

Autonomy and leadership at Spotify

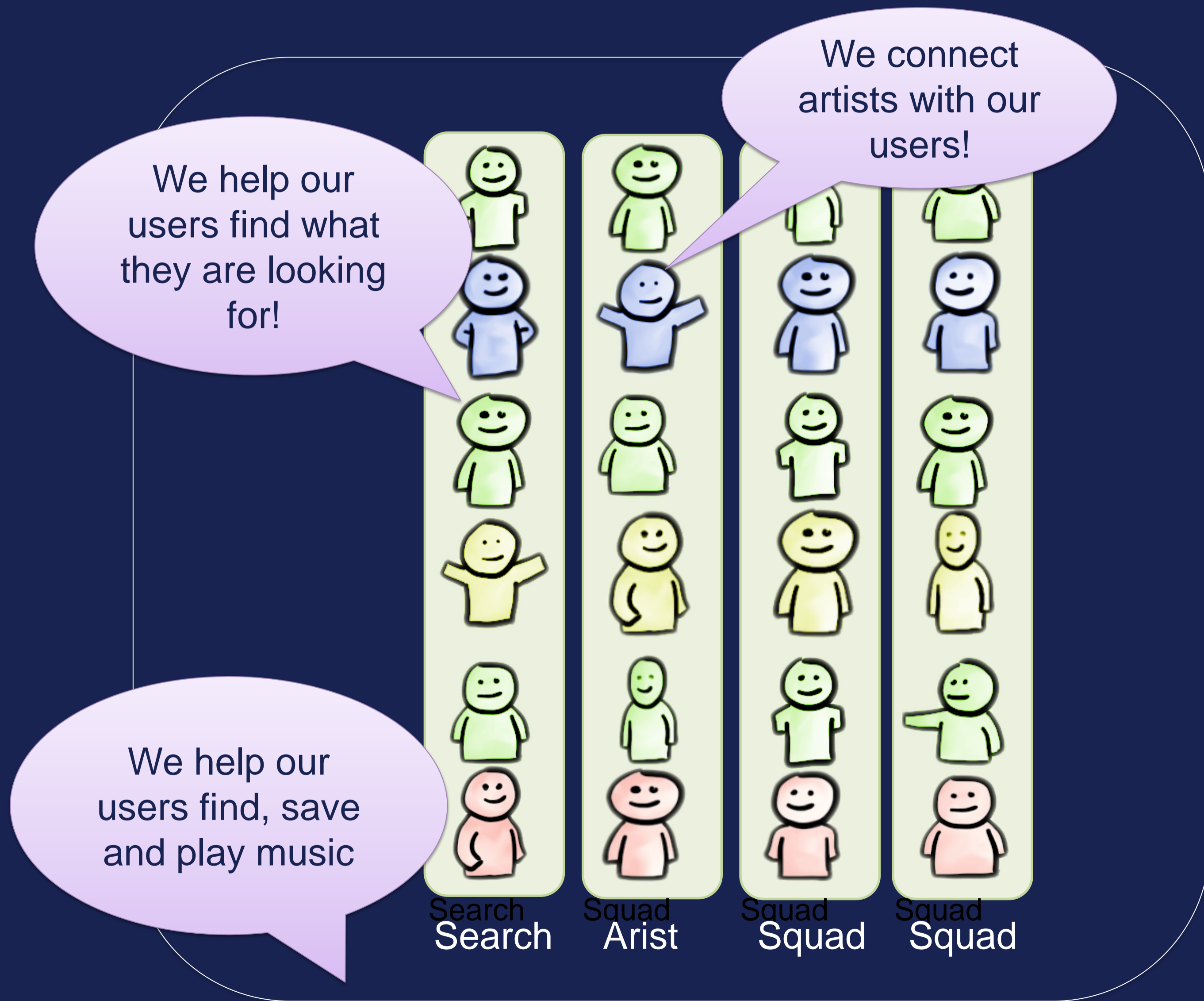
Anders Ivarsson
@anders_ivarsson



It all begins with
WHY



Squads and tribes



Music Player Tribe



Client Infrastructure Tribe





Search

MAIN

- Browse
- Radio
- Follow
- Top Lists
- Messages
- Play Queue
- Devices
- App Finder

YOUR MUSIC

- Songs
- Albums
- Artists
- Local Files

Browse

OVERVIEW TOP LISTS GENRES & MOODS NEW RELEASES NEWS DISCOVER

Good Morning, Monday!

Morning Commute
Make it to work the right way

Your Favorite Coffee
Coffee House

Ready for the Day
This fun, upbeat playlist will help get you up and ready to start your day

Feelin' Good
Feel good with this positively timeless Soul playlist

On Wheels To Work
Take your bike to work, breathe in the fresh air, and listen to these tunes



Spotify SPOTLIGHT

Foster The People

ARTIST - VIEW PROFILE

PAUSE FOLLOWING

1,079,828 FOLLOWERS

OVERVIEW RELATED ARTISTS BIOGRAPHY

POPULAR

1	+ Pumped up Kicks	92,077,824
2	+ Helena Beat	34,493,970
3	+ Houdini	28,992,336
4	+ Don't Stop (Color on the Walls)	23,494,826
5	+ Best Friend	8,897,687

RELATED ARTISTS

- Coldplay
- The Killers
- Mark Foster
- Elite Gymnastics

ALBUMS

- FOSTER THE PEOPLE SUPERMODEL
- FOSTER THE PEOPLE

Best Friend
Foster The People
1:57 / 4:27

RELATED MUSIC

- Best Friend - Foster The People
- Sex - The 1975
- Sleepyhead - Passion Pit
- The Mother We ... - CHVRCHES
- Contact High - Architecture in Helsinki
- The Struggle - Grizfolk
- Miss You - Foster The People

9:41 AM 100%

Foster The People

FOLLOWING

1,079,908 FOLLOWERS

SHUFFLE PLAY

POPULAR

- 1 Pumped up Kicks 92,077,824
- 2 Helena Beat 34,493,970
- Best Friend Foster The People



