

Research Managers as Cyborgs





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Research Managers as Cyborgs

Risks and opportunities in extending our human capabilities with software and machines

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Research Managers as Cyborgs

Risks and opportunities in extending our human capabilities with software and machines

The digital wave has a transformational power that had no equivalent in the history considering its impact and pace. Our own nature evolves by the mean of external tools extending our physical and mental capabilities in personal and professional lives. We are all becoming cyborgs as soon as we are using a computer, a smartphone or fingers and oxygen tank. A cyborg is an organism to which exogenous components have been added for the purpose of adapting to new environments. Research managers and administrators (RMAs) are not making exception and do have good reasons for self-upgrading to efficient 'cognitively augmented' cyborgs. Their environment is getting more and more complex and competitive. RMAs have to face to an increased level of expectation from central administration, funding agencies and researchers. They need to demonstrate impact, benefit and efficiency from torrents of operational, administrative, legal, human resources and financial data. Research organisations and Universities are progressively turning to quantified organisations (BRYANT). The globalisation and industrialisation of research puts RMAs at the centre of new approach of the production and exploitation of knowledge. This session should start discussions about the (re)volution of RMAs cyborgs. Through different use cases using cyborg terminology (CASE), the presentation will show that the debate overweighs the simple improvement of digital skills. It's about reinventing the way you and/or your virtual self should integrate and influence a complex socio-technical ecosystem which introduces new risks:

- Cyborg security
- Lack of control on the interstitial space (e.g. layer of software applications)
- Decrease of productivity because of connective obligation or panic architectures (Just think about the former EU participant portal)
- Legal uncertainty in the invisible space created by networks of computers
- ...

and opportunities:

- Global research coo-petition and ambient awareness
- Increased involvement of citizens in science
- Help of robots and secondhand cyborgs to automatise tasks
- Improved control and flexibility in research projects and programmes
- ...

The presentation is intended for all kind of audience. The main learning outcome is to provide awareness about the transformational impact of the adoption of technologies as externalities and to let participants engage a reflexion on their own practices and new approaches within their organisations.

References
 (Bryant) Bryant, Lee, "The Quantified Organisation: Can Change Become Routine?" POST*SHIFT, <http://postshift.com/the-quantified-organisation-can-change-become-routine/>, 2014.
 (Case) Case, Amber, and Maggie Wauklyn, An Illustrated Dictionary of Cyborg Anthropology, CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2014.

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PRESENTER BIOGRAPHIES

Each presenter is required to supply a short biography that will be shared with other delegates.

Ghislain Sillaume *Centre Virtuel de la Connaissance sur l'Europe*

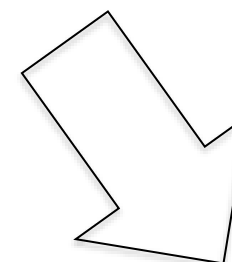
Ghislain Sillaume is National and European project coordinator at the CVCE in Luxembourg. He holds a Master's degree in Business Informatics and began his career as a software engineer by working in IT consultancy in the industrial, institutional and banking sectors. For the past 12 years, he has been developing partnership and research networks in the fields of European integration studies.

You have 2 words remaining.

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RESEARCH
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GROUP

Information and Communication Technologies

Social Sciences & Humanities

European Integration Studies

Digital Humanities

Social Progress





“A cyborg is an organism to which exogenous components have been added for the purpose of adapting to new environments.”



We are all cyborgs...

This screen is an exogenous component that is making me a cyborg. It actually increases my capacity to deliver a message to a large audience within a conference room. But there is nothing to gain if I use it in the wrong way. For example, the use of long text should be prohibited on slides. Text takes time to read and is boring to look at. Even worse, people tend to read a text as soon as it is presented. By focusing on the reading activity, they lose the thread of the message conveyed by the voice of the speaker. Hey! Are you still listening to me?

This



300 wpm

Reading a simple text

This screen is an exogenous component that is making me a cyborg. It actually increases my capacity to deliver a message to a large audience within a conference room. But there is nothing to gain if I'm using it the wrong way. For example, the use long text should be prohibited on slides. Text takes time to read and it is boring to look at. Even worse: people tend to read a text as soon as it's presented. Focussing on the reading activity, they are loosing the thread of the message convey by the voice of the speaker. Hey! Are you still listening to me?

