

Why a Complex World Needs Expert Generalists



Constantin Gonzalez

Expert Generalist
Disruption Selling GmbH
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2012 - 2025



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Solutions Architect
Amazon Web Services



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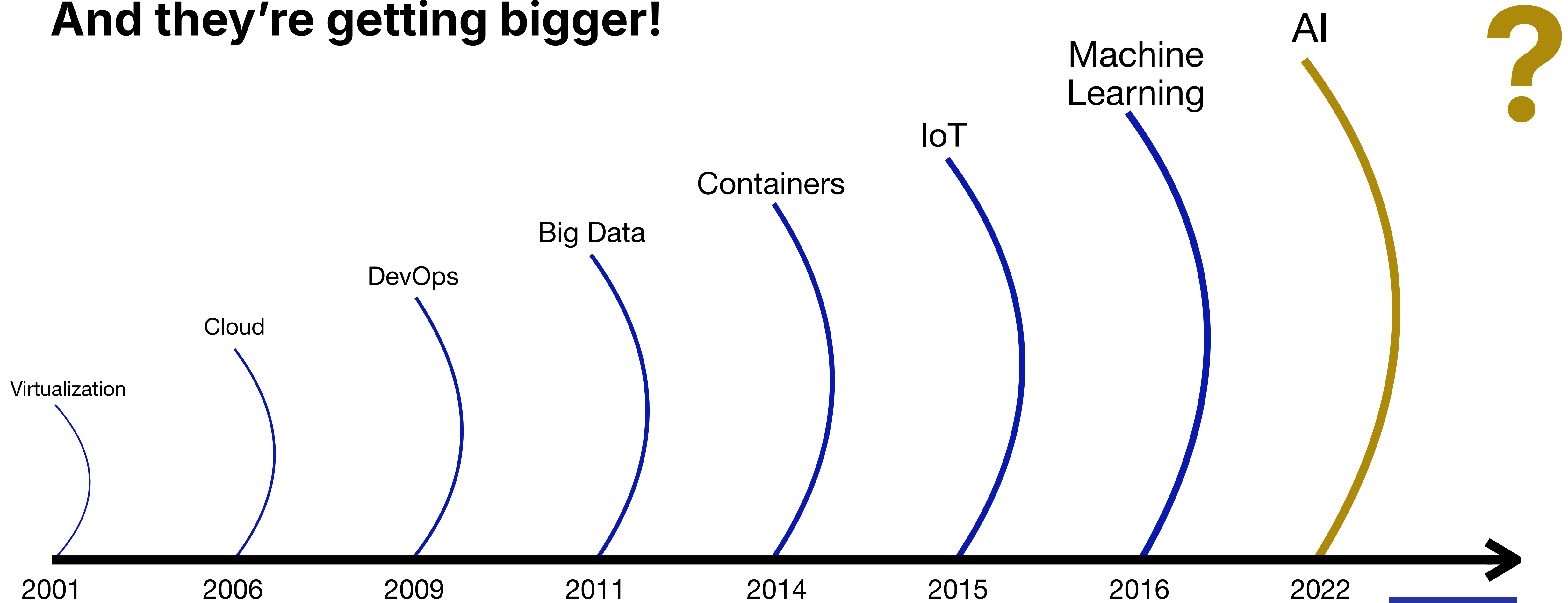


Disruption Selling

Technology waves

The waves keep coming

And they're getting bigger!



"The agents... do several days' work in 15 minutes."

