

R&D Team Actualization and Scaling Practices

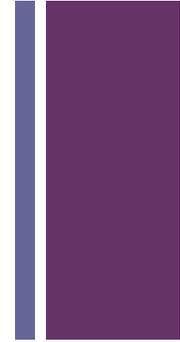
Chuba Udokwu

EEF

April 28th 2009



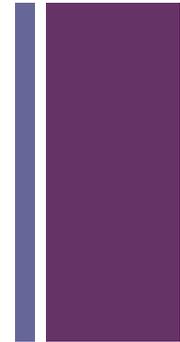
Agenda



- Goals
- First off clean up the front end.
- Engineering Process Review
- Culture
- Organization
- Team Building
- Q&A



Goals



- **Increase Accountability / Empowerment**
 - Issues owner, escalation paths
 - Silo focus of accountability

- **Increase Schedule Integrity**
 - Tracking/progress data

- **Growth for Development and Test engineers**

- **Increase End to End Customer focus**

- **Increase Consistency across programs, platforms**
 - Reporting/taking, risk assessment, escalation paths, process

- **Consistent implementation of priorities**

- **People, Equipment and Budget Planning and Visibility**

- **Increased Cross functional Interworking**
 - Architecture, Test – Development – System Test, Regression, etc

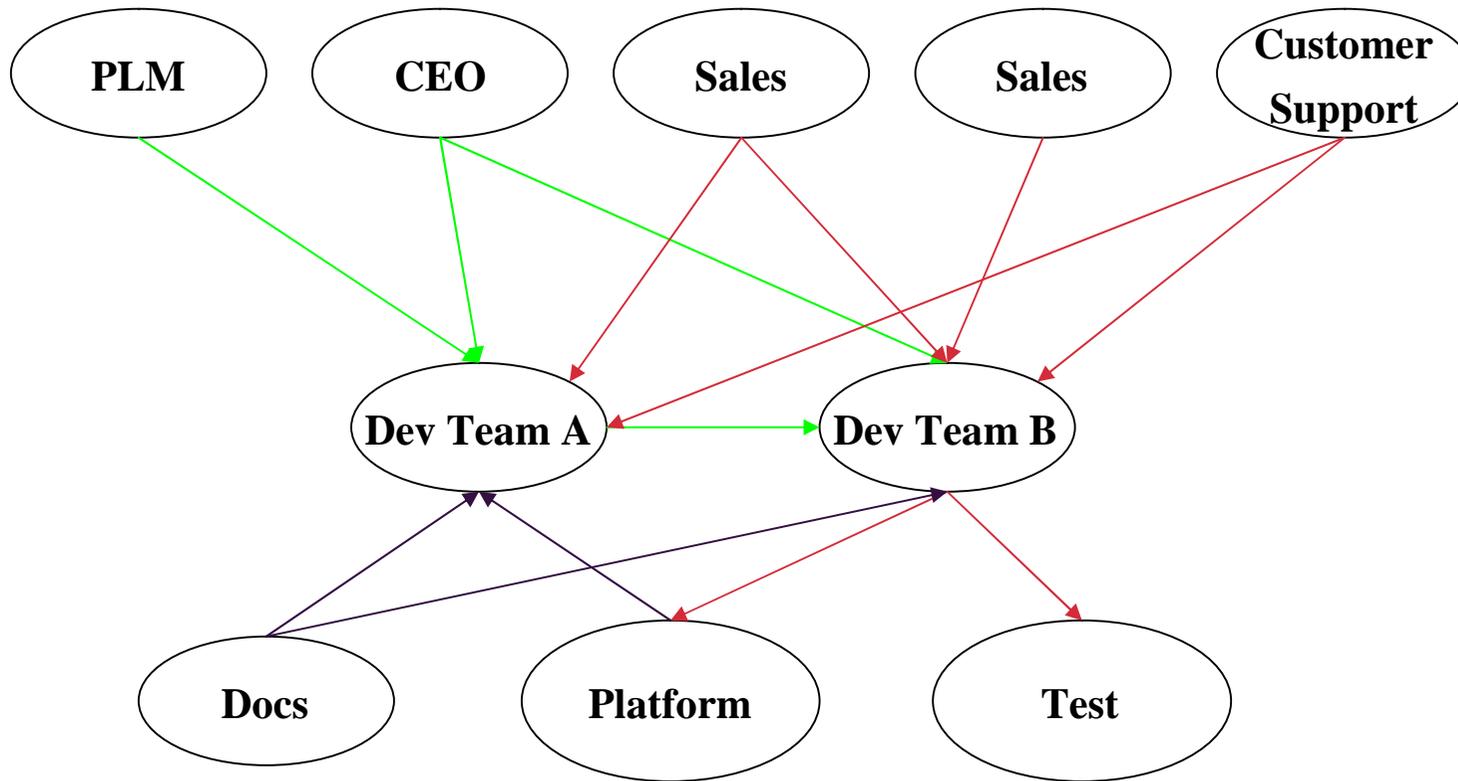
- **Handoff Model Issues** (passing the baton)

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Clean Up the Front End First!



