

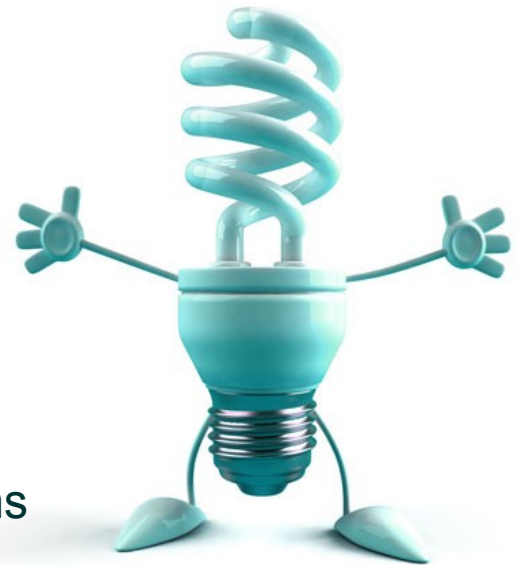
Why do usability problems go unfixed?

Caroline Jarrett and Francis Rowland
UXBristol 2012

Thanks to Steve Krug

“But the light bulb
has to want to
change”

Why do the most serious usability problems
we uncover often go unfixed?



<http://www.slideshare.net/SteveKrug/upa-lightbulb>

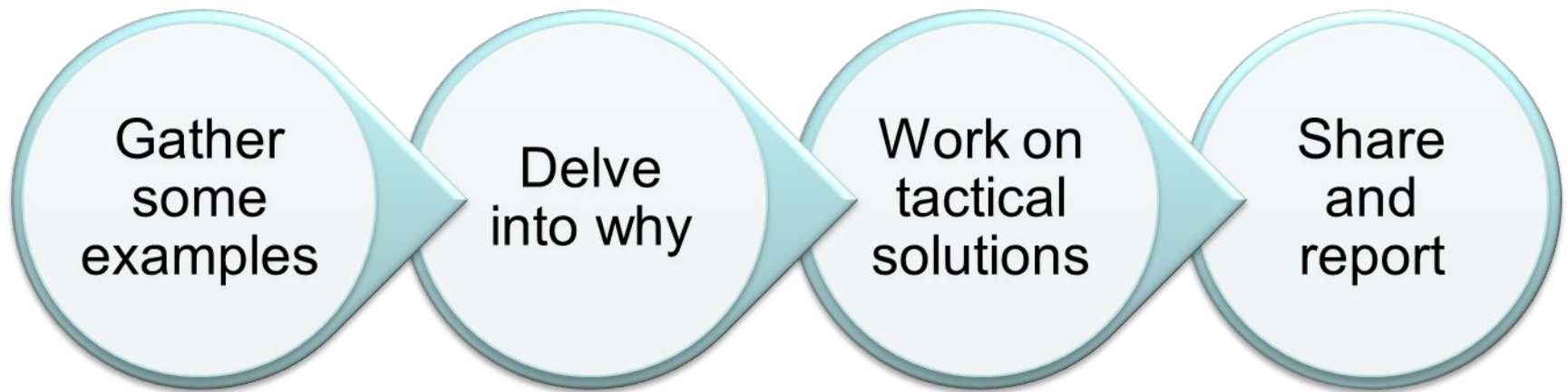
We are Caroline and Francis

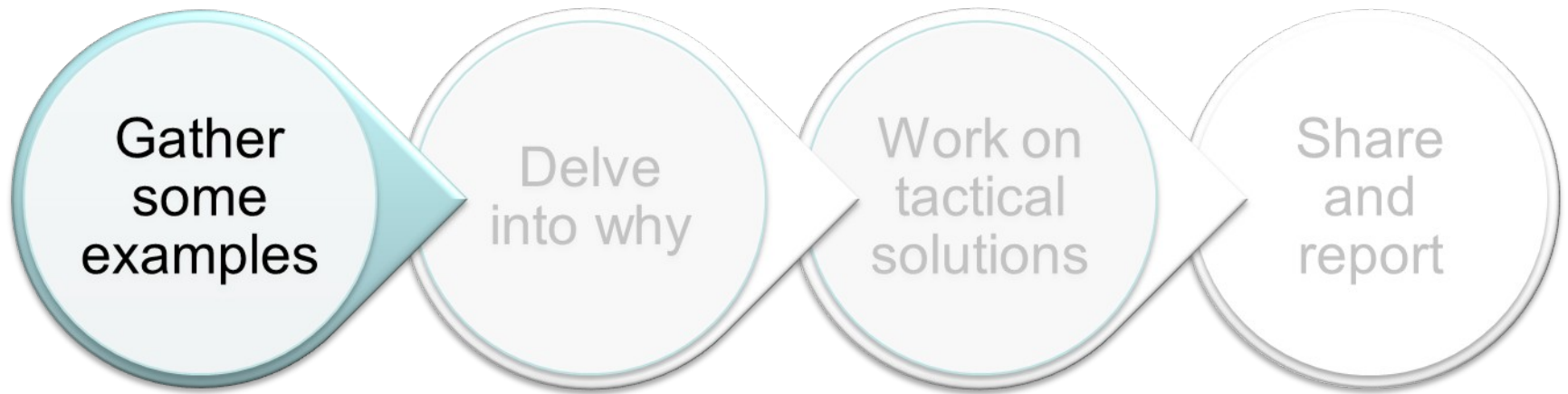
	Caroline	Francis
What do you do?	UX consultant, mostly working with the Open University	UX designer, background in web design and science
OK but what do you love to do ?	Work on big complex complicated worthy things. (But my real favourite: tax forms)	Help scientists share data and knowledge in useful, usable ways
What's your motto?	"What's the scope for change?"	"What problem are you trying to solve?"
What got you into this 'light bulb' thing?	Change in big complex complicated worthy organisations never happens as quickly as I'd like it to	Usability issues can get buried under "everything else we have to do".

Who are you?

You	Your neighbour
What do you do?	
OK but what do you love to do ?	
What's your motto?	
What got you into this 'light bulb' thing?	

What we're going to do in this workshop





We'll share a story...

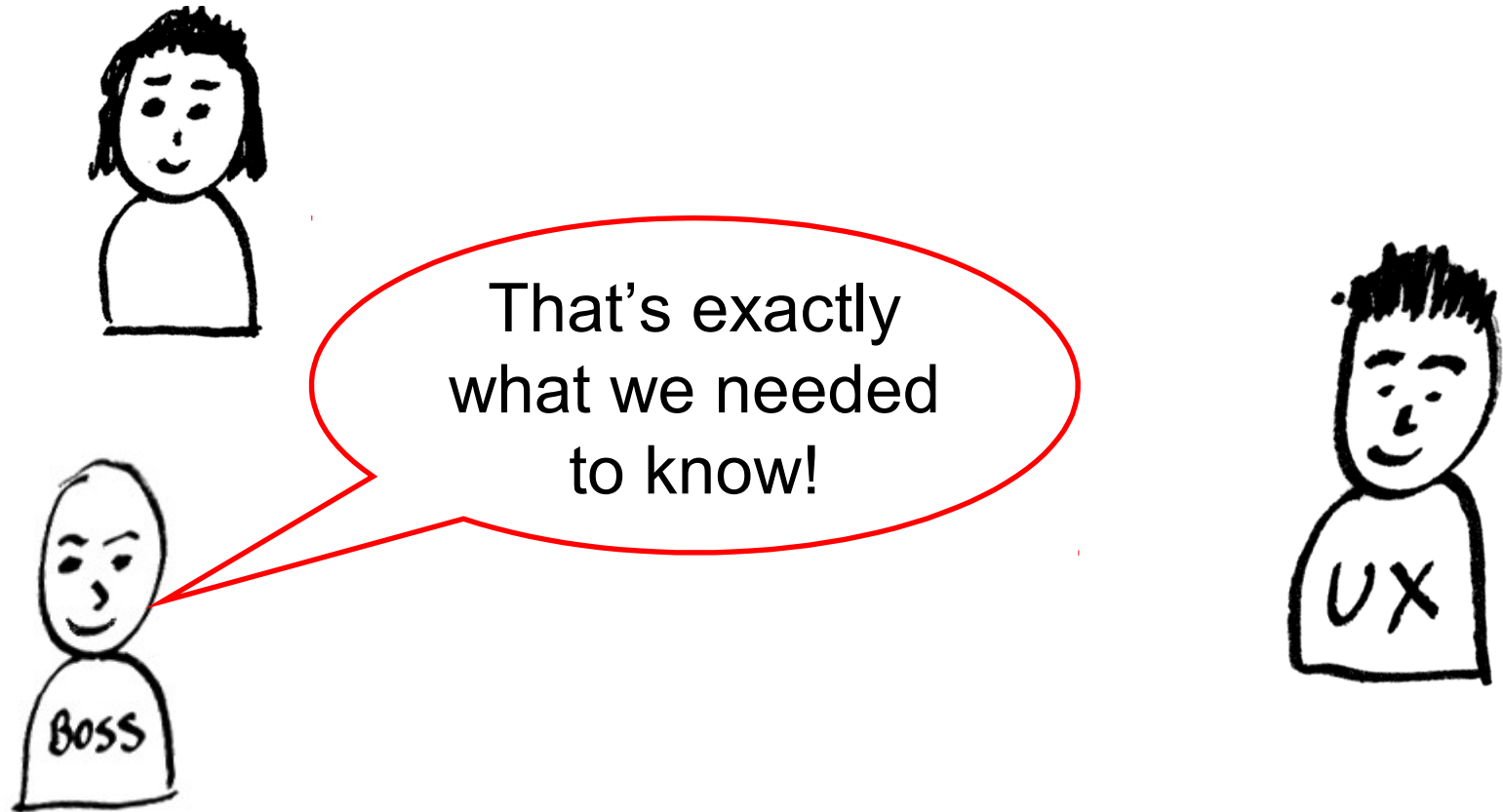
You work hard to find serious usability problems



