

Making Better Decisions

How we can decide better together.

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When do we know a decision is good?

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**Evaluate decisions based on the
information available, not their
outcomes.**

Why does good decision making matter?

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85% of business leaders have
suffered from decision distress.

74% of people say the number of decisions they make daily has increased 10x over the last three years

Large construction projects typically take **20% longer** to finish than scheduled and are up to **80% over budget** due to poor decisions.

Why does it matter to decide together?

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Why does it matter...

to make decisions together?

- ✓ Use swarm intelligence – More brains!
- ✓ Benefit from diversity
- ✓ Share the load
- ✓ Help people understand the decision
- ✓ Enable people to commit
- ✓ Make the decision a success

Why do we decide?

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We make decisions to
exert control over our lives
and navigate our environment effectively.

Why is this so difficult?

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1 + 1 = ?

**Where are we going
to have dinner?**

“The more equally attractive two alternatives seem, the harder it can be to choose between them.”

Fredkin's Paradox

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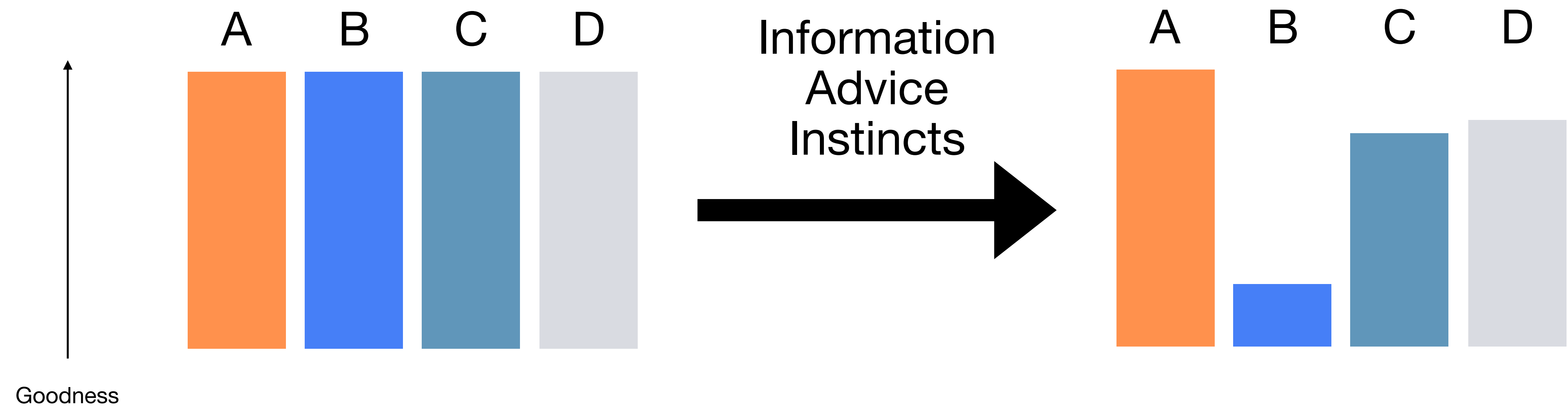
How to make good decisions alone?

