

TEAM UP

George Karseras

Building Better Teams in
the Digital Age

BCS Nov 17th 2021

A bit of background



My Mission

To help as many teams as I can in organisations to work better in order to improve well being and contribution.

"[It's] is an insightful book offering leaders a compelling and practical team building 'code' to optimize team performance."
—Amy C. Edmonson,
author of
The Fearless Organization

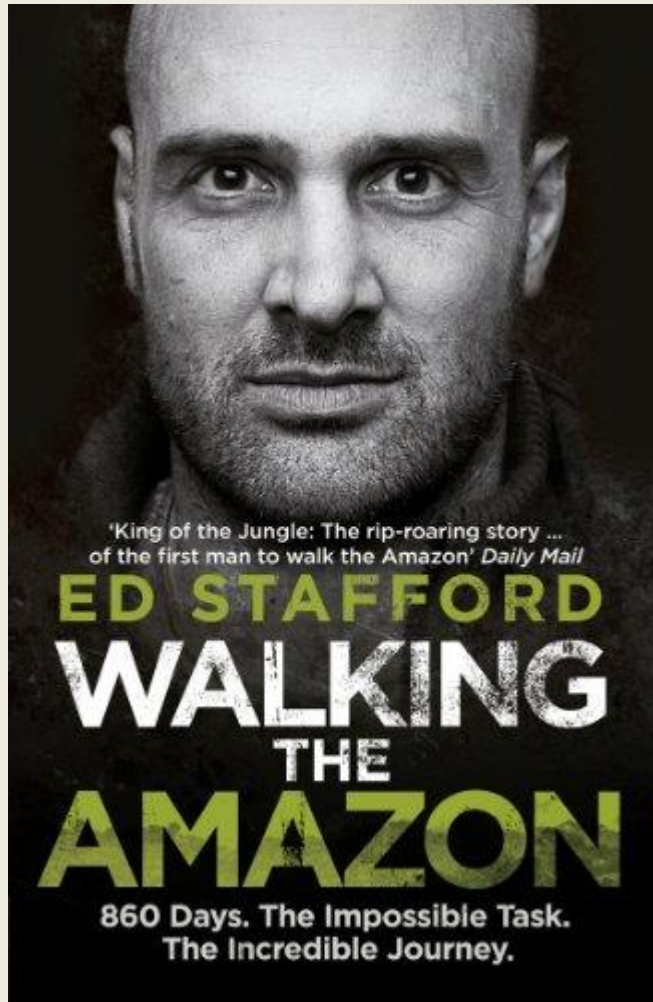
*Creating
Winning
Teams
in the
Digital Age*

Build *Better* Teams

GEORGE KARSERAS

TEAM UP

A Story Part 1



River Length 6992 Km
Walk length 860 days

Luke Collier



Ed Stafford



2nd April 2008







Gadiel “Cho” Sanchez Rivera





Aug 9 2010



9 August 2010



“Truly extraordinary... in the top league of expeditions, past and present”

Sir Ranulph Fiennes

- + National Geographic Adventurer of the Year 2010
- + European Adventurer of the Year 2011
- + Guinness World Record 2011

TEAM UP

The Changing Landscape

Our Track Record in Teaming is NOT great!

80% of Top Teams are Mediocre at Best (Wageman et al)

75% of Cross Functional Teams are Dysfunctional (Trabizi)

Only 10% of teams are High Performing (according to leaders)

Digitalisation is going to make it tougher to team

Expect...

- + A spate of continuous digital transformations
- + significant restructuring of organisations
- + industries to be reconfigured
- + Big Data to get Bigger
- + Machine Intelligence to erode blue collar jobs
- + more subject matter experts (SMEs)

The Changing Landscape of Teaming in the Digital Age

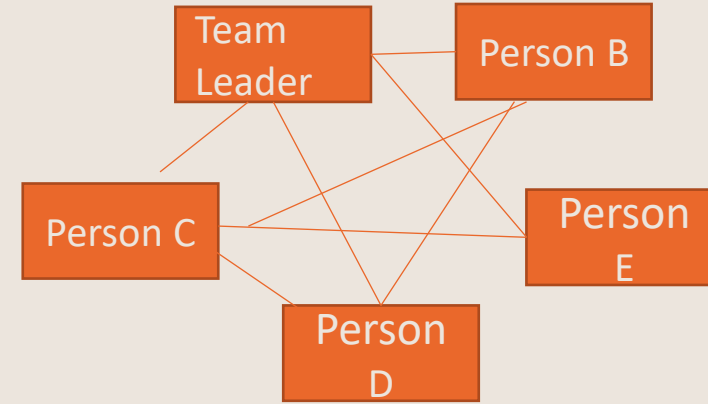
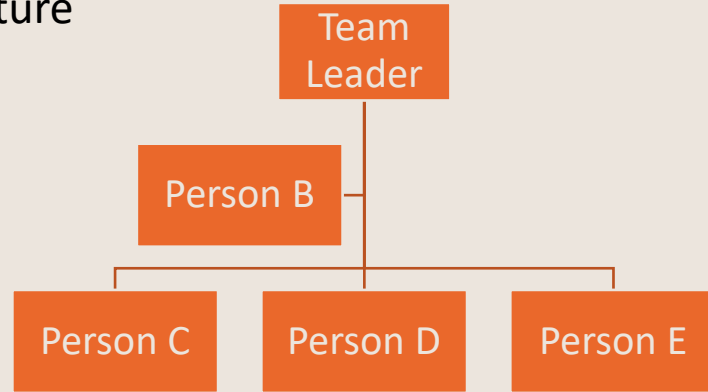
1. More momentum for better mental health
2. More emphasis on teaming and collaboration
3. More 'Agile' and 'agile' teams
4. More cross functional teams
5. More virtual and hybrid teams
6. More experimentation and
7. More empowered teams
8. More team based learning
9. More emphasis on team based resilience
10. More knowledge sharing
11. More teams of teams

Team of Teams

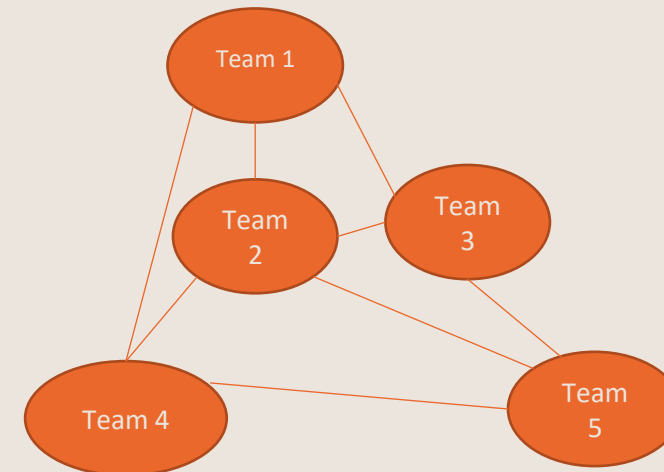
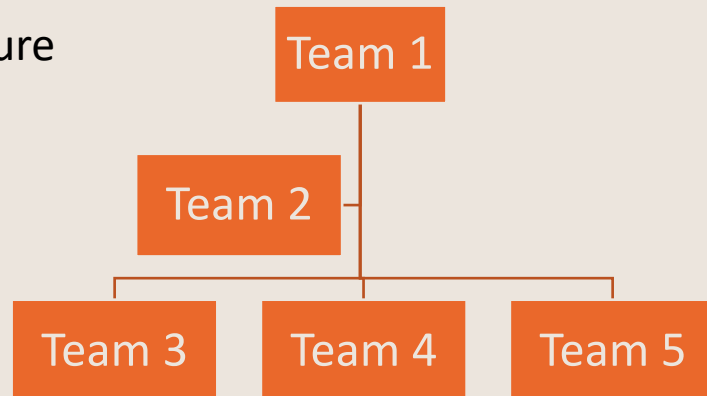
The Brochure

The Reality

Team Structure



Org Structure



Teaming has never been so tough

Virtual Working
Isolation



Mounting Regulations



Worsening Mental Health



Digitalisation
Turbulence



Teams Under Pressure

Individualism on the
Charge



Complexity from Diversity



More Virtual Team Working Means ...

- + More Isolation
- + Productivity Challenges
- + Trust Issues
- + Communication Challenges

In other words more Conflict!

The Changing Landscape for the Virtual Team...

- Strong task and action orientation
- Getting stuff done well but not to perfection
- Building a team identity
- More Important to create 'shared mental models'
 - Purpose
 - Goals
 - Roles
 - Norms and Standards
 - Progress made
- More distributed leadership
- More positive contagion
- More empathy
- More knowledge sharing

Where's the Cavalry?

- Forming Norming Storming etc...?
- Psychometrics?
- Consultancies?
- Anything Else out there?

Conclusions

Teams need help

Nothing Compelling
Available

Is it Possible – The Holy Grail?

Sequenced Road Map

Science Based

Cover the Ground

Simple

Actionable

Universal



TEAM UP

The Quest

3 Primary Sources for a Team of 5 Researchers for 5 years

1. Academic Journals
2. Well Referenced Books
3. Extreme Teams Interviews

What Predicts Great Teaming?

