DESIGNING FOR EXECUTION

Techniques to support Strategy success
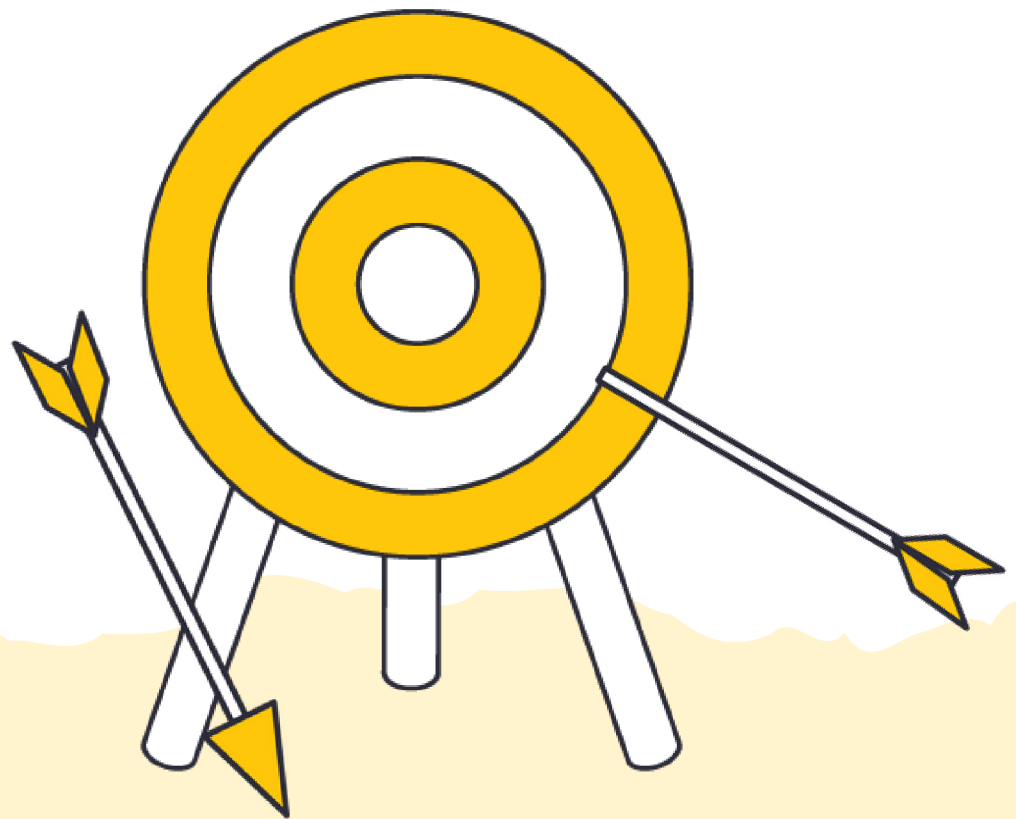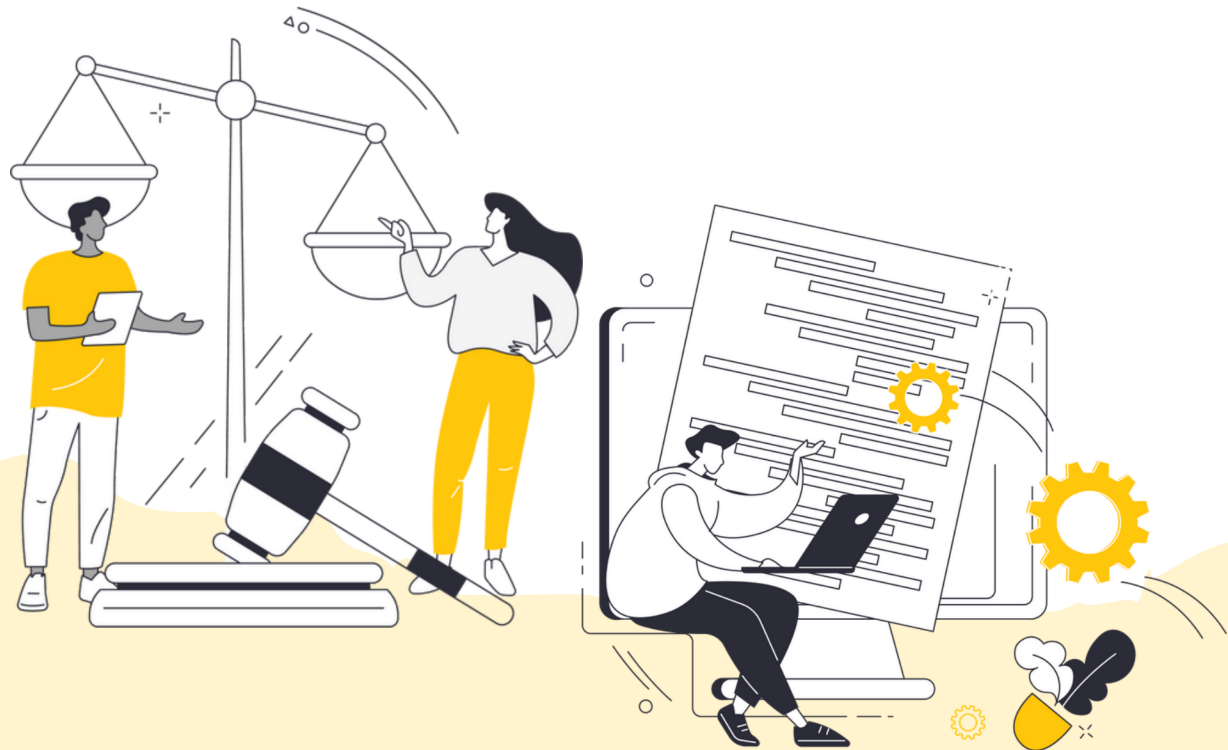

