

Blockers - Treasures of Improvement

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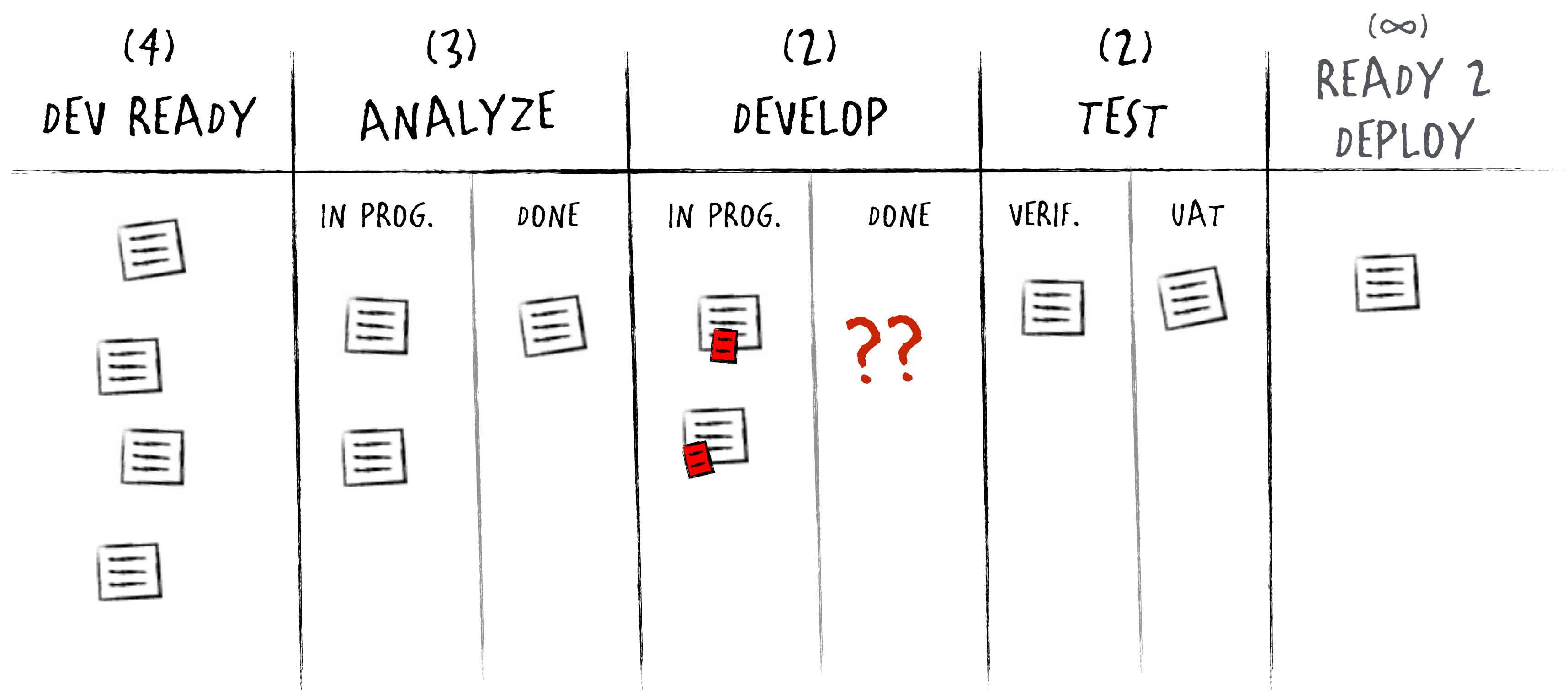
twitter: @klausleopold

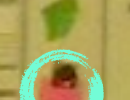
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What could we do?

—> increase WIP limit in DEV

—-> solve problems





Enter

Enter

Enter



BLOCKER

Extern

Intern

Kunde

46 Tage / 5 Tickets NPTT/T.iss
+ 84 → -
130 Tage

WARTEN AUF KUND

Warte auf Kunde
12 x auf 4
18 f
2

WARTEN auf H...
Warte auf Kunde
18.06 -
Warte auf Kunde
Warte auf Kunde
Bilder fehlen vom Kunde

Lieferant

Warten auf Video von ...

WARTEN auf GOOGLE
down

WARTEN AUF FERATEL

IT-Systeme

Teilerledigt

Mit alle ...
Blockade
Onlinebuche
Fehler
Design

Tickets

111 Tage

Ticket tickets

Server

DEV arbeitet am Server

Andreas Wichtiger

Statt ...

Michael

111 besprechen



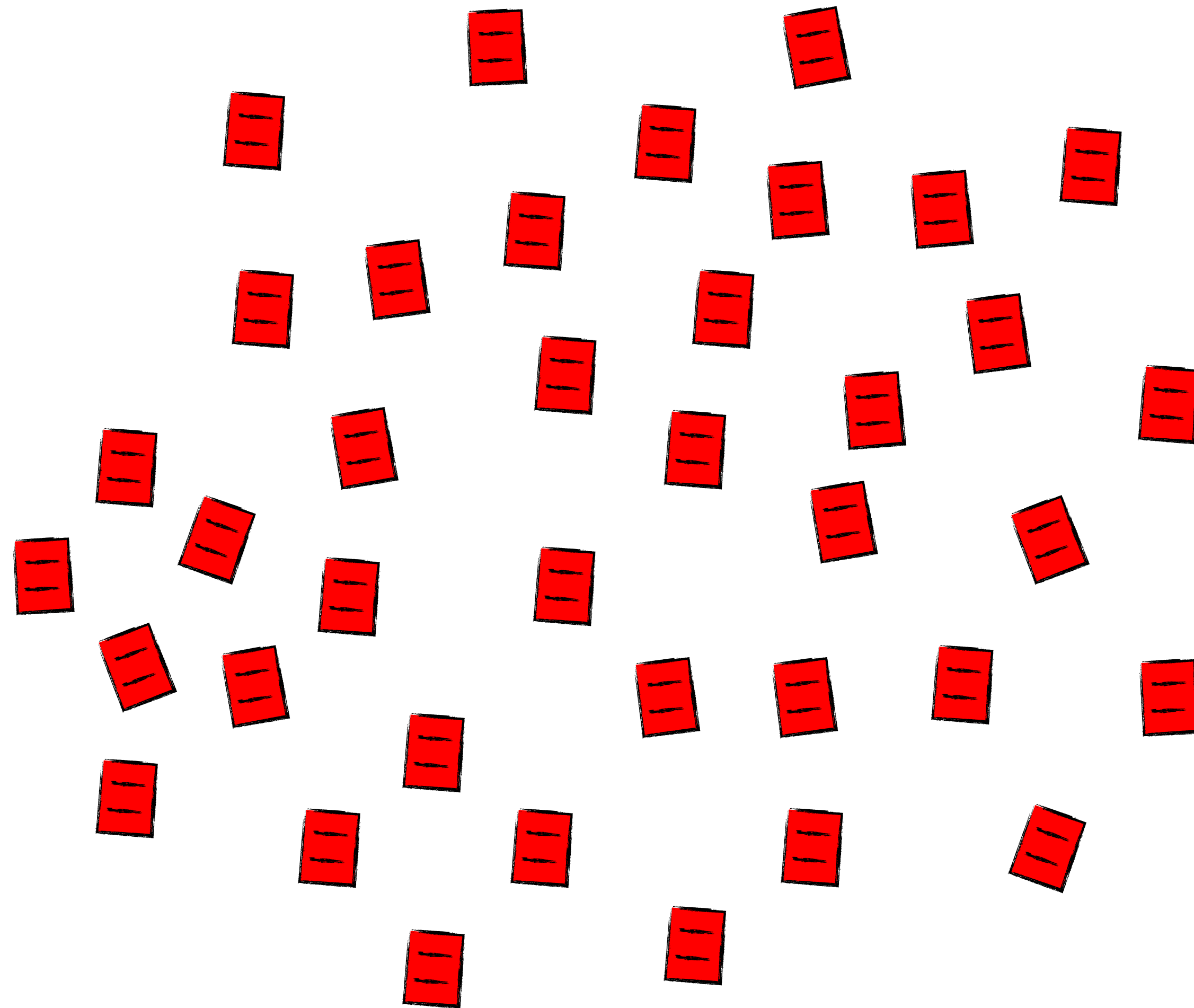
SOUND REASON

Text and photos
for reservation
page missing
(Customer X)
[DEV]  

