

# The surprising science behind agile leadership

Why we do what we do

Jonathan Rasmusson

# What we're going to talk about

- Why agile leadership works
- What's changed in the last 40 years
- What the next 40 are looking like

A story

679

# How would this map to 'work' today?

- Why don't we compare team velocities?
- What can't all software project plans be created from a single baseline?
- Why are our estimates so wrong!!!

Daniel H. Pink

author of the *New York Times* bestseller  
*A Whole New Mind*

**DRiVE**

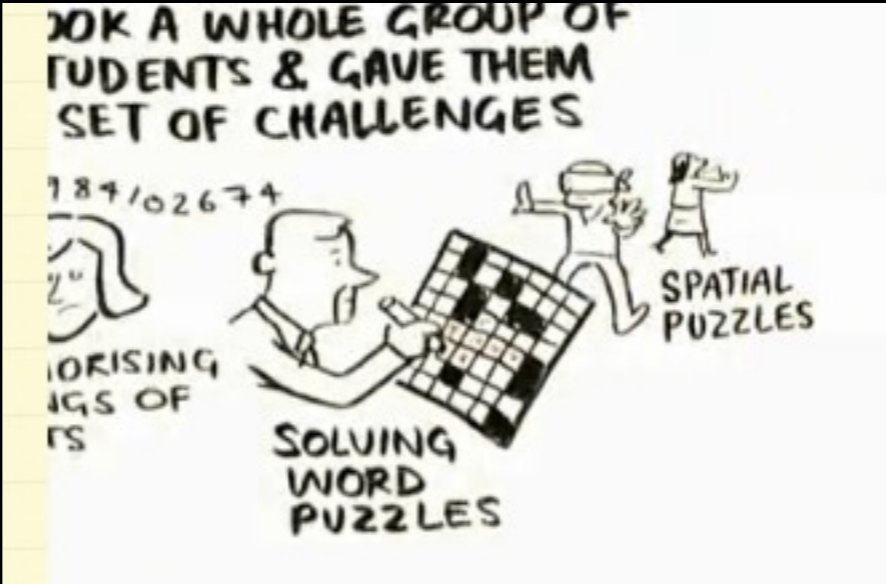
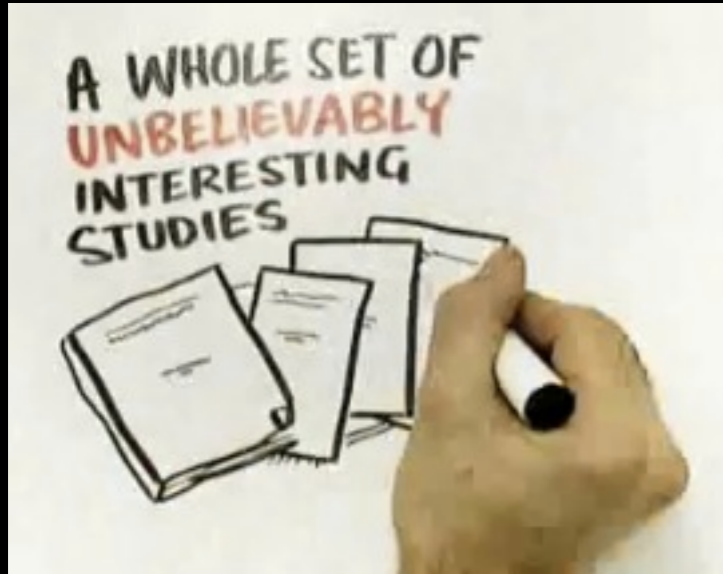
The Surprising Truth  
About What Motivates Us