- Prevailing Culture
- Team Leadership Quality
- Resources to Team
- Talent in the Team (courage and ability)

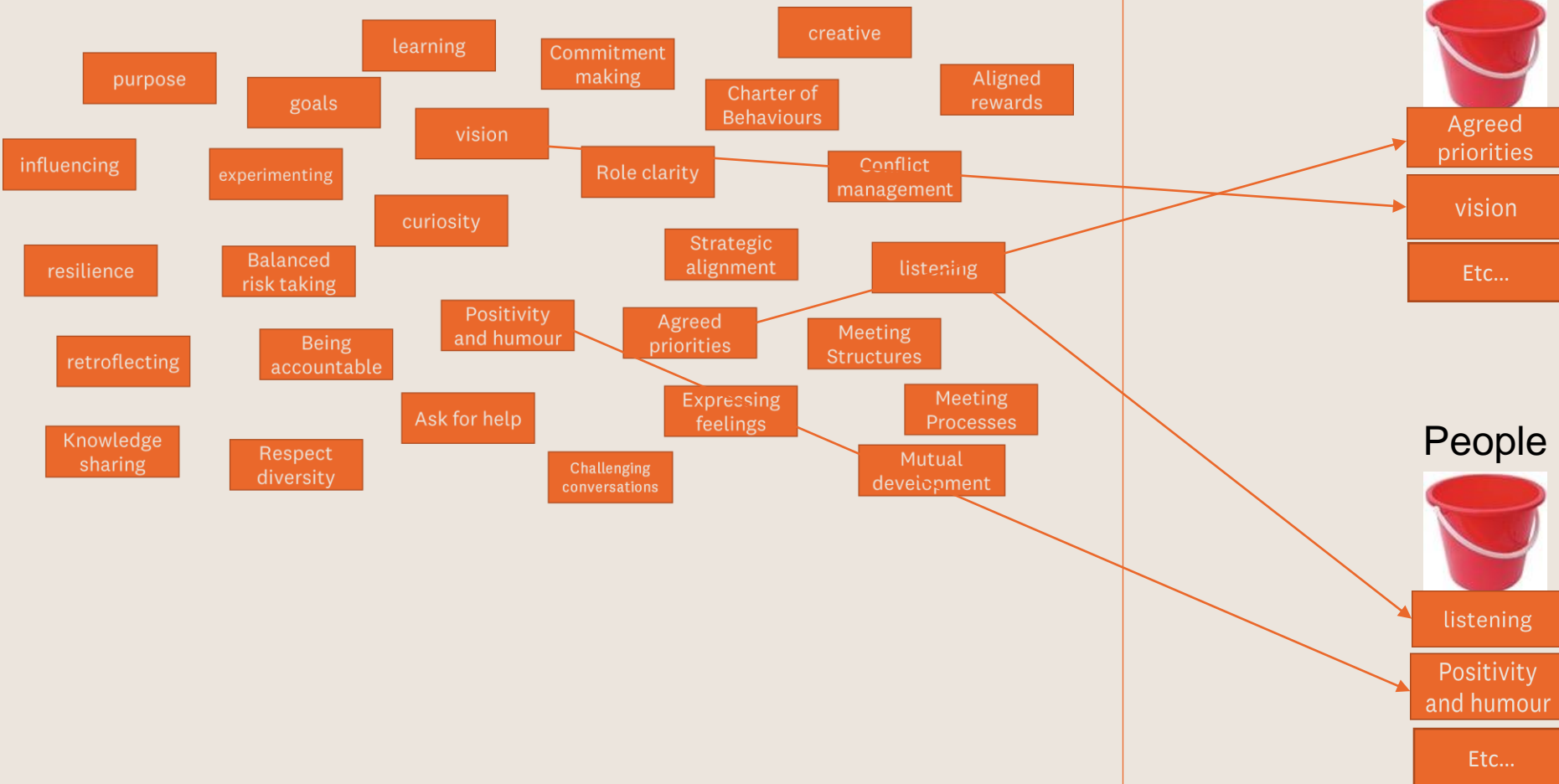
Thanks very much and Help!

What's Controllable that Predicts Great Team working?

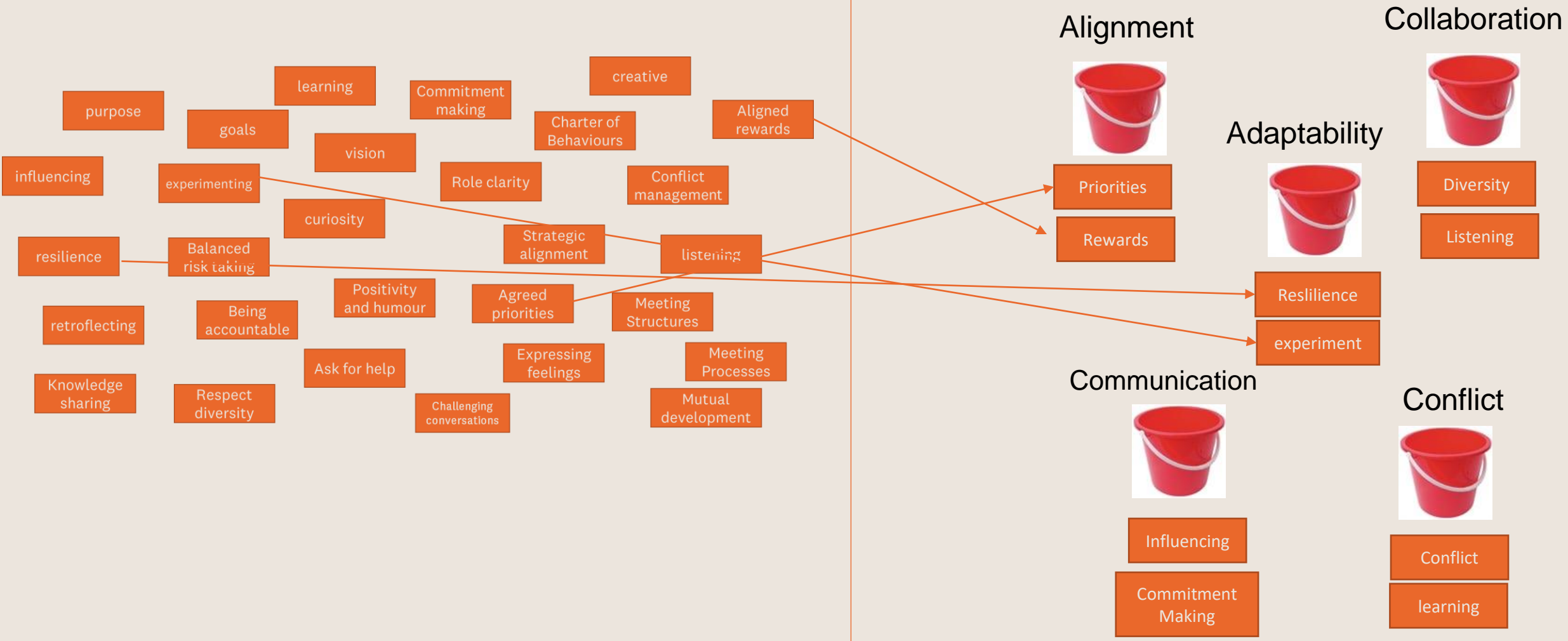


I Started Allocating Predictors to Buckets (categories)

Task v People



Alignment v Collaboration v
Communication v Conflict v
Adaptability (Buckets x 5)



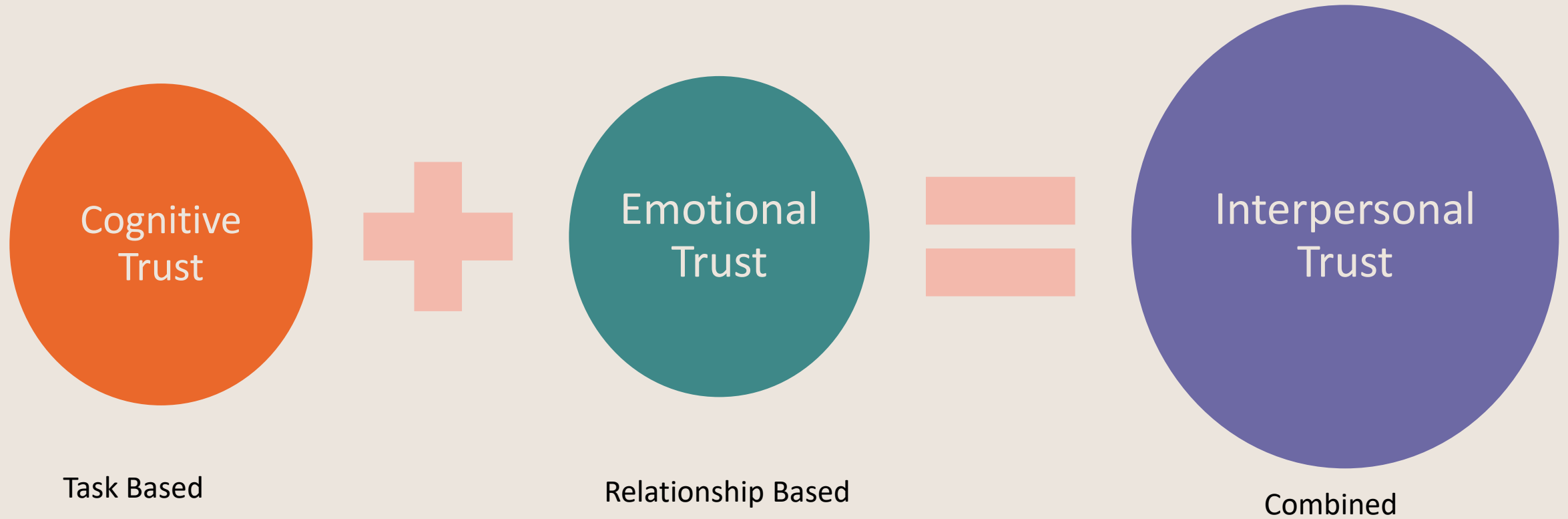
The First Bucket...



