

Is it so hard to grow your ELT School?

If we know what to do then why can't/don't we do it?

Robert Craven

Friday 8th October 2021

Founder GYDA Initiative

Author Grow Your Digital Agency



**In a
nutshell**

▶ **Mindset**

▶ **Back to basics**

▶ **Buckle up (and enjoy the ride)**

Agenda

- ▶ **Scary Times**
- ▶ **What's holding you back?**
- ▶ **What's the real challenge?**
- ▶ **The top questions (and answers)**
- ▶ **Is now a good time?**
- ▶ **Takeaways**

Warning

This presentation may damage your health

Scary times



**English
schools
not
optimistic
for 2021**

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27% anticipate **no recovery**

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27% anticipate **no recovery**

36% anticipate **20% of pre-Covid**

English
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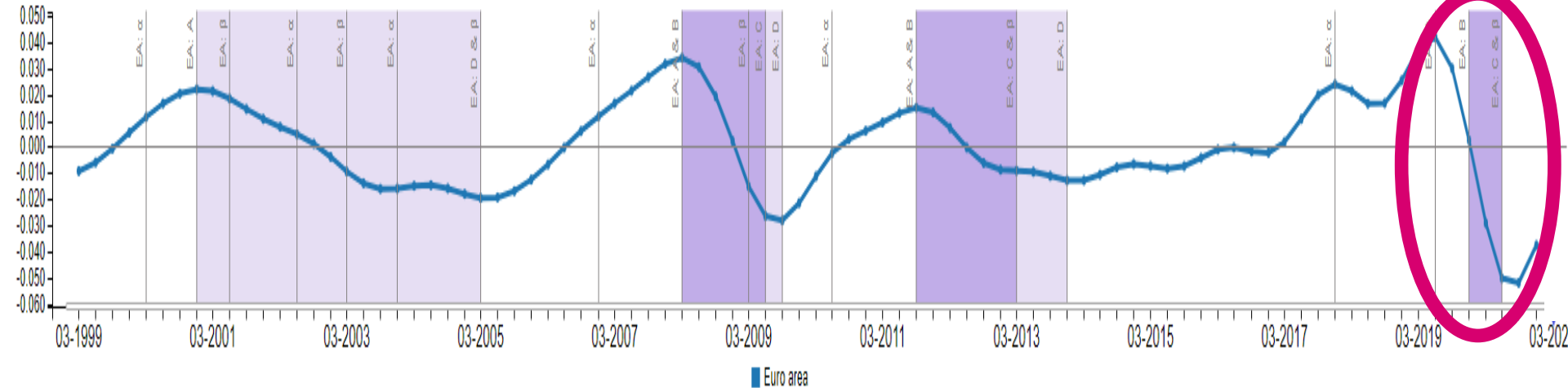
36% anticipate 20% of pre-Covid

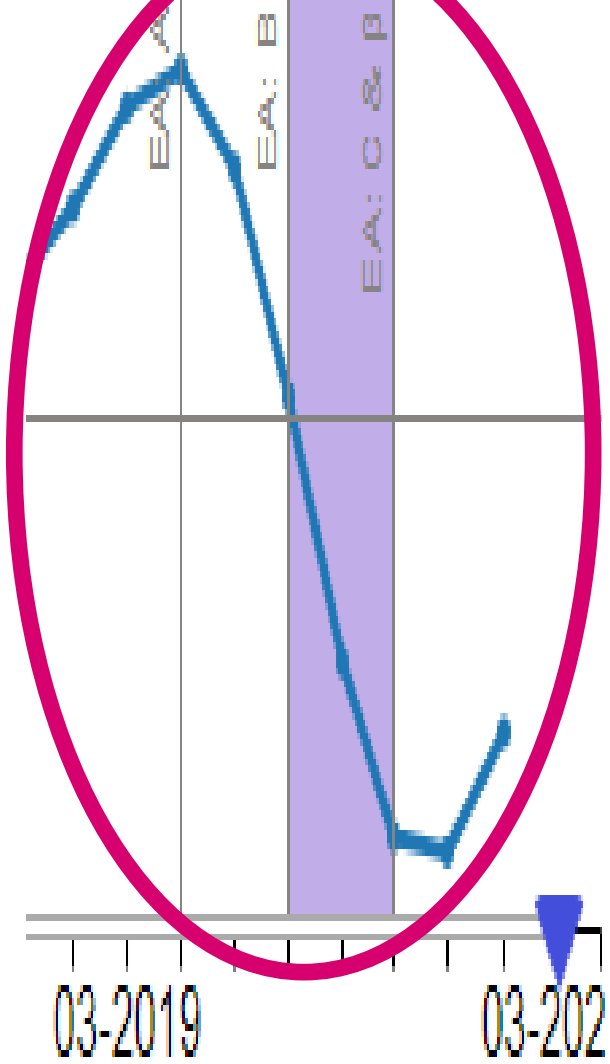
29% anticipate 40% of pre-Covid

Volatile
Uncertain
Complex
Ambiguous

Show on map 

GDP growth cycle as a percentage of deviation from the trend





Students

More Informed

Go more

Personal

More Demanding

Do more

Faster

More Impatient

Get more

Frictionless

Volatile
Uncertain
Complex
Ambiguous

Volatile
Uncertain
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Warren Bennis

