

Devopsdays'09

INTRODUCING KANBAN IN OPERATIONS

2009-10-31

Mattias Skarin



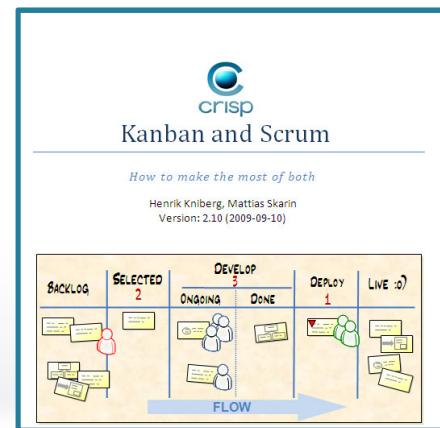
Who am I

mattias.skarin@crisp.se

Help organisations succeed with software



Book: "Kanban and Scrum –
how to make the best of both"



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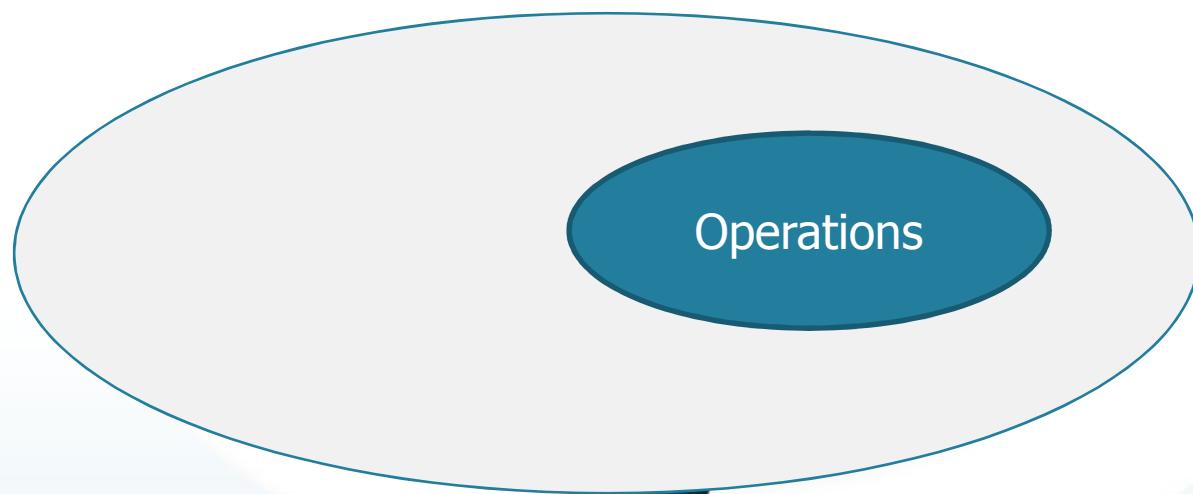
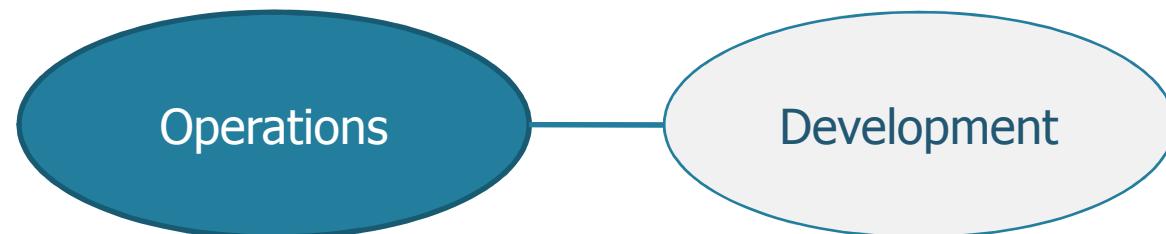
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Operations

Development

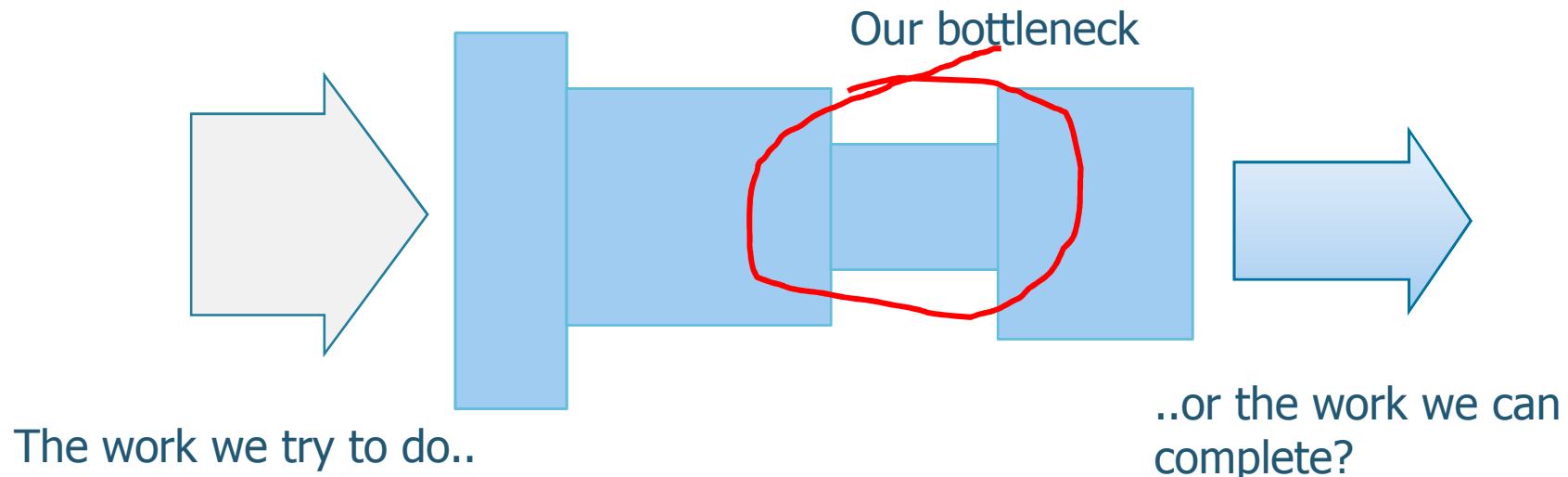


Questions & challenges

- **Can technical operations be viewed as a flow problem?**
- **Is it possible to get team work benefits in a field with high specialization?**
- **How well can continuous improvement be deployed in operations?**