Adrian Cockcroft, QCon San Francisco, November 2025



Disruption Selling

**What if generating code
accelerates 10x - 100x?**

When technology is slow, bottlenecks don't matter

Business

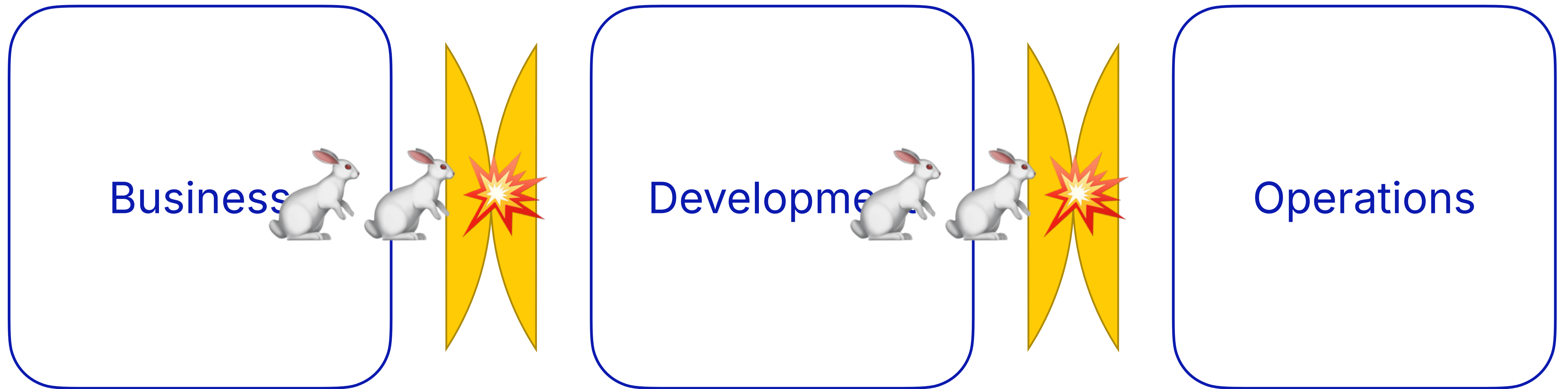


Development



Operations

But when technology accelerates...



Who can help?

martinFowler.com

Refactoring Agile Architecture About Thoughtworks

Expert Generalists

As computer systems get more sophisticated we've seen a growing trend to value deep specialists. But we've found that our most effective colleagues have a skill in spanning many specialties. We are thus starting to explicitly recognize this as a first-class skill of "Expert Generalist". We can identify the key characteristics of people with this skill - and thus recruit and promote based on it. We have started to design workshops to train this skill, which is one we think becomes more valuable with arrival of LLMs and similar AI tools into our profession.

02 July 2025

Unmesh Joshi

I am a software enthusiast who still feels a spark of joy every time my tests turn green. By day I run the unofficial Office of Developer Happiness—crafting code, diagrams, and deep dives that put open-source projects under a patterns microscope. Those close-up views surface hidden design lessons, adding a little extra happiness to every developer's day.

Gitanjali Venkatraman

I am a technologist and have done over a decade of software delivery with a focus on product definition. Software impacts people — and people develop different equations to software and tech with varying degrees of alienation or attachment. With pictures and words, I now want to make the world of software more approachable by exploring its back story and giving it a place in our present.

Martin Fowler

When I began in software in the 1980s I was dismissed as an "object guy" by database folks and as a "data modeler" by object folks. I've since been dismissed as a "patterns guy", "agile guy", "architecture guy", "java guy", "ruby guy", and "anti-architect guy". I'm now a past-it gray-beard surviving on drinking the intellectual blood of my younger colleagues. It's tasty.

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- [Curiosity](#)
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- [Customer Focus](#)




martinfowler.com/articles/expert-generalist.html

martinFowler.com
 Refactoring Agile Architecture About Thoughtworks

Expert Generalists


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 The Characteristics of an Expert Generalist
 Curiosity
 Collaborativeness
 Customer Focus

 **Curiosity**

 **Collaborativeness**

 **Customer Focus**

 **Favor Fundamental Knowledge**

π Blend of Generalist & Specialist Skills

 **Sympathy for Related Domains**

 **Curiosity**

 **Collaboration**

 **Customer**

 **Fundamentals**

π Blend

 **Sympathy**



 **Curiosity**

 **Fundamentals**

 **Collaboration**

π Blend

 **Customer**

 **Sympathy**



Disruption Selling

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

Seeing the organization with different eyes

A company is a system...

