



The Deliberate Practice of **Thinking About Your Systems**



Auckland - April 2025



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About Andrea



Programmer and Creator of Bytesize Architecture Sessions

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- Programming professionally since 2001
 - Co-founded PC & Console Games Company in Ireland
 - Contractor and Consulting since 2018
 - E-Commerce
 - Broadcasting media
 - Finance
 - Recently moved to NZ and working with Atlassian

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You ship what is in your programmers' brains.

.....

Andrea Magnorsky - 2021



**“It’s not the domain experts knowledge
that goes into production, it’s the
assumption of the developers that goes
into production.”**

.....

Alberto Brandolini - 2019*

***or before**

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Knowledge workers are workers whose main capital is knowledge. These are workers whose job is to “*think for a living*”.

Source: [Thinking For A Living: How to Get Better Performance and Results From Knowledge Workers.](#)
Davenport, Thomas H. (2005).

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Knowledge Stock & Flow



**...each pile represents a person's knowledge
and the lines represent sharing**

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“Knowledge transfer among employees is thought to be a crucial determinant of an organisation’s capacity to utilise new knowledge and innovate.”

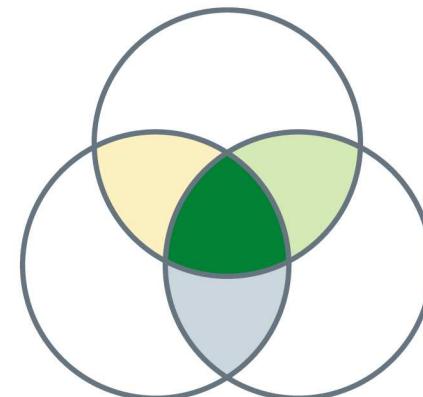




Added difficulty

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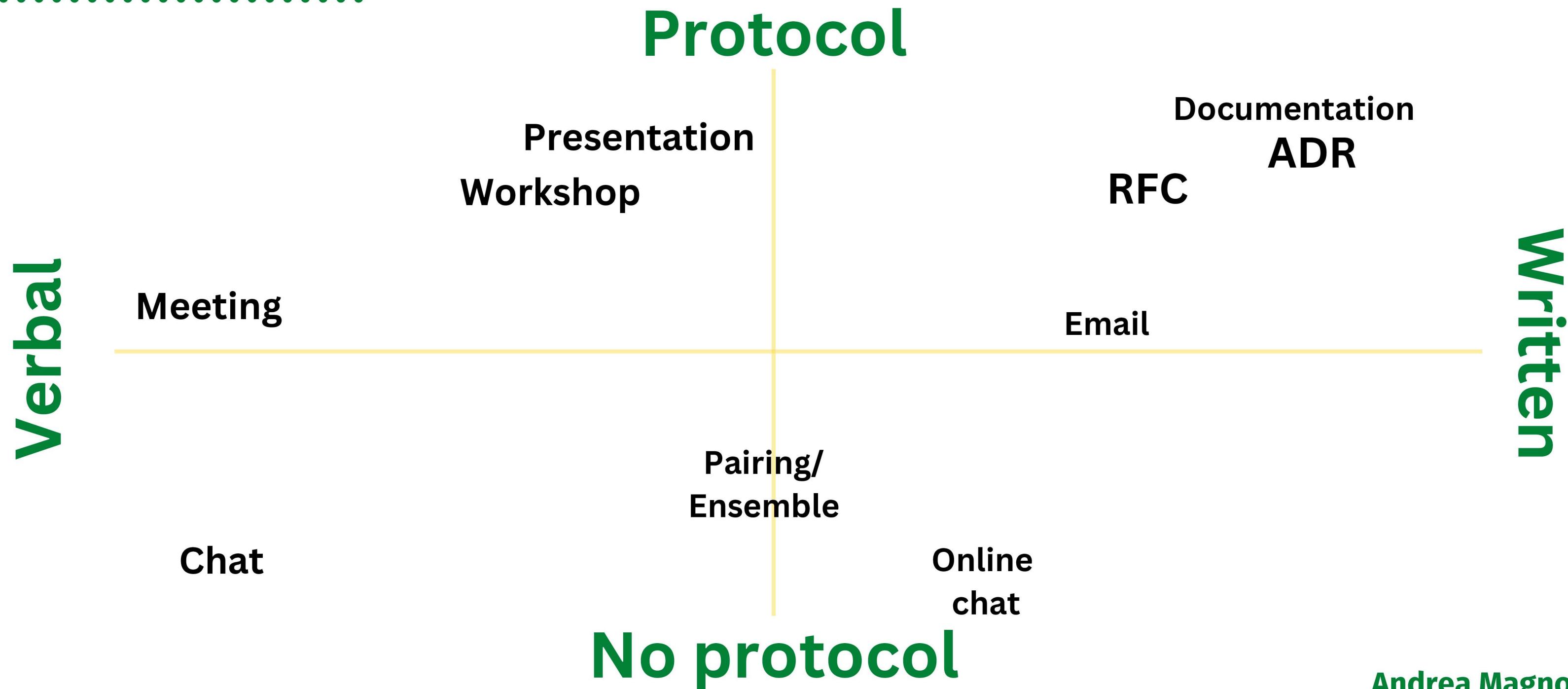
- Changing teams
- Coordination between teams
- Conflicting long term plans
- Power
- Role dependent information variance





Knowledge sharing methods

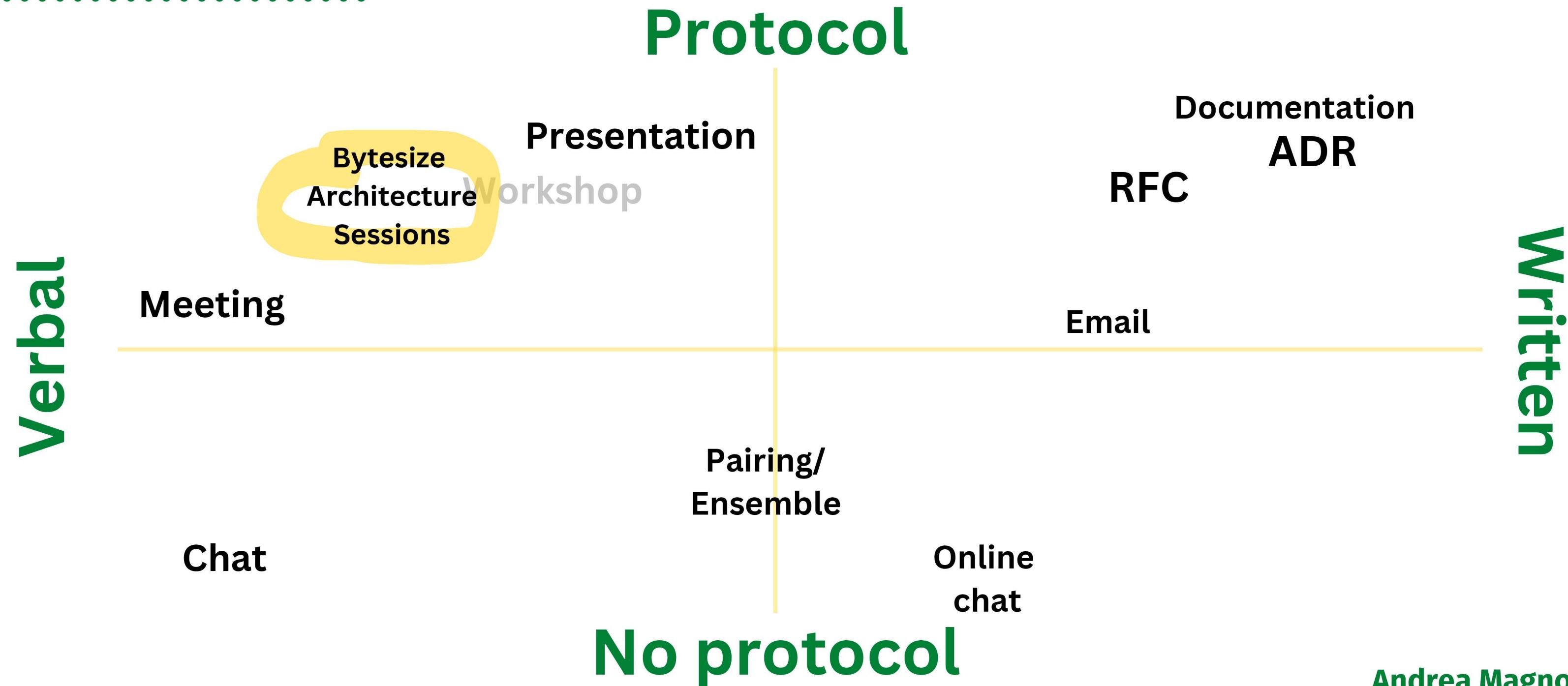
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Knowledge sharing methods

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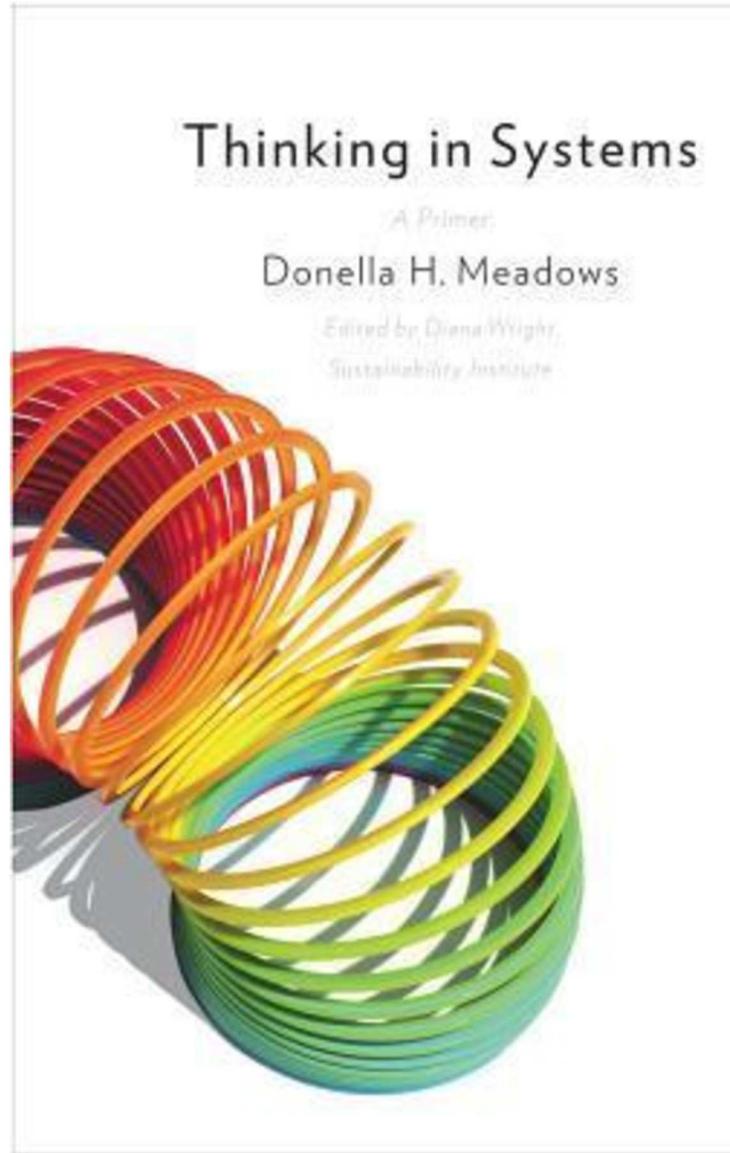




Bytesize Architecture

Sessions[T] is a workshop format

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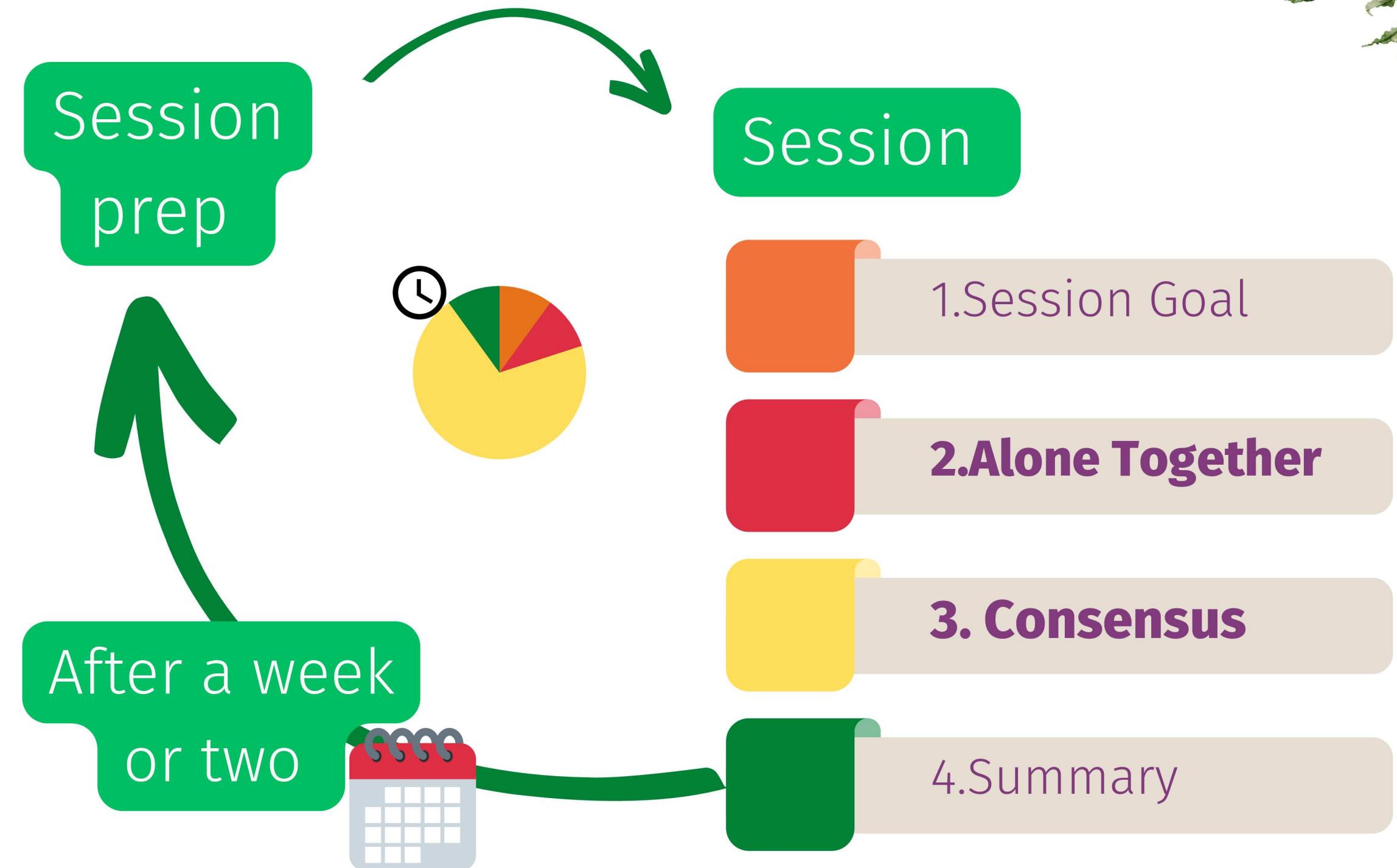
“Words and sentences must, by necessity, come only one at a time in linear, logical order. **Systems happen all at once.** They are connected not just in one direction, but in many directions simultaneously.”



