

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP

Don't Let Politics Block Your Digital Initiatives

A presentation by Jane McConnell, independent adviser, researcher, and management briefer on digital strategies inside organizations.

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Strategy Advisor

18 years of extensive hands-on consulting experience with intranet and digital workplace strategy in over 60 large, global organizations.

Researcher

Ten years of research: annual surveys and reports since 2006



Approximately 300 organizations worldwide each year

Paris-based Workgroup



- Air France
- Air Liquide
- Allianz Worldwide Partners
- Biocodex
- BNP Paribas
- Euler Hermes
- Euronext
- Group SEB
- LafargeHolcim
- Nokia
- SNCF
- Société Générale
- Sodexo
- Vinci

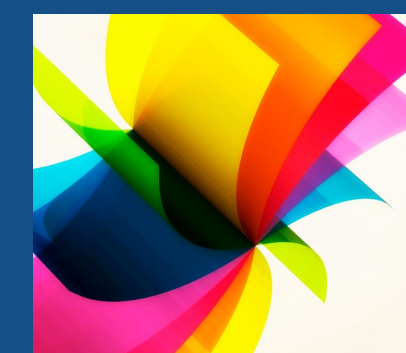
Author



MIT Sloan Management Review

How Digital Leaders Inspire Engagement

Neutralize Internal Politics in Digital Initiatives



Harvard Business Review

The Company Cultures That Help or Hinder Digital Transformation

Tracking the Trends in BYOD

Why do internal politics hinder digital initiatives and what can you do about it?



Deepen involvement

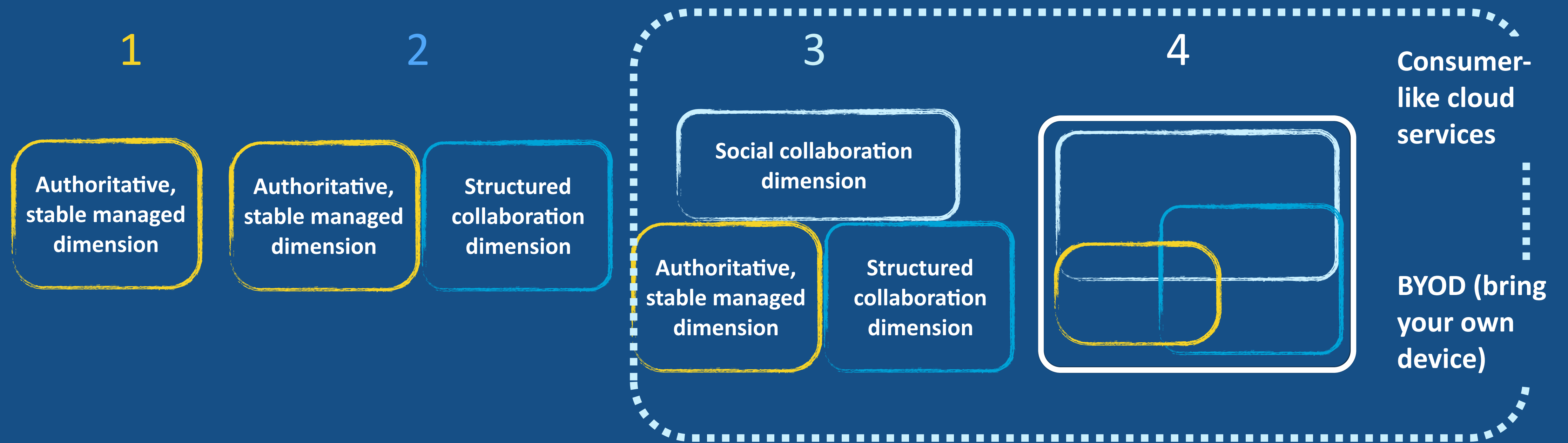
Broaden decision-making

Fluidify silos

The Why

It's about freedom, power and compromises.

In the beginning...



Losing Control?

