Methods Against Madness

- how to achieve innovation
and create successful products

Sabrina Duda

DDX Innovation & UX Conference

London, 16 November 2024
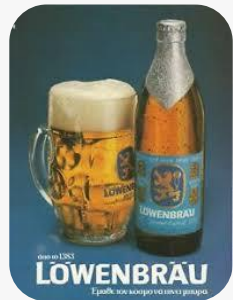
User Researcher

& Psychologist

Sabrina Duda
Principal UX Researcher

From Munich…   …to Leigh-on-Sea

 Munich
Bavaria

 Leigh-on-Sea
Essex

MSc Psychology

Engineering Psychology/ Cognitive Ergonomics & Computer Science

Founder of eye square

1999

Founded one of the first usability agencies in Germany

From 2 founders to >50 employees

Founders of eye square & investors

Timeline of my career

MSc Psychology
Humboldt University

Founder of eye square:
UX agency start-up growing to 50 people

Move to the UK

Various UX roles:
Principal UX Researcher, Head of Insight, Head of UX, Senior Manager Research & Insights, Senior UX Researcher…

1998

1999

2015

2024

What is innovation?

Innovation is the practical implementation of ideas that result in the introduction of new goods or services or improvement in offering goods or services.

Value!

Thomas Edison
Serial inventor
Inventor of the phonograph

Over 1ooo U.S. patents

Emile Berliner

Inventor of the first disc record

His gramophone record was the first disc record.

Video

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/Pa2--fl7Y4Y
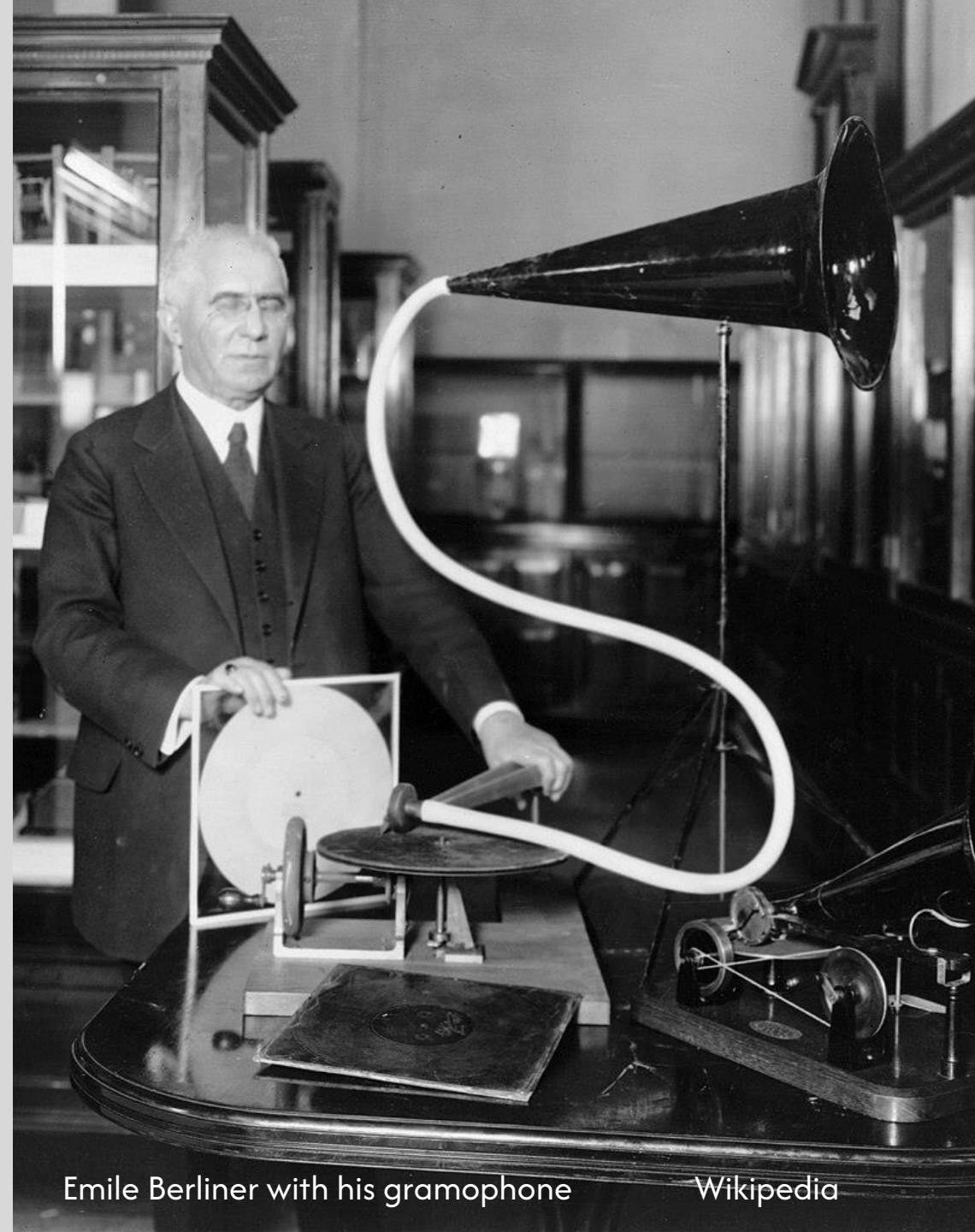
Emile Berliner with his gramophone   Wikipedia

# Instead of one innovator, we now need teams to deliver value

Peter Merholz

- Worked in design & UX for over 25 years

- Author of 'Org Design for Design Orgs'

- Coined the word "blog"

*"The products we're designing get more complex, and to deliver meaningfully on that, we need to have **cross-functional teams that try to solve the problem in parallel and work together**."*

*"**No one person can master it all**. An entire business needs to care about its customers and be concerned that what they're delivering is of use and value to the end user."*
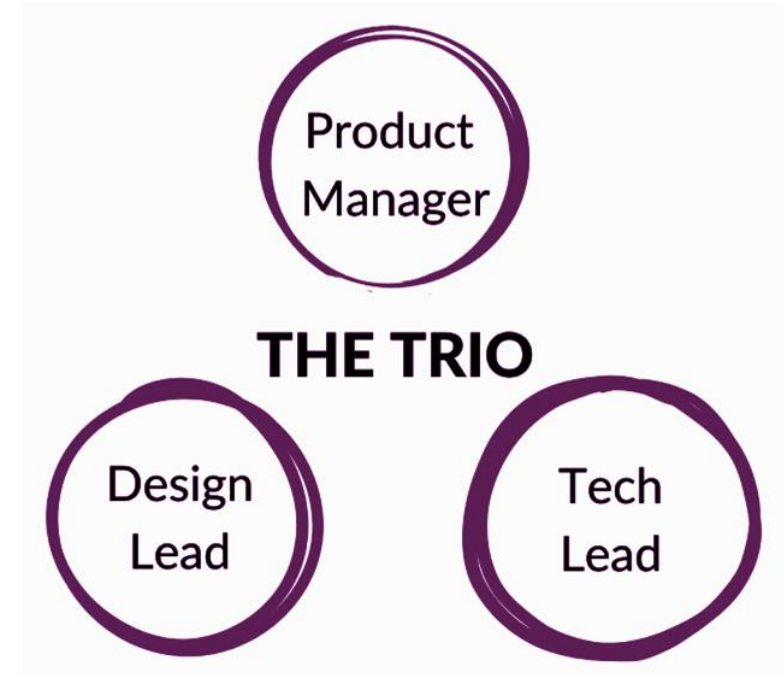
The three-legged stool

Product / Service

Business **Technology** **Design**
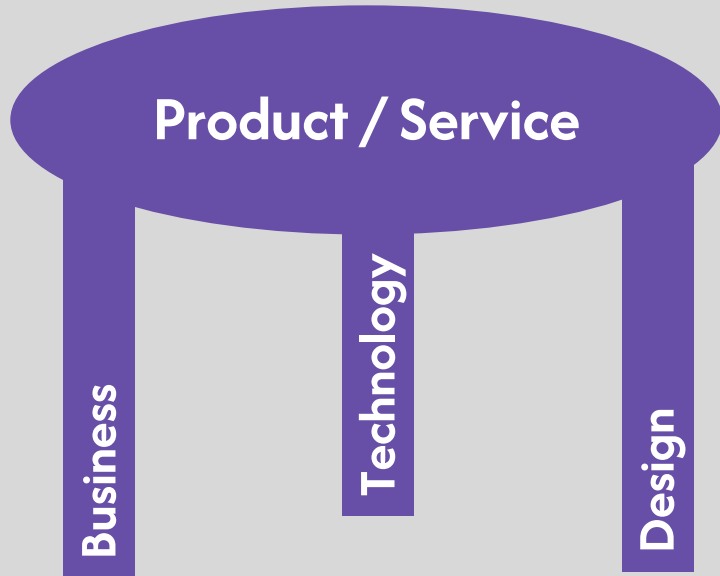
Today's complex connected systems & continuous delivery need collaboration. Design & tech & business need to work together on complex products & services.