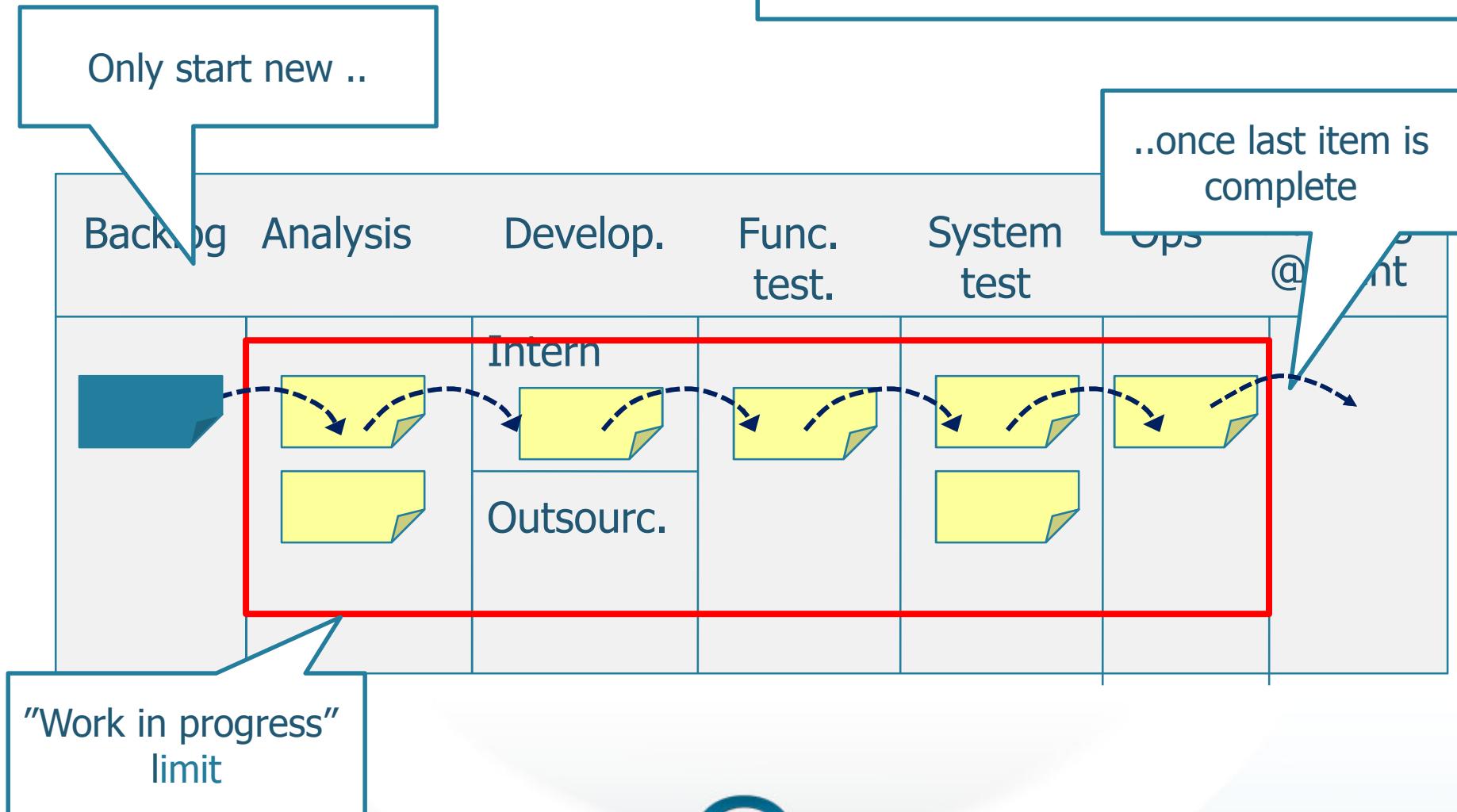
Flow

What matters?



What is Kanban?

1. Limit Work In Progress
2. Only start new when last item was complete
3. Balance demand against throughput



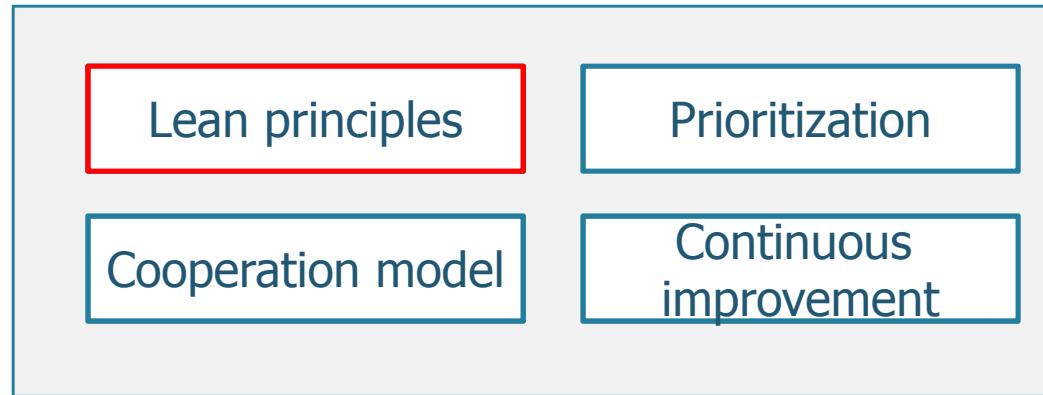
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A view on Scrum?

