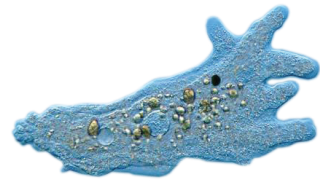


# VMCL: Build an Adaptive Organization

**V VISION:** concise, measurable future state or goal\*



Biodiversity

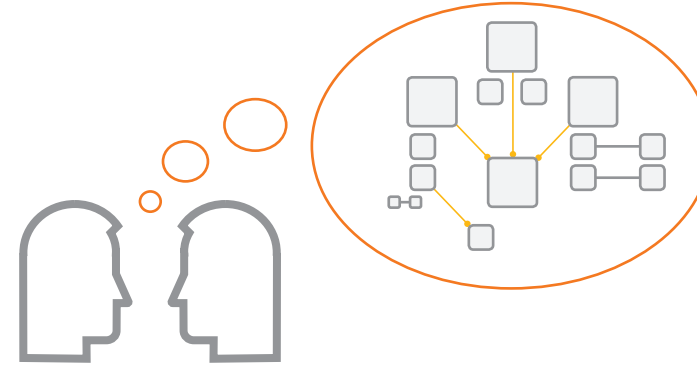


**M MISSION:** simple rules, known by all, that in repetition lead to vision\*

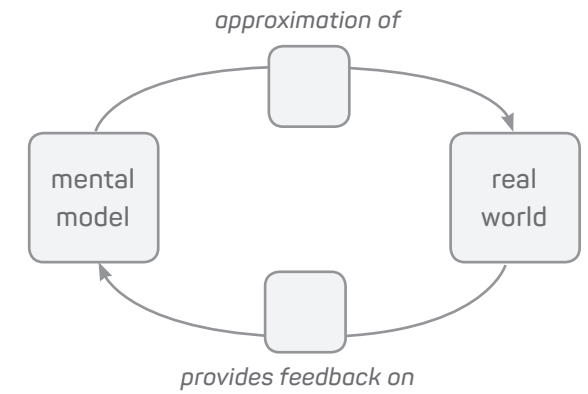


Go forth and multiply

**C CULTURE & CAPACITY:** shared mental models that support vision, mission and management of mission critical systems\*



**L LEARNING:** constant adaptation based on feedback from the real world\*



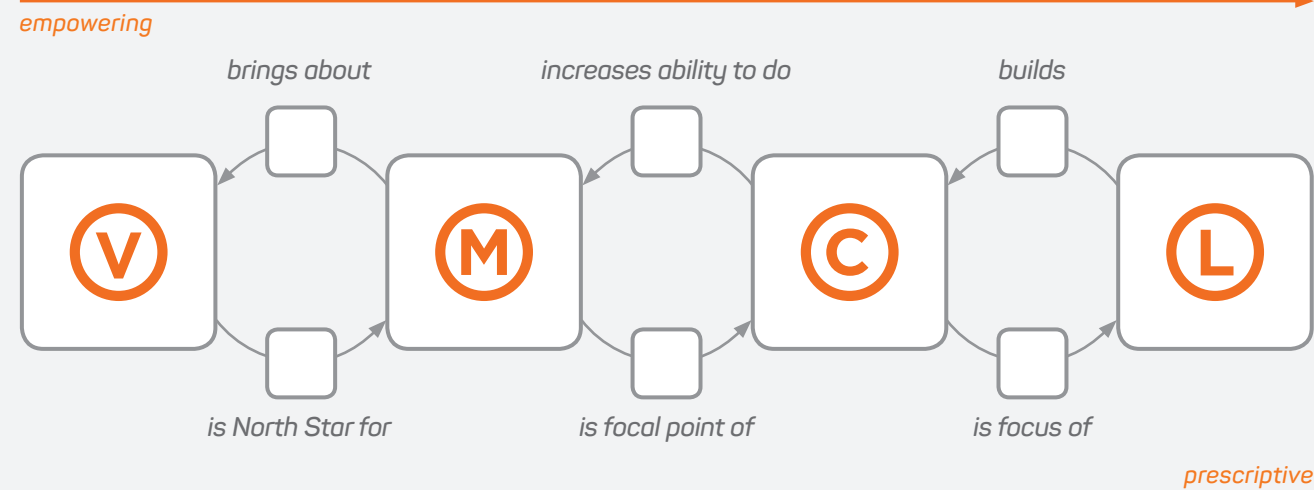
Mental model describes, predicts, and leads to behavior in the real world. Real-world consequences inform adaptation, viability, and competition among models.

\* See 10 tests for designing and assessing your vision-mission in *Systems Thinking Made Simple*

\* See 3 Things Systems Thinkers Do Infographic and *Systems Thinking Made Simple*

## VMCL: Components

Vision, Mission, Capacity & Culture, & Learning are the design principles for the modern organization.

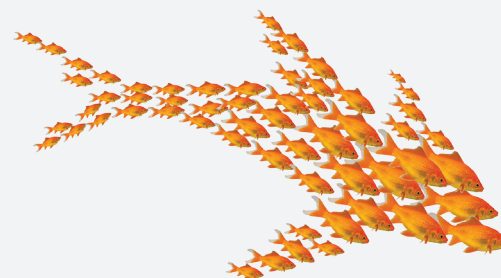


VMCL is empowering because it tells you what to focus on if you don't know what to do. LCMV is prescriptive because it tells you what to do next.

## From SUPERORGANISM to SUPERORGANIZATION

Organizations are complex adaptive systems (CAS). Those that adapt, thrive. We can learn a lot from the self-organizing CAS found in nature (e.g., bird flocks of thousands can turn in sync in a single instant). Scientists call them super-organisms because many independent agents behave as one. These agents follow simple rules, learn from the environment, and adapt their behavior accordingly.

VMCL is a model that shows us how to design and lead a superorganization.



## NOT VISION MISSION FRIENDLY

## VISION MISSION FRIENDLY

### Change Archetypes

#### NAYSAYERS

Oppositional  
Intransigent  
Misinformed  
Status quo  
Combative

Motivated by  
oppositional  
defiance

#### FENCE SITTERS

Passive  
Tentative  
Bystanders  
Undecided  
Skeptical

Motivated by  
strategic or ritual  
compliance

#### SUPPORTERS

Missionaries  
Passionate  
Excited  
Reliable  
Doers

Motivated by ex-  
trinsic and intrinsic  
factors

#### THOUGHT LEADERS

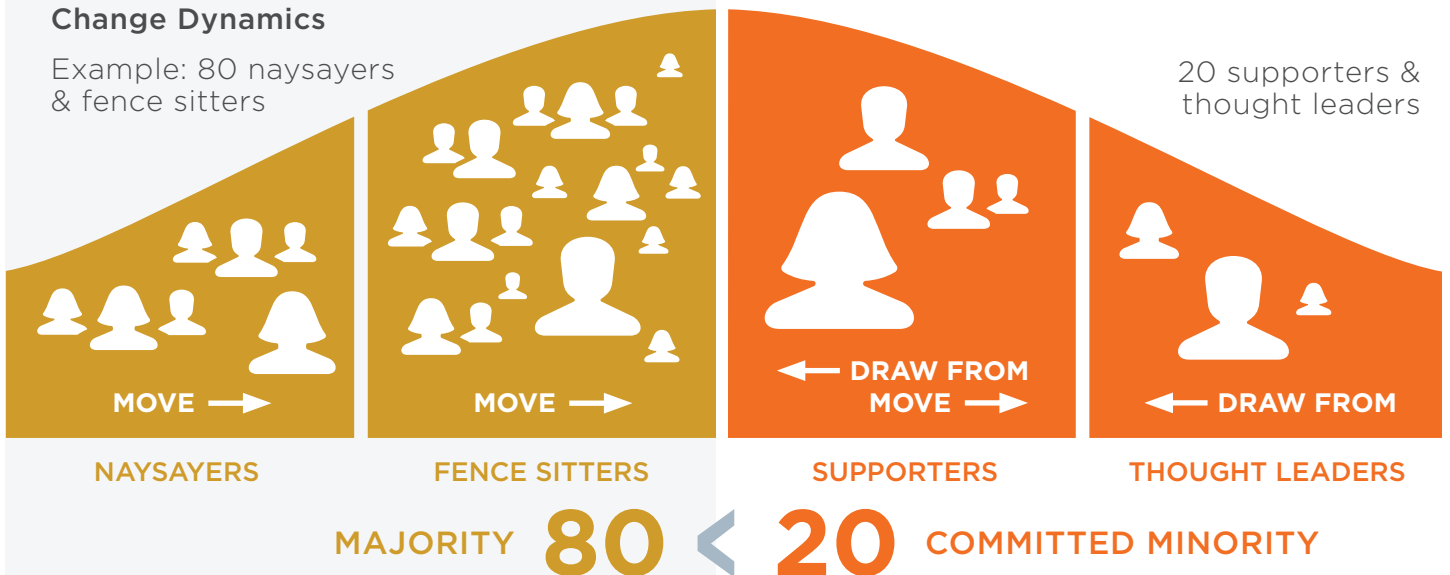
Visionaries  
Evangelists  
Invested  
Risk takers  
Doers/Leaders

