

Getting fit for innovation

John Bessant

March 2019



Inattention blindness

- We can't pay attention to everything
- We simplify by making models of what we expect to be there
- It helps – but we risk missing something surprising and unexpected
- The same goes for organizations – the sideways challenge
- Need focus *and* peripheral vision



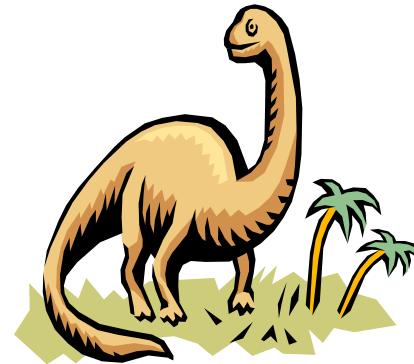
The innovation imperative ...

New response needed

Low
uncertainty



High
uncertainty



Old response appropriate

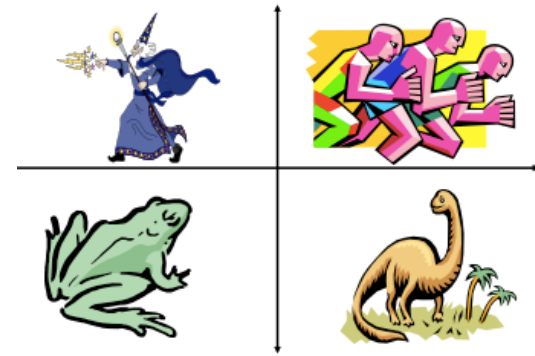
Learning isn't easy



“... Here is Edward Bear, coming downstairs now, bump, bump, bump, on the back of his head, behind Christopher Robin. It is, as far as he knows, the only way of coming downstairs, but sometimes he feels that there really is another way, if only he could stop bumping for a moment and think of it”

