

Developer Productivity is Waste

Preparing for the continuous deployment of DevX mania.

Coté – June 12th, 2024



Developer Productivity: The quick answers

Happiness, flow, features

FIGURE 1: **THREE CORE DIMENSIONS OF DEVELOPER EXPERIENCE**

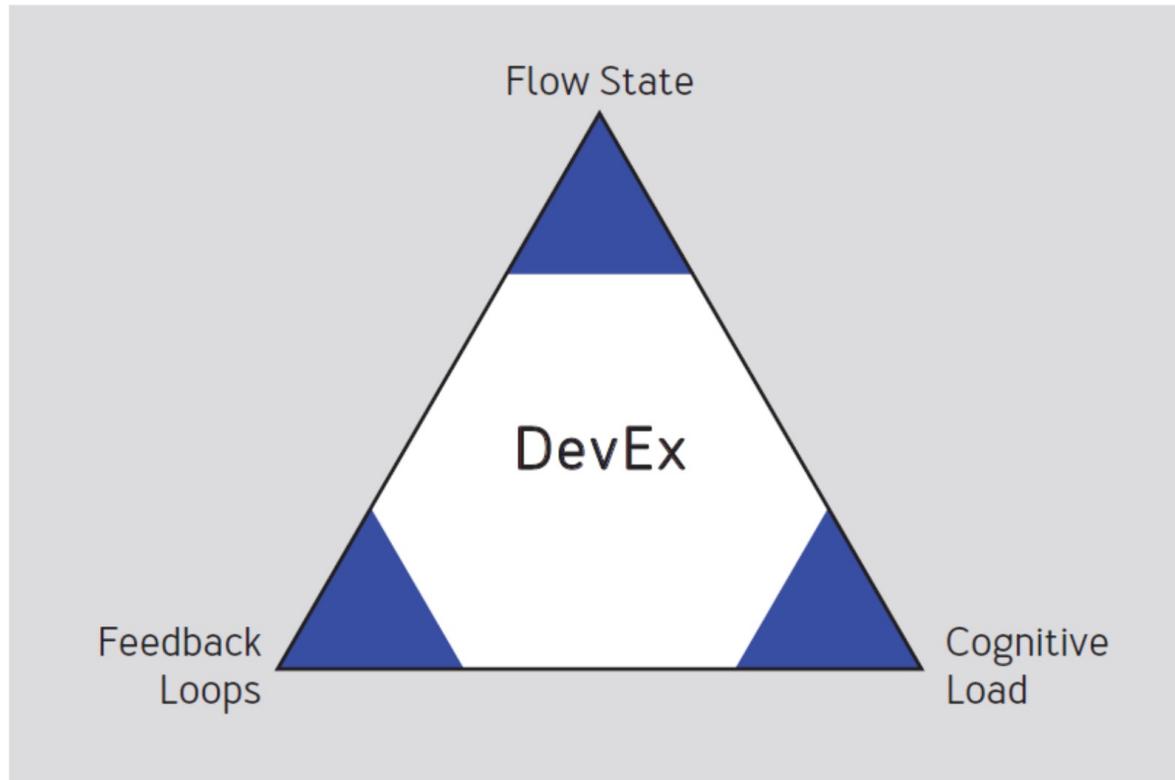


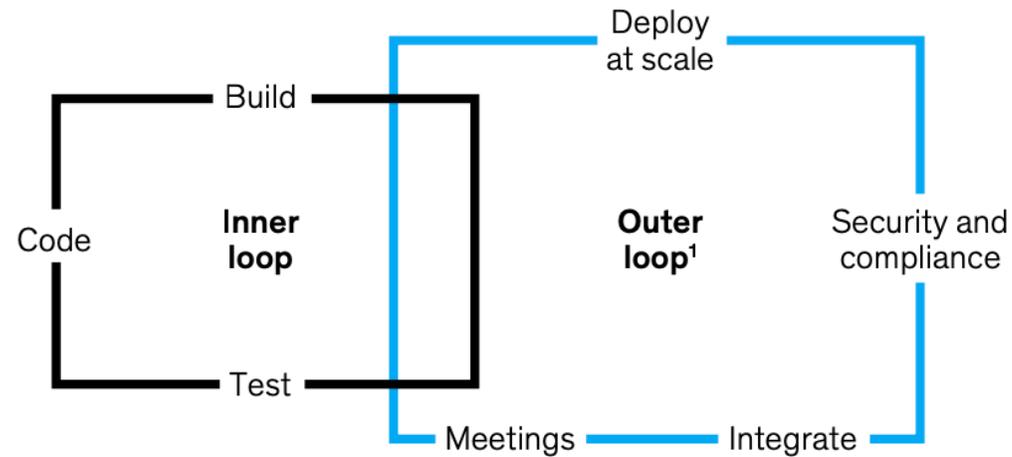
TABLE 1: **EXAMPLE DEVEX METRICS**

	FEEDBACK LOOPS	COGNITIVE LOAD	FLOW STATE
PERCEPTIONS <i>Human attitudes and opinions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Satisfaction with automated test speed and output • Satisfaction with time it takes to validate a local change • Satisfaction with time it takes to deploy a change to production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived complexity of codebase • Ease of debugging production systems • Ease of understanding documentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perceived ability to focus and avoid interruptions • Satisfaction with clarity of task or project goals • Perceived disruptiveness of being on-call
WORKFLOWS <i>System and process behaviors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time it takes to generate CI results • Code review turnaround time • Deployment lead time (time it takes to get a change released to production) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time it takes to get answers to technical questions • Manual steps required to deploy a change • Frequency of documentation improvements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of blocks of time without meetings or interruptions • Frequency of unplanned tasks or requests • Frequency of incidents requiring team attention
KPIS <i>North star metrics</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall perceived ease of delivering software • Employee engagement or satisfaction • Perceived productivity 		

Software development can be broadly divided into two sets, or loops, of tasks; the less time spent on less fulfilling, outer-loop activities, the better.

→ developers

Software development activities

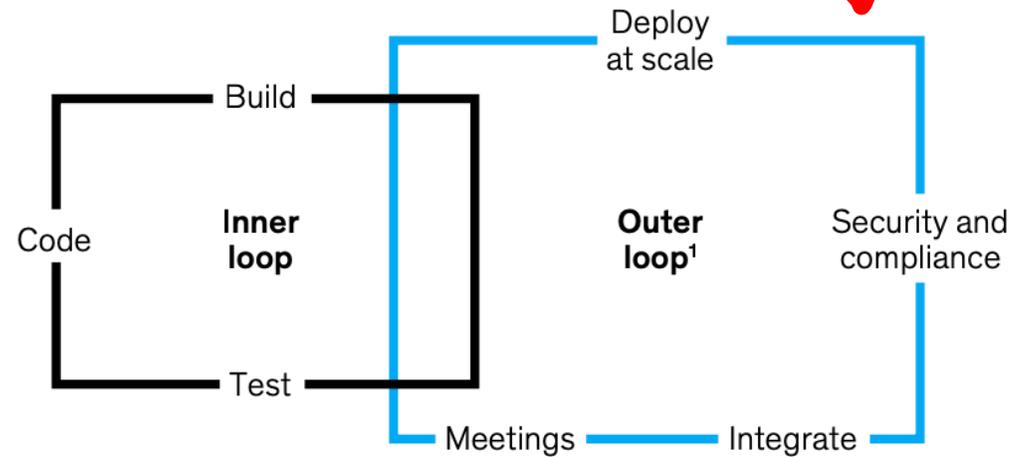


¹Activities listed are nonexhaustive.

McKinsey & Company

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Software development activities



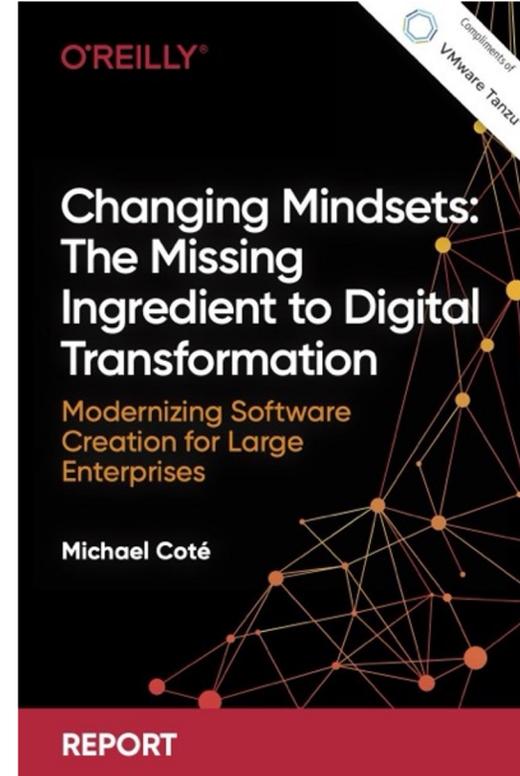
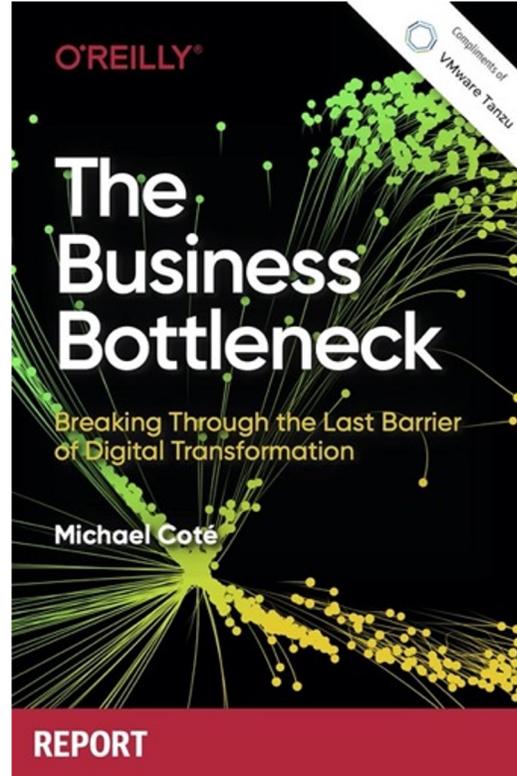
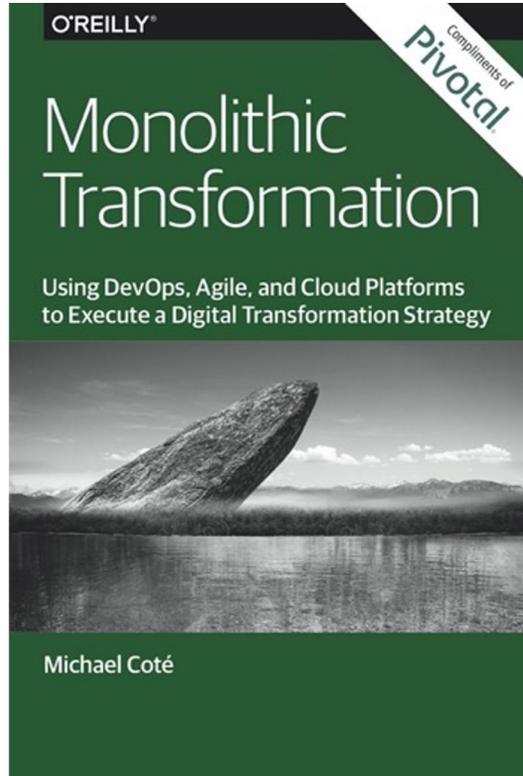
Focus here for developer productivity

¹Activities listed are nonexhaustive.

