Agile BAU
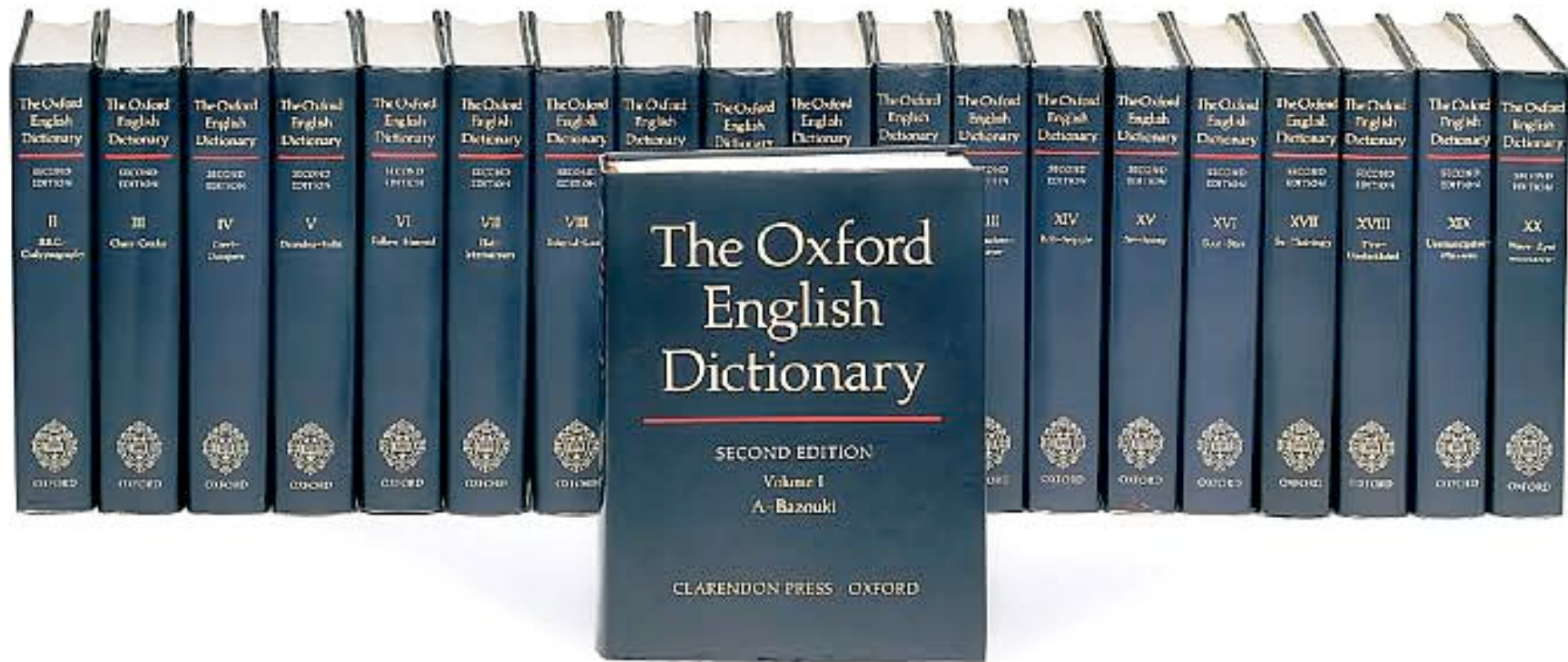
Lachlan Heasman - ThoughtWorks

Jody Podbury – Suncorp

FIRST...
SOME DEFINITIONS

What do we mean when we say BAU?

- Business as usual and production support
- A mix of planned and unplanned work
- Solutions that are post implementation and post warranty
- More than **lights on**

- This is where solutions start to earn their keep

What do we mean when we say Agile?

- Collaborative, self organising & cross functional team

- Business prioritisation of work

- Collective ownership of supported applications

- Quality focus – technical discipline, root cause
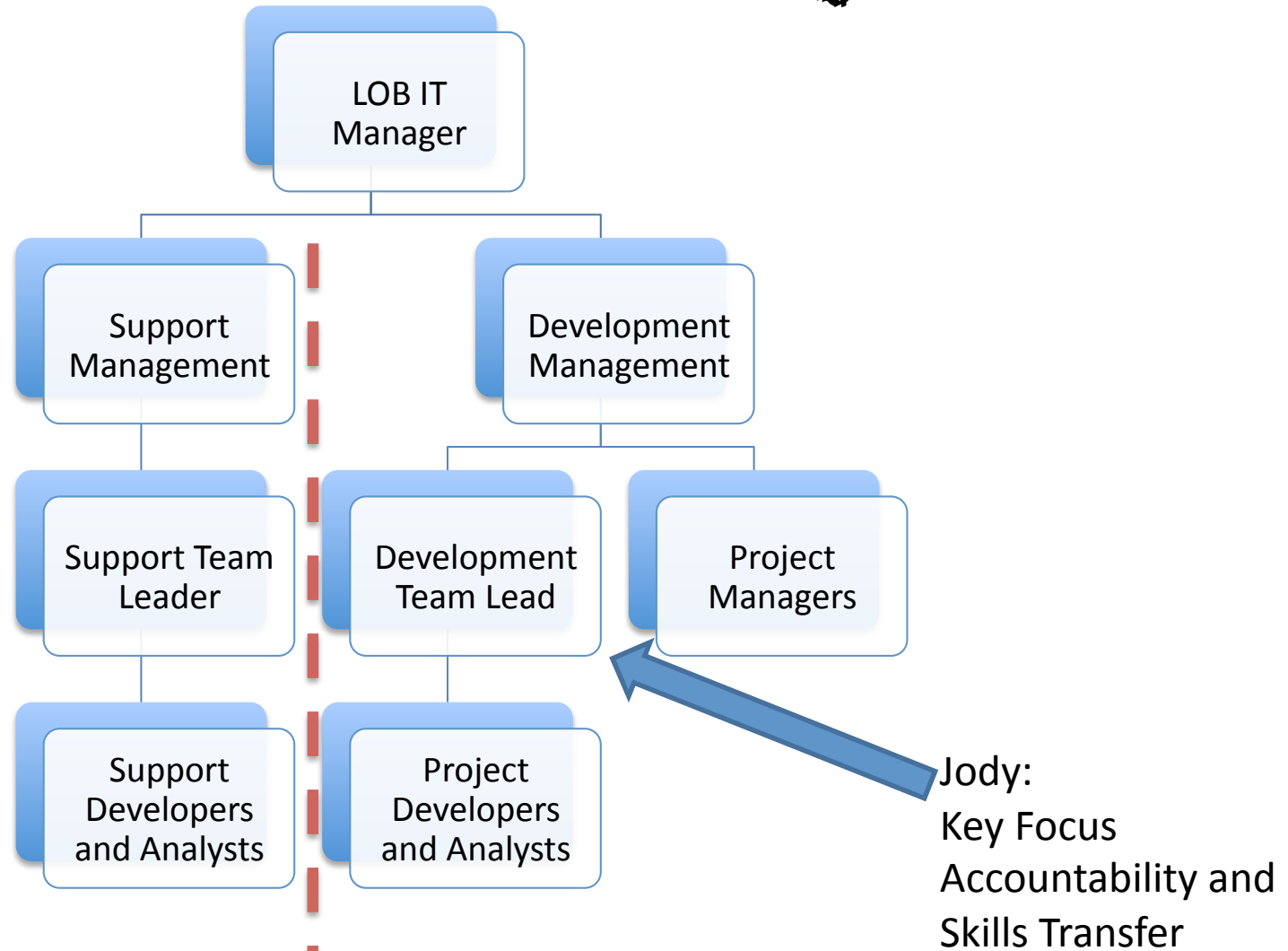
- Transparency of activity

Pre-December 2008

EARLY DAYS

Pre December 2008 - Organisation

LOB IT Manager

- **Support Management**
  - **Support Team Leader**
    - **Support Developers and Analysts**
- **Development Management**
  - **Development Team Lead**
    - **Project Developers and Analysts**
  - **Project Managers**

Jody:
Key Focus
Accountability and
Skills Transfer

SUNCORP
ThoughtWorks®

Pre-December 2008: Side effects

- 2 teams –
  Development "we make shiny new things"
  Support "we see under the hood of the shiny new things"
- No accountability from one team to the other
  – CLASSIC OVER THE WALL PROBLEM
- Distrust between teams
- No sense of ownership or quality in solutions.
- Continued dependence on specialists

Train wreck projects

- Into production on time, on budget, full scope plus change requests

- Maybe some minor defects, nothing prod support can't handle

SUNCORP

ThoughtWorks®

WHAT DOES THE CUSTOMER THINK?

Business Feelings

- Building number of issues in support - nearing 800 (AU & NZ)
- Solutions delivered with operational/support features not complete
- Project Team valued by Business,
  Support Team not valued by Business.
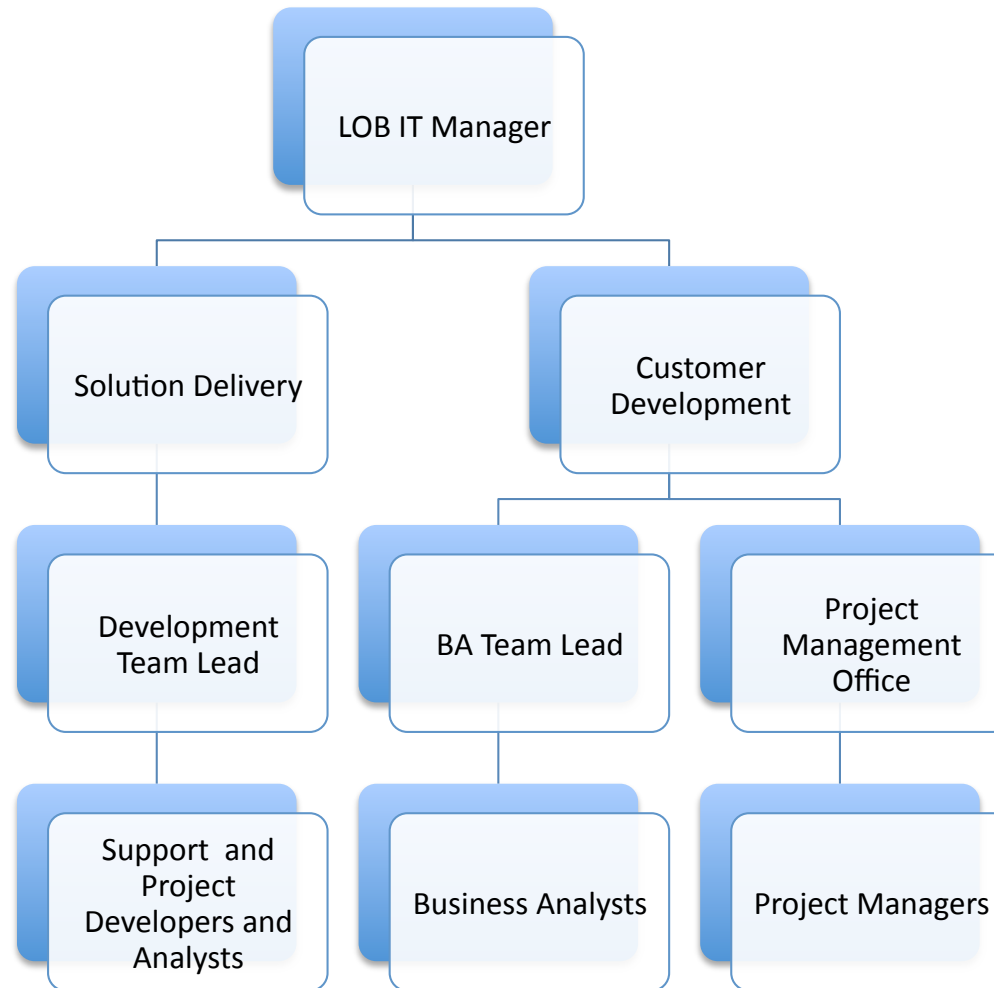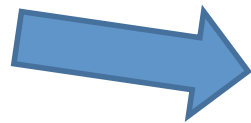
Escalation was the only way to get anything done

December 2008 to May 2009

BRIDGING THE DIVIDE

December - New Team

Jody
Focus
Application
Ownership
Team
accountability

New structure – Impact

- All in one team
  Development team – GONE
  Support team – GONE

- Developers have to support what comes from project work ("eat their own dog food")

  Analysts and Project Managers do not have to support their work!

Goals for new team

Create a…

- Trusted Team

- Valued by Business

- Sense of Quality and Ownership in Solutions

- Solutions are operationally sound

- Team that works together

- Team that lives up to each others expectations

SUNCORP
ThoughtWorks®

Actions Stations

Listening Forums		
Learning	Developer forums	Lunch and learns
Accountability	All on call	Rotation
Leadership	Be vulnerable	Instigate, don't own

SUNCORP

ThoughtWorks®

April 2009

TIME FOR A CHANGE

BAU to Agile

- Most of the team have been through the Agile Academy training

- Let's adopt some agile style planning

- Let's make the work visible with a task wall

Jody and Lachlan think

This will be easy – get the team to bring their planned items together and give it a go

