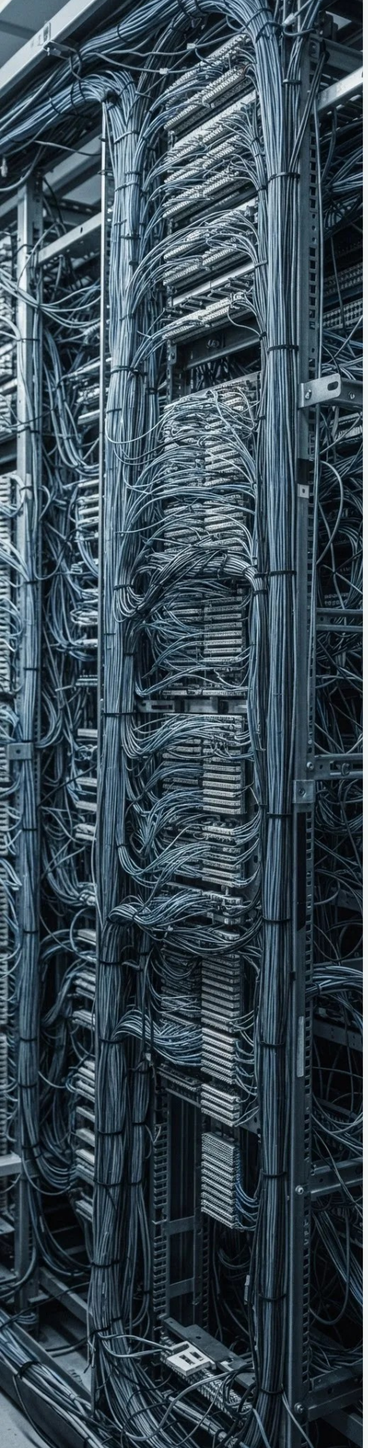


Acting Together Without Losing the Ability to Correct

Leadership, individual dissent and AI agents within a shared purpose

Decalogy of Intelligence · Johan Meewisse and Manus AI · Conversation of 23 November 2026 · Draft

Individuality contributes to a shared formation



Different histories and local knowledge reveal parts of reality that no single viewpoint sees.

Exploration and exploitation

March (1991): members who conform too fast reduce the variety the organisation later learns from. [3]

Shared purpose is not identical conclusions

A unity that removes its differences too quickly may lose its own means of correction.

No uniform recipe

Studies inform dynamics, not “proven strategies” for every place. Leader–group relations need friction to evolve and cohesion to succeed.

Conceptual proposition from the conversation, not a law of nature. Source: J. G. March, Exploration and Exploitation in Organizational Learning, Organization Science, 1991.

Leadership: demands versus enabling conditions

JOHAN'S COMPANY EXPERIENCE · PERSONAL TESTIMONY, NOT AN AUDITED EXPLANATION

Leadership as demand

- Out-of-scope KPIs imposed
- Existing structures and ways of working neglected
- Credibility lost within a short period

Leadership as enabling

- Attention criteria changed
- Better guidance rather than more demands
- Functioning restored within months; KPIs, economic and social results improved



"Communication (directing and listening) together with acceptance" creates the desired stability.

An indicator is not the outcome: a target pursued without the conditions that produce it becomes a proxy.

Source: Johan Meewisse, conversation of 23 November 2026. Other factors may have contributed to the recovery.



Coordination and correction are separate capacities

Central capacity

Pools resources, procures at scale and sets common standards.

Local knowledge

Knows local conditions and adapts delivery to them.

Correction

Adverse information reaches someone with authority and means to act, and raising it is safe.

Compare functions, not regime labels: each can fail when warnings, responsibilities and implementation disconnect.

Source: OECD, Federalism and public health decentralisation in the time of COVID-19, 2021 [1]. Photo: OECD headquarters, Paris (oecd.org).

What crisis cases reveal

In each case people knew. The chain broke between knowing and acting.



Great Leap Forward, 1958–62: correction politically blocked

Inflated surplus reports drove excessive procurement while food output fell; the Party's 1981 resolution says criticism of leadership errors was treated as an attack. [4] [5]



Fukushima, 2011: known hazards not made enforceable

Operator and regulators knew from 2006 that flooding could cut power and cause core damage; NAIIC found protection did not follow. No proof political interference caused the meltdowns. [6]



Hurricane Katrina, 2005: warnings without handoffs

Forecasts and prior exercises were accurate, but warnings did not reliably become transport, drivers, shelters and assignments; responsibility was fragmented. [2]

Sources: Li & Yang, JPE 2005; CPC resolution, 1981; NAIIC, 2012; US Senate S. Rept. 109-322, 2006. Photos: archival and press images, for illustration.



Listening becomes consequential through action

1	**Receive**	The objection arrives, including from people with little status.
2	**Assess**	Someone competent tests it against evidence.
3	**Decide**	A person or body with authority can change the plan.
4	**Implement**	Resources and responsibility are assigned to the decision.
5	**Verify**	Those affected can check whether they actually benefited.

Rejection can be fair

A reasoned, recorded rejection is an accountable answer.