Brittle
Anxious
Nonlinear
Incomprehensible

Jamais Cascio

A group of five men are seated around a white conference table in a meeting room. They are engaged in a discussion. The man on the left is wearing a purple shirt. The man next to him has long dark hair and is wearing a grey shirt. The man in the center is wearing a light grey sweater and is smiling. The man on the right is wearing a light blue shirt and glasses. The man on the far right is wearing a black shirt. The table is cluttered with papers, a coffee cup, a pen holder, and other office supplies. In the background, there are colorful pillows (green, red, yellow) and a whiteboard on a stand. The text "What's holding you back?" is overlaid in white on the left side of the image.

What's holding you back?

Covid
The economy
Brexit
Boris, Joe
George Vella,
Robert Abela
Costs
Cheap, cheap prices
Alternative suppliers
Over-crowded market
Low barriers to entry
Poor utilisation
Don't understand strategy,
marketing, people.
And finance.

Same as the rest
Pressure on price
Economics
Local regulations
Industry norms
Craft/bohemian/
alternative lifestyles
The rise of social media
Declining reputations
Using old models
Offline vs online
AI
Sales techniques for 2021
What students really
want?

Cheap apps
Over-cooked market
Alternatives
GDPR
EU e-commerce legislation
Freelancers
Millennials, Gen Z or Y
Out of touch clients
Agglomerations
Agencies
Nothing seems to work
Artists not business people
No playbook
The Big Schools
Every distraction...