Planning meeting

- 2 hours to introduce the concept and get going
- Here's what we're thinking
  - ✓ 2 week iterations
  - ✓ Planning our work
  - ✓ Showing the work on a task wall
- Let's plan the first two weeks
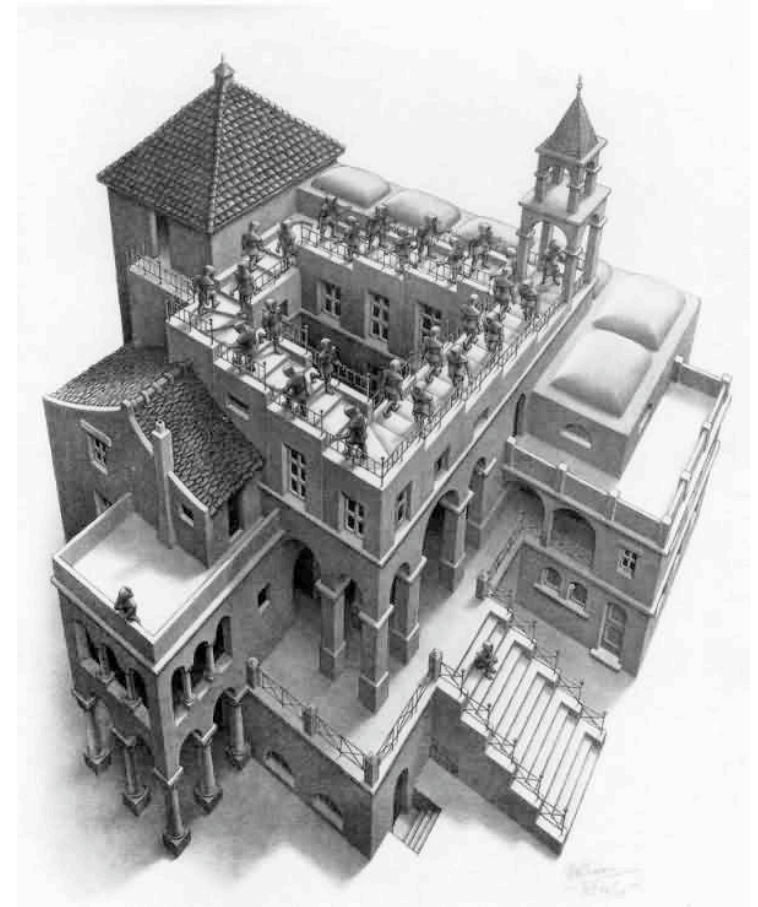 - Bring your planned tasks
  - Let's estimate and schedule
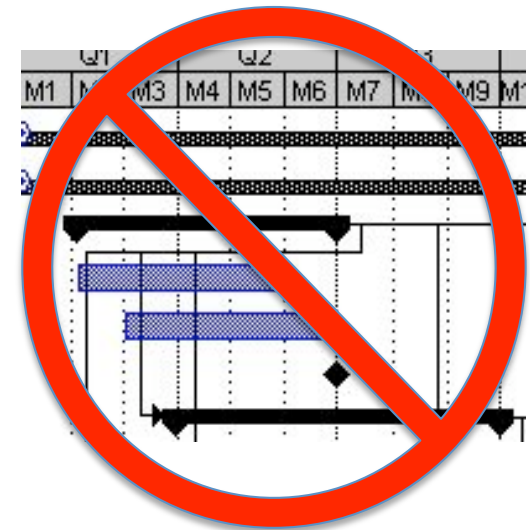
What's this points stuff?

Copyright Heasman 2009

What is this points stuff?

- How should we estimate our work?
  - Days – my day isn't his day
  - Arbitrary items – dogs?
  - Gummi Bears

Circles

Spirals

First Meeting
What did we have to show for it.

- 2 hours spent with the team

- We tried to explain the changes we were hoping to make

- Result:
  - ✓Frustration
  - ✓Confusion
  - ✓Disillusionment (Jody)

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY A GAME?

XP Game

- Disparate tasks
  - Blowing up balloons
  - Folding hats

- Range of skills required from the team
  - Who can fold well?
  - How fast can we sort cards?

- Just like support function

Developed by Vera Peeters (Tryx) and Pascal Van Cauwenberghe (Nayima)

Points/Sizing and Chocolate

- Ideal Days – but we only have 3 minute iterations?

- Fibonacci Numbers – dismissed, too nerdy?

- From the back a call

  *"*I LIKE CHOCOLATE*"*

  – Furry Friends, Chunky Bars, Family blocks

The Cadbury Scale is born

Cadbury scale

- Estimate the size of work based on the relative sizes of Cadbury chocolate bars
- Smallest = Furry Friends
- Largest = Slab

Side Effects of the Cadbury Scale

- No not weight gain.
- Any late comers to stand ups had to buy chocolate for the team.
- Increasing penalty the second person had to buy the next chocolate size up the scale and so on.