VS



WRONG use of technology:
Not taking into account human behaviours and context.

Better use of technology:
Providing a way to accelerate the speed of reading (with training).



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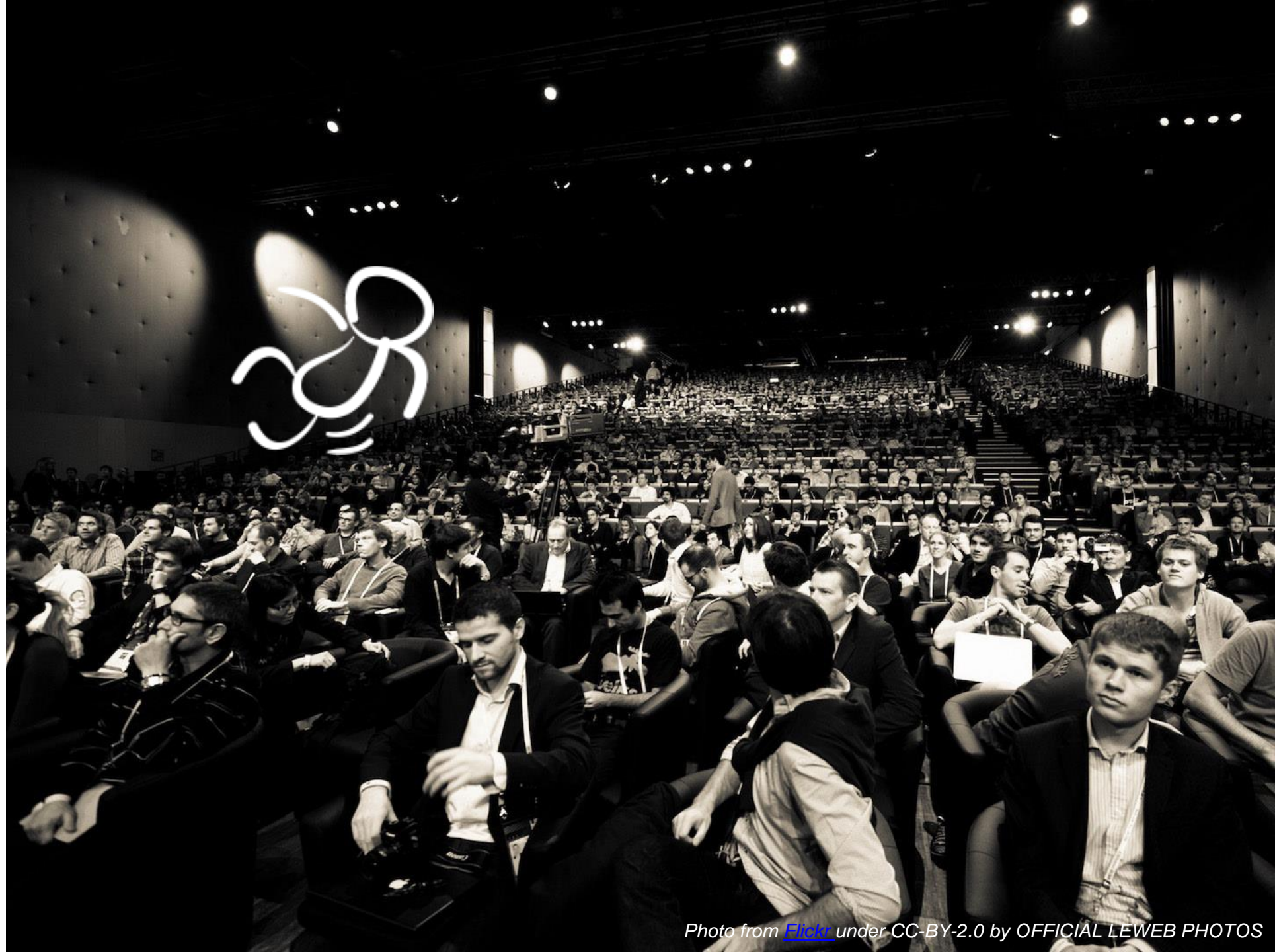