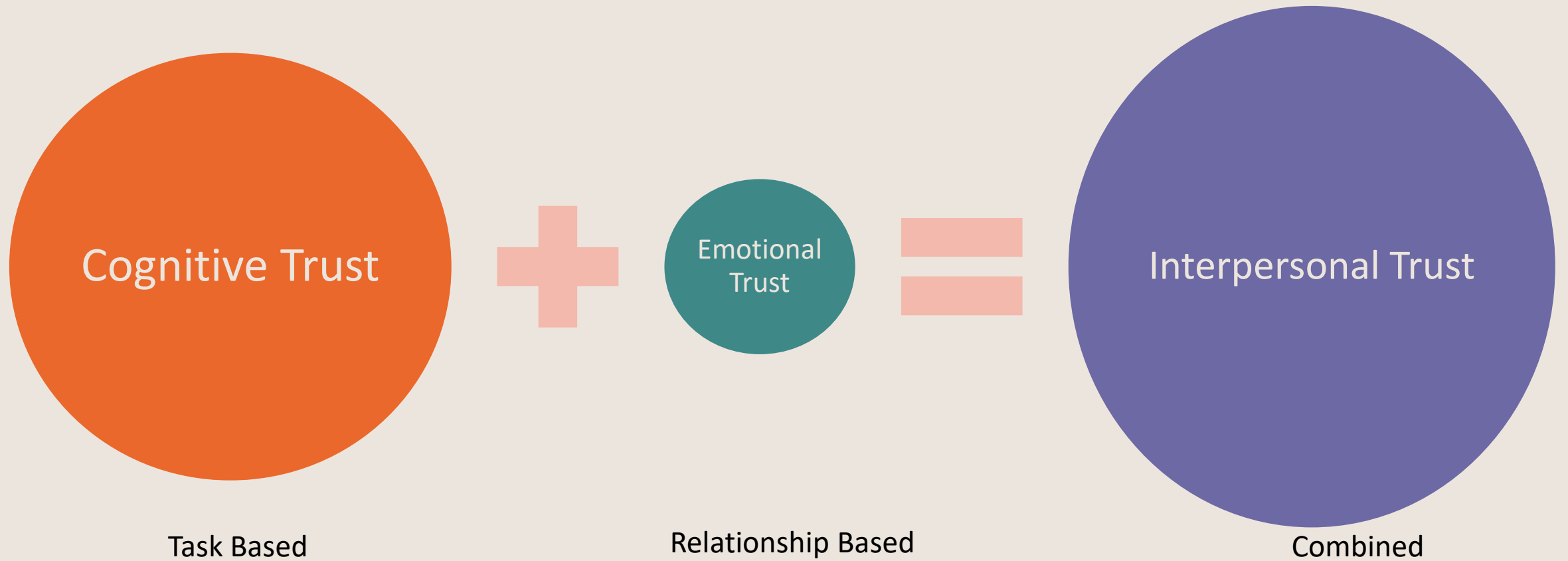
Extreme Teams and Swift Trust



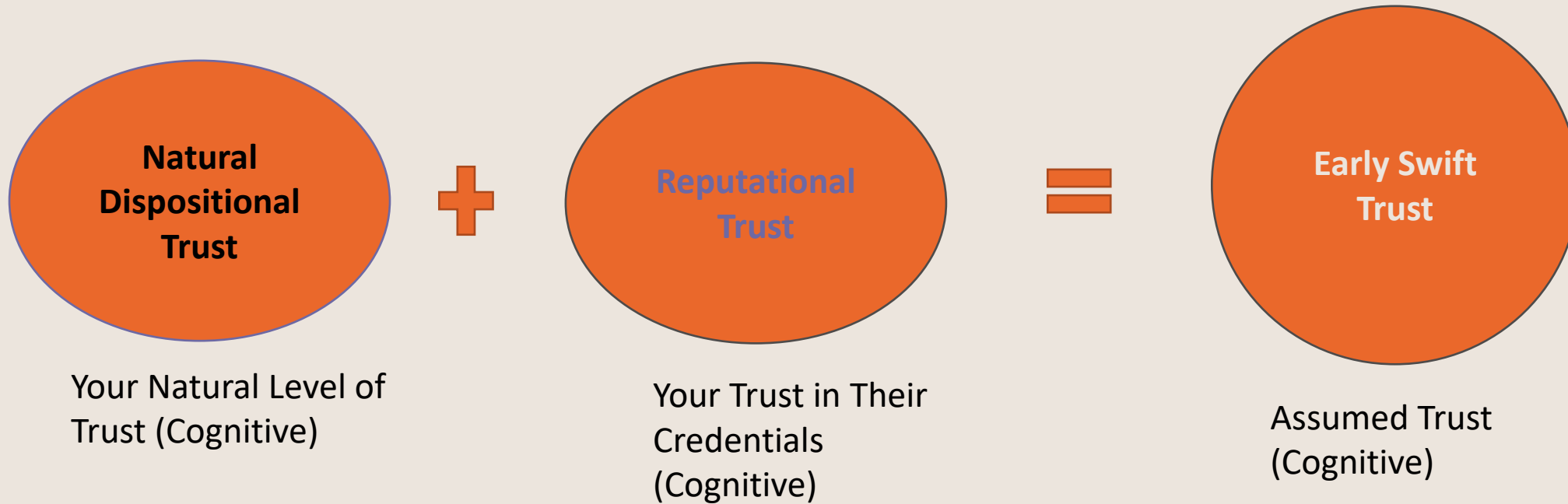
The Traditional Trust Equation



Trust in Extreme Teams

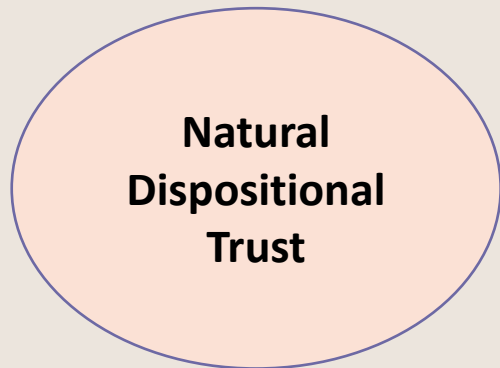


Early Swift Trust Starts to form *Before* we Meet Someone

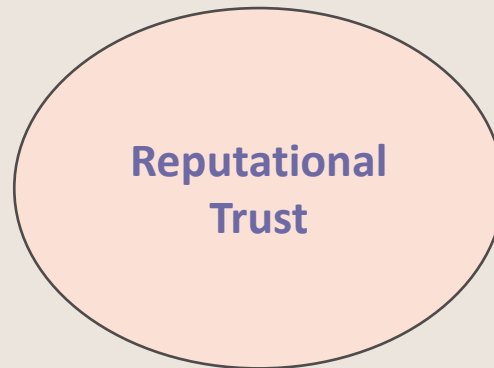


Building Same Page Trust is *The best* way to Turbo Boost Swift Trust

Early Swift Trust Built Before Joining Team



Hard to
Increase



Hard to
Increase

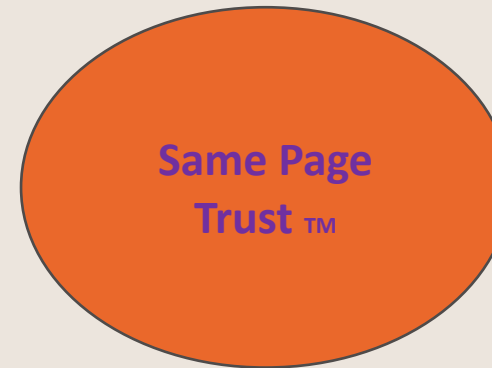


Full Swift Trust Built After Joining Team

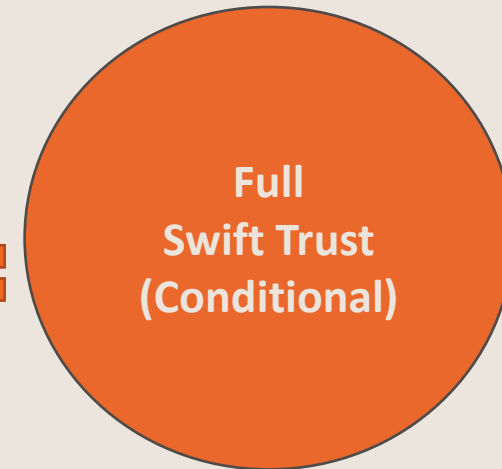
*Intervention
Point*



An orange arrow pointing from the text 'Intervention Point' to the 'Same Page Trust' circle.

