

EFFECTIVELY DEALING WITH DEADLINE PRESSURE

DAVE MOORE

8TH LIGHT



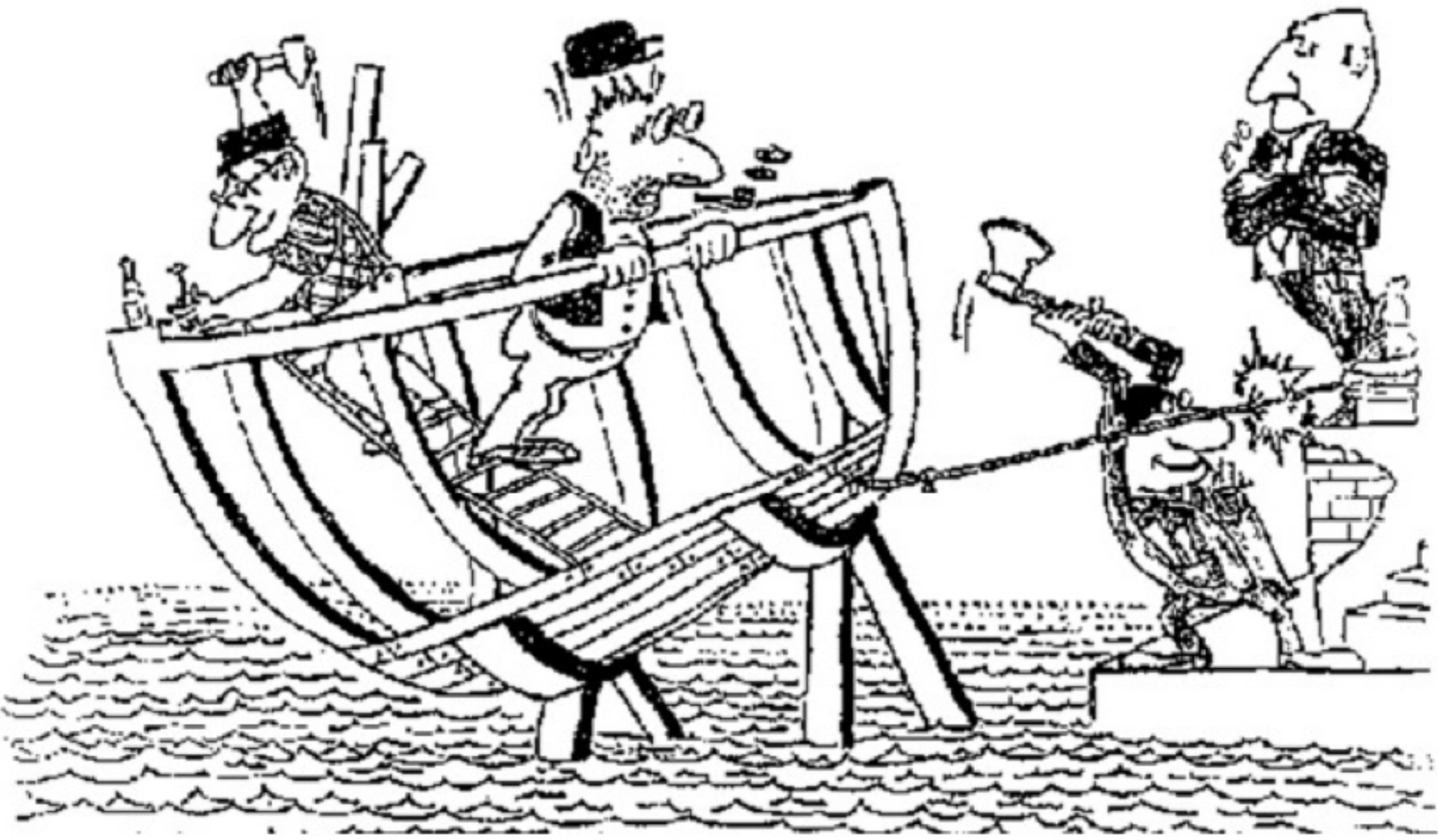


WHO IS INVOLVED?