+ Engagement Model - Yesterday



Problem 1: Multiple Priorities from different sources

Problem 2: Lack of cohesive Program Management

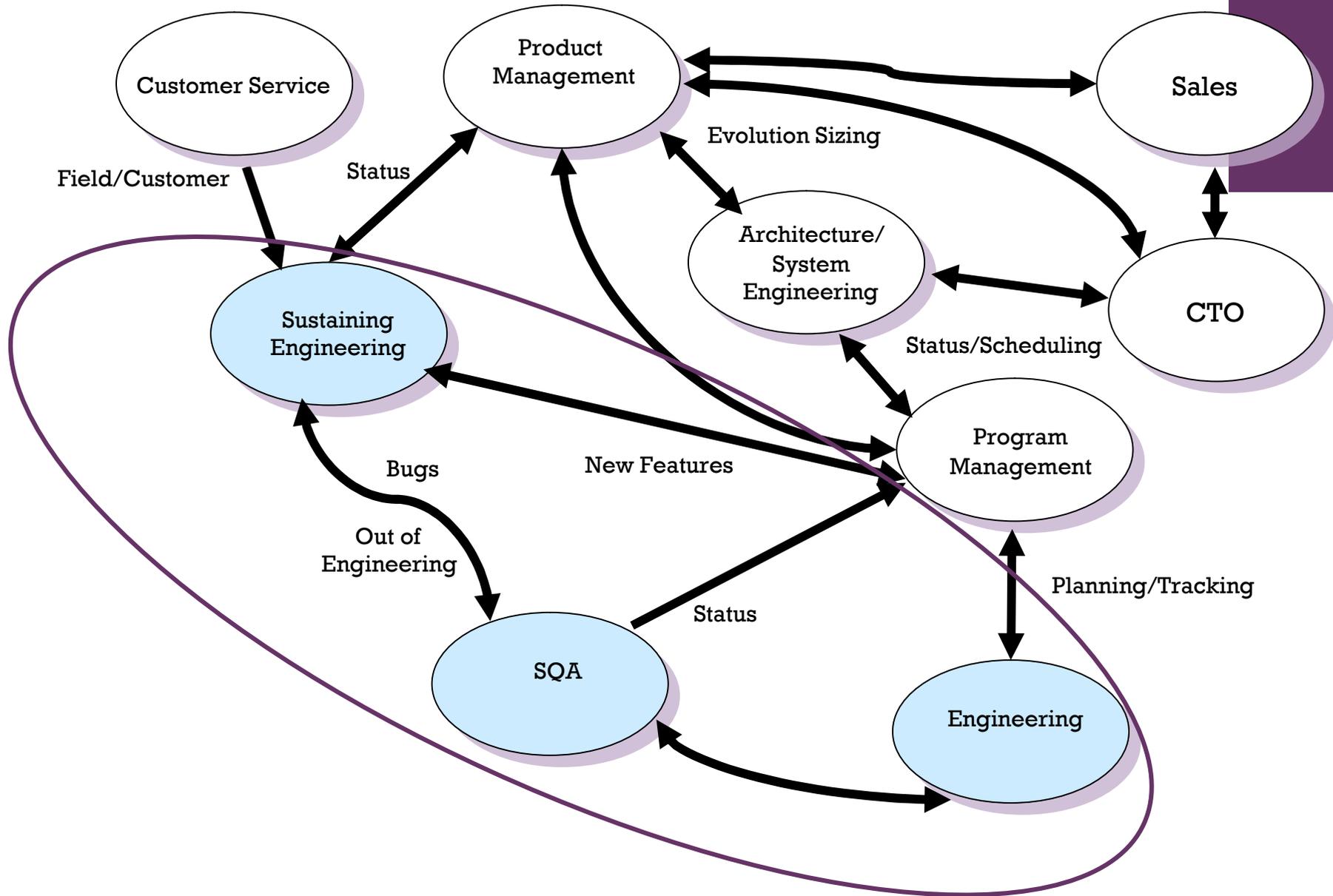
Legend

Priorities 

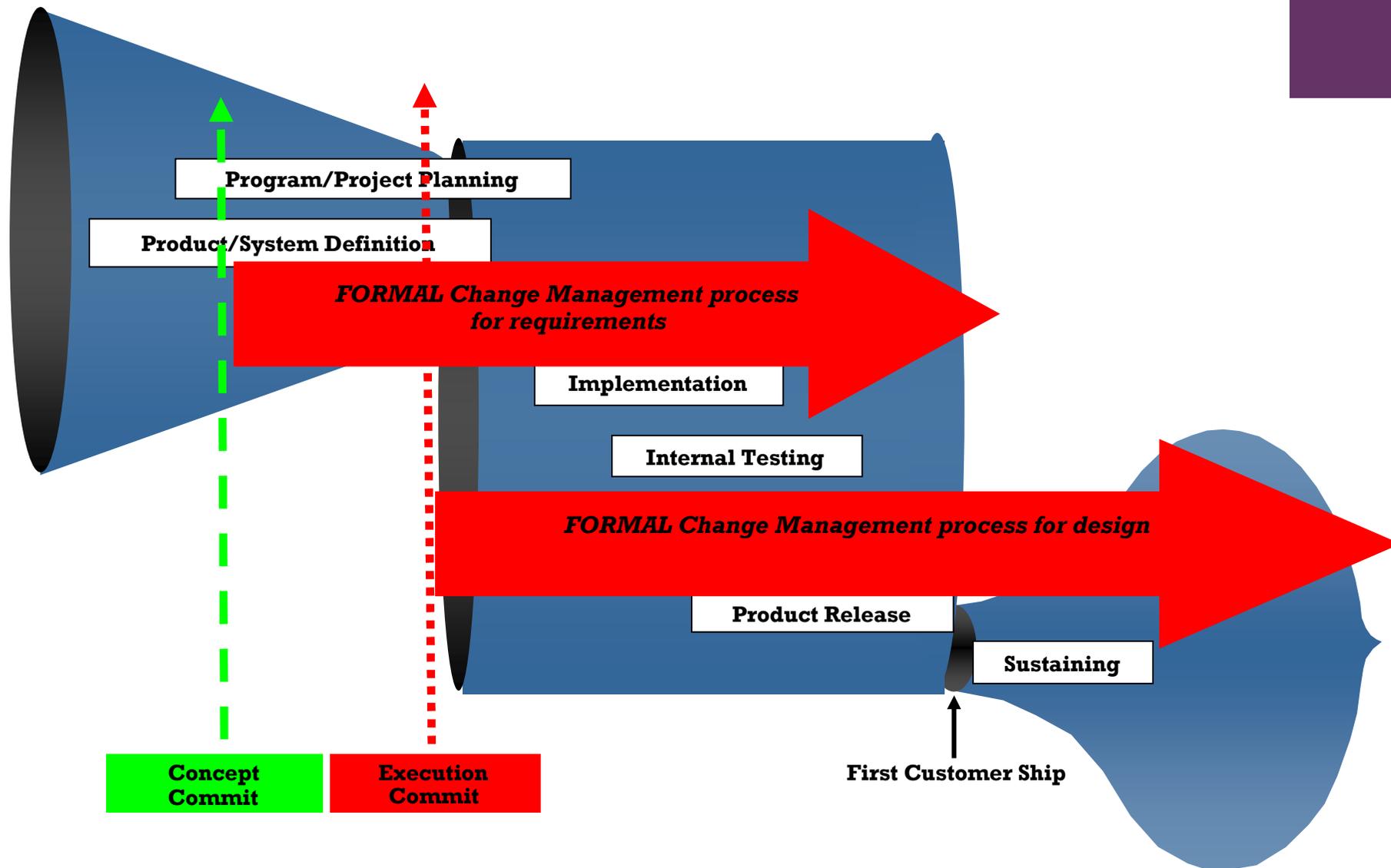
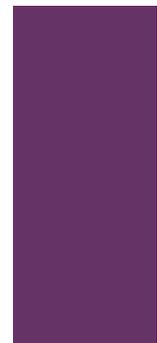
Requests 

Engagement 

+ Product Development Process

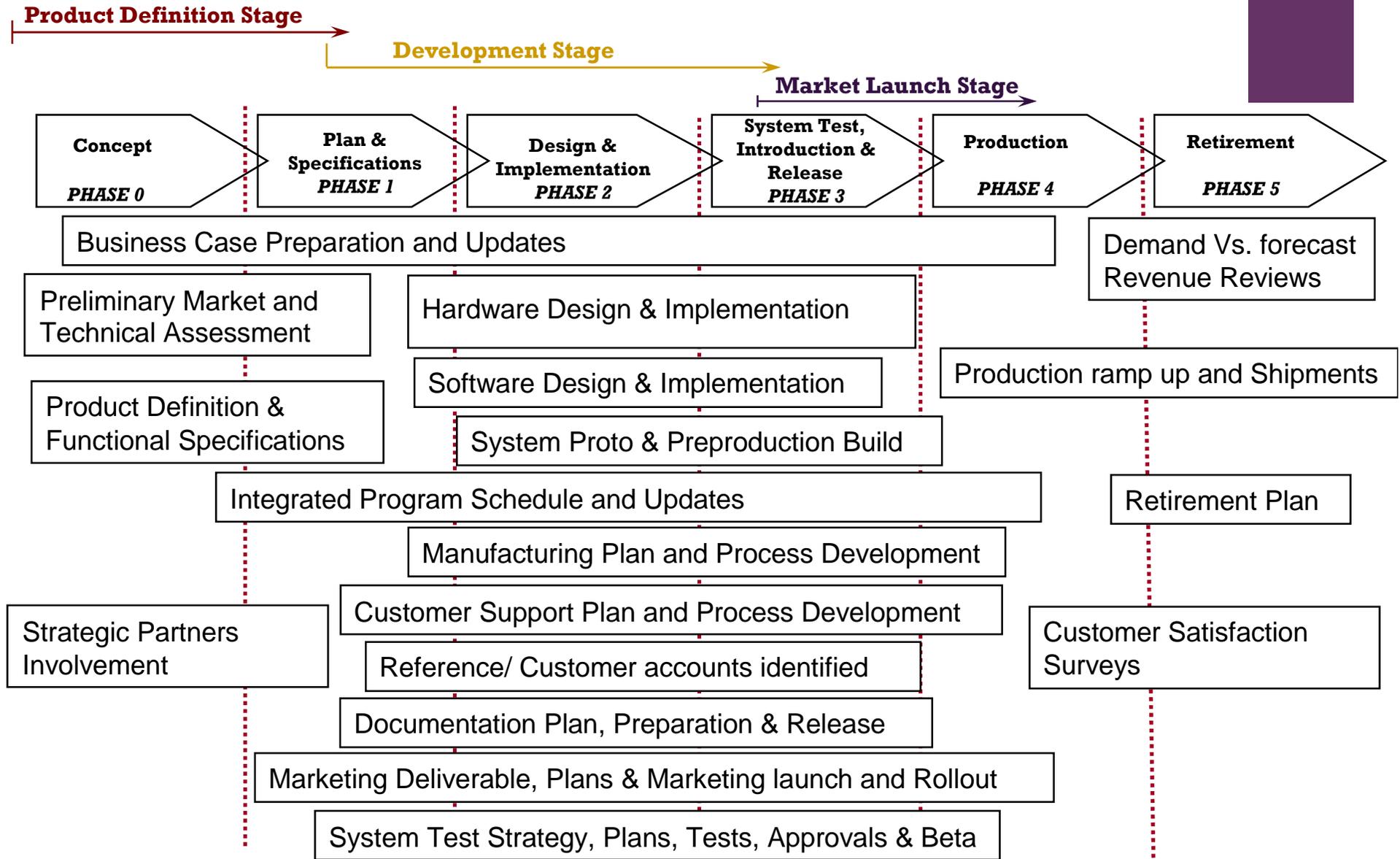
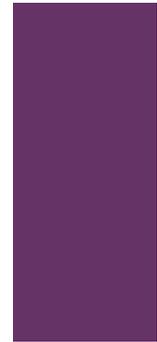


+ Introduce NPI Phases & Stages





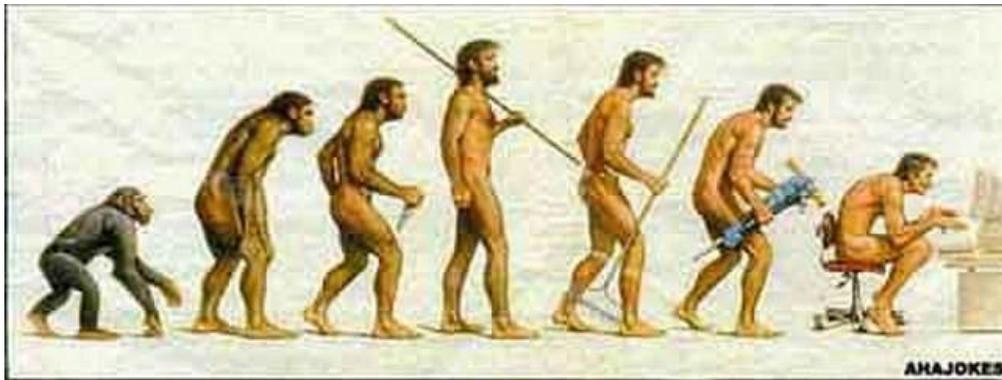
NPI Model On Going Activities



+ Project Phases/Milestones

- **Pre Concept Commit (PCC)** – requirements definition, business case development, prioritization
- **Concept Commit (CC)** – approved PRD, Stakeholder approval of requirements, business case, resources necessary to plan the EC.
- **Execution Commit (ECC)** – approved functional spec, schedule, risks, resourcing, release planning, ... Stakeholder approval to execute.
- **Development Complete (DC)** – design, code, unit test, code review, static analysis complete
- **SQA Readiness** (development test complete, commit criteria met)
- **ECO** (Release to Manufacturing with all documentation and release notes complete)

Engineering Process Review



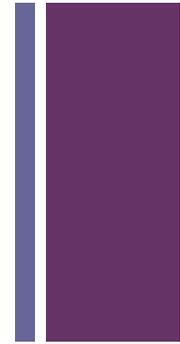
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• **Anti-Virus Precision** •

