

Pigs & Chickens - Dealing with some Issues

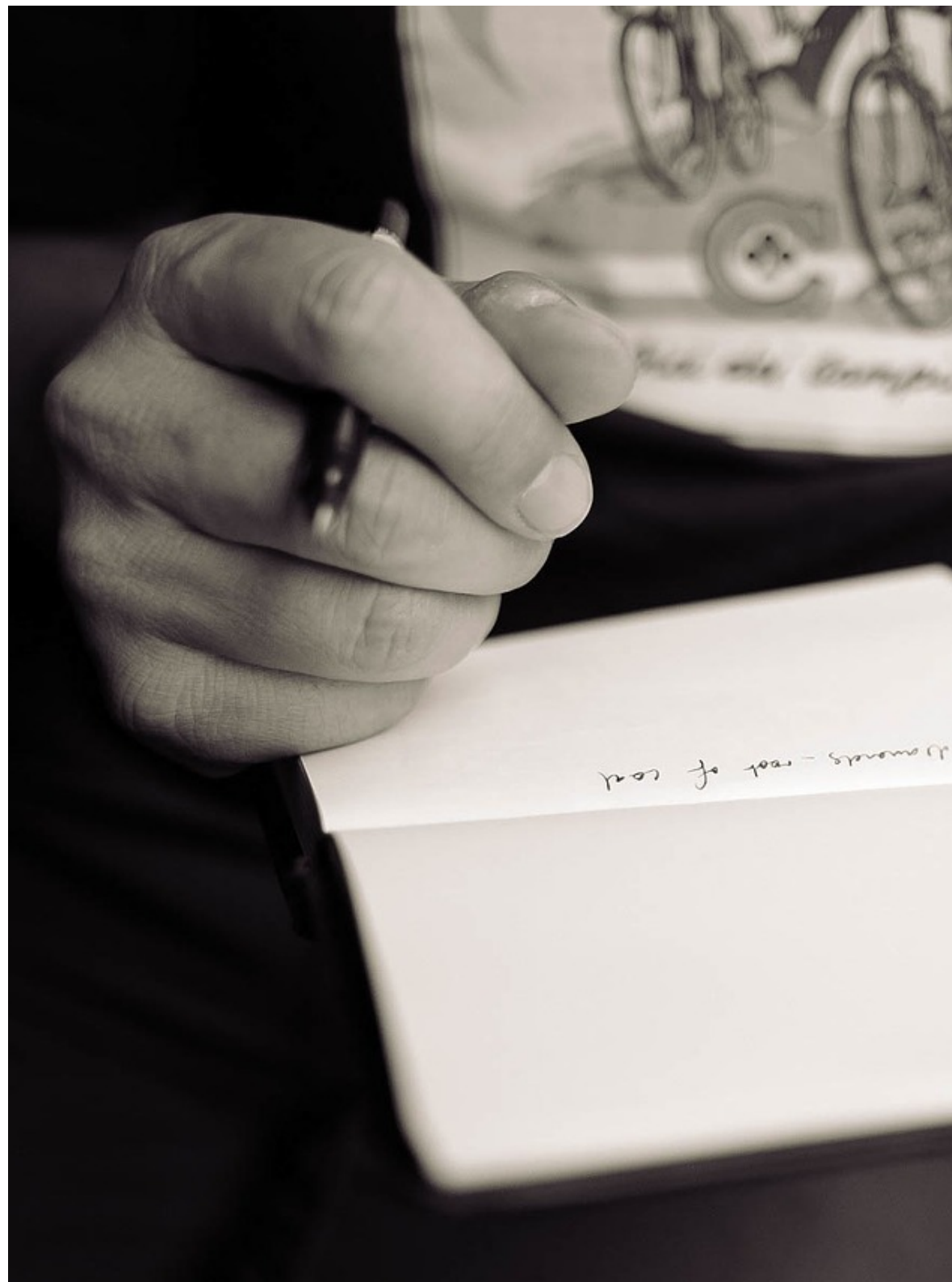
June 5, 2024

Joe Little — [LeanAgileTraining.com](https://leanagiletraining.com)

© 2024 - Joseph Little

Reminder to me to say...

