

Ten learnings on delivering big bet initiatives



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Raise your hand if you work on
delivering products?

Raise your hand if you work on big bet
initiatives, modernisation?

risks manifest

Strategic Idea/
opportunity



misalignment

Uncertainty

Complexity

overwhelm

ambiguity



outcome

Ten learnings on delivering big bet initiatives

1. Be a vitamin and a
painkiller

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PAINKILLER

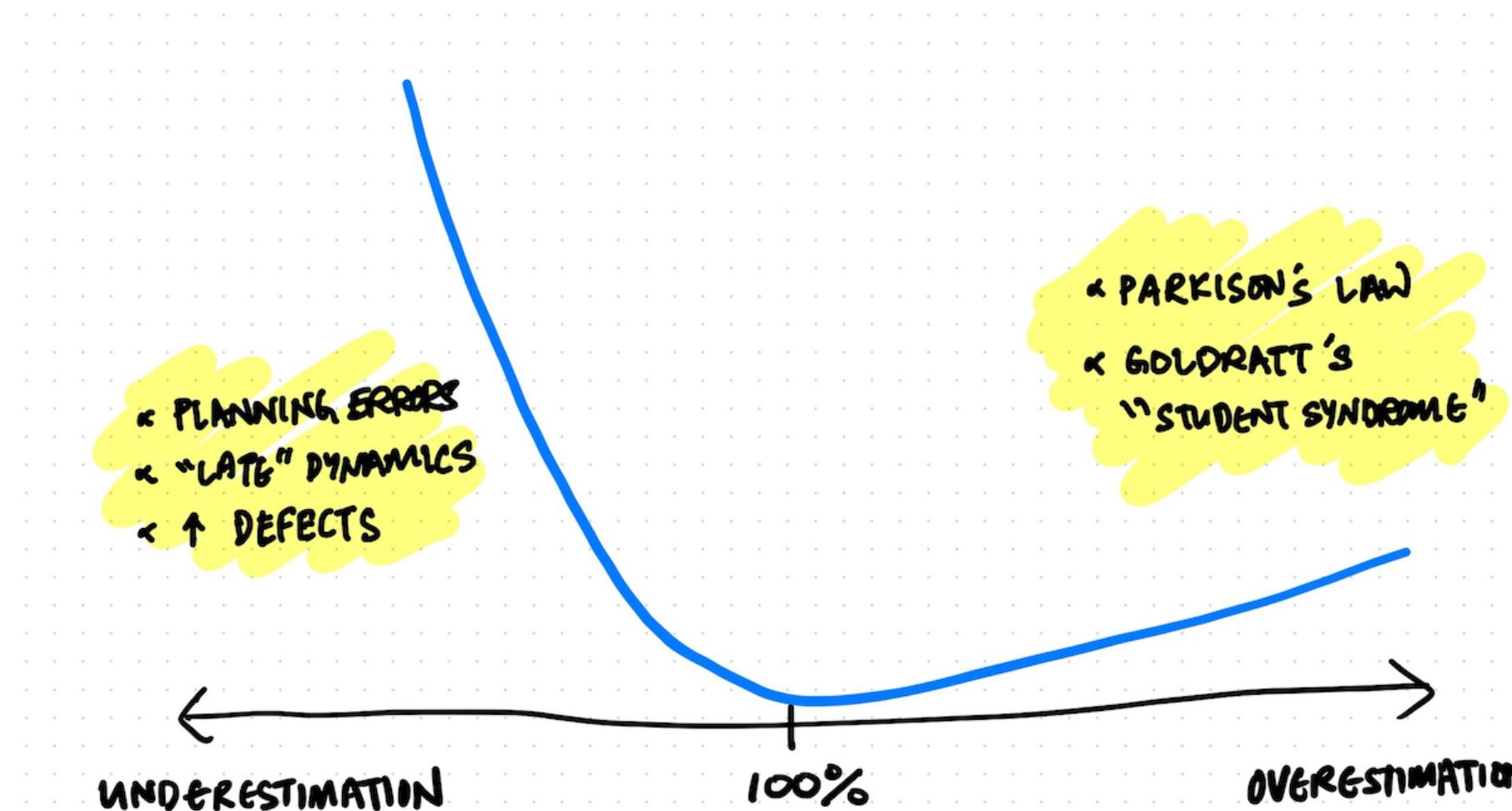


VITAMIN



2. Neither overestimation
nor underestimation is
good

2. Neither overestimation nor underestimation is good



3. Sequencing becomes a lot more
critical

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| Milestones | Demos | Fishfood | 2nd Fishfood | Dogfood | Launch Ready |
|---------------------|-------|----------|--------------|---------|--------------|
| Target Dates | | | | | |
| Interim Outputs | | | | | |
| Notes / Assumptions | | | | | |

