Radical Product Thinking

Overcoming (and preventing) the most common product diseases

@RadhikaDutt

RADICAL PRODUCT

Today's mantras for innovation:

- Fail fast, learn fast
- Move fast and break things
- Iterate quickly

We’ve learned that innovation requires **iterating** and **pivoting** until we reach the nirvana of **customer delight**.

“Iterate till you find product-market fit”

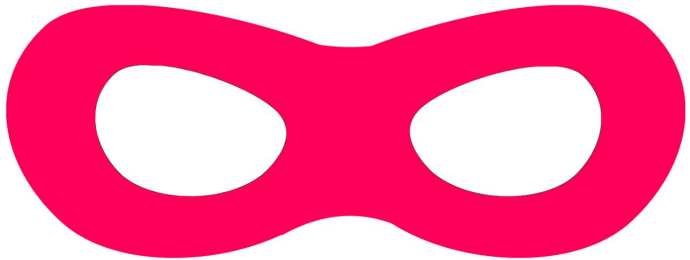
Some common **“diseases”**

Time for a **checkup** ?

BER
BERLIN
BRANDENBURG
AIRPORT

Hero Syndrome

Focus is on **scale** instead of having a real **impact**



High risk decisions, perception of success

“BER’s vision was filled with superlatives: To be the biggest, most modern airport to put Berlin on the map.”

Pivotitis

Rapid, frequent changes
in product direction

Confused customers,
confused product team

“Doubled capacity after construction started, added a floor for retail.”

Obsessive Sales Disorder (OSD)

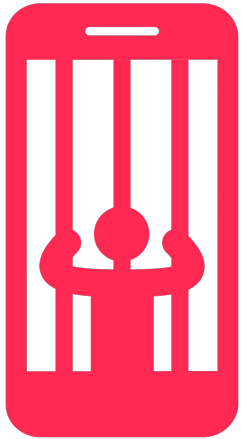
Trading off the long game for **quick gains**

Fragmented product, distracted engineers

“Making short term decisions to show politicians new shiny objects to justify new rounds of funding.”

Locked-In Syndrome

Commitment to a **solution** rather than a problem space

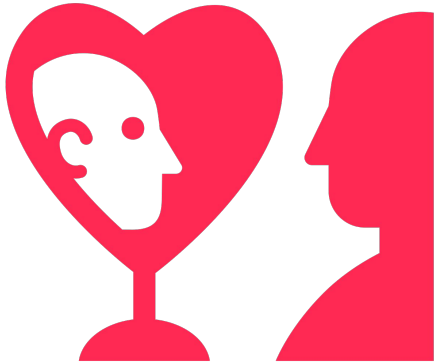


Reduces flexibility in solving customer needs

“We’ve spent so much public money, we can’t scrap the project and restart.”