Fear



The *problem* is me





The question



**We shouldn't
be talking
about this but
we still are**

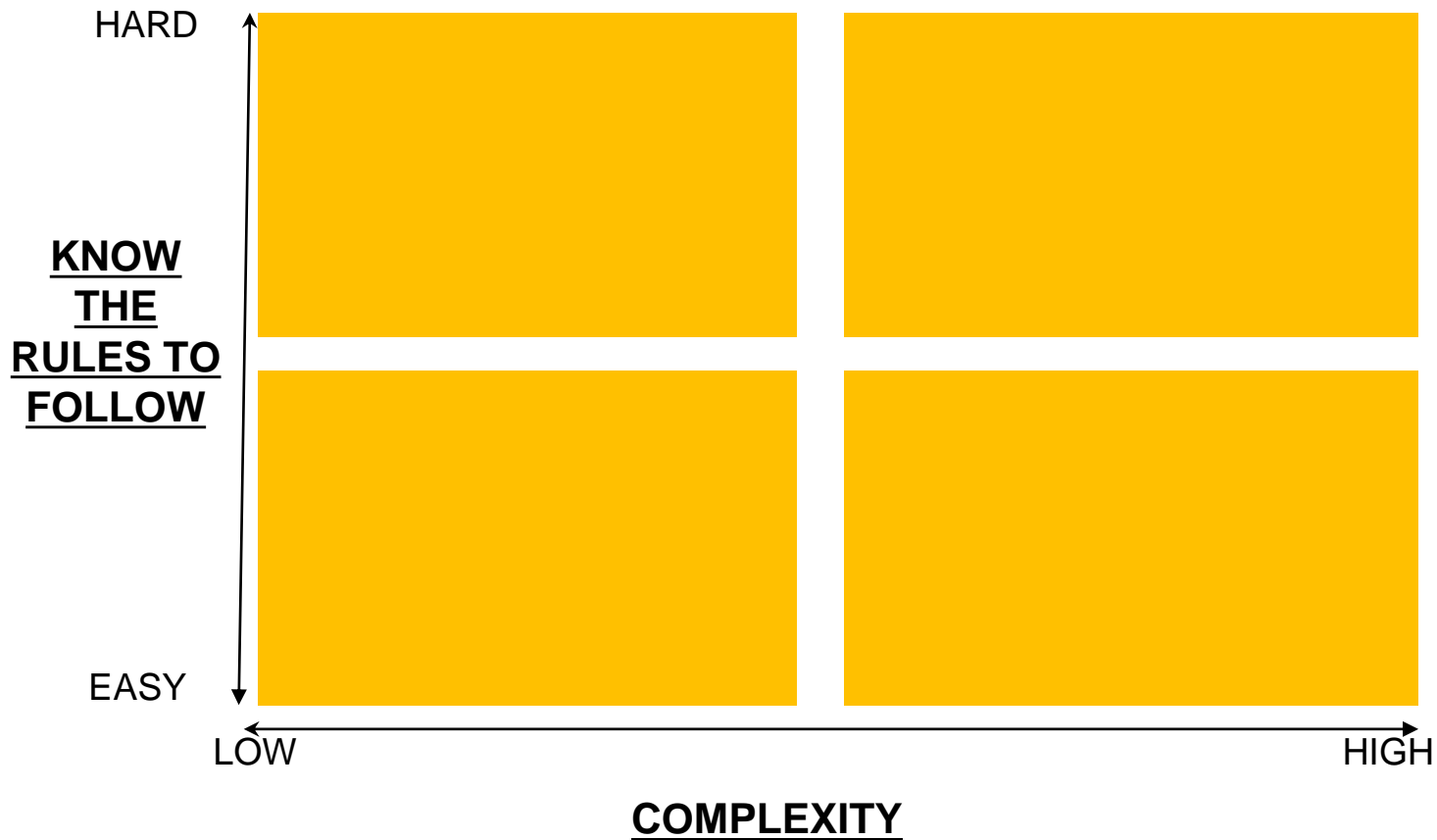


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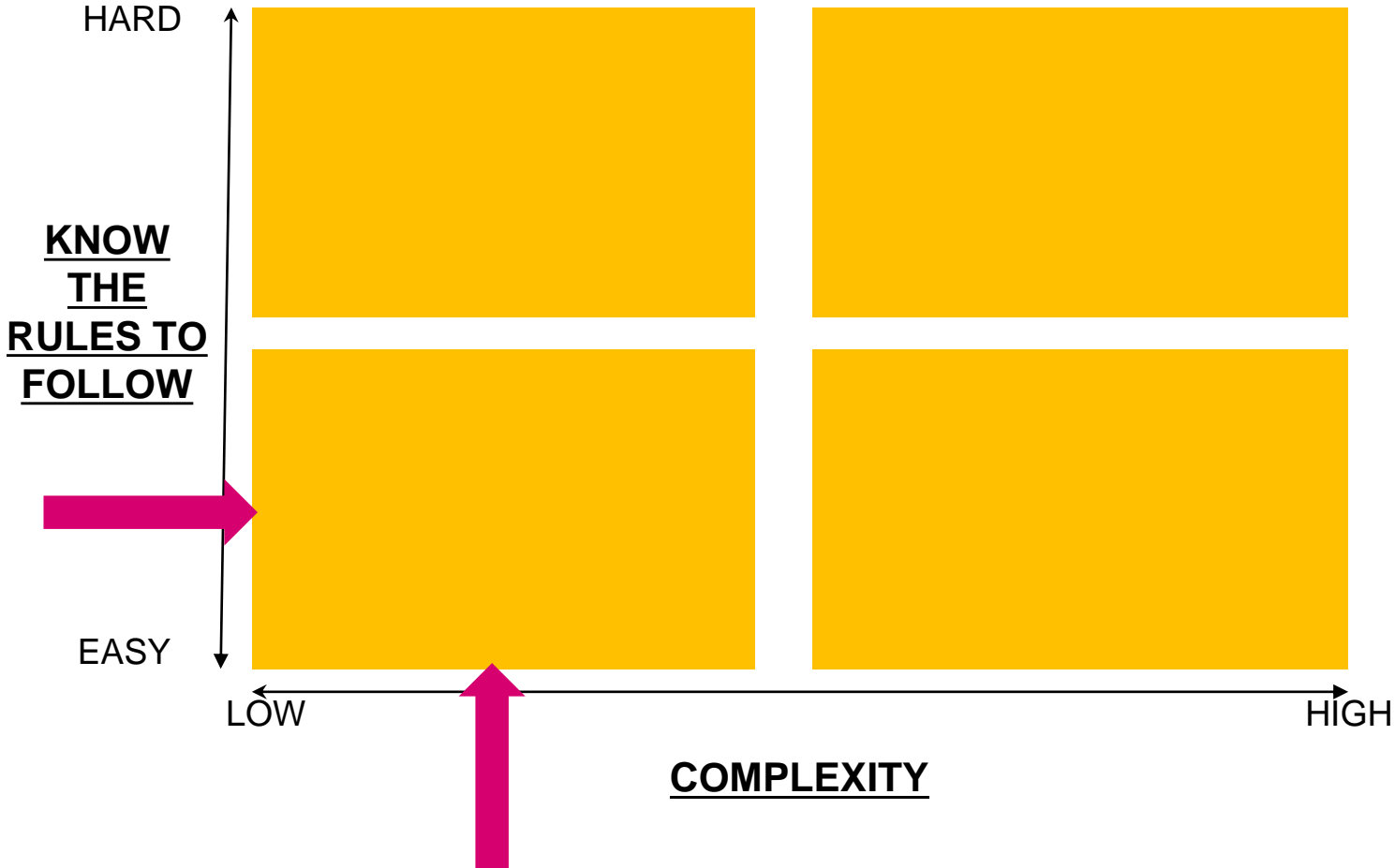
Why is it so hard to grow an ELT school?



Why is it so hard to grow an ELT School?



Why is it so hard to grow an ELT School?



