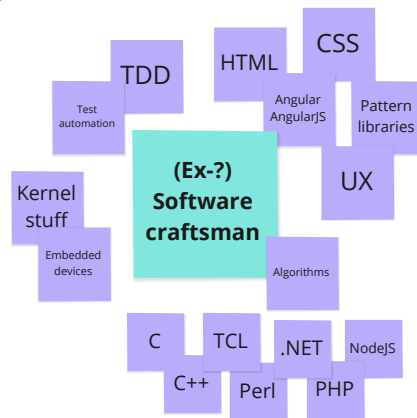
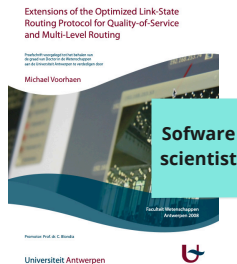
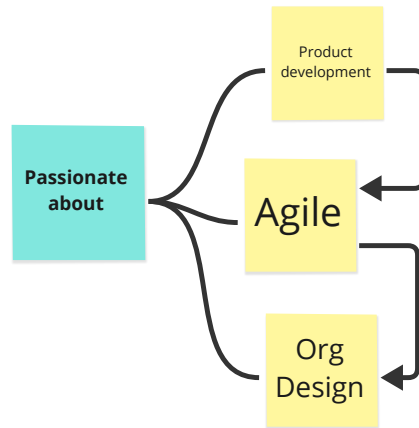


The Strobbo Experiment

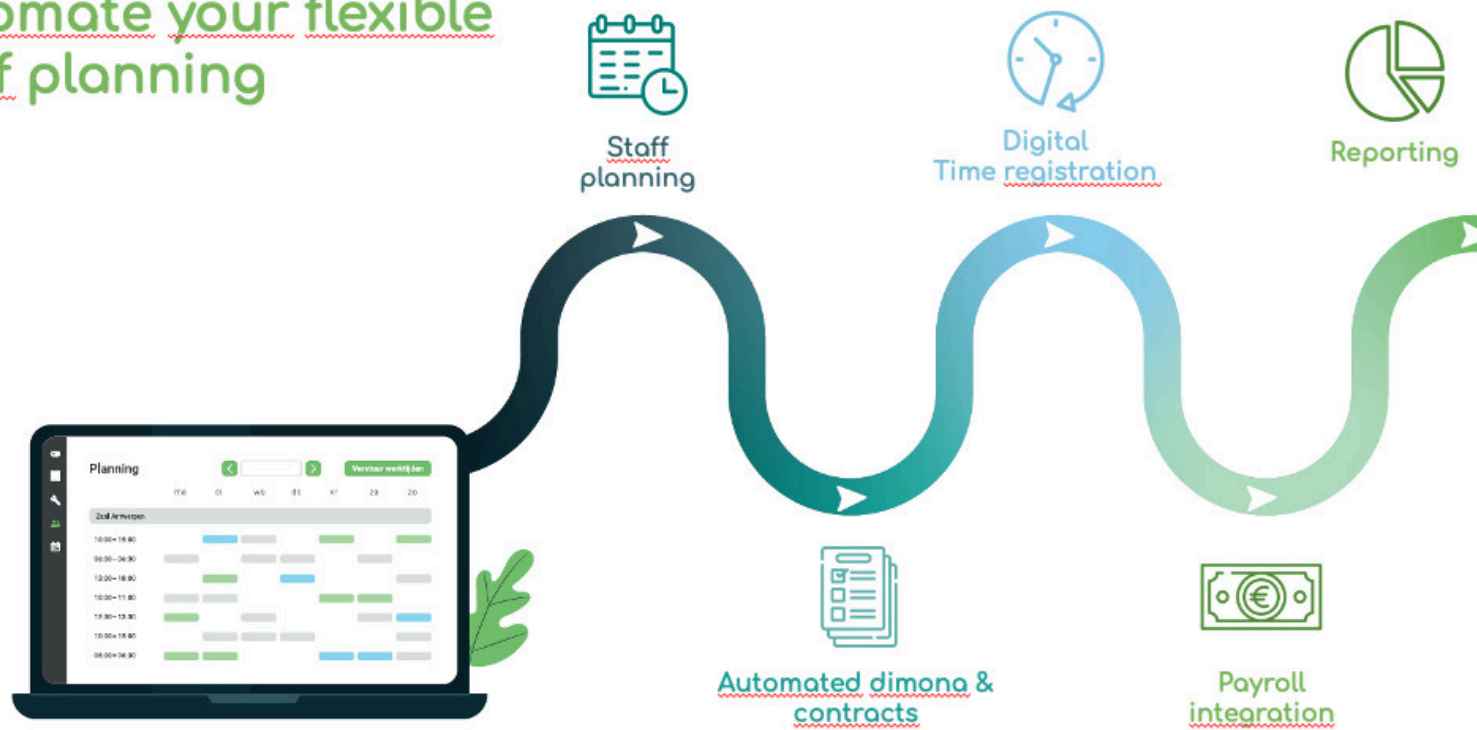
From Startup to Scaling Slowdown and Returning to Business Agility

Michael Voorhaen

About Me

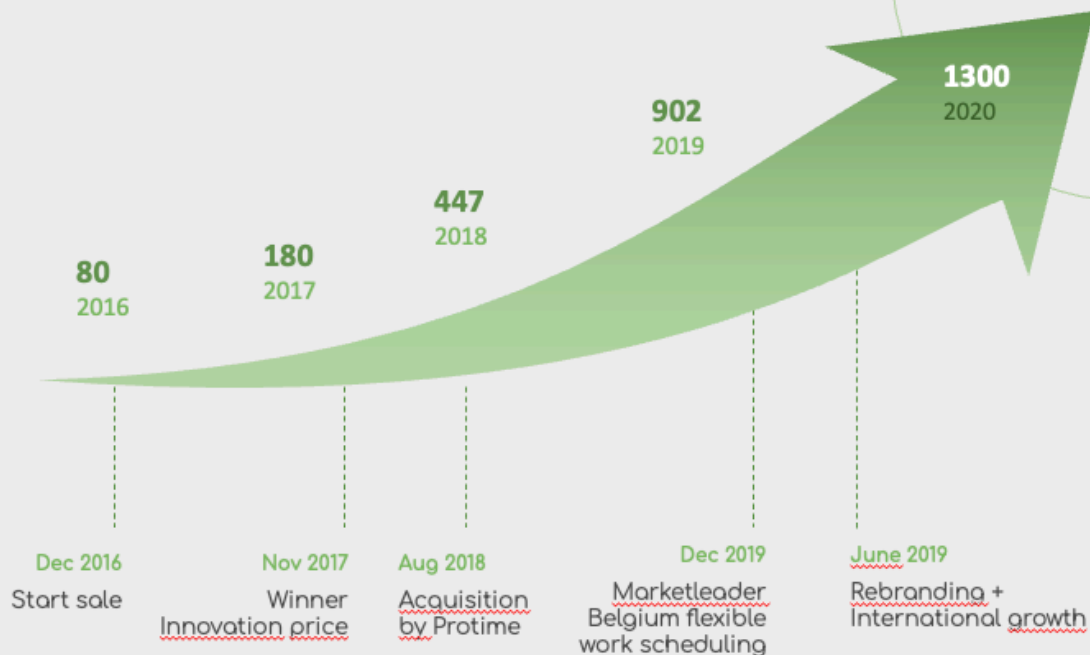


Automate your flexible staff planning





Agile start-up
2017





Founders

Bert

Nick







- Grew fast → from 2 devs to 3 devs to a 10+ dev team
- Mostly junior devs



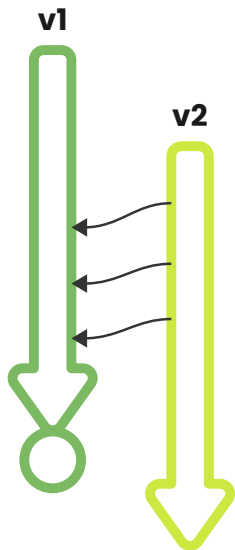
Me

- Grew fast → from 2 devs to 3 devs to a 10+ dev team
- Mostly junior devs

Struggles

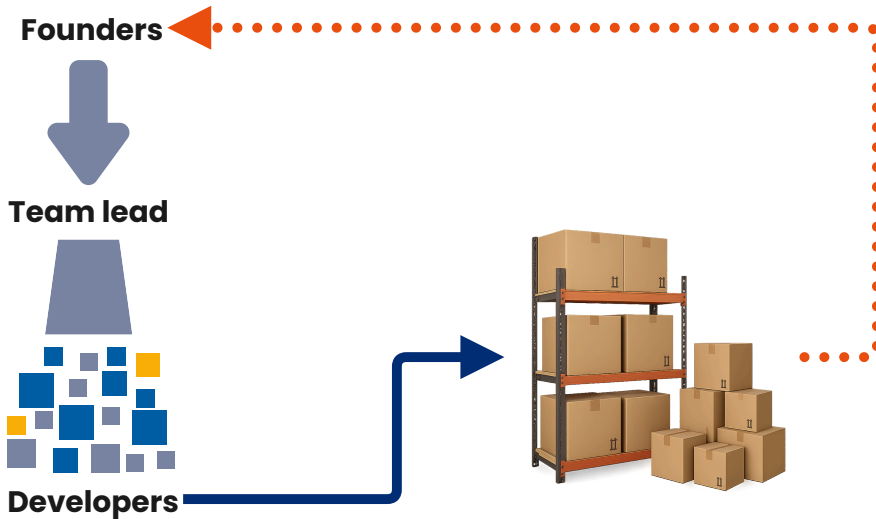
Building a new version of Strobbo alongside the old one with a new team.

The new team could not release without the old one.



Work was presented fragmented and very detailed to developers.

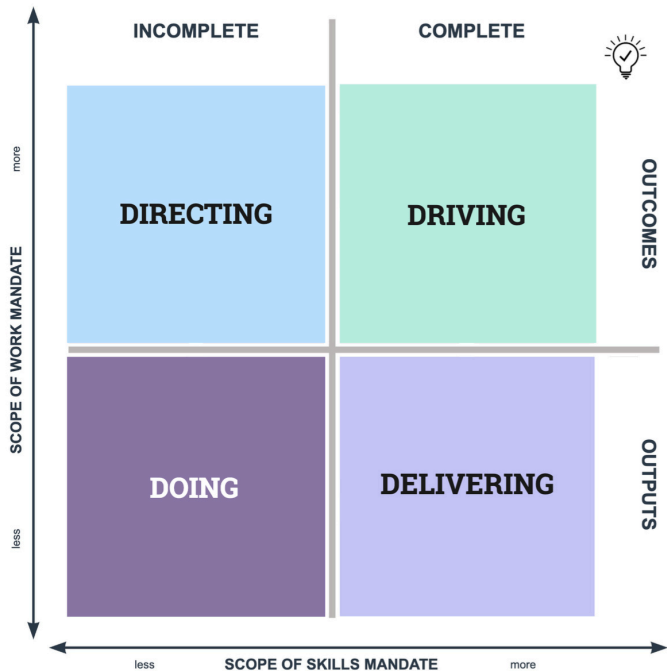
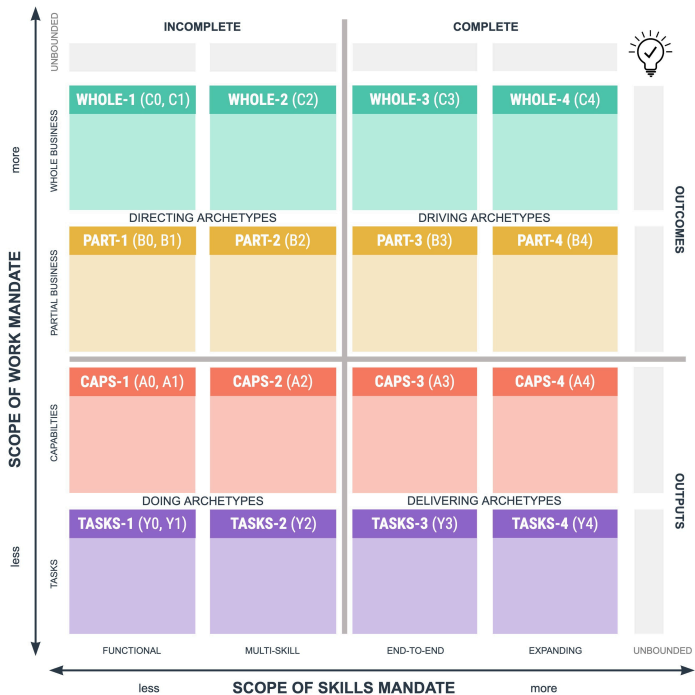
Devs were identifying as front-end and back-end.



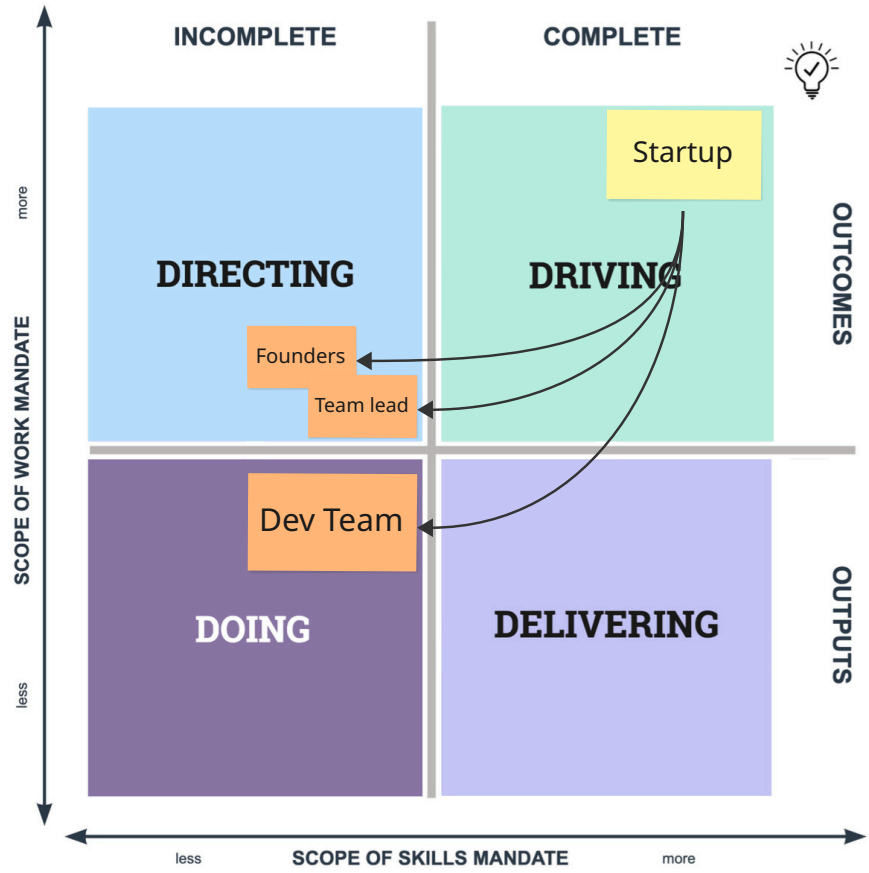
What the team delivered got stuck waiting for feedback and approval from the founders.

When we released they were large chunks with high impact.

Org Topologies

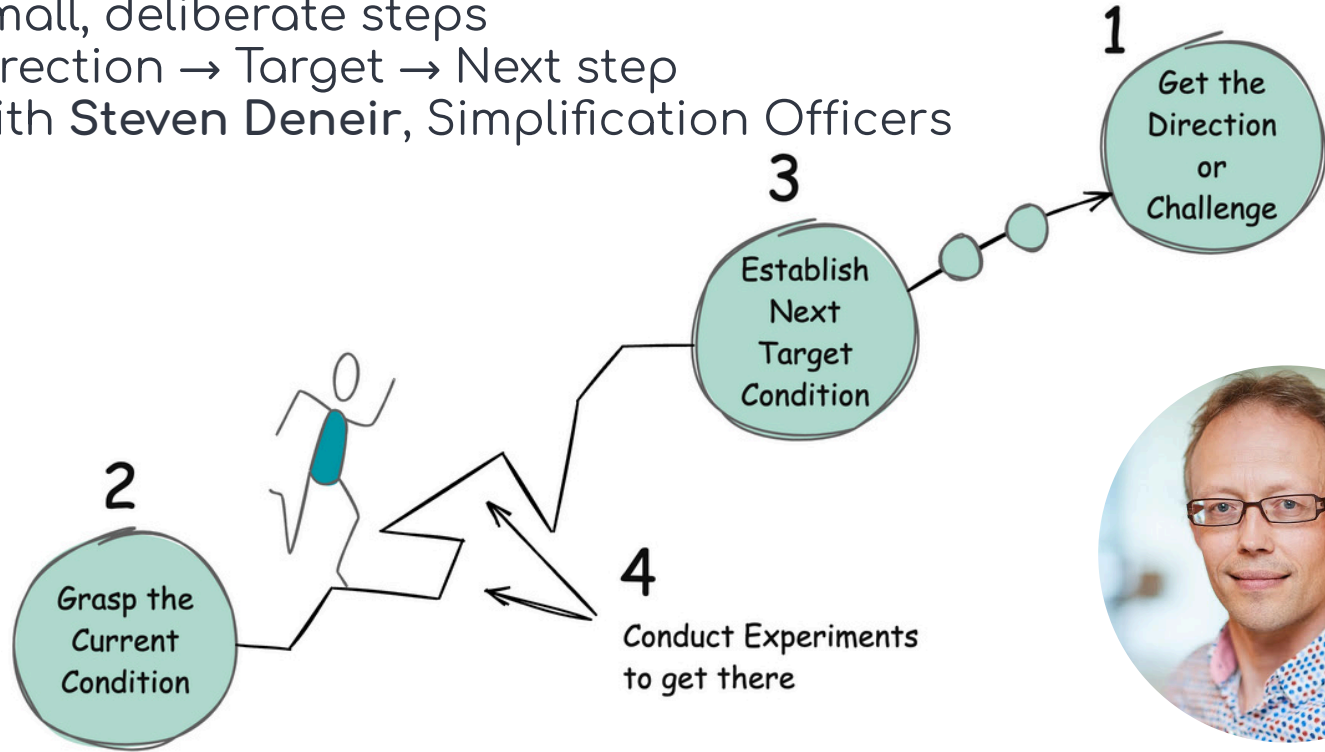


On the map

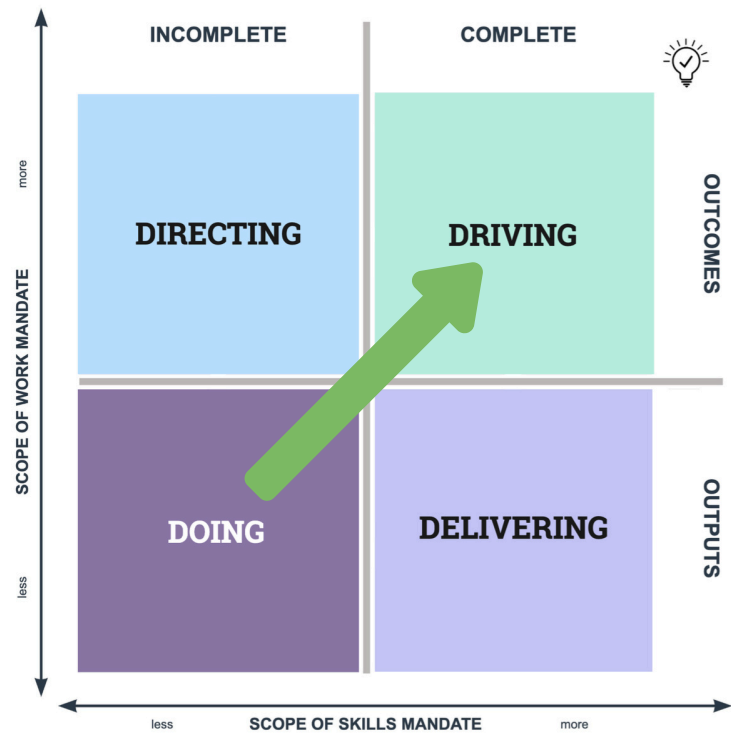


Lean Improvement Kata

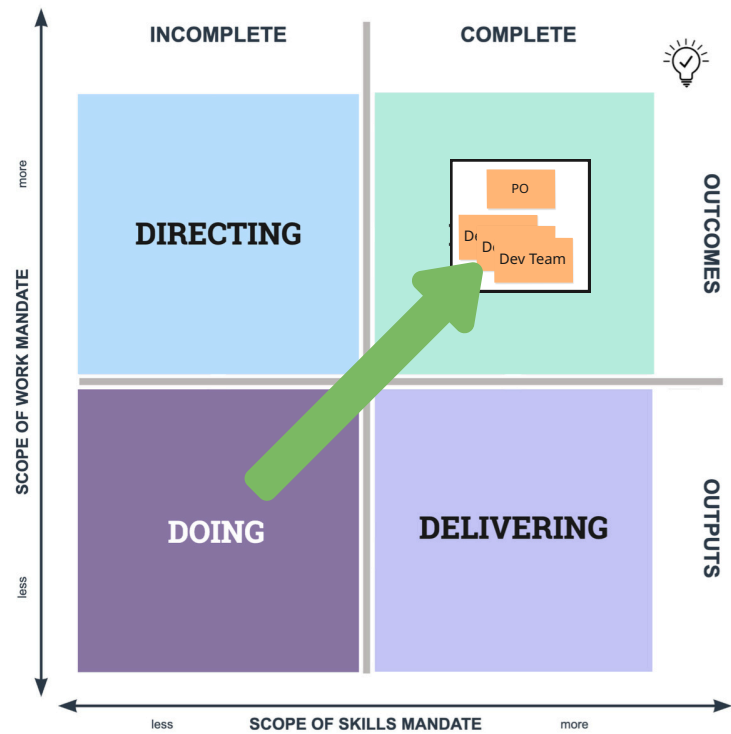
- Small, deliberate steps
- Direction → Target → Next step
- With Steven Deneir, Simplification Officers