Communication

✓ Message

✓ Target and Timing

IT

✓ Toolset

✓ Rollout

HR

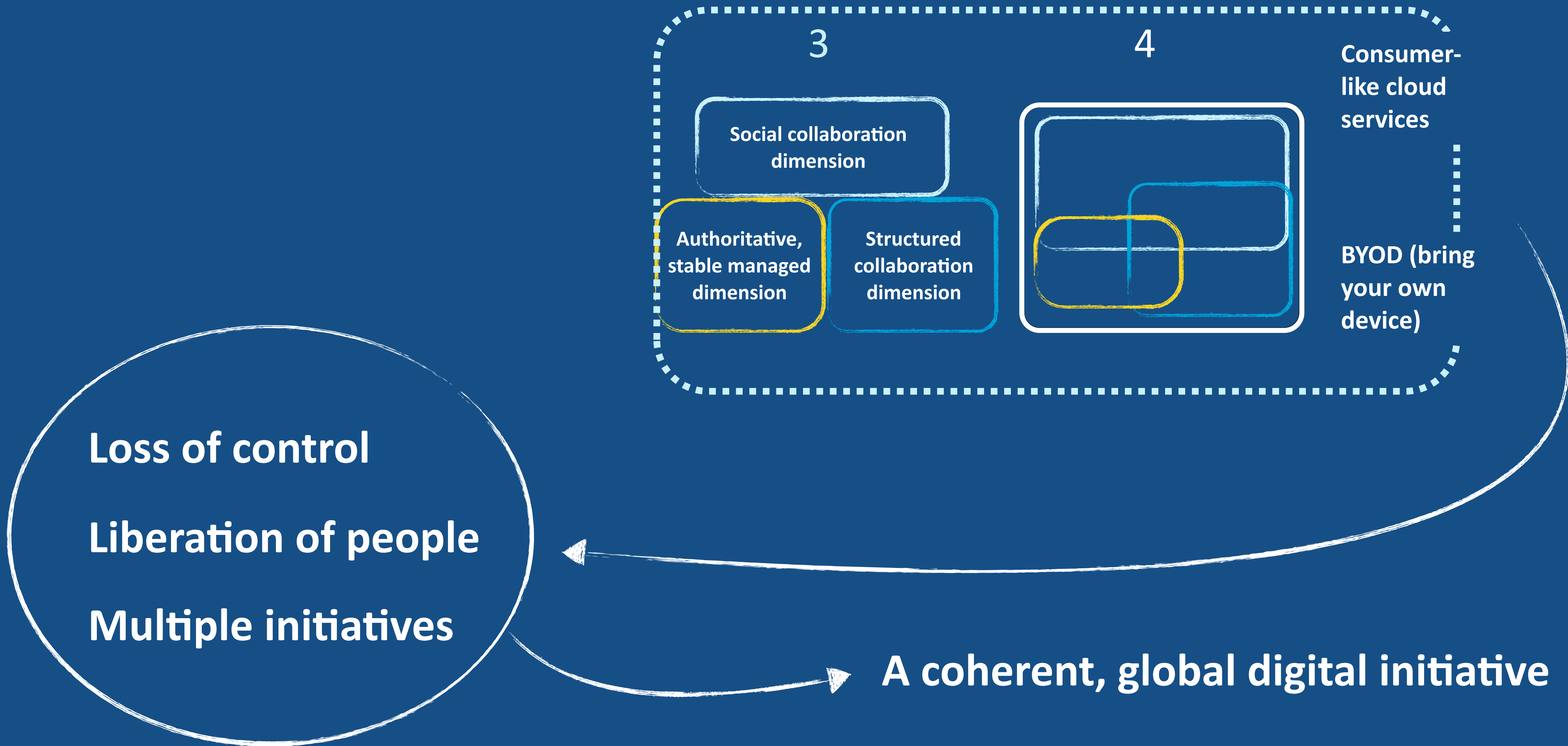
✓ Profiles

✓ Expertise (Personal Branding)

Leadership

✓ Decision-Making

✓ Hierarchical Controls



A “coherent, global” digital initiative raises issues...

