# UX practice for lean startups

UX London

Luxr
the lean user experience residency

POP VOX

taskrabbit

adaptive path

Food Foodspotting

diaspora*

Netscape

Mingly

# TWEET!

Janice Fraser

www.luxr.co

**@clevergirl**

# Outline for the afternoon

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 2:00-2:20 | Lean Startup -- Nothing Here Is New | 20m |
| 2:20-2:30 | Briefing | 10m |
| 2:30-3:00 | Assumptions Workshop | 20m |
| | Group Discussion | 5m |
| | Points to Note | 5m |
| 3:00-3:30 | Experiment Design Workshop | 30m |
| 3:30-4:00 | BREAK | 30m |
| 4:00-4:30 | Group Discussion (experiment design) | 10m |
| | Smallify the Experiment | 15m |
| | Points to Note | 5m |
| 4:30-5:00 | MVP Workshop | 30m |
| | Group Discussion | 10m |
| | Points to Note | 5m |
| 5:00-5:30 | 7 habits, 4 power tools, 1 fishbowl | 30m |

# Lean Startup?

## Lean Startup is NOT

# Cheap Startup

# Fast Startup

# Shortcut Startup

# Lean Startup is NOT

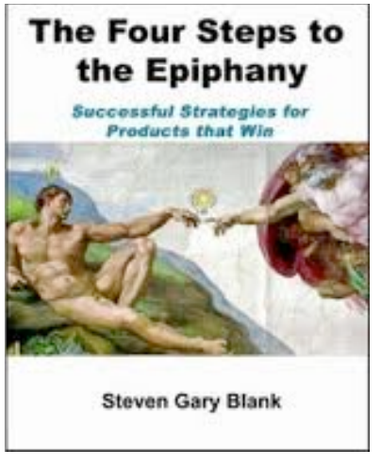
# Low-Ambition

# Lean Startup is NOT

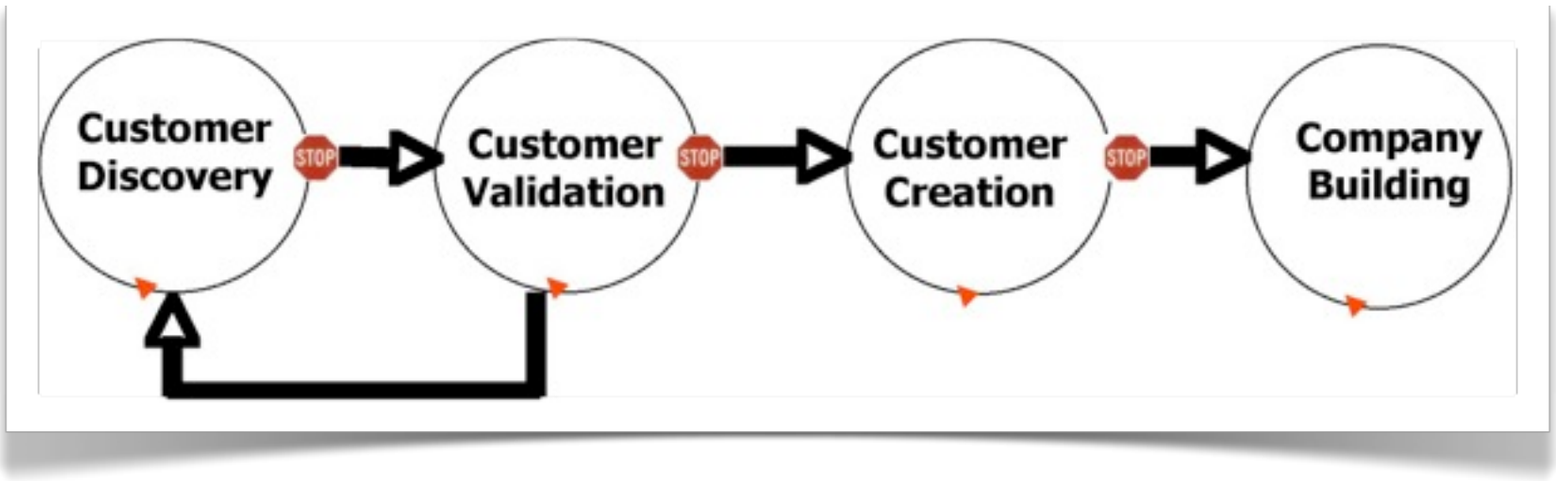
# THE OPPOSITE

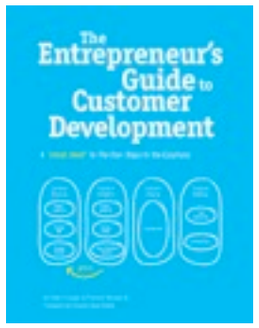
# OF FAT STARTUP

Get out of the building!

