



Acceleration Events post COVID: Beyond the big 3 in person events

Brian Cohn

2 February 2022

Overview



Introduction

In Person or Virtual – advantages for each

Requirements Events

Planning Events

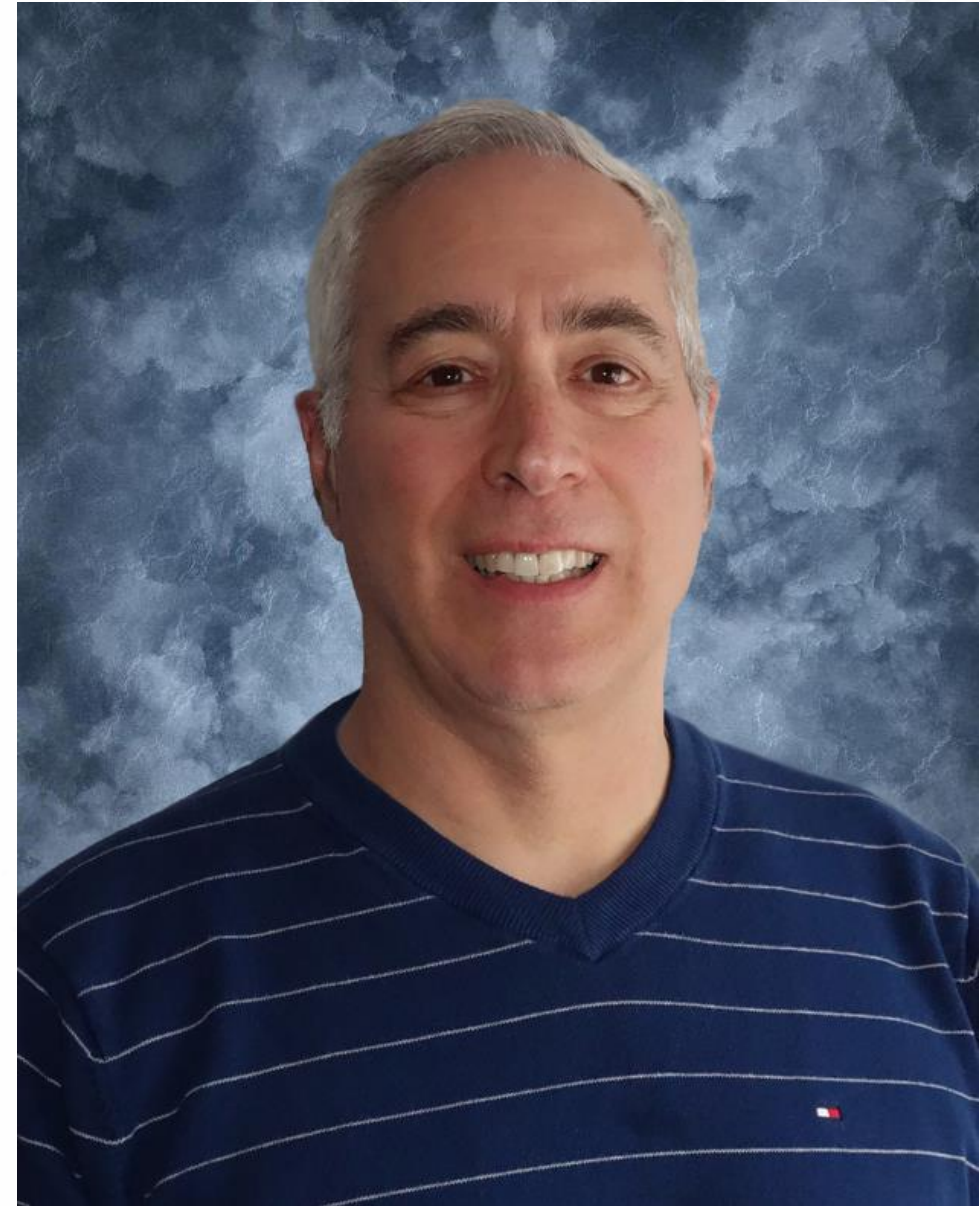
3P

Launch Strategy

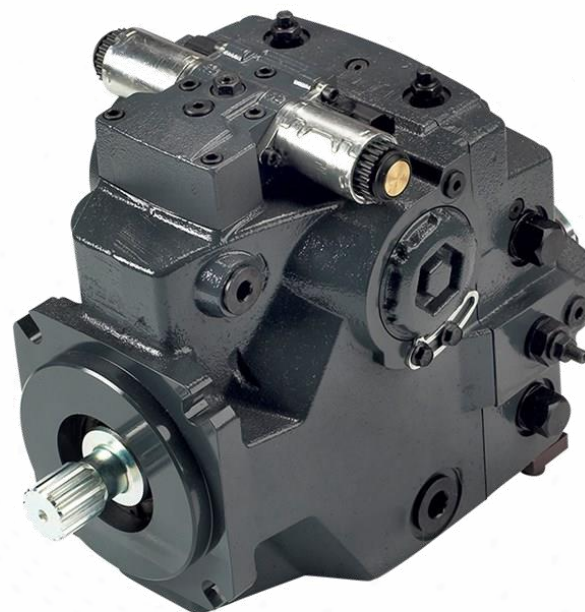
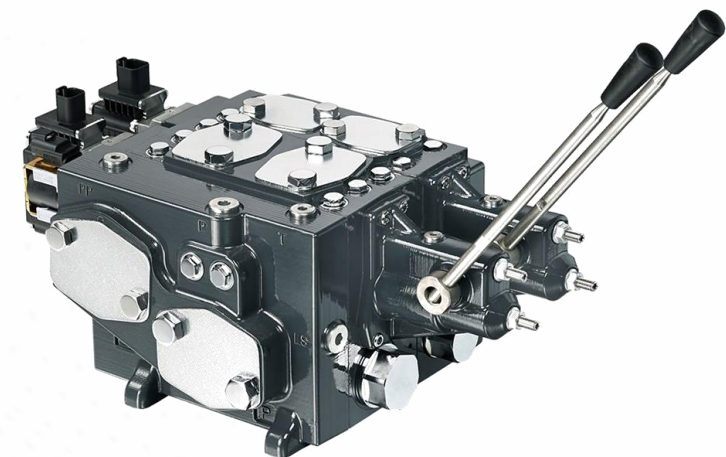
Keys to virtual event success

Brian Cohn

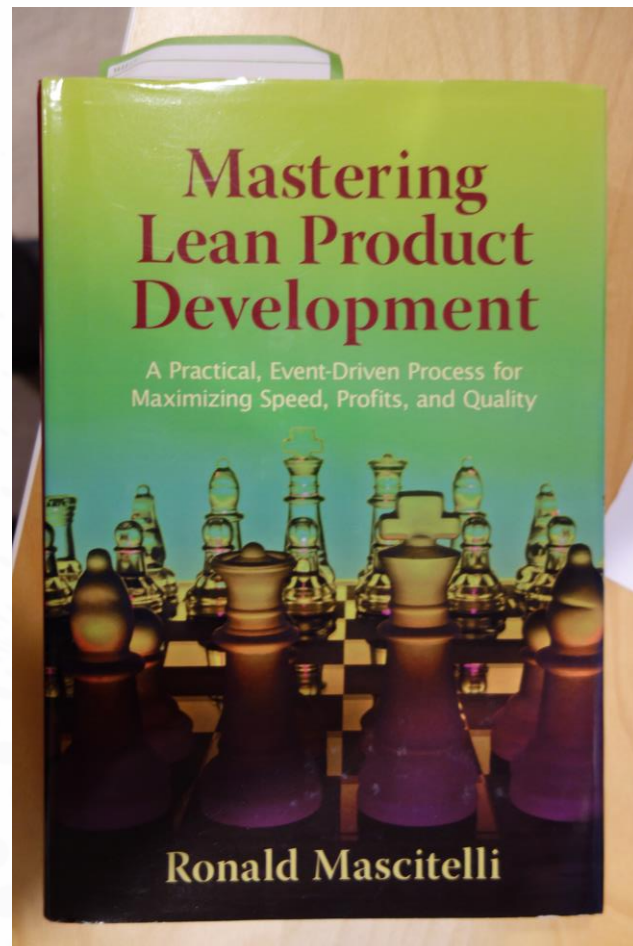
- Partner & Co-Founder
- Aspire Innovation
- 30 years leading product and portfolio development for Product Development
- 7 years coaching organizations to improve Product Development performance



Product Examples



The Inspiration



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In person events – generally 2-5 days

Events post-COVID

- Market Requirements Event
 - Align on what the product should do and what problem it solves
- User Scenario Workshop
 - Build the initial backlog (for software development)
- Product and Process Preparation
 - Ensure that the product can be assembled and that operations is engaged early (and often) in the development
- Planning & Risk Mitigation
 - The team creates and owns the plan
- Launch Strategy Workshop
 - Develop and align on the Go to Market strategy
- Do them either in person or virtually

Why Acceleration Events

From:	To:
Documents thrown over the wall from one function to another (and back again and again) – that nobody really reads until they discover something important is missing.	Everyone in the room together, everything on the table at the same time. We don't leave until we have something we can all accept.
Months from the start of the deliverable preparation until submission	First draft created in a few days – with actions to close the uncertainties
One person's version of what the truth should be	Cross-functional inputs to build the best available knowledge of the truth
Recipients continually asking for one more piece of information before they can make a decision	Decision makers part of building the document. Alignment on the important knowledge gaps to close to be able to make decisions

