

Ten capabilities of responsive organizations

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Introduction to the tool

What this model is about and the purpose of it

Several leadership thinkers point towards a higher focus on capabilities, your HOW, rather than your production directly, your WHAT. So, why not let the guiding point for change be your organizational capabilities that you need for the future of work?

We have identified these ten capabilities in the modern workplace that will help you identify what your organization is good at or what need to be improved.

Using this tool will help you:

- Help you focus on capabilities and your how rather than your what.
- Increase conversations on capabilities and what is needed for your organization for the future of work.
- Increase awareness on capabilities within your organization and how you should work with them accordingly.

All ten characteristics is interconnected and correlated to the culture, and will only crystallize if the culture is fit.

Credits and rights when using this model

The Ten Characteristics of the Modern Workplace is made by Erik Korsvik Østergaard with inspiration from Agile Change and is featured in his book 'The Responsive Leader'.

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What to use the ten characteristics for

Understanding your capabilities by mapping characteristics in your organization

Inviting employees or leaders to map characteristics in your organization, will make you understand your organization's capabilities. You should be aware that the characteristics cannot stand alone, and by moving one it will push the others. You should always strive towards having all the characteristics in your organization – either in your teams and employees or in your leadership team.

Use this tool in two ways:

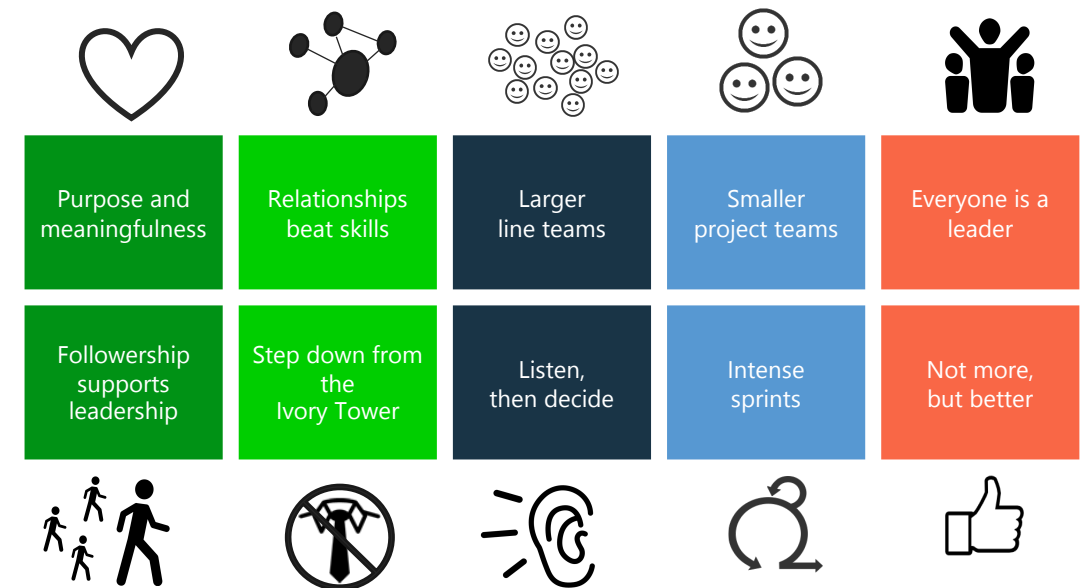
Use this tool for mapping capabilities by analyzing the characteristics in your organization. Do this with 1) employees from different teams, or 2) with the leadership team to understand which capabilities there is lacking in the organization.

We recommend that you start by using the tool for mapping the capabilities with the leaders.

During the assessment, it will give you and the other leaders time to reflect upon what to work on, and we have suggested questions to ask during the assessment.

Understand the output:

By using the model, it will help you understand what your organizations capabilities are. The characteristics are linked, which means that one of the characteristics can't stand alone without influencing the others. It is interconnected and correlated to the culture and will only crystallize if the culture is fit.