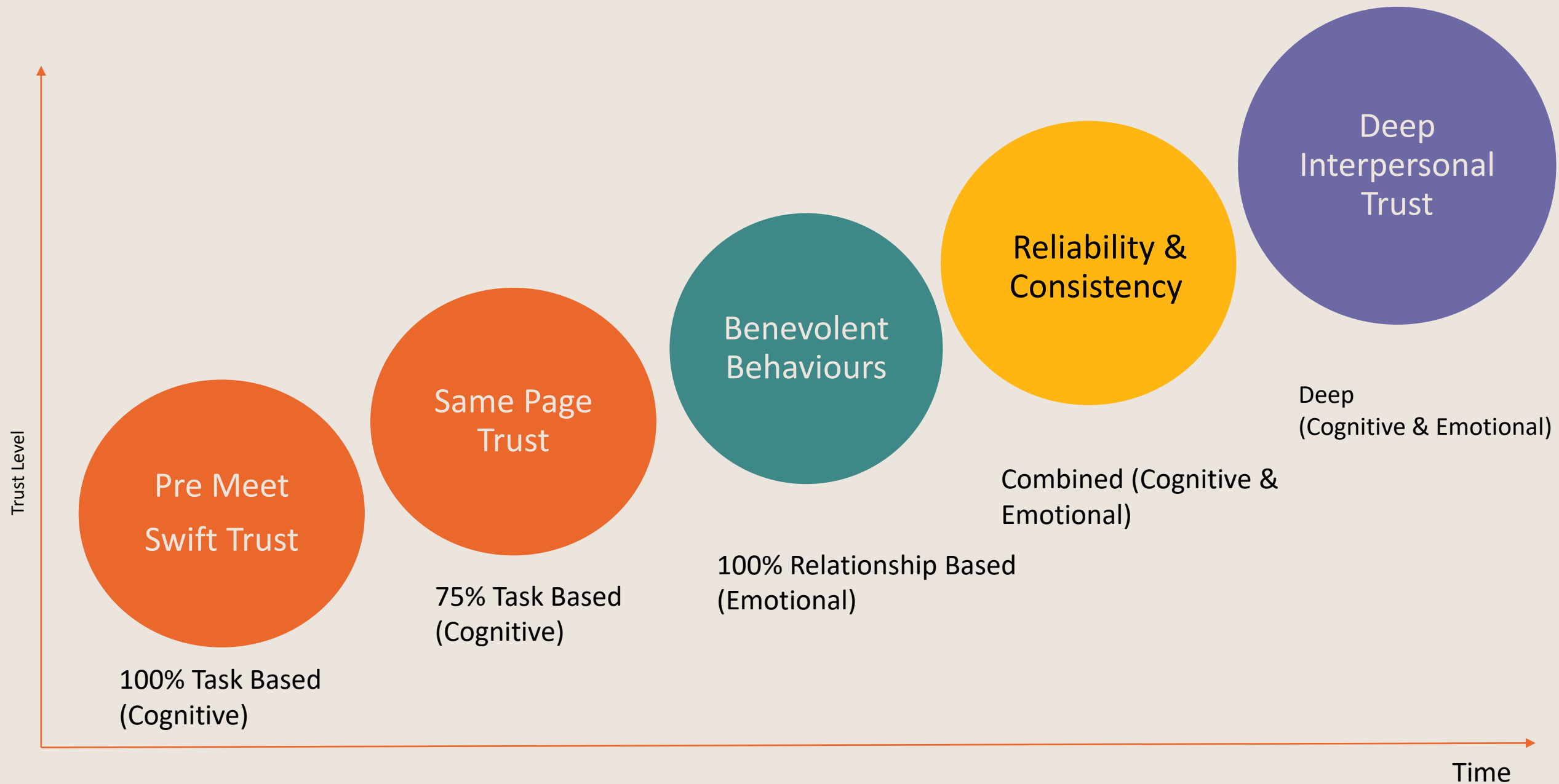


We Increase this by
Sharing Mental Models



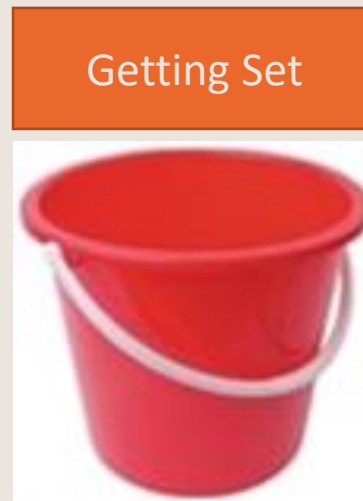
Can Then Increase

Ultimately we Convert *Conditional* Swift Trust to *Deep* Interpersonal Trust



The First Bucket – “Getting Set”

We start building teams by sharing mental models and in doing so building Same Page Trust



Get Set and Cognitive Trust

- + **Being on the Same Page**
- + **Agreed Expectations**
- + **Ready to Reset**

Teams scoring well on the Get Set metric are clear on their:

- **Mission**
- **Plans**
- **Disciplines**

Teams are confident, clear on what's expected to succeed and very purposeful.

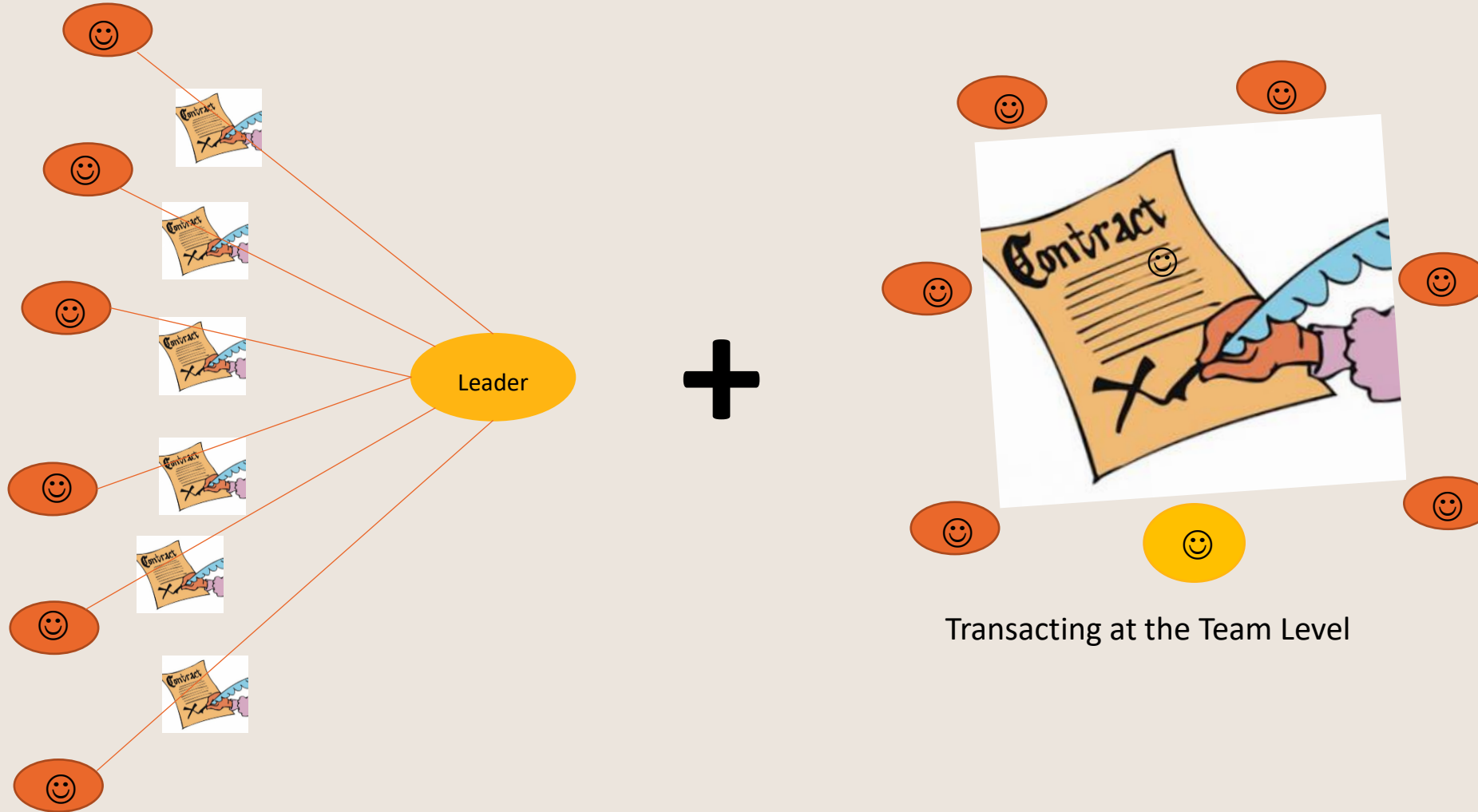


✱ Get Set

0.0

Mission	1. Our purpose is clear to us and to our stakeholders.	
	2. Our goals are SMART and we agree which of them are 'shared' goals requiring 'proper' collaboration across the team.	
	3. We share a vision of what we are trying to achieve.	
	MISSION	0
Plans	4. We agree on a high-level plan to achieve our shared goals including how we'll communicate to our stakeholders.	
	5. Team member roles and responsibilities are clear and understood, especially for the goals we share.	
	6. We agree on our priorities and we are ready to swiftly reprioritise if we need to.	
	PLANS	0
Disciplines	7. Our meeting structures (frequency, timings, invitees, preparation, and agenda- setting) enable both individual and shared goal success.	
	8. We agree on our target behaviours and how we will maintain them, including how we would like to be led by our leader.	
	9. We have sufficient ' skin in the game ' to ensure we are motivated to collaborate with others with whom we share goals.	
	DISCIPLINES	0

Sharing Mental Models is all About **Team** Contracting



Transacting at the Individual Level

Transacting at the Team Level

The 'Same Page' Big 5



The Second Bucket...