Katerina Karanikolopoulos
February 2023

EXECUTION FAILURE

is when the desired outcomes of a strategy are not achieved

EXECUTION FAILURE

is caused by a combination of **poor judgement** and **poor implementation**

JUDGEMENT FAILS

foremost when the wrong problem or solution is chosen with opaque rationale...

Wrong Problem

The organisation's core hurdle (or opening) is not been diagnosed

Wrong Solution

The solution doesn't solve the core of the problem

Opaque Assumptions

The rationale for a choice and its critical success factors is a black-box

Strategy Locked

Locking-in Strategy for a given period of time

Consequences Overlooked

Not considering 2nd & 3rd order consequences (inc. People & Planet)

Extrapolating the present

Assuming the future will be an incremental extrapolation of today

... or when agility, future thinking, and mapping the system consequences are absent

IMPLEMENTATION

suffers with unclear priorities, execution gaps and misalignment

Priorities Unclear

Capability Gaps

Monitoring Gaps

Resources Misaligned

Incentives Misaligned

SO HOW DO YOU ESTABLISH EXECUTION SUCCESS ?

Co-create strategy with diverse teams, stakeholders & the people who will execute

Improve richness of problem-solution ideation and validation and the surfacing of execution challenges

#TECHNIQUE 2

Gather your WITTS & test if conditions for strategy success are in place

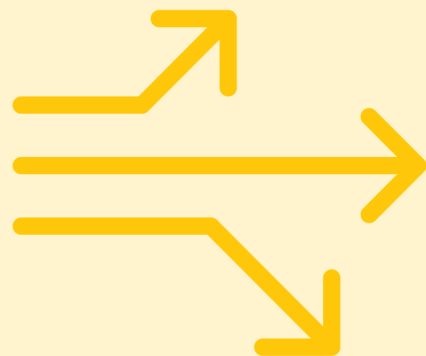Ask

What Would

I t

Take

To

Succeed?

