



Metrics Are Easy, People Are Hard:

Why Software Metrics Fail and How You Can Fix It

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Introduction

- Veli-Matti Ahlroth
- Program Test Manager
- CGI Finland, LTC-Otso (Financial Sector)
- +8 years in testing, always been keen on numbers and understanding what they tell us.





Today's Journey

1. The Learning - Three attempts at metrics adoption (and what they taught me)
2. The Framework - Why innovations, and metrics, spread (or don't)
3. The Strategy - Four moves that actually work
4. The Discipline - Setting your people up for success
5. The Principles - What makes metrics worth spreading
6. The Playbook - Taking this back to your teams

Three Attempts

Showing



These look great!

Sharing the why

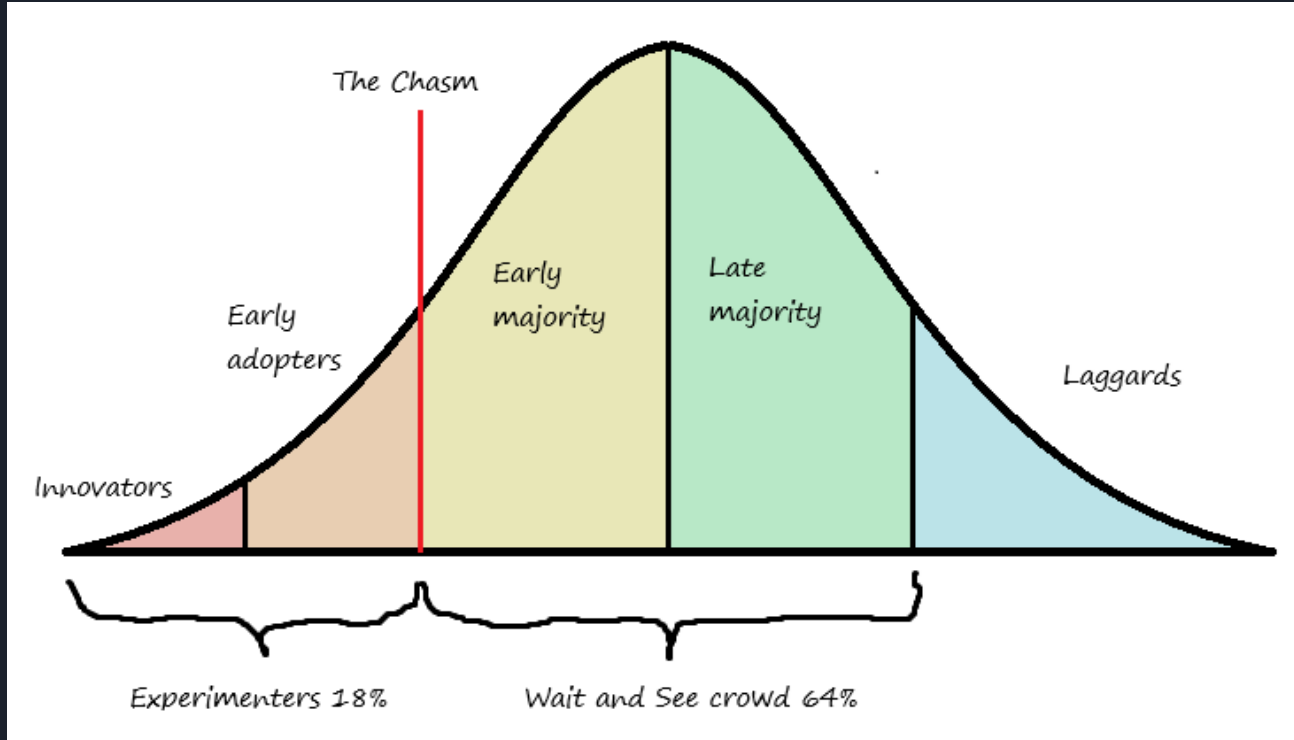


Everyone should use these!

