



# 5 Minute Strategic Mindset

Your weekly dose of subtle disquiet



Here's my list of what I'm enjoying, or is inspiring me this week.

## A quote that made me think

"Our institutions are too powerful, authoritative, and strong. Our problem is weak communities, made ever more impotent by our strong service systems." **John McKnight, from *The Careless Society: Community And Its Counterfeits***

## An idea that amazed me (and not in a good way)

Some US prisons are eliminating in-person visits in favour of video visits. Why? Three reasons: more convenient for families, so more likely they'll call. More convenient for prison operators, as they don't have to operate tricky security screenings and meetings between prisoners and visitors. And, lastly, cost - yes, the Land of the Free charges prisoners a fixed (\$10) or per minute (50c) fee, split between the prison system and the video operator. But, prisoners hate it. Jerky video, poor sound, cutouts. And, more importantly, no sense of 'real contact'. **Question: What initiative could make sense for your business, but not for your customers?**

## A book I'm loving

A skinny book, and an easy (60 minute) read here. Who remembers CDs? Derek Sivers accidentally founded CD-Baby as a way for unsigned musicians to distribute their work (think of a physical version of Bandcamp or Soundcloud). His inspiring book about his experience as an unwilling Founder-CEO is titled **"Anything You Want: 40 Lessons for a New Kind of Entrepreneur"**. He shows how he built a business over 10 years (which he eventually sold for \$22m) with zero investment and a bunch of crazy principles. Some are "Formalities play on fear. Bravely refuse", "You don't need a plan or vision", "Act like you don't need the money" as well as deeply pragmatic advice, such as "Trust, but verify" and "Delegate, but don't abdicate". Trust me, it's a well-spent hour reading this. Also, read it to find out what he did with his \$22m windfall. **Question: What capabilities or insights have you 'accidentally' stumbled on in your career? Could you 'teach' them to others?**

## An idea that I've been pondering this week

Psychological safety. In a newsletter a couple of weeks ago, I wrote about psychological safety being one of the critical features of the highest performing teams that Google has identified. So, who apart from Google actively pursues this as a concept? It turns out that one of Australia's standout tech firms, **Atlassian**, does. They even have someone with the title "Work Futurist", Dominic Price, who says "Fostering psychological safety is a full-team job, but it starts with managers. We coach our leaders at Atlassian to openly ask for help, try new approaches, and treat honest failures as opportunities to learn. They're also free to share their hopes, fears, and struggles to whatever degree they're comfortable, even when it has nothing to do with work. That sets the tone for the entire team." **Question: How explicitly do you build psychological safety for your team?**

And, please send me your feedback by email to [ah@workwell.com.au](mailto:ah@workwell.com.au)  
Which bullet above is your favourite? What do you want more or less of?  
Other suggestions? Let me know!

Have a wonderful weekend.

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