

Chet Richards

The lost arts of leadership

And how to get them back

Edition 18.22
March 2025



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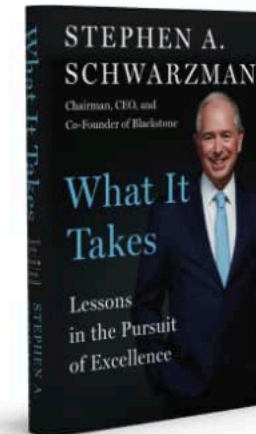
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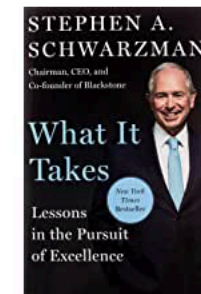
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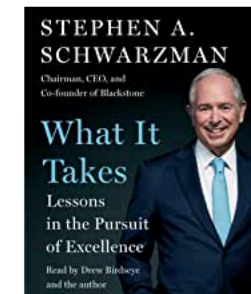
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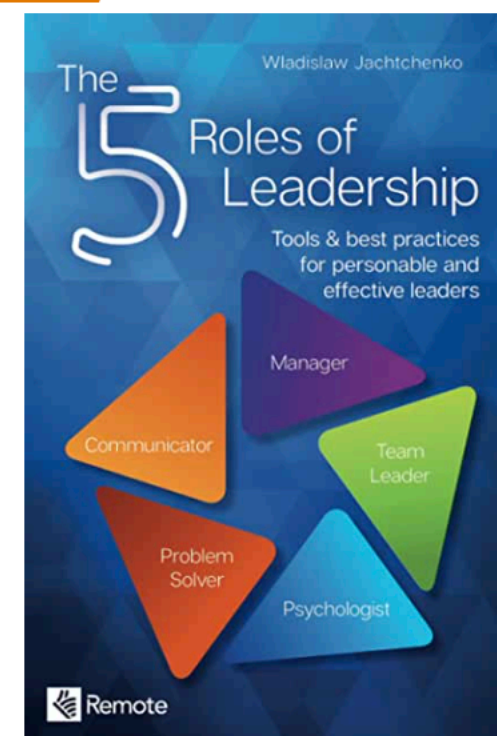


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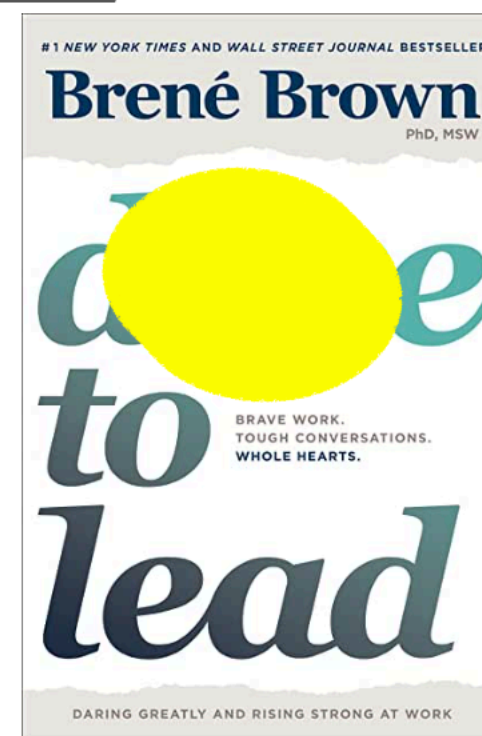
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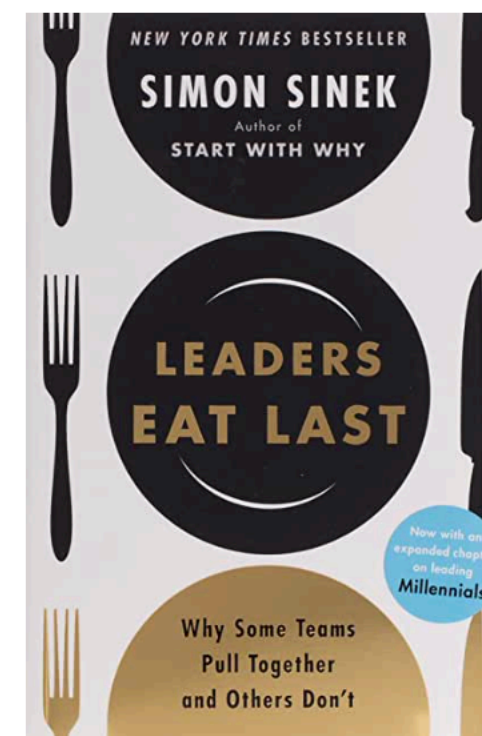
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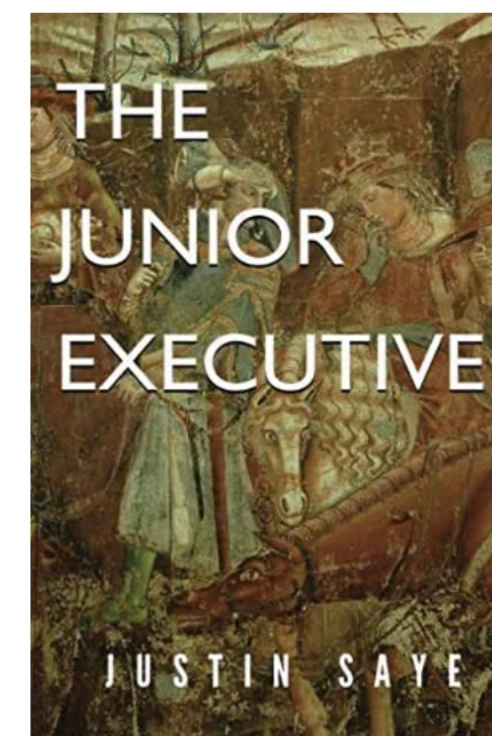
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Can you really say leadership is getting better?

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will be
warns staff
'turning up the heat' to weed out underperformers
who don't meet certain KPIs.

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to remote workers: "Pretend to work
somewhere else."

Mark Zuckerberg warns staff Facebook will be 'turning up the heat' to weed out underperformers who don't meet certain KPIs.

Elon Musk to remote workers: “Pretend to work somewhere else.”

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'turning up the heat' to weed out underperformers
who don't meet certain KPIs.

Elon Musk to remote workers: "Pretend to work
somewhere else."