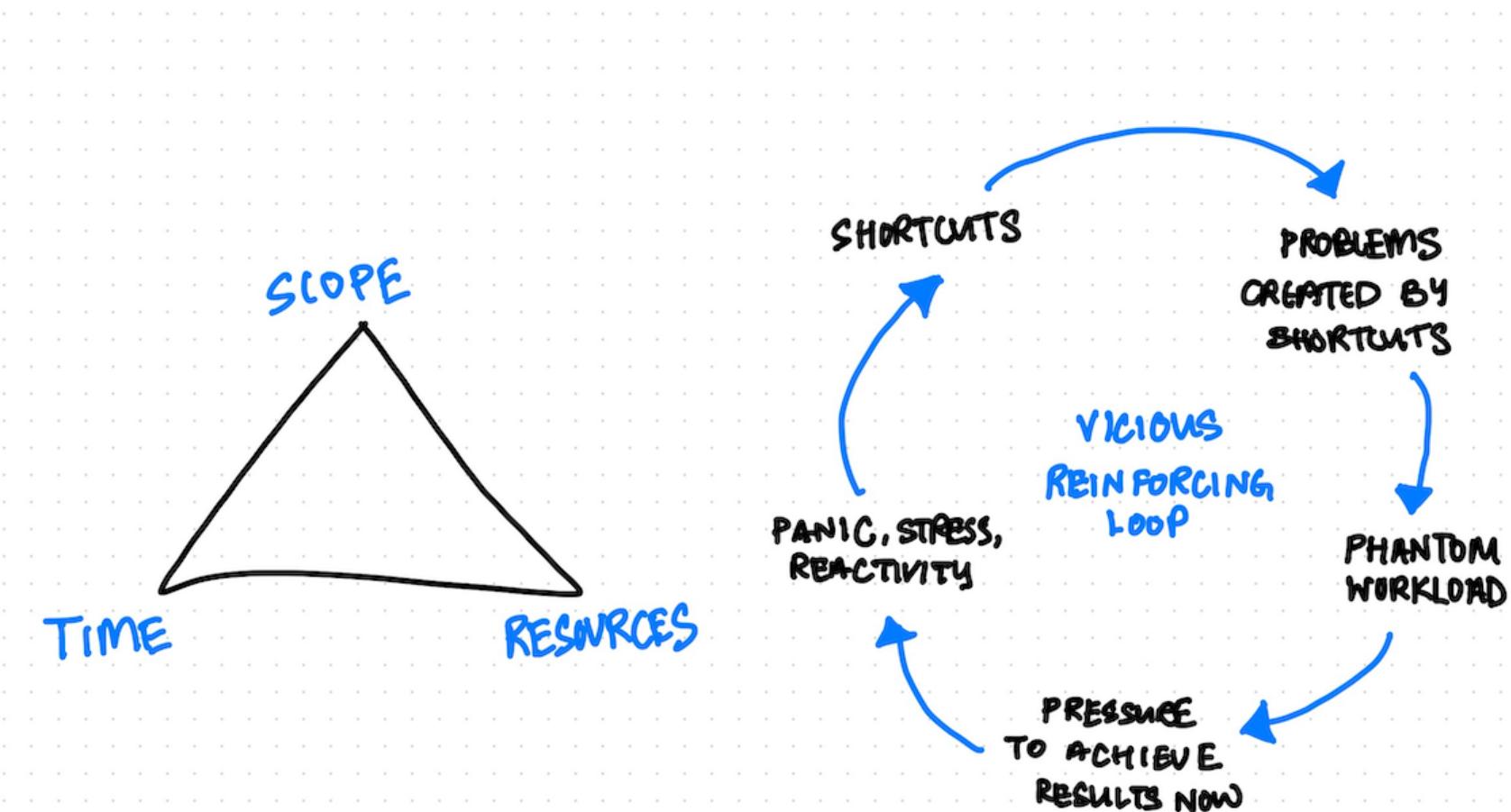
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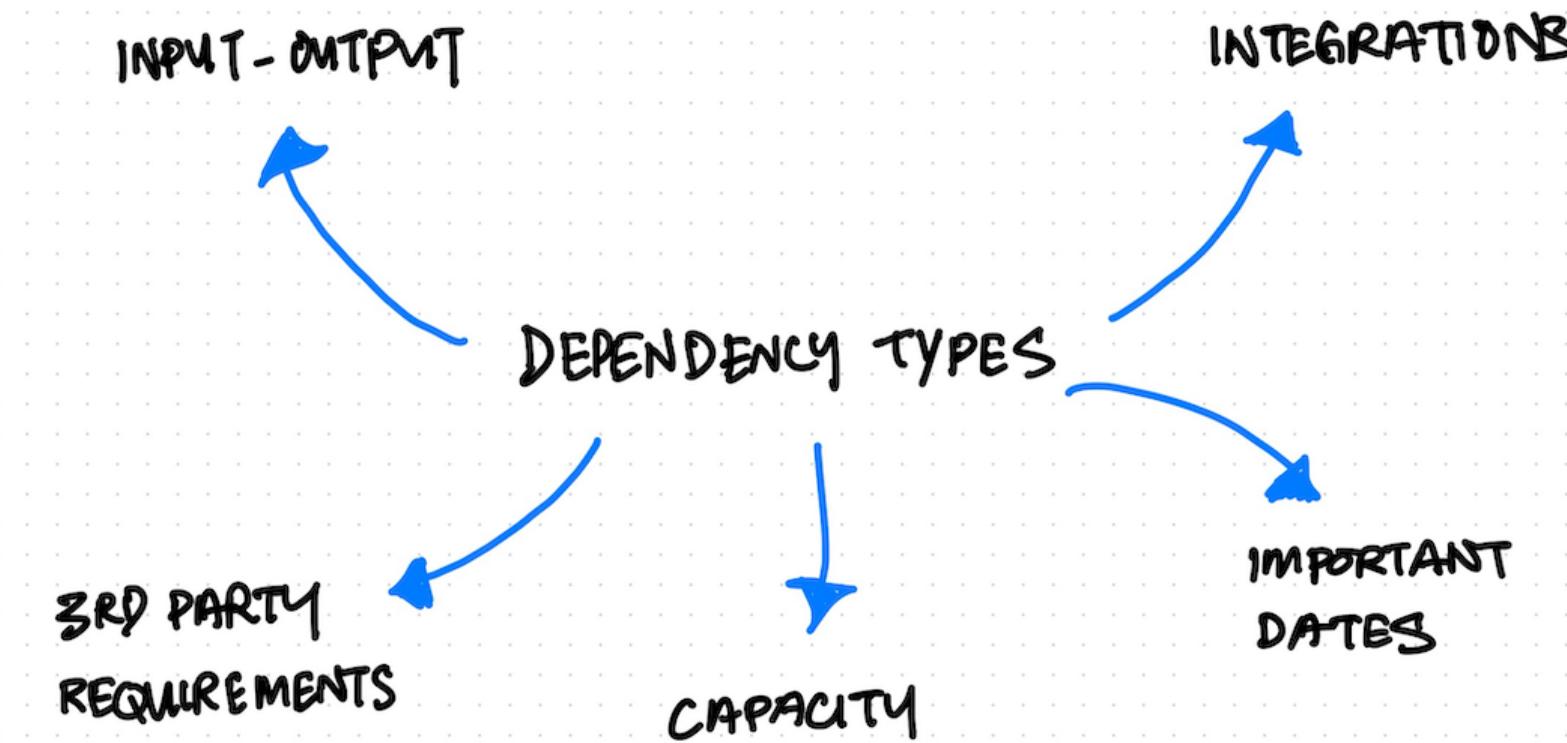
5. Make tradeoff decisions early