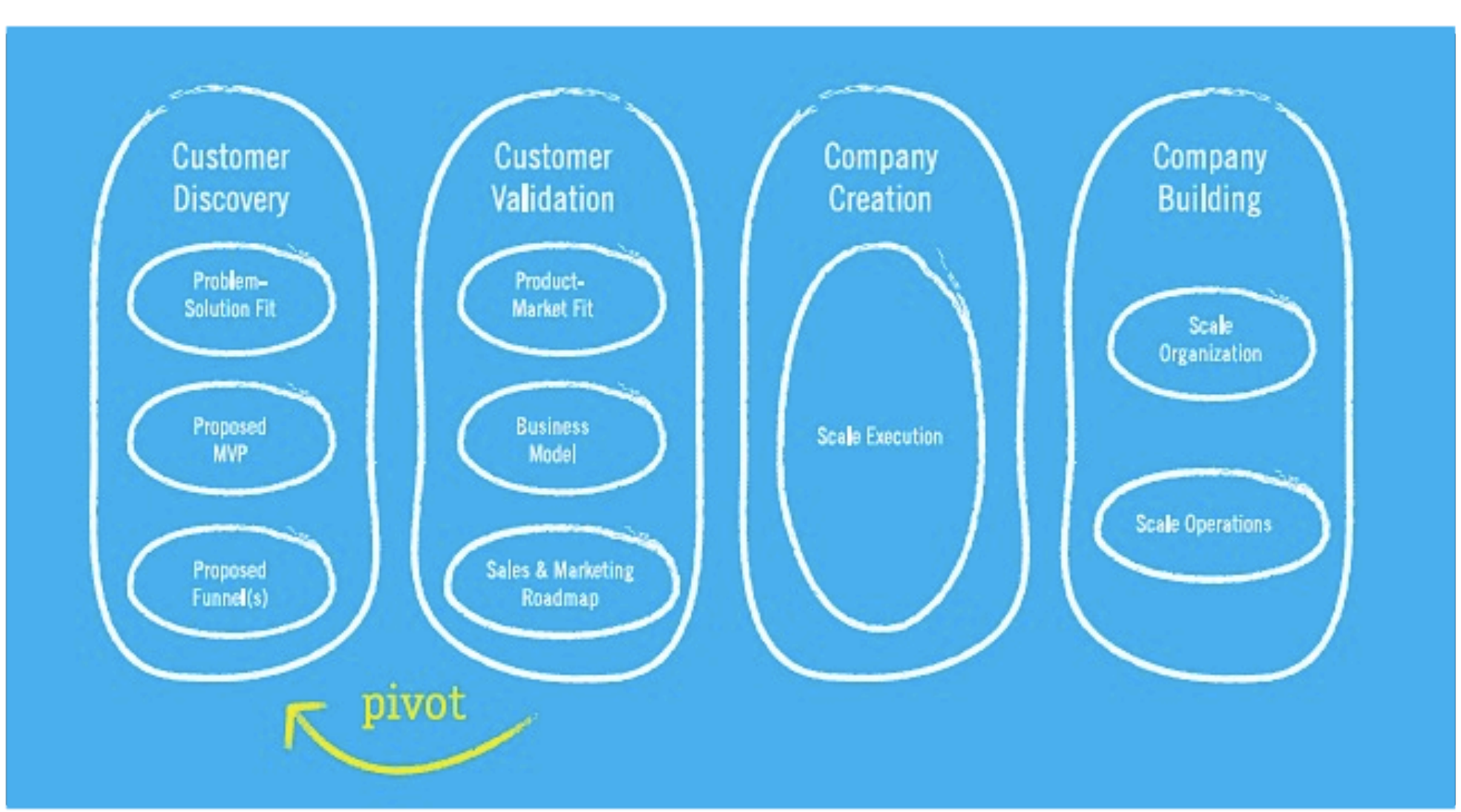


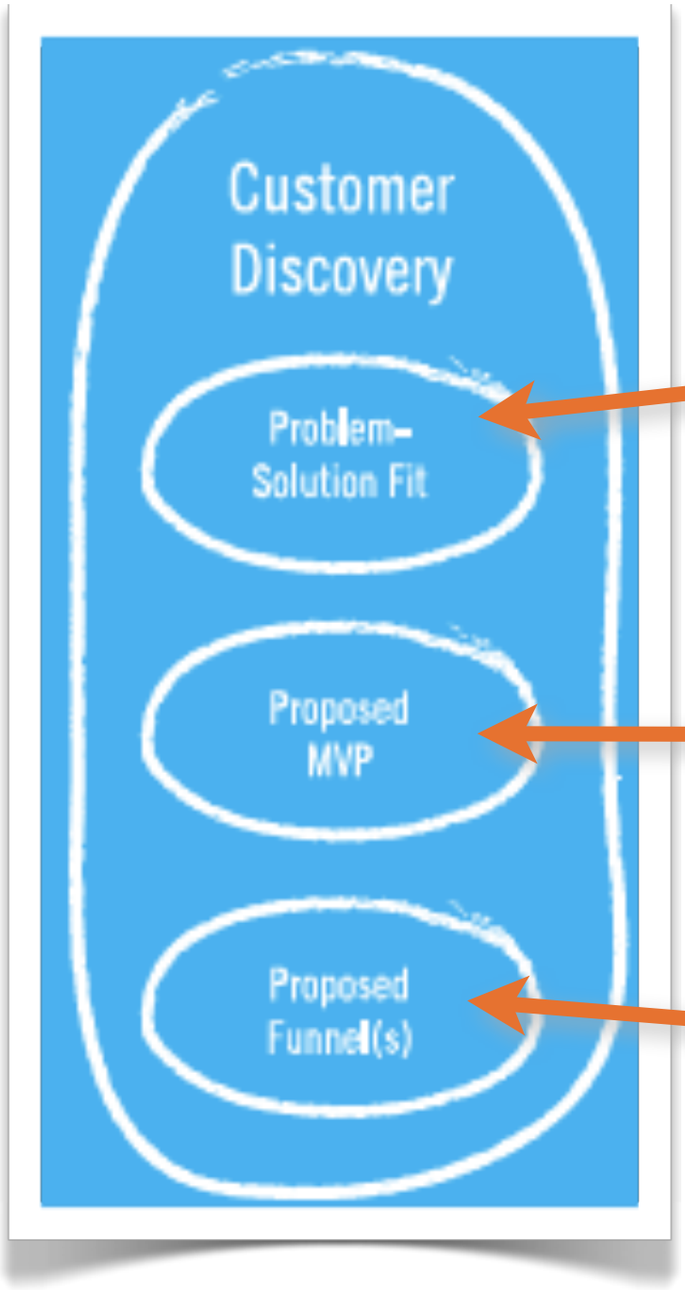

# Steve Blank introduced “Customer Development” in...um...2006.






# In 2010, Brant Cooper and Patrick Vlaskovitz wrote a shorter, more useful book.






People, their goals & needs

Sketches and prototypes

"New user" experiences

# CUSTOMER DEVELOPMENT = UX!?

# About 1,720,000 results

Here's a distillation...

# "Customer Development in 1 Page"

I have an idea
BOB

* Who is it for?
  (personas & Design target)
* What can "MARY" do
  that wasn't possible before?
  (activity map, concept drawings)
* What features does MARY need
  for that?
  (6-up drawings, stickeys, 2×2)
* How do they fit together?
  (3-up, page-value prop, wireframes)