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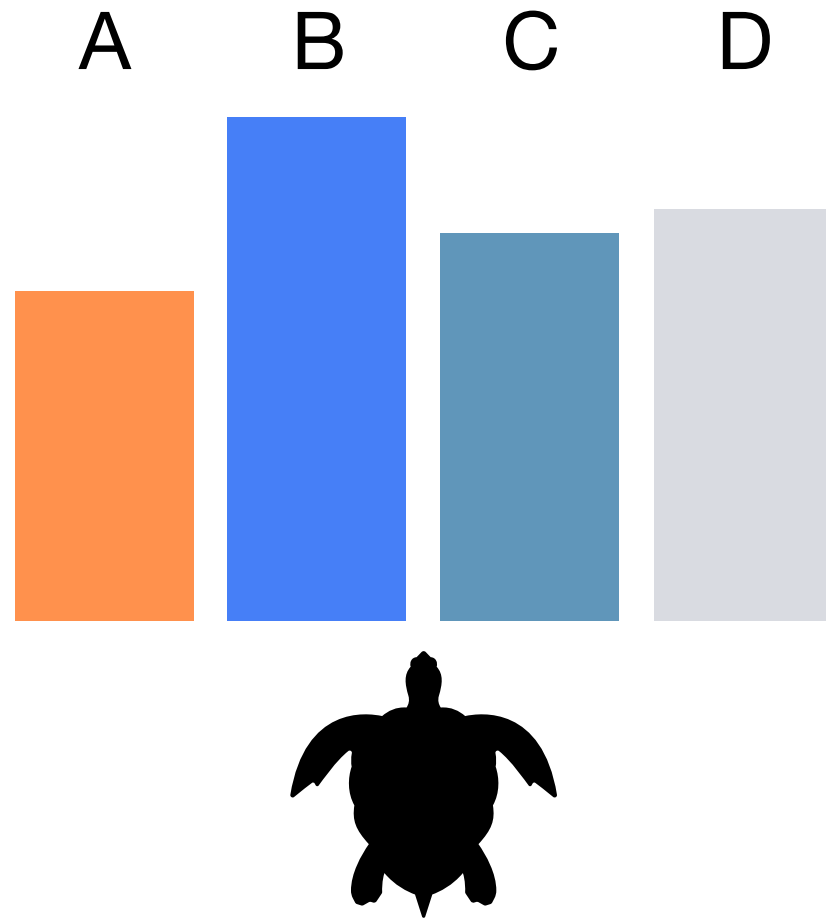
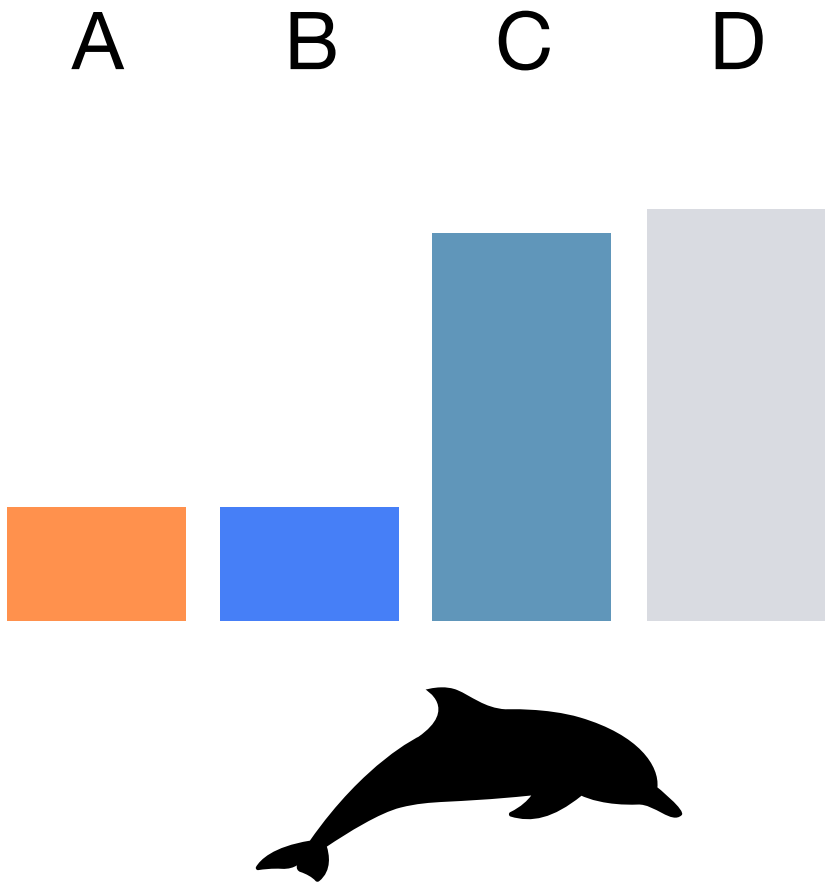
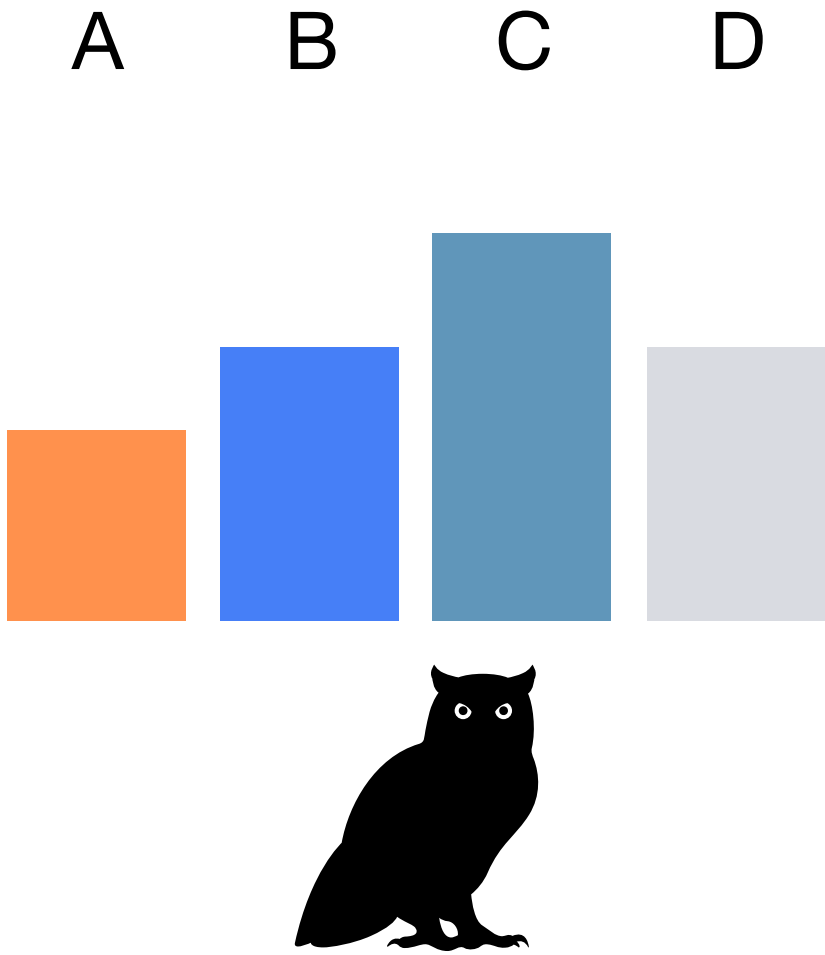
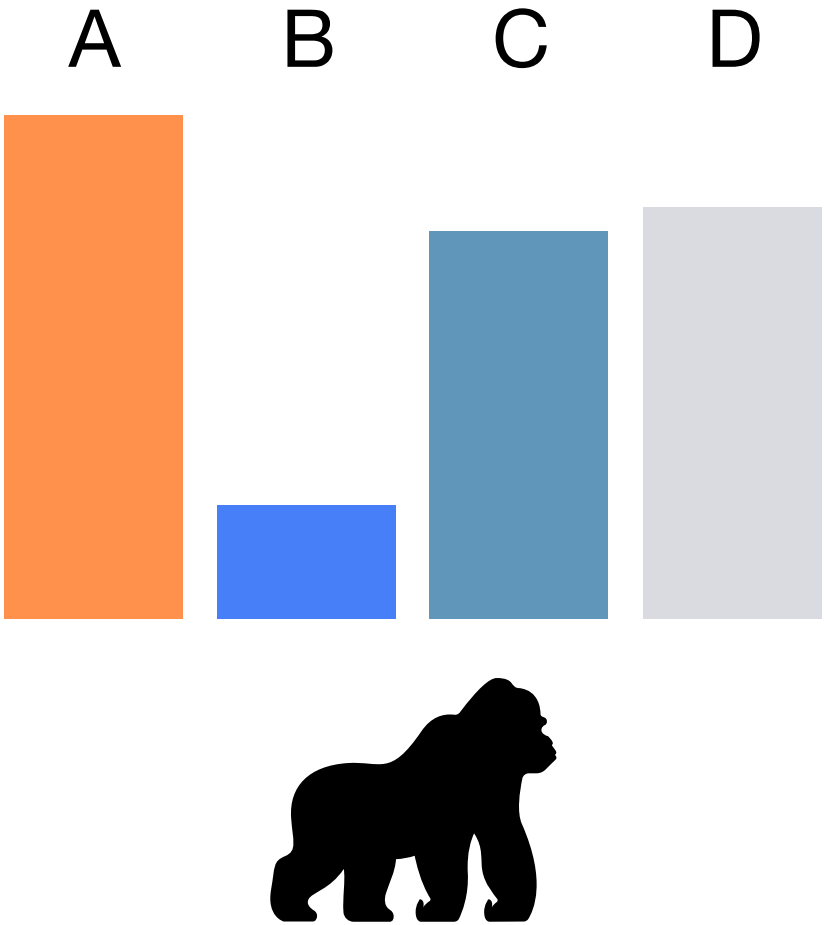
How to make good decisions alone?

