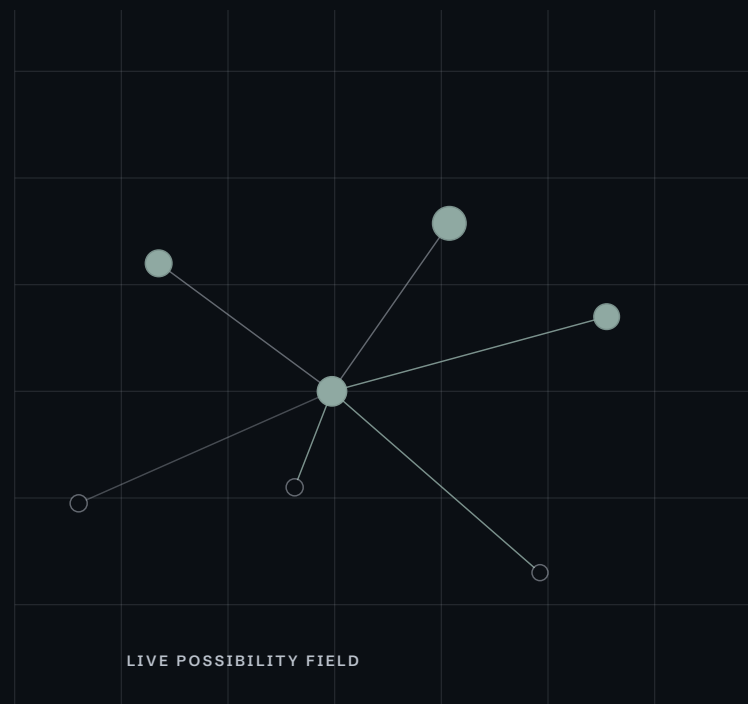


The Judgment Field Regulation Model

A cognitive model of how teams regulate possibility
before judgment



A team can debate the wrong question brilliantly.

THE SITUATION

A deadline has slipped for the third time. **The team needs an answer today.**

THE FIRST THREE ANSWERS

01

ADD MORE PEOPLE

02

WORK LATER

03

TIGHTEN CHECK-INS

Different fixes. Same hidden assumption: **the work itself is right.**

Then someone asks: **are we sure this is the right thing to build?**

No new data appeared. A possibility everyone already understood - stop, simplify, or change direction - finally became part of the decision.

01

KNOWN

02

IN THE ROOM

03

COMPARED

04

CHOSEN

An absent contender cannot lose. If the team never considers it, it cannot be tested or chosen.

What is present is not the same as what is live.

At any moment, a person or team holds a temporary distribution of possible explanations, actions, and interpretations. Some dominate. Some remain faint. Others are known but exert almost no influence.

JUDGMENT FIELD

DERIVED FROM THE CONTENDER FIELD (F_t)

$$F_t = \{(c_i, r_i(t))\}$$

01

Strength

How strongly are the available possibilities pressing on judgment?

02

Breadth

How many possibilities carry meaningful influence rather than merely being named?

03

Functional dispersion

How different are the contenders in predicted consequences and implied actions?

04

Persistence

How long does the configuration survive, especially after the world changes?

Candidate count is not cognitive range. A meeting can sound exploratory while remaining inside one family of thought.

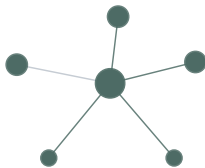
More possibilities are not always better.

Effective judgment requires exclusion. The failure is not narrowness. It is **narrowness that no longer fits the world.**

01

Widen

UNCERTAIN WORLD



Keep several possibilities genuinely competitive while evidence is weak.

FIELD RESPONSE

Maintain alternatives

02

Compress

CONCENTRATING EVIDENCE



Let weak alternatives lose influence as evidence concentrates.

FIELD RESPONSE

Eliminate weak rivals

03

Reopen

EXPECTATION FAILURE



Restore suppressed regions when expectation fails.

FIELD RESPONSE

Restore suppressed regions

Speed and adaptability are not opposites. They are different phases of the same control problem. Expertise should compress quickly when the pattern fits – and reopen quickly when it does not.

Research anchors: recognition-primed decision making (Klein, 1993); Einstellung and persistent attention to a familiar solution (Bilalic, McLeod & Gobet, 2008).

The same bad decision can come from different failures.

