SCENARIO BOOK

Hybrid Teams

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When your teams work alongside the best practising experts, it can transform the value they bring to delivery. Do your teams need a lift up?

HYPR

Your scenario?

- You're confident that your teams are competent and well-versed in the product and software delivery practices embedded in the organisation

- You're less confident however about whether these practices are up-to-date and whether people are improving their skills with real intent

- The pressure of work in the system makes it hard to take individuals out of delivery to give them time to learn

- The training opportunities that do exist for team members are not only under-used, but it's hard to monitor learning outcomes and see the positive impact on delivery

- No one truly owns the kind of capability uplift you want to see

- You've tried to fill practices and skills gaps through new hires but you're not seeing a transfer of their skills to others

"I need to feel much more confident that we're continuously improving the practices we use across delivery and the skills of the teams. I want to find a way to do these things without disrupting our work"
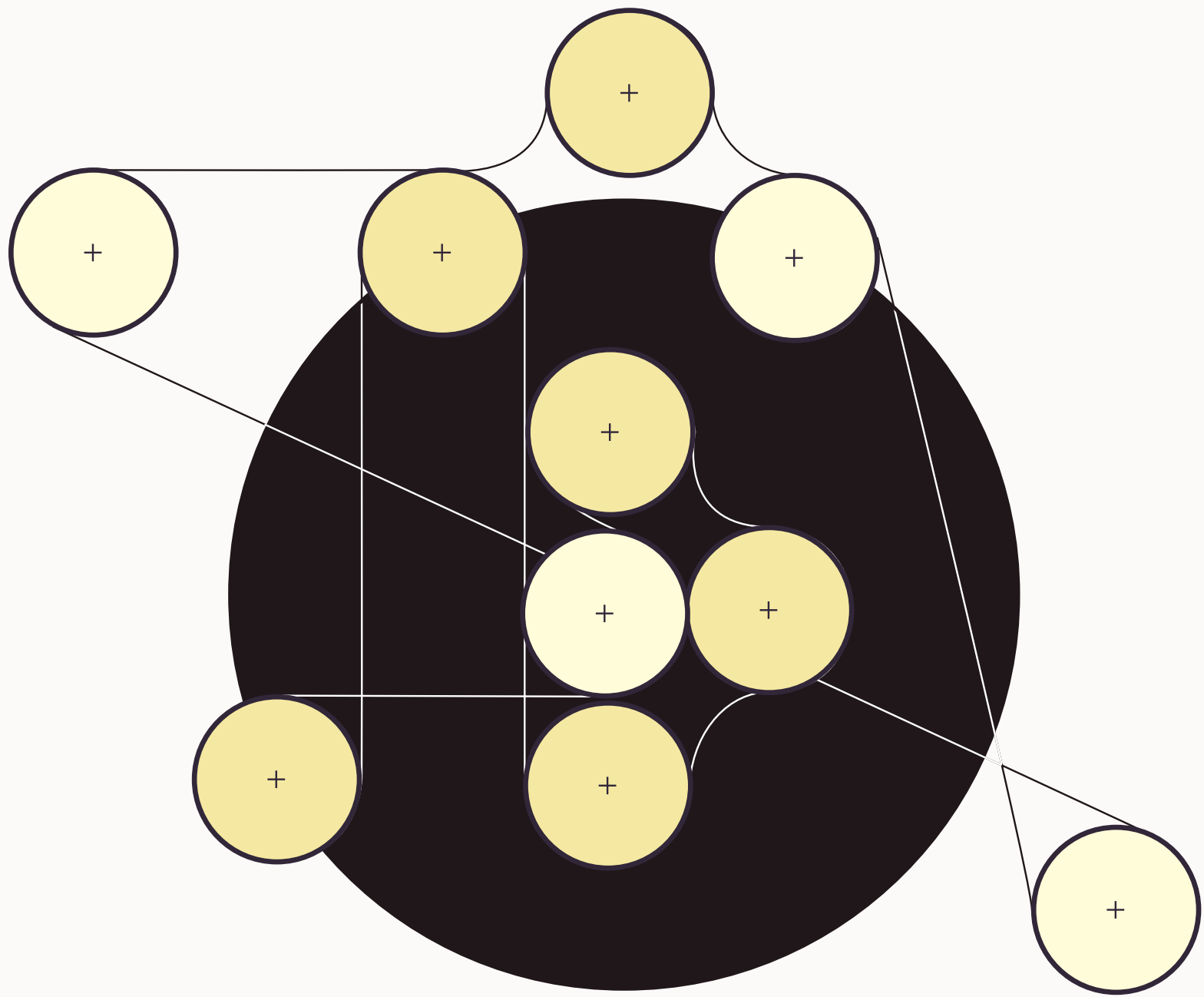
You're not alone