Across internal and external environments

Watch your **WITTS** for strategy review triggers

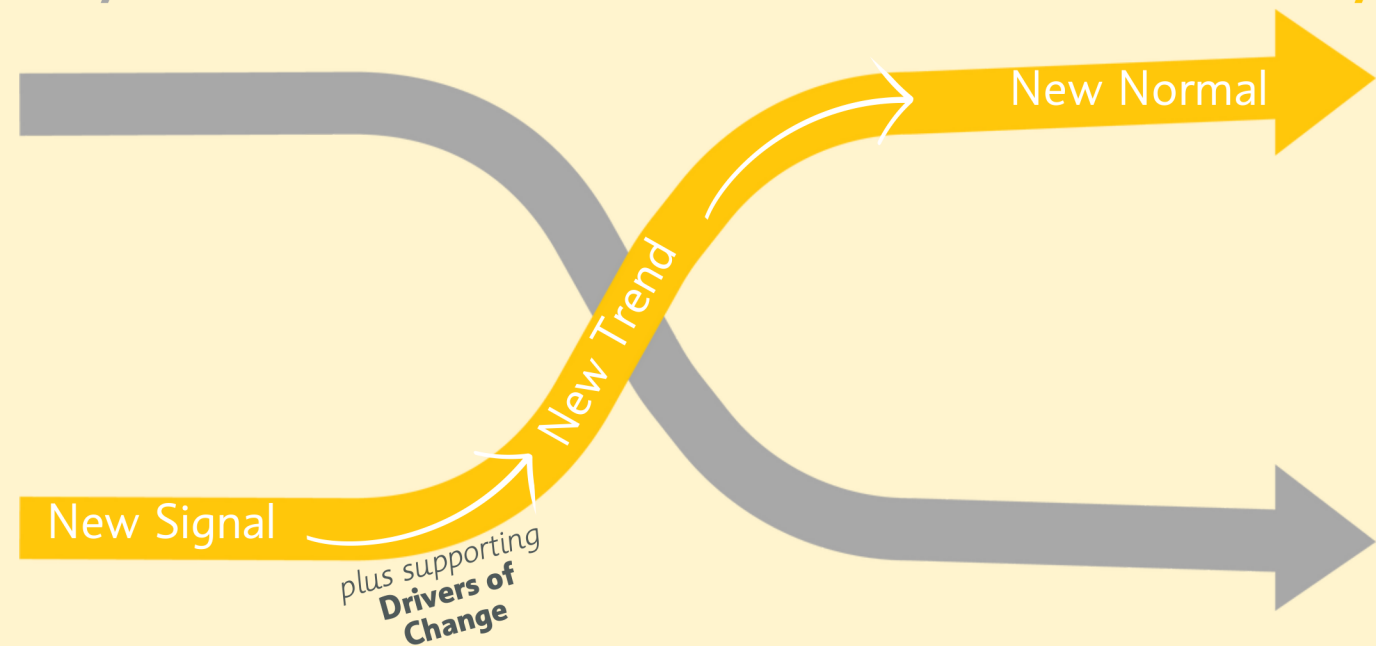**Monitor for changes to conditions required for success**

