

Reversing the power pyramid - unlocking real engagement







Consumer technology is changing the workplace

Outside work, we say:
“OMG, you must try...”

BUT

Inside work, we say:
“OMG, please don’t make me use...”





Consumer tech

-  Joyful experience
-  I’m the centre of the universe
-  Valuable features for ‘me’
-  High engagement

 **great tech**

N
NETFLIX

Work tech

-  Joy-less experience
-  This wasn’t built for me
-  Valuable features for ‘them’
-  Low engagement

 **poor tech**

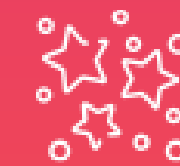


Why is this?

The way we treat consumers and employees is different. This makes no sense when we're one in the same. A consumer mindset:



Puts users first



Finds the fun, the joy



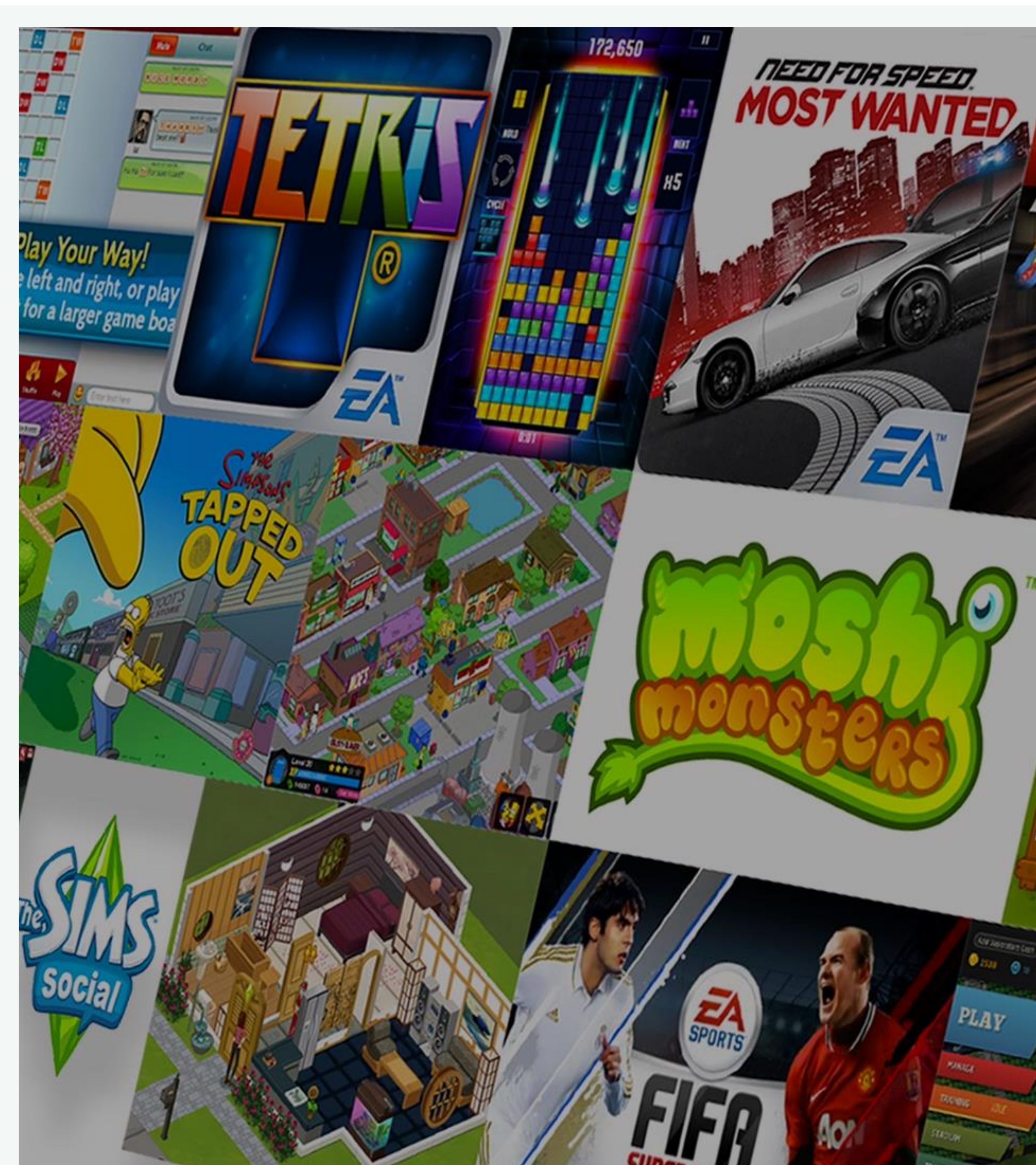
Makes the 'have to do' the 'want to do'



Laser focus on the **player**, not the **payer**



Thought: this mindset drives incredible engagement and motivation - why?



