Better Decision-Making for your Agile Team

Cristin Hernandez & Heidi Araya

March 24 – 4:00pm

"Who am I and why I care" - Heidi

8 AGILE TRANSITIONS FROM THE INSIDE... PLUS CONSULTING WORK

MOST PEOPLE ARE NOT ENGAGED AT WORK

HARD TO GROW AUTONOMY IN A COMMAND AND CONTROL ORGANIZATION

OPEN LEADERSHIP PROVIDES SOME GUIDANCE TO INCREASE AUTONOMY AND ENGAGEMENT

Who am I and why I care - Cristin

3 Agile Transformations & 1 Agile Evolution

Catalyst for adaptability, engagement, and resilience
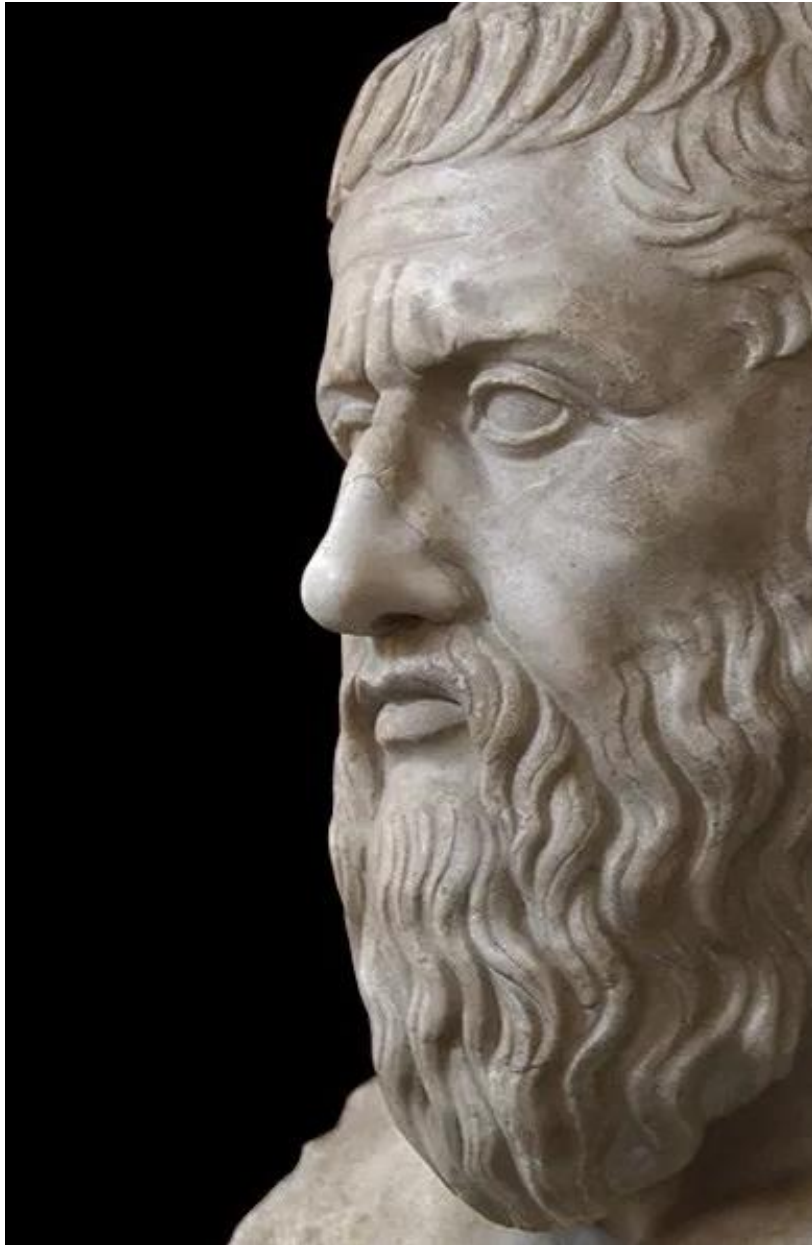
High performing teams from c-suite to development teams

Open Leadership Network values organizations and humans

"A good decision is based on knowledge and not on numbers."

- Plato

Knowledge

- Numbers
- The system
  - Incentives & pressures
  - Level of trust
  - Sense-making profiles
- Traps…

Some Decision-Making Traps

- Narrow Framing (this or that)
- Anchoring
- Overconfidence
- Sunk Cost
- Status Quo
- Confirmation Bias

Activity: Reflect on a recent decision

- Was it a good decision? How do you know?

- What decision-making traps did you fall into?

- **Narrow Framing –** *Limiting the decision to two options*

- **Anchoring –** *the mind gives disproportionate weight to first information it receives*

- **Overconfidence –** *bias towards believing one can predict the future & forgetting potential pitfalls*

- **Sunk Cost –** *basing decisions on past behaviors and a desire to not lose the invested time or money*

- **Status Quo –** *bias towards options that are similar to the current situation*

- **Confirmation Bias –** *using only information that supports our existing instinct or point of view while avoiding information that contradicts it*
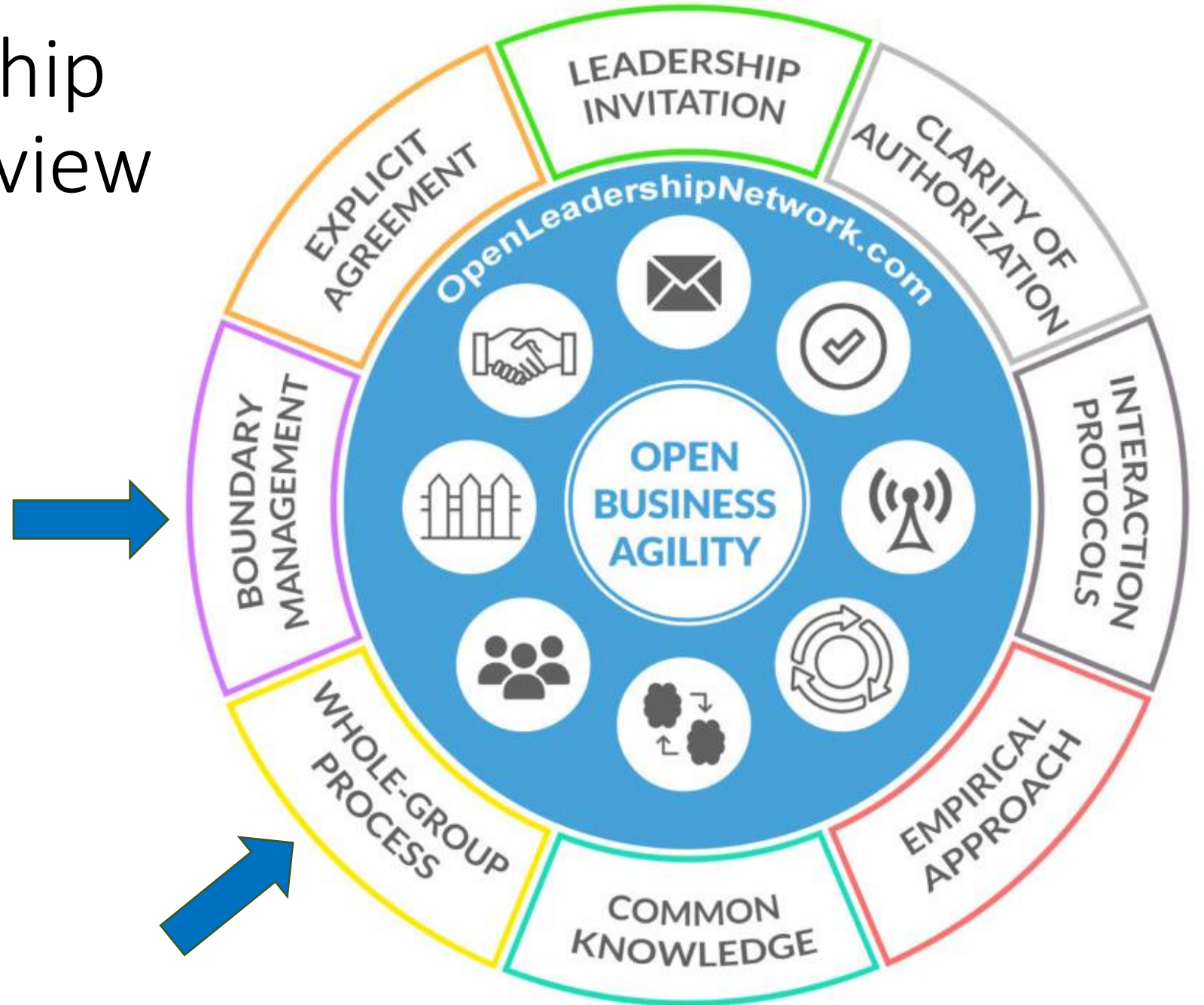
2 Behavioral Patterns that Improve Knowledge*

- Include different perspectives
- Be clear about objectives and boundaries

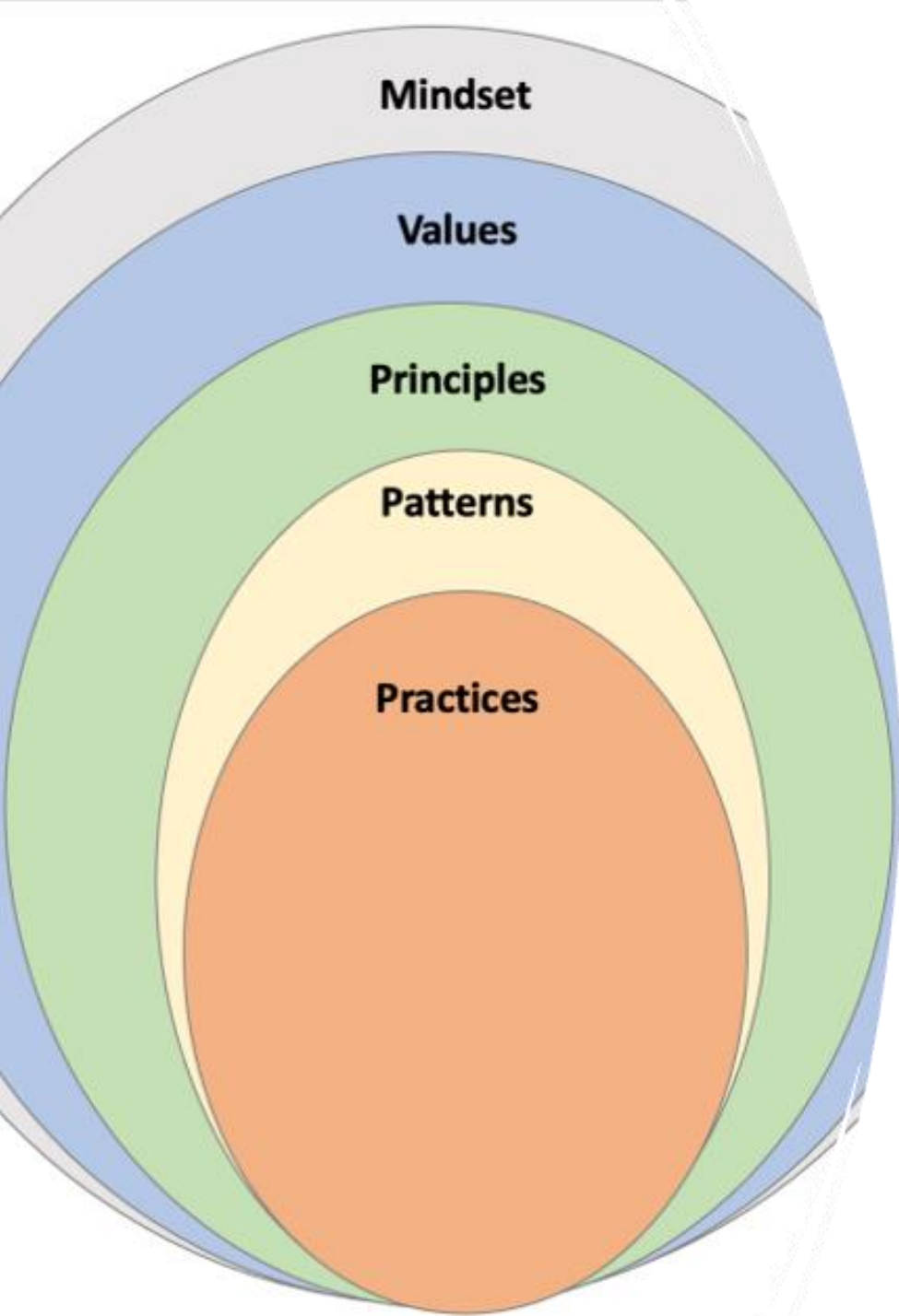* and the ability to make good decisions!

