

AGILE PRODUCT RESCUE

Presenter: Mark Rajpal, M.Sc., PMP | PMI-ACP



Agile Experience Poll



None



Some



Advanced



Dangerous

The Situation

- Frustrated potential client
- Current software vendor wasn't meeting their needs
- Requested an assessment on current state
- We were selected
- Proceeded with on-site interviews and off-site analysis



The Approach



Assessment

Listened

- What are the main pain points?
- What was the journey?

Analysis

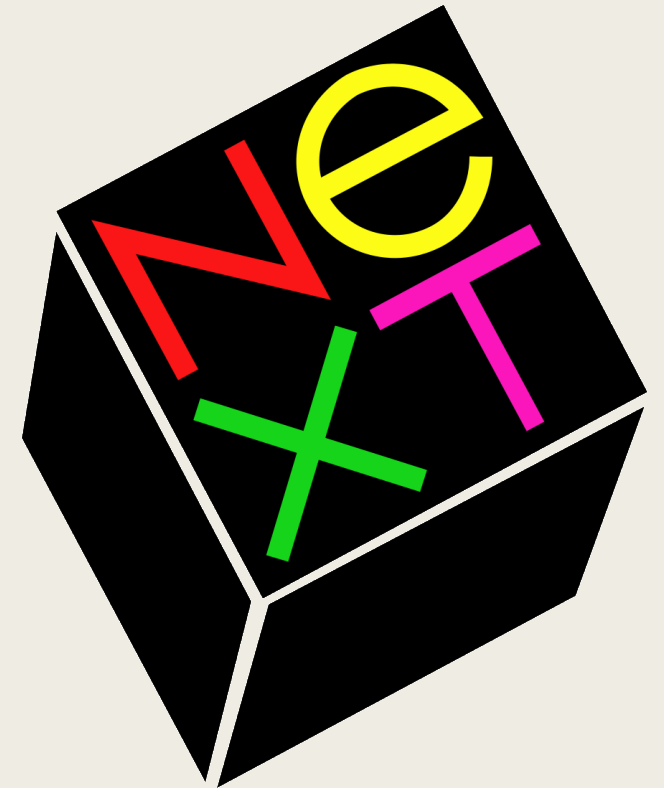
- Database
- Code
- Documentation

Report

- Over-engineered
- Lots of technical debt
- Re-write was not necessary

What next?

- Client reviewed our recommendations
- Client fired their software vendor (not our recommendation)
- Hired us. Yay!
- Proceeded to replace the old vendor



Vendor Replacement

Production

(Old Vendor to Client)

Procured New
Hardware

Installed the Software

Switchover

DR Site

(3rd Party to New Vendor)