Imposed from the top  Freedom of decisions

Common vanilla  Our favorite flavors

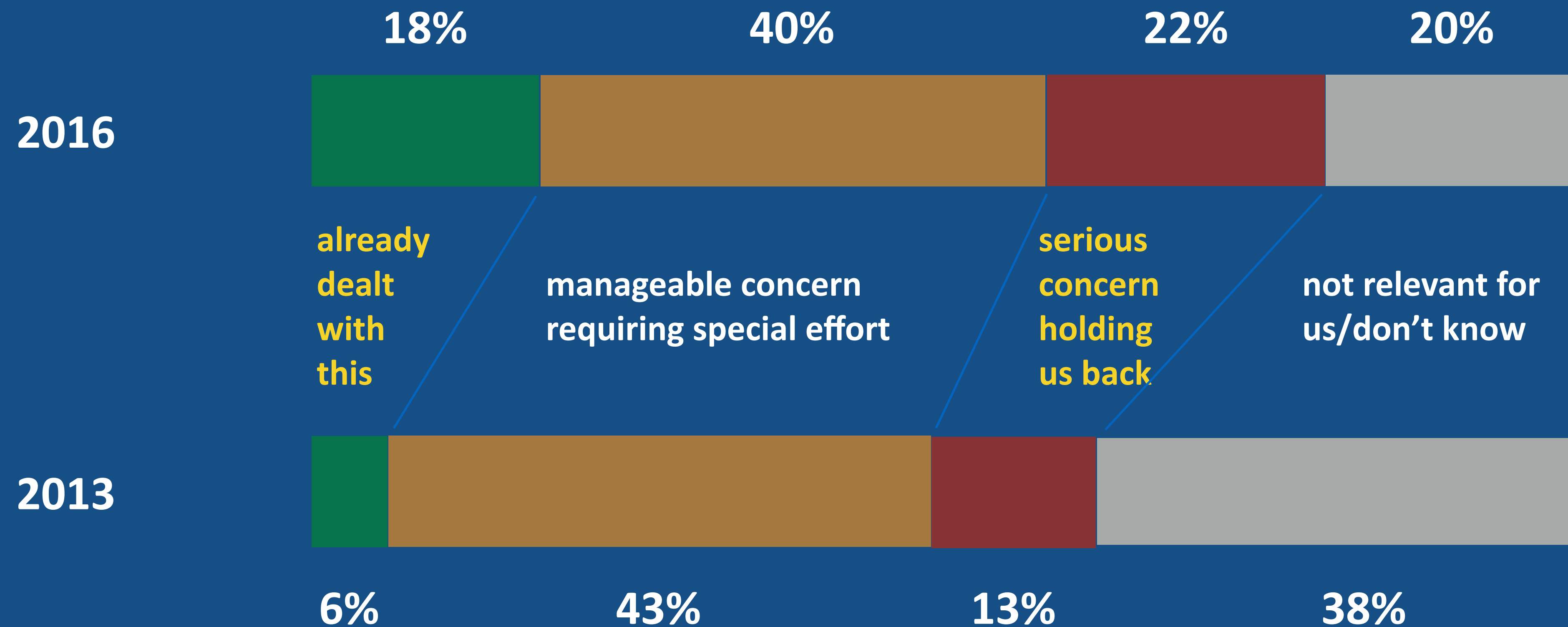
“We’ll build something better together.”  “We re happy with what we have now.”

...that often trigger internal political struggles.

Poll: Do internal politics impact your digital initiatives?

- No problems!
- It's a manageable concern, requiring special effort.
- It's a serious concern holding us back.
- Don't know.

