/serverless/DAYS
Belfast

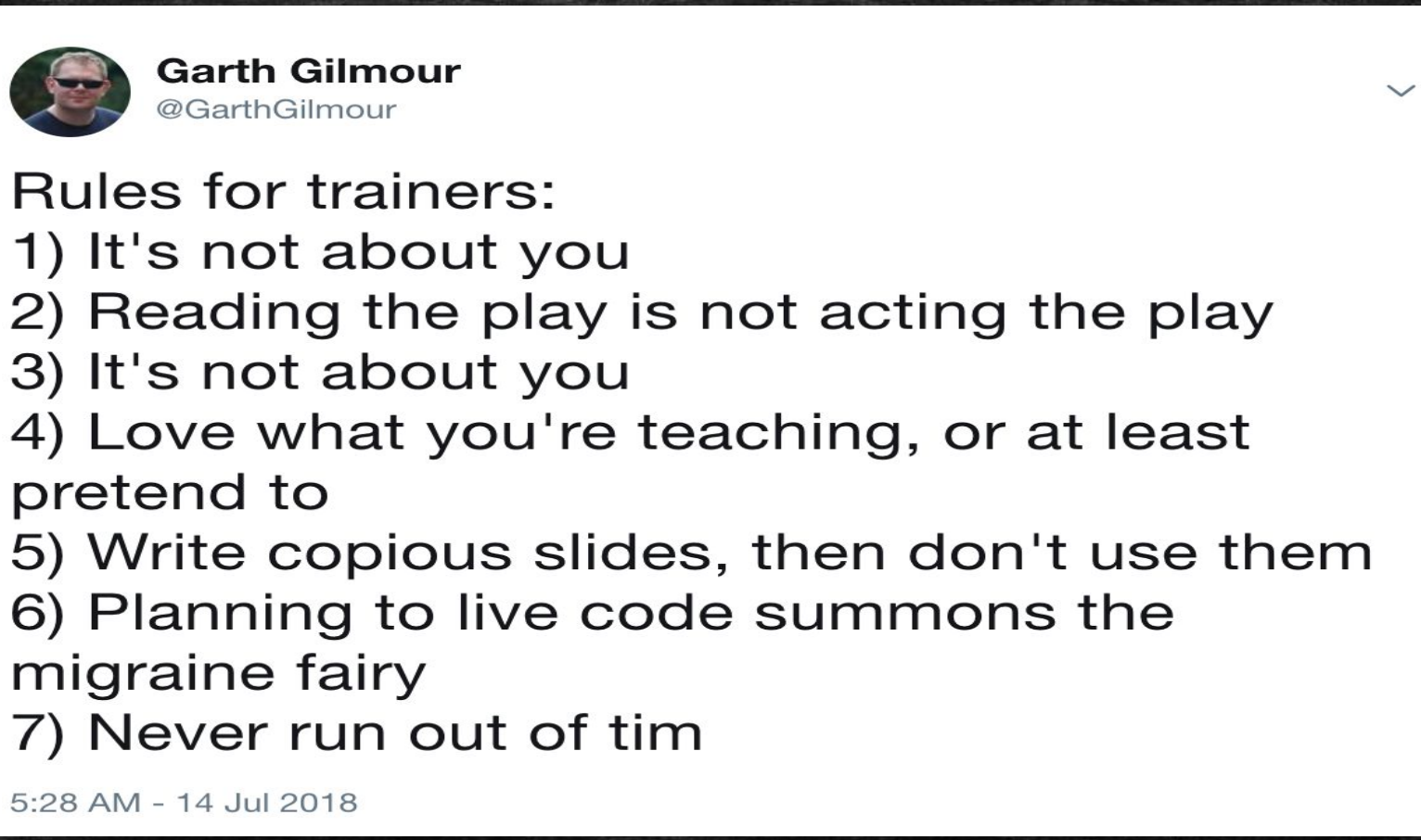
Preparing A Great Talk

Garth Gilmour


DON'T
PANIC

I know a bit about presenting...

My Personal Code



Agenda

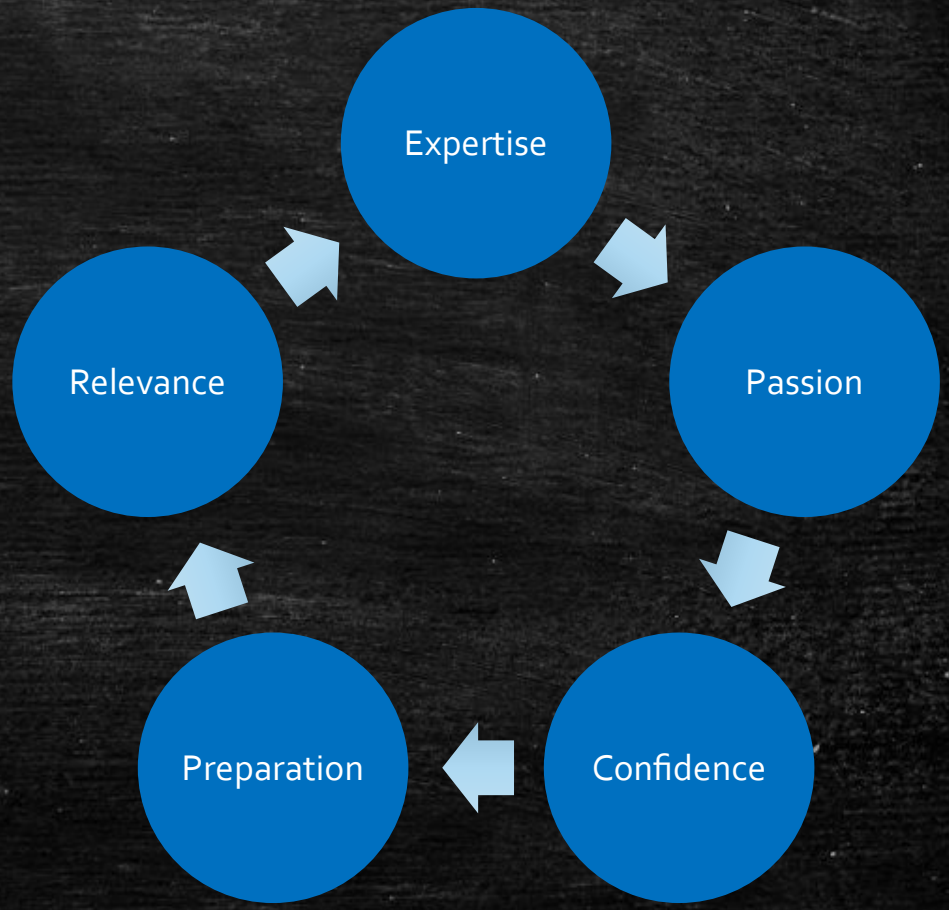
- Big Ideas and General Advice
- When and how to use slides
- Final thoughts

Part 1

Big Ideas and General Advice

The Golden Talk (which never happens)

- Expertise
- Passion
- Confidence
- Preparation
- Relevance



True Story...


ARGENTINIAN STEAKHOUSE
MAES
ARGENTINIAN STEAKHOUSE
MAES
Since 1989
Bife Churrasco
Carne
Argentina
Real Charcoal Grill

Respect the Audience

- Presenting is a service industry
- The public have given time and money
- It's up to you to entertain and inform them


@DuneInfo
Bene Gesserit
"We exist only to serve"