- I will send you a copy of this slide deck if I have...
- ...your email address



Agenda

- Definitions
- Normal Situation
- Some alternate scenarios
- Discussion
- Biggest Take-aways



Definitions

- Pigs: The Scrum Team. “100% Committed”
- Joe’s “Std”: 7 people. 5 “Developers”, 1 PO, 1 SM
- Chickens: part-timers (to our Prod Goal). People who help, part-time.
- Not as reliable, but commonly essential, and always there
- Success is commonly dependent on the Chickens



Chickens

- Involved rather than committed
- Call them: extended team members
- Involve them in some meetings



Normal (Good) Situation

- Good team. Minor problems.
- Good collaboration
- Chickens help fairly well.
- Success!



IMPORTANT OPINION

- This is an opinion about the reality you face. (Maybe not 100% true in all cases.)
- Chickens always need to help the Team.
- And Success, to some degree, or the level of success, is dependent on the chickens.



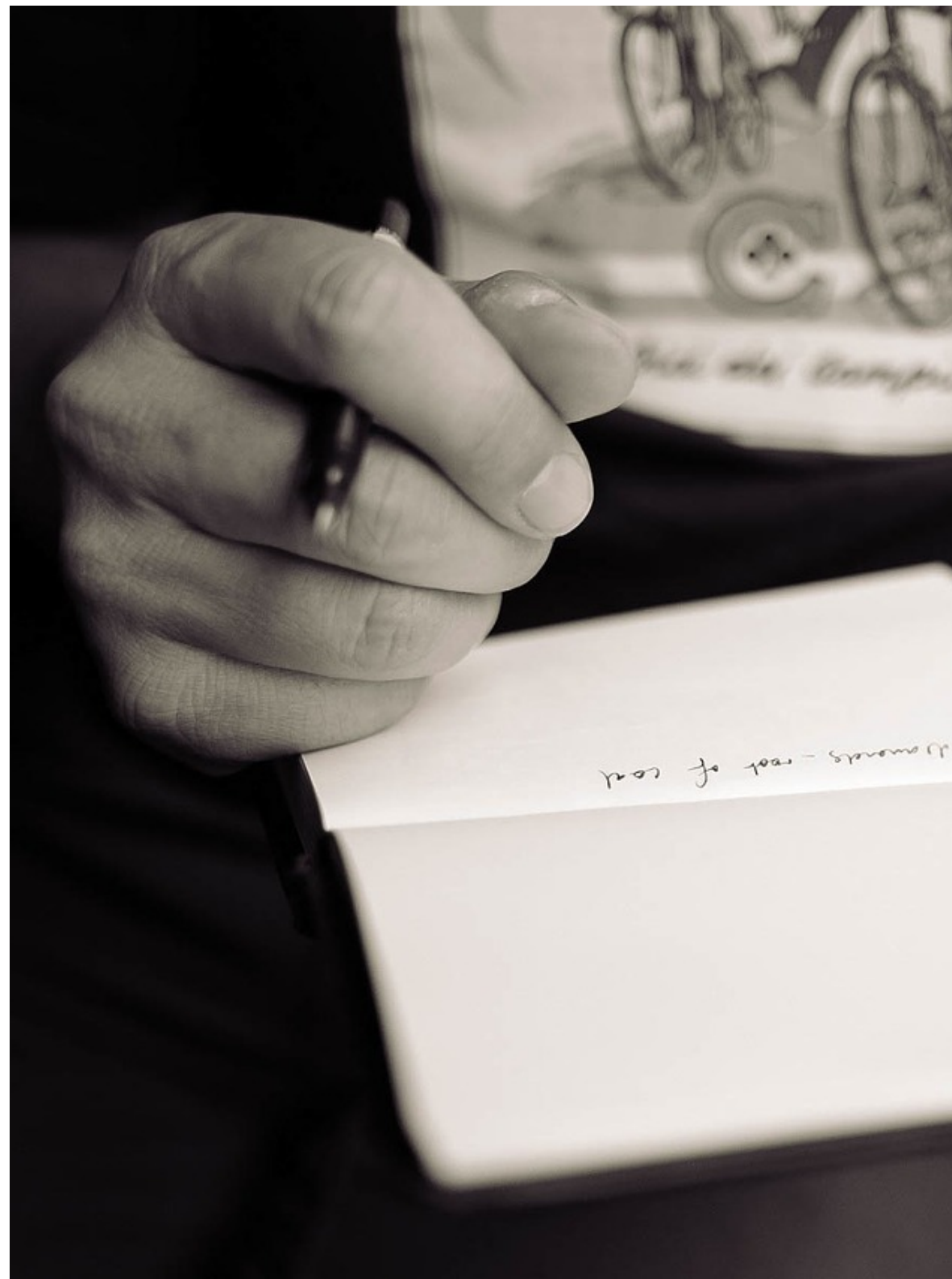
Team problems

- A long list, lots of variables
- PO sucks
- SM sucks
- Not enough people or skills
- Low collaboration
- One bad apple
- Not a Team player
- Etc.