You
know this

▶ **What?**

▶ **Why?**

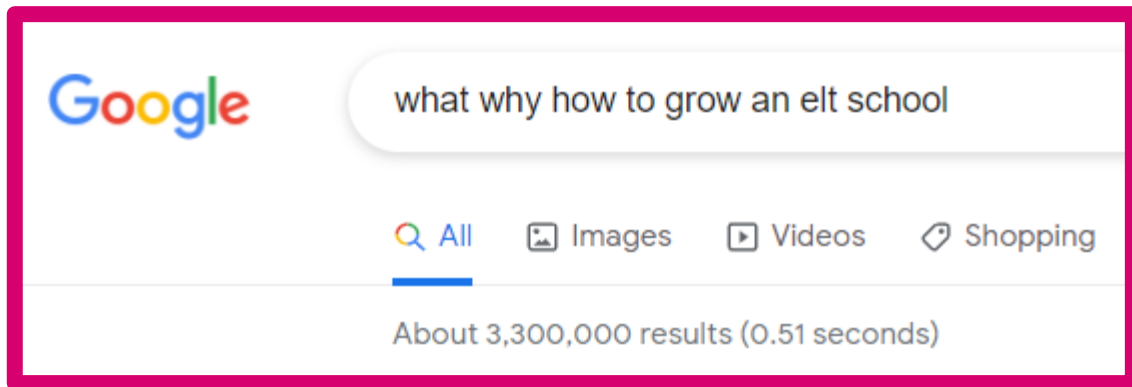
▶ **How?**

You
know this

What?

Why?

How?



So...

Why
not?

So...

What's the real challenge here?

Working with **your reptile brain**



**Top
Questions
“WE...”**

Top
Questions
“WE...”

Why can't **we** get more/better customers?

Top
Questions
“WE...”

▶ Why can't **we** get more/better customers?

▶ Why aren't **we** more profitable?



Top
Questions
“WE...”

▶ Why can't **we** get more/better customers?

▶ Why aren't **we** more profitable?

▶ Why won't people do what **we** expect?

Top
Questions
“WE...”

- ▶ Why can't **we** get more/better customers?
- ▶ Why aren't **we** more profitable?
- ▶ Why won't people do what **we** expect?
- ▶ Why aren't **we** hitting targets?

**Top
Questions**
“|...”

**Top
Questions**
“|...”

▶ **Why am I working harder?**

**Top
Questions
“|...”**

▶ **Why am I working harder?**

▶ **Should I handover control?**



**Top
Questions**
“|...”

▶ **Why am I working harder?**

▶ **Should I handover control?**

▶ **How do I get back my mojo?**



**Top
Questions
“I...”**

- ▶ **Why am I working harder?**
- ▶ **Should I handover control?**
- ▶ **How do I get back my mojo?**
- ▶ **What's the secret sauce I am missing?**



Quick 'n' dirty solution: More sales and marketing?



Quick and Dirty

**Quick
and
Dirty**

Put up your prices

**Quick
and
Dirty**

Put up your prices

Decrease direct costs

**Quick
and
Dirty**

- ▶ **Put up your prices**
- ▶ **Decrease direct costs**
- ▶ **Fix underperformers**
- ▶

**Quick
and
Dirty**

- ▶ **Put up your prices**
- ▶ **Decrease direct costs**
- ▶ **Fix underperformers**
- ▶ **Sort marketing**



similar



The Basics

The Basics

Overt business benefit

13%

38%

The Basics

Overt business benefit

13%

38%

Real reason to believe

18%

42%

The Basics

Overt business benefit

13%

38%

Real reason to believe

18%

42%

Dramatic difference

15%

53%

**Top
Questions
“WE...”**

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Questions
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Questions
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**Top
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- ▶ **Why am I working harder?**
- ▶ **Should I handover control?**
- ▶ **How do I get back my mojo?**
- ▶ **What's the secret sauce I am missing?**