PLAYING FROM ARTIST Calvin Harris

CALVIN HARRIS

HARRIS

BLAME

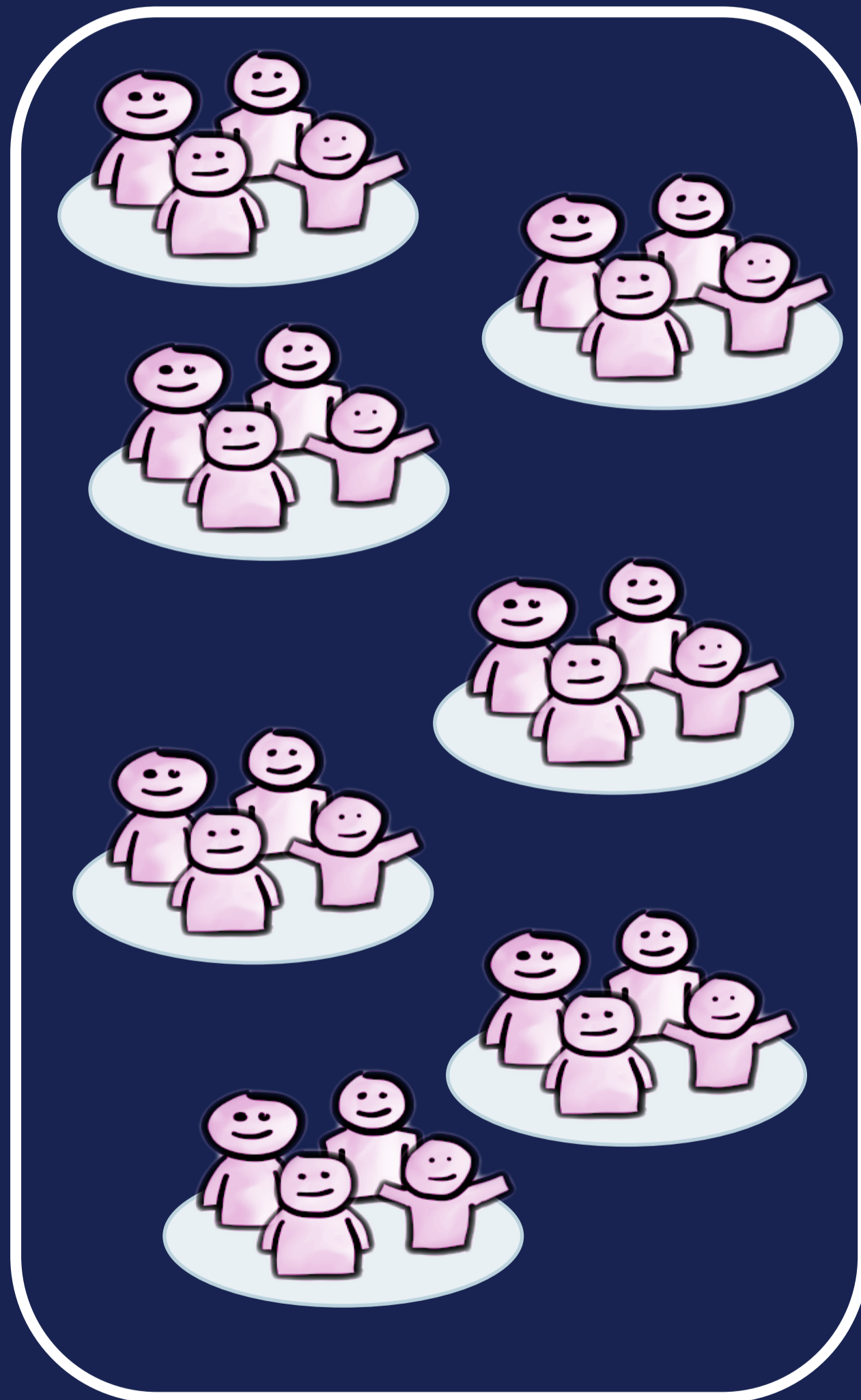
FEAT. JOHN NEWMAN

Blame
Calvin Harris

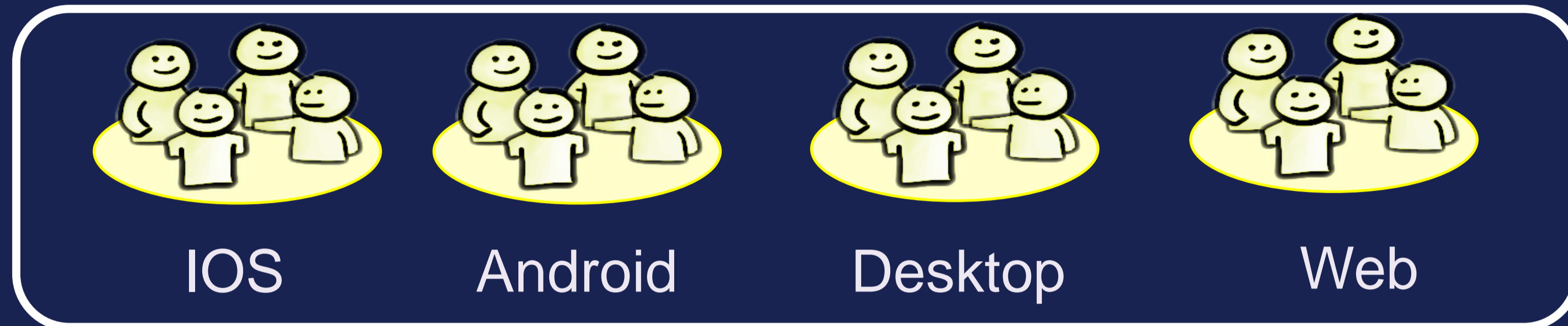
0:54 / 3:34



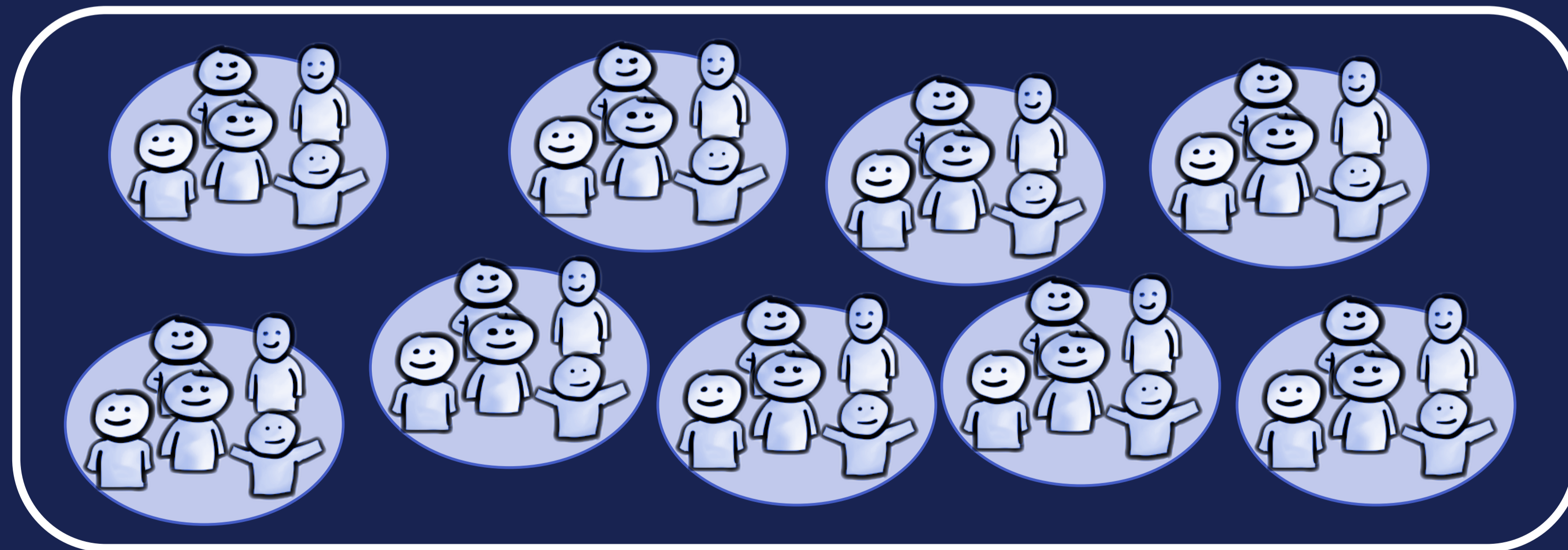
Infrastructure squads



Client platform squads



Feature squads

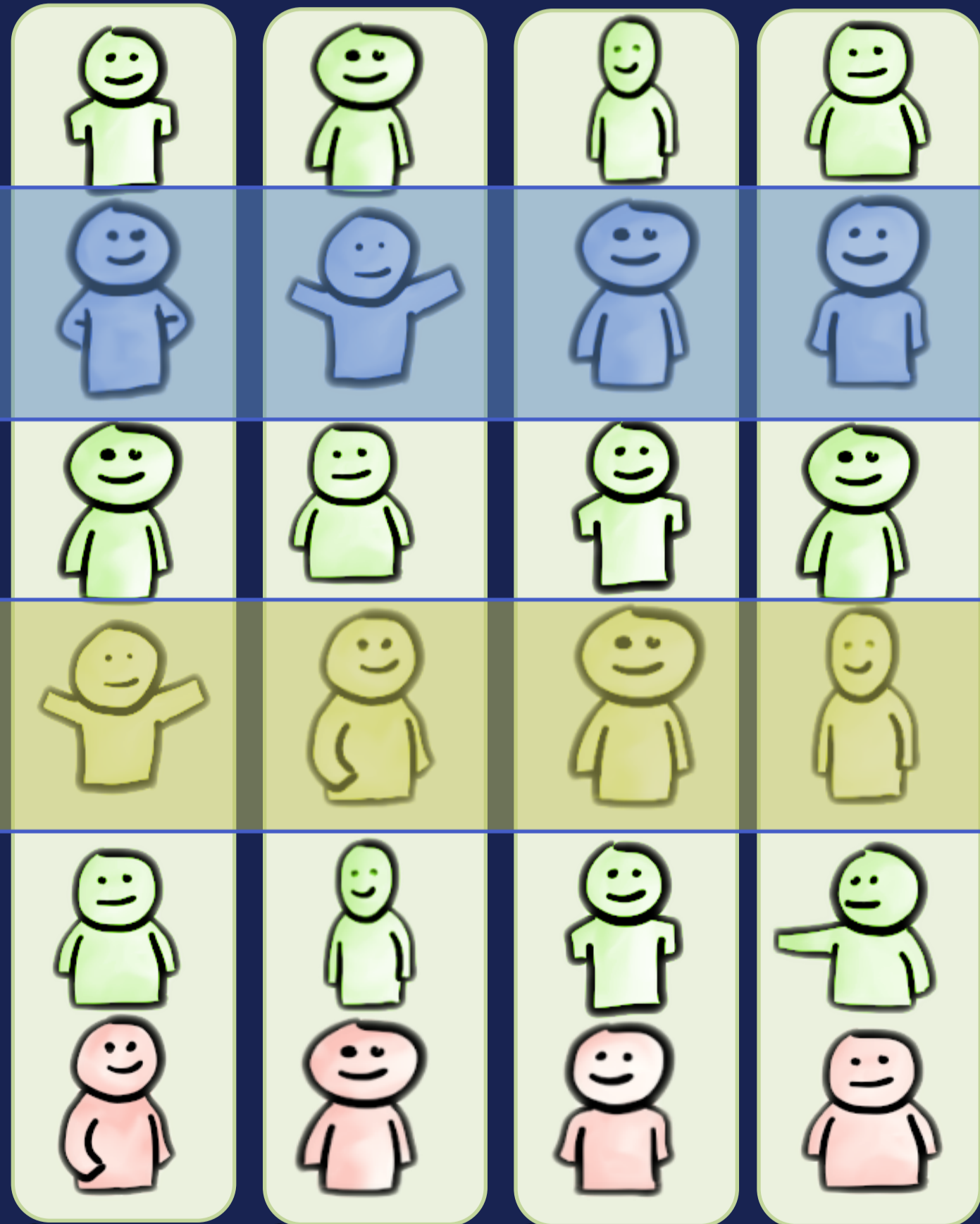


Chapters

Tribe

Chapter

Chapter



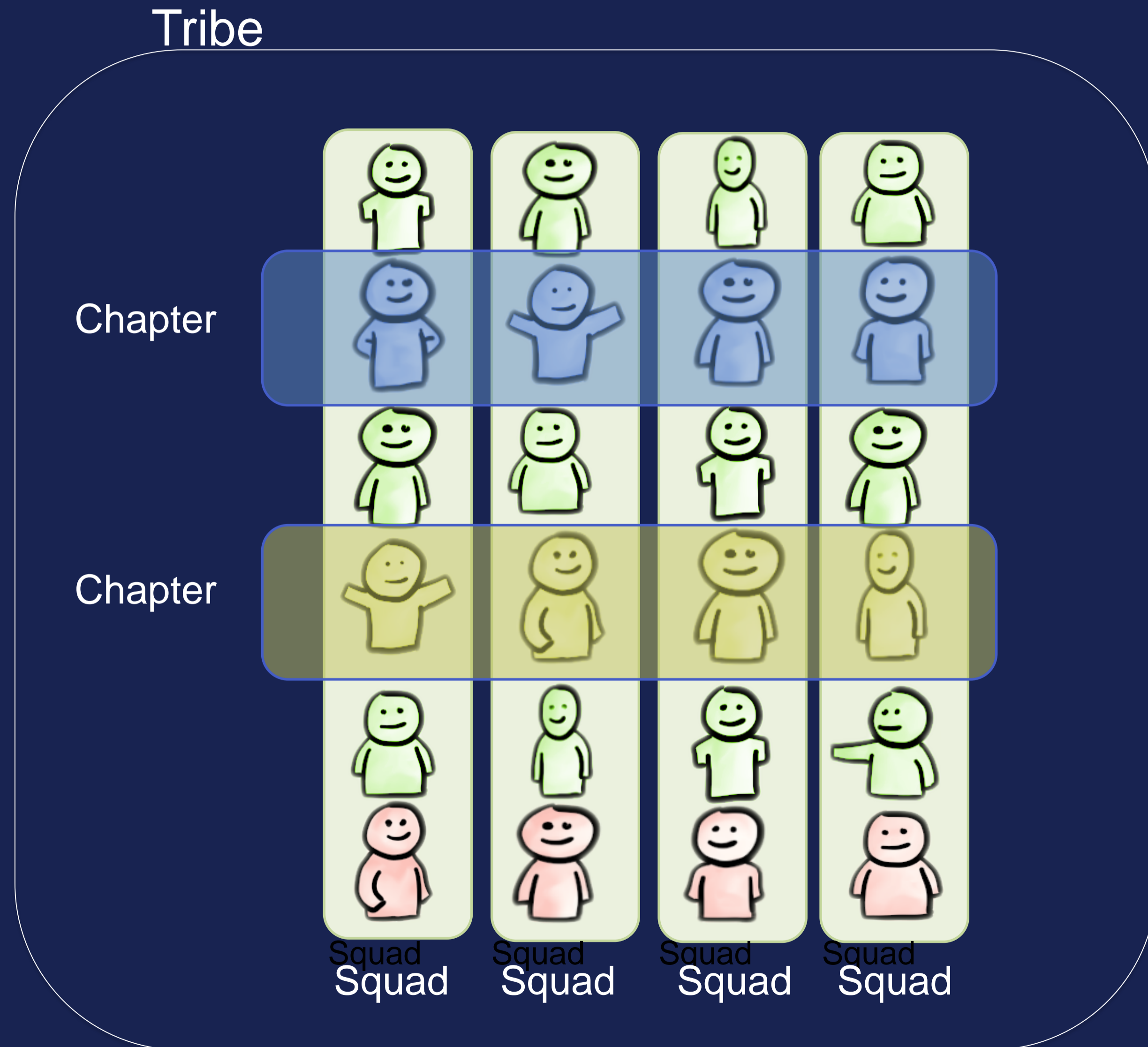
Squad
Squad