Continuous capability uplift is essential to achieving digital maturity and accelerating the flow of customer value. Outdated practices and skills are simply another constraint in your system. But delivering uplift initiatives is one of the biggest challenges for any business. Most organisations try hard to make it happen yet have little confidence in the impact they are making. Some reasons:

- There's too much work in the way
- Individuals don't have time to satisfy their own curiosity at work and may not be motivated to upskill in their own time
- It's hard to build a financial case between continuing to relentlessly deliver value and interrupting work to improve how you deliver it
- There's fear about creating an old vs new paradigm. An 'us and them' where some teams get to work in new ways with new tools on cool stuff, while others are left delivering operational initiatives using traditional practices
- Initiatives cannot overcome inertia. Teams repeat the patterns they're used to or they are forced to keep on working with code in existing ways because the originating teams have long since left. Despite your best intentions, the overhead and overhang of supporting and developing the old weighs you down
- There's not enough intent. Capability uplift is left to individuals or isolated leaders or it may be expected to happen through some form of enterprise-wide osmosis
- Learning programmes may not focus on the very latest practices, leaving individuals and teams always behind the curve
- Learning programmes rarely embed skills 'in the moment' on a live project
- If you've tried bringing in a shiny new team from outside but not seen a transfer of skills to your existing team, it might be because those existing teams are acting as corporate antibodies to the new people – whether intentionally or otherwise

So the three key challenges are:

- How do you keep delivering and get better at it at the same time?
- How do you carry as many of the team with you as possible into the new world?
- How do you make it relevant to your business?

The magic of Hybrid Teams

A Hybrid Team is created when your team is joined by exceptional external practitioners – from HYPR, for example.

They work together to deliver a **new** or **existing initiative** in your portfolio of work.

The external skills can be in any area of delivery – in architecture, coding, DevOps, product ownership, Agile and so on.

The specific goal of the experts is to **deliver** the work while providing **side-by-side teaching, coaching and mentoring** to your team members. Experts may also augment learning through targeted workshops, brown bag lunches and one-on-one sessions.

Hybrid Teams make the adoption of new practices and skills real. And you meet each of your three challenges:

- You keep on delivering work
- It's implicitly relevant to your business alone
- It's real-world capability uplift that you can take across teams – either by deploying upskilled individuals to other teams (where they act as mentors themselves) or by creating new Hybrid Teams elsewhere

It can be a truly virtuous circle. For everyone...

Priceless shifts

Moments of progress for your people

- The joy of learning new skills and being able to put them into practice immediately on something *that's of value to others*

- Eureka moments of progress that are incredibly motivating. People immediately feel that they are more relevant in their role and more confident about the contribution they can make

- A new willingness to share their learning and experience with others

- Heightened interest and engagement in their area of delivery and probably other areas too

- Motivation to learn more new skills and practices

Value delivery improved for your customers

- The constraints created by yesterday's practices and a lack of skills begin to be removed and the flow of customer value accelerates

- The quality of what you deliver to customers improves, often dramatically

- You become more responsive to customer needs

Heightened reputation of your employment brand

- Happier, more engaged people who have experienced learning in Hybrid Teams will likely tell others outside your organisation

- The best new talent is always attracted to professional development support. So Hybrid Teams can help you build your employment brand to attract the best people

HYPR Hybrid Teams

There are two principal types of engagements where HYPR's experts work in client teams.

