

# 4 things we need to know about teams

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**“NOTHING IS MORE DANGEROUS  
THAN AN IDEA WHEN IT IS THE  
ONLY ONE WE HAVE”**

**CHARTIER**



# 4 things...

1. Development models
2. Motivational effects
3. Outcome vs Process focus
4. Leadership





# DANGER



This  
presentation  
contains  
science  
content

laced with opinion



# Teams – short (?) definition

- 3 to 20 individuals
- Members have influence over each other
- Develop specialised roles
- Share a common goal or purpose
- Mutual sense of belonging
- Norms and standards of membership
- Engage in interactive communication
- Jointly produce a collective work product
- Shared leadership roles

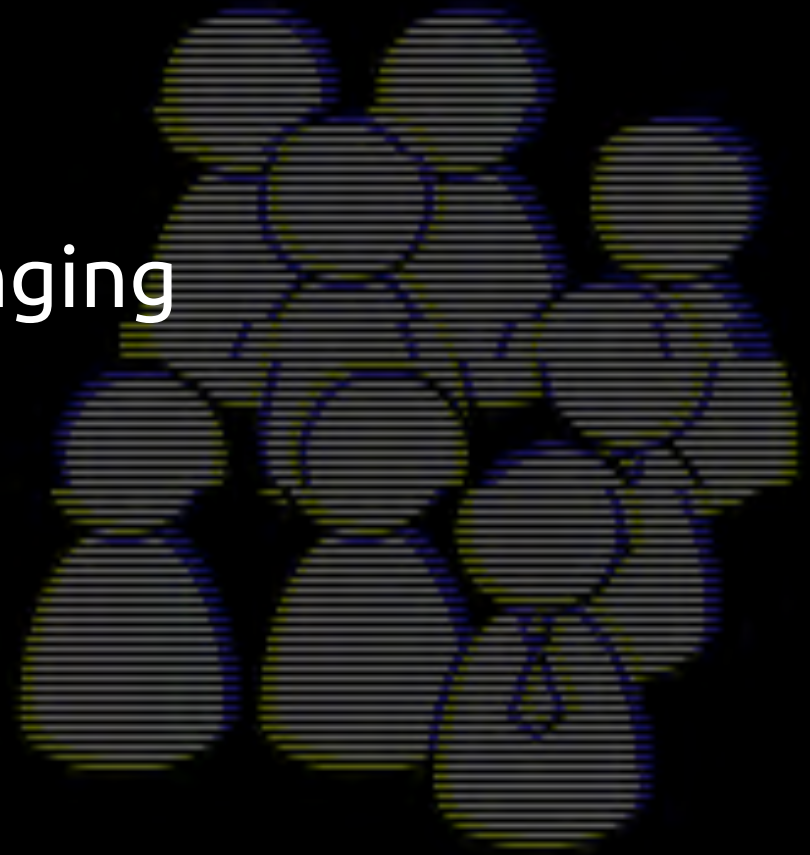
from Katzenback & Smith, Harris & Sheldon