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6. Adjust for dependencies

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7. Mitigate the risks

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¹ Pointe Du Hoc

8. Leverage Elon Musk's employee vector theory

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²Employee Vector Theory

9. Use Sun Tzu's Art of War in communication

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If words of command are not clear and distinct, if orders are not thoroughly understood, the general is to blame. But if his orders are clear, and the soldiers nevertheless disobey, then it is the fault of their officers.

— Sun Tzu, Art of War.

10. Move from event thinking to system thinking

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| Level of Perspective | Current Reality | Desired Future Reality |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Vision | <i>What is the current vision-in-use?</i> | <i>What is the espoused vision of the future?</i> |
| Mental Models | <i>What are the prevailing assumptions, beliefs and values that sustain the systemic structures?</i> | <i>What assumptions, beliefs, and values are needed to realize the vision?</i> |
| Systemic Structures | <i>Which systemic structures are producing the most dominant pattern of behavior in the current system?</i> | <i>What kinds of systemic structures (either invented or redesigned) are required to operationalize the new mental models and achieve the vision?</i> |
| Patterns | <i>What is the behavior over time of key indicators in the current system?</i> | <i>What is the current vision-in-use?</i> |
| Events | <i>What are some specific events that characterize the current reality?</i> | <i>What are some specific events that illustrate how the vision is operating on a day-to-day basis?</i> |

³ Modified version of the “Vision Deployment Matrix”

Bonus: Theory of constraints

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1. System can only move as fast as the slowest person
2. Build a system of learning (Help the team learn by itself)
3. Iron sharpens Iron
4. Collective learning
5. Compounded learning

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7. Mitigate the risks
8. Leverage Elon Musk's employee vector theory
9. Use Sun Tzu's Art of War in communication
10. Move from event thinking to system thinking
11. Bonus: Theory of constraints

This talk is based on an article I
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