- ▶ Stakeholders (managers, executives, etc.)
- ▶ Engineers (dev, qa, ops, sys, etc.)
- ▶ Users (internal users, paying customers, etc.)

**ALL PARTIES INVOLVED
WANT A QUALITY PRODUCT.**

**WHY IS THERE A
DISCONNECT THEN?**



LEVERS

- ▶ A lever is any action that someone can take to get the project closer to completion
- ▶ Levers get pulled every day
- ▶ Problematic when pulled without thinking through affects

STAKEHOLDERS – LEVERS

- ▶ Promotion(s)
- ▶ Threaten budget cut
- ▶ Force extra hours
- ▶ Cut scope
- ▶ Extend deadline
- ▶ Hire additional team members
- ▶ Re-prioritize other team efforts to support your team
- ▶ Pull plug on project

USERS - LEVERS

- ▶ Threaten/take legal action
- ▶ Stop using product
- ▶ Bash product on social media
- ▶ Invest their money ahead of time to see product hit market
- ▶ Message customer service agent

ENGINEERS - LEVERS

- ▶ Skimp out on testing
- ▶ Not think about the proper abstraction, design, and/or architecture
- ▶ Skip review process
- ▶ Skip pairing
- ▶ Don't spend time estimating/grooming
- ▶ Work more hours

EFFECTS OF GOING “FAST”

- ▶ Code/Infrastructure that's hard to maintain
 - ▶ Unreadable
 - ▶ Error prone
 - ▶ Tightly coupled
- ▶ Future deadlines are harder to meet
- ▶ Morale plummets
- ▶ Bugs occur more frequently - customers complain

COMMUNICATION WASTE

- ▶ Leverage the Agile Process
 - ▶ Avoid status checks
 - ▶ Define story thoroughly in card (include F.A.Q.)
- ▶ Favor direct communication for low level implementation questions

THE NEGOTIATION

- ▶ Meeting with stakeholder, engineer, and user
- ▶ Purpose: level set & assess options/trade-offs at the story level
- ▶ Should happen regularly

THE NEGOTIATION - SCOPE

- ▶ Scope is always negotiable
- ▶ Challenge stakeholders to think critically about importance of every single component
- ▶ Deliver MVP early on and deliver features each iteration