Thinking in Systems: A Primer by Donella H. Meadows

Format

.....





In their words

.....

The main thing I took from today is
that everyone brought their own
perspective and that enabled us **all**
to learn something



Jim Taylor
Senior Product Manager
ITV



Why run Bytesize Sessions?

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1

**Toward
homogeneous
understanding of
your System**

2

Enabling format

3

**Creates design
tools**



**Build an architecture
practice in a safe way**

.....



When to use Bytesize Sessions?

Tech debt

Acknowledge problems and plan for the future

.....

Evolving Team

Acknowledge gaps and learn together

.....

Big Changes

Map current and ideal. Iterate towards optimal solution

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Industry example: the first Bytesize Architecture Session



Before the Session

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- 1. Invited the team. Active participants of the stand up**
- 2. Taught the team about C4 Model**



Session starts

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Session

1.Session Goal

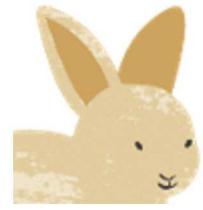
2.Alone Together

3. Consensus

4.Summary

1. Goal

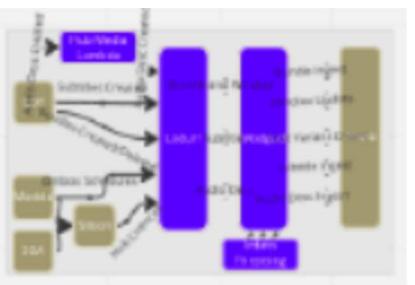
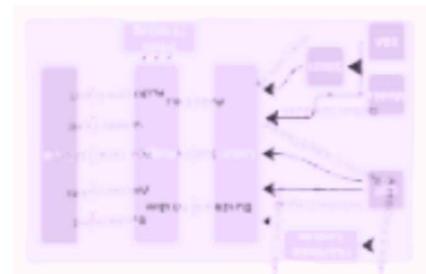
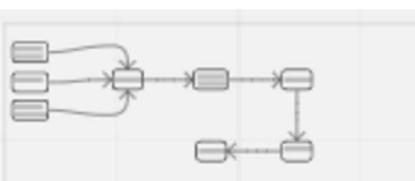
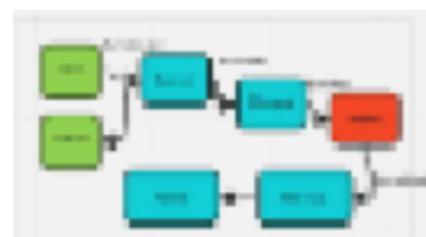
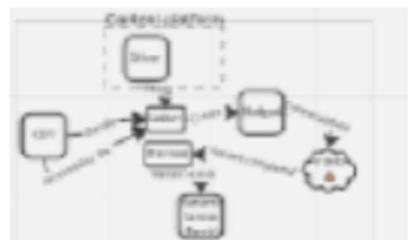
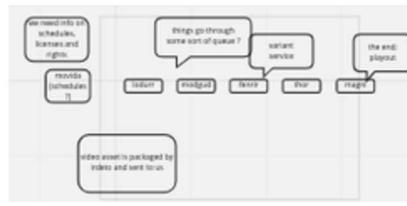
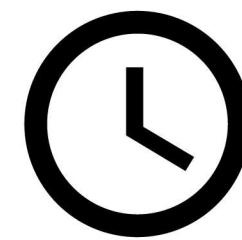
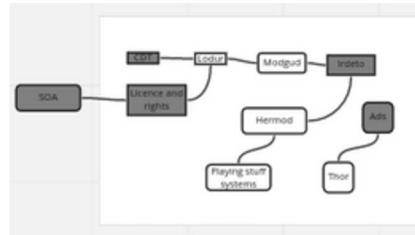
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**Set the goal:
Create a context
diagram of the
system as it is.**