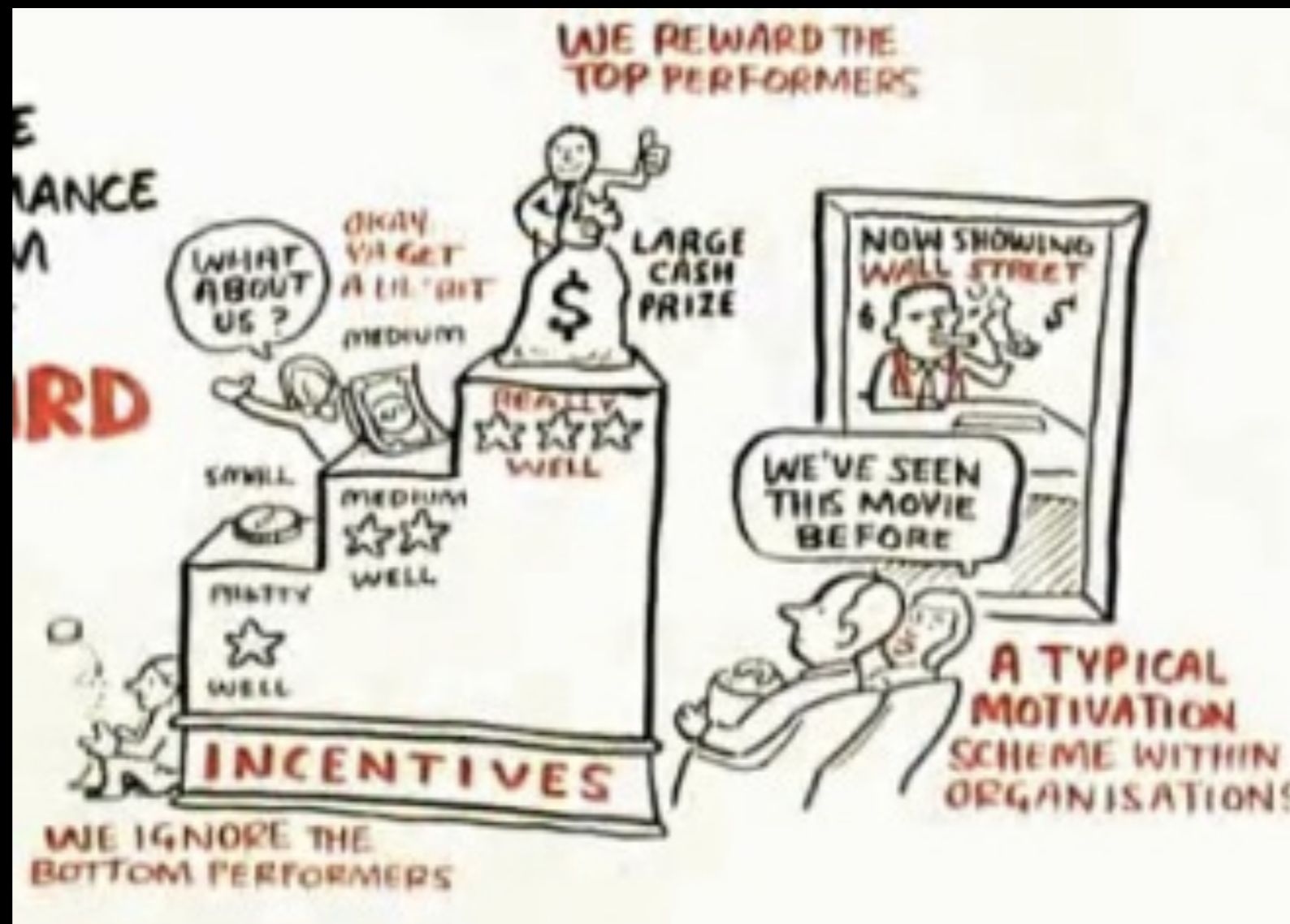
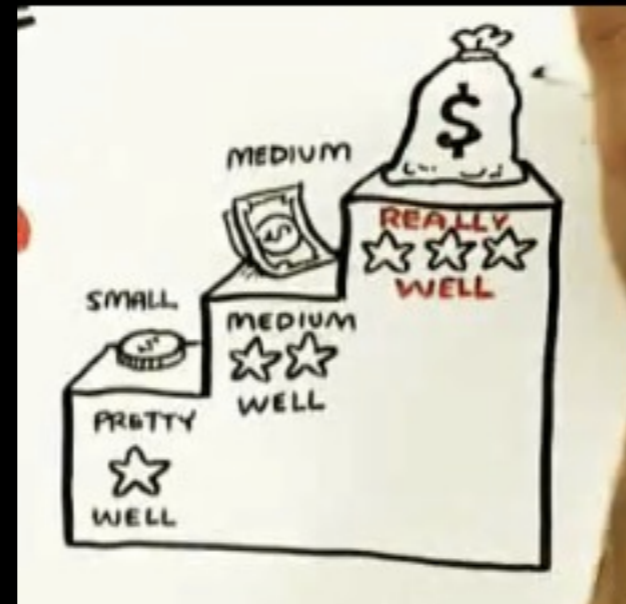
OUR MOTIVATIONS  
ARE UNBELIEVABLY  
INTERESTING