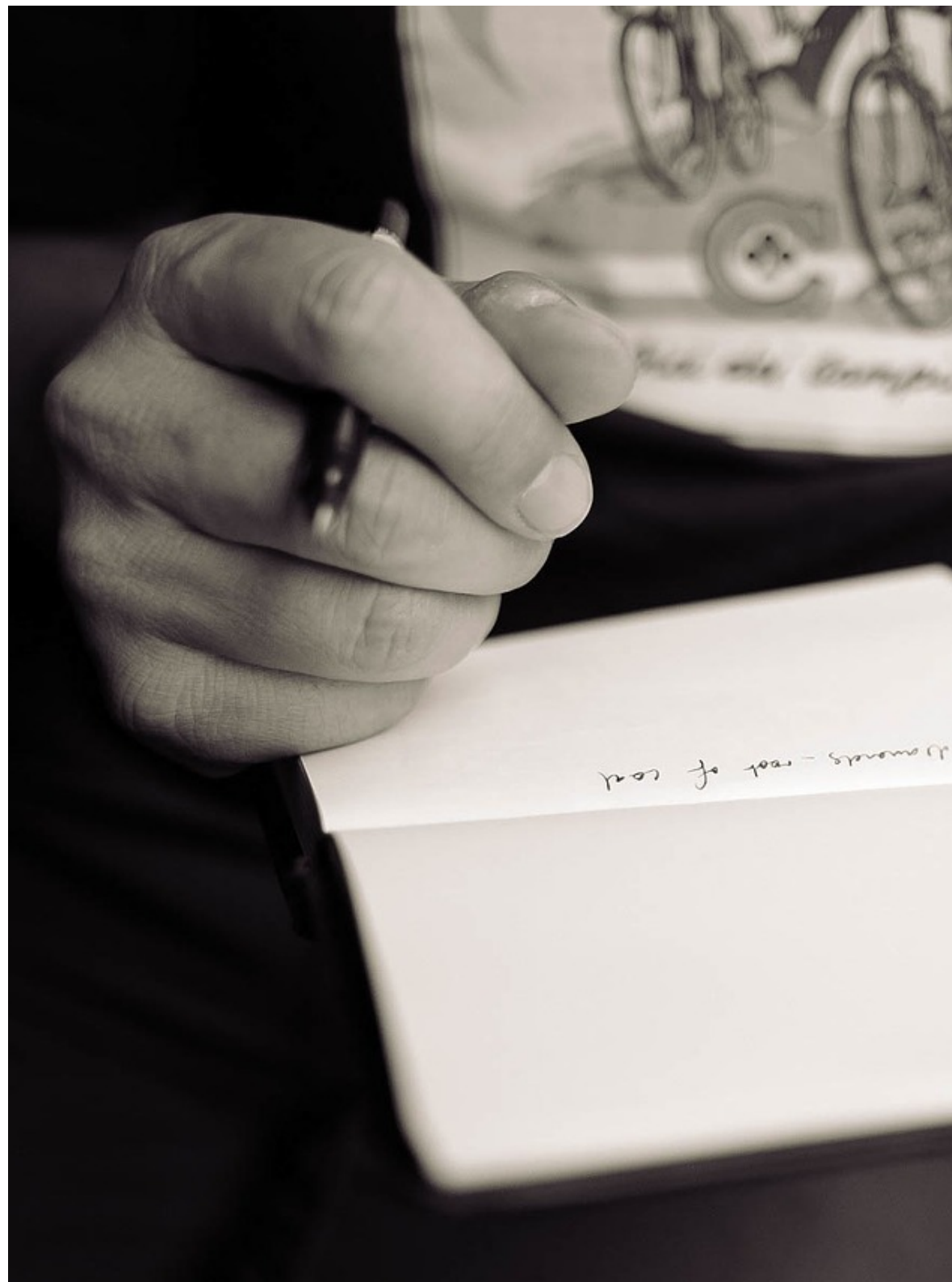
More related Problems

- The whole Team is not motivated.
- We need help fixing an impediment
- We need coaching
- On and on go the various situations



One “answer”

- Not the only answer, but a possibly useful answer:
- A chicken(s) to help with problem X



How much are chickens “allocated”

- Commonly spend <20% of their time helping our Team. Often ~5%
- Might spend 100% of time for a few Sprints.