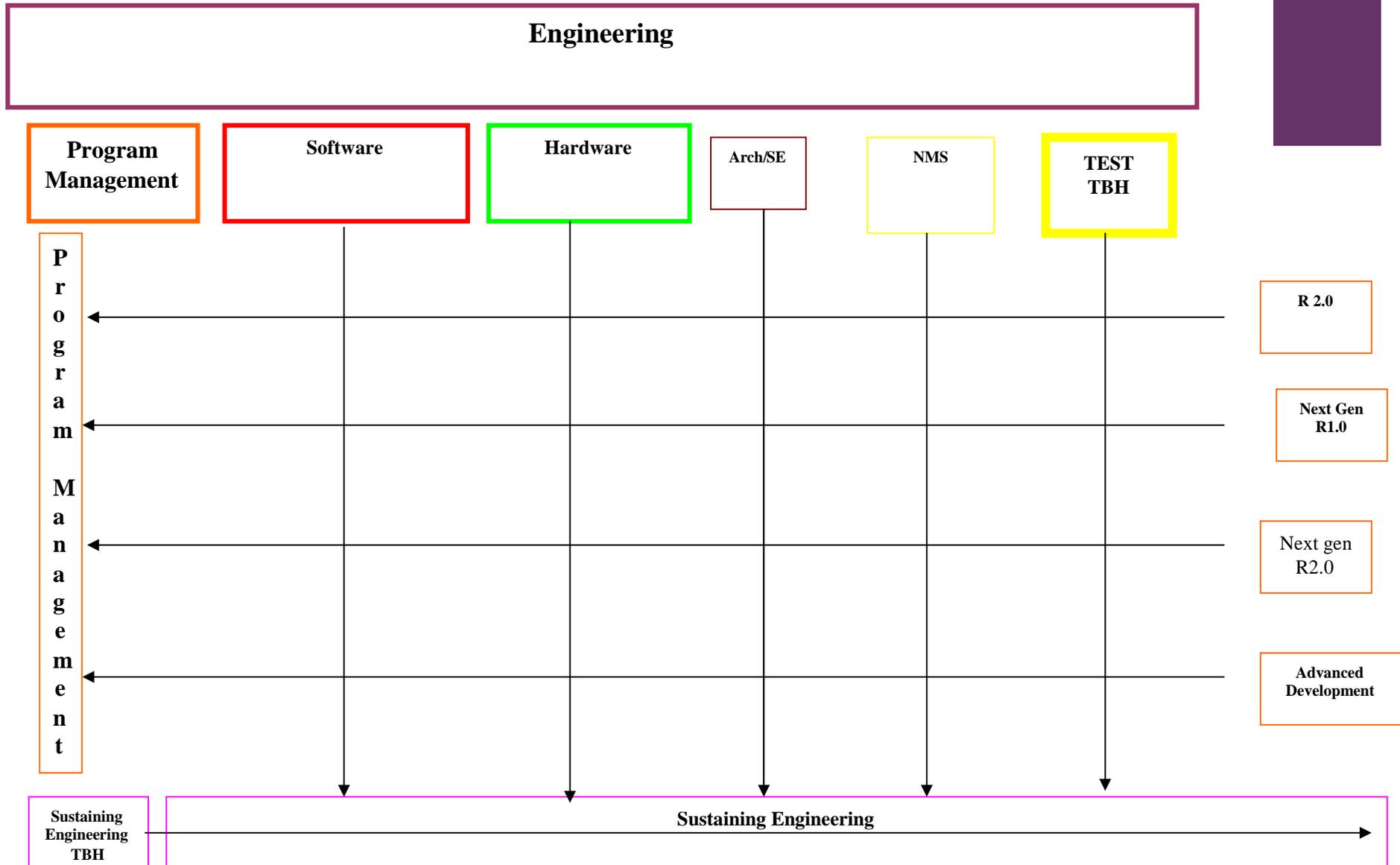


Solution Overview



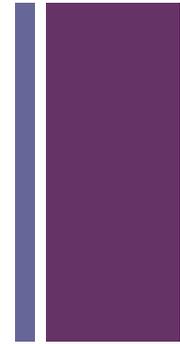
- Strong Project Manager function accountable for projects end to end
- Staff virtually report to Project Manager for project deliverables
- Functional Area Managers responsible for overall technology area

+ Development Organization View- Top





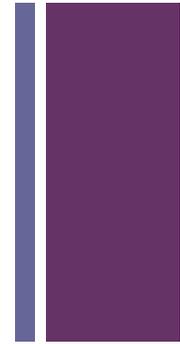
Actions



- Introduce Project team (matrixed) development process
- Restructure the Engineering organization to provide project focus, process focus and better quality
 - Customer focused solution development teams created with a fully empowered and accountable project leads. Teams will have dedicated resources from all requisite technology groups and SQA.
 - Independent platform development teams formed to focus on platform evolution and quality.
- Centralized QA organization
- Focused Sustaining Function

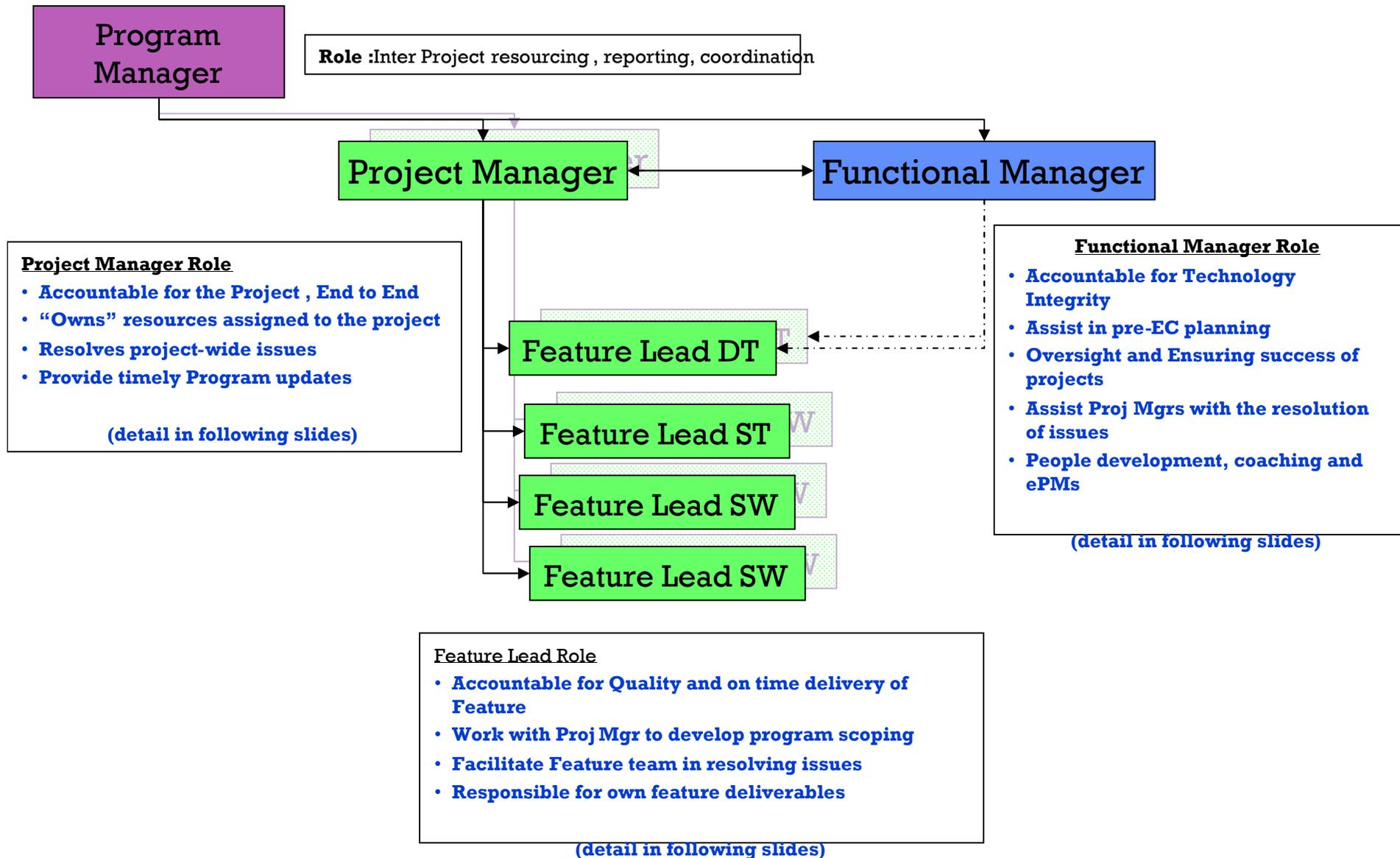


Objectives



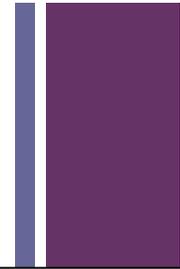
- **Strong Project Lead(PL) function accountable for projects end to end.**
- **People virtually report to PL for project duration, resources allocated up front.**
- **Phase gate process with exit criteria per phase.**
- **Functional managers responsible for specific technology area.**
- **Clear development roadmap.**
- **Frequent, date-based, project release vehicles.**

Role Relationships





Project vs. Functional Managers

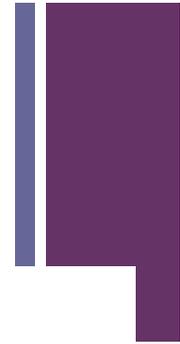


Project Manager Role

- **Accountable for the Project , End to End**
- Lead & Drive Pre-EC planning, milestones & deliverables
- Coordinates activities and deliveries
- Coordinates staffing of Feature Teams
- **“Owns” resources assigned to the project**
- Facilitates Resolution of issues between Feature Teams
- Ensures periodic Feature meetings
- Manages Technology Branch
- Ensures adherence to processes
- **Provide timely Program updates**
- Run weekly Tracking meetings
- **Resolves project-wide issues**
- Manages Inter-Disciplinary handoffs/issues
- Manages Release/Feature Scorecard
- Collaborate with PLMs etc
- Organize Customer EFT & POCs Testing
- Budget and equipment roadmap
- Escalates any issues to Funct Mgr
- Escalates any issues Program Mg/Biz Team
- Provide employee performance feedback to Funct Mgrs
- Recommends spot Awards

Functional Manager Role

- **Accountable for Technology Integrity**
- **Assist in pre-EC Strategy and Planning for People and Equipment**
- Assist in EC planning working closely with the program manager to ensure a viable and realistic plan, including the right people, equipment and high level strategy.
- **Assist Proj Mgrs with the resolution of critical issues impacting deliverables**
- Assist Proj Mgr with resolving employee Performance issues
- **Oversight and Ensures success of projects his/her team is on.**
- Engage with Feature Leads to mentor and ensure project success
- **Owns technology Roadmap**
- **Owns HC Roadmap**
- Responsible for Regression Code Coverage (Lifecycle)
- Administrative manager for members of group
- Accountable for the evolution and quality of technology
- Engage with field to resolve customer issues and share testing information
- Accountable for test and automation effectiveness and process improvement cross all projects
- Capture employee performance feedback from Proj Mgr & Feat Leads
- Create a Team technology Vision and team goals
- **People development, coaching and ePMs**

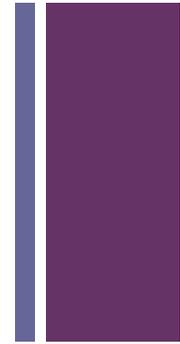


- **Accountable for Quality and on time delivery of Feature**
- Actively Participate in PRD & SFS reviews
- Work closely with Project Mgr in developing an EC plan
- Work with Feature Engs to perform scoping of activities
- **Work with Proj Mgr to develop program scoping**
- Collaborate with Regression teams to develop Regression Test Strategy
- Develop Feature & System Development and Test Strategy as applicable
- Run Feature Team meetings
- **Facilitate Feature team in resolving issues**
- Gather progress reports from Feat Engs, Provide Updates to Proj Mgr
- **Responsible for own feature deliverables**
- Highlight issues to Proj Mgr and recommend solutions
- Engage with other Feature leads to resolve common cross-team issues
- Interfaces with engineers from other FT's as applicable to ensure synergy
- Ensure that FTS & Commit forms are completed for responsible features
- Ensure that all test results are posted.

Developer and Tester Roles

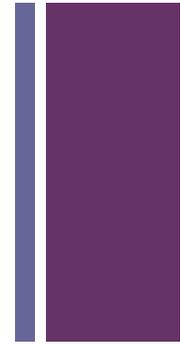


- Virtually report to Project managers for project deliverables
- Accountable to the project until it is delivered
- May be required to perform multiple roles as member of project team





Summary

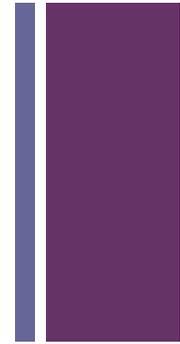


- **Clear Accountability**
- **Visibility and transparency of Project Data**
- **Consistent Executions of Priorities**



Culture

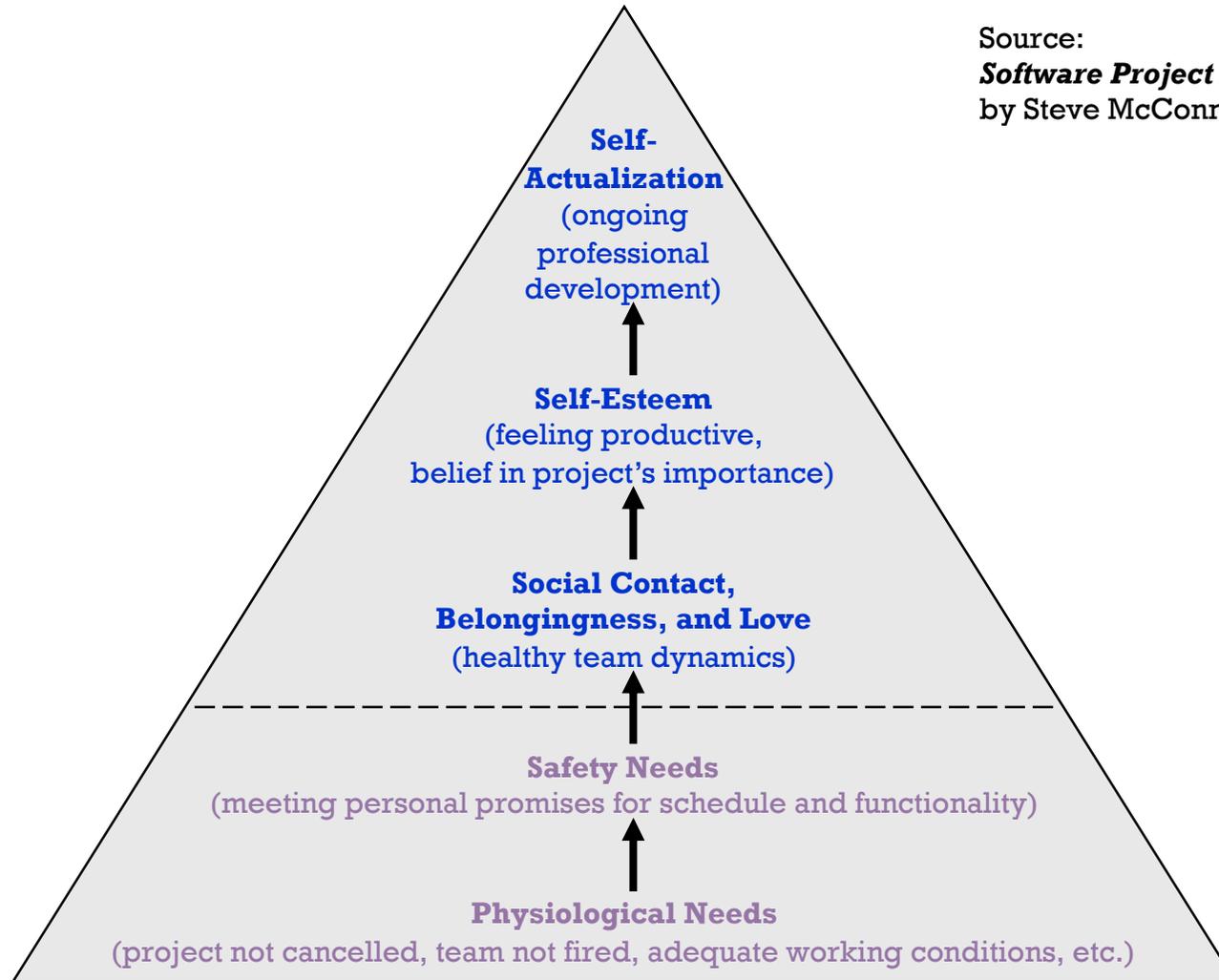
- Transition from custom development to product based development
- Increase Empowerment/Accountability
- Improve Engineering capacity planning
- Strengthen schedule integrity
- Increase End to End Customer focus
- Increase cross-functional inter-working and break down group silos
- Bring the place to life!





Project Needs Hierarchy

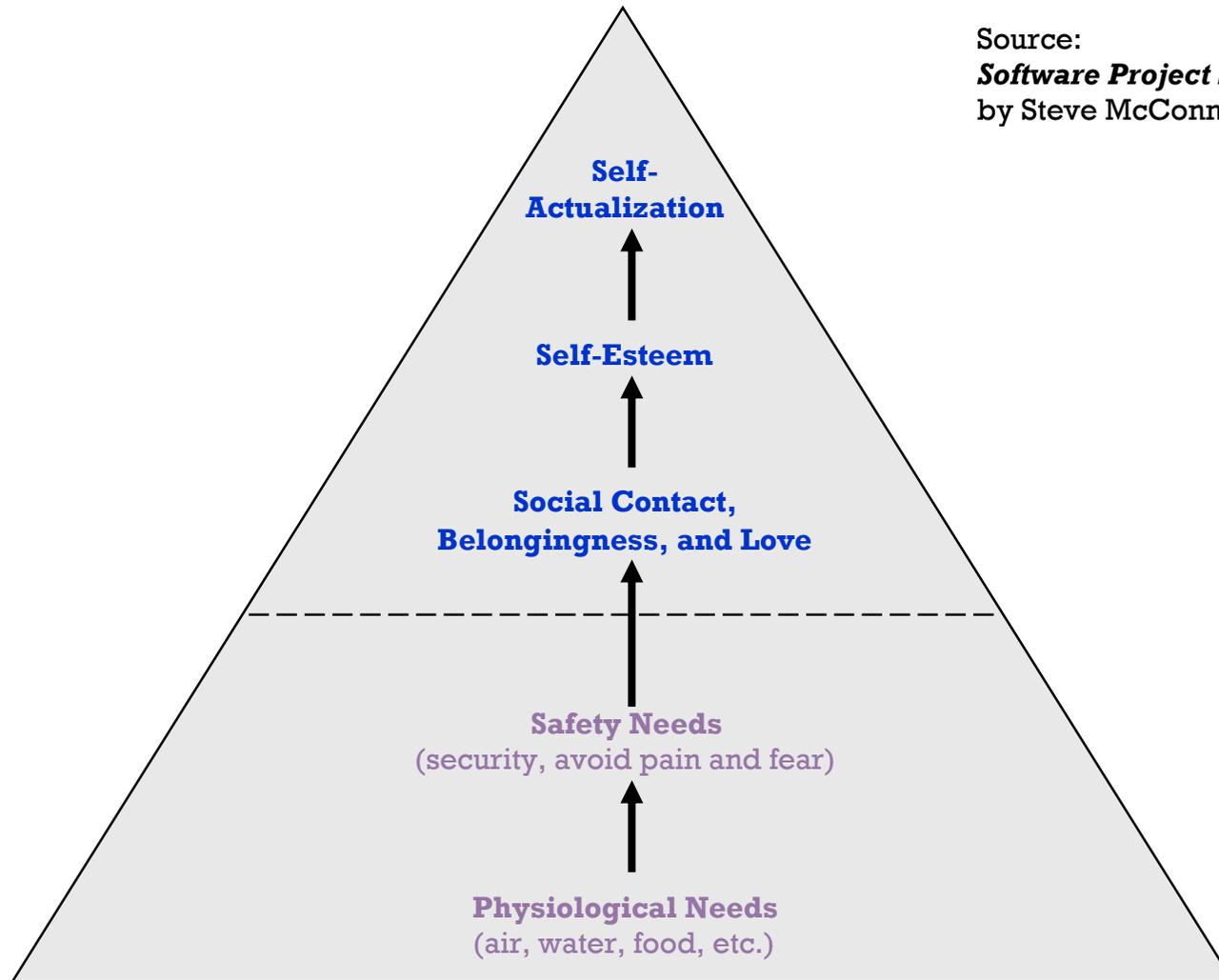
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by Steve McConnell





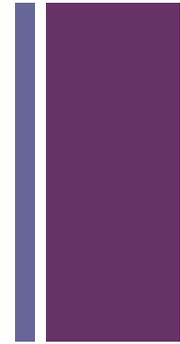
Human Needs Hierarchy

Source:
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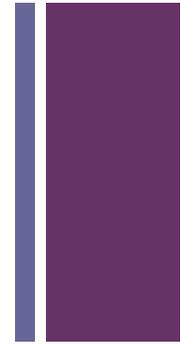
+ Transition from Custom Development to Product Development.