**WE ARE NOT AS  
ENDLESSLY MANIPULABLE  
& PREDICTABLE AS YOU  
WOULD THINK!**



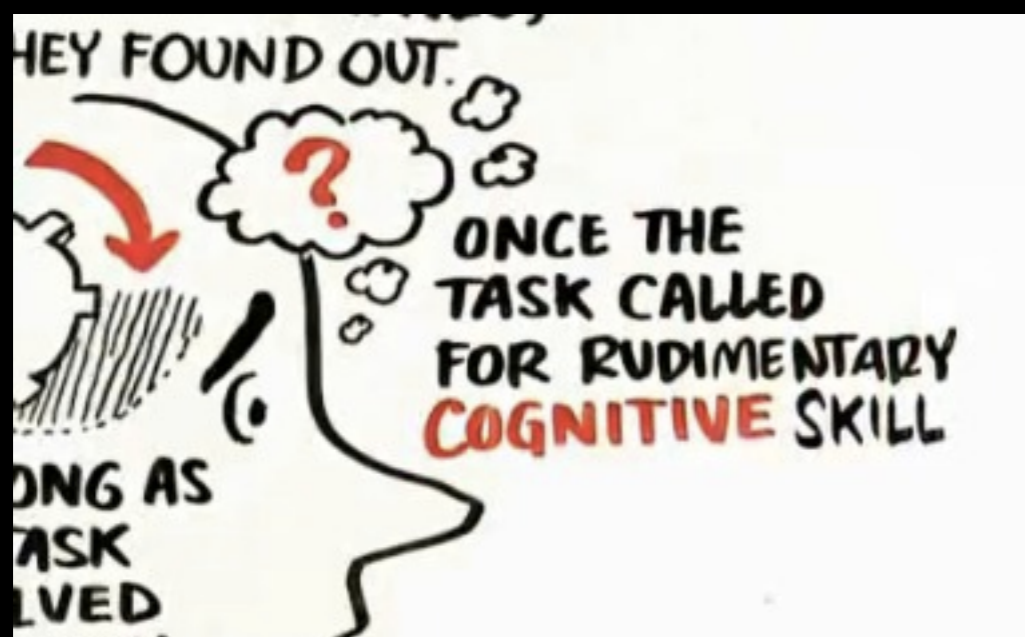
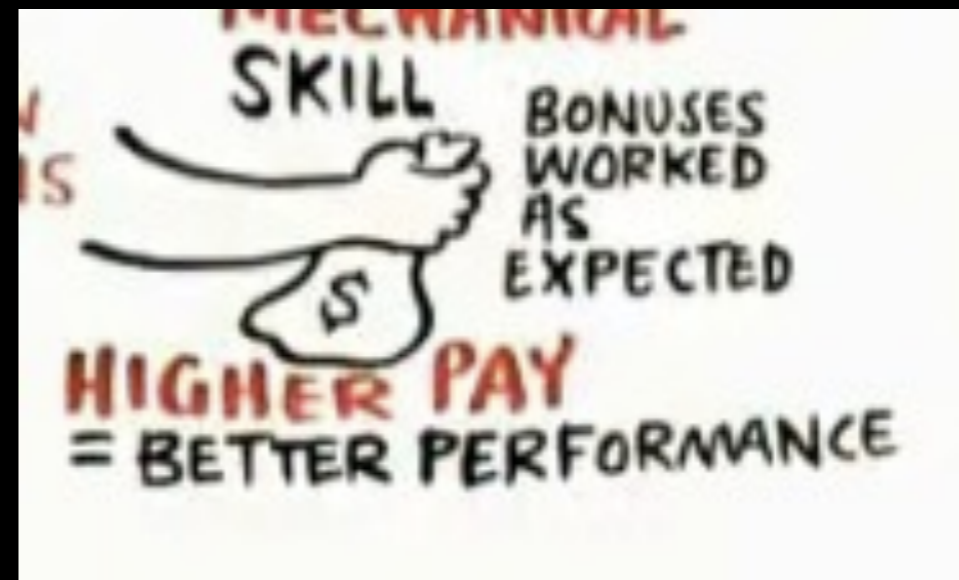
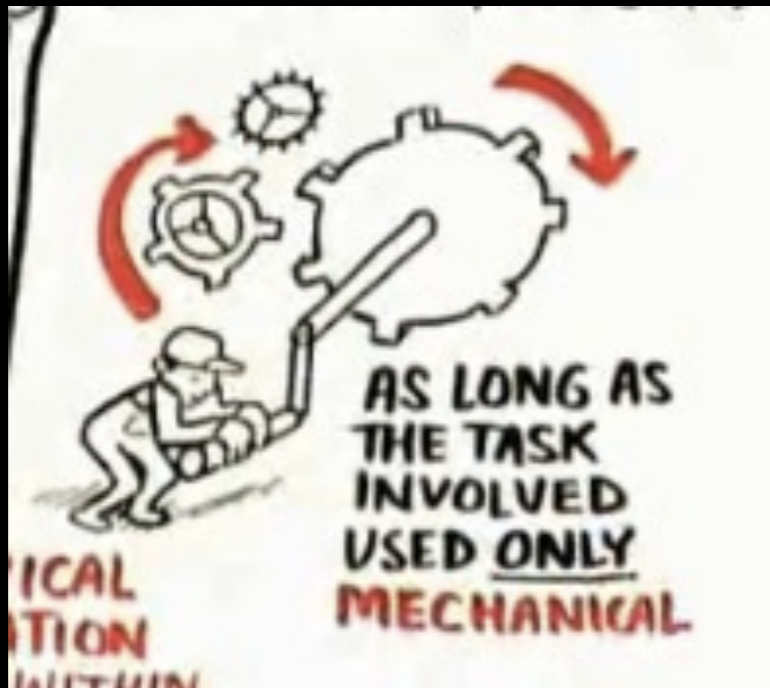


