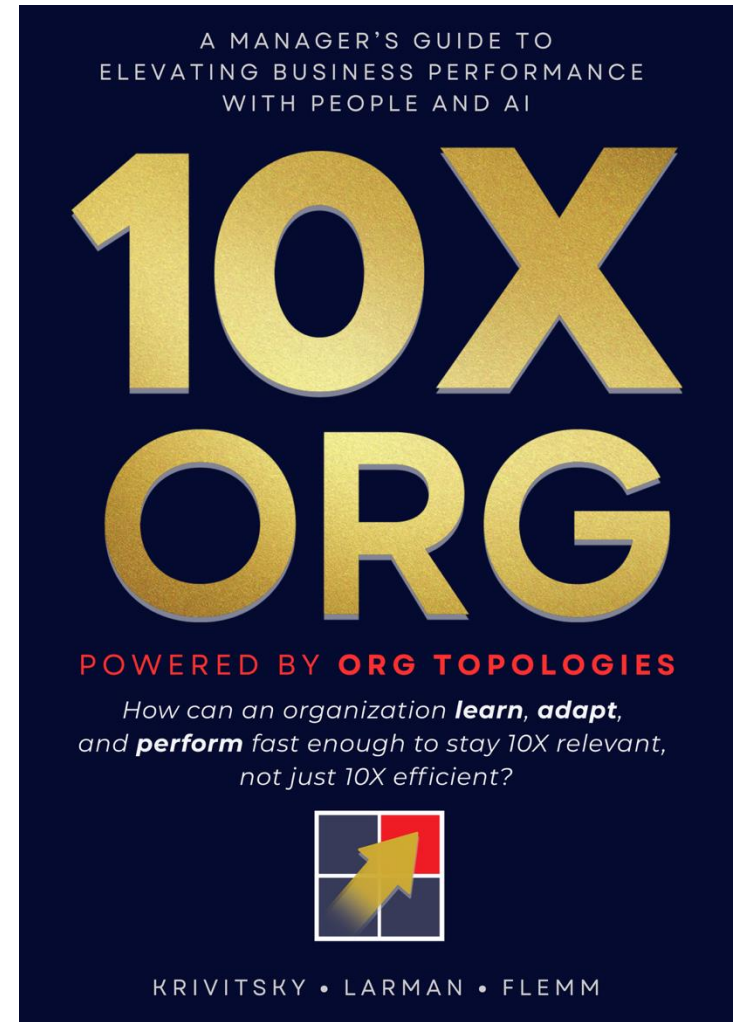
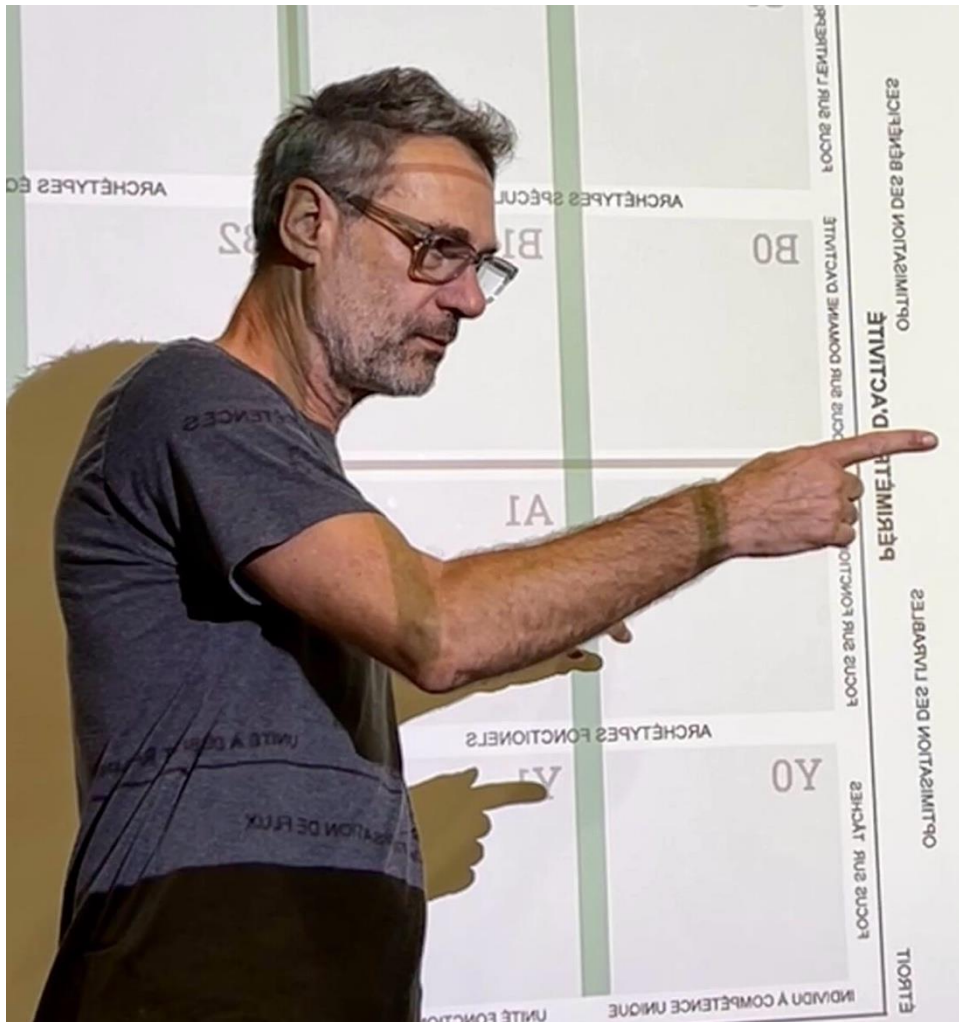




Rabobank

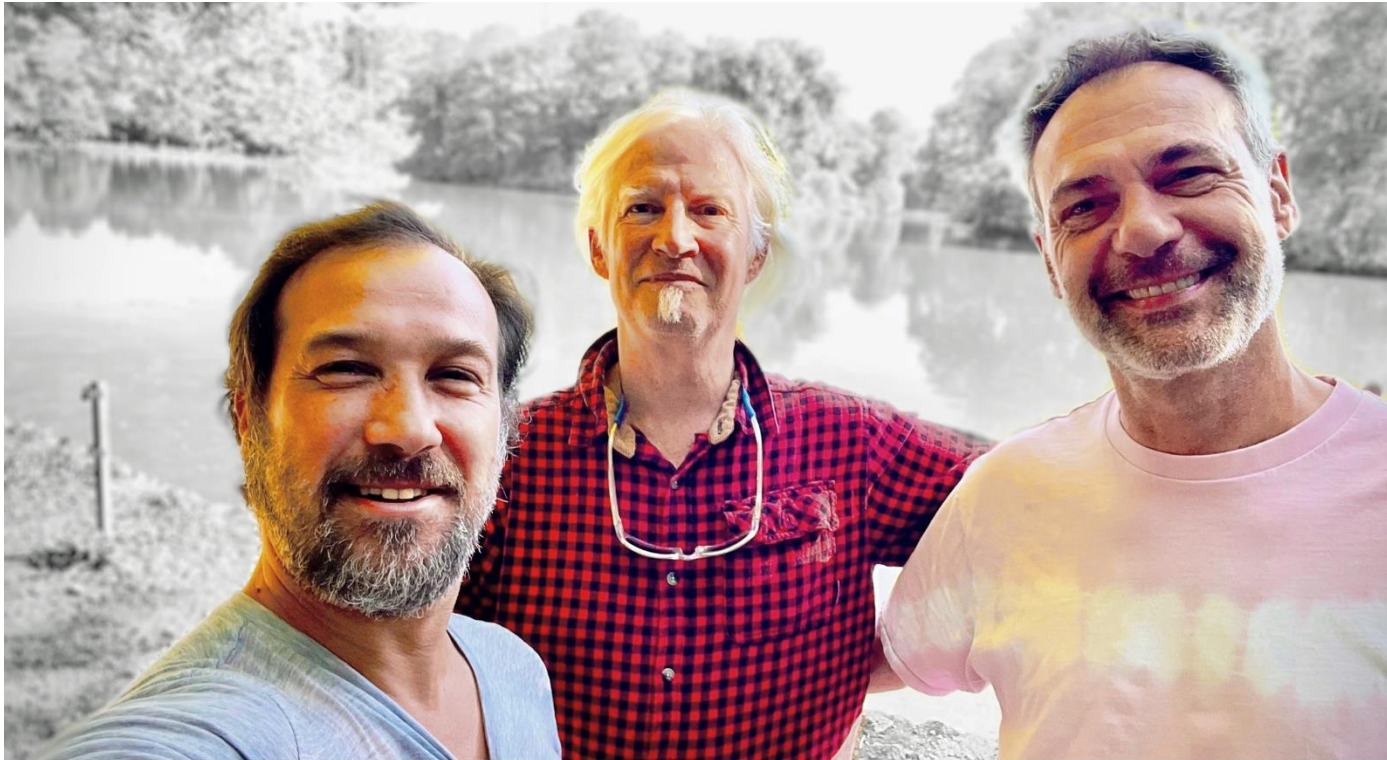
Oct 27 - Utrecht



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The authors



Alexey Krivitsky

Craig Larman

Roland Flemm



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ALEXEY KRIVITSKY & ROLAND FLEMM

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How can an organization learn,
adapt, and perform fast enough
to stay 10X relevant –
not just X-times efficient
(in the age of AI)?”

From 2X ‘Tools’ to 10X ‘Org Design’
powered by Org Topologies™



In 2024, AI applications focus on efficiency or cost reduction, they rarely generate new profit.

company	AI application		
everywhere	CO-Pilot for developers	Chat GPT for analysts	GPT to prepare retro for scrum masters

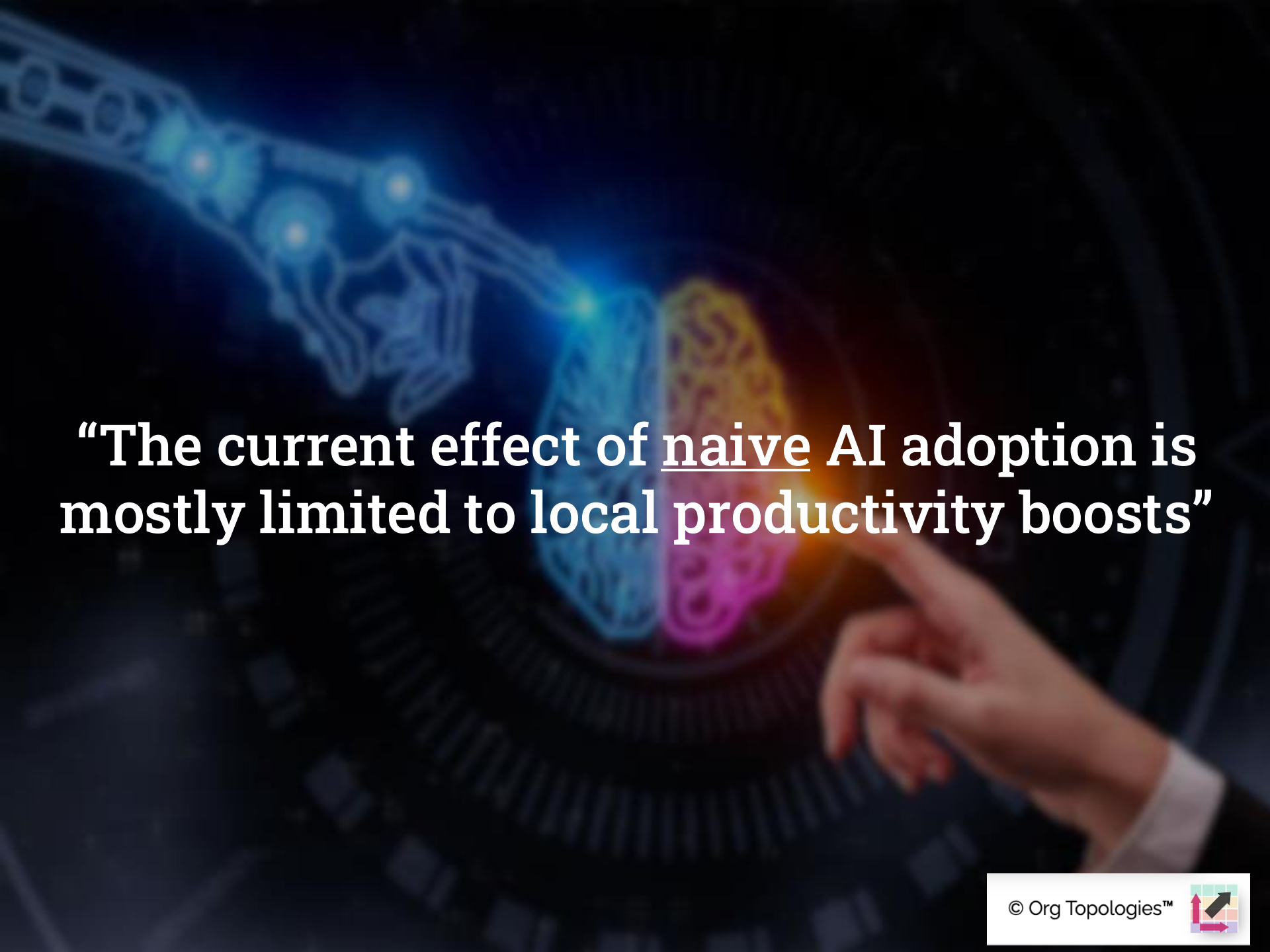


Warm-up Questions (Discuss in pairs)

Which outcome do you want AI to improve this quarter?