The team owns the scale

Back to planning

- Less than 2 hours
  - Now takes about ½ hour!
- All tasks estimated in chocolate block sizes
- All tasks displayed on wall for all to see
- Planned tasks use one colour of card, unplanned use a separate colour
- One task per card

May 2009

Are we agile yet?

May 2009 – what do we have?

- One team
- Visible, prioritised and estimated
  plan for the next two weeks
- Visibility of what everyone is doing
- Now meeting everyday in front of the task wall
- Team Wide bi-weekly standup to share across
  Projects/BAU

Business Prioritisation

- Weekly distribution of issues

- Business prioritise and send back list

- Analysts and business in contact

- Team call key contacts on issues/tasks daily

- Key Business team member spends Thursday a fortnight with us working through issues

WHAT DOES
THE TEAM THINK?

WHY ARE WE DOING THIS?

SUNCORP
ThoughtWorks®

Where the team is at

- Growing pains
  - How big is a task.
  - Team trying things on (how much to share)
- Stunted Delivery
                    way less than what was planned.
- Resenting the morning meetings.
- Humour the leader (Jody wants it)
- No tracking yet.

A problem has been detected and Windows has been shut down to prevent damage to your computer.

DRIVER_IRQL_NOT_LESS_OR_EQUAL

If this is the first time you've seen this Stop error screen, restart your computer, If this screen appears again, follow these steps:

Check to make sure any new hardware or software is properly installed. If this is a new installation, ask your hardware or software manufacturer for any Windows updates you might need.

If problems continue, disable or remove any newly installed hardware or software. Disable BIOS memory options such as caching or shadowing. If you need to use Safe Mode to remove or disable components, restart your computer, press F8 to select Advanced Startup Options, and then select Safe Mode.

Technical information:

*** STOP: 0x000000D1 (0x0000000C,0x00000002,0x00000000,0xF86B5A89)

***   gv3.sys – Address F86B5A89 base at F86B5000, DateStamp 3dd991eb

Beginning dump of physical memory
Physical memory dump complete.
Contact your system administrator or technical support group for further assistance.
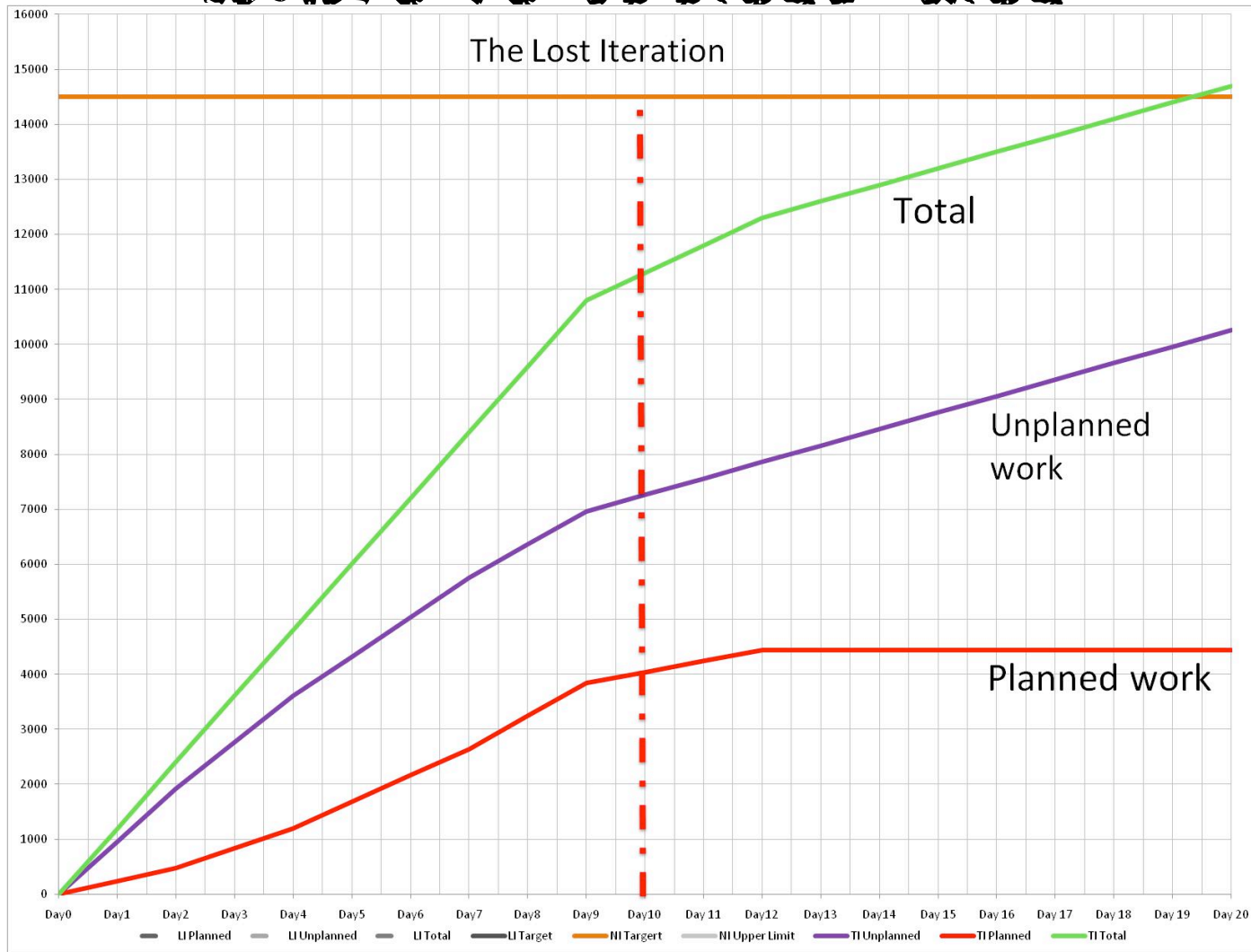
How to succeed – start by failing