We must identify them

- The Team must identify the chickens
- Managers can help
- Occasionally a chicken will come and offer to help some. Rare.
- Hence: We must think carefully about them.



Chickens can be

- A person
- Another Scrum Team
- A group or department
- A vendor outside the company
- Etc.
- Be very open in your thinking about this



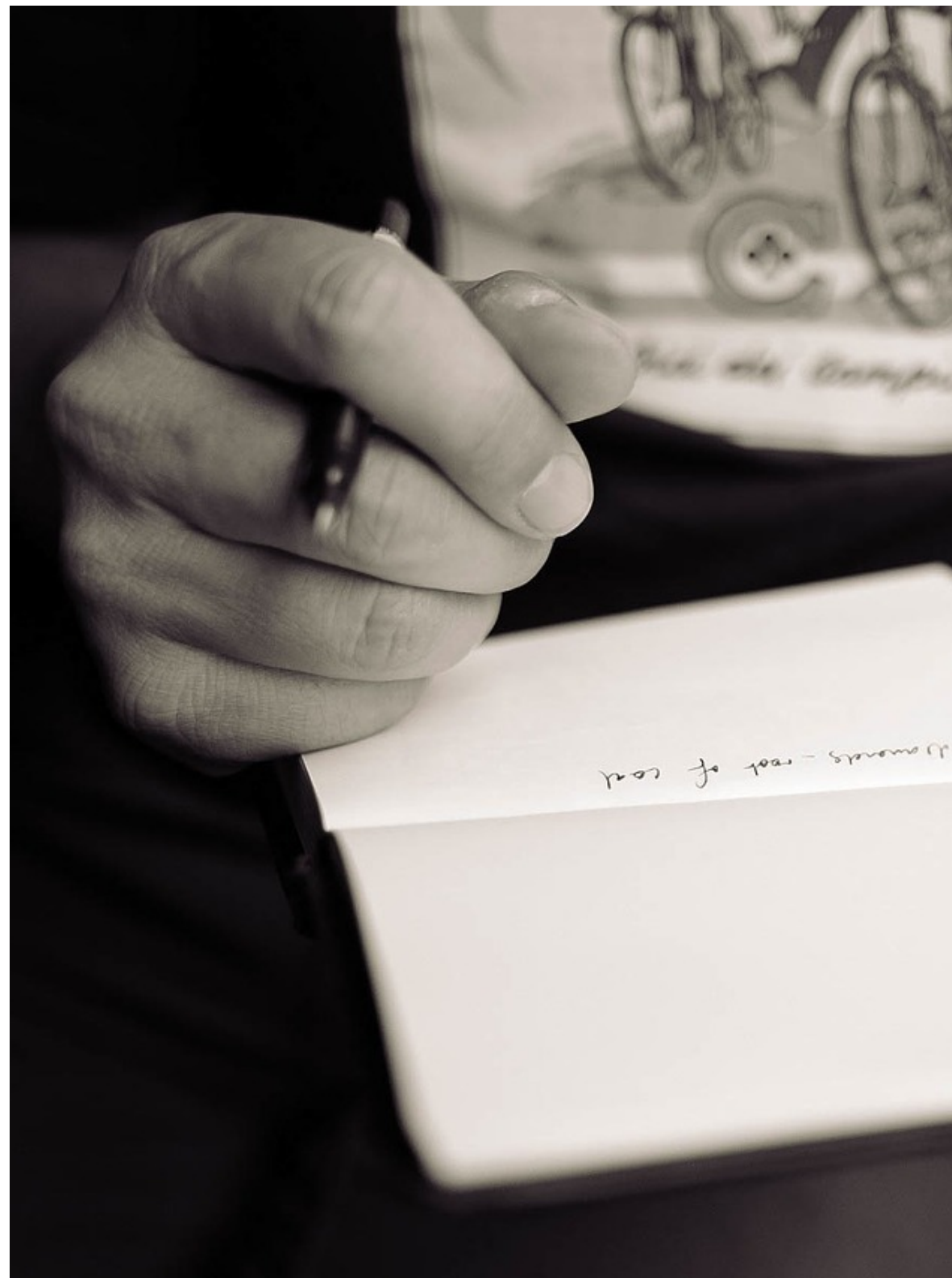
Chickens can help by

- Coaching
- Doing work alone
 - Perhaps delivering a set of work
- Working with us
- Giving us a widget, all wrapped up. We simply insert
- Removing an impediment for us



Examples of chickens

- A manager
- the DBA group
- the Architects
- Dev/Ops (broadly)
- another Scrum team
- a smart person
- a vendor who is expert at setting up automated testing



Be creative / open-minded

- A chicken could come from anywhere!
- A chicken could do anything!
- **VERY IMPORTANT!**



Our problems using Chickens

- We don't even think of them
- Can find none / too few
- They deliver late
- They don't deliver exactly what we want
- Chickens don't have all the skill sets
- Their other priorities win too often
- Miscommunication



Interactions

- We don't manage them (at all)
- Some chickens are not manageable
- The interaction does not work well (lots of reasons)
- For Chickens' (incoming) work
 - timing is often unpredictable
-