01

Directly on an existing project and usually with a specific purpose

For example, two of our team are engaged to support a client's DevOps team to build a platform and delivery pipelines. As well as building those things, we're making sure that we're embedding the very best practices and skills across the team. We're teaching people how to fish. And when we leave, the client team will be able to onboard new hires or colleagues and transfer their learnings.

02

On new, larger and more complex initiatives

Whenever we're engaged on a significant, long-term tech transformation project, we always propose Hybrid Team working. For example, an initiative might require four client teams of eight people each. We might begin with two or three HYPR experts in each of those teams and then, over time, reduce this to one person in each team until delivery is finished. The aim is to transfer skills through the work and at *a pace that meets the needs of the client team*.
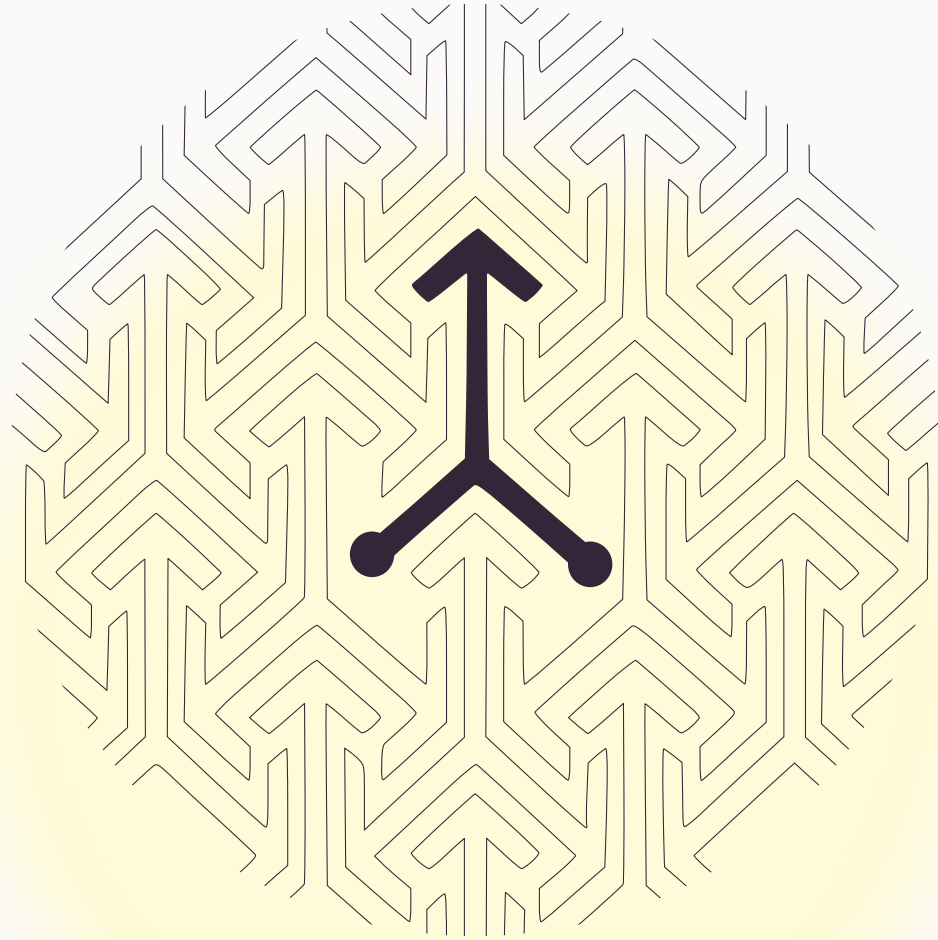
HYBRID TEAM WORKING