# TEAM

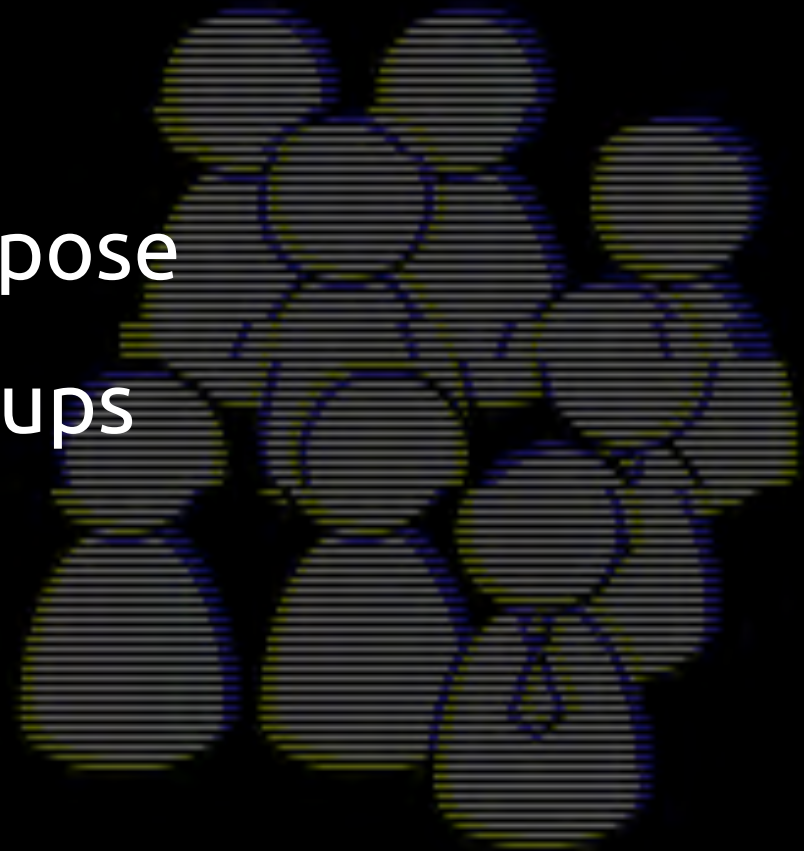
Mutual sense of belonging

aka cohesion



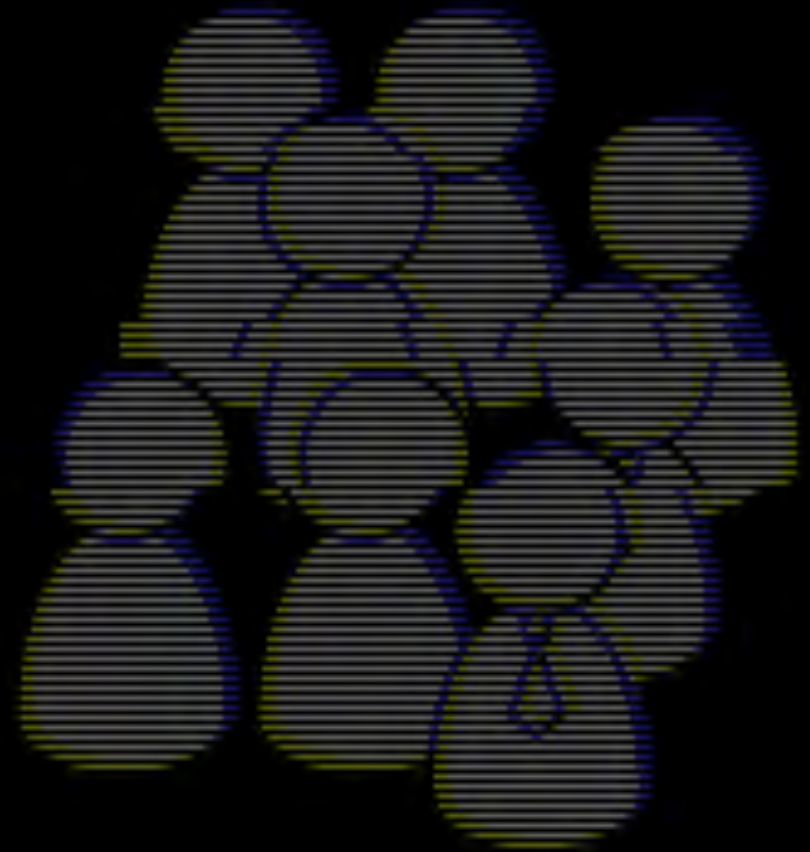
# TEAM

Common sense of purpose  
this is different to groups



# TEAM

Joint work product





# TEAM

# INDIVIDUALS



Not a collective clump





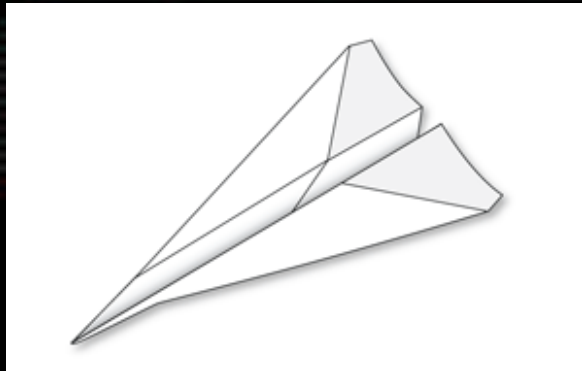
# DEVELOPMENT MODELS



# Models?

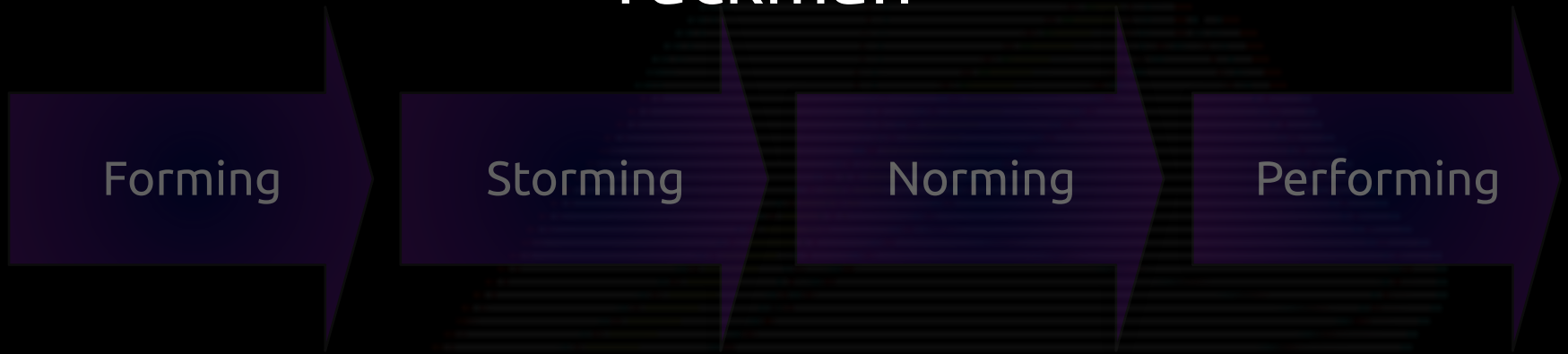
All models are simplified representations of the larger, complex, and mostly unknown reality. They are incomplete, tentative, and analogical.

Graziano & Raulin

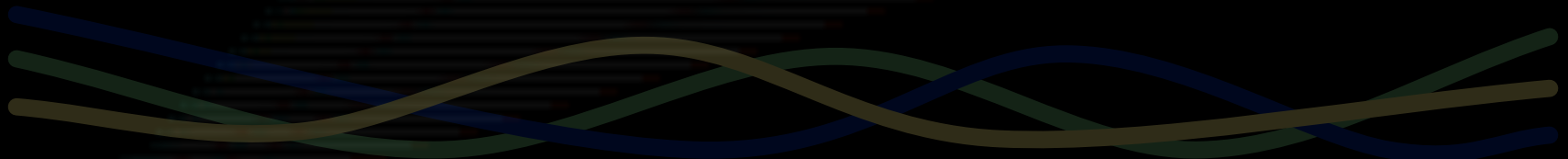


# Team Development Models

Tuckman



Poole



# Tuckman - 1965

- Based on a review of 50 studies of group settings, the majority were therapy with others from lab and natural settings.
- Stage model of development



# Problems with Tuckman?

Potentially none

It was based on group therapy (mostly)

Note - Tuckman's 1965 paper gave examples of groups not conforming to the model

How much do we try to map what we see into this model? Perhaps it's not actually happening?

