

Agile Flavoured Collaboration Hacks for Distributed Teams

Christoph Schmiedinger

pma young crew Workshop, 21st of April 2018

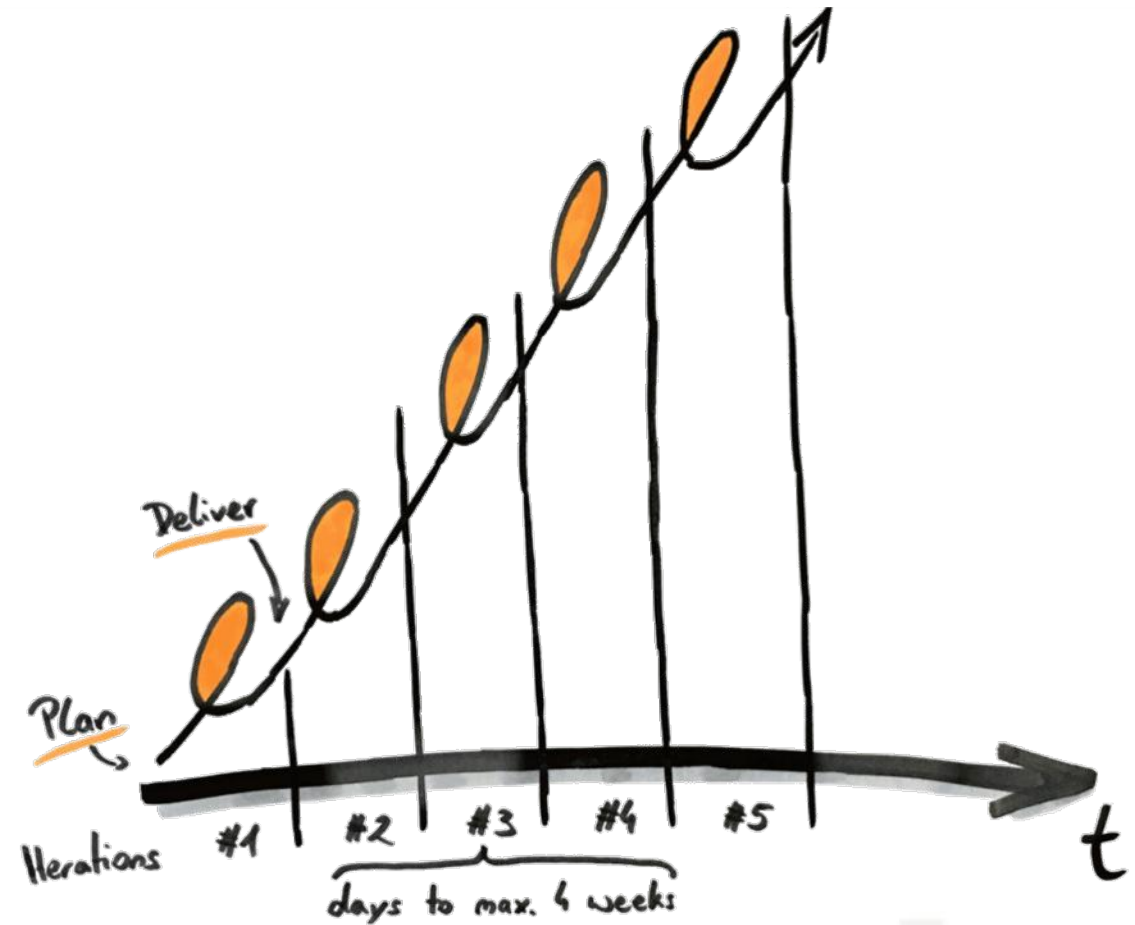
 @cschmiedinger



Agile?

Values & Principles

visualization
courage
feedback
self-organization
respect
cross-functional
commitment
focus



Agile is about working together!

- Task-Force“-mode
 - High focus
 - Close interaction & collaboration
 - Intensive synchronization
 - Haptic artefacts & visualization
 - Fast delivery of results



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What is distributed?

What about a team that is spread over whole Europe?

What about a team that is spread over two buildings in the same city?

What about a team that is spread over two floors in the same building?



