Challenge assumptions

Principle 6 (Communication)

v1.4

PowerMaps

PRINCIPLES (universally useful ways of operating any organisation can adopt)						
CATEGORY	COMMUNICATION	DEVELOPMENT	OPERATIONS	LEARNING	LEADING	STRUCTURE
PHASE I *TAKE CONTROL*	3. Use a common language 6. Challenge assumptions 5. Understand what is being considered (situational awareness)	1. Know your users 2. Focus on user needs Remove bias and duplication Use appropriate methods	4. Think small (as in know the details)	Use a systematic mechanism of learning (bias towards data)		
PHASE II *GET FIT*	Be transparent (Bias towards open)	Focus on the outcome not a contract Think fast, inexpensive, restrained and elegant (FIRE) Use appropriate tools Be pragmatic Use standards where appropriate	Manage inertia Manage failure Effectiveness over efficiency	Bias towards action (learn by playing the game)	Move fast Strategy is iterative not linear	Think small (as in teams) Distribute power and decision making Think aptitude and attitude
PHASE III *BETTER WITH LESS*			Optimise flow (remove bottlenecks) Do better with less Set exceptional standards (great is just not good enough)	Bias towards the new (be curious, take appropriate risks)	Commit to the direction, be adaptive along the path Be the owner Think big, inspire others Embrace uncertainty Be humble (listen, be selfless, have fortitude)	Provide purpose, mastery & autonomy Seek the best
PHASE IV *REAL-TIME STRATEGY*				Listen to your ecosystems (future sensing engine)	Exploit the landscape There is no core (everything is transient)	There is no one culture Design for constant evolution

"You gotta challenge all assumptions. If you don't, what is doctrine on day one becomes dogma forever"
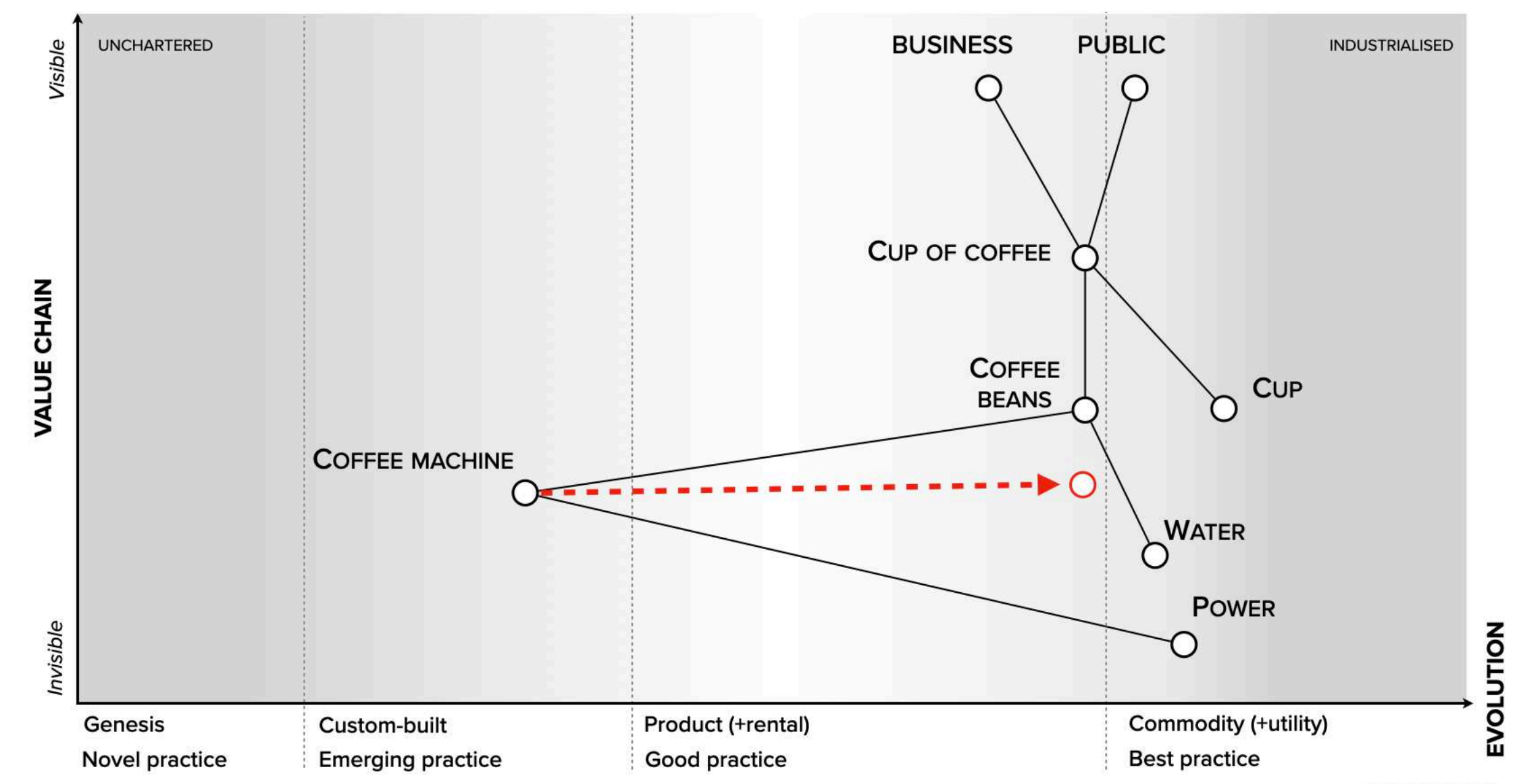
— Col. John Boyd

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There's no point focusing on user needs, creating a common language (a map) or sharing it if no-one is willing to challenge it.

Challenge should be a duty for everyone in the company. It shouldn't matter if it's someone's pet project, everyone needs people to openly and honestly say where they think it might go wrong.

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Why challenge matters.

In 1558 an influential map charted a landmass south of Iceland. After this incorrect charting, the phantom island appeared that way on maps for the next 100 years. In brief, assumptions can be perpetuated if they're not challenged.

CHALLENGE REQUIRES TRUST

Any form of retribution or bias against someone for challenging is a deadly sin that will harm your company.