

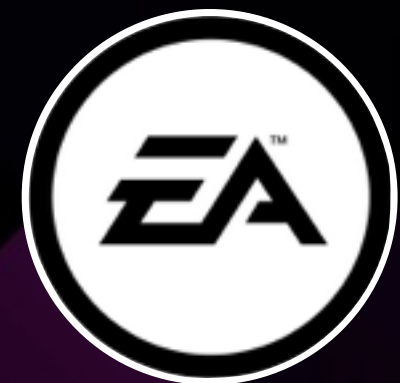


Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose

— building a hyper-engaged team

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Criteriongames



Criteriongames

WE ARE CURRENTLY HAVING THE **BEST TIME**
MAKING THE **BEST GAMES** WE EVER HAVE

I'M HERE TO TELL YOU HOW!

PART I – *Our Back Story*

PART II – *Our New Philosophy*

PART III – *How we know it's good*

PART IV – *Practices*

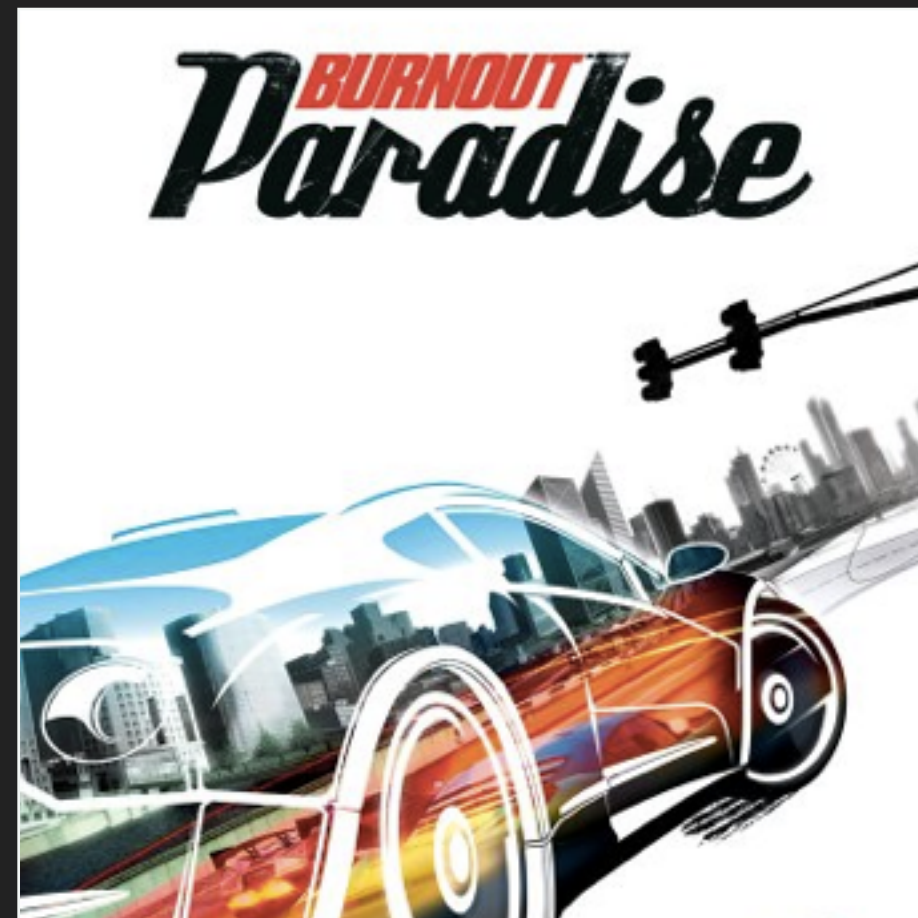
PART V – *Summary*



PART I

WHERE DID THIS COME FROM?

YOU MAY HAVE HEARD OF SOME OF OUR WORK



HIGH METACRITIC
LOW MORALE

WHY THE LOW MORALE?

The studio consistently made bad decisions,
and the team poured their hearts into
features that were always destined to be cut.

