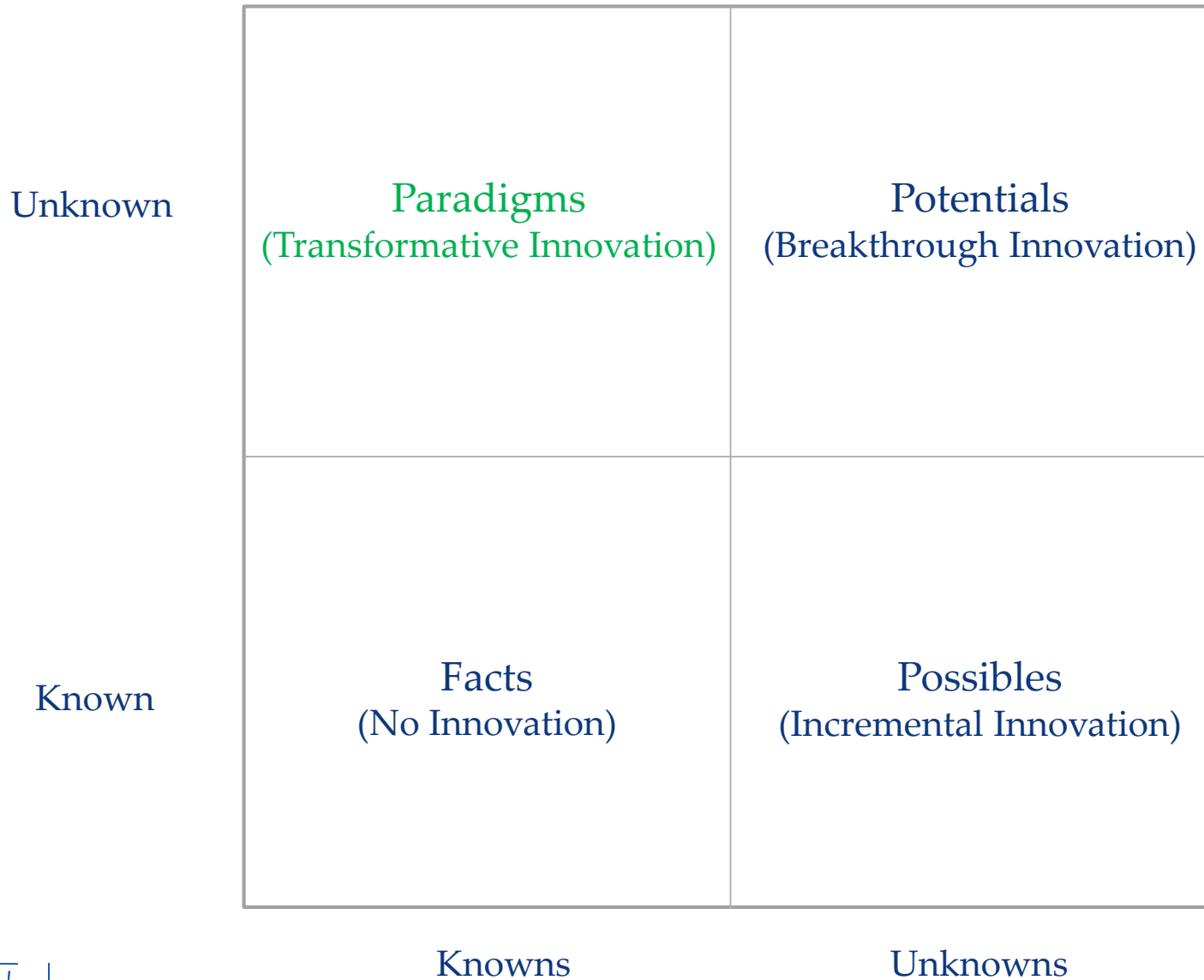


Breaking Assumptions

Pablo G. Tello
EU Office/IdeaSquare
CERN



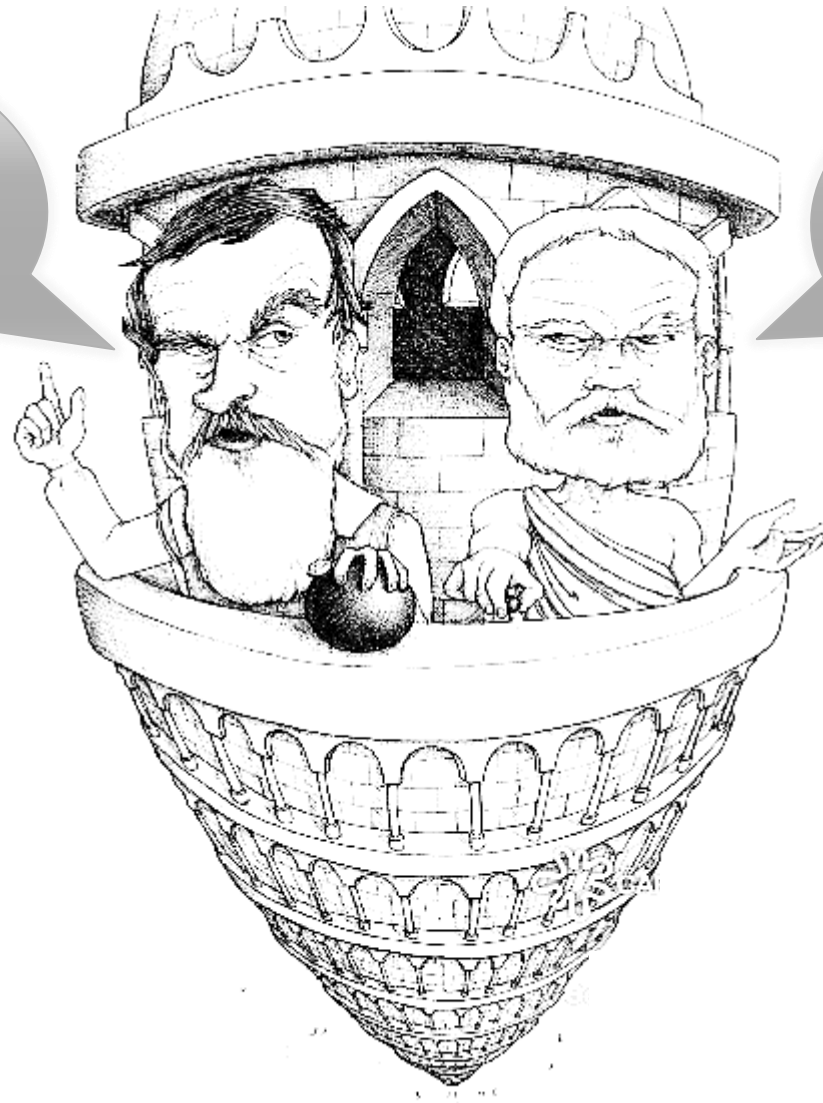
What is to challenge an assumption?





In Physics breaking assumptions is everyday business....

Heavy bodies
fall at the
same speed
than lighter
ones.



Heavy bodies
fall faster than
lighter ones.

A famous 2000 years controversy.



Maybe in the near future...

Galileo vs. Moore's Law...

DESCENDANT OF GALILEO
DISPROVING THE THEORY THAT COMPUTERS
DOUBLE IN SPEED EVERY TWELVE MONTHS

But assumptions can be broken anytime, anywhere....



It was the first of December 1951, when Rosa Parks (42 years African American) was riding a bus back home in Alabama, US.

