CORNELL NYC TECH

Lecture 2

Turning Ideas into Software

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Risks Abound

- Founding Team
- Product
- Market
- Sales
- Recruiting Risk
- Economic / Macro Risk

Divide and Conquer

Executive

Engineering

Product

Role of the CTO

Execute the Product Vision

Role of the CTO

Executing the Product Vision Includes:

- Partner in defining the Product
- Building the Product
- Cultivate healthy communication and feedback loops
- Grow the team
- Make decisions for the sake of progress

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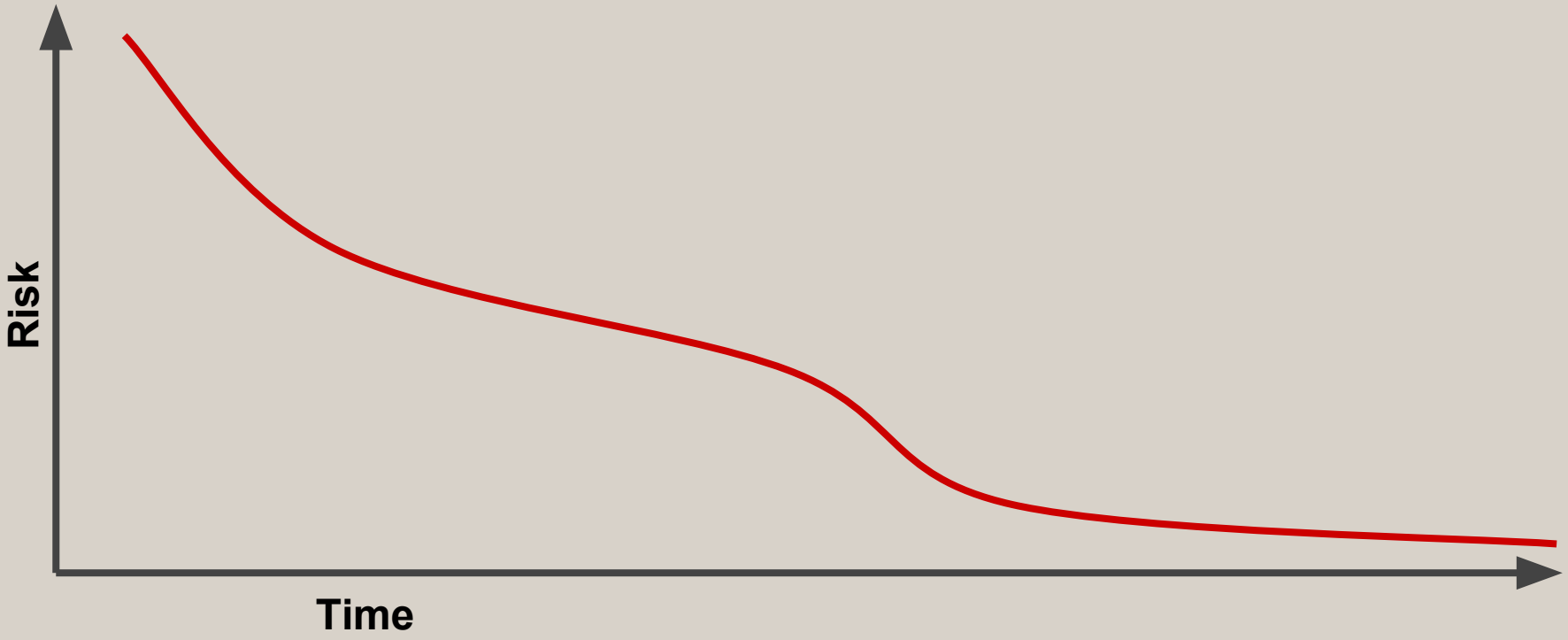
Reducing Product Risk



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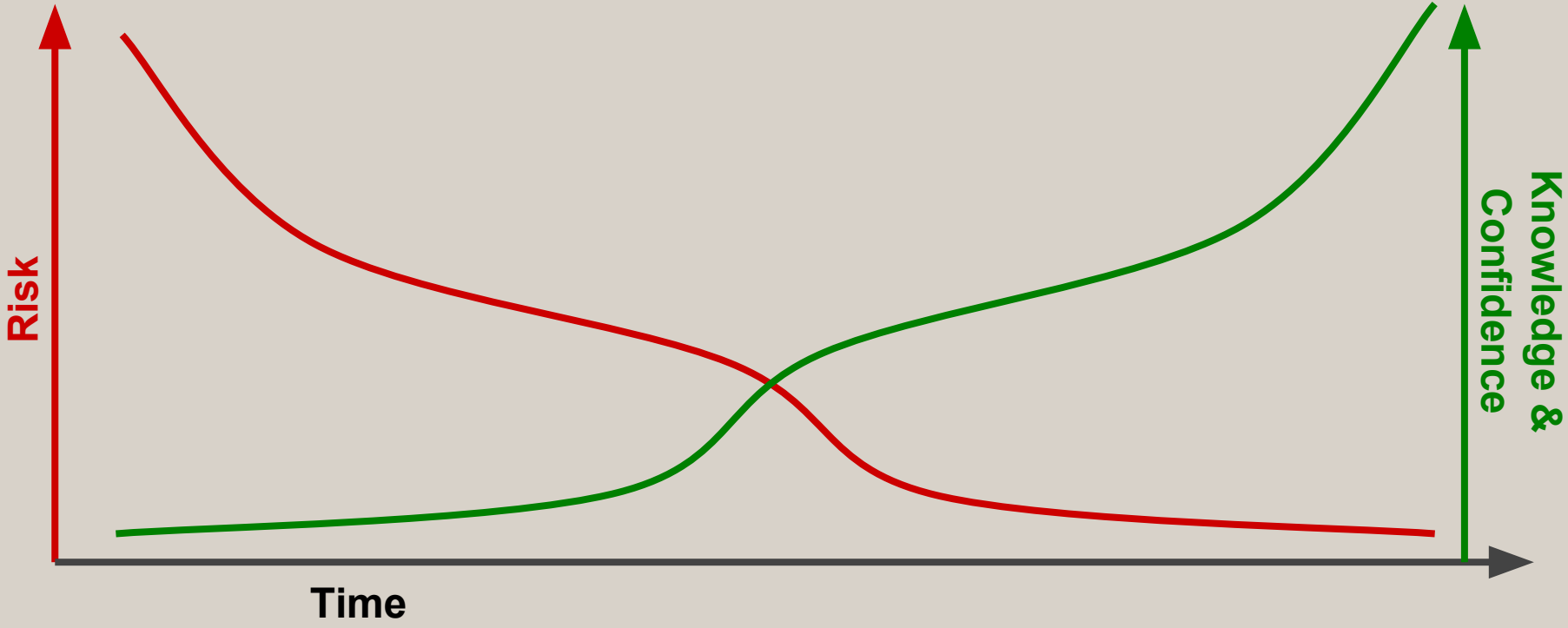
Reducing Product Risk



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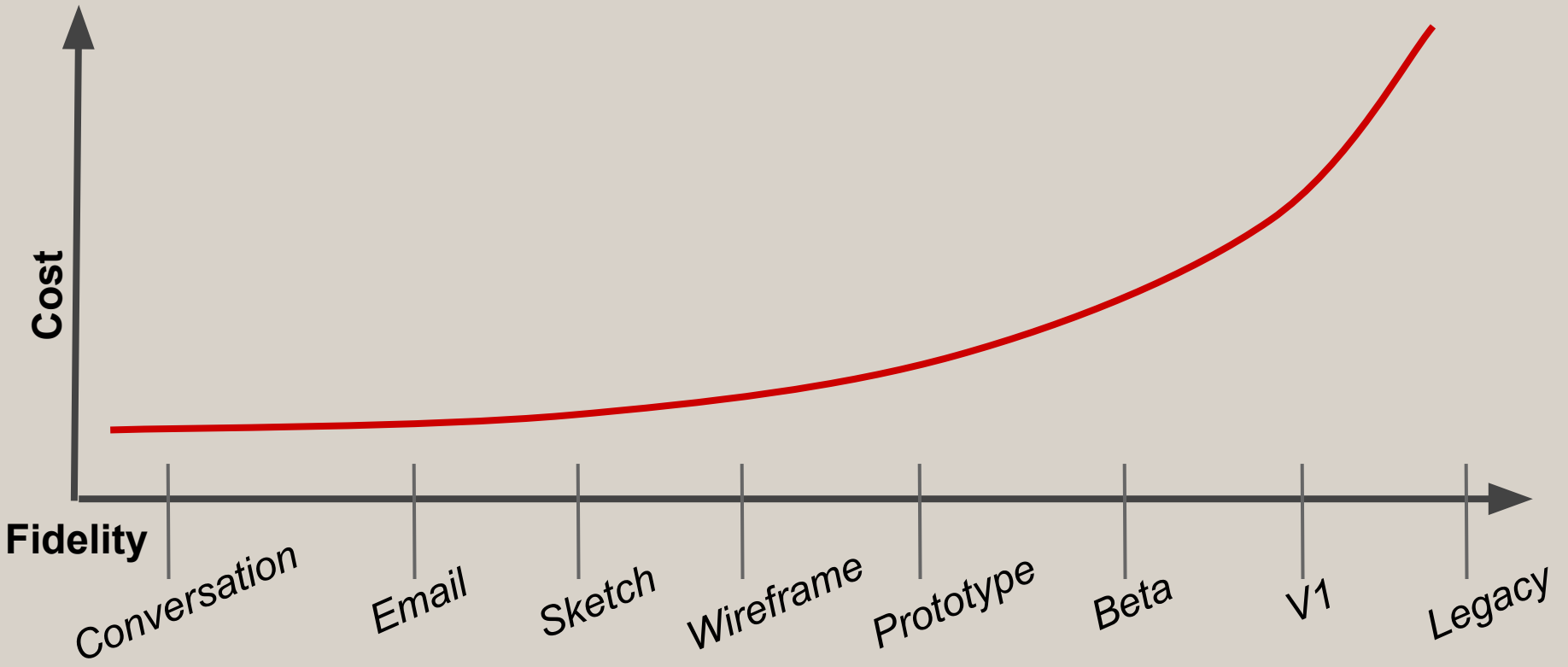
Ideas are Cheap. Execution is Not



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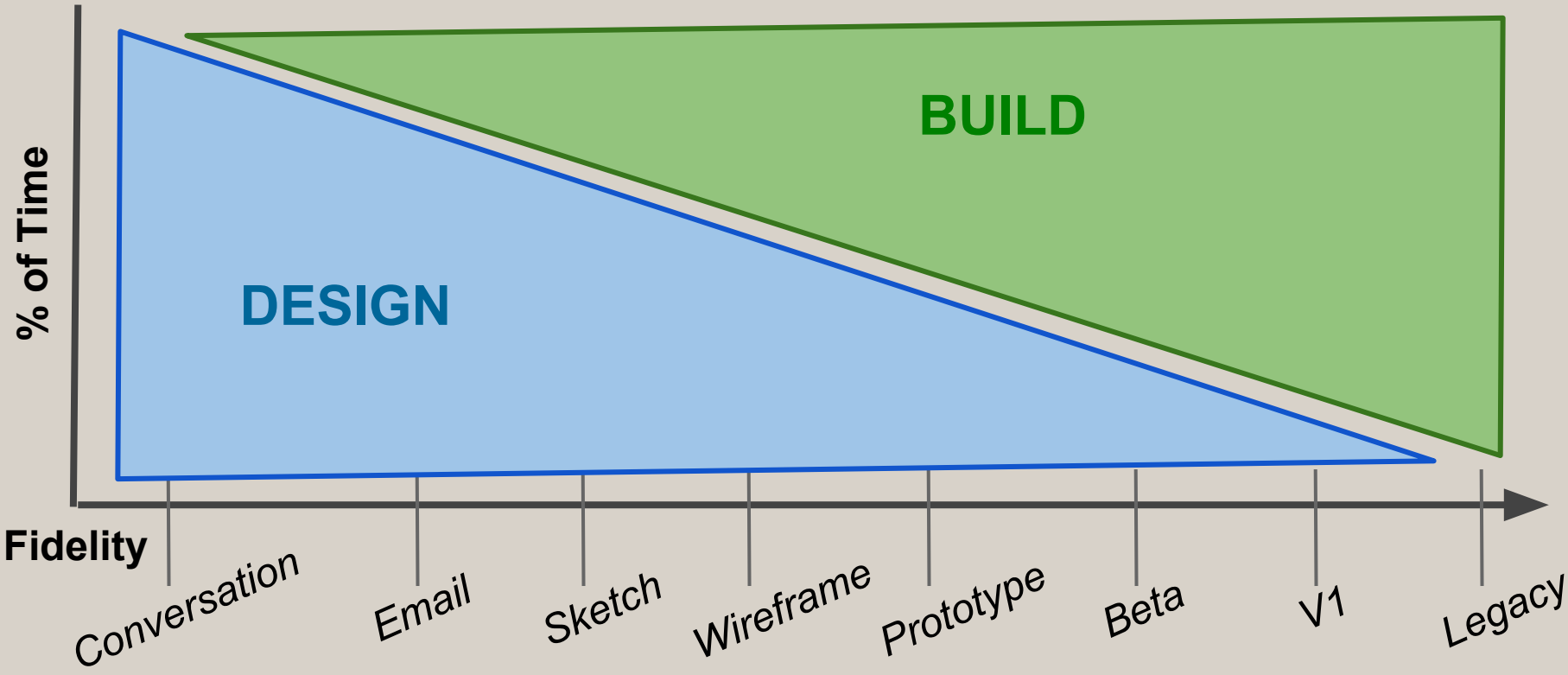

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Design ⇒ Build

- Need-finding
- Prototyping
- **Execute**

Need-finding

- Goal is to **deeply** understand the problem
- Stay focused on pain, **not** on solutions
- Direct observation of real behavior is best, rarely possible

Prototyping

- Goal is to **de-risk** the solution before building it
- Enact the vision and explore it with customers
  - Identify a specific task they must accomplish
  - Subject thinks-aloud as they solve the task in prototype
- Prototype becomes an awesome spec

Divide and Conquer

Executive

A customer said they want **everything**

...yesterday

Engineering

That will take **months**, and for just one customer!

Product

Lets offer them **our thing**, with a custom menu option