Introduction to the ten characteristics

1. **Purpose and meaningfulness.** The great cultures are joined with a shared cause or belief, hence the need for a business purpose and narrative. They know what they fight for, who they serve, what problem they are solving, and what value they are creating.
2. **Relationships beat skills.** Who you know and have a relationship with is more important for the productivity and getting things done, than skills. It's not that skills are unimportant. Relationships are just more important and pave the way for the networked organization.
3. **Larger line teams.** This is in direct correlation with the networked organization and the culture: the line teams grow larger and fewer, giving the leader a span-of-control that grows to double the amount from traditional hierarchical structures. This comes from a changed approach to (a) delivery structures, that are based on networked teams instead of the line organization, and (b) from the relationships between the employees, which create personal attention and a sense of belonging. This changes the role of the leader (see the description in the book).
4. **Smaller project teams.** Or rather, delivery teams. Teams in these kinds of organizations tend to become smaller, to a size where they 'can share two pizzas over lunch', a description coined by Jeff Bezos, founder of Amazon. This both requires and nurtures a culture of relationships, trust, and transparency.
5. **Everyone is a leader.** Or has the opportunity to take the lead on tasks if they have the will, skill, and drive to engage in.
6. **Followership is a direct consequence of making everybody leaders.** Accepting that you are a follower to the person who takes the lead on a task or activity. This action and behavior is a huge cultural driver.
7. **Step down from the Ivory Tower.** The modern leaders are artisans too and works both ON and IN the business. Merits and actual dialogue with problem owners shapes you as a role model.
8. **Listen, then decide.** The modern workplace is based on involvement and inclusion. Decisions and collaboration are based on a culture of listening to every stakeholder and employee prior to acting. This is a tough point to implement in many organizations, where involvement and listening are a major change from the traditional power distribution.
9. **Intense sprints.** Modern workplaces have a natural preference for working intensely in sprints, then stopping to evaluate, prior to engaging in yet another sprint. This stems from the ingrown focus on people and value-creation rather than technology and solution-provision.
10. **Not more, but better.** The modern workplace is driven towards results and accomplishments, but not for the sake of producing many products, but rather better products. Value-creation and purposefulness is at the center for the culture.

Workbook: How to use the ten capabilities of the modern workplace

Guide: How to get going

Use the assessment tool with these steps:

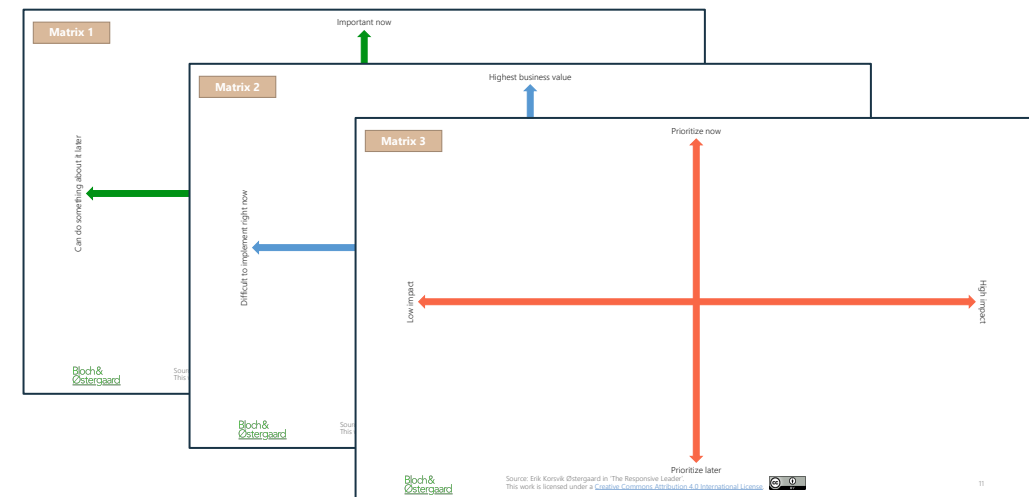
1. Print this document and cut out the ten characteristics in modern organization.
2. Gather a small group of people from different teams and departments or gather your leadership team.
3. Take one question at a time and rate each capability.

We recommend that you can use matrix 1, 2 and 3 on the following pages for this and put the characteristics one by one, rating them on the matrix.

4. Discuss why you rate as you do .
5. Discuss how you see the capabilities useful for your organization.
6. Generate ideas about how to make interventions and experiments that can move you towards the capabilities.