TO INCENTIVISE  
THEIR PERFORMANCE  
THEY GAVE THEM  
**3** LEVELS OF  
**REWARD**



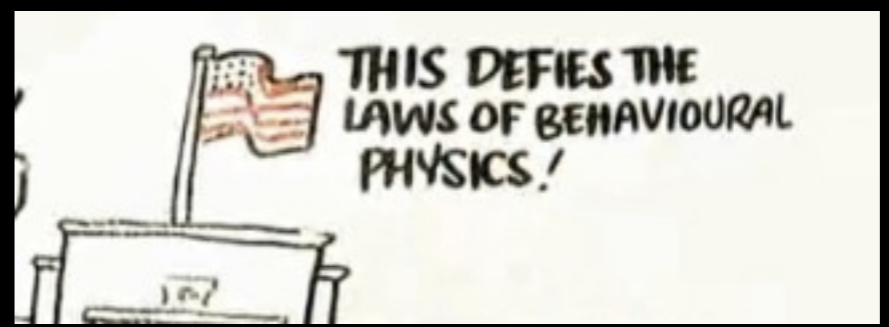
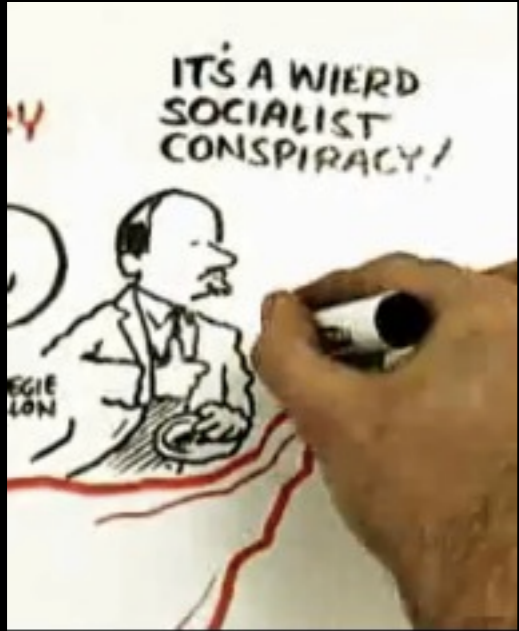


WHAT HAPPENS? THEY DO THE TEST... HAVE THESE INCENTIVES, HERE'S WHAT THEY FOUND OUT.









