

A Quick Tour of Delivery Management

pat@patkua.com



TechLead
ACADEMY

@patkua

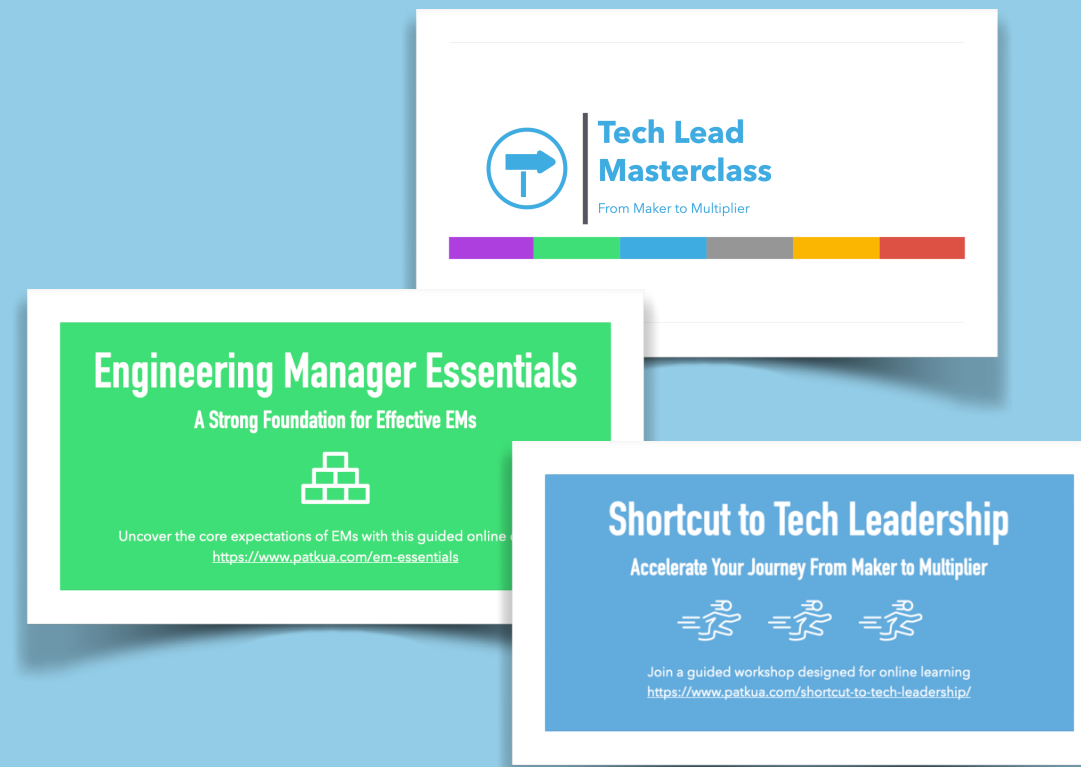


<https://www.linkedin.com/in/patkua/>



I help...
**Senior ICs,
Tech Leads and EMs**

through...
training



**Senior EMs &
Directors+**



content

**CTOs &
VPs of Eng**



**1:1
coaching**

~25 Years in Tech

patkua.com



Coach

CTO



@patkua

*"What's keeping you
up at night?"*



Coach

CTO



CTO



*"Our organisation is
really bad at
delivering 🤯"*



Coach

CTO



*"Our EMs lack **delivery management** skills 😞"*



Coach

CTO



*“Product constantly
complains about
how we **deliver** 😡”*



Coach

Phrases



Phrases

A man with dark hair and a beard, wearing a white button-down shirt, is shown from the chest up. He has his right hand pressed against his forehead and eyes, with his fingers spread, suggesting a state of stress, frustration, or exhaustion. The background is a solid blue color.


*“We’re always **behind** schedule”*

Phrases

A man with dark hair and a mustache, wearing a white button-down shirt, is shown from the chest up. He is covering his face with his right hand, with his fingers spread, suggesting a state of stress, frustration, or despair. The background is a solid blue color.

*“Timelines keep **slipping**”*

Phrases

A man in a white shirt is shown from the chest up, covering his face with his right hand. He has dark hair and a beard. The background is a solid blue color. The image is used as a background for the text.

*“It feels like we’re **making it up**
as we go along”*

Phrases

A man in a white shirt is shown from the chest up, covering his face with his right hand. He has a distressed or frustrated expression. The background is a solid blue color.

*“I have **no idea** when my team
will be **DONE DONE**”*

Phrases

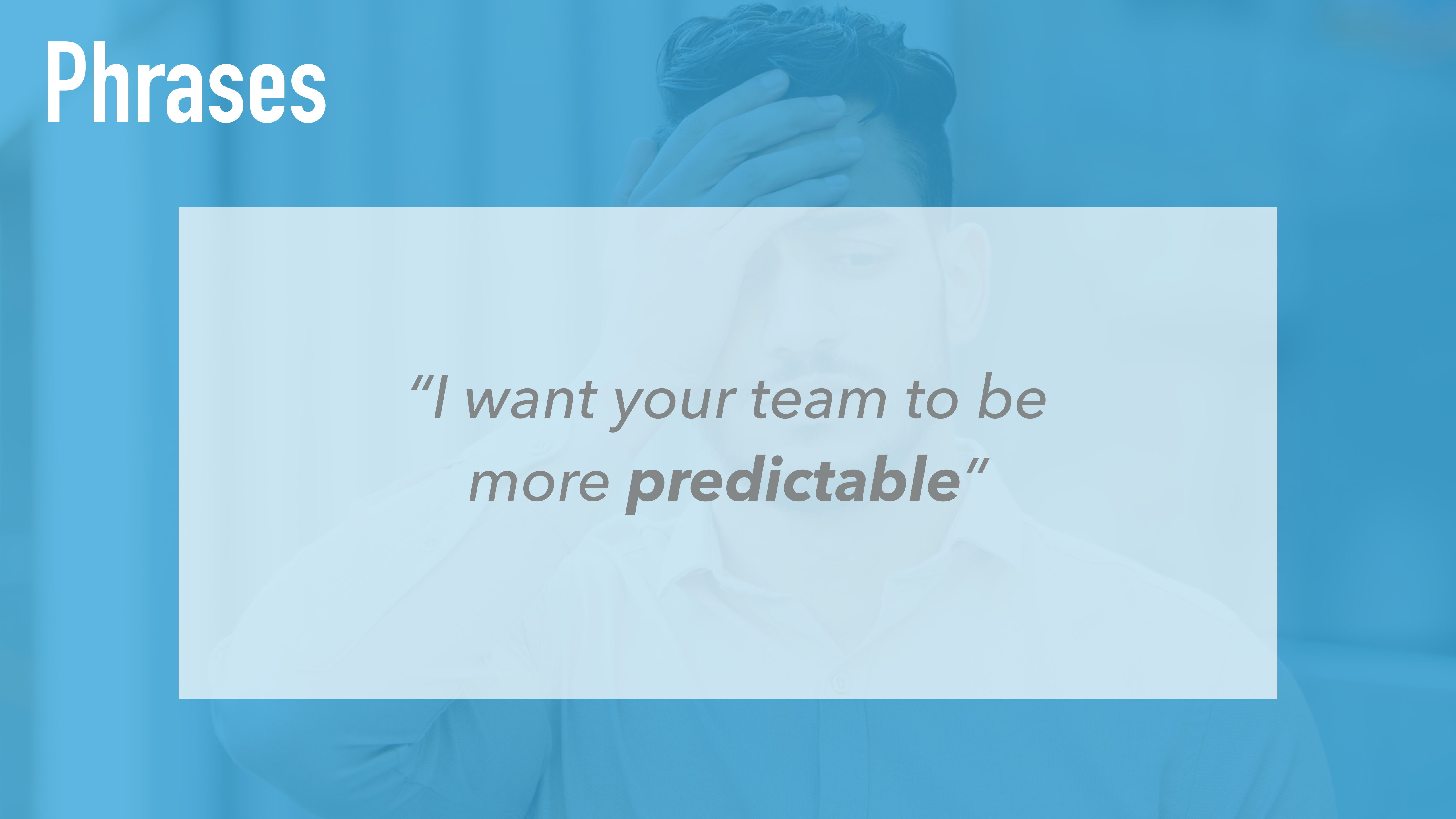
A man in a white shirt is shown from the chest up, covering his face with both hands. He appears to be in a state of distress, surprise, or frustration. The background is a solid blue color.

*"There are always **surprises**
along the way"*

Phrases

*"There's zero **accountability**
for these timelines"*

Phrases

A man in a white shirt is shown from the chest up, covering his face with his right hand. He has dark hair and a beard. The background is a solid blue color. The image is used as a background for the text.