Teaching hands on



The Diffusion Curve





Different Needs

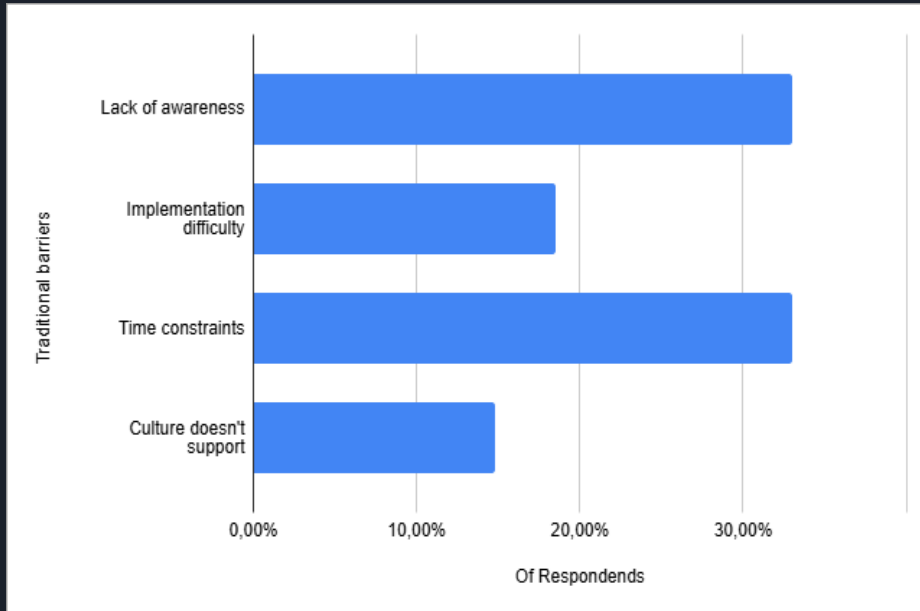
Experimenters want:

- Vision and possibility
- "This could be useful"
- A chance to figure it out

Wait-and-See wants:

- Proof and precedent
- "This IS useful - I've seen it"
- A clear path to follow

The Research - Reframed



These aren't bugs. They're features of the adoption curve.

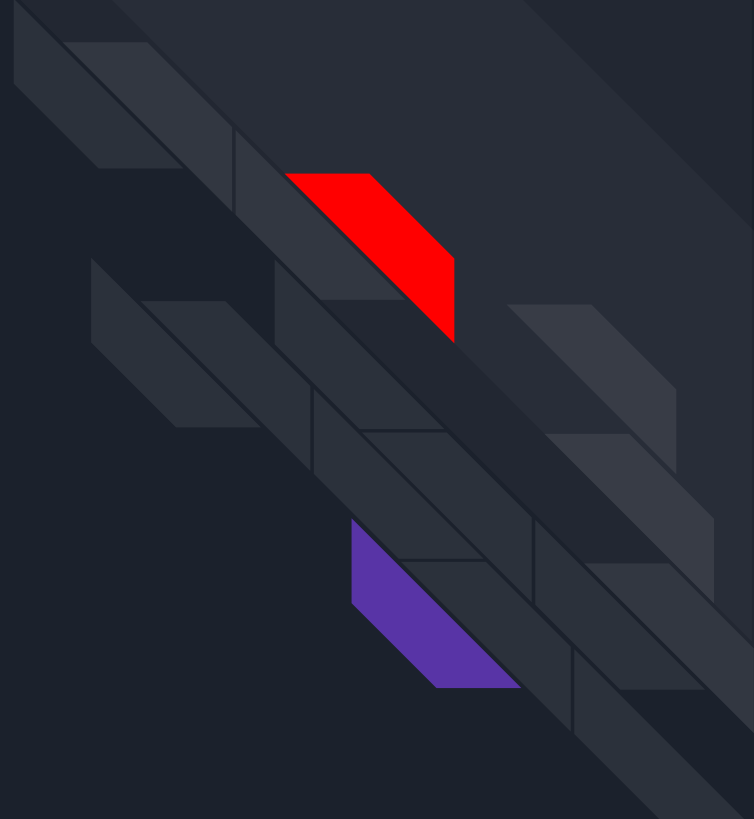
= Waiting for social proof

= Need proven frameworks

= Need demonstrated ROI

= Pre-tipping point normal

The Strategic Moves





Strategy #1: Find Your Experimenters

- Don't broadcast, intrigue
- Create conditions where they reveal themselves
- Look for curiosity, not technical skills
- Trust your instincts



Strategy #2: The Long Game



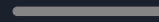
WORKSHOP

Foundation



COACHING

Real Learning



INDEPENDENCE

Months, not weeks



Strategy #3: Make It Visible Through Use

- Use in existing meetings
- Answer existing questions
- Utility over promotion



Strategy #4: Reading the Signs

Language Shifts

- “Based on metrics...”
- “How do I...”