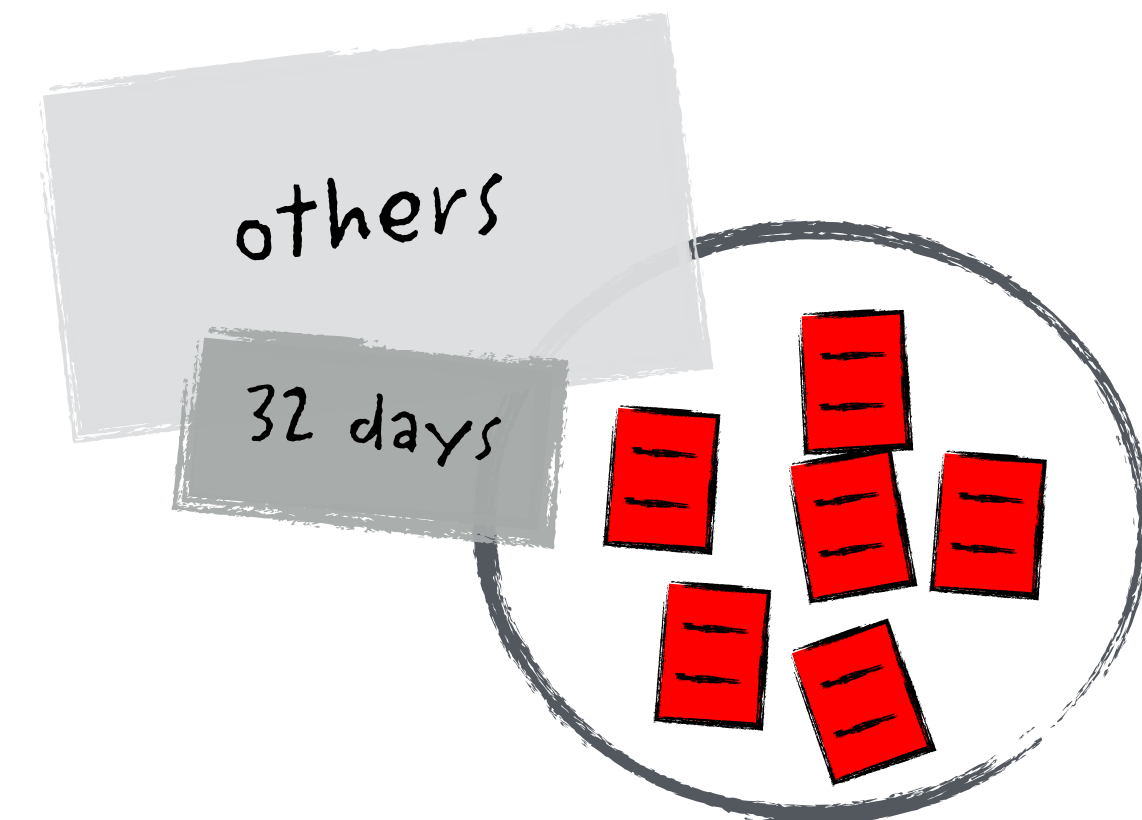
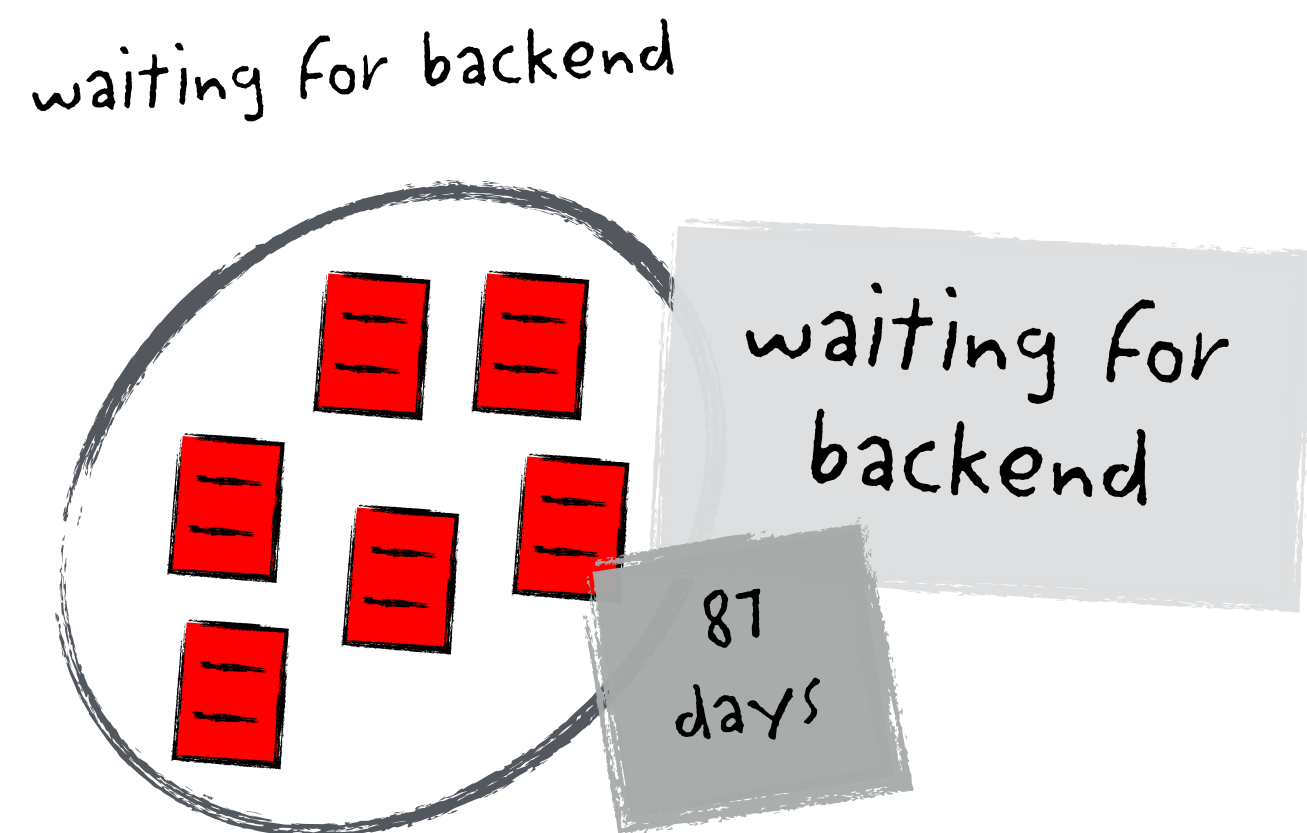
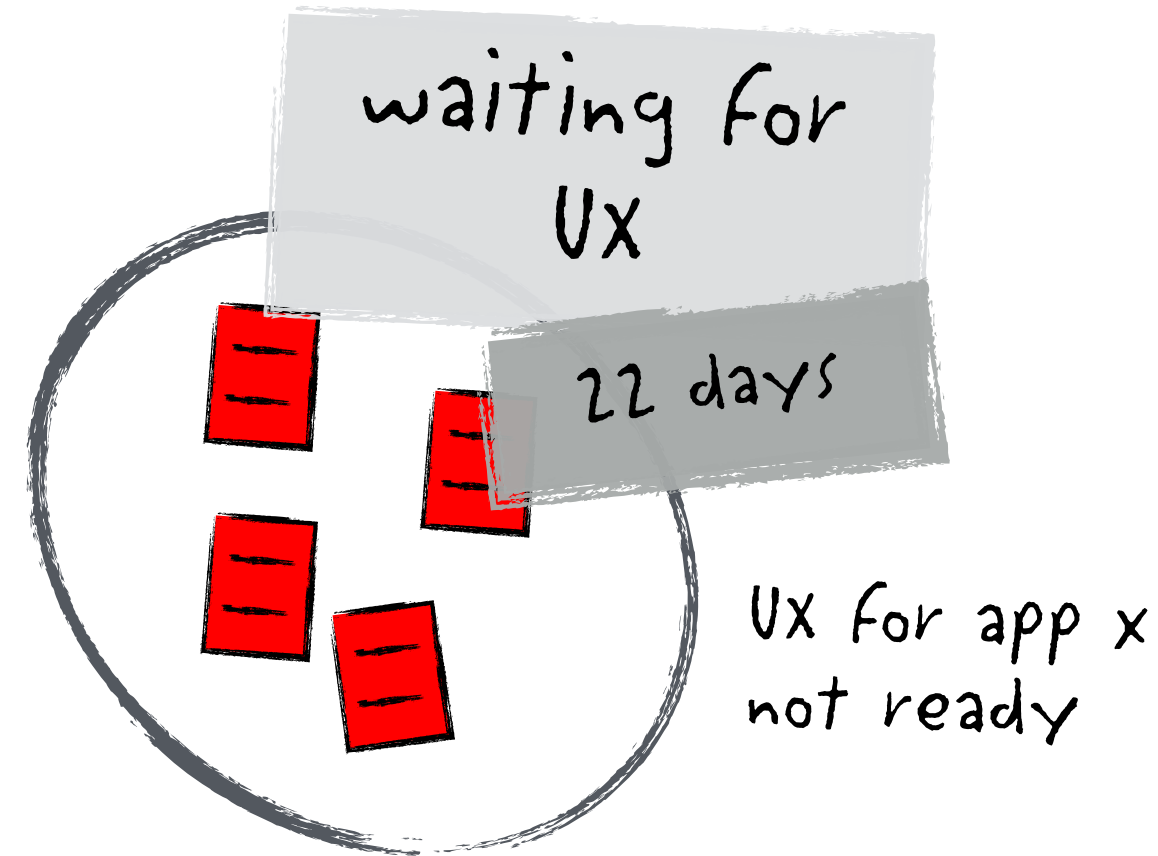
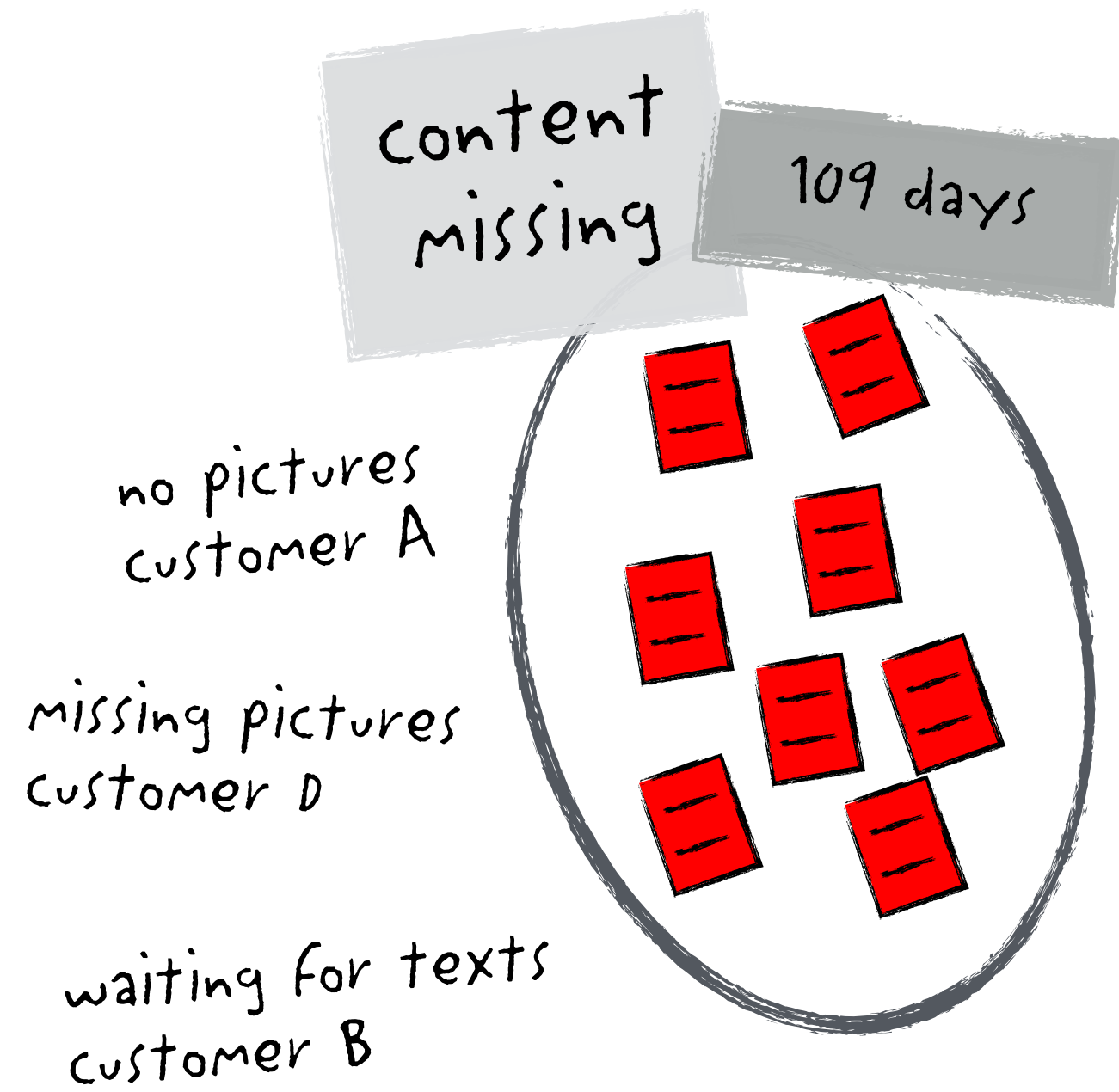
ACTIVITY

DAYS BLOCKED

collect blockers



cluster blockers



backend not ready

understand problem

?- WHY is content missing?

!- The customers don't send it.

