

Agile – Myth or Magic?

ITA conference 2009

2009-04-07

Mattias Skarin



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Mattias Skarin

Who am I?

● **Mattias Skarin**

mattias.skarin@crisp.se

+46 733 66 88 08

● **Founder of**

- Extreme Solutions
- Bizplant

● **Agile & Lean coach**

- Scale >10 teams
- Operations/system administration
- Management involvement

● **Experience**

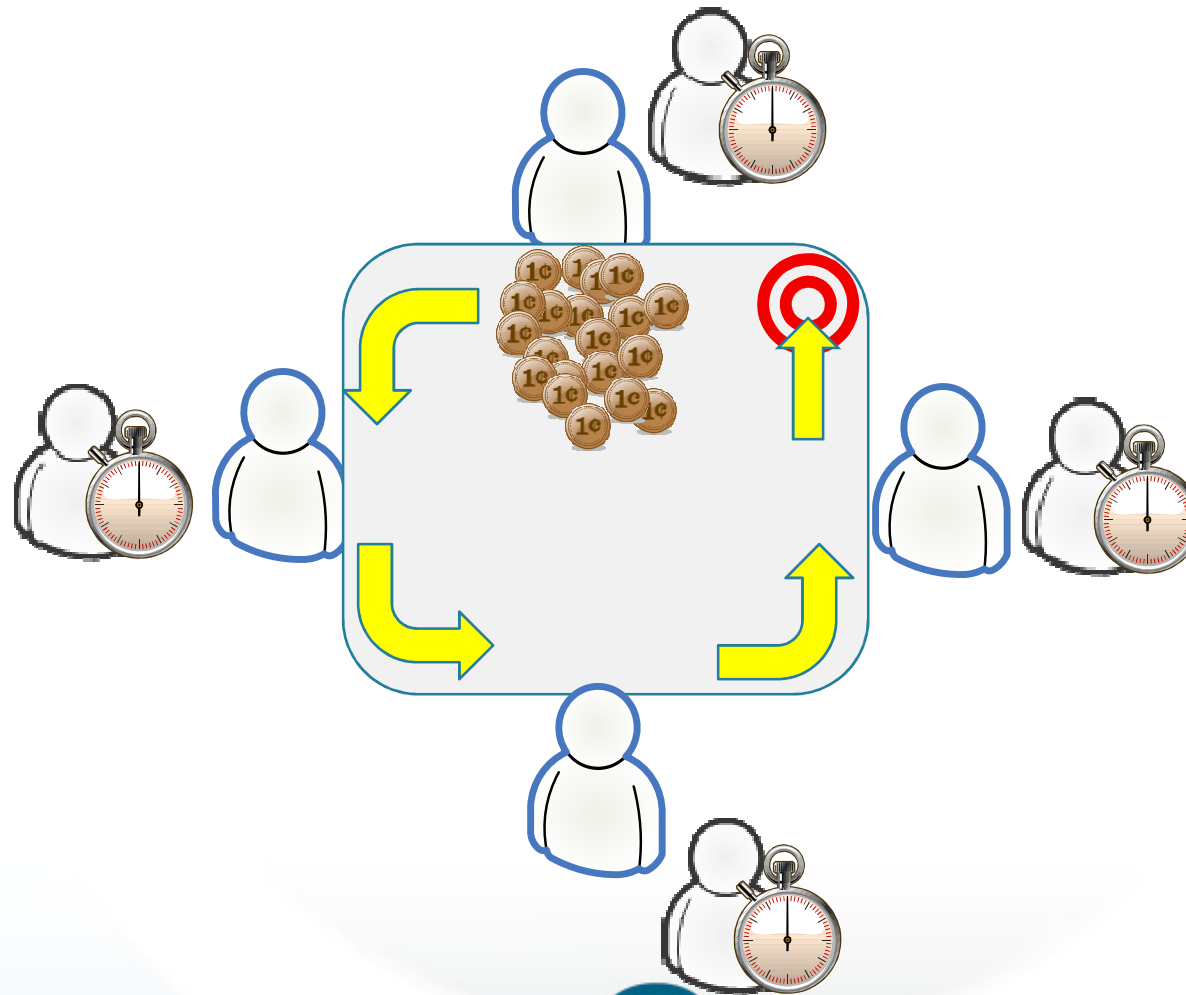
- Developer/PM 9yrs
- Acting CTO Explorica

