Twitter Thread by Simon Wardley #EEA

Simon Wardley #EEA
@swardley

X : Our executive team is concerned that we need to up our game in order to out innovate Amazon.

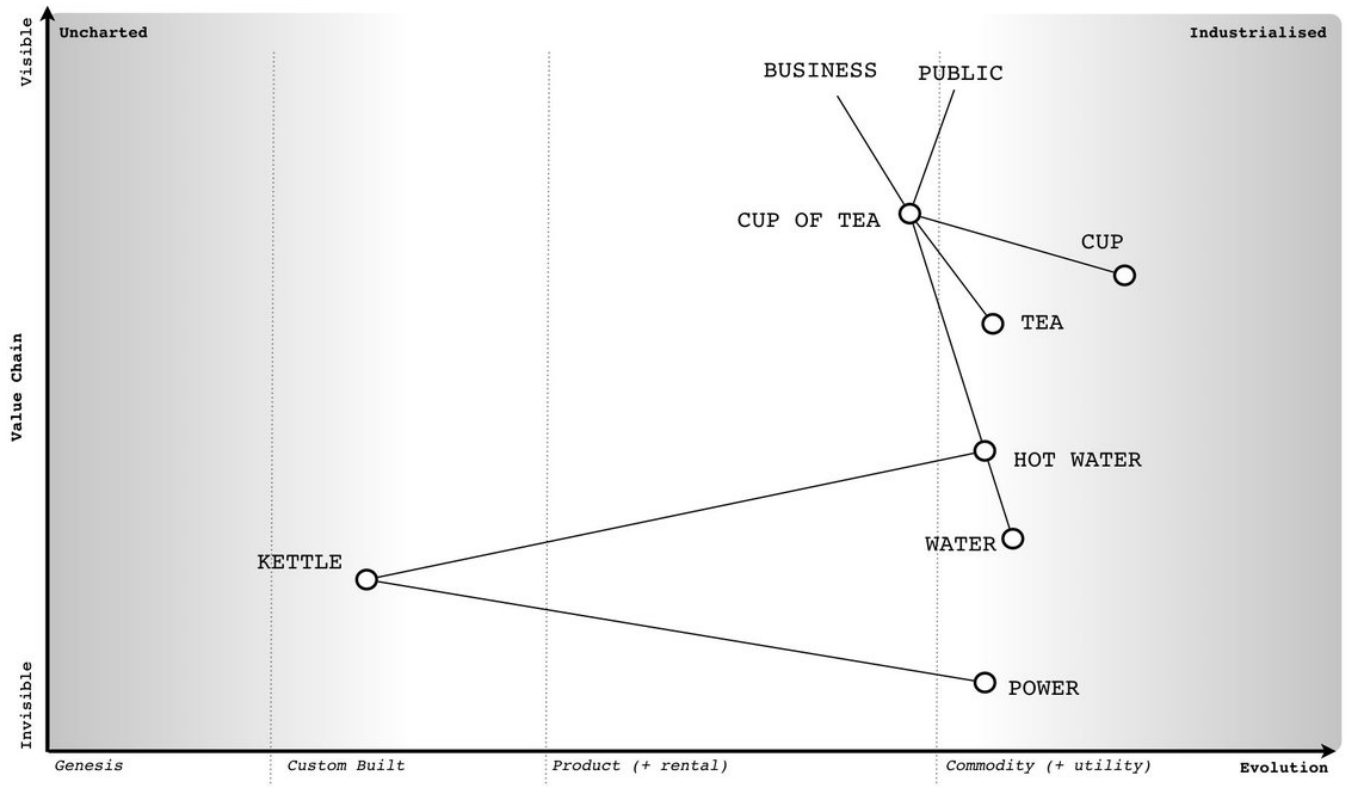
Me : Do you map?

X : Yes

Me : Like this?