Psychological Safety

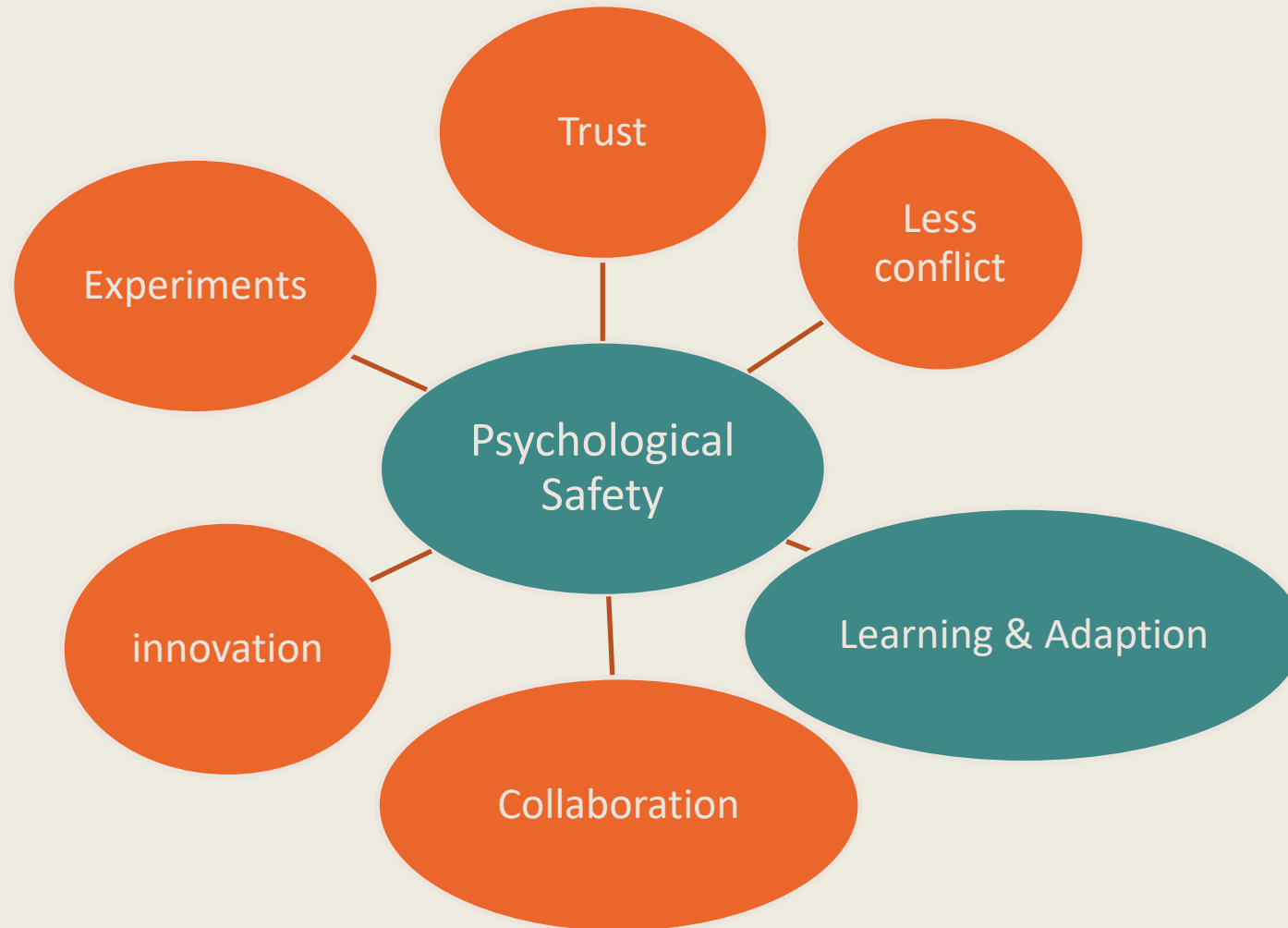
“...a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking.”

“...a belief that one will not be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns or mistakes”.

Signs of Compromised Psychological Safety

1. Less candid and open conversation.
2. People feel uncomfortable for being 'different'
3. Cliques operating – some with separate 'ground rules'
4. Avoidance of the elephants
5. Approval seeking behaviours
6. Gossip -people talk 'about others' not 'to others'
7. Limited discussion and feedback in meetings.
8. People feel reluctant to speak their minds.
9. Sub –optimum collaboration.
10. Stress and worry by some
11. Some risk aversion
12. Reluctance to be totally transparent with bad news or mistakes.
13. Information is not readily shared, even withheld
14. Action plans are signed up to verbally but not in action
15. Some finger pointing can exist.
16. Less hands go up to volunteer or to step forward.
17. There may be a tendency to simply check boxes or to go with the flow regardless of impact on organisation

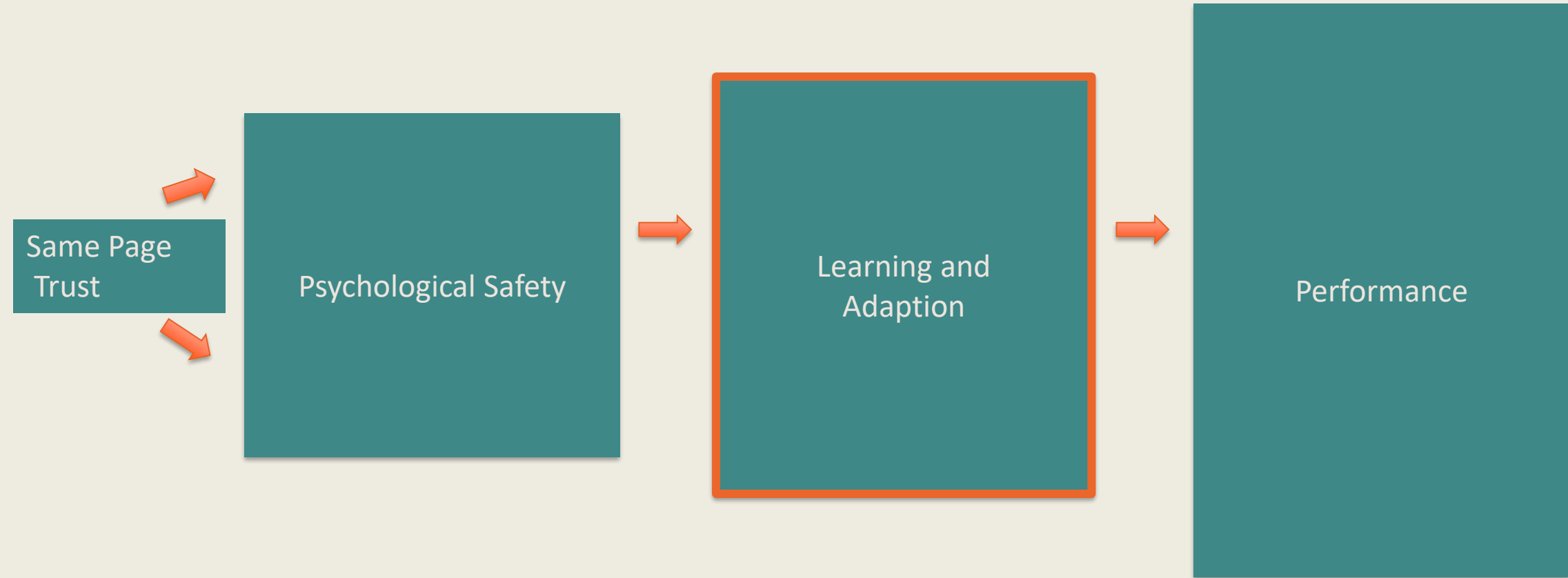
It's a No -Brainer



Psychological Safety is not just a ‘nice thing’ – it’s a CRUCIAL ‘thing’



Same Page Trust Turbo Boosts Psychological Safety



Mechanisms to Increase Psychological Safety

For Team Members & Team Leaders

1. Supportive, respectful and sensitive dialogue
2. Great listening skills
3. Asking for help
4. Seeking feedback
5. Giving good quality feedback—especially appreciations
6. Acknowledging ideas from others even if you disagree
7. Brining in others into the conversation
8. Acknowledge your mistakes or shortfalls
9. Regarding your mistakes, shortfalls or failures as learning opportunities
10. Admitting when you don't know the answer to something
11. Sharing your knowledge and expertise
12. Offering help
13. Asking more questions rather than taking up a lot of air time talking
14. Sharing your stories, aspirations and dreams
15. Saying how you feel
16. When you're asked how you are – tell the truth
17. Humour – especially poking fun at yourself

For Team Leaders

1. All of the left hand side plus
2. Being more accessible to the team to ask questions.
3. Encouraging team members to speak up regardless of whether it is positive or negative.
4. Letting frankness go unpunished
5. Including others in the decision making
6. Encourage and celebrate mistakes (in moderation)

The 3 Part Code for Psychological Safety

1. Vulnerability

1. Asking for help
2. Seeking feedback
3. Acknowledging ideas from others even if you disagree
4. Admitting when you don't know the answer to something
5. Sharing your stories, aspirations and dreams
6. Saying how you feel
7. Poke fun at yourself

2. Empathy

1. Supportive, respectful and sensitive dialogue
2. Great listening skills
3. Giving good quality feedback –especially appreciations
4. Brining in others into the conversation
5. Sharing your knowledge and expertise
6. Offering help