Unsolicited Adoption

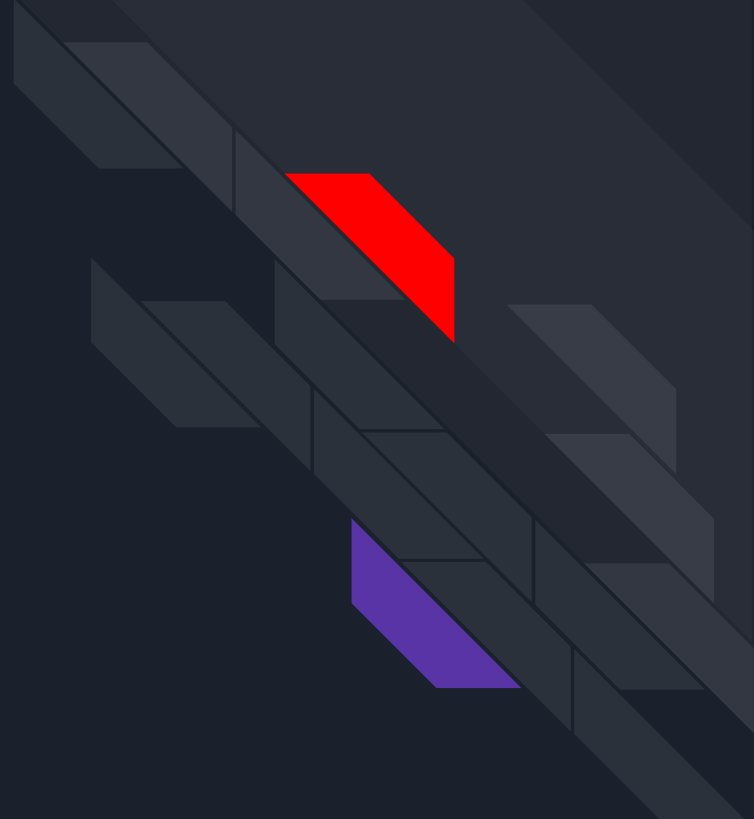
- People you never trained reach out
- Secondhand mentions
- Unexpected requests

Your Role Changes

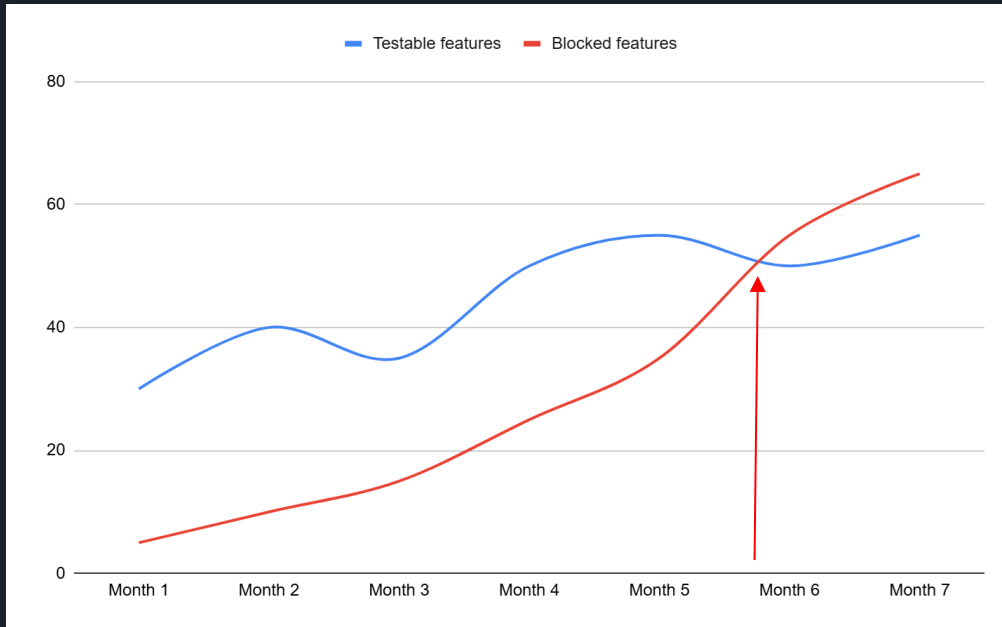
- Supporting vs. convincing
- Responding vs. creating demand

This isn't a finish line—it's a rhythm. Keep cultivating.

