

Scrum Isn't Broken, Your Team Design Is



Strong Team Design
Connected around a shared
goal and purpose



Broken Team Design
Disconnected, siloed,
and misaligned



Meet Your Speaker

Mark Palmer

Scrum Alliance CST + CTC | Great Fish Agility

30 years in IT, software, product management, and Agile leadership



12K+

Scrum Alliance
learners certified



30

Years in IT, software,
and product leadership



3x

Global Scrum
Gathering speaker



Enterprise Scale

Capital One, State Street,
Phillips 66, SWIFT,
and more



“

*I've spent three decades seeing what
makes teams work and what quietly breaks them.*



What You'll Learn Today:

- **Diagnose** structural leaks using Hackman's 60-30-10 model .
- **Identify** the specific Anchor dragging your team's performance .
- **Rebuild** a real-world \$10M turnaround .
- **Master** the executive scripts to fight for focused teams .
- **Why** your team design determines whether AI accelerates you — or buries you in technical debt

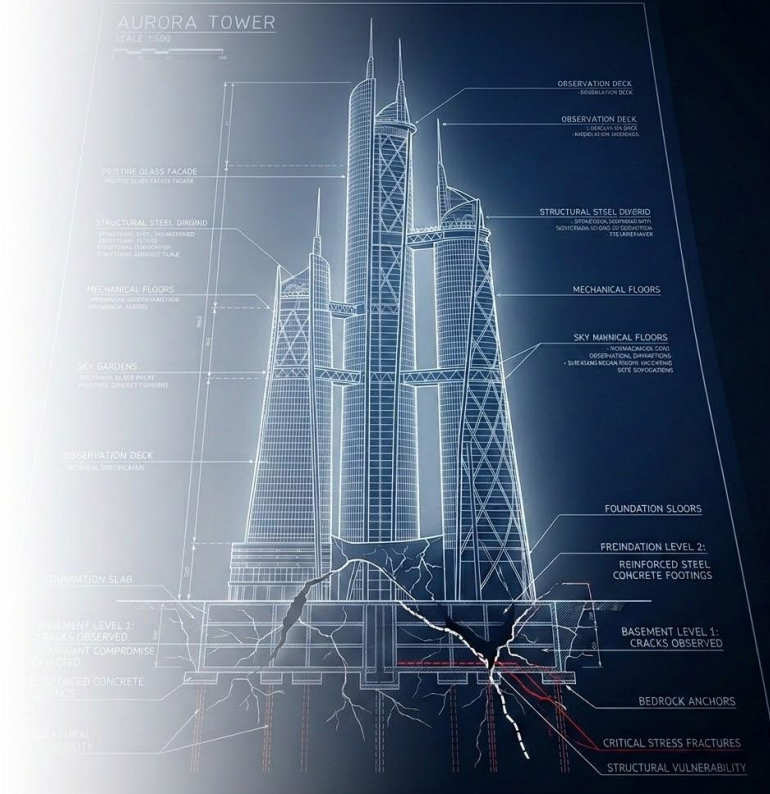
Why Stay Until the End?

- **A real Capital One turnaround:** from "never" to launching 6 months ahead of schedule
- **Two scripts** you can use Monday morning to change the executive conversation
- **A free Architect's Toolkit** — templates and trackers you can deploy immediately

Scrum Isn't Broken, Your Team Design Is.

Scrum doesn't need a **mechanic**.

It needs an **architect**.



Performance is a byproduct of environment, not effort.

How Many Teams Are You Actually On?

- **1 Team:** 100% Dedicated & Focused
- **2 Teams:** 20% Context-Switching Tax
- **3 Teams:** 40% Context-Switching Tax
- **4+ Teams:** 60%+ Tax (Structural Bankruptcy)



GLOBAL IMPACT OF CONTEXT SWITCHING

Visualizing the scale of task switching costs confirmed by the APA and illustrative regional losses. (Synthesized & illustrative data).

APA TASK SWITCHING
productive time loss

Up to
40%

US \$450B
estimated annual business
loss due to task switching

Australia
approximately
600 hrs/person/yr
lost to workplace distractions



Europe 36–50%
workers lose 1–5 hours weekly
to context switching alone

You aren't just busy. You are cognitively impaired by design

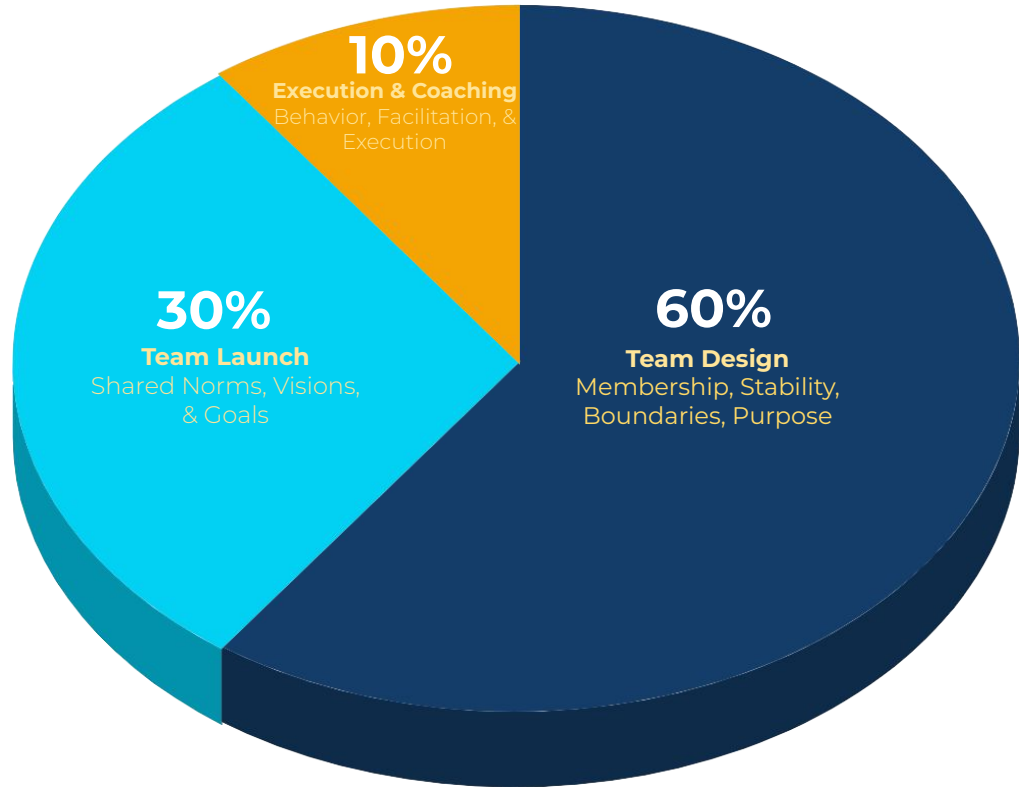
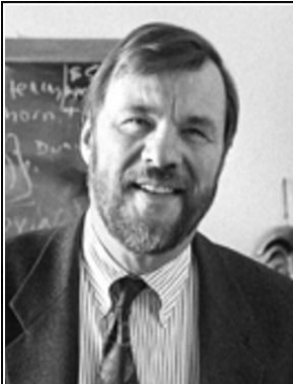
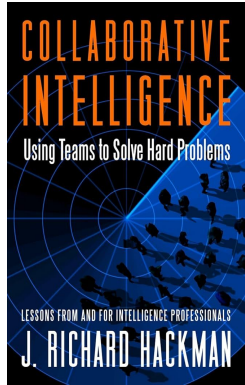
2026: The AI Complexity Explosion

- AI accelerates **Output**, not necessarily **Outcomes**.
- Fragmented design + AI = Technical Debt at Warp Speed.
- Human "Equal Voice" is the only governor.
- Only 2.5% of people can truly multitask — AI doesn't change that number." (Source: APA/neuroscience research)



Structure is the only thing that keeps AI speed from becoming chaos

The Architecture of Performance



90% of a team's performance is determined before the first Sprint 7

Designing for Flow: The 4 Anchors

- **Psychological Safety:** Shield the team from "Drive-by" noise. (*Edmonson 1999*)
- **Trust:** Establish stable, long-lived membership. (*Hackman longitudinal*)
- **Shared Vision:** Focus on "Strategic Bets" (Outcomes). (*Dan Pink - Drive*)
- **Equal Voice:** Use rituals to unlock collective intelligence. (*MIT Woolley 2010*)