It's a model

# Poole - 1983

Research exploring group decision making

Found that groups exhibited considerable differences in developmental sequences



# Poole - Model

Activity Tracks

Break points

Structure for task accomplishment





# Activity Tracks - Poole

Task process - Activities a group enacts to manage its tasks

Relational - Activities that reflect or manage the relationships among group members as these relate to the group's work

Topical - Substantive issues and arguments of concern to the group at a given point in time



# Breakpoints - Poole

Normal: topic shift. The group deals with these.

Delays: when in a holding pattern. Can precipitate difficulties or creativity.

Disruptions: such as failures or distractions. May require effort to refocus on main goal.



# Structural requirements

What is the purpose of the team?

Why does the team exist?

A team exists for some purpose and understanding this can lead to focus and guidance across the three activity tracks.

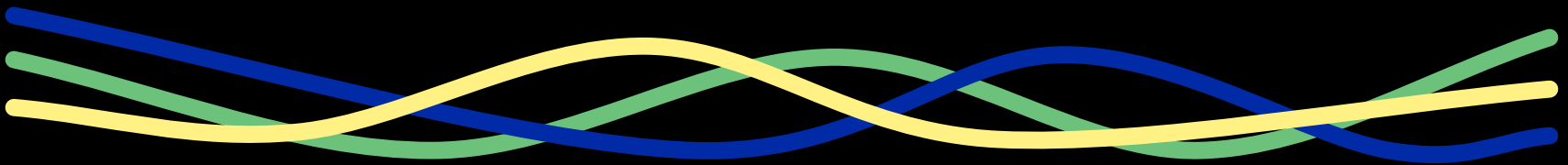


# Poole - Model

Activity Tracks

Break points

Structure for task accomplishment



# Using this model

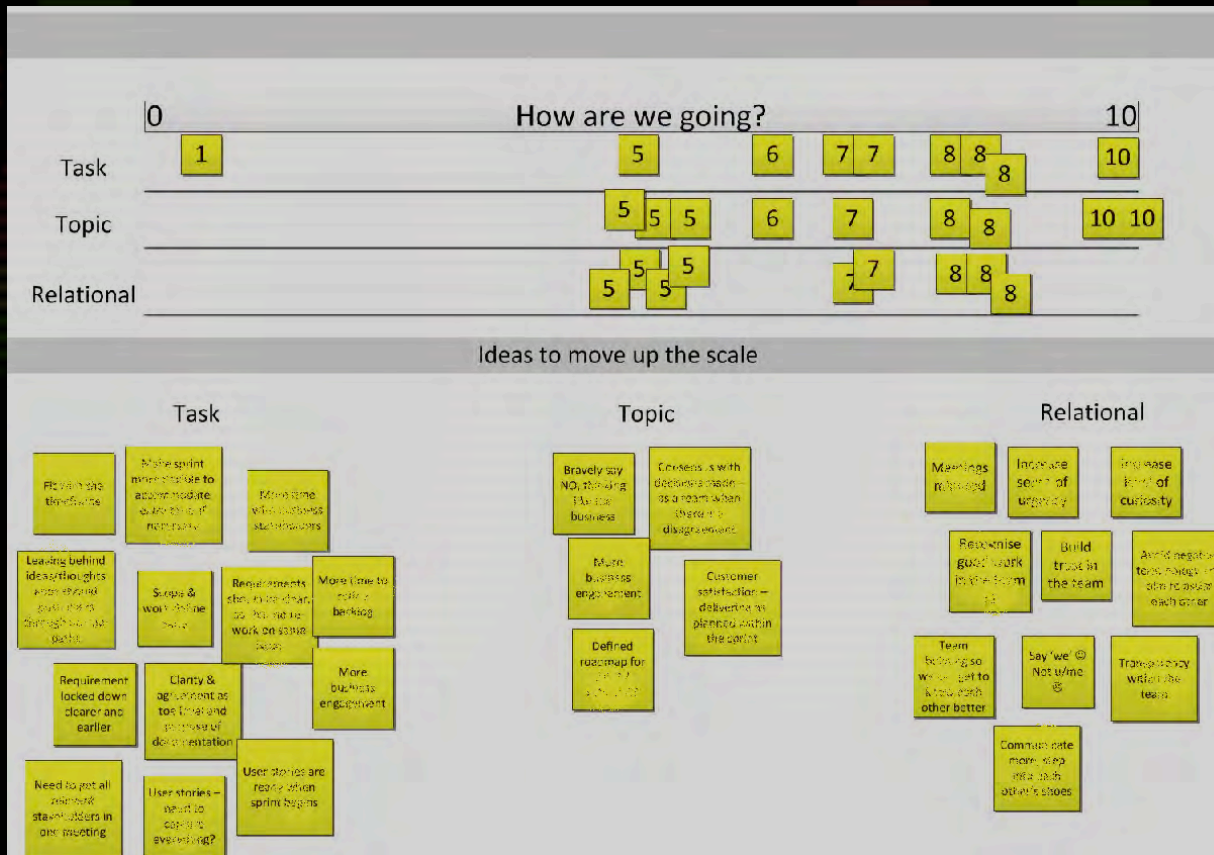
Be aware of an alternative to the Tuckman model

