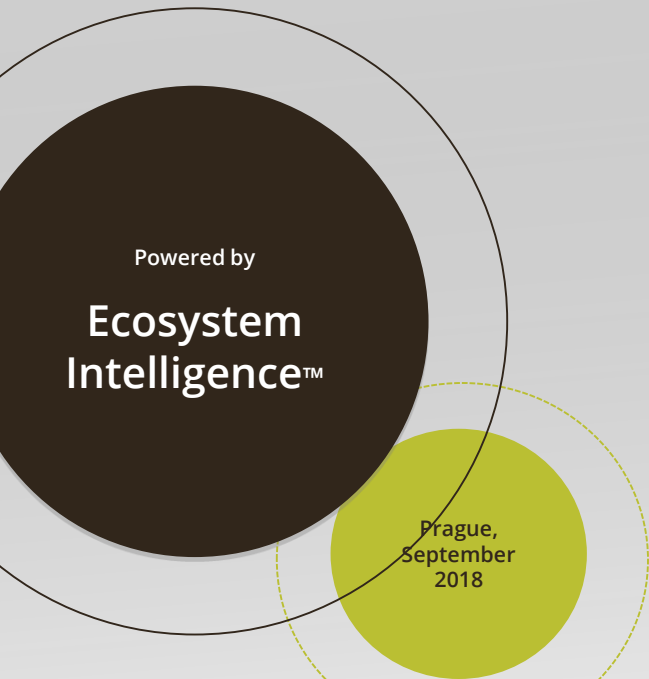




Business Agility Tastes Like Chocolate?



Business Agility (BA) Defined



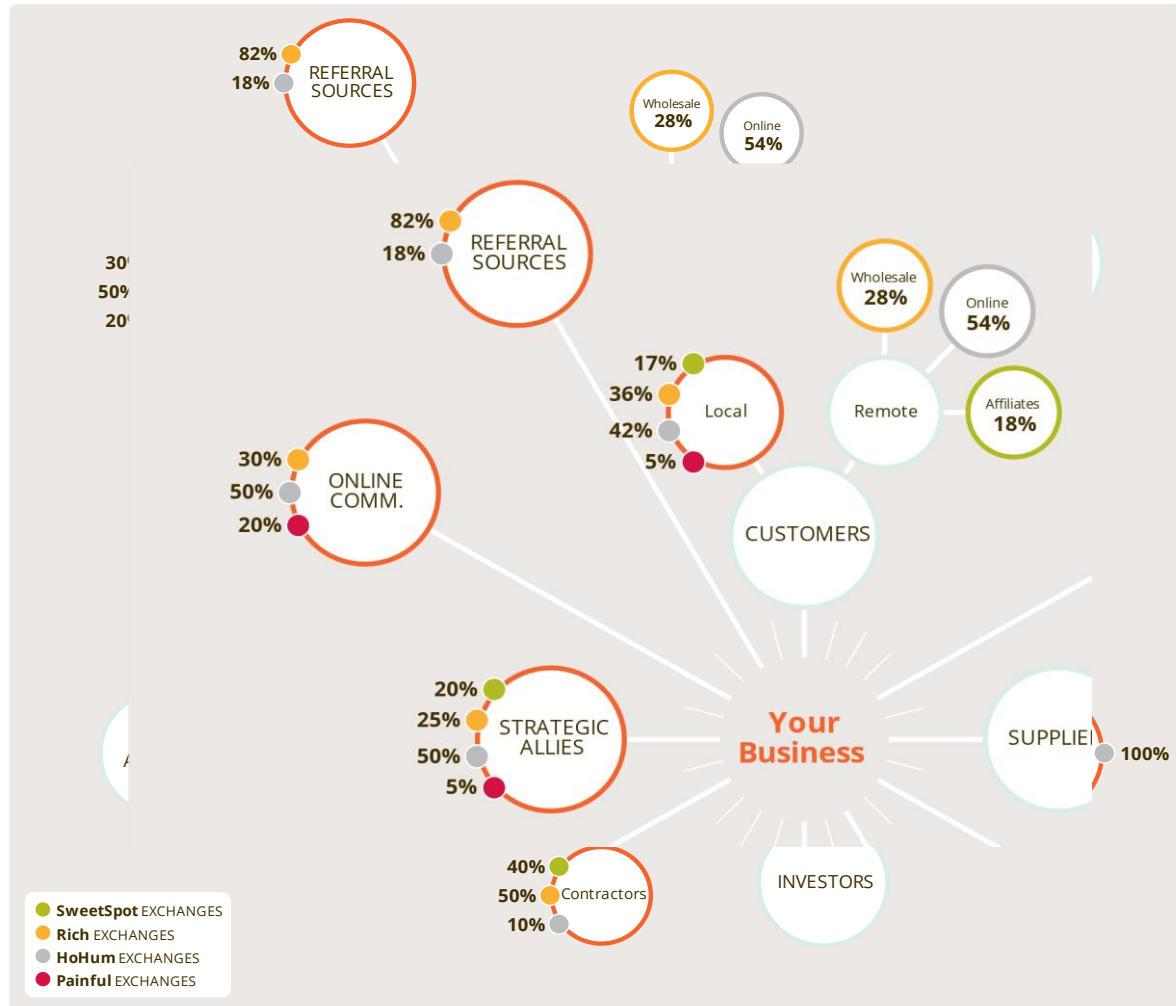
Responding effectively in a continually emerging ecosystem:
a form of fitness



Ecosystem Intelligence™ drives Business Agility



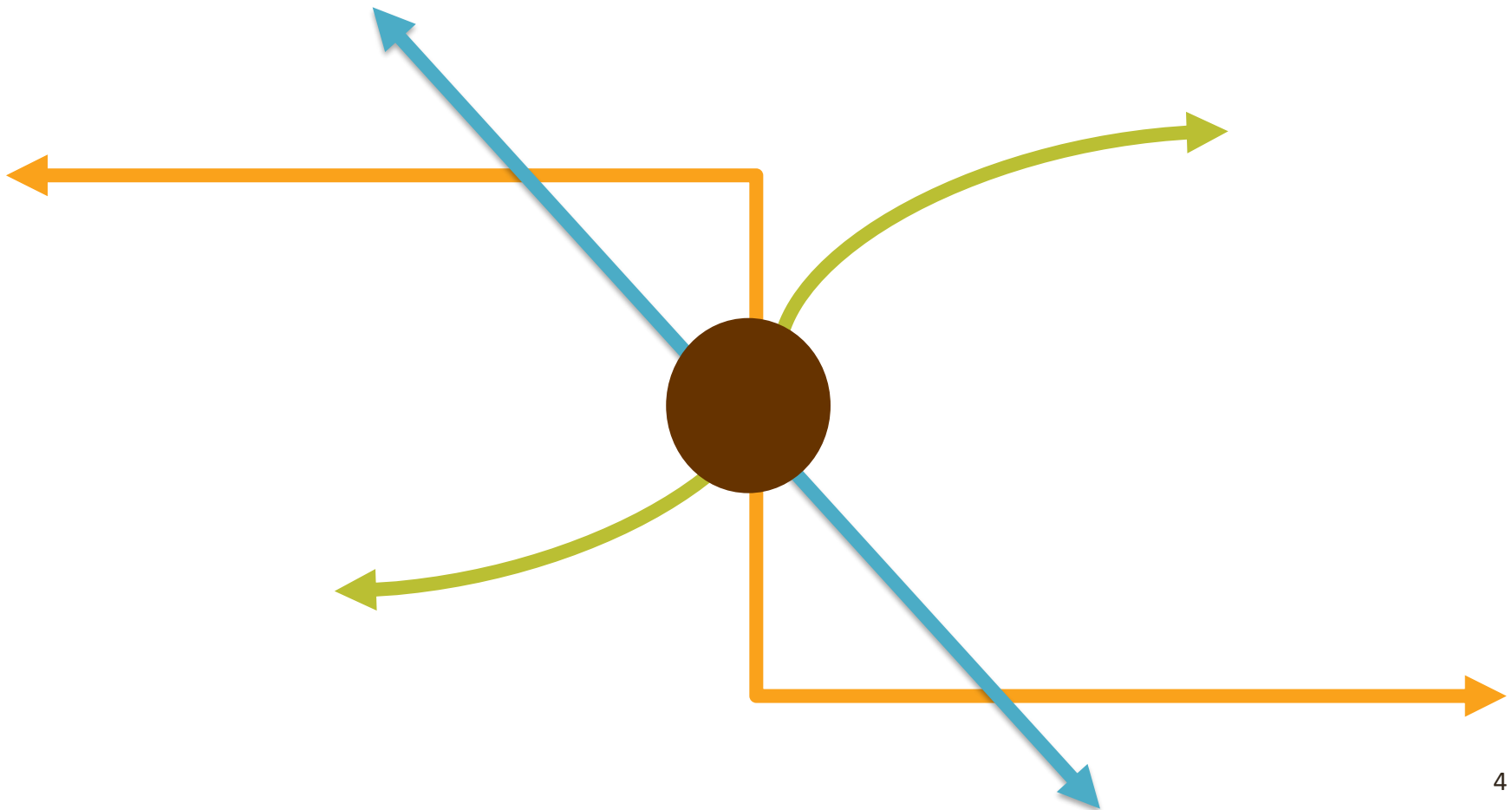
A new leading indicator: how Rich and Sweet are your exchanges?



How BA tastes like [sex and] chocolate



A delicious intersection of Social Neuroscience, Business Anthropology,
and Ecosystem thinking



Ecosystems are continually emerging



How Wolves Change Rivers



As ecosystems change, exchanges change



Agility is social/biological: fundamentally interactive

The formidable Colombian lesserblack tarantula could easily eat an animal as small as the dotted humming frog, but it doesn't....

The spider and frog have been observed sharing burrows created by the spider.

The two species share a mutually beneficial arrangement. Many other predators that might otherwise dine on the dotted humming frog wouldn't dare enter the burrow of a large hunting spider to do so.

The frogs can also feast on small invertebrates attracted to the remains of the spider's kills.

So, how do these amphibian room-mates pay their rent? The humming frogs eat ants, including those that might otherwise eat the Colombian lesserblack's eggs.



The exchanges in your Business Ecosystem will morph and re-morph



What's required to lead the change?
to respond effectively?



Social Neuroscience illuminates



The primary apparatus of BA was developed in the Stone Age



The drive to belong is biological



Our brains evolved to keep us focused on interacting with others.
(Maslow had it upside down.)



Social Animals co-regulate



Long before humans' Stone Age,
mammalian neurophysiology provided advantage for 65 million years



@ThisMansWorld

While commerce, society and the brain were co-evolving...



Maybe 250,000 – 500,000 generations...

People lived and worked in small groups

They knew each other all their lives

They knew their ecosystem and everyone's role in keeping the group vital

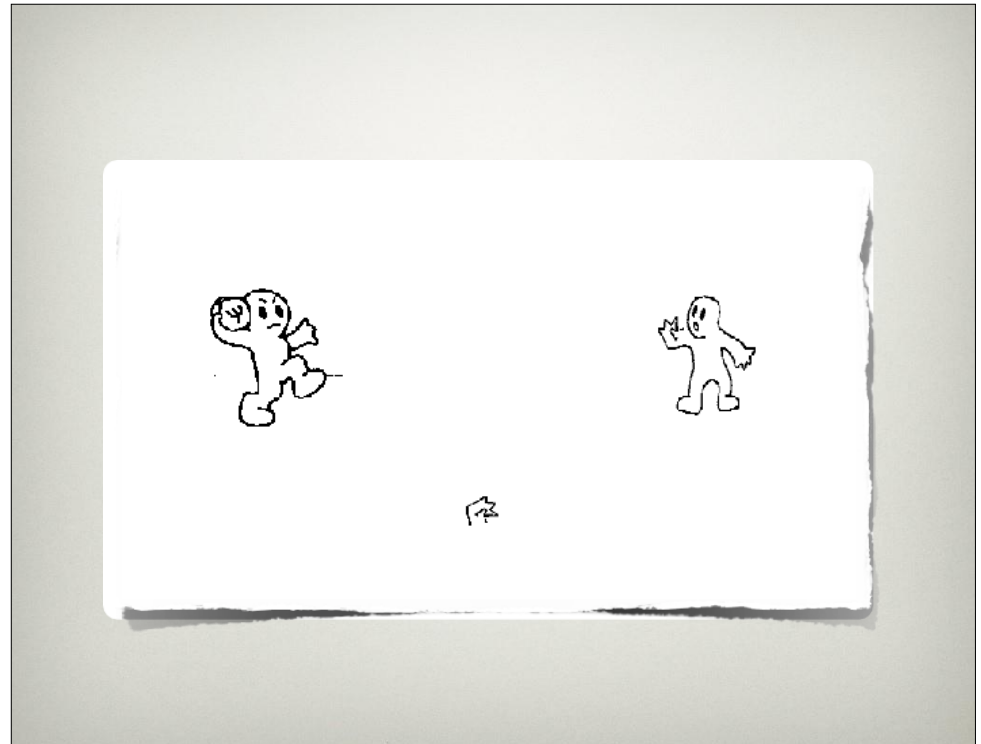
They saw little social or technological change during their lifetimes



Neural networks are largely established before puberty



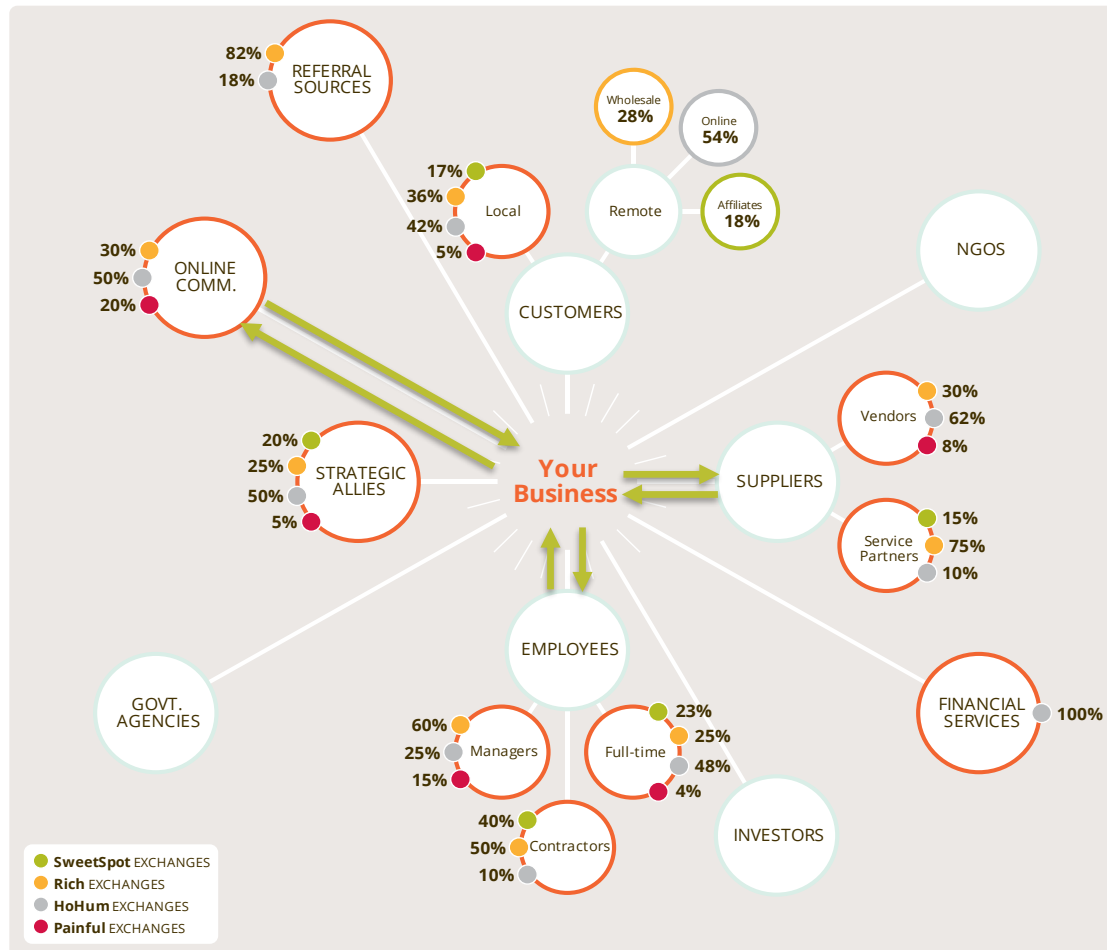
We are extremely vulnerable to social insecurity



The lens of Business Anthropology



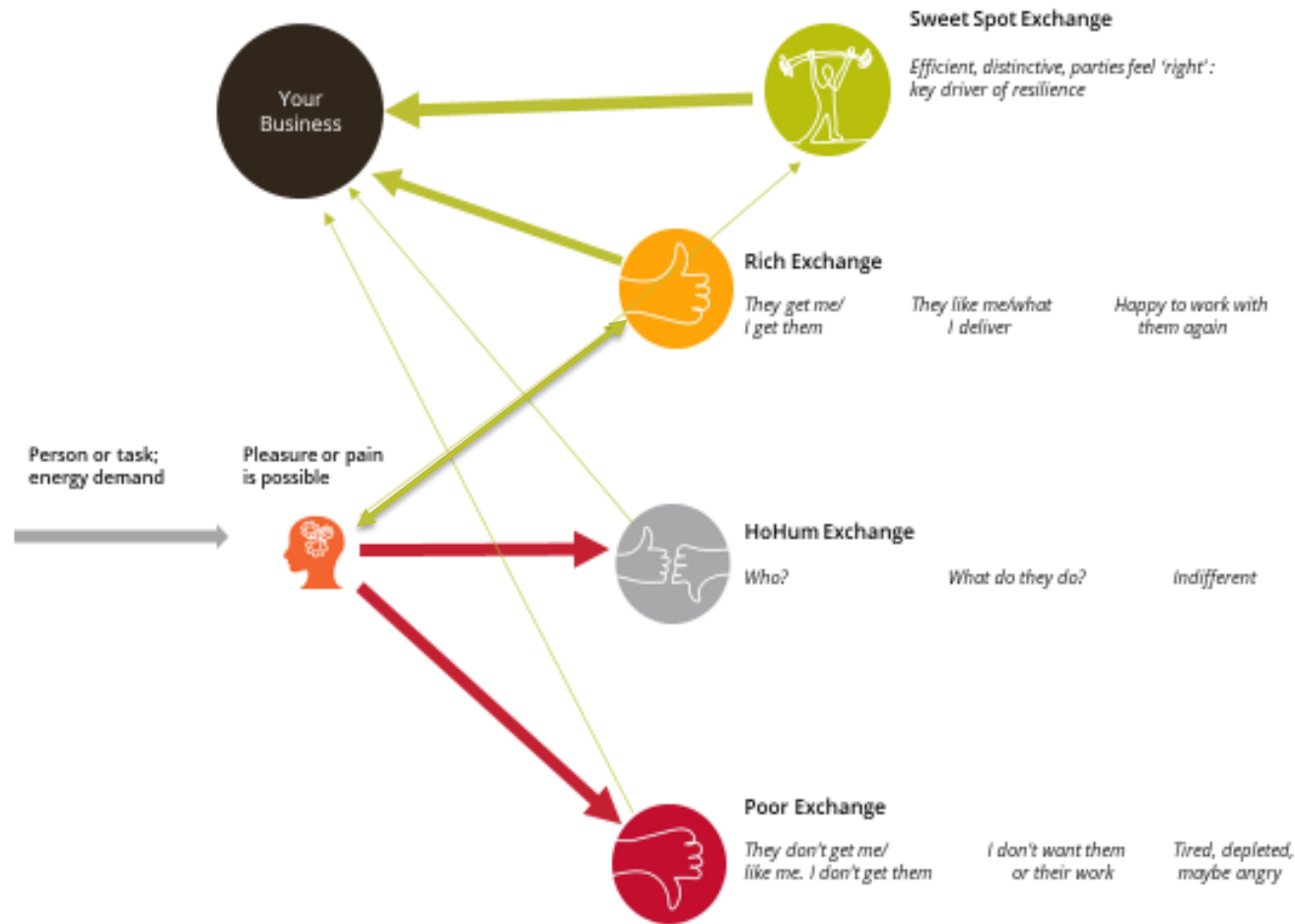
A business is a network of exchanges: nothing more nor less. Exchanges are where/how value is created, delivered and assessed.



Exchanges are based in vulnerability



Our brains are organized to rely on exchanges; we are exquisitely attuned



The value of the exchanges that make up your business is determined by value partners' experiences.

SweetSpot Exchanges taste like sex and chocolate

The ecstasy of knowing that you're contributing your best
and your people benefit

Great for business too:

- Often distinctive
- Highly valued; profitable
- Rejuvenating for both parties

Moving your business in an
advantageous direction

FAST COMPANY 09.07.18 5:00 AM

WORLD CHANGING IDEAS

This startup is trying to beam cheap internet into low-income communities. Starry, a new service provider that uses innovative antenna technology to deliver internet, hopes to bridge the digital divide for people in public housing.

For people living in public housing, finding a good, accessible Wi-Fi signal can often be a struggle. Now that a good internet connection is vital for so many facets of life—from school to job searching to communication—this deficit is both a significant indicator and driver of socioeconomic disparity.

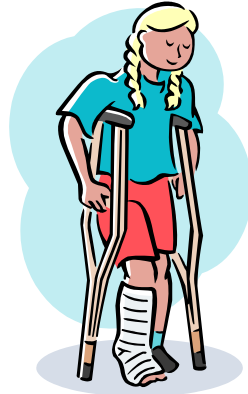


Exclusion – or the threat of exclusion – is almost intolerable

We humans are handicapped by social insecurity



=



*The pain of a broken heart
is like a broken leg.*

*Mentoring tastes like
sex and chocolate.*



Matthew Lieberman and Naomi Eisenberger,
UCLA Social Cognitive Neuroscience Labs

“There is much suffering in the world... from hunger, from homelessness, from all kinds of diseases. But the greatest suffering is being lonely, feeling unloved, having no one. I have come more and more to realize that it is being unwanted that is the worst disease that any human being can ever experience.”

