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T-SHAPED TEAMS

How to Increase Throughput by Avoiding Specialization

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Scrum Teams are cross-functional, meaning the members have all the skills necessary to create value each Sprint.

- The Scrum Guide

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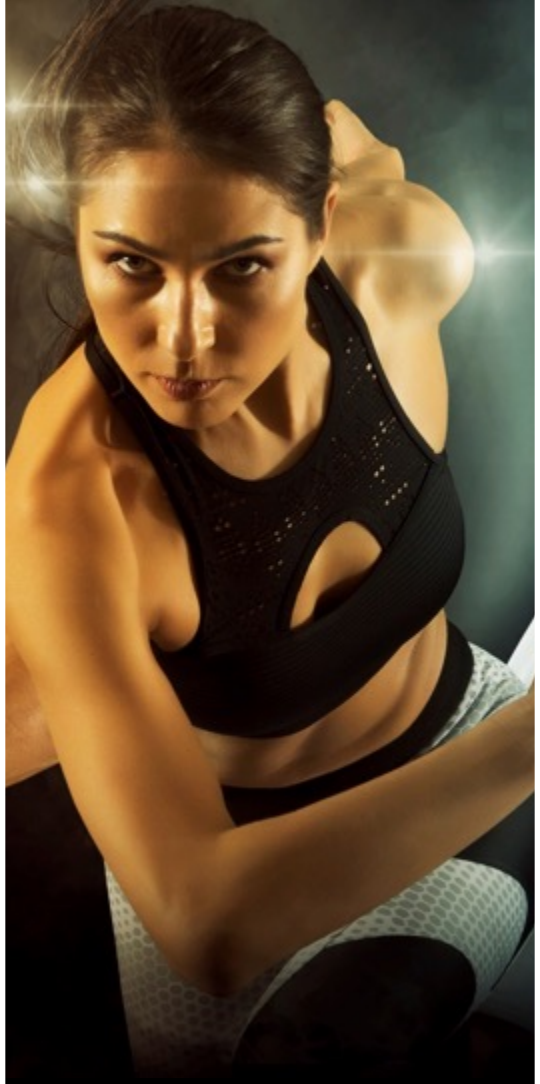
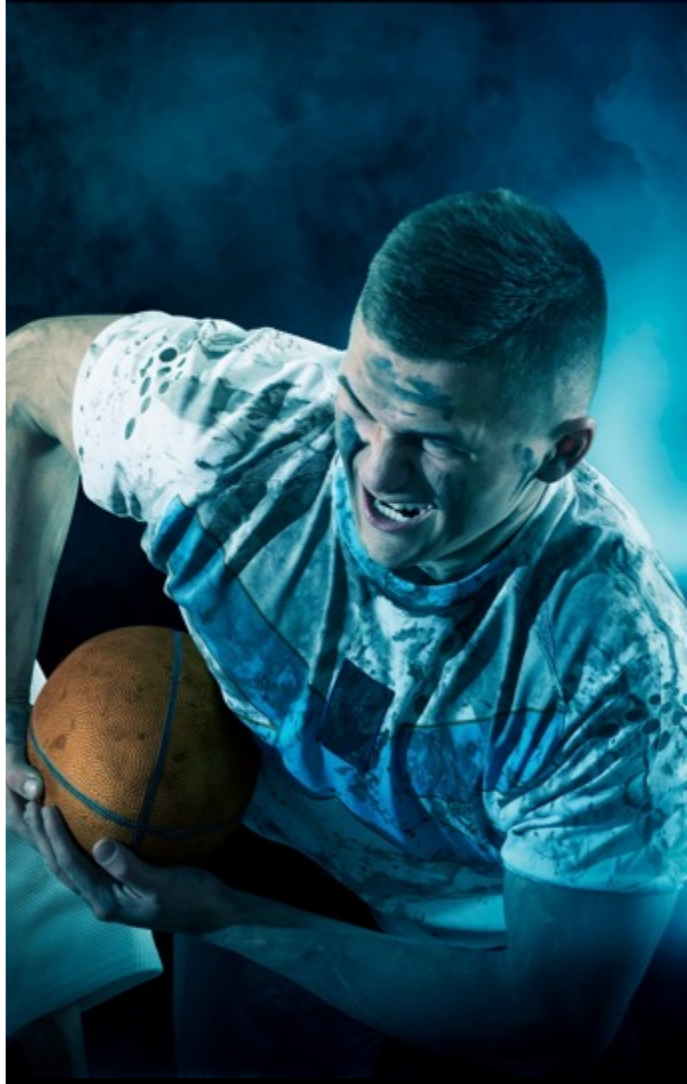
Back End