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Exercise: Pass the pennies / Flip coins



Tomas Björkholm & Mattias Skarin

Our heritage – Scientific management

Taylor's assumptions:

- Workers are not smart enough to know best way to do their job
- They don't care about quality in their work
- Experts should define the work



Frederick Winslow Taylor
Scientific management

**Pursuite of effectiveness
through scale economy**



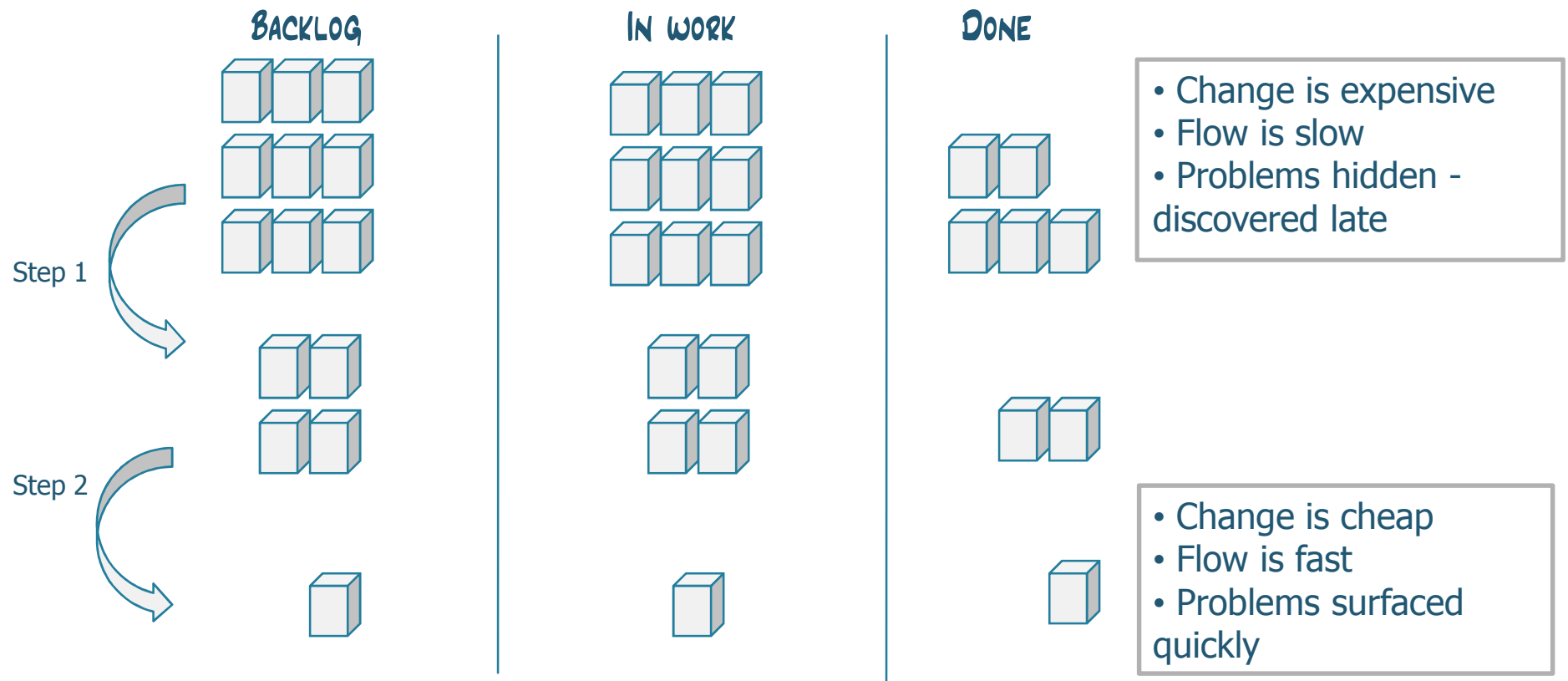
T-Ford – Division of labour and
scale economy