With predictable results

Ordered back to the office, top tech talent left instead,
study finds

BY TAYLOR TELFORD

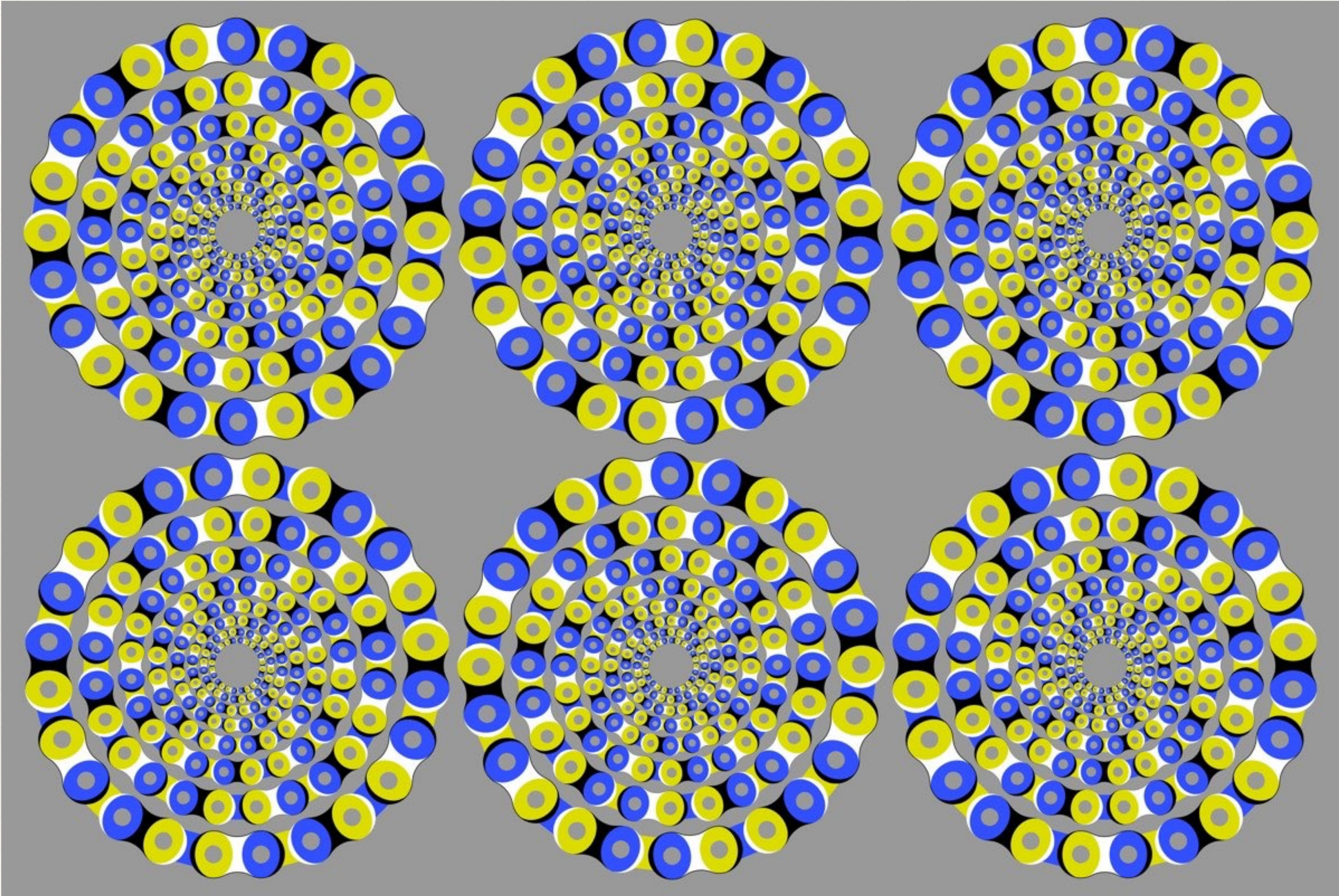
Washington Post

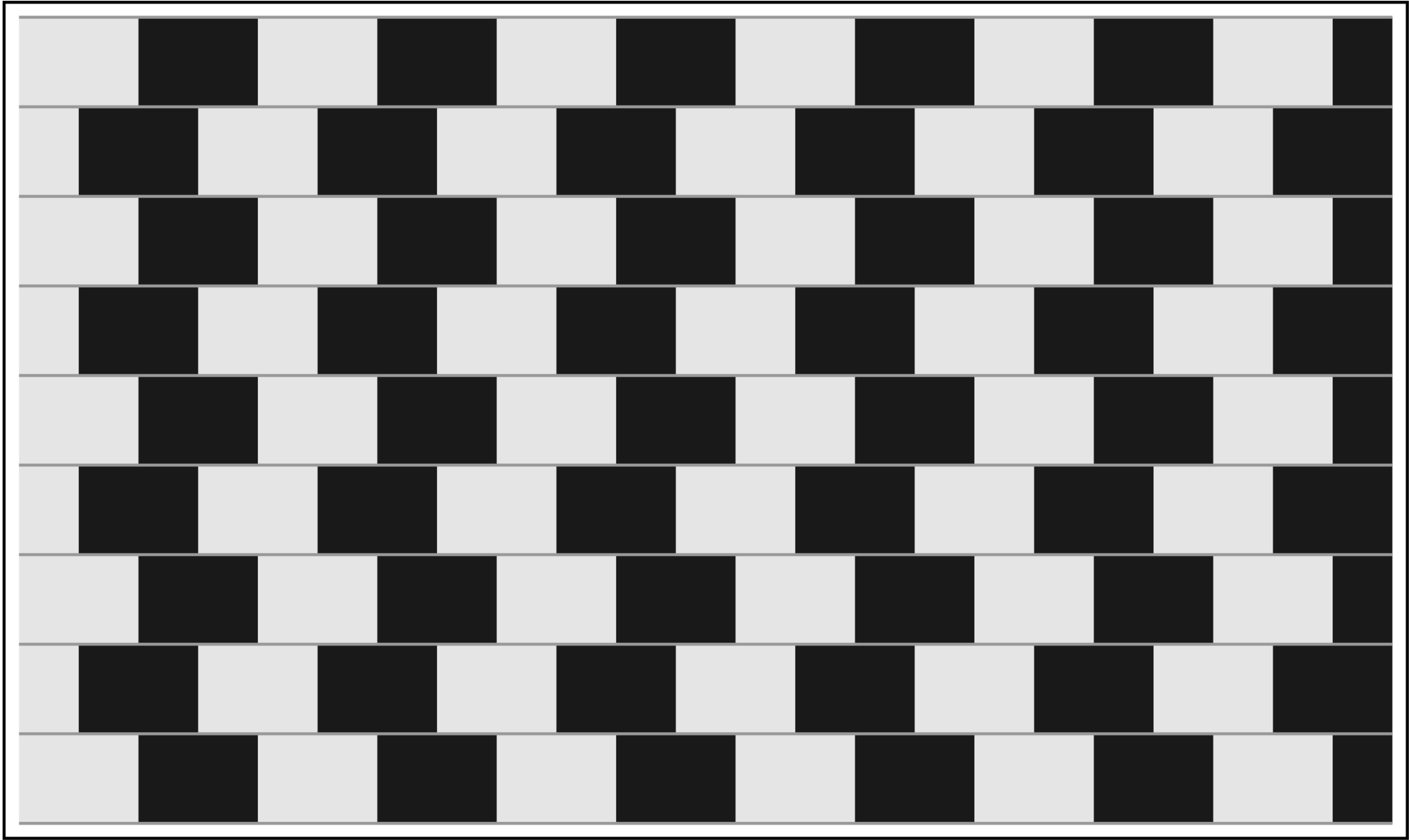
May 12, 2024

So what's missing???

**Do you believe
in magic?**







All our perceptions are active constructions, brain-based best guesses at the nature of a world that is forever obscured behind a sensory veil.

“The Neuroscience of Reality” Anil K. Seth,
Scientific American, 8/20/2019

Therefore:

“Perception is never a direct window” to anything we perceive, including our own organization.

Obviously this can present problems — illusions about how our organization is performing, for example.

But it also presents opportunities.

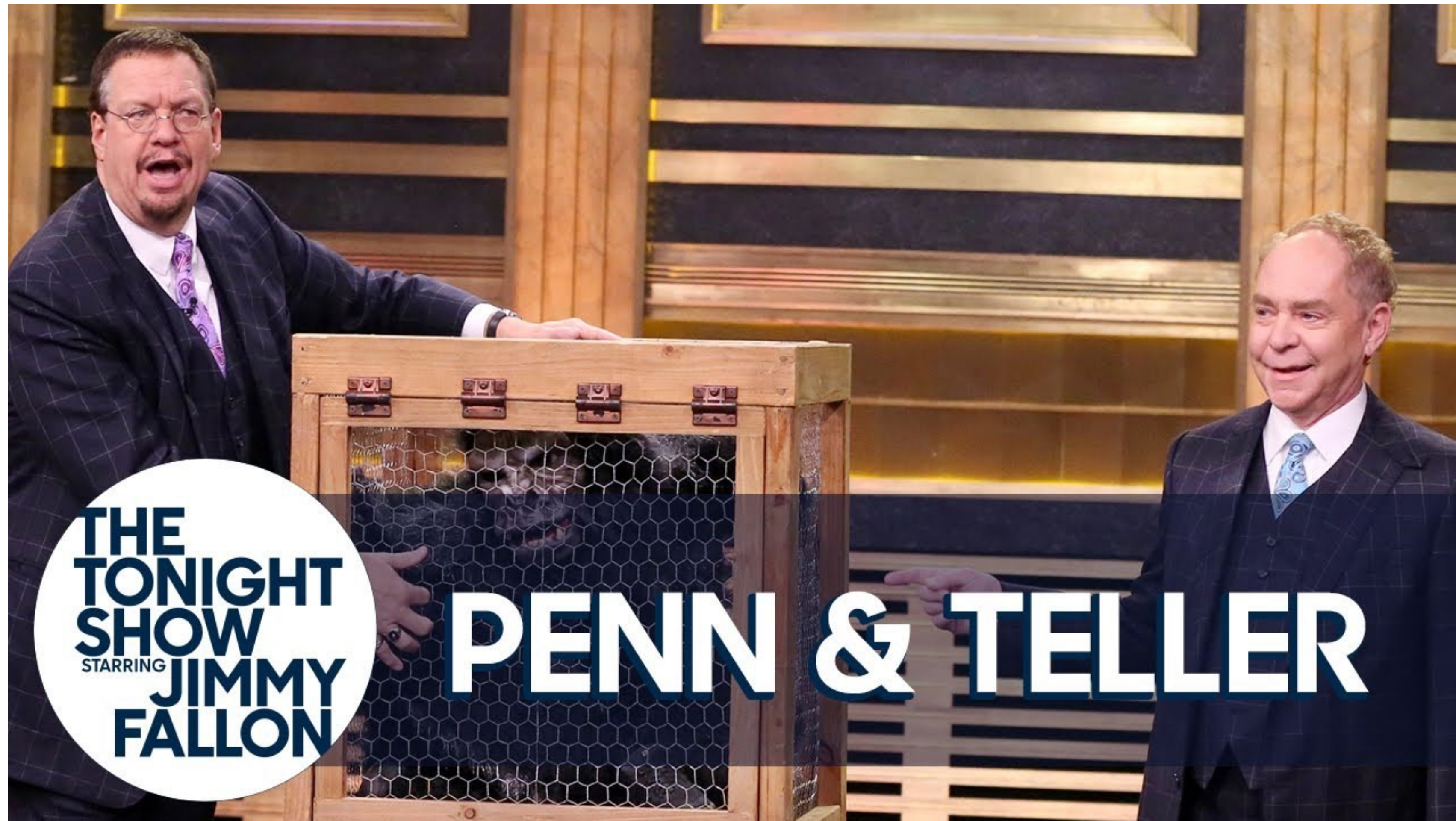
Let me explain.