1. Define Your Priorities
2. Gather Information
3. Weigh the Pros and Cons
4. Consider the Alternatives
5. Trust Your Instincts
6. Seek Advice
7. Make a Decision

Deciding alone



Deciding as a group



... and now what? 🙋

How to make good decisions together?

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Group Decision Making Options

1. HIPPO
2. Loudest Person Wins
3. Decision by Delegation
4. Consensus
5. Consent
6. Consent with integrative objection handling
7. Systemic Consensing
8. Proposal/Advice Process
9. Rolling a dice

Group Decision Making Options

HIPPO



Highest

Paid

Persons

Opinion

Group Decision Making Options

Loudest Person Wins

- Rarely the best option.
- Stopps others from contributing.
- Lack of diversity.
- Lack of commitment.

Group Decision Making Options

Decision by Delegation

- Pick one person.
- That person decides.
- Good if
 - Person has enough knowledge
 - Consequences are low

Group Decision Making Options

Consensus = Everybody agrees

- Often impossible to achieve.
- Sometimes, the perfect decision does not exist.
- Endless search to make everybody equally happy.
- Decision Paralysis 👉 Frustration

Group Decision Making Options

Consent = Nobody objects

- Objection != I don't like it.
- Objection = This will cause harm (explain why)
- Question: Is it safe enough to try?

Group Decision Making Options

Consent with integrative objection handling

1. Present proposal
2. Ask comprehension questions
3. Collect reactions
4. Improve proposal
5. Raise objections
6. Integrate objections

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing

1. Create a shared problem understanding.
2. Find as many solution options as possible.
3. Ensure everybody understands the options.
4. Check individual resistance (0-5).
5. Collect the results.

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example

Problem	<i>Status Quo</i>	Proposal 1	Proposal 2	Proposal 3	Proposal 4
Person A					
Person B					
Person C					
Person D					
Person E					
	0	0	0	0	0

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example

- Alice, Bob, Eve, Max, and Martha are a team.
- Martha notices that the team spirit has decreased since all members are working fully remote.