Capability
Uplift

TEAM

PARTNER

01

02

03
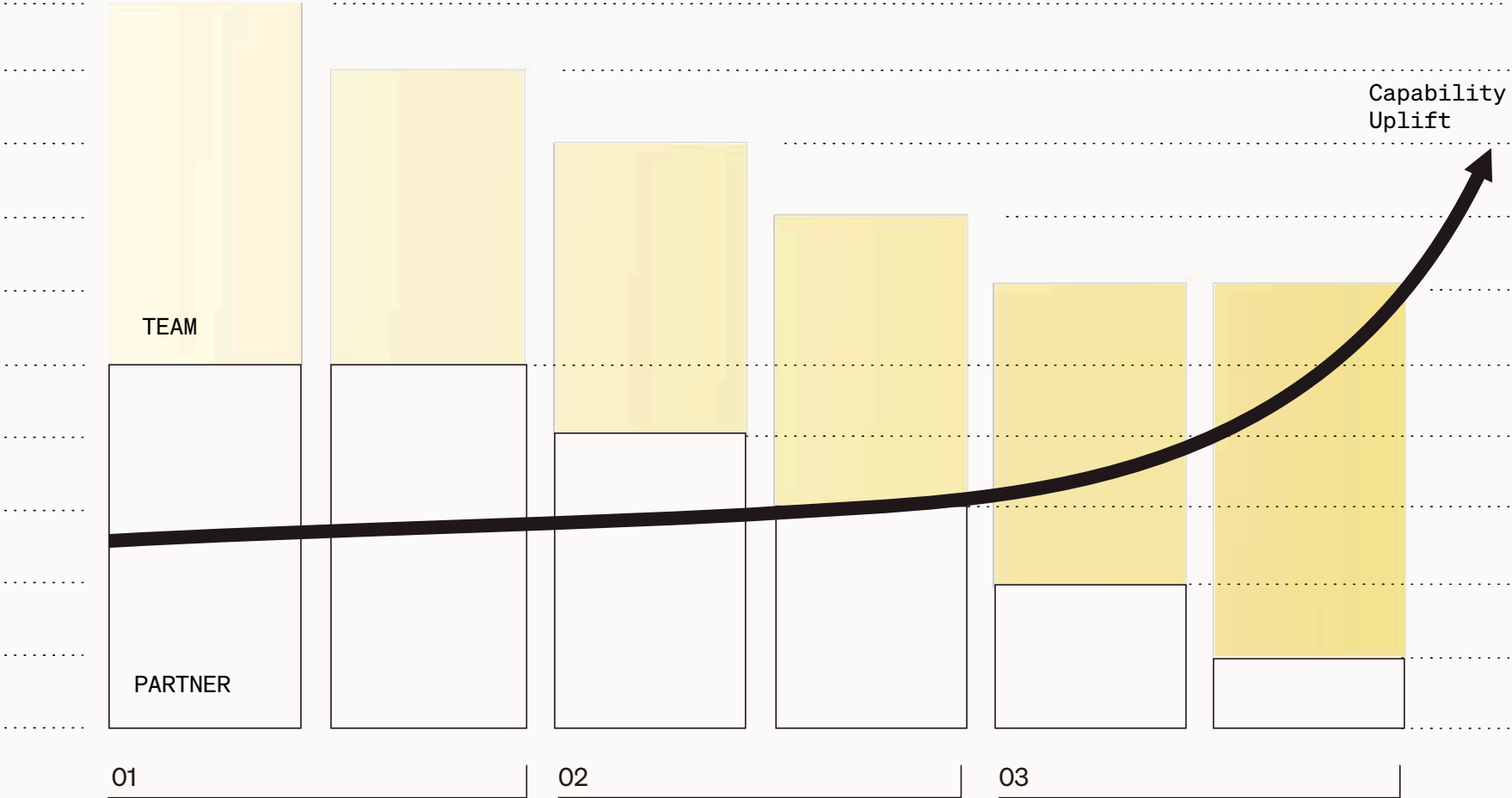
Partner with external experts
in your team/s on existing or
new work

Experts work alongside your
people to maximise delivery
and learning

With capability uplift, your team/s
is/are able to sustain and evolve
the work

Working out what's best for you

Understanding your ambition

We listen to what you want and might expect to achieve, what's worked for you in the past and why any current capability initiatives are performing poorly. Understanding the scale of your ambition frames the engagement.

