

British Government @ LSE public lecture



How to Run a Government

Sir Michael Barber

Co-founder, Delivery Associates and Chief Education Advisor, Pearson

Author How to Run a Government so that citizens and taxpayers don't go crazy

Sir Jeremy Heywood

Chair

Cabinet Secretary, Head of the Home Civil Service



Suggested hashtag for Twitter users: **#LSEBarber**



~~WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY/ NO~~
~~GLASS CEILING/ FROM THE GET-~~
~~GO/ MISSION CREEP~~ HOW TO RUN
A GOVERNMENT SO THAT CITIZENS
BENEFIT AND TAXPAYERS DON'T
GO CRAZY BY MICHAEL BARBER

LSE, Old Theatre
London, 16 March 2015

 @michaelbarber9
#howtorunagovernment

Introduction

“ ... The book has a moral purpose. More people are likely to lead more fulfilled lives if they live in countries with effective, accountable government.”

How to Run a Government p. xxiv

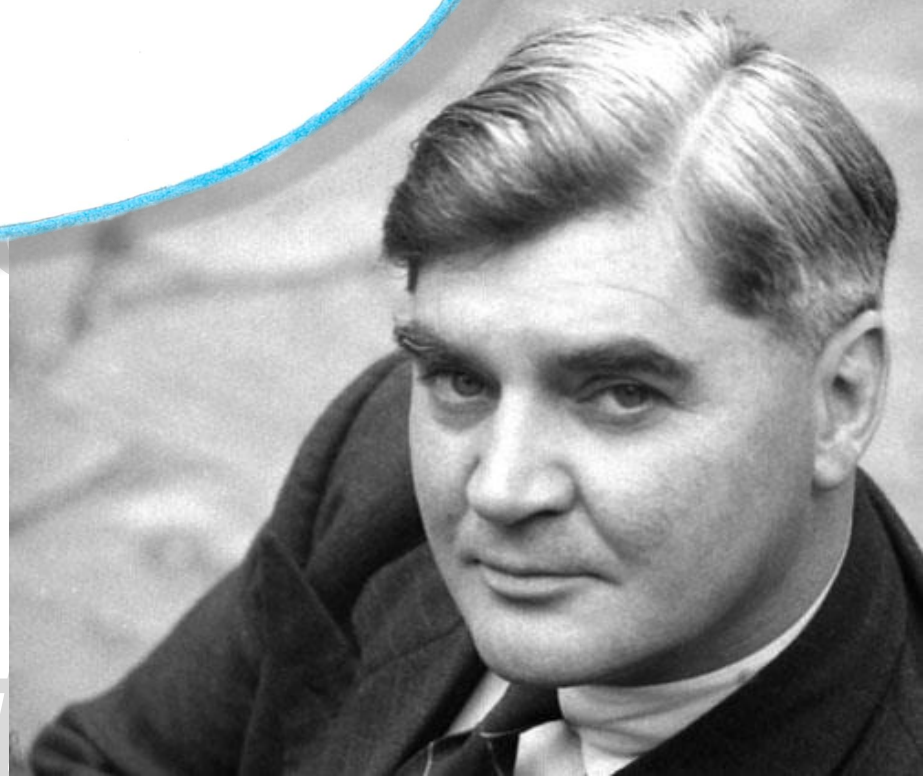
“Whether your political preference is for a minimalist state or a much larger one, you have an interest in government being effective at what it does.”