*"I want your team to be
more **predictable**"*

Why does this matter?





Trust



Thought Experiment

Team 

- ▶ Delivery 
- ▶ Earned   
- ▶ No surprises 

Team 

- ▶ Delivery 
- ▶ Shipped 
- ▶ Constant   **!?**

Thought Experiment

Team 

“We would like two weeks to work on tech debt”

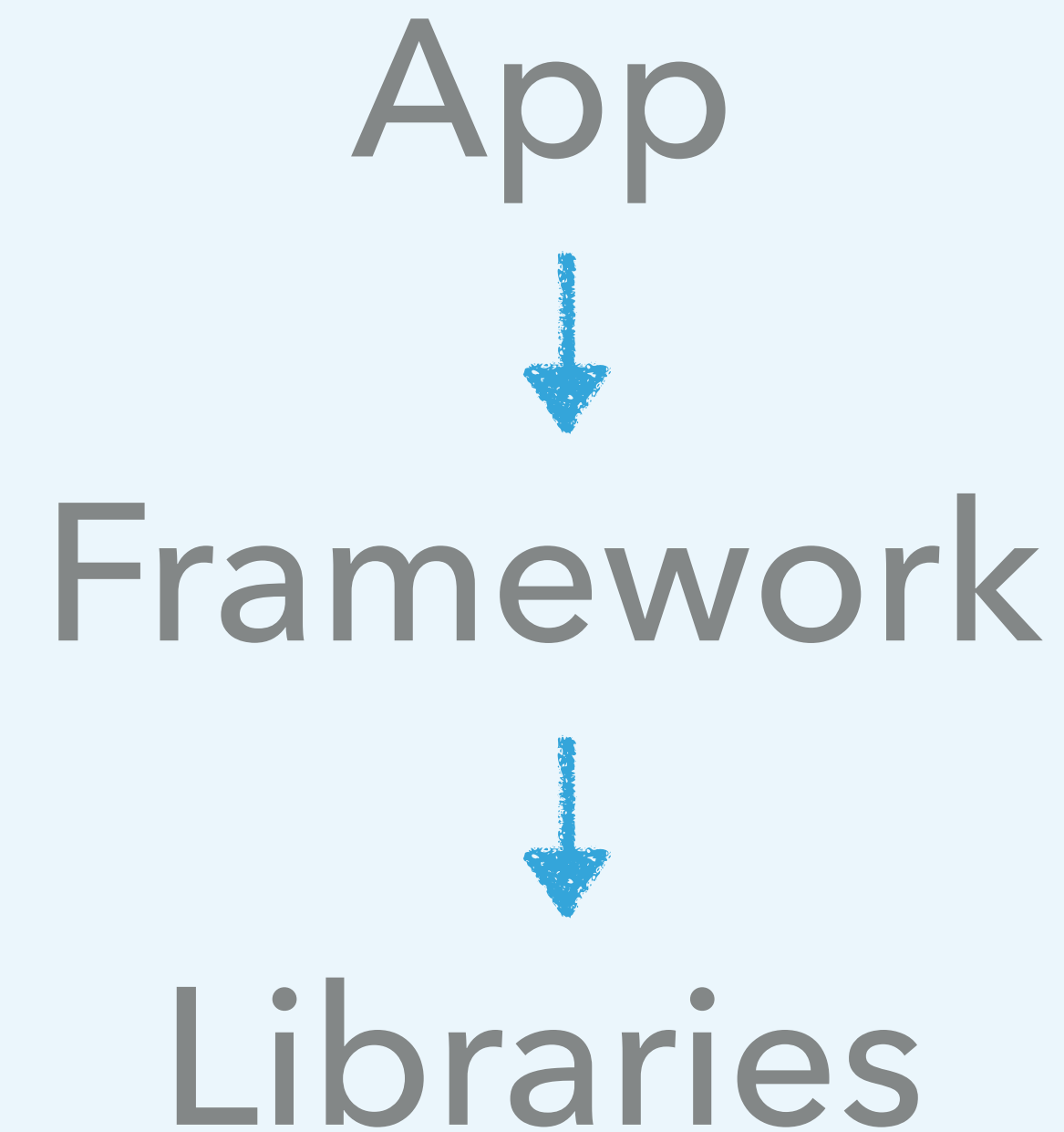
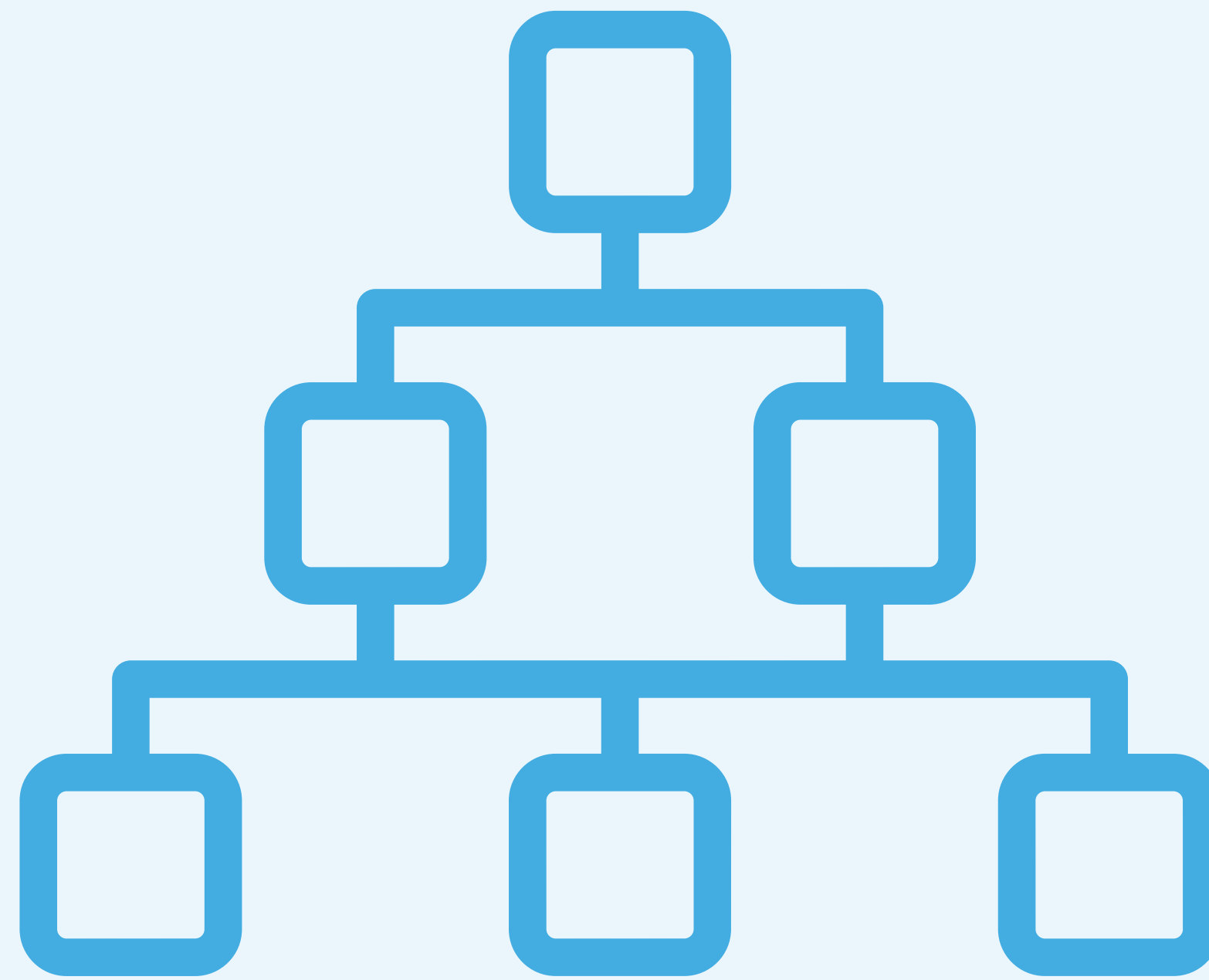
Team 

“We would like two weeks to work on tech debt”