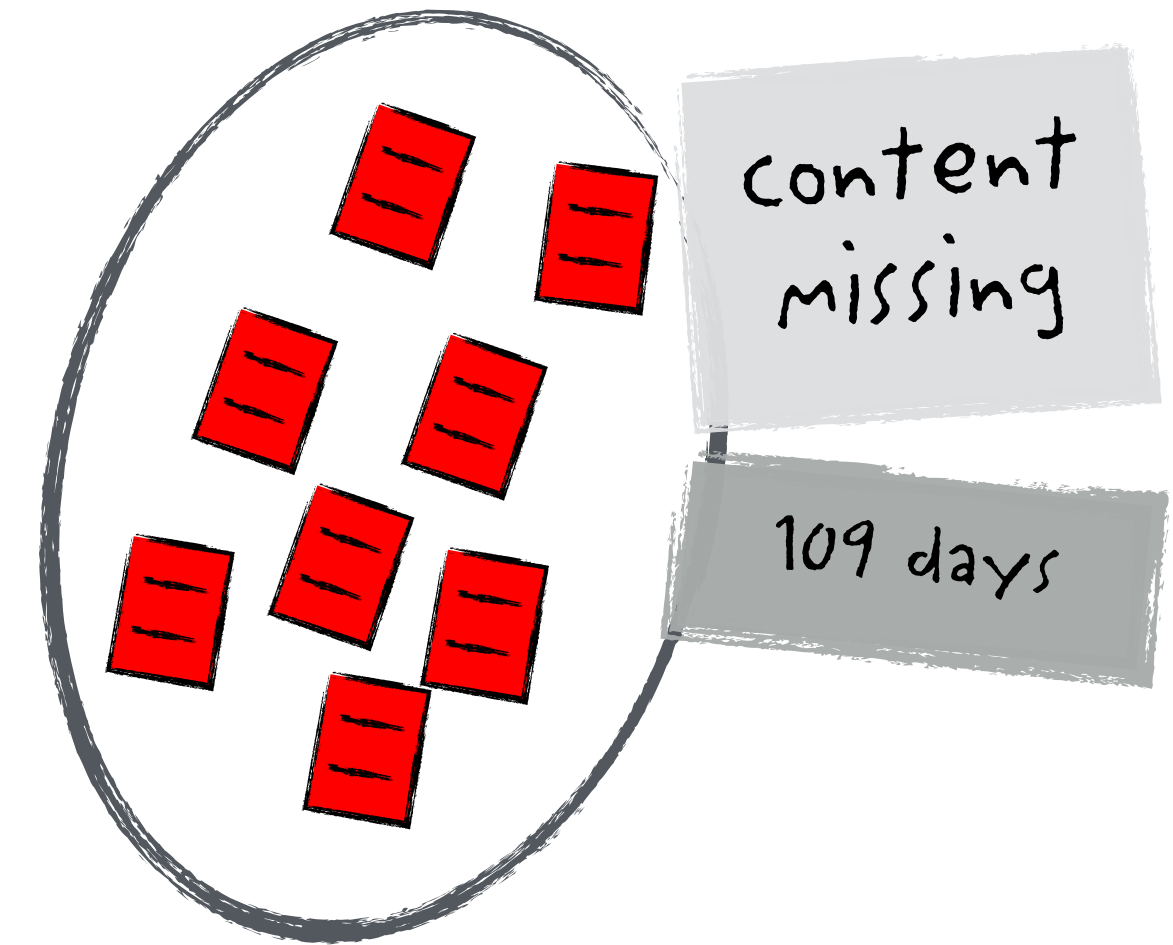
?- WHY don't they send it?

!- Often they don't know what we need.

?- WHY don't they know what we need?

!- We don't tell them always.

—> Maybe it'd be smart to tell them ALWAYS...



find solution

Add an item to the Definition of Done checklist in the ANALYSIS activity:

—> INFORM CUSTOMER ABOUT CONTENT DELIVERIES

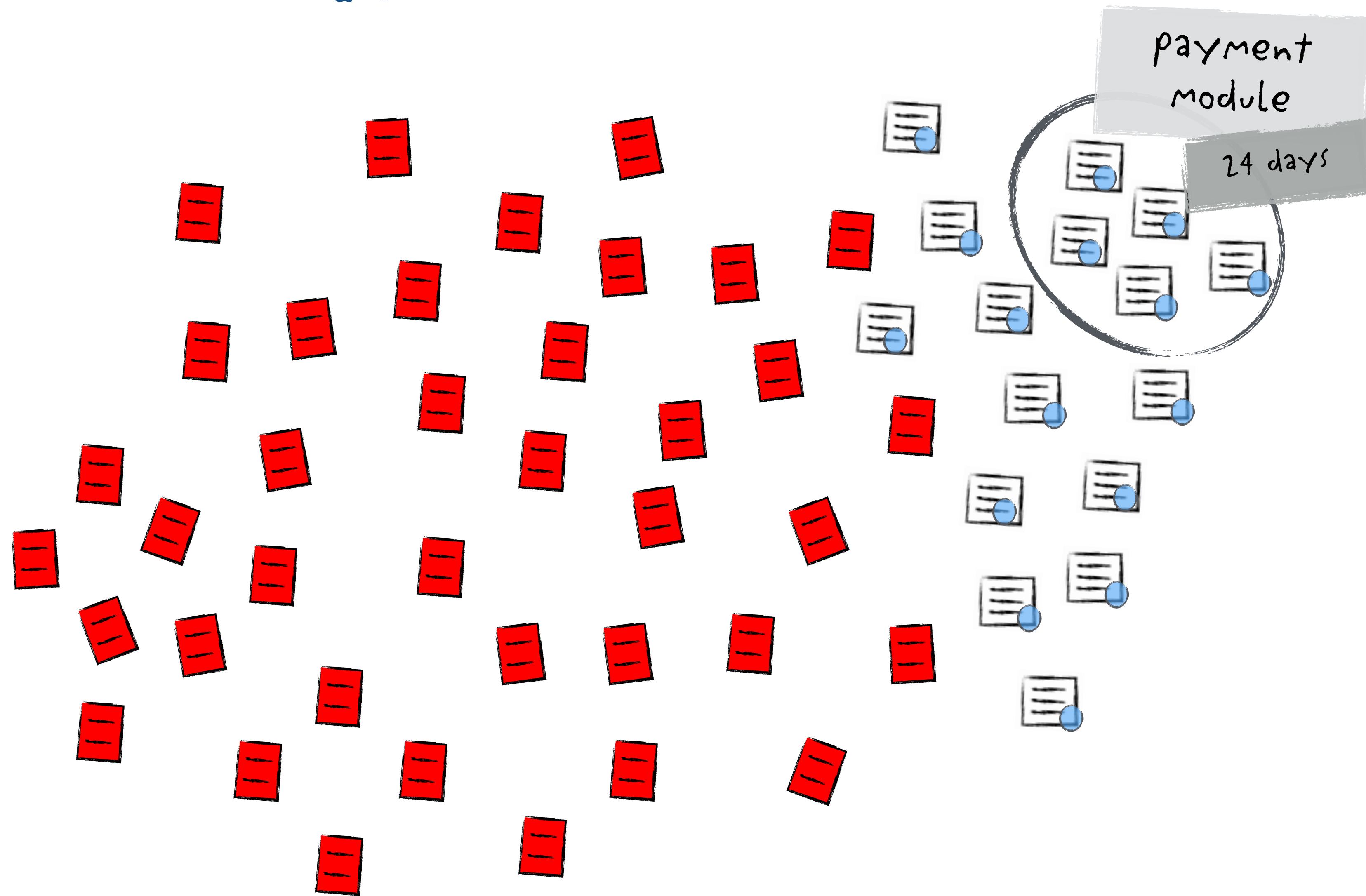


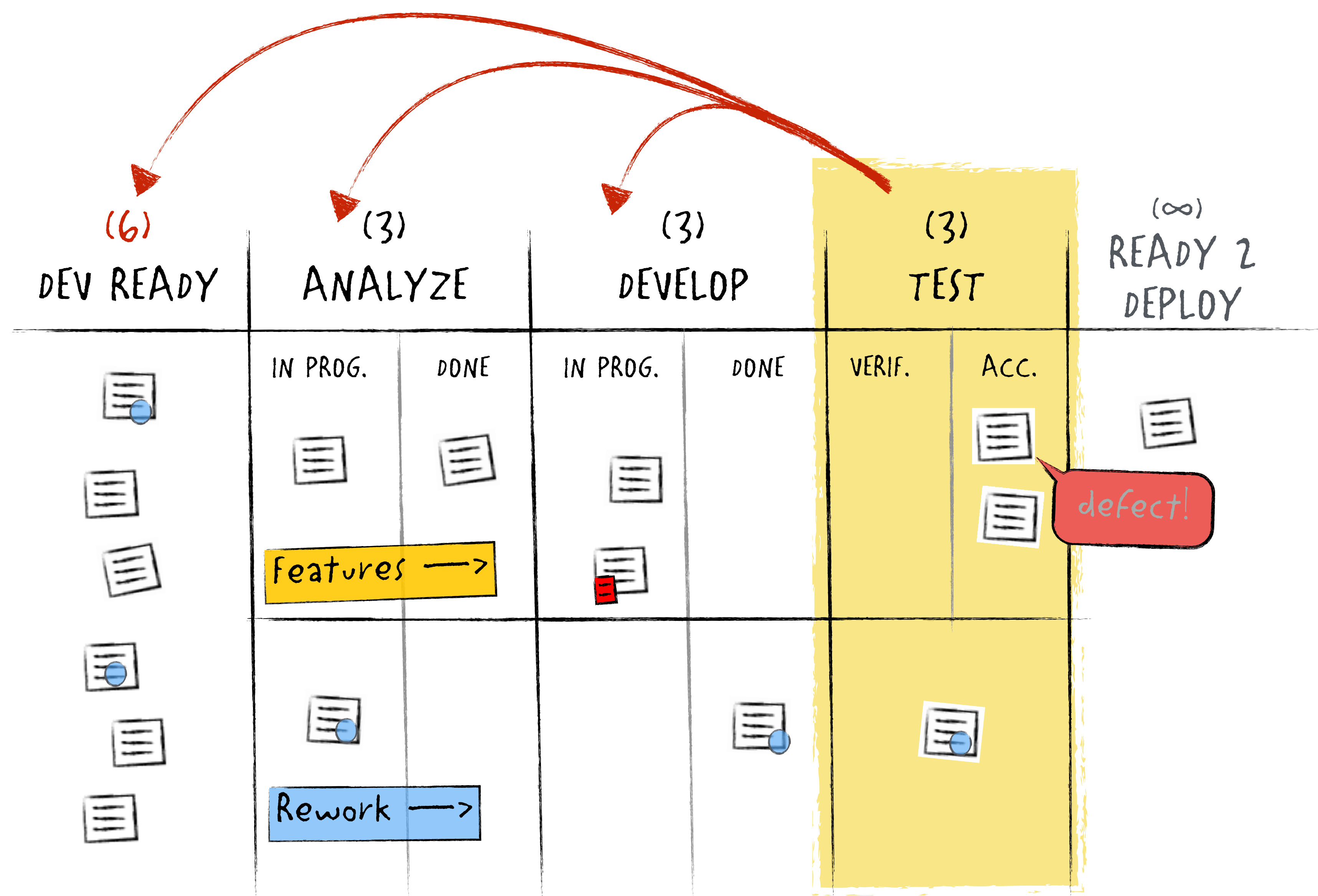
	(3) ANALYZE		(3) DEVELOP		(?) TEST
(6) DEV READY	IN PROG.	DONE	IN PROG.	DONE	VERIF.
<i>user profile</i> 	 Features →		 		
<i>payment module</i> 	<i>payment</i> Rework →		 <i>search</i>		

A large percentage of **SUPPORT REQUESTS** is actually rework!

REWORK and SUPPORT are blocking you from doing valuable stuff!