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Batch size effects

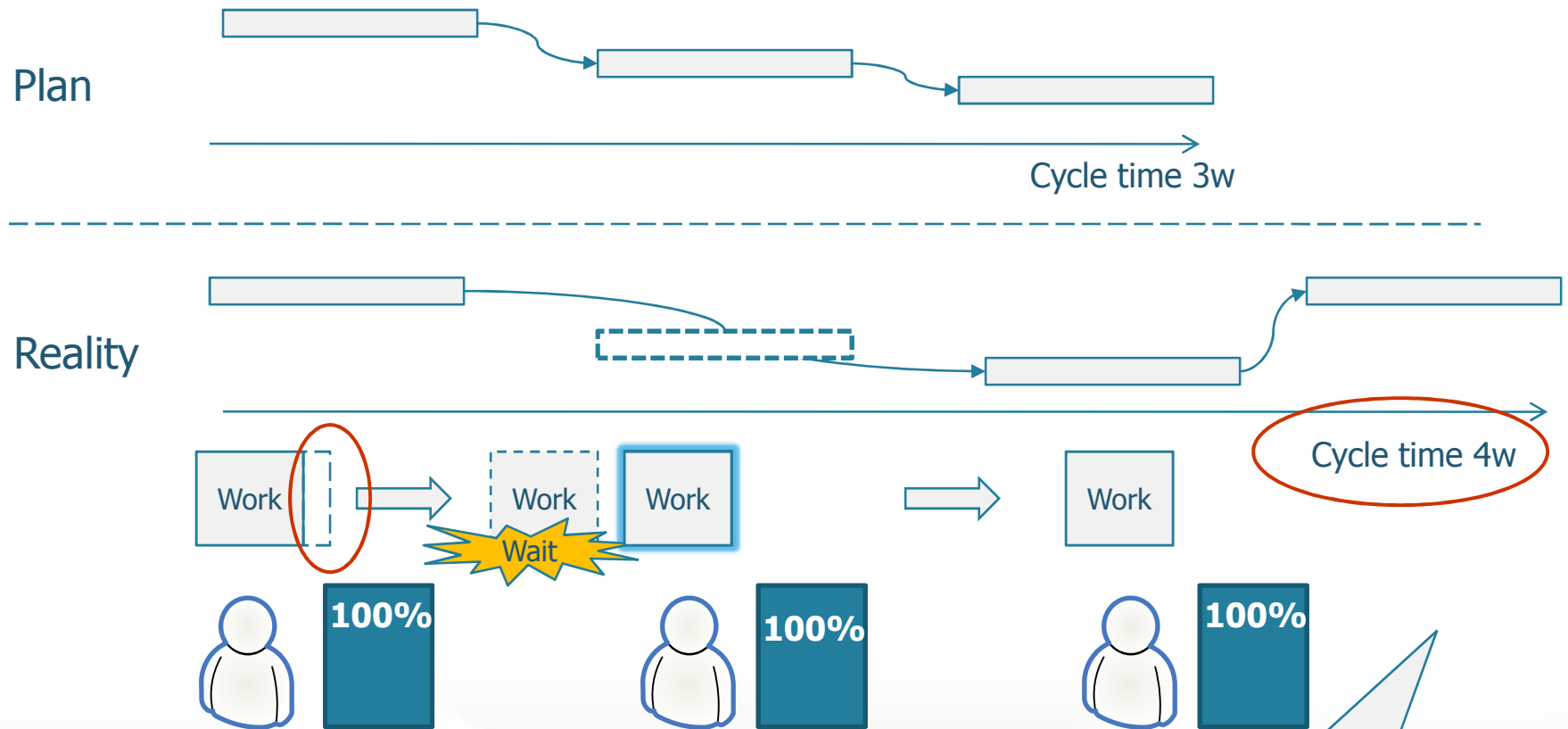


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Resource Utilization Trap



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2% variance causes
30% longer cycle time