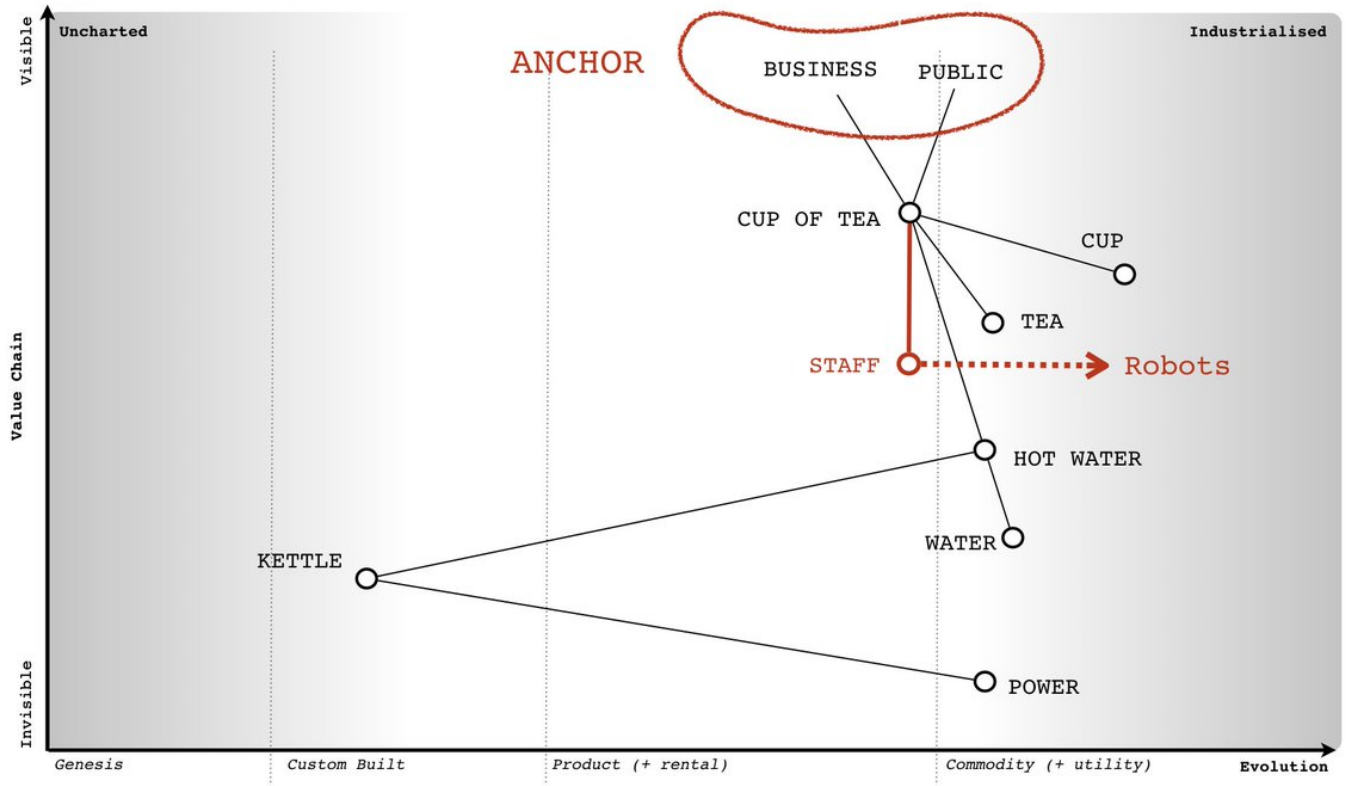
X : No. What's that?

Me : A map of a tea shop.