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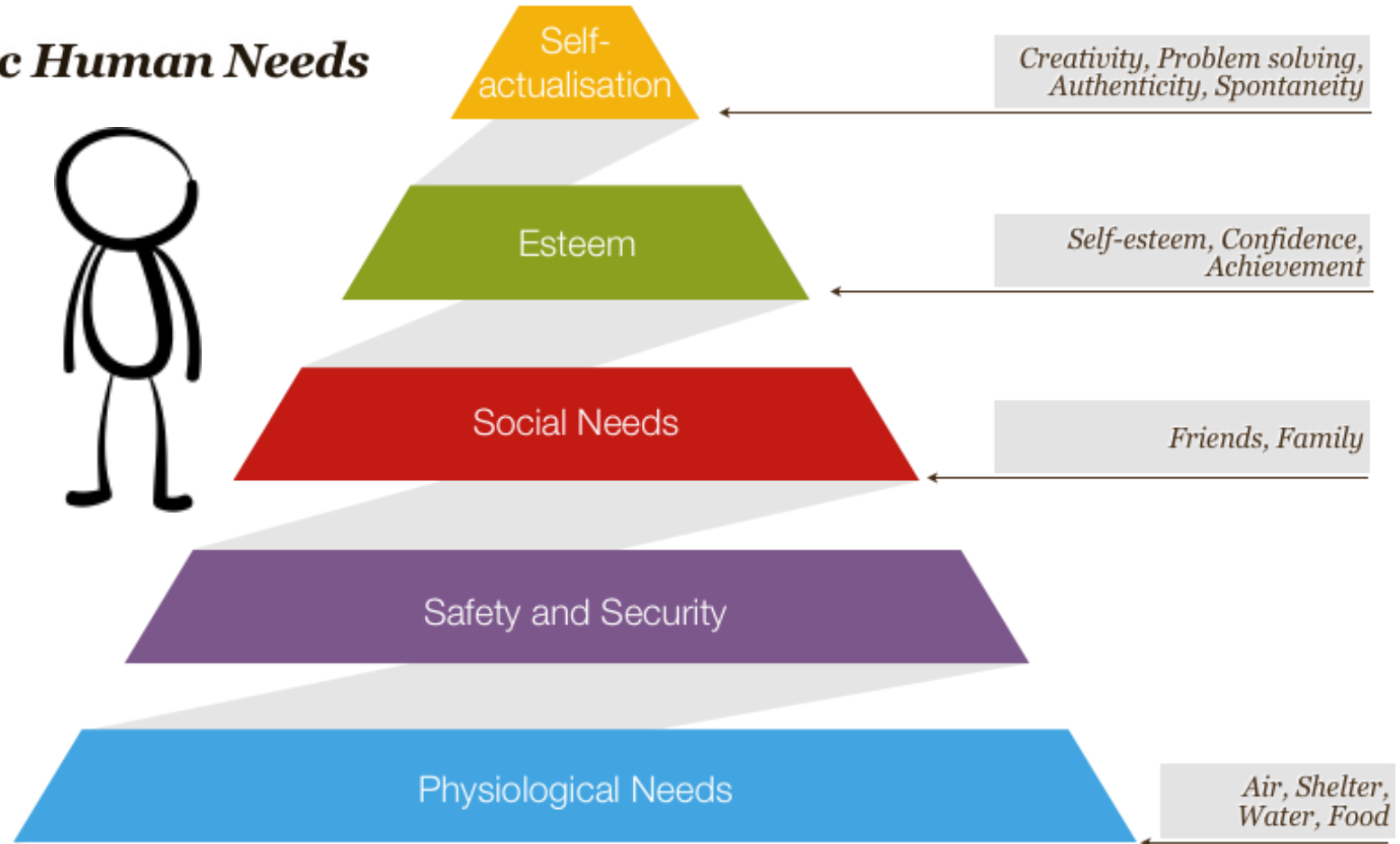
Julia is a 43-year-old research administrator working for a medium-sized university in Europe. She is mum to two daughters.

Her job is stressful. She tries not to bring work home but she has to do so regularly since she is constantly working under pressure and is committed to respecting strict deadlines.*

Sometimes she takes a short break by attending a conference away from her day-to-day work (but she still has to reply to urgent emails...).