Standardized package



Nature of technical operations



Nature of demand

Operations

- Interrupt driven
- Specialized issues
- Uneven
- Highly interdependant

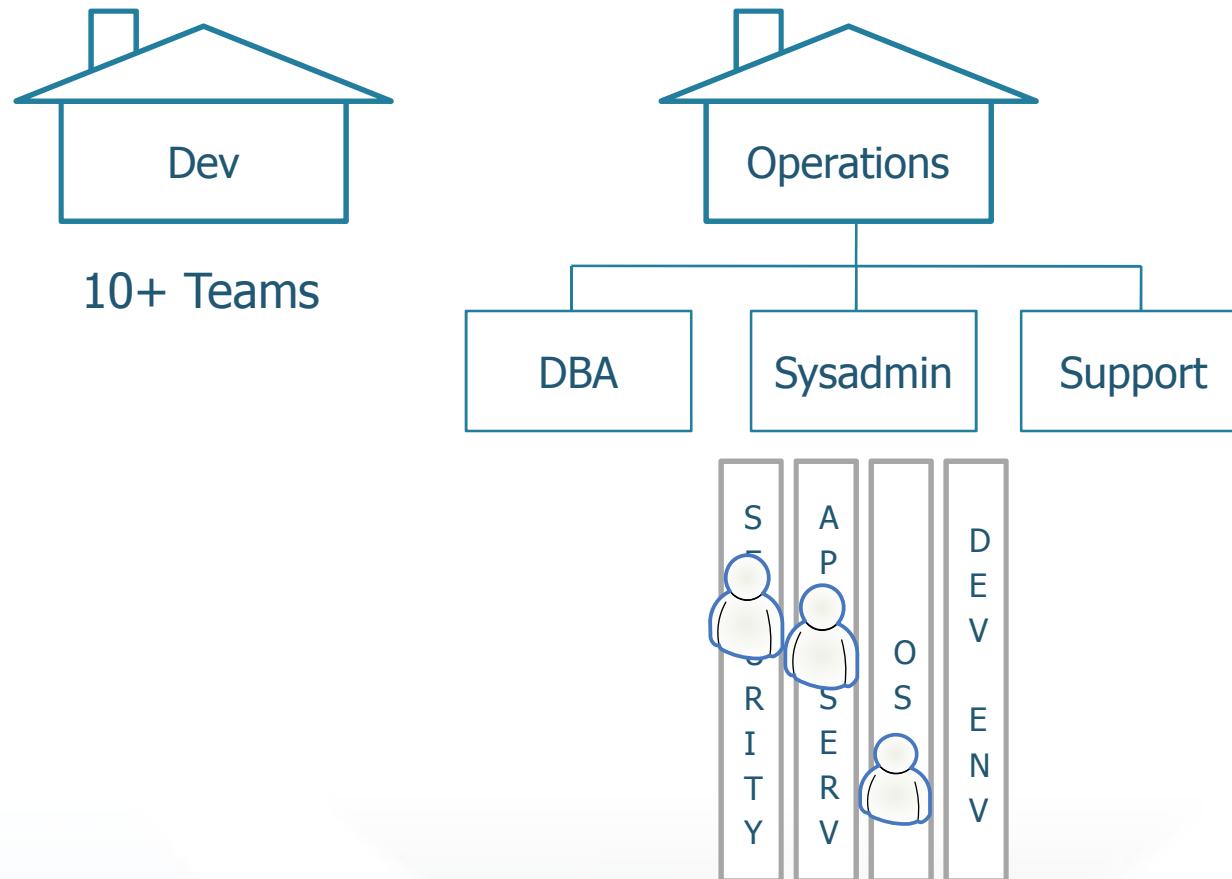
Software

- Focus time
- Shared work
- Continuous flow
- Answers to themselves

Run Scrum?

No! We have a different problem

The case



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"Us"
(tech ops)



"Why aren't you using the existing platform advantages?"

"Let's make release work easier"

"We are hurt by your bad quality!"



"Them"
(development)



"will but no way.. getting help is heavy"

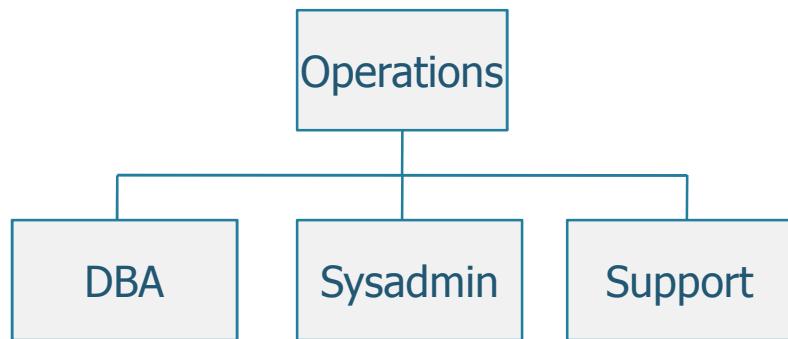
"very competent when it comes to infrastructure"

"projects takes too long"

"They" ought to change



Asking the right questions



"How can we improve?"

"What can we learn
from Agile?"

How we got going

1. Why do we want to do this?

Work closer with product development

Tell end customer when we can deliver

Management can shift focus from the imminent stuff

Better opportunities of growth and teamwork

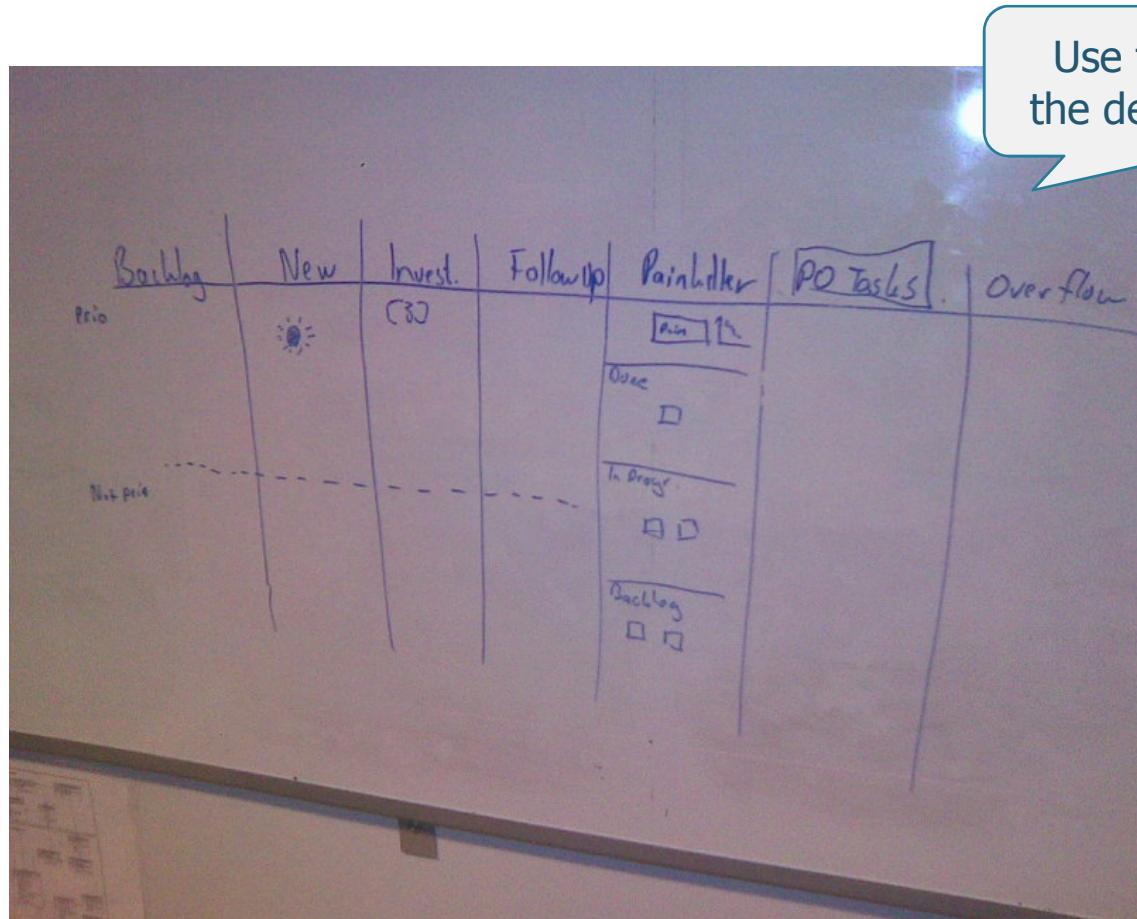


3. Meet stakeholders

- Upstream
- Downstream



4. Sketch/review some potential kanban designs



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4. Get going!



