

Introduction

Banking Innovations is a fintech located in Amsterdam. They sell a highly sophisticated set of wealth widgets and IT-tooling that enable banks to offer a competitive proposition in the higher private banking segment. *Banking Innovations* has been incredibly successful since they raised 1 million euro in startup funding: for 4 years in a row their annual turnover has doubled. Their product is highly acclaimed by Gartner, for 2 years in a row they have been awarded the most visionary fintech innovator. Market expectations for the new upcoming Wealth Collection version 10 release are high.

However, the new version of the product has been postponed two times in a row. The release is currently 6 months late, and if all customer deadlines are not met by the end of the quarter the company will start losing money. The CEO has hired you, an expert in systems thinking, to help solve this problem.

There are three parties in play:

- R&D management
- Sales representative
- R&D Project Manager
- Developers
- Agile coach

Exercise

Your assignment is to talk to all parties involved and help them with the following:

- Model their current system
- In each party's system, identify intervention points that could help to solve the release delays
- Combine all parties' systems and identify overall intervention points that could help to solve the release delays
- Look for additional opportunities to improve the system (even if it does not directly solve the CEO's problem)

Solutions and workshop material can be found at <http://www.dcme.nu/> or <https://emilesilvis.com/>

R&D Management says:

I know some healthy deadline pressure makes developers work harder to deliver timely releases. My goal is to avoid customer escalations. Delaying deadlines lead to customer escalations, therefore, I occasionally ask for quick fixes directly from lead developers to mitigate these customer escalations.

The Sales Representative says:

Over the past 6 months, customer satisfaction went down due to lagging deliveries by R&D on new feature requests I promised. This hinders me generating sales, which I need since I am rewarded on commission basis per software feature sold. To meet my targets for this quarter, I seek to find new customers to close deals. Things look good: At new customer sites, I see a growing market potential for future feature requests.

The R&D Project Manager says:

Release dates are slipping. The number of bugs increase due to growing number of quick fixes. Developers currently spend more time on fixing bugs than on developing new features. To mitigate the problems with delivery dates, I will hire more developers and intensify coordination with more meetings (to align and prioritise customer requests). I see a lot of time is wasted, I believe developer time can be optimized, so I am considering implementing a tool to make sure all developers will be utilised at 100%.

The Agile Coach says:

I see a growing number of new developers joining and a growing number of meetings. I notice developers are not happy. They are under pressure due to delivery dates and I think this can be solved by reducing the workload and having fewer meetings.

The Developer says:

I need to spend an increasing amount of time in meetings. Management pressure forces me to apply quick fixes, which makes the code more and more complex. The actual time spent on new features is low which causes a growing amount of bugs. This situation is frustrating as I know that rebuilding the code with proper architecture would solve the problem, but the Project manager told me there is no time to do that.