



# 5 Minute Strategic Mindset

Your weekly dose of subtle questioning



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

## A quote that made me think

"Imagination is more important than knowledge" *Albert Einstein.*

## A deep idea that provoked me

**Uber's** IPO has disappointed some (including its CEO) who are banking on its value reaching \$120b. Today, it's worth "just" \$62b, having launched on Friday at over \$80b. I'm often use two of its main products: ride-sharing and meal delivery, and happily contribute to its \$11b of revenues. To understand how such a valuation is justified, I wanted to know how Uber thinks about its core capabilities. I've discovered there are just three: (i) data capability (an unparalleled data set of transportation movements); (ii) routing capability (standout software that navigates movement from A to B); and controversially (iii) jurisdictional authorisation (negotiate permissions to operate in cities and states everywhere). But what most influences Uber's valuation is its core value proposition, which is to "reduce movement inefficiencies". Think about that for a moment. This takes Uber far beyond taxis and meals and could, in future, be applied to any movement with economic value: container shipping movements, within-hospital movement of patients and medicines, and many others. What else can you think of? **Question: Can you identify your organisation's 3 core capabilities and, if so, what other problems could they be applied to?**

## A book I'm loving

This week, in Australia, we elect a new government, perhaps a new Prime Minister. And, last week, I did something very unusual, for me at least. I read a political novel. Admittedly, it's one of the most controversial (and popular) novels in its home country, France. Michel Houellebecq sets the aptly titled **Submission** in the near future (2022) when a coalition of a Muslim party and socialists narrowly defeat the far-right party of Marie Le Pen, with the charismatic Mohammed Ben Abbas becoming President. Submission's main character is a muted, defeated middle-aged academic who watches with mild horror as the world around him is gradually Islamicised. Women withdraw from his classes, senior people at his university are replaced by Muslim managers and academics, Jews are 'encouraged' to emigrate to Israel, which they do. **Question: How rapid and how fundamental a change could you adapt to, if the authorising environment around you also changed suddenly?**

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

Attackers as defenders; defenders as attackers. My 10yo son, Jasper, learns soccer every Sunday in a local park. His coach is Shede Olukhale, a former Kenyan national vice-captain, who tactfully pushes the boys and girls beyond what they think is possible. When picking up Jasper this week, he said to me, "Jasper played well, he ran for the whole game. That's important, as what we now see in professional soccer is that attackers must defend, and defenders must move forward to join the attack. Passing well is not enough". Shede's comment made me think about 'back of house' functions (finance, HR, IT) vs the 'attacking' functions (sales, business development, marketing) and whether that's also true — that 'back of house' needs to understand the customer and the sales imperatives, and that those at the front lines need to grasp the base capabilities the organisation has. In his words, "Passing is not enough".

**Question: "Which 'attackers' in your organisation need to 'defend' better? And vice versa?"**

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Have a wonderful weekend.



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