Engage with the Audience

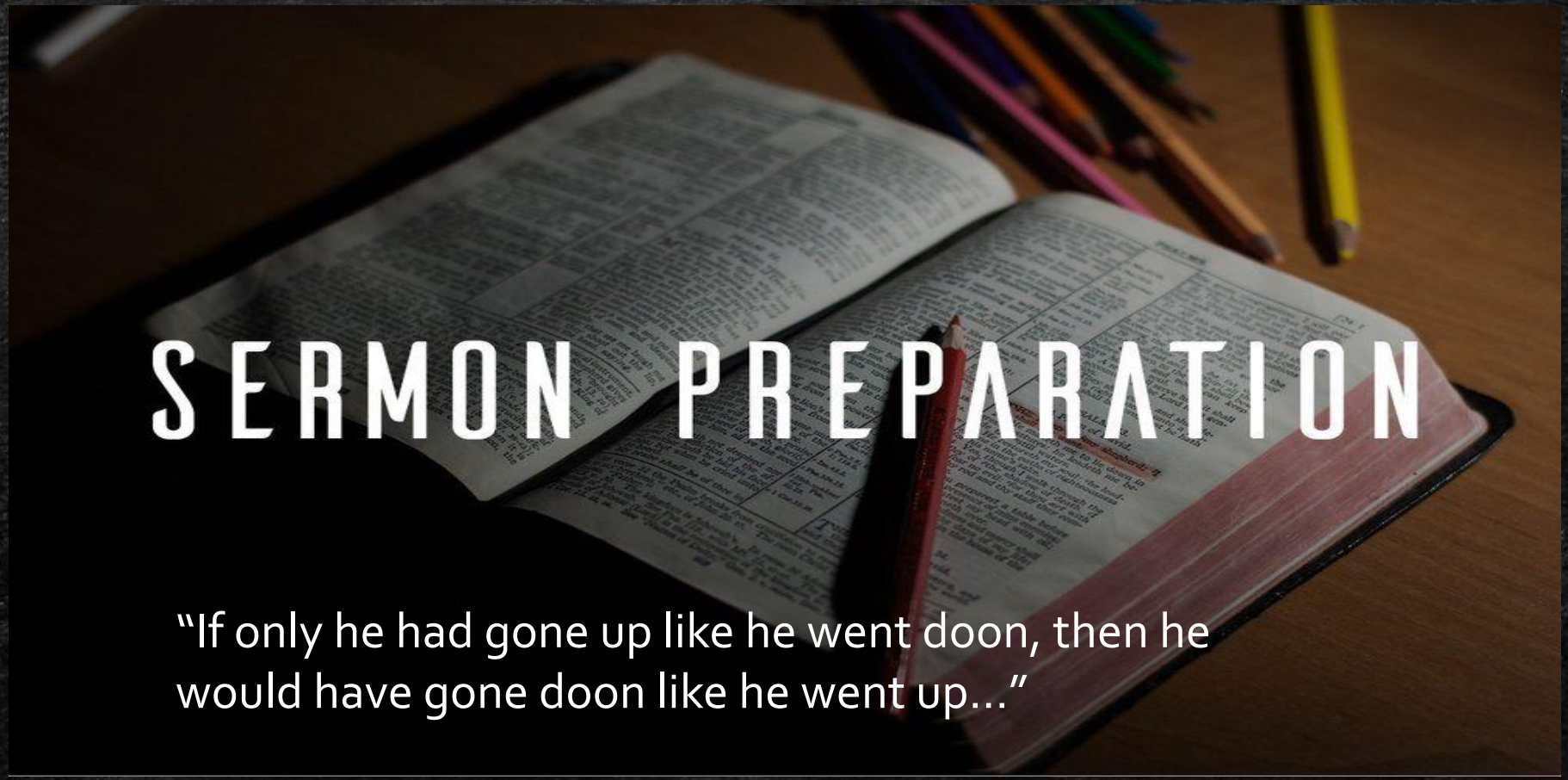
- The audience are on your side*
- They will support and encourage you
- Lean into them whenever possible
- Make the most of their goodwill

* Exceptions apply for professional speakers at commercial conferences. Plus, anyone going past their allocated time before lunch.

Counterpoint: Take Responsibility

- Once you step on stage you are in the ‘red shirt’
- Everything that goes wrong is your fault
- Never blame others whilst on stage

Some Presbyterian Wisdom



"If only he had gone up like he went doon, then he would have gone doon like he went up…"

Avoid Classic Blunders

- Too much good material (without a plan to cut it)
- Overestimating or underestimating the audience
- Assuming the audience shares your passion
- Relying on audience participation
- Relying on logistics (e.g. networks)

Stuff Happens

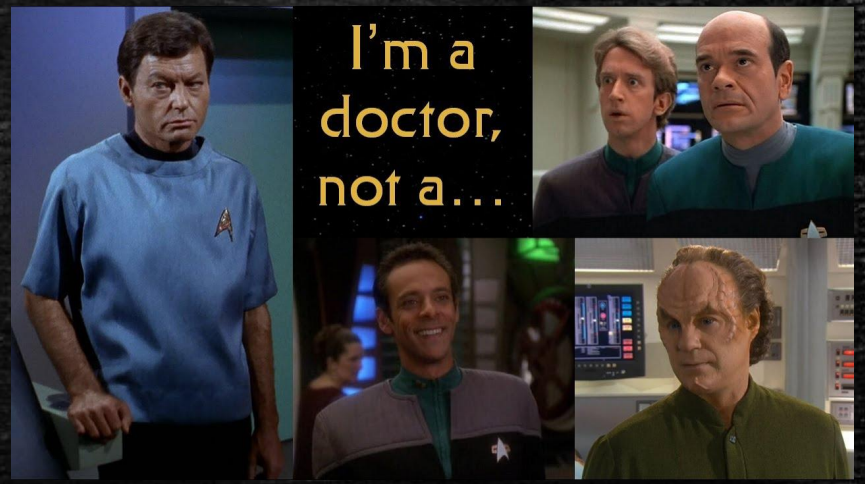
Garth Gilmour
@GarthGilmour

Blinding stage lights. Speaker clock set to 45 hours, not minutes. Projector bulb blew. Fire alarm. Carbon Monoxide alarm. Fire. Computer virus. Virus. Explosive nose bleed. Attendees laid off that day. Car stolen the night before. Locked in / out of venue. Migraines and asthma.

True Story

Know Your Limitations

- All skills are terrifyingly context dependent
- This applies to presenting as well



Compare the following...

- Lecturing students for an exam you will be setting
- Coaching developers who have to begin a new project
- Inspiring staff facing an existential threat to their jobs
- Participating in rumbustious televised political debate
- Giving a mother / father of the bride speech at a wedding

True Story...

Prepare for Imposter Syndrome

- If this is your first talk you will hate yourself afterwards
- This is part of the process and nothing to worry about
- Don't let it bother you (if at all possible)
- Bank the lessons learned and move on

Prepare for Imposter Syndrome

- It probably went a lot better than you think
- A musician notices every slip, but the audience does not…

The first pancake is never any good

Russian Proverb

Be Positive

- Enthusiasm is contagious
- Unfortunately, so is boredom
- As the speaker you can set the tone
- Be as happy as the situation allows
  - This also applies to espionage

On Writing

- Writing a good talk is bloody hard work
  - I suggest you chip away at it over time
- Give your subconscious time to percolate
  - Keep a notepad with you to jot down ideas

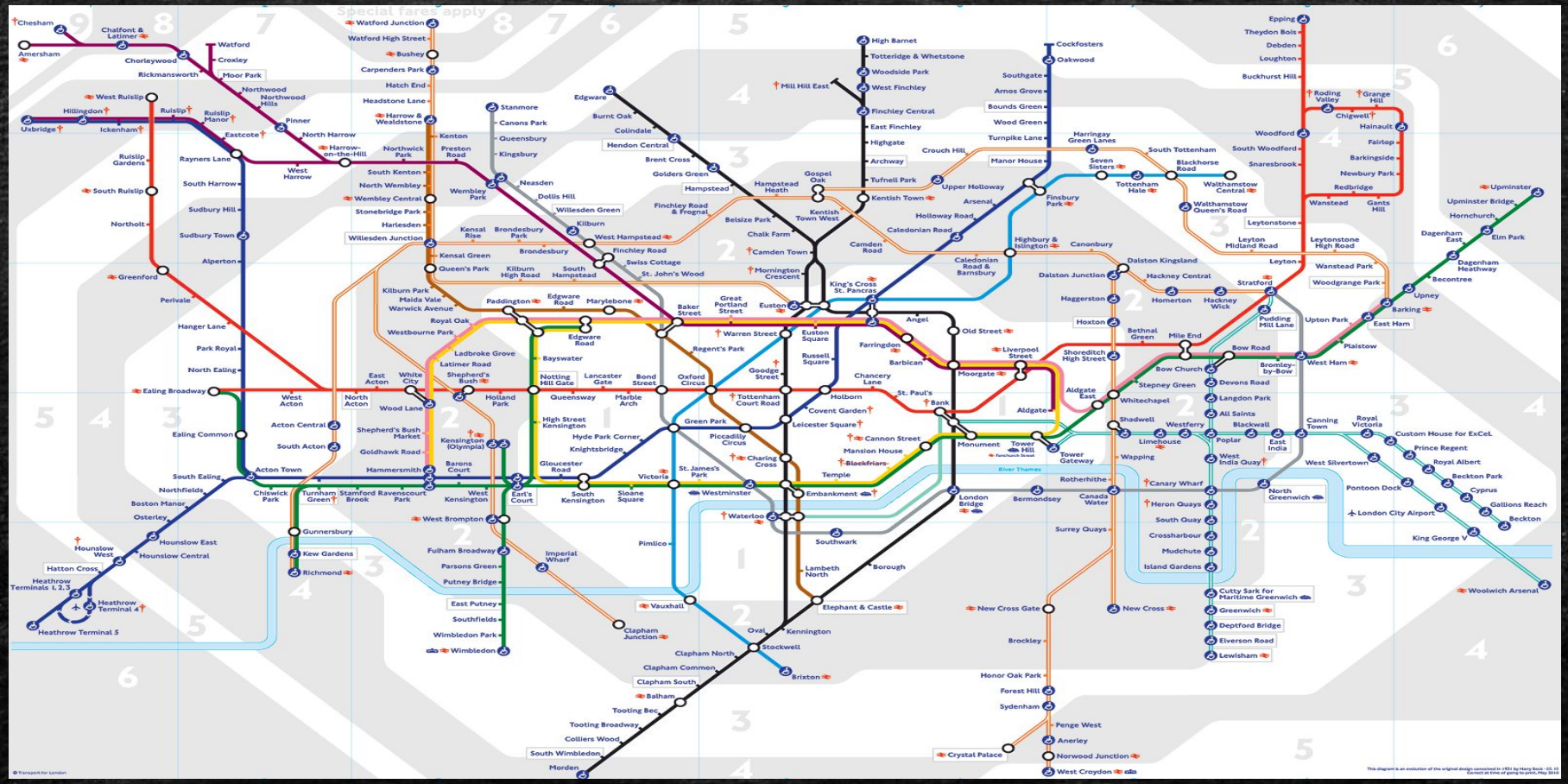
Writing is easy. You only need to stare at a piece of blank paper until your forehead bleeds.