Magic you can actually use:

1. Stage magic

*This is what makes magic so difficult: **The magician must sell people a lie even as they know they're being lied to.***

Teller, of the long-running Vegas act, Penn & Teller



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lo5BRAKvJoA>

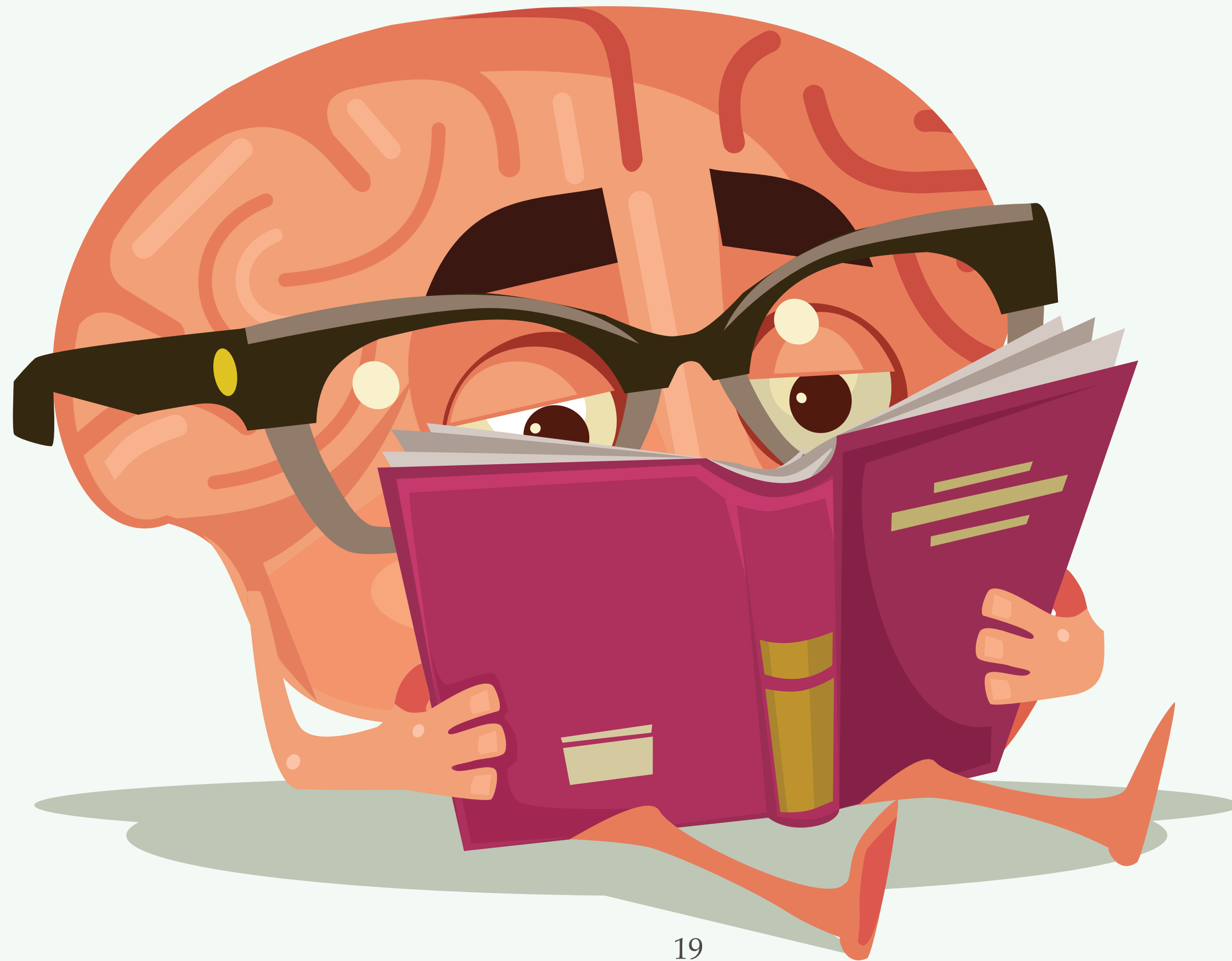
*So the brain predicts the path of motion before it happens.
It tells us a story about where the object is heading,
and this story becomes our reality.*

“Reality” is constructed by your brain.
Here’s what that means, and why it matters,
Brian Resnick, Vox, 6/22/2022

Magic you can actually use:

2. Mentalism

Mentalism: Mind Reading & Control



Influence Strategies

Leaders in organizations of all types and sizes would do well to learn the importance of imagery and symbolism, and to do things that, in their particular situations, help convey the messages and impressions that will make them seem in power, in control, and able to get things done. Jeffrey Pfeffer, Prof. Stanford University, author of *Leadership BS* and *Hidden Value*

Let's be honest here

- ❖ “Leadership” is really just mind control under a more marketable name
- ❖ So let's see if we can pick up some pointers from people who do it for a living..

NETFLIX

DERREN BROWN
THE PUSH

AMS

THOMAS KAIL

JEFFREY SELLER

PRESENT



DERREN BROWN
SECRET
ON BROADWAY

How mentalism works

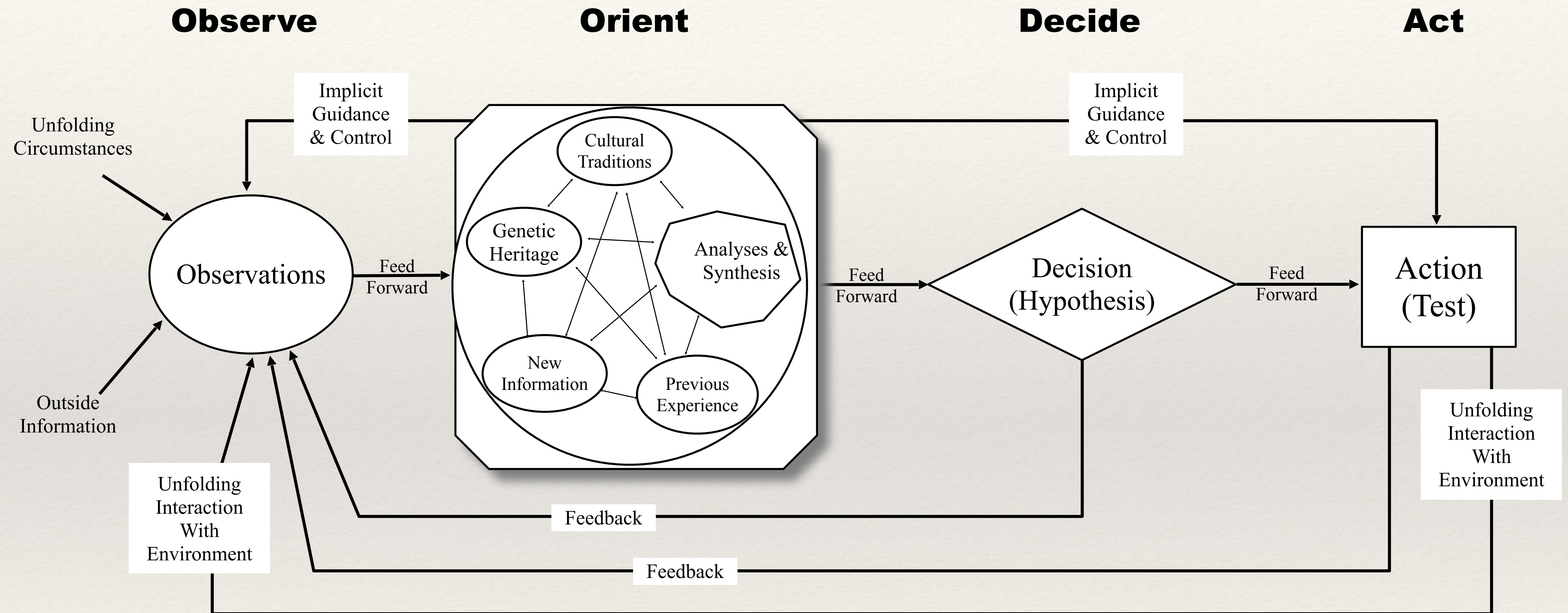
“magic, suggestion, psychology, misdirection, and showmanship,” not to mention “the power of the well-placed lie.”