2. Alone Together

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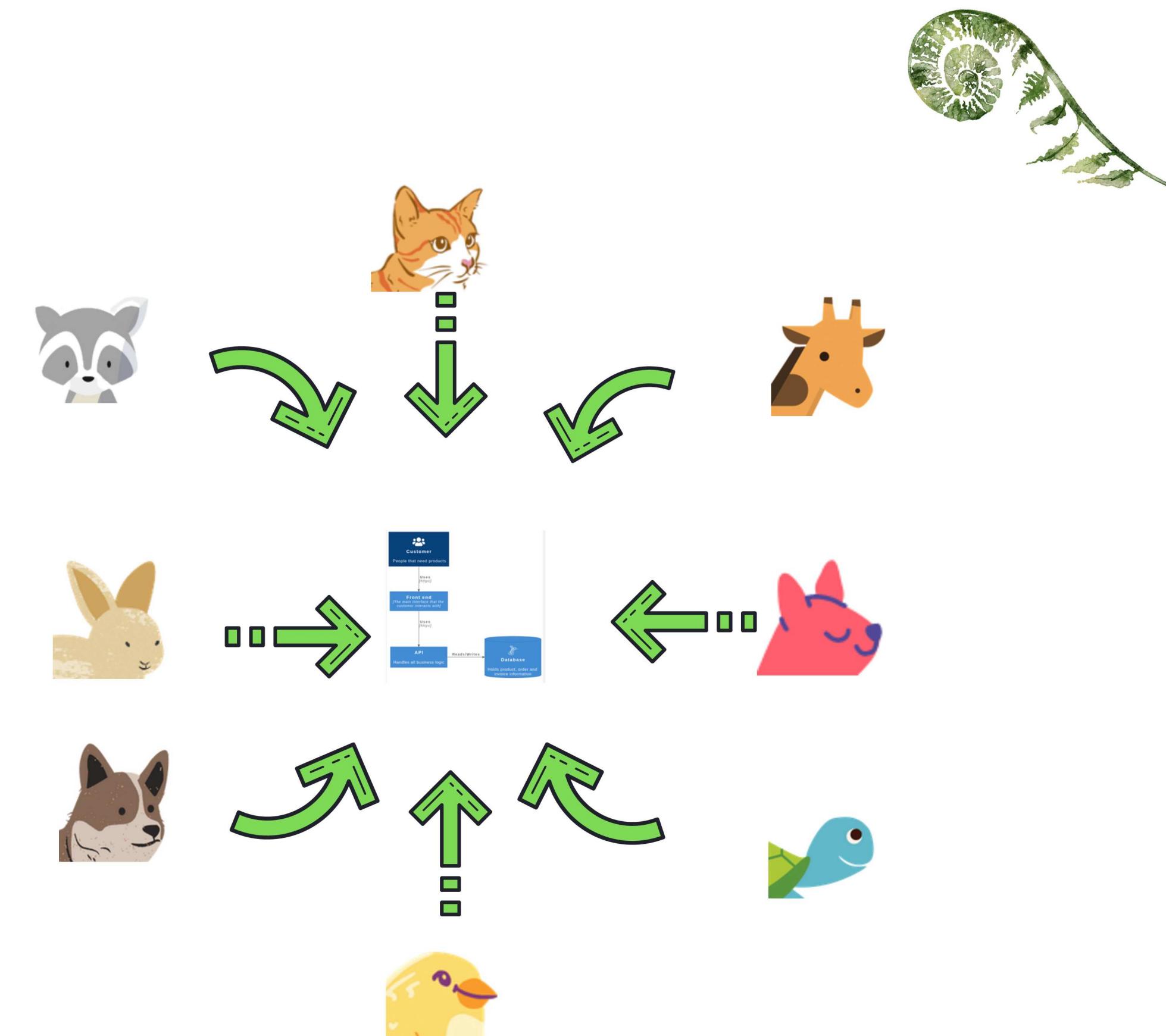


When the 3min timer elapsed each attendee explained their model.