Narcissus Complex

Looking inwards and
focusing on our own needs

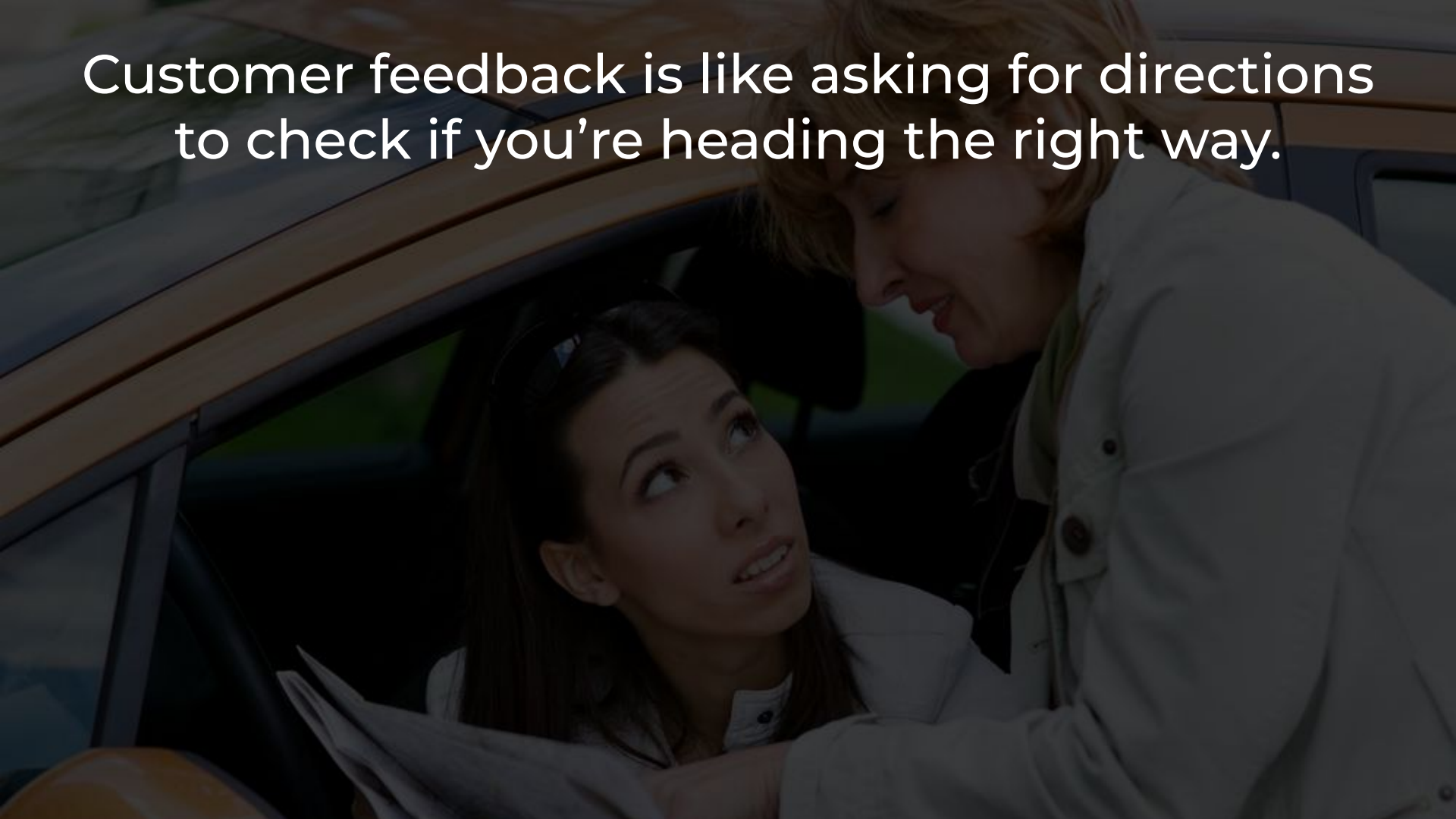


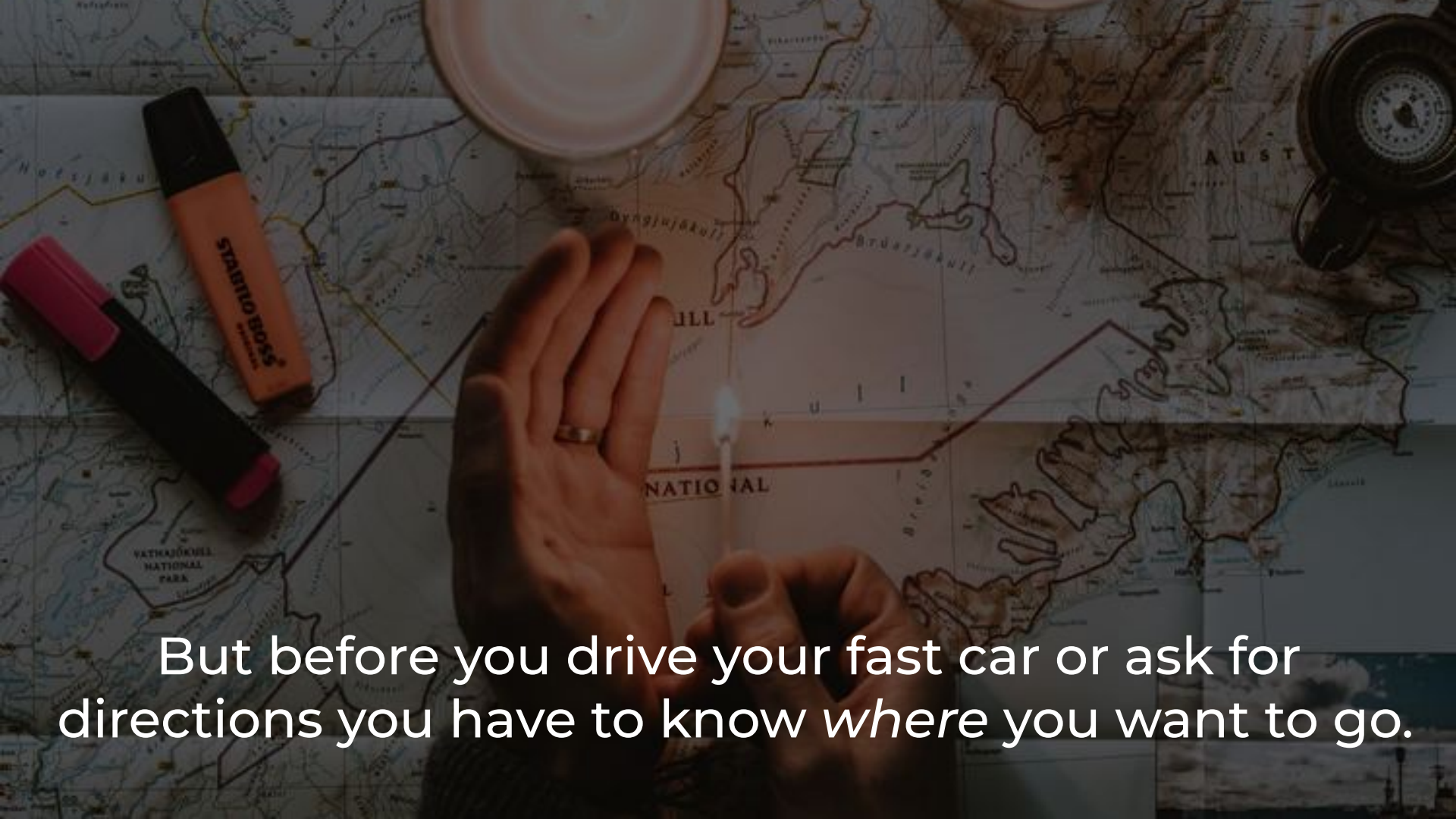
Disconnected from
customer needs

“We’ll build the airport as the major hub in Europe!” (No airline wanted BER as a hub)

They’re common (but avoidable!) problems that occur in the absence of clear **product vision and strategy**.

Lean and Agile give you a fast car - they help you get to where you want faster.