Setting Your Experimenters Up for Success



The SIT Backlog Problem

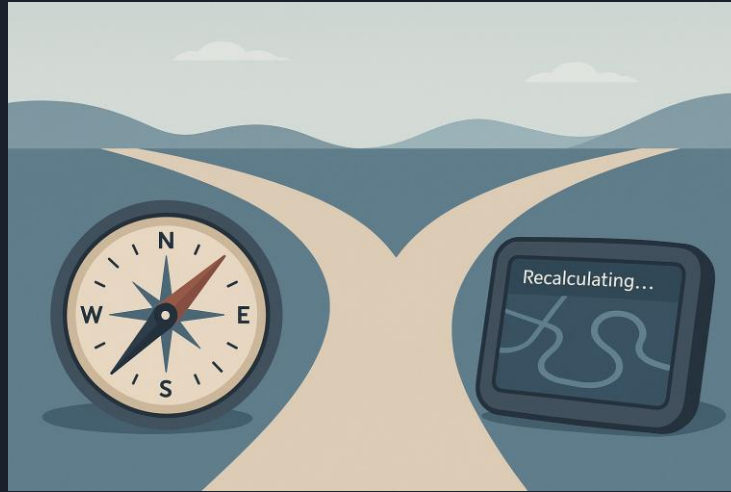


*Analysis:
All good and well*

*(6 months since last
analysis update)*

The Compass Principle

The Trap: Enthusiasm Without Discipline



→ *Metrics are a compass, not a GPS*



The Three Questions Framework

Before creating any metric:

1. What question am I trying to answer?
2. What decision will this inform?
3. What would I do differently based on this data?

→ *Never show a metric without fresh analysis*



The Storytelling Structure

Tell the story of discovery:

- What did I notice?
- What surprised me?
- What did I investigate?
- What did I find?
- What have I done?
- What still needs attention?

→ *Stop explaining data. Start telling stories.*



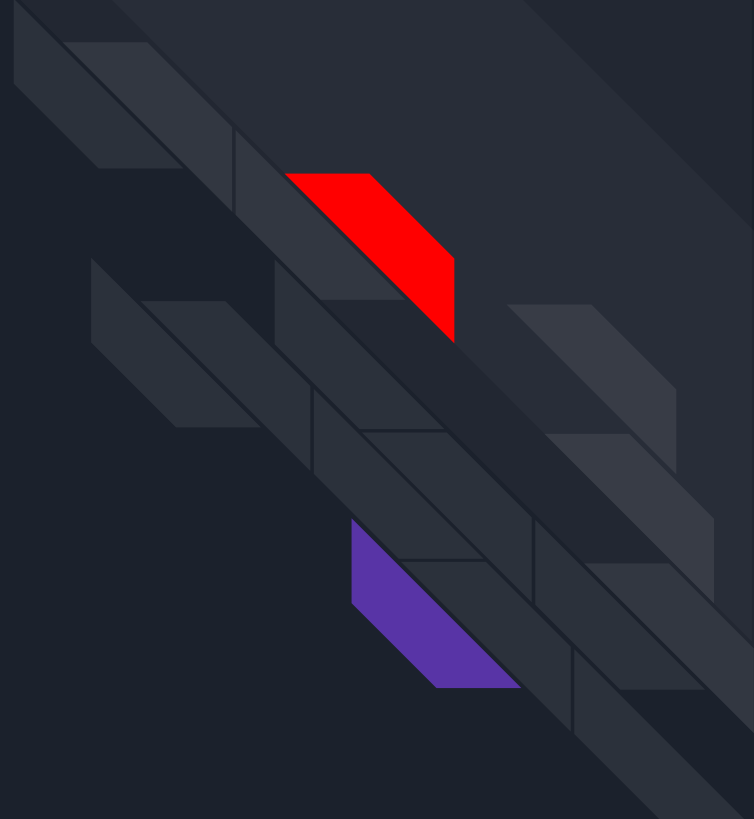
Practical Coaching Tactics

Coaching practices:

- Guide through storytelling structure
- Review before they present
- Ask "what does this tell you?"
- Explore data together in real-time
- Celebrate good analysis