**Why
don't
We?**

**Why
don't
We?**

▶ **Rewards are in the future**

▶ **But first:**

- **disruption**
- **discomfort**
- **discipline**

Discussing what disciplines you are prepared to accept to get to a goal feels

Tough

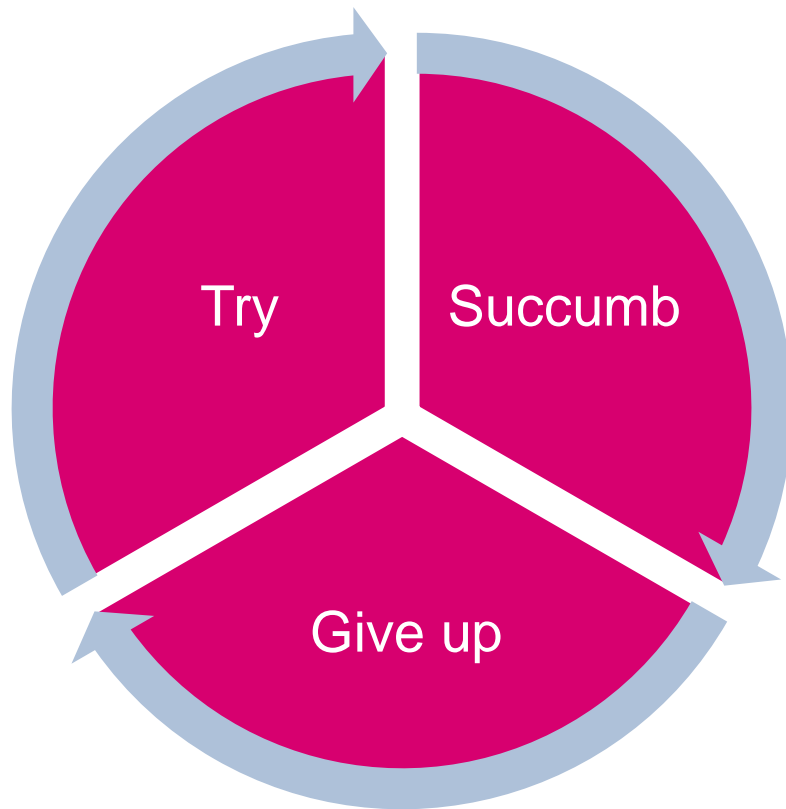
Awkward

Annoying

Frightening and

Completely unpleasant

**Slimmer's
World**



**We
Need...**

- ▶ **Permanent change**
- ▶ **Change the scorecards**
- ▶ **Get serious (or take a chill pill)**