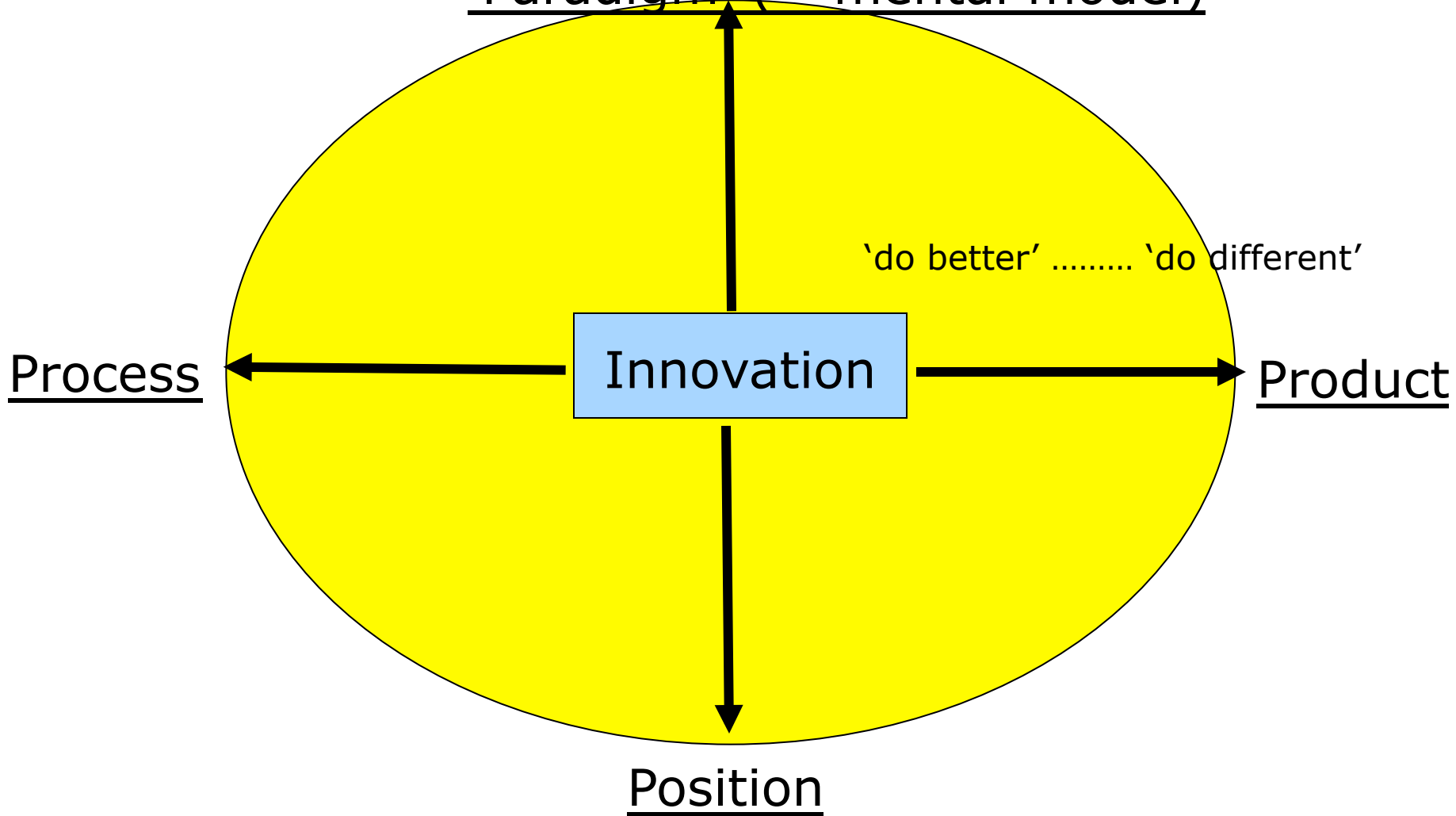
Deploying dynamic capability

- Time and space for reflection
- Challenging partners
- Multiple diverse perspectives
- Two challenges:
 - Are we fully exploring our innovation space?
 - Are we fit for innovation?



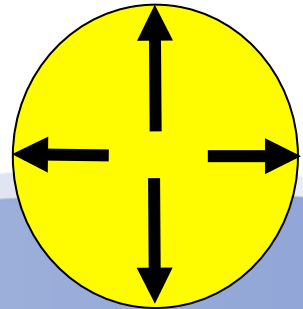
Exploring innovation space

'Paradigm' (= mental model)



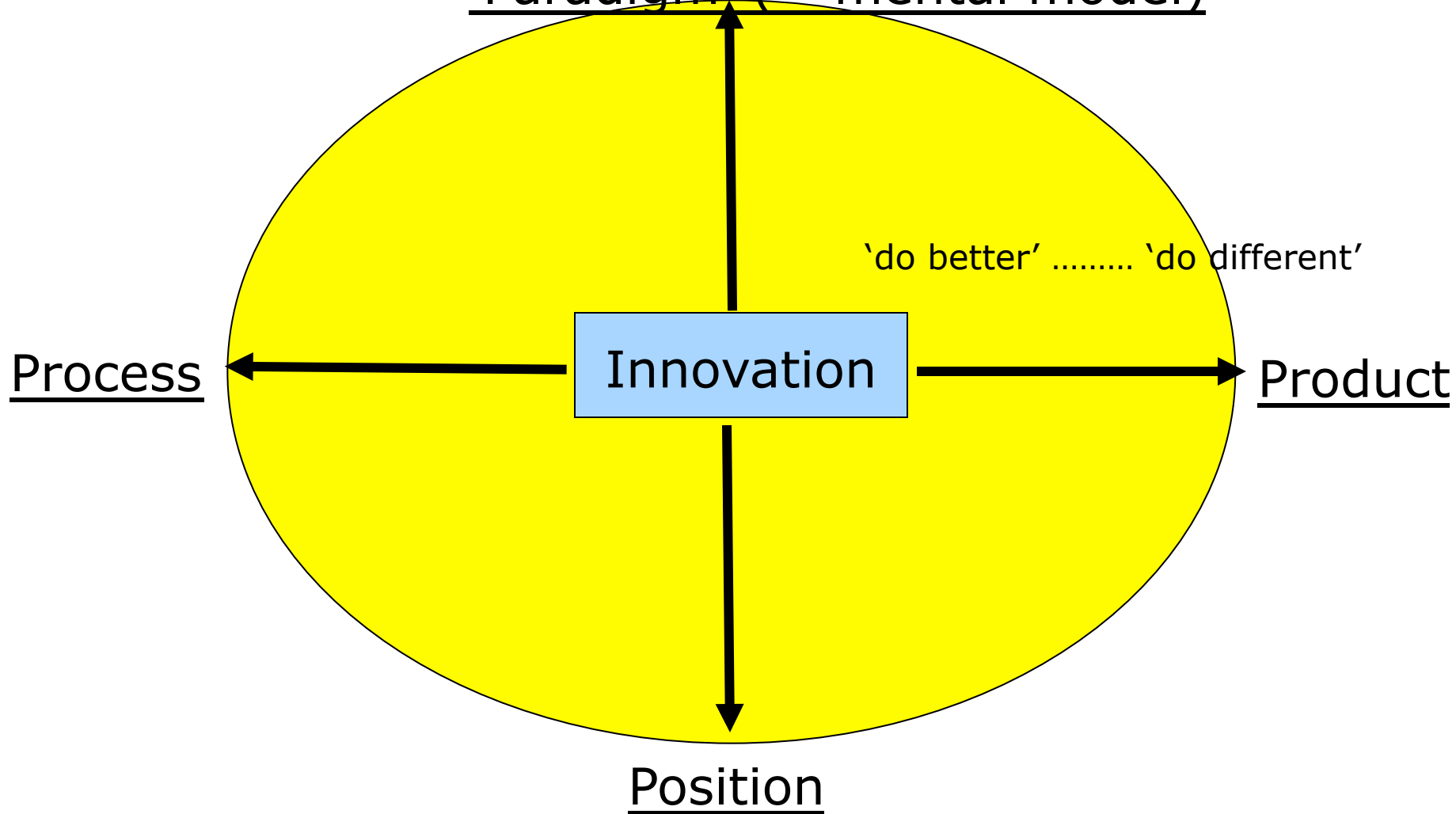
Thinking about innovation space ...