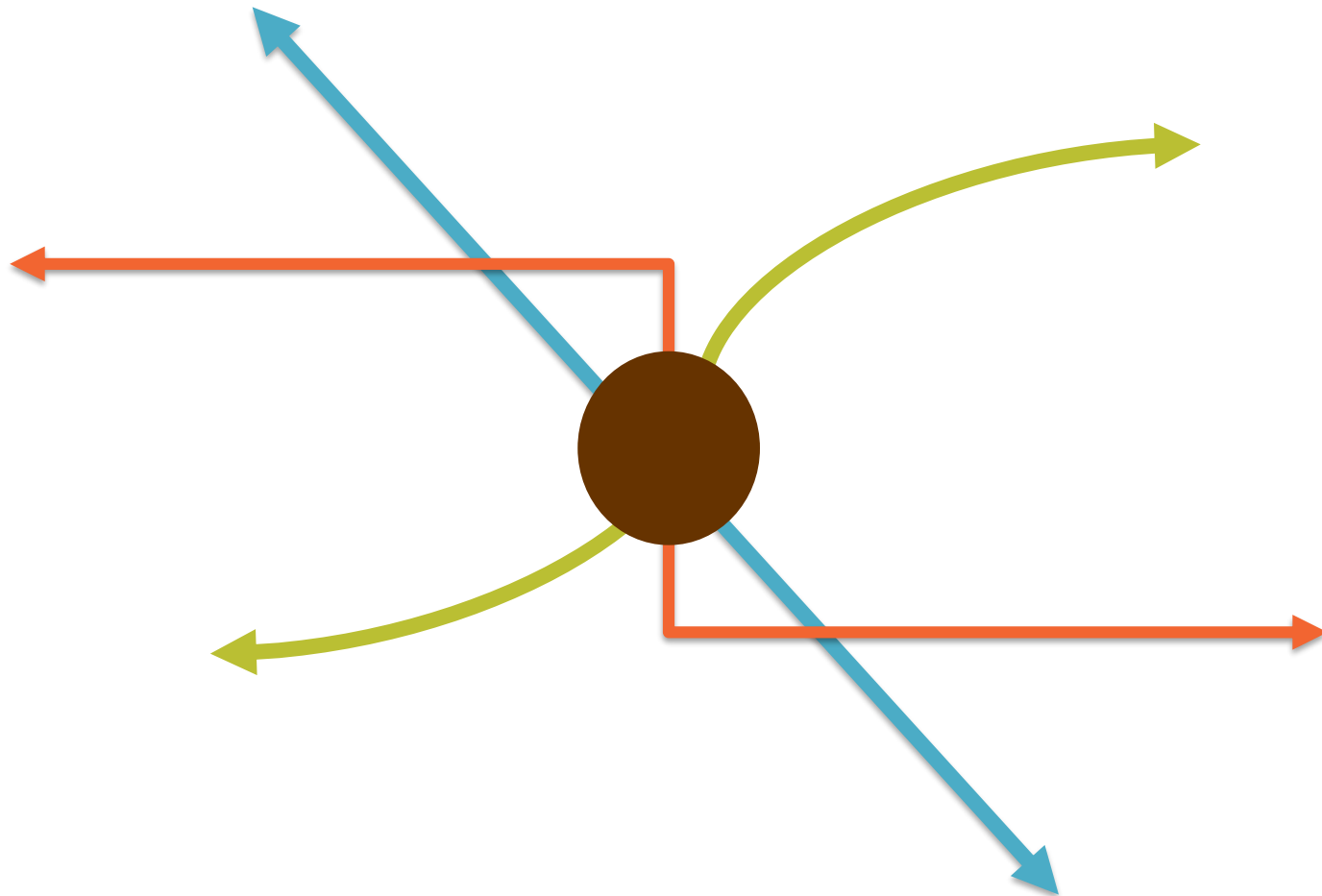
-Mother Theresa



How does all this work in modern business?



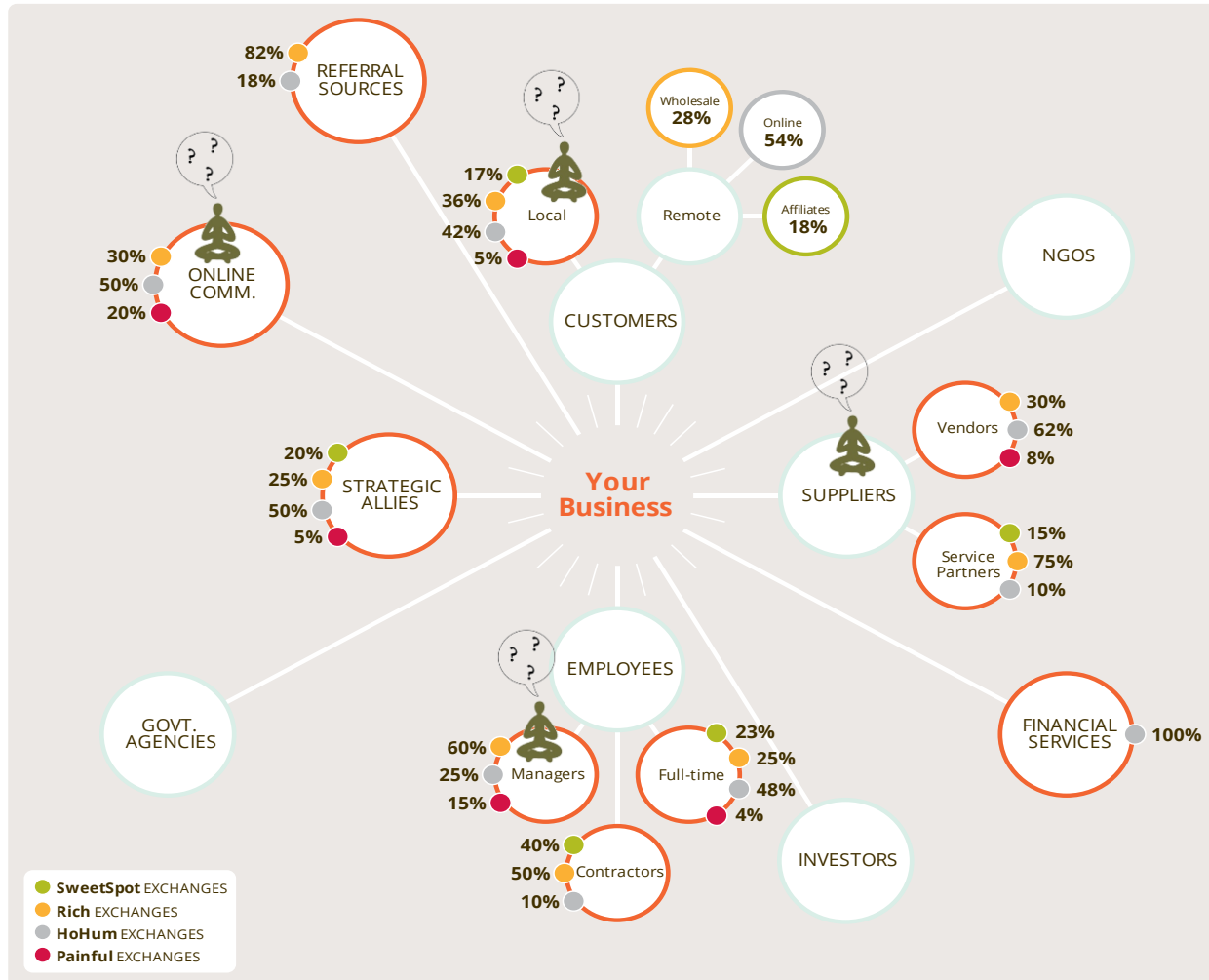
Social Neuroscience, Business Anthropology, and Ecosystem thinking...