Knowledge work is different

- **Small batches, needs *less invested capital*, returns payoff *faster*, makes changes *less risky*, and *reduces impact of variation***

★ **MAGIC**

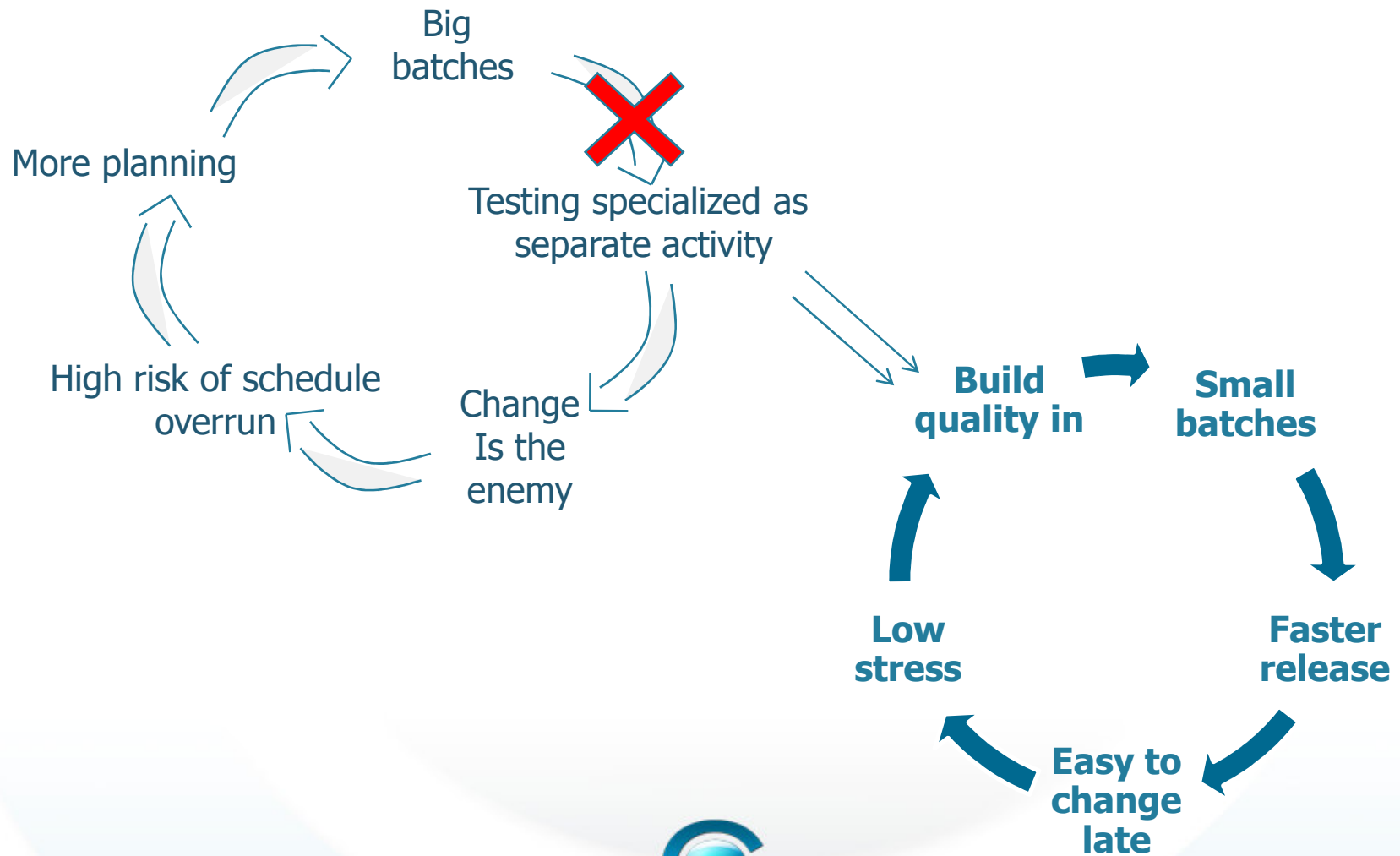
A change is no longer
such a big thing

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Breaking Out Of The Evil Loop