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Squad

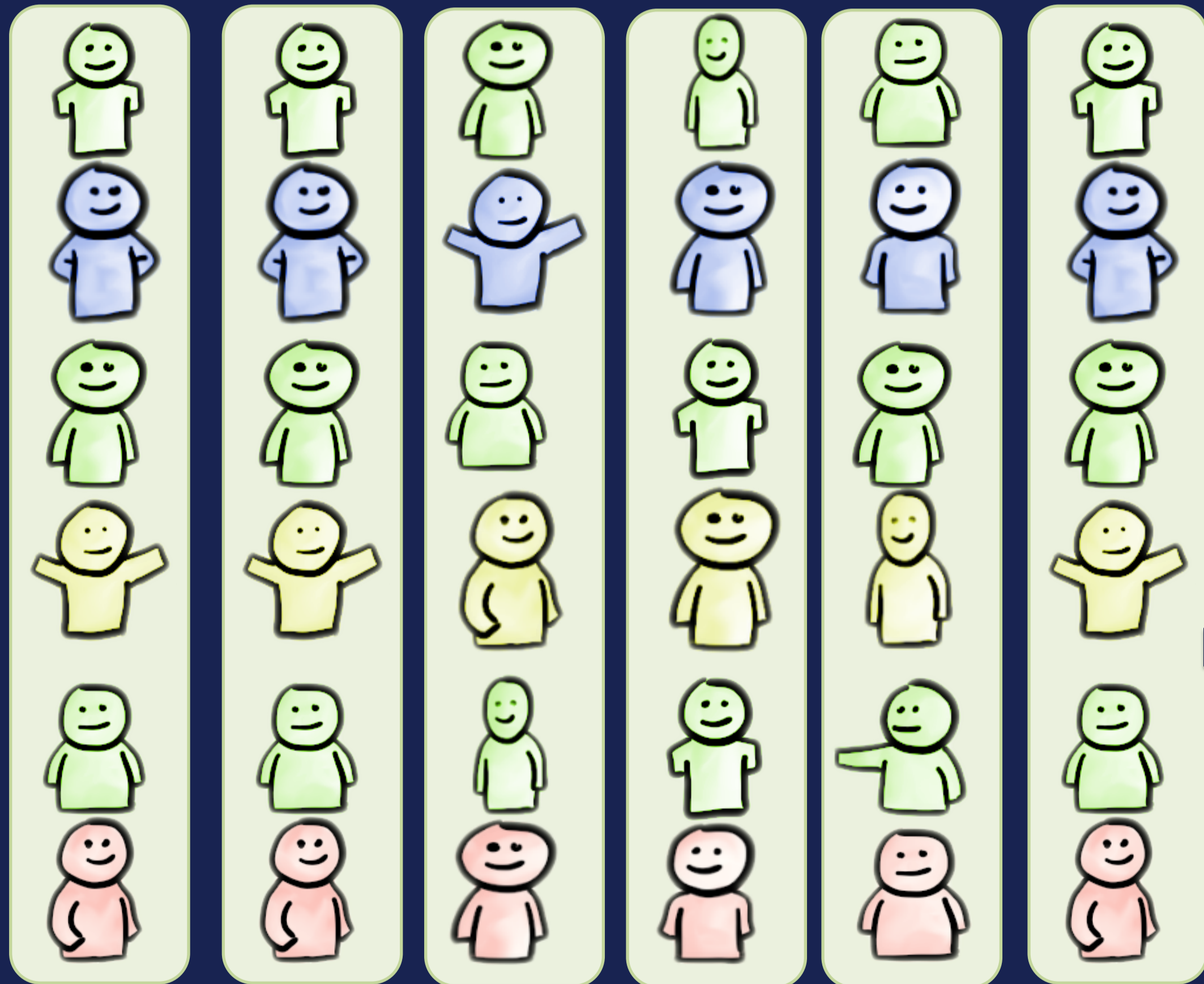
So ... “the Spotify model”



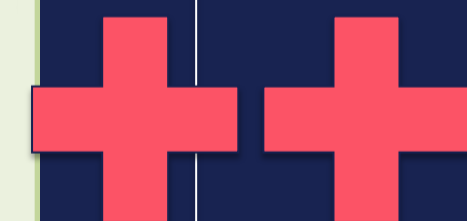
- Never intended as a model
- Snapshot of how we work
- Constant evolution

Evolution and experimentation

Tribe



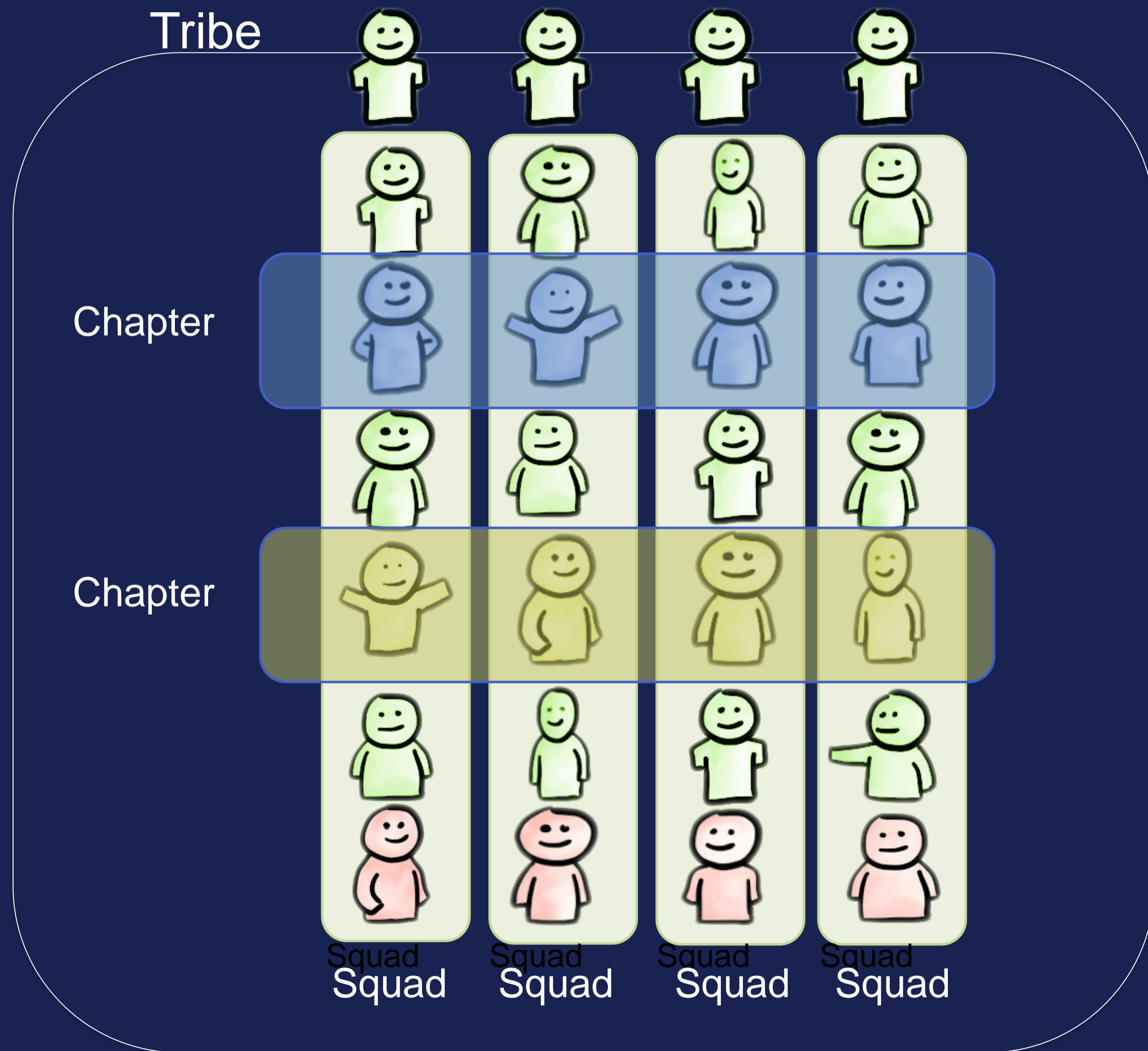
Squad Squad Squad Squad Squad Squad



Tribes larger than 100 persons?

MAYBE

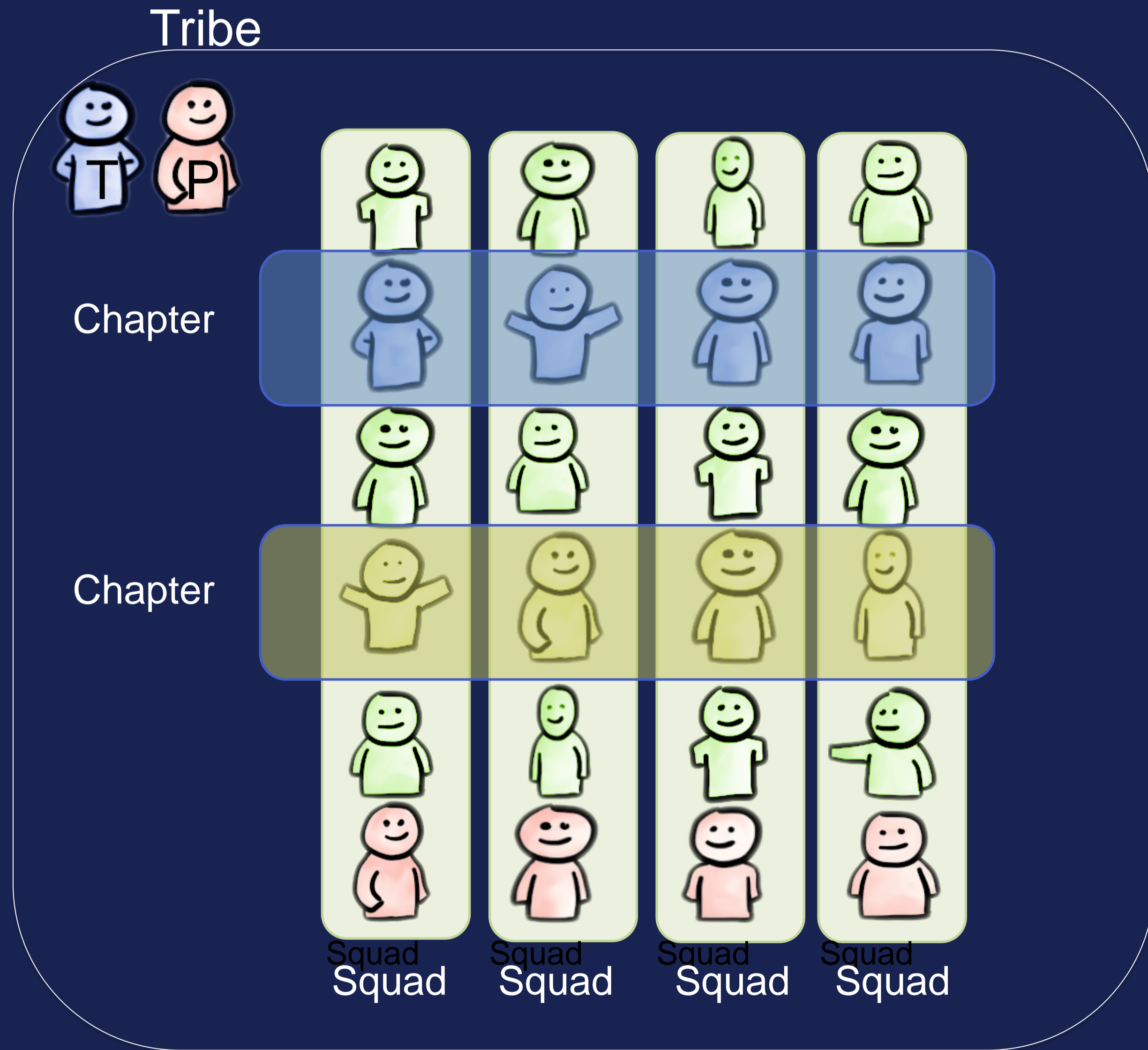
Evolution and experimentation



Squad leads?

