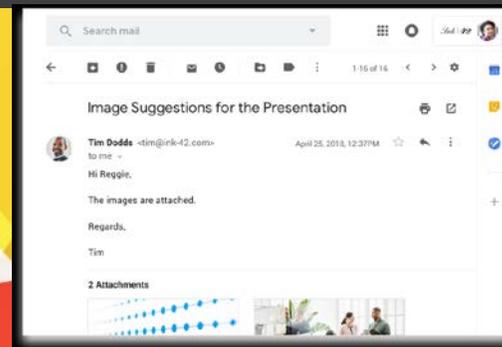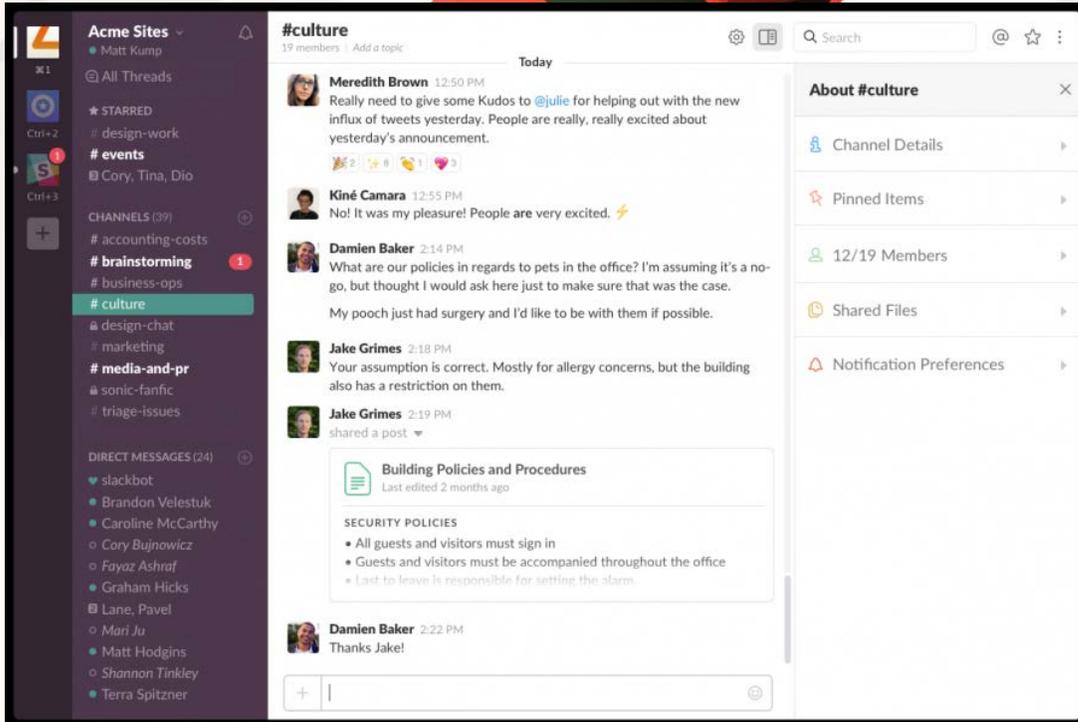# LEADING VIRTUAL TEAMS

