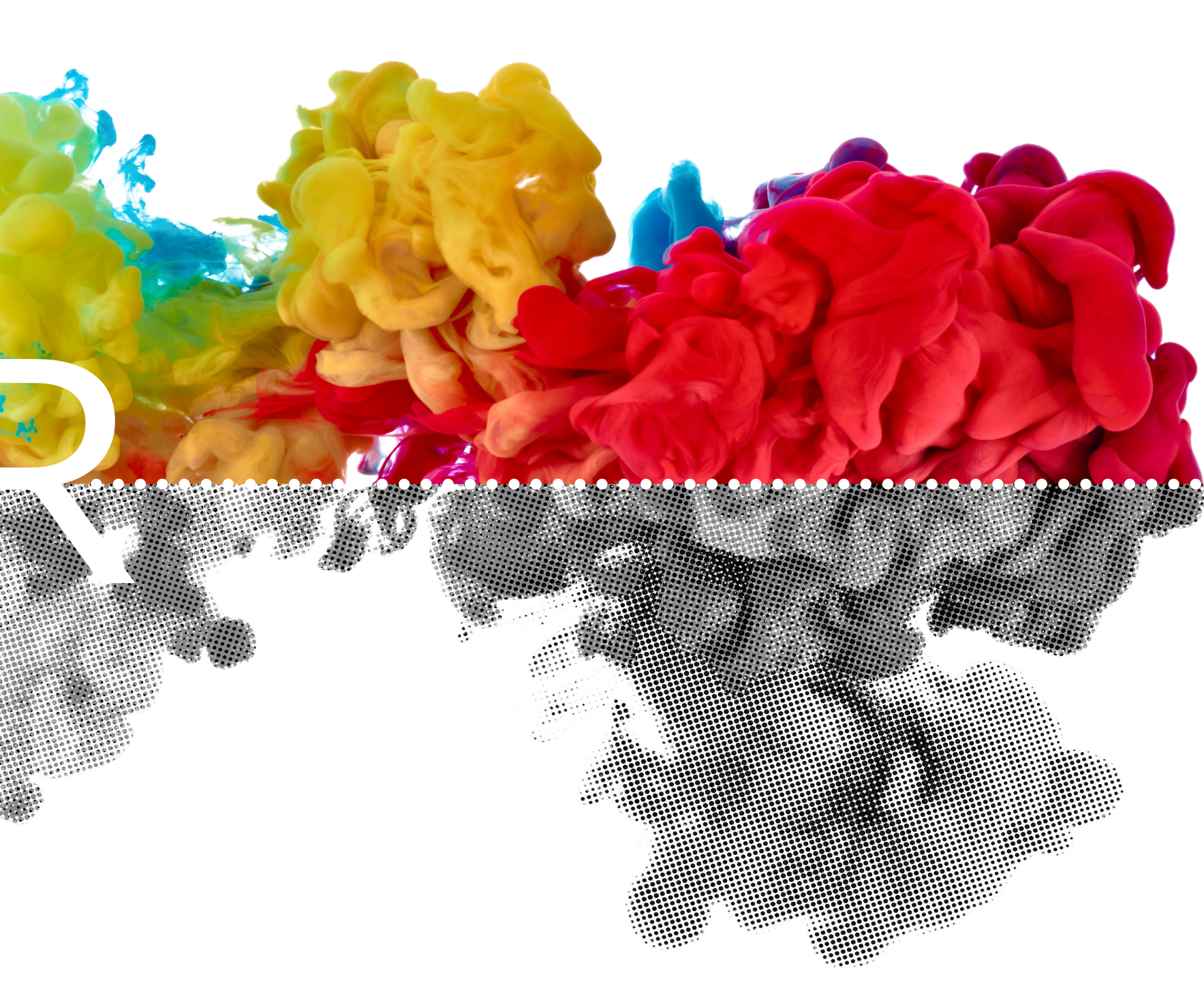




ROUX
CONSULTING

**THRIVING THROUGH
RADICAL
UNCERTAINTY**

CIPD
Wellbeing Conference

A modern glass-walled office with five people (three men and two women) sitting around a dark wooden table, engaged in a meeting. The office is brightly lit with natural light from large windows. Overlaid on the image are vibrant, abstract, smoke-like or cloud-like graphics in shades of yellow, green, blue, and pink, creating a dynamic and artistic atmosphere. The text is positioned on the right side of the image, overlaid on a dark, semi-transparent rectangular background.