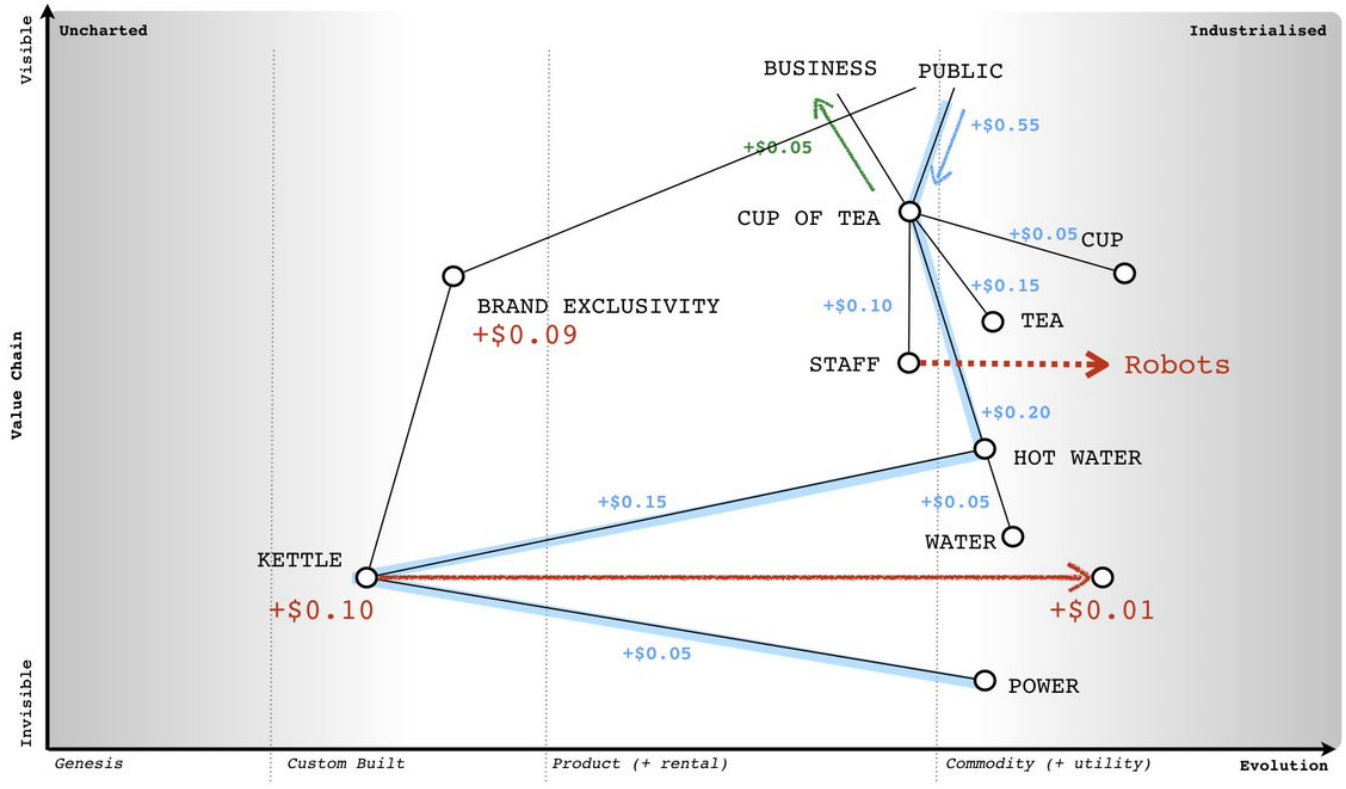
X : Why is that a map?

Me : Long story, all to do with how space has meaning. To keep it short, maps help people to focus on user needs, the components involved, to communicate missing components and scenario play ideas like staff becoming robots.