FOR SIMPLE, STRAIGHT FORWARD  
TASKS ... **OUTSTANDING**



WHEN A TASK GETS MORE  
COMPLICATED, IT REQUIRES  
SOME CONCEPTUAL, CREATIVE  
THINKING.





**OUTSTANDING**

← MONEY IS A MOTIVATOR

**FACT**

IF YOU DON'T PAY ENOUGH... PEOPLE **WON'T** BE MOTIVATED

YOU GET THAT

**WON'T** BE MOTIVATED

PAY PEOPLE ENOUGH TO TAKE THE ISSUE OF MONEY OFF THE TABLE

**WORK**

3 FACTORS LEAD TO BETTER PERFORMANCE & PERSONAL SATISFACTION...

**AUTONOMY**

**MASTERY**

**PURPOSE**

**AUTONOMY**

THE DESIRE TO BE SELF DIRECTED

YEAH... THIS WAY

TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF MANAGEMENT RUN FOUL OF THIS

YES SIR

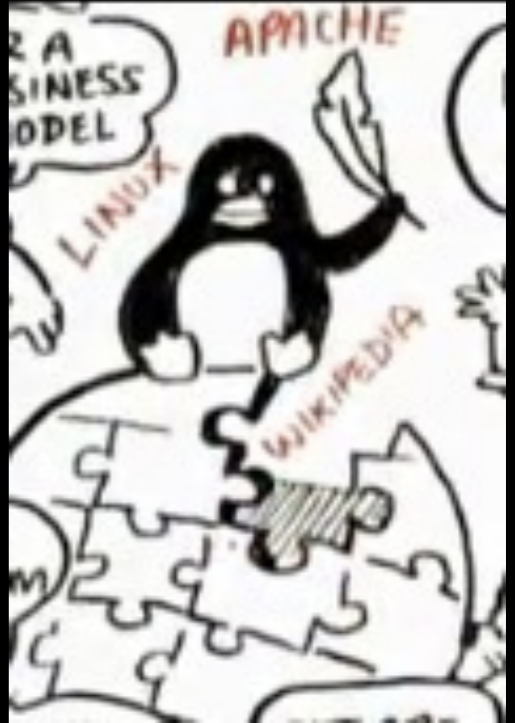
MANAGEMENT IS GREAT IF YOU WANT **COMPLIANCE**

IF YOU WANT **ENGAGEMENT** SELF DIRECTED IS BETTER





EMERGE  
**MASTERY**  
THE URGE TO GET  
BETTER AT STUFF





MORE & MORE ORGANISATIONS  
WANT A  
TRANSCENDENT  
**PURPOSE**







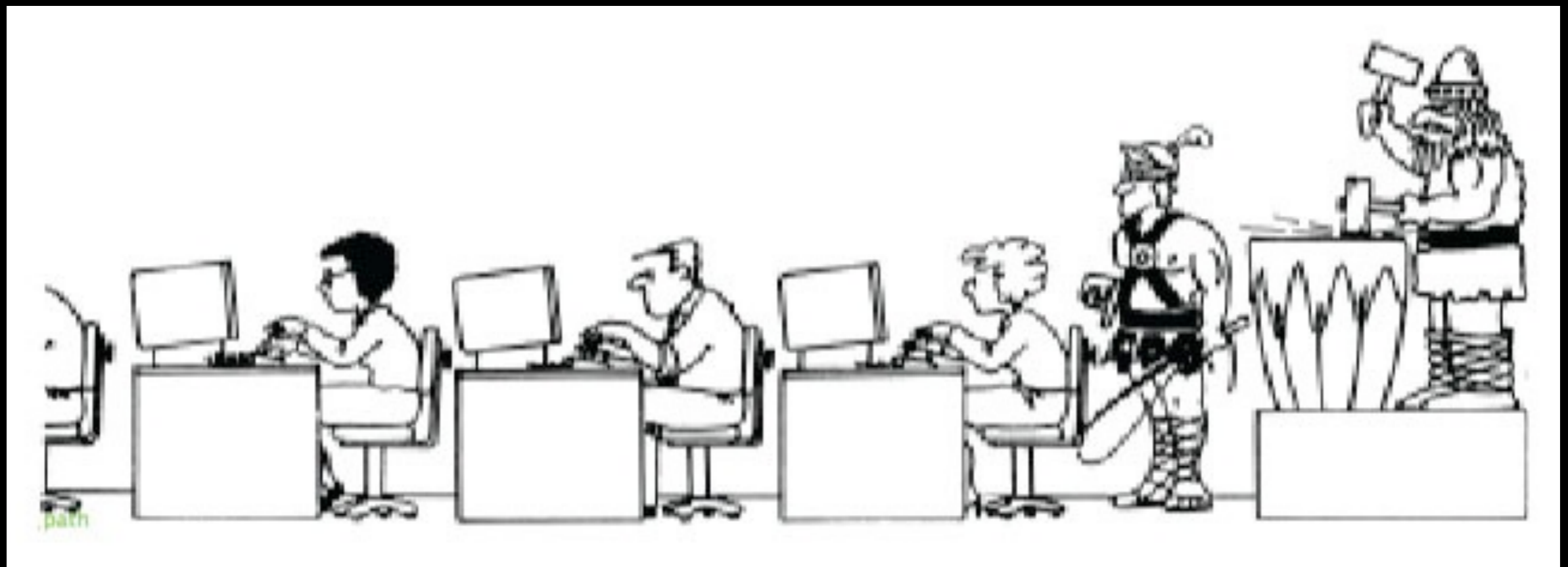