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

Management

Business



Development



Operations

Processes



Disruption Selling

A company is a system...

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

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Business



Development



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Processes



Disruption Selling

...just like a server.

🔍 Curiosity

🏛️ Fundamentals

🤝 Collaboration

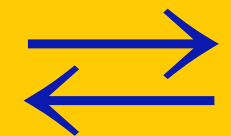
π Blend

🎯 Customer

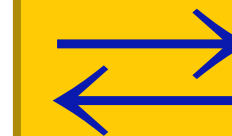
🚗 Sympathy

Software

I/O



CPU



Storage

Bus



Disruption Selling

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

What's the goal, really?

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

What's the goal, really?

 **Curiosity**

 **Fundamentals**

 **Collaboration**

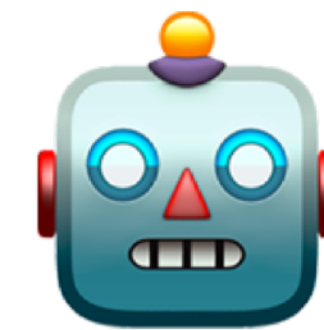
π Blend

 **Customer**

 **Sympathy**



Tools



Work



Disruption Selling

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

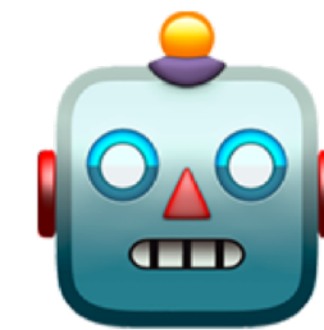
 Customer

 Sympathy

Wiring



Tools



Work



🔍 Curiosity

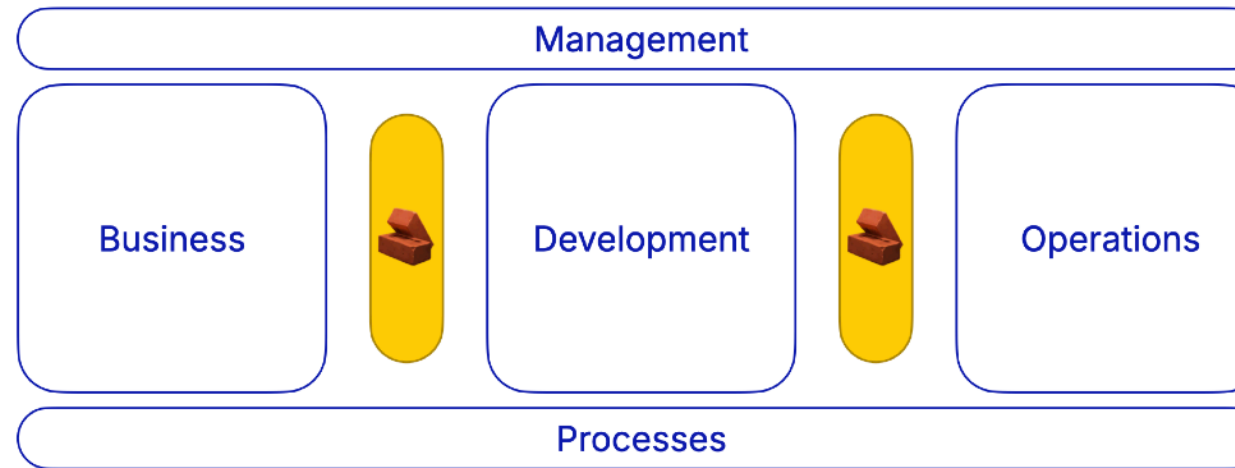
🏛️ Fundamentals

🤝 Collaboration

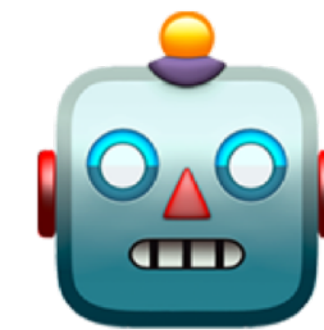
π Blend

🎯 Customer

🚗 Sympathy



Tools



Work



Disruption Selling

What does this mean for companies?