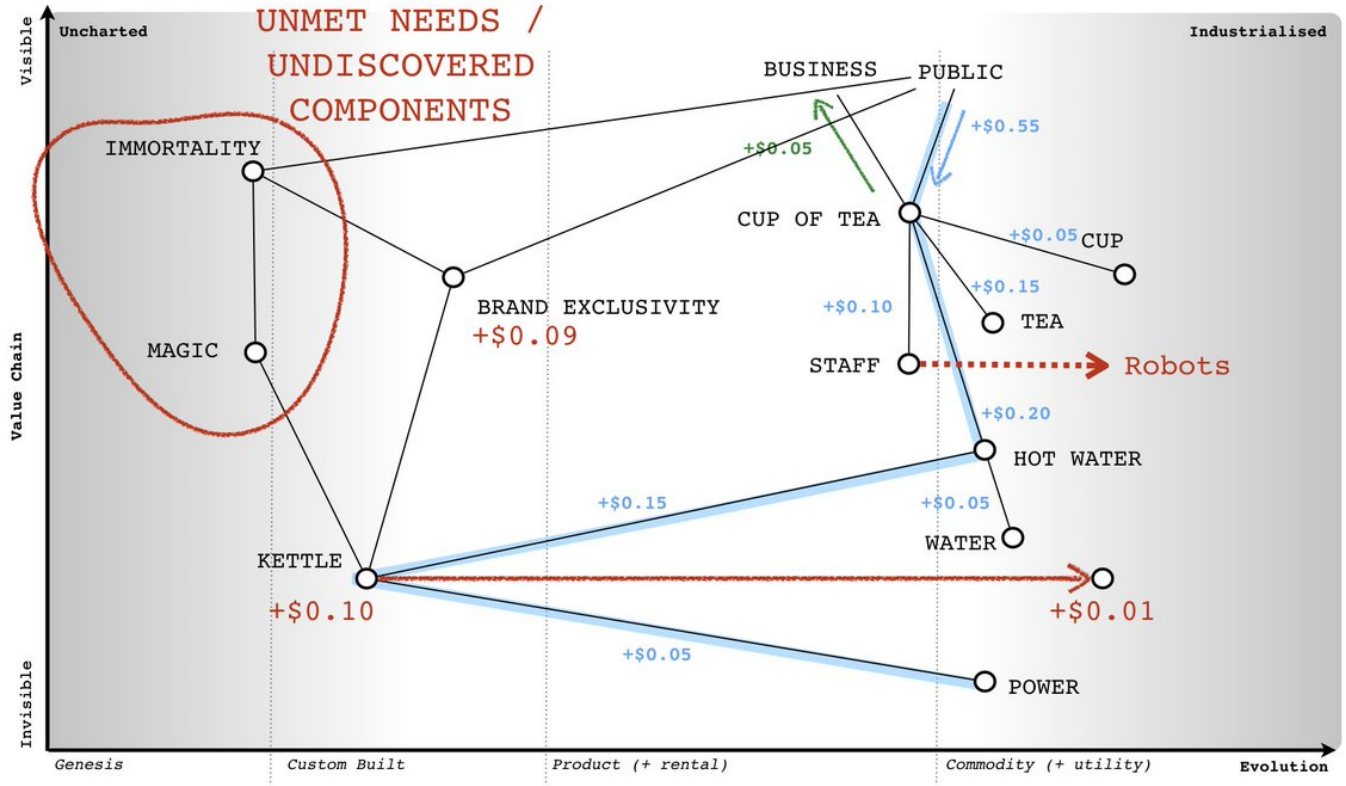


Me : They're also good for measuring and managing capital flow, making investment decisions, removing bias and getting rid of duplication.

X : I don't see how that helps with innovation?



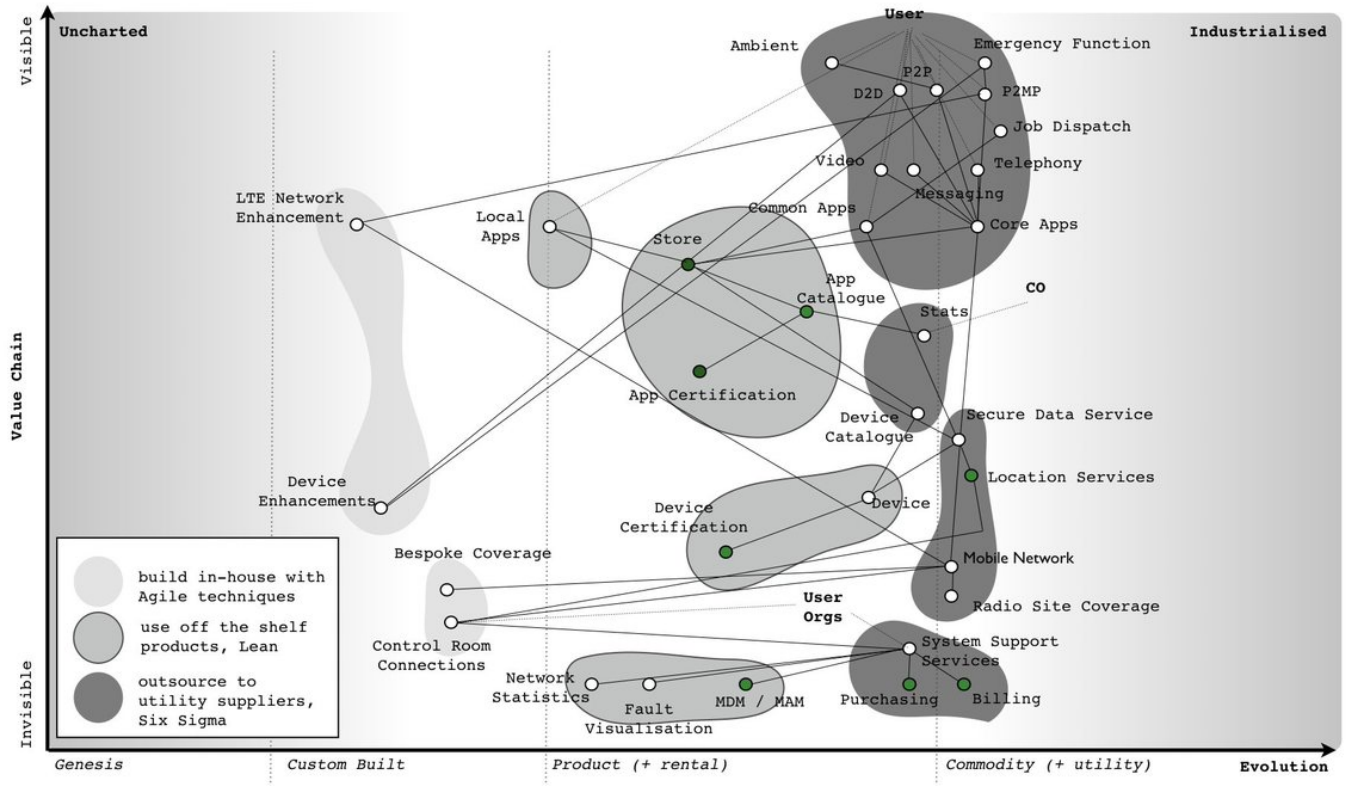
Me : Well, innovation is a tricky word because we use it to describe many things. If you're talking about differentiation with the adjacent unexplored then you're experimenting in the "uncharted" space e.g. immortality with magic provided by the special custom built kettle.