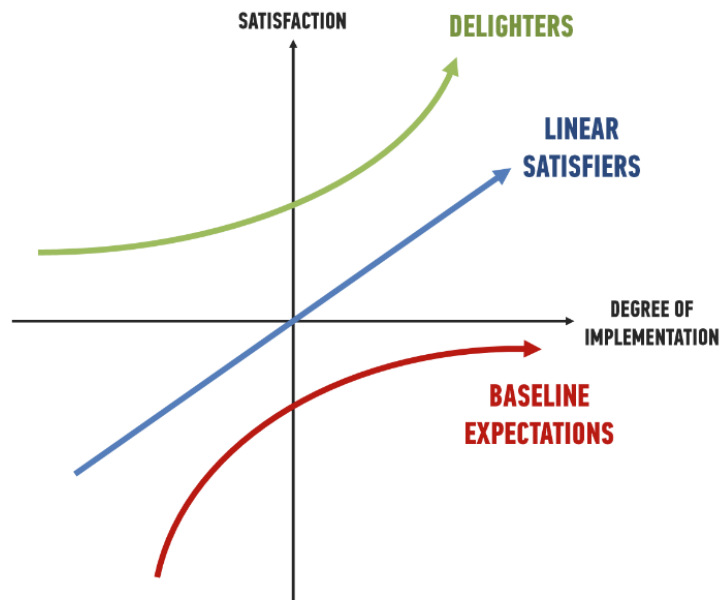
Advantages of In Person Events

- Best communication – hear, get tone, observe body language
- Easiest to have break-out groups as appropriate
- Team building – events adjacent to the workshop (e.g., team dinners)
- Breaks and lunches are informal time for team to reflect on what has transpired and come back with new insights
- Tends to be faster – once you have everyone they stay together for full days until completion

Advantages of Virtual Events

- Reduced total time investment – nobody needs to travel to meeting
- Less expensive – no travel costs, no fees for rooms if you can't use your own facilities
- Seems more conducive to spreading the event over a bit more time
 - Allows people to reflect on the previous session
 - Can be helpful for more deliberate thinkers – people who need to mull things over rather than respond quickly.

Market Requirements



Day 1

1. Customer requirement & applications

- Get aligned on customer requirement and application overview

2. Review & challenge baseline expectations

- Identify qualifiers for new product based upon benchmarking

3. Identify and prioritize key differentiators

- Identify and select key differentiators

Day 2

4. Define S/C on differentiators

- Select the most promising features
- Define S/C
- Finalize Customer Requirement Specification

5. Customer WS

- Identify customer need in Customer WS

Part II

6. Update Customer Requirements Specification

- Update qualifiers and M/S/C based upon input from Customer WS

Structure to decide Should/Could/Won't

Priority for positioning	Differentiator	Feature/performance level	Impact on				Comments	Should	Could	Won't
			Perf.	Cost	Profit	Effort				
Medium	Easy Disposal of nut shells	Tube to collect nut shells								
		One way disposal of nut shells								
High	Low force to crack nut	Use metal ball to crack nut								
		Exchange to reduce force								
		Long handle to reduce force								
High	Nice Design	Design that appeals to millennials								

- Rank features on impact on sales (price, volume), cost, and effort/risk to include in project
- MUST items have high (positive) impact on price and volume and manageable effort/risk. These are the basis of the value proposition
- COULD items have positive impact on volume (entice people to buy) and very low impact on product cost, effort, & risk – easy to add, increase sales above business plan
- WON'T items add risk and effort to the project, cost to the product, and have uncertain or minimal impact on price & volume

Keys to virtual Market Requirements Events

- Introduce the team to the project in a dedicated session ahead of the workshop
- Have a proposal for the Baseline Expectations ahead of the workshop and focus discussion on the few items that require discussion
 - Make the whole list available ahead of time.
- Use breakout sessions to divide and conquer when assessing the impact of potential differentiators

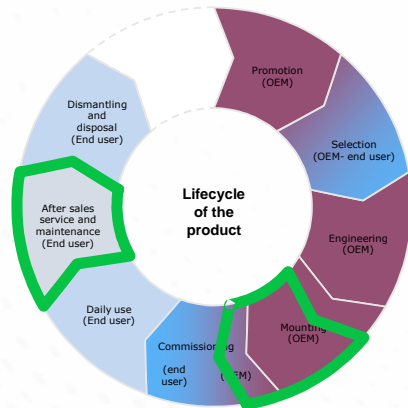
Dealing with products with variants

- Must, should, could for base product
- What variants are required at initial launch
 - Roadmap for subsequent releases
- Define what must, should, or could be offered in variants
 - What options must be available per core variant



User Scenario workshop

Identify Users



- Where is the new application mostly used?
- Who are the main stakeholders?
- Who are the different users, what do we know about them, what do they do during a typical day?
- Summarise the user understanding as a Persona.

