

When Your Project Goes to War



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What *is* it good
for?

All wars are
projects (but not all
projects are wars)

A War is a Project

- Temporary and unique
- Definite beginning and end
- Designed with specific objectives in mind
- Uses resources
- Can be broken into work packages and activities
- *Doesn't necessarily require violence!*

Reasons Your Project May Be At War

- War with a competitor (new product competition)
- Internal war (people opposed to your project)
- Career war (someone wants your position or your resources)

What is War?

- “The continuation of politics with the addition of other means.”
- “An act of force to compel our adversary to do our will.”



Carl von Clausewitz



Force

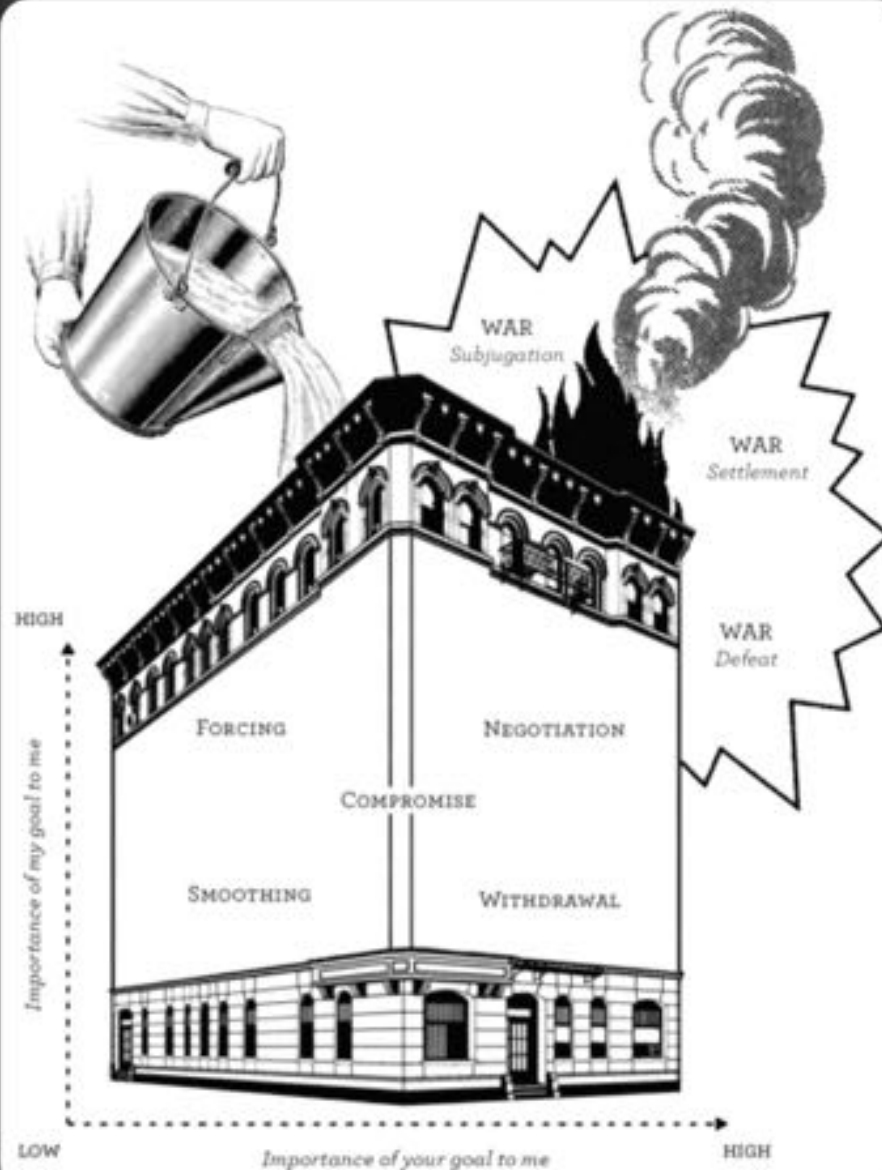
“An act of force to compel our adversary to do our will.”

Carl von Clausewitz

- Physical Force
- Moral Force
- Political Force
- Economic Force
- Legal Force

Wars are an
extreme form of
conflict resolution

Conflict Strategies Map



Source: *Creative Project Management*, Michael Dobson and Ted Leemann, McGraw-Hill. Illustration by Baker and Hill Graphic Design. Copyright © 2010. All Rights Reserved. Used with permission.

Did I Win Yet?