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

 Sympathy

Management

Business



Development



Operations

Processes



Disruption Selling

We solved this before...

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

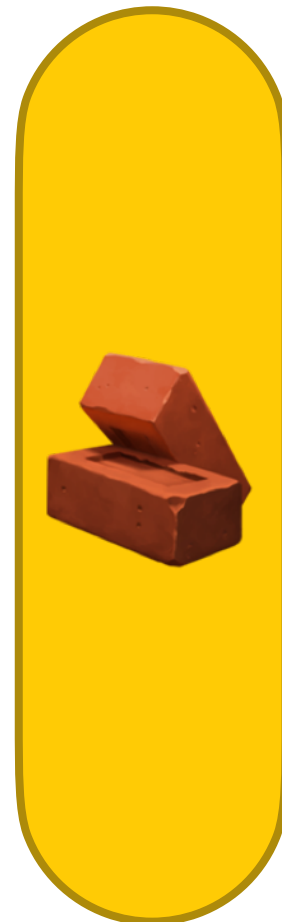
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Disruption Selling

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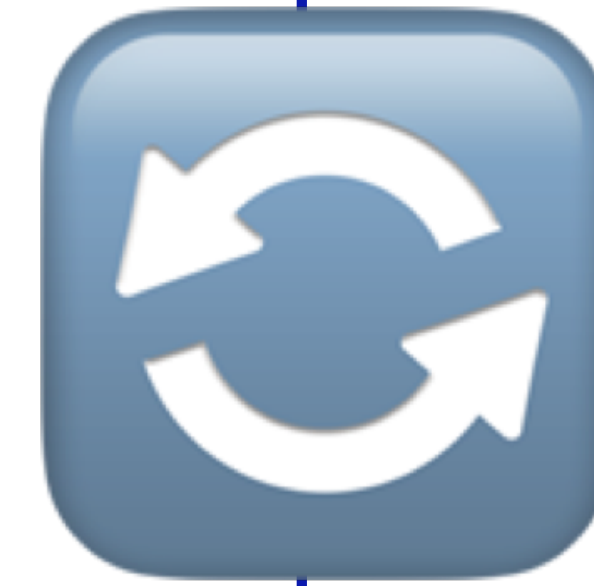
🚗 Sympathy

Management

Business



Development



Operations

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Disruption Selling

We can do it again!