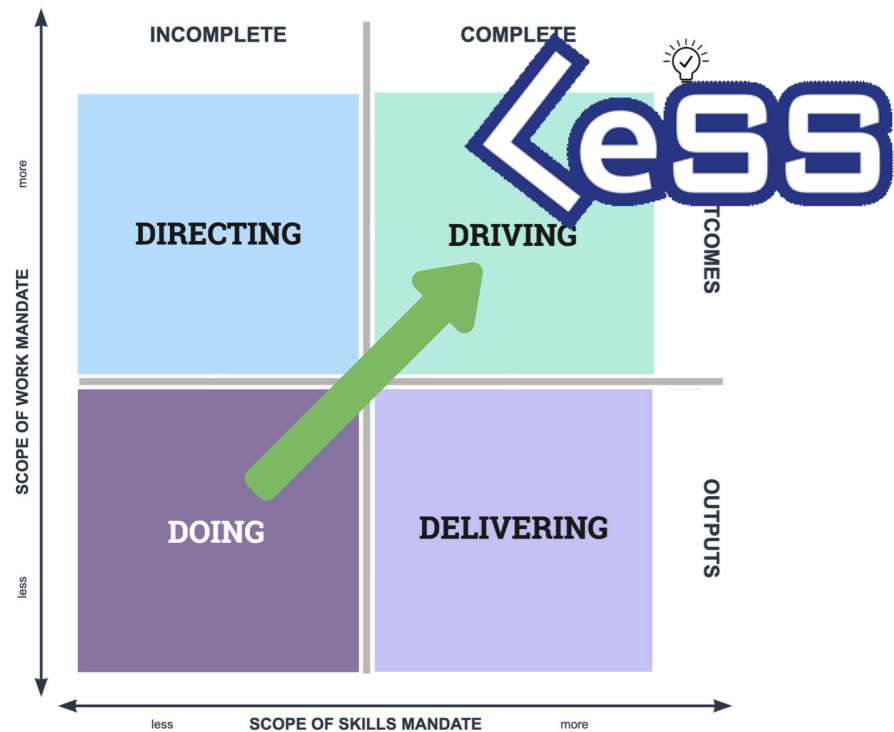
Vision



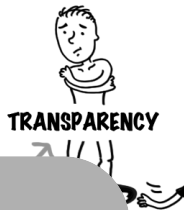
Vision



Vision



Reviews as an Elevating Kata



What will you do in the breakout?



You will be helping *Salma* from "Papa Luigi's" create a planning that follows the rules

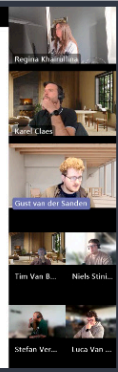
This breakout will feature the following:

- Bazaar-style sprint reviews
- → transparency & whole-product focus

Mobile - Tenant switch

- Allows the user to switch to a different tenant
 - Only get push notifications from your active tenant
- Consultants can also switch and enter a new reason