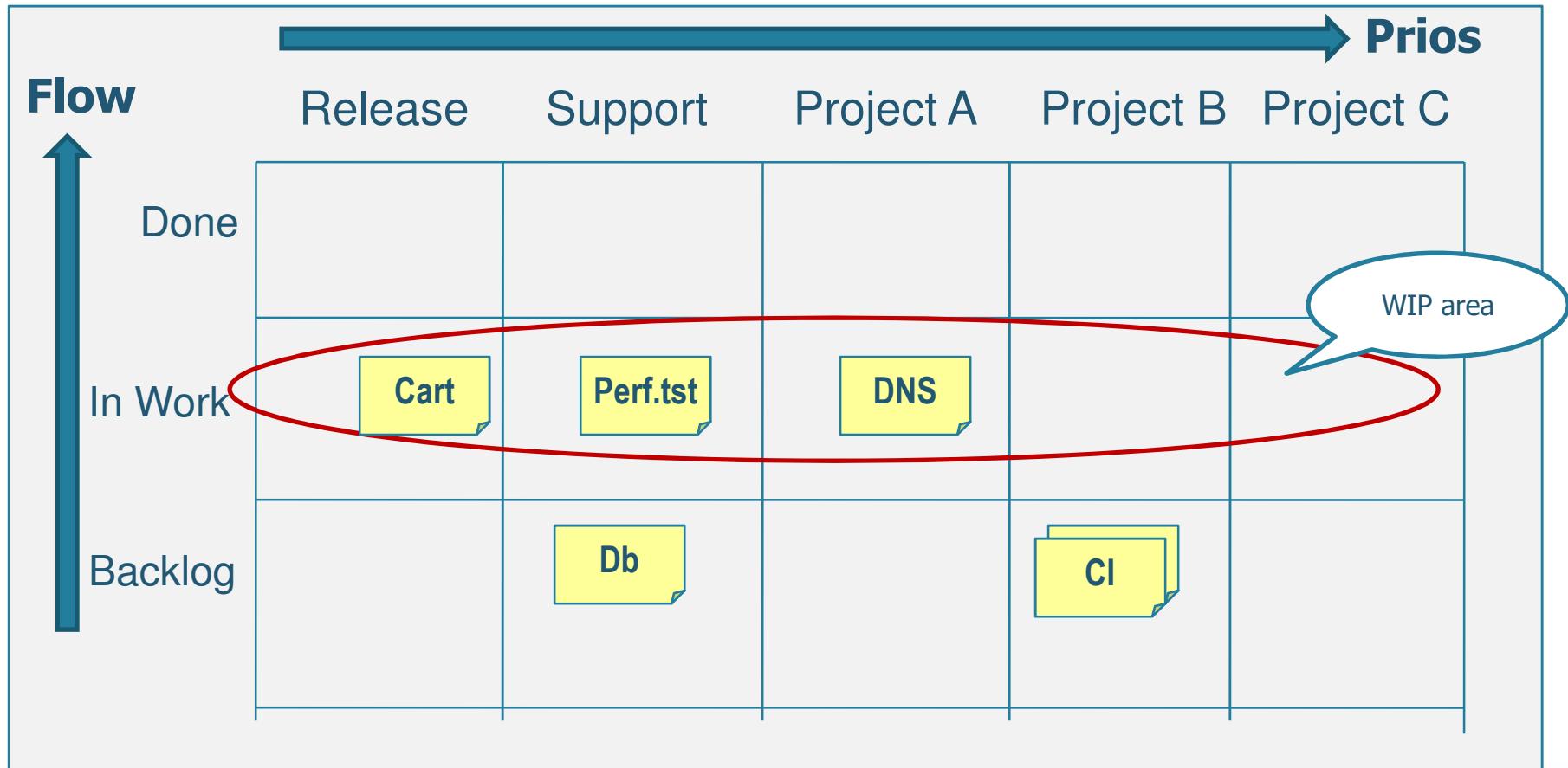
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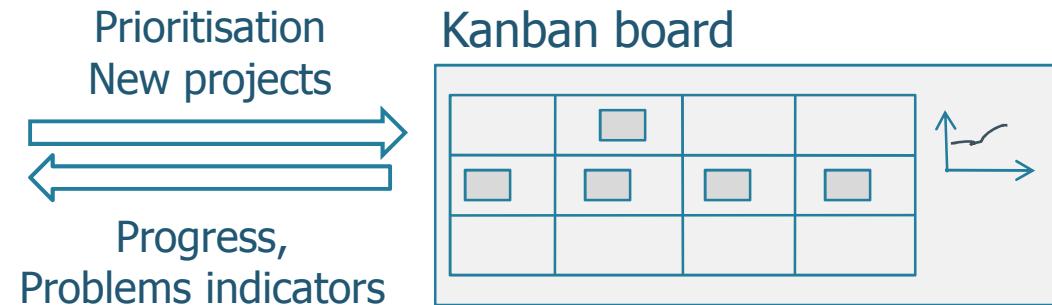
Keep managers involved :)



The first board



How did the work work?



- Keeping priorities updated
- Tell why
- Problem solving

How & when to do the work
Add own stories (up to 2d)