Review the strategy if changes are observed

#TECHNIQUE 4

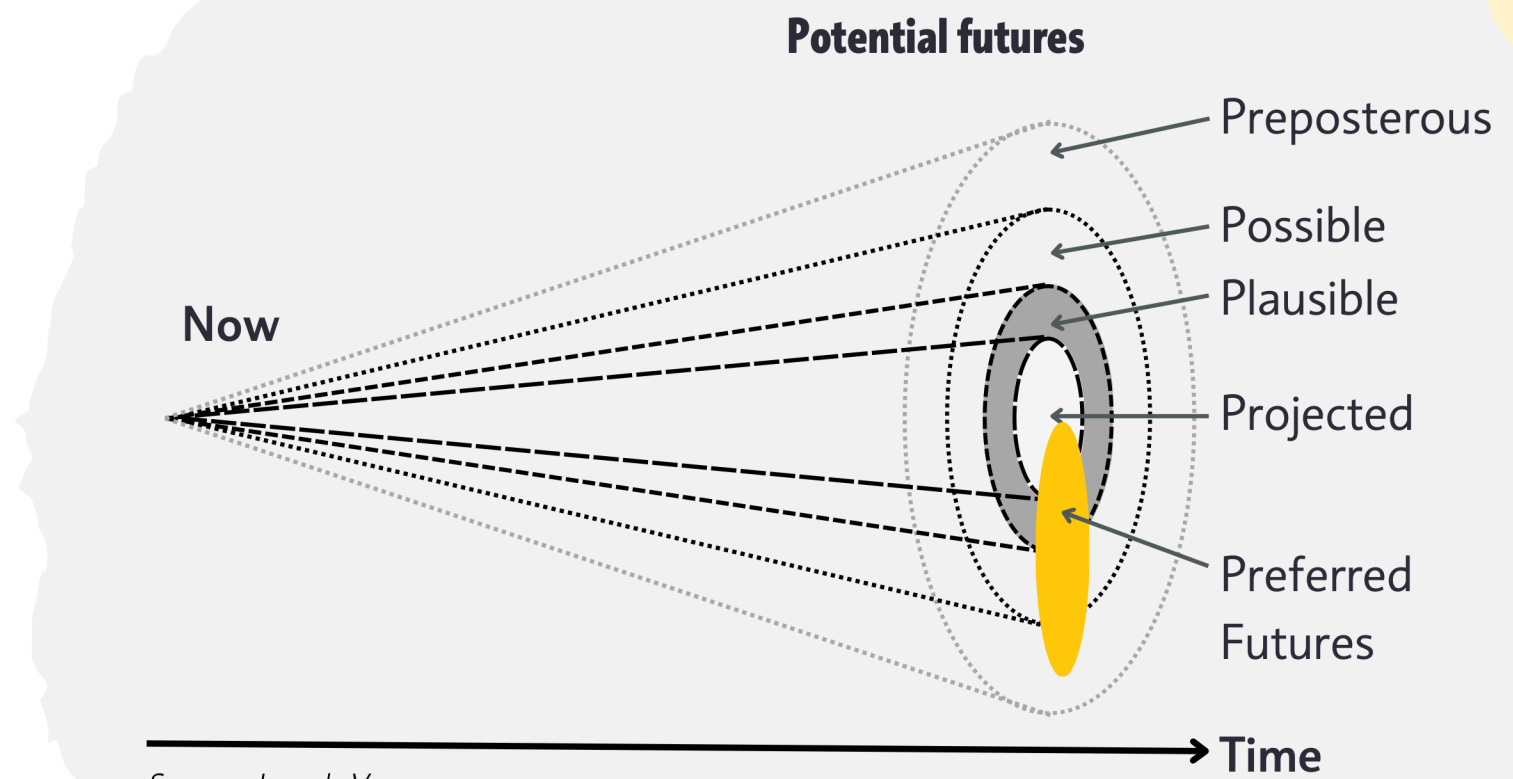# Scan weak signals from today's fringe for clues about tomorrow