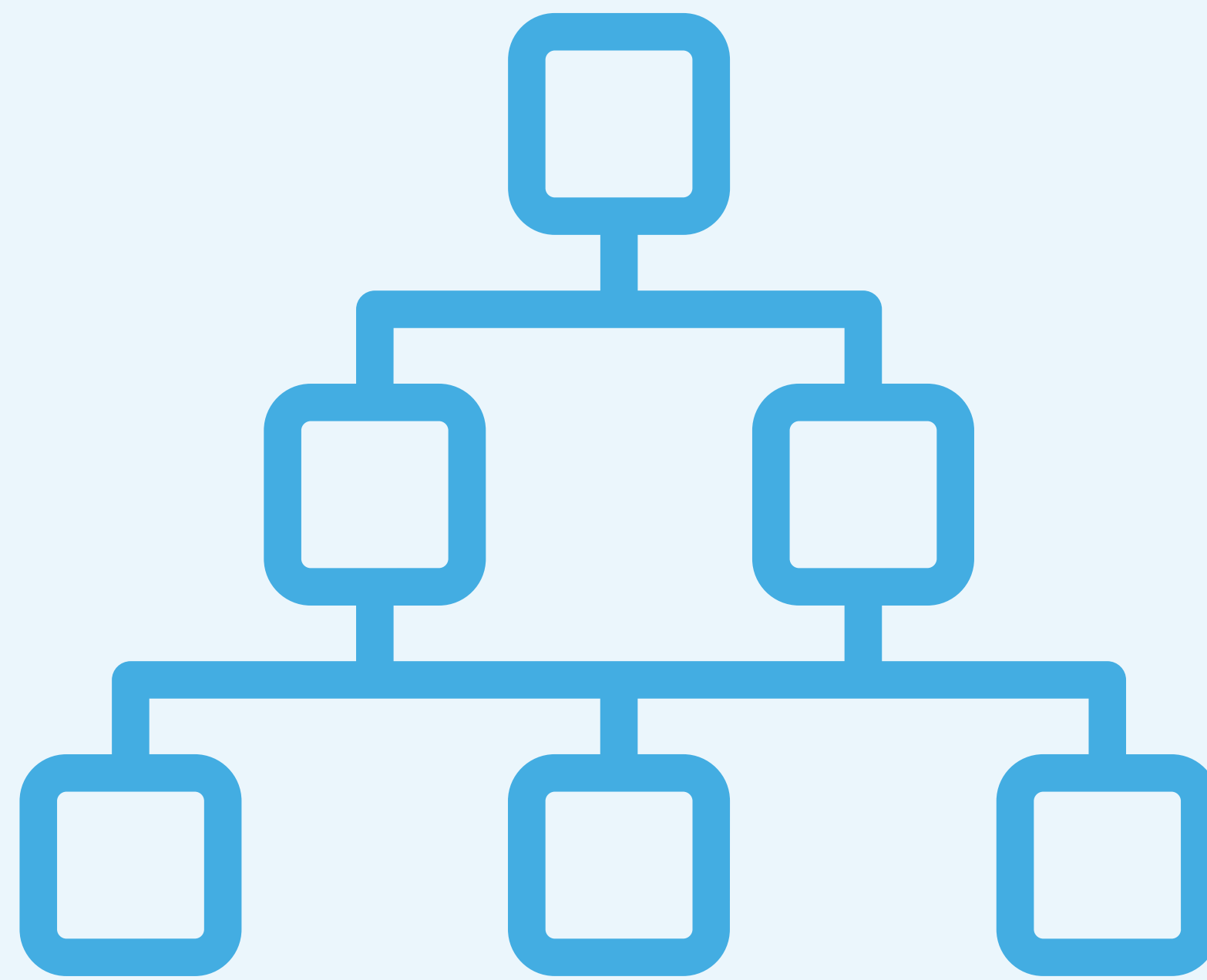
Trust



Also... dependencies



Also... dependencies



Product Success



Campaign



Delivery

Also... dependencies

Initiative



£5M TV Campaign

Also... dependencies

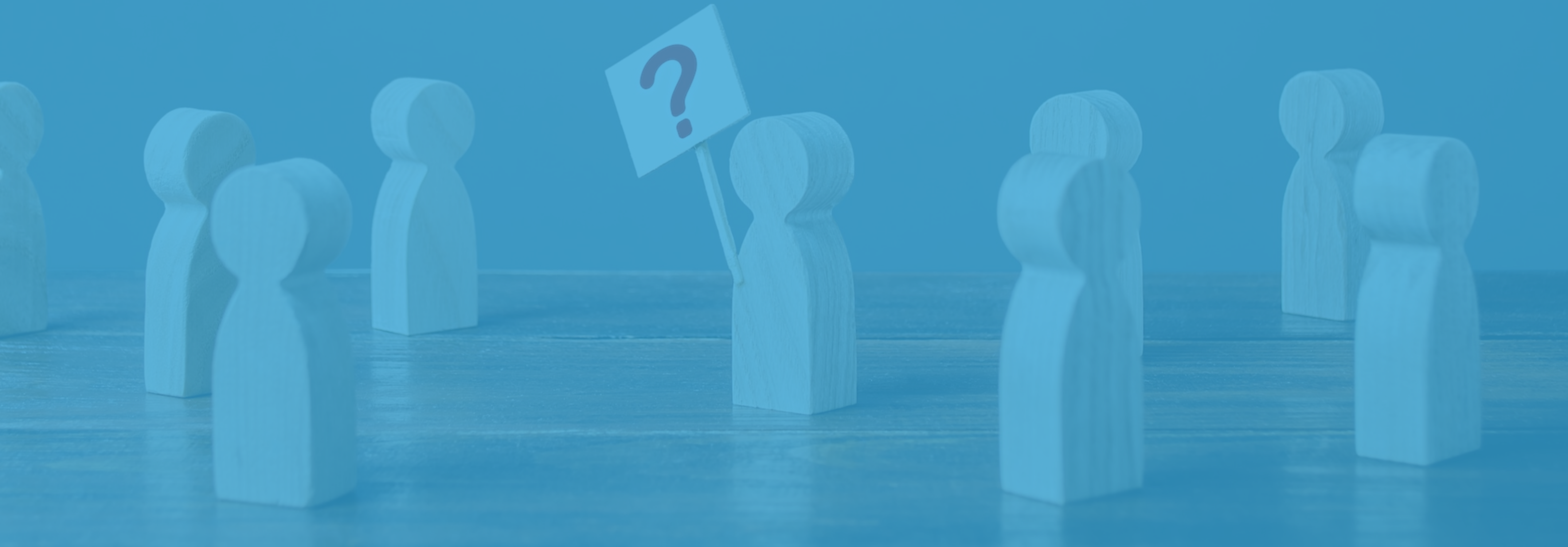
Initiative



£5M TV Campaign

Oops

What is Delivery Management?



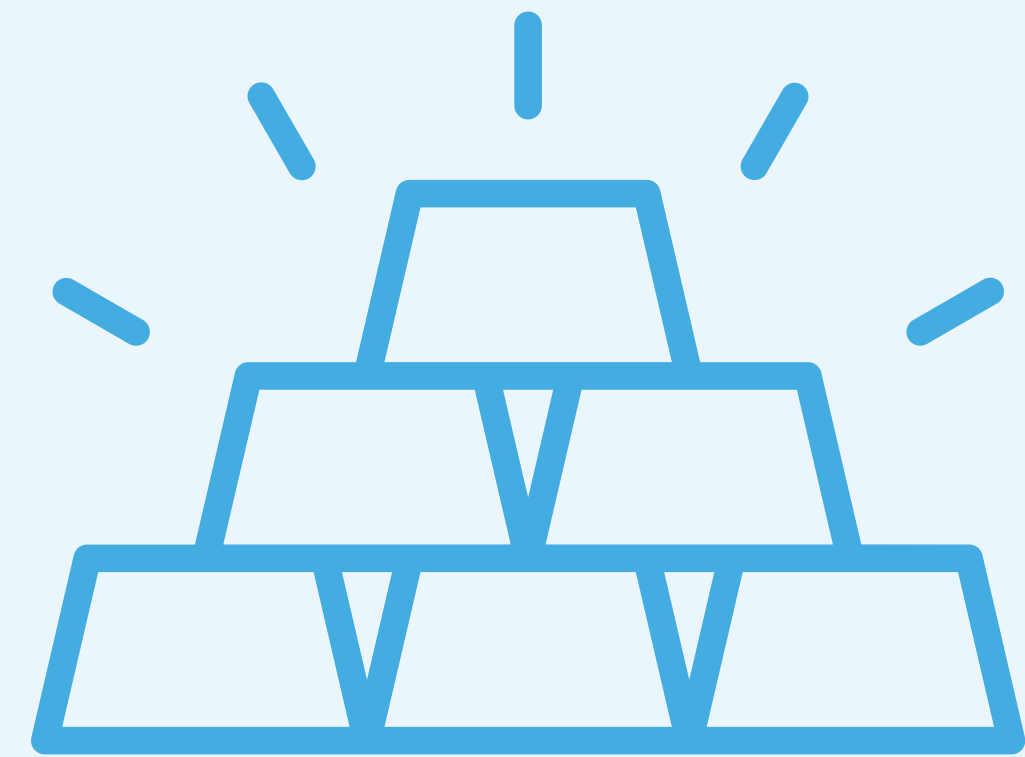
Delivery of what?



