

Why Codev Works

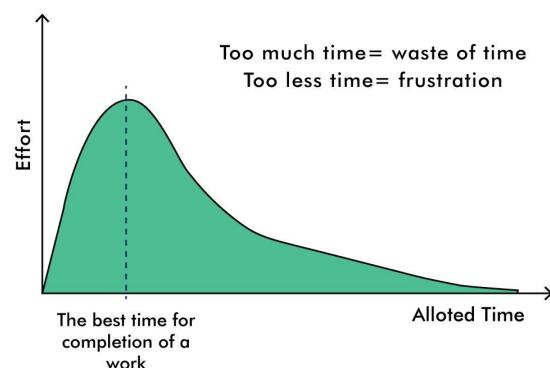
A few weeks ago, I facilitated a Codev (co-development) session with Astore's global Executive Committee. Astore is Accor's procurement entity, operating with a worldwide remit.

The feedback was extremely positive. The quality of the discussions was high, ideas were generated quickly, and there was a strong shared sense that we had worked deeply on a real issue, without distraction. This was not just another meeting. It was time well spent and genuinely productive.

As I left the session, one thing became very clear.

If Codev works so well, it is not by chance.

Parkinson's Law

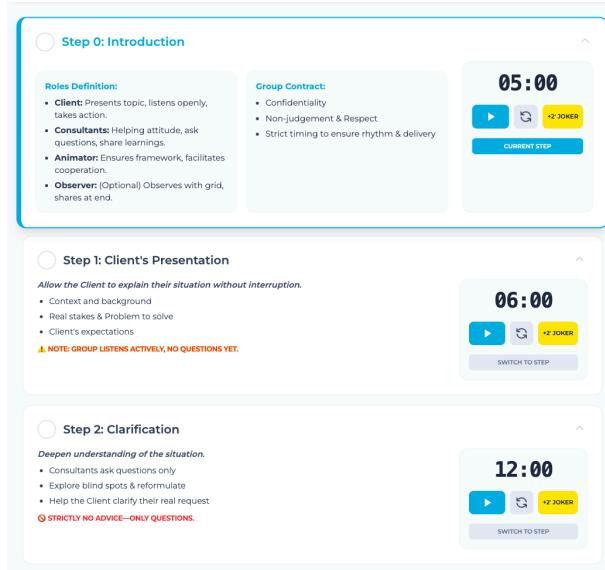


Why structure matters

Codev is built on a fundamental principle of work: work is elastic. The more time you give it, the more it expands. This is Parkinson's Law in action.

Co-development is a very practical response to this reality. Its effectiveness relies on strict discipline around structure, timing, and roles. Without that discipline, discussions drag on, the same voices dominate, solutions appear before the problem is fully understood, and value quickly dissipates.

In a Codev session, everything is deliberately structured. The steps are clear, time is tightly managed, and, most importantly, everyone knows when they are meant to speak and when they are not.



Step 1: Client presentation

The “client”, the person benefiting from the coaching, presents their situation without interruption. Context, real challenges, the issue at hand, and expectations.

The group listens. No questions. No reactions. The limited time forces the client to focus on what truly matters.



Step 2: Clarification

The consultants ask questions only. Absolutely no advice.

This constraint prevents jumping too quickly to solutions and helps the client clarify their real request. It slows the group down just enough to ensure the right problem is being addressed.

Step 3: Contract

The client then reformulates precisely what they expect from the group. Support with decision-making, prioritisation, or understanding.

The outcome is explicit: “I would like to leave with...”.

This step removes ambiguity and gives direction to everything that follows.



Step 4: Consultation and sharing

The group shares its contributions. Experiences, questions that open new perspectives, hypotheses, and action ideas.

The client listens and takes notes without responding. Strict timing keeps contributions focused and useful. Not being able to respond can feel frustrating, but it prevents back-and-forth debates and avoids a few people dominating the conversation. Ideas emerge quickly and with real density.

Step 5: Synthesis and action plan

The client speaks again. They share what they have understood, what they are taking away, and what they will implement in practical terms.

At this stage, only the client speaks. This ensures ownership and clarity on next steps.