* See the session “How stressful is the life of a research administrator?”

Basic Human Needs



Basic Cyborg Needs



Self-actualisation

Creativity, Problem solving, Authenticity, Spontaneity

Esteem

Self-esteem, Confidence, Achievement

Social Needs

Friends, Family

Safety and Security

Physiological Needs

Air, Shelter, Water, Food

Connective Obligation

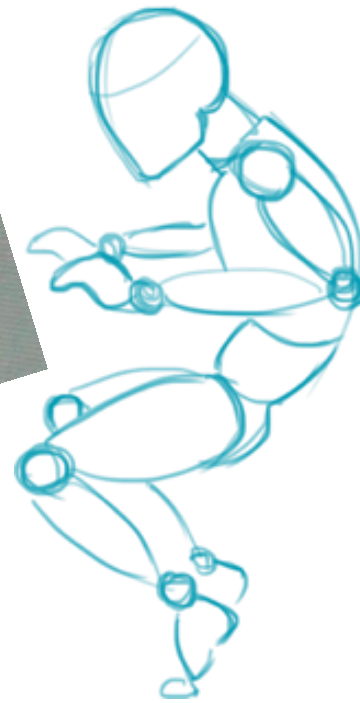
Wifi

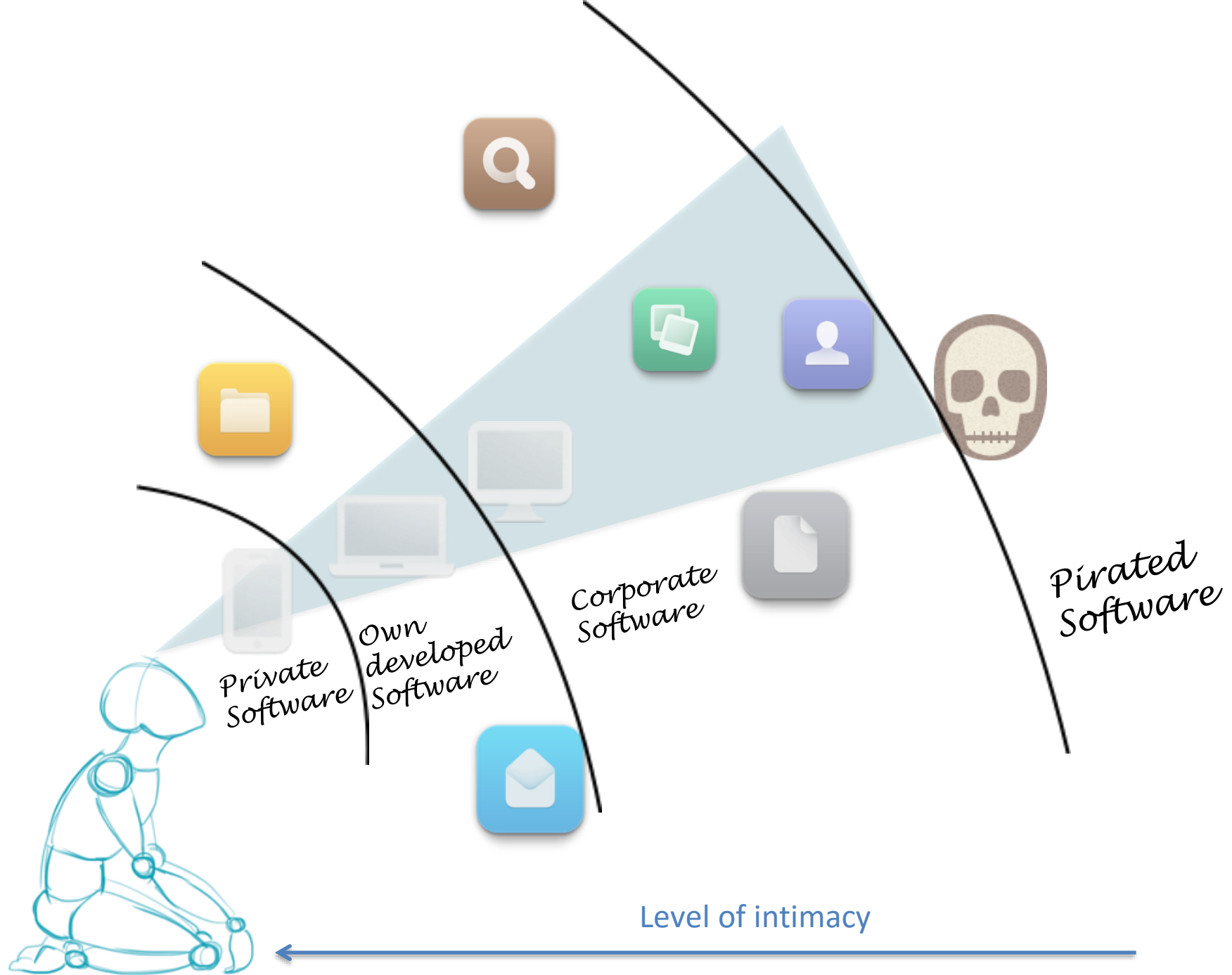
Extended cognitive self

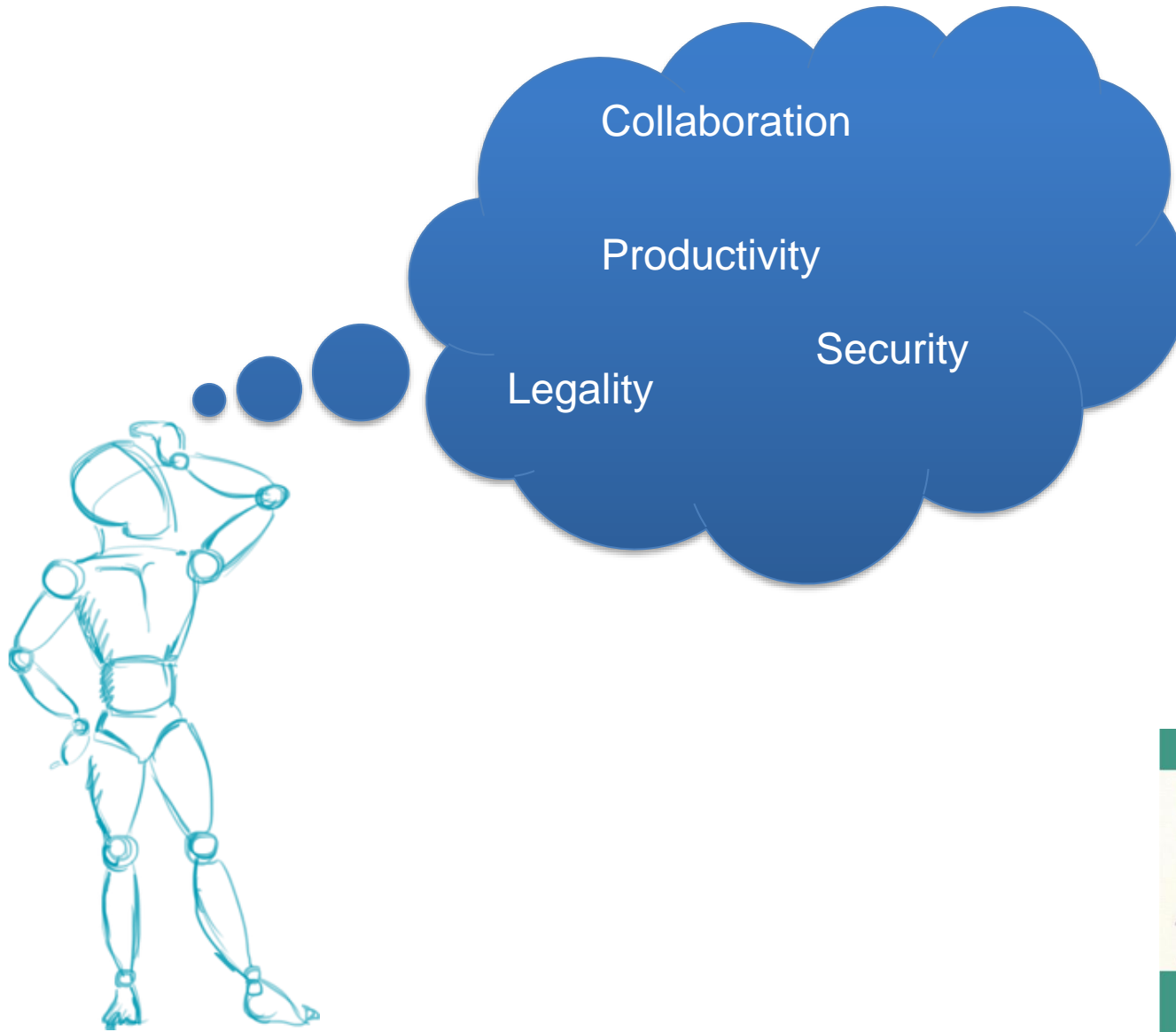
Battery



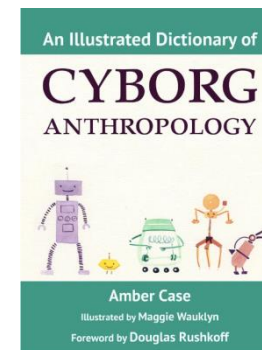