Time



Quality

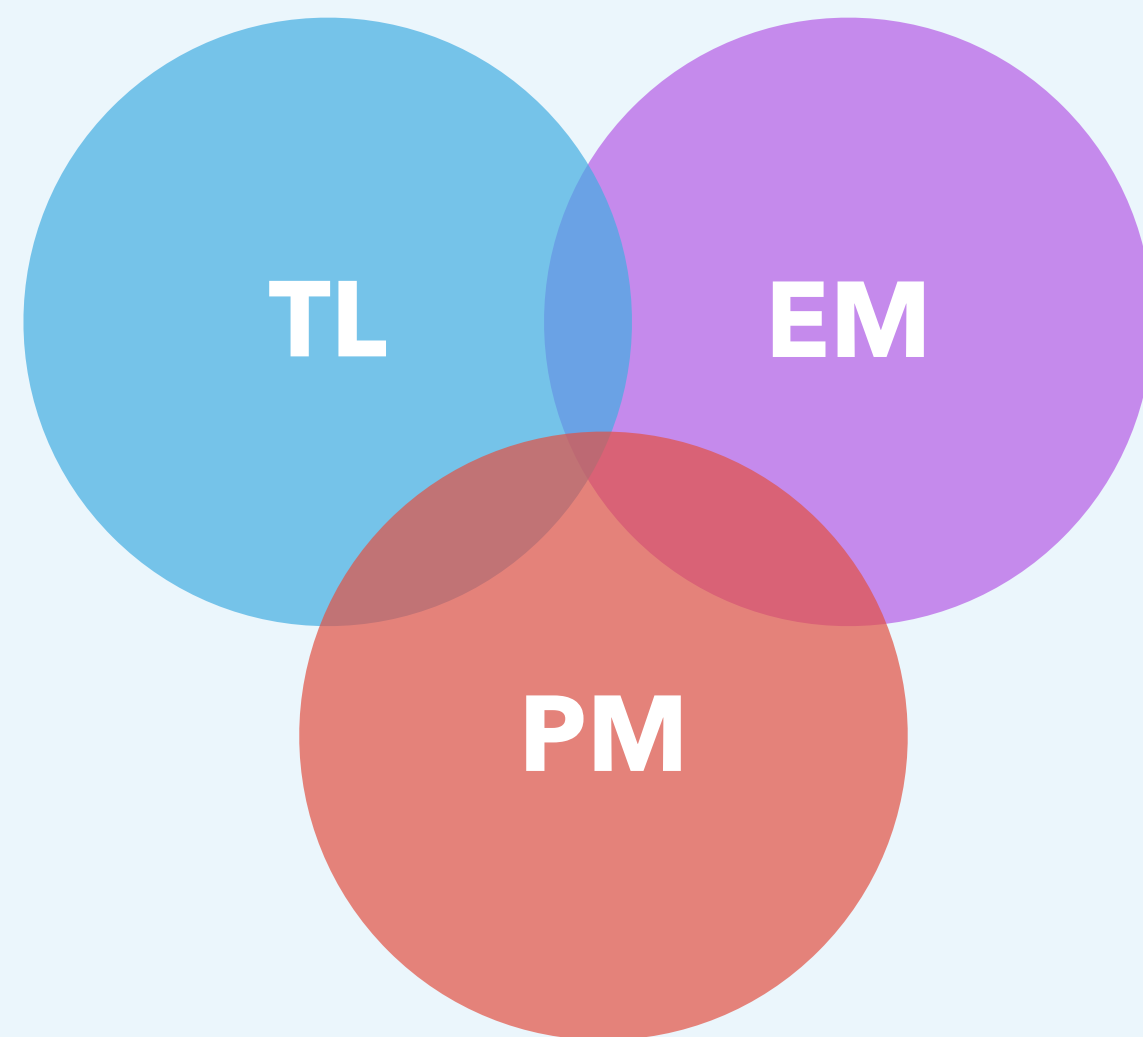


Value

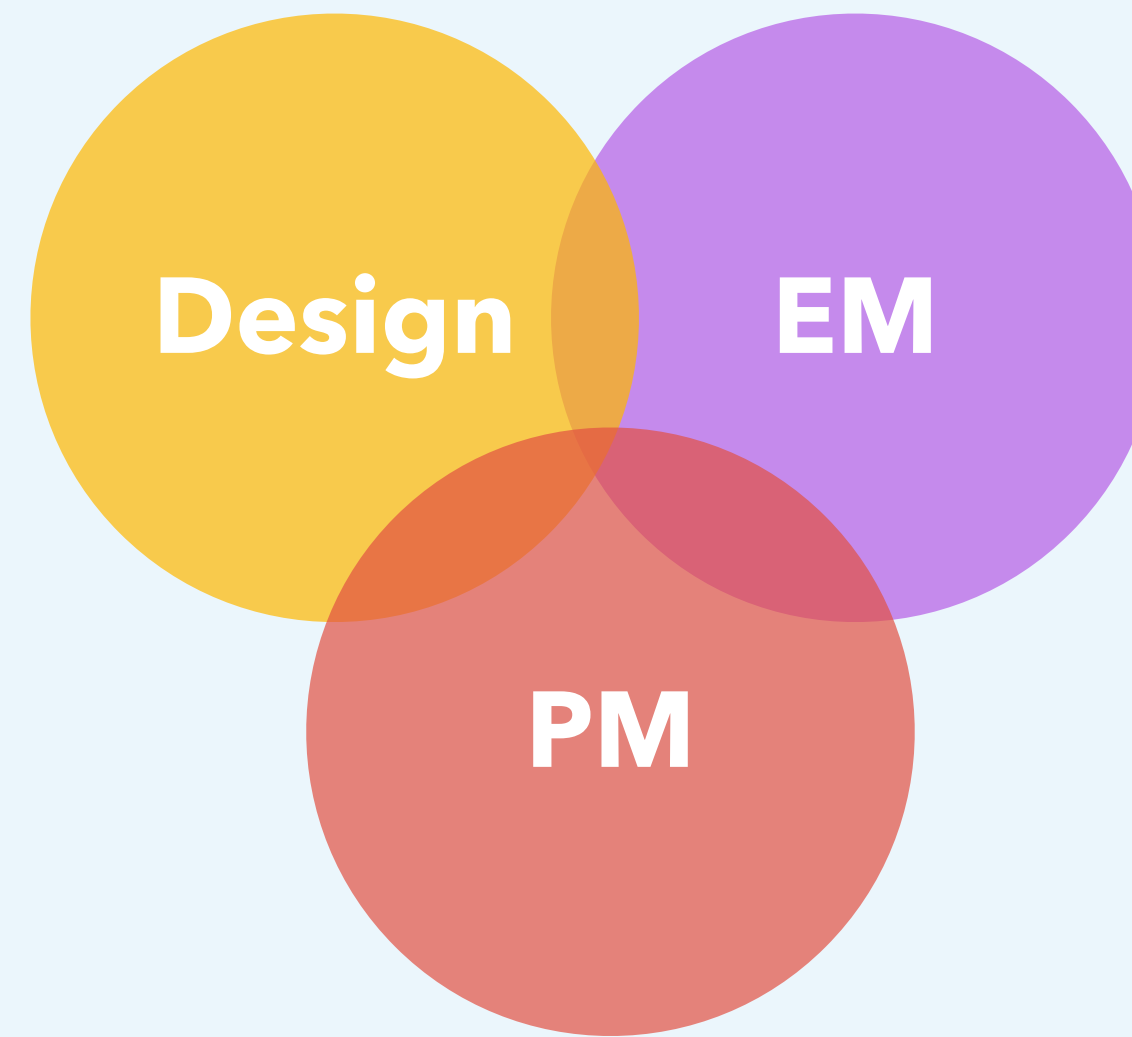
How to measure?