Internal politics intensify in digitally maturing organizations



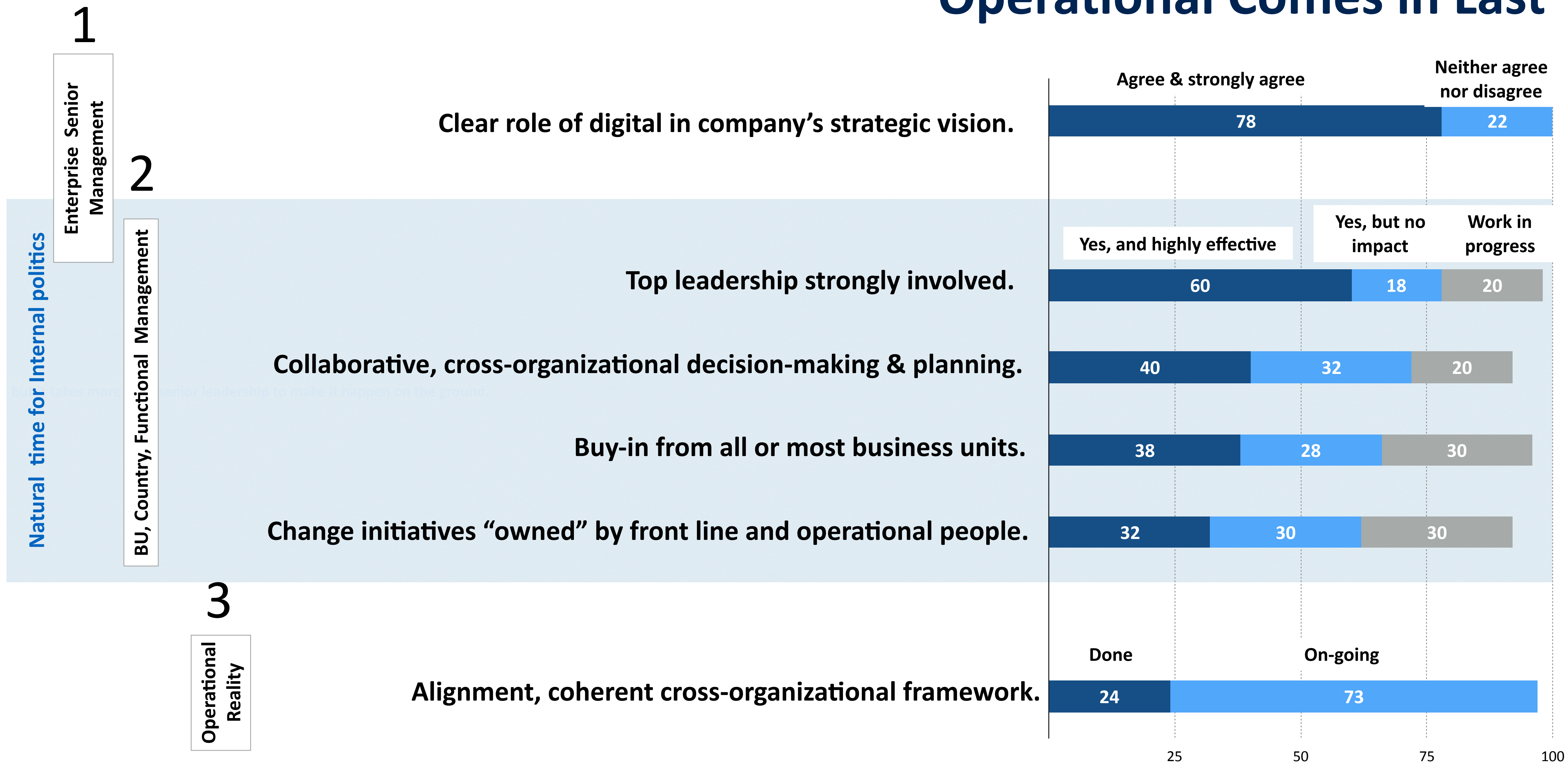
Data from 2013 and 2015 surveys of approximately 300 organizations. Figures from the most digitally mature organizations each of those years.

The How

1. Deepen involvement
2. Broaden decision-making
3. Fluidify silos



Operational Comes in Last



Data collected 2016. 311 people around the world.
Numbers represent actions, not intentions: "planned" and "not planned" are not included on the chart, which is why the bars do not quite reach totals of 100%.

Superficial Approach

Top Down Authority and Decision-Making



Deeper Approach

Listening, Sharing, Negotiating Agreements



Deepen Involvement...

- Front Lines
- Young, New Workforce
- Value Behaviors, All Levels

The How

1. Deepen involvement

2. Broaden decision-making

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Decision-Making Freedom within a Framework

Define the framework together. Identify the fundamental principles.

Principles last . Strategies change.

Examples

All digital initiatives will be clearly linked to operational and strategic needs.

We facilitate local initiatives rather than force central solutions.