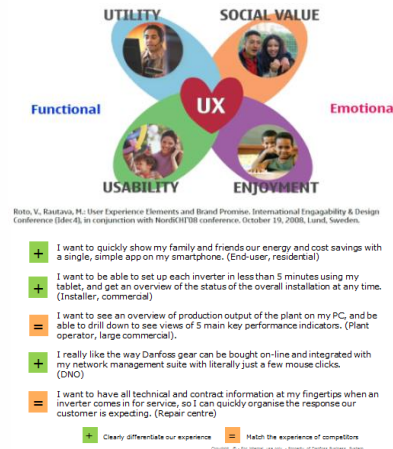
User Profile & Stories

Commissioning engineer



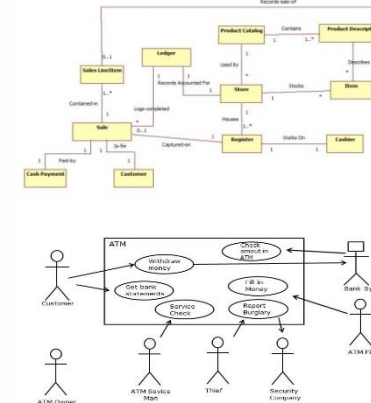
- Brainstorm and list the users tasks
- Make a user profile
- Make a workflow map of the tasks
- Document the high-level jobs as "user stories"
- Write a description, in narrative form, of how the user interacts with the system for each job

UX Targets



- Introduction to User Experience target setting
- Create user experience target statements for each user.
- Group those targets that are common and those that are specific.
- Consolidate to around five UX targets for the system.

Domain Model



- Introduce Domain model and terminology.
- Identify all elements in the system and their interactions
- Place the all users in the model.
- Identify use cases and name them.

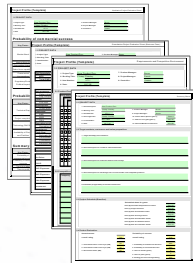
Find some pictures to demonstrate that we've done these

Planning and Risk Management

Preparation

1

Align team on project objectives



Time schedule



Product Specs



Financial targets

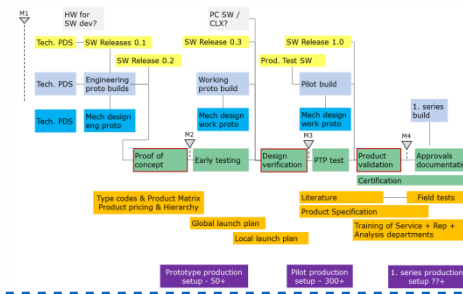


Product concept

etc...

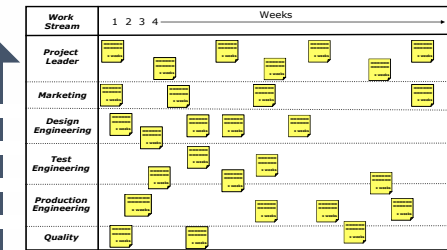
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Outline major project deliverables in level-0 plan



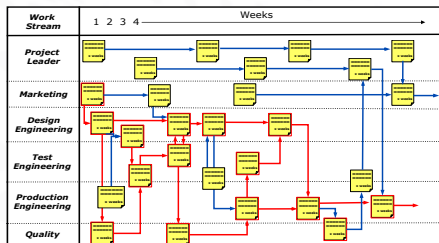
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Create detailed plan in workstreams



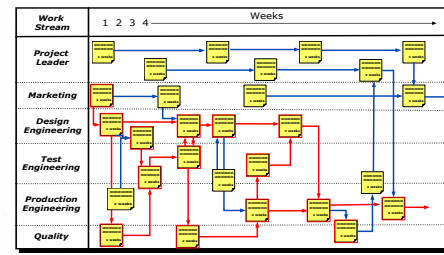
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Determine schedule drivers and crunch



5

Check resource loading



5 6 6 5 8 5 5 5
FTE FTE FTE FTE FTE FTE FTE FTE

6

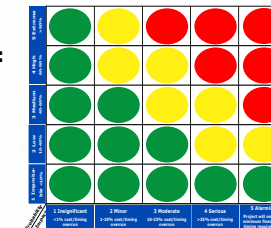
Identify risks & mitigation actions



Technical Risk:



Schedule Risk:

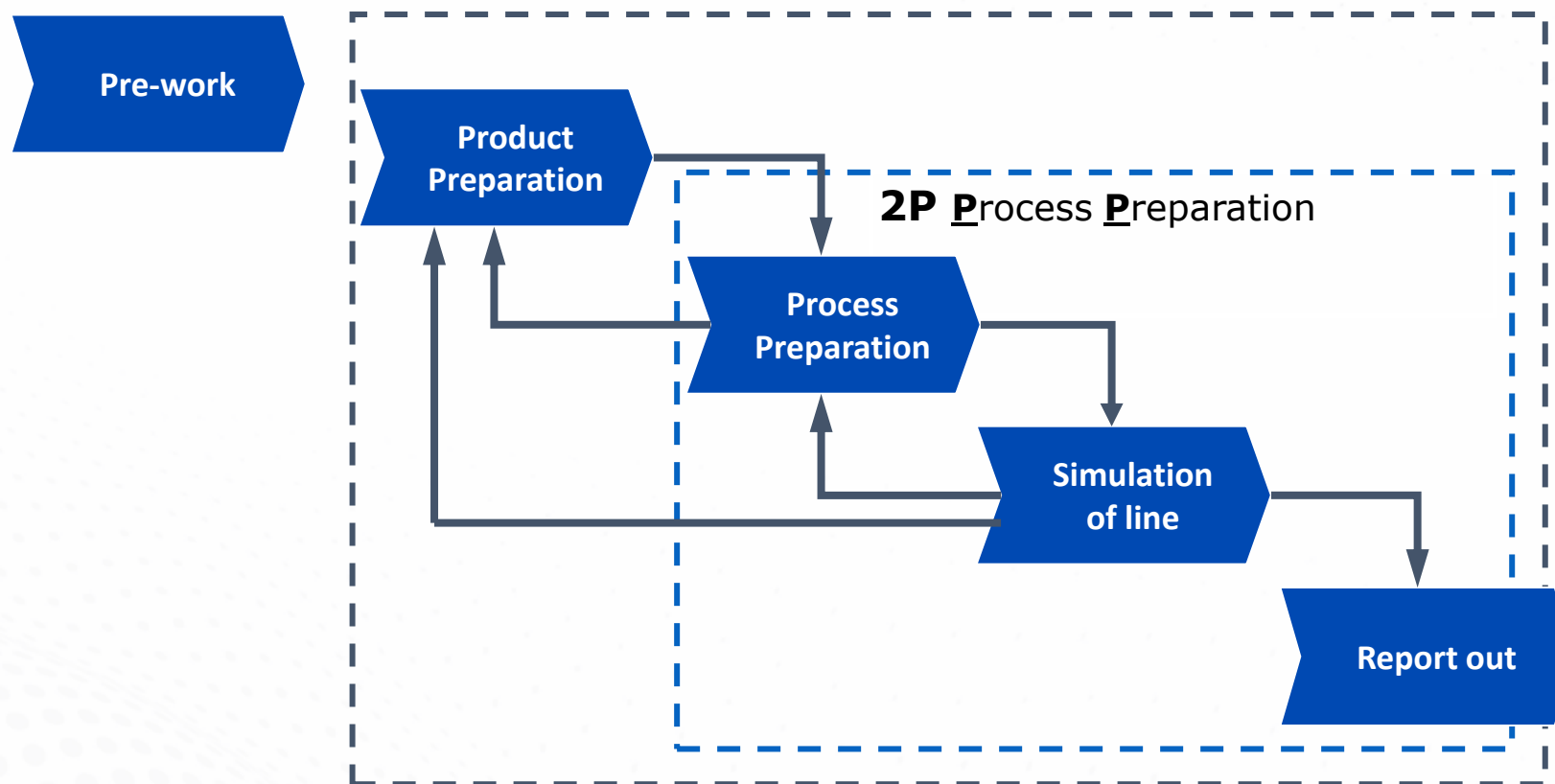


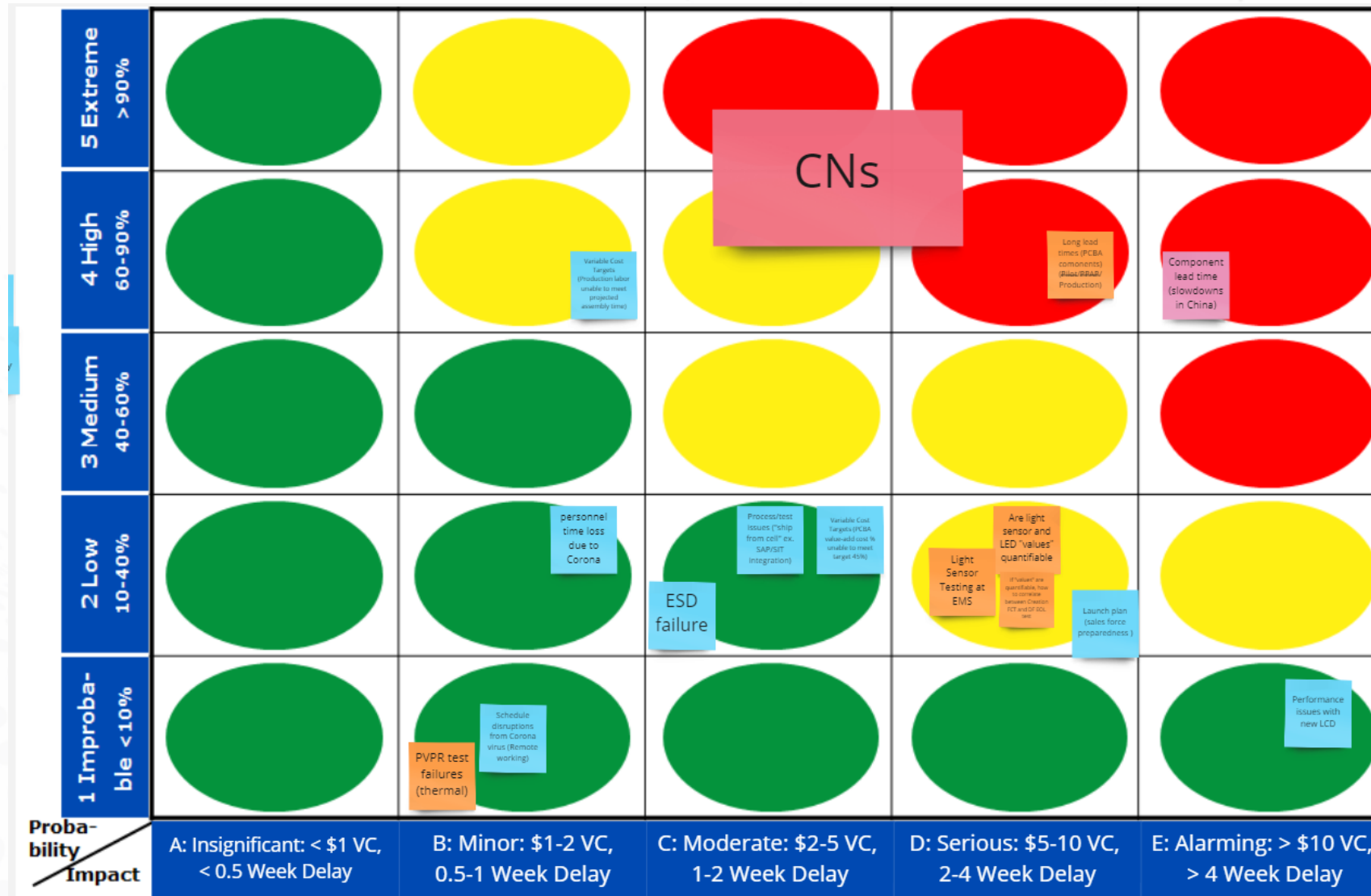
Build plan in time boxes rather than as a PERT chart