Breakout



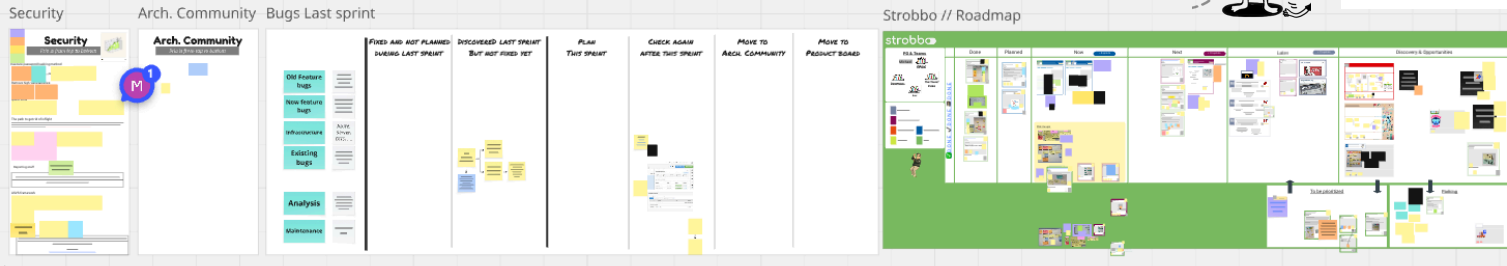
Planning as an Elevating Kata



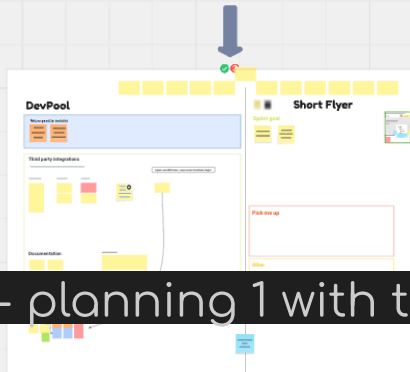
WHOLE
PRODUCT
FOCUS



Planning 1



Planning 2



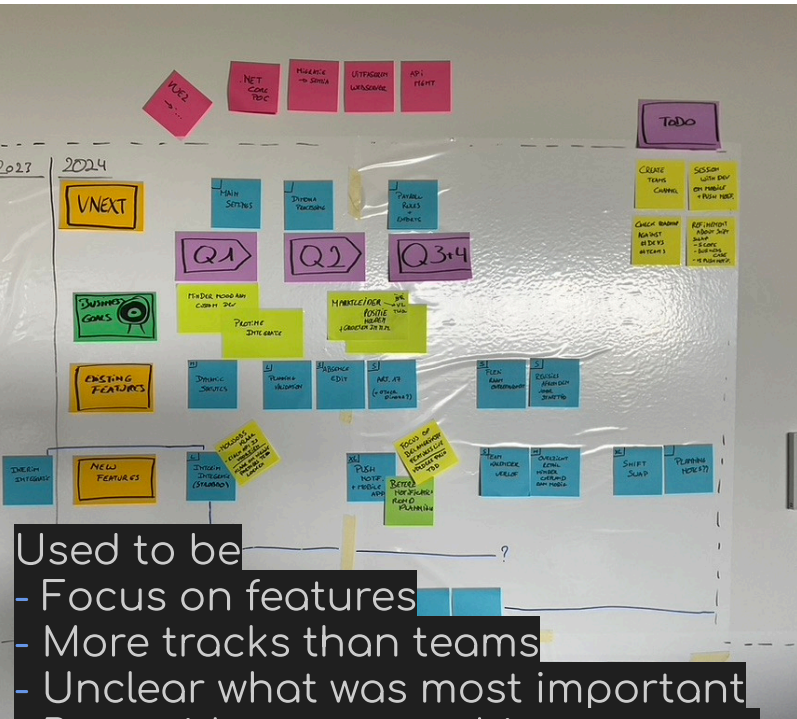
- Planning 1 & 2 (like LeSS) - planning 1 with the entire team
- On-site
- Built out routines to help us stay on track
- What do we think are the most meaningful sprint goals over pulling in work items

Refinement as an Elevating Kata



- Cross-team and involving internal stakeholders
- Evolved from
 - understanding stories → working on outcomes → product discovery
- Early on combined this with learning and knowledge transfer
 - understanding features, our domain, etc.
- Now: joint understanding through discussion

Roadmap / Backlog



Used to be

- Focus on features
- More tracks than teams
- Unclear what was most important
- Busy with too many things at once

0

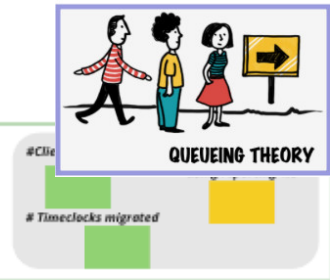


Leftovers of 2023 goals

- vNext breakout rollout
- Phase out reporting 1.0

Stability vNext

7 of 4 sprints



1



Existing planning sync customers are migrated to external contracts

- All **live** with **planning sync**
- Availabilities can be synced from **app**
- live** depending on status **live**

Integrations Stability

6 of 4 sprints



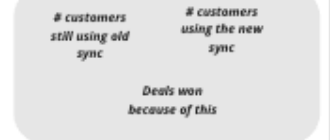
2



Deeper integration with SD Worx Payroll

- Extra fields with employee sync
- ...

Now **Market leader**



3

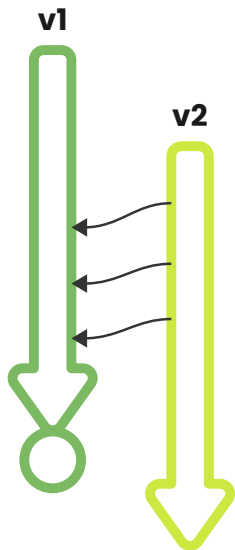


- Goals focusing on outcomes
- Clear order in which to proceed
- WIP limit = the amount of teams

Struggles

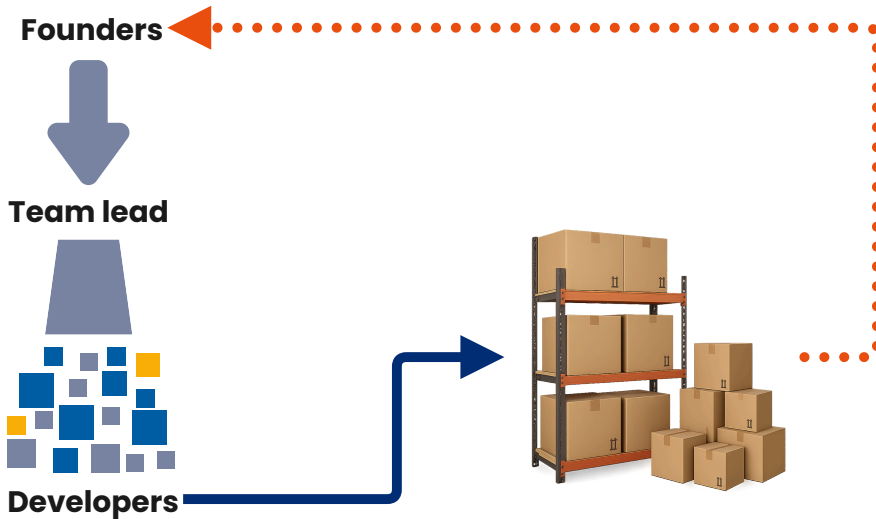
Building a new version of Strobbo alongside the old one with a new team.

The new team could not release without the old one.



Work was presented fragmented and very detailed to developers.

Devs were identifying as front-end and back-end.



What the team delivered got stuck waiting for feedback and approval from the founders.

When we released they were large chunks with high impact.

Bets



- Estimates were associated with frustration and mistrust.
- But we still need a way to "control our clock"
- Introduced bets as a middle ground
 - Instead of "How long will it take?"
 - I started asking "What can I get in this timeframe?"
- As a PO you can think about investments



6 sprints

Unit: 1 sprint goal for 1 team

9

Planners can add custom notes to the planning

*Protects our market leader position in BE
Additional configurability for international markets*



2/3 sprints

Planning notes

Bets



- Estimates were associated with frustration and mistrust.
- But we still need a way to "control our clock"
- Introduced bets as a middle ground
 - Instead of "How long will it take?"
 - I started asking "What can I get in this timeframe?"
- As a PO you can think about investments



6 sprints

Unit: 1 sprint goal for 1 team

Bets have become a conversation starter.

