

Lean UX Anti-Patterns

Behaviors that can stifle collaboration

Bill Scott
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Genius Designer

All design emanates from a single designer

The feedback loop is back to the designer

Team doesn't collaboratively participate in design/ideation



Tribal Groups

When a team is very small it
forces cross-discipline
collaboration

When a team grows, teams
will naturally form into tribes

Collaboration stops



The Stranger

A new team member joins the team after a team has established a good cadence

The newcomer will not share the learnings, understandings, team agreements

The team must immediately stop and initiate the newcomer



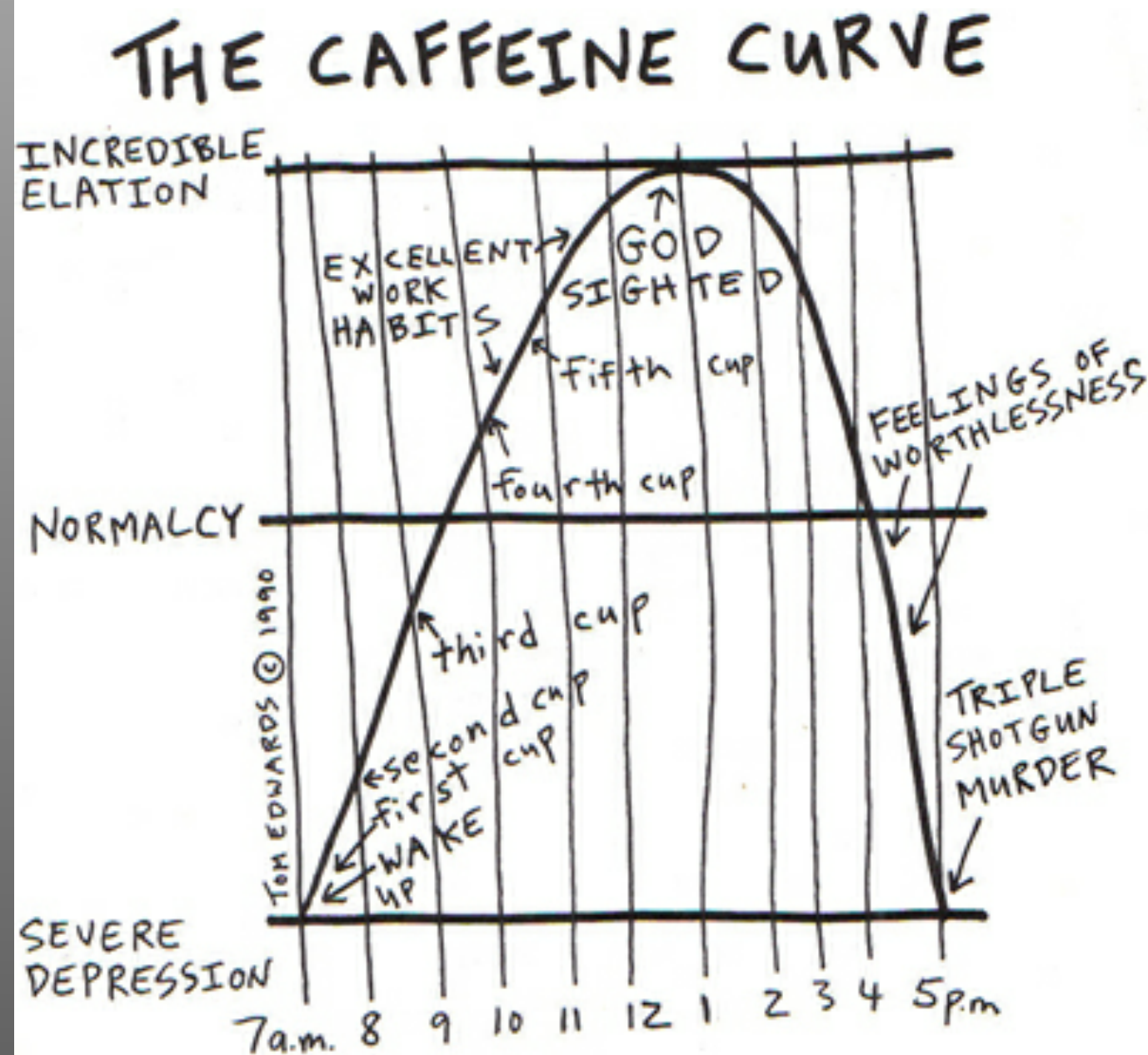
Bad Habits

Teams will often make a good start by trying out new behaviors

Watch out!

Any change in the team can bring out the old habits

Unless the good habits are practiced long enough the bad habits will return





The Naysayer

It only takes one person that sees problems and not opportunities to bring the team to a creative full stop

The naysayer must either learn new techniques or leave the team

The Visitor

Input from outside the team is essential

However, watch out. People cycling in & