

| **Grow** your career.
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Rethinking Change Leadership: Dealing With Complexity

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Stephen Friedman

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Teaching, Organizational Behavior, Team Development, Human Resource Management and Interpersonal Management in the BBA, MBA, MMKT, MGMT, and MMAI Programs.

Executive coach, facilitator and educator, working in the areas of leadership and management skills development, group and team development, organizational learning and human resource management for numerous organizations and individuals for over 25 years.

Other stuff...



“

“We try to buy thoughts ready-made and guaranteed to fit, in the shape of systems installed by experts. We try to substitute discussion for thought by organizing committees; a committee may function very well indeed as a clearinghouse for thoughts, but more commonly a committee organization is just an elaborate means of fooling oneself into believing that a spell spent in talking is the same as a spell spent in thinking.”

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— HARVEY S. FIRESTONE

Learn more at fs.blog/firestone

”

What Helps Us Solve Problems?

Get the right data

Use past experiences and expertise

Get the 'facts'

Gather all the information

Understand the TRUE problem

Find the root cause

Think Critically

Discover best practices

Gather diverse perspectives
and discuss the options

Trust your gut

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Why Is This Topic So Important?

We Are Living in Turbulent Times!



mental
health
is
health

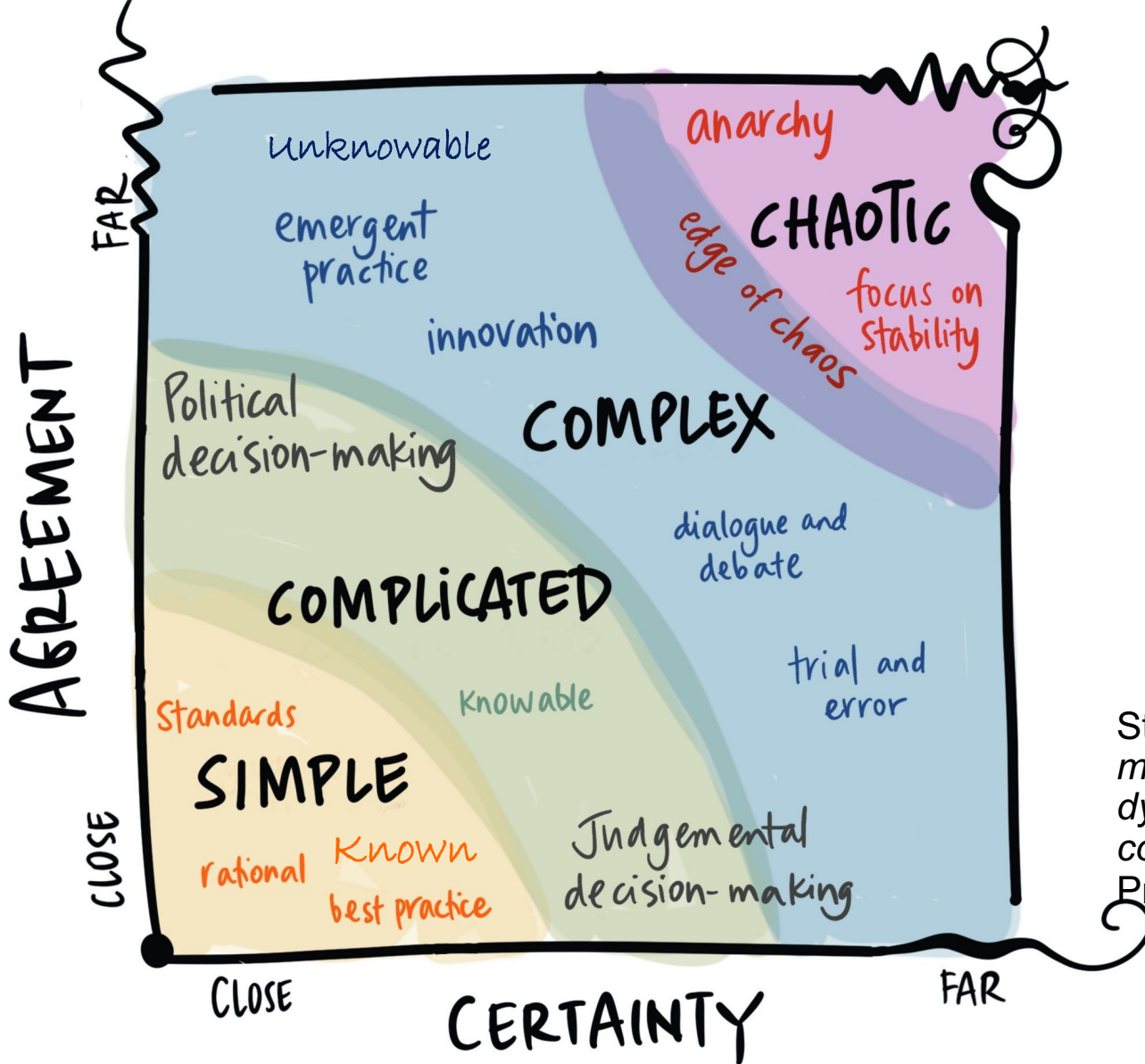


“

“It is not the strongest of species that survives, nor is it the most intelligent that survives. It is the one that is the most adaptable to change.”

Charles Darwin

”



Stacy Complexity Matrix

Stacey RD. *Strategic management and organisational dynamics: the challenge of complexity*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Prentice Hall, 2002.

Stacey Matrix adapted by S. Bradd and D. Finegood

Baking a Cake (From a Recipe)

- The recipe is essential
- Recipes are tested to assure replicability of later efforts
- No particular expertise; knowing how to cook increases success
- Recipe notes the quantity and nature of “parts” needed
- Recipes produce standard products