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Technology, Media & Telecommunications Practice

Yes, you can measure software developer productivity

Measuring, tracking, and benchmarking developer productivity has long been considered a black box. It doesn't have to be that way.

This article is a collaborative effort by Chandra Gnanasambandam, Martin Harrysson, Alharith Hussin, Jason Keovichit, and Shivam Srivastava, representing views from McKinsey's Digital and Technology, Media & Telecommunications Practices.



Source: ["Yes, you can measure software developer productivity,"](#) Chandra Gnanasambandam, Martin Harrysson, Alharith Hussin, Jason Keovichit, Shivam Srivastava, McKinsey Aug(?) 2023.

Adding a focus on opportunities to software developer productivity metrics can offer clearer paths to improvement.

Focus areas by level

● DORA¹ metrics

● SPACE² metrics

● Opportunity-focused metrics

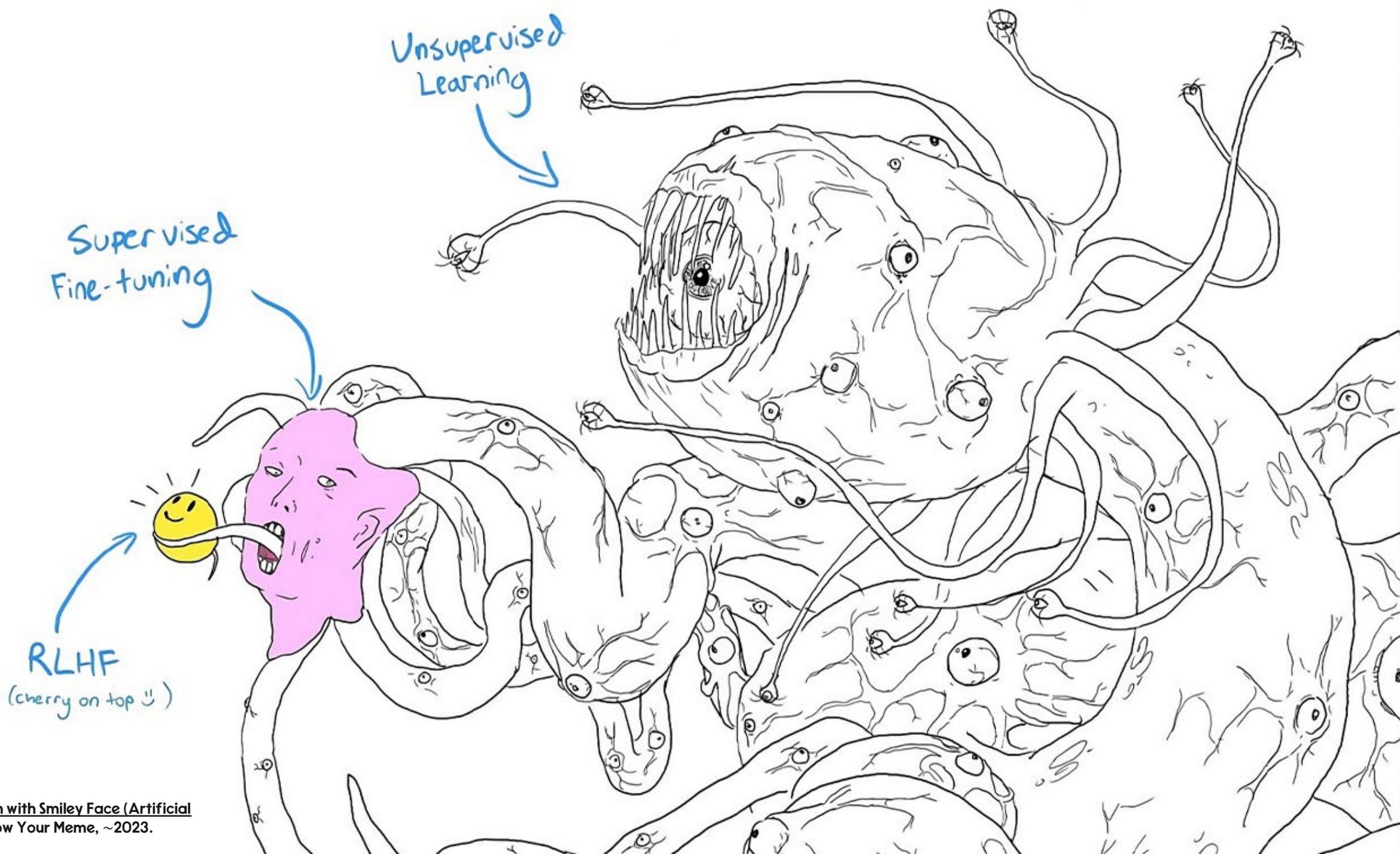
	Outcomes focus <i>Are you delivering products satisfactorily?</i>	Optimization focus³ <i>Are you delivering products in an optimized way?</i>	Opportunities focus <i>Are there specific opportunities to improve how you deliver products, and what are they worth?</i>
System level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deployment frequency ● Customer satisfaction ● Reliability (uptime) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Code-review timing ● Velocity/flow through the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Satisfaction with engineering system ● Inner/outer loop time spent
Team level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lead time for changes ● Change failure rate ● Time to restore service ● Code-review velocity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Story points completed ● Handoffs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Quality of documentation ● Developer Velocity Index benchmark⁴ ● Contribution analysis
Individual level	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Developer satisfaction ● Retention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interruptions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Contribution analysis ● Talent capability score

¹Google's DevOps research and assessment team, which developed these outcome metrics.

²Satisfaction and well-being, performance, activity, communication and collaboration, and efficiency and flow; GitHub and Microsoft Research developed these metrics, which aim to look at developer well-being as a measurement at the individual level.

³Nonexhaustive.

⁴Benchmarks an organization's technology, working practices, and organizational enablement; see Shivam Srivastava, Kartik Trehan, Dilip Wagle, and Jane Wang, "Developer Velocity: How software excellence fuels business performance," McKinsey, Apr 20, 2020.



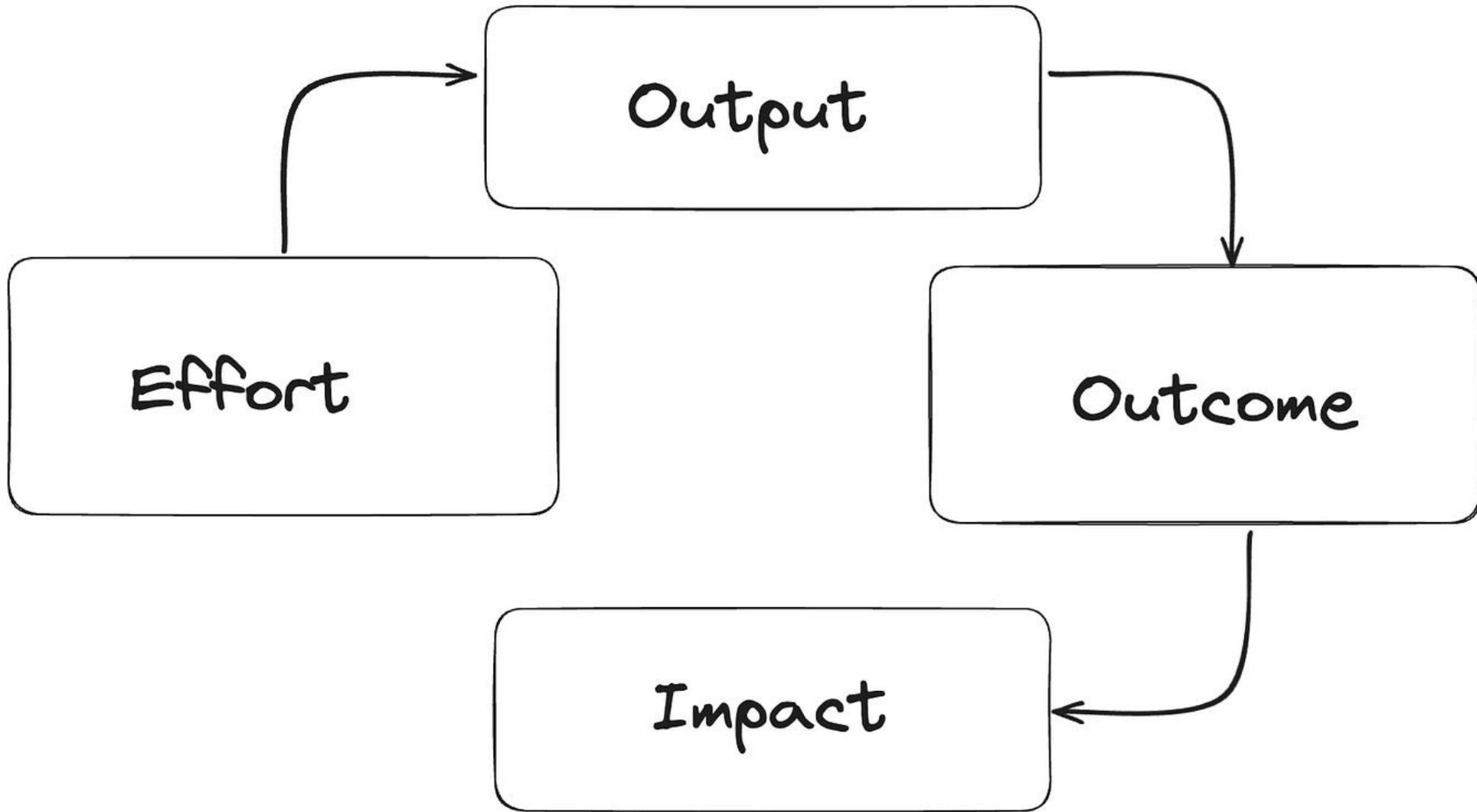
26% of organizations are using GenAI to support application development, testing, and management and 25% are utilizing machine learning with the greatest focus on leveraging AI to support DevOps analytics and process, governance, and security testing.

