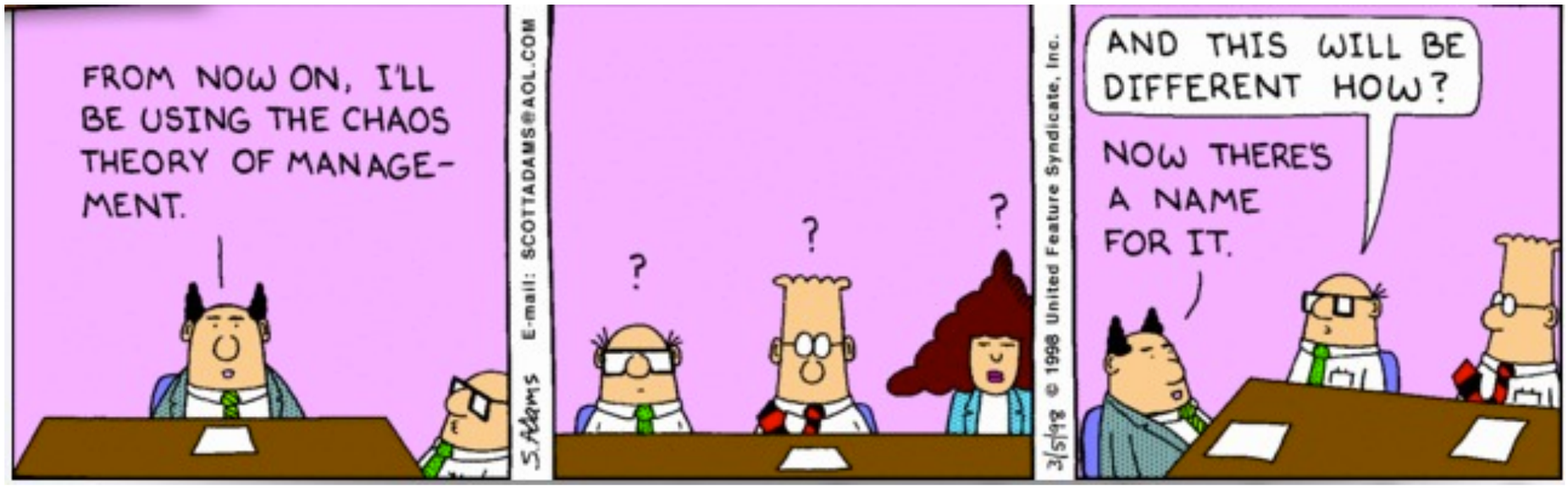
Navigating Chaos

a holistic approach to product development

Olve Maudal, Cisco Systems Norway



http://dilbert.com/strips/comic/1998-03-05/

The key to effective product development is to prepare for the unexpected and be willing to deal with it when it happens. In this presentation I will use examples from developing telepresence products and solutions to show why it is better to respond to change over following a plan, why collaboration is better than contract negotiations, and why following principles is better than implementing procedures. Effective and succssful product development is all about being exceptionally good at navigating the unknown.

A 45 minute presentation for Comperio
Kampen Bistro, 1. September 2011

About me

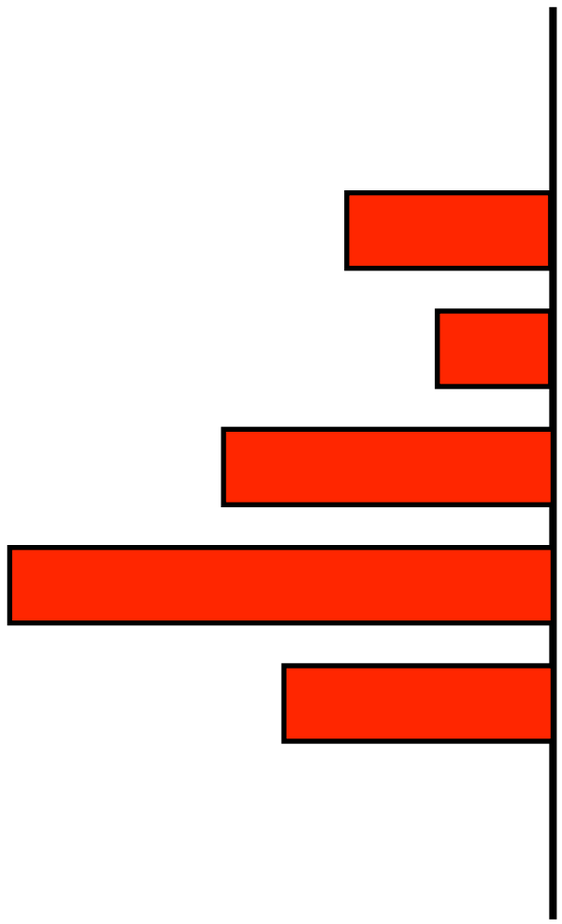
1992-1995 BEng, Software Engineering, UMIST, Manchester
1995-1996 MSc, Intelligent Robotics, Dept of Artificial Intelligence, Edinburgh
1996-1996 Postgrad, Data Mining and Knowledge Discovery, NTNU, Trondheim
1996-2000 Schlumberger, developing systems for finding oil
2000-2004 BBS, developing systems for electronically moving money
2004-2010 TANDBERG, developing systems for effective communication between people
2010-now Cisco Systems (TANDBERG was aquired by Cisco in 2010)

Active member of the vibrant geek community in Oslo. Eg, JavaPils, Smidig, JavaZone, XP Meetup, Cantara, Lean Meetup, and Oslo C++ Users Group, and a lot of other things. Also an active member of ACCU.

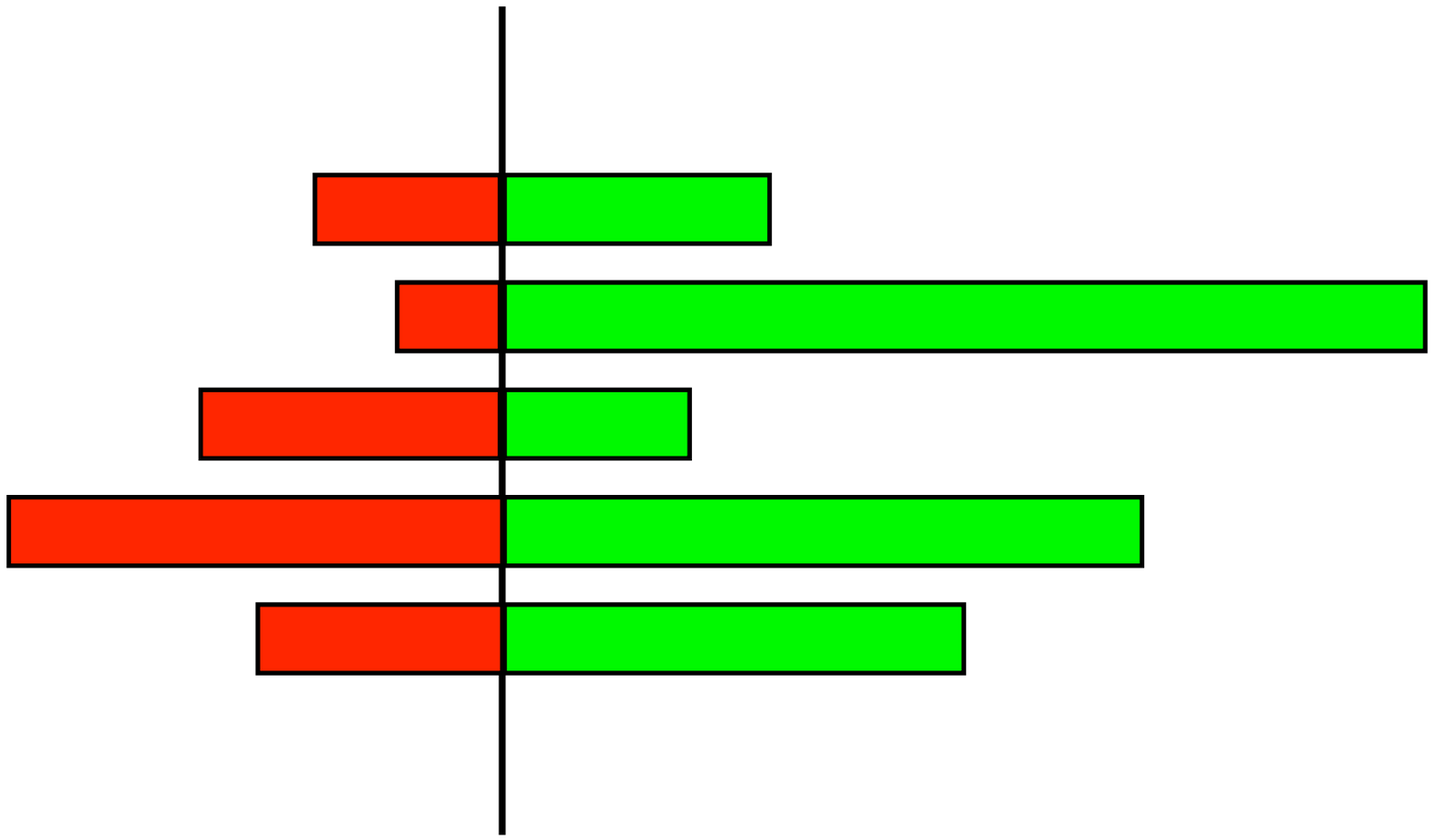
Blog: http://olvemaudal.wordpress.com/
Twitter: @olvemaudal

Some thoughts about systems thinking

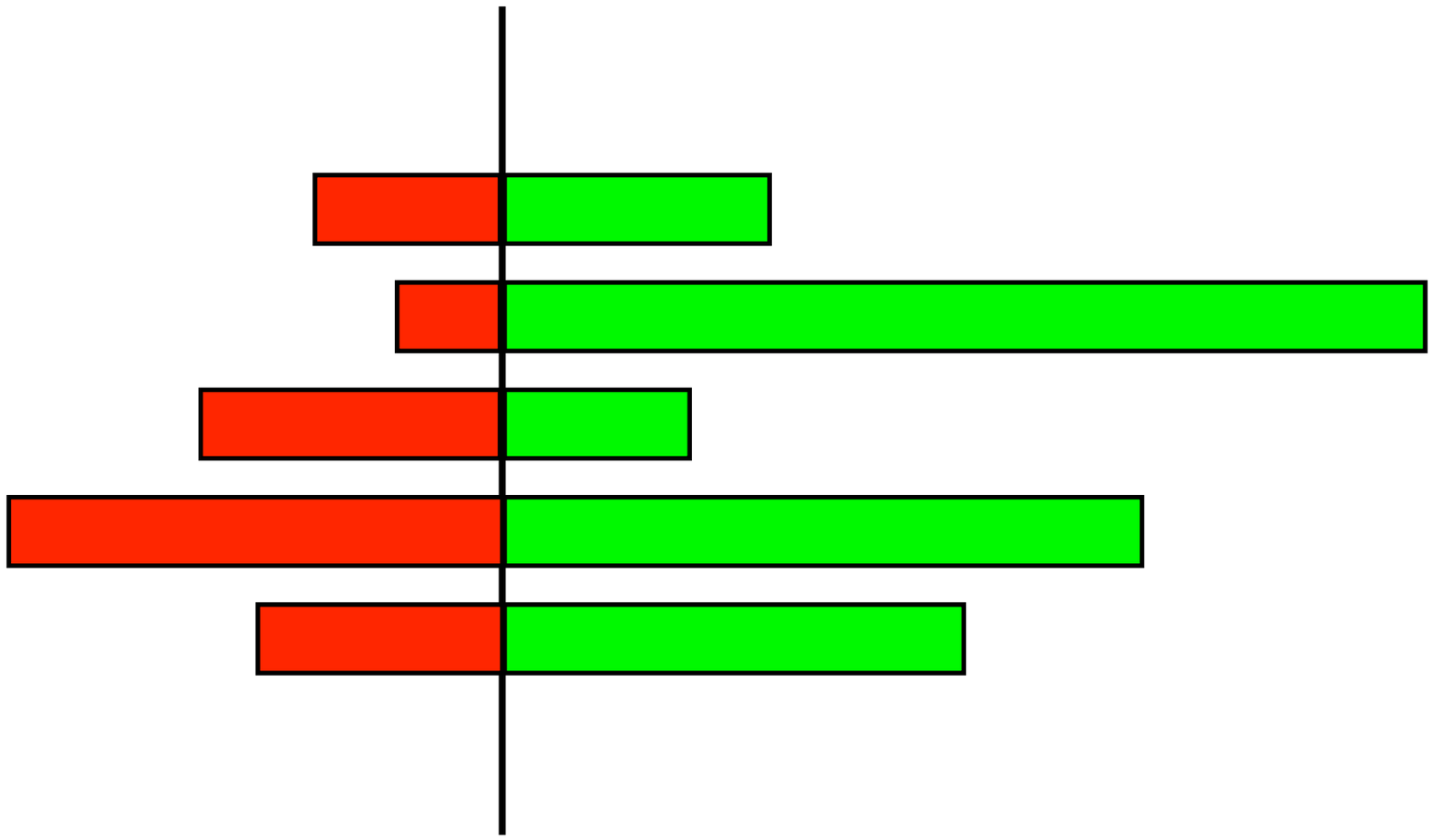
everything has a negative component ...