- The *loser*, not the winner, decides when a war is over by accepting all or part of the victor's will
- You only win if you *achieve your objective at an acceptable cost*—no matter what happens to the other side

War and PMBOK®

Project Stakeholder Management

Project Risk Management

Planning Process Group

Keep Your Enemies Closer



Enemies are Stakeholders, Too



The diagram consists of three white circles arranged horizontally on a gray background. Each circle contains a label in bold black text. Below each circle is a corresponding description in white text.

Positive

Win when you
win

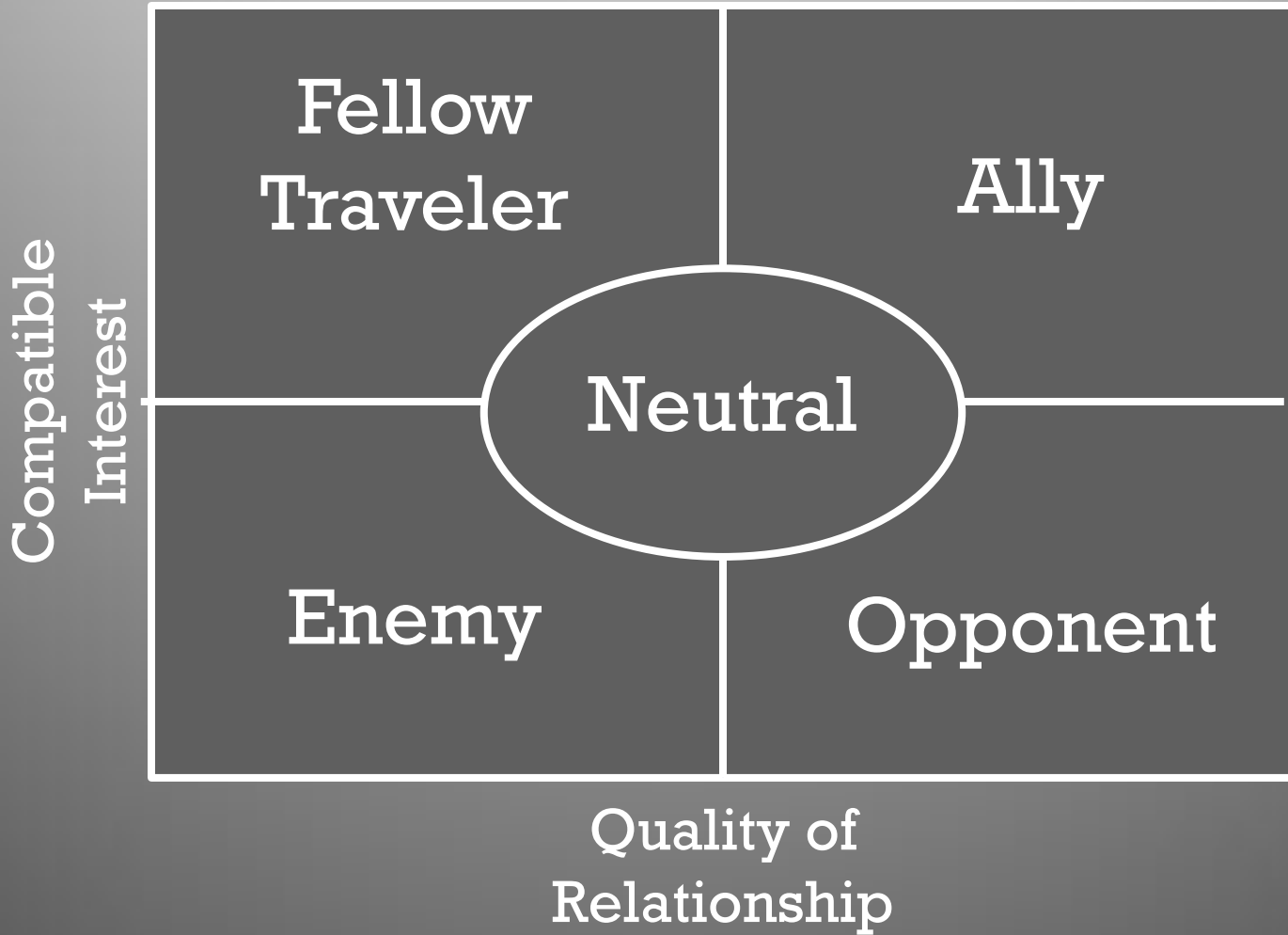
Negative

