Shared Identity Leadership in a Self-Managing Organization

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Background

- Success factor to *scaling* a flat organization: **identity promotion & storytelling** [1]

- Effective identity leadership:

Effective Identity Leadership [2]

Integrating 'us' in the workplace
(Embedding our identity)

Crafting the sense of 'us'
(Defining our identity)

Sense of 'us' as a group
(Shared identity)

Doing it for 'us'
(Advancing our identity)

Being one of 'us'
(Similar & representative)

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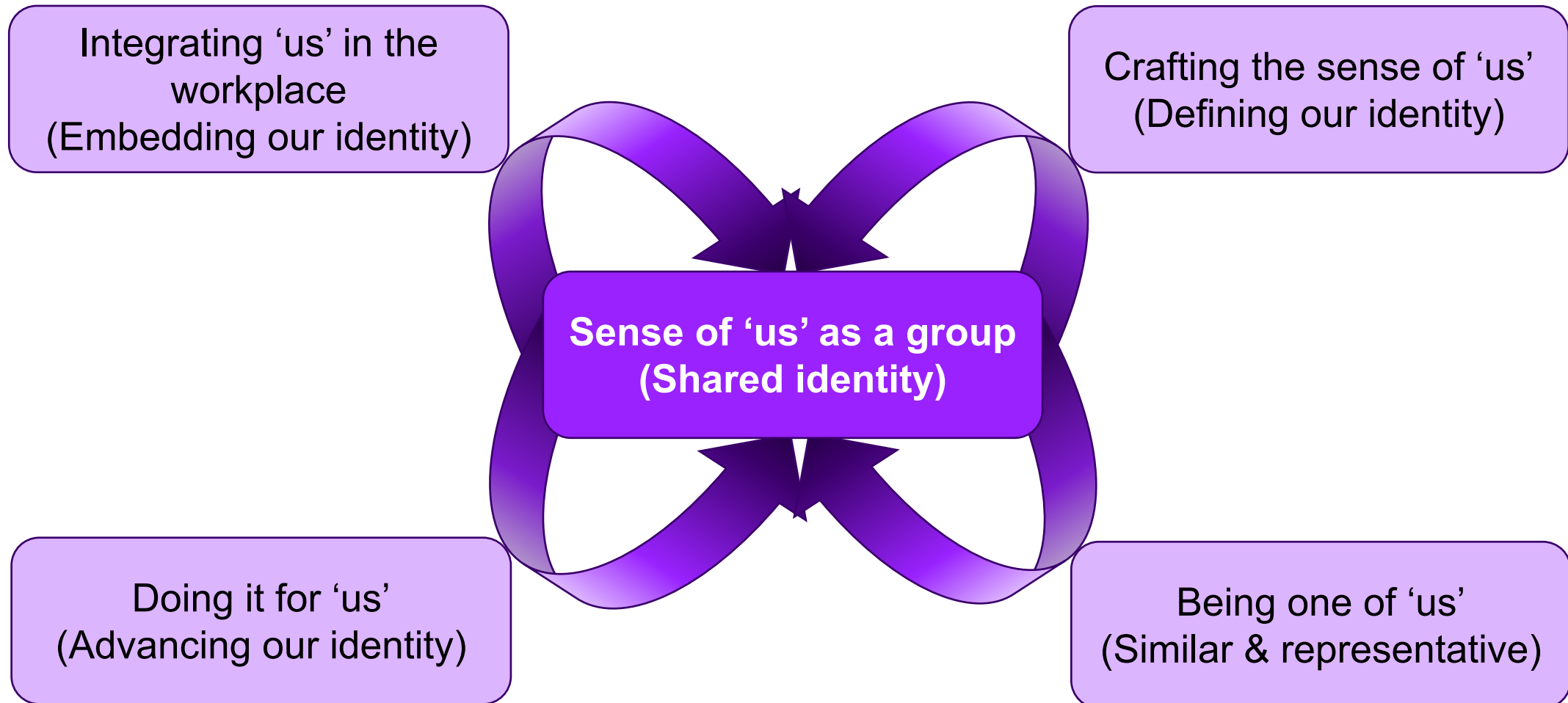
Purpose & Methods

- **How is identity led in a self-managing organization?** [4]

- Methods: Case study, data triangulation:

Organization
perspective (5)

Leadership
in action (4)

Employee
perspective (3)

Newcomer
perspective (1)