NO

Evolution and experimentation

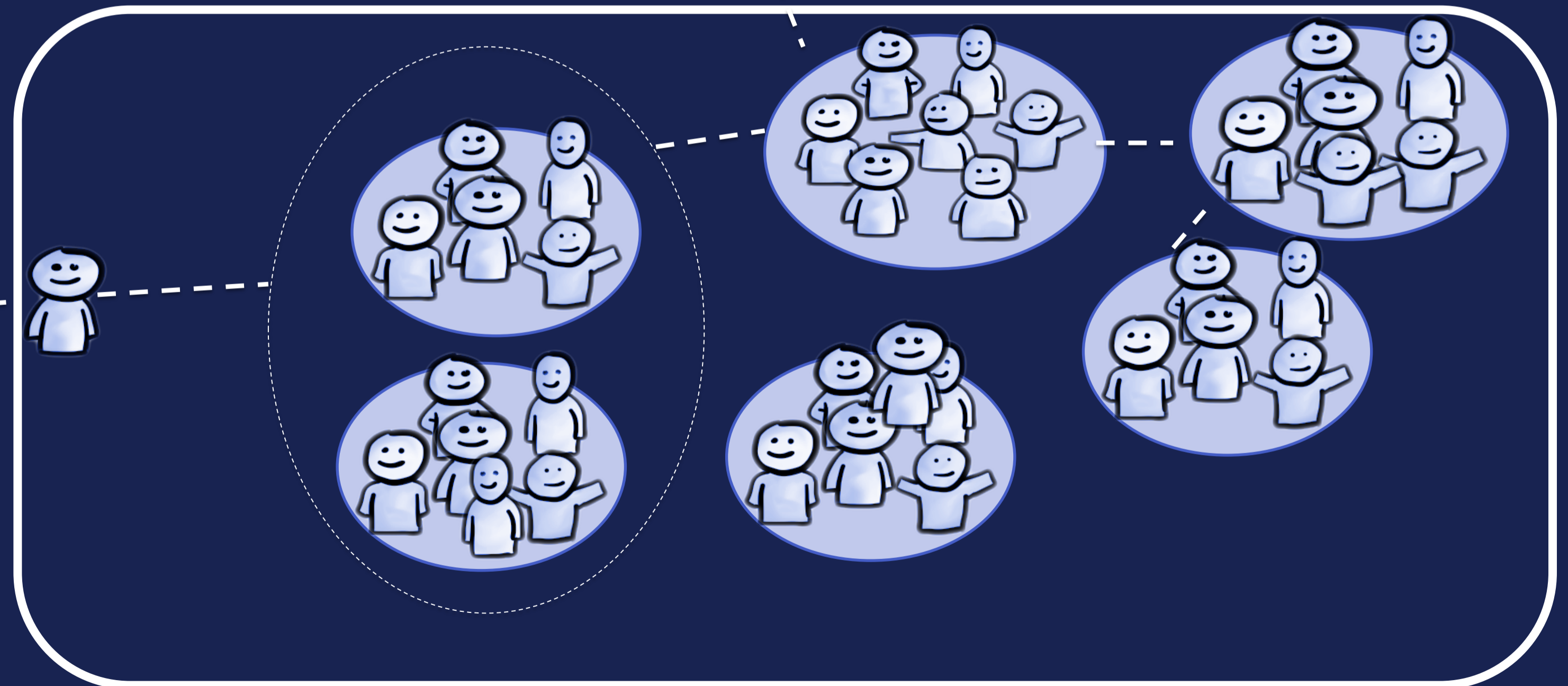
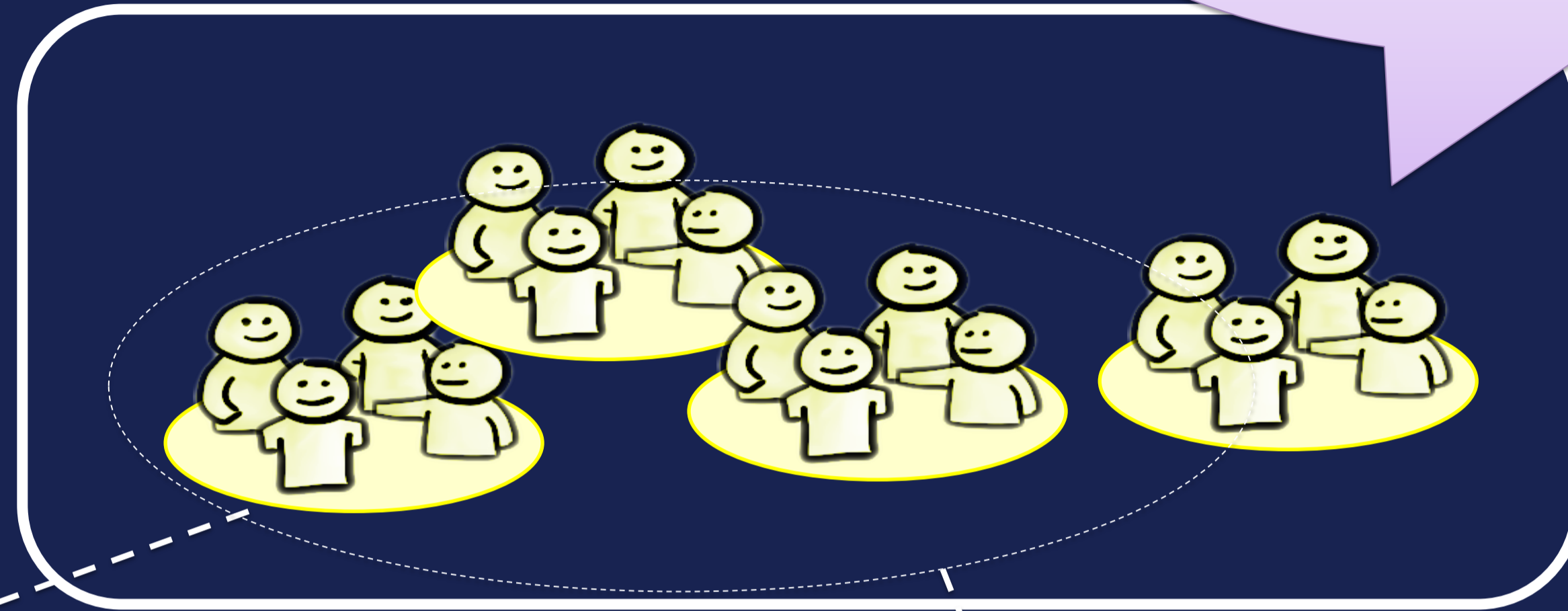
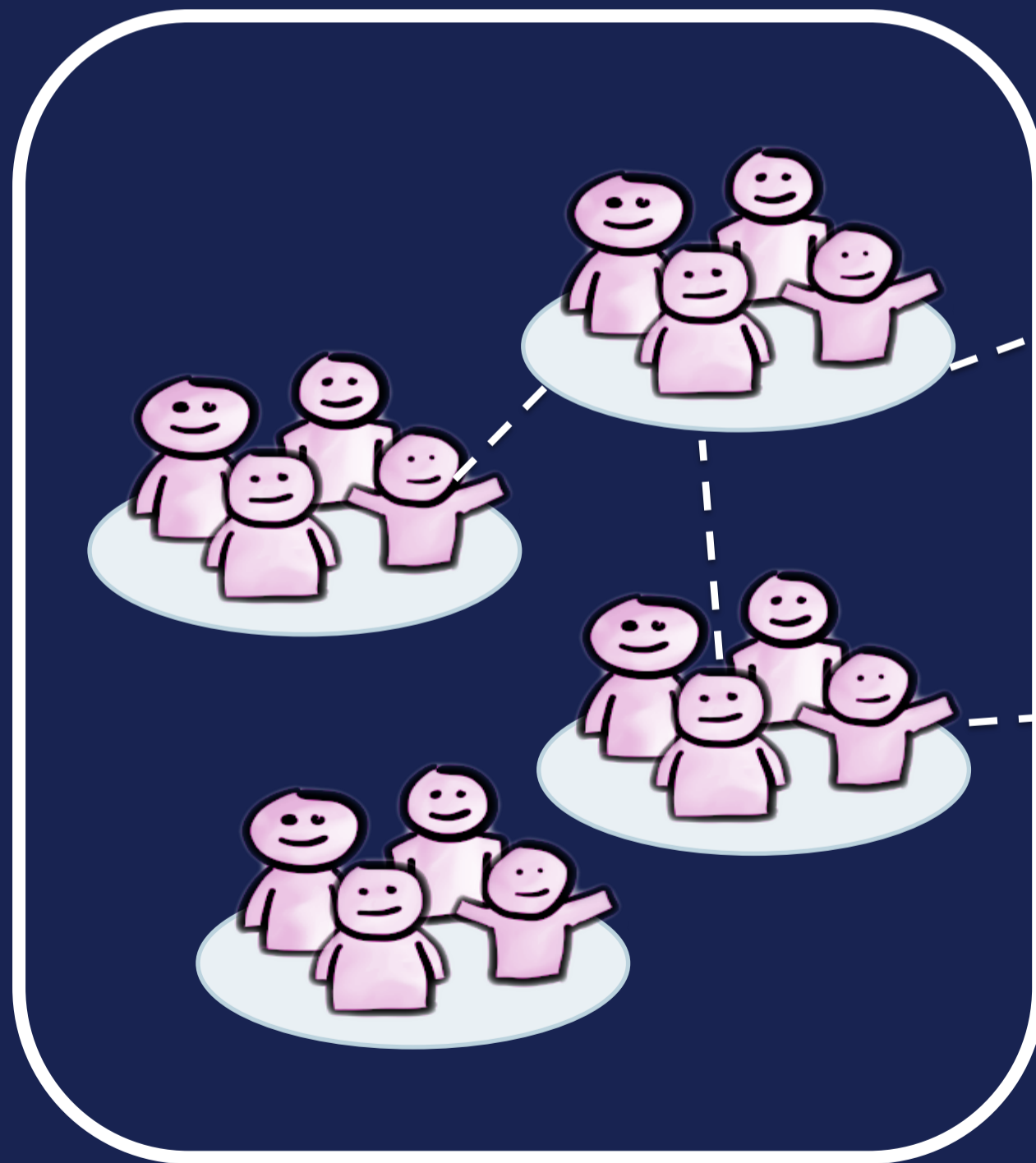


