

Fit work to people – What policy instruments work in occupational health and safety?

**PUBLIC AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH
SEMINAR SERIES**

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Challenges for contemporary occupational health and safety policy

- Limits for command-control enforcement
 - Fast social and technological development
 - Unambiguous standards difficult
 - Complex control measures
 - Limited resources for enforcement
- A more complex working environment
 - Safety concerned with not only machine guards but complex interaction between technology, organisation and humans
 - Chemical risks moves towards exposures to many chemical at low levels
 - Physiological and psychosocial risks derive from complex interactions between physiological and psychosocial strain, work organisation and individual factors

Searching for answers

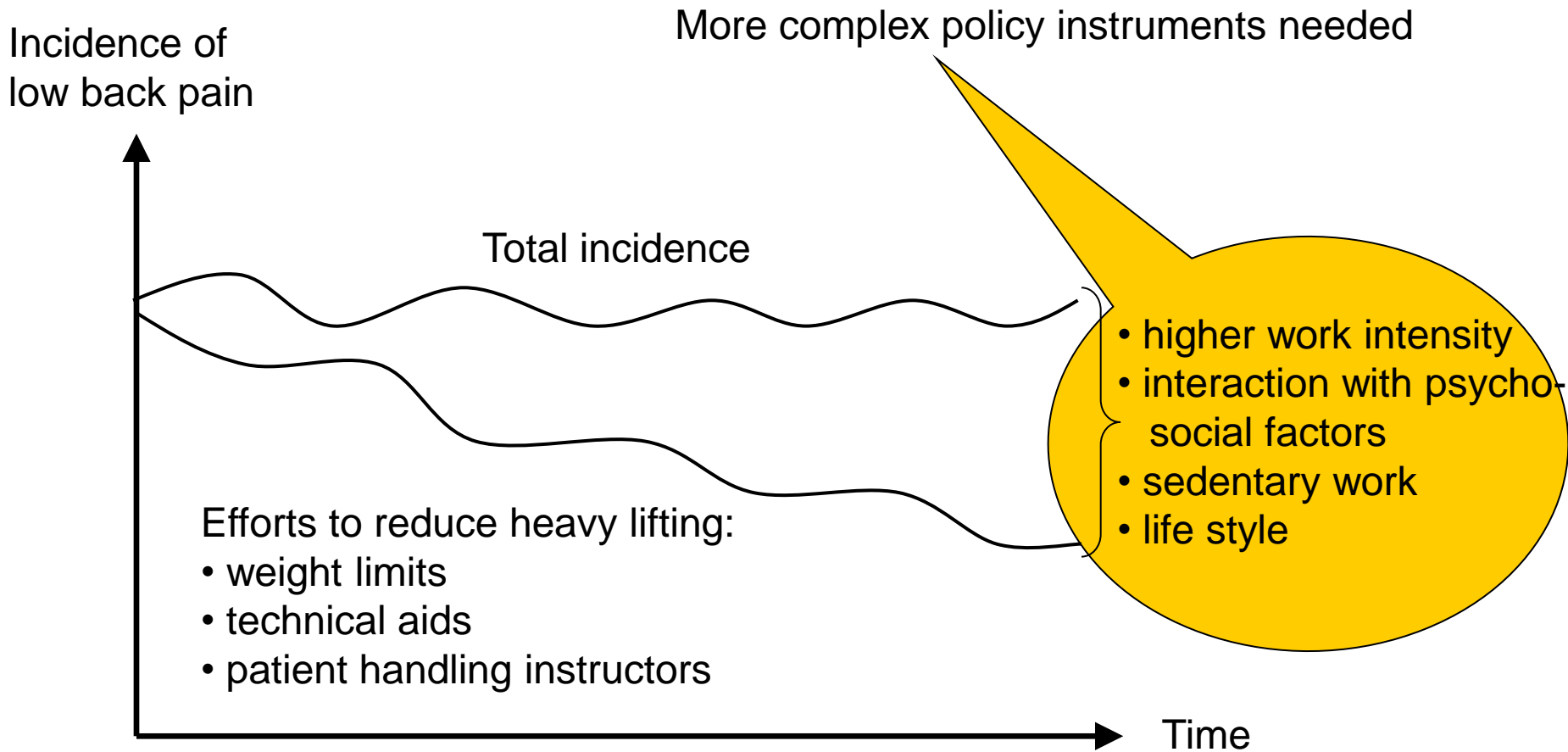
Reflexive regulation

- Introduced by the Roben's report in 70ties in most European countries
- From content to proces standards – OHS management, risk assessment, OHS representatives
- Too much proces considered bureaucratic
- Difficult to prove effect
- Low-hanging fruits are harvested