+ Lived experience

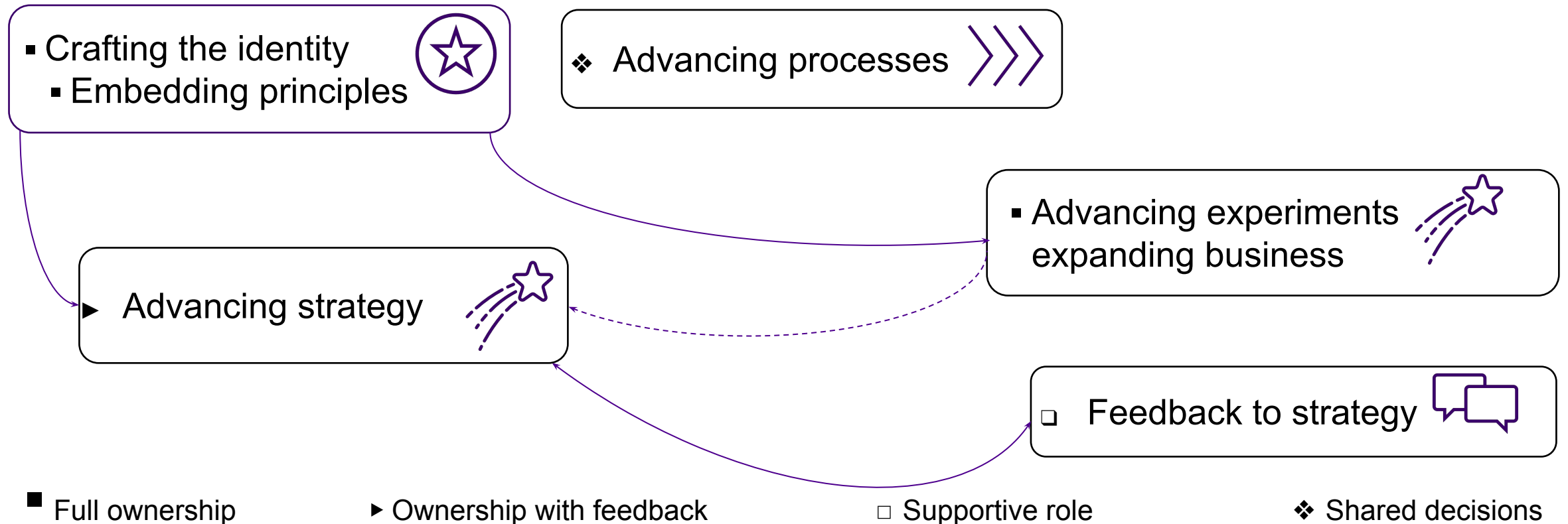# Results: Shared Identity Leadership Addressing the Domains of Organizing[4,5]

Work-in-progress, preliminary ideas

Results: Direction & Task Division

Leaders   **Together**   **Employees**

- Crafting the identity
  - Embedding principles

❖ Advancing processes

- Advancing experiments expanding business

▶ Advancing strategy

❑ Feedback to strategy

■ Full ownership ▶ Ownership with feedback ❑ Supportive role ❖ Shared decisions

Results: Task Allocation

Peer-Leaders   **Together**

- Advancing self-selection into Peer-Leader roles

- Embedding structures
  - Coaches
  - People-peer-leaders

- ❖ Advancing in embedded structure: professional tasks

■ Full ownership   ▶ Ownership with feedback   □ Supportive role   ❖ Shared decisions