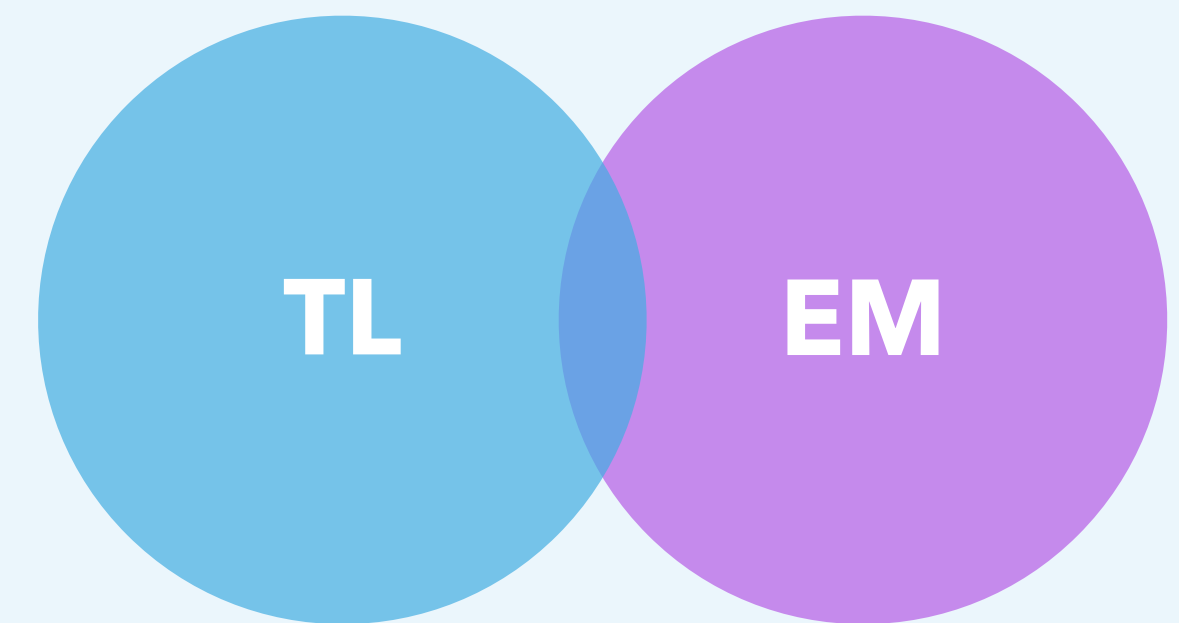
Who owns delivery?



You all do...



Joint accountability





Tragedy of the commons

*I thought they were
responsible for delivery*



Tragedy of the commons

*If you're a leader, you're
always accountable*



How



How

1 Build an accurate plan

CTO



*"How much is
left to complete?"*



You

CTO

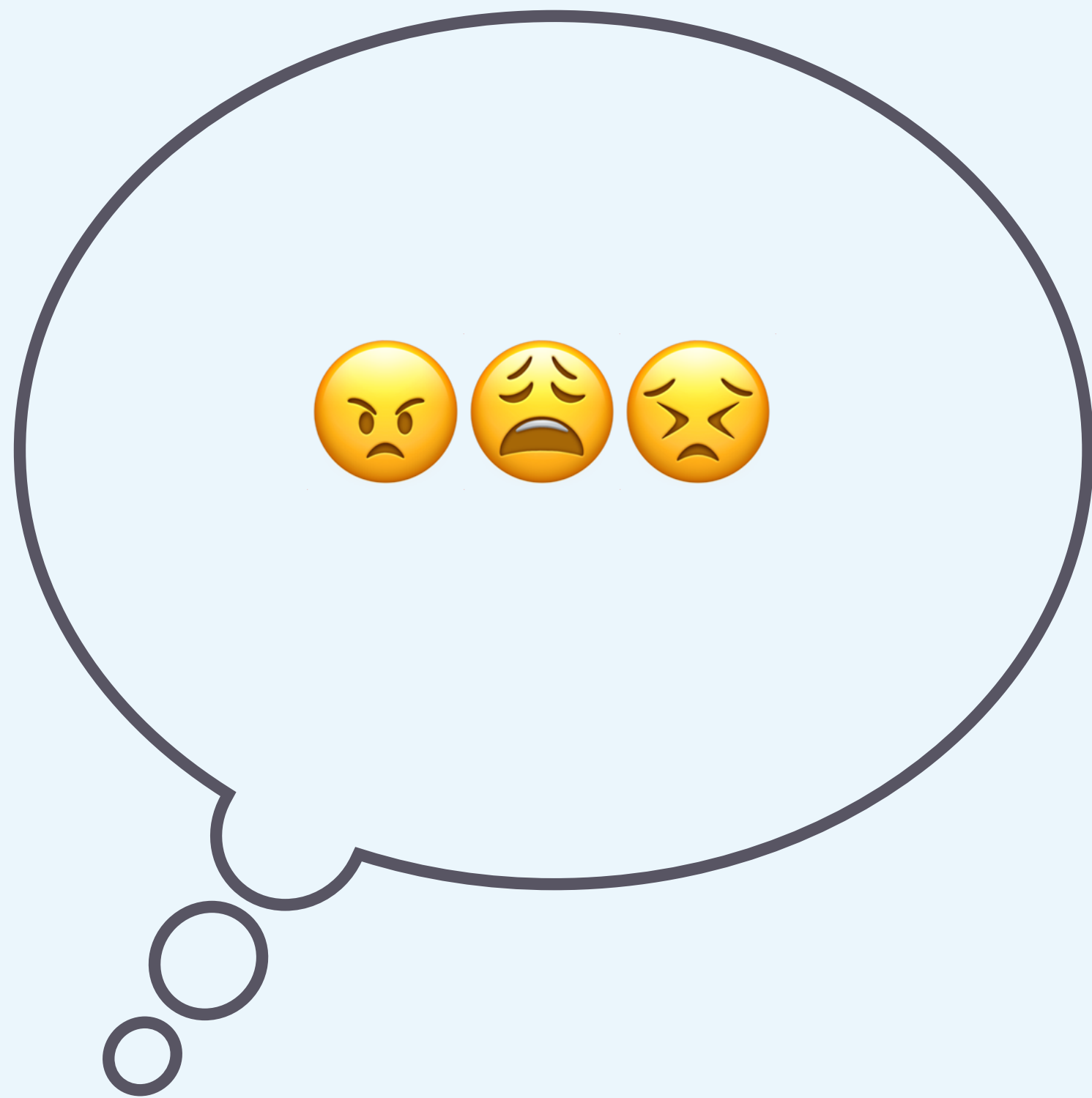


*"But this is too hard
to estimate?"*




You

CTO



You

A stylized world map in a light blue tone, overlaid on a darker blue background with a wood-grain texture. A hand is shown pointing towards Europe, and a pencil is shown pointing towards Asia. The map includes labels for continents like North America, South America, Europe, Asia, and Australia, and oceans like the Arctic Ocean and Atlantic Ocean. A compass rose is visible at the bottom center.