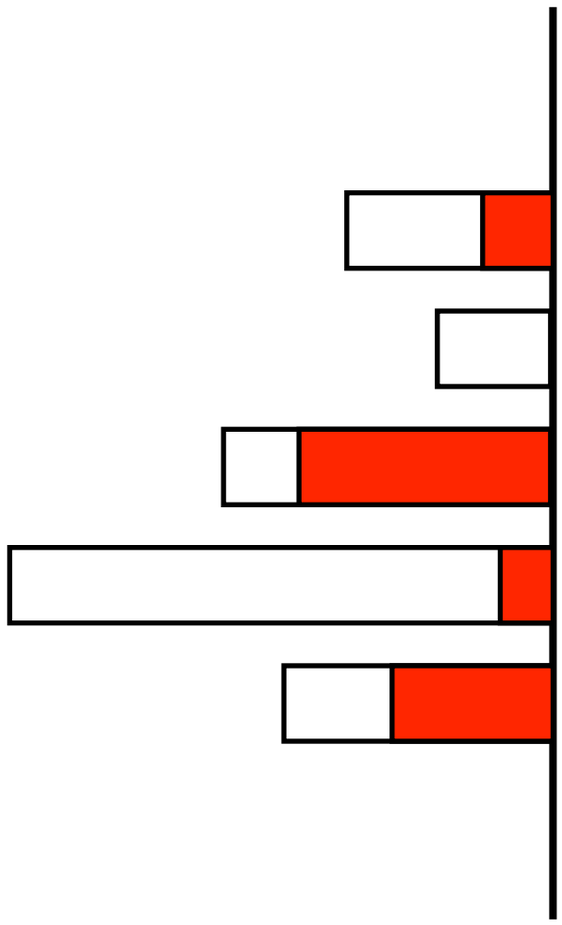
... as well as a positive component



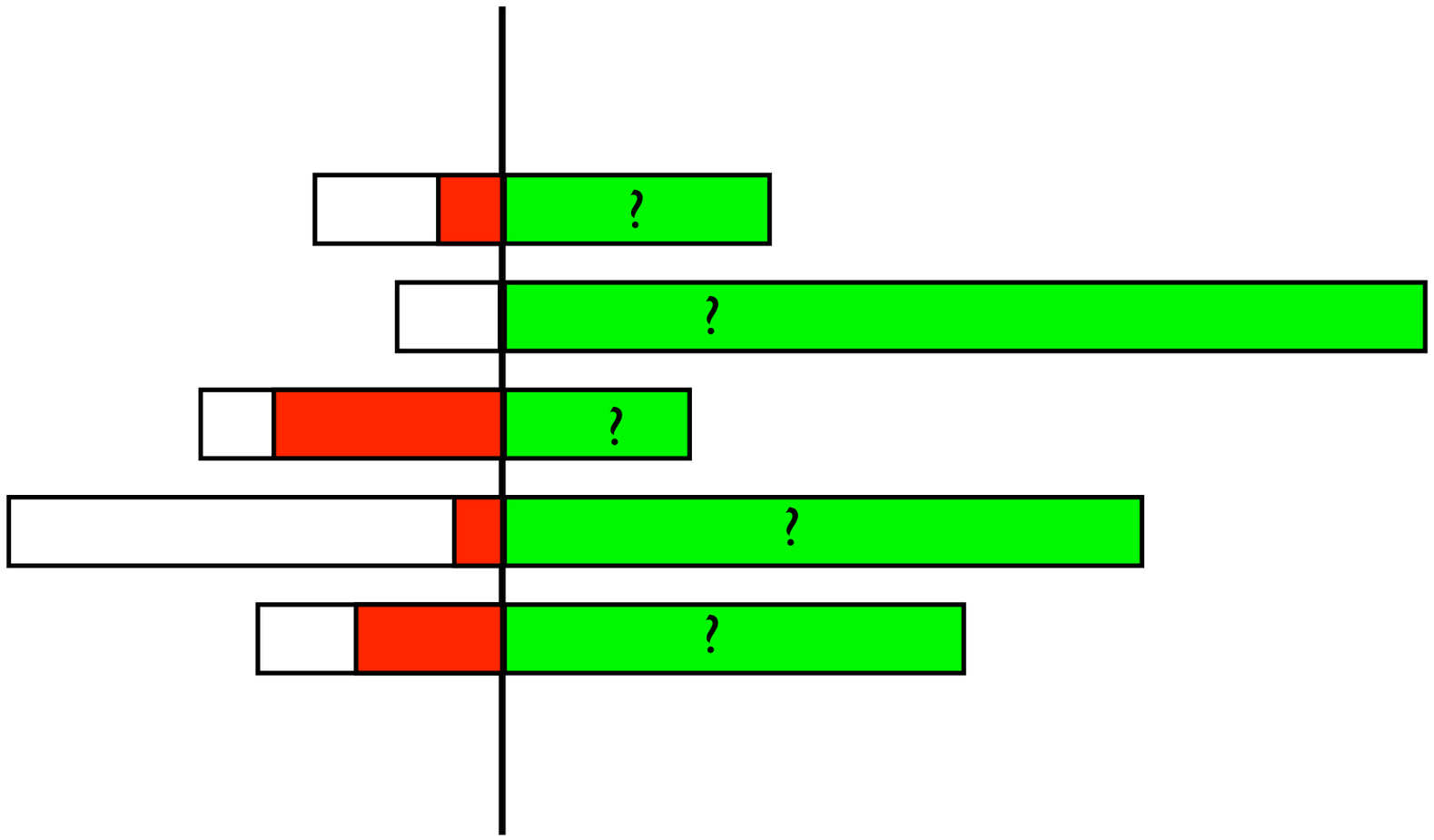
so if you want to improve something...



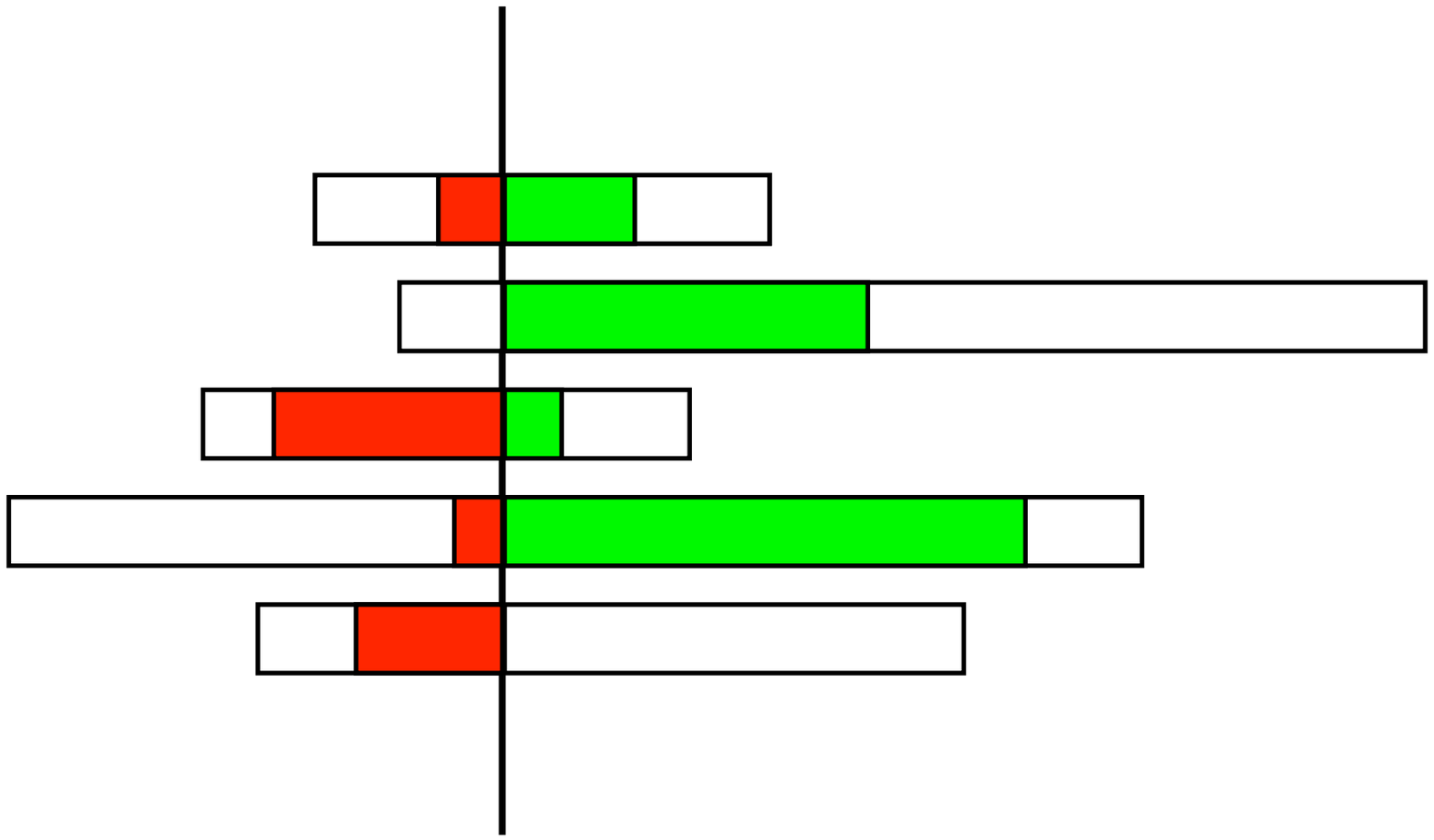
... do **not** try to fix the negative stuff ...



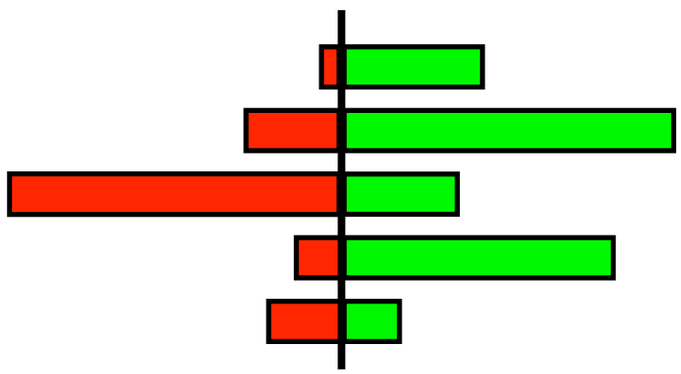
... without considering how it will affect the positive component



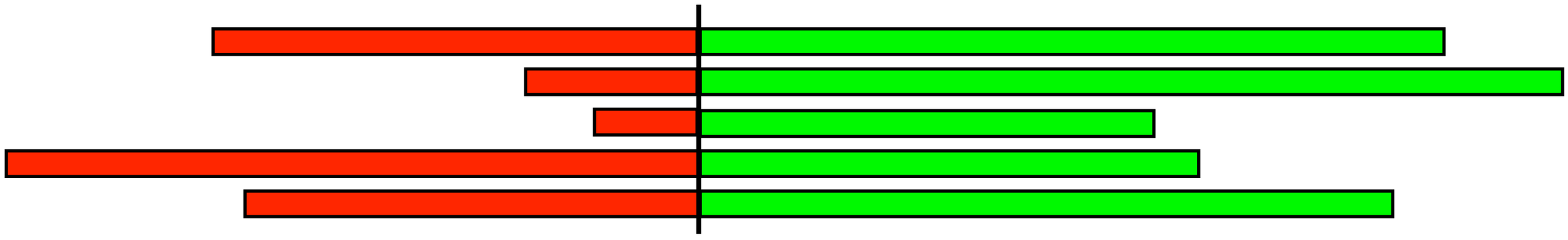
because you might end up by reducing the positive component by even more



good organizations often have a profile like this



great organizations usually have profiles that looks like this

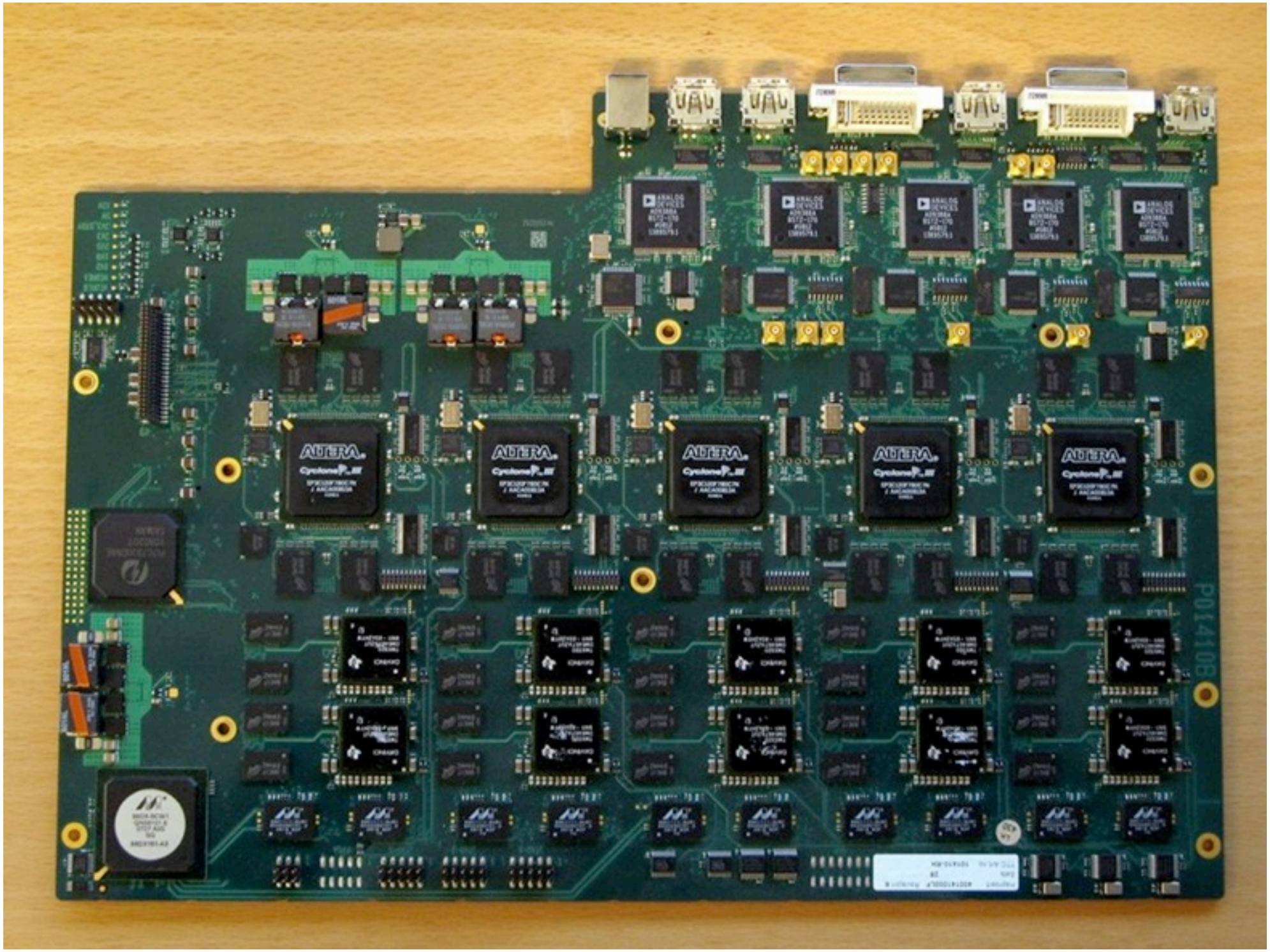


"Managing your problems can only make you good, whereas building your opportunities is the only way to become great." (Good to Great, Collins, 2001)

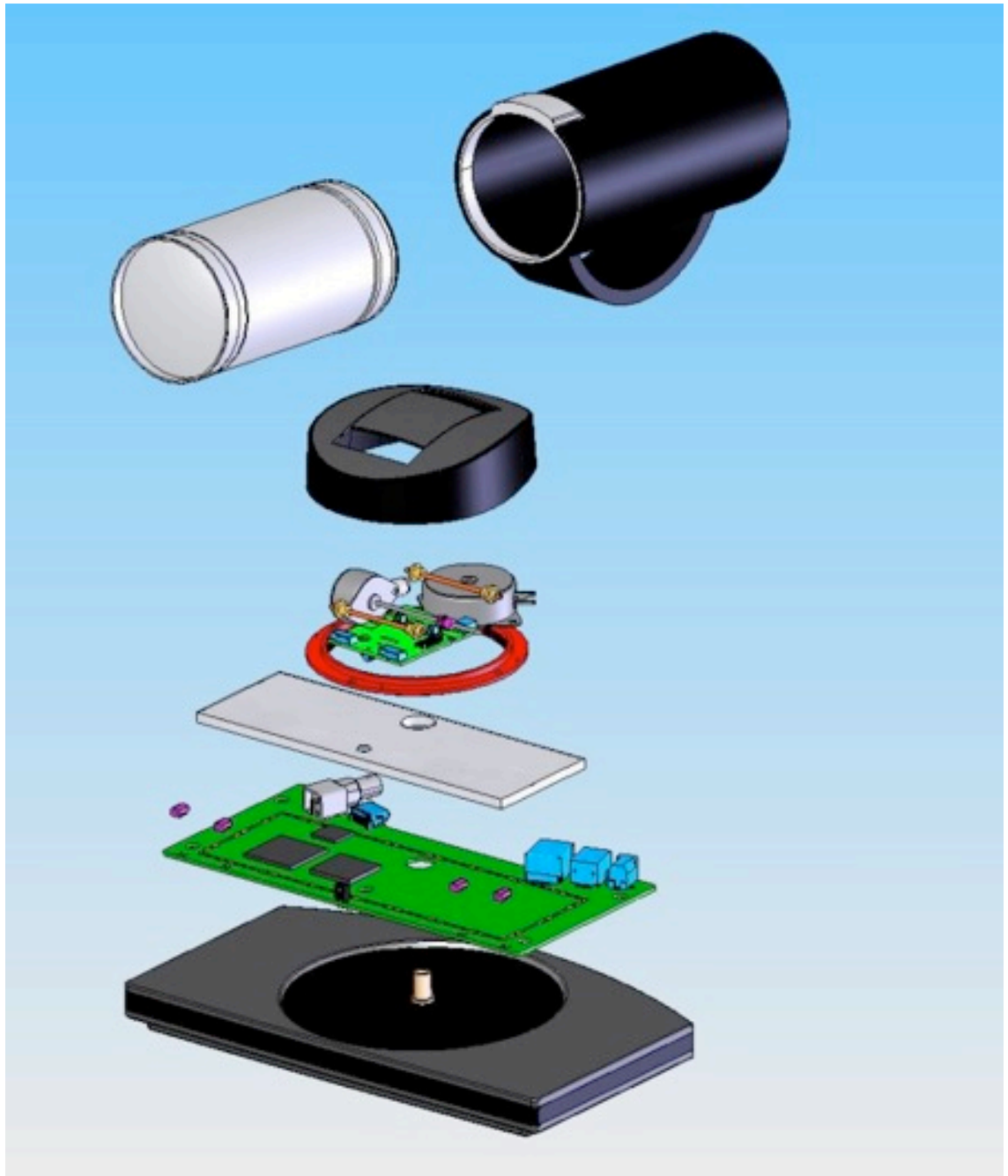
TelePresence Technology Group
Cisco Systems Norway