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CUNY IOP Network 6.29.21

"Zoom" Leadership

◦COVID-19 has made virtual leadership more salient

◦Everyone is now on Zoom
  ◦Or WebEx
  ◦Or Teams
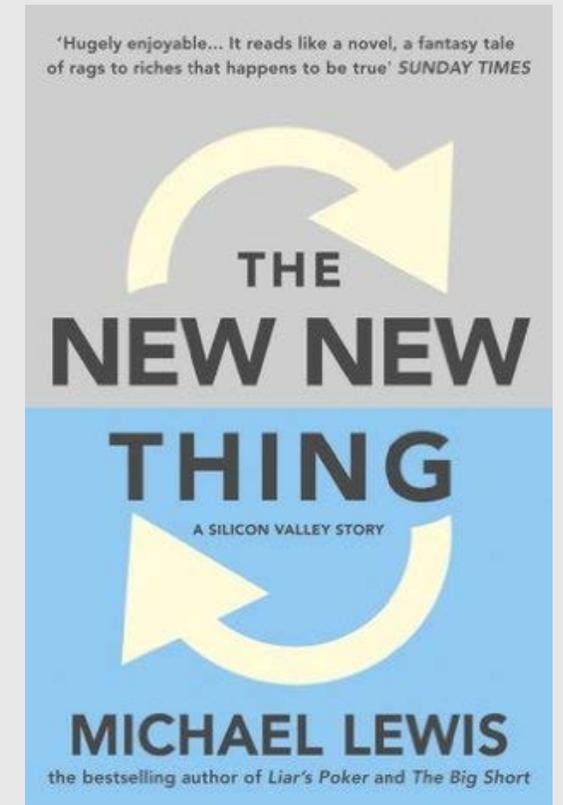 ◦Or somehow still using Skype

But this is not new

◦ We've used tools to communicate at a distance forever really

◦ Pre-COVID-19 what were some ways you communicated non-face to face with someone related to work?