TODAY'S Way

TOMORROW's Way

New Normal
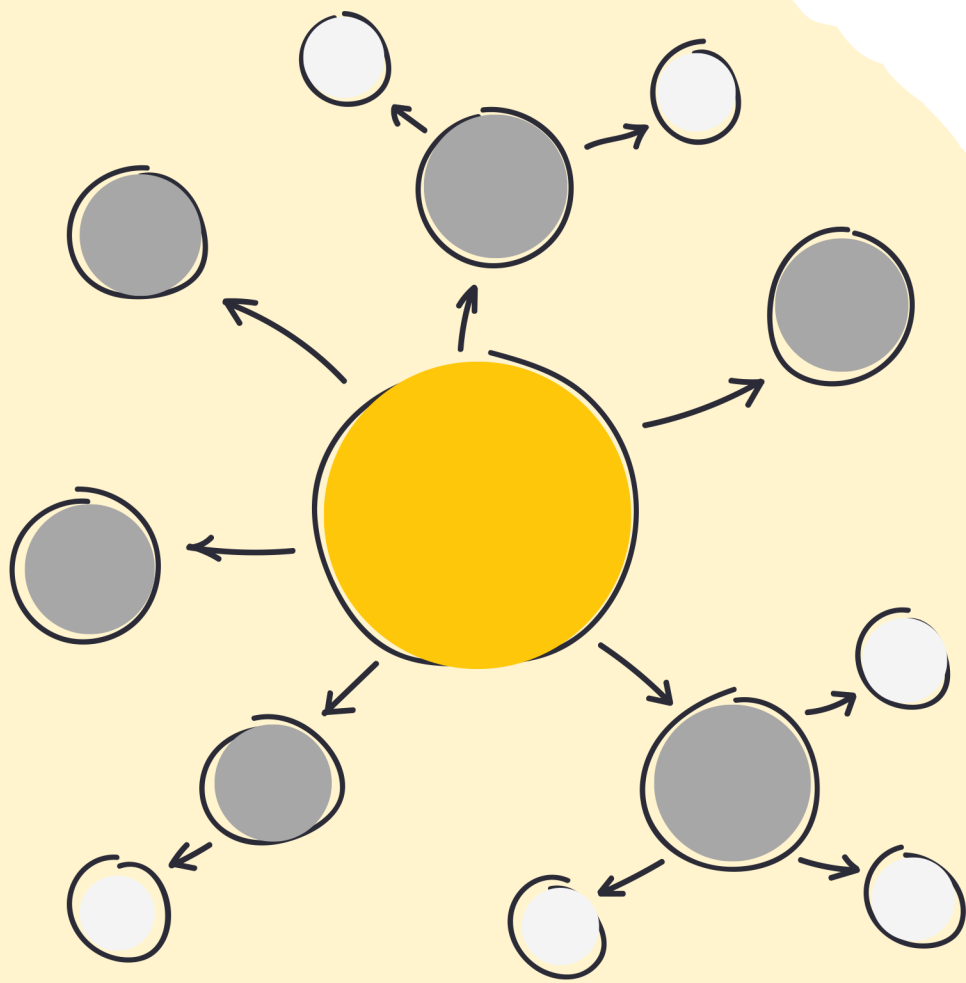
New Trend

New Signal

plus supporting **Drivers of Change**

Create future scenarios to challenge strategy, shape and invest for the future

Potential futures

