

# **The Strobbo Experiment**

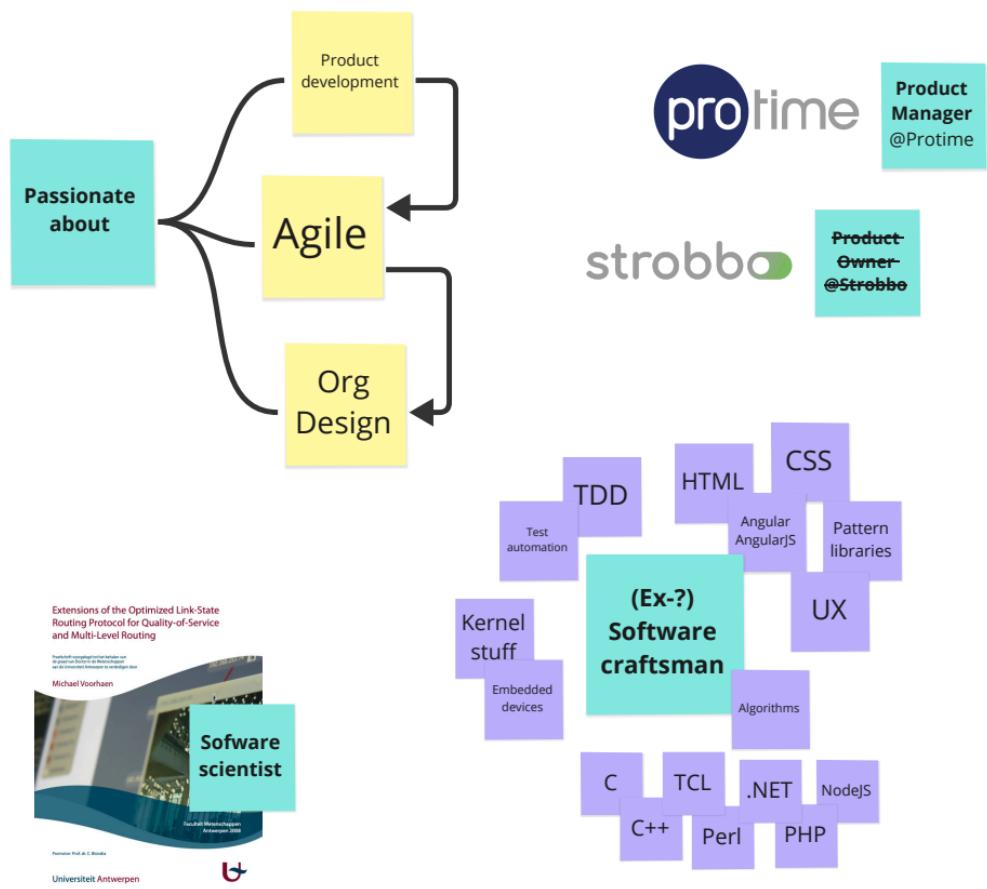
## Elevating Katas on the Road to Business Agility

Michael Voorhaen

strobbo

LeSS  
conference

# About Me



# Automate your flexible staff planning



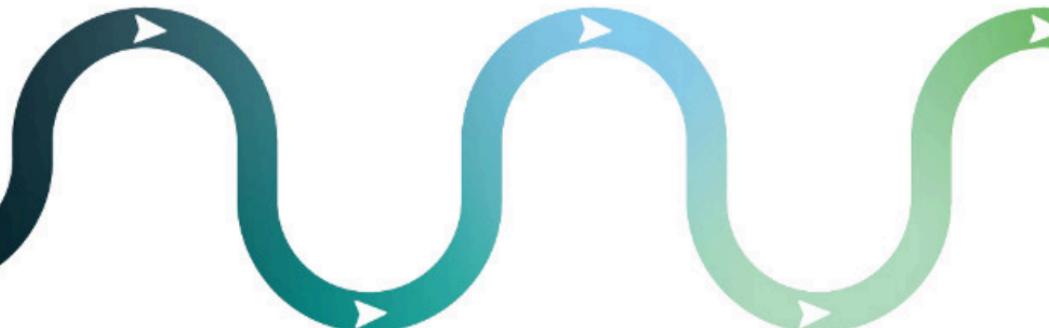
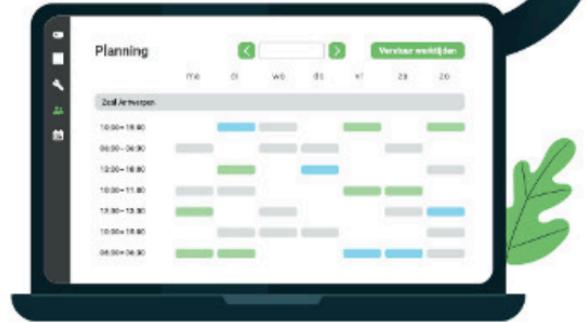
Staff  
planning