Telepresence systems and solutions

Electronics / Hardware



Mechanics



Industrial Design

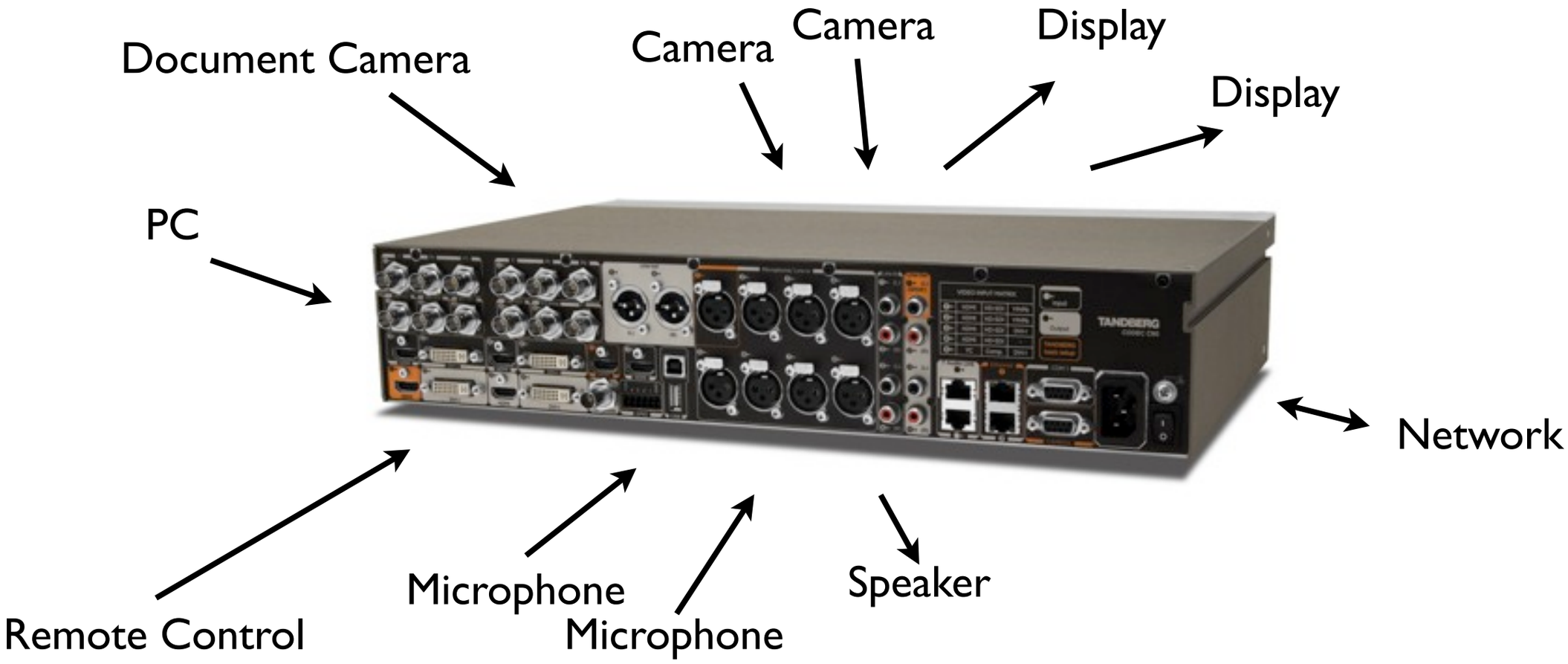
1993

2011

Software Development

Example of a Product

Cisco TelePresence Codec C90



C90 Features:

- realtime H.264 encoding/decoding
- full HD 1080p30, (4+4) concurrent streams
- 12 high definition video sources
- 8 high quality audio sources
- support for many-to-many communication
- Interoperability through H323 and SIP
- API for integration and remote control

Cisco TelePresence Codec C90

- Developed at Lysaker
- Started spring 2007
- First HW prototype arrived summer 2008
- Released late 2008 (~20 months of development)
- 2-3 people working with mechanics/design
- 4-5 people working with electronics/hardware
- 5-6 people working with FPGA development
- 40-50 people working with software development
- 4-5 test developers
- 1 person working with approvals

Our Development Process

Development Process?

~~Development Process?~~

Development Practices in the Saturn project

- Continuous planning
- Always attack high risks first
- Heavy focus on effective feedback mechanisms
- Visualization of actual status throughout project
- Teams: GUI, App, Protocol, Video, Audio, FPGA, Platform, QA, Support
- Parallel development
- Iterations and time-boxing
- Daily 15 minute morning assembly of elders
- Weekly rendezvous meetings
- Early and many prototypes

Observations from TTG, Cisco Systems Norway

as a software engineer joining the organization…

at first you might get this impression...

at first you might get this impression...

- No documentation

at first you might get this impression...

- No documentation
- No routines

at first you might get this impression...

- No documentation
- No routines
- Fooling around

at first you might get this impression...

- No documentation
- No routines
- Fooling around
- Not following plans

at first you might get this impression...

- No documentation
- No routines
- Fooling around
- Not following plans
- Decision are postponed

at first you might get this impression...

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- People communicate
- Focus on important stuff

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- People communicate
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- Embedded slack

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- Continuous planning

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- Continuous planning
- Effective decisions
- Autonomous organisation
- Respect for the doers

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- Spectacular products
- Fast deliveries

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- No integration period
- Spectacular products
- Fast deliveries
- Sustainable pace

... and while you still see the "negative" stuff, you will start to appreciate the "positive" stuff more.

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Agile?

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Agile?

Scrum?

Observations from TTG, Cisco Systems Norway

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Agile?

Scrum?

Lean?

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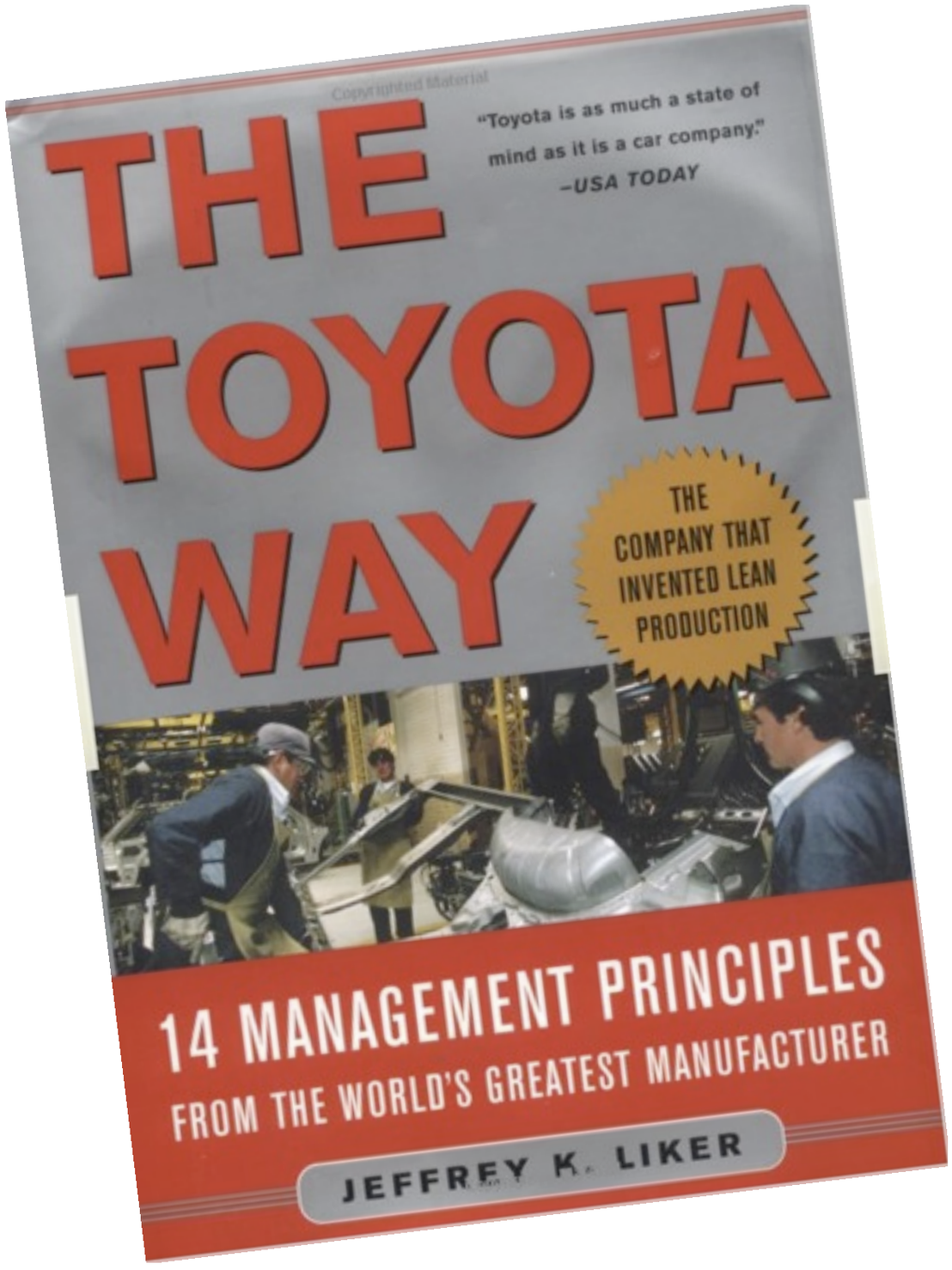
Agile?

Scrum?

Lean?

Deming?

