

WHY?

GOAL

The centre of an impact map answers the most important question: Why are we doing this? This is the **goal** we are trying to achieve.

The purpose of a goal definition is to allow the delivery organisation and business sponsors to re-evaluate the plan as new information becomes available. For this reason, good goals tend to be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Action-oriented, Realistic and Timely.

Goals should not be about building products or delivering project scope. They should explain why such a thing would be useful.

Goals should present the problem to be solved, not the solution. Avoid design constraints in a goal definition.

Don't worry about nailing it down to a single number. Chris Matts suggests defining a model for business value first, and then defining goals as increments of business value, explaining how the situation should change in the future. This is particularly effective when you have a set of key performance indicators for product performance.

For commercial products and organisations, try to define goals that have an obvious link to money.

WHO?

ACTORS

The first level of an impact map provides answers to the following questions: Whose behaviour do we want to impact? Who can produce the desired effect? Who can obstruct it? Who are the consumers or users of our product? Who will be impacted by it? These are the **actors** who can influence the outcome.

Important actors are those who can significantly influence the success of a project or product milestone, including end-users and internal or external decision-makers. Alistair Cockburn advises looking for three types of actors:

1. Primary actors, whose goals are fulfilled, for example players of a gaming system
2. Secondary actors, who provide services, for example the fraud prevention team
3. Off-stage actors, who have an interest in the behaviours, but are not directly benefiting or providing a service, for example regulators or senior decision-makers

Be specific. Avoid generic terms such as 'users' – different categories of users might have different needs, and not all users of a system might be important to consider for a particular project. Try to define actors in this order: specific individual, user persona, role or job title, group or department.

HOW?

IMPACTS

The second level of an impact map sets the actors in the perspective of our business goal. It answers the following questions: How should our actors' behaviour change? How can they help us to achieve the goal? How can they obstruct or prevent us from succeeding? These are the **impacts** that we're trying to create.

Don't list everything an actor might want to achieve. List only the impacts that really help move you in the right direction towards the central goal.

Impacts are not product features. Avoid listing software ideas here, focus on business activities.

Ideally show a change in actor behaviour, not just the behaviour. Show how the activity is different from what is currently possible. So instead of just 'selling tickets', say 'selling tickets five times faster'.

Consider negative or hindering impacts as well as positive ones.

Important actors can often help or hinder the outcome in many different ways. Once you discover the first impact of an actor, think about what else they could do.

WHAT?

DELIVERABLES

Once we have the first three questions answered, we can talk about scope. The third level of an impact map answers the following question: What can we do, as an organisation or a delivery team, to support the required impacts? These are the **deliverables**, software features and organisational activities.

This is the least important level of an impact map. Don't try to make it complete from the start. Refine it iteratively as you deliver.

Treat deliverables as options, don't take it for granted that everything listed here will actually be delivered.

Don't go into a lot of detail early on, there will be time for that later. List only high-level deliverables. You can break down high-level features into lower-level scope items, such as user stories, spine stories, basic or extension use cases later. These items can become fourth, fifth or sixth level map branches.

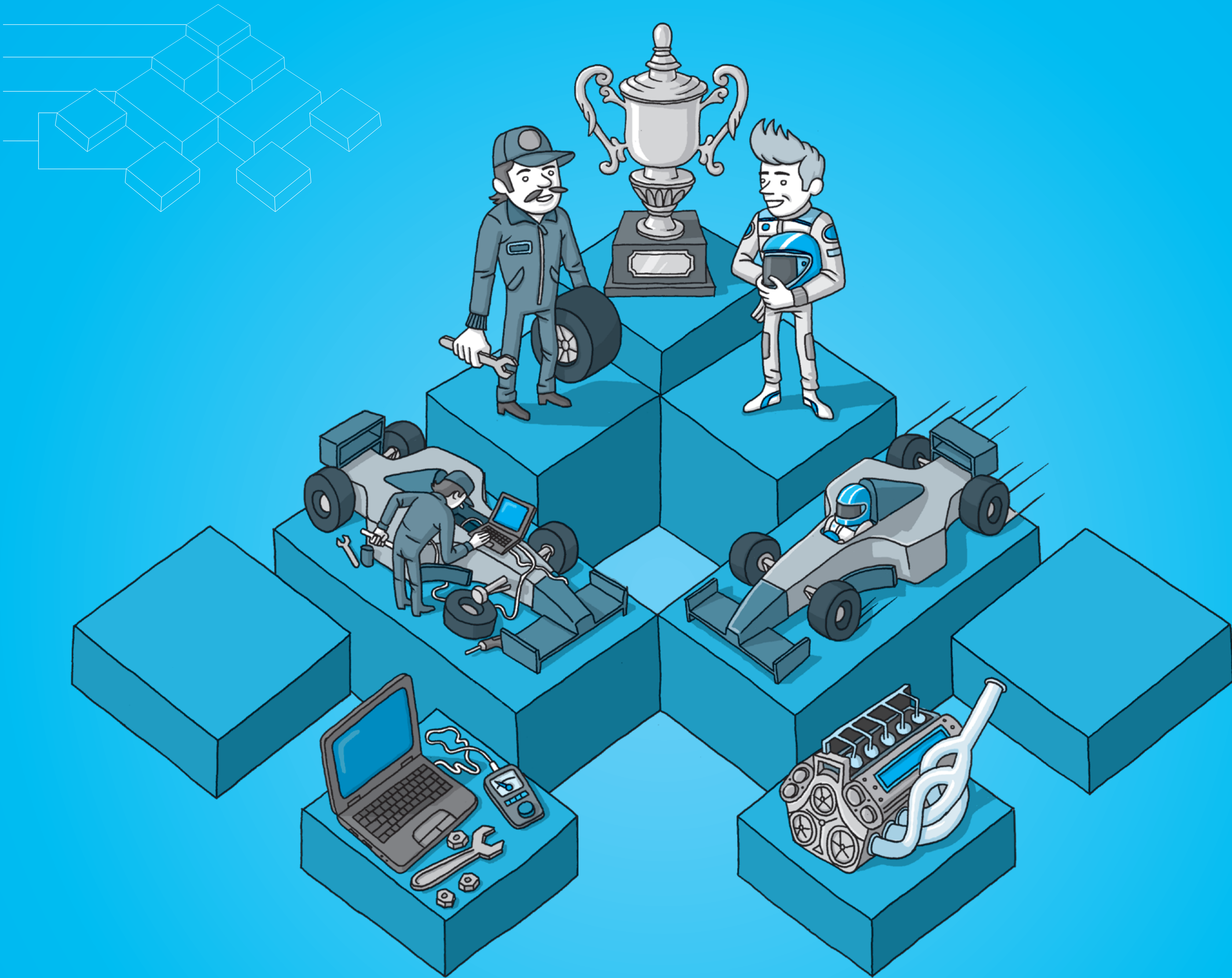
Even on software projects, there are often ways of supporting a business activity without building software – sometimes it is cheaper to pay for advertising to recruit new players than spend months rebuilding a system. Consider anything that helps to achieve an impact.

WHY?

WHO?

HOW?

WHAT?



IMPACT MAPPING

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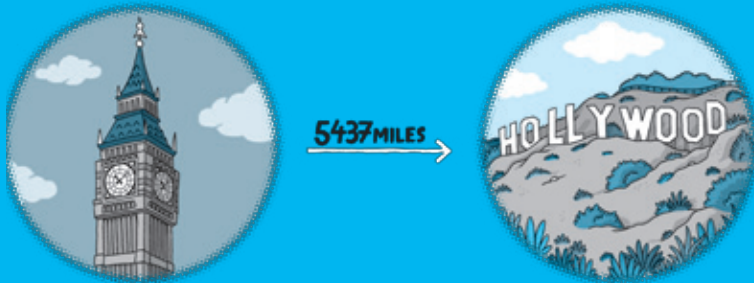
CREATING AN IMPACT MAP

PREPARATION

DISCOVER REAL GOALS



DEFINE GOOD MEASUREMENTS

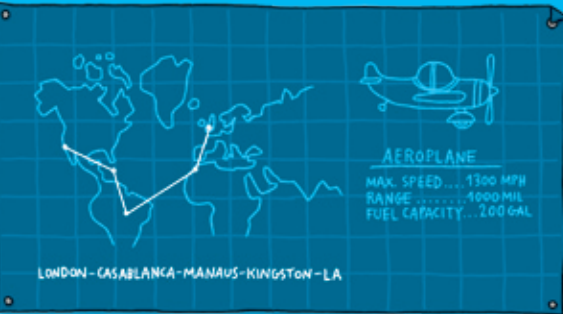


PLAN YOUR FIRST MILESTONE

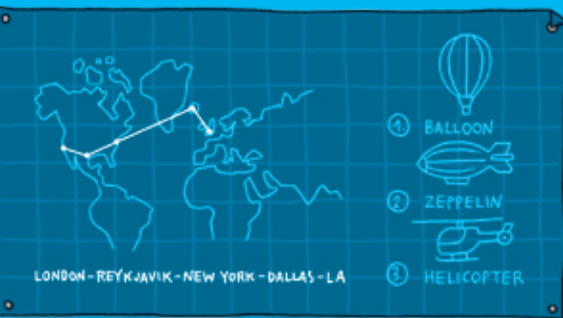


MAPPING

DRAW THE MAP SKELETON



FIND ALTERNATIVES



IDENTIFY KEY PRIORITIES



EARN OR LEARN