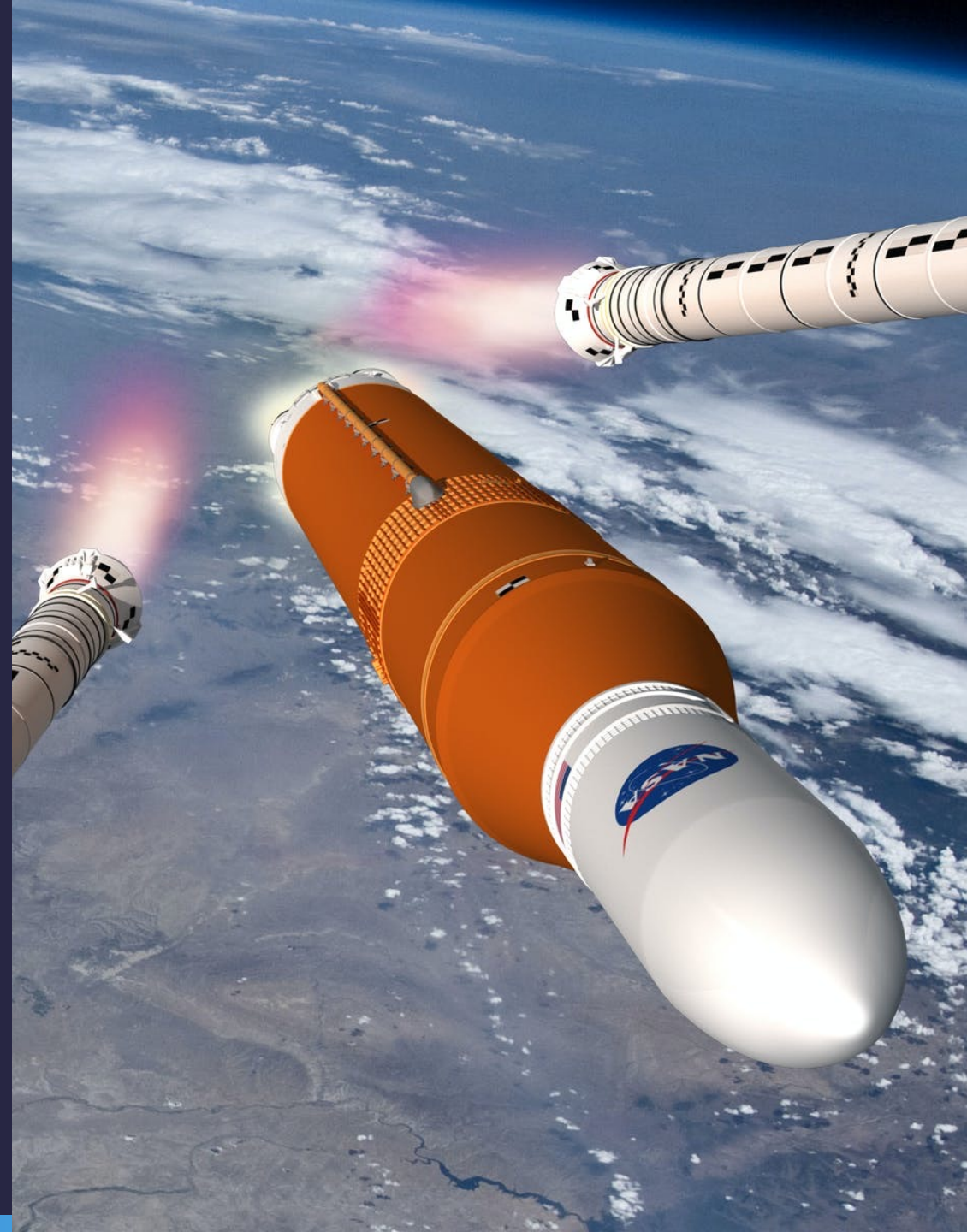
Simple/Known



Rocket to the Moon

- Formulae are critical and necessary
- Sending one rocket increases assurance that next will be ok
- High level of expertise in many specialized fields + coordination
- Separate into parts and then coordinate
- Rockets similar in critical ways

Complicated/Knowable





Raising a Child/ Romantic Relationships

- Formulae have only a limited application
- Success in one gives no assurance of success with the next
- Expertise can help but is not sufficient
- Can't separate parts from the whole
- Every child/person/relationship is unique

Complex/Unknowable

Complex Issues/Problems

Lots of Uncertainty

Lots of disagreement

No definitive formulation of problem

No end point

Solutions are not true/false but better/worse

Unique situations/contexts

Relationship and 'context' based – can't isolate cause/effect

What Helps With Complex Problems?



- Challenging Assumptions
- Reframing
- “Safe to Fail” Experimentation

Challenging Assumptions: Assuming Abundance



ABUNDANCE VS **SCARCITY**

Challenging Assumptions: Probable vs. Possible



Managing the Probable

Right answer
Efficiency
“Best” Practice
THE Root Cause
Knowing
“Yes”