 Curiosity

 Fundamentals

 Collaboration

π Blend

 Customer

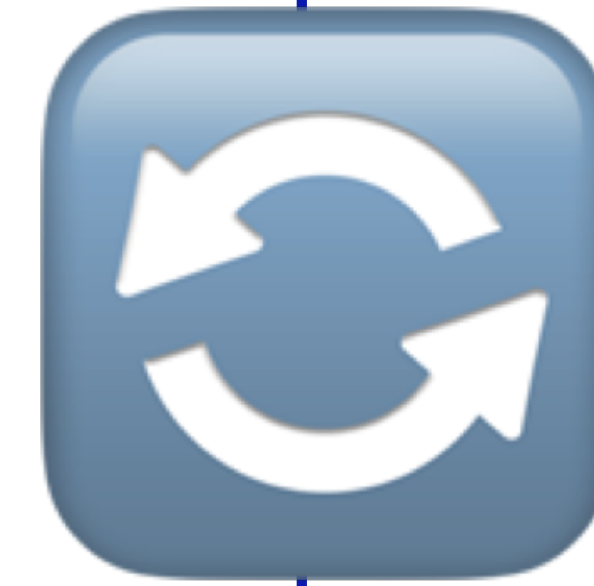
 Sympathy

Management

Business



Development



Operations

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Disruption Selling

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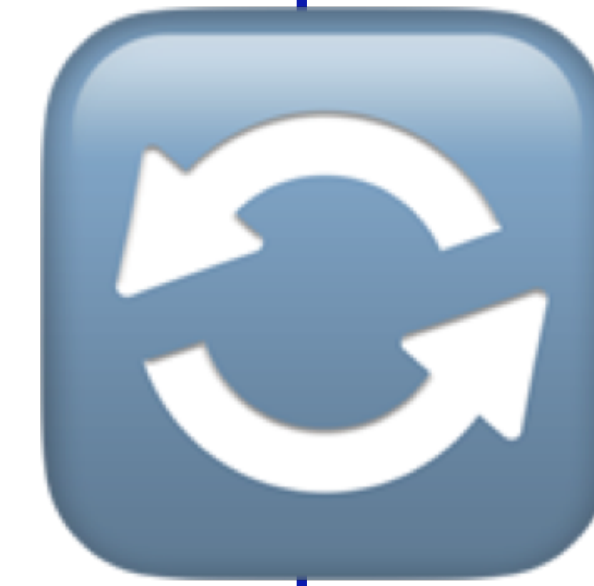
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Disruption Selling

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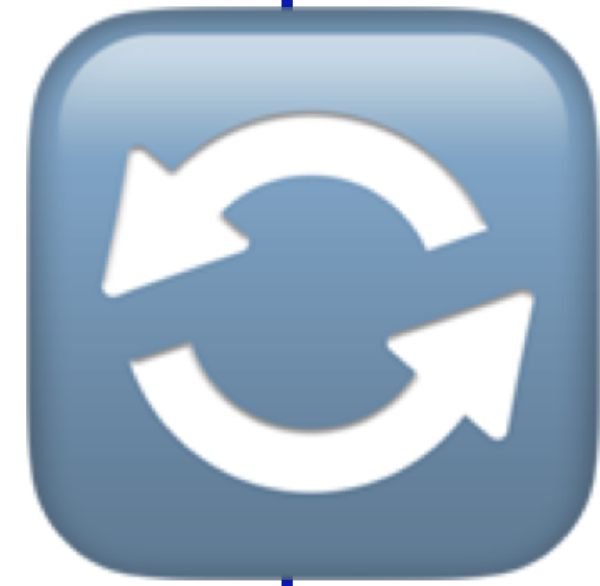
π Blend