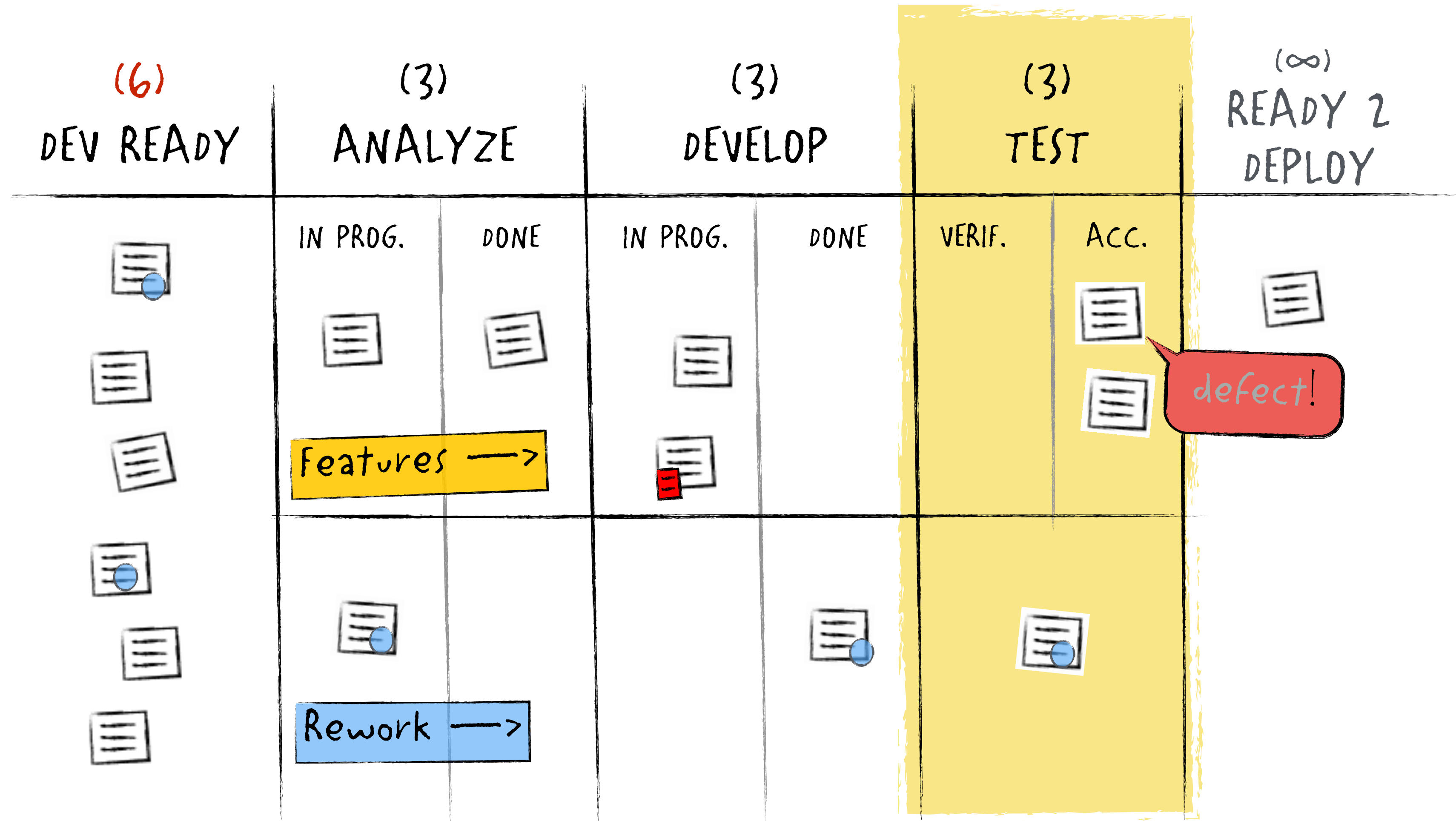
collect blockers



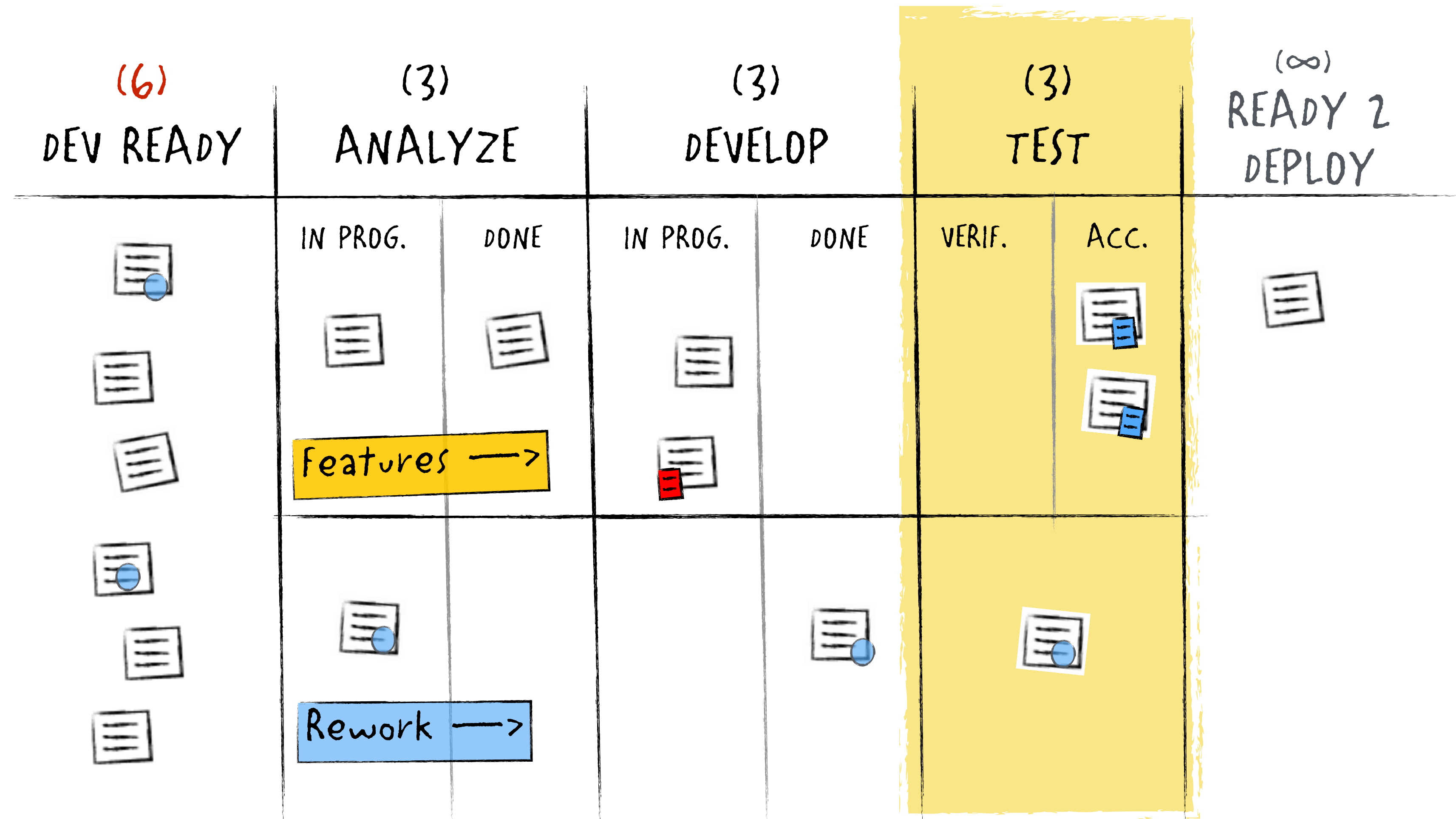


BUG FIXING IS
NO NEW WORK

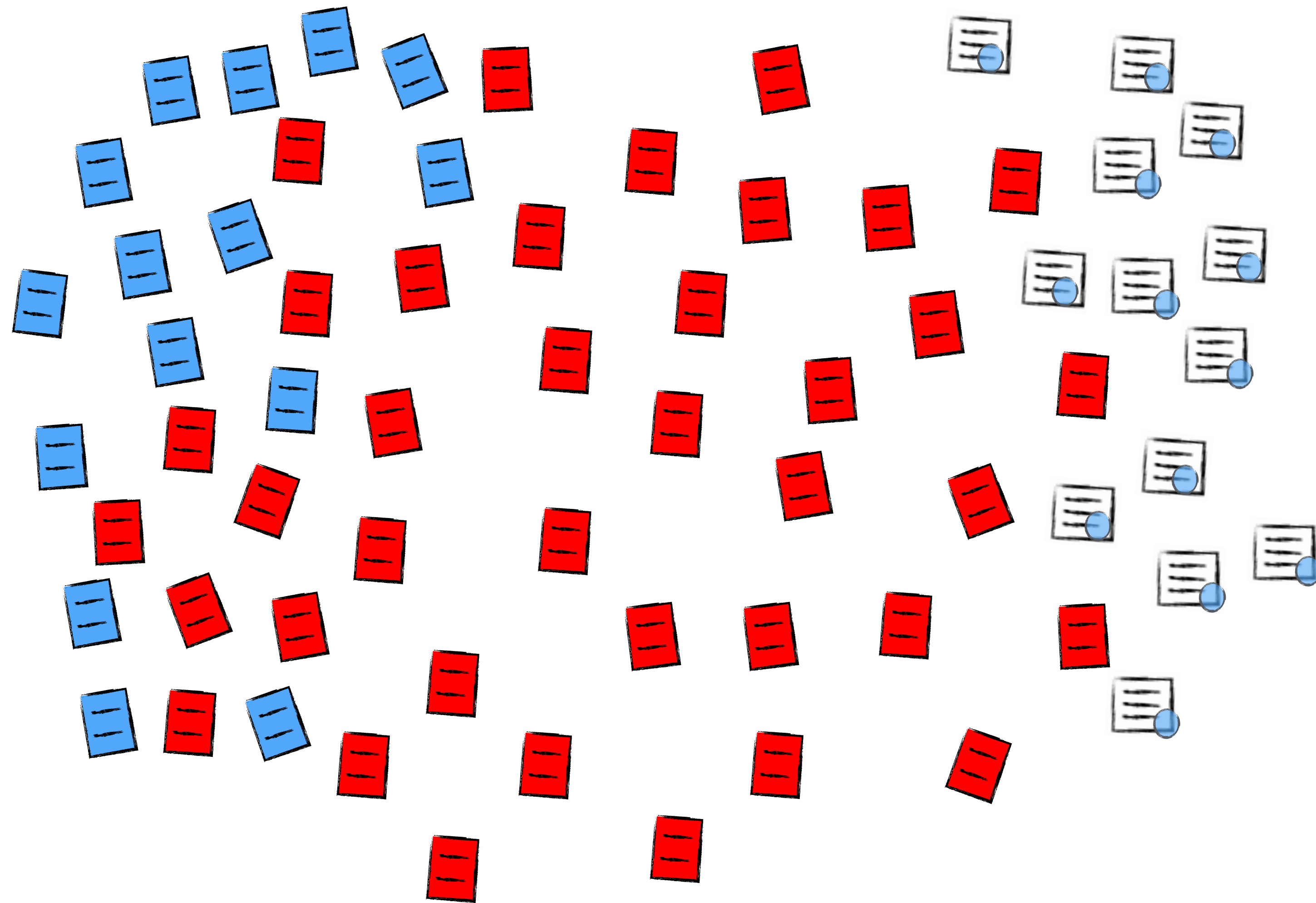
don't allow
return traffic



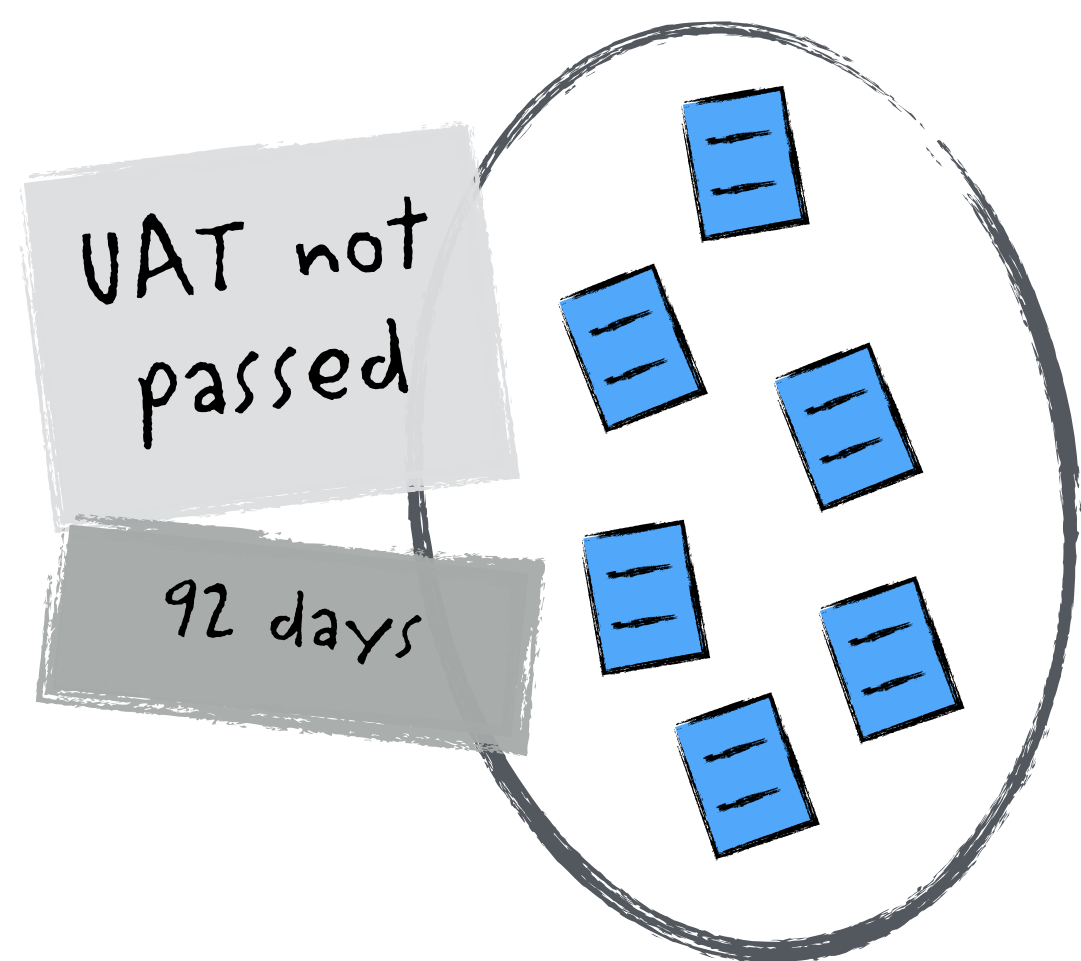
DEFECTS ARE BLOCKERS!



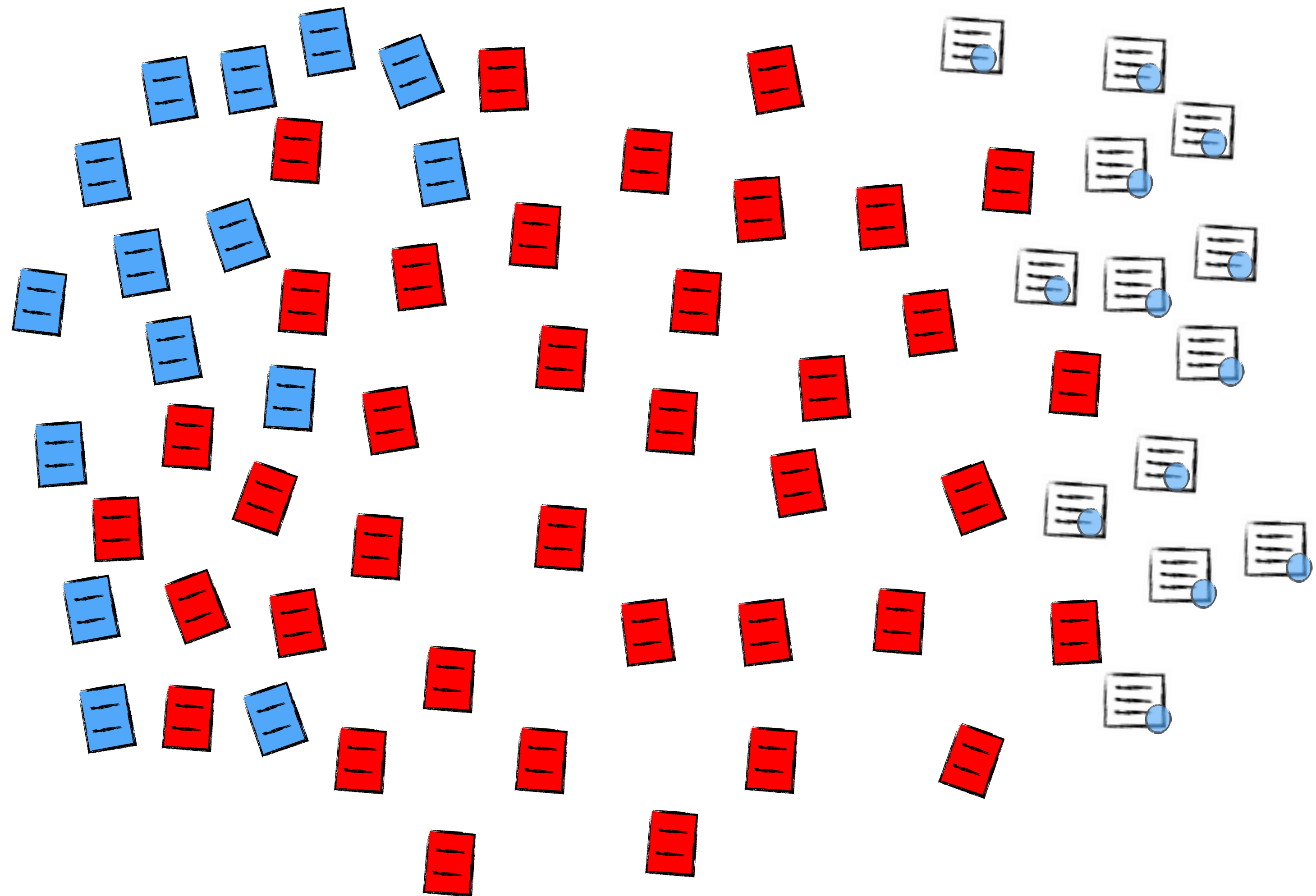
collect blockers

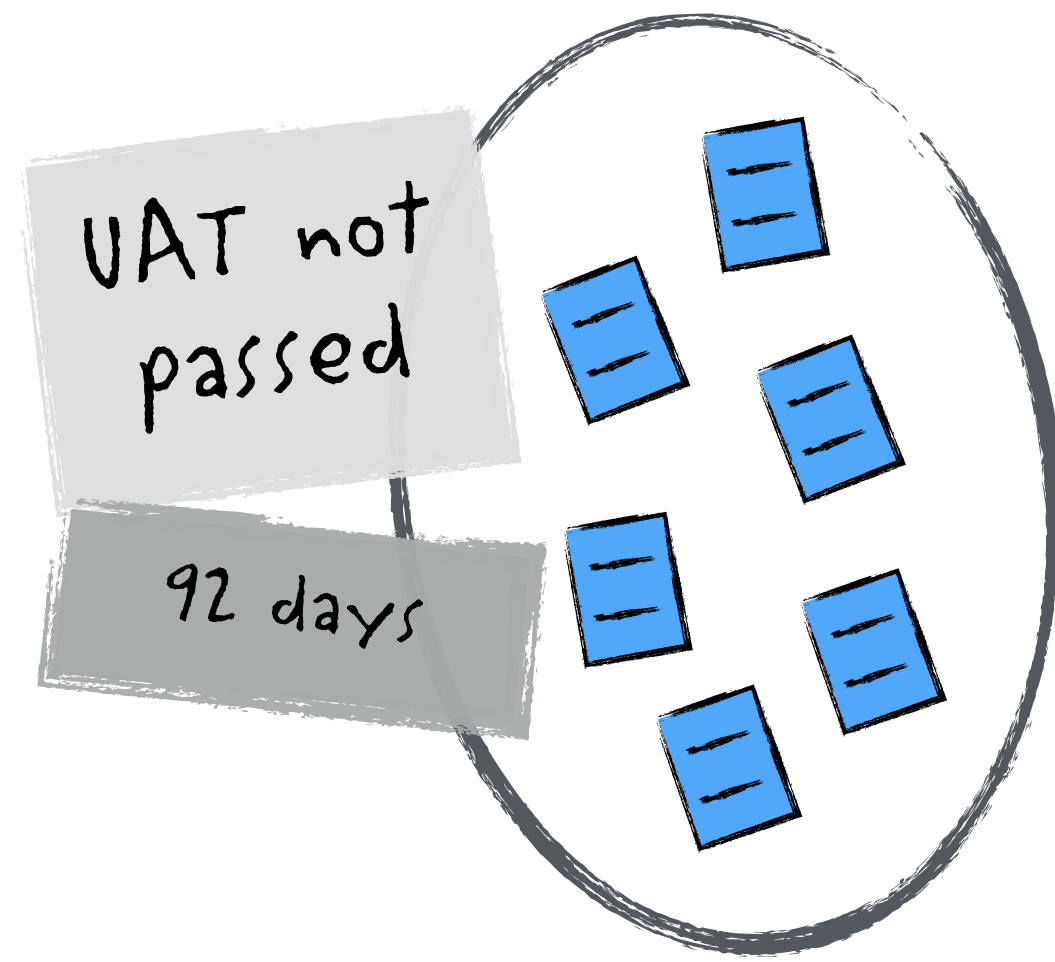


CLUSTER BLOCKERS



collect blockers





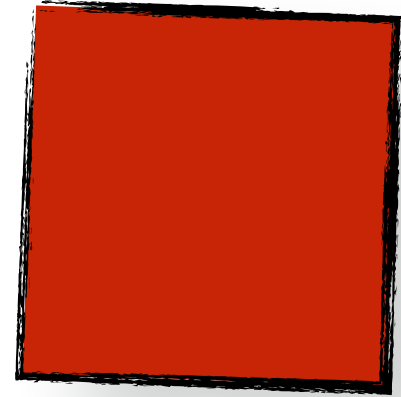
UNDERSTAND THE PROBLEM

- ?- WHY are we blocked by UAT?
- !- Customers are not satisfied with what we deliver.