http://www.flickr.com/photos/desireecherisse/4347299821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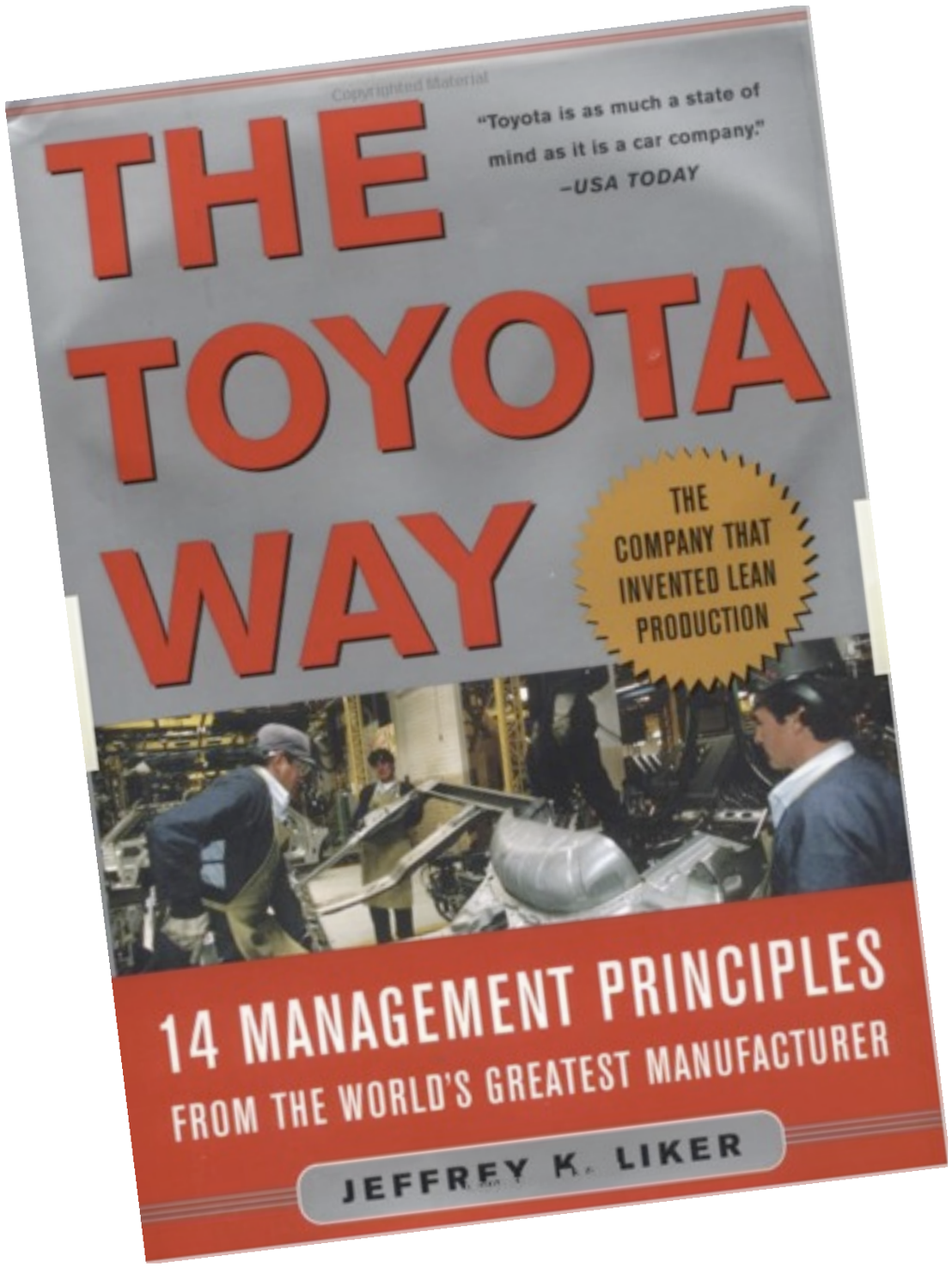
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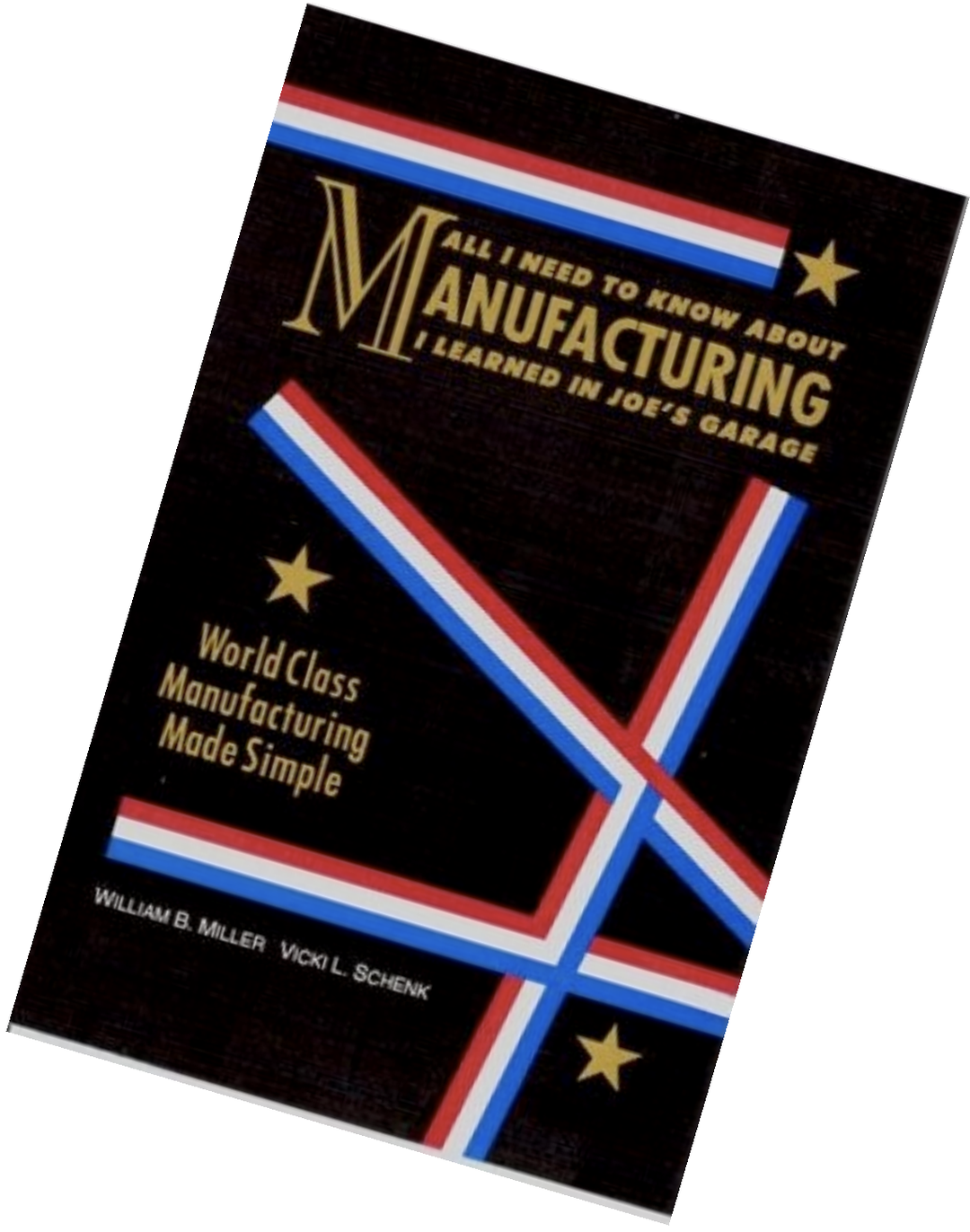
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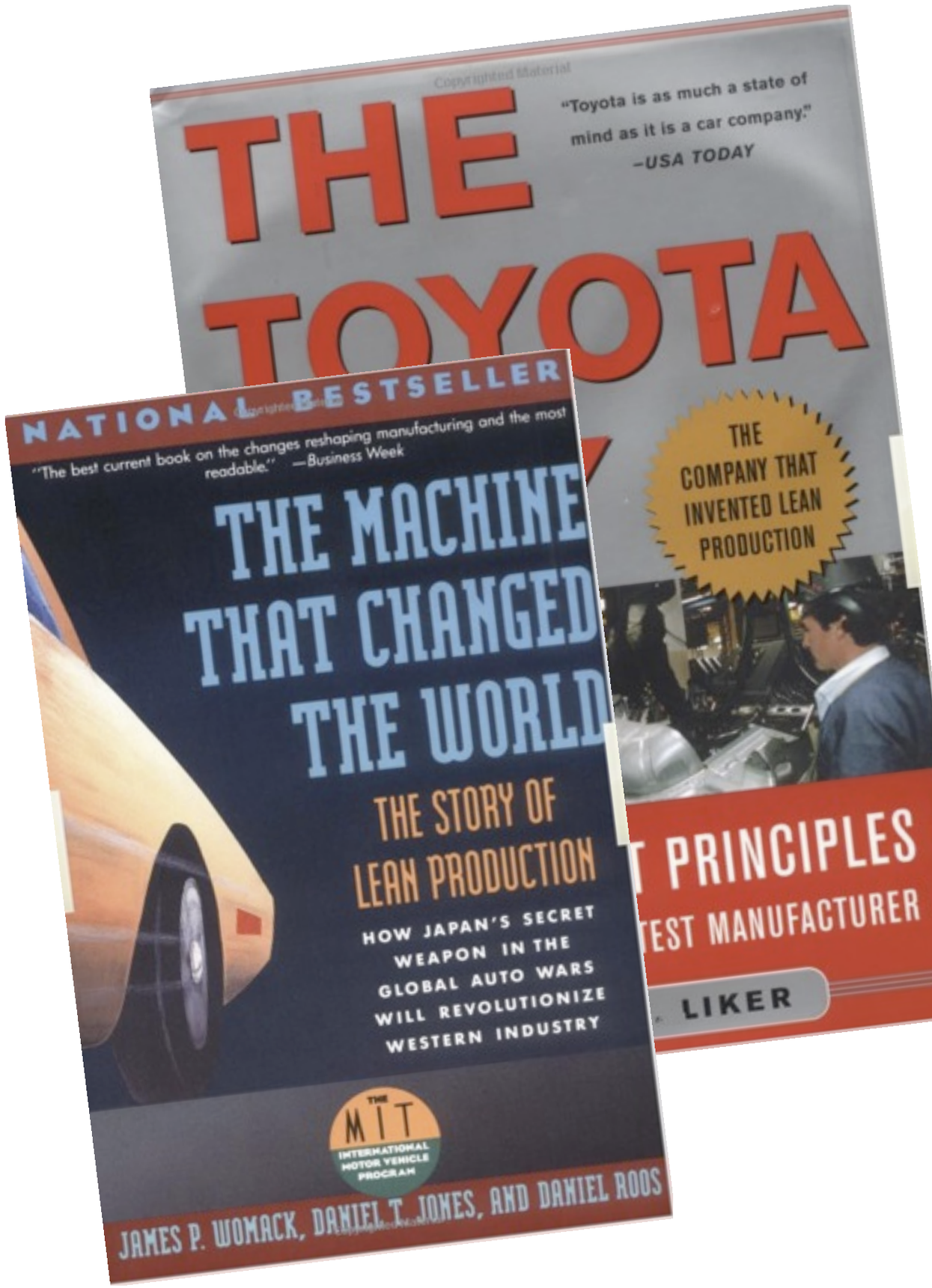
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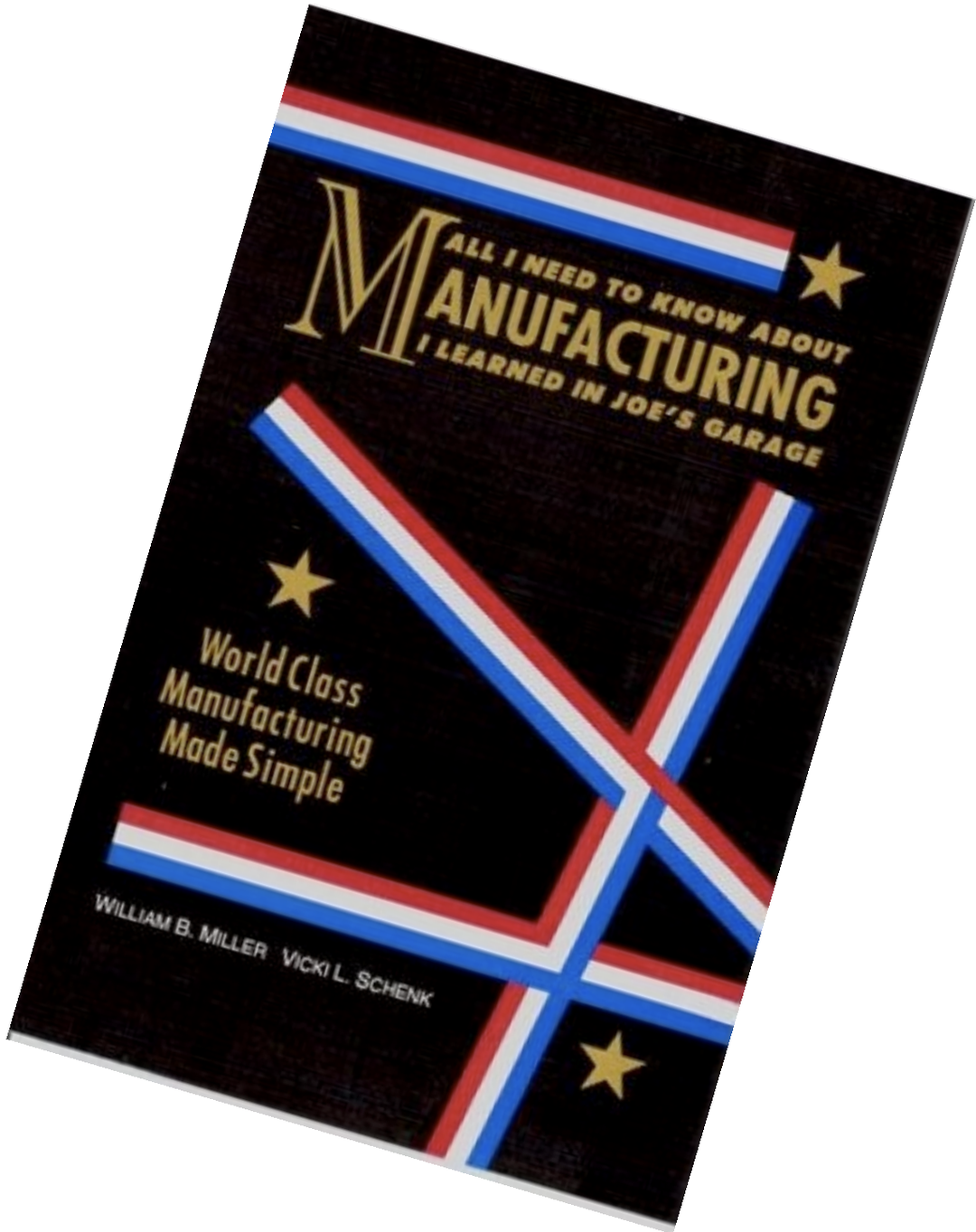
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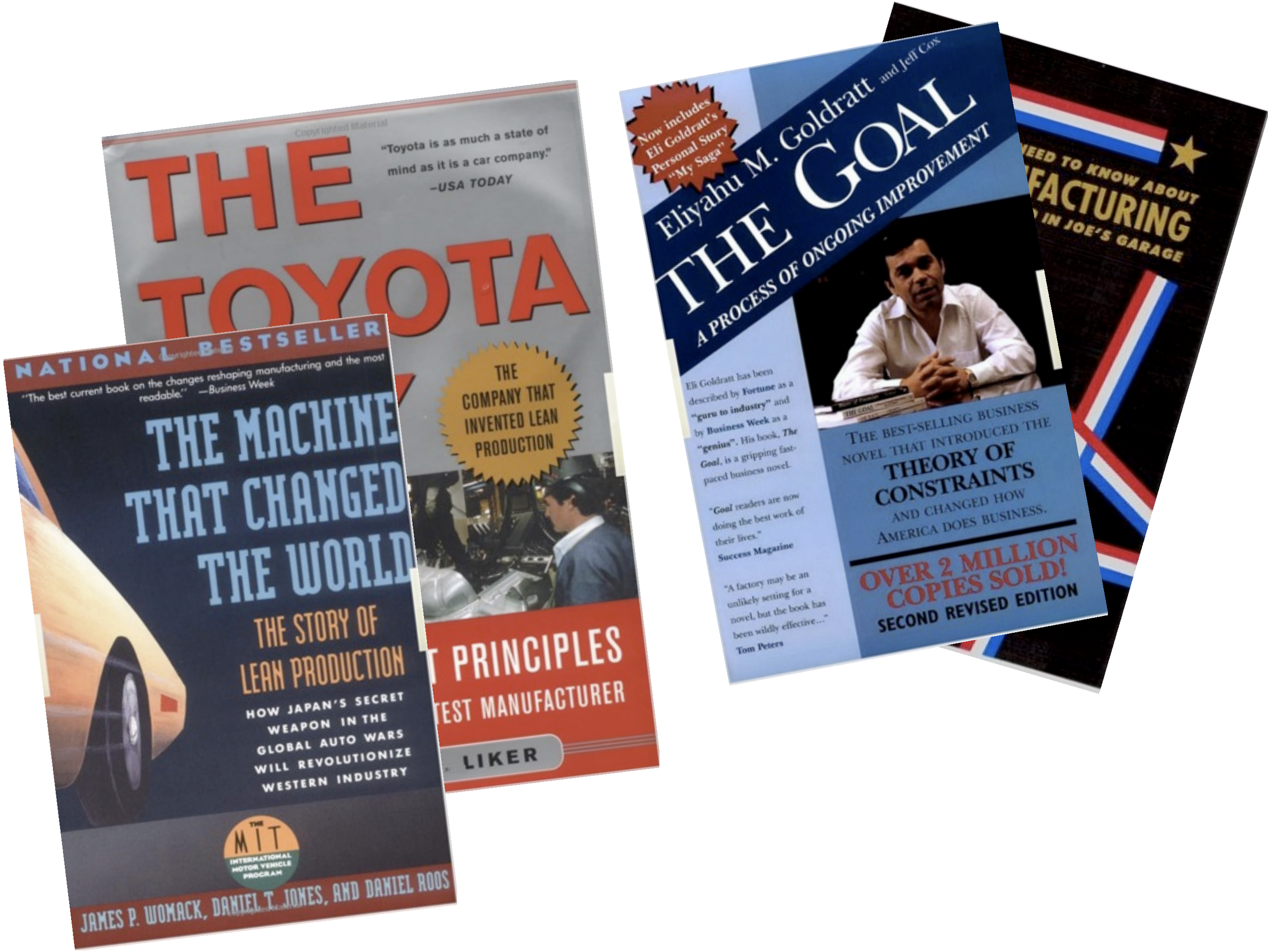
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• Uncovering and eradicating waste throughout the software development lifecycle
• Practical techniques for every development manager, project manager, and technical leader
Forewords by
Jim Highsmith
and Ken Schwaber
Mary Poppendieck
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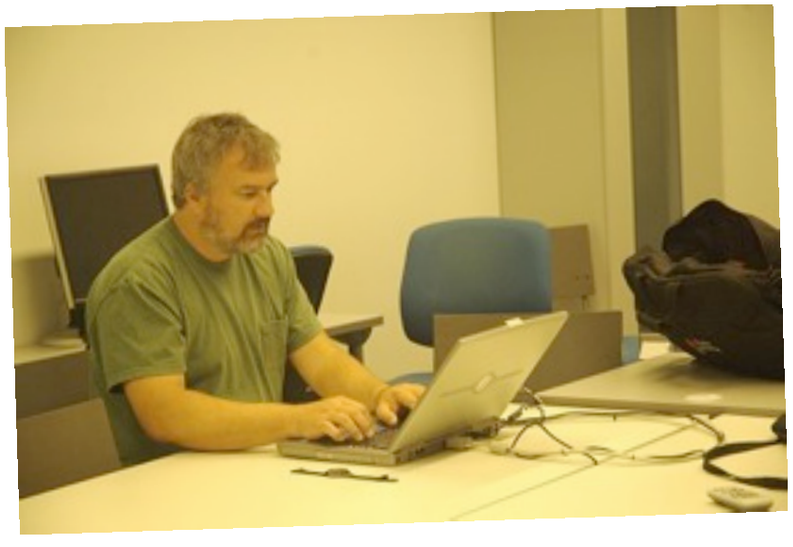
XP2006



"I have been working with software development groups all around the world, and you are way ahead of most."