Digital  
Time registration



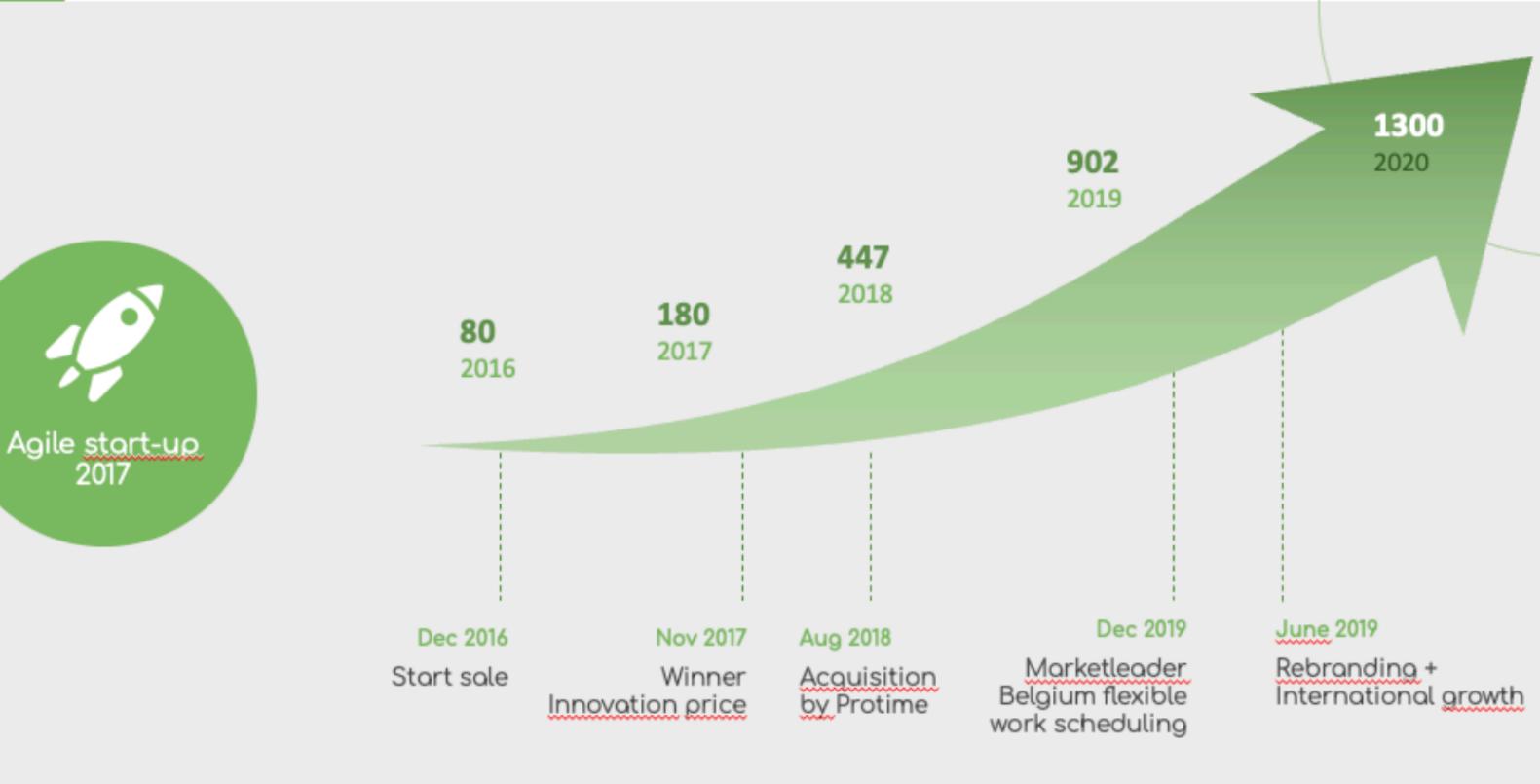
Reporting



Automated dimona &  
contracts



Payroll  
integration

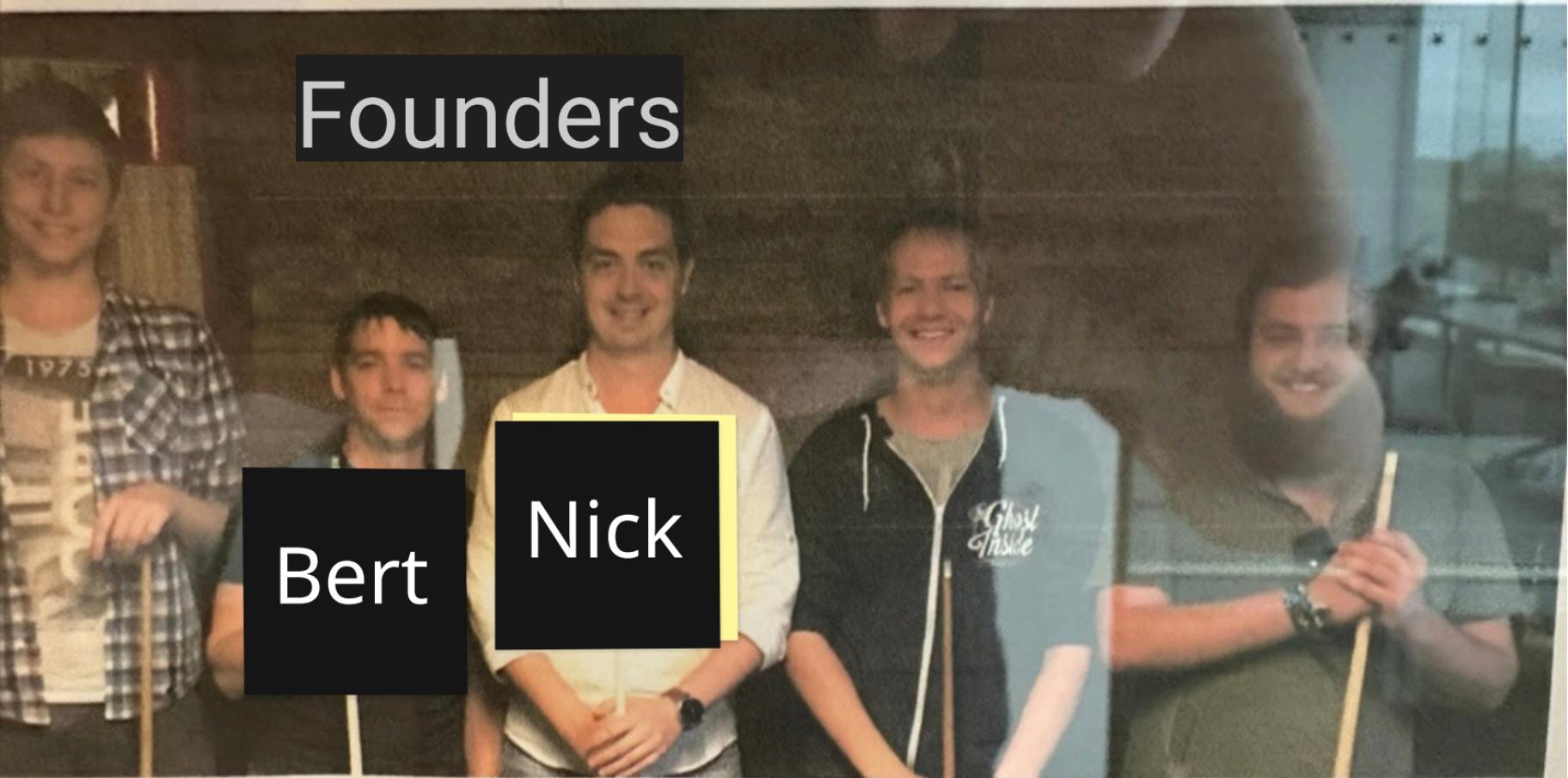




# Founders

Bert

Nick







- Grew fast → from 2 devs to 3 devs to a 10+ dev team
- Mostly junior devs



Me

- Grew fast → from 2 devs to 3 devs to a 10+ dev team
- Mostly junior devs

# Struggles

Building a new version of Strobo alongside the old one with a new team.

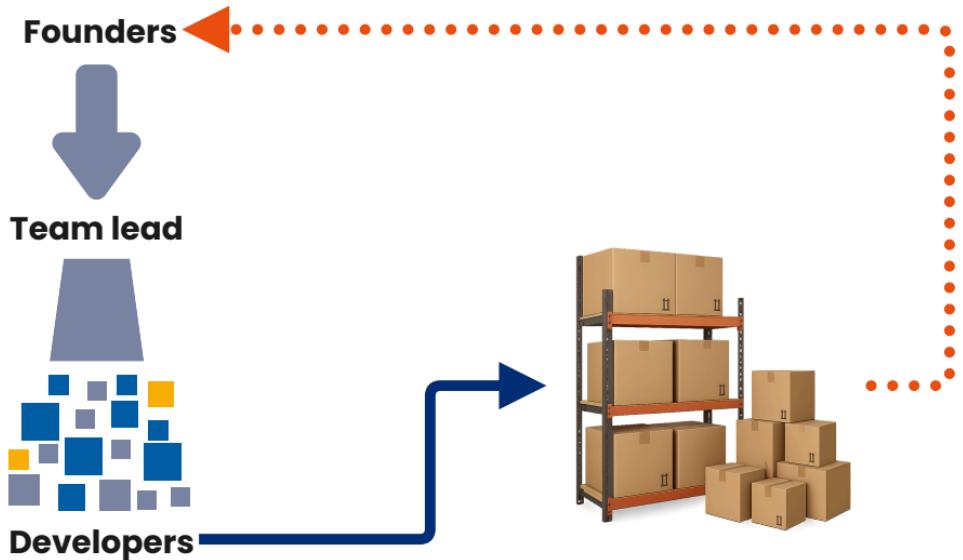
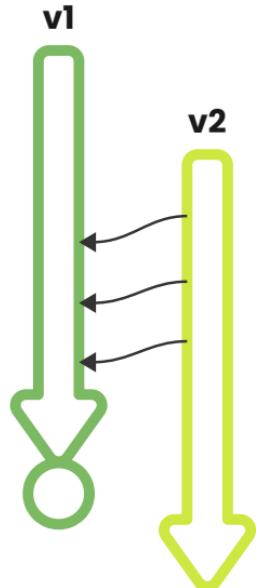
The new team could not release without the old one.

Work was presented fragmented and very detailed to developers.

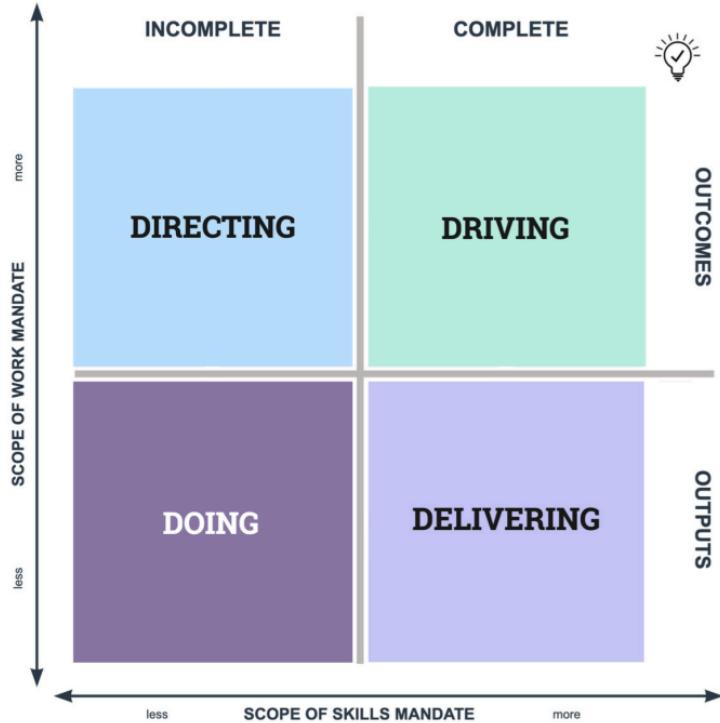
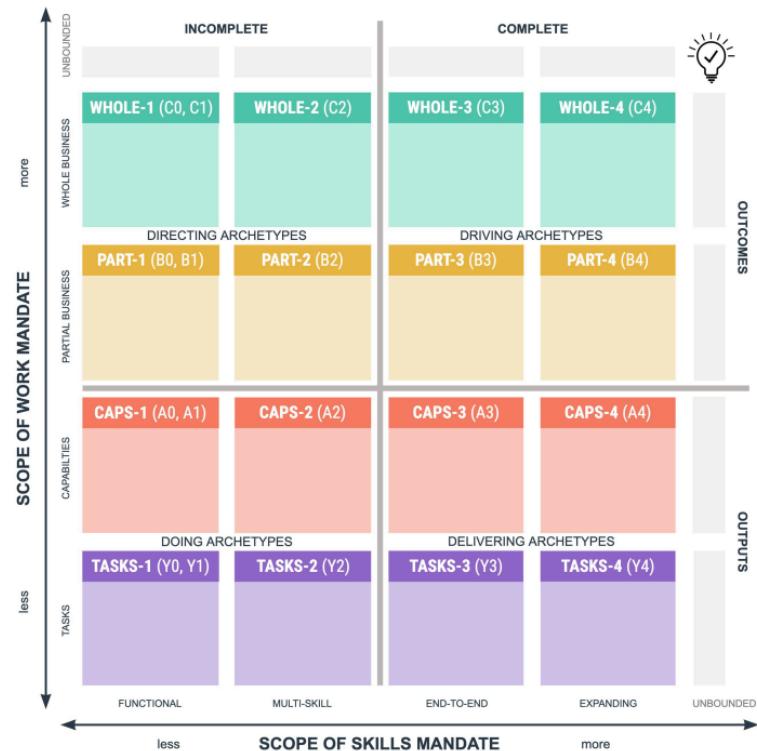
Devs were identifying as front-end and back-end.

What the team delivered got stuck waiting for feedback and approval from the founders.

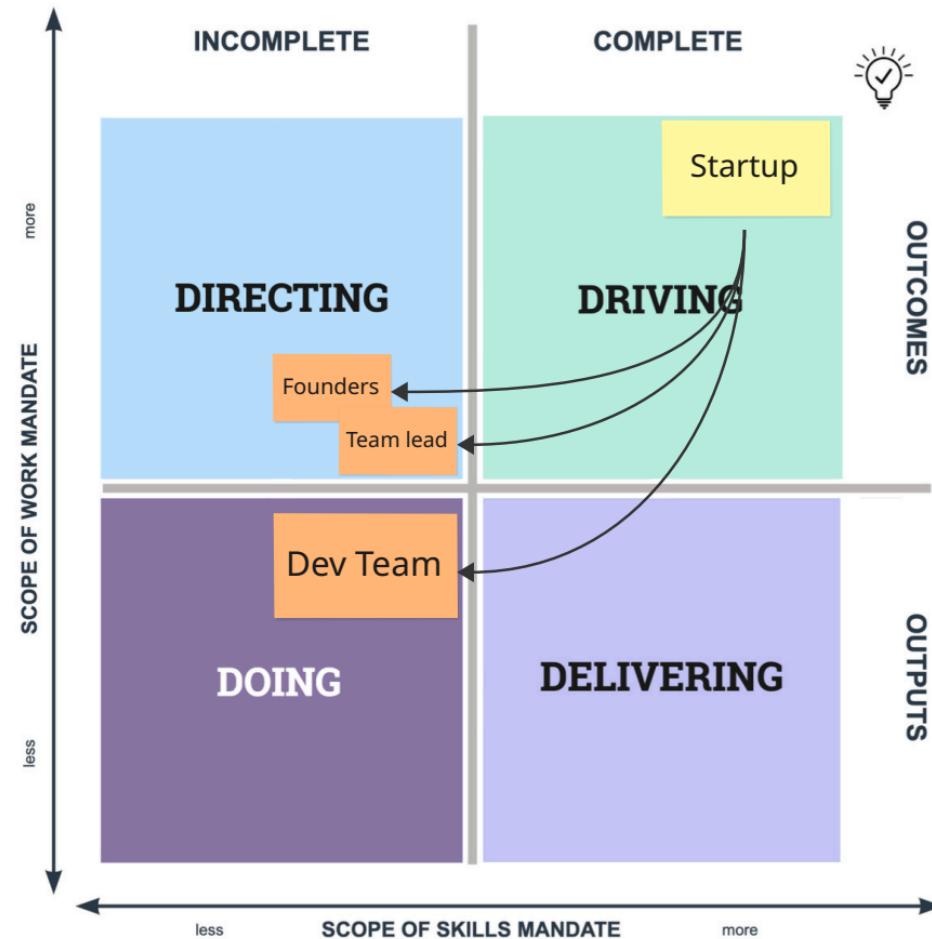
When we released they were large chunks with high impact.