- ?- WHY aren't they satisfied?
- !- There's a mismatch on what they want and what we deliver.
- ?- WHY is this mismatch?
- !- ...

FIND A SOLUTION

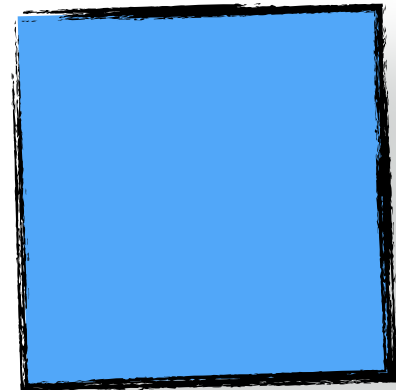
- introduce **review** activity after analysis
- participants: customer, BAs, DEVS & Testers

what's worth
collecting & analyzing?



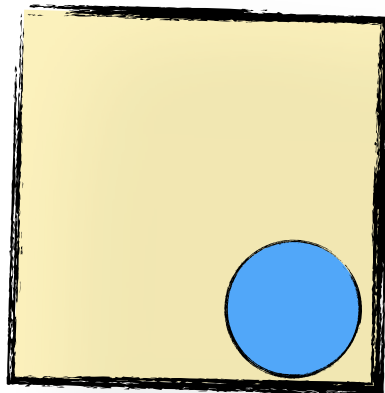
BLOCKERS

- anything that prevents flow of work items



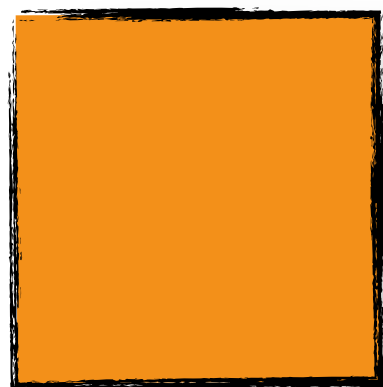
BUGS & DEFECTS

- anything you have to spend additional effort on because of bad quality (bugs, defects, etc.)