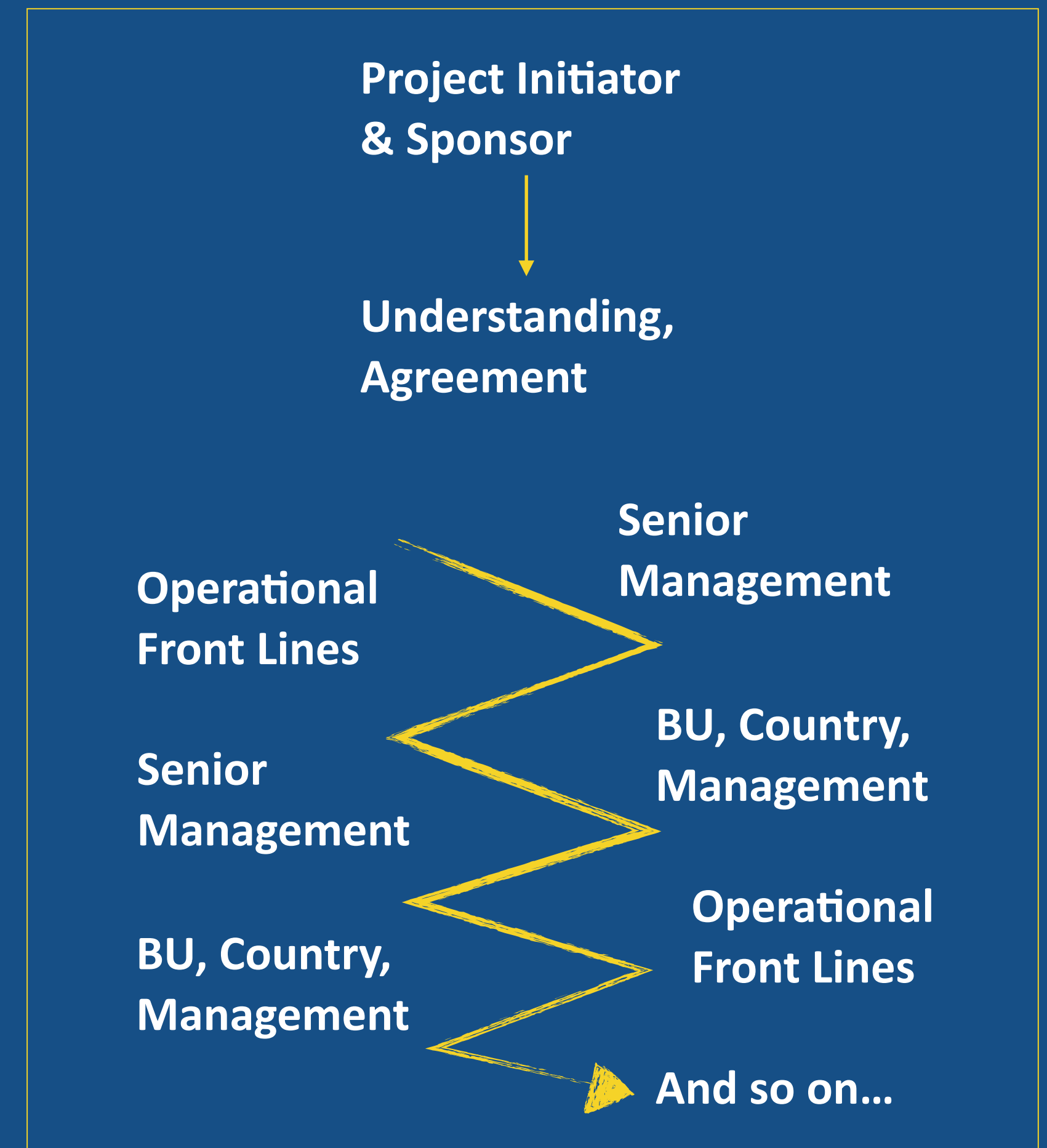
All spaces, communities and team sites will be open unless there are confidentiality reasons for closing them.

....

Decision-Making Freedom within a Framework

Define the framework together. Identify the fundamental principles.

Involve the right people from the beginning. Be sure to include people from the “edges”, those that are close to customers.



Decision-Making Freedom within a Framework

Define the framework together. Identify the fundamental principles.

Involve the right people from the beginning. Be sure to include people from the “edges”, those that are close to customers.

Place decision-making at the lowest level of accountability.

Who should decide?

The person closest to the issue who is accountable for the outcome.

How?

By consulting those who will be impacted by the decision.

By respecting the organization's fundamental principles.

A wide-angle landscape photograph showing a calm river winding through rolling green hills. The hills are covered in lush vegetation, and the river's surface reflects the sky and the surrounding greenery. The sky is a vibrant blue with scattered white clouds. The overall scene is peaceful and scenic.

Broaden Decision-Making...

- Simple Framework
- The Edges
- Sabotage

The How

1. Deepen involvement
2. Broaden decision-making
3. Fluidify silos

We can't break silos. We can build connections and flows between them.

Tips and examples:

1. Open information sources.
2. Make work visible.
3. Complement, don't duplicate the organizational structure.
4. Open silos especially at the top.

1. Open Information Sources

18% of companies with **open** information systems say internal politics are a “serious concern holding us back”.

The figure is **51%** for companies with **closed** systems.