So how does this map  
to our world?



# What work in software used to look like





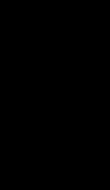
# Command and control



## Good for compliance

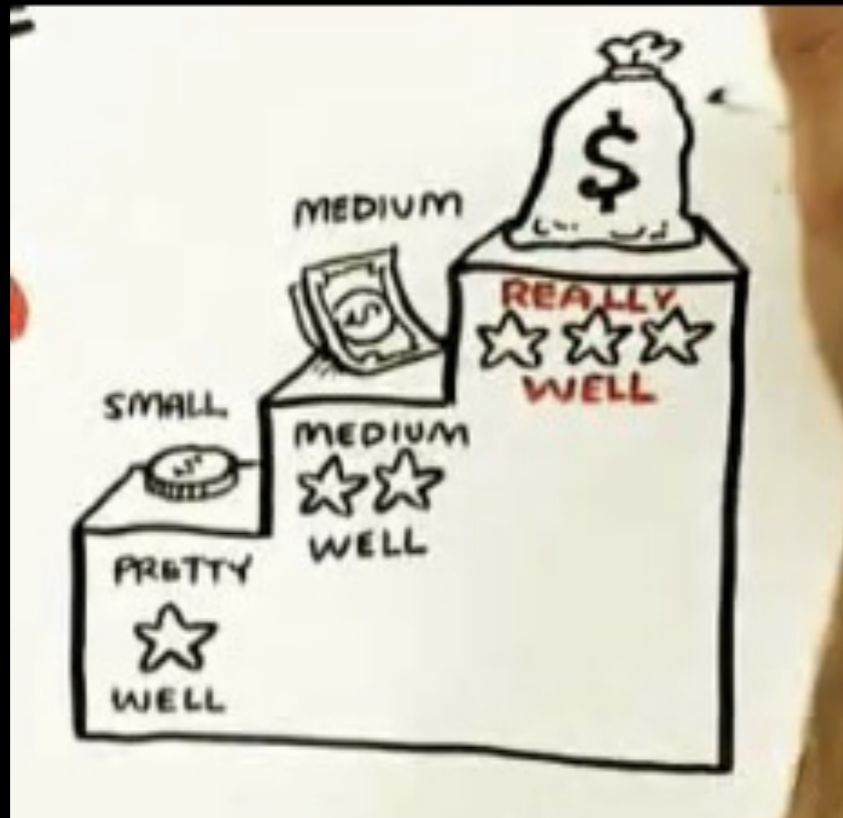


## Terrible for engagement



What motivates us  
today is totally different

# If it used to be ...



now it's something else.





The nature of work has  
changed.

# The future of work

<http://www.slideshare.net/jbrenman/the-future-of-work-2361479>


Project teams at work  
are beginning to resemble  
movie production teams.



A film set with a white backdrop and various equipment. The backdrop is illuminated by three spotlights hanging from a metal truss. In the foreground, there are several pieces of equipment: two spotlights on tripods on the left, a director's chair, a clapperboard, a camera on a tripod, and a boom microphone on the right. The background is a brick wall.