2 major enablers

**People &
Processes**

**Tools &
Infrastructure**



Breakout Session #1

>> Identify & discuss possible success factors
for each of the two enablers





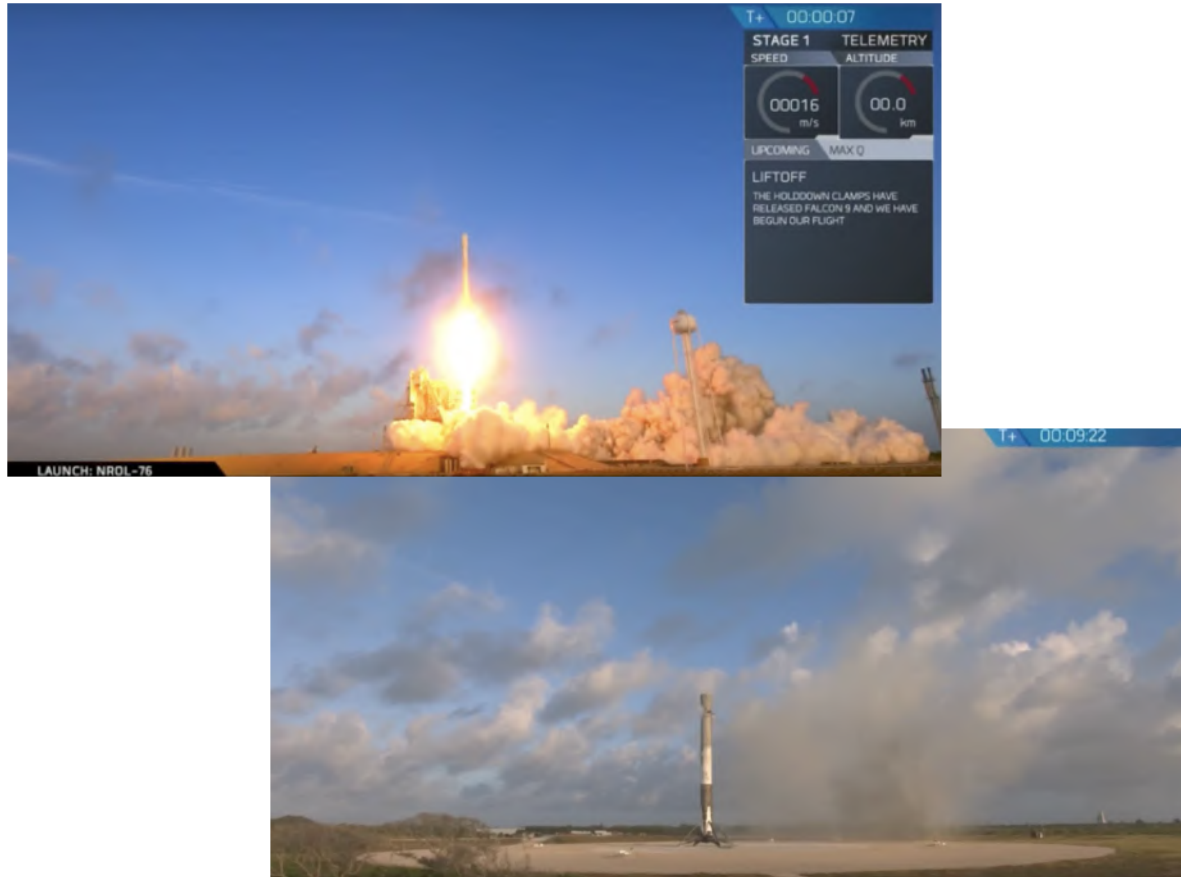
PEOPLE & PROCESSES

Self-confidence of project managers

- Claim autonomy for decisions
 - ... it is necessary to be successful anyway
- Define constraints that have to be met
 - ... a definition that doesn't mean never thinking about them again