"What is most important to deliver first?"

"Which tech debt can we clean up?"

"Are we still on track? Do we need to make decisions?"

"Do I need to invest more time?"

8

Dynamic statutes and rule-based planning validation

*Protects our market leader position in BE
Additional configurability for international markets*



EMPIRICAL
PROCESS CONTROL

Combines well with incremental delivery

- Sprint 1: disable and hide old static statutes
- Sprint 2: add your own statutes
- Sprint 3: move some settings to dynamic statutes to give more options to users
- Sprint 5: release new planning validation with new functionality in beta next to the old validation
- Sprint 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: release additional rules and roll out to everyone
- ***Sprint 11: invest in blocking validation rules***

Dynamic Statutes - Update

3 statutes created during last sprint

Updated fields

- name
- hasToSignAllowedAbsence
- translations.nl
- translations.fr

18
14
13
9
9
4
4
3
2

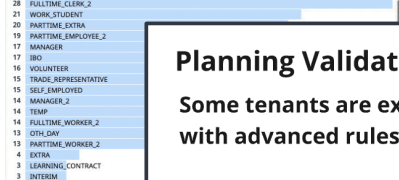
Dynamic Statutes Update

200+ statutes disabled during last sprint

Disabled

218

of disables per statuteld (<1000)



Planning Validation Rules Update

Some tenants are experimenting with advanced rules

Created

7

Some examples:

- **Students** must be planned for at least **4 days** per **month**
- **All employees** must be planned for at least **32 hours** per **1 week**
- **Part time employees** must be planned for at least **24 hours** per **1 week**
- ...

Planning Validation Rules Updates:

Some new widgets:

- Avg. # errors per sending of worktimes
- Avg. # warnings per sending of worktimes
- Total # of errors bypassed per sending of worktimes
- Total # of warnings per sending of worktimes



Planning Validation Rules rollout:

Currently:

60%

10/07/2025

100%

Weekweergave

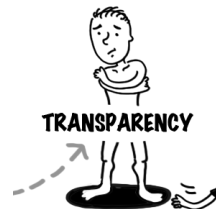


Blocking Rules Update

🚫 53 rules have been marked as **blocking** across 12 tenants

👤 13 tenants only allow **admins** to overrule blocking errors

⚠️ **Blocking errors** have been **overruled 17 times** across all tenants



95%
accurate

Usually
only 1
sprint over

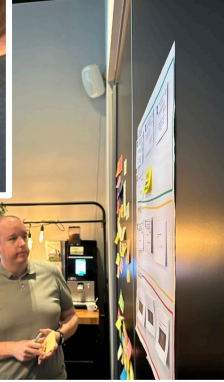
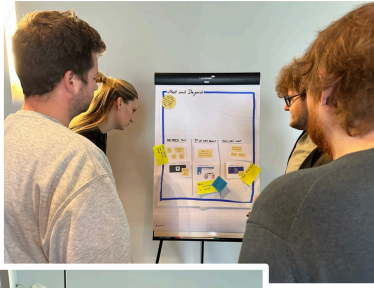
We do complete
early but then
time is spent on
refactoring and
improvements

86%
efficient

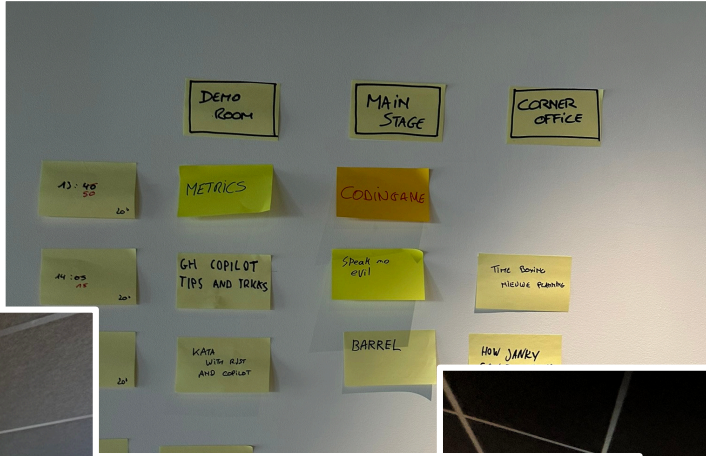
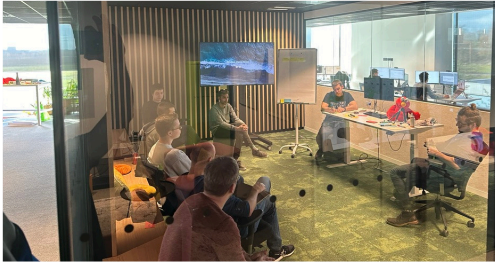
with 2 teams
we have 52
sprints a
year