What is the biggest barrier to AI adoption in your organization?





“The current effect of naive AI adoption is mostly limited to local productivity boosts”



“The wrong design doesn’t just slow you down; it actively blocks achieving business objectives. Without org redesign, AI makes your current dysfunctions grow faster”



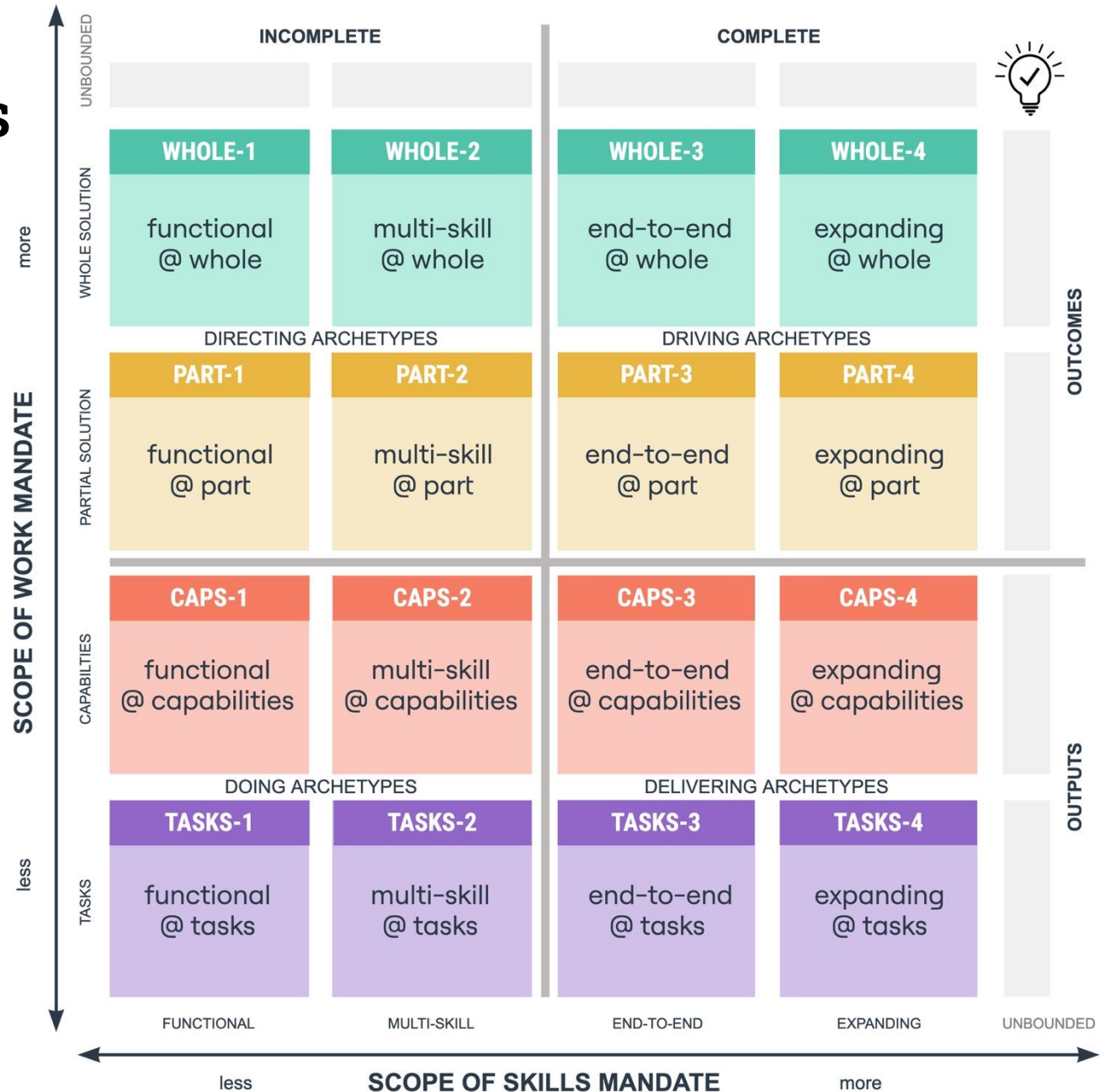
The background features a dark blue field with a glowing network of nodes and lines, resembling a neural or organizational structure. A hand in a suit sleeve points towards a central, glowing brain graphic that is split into blue and pink halves. The text is overlaid on this scene.

“Leaders are responsible for designing an organization that delivers the performance needed to achieve the strategic objectives”



Org Topologies 4x4 map

An easy way to
understand
org design

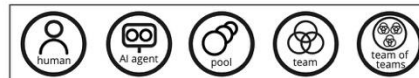
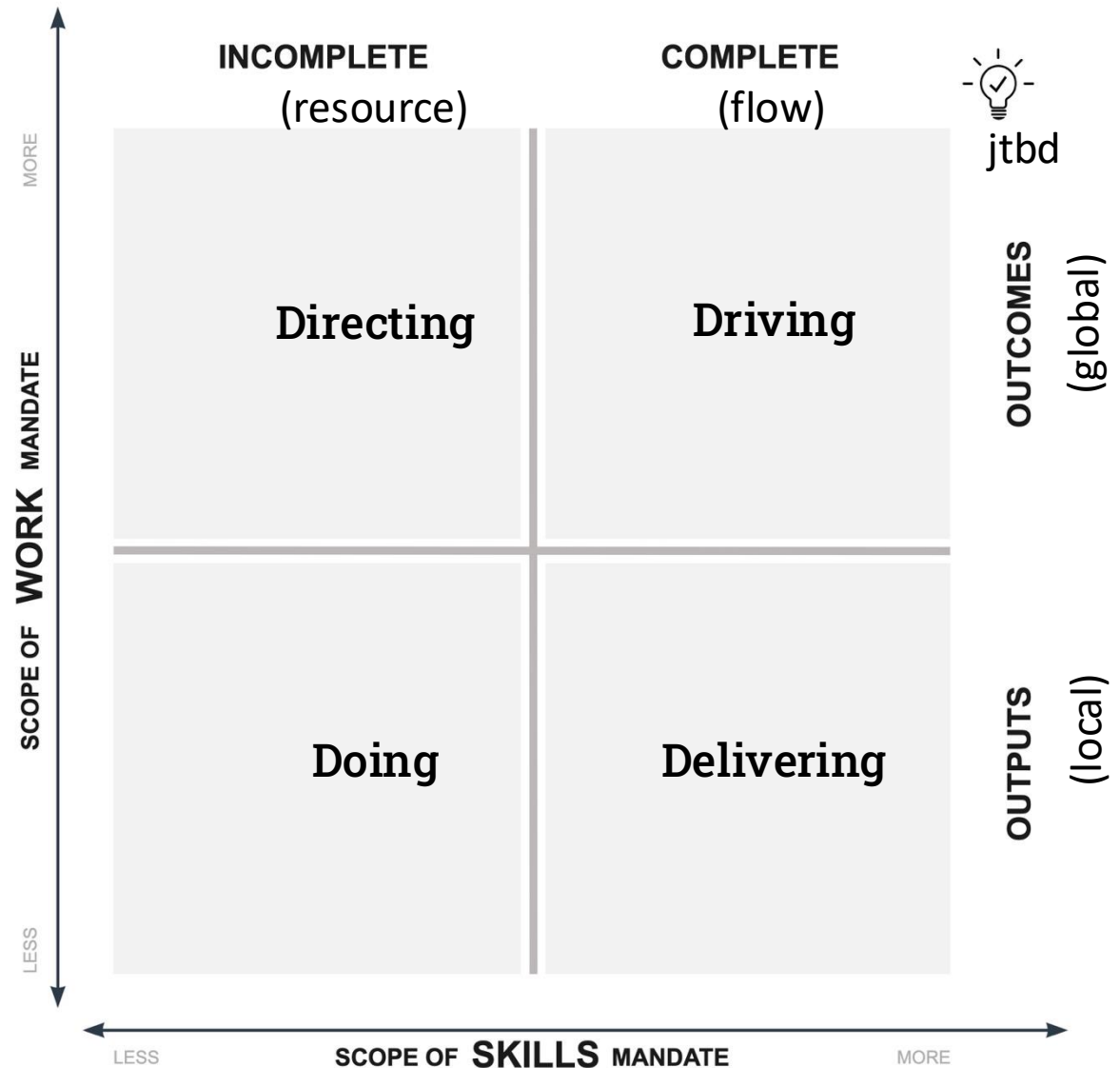


Org Topologies

2x2 map

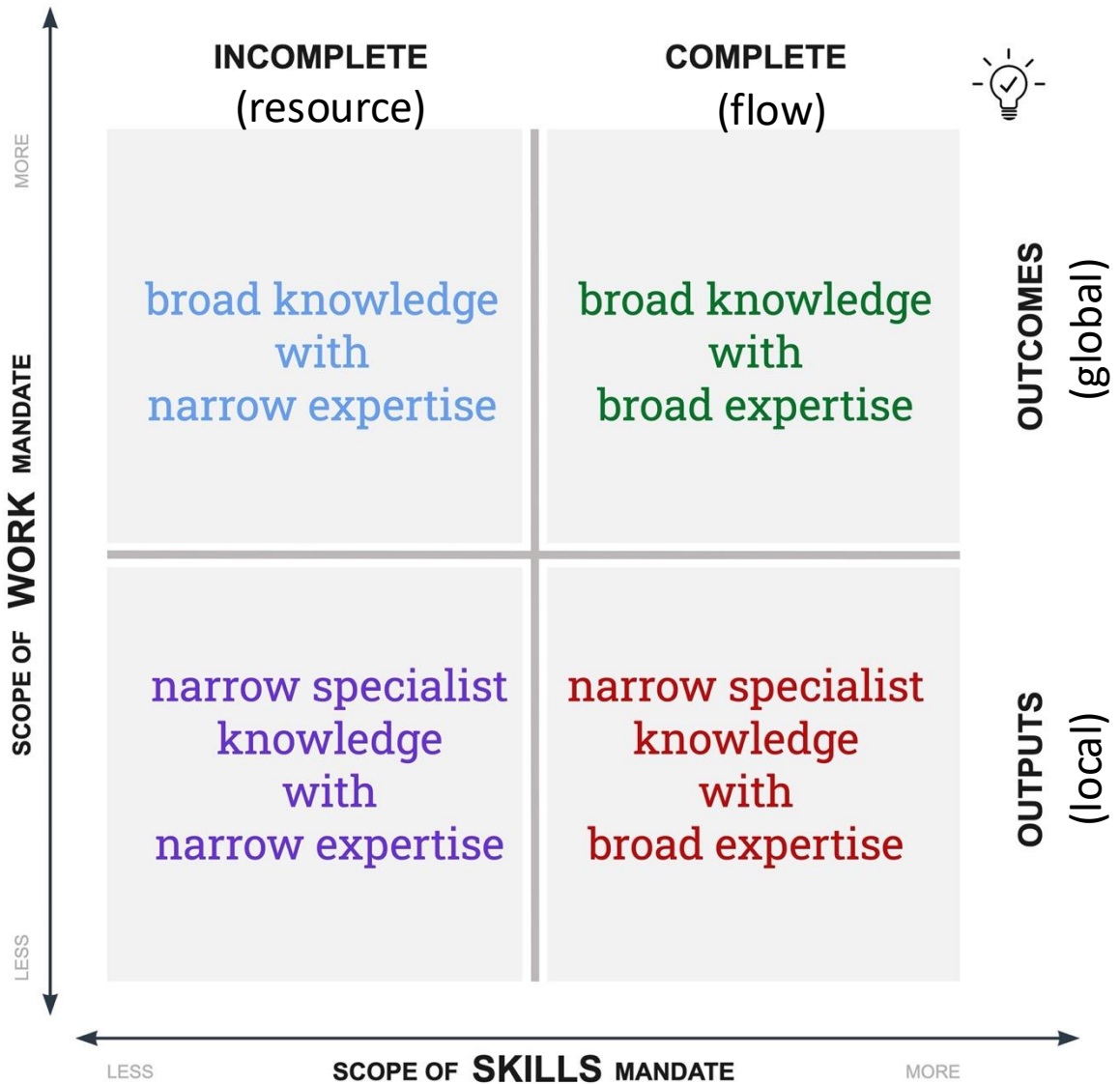
An easier way to understand org design

- the customer need
- the axes
- the four intelligence types
- the problem to solve