*“Plans are worthless,
but planning is everything”*

- Attributed to Dwight D. Eisenhower

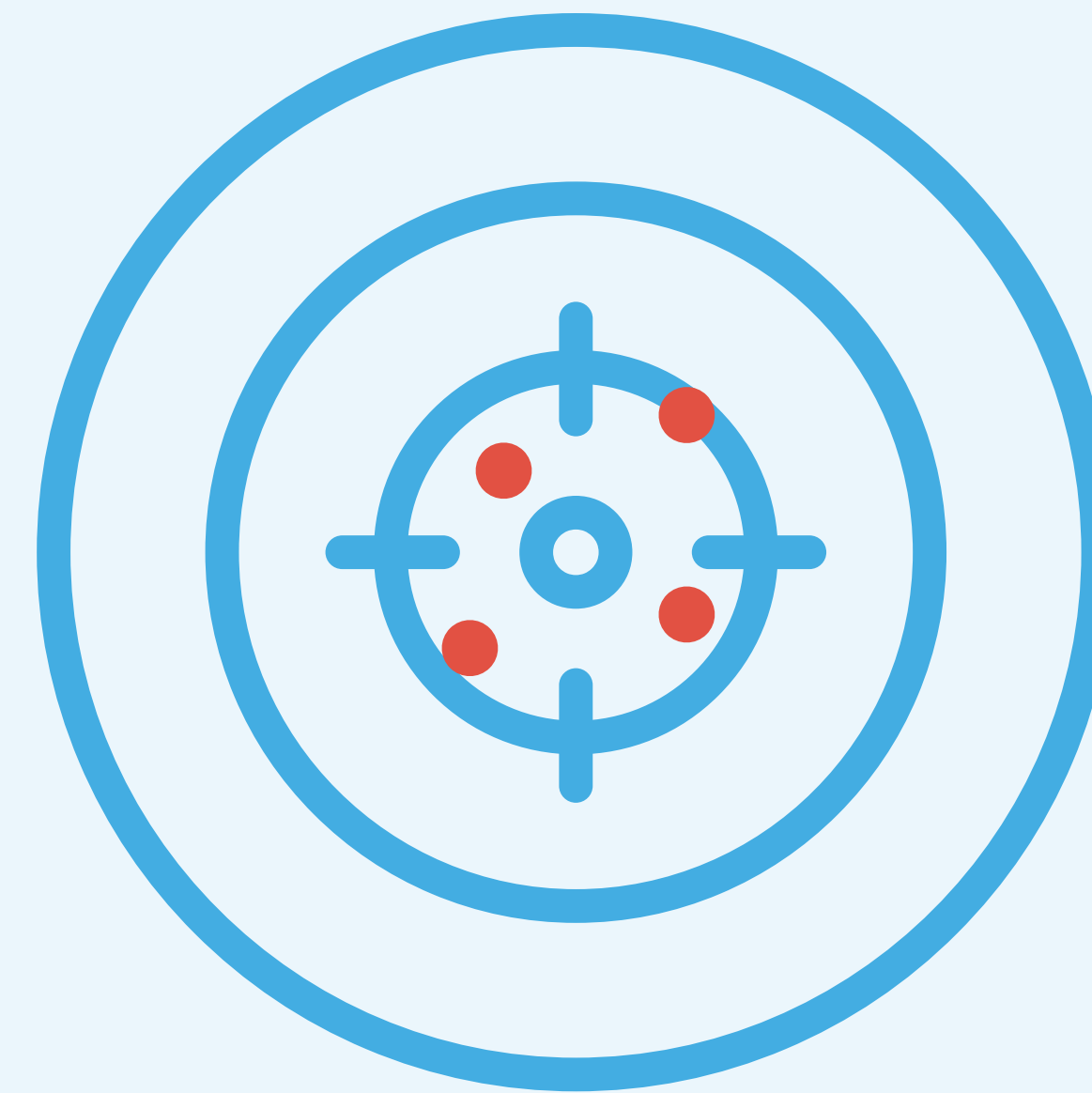
Good plans answer

- ▶ Do we know the outcome?
- ▶ Do we know what we need to do?
- ▶ Do we know (approximately) how long?
- ▶ Are we aware of critical dependencies?
- ▶ How do we know we are done?

Precision vs Accuracy



Precisely inaccurate



Imprecisely accurate

Example

“Our migration will be done on May 12, 2026”

Precisely inaccurate

“Our migration will be done in Jan '26
+/- 1 month”

Imprecisely accurate



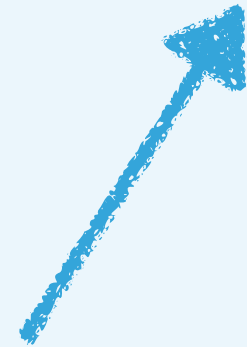
How

1 Build an accurate plan



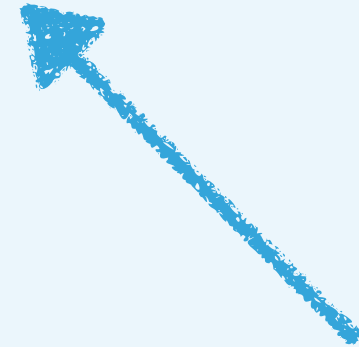
- 1** Build an accurate plan
- 2** Show constant visible progress