How to Run a Government p. xxiii

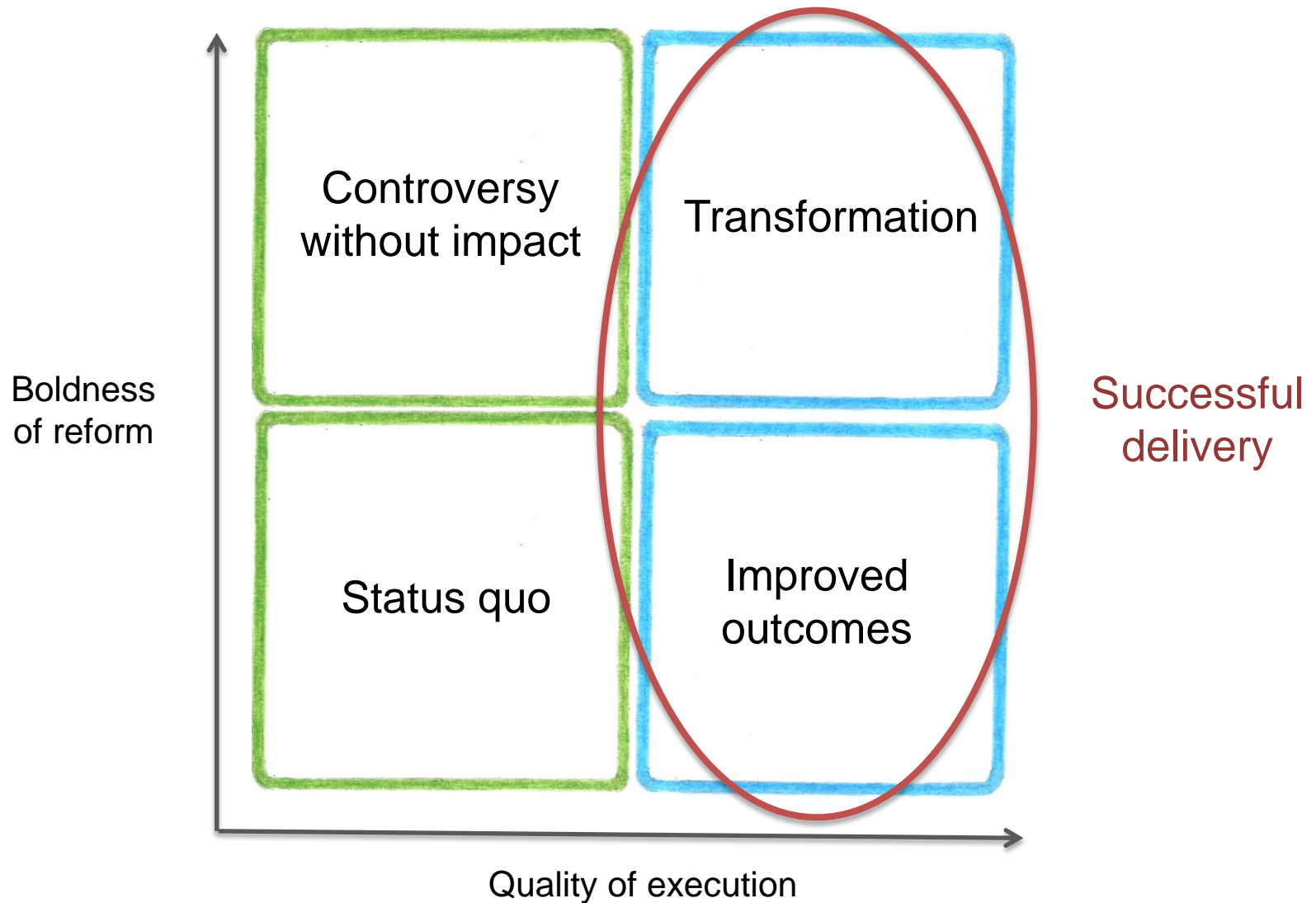
Priorities

*“Socialism is the language
of priorities.”*

Aneurin Bevan



A map of delivery





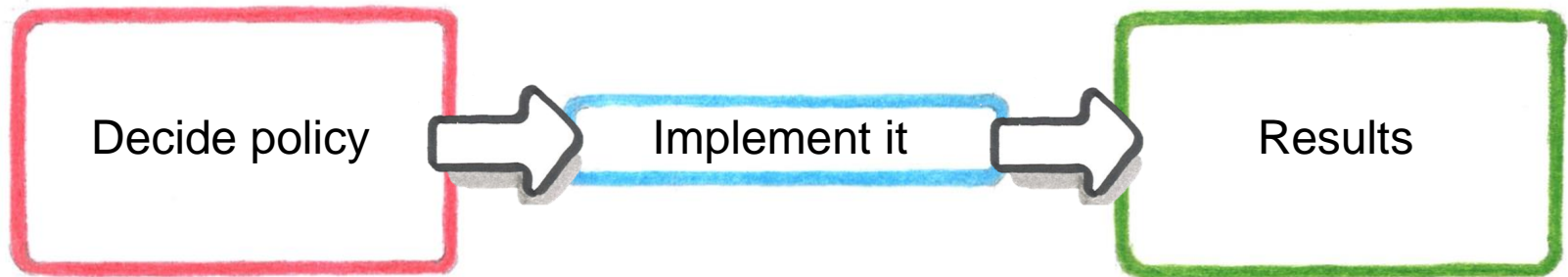
Organization

*“There was a political confidence,
even swagger about us; but it was
born of our popularity with the country,
not our fitness to change it.”*

