

Welcome to



Product Launch vs. Product Escape

Kelly Stephen

Agenda

What are the ground rules?

Who am I?

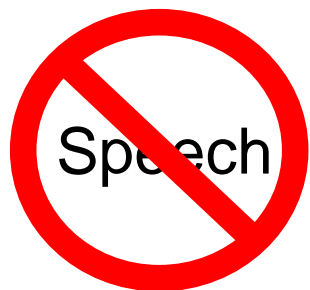
Who are you?

What's the problem?

How do we fix it?

What are the take-aways?

What are the ground rules?



45 Minutes



Interactive
Session



Have
Fun



Ask
Questions



Who am I?

- Education
- Work Experience
- Product Management Experience
- Consulting Focus & Observations

CAL POLY POMONA



Software Strategy, Execution, Quality, Delivery.



Who are you?

- Roles
- Industries
- Companies

What's the problem?

Session Abstract

You just launched your new product (or your new release). You and your development team busted your rear ends for the past 6-9 months (or more) to ensure it works great and it has all the features you wanted. But it's getting zero buzz. The only feedback you're getting is negative. A spike in Support calls from customers who have questions about the new features. And a slew of angry emails from your internal customer-facing teammates (Sales, Support, Account Management, Professional Services), all asking the same question: "what the heck just happened, and why didn't I know about it?" Launching your product instead of having it escape is a critical responsibility of Product Managers. Hear some tips on how to make that happen.

Remember these?



But we're not going to focus on releases that had issues and/or had to be pulled:

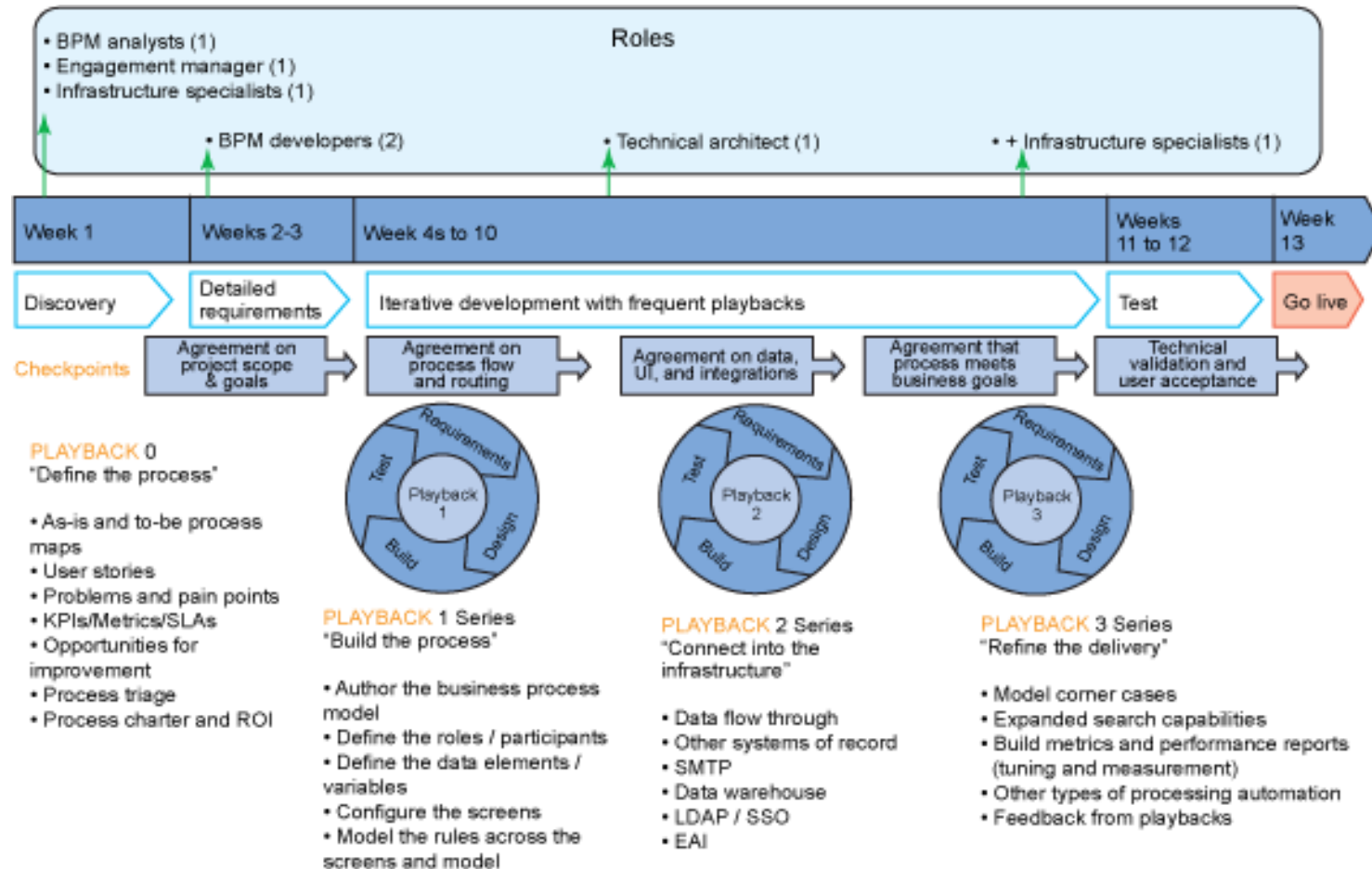
Our focus is on solid releases that still caused issues