Add slide of MIRO board/template

Schedule

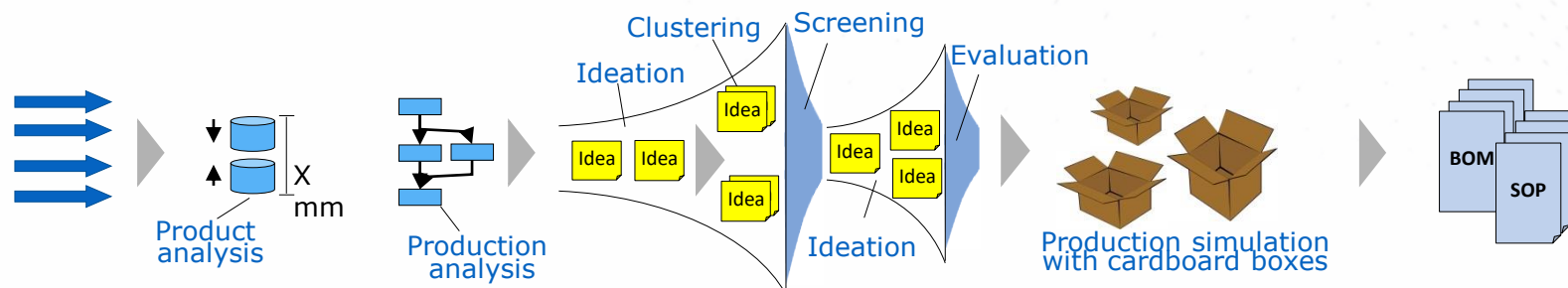
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3P Events