Tony Blair



How not to think about implementation





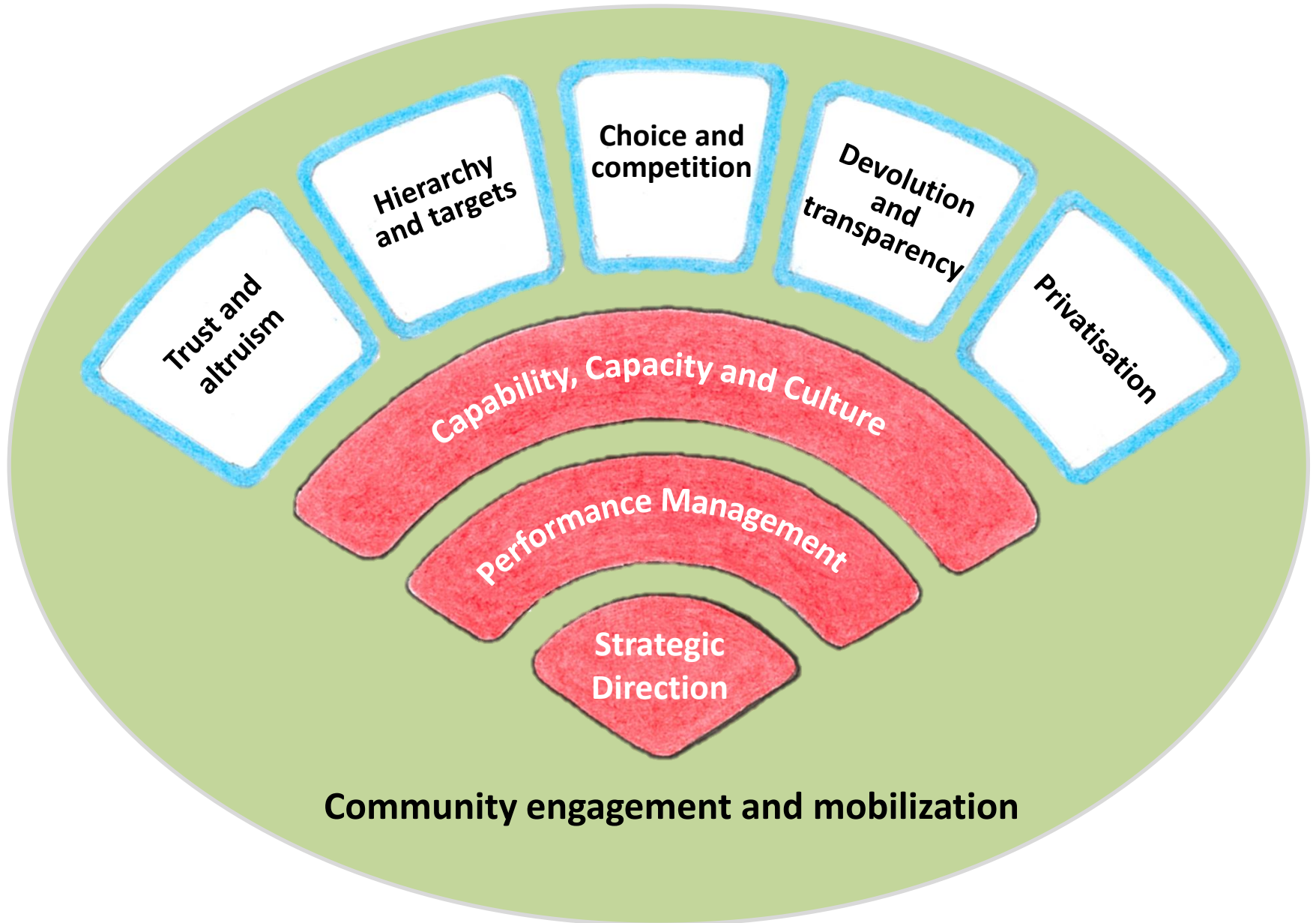
Strategy

*“Communication could easily
break down . . . in sprawling,
complicated encounters
wreathed in smoke.”*