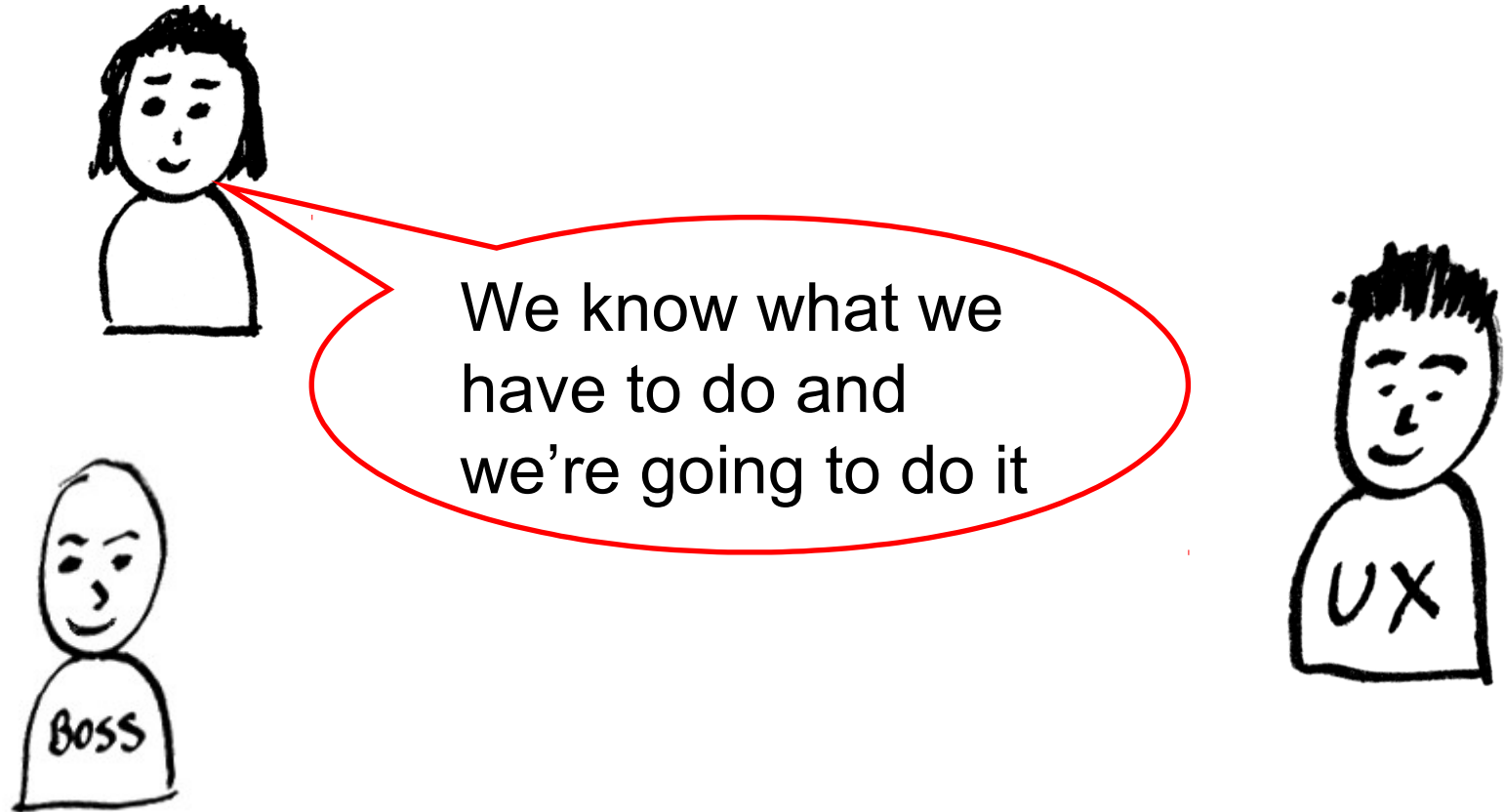
You present your findings to the client/team



They love your findings and recommendations



Everyone agrees on the changes



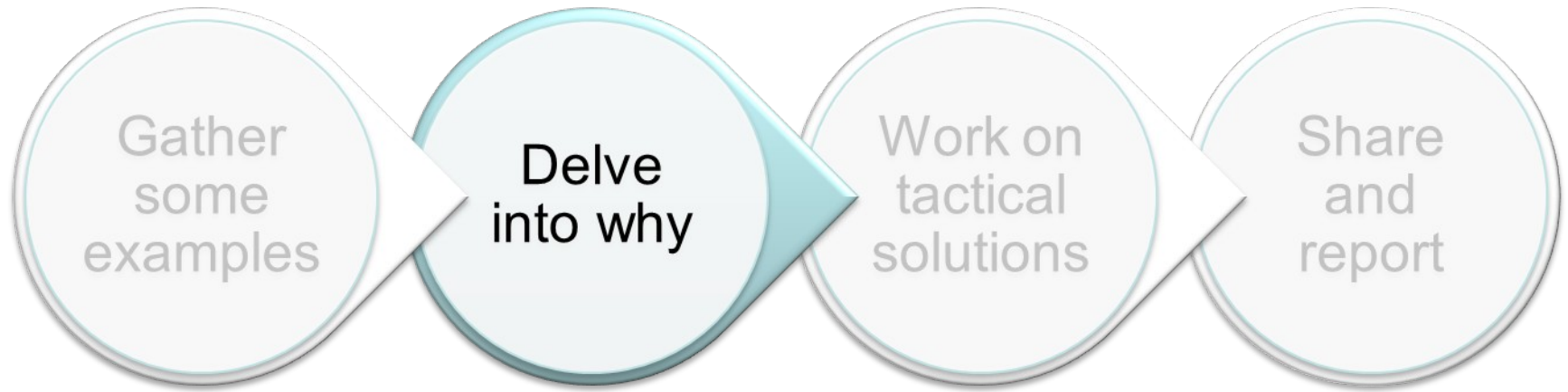
Months/years later, the same problems still exist

If only I could find out
where to sign in...





- If this has happened to you, share your story with your neighbour
 - If it has never happened to you, give your neighbour a chance to share two examples. Or more.



**Steve and Caroline
did a survey**

We're interested in cases where

- you ran or were part of a usability test or expert review
- based on your findings, you made a recommendation for what you considered to be an important change, and
- the client/stakeholders/team agreed, but
- the change never got made.

1. Has this ever happened to you?

- ☐ Yes, this has happened to me a lot.
- ☐ Yes, this has happened to me occasionally.
- ☐ Yes, but only rarely.
- ☐ Never. (Please skip to question 6)

Any comments?

2. Please tell us about an example when this happened to you

We asked people why it happened (12 options)

3. Were any of these among the reasons why the change never got made?

Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Not enough time
- ☐ Too much else to do
- ☐ Not enough resources
- ☐ Required too big a change to a business process
- ☐ Technical team said it couldn't be done
- ☐ Team did not have enough power to make it happen
- ☐ Conflicted with decision maker's belief or opinion
- ☐ No effective decision maker
- ☐ Disagreements emerged later
- ☐ Deferred until next major update/redesign
- ☐ Other events intervened before change could happen
- ☐ Legal department objected

Any other reasons or comments?