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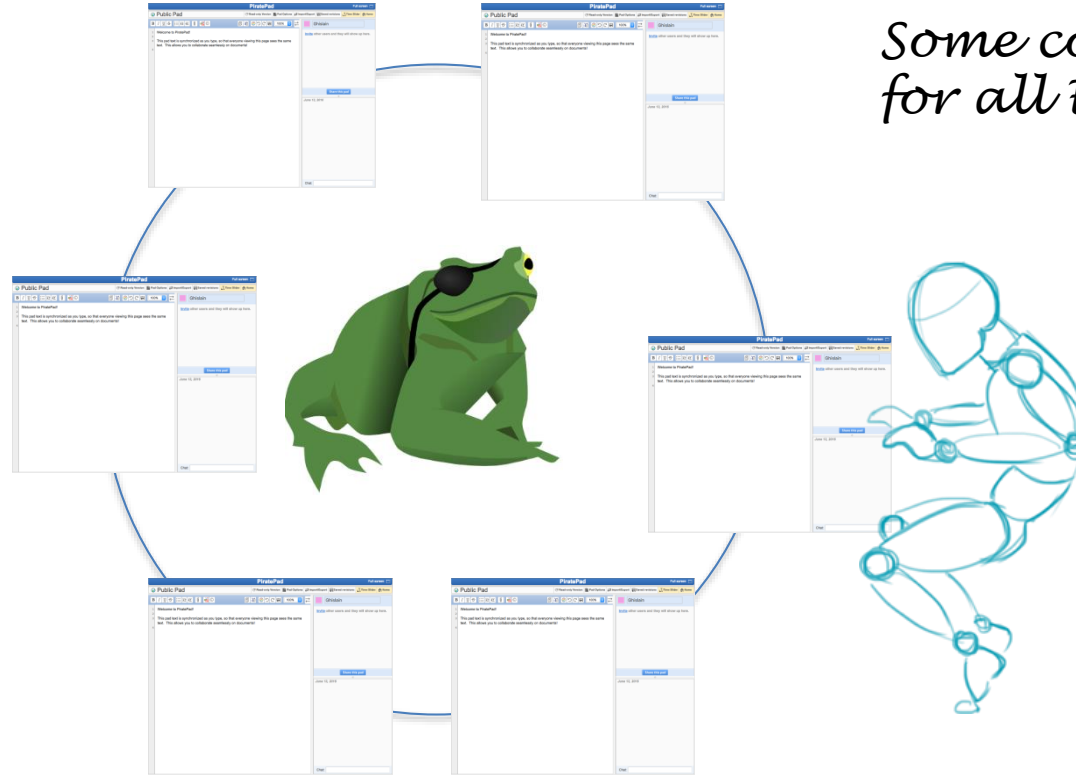




RMACyborg v1.1



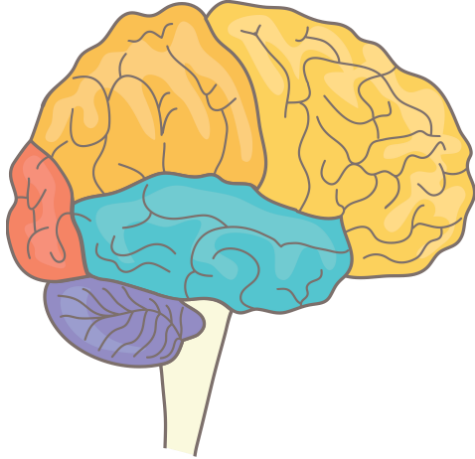
Collaboration



*Some collaborative notes
for all EARMA sessions?*



Productivity



We are far more productive when we perform tasks one at a time.