Peter Merholz

The product trio

Product Manager

THE TRIO

Design Lead   Tech Lead

Product trios are cross-functional product teams who are responsible for both deciding what to build and then building it.

Teresa Torres

1
Mission

What we need to create innovative products

1 Mission

Common purpose & vision

Common purpose and vision

The janitor who helped put a man on the moon

1962, President Kennedy visited NASA. He met a janitor with a broom and asked him what he did. The janitor replied:

"I'm helping put a man on the moon."

The Janitor Who Helped Put a Man on the Moon

November 4, 2017

In 1962, President John F. Kennedy visited NASA for the first time. During his tou of the facility, he met a janitor who was carrying a broom down the hallway. The President then casually asked the janitor what he did for NASA, and the janitor replied, "I'm helping put a man on the moon."

Take a moment, and reflect on this idea. The janitor knew something that most o us struggle with, the purpose of his work. He kept the building clean so that the scientists, engineers, and astronauts could focus on their mission of putting "ma on the moon". They did not have to worry about spending their time on trashcans bathrooms, or hallways. He did that for them. He saw where his contribution fit i the organization. He connected his purpose with theirs.

1
Mission

2
Culture

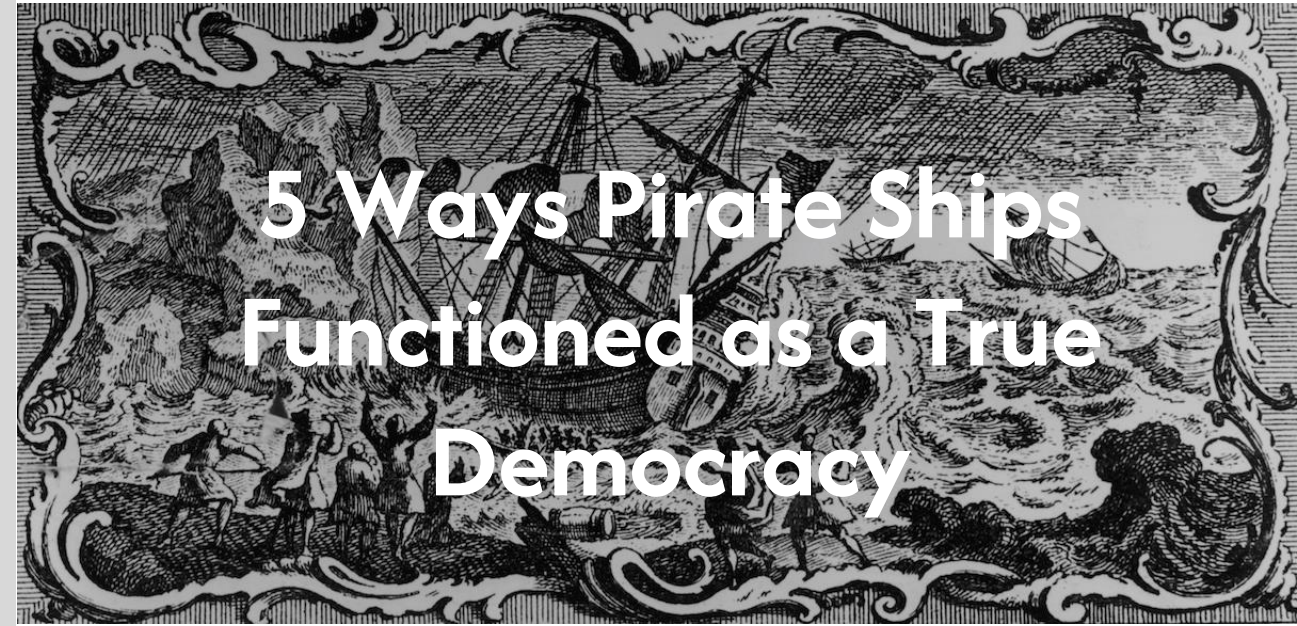What we need to create innovative products
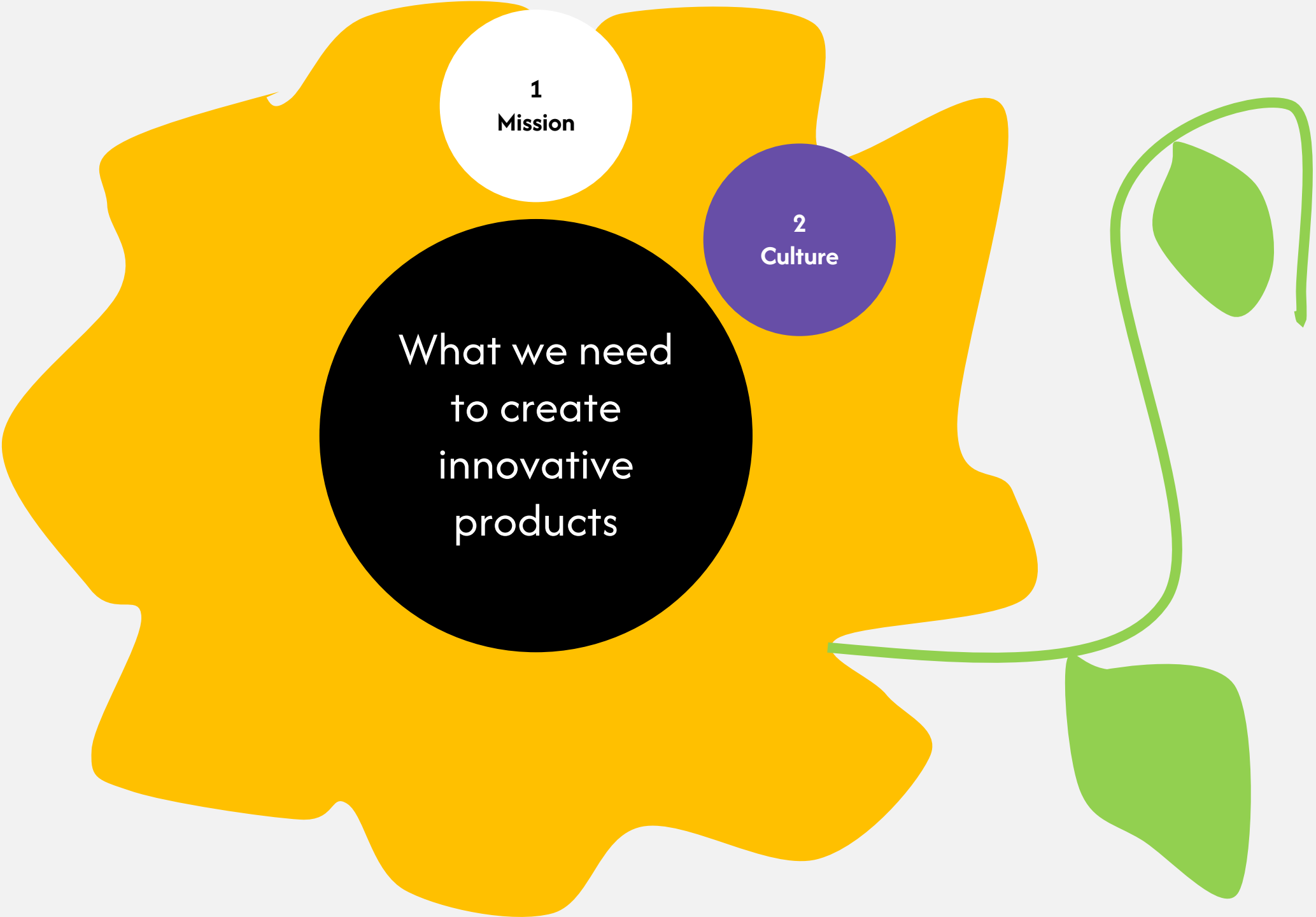
2 Culture

Freedom, fairness & safety

Pirates realised they need a democratic system to be successful

- The pirates voted for their captains.
- The crew had the right to sack their leader.
- They had a system of checks and balances.
- They had a health care system.
- Booty was distributed fairly according to skill and duty.