Customer feedback is like asking for directions
to check if you’re heading the right way.



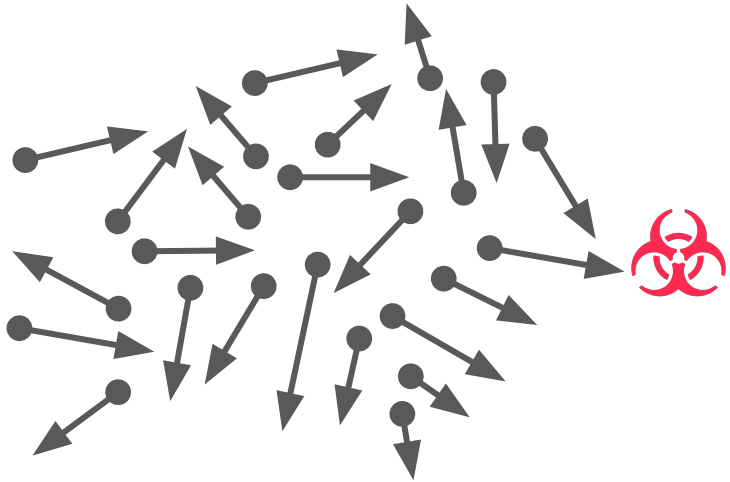
But before you drive your fast car or ask for directions you have to know *where* you want to go.

Lean and ***Agile***

..are important **feedback-driven** **execution methodologies** that gives us...

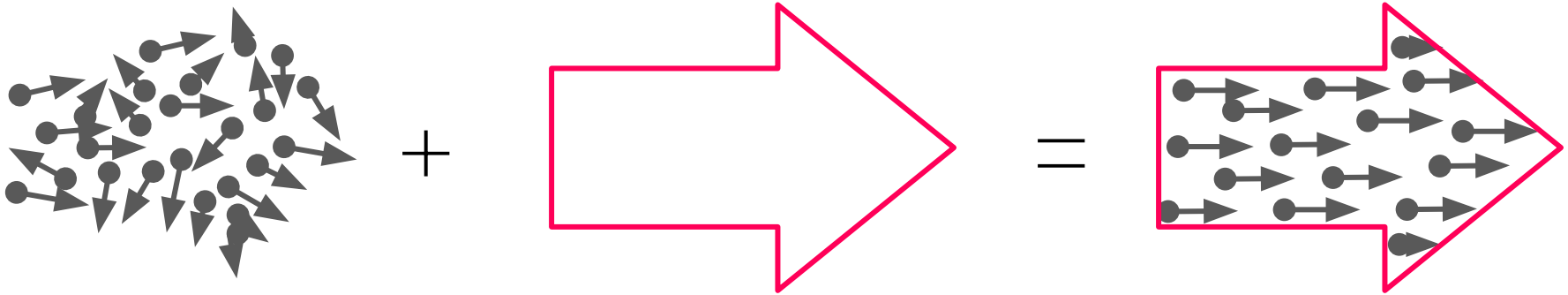
...speed

Speed can look like this...

