Startup Studio

AI-Accelerated Building and Validation

01.22.26 C1W1

Agenda

- Instructor intro
- Class intro
- Exercises
- Homework

Instructor Intro

Who am I?

Ken St. Clair

- Early-stage start-up Product Leader with 20+ years experience
  - Software engineering, sales engineering, product design, product leadership
  - Two robotics products from 0→1
  - Experience with 0→1, growth, acquisition, and deprecation
  - B2B, B2B2C, B2C

- BS Computer Science, Georgia Tech
- Masters of Human-Computer Interaction, Carnegie Mellon

aescape

NASA

Carnegie Mellon University

MISO ROBOTICS

facebook

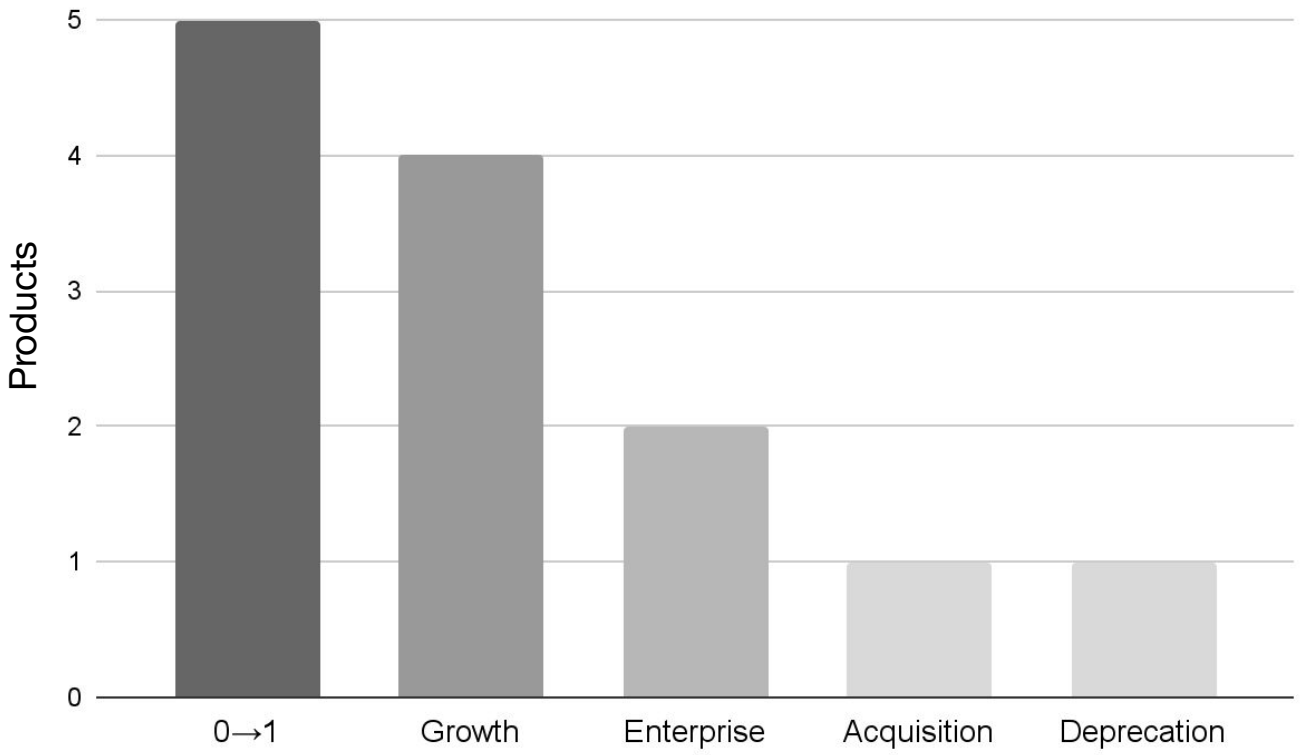
Georgia Institute of Technology

Whom have I Worked with?

Select Partners and Clients

Gyms + Spas	Print Media	Broadcast	Streaming/Sports	Food Service
EQUINOX	The New York Times	Turner	MLG Major League Gaming	Outback Steakhouse
Life Time Healthy Way of Life	Bloomberg	Disney	twitch	White Castle
Lotte New York Palace	The Wall Street Journal	ESPN	Roku	
Remedy PL	The Atlantic	NBC	NHL	More...
The Well	The Huffington Post	Viacom		tinder
	Vice	CBS	NFL	Nationwide

Product Stages I’ve Worked On



Class Intro

What’s a “Studio”

A course focused on making, iterating, and critique.

Students learn by building real artifacts and receiving continuous feedback, rather than by absorbing theory first.

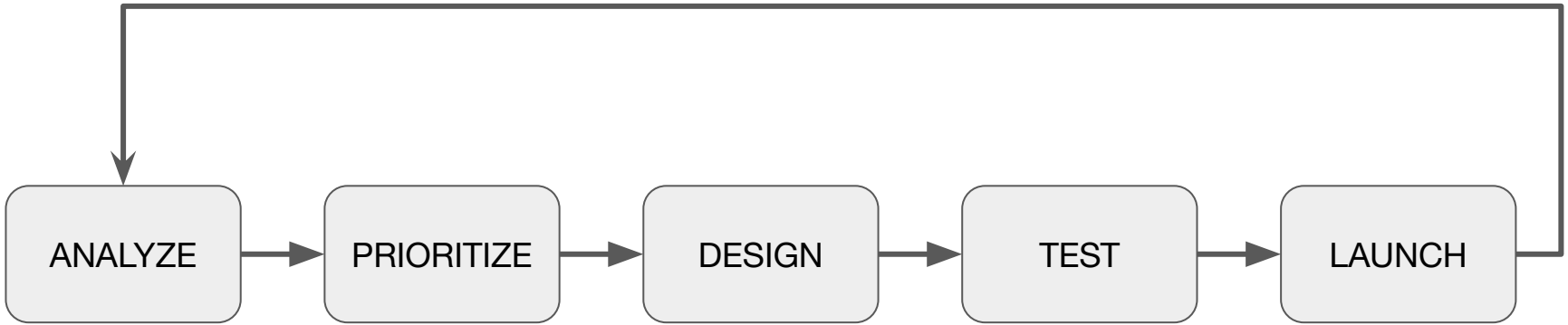
What’s “Startup Studio”

A course focused on making, iterating, critique, **experimentation and launching**.

Students learn by building real artifacts and receiving continuous feedback, rather than by absorbing theory first.

Startup OS

The operating system for this class



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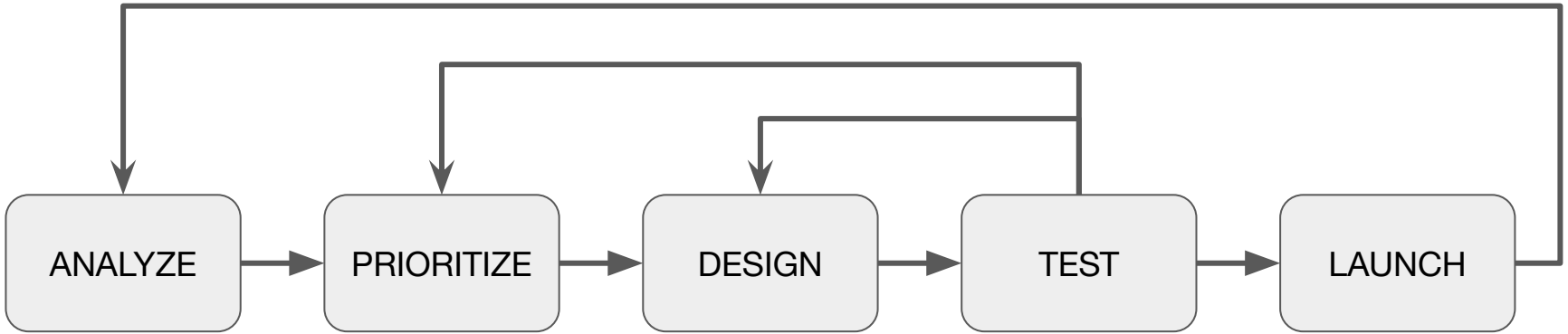


Analyze

- Problem Exploration
- Market research
- Online research
- Monitoring analytics
- User interviews

Prioritize

- I’ve got more ideas than I can execute at once
- How do I pick which to do first?

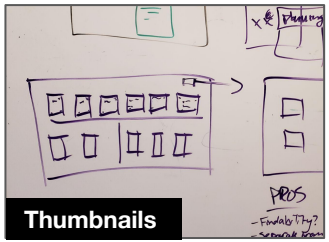
Design(/Build)

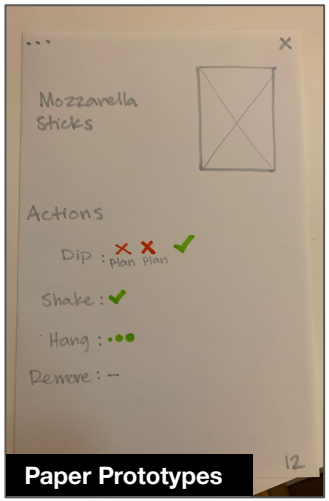
- Software, yes

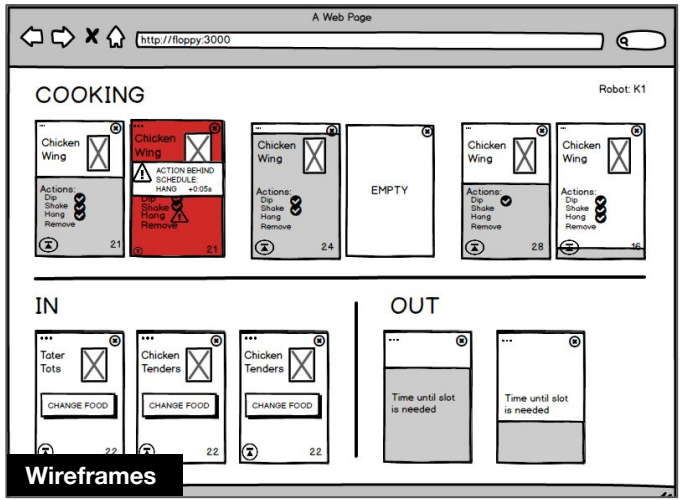
But building also includes

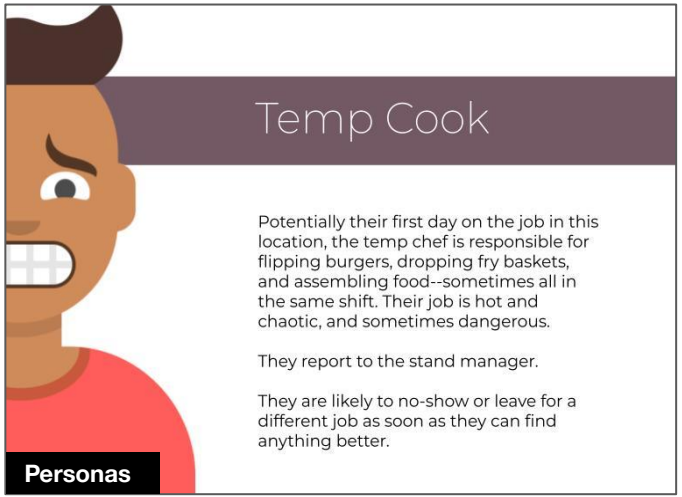
- Paper prototypes
- Low-fi prototypes
- Mockups

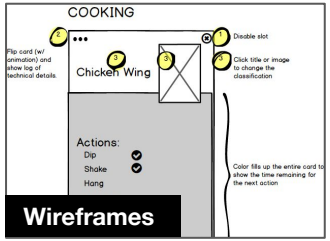
[Design Ex.] Personas, Wireframing, Integrated Journeys

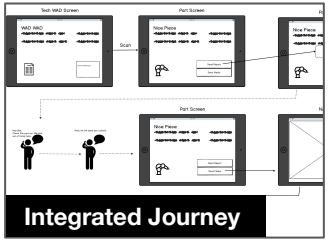




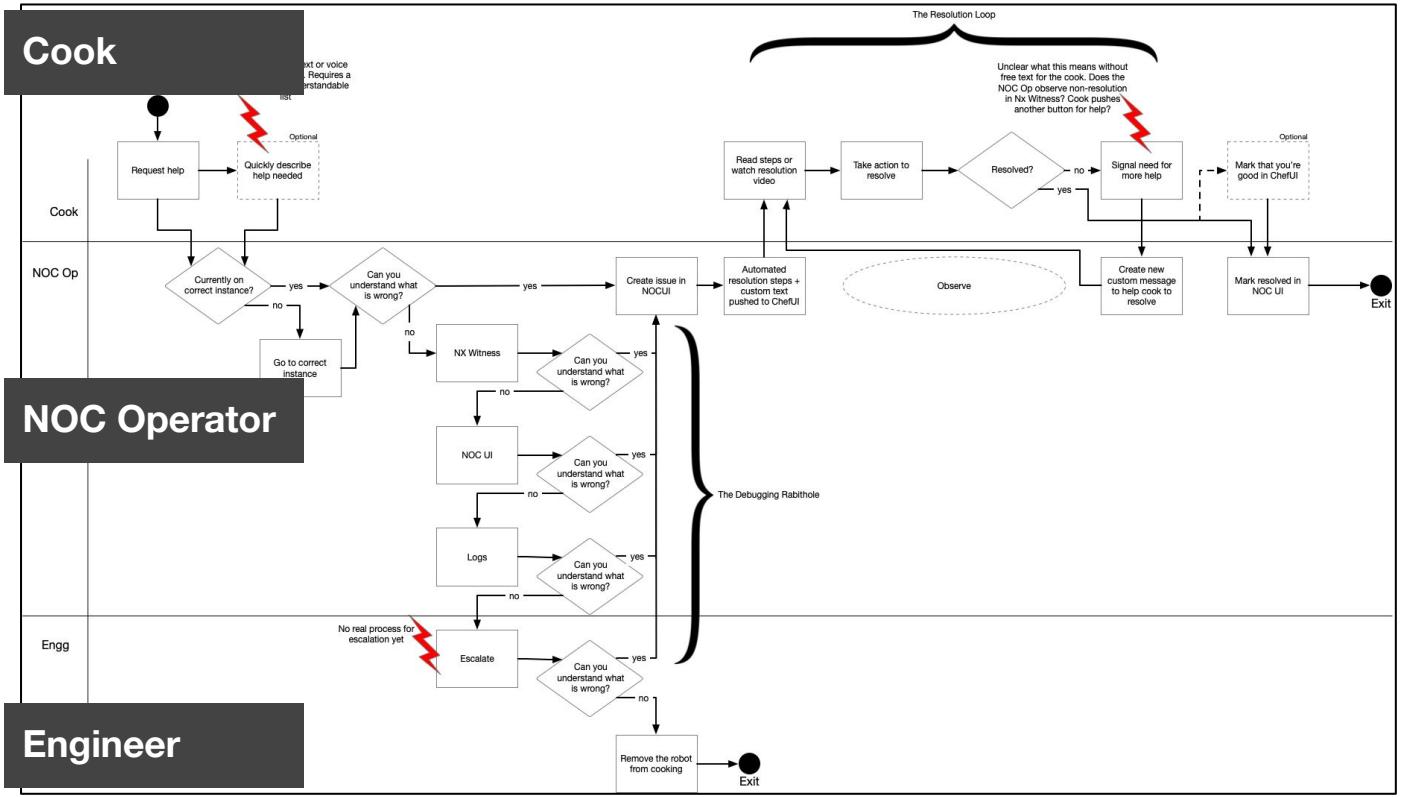








[Design Ex.] The Debugging Rabbit Hole and Resolution Loop



Mapping the debugging process across each user – Cook, NOC Operator, and Engineer – allowed us to identify high impact areas of focus: the debugging rabbithole, and the resolution communication loop.

Improved performance and efficiency in debug and resolution have a direct impact on revenue by affecting the throughput and overall volume of the cooking session.

Test

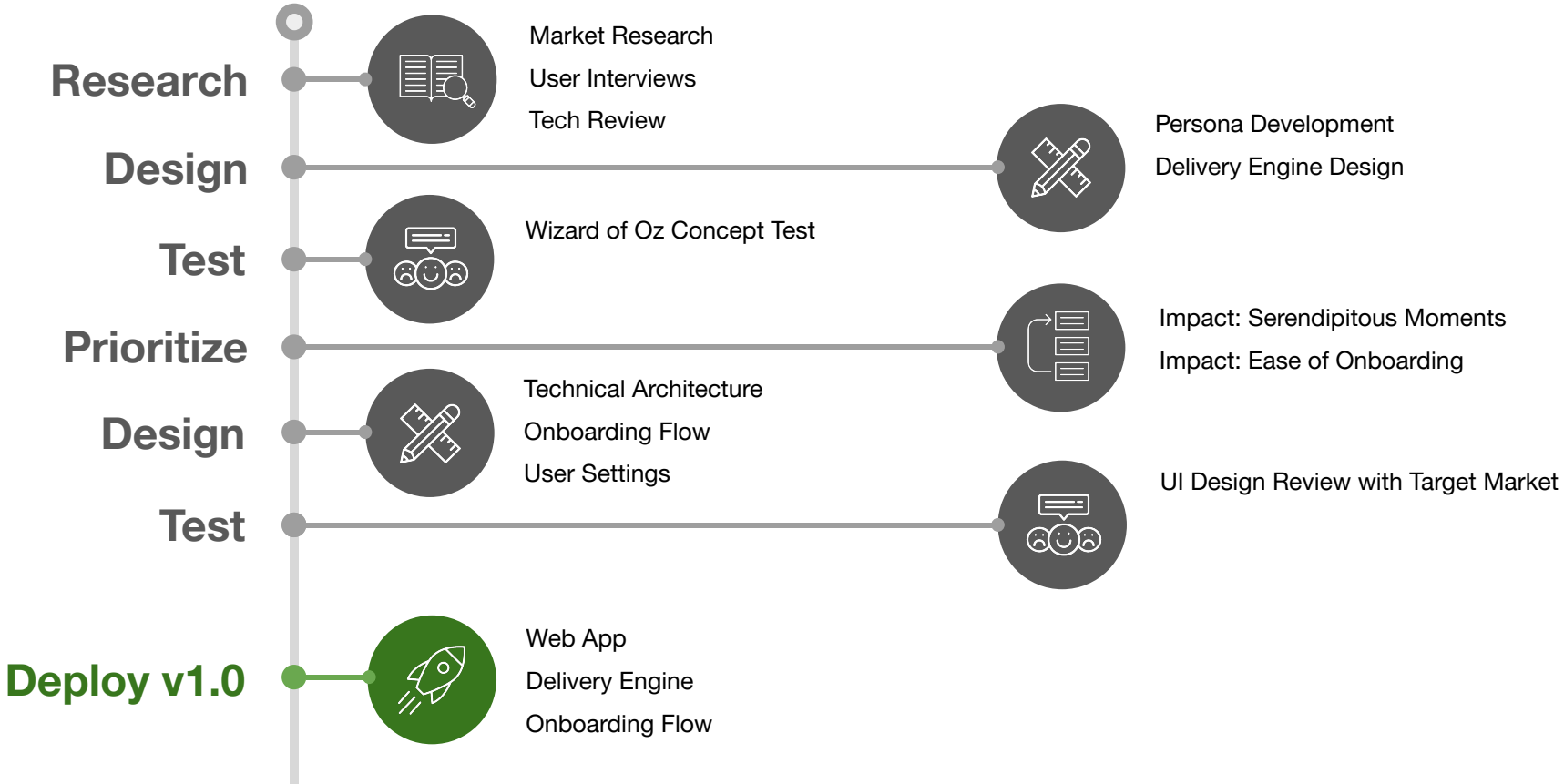
Not QA testing

- User Testing
- Experiments

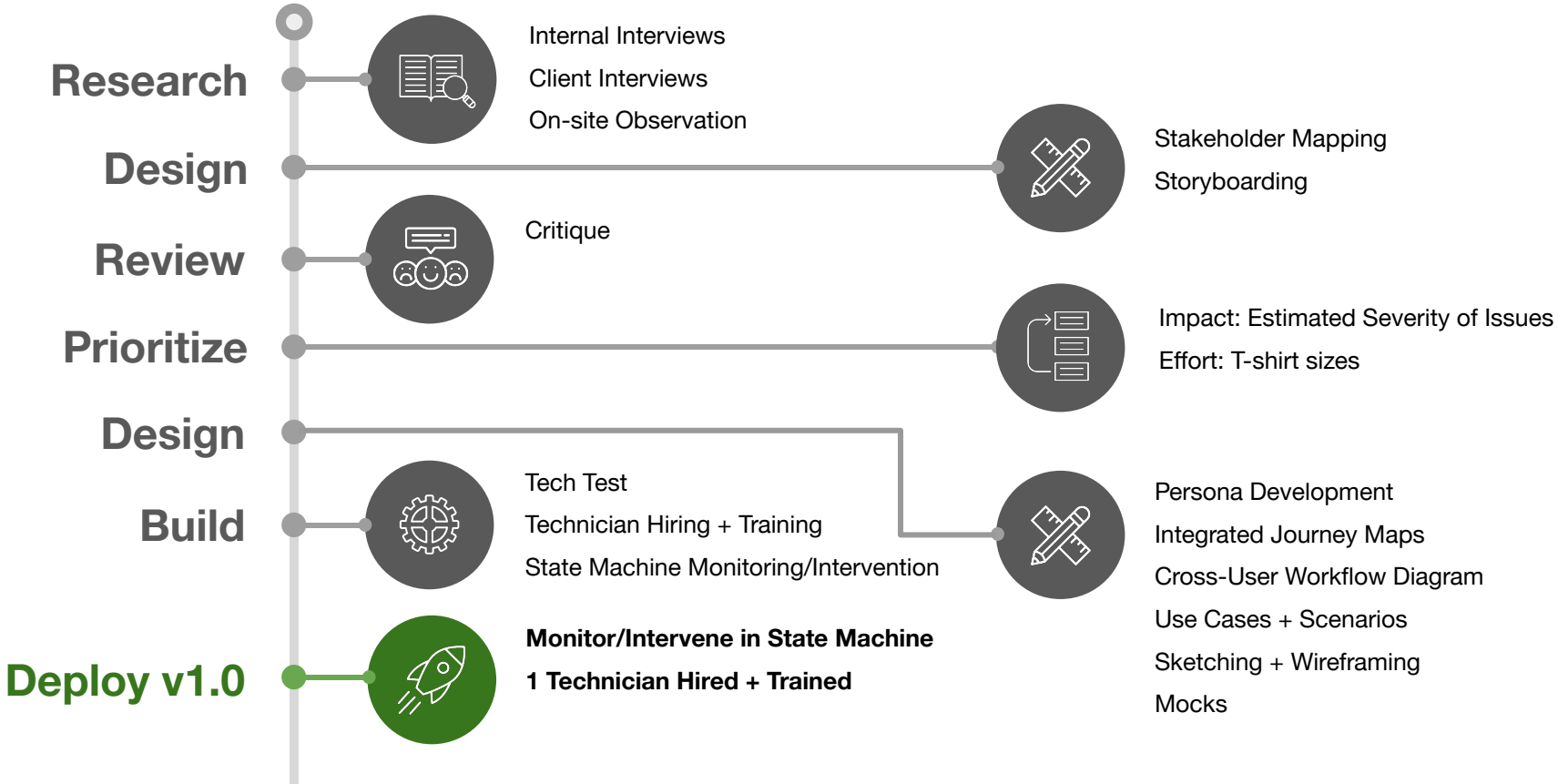
Launch

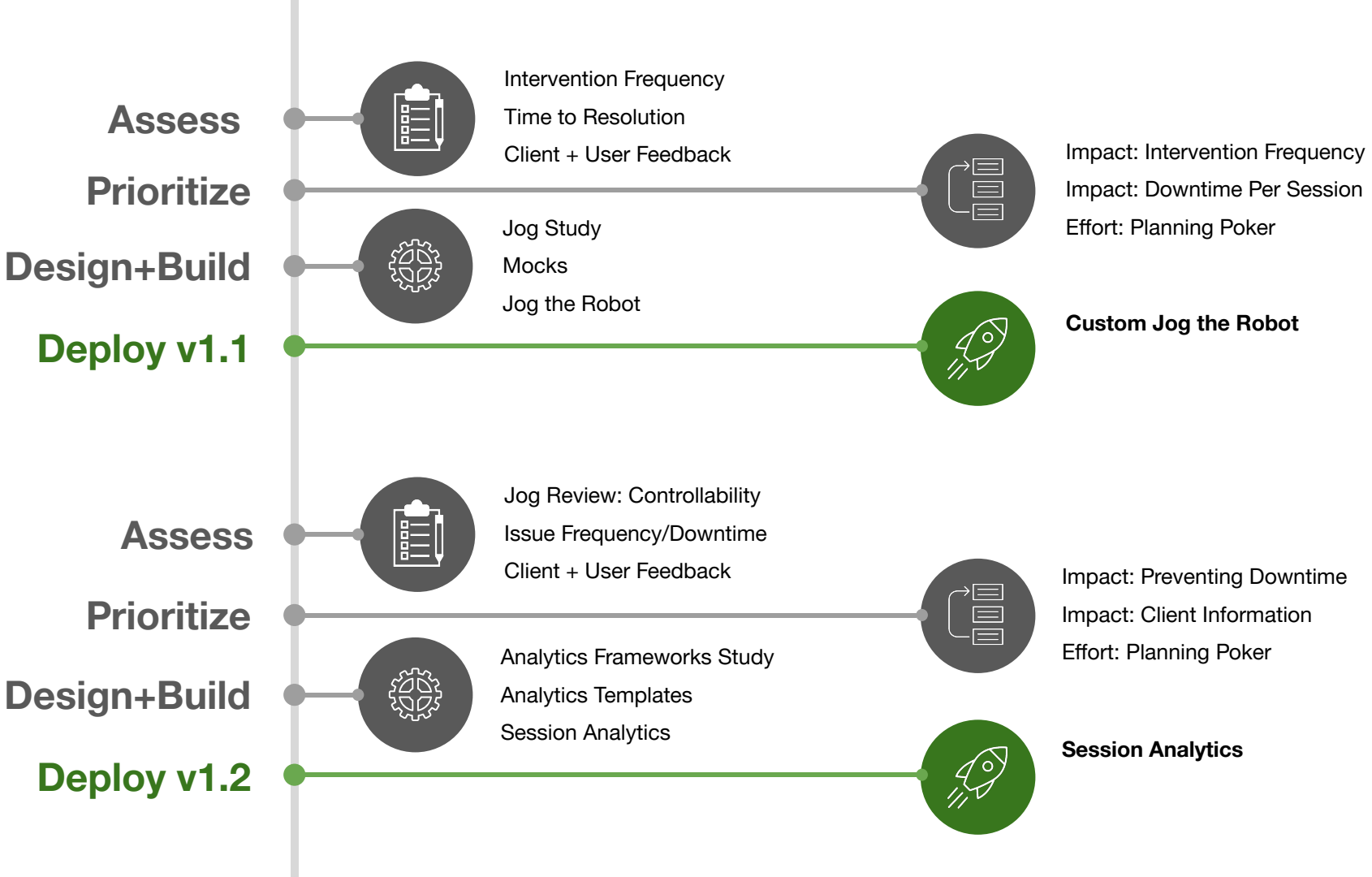
- Get real users

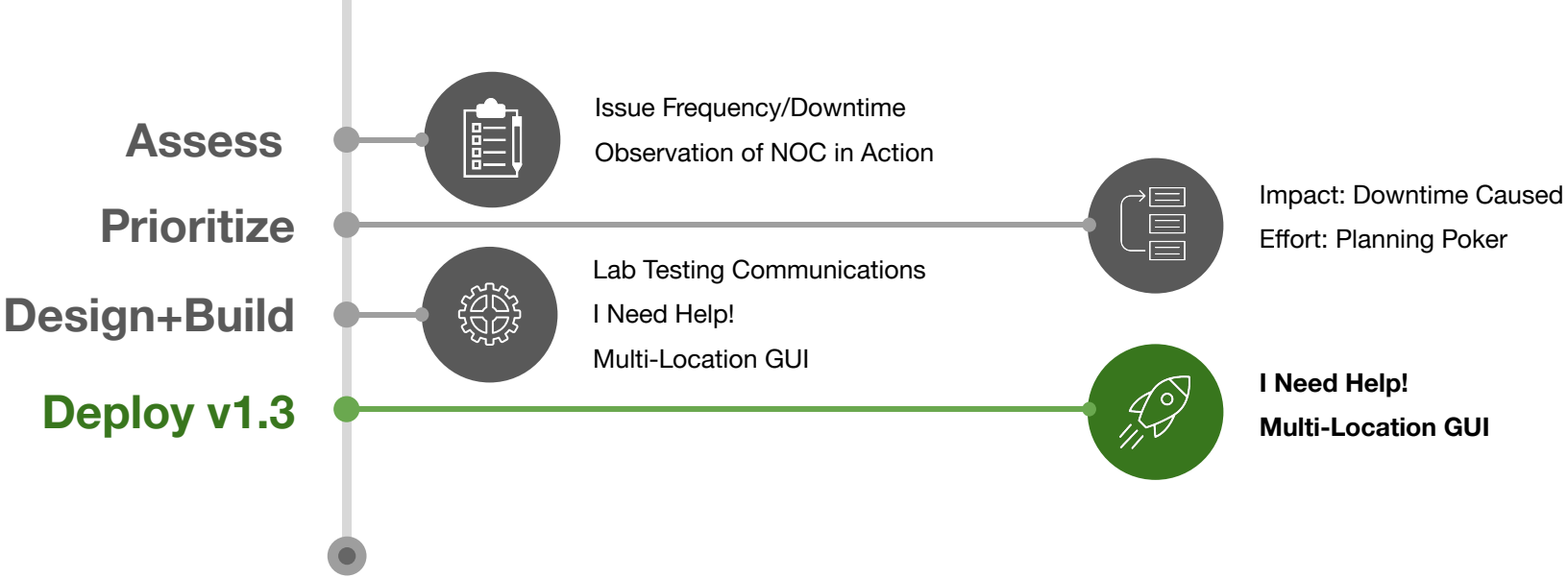
Real Timeline Excerpt: Text Affirmations



Real Timeline Excerpt: Network Operating Center




Assess
Prioritize
Design+Build
Deploy v1.1
Intervention Frequency
Time to Resolution
Client + User Feedback
Impact: Intervention Frequency
Impact: Downtime Per Session
Effort: Planning Poker
Jog Study
Mocks
Jog the Robot
Custom Jog the Robot
Assess
Prioritize
Design+Build
