Knowledge Sharing in our exponential world. New lenses may be required.

Our Past context

Push Economy of the 20th Century

20th century infrastructure drove organization architectures where Scalable Efficiency was the holy grail.

- predictable
- hierarchical
- controllable
- organizational routines
- minimize variance

S-curve, stable over decades.

And we built our practices around it.

Our Management Practices
Our Strategies
Our Offices
Our Corporate Training
Our Knowledge Sharing strategies/tools

THEN
The Big Shift Happened

21st C infrastructure: no stability in sight driven by continual exponential advances in computation...

S-curve, stable over decades.
And even our ways of knowing.

What does all this mean?

The Big Shift

Stocks \( \Rightarrow \) Flows

- protecting/delivering authoritative knowledge assets
- participating in knowledge flows
  - [creating new knowledge](#)
  - (strong tacit component)
- Scalable Efficiency
- Scalable Learning

in a world of increasingly rapid change, the half life of a given stock/skill is constantly shrinking

(perhaps now down to five years for many)

These different eras engendered quite different ways of:

- living
- working
- learning
- organizing
- connecting

Industrial Age  Digital Age  Networked Age

Whitewater Kayaking
This era is no longer just about deepening individual expertise within a silo.

Instead, it is also about participating in & shaping knowledge flows balanced & embedded when all is in flux.

But how does tacit knowledge flow perhaps with video, social media, AR/MR/VR, …

AR/MR/VR, mobile and youtube ++ now make it so much easier to share the tacit – even when not co-present..

The Big Shift
Stocks ===> Flows
protecting/delivering authoritative knowledge assets

Creating new knowledge (strong tacit component)

participating in knowledge flows

Scalable Efficiency
But we may still need to escape our own competency traps and now even faster.

The Competency Trap works against change and radical learnings!

An Example of a Competency Trap

Glenalvon - 1880s

Clipper Ships

France II

Preussen

Thomas W. Lawson
Competency traps Reigns Supreme

And this holds true for us and for Corporations, Universities & Governments

Indeed, for this we need more than just scalable learning.
We need scalable unlearning.
Welcome to the whitewater world of exponentials.

The Big Shift

Stocks ===> Flows
participating in knowledge flows
creating new knowledge (strong tacit component)
Scalable Efficiency
Scalable Unlearning, too.
That is, a willingness to unlearn old habits & beliefs.

In part because:
Tacit knowledge can be surprisingly hard to recognize.
And, it can foster incorrect beliefs and denial!

Let's see:
What follows is a simple question for us, here.

Unlearning habits and beliefs is hard—
Trying is believing – (but try it in a safe space)

Unlearning habits and beliefs is hard---

So what should we do????

Leverage the edge(s)...

A Simple Start – a Simple Edge

"How often do you get out of your comfort zone?"

Jack Hidary

Increasingly important in a global world of constant change!

3 quick stories at the more individual level before we get into techniques at the organizational level.

Same for a motorcycle!
Orchestrating Serendipity
Can be more than just luck!!!

Choose
Develop
Enhance
Serendipity
Serendipity
Serendipity
Environments
Practices
Preparedness

All encounters: deep listening with reciprocity

Also consider: Reverse Mentorship

Especially important in an exponential world... but it can also be humbling.

One-offs are great, jsb but we need more systemic & systematic approaches to meet the challenges & opportunities in the exponential age.

Reverse Mentorship – JC Hertz agrees to mentor jsb in game design in 2002

A guild staff meeting WoW

game critic – New York Times

Yes, we must consider Institutional Innovations

Expanding our focus beyond just cool technologies but also made possible by them!
Hackamonth—
silo busting at Facebook

Once a year, engineers at Facebook are encouraged — but not required — to ditch their jobs and try something else out within the company for thirty days, called “Hackamonth.”

And building deeper communities of practice across the whole company.

Edge – Core Reversal as a start.

20th Century: push mode
Innovate on the edge and then push the edge to the core, transforming (hopefully) the core.

21st Century: pull mode
Innovate on the edge(s) and let the edge pull the core to the edge.

Story of Xerox PARC vs. Amazon

New tools for empowering the edge

> cloud computing enables the edge to access all the power it needs without core approval.
> cloud enables nearly infinite scalability & reach and enables new business models, galore.
> social media amplifies engagement with external partners, customers, & others in the core.
> big data allows you to interpret weak signals.
> blockchain – smart contracts with no overhead.

But we also need tools to help us listen to & hear each other especially in our fast paced, agile teams comprising diverse talents.

unlearning bad habits

The Skadden Story

Learning from the Twitter/FB generation. (CTO as convener/moderator/translator)

Connecting edge & core bi-directional learning within your own organization

Dennis C. Lesser
Director of Music Technology
Skadden, cros, Slate, Morgan & Flom LLP
peter.ross@skadden.com
Social physics

What’s needed is a theory of how people make decisions as a function of interaction. Once you realize there are patterns, then you can predict outcomes.