Org Topologies 2x2 map

The roles and responsibilities that are shaped via the mandates





first example



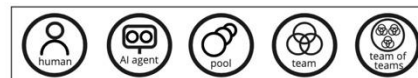
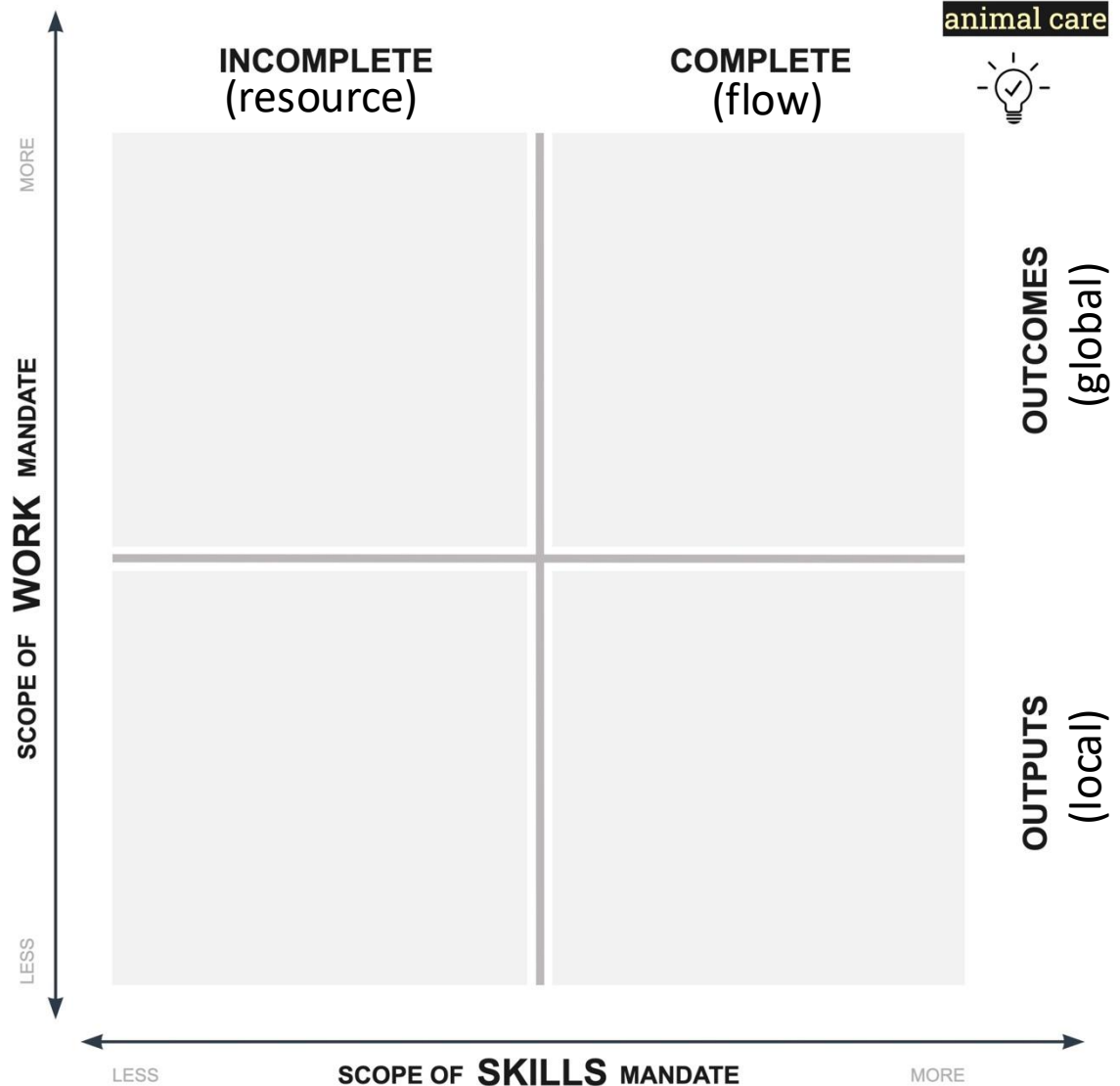
What is the expected impact?

Consider a web portal for animal care products. There is a Product manager who manages all markets. She has portal changes she passes to IT, where an analyst works on the wholesale domain. (another analyst works on consumer products, is out of scope for this mapping.) The analyst decomposes the work for three POs, who each manage a team: wholesale customers, products, and checkout. All three teams often need collaborate with each other, and with a single back-end team. A wholesale integration team collects the work, tests, and releases when all the work for a portal change is done.



Let's Map!

Consider a web portal for animal care products. There is a Product manager who manages all markets. She has portal changes she passes to IT, where an analyst works on the wholesale domain. (another analyst works on consumer products, is out of scope for this mapping.) The analyst decomposes the work for three POs, who each manage a team: wholesale customers, products, and checkout. All three teams often need collaborate with each other, and with a single back-end team. A wholesale integration team collects the work, tests, and releases when all the work for a portal change is done.

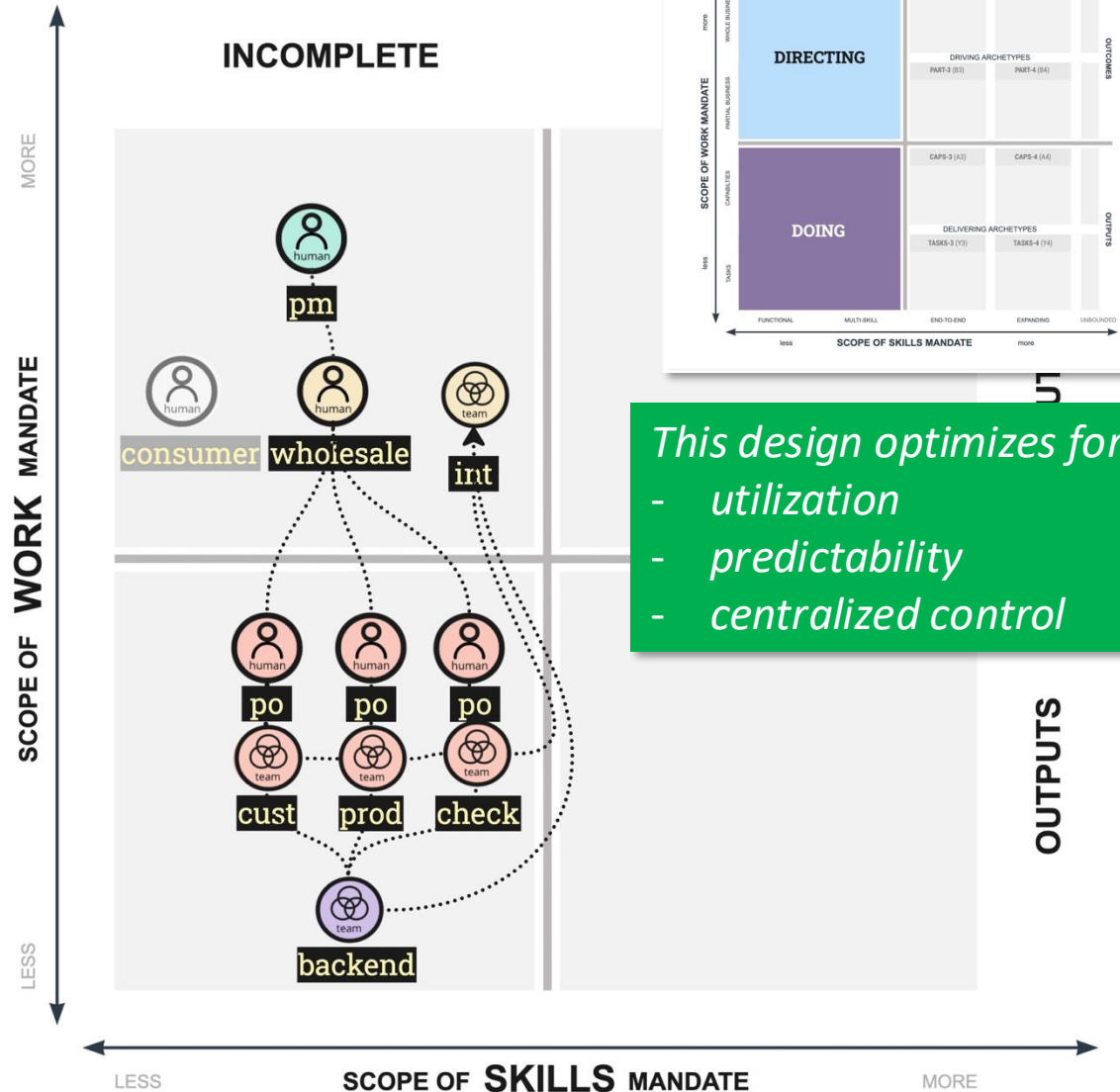


Resource Topology

A customer request is broken down in parts for specialized units to work on.

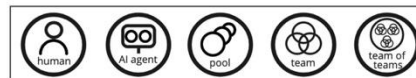
When all units have finished their part, the parts are assembled by an integration team.

What does this design intrinsically optimize for?



This design optimizes for:

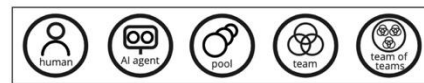
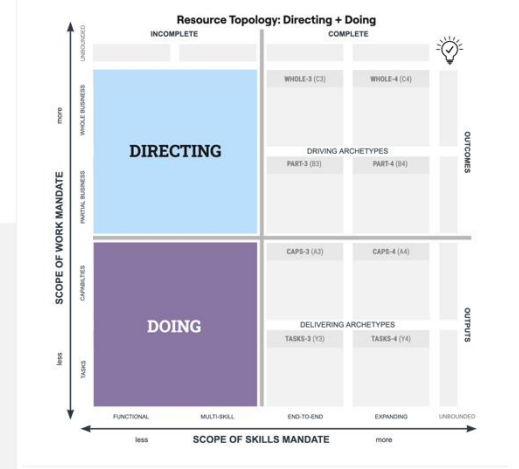
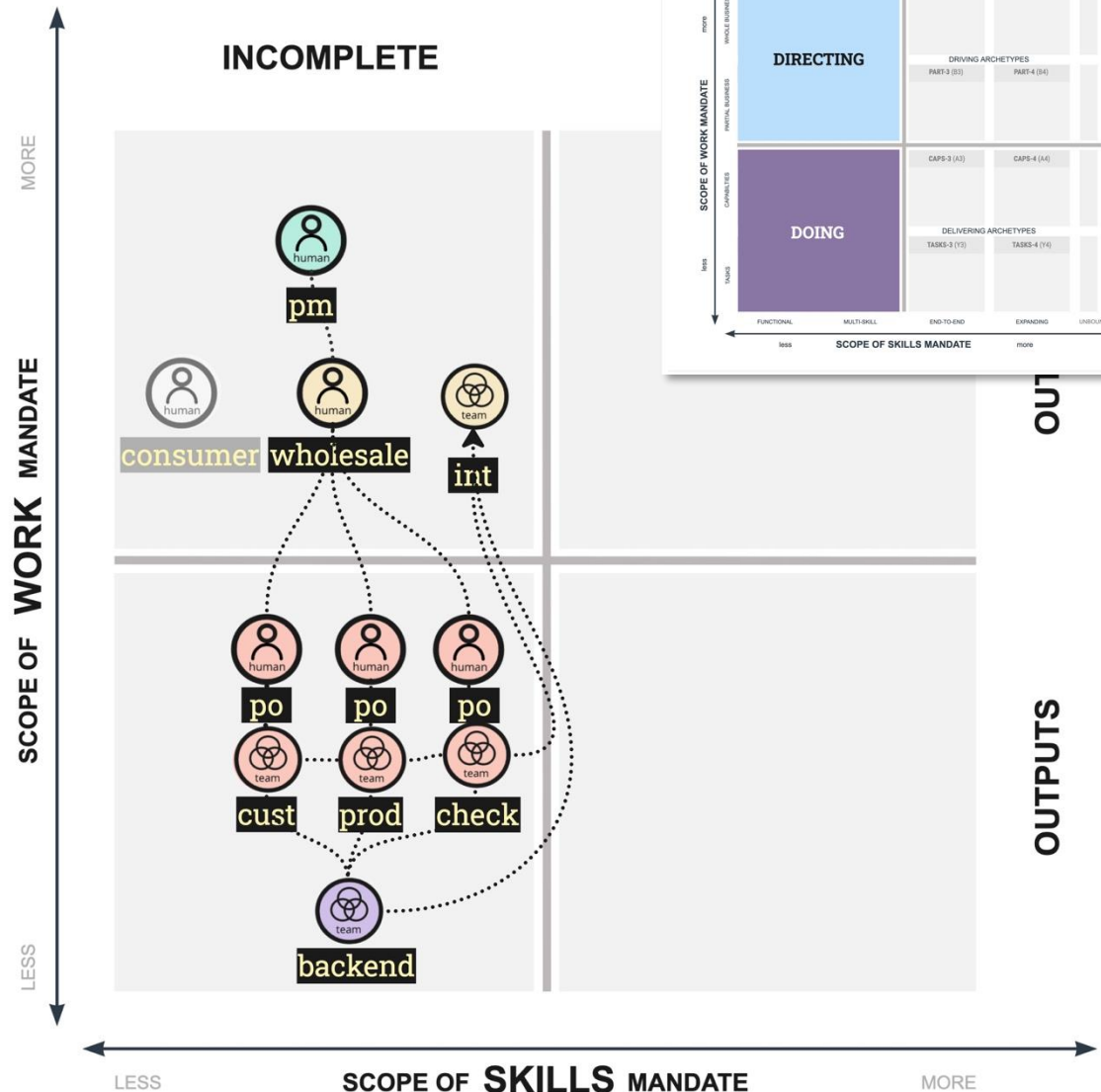
- utilization
- predictability
- centralized control



