

Double Loop Kanban Conversations

Think about an experience you've had working in a team where someone else helped you discover a better way of working or overcome a difficult challenge

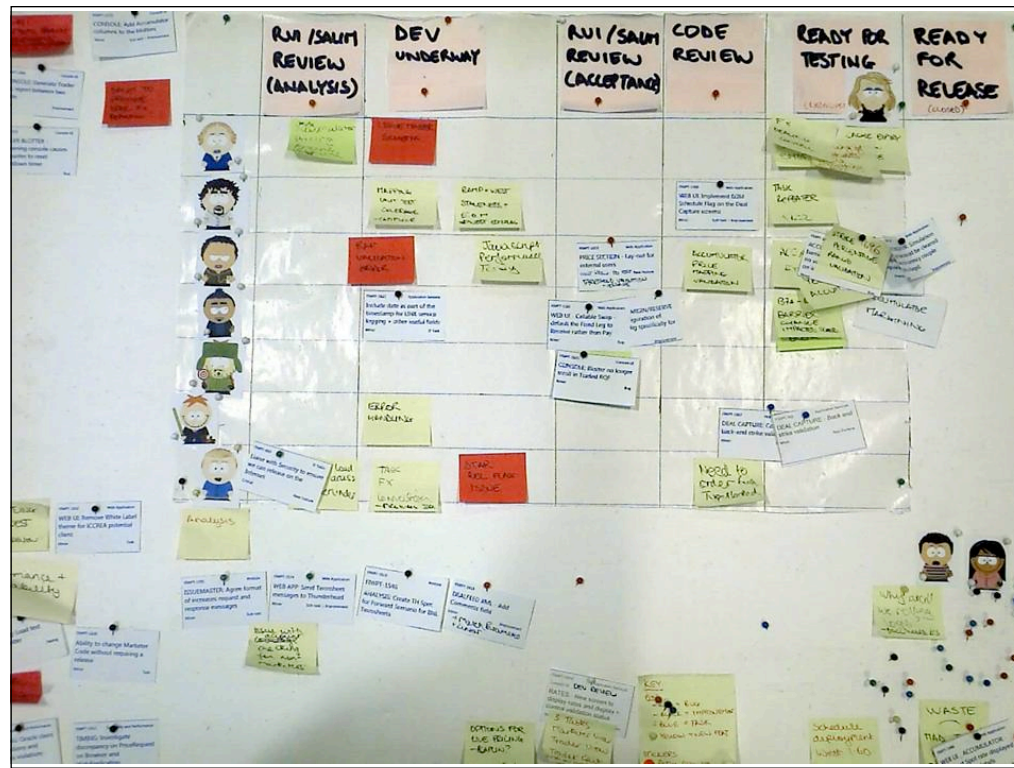
Introduce yourself to a person nearby. Spend a few minutes describing your experience