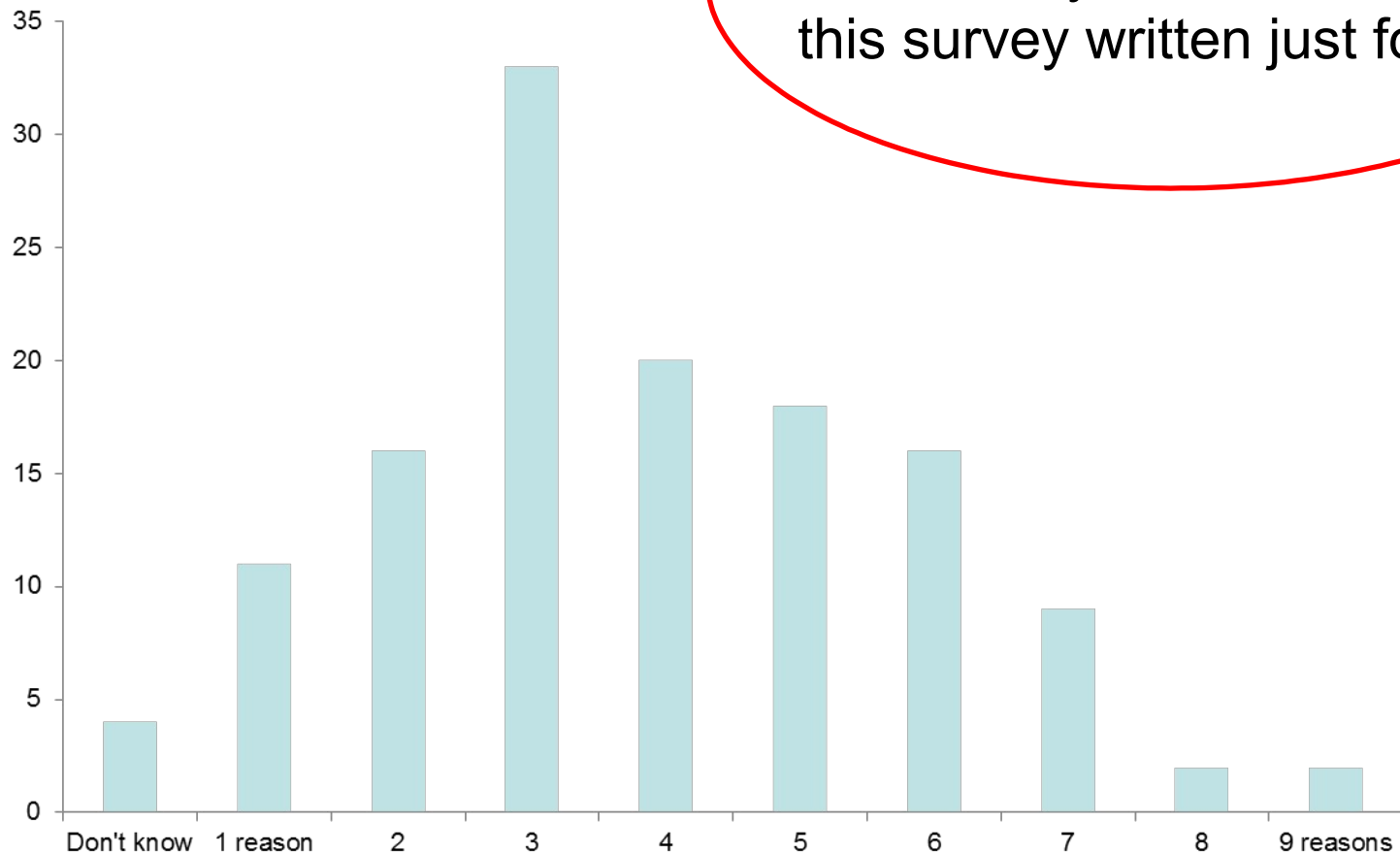


Which one do you think is most frequent?

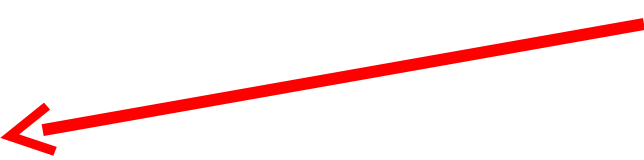
- Not enough time
- Too much else to do
- Not enough resources
- Required too big a change to a business process
- Technical team said it couldn't be done
- Team did not have enough power to make it happen
- Conflicted with decision maker's belief or opinion
- No effective decision maker
- Disagreements emerged later
- Deferred until next major update/redesign
- Other events intervened before change could happen
- Legal department objected

Most people chose lots of reasons

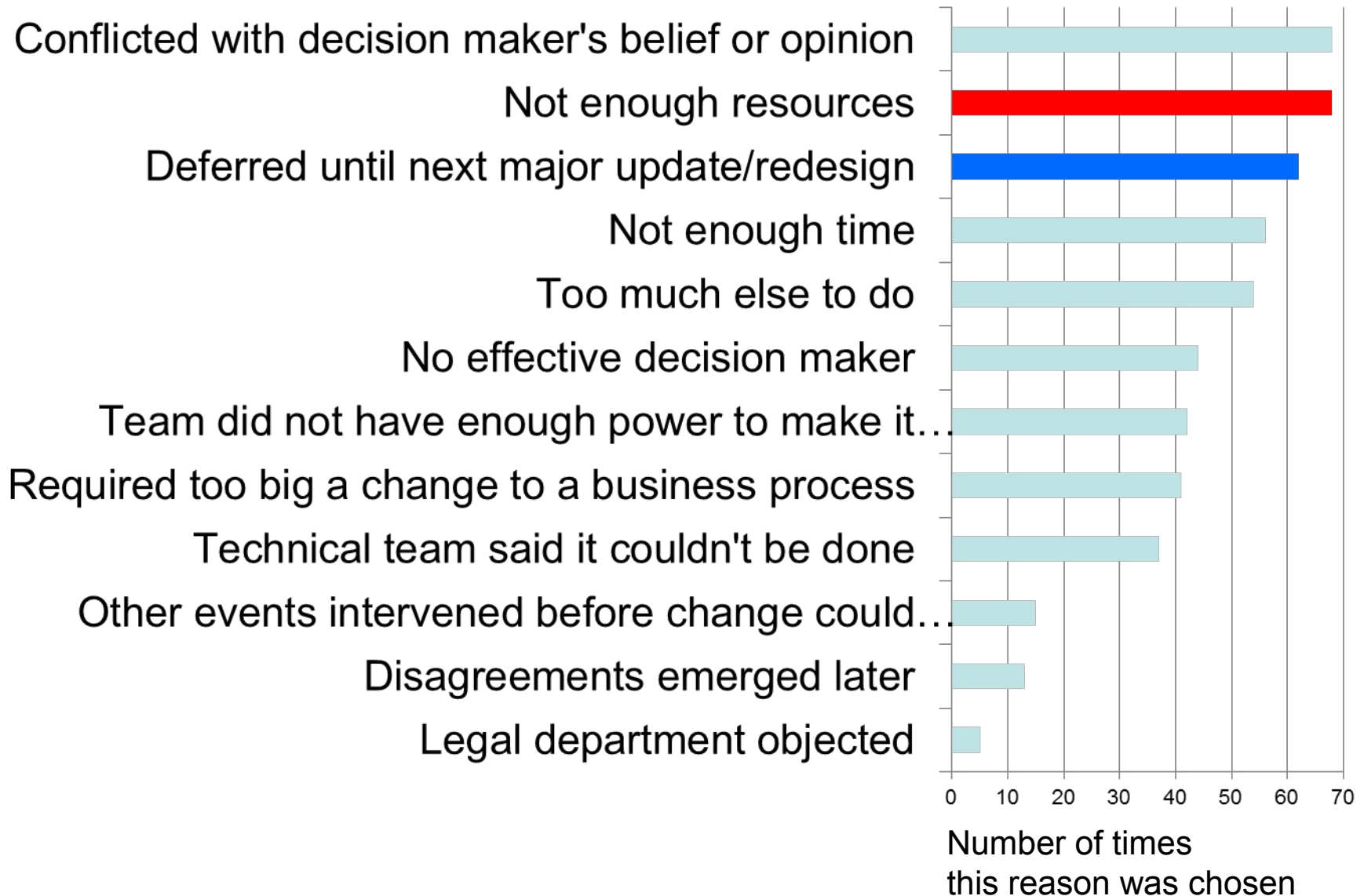
“I could have checked off just about every one of these. Was this survey written just for me?”