Utilized current
Infrastructure

Installed the Software

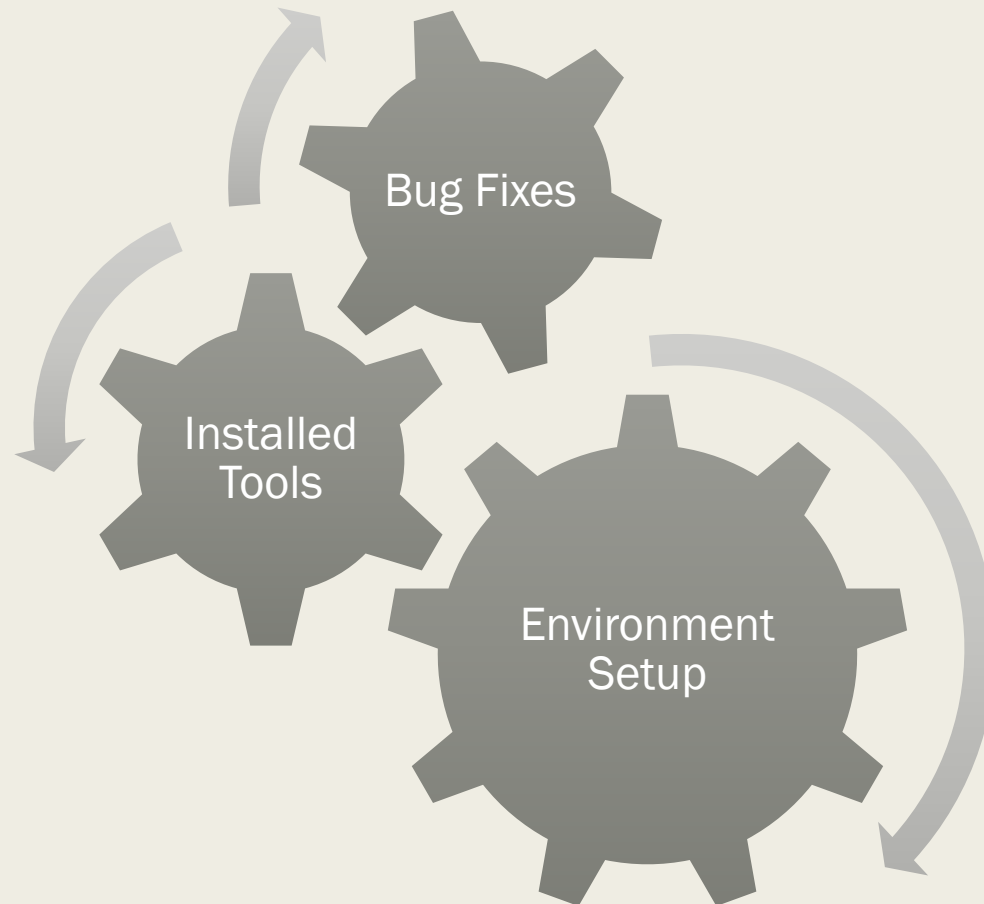
Tested Replication

Results

- Client was relieved to be rid of their former vendor
- We were happy having delivered something tangible
- PASS



Initial Delivery



Result

- Delivered this phase late, mostly due to added tools
- Bug fixes were delivered in a Waterfall fashion
- The team was unhappy
- FAIL



Why?

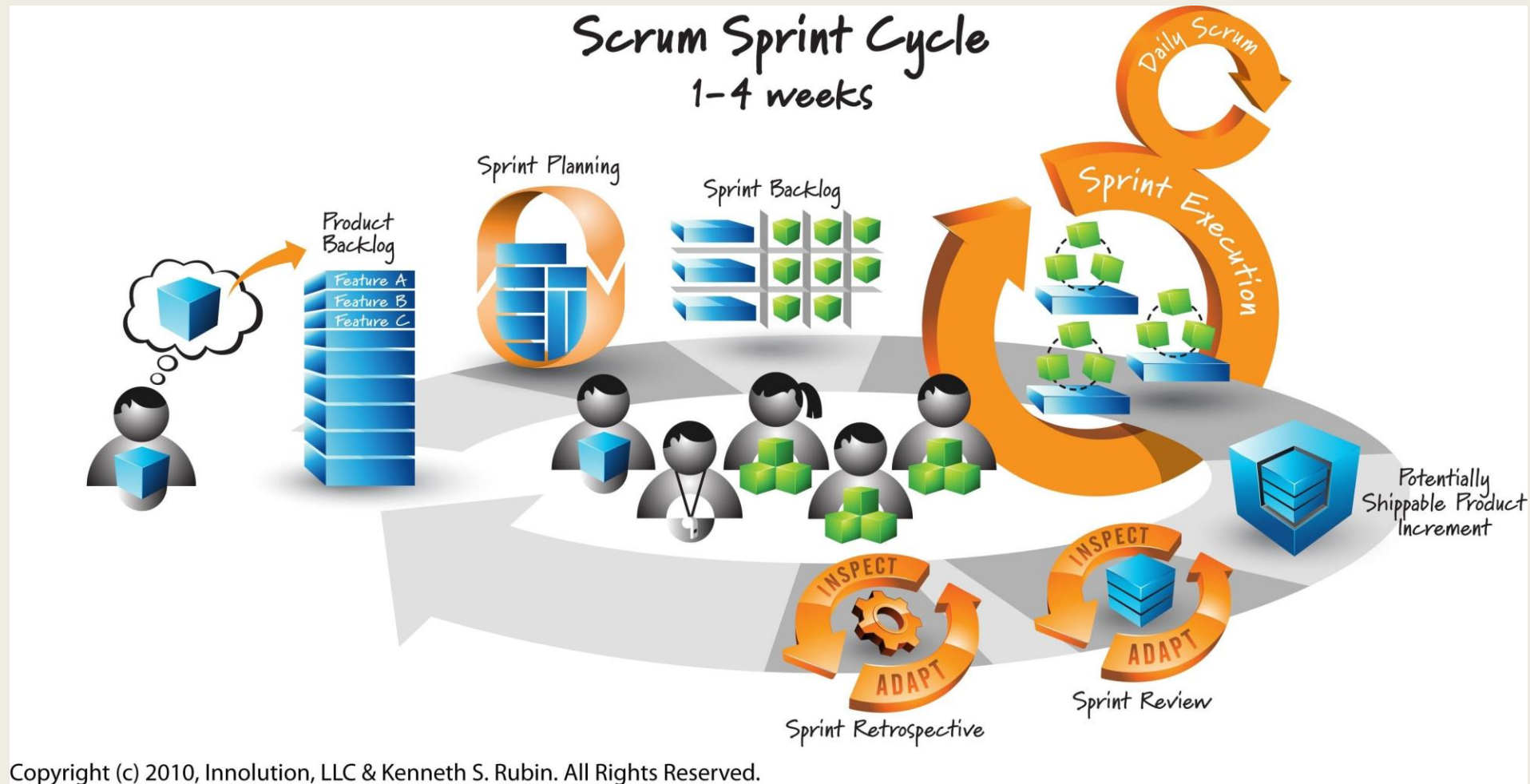
- Weekly status meetings where the PM wanted to update the % Complete on MS Project
- Progress was slow
- Disconnected from the client
- Didn't feel like a team
- It wasn't fun