3. Consensus

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The team drew part
of the system.
End session before
they were done.



4. Summary

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The team summarised that they:

- Learned a lot
- Were very happy with the format and,
- Wanted to do it again soon.



Detail

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bytesizeArchitectureSessions.com



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Kea

Extended case study: Inter-team collaboration

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- Cohesive understanding
- Well documented
- More in Chapter 17 ...

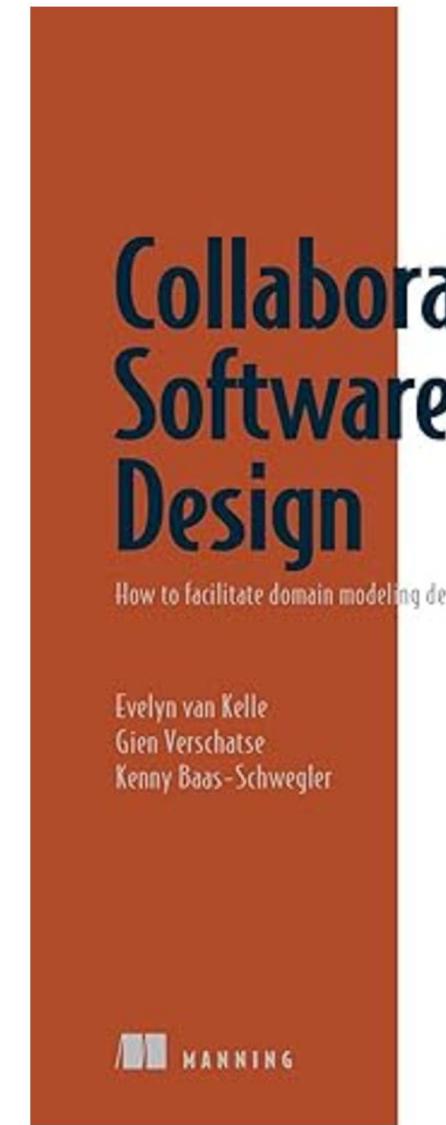


Architecture Modernization
Nick Tune

Collaborative Software Design

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A great book that helps you find what, why and how to design software together.



Collaborative Software Design
Evelyn van Kelle, Gien Verschatse,
and Kenny Baas-Schwegler

Learning Systems Thinking

.....

“Deeply insightful, reassuringly practical, delightfully real, and staggeringly well written.”

Kevlin Henney

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Diana Montalion

Learning Systems Thinking
Diana Montalion

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Bytesize Sessions at the Open Practice Library



Bytesize Architecture Sessions

Iteratively collaborate to learn about your systems

▲FOUNDATION

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COLLECTION

WHAT WHY HOW LOOK LINKS DISCUSS

SHARE :

What Is Bytesize Architecture Sessions?

Bytesize Architecture Sessions are a workshop format that helps teams understand the systems they work on. Each session focuses on a small slice of a system. After some sessions your team will become more homogeneous in the understanding of their systems, grow a consistent vocabulary and ultimately build tools to design the future together.

A session lasts between 45 and 90 minutes, and has four well defined parts: Session Goal, Alone Together, Consensus and Summary. You can model your systems using different tools. I suggest starting with [C4 Diagrams](#).

<https://openpracticelibrary.com/practice/bytesize-architecture-sessions/>

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Foundational pieces



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**“A system is not the sum of
its parts, it's their
interactions”**

Russ Ackoff

Source: youtube.com/watch?v=OqEeIG8aPPk

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Why do we share Knowledge?

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Knowledge Sharing is Systems Building

Thank You!

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