REWORK & SUPPORT REQUESTS

- defects in the live environment
- queries from customers



CONSCIOUS POLICY VIOLATIONS

- write the reason of the violation on a sticky and attach it to the work item
- collect & cluster policy violations
- understand & improve

What cluster should you solve first?

We're often fooled by biases...

- The ones with the highest delay
- The ones "we" own — because we're in control
- The simple ones — because we want to see quick results
- The most recent ones — they're fresh in memory
- ...

content
missing

109 days

waiting for
UX

22 days

reviewer X
not available

11 days

UAT not
passed

92 days

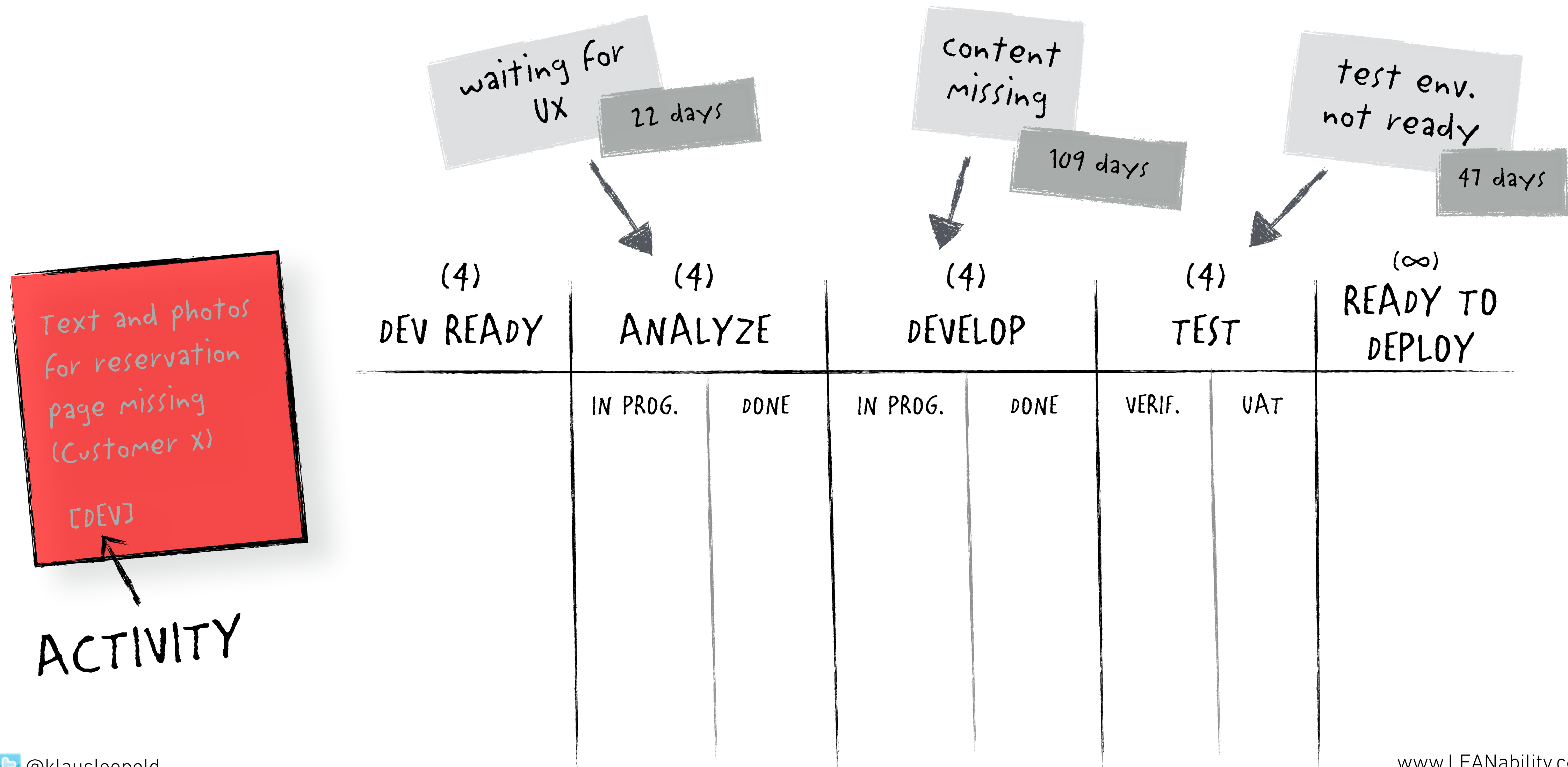
waiting for
backend

87
days

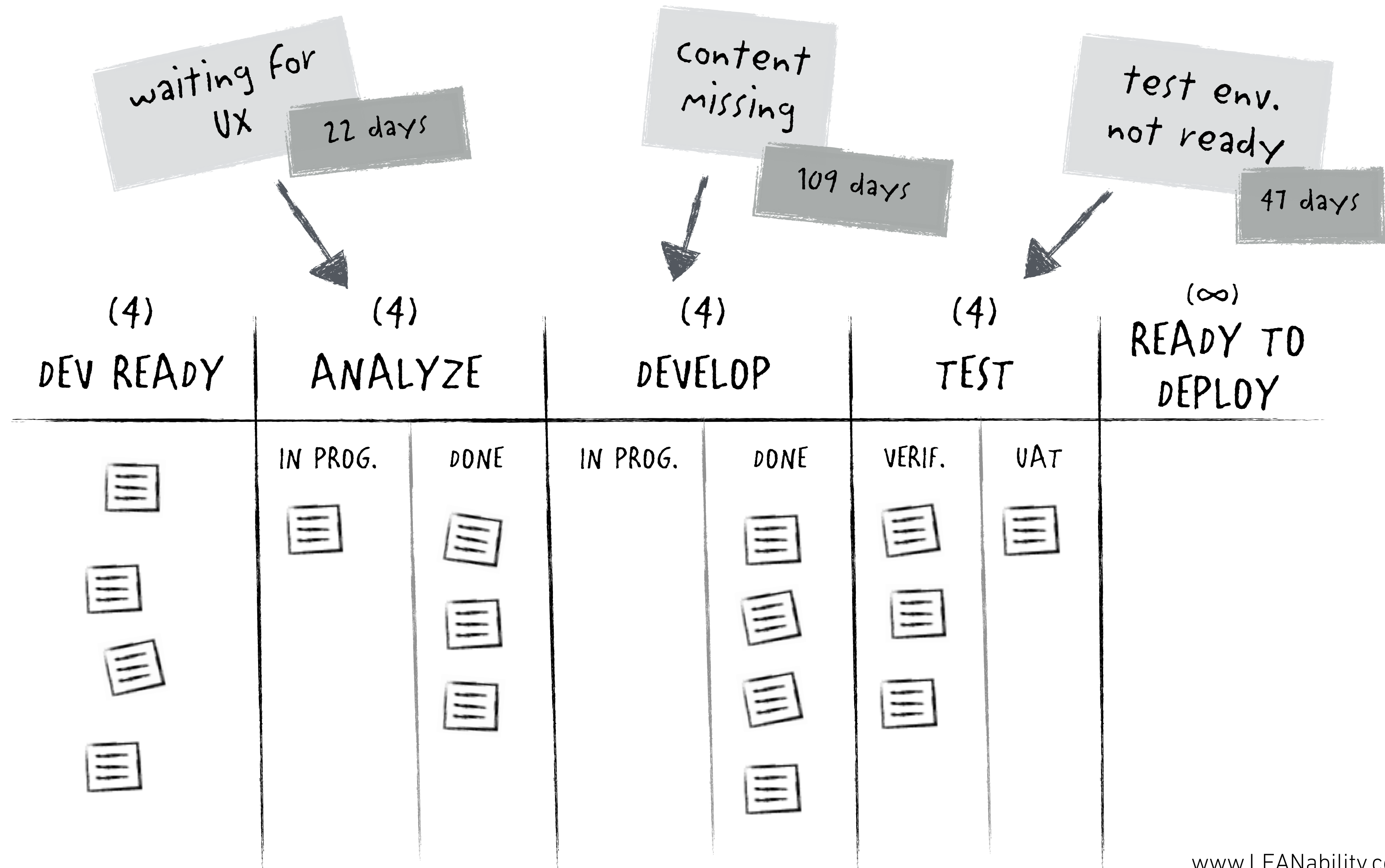
test env.
not ready

47 days

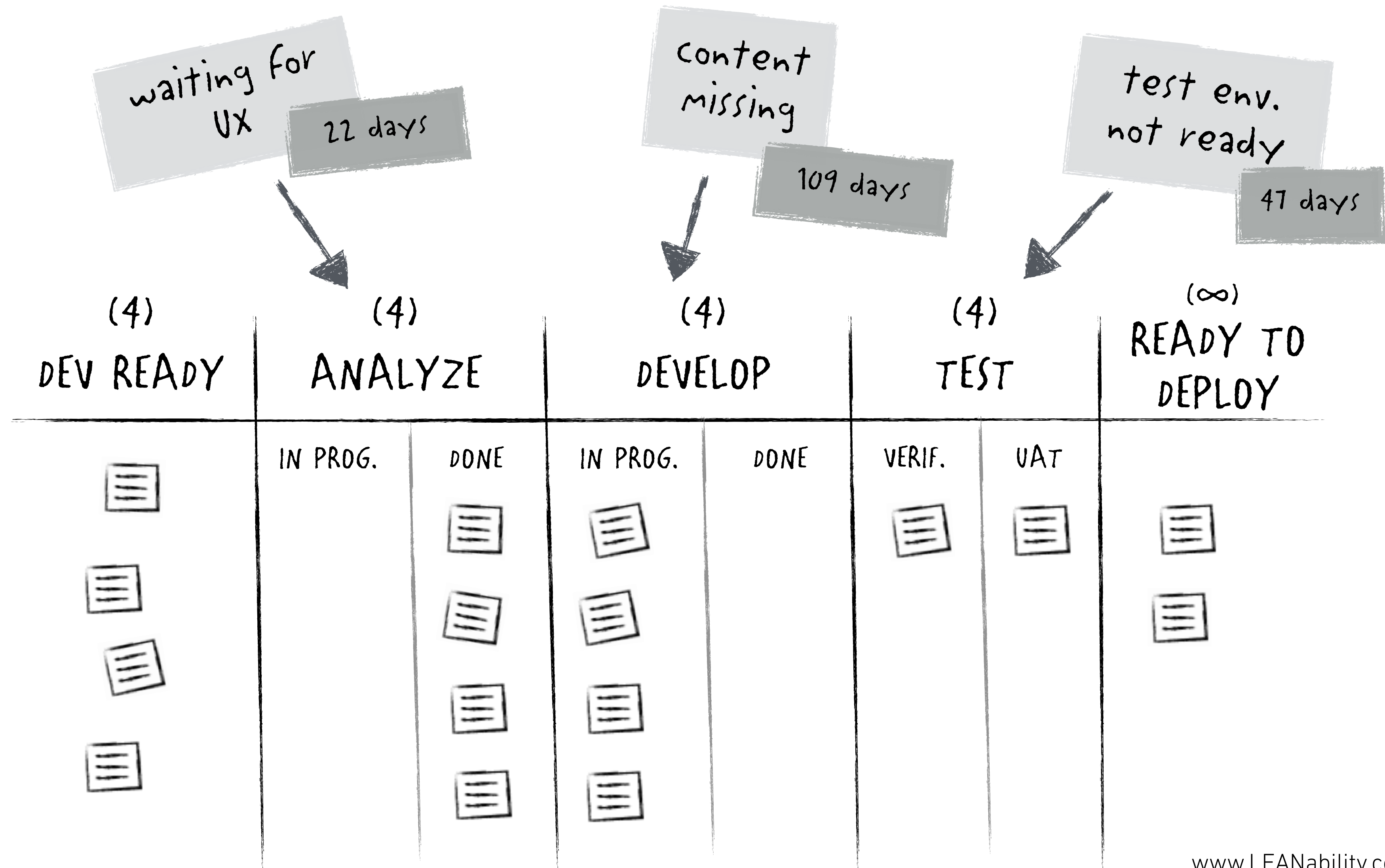
1. Fix clusters that constrain the system



1. Fix clusters that constrain the system



1. Fix clusters that constrain the system



solution: DoD-Item to inform customer about content

content missing

109 days

2. Weight resolution effort against blocker impact

		time blocked		
		high	medium	low
solvability	easy to solve	1	2	7
	moderate	3	4	8
	hard to solve	5	6	9

reviewer X not available

11 days

solution: talk to reviewer X and find a solution with him

waiting for backend

87 days

solution: merge/restructure back-end and front-end teams

PROBLEM

UAT not passed

92 days

3. Think about economics

SOLUTION

- introduce **review** activity after analysis
- participants: customer, BAs, DEVS & Testers

(4) DEV READY	(3) ANALYZE	(3) REVIEW	(2) DEVELOP	(2) TEST		READY 2 DEPLOY
				VERIF.	ACC.	