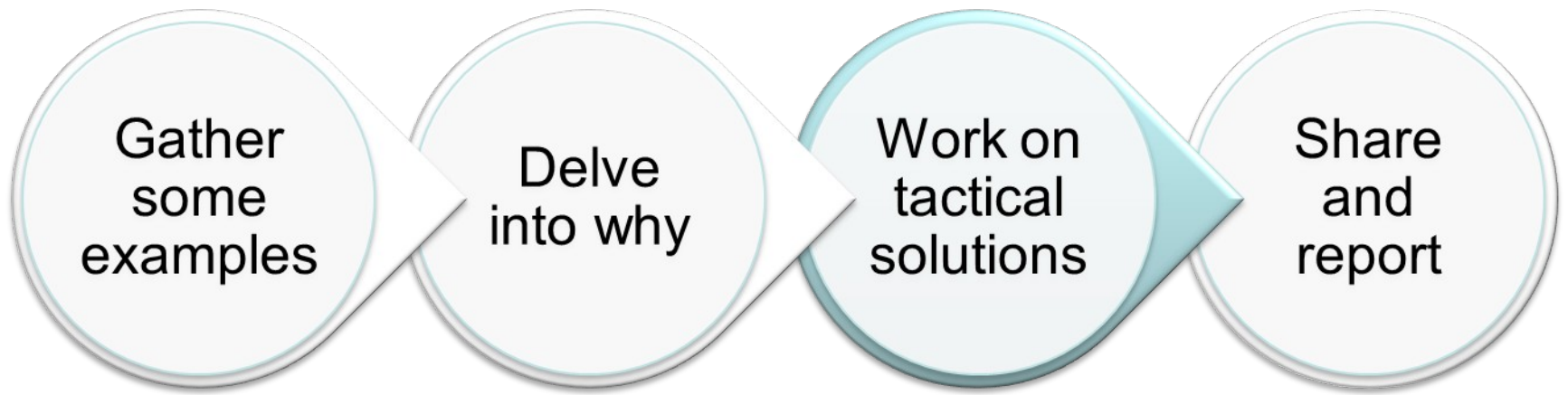


Steve and Caroline's picks for most frequent

- Not enough time
- Too much else to do
- Not enough resources  Steve
- Required too big a change to a business process
- Technical team said it couldn't be done
- Team did not have enough power to make it happen
- Conflicted with decision maker's belief or opinion
- No effective decision maker
- Disagreements emerged later
- Deferred until next major update/redesign  Caroline
- Other events intervened before change could happen
- Legal department objected

We underestimated the politics





So, what can we do?

The four stages of usability problem discovery

■ Prepare



■ Test



■ Report



■ Act





Work on
tactical
solutions

3-12-3 activity overview

3 minutes

Individually

Lots of ideas

12 minutes

Team

Pool, group,
turn into tactics

3 minutes

Spokesperson

Present ideas
to the workshop



Work on
tactical
solutions

3 minutes
Individual

Politics

Not enough time / resources

Leave it until redesign

Too small / not important

Technical problems

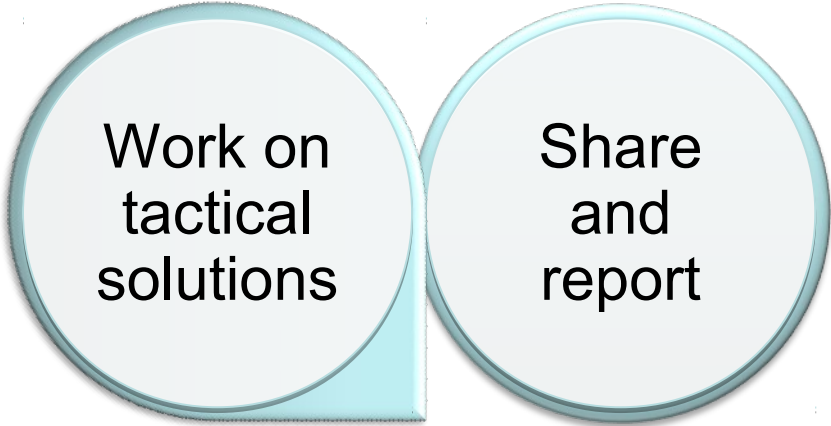
Conflict (in-team; with managers)



Work on
tactical
solutions

12 minutes
Team

Pool those ideas
Group them: any themes?
Turn them into tactics

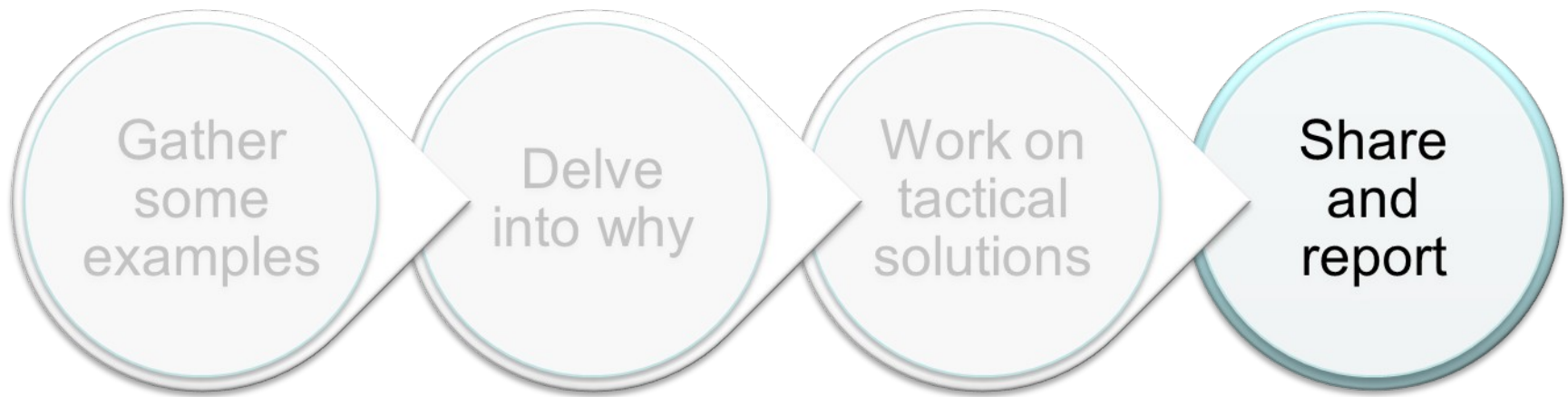


Work on
tactical
solutions

Share
and
report

3 minutes
Spokesperson

Tell us all about the results



**Ideas from our survey
respondents – in themes**

Theme: Do nothing

- Accept the situation
 - ▶ “Sometimes recommendations don't get realized.”
 - ▶ “Clients don't have to follow our advice”
 - ▶ “I'll chant some Oms”



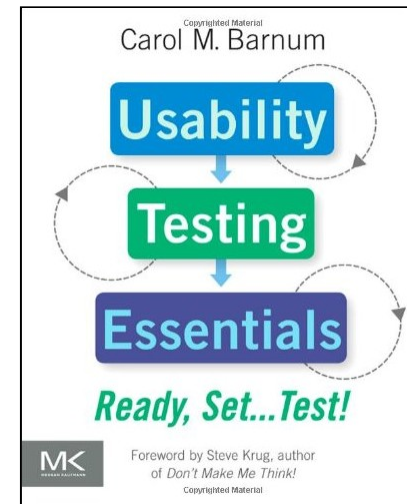
Theme: Choose better clients or a better job

- “Become more efficient at choosing who I accept as clients”
- “Work for a company that gave a fig about UX”



Theme: Do basic UX better

- Do testing earlier
- Make stakeholders watch the sessions
- Present results better
 - ▶ More explanations
 - ▶ Use video clips



Theme: Think about the impact on developers

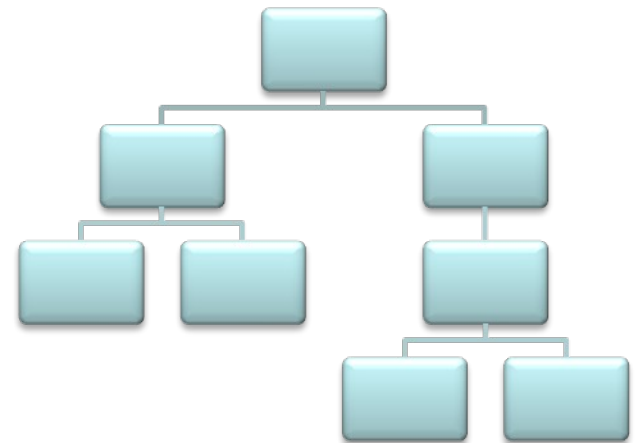
- “redefine problem as interaction bug”
- “have a role in the implementation team”
- “don’t spring surprises on them”



Image credit: Effortmark Ltd

Theme: Get better at politics

- Get decision-maker support
- Understand priorities
- “Get more buy-in. Explain changes to a sponsor. Argue the case. Make it harder to NOT do the change”.