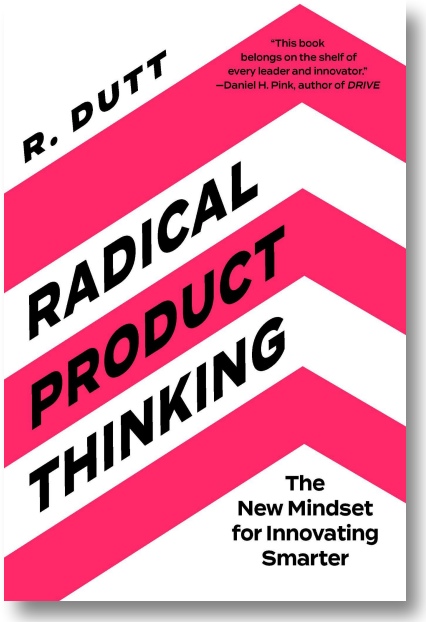


Speed + Direction = Velocity

Before launching into **execution**,
we must define the **direction** of our speed



What is **RADICAL PRODUCT THINKING** ?



It's a methodology for building **world-changing products**...

...giving organizations a practical approach and a clear process.

You can systematically **engineer your change**:

Vision
What's the end-state you want to create?

Strategy
How will you create that?

Prioritization
In what order will you deliver it?

Execution & measurement
How will you measure and adapt?

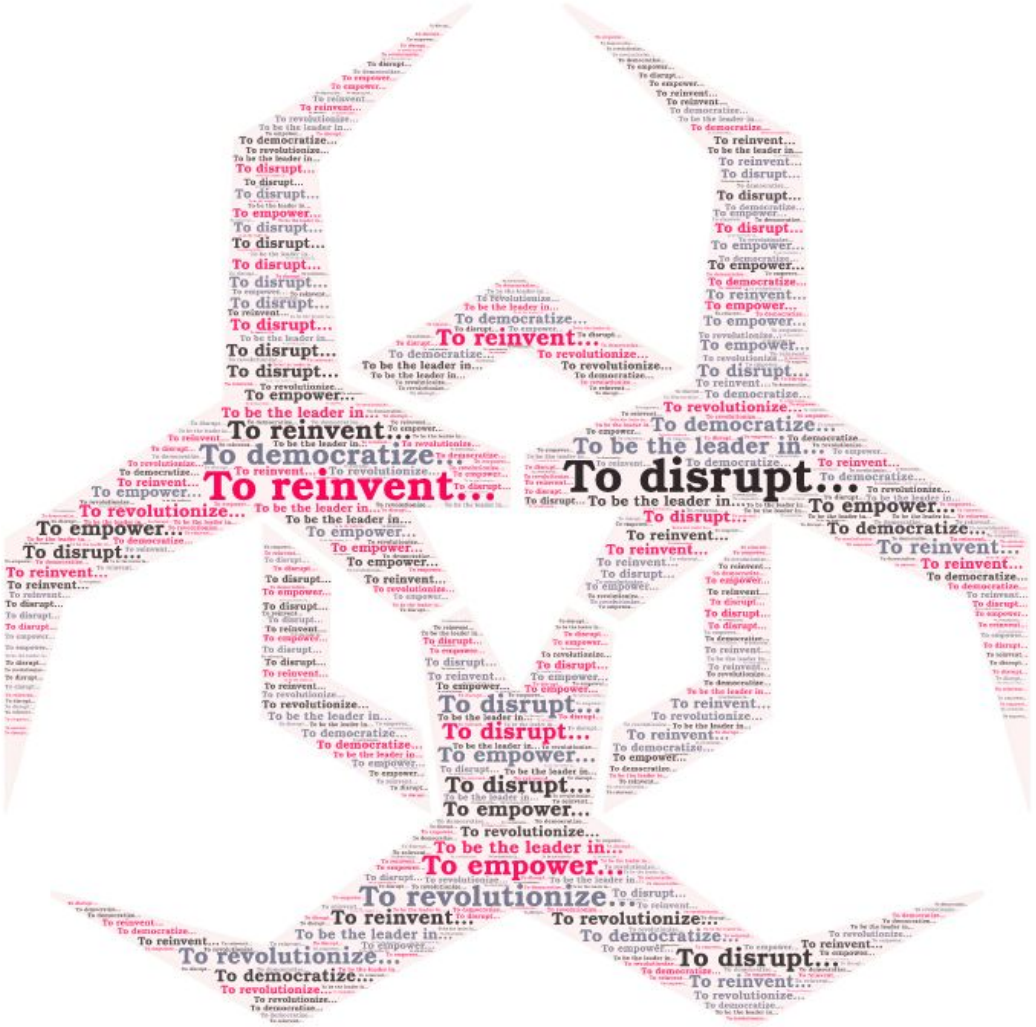
Team
What team and culture do you need in place?

...and **communicate** your rationale across your team and within your organization

Define your

VISION

“Contributing to human progress by empowering people to express themselves.”



We must unlearn all we know about a “good vision”.

Your Vision should articulate...