- Choose an organization to work on and the rest act as ‘catalysts’
- Where do they innovate?
- Where *could* they innovate?
- ‘Golden future’ – or gorillas?
- Short feedback- reflections?



Exploring innovation space

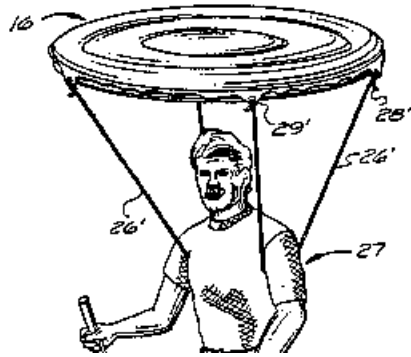
'Paradigm' (= mental model)



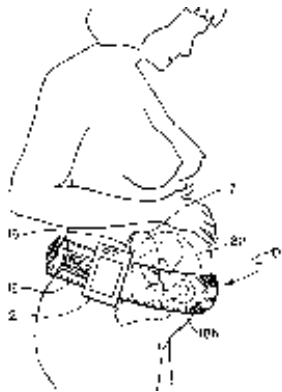
When did you last use your Spengler?



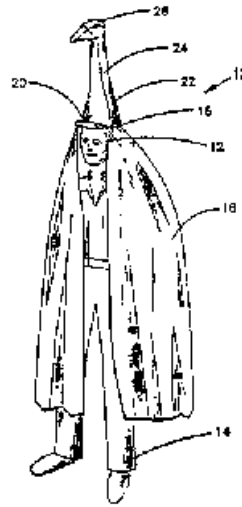
Invention is not enough



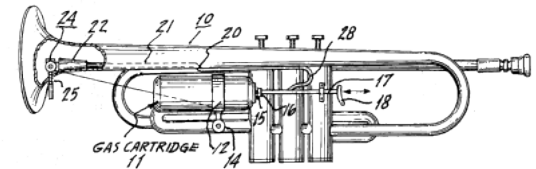
Gas-filled umbrella



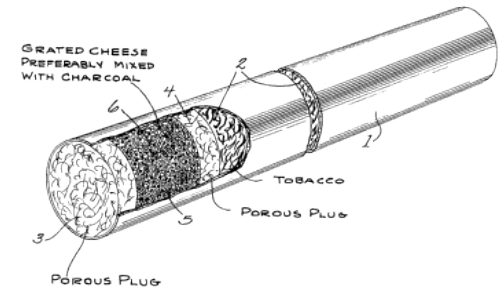
Foetus Walkman



Decoy ducks & stay dry!