Next Steps

- Agreed that we wanted to try Agile
- Discussed with our PM:
 - *“Agile doesn’t work”*
 - *“The client will never go for it”*
- Discussed with the client who agreed we should try it:
 - *“Agile is similar to the way we currently work”*
 - *“We like the idea of trying something new because the old way didn’t work”*
- Developed a Release Plan

Agile Delivery



Agile Delivery

Getting Started

- Didn't request training because we knew it wouldn't get approved
- Provided a quick Agile 101 overview
- Proceeded to Sprint 1

Out of the Gate

- Exceeded our target of 50 story points
- Adhered to the Scrum ceremonies
- Delivered often

How did we do?

- Got better and better
- Our team stories seemed to accumulate interest
- Best sprint, 476 story points

The Unexpected...

- Client participation was amazing:
 - *Embraced the Product Owner role*
 - *Dedicated Tester at all times*
 - *Participated in Daily Scrums*
- Pair programming just happened
- Distributed team communicated well
- Delivered the release plan 3 months early

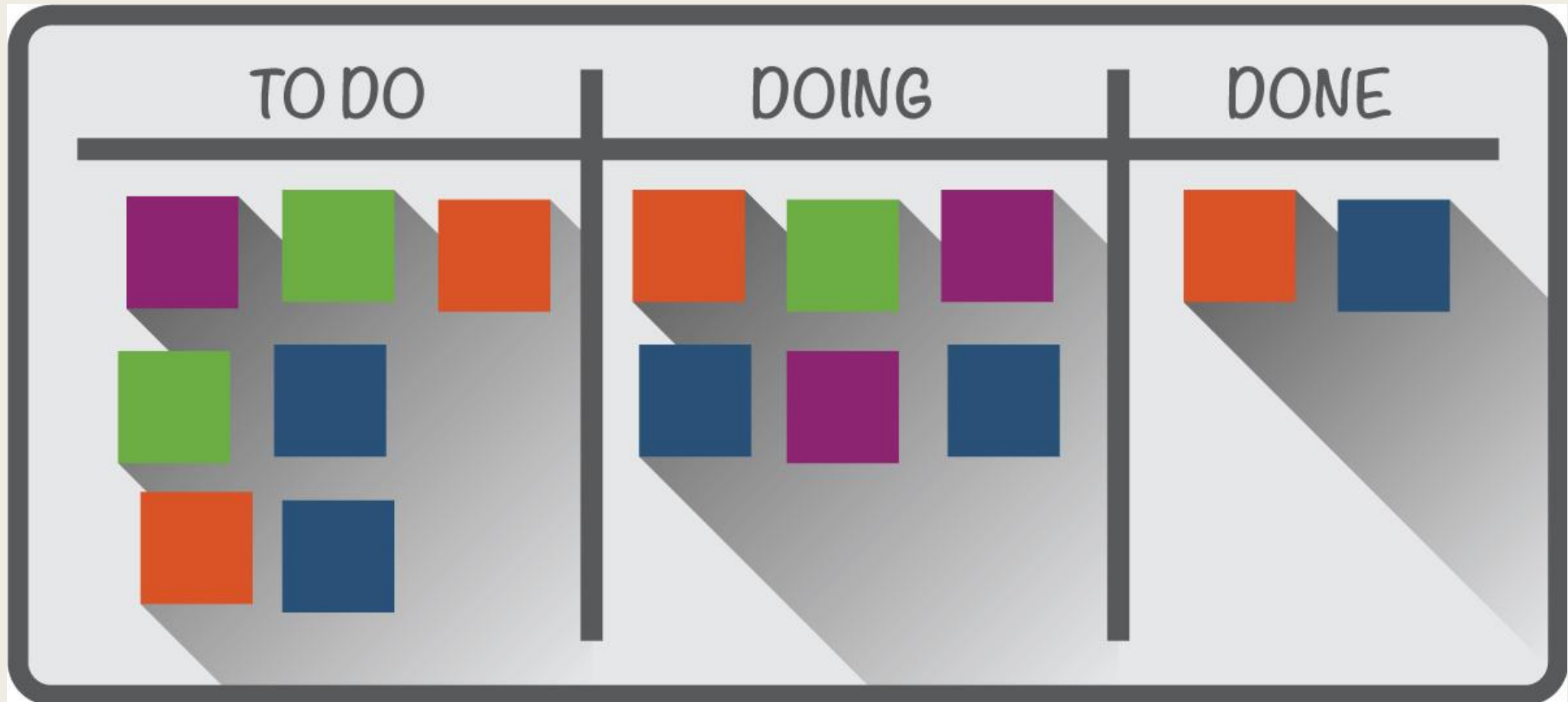


Crossing the finish line

- Final sprint focused on 'quality'
 - *Automated Tests*
 - *Client trusted us to make the right decision*
- Nobody was stressed out
- The team ended with:
 - *Increased confidence*
 - *Additional/Improved technical skills*
 - *Understanding of Agile*