X : That sounds like nonsense.
Me : A lot of what people think will be the next great innovation is nonsense. Actually, most of it is. That's the nature of the uncharted space, it's experimental, high risk and generally results in failure.
X : We need more reliable innovation.

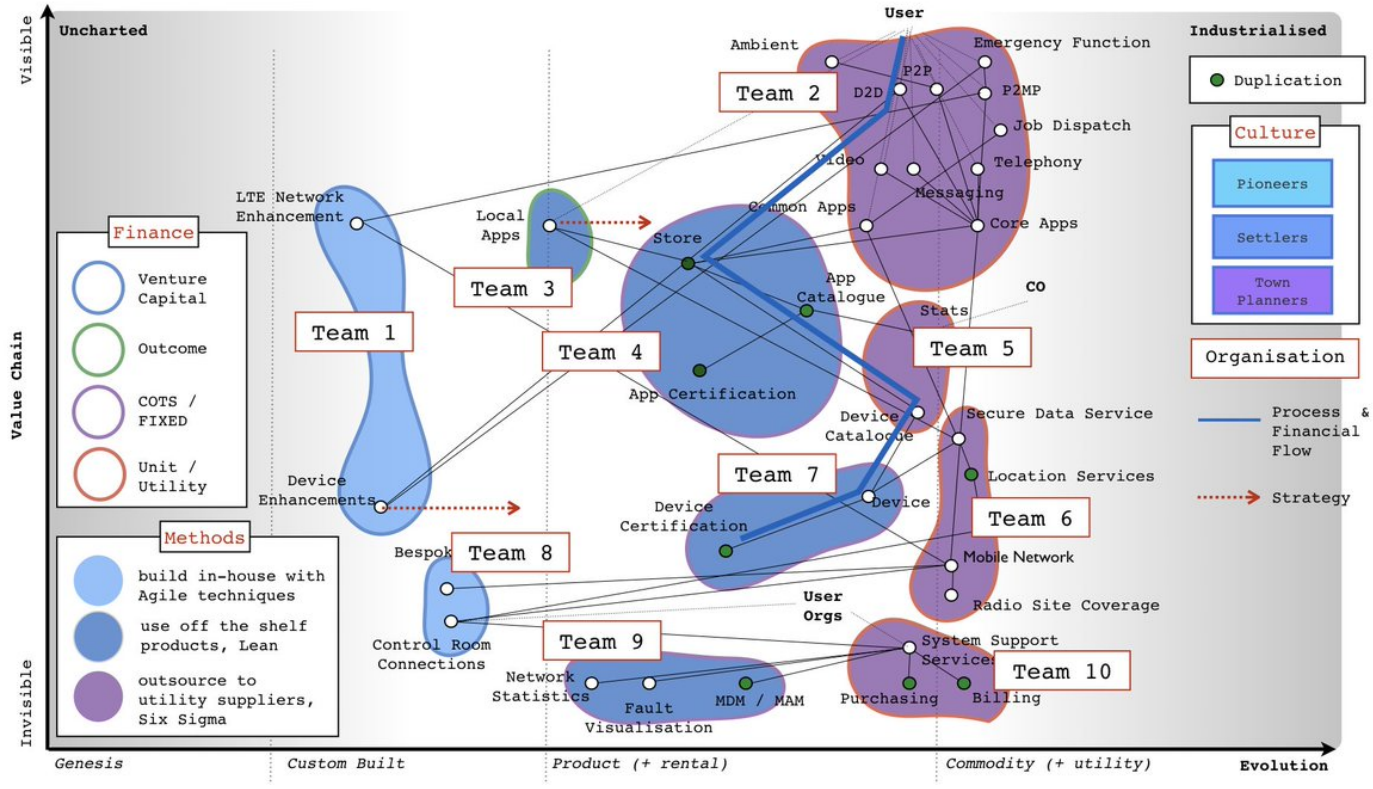
Me : Ah, so you're talking more product innovation or shifting product to utilities (business model innovation). They're all different things and different methods are required.
X : We need a consistent method.
Me : You can't have one ...