5 Ways Pirate Ships Functioned as a True Democracy

https://time.com/3728421/pirate-democracy/

The Golden Age of Piracy: 1650 - 1730

Pirate organizations were much earlier than any modern democratic government.

Video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ksOn-0ijWA

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Airport disaster
Tenerife, 1977

Two airplanes, from KLM & Pan Am, crashed on the foggy runway at Tenerife North Airport.

- 583 people killed
- Deadliest accident in aviation history

Why?

Before takeoff, the KLM flight engineer asked his pilots concerned:

"Is he not clear, that Pan American?"

The KLM captain continued with the takeoff, ignoring the junior officer's concern.

The result: Crew resource management training

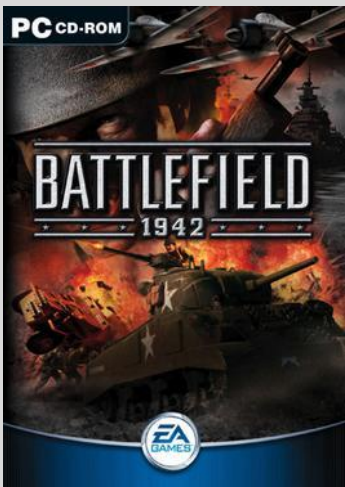Co-pilots are encouraged to question captains if they observed them making mistakes.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Crew_resource_management

➢ Retaining a command hierarchy
➢ Fostering a less-authoritarian cockpit culture

Swedish video game company

Created many award-winning games:
Battlefield, Star Wars Battlefront, Mirror's Edge.

Started as a small software development company in Sweden, 1992

- Built Battlefield, one of the most successful games
- Good team culture
- Great work environment
- Freedom of creativity

As a result of the success, they were sold in 2006

Latest game Battlefield 2042, Nov. 2021
- Lost 90% of users within first 2 months
- Only few hundred gamers are playing it
- DICE is no longer a fan favorite

What had happened?

How toxic work culture can ruin a company

BATTLEFIELD

- Working in silos, with little communication
- Lots of office politics
- Constructive criticism from employees ignored
- Design ideas from upper management pushed through
- Employee turnover rate dramatically increased

Employee feedback

*"Management have forgotten what a Battlefield game is. They **ignore valid feedback and criticism** from the developers."* - January 2022

*"**Top-heavy decision-making.** Most of the time it feels like someone high above decided something and that is the law. When employees bring up feedback it's already too late."* - May 2021

*"The game studio is **divided in siloes that don't share the same goals**. This leads to dysfunctional communication, lack of progress, as well as a lack of a clear vision. Strong presence of office politics."* - May 2019

*"Mass exodus of talent - **lots of people leaving** (senior people - some who have been there for 15+ years)."* - July 2019

'First do no harm' is especially crucial to innovation

Professor of Management Science at Stanford University School of Engineering

Ph.D. Organizational Psychology

Best-selling author:
The No Asshole Rule, The Asshole Survival Guide

Robert Sutton

"The best management is sometimes no management at all: Managers consistently overestimate their positive impact on performance.

'First do no harm' is especially crucial to innovation."

The no asshole rule

Workplace bullying worsens morale and productivity. To screen out the toxic staff, he suggests the 'no asshole rule'.

TCA: Total Cost of Assholes

UK data
- 25% of bullying 'targets' & 20% of 'witnesses' leave their jobs
- 'Average' bullying rate in the UK is 15%
- Total replacement costs up to £1.5 million

THE
NO ASSHOLE
RULE

Building a Civilised Workplace
and Surviving One That Isn't

#@?!#
delete

ROBERT SUTTON

'Entertaining and important . . . this book
is a blow for humanity as well as management'
Guardian

1
Mission

2
Culture

What we need to create innovative products

3
Happiness

3 Happiness

Happiness is needed for creating great products

When designing and innovating, a workplace with room for creativity and collaboration is needed

The key to happy customers are happy employees

Each one-star improvement in a company's Glassdoor rating corresponds to a 1.3-point out of 100 improvement in customer satisfaction scores.

They recommend: *"If you want to build a customer-first strategy, building high employee morale is a necessary (though not sufficient) precondition."*

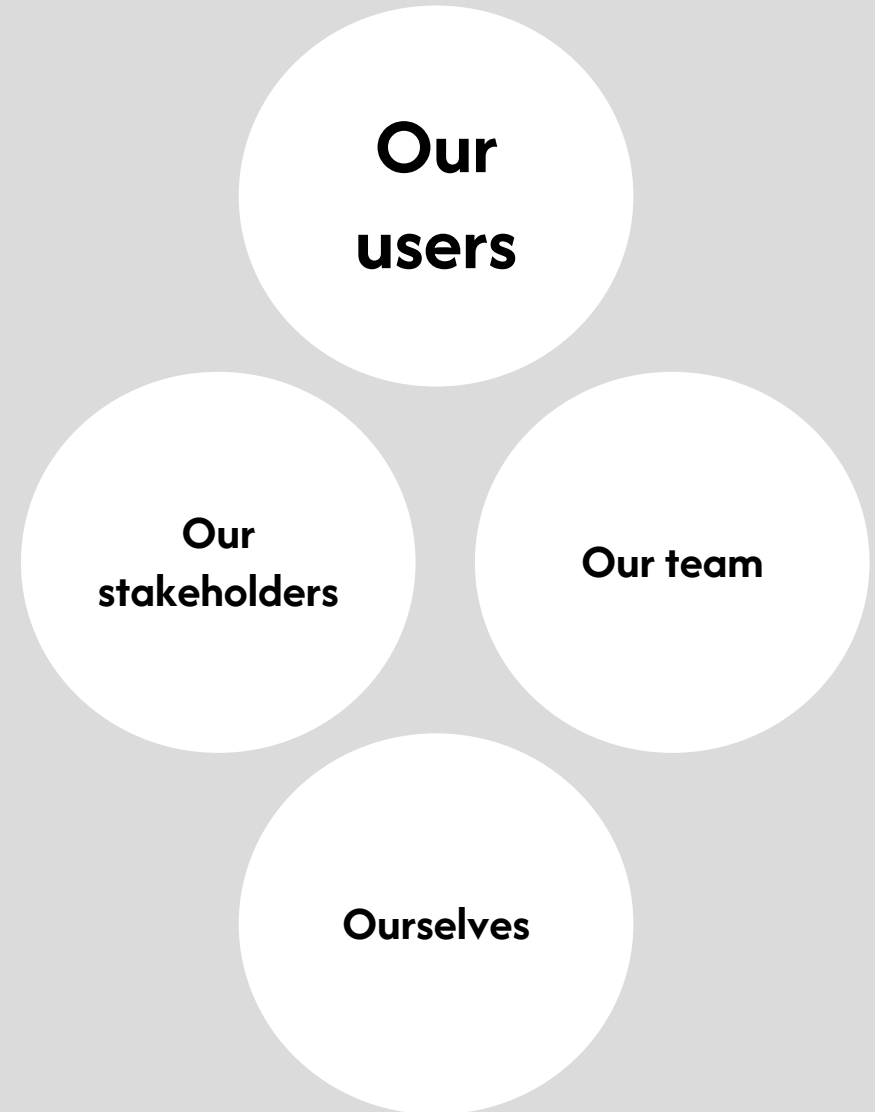Andrew Chamberlain and Daniel Zhao, 2019

Harvard Business Review

https://hbr.org/2019/08/the-key-to-happy-customers-happy-employees

1
Mission

2
Culture

3
Happiness

4
Empathy

What we need to create innovative products

4 Empathy

For creating innovative products we need empathy with…

Our users

Our stakeholders

Our team

Ourselves

What makes a good doctor?