Support



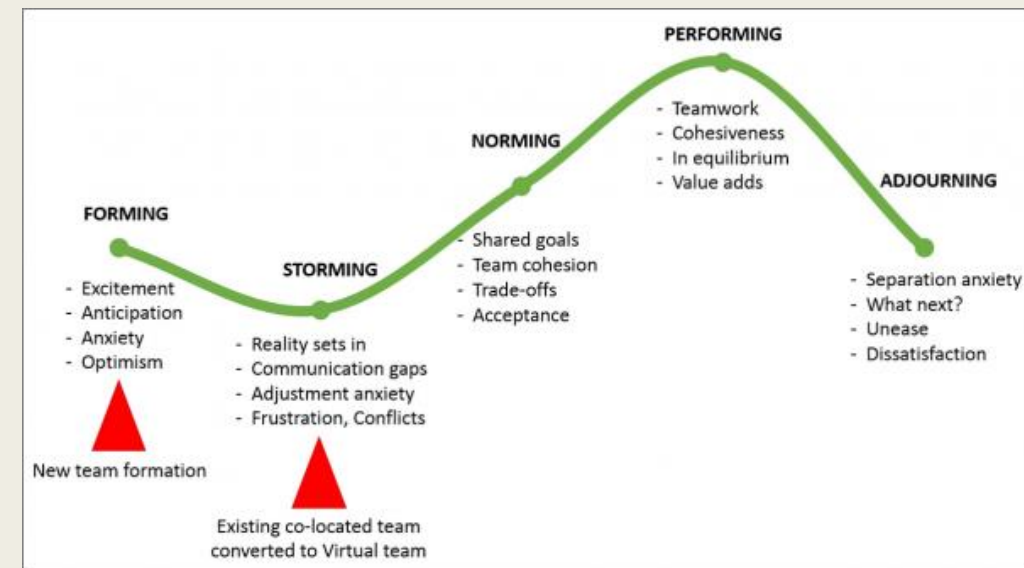
Support Model

- Switched to Kanban
- Utilized 1 resource from the team
- No iterations
 - *Fix & Deploy strategy*



Afterwards...

- Former team members reported they were undergoing adjourning/mourning (i.e. Tuckman)
 - *Weren't having fun on their new non-Agile assignments*
- Some turnover in the support role
 - *Mitigated by filling it with former team members*
 - *Still continue to struggle with this*



LESSONS LEARNED

- Keep a high performing team together
- Add automated tests as you go
 - *It's easier and saves time*
 - *You may not have the luxury of adding it at the end*
- Change up the Retrospectives
 - *Different facilitators/activities/venue*



LESSONS LEARNED

- Frequent travel
 - *e.g. once a month for sprint planning/review/retrospective*
 - *Team dinner*
 - *Face-to-face with the client is also important*
- Communication Tools
 - *IM*
 - *Email*
 - *GoToMeeting, etc.*
 - *Speakerphone (not the Polycom ☹)*



Real Life Conference Call

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DYu_bGbZiiQ



Final Thoughts

- It's not just about the **Client** getting what they want
- It's not just about the **Vendor** looking good and making a profit
- It's also about the happiness of the **Team**

■ **A HAPPY TEAM DELIVERS RESULTS!!!**



That's all Folks!