3. Learning

1. Seeking feedback
2. Giving good quality feedback –especially appreciations
3. Regarding your mistakes, shortfalls or failures as learning opportunities
4. Asking more questions rather than taking up a lot of air time talking

The 2nd Bucket – “Getting Safe”

We ‘Get Safe’ by building psychological safety, emotional trust and developing the learning team

Getting Safe



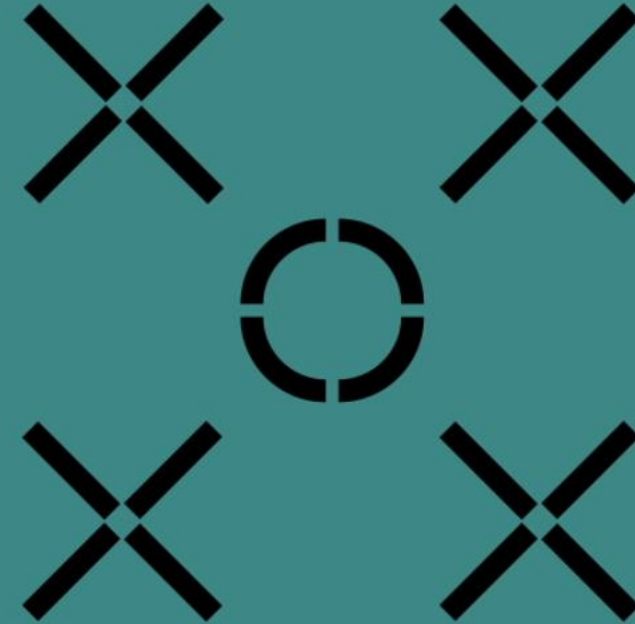
Get Safe and Emotional Trust

- + **Emotional Trust**
- + **Psychological Safety**
- + **Great Dialogue**

The team that is Safe has:

- Vulnerability
- Empathy
- Learning Conversations

Team members speak more freely, make more telling contributions and share knowledge more.





Get Safe

0.0

Vulnerability	1. We are open about what we don't know and good at asking for help.	
	2. We use humour, appreciation and gratitude to create a positive and optimistic atmosphere.	
	3. We feel confident to say how we really feel, without fear of reprisal.	
	VULNERABILITY	0
Empathy	4. We listen well, picking up on both content and emotions.	
	5. We respect diversity, encouraging contributions from each other.	
	6. We are generous at sharing our knowledge and in offering help.	
	EMPATHY	0
Learning	7. We regularly reflect as a team and extract learning from our experiences, successes and mistakes.	
	8. We ask questions with humility and demonstrate an obvious curiosity to learn.	
	9. We help each other to develop and to grow by providing feedback, coaching and support.	
	LEARNING	0

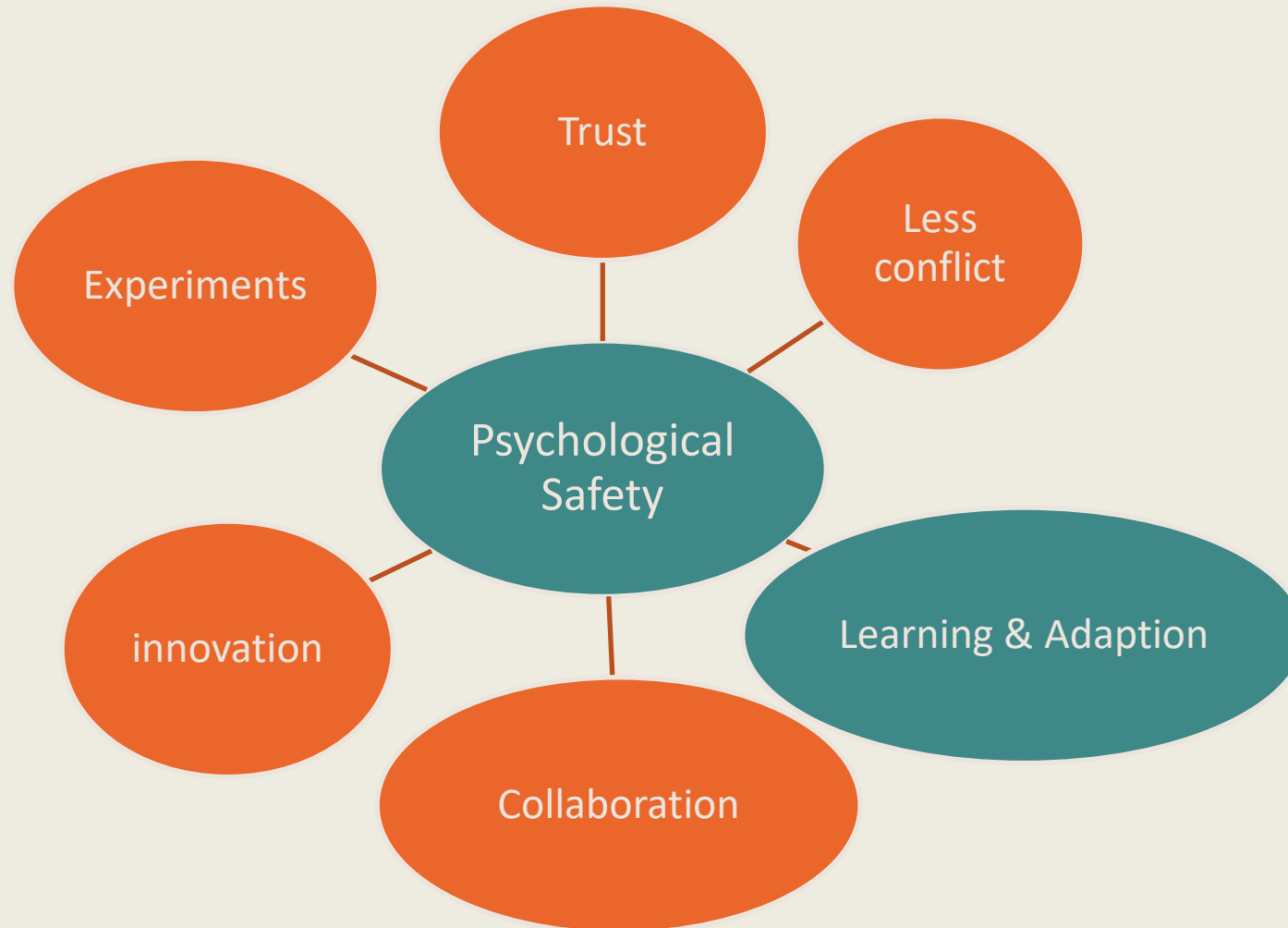
The Third Bucket...



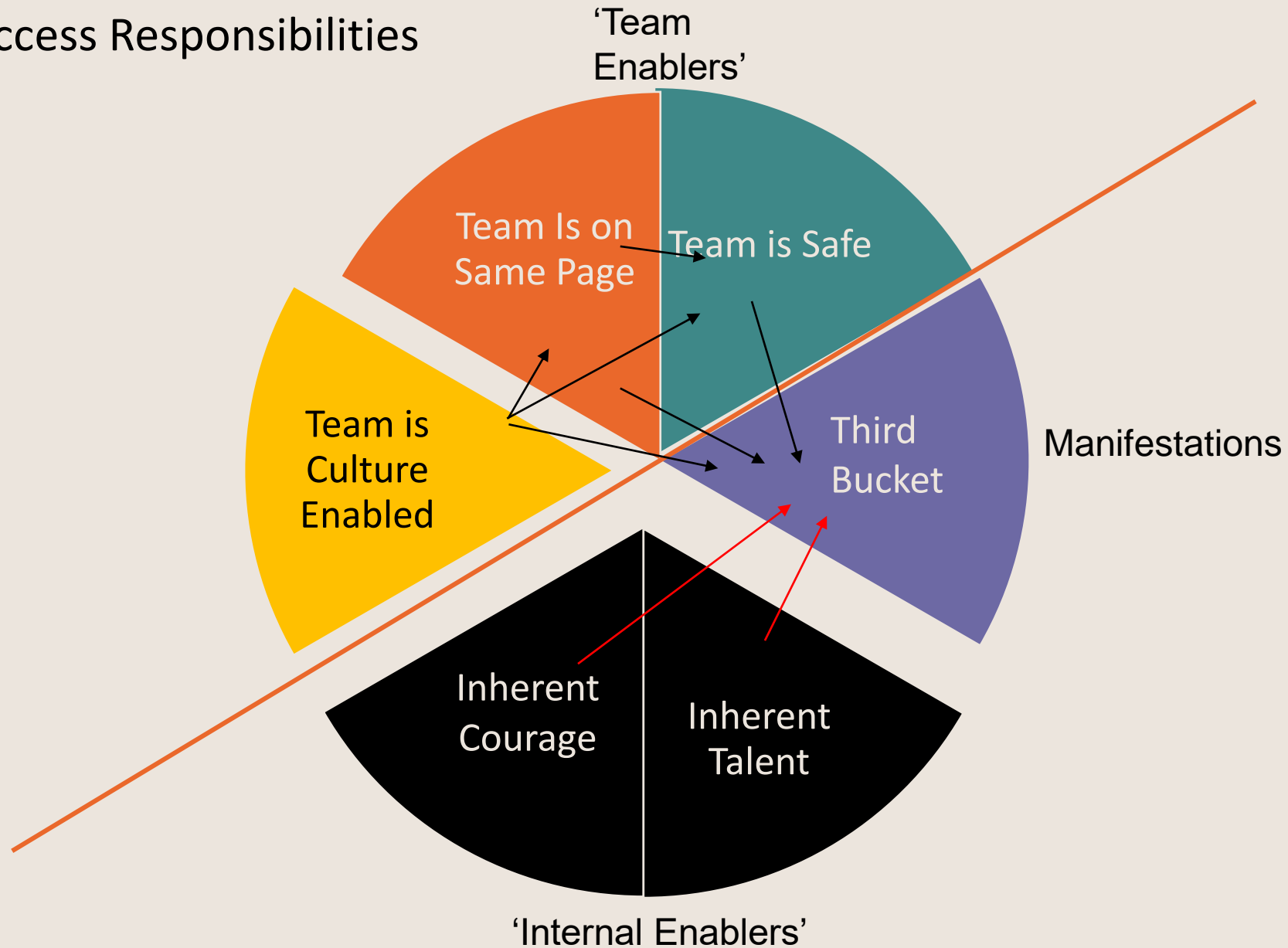
Bucket 3

1. Has to manifest as a RESULT of Get Set and Get Safe
2. Has to be the most predictive of results
3. Has to 'extend' the team members out of traditional comfort zones so it can thrive in an era of Virtual, Hybrid and Digital Transformation