- **Who**: Whose world are you changing?
- **What**: What does their world look like today?
- **Why**: Why does their world need changing?
- **When**: When will you know that you've arrived?
- **How**: How are you going to change it for them?

... the **Who**, **What**, **Why**, **When** and **How**

Use the **Radical Vision Worksheet** to iterate on your vision until you're happy with it

Today, when _____ want to _____,
identified group *desirable outcome*

they have to _____. This is unacceptable, because
current activity/solution(s)

_____. We envision a world where _____.
shortcomings of current solution *shortcomings are resolved*

We're bringing this world about through _____.
broad technology/approach

Radical Product Thinking: Vision Setting Course

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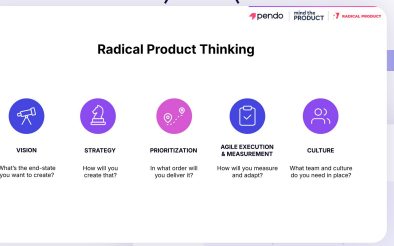
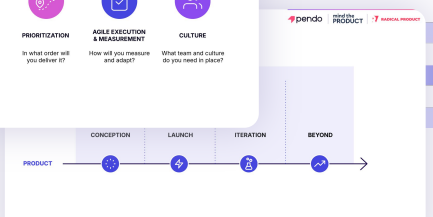
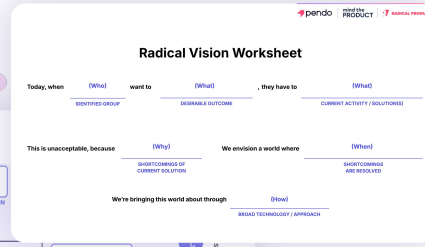
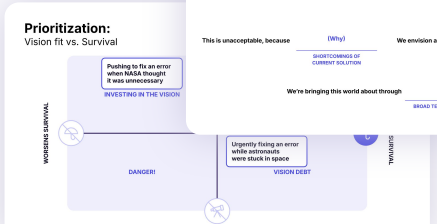
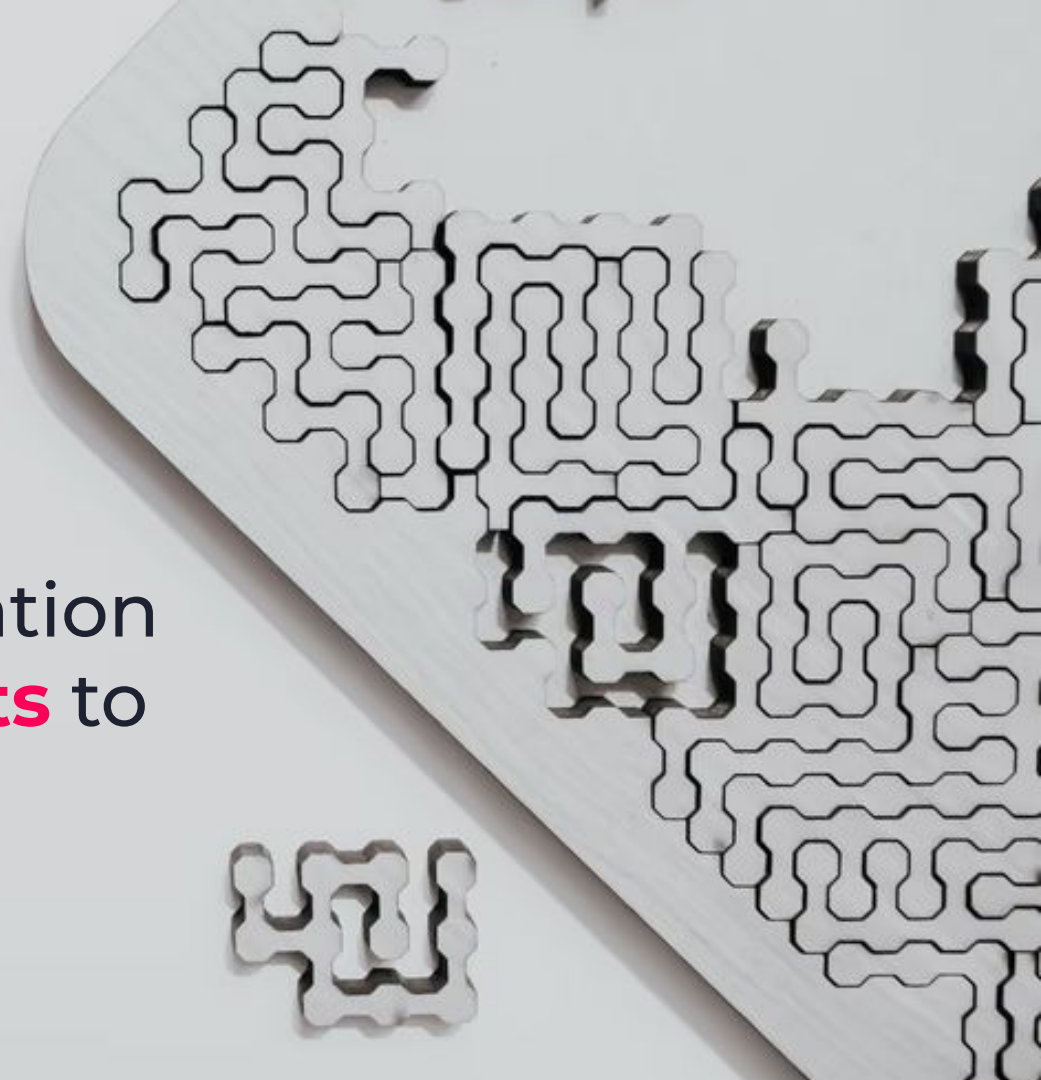