“It’s confidential”

If

Misinterpretation

Inappropriate use

Deliberate transmission to third-party

Potential

Risks and consequences

Legal

Financial

Competitive

Image

Only then

Keep it closed

“No one else is interested”

If

Specific to a group
or part of the
organization

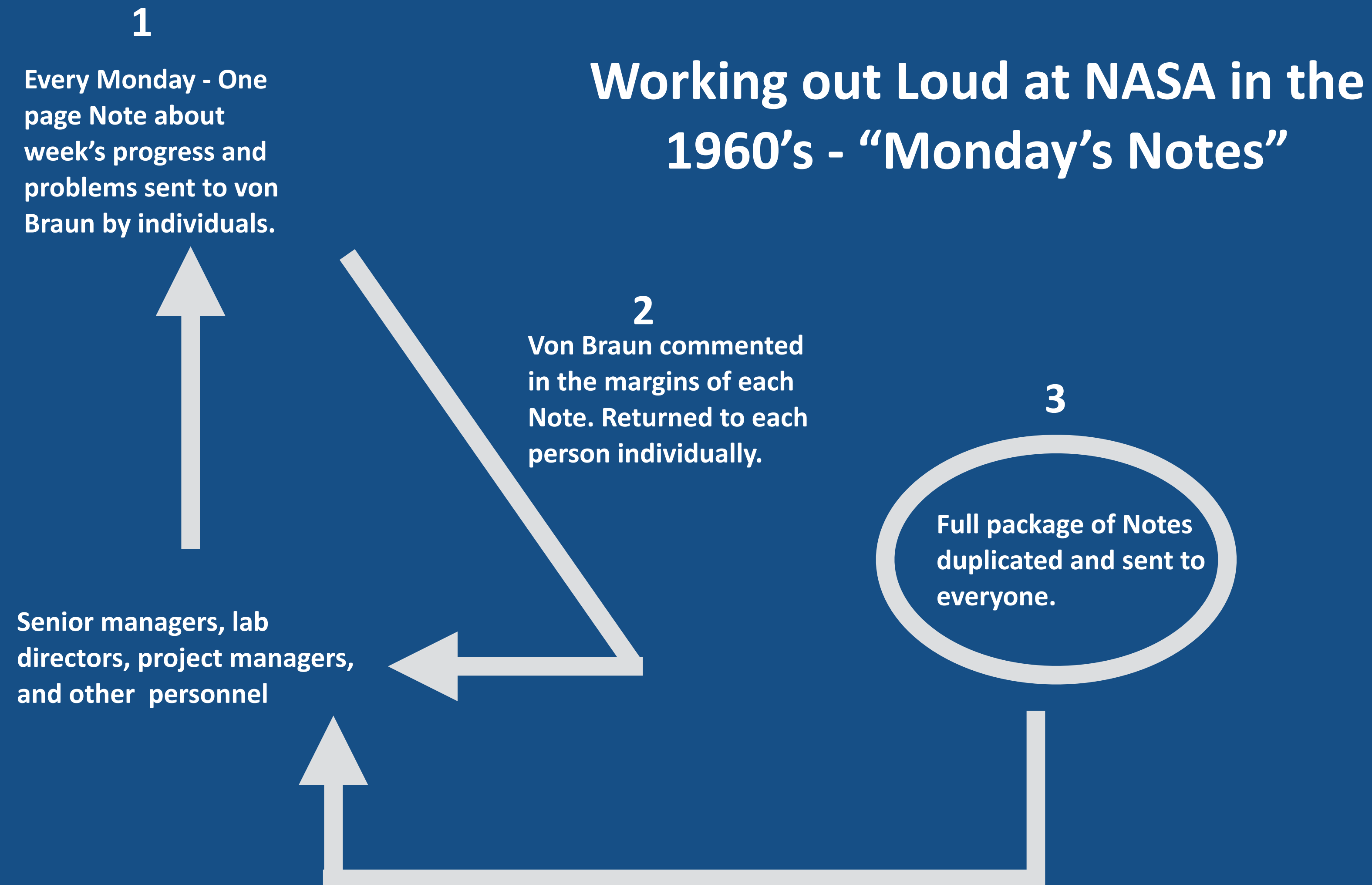
But no...

Then

Leave it open

Serendipity may bring
unexpected benefits!

2. Make Work Visible



Key Managers for Apollo (L-R): Charles Mathews, Dr Wernher von Braun, Dr George Mueller, and Gen. Samuel Phillips.



Wernher von Braun, in the 1960's. Director of the Marshall Space Flight Center. Initiator of Monday Notes.

