



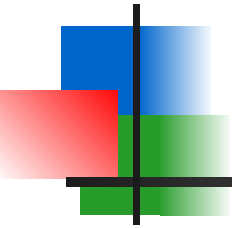
Lego Workstream Visualization

Nancy Van Schooenderwoert
Lean-Agile Partners Inc.

&

Joe Wright
Arnold Clark Co.





Level 1 play





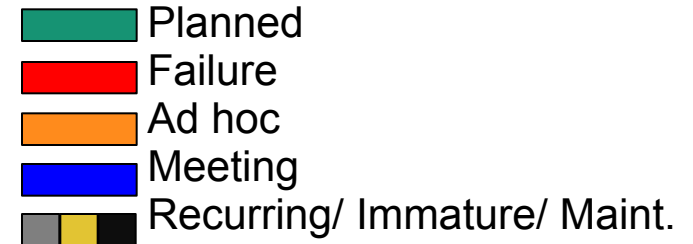
The challenge:

“We’re spending a lot of our time on bug fixes and other rework. We need a way to help our management see that if we have time to clear tech debt this drain on our time could go away permanently.”

Our plan: Make the nature of each week’s work more visible. Show ‘Failure demand’ and ‘Ad hoc’ work and time spent in meetings.

Where our time went...

- 5 categories for this week...



“The front row is this week’s labor – 1 block for 1 hour. The prior 4 weeks are also on the platform.”

Joe Wright, Agile coach at Arnold Clark in Glasgow, Scotland

Close-up



“We keep this visible and it’s a great conversation-starter when managers ask about it. You can see that they’ve given us so much Ad-hoc work that we ran out of orange Legos!”

- Here are my 7 work hours from today



“I split them up and put them on the front row.”



Start of a new week

- Take last row off; move all back



Start of a new week

- Create a blank front row



“At each daily standup, each of us will put 7 Lego together to express how our time was used yesterday.”





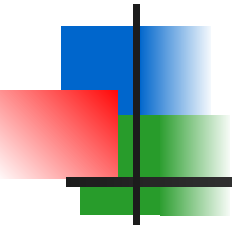
Statistics over 6 months

- Four weeks of April the distribution was:
 - 23% on planned
 - 30% on failure
 - 40% ad-hoc
 - 2% in meetings
- Most recent four weeks (Nov) are:
 - 51.2% planned
 - 4% on failure
 - 20% ad-hoc
 - 10% in meetings
- We added a tester in May too.



Discussion: Why does it work?

- Why isn't it just as effective to store this info in a spreadsheet online?
- Would you use the same or different categories?



Level 2 play



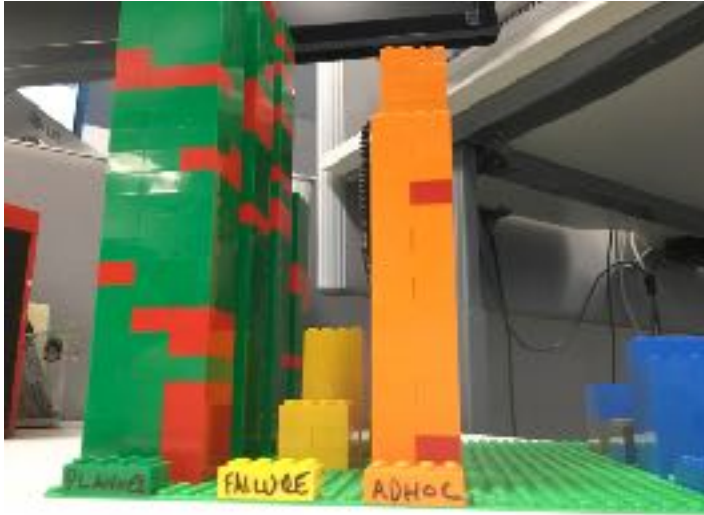


The challenge:

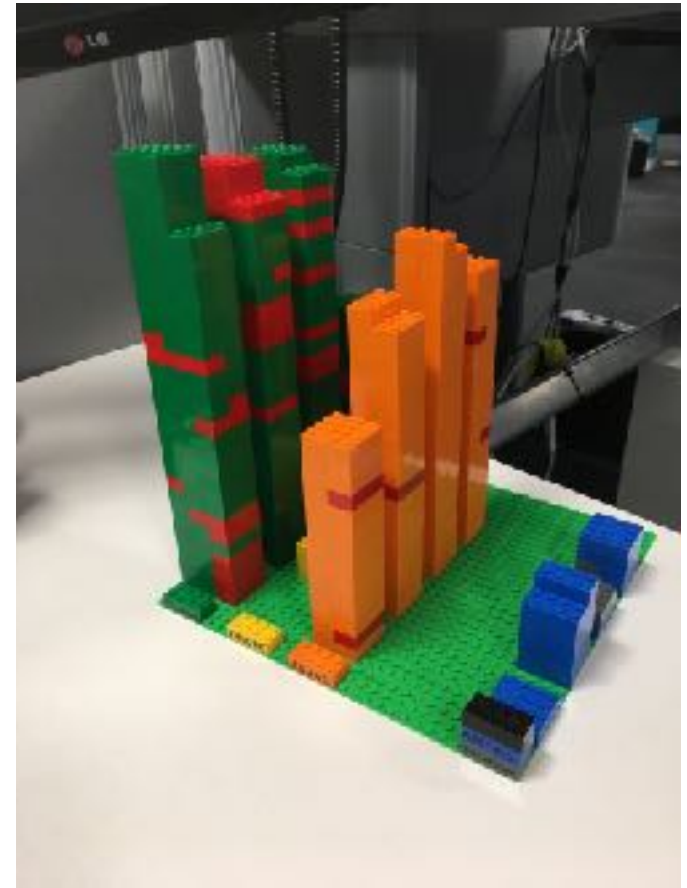
We realized that the green column on planned work was not truthfully representing our time. The drag due to existing legacy codebase was buried inside of the “planned work”. It now could be dealt with.

Our Plan: Add red bricks into the green column to show time lost to legacy code issues in our planned work.

Red shows legacy code work



Within both the Planned and Ad hoc work, time spent on legacy code is now visible.



Photos on this page were made by Joe Wright.

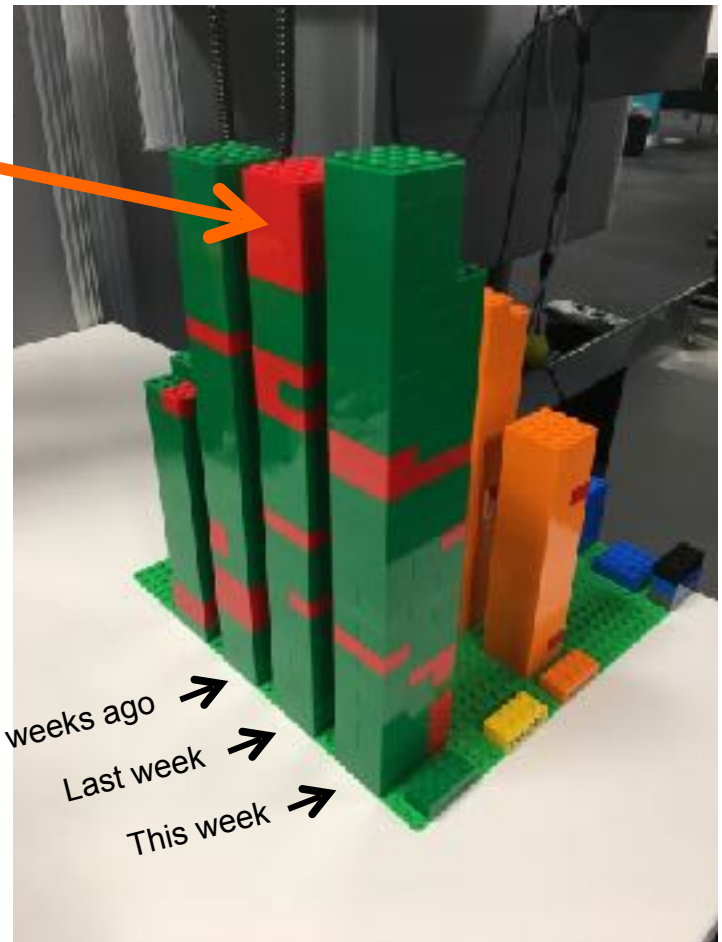


Visible legacy code cost

“Last week we lost 2 working days because of the legacy code.”

With the cost of legacy code visible, managers could see the benefit of addressing it.

Eventually a proposal could be made that would give confidence that a new component should be done differently, with the data to back it up.





Discussion: What next?

- Might there be another category of work hiding inside the “Planned” category? What?
- What would happen if you made it visible?



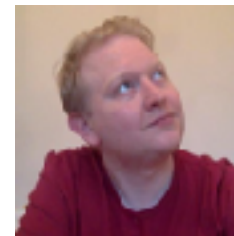
Closing Credits

We'd like to know how this Lego visibility technique helps your team. Please share your news with us!



Nancy Van Schooenderwoert
LeanAgilePartners
nancyv@leanagilepartners.com

[@vanschoo](#)



Joe Wright
Arnold Clark co.
joe@joejag.com

[@joe_jag](#)

