

# Charting the course to Requirements Excellence

## About Us



Gayathri Sriram is an agilist of 22 years experience, igniting team growth with agile & OKR coaching. She leads on key initiatives of the Openreach agile transformation.



Mark Anning started his agile journey in 2005 and has applied lean-agile thinking within many diverse contexts. He leads the Openreach team of Agile Coaches.



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# Charting the course to Requirements Excellence

## Our Companies



# openreach

TCS is one of the largest and most successful technology companies in the world with operations in over 46 countries and employing over 390,000 people. We have pioneered a strategic approach that has not only reshaped our processes but also cultivated a culture of precision and clarity.

Openreach run the UK's digital network. A wholly owned subsidiary of BT and a separate legal entity. We're the people who connect homes, mobile phone masts, schools, shops, banks, hospitals, libraries, broadcasters, governments and businesses – large and small – to the world.



**The Problem**  
**Our Approach**  
**Tools & Techniques**  
**The Challenges**  
**Our Impact**

# The Problem

What we observed

How it felt

How to change behaviours

How to demonstrate sustainable improvements



# Our Approach

## Requirements Excellence

An oxymoron

A shared understanding

Adoption measures

Outcomes



# Our Approach

Hearts & Minds

The Requirements Maturity Assessment Tool  
**(RMAT)**

The Requirements Maturity Toolkit (RMT)

Behaviour Driven Development (BDD)

Objectives & Key Results (OKRs)



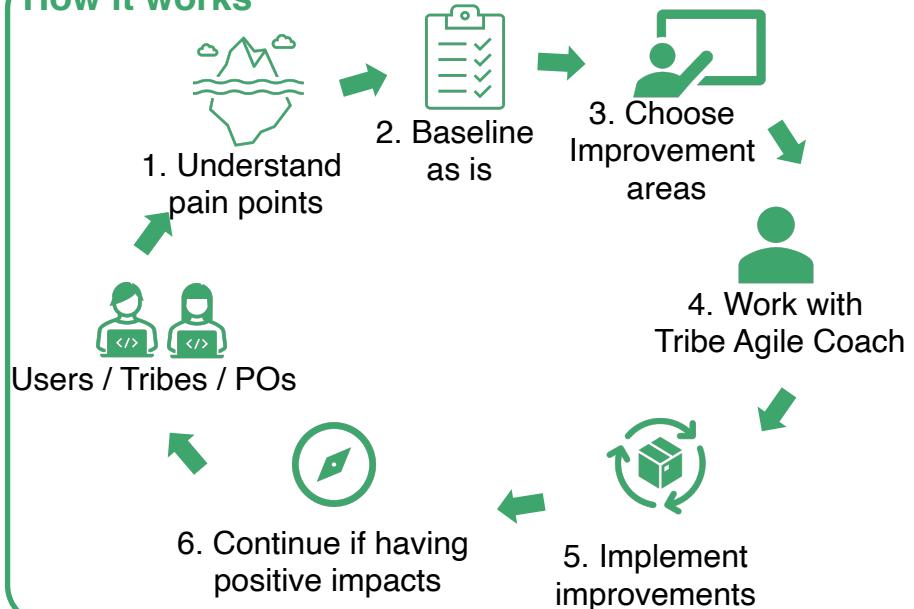
# Our Approach

## Requirements Excellence



We created the **Requirements Maturity Assessment Tool (RMAT)** to help our Tribes and Product Owners assess the 'as is' practices and identify improvement areas

### How it works



### Case Study

How the RMAT helped assess the Tribe's 'as is' level of maturity allowing the Squads to choose what to improve



Challenge

No standard way to measure requirements maturity of the Tribes



Assessment approach

Defined 5 maturity levels within the RMAT  
Built the Requirement Maturity Toolkit (RMT)  
Rolled out across the 5 Openreach Tribes