Step 6: Learnings and integration

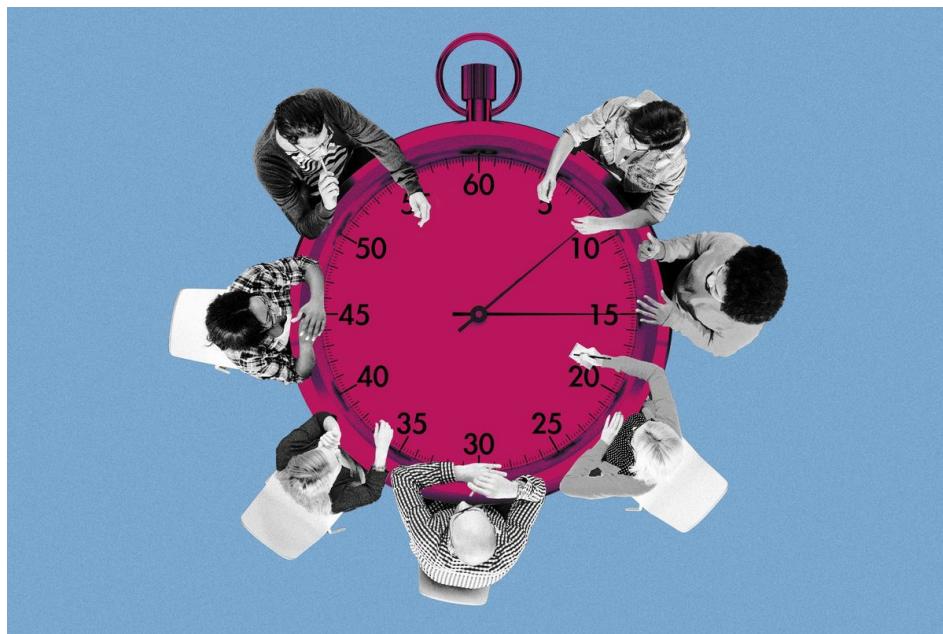
Each participant shares what they have learned and what they will apply in their own practice.

This is a key step. It transforms an individual topic into collective learning and reinforces the value of the session for everyone involved.

Step 7: Evaluation and conclusion

The session ends with a quick round of feedback, often referred to as a “weather report”, followed by closing words from the facilitator.

This step is frequently sacrificed when time is not well managed. Yet it plays an important role in strengthening the framework and supporting long-term collaboration.



Why discipline makes the difference

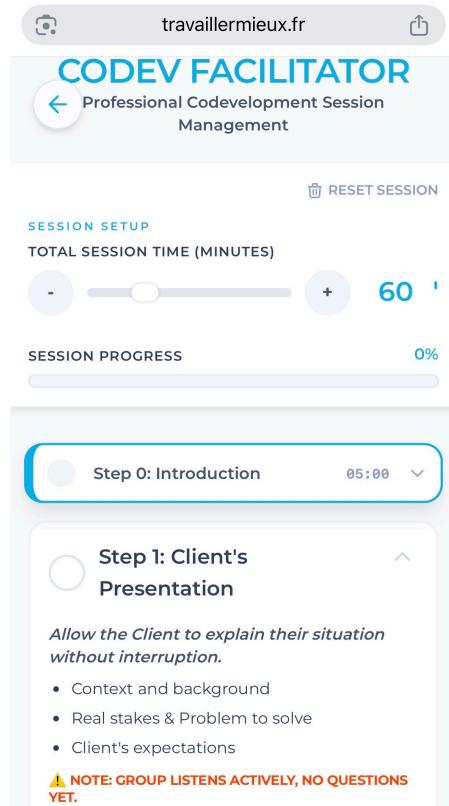
I discovered Codev through APM, at the Munich club, facilitated by Agnès Tondre. When the framework is applied with rigour, the quality of exchange is remarkable, even with very experienced senior leaders.

Codev is not about talking for longer.

It is about talking better.

And for that, time discipline is not a constraint. It is precisely what makes collective intelligence truly productive.

This same discipline is also what makes Codev demanding to facilitate, particularly at executive committee level. The facilitator must constantly monitor time, refocus the group, and sometimes interrupt, while remaining fully present in the discussion.



Making Codev easier to facilitate

It was from this observation that I developed a facilitation tool specifically designed for co-development.

A simple tool, created to make this format easier to facilitate and to support wider adoption. It allows sessions to be easily adapted to the time available, whether 45 minutes or two hours. Each step is visible, the rhythm is clear, and the framework is shared by everyone.

By removing the mental load of time management, the facilitator can focus fully on what really matters: the quality of facilitation and the depth of collective thinking.

I would be interested to hear how others are using structured collective intelligence formats within their leadership teams, and what has made the biggest difference in practice.