THE UPSHOT OF THAT SITUATION

Much of the team was under-motivated

despite being incredibly passionate

Most of the team weren't empowered to make decisions

despite knowing everyone else on the team



INSPIRED BY INDIES

When everyone knows the whole game they're making,
they're resilient to many of the problems we faced

PART II

OUR NEW PHILOSOPHY

If we assumed that

**EVERYONE WANTS TO MAKE
THE BEST GAME THEY CAN**

What would we do?

TREAT PEOPLE AS **TALENT**

&

ACTIVELY ERADICATE HARMFUL DOGMA

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

This is a **RESOURCE**



It's something of value
that you can own

These are **PEOPLE**



They're talented individuals who
can create wonderful things

Brought to you by the caring people at

Criteriongames

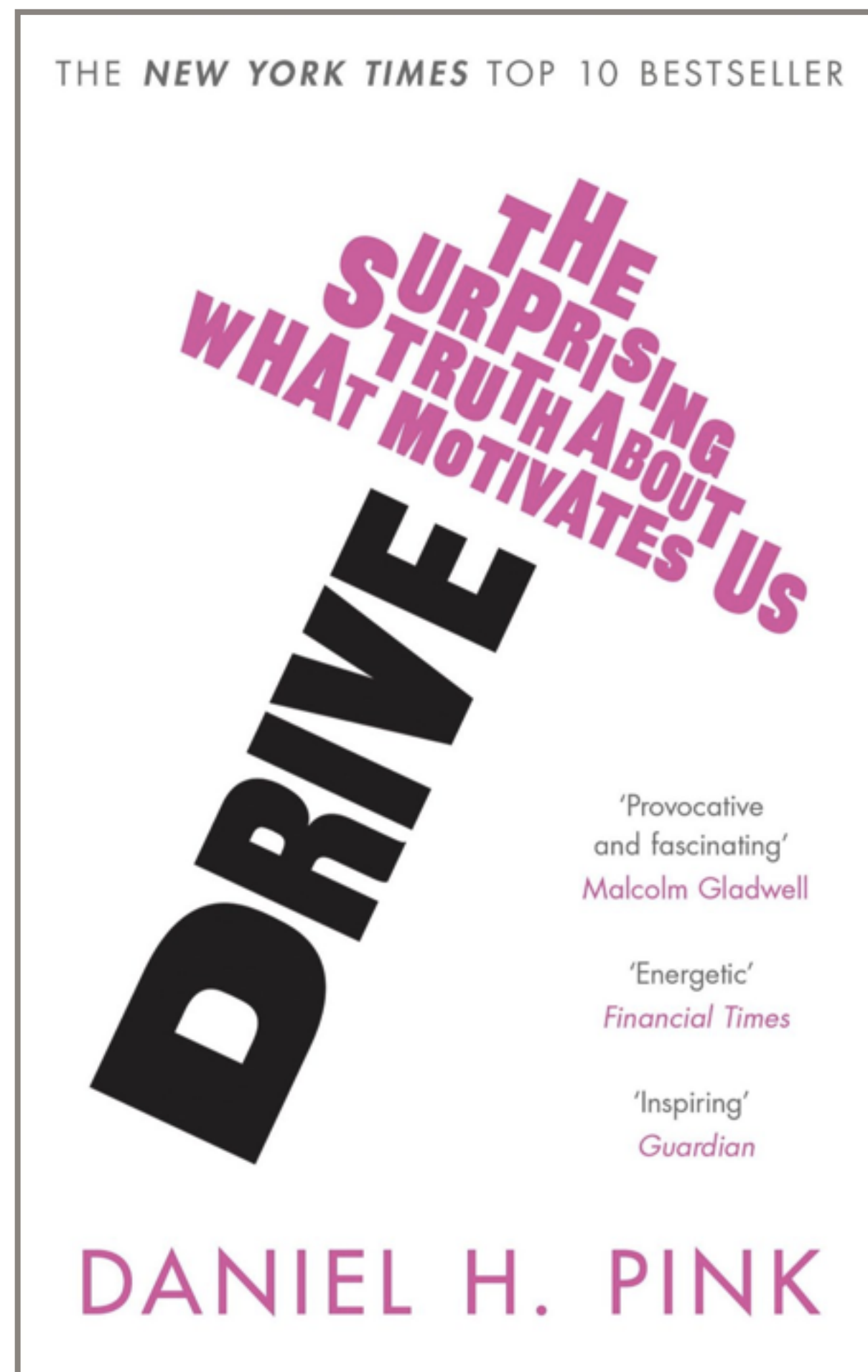
TREAT PEOPLE AS TALENT

Our job as leaders isn't to
get our **resources** to complete **tasks**

Rather, we have to
inspire and **facilitate creative collaborations**

STAND BACK!

I'M GOING TO TRY SCIENCE



*When it comes to motivation,
there is a **mismatch** between
what science knows and what
business does*

– Daniel Pink

WHAT ACTUALLY MOTIVATES PEOPLE?

AUTONOMY – over TEAM, TASK & TECHNIQUE

MASTERY – of a valued skill

PURPOSE – in service to something greater than ourself

AUTONOMY

Having control (*within project parameters*) over

WHAT you work on,

WHO you work with, *and*

HOW you approach it

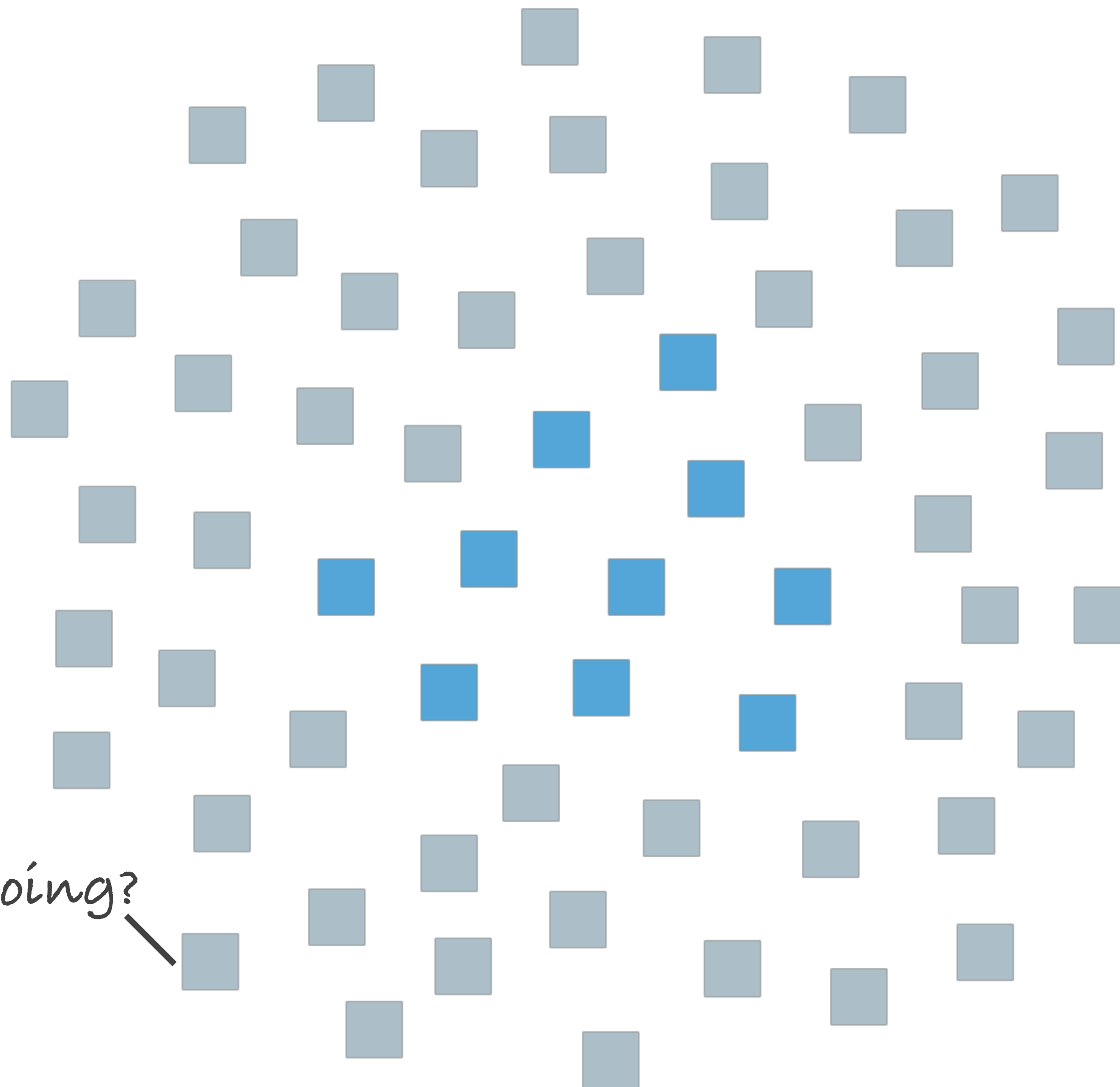
has been shown to be hugely motivational