# Org Topologies

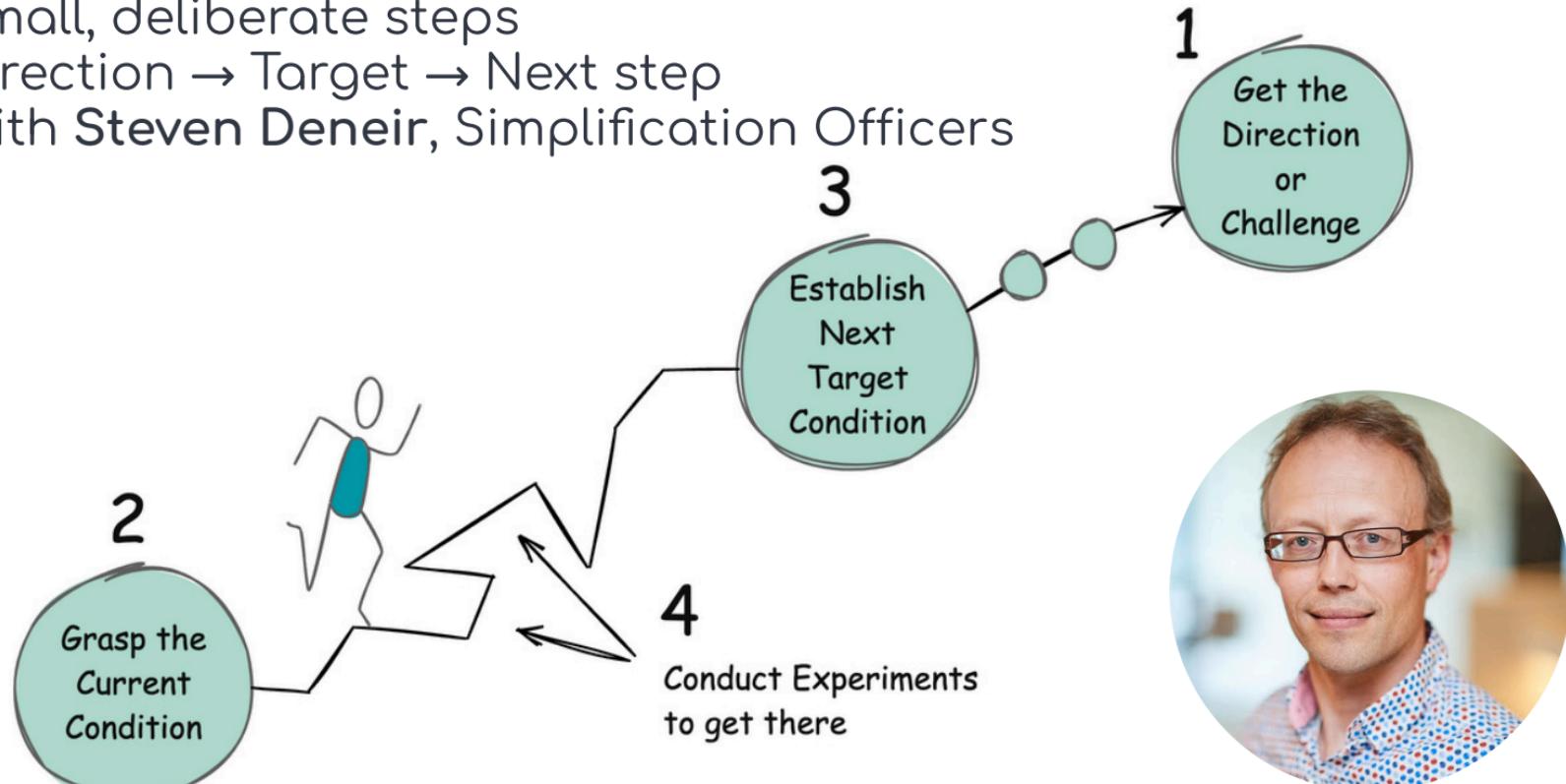


# On the map

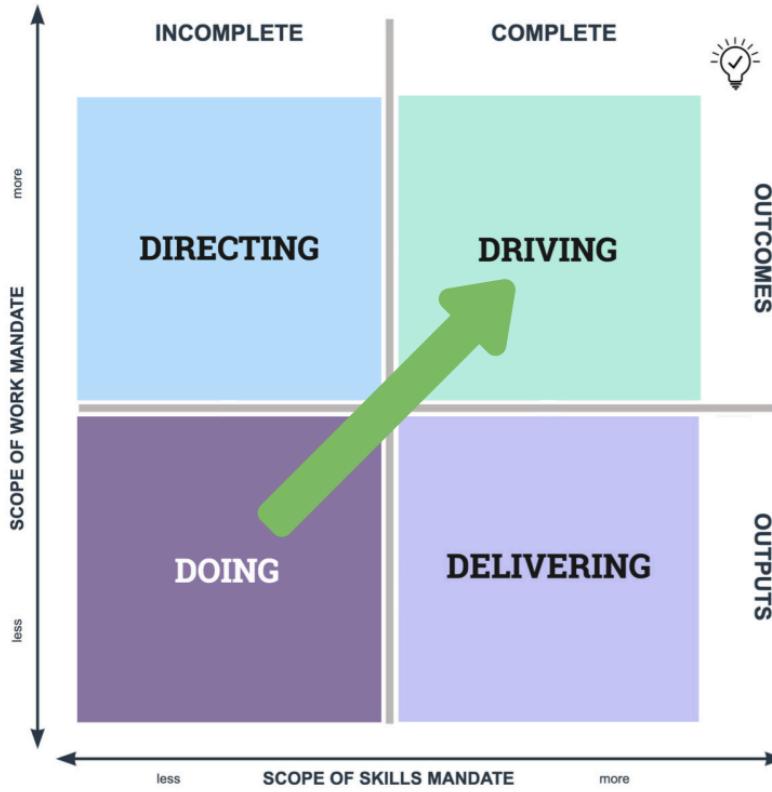


# Lean Improvement Kata

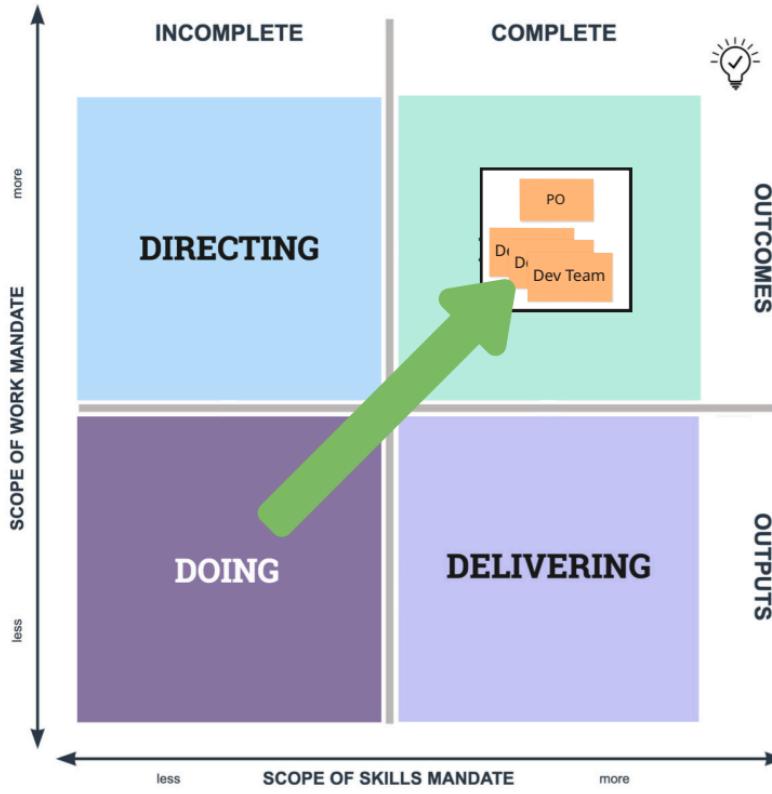
- Small, deliberate steps
- Direction → Target → Next step
- With Steven Deneir, Simplification Officers



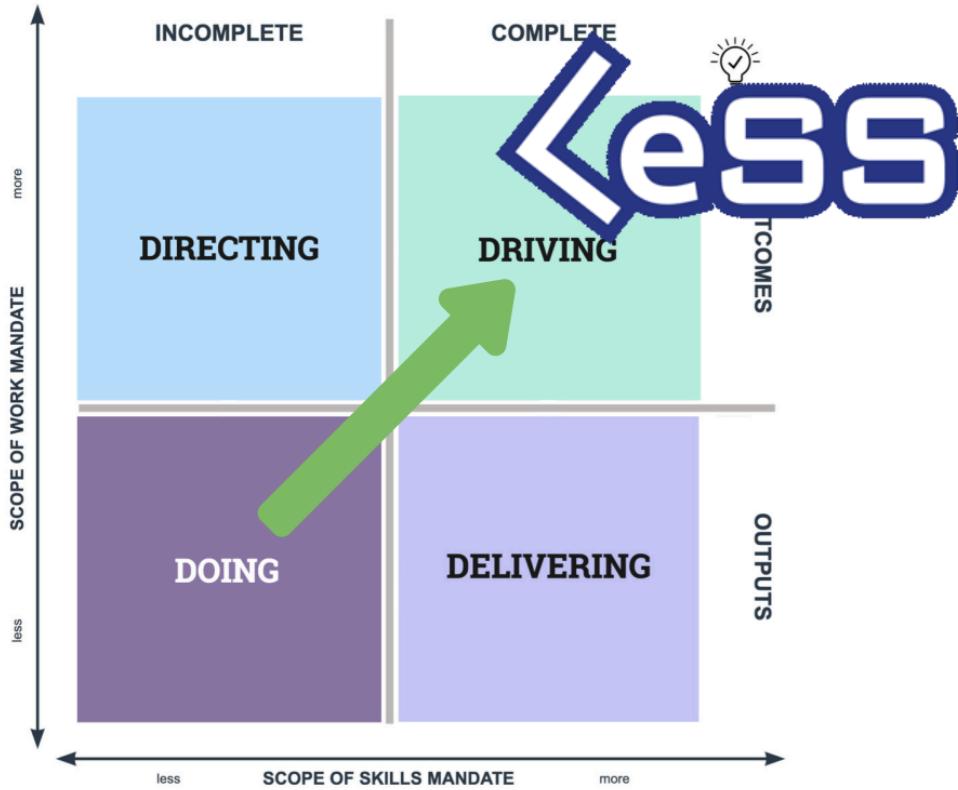
# Vision



# Vision



# Vision





# Reviews as an Elevating Kata



What will you do in the breakout?



You will be helping *Salma* from "Papa Luigi's" create a planning that follows the rules

## Mobile - Tenant switch

- Allows the user to switch to a different tenant