we only plan for
about 40 and
use about 44
for roadmap
work

Roadmap workshop

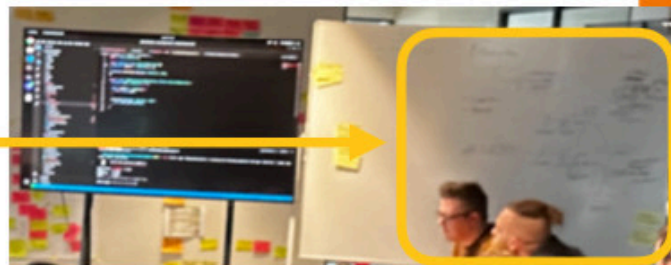


Dev Days



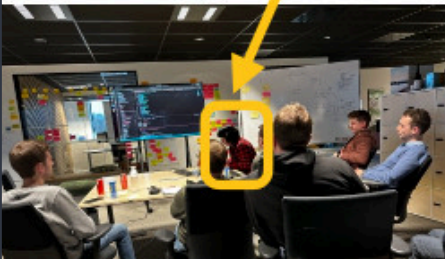


3 teams: coders, testers, analysts, scrum master, manager and... secretary



30 minute refinement before starting

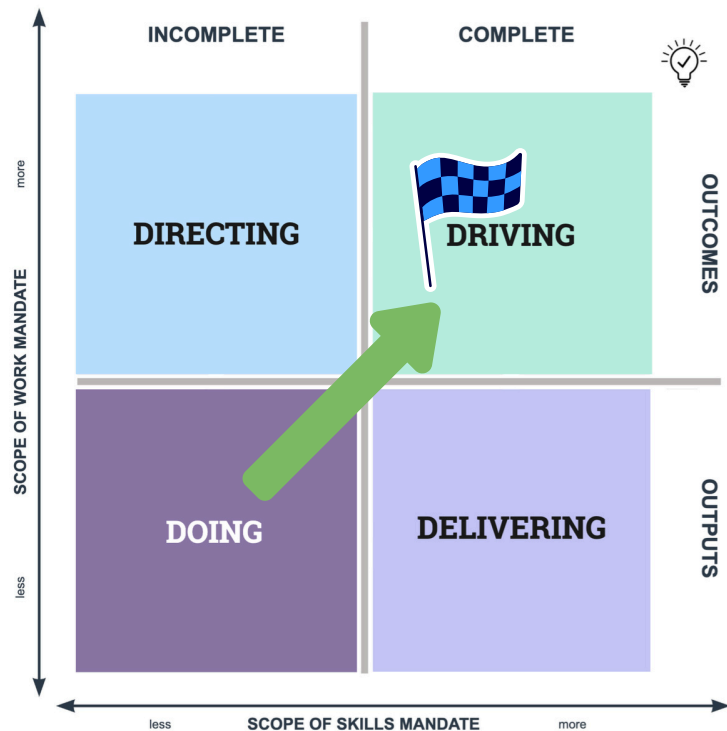
Round 3, +/- 1 hour in...
Split in 2:
- Front-End
- Back-End



Customer contact



Signs of stable footing



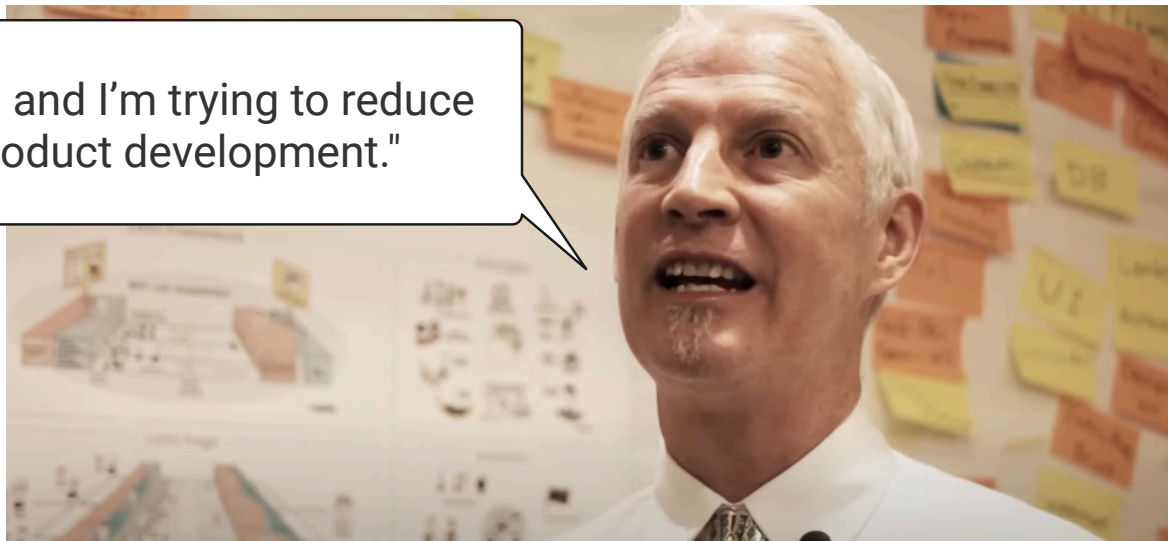
Signs of stable footing

The ***perception of speed*** by stakeholders goes up (way before everything really goes faster).

Signs of stable footing

It's (sometimes) **fun again!**

"I'm Craig Larman and I'm trying to reduce suffering in product development."



Signs of stable footing

You notice you are working
with a ***team-of-teams***
instead of separate ***teams***

Signs of stable footing

You ***just talk*** a lot (in a good way).



Bas Vodde • 1st

Developer and coach in multi-team products.

1mo • 



In LeSS, we prefer to create a system for teams to "just talk". We've been using that as a short for focusing on "spontaneous, decentralised, informal coordination." I often use these words, but they are picked precisely.

When you created an environment where people can use "just talk" for coordination then knowledge and learning flows rapidly through an organisation.

[#lessworks](#)



192

16 comments • 19 reposts

Signs of stable footing

You **just talk** a lot (in a good way).

Signs of **empiricism** in the
language everyone uses.

What is the next step we can take?

VS

When will it be done?

Openness for developers
and stakeholders to
understand each other.

Signs of a **shared language**

Thank you!

strobbo 