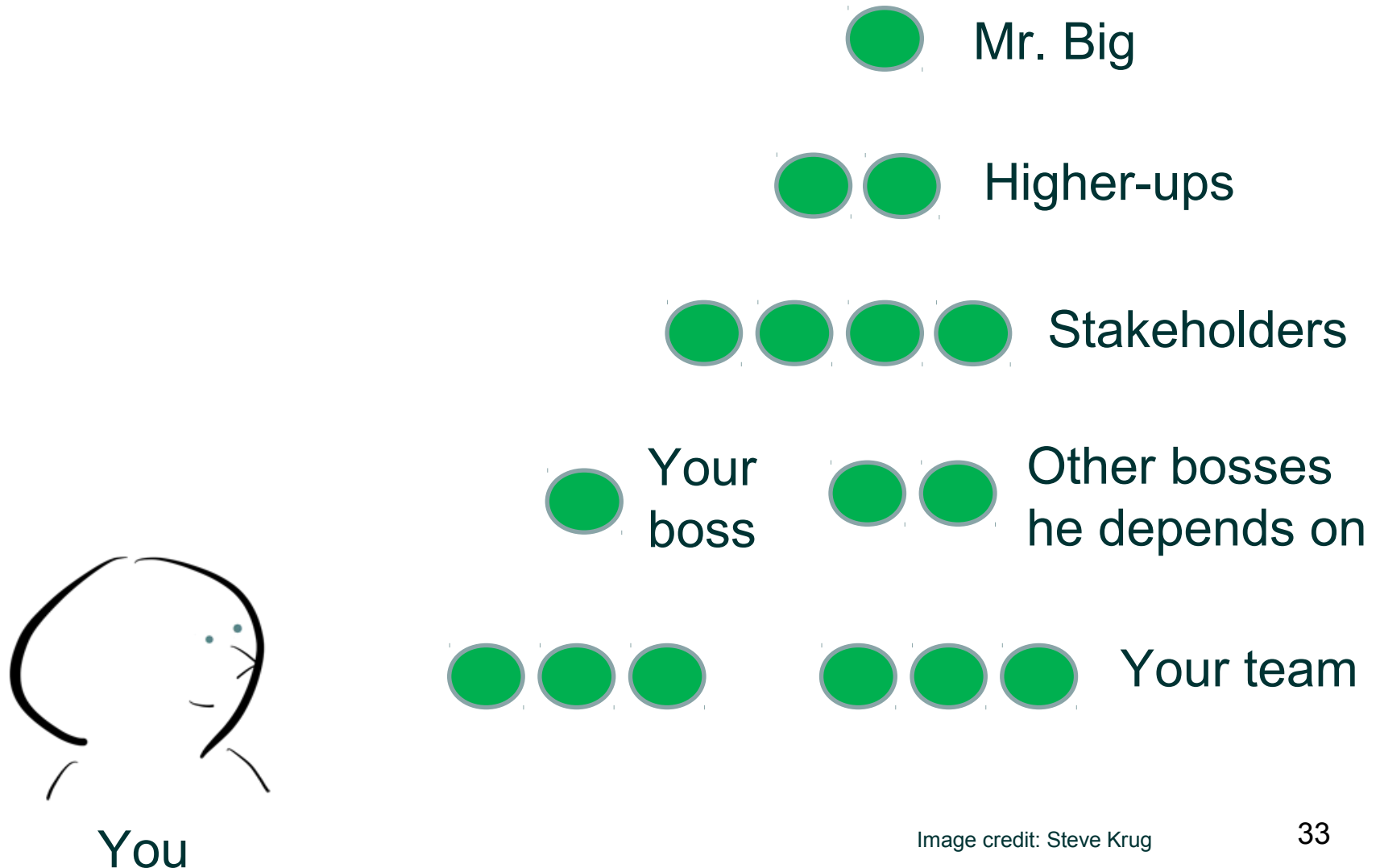
Steve's recipe

(greatly shortened) * :

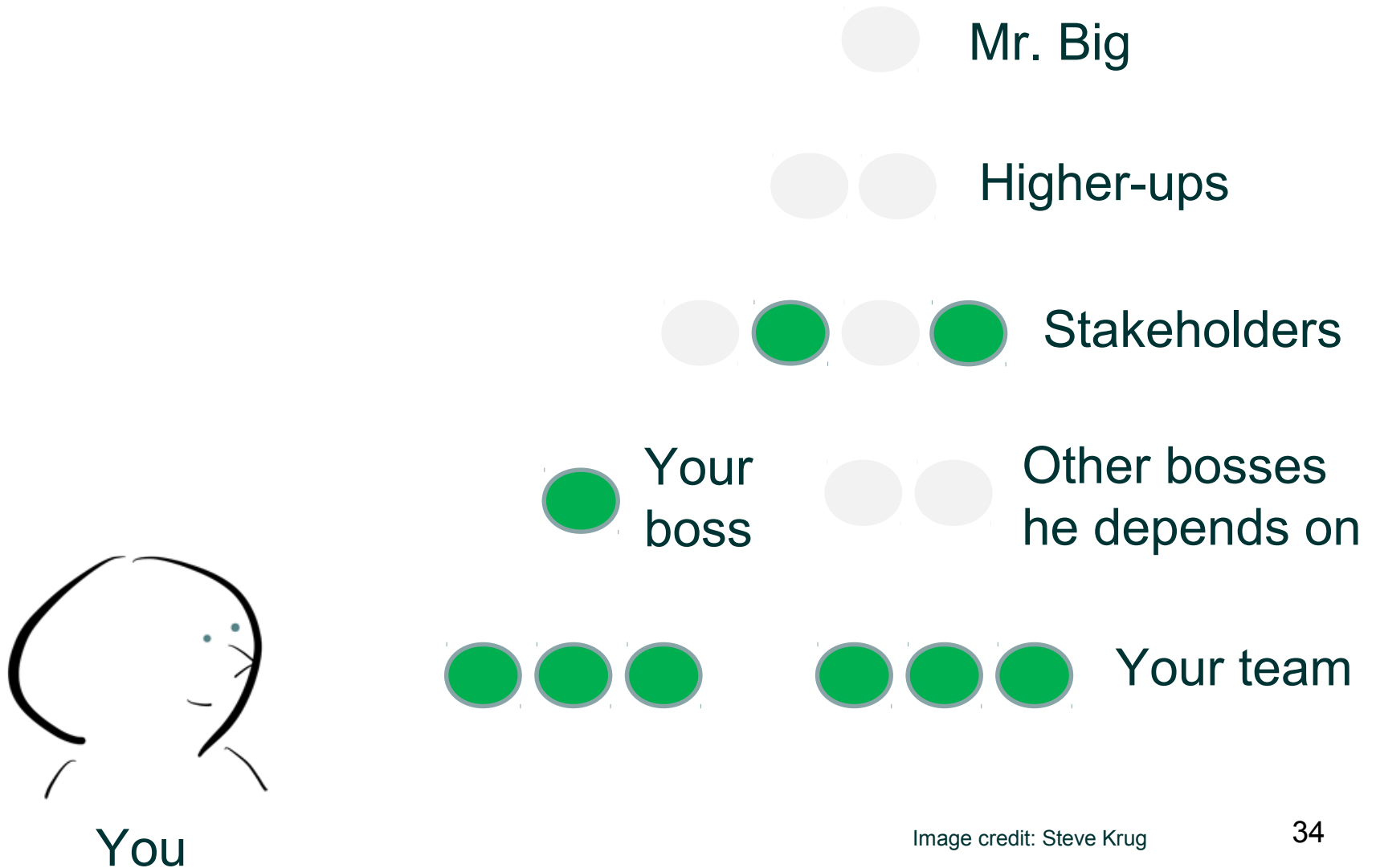
Fly under the radar

*For the full version, please see
<http://www.slideshare.net/SteveKrug/upa-lightbulb>

Don't try to convince everybody



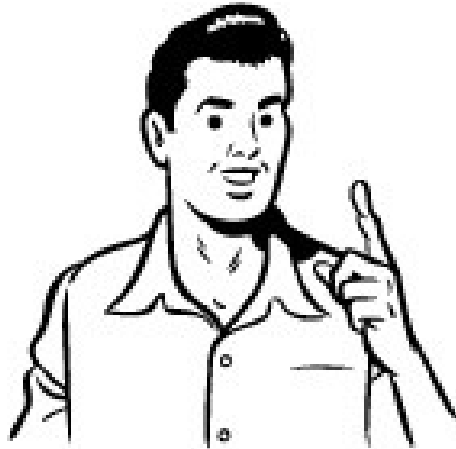
Ideally...



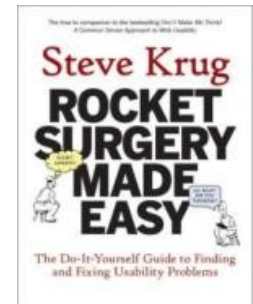
i.e., the people you can get in an observation room



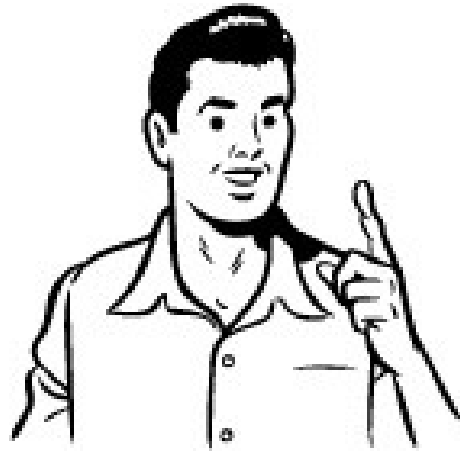
Keep them focused on the worst problems



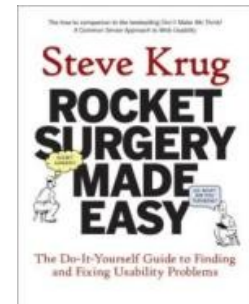
Focus ruthlessly on a small number of the most important problems.