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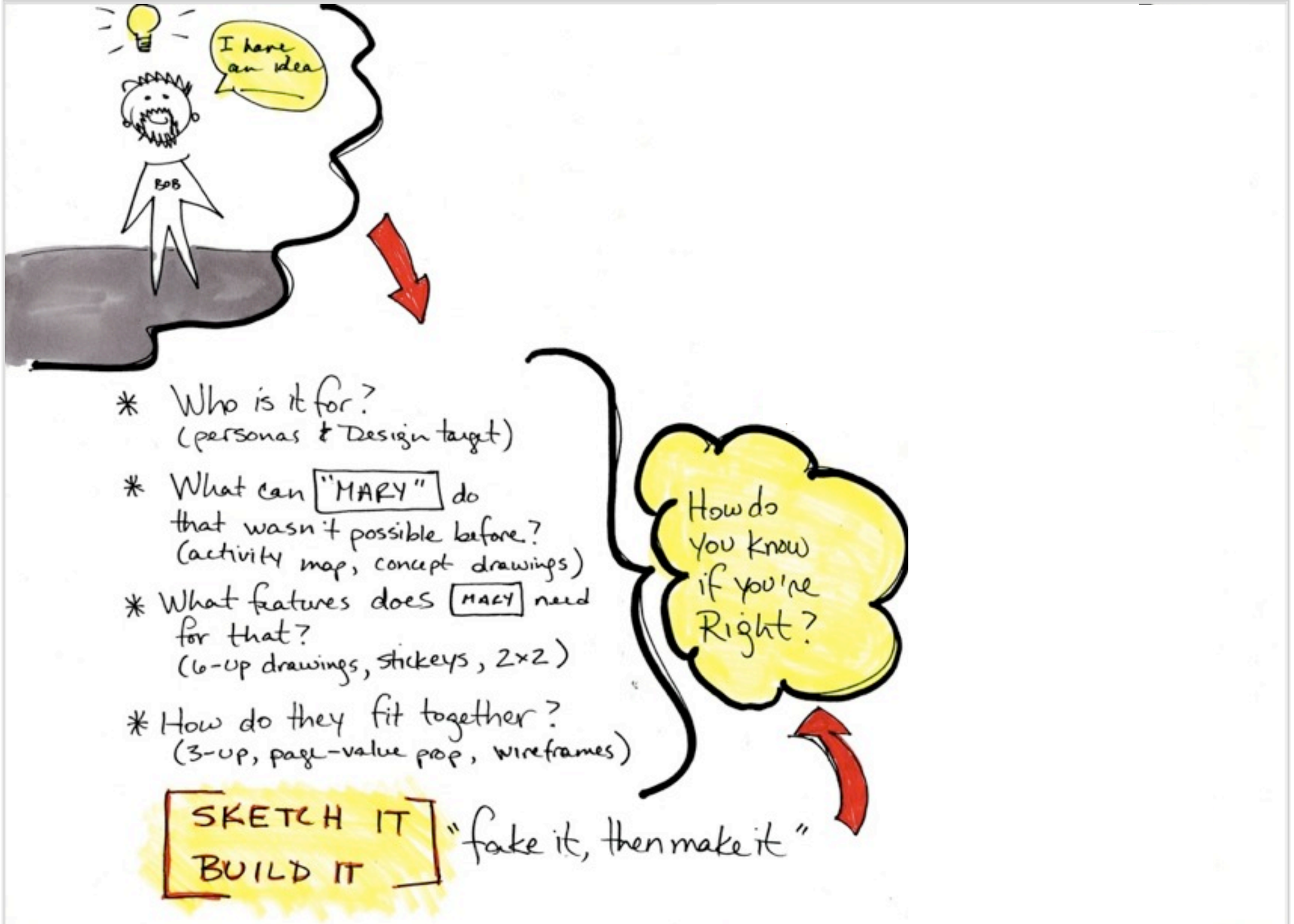
SKETCH IT
BUILD IT

"fake it, then make it"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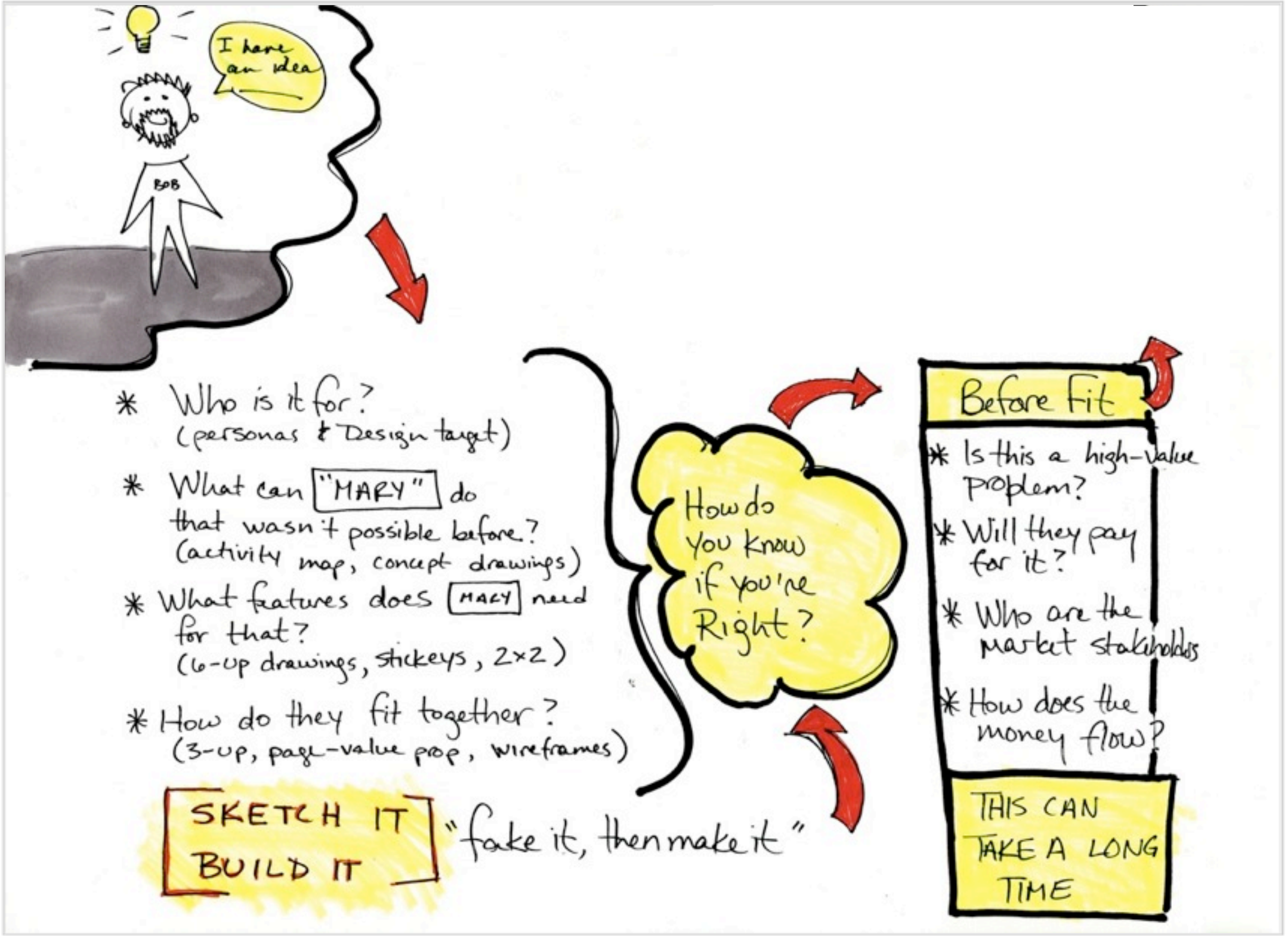
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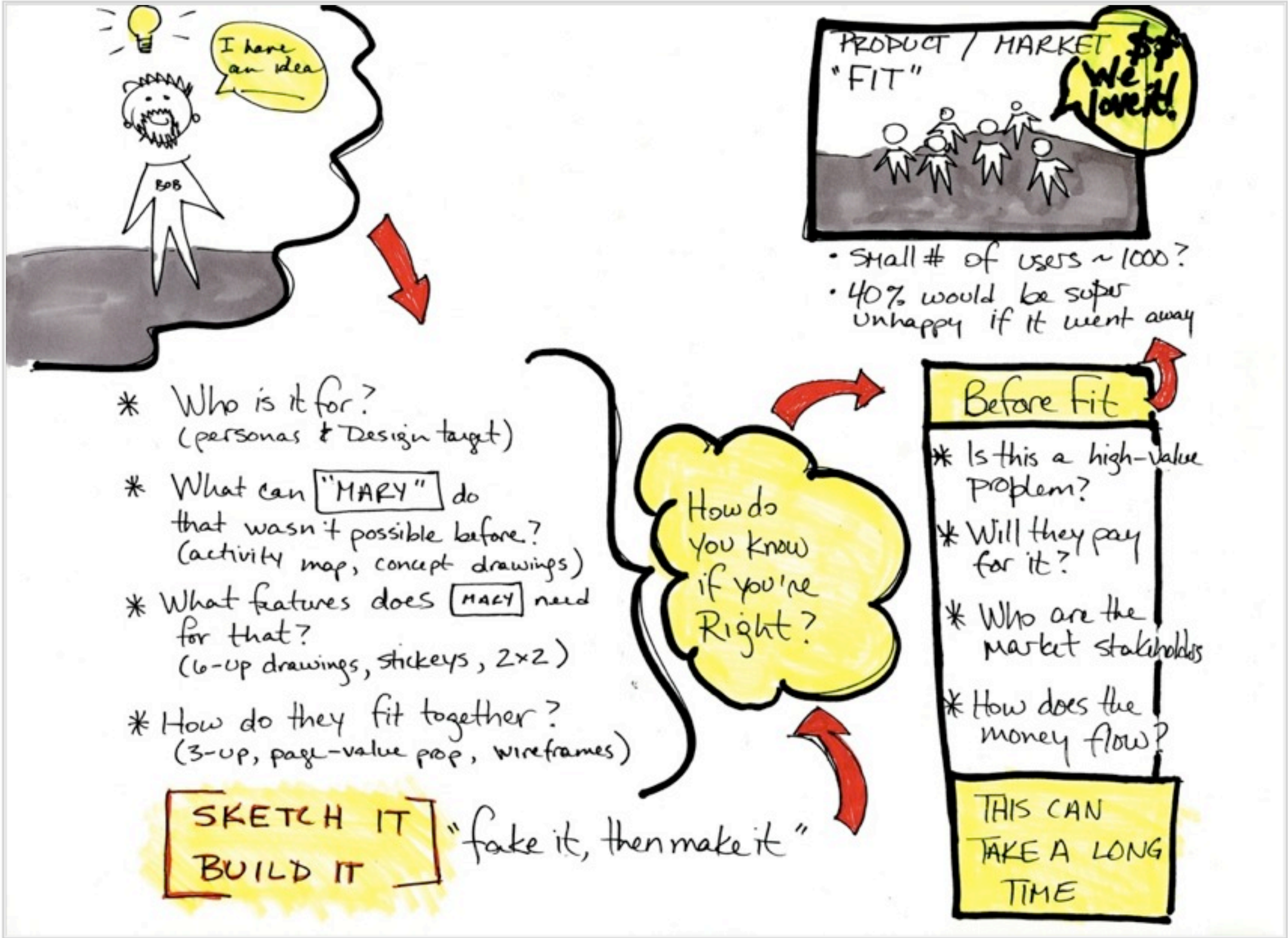
Before Fit
* Is this a high-value problem?
* Will they pay for it?
* Who are the market stakeholders
* How does the money flow?
THIS CAN TAKE A LONG TIME


