COOPERATIVE EXTENSION SERVICE
UNIVERSITY OF ALASKA FAIRBANKS

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How to Innovate as we Evaluate

Dr. Alda Norris

Innovate to:

Develop Create Improve Adapt

something

New Valuable Better Progressed

eXtension Impact Collaborative (2019)

Adobe Kickbox

Law of Large Numbers

https://kickbox.adobe.com

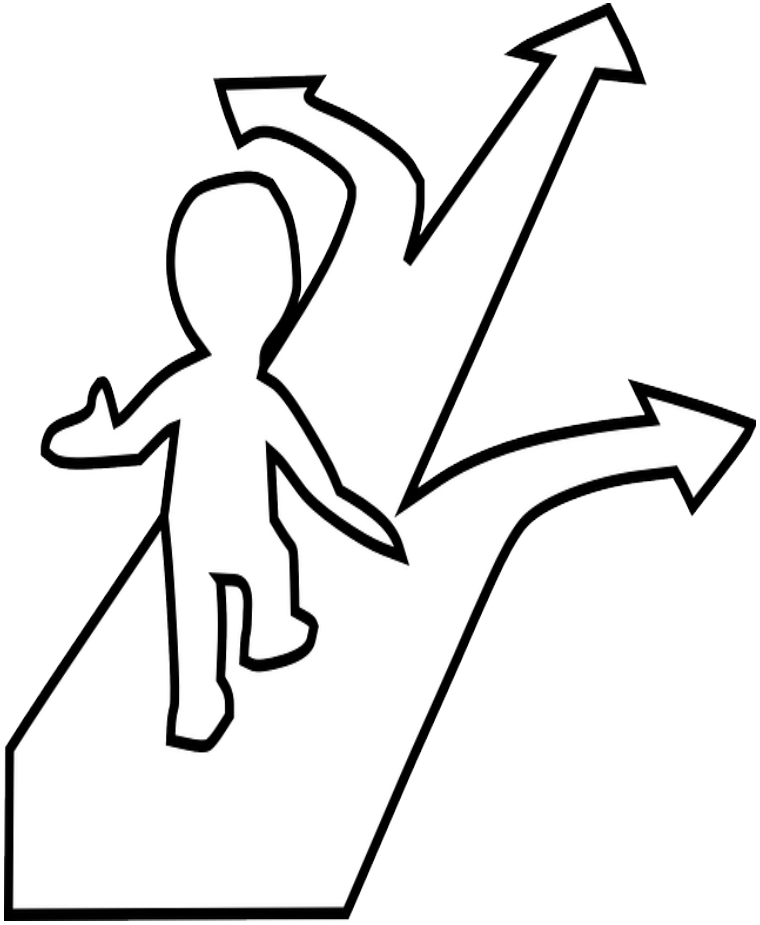
CENTER FOR EVALUATION INNOVATION

Learning habits:

- Make thinking visible
- Ask powerful questions
- Combat biases
- Question causal inferences
- Answer "now what" ?s

www.evaluationinnovation.org/insight/

Evaluation Challenges in AK



Can't get to

Didn't happen

Wicked problems

Entangled strategies

Barriers to participation

Untested in rural setting

Personal Motivation

Prove something

Help someone

Reach a goal

Bored

Love challenges

Hate job

Need a new tool

Raise visibility

Work Out Loud #WOL

Build a Team

"If you want to go fast, go alone.

If you want to go far, go together."

–African proverb

RACI Method

- Responsible
- Accountable
- Consultant
- Informed

And who will facilitate communication across this team?

Facilitation

How will you make space for voices that have not been previously heard?

Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making (2nd Ed., 2007)

Say it Out Loud

Discuss ideas with

Birds of a Feather

True Brainstorming

DeCaro (2011):

1. Express any and all ideas…
2. Do not criticize any ideas
3. Generate as many ideas as the group can
4. Combine ideas and parts of ideas…

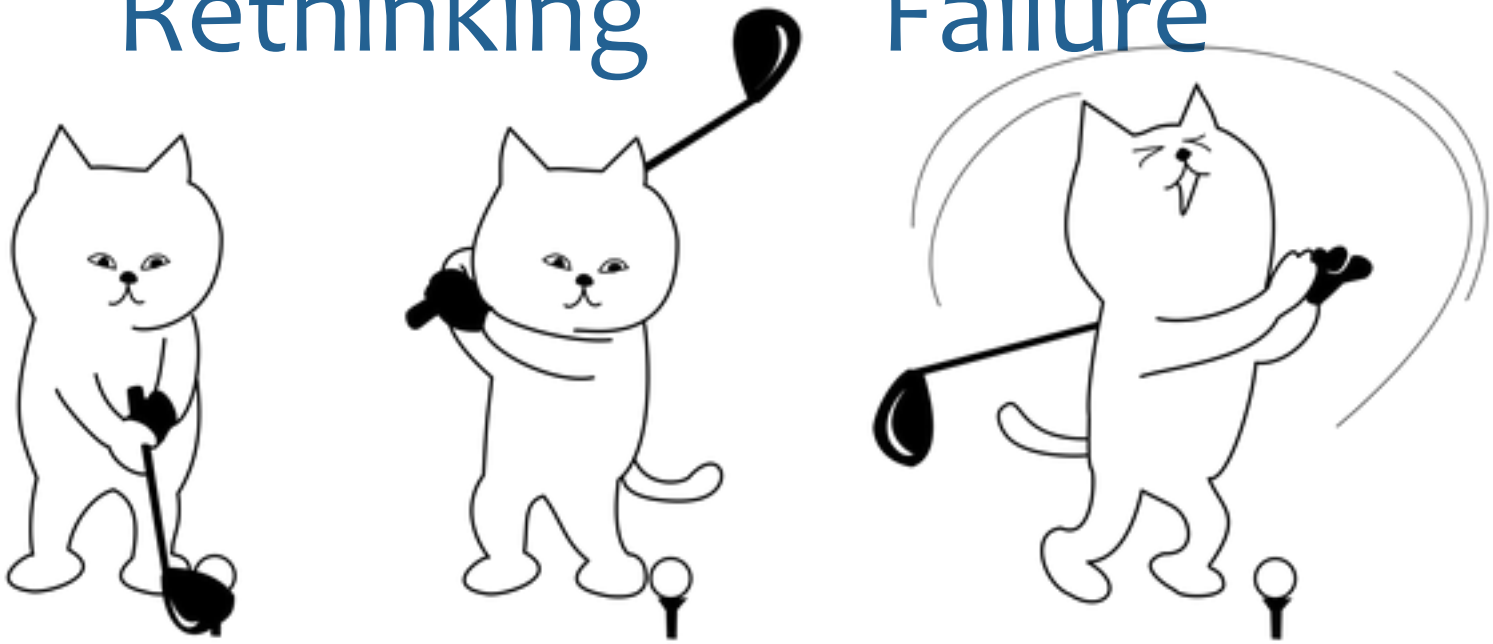
Embrace Bad Ideas

Iteration is a key part of innovation

Many game-changing ideas start off labeled as dreams, silly, too hard

Start from the premise that it's a bad idea and you can only improve!

Rethinking Failure



Ex: Failing **Up**; Failing **Forward**; Failure **Fair**

It Takes Time

"Success is a function of persistence and doggedness and the willingness to work hard for twenty-two minutes to make sense of something that most people would give up on after thirty seconds."