Results: Information Flow

Leaders   **Together**   **Employees**

- Embedding (independent) ICT use:
  - Interactional
  - Stockpile

- Embedding ICT: provision & development

❖ Embedding ICT use
  ❖ Interactional, incl. decisions
  ❖ Stockpile

- Crafting the direction
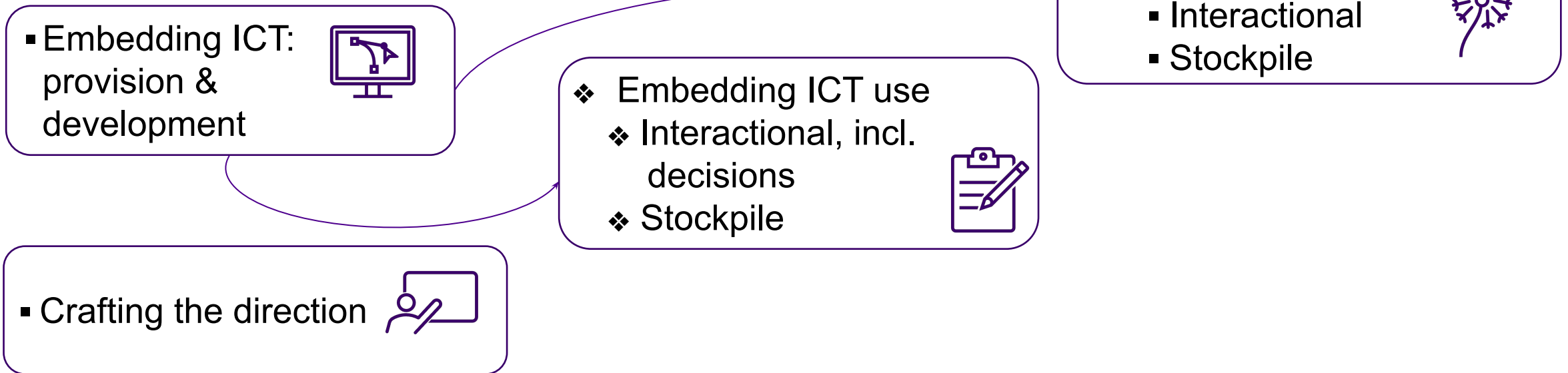
■ Full ownership   ▶ Ownership with feedback   ☐ Supportive role   ❖ Shared decisions

Results: Intrinsic Motivation[5]

Leaders   **Peer-Leaders I Together**   **Employees**

❑ Advancing
   ❑ Coaches
   ❑ People-Peer-Leaders
   ► Recruitment-Peer-Leaders

▪ Embedding (independent)
ICT use:
   ▪ Interactional
   ▪ Stockpile

► Advancing growth opportunities

❑ Feedback on growth opportunities

▪ Embedding principles

▪ Advancing experiments

■ Full ownership   ► Ownership with feedback   ❑ Supportive role   ❖ Shared decisions

Results: Rewarding & Motivation

Leaders

Peer-Leaders I Together

Employees

- Advancing bonus & stock options

- Advancing People-Peer-Leaders

- ❑ Colleague-feedback

- ❖ Advancing benefits plan

- Advancing feedback & instant rewards

- ❑ Advancing
  - ❑ Community-Peer-Leaders
  - ❑ Coaches

■ Full ownership ▶ Ownership with feedback ❑ Supportive role ❖ Shared decisions

Results: People-Functions

Leaders   **Peer-Leaders**   **Employees**

- Advancing
  - Coaches, Community-Peer-Leaders
  - Learning-Peer-Leaders

▢ Peer-Leader feed-back on needs

- (Crafting the identity)

► Advancing
  - ► Recruitment-Peer-Leaders
  - ► Onboarding-Peer-Leaders

- Advancing ad-hoc support

■ Full ownership   ► Ownership with feedback   ▢ Supportive role   ❖ Shared decisions

Discussion – Key Take-aways

- Particularly identity advancement, but also embedding addressed the key domains of organizing; additional contributions from crafting

- SMOs in a unique position to promote identification in the team: distinctiveness, team similarity

- The structures & resources typical of SMOs seem to strengthen identity leadership effectiveness

- Identity leadership as the contributor to SMO performance

- One case study – more research needed

References

- [1] Vaara, E., Harju, A., Leppälä, M., & Buffart, M. (2021). How to successfully scale a flat organization. *Harvard Business Review*.

- [2] Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D., & Platow, M. J. (2011). *The new psychology of leadership: Identity, influence and power*. Routledge.

- [3] Steffens, N. K., Haslam, S. A., Reicher, S. D., Platow, M. J., Fransen, K., Yang, J., ... & Boen, F. (2014). Leadership as social identity management: Introducing the Identity Leadership Inventory (ILI) to assess and validate a four-dimensional model. *The leadership quarterly*, 25(5), 1001-1024.

- [4] Lee, M. Y., & Edmondson, A. C. (2017). Self-managing organizations: Exploring the limits of less-hierarchical organizing. *Research in organizational behavior*, 37, 35-58.

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- [6] Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (2000). The "What" and "Why" of Goal Pursuits: Human Needs and the Self-Determination of Behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 11(4), 227–268.

- [6] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-Determination Theory and the Facilitation of Intrinsic Motivation, Social Development, and Well-Being. *American Psychologist*, 55(1), 68–78.