**WHAT IS RADICAL
UNCERTAINTY AND WHAT IS IT
DOING TO US?**

What is Radical Uncertainty?

Risk

Probabilities are known or can be estimated.

Example: Insurance, financial modeling.

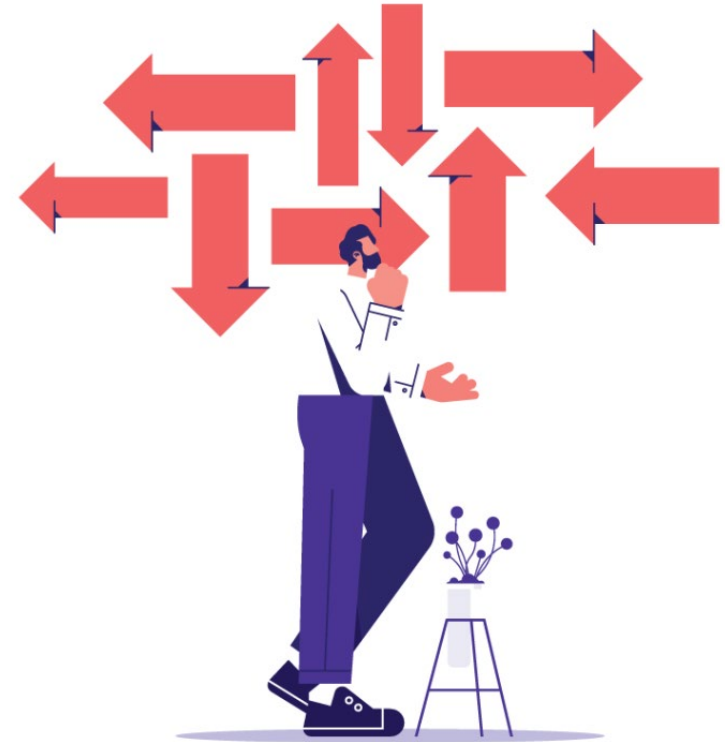
Radical Uncertainty

Outcomes are unknowable; probabilities cannot be calculated.

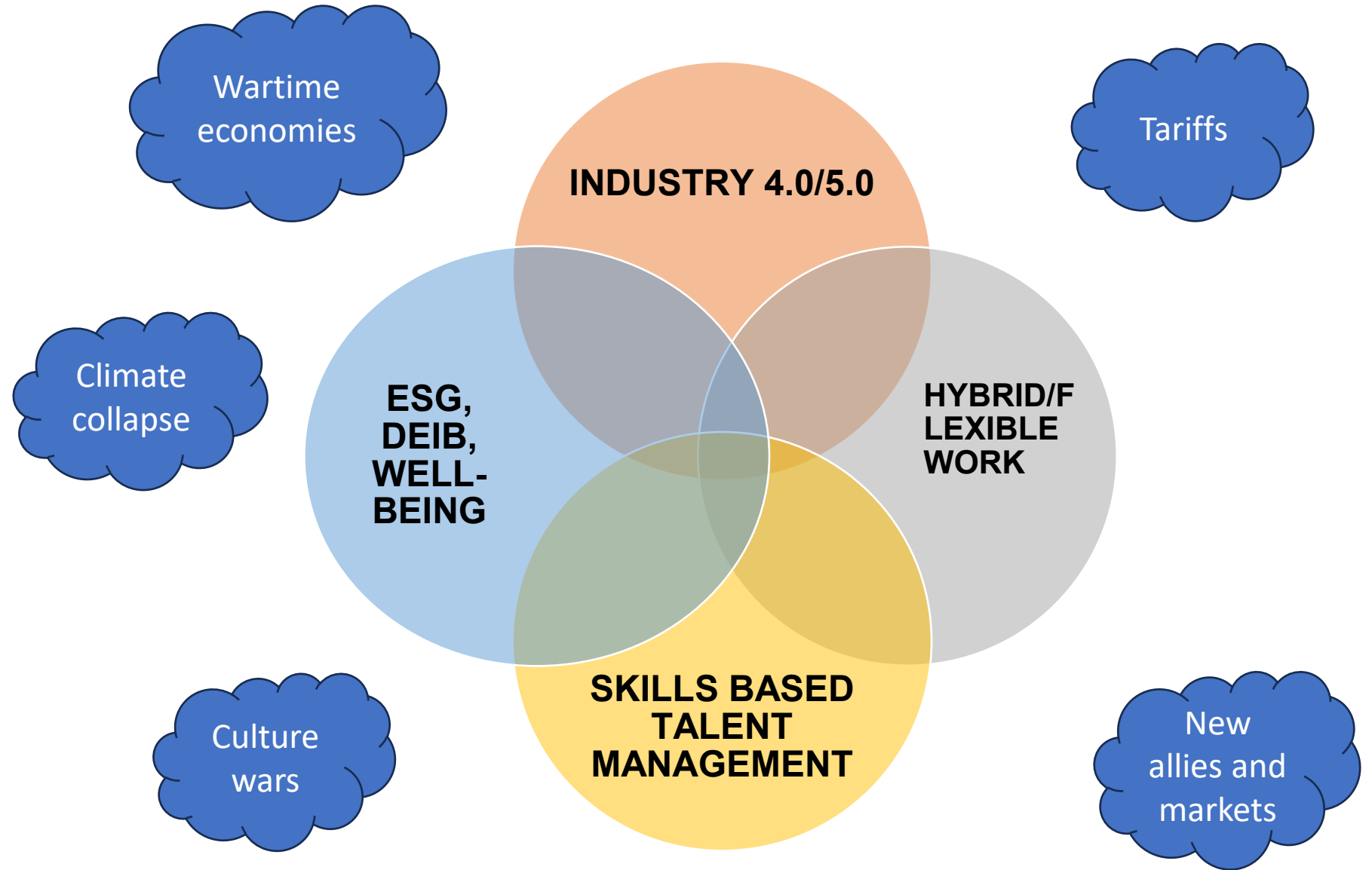
“We don’t know what we don’t know.”