Discovering capability uplift requirements

Irrespective of the type of engagement, we can conduct audits to highlight deficiencies in your practices and team skills. We use our Improvement Model to measure your capabilities compared to average and best benchmarks across eight key areas of delivery. See our Situational Analysis Scenario Book for more details on these audits.

Understanding the work you want to deliver

Given that Hybrid Team working is about uplifting skills while delivering, we need to know what the work is. In a *type two engagement* – ie. on new, more complex initiatives – we're already right across that because the work has probably led our conversations (and Hybrid working forms a natural part of the engagement).

For a type one engagement, with us helping to deliver an existing initiative, you'll probably have a clear idea of exactly what you want to deliver (eg. new DevOps pipelines). Occasionally, clients ask us to help them choose the project to deliver what best meets their capability uplift ambition.

Team topologies

Knowing the work and knowing the capability uplift requirements, we then look at the make up of your teams (topology) and assess capability and role gaps in each. This allows us to recommend which key skills and potentially roles are 'blind spots' or can be strengthened using Hybrid Teams.

Working out how we'll work to lift your skills

Once we've agreed the team topologies, we'll propose the HYPR people with the best fit for the engagement.

As well as being expert practitioners, they will deliver high-level coaching and teaching skills. This may be through techniques such as pairing and flexible learning through structured modular approaches. They may augment learning through workshops and other focused sessions.

Delivering the work is usually done in short sprints. This allows for experimentation, quicker learning and a better understanding of the value delivered.

Measuring improvements

The improvement you want is an acceleration in the flow of value to customers – this is the key business goal. Lifting the abilities and practices of your people effectively lessens or removes constraints to flow. We can help you set measures and quarterly OKRs and Flow or DORA Metrics for those teams to show improvements in quality, speed, productivity and value.

