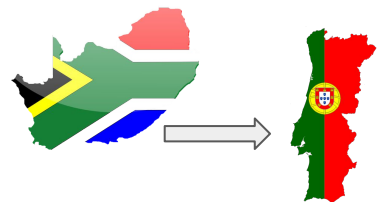# Quality Connections in a Remote World

Louise Perold

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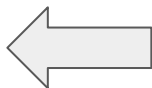
Feb 2020 — **Started out OutSystems**

Mar 2020 — **Fully remote**
Adapted weekly syncs

Starting to experiment with Ensemble testing sessions

Oct 2020 (PI1) — **Started working in PIs**

Jan 2021 (PI2)

Apr 2021 (PI3)

Jul 2021 (PI4)

August 2021

Oct 2021 (PI5)

Jan 2022 (PI6)

Apr 2022 (PI7)

Jul 2022 (PI8)

Oct 2022 (PI9)

Small tweaks to what we had..

Quality Practice Group Sync
Audience: Entire Quality Practice
Cadence: 1 per sprint
Duration: 40 mins
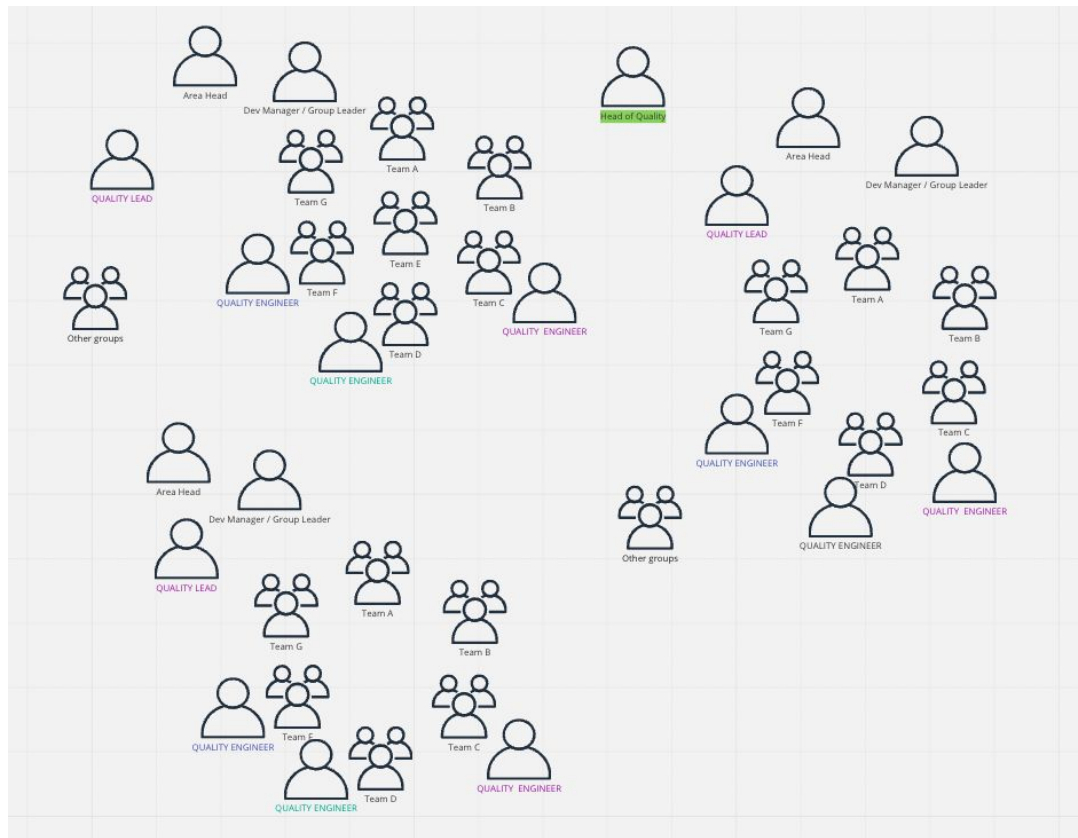**Purpose:**
One representative for each area sharing - what the group learned / achieved, what got in the way, what they think others should know, how they feeling
What have I learned?
Started 1 / week, and recently adjusted
Beware of becoming status update - questions help
I find it really useful because I am curious about what others are doing - it is important to spot the connections

Experiment with something new..

Weekly Ensemble testing session
Audience: Team + Quality group (whoever is available)
Cadence: 1 per week (sometimes we cancel)
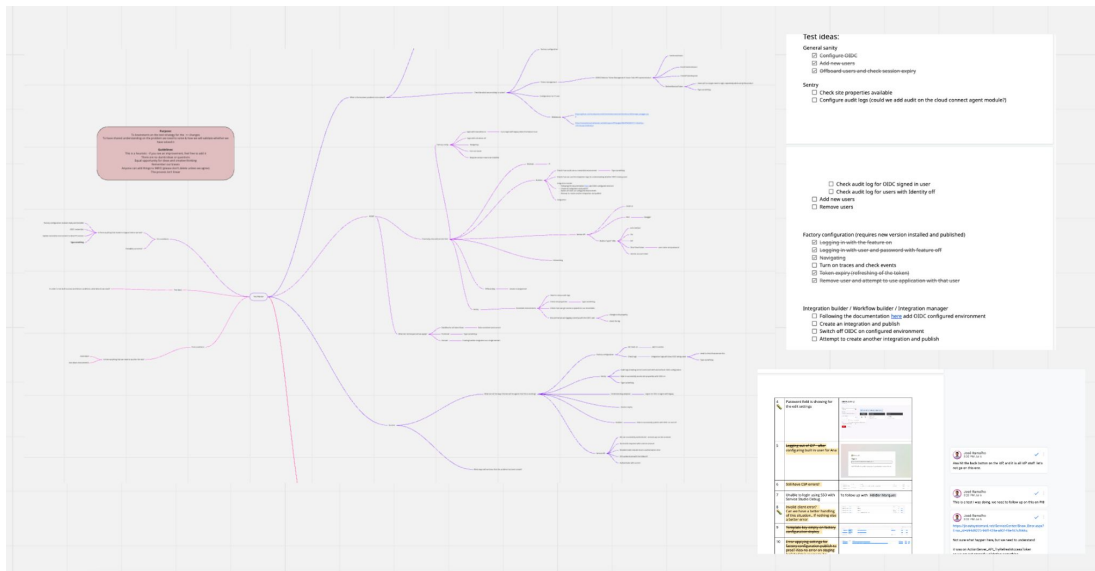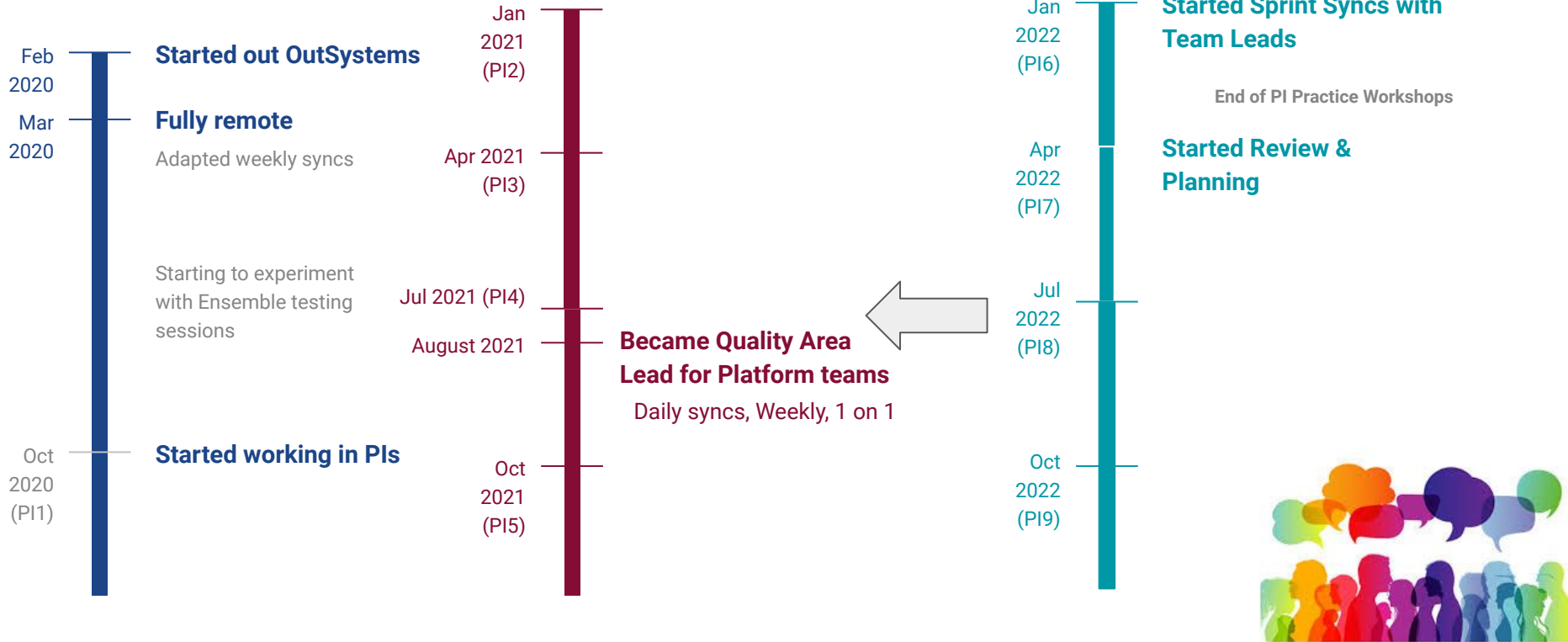**Duration:** 1.5 - 2 hours
Purpose:
To test either new releases in a general way or specific features that teams have selected, mutual learning, activity on our environments (early feedback on latest versions - Dogfooding)