- **Requires a change in paradigm**
- **Requires project structures**
- **Requires Process!**
- **May require a change in personnel to accomplish.**
- **Requires leadership**





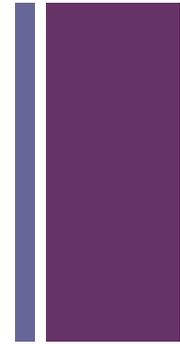
Process



- A development process is **the application of a methodology** in order to develop product.
- Every methodology has:
 - Beliefs and assumptions
 - Prescribed rules of behavior
 - Criteria to determine what's good and what's bad
 - “Sacred documents” that describe the methodology and “gurus” who promote it
 - Believers and nonbelievers



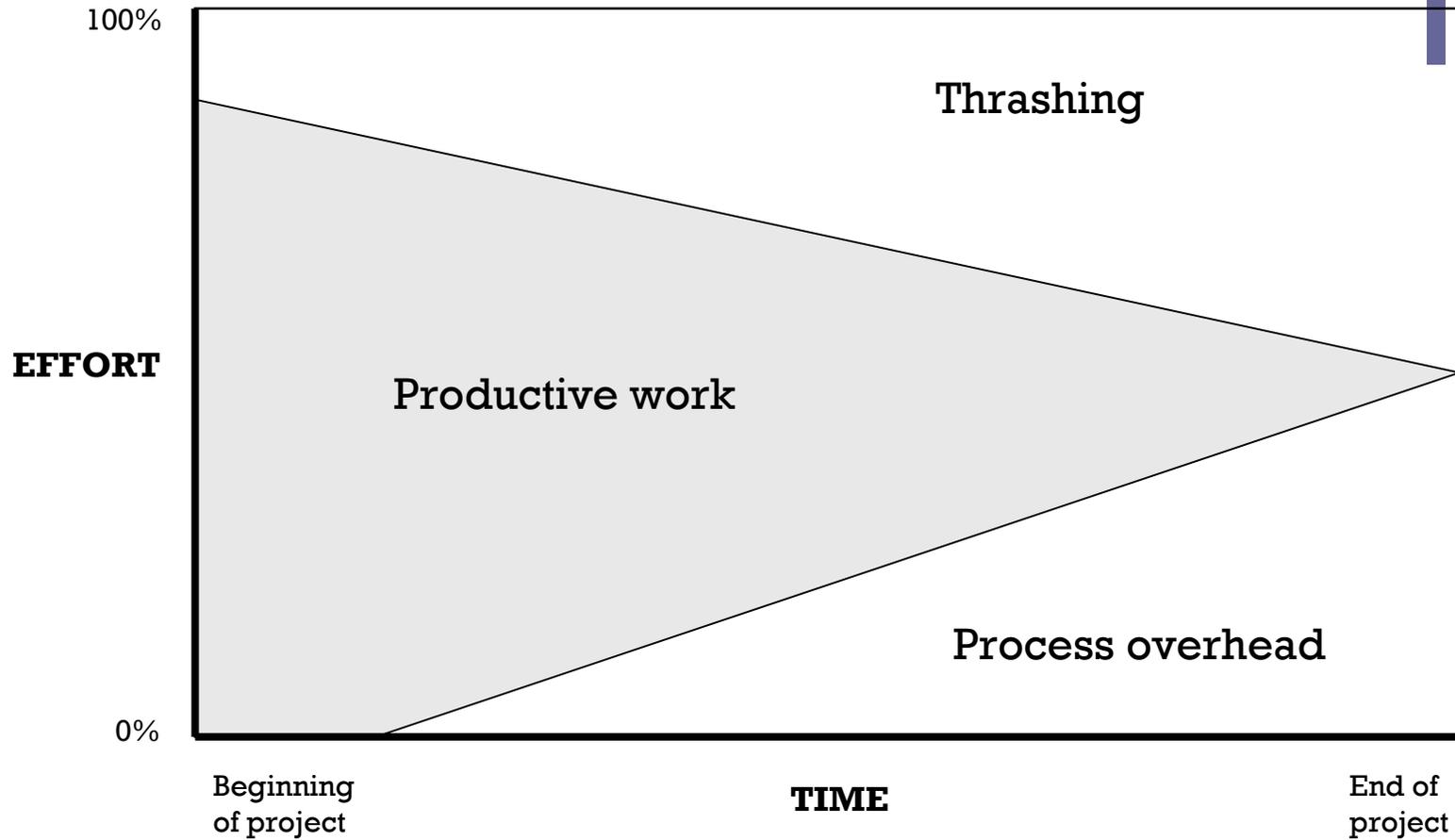
Process Elements of Engineering



- Use cases
- Prototyping
- Eliciting requirements
- Conceptual and object designs
- Schedules
- Test plans
- Design and code reviews
- Source control and issue tracking
- *etc.!*



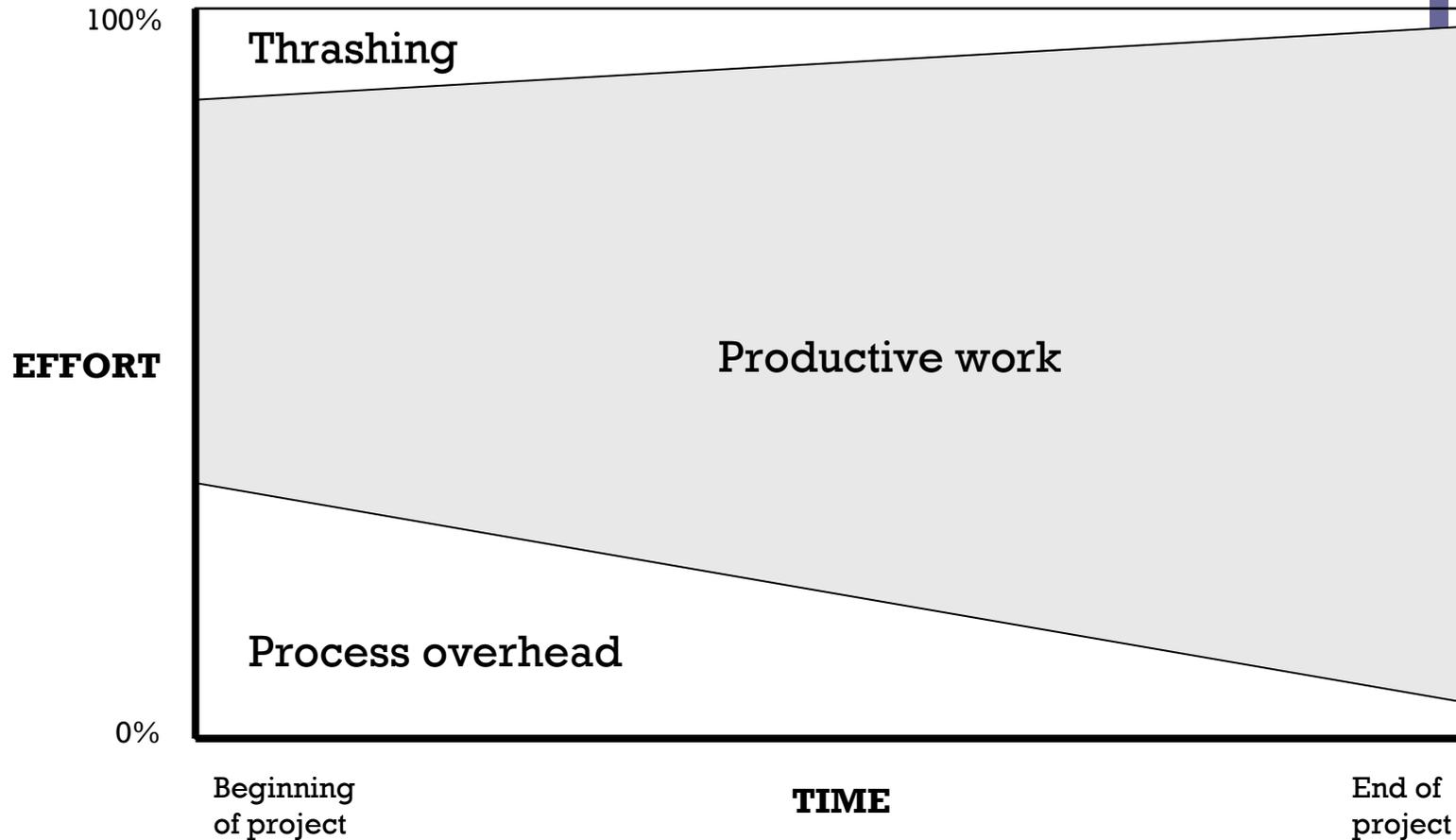
No Process at the Start



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by Steve McConnell



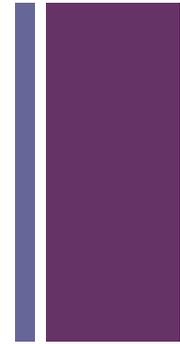
Well-Implemented Process from the Start



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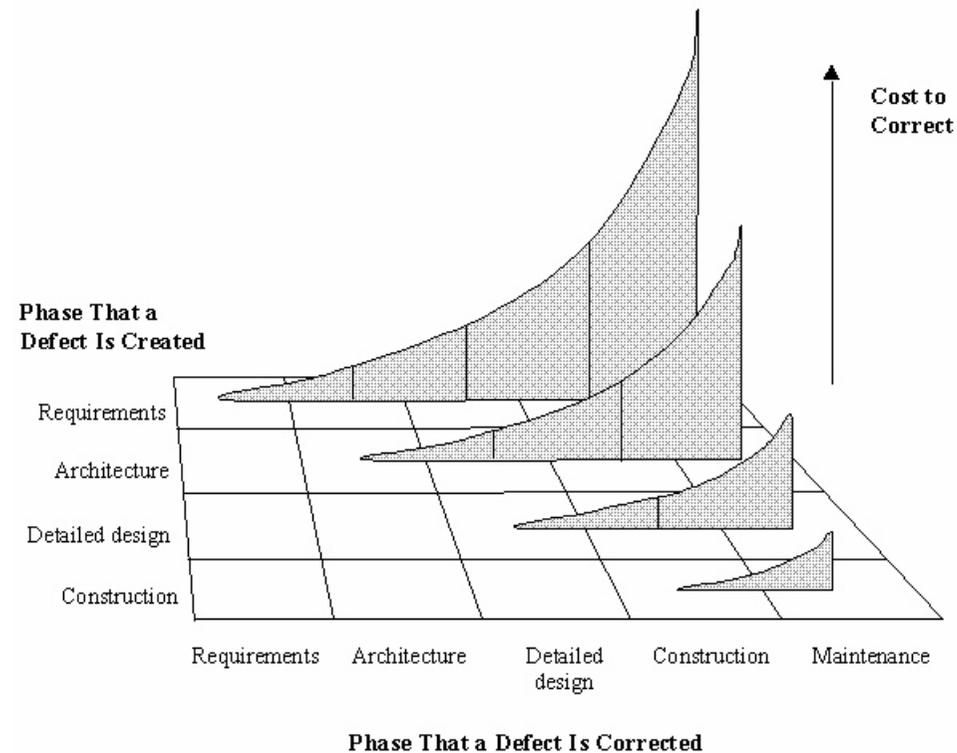
Good Process = High Productivity



- Strong project leadership establishes a process from the start that fosters productivity.
- A good process allows developers to be more creative with technical work and frees them from distractions.
- A productive developer is a happy developer.