From user interviews 2018/2019

"They are likeable."

"They ask me how I am."

"They are listening to me."

"They know me and my history."

"They have time for me."

Likeable doctors & doctors who are talking more to their patients are less sued

Law Offices of Jeffrey S. Glassman, 2018

Aaron E. Carroll, 2015

The likeability of the doctor is the greatest factor in predicting whether the patient might sue their doctor.
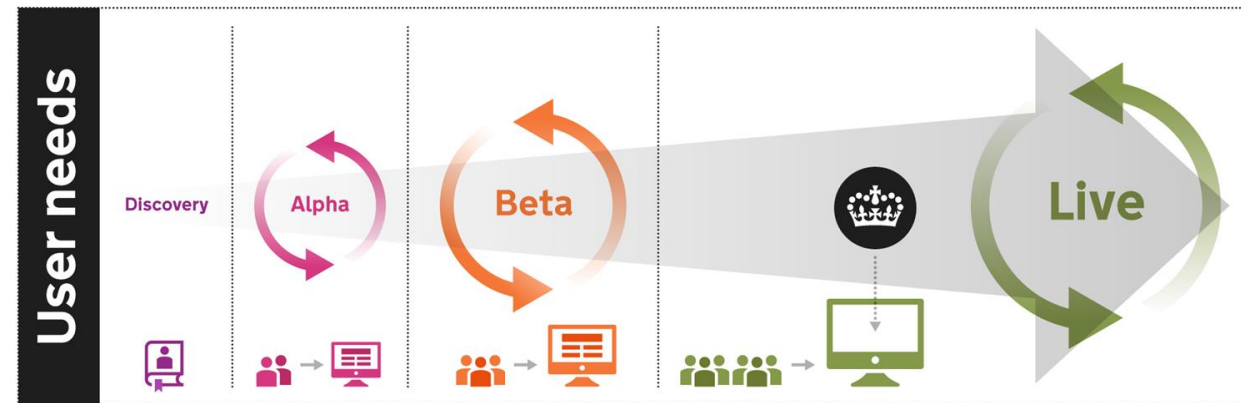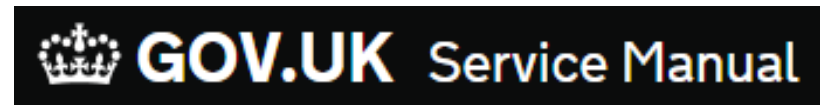
- Spending time educating patients
- Using humour & laughing with patients
- Trying to get their patients to talk & express opinions

➢ More likable doctors are less likely to have claims.
➢ Doctors with a good relationship with their patients have fewer lawsuits.

What we need to create innovative products

1 Mission

2 Culture

3 Happiness

4 Empathy

5 Ways of working

5 Ways of working

Cross-functional, agile team

- Product manager
- Service owner
- Delivery manager
- User researcher
- Content designer
- Designer
- Developer

User needs driven process

What we need to create innovative products

1 Mission

2 Culture

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4 Empathy

5 Ways of working

6 Processes & tools

6 Processes & Tools

Discovery · Alpha · Beta · Live

continue? · continue? · continue?

Discovery — Understanding context and problems to solve
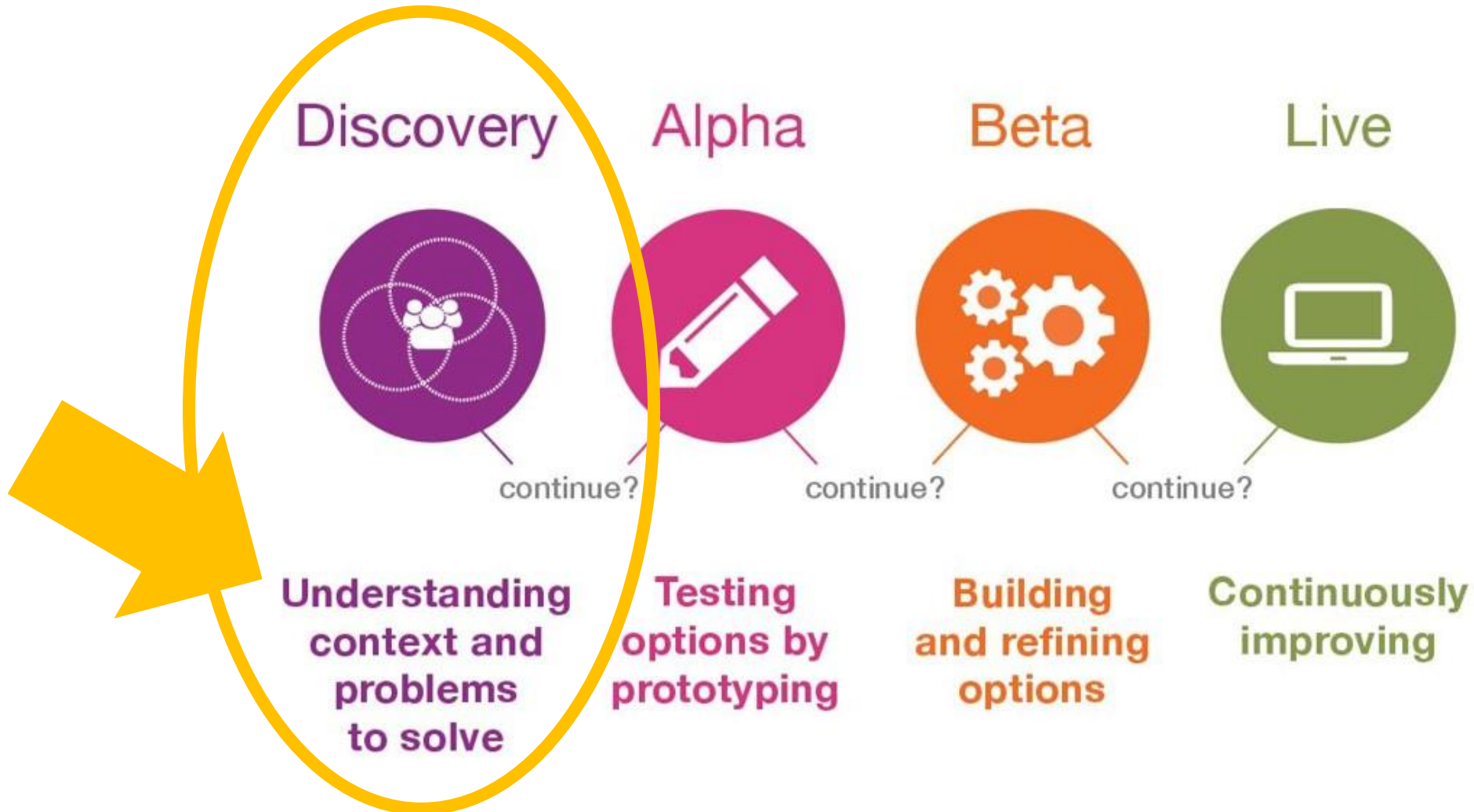
Alpha — Testing options by prototyping