I have an idea
BOB
PRODUCT / MARKET "FIT"
We loved it!
• Small # of users ~ 1000?
• 40% would be super unhappy if it went away
* Who is it for? (personas & Design target)
* What can "MARY" do that wasn't possible before? (activity map, concept drawings)
* What features does MARY need for that? (6-up drawings, stickeys, 2x2)
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SKETCH IT
BUILD IT
"fake it, then make it"

# Lessons Learned

by Eric Ries

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2008

## The lean startup

107 tweets

retweet

I've been thinking for some time about a term that could encapsulate trends that are changing the startup landscape. After some trial and error, I've settled on the Lean Startup. I like the term because of two connotations:

1. Lean in the sense of low-burn. Of course, many startups are capital efficient and generally frugal. But by taking advantage of open source, agile software, and iterative development, lean startups can operate with much less waste.
2. The lean startup is an application of Lean Thinking. I am heavily indebted to earlier theorists, and highly recommend the books Lean Thinking and Lean Software Development. I also owe a great debt to Kent Beck, whose Extreme Programming Explained: Embrace Change was my first introduction to this kind of thinking. (So far, I have found "lean startup" works better with the entrepreneurs I've talked to than "agile startup" or even "extreme startup.")

What are the characteristics of a lean startup? One that is powered by

**Coming soon...**

The Lean Startup Book will be published in Fall, 2011 by Crown. You can pre-order here.

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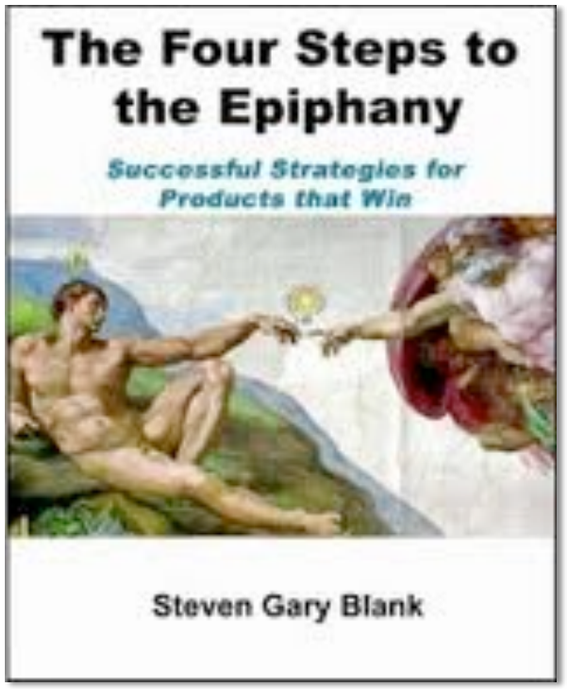


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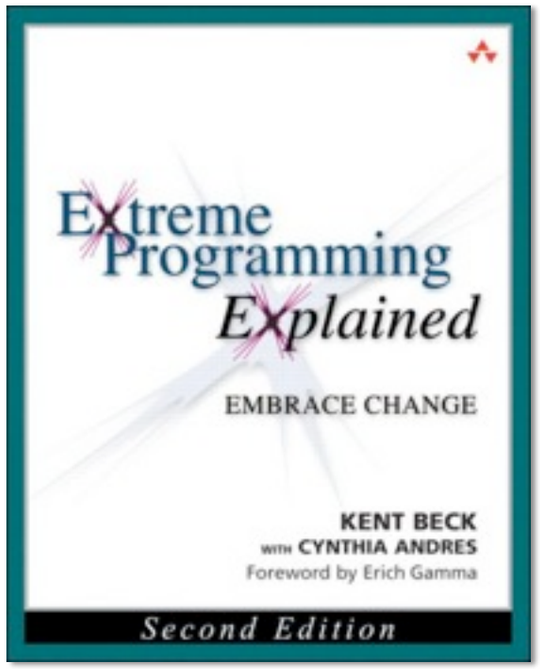