 Customer

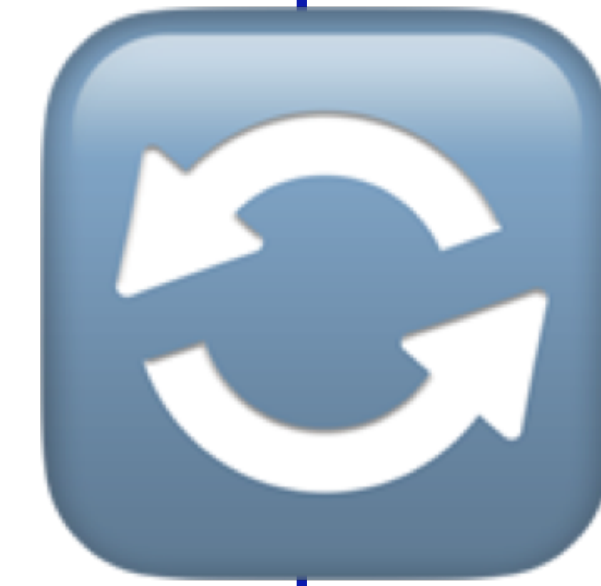
 Sympathy

Management

Business



Development



Operations

Processes



Disruption Selling

DOMAIN PROTOTYPING

METHOD PHASES PATTERNS ARGUMENT FAQ CONTACT

A METHOD TO NAVIGATE COMPLEXITY

GROW
ORG

What if y
and resc
day, eve

Most
we s
tear
and
gra
technology

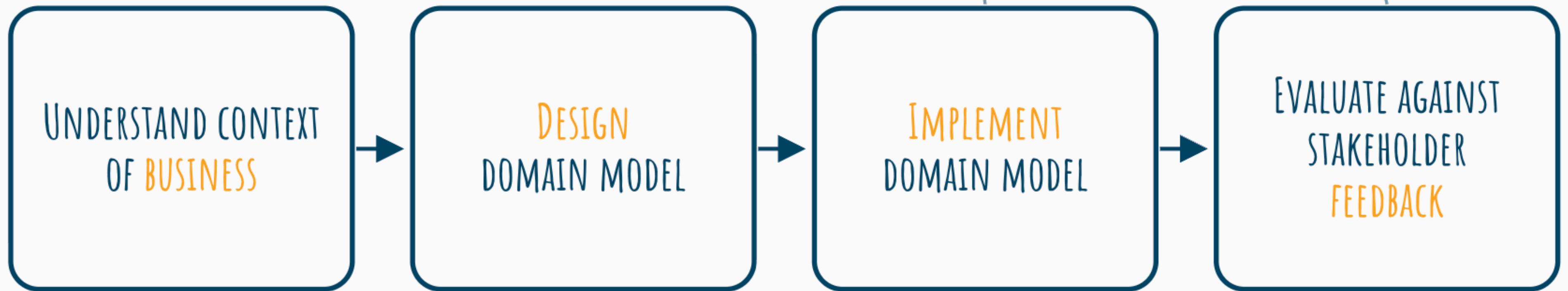
LEARN MORE → READ THE ARGUMENT LET'S HAVE A CHAT

```
graph LR; A[UNDERSTAND CONTEXT OF BUSINESS] --> B[DESIGN DOMAIN MODEL]; B --> C[IMPLEMENT DOMAIN MODEL]; C --> D[EVALUATE AGAINST STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK]; D -.-> A; D -.-> B;
```