What is “developer productivity”?

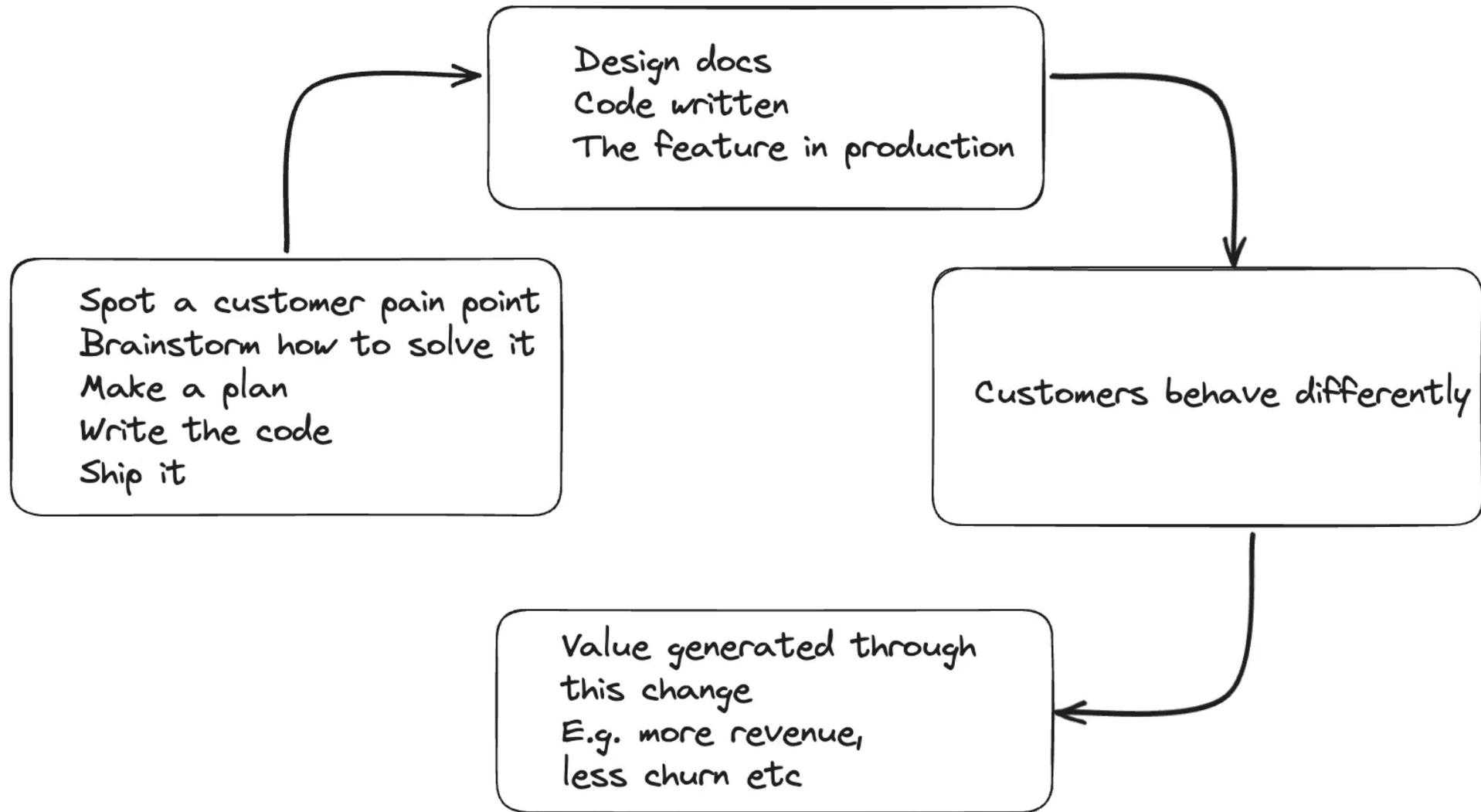
The Problem

“Engineering leaders have long sought to improve the productivity of their developers, **but knowing how to measure or even define developer productivity has remained elusive.**”

“**there is no clear-cut definition of productivity and its influencing factors, although research has been conducted for more than a century.** Like in software engineering, this lack of common agreement on what actually constitutes productivity, is perceived as a major obstacle for a substantiated discussion of productivity.”



Kent Beck / Software Design: Tidy First? and pragmaticengineer.com



Kent Beck / Software Design: Tidy First? and pragmaticengineer.com

Why?

...and who's asking?

Improvement.

Developers getting better at craft.

*It's usually this
person asking*



HA HA!



BUSINESS

Money.

1. Are we paying too much?
2. Could we get by with paying less?
3. Who should I give more money to?
4. Who should I punish/fire?

Business Growth.

Adding more developers

vs.

Increasing productivity per developer

At the Metrics Buffett

DORA

The Four Key Metrics

Accelerate by Nicole Forsgren, PhD, Jez Humble, and Gene Kim


- ### 1 LEAD TIME

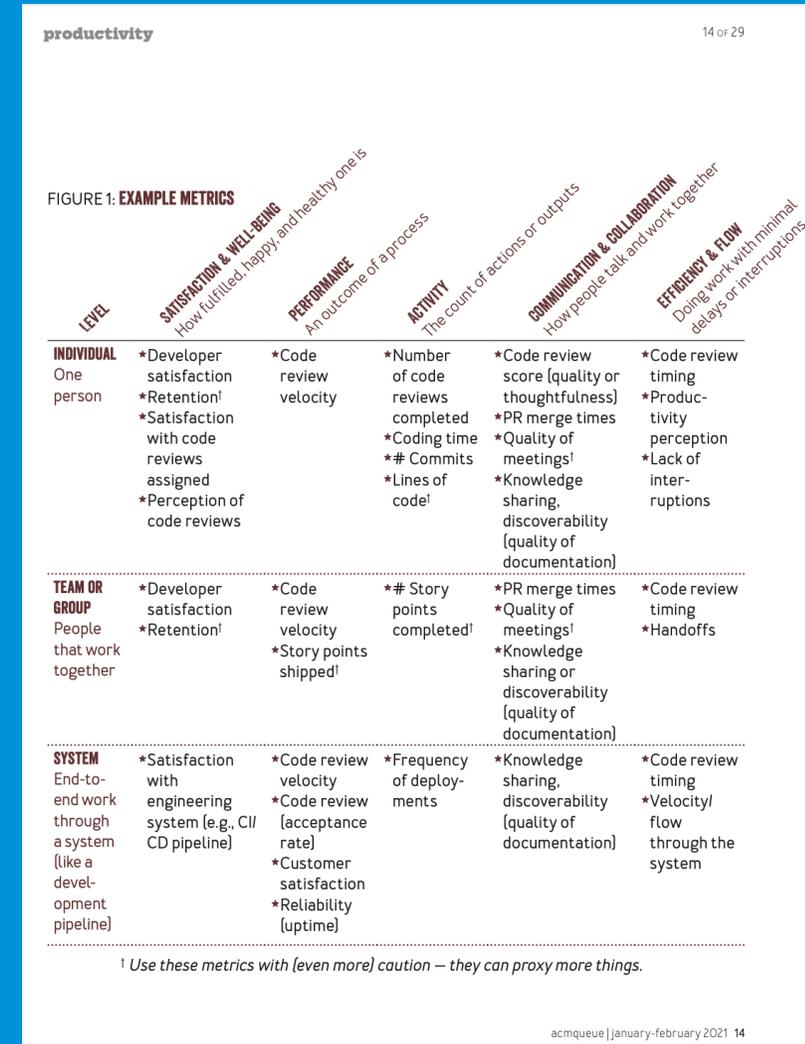
Lead time is the time it takes to go from a customer making a request to the request being satisfied. Shorter lead times enable faster feedback.
- ### 2 DEPLOYMENT FREQUENCY

Deployment frequency is a proxy metric for batch size: the more frequently you deploy the smaller the size of the batch. Small batch sizes reduce cycle times, reduce risk and overhead, improve efficiency, increase motivation and urgency, and reduce costs and schedule growth.
- ### 3 MEAN TIME TO RESTORE

Reliability is traditionally measured as time between failures, but in a modern software organization failure is inevitable. Thus, reliability is measured by how long it takes to restore service when a failure occurs.
- ### 4 CHANGE FAIL PERCENTAGE

This metric looks at the percentage of changes made to production that fail; the same as percent complete and accurate in Lean product delivery.

SPACE



Happiness, flow, features

Or, “stop interrupting me!”