Beta — Building and refining options

Live — Continuously improving

Biggest mistake in product dev:
Not starting with discovery

When you don't discover your users & their problems first: The difference between usable and useful
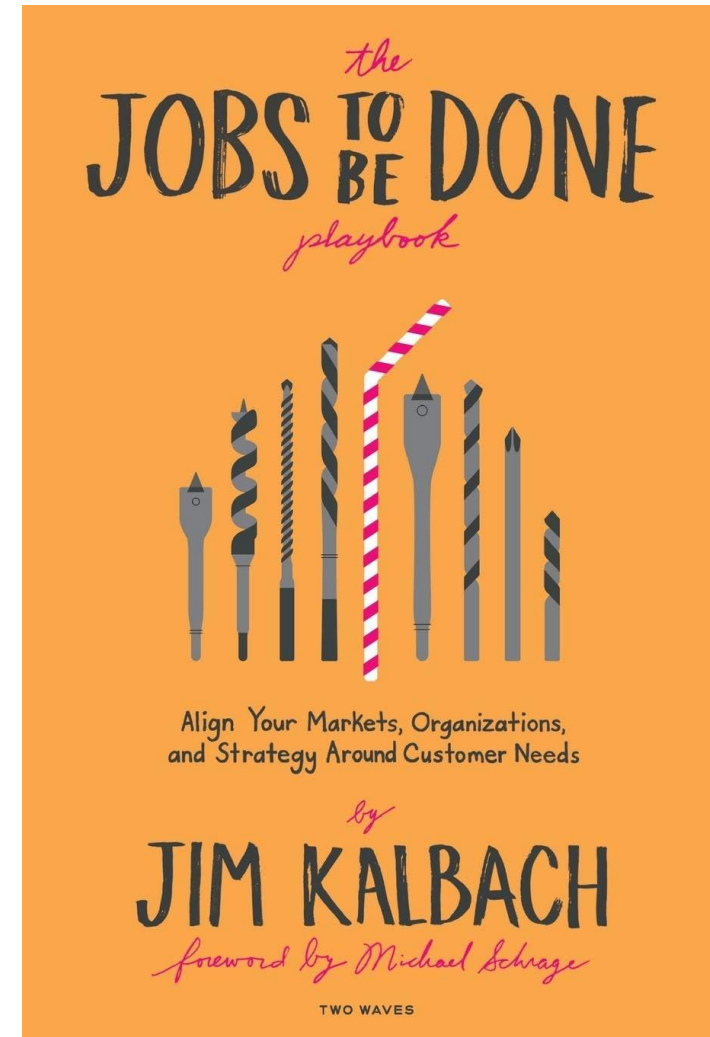
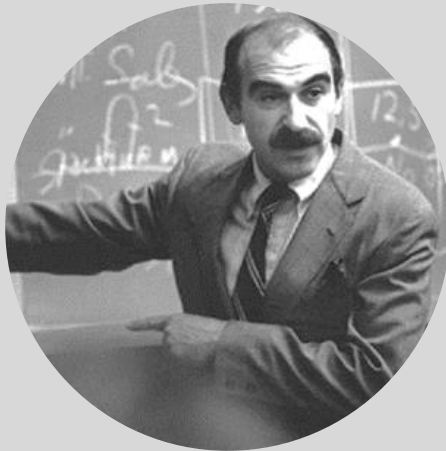# No innovation when your solution doesn't solve a problem

"My team has created a very innovative solution, but we're still looking for a problem to go with it."

Jobs-to-be-done approach to discover problems

The origin of the JTBD concept

"They don't want quarter-inch [drill] bits. They want quarter-inch holes."
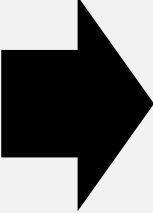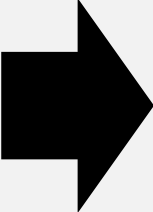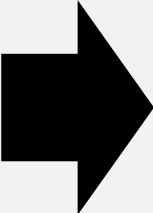
Theodore Levitt, 1983

People don't buy products; they 'hire' them to do jobs - solving a problem or fulfilling a need.

JTBD: A new lens to look at products
From products to jobs-to-be-done

Product

Job

Nice home

Relaxing

Bonding

What do customers really want?

Not drilling a hole…

but also not assembling furniture…

Customers don't want this

IKEA

IKEA's innovation was to create furniture that you could order and assemble yourself without needing to 'drill a quarter inch hole'.

https://jtbd.info/know-the-two-very-different-interpretations-of-jobs-to-be-done-5a18b748bd89

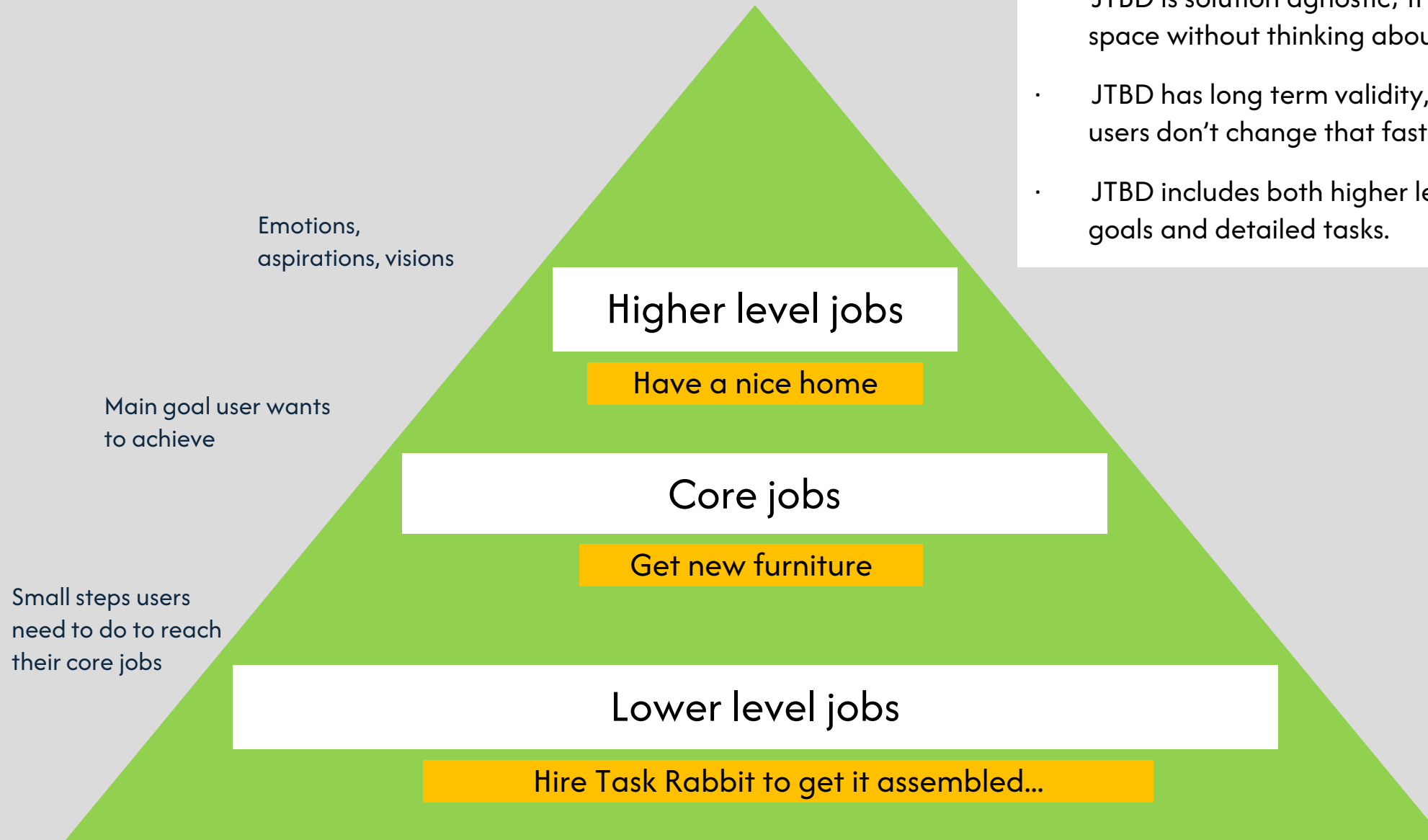# What do customers really want?

…just a nice home

They want this

In 2017, IKEA bought Task Rabbit - because people don't want to 'assemble/ build furniture' either.