(a consultant visiting our R&D department)

Development Principles

"Plans are nothing, planning is everything"

"Plans are nothing, planning is everything"

"Plans are nothing, planning is everything"

“Everyone has a plan 'till they get punched in the mouth.”

"Plans are nothing, planning is everything"

“Everyone has a plan 'till they get punched in the mouth.”

Mike Tyson

Let the project and teams own their methodology

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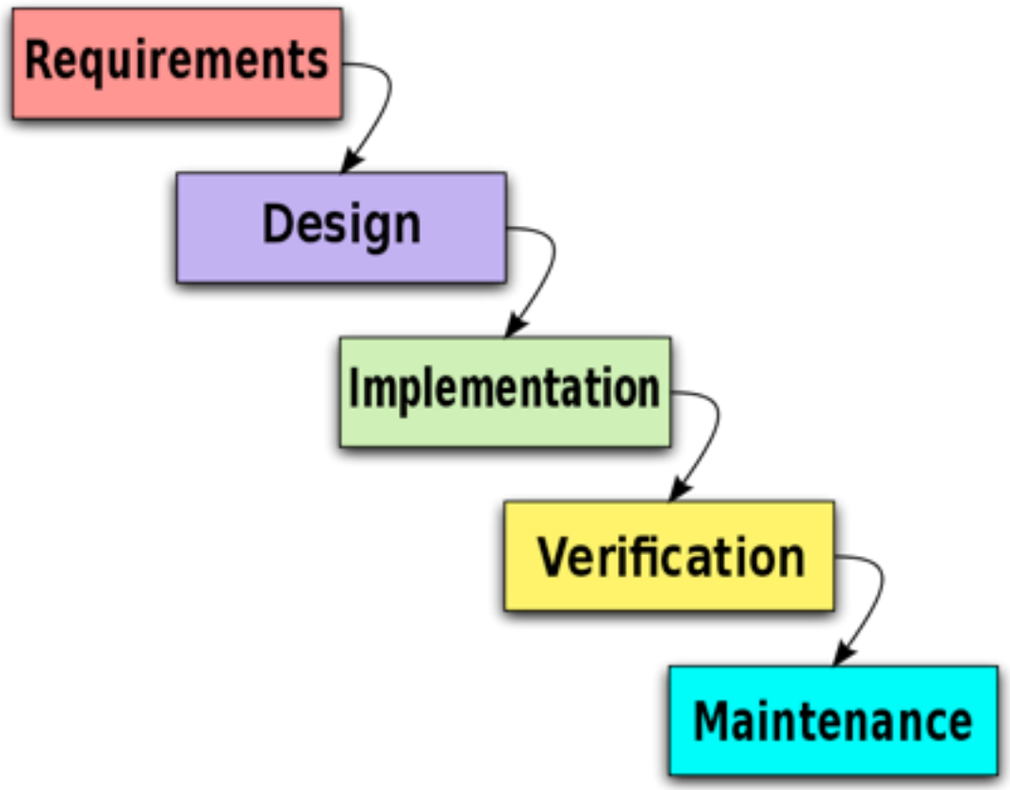

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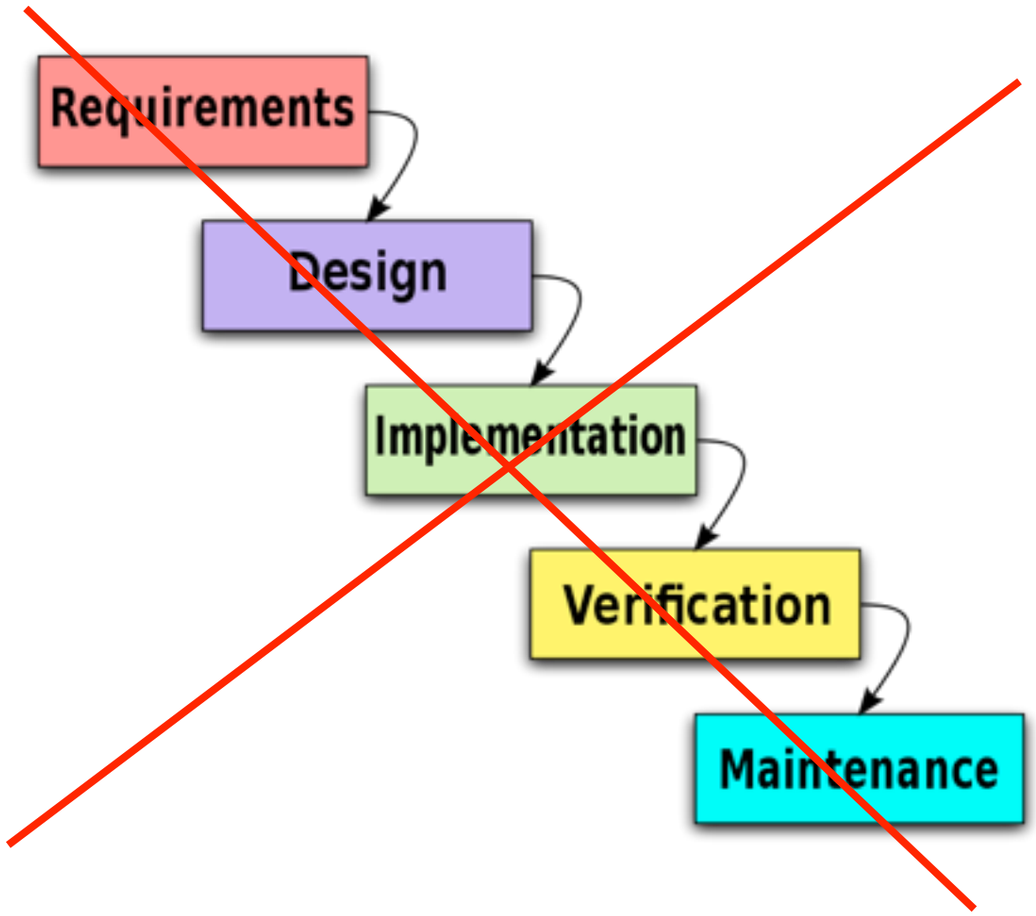

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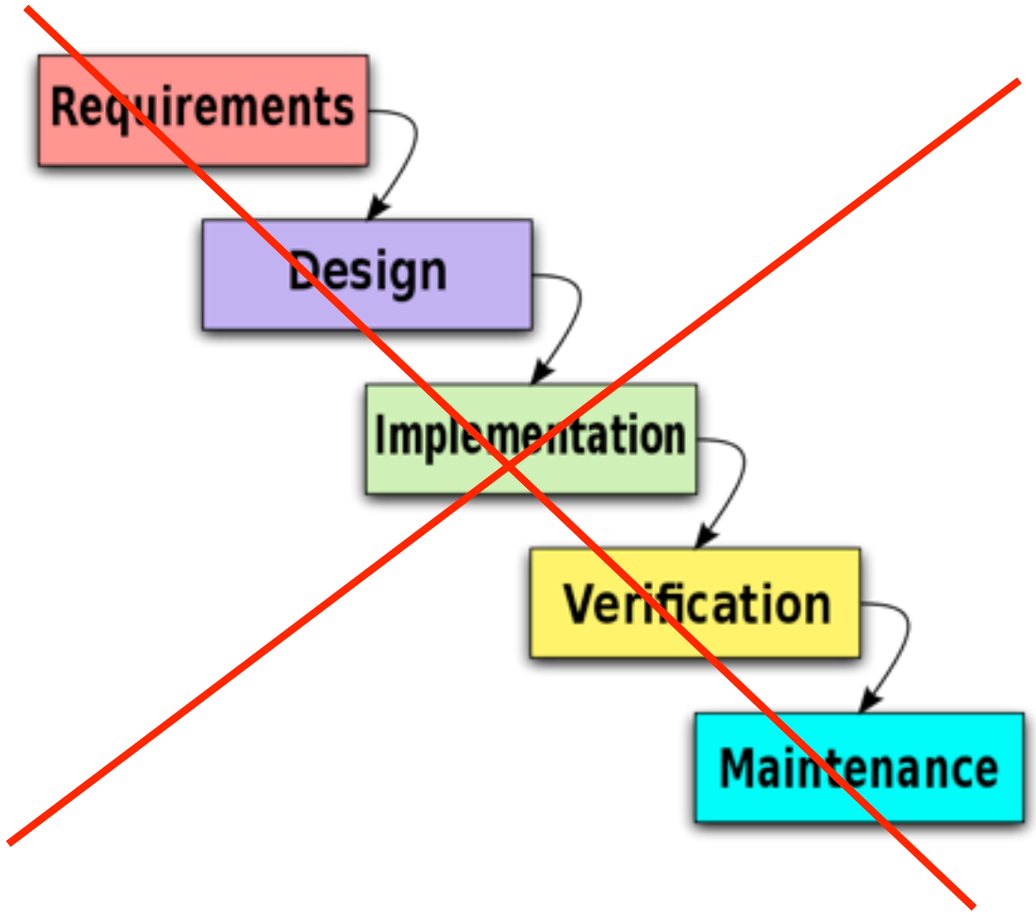

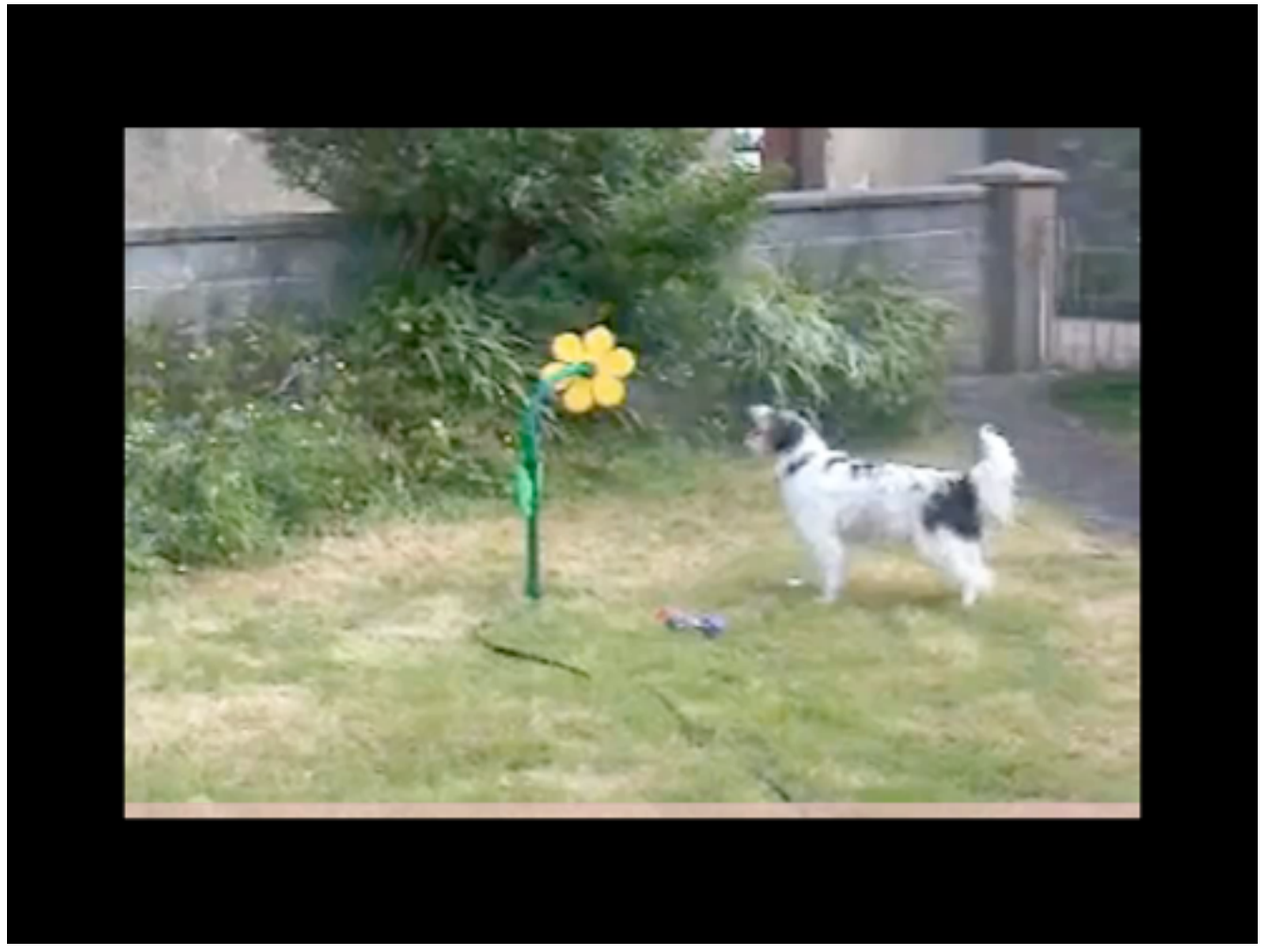

Focus on communication, don’t rely on documentation

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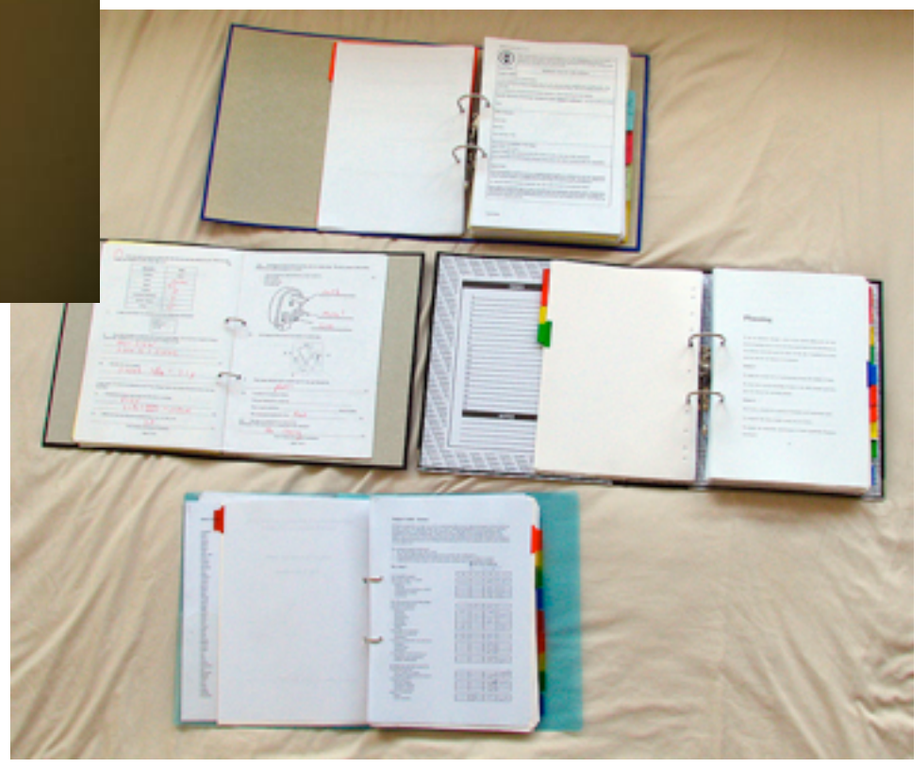