Resource Topology

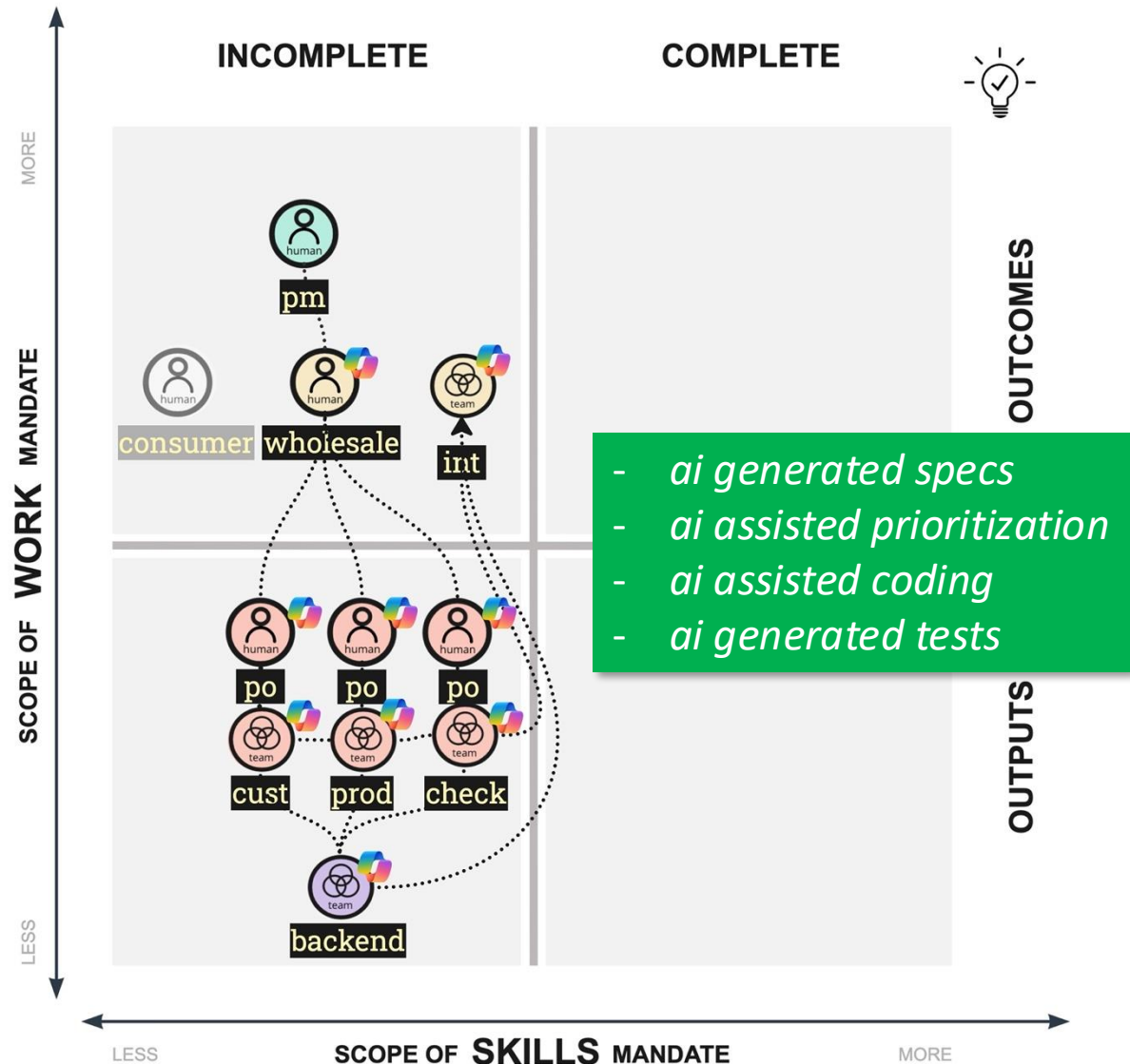
Discuss in your group:

What is likely to happen when we adopt AI in this topology?



Resource Topology + AI

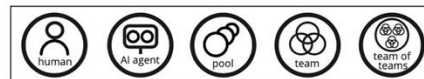
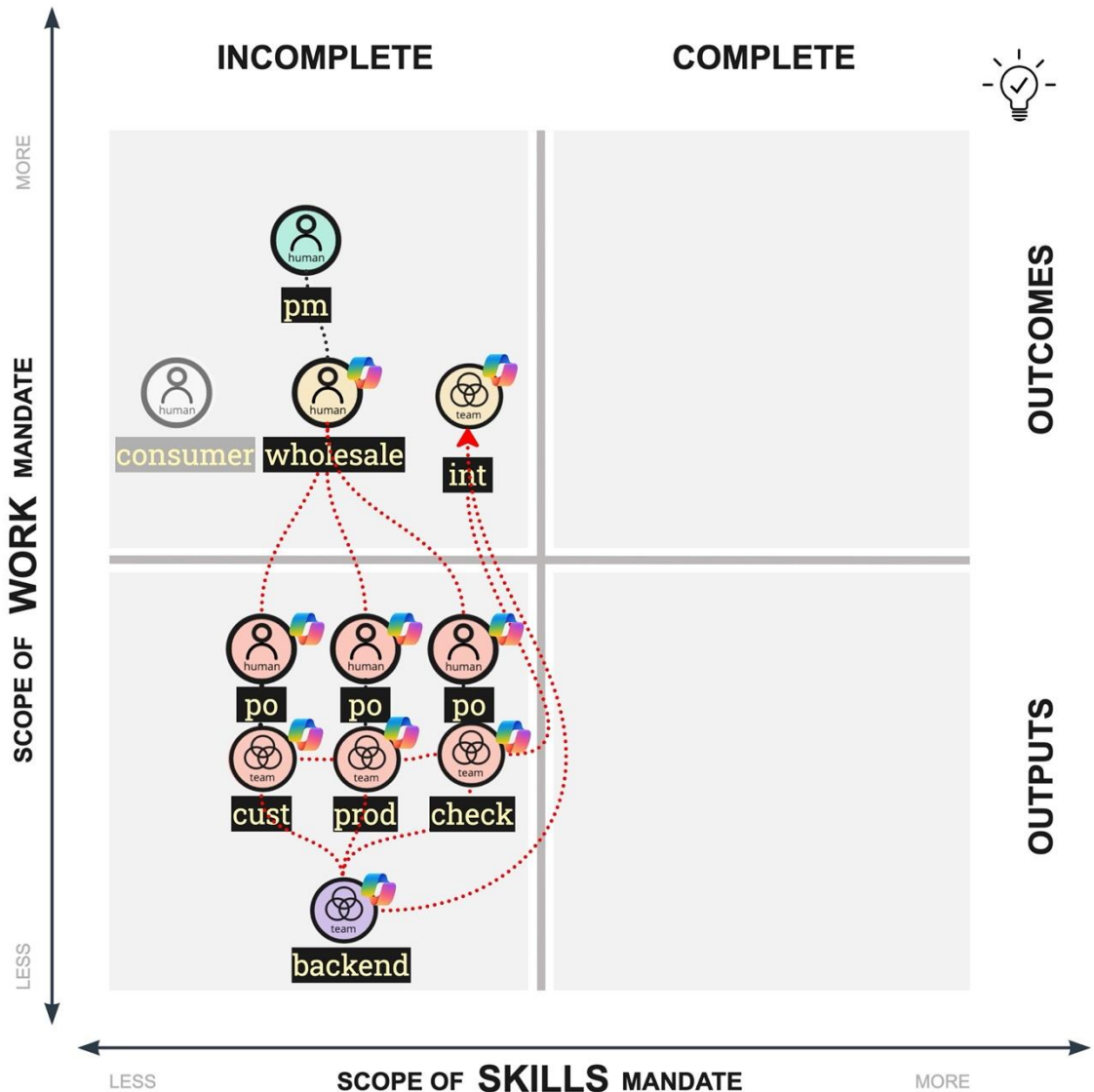
Adopting AI in the Resource Topology means we enable each org unit to support or automate their (repetitive) work (coding, writing tests, etc.).



Resource Topology + AI

AI does not change the overall speed of the system due to **handoffs** and **delays** and async work and **decision uncertainty**.

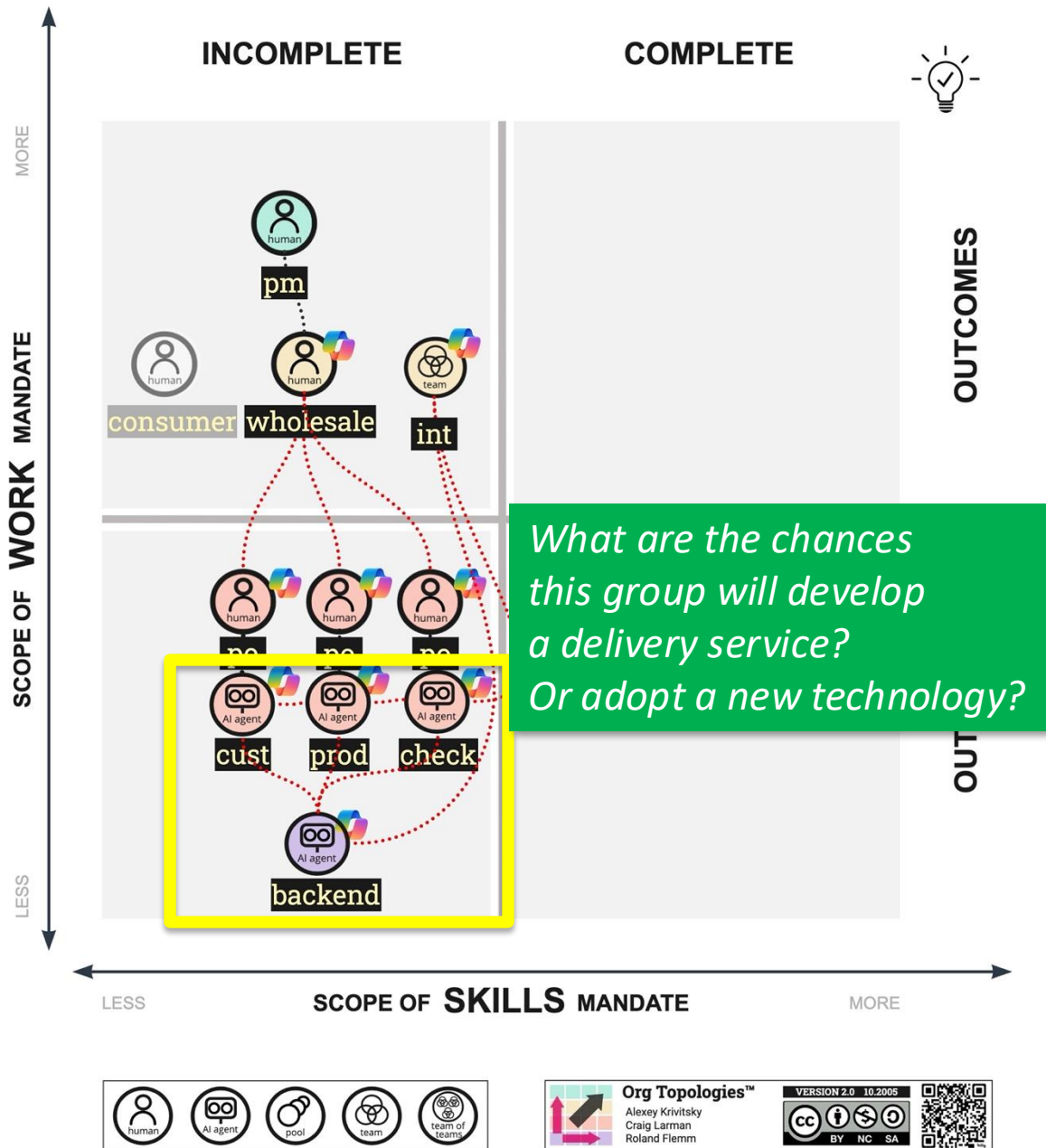
Faster larger queues,
slower outcomes



Resource Topology + AI

We can replace people with AI agents to automate the repetitive work.