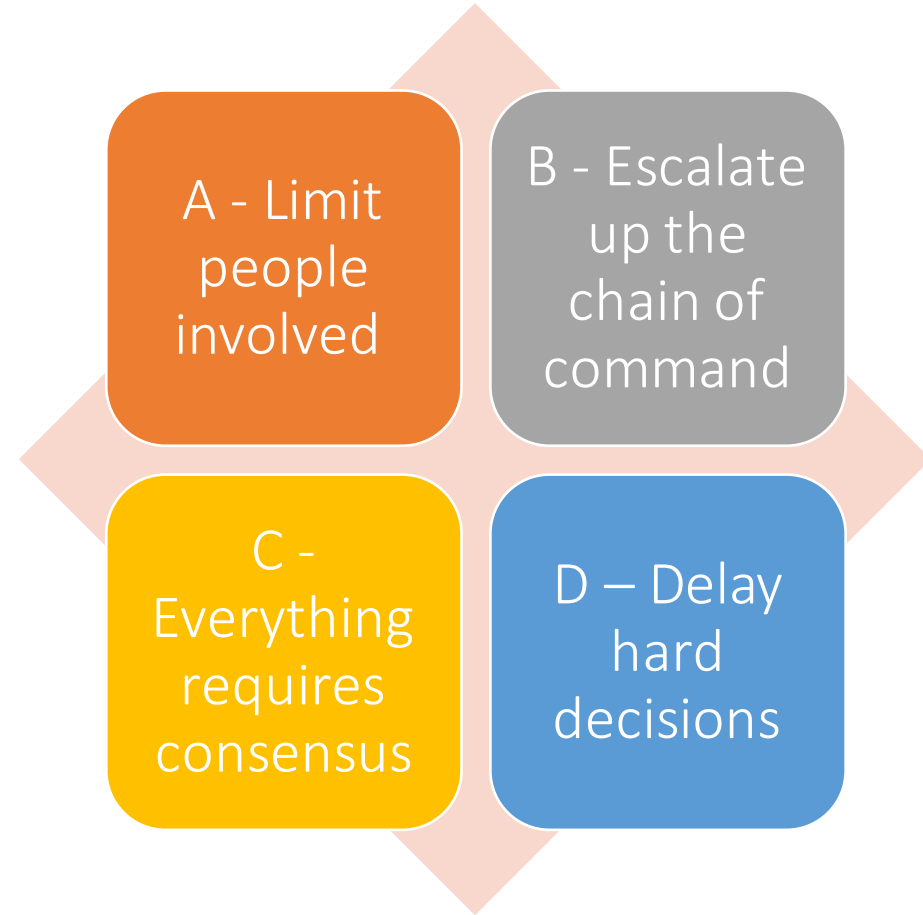Open Leadership Patterns Overview

Patterns are Everywhere

… and once you know them…

- people will expect the pattern and ask questions if it's missing
- you can easily spot anti-patterns

Principles, Patterns, & Practices

- **Principle** – rules governing behavior
- **Pattern** – model, example
- **Practice** – application of something
- What is not a pattern?
  - 3 questions in the Daily Scrum = practice
  - BUT the daily Scrum contains Open Patterns

What Decision Making patterns does your organization or team follow?

A - Limit people involved

B - Escalate up the chain of command

C - Everything requires consensus

D – Delay hard decisions

Boundary management

Be clear about objectives and boundaries

- Essential boundaries are clearly defined
- Open enough to generate self-organization
- Explicitly communicated
- Carefully maintained
- Boundary Management domains include Time, Task and Territory

The rules of the game!

Decide how to decide

- Explicitly communicate
    - The decision to be made
    - Who decides?
    - Who provides input?
    - Who can overturn the decision?
    - How will we decide?
- Guardrails
    - Budget, timeline to decide, timeline to deliver, what's in-scope, what's out-of-scope, principles