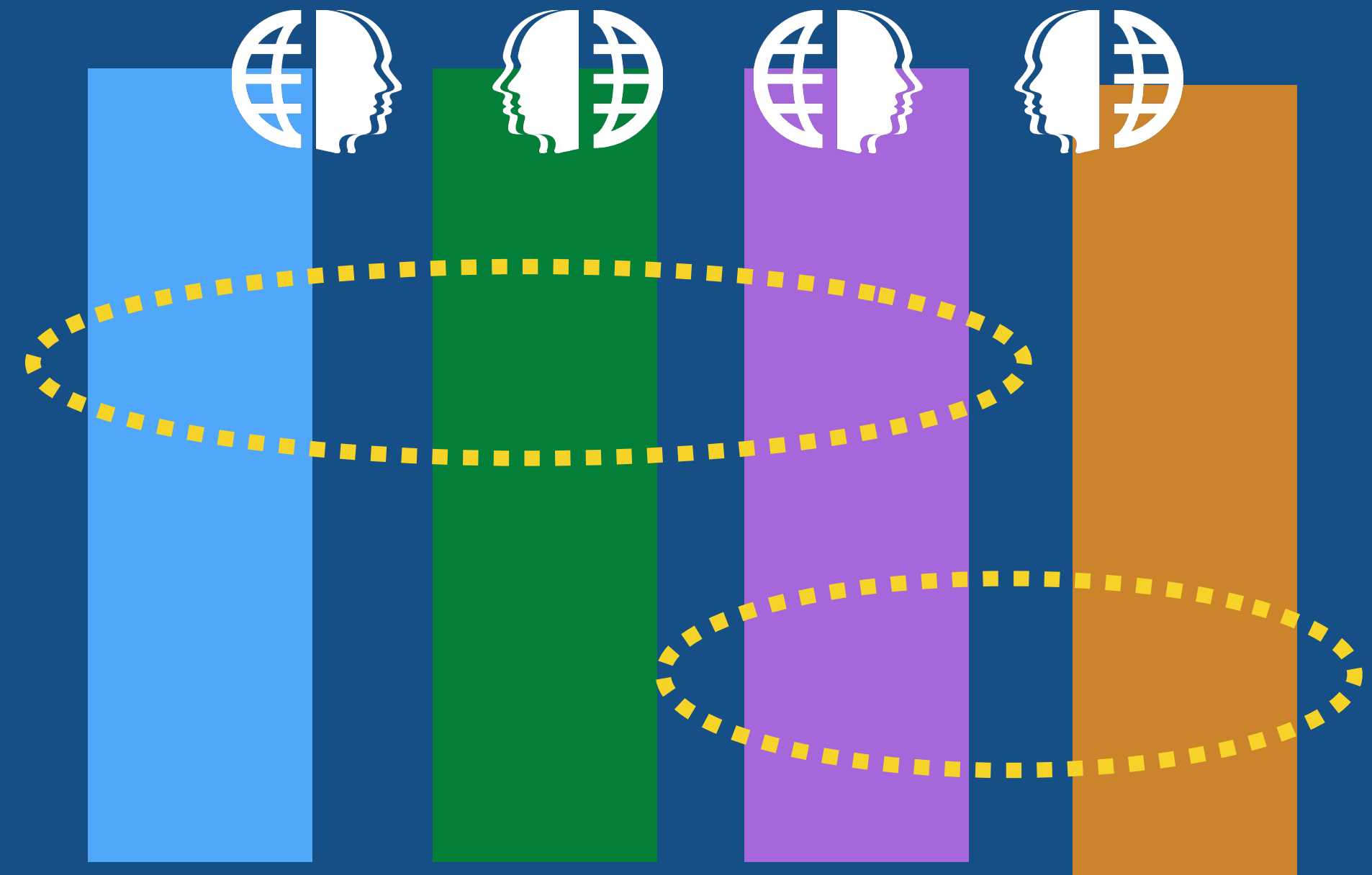
Photo from Wikipedia.

3. Complement, don't duplicate the organizational structure.

Allow only communities that are cross organizational.

4. Open silos from the top down.

Practice job-swapping at the top levels of the organization.



Why do internal politics hinder digital initiatives and what can you do about it?

Deepen involvement.



Broaden decision-making.



Fluidify silos.



Thank you!

Get in touch with Jane McConnell

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**Today's webinar will be available to watch
on-demand within several business days.**

Watch your inbox for access instructions.