**Independent individuals  
with unique talents get  
together to work on a  
company's project.**



A film set with a white backdrop and various equipment. The backdrop is illuminated by three spotlights hanging from a metal truss. In the foreground, there are several pieces of equipment: two spotlights on stands to the left, a director's chair, a clapperboard on a stand, a camera on a tripod, and a boom microphone on a stand to the right. The floor is a light-colored wooden surface.

**At the end, they all go their  
separate ways. They might  
work together again in the  
future. They might not.**





**Individuals will have  
more freedom and power  
than ever before.**

**Your earning potential  
will be based on merit,  
not location.**





Sound familiar?

# Agile leadership model



Behaviour is  
induced---not  
compelled.

Servant-leader

Self organizing

Flat

Empowered

Accountable

Self directed

Merit based

# Agile teams like to be autonomous.



# MASTERY



## Agile teams like to continuously improve.



Retrospectives

No broken windows

Testing day one

Blogging

Opensource



# We all want purpose.



Genchi genbutsu -  
“go and see”

Agile inception deck

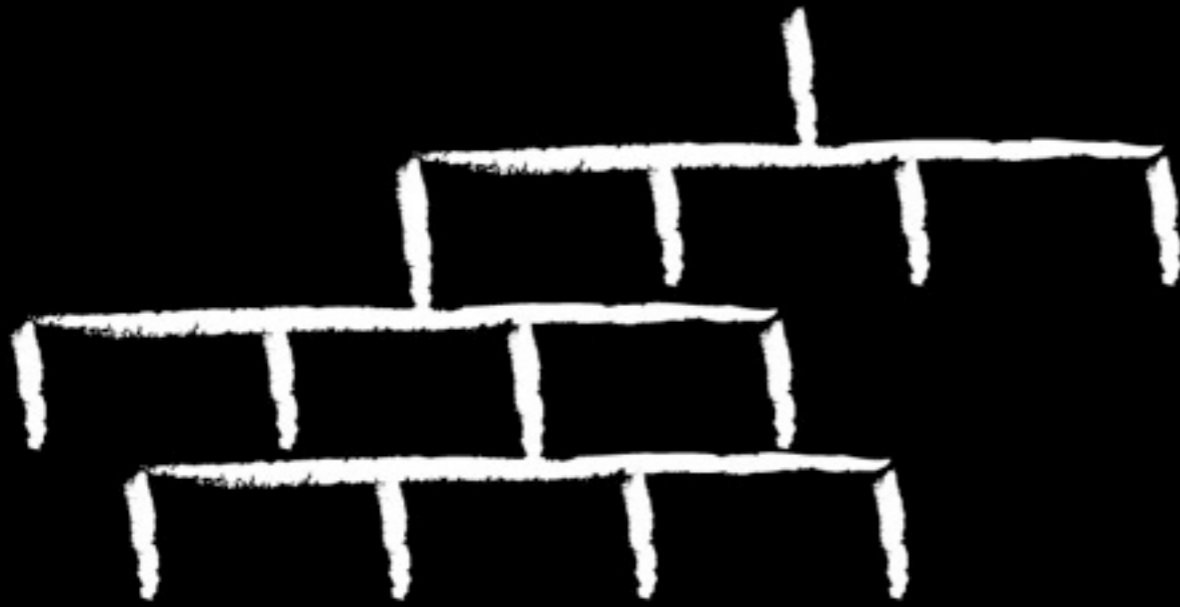
Why are we here?

Why aren't we all  
working this way?

While the work has changed ...