Open Leadership Patterns Overview
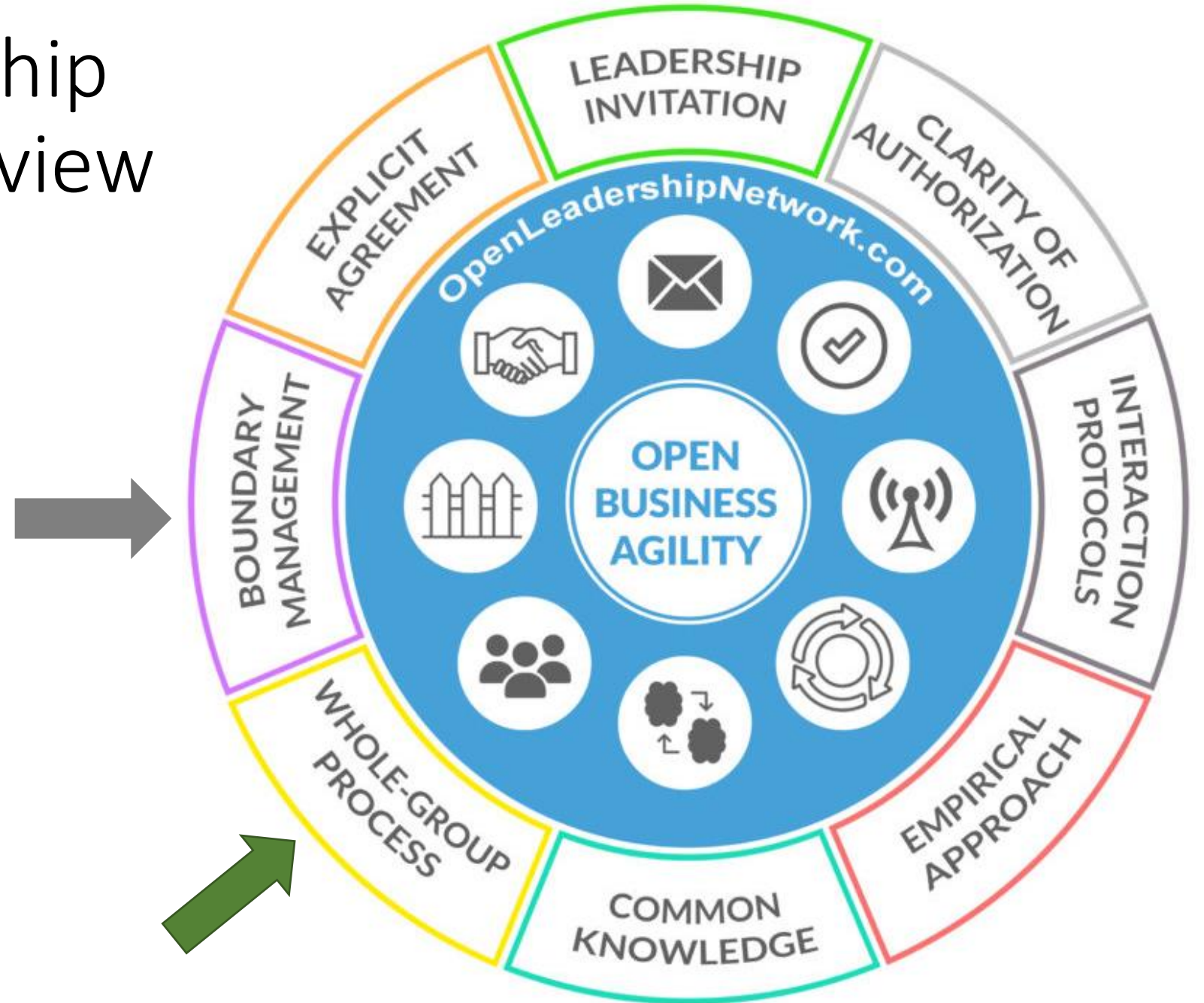
Pattern: Whole Group Process