Preposterous

Possible

Plausible

Now

Projected

Preferred Futures
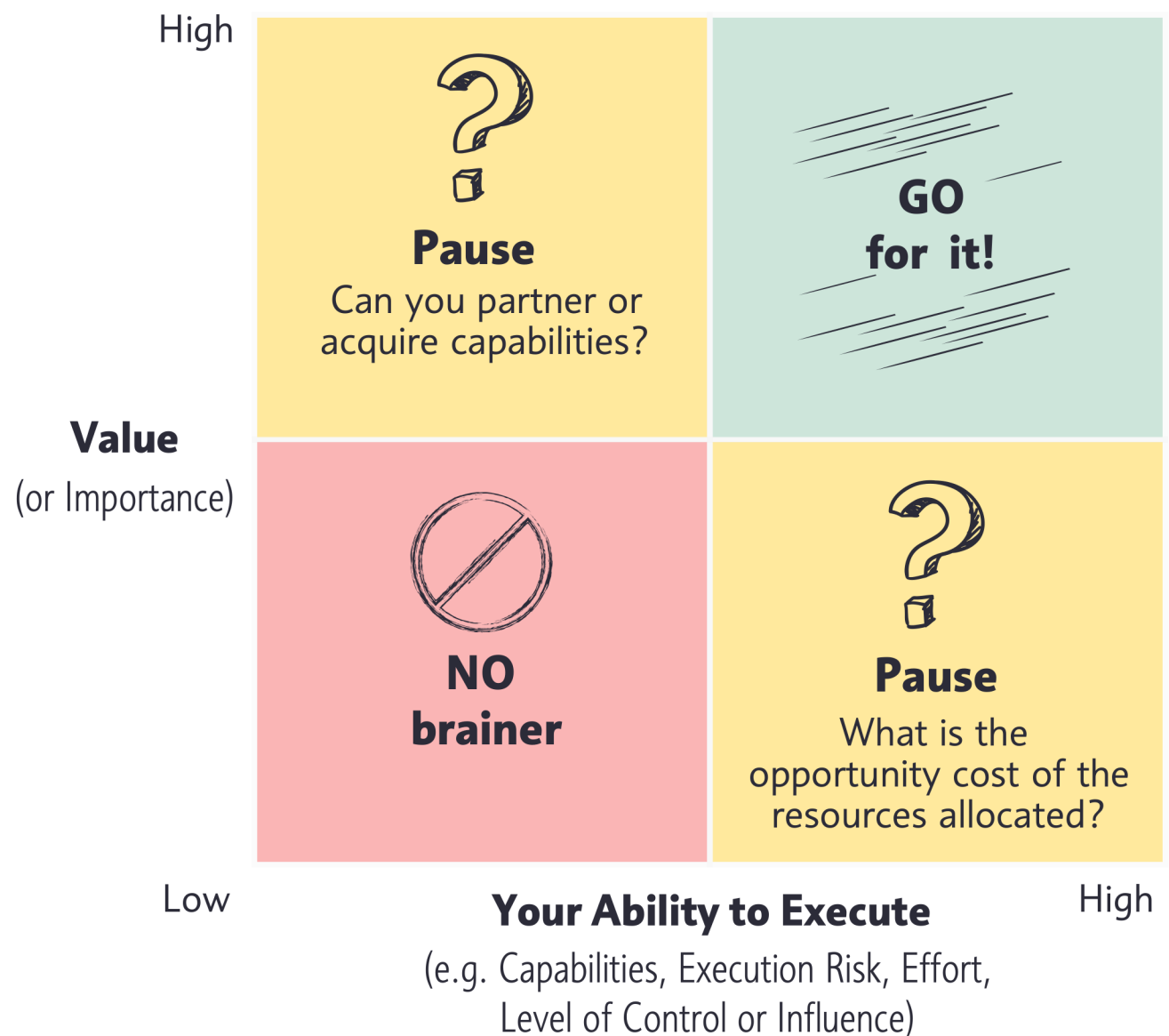
Time

Source: Joseph Voros

Map and manage the obvious and non-obvious **consequences** of options across **the system**