How a large organization built **radical products** to **create change**.



Lijjat

- 60% market share in pappadums
- Over $220 million in annual revenues
- Owned by 45,000 women (equal partners)

In 1959, Lijjat was started by 7 women who wanted to earn a dignified living.

They started rolling pappadums on their building’s terrace.

Buses drive Lijjat's member sisters to centers to pick up dough.

Member sisters roll pappadums at home.

Next day, they drop off pappadums and get paid.

Define your

VISION

Lijjat’s vision for change and its product

Jaswantiben Popat
(1/7 founders of Lijjat)

Envisioned Change: Financial independence for women by allowing them to earn a dignified living.

Product: Pappadums that taste like they’re homemade, without requiring the effort.

Lijjat's radical vision

Today, when ***women without education from poor households*** want to ***run the household and educate their kids***,

identified group *desirable outcome*

they have to ***depend on their husband's income and can't influence household spending***. This is unacceptable, because

current activity/solution(s)

it limits their children's educational prospects, and repeats the cycle of poverty . We envision a world where ***women become self-reliant, leading to their socioeconomic progress***.

shortcomings of current solution *shortcomings are resolved*

We're bringing this world about through ***High-quality pappadums (later other fast-moving consumer goods), without ever taking charity***.

broad technology/approach

Defining your **vision** is only the first step in **engineering** change.

Develop your

STRATEGY

R

Real Pain Points

“What do they need for a dignified living?”

1. Have work ethic but low education

1. Primary caregivers in a patriarchy - can’t leave home for long

D

Design

“What does our solution look like?”

Work from home (not factories)

Earn daily wages by rolling papads, share in the profits, equal partners

C

Capabilities

“How do we enable those capabilities?”

Open books, transparent accounting

Develop mindset to share in profits equally, maximizing group earnings, not individual gains

L

Logistics

“How do we deliver it?”