British mentalist Derren Brown, “How Derren Brown remade mind reading for skeptics” *The New Yorker*, 9 / 30 / 2019

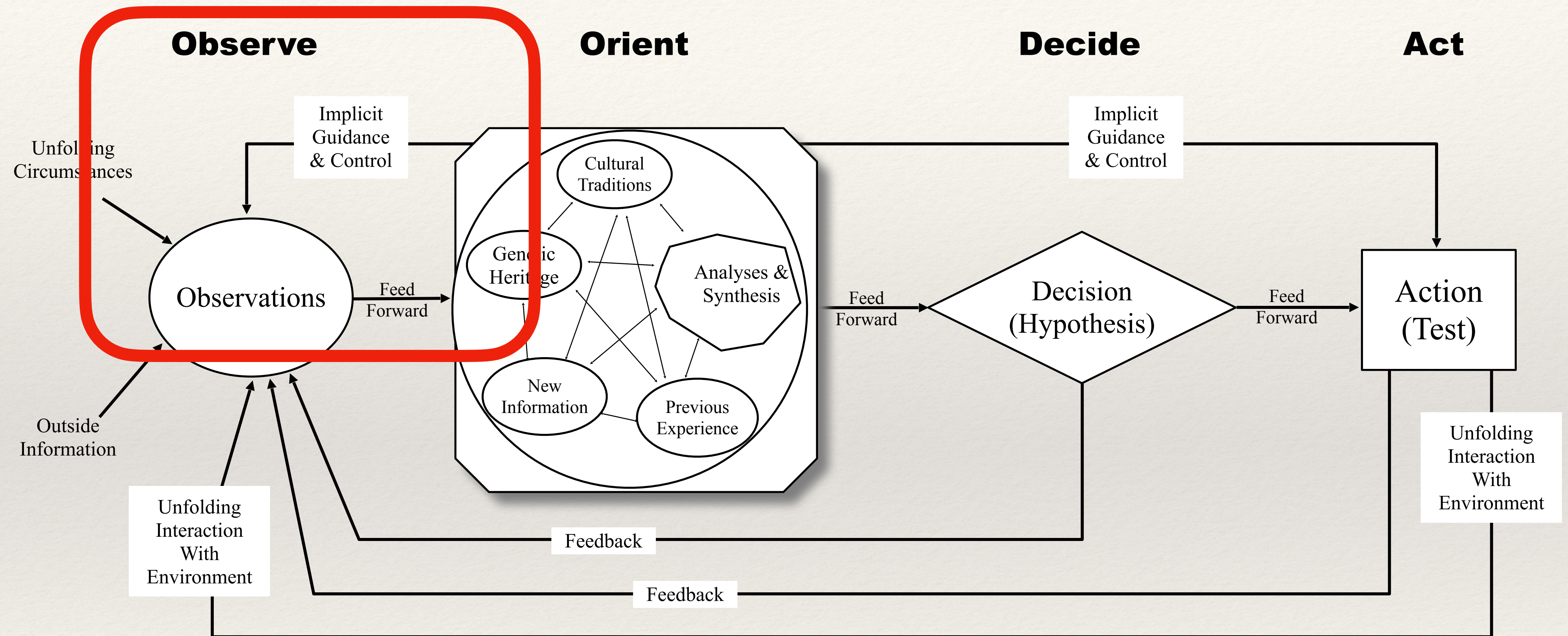
Principles of mentalism

- ❖ Create surprise & confusion
- ❖ Practice “cold reading”
- ❖ Subtly make suggestions (“hypnosis”; anchoring)
- ❖ Exploit confirmation bias / “incestuous amplification” / inattentional blindness

