

**The Gnarliest Problem:**

# What's the Right Excom Structure for Right Now?

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# Our Agenda

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- **To disrupt or not to disrupt**
- **Multiple ways to crack the nut**
- **Getting what you want**

***“Pressure makes diamonds.”***

- George S. Patton Jr.

# Let's Talk Pressure

2020 put a spotlight on executive spokespeople and the communication teams that support them

## Changing Expectation of **Business Leaders** as **Company Spokespeople**

- Consumers, voters, policy influencers and retail investors are joining institutional investors in paying close attention to how corporate leaders are navigating today's issues.
- Throughout 2020, corporate leaders have increasingly been pushed into the public spotlight.
- In 2021 the spotlight will continue to grow, with corporate leaders having to navigate a new geopolitical environment while managing the expectations of a more polarized consumer base.
- Business leaders are now expected to leverage their positions to positively impact society.

## Changing Expectation of **executive and employee communication teams**

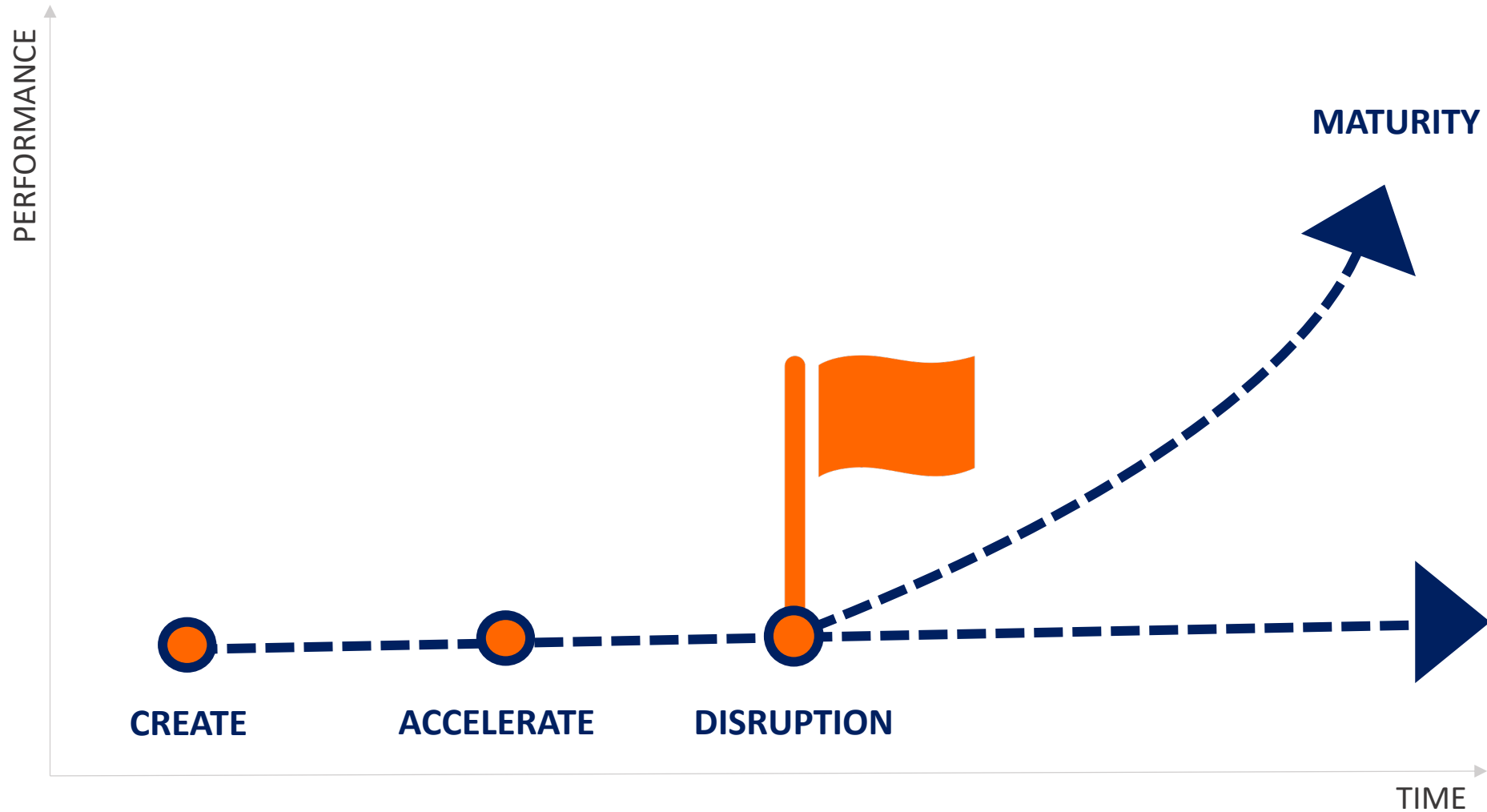
The events of 2020 jettisoned ExComms from a niche specialty to a more strategic, more vital practice and ExComms roles have profoundly changed as leaders both rely on and ask for more collaboration than ever before.

