

Supporting Political Leaders in Becoming Bold Transport Reformers

Mount Transport Reform

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Transport Reform Mountains

- Increasing congestion
- **Climate change**
- Technological transformation
- **Infrastructure Costs**
- Subsidy Dependence

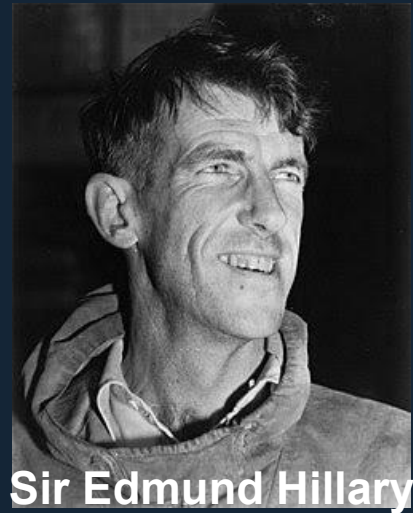
These are big mountains.

How are we going to climb them?



Our Mountaineers (Political Leaders)

- Some are highly skilled, experienced and motivated
- Good international (and local) examples
- Most are not



Sir Edmund Hillary



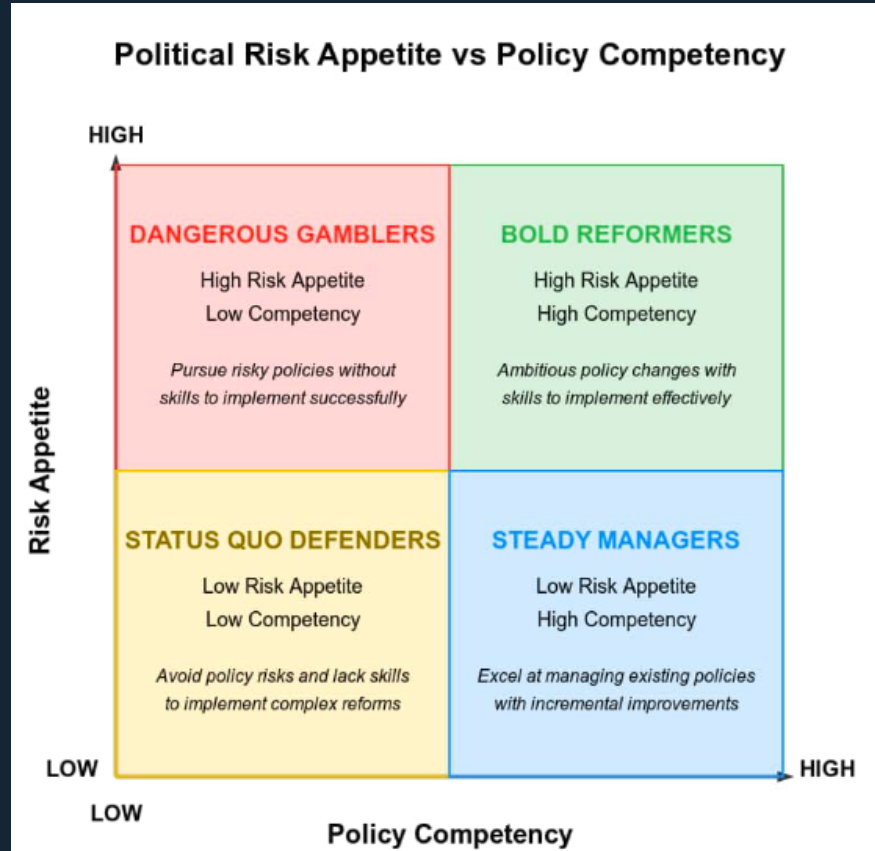
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Mountaineer Characteristics

- Interested in reform mountains but not transport ones
- **No understanding of transport policy**
- Default to build more roads
- **Risk averse**
- Inexperienced reformers
- **Transport as a stepping stone**
- Want to do the right thing



Political Mountaineer Skills and Mindset



Headwinds Have Made the Climb More Treacherous

- Social Media and 24 hour news
- Decline of policy journalism
- Access to politicians
- Distrust of experts
- Public expectations
- Complexity



Support Team - The Trainers

- The political advisors
- Potentially invaluable for transport policy and politics of reform
- Lack experience
- Capabilities vary
- No background in transport
- Mindset on reform varies



Upgrading The 'Trainers'

- Every minister should have a highly experienced transport policy expert.
- Role is to advise political leaders on good transport policy AND how they can make the politics work.
- Examples:
 - Walking and cycling commissioner in London
 - Student Loan (HECS reform)



The Sherpas

- Public Servants
- At their best, guide and do a lot of the heavy lifting
- Lost strategic policy-making skills
- Split on key issues such as induced demand
- Leadership has become politicised and short-term
- Capacity decline
- Reactive rather than proactive
- Tendency towards technical advice only



Upgrading the Sherpas

- Public service problems are systemic across jurisdictions and specialisms
- **Non-political leadership**
- Strategic policy making skills
- **Modernise tools**
- Overhaul the new minister induction
- **Provide ministers with the questions to ask**
- Mindset: What is the right policy, how can we take stakeholders with us?



The Experts

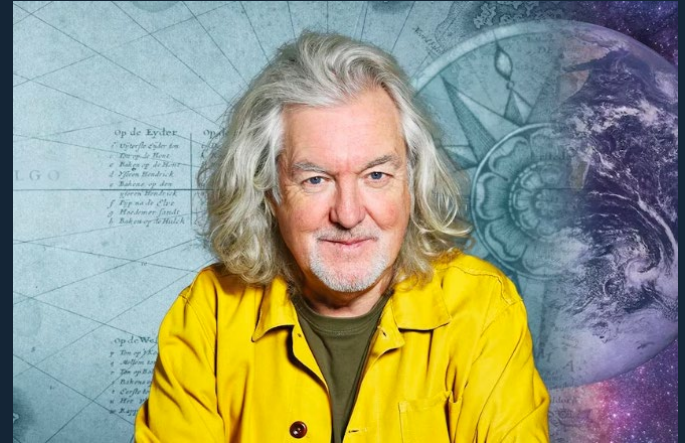
- Lots of knowledge of terrain
- Can help to remove trips and hazards
- Politically inexperienced
- Need to reach out beyond choir
- Use language that outsiders cannot understand
- Can come across as condescending
- Not trusted



Cassandra

Upgrading The Experts

- Use plain language that non-experts can understand
- Understand political risk and how to reduce it
- Reach out beyond natural allies
- Find messengers who resonate with a wider audience
- Develop basic guides and training for new transport ministers



Climbing Mount Transport Reform

- Better support will not guarantee success, but it will improve chances
- **May need to start with large hills rather than full-blown mountains.**
- We can help by progressing the easier-to-implement changes:
 - **Develop guides and training**
 - Policy advisors for political mountaineers
 - **Change our language**
 - Educate the public



Reaching the Peak

- There are political mountaineers who have succeeded.
- **But we cannot wait for these superheroes to come along.**
- Rather than waiting, let's lean in and help the leaders we have to become the bold reformers we need.

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Newsletter and blog: transportlc.org

