

# Reflections on the Principles of SBCC Capacity Strengthening

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Not to persuade but simply to  
“stir the glass”



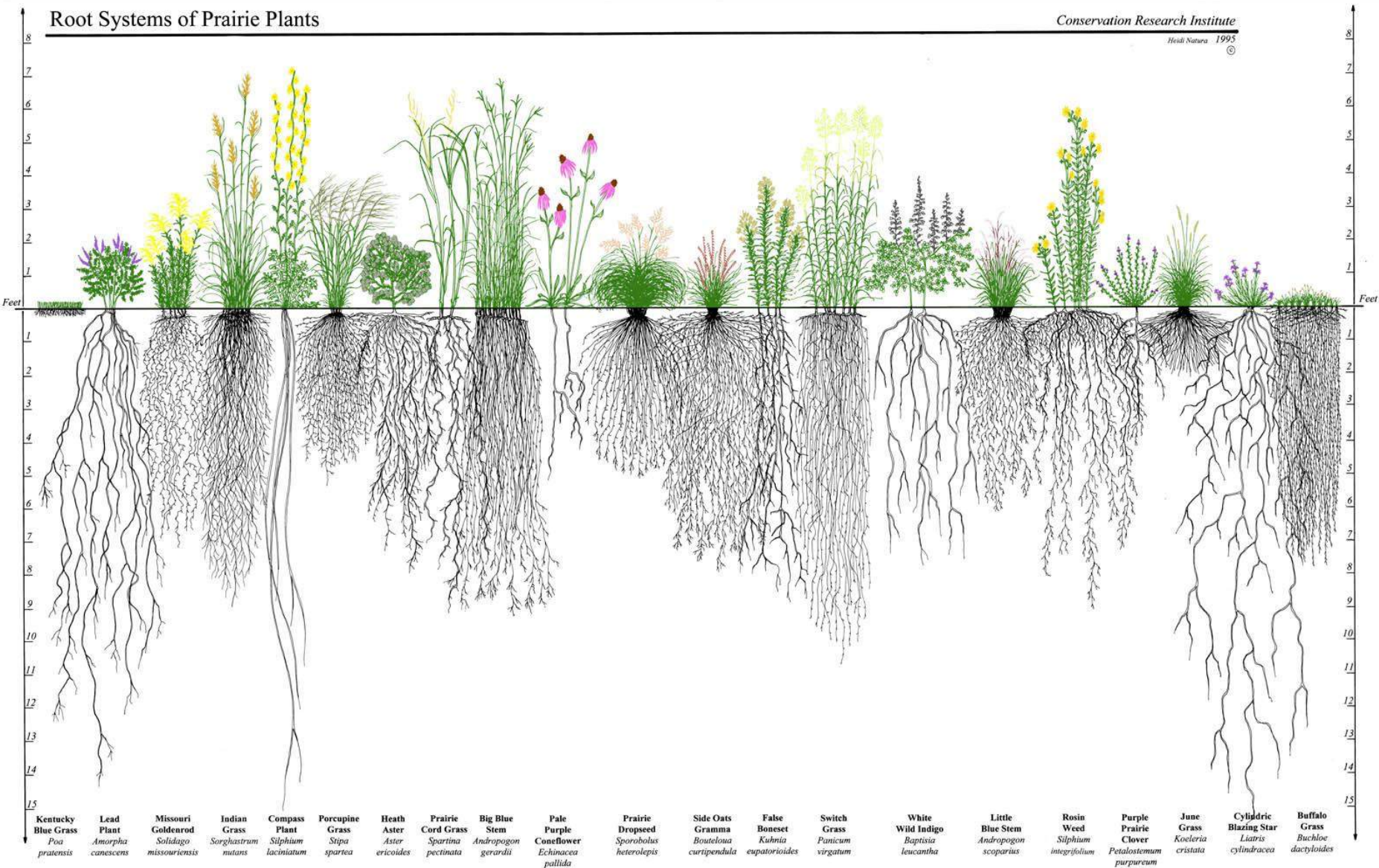


“To grow up,  
one needs to grow  
down as well!”

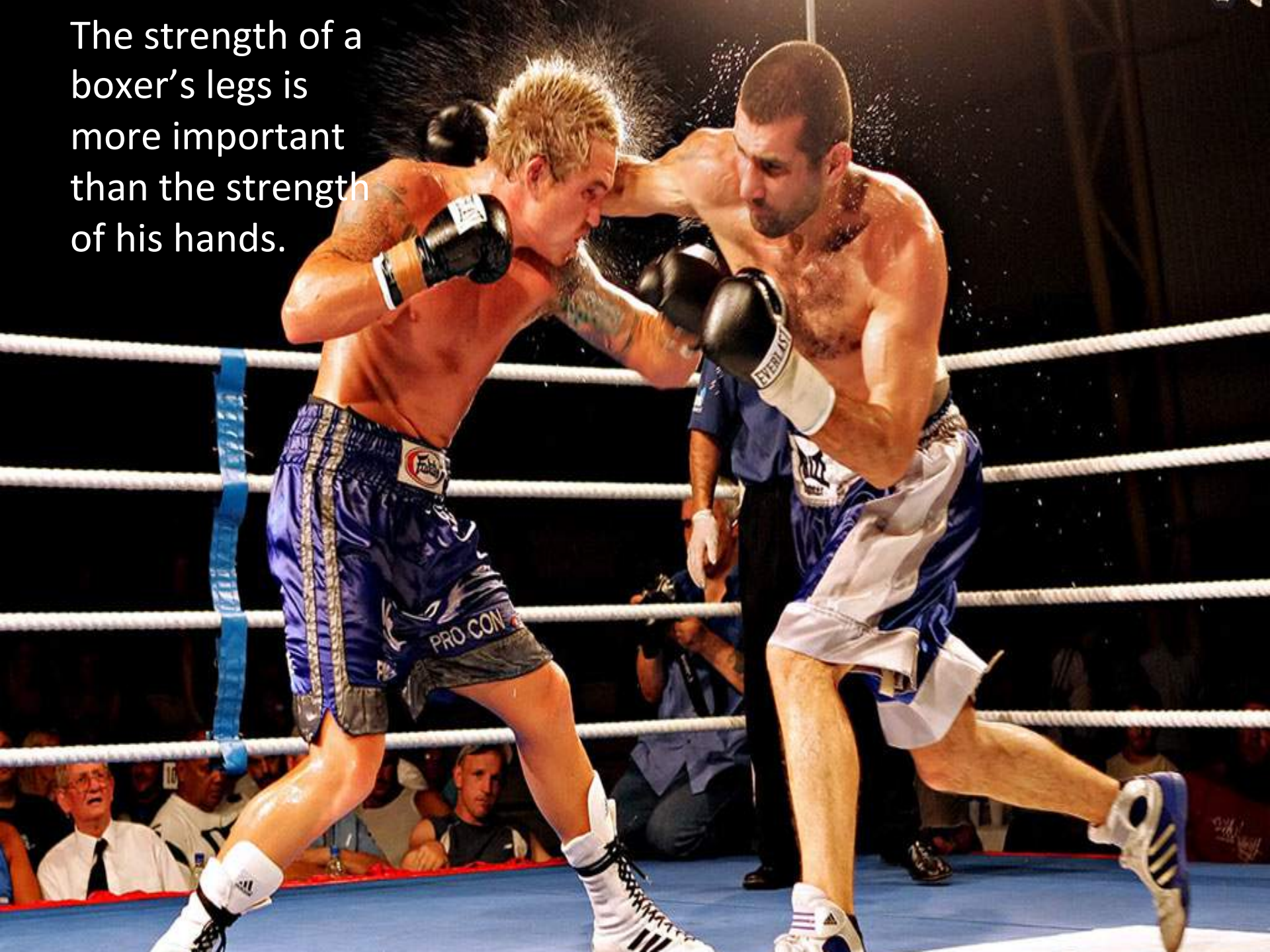
# Root Systems of Prairie Plants

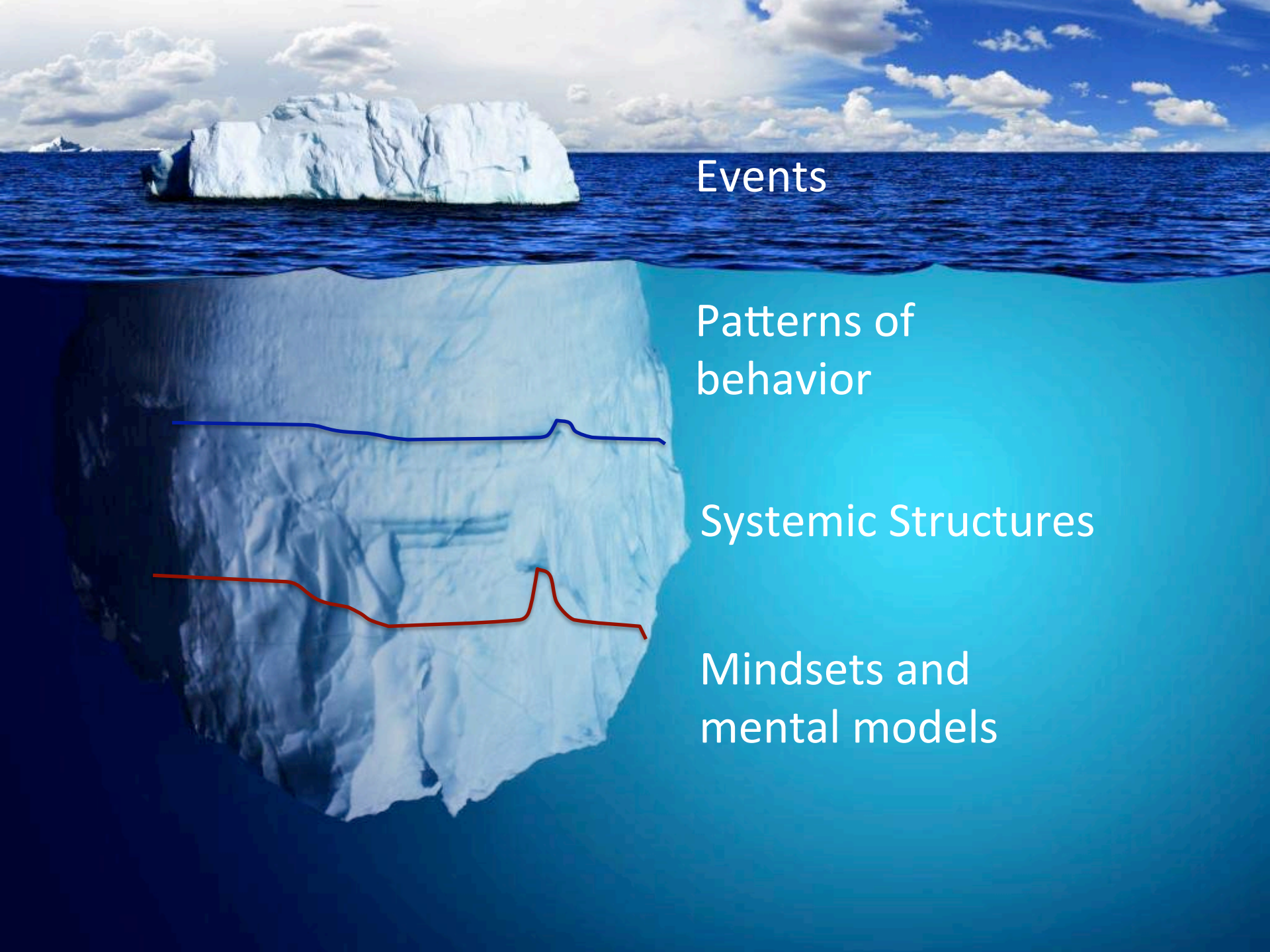
Conservation Research Institute

Heidi Natura 1995



The strength of a boxer's legs is more important than the strength of his hands.





Events

Patterns of  
behavior

Systemic Structures

Mindsets and  
mental models



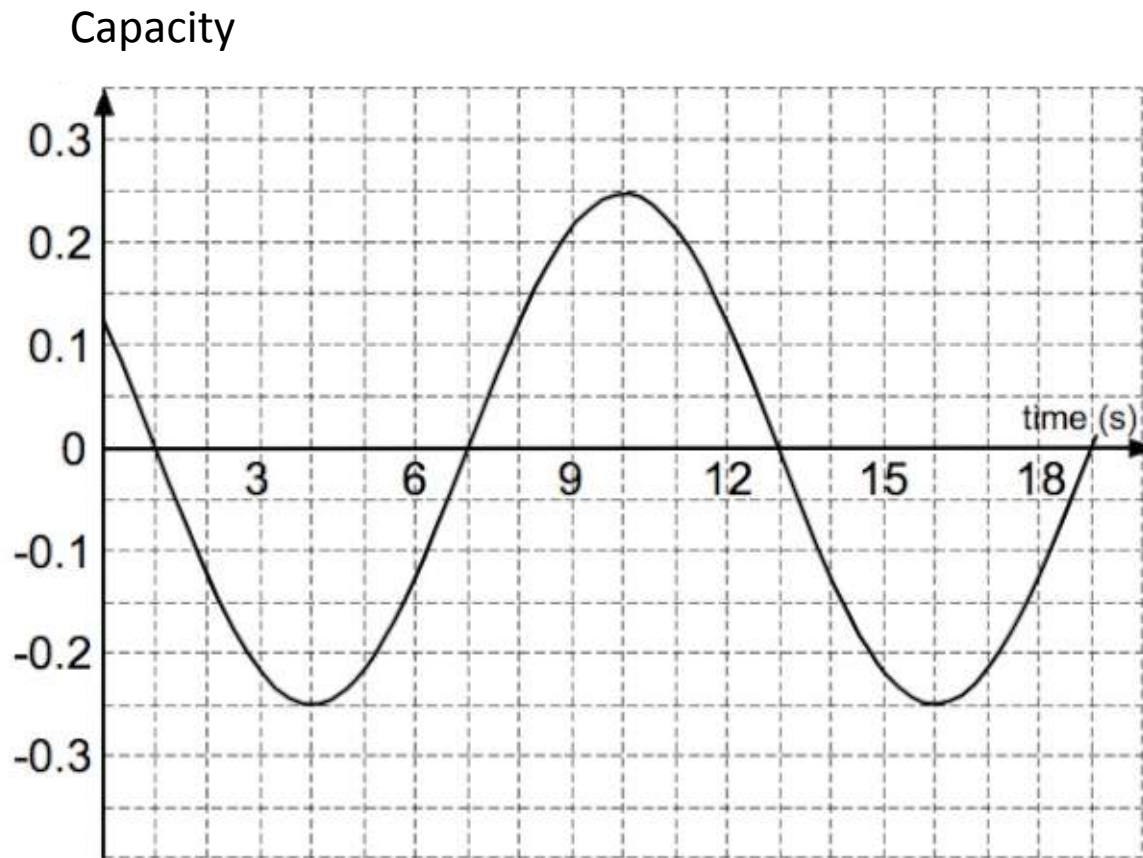
Is the process of nurturing a system to achieve its function or purpose more effectively and efficiently in a sustainable way.

Why is capacity strengthening so challenging?

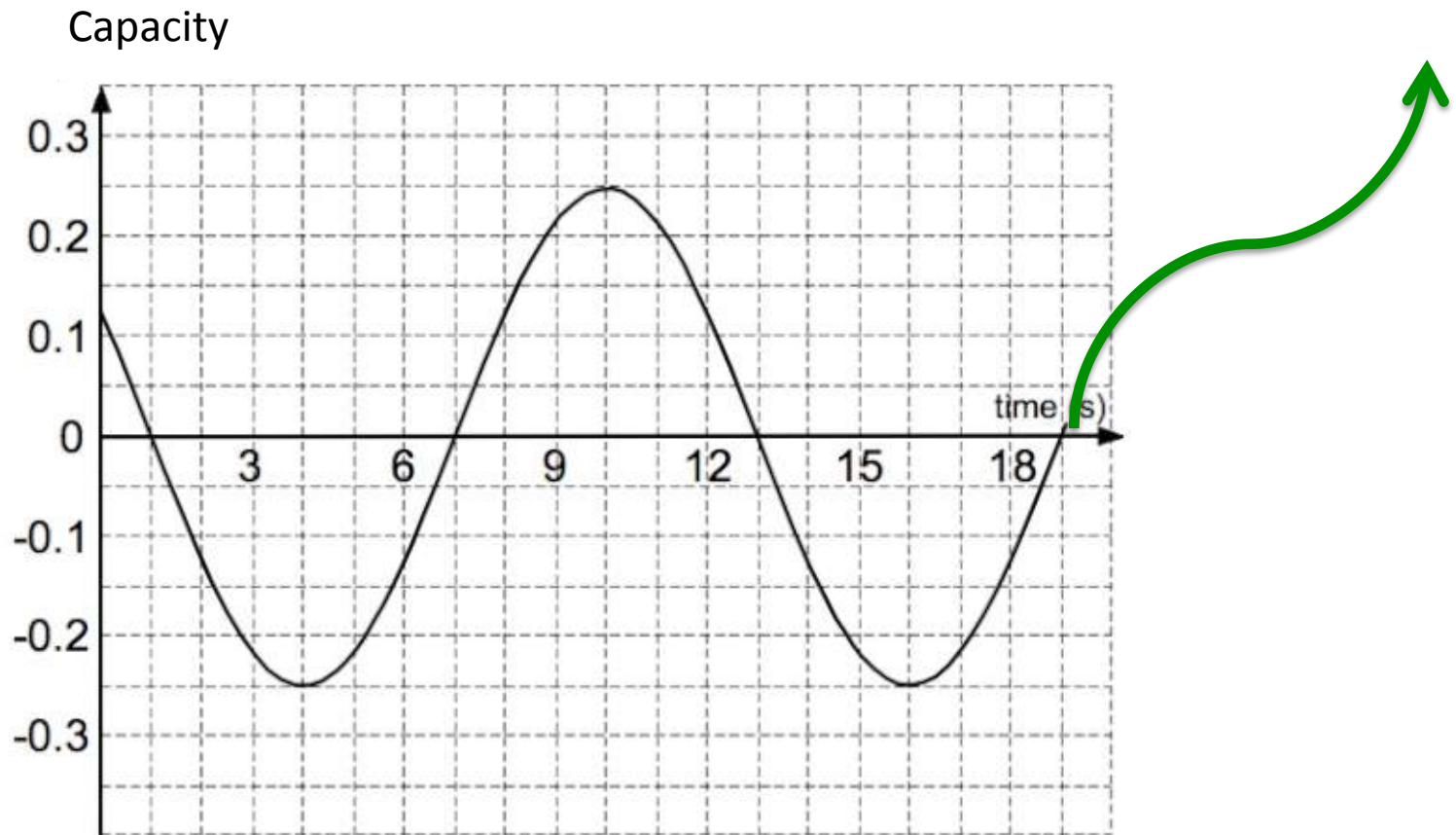




# Oscillation – strengthened capacity often does not stay strong



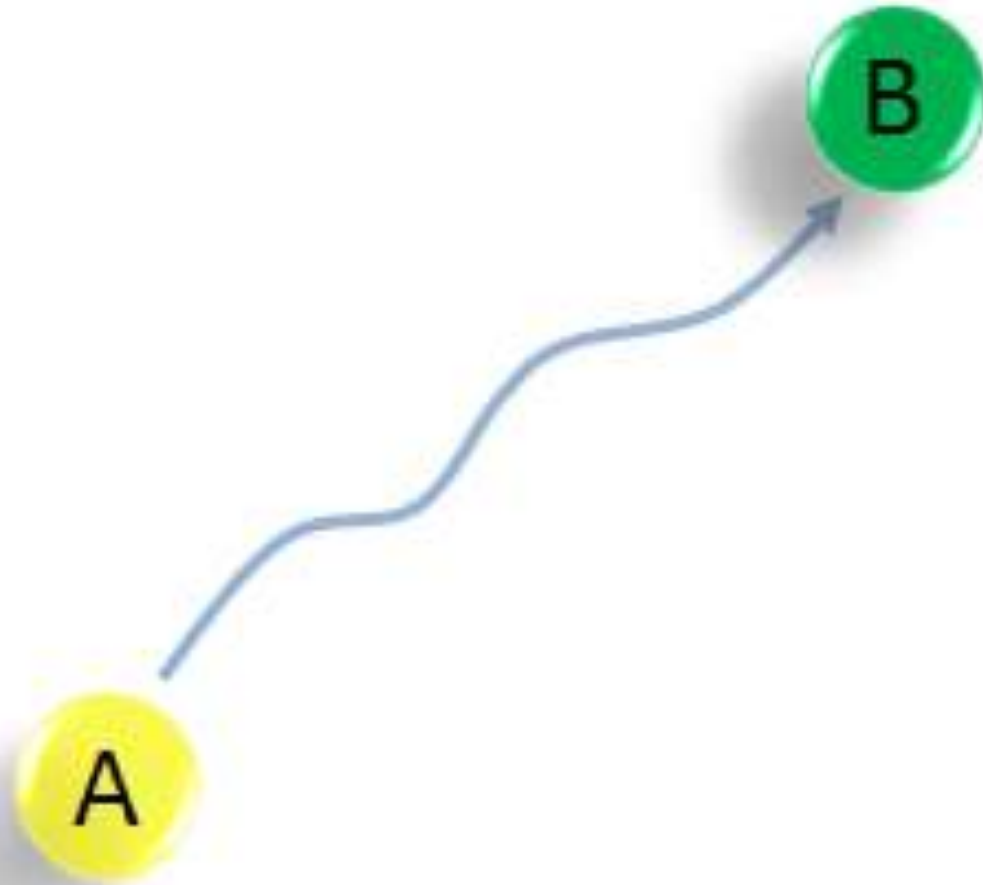
Strategic issue -How do we transform oscillation into a stable upward trend?



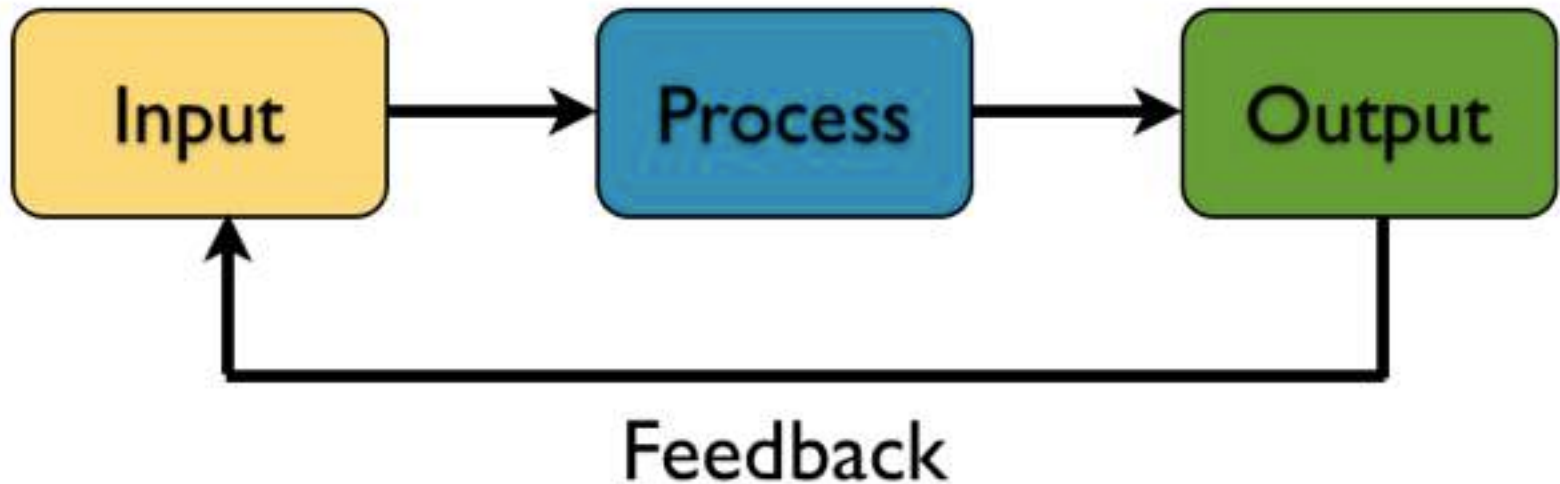
# Why is capacity strengthening challenging and what can we do?

1. Capacity strengthening is a process. There is NO **end state**. The goal posts MOVE.
1. We need to appreciate capacity strengthening as a mind set, as a value and evolve continuously!

# Capacity Building as an End State



Is capacity building a simple input-process-output model?



Capacity building never ends. The goal posts move continuously. Capacity building is a moving target, a process not an end state.

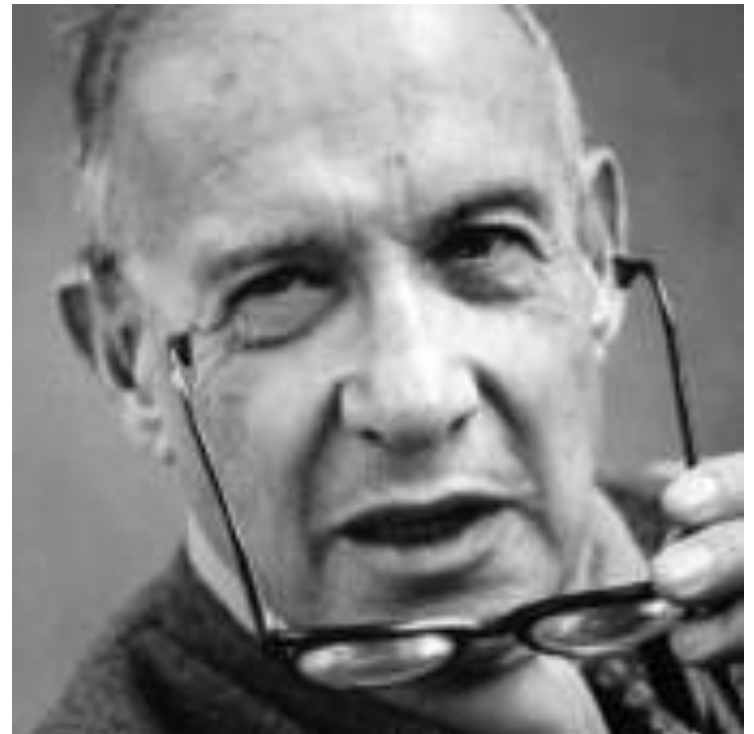


The key to capacity building is nurturing the “discipline of learning” – of learning how to learn!

*“A knowledge society needs **process knowledge**--- something schools have rarely even tried to teach.*

***People have to learn how to learn! We need a discipline of learning!”***

*Peter Drucker  
Management Guru*





At 96 years old, Pablo Casals continued practicing six hours a day!





“If you focus on results,  
you will never change.  
If you focus on change,  
you will get results!”

Jack Dixon

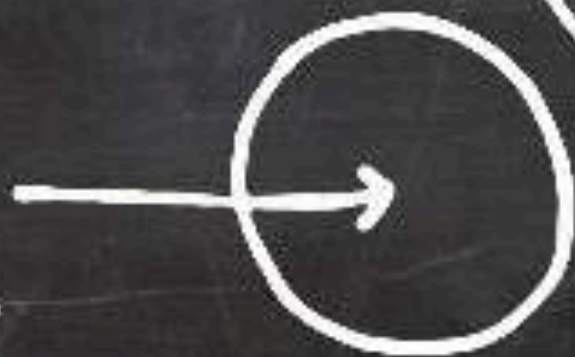
# Why is capacity strengthening challenging and what can we do?

1. Capacity strengthening is a process. There is NO end state. The goal posts MOVE.
2. Capacity strengthening requires going outside of our comfort zones.
1. We need to appreciate capacity strengthening as a mind set, as a value and evolve continuously!
2. We need to accept making mistakes as an essential part of learning and capacity building.

To achieve significant tasks,  
we need to leave our  
comfort zones!



Your  
Comfort  
Zone



Where the  
magic happens

# Should our current capacity define our vision? – “Can’t do” mindset

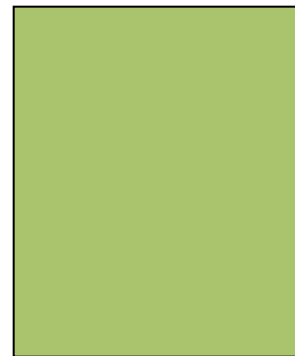
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Capacity

=

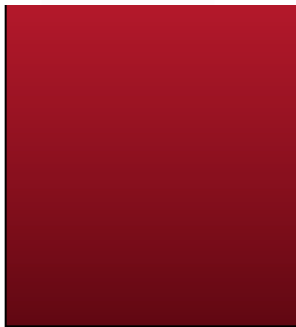


Our vision or goals

# Should our vision define our future capacity?

•

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Capacity

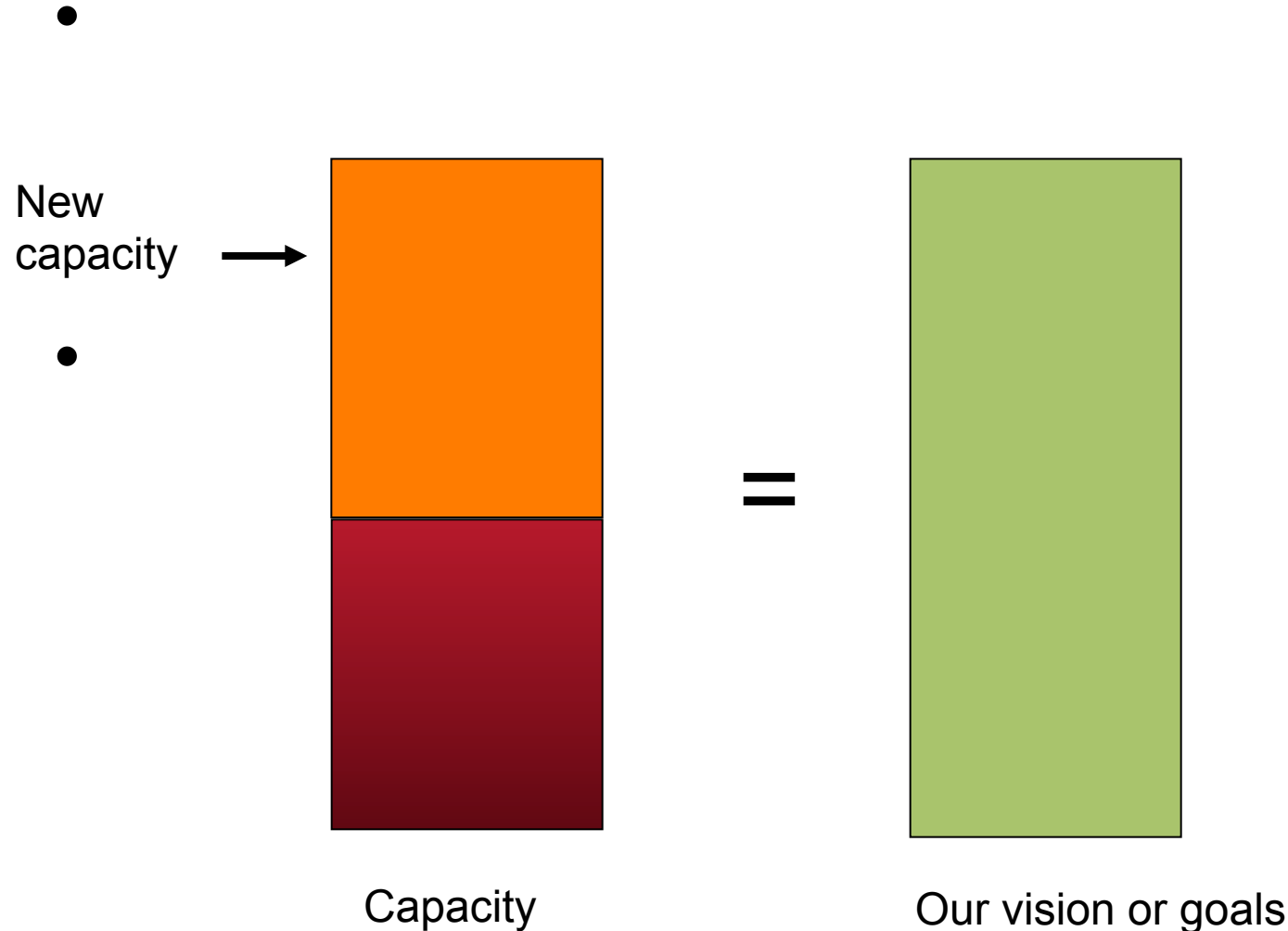
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Our vision or goals

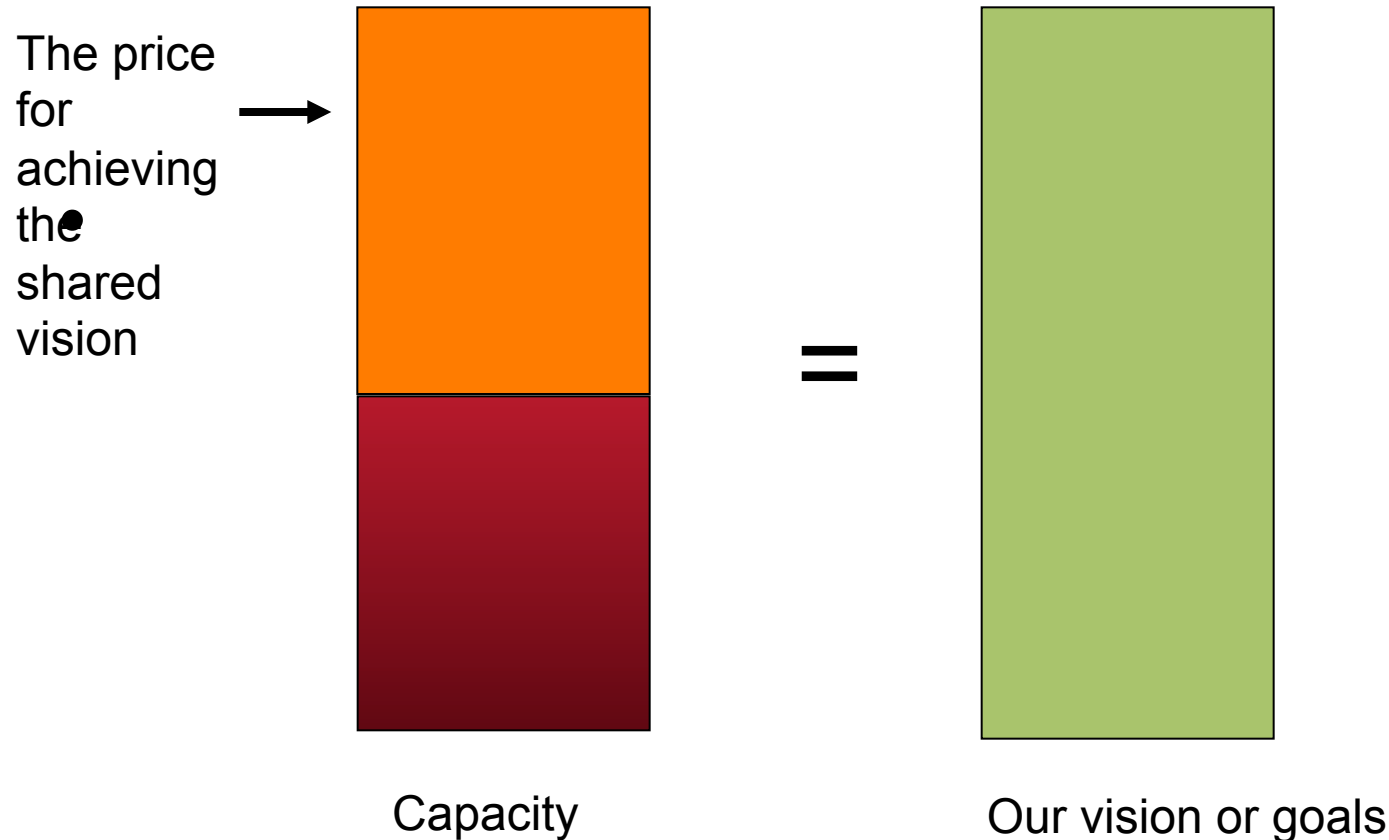
# Should our vision define our future capacity?

– "Can do" mindset



# Every vision demands a price! We must be willing to pay the price

- 





# Why is capacity strengthening challenging and what can we do?

1. Capacity strengthening is a process. There is NO end state. The goal posts MOVE.
  2. Capacity strengthening requires going outside of our comfort zones.
  3. Capacity strengthening comes hand in hand with strategy.
1. We need to appreciate capacity strengthening as a mind set, as a value and evolve continuously!
  2. We need to accept making mistakes as an essential part of learning and capacity building.
  3. We need to improve operational effectiveness before we design our strategy.

Organizational  
Success

```
graph TD; OS[Organizational Success] --> Line; Line --> OE[Operational Effectiveness]; Line --> S[Strategy]; OE <--> S;
```

Operational  
Effectiveness

Strategy

**Operational Effectiveness-**  
the basics of getting the  
job done!

Mandatory

The ONLY door

The fundamentals

Execution

Do things better



Strategy implies choices!



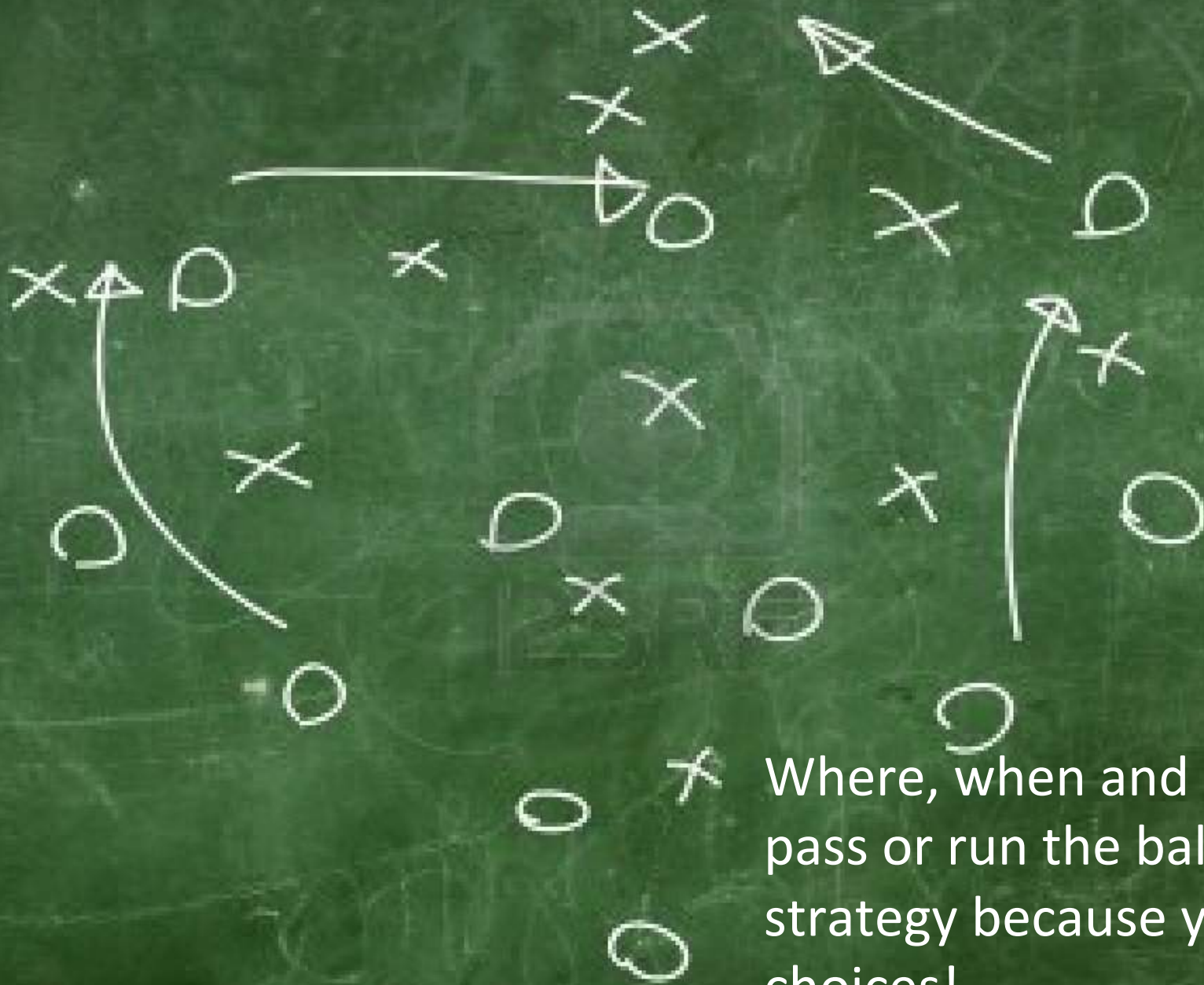


The ability to pass the ball is operational effectiveness, not a strategy!



The ability to strike a goal is operational effectiveness, not a strategy!





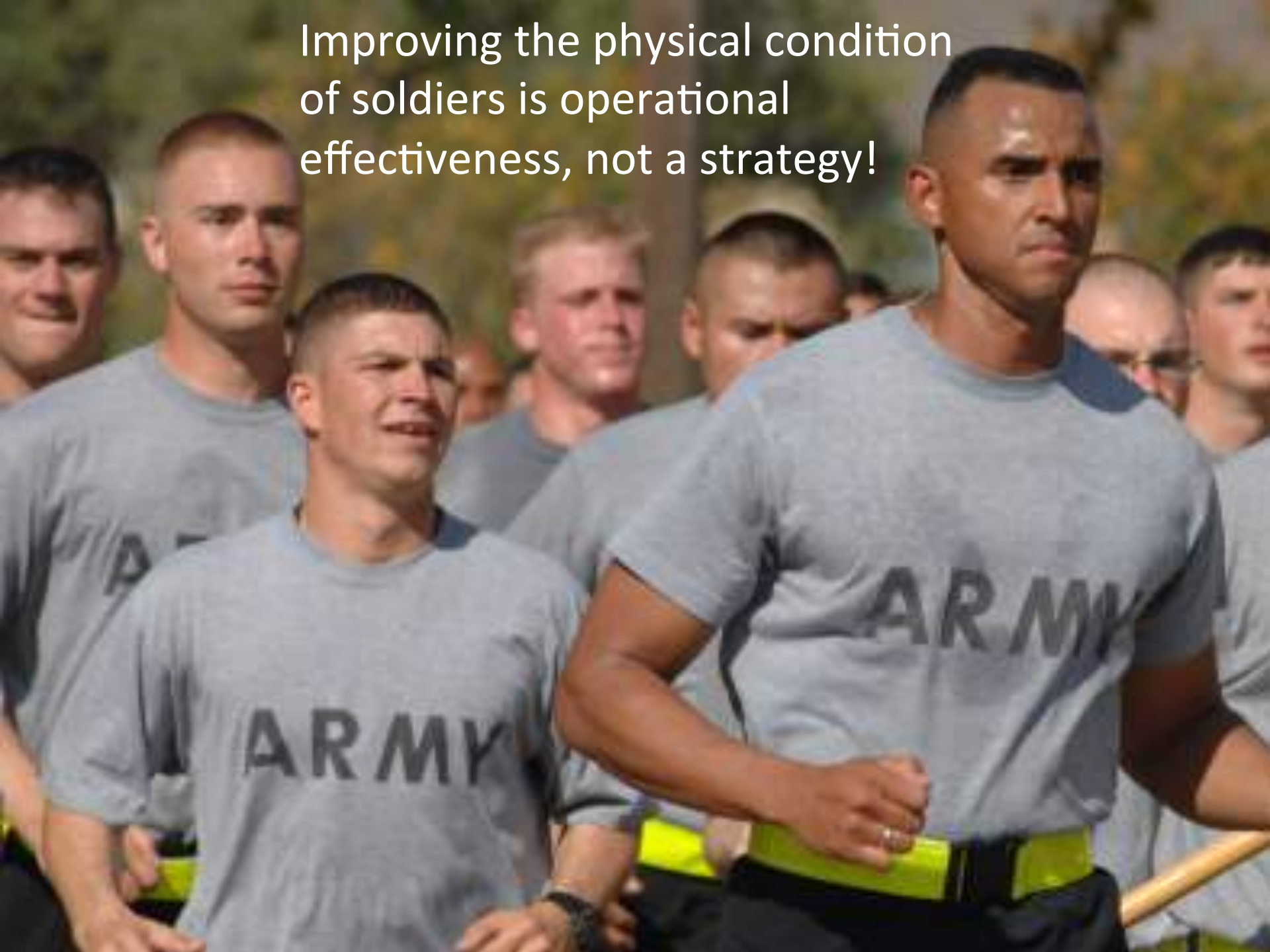
Where, when and how to pass or run the ball is a strategy because you have choices!

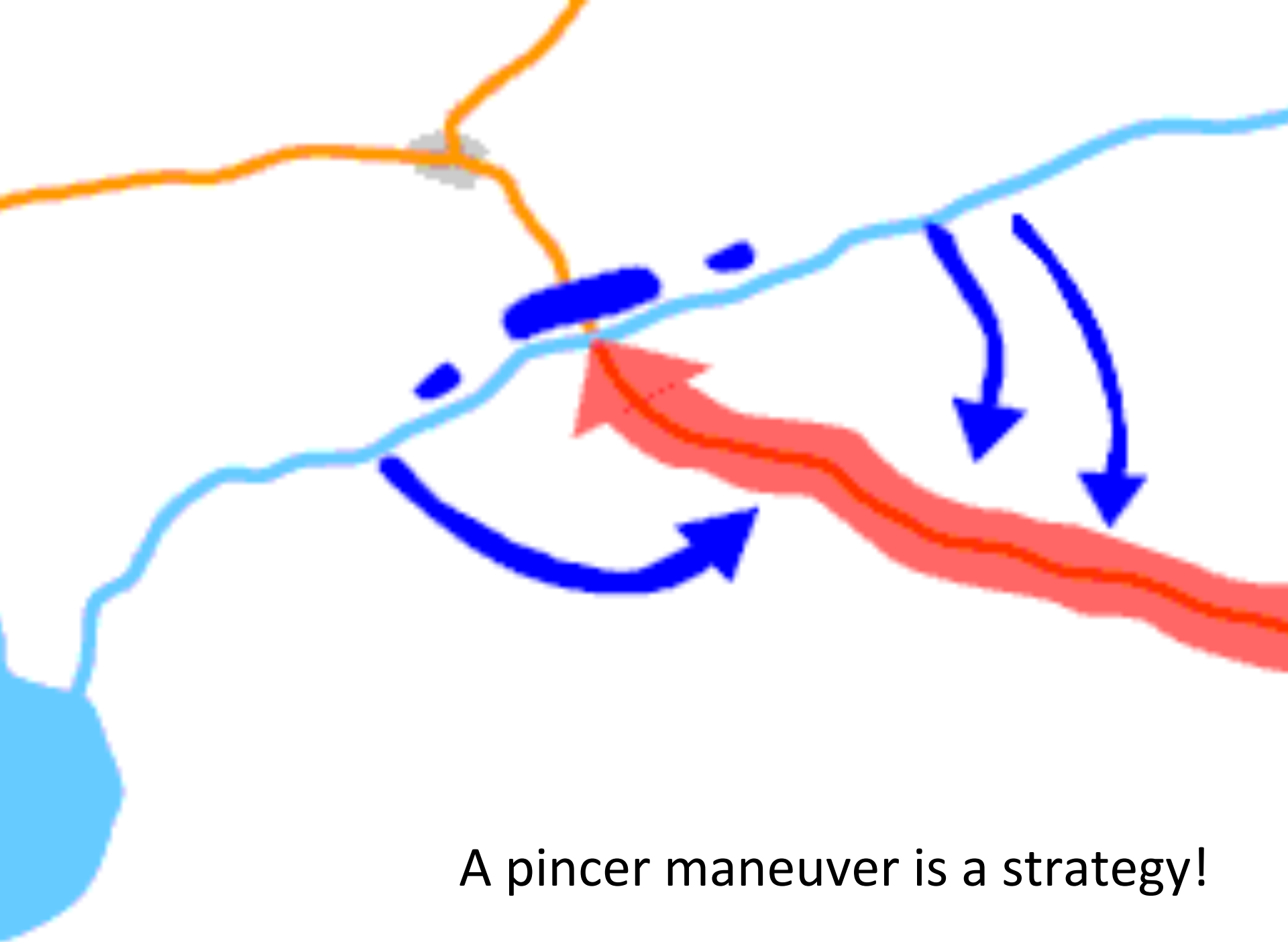
Training soldiers how to shoot is NOT a strategy. It is “operational effectiveness!”





Improving the physical condition of soldiers is operational effectiveness, not a strategy!





A pincer maneuver is a strategy!

# Why is capacity strengthening challenging and what can we do?

1. Capacity strengthening is a process. There is NO end state. The goal posts MOVE.
  2. Capacity strengthening requires going outside of our comfort zones.
  3. Capacity strengthening comes hand in hand with strategy.
  4. Capacity strengthening is best when it is organic and not an ad hoc activity. We need systems thinking!
1. We need to appreciate capacity strengthening as a mind set, as a value and evolve continuously!
  2. We need to accept making mistakes as an essential part of learning and capacity building.
  3. We need to improve operational effectiveness before we design our strategy.
  4. “Being organic” means local ownership is a crucial element of capacity strengthening.

# Sustainable growth vs Ad Hoc

Ad hoc

When a need arises and  
often one off

Sustainable growth

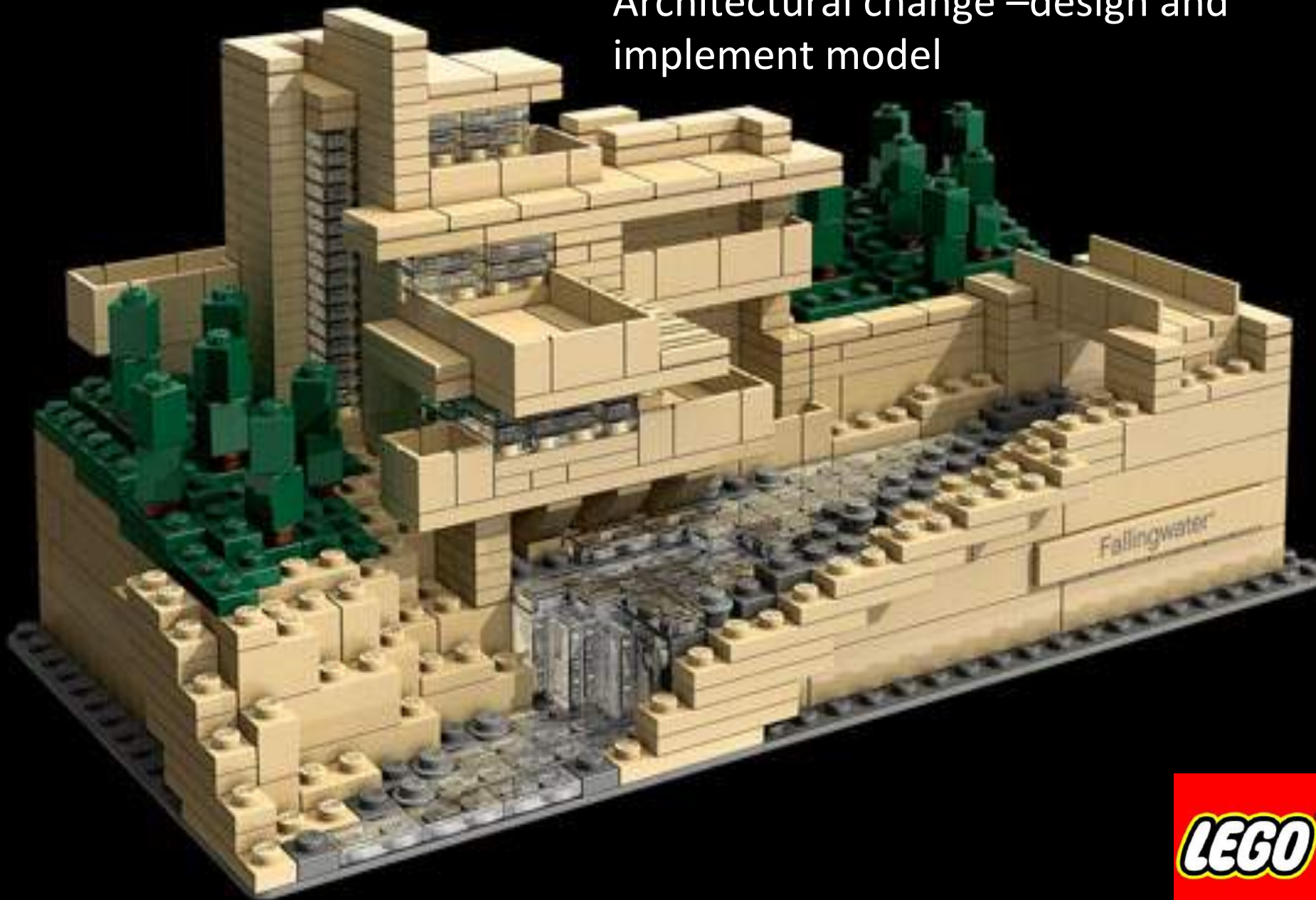
Purposeful, organic  
part of the system



# Growth

- Capacity growth is not instant.
- Each step of the model has an inherent process of growth within it that is influenced by experience and time.

Architectural change – design and implement model



**LEGO**

Organic Change -  
plant and grow model





Authoritarian, unjust,  
wide spread poverty

Time 0

Time 1

Time 2

Time 3

Progress and  
democracy

Time victory

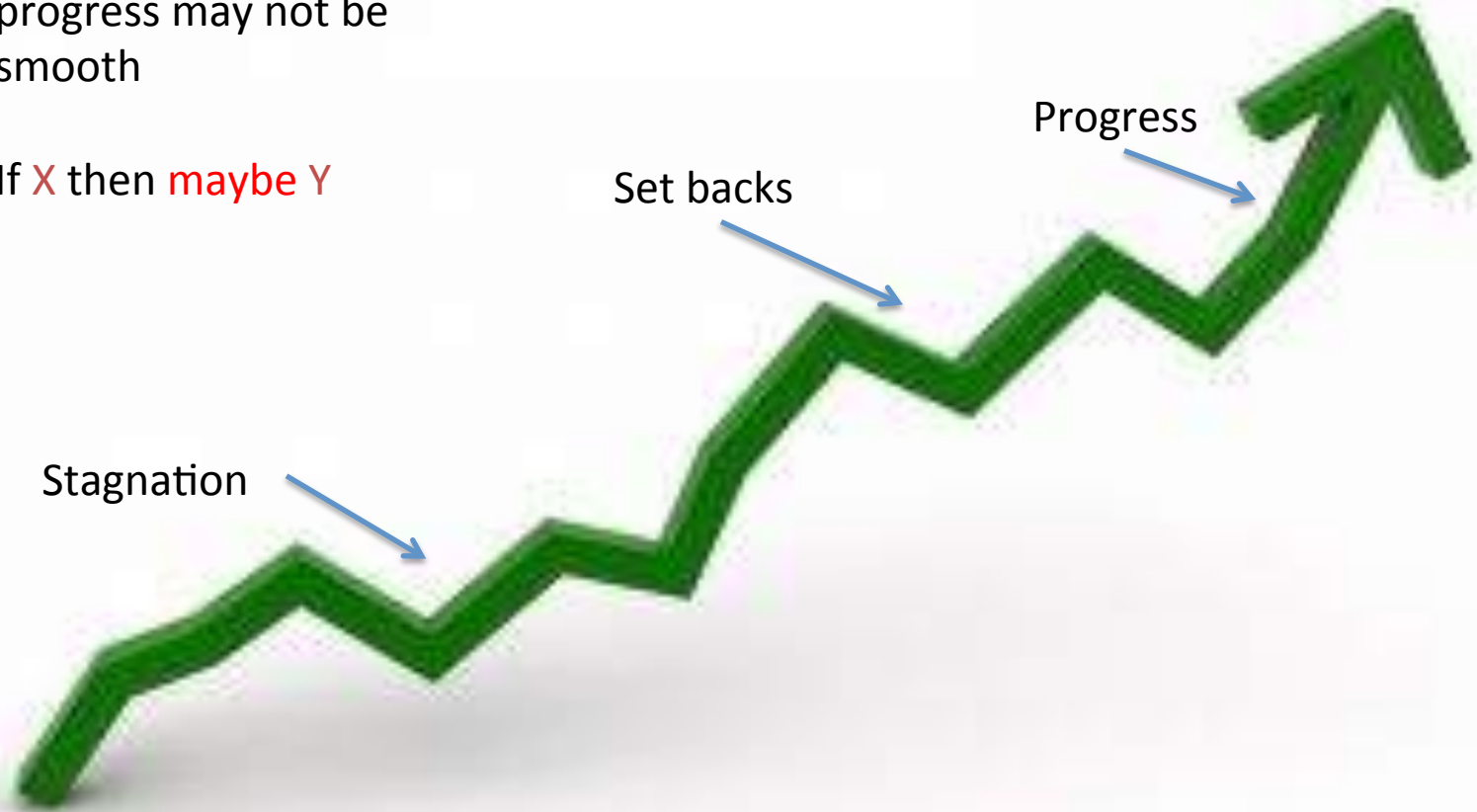
**Architectural change** – Systematic,  
step-by step process, clear  
timelines, smooth progress

If X then Y



Organic change – no clear timelines and progress may not be smooth

If X then maybe Y



Perhaps not either or-- but a range



Capacity  
strengthening

# Systems imply stages of growth in capacity!



Do you know of any training program that can transform an adolescent in two weeks?



# Ownership

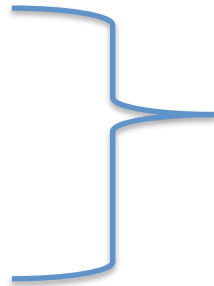


# Ownership



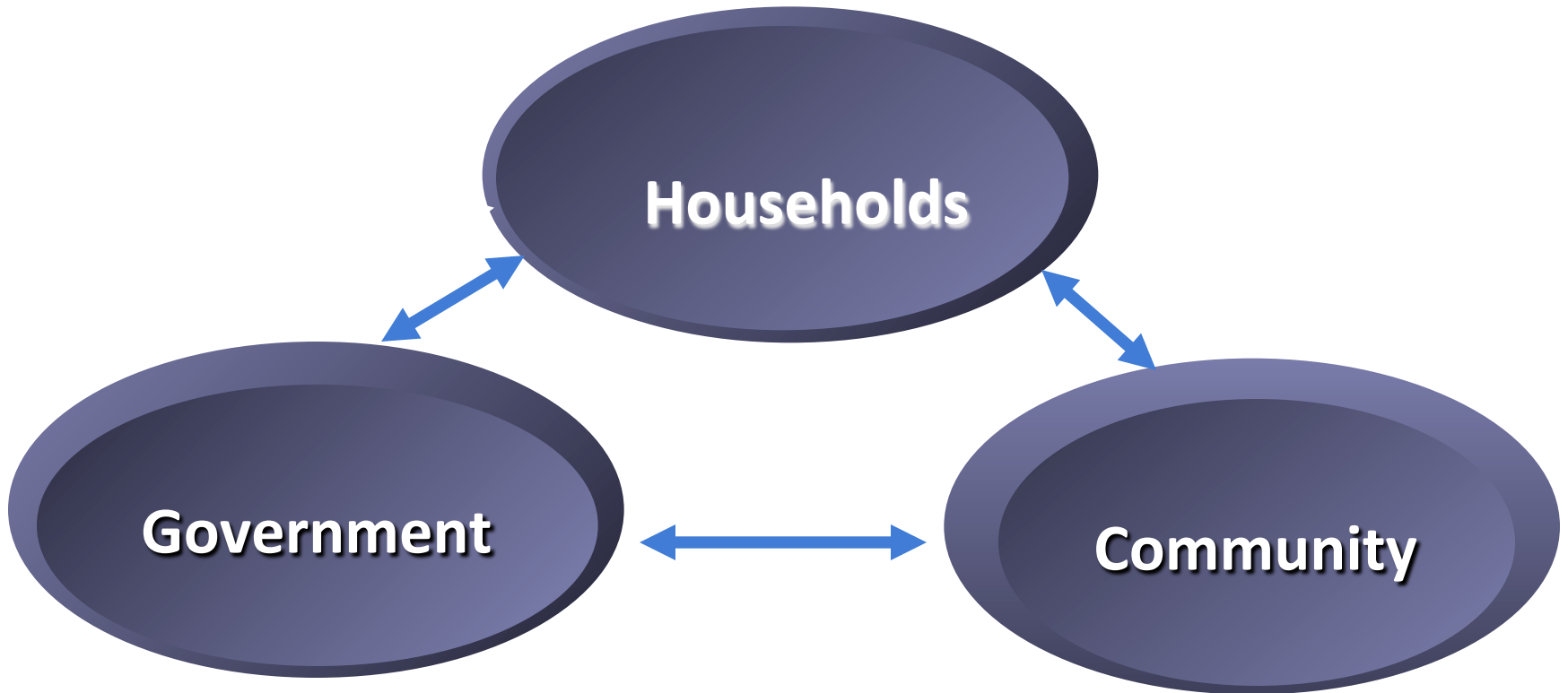
# Where is the key constraint?

- 1. One of the elements or components
  - a. Values
  - b. Practices
  - c. Resources
- 2. Interconnections
- 3. Functions or purposes
- 4. Strategy
- 5. Execution



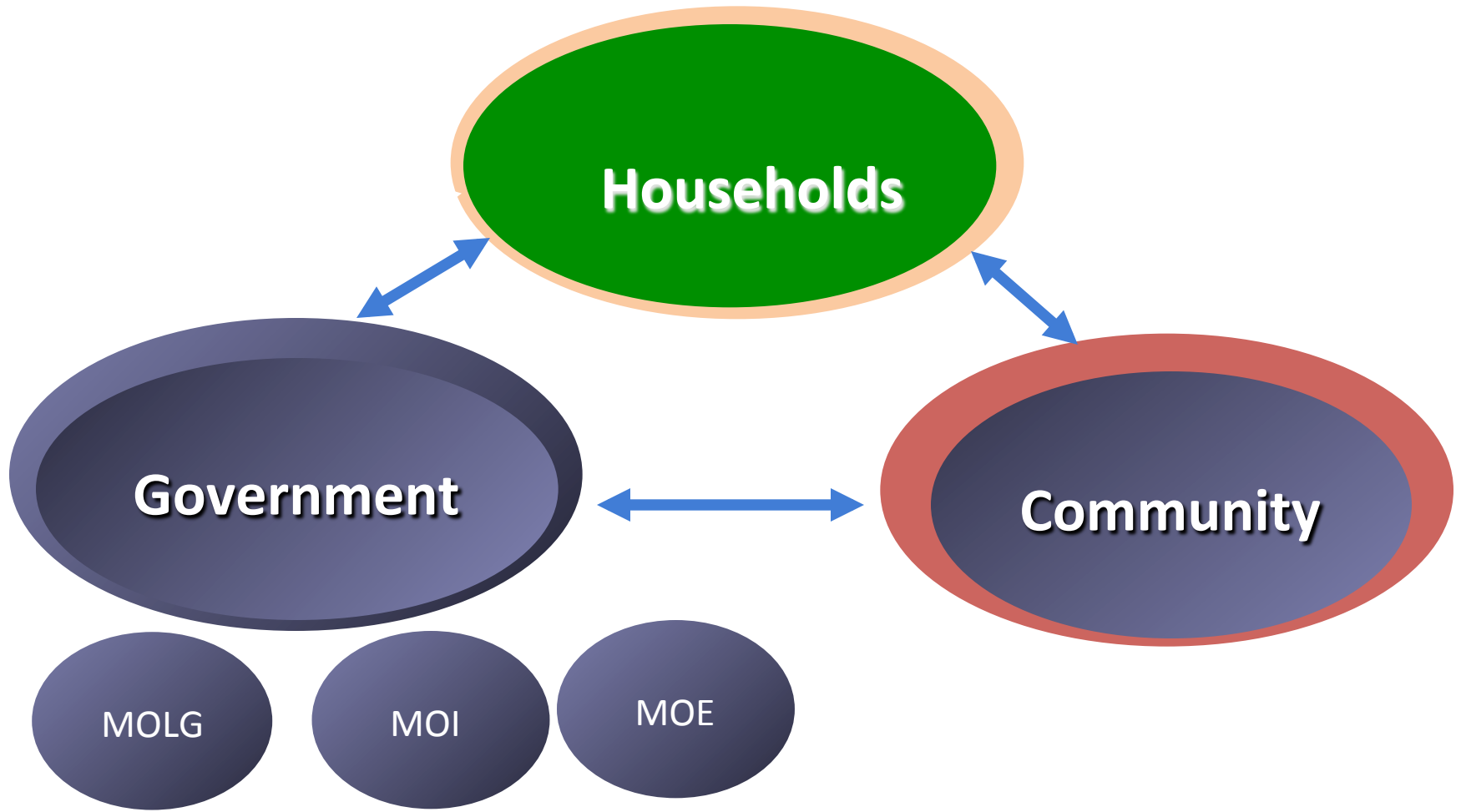
We spend a lot of our time here!

# A country's health system





A country's health system is **ALREADY** sustainable!  
The present system is the perfect system to produce  
the current results!

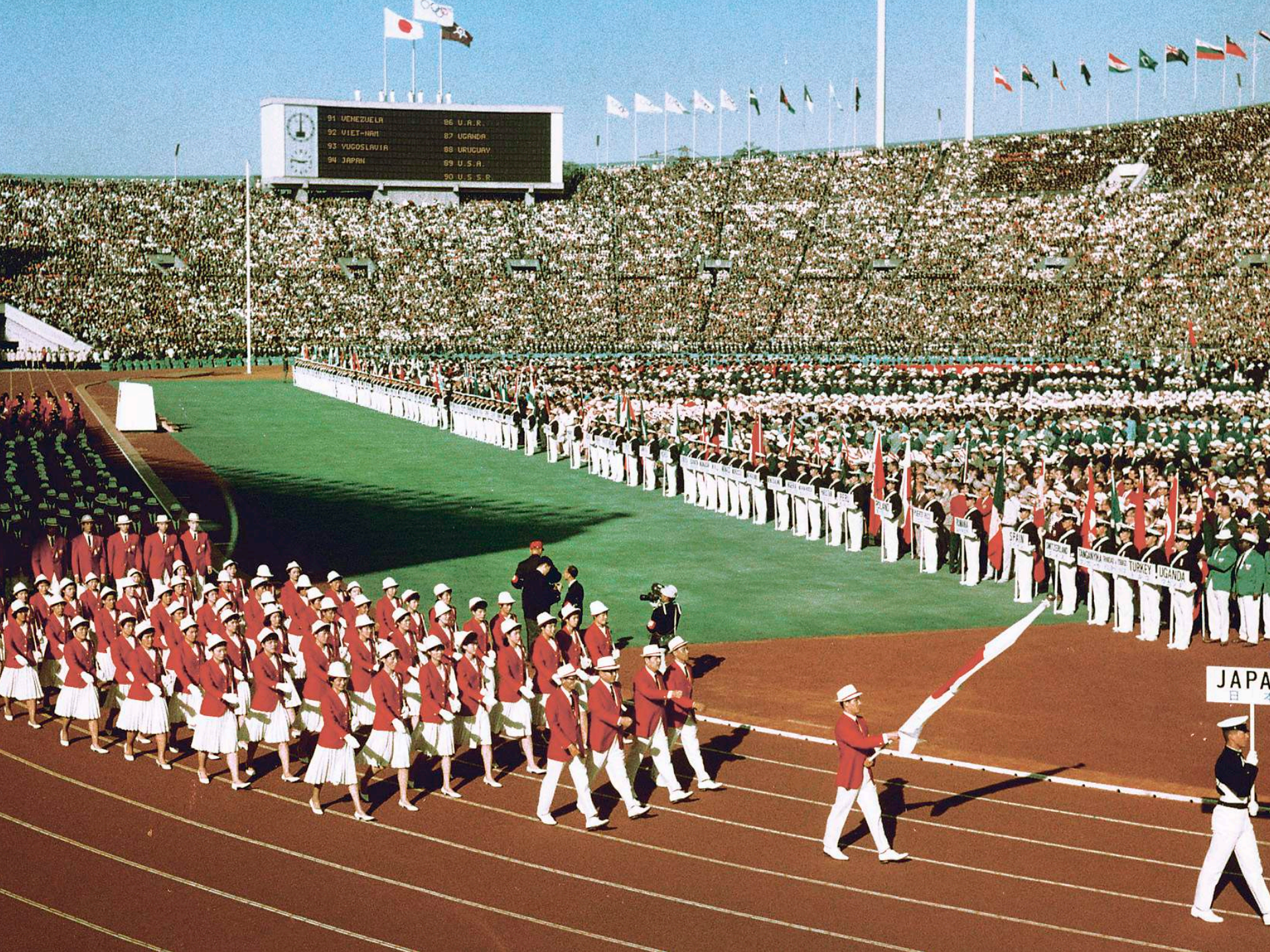












81 VENEZUELA	86 U.A.R.
92 VIET-NAM	87 UGANDA
93 YUGOSLAVIA	88 URUGUAY
94 JAPAN	89 U.S.A.
	90 U.S.S.R.

JAPAN  
日本





“If a factory is torn down but the rationality which produced it is left standing, then that rationality will simply produce another factory. If a revolution destroys a government, but the systematic patterns of thought that produced that government are left intact, then those patterns will repeat themselves... There’s so much talk about the system. And so little understanding.”

Robert Pirsig, Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance



**Malawi**  
**Happy**  
**Independence Day!**  
**6th July 1964**




[www.binoandfino.com](http://www.binoandfino.com)



Today, 51 years after independence,  
Only 9.8% of Malawi citizens have  
access to electricity!

World Bank Development Indicators, 2015



Every human being was born poor, without clothes. Poverty may be the default state. Perhaps what we need to understand is how the rich became wealthy!"



“To grow up,  
one needs to grow  
down as well!”

AC



MARCO

"  
TEARER  
TLW

QUESTION  
EVERYTHING





Could there be  
more than one  
right answer?



“ Far better is an approximate answer to the right question...than a precise answer to the wrong question!”

John Tukey, 1950

Capability indicators	(Low) Level 1	(Low/moderate) Level 2	(High/moderate) Level 3	(Sustainable) Level 4
Vision	Activity level only	Campaign level	National health communication strategy/policy	Shared vision “whole society approach”
Resources	Very low – Requires high level of external support	Basic-Dependent on external support	Adequate-Still requires significant external support	Sustainable- Requires minimum external support
Communication skills	Very low	Some skills in P-Process	Moderate skills	Training institutions provide advances training
Management and teamwork	Very low	Some collaboration	High teamwork	Extremely high <b>Provides assistance to other countries</b>



# Indonesia

Capability indicators	(Low) Level 1	(Low/moderate) Level 2	(High/moderate) Level 3	(Sustainable) Level 4
Vision	Activity level only	Campaign level	National health communication strategy/policy	Shared vision “whole society approach”
Resources	Very low – Requires high level of external support	Basic-Dependent on external support	Adequate-Still requires significant external support	Sustainable- Requires minimum external support
Communication skills	Very low	Some skills in P-Process	Moderate skills	Training institutions provide advances training
Management and teamwork	Very low	Some collaboration	High teamwork	Extremely high Provides assistance to other countries

# Country X

Capability indicators	(Low) Level 1	(Low/moderate) Level 2	(High/moderate) Level 3	(Sustainable) Level 4
Vision	Activity level only	Campaign level	National health communication strategy/policy	Shared vision “whole society approach”
Resources	Very low – Requires high level of external support	Basic-Dependent on external support	Adequate-Still requires significant external support	Sustainable- Requires minimum external support
Communication skills	Very low	Some skills in P-Process	Moderate skills	Training institutions provide advances training
Management and teamwork	Very low	Some collaboration	High teamwork	Extremely high Provides assistance to other countries

# Country Y

Capability indicators	(Low) Level 1	(Low/moderate) Level 2	(High/moderate) Level 3	(Sustainable) Level 4
Vision	Activity level only	Campaign level	National health communication strategy/policy	Shared vision “whole society approach”
Resources	Very low – Requires high level of external support	Basic-Dependent on external support	Adequate-Still requires significant external support	Sustainable- Requires minimum external support
Communication skills	Very low	Some skills in P-Process	Moderate skills	Training institutions provide advances training
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Transform

Communication 401-  
Nurturing

Manage

Communication 301-  
Creativity

Cope

Communication 201 –  
Critical Thinking

Communication 101 –  
Foundation

National

Communication 401-  
Nurturing

Regional

Communication 301-  
Creativity

Provincial

Communication 201 –  
Critical Thinking

Community

Communication 101 –  
Foundation

National

Public Health 401- Nurturing  
Build capacity at macro level  
Transformative leadership

Regional

Public Health 301- Creativity  
Design public health interventions  
Macro level planning

Provincial

Public Health 201 – Critical Thinking  
Assess public health needs  
Identify public health strategy

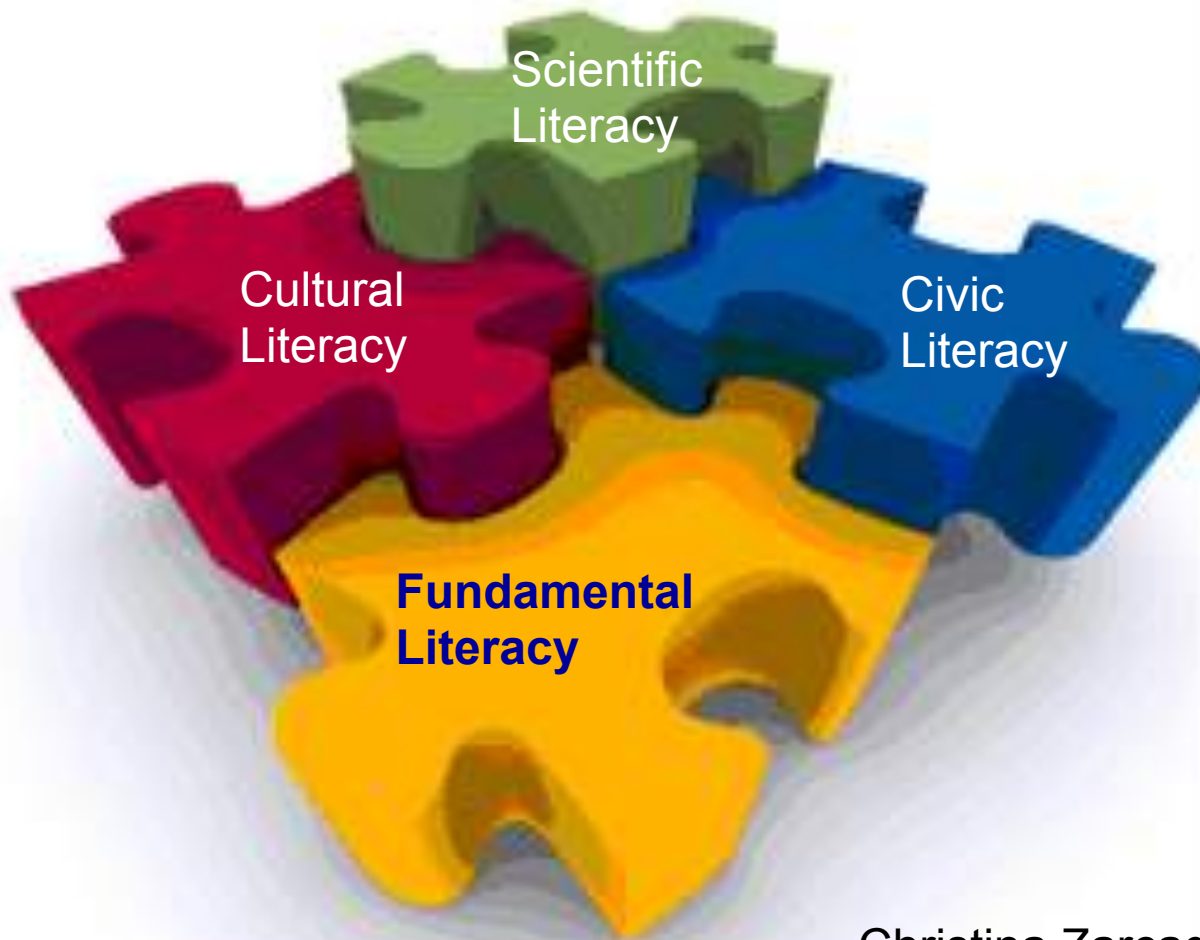
Community

Public Health 101 – Foundation  
Basic principles  
Client centric, behavior psychology  
Discern good/not so good public health

Break from the confined space of “evidence-based” and “best practice”!



# Health Literacy

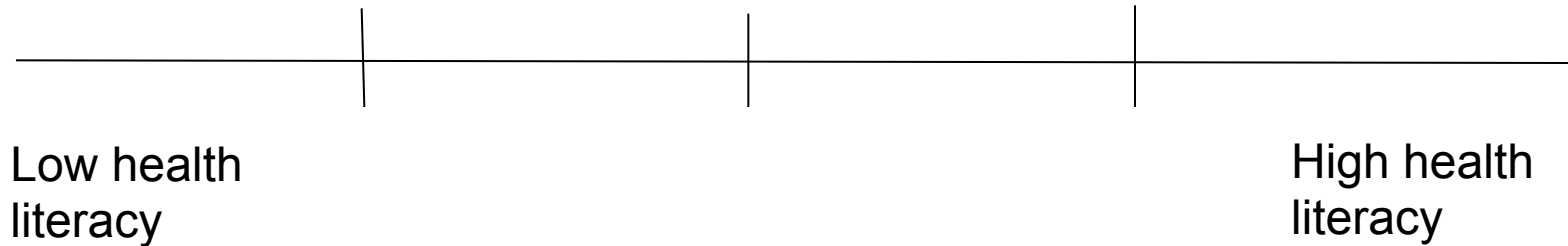


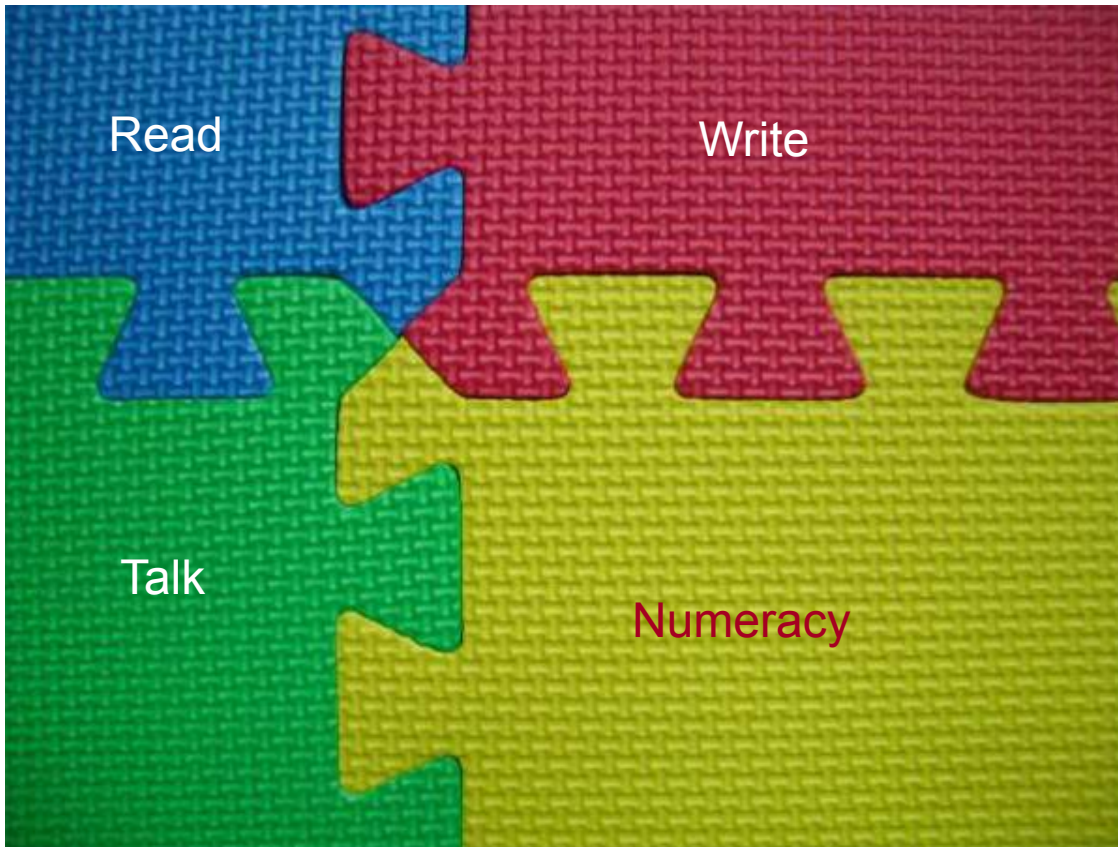
Christina Zarcadoolas, et.al  
Advancing Health Literacy, 2006



# Health literacy

- A wide range of skills and competencies that seek out, comprehend, evaluate and use health information and concepts to make informed choices, reduce health risks, and increase quality of life.





**Fundamental Literacy-** Ability to read, write, talk and work with numbers.

# Your children will have...

- “ one in four chance of being....”
- “ a 25 percent likelihood of developing....”
- “ a 75 percent of not developing.....”

**Scientific Literacy** –  
skills to understand  
scientific process and  
use science and  
technology



- What science must a person know to understand and act on a specific health message?
- What assumptions about the listener's scientific literacy do developers of health messages make?
- Do people understand scientific “uncertainty”?

# Do you know ...

- that science is “work in progress”?
- about “scientific uncertainty”?
- that science follows the principle of “falsification” rather than proof?
- that science is “intersubjective” rather than “objective”?

**Civic Literacy** – skills to understand public issues and participate in critical dialogue and decision-making





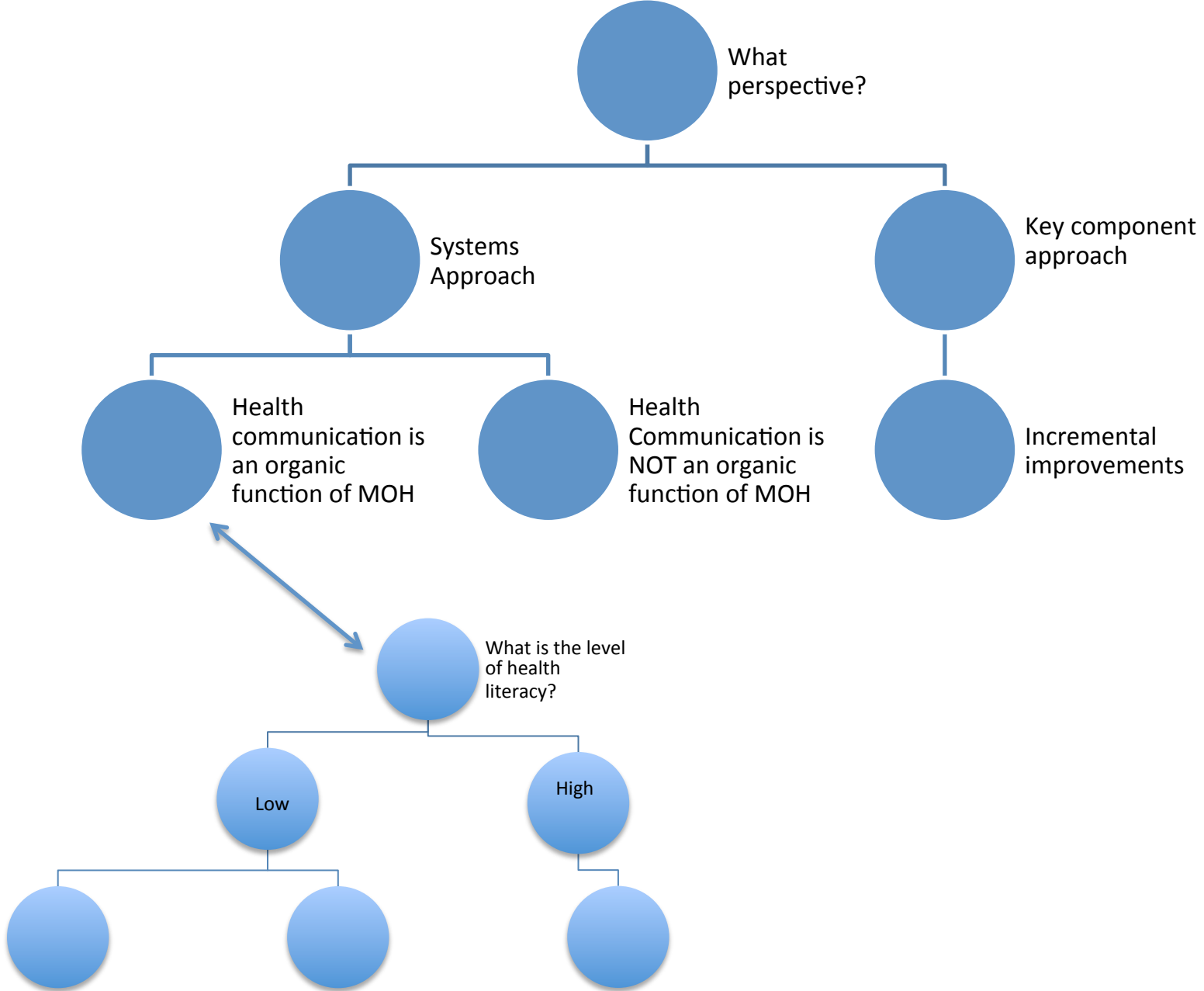
**Cultural Literacy** – abilities to recognize, understand and use collective beliefs, customs, worldview and social identity of diverse individuals to interpret and act on information.



•Research showed that some Hmong immigrants in Los Angeles area :

- Halved dosage of medicines because they thought that Americans are much bigger than they are
- Doubled dosage of medicines when they want to improve much faster



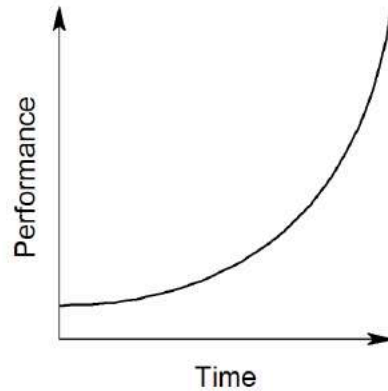


# Lay the foundation with structural messages

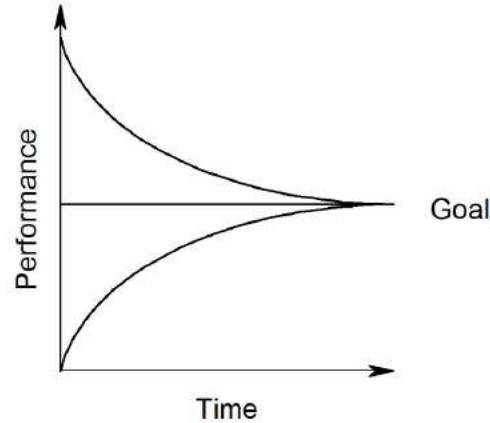
1. The human body system- key components
2. Longevity and the Life stages approach
  - a. Every human life is sacred
  - b. Personal responsibility for one's health
  - c. Physical activity
  - d. Diet
3. Life events/behavior
  - a. Reproductive health and sexual activity
  - b. Pregnancy and delivery
  - c. Child rearing and adolescence
  - d. Adulthood
4. Life style diseases
  - a. Smoking
  - b. Other harmful substances
  - c. Safety and injuries
5. Infections
  - a. Germs and bacteria
  - b. Viruses
  - c. Parasites
  - d. fungal infections



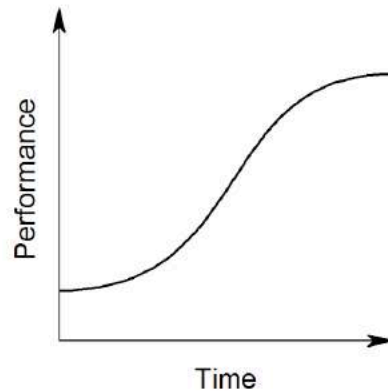
# Four possible behaviors of a system -



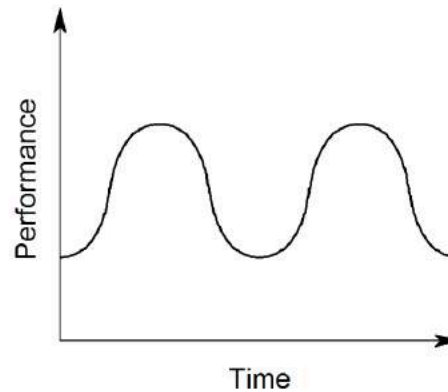
a. Exponential growth



b. Goal-seeking



c. S-shaped



d. Oscillation

Adapted from  
"Systems Modeling"  
by John Sterman 2011