

# Strategic and Adaptive Thinking

Increase the chances of positive outcomes



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# About Reshma

Reshma turns ideas into reality by connecting strategy with execution. She helps teams consistently deliver high quality products and business outcomes. She is a Principal Program Manager at Sophos. You can find her on her website <https://rshahabuddin.com/>.

# Agenda

- ▶ What is strategic thinking?
- ▶ What is adaptive thinking?
- ▶ How do we develop it?
- ▶ How do we implement it with our team?

# Strategic thinking

- ▶ Strategic thinking is a valuable skill for everyone
- ▶ Imagine and make decisions about
  - ▶ what is valuable for us, our team, and our company
  - ▶ what we choose to spend our time on and what we choose not to
- ▶ Increase the chance of positively altering our future

# Adaptive thinking

- ▶ Adaptive thinking is the ability to recognize unexpected situations, quickly consider various possible responses, and decide on the best one.
- ▶ Monitor progress and adjust or shift when circumstance changes.

# Embrace the mindset

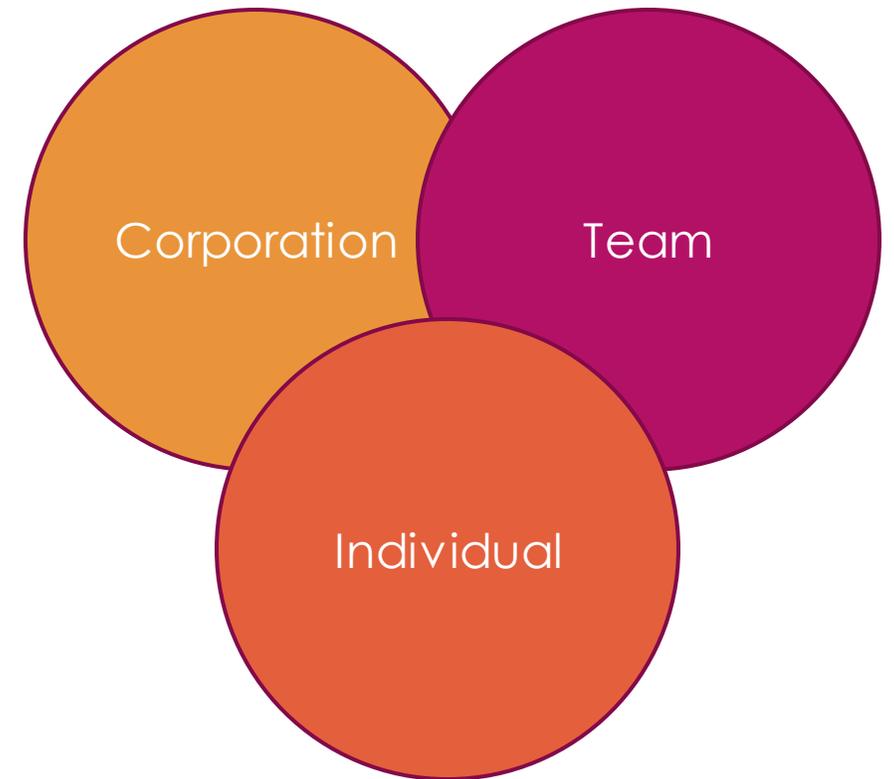
Strategic and adaptive thinking are not one-time activities. As situations change, we have to change our strategy and we have to adapt.

We have to:

- ▶ Question assumptions
- ▶ Observe the macro and micro trends
  - ▶ Macro – impacts society on a global scale
  - ▶ Micro – impacts our industry specifically
- ▶ Clear our mental decks
  - ▶ Be present
  - ▶ Reflect on our experiences
- ▶ Gain unique insights and gain strategic advantage

# Team and Individual Strategies

- ▶ Align our strategy and how we spend our time and make a difference within our organizational context
- ▶ Think about our future goals and increase the chances of making it happen



# Accomplish Strategy

- ▶ Think about a path from the big picture down to the details
- ▶ Choose goals and tactics to implement our strategy
  - ▶ Goals are possible ways to achieve our strategy
  - ▶ Tactics are activities to achieve our goals

# Develop Strategy

- ▶ Seek out big picture information – macro and micro trends
- ▶ Read voraciously
- ▶ Identify and seek out well informed people and learn from their insights
- ▶ Engage in scenario building (multiple ways the future can play out)
- ▶ Understand the past
  - ▶ What happened
  - ▶ Why it happened
- ▶ Adapt when disruption happens and be ahead