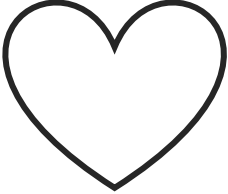
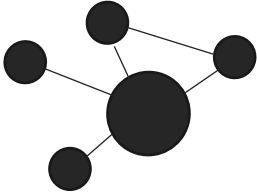
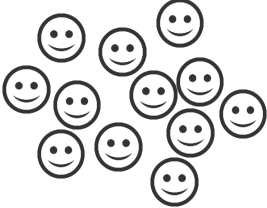
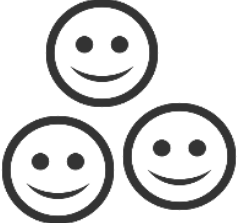




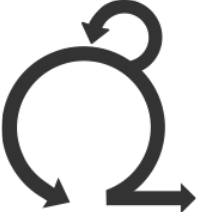

Questions to ask during the session:

- Which capabilities are most important to you right now? (See matrix 1)
- Which capabilities can you do something about right now? (See matrix 1)
- Which capabilities would add the highest business value for the whole organization? (See matrix 2)
- Which capabilities are easier to implement than others? (See matrix 2)
- Which capabilities will have a high impact on your organization now? (See matrix 3)
- Which capabilities should you prioritize first? (See matrix 3)