+ The Cost of Correcting Defects

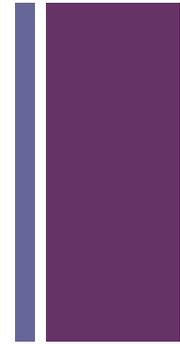
- The cost to correct a defect increases the later it is corrected.
 - 50 to 200 times more expensive to correct later than sooner.
 - An iterative (agile) process catches defects soon after they're made.



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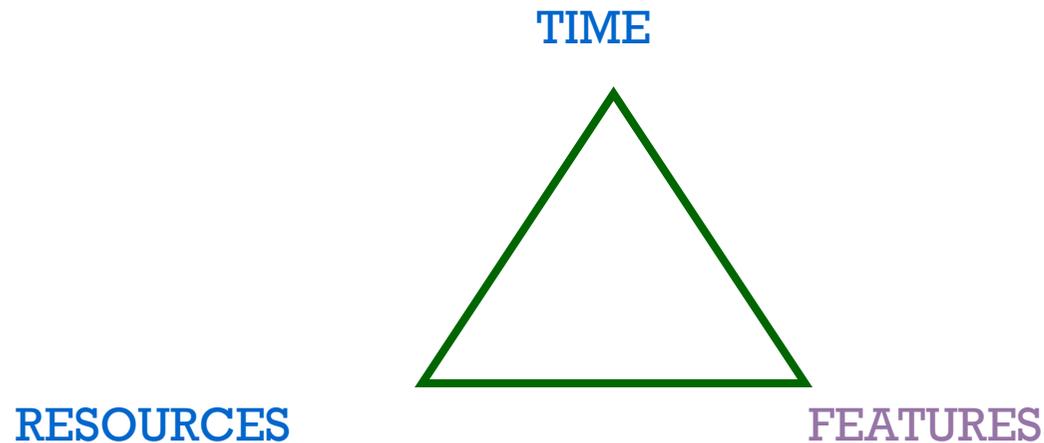
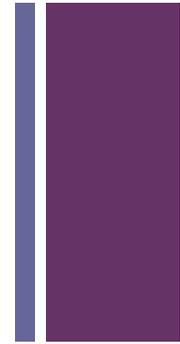
Make Small Mistakes Early



- Plan to make a **carefully planned series of small mistakes** early in order to avoid making unplanned large mistakes later.
 - Example: Create four conceptual design alternatives in the beginning and throw three of them away
= **3 small early mistakes**.
 - Example: Fail to do adequate design in the beginning and later rewrite the code three times
= **3 large expensive mistakes**.
- Make and correct mistakes early because they cost only **1/200 to 1/50** as much as late mistakes.



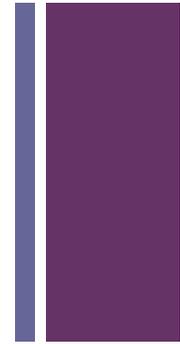
Project Scheduling



- Time, resources, and features are interdependent.
 - When scheduling a project at the beginning, you can have **firm time and resources**, or **a firm feature set**, but not both.
- Because developers want to be productive (i.e., make accomplishments), unrealistic schedules are demoralizing.
 - Recall: crunch mode and death march.



Risk Management



■ Identification

- Discovery of possible risks to a project.

■ Analysis

- Judge the **probability** that an identified risk can occur (e.g., low, moderate, high) and its **seriousness** (e.g., nit, tolerable, serious, fatal).

■ Planning

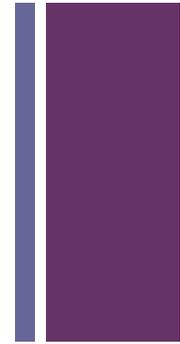
- Strategies to deal with identified risks.

■ Monitoring

- Regular reassessment of each identified risk's probability and seriousness.



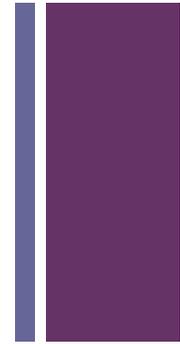
Risk Management (*cont'd*)



- Reactively
 - “Don’t worry. We’ll deal with it when it happens.”
- Proactively
 - Avoidance strategies
 - Schedule and resource risks: well-defined milestones, prevent scope creep
 - Minimization strategies
 - Illnesses: cross-train team members
 - Contingency plans
 - Back-up planning, just in case!



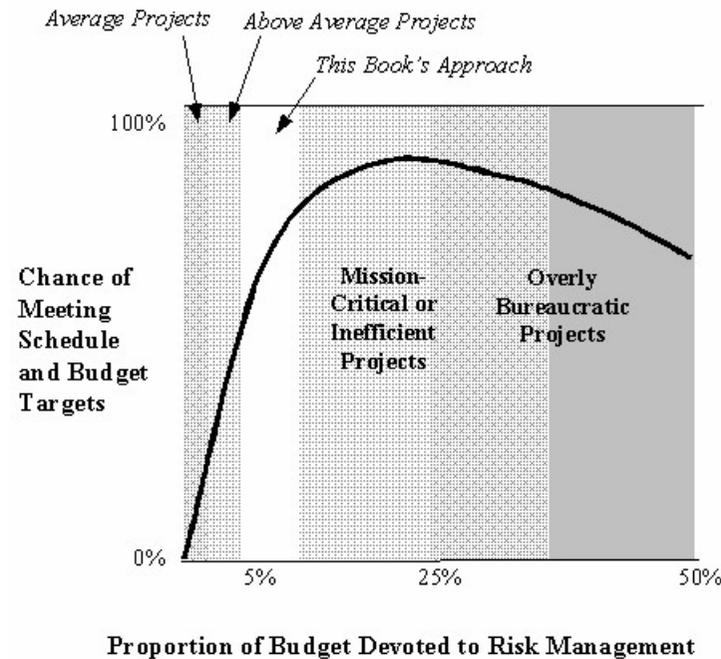
Risk Management (*cont'd*)



- Many project risks can be avoided or minimized by performing **active risk management**.
- The most serious project risks:
 - Failure to plan
 - Failure to follow the plan that was created.
 - Failure to revise the plan when circumstances change.
- **Successful projects seek ways to trade small amounts of increased project overhead for large amounts of risk reduction.**

+ Risk Management (*cont'd*)

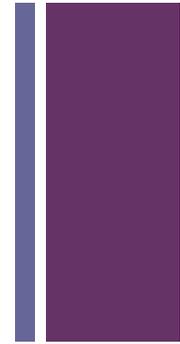
- Devote about 5% of a project's effort towards risk management.
 - Increase chances of completing on time and on budget by 50-70%



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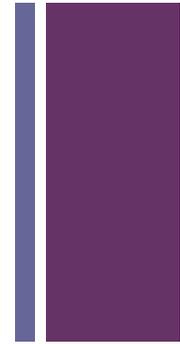
Personnel Management



- **Enlightened personnel management:**
 - **Project managers are evaluated on how well they retain project personnel.**
 - **All project members have access to professional growth during the project.**
 - **Project members believe in the project vision and upon completion feel better about the company, not worse.**
- **There is at least a 10 to 1 difference in productivity between the best and worst developers.**
 - **It is better to wait and hire a productive developer than to wait for the first available developer to become productive.**
 - **A major complaint of project team members is the failure of management to deal with personnel problems.**
 - **Move problematic members off the team as soon as possible.**



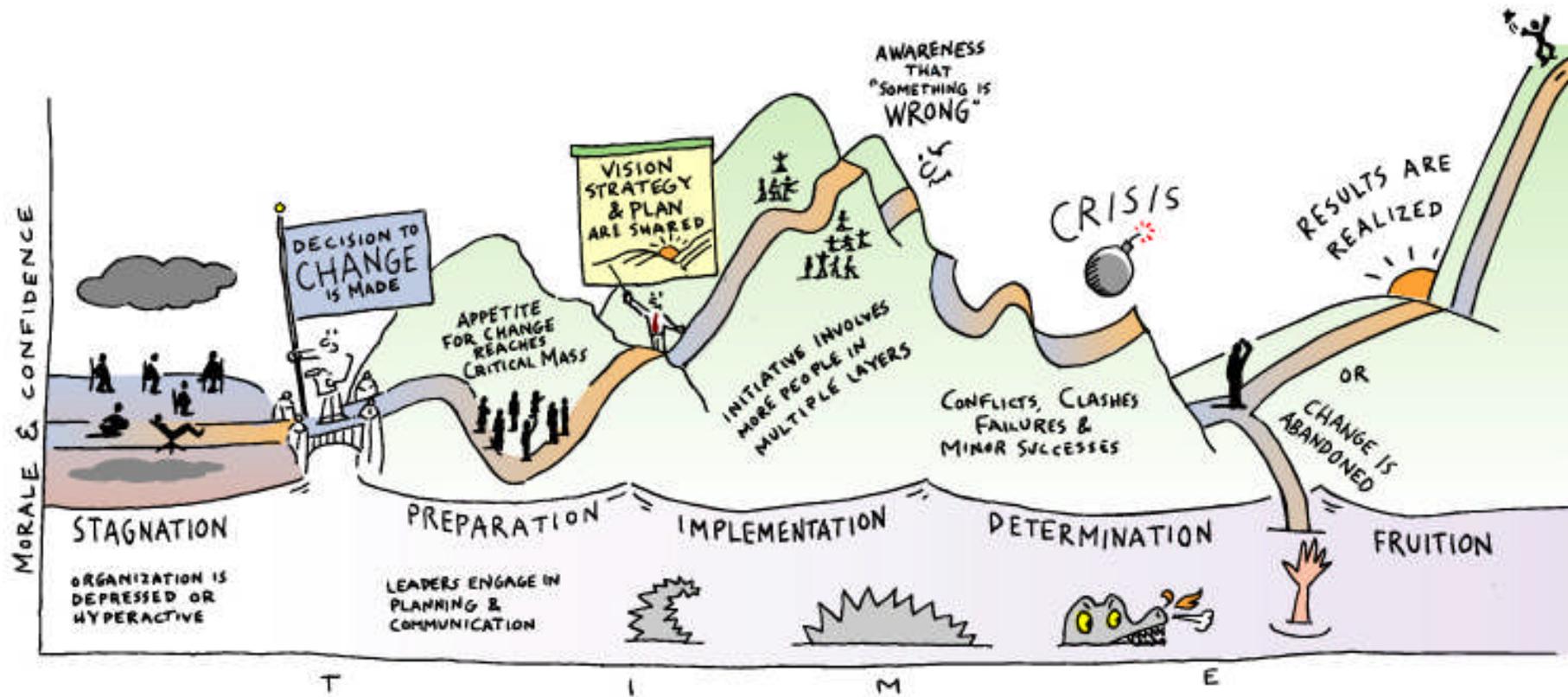
Organization



- How do we best organize our selves for driving the strategy and growth of Vanu?
 - Vision is to be a software company
 - Vision is to have a flexible platform that permits the addition of new waveforms, applications etc without impact to platform
- Do we have the right people?
- Do we have the right infrastructure?
- Do we have the right leadership?
- Can we maintain technology leadership and innovation thru this transition?

