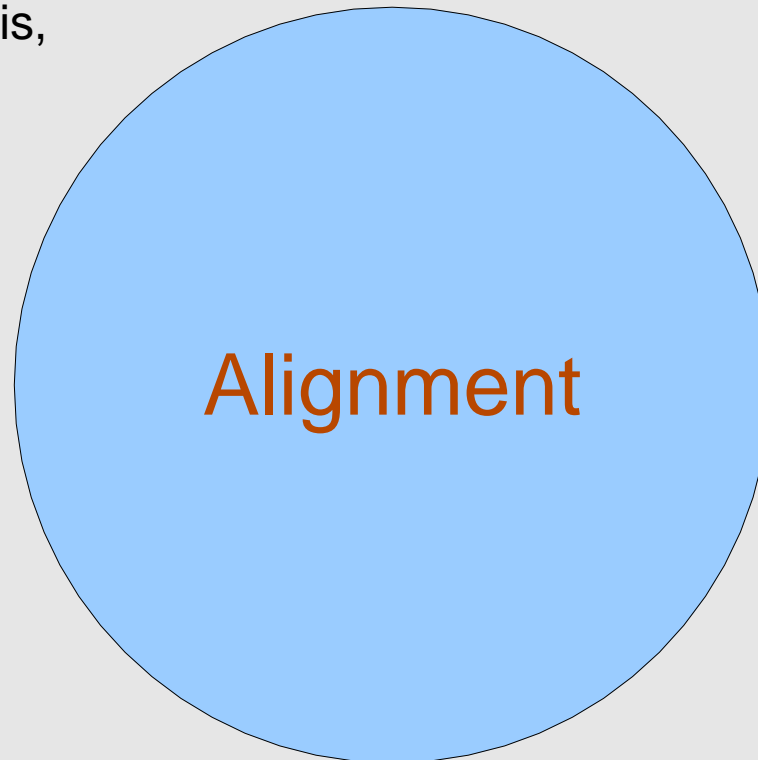


**Objective:**

Develop a theory of what is,  
not what should be



No a priori hypotheses.  
That is,  
**Grounded Theory**

**Participants:**

Both business & IT managers.  
All levels of hierarchy.  
Not a representative sample.

**Focus Groups**  
These then informed  
**Individual Interviews**

Structure of business

Are there business strategies?  
Are they being followed?  
Why not?

Motivation & Measurement

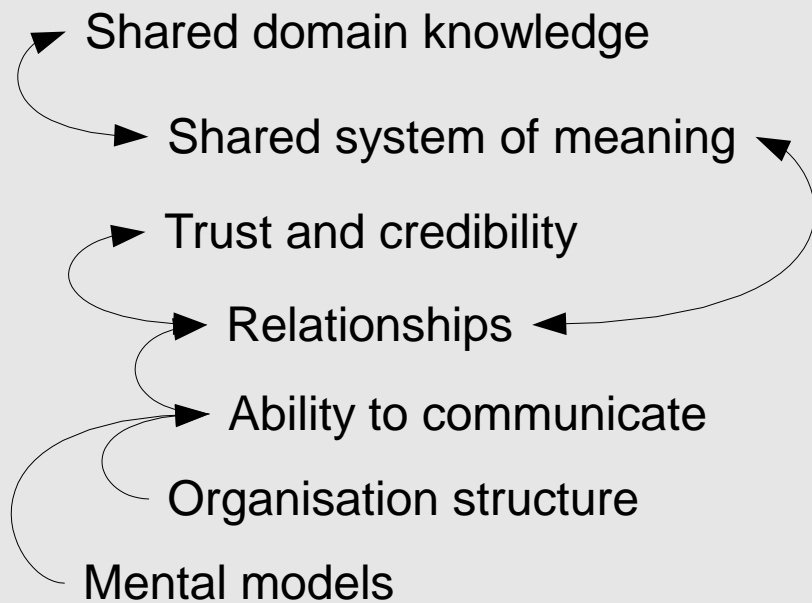
What's the Problem?  
**Strategy Ambiguity!!!**

Resistance to change

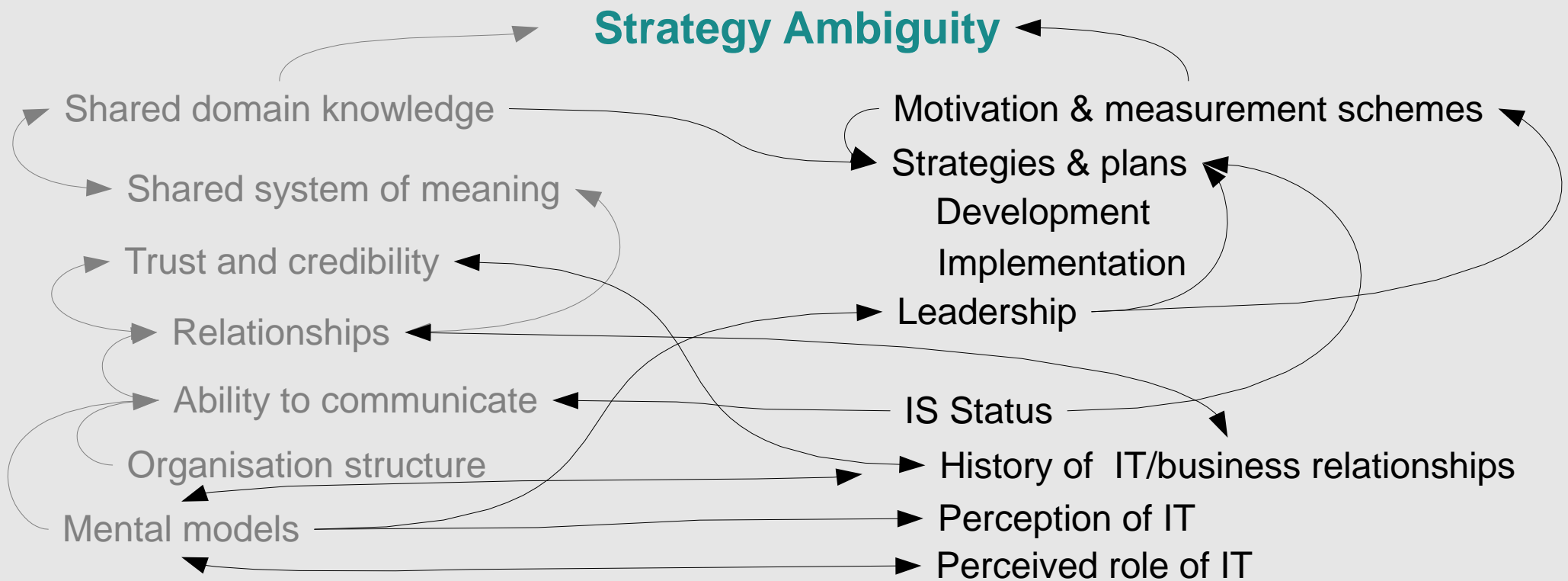
Conceptual complexity of  
many business strategies

# Locus of Comprehension

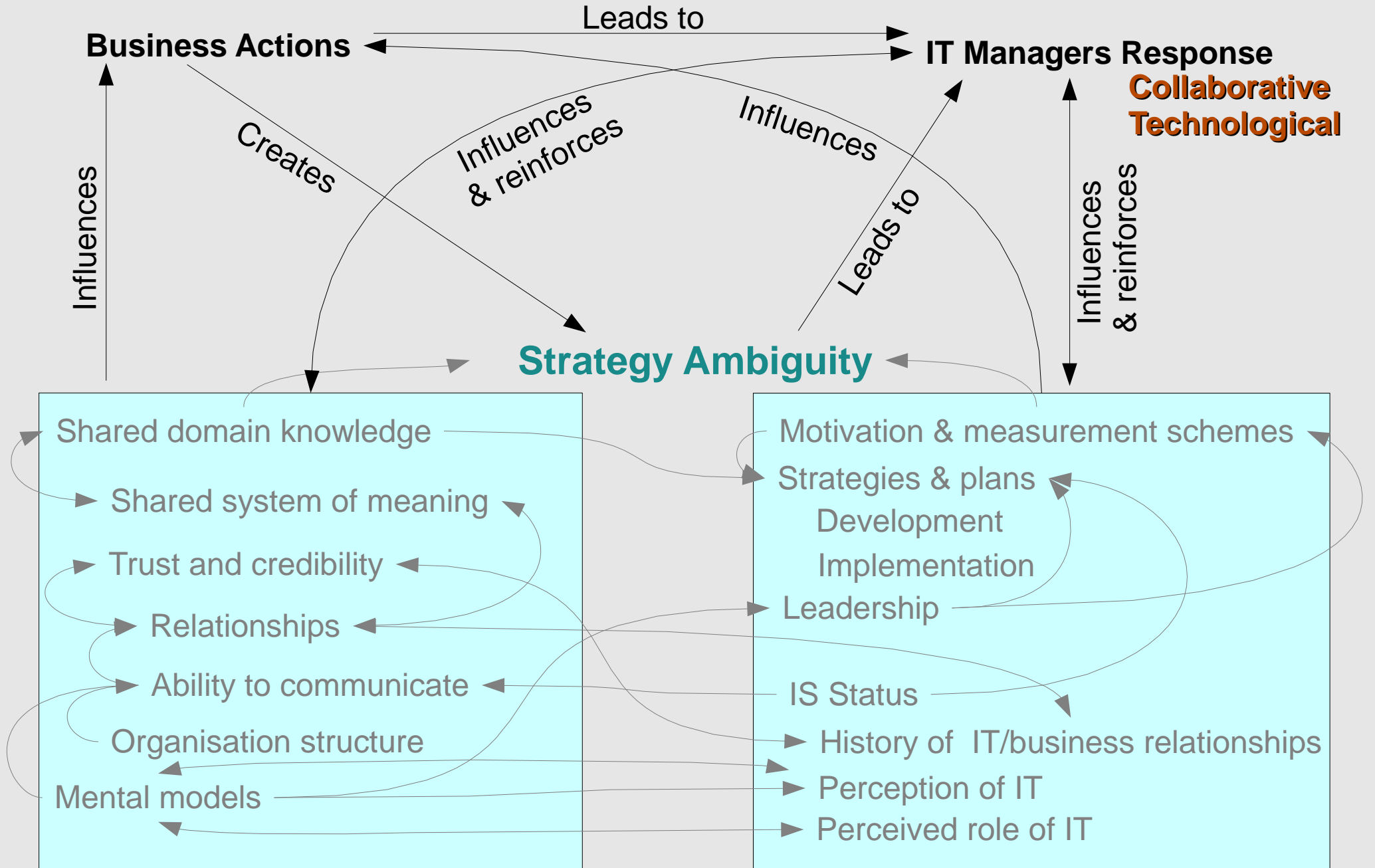
Strategy Ambiguity



# Locus of Control



# The Result...



# Collaborative Response

- IS managers try to form relationships with their business **peers** to:
  - Understand what is going on
  - Gain support and influence
  - Build personal credibility and trust
  - Develop shared domain knowledge
  - Change attitudes towards IS and
  - Allow a collaborative working environment that allows them to support the goals of their business peers

# The Collaborative Response

- Understanding of business issues:
  - Attitude:
  - Emphasis:
  - Alignment:
- High
  - Keep our customers happy
  - Adding business value
  - Horizon & target dependent on the goals of individual business managers and/or business unit

# Some implications...

- In the Collaborative response
  - IT managers follow the lead of their business peers
    - There could be alignment of strategies at executive level
    - There could be alignment of actions at operational level, but
    - There may not be alignment between business strategy & operations
      - Difference between strategies in plans and those being implemented
    - Result could be that IT operations do not support either business or IT **plans**

# Technological Response

- IT managers are often prevented from forming relationships with their business peers
- This is often not their own choice
  - The interaction of the variables within the two locii prevent them from forming relationships.

# The Technological Response

- Understanding of business issues:
  - Attitude:
  - Emphasis:
  - Alignment:
- Low
  - Do what I'm told
  - Reliable low cost service
  - What alignment?

# Any Questions??

- There are a lot of implications of this research not discussed here
- It shows why alignment has been, and is likely to remain, an intractable problem
- It shows that alignment is an issue for all managers, not just the executive as has been implied in most prior alignment research
- There are two aspects to strategic alignment: strategy development **and** implementation. Most alignment research ignores the latter.
- Any improvement is likely to require action from groups of managers, not an individual