It's a No -Brainer



Teaming Success Responsibilities



Get Strong – Interpersonal Trust

+ Robust Interactions

+ Reliability

+ Value Creating Interactions

The team that is Strong is high in:

- Accountability
- Constructive Tension
- Experimentation

Team members feel a little bit more stretched. They are ‘comfortably uncomfortable’.



Get Strong

0.0

Accountability	1. Individuals and sub-teams working on shared goals take action without unnecessarily referring upwards.	
	2. We are effective at influencing those with whom we have to collaborate, both inside and outside of the team.	
	3. We habitually commit to do X by Y and we give early warning signs if we can't deliver on them.	
	ACCOUNTABILITY	0
Constructive Tension	4. When necessary, we are able to have challenging conversations with those whom we share goals.	
	5. We react appropriately and constructively to bad news , tough feedback, challenge or critique.	
	6. We are effective at minimising and resolving inevitable interpersonal tension and conflict .	
	CONSTRUCTIVE TENSION	0
Experimentation	7. We are prepared to step forward , take action and adapt, even when we don't have the clarity we would like.	
	8. We bring creative and lateral thinking to our problem solving.	
	9. We experiment and take calculated risks to try to deliver more value.	
	EXPERIMENTATION	0

4 Get Success – Profound Trust

+ Resilient
+ Cohesive
+ Innovative

Teams that are Successful are:

- Delivering
- Trusted by All
- Adaptable

Team members feel confident, ready to pivot and proud to be part of the team.

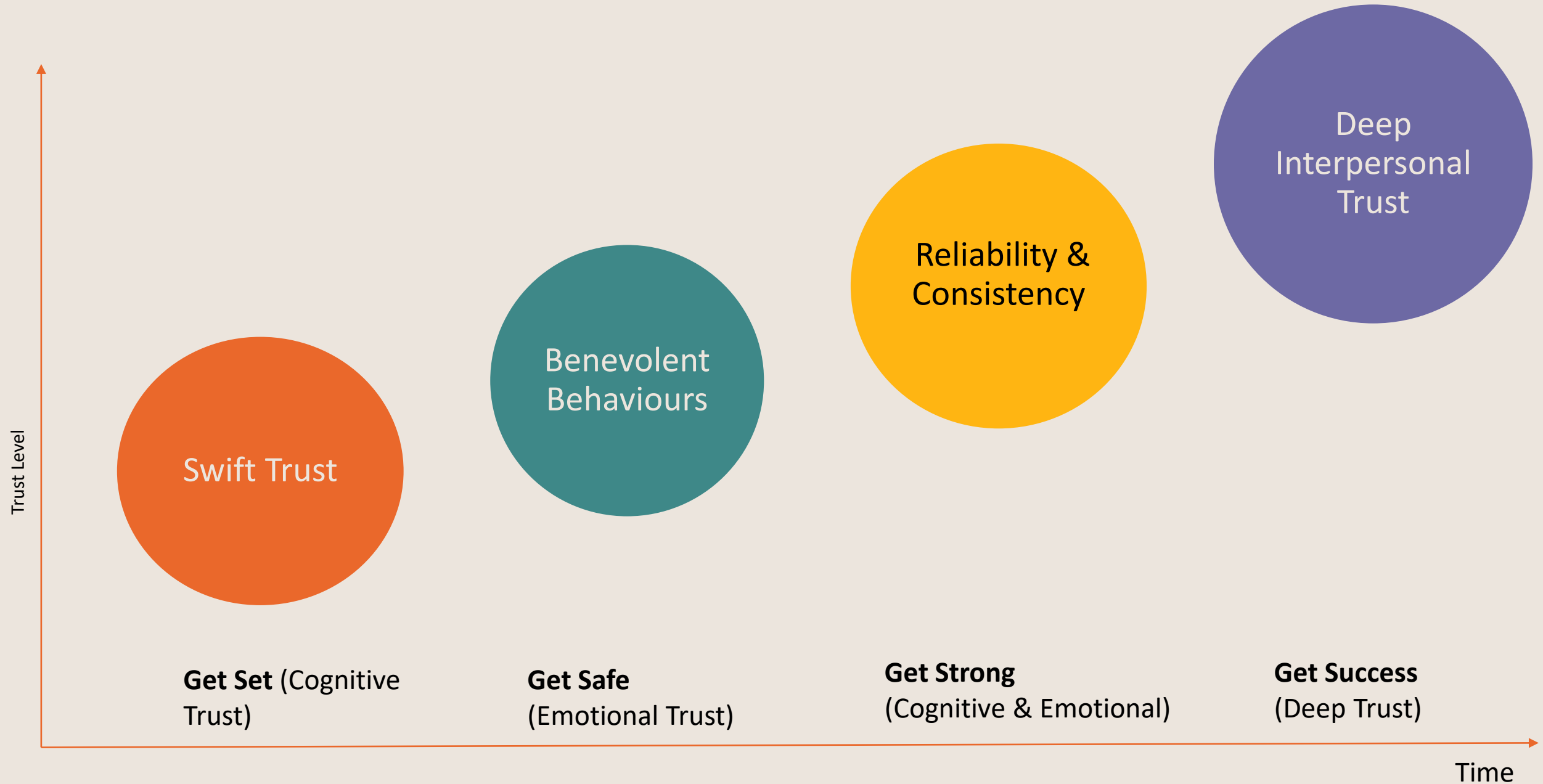


Get Success

0.0

Delivers	1. Our meetings and interactions are highly productive, enjoyable and efficient.	
	2. We consistently deliver on our commitments to those inside and outside of the team.	
	3. We prove that we truly value the team agenda as well as our own personal agendas.	
	DELIVERS	0
Trusted	4. We profoundly trust each other.	
	5. We have proven to be a resilient and unified team even under the most extreme duress.	
	6. We have a great reputation and our stakeholders really do believe in us.	
	TRUSTED	0
Adaptable	7. We are adept at converting our creative thinking into innovation and value.	
	8. We are consistently effective at pivoting and resetting.	
	9. We are fast learners.	
	ADAPTABLE	0

Trust Builds Through the Code

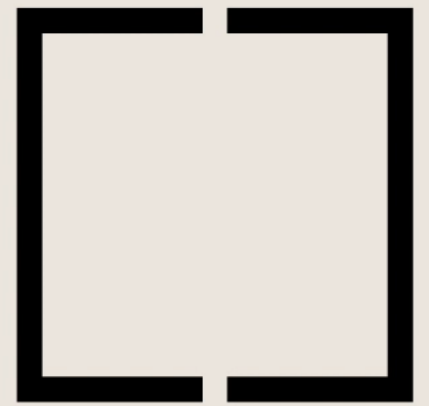
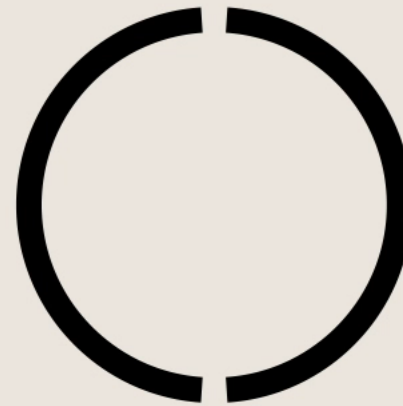
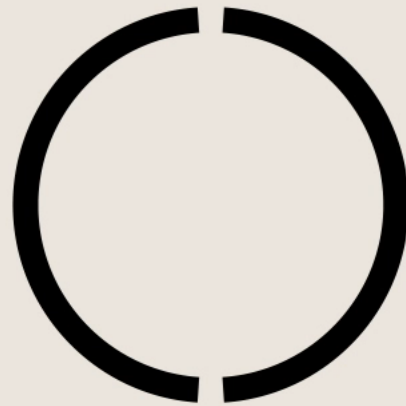


The Science of Great Teams - The TeamUp Playbook™

1



Mission
Plans
Disciplines



TEAM UP

Applying the Code for Miracles

The Reality

- + In any meeting teams are simultaneously getting on the same page, building psychological safety and committing to actions.
- + But what's the balance?