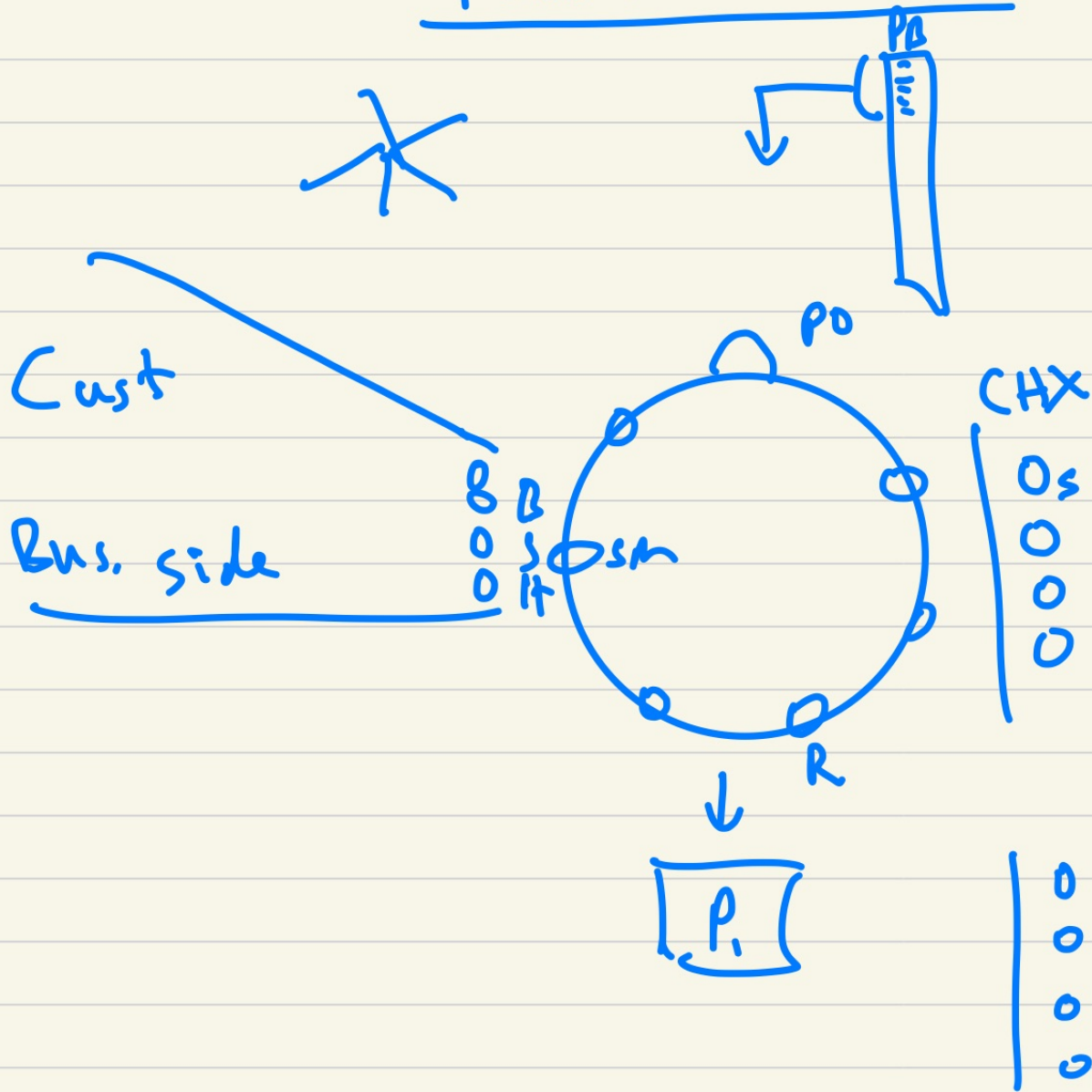


Put Chickens in the Picture

- Draw a diagram
- Name names
- Guess at how it will work
- Use the framework to manage (eg, the risk)



Fuller Picture



Suresh

Robert

People in the Team help manage Chickens

- Hopefully the Pig already knows that Chicken
- Or gets to know them
- And evaluates
- Escalates when it looks bad