Douglas Adams

On Writing

- Structure is as important as content
  - Tell them what you're going to tell them
  - Tell them
  - Tell them what you just told them
- Force yourself to 'kill your darlings'
  - Only cover what the audience will find interesting
  - If you are an expert you must ruthlessly cut back

Simplicity in Action



Preparation

- In general it is not possible to ‘wing it’
  - Unless you know the subject backwards and have no nerves
- There is no such thing as ‘too much preparation’
  - Remember to plan for both failure and success
- Its OK to prepare things that you never use
  - Contingencies for eventualities build confidence

Victory Loves Preparation

Unknown

Never Knowingly Under Cater

Spontaneity

- There is no such thing as too much planning / rehearsal
- Repetition can dull your edge and make you look stale…
- … but there are ways to maintain enthusiasm

Maintaining Enthusiasm

Enoch Powell

Spontaneity

- Plan all your unplanned digressions
- Have your ‘on the fly’ comments prepared well in advance ☺️

The hardest part is making it look spontaneous

Bono

Adrenaline Issues

- Adrenaline will screw with your head
- You may become braver and mad ideas may come to mind
- But you will not become smarter or more dexterous

Adrenaline Issues

We don't rise to the level of our expectations, we fall to the level of our training

Archilochos

Be Careful With Jokes

- Vet all the jokes and stories you plan to tell in advance
- Humour is subjective and your talk may be shared widely

Live Coding

- Live coding etc. is to be approached with great care
- Always have secure ‘save points’ that you can move to
- Assume all the logistics at the venue are against you

Rehearse and Reuse

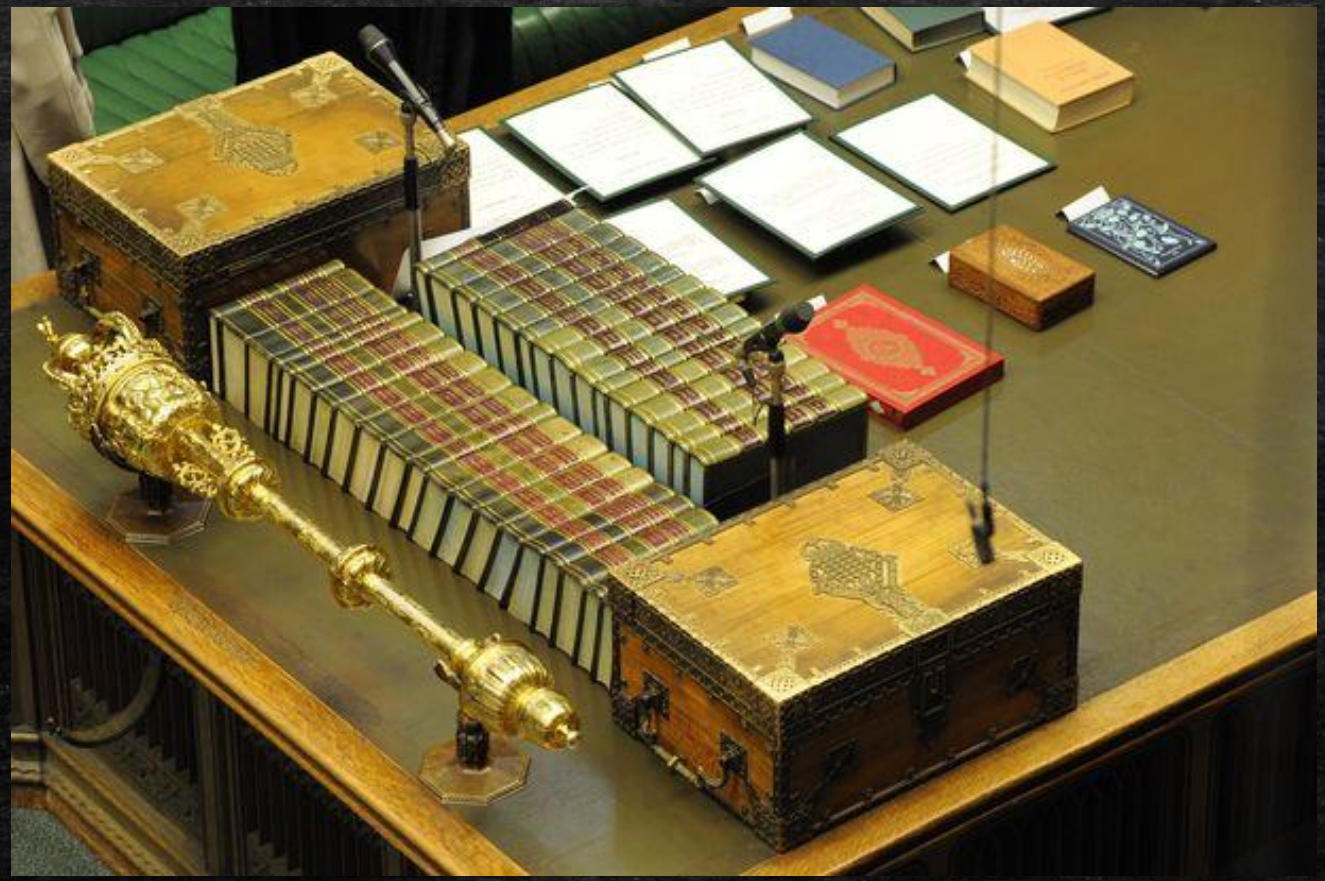
- No professional every does a talk just once
  - Politicians have their ‘stump speech’
  - Comedians have their own ‘skits’
  - Preachers save their sermons
  - Etc…
- Don’t feel bad about reusing content and themes
  - As long as its new to this particular audience

Original Content

We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.

Will Durant

Handling Questions



Part 2

When and how to use slides

Why use slides?

The Answers

- To make an appeal to authority
- To make a bold statement via an image
- As an anchor to talk around
- To sum up a lot of information quickly
- To simplify a complex issue
- As a fall back in case you become frozen
- For when you are too tired to think
- To be entertaining (hopefully)
- For when the demo fails
- To refer to other resources

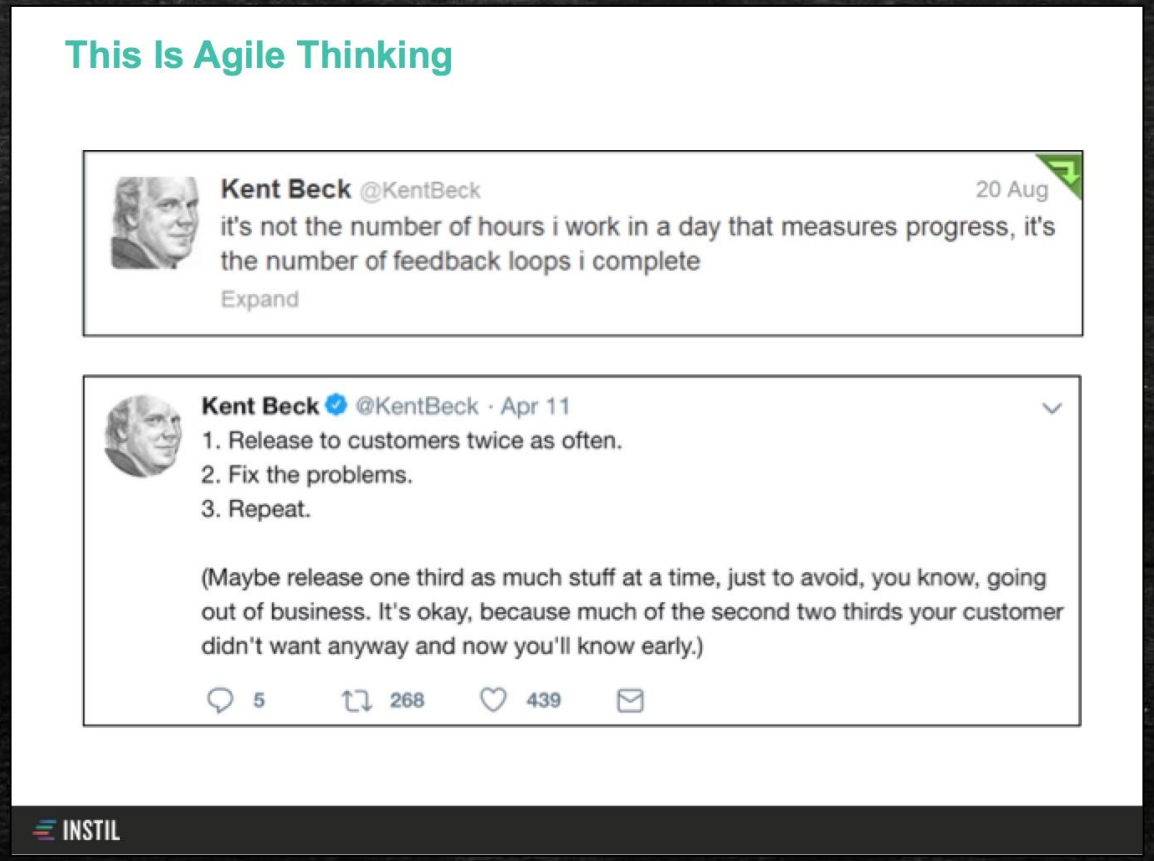
Making an Appeal to Authority

After **nine years** of work and **billions of pounds** already spent, the UK government recently abandoned a doomed IT project because **'it wasn't essential'**.