Include different perspectives

Whole group over closed door dialogue

Diversity of thought reduces blind spots

Considerations for impact and risk should inform how many people and whom to involve
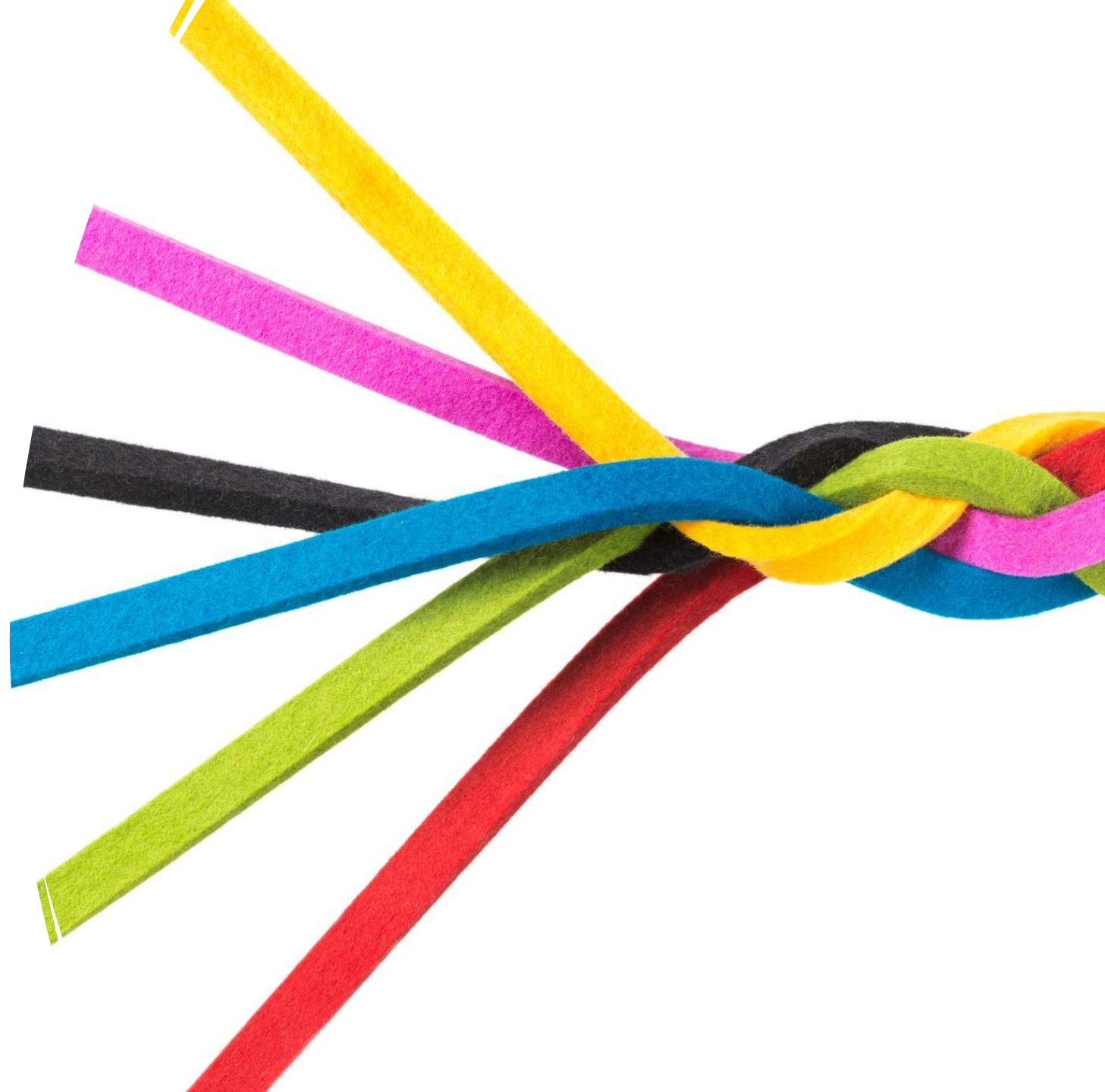
What is Whole Group Process NOT?

- Consensus
- Chaos or free-for-all
- Decision by committee
- Everyone always goes along with one person's idea
- *-est person wins

Whole Group Process for Better Decision Making

- **Frameworks, formats, ideas**
  - Leverage existing team events & meetings
  - Open Space Technology
  - Lean Coffee
  - Surveys
  - *How else? Post in chat*

- **Practices & techniques**
  - Fist to Five
  - Thumb or dot vote
  - Replace "or" with "and"
  - Remove all options
  - *How else? Post in chat*

Reflection

- Do you fall into any traps?
- Could you use boundary management or whole group process?
- What barriers are in your way to applying these concepts?

Wrap Up

- What resonates – what doesn't?
- Questions?

Connect with us!
- CoachingAgileJourneys.com
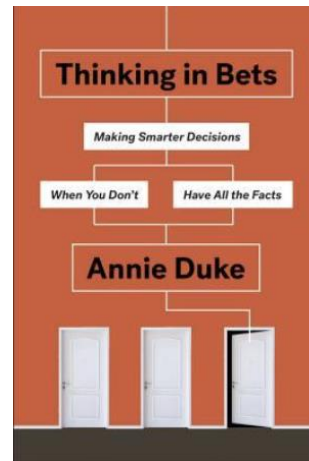- Cristin Hernandez @AgileCoachCris
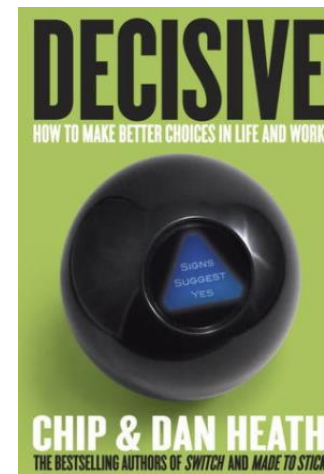- Heidi Araya @HeidiAraya

Recommended Resources

HBR Article: The Hidden Traps in Decision Making

Open Leadership Network

Thinking In Bets

Decisive

HBR Article: Seven Transformations of Leadership