Example: Pandemic emergence, disruptive new tech, geopolitical shocks.

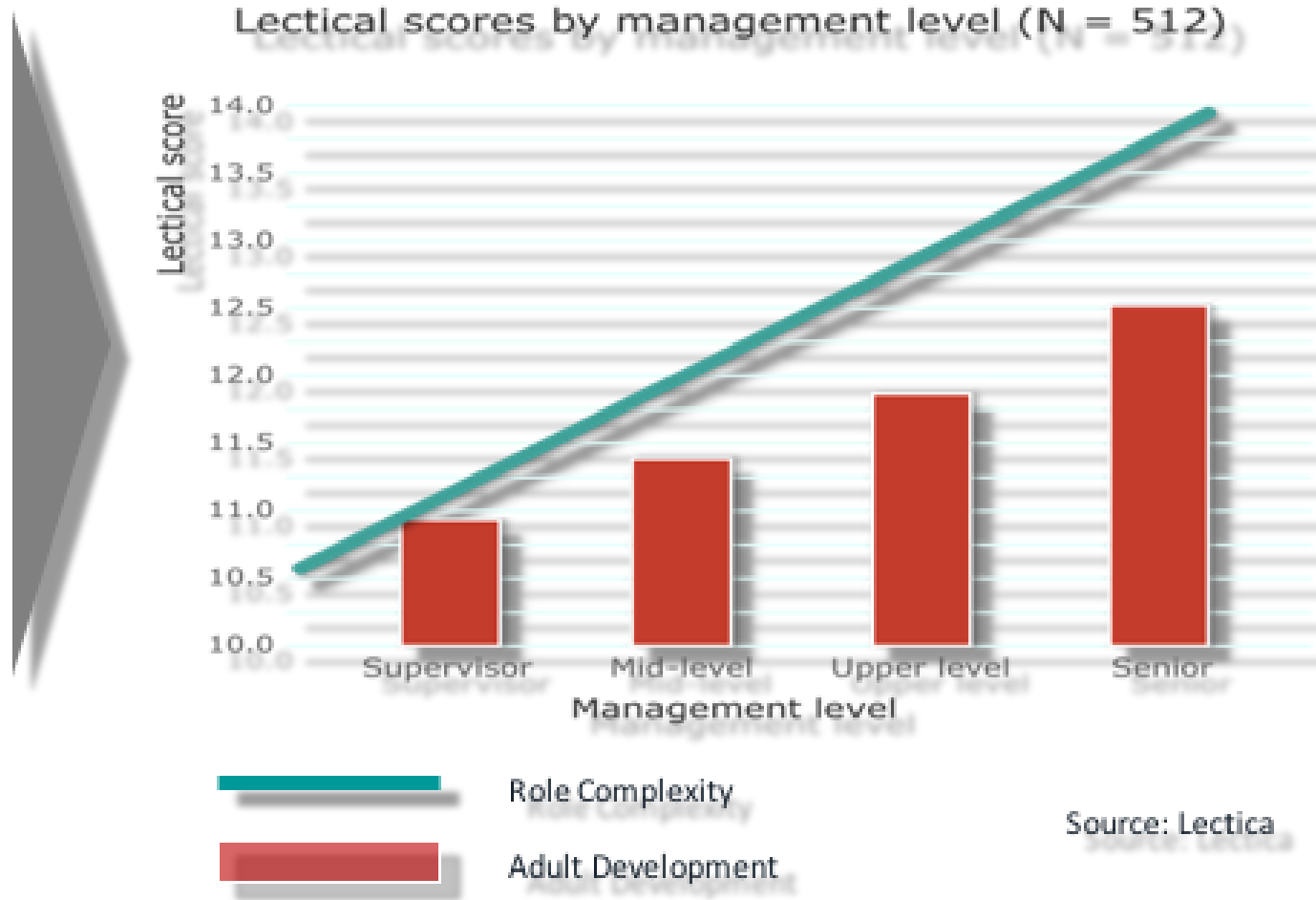
Radical uncertainty is not about calculating odds: it’s about navigating the unknowable.



