

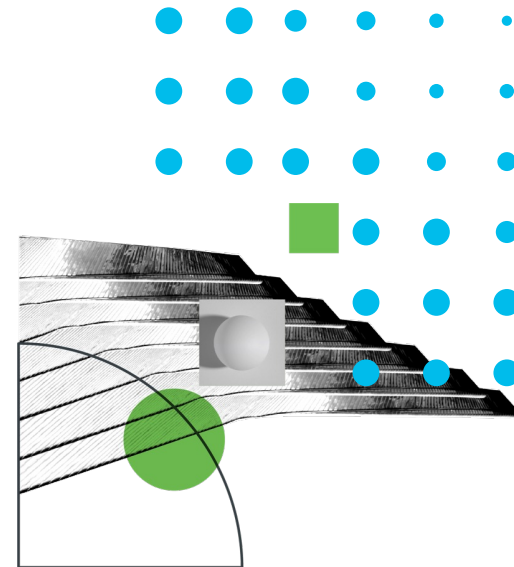
YOU NEED YOUR OWN DEFINITION OF DESIGN MATURITY

Francesca Barrientos, PhD

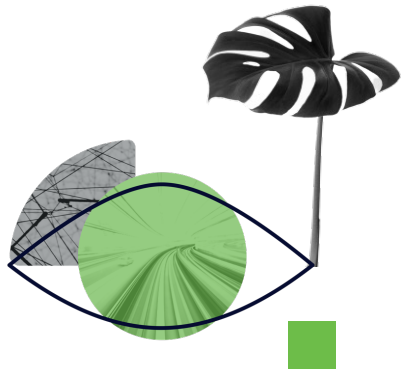
Design Strategist, Security Business Group, Cisco

Design at Scale 2022

READY TO LEVEL UP
OUR DESIGN
MATURITY



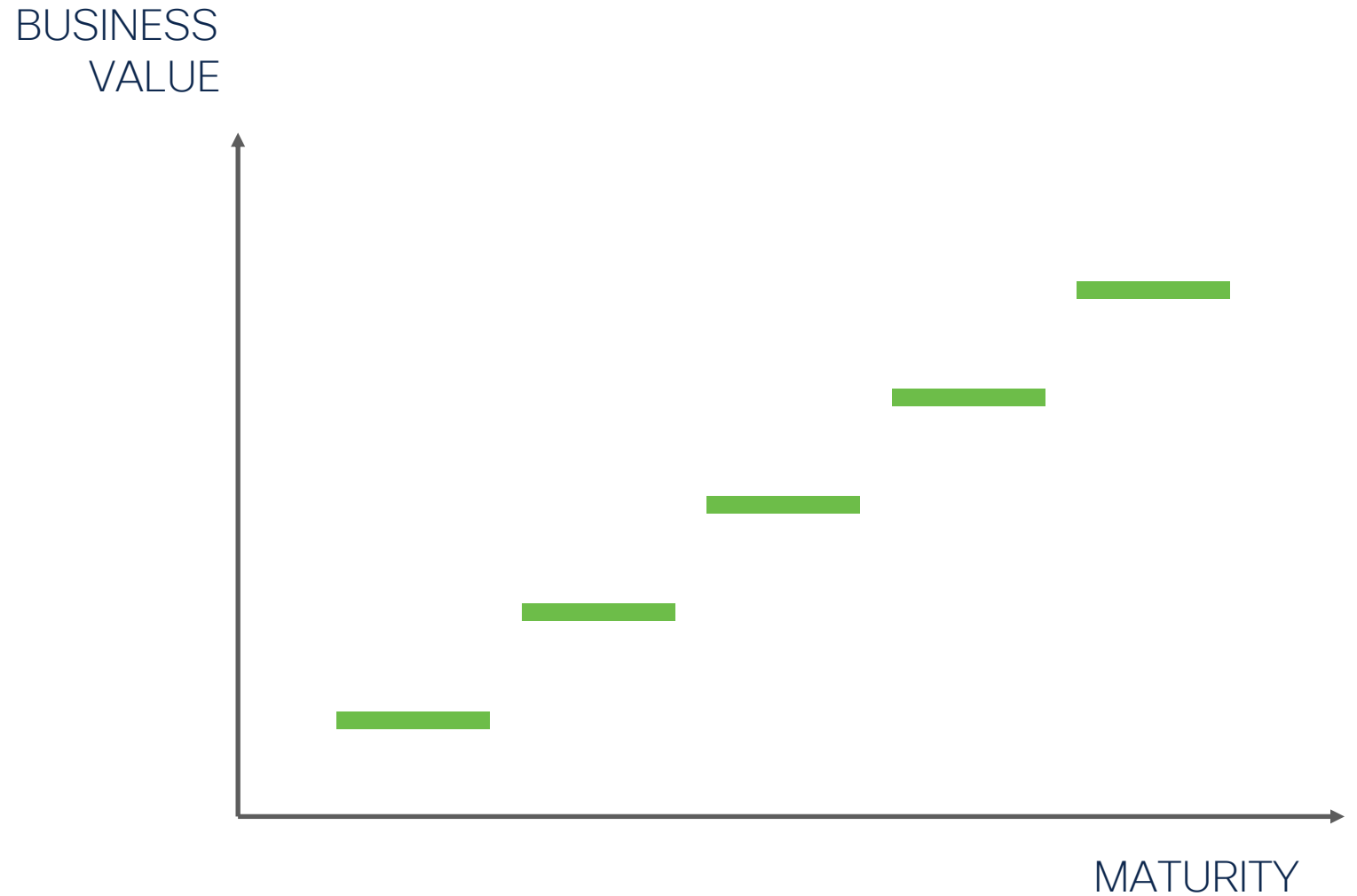
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WE NEEDED OUR
OWN DEFINITION OF
DESIGN MATURITY

DESIGN CAPABILITY MATURITY MODELS

Design Maturity - a measure of how well a business uses design capabilities to create value.