**“Decide where you can have the
most positive effect, and work on that!”**

CONTEXT IS KING

wtf am i doing?



CONTEXT IS KING

oh hey, i have an idea that
would be easy and cool! \

AUTONOMY OVER TEAM



A NOTE ABOUT TEAM VIABILITY

It's vital that any given team or sub-team is **viable**, i.e.

it has the capability to deliver what it's trying to in the time it has

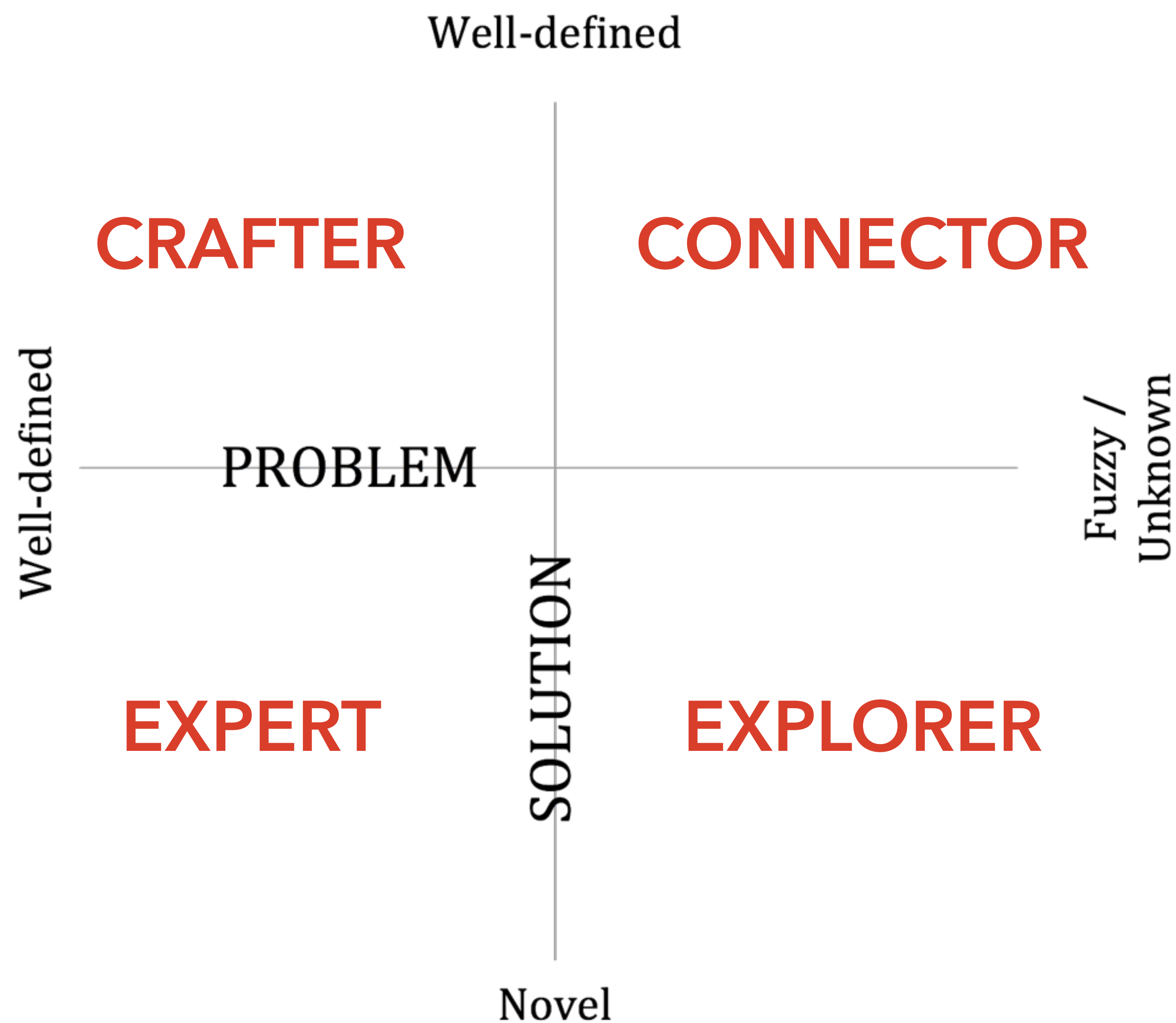
A **viable** team is greater than the sum of its parts.