  - Only get push notifications from your active tenant
- Consultants can also switch and enter a new reason

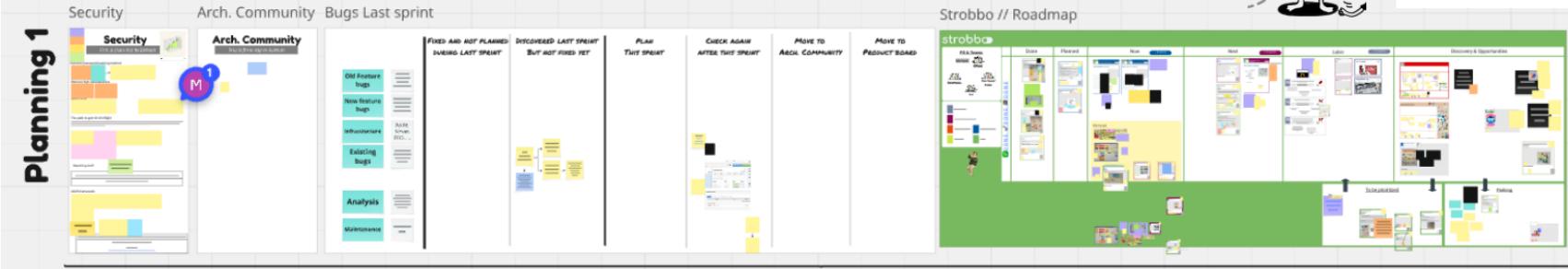
Breakout



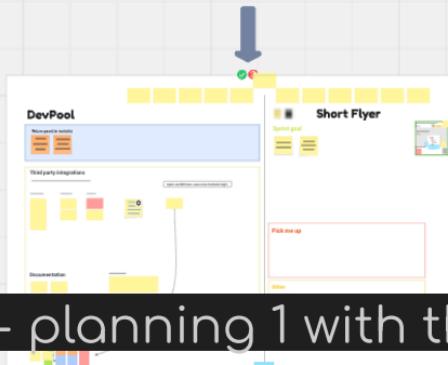
This breakout will feature the following:

- Bazaar-style sprint reviews
- transparency & whole-product focus

# Planning as an Elevating Kata

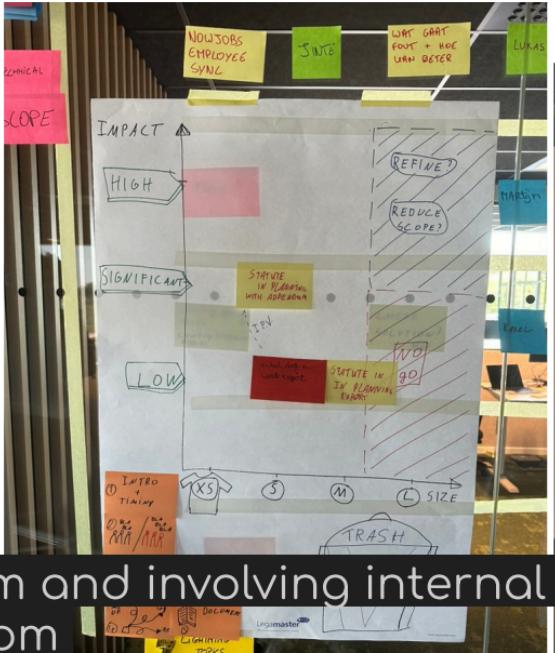


## Planning 2



- Planning 1 & 2 (like LeSS) - planning 1 with the entire team
- On-site [redacted]
- Built out routines to help us stay on track
- What do we think are the most meaningful sprint goals over pulling in work items