Business model where no credit is given or taken

Training women to allow for decentralized quality control

Bring balance through

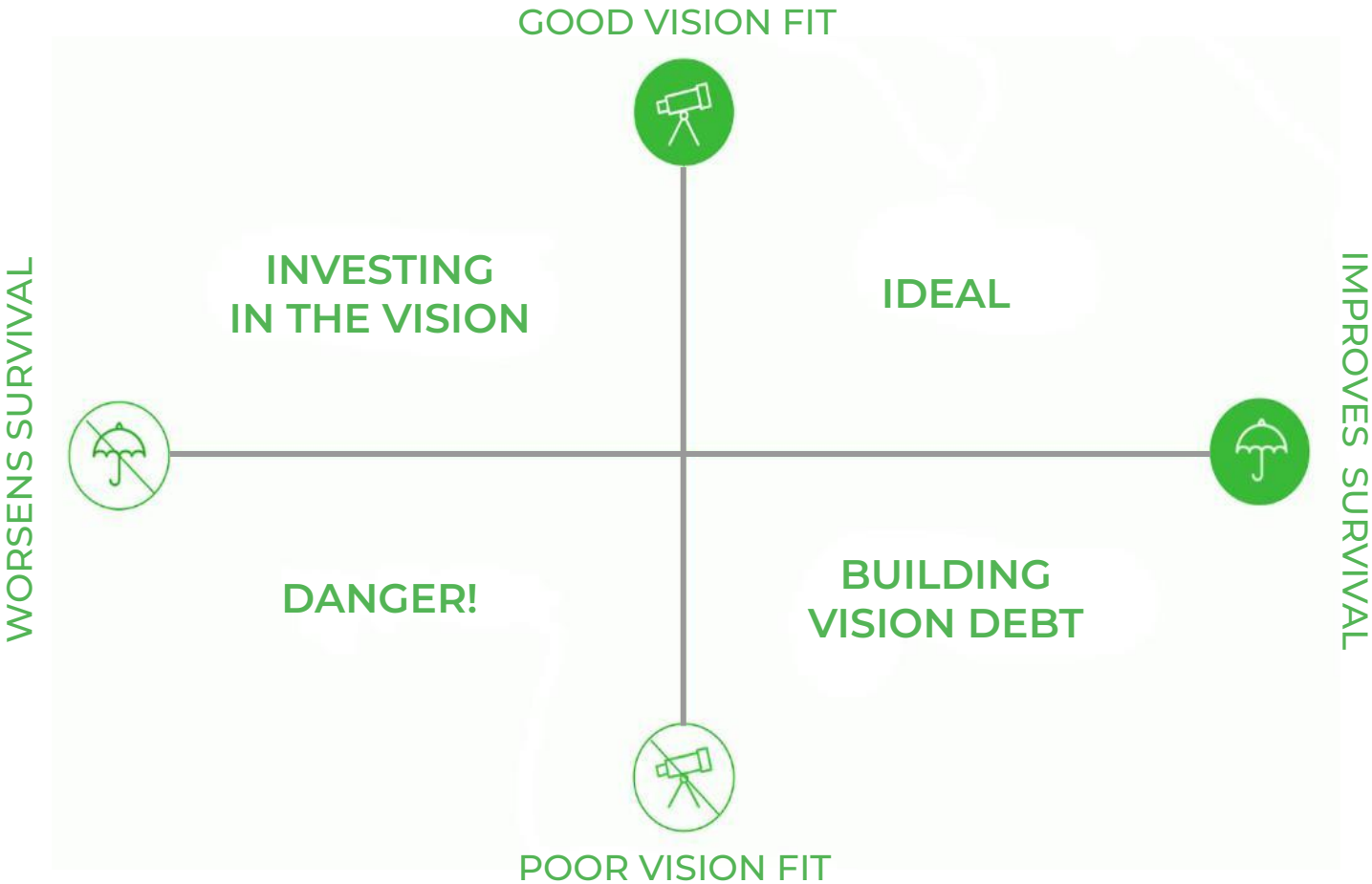
PRIORITIZATION

Prioritization means factoring in
the pesky problem of **survival**

Vision
(the long-term)

Survival
(the short-term)

Prioritization: Balancing Vision vs. Survival Risk



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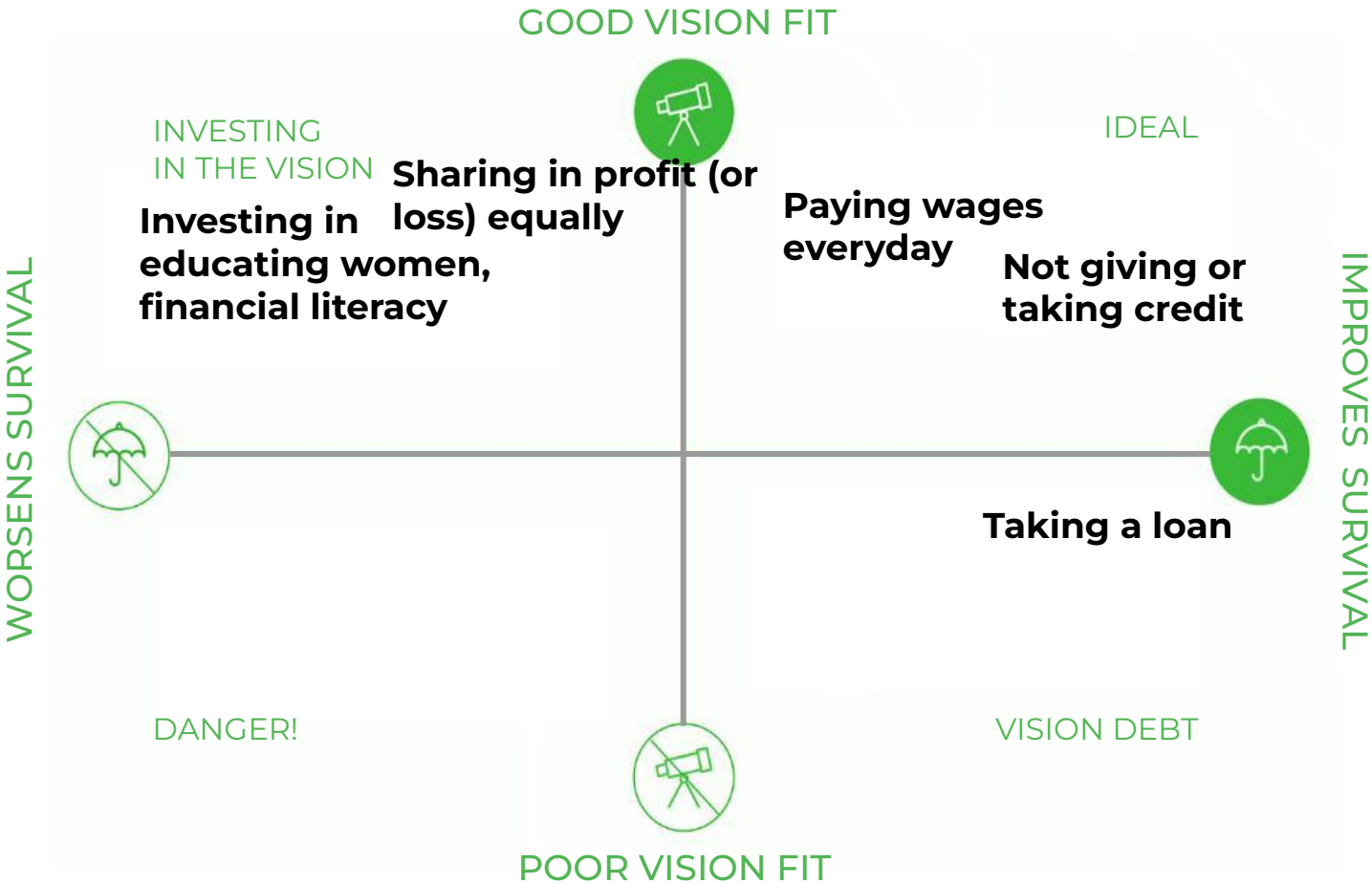