Constant visible progress



< 1 week

Daily



User focused

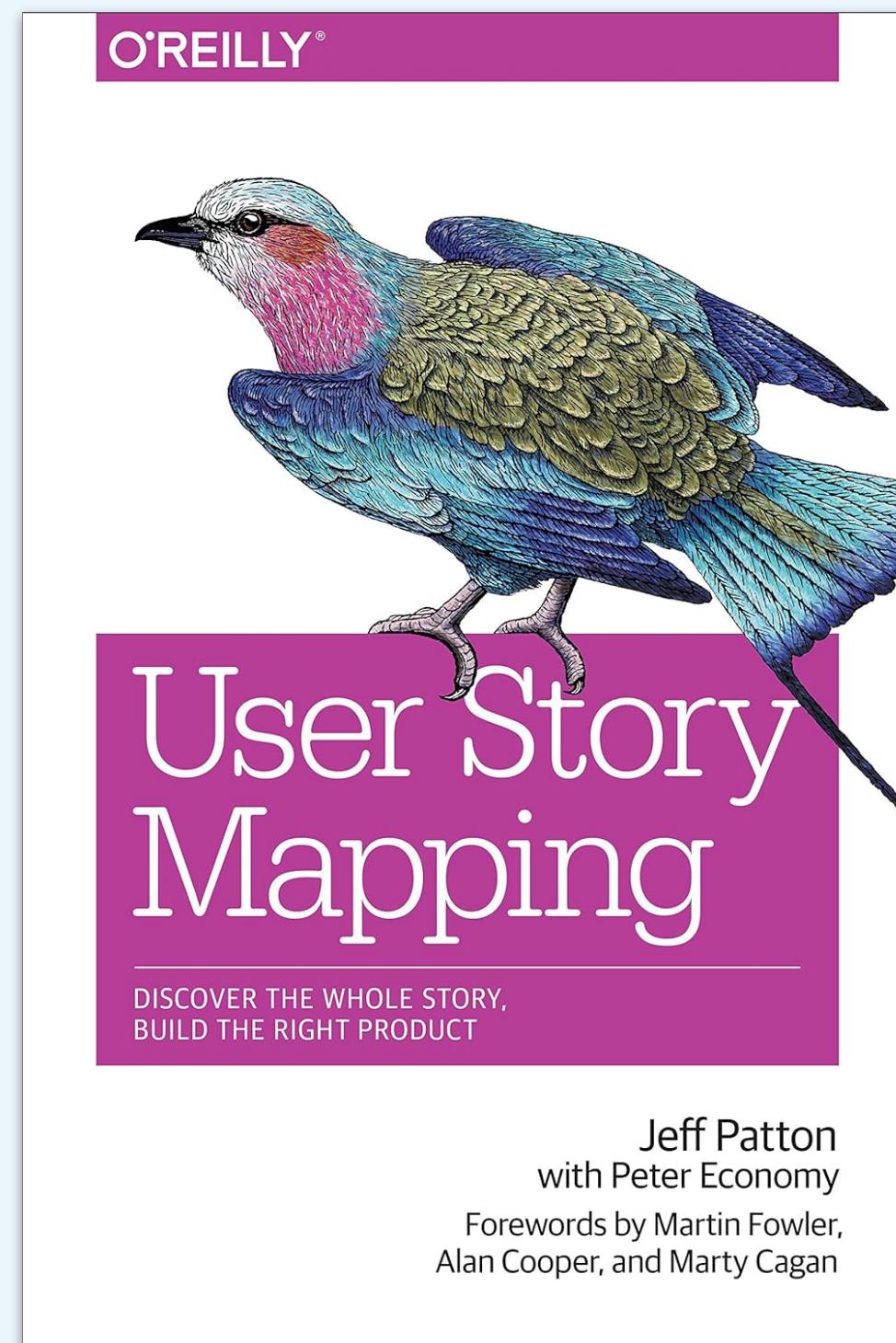


“

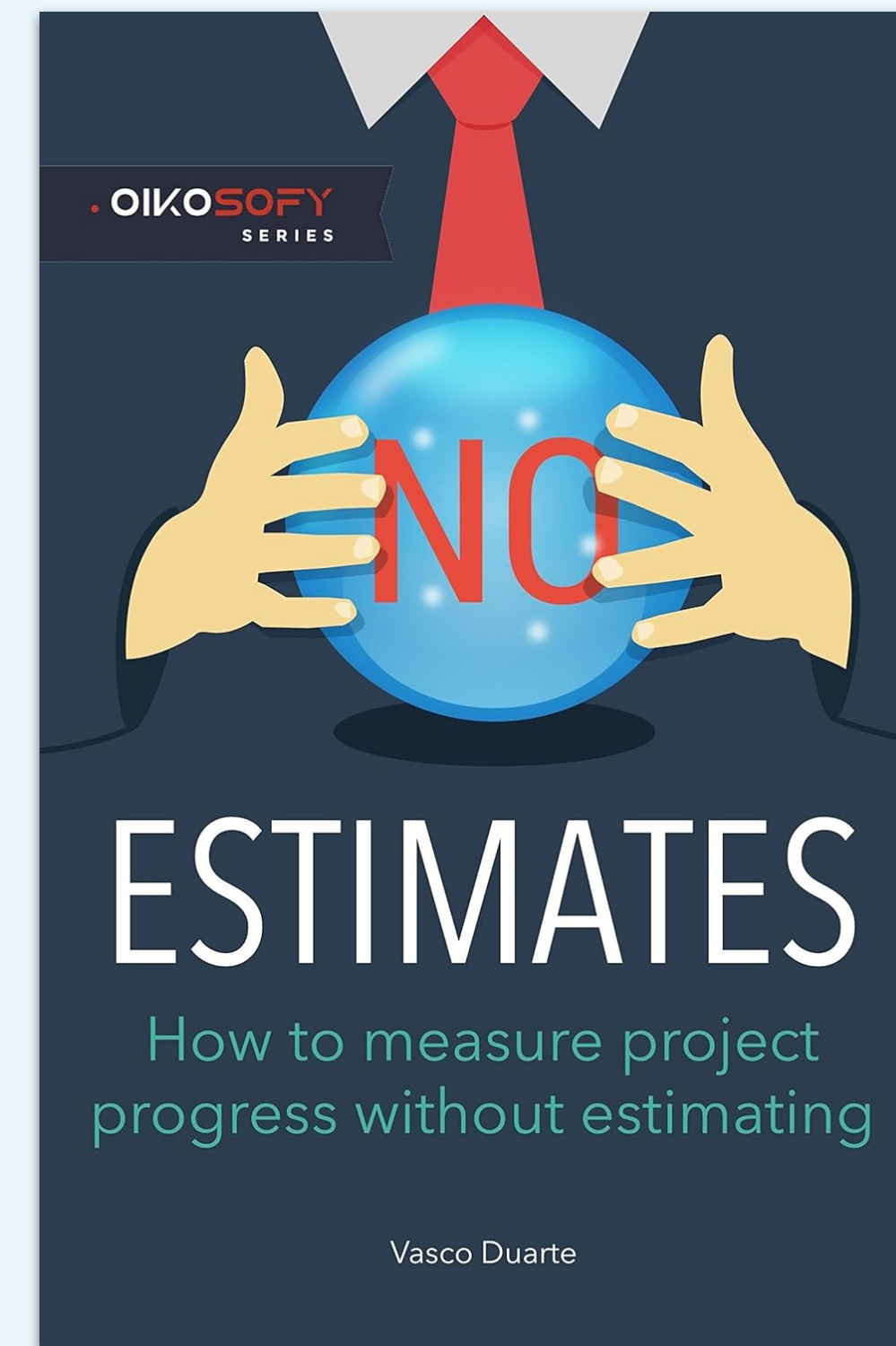
*But our work
is too big to ship*

”

Constant visible progress

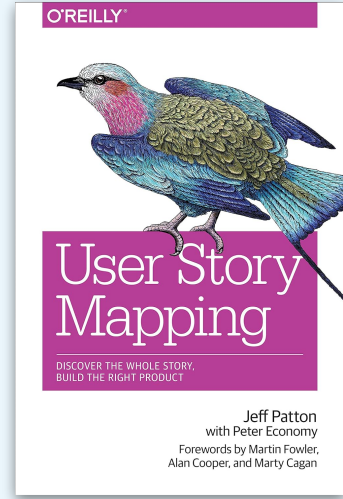
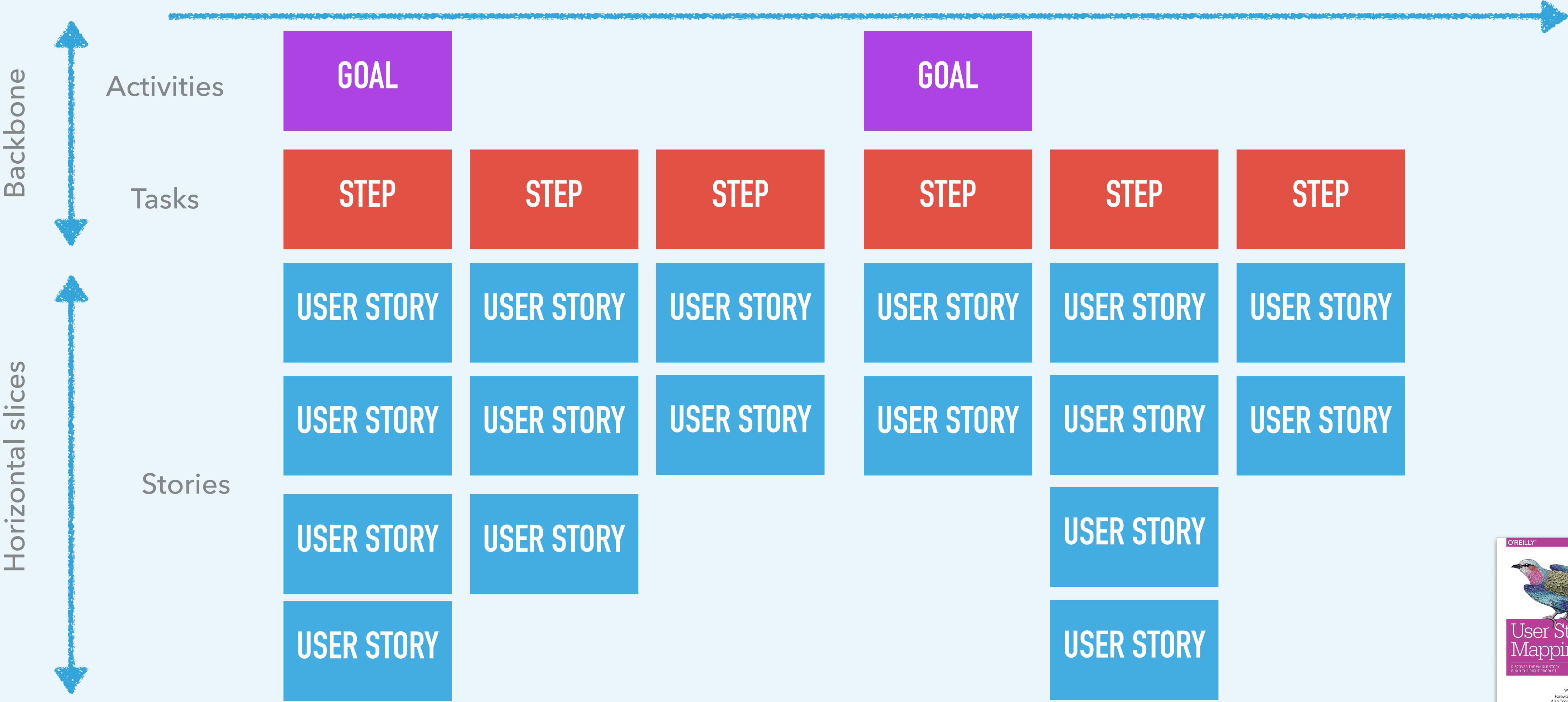


(2014)



(2015)

User flow



Prompt

Please give me a summary of techniques to slice user stories into smaller increments

Please give me a summary of techniques to slice user stories into smaller increments

Sure! Here's a concise summary of techniques to slice user stories into smaller, more manageable increments:

◆ Summary of Story Slicing Techniques:

1. Workflow Steps

Break down by stages in a process (e.g., form design → submission → confirmation).

2. Data Variations

Start with basic data types or inputs, then handle more complex or edge cases.

3. CRUD Operations

Split stories by Create, Read, Update, Delete actions.

4. Happy Path First

Begin with the ideal use case, then handle exceptions and edge cases separately.

5. Platform or Channel

Deliver on one platform (e.g., web) before other (e.g., mobile).

Prompt

I'm going to give you a description of a user scenario. Please give me suggestions on how to split this into a set of small user stories.

I'm going to give you a description of a user scenario. Please give me suggestions on how to split this into a set of small user stories.

Perfect — go ahead and drop the user scenario, and I'll help you break it down into small, focused user stories that deliver value incrementally. Ready when you are!





Scenario

*I would like to register a patient for
a medical clinic based in the UK*

Suggestions

I would like to register a patient for a medical clinic based in the UK

Great — let's take that scenario and break it down. Here's the base user story:

As a clinic administrator, I want to register a patient so they can receive medical services.

Now let's slice this into smaller user stories using different techniques. Here's a breakdown:

Sliced User Stories

1. Happy Path First

- As a clinic admin, I can enter a patient registration.

2. Workflow Steps

- As a clinic admin, I can record the patient's details.
- As a clinic admin, I can record the patient's contact information.

3. Business Rules and Validation

- As a clinic admin, I am notified if required fields are missing.
- As a clinic admin, I am alerted if the NHS number is invalid or already in use.
- As a clinic admin, I can register patients who are temporary or overseas visitors.

4. Data Variations & Edge Cases

- As a clinic admin, I can register a patient without an NHS number.
- As a clinic admin, I can update a patient's details after registration.

5. User Segments

- As a walk-in patient, I can fill out a self-registration form via tablet at the reception.
- As a returning patient, I can verify and update my information online.