… even taking something simple such as project management, there is no magic one size fits all method. You need to use multiple across the landscape. Hence any large system will require multiple methods at the same time which is why we break things into components.



X : That seems complex.

Me : It can be both complex and complicated. At some points also simple, but we're wandering. This is just the start, wait until you get into team organisation, culture, purchasing methods etc.



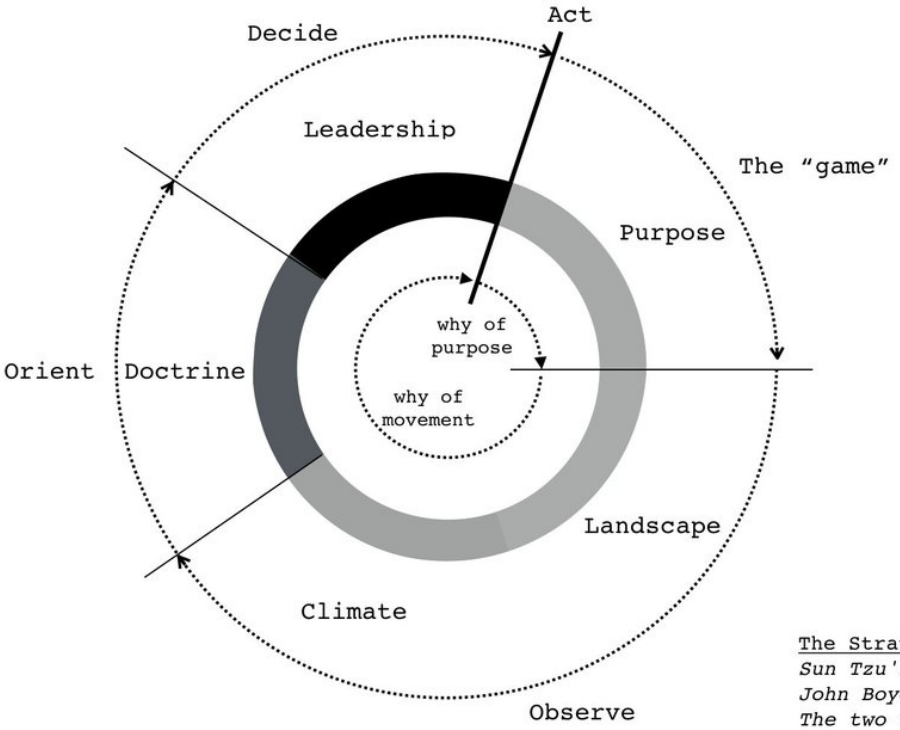
X : I don't have time for this, I need something now.

Me : Ok, well we can start with doctrine.

X : What's that?

Me : Do you know the strategy cycle?
X : No
Me : Ok, let us start there ….

… the strategy cycle is simply a representation of change and how we need to react to it. It starts with your purpose, understanding the landscape, climatic patterns useful for anticipation, universal principles (or doctrine) useful for organisation, gameplay and action.



The Strategy Cycle
Sun Tzu's five factors
John Boyd's OODA loop
The two types of why

Doctrine contains the universally useful patterns, so you can just do those without having to map. Except of course, the implementation is context specific and maps are essential to fixing some of it. But we can start here.