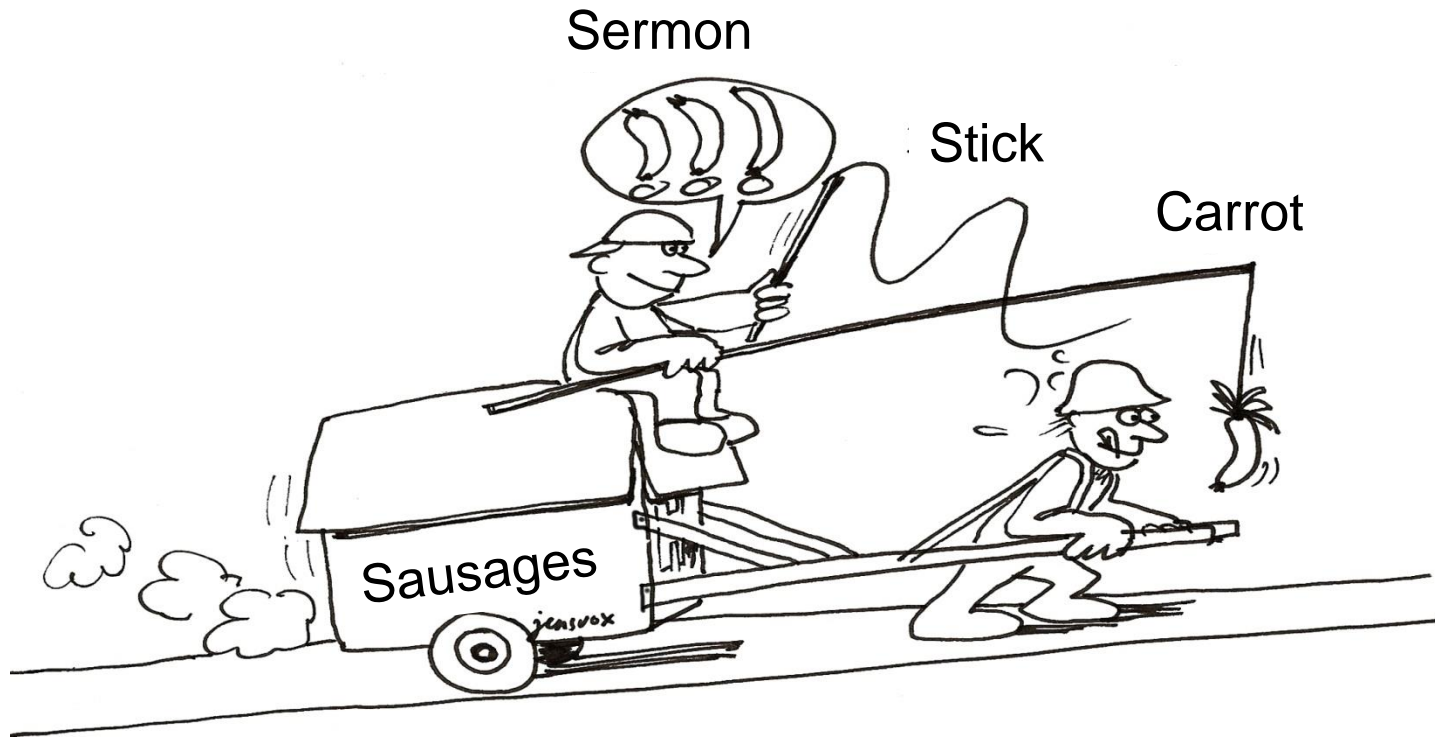
A need to develop new strategies

- Without throwing the baby out with the bath water
- Enforcement, command-control and reflexive regulation still needed

An example: From heavy lifting to complex interactions



A typology of policy instruments



Vedung, 1998

Policy instruments

Regulation (stick):

- Government laws, enforcement and punishment

Incentives (carrot):

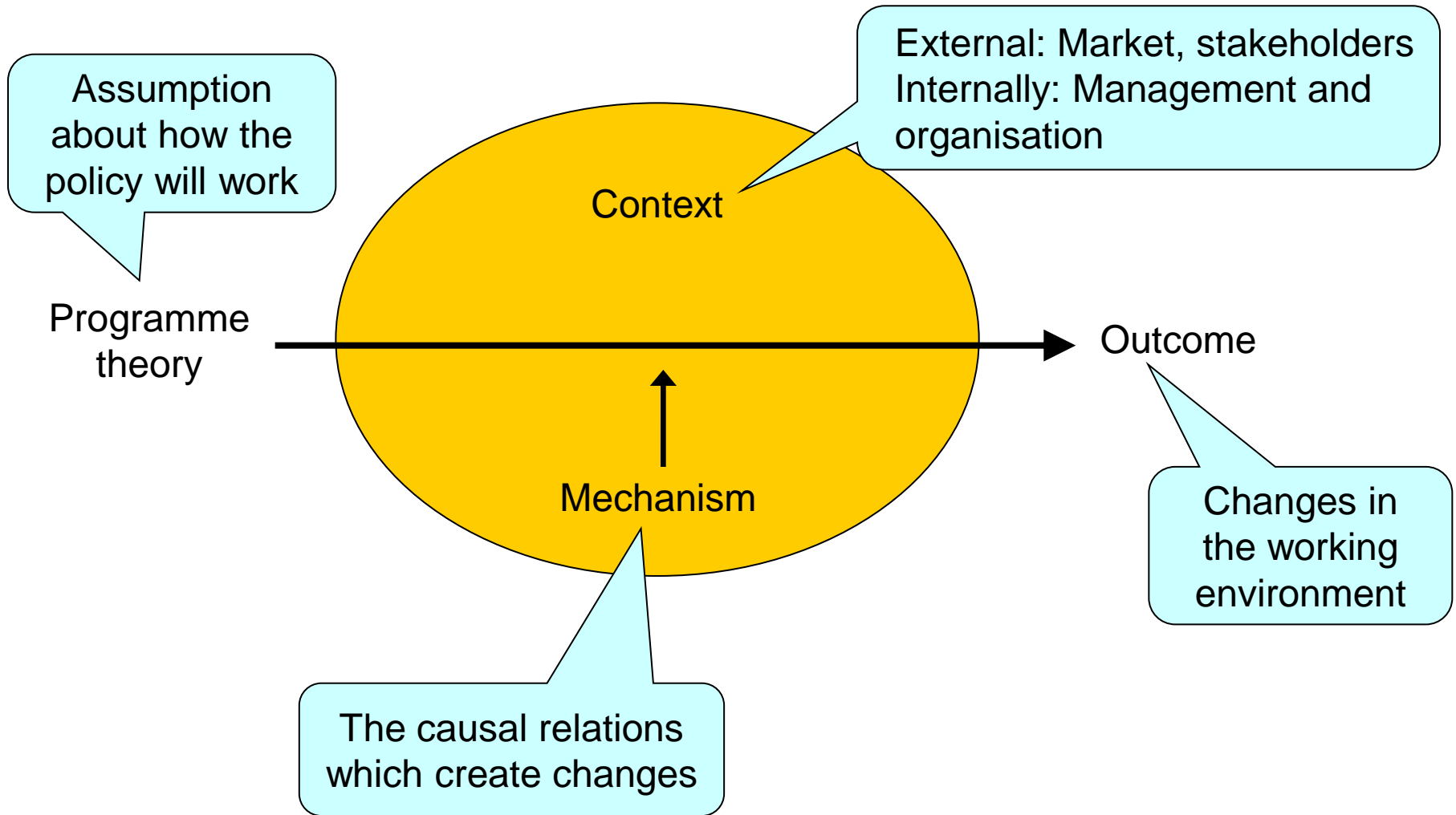
- Reduced insurance fees, certification releases from inspections, branding

Information (Sermon):

- Training, dissemination of information

Most policy programmes include elements of all instruments

Realistic evaluation – a possibility to learn how policy programmes work



Important characteristics for policy programmes

- Based on theory
- Programmes are actively transformed by stakeholders
- Long causal chains where links have consequences for outcome
- Mechanisms are not linear and have numerous feed back loops
- Mechanisms are embedded in several partly overlapping social systems
- Programmes are opens systems changing the conditions they meet

Conclusion:

- Programmes are complex which make them difficult to study

Pawson, 2006

Complexity of mechanisms in policy programmes

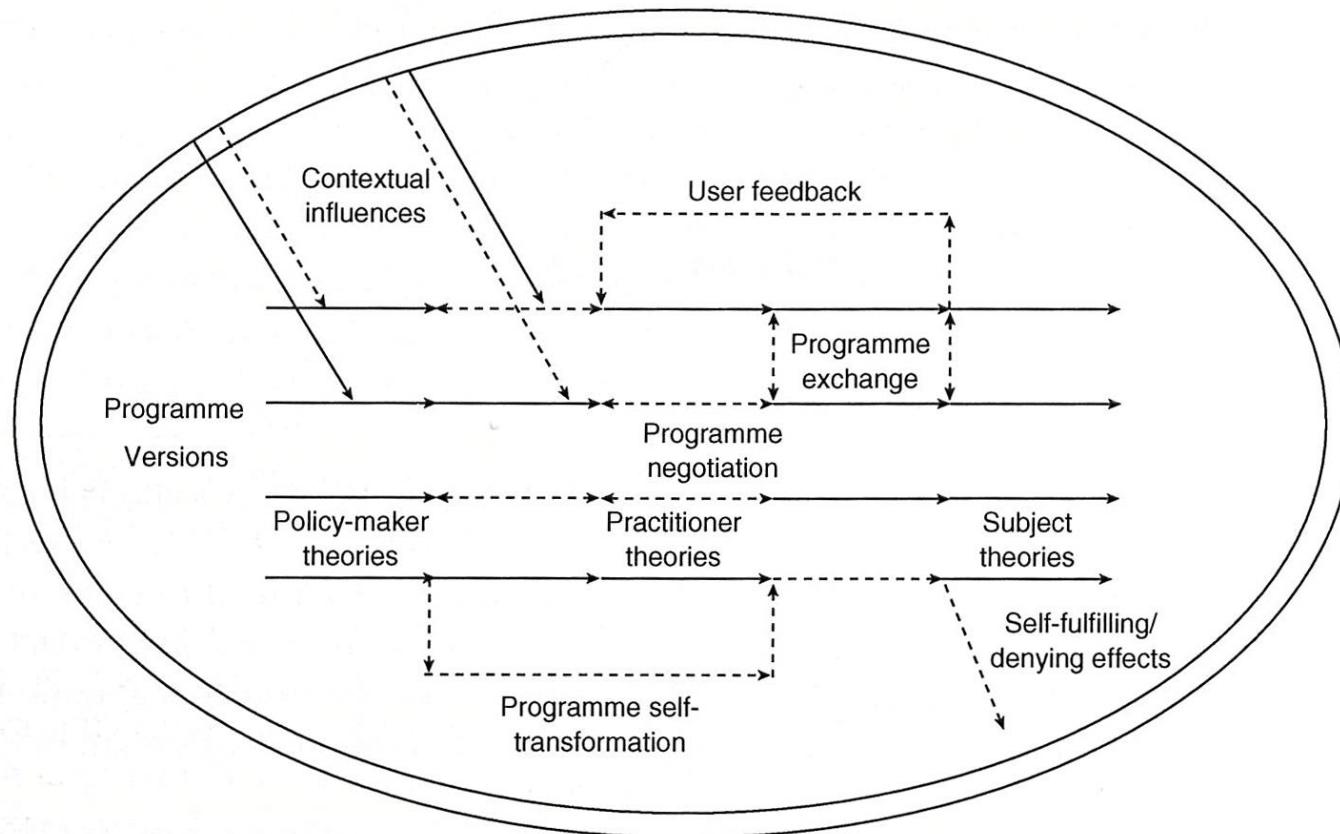


FIGURE 2.7 Programme complexity

Pawson, 2006

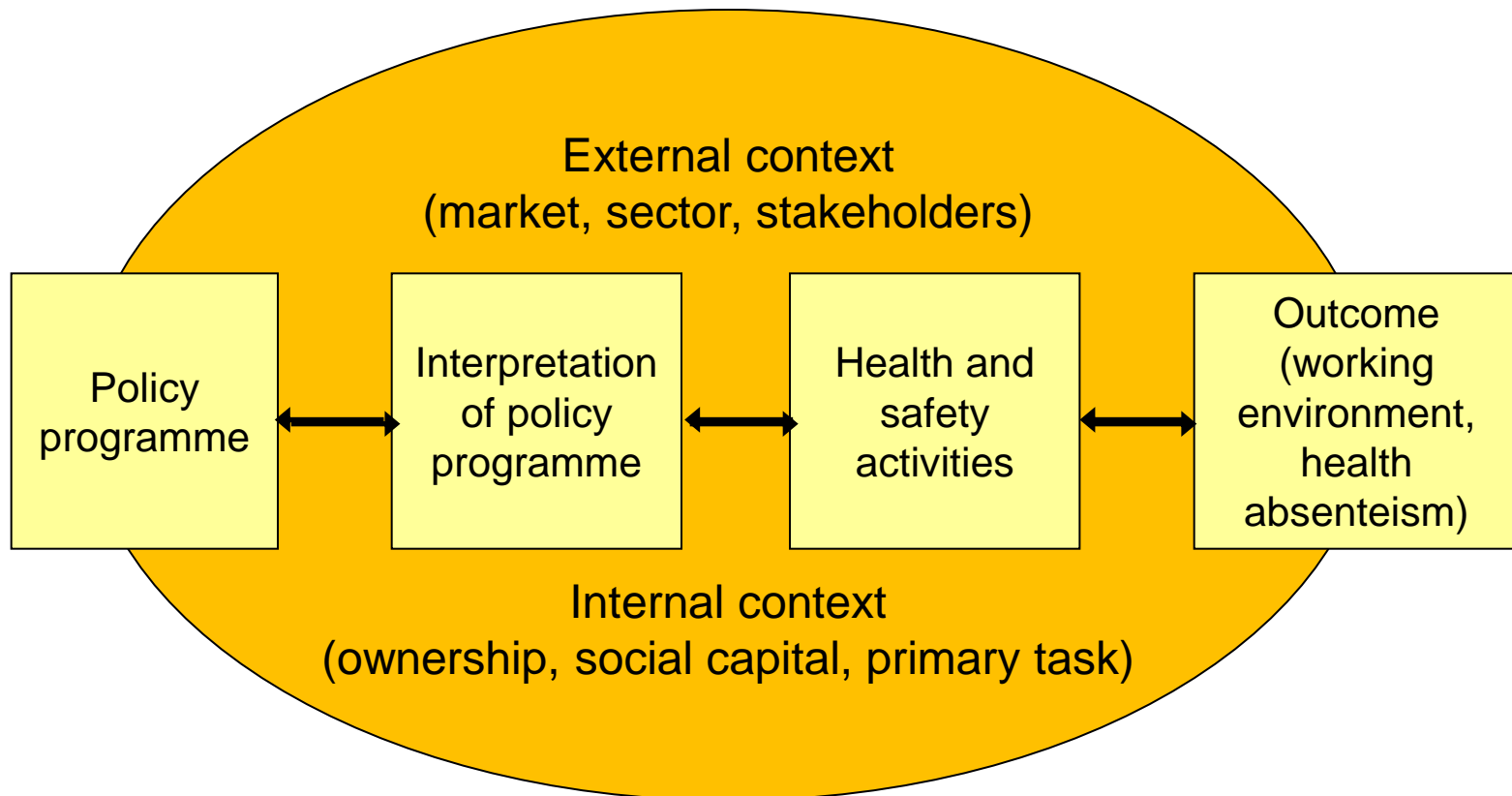
The bio-medical paradigm dominate research in policy instruments