Motivated mostly by  
intrinsic factors

### Change Dynamics

Example: 80 naysayers  
& fence sitters

20 supporters &  
thought leaders



NAYSAYERS

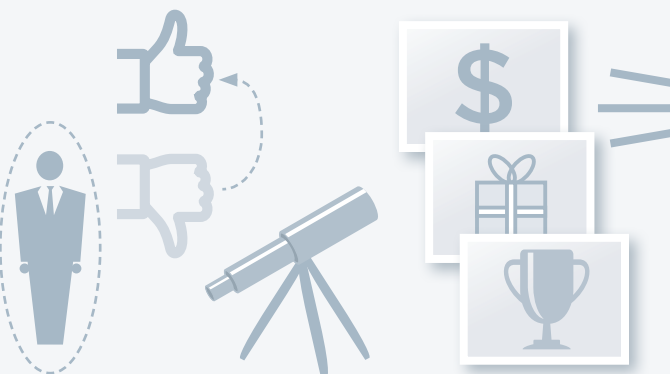
FENCE SITTERS

SUPPORTERS

THOUGHT LEADERS

MAJORITY **80** < **20** COMMITTED MINORITY

### Organizational Change Strategies



Ignore, or  
redirect their  
negative  
energy

Help them  
to see the  
Vision and  
Mission

Show  
party photos/  
withhold  
incentives

GET THEM TO SEE VISION & MISSION

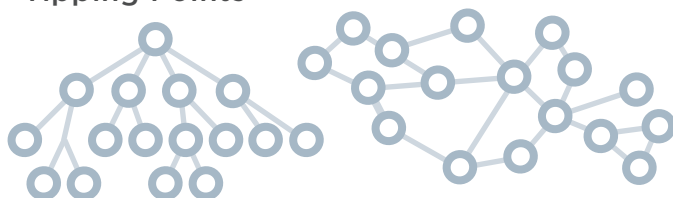


All incentives, rewards,  
and training go here

Show them the  
love. Give them what  
they want/need.  
Let them run.

GET THEM INVOLVED IN VISION & MISSION  
AND CULTURE & LEARNING

### Tipping Points



Our mental models of organizational structure are usually based on hierarchical org charts. But organizations are made up of independent actors with individual motivations, goals, and influence.



Making a cat video go viral requires different processes than making a paradigm shift go viral. Committed minorities lead to tipping points in learning curve-based paradigm change.



ThinkWater is a national campaign supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help people of all backgrounds and ages think and care deeply about water. It does so by applying systems thinking to existing water education and research efforts and by actively engaging people in a new way around water issues. Our Mission-Vision is to Engage, Educate and Empower 7 Billion Systems Thinkers to solve wicked water problems.

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