High-performers work ON

Systems and processes or Machines

High-performers work ON

▶ **Systems and processes or Machines:**

Marketing and Sales

Operations

Finance

People

Take-
aways

We're back, they're back



Students

More Informed

Go more

Personal

More Demanding

Do more

Faster

More Impatient

Get more

Frictionless

Your clients

More Informed

Go more

Personal

Metrics

More Demanding

Do more

Faster

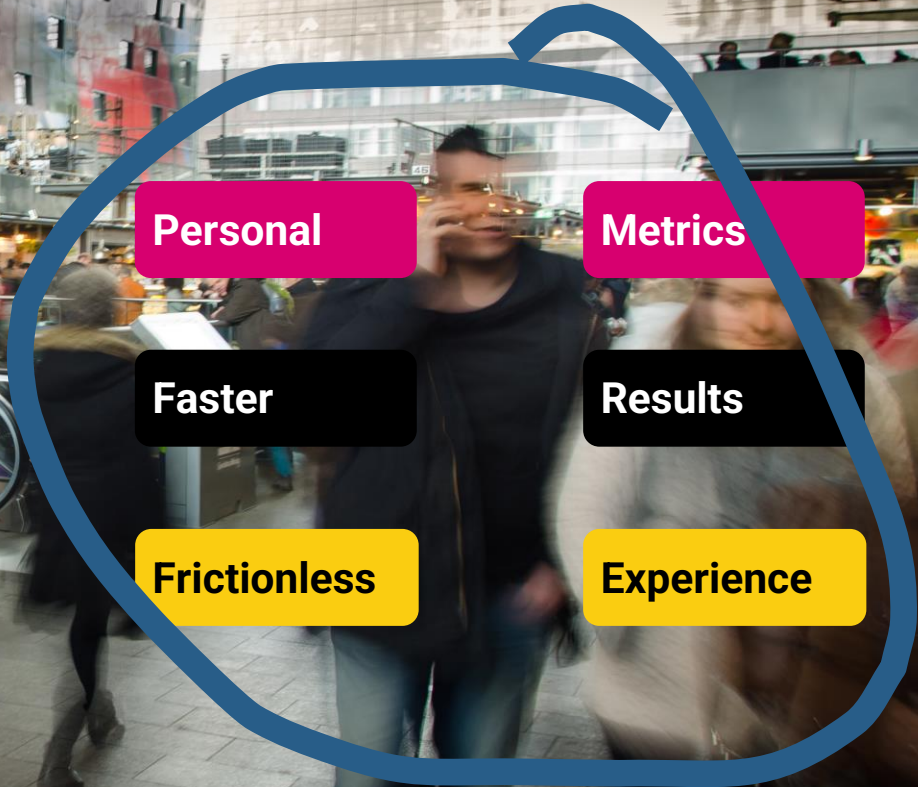
Results

More Impatient

Get more

Frictionless

Experience



Your
issues

Biz Dev machine



Your
issues

Biz Dev machine

Biz Delivery machine

GYDA⁷
INITIATIVE



**Your
issues**

Biz Dev machine

Biz Delivery machine

Culture People/teams



Your
issues

Biz Dev machine

Biz Delivery machine

Culture People/teams

Energy/direction/focus



**Your
issues**

Biz Dev machine

Biz Delivery machine

Culture People/teams

Energy/direction/focus

+ LUCK



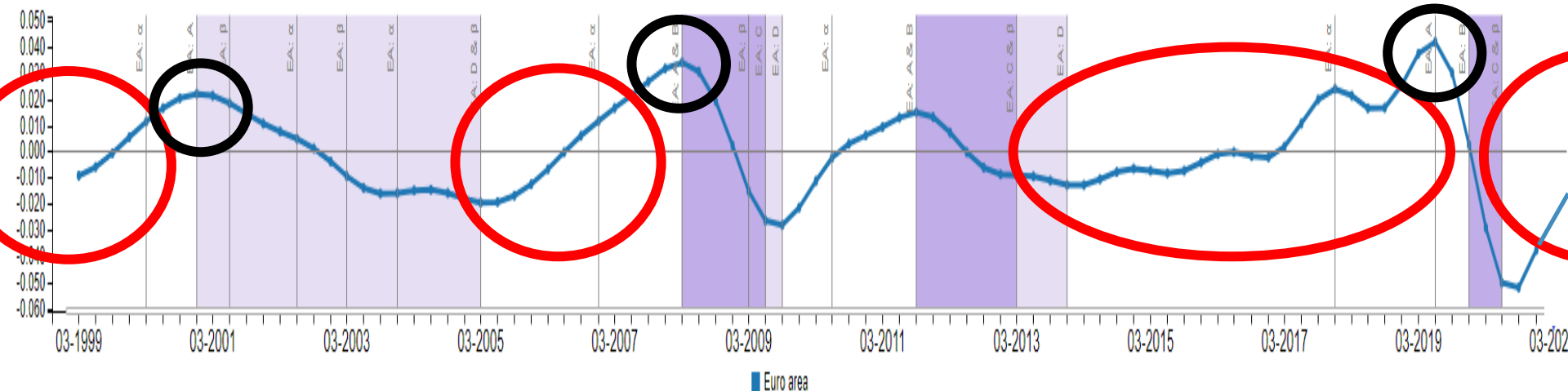
Is now a good time?

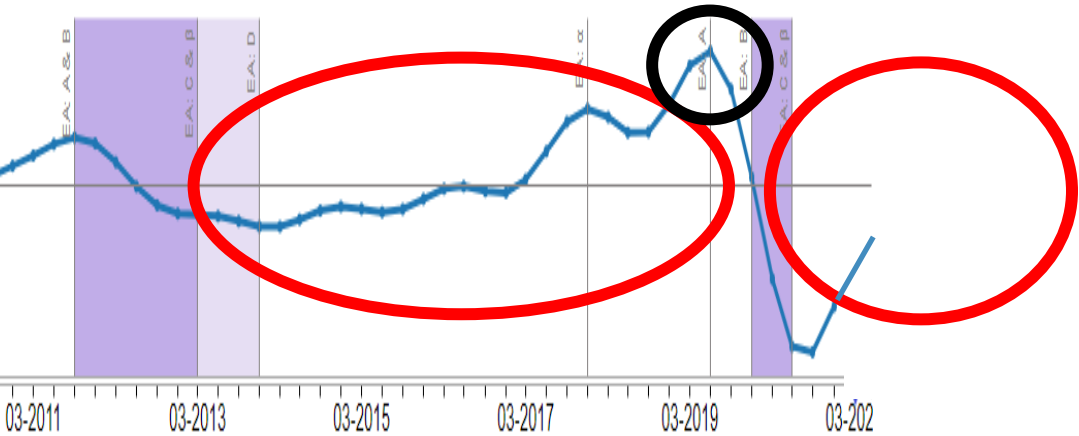


Now...

Why now is a good time
The macro reasons

GDP growth cycle as a percentage of deviation from the trend





Now...

Why now is good?
The micro reasons

Now...




Volatile
Uncertain
Complex
Ambiguous

Warren Bennis

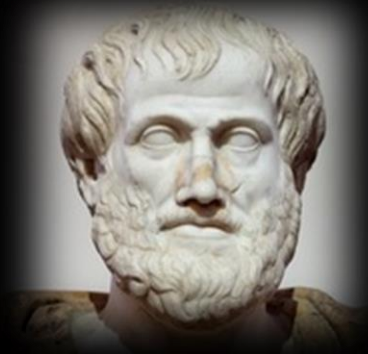
Brittle
Anxious
Nonlinear
Incomprehensible