+

How do we get there?



Team Building



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A team is a group of people who are jointly responsible for achieving a shared goal. If one member fails then it can hinder the achievement of the collective goal. Even if the members fulfill their individual roles but they don't work synergistically, then they may not fulfill their potential or achieve as much as they could.



Lessons From Geese

FACT 1:

As each goose flaps its wings it creates an "uplift" for the birds that follow. By flying in a "V" formation, the whole flock adds 71% greater flying range than if each bird flew alone.

LESSON:

People who share a common direction and sense of community can get where they are going quicker and easier because they are traveling on the thrust of one another.

FACT 2:

When a goose falls out of formation, it suddenly feels the drag and resistance of flying alone. It quickly moves back into formation to take advantage of the lifting power of the bird immediately in front of it.

LESSON:

If we have as much sense as a goose we stay in formation with those headed where we want to go. We are willing to accept their help and give our help to others.

FACT 3:

When the lead goose tires, it rotates back into formation and another goose flies to the point position.

LESSON:

It pays to take turns doing the hard tasks and sharing leadership. As with geese, people are interdependent on each other's skills, capabilities and unique arrangements of gifts, talents or resources.

FACT 4:

The geese flying in formation honk to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.

LESSON:

We need to make sure our honking is encouraging. In groups where there is encouragement, the production is much greater. The power of encouragement (to stand by one's heart or core values and encourage the heart and core of others) is the quality of honking we seek.

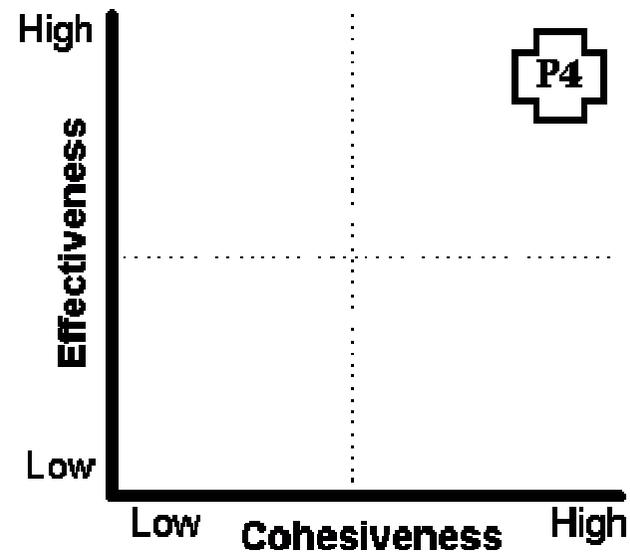
FACT 5:

When a goose gets sick, wounded or shot down, two geese drop out of formation and follow it to help and protect it. They stay with it until it dies or is able to fly again. Then, they launch out with another formation or catch up with the flock.

LESSON:

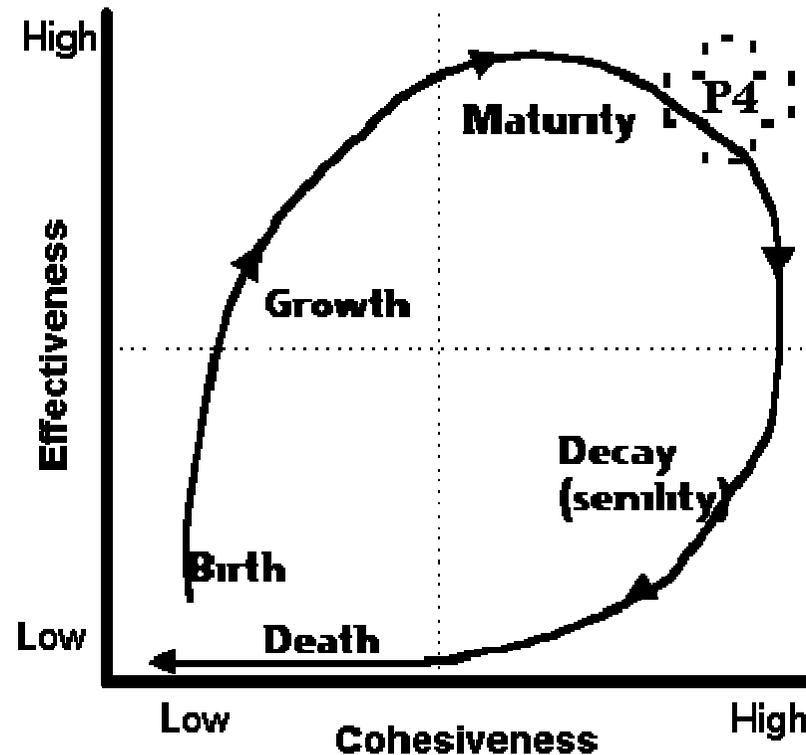
If we have as much sense as geese, we will stand by each other in difficult times as well as when we are strong.

Team Building

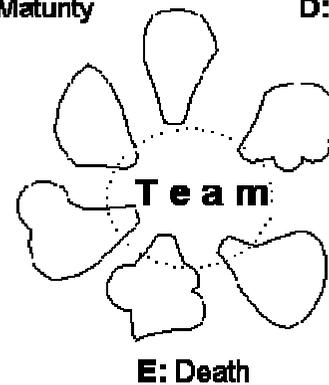
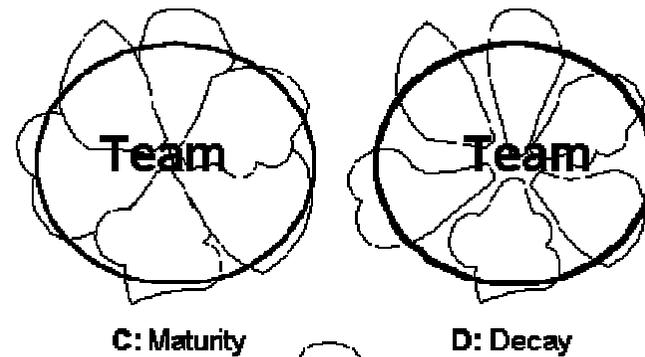
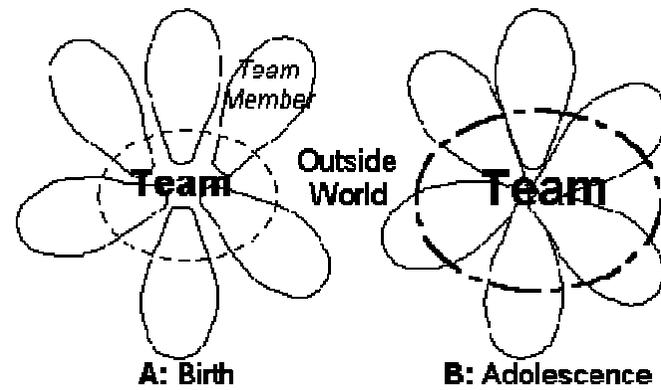


The P4 group, highly effective and highly cohesive.

Team Building



The life cycle of teams. The period from Birth to Maturity is typically two to three years. Maturity to Decay may take two to five years. Decay to Death takes less than a year and is triggered (usually) by a catastrophe the team produces.



Relationships among team members and between team members and the world outside the team. Shown for different times in the life cycle.

As team members learn from one another and take successful actions together, the team's effectiveness and cohesiveness increase. This increases the members' enthusiasm and commitment to the team. For a while there is a positive feedback loop in which success increases cohesiveness, which increases effectiveness, which generates more success. This is the team's adolescence (Fig. B).

Eventually the team accomplishes its first major success, the strategic objective for which it was formed. That strategic success marks the point at which the team is considered to be highly cohesive and highly effective. But cohesiveness has a dark side: lack of openness to the world outside the team or to new team members (Fig. C). Success also has its dark side. The team changes its attitude about its relationship to the outside world. It succeeded, therefore it has the formula! It loses the very anxiety and sensitivity to the external environment which contributed to its success.

The team also develops a team memory based on past successes and previous communications. The team memory now defines each member's role, the team's knowledge of the outside world, and how the team operates in that world. The team memory enables the team to perform like an experienced adult, able to quickly handle challenges in previously learned ways. But the team succeeds only as long as the team memory of how things *were* accurately reflects how things *are*. When the outside world changes, for example in customer requirements, competitors' innovations, or new technologies, the members of a highly cohesive and highly effective team usually don't respond. They continue to see the world through the team memory and act accordingly. After all, that behavior was successful!



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Once the team becomes highly effective and highly cohesive, the communication of new information between the outside world and the team and among team members deteriorates (Fig. D). The team memory freezes and becomes increasingly detached from the present reality. Team members no longer listen to one another because they already know what to expect. They become bored with their predictable roles. Sooner or later, the team makes decisions that fail to meet members needs or fail in a changed external environment. The decay process is underway.



After decay becomes well established, some CEOs seek outside help to restore their teams' to peak performance. The team members are highly sensitive to their own isolation within the team, and remember a team past in which things were much better. Consequently, the restoration efforts tend to focus on *communication* and *cohesiveness*. Sometimes these efforts temporarily slow the decay process. Usually they have little impact, especially when the CEO exempts himself from them.

Loss of effectiveness (typified by one or more failed decisions or projects) eventually overcomes the exaggerated management energy committed to cohesiveness, and the team disintegrates (Fig. E). Disintegration (death), frees team members to participate in new teams where they can renew their enthusiasms, develop new personal relationships, and revitalize their atrophied learning processes. Disintegration of the old team also makes room for a new leadership team; one that is able to start out anchored in the "real world," ready to deal with things as they are, not as they used to be.