Empirical research shows that the most productive people work for 52 minutes then take a break of 17 minutes.

It takes an average of 23 minutes to refocus after being interrupted.

inged insect;
n used as fish-bait;
in the ointment
e; idm fly on the
ret observer; idm no
sb sb is not easily
oled; a flyblown
ggoty; n fly-
bird;

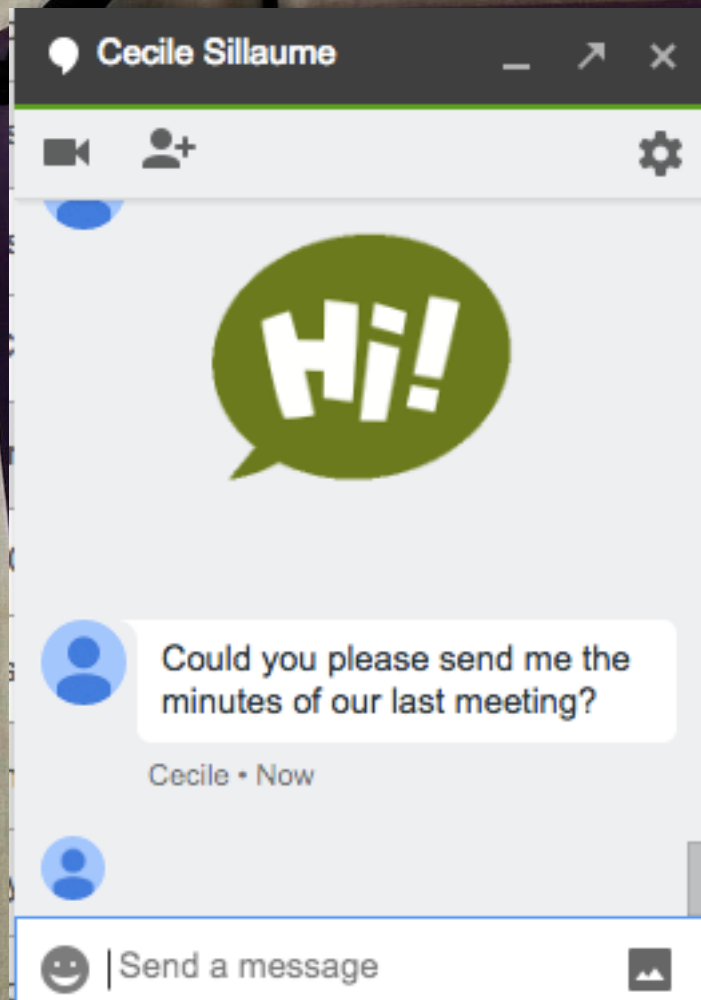
accepting (wor
article).

focus n poi

converging rays of light,
heat, waves of sound, meet;
centre of activity or
intensity; pl focuses, foci; v
adjust; cause to converge;
concentrate; a focal
pertaining to focus

A purple-framed sign hangs from a black cord on a light-colored wooden door. The sign has a white background and features the text "#DONOTDISTURB" in a black, hand-drawn, sans-serif font. The text is centered horizontally and vertically on the sign. The wooden door has a vertical grain and a metal handle is partially visible on the right side.

#DONOTDISTURB



DISTURB



Automatic reply:

I am attending a conference. I cannot read your email. Your email is being deleted. Please contact Hervé if it's really important, or send the email again after I'm back in the office.

Thank you very much.