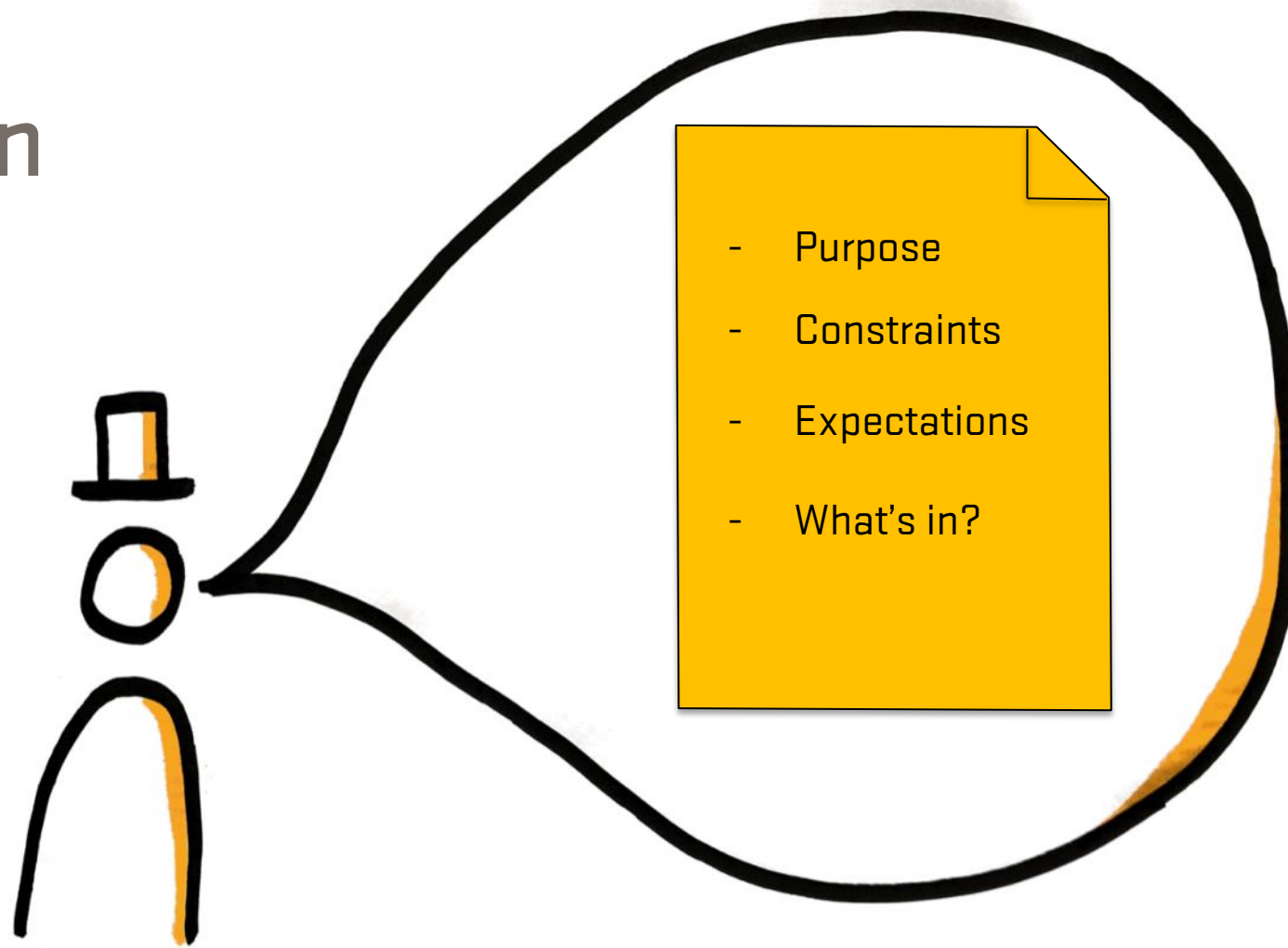
Strong and ambitious visions



Quelle: Space X (<https://youtu.be/GhaD8XLo0I4>)



Invitation



Important Lesson

travel costs << costs for ineffective team work

... but the fewest acknowledge that



Personnel costs are extremely high

Half of a 10-person team is travelling between two European cities including one overnight stay

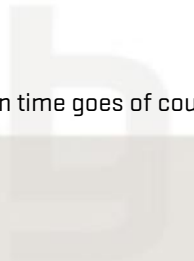
| | | |
|---------|--------|--------------|
| Flights | 5x400€ | 2000€ |
| Hotel | 5x150€ | 750€ |
| | | <hr/> |
| | | 2750€ |

Team costs per amount of time

Costs 10x 90€/h **900€/h**

If the team is at least **3h*** more effective in meeting face-to-face, the costs of travelling are amortized. Irrespective of other positive side effects of increased personal bonding that pays off in future collaboration.

* If travel time is salaried, then the amortization time goes of course up.



Collective kick-off phase

- “Bootcamp“-mode
 - Intensive examination of the project/initiative
 - Ideally off-site with no major interruptions
 - Good balance between work and socializing

Example: borisgloger company days



Regular phases of get together



- Once per agile iteration (typically two weeks)
 - In case of two locations: colleagues travel once every four weeks
- Plan one overnight stay to allow regular socializing



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Co-located work in critical phases



Private flight for more than 30 employees every week between Germany and Spain

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Ambassadors

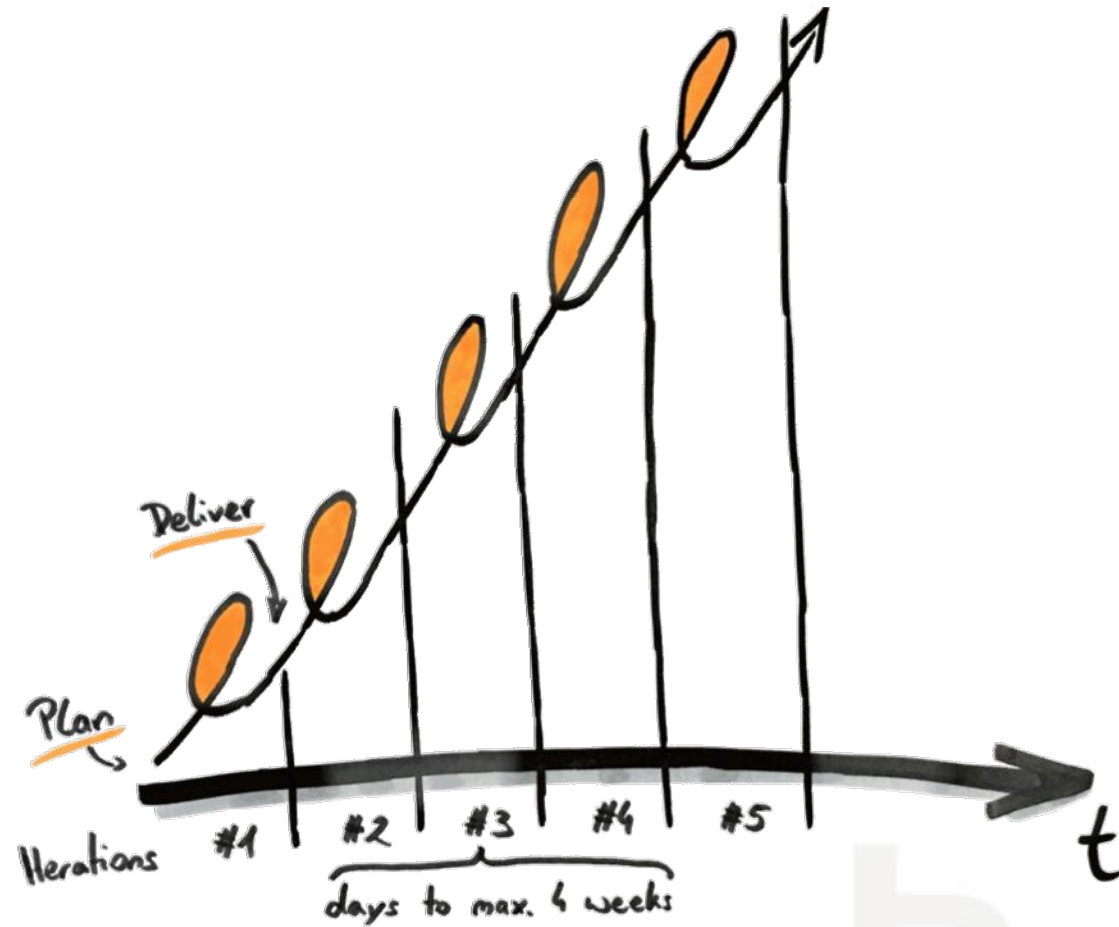
- Ambassadors as first contact person at the other location
 - Rotation principle



Iterative processes can help

- Regular review & planning session help synchronizing within the team
- Definition of iteration goals help to unify the team

... no matter if you do Scrum or not



Google Aristotle Project

- 1) Psychological safety
- 2) Dependability
- 3) Structure & clarity
- 4) Meaning
- 5) Impact



Further informationen: <http://bit.ly/2caU5Yy>

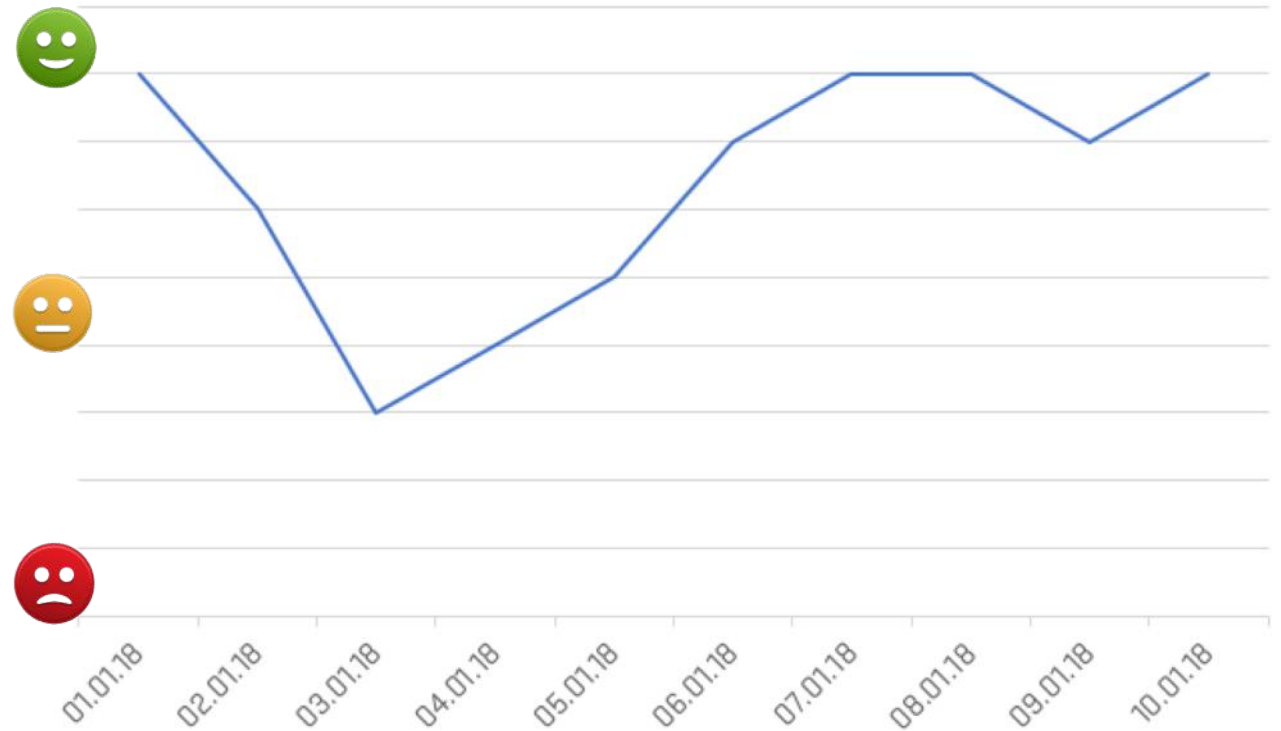
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Team mood