Top executives are communicating live, large-scale events once a week or more with no slowdown in sight, putting increased strain on already busy employee communication teams.

With employees' rising clout and interest in workforce issues, executives are communicating much more meaningfully inside the business now.

Leaders have become spokespeople for the most vital topics – diversity and inclusion, social justice, the workplace of the future.

# Permission to Disrupt?



***“The future has a  
way of arriving unannounced.”***

- George Will

# ExCom ROI

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## Return For The Business:

Better positioning

Broader messaging

Identifying and prioritizing activities with the highest value and return

Creating integrated plans that evolve the visibility and raise the profile of your top executive spokespeople

## Return for Individual Executives:

Help break through industry “noise” and elevate individual and company profiles

Position leaders beyond their product, engineering or SME expertise

Inspire others to join or follow the business or them as leaders

Evolve a person’s brand identity

# Industry ExCom Models

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## Typical Solutions



**One-To-  
One**



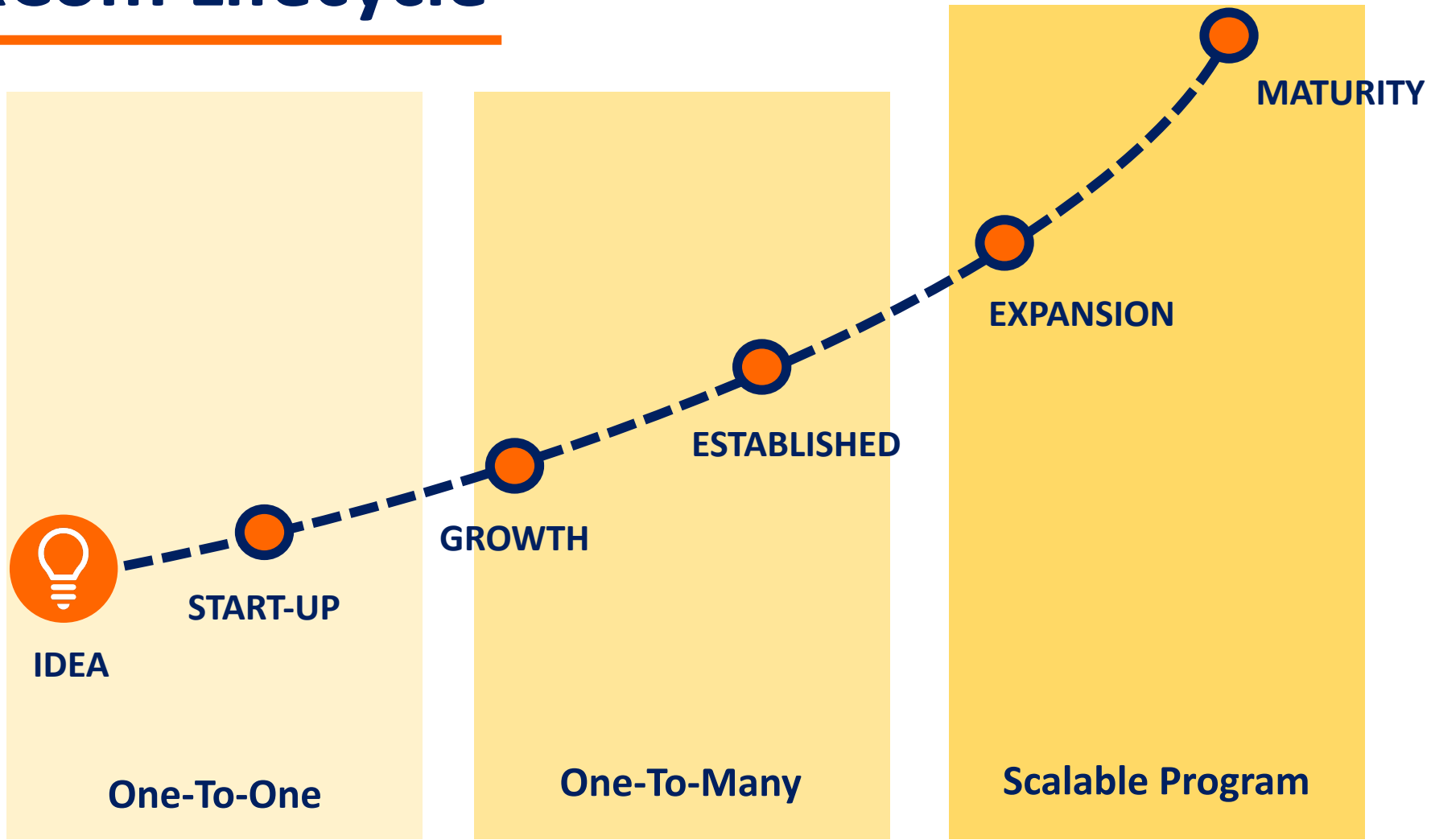
**One-To-  
Many**



**Scalable  
Program**



# ExCom Lifecycle





# One-To-One Model

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## TYPICAL SOLUTION FOR DEVELOPMENT, START-UP COMPANY

COMPANY PROFILE	
Company	Development, start-up
Culture	Autonomy, loose coordination
Leadership orientation	Product and technology
Spokespeople	Company
Program status	New, unstructured
Funding source	Single executive
Investment	Low
Relationship to EC	FYI
Growth approach	Buy

Maximum flexibility, stand up executive spokespeople quickly.



## WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU

### COMMON CONSIDERATIONS

<b>Why this works well</b>	Client friendly
<b>When this gets hard</b>	Executive departures, restructures
<b>Compensation decisions</b>	Executive has loud voice, hard to deny