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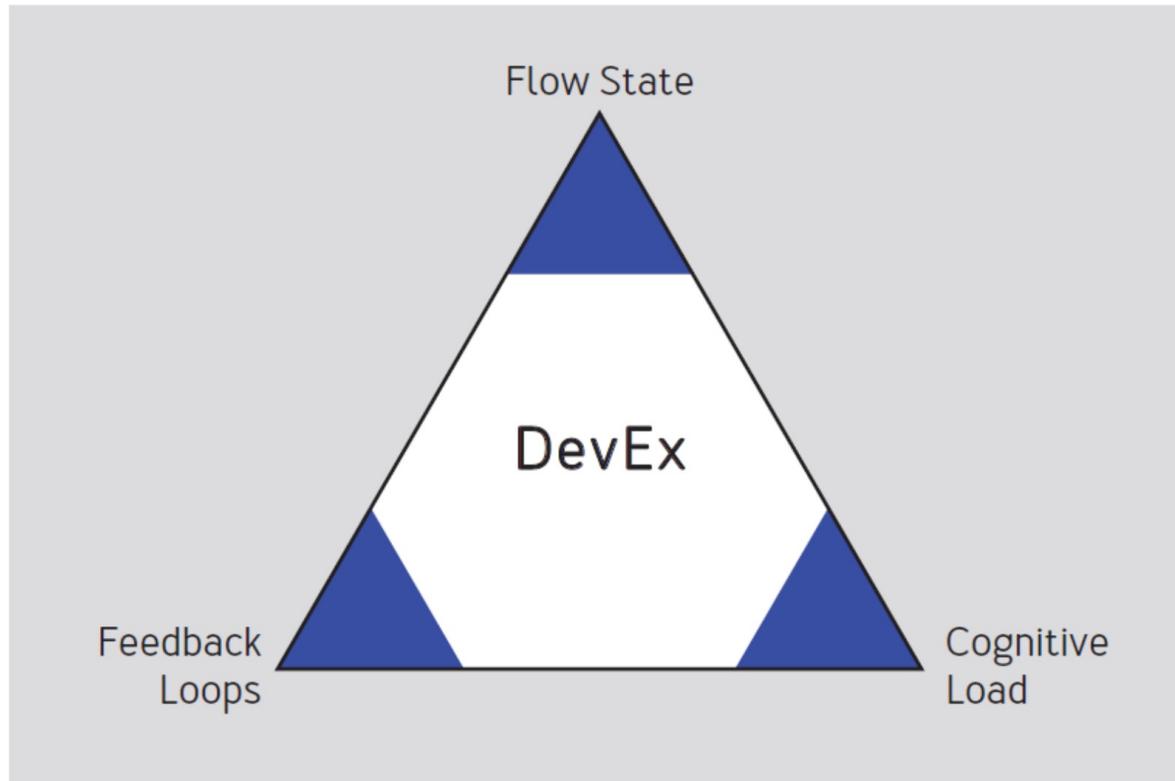
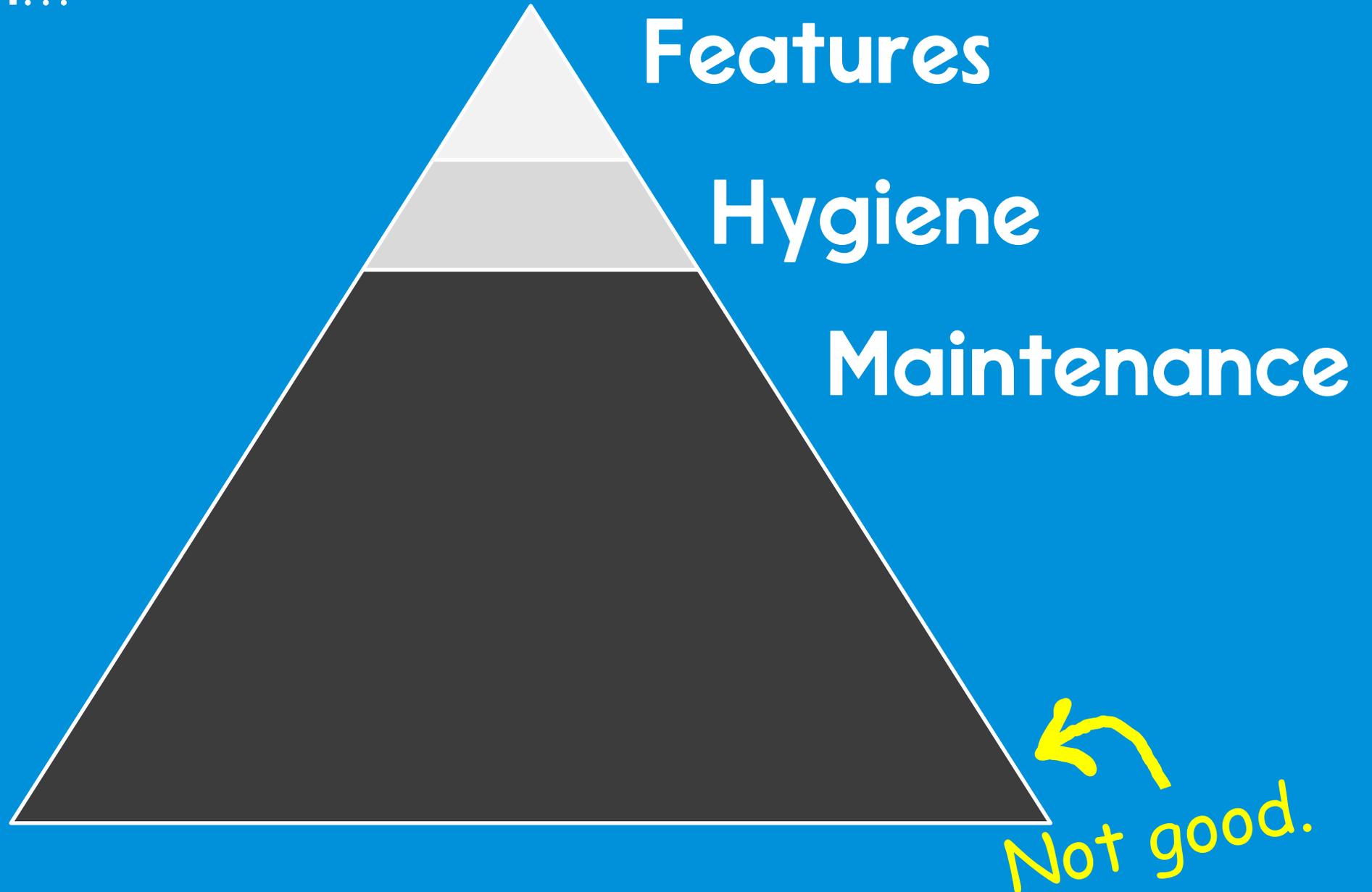


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Time spent on...



Developer Productivity Tools

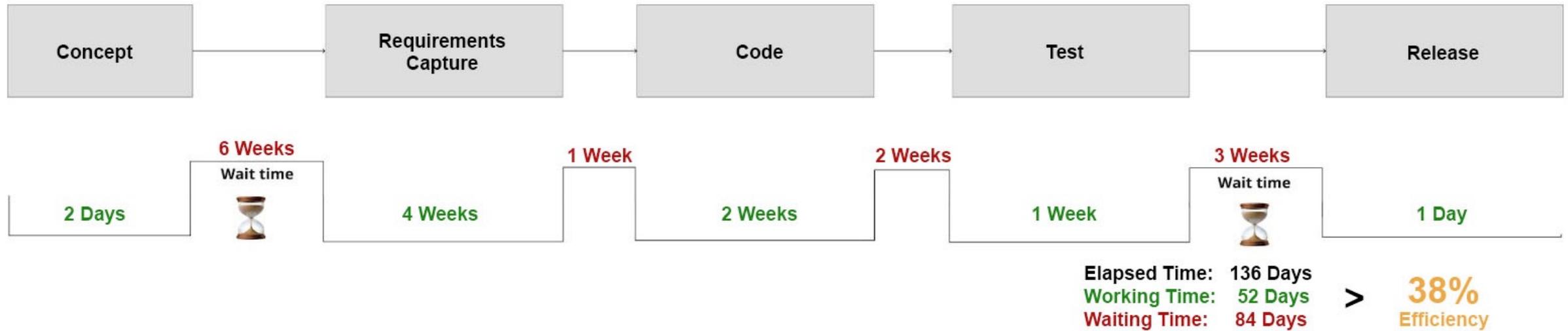
Find the Developer Toil, Confusion, Blockers

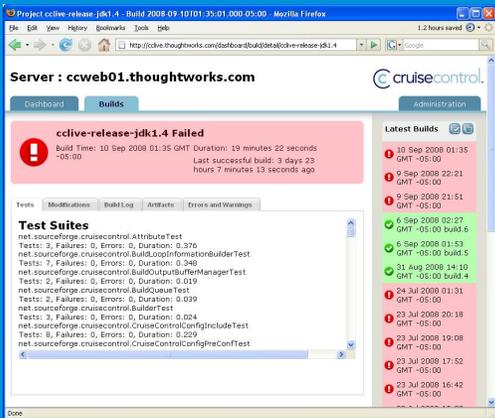
Find the Developer Toil, Confusion, Blockers

- What are we making?
- We have a strong vision for our product, and we're doing important work together every day to fulfill that vision.
- I have the context I need to confidently make changes while I'm working.
- I am proud of the work I have delivered so far for our product.
- I am learning things that I look forward to applying to future products.
- My workstation seems to disappear out from under me while I'm working.
- It's easy to get my workstation into the state I need to develop our product.
- What aspect of our workstation setup is painful?
- It's easy to run our software on my workstation while I'm developing it.
- I can boot our software up into the state I need with minimal effort.
- What aspect of running our software locally is painful? What could we do to make it less painful?
- It's easy to run our test suites and to author new ones.
- Tests are a stable, reliable, seamless part of my workflow.
- Test failures give me the feedback I need on the code I am writing.
- What aspect of production support is painful?
- We collaborate well with the teams whose software we integrate with.
- When necessary, it is within my power to request timely changes from other teams.
- I have the resources I need to test and code confidently against other teams' integration points.
- What aspect of integrating with other teams is painful?
- I'm rarely impacted by breaking changes from other tracks of work.
- We almost always catch broken tests and code before they're merged in.
- What aspect of committing changes is painful?
- Our release process (CI/CD) from source control to our story acceptance environment is fully automated.
- If the release process (CI/CD) fails, I'm confident something is truly wrong, and I know I'll be able to track down the problem.
- What aspect of our release process (CI/CD) is painful?
- Our team releases new versions of our software as often as the business needs us to.
- We are meeting our service-level agreements with a minimum of unplanned work.
- When something is wrong in production, we reproduce and solve the problem in a lower environment.