Take a hypothesis-driven approach to

EXECUTION & MEASUREMENT

Lijjat measures success by the # of women to whom they give financial independence.

Popular metrics such as revenues, market share, customer reviews are important but aren't indicators of progress towards **Lijjat's vision**.

Pappadums were Lijjat's **radical product** that gave financial independence to over 45,000 women.

Lijjat was vision-driven and systematically translated a vision for change into reality.

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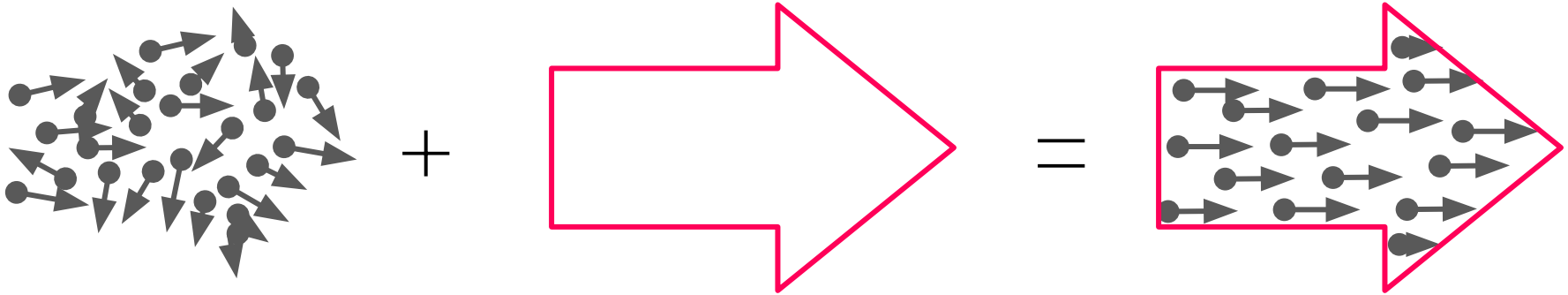
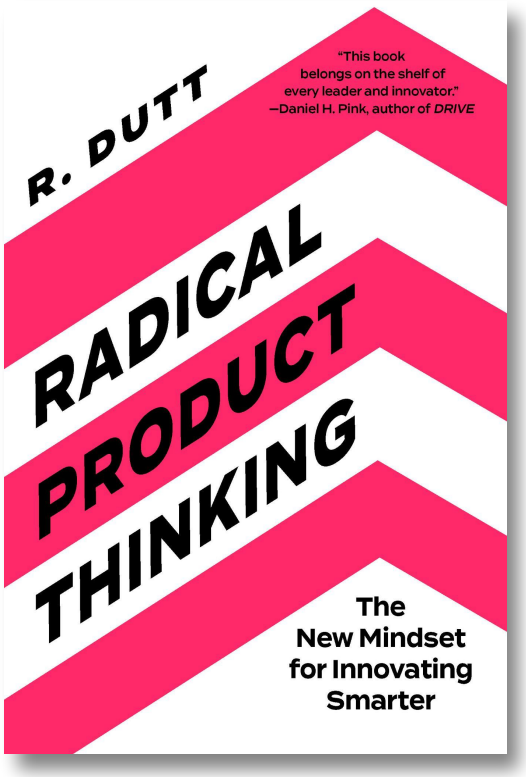


Want to learn more?



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