# Refinement as an Elevating Kata

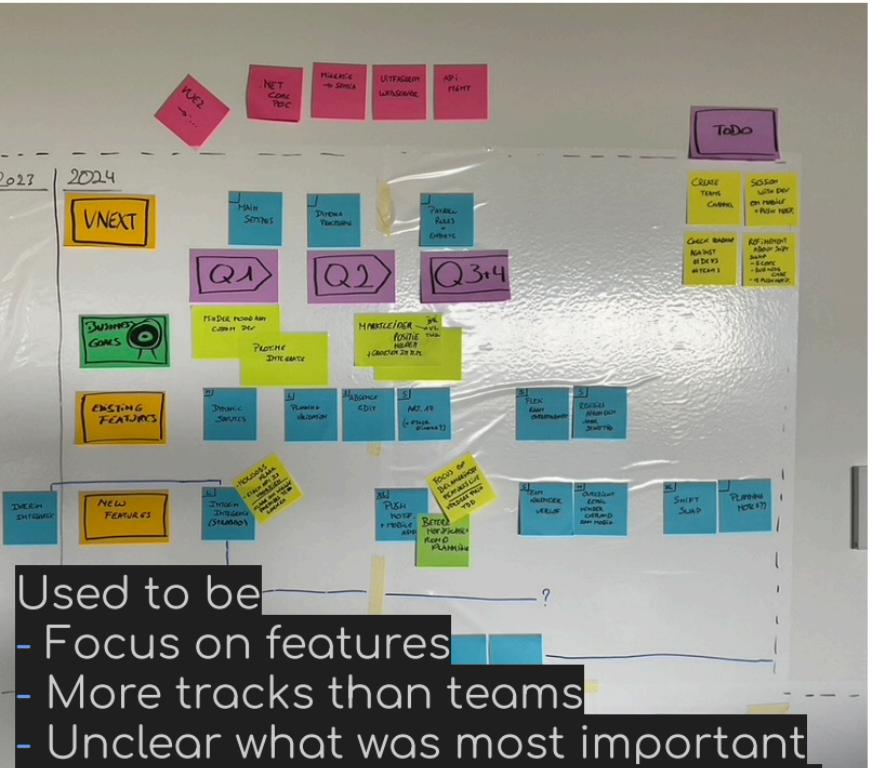


WHOLE  
PRODUCT  
FOCUS

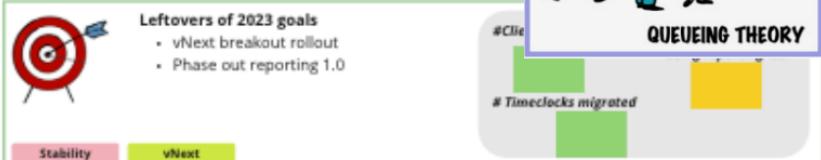


- Cross-team and involving internal stakeholders
- Evolved from
  - understanding stories → working on outcomes → product discovery
- Early on combined this with learning and knowledge transfer
  - understanding features, our domain, etc.
- Now: joint understanding through discussion

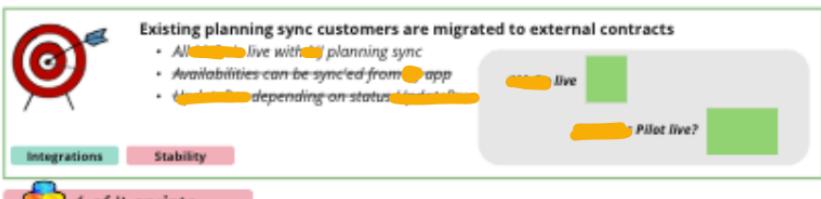
# Roadmap / Backlog



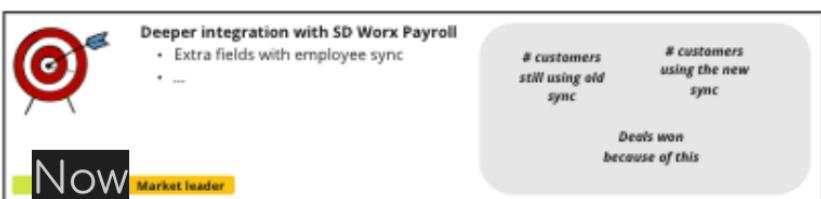
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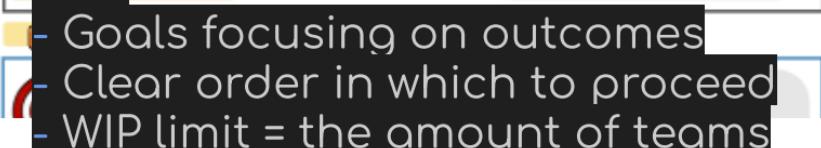
1



2



3



# Struggles

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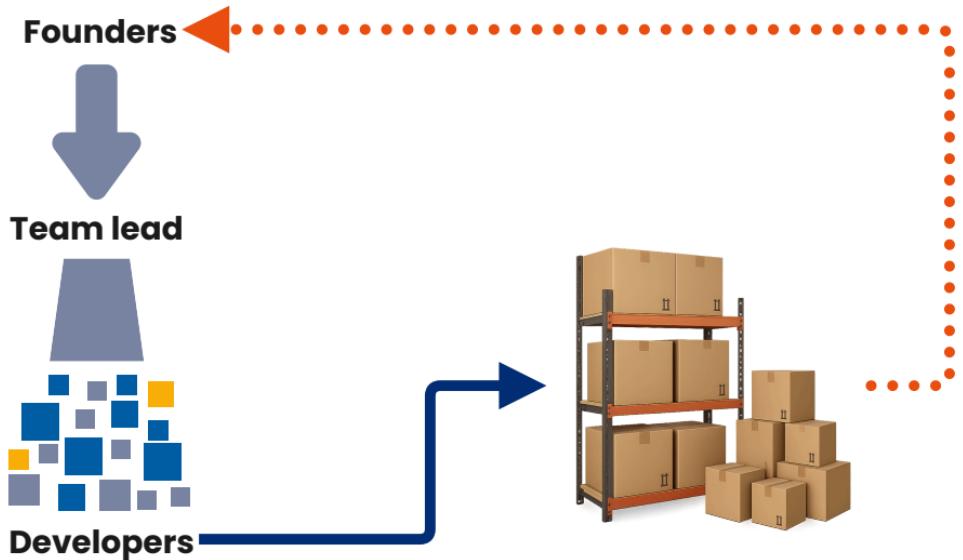
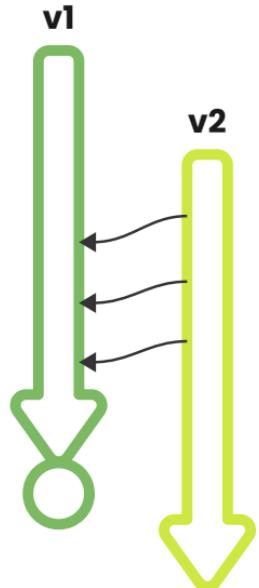
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When we released they were large chunks with high impact.