Daily Happiness Metric



Happiness Metric

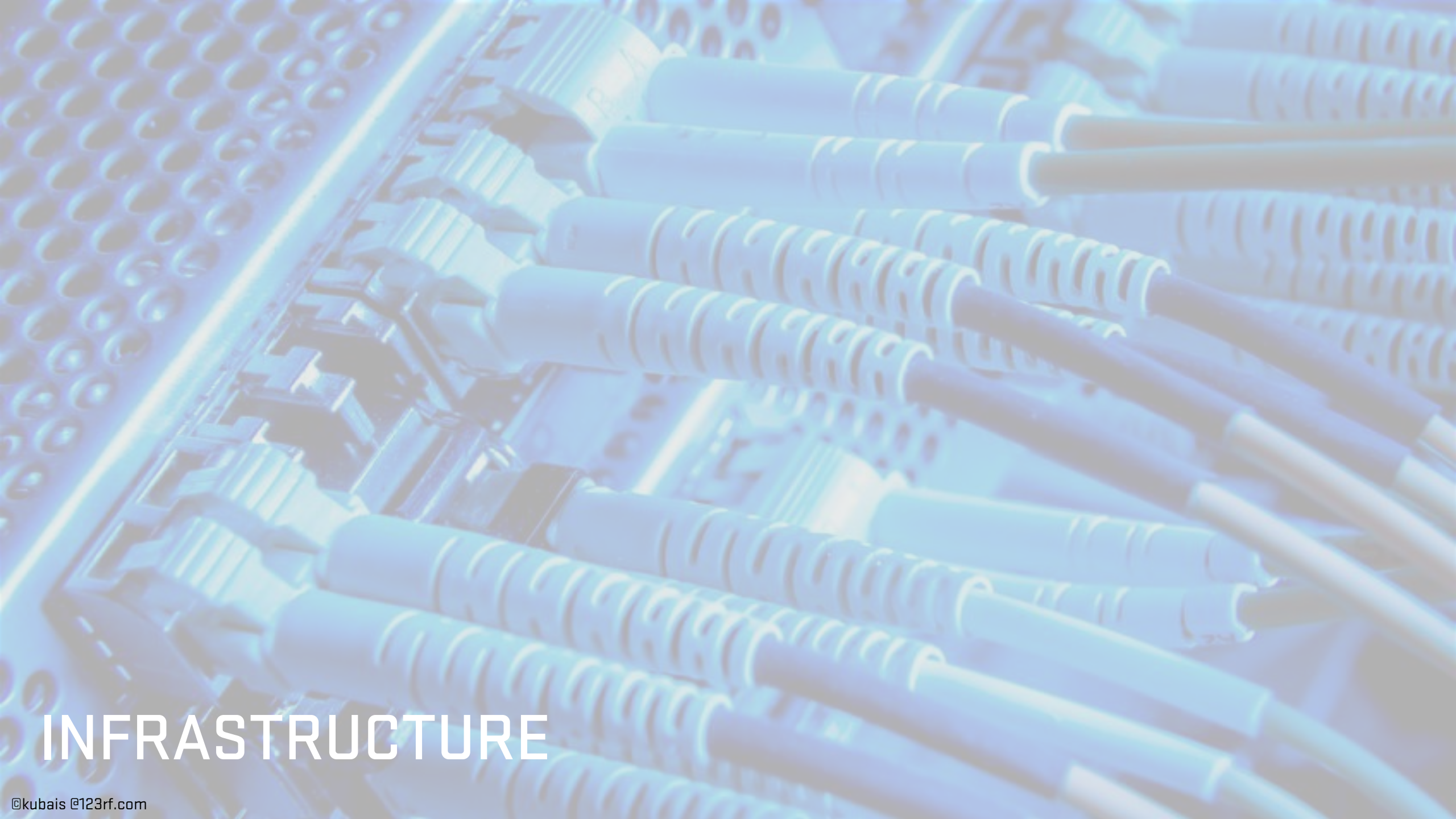


Remote-“Pairing”

- Common achievement of a task
 - Intensive collaboration
 - Knowledge transfer
- Regular rotation
 - Spread knowledge
 - Bond with each other



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INFRASTRUCTURE

Infrastructure is key!