Product “Escapes”

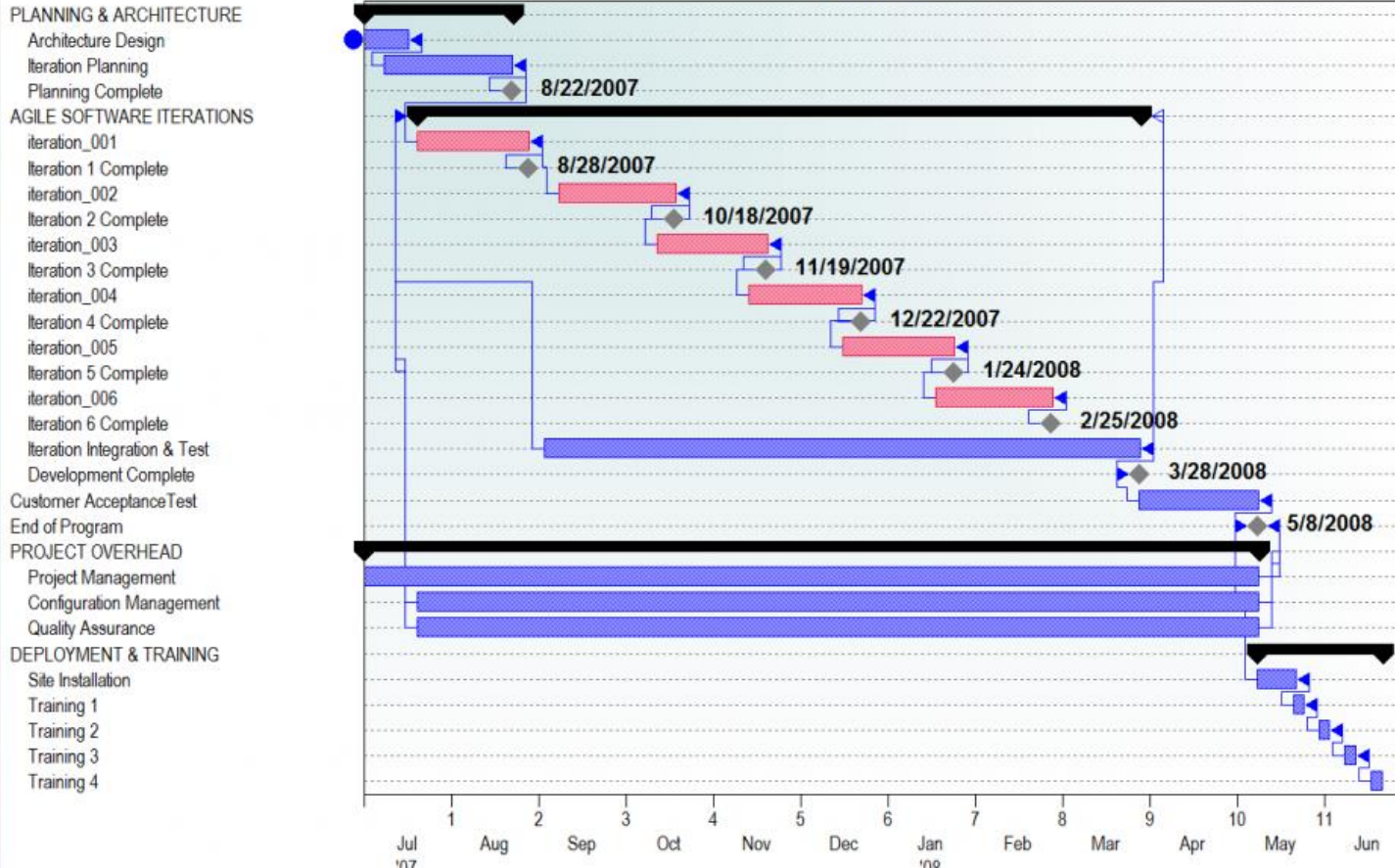
- Examples
 - Current client—partnered w/another software company to white label a solution
 - Success—white labeling completed, testing solid, support trained and ready, solutions specialist solid
 - Signed up 3 pilot sites very quickly
 - Failure—no customer sales plan/no collateral/no marketing material
 - Past client—major product release signed off after 6 months of development and rolled out to clients
 - Notice sent to client the week before the update
 - No beta period, documentation and training material not ready