# Bets

- Estimates were associated with frustration and mistrust.
- But we still need a way to "control our clock"
- Introduced bets as a middle ground
  - Instead of "How long will it take?"
  - I started asking "What can I get in this timeframe?"
- As a PO you can think about investments



6 sprints

Unit: 1 sprint goal for 1 team

9

Planners can add custom notes to the planning

*Protects our market leader position in BE  
Additional configurability for international markets*



2/3 sprints

Planning notes

# Bets



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6 sprints

Unit: 1 sprint goal for 1 team

Bets have become a conversation starter.

"What is most important to deliver first?"

"Which tech debt can we clean up?"

"Are we still on track? Do we need to make decisions?"

"Do I need to invest more time?"

8

## Dynamic statutes and rule-based planning validation

*Protects our market leader position in BE  
Additional configurability for international markets*



### Combines well with incremental delivery

- Sprint 1: disable and hide old static statutes
- Sprint 2: add your own statutes
- Sprint 3: move some settings to dynamic statutes to give more options to users
- Sprint 5: release new planning validation with new functionality in beta next to the old validation
- Sprint 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: release additional rules and roll out to everyone
- **Sprint 11: invest in blocking validation rules**



TRANSPARENCY

## Dynamic Statutes - Update

3 statutes created during last sprint

### Updated fields

- name
- hasToSignAllowedAbsence
- translations.nl
- translations.fr

### Dynamic Statutes Update

200+ statutes disabled during last sprint



## Planning Validation Rules Update

Some tenants are experimenting with advanced rules

Some examples:

- Students must be planned for at least **4 days** per **month**
- All employees must be planned for at least **32 hours** per **1 week**
- Part time employees must be planned for at least **24 hours** per **1 week**
- ...

### Planning Validation Rules Updates:

Some new widgets:

- Avg. # errors per sending of worktimes
- Avg. # warnings per sending of worktimes
- Total # of errors bypassed per sending of worktimes
- Total # of warnings per sending of worktimes

15

2

10

10

Planning validation rules

# Created    # Deleted    # Enabled    # Disabled    # Updated

15      2      10      10      10

Planning Validation Rules rollout:

Currently:

10/07/2025

60%

100%



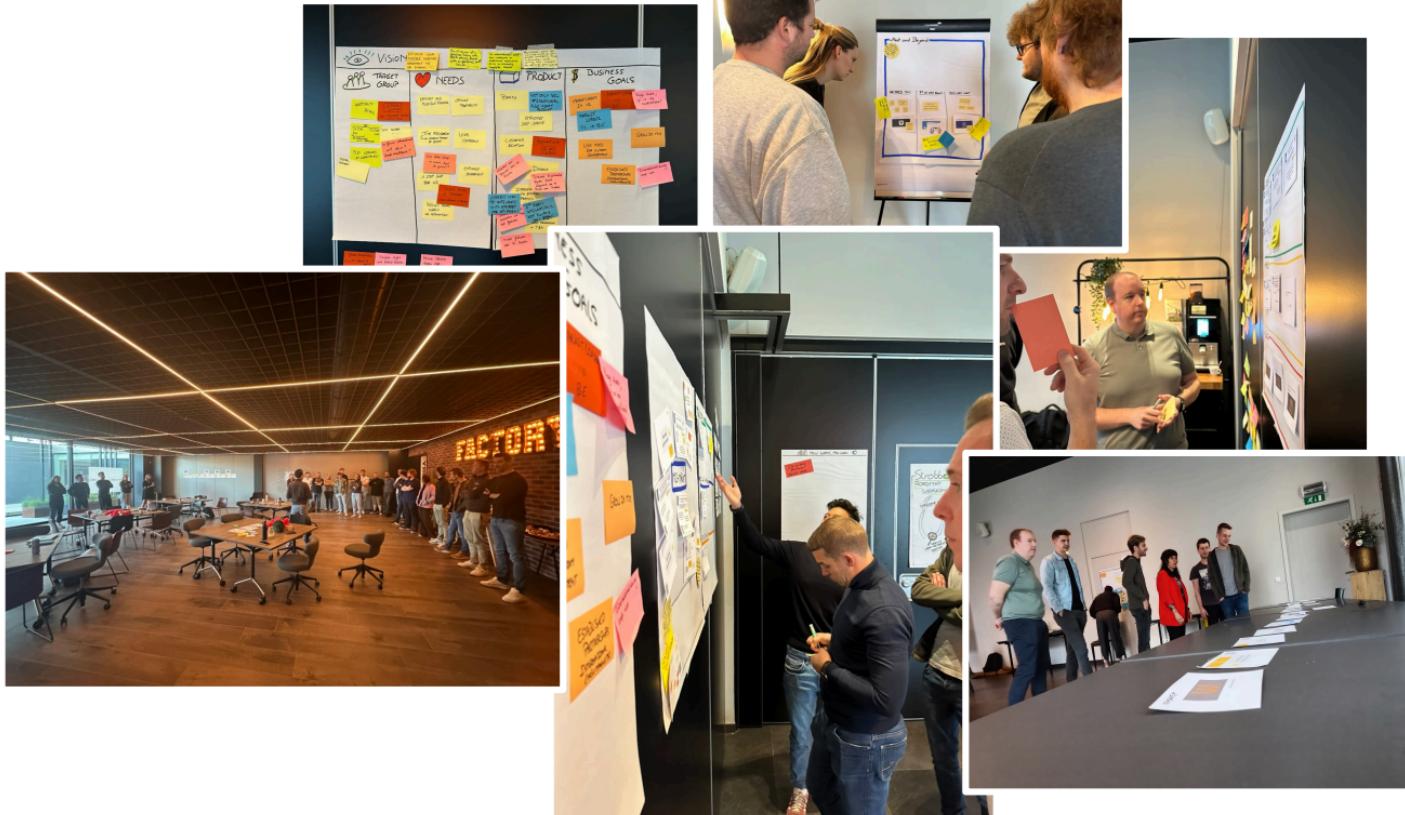
## Blocking Rules Update

🚫 53 rules have been marked as **blocking** across **12 tenants**

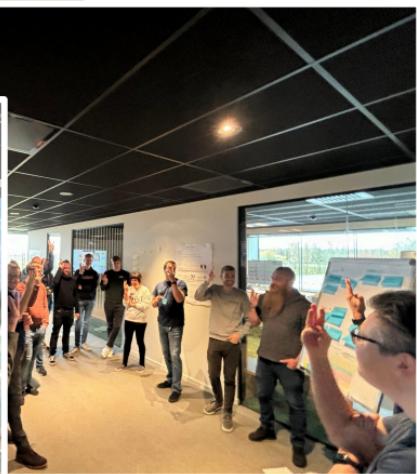
🔒 13 tenants only allow **admins** to overrule blocking errors