Is it **economically** meaningful to implement solution?

(4) DEV READY	(3) ANALYZE	(3) REVIEW	(2) DEVELOP	(2) TEST		READY 2 DEPLOY
				VERIF.	ACC.	

Is it **economically** meaningful to implement solution?

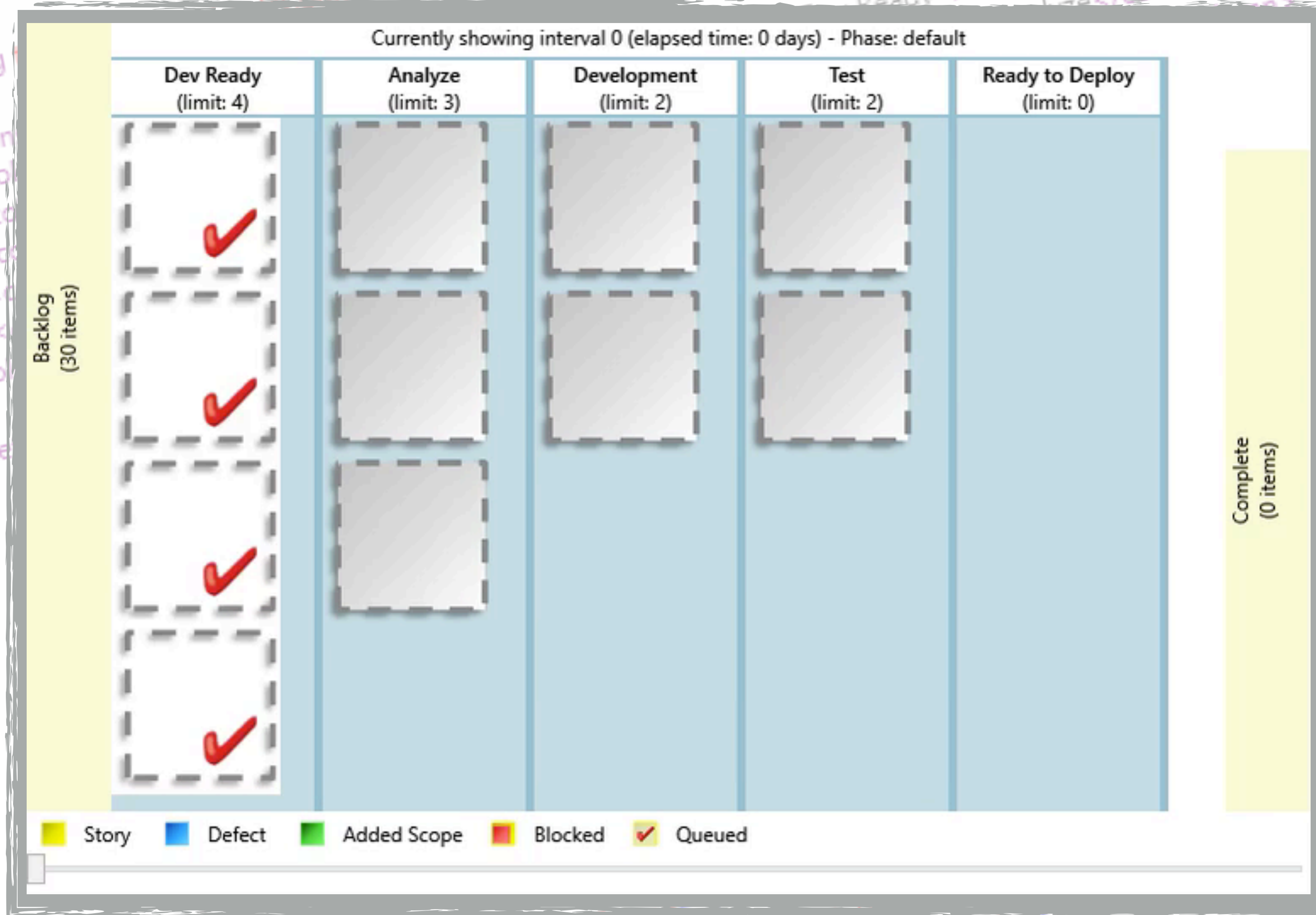
LET'S THINK ABOUT IT...

- additional review increases lead time for all work items
 - * higher lead time → worse TTM & pot. higher CoD
- lower lead times for items with potential defects
 - * lower lead times → improved TTM & less CoD
- less effort for defect fixing
- ...

ECONOMIC SIMULATION

<forecastDate startDate="01-Nov-2014" targetDate="01-Feb-2015"
costPerDay="1.000€"
revenue="5.000€" revenueUnit="week" />
Count="30" />

<backlog
<column
<col
<co
<co
<co
<co
<co
</co
<de



UAT
<column id="2" estimateLowBound=
<column id="4" estimateLowBound="1" estimate
column id="5" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound=

KanbanSim and ScrumSim v1.6.1 - Focused Objective

Home Kanban Examples Scrum Examples Resources Help

Board Charts Source Refresh Cloud Simulate Forecast Sensitivity Staff Statistics

Monte Carlo Cycles (Professional) Monte Carlo Measure Average Auto Refresh on Model Change

Model - LKCE UAT (unsaved) Errors (0) Warnings Last Results

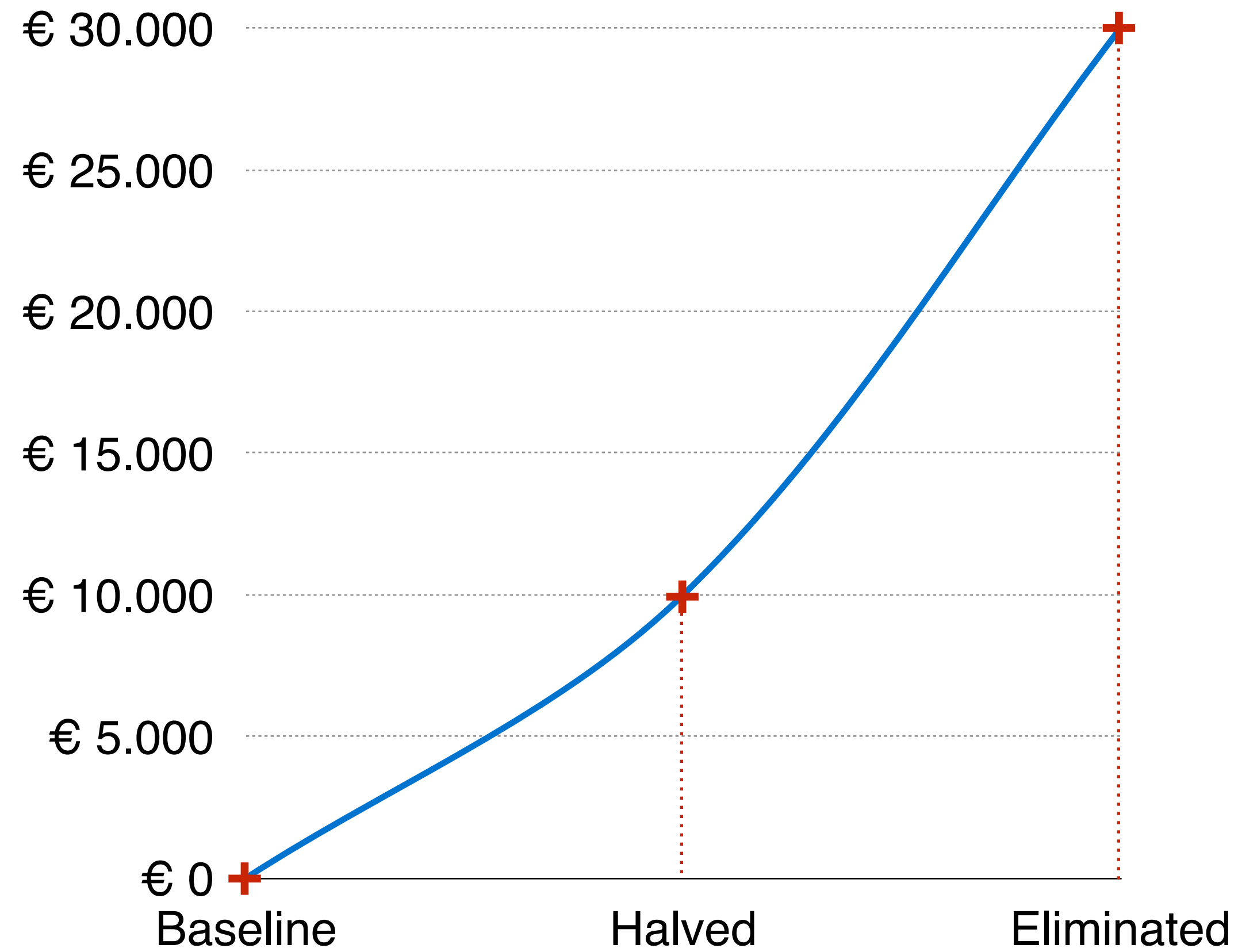
```

4
5 <forecastDate startDate="01-Nov-2014" targetDate="01-Feb-2015"
6   costPerDay="1.000€"
7   revenue="5.000€" revenueUnit="week" />
8
9 <backlog type="simple" simpleCount="30" />
10
11 <columns>
12   <column id="0" buffer="true" replenishInterval="5" wipLimit="4">Dev Ready</column>
13   <column id="2" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="3" wipLimit="3">Analyze</column>
14   <column id="4" estimateLowBound="2" estimateHighBound="4" wipLimit="2">Development</column>
15   <column id="5" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="3" wipLimit="2">Test</column>
16   <column id="6" buffer="true" completeInterval="5" wipLimit="0">Ready to Deploy</column>
17 </columns>
18
19 <defects>
20
21 <!-- UAT Failing -->
22 <defect columnId="5" startsInColumnId="4"
23   occurrenceType="percentage" occurrenceLowBound="30" occurrenceHighBound="50">
24   UAT Not Passed
25
26   <column id="4" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="2" />
27 </defect>
28
29 <!-- initial analysis wrong. Needs to be reworked -->
30 <defect columnId="5" startsInColumnId="2"
31   occurrenceType="percentage" occurrenceLowBound="10" occurrenceHighBound="30">
32   UAT Failed Bad Analysis
33
34   <column id="2" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="2" />
35   <column id="4" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="1" />
36   <column id="5" estimateLowBound="1" estimateHighBound="3" />
37 </defect>
38 </defects>
39
40 </defects>
41 </setup>