How would you say that? Conversations for Double Loop Learning with Kanban

Benjamin Mitchell
Equanimity Consulting
@benjaminm

INTERNATIONAL
SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT
CONFERENCE

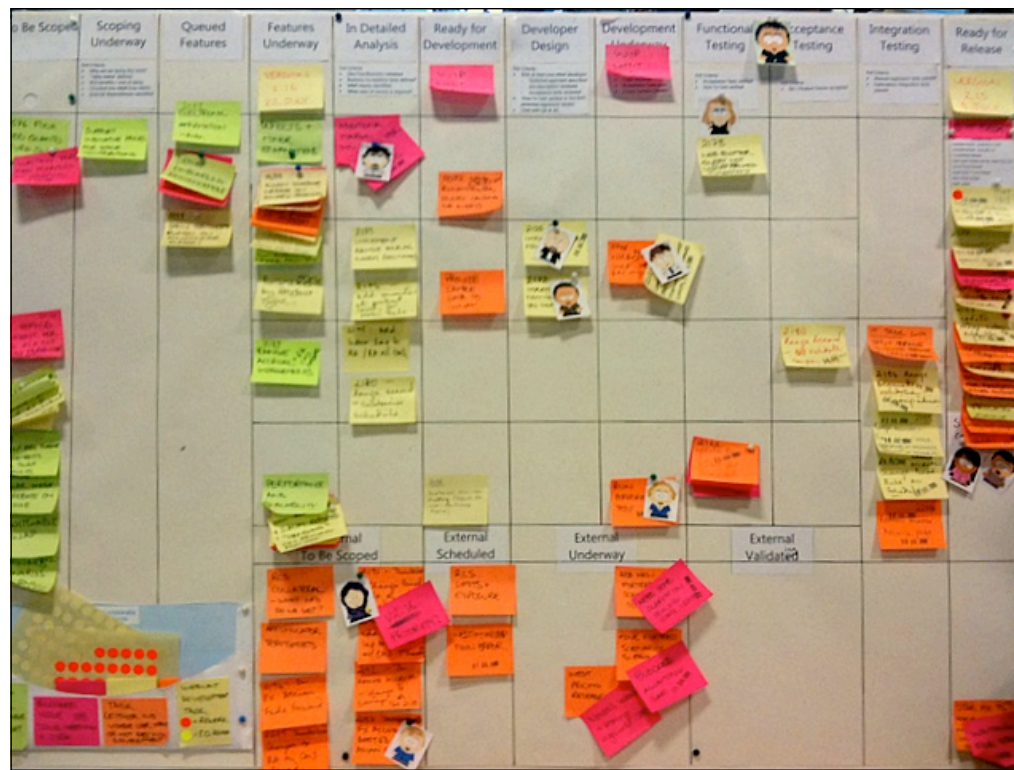
gotocon.com



28 October 2008

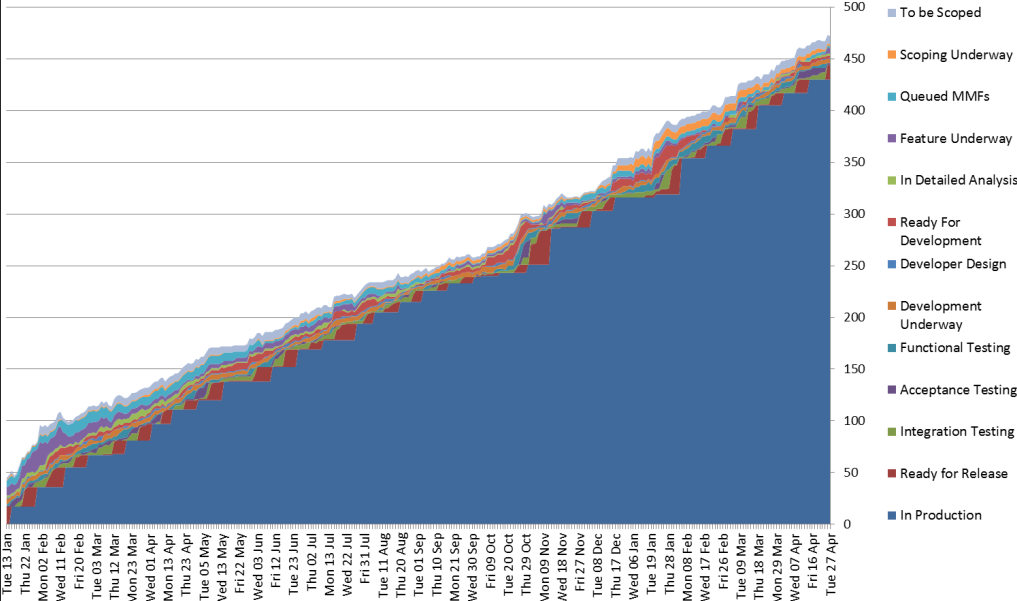
What can you see?