*John Sugden,
Nelson: The Sword of Albion*



Five paradigms of system reform

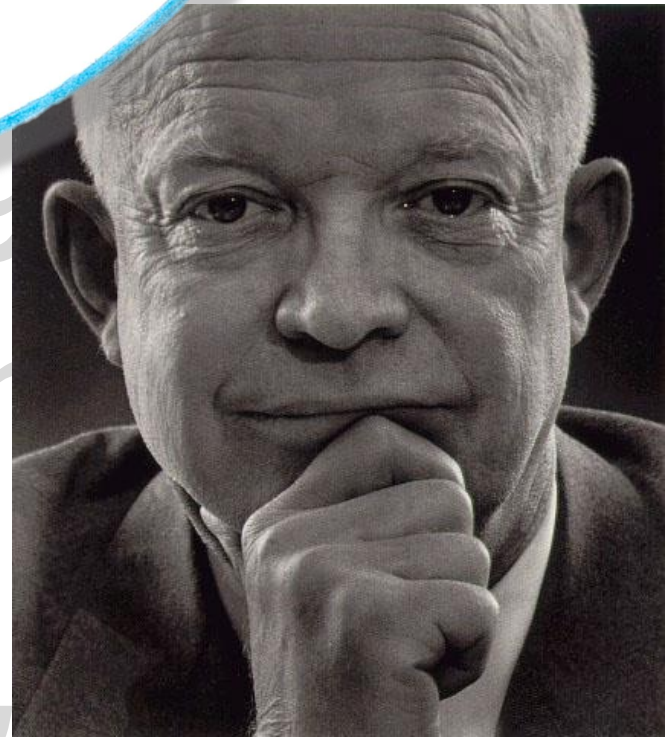




Planning

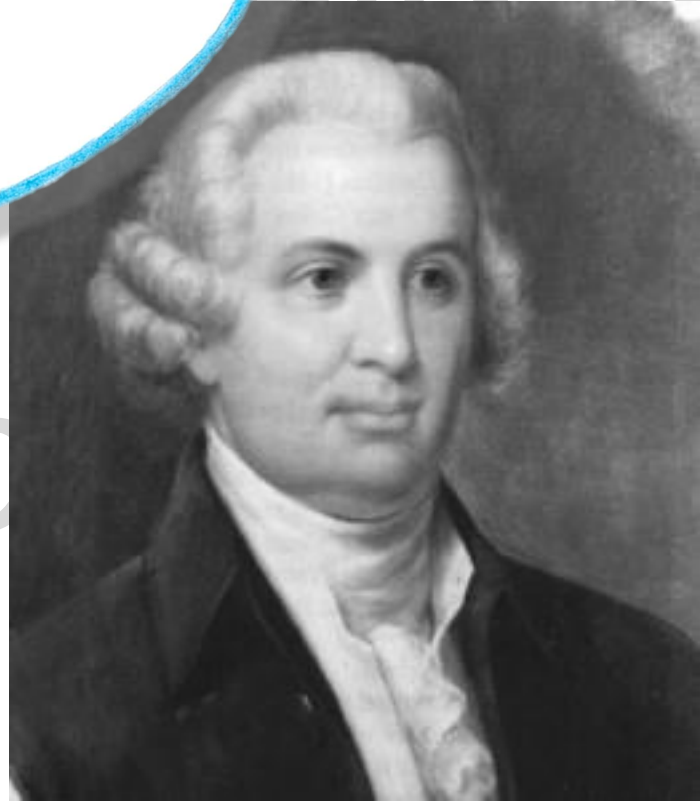
*"In preparing for battle,
I have always found that plans
are useless but planning
is indispensable."*