*Organizations haven't caught up yet.*

# The 'matrixed' organization



Steep formal hierarchy  
Chain of command  
If/then short term  
incentives

*“Don’t ship your org chart.” - Steven Sinofsky*



# Where most work is headed



Flat

No formal hierarchy

Self organizing

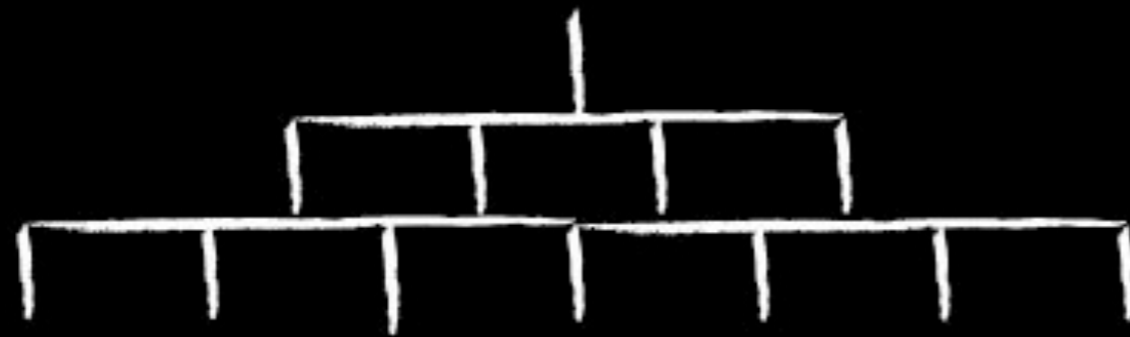
Servant-leader

*“Stand back and get out of the way.”*

Can't they co-exist?

Yes, but ...

# Agile today



Annual budgets  
Titles / Roles  
\$\$\$ incentives



≠ Trust

Empowerment  
No formal titles / roles  
Crave autonomy

## A clash of cultures

# !Tension!

- Companies like the autonomy and self direction of agile as long as it ...
- Doesn't conflict with their short term goals

Warning: this is deeper than quarterly bonuses.



# It's a fundamentally different belief system

<b>Newtonian Belief System: Stability is the norm.</b>	<b>Quantum Belief System: Chaos is the norm.</b>
The world is linear and predictable.	Uncertainty reigns.
It is controllable.	Expect surprises.
We can minimize change.	We should welcome change.
Add rigor to the process to increase the feeling of security.	Relax controls to increase the feeling of security.

©2002-2004, Doug DeCarlo

So what does this all mean  
for you and me?

# Companies the rely on ...

- innovation
- creativity
- engagement



Are going to be looking for more of this

We are already seeing this  
war for talent.

facebook

Google™

**Microsoft®**





# The good news

If this resonates with you ...

**YOU'RE  
NOT  
CRAZY!!!**

They are valid, scientific  
explanations for why you like to  
work the way you do.

If you are already into this ...

creative engaging work 

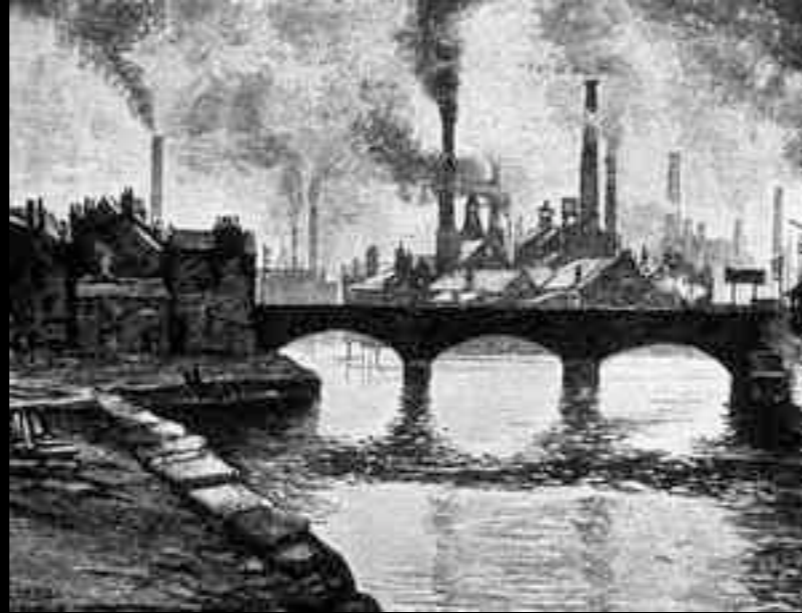
you are headed in the right direction.



The bad news is



*IT'S GOING  
TO TAKE  
SOME TIME*



100 years of history  
working against us.

# My advice

- Manage one's self
- Be flexible
- Do what works for you
- If you aren't getting what you need at work
  - seek it else where

No doubt 100 years from now  
people will be laughing at us for working agile.

So don't sweat it.

Go out there.

Kick butt.

And make something great.

# Learn more

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