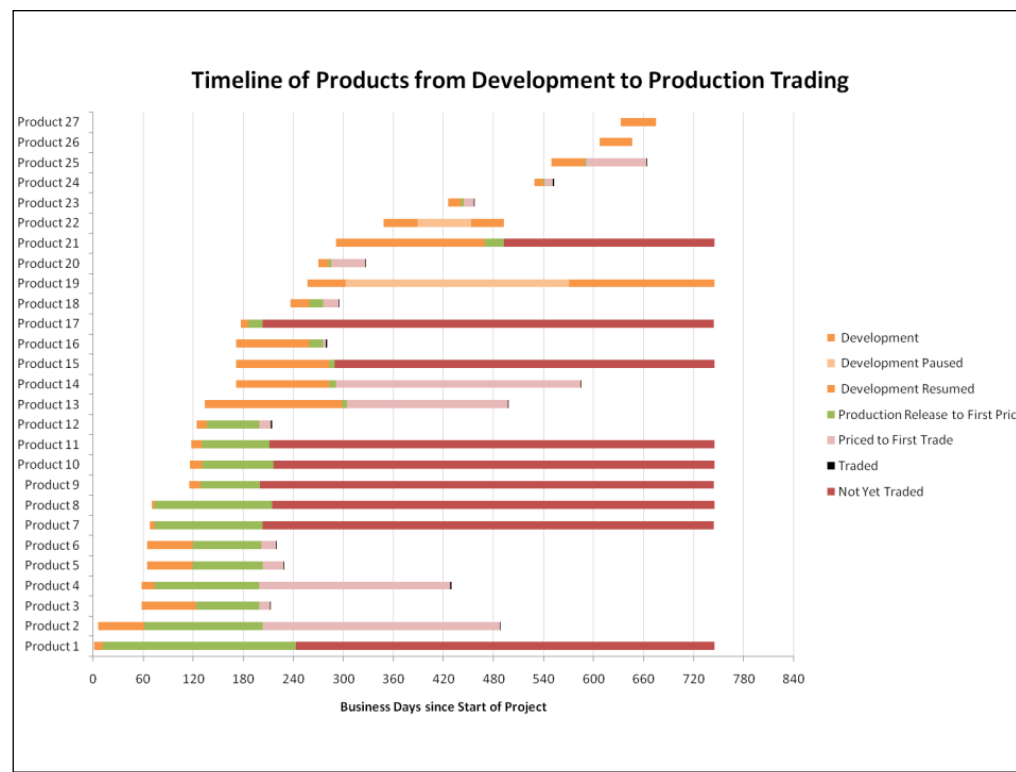
After this we de



9 July 2009

Cumulative Flow Diagram of Stories by Process Stage





This is a graph of business days along the bottom.

For each product, it shows the flow from development, to production, to being priced and finally, sometimes, traded.

The red shows the time spent waiting for never traded.

NOT LEAN – building ahead of demand.

Red also showed the complexity

What we we able to do in terms of our capability



Getting angry isn't effective.
If you're not part of the problem, you're part of the solution.





Why I think this is important

My experience at an Investment Bank

Agile approaches and practices are successful at delivering more high quality working software in short periods

Didn't necessarily lead to us learning about how to discover the right thing to build

Common approach based on using data wasn't as effective as hoped

Let's look at the 'data' of the conversation and what I thought but feared to say



What happened?

Ask me questions to see if
you can work out what
happened in the following
scenario

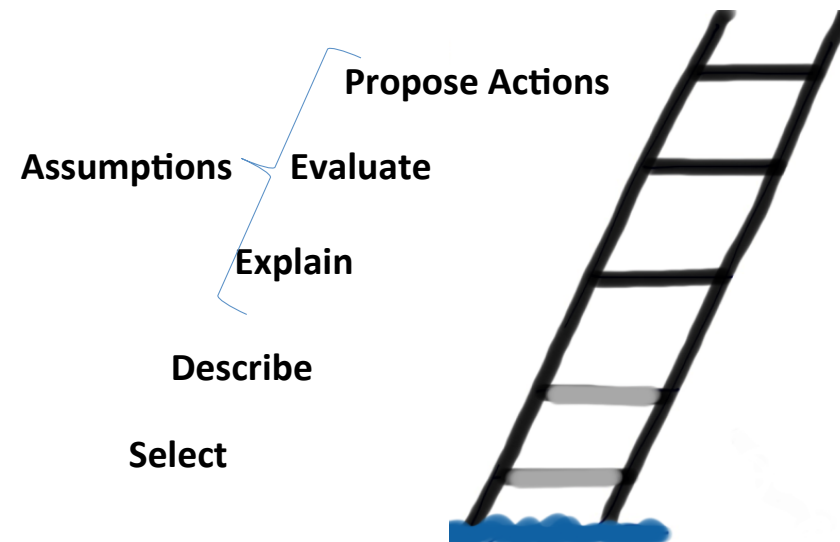
I will answer only yes or no



There is a cabin in the woods

There are lots of dead bodies

The Ladder of Inference



Source: Based on the work of Schwarz, Argyris & Schon, Noonan and Action Design Partners