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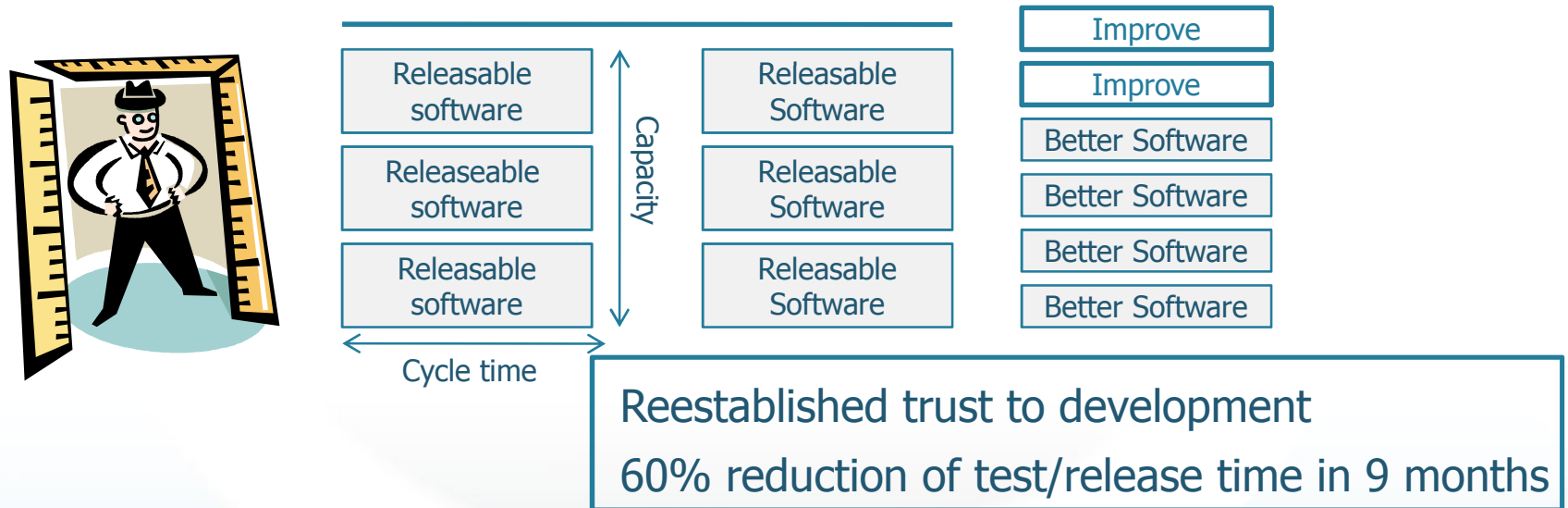
How is it possible?

- **Nordic Poker company**

Full out Scrum and XP (TDD/Pair programming)
Temporary fire fighting team
Fire preventing team

- **Nordic gaming company**

10 Teams, Scaling Scrum to whole IT



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Myth: Test Driven Development Does Not Pay Off



Test driven development (TDD) helps build quality in!

Good rule:

- Decide what is important to test

What is the cost of:

- Replacing the system?
- Refusing a late change?
- Low user experience?
- Delayed market entry?

Do the maths and find out!

Myth – Agile transformation is painless

Slow or fast, up to you!