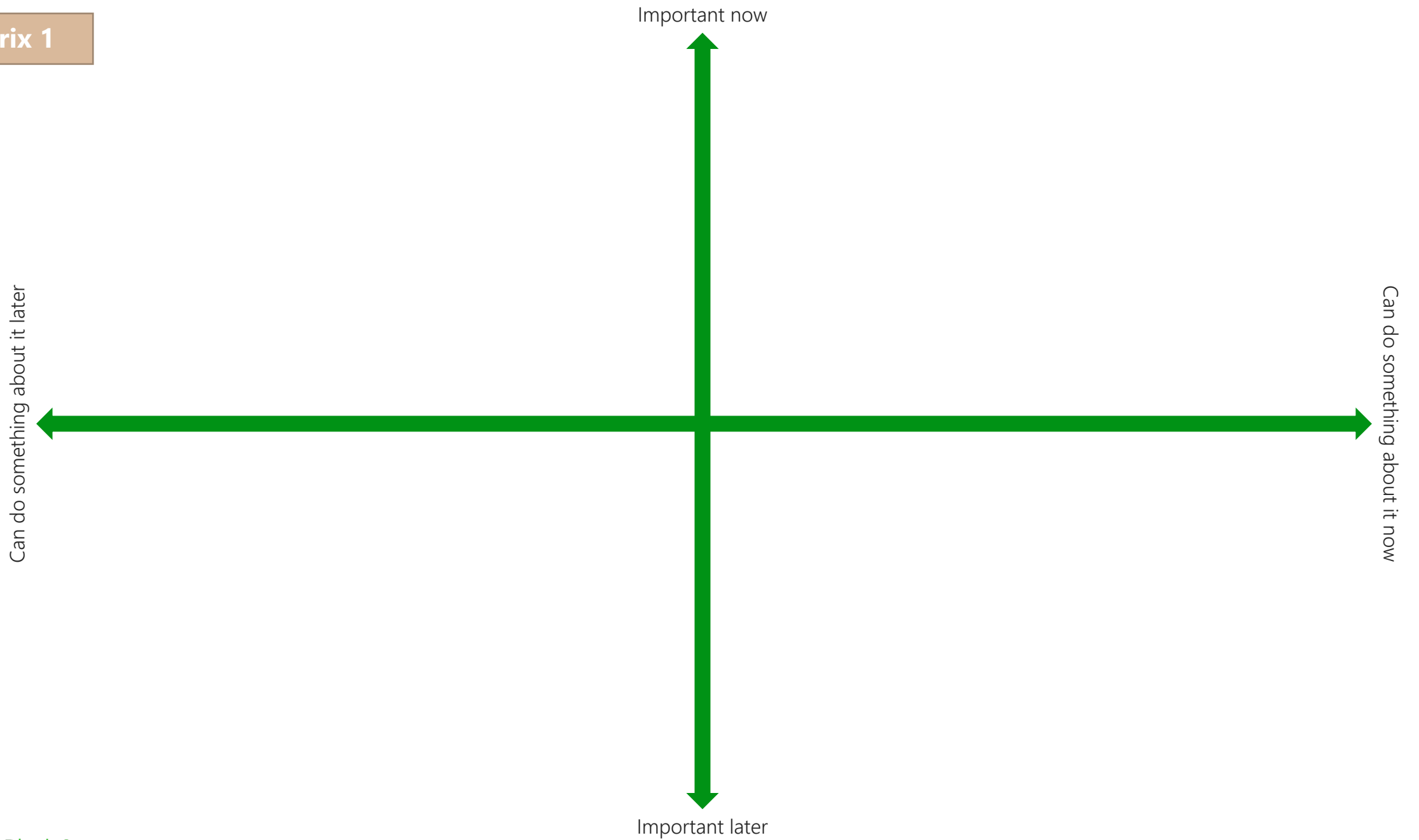


The Ten Characteristics in Modern Workplaces

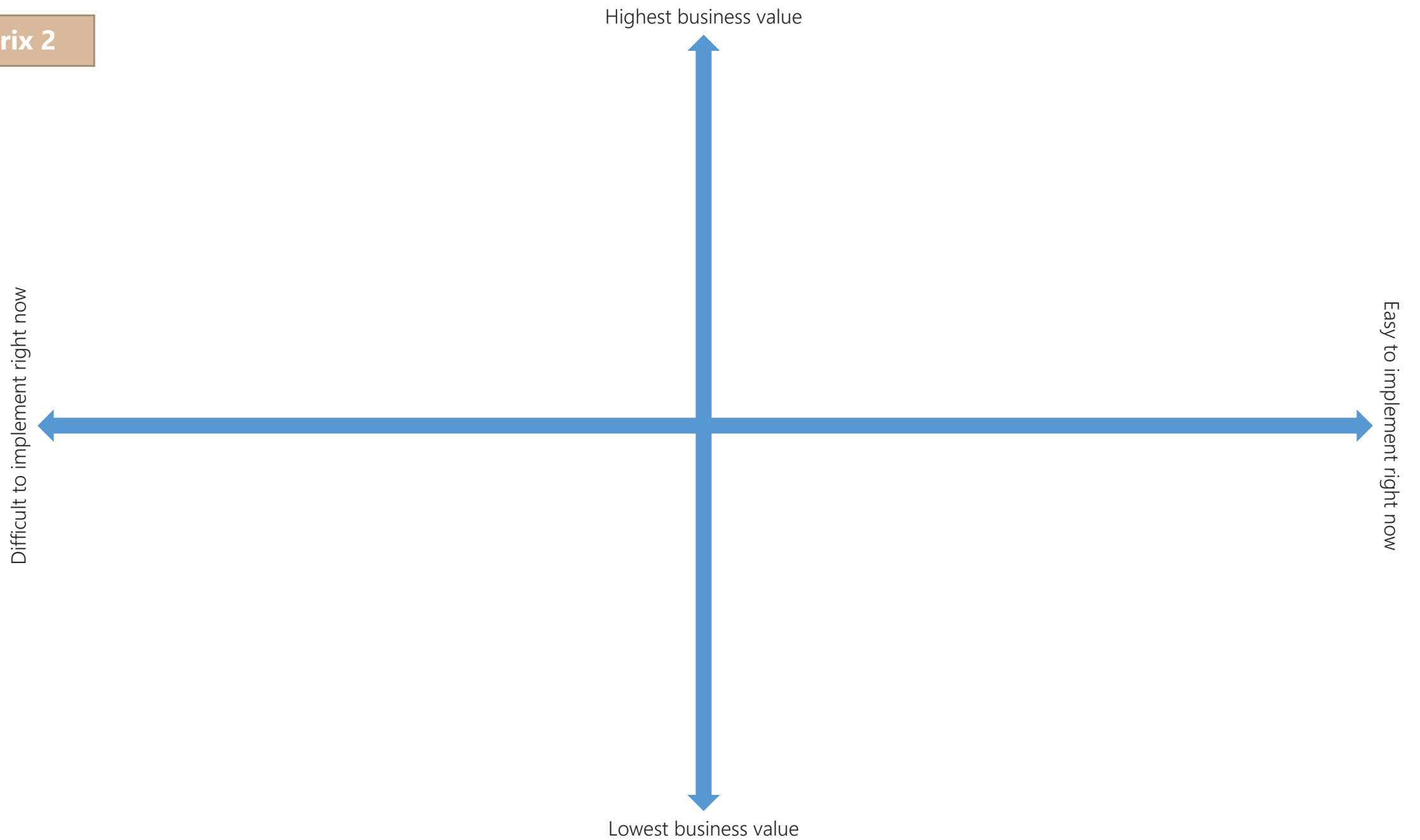


				
Purpose and meaningfulness	Relationships beat skills	Larger line teams	Smaller project teams	Everyone is a leader
Followership supports leadership	Step down from the Ivory Tower	Listen, then decide	Intense sprints	Not more, but better
				