They want to express their individuality and feel comfortable in their home.
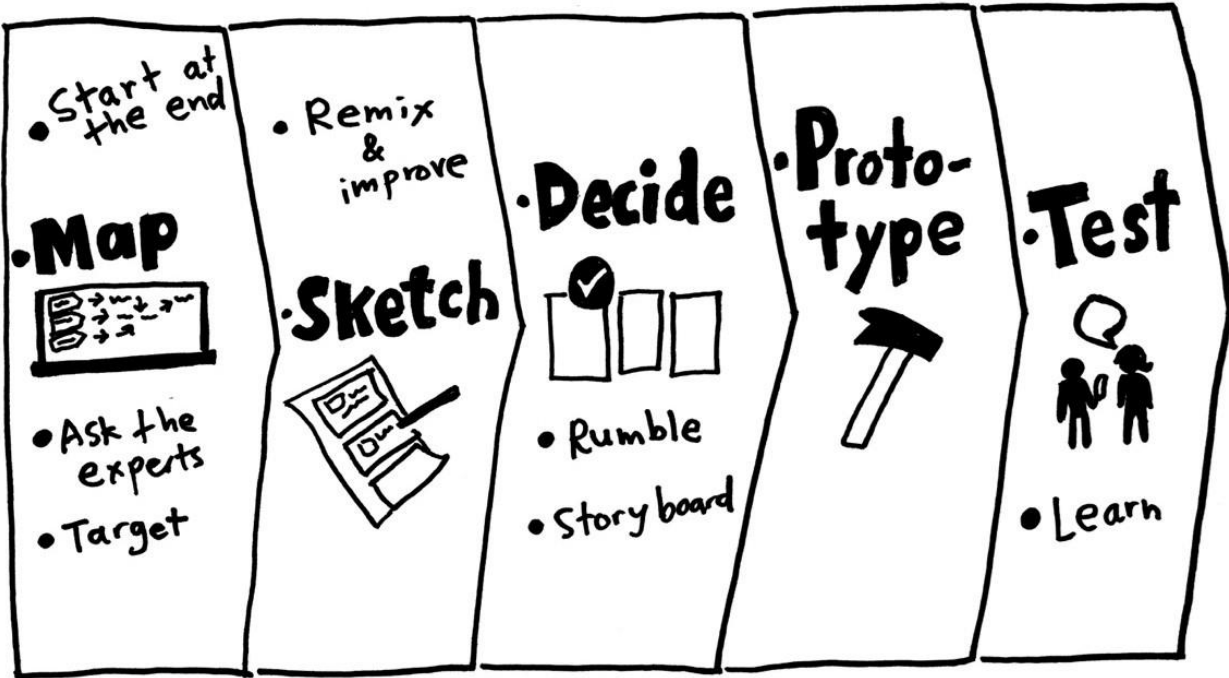
JTBD Hierarchy

Advantages of JTBD
- JTBD removes the guesswork about the user by focusing on users' goals (jobs).
- JTBD is solution agnostic; it describes the problem space without thinking about solutions.
- JTBD has long term validity, because the goals of the users don't change that fast.
- JTBD includes both higher level goals like visions, main goals and detailed tasks.

Emotions, aspirations, visions

Higher level jobs

Have a nice home

Main goal user wants to achieve

Core jobs

Get new furniture

Small steps users need to do to reach their core jobs

Lower level jobs

Hire Task Rabbit to get it assembled...

47

Design Sprint to discover solutions to problems

Design sprint in 1 hour

Chris Callaghan

Head of Digital, Jaywing

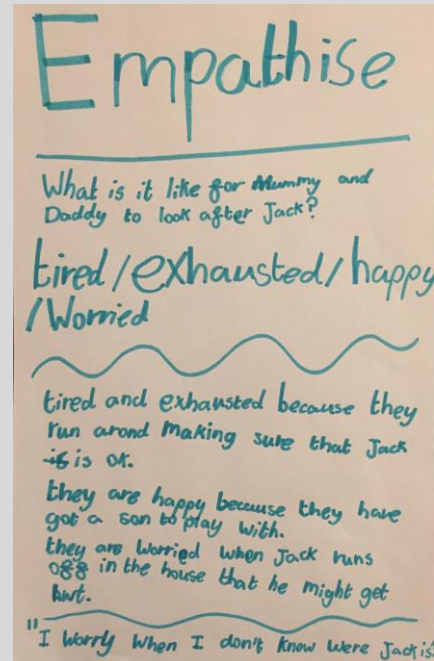Chris conducted this sprint with his 7-year-old daughter Matilda.

Goal for Matilda: Get an inventor badge!
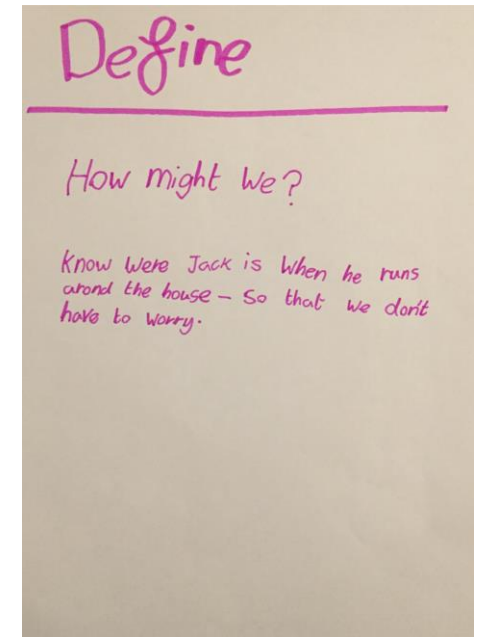
1 Empathise

Matilda's parents' emotions:

- They feel tired, exhausted, worried, but also happy when they look after 18 month old Jack.

- Her mother: *"I worry when I don't know where Jack is."*

2 Define

How might we

know where Jack is when he runs around the house

so that we don't have to worry.

3 Ideas

Generating ideas

- Crazy 8s…..
- Sketching
- Storyboarding
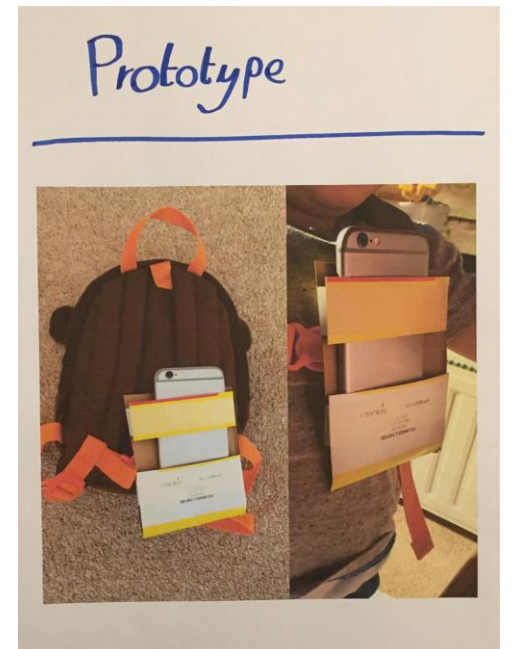
Voting on ideas