<b>Typical scope</b>	High customization, internal and external
<b>Working agreements</b>	No limits
<b>Source of subject matter content</b>	CEO / CXO
<b>Career implications for comms leads</b>	Great while it's good; risky if executive leaves



# One-To-Many Model

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## TYPICAL SOLUTION FOR GROWTH, EVOLUTION COMPANY

COMPANY PROFILE	
<b>Company</b>	Growth, evolution
<b>Culture</b>	Informal cooperation, coordination
<b>Leadership orientation</b>	Sales and marketing
<b>Spokespeople</b>	Company and Industry
<b>Program status</b>	In demand
<b>Funding source</b>	Client / BU and corporate
<b>Investment</b>	Medium
<b>Relationship to EC</b>	Partnership
<b>Growth approach</b>	Buy, Build

Mostly standardized and defined services, clear scope, agency support in place.



## WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU

### COMMON CONSIDERATIONS

#### Why this works well

Resources fully optimized (\$\$ smart)

#### When this gets hard

Execs want/need more than SLA forecasts than comms lead can do

#### Compensation decisions

Clients weigh in, without benefit of comparing to comms lead peers

#### Typical scope

80/20 – planned / unplanned based on strategic plan; industry focus

#### Working agreements

SLAs

#### Source of subject matter content

Deep SMEs in the business

#### Career implications for comms leads

Opportunity to develop deep SME, typically transferrable to other jobs here and elsewhere



# Scalable Program

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## TYPICAL SOLUTION FOR EXPANDING, MATURE COMPANY

COMPANY PROFILE	
<b>Company</b>	Expansion, maturity
<b>Culture</b>	Central direction and control
<b>Leadership orientation</b>	Operational rigor
<b>Spokespeople</b>	Company, Industry and Global
<b>Program status</b>	Core offering
<b>Funding source</b>	Corporate (client funded too)
<b>Investment</b>	High
<b>Relationship to EC</b>	Organizational discipline
<b>Growth approach</b>	Buy, Build, Partner, Deprioritize

More support for more people, manage costs.