FORTNITE BATTLE ROYALE



Autonomy

Mastery

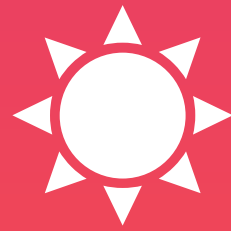
Purpose

Work vs Play

Autonomy, Mastery, Purpose exists @ work - but for the few



Decreases as you 'go down the pyramid'



Ironic since 'bottom' is the nearest to the customer

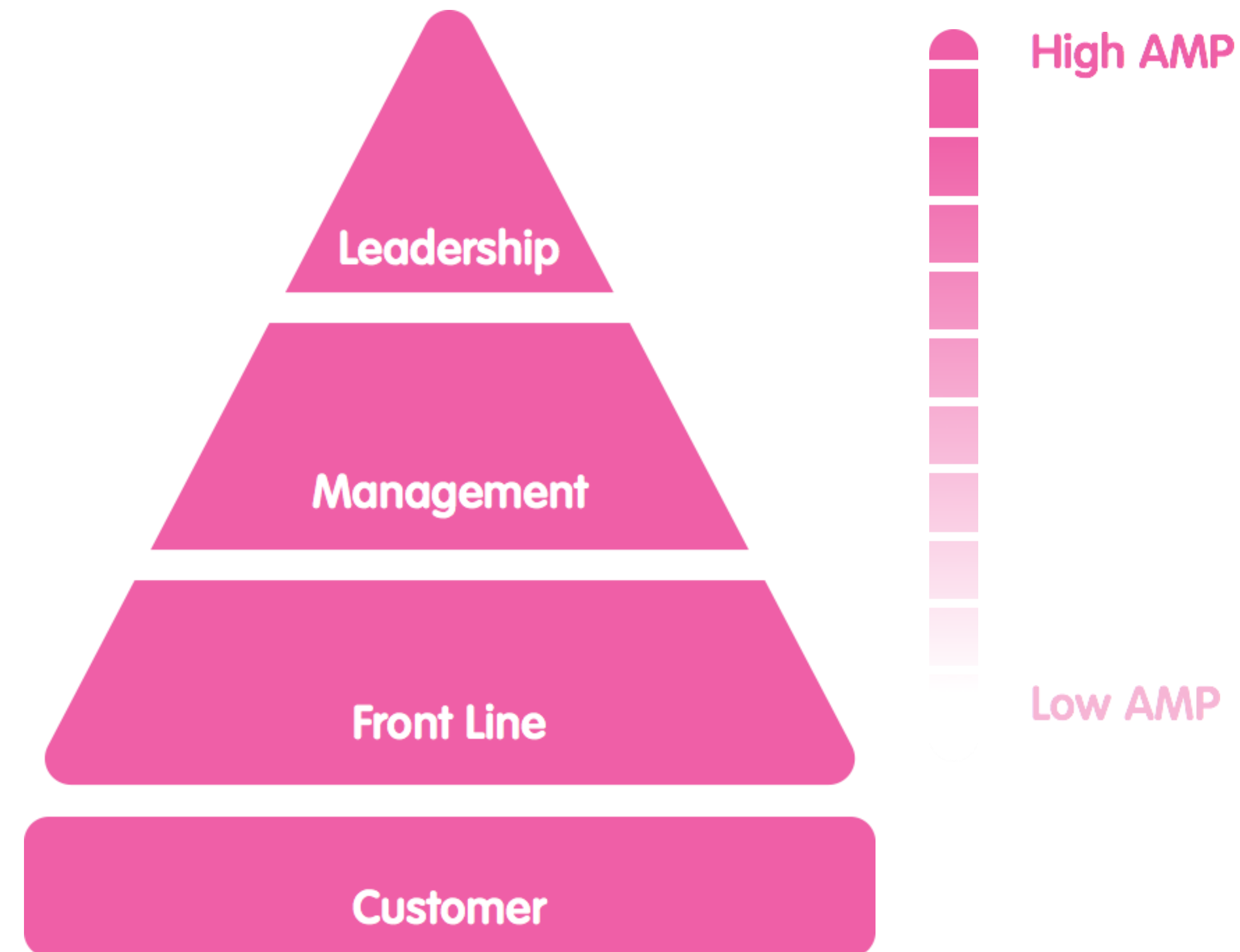


The tech we give employees betrays a wider truth - they are resources, not players



Thought: what would happen if we treated employees as players?

The power pyramid



	WORK	GAME
Tasks	repetitive, dull	repetitive, fun
Feedback	once a year	constantly
Goals	contradictory, vague	clear
Path to Mastery	unclear	clear
Rules	unclear, intransparent	clear, transparent
Information	too much and not enough	right amount at the right time
Failure	forbidden, punished, don't talk about it	expected, encouraged, spectacular, brag about it
Status of Users	hidden	transparent, timely
Promotion	kiss-up-o-gracy	meritocracy
Collaboration	yes	yes
Speed/Risk	low	high
Autonomy	mid to low	high
Narrative	only if you are lucky	yes
Obstacles	accidental	on purpose

Huge implications

It’s not about paying lip-service with another employee engagement survey. The implications are profound:



this isn’t just about tech



tech is just the ‘canary in the coalmine’



it’s about inverting the ‘pyramid’



... and putting employees at the centre of a new
('player') experience



Thought: this is really about
tech-enabled culture

Why HR must lead

Technology is (only) the enabler for change

But technology used by humans... is essentially just about humans

This is really about culture - and the need to change the organisational model

~~Human Resources~~ needs to own this (and probably needs a name change)

Thanks