- Professional videoconferencing & screen sharing
- Lightweight chat tools
- Tools for visualization of the progress
- Possibility to work from everywhere with internet access



Modern chat tools

- *Slack, Atlassian Hipchat, Microsoft Teams, Mattermost, ...*
 - Organization in channels (principle of voluntariness)
 - Elimination of “internal only“-mails
 - Open APIs for further integration possibilities

Example: borisgloger consulting use of Microsoft Teams



Mattermost

The screenshot displays a Mattermost chat window. On the left is a blue sidebar with navigation options: Contributors (@alice.miller), Favorite Channels (Amy Blais, Tom Smi..., Community Heartbeat), Public Channels (Marketing: Twitter, Public Test Channel, Reception), Private Channels (Marketing Project Disc), and Direct Messages (Tom Smith). The main chat area shows a conversation with Tom Smith. Alice Miller sends a screenshot of a document titled 'Wargaming Switches from Slack to Mattermost' (1MB PNG). Tom Smith thanks her and asks for a blog update. Alice Miller agrees. Alice Miller then asks when Tom is available for a call to discuss marketing assets. Tom Smith replies he is available in an hour. Alice Miller confirms. A date separator 'Thu, Nov 30, 2017' is shown. Alice Miller then asks Tom to review a document 'Wendy Jones.pages' (510KB). The chat input field at the bottom contains the text 'Write a message...'. The top right of the chat area includes a search bar and user status indicators.

@mattermost.com

Electronic TaskBoards



The screenshot shows a Trello board for a kitchen renovation project. The board is organized into four columns representing different stages of the project:

- Ideen (Ideas):** Cards include buying a new crossbar for pots, installing a top hanging above the island, replacing drawer knobs, and buying cabinet color.
- To Do:** Cards include adjusting water pressure, removing the old refrigerator and stove, installing a new sink, and laying a new floor.
- Im Gange (In Progress):** Cards include selecting countertop colors and buying a new service cart.
- Fertig! (Done):** Cards include contacting the contractor and finding a faucet for the new sink.

The board also features a right-hand sidebar with a 'Menü' (Menu) section, a 'Mitglieder' (Members) list, and an 'Aktivität' (Activity) log showing recent actions like drilling holes and adding cards.

@trello.com

Smart Boards



| Story | To Do | In Progress | To Verify | Done |
|----------------|--|--|---|--|
| 1 red square | 1 red square, 1 green square, 1 blue square, 1 yellow square | 1 yellow square, 1 green square, 1 orange square, 1 red square, 1 blue square, 1 yellow square | 1 red square, 1 blue square, 1 green square, 1 yellow square, 1 orange square, 1 red square | 1 green square, 1 yellow square, 1 orange square, 1 green square |
| 1 blue square | 1 green square | 1 yellow square, 1 orange square | 1 yellow square, 1 red square | 1 yellow square |
| 1 green square | 1 red square | 1 blue square, 1 red square, 1 yellow square | 1 blue square, 1 yellow square | 1 red square |