Outputs

Baselined

Identified gaps and prioritised next steps

# Our Approach

## The Requirements Maturity Assessment Tool (RMAT)

Level	Category	Criteria
3	UX	Persona framing is in place and teams are using personae in their conversations
3	BDD	The 3 amigos technique is embedded and individuals have a common understanding of user stories
3	BDD	Scenarios are used to describe user's behaviours
3	Process	A product vision is in place and is embraced by the teams
3	Process	Backlog refinement occurs on a regular and ongoing basis
3	Process	User stories consistently have clear acceptance criteria
4	UX	User experience designers and developers work together and understand each other's domains
4	UX	Teams use component libraries and style guides
4	UX	User experience activities start before any code is written
4	BDD	Scenarios are discussed within the 3 amigos meetings
4	Process	Feature benefits are clearly defined
4	Process	Features are estimated using modified Fibonacci sequence and prioritized using MoSCoW or WSJF
4	Process	User stories acceptance criteria are consistently written in the given-when-then format

# Our Approach

## The Requirements Maturity Toolkit (RMT)



We created the **Requirements Maturity Toolkit (RMT)** to provide a structured approach to product development; mature product requirements, team alignment to common goals and product alignment to business objectives, standardization across Tribes, with templates for forming OKRs

### Case Study

The RMT enables the Squads to implement improvements



Mis-understanding, scope creep, delays.  
No consistent way to guide Product Owners  
towards improved requirements maturity.



### Approach

The RMT contains techniques and templates mapped to product development and includes: Lean Canvas, Product Goal Canvas, Impact Mapping, User Story Mapping. All associated templates are hosted within Confluence.



### RMT

#### Problem Statement

#### Lean Canvas

#### Product Goal Canvas

#### Impact Mapping

#### User Story Mapping

#### Prioritisation Dot vote

#### Build MVP

Understand  
the problem

Build strategy

Set product goal

Pick a goal and arrive  
at Epic / Feature

Breakdown  
Features to Stories

Prioritise with  
stakeholders

High level release  
planning MVP

Product Owner



Minimum Viable Products  
built 1.5x times faster

Improved alignment with  
business goals

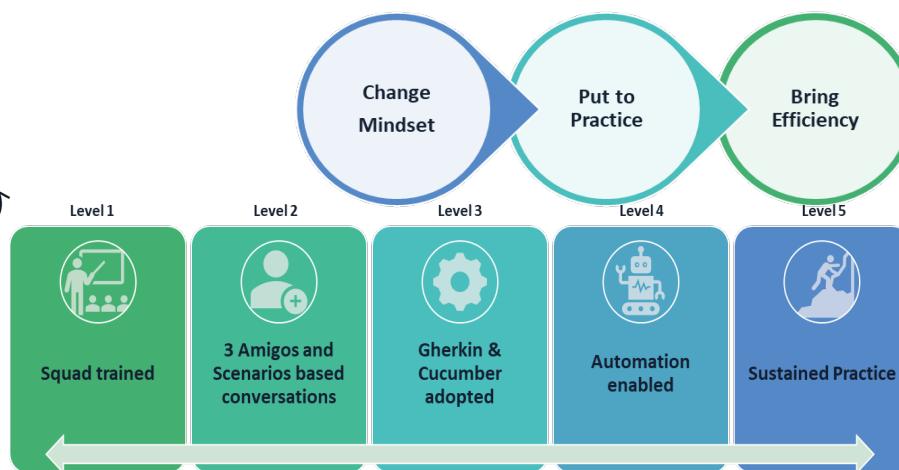
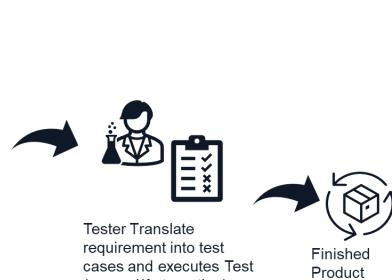
Improved collaboration and  
better user experience

# Our Approach

## Behaviour Driven Development (BDD)



The BDD practice was tailored for Openreach to improve collaboration and promote discovery and solution design, as opposed to purely for test automation. Supported by the Tribe Agile Coaches and Product Owners, driving solution delivery, reducing rework and delighting customers



# Our Approach

## Objectives & Key Results (OKRs)



We created the **OKR Toolkit** to provide a list of KPIs, company goals, guidance on when to use OKRs & KPIs, and examples. Setting achievable and measurable objectives is the key to success when using OKRs

### Case Study - How OKRs help POs achieve business outcomes



Challenge

Teams talking in terms of outputs. Unable to articulate the benefits delivered to the customer. Lack of understanding of the big picture. Low focus and alignment



Approach

### Contact Channels Tribe:

OKR sessions for the Tribe Lead, Scrum Masters & Squads understand benefits, focus & alignment. OKR Toolkit & Outcome Based Roadmap enables POs to think on benefits the initiatives bring. OKR cadence review to track, inspect & adapt.