## WHAT THIS MEANS TO YOU

### COMMON CONSIDERATIONS

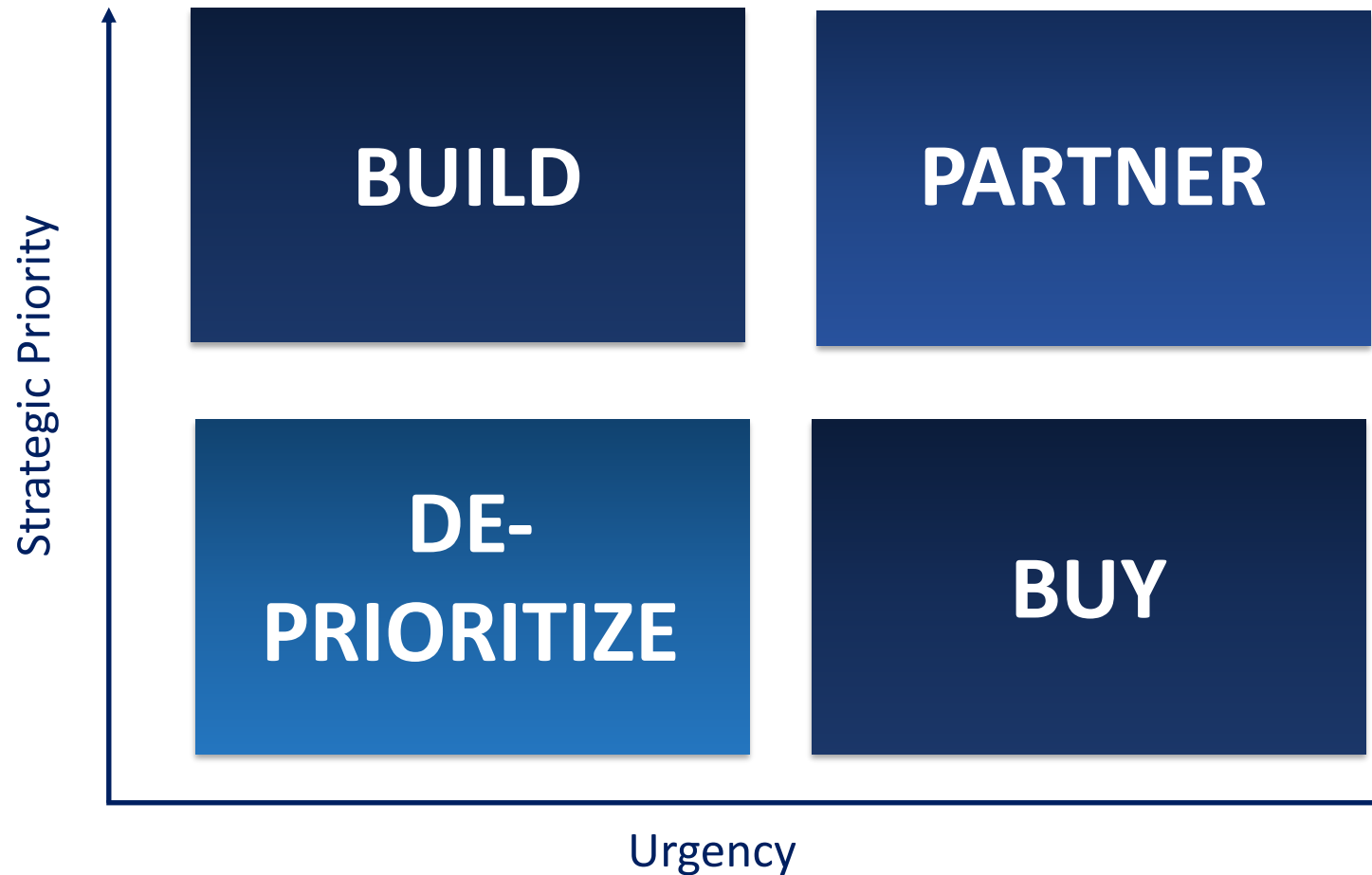
<b>Why this works well</b>	More specialized expert services
<b>When this gets hard</b>	Agency model for outsourced services needs big investment in “Operations”
<b>Compensation decisions</b>	Traditional process: communication leader decision
<b>Typical scope</b>	Repeatable practices, Centers of Excellence, Shared Services
<b>Working agreements</b>	Shared methodologies
<b>Source of subject matter content</b>	SMEs associated with program or campaign, alignment to brand
<b>Career implications for comms leads</b>	Broad range of learned and observed skills