Category	**Wardley's Doctrine** (universally useful patterns that a user can apply regardless of context)			
Communication	Be transparent *(a bias towards open)*	Focus on high situational awareness *(understand what is being considered)*	Use a common language *(necessary for collaboration)*	Challenge assumptions *(speak up and question)*
Development	Know your users *(e.g. customers, shareholders, regulators, staff)*	Focus on user needs	Think fast, inexpensive, restrained and elegant (FIRE, formerly FIST)	Remove bias and duplication
	Use appropriate methods *(e.g. agile vs lean vs six sigma)*	Focus on the outcome not a contract *(e.g. worth based development)*	Be pragmatic *(it doesn't matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice)*	Use standards where appropriate
	Use appropriate tools *(e.g. mapping, financial models)*			
Operation	Manage inertia *(e.g. existing practice, political capital, previous investment)*	Optimise flow *(remove bottlenecks)*	Think small *(as in know the details)*	Effectiveness over efficiency
	Do better with less *(continual improvement)*	Set exceptional standards *(great is just not good enough)*	Manage failure	
Structure	Provide purpose, mastery & autonomy	Think small *(as in teams, "two pizza")*	Distribute power and decision making	Think aptitude and attitude
	Design for constant evolution	There is no one culture *(e.g. pioneers, settlers and town planners)*	Seek the best	
Learning	Use a systematic mechanism of learning *(a bias towards data)*	A bias towards action *(learn by playing the game)*	A bias towards the new *(be curious, take appropriate risks)*	Listen to your ecosystems *(acts as future sensing engines)*
Leading	Be the owner *(take responsibility)*	Move fast *(an imperfect plan executed today is better than a perfect plan executed tomorrow)*	Think big *(inspire others, provide direction)*	Strategy is iterative not linear *(fast reactive cycles)*
	Strategy is complex *(there will be uncertainty)*	Commit to the direction, be adaptive along the path *(crossing the river by feeling the stones)*	There is no core *(everything is transient)*	Be humble *(listen, be selfless, have fortitude)*
	Exploit the landscape			

Good
Neutral / unknown
Weak
Warning

X : How do I use it?

Me : Measure yourself against doctrine. Ask people. You'll soon discover whether you look more like the bank or the web company.

X : And why does this matter?

Me : Adaptability. The more green, the better.

INSURANCE GIANT	**Wardley's Doctrine** (universally useful patterns that a user can apply regardless of context)			
Communication	Be transparent *(a bias towards open)*	Focus on high situational awareness *(understand what is being considered)*	Use a common language *(necessary for collaboration)*	Challenge assumptions *(speak up and question)*
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	Exploit the landscape			

Good
Neutral / unknown
Weak
Warning

X : That says Insurance giant.

Me : My bad, this is a banking giant.

X : How do they survive?

Me : Most of their competitors look the same. Well, they used to anyway. Survive is more past tense for some.

BANKING GIANT	**Wardley's Doctrine** (universally useful patterns that a user can apply regardless of context)			
Communication	Be transparent *(a bias towards open)*	Focus on high situational awareness *(understand what is being considered)*	Use a common language *(necessary for collaboration)*	Challenge assumptions *(speak up and question)*
Development	Know your users *(e.g. customers, shareholders, regulators, staff)*	Focus on user needs	Think fast, inexpensive, restrained and elegant (FIRE, formerly FIST)	Remove bias and duplication
	Use appropriate methods *(e.g. agile vs lean vs six sigma)*	Focus on the outcome not a contract *(e.g. worth based development)*	Be pragmatic *(it doesn't matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice)*	Use standards where appropriate
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	Exploit the landscape			

X : So I can just fix doctrine?

Me : It's a start. You won't be anyway near anticipation or gameplay yet but you won't make daft errors.

X : How long does it take.

Me : You mean which order should I fix things in? I've given a best guess implementation in phases.

IMPLMENTATION	**Wardley's Doctrine** (universally useful patterns that a user can apply regardless of context)			
Phase I	Know your users *(e.g. customers, shareholders, regulators, staff)*	Use a systematic mechanism of learning *(a bias towards data)*	Focus on high situational awareness *(understand what is being considered)*	Use a common language *(necessary for collaboration)*
	Challenge assumptions *(speak up and question)*	Focus on user needs	Remove bias and duplication	Think small *(as in know the details)*
	Use appropriate methods *(e.g. agile vs lean vs six sigma)*			
Phase II	Be transparent *(a bias towards open)*	Move fast *(an imperfect plan executed today is better than a perfect plan executed tomorrow)*	Be pragmatic *(it doesn't matter if the cat is black or white as long as it catches mice)*	Think fast, inexpensive, restrained and elegant (FIRE, formerly FIST)
	Focus on the outcome not a contract *(e.g. worth based development)*	Use appropriate tools *(e.g. mapping, financial models)*	Manage inertia *(e.g. existing practice, political capital, previous investment)*	Effectiveness over efficiency
	Think aptitude and attitude	Think small *(as in teams)*	Use standards where appropriate	Manage failure
	Strategy is iterative not linear *(fast reactive cycles)*	A bias towards action *(learn by playing the game)*	Distribute power and decision making	
Phase III	Provide purpose, mastery & autonomy	Set exceptional standards *(great is just not good enough)*	Commit to the direction, be adaptive along the path *(crossing the river by feeling the stones)*	A bias towards the new *(be curious, take appropriate risks)*
	Do better with less *(continual improvement)*	Optimise flow *(remove bottlenecks)*	Think big *(inspire others, provide direction)*	Be humble *(listen, be selfless, have fortitude)*
	Be the owner *(take responsibility)*	Strategy is complex *(there will be uncertainty)*	Seek the best	
Phase IV	Exploit the landscape	There is no core *(everything is transient)*	Listen to your ecosystems *(acts as future sensing engines)*	There is no one culture *(e.g. pioneers, settlers and town planners)*
	Design for constant evolution			

