

# ***Creative Consulting: Moving From ‘Persistent Misdirected Efforts’ To Truly Transformative Results***

**By Dowshan Humzah**

***Z/Yen Group, FS Club: 4pm Monday 13<sup>th</sup> March 2023***

***Chaired by Professor Michael Mainelli***

***(Includes poll results)***

***“We cannot solve our problems today with the same thinking we used when we created them.”***

***Albert Einstein***

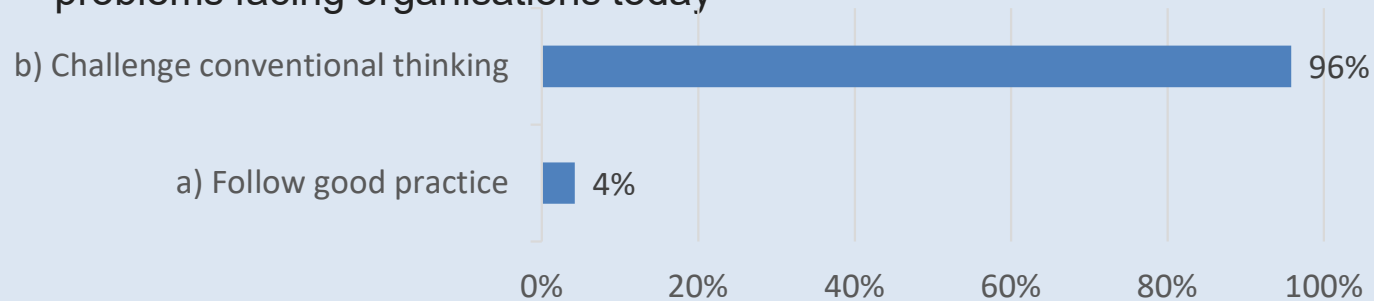
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# Poll 1: Consulting Approach

- Which approach do you believe is more effective in addressing complex, systemic problems facing organisations today?
  - a) One that follows industry good practice and established strategies
  - b) One that challenges conventional thinking and reframes problems

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- The two polls were conducted, by the Chair, just before the start of the formal presentation with results shared immediately
    - Poll 1 on consulting approach showed 96% of respondents believe an approach that challenges conventional thinking and reframes problems is more effective in addressing complex, systemic problems facing organisations today

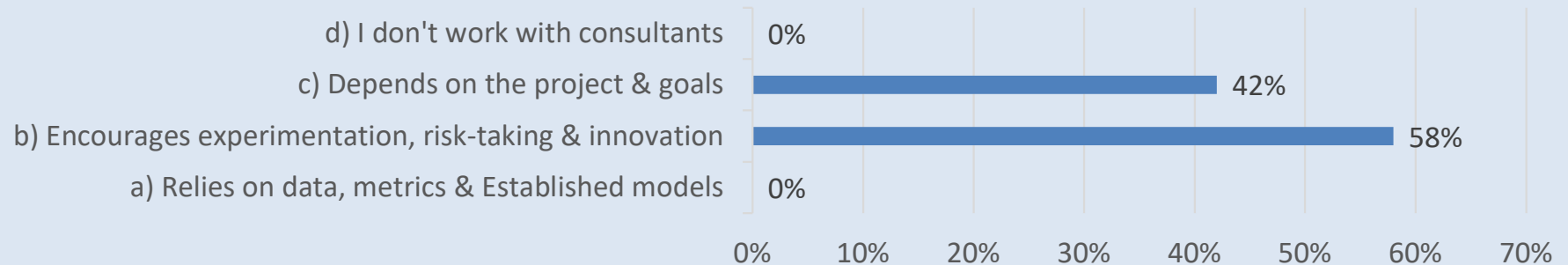


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## Poll 2: Type of Strategy Consultant

- Which type of strategy consultant would you rather work with on a project?
  - a) One who relies on data, metrics and established models
  - b) One who encourages experimentation, risk-taking, and innovation
  - c) It depends on the project and goals
  - d) I don't work with consultants

- The two polls were conducted, by the Chair, just before the start of the formal presentation with results shared immediately
  - Poll 2 on type of strategy consultant attendees prefer to work with, showed 58% on option b) 'Encourages experimentation, risk taking & innovation'; 42% on option c) 'It depends on project'
  - Interestingly 0% voted for option a) 'Relies on data, metrics and established models'