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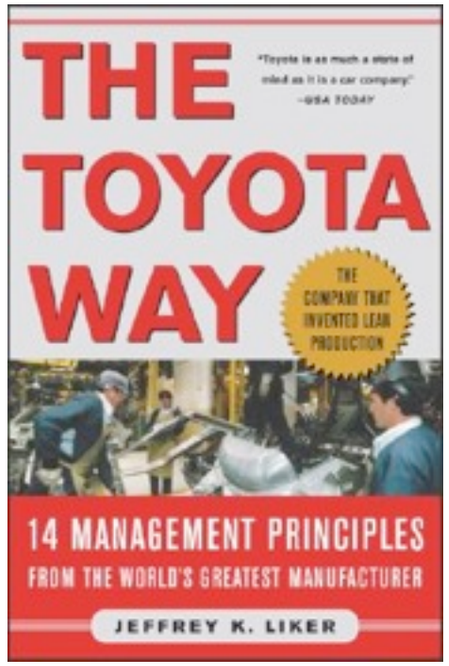
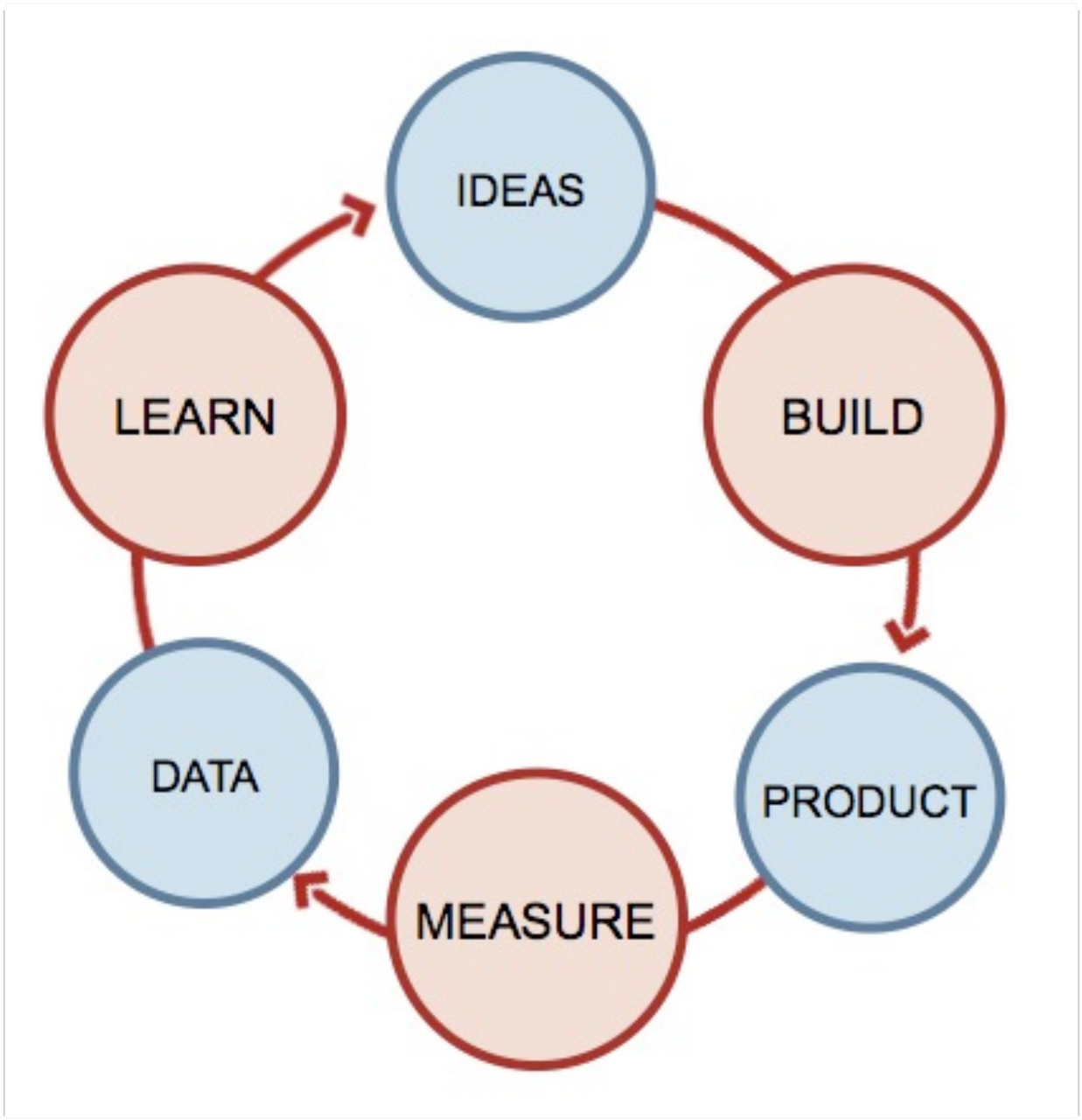



**make products customers want**

**incremental releases**

**reduce waste**

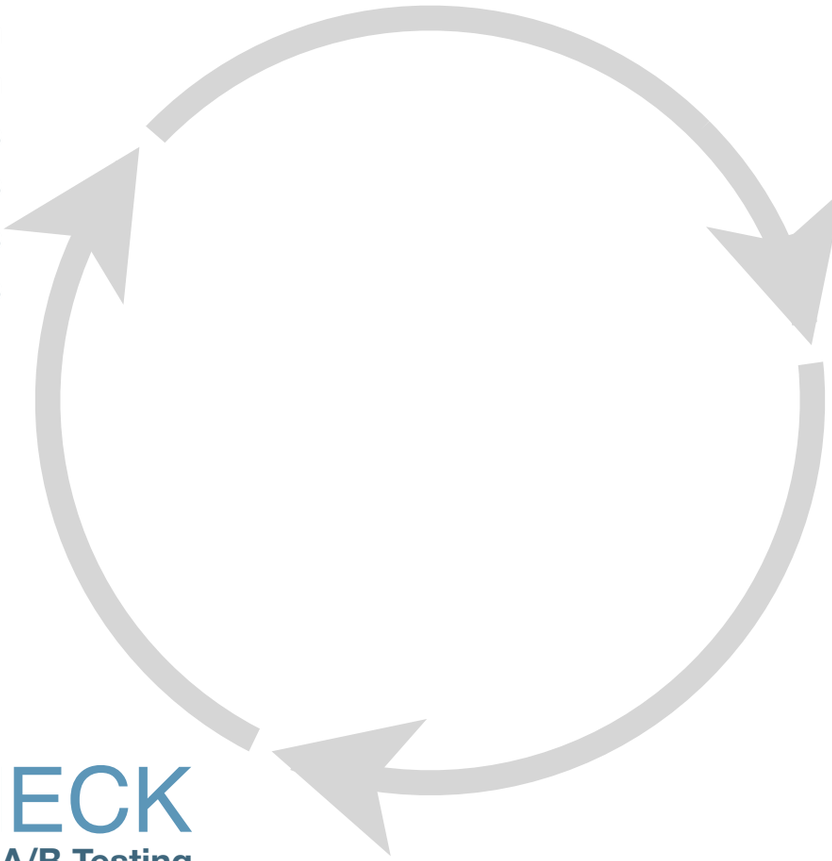
# #2 New York Times Bestseller


IDEAS
LEARN
BUILD
DATA
PRODUCT
MEASURE

# UX Cycles

## THINK

Generative Research
Ideation
Mental models
Behavior Models
Test Results
Competitive Analysis