3P Tools and Process



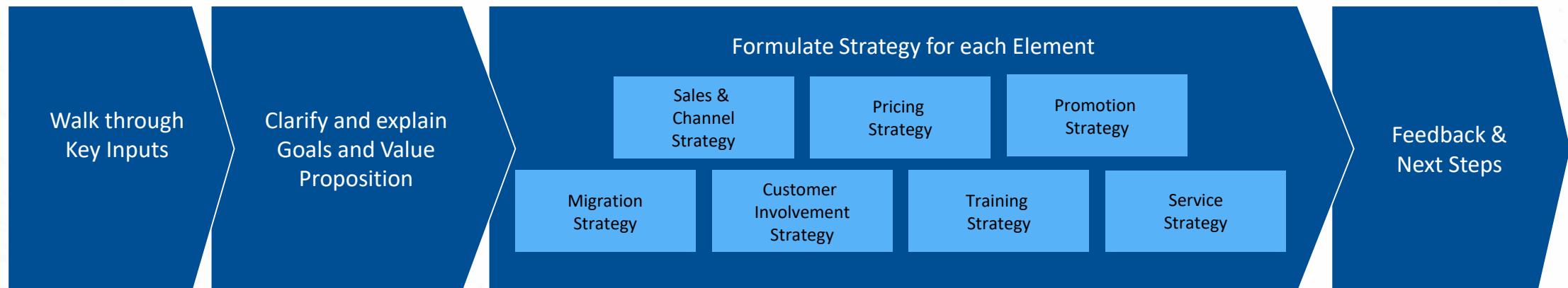
Scope and analysis phase		Creative phase		Evaluate (and simulate)	Detail and document
3P	2P	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives & Constraints Technical attribute requirements Function Analysis Least number of parts analysis Critical elements analysis 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming Sketching DFM & DFA design guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation schemes: customers' Must/Should/Could needs, cost, manufacturability, time/technical risk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed drawings BOM
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Objectives Constraints Flowchart/Current process Determine critical production steps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorming Sketching Lean design guidelines 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation schemes: Lean principles, time Production simulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed Drawings Videos/photos Cycle times, cost, investment, SOP Action list Risk list

Launch Goals & Strategy Event

1 Preparation



2 Workshop



3 Finalize and Publish



Instructions for exercise

Go through all the questions on selected Strategy element

1. For each question:
 - A. Answer the question as a team and have discussions & challenge assumptions
 - B. Capture & record the important points on the question during the discussion
2. Based on the discussions, answers and recorded key points, formulate the strategy & tactics

Note:

Discussion is more important than just answering the question

Record & capture important points on the Post its as and when discussed

The cards shown are:

- Service**: How should we provide service to our customers?
- Training**: Who should be trained?
- Customer involvement**: How to involve the key customers?
- Migration**: How to move our offerings in the target markets?
- Promotion**: What are the target groups and how to approach them best?
- Pricing**: Assess all these factors for a strong pricing.
- Sales & Channel**: How to close the gap between current and future state?

The **Sales & Channel** card includes a table for recording responses:

Channel	Route to market	Sales	Product Concept	Target markets	Launch Goals	Sales strength & competences	Target applications	Competition	Customers	Cross selling	Up selling	Legislation & DPs	Risks	Early buyer/Influencer identification
			How new is the product concept in target markets?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			How new is the product concept to the company?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			What is the maturity level in target markets? (acceptance of product/technology)	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty
			How ambitious are the Launch Goals?	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty
			What is the sales strength (in numbers) available to sell the product in target markets?	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty
			What is the competency level of available sales force in target markets? (product/industry applications)	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty
			How strong is the value proposition for all target applications?	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty
			In which target market is the competition strongest/weakest?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			Which type of customers will help the product to find success in target markets?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			Which customer sub-segment will help the product to a fast success in target markets? (Age, gender, specific, application specific, etc)	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			What is the potential for cross selling? Elaborate	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			What is the potential for up selling? Elaborate	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			How likely will legislation (existing/forthcoming) affect sales? (Product/industry)	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			What will/can be level of impact of patents, trademarks in target markets?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing
			What is the risk for this product, technical / others?	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing	Novelty	Existing

At the bottom of the Sales & Channel card, there are sections for **STRATEGY:** and **TACTICS:**.