What makes sense to you in the situation you are in?



# Using this model

Teach the team about the model and use it



# Using this model

Listen/watch for Breakpoints

How should you be working now?

Force a Breakpoint

Make something happen!



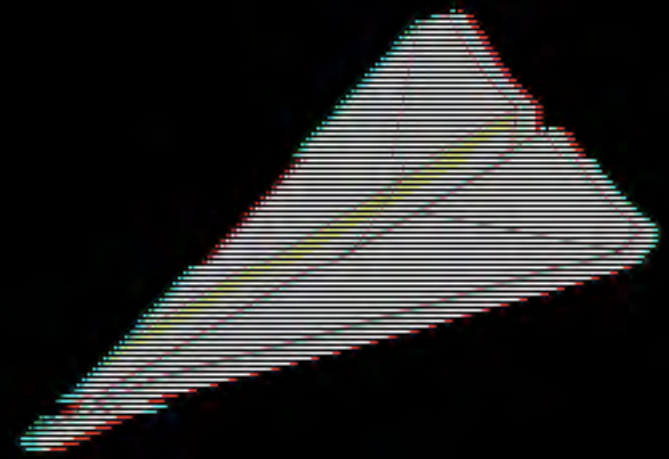
# Other development models

Tubbs – linear stage model

Fisher – linear stage model

Hare – cyclical model

Gersick and Hackman – punctuated equilibrium model





# MOTIVATIONAL EFFECTS



# Motivation?

Why individuals initiate, choose or persist in specific actions in specific circumstances

The moving force that energises behaviour  
– what people want to do and how strongly they want to do it



# Free riding

When someone benefits without contributing

Relatively rare, but does happen –  
e.g. a manager attaches themselves to a team to get some of the glory.



# Social Loafing

The great irony of teamwork

People working together do less than working alone!

Social loafing refers to the reduction in effort and motivation that tends to occur when individuals work collectively on a task