Dwight D. Eisenhower



*“It becomes our duty
to see things as they really are,
divested of all disguise.”*

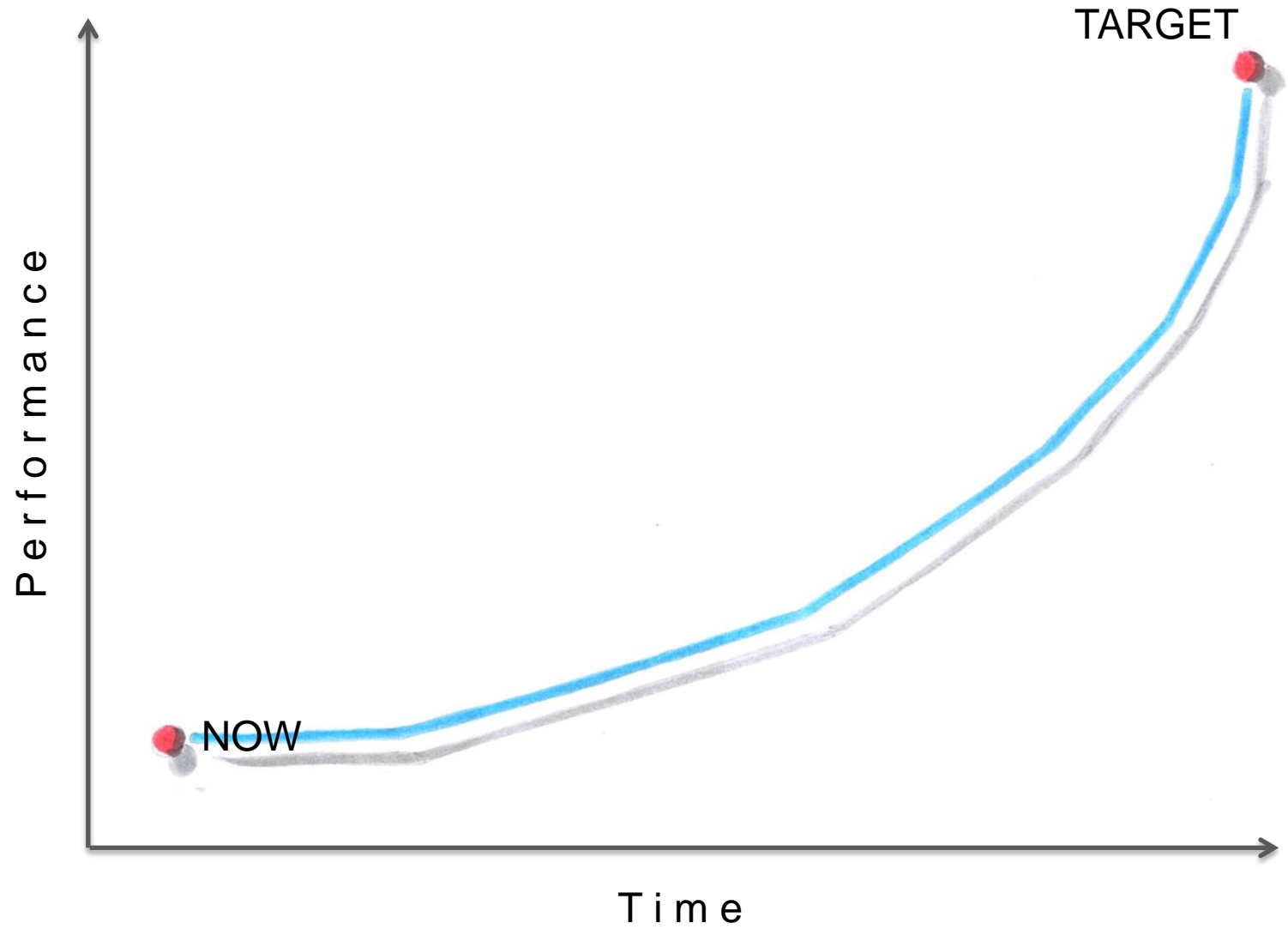
William Hooper 1776



Delivery chains

1	Person responsible for delivering the results (Me)
1	Director of the National Literacy Strategy
15	Regional Directors
150	Local authorities, each with someone playing my role at local level
400	Literacy consultants
19,000	Head Teachers, each with a literacy co-ordinator (so another 19,000)
190,000	Teachers teaching literacy hours
3.5 million	Children, lapping it all up