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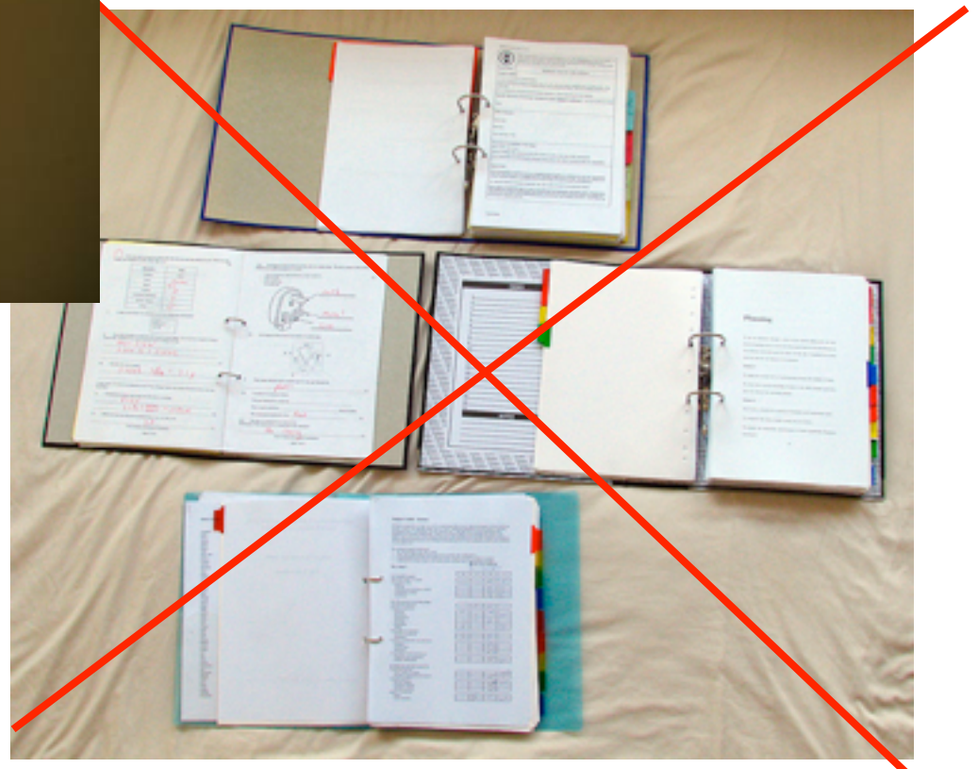


Treat engineers as professionals, not as resources

Treat engineers as professionals, not as resources

Treat engineers as professionals, not as resources

Slack is essential!

Slack is essential!

Focus on the whole product

Focus on the whole product

Focus on the whole product

Encourage failure

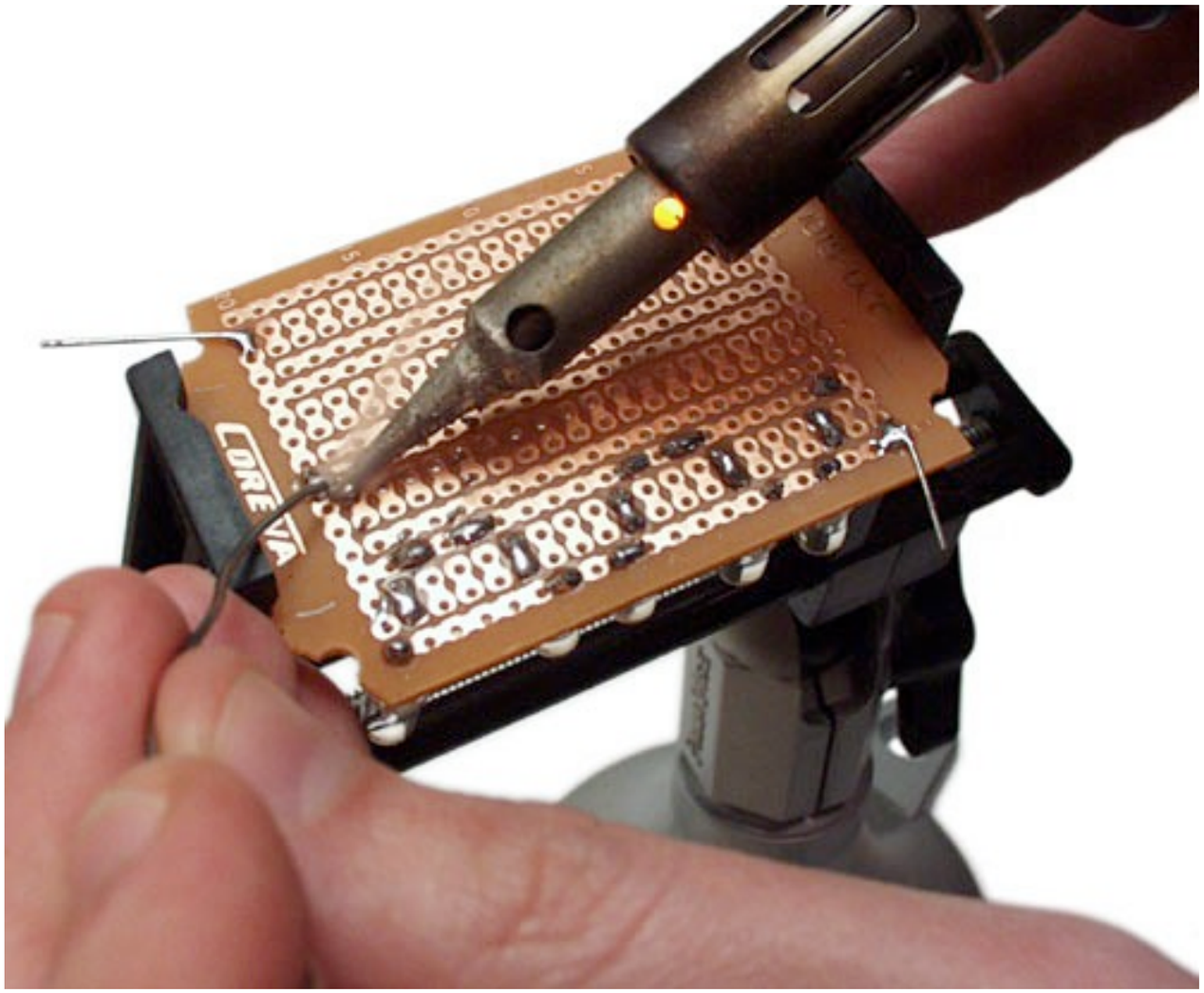
Encourage failure

Encourage failure

Beware of the observer effect

Respect the doers and create an autonomous organization

Respect the doers and create an autonomous organization



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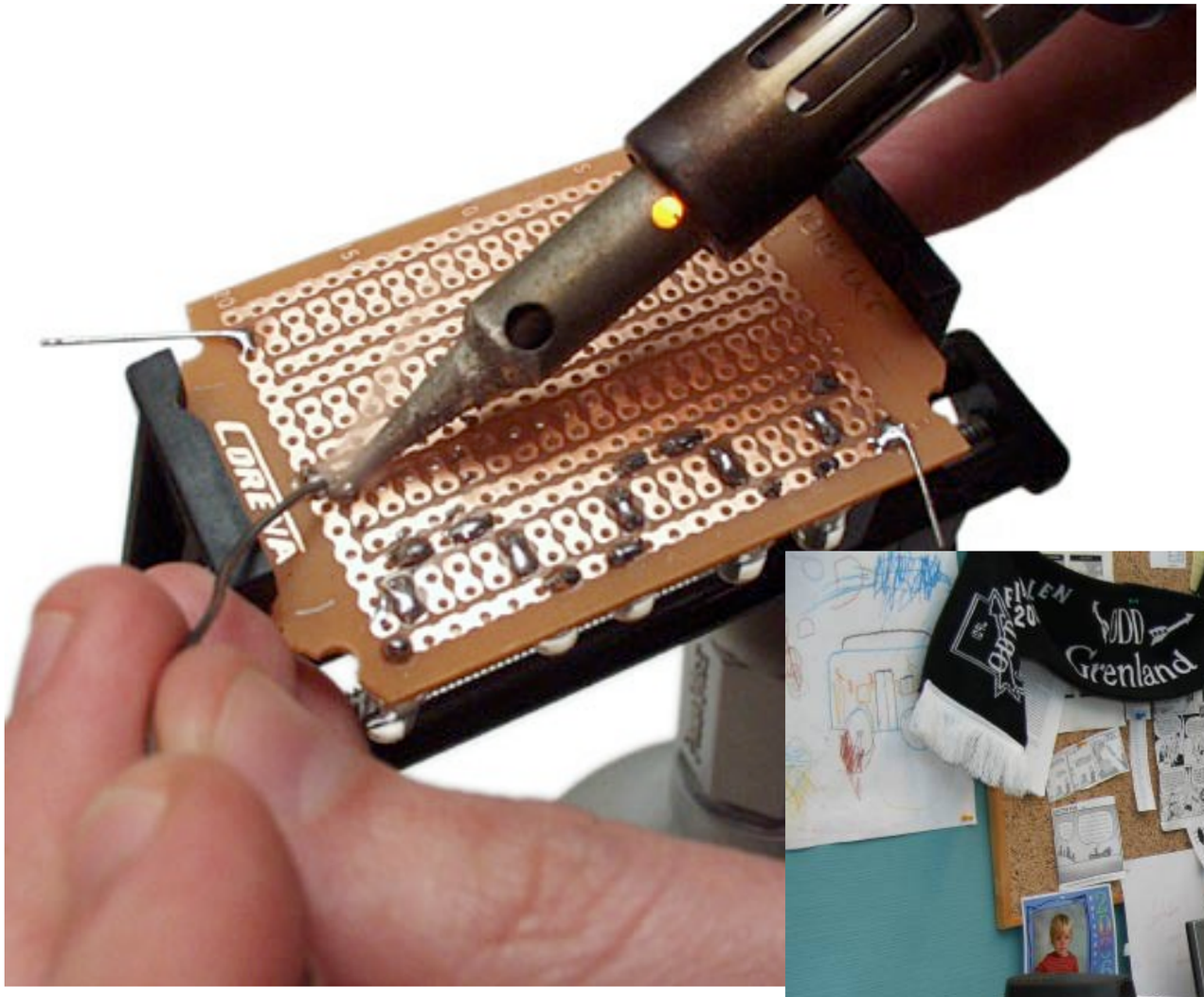


Look for communication skills when hiring

Look for communication skills when hiring

Aim for approximately right rather than accurately wrong

Aim for approximately right rather than accurately wrong

Aim for approximately right rather than accurately wrong

Release early and release often

Release early and release often

Release early and release often

Align innovation

Align innovation

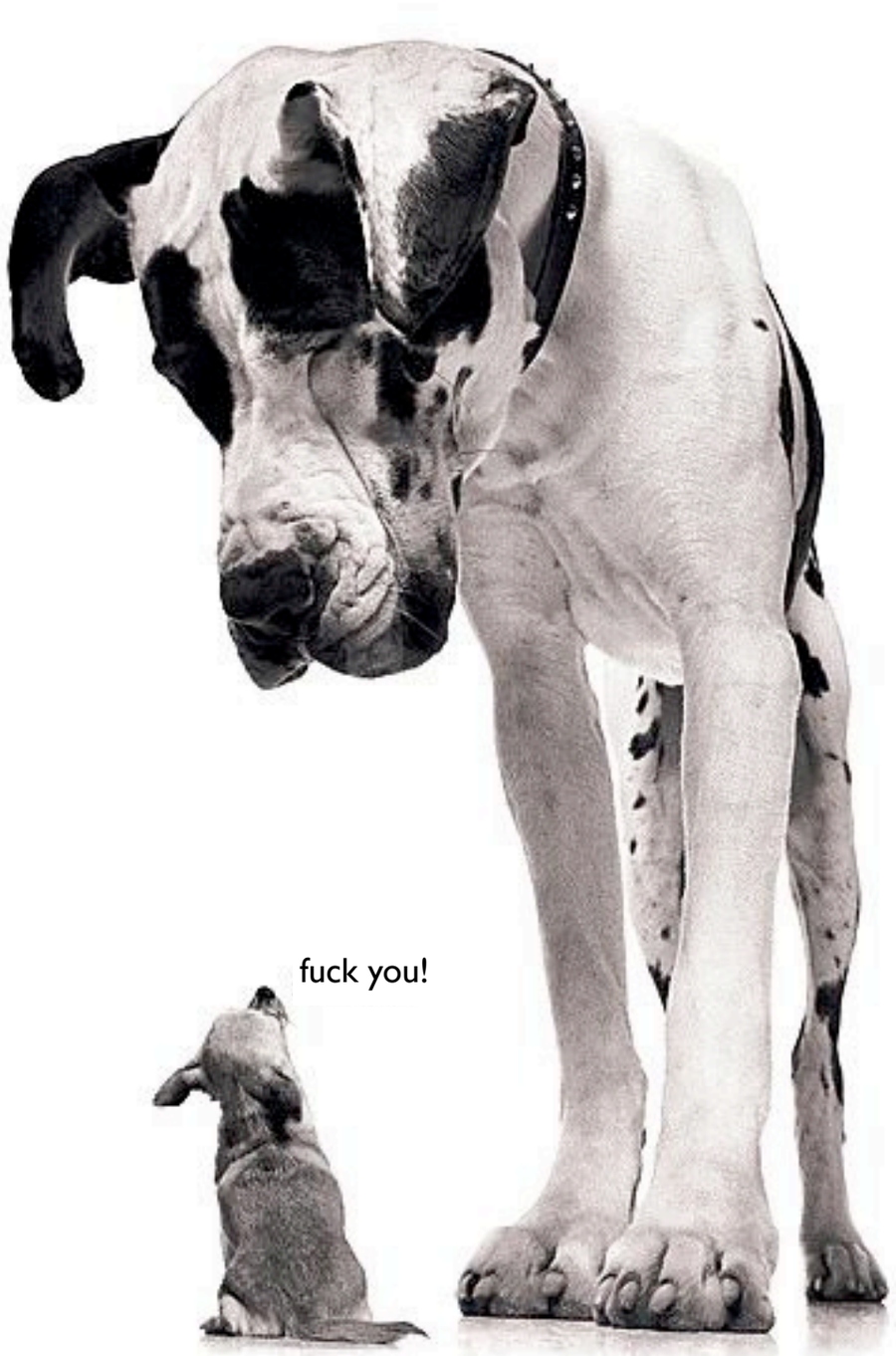
“Det kan du bare drite i”

(no f&*^* way)