- Weekly
-
- Breakdown of new projects
 - Continuous improvement

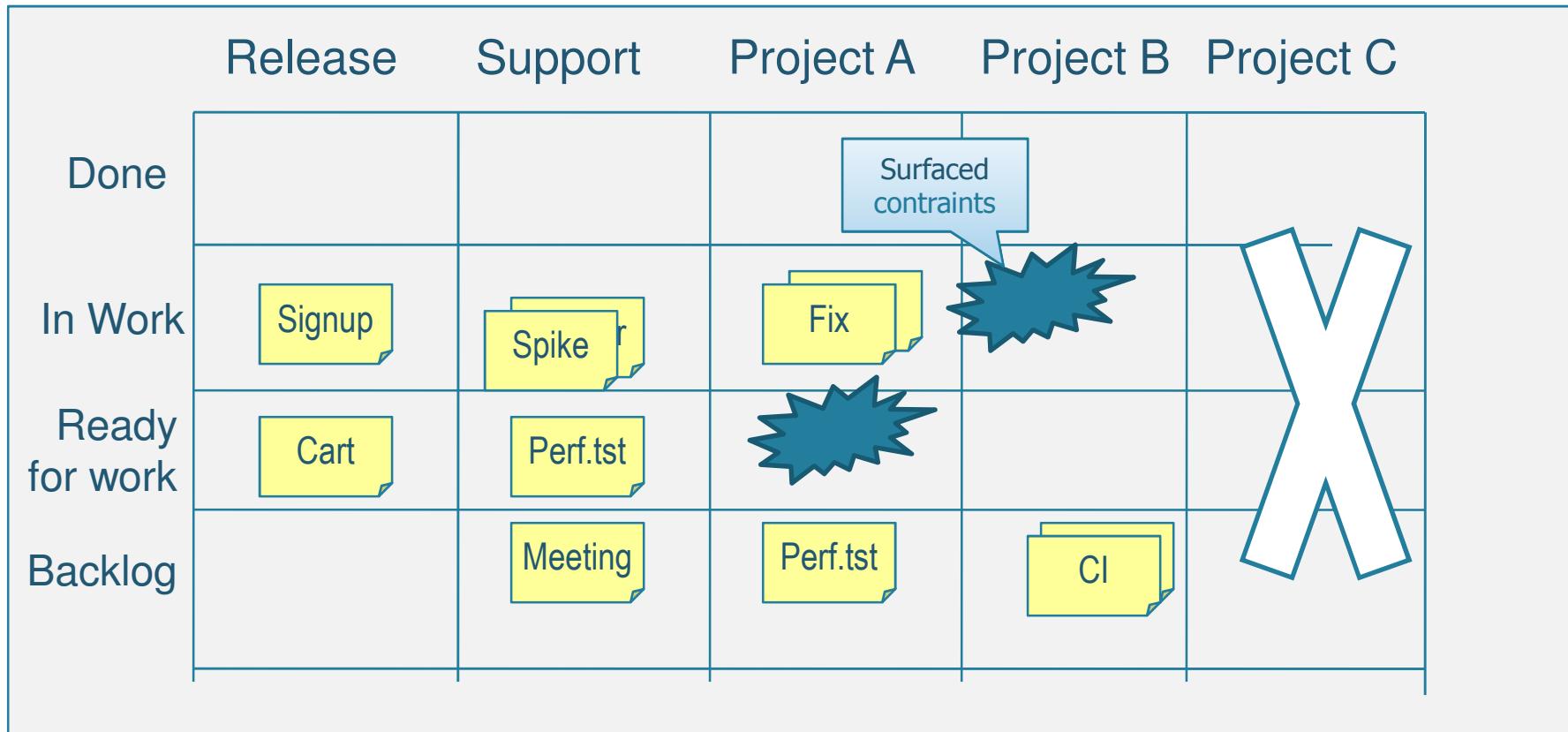


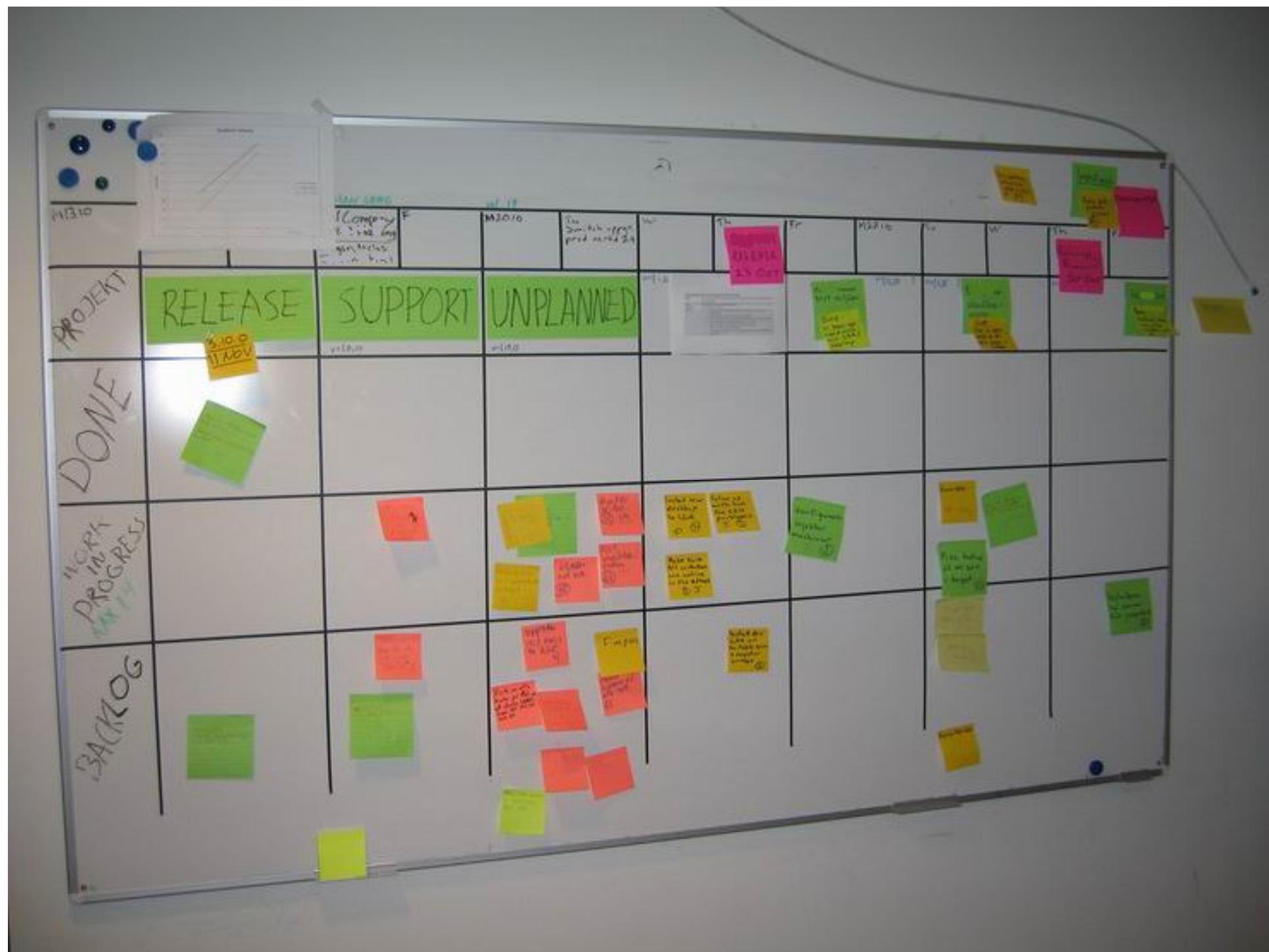
- Daily
-
- Standup
 - Blockers in flow?

45 min
5 min

Learning

1. Fewer projects
2. Flow redesigns
3. Surfacing of constraints





Evolving teamwork

Nothing beats just
doing it, sharing tasks
in everyday work



Team charter



We value:

- Respect the board
- Respect work someone else started

We will hold each other accountable for:

- Avoiding being straight
- When ideas are rejected without
consideration

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Beyond stable

REFINED CONCEPTS

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One sysadmin per team

Before

?