Musical flamethrower



Cheese-flavoured cigarette

Understanding innovation

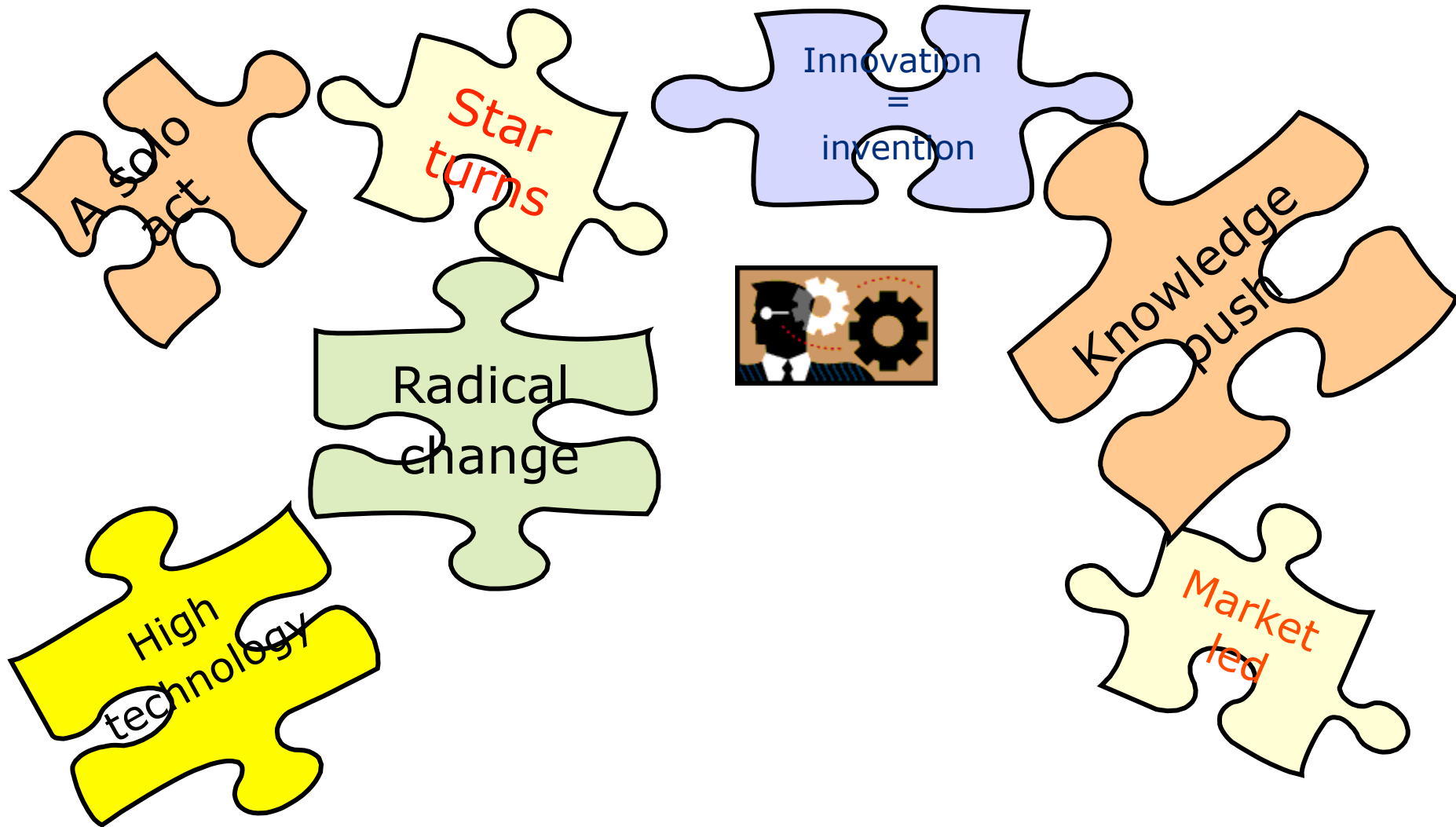


How we think about something....

... shapes the way we manage it



Partial models of innovation ...



Simplified model of the innovation process



Are we in shape for innovation?

- Do we have effective enabling mechanisms?
- Do we have an innovation strategy - and commitment to it?
- Do we have an innovative organisation?
- Do we have pro-active linkages?
- Do we learn and build capability?

Innovation audit exercise

- Complete the ‘Innovation Fitness Test’ by yourself
- Where are the top and lowest scoring questions?
- Be specific – think of real examples
- What do these scores mean – and what might you do about it?
- Discuss and share

Further resources

- www.johnbessant.org
- www.innovation-portal.info
- LinkedIn, Facebook - ISPIM Teaching and Coaching Innovation SIG