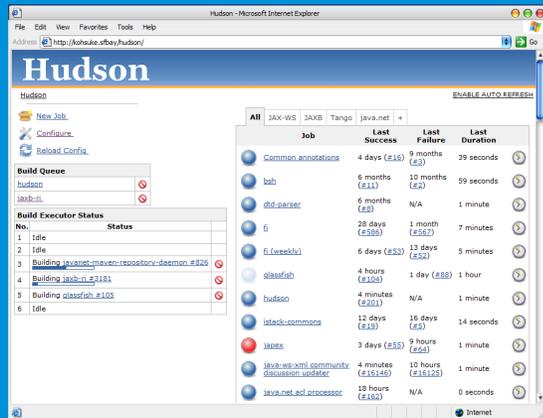
Put CI/CD in place

Waste is outside the box





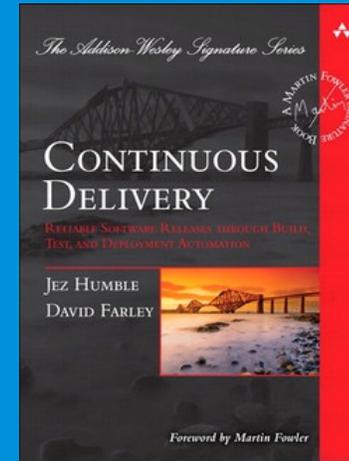
2001



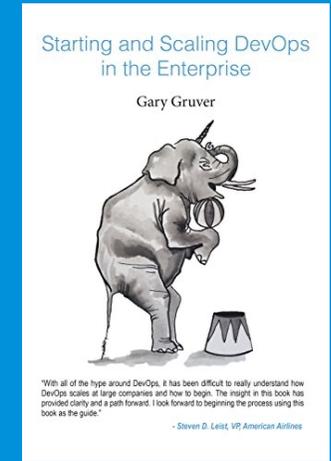
2005



2011



2010

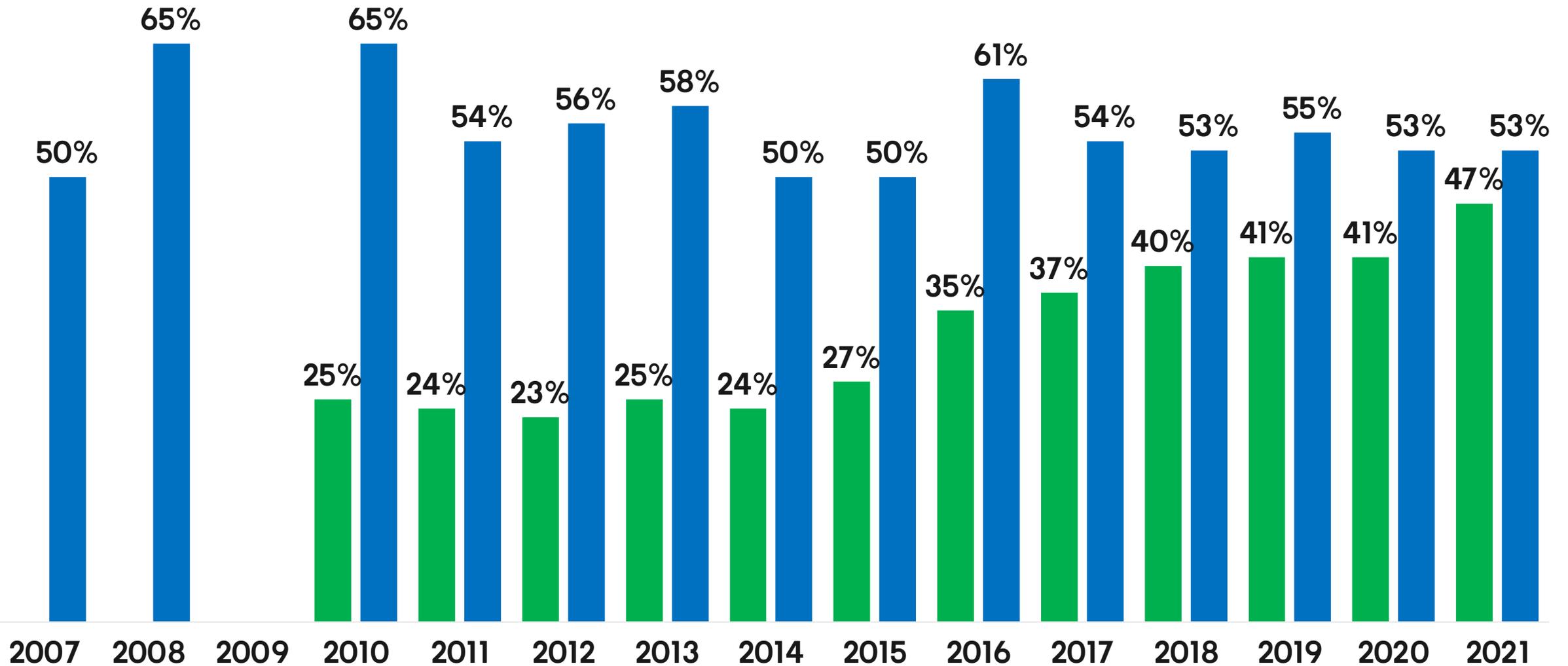


2016

Printer firmware?
Hold my beer. ↗

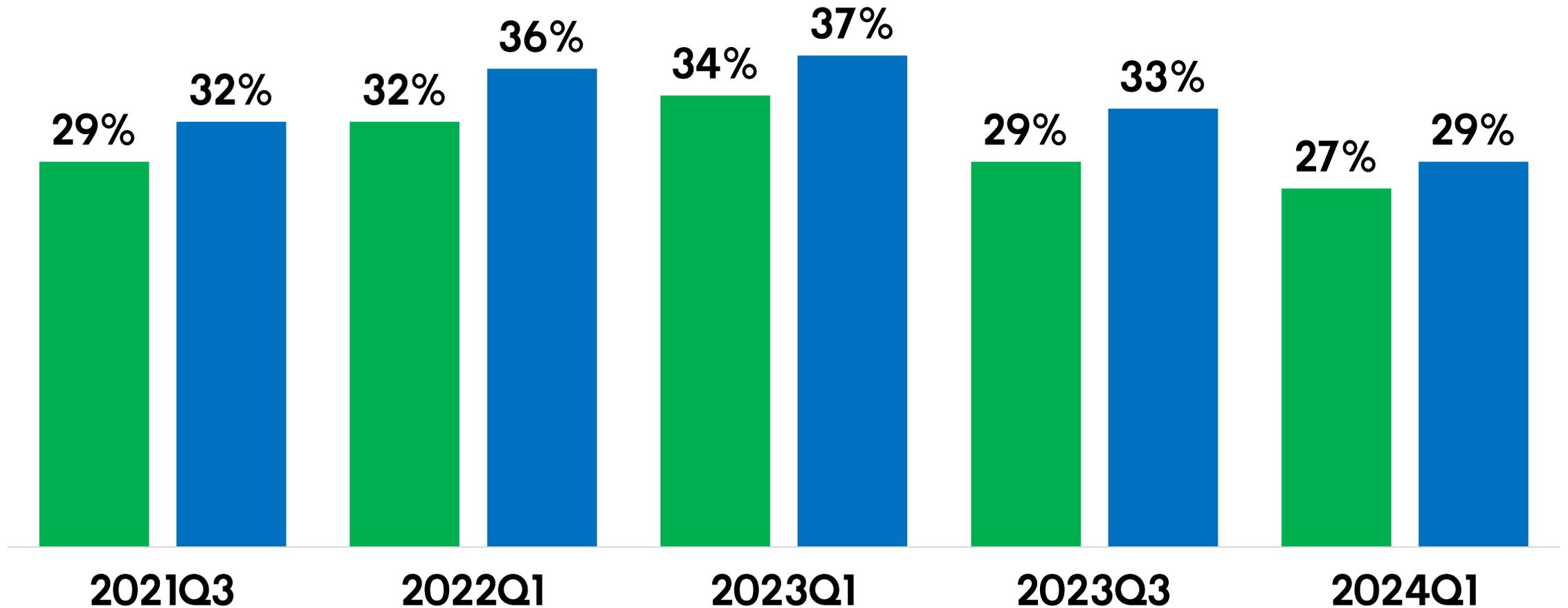
CI and CD usage, 2007 to 2021

■ CD ■ CI



CI and CD Usage, 2021 to 2024

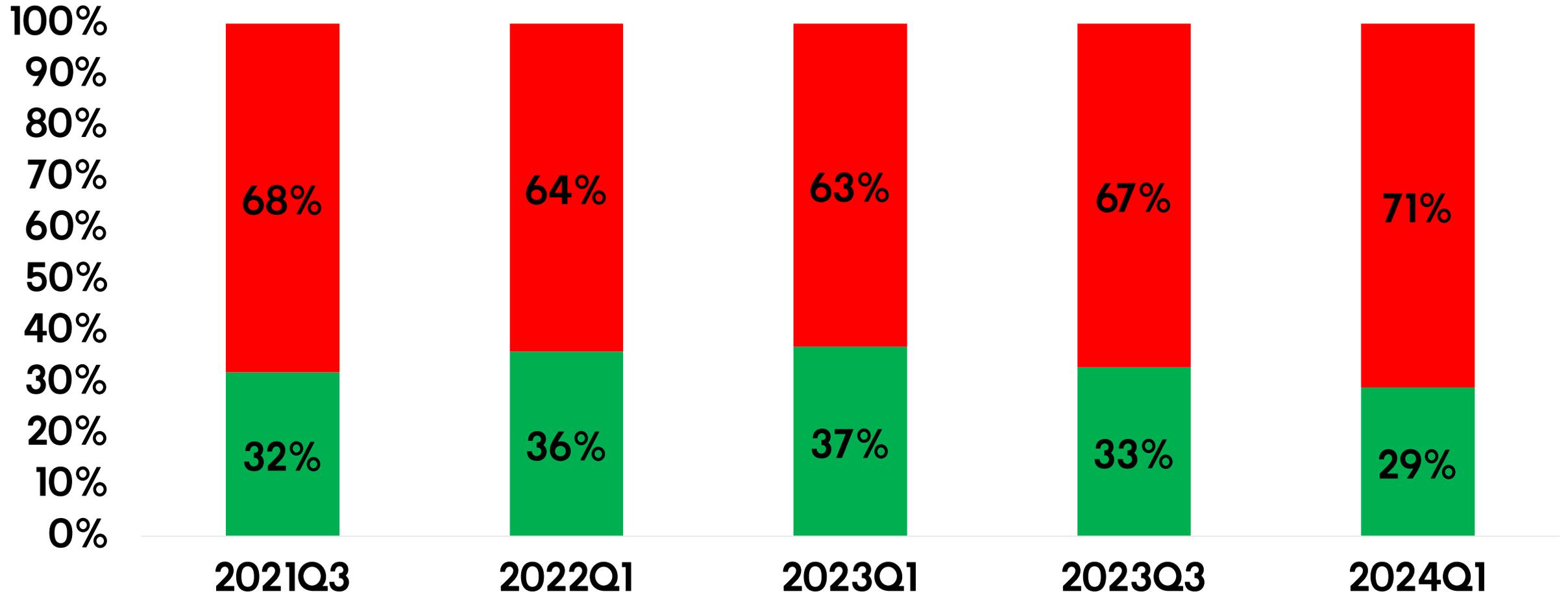
■ CD ■ CI



Question: Which of the following technologies have you used as part of your development activities in the last 12 months? Source: CD Foundation Surveys (Slashdata).

CI Usage, 2021 to 2024

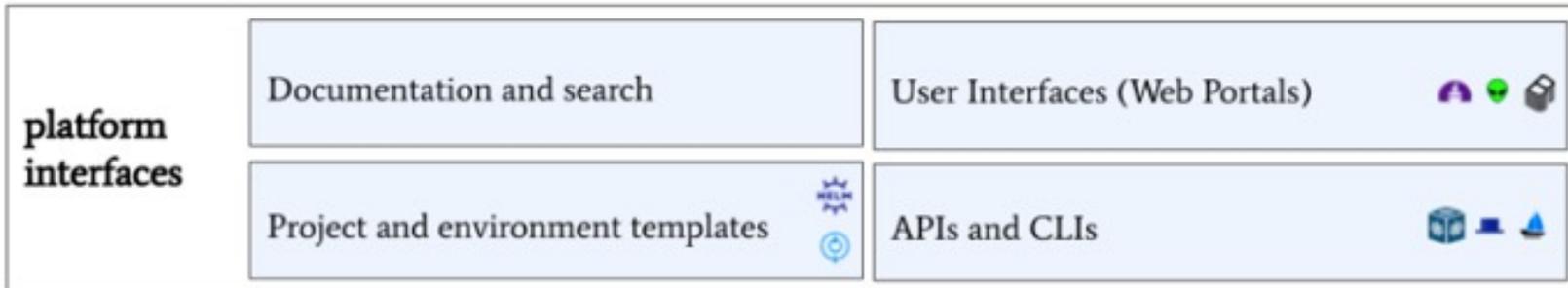
■ CI ■ No CI



Question: Which of the following technologies have you used as part of your development activities in the last 12 months? Source: CD Foundation Surveys (Slashdata).

Stop building your own platforms, etc.

Product and application teams



Capability and service providers

Building a custom platform takes **41%** of organizations more than a year.

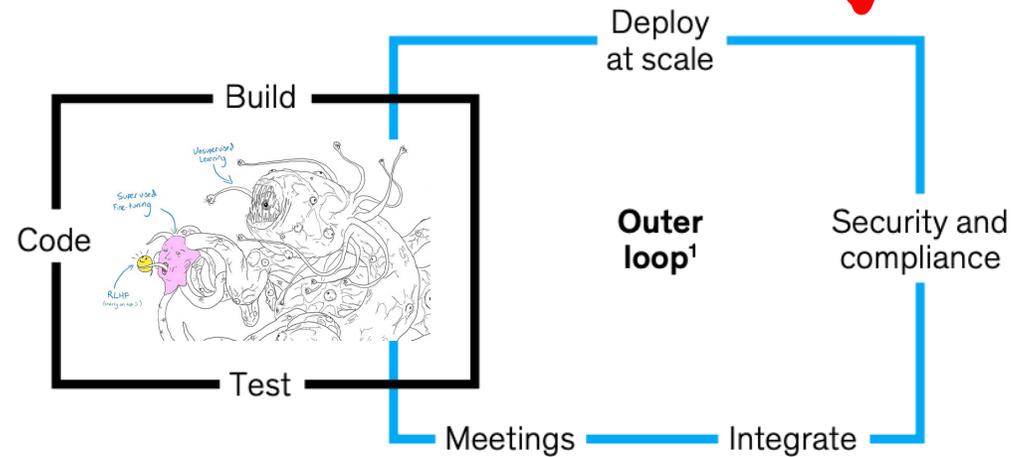


Accidental platform gardening

Kubernetes use in Spring environments continued to grow this year, reaching 65% of respondents. More than half (52%) run a *Kubernetes distribution* (DIY, TKG, Rancher, EKS, etc.), a third (33%) use a *platform based on Kubernetes* (OpenShift, TAP, etc.), and more than a quarter (26%) use a *non-Kubernetes based platform* (CloudFoundry, Heroku, etc.). We find the fact that half start with a *Kubernetes distribution* rather than a more complete platform a little surprising since so much extra work is required.