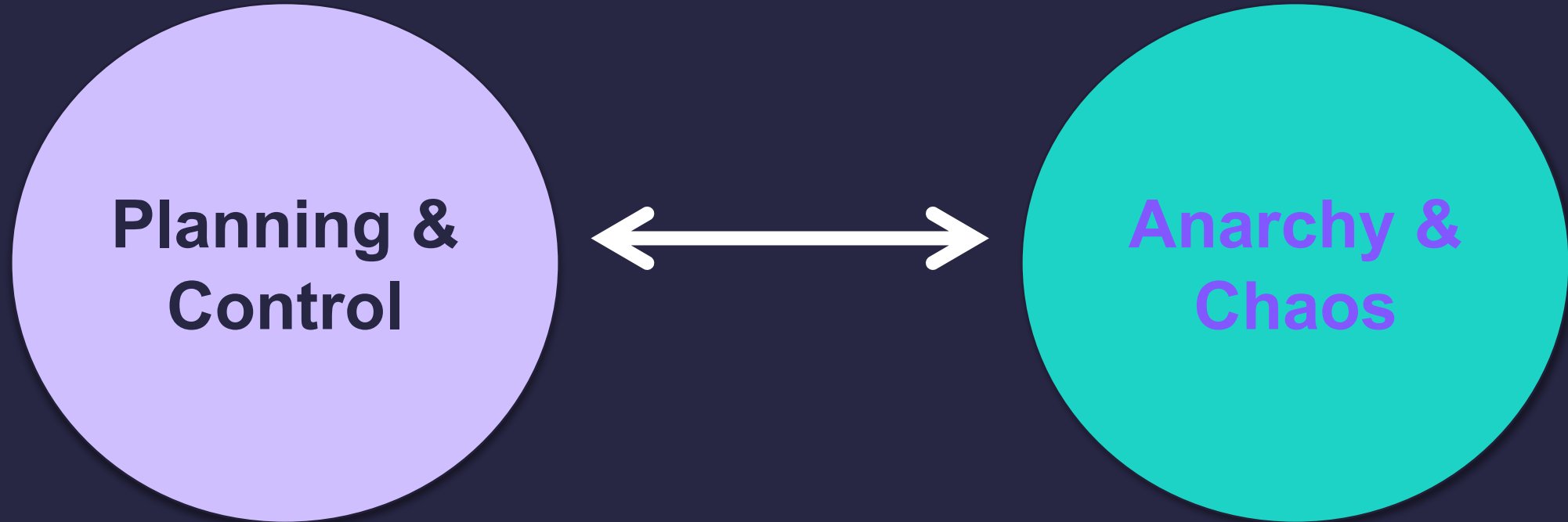
Correct!

Leading the Possible

Good questions & insights
Adaptability & Flexibility
Small wins
Learning & Experimentation
“Maybe”

Pretty Darn Good!

Challenging Assumptions: Organizations as “Machines”



Organizations and people are implicitly viewed as machines (or made up of machine parts)

Challenging Assumptions

Organizations as Living Systems?