Product Owner



OKR Tool Kit



Outcomes achieved



Outcomes

Clear and measurable objectives

Improved performance tracking

Increased productivity and motivation



## Tools & Techniques

**Swarming** to limit WIP and reduce Lead Time

Working in **small batches** to improve flow in the system

Doing certain activities in parallel to **reduce spillover**

Embedding **OKRs** to shift from an output focus to an outcome focus

Adoption of **Jira & Confluence** as a centralized platforms to aid decision making

A **collaborative approach** with front-end and back-end working together

Use of **Copilot**



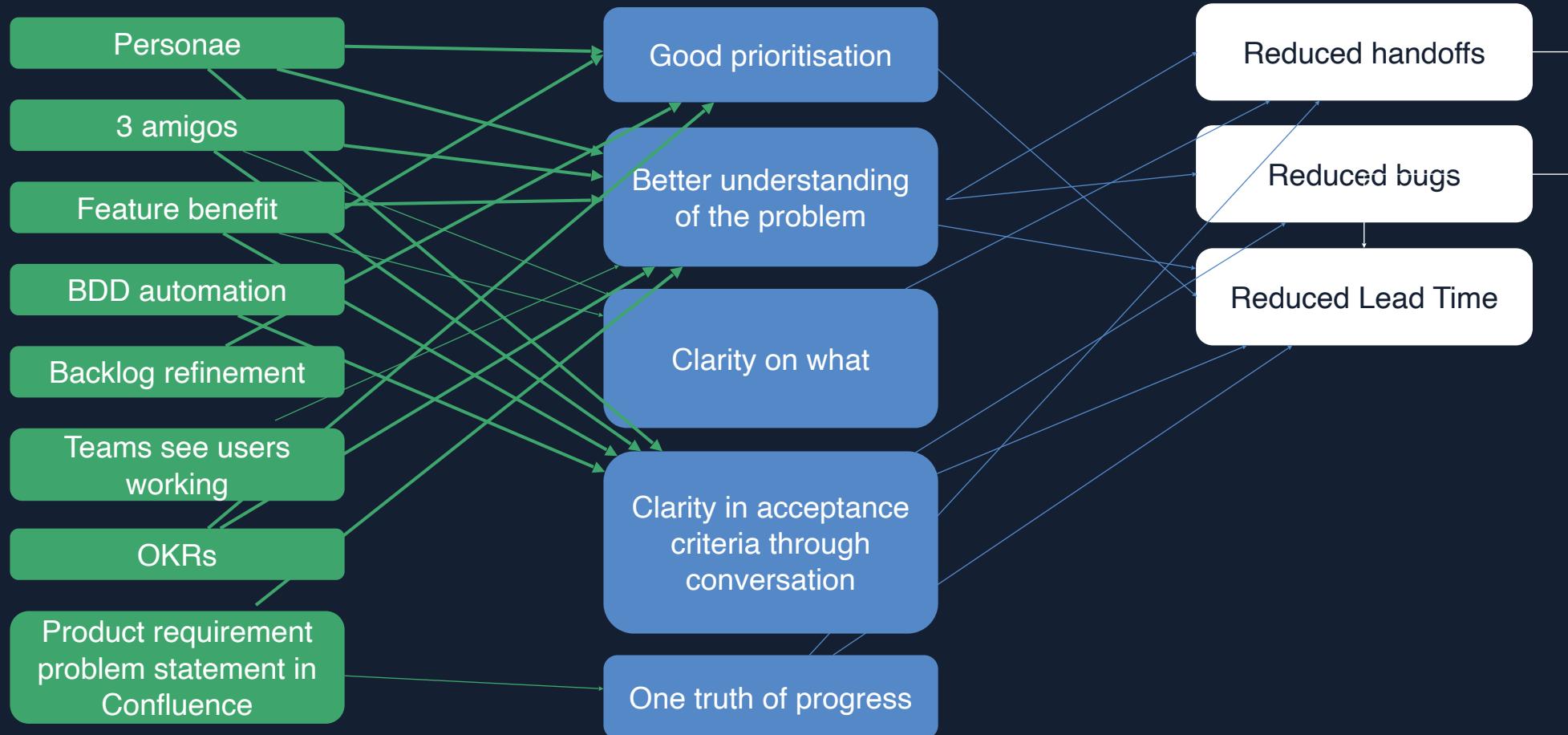
# The Challenges

Post assessment and during implementation

Post assessment		During implementation	
Challenge	Solution	Challenge	Solution
Huge variations in maturity across our 5 Tribes and 50 Squads	Analysed combined assessment data from our and identified patterns	Product Owners required significant handholding to implement the practices	One dedicated Agile Coach embedded in each Tribe providing support
What to implement with many Squads adopting practices from across levels	Progressed incrementally level by level which increase in intensity	How to provide consistent guidance in the application of the practices	Standard global templates including pre-filled examples in Confluence
How to prioritise	Low hanging fruit / 80:20	Gaming of measures	Never compare Tribes
Busy teams and scarce availability of Product Owners to attend training	Agile Coaches worked with POs to apply the good practices on the job	How to make the changes sustainable / embed as business as usual	Requirements maturity good practice added to our new Squad set-up process