Software development can be broadly divided into two sets, or loops, of tasks; the less time spent on less fulfilling, outer-loop activities, the better.

Software development activities



Focus here for developer productivity

¹Activities listed are nonexhaustive.

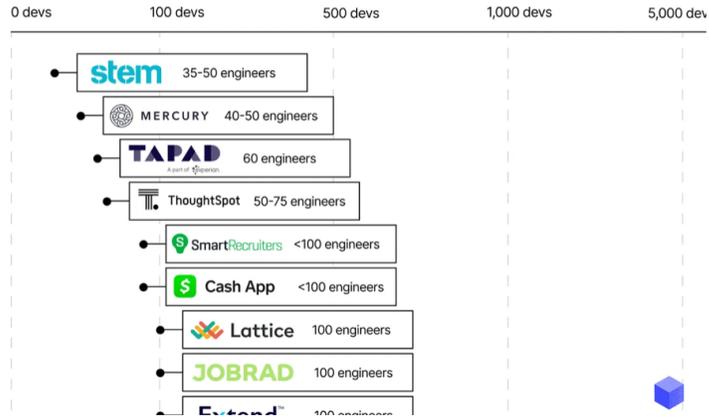
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Engineering Enablement

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When should you establish a Developer Productivity team?



When should you establish a Developer Productivity team?

Lessons from DoorDash, Lattice, Yelp, and 15+ other companies.

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The latest research and perspectives on developer productivity.

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Reducing Code Review Time at Google

Google's tool for helping developers address code review comments more efficiently.

MAY 24 · ABI NODA



The science behind DORA

DORA's lead researcher on how their reports come together.

MAY 17 · ABI NODA



Recommendations



The Pragmatic Engineer

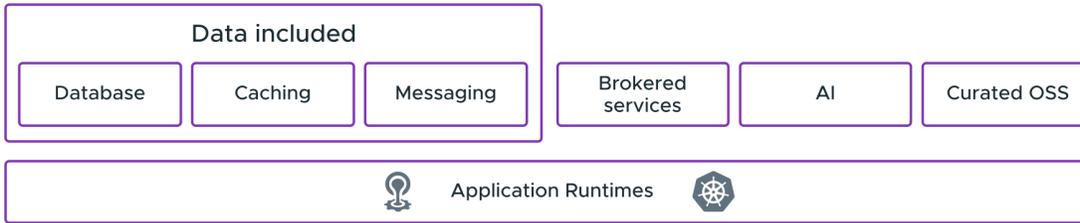
Gergely Orosz



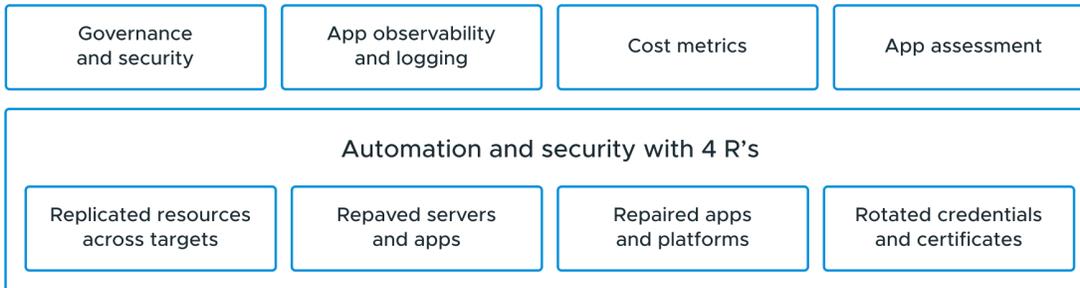
DEVELOPER ABSTRACTIONS



SELF-SERVICE APP SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE



APP AND PLATFORM OPERATIONS



HYBRID CLOUD



PUBLIC CLOUD



EDGE

Thank You!

Slides!