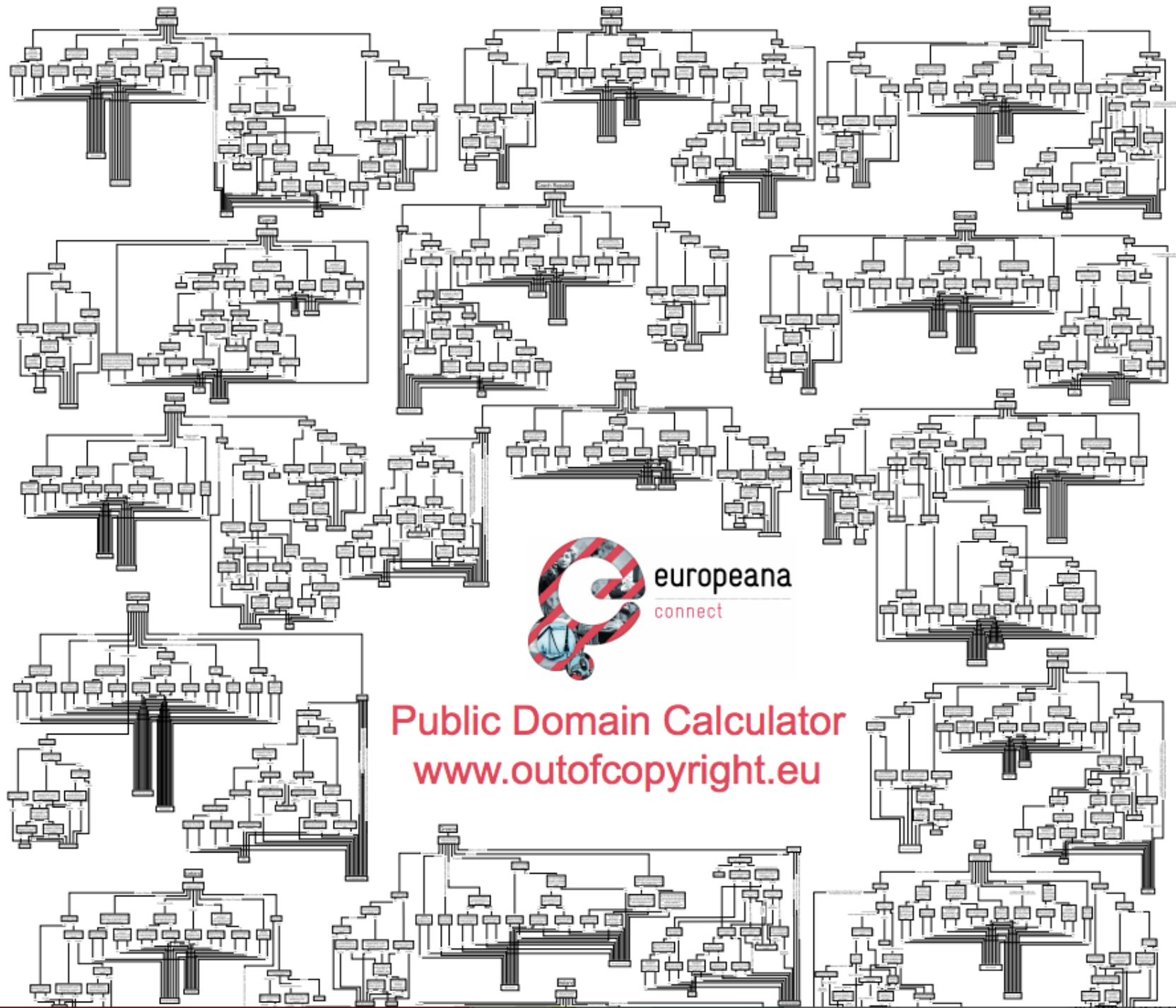


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Legality

- *Reading the privacy policies you encounter in a year would take 76 working days.*
- *The median time users spend on terms and conditions pages is only 6 seconds!*






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Take-home message

- Your choices and behaviours as RMA cyborgs are as important as the ones you develop as a human being, if not more so...
- We are only just starting to experience the new phenomena that are being derived from our close interactions with software and machines. We should develop terminology for them, attempt to understand their global impact and call for better-designed solutions.
- NEVER forget the man / woman in the cyborg!



Related webography

- [Cyborg Anthropology](#) (including dictionary of terms)
- [Design for time well spent](#) (including the manifesto)
- [Who's downloading pirated papers? Everyone](#)
- [The secret of the 10% most productive people? Breaking](#)
- [How technology hijacks people's minds](#)
- [Social Engineering: Password in exchange for chocolate](#)
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