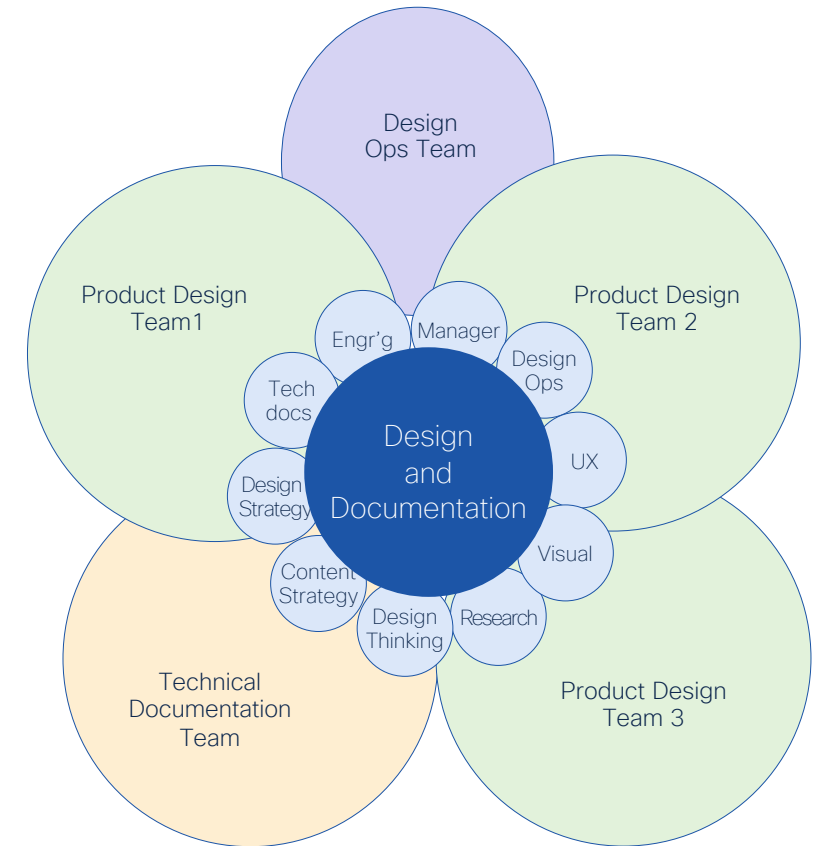
EARLY 2021

Business

- High tech, B2B
- >1200 engineers
- Business leaders recognize design's value to alignment and engineering

Design & Technical Documentation Team

- Director level leadership
- ~75 team members



LEARNING WHAT DESIGN MATURITY MEANS TO US

QUESTIONS

What behaviors do we want to start/stop/keep doing?

What is our vision of design maturity?

What do they believe the purpose of design is?



Design maturity models
Value of Design
History of Finance



Thought leadership on
design orgs



Interviews with Teammates

scrappiness

longing

belonging

admiration

loneliness

weariness



DESIGN MATURITY
CAPABILITY
MODELS IMPRESS
BUSINESS EXECS



Photo by Charles Forerunner on [Unsplash](#)

DESIGN MATURITY IS FOR THE DESIGN TEAM MEMBERS, TOO



EVOLVE DESIGN'S PURPOSE

Inclusiveness

Ethics

Social Justice

Sustainability



DESIGN MATURITY PILLARS

CISCO CLOUD & NETWORK SECURITY

I.

Clearly Defined
Mission, Vision,
and Principles

II.

Elevate Our
People

III.

Common
Methodologies
Consistently
Used

IV.

Design
Mindsets and
Skills Integrated
across
Functions

EMERGENT DEFINITION OF DESIGN MATURITY

Maturity results from the **behaviors** and **structures** we put in place that enable us to deliver greater value to the customer, the business, ourselves, and society.

We get there by trusting our experience and working with each other.

USING OUR NEW DESIGN MATURITY DEFINITION



Presented recommendations to design leaders at OKR planning workshop



Socialized with the team



Team reflection

Message to the team

The design function is still finding its place in the enterprise

All designers can be a part of figuring out how to make design fit into business

Business is just people trying to figure out what to do next.



OUTCOMES

“We have our why”

OKR planning – a new lens on what is and isn’t working

Decision to pause team-wide design critiques

Enkindled thoughtful reflection at an all-hands

Team members feeling seen



WHY RETHINK DESIGN MATURITY NOW



Collective and
personal traumas of
2020, 2021, ...



Foregrounding
care



Adapting to
awkwardness and
discomfort

SEE THE TEAM'S WHOLE EXPERIENCE

- Moral injury of having to justify your function
- Loneliness of feeling your value is dismissed or ignored
- Longing for autonomy
- Need for safety and belonging
- Pride and admiration for our colleagues



MAKE YOUR OWN DEFINITION OF DESIGN MATURITY

Only you know your experiences

Only you know where your team has been

Only you know your team's aspirations



Thank you

