



The four models of forward-looking management, with Julian Birkinshaw

*Our ignorance can be divided into problems, and mysteries -
Noam Chomsky*



BIRKINSHAW'S FOUR MODELS OF MANAGEMENT

Management in the twenty-first century is all about reckoning with radical new problems: from tech and deglobalisation to climate and sustainability. These new forces are unpredictable, exciting, and create huge opportunities – but only for those firms that can adapt to this new, no-size-fits-all reality.

Professor Julian Birkinshaw, author of Reinventing Management and Fast/Forward, argues that the key to success today is matching the right management style to the problem a firm is trying to solve.

	LOOSE MEANS	TIGHT MEANS
LOOSE ENDS	<p>“DISCOVERY”</p> <p><i>Let's change the world for the better, even if we don't know how yet</i></p> <p><i>Example: the next moonshot tech start-ups in energy or food (and we don't know who they are yet either!)</i></p>	<p>“SCIENCE”</p> <p><i>We replicate consistent strategies to explore unknown problems</i></p> <p><i>Example: global sustainability consultants like Arup</i></p>
TIGHT ENDS	<p>“QUEST”</p> <p><i>We all know the goal, and we trust you to get there – whatever it takes</i></p> <p><i>Example: Disruptive scale-ups like Tesla or Extinction Rebellion</i></p>	<p>“PLANNING”</p> <p><i>Top-down bureaucracy can still get consistent, targeted results</i></p> <p><i>Example: low-cost solar panel manufacturers like Jinko Solar</i></p>

You can find out more about Professor Birkinshaw, including his book *Reinventing Management* [here](#).

To dig further into the future of management in the climate age, listen to Professor Julian Birkinshaw's full *Conversations on Climate* episode [here](#).