Invite value partners to participate



Your percent of Rich Exchanges is an early indicator of BA condition



Are people in better shape exchanging with you? |

Grey Brothers Dashboard **Workout 6/13/15**

Rich Exchanges 18%	Sweet Spot Exchanges 67% of Rich Exchanges	HoHum Exchanges 69%	Painful Exchanges 13%
Employees	20% Employees	Customer Techies	Customer tech managers
Customer CFO's	100% Customer CFOs	Bankers	San Francisco gov't agencies
Partners	50% Partners	Social networks	X and y software suppliers
Marketing consultant	50% Marketing Consultant	Professional Orgs	NGO customers
		Subcontractors/outsource orgs	
		Most gov't agencies	
		Most software suppliers	
		Airlines, car rental, hotels	
		Accountant	

Do people with 'foreign' points of view feel welcome and understood around you?



Simple test: do you look forward to interacting again?



Do you tune in, with pleasure?



Do EcoPartners™ seek the experience of exchanging/being with you?



Welcoming a constantly emerging ecosystem? | 



Generate the experience of belonging



Inside your enterprise and around your ecosystem



Create inclusion with sincere questions



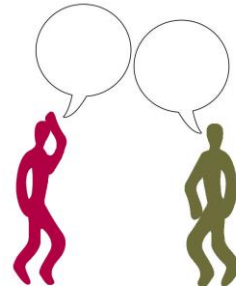
Create inclusion with play



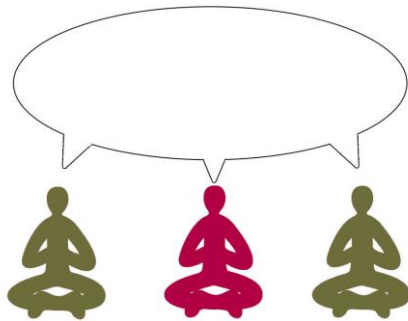
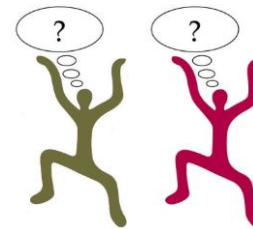
A culture of inquiry fosters Agility



Bring shared vulnerability into your conversations



Develop practices to optimize resilience



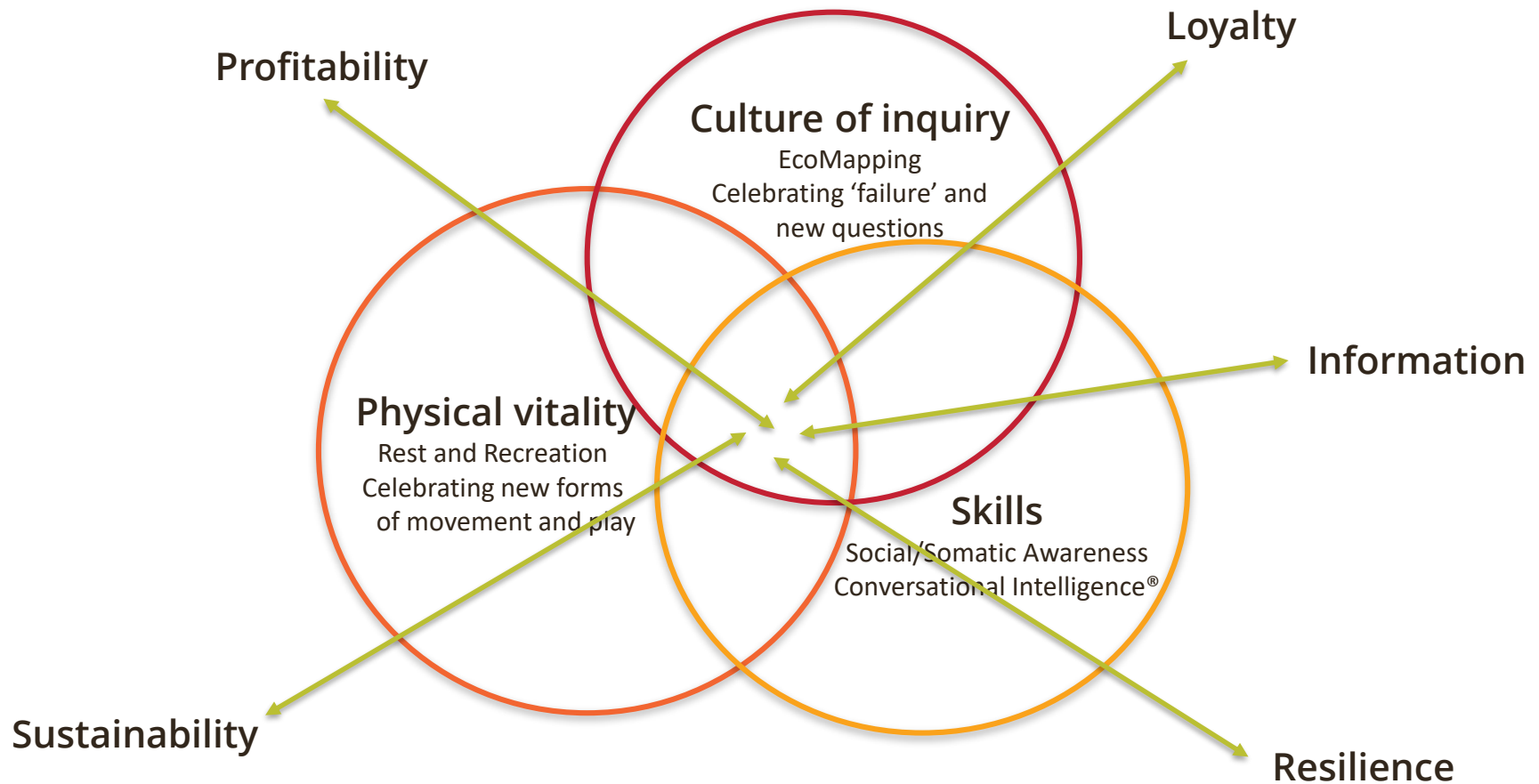
- Promote inclusion
- Neutralize status
- Provoke curiosity
- Encourage neuroplasticity