# Informed Strategy

- ▶ Good strategy does not need to be unique
- ▶ Look at our competitors
  - ▶ Do something similar or
  - ▶ Do something different
- ▶ Future trends in our industry
  - ▶ Will we achieve a breakthrough or
  - ▶ Will our competitor and why
- ▶ Gather feedback from diverse sources (bring in new voices and new perspectives)

# Strategy with our team

- ▶ Create a high-level proposal
- ▶ Brainstorm and identify objections
- ▶ Share with our team and manager
- ▶ Get input, feedback, and buy-in
- ▶ Maintain accountability with our team
  - ▶ Basic level– check-in who is doing what and when
  - ▶ Macro level– reiterate roadmap and hit milestones
- ▶ Regularly evaluate progress against our assumptions

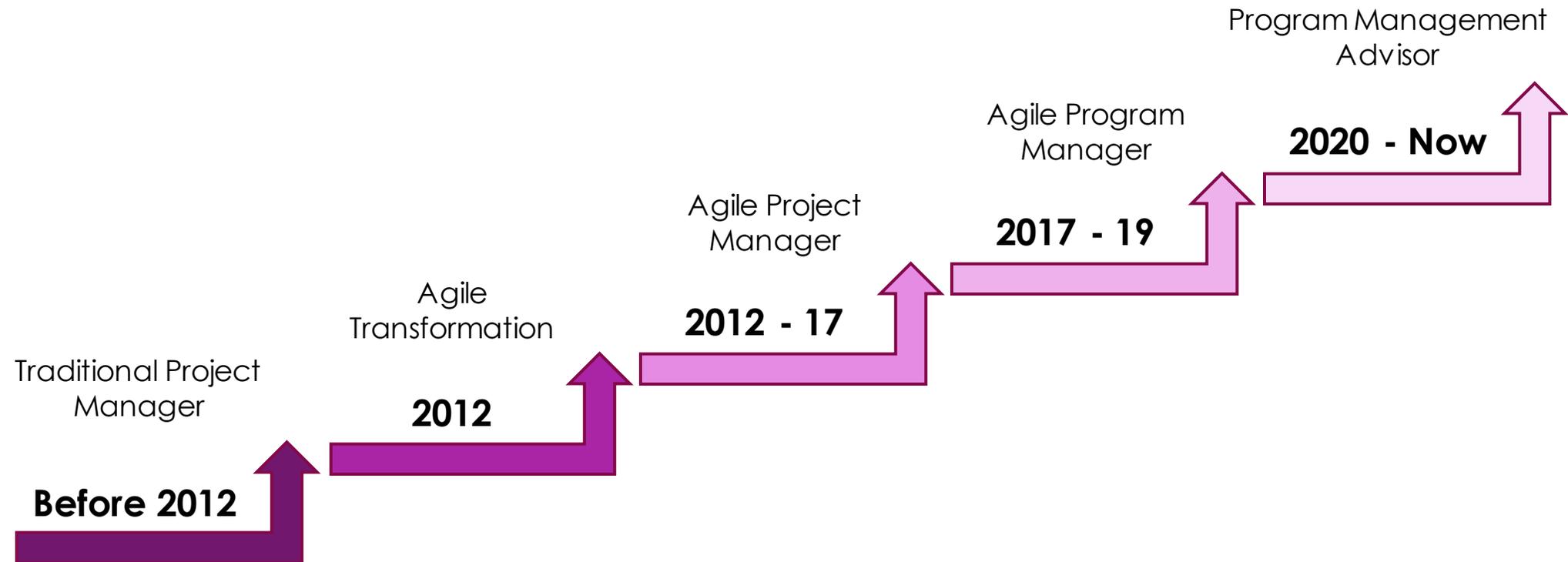
# Change strategy

- ▶ Initial expectations are not met
- ▶ Major change in circumstances
- ▶ Discover something that is better (run a small test)
- ▶ Disruption happens
  - ▶ Formulate a new plan and respond decisively
  - ▶ Mitigate things now and think of options later (adaptive thinking)
  - ▶ Go back to our vision and devise another plan

# Make strategy time

- ▶ Take an hour every week
- ▶ Block off time on our calendar
- ▶ Sit at our desk or take a walk
- ▶ Do it with a co-worker or a trusted friend

# How I applied strategic and adaptive thinking



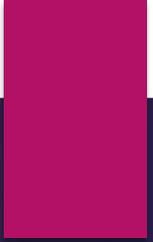
# Resources

## **Dorie Clark's LinkedIn Course**

<https://www.linkedin.com/learning/strategic-thinking/welcome-to-strategic-thinking?u=2265601>

## **Bob Iger's Master Class**

<https://www.masterclass.com/classes/bob-iger-teaches-business-strategy-and-leadership>



Questions?