Tribes =
Technology and Product

YES

Organic Structure

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



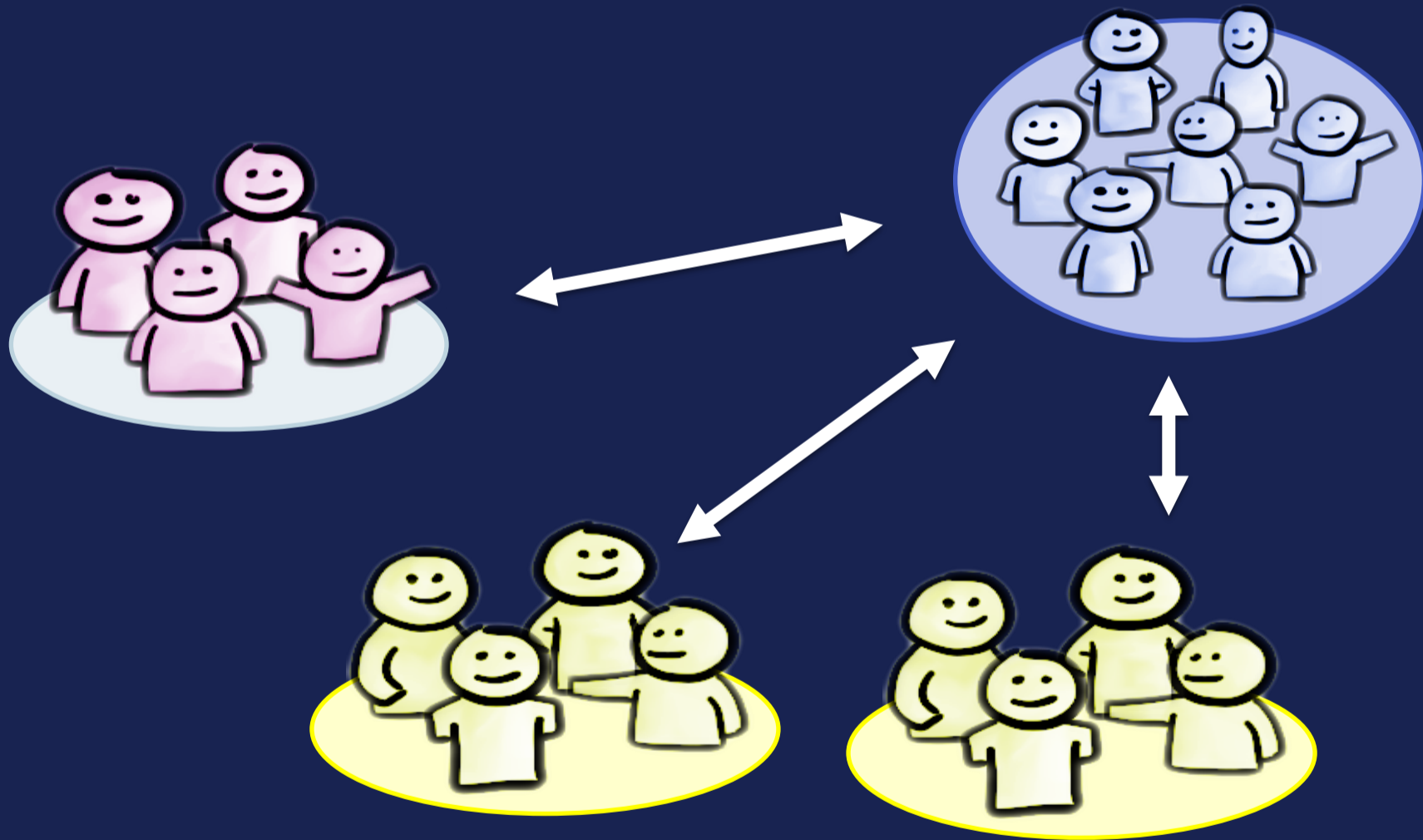
Success is all about the team



Explore the context



Users and stakeholders



- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

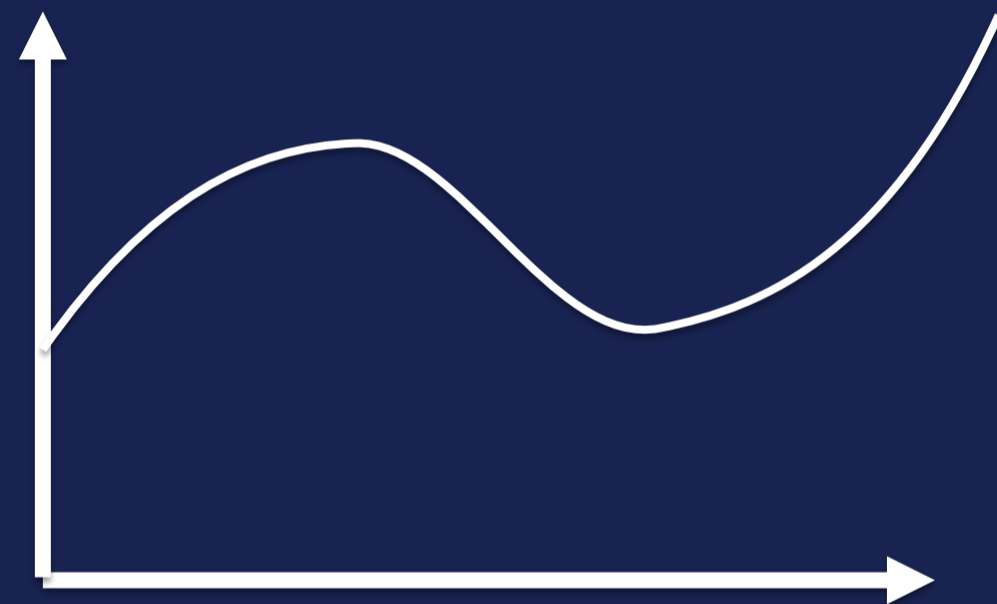
Priorities

Interfaces

Deliver value – early and often



Prototyping



Squad and core metrics



9 steps to heaven	Hell	Purgatory	Heaven
Source / configuration management	Team uses source control for code only. Highly manual to recreate any build or environment. May involve occult knowledge...	Most things are in source repository - but some things missing (configuration information, build steps), some manual steps required to fully install / build	Totally risk free and easy to rebuild any environment / executable on fresh machine from one repo. Fully automated
Branching	Anything goes - frequent merge hell	Some long lived feature branches, but we try to avoid this	We work off a stable Master using feature flags / Branch by Abstraction to avoid long lived feature branches
Commit	Commit size varies from small to enormous. Commits regularly abandoned	Mainly sensible size, but unpredictable. Discipline varies.	Small discrete commits, protected by feature flags when needed.
Automated testing	The team occasionally writes Unit Tests. Their status is not always known. Test automation seen as the responsibility of a Test Automater. Failing automated tests are ignored.	Unit tests run by post-commit hook. Test automation is valued, though not everyone contributes. Unit tests are expected, and coverage known. It takes a long time to run regression tests. Results of automated tests are unpredictable.	Test automation includes Unit Testing, Integration Testing, Acceptance Testing, Performance Testing. The level of automated tests gives us confidence to release. Very limited human checking required.
CI	We have a CI server, but it's slow and unreliable to build, broken builds are common and often ignored.	The CI server builds nightly. Most builds succeed, but we don't always fix a broken build as a top priority.	Every commit to master is built on an Integration machine. Fixing a broken build stops all other work and the build is fixed as team's top priority.

Continuous delivery



Keep improving



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

Embrace failure



Retrospectives

★
Improve everything



Kickass engineering

Collective code
ownership

Automate
everything



Platformize

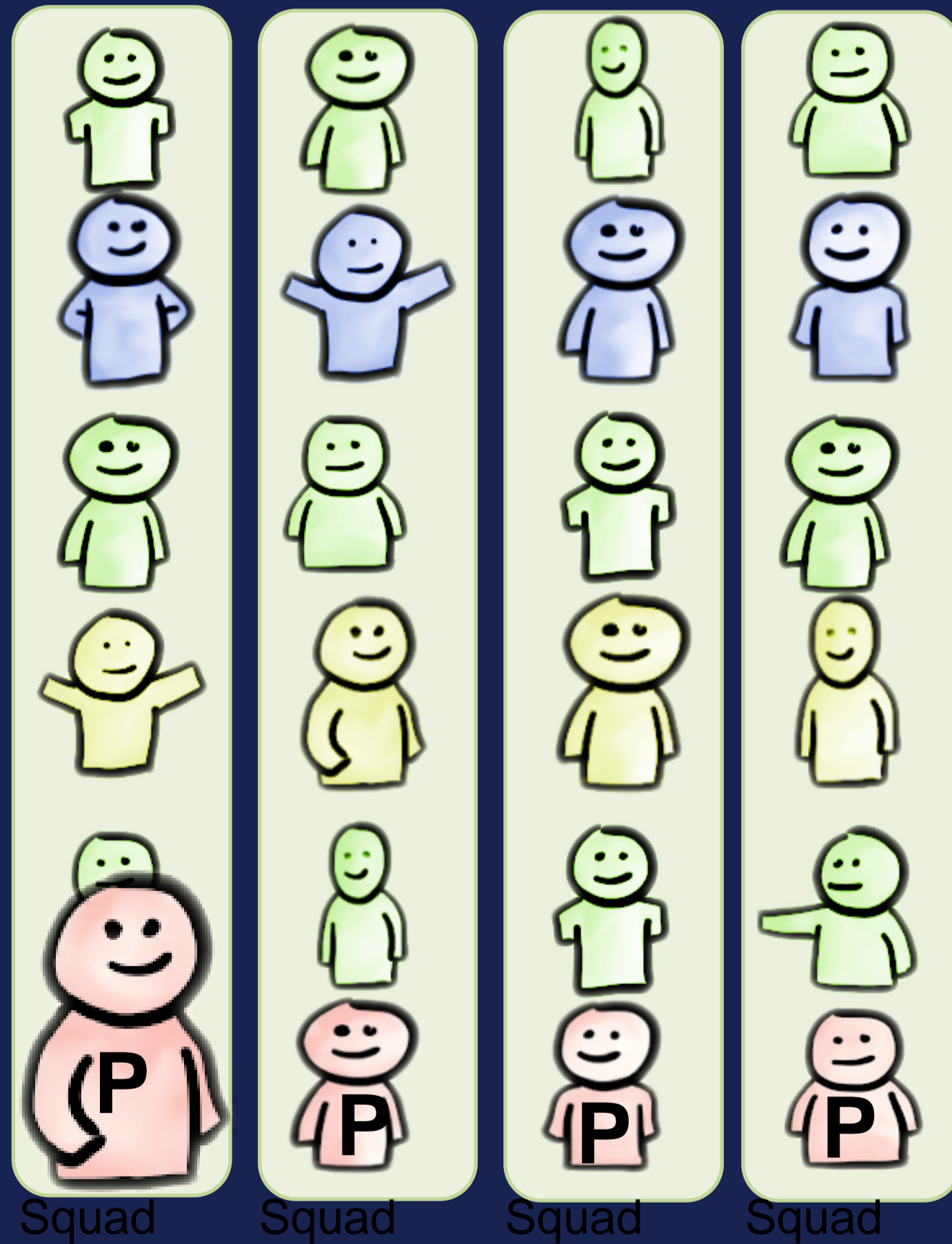
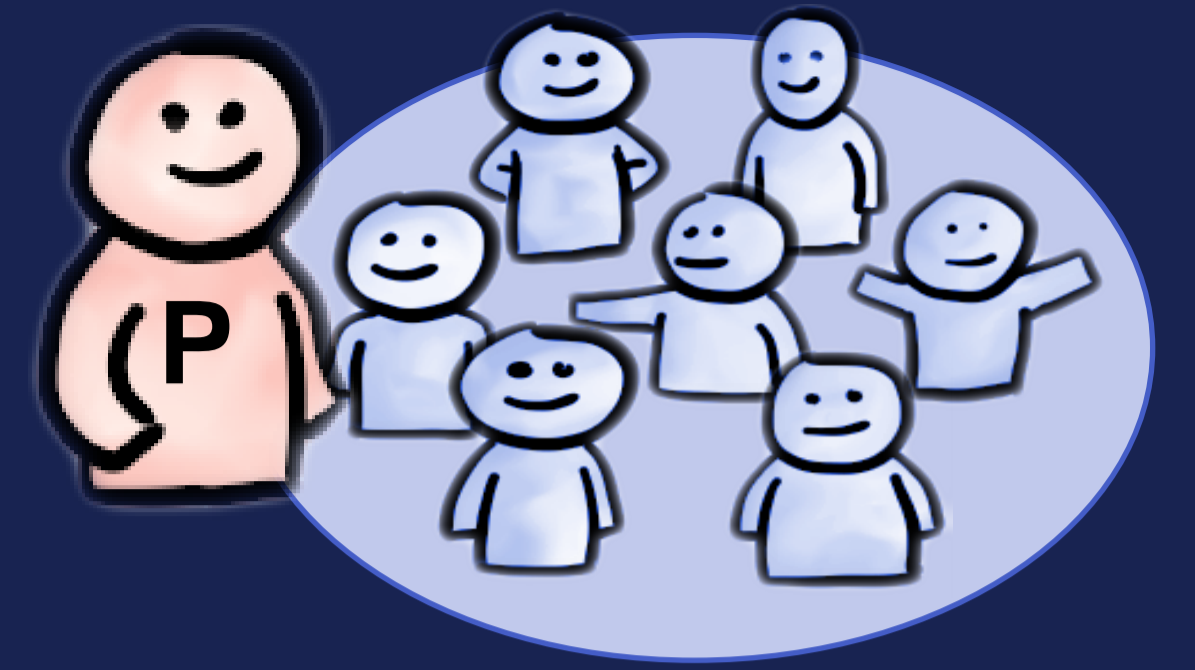
Leadership is all
about supporting
the team