EI packs big rewards



Agility begs us beyond the limits of our tribally-birthered brains.
We can train our executive function and work mindfully with the social brain.



What will your EcoPartners™ want next?



Will you be ready, willing and able to respond?

- ✓ Will they trust you to care what's happening with them?
- ✓ Will you be in shape to welcome new input?
- ✓ Will you attract well-informed thinking partners exploring new opportunities?
- ✓ Can you let go of your current 'reality'? Your current role?

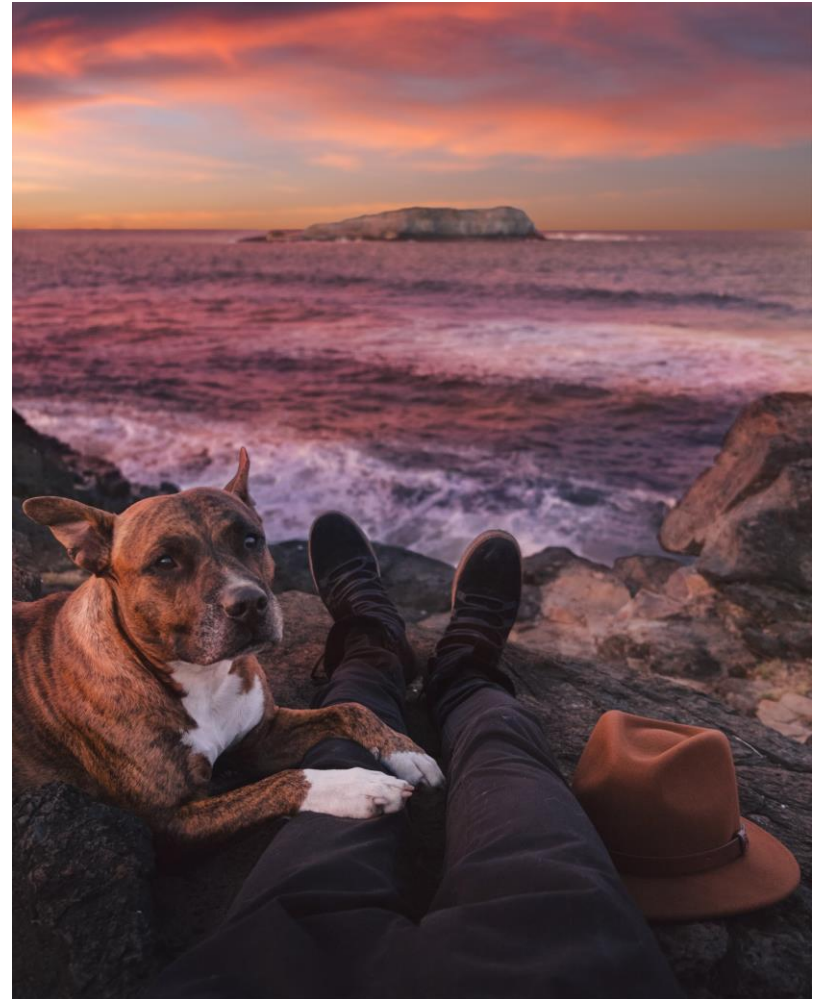


Don't forget that business is biological



Ecosystems operate in shared vulnerability

- Our brains/bodies evolved to thrive in a stable social ecosystem.
- Ensure the experience of belonging: minimize social insecurity.
- Celebrate resting. Allow people to work smart; provide clear specs and timelines, and enable them to devise their own workflows.
- Steadily increase your percentages of Rich and SweetSpot Exchanges.



How will you sustain curiosity?



With gratitude for the teachers and researchers who illuminated the path



[Marsha Shenk](#) is a veteran consultant, a pioneer of Business Anthropology. Her syntheses of the cultural, biological, and historical influences that impact modern commerce have empowered business leaders for 4 decades.

www.BestWork.biz

[@MarshaShenk](#)

Curious? You might enjoy

A few accessible books about brain function

Social, Matt Lieberman

How Emotions are Made, Lisa Feldman Barrett

Brain Rules, John Medina

Stealing Fire, Jamie Wheal and Steven Kotler

Conversational Intelligence, Judith E. Glaser