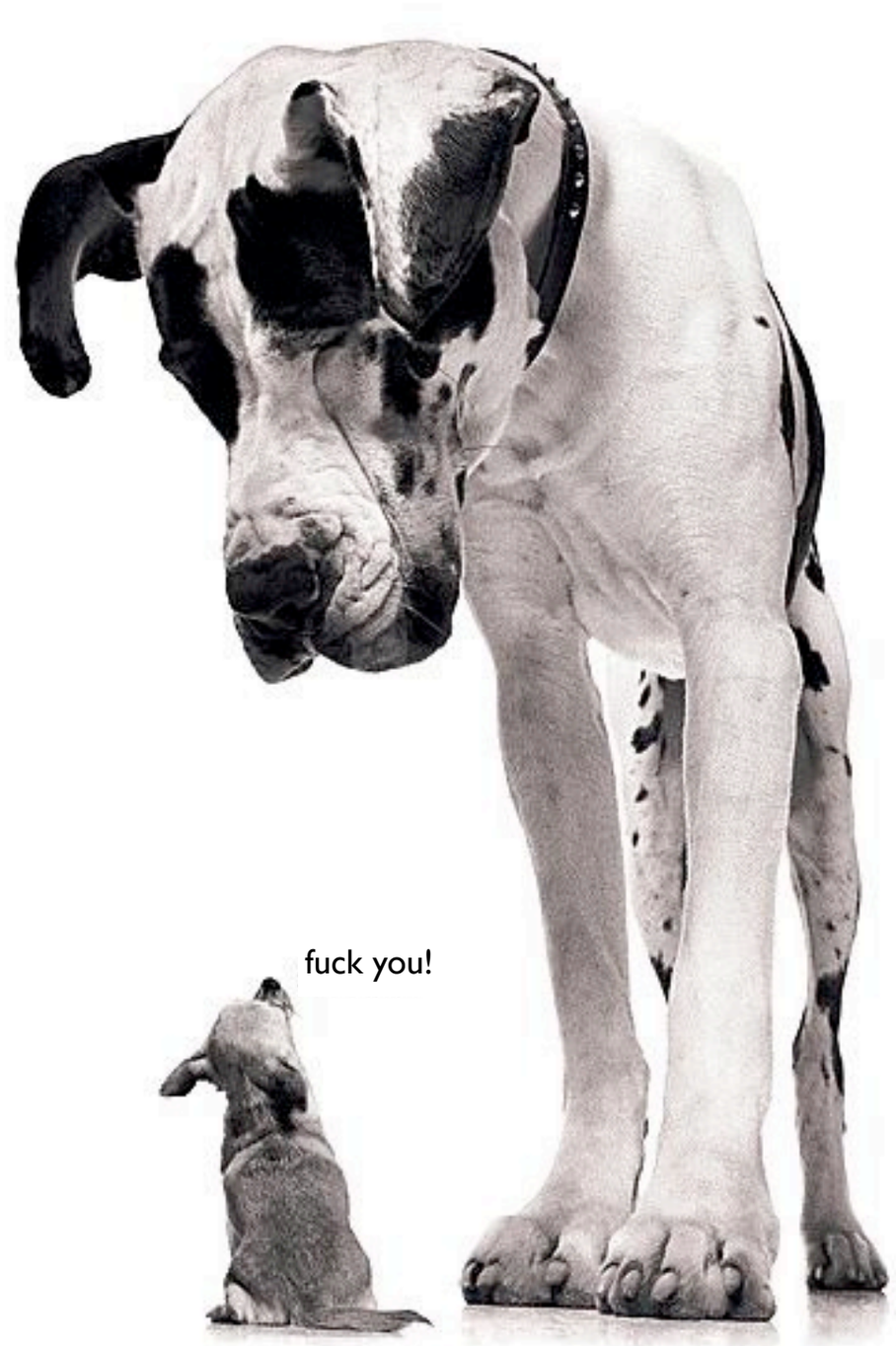
Per Haug Kogstad
(arguably the most influencial person and key driver behind TANDBERGs success.)

Reward courage

Reward courage



Reward courage

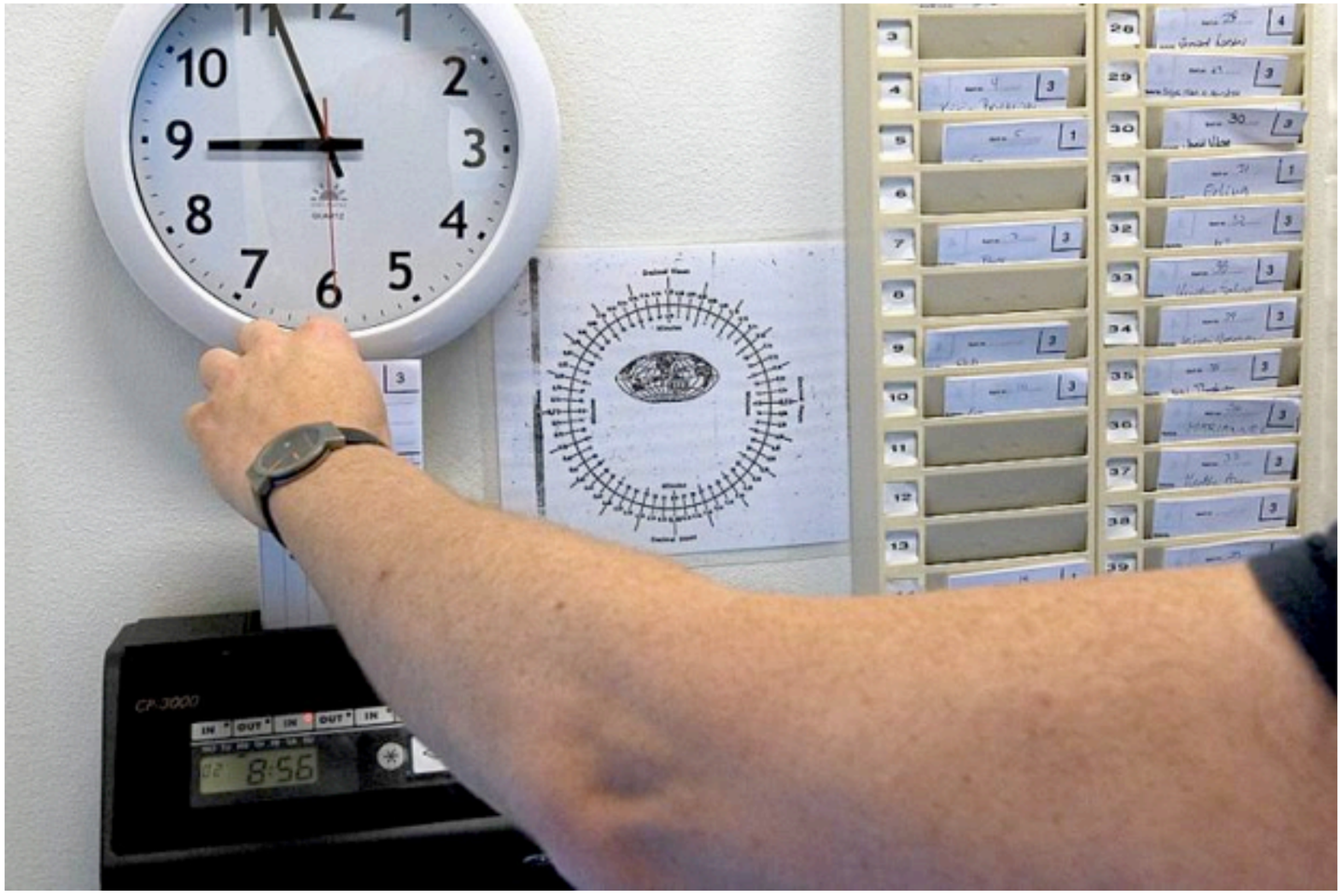


“Man **skal** bryte regler!”

(you should break rules!)

Trust your employees!

Trust your employees!



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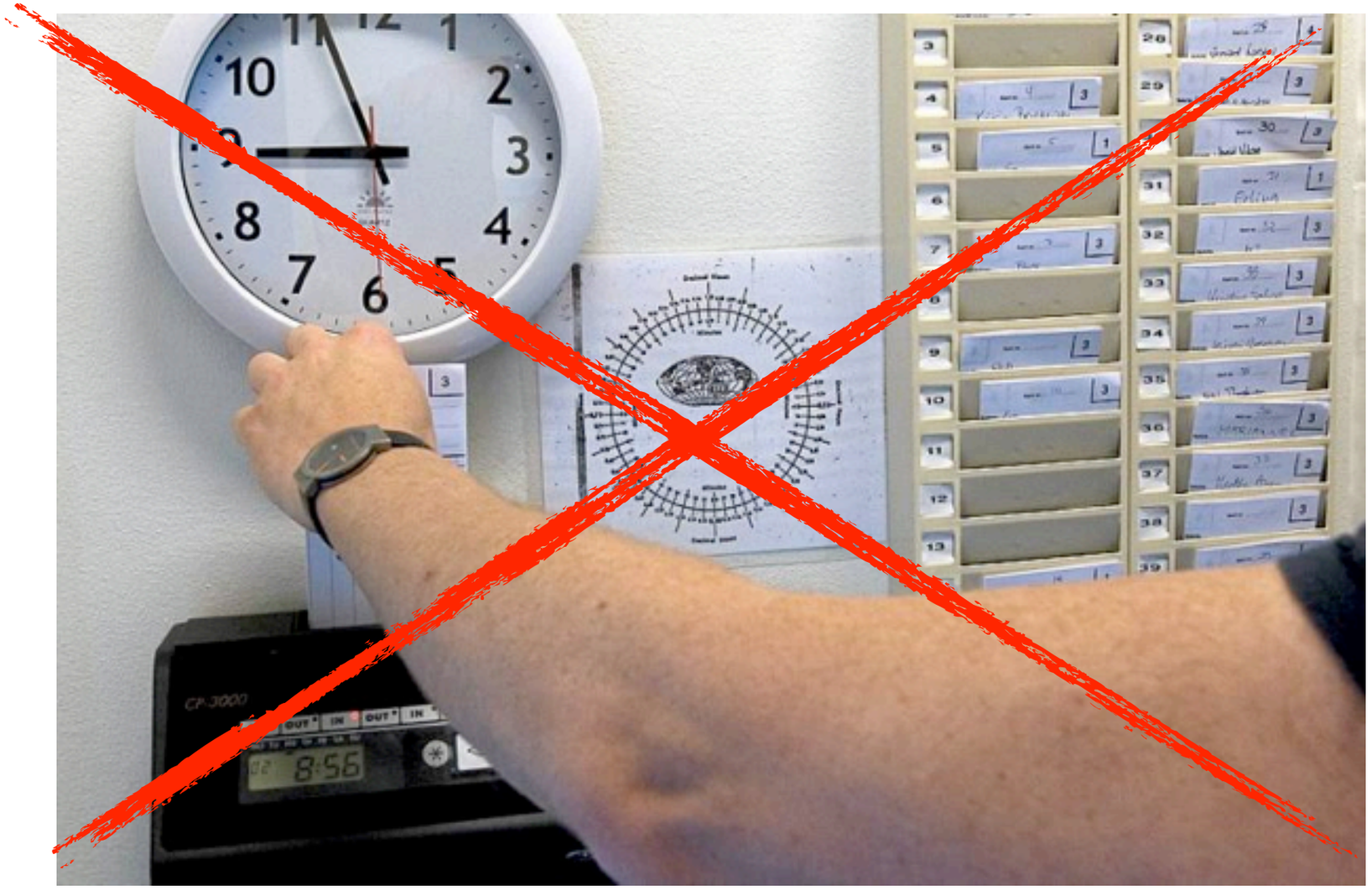

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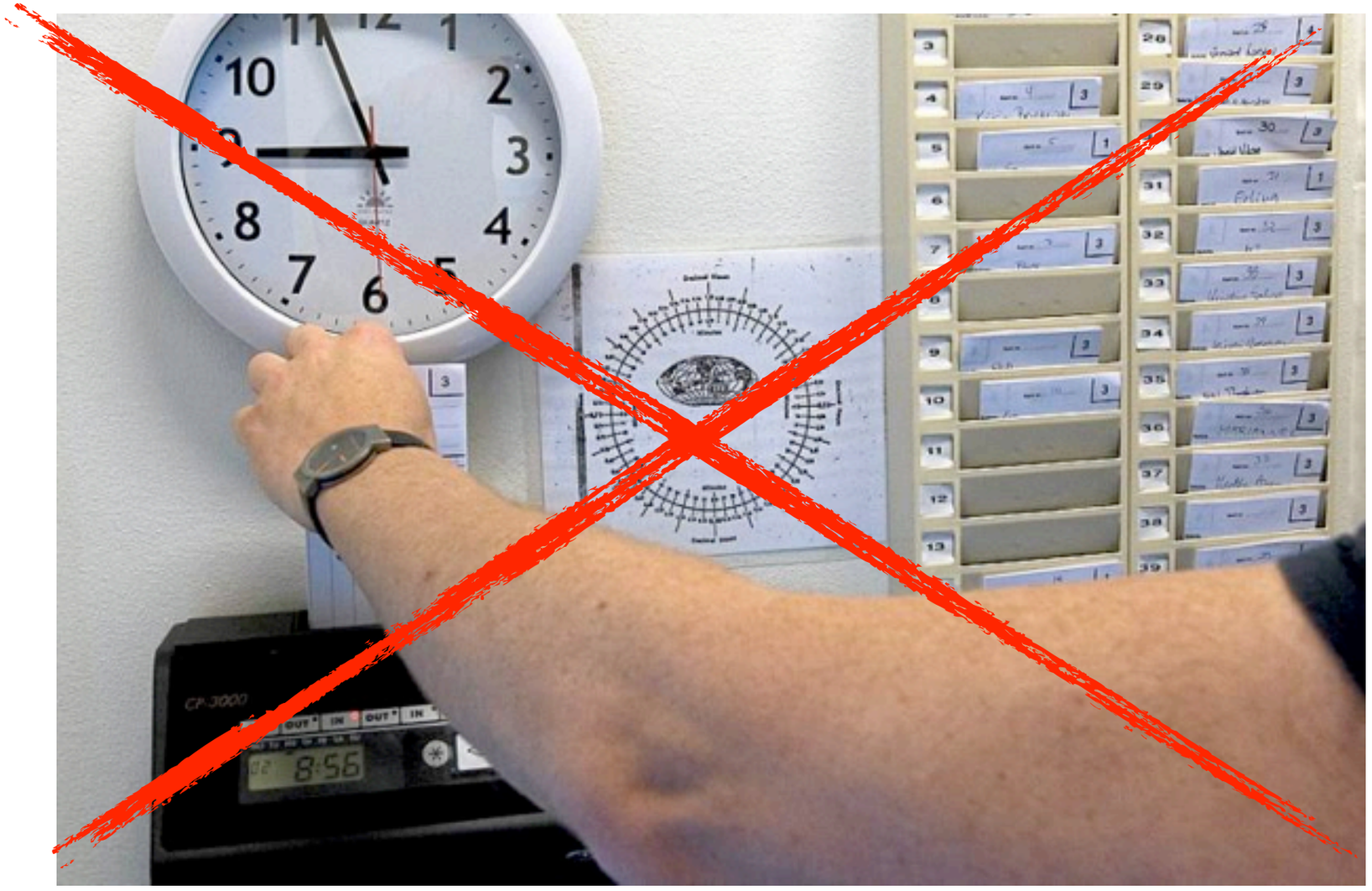


"What we don't do is treat our employees like they're all, you know, criminals,"

(Jenn Mann, SAS Institute)

Principles for effective product development

- "Plans are nothing, planning is everything”
- Let the project and teams own their methodology
- Focus on communication, don’t rely on documentation
- Treat engineers as professionals, not as resources
- Slack is essential
- Focus on the whole product
- Encourage failures
- Beware of the observer effect
- Respect the doers and create an autonomous organization
- Look for communication skills when hiring
- Aim for approximately right, rather than accurately wrong
- Release early and release often
- Align innovation
- Reward courage
- Trust your employees

About Software Development

Few software projects are like running on a paved road where you can see the ...