Leadership
is a behavior
— not a role

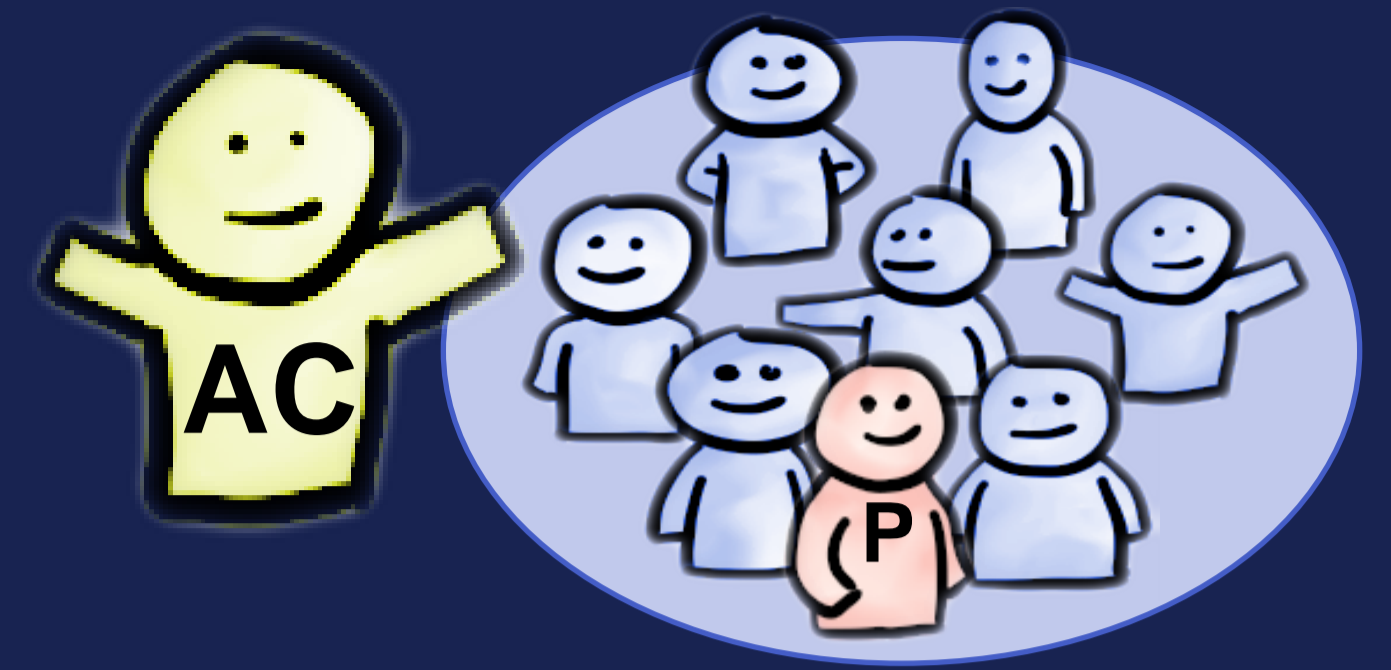


Product Owner



- What and why?
- Product vision
- Squad mission
- Purpose
- Alignment

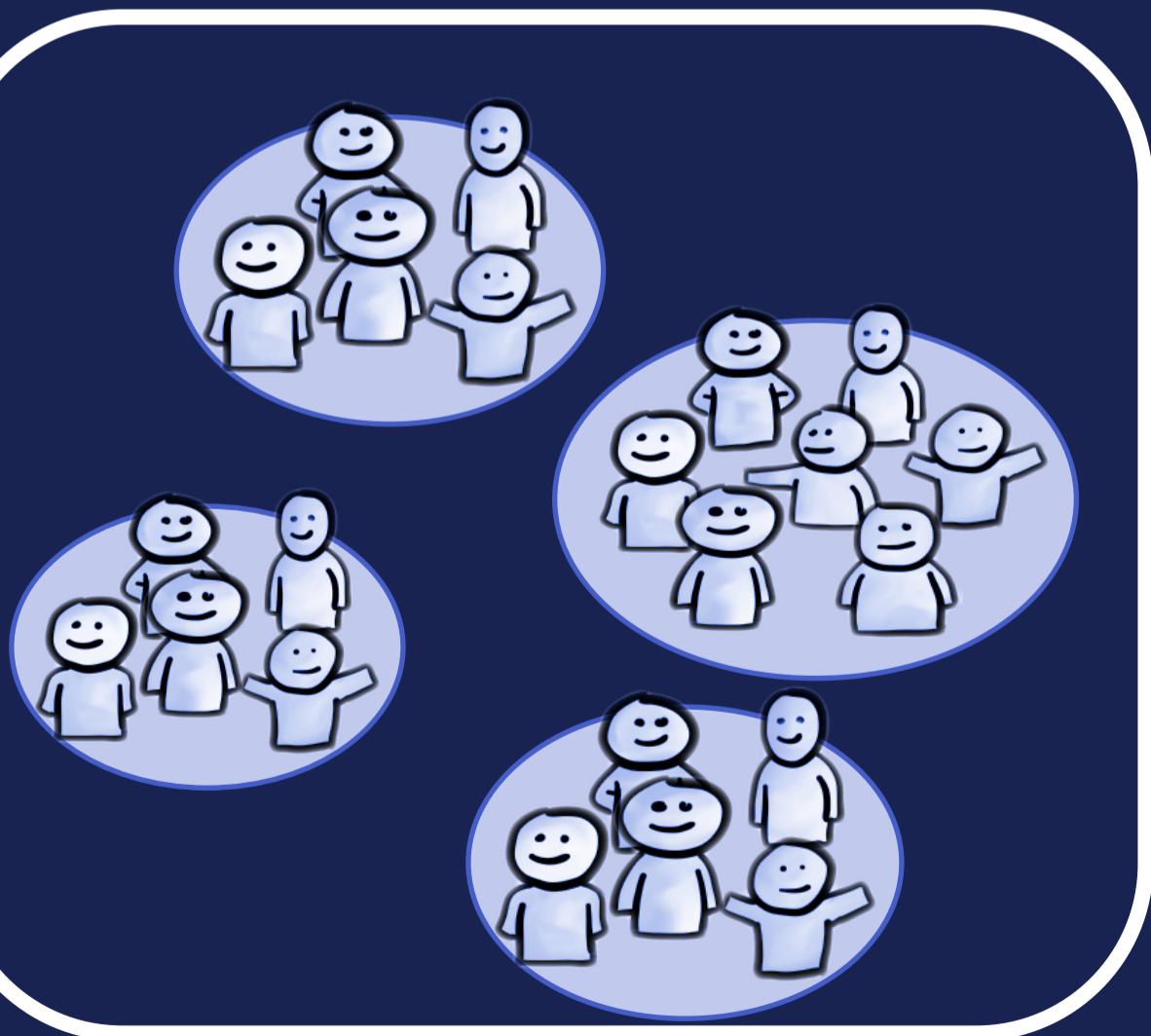
Agile coach



Individual



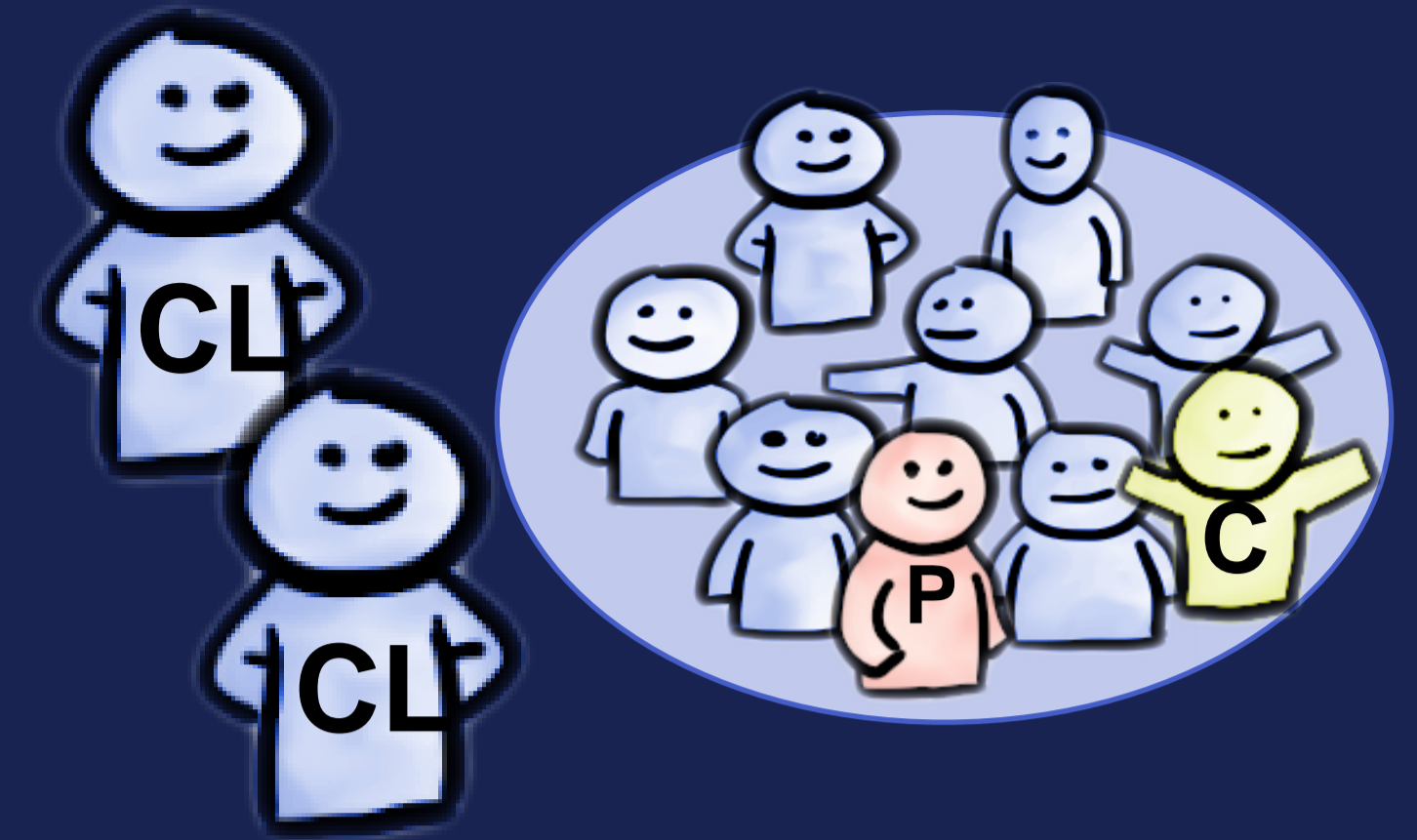
Squad



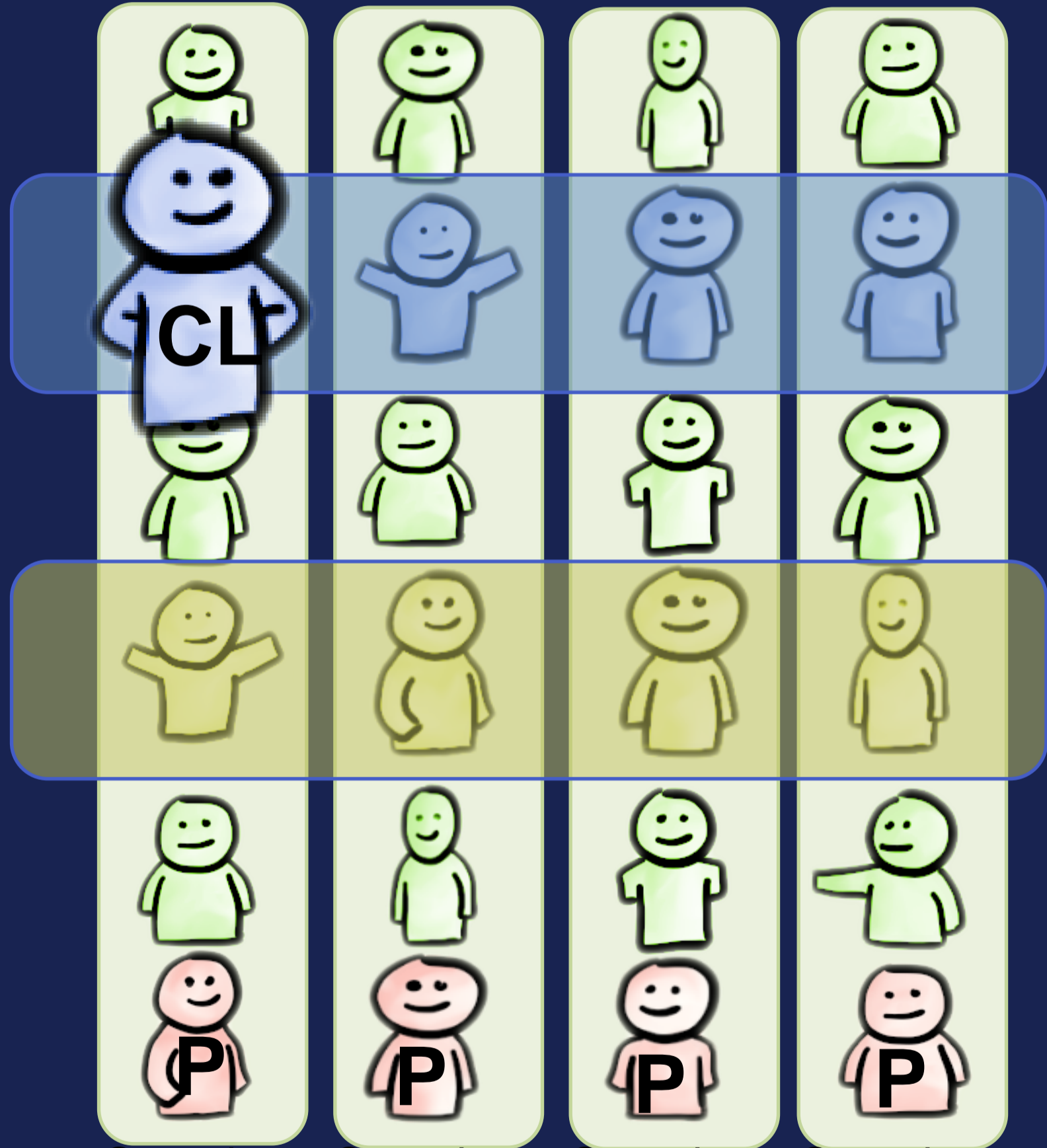
Tribe

- High performing teams