Trajectories





Routines

*“People underestimate
the importance of diligence
as a virtue.”*

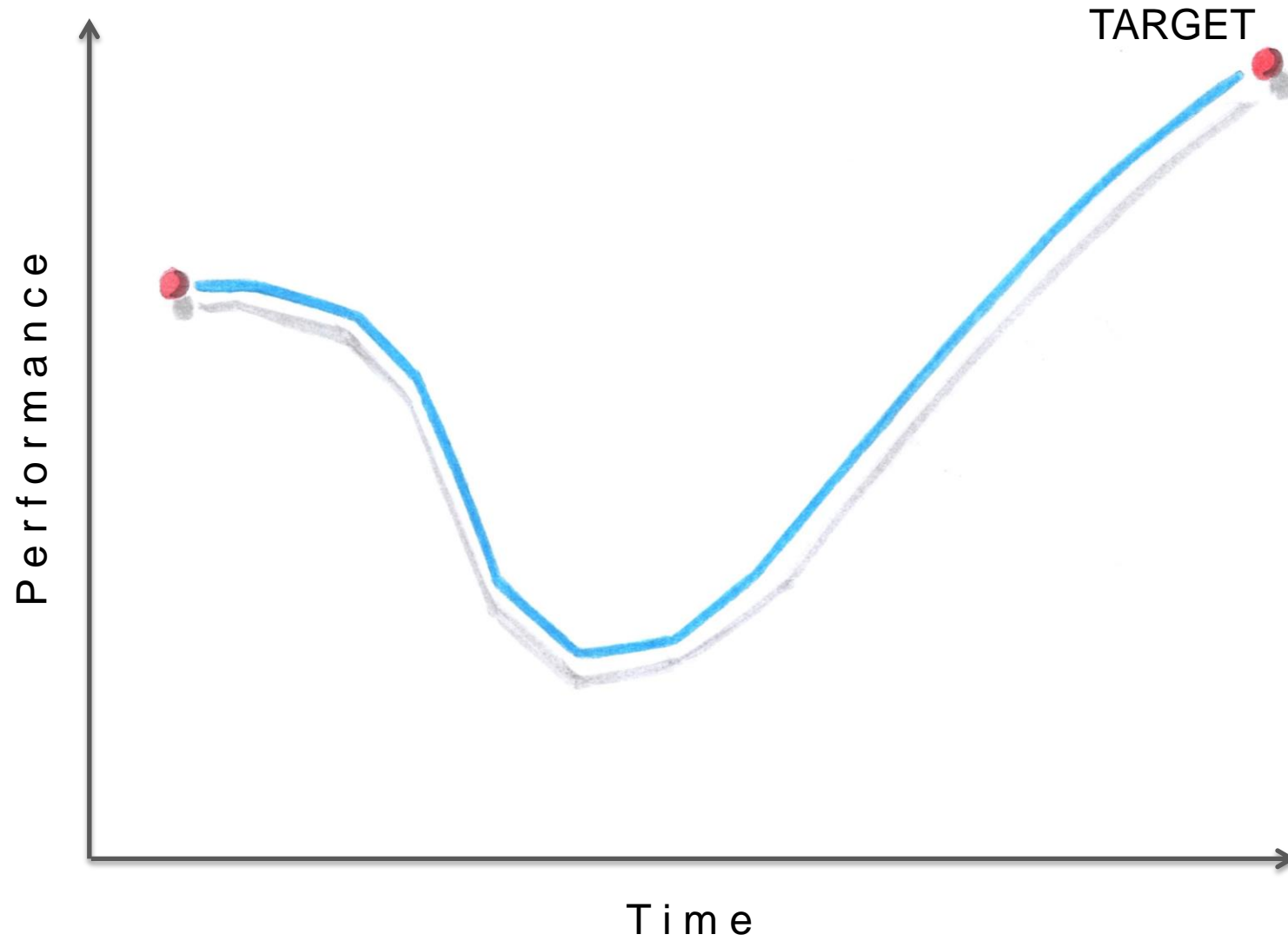
Atul Gawande



“In all 126 spies have fallen into our hands. Of these eighteen gave themselves up voluntarily; twenty-four have been found amenable and are now being used as double-cross agents.”