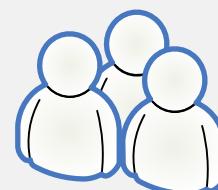


Development Team

After



Dedicated contact
within sysadmin



Development Team

Two approaches to planning

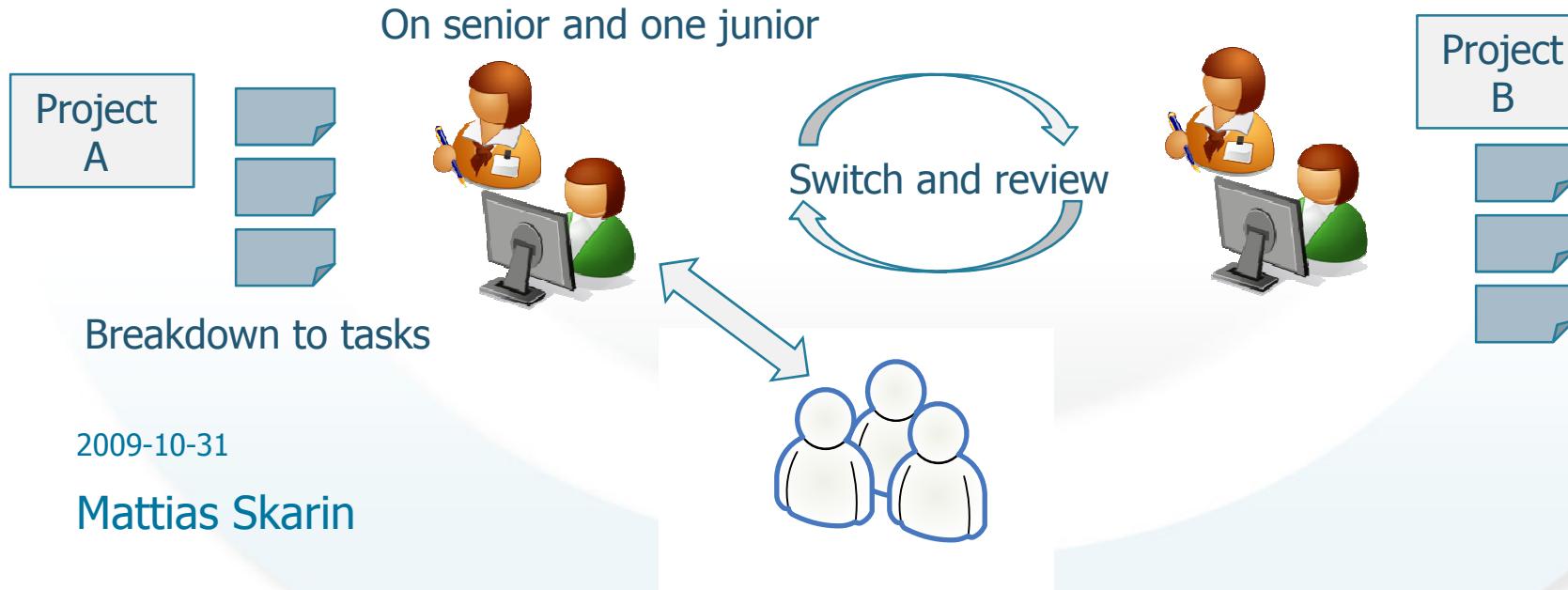
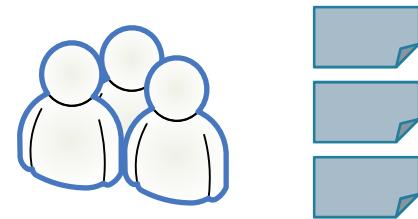
Before planning

Do we understand what is needed well enough to draft a solution?



At planning

- Recheck solution
- Breakdown to tasks



Doing continuous improvement

.. nothing fancy just..

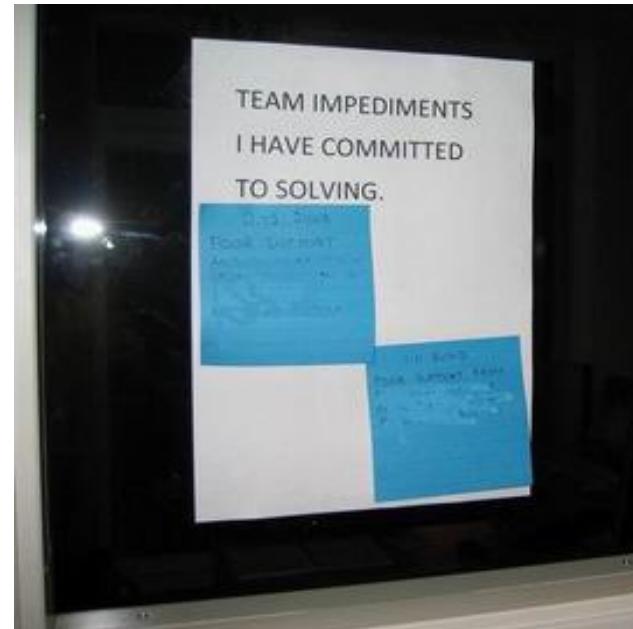
Solve 1 pain
per week



Addressing causes outside team

- Manager have two slots at any single point of time.
- If both are full, you can add a new one as long as you remove the less important one.
- Team decides when issue is solved.

Managers door



.. and his managers door..



DID WE GET SOMEWHERE?

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3 months later

Sysadmins awarded "best performing team"

"Miracles have happened to the sysadmin team. The incident we had on yesterday was earlier something that required several phone calls and took usually hours or even a day to resolve. Typically I had to call the manager to get things moving forward.

Now I feel that it's unnecessary to raise this kind of small things as impediments"

-- Test Lead

4 months later..



Development opens support for production disturbances

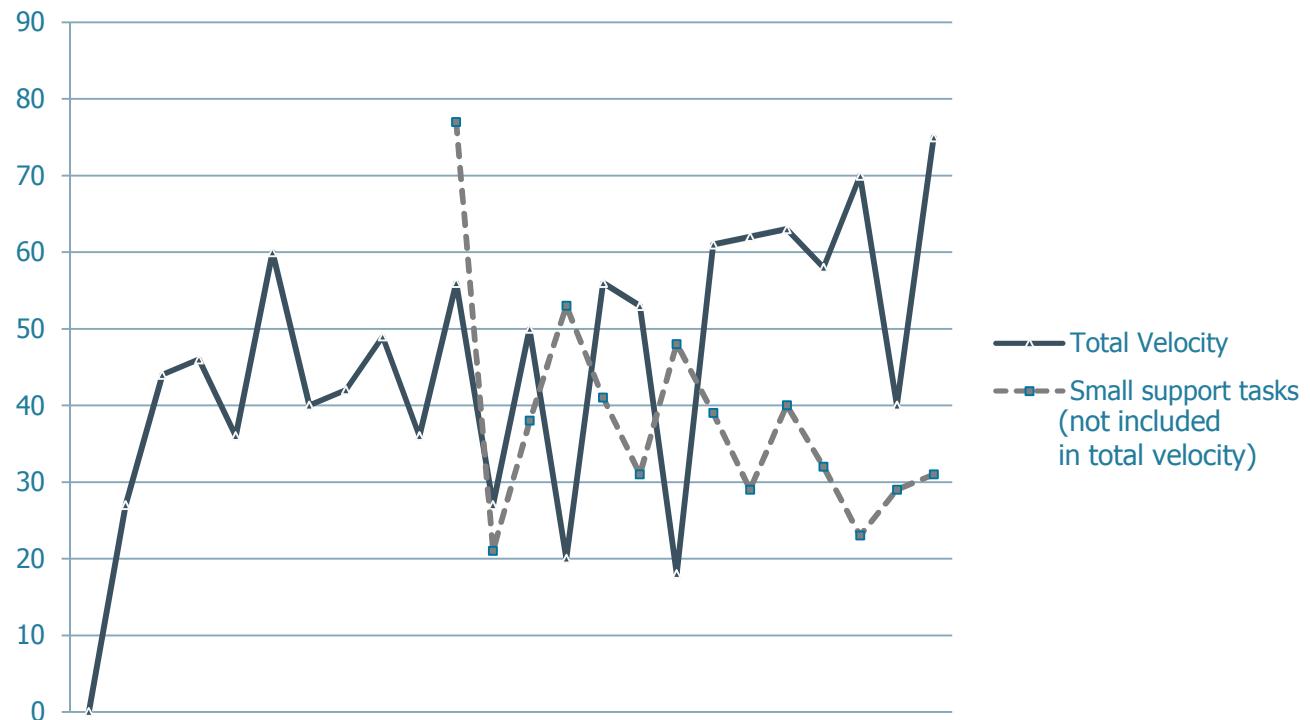
What didn't work?