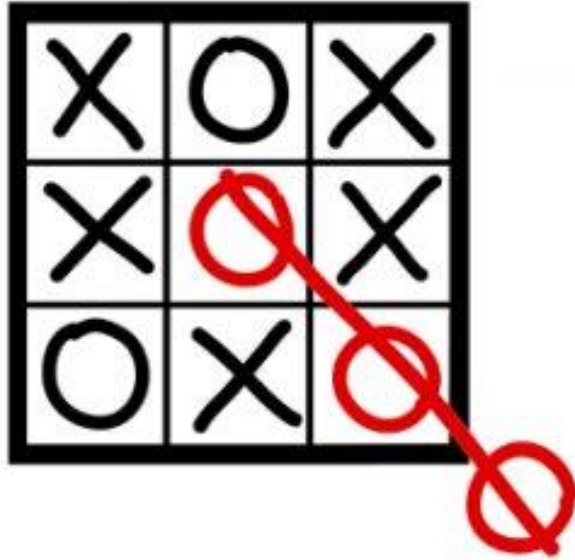
At the time, law stated that buses have separate seats for White people and Black people.

When asked by the driver to stand up and give her seat to a white man, she answered, "I don't think I should have to stand up." She was arrested.

Three days later, a bus boycott was announced. The boycott organizers elected one young unknown church minister to coordinate their efforts; his name was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



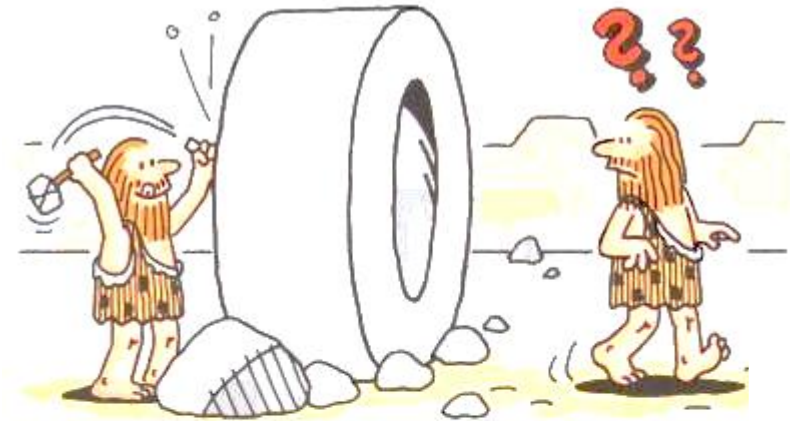
THINK OUTSIDE THE BOX



... yes, but how?

The most difficult to achieve is to...