What have I learned?
Requires preparation
Useful to have this as a container that can be used or spoken about
Starts to get a life of its own

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Jul 2021 (PI4)

August 2021 — **Became Quality Area Lead for Platform teams**
Daily syncs, Weekly, 1 on 1

Oct 2021 (PI5)

Jan 2022 (PI6) — **Started Sprint Syncs with Team Leads**

End of PI Practice Workshops

Apr 2022 (PI7) — **Started Review & Planning**

Jul 2022 (PI8)

Oct 2022 (PI9)

Starting in a new area…. clean slate

Quality group area daily sync

Audience: The quality team for our area
Cadence: Daily except Thursday (can also be done async in slack if any clash)
Duration: 15 mins
Purpose:
See each other, quick rant, share blockers or questions, build connection, learn, reprioritise

What have I learned?
Evolves as you get to know each other better
More powerful than you think

Quality Area weekly Sync
Audience: Quality team for our area
Cadence: 1 per week
Duration: 1 hour
Purpose:
Our step back - what did we each learn / achieve, what got in the way, what they think others should know, how we feeling
What have I learned?
We can feed this into the group sync
Because we have notes, this is great to refer back to when we want to reflect on our achievements / struggles for a time (and for review moments)

Quality team One on Ones
Audience: Individual Quality Engineers (3 in the team)
Cadence: 1 per week
Duration: 30 mins
Purpose: Connection with the each person, how things are with them generally, whether they are enjoying the work, specific achievements, any feedback or suggestions or help needed / wanted

What have I learned?
This is really important even though we speak every day… I get to know someone in a deeper and different way

Team daily standups
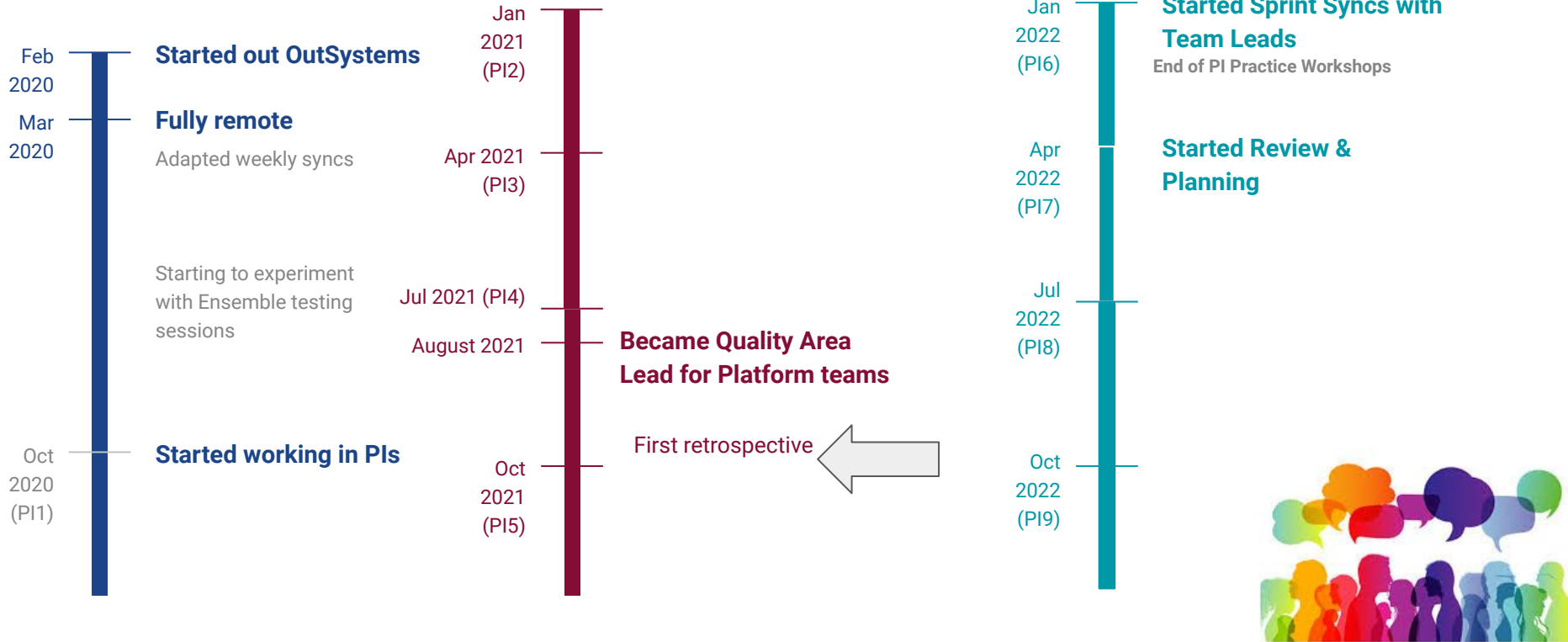**Audience:** QEs join team standups
Cadence: Daily
Duration: 15 - 30 mins
Purpose:
Regular standup - Spot opportunities for Quality