MAJOR SEISMIC CHANGES ARE CONVERGING



LEADERS ARE IN OVER THEIR HEADS



“The biggest risk to leadership is not turbulence itself, but leading with yesterday’s mindsets, obsolete frameworks and out-dated assumptions about the world.”

Terence Mauri



How Humans Typically Respond to Radical Uncertainty

- Threat response: fight/flight/freeze - the brain shifts control from prefrontal cortex to survival circuits, reducing flexible thinking.
- Intolerance of uncertainty: people interpret ambiguity as threat, showing stronger fear/anxiety responses.



How Organizations Typically Respond to Radical Uncertainty

- Control reflex: doubling down on planning, models, and legacy playbooks - adding friction when learning loops are needed.
- Progress requires unlearning: discarding obsolete assumptions & processes is a multi-stage process.
- Change fatigue → burnout: WHO defines burnout as exhaustion, cynicism, reduced efficacy. Gartner/HBR report 70%+ of employees show change fatigue.



A group of five business professionals (three men and two women) are seated around a dark wooden table in a modern office setting. They are engaged in a meeting, with one woman using a laptop. The office has large glass windows that look out onto a city skyline. The scene is overlaid with vibrant, colorful abstract shapes in shades of yellow, green, blue, and pink, creating a dynamic and artistic atmosphere. A dark semi-transparent rectangle on the right side of the image contains the text.

**THE MINDSETS AND
PRACTICES THAT HELP US
ADAPT AND THRIVE**

A NEW BOLDNESS IS REQUIRED

Bold accelerators

- **The curiosity to learn:** evolving as the world evolves.
- **The courage to unlearn:** the word 'unworlding' or 'reworlding' means letting go of all the outdated ways of thinking and being open to new possibilities.
- **The clarity to focus:** building cultures where talent is empowered to solve the biggest problems.
- **The conviction to decide:** deciding future trends and their implications on strategy.
- **The compassion to care and co-create:** it is possible to win with empathy.



LEADERSHIP IS EVOLVING



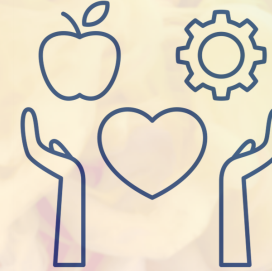
LEADERSHIP 1.0

- Hero Leadership
- Trait Theory
- Command & Control
- Competencies
- Job Security
- Hierarchy
- Narrow Tasks & Roles
- Socialized
- For the Elite Few



LEADERSHIP 2.0 & 3.0

- Visionary
- Charismatic
- Transformational
- Behavioral
- Horizontal
- Competencies
- Empowerment
- Culture
- Socialized
- Situational



LEADERSHIP 4.0

- SHARED
- Human
- Integrative
- Holistic, Deep
- Eco Systemic
- Lifelong Journey
- Complex Social Context
- Neuroplasticity
- Horizontal & Vertical
- Agile & Adaptive
- Digital Technology
- Virtual & flexible
- Self-Authoring