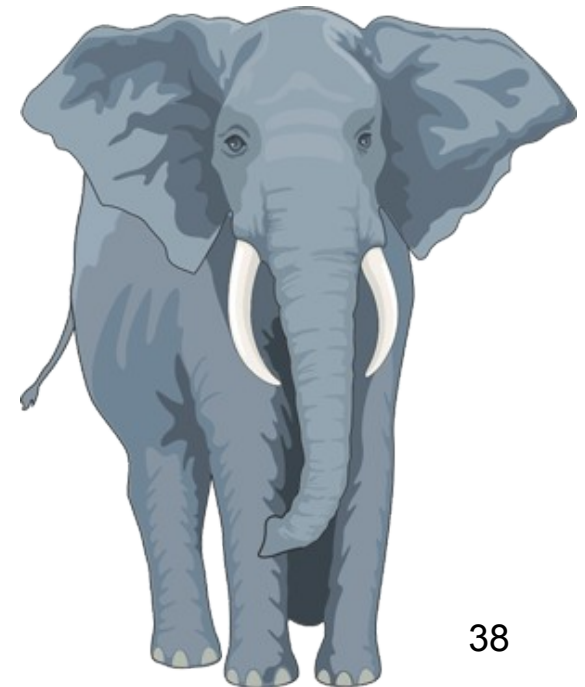
Tweak, don't redesign



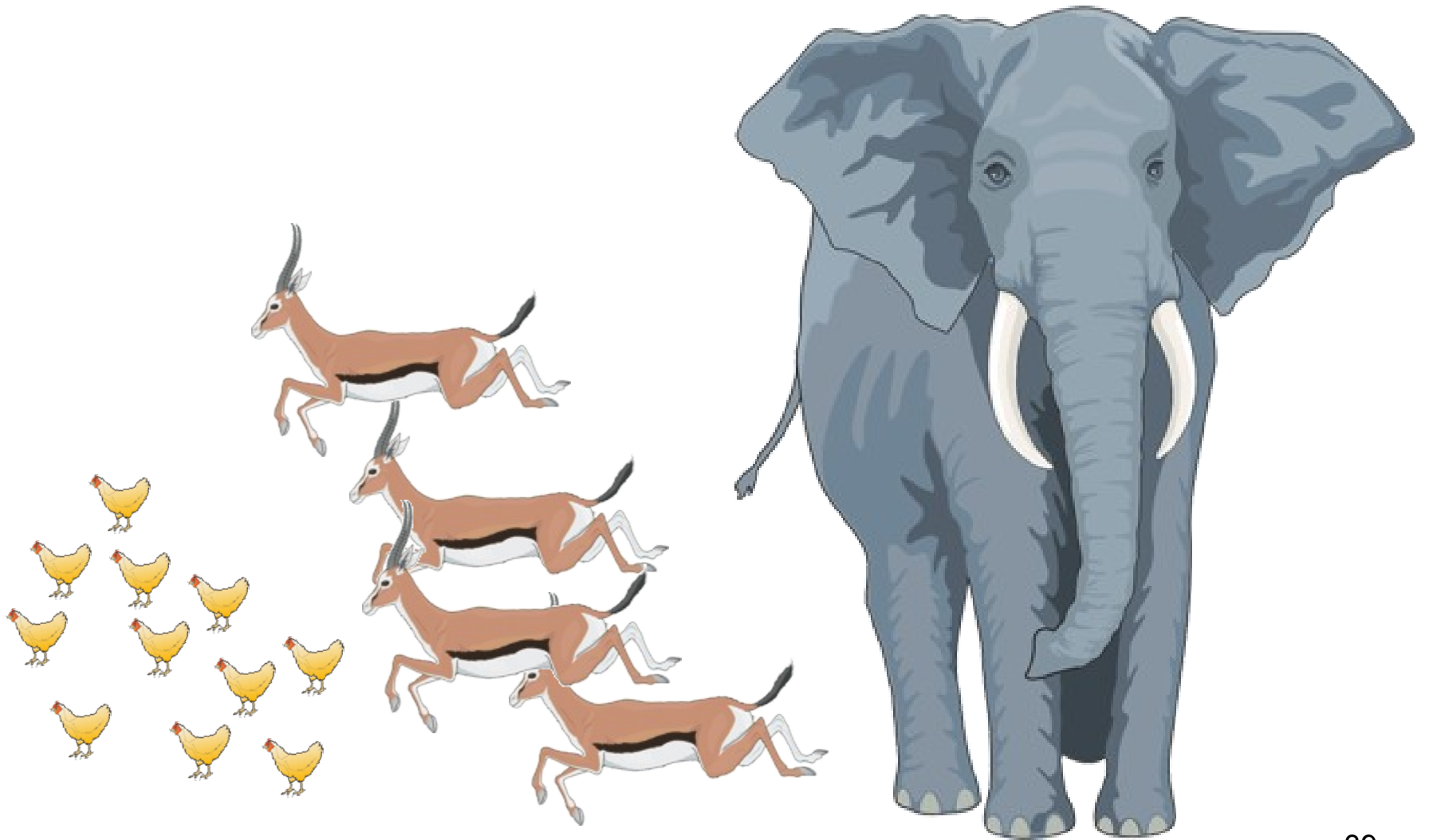
**When fixing problems,
always do the
least you can do™.**



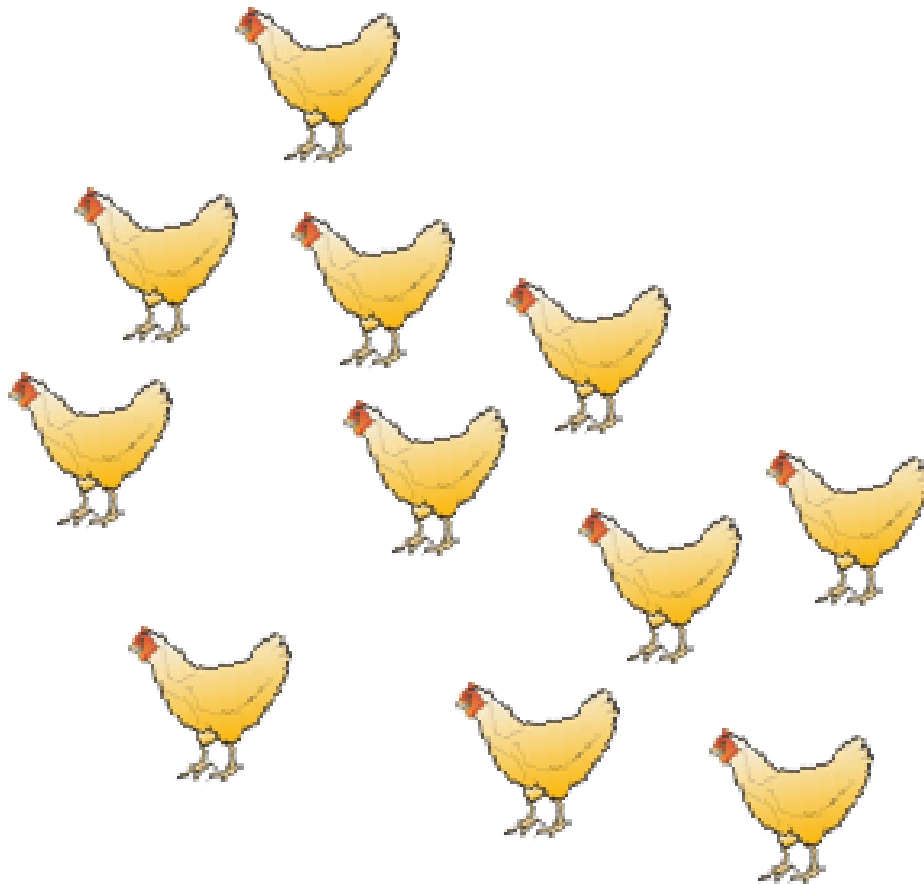
Caroline responds...
about the most
important problem