Burndown charts for projects smaller than 1 month

Estimations – rarely needed

Incremental improvements on higher level

DBA Team Velocity



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OBSERVATIONS & LEARNINGS

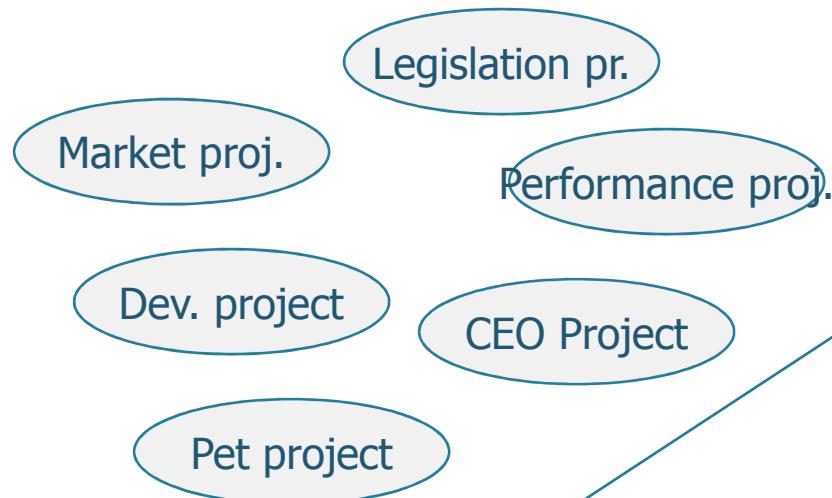
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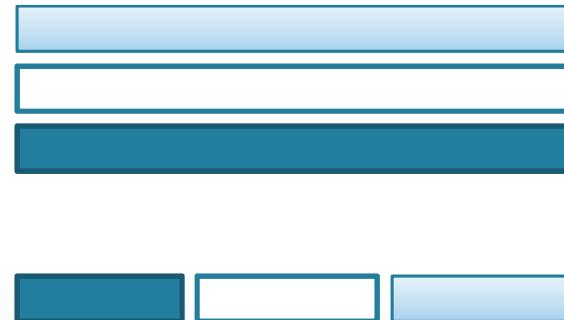


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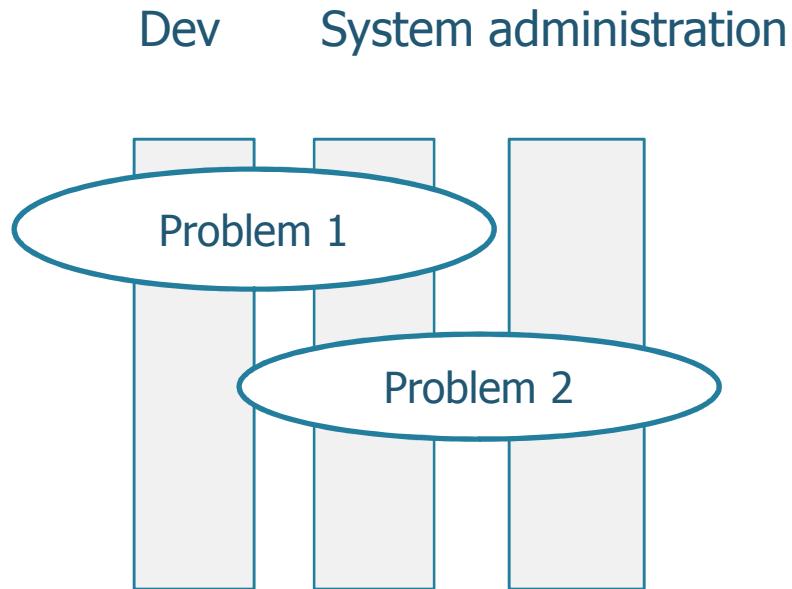
Many projects..