What have I learned?
Use this to stay close to the team's work and as an observation point for what gets in the way of quality

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First retrospective ⬅

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Oct 2022 (PI9)

End of PI7

End of PI retro and brainstorm
Audience: The quality team for our area
Cadence: 1 per PI
Duration: 2 / 2HR
Purpose: Take a step back, reflect on what we achieved in the quarter, what is going well and what got in the way, brainstorm ideas for our next PI

What have I learned?
Can gain some perspective on things that are changing / moving (sometimes hard to do this on a weekly basis as things.take.time

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First retrospective

Oct 2021 (PI5)

Second retrospective

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Getting to know the bigger team better

Sprint check-in with Team Leads

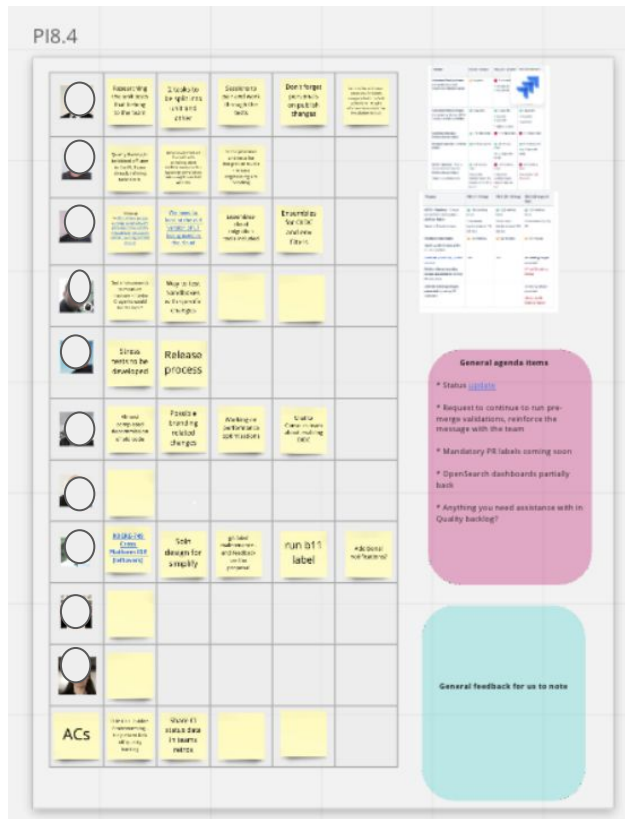**Audience:** Quality Eng and TLs, POs each TL separately
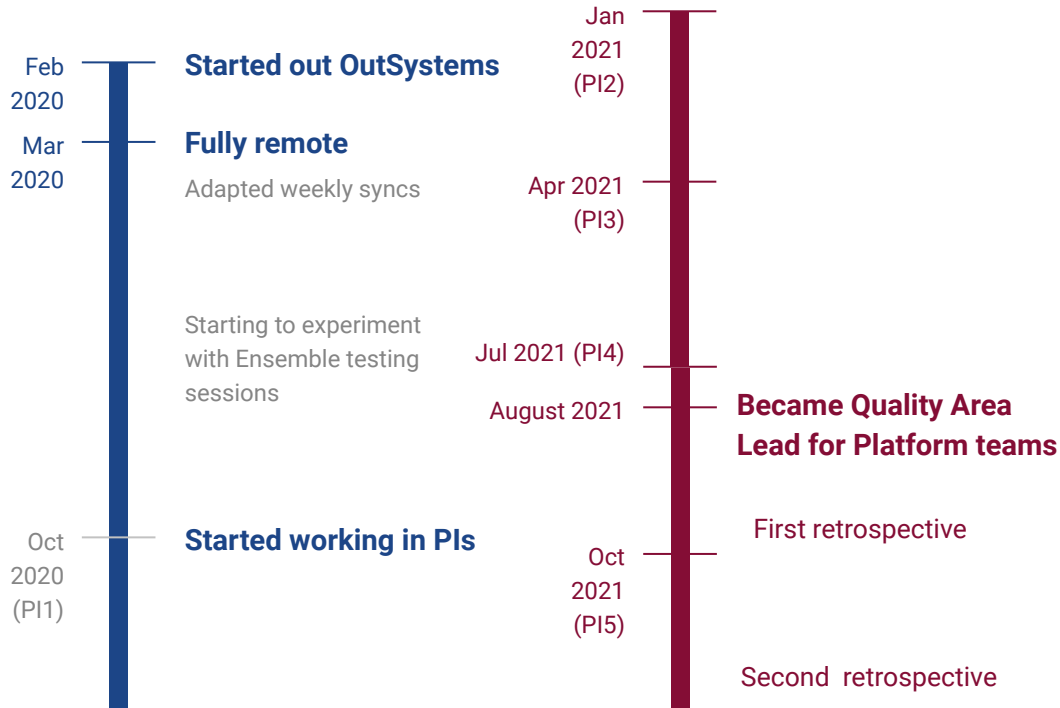**Cadence**: 1 per sprint
Duration: 20-30 mins
Purpose: Bring up Quality topics that we want to reinforce, (e.g. review our metrics), positively reinforce any cool things, check where teams need extra help, little chit chat