MI5 monthly note 1943

The implementation dip



Problem-solving

“No experience of the failure of his policy could shake his belief in its essential excellence.”

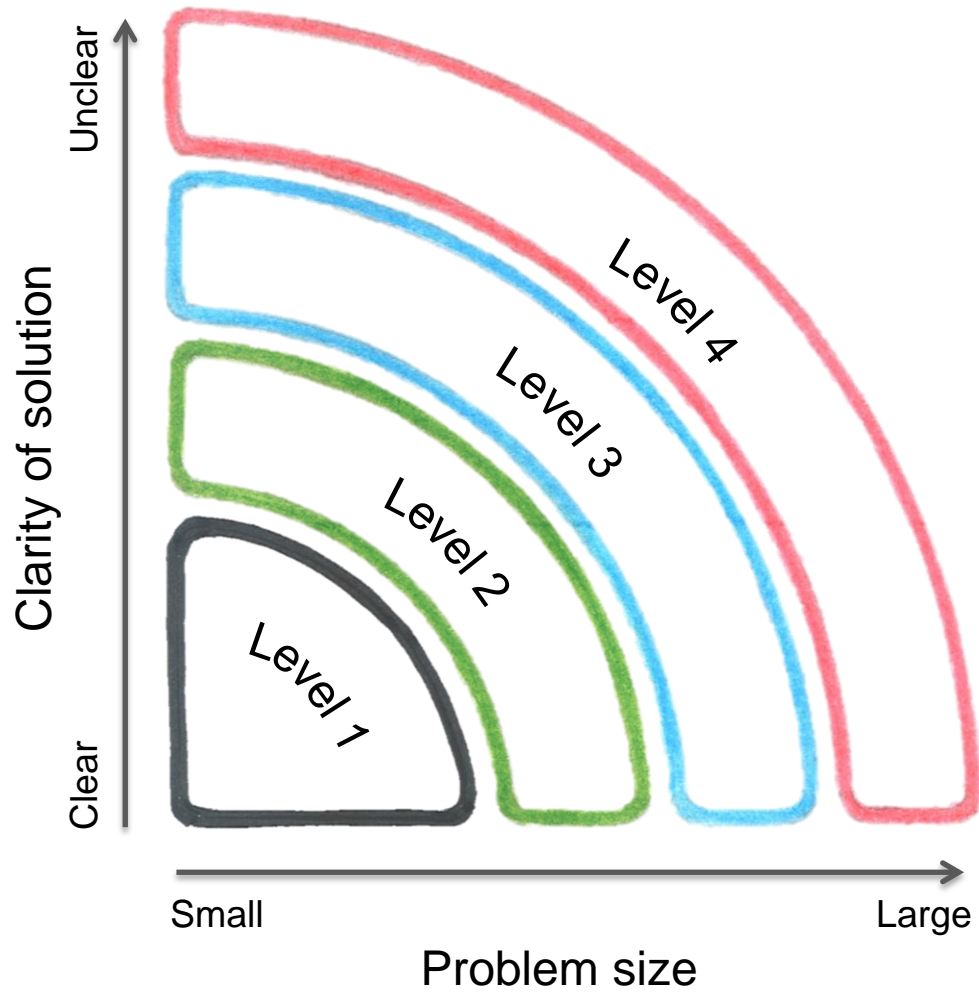
*Barbara Tuchman
on Philip II, King of Spain*



Kto vinovat?

Sto deliat ?

How big a crisis is it ?