Why did the “Escapes” happen?

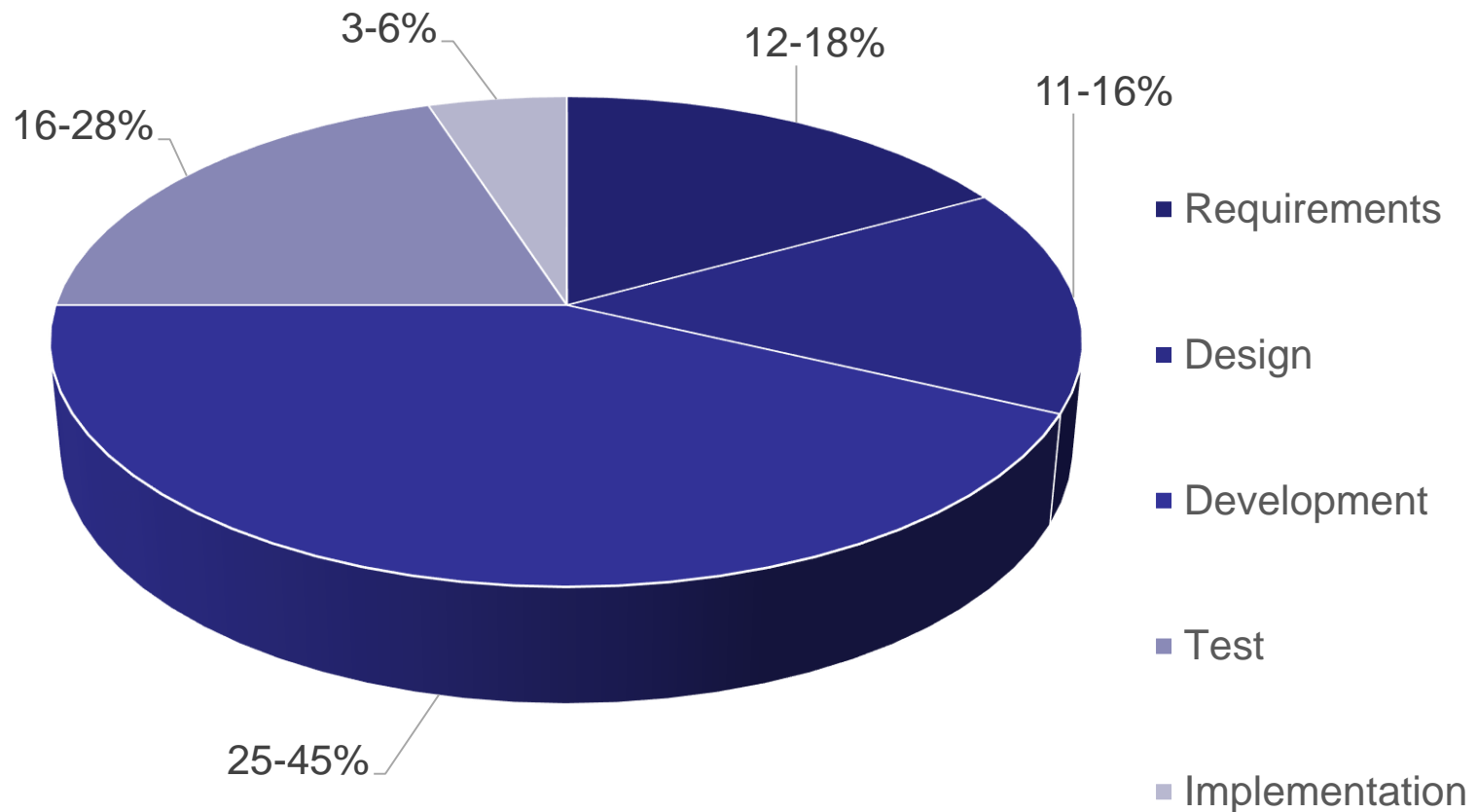
- No definition of “done”
- Lack of a comprehensive plan



