **Can't predict - impossible to plan**
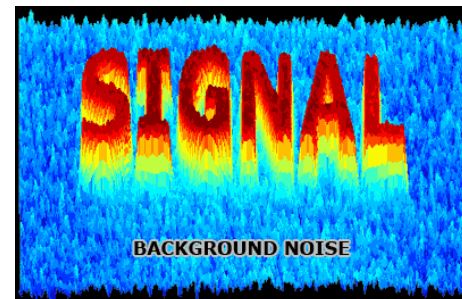
Types of Variation

- **Common cause**
  - Predictable
  - Built into the design of the system

- **Special cause**
  - Unpredictable
  - Assignable to a specific reason

Finally…purpose

Clear intention – *You must know your purpose and persist in its pursuit*

Success equals

Skilful means – *You must have good methods and be skilled in their use*

Affirmation – *your task must have integrity, not clash with fundamental values and have support of tribe and your heart*

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From: Dhyani Ywahoo. *Voices of our Ancestors - Cherokee Teachings from the wisdom fire* (with thanks to Scholtes)