THE NEGOTIATION – ASSESS VALUE

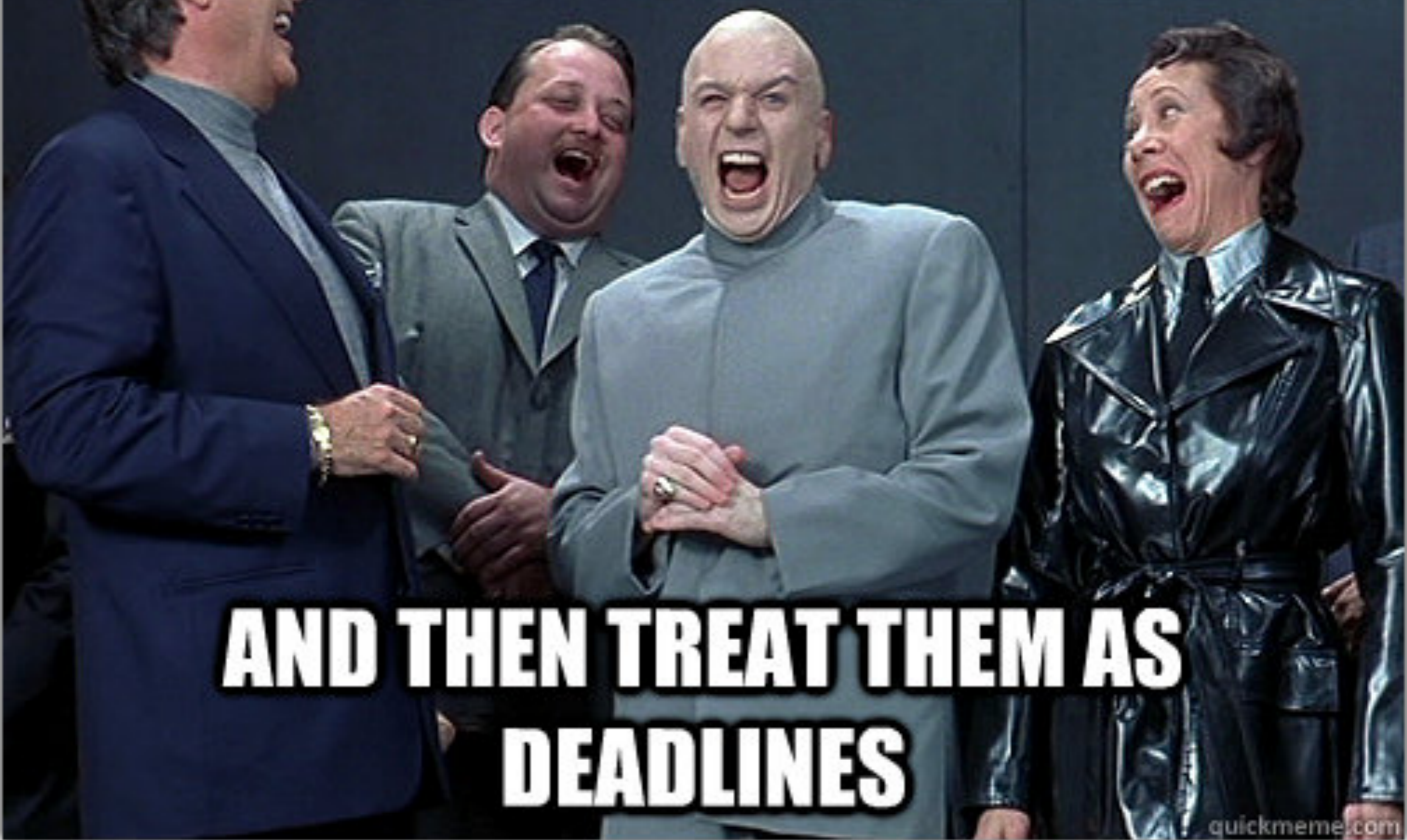
- ▶ Discuss consequences of missing the deadline
- ▶ Assess importance of deadline
- ▶ Stakeholders often overvalue importance of hitting deadline to detriment of project

Thanks for putting in extra hours to make a bullshit deadline that does not matter.



your  cards
someecards.com

WE'LL ASK FOR ESTIMATES



**AND THEN TREAT THEM AS
DEADLINES**

**ESTIMATES ARE SUPPOSED
TO HELP STAKEHOLDERS
MANAGE PROJECT RISKS.**

THE NEGOTIATION – ESTIMATION

- ▶ No estimates
- ▶ Uniform estimates
- ▶ Complexity based
 - ▶ Fibonacci
 - ▶ T-Shirt size
 - ▶ etc.
- ▶ Time based

THE NEGOTIATION – ESTIMATION

- ▶ Date ranges
 - ▶ Optimistic
 - ▶ Realistic
 - ▶ Pessimistic
- ▶ Inception to deployed
- ▶ Estimate an hour as a pair hour
- ▶ Represent current snapshot of team's understanding
- ▶ Regularly revisit estimates
- ▶ Create feedback loop
 - ▶ Track actuals
 - ▶ Retro on incorrect estimates
- ▶ Avoid anchoring effect
- ▶ Add bucket for scope creep

**WHEN STAKEHOLDERS, ENGINEERS,
AND USERS HAVE A SHARED CONTEXT,
THE CORRECT LEVERS GET PULLED.**

THANKS