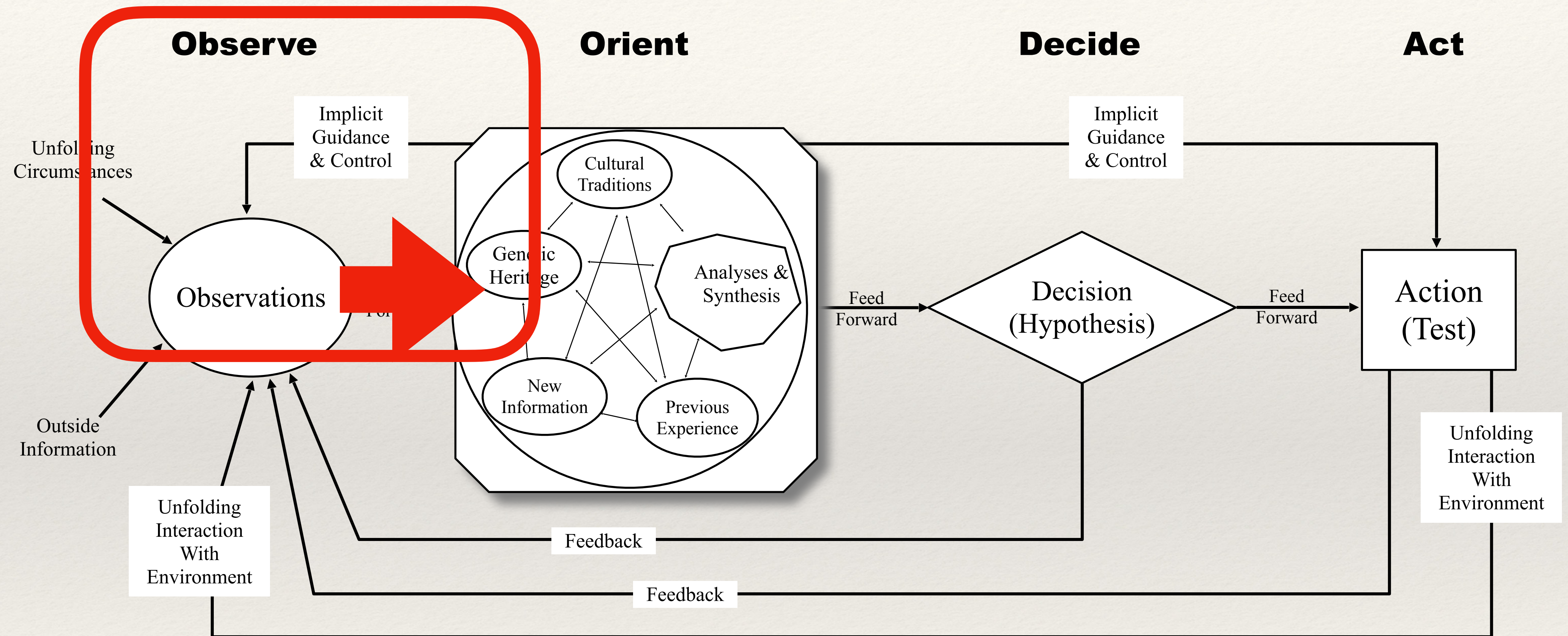
Incestuous amplification



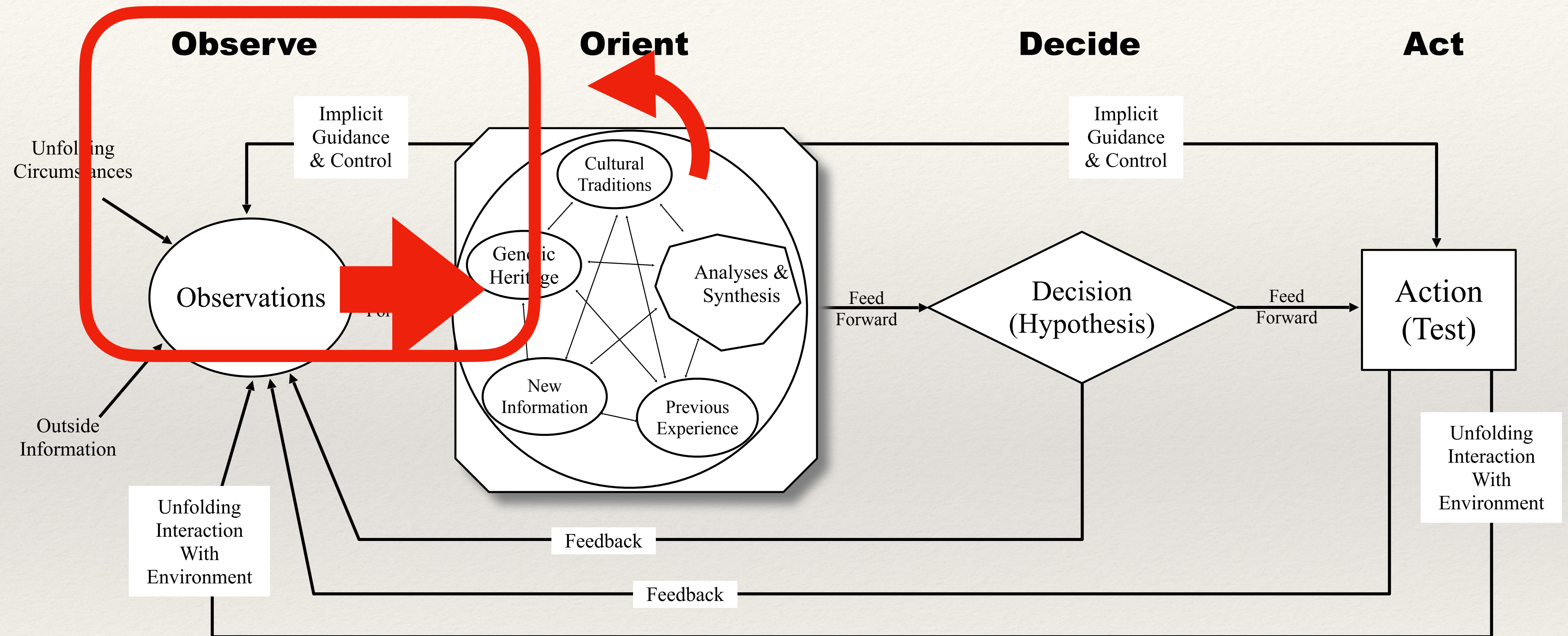
Incestuous amplification



Incestuous amplification

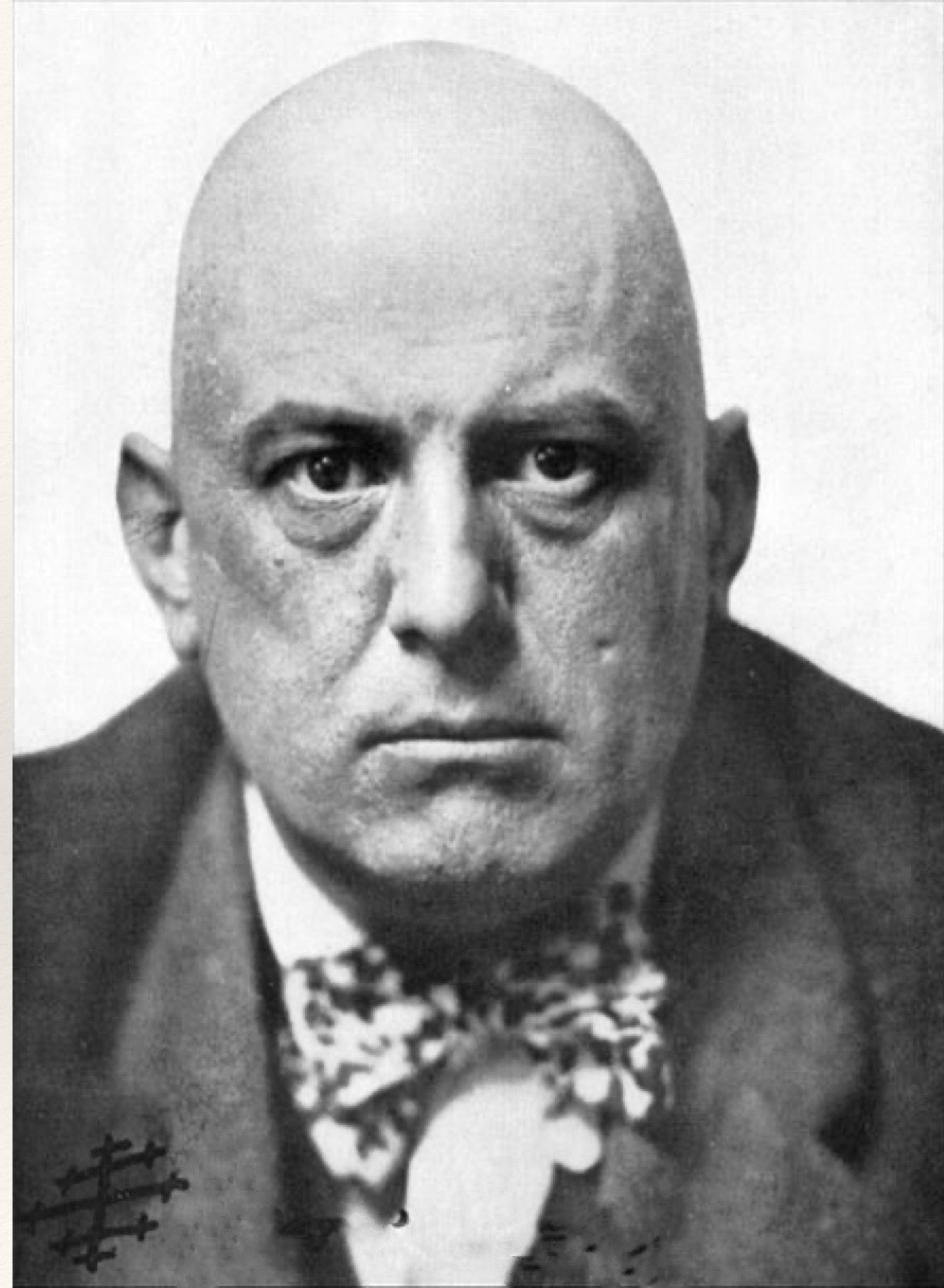


Incestuous amplification



Mentalism is everywhere

- HUMINT & Interrogation
- Fortune telling
- Psychic sessions
- Cultic religions
- Romance
- Salary negotiations; promotions; plum assignments, etc.



Mentalism in war

- ❖ To become the enemy is to think as if one were the enemy.
- ❖ Using your knowledge of military tactics, think of all the enemies as your own soldiers. You are the general. The enemies are soldiers under your command.