**Ai will make
the system more
efficient, not more
adaptive**



Resource Topology: AI stalls at X more efficient

- Assistants deployed inside existing silos → local wins, limited end-to-end impact
- Handoffs, approvals, and fragmented data remain unchanged, queues grow
- Distributed decision rights → automation is limited; additional risk and audit processes
- Focus on local output optimization; not on optimizing the performance of the whole





second example

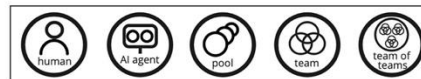
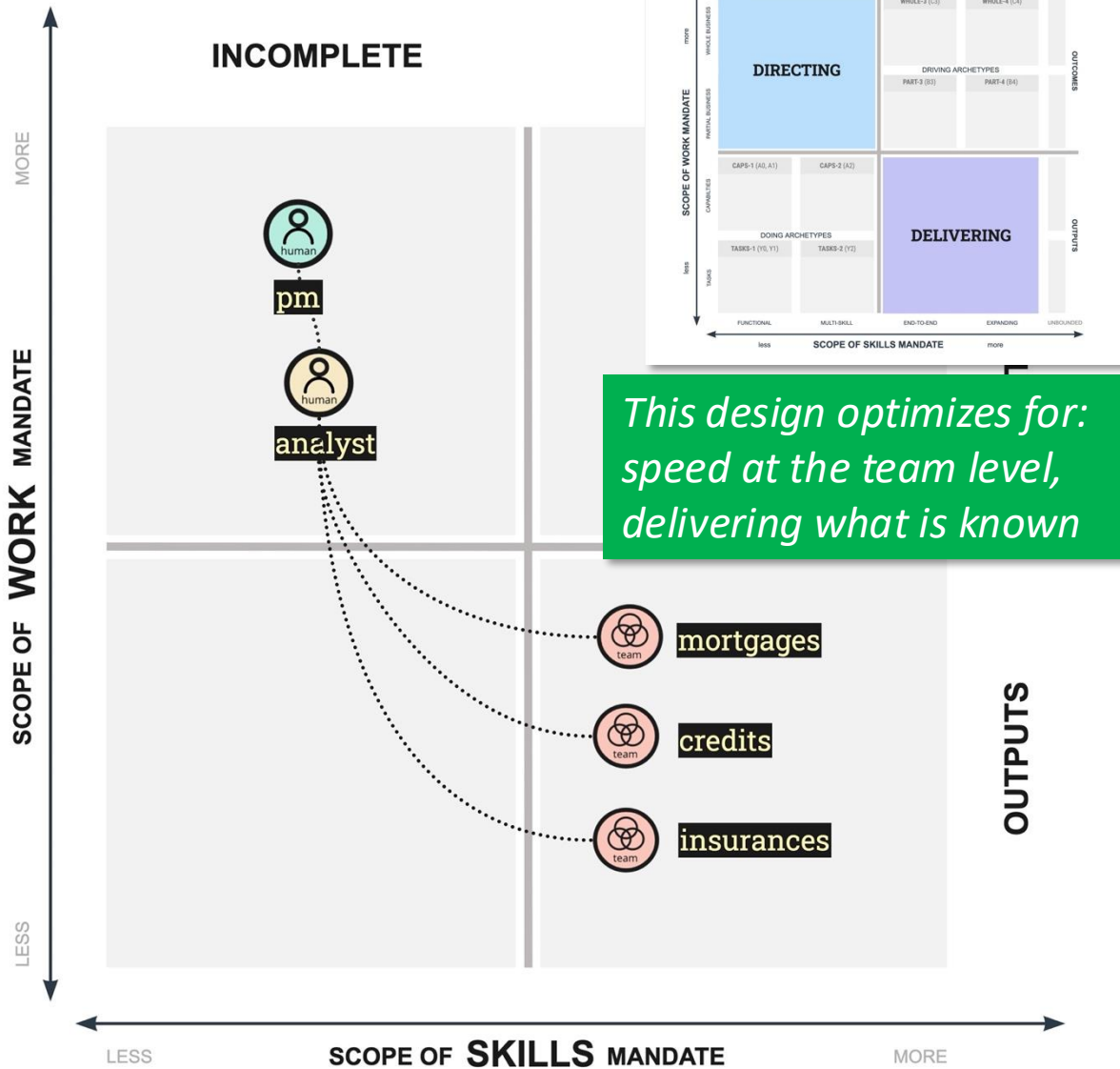


Delivery Topology

A customer request is broken down in parts for the dedicated value stream units to work on.

Each unit has the skills to deliver end-to-end value.

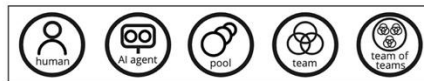
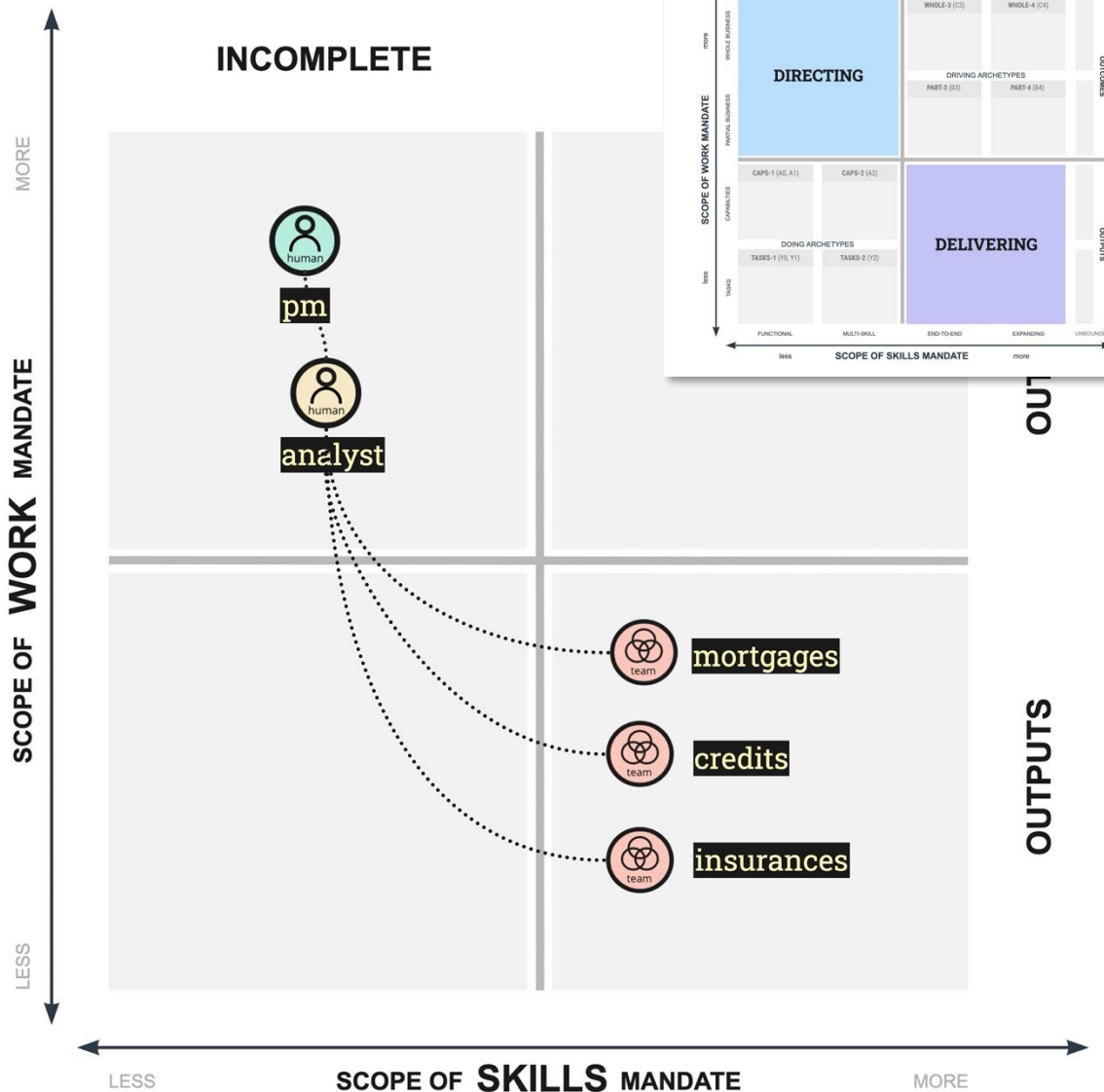
What does this design intrinsically optimize for?



Delivery Topology

Discuss in your group:

What is likely to happen when we adopt AI in this topology?

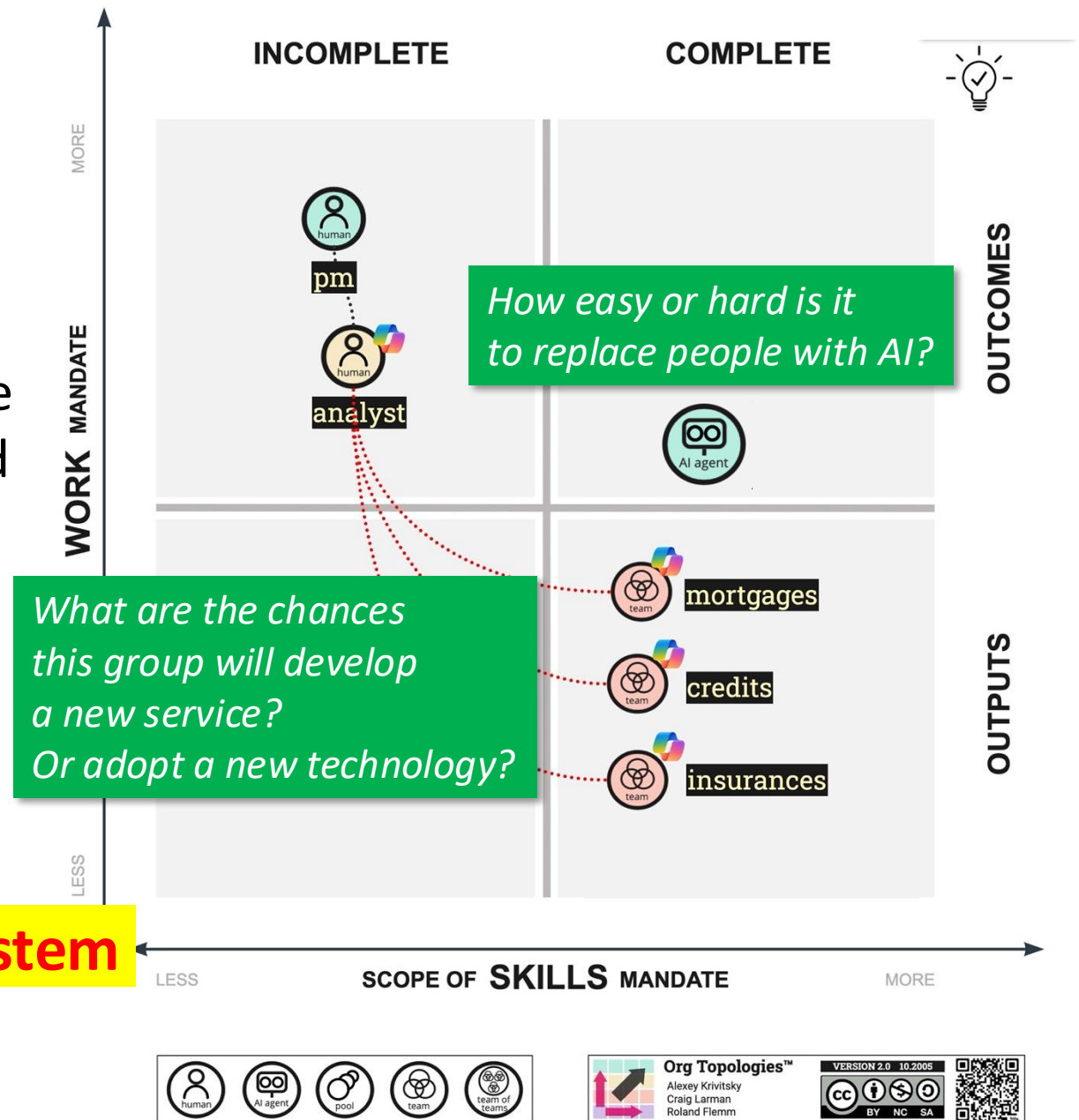


Delivery Topology & AI

Adding AI to each value stream increases speed of end-to-end delivery.