## MAKE

Prototypes
Wireframes
Value Prop
Landing Page
Hypotheses
Comps
Deployed Code

Reduce cycle time, not build time

## CHECK

A/B Testing
Site Analytics
Usability Testing
Funnel
Sign-ups

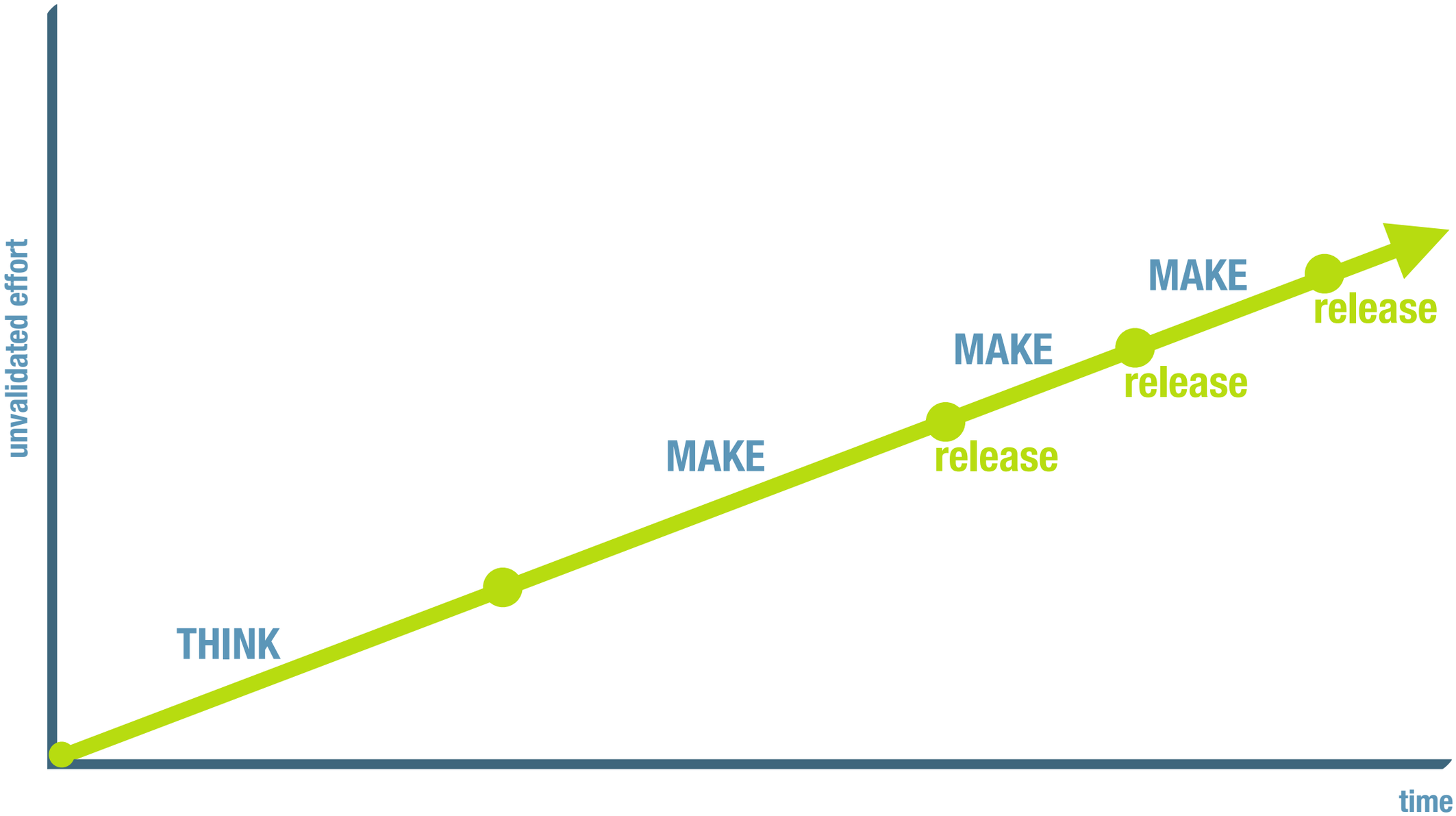
# How does UX fit?