LEADERSHIP FIT FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

I make sense of and
act on the changes
around me –
CONTEXTUAL
INTELLIGENCE

I thrive in complexity
and uncertainty
PERSONAL AGILITY
AND CURIOSITY

I display ETHICAL
AND MORAL
MATURITY
consistently

I understand and
evolve how I make
meaning so I can
work in more
complexity
IDENTITY

I learn to co-create
and collaborate and
share leadership
COLLABORATIVE
BEHAVIOURS

I keep my
knowledge and
skills relevant
FUTURE FIT
COMPETENCIES



I make sense of and act on the changes around me – CONTEXTUAL INTELLIGENCE

In high uncertainty conditions, you need to plan to learn, not plan to prove you were right.

Stop pretending you know all the answers. In a highly uncertain and fluid environment, neither you nor anybody else has answers.

Arguing about being 'right' or having a detailed plan going eighteen months out is just wasting your breath. Instead, articulate and pinpoint the major uncertainties and how you might gain some insight about them.”

Rita McGrath



Growth Mindset: Showing up with curiosity and the belief that you and others can grow and develop continually.

Self-Awareness: Internal self-awareness - how clearly, we see our own values, passions, aspirations, fit with our environment, reactions, and impact on others and the second - external self-awareness - understanding how other people view us, in terms of those same factors listed above. *(Eurich, 2018)*

Emotional agility: Understanding all your emotions—negative and positive—and aligning your decisions and actions intentionally.

Focus and Deep Work: Your focus is your reality. Attention works like a muscle. We learn, interact and work best with focused attention and presence, but the wealth of information and distractions creates a poverty of attention. We need to learn to carve out time for focused deep work and starve our distractions.

Grit: The right blend of passion and perseverance has been shown repeatedly to be the key differentiator of long-term success across several studies.

I thrive in complexity
and uncertainty
PERSONAL AGILITY
&
CURIOSITY



I display
ETHICAL & MORAL MATURITY
consistently

Ethical Intelligence is the ability of humans to make ethical decisions through principled thinking, choosing, and behaving when faced with moral challenges.



Brent Kedzierski

Brent Kedzierski

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Complexity of self is achieved by seeking growth and development, welcoming challenging experiences that stretch one's understanding and equilibrium, exposing oneself to multiple perspectives, seeking and accepting feedback, listening and reflecting and, importantly, taking the risk of acting amidst uncertainty with the best of intentions for the good of the whole system, not just one's own domain.

Ted Billies

I understand and evolve how I make meaning
so that I can work in more complexity
IDENTITY



Most often successful, achievement-oriented people mistakenly believe they are the principal source of accomplishments in their teams and organisations.

Relationships are the bridges that connect authenticity to influence and value creation. Leadership always operates in the context of relationships.

Kevin Cashman



I learn to co-create, collaborate and share leadership
COLLABORATIVE BEHAVIOURS



I keep my knowledge and skills
relevant

FUTURE FIT COMPETENCIES

Here are just some ideas of the critical few I come across often as gaps in leadership knowledge and skills and ways to start your development journey.

- **Technology, data, AI and cyber security literacy.**
- Complex problem finding and solving (critical thinking).
- Agile methods for delivery and performance.
- Human centred design.
- Human/machine optimisation and the skills-based approach.
- Storytelling.





Catherine Clark

Ex-CEO: Paralympics Australia

“We are facing more wicked problems than ever before as leaders.

The way people show up for work and how they feel about work has changed forever and **we cannot lead the way we led before.**

Learning and unlearning is the new currency.”

Leadership Fit for the Future of Work



LEADERSHIP: Sense of curiosity, a dash of courage...



Brid Horan

Chancellor Dublin City University,
Independent Chair
Non-Executive Director,
Founding member 30% Club Ireland

“Often, I was terrified, but I was more fearful of things **NOT** changing, so I went ahead anyway. What got me through was a **sense of curiosity, a dash of courage and the need to make connections.**

I accept that I cannot know everything or what is coming, and I do as well as I can by taking one step and gaining momentum. You can only gather so much evidence, then you must back your and others’ judgments. I do not want perfect to be the enemy of better.

You must stay focused on your values to guide you.”