The Science of Great Teams - The TeamUp Playbook™

The Full Trust Journey



The Miracle of Isaac

A Story of:

Love
Commitment
Purpose
Clarity
Vulnerability
Courage

The Miracle Meeting Code for Virtual and Hybrid Teams

Decisions and Outcomes in No Time

Summarising

Clarification Questions

Outcome Focused

Helpfulness

Crisp

Action-ning

Politeness

Positivity

Admitting

Initiation

The Miracle Meeting Code for Virtual and Hybrid Teams

Decisions and **O**utcomes in **N**o **T**ime

Clarification Questions

Helpfulness

Outcome Focused

Politeness

Positivity

Initiation

Summarising

Admitting

Action-ning

Crisp

DON'T CHOPP ISAAC

The Miracle Meeting Code for Virtual and Hybrid Teams

Decisions and Outcomes in No Time

1. Clarification Questions (Set/Task)
2. Helpfulness (Safe/Process)
3. Outcome Focused (Set/Task)
4. Politeness (Safe/Process)
5. Positivity (Safe/Process)
6. Initiation (Strong/Task)
7. Summarising (Safe/Process)
8. Admitting (Safe/Process)
9. Action-ning (Strong/Task)
10. Crisp (Strong/Process)

DON'T CHOPP ISAAC

50% Task 50% Process

20% Getting Set

50% Getting Safe

30% Getting Strong

TEAM UP

A Story Part 2

Aug 9 2010



Ed and Cho's Amazon Walk?

Virtual Working
Isolation



Mounting Regulations



Digitalisation
Turbulence



Worsening Mental Health



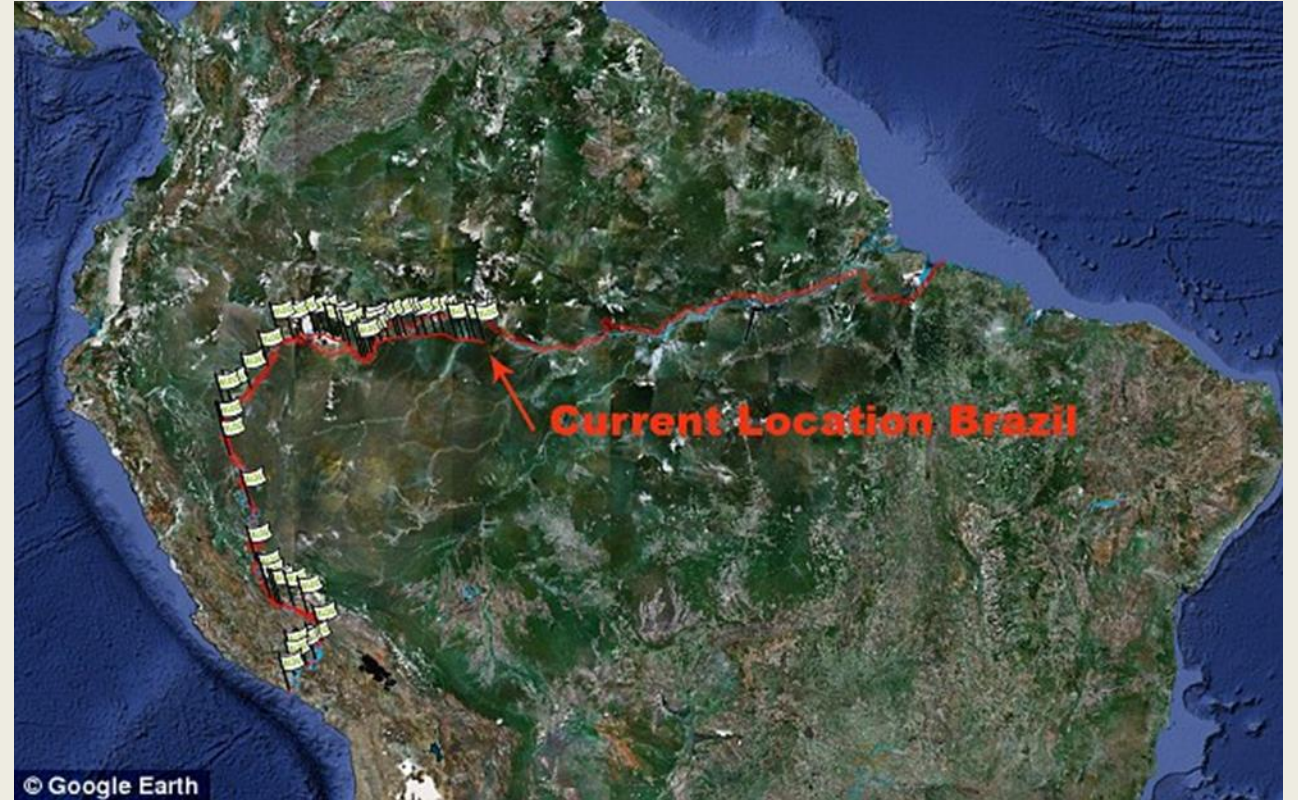
Individualism on the
Charge



Complexity from Diversity











The Science of Great Teams - The TeamUp Playbook™

The Full Trust Journey



Ed and Luke v Ed and Cho



Were They Set ?

Shared or Compatible Purpose?

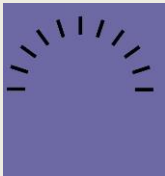
Agreed Plan?

Agreed Roles?

Agreed Norms?

Agreed Feedback Mechanisms?

Skin in the Game?

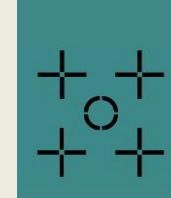


Were They Strong?

Minimum collaboration

High Conflict

No Experimentation



Were They Safe?

Vulnerability?

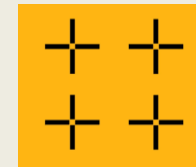
Asking for Help?

Saying how they felt?

Humour and positive contagion?

Empathy?

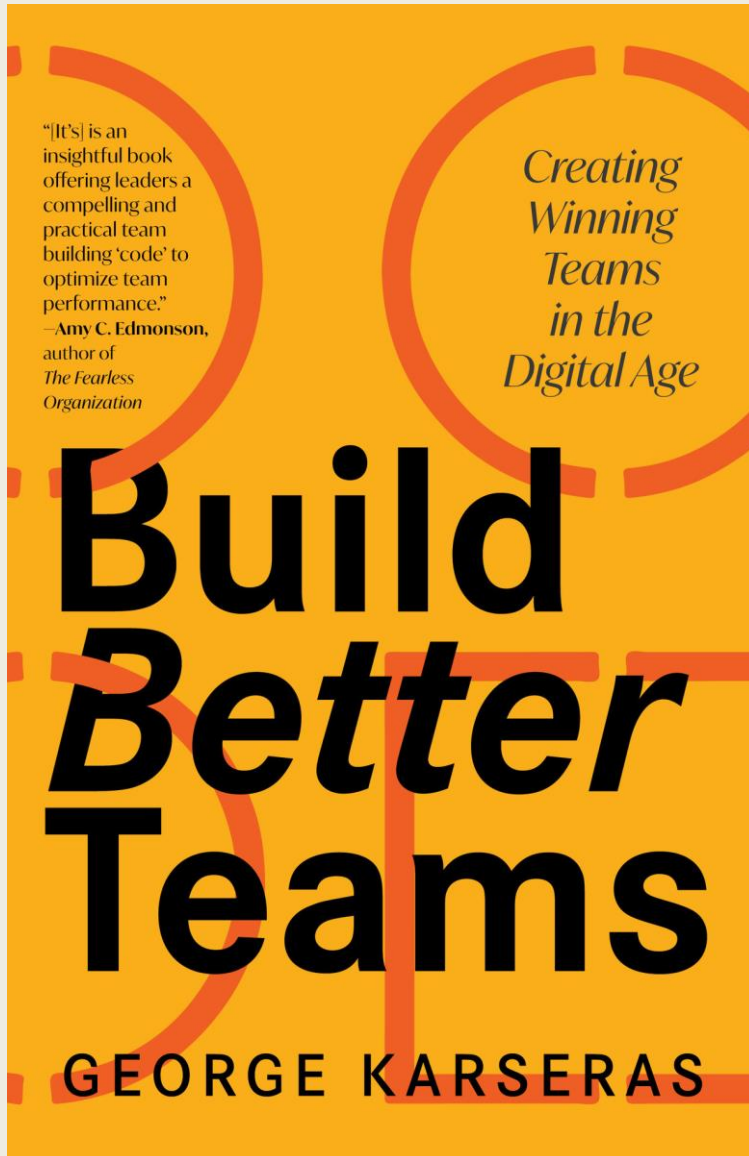
Team based learning?



Successful?

Summary

- + The teaming landscape is changing
- + Teams need help
- + A new code is now available to help you navigate your terrain



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Selected Questions From The Audience

- + Was that root based on Ed having a greater level of cognitive trust in Cho? i.e. he believed he could do it more than Luke, as he had an existing relationship with Luke?
- + What do you do with an existing team where the team members don't have confidence in each other's ability to perform and deliver?
- + Do you think someone may feel less safe because of outside pressures? e.g. financial pressures of being the major income earner for the household
- + How about doing a root cause analysis and perform a motivational lift up based on each member's personal traits?
- + We have team objectives rather than individual objectives. Individuals follow shared principles and values to contribute to team performance.
- + Do you consider it best practice to keep the high performing team for any and all activities or change team members to improve the skill set of the whole organisation
- + Is there an optimum size for a team?
- + Should one sub-divide these larger teams?
- + size depends on the complexity of the project and its characteristics
- + Do self regulating teams work without having a dedicated team leader in charge?