- Randomized control trials the golden standard
- Systematic Cochrane reviews where only randomization or similar methods count
- Useful and necessary for many kinds of research – in particular in development of medicine
- Policy programmes and many organisational interventions in companies cannot be randomized
- Research in such programmes would therefore be classified as insufficient and therefore rejected in reviews

The need for evidence about policy instruments

- Evidence about policy instruments constitute the best available knowledge at any given time
- Recognition of social interventions complexity and non-linear causal relations
- Rephrase the question
 - From: whether it works?
 - To: why, how, when and for whom it works?
- A data collection strategy building on multiple methods and both quantitative and qualitative data
- An analytical strategy where conclusions like a puzzle are build on many pieces which fit together (or the opposite)

An analytical model for health and safety policy programmes

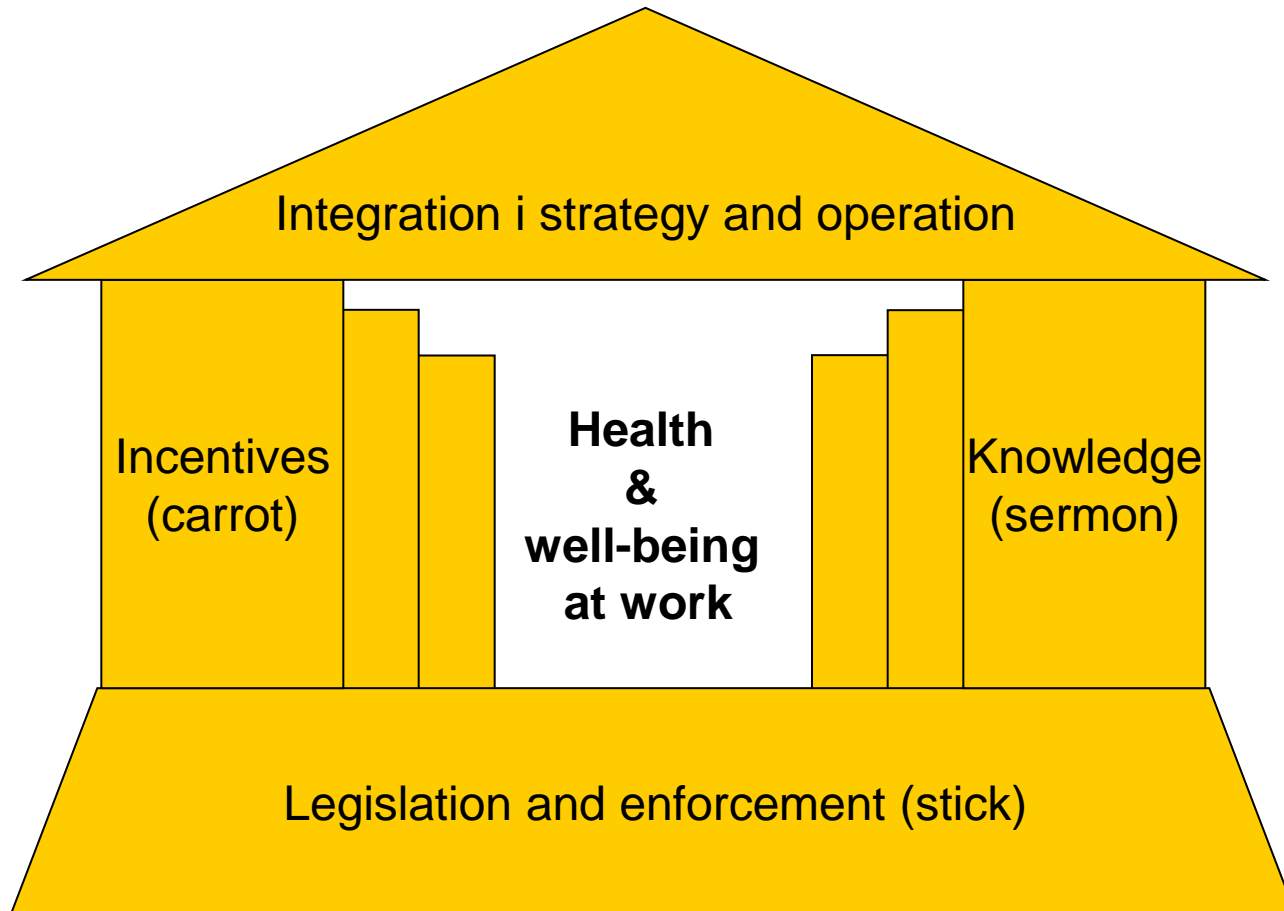


Implications for the strategy for effective OHSpolicy programmes

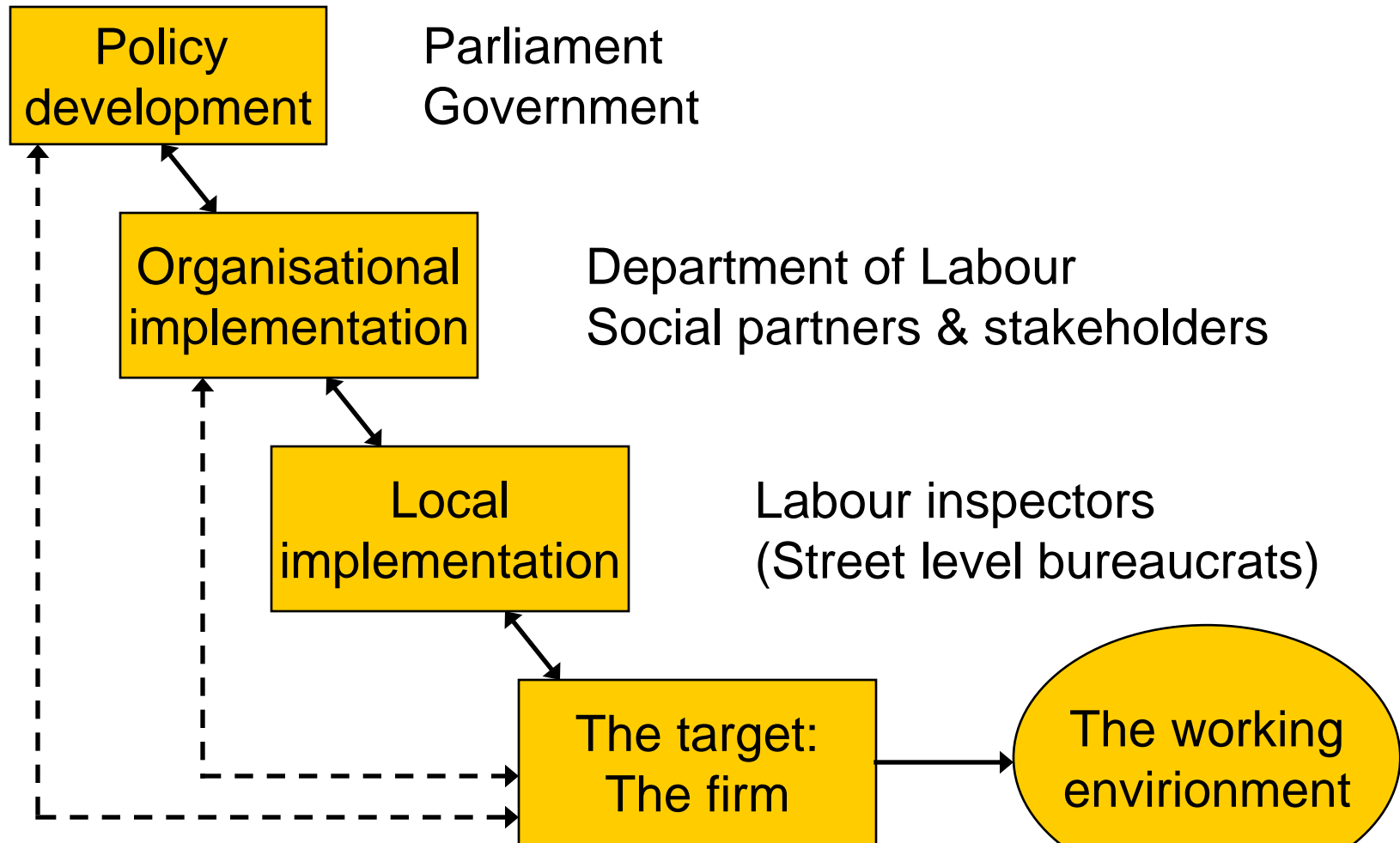
An effective policy programme must build on

- A multi-pronged effort with combination of several instruments
- Elements of both stick, carrot and sermon
- Sensemaking in firms requires integration in firm strategy and operation
- A certain level of patience

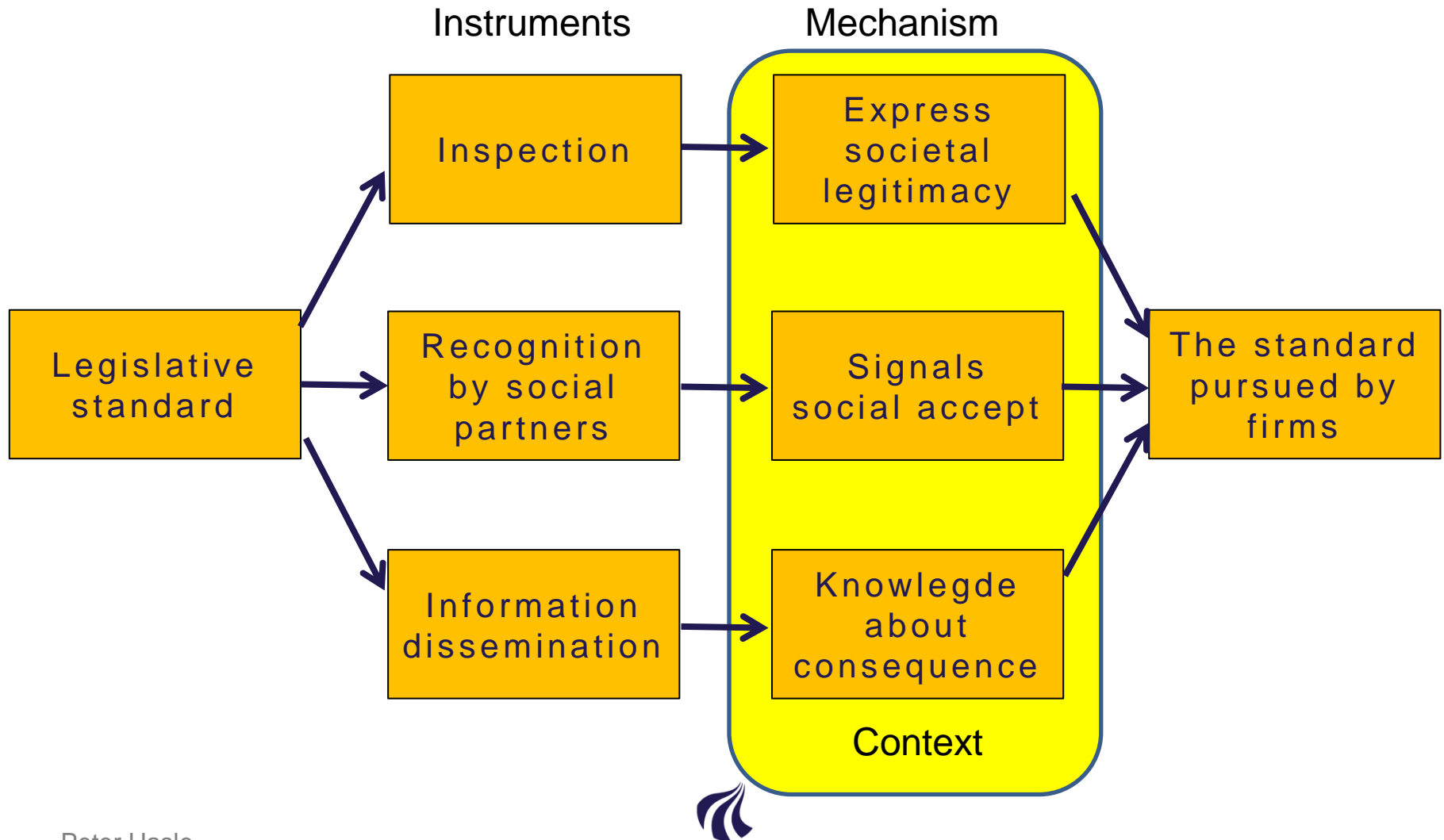
A holistic strategy for occupational health and safety policies