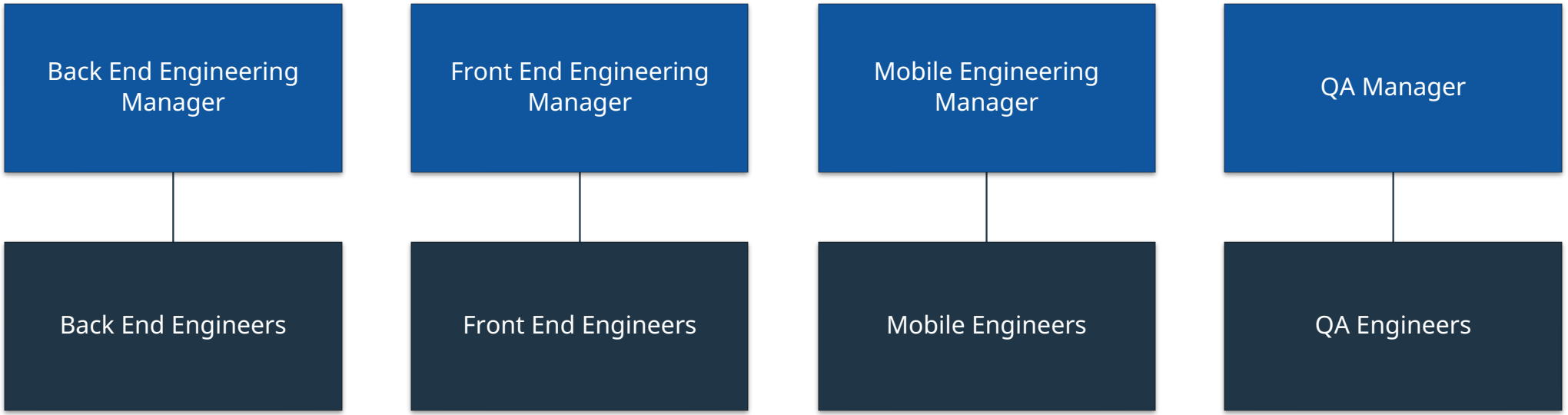
Front End

Mobile



QA

Traditional Organizations



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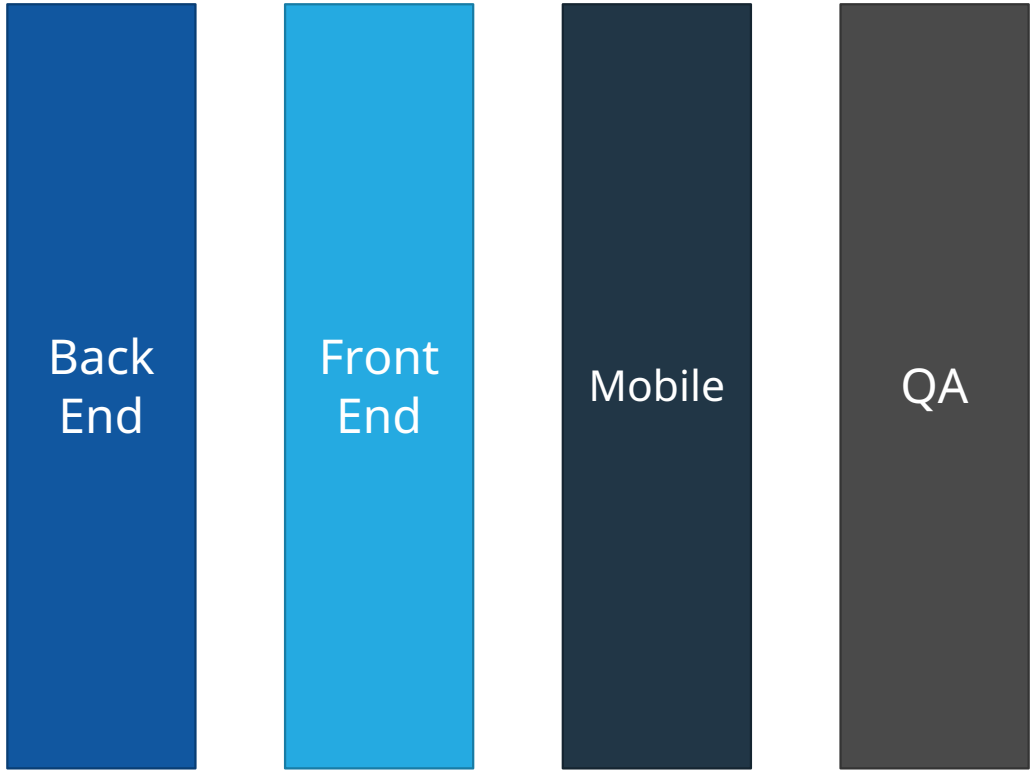
The Result: Siloed Specialization