Miyamoto Musashi, *Book of Five Rings*
1645



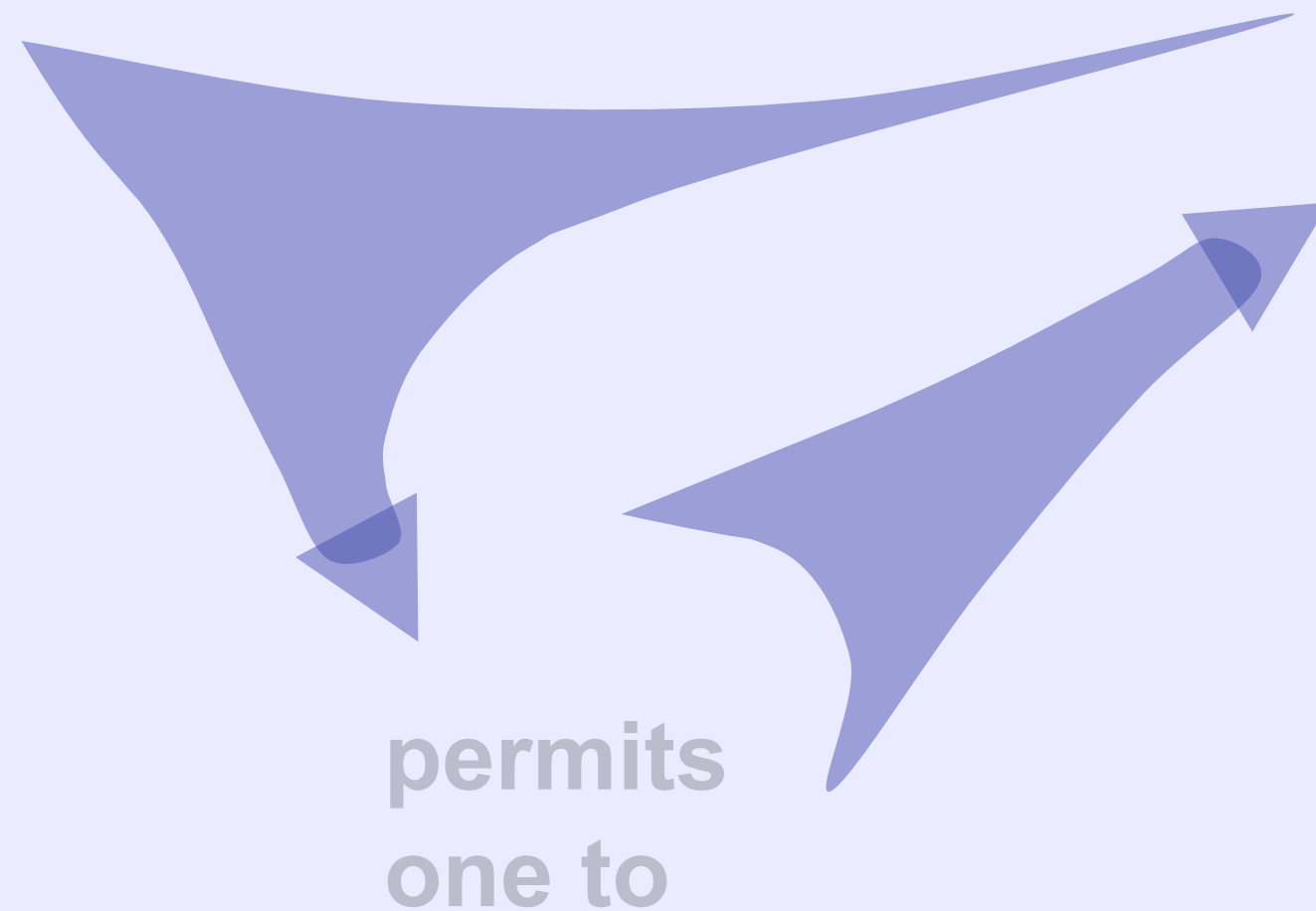
Magic!!

Transients

- Observe, orient, decide and act more inconspicuously, more quickly, and with more irregularity ...

or put another way

- Operate inside adversary's observation-orientation-decision-action loops or get inside his mind-time-space.



Intentions

- Probe and test adversary to unmask strengths, weaknesses, maneuvers, and intentions.
- Employ a variety of measures that interweave menace-uncertainty-mistrust with tangles of ambiguity-deception-novelty as basis to **sever adversary's moral ties and disorient ...**
- Select initiative (or response) that is least expected.
- Establish focus of main effort together with other effort and pursue directions that permit many happenings, offer many branches, and threaten alternative objectives.
- Move along paths of least resistance (to reinforce and exploit success).
- Exploit, rather than disrupt or destroy, those differences, frictions, and obsessions of adversary's organism that interfere with his ability to cope ...
- **Subvert, disorient, or overload**, or **seize** adversary's vulnerable, yet critical, connections, centers, and activities ... in order to dismember organism and isolate remnants for wrap-up or absorption.
- **Generate uncertainty, confusion, disorder, panic, chaos ... to shatter cohesion, produce paralysis and bring about collapse.**
- Become an extraordinary commander.

Management should be done not by arithmetic but by *ninjutsu*, the art of invisibility.

Taiichi Ohno, *Toyota Production System*, 69.



Mentalism in military leadership

We believe that implicit communication—to communicate through mutual understanding, using a minimum of key, well-understood phrases or **even anticipating each others' thoughts**—is a faster, more effective way to communicate than through the use of detailed, explicit instructions.

*Marine Corps Doctrine Publication 1,
Warfighting, page 79.*

MCDP 1

Warfighting



U.S. Marine Corps

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Applied mentalism: Sales and closing



One year, he fulfilled his annual sales quota in just two weeks.

Magic you can actually use:

3. Gambling

Professional gamblers don't play the cards. They play the other players.

Watch the recording of Sara Blakely's MasterClass Live [here](#)

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Poker is an intellectual endeavor that is actually skill-based over time. — Daniel Negreanu, champion professional poker player, <https://www.masterclass.com/classes/daniel-negreanu-teaches-poker>

“ ... sharpen your mental game through demos on reading opponents and spotting tells.”

Magic you can actually use:

4. Storytelling



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Bluffton 29909

All ▼

storytelling

☰ All

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1-48 of over 60,000 results for **"storytelling"**

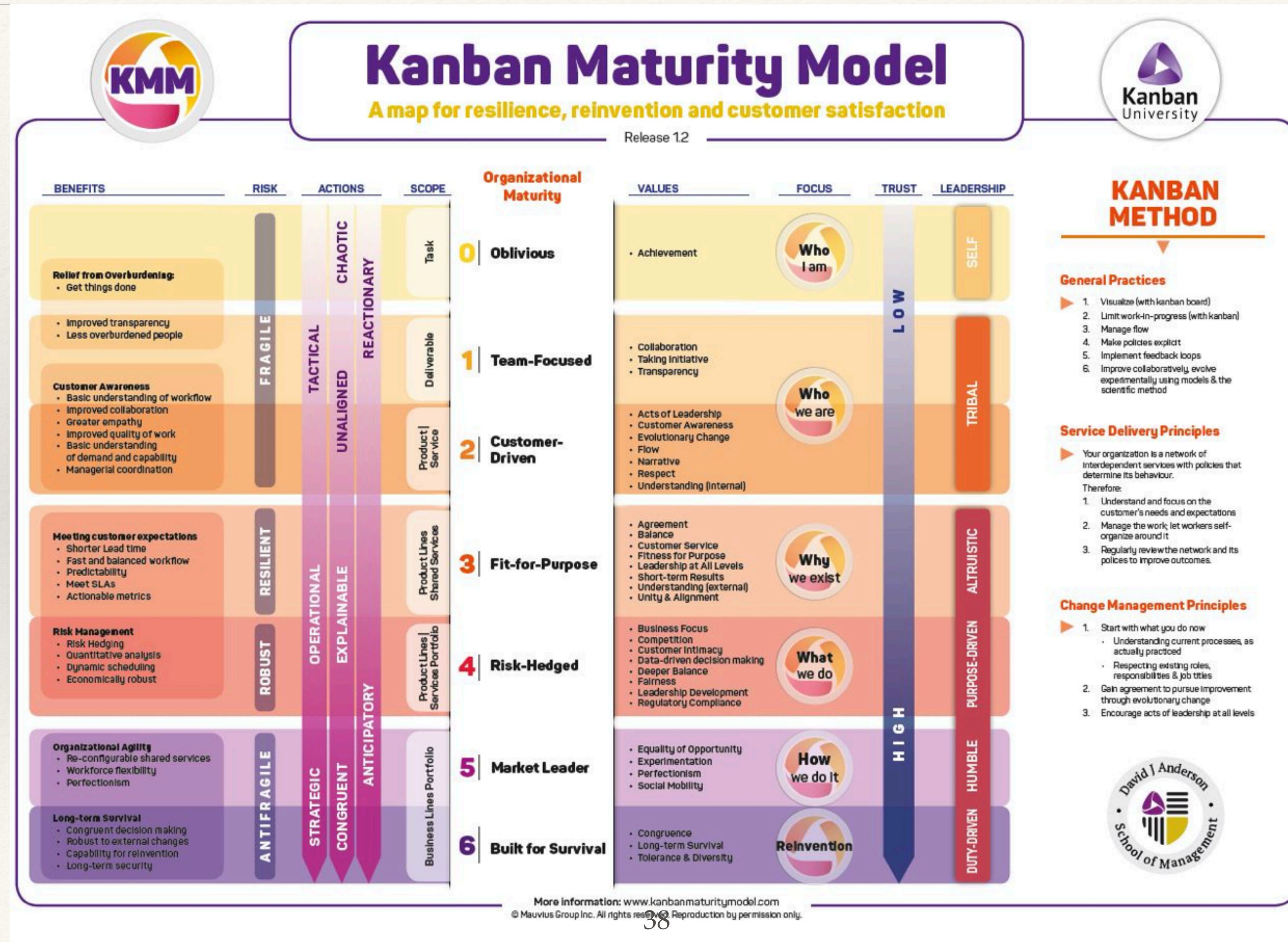
Where's the magic????

Might as well get out the guitar and sing “Kumbaya.”

Unless:

- ❖ Your story serves a higher purpose: e.g., curating of attention or anchoring

Here's a story your team can tell itself



Where's the magic????