Like removing a blanket

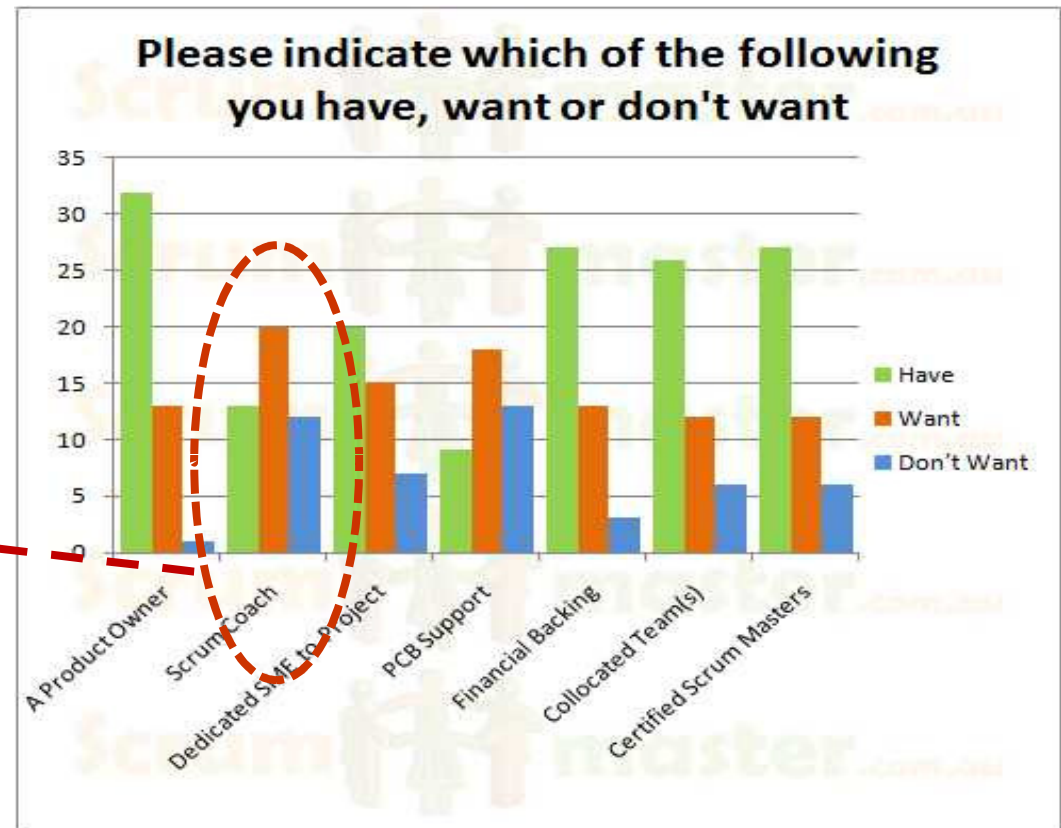
Agile teams need to learn to embrace full life cycle ownership

New agile teams biggest struggle is lack of experience



MAGIC

Great way of growing talented staff



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Source: Australian Scrum survey, 2008

Myth: Agile Is Not a Performance Culture



.. Earthling.. what have you done today?..

Agile brings in visibility

Done right, Agile will add to positive (inspiring) stress, but decrease negative (destructive) stress

"People under pressure don't think faster"
- Lister's law

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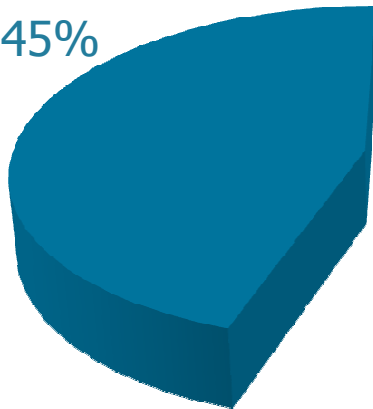
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Myth: Value of Big Upfront Planning

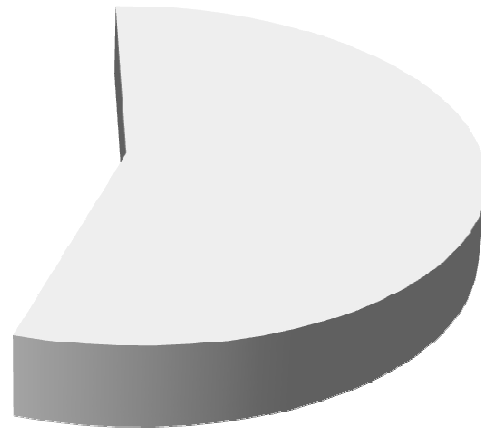
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Impact on functionality