How to maintain focus, transparency on progress, visibility of impacts, and a sense of excitement	Celebrated progress every 90 days during Tribe Reviews with the Tribe Leads, and the Openreach Technology Director	How to support Product Owners in their discussions and negotiations with Business Owners / stakeholders / users	Of the techniques, we found User Story Mapping to be particularly effective for Business Owner discussions

# Our Impact

## Actions, Outcomes, & Impact



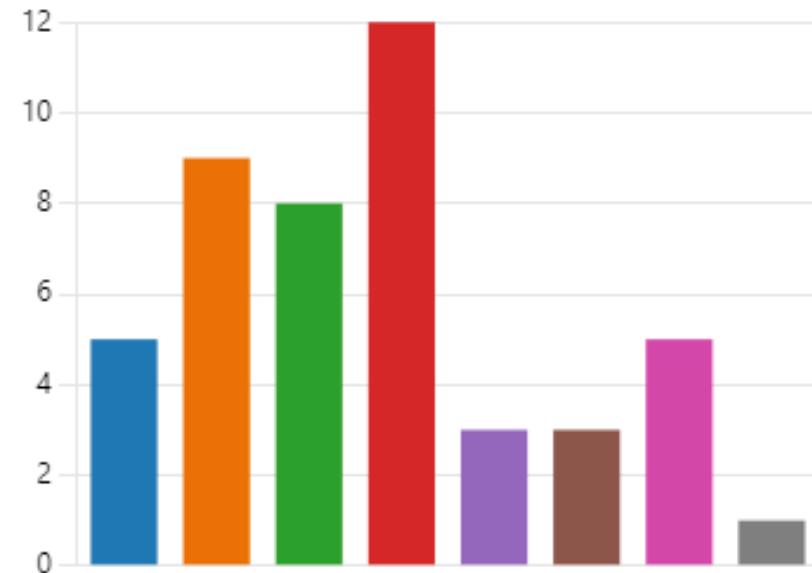
# Our Impact

Which initiatives helped our people the most

1. Which of the following initiatives from requirement maturity as helped you the most? choose all that helped you the most(multiple selection)

[More Details](#)

● Introducing Personas	5
● Co pilot	9
● Confluence templates to help P...	8
● Feature Benefit	12
● Tools and techniques to reduce ...	3
● Dashboards quantitative assess...	3
● OKR	5
● All of the above	1



# Our Impact

What our people are telling us

**“By adding feature benefit, the team understood what the product was actually intended to do”**

Anitha – Scrum Master

**“OKRs helped us to align with the requirements & track progress”**

Jasmin – Scrum Master

**“Having designs documented in Confluence & having proper Acceptance Criteria brought clarity”**

Stella – Scrum Master

**“We can now strive for continuous improvement”**

Uchit – Scrum Master

**“The efficiency and effectiveness of these activities improved our performance and consistency”**

Dhuvarish – UX Designer

**“The confluence templates were useful for giving a bit of direction”**

Gordon – Product Owner

**“Copilot is really useful”**

Nidhi - Developer

# Our Impact

Remarkable and we continue to improve

Design defect reduction

Overall defect reduction

Cultural shift



**Thank you**

Help we're looking for