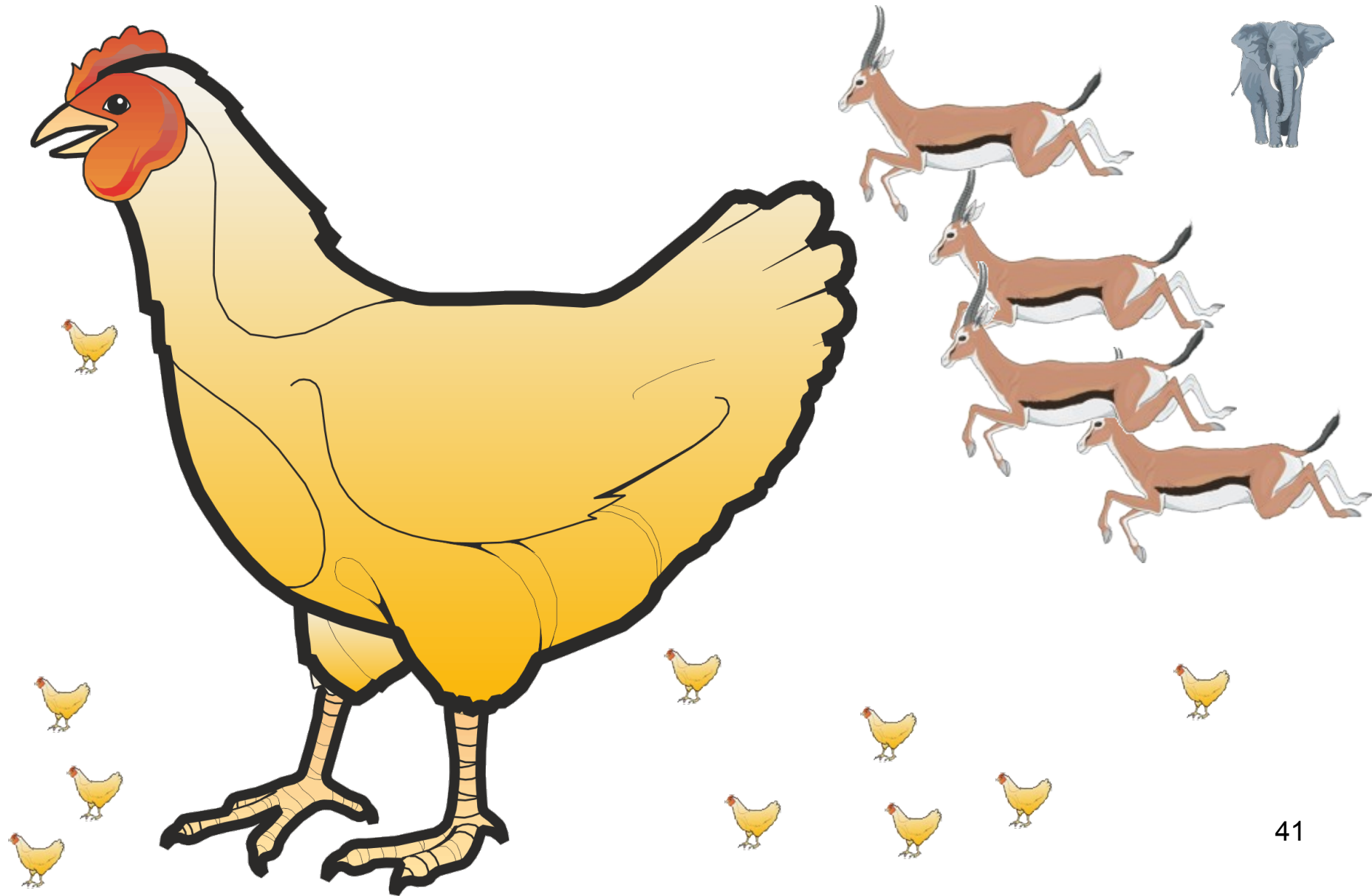
Eat now, eat soon, or eat an elephant?



Sometimes teams need a success experience



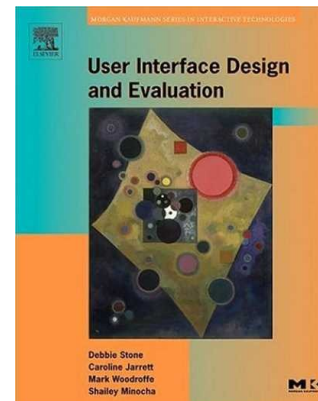
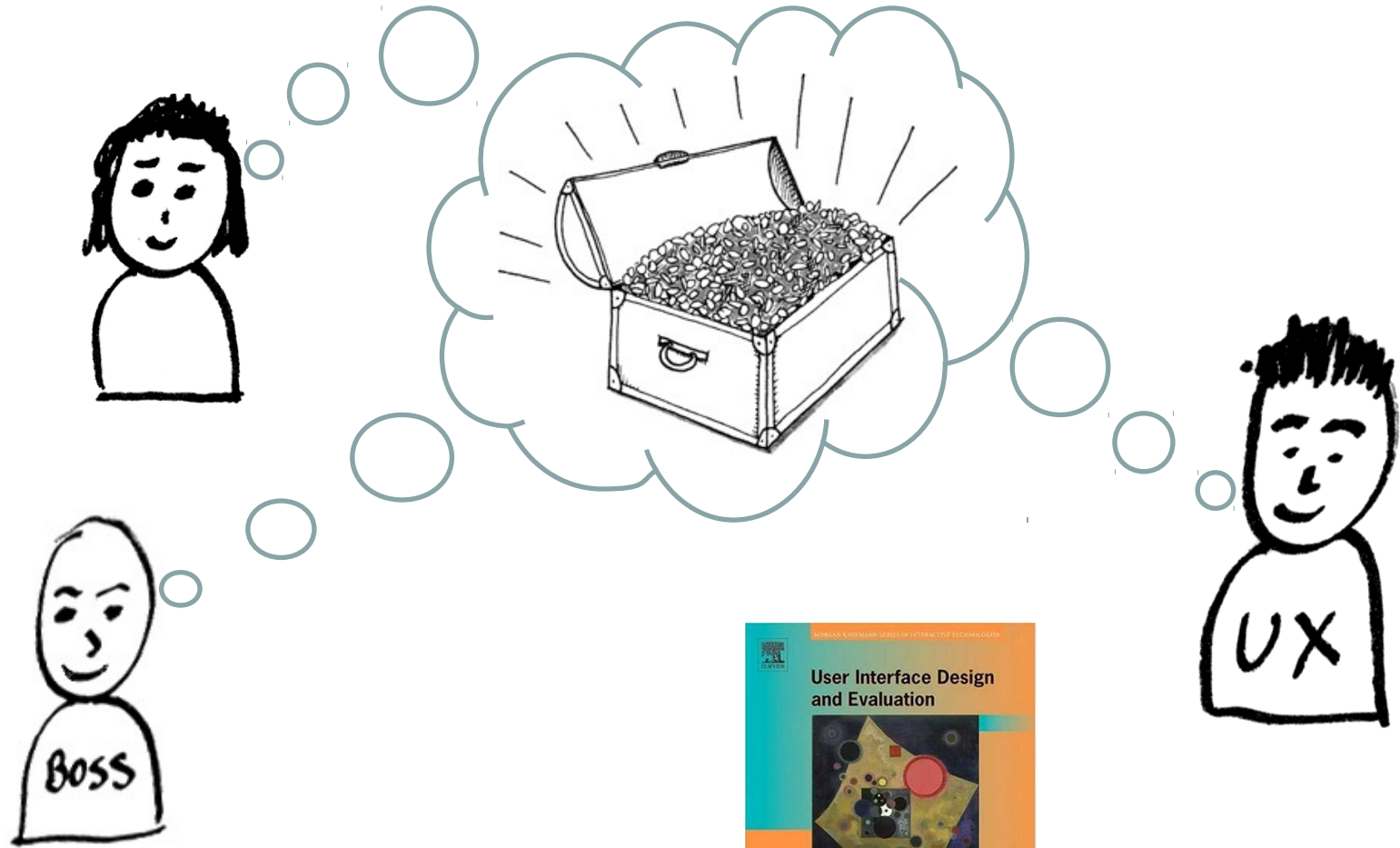
Sometimes users have a different perspective



We have different ideas about rewards



Look for success in everybody's terms



Don't call their baby ugly, let them learn it's ugly



And Francis has
suggestions

You're not ready for love (or usability testing)

■ Is your organisation ready for this?