Used by
customers
45%



Never used
by customers
55%



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Scott Ambler, Dr Dobbs Journal,
"Is fixed-priced software unethical"

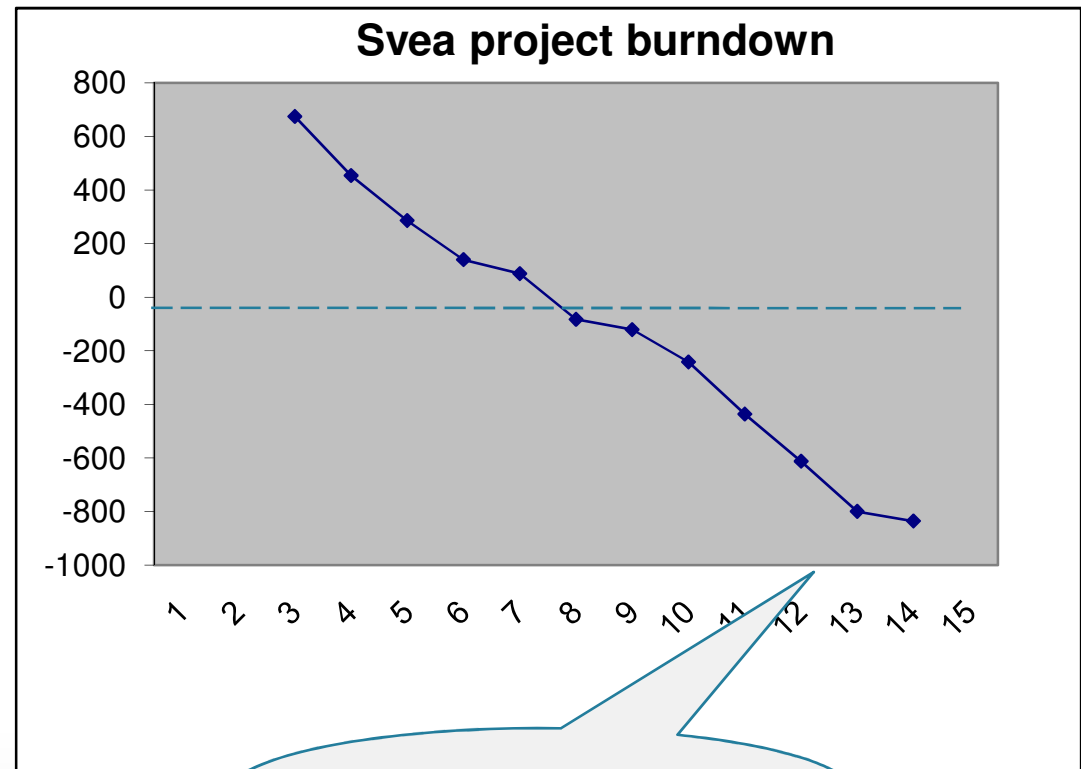
Myth: Software Size Estimates are Accurate

Scope typically ends at 180% of original estimate¹



MAGIC

Customer learns what they value if they can try running software



Scope ended up over 200%

1. The Standish Group's chaos report

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Myth: No more planning and documentation