- Escalates in a nice way, but early and firmly
-



Alternate Structures

- Lots of possibilities, but giving PBIs to their PBL is one
- “Try the simplest thing that could possibly work, and then test.” Ward Cunningham



Photo by [Ben Neale](#) on [Unsplash](#)

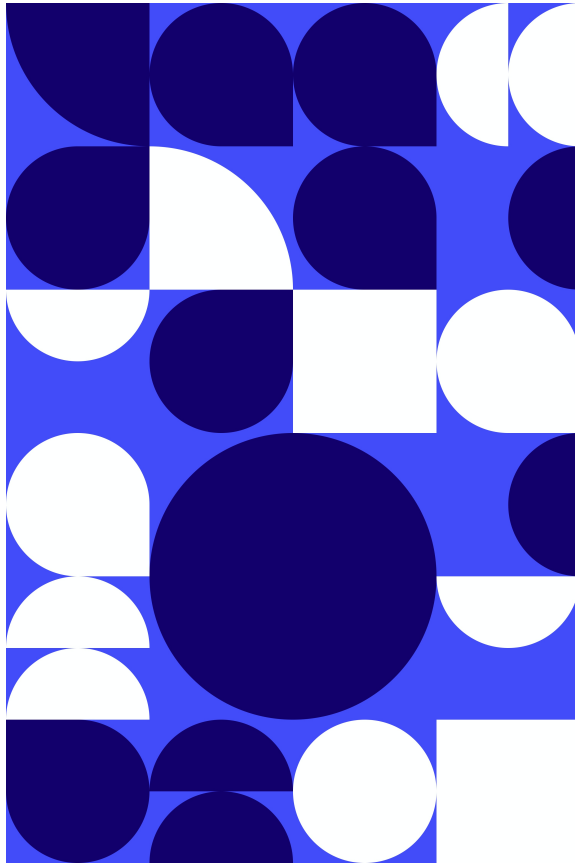


Photo by [MagicPattern](#) on [Unsplash](#)