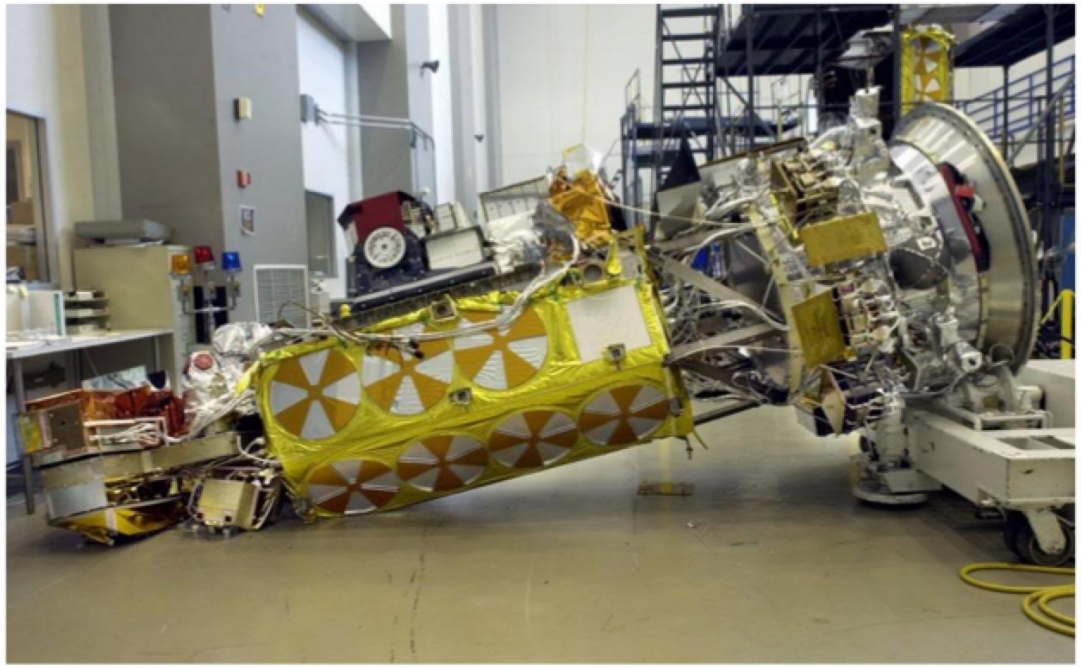
Similar examples of less epic proportions are all around us. Commercial organisations across the European Union **lost 142 billion EUR** on failed IT projects in 2004 alone, mostly because of poor alignment with business objectives or business strategies becoming obsolete during delivery.

This is roughly the cost of the **International Space Station programme**, including all flights, or almost **twice the cost of the entire Apollo programme**, which achieved six manned landings on the Moon.

Making an Appeal to Authority

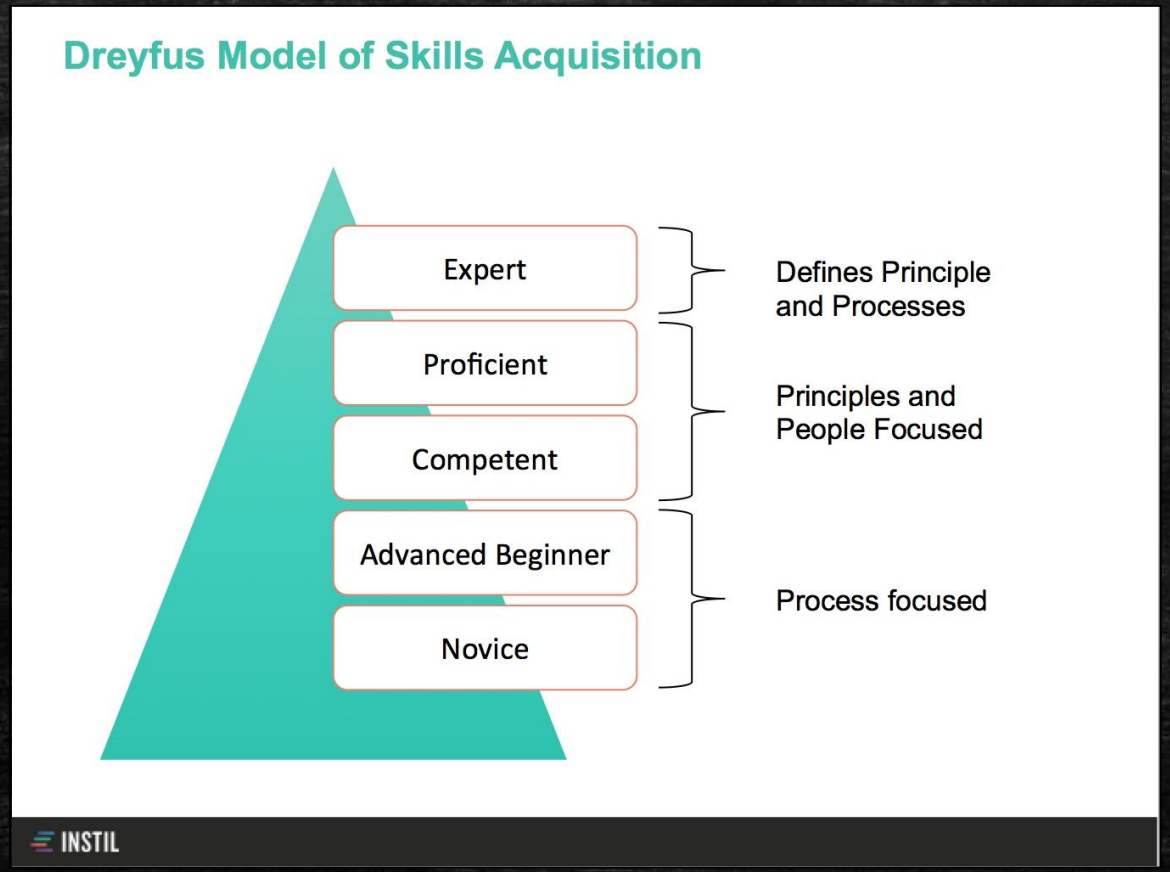


To Make a Bold Statement via an Image



INSTIL

As an Anchor to Talk Around

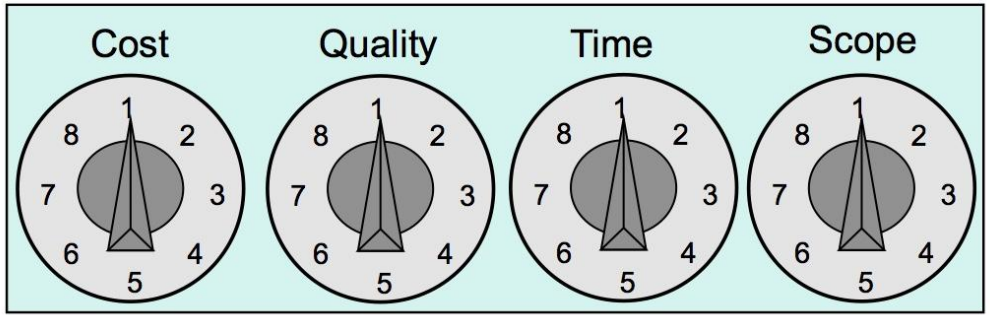


As an Anchor to Talk Around

Some Things Do Not Change

Some aspects of development are timeless

- Especially the relationships between the four key variables
- You can fix three of these dials but the fourth goes where it will…