# Köhler Effect

Motivational gain rather than loss

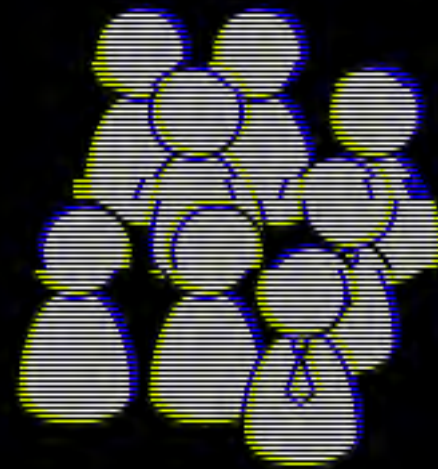
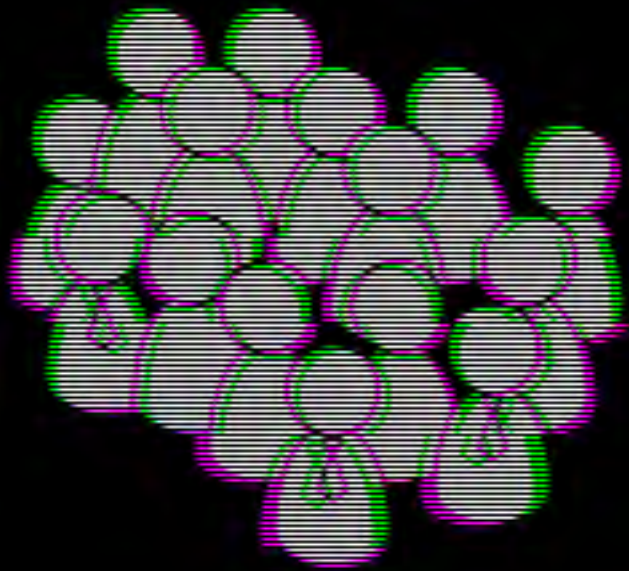
Looked at in exercise groups, experimental studies and workplace studies

No one wants to be the worst performer!  
So people work hard enough to stay off the bottom.



# Get some Köhler, lose the loafing

Team size – large groups lead to more loss



# Get some Köhler, lose the loafing

Hire people with strong personal  
work ethic

Build projects around motivated individuals.

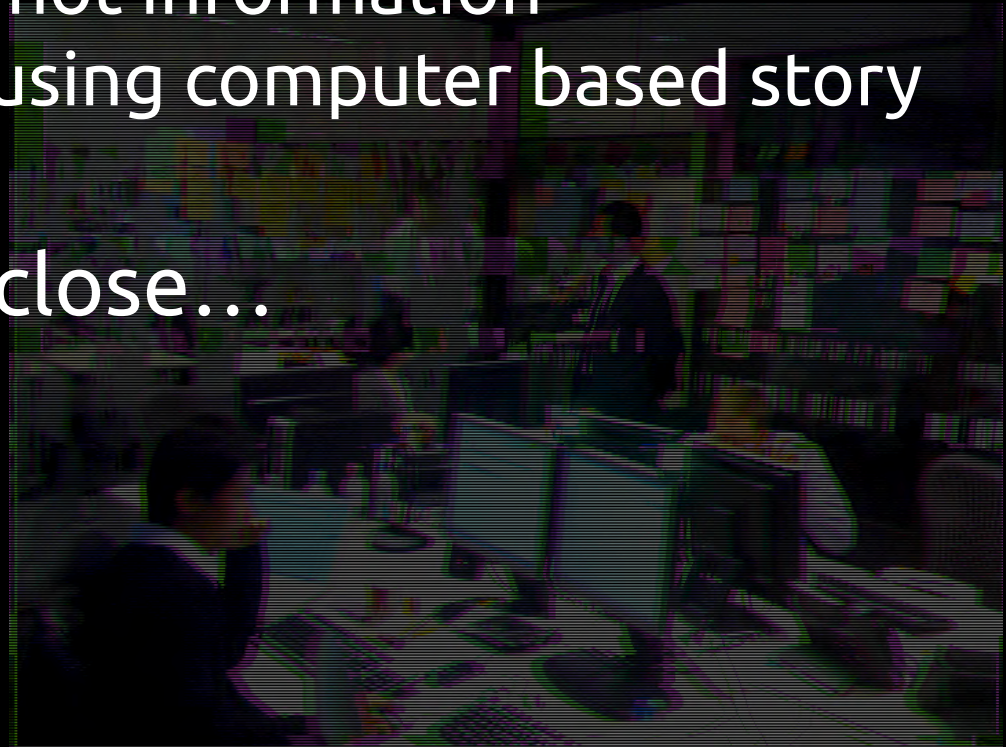
Give them the environment and support they need,  
and trust them to get the job done.