Jamais Cascio



**“When the going gets tough,
the tough get going”**

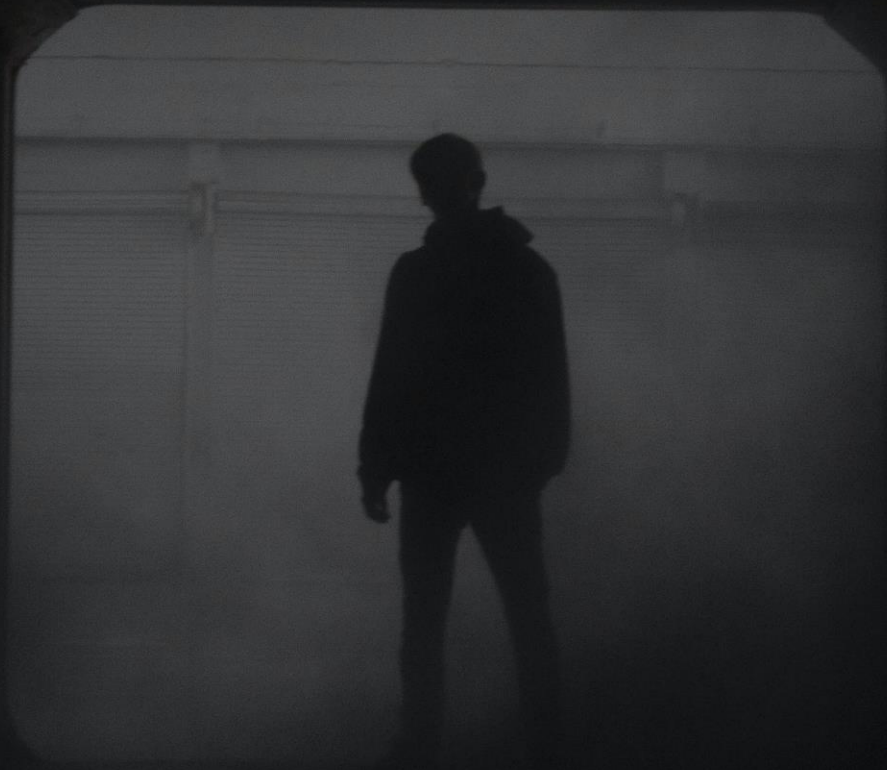
Joseph P Kennedy



“Fortune favours the bold”

Aristotle

Takeaways





Grandma: When I was nineteen, Grandpa took me on a rollercoaster... Up, down, up...



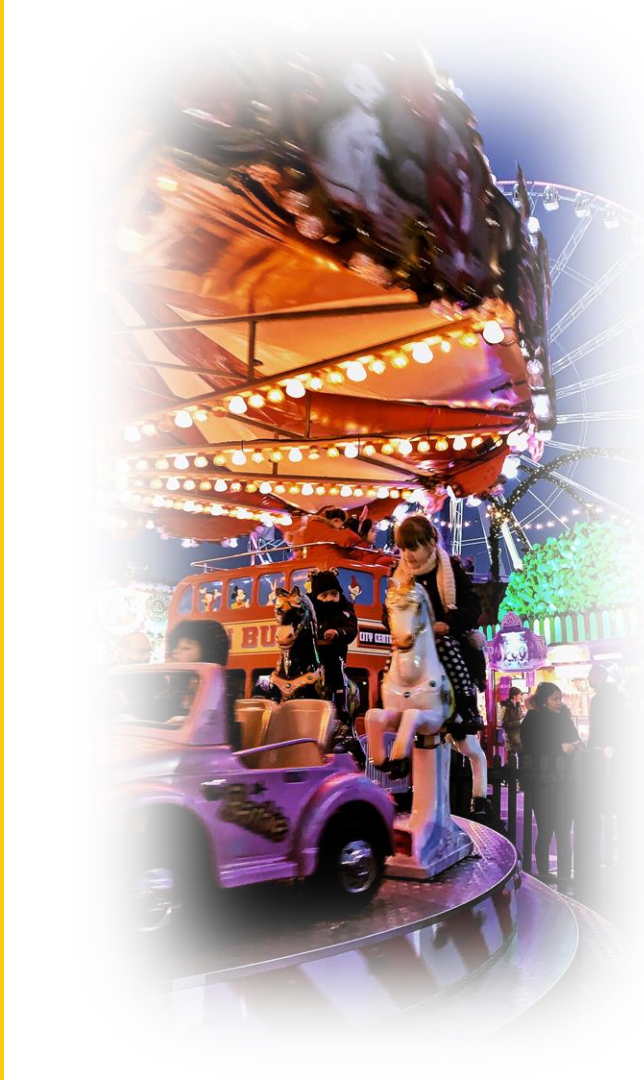
Grandma: You know, it was just so interesting to me that a ride could make me so frightened, so scared, so sick, so excited, and so thrilled all together!



Some didn't like it. They went on the merry-go-round. That just goes around. Nothing.

I like the roller coaster. You get more out of it.