The Lost Iteration

- Team Leader goes on leave 3 iterations in
- Iterations are 2 weeks with fortnightly planning/retro
- Rollover of iteration is in week off
- Iteration end didn't happen
- Team decided to end Iteration after 4 weeks
- Retro
  - When/how do we end this
  - Too long, way too long
  - Too much on wall
  - Lost track

Lost Iteration –
what it looked like

The Lost Iteration

Total

Unplanned work

Planned work

| Day0 | Day1 | Day2 | Day3 | Day4 | Day5 | Day6 | Day7 | Day8 | Day9 | Day10 | Day 11 | Day12 | Day13 | Day14 | Day 15 | Day 16 | Day 17 | Day 18 | Day 19 | Day 20 |

LI Planned   LI Unplanned   LI Total   LI Target   NI Targert   NI Upper Limit   TI Unplanned   TI Planned   TI Total

SUNCORP

ThoughtWorks®

Too much to do

- The team ignores yesterdays weather (a combination of planned and unplanned work)

- Pet coach nags the team leader
"they've planned too much,
they've planned too much"

- Team leader shuts the coach up
"Yes they have chicken little, and it won't get done, and they'll learn"

Pitfalls and Pratfalls

- One team member had stacks of big tasks
  - Load balancing (sharing the work)
  - Planning – Make it more granular.
- Adding additional team members
  - New skills, new function, team barely had its feet wet and had to teach the newbies.
- Too hard to record won't record it.
  - Modifying the recording process. Simplify what is captured for the unplanned to ensure team is accounting for it.