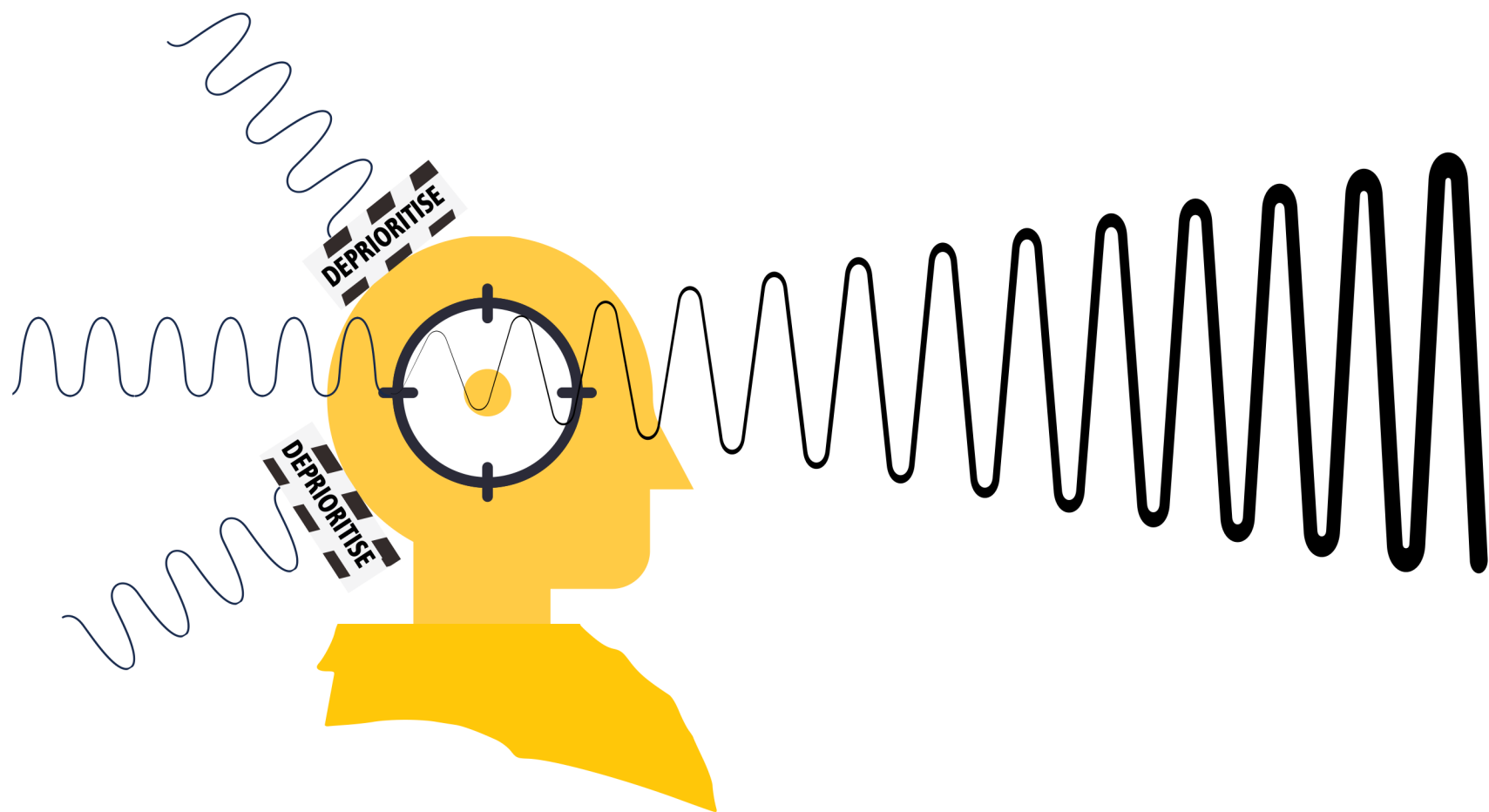**Avoid harm, avert non-obvious pitfalls, and seek positive system & organisation impacts**

Consider 'executability' to prioritise options during strategy design

High

Pause
Can you partner or
acquire capabilities?

GO
for it!

Value
(or Importance)

NO
brainer

Pause
What is the
opportunity cost of the
resources allocated?

Low

High

Your Ability to Execute
(e.g. Capabilities, Execution Risk, Effort,
Level of Control or Influence)

# Focus on a few critical activities that define success and amplify impact

#TECHNIQUE 9

Identify the capabilities the strategy needs & allocate sufficient resources

Ambition

Customers Targeted

Customer Proposition(s)