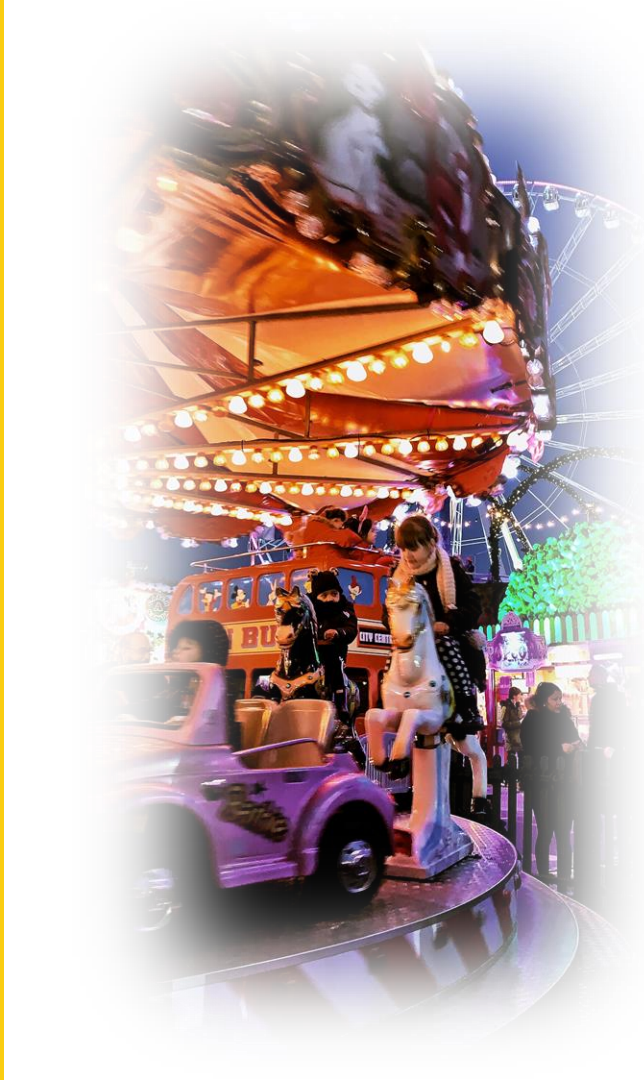




The
message

Get
your
'act' together

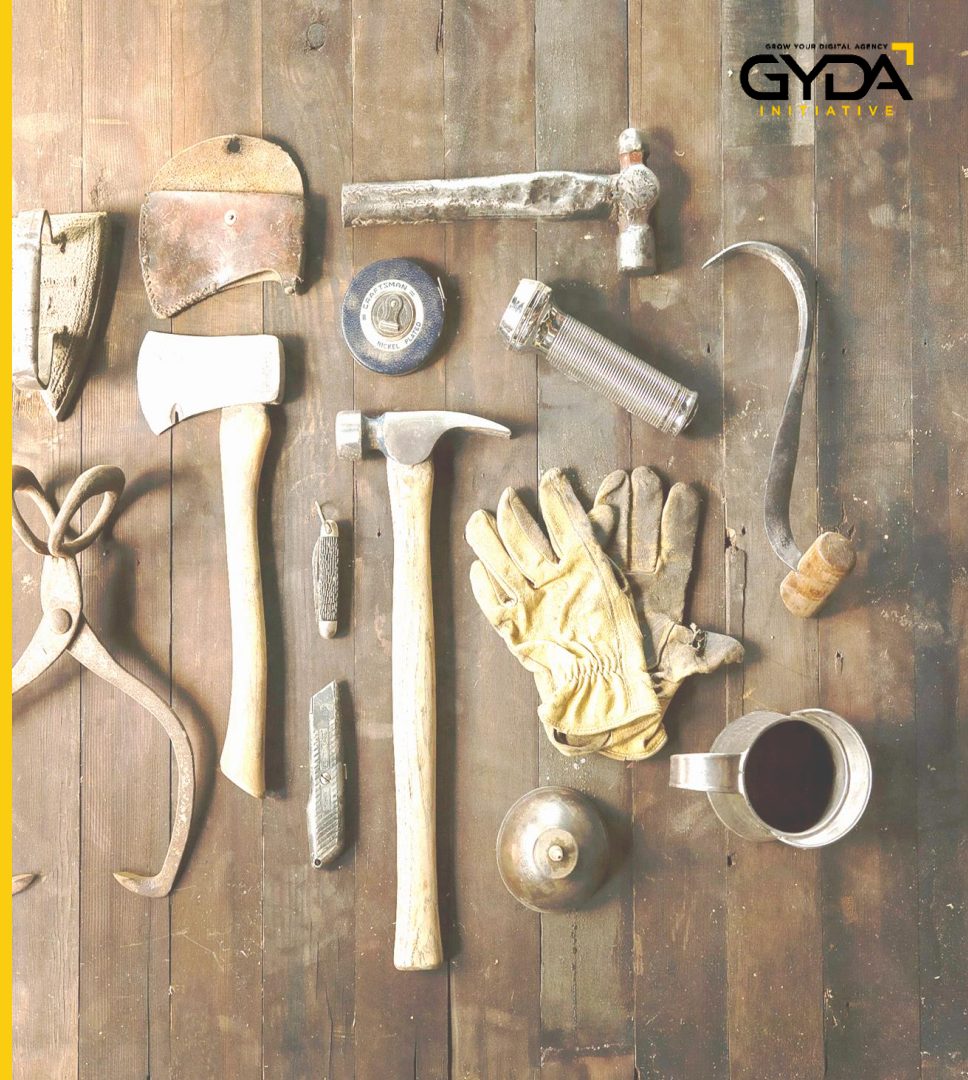




**Sheep
or a
lamb?**



Call to action



**Is it so hard to grow
an ELT business?**

**If we know what to do
then
why can't/don't we do it?**

**Is it so hard to grow
an ELT business?**

Yes

**If we know what to do
then
why can't/don't we do it?**

**Is it so hard to grow
an ELT business?**

Yes (and No)

**If we know what to do
then
why can't/don't we do it?**

**Is it so hard to grow
an ELT business?**

**If we know what to do
then
why can't/don't we do it?**

Yes (and No)

Mindset... Discipline

STOP FAFFING AROUND