August - September 2009

PERFORMING

Current delivery

- 12 000 – 14 000 chocolate points per iteration
- 2000 points per person per iteration
- Burn down 60 issues per iteration
- Issues now resolved before being received through "official channels"
- Team has introduced code to better manage stand ups "T" for Time Out and "O" for Offline.
- Planned work is now hitting over 50% of the iteration
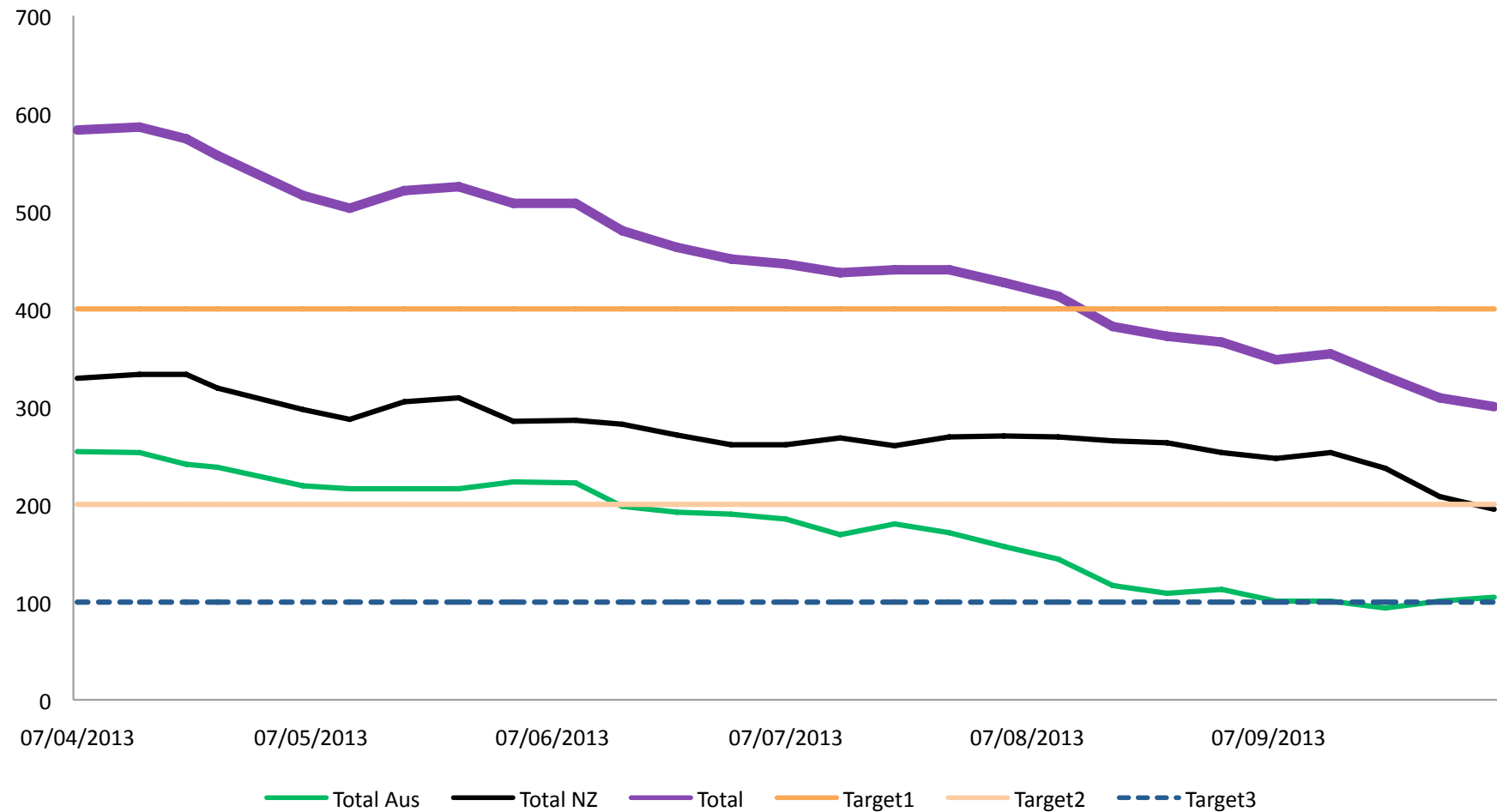
How we track stuff

- Task wall – a big task wall, everyone can see it. Don't put it in a computer!