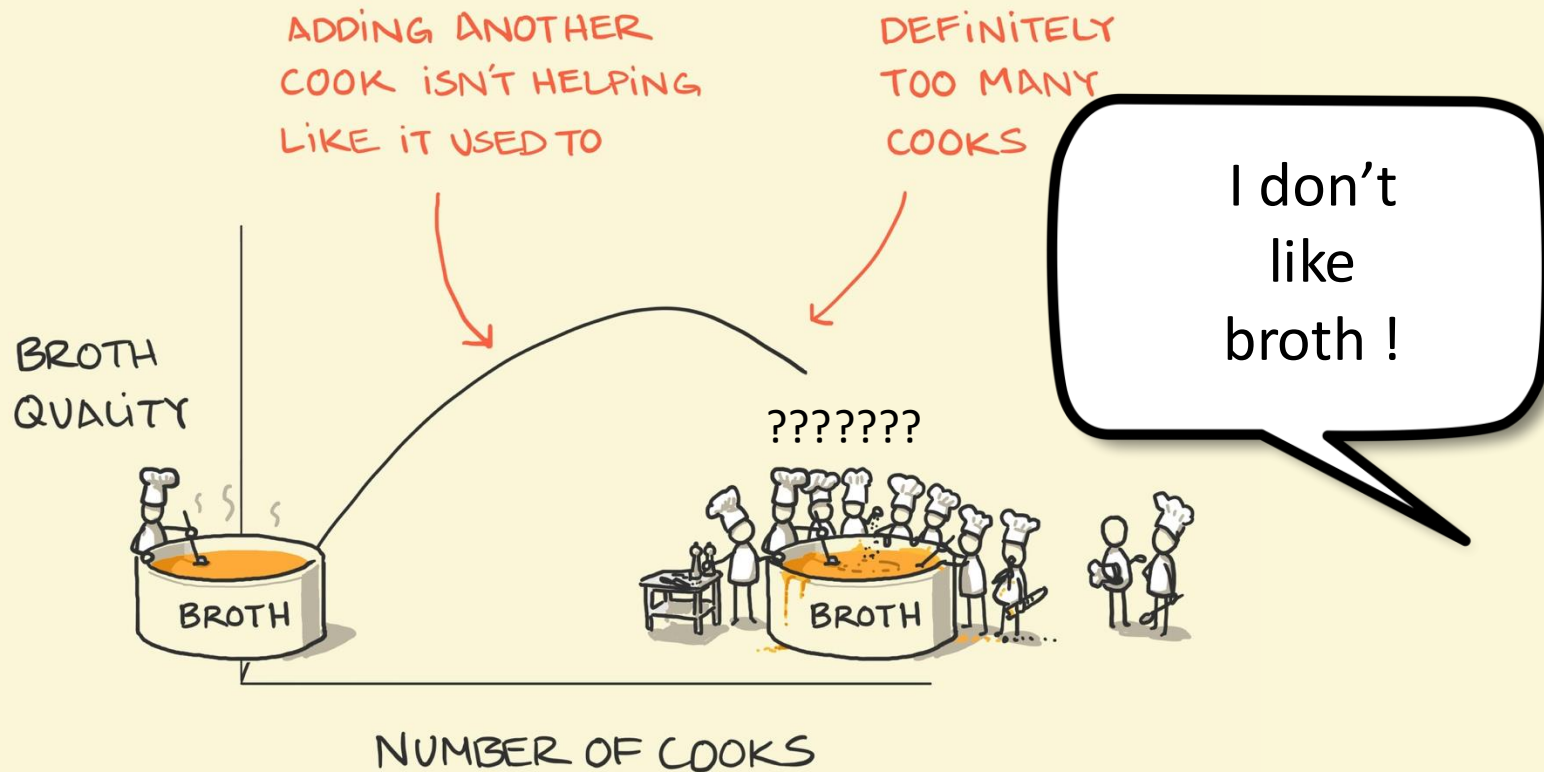
New customer needs (eg business loans) require creating new value streams.

AI will make the system faster, not more adaptive.



LAW OF DIMINISHING RETURNS

AT SOME POINT MORE OF THE SAME STOPS PAYING OFF



Sketchplanat

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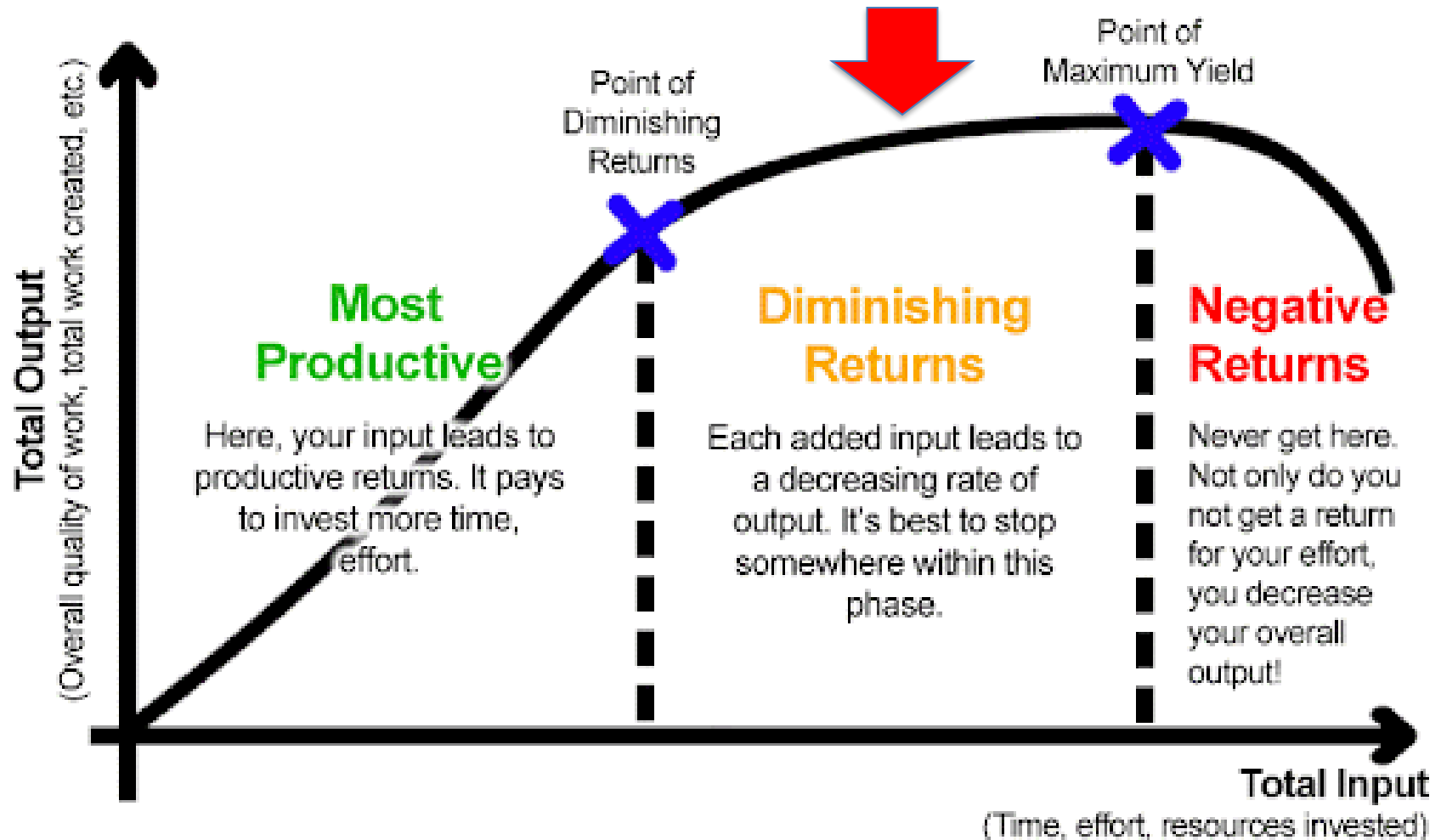
Delivery Topology

AI stalls at X more feature speed

- Assistants deployed inside existing silos → local wins, limited team-level impact
- Returns cap out due to silo-limited innovation
- Focus on local output optimization on a value stream level



PIVOT



**Pivoting requires to be more adaptive,
not more efficient or faster**

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greenflux

third example



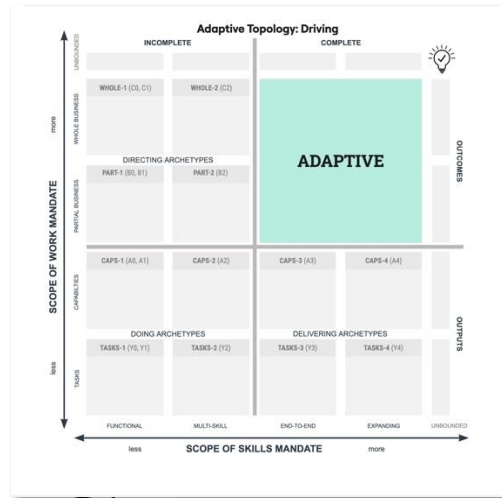
Adaptive Topology

All skills needed to create a product are available in a **team of teams**.

They understand and work on the whole same business problem at the same time.

There are no hand-offs and external coordinators.

What does this design intrinsically optimize for?



SCOPE OF WORK

LESS

LESS

SCOPE OF **SKILLS** MANDATE

MORE

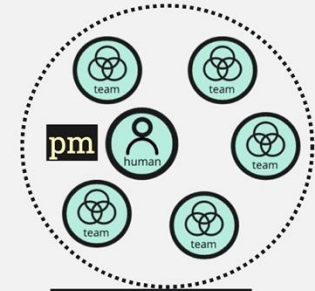
COMPLETE

e-mobility



OUTCOMES

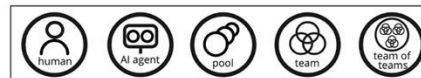
OUTPUTS



team of teams

This design optimizes for:

- adaptability at org level
- learning
- innovation

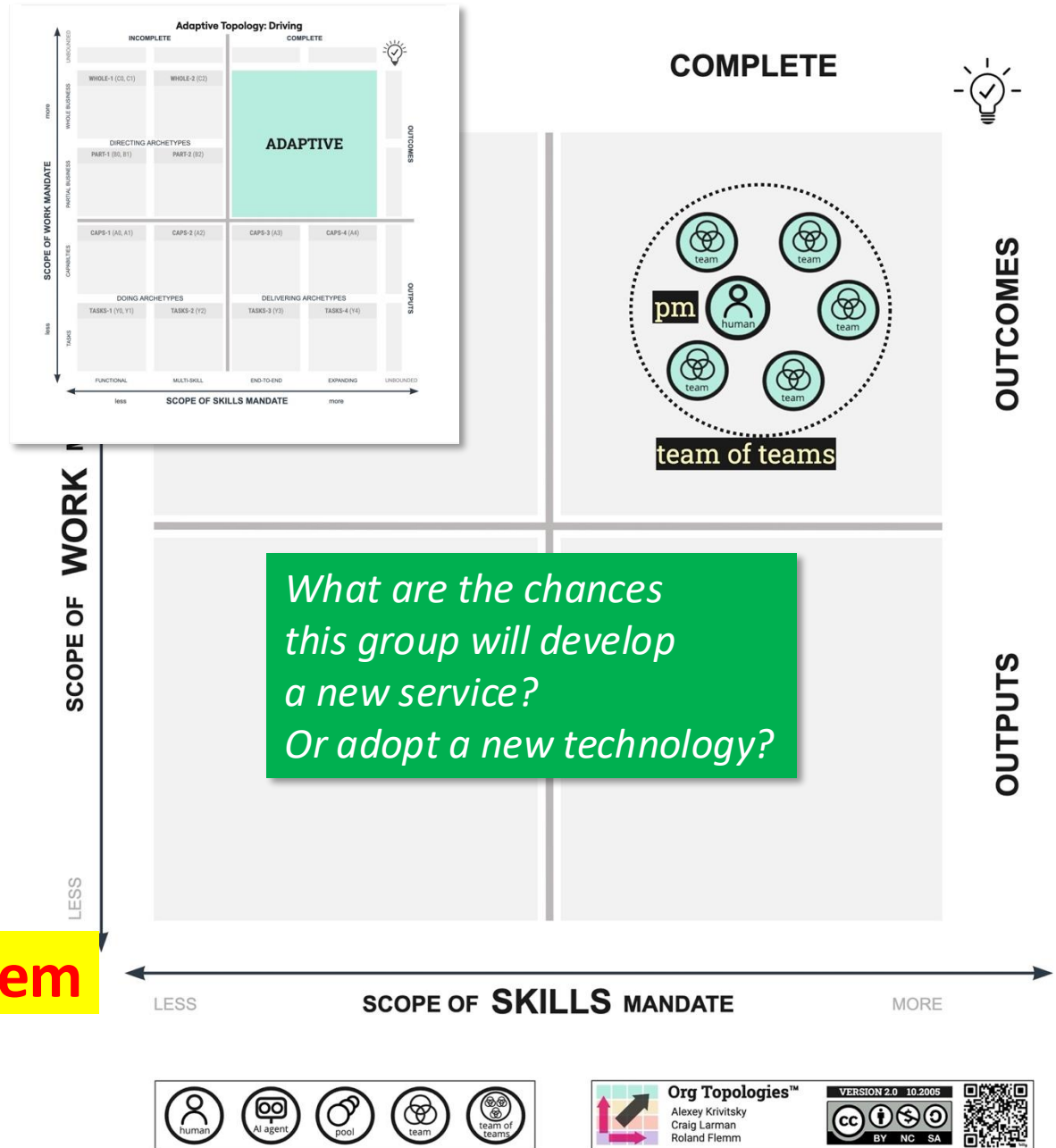


Adaptive Topology

Discuss in your group:

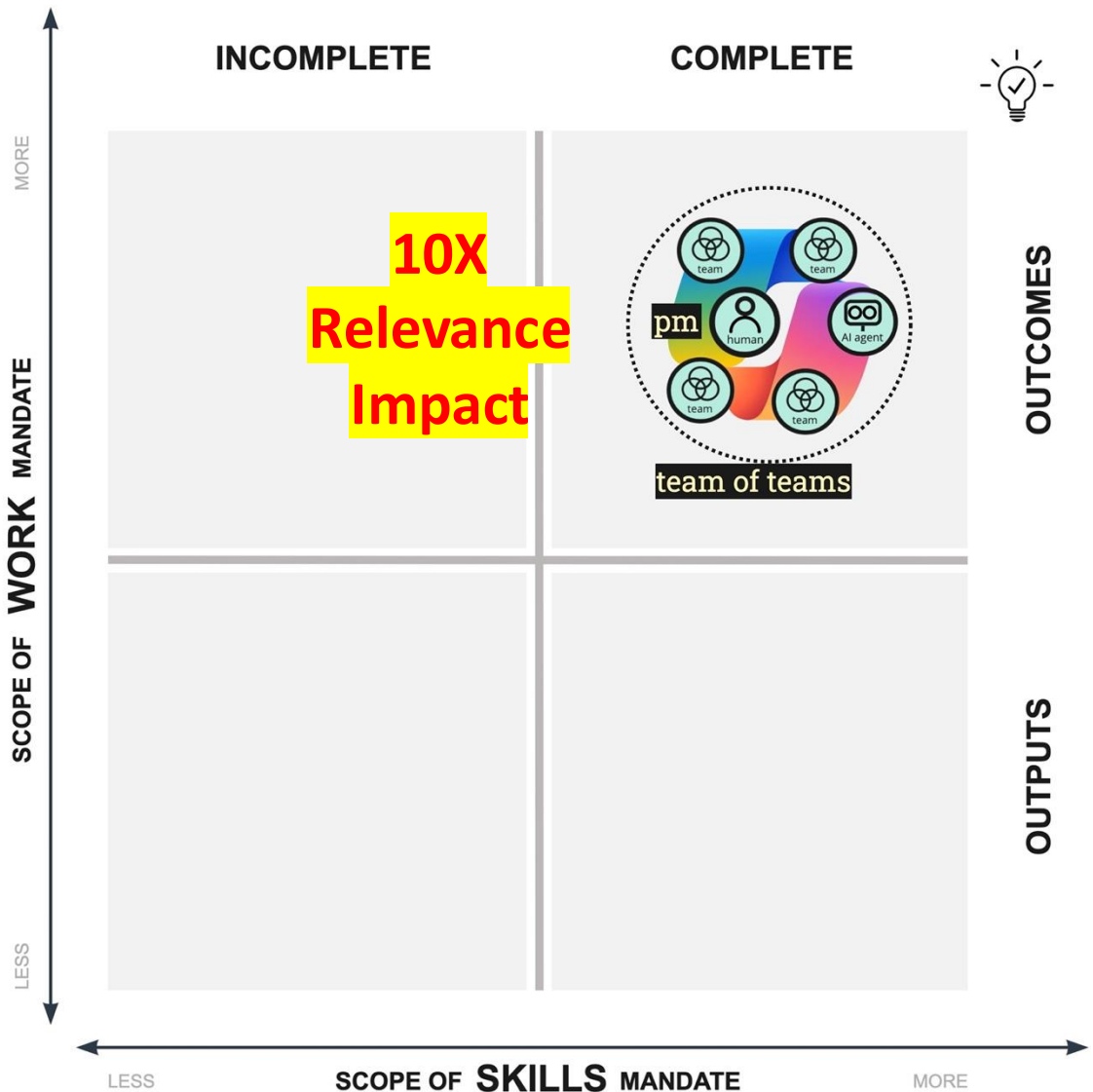
What is likely to happen when we adopt AI in this topology?

AI will make the system more adaptive.



Adaptive Topology & AI

- Application of AI on shared business outcomes
- No overhead from decentralized AI implementations
- No reorgs needed when the nature of work changes (easier because of AI)
- wholistic by design



Adaptive Topology

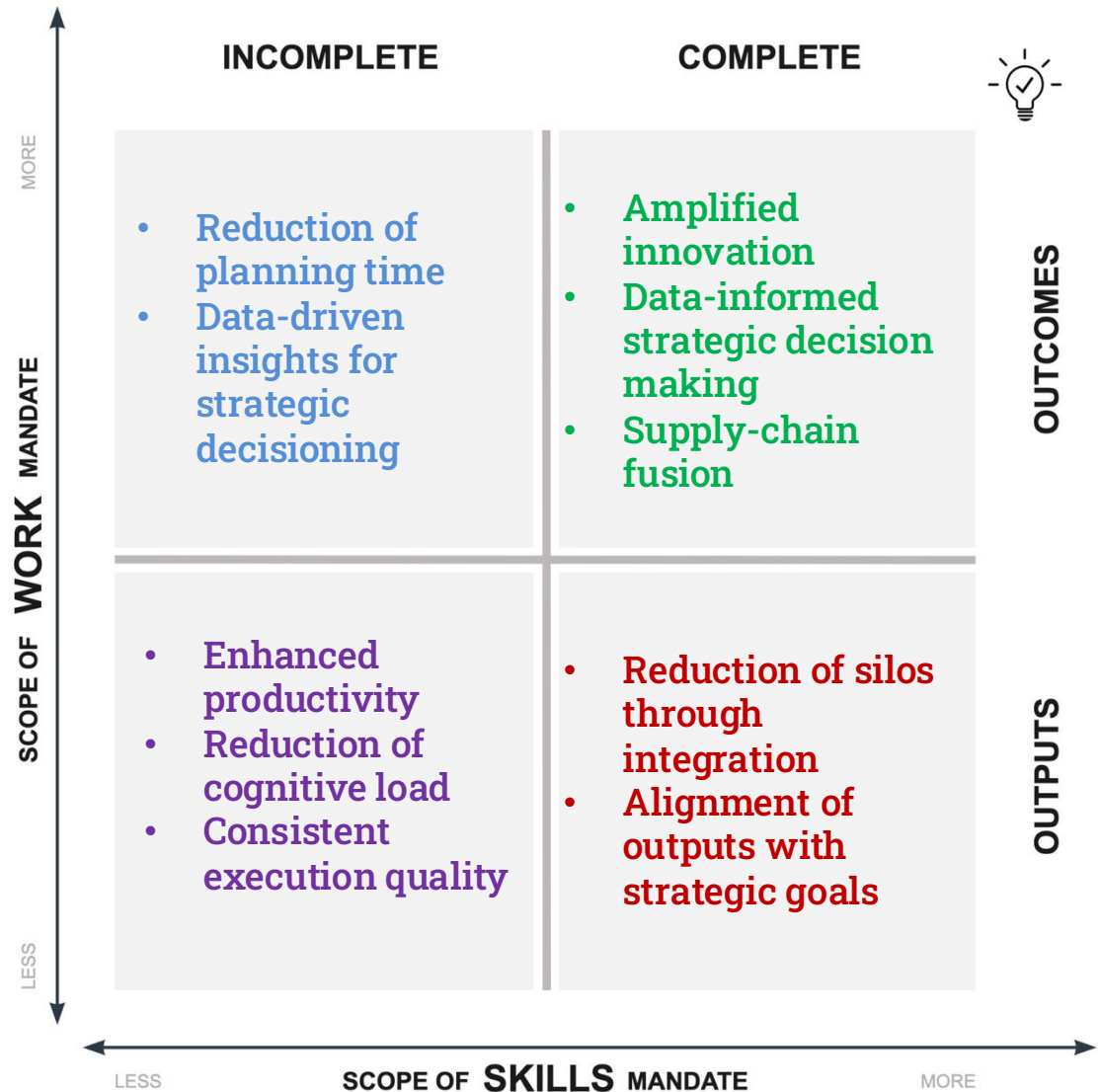
AI can deliver 10X more performance at the whole business level

- End-to-end and whole business impact of AI
- AI boosts learning ability: strategic pivots do not require reorganizations
- AI does not reinforce dysfunctions but enables elevation to the Adaptive Topology
- AI gets the best out of humans, AIs and their collaboration



Benefits of AI Adoption in the four Quadrants

In each quadrant, people will work alongside AIs, but with different outcomes at the whole company level.





**New!
Improved!**

**Organizations that want to stay
relevant in the age of AI will
need to adapt their Org Design**





**New!
Improved!**

First Design, then AI.



The MADE Method to Drive Org Development

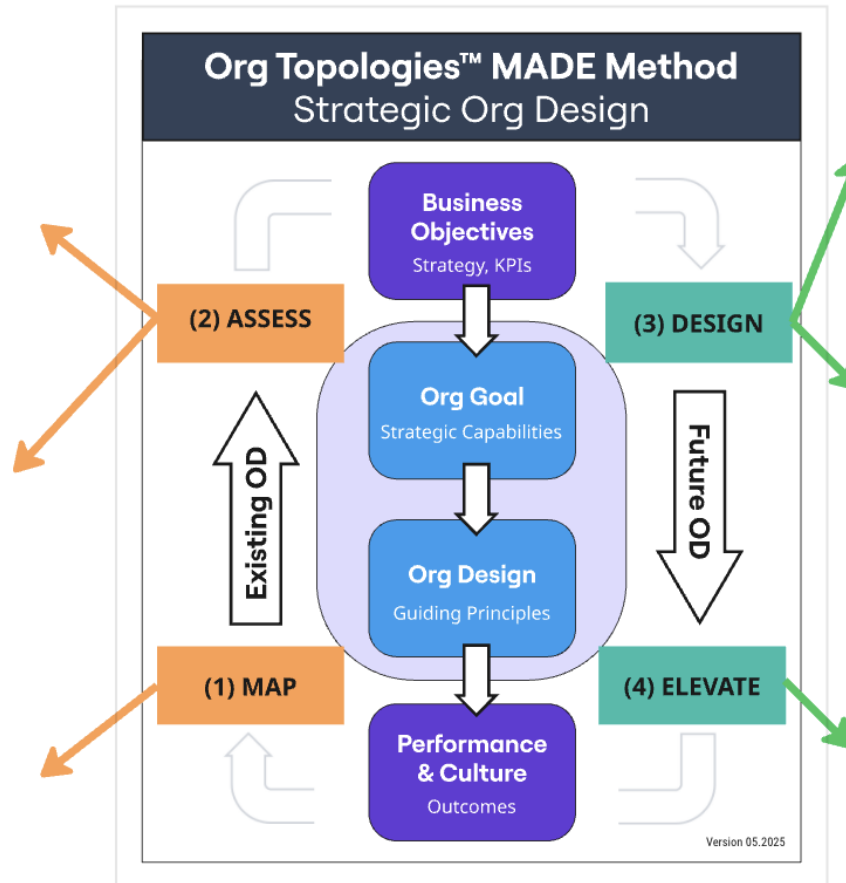
MADE

Fit for purpose in
regards to biz
strategy?