INSTIL

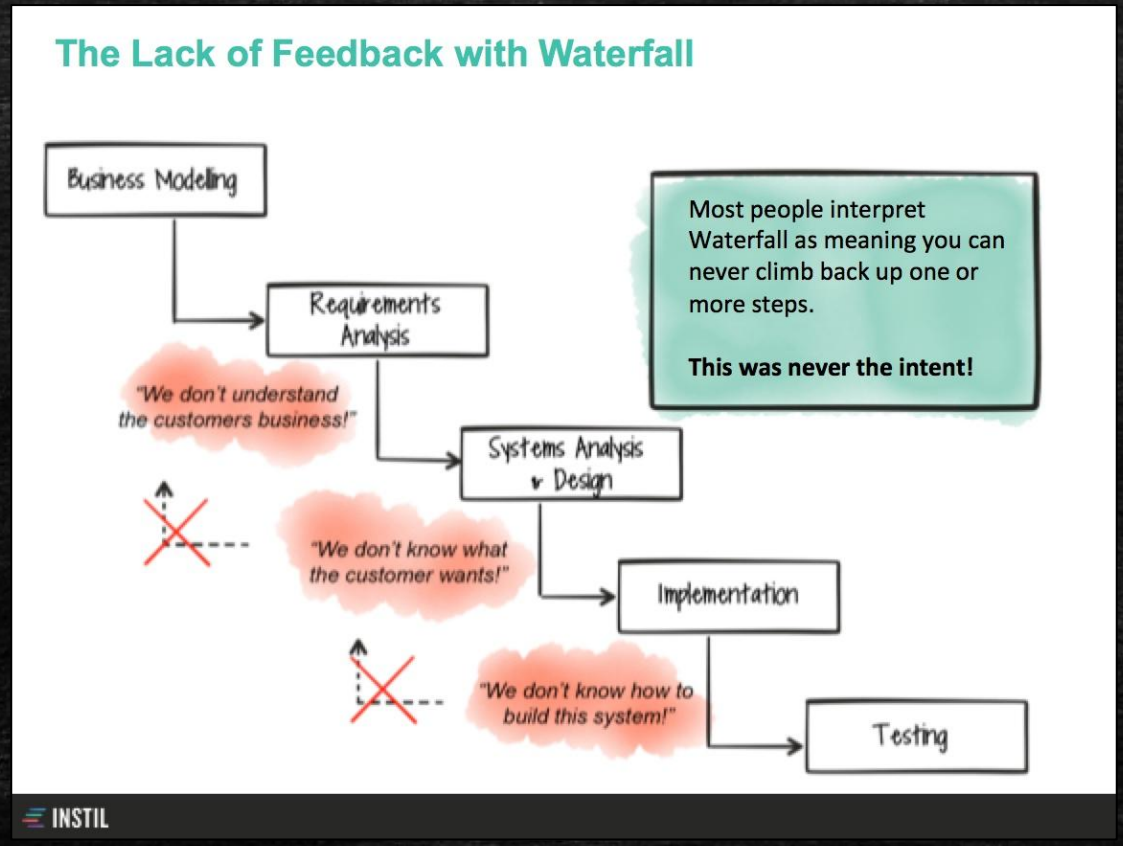
To Sum Up a Lot of Information Quickly

The Sample Re-Written in Kotlin

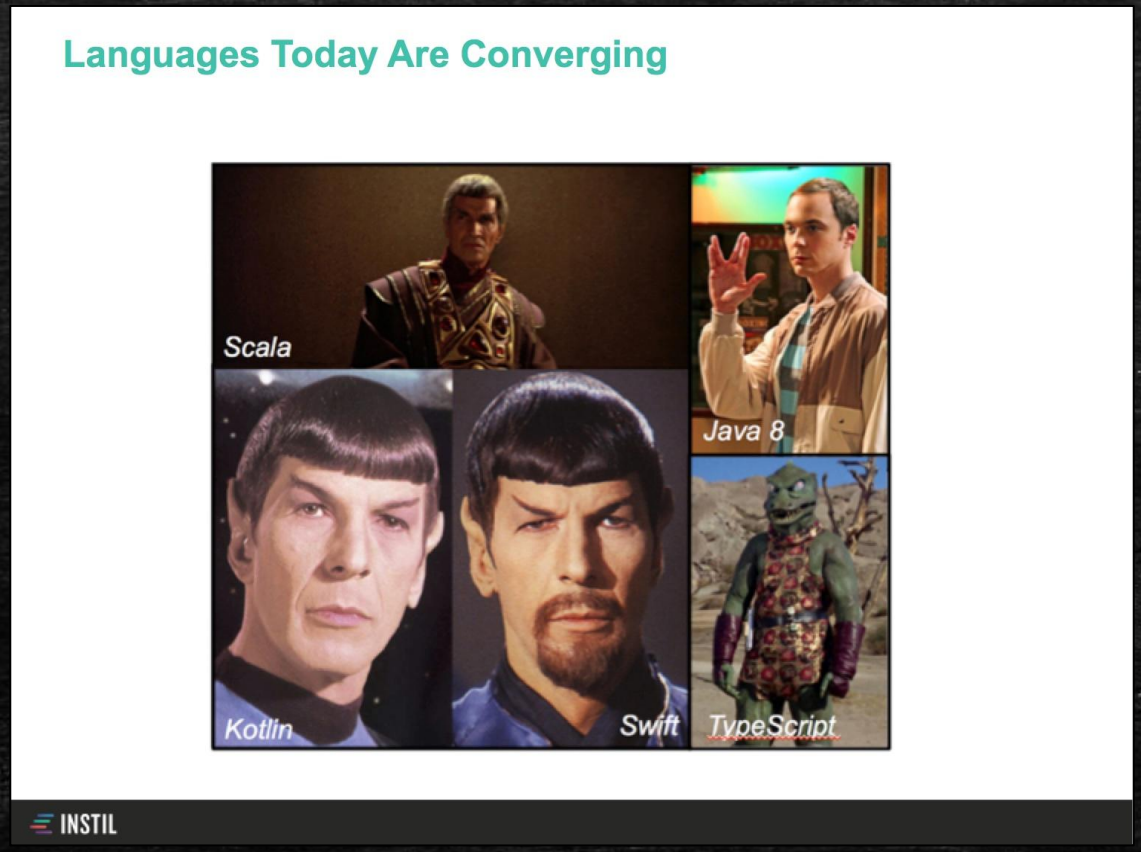
```
fun main(args: Array<String>) {
    val numbers = mutableListOf<Int>()
    val scanner = Scanner(System.`in`)
    val endOfInput = Regex("X{3}")
    println("Enter some numbers or three 'X' to finish")

    while (scanner.hasNextLine()) {
        if (scanner.hasNext(endOfInput.toPattern())) {
            break
        } else if (scanner.hasNextInt()) {
            numbers += scanner.nextInt()
        } else {
            val mysteryText = scanner.nextLine()
            println("Ignoring $mysteryText")
        }
    }
    //Would be better to use 'numbers.sum()'
    val total = numbers.fold(0, Int::plus)
    println("Total of numbers is: $total")
}
```

Points to note:
- ✓ No redundant class
- ✓ No semi-colons
- ✓ Type inference
- ✓ Both 'val' and 'var'
- ✓ Helper functions
- ✓ String interpolation
- ✓ Simplified collections
- ✓ Interop with Java types
- ✓ Simpler use of FP

To Sum Up a Lot of Information Quickly



To Simplify a Complex Issue



To Simplify a Complex Issue

The Evolution Of Web Applications

Web apps as ‘browser-ware’