– Malcolm Gladwell,

Outliers: The Story of Success

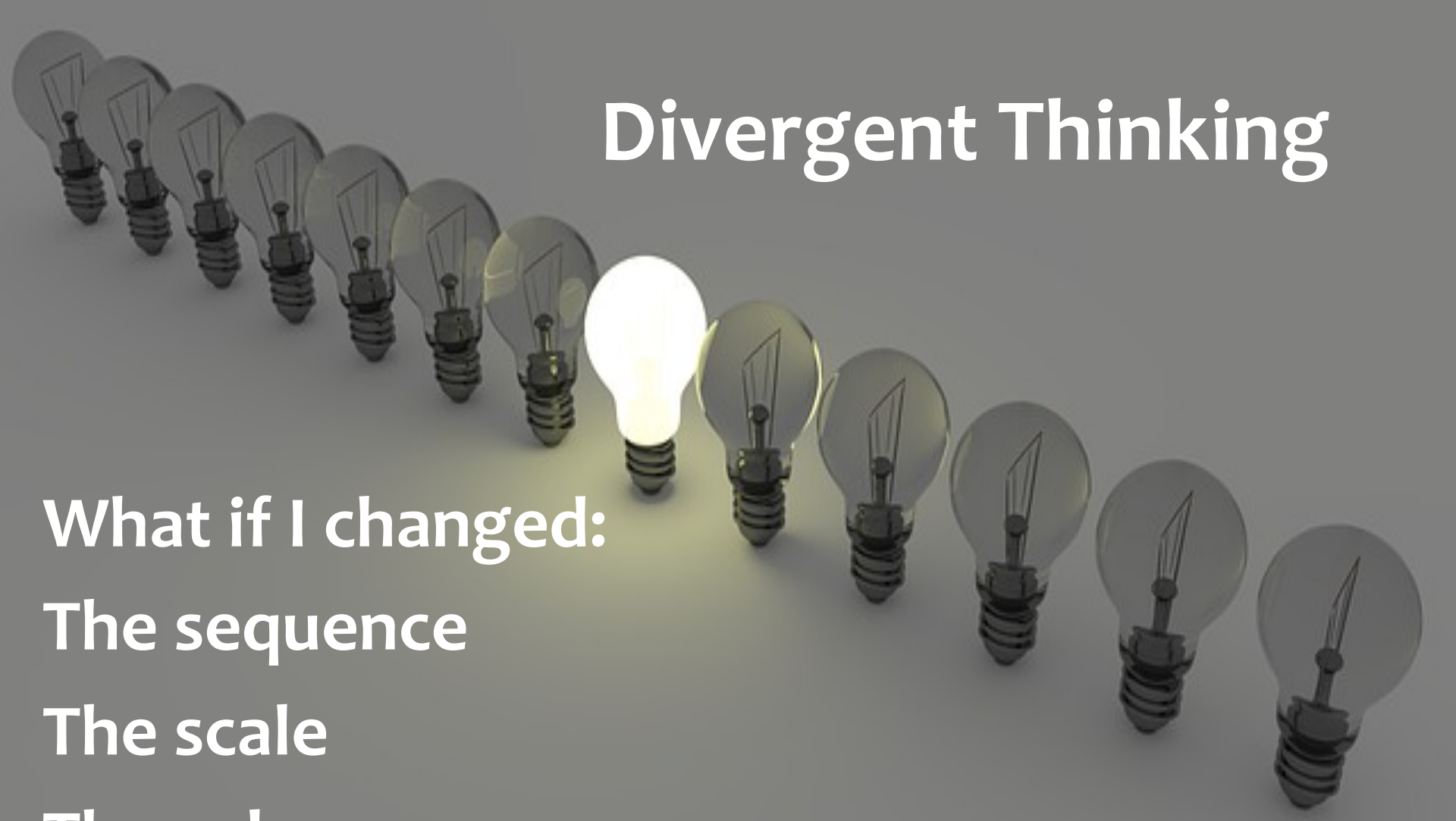
Convergent Thinking

Assumptions:

A linear approach is best

What's familiar is most valuable

There is one and only one correct answer



Divergent Thinking

What if I changed:

The sequence

The scale

The value

The elements

Creativity Strategies

Roger von Oech's

Creative Whack Pack (2003)

Exaggerate: "What if it were a thousand times bigger, louder, stronger, faster, brighter?"

Or the opposite?

Look Somewhere Else

"You can't see the good ideas behind you by looking twice as hard at what's in front of you"

-von Oech (2003)

Challenge Your Worldview

Divergent Sources

different fields, domains, perspectives, cultures, trend-setters

Example for Evaluators:

Research is Ceremony

Wilson (2008)