On the road to better

Hybrid Teams are not usually short journeys but they tend to create long-lasting, sustainable improvements in practices, skills and, of course, flow of customer value. Just as important are the seminal moments of relevance and progress that happen for people who have experienced real-world implementation of better ways of being, thinking and working. It inspires your teams to stay curious, continuously improve and be ever more adaptable to change.
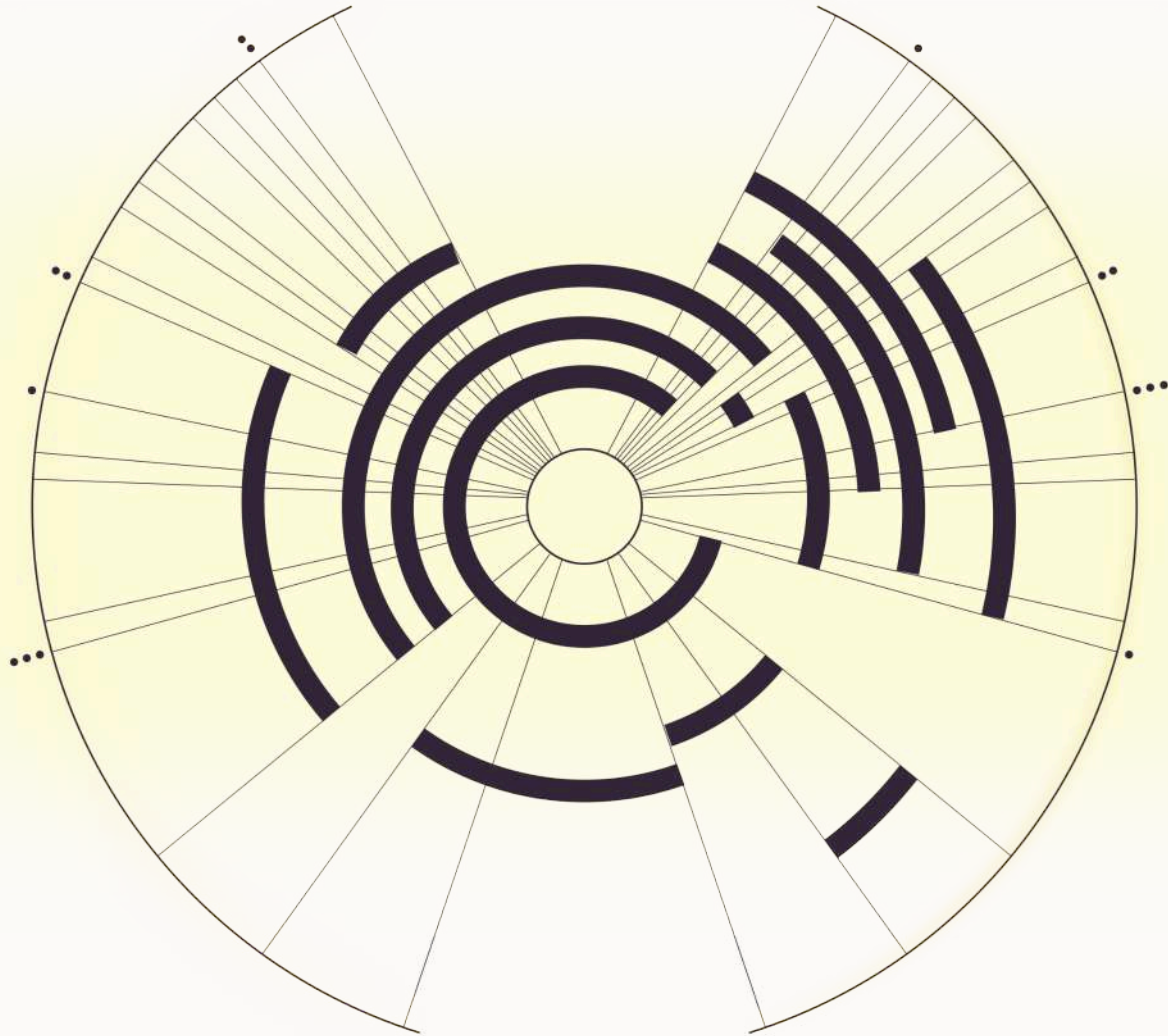
Why HYPR?

Our purpose is the 'Pursuit of Relevance'. We're here to help you accelerate the flow of value delivered to your customers so you can thrive in rapidly changing times.

What makes us different?

Focus on flow – Progressive enterprises are focusing on finding and removing delays from their system through the practice of Value Stream Management (VSM). We're a leading VSM consultancy helping enterprises in NZ and Australia.

Systems thinking – We take a systems-thinking approach to avoid local optimisations that contribute little to the whole.

Focus on your people – Technology and people are one system and two sides of the same coin. We focus as much on the social constructs and human networks as we do on the tech.

Transition not transformation – Your enterprise operates in a VUCA (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, Ambiguous) world. It needs to keep flying while making changes. We know from experience that transition is the only way you can do both.

Our people – We're a diverse team with shared purpose and values. We have extensive skills across our consulting lines, from the very best software engineers to strategic experts able to engage at board level. They have lived at the coalface of change.

We're ready to help

HYPR

Hybrid Teams is a highly effective way to achieve sustainable capability uplift for your people. How can HYPR's experts help you? Call us now...

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Thanks to all the clients and 'Friends of HYPR' who provided feedback and the pioneers of ideas and models that help us see things in new and different ways.

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