Challenge Assumptions



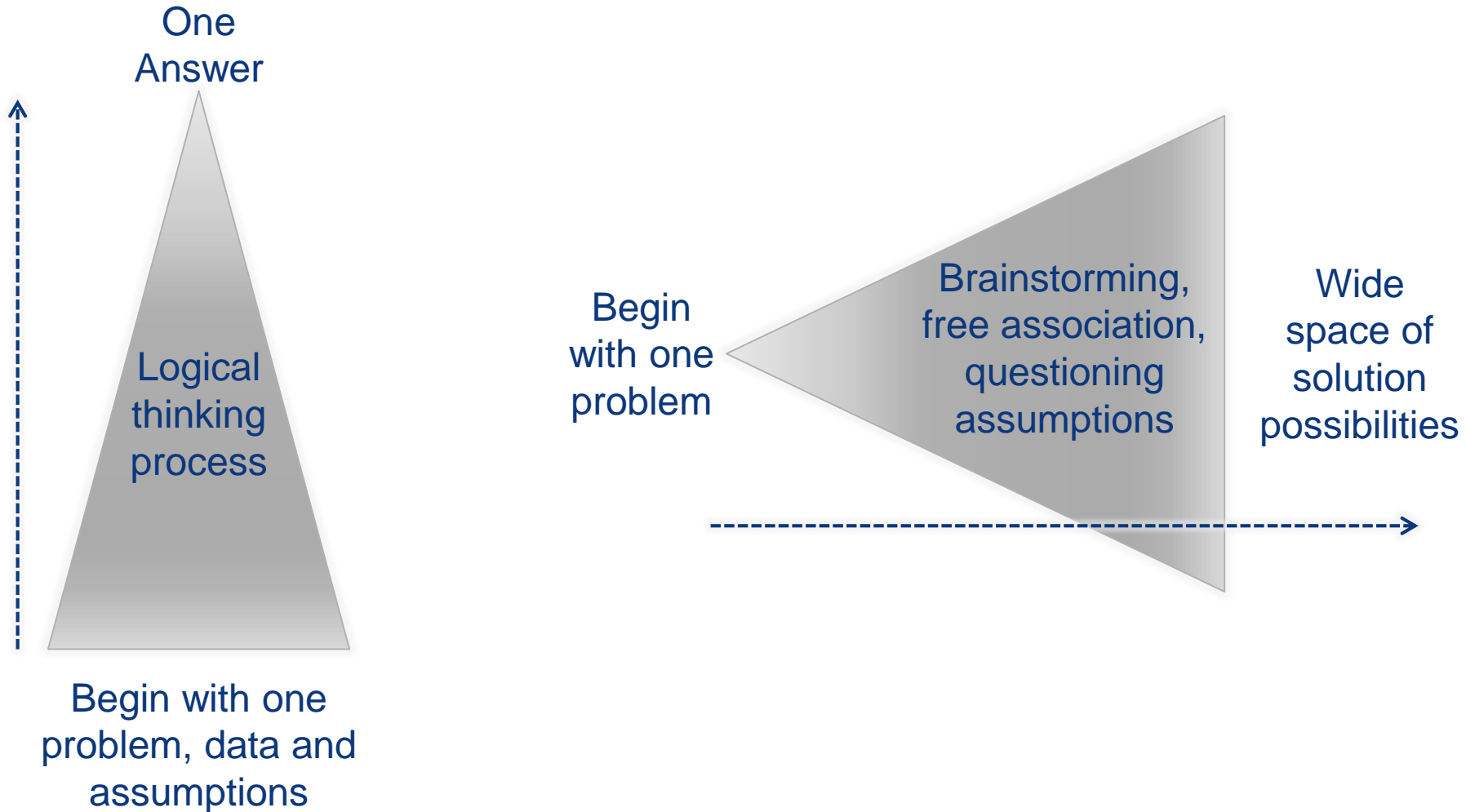
Generate new possibilities



Lateral vs Logical thinking...

Logical search	Lateral search
One is looking for the BEST POSSIBLE approach.	One is trying to produce as MANY ALTERNATIVES as possible.
One stops when one comes to a promising approach.	One acknowledges the promising approach and may return to it later but goes on to generating others.
One considers only reasonable alternatives.	Alternatives do not have to be reasonable.
Purpose: search for the best one.	Purpose: To loosen up rigid patterns and provoke new patterns.

Logical vs lateral thinking...



Enough theory...

...let's go for the practice

Exercise

Suppose you want to start restaurant and have difficulties to come up with ideas. You then decide to list three assumptions and reverse them.

Assumption

- a) Restaurants have menus either written, verbal or implied.
- b) Restaurants charge money for food.
- c) Restaurants serve food.

Reverse

- a') Restaurants have no menus of any kind.
- b') Restaurants give food away for free.
- c') Restaurants do not serve food of any kind.

Come up with an idea for each one of the reversals

Solution Example

Reverse

- a') Restaurants have no menus of any kind.
- b') Restaurants give food away for free.
- c') Restaurants do not serve food of any kind.

Idea

- a') The chief informs the client of what he bought that day. Asks the customers what ingredients appeal to them and cooks an exclusive dish. Recipe will be sent to them by email.
- b') An outdoor café where customers pay for time instead of food. Use a time stamp to charge by the minute. Selected food or beverages are sold for free.
- c') Create a restaurant with a unique décor in an exotic environment and rent out the location. People bring their own food and beverages and pay a service charge for the location.

Final Exercise

Come up with a “business” idea for the following 4 establishments based on reversing 3 assumptions about each one of them.