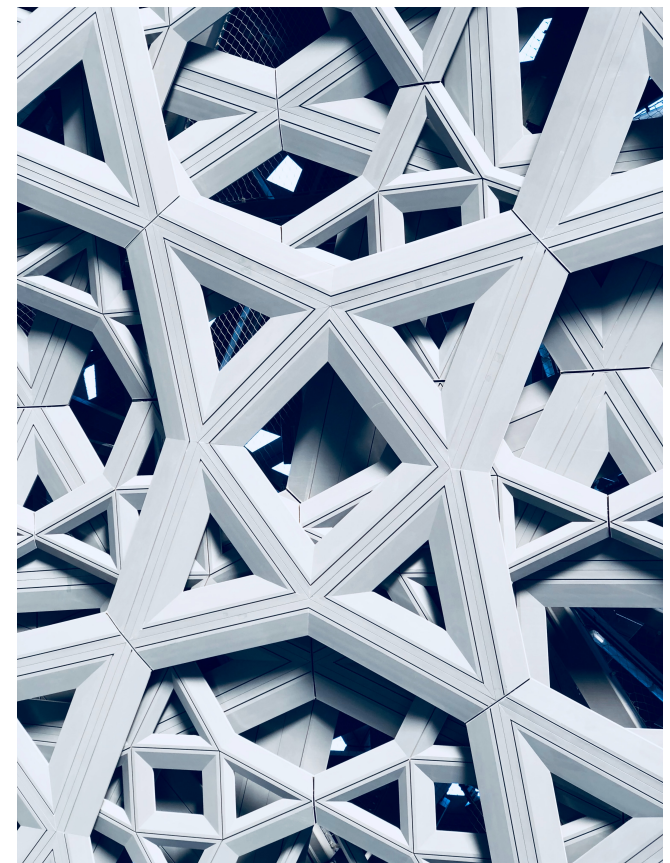
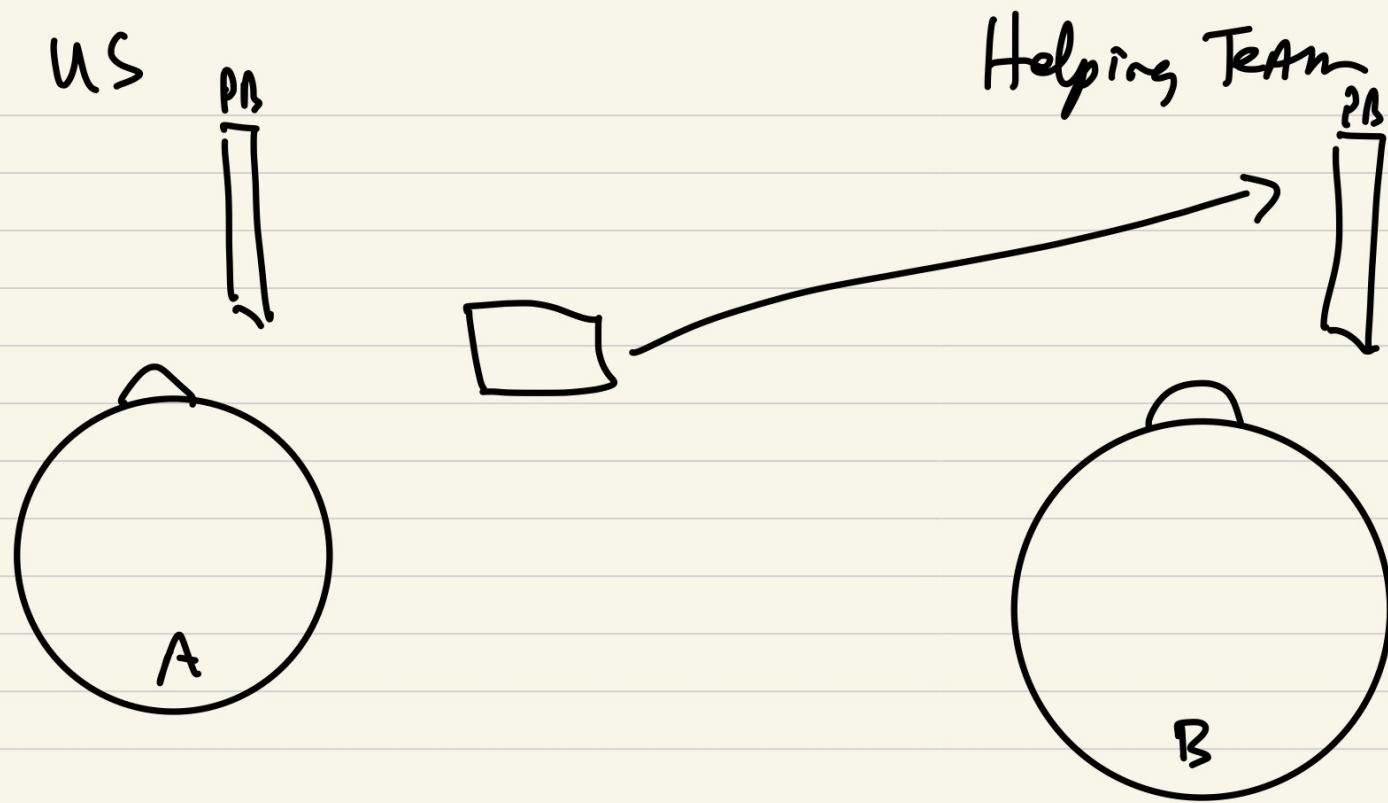