```

	Completes	Days	Staff Cost	Cost of Delay	Days Late	Total Cost	Total Saving
Baseline	20.Feb.15	79	€ 79,000	€ 35,714	50	€ 114,714	€ -
Halved	13.Feb.15	74	€ 74,000	€ 30,714	43	€ 104,714	€ 10,000
Eliminated	30.Jän.15	64	€ 64,000	€ 20,714	29	€ 84,714	€ 30,000

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Eliminated	30.Jän.15	64	€ 64,000	€ 20,714	29	€ 84,714	€ 30,000



BLOCKER HANDLING

- collect & cluster blockers
- understand problem
- find solution
- evaluate clusters
- * think about constraints
- * weight effort against impact
- * economics is your friend

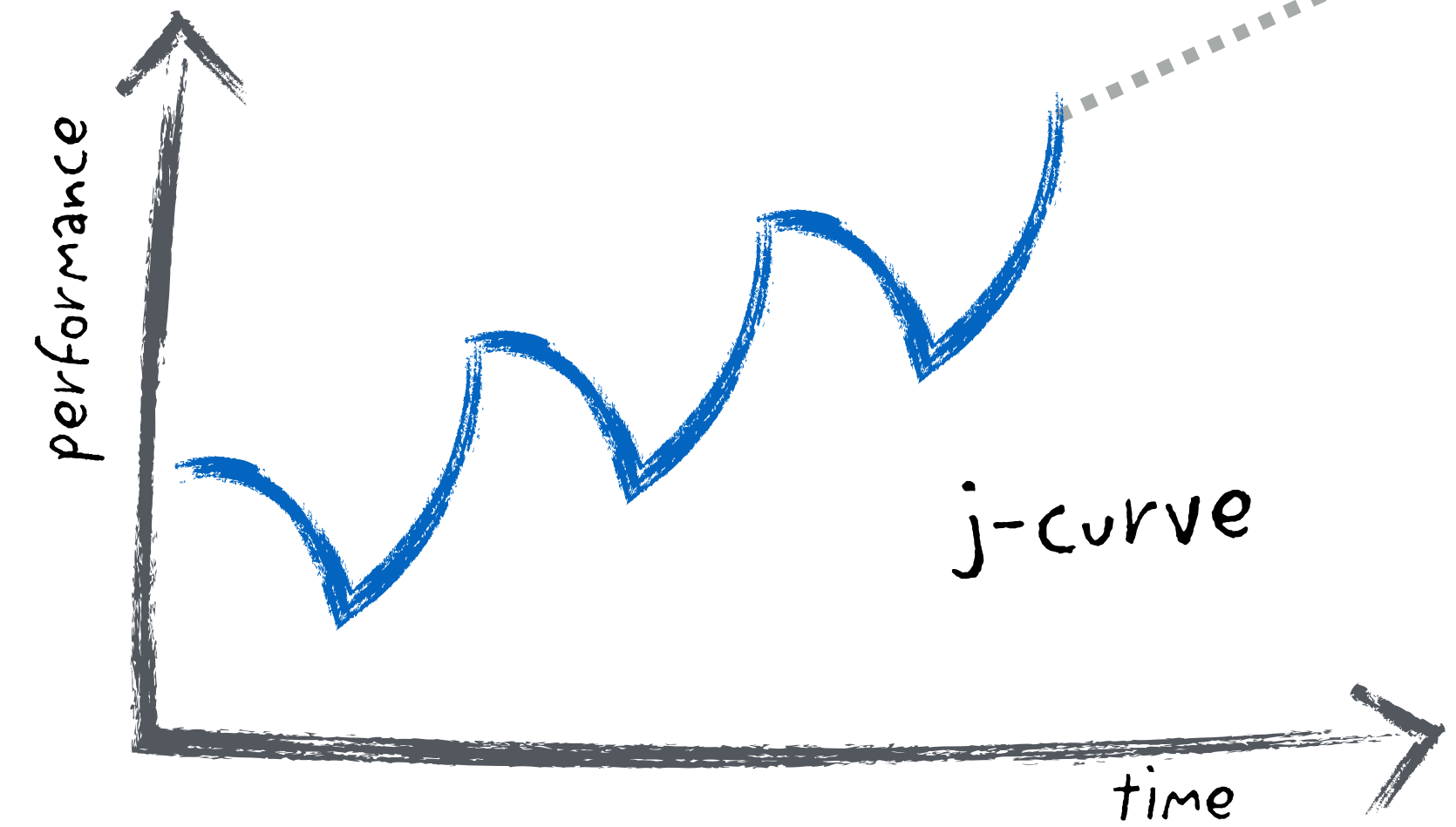
CADENCE

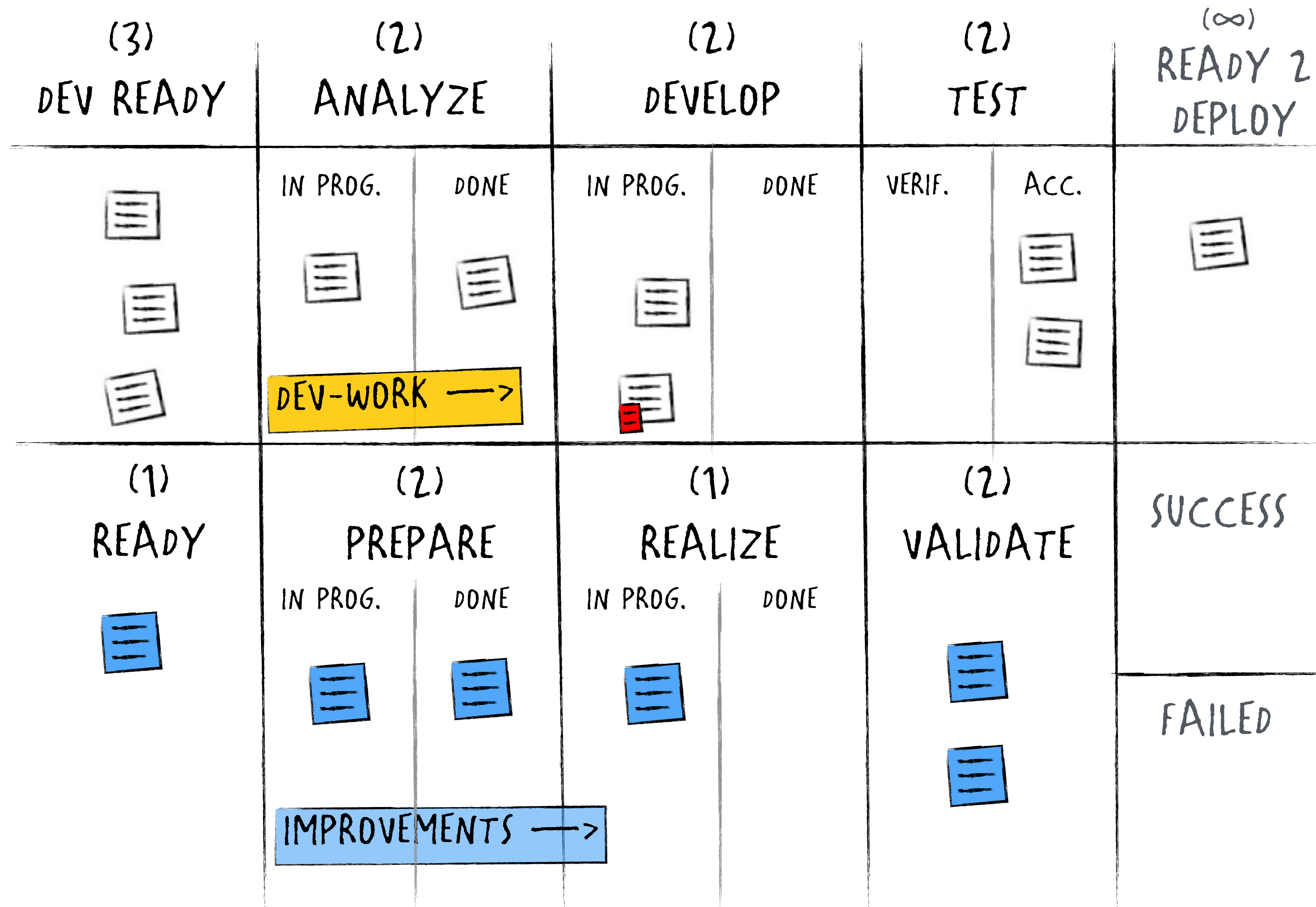
- trade-off: quantity of blockers vs. narrow time frame
- 4-weekly cadence is a good start
- adapt cadence to your needs

MEETING FORMAT

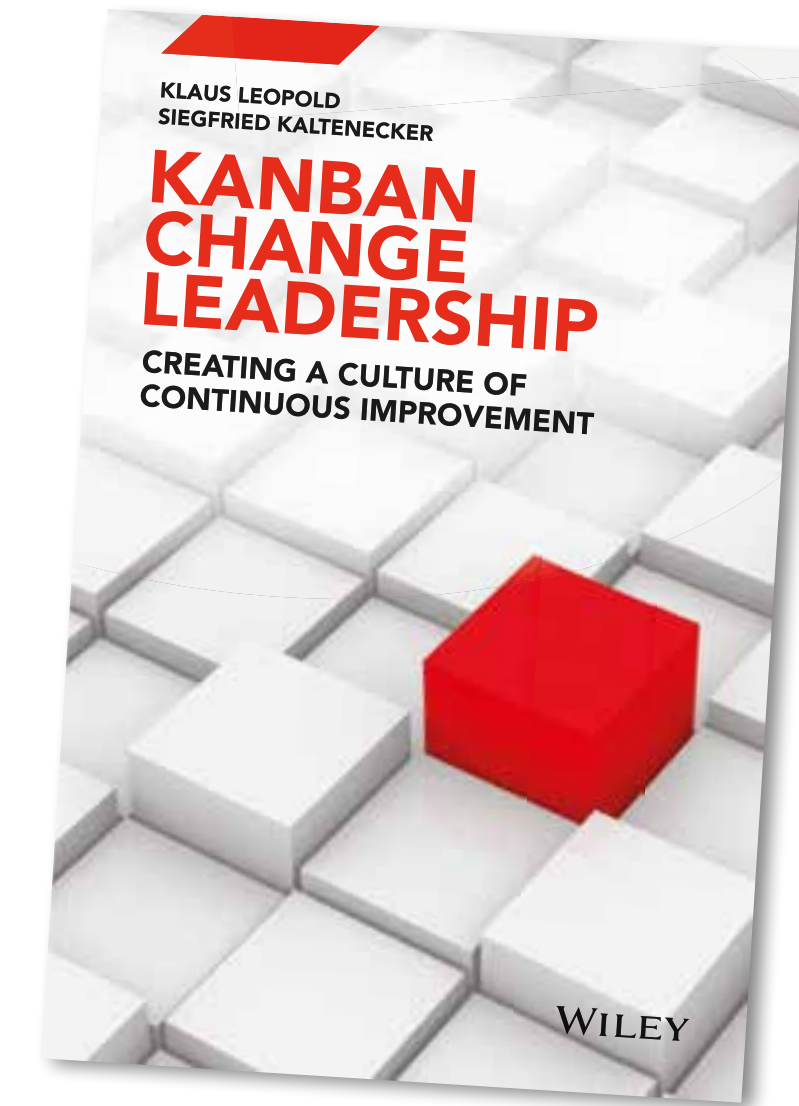
- Use established improvement meetings for it
- participants:
 - * on team level - the team
 - * on higher flight levels, multi-tier systems - work with delegates

WHAT ELSE TO CONSIDER?





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Thanks to Troy Magennis for working with me on this topic!

“Using Blocker Clustering, Defect Clustering, and Prioritization for Process Improvement”,
Klaus Leopold and Troy Magennis, InfoQ, <http://bit.ly/InfoQblocker>