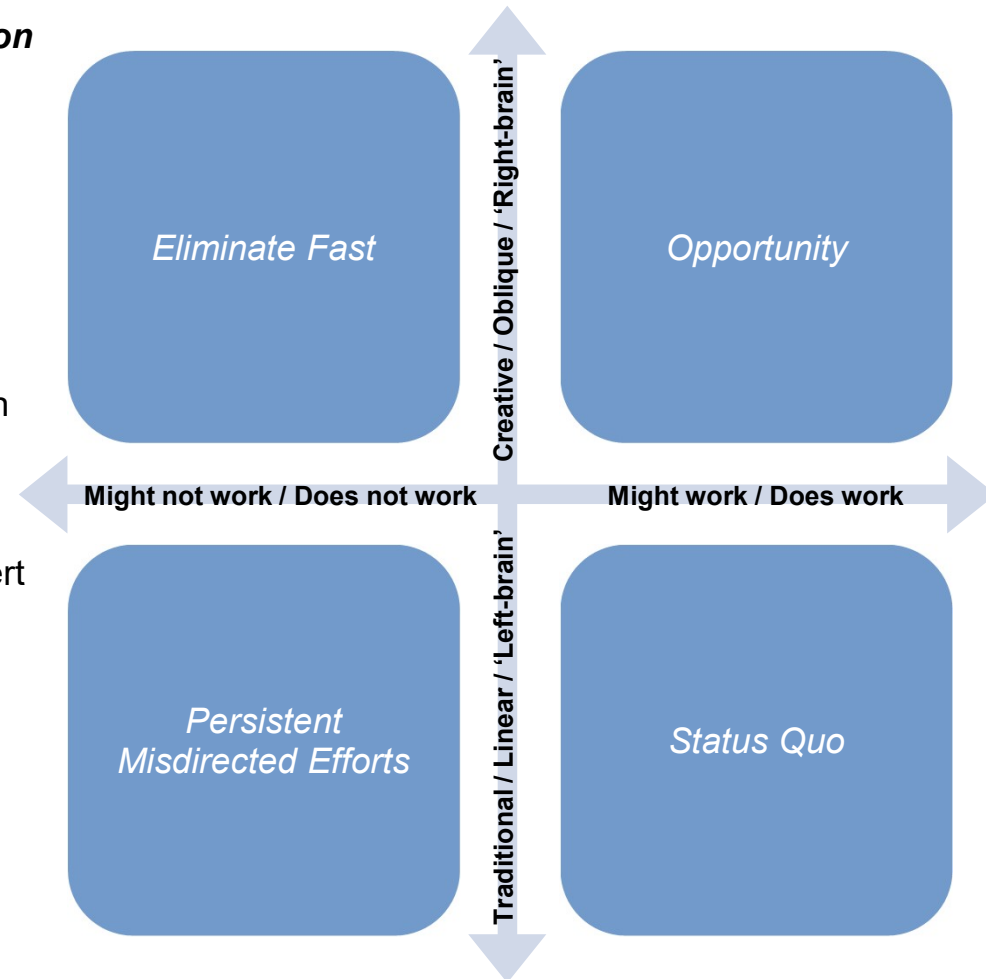


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# The Current Situation: Traditional Strategy Consulting

- ***“What gets measured gets managed even when it’s pointless to measure and manage it, and even if it harms the purpose of the organisation to do so.”*** *Simon Caulkin summarising V F Ridgway’s paper ‘Dysfunctional Consequences of Performance Measurements’ in Administrative Science Quarterly 1956*
- We are living through increased disruption: volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity
- Many leaders’ thinking and culture are focused on the traditional, linear and more ‘left-brain’
- The status quo is rarely challenged - and we revert to type when experiencing challenge
- We lack diversity, especially cognitive - not fully embracing and valuing difference
- **Traditional operating cultures and consulting models are increasingly not fit-for-purpose**

Figure 1: A simple 2-by-2 with x axis focused on effectiveness and y axis focused on approach