Photo by [Alvaro Pinot](#) on [Unsplash](#)



To us, Team B is helping
We give them one story to help us.
(ask)

Putting a "story" in their PBL

Culture Issues

- The interaction is easier to manage if it is partly built into the culture.
- Typically, we just started teaching the culture about interaction with Chickens.
- Although often there was a prior culture of some people helping multiple teams
- Pick from several common patterns (once they become known)



Meetings

- Which meetings might the chickens attend?
 - Sprint Planning
 - Daily Scrum
 - Sprint Review
 - Retrospective? (less likely)
 - Other?

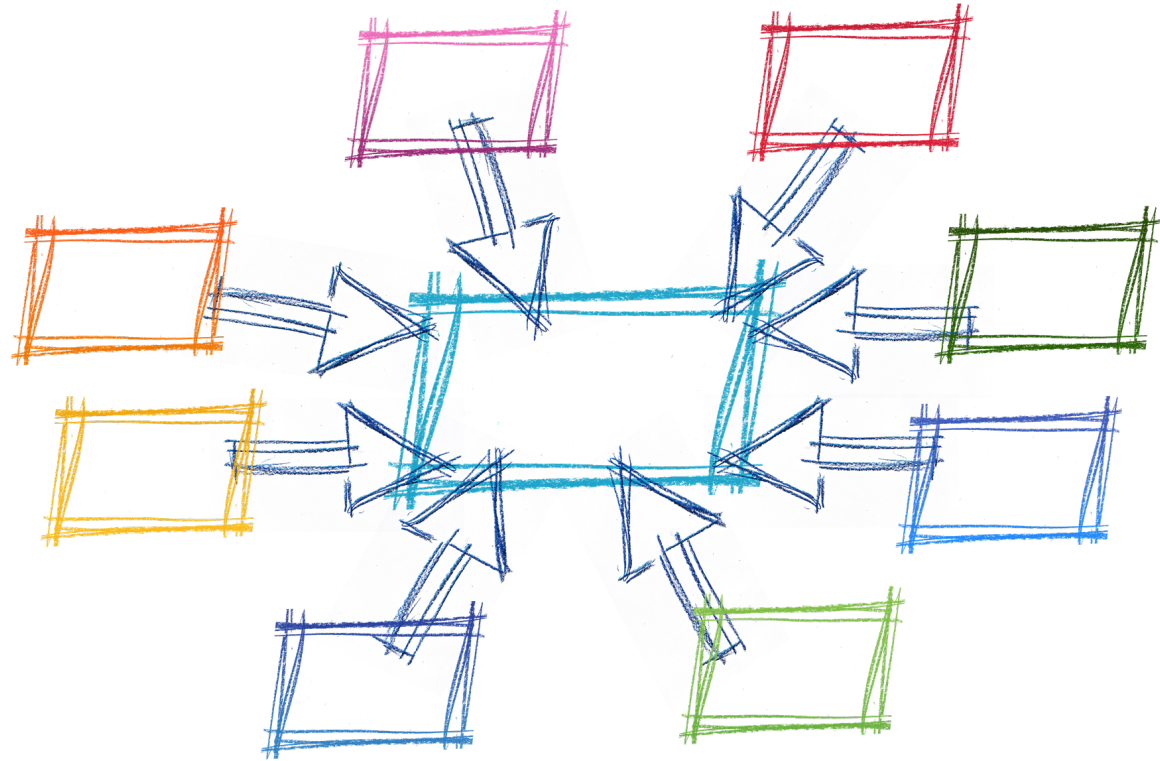


Each Team will start to see common patterns

- Note how working with diff chickens starts to show repeated patterns
- Trade insights and patterns with other Teams
- Maybe all Teams use the same pattern when working with X chickens (eg, the Architects)



Your scenarios



Questions?

- Can we answer any questions?



Contact Info

- Joseph Little
- www.LeanAgileTraining.com
- jhlittle@LeanAgileTraining.com
- 704-376-8881
- Happy to talk later!
- Hope I see you soon (a webinar, a workshop, a course)