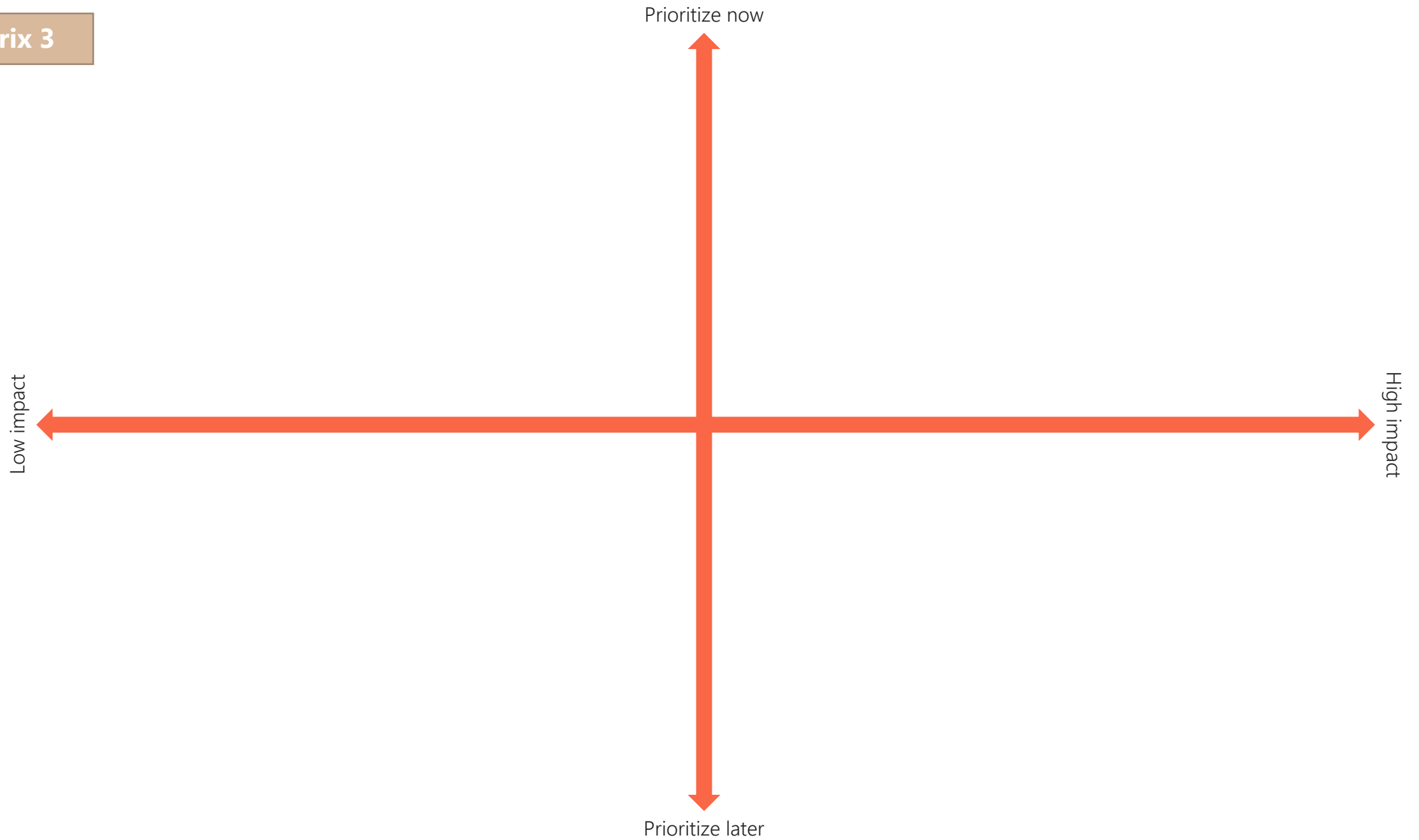
Matrix 1



Matrix 2



Matrix 3



Bloch & Østergaard

Creating organizations where people want to show up!



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