A nonviable team isn't.

AUTONOMY OVER TECHNIQUE

Each team is responsible for creating the goals
they sign up to, as well as deciding on exactly
how they'll reach those goals

MASTERY



PURPOSE

Make incredible games,
in the best way we can.

ACTIVELY ERADICATE HARMFUL DOGMA

10 REVIEW

20 ADAPT

30 COTO 10

PART III

SOUNDS LOVELY.

DOES IT ACTUALLY WORK?

EARLY SIGNS WERE GOOD!

By the end of 2014, we were **more productive** than any team I'd ever worked with

Our team reported the highest levels of satisfaction, confidence and hope of any game team within EA

WHEN SUDDENLY...

...THE OLD WORLD CAME KNOCKING!



A REQUEST FOR HELP

M/ 2014

We delivered a very
innovative take on the
feature,
to a very **high quality**,
bang **on schedule**!





IT HAPPENED AGAIN!



“The two-minute thrill of an Endor speeder-bike chase is as pure a hit of Star Wars joy we've had since Atari's legendary arcade sideshow in 1983”

– Eurogamer

SINCE 2014



65 staff-years experience in pre-production



18 staff-years experience on shipped titles

PART IV

HOW WE'VE PUT THIS INTO PRACTICE

MILESTONES



Our primary means to build context is to bring the whole team together for one week out of every seven

This week is used to **review** & **share**, **re-form** teams, and **plan** the next milestone

THE BROADCAST



UNDERSTANDING SOFTWARE REVIEWS

UPDATE

– “FYI, this is where we are; we want your awareness

STEERING

– “We could try A, B or C. Which is better?”

QUALITY

– “We think this is about good enough - is it?”

FREQUENT RETROSPECTIVES

“What went good?”
“What went bad?”



