

# Successful Integration of Multi- disciplinary Teams at Systemic Levels in Times of VUCA

## BACKGROUND:

- The term VUCA (volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity) has been used to describe the climate we are currently in, in terms of organisation management. Moving from post-modernist and traditional structures to VUCA.
- Successful team integration cohesion is particularly important within the context of VUCA to help overcome and continue to work through difficult challenges (Codreanu, 2016).
- It is important that organisations can adapt to the ever-changing environment, especially for successful integration within a multi-professional platform that works within various industry structures and within different teams.
- Team integration facilitates a more positive, cooperative, and productive work environment. Both internal and external teams must be able to coordinate and cooperate with each other to share their collective knowledge and utilise their resources for the greater success of the project or situation (Ibrahim, 2013).

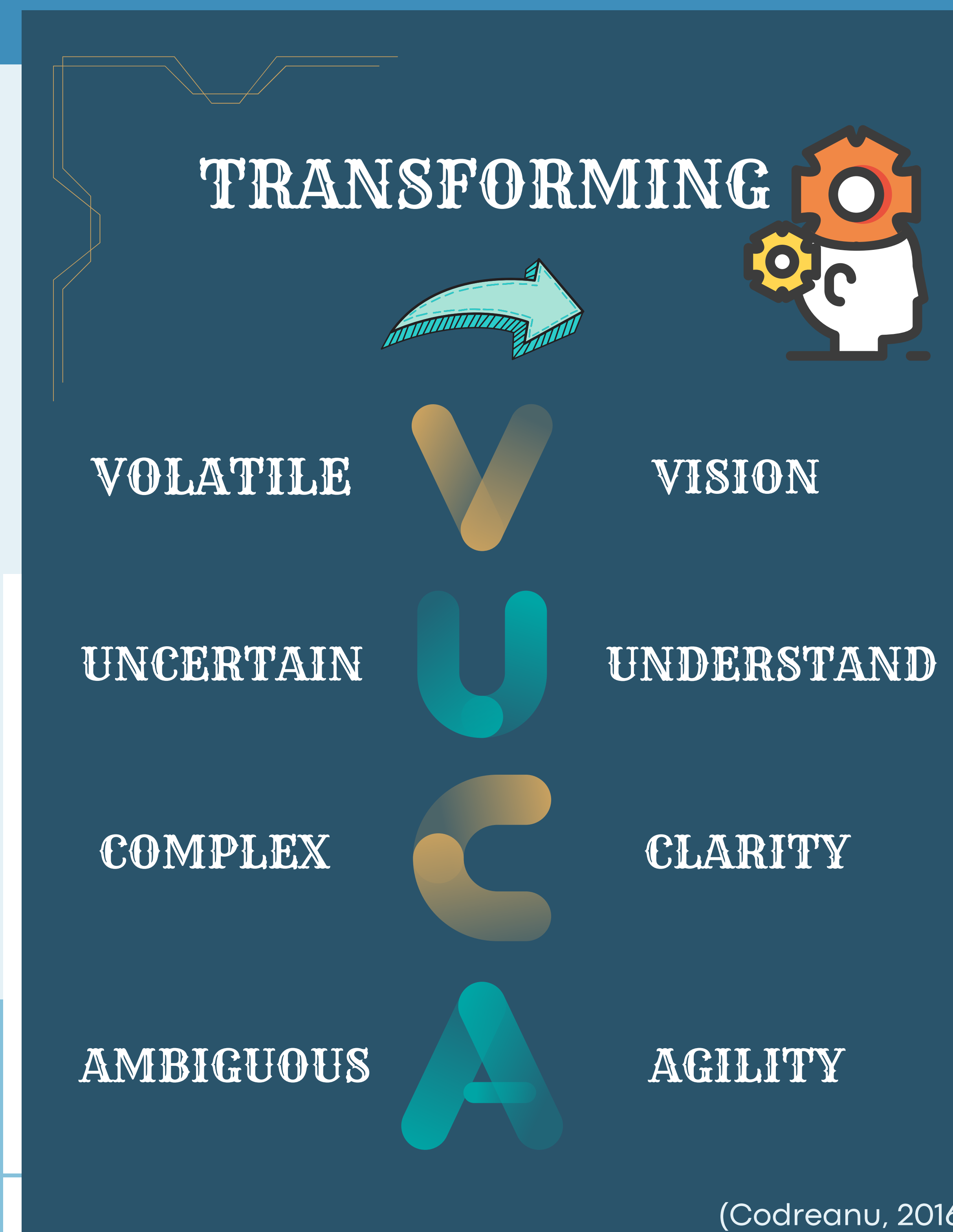
## WHAT MAKES INTEGRATION SUCCESSFUL:



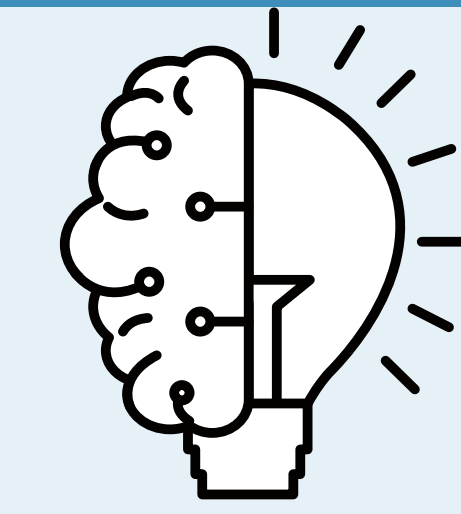
- The presence of **knowledgeable and approachable team leaders** (or consultants to work closely with teams). For digital teams, modelling online behaviour and increasing digital literacy and competency from observing such leaders at work (Erhan, Uzunbacak & Aydin, 2022)
- From a human factors perspective, the **work equipment and communication mediums** could be designed as more **user friendly** to minimise technological stress (Wickens, Helton, Hollands & Banbury, 2021)
- Communication and leadership can be effective tools when trying to successfully integrate different teams (Baiden & Price, 2011)

## GAPS ENCOUNTERED:

- **Physical, environmental and non-verbal cues** from **in-person communications being absent** may impact team digital communication and subsequent cohesion with confusion interpreting what different team members are trying to get across (Boken et al., 2022).
- **Boundary crossing: Complexities of exchange of information** and knowledge between multi-disciplinary teams (Fong, 2003).
- **Attitudes and perceptions** of different teams about the “out-group” (Eppich, & Schmutz, 2019).
- **Lack of common goal/vision perception** (Tuckman (1965).



## HAVE YOU CONSIDERED?:



- **Inter-project learning?** to tackle issues of border crossing that have been highlighted as a barrier to the progress of multidisciplinary knowledge creation, sharing, generation and implementation. (Fong, 2003).
- Ridding ‘in-group’ vs ‘outgroup’?, that is, the “us vs them” notion through **team inclusiveness** to bridge boundaries across multidisciplinary teams (Eppich, & Schmutz, 2019). Focusing on inter-team binding rather than intra-team.
- **Social integration?** Different teams merging together may not go well; there is a lack of biologically rooted social connectedness from the digital interface (Scarlett, 2019, Wickens et al., 2021).
- **Working on digital connectedness?** Digital work communications platforms could be developed to be more user friendly and immersive to attempt to recreate the same human connectedness of physical presence but digitally. It may have the potential to strengthen team bonds and achieve work community cohesion (Boken et al., 2022).

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