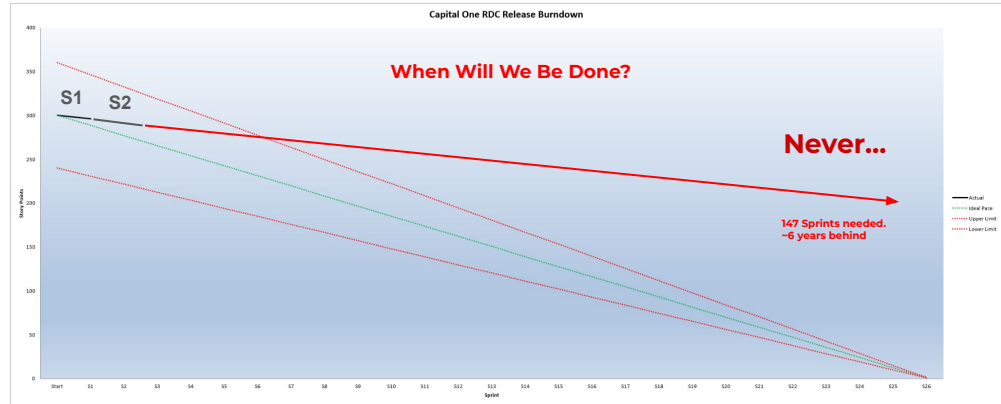


Flow is a design outcome, not a team behavior

Capital One: When "Busy" Becomes Catastrophic

The Forecast:

- Sprint 1: 15 PBIs pulled, 4 completed
- Sprint 2: 20 PBIs pulled... only 2 completed
- Total: 6 of 300 PBIs done after two Sprints
- **"Decaying Velocity"** (4 items down to 2) . This proves that pressure makes performance worse, not better .
- Sprint Planning attended by 3 people
- PO has a day job, SM on 3 teams, Devs on 5 project teams
- Dev morale plummeting — devs want off the project
- Release burndown projects Sprint ~150 finish

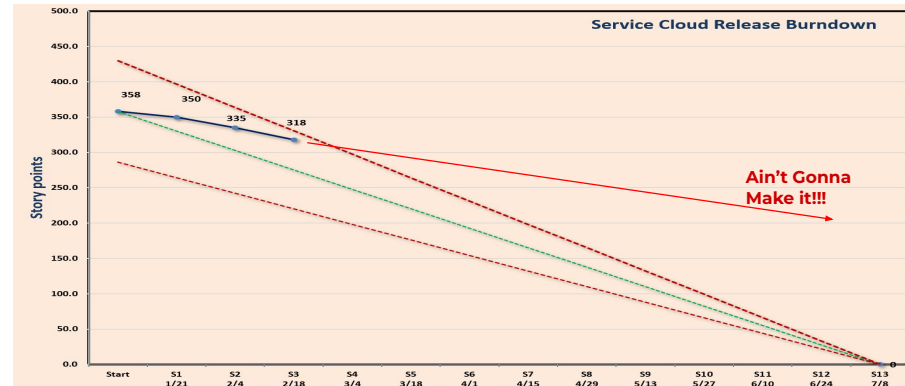


When everyone owns everything, no one owns anything

Phillips 66: The \$7 Million Disaster

“Before” — The Warning Signs

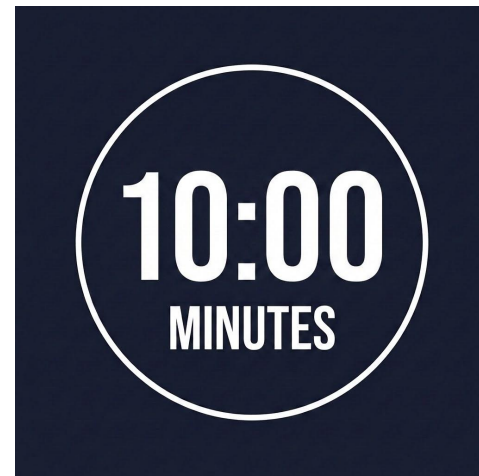
- \$10M transformation project
- 1 year behind schedule
- Distributed teams (Oklahoma & Chennai)
- 358 points across 150 PBIs
- Waterfall legacy habits carried into Agile
- **Feedback loops >24 hours**
- Testing lag, velocity chaos, rework spiral



You don't fix chaos by working harder. You redesign the system

Workshop: Design Repair

1. **Get into groups of 3–4** with people you didn't come with.
2. **Complete the 4 Anchors** diagnostic first.
3. **Circle the ONE** primary bottleneck.
4. Then **write your two structural fixes**.
5. **Constraint:** No new meetings. No mindset training. Move a line.

