

# SWARM ORGANISATION

*The vital next step  
in organisation  
development*



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[www.swarm-organisation.com](http://www.swarm-organisation.com)

EVERT BLEIJENBERG

# SWARM ORGANISATION

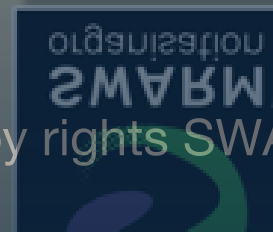
*The vital next step  
in organisation  
development*

FULLY  
REVISED  
EDITION



*“The fact that hierarchic organisations require ever more regulations and control to function is a clear indication that this model has reached the end of its operational lifespan”*

*Evert Bleijenberg MBA, Author*

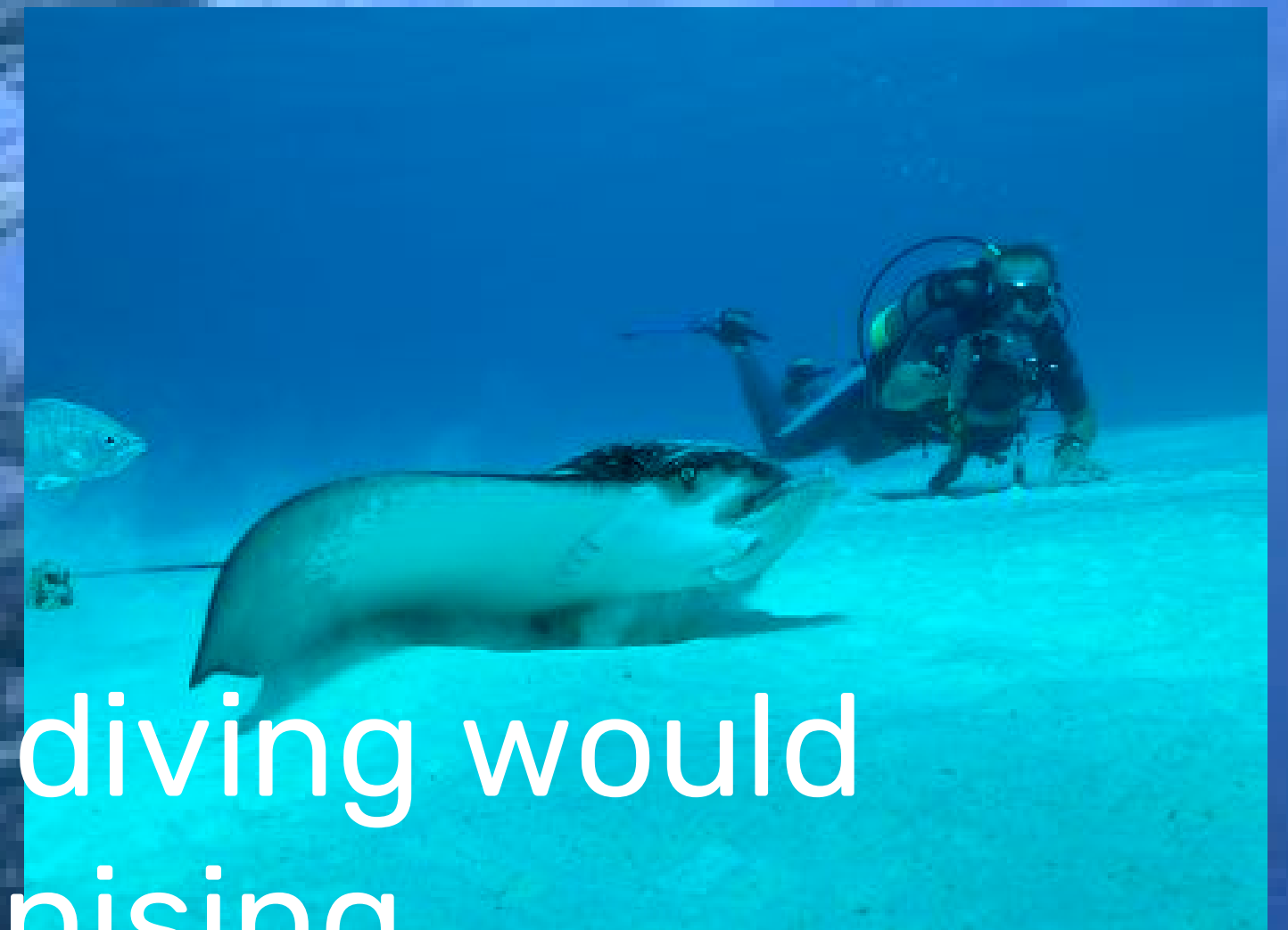




# My journey





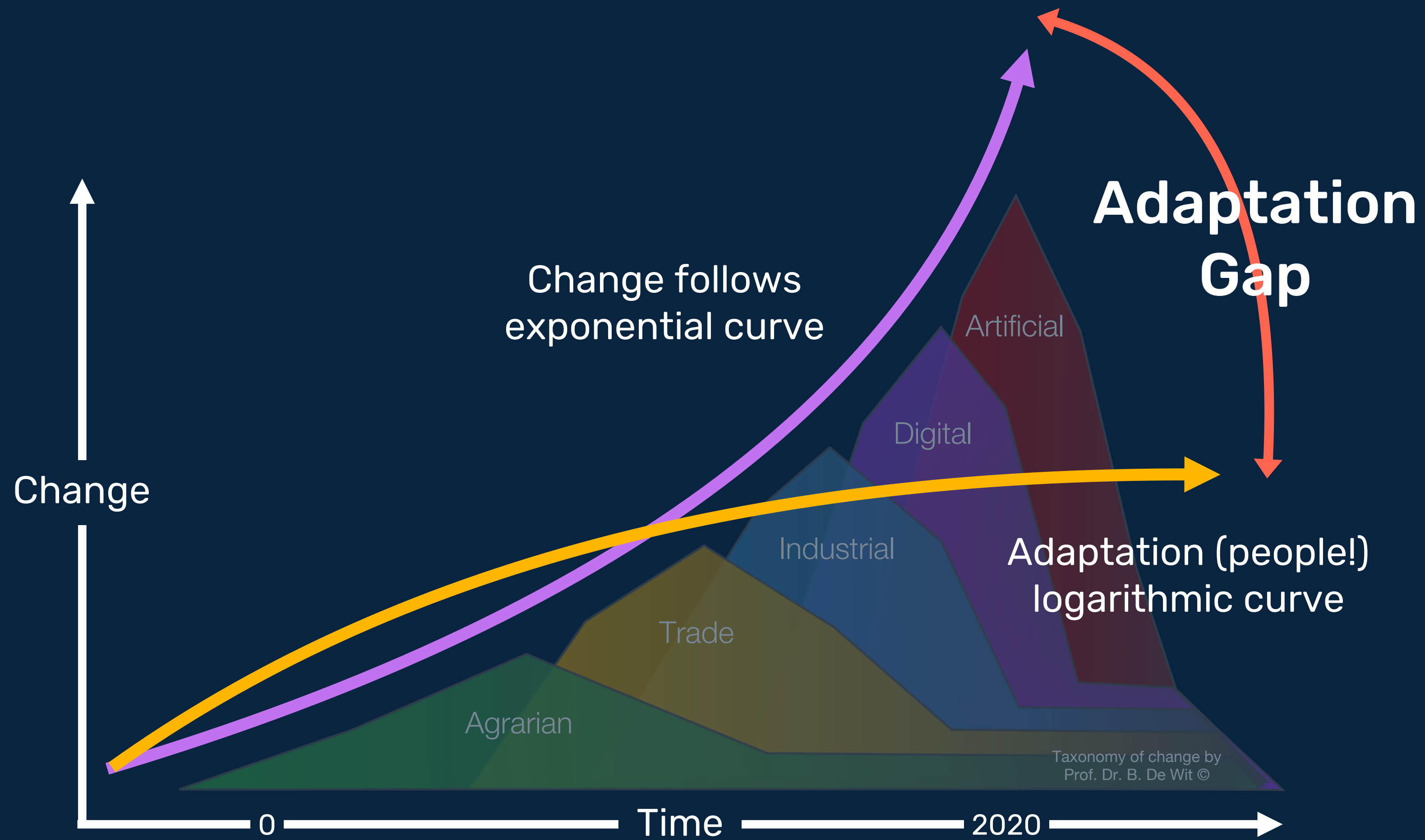


I never expected that my passion for diving would show me a new future for organising.

# WHAT 'S GOING ON?



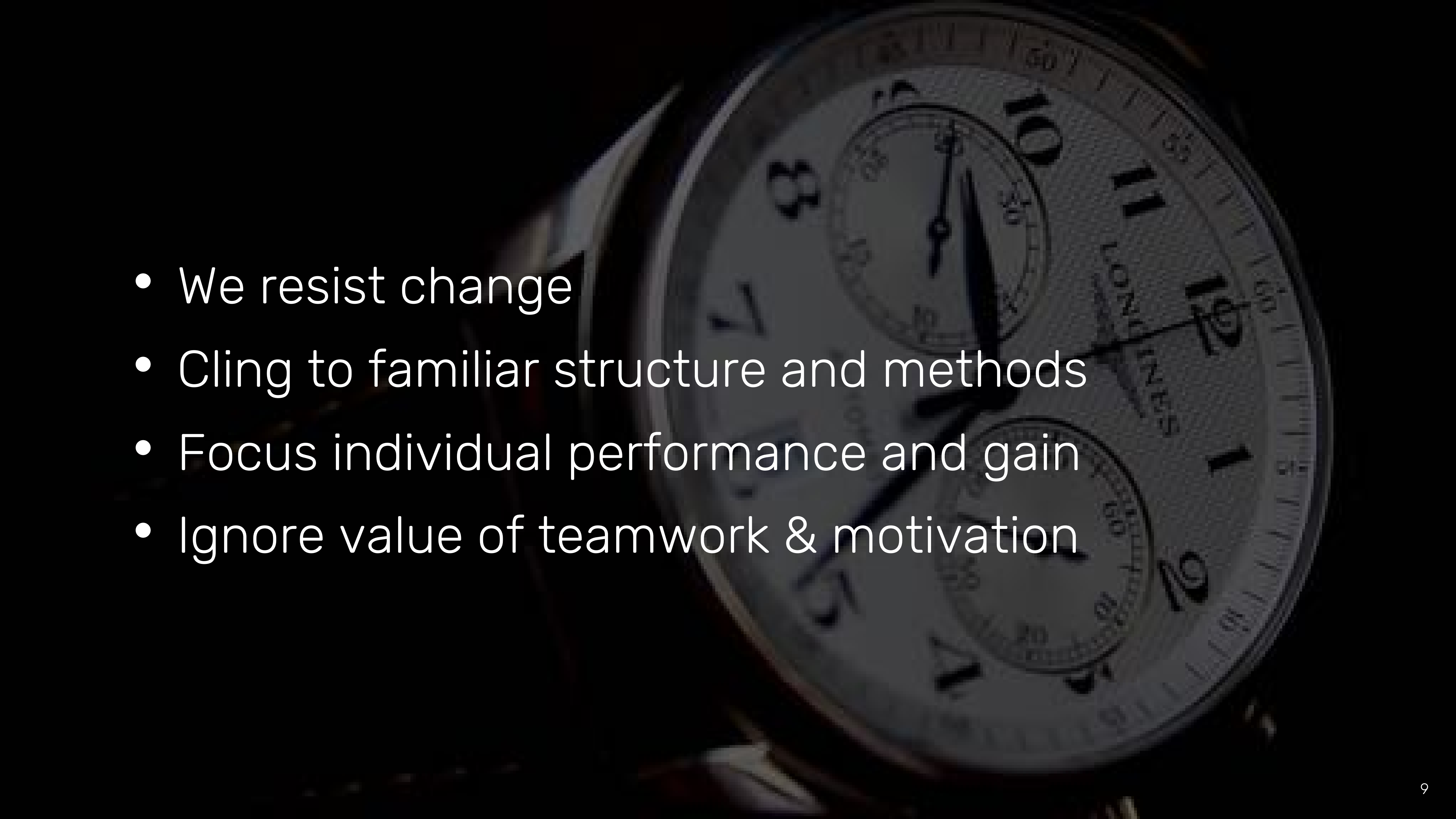
# The Adaptation Gap (Martec's law)







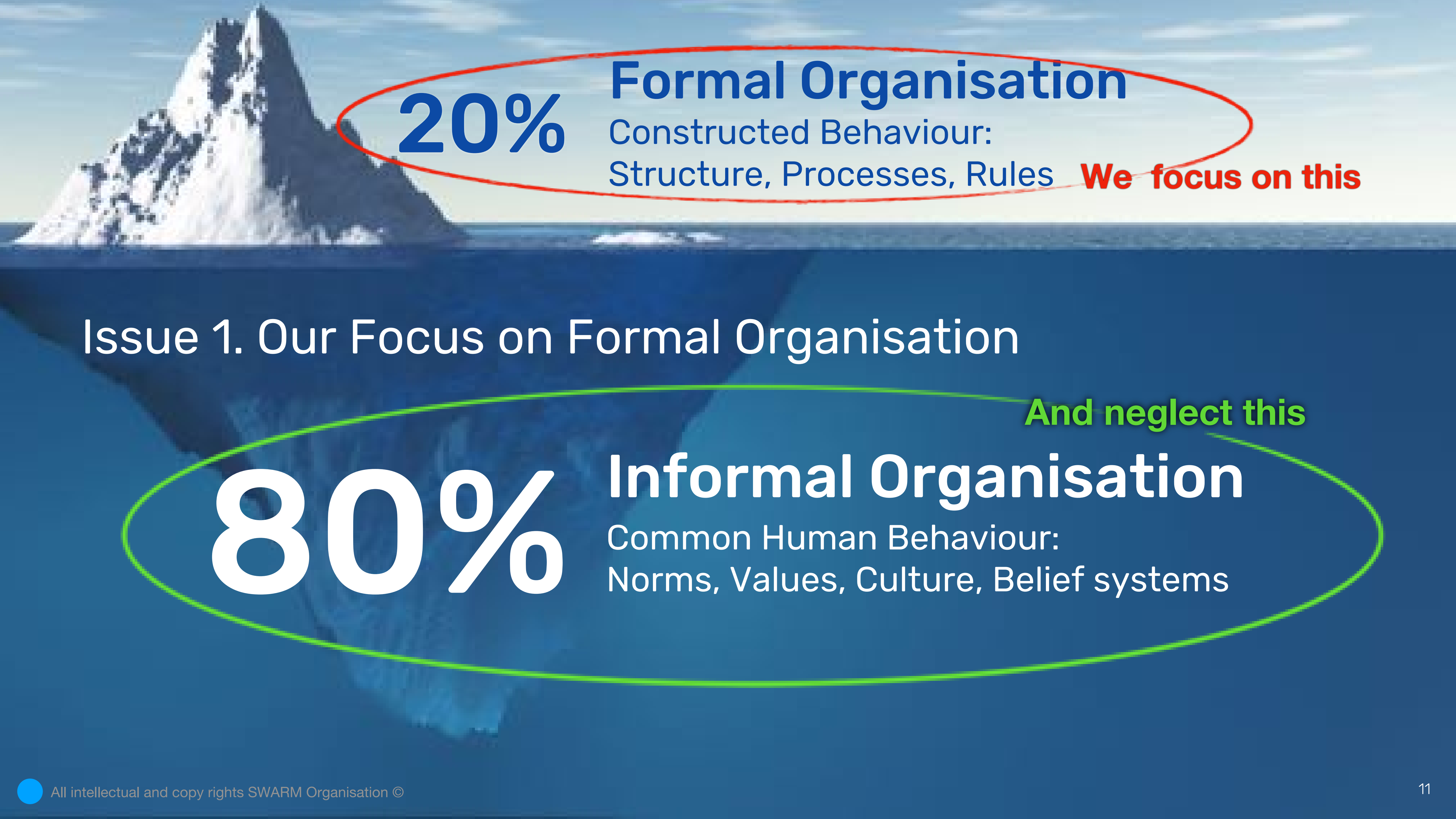
It's our  
**THINKING & BEHAVIOUR**

- 
- We resist change
  - Cling to familiar structure and methods
  - Focus individual performance and gain
  - Ignore value of teamwork & motivation

We address 21st century problems  
with industrial age solutions





An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg, which is above the water, is small and represents formal organization. The much larger part of the iceberg, which is submerged below the water, represents informal organization. A red oval highlights the tip, and a green oval highlights the submerged part.

**20%**

## **Formal Organisation**

Constructed Behaviour:

Structure, Processes, Rules **We focus on this**

### Issue 1. Our Focus on Formal Organisation

**And neglect this**

**80%**

## **Informal Organisation**

Common Human Behaviour:

Norms, Values, Culture, Belief systems

## Issue 2. Our Focus on Central Leadership

Hierarchic organisations position leaders as the epicenter for resolutions and decisions.

**This inevitably makes them the focal point for conflict, obstruction and corruption.**

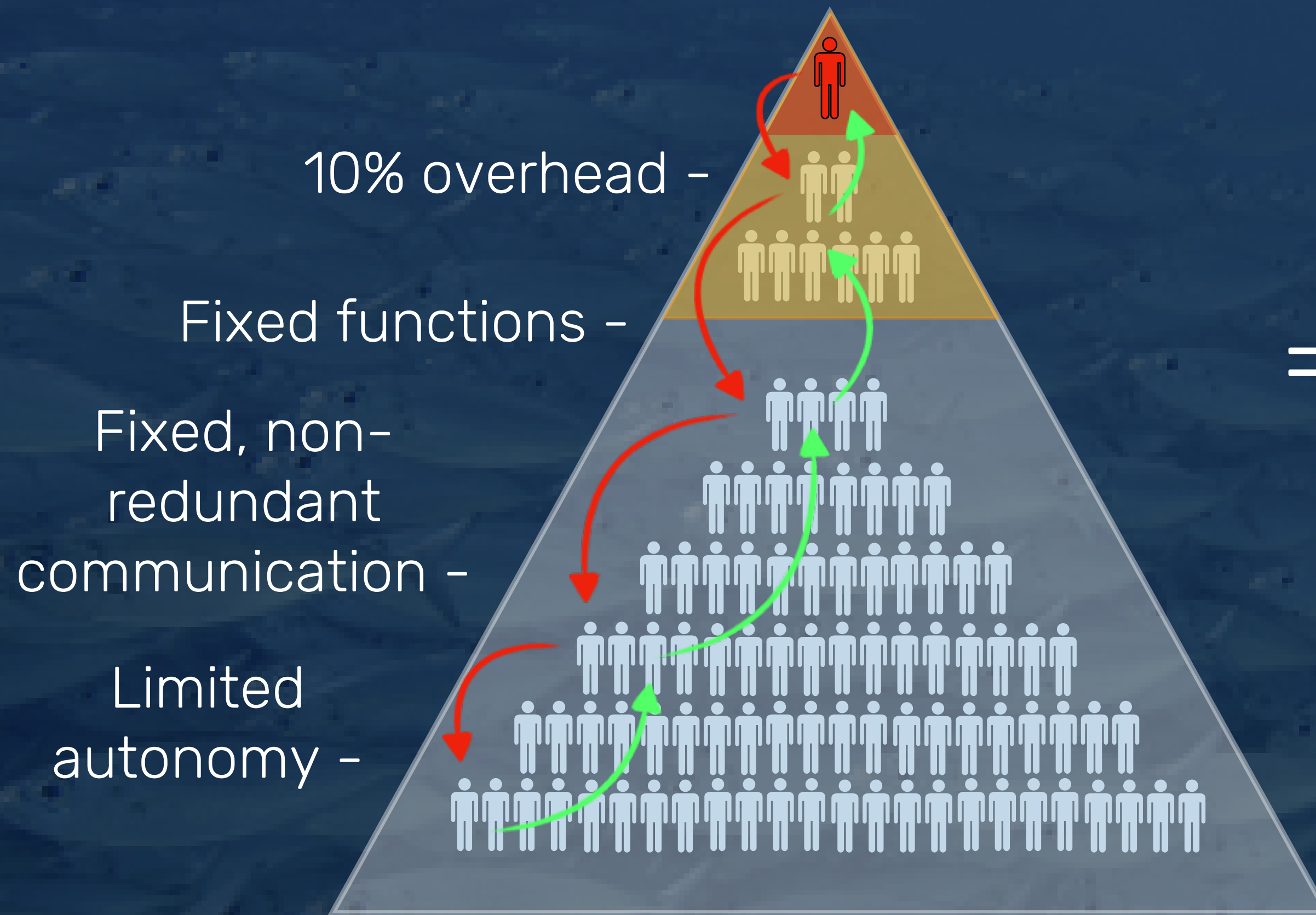
# Issue 3. The Control Conviction



How beneficial is extensive control for organisation intelligence?



# Issue 4. Traditional Hierarchic Structures



= Innovative, Connective,  
Adaptative?  
**Future proof ?**

# Key realisation



“A lack of  
innovation, adaptation and connection  
is mostly not due to a lack of  
good ideas, human flexibility and empathy”

**“It’s a consequence of  
highly structured organisation”**



Is there an alternative?

And **WHAT** does that look like?





# Swarm Intelligence



Is the pinnacle of connective,  
innovative and adaptive behaviour

Creates the right behaviour, for any  
situation at any moment in time

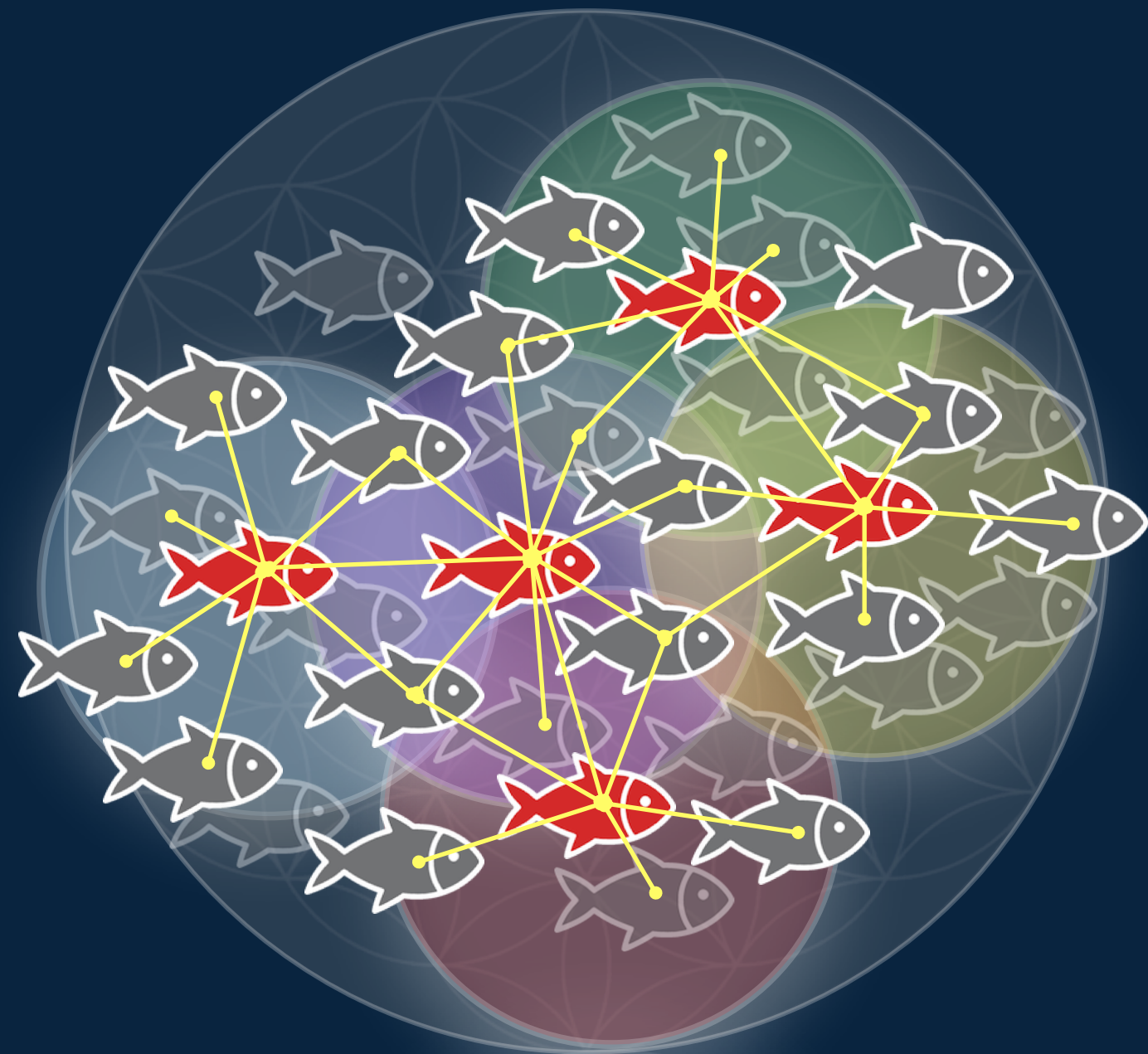
99%

Efficient

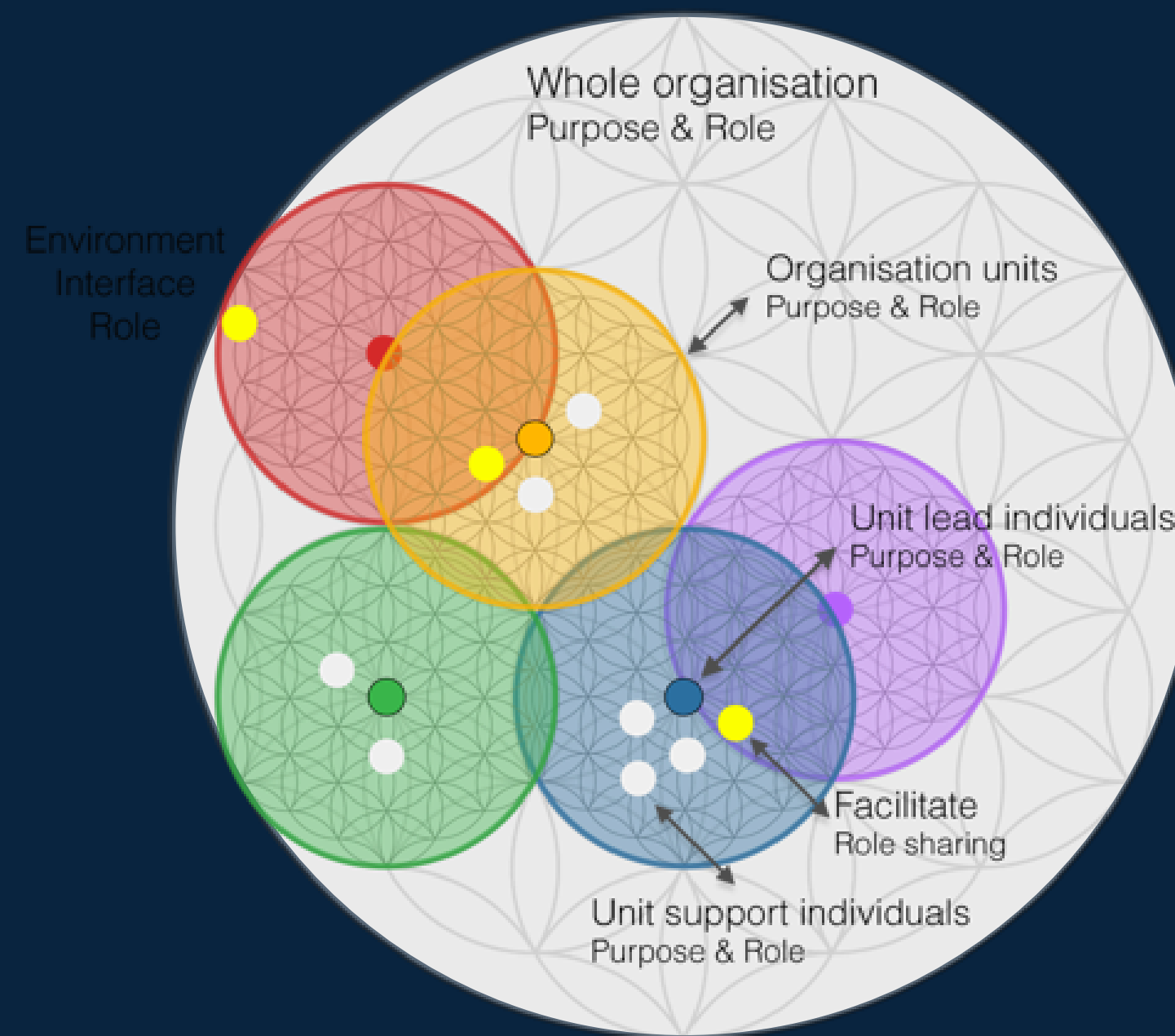
# HOW?

# 3 Steps to SWARM

**1** Adopt narrative of self-organisation



**2** Adopt a facilitating organisation structure

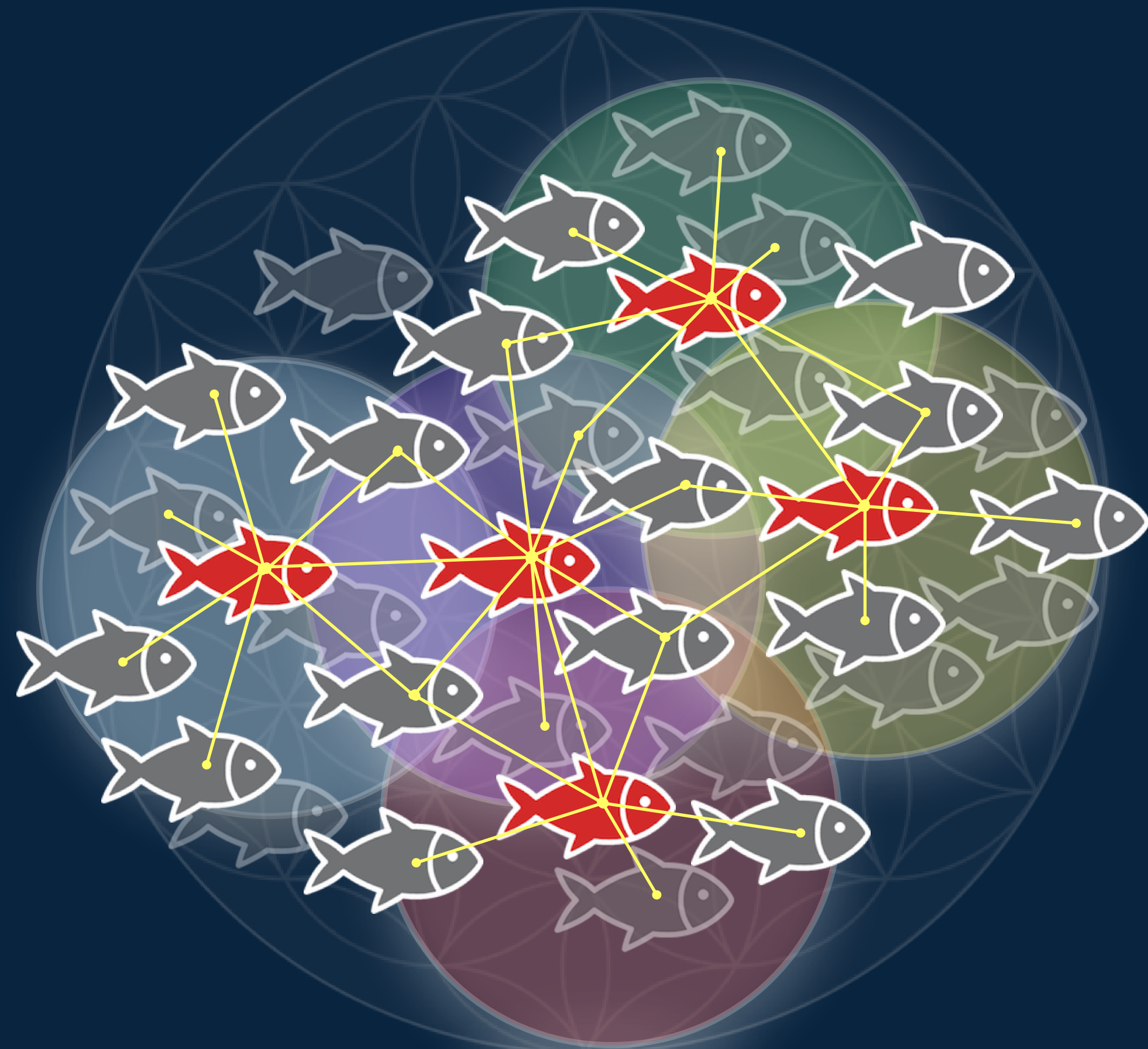


**3** Develop an adaptive mind-set & behaviour



Create adaptive - self-organising - future proof - organisations





# A New Narrative

The 6 principles of natural self-organisation

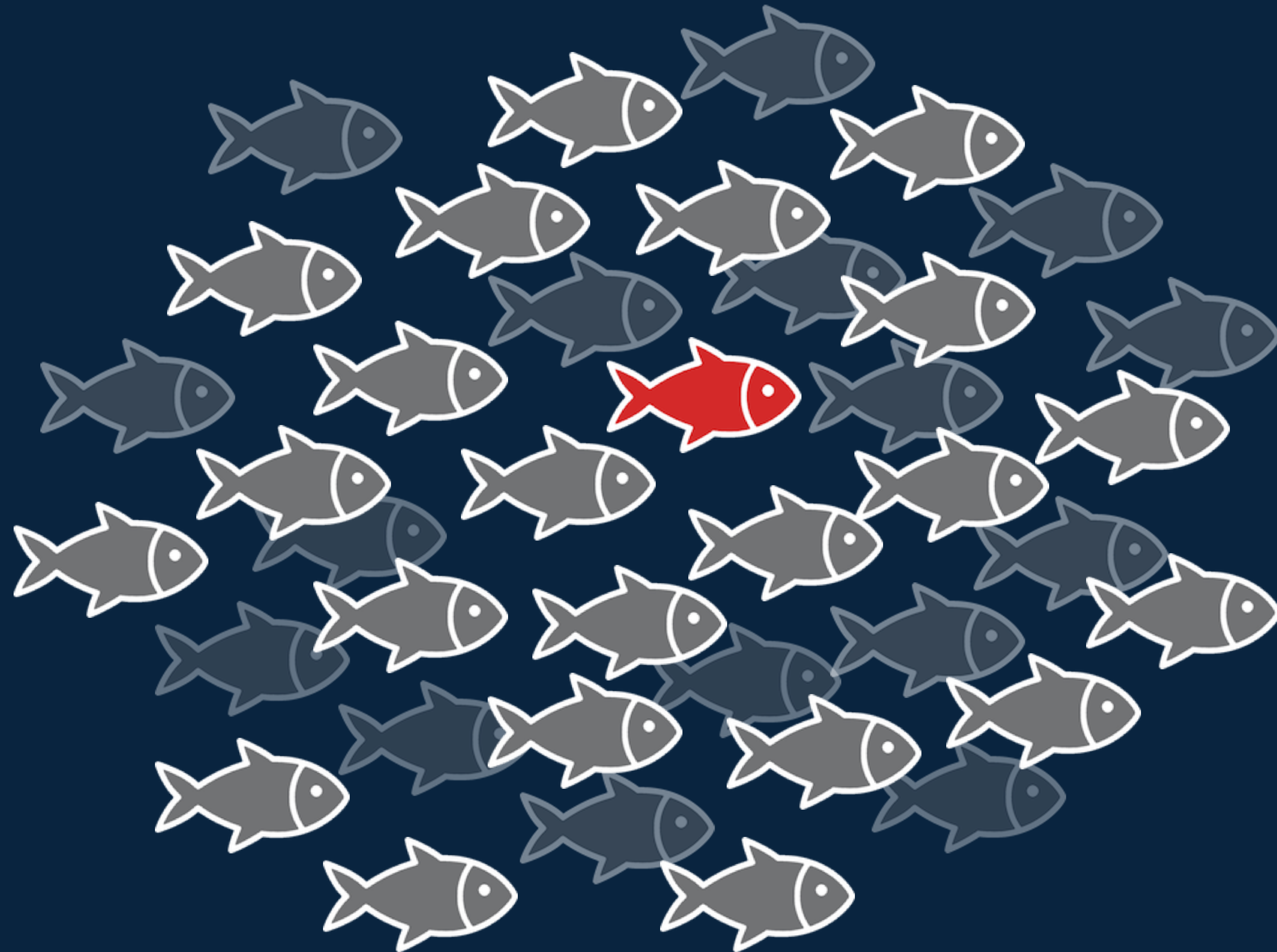


# Meet the subject

**Has no idea of 'the World'.**



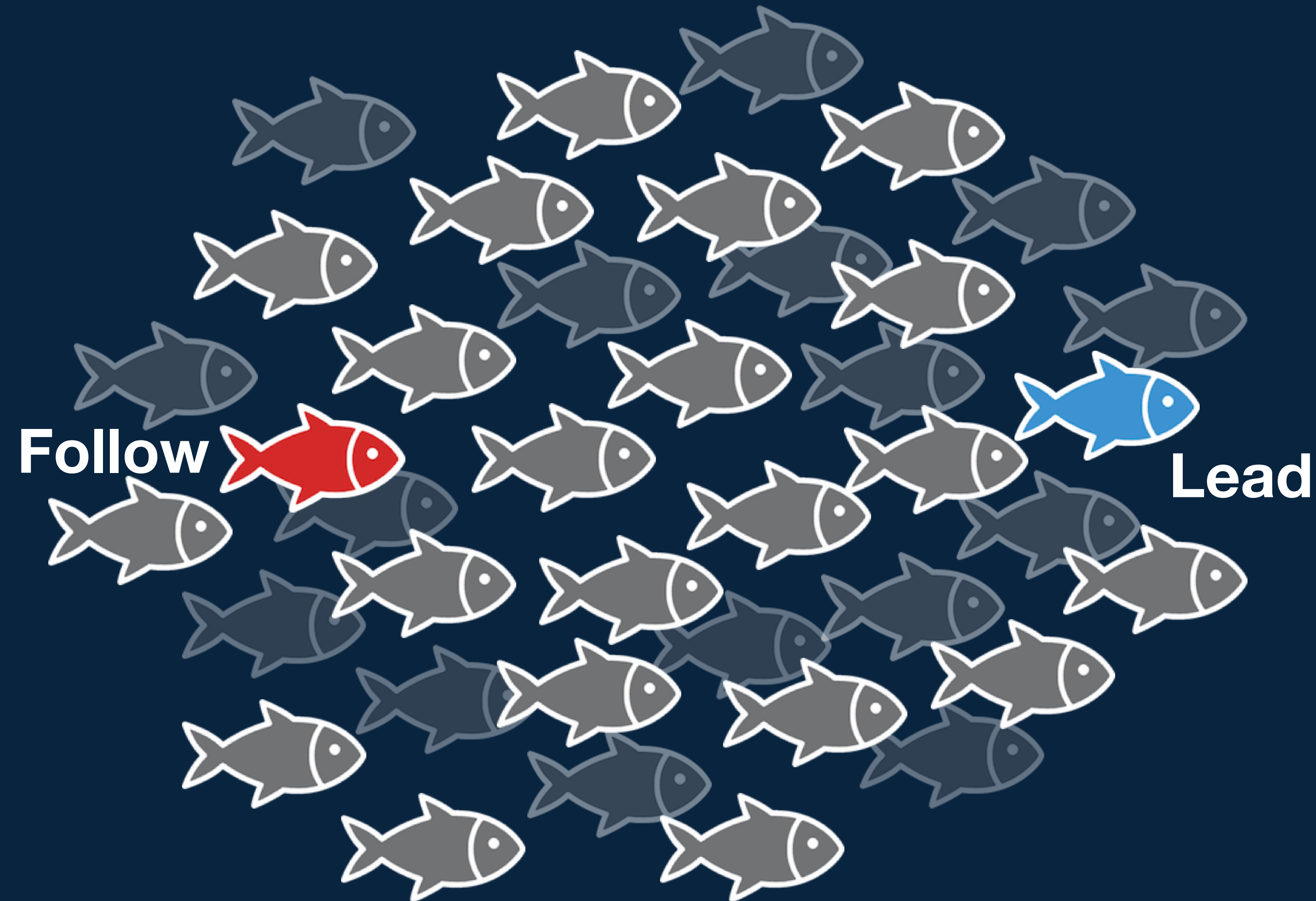
# (1) The swarm facilitates self-organisation of fully autonomous entities



- No one is 'in charge'
- They pursue a common goal based on individual motivation
- The Swarm is fully purpose driven

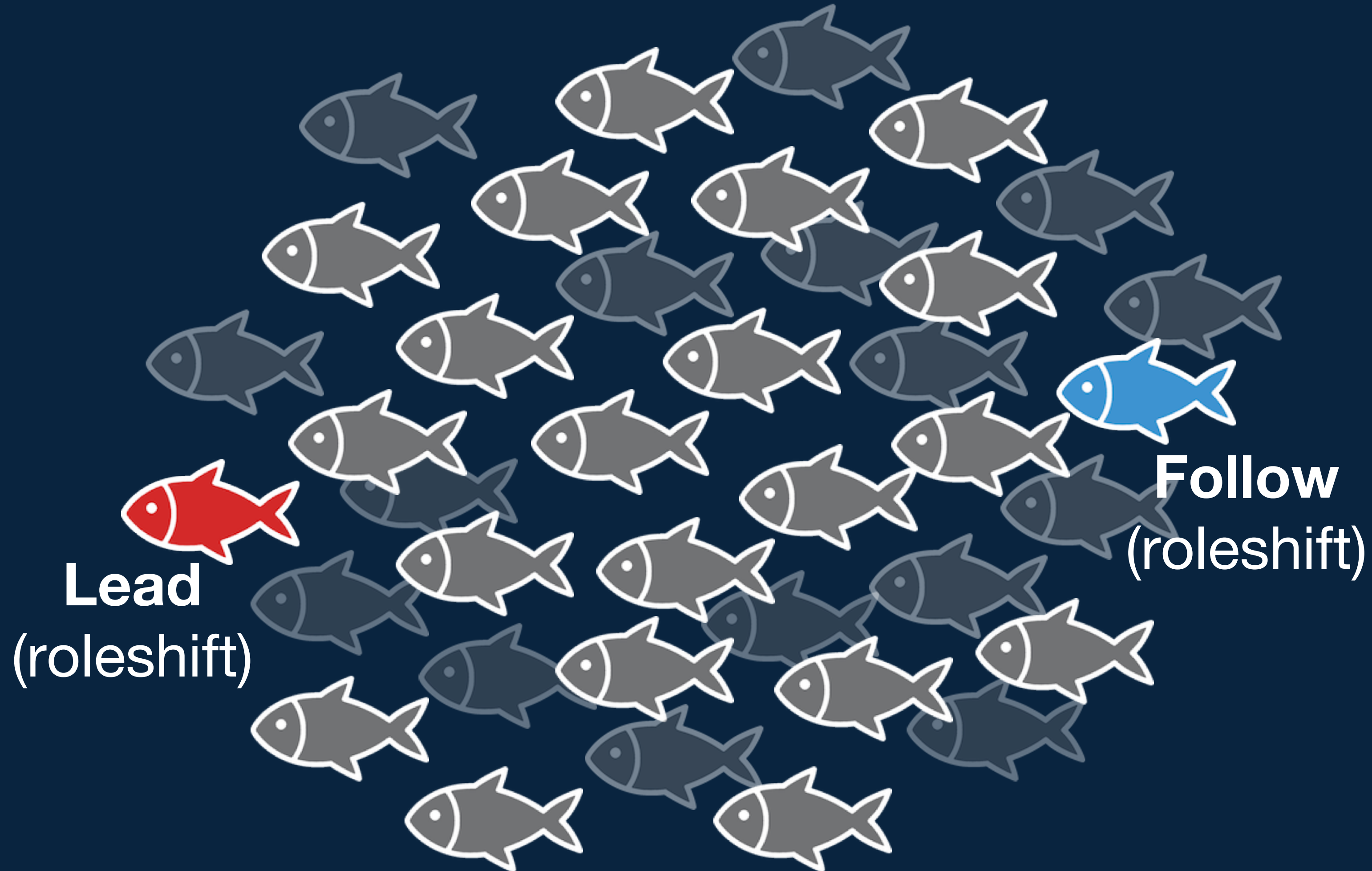


## (2) Role based organisation design



- Fulfill a purpose
- Self-assigned roles
- Based on need

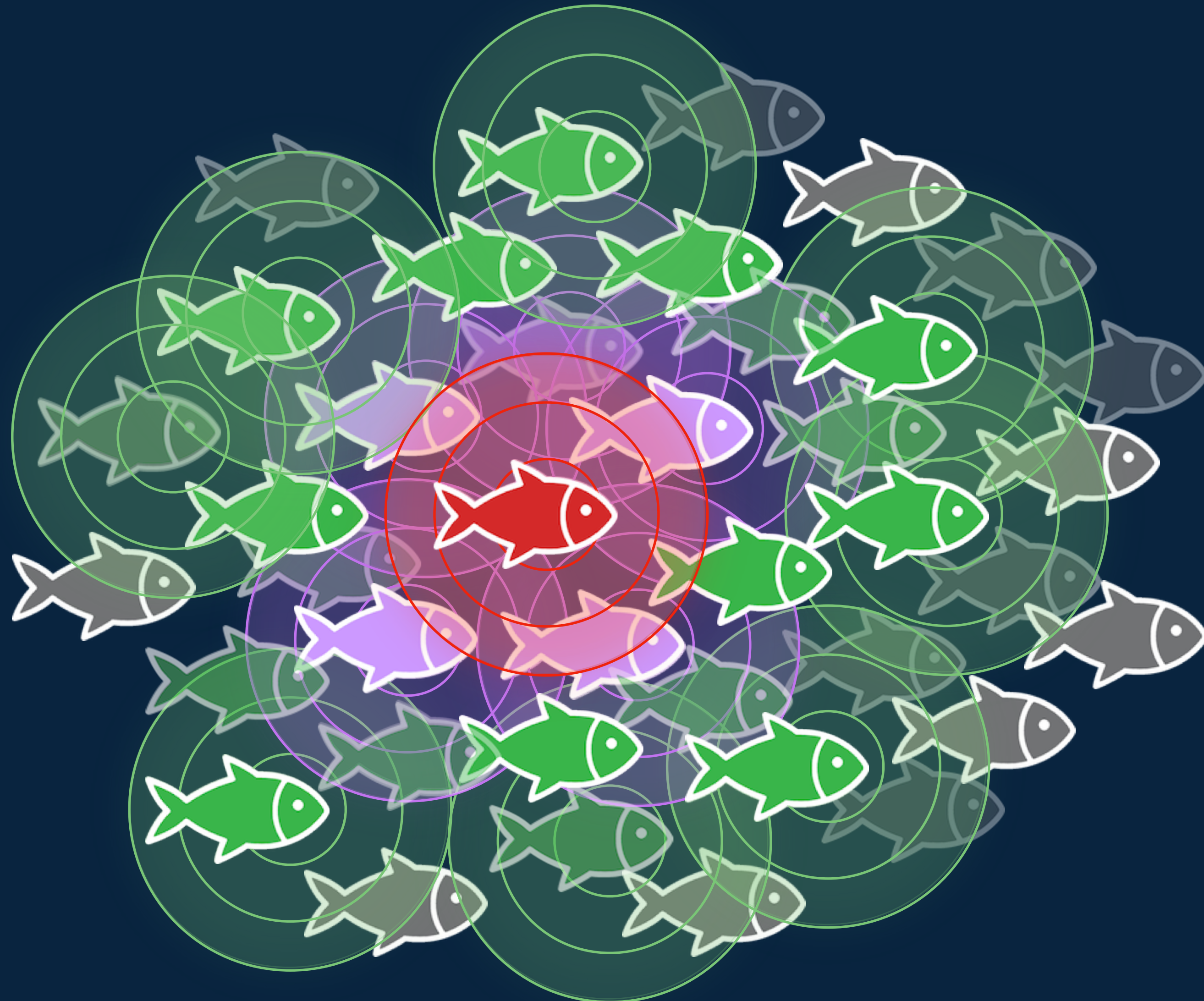
# (3) Simultaneous generalism & specialism



- Creates unsurpassed flexibility & efficiency

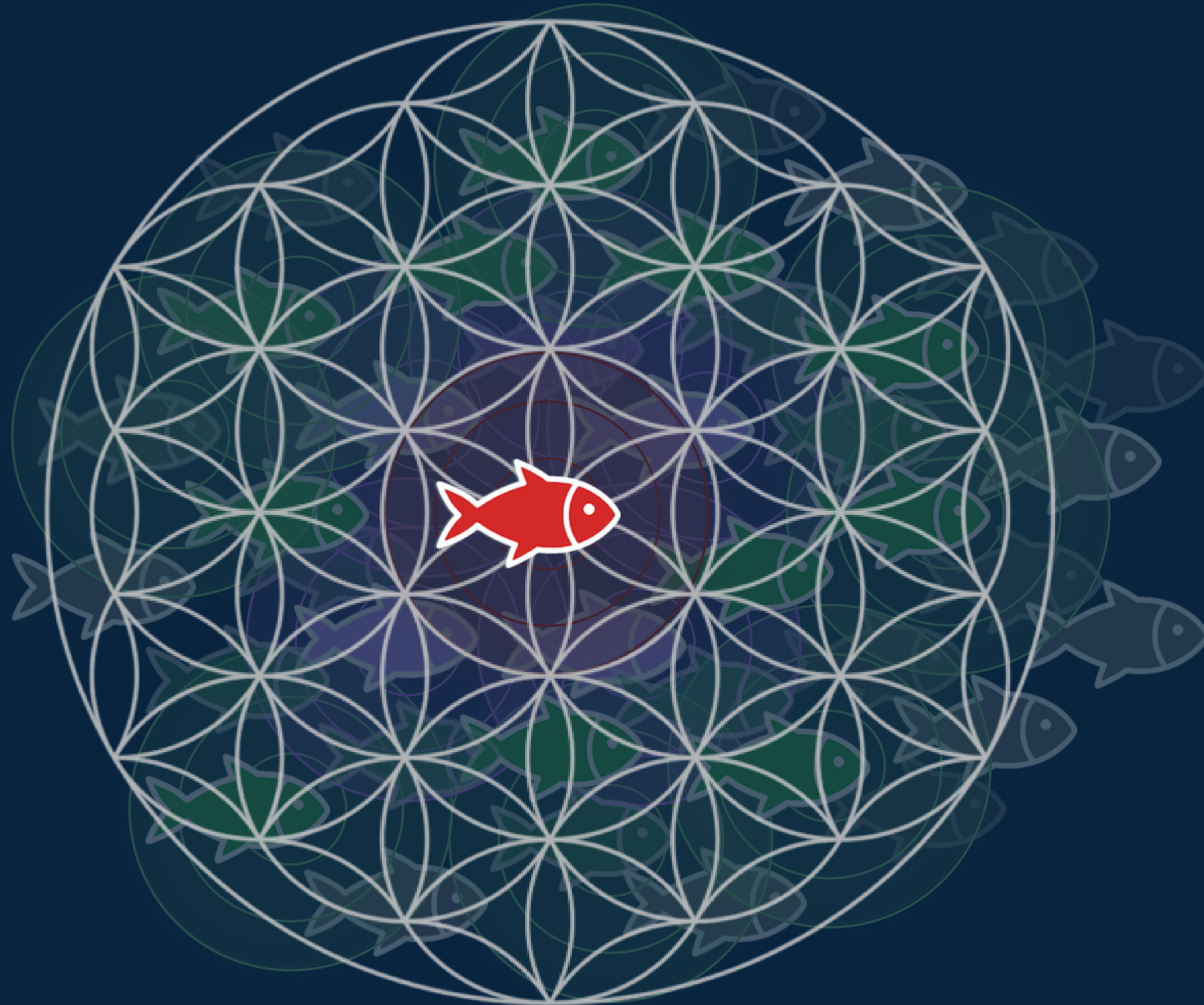


(4) All entities mirror each other  
and the whole collective





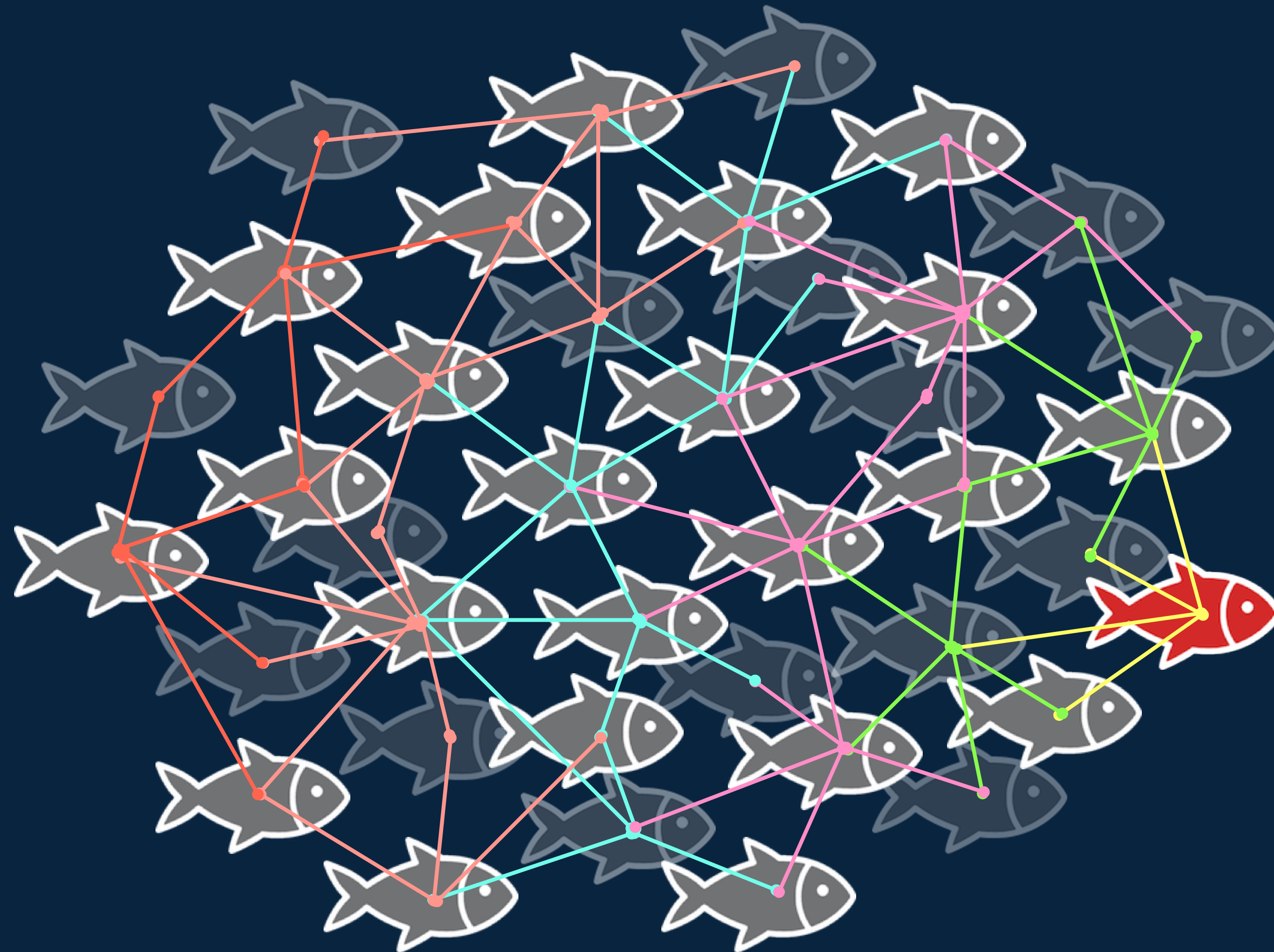
## (4) All entities mirror each other and the whole collective



- Every individual is a mirror image of the whole
- The Swarm is **holographic**

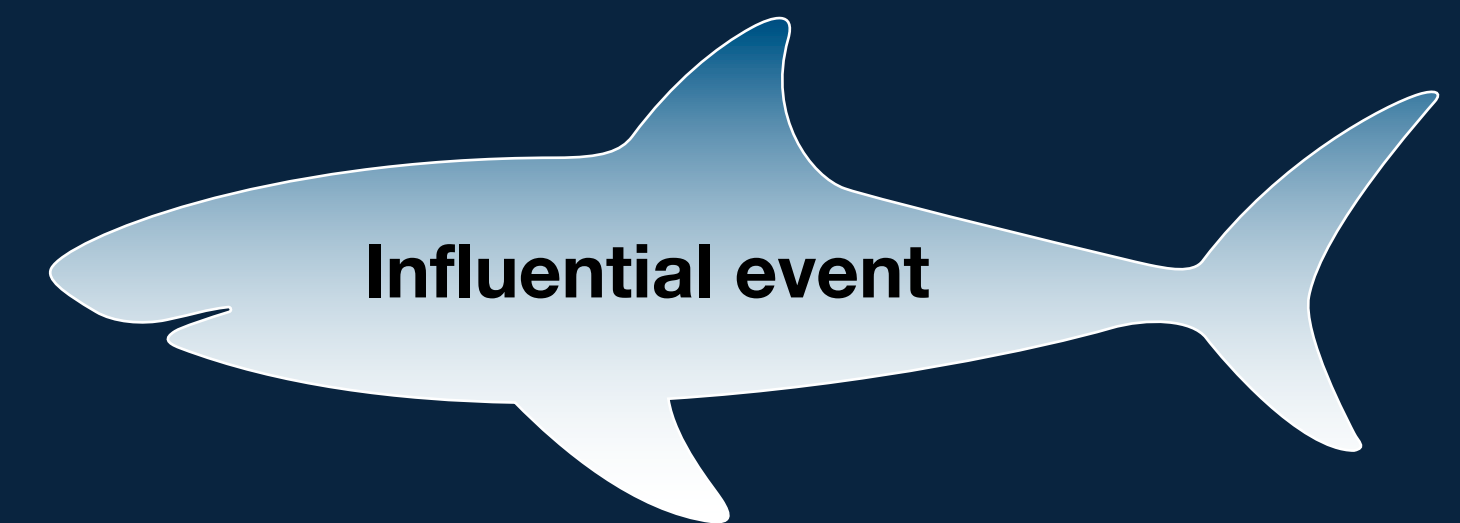


# (5) Redundant connectivity secures the information flow



## Redundant connection

- No information is ever lost, hidden, withheld or manipulated

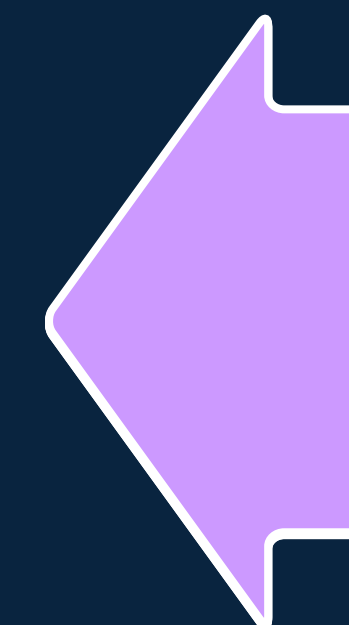




## (6) Internal diversity matches variety of the environment



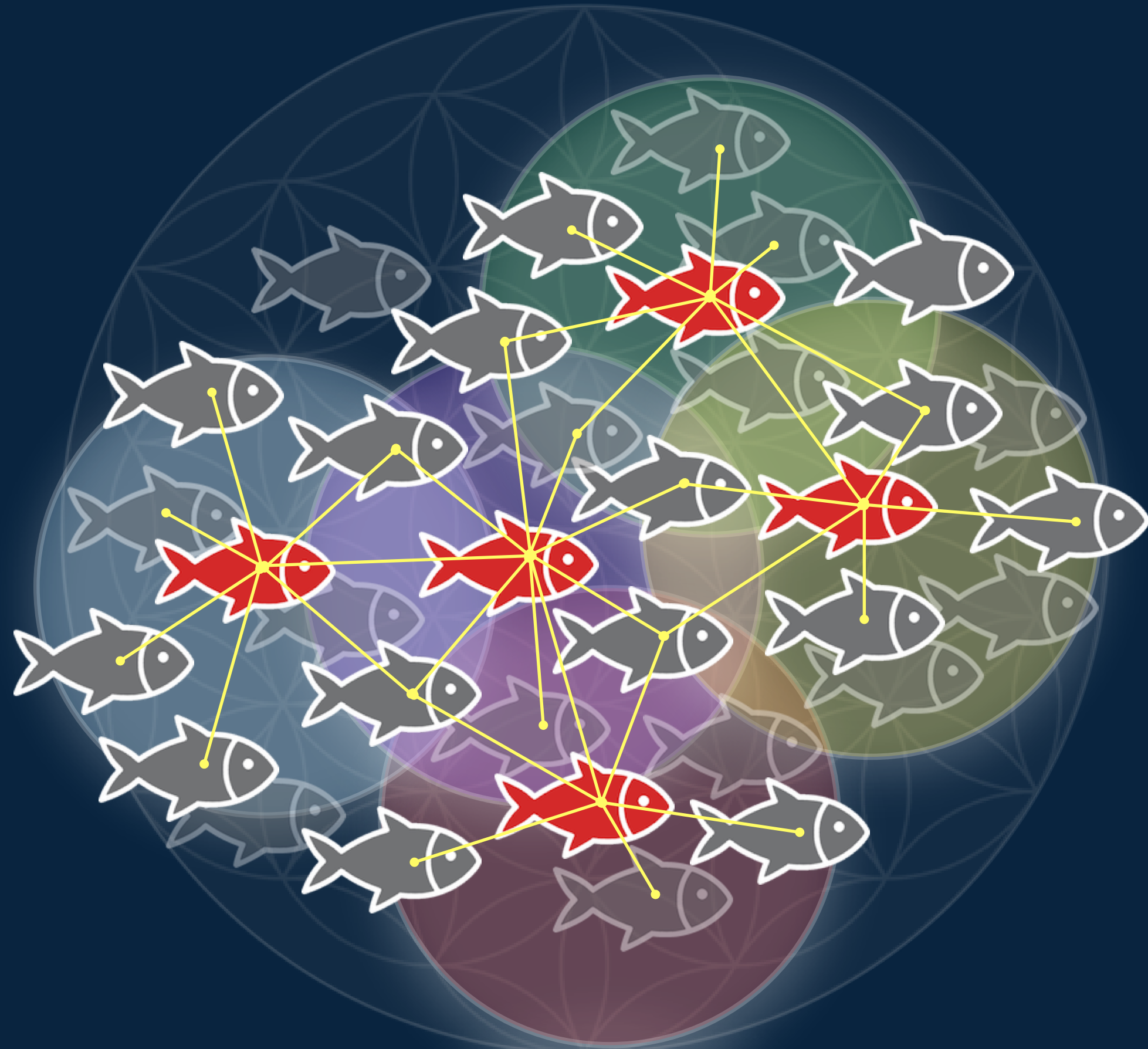
- Internal diversity facilitates **hyper adaptivity**



Input from  
environment



# Benefits



- Innovative, adapt extremely fast
- Highly connected & informed
- Fluidly organise around events
- Solve problems at point of occurrence
- Role exchange, highly efficient
- Resilient & future proof

**Resonate and are in full flow**

# Human self-organisation

## Imagine a soccer team

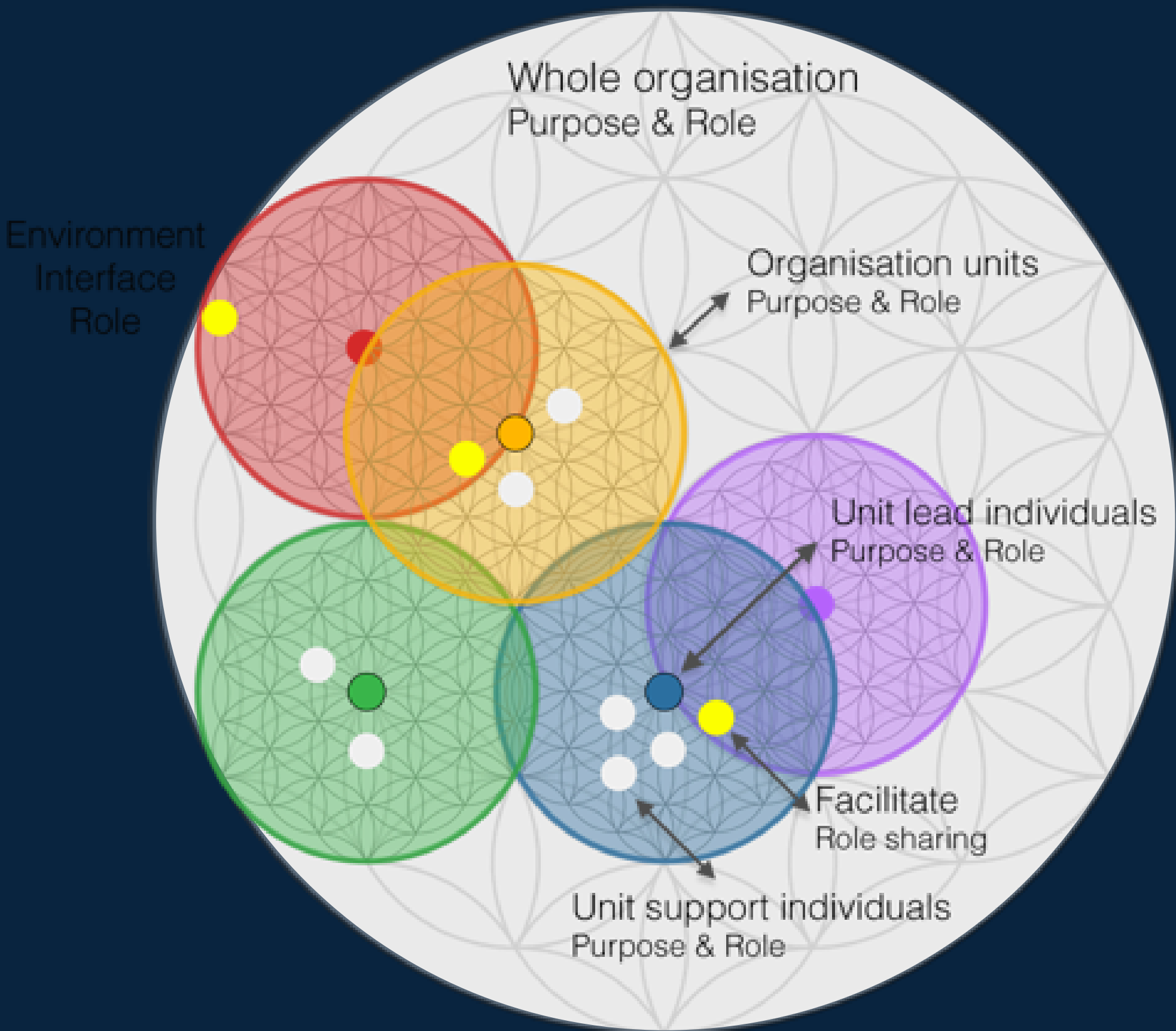
- All players are autonomous
- The team is role based
- All are generalist and have a specialism
- All mirror each other
- All are redundantly connected
- They are extremely diverse
- Have a strong commonality
- And common purpose

**A soccer team is a self-organizing collective.**

**A mini SWARM !!!**

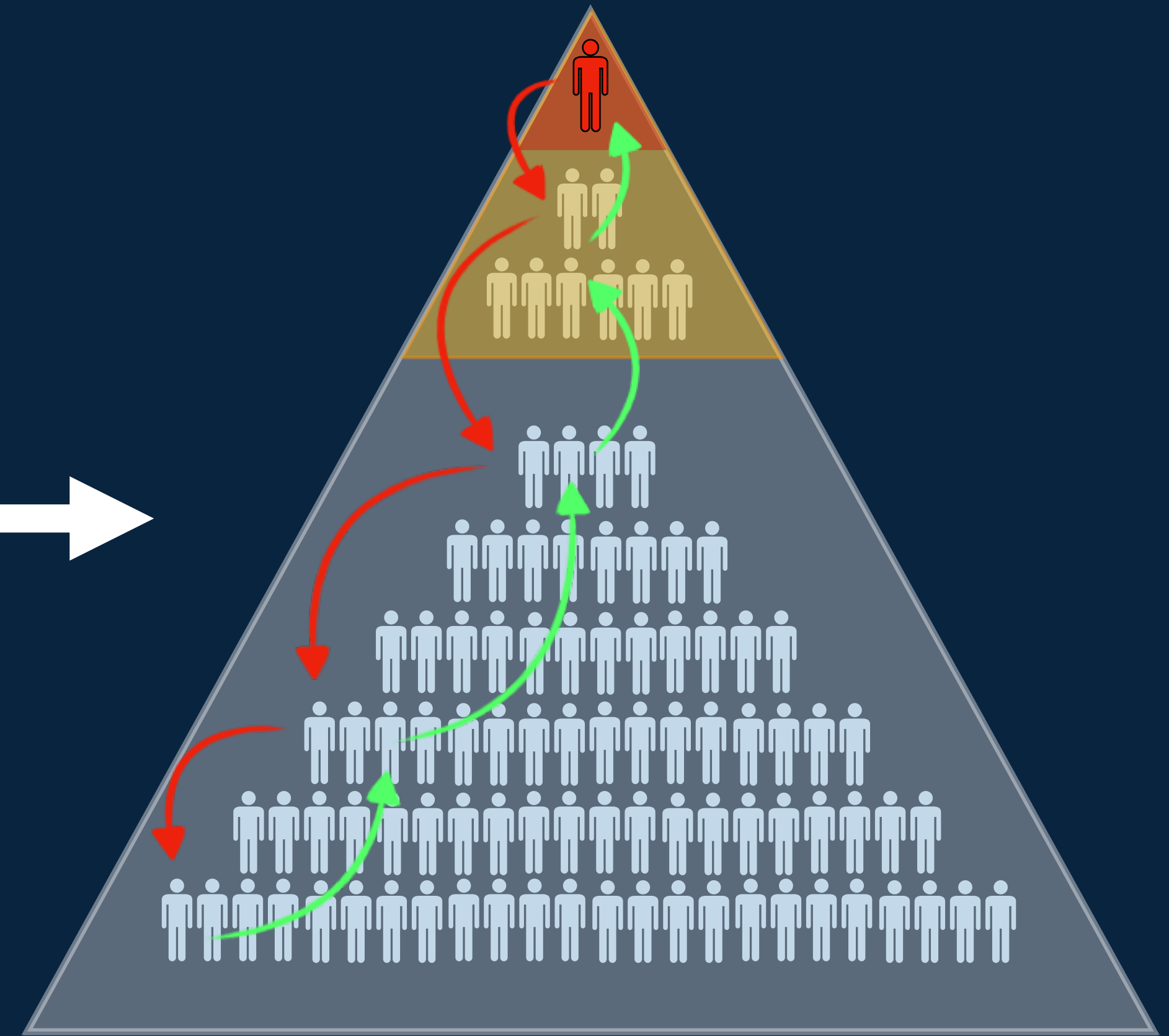
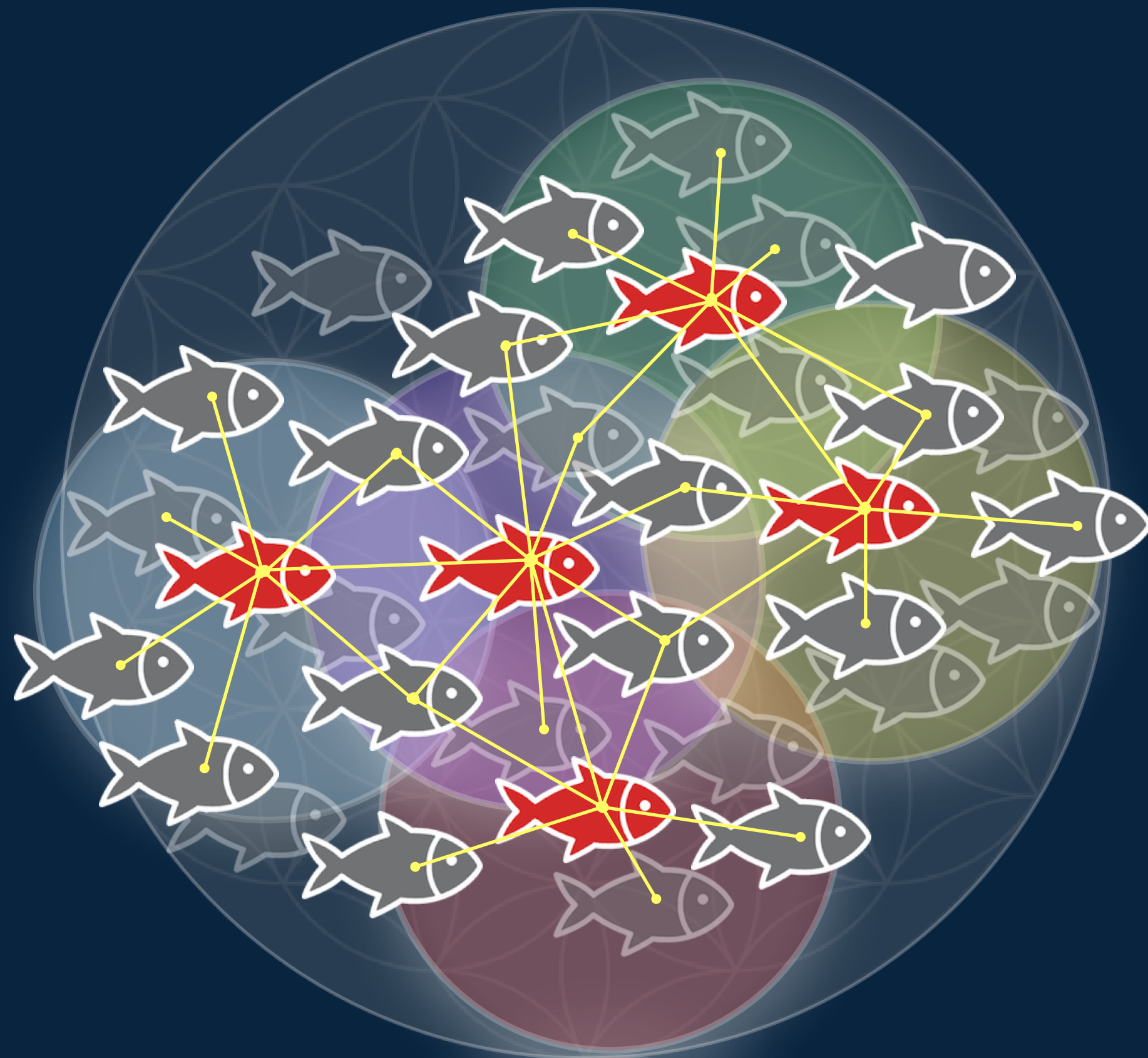






# A New Structure

# Step 2: Structure



# How do we structure this?



# A practical framework

## Fundamental guidelines

- Role & purpose determine the structure
- Structure is never fixed, it's *extremely flexible*
- Inspiration, motivation & attitude, transcend structure
- Autonomy, self-responsibility & empathy are rudimentary

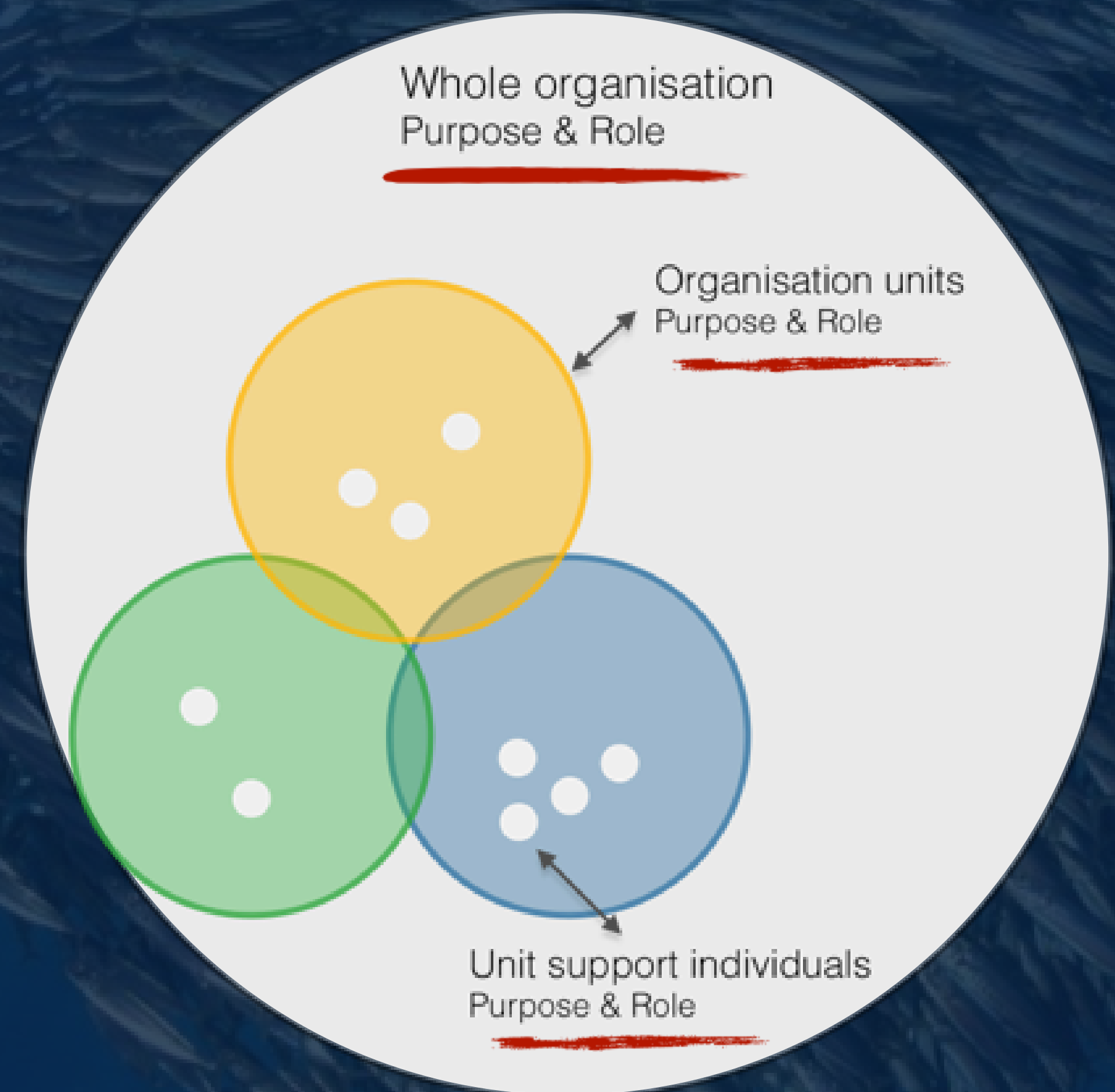
Structure always follows a need

It delivers a value proposition for all stakeholders

## Format

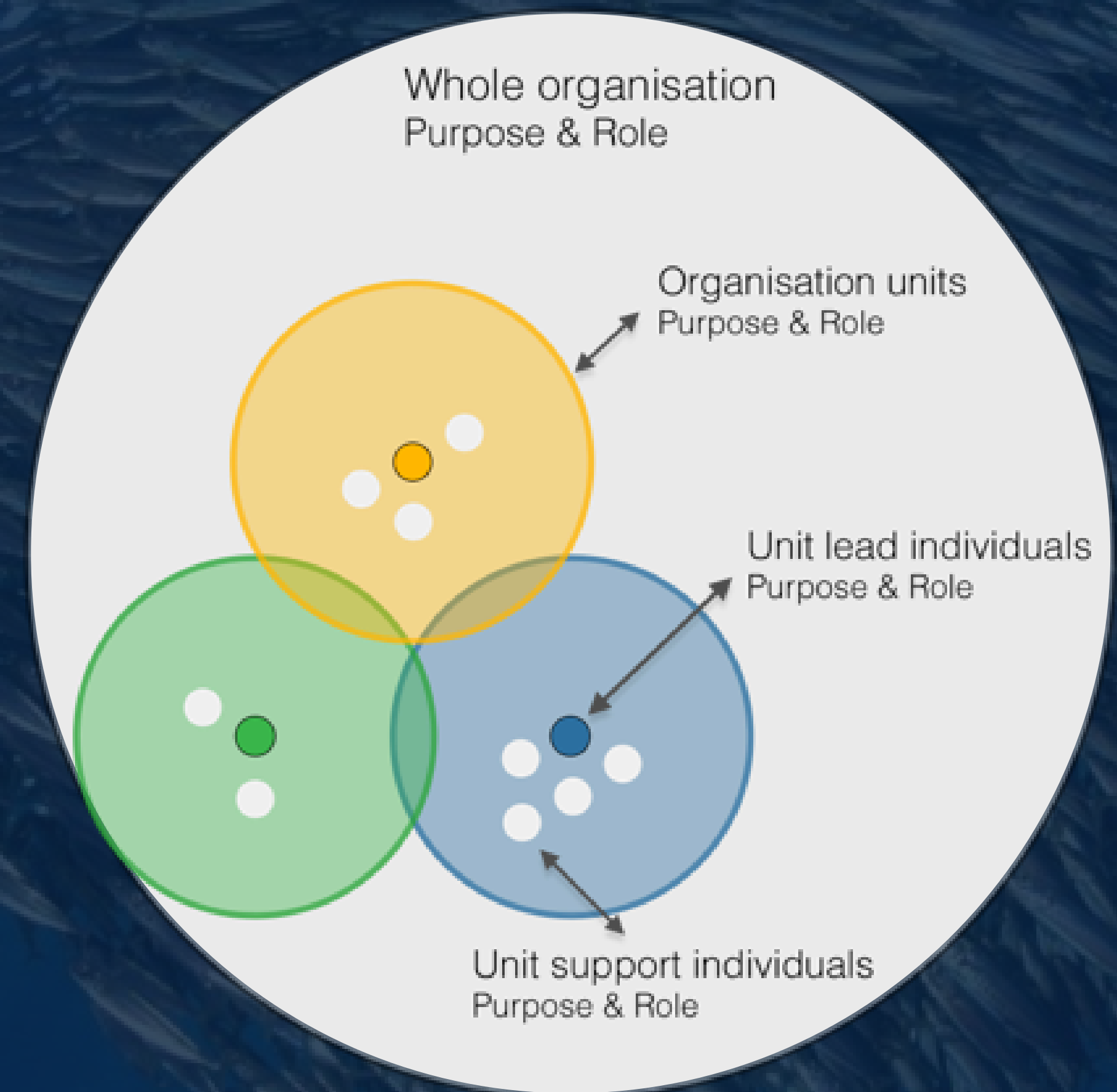
- Define organisation in spheres
- That fulfill a role, purpose and tasks
- Roles are solely based on a need
- And thus not permanent

Role & purpose follow the consensus of the environment



## Fulfilling roles

- Individual motivation
- Can be more than one
- And shared between teams/units
- **Leadership remains !**
- Authority is in role, not the person



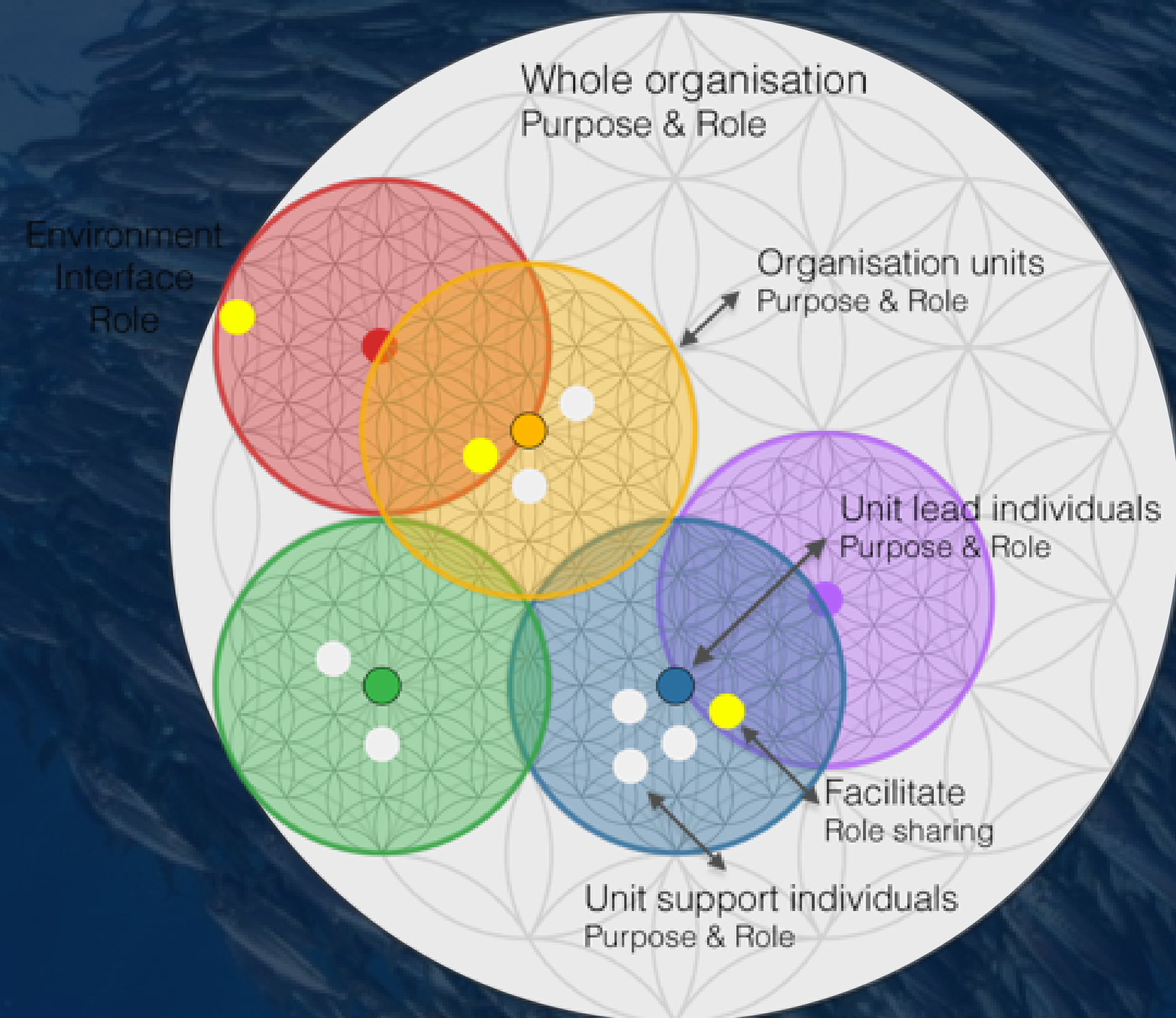
**Benefit is linked to participation**



## Create holography

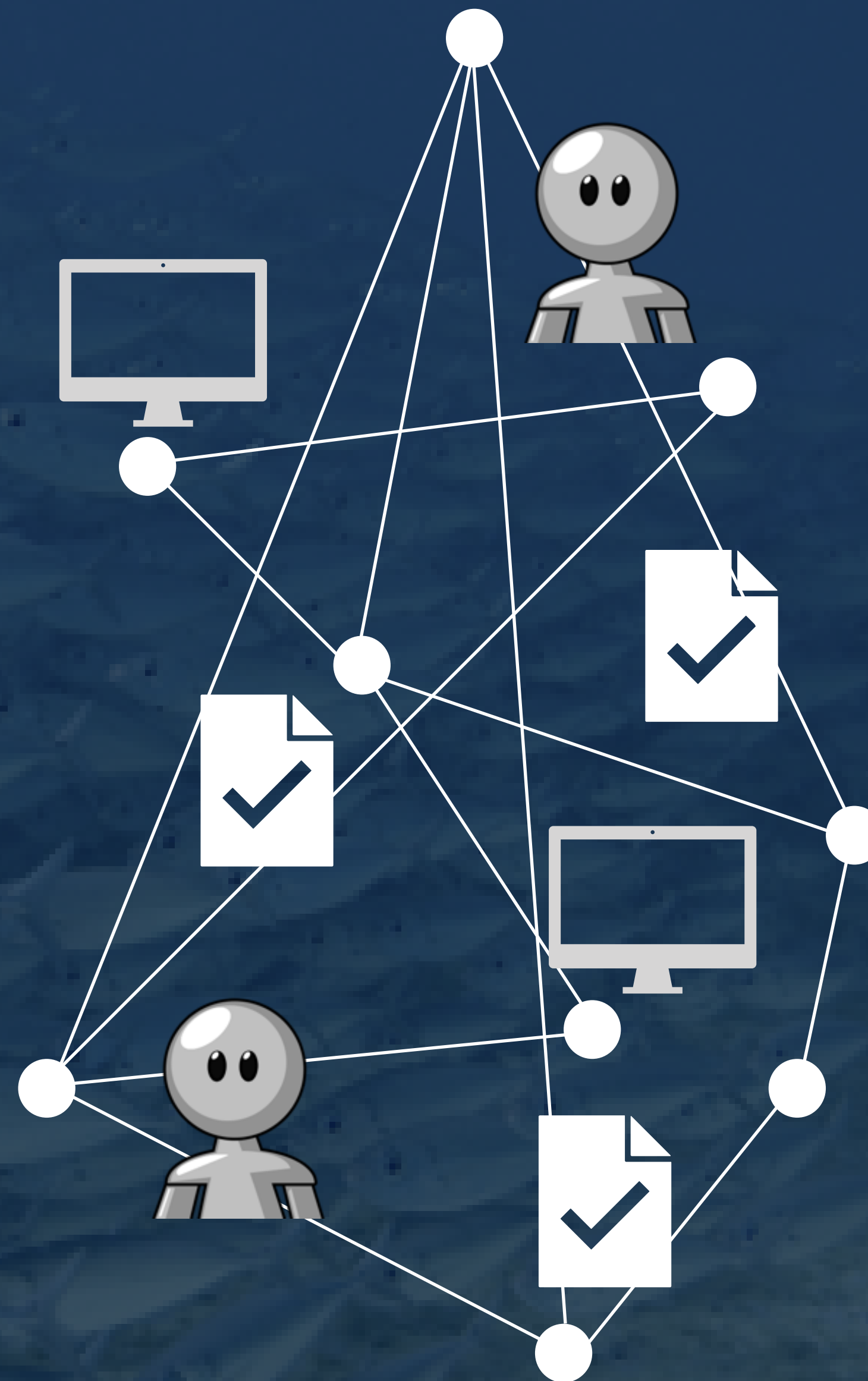
- Individuals connect & share info
- Role sharing & swapping
- Mirroring – all know all
- Promote diversity

Improves flexibility, efficiency,  
knowledge and innovation

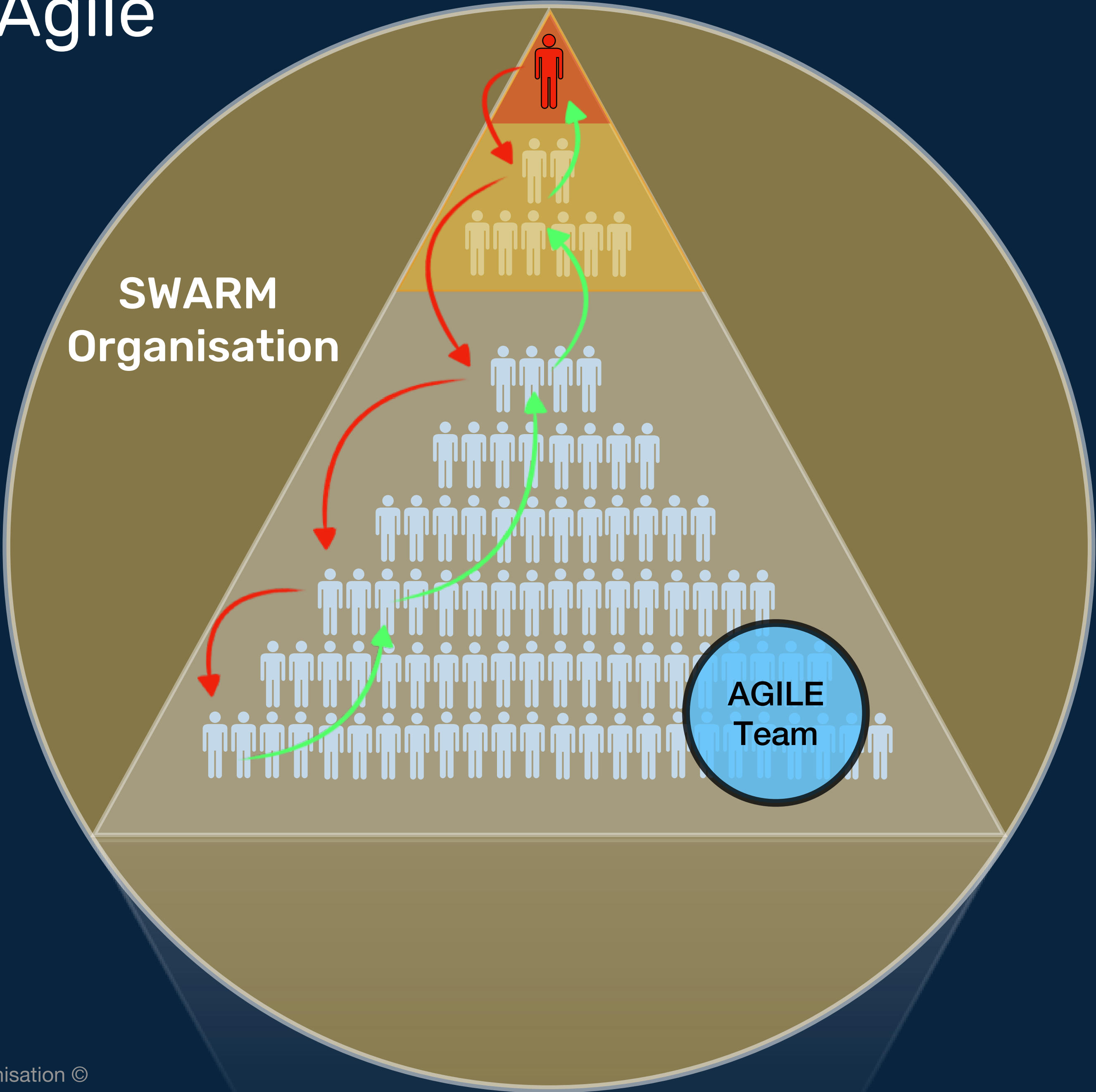


## D.A.O's

- Decentralised
- Autonomous
- Organisations



# SWARM vs. Agile





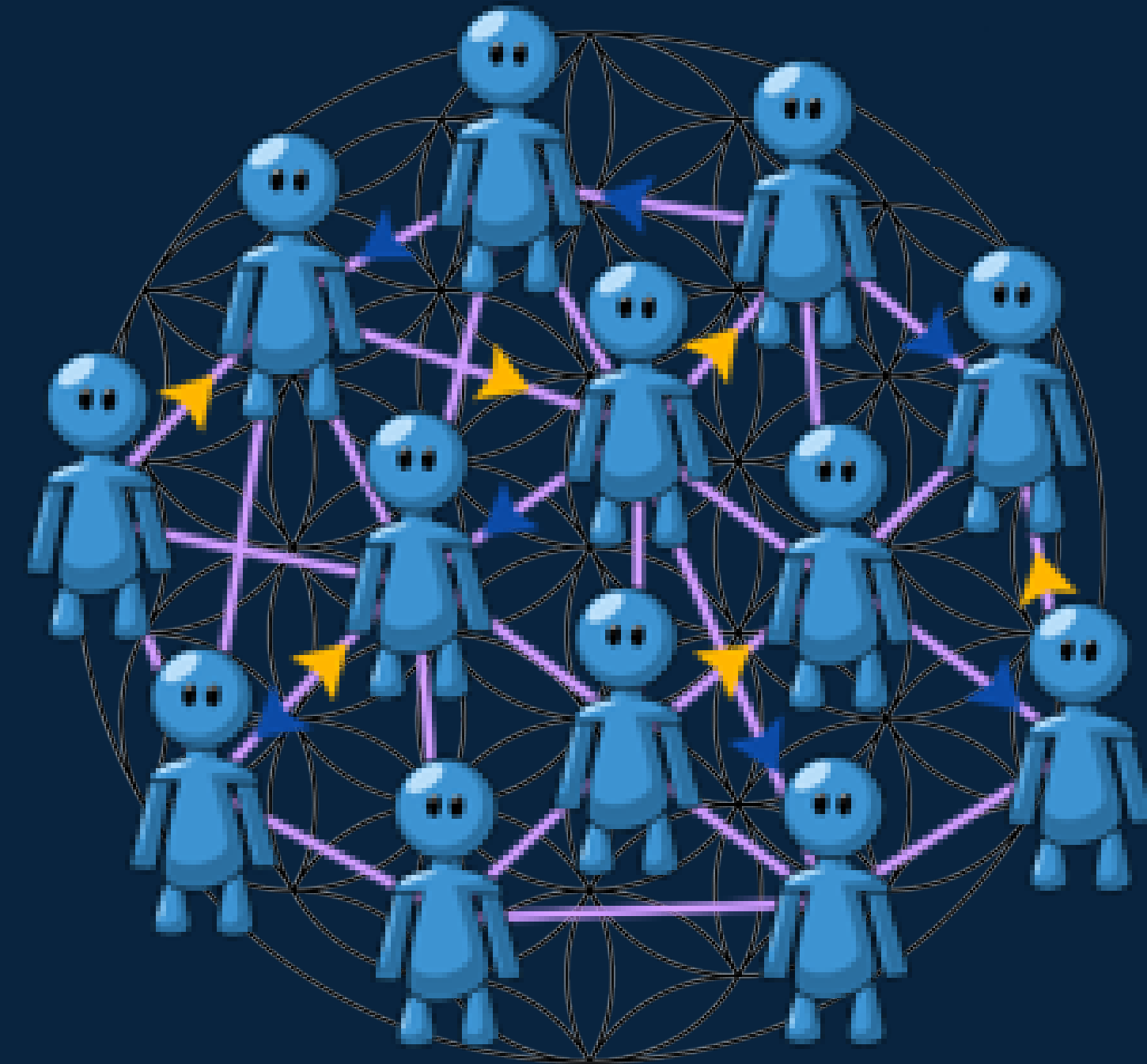
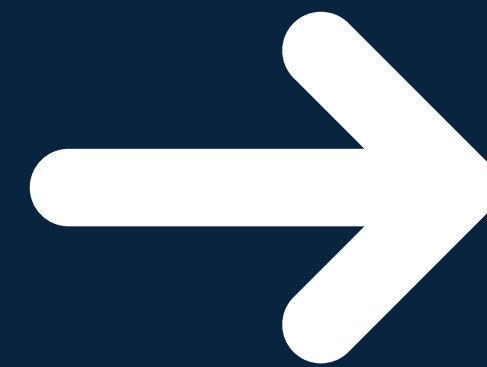
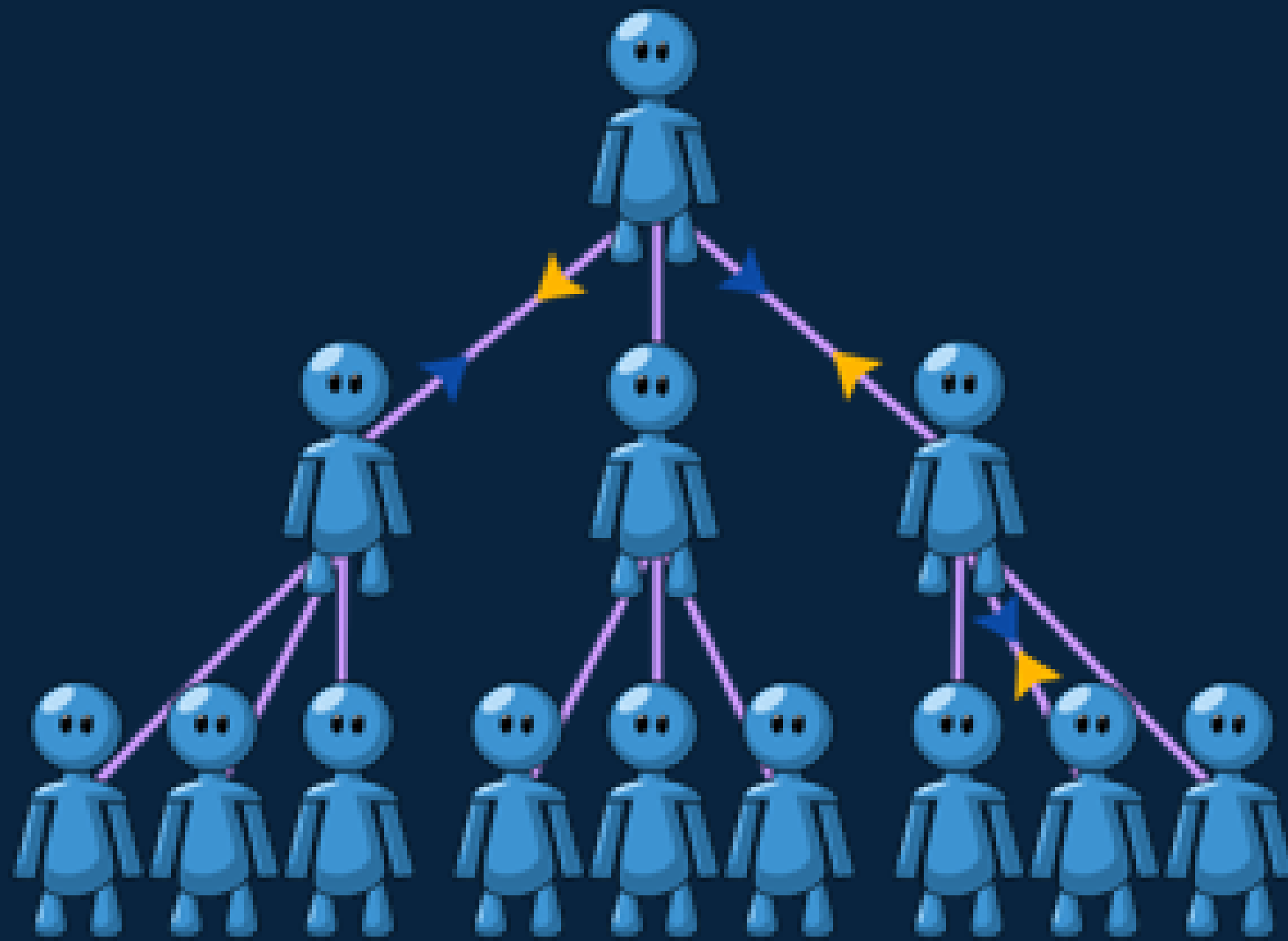


# A New Mind-Set

# Step 3: The Mind-shift

HOW to grow from **THIS** ...

Into **THIS**?



This challenge is less about **structure**  
than it is about **mindset**





We are 'programmed' with  
the idea that hierarchy is  
**inevitable**

## (Western) Humans

- Struggle with change & uncertainty
- Trust ratio over feelings
- Believe they're more intelligent than nature

We need to leave behind  
centuries of  
limiting convictions

People follow a consistent pattern

- The Pain
- The Gain
- Bridging the Gap

# Why?



# What?



# How?



## The Pain - The Why?

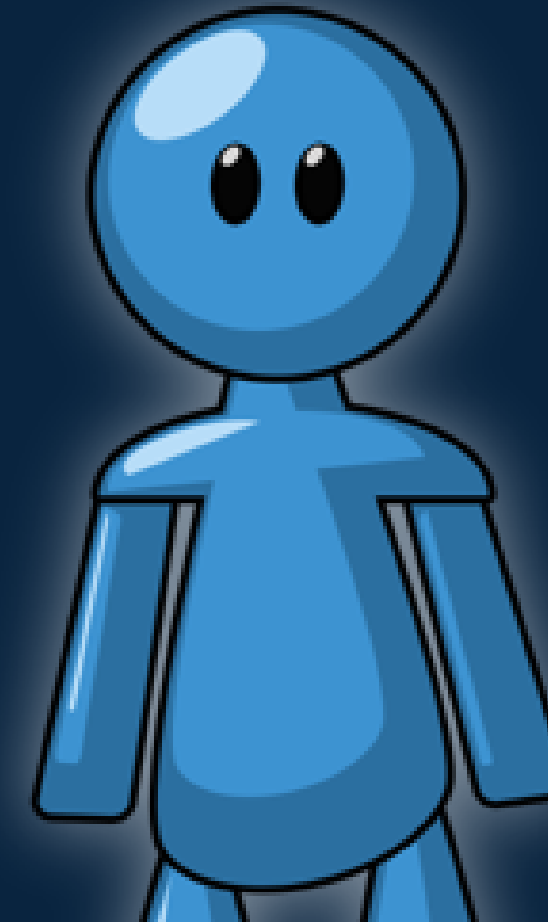
- We need an urgent reason
- Conviction change is necessary
- Experience a big problem or opportunity
- We need a **motivation**



MOTIVATION

## The Gain - The What?

- We seek a promising alternative
- Something that gives us hope
- Experience something that touches us
- Something that **Inspires us**

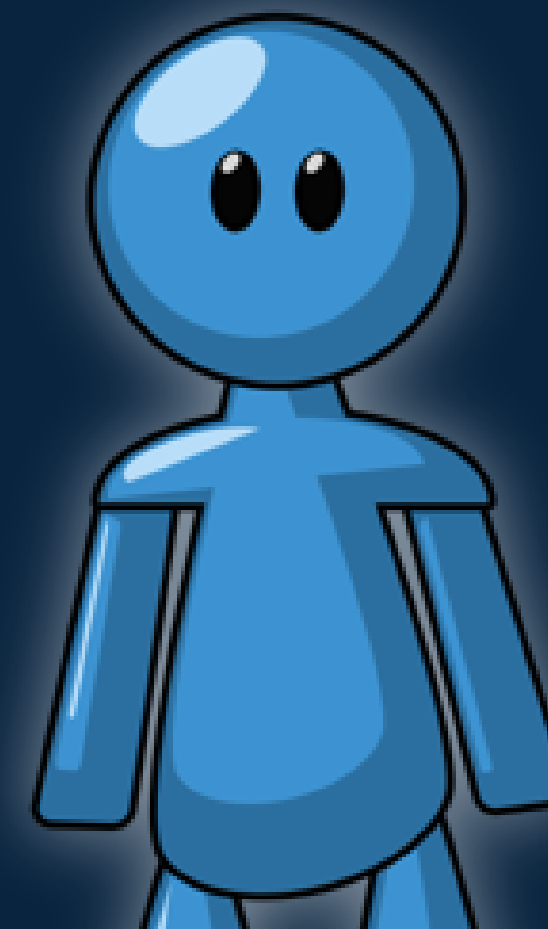


INSPIRATION

MOTIVATION

## Bridging the Gap - The How?

- A rational explanation
- A realistic path
- A plan to consider
- Something to reduce uncertainty
- Something that justifies our **Position** and **Attitude**



INSPIRATION

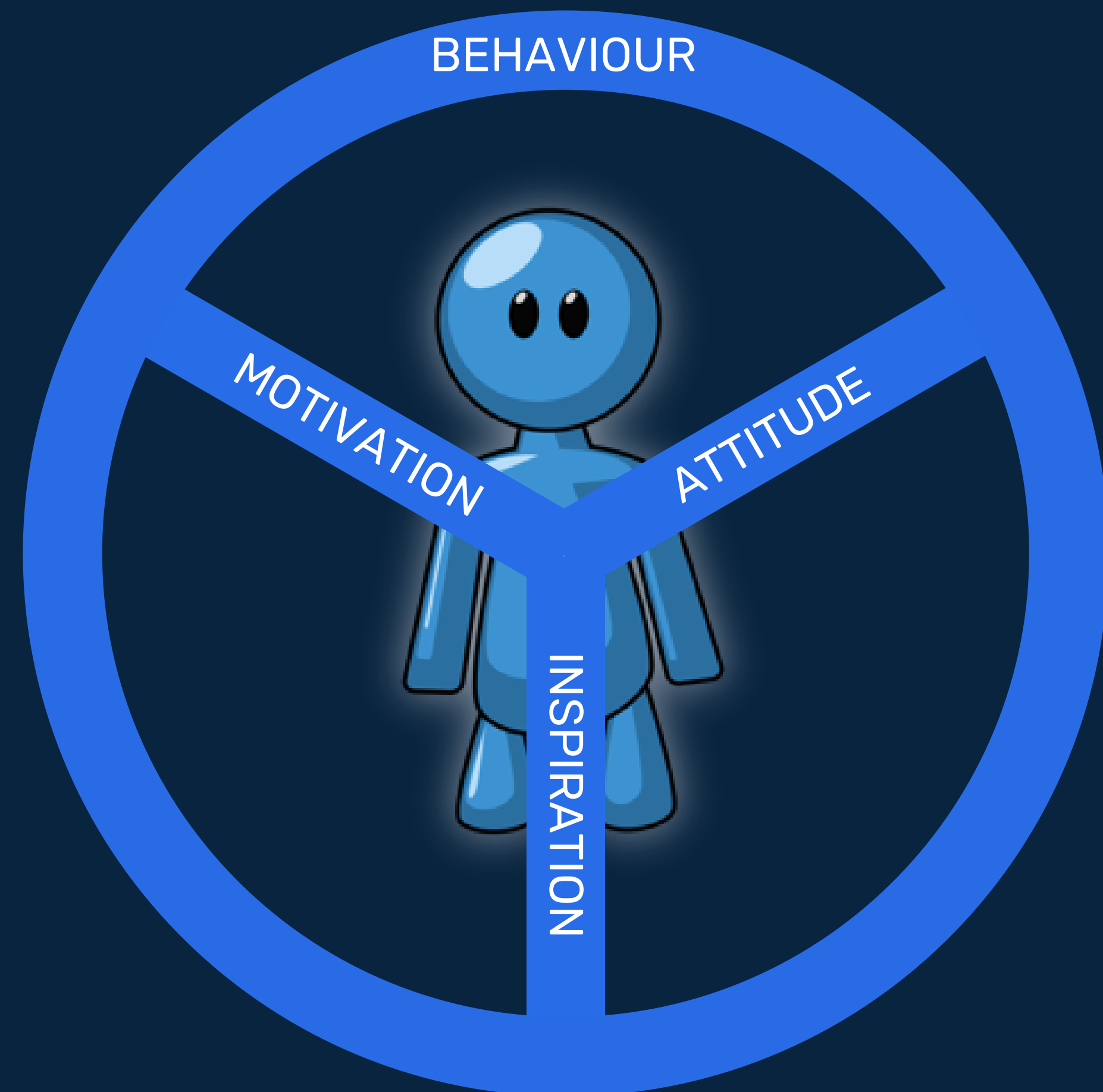
MOTIVATION

ATTITUDE



## The Mind-Shift

- Motivation + Inspiration + Attitude = new mind-set and behaviour
- To actually do things differently



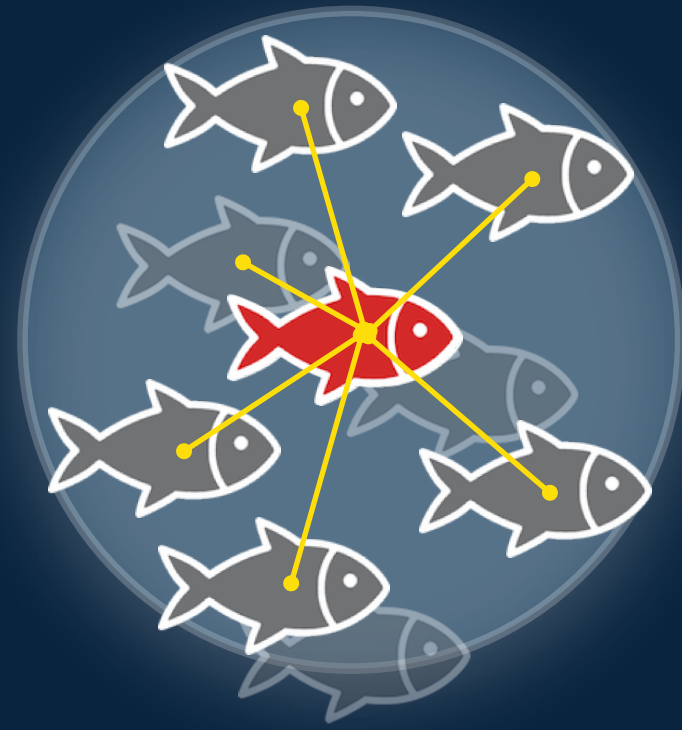
# The Mind-Shift

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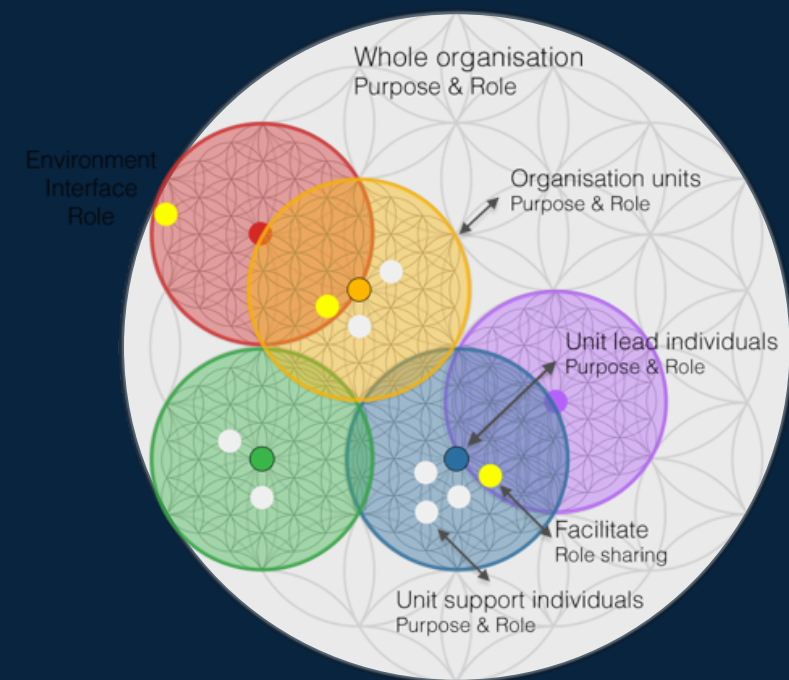
The SWARM Solution  
 Rational - Intuitive - Holistic  
 Helps create new mind-set



# Our Contribution to Organisations



Created a new narrative for future proof organisations



Proposed a structure and process for the transformation



Developed a model that aides the organisation mind-shift