# Get some Köhler, lose the loafing

## Show individual contributions

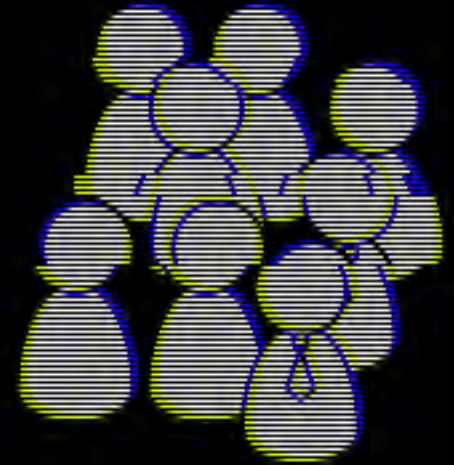
- visual management not information refrigerators – stop using computer based story walls in teams
- Collocate – really close...





# Get some Kohler, lose the loafing

Create cohesion in the team



# Get some Köhler, lose the loafing

Avoid busy work

– ie work on essential tasks only



# Covered so far...

Non-linear development model



Motivational effects in teams



# OUTCOME VS PROCESS FOCUS



# Process / Outcomes

**Process** – how members coordinate and combine physical efforts and resources into a shared product

**Outcomes** – the intended final products or results of the teams work

Woolley 2008 & 2009



# FOCUS

**Process Focus** – temporal precedence – of the focus on process prior to outcomes in organising work.

**Outcome focused** - allow outcomes to take precedence over processes both over time and the level of centrality in decision making.



# Outcome

Where there are complex, open ended tasks which benefit from the creation or combination of new ideas or knowledge, outcome focus will be more successful than process focus.



# So what?

In a complex, changing environment where the need is to devise better ways to approach work Process Focused teams are at a disadvantage.

Outcome focused teams can have a performance advantage in the face of task problems.





# How we can become process focused

Some organisations require detailed following of process. Where there are repetitive tasks and need for avoidance of errors.

This is where you want to be process focused

Software development circa 1962



# How we can become process focused

Task complexity

people use established patterns to solve problems

Define

Measure

Analyze

Improve

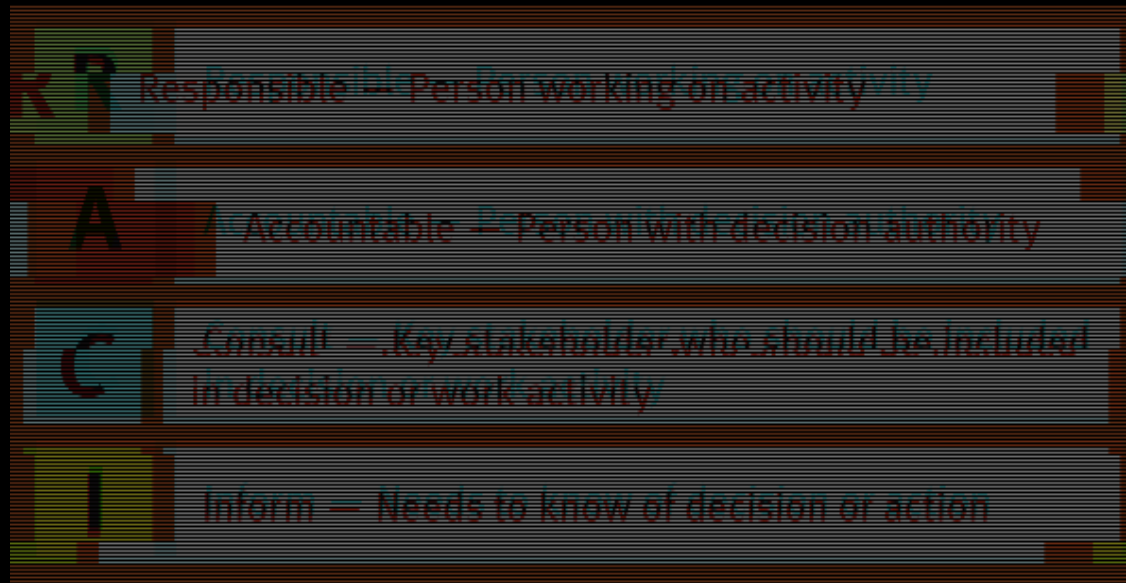
Control

Institutionalize



# How we can become process focused

Tendency to want to get work done instead of spending time analysing tasks – this creates responsibilities and tasks to get work done quickly, it feels like progress



# How to become outcome focused

Watch how you start off with the team

WBS? Get going by defining roles and responsibilities? Schedule?