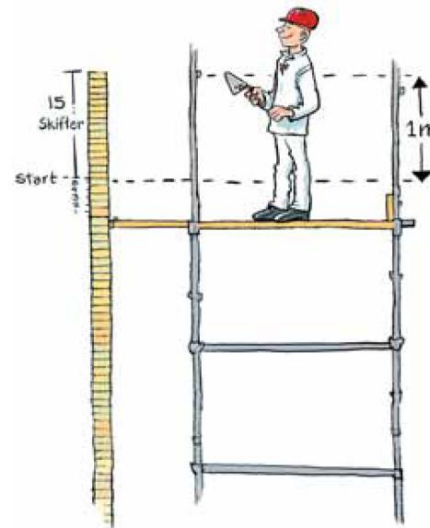
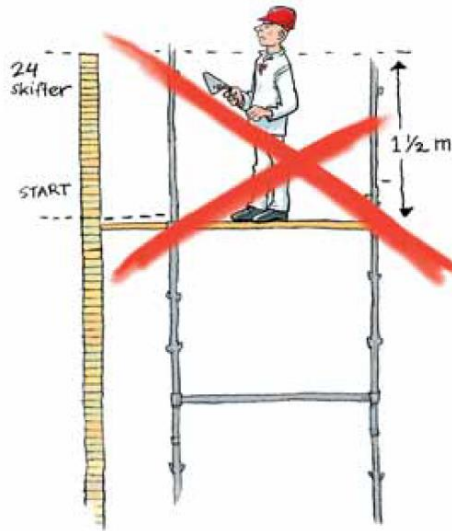
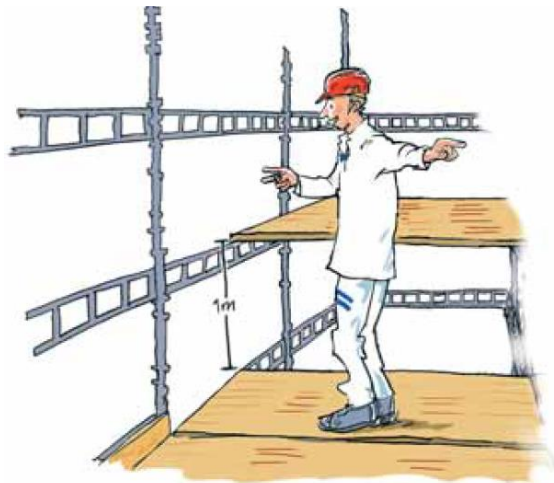
Implementation of policy programmes



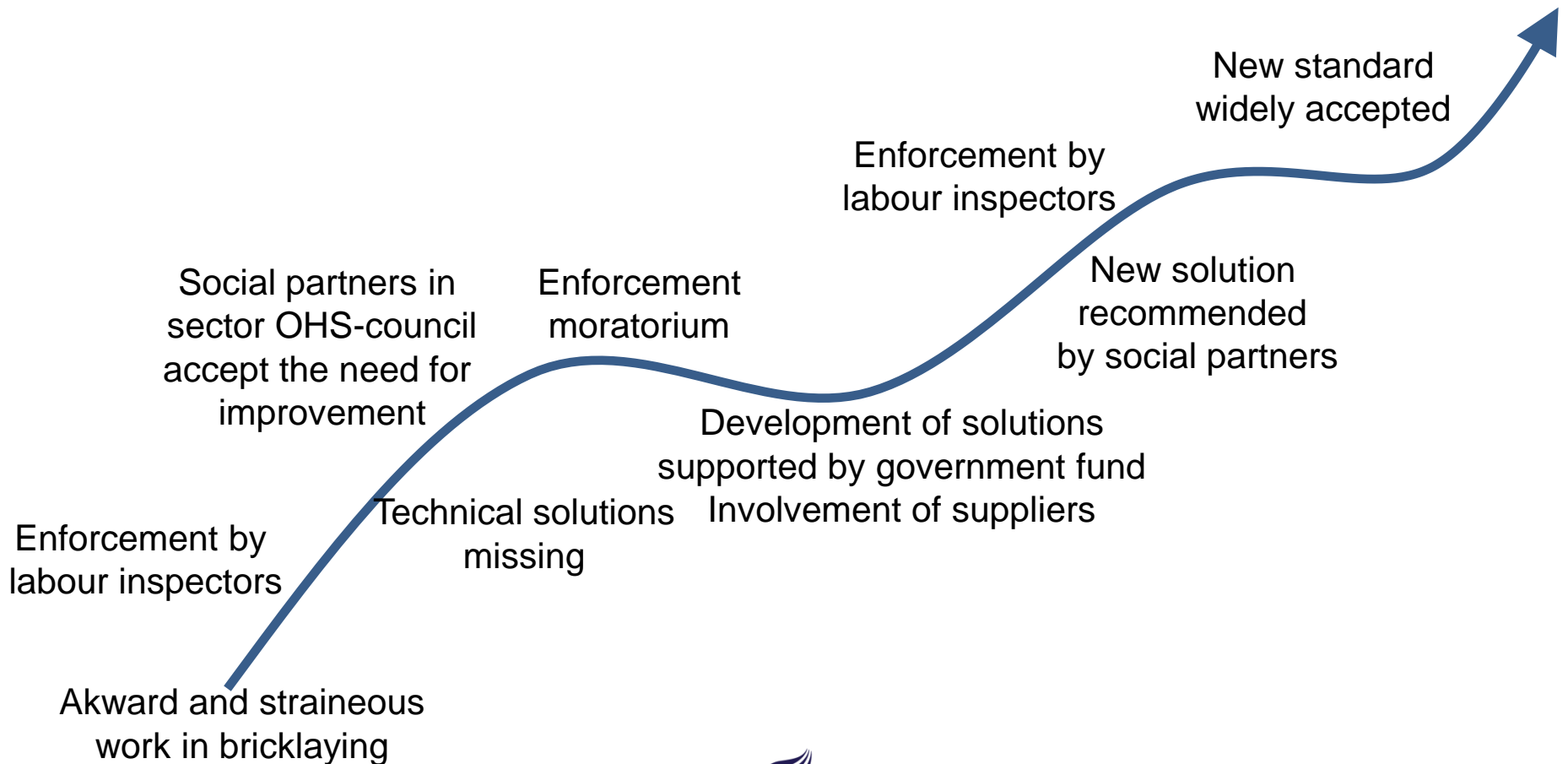
How to implement an occupational health and safety standard