Group into themes
⚡ *unclear points*



Discuss ⚡ cards
Agree actions for themes

START



STOP



CONTINUE



THE WALL OF AWESOME

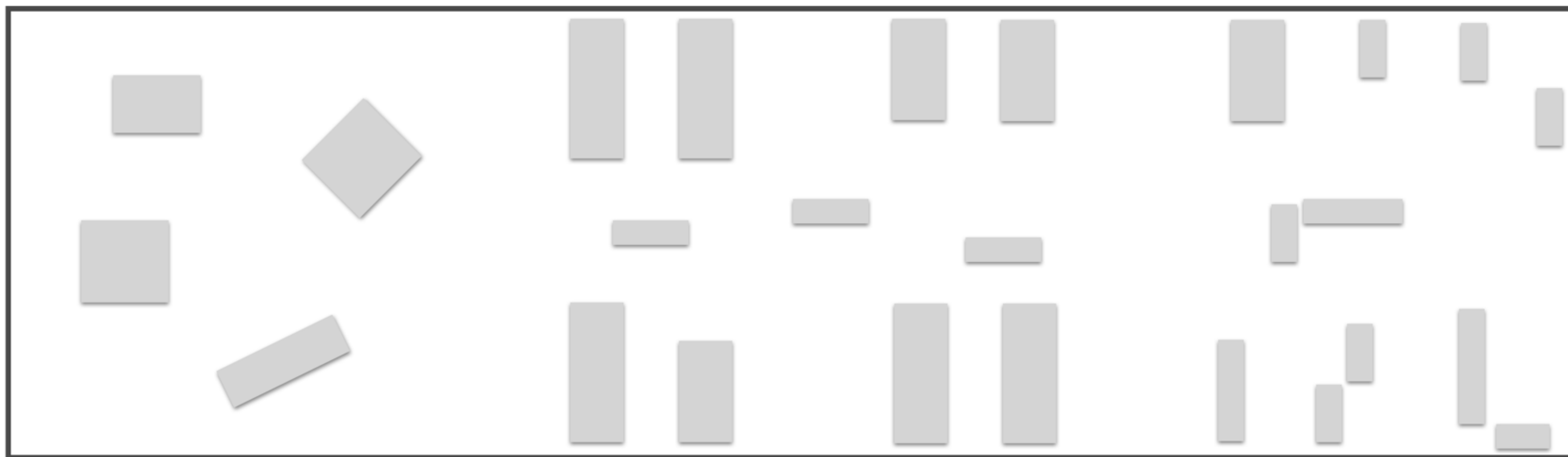


SPACE

EXPLORERS

CRAFTERS

EXPERTS



Highly
distracting &
stimulating

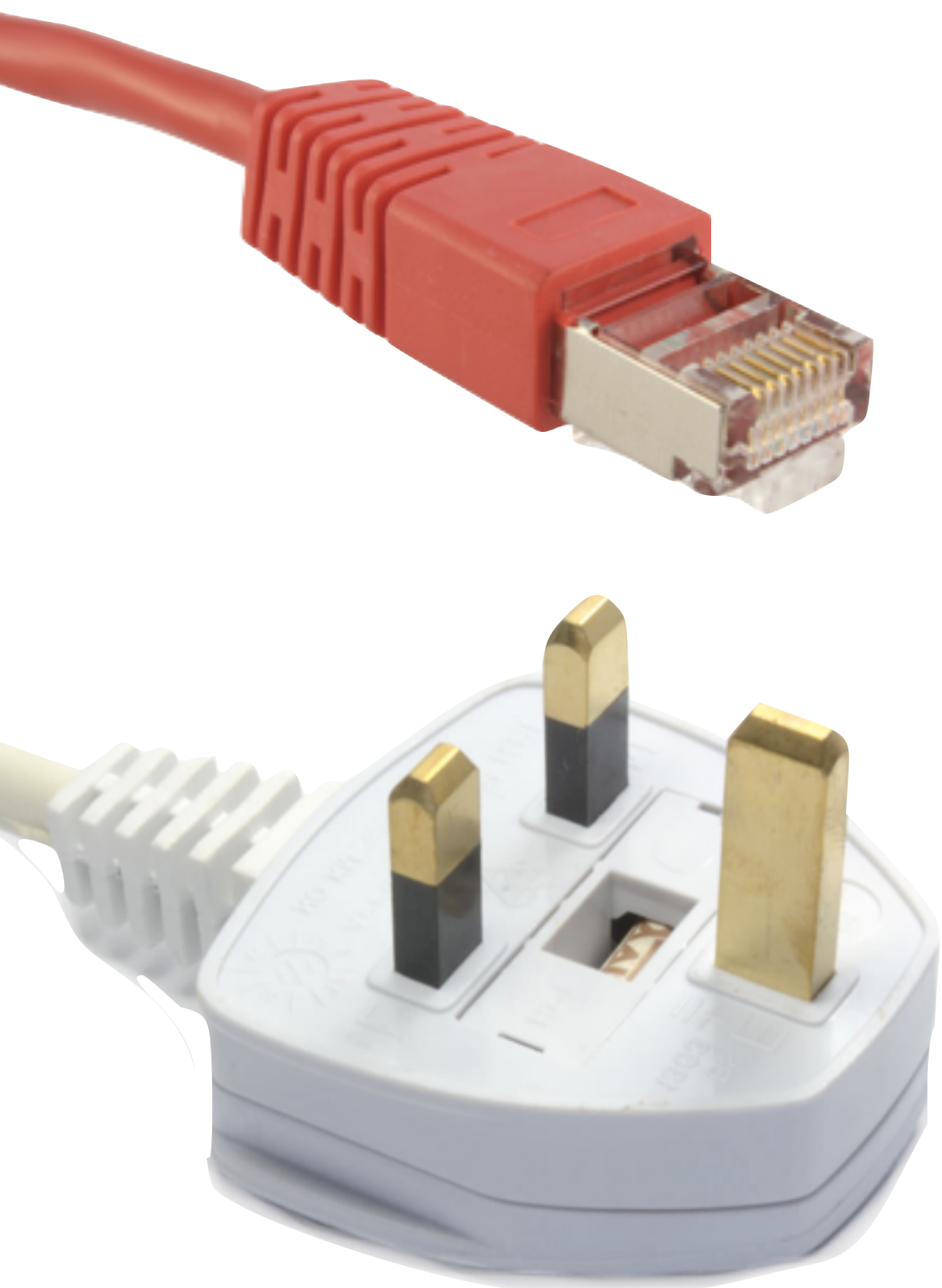
Interruption

Highly focussed





TWO PLUGS

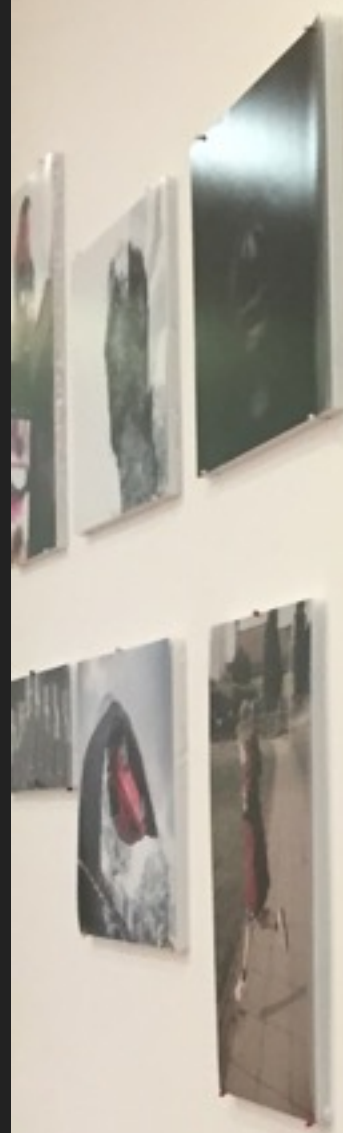


It used to take a three days and cost \$15,000 to rearrange the office

We developed a desk on wheels that only needed two plugs into building infrastructure

We now rearrange the whole office in under 20 minutes

CLONAK ROOM



PART V

SO HOW **DO** YOU BUILD A
HYPER-ENGAGED TEAM?

TREAT PEOPLE AS TALENT

CONTEXT is King!

USE PROVEN DRIVES TO MOTIVATE YOUR TEAM

AUTONOMY

MASTERY

PURPOSE

DON'T ACCEPT A HARMFUL STATUS QUO

NO DOGMA!

WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT WE ARE NOW
BUILDING GAMES IN **THE BEST WAY**
WE'VE EVER HEARD OF

Criteriongames

IS HIRING!

<http://www.criteriongames.com>

<http://careers.ea.com>

TREAT PEOPLE AS **TALENT** | **ACTIVELY** ERADICATE HARMFUL DOGMA

ANY QUESTIONS?

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