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And Often Specialist Teams

Back End Team

Front End Team

Mobile Team

QA Team

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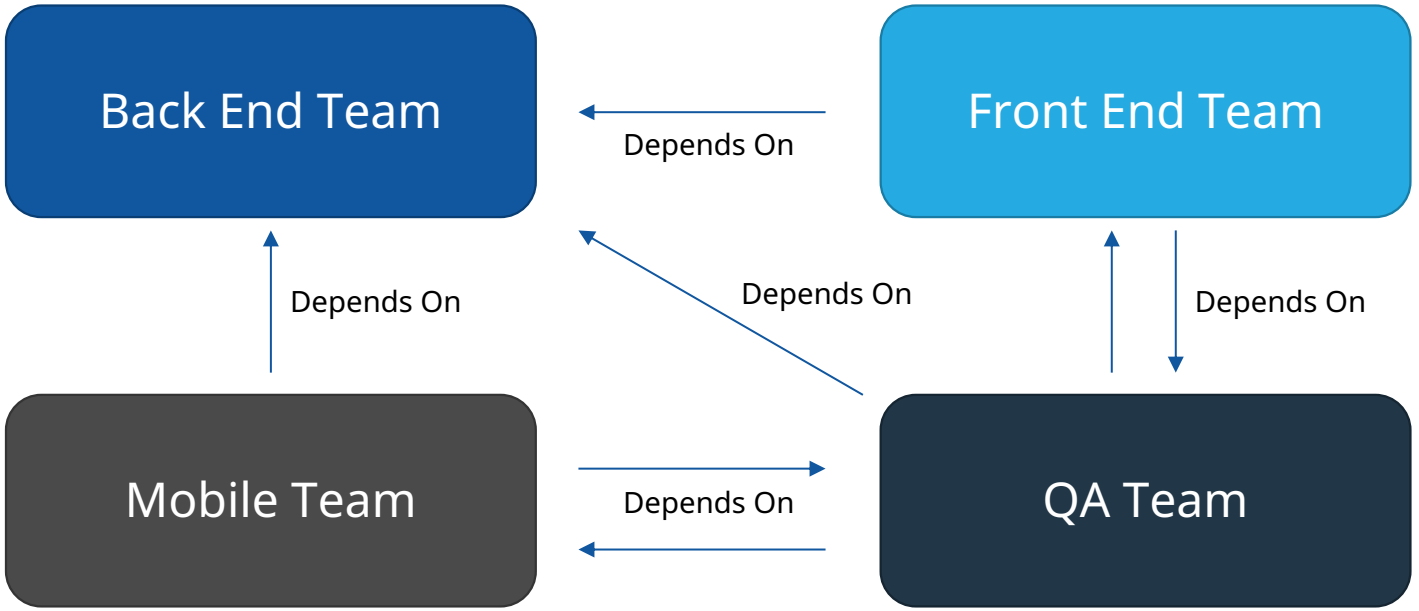
Which Comes at a Cost