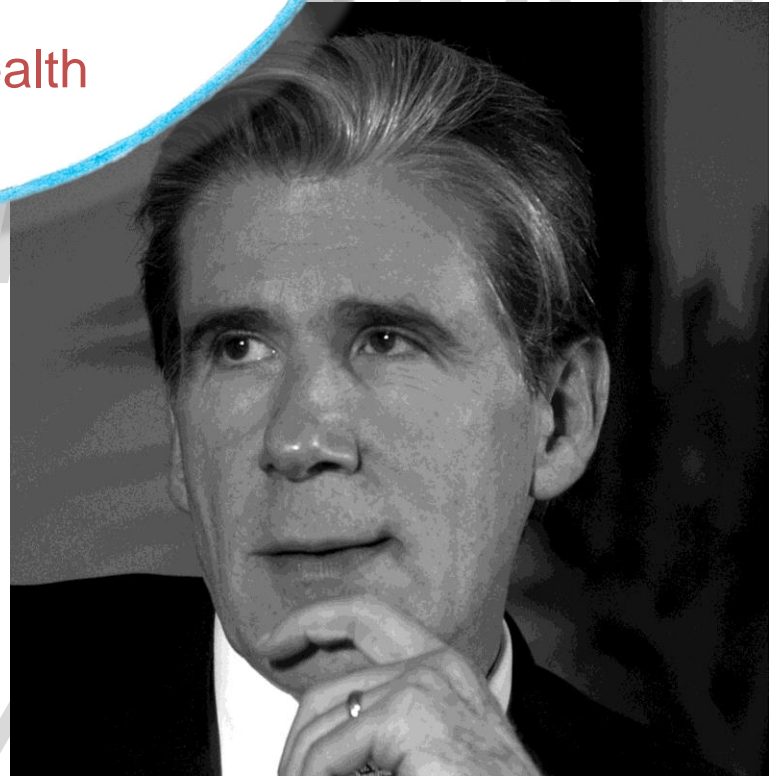


Irreversibility

Establishing a legacy

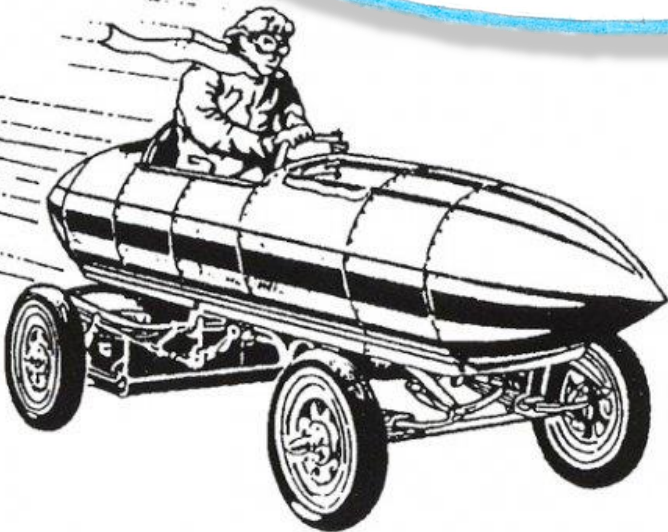
*“My predecessor was an idiot
and my successor
is a traitor.”*

*Saying quoted by
Julio Frenk, former Minister of Health*



"I'm reminded of that Belgian car that broke the world land speed record in 1899 . . . the name of the car was La Jamais Contente."

Dalton McGuinty
Premier of Ontario 2003-2013



Ever-widening circles of leadership



Conclusion

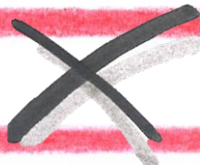
“The Cameron government has been much more rigorous (than Blair) in taking an axe to existing budgets, but ironically much less clear about defining priorities and outcomes. Maybe one day a British Government will put the whole thing together . . .”

How to Run a Government
p 261



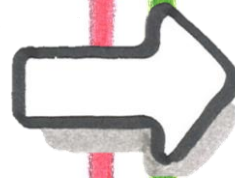
Government by spasm

Everything matters
Vague aspiration
Crisis management
Guesswork
Post-hoc evaluation
Massaged impressions
Remote and slow
Present-focused
Hyperactivity
Soundbites
Announcements



Government by routine

Clear priorities
Specification of success
Routine oversight
Data-informed
Realtime data
An honest conversation
In touch and rapid
Future-focused
Persistent drive
Dialogue
Change on the ground



"The danger . . . lies not in the least in the concentration of power in competent and accountable hands. It lies in having the power insufficiently concentrated so that no one can be held accountable for its use."

Theodore Roosevelt 1909



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