Market

Customer	Who are the key stakeholders that require the service?					
	Discuss expectations / challenges / current satisfaction?					
	How important is service for this product? Consider consequences if customers don't get it in time?	Not Important	Of Little Importance	Somewhat	Important	Very Important
Service Pricing	How willing are the customers to pay for service?	Highly Willing	Willing	Neutral	Unwilling	Highly Unwilling?
	Discuss Service pricing models					

Organization

Product Quality	How high is the risk/uncertainty of product quality in 1st year of sales?	Very Low		Moderate		Very High
Service Organization	How strong is the current (internal + external) Danfoss service organization? (Size, competencies)	Very Weak	Weak	Neutral	Strong	Very Strong
Training	How important & necessary is to provide the service training?	Not Important	Of Little Importance	Somewhat		

Convert the paper questionnaires to PowerPoint slides for the breakout teams to work on

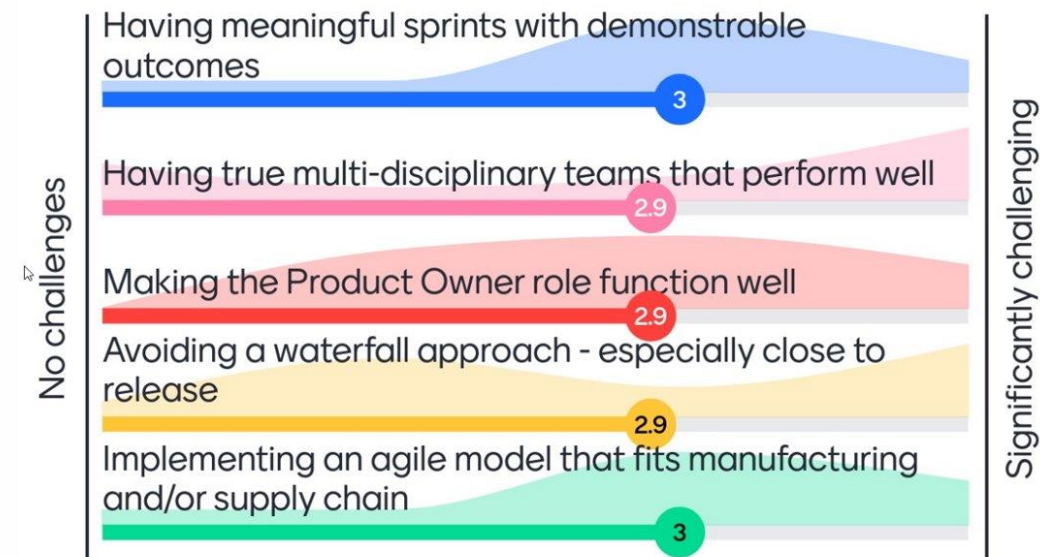
Migration Strategy

PowerPoint Template for the team to fill in

Strategy	Tactics
XXXXXX will physically fit into the same panel hole, and same 12-pin connector (as XXXXX).	
Software migration instruction guide: XXX to XXXX.	
Secure sales to migration customers from XXXXXX. Address business at risk.	
Proactively communicate phase-out plan of XXXX.	
Target XXXX customers immediately due to obsolete component. Start XXXX in 2020.	
Will need to support product for 10-15 years after notification for key customers like XXXXXXXX.	

Online tools to get the conversation started

- Online polling tools can be great to get conversations started
- Break the ice through simultaneous usage
- Especially good for sensitive topics
 - Anonymity helps people put down what everyone is thinking but nobody wants to be the first to say
- Automatically generate graphics that are easy to understand
 - Word clouds
 - Histograms for Likert Scale questions
- Good success using Menti(meter) – there are other tools that would work equally well



Supply chain integration, particularly during the deployment phase.	I like the concepts of the 3 phases, and the insight that gives on the structure of a Backlog.	The hybrid (where waterfall is ok) as a way to gain organizational acceptance
Iterative testing to avoid the big surprise just before production. Looking at what you don't know and closing those gaps.	"Keep sprints long enough to accomplish something and short enough to plan!" - Brian Cohn	Sounds a lot like the Demming Cycle - Plan Do Check Act
Time boxing is good early on to keep student syndrome from causing endless development.	How the project mgmt method can change as the project progresses from discovery through deployment	Make decisions at the last responsible moment This reduces financial risk by not making the wrong decision earlier in the process when there is more uncertainty You can also make smaller investment decisions to move in a direction and correct early

Keys to successful Virtual Events

- Virtual, not hybrid
- Cameras on
- More, shorter sessions with more breaks
 - Try to divide the work into 50-minute chunks followed by a 10-minute break
 - No more than three blocks per session, preferably one session per day
- It's OK, and sometimes good, to assign homework between sessions
- Plan, plan, plan, and plan some more
- Use the right tools that allow everyone to contribute simultaneously
 - Virtual whiteboarding tools like Miro and Mural
 - Productivity tools that people are used to using
 - Office 365 or the Google suite
- Prepare templates for people to use
- Take advantage of the breakout room feature of the audio-visual platform
- Make sure there is a text communication channel available
 - Ideally with the capability for 1:1 or 1:few discussions
 - Teams works well – if using Zoom it's probably good to also have Slack or similar

Reflections & Questions?



Contact me!



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