@benjaminm

Practising with the Ladder of Inference

“Control freak leader”

Say what you see.
Check if the leader sees it differently

Say what you think it means.
Check for differences



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"PEOPLE ARE ALL FOR THE TRUTH,
AS LONG AS THE TRUTH IS NOT
EMBARRASSING OR THREATENING"

CHRIS ARGYRIS

@benjaminm

Logic of the Kanban Method

“It is the WIP limit that ultimately stimulates conversations about process problems”

“The team has the option to:

- break the limit,
- ignore the problem and carry on,
- or to face up to the issue, discuss it and suggest a change.”

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Most methods don't illustrate the conversations in a way that we could produce them.

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The "Working" column's limit was 2. We had 3 items in it. I raised the limit to 3. There are now 4 items in it. #kanban

17 Nov via MetroTwit

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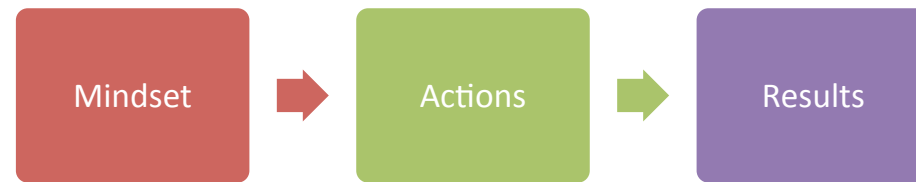
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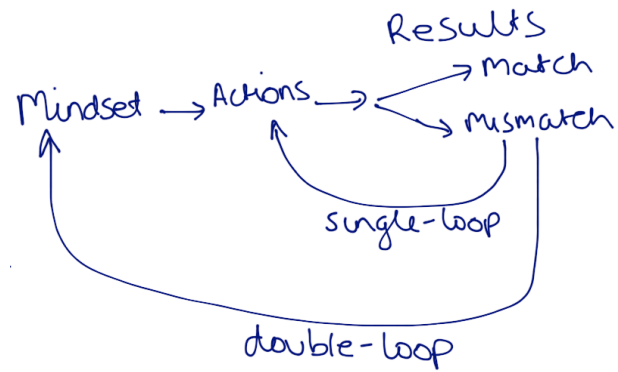
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Theory of Action



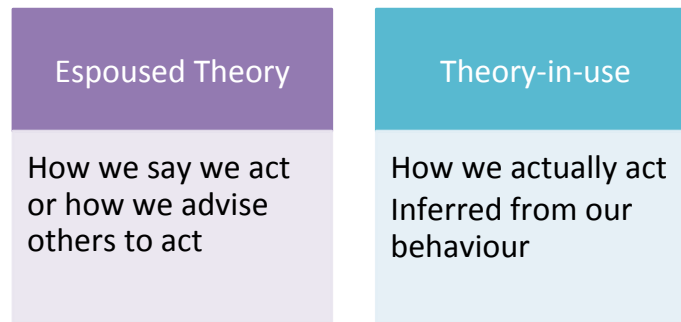
Single & Double Loop Learning



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Example of a single-loop solution – saying ‘I don’t know” but in a scared voice.

Two different Theories of Action



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We're often unaware of the gap
The gap is greatest under conditions of embarrassment or threat

Unilateral Control Model

Core Values & Assumptions	Strategies	Consequences
Be in unilateral control Win, don't lose Ensure no one feels bad Act rational	State my position Keep my reasoning private Don't ask about their reasoning Ease-in Save Face	Misunderstanding Defensiveness Mistrust Self-fulfilling, self-sealing processes Limited learning Reduced effectiveness

Source: Based on the work of Schwarz, Argyris & Schon, and Action Design Partners

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Transparency test:

Can I say what I'm doing without changing the impact?