.NET WebForms, JEE / JSF etc…

ASP .NET MVC, Spring MVC plus jQuery and Dojo based widgets

React / Angular SPA’s interacting with RESTful Services via JSON

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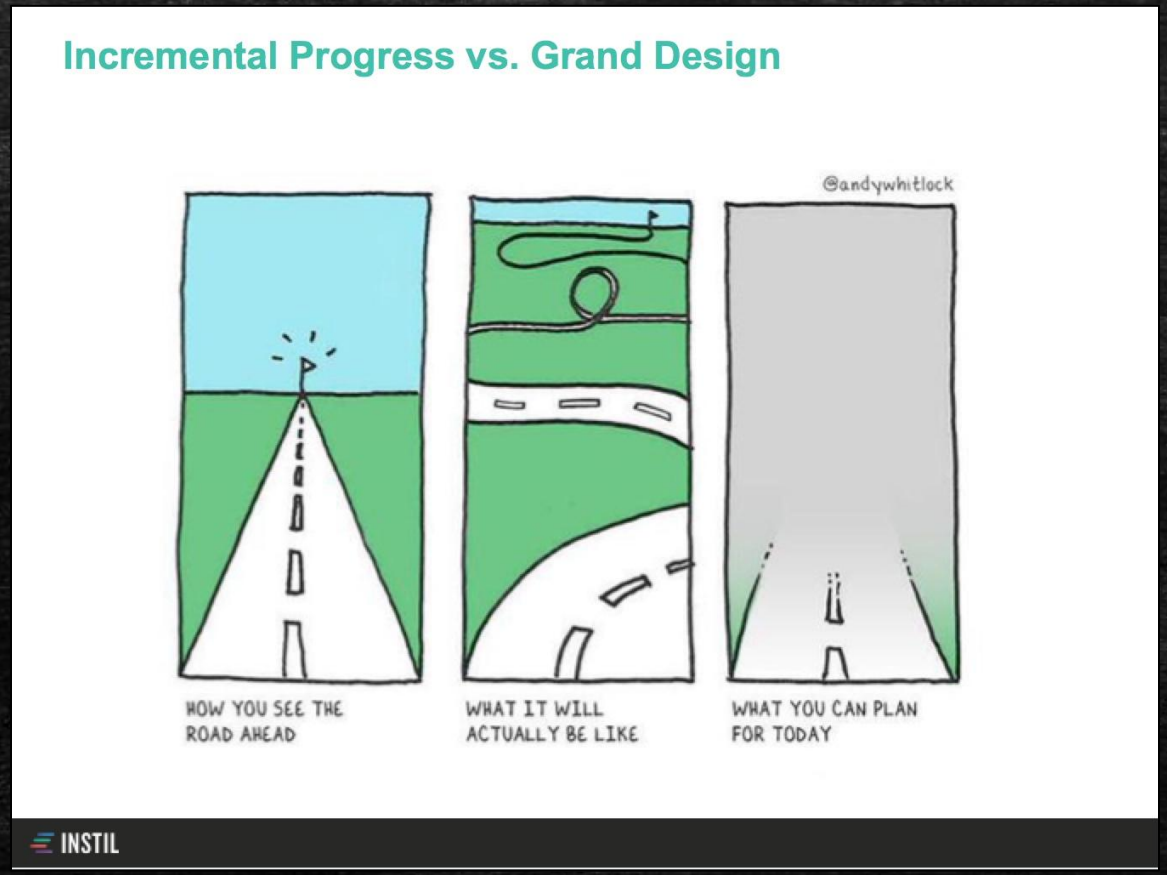
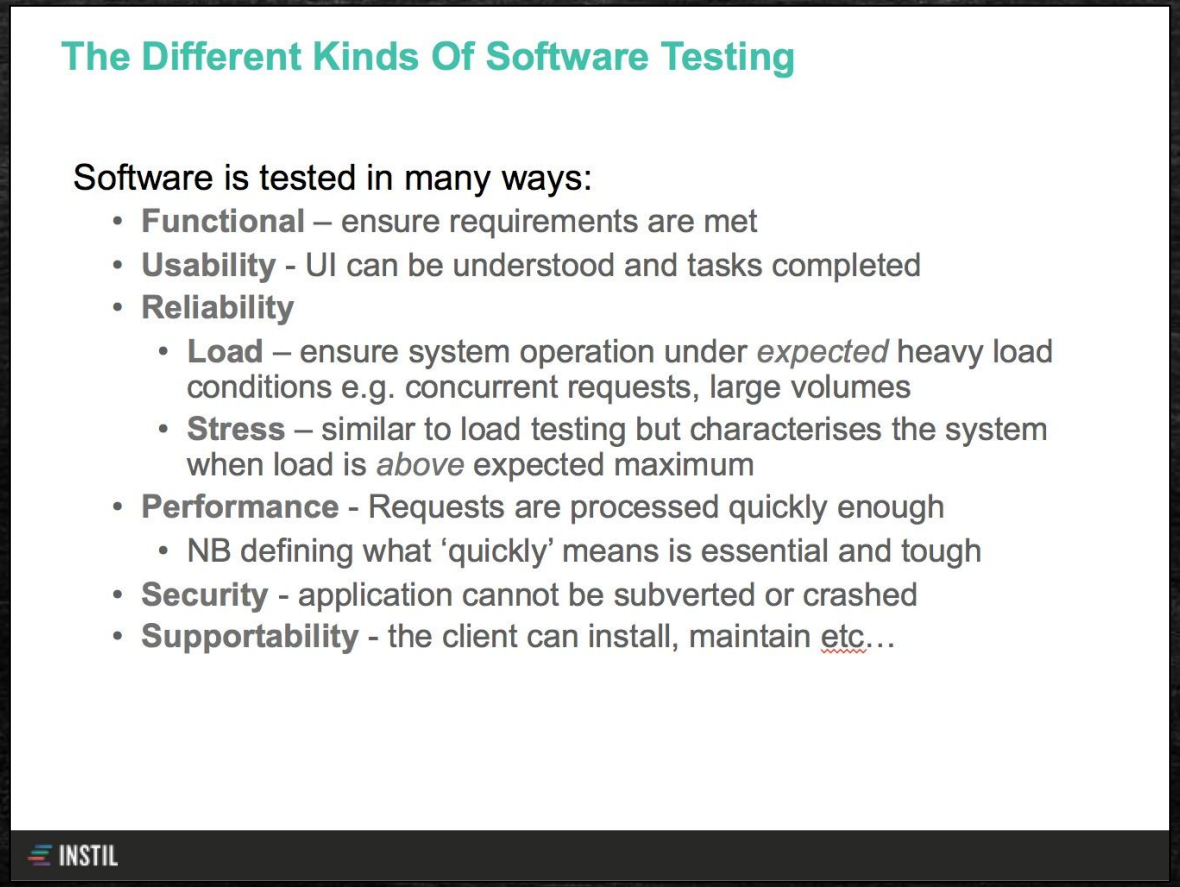
To Simplify a Complex Issue



In Case You Freeze



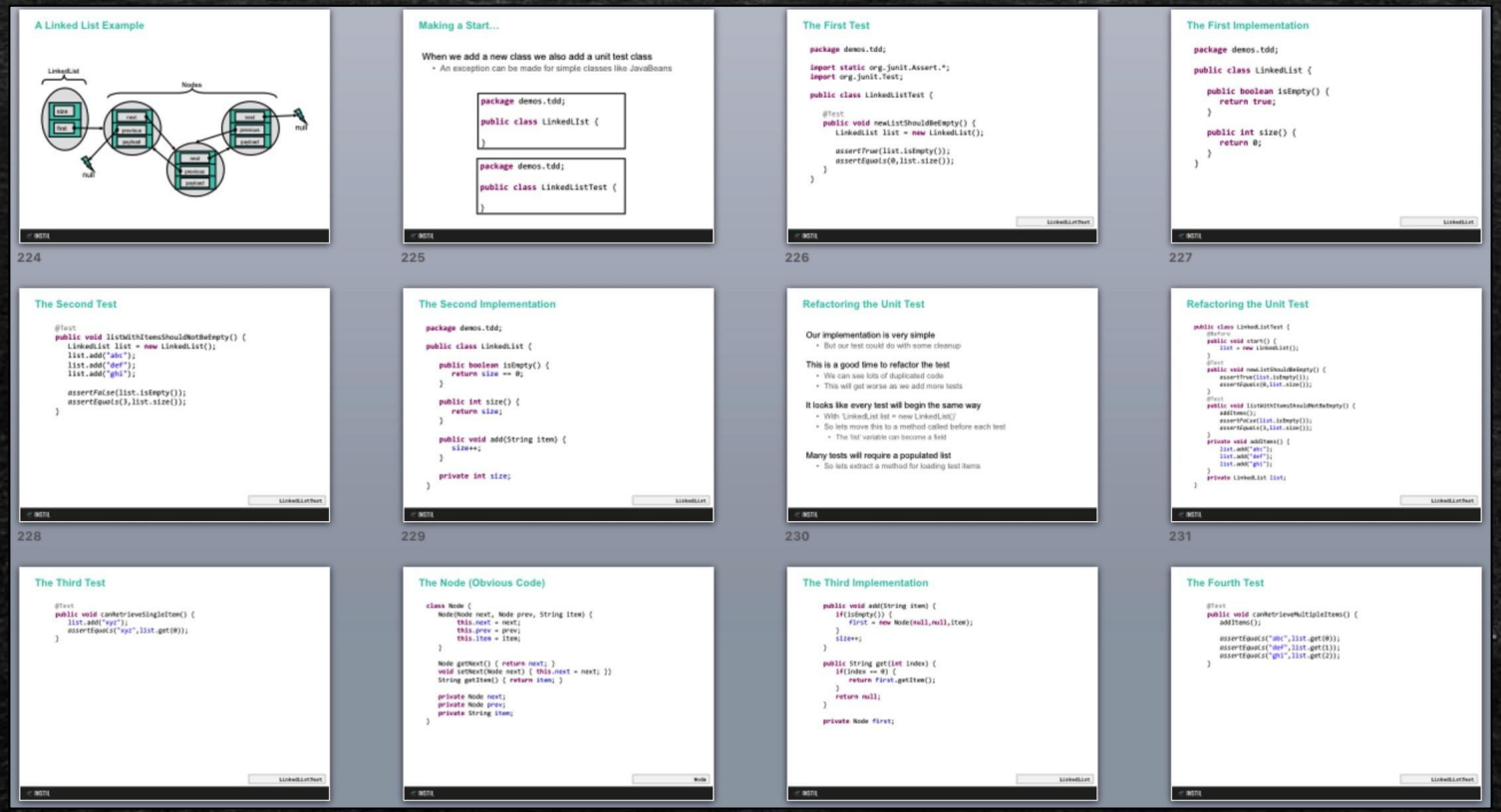
“Better a short pencil than a long memory”