 <https://tanzu.vmware.com/platform>

 <https://newsletter.cote.io/>

Appendix: Grandpa Stories

1940's to 1950's

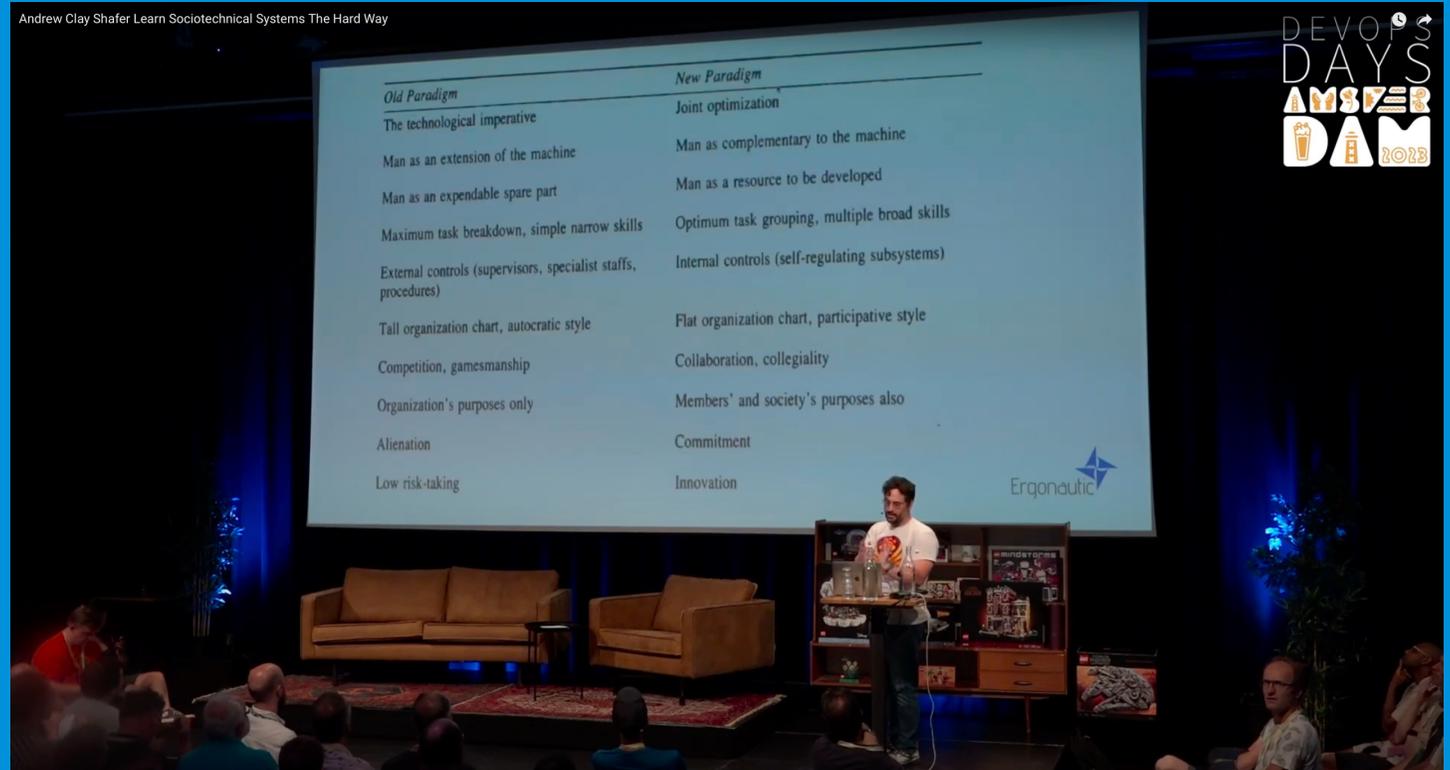


Andrew Clay Shafer Learn Sociotechnical Systems The Hard Way

<i>Old Paradigm</i>	<i>New Paradigm</i>
The technological imperative	Joint optimization
Man as an extension of the machine	Man as complementary to the machine
Man as an expendable spare part	Man as a resource to be developed
Maximum task breakdown, simple narrow skills	Optimum task grouping, multiple broad skills
External controls (supervisors, specialist staffs, procedures)	Internal controls (self-regulating subsystems)
Tall organization chart, autocratic style	Flat organization chart, participative style
Competition, gamesmanship	Collaboration, collegiality
Organization's purposes only	Members' and society's purposes also
Alienation	Commitment
Low risk-taking	Innovation

DEVOPS DAYS AMSTERDAM 2023

Ergonautic





2003

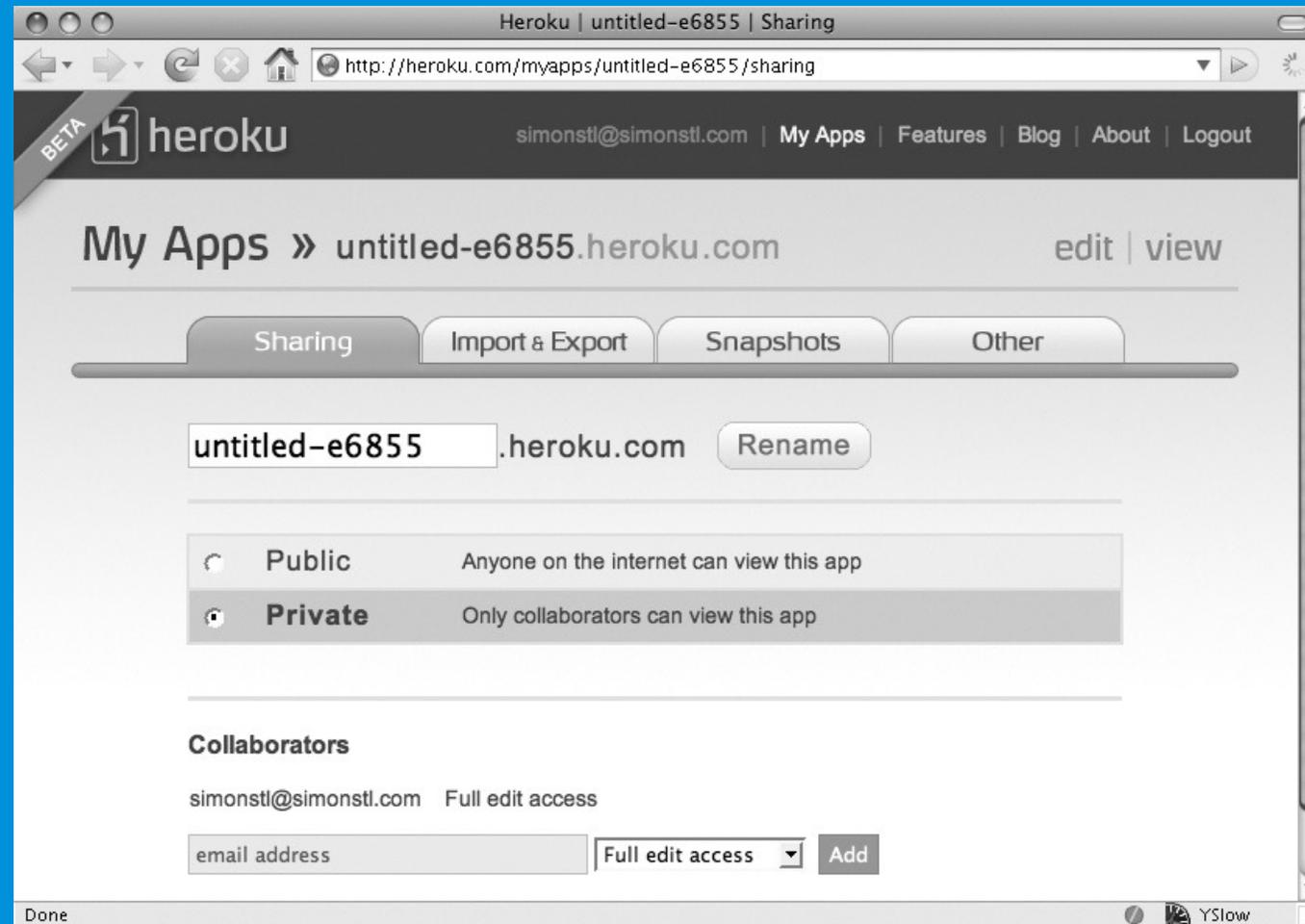


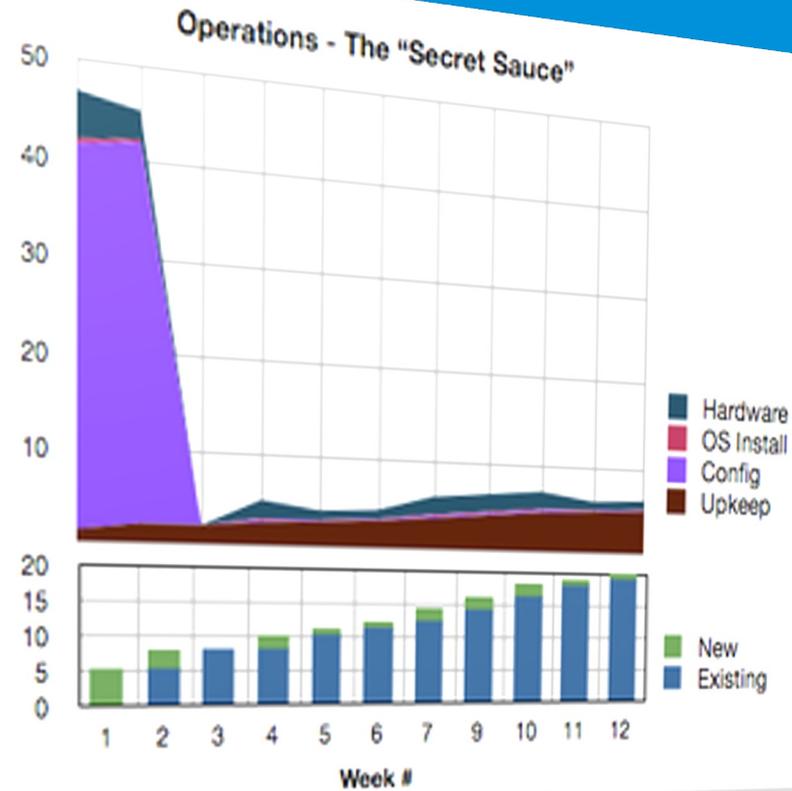
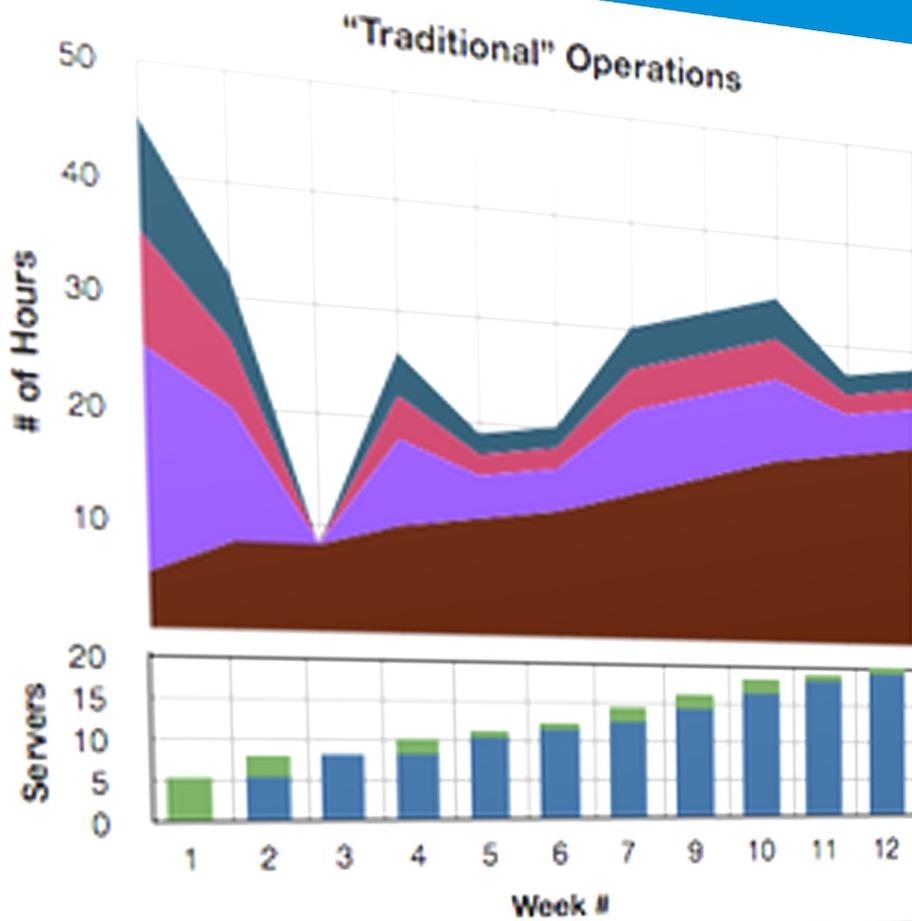
spring[®] by VMware Tanzu