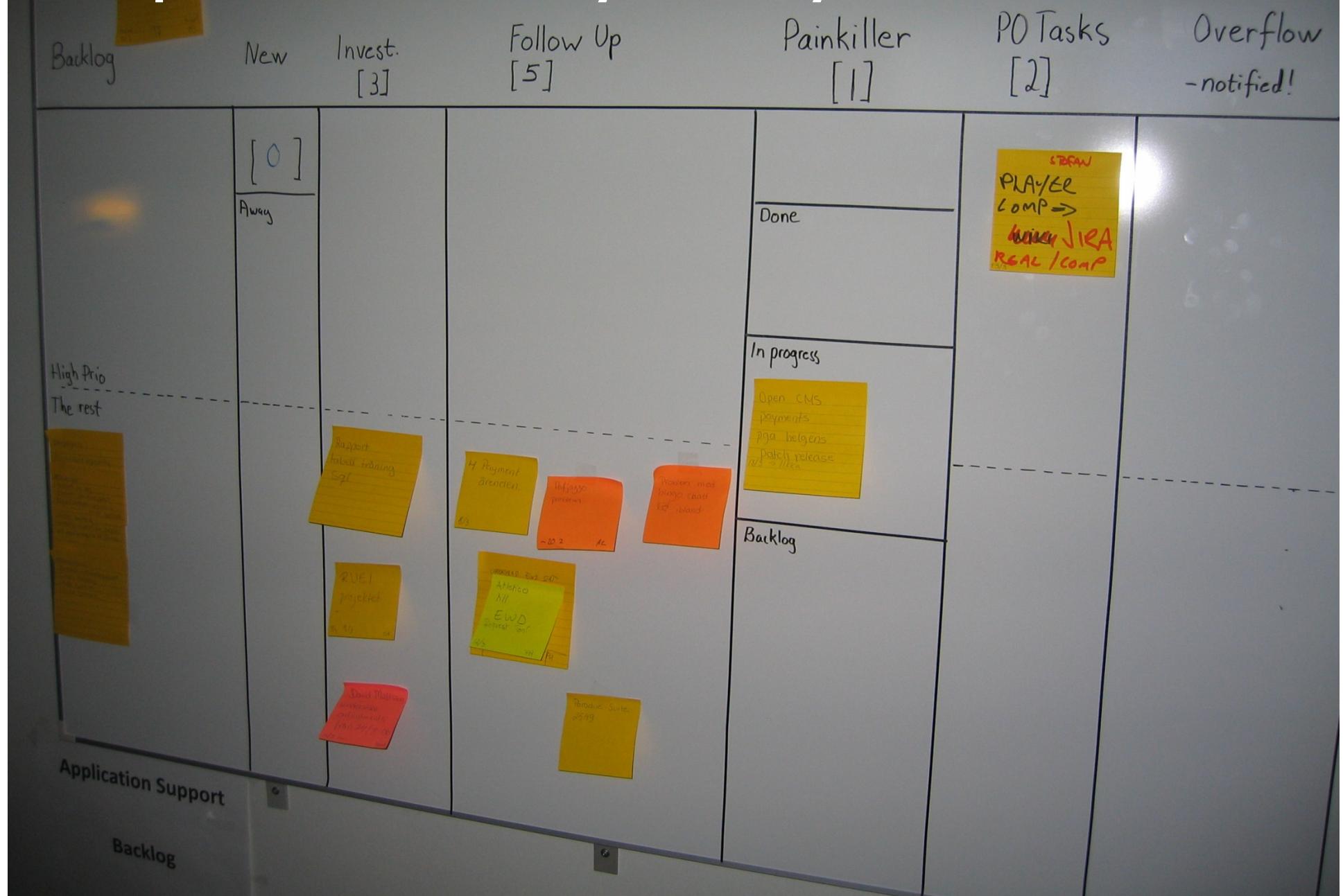
.. leads to long delivery time



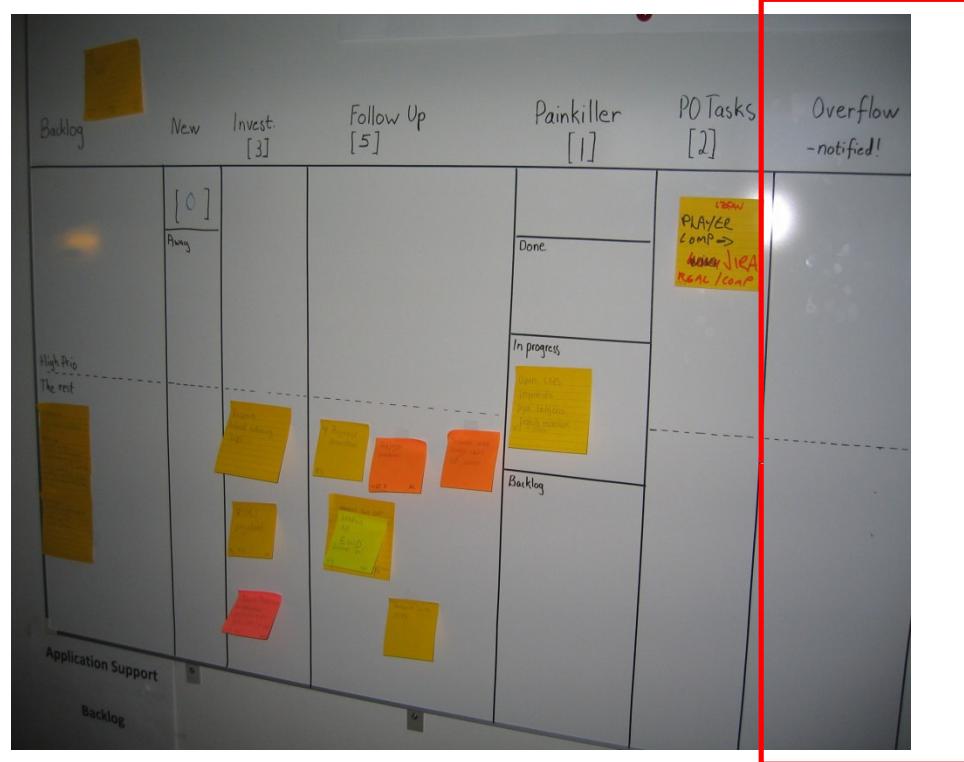
Problems know no organisational boundaries



The problem is not always where you think..



WIP overflow can be handled



But quality is the long term cure..



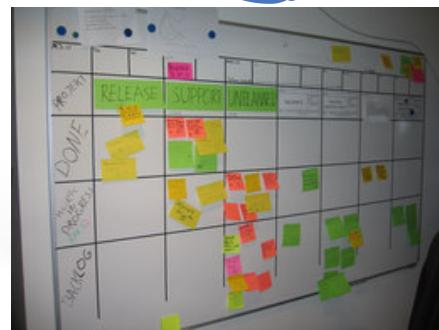
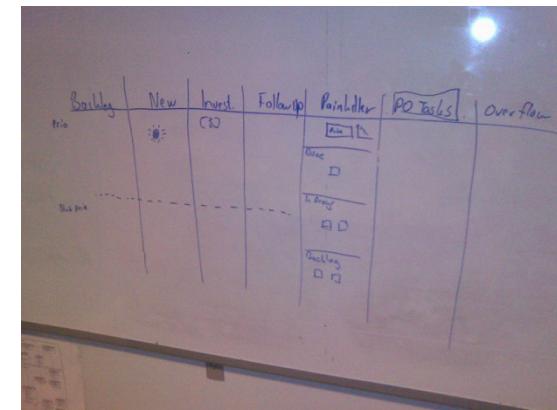
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Why is each board different?



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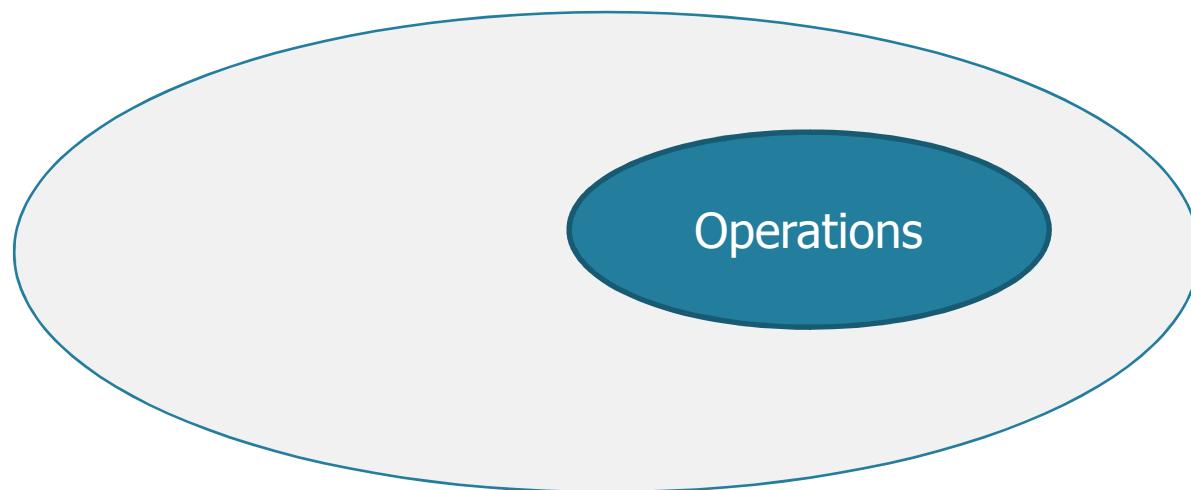
Lookback

- **Can technical operations be viewed as a flow problem?**
- **Is it possible to get team work benefits in a field with high specialization?**
- **Can continuous improvement work in this environment?**

No magic involved



Today



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Thanks for listening!



mattias.skarin@crisp.se

Blog:

[**http://blog.crisp.se/mattiasskarin**](http://blog.crisp.se/mattiasskarin)

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