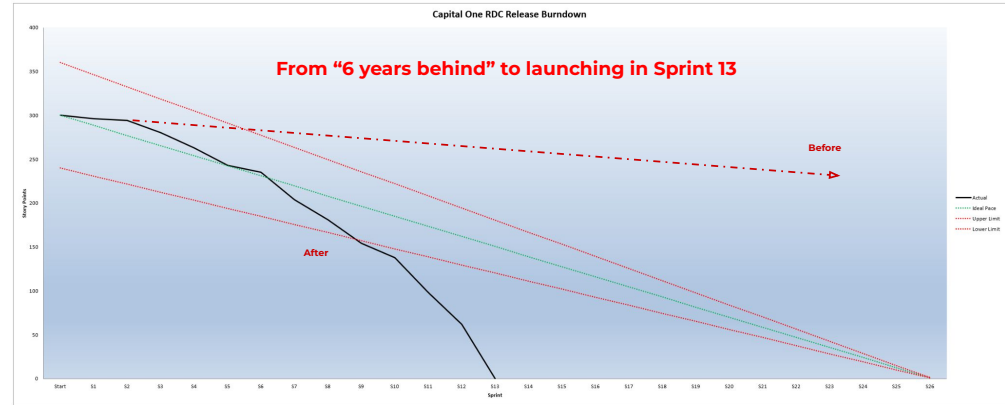


Stop fixing your Scrum. Start designing teams that can actually think

Capital One Reveal

The Fix & Results:

- Dedicated, stable Scrum team (PO, SM, Devs)
- Developers no longer on 5+ projects
- 24-hour turnaround on questions & decisions
- Reduced backlog to ~150 high-value PBIs
- Clear sprint goals and priority alignment
- Sprint Reviews with real feedback
- Stakeholders fully engaged



Q1: "What's the value of RDC?"

Q2: "What will this cost us in total?"

Q3: "What will it take to do this right?"

Q4: "What do you need from us to make that happen?"

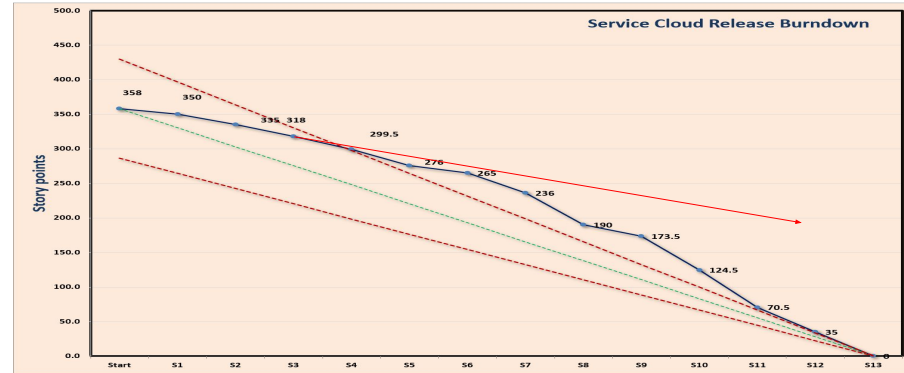


RDC Launched 6 Months Ahead of Schedule!

Phillips 66 Reveal

The Fix & Results:

- Unified Scrum team: Chennai + Houston
- 24-hour feedback loop
- 50% scope reduction
- 250% increase in productivity
- 75% faster defect turnaround
- Project delivered on time



The \$10 Million Turnaround - Project Launched On-time!

Re-Scripting the Leadership Conversation

- **Stop asking:** "How busy is everyone?"
- **Start asking:** "What is the cost of our WIP?"
- **Stop asking:** "Can we add one more person to speed this up?"
- **Start asking:** "What's preventing the people we have from doing their best work?"

You can't do this alone.

You need to talk to the C-Suite like we did at Capital One.
When they ask to add 'one more project,' give them the data.

Show them the 60% tax. Shift them from a 'utilization' mindset to a 'flow' mindset.



Focus isn't a soft skill. It's a system design decision

Grab Your "Architect's Toolkit"

- 60-30-10 Reset Canvas
- 4 Anchors Team Health Assessment
- Executive WIP Brief
- Lead Time Tracker with formulas
- Case Studies: Capital One + Phillips 66
- Research Brief: The Science Behind Team Design
- Bonus: The Spotify Warning + 3 Other Stories Your Boss Needs to Hear



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Stop fixing your Scrum. Start designing teams that can actually think



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**Agility is the byproduct of a system designed for focus. Stop fixing your Scrum.
Start designing teams that can actually think**

THANK YOU



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