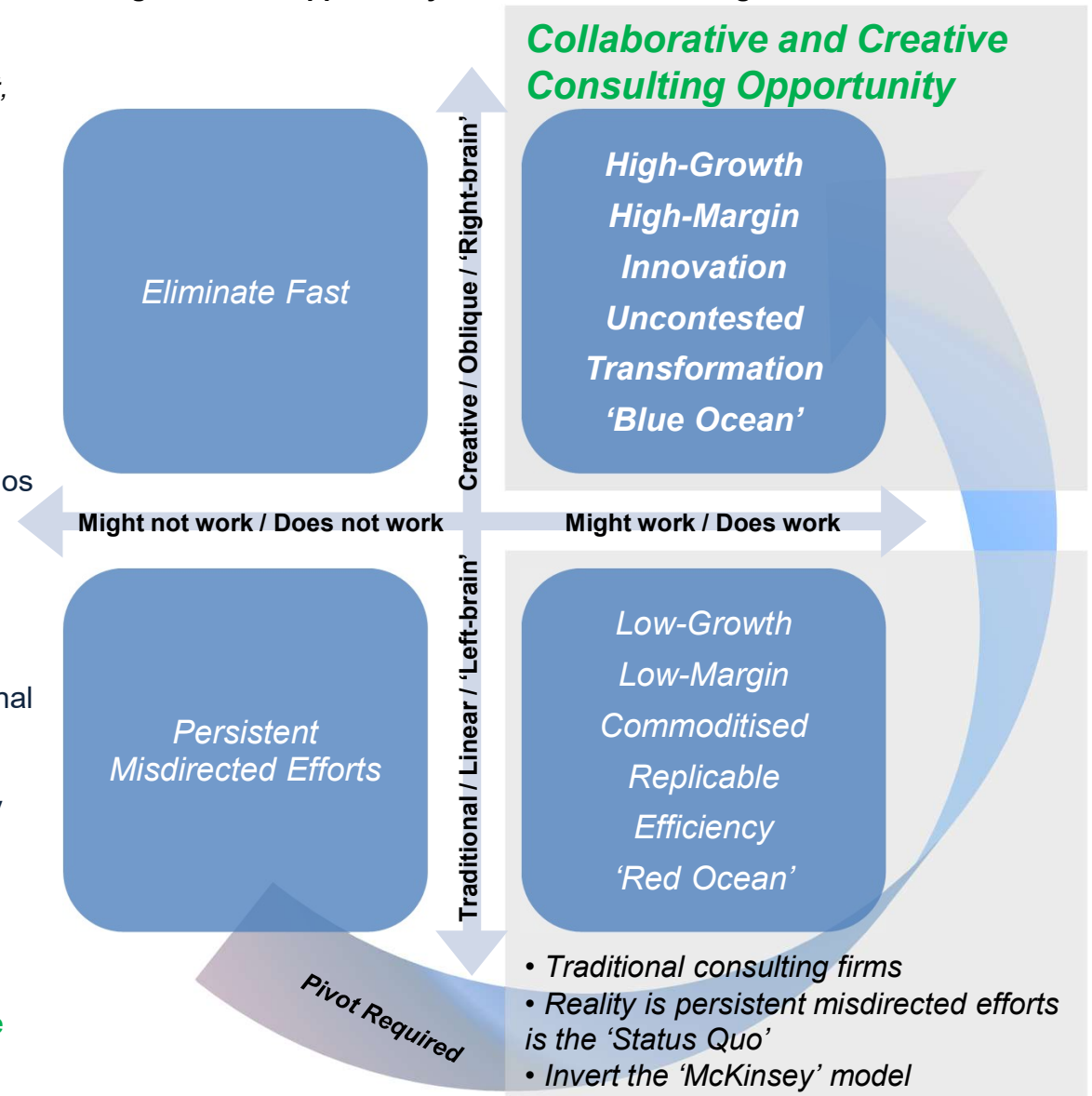
***A 'new' professional service firm, that better harnesses the art and science of consulting, is needed for client transformation, growth and innovation to better serve their people (end users and workforce)***

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# The Way Forward: Creative Consulting

- **“Worldly wisdom teaches that it is better for reputation to fail conventionally than to succeed unconventionally.”** *The General Theory of Employment, Interest and Money, John Maynard Keynes 1936*
- We often seek exponential growth or innovation
  - Yet, we settle for the marginal and safe
- We often recruit and brief to challenge
  - Yet, we appoint and select to fit
- We know the cognitively diverse and ‘mavericks’ can drive transformation and future growth
  - Yet, we pay lip-service to diversity and work in silos
- Not everything that matters can be measured.
  - Yet, not everything that we can measure matters
- Behaviour has a value and drives growth
  - Yet, we mainly focus on efficiency and the marginal
- Creativity and psychology expand solution spaces
  - Yet, traditional focus on metrics limits opportunity
- As a result, traditional consulting needs to change
  - More behavioural and ‘emotionally’ driven
  - Better embracing creativity and analysis
  - Focus on insight, inspiration and delivery
  - Ensure demand creation on understanding future
  - Think differently for innovation and growth

Figure 2: The Opportunity for Creative Consulting



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# Summary

- “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”
  
- Disruption is the new normal
  
- Think and do differently to achieve transformation, change and growth
  - Adopt a more creative, oblique and 'right brain' perspective
  - Combine behavioural science, psychology & creativity with the current
  - Expand imagination, possibility and the resulting solution space
  - Focus on people (workforce and end users), collaboration and innovation
  
- *Creative Consulting*
  - *Moving From 'Persistent Misdirected Efforts' To Truly Transformative Results*
  - *Thinking and doing differently to achieve transformation, change and growth*

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