X : How long will that take?

Me : Depends upon your size and focus. Give yourself a good few years.

X : We need to move faster. How about gameplay.

Me : There's a lot to gameplay. Problem is, you know 'nuffin about strategy Jon Snow, so don't go there.

Category	**Wardley's Gameplay** (context specific patterns that user can apply)			
User Perception	Education	Bundling	Creating artificial needs	Confusion of choice
	Brand and marketing	Fear, uncertainty and doubt	Artificial competition	Lobbying / counterplay
Accelerators	Market enablement	Open approaches	Exploiting network effects	Co-operation
	Industrial policy			
De-accelerators	Exploiting constraint	IPR	Creating constraints	
Dealing with toxicity	Pig in a poke	Disposal of liability	Sweat and dump	Refactoring
Market	Differentiation	Pricing policy	Buyer / supplier power	Harvesting
	Standards game	Last man standing	Signal distortion	Trading
Defensive	Threat acquisition	Raising barriers to entry	Procrastination	Defensive regulation
	Limitation of competition	Managing inertia		
Attacking	Directed investment	Experimentation	Centre of gravity	Undermining barriers to entry
	Fool's mate	Press release process	Playing both sides	
Ecosystem	Alliances	Co-creation	Sensing Engines (ILC)	Tower and moat
	N factor markets	Co-opting and intercession	Embrace and extend	Channel conflicts & disintermediation
Competitor	Ambush	Fragmentation play	Reinforcing competitor inertia	Sapping
	Misdirection	Restriction of movement	Talent raid	Circling and Probing
Positional	Land grab	First mover / Fast Follower	Aggregation	Weak signal / horizon
Poison	Licensing play	Insertion	Designed to fail	

X : I've done strategy for 30 years!

Me : Yes and you're only just now learning about maps and principles.

X : Are you going to help or not?
Me : Well, you seem unwilling to learn but there is one thing …

X : Yes?
Me : Fire staff, cut costs, buy equivalent companies to replace revenue and repeat the squeeze. Hand out dividends and kick off a share buyback scheme.
X : How is that going to help us become more successful?
Me : It'll buy you time and keep the stock price up.

X : We should use that time to create something new?
Me : Hell no. If your company is going to have any future then you should use that time for yourself and your exec team to retire.

X : Why would that help?
Me : Look, you run the company with no maps which means you probably don't understand user needs, components involved, duplication and you'll be riddled with misalignment, lack of communication & learning and magic solutions - Let's AI, Spotify, Agile ...

... without an effective means of learning and communication (i.e. maps) then you'll never get a handle on anticipation or strategy. You'll have next to zero situational awareness bar any mental models. It'll all be run with gut feel, magic thinking and outcome bias.

... without an effective means for communication of assumptions (i.e. maps) then you won't have a means of challenge. Any structure you create is also gut feel, you're not even organising around your landscape. Basically, everything will be a mess.

X : So how do we survive?
Me : Because almost everyone else is a mess as well. A few aren't and I'm afraid your competitors of the future won't be as trivial and simple to fight against as the the competitors of the past. Either adapt or get out of the way. Your choice.

X : Are you always this grumpy?
Me : This is my friendly mood. I've always saved the really grumpy face for those who work for me and don't think about context. Situational awareness is not a nice to have in my book.

X : But this is more management than leadership.
Me : If you don't understand the landscape, if you can't anticipate or communicate or learn or challenge effectively, if you can't organise or work out where to attack or what type of people you need then leadership is irrelevant.