- Burn down / burn up your work across iterations and within iterations

- Use cumulative flow diagrams to see how your queue is responding
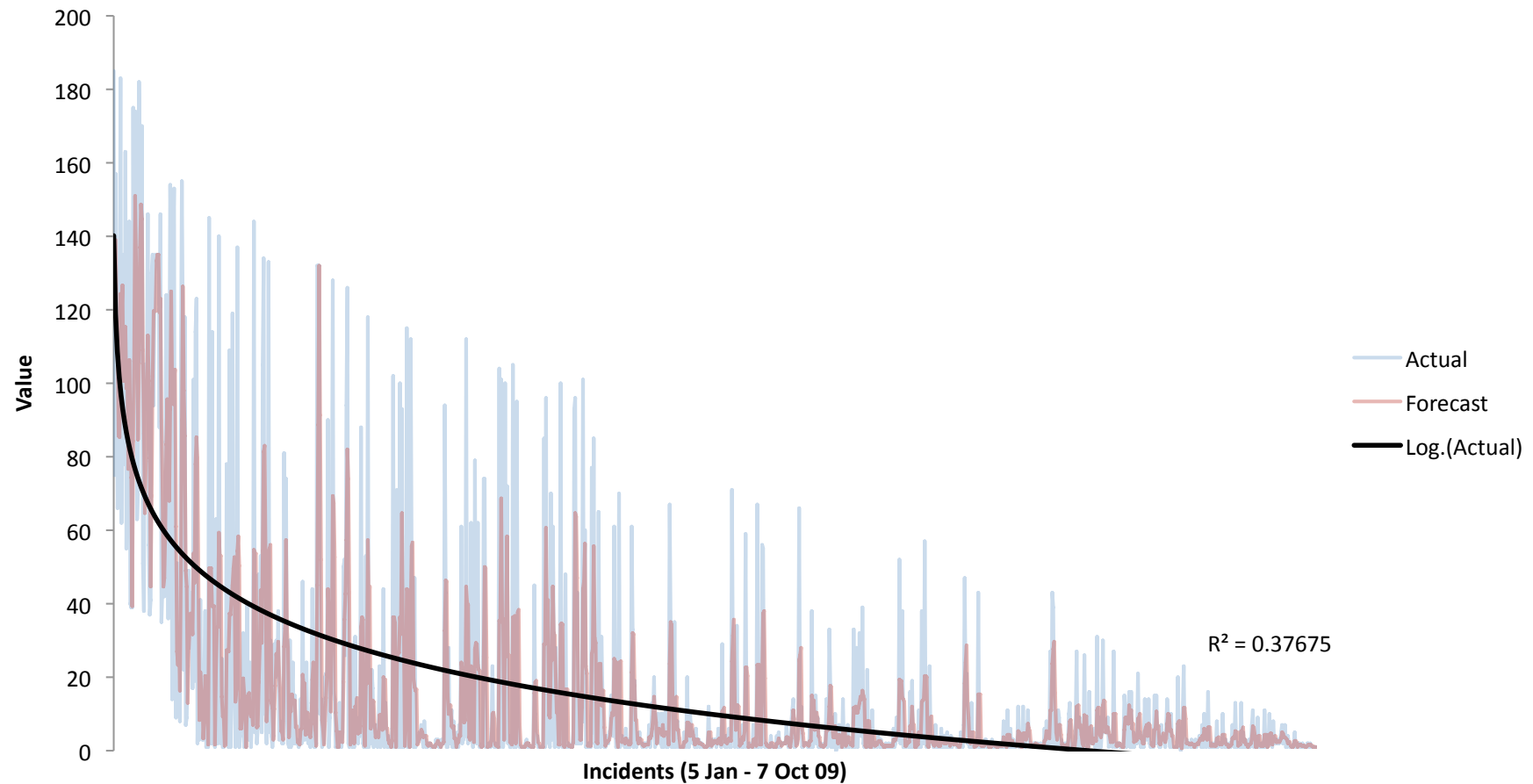
The Wall!

Outstanding Issues Over Time

The Pay Off!

Elapsed time per Incident/Issue Jan - October

R² = 0.37675

Value

Incidents (5 Jan - 7 Oct 09)

Actual
Forecast
Log.(Actual)

SIDE EFFECTS

Side Effect

- Team owns process and delivery
- Team does all their own planning
- Team starts/ends iterations
- Team reports on tasks – verbally & visually
- Team instigates changes/tweaks
- "It's good I know what I am doing, and why, and what the team are doing every day" - N Waykul Team Member Analyst

- What does Jody do?

Side Effect

- Peer pressure on other teams forcing them to change and improve

- Team members are starting to resolve issues for other teams as these are creating noise in their work

Side Effect

- Customer now cc's team on issue log requests
- Team resolves issues days before the issue management system notifies them
- Time is now spent matching up issue with already resolved work

Side Effect

- One task = one card. "Done" cards filled up the wall

- "I knew they did a lot of work, but I didn't know how much" – G Davie Executive Manager

- "I used to call you all the time to escalate tasks, the team are now calling me for input on a case before I expect it" – M Caruana Business Improvement

HOW TO TRY THIS AT HOME

Try this with your team

- One team; only one team
- Train the team
- Share knowledge within the team
  - Create and schedule a forum for communication
  - Unload the superstars; have these people coach
  - Resist the urge "The Best person to do the job is NOT the one that knows it best"
- Make quality part of everything for the team
- Recognise and acknowledge achievement
- Bring in an expert – to seed, not to do

SUNCORP
ThoughtWorks®

Try this with your work

- Support / enhancements put it in one queue – it's just work and it all has value

- Prioritise with your customer and deliver quickly

- Try different ways of measuring the work – but don't get hung up on the measures they will come

SUNCORP

ThoughtWorks®

Try this as a leader

- Listen to your team
- Let your team fail – do this by example
- Teach your team to be accountable to each other
- Get them to talk to each other (not you)
- Make work visible
- Don't always be there - empower
- Set Targets and Reward the team!
  (Don't change the goalposts)
- Do something different
- It won't happen over night – but it will happen

The end