- Continuous improvement
- Ways of working
- Collaboration
- High performing organization

Chapter Lead



Chapter

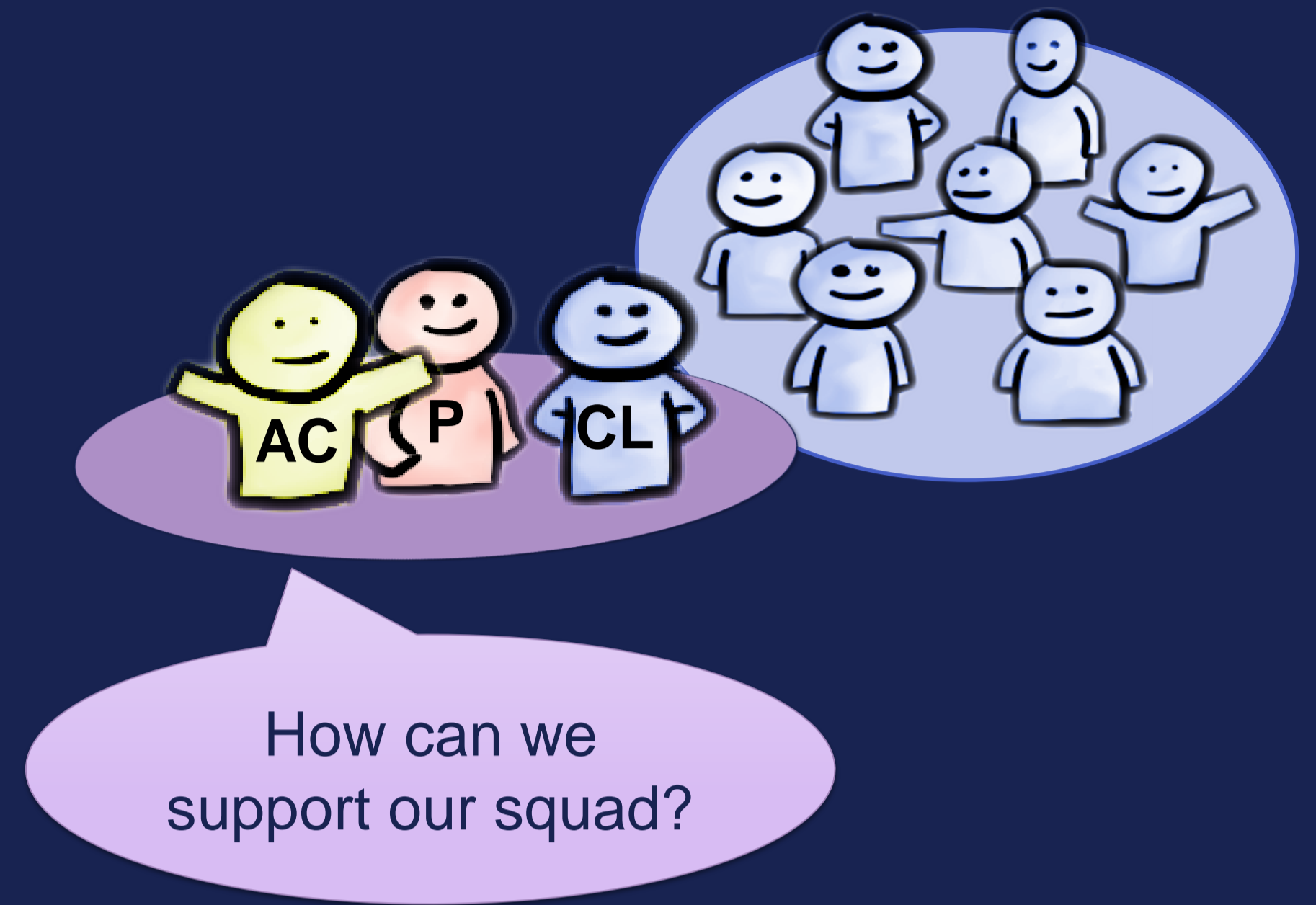


Chapter

Squad Squad Squad Squad

- Grow individuals
- Grow chapter competence
- Hire the right people
- Salary reviews

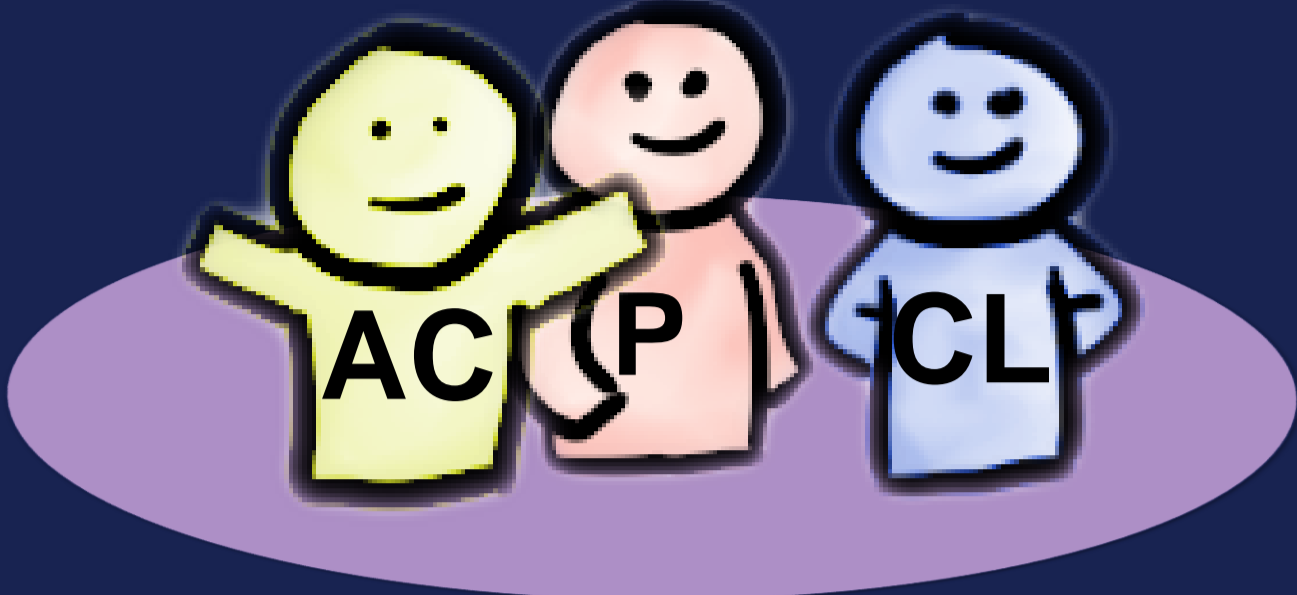
Squad support



Product Owner

Chapter (Team) Lead → "POTLAC"