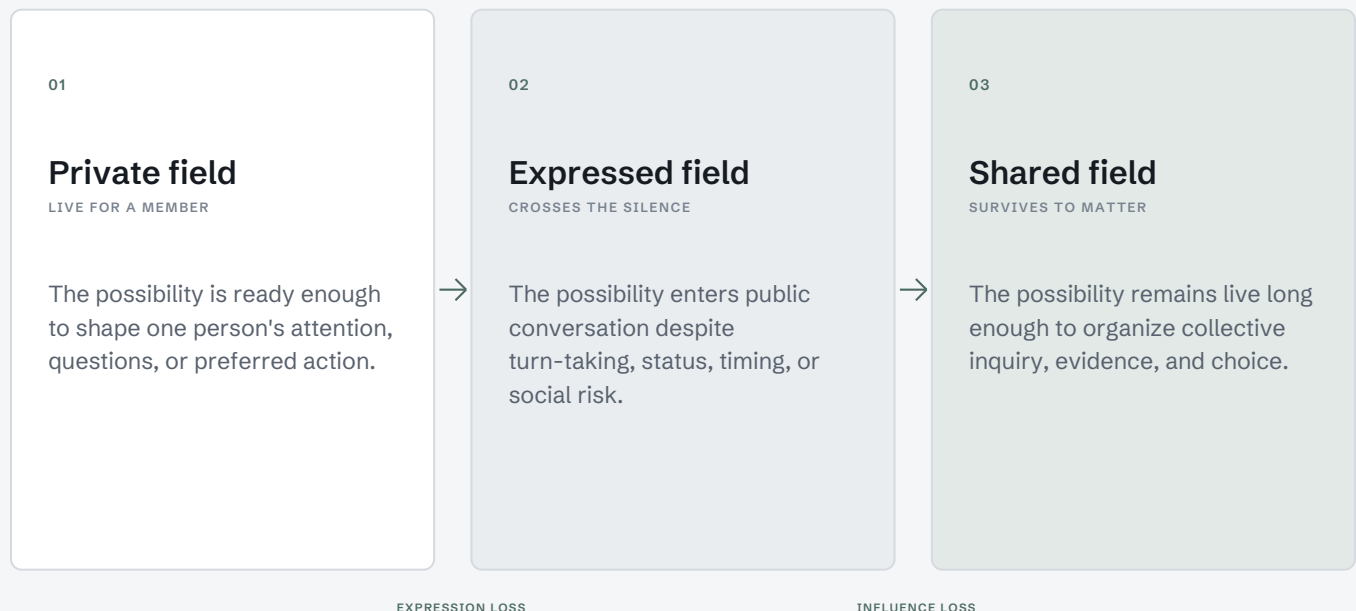
Outcomes reveal little about where judgment broke. The regulatory signature determines the useful intervention.

01 PREMATURE COMPRESSION	OBSERVABLE SIGNATURE Alternatives disappear while uncertainty remains high.	NEXT MOVE Introduce a genuinely different contender.
02 FALSE BREADTH	OBSERVABLE SIGNATURE High candidate count, but low functional dispersion.	NEXT MOVE Change the family, not the example.
03 DOMINANT FRAME LOCK	OBSERVABLE SIGNATURE Repeated return to one region despite contradiction.	NEXT MOVE Make the failed prediction explicit.
04 FAILED REOPENING	OBSERVABLE SIGNATURE Low field change after meaningful surprise.	NEXT MOVE Reframe before generating more answers.
05 UNPRODUCTIVE EXPANSION	OBSERVABLE SIGNATURE Breadth persists without information gain.	NEXT MOVE Force discrimination and commit.

Behavior-only coaching can prescribe the wrong correction. Another question may widen a field that should compress - or create another near-duplicate in a field that only appears broad.

A team can know everything and still consider too little.

In a group, a contender has a social life. It must occur to someone, cross the silence, and remain in the conversation long enough to influence comparison.



The group field is not the union of what every member knows. A decisive interpretation may never become ready, may never be voiced, or may be voiced and disappear without changing what the team evaluates next.

Silence is not evidence of absence. Mention is not evidence of influence.

EXPRESSION LOSS

An individually evidenced contender never enters shared discussion; silence alone cannot establish this loss.

INFLUENCE LOSS

A voiced contender fails to alter later inquiry, evidence gathering, or choice.

Research anchors: hidden profiles (Lu, Yuan & McLeod, 2012); production blocking (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987).

A different unit of performance.

Judgment intelligence is the capacity to regulate the field of live possibilities so that its shape remains appropriate to uncertainty, evidence, and change.

FIELD TRAJECTORY / MEASURABLE PROPERTIES

01 BREADTH

Distinct contenders shaping later turns.

02 DISPERSION

Functional distance between contenders.

03 DOMINANCE

Discussion organized around one contender.

04 REOPENING

Time from surprise to a new family.

05 MOBILITY

Ability to leave one explanatory family.

MODEL FAMILY / COMPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

COGNITIVE TOPOLOGY HYPOTHESIS -> CSTM

Transition

How did the interaction move cognition?

CONTENDER FIELD MODEL -> JFRM

Regulation

Was the resulting possibility field appropriate to the evidence?

Piloteer's opportunity: estimate the geometry and dynamics of collective judgment, not merely label behaviors. Field shape becomes performance evidence only when interpreted against uncertainty, evidence, urgency, reversibility, and the cost of being wrong.

Responsible boundary. Field conditions are latent. Piloteer can estimate them only probabilistically from observable language, timing, sequence, interaction patterns, and context. JFRM is a testable performance framework - not mind-reading, and not proof that one field shape is universally correct.

Research basis: option generation vs. choice (Morris et al., 2021); graded activation (Oberauer, 2013); diagnostic contender sets (Thomas et al., 2008); retrieval-constrained valuation (Zhang et al., 2021).

The Judgment Field Regulation Model

FIELD REGULATION



The strongest leader knows when the room should narrow -
and notices when the answer that matters is no longer inside it.



PILOTEER LABS

RESEARCH / HUMAN PERFORMANCE