No team can produce
anything independently

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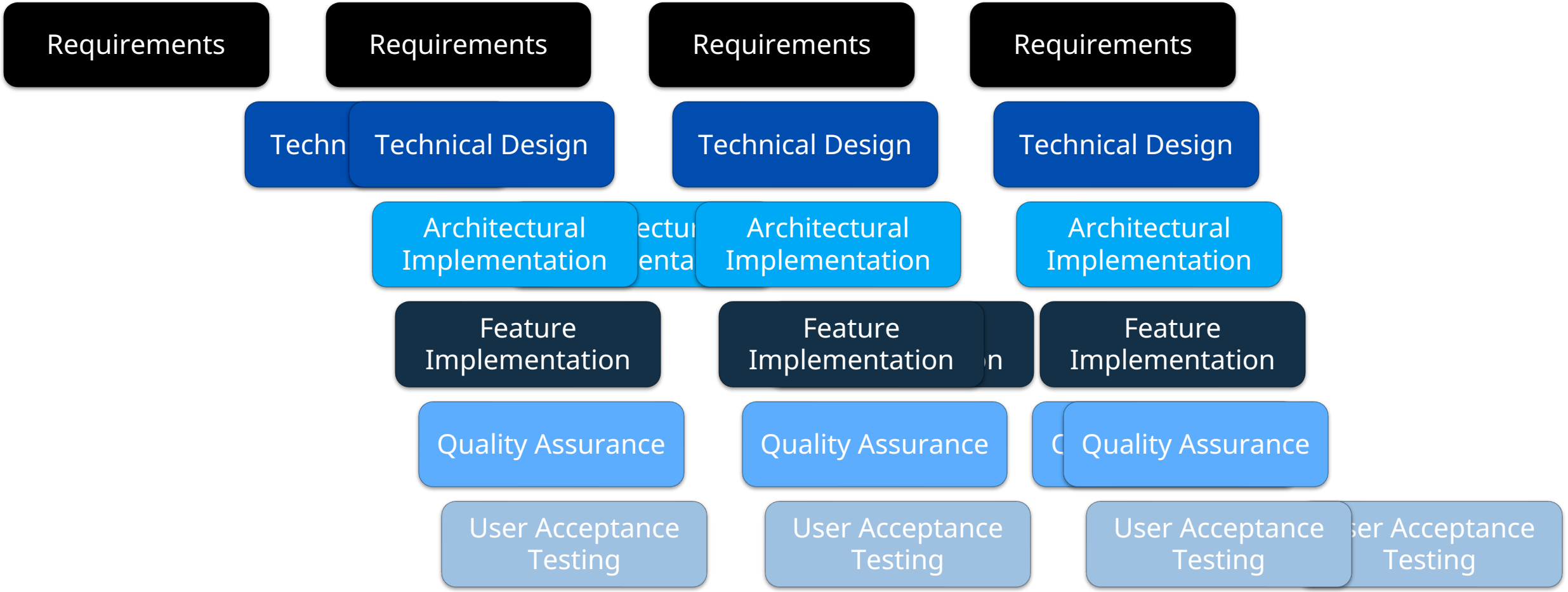
“A little bit of everything all the time.”