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ETEEO-Board



- Saxonia Systems
 - In-house developed solution
- ETEEO = “One Team One Office“



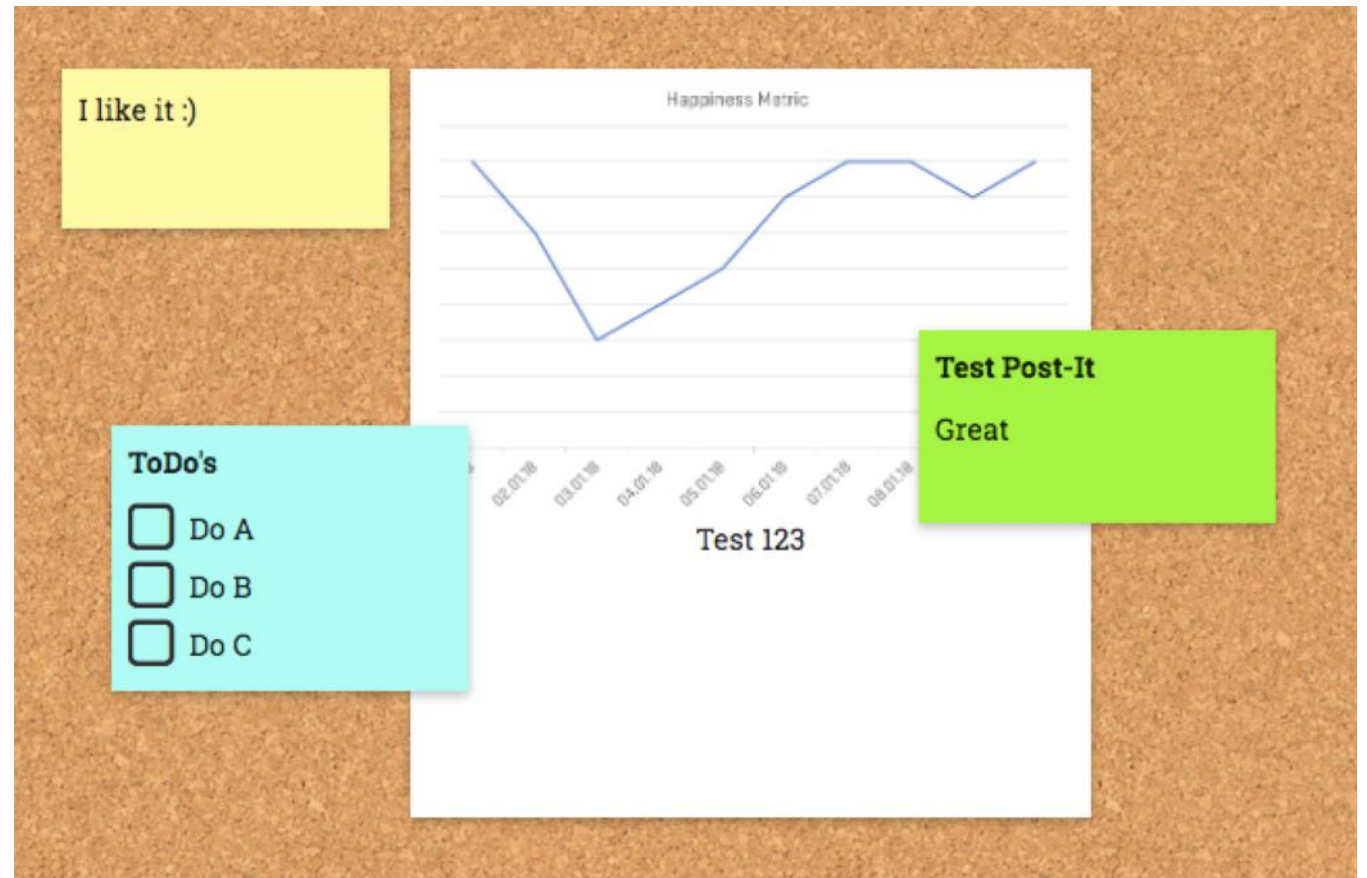
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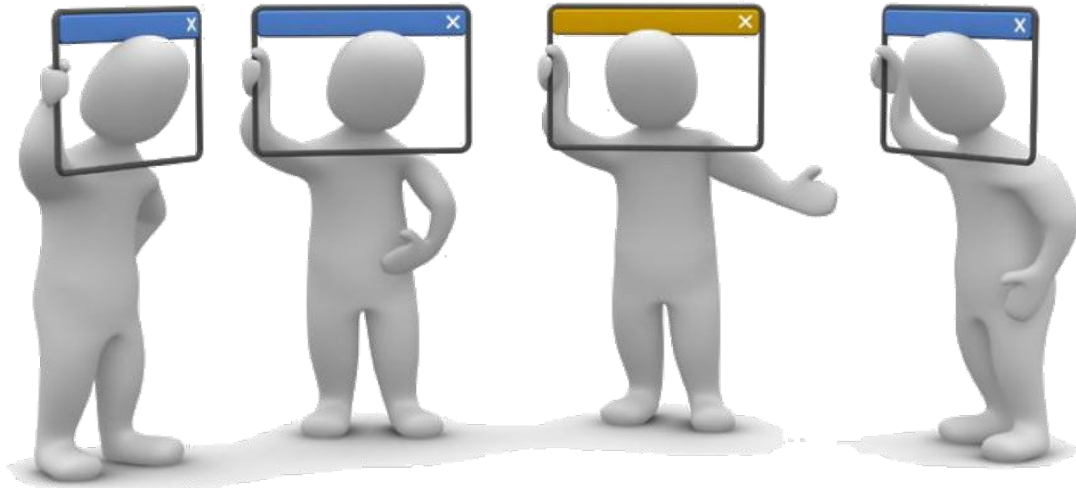
Remote collaboration

- Online corkboards/
whiteboards
 - pinup.com
 - note.ly

Example: borisgloger
remote retrospectives



Daily Stand-Ups

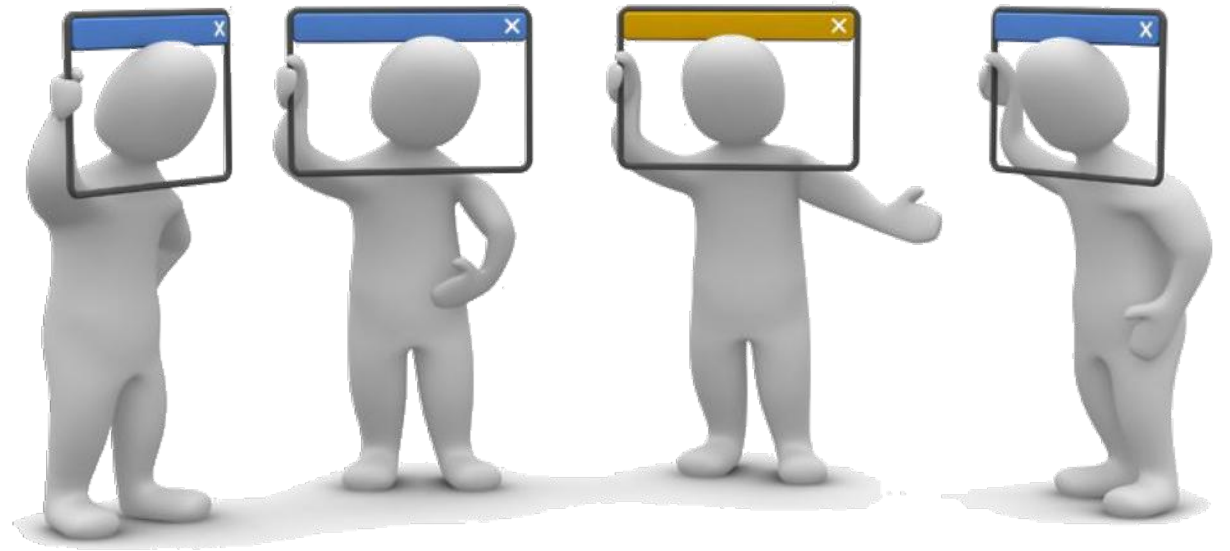


i done this

From video conferencing to asynchronous information flow?