Might as well get out the guitar and sing “Kumbaya.”

Unless:

- ❖ Your story serves a higher purpose: e.g., curating of attention or anchoring, *and*
- ❖ You know how to tell stories.

Do you know how to tell stories?

Show of hands: How many of you that have had formal leadership training (I'll accept an MBA) where you had to construct and deliver effective stories in order to graduate?

I'll also accept “write short stories.”

LITERATURE/WRITING

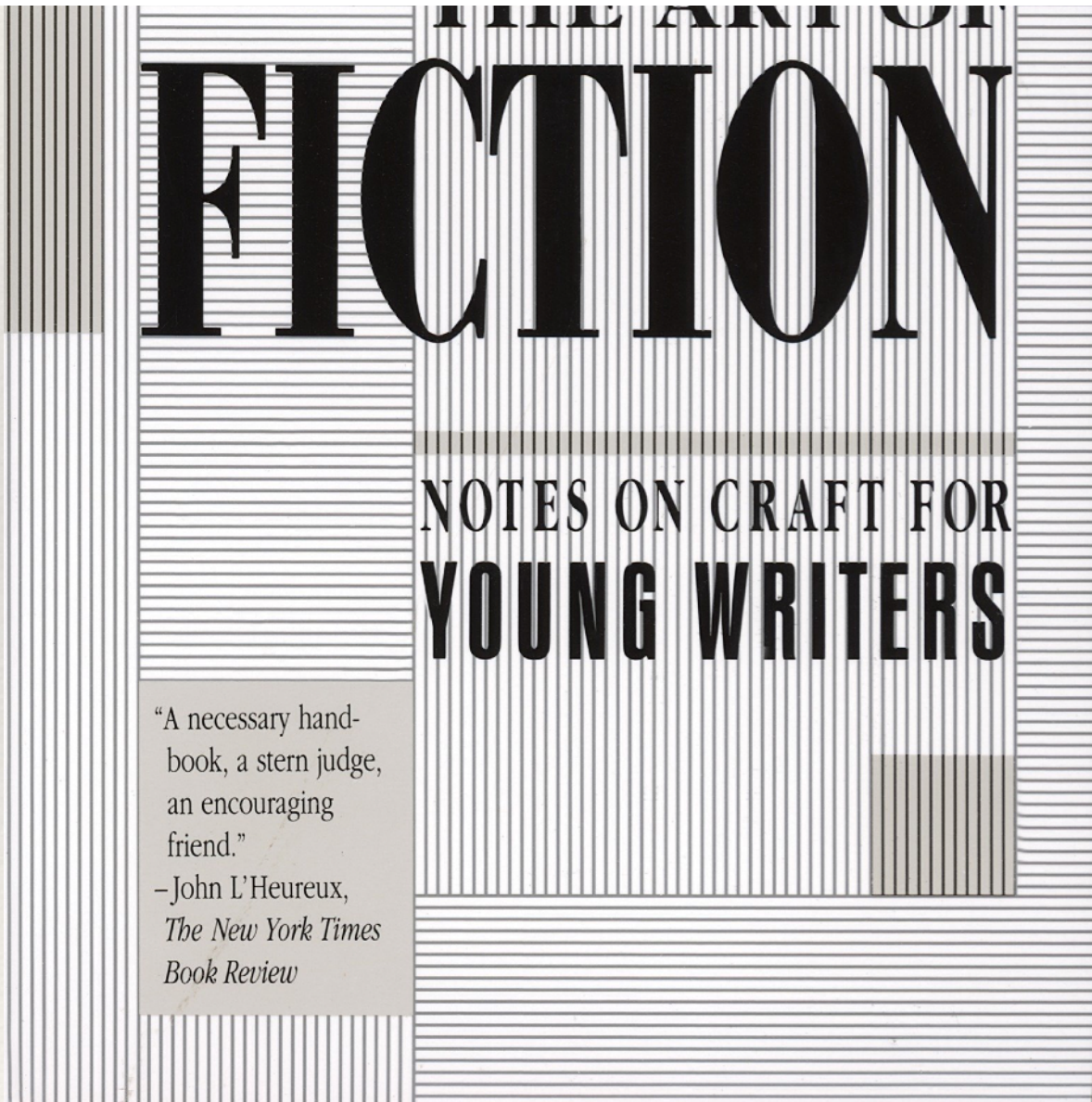
Lower Division


LTWR 8A. Writing Fiction (4)

Study of fiction in both theory and practice. Narrative technique studied in terms of subject matter, style, and structure. Readings will be introduced through readings from the history of the novel and short story. Student will be introduced to the history of the novel and short story. Student will be introduced to the history of the novel and short story. *Prerequisites:* CAT 2 and 3 or DOC 2 and 3 or HUM 1 and 2 or MCWP 1 and 2.

LTWR 8B. Writing Poetry (4)

Study and practice of poetry as artistic and communal expression. Techniques of composition (including traditional and new genre) studied through written and spoken examples of poetry. Readings during the quarter. *Prerequisites:* CAT 2 and 3 or DOC 2 and 3 or HUM 1 and 2 or SYN 1 and 2.






How to Write a Novel: Structure & Outline

UBCx


Course



AP® English Literature & Composition – Part 1: Stories

BerkeleyX

Course



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Course



Building your Screenplay

UniversityofCambridge

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What is Poetry? An Introduction to Literary Analysis

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AP® English Literature & Composition – Part 2: Poems

BerkeleyX



AP® English Literature & Composition – Part 3: Plays

BerkeleyX

The power of poetry



He is a Caucasian, exotic and mysterious, as a man of secrets should be;

a romantic poet of some achievement;

a natural actor, who could win anybody over when he was in the mood.

The power of poetry



He is a Caucasian, exotic and mysterious, as a man of secrets should be;

a romantic poet of some achievement;

a natural actor, who could win anybody over when he was in the mood.

Magic you can actually use:

5. Shape shifting



Magic you can actually use:
5. AKA "Acting"

But I want to be authentic

Unfortunately,

Your authentic persona is probably not very inspiring:

- ❖ Uh ... umm ... tending to rambling and repeating ... standing at rigid attention and reading the slides to your audience.
- ❖ You don't give any sign you're interested in the person you're talking to.

Leadership

The ability to:

Fire up the creativity and initiative of everyone in the organization,

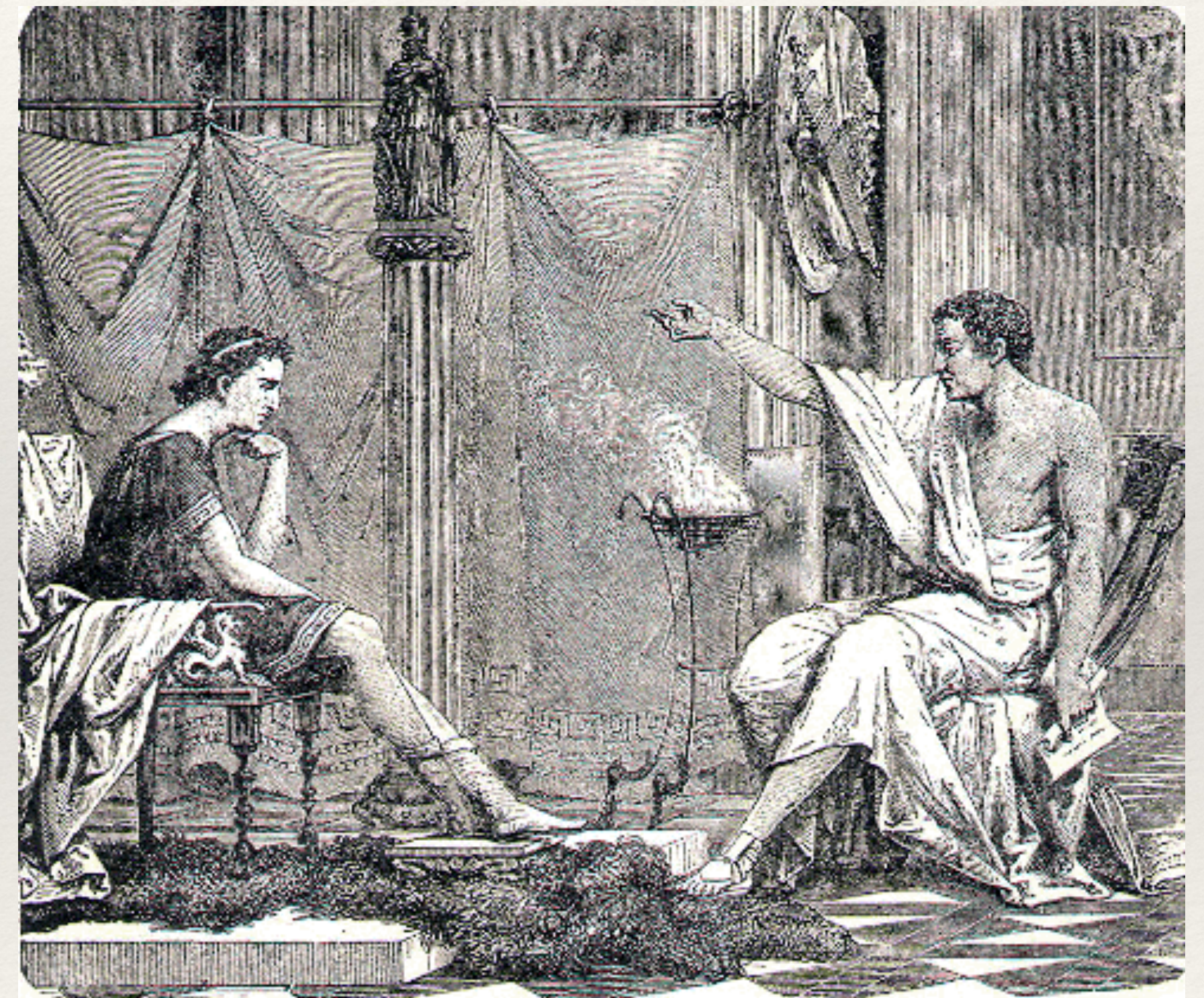
~ *and* ~

Harmonize all this activity to accomplish the objectives of the organization.

In other words, leadership is all about persuasion

Aristotle: Rhetoric, the faculty of observing in any given case all the available means of persuasion.

- ❖ Three persuasive audience appeals: logos, pathos, and ethos





Leadership Skills for Resilience, Change, and Reinvention

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Change leadership requires skills in culture hacking and identity management as well as defining and communicating purpose. Change leaders have a strong tribal intuition – an ability to form empathy, move people emotionally, and inspire with a powerful vision and a worthy cause. This class will give leaders a new mindset. Experience fresh insights and understanding to move people to action and embrace the changes necessary for the long-term survival of the business.

Join David Anderson in Bilbao, Spain for a new and exclusive training experience!

Learn to:

- Motivate people through purpose, defining a mission and objectives at strategic, operational, and tactical levels

IOW, where the heart leads, the mind will follow.

Pericles' Funeral Oration, 421 BCE

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|----------------|
| ❖ Antithesis | ❖ Asterismos | ❖ Symploce |
| ❖ Anacoluthon | ❖ Eutrepismus | ❖ Aporia |
| ❖ Asyndeton | ❖ Procatalepsis | ❖ Exergasia |
| ❖ Anastrophe | ❖ Metonymy | ❖ Dysphemism |
| ❖ Anadiplosis | ❖ Anaphora | ❖ Litotes |
| | ❖ Apophasis | ❖ Antimetabole |

<https://greekreporter.com/2022/05/23/greatest-speech-history-pericles-funeral-oration/>

To be an effective leader, it helps to be a good actor



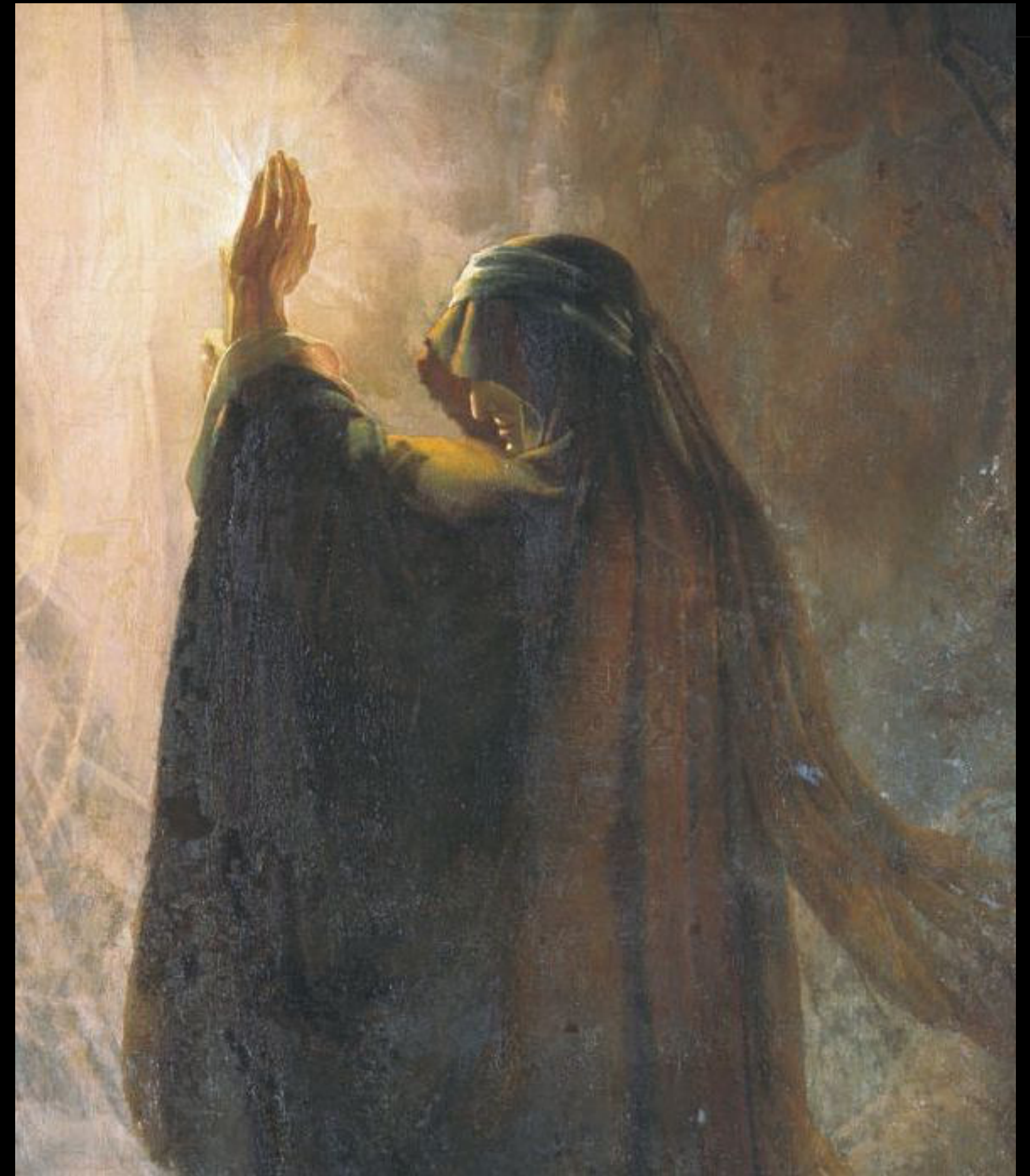


Let us be
honest.

None of this is
real magic.

Real magic

- Sorcery & Witchcraft
- Necromancy
- Divination
- Conjuring



Real magic

Any formalised practices by human beings designed to achieve particular ends by the control, manipulation, and direction of supernatural power or of spiritual power concealed within the natural world (Professor Ronald Hutton, Bristol University, UK).

GLENDOWER

I can call spirits from the vasty deep.

HOTSPUR

Why, so can I, or so can any man,
But will they come when you do call for them?



**Point: If you can reliably “control, manipulate,
direct, or subdue” useful forces
(natural or otherwise),
you have a skill or technology.**

❖ Any technology sufficiently advanced is indistinguishable from magic.

— Arthur C. Clarke

- ❖ My version: Any skill can be developed to the point where it appears magical,
- ❖ Including leadership.

Engineering is magic made real.
Elon Musk

Leadership is magic made real.

Some practical advice for using magic

Develop a deep understanding of why these work:

- ❖ Stage magic
- ❖ Mentalism
- ❖ Gambling
- ❖ Story telling
- ❖ Acting



Practice and use these

Wherever you find yourself and in
whatever circumstances, give an
impeccable performance.

Epictetus

A woman dressed as a witch in a black hooded robe with long braids is casting a spell. She holds a large, open, dark book from which white smoke or steam rises. Her right hand is extended, emitting a bright, jagged lightning bolt that arcs across the dark, spiderweb-filled background. Her mouth is wide open in a shout. In the bottom right corner, there is a small decorative object with lit candles. A speech bubble is positioned above her head.

HOW DARE
YOU QUESTION
ME!!