Waterfall



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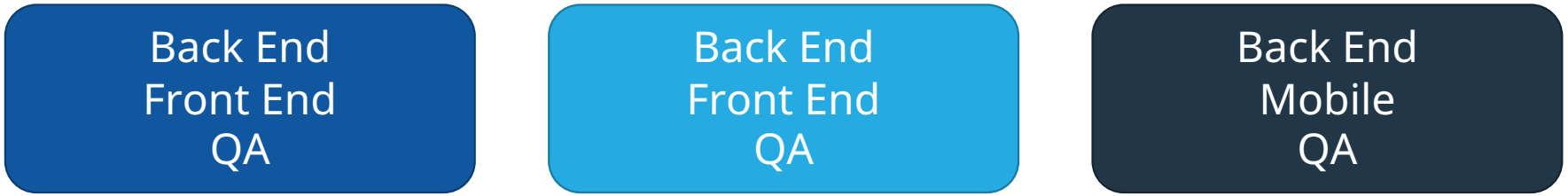
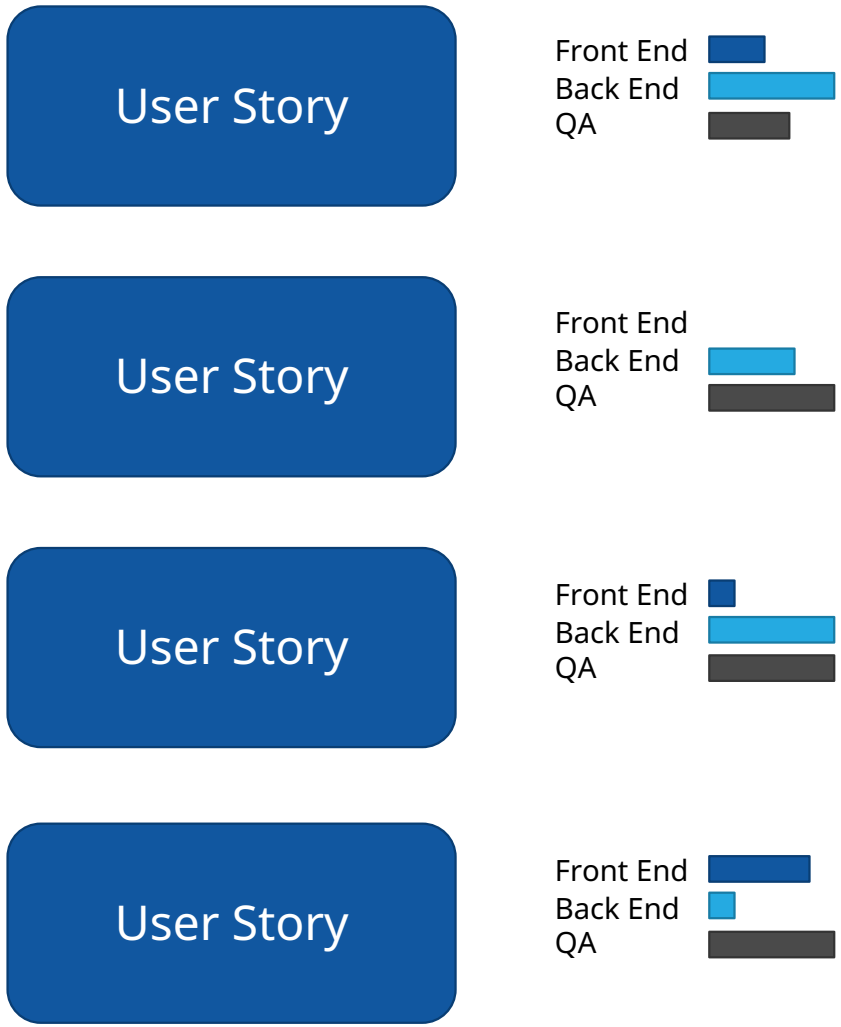
A *Partial* Solution



The Problem



Without a T-Shaped Team

- No swarming
- Stories don't get done
- Focus moves into the backlog
- "I don't have anything to work on"

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A Perspective on Team Members

- This is OK:
  - “Emily is the **best** person to do this work.”
- Not OK:
  - “Emily is the **only** person who can do this work.”