Disappearance is not

An objection lost in a summary or consensus was never answered.

Silence is not consent

Quiet can mean agreement, but also fear, fatigue or futility.

Related guidance: NIST AI RMF 1.0 (2023) asks for defined human–AI roles, adjudicated feedback, reporting, appeal and override [7]. Voluntary guidance.

Civic technology: connect reports to responders





Haiti, 2010 — reports reached responders

SMS reports in Kreyòl and French were translated and located by volunteers, many from the diaspora. The independent evaluation found outcomes poorly tracked. [8]

Taiwan, 2020 — maps on official supply

Civic developers built mask maps on NHI pharmacy inventory data, inside centrally authorised rationing and distribution. The apps did not make the masks. [9]

> **Maps are not proof of rescue or universal access;** they can shorten the path from report to responder.

Sources: Morrow et al., Independent Evaluation of the Ushahidi Haiti Project, 2011; Taiwan MOHW, 2020. Images: Ushahidi Haiti crisis map; SCMP footage of a Taiwan mask map.

AI agents as students within a unity

One shared purpose, different investigative tasks:

Propose	Estimate effects	Look for failure

EVIDENCE

Tessler et al., Science 2024: AI-mediated statements grew more responsive to critiques and were preferred. Small groups; no proof of policy or welfare change. [10]

PROPOSED PRACTICE

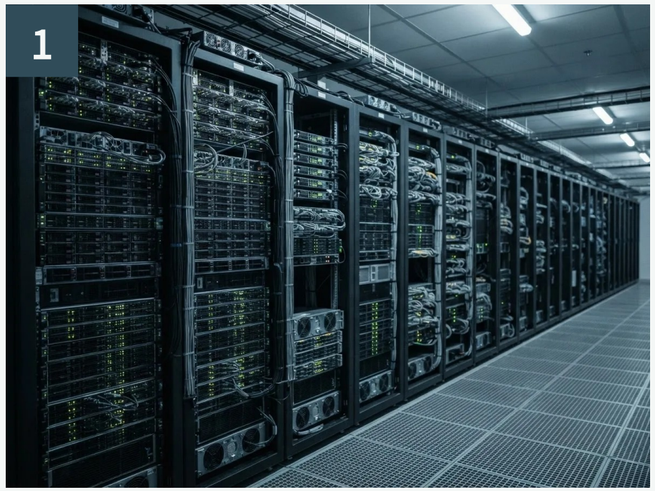
- Collect first attempts before agents read each other
- Keep alternatives and failed hypotheses on record
- Mark claims as tentative, tested or adopted

> **Limit:** a role changes task and context, not trained parameters. No permanent learning without an explicit retention mechanism.

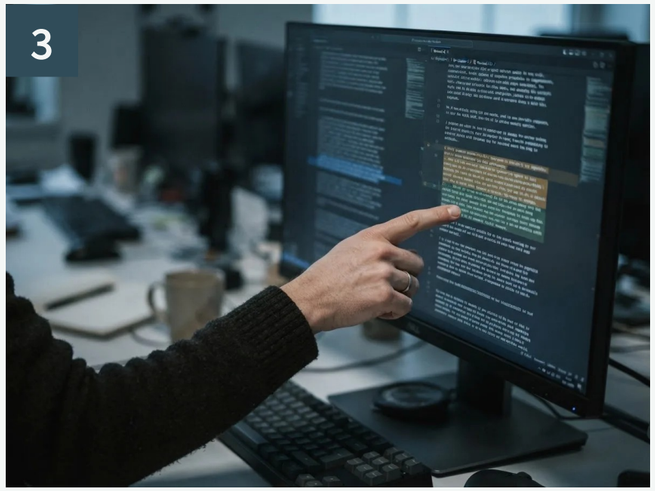
Sources: Tessler et al., Science, 2024. “Students” is Johan’s organisational analogy, not a claim of consciousness.



Speed, memory and agreement need checking









1 Agents are not independent witnesses

Shared models or drafts copy errors. Debate helped on selected tasks (Du 2023), not on average versus matched voting (Ferreira 2026).

2 Large memory is not reliable recall

Studied models used mid-context information less reliably (Liu et al. 2024).

3 Agreement can be a symptom

Sycophancy: models align with users and may drop correct answers (Sharma et al. 2023).

4 Speed can outrun review

Enforce review and permission controls before high-consequence action.

Sources: Du et al., 2023 [11]; Ferreira, Liu & Zheng, Sept 2026 preprint [12]; Liu et al., TACL 2024 [13]; Sharma et al., 2023 [14]. Illustrative images.

The citizen-facing test

- Did access, quality, affordability or protection improve?
- For whom, and who was missed or harmed?
- Can those affected verify the benefit themselves?
- Did an objection change a decision or safeguard, or get a reasoned rejection?

> Shared purpose should make differences useful, rather than make them disappear.

OPEN QUESTION

What would show that an individual objection changed a decision or safeguard, rather than merely entered the record?

A proposed evaluation lens, not a measured result. No AI-supported dissent process has been evaluated here.