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example

Our team spirit decreased since we are all remote.					
Alice					
Bob					
Eve					
Max					
Martha					
	0	0	0	0	0

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example

Our team spirit decreased since we are all remote.	<i>Change nothing</i>	Go back to the office	Meet in the office 1 day a week	Meet for an onsite every quarter	Do more team programming remotely
Alice					
Bob					
Eve					
Max					
Martha					
	0	0	0	0	0

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example (easy decision)

Our team spirit decreased since we are all remote.	<i>Change nothing</i>	Go back to the office	Meet in the office 1 day a week	Meet for an onsite every quarter	Do more team programming remotely
Alice	2	5	4	2	1
Bob	2	5	4	2	1
Eve	2	5	5	5	2
Max	2	3	5	3	2
Martha	5	2	1	4	3
	13	20	19	16	9

Group Decision Making Options

Systemic Consensing – Example (difficult decision)

Our team spirit decreased since we are all remote.	<i>Change nothing</i>	Go back to the office	Meet in the office 1 day a week	Meet for an onsite every quarter	Do more team bonding weekly
Alice	2	5	4	0	
Bob	2	5	4	2	3
Eve	2	5		5	3
Max	2		5	3	2
Martha		2	1	4	5
	13	20	19	16	13

Continue with Integrative Objection Handling

Group Decision Making Options

Integrative Objection Handling – Example (difficult decision)

1. Change nothing: Stay remote and do nothing to improve the situation (Martha: 5)
2. Try remote team programmings to improve the situation (Martha: 5)

Group Decision Making Options

Rolling a Dice

“The more equally attractive two alternatives seem, the harder it can be to choose between them.”

Fredkin's Paradox

Group Decision Making Options

Rolling a Dice

“The more equally attractive two alternatives seem, the harder it can be to choose between them – no matter that, to the same degree, the choice can only matter less.”

Fredkin's Paradox

But we can do EVEN better!

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Through distributed decisions!

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Tension-based Proposal Processing

How it is done

1. Based on felt tensions
2. Document-based
3. Integrate feedback
4. Handle objections
5. Default-to-yes

Tension-based Proposal Processing

Why it works

1. Change becomes understandable
2. No endless discussions
3. Empowers everyone to initiate and make big decisions safely
4. Can dissolve hierarchies
5. Writing creates clarity
6. Focus on real tensions
7. Some tensions resolve on their own
8. Leads to acceptance

**The quality of our decisions is limited
by the quality of our options.**

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How to generate ideas in a group?

1. “Classic” Brainstorming
2. 1-2-4-All
3. 25/10 Crowd Sourcing (for larger groups)
4. Secret Brainstorming + Affinity Mapping

How to generate ideas in a group?

“Classic” Brainstorming

- Pro: Everybody knows it.
- Con: It does not work.

See: “Why Brainstorming Doesn’t Work” by Adam Grant
<https://time.com/6327515/brainstorming-doesnt-work-essay/>

How to generate ideas in a group?

1-2-4-All

1. Everybody silently writes down their ideas alone.
2. Two people come together and share their ideas with each other.
3. Two pairs come together and share their ideas with each other.
4. All groups present their ideas to each other.

See: “1-2-4-All” – Liberating Structures
<https://www.liberatingstructures.com/1-1-2-4-all/>

How to generate ideas in a group?

25/10 Crowd Sourcing

1. Every participant writes their best idea on an index card.
2. The cards are passed around in the room for some time.
3. Everybody now has a card different from theirs.
4. Read the idea and rate it (1-5)
5. Repeat 5 times.
6. Sum scores and sort cards by score.

See: “25/10 Crowd Sourcing” – Liberating Structures
<https://www.liberatingstructures.com/12-2510-crowd-sourcing/>

How to generate ideas in a group?

Secret Brainstorming + Affinity Mapping

1. Silently write down your ideas secretly.
2. Mix the ideas.
3. Review all the generated ideas.
4. Group similar ones and reframe as one idea.

How to make decisions easier?

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Make decisions smaller.

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Make decisions safer.

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Make decisions more often.