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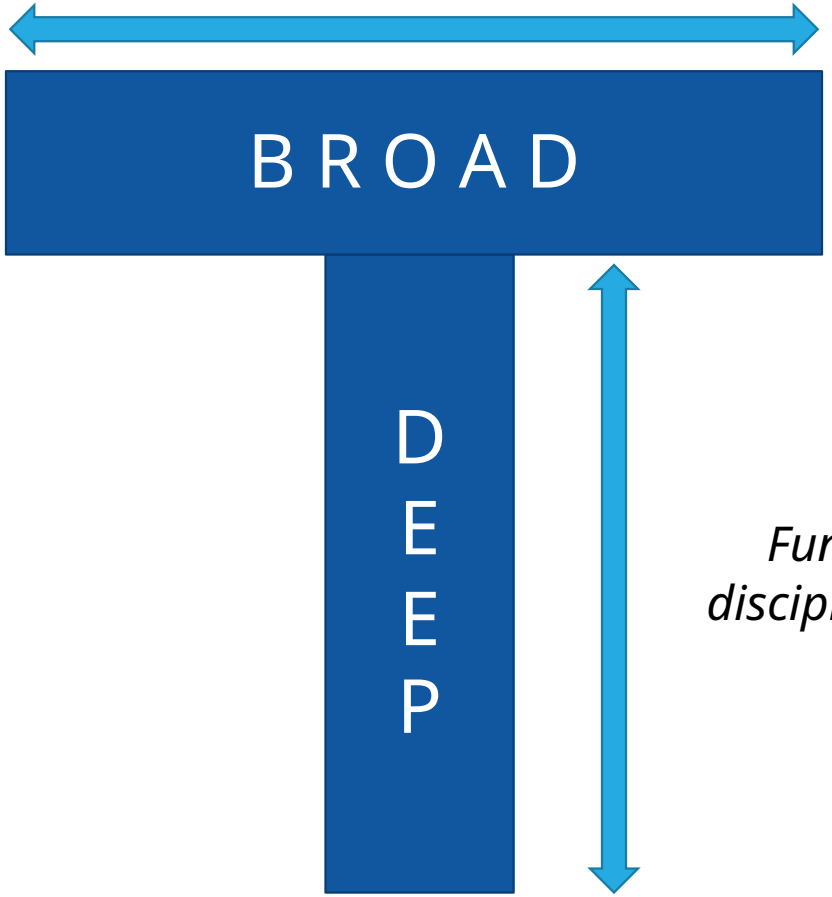
The T-Shaped Team

Ability to work outside of core area



More about *individuals* being “T-shaped”

Functional area, discipline, or specialty

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Benefits

- **The ability to “swarm”**
- Risk management
  - Specialist gets sick
  - Or is on vacation
- Avoiding attempts to “level the work”
- Avoiding “dipping into the backlog”

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Key Success Factor: Attitude

“All for one and one for all”

- The Three Musketeers

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Techniques to Build Capabilities

- Pair programming
- Mob programming
- Code reviews
- Fixing bugs

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Pair Programming

Navigator

- More Experienced
- Directs the Coding

Driver

- At the Keyboard
- Does What Navigator Says

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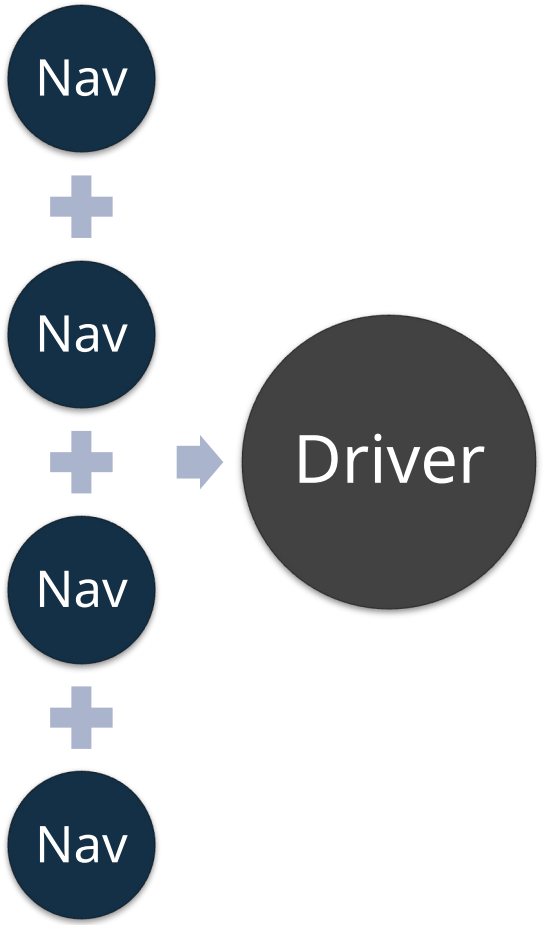
Mob Programming



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Resources

- On Pair Programming (martinfowler.com)
- Mob Programming for Remote Teams: A Resource Guide
- CoScreen: Real-Time Collaboration Tool for Remote Teams