Monthly Gantt Chart (L3) < Working >



Software Project Time Distribution



Why did the “Escapes” happen?

- No definition of “done”
- Lack of a comprehensive plan
- Lack of engagement from non-product organizations
 - Senior Management
 - Sales/Account Management
 - Marketing
 - Product Support
 - Professional Services
 - Training

*Common thread:
these are **all**
customer-facing
roles!*

What's the problem?

Successful development project
+ Good project management
Solid software application
- Poor/non-existent release plan/process
Lousy user experience

Lousy user experience → Upset customers

*Your competition is knocking on your
customers' doors every day...
don't give your customers a reason to open the door!*

How do we fix it?

- Expand your horizon beyond the development effort
 - Focus on all of the activities that have to happen after QA sign-off
 - Engage the customer-facing organizations
- Know your audience
 - Understand their needs and how to resonate with them
 - Develop messaging that meets these needs

How do we fix it?

- Develop a release checklist template
 - Include all non-development tasks
 - Identify the roles/groups responsibility for all tasks

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	Area	Task	Responsible	Status	High Pt	Due Dat
2	Marketing	PPT/slide deck	Rachael J		Yes	
3		Value proposition	Rachael J/Penelope /MyRounding		Yes	
4		Website content--landing page	Rachael J/Penelope		Yes	
5		Product sheet		Complete		
6		Press release		Complete		
7		Lead campaigns	Kat David			
8		Institute content	Tasha W			
9		Web placement--homepage	Laura K			
10		Insights	Laura K			
11		Hardwired results	Laura K			
12		Case study/white paper	Laura K			
13		Internal communication--WWGO, CDI, etc.	Penelope			
14		Adding Studer Group Rounding to existng communications				
15		Sales	Competitive Analysis	MyRounding		
16	Pricing history distribution/validation		MyRounding			
17	PD training (Value prop/sales process)		Penelope/ Matthew B			
18	Coach training (value prop/sales process)		Penelope/ Matthew B			
19	Demo process		Kat Davis			
20	Discussion owners (pricing/terms)		Kat Davis			
21	References		MyRounding		Yes	
22	MyRounding lead list/partner list		MyRounding		Yes	
23	Big system approaches		Dan C		Yes	
24	lead management		Kat Davis		Yes	
25	Competitive cross walk		MyRounding		Yes	
26	CRM data management		Kat Davis		Yes	
27	Contracts/billing	Approach letter	Felicia W/ Stephanie Stevens		Yes	

How do we fix it?

- Migrate your SDLC to a PDLC
 - Include all release activities in your plan
 - Assign roles with specific individuals
 - Make everybody accountable owners for their tasks
 - Focus on all release tasks with the same fervor as the development tasks
- Have a post-launch review and improve the process for your next launch

How do we fix it?

- Communicate!
 - Develop a robust, comprehensive communication plan—what, why, when
 - Include both internal and external
 - Regularly communicate status and both hit and missed due dates—eliminate FUD

*Eliminate any and all excuse for
not being prepared!*

What are the take-aways?

- What did you learn?
- What did we miss?
- Questions?

Bibliography

- BPM Schedule: www.ibm.com
- Software Project Time Distribution:
 - <http://csse.usc.edu/csse/TECHRPTS/2008/usc-csse-2008-836/usc-csse-2008-836.pdf>
 - <http://www.infoq.com/articles/project-metrics>