Do:
Planning and documentation that is valuable

Stop:
What is not being used

Remember:
Value of knowledge can decay over time

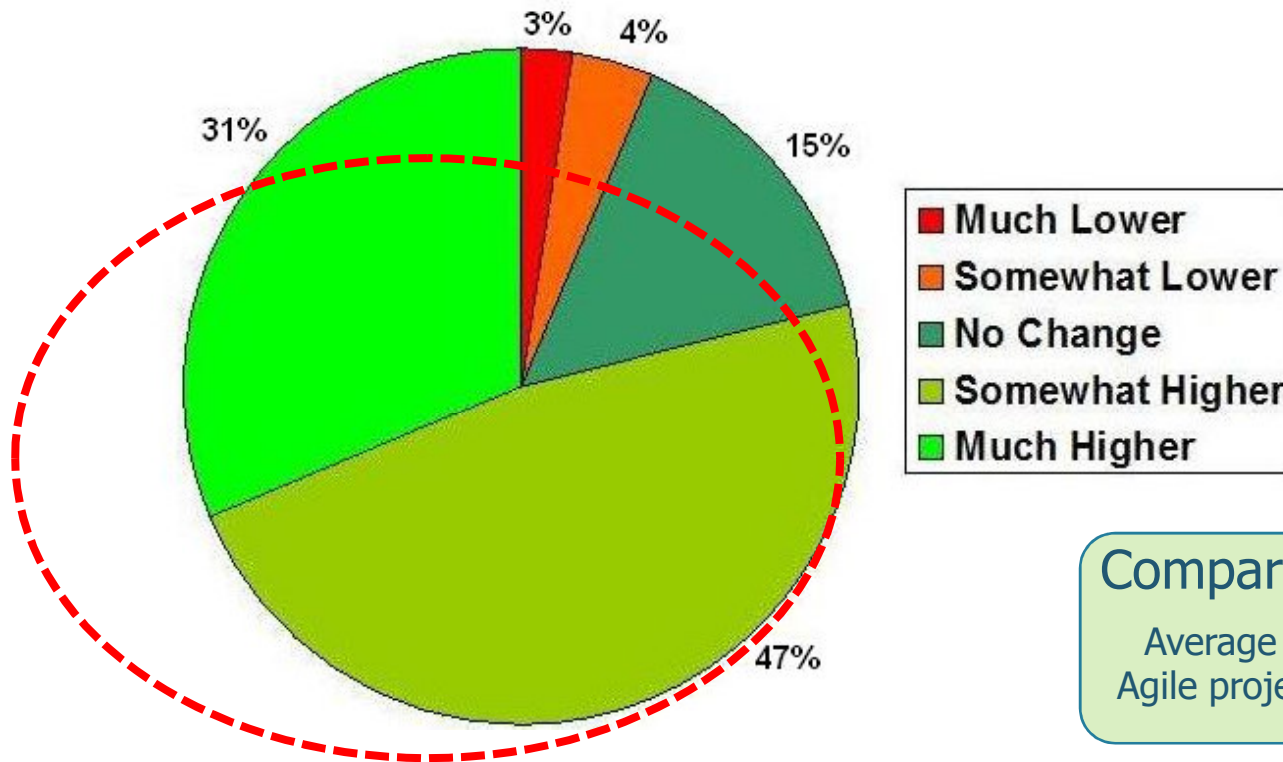
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Does Agile Software Development Work?

Business Stakeholder Satisfaction



78 % Reports higher satisfaction

Comparison

Average project: 30% success rate
Agile project: 60-80% success rate

Sources:

- <http://www.softwagemag.com/L.cfm?Doc=newsletter/2004-01-15/Standish>
- http://www.versionone.com/pdf/3rdAnnualStateOfAgile_FullDataReport.pdf
- <http://www.ambysoft.com/surveys/agileFebruary2008.html>

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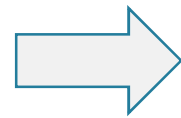


Agile In The Public Sector

Nordic Battle Group



Dynamic and unclear requirements
Access to users and material unsure
Delivery time = NOT NEGOTIABLE



Decision: Use Scrum for testing

Results:

Duty commenced as planned, with support needed to solve expected operations

Systems delivered where completely different from the original specification

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Thanks to: Kennet Osbjør, Addq 18

Summary

- **Neither myth nor magic**
- **Pursuit of Scale economy prevents us from thinking straight**
- **Enforce: Responsibility, Small batches & iterations, Build quality in, Limit work to capacity**
- **Given this, Agile is a low risk decision**

Thanks for listening!

Blog:

<http://blog.crisp.se>

<http://blog.crisp.se/mattiasskarinn>

Future of Agile – 27:th May

<http://www.crisp.se/futureofagile>

<http://www.crisp.se/konsulter>



If you are interested
in "what's next"

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