## Among UX strengths...

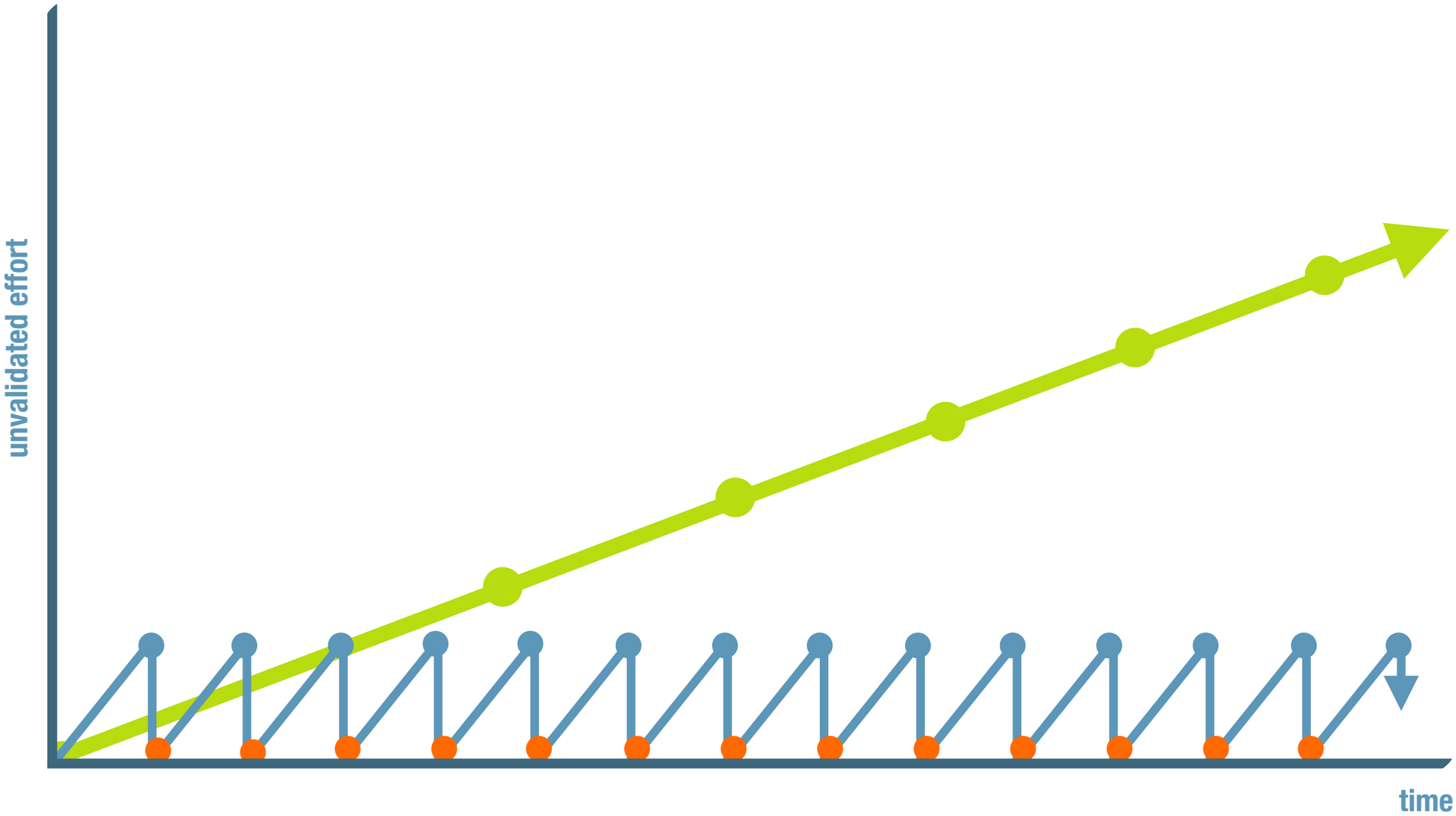
# UX people are EXPERTS at “getting out of the building.”

Lean User Experience is a principle-driven process for teams working in situations of extreme uncertainty. It is characterized by practices that predispose predictable, high-quality, high-velocity user experience outcomes.

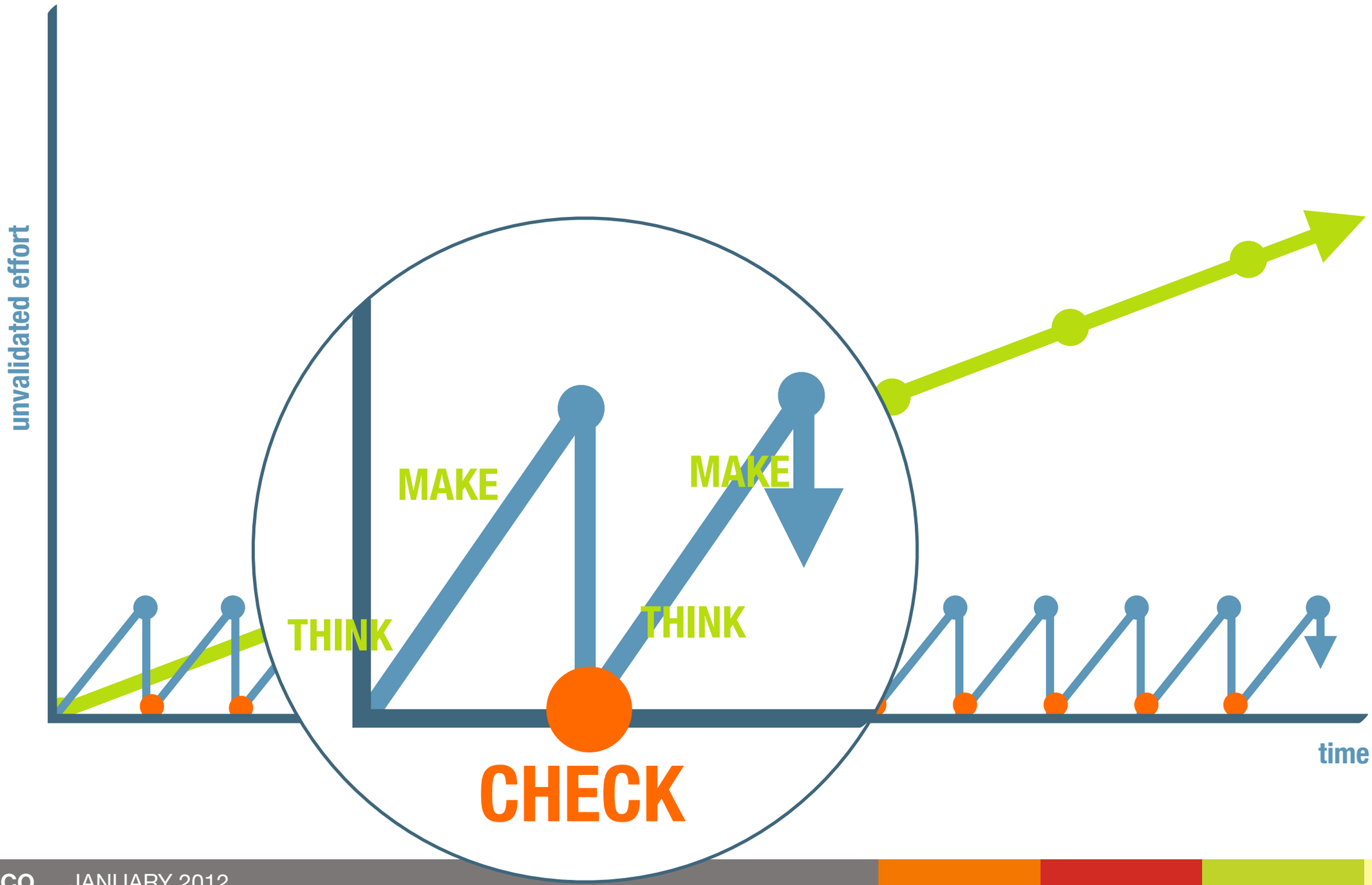
# Plot the difference



# Lots of little wiggles



# Each wiggle is a learning cycle.



# MAKE THE RIGHT PRODUCT

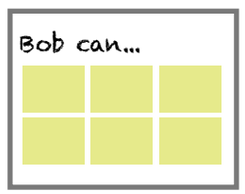
(INSERT BUSINESS THINKING HERE)

**Users**

**Needs**

1. BLAH
2. BLAH
3. BLAH

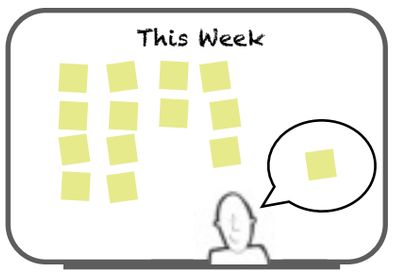
**Uses**




**Features**

(CREATE SKETCHES, WIREFRAMES & PIXELS)

**User Stories**
**Themed Releases**



# Victory is measured in learning.

# This will change how you think about your role, your work, your team, your process.

# The setup.

# “Reddy Runners”

Leah Fuskie was a developer at IBM. She was a stuck at work one afternoon, and realized that she needed dogfood and wouldn’t have time to get it.