Lose when you
win

Tangential

Unrelated
interest

Move Your Enemies





How to Split an Orange

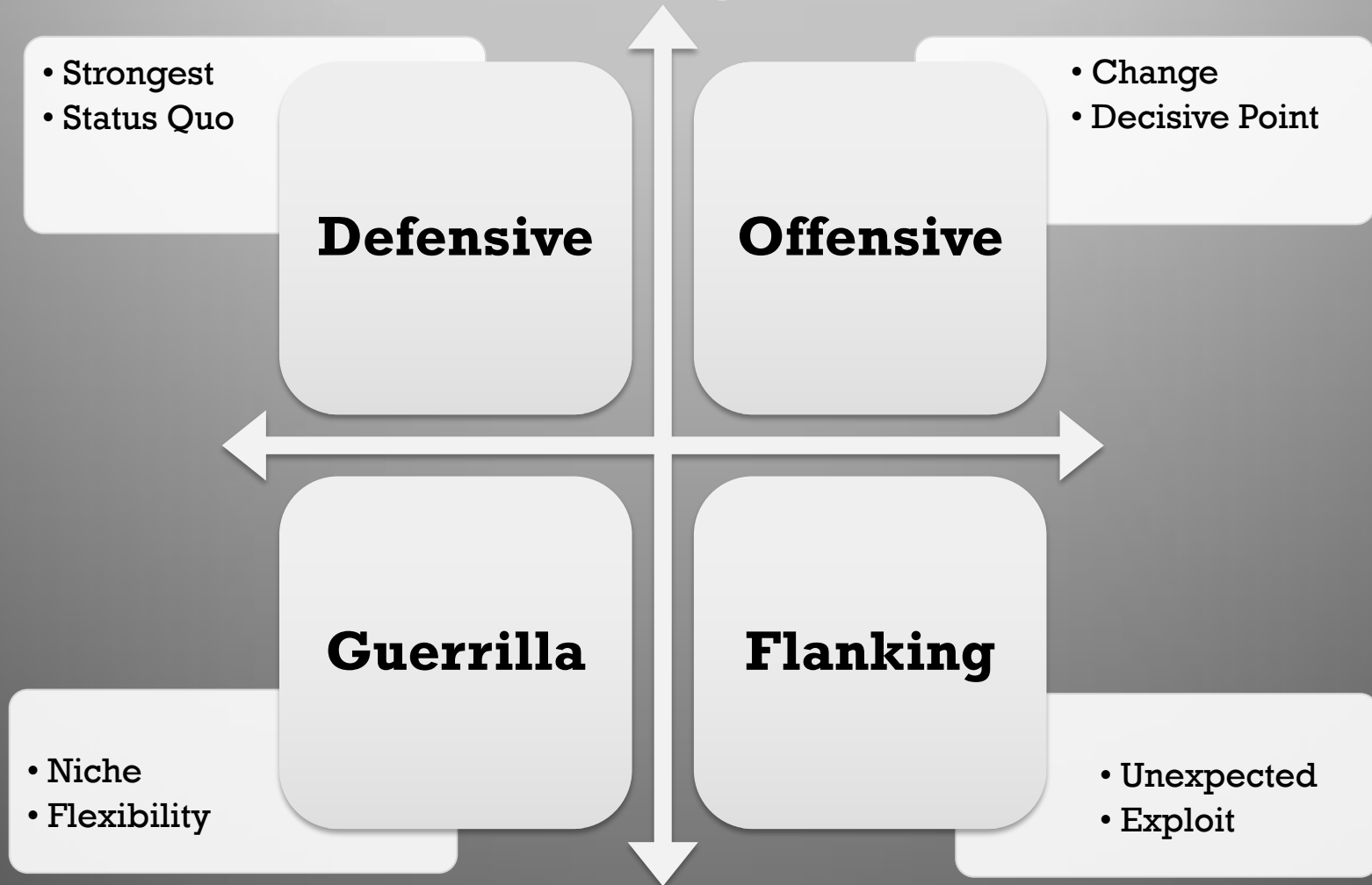
Managing Deliberate Risks

- Risks are no longer just natural phenomena, they're *man-made*.
- Risks become more probable if they are more harmful
- Attack strategies and alliances first—avoid frontal attacks or force vs. force
- The best place for them to strike is where you aren't expecting it—and vice versa

Planning in a War Zone

- “No battle plan ever survived first contact with the enemy.”
 - Helmuth von Moltke the Elder
- “Plans are worthless. But planning is everything.”
 - Dwight D. Eisenhower