⚠️ Blocking errors have been **overruled 17 times** across all tenants

# Roadmap workshop

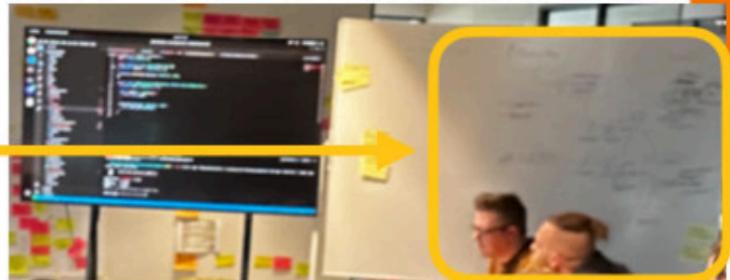
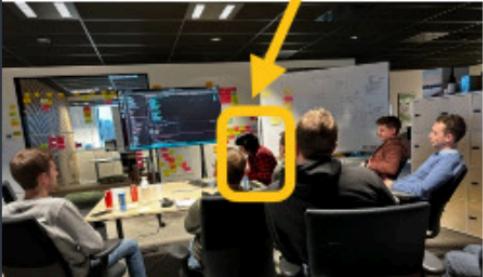


# Dev Days





3 teams: coders, testers, analysts, scrum master, manager and... secretary



30 minute refinement before starting

Round 3, +/- 1 hour in...

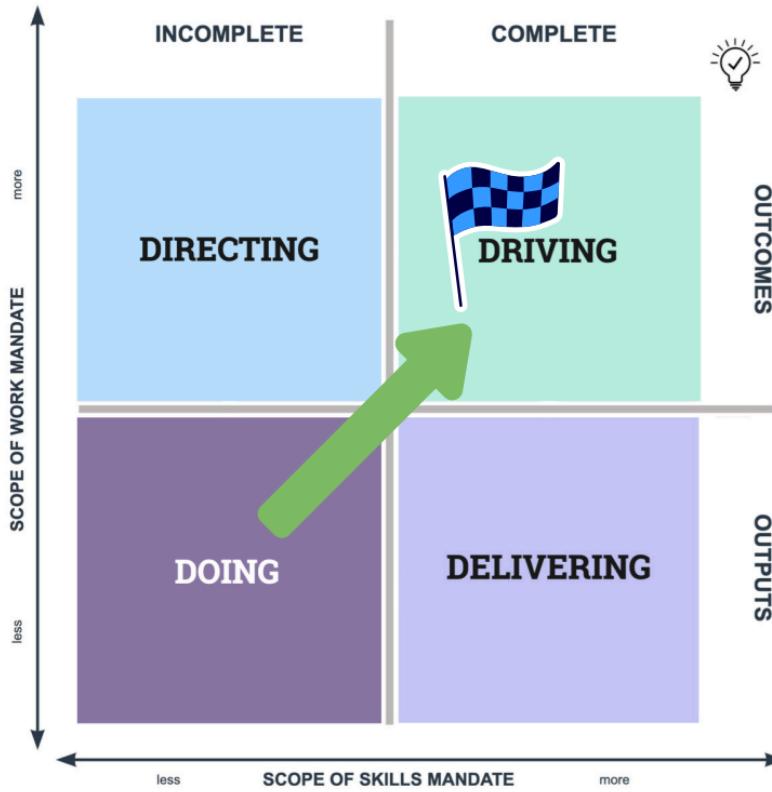
- Split in 2:
- Front-End
- Back-End



# Customer contact



# Signs of stable footing



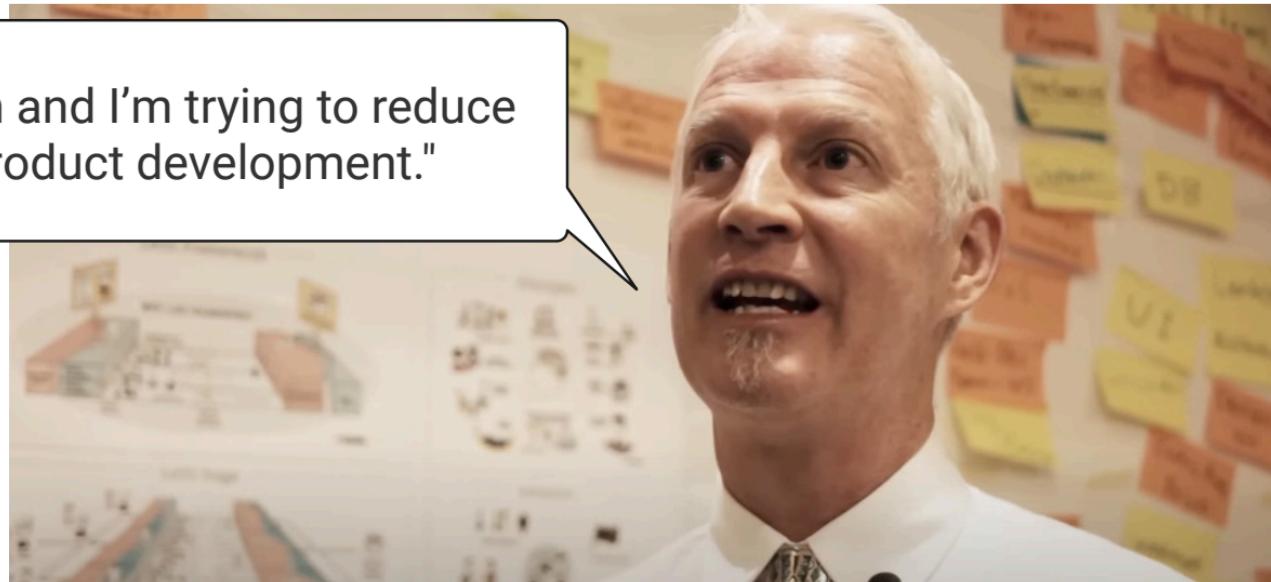
## Signs of stable footing

The ***perception of speed*** by stakeholders goes up (way before everything really goes faster).

## Signs of stable footing

**It's (sometimes) fun again!**

"I'm Craig Larman and I'm trying to reduce suffering in product development."



## Signs of stable footing

You notice you are working  
with a ***team-of-teams***  
instead of separate ***teams***

# Signs of stable footing

You **just talk** a lot (in a good way).



**Bas Vodde** • 1st

Developer and coach in multi-team products.

1mo • 5

...

In LeSS, we prefer to create a system for teams to "just talk". We've been using that as a short for focusing on "spontaneous, decentralised, informal coordination." I often use these words, but they are picked precisely.

When you created an environment where people can use "just talk" for coordination then knowledge and learning flows rapidly through an organisation.

#lessworks



192

16 comments • 19 reposts

## Signs of stable footing

You **just talk** a lot (in a good way).

Signs of **empiricism** in the **language** everyone uses.

*What is the next step we can take?  
vs  
When will it be done?*

Openness for developers and stakeholders to understand each other.  
Signs of a **shared language**

# Thank you!

strobbo