Leadership Fit for the Future of Work



A leader's guide to navigate increasing complexity, maximise engagement, drive agility, and achieve both horizontal and vertical growth.

vertical growth: both horizontal and agility and achieve engagement, drive complexity maximise navigate increasing



4 Reasons High Performance Teams Should Practice Positive Uncertainty

Uncertainty and interdependence are attributes of most work today. And, therefore, without an ability to be candid, to ask for help, to share mistakes, we won't get things done.

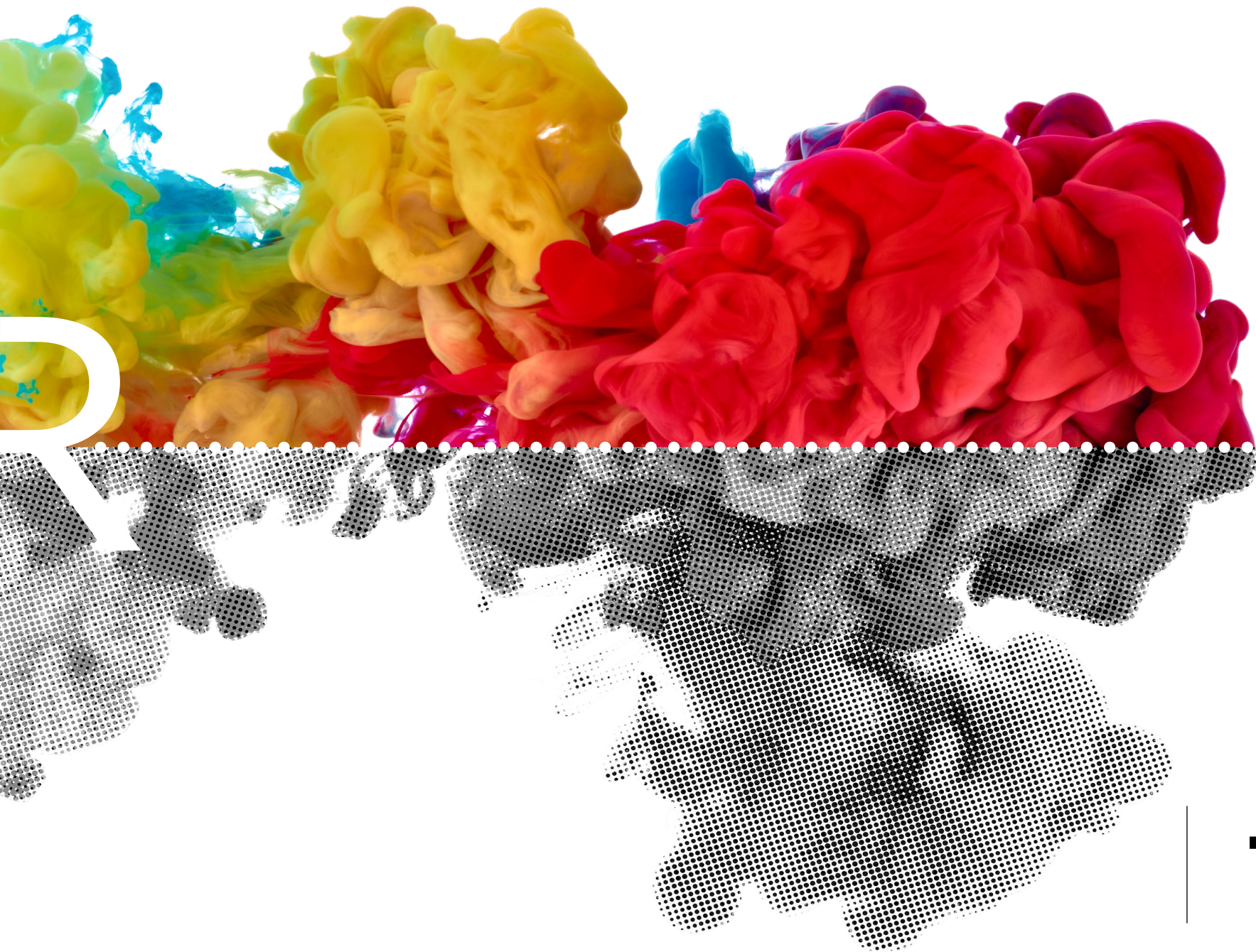
Amy Edmondson, Harvard Business School, June 2023



A closing thought from Amy Edmondson..

PRACTICE POSITIVE UNCERTAINTY AND BE BOLD





THANK YOU