Anonymous

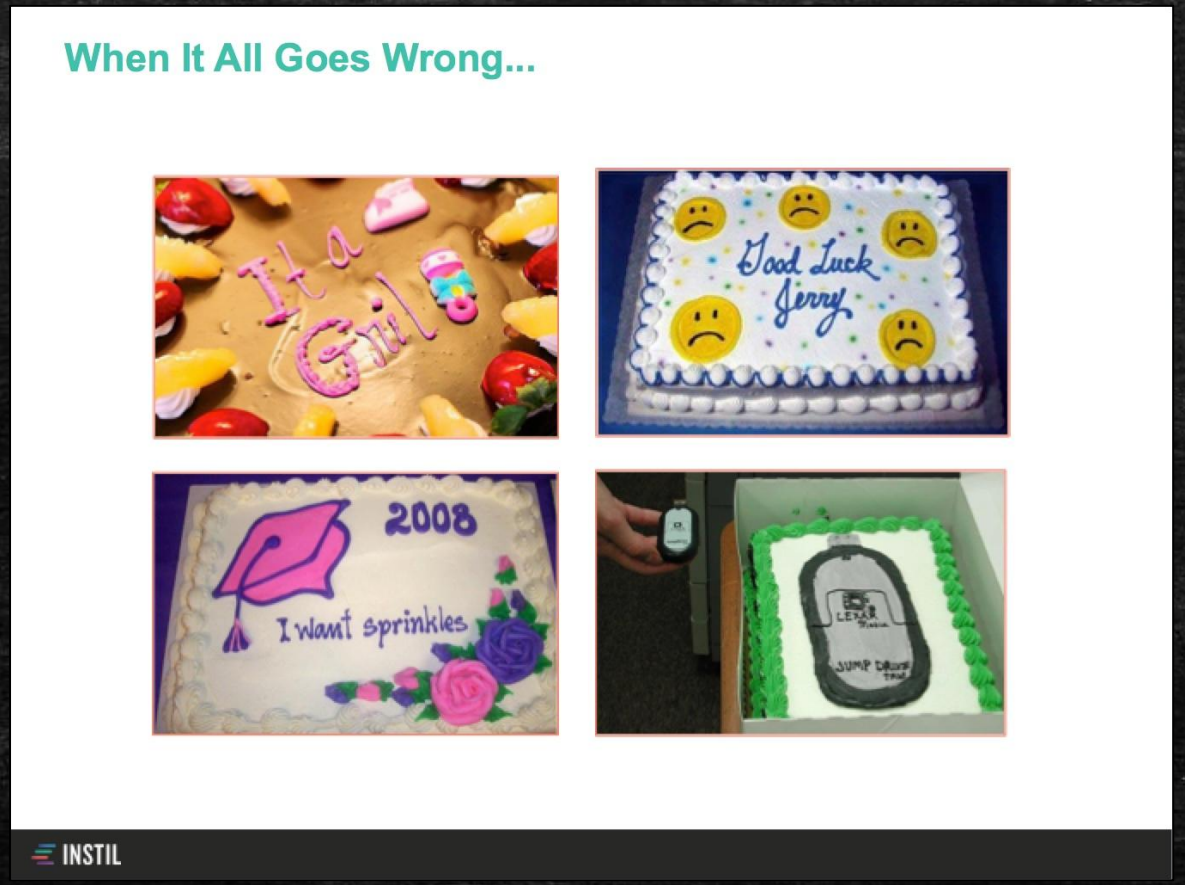
“Those who advocate for single words on slides have never had to teach for eight hours with a ******g migraine”

Garth Gilmour

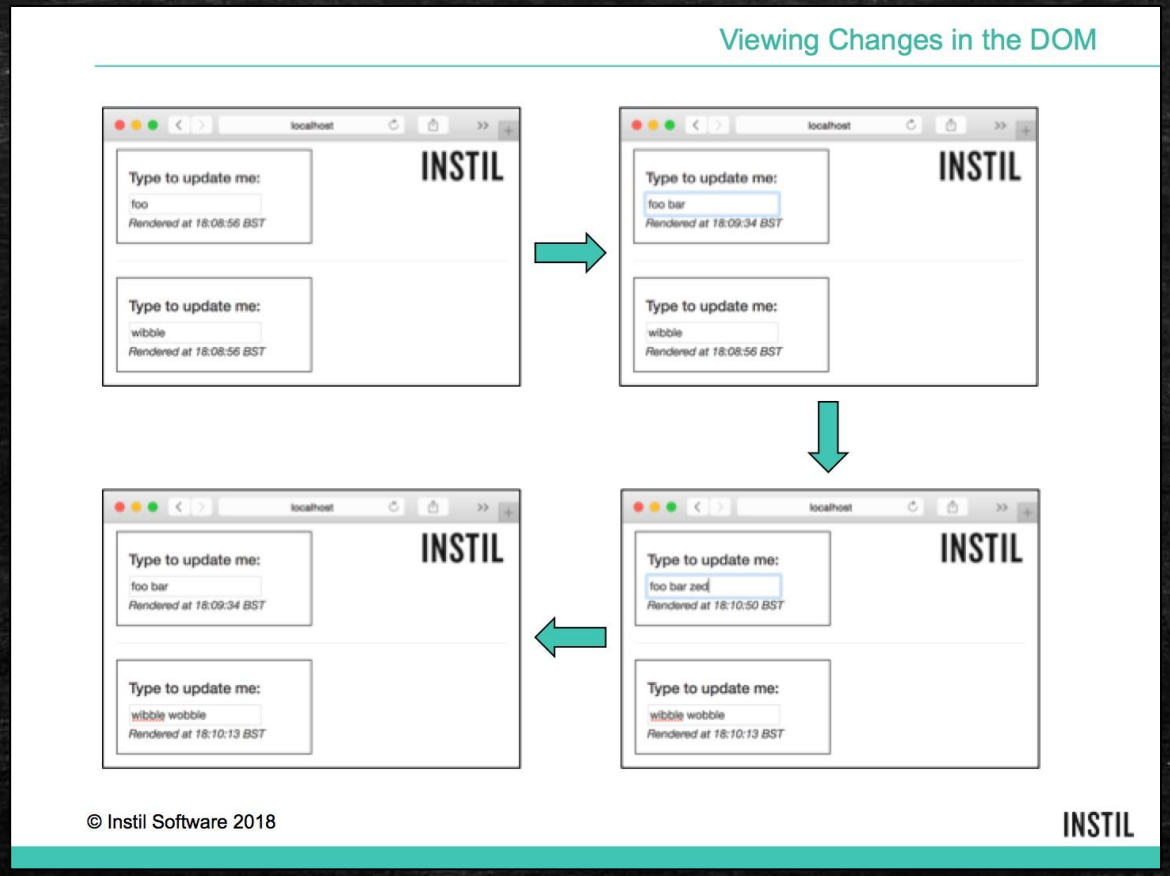
When you are Too Tired to Think



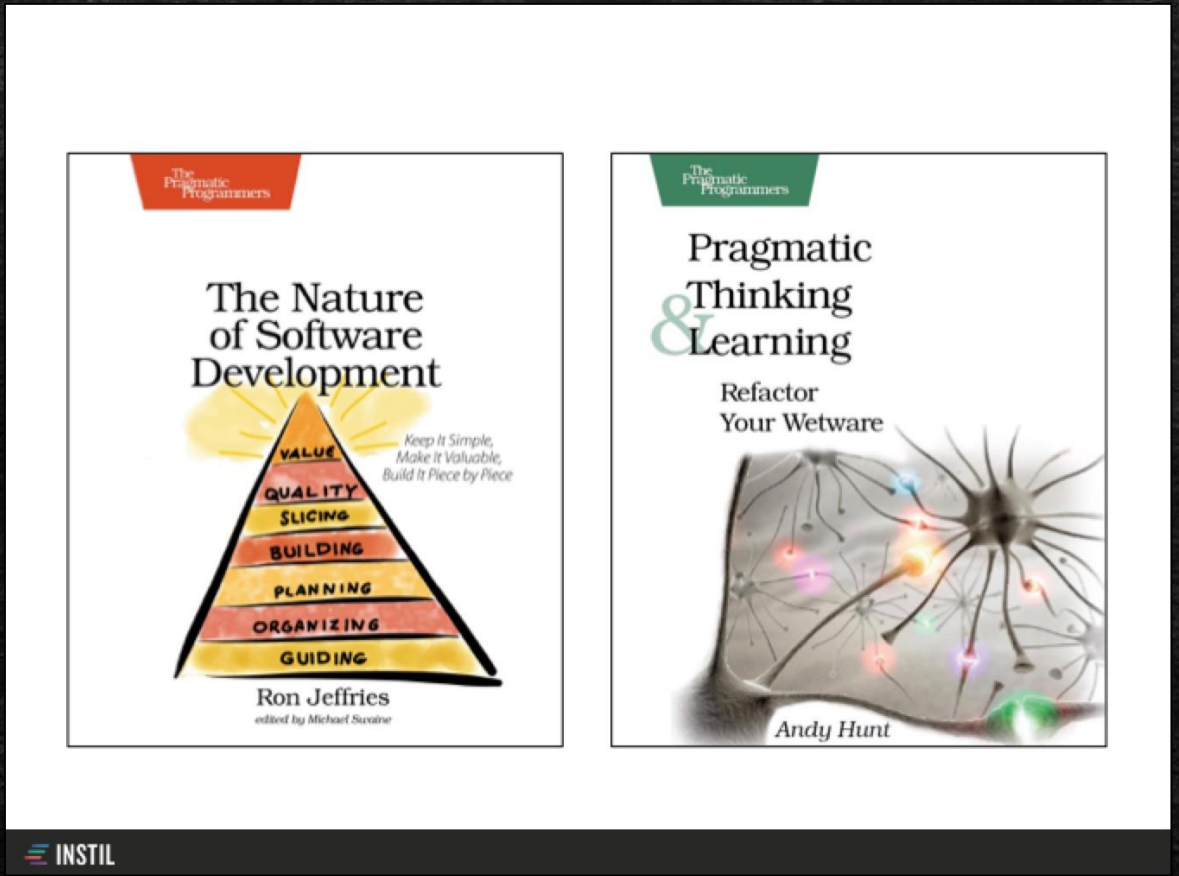
To Be Entertaining (Hopefully)



