

# MORE WITH LESS

Making better products  
by making companies better

IA Summit 2012

Will Sansbury

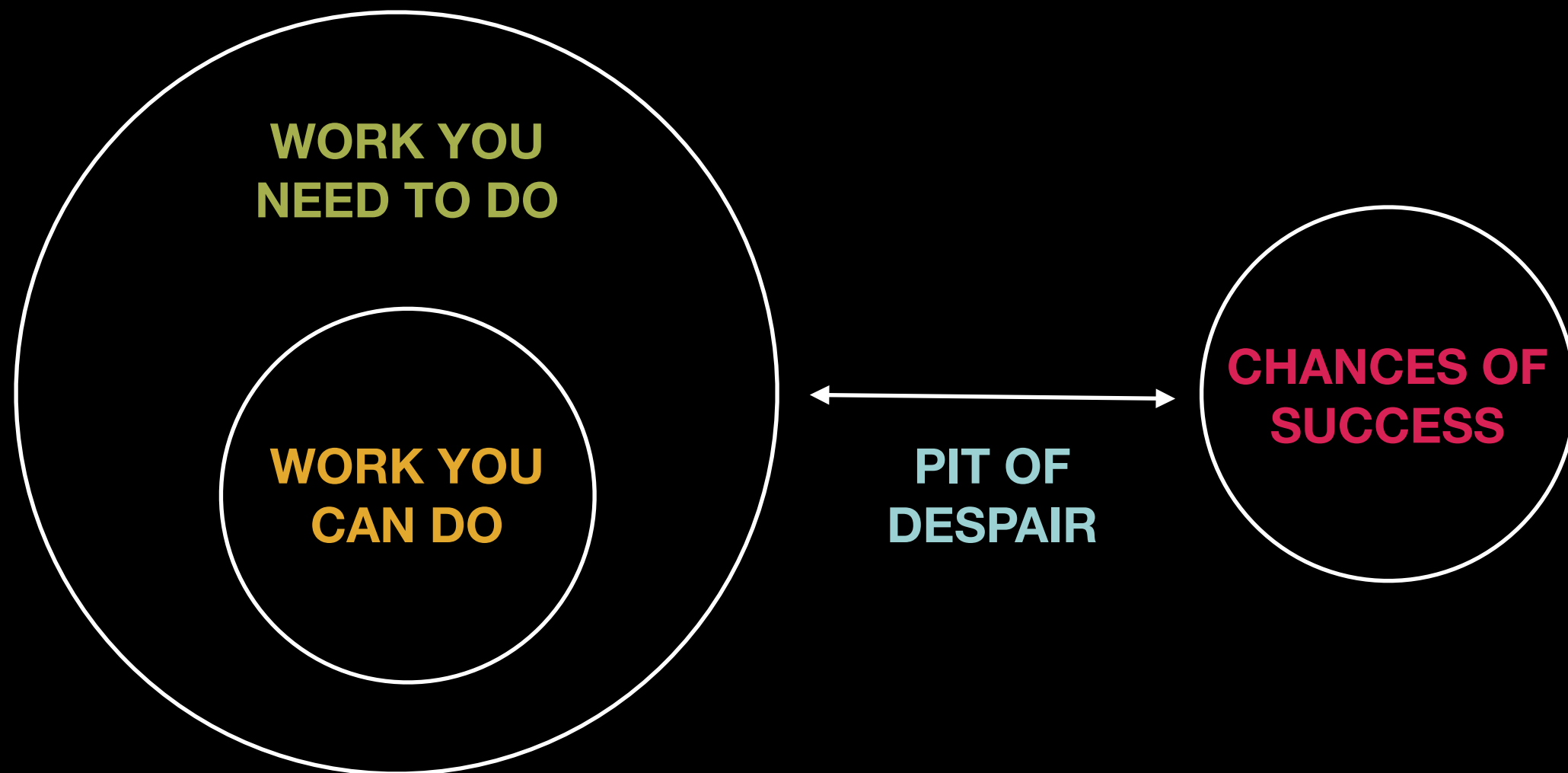
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#MoreWithLess

# Too much work, too little time



# Natural response is to lighten the design process





# Kill the churn





“The bigger risk for most startups is building something nobody wants.”

*Ash Maurya in  
Running Lean:  
Iterate from Plan A  
to a Plan That Works*

# Clarity of **WHO**





# WHO: Red flags

 Scope ballooned as edge cases were discovered

Features were justified by anecdotes from a single customer

“Yeah, I can imagine somebody wanting that some day...”


“Personas? I think Marketing did some.”


# WHO: Solution




## Ad-hoc persona workshop

Value alignment over accuracy

PAUL	
pop culture geek	
	<b>CONTEXT / SITUATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watches movies in college dorm with friends</li> <li>- Trades movie recs with real-life friends and social media friends</li> <li>- Watches spontaneously, but keeps a list of movies he wants to see</li> <li>- Watches on TV, iPad + Comp</li> </ul>
	<b>ABOUT PAUL</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 19yo college sophomore</li> <li>- Highly computer literate</li> <li>- Entertainment-focused</li> <li>- Quotes lines from favorite movies frequently</li> <li>- Likes to rewatch faves frequently</li> <li>- Has large library of DVDs + digital movies</li> </ul>
	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help him find movies that are fun to watch</li> <li>- Help him find + learn off-quoted lines</li> <li>- Make it easy to share his favorite movies</li> <li>- Help him keep track of his library</li> </ul>

CRAWFORD	
self proclaimed critic	
	<b>CONTEXT / SITUATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sees movies as evolution of literature</li> <li>- Well studied in film-making techniques and film history</li> <li>- Watches deliberately, often with other film lovers</li> </ul>
	<b>ABOUT CRAWFORD</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 35yo real estate agent</li> <li>- Likes to discover independent foreign films and introduce them to others</li> <li>- Blogs reviews of movies</li> <li>- Reads lots of reviews</li> <li>- Looks for homages; likes to see where one film influenced another</li> <li>- Cares more about directors than actors</li> </ul>
	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help him discover titles that are trending</li> <li>- Make it easy to share his thoughts and read others'</li> <li>- Let him trace influences through films</li> <li>- Celebrate technical side of films</li> </ul>

DARLENE	
date night planner	
	<b>CONTEXT / SITUATION</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Watches a movie either at home or in theater with her husband every week</li> <li>- Pays attention to what her friends watch (via Facebook + Twitter)</li> <li>- Plans date night over her lunch hour on Fridays</li> </ul>
	<b>ABOUT DARLENE</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 26yo newlywed</li> <li>- Works all day at a computer; web savvy; iPhone user</li> <li>- Checks Facebook compulsively</li> <li>- Struggles to find movies both she &amp; her husband will enjoy</li> <li>- Sends ideas to her husband to get his feedback</li> </ul>
	<b>IMPLICATIONS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Support web + mobile access to some degree</li> <li>- FB integration is desirable</li> <li>- Help her better predict if he or she will like a movie</li> <li>- Provide easy sharing options</li> </ul>



# Clarity of **WHAT**





# WHAT: Red flags

 Project leads couldn't agree on priorities

Requirements were poorly articulated,  
with too much information implied or omitted

Team was easily bogged down  
in debates about design

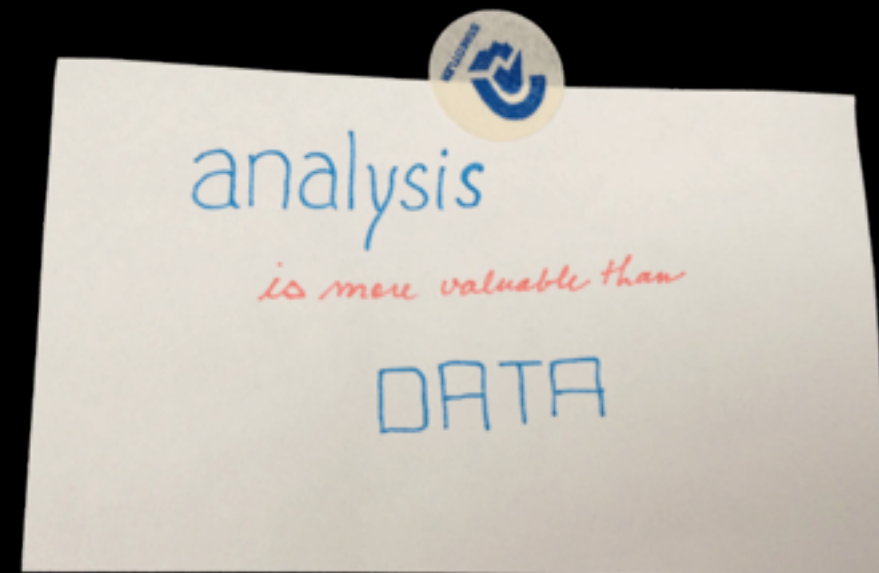
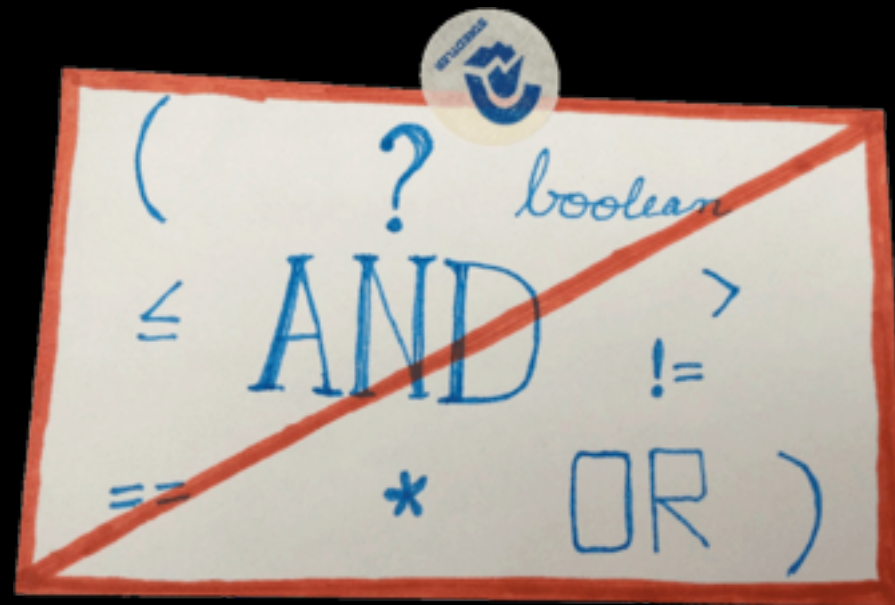
What we built didn't match what we designed  
and didn't meet project objectives



# WHAT: Solution

## Product principles

A set of explicit agreements to guide design and implementation trade-offs



# Clarity of **WHY**





# WHY: Red flags

 Estimate was much larger than anticipated

Semantic arguments about requirement details were frequent

Requirements were interpreted extremely literally

Team's user-centric focus atrophied

Team lacked heart, drive, passion

# WHY: Solutions



## **Product or release charter**

Get goals agreed to, written down,  
and consistently visible to the team

“We’ll know we’re successful when...”

When a team  
understands  
**WHO**, **WHAT**, and **WHY**,  
they will create value  
in less time.



When it comes  
to strategy,  
how can you  
move from  
**consumer** to  
**collaborator?**

# Thank you!

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