Do I ask questions?

Am I listening to understand?

Agile Feedback

“Your feedback to the team member was poor because:

It did not focus on any positive actions and it didn't use any examples”

Demonstrates:

Skilled Incompetence

Skilled Unawareness

"PEOPLE BLAME OTHERS AND THE SYSTEM,
DENYING PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND
DENY THEY ARE DENYING"

CHRIS ARGYRIS

What does being wrong feel like?



Source: Kathryn Schulz "On Being Wrong"

Unilateral Control vs Give Up Control

Unilateral Control Core Values

- Be in unilateral control
- Win, don't lose
- Ensure no one feels bad
- Act rational

Give Up Control Cover Values

- Everyone participates in defining the purpose
- Everyone wins, no one loses
- Express your feelings
- Suppress your intellectual reasoning

Source: Based on the work of Schwarz, Argyris & Schon, and Action Design Partners

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“KANBAN TRIES TO AVOID EMOTIONAL
RESISTANCE.

IT DOES THIS IN PART BY [INITIALLY]
EMBRACING CURRENT ROLES,
RESPONSIBILITIES AND JOB TITLES.”

http://agilemanagement.net/index.php/site/kanban_-_lack_of_roles_is_a_strength/ @benjaminm

"Be diplomatic" - always point out something positive as well as negatives. It helps get them on your side, and stops them being defensive.
An example of how I won an argument: I showed them the data - they conceded - you've got us on this one - have the data to back up the data to win argument.
Mixed message

Mutual Learning Model

Core Values

- Publicly testable information
- Free and informed choice
- Internal commitment

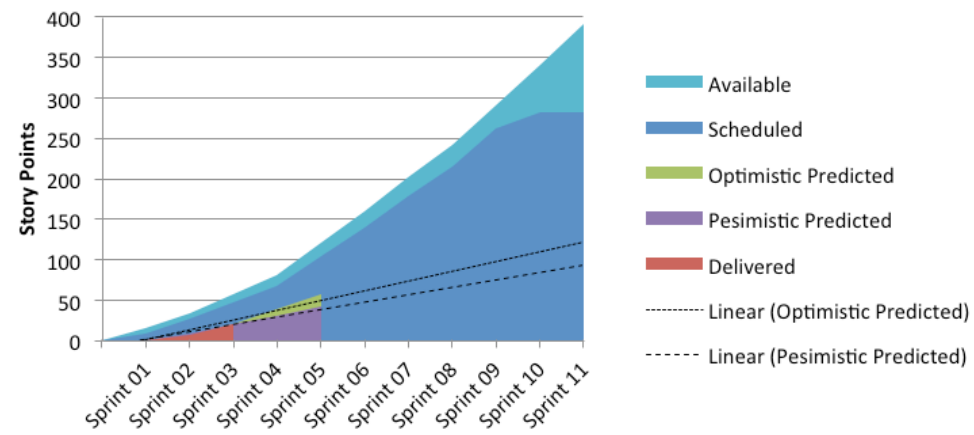
Strategies

- Test assumptions and inferences
- Share all relevant information
- Explain reasoning and intent
- Combine advocacy and inquiry

Source: Based on the work of Schwarz, Argyris & Schön, and Action Design Partners

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Released Story Points Burn Up



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Any Questions?

Tutorial on Thursday

Feel free to connect:

Read my blog <http://blog.benjaminm.net>

Follow me on twitter <http://twitter.com/benjaminm>

E-mail me benjaminm@benjaminm.net

Books to read

- The Skilled Facilitator & Skilled Facilitator Workbook by Schwarz
- Discussing the Undiscussable by Bill Noonan
- Flawed Advice and the Management Trap by Chris Argyris
- Getting More by Stuart Diamond
- Difficult Conversations by Stone, Patton & Heen
- Longer list on my blog: <http://bit.ly/Argyris>