Developing a new standard for bricklaying



The road to a new standard for bricklaying



The policy instruments and mechanisms in the bricklaying case

A combination of policy instruments

Regulation (stick):

- Improvement notices from labour inspectors
- Enforcement moratorium
- Improvement notices based on the new solutions

Incentive (carrot):

- Government fund support development of new technical solution

Knowledge (sermon):

- A code of practice with info on technical aids and work methods
- Disseminated through several platforms by all involved stakeholders

Mechanisms

Coercion:

- Initial improvement notices
- Renewed enforcement after solution developed

Norms:

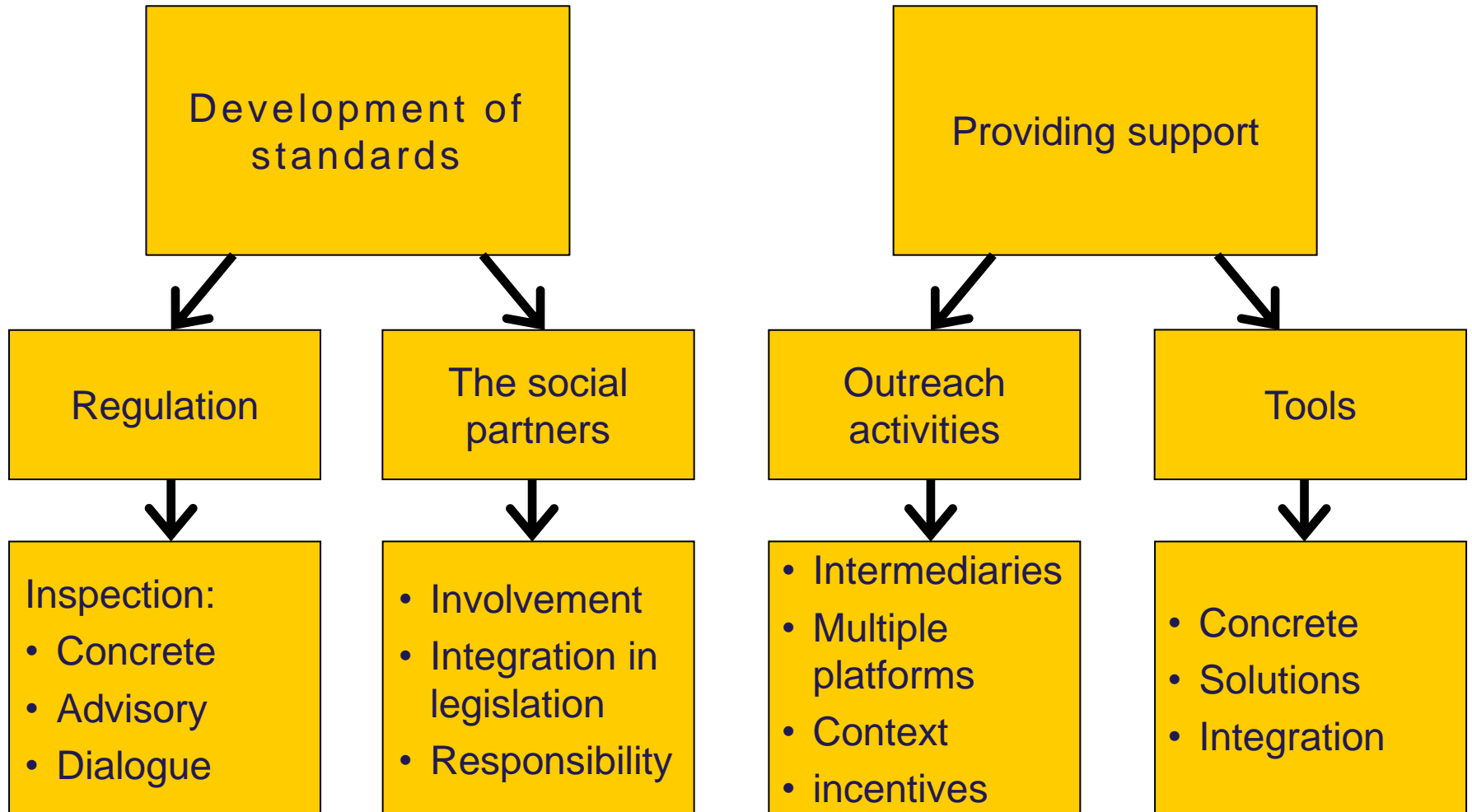
- Joint message from employers and unions signals that the new solution is both ethical responsible and economically viable

Imitation:

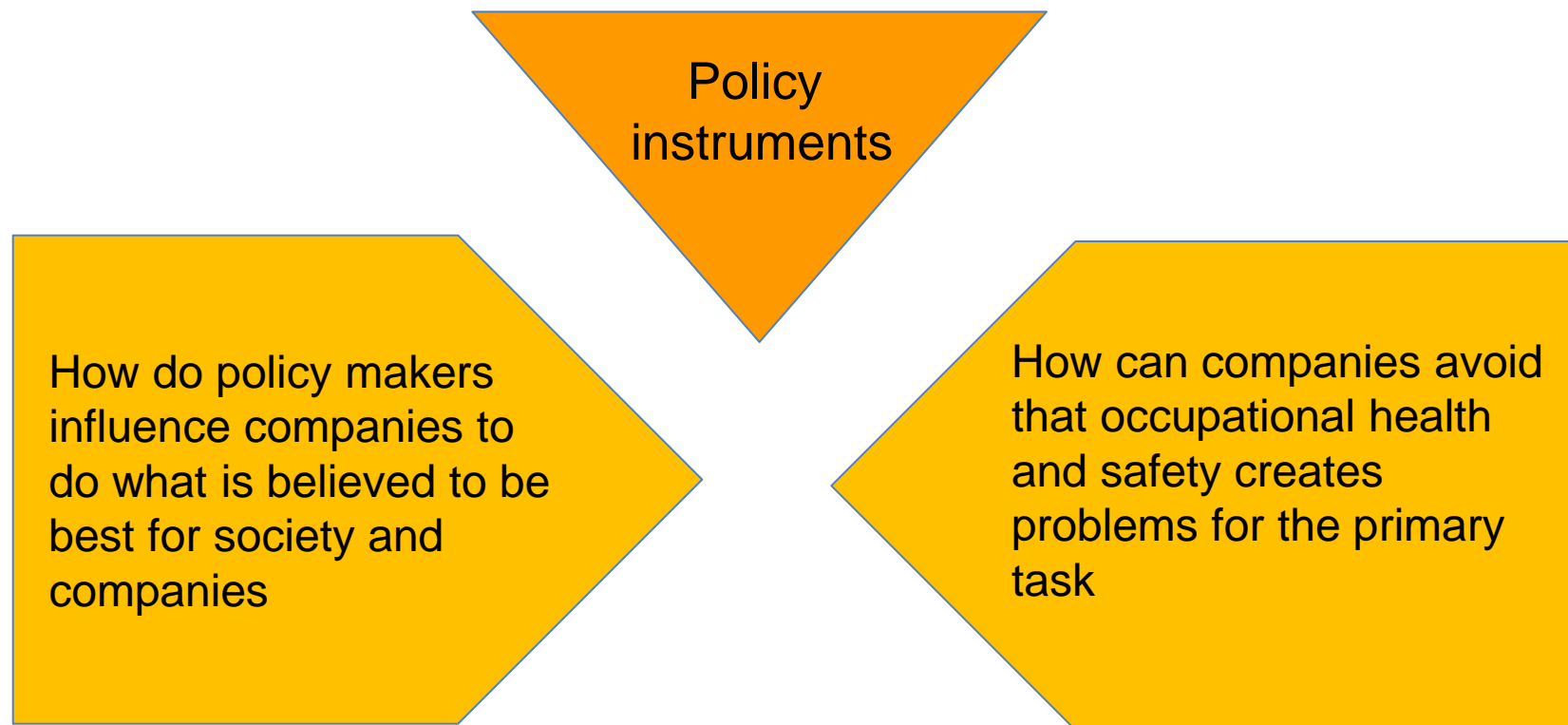
- Owner-managers and bricklayers observe still more cases with the new solutions being applied and get convinced that it is the way to do bricklaying in the sector



Establishing an effective system



Looking from outside – looking from inside



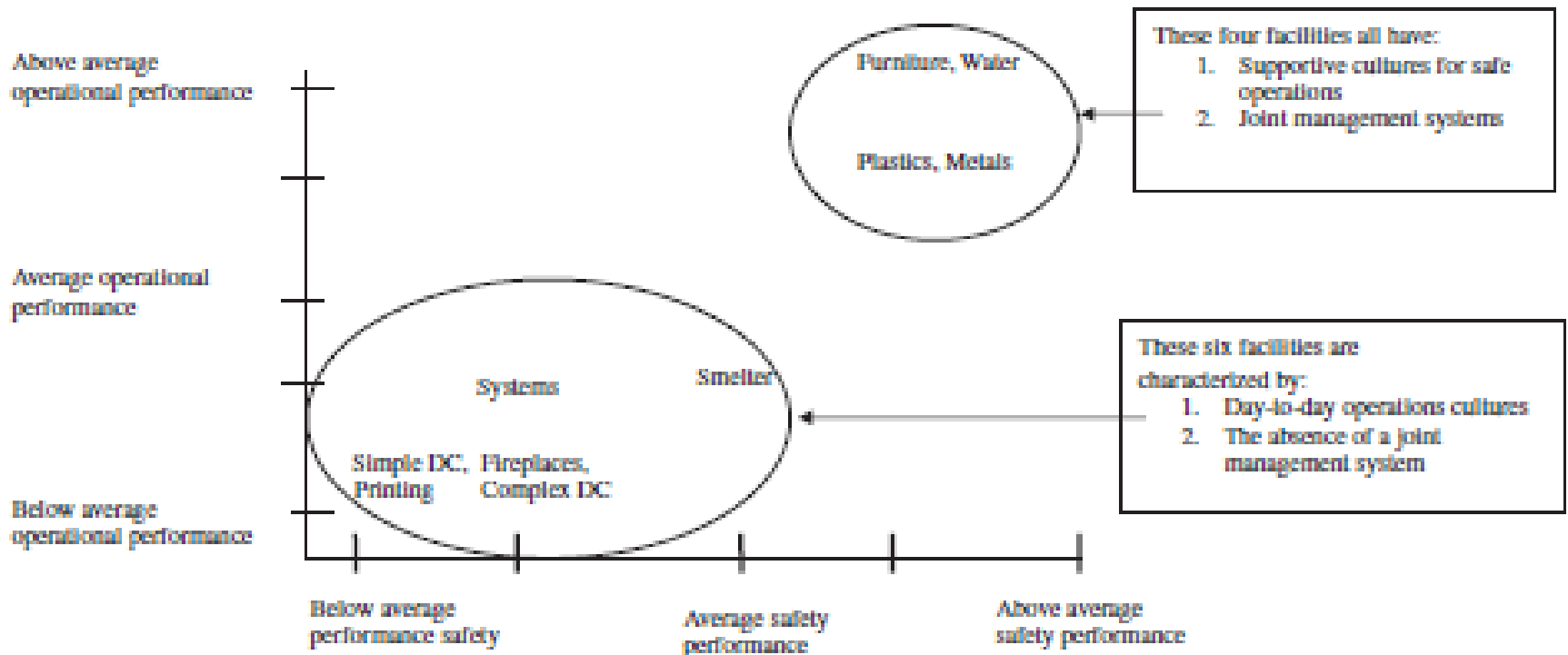
The weak link: Integration in strategy and operation

- Traditionally of low priority for policy makers
- Each ministry and department has its own silo

From industry perspective:

- Every organisation created in order to execute a primary task
- Occupational health and safety just a peripheral issue which mostly is considered as hassle
- OHS placed in a sidecar
- Key question: what can health and safety efforts offer which contributes to our primary task?

Integration of safety and operation



Veltri et al., Safety Science, 2013

Collaboration about the primary task

- a joint focal point for performance and the working environment

- Employers have an interest in performance which is secured through the execution of the primary task
- Employees have an interest in a meaningful work which is also secured through the primary task
- The primary task is the foundation for organisational social capital:
 - The ability of management and employees to collaborate about solution of joint tasks
- A need to develop OHS programmes which contribute to execution of the primary task and to improved collaboration

Special needs for small businesses

- Higher risks and few resources (time, attention and money)
- Dominated by owner-managers fight for survival
- Expensive to reach

Development of small business programmes:

- Practical
- Positive
- Personal contact
- Integrate business goals
- Use trusted intermediaries



Thanks for your attention
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