→ *You can't create the bridge across the chasm. Only your experimenters can*

Setting Your Metrics Up for Success





Four Metrics Principles

Keep Metrics as Insight, Not Targets

When a measure becomes a target, it ceases to be a good measure

Measure Outcomes and Trends, Not Just Snapshots

Snapshots prompts explanations. Trends prompts investigations

Never Use Metrics as Weapons

Metrics must feel safe to surface problems early

Beware Vanity Metrics

Look impressive but don't drive decisions



Quality Matters

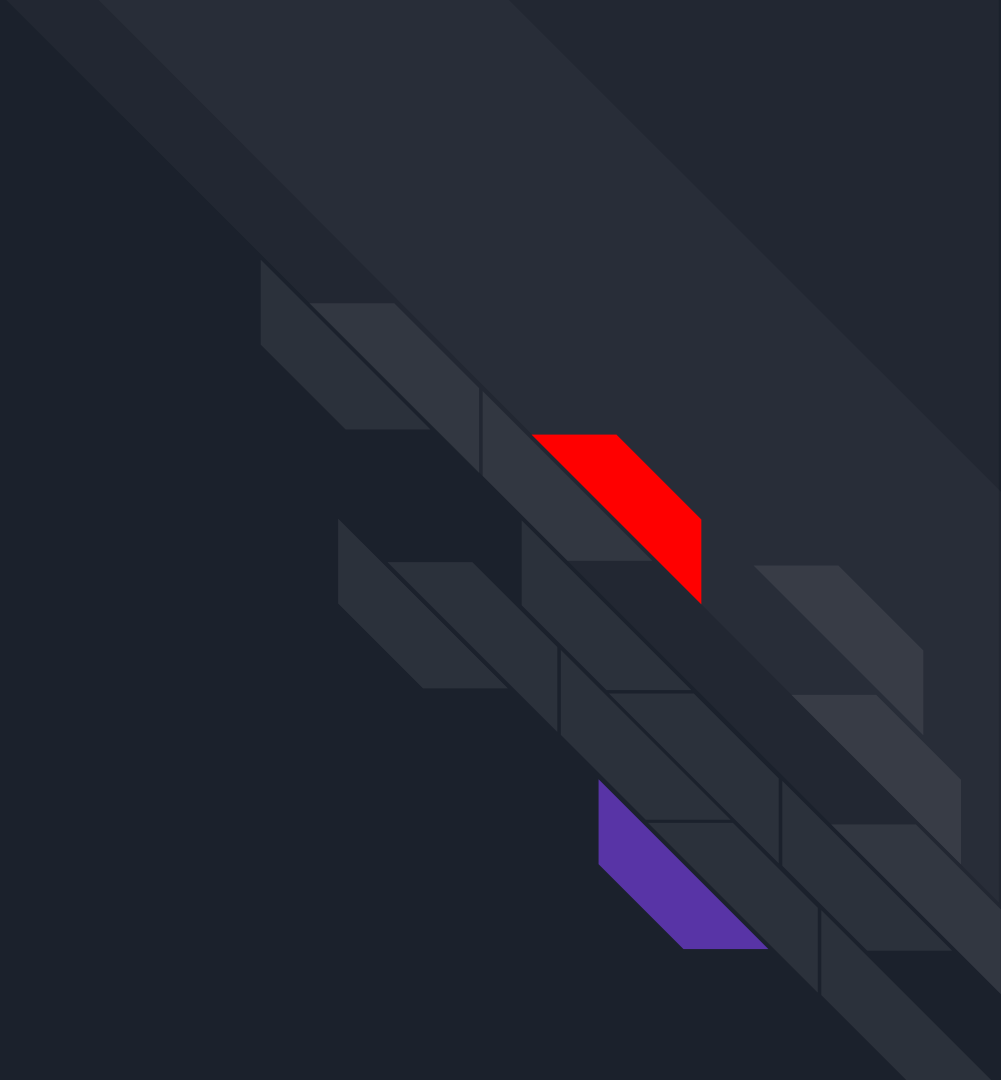
Bad metrics spread just as easily as good ones

Quality matters as much as adoption

Metrics that are actually worth spreading:

- Inform real decisions
- Surface problems without fear
- Show direction, not destinations
- Build momentum that lasts

Takeaways





Why Metrics Initiatives Fail

They fail if:

1. Treated as a persuasion problem
2. Expect everyone to adopt at once
3. Skip from training to "good luck"
4. Spread enthusiasm without discipline
5. Tie metrics to targets
6. Turn metrics into weapons

These aren't bugs. They're predictable patterns.



The Essential Playbook

1. Create conditions where Experimenters reveal themselves
2. Months of coaching, not days of training
3. Only Experimenters can create the bridge to “masses”
4. Teach the three questions and storytelling
5. Metrics are a compass, not a GPS
6. Trends prompt investigation
7. Quality matters as much as adoption



Metrics adoption isn't a persuasion problem, it's a diffusion strategy problem

Work with human psychology, not against it



Questions / Thank You

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