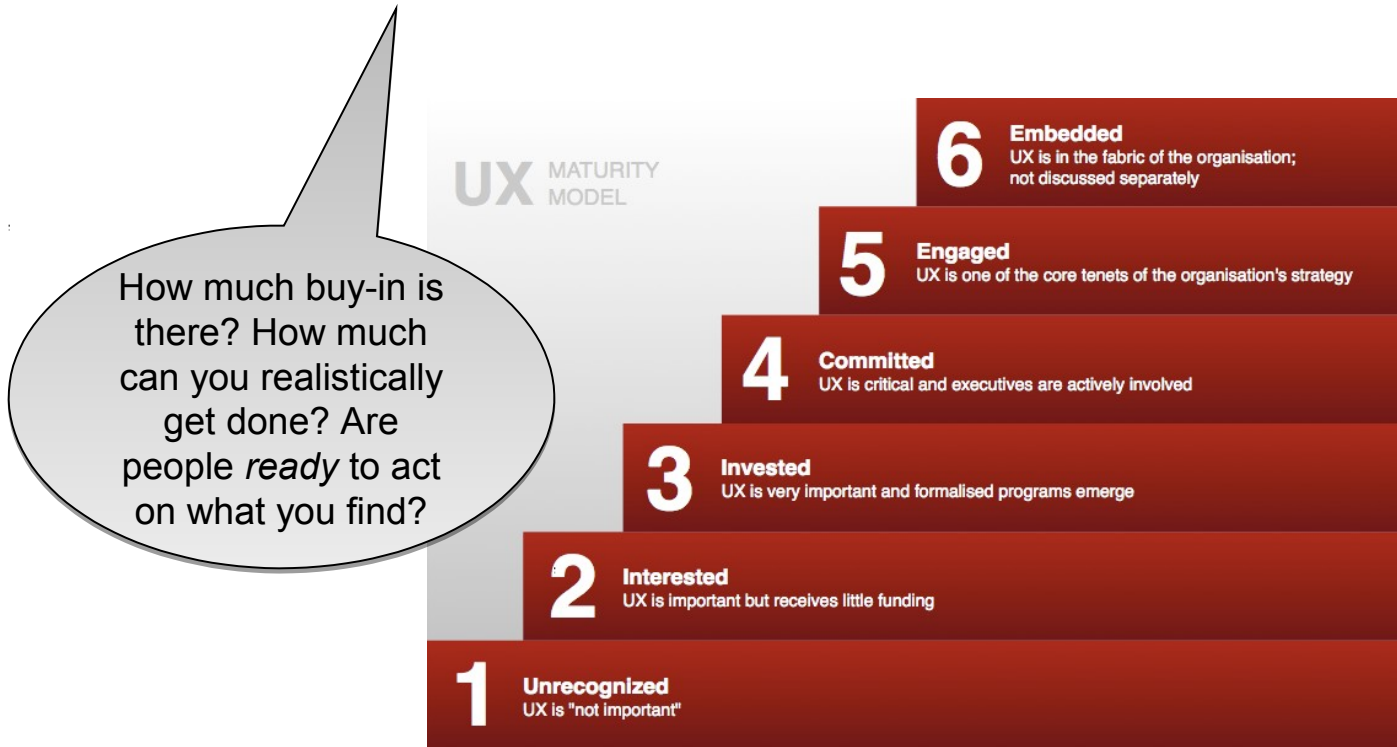


Image credit: Renato Feijó – *Planning your UX strategy*

See also presentations and articles from
Michele Ide-Smith and Tomer Sharon

Report through the accepted channels

- Helpdesk, bug-tracking, post-its on a whiteboard...

Use whatever works
best for the team...
make it visible and
actionable

Home Tickets Tools Logged in as jesse RT for example.com BEST PRACTICAL

RT at a glance New ticket in General Search...

10 highest priority tickets I own

Subject	Priority	Queue	Status
has run out of coffee!	0	Office	(pending 1 other ticket)
coffee	0	Office	(pending 2 other tickets)

My reminders

Quick search

Queue	new	open	stalled
General	2	-	-
Office	1	1	-

Dashboards

RT System's dashboards	Subscription
SLA Performance	daily at 6:00 AM

Refresh

Don't refresh this page. Go!

Bookmarked Tickets

#	Subject	Priority	Queue	Status
4	Evaluate responses to RFP for coffee roasts	0	General	new

Quick ticket creation

Subject:

Queue: General Owner: Me

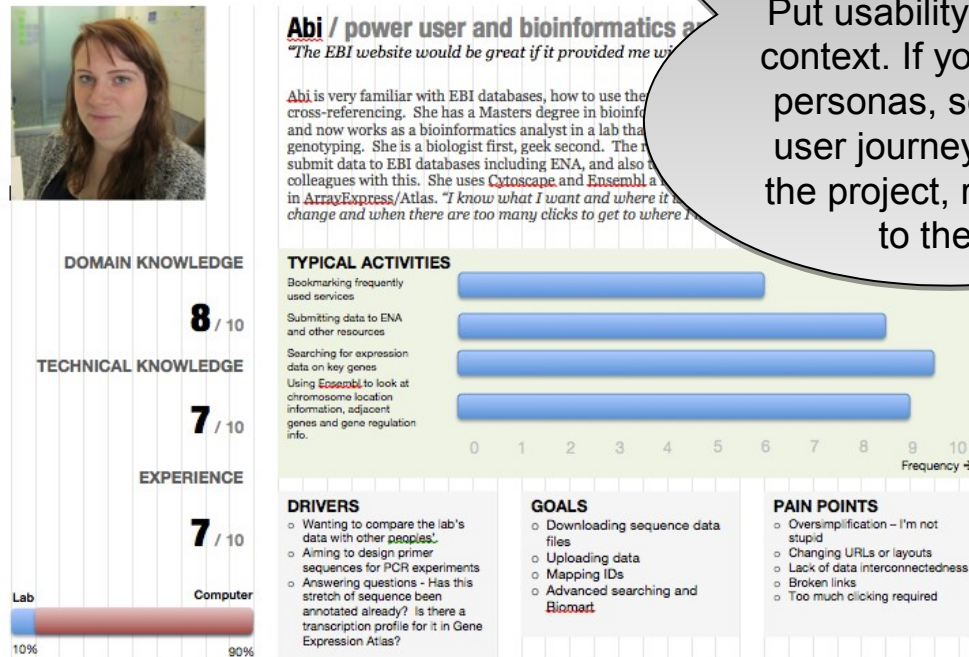
Requestors: sales@bestpractical.com

Content:

Create

Focus on what really matters to users

■ Designing with personas and scenarios



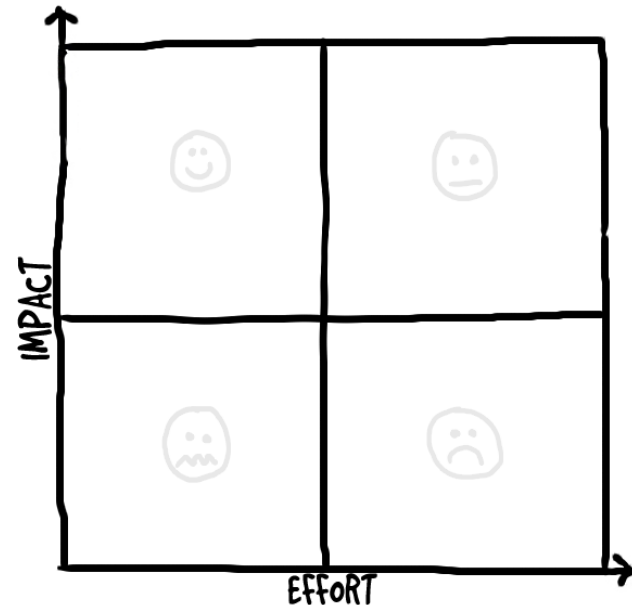
Put usability issues in context. If you've used personas, scenarios, user journeys, etc. in the project, refer back to them.

Find fun ways to attack problems

- Be there
- Use games

Stay involved. Help with prioritising and problem-solving. We don't want to just "throw things over the wall".

You probably have some tricks up your sleeve for how to help break down problems and find solutions. Use them.



That light bulb reference

Q: How many psychiatrists does it take to change a light bulb?

A: Only one, but the light bulb has to want to change



Your turn

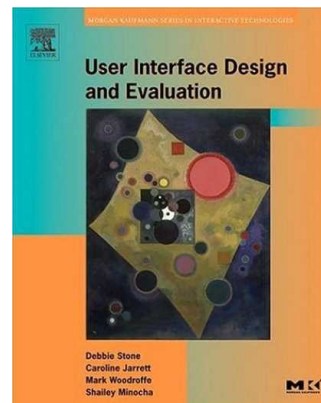
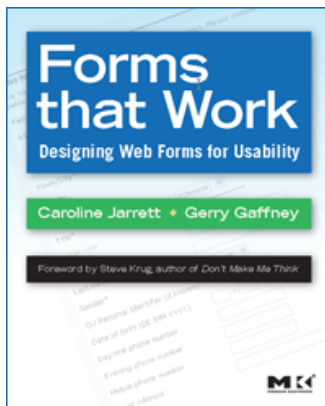
- Questions, comments, requests for a refund?

Caroline Jarrett

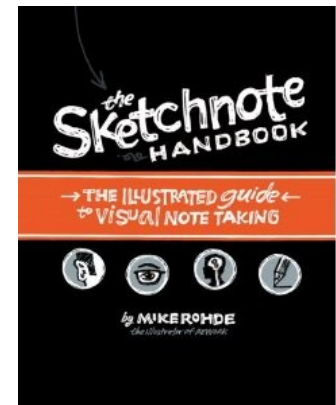
Francis Rowland

Twitter @cjforms
carolinej@effortmark.co.uk

Twitter @francisrowland
LinkedIn francisrowland



I have 2 pages in here!



... coming October 2012

For the longer version of this presentation

<http://www.slideshare.net/cjforms>

<http://www.slideshare.net/SteveKrug>

**“But the light bulb
has to want to
change”**

Why do the most serious
usability problems
we uncover often go unfixed?

Steve Krug and Caroline Jarrett
#upa2012 Las Vegas