Completely different vs. modified

◦ For tech we often fall in the trap that it is a completely new thing

◦ The tool or tech has created a new world

◦ But it is a way to "better" do what we are already doing

◦ Virtual leadership = parts of leadership done in virtual environment

◦ Goals often the same or similar
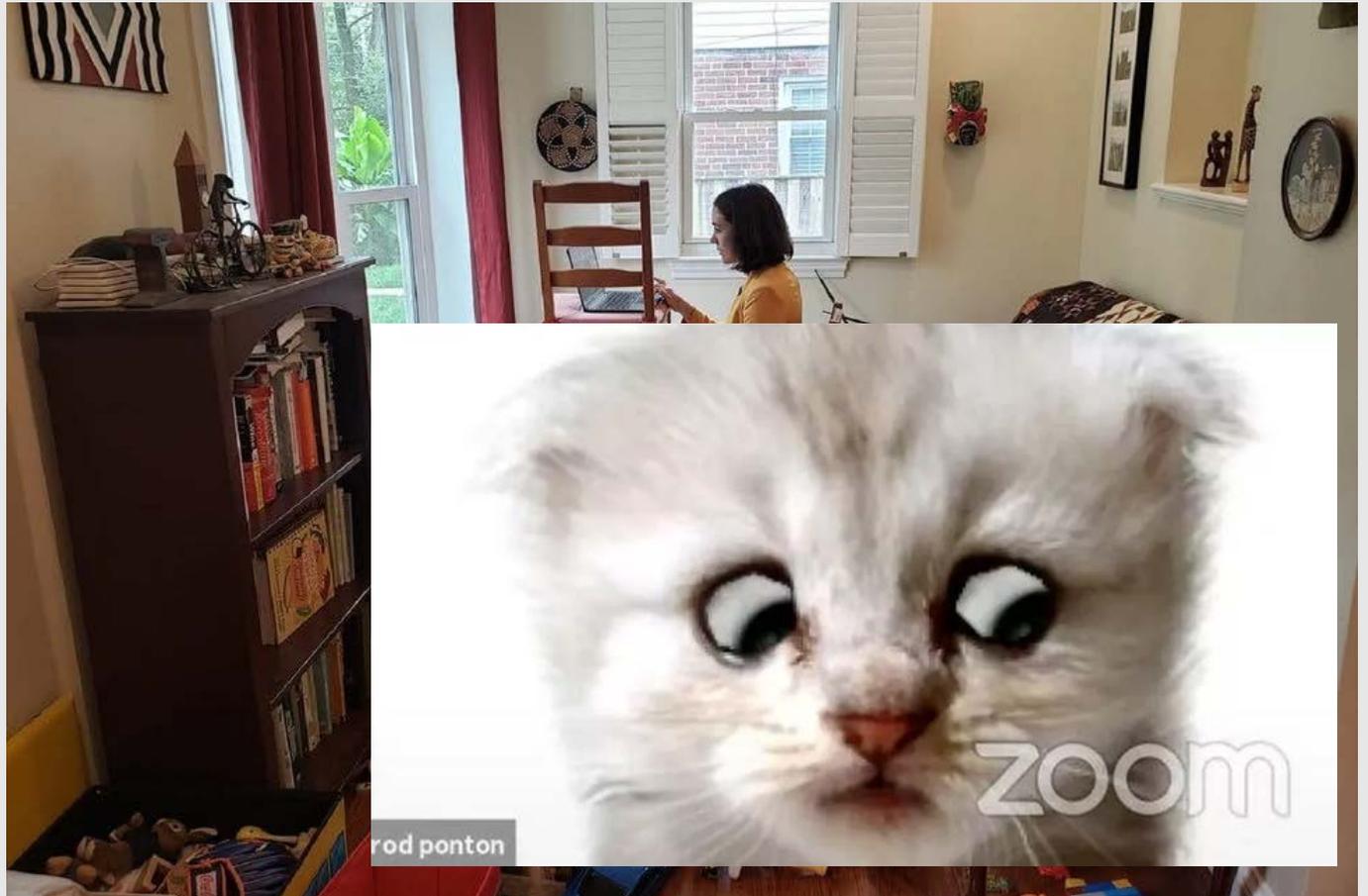

'Hugely enjoyable... It reads like a novel, a fantasy tale of rags to riches that happens to be true' SUNDAY TIMES

THE

NEW NEW

THING

A SILICON VALLEY STORY

MICHAEL LEWIS

the bestselling author of Liar's Poker and The Big Short

But note context matters, as well

Landers & Marin (2021) Theory and Tech

◦Shouldn't look at tech as just unitary thing

◦Tech is designed for a purpose
- ◦We need to think about function, how used
- ◦How does tech help accomplish goals?

◦Affordance perspective
- ◦What does the technology help us to do
- ◦Helps to future-proof advice, not tied to particular piece of tech

So what does the technology help us to do?

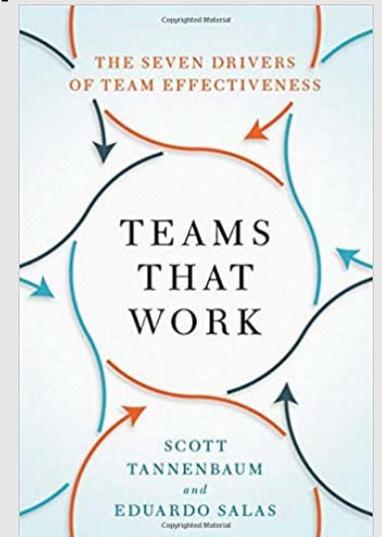So what are we actually trying to accomplish as a leader?

So what do leaders actually do?

◦Leadership- influencing what others do and think to help accomplish goals (Yukl, 2013, paraphrased)
  ◦ Goal choice/focus
  ◦ Sensemaking
  ◦ Motivation of followers
  ◦ Organization of work
  ◦ Development and learning of followers

◦Tech tools can help leaders to accomplish these things, but need to consider what the tool actually helps

Task Communication Important

◦ Research finds task direction crucial for virtual teams

◦ Might think people can work on own, but can miss informal information or needed elaboration

◦ So communication can't be just trying to get personal connection, task directions matter

◦ Make sure to communicate such info and create environment comfortable to ask

Tech to Help Sensemaking

◦ Leaders help followers to understand what is going on

◦ Sensemaking- how interpret events and information

  ◦ What attitude/opinion to have and what actions to take

◦ Tech major way of doing so, especially during COVID-19

◦ But email is not often enough

◦ How did you communicate needed

information and sensemaking during COVID-19?

What are some things you want to do better as a virtual leader?

Questions?

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