1. When a team is formed it focuses on the future. Once it succeeds it focuses on the past. Team members are usually selected based on how they will contribute to the team's strategic objectives. Once the team attains its first strategic success, however, a member of an executive team gets to stay on the team as a reward for the team's success. That member may not be appropriate for the future challenge. (An executive team has to fail repeatedly and miserably before team members are disenfranchised.) IBM lost most of the PC market (new challenge) because its key business decisions were made by people who succeeded with mainframes (past successes).

2. Success breeds failure. In business and in sports it is difficult for a team to repeat its success. A study of management teams found that most successes are followed by major failures. For example, the IBM PC (success) was followed by PC Jr. (abject failure). Apple II (success) was followed by Lisa (failure)! Apple MacIntosh begat Newton! There are almost no "three-peats" in sports or business.

3. Failure can breed success. Norman Schwartzkopf and Colin Powell endured the failure of Vietnam. They learned from that, and fought Desert Storm with the wisdom and anxiety that Vietnam fostered. I wouldn't select Norman Schwartzkopf to lead another battle because he succeeded in the last one. He would tend to repeat his past actions with too little sensitivity to changed circumstances.

4. Term limits of no more than 8 years for executives and executive teams would improve business effectiveness more than any other management change. In another essay I'll show why a leader can only lead change in the first two years of his tenure. After that he can only maintain a past direction, regardless of any change in his personal vision!



Conclusion

A highly effective, highly cohesive team is a transitory state in a dynamic process. Business management will improve significantly when executives respect the values of that process and work with its dynamics.



Q&A

How to build a team



Using Vision, Commitment & Trust

The moment you start doing anything at all with another person, you've established a team. Begin a conversation, pick up the phone, brainstorm an idea and you're in teamwork.

Start with Your Ability to Relate

Every possibility, from landing the contract to the romantic evening hinges on your ability to relate. But neither profit nor pleasure are the primary motivation for teamwork. Productive teamwork moves you toward challenge, through change, with more confidence. Working well on any team generates energy and enthusiasm for life.

Some are More Skilled than Others

This ability is learned. You do not need complex interaction formulas. You don't have to be easy-going, well-educated, hard-nosed, or even especially intelligent to build a team. You don't have to be anything other than yourself. You can be effective with people using common sense and a few fundamental principles.



Vision

Vision means being able to excite the team with large, desired outcomes.

Large outcomes mean devising goals that attract missionaries. The first step in vision is to project such a goal. This goal must be bigger than a pay check. It must contain challenge, appeal to personal pride, and provide an opportunity to make a difference and know it. Then the goal can become a powerful vision.

Next, team leaders position the goal by picturing success. Initial questions might be, "What will it look like when we get there?", "What will success be like, feel like?," "How will others know?" When a large, missionary-friendly goal has been pictured and clearly communicated, the vision is complete.

Commitment



Commitment can be a dangerous concept because of its attendant assumptions. Some may assume, for example, that commitment means long hours, while to others it may mean productivity. When expectations are defined, success rates soar. When leaders assume that everyone "should" be committed, as a matter of course, we overlook the difficulties many have with certain commitments.

If people cannot initially commit, it doesn't mean they don't care. More often, it means they do care, and they are caught up in a process of doubt. This process precedes every meaningful commitment. Effective leaders catalyze this process, so that the critical mass of people can pass through this stage efficiently on their way to genuine commitment and innovative strategies.

This pre-commitment process is the same for team leaders and members. When we ponder a new commitment, we climb up to a kind of mental diving board. Commitments contain unknowns, and some warn of possible failure. It is common for people to neither jump nor climb back down the "ladder," but rather to stay stuck at the end of the board, immobilized in pros, cons, obstacles, and worries. In this state of mind, the obstacles begin to rule, obscuring the vision, blunting motivation.

When leaders do not understand the commitment process they tend to seek accountability without providing support. Without a means to process doubts and fears, people often feel pressured to commit, but can't. One option, often unconscious, is to pretend to commit, to say "yes" and mean "maybe" at best. The pretended commitment is a form of wholly unnecessary corporate madness.

The solution to this set of problems is two fold: establish an atmosphere of trust, and within that atmosphere encourage inclusion.

Trust



Trust is the antidote to the fears and risks attendant to meaningful commitment. Trust means confidence in team leadership and vision. When trust prevails, team members are more willing to go through a difficult process, supported through ups, downs, risk and potential loss.

Trust is most efficiently established when leadership commits to vision first, and everyone knows those commitments are genuine. The process for leaders to commit is the same as for everyone else: assess pre-commitment doubts, questions, unknowns and fears. This involves three simple steps:

- List the unknowns.
- Assess worst case scenarios and their survivability.
- Research the unknowns.

The list of unknowns reveals some answers and further questions. Some of these questions lend themselves to research (others' experience, a small pilot plan), and some have no apparent answers from our pre-commitment position. These latter comprise the bottom line or irreducible risk. We learn the outcome only after commitment. Every major commitment contains some irreducible risk, some lingering unknowns. We therefore make every major commitment in at least partial ignorance.

Leadership now understands the potential loss and gain involved in the new vision. At this point, leadership can commit itself, and prepare to include other team members. That preparation must include a plan for leadership to share visibly both risk and reward with the other team members who will be coming on board.

With leadership's commitment to a clear vision, and a genuine plan to share risks and rewards, the atmosphere for trust is in place. We are now ready to include others in our team effort.

Inclusion

Inclusion means getting others to commit to the team effort, helping others through their "diving board doubts" to genuine commitment. Since leaders now understand this process first hand, we need only communicate with the potential team members to complete inclusion.

The best setting to obtain buy-in and build trust is in small groups that facilitate thorough give and take. The basic tasks are to communicate the vision, make sure it is understood, communicate leadership's commitment (including sharing risk and reward, and how), and elicit and address peoples' doubts.

Leaders will need three communication skills to achieve inclusion. These are the non-assumptive question, good listening, and directed response.

1. Non-assumptive questions ("What do you think?", "Can you tell me what is happening with this report?") invite real answers because they are inclusive, not intrusive. Questions containing assumptions ("Why are you skeptical?", "Why is this report so incomplete?") invite defensiveness. When converting an atmosphere of change and possibly skepticism to trust, added defensiveness is counter-productive.

2. Listening means separating the process of taking in information from the process of judging it. Kept separate, both processes are valuable. Mixed, especially when the receiver is a designated leader, the sender is invited to stop communicating or to change the message midstream.

3. Directed response. Effective team leaders demonstrate responsiveness. Since leaders have already processed their own pre-commitment doubts, many questions can be answered on the spot. Some require research and a time line for response. And some, which relate to the bottom line, irreducible risk, require a truthful "I don't know. I'm in the same soup as you."



Help Exchange

The final step in creating the team is to establish a corroborative, balanced strategy for reaching the committed vision. This plan will consist of all of the tasks and help exchange necessary to realize the overall vision. Your teammates themselves are in the best position to supply this information. Since by this time you have laid the groundwork for trust, and established good buy-in, your teammates are likely to be enthusiastically cooperative.

At this point, the leadership role is to catalyze consensus, not to issue orders. Consensus means that team members agree to, whether they necessarily agree with, a particular approach. Consensus occurs easily when most feel their ideas were heard and considered, whether or not the team ultimately chooses those ideas. Obtaining consensus again requires use of leadership communication skills: non-assumptive questions, good listening, and directed response.

Effective teams often produce lively discussions of divergent viewpoints before reaching consensus. Diverse views can mean unresolved argument, or they can mean increased team intelligence and ultimate consensus. The difference is a well built team

Building the Winning Team



"Everyone wants to feel that they are on a winning team, that the company is moving ahead, and that they are an integral part of the group."

Beyond Hiring Great People

Building the winning team requires more than just hiring a bunch of talented people.

It means hiring people who will work well together.

It means developing a shared vision and commitment.

It means physically bringing people together in formal group meetings for open discussion of broad-based issues.

It means encouraging positive, informal interactions between group members.

It means instilling a "winning" attitude throughout the organization.

It means watching for and quickly trying to reverse team-building problems such as jealousy, cynicism, and defensive behavior



Get 'Em To "Buy In"!

To build the winning team, you not only need to show people what direction the company is headed in, but you need to get them to "buy into" this direction.

Otherwise, you can't expect people to support a group if they don't agree with where it's headed or, worse, don't even know where it's headed.

Specifically, you need to show people:
Your vision for the future.

Your strategy for getting there.

Why this is the best strategy.

Every achievement that indicates this team is winning.

This is not a one-time discussion or announcement.

You need to constantly remind people what the organization stands for and that it does indeed hold a bright future for them!



Meetings Build Teams

Part of building the winning team is having some group meetings. Meetings, or even parties or celebrations, with as many people as possible from the entire organization, help build a feeling of solidarity throughout the organization. But it is also important to have everyone participate in smaller group meetings where some work is done or some decisions are made. This makes people feel that they aren't just part of some big group, but that they are an active, important part of a team.

For key managers, or people in your work group, you should have an interactive meeting once per week-not a meeting where you just make announcements and summarize the work that's been done and needs to be done, but a meeting where everyone has an opportunity to give feedback on substantive issues.

Getting People To Work Together

Perhaps the most difficult part of building a winning team is encouraging positive, informal interaction between team members when you are not present. Here are some thoughts on this:

Have team members take part in the hiring process of new team members.

Assign specific projects for two team members to work on together.

Try to arrange for close proximity of offices.

Create an incentive-pay plan based on common goals such as profitability.

Have a specific part of the salary review dependent upon "interaction with others."

Take your team off-site for formal meetings as well as casual get-togethers to build a sense of bonding.



Watch Out For Team Destroyers!

Here are some of the problems that can rip the team-building process apart.

Jealousy. Be on guard for jealousy whenever a new member is hired into the group. Go out of your way to tell other team members how much their work is appreciated.

Cynicism. Some people are just negative by nature. Others might feel your company can't possibly prosper or they just don't like small companies, big companies, or whatever Be sure you are emphasizing the company's positive achievements to the group as a whole. And don't hesitate to confront any openly cynical individual and demand their behavior change at once.

Lack of confidence. Some people lack confidence in themselves and view attacks on their opinions as attacks on themselves, responding with statements like "Are you telling me my fifteen years of experience don't matter?" Stop any discussion like this immediately and, in a private one-on-one meeting, patiently point out the defensive behavior.