domainprototyping.com

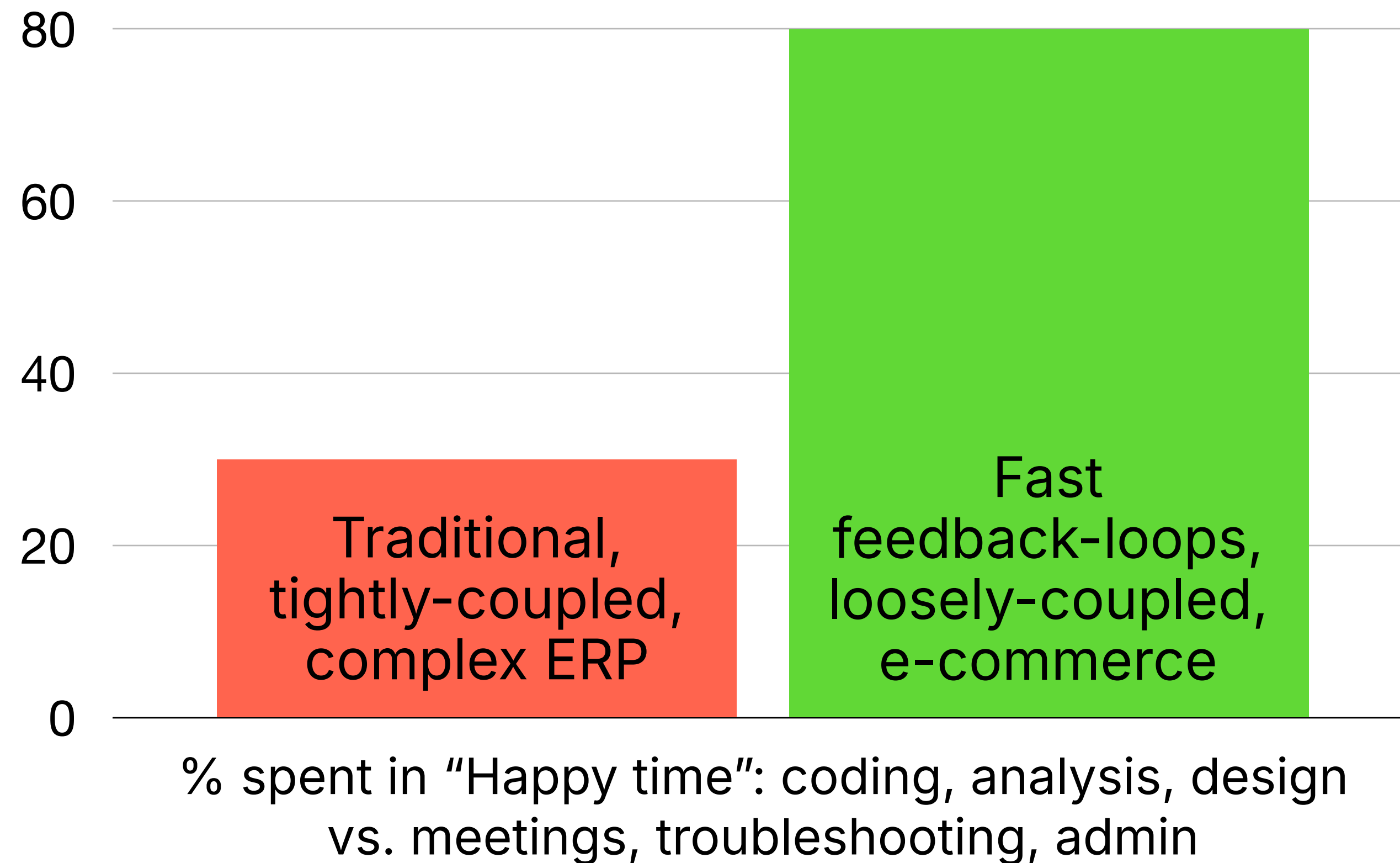


Disruption Selling



Adidas: 20-30% better productivity

And: 50% happier developers, too!



"If I offered copilot to those teams [working within highly coupled architectures], they'd swear at me. They'd say, 'Fernando, are you crazy? Please, instead of that, fix the environment, fix the test processes...'"

Fernando Cornago,
SVP of Digital Technology,
Adidas

700 developers. Same tools. Same skills. Different wiring.



Three next moves for you

Three next moves for you

🔍 Curiosity

🏛️ Fundamentals

🤝 Collaboration

π Blend

🎯 Customer

🚲 Sympathy

- Apply the six characteristics of an Expert Generalist
- See the whole as a system
- Focus on the outcome, not the factory



Disruption Selling

“The things that make us human will become much more important instead of much less important.”

Daniela Amodei, co-founder, Anthropic



Disruption Selling



YOUR NAME

Expert Generalist
YOUR COMPANY



Disruption Selling

Books and links

- *Expert Generalists*
Martin Fowler, et al., martinfowler.com/articles/expert-generalist.html
- *Directing a Swarm of Agents for Fun and Profit*,
Adrian Cockcroft, infoq.com/presentations/coding-agents
- *Thinking in Systems: A Primer*
Donella Meadows
- *The Phoenix Project: A Novel About IT, DevOps, and Helping Your Business Win*
Gene Kim et al.
- *Vibe Coding: Building Production-Grade Software With GenAI, Chat, Agents, and Beyond*
Gene Kim and Steve Yegge
- *Domain Prototyping*
Tobias Goeschel, domainprototyping.com



Blog post, links & slides

Thank you!



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