The Strategic Square



Find the *weakness*
in the opponent's
strength

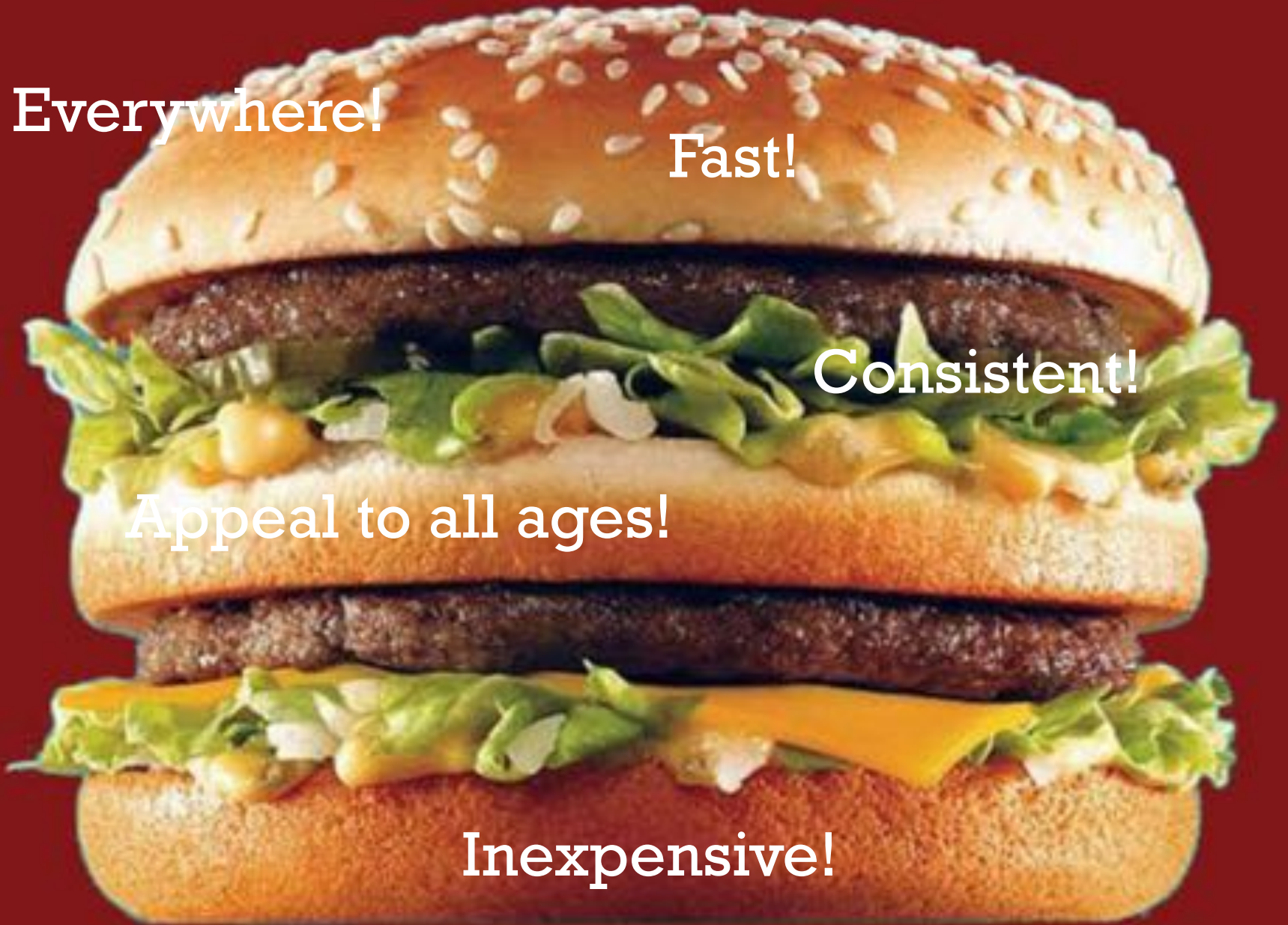
Everywhere!

Fast!

Consistent!

Appeal to all ages!

Inexpensive!



Weakness

- Some weaknesses are easily overcome
- Look at the opponent's strengths to find the weaknesses they can't defend
- Attack on as narrow a front as possible
- Pursue, pursue, pursue!

Six Questions to Consider

1. What's the best conflict resolution strategy for the situation?
2. Who are my enemies—and what can I do about them?
3. Is there an “orange peel” solution?
4. How has my risk environment changed?
5. What kind of war should I fight?
6. What's the weakness in my opponent's strength?

Thank you very
much.



Michael Dobson's SIDEWISE THINKING



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