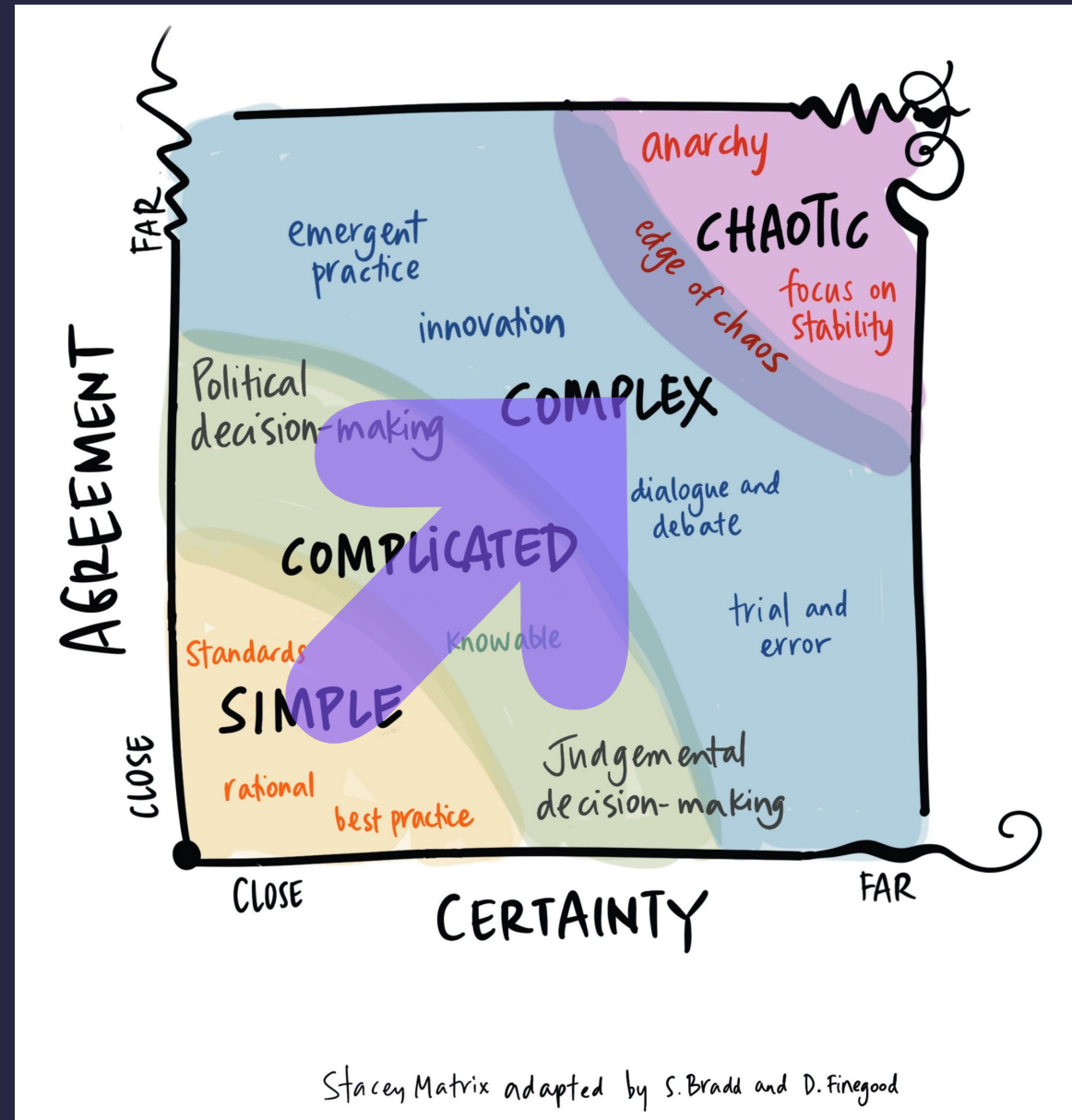


- Dynamic (but unpredictable)
- Capable
- Self-Organizing “Systems”
- Complex adaptability
- Emergent outcomes



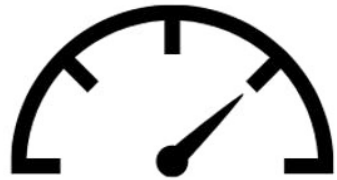
Reframing

- Pushing our minds away from 'simple' solutions
- Purposefully increasing (our own) uncertainty and disagreement
- Create new solution "frames" and insights!

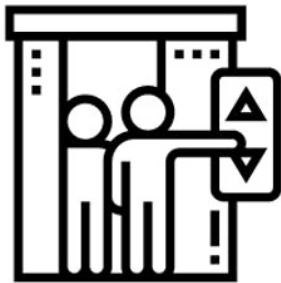


Reframing: Finding a New Solution Frame

Problem Framing



The elevator is too slow



The wait feels like forever



Solution Framing



Make it faster

(Upgrade motors, improve algorithm, new elevator)



Make the wait feel shorter

(Decorations, mirrors, music, sanitizers etc)



EXPERIMENT. FAIL.
LEARN. REPEAT



Safe-To-Fail Experimentation

- Experiment such that failure is 'survivable'
- Run a 'pilot'
- Testing stuff out
- Small scale

Recap

- ✓ The (retail, business) world is **SUPER** complex!
Turbulent!
- ✓ Many problems likely cannot be ‘solved’
- ✓ Simple, Complicated, & Complex
 - Both/and vs. either/or
 - Challenge assumptions
 - Change the solution frame
 - Need to “Act-learn” at the same time – less explicit planning
 - Experiment - Aim for “good enough” and “maybe”

Leaders Need to Get Comfortable With:

- Ambiguity
 - Disagreement
 - Uncertainty
 - Not knowing
 - Experimentation
- Agility

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Thanks!

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