What have I learned?
Started out very one way convos
Having a little agenda and space to keep the notes as things come up in a week as a reminder helps me
Repeating messages is a thing - often we are repeating things I have put in slack but I get new questions or engagement

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End of PI Practice Workshops

Third retrospective

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Jul 2022 (PI8)

Oct 2022 (PI9)

Quality Sprint review and planning
Audience: All TLs, Area head, Quality head, anyone interested / impacted by the work is invited
Cadence: 1 per sprint
Duration: 15 mins
Purpose:
Demos, quick overview of our priorities

What have I learned?
This we only started to do after a few months of starting to work in a kanban way on a backlog that was outside of the team's work and realised we had an opportunity to showcase this work more formally and get feedback.
Part of our efforts to increase our visibility
Not sure why but not much reprioritising going on .. yet

Review of 8.3 and Planning 8.4

Other group things

Quality Practice Knowledge Sharing
Audience: Entire Quality Practice
Cadence: 1 every two weeks
Duration: 1 hr
Purpose: To share anything we have found useful, been working on, want feedback about
There is an agenda that people can add their names to / can be encouraged to do so
What have I learned?
Have to encourage people to share

Quality Practice PI Get Together
Audience: The whole of the Quality practice
Cadence: Once per quarter (PI)
Duration: The whole day
Purpose: Somewhat co-sourced agenda, opportunity for the group to connect, learn, share with each other and to reflect on the practice

What have I learned?
Hybrid model (some are remote, some together in the office is more difficult but still possible), time for conversations, connections and interactions different from the day to day is useful and fun

Quality Zoom lunches

Social hangouts

Book club

Learnings…

- I felt more confidence through connecting
- Getting to know the humans brings me joy
- Get a better feeling for what is actually happening
- Have a bit more insight (closer to the detail) of the things getting in the way of quality helps gain confidence in what we are doing and prioritising
- Able to have different perspectives / additional layers of observation through these connections

And the practical things…

- Continually retrospecting helps to spark new ideas, refine old ones
- Containers (regular time in the calendar, sticking to it) work for me..
- Not everything needs a meeting
- Changing it up
- Choosing when to facilitate and when to share
- Agendas and talking to something
- Reduce some admin of notes and sending output by using MIRO and pasting screenshots of the notes with link to the MIRO after the meetings