... goal in the end of the road.

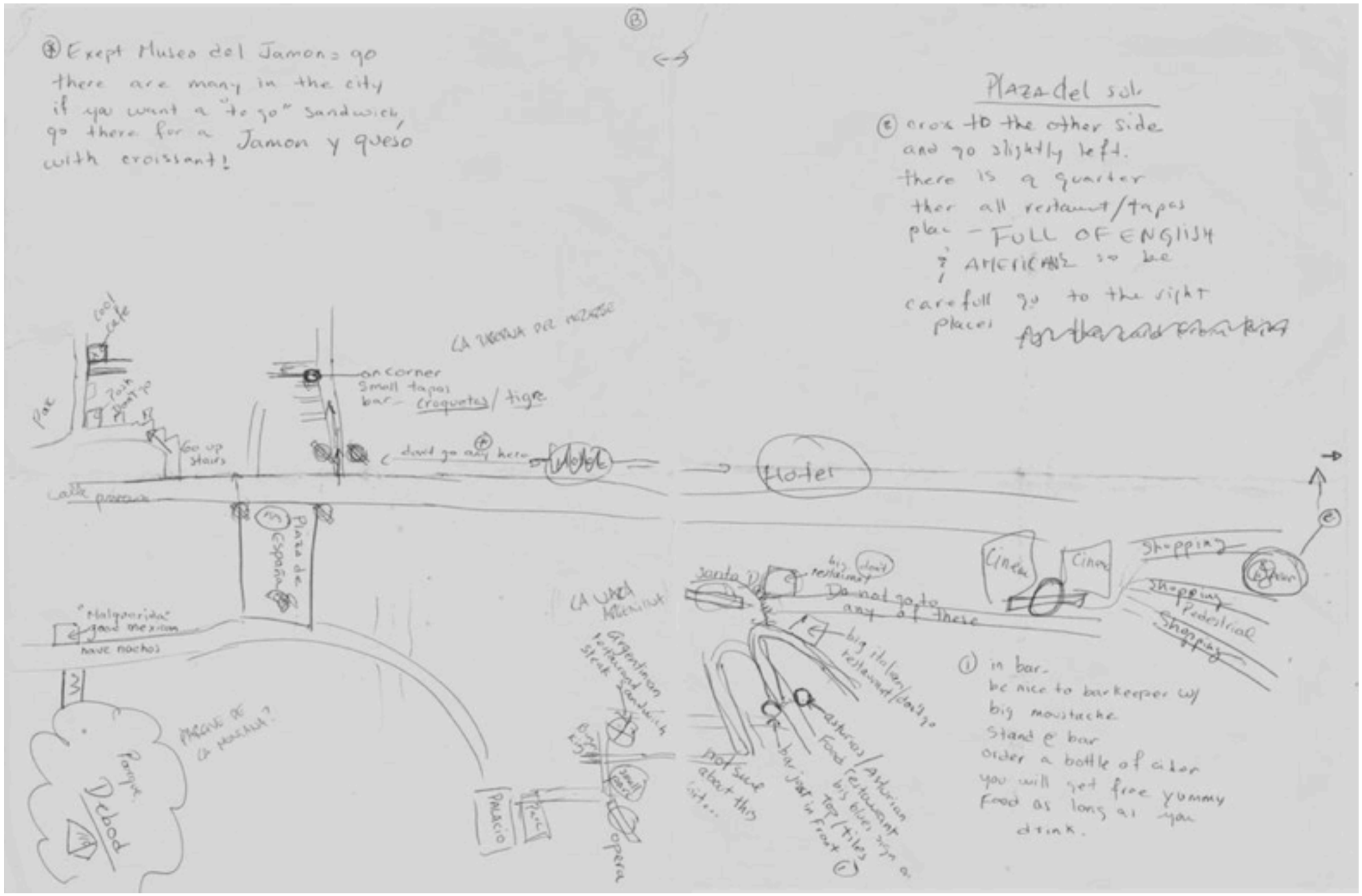
Most projects are more like...

extreme orienteering

in impossible terrain

with a group of people

in the dark



with only a sketchy map as guidance

You rush miracles, you get rotten miracles...

You rush miracles, you get rotten miracles...

Inigo: We need a miracle. It's very important.

You rush miracles, you get rotten miracles...

Inigo: We need a miracle. It's very important.

Inigo: We're in a terrible rush.
Miracle Max: Don't rush me, sonny.
You rush a miracle man, you get rotten miracles.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1oWAtAWat4E

Inigo: I just hope it's enough to buy a miracle, that's all.
[Inigo knocks on the door. A face appears]
Inigo: Are you the Miracle Max who worked for the king all those years?
Inigo: We need a miracle. It's very important.
[after a while]
Inigo: Sir...sir??
Miracle Max: Huh?
Inigo: We're in a terrible rush.
Miracle Max: Don't rush me, sonny. You rush a miracle man, you get rotten miracles.

For any non-trivial project: Software development should be considered a continuous learning process and a cooperative game of communication between professionals. Effective software development can be achieved through frequently repeating cycles of preparing, changing, observing, reflecting, and learning.

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http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oetF3UTIwbc

Problems in software development usually multiply and gets worse by exerting more control...

The more you tighten your grip, Tarkin, the more star systems will slip through your fingers.

(Princess Leia)

Manifesto for Agile Software Development

We are uncovering better ways of developing
software by doing it and helping others do it.
Through this work we have come to value:

Individuals and interactions over processes and tools
Working software over comprehensive documentation
Customer collaboration over contract negotiation
Responding to change over following a plan

That is, while there is value in the items on
the right, we value the items on the left more.

Kent Beck
Mike Beedle
Arie van Bennekum
Alistair Cockburn
Ward Cunningham
Martin Fowler
James Grenning
Jim Highsmith
Andrew Hunt
Ron Jeffries
Jon Kern
Brian Marick
Robert C. Martin
Steve Mellor
Ken Schwaber
Jeff Sutherland
Dave Thomas

The Seven Lean Principles of Software Development

- Eliminate Waste
- Amplify Learning
- Decide as Late as Possible
- Deliver as Fast as Possible
- Empower the Team
- Build Integrity In
- See The Whole

(Poppendieck, 2003)

A subset of Systems Thinking by Deming:

- Cease dependence on inspection to achieve quality
- Move towards single suppliers and establish long-term relationships
- Drive out fear
- Break down barriers between departments
- Eliminate work standards
- Eliminate management by objective
- Remove barriers that rob people their right to pride of workmanship
- Institute a vigorous program of education and self-improvement

"Jeg var arbeidsløs og startet med en tom ølkasse" (Jan Christian Opsahl)

74

jobb & liv

Gutteklubbens ugreie

SOLVEIG HAAVIK

MØTER JAN CHRISTIAN OPSAHL

Han er 95 prosent grei og fem prosent drittsekk. Andre påstår omvendt. Men denne hyperaktive, fåkjefta avart av en styreleder skal uansett ha storparten av æren for at Tandberg og Tomra er de to norske teknologiselskapene som gjør det aller best internasjonalt.

Og overarbeidende styreformann Jan Christian Opsahl raver omkring og bruser med fjærene, stolt og kry som en hane. For de siste månedene har interessen for Tandbergs videokonferanseutstyr svingt seg stadig fortere og høyere mot svimlende sfærer, Tandberg-aksjen har på ny og på ny nådd all time high, og Tomra går så det suser.

- ...og se bare hva Aftenposten skriver! Om «Q-free, en interessant nykommer på børs, ikke minst fordi selskapet satser internasjonalt på en norsk oppfinnelse. Det er ikke utenkelig at dette kan bli en ny Tomra eller Tandberg». Og de to - Tomra og Tandberg - har altså jeg skapt!

Han gliser og strutter, spankulerer rundt skriveboerdet og viser frem storskjermen sin. Herfra kan han videokonferansiere og se sine ansatte i kvitøyet, uansett hvor de befinner seg i verden.

- Skjønner'a at vi skal bli rike, eller?

Det glitrer og spraker bak brilleglassene.

- At dette kommer til å bli stort, begynner jo verden endelig å skjønne. Men det har altså tatt meg 14 år. Og det har vært tungt. Folk mente jo at jeg var idiot da jeg begynte i Tandberg. Og husker du for noen år siden, da en berømt megler - jeg skal ikke nevne navn...

- *Jan Petter Sissener.*

- Ja. Han sa at vi skulle gå konk.

- *Jaja. Og da du ble ansatt i Tandberg, i 1988, føyk aksjene i været med 500 prosent. Men de har jo vært en smule sykliske sørpå, da.*

- Jo da, men du ser jo fasiten, så ikke prøv deg!

Han sender et olmr sideblikk og trekker triumferende frem en plakett fra en eller annen finansinstitusjon som gratulerer Tandberg med en vekst på 30159 prosent.

- Klarer du å regne så mange prosent, eller? Det viser seg jo at vi har vokst dobbelt så mye som Nokia de siste ti årene.

- *Og Morten Sandbø i Børsspeilet vier kalder Tandberg for Nordens nye teknologieventyr etter Nokia.*

- Ja, ikke sant? Men når jeg ser slått, da får jeg nesten prestasjonsangst. Det er frykteleg krevende, for da kommer alle forventningene. Det er sånn som holder deg våken om nettene. For det er dynamikken i dette.

For et er jo riktig som du sier, vi fikk selvfølgelig en stor smell i Australia i 1993-94...

- *Der var vel da Jan Petter Sissener spådde konkurs?*

- Ja. Og han sa at det ikke var et spørsmål om vi skulle gå konkurs, bare om *når.*

- *Har du møtt Sissener igjen nå, etter at kursen begynte å gå rett til værs?*

- Ja, jeg var faktisk i en hyggelig middag hos Orkla Enskilda for noen uker siden. Da fikk jeg en fantastisk god flaske rødvin som jeg gledet meg over i påsken. Den fikk jeg av Jan Petter. Så du kan godt si at vi har skværet opp og har stor gjensidig respekt.

Men det tok lang tid...

Store gutter og store sturebasser, vet du, som det heter på fagspråket.

Jan Christian Opsahl knegger. Han har i likhet med Jan Petter Sissener - aldri vært kjent for å pakke ordene inn i bomull eller gå særlig stille i dørene.

Best kjent for å slenge med leppa ble han i 1988. Det var da han - etter tre år hos Erling Lorentzen i Brasil og lynkarriere i Dyno, Unitor og Tomra - ble headhuntet til Aker for å være visekonsernsjef under daværende konsernsjef Gerhard Heiberg. Fem uker etter tiltredelsen sa Opsahl takk for seg med følgende kraftsalve i dagspressen: «Jeg fungerte ikke under Gerhard Heiberg. Ledelsesfilosofien i Aker er at sjefen tar alle beslutninger i all sin visdom. Deretter utfører slavene ordre.»

Dagen derpå haglet fy-telefonene. Slik gjorde man bare ikke. Tenk å insinuere offentlig at man ikke passer inn og uttpåtil være utakknemelig nok til å kritisere det bestående.

Gutteklubben Geni fikk bakoversveis. Headhunterne smelte døvene igjen. Men det kom da noe godt ut av det: Investor Tharald Brøvig bukket umiddelbart tak i overløperen og fikk ham til å bygge opp Tandberg.

- Akkurat det er jo historien Tharald elsker å fortelle, flirer Jan Opsahl bredt.

- For da var jeg hot, da. Jeg ble jo unemployable, ikke sant? Ingen kunne jo ansette den drittsekken, Jan, de ville ikke ta i meg med ildtang.

Men Tharald tenkte: flott! For da fikk han tak i en flink kar til en billig penge.

Og så lo alle. For Tandberg var jo bare en pølsebod på den tiden. Og Opsahl, han som liksom skulle være så veldig flink, han sku' jo drive et konsern. Og så tenkte folk at dette var nok bare en overgangsordning.

Men jeg hadde bestemt meg, jeg. Dette skulle jeg få til. Og så har det jo gått bra også da.

Han veier seg bakover i skinnstolen, folder hendene bak i nakken.

- *Hvis Kjell Inge Røkke hadde vært i Aker den gangen, hadde du holdt ut lengre da?*

- Hvem skulle ha vært sjefen? Han eller jeg? kommer det lynrapt og gliset strekker seg fra øre til øre.

Han er ikke blitt særlig mer beskjeden med årene, Jan Opsahl. Bare mye rikere. Og litt mer integrert i klassen. For det er jov å slenge litt mer med leppa nå. Særlig hvis man har resultater å slå i bordet med. Og det har han. Han har til og med begynt å spille golf - selv om han syns det er dødskjedelig, det gir jo altfor tregt. Og så har han skaffet seg digert videokonferanseutstyr og åtte telefonlinjer på hytta i Stavern, og villa i Holmenskollen.

- Du har kanskje hørt at jeg har kjøpt meg en liten hytte i Nordmarka?

- *Du mener Tvenge-villaen til 25 millioner kroner?*

- 21 millioner, takk!

- *Er du flyttet inn?*

- Ja visst. Omtrent samme dagen. Det er litt festlig historie det der. Vi hadde jo et hyggelig gammelt hus ved Parkdammen hvor vi har bodd i 20 år. Og hadde egentlig ingen planer om å flytte. Men da sønnen vår dro til Dallas for å studere, ville vi pusse opp huset. Ingen store byggeprosjekter, men noe måtte rives og bygges opp igjen. Men det var omtrent 42 ukers venting på alt, du vi'kke tru det, altså. Og etter et år så hadde jeg brukt et par hundre tusen kroner og var ikke kommet av flekken. Og plutselig en dag treffer jeg Øystein Tvenge som sier at han skal selge huset. Og da tenkte jeg, faen, da kjøper jeg det. Så satt jeg der da, med et halvveis nedrevet hus som jeg ikke hadde bruk for, og en leilighet som jeg heller ikke hadde bruk for, begge måtte pusses opp hvis jeg skulle få solgt. Og i løpet av to uker var alt unnagjort. ▶

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FOTO: ESPEN RØST S.

ØKONOMISK RAPPORT 18. April 2002

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«Vi vingler fra grøftekant til grøftekant, og når vi så beslutter, har vi en så jævlig fart at vi treffer med 180 km i timen. Men da er vi også fremme før de andre har startet.»

«Hvis vi leverer 100 prosent kvalitet, så går vi konkurs. Vi må gå inn for 99,99 prosent, det er omtrent hva vi har råd til. Den siste 0,1 prosenten blir rett og slett for dyr. I elektronikk må det være rom for feilmargin.»

Gutteklubbens vugge

SOLVEIG HAAVIK

FOTO: ESPEN RØST S.

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Systems thinking vs Reductionism

(aka, Demingism vs Taylorism)

Systems thinking is the process of understanding how things influence one another within a whole

Reductionism is a philosophical position that a complex system is nothing but the sum of its parts, and that an account of it can be reduced to accounts of individual constituents.

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