Agile Coach



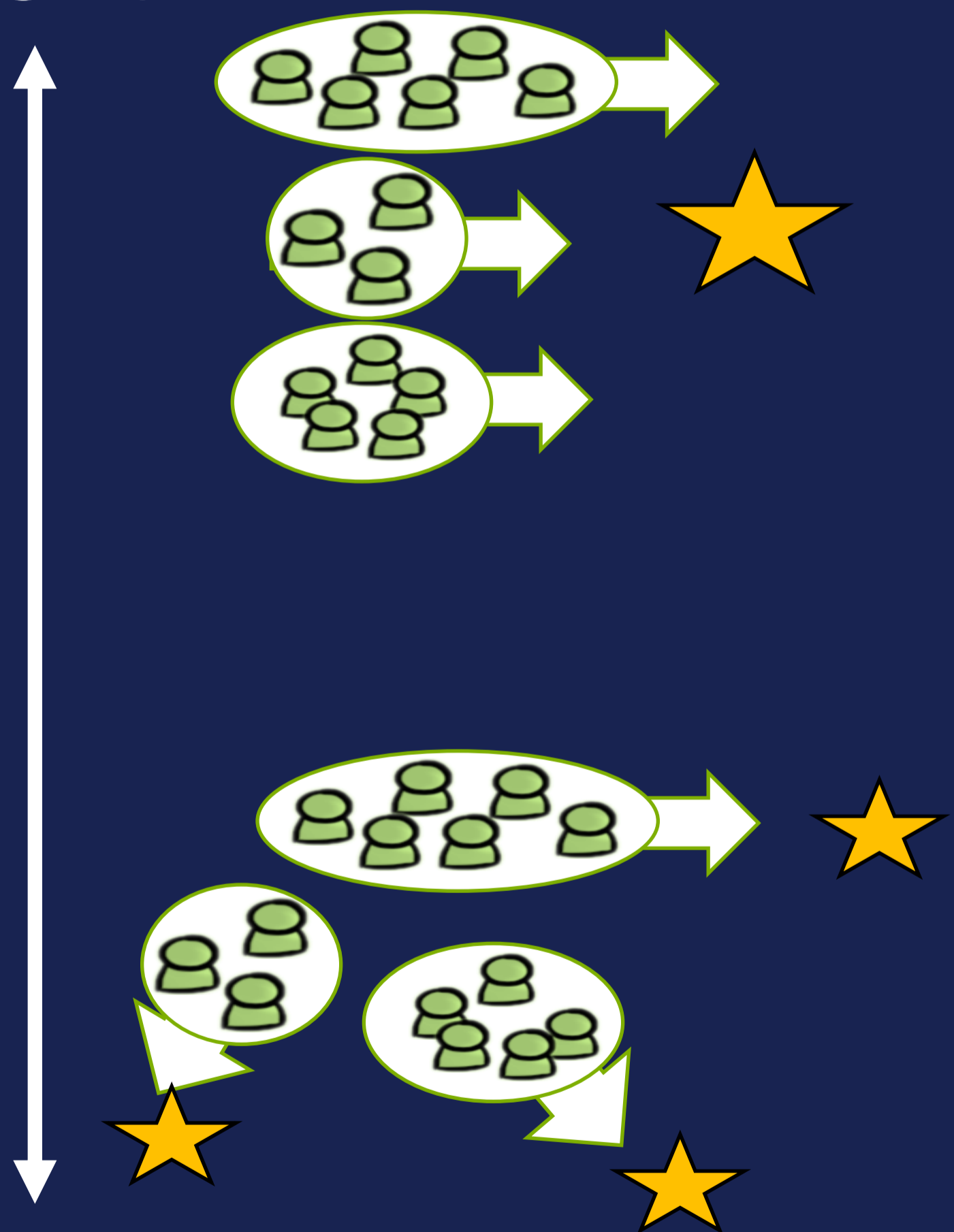
Strong leadership team

Good manager

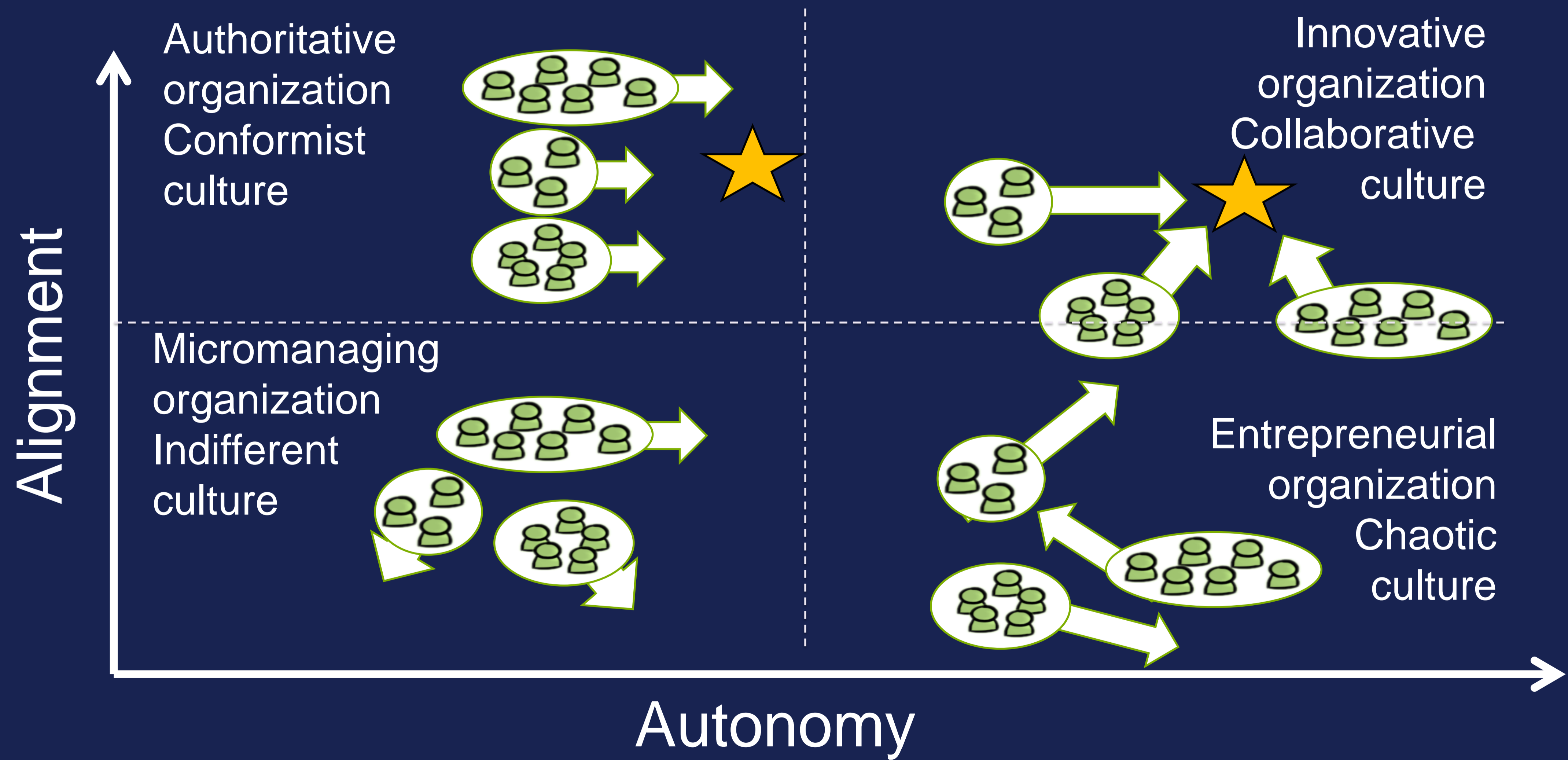
Dysfunctional leadership team

Bad manager

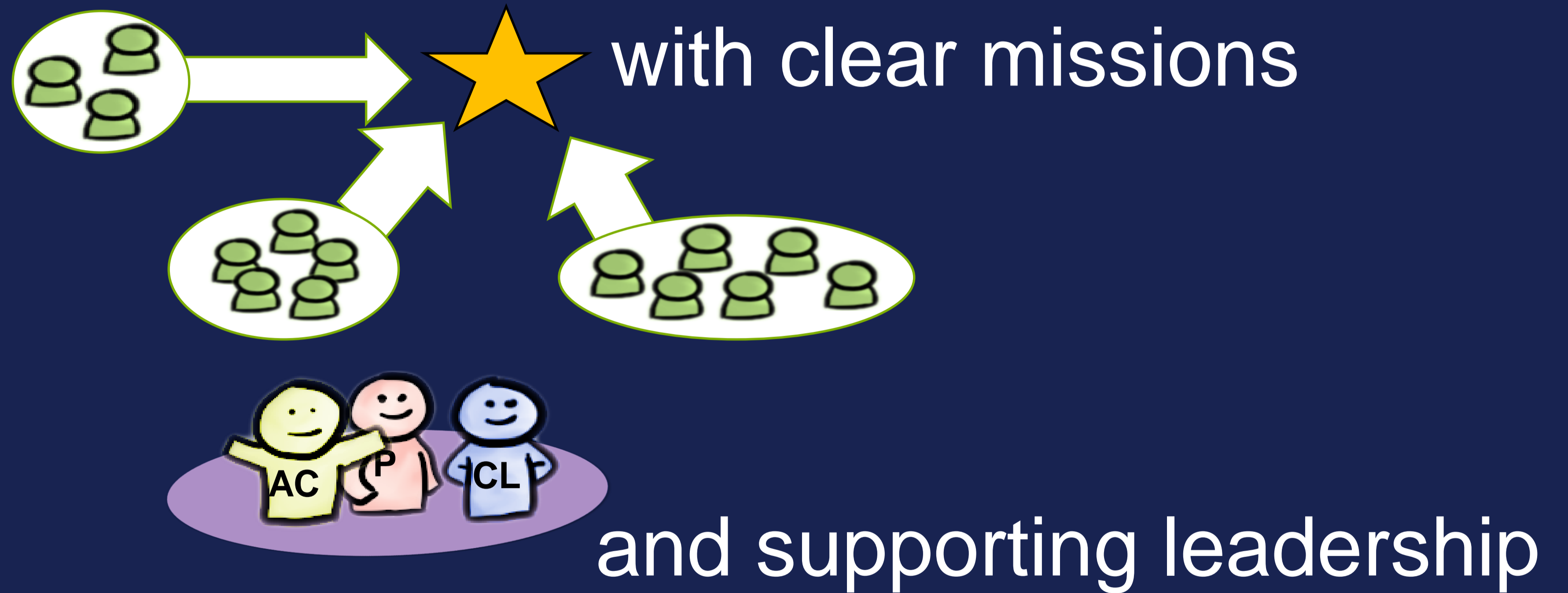
Alignment



Autonomy



Strong autonomous teams



Thank you!



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