Prepare a pitch of 3 min about every idea that you have generated.

Establishment one: Insurance Company

Assumptions

- a)
- b)
- c)

Reverses

- a')
- b')
- c')

Idea/Pitches

- a'')
- b'')
- c'')

Establishment two: Prison

Assumptions

- a)
- b)
- c)

Reverses

- a')
- b')
- c')

Idea/Pitches

- a'')
- b'')
- c'')

Establishment three: Airport

Assumptions

- a)
- b)
- c)

Reverses

- a')
- b')
- c')

Idea/Pitches

- a'')
- b'')
- c'')

Establishment four: Pick up your own

Assumptions

- a)
- b)
- c)

Reverses

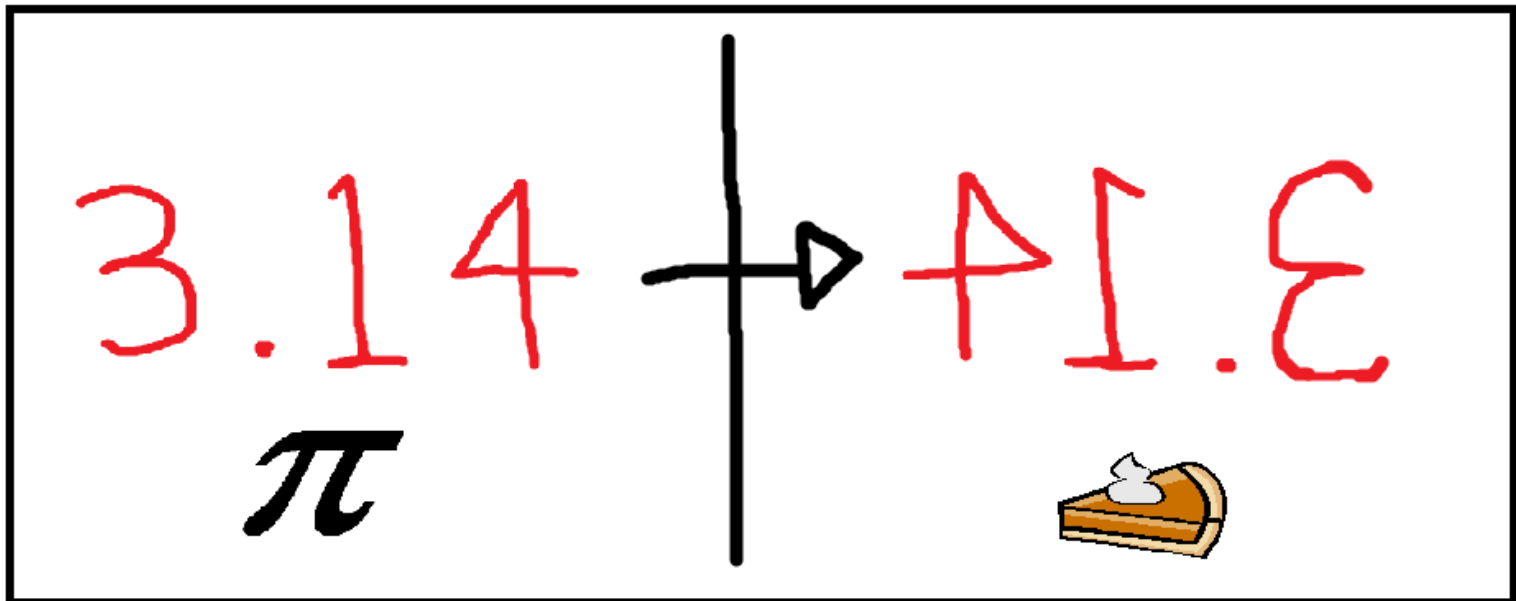
- a')
- b')
- c')

Idea/Pitches

- a'')
- b'')
- c'')

Message to take home...

Challenge assumptions
and
Generate new different solutions



Thank you

Any questions?