WTS -



2007

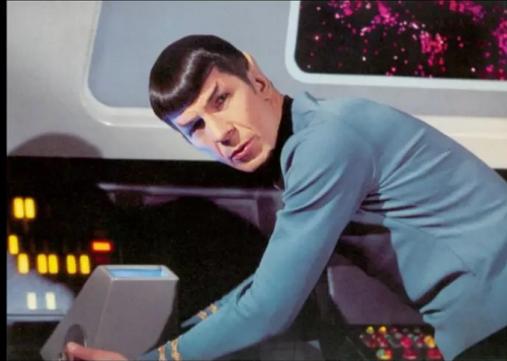




(<http://radar.oreilly.com/archives/2007/10/operations-advantage.html>)



2009

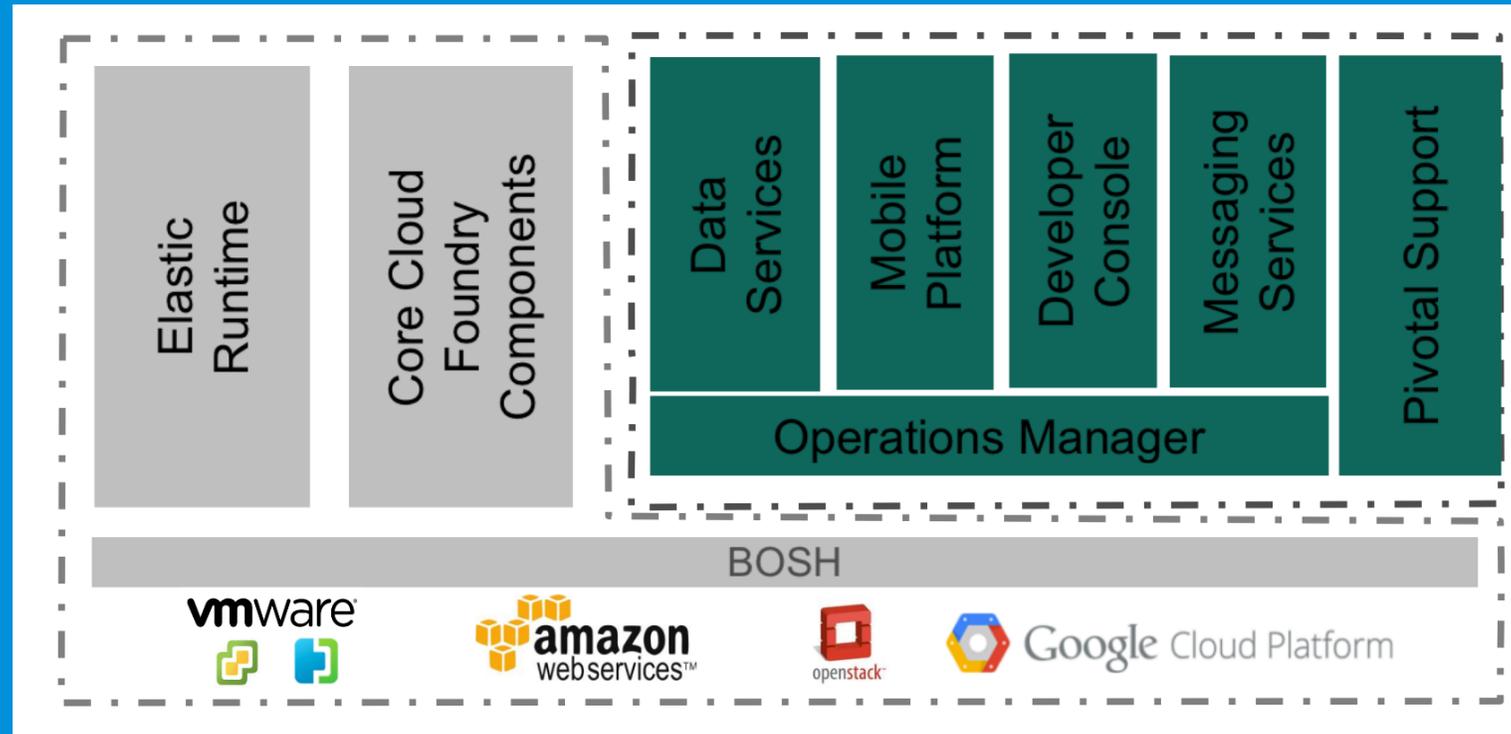


Little bit weird
Sits closer to the boss
Thinks too hard



Pulls levers & turns knobs
Easily excited
Yells a lot in emergencies

2015



2017

containers

1 of 11

TEXT
ONLY



Containers *will not fix* your broken culture [and other hard truths]

BRIDGET KROMHOUT

COMPLEX
SOCIO-TECHNICAL

We focus so often on technical anti-patterns,
neglecting similar problems inside our social

Source: [“Containers Will Not Fix Your Broken Culture,”](#) Bridget Kromhout, Dec 2017.

2020



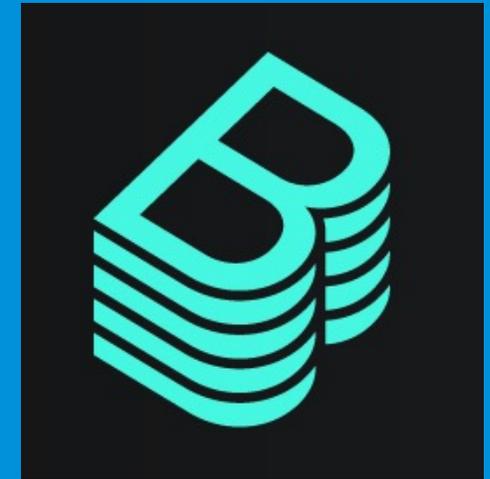
the developer-focused industry analyst firm

Videos Research Events About Team Services Clients Contact

TECOSYSTEMS

The Developer Experience Gap

By [Stephen O'Grady](#) | [@sogradey](#) | October 6, 2020



Sources: ["The Developer Experience Gap."](#)
Stephen O'Grady, RedMonk, October 2020.

When the iPhone was first introduced in January of 2007, it took the

2022



THE NEW STACK



PODCASTS EBOOKS EVENTS NEWSLETTER

ARCHITECTURE ENGINEERING OPERATIONS

DEVOPS / PLATFORM ENGINEERING / SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT / TECH LIFE

DevOps Is Dead. Embrace Platform Engineering

Platforms provide golden paths, with recommended tools and best security practices built in, reducing cognitive load while preserving developer freedom.

Sep 22nd, 2022 7:10am by [Aeris Stewart](#)



Image via [Unsplash](#).

Source: "[DevOps Is Dead. Embrace Platform Engineering](#)," Aeris Ransom, Humanitec, Sep 22nd

2023

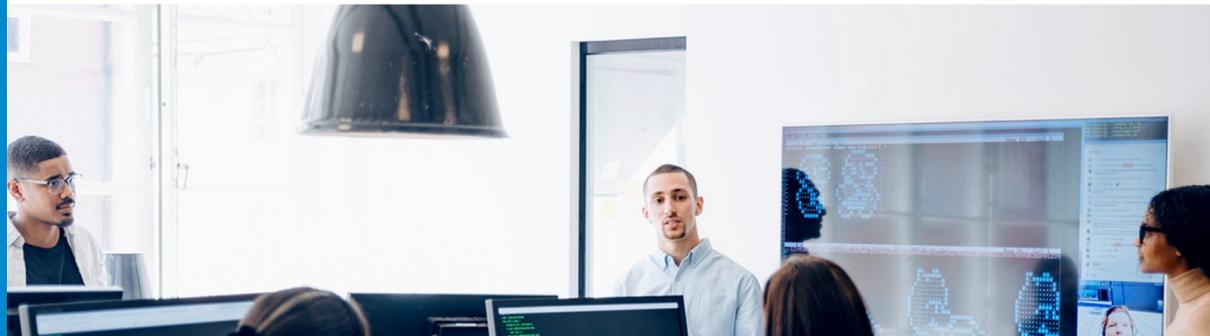
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2023

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2024-2025