Capabilities

Configuration

...that deliver the chosen proposition for the selected target customers

Configure operations & align incentives to deliver the customer value
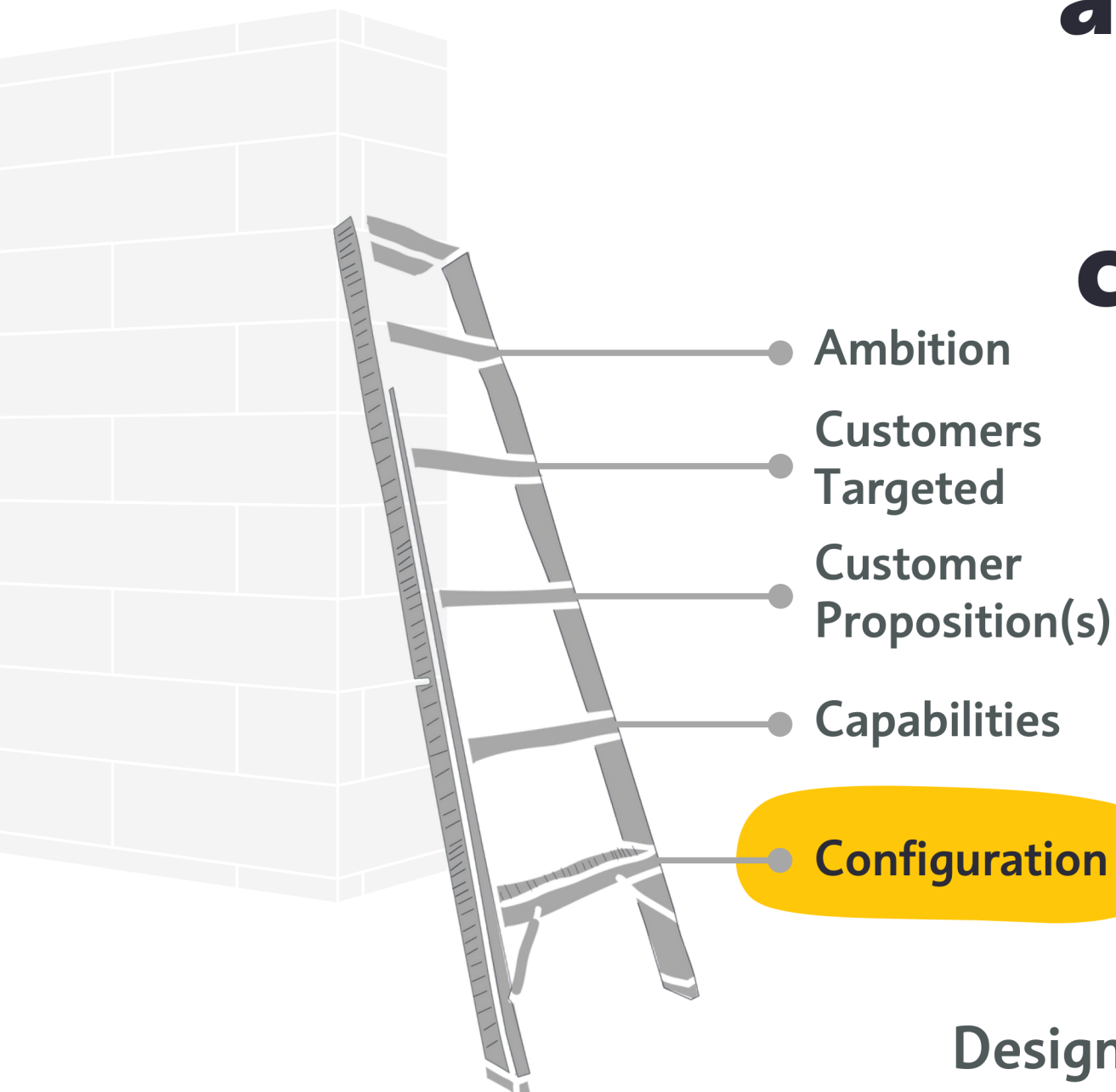
Ambition

Customers Targeted

Customer Proposition(s)

Capabilities

Configuration

Design a strategy aligned operating model, performance monitoring system and incentives

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**Written and designed by
Katerina Karanikolopoulos**
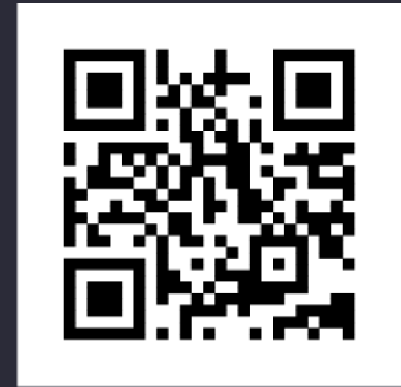
Hi, I'm Katerina,

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Cheers,

Katerina