***“When nothing is  
sure, everything is possible.”***

– Margaret Drabble

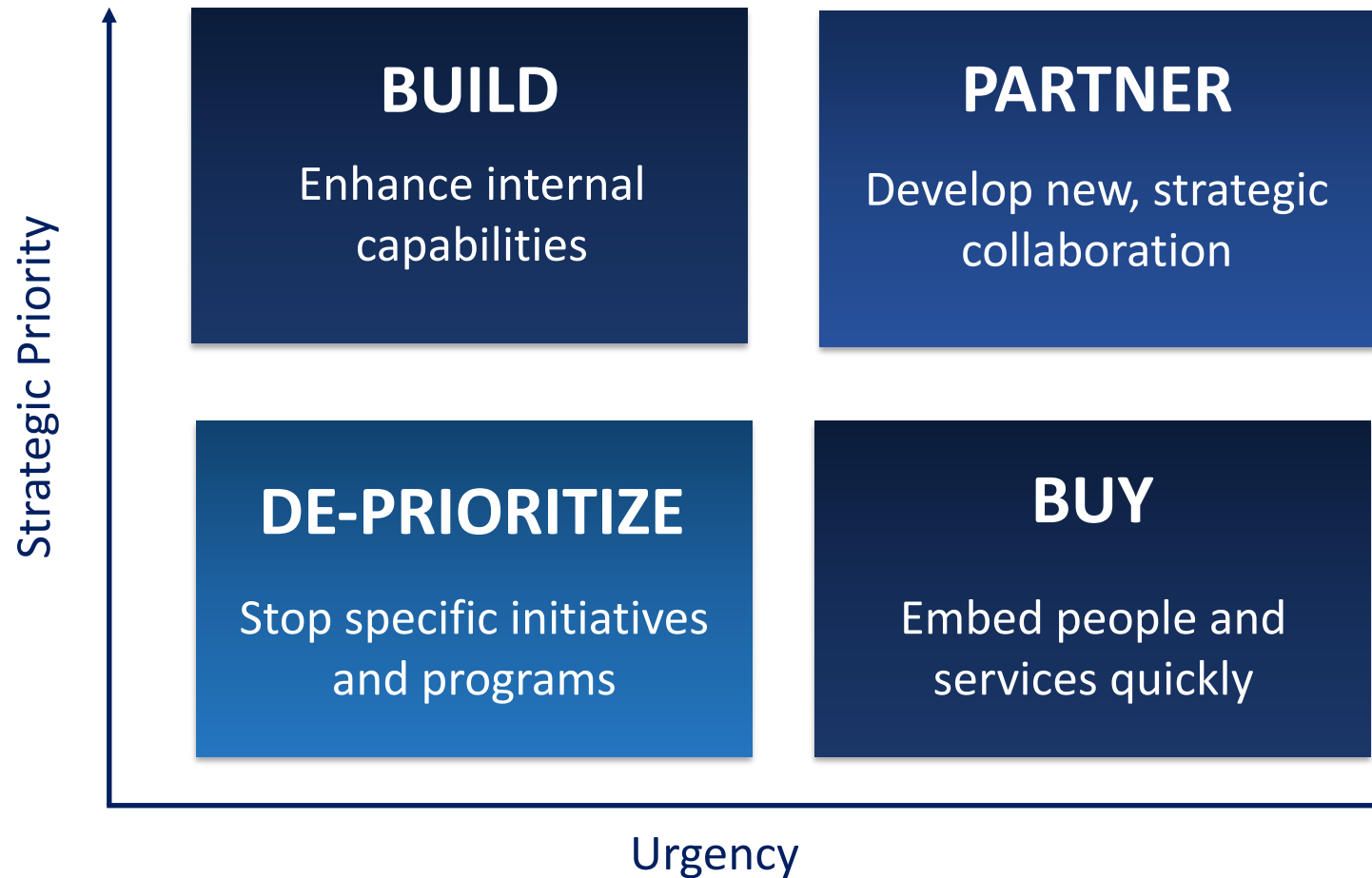
# Four Ways to Scale

You scale ExCom the same way the business scales its products



# Four Ways to Scale

You scale ExCom the same way the business scales its products





## **Sponsorship Before Selling**

- ✓ Gotta have it

## **Know Before You Go**

- ✓ Be transparent

## **Invest to Save**

- ✓ Build smart, evolve smart

## **Play to Your Strengths**

- ✓ Embrace change

## **Keep it Simple**

- ✓ Balance creativity and process

# Q&A – Let's Chat!

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**THANK YOU!**

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