Continuous video conferencing

- Rather extreme solution but some companies actually really use it!



Learn from others!

- Open Source Community
 - Highly distributed community
 - Individuals that contribute not regularly & often outside office hours

Example for software development

GitHub

Breakout Session #2

>> Do you know other useful infrastructure/tools that help to boost team productivity?



Autonomy is necessary for success!



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Breakout Session #3

>> Share your experience – is autonomy for project managers the norm or rather an exception in your organizations?



Case Study

You are a project manager in an international company that sells hardware appliances for the automotive sector. In half a year there is one major trade fair, where the company wants to show a demo case to potential customers. The hardware parts are typically manufactured in the US, the software is coded in Romania and the majority of the product management and sales staff is working in the German HQ.

You are asked if you want to lead the project of:

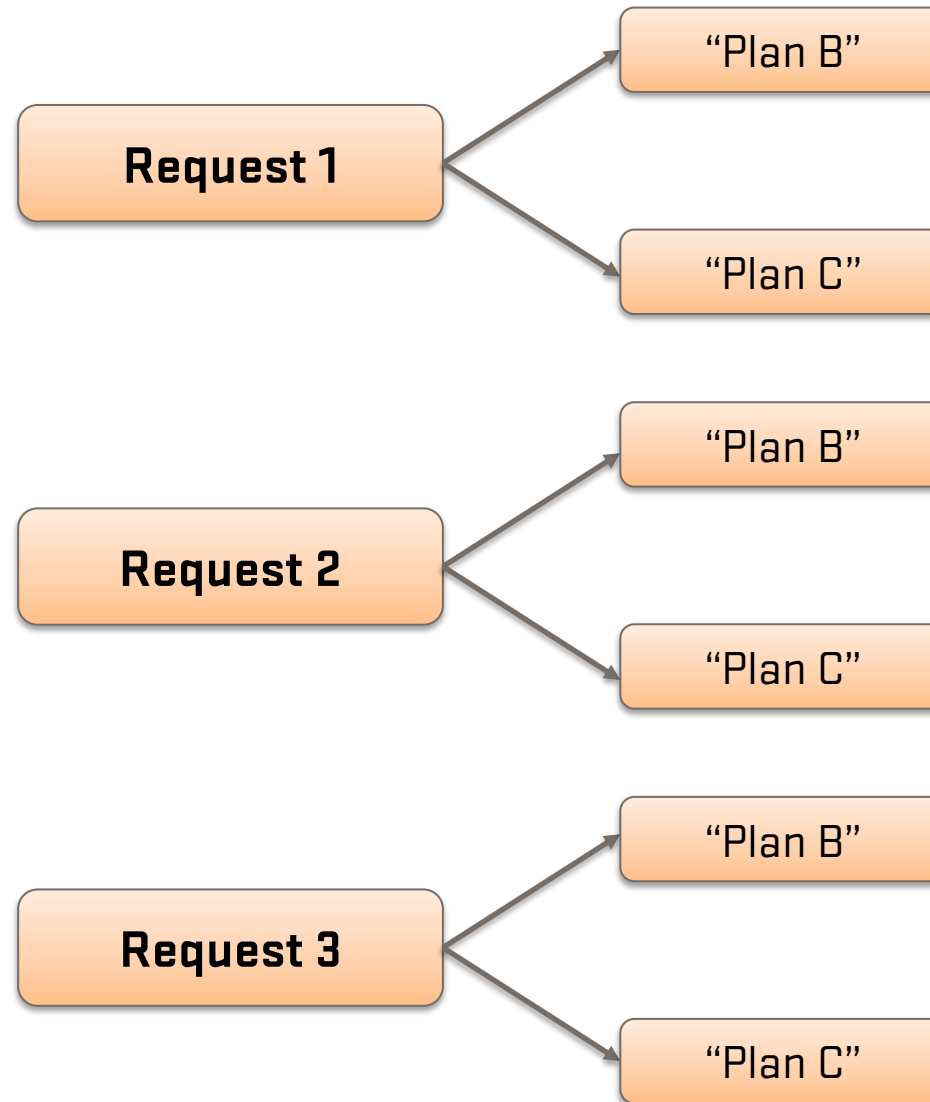
- investigating what the demo case should exactly demonstrate
- preparing the demo case for the trade fair
- organizing everything around the trade fair (shipment, on site staff, ...) that the demo case will be a success

Questions to think about:

- What do you would ask your sponsor in order to make the project successful (focus on supporting productivity of the distributed team)?
- What do you plan to do, if those requests are declined (think of it as part of risk mitigation strategy)?



Potential answer format





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SlideShare