Inspired by this need, Leah decided to start a marketplace where people with time could do odd jobs and errands for people who need help.

She put together a prototype marketplace where a person could post a job and a name a price, and another person could make an offer to do that job.

**“It’s AirBnB for work, but with pricing arbitrage.”**

As you can see from the “logo” above, she needs a good designer. She’s a friend of a friend, and hired you to be the “rockstar” designer.

# Congratulations!

You're the Cofounder of a new company.

Your partners are a pair of Software Engineers.

They raised enough money to pay everyone a small salary for 6 months, which means you have to start raising in 3 months.

You need to prove that this is a viable business by the time you go out to raise.

Ready? GO!

# The job.

# Assumptions

My assumption:

You don’t want to waste your time, your career, your patience, or your friendship building something that has no chance of success.

Use a sharpie, work independently, write one idea per sticky.

Write down 10 assumptions that you & your team must validate in order to be sure the business idea is a good one.

Underline the one word or phrase that summarizes each assumption

Working at the wall, review all of the ideas as a team and de-dupe.

Discuss to understand.

Divide into 2 piles: Will it kill the company if we’re wrong?

Stack Rank the top pile.

Choose the one assumption to move forward into the next step.

# Examples

1. Many <u>people will pay</u> to have someone get dogfood or have odd jobs done.
2. People <u>want to run errands</u> like getting dogfood.
3. We believe it is legal in the country of operation
4. This service is useful for disorganized people.
5. This service is useful to time-poor people.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.

# Things to note about the assumptions workshop,

**which you probably already knew,
that are massively valuable in a startup environment.**

Broad ideation is mandatory in order to recognize which thoughts are the best.

Ideation can be quick if you focus, work independently, use paper and pen, and push yourself with a time limit.

Ideation applies to many parts of the logical thought process, not just feature identification and design.

Efficient decision-making is essential when you do broad ideation.

Decision-making is arbitrary when you have little or no data.

Multi-person ideation yields better thinking than solo ideation.

Multi-person ideation relieves pressure for anyone to be a “genius”.

Independent ideation, followed by group understanding, followed by decision-making is a uniquely efficient mode of decision-making.

# Experiments

Work independently, use a sharpie and A4 paper.

At the top of the paper, state the hypothesis the team selected to move forward with.

Design an experiment to learn if this is true. Briefly describe it.

State how you will know if the hypothesis is valid or invalid. This can be quantitative evidence or qualitative.

How much time/money/effort will it take?

Do this 3x

Tape them all to the walls

Discuss as a group

Use three voting dots per person. Place them on the experiment frameworks that you find most appropriate given the circumstances.

# Experiment Framework

We believe people like [customer type] have a need for (or problem doing) [need/action/behavior].

The smallest thing we can do to prove that need is [experiment].

We will know we have succeeded when [quantitative/measurable outcome] or [qualitative/observable outcome].

# Smallification

Grab the three top experiments from dot-voting.

Take an experiment that was not your own and return to your table.

On a fresh sheet of paper, redesign the experiment:

WHAT WOULD YOU DO TO GET APPROXIMATELY THE SAME LEARNING ... [each person on the team chooses one time scale]

IN 2 DAYS?

IN 2 WEEKS?

IN 2 MONTHS?

Discuss the experiments as a team.

Decide which experiment to run.

# Experiments that were designed

| assumption | experiment | measurable/observable outcome |
|---|---|---|
| busy people need a service to help them get menial shit done | fb ad, neighborhood targeting presents an offer, landing page. Phone number or tweet. No out of pocket cost. | 10% ctr on ad, 10% ctr on landing page. 2 days |
| same | find busy people (in offices). Set up a “shop”. Sit in their reception and see if we can get jobs. Prevail upon friend who runs 300-person company | 5% of employees will make a hire. 1 repeat booking 2 wks |
| Similar | ad in 10 different offices, diff types of companies | 2 weeks. |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

# Things to note about the experiment & smallification workshops,

**which you probably already knew,
that are massively valuable in a startup environment.**

Progress not a function of the quality, size, or number of product releases.

**Progress is measured in learning.**

Smallification can be done by adjusting scope or fidelity.

Smaller/faster experiments are usually better.

Behavioral experiments are usually better.

Small, behavioral experiments are usually best.

Founders need to balance between size/quality and speed of learning.

The best option is often non-obvious.

The decision-maker is usually acting on belief, because there is insufficient data to decide rationally.

The decision-maker is therefore often going to be wrong.

Wrong decisions are expected and usually not fatal.

**Progress is measured in sequential cycles of learning.**

# MVP

| CUSTOMER | PROBLEM | SOLUTION |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Mary<br>32 years old<br>Professional<br>Londoner<br>Married | Mary needs more time, someone to catch her mistakes (left cell phone at the office), help cleaning the house, and help with ad-hoc temp work at the office. | You've decided to focus on running errands like dry cleaning, small purchases like dog food, and picking up/delivering items. |

Work independently using sticky notes & a sharpie, writing one idea per sticky.

Focus only on the Mary side of the marketplace. For now, you're going to use manual processes to handle the service fulfillment side.

Create 10 service/software features that should be created to support Mary's need.

Working at the wall, create a 2x2: Important/Not and Hard/Easy.

Place your stickies individually.

Remove the stickies below the line.

Together, stack rank the stickies on the right.

Decide where the cutoff is for the MVP.

# Things to note about the MVP Workshop,

## which you probably already knew, that are massively valuable in a startup environment.

Product roadmaps are worse than useless in a startup.

On-time, on-budget delivery isn't helpful if you've built the wrong thing.

We're teaching entrepreneurs to anchor product builds in a single use that maps to a customer's need.

You should the smallest possible release to deliver on the use.

Releasing something unpolished or unfinished can make designers physically ill. Push yourself to rationally evaluate how much perfection is right for the circumstance.

Smallifying a product release is easier when you approach the question incrementally and stepwise.

Focusing on a small, single-use product makes it easier to envision and design.

We're not rejecting instinct and insight. You can get your imagined solution out on paper, set it aside, and understand it more rationally after going through a broad ideation process.

# And now the big finish.

# 7 Habits of Highly Effective Startup Designers

1. Ideate with friends.
2. Go broad.
3. Say “Tell me about this one.”
4. Ask “who has the d?”
5. Make informed albeit arbitrary decisions.
6. Prove it.
7. Question perfection.

# 4 Power Tools for Startup Designers

1. Dump & Sort
2. Working at the Wall
3. Blue-tape 2x2
4. Dot-Voting