Sandy Pentland-MIT

Reality mining: what makes great teams

Just by looking at the sociometric data, we’ve been able to foretell which teams will win a business plan contest.

1) Energy – how team members contribute to a team as a whole.
2) Engagement – how members communicate with each other.
3) Exploration – how teams communicate with other teams inside & outside their firm.

Sandy Pentland-MIT

“The New Science of Building Great Teams”

“Patterns of communication are the most important predictor of a team’s success”

14:29, 2/13/2017: Terry shared a google doc, “Sales pipeline automation” with Mike.
14:35, 2/13/2017: Terry sent email to Mike with title, “Please review”, linked google doc.
14:40-15:00, 2/13/2017: 17 slack messages, 560 words, between Terry and Mike
18:35, 2/15/2017: Mike edited this same google doc with 300 new lines, '@' to Terry.
21:15, 2/16/2017: Mike created invitation to Chris for 10-11 on 2/23 with title, “Sales mobile app”
3/1 - 3/4: Chris had a series of commits in Github.
11:00-17:00, 3/4/2017: 40 Slack messages, 900 words, between Chris and Bob
18:56, 3/5/2017: Chris marked JIRA story as complete
Over the course of this time, there were a plethora of chats, emails, meetings, notes, documents etc.

The Big Shift

calls for more than just scalable learning and unlearning.
It calls for a new ontology – a new way of being.

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Work in progress: scaling DevOps
We need to cultivate a blended ontology

- **homo sapiens**  
  man who knows

- **homo faber**  
  man who makes

- **homo ludens**  
  man who plays

blended in each of us

**Homo Ludens**  

- a highly nuanced concept of play

- as in permission to fail, fail and fail again and then get it right:
- as play of imagination – poetry
- as in an epiphany – suddenly falling in place
  - as in solving a riddle.

- Learning as riddles, leading to a reframing the world.

Extending the Blend even further

- **homo sapiens**  
  man who knows

- **homo faber**  
  man who makes

- **homo ludens**  
  man who plays

- probing & pushing boundaries
- invention within a space of rules
- deep tinkering

Extending the Blend even further

- **homo sapiens**  
  man who knows

- **homo faber**  
  man who makes

- **homo ludens**  
  man who plays

- interrogating context as a form of ‘play’
- like a detective (making sense)

With the imagination as the binding agent

- **homo sapiens**  
  man who knows

- **homo faber**  
  man who makes

- **imagination**

- **homo ludens**  
  man who plays

within the individual

**The Big Picture**
The Big Shift

Stocks ===> Flows

participating in knowledge flows

creating new knowledge (strong tacit component)

Scalable Learning

 Scalable Efficiency

A new kind of symbiotic relationship between us and computation

Freestyle Chess tournament

The winners racing with the machine as a generative dance between us and machine.

Zack Stephen and Steven Cramton

Can we include AI/IA in this new blended ontology?

Cultivating a blended ontology with human/machine

homo sapiens + IA
man who knows

homo faber + IA
man who makes

homo ludens + IA
man who plays

Imagination

With IA, the imagination (as the binding agent) has new properties

Cultivating a blended ontology with human/machine

homo sapiens + IA
man who knows

Ex. Cell phone to google
Watson on-call
Wikipedia

(sure changes how I think about learning and having conversations)

With IA, the imagination (as the binding agent) has new properties
Cultivating a blended ontology with human/machine

**homo faber + IA**

man who makes

with intelligent assistants for guidance/coaching/debugging/critiquing/…
e.g. engaging in Synthetic bio

With IA, the imagination (as the binding agent) has new properties

**homo ludens + IA**

Ex. Free style chess

Go masters

With IA, the imagination (as the binding agent) has new properties

Cultivating a blended ontology with human/machine

**homo sapiens + IA**

man who knows

**homo faber + IA**

man who makes

**homo ludens + IA**

man who plays

Focusing on the individual *qua* individual

**imagination**

Networks of Imagination

Networked Imagination emergent from collective action

IETF, built the RFC internet

Networks of Practice

Communities of Interest

Closing thoughts

Indwelling across a distributed community of practice – creating a networked imagination
The unique power of the human imagination comes in part from its ability to integrate opposing qualities, like emotion and reason, curiosity and certainty.

“for adults, play is a space of permission to unlearn ‘rules’ in order to experiment with possibilities that re-imagine the world under different terms — concretely and socially — with different rules or with themselves in different roles. Imagining ourselves in different roles, playing with those roles, allows us to discover new capacities, new interests, imagine alternate pathways forward, and build new social relationships.”

Ann Pendleton-Jullian - Design Unbound - designing for emergence in a whitewater world

along with a word of caution

“The real difficulty in changing any enterprise lies not in developing new ideas, but in escaping from the old ones”

John Maynard Keynes:

One more knowledge sharing challenge as if our job wasn’t hard enough before the Big Shift

Thank You

John Hagel
JSB
Lang Davidson
A New Culture of Learning
Douglas Thomas
& JSB
Pragmatic Imagination
Ann Pendleton-Jullian
& JSB