“

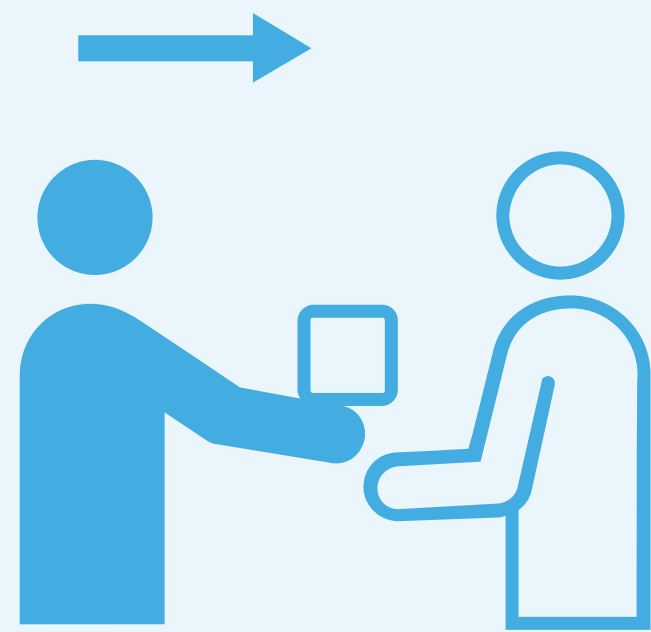
*Our work will
speak for itself*

”

Constant visible progress

What you see is not
what other's see

Constant visible progress



Proactive
communication



Status
reports



Steering
meetings



Raise in
1-1s



- 1** Build an accurate plan
- 2** Show constant visible progress



- 1 Build an accurate plan
- 2 Show constant visible progress
- 3 Anticipate the future

We can't predict the future



We can't predict the future



But we can guess a few things



About the future



Learn from
the past

- What has gone wrong in the past?
- How can we reduce risk?
- Use futurespectives/pre-mortems



About the future



Learn from
the past



It won't go
perfectly



About the future

Known unknowns



Planned schedule

Contingency

“Under commit and overdeliver”



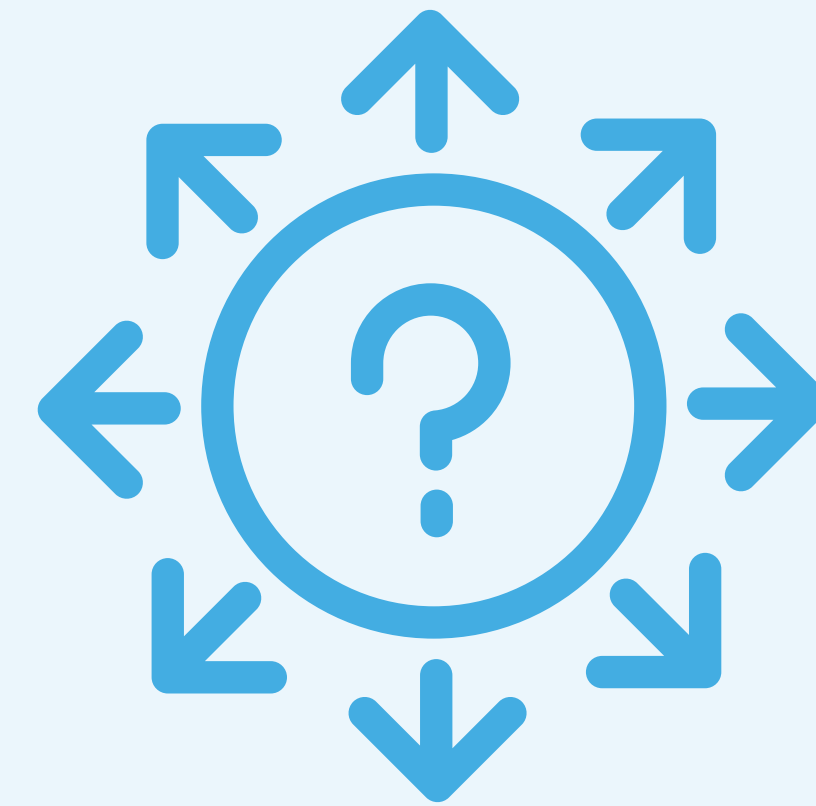
About the future



Learn from
the past



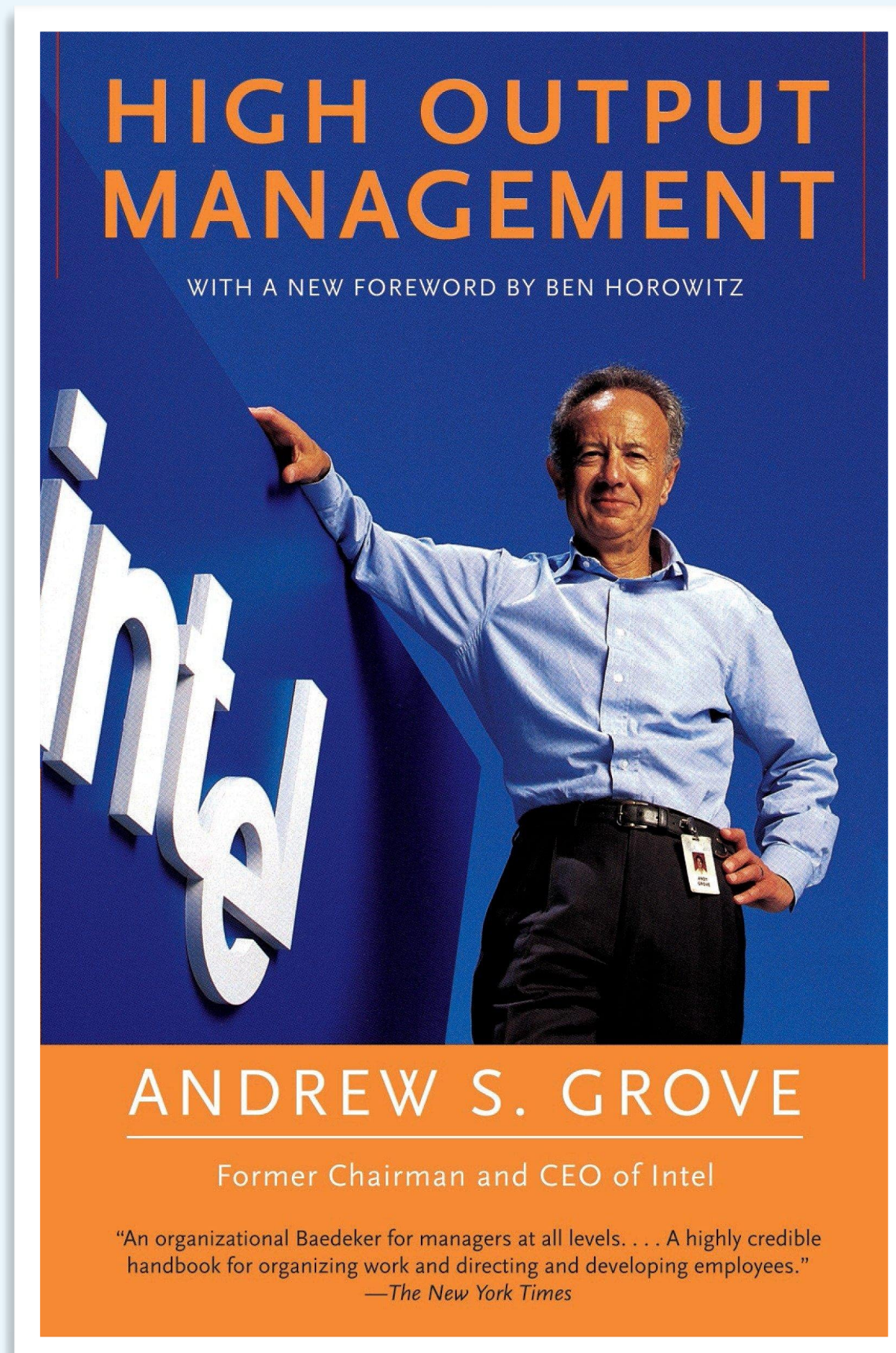
It won't go
perfectly



There will be
uncertainty



- 1 Build an accurate plan
- 2 Show constant visible progress
- 3 Anticipate the future
- 4 Drive decision-making

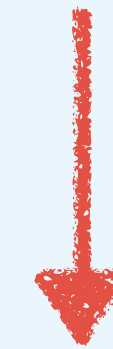


“A manager also makes and helps to make decisions”

Gaps



Dependencies





- ▶ Establish a steering committee
- ▶ Present options/trade-offs
- ▶ Decide (and document)
- ▶ Communicate decisions



- 1 Build an accurate plan
- 2 Show constant visible progress
- 3 Anticipate the future
- 4 Drive decision-making

CTO



*"Our organisation is
really **great** at
delivering 😊"*



Coach

Stay in touch

Need help training your technical leaders
and managers?

Get in touch at pat@patkua.com or
<https://www.linkedin.com/in/patkua/>