Deploy v1.2
Jog Review: Controllability
Issue Frequency/Downtime
Client + User Feedback
Impact: Preventing Downtime
Impact: Client Information
Effort: Planning Poker
Analytics Frameworks Study
Analytics Templates
Session Analytics
Session Analytics


Assess
Prioritize
Design+Build
Deploy v1.3
Issue Frequency/Downtime
Observation of NOC in Action
Lab Testing Communications
I Need Help!
Multi-Location GUI
Impact: Downtime Caused
Effort: Planning Poker
I Need Help!
Multi-Location GUI

What We’re NOT Focusing On

- Hardware
- B2B
- Research/Publishing
- Theory/Deep Foundational Learning

Class Position on AI

Use AI for everything.

Syllabus

http://bit.ly/4sS0wl9

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1_dz-_uGV6ifRUdEkUkkG9klOrJoXkOSqEi6-Tzi-Ngo/edit?tab=t.0

Deck: https://bit.ly/4pYNAYd

Exercise

Speed Dating

Answer 3 Questions

- What is one project you’re proud of?
- What kind of user/problem space you are drawn to?
- What would you like to get better at through this course?

Back to Your Seats!

Problems Brainstorm

Just yell them out at me!

Homework

Reading

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable

Complete book (~220 pages) by Week 3

Assignment 1 (Due Thurs 1/29) - KRS2212

Build Anything

- Use any AI builder (lovable, cursor, etc)
- Build anything you like

  It should have
  - Some functionality (not just a brochure/marketing page)
  - Be hosted somewhere. No custom URL necessary but get a live URL from lovable/railway.app/heroku etc

  Avoid for now
  - Logins, payments, other basic logistical features that will eat up time

Write a Reflection

- What is AI bad at when it comes to building software? Reference your own work and where AI was less helpful or hampered your work/intent. What were some patterns you used that made it more helpful?