Assess the
topology and
capabilities

Map your existing
ecosystem

Formulate biz objectives



Define desired
strategic
capabilities

Choose your target
topology and
create org design
blueprint(s)

Figure out how to
get the change
going with
Elevating Katas

(Re)Formulate biz objectives



Old design 2024



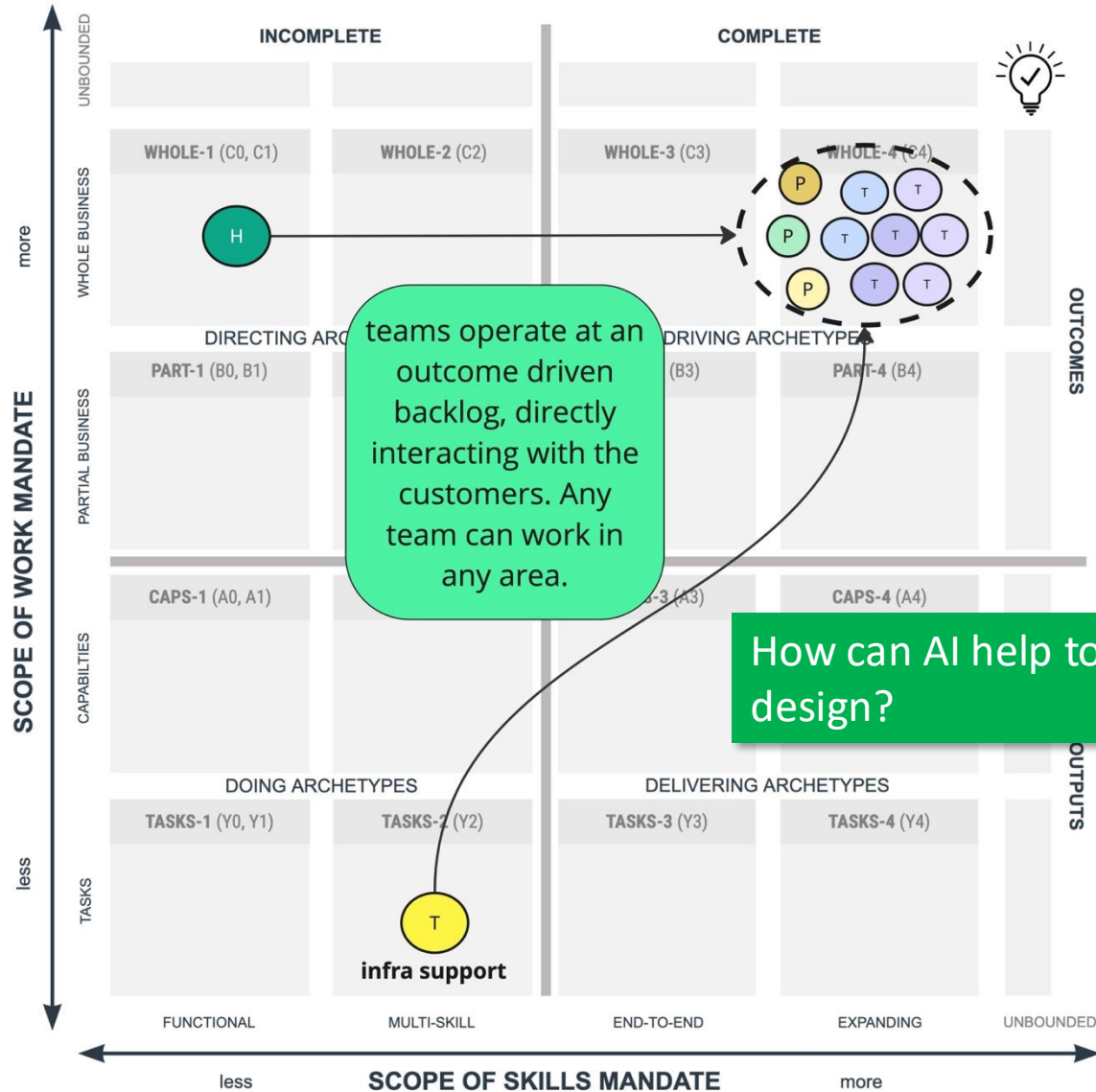
We are falling behind!
We are too slow!

We need to hire more Product owners, developers, and UX-ers.

We need to start using AI!



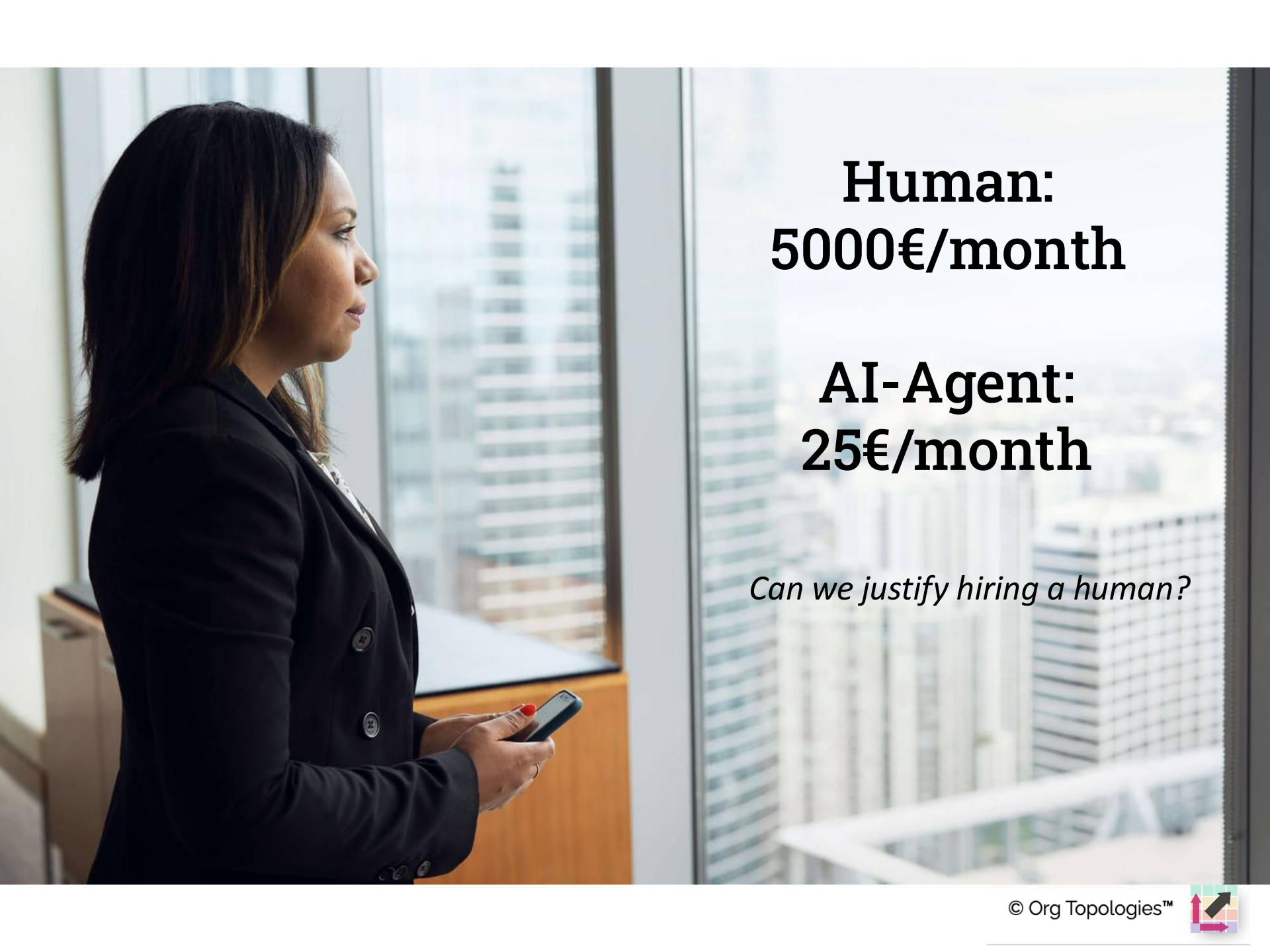
Perfection goal





**OK.
So, what does
this mean to
ME?**





**Human:
5000€/month**

**AI-Agent:
25€/month**

Can we justify hiring a human?

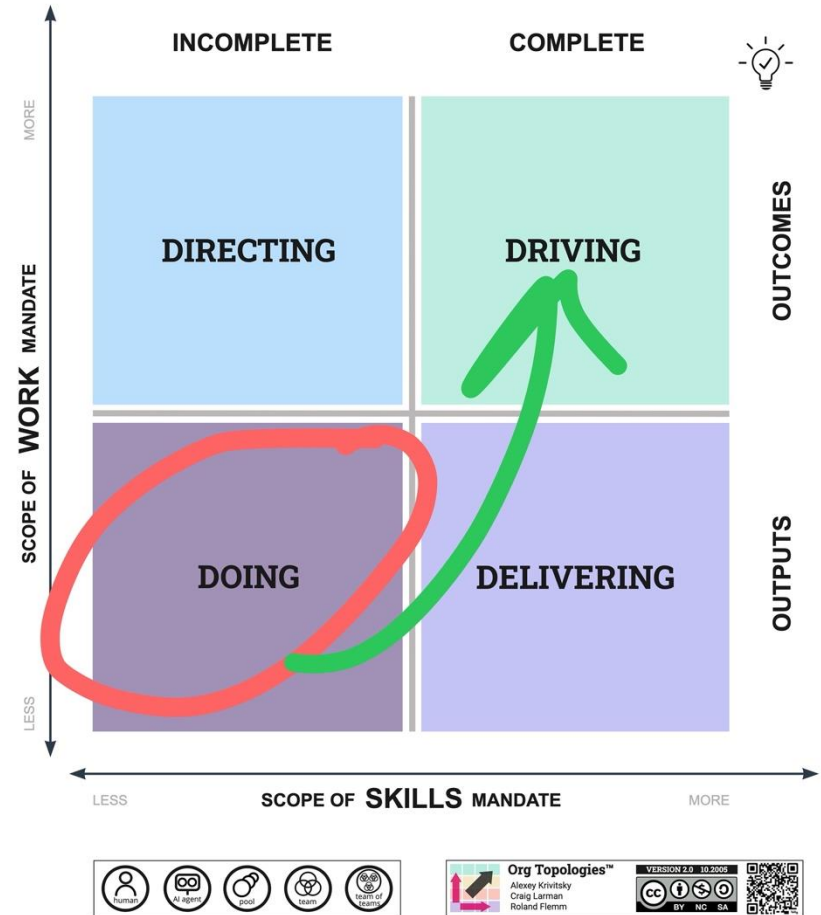


Elevate, not Eliminate!

How do we keep people relevant in the age of AI?

Leaders give people the **mandate** to orchestrate AIs that handle:

- simplifications of the tech environment
- business process redesigns
- innovations with fast prototyping and validation
- automations of repetitive work
- teaching people to expand the scope of skills and work



This requires a new org design!

Multi-learning!



The image shows a snippet of a Harvard Business Review article. At the top left is the Harvard Business Review logo. Below it is a navigation bar with links: Latest, Magazine, Topics, Podcasts, Store, The Big Idea, Data & Visuals, and Case Selections. The article title is "The New New Product Development Game" by Hirotaka Takeuchi and Ikujiro Nonaka, dated January 1986. The text begins with "In today's fast-paced, fiercely competitive world of commercial new product development, speed and flexibility are essential. Companies are increasingly realizing that the old, sequential approach to developing new products simply won't get the job done. Instead, companies in Japan and the United States are using a holistic method—as in rugby, the ba". Below the text is "EXHIBIT 1 Sequential (A) vs. overlapping (B and C) phases of development". It contains three diagrams: Type A shows five sequential rectangular blocks; Type B shows six overlapping bell-shaped curves; Type C shows six overlapping bell-shaped curves that are more tightly packed than Type B.

Product Development

The New New Product Development Game

by Hirotaka Takeuchi and Ikujiro Nonaka

From the Magazine (January 1986)

In today's fast-paced, fiercely competitive world of commercial new product development, speed and flexibility are essential. Companies are increasingly realizing that the old, sequential approach to developing new products simply won't get the job done. Instead, companies in Japan and the United States are using a holistic method—as in rugby, the ba

EXHIBIT 1
Sequential (A) vs. overlapping (B and C) phases of development

Type A

Phase 1 2 3 4 5

Type B

Phase 1 2 3 4 5 6

Type C

Phase 1 2 3 4 5 6

Moving the Scrum Downfield

From interviews with organization members from the CEO to young engineers, we learned that leading companies show six characteristics in managing their new product development processes:

1. Built-in instability
2. Self-organizing project teams
3. Overlapping development phases
4. "Multilearning"
5. Subtle control
6. Organizational transfer of learning

<https://hbr.org/1986/01/the-new-new-product-development-game>

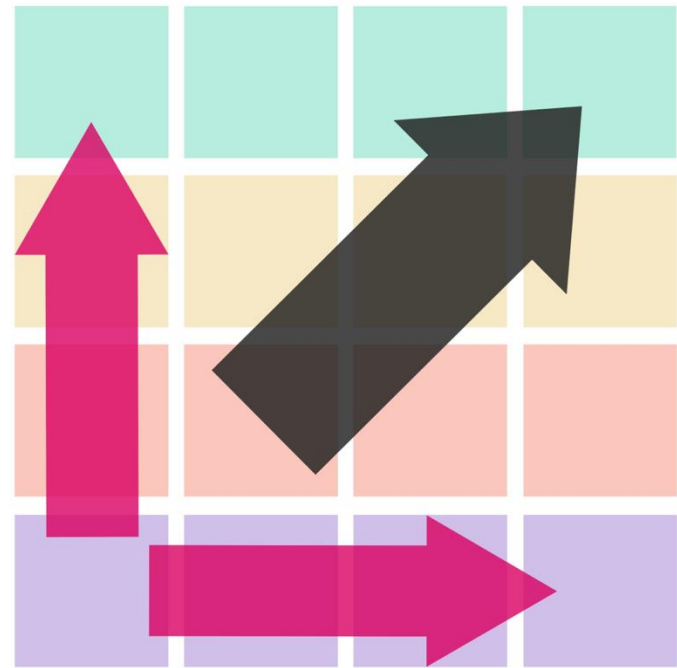
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Changing mandates = Changing org design
Multi-learning is key

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3 hours

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Discussion



1. “AI adoption without redesigning the organization will reduce—not increase—overall performance.”
2. “The single biggest lever leaders have on performance is org design, not technology or talent.”
3. “In the age of AI, the adaptive topology is the only option for long-term relevance of a company.”