Work on what the team's end goal is...

How will this be evaluated?

Sliders?



# How to become outcome focused

What cues are being sent or received?

What does the environment value? Is it a consistent and repeatable process? Is that what is needed?

Listen to what you say?

Are you making agile a process?



# How to become outcome focused

Intervene!

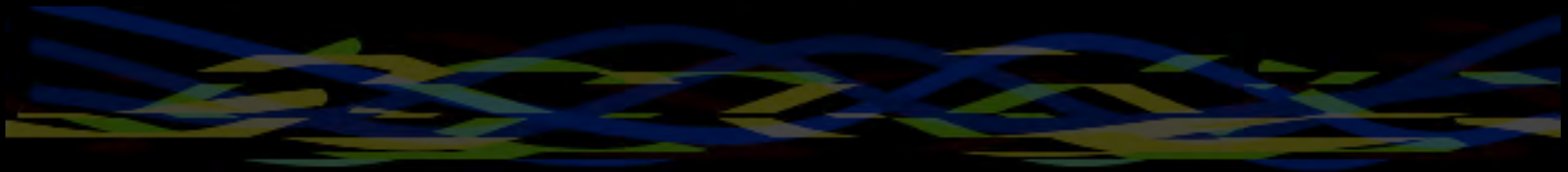
Use stand ups, retros, planning meetings.  
Help the teams focus on outcomes.

This will send new cues.



# Covered so far...

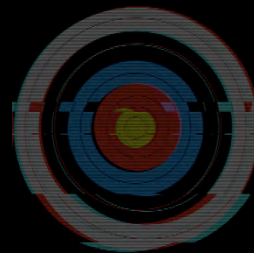
Non-linear development model



Motivational effects in teams



Outcome vs Process focus



**LEADERSHIP**





# What is the team?

If we take everyone away from the team, does it still exist?

Perhaps the team is the nature and understanding of the interactions of individuals as they work to attain a common goal.



# Who leads?

Who are the leaders of your teams?

How do you know these people are leaders?

hair cut? salary? dress? gender? title?

or

Is it the action they take?



# Leadership

If teams are the way we understand and direct our interactions

And

Leaders are recognised by the action

Then leadership cannot be a position it must be something else



# Leadership

Leadership occurs in the face of adaptive challenges – that is problems that require learning or innovation of new patterns of behaviour



# Who is the leader?

Anyone in the team can make changes or take action that leads to better functioning for the team.

Leadership is this change in performance



# Coaches / Managers

You need to supply the tools to help team members create leadership!

Reframe leadership to be about events rather than people

events that change the rules of interaction, influences what gets done and how things get done



# How to do this...

Foster interaction – as this is the driver for adaptive change

Leadership is the result of participation as it is the potential from our interactions rather than being established in a specific individual.



# How to do this...

Foster interdependency – to reinforce the interaction need and this builds from positive interaction

It is in the nature of these interactions that can determine the quality of our contributions creating the potential for adaption.





# How to do this...

Introduce adaptive tension – rather than destructive – use this to get people generating ideas and changes.

Help people to hold this tension and work with it rather than head straight for tension free comfort.



# Leadership

To help create team environments that can make adaptive changes (leadership as events) we probably need to be

- outcome focused
- motivated in our team
- and to dynamically shift our focus of interaction in the teams as needed

this requires some different ideas on how teams work to the way we normally think about teams.



# Leadership

Perhaps it's the other way around?

If we think of leadership as events that make adaptive improvements we will start to think about differently about teams .

Hopefully this talk has provided some different ways to think about teams.



# 4 things...

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3. Outcome vs Process focus
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