For When the Demo Fails



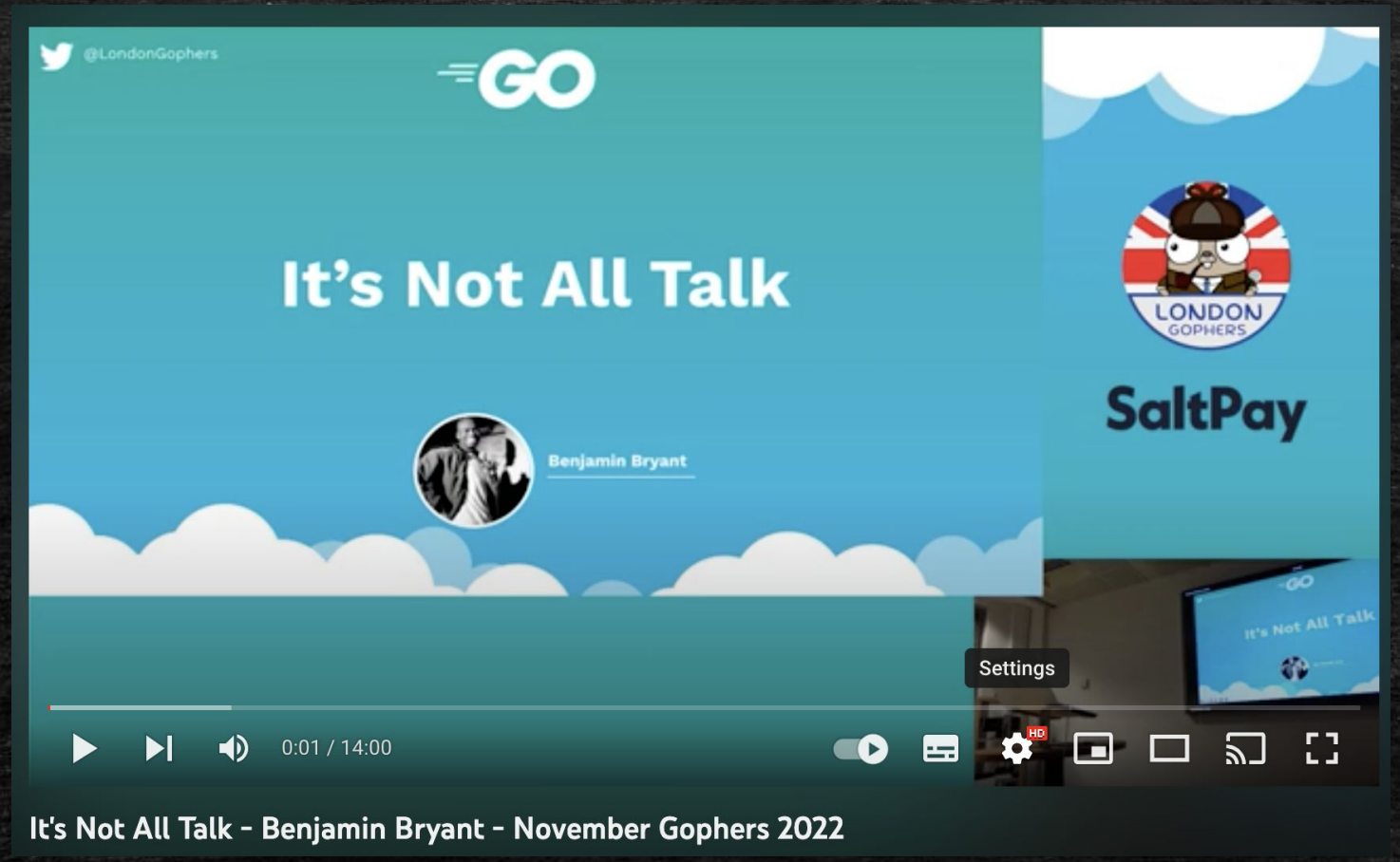
To Refer to Other Resources



Part 3

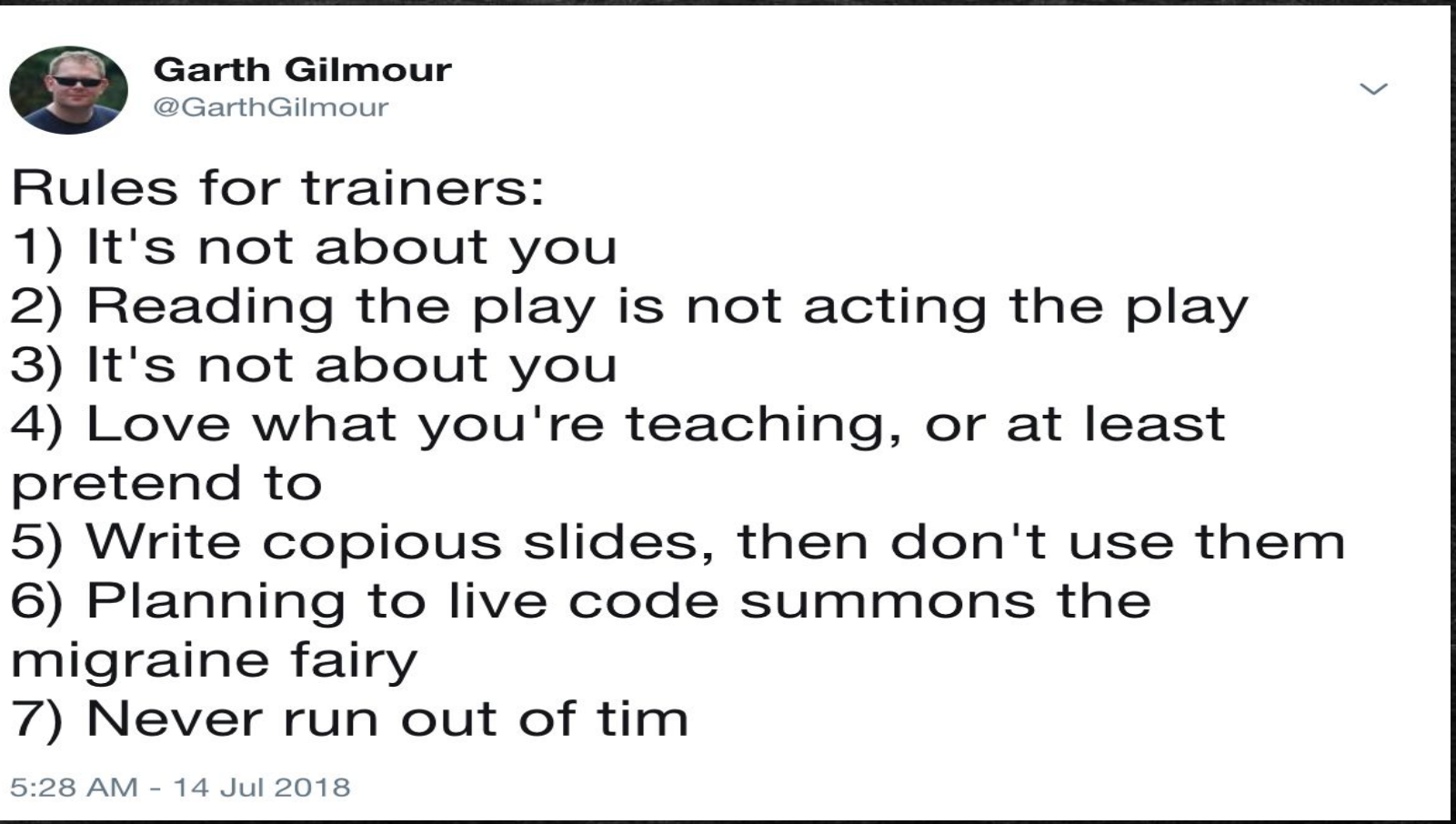
Final Thoughts

An Alternative View

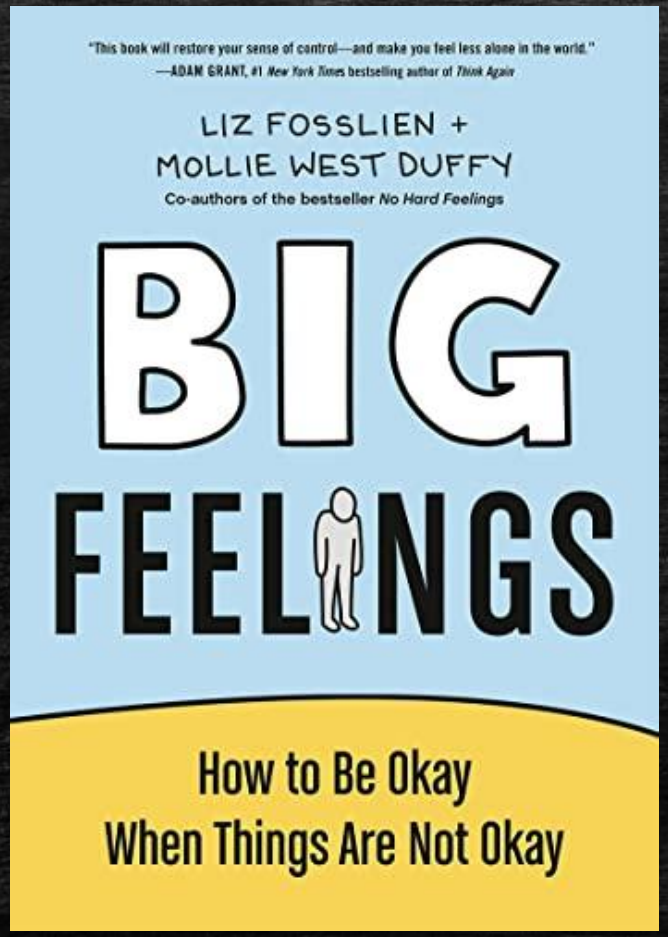


https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1SoXb9d9Ks

My Personal Code (Revisited)



It’s OK to be Nervous!



Questions?