- A phone is attached to the baby

4 Prototype

Create a prototype

Phone attached to a backpack

5 Test

Test with users

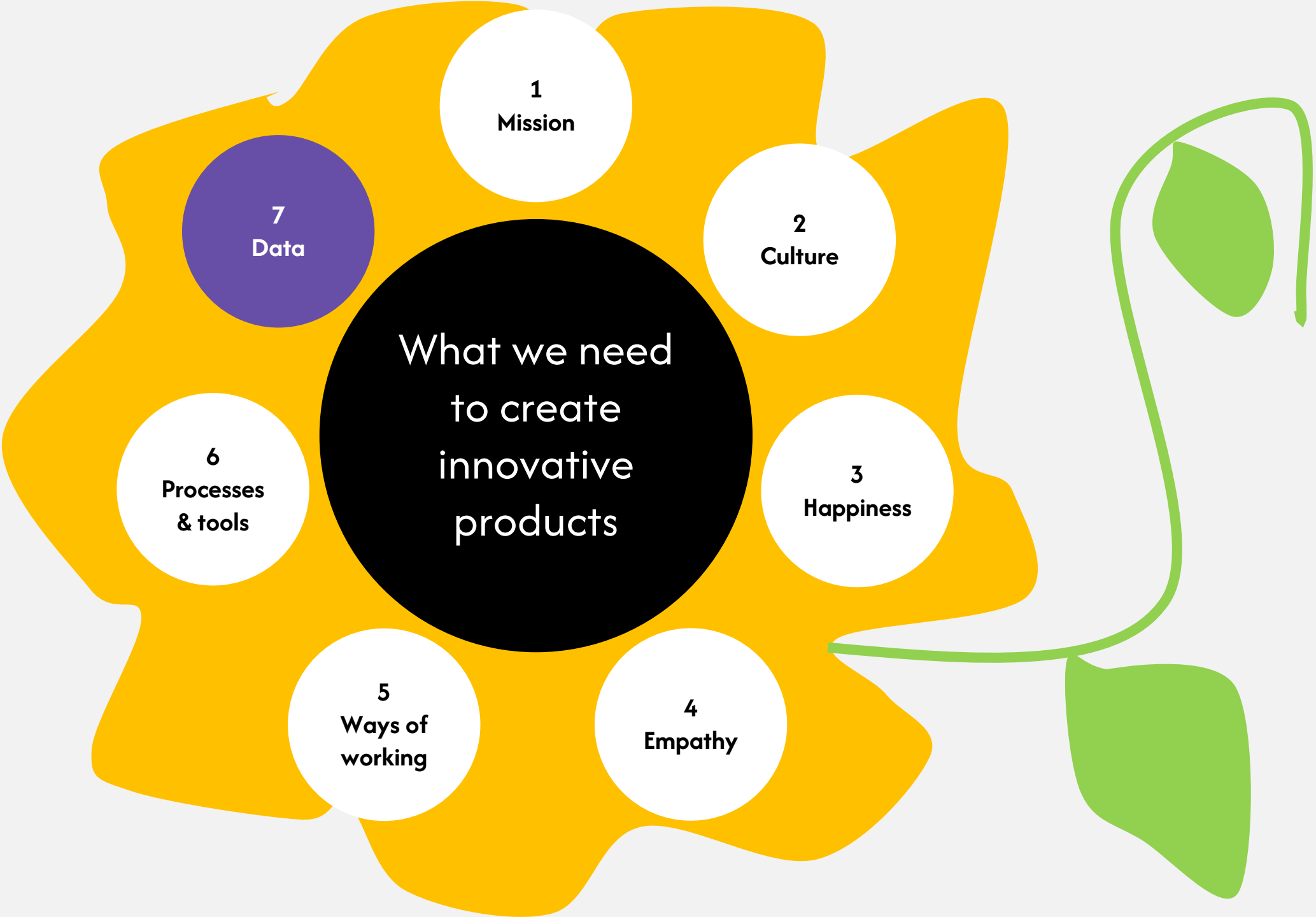- The parents could see on the video that Jack is safe in the playroom.

Outcome of the design sprint:

- Matilda was happy and enthusiastic about her invention!

- She got her inventor badge.

Test

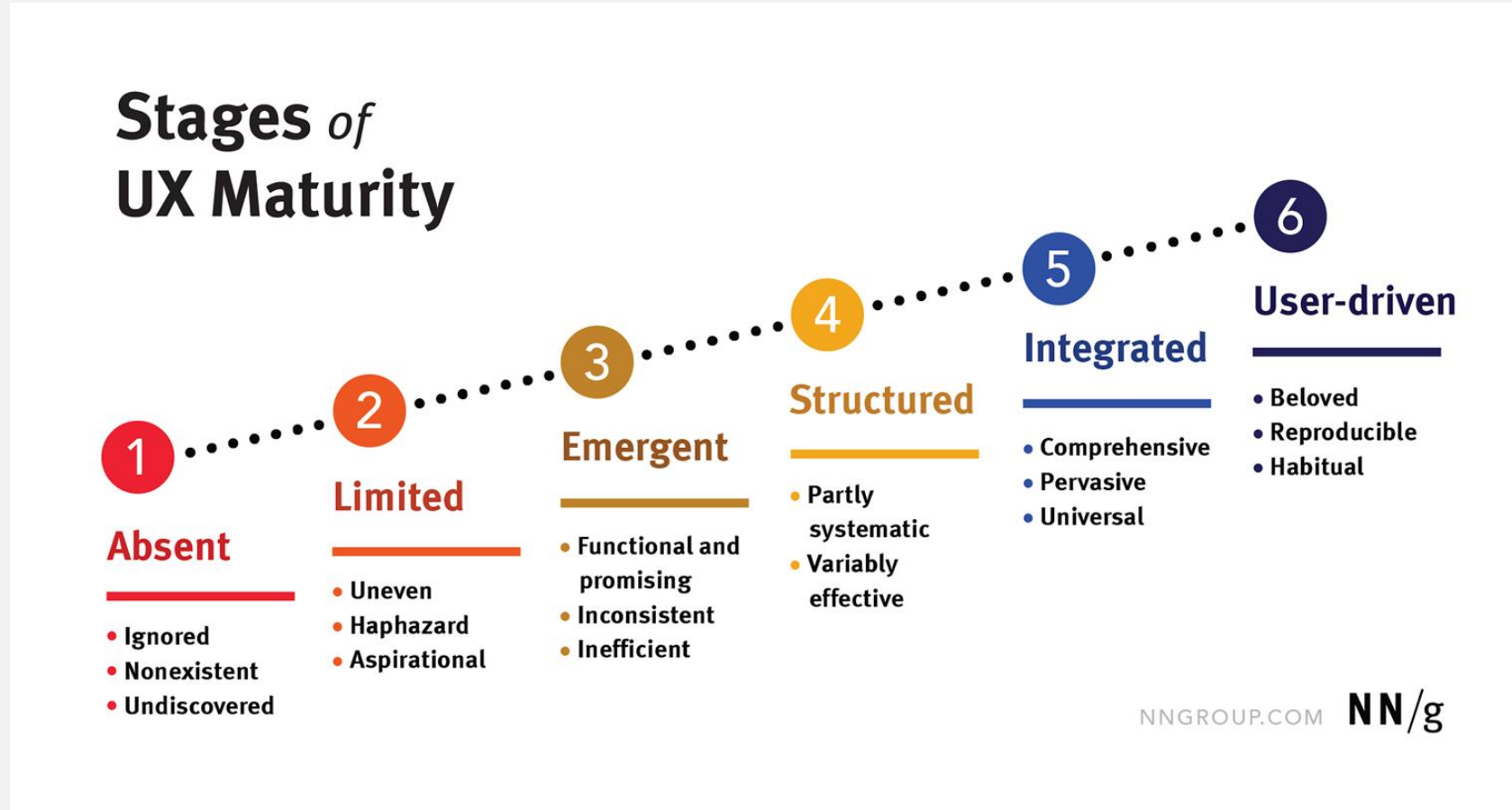we knew that Jack was safe because he was in the play-room.

What we need to create innovative products

1 Mission
2 Culture
3 Happiness
4 Empathy
5 Ways of working
6 Processes & tools
7 Data

7 Data

User focus leads to successful products

But where are we in the 6 stages of UX maturity?