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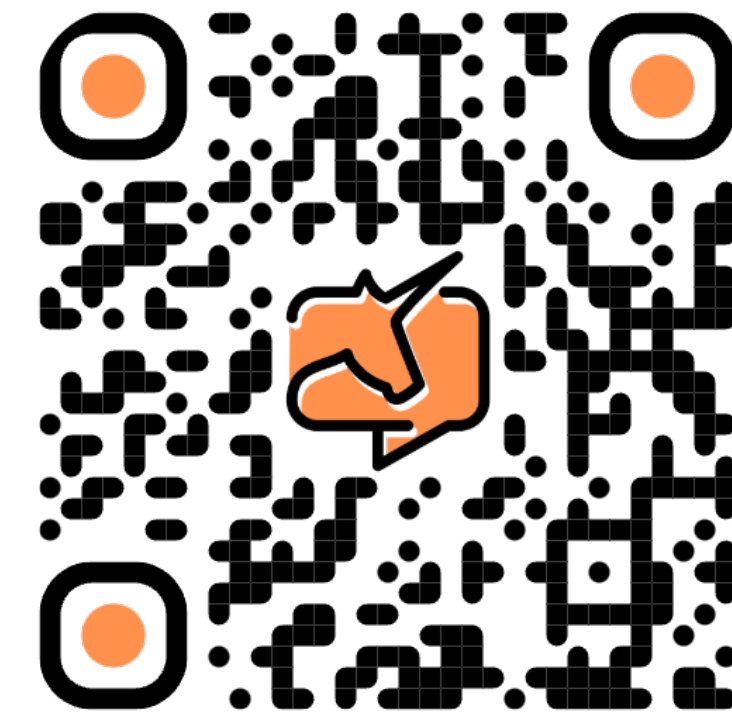
Make sure the problem
is the *real* problem.

About me

Tobi(as Mende)



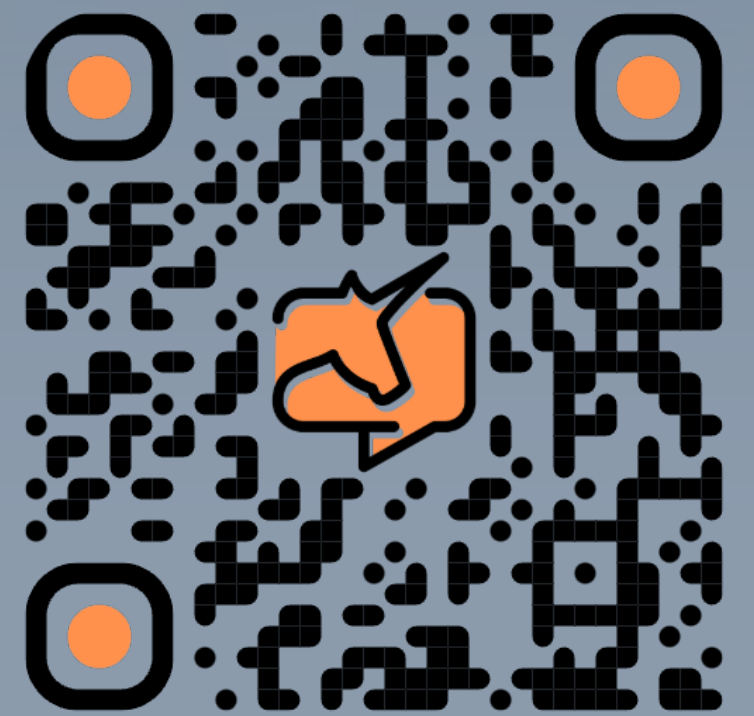
- Helping founders build high-performing self-managing organizations
- Doing this through:
 - Leadership Consulting,
 - Technical Agile Coaching,
 - Interim (Engineering) Leadership,
 - Workshops, Courses, Mentoring



Please Give Feedback,
Connect, Get Slides

Which decision will you make differently tomorrow?

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Please Give Feedback,
Connect, Get Slides