Stages *of* **UX Maturity**

1 — **Absent**
- Ignored
- Nonexistent
- Undiscovered

2 — **Limited**
- Uneven
- Haphazard
- Aspirational

3 — **Emergent**
- Functional and promising
- Inconsistent
- Inefficient

4 — **Structured**
- Partly systematic
- Variably effective

5 — **Integrated**
- Comprehensive
- Pervasive
- Universal

6 — **User-driven**
- Beloved
- Reproducible
- Habitual

NNGROUP.COM   NN/g

The State of UX Maturity:
Data from Our Self-Assessment Quiz

Nielsen Norman Group, 2022

https://www.nngroup.com/articles/state-ux-maturity-quiz/

UX Maturity is emerging…

…but almost no company is user-driven

Percentage of Respondents in Each UX-Maturity Stage

- 1: Absent — 1%
- 2: Limited — 17%
- 3: Emergent — 49%
- 4: Structured — 28%
- 5: Integrated — 4%
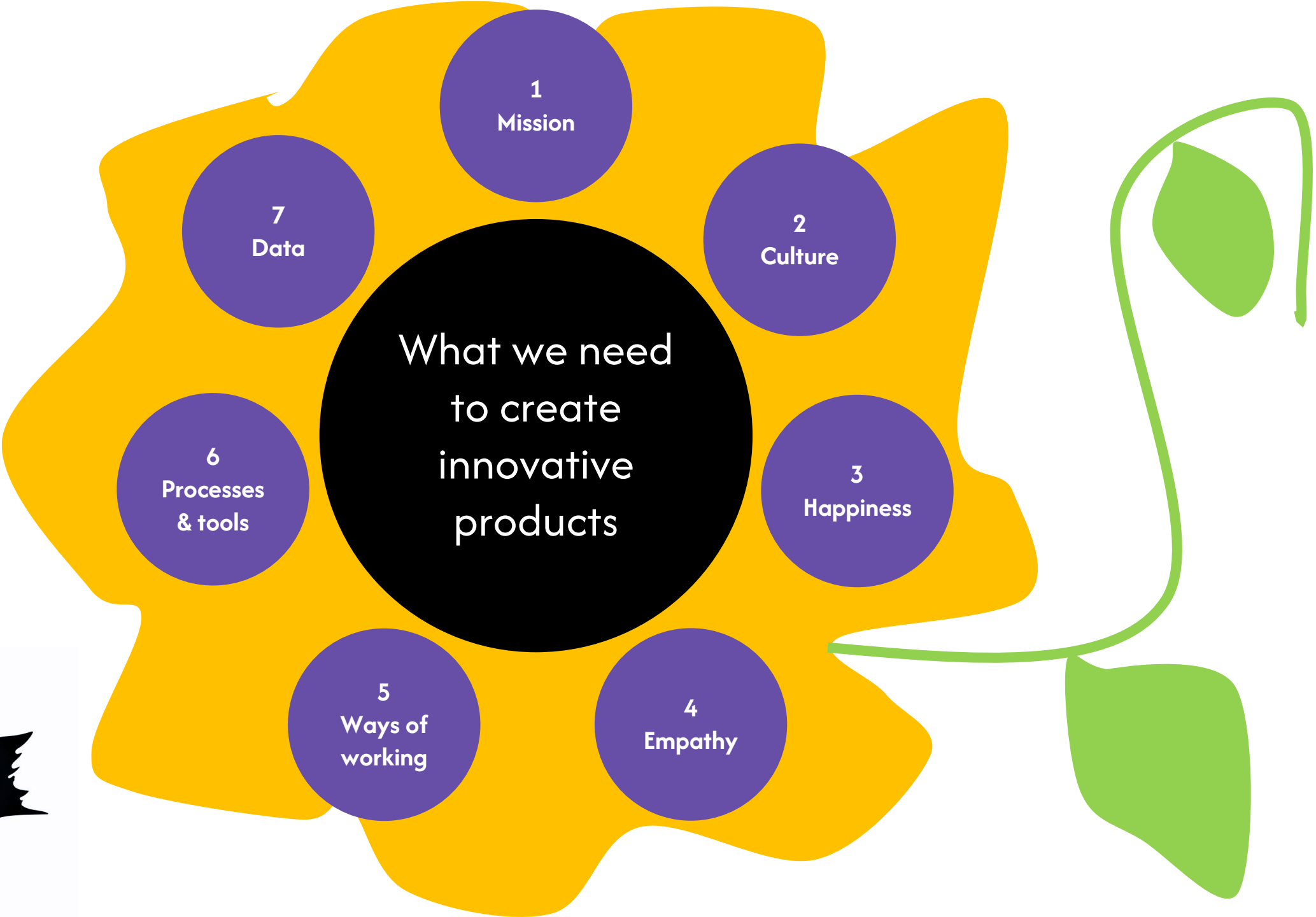- 6: User-Driven — 0.04%

NNGROUP.COM NN/g
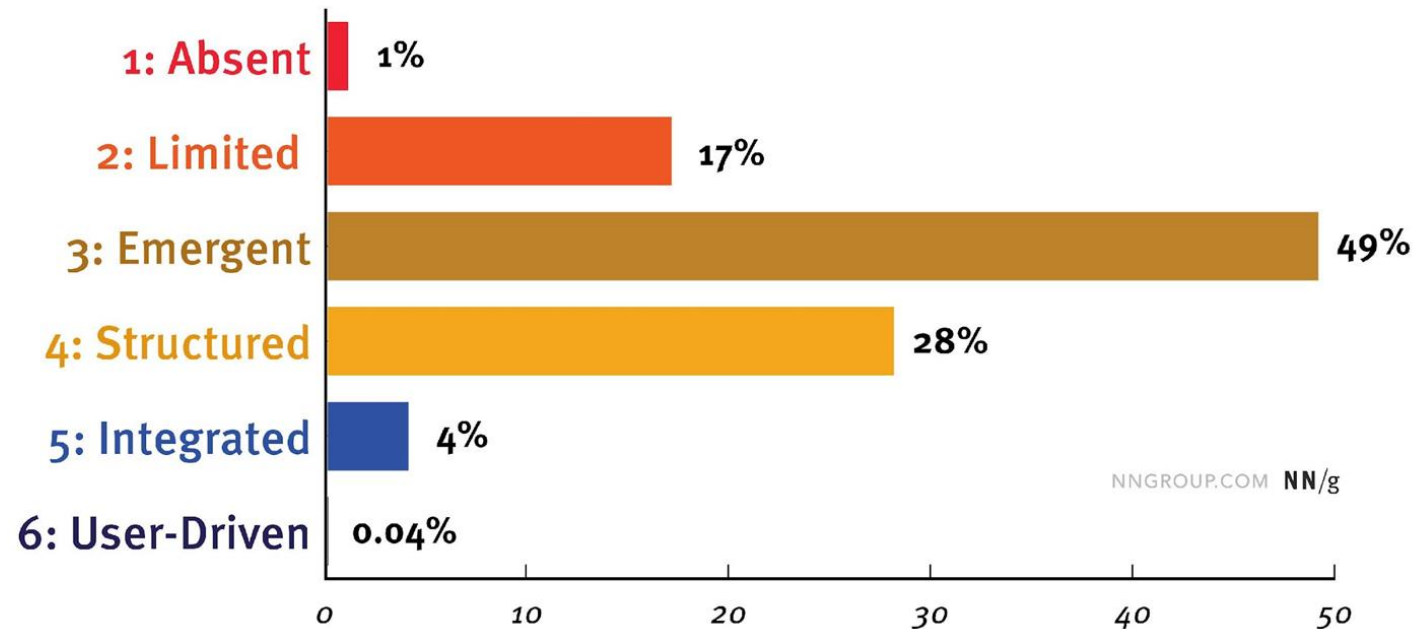
"Half of 5,371 UX professionals were in stage 3 (emergent maturity) out of the 6-stage UX maturity model, and very few scored at the highest end. The lowest-maturity organizations are likely not captured."

The State of UX Maturity:
Data from Our Self-Assessment Quiz

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https://www.nngroup.com/articles/state-ux-maturity-quiz/

Conclusion

What we need to create innovative products

1 Mission

2 Culture

3 Happiness

4 Empathy

5 Ways of working

6 Processes & tools

7 Data

Thank you for your attention!

Sabrina Duda

Principal UX Researcher

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Send us your madness stories!

If you have experienced some crazy stories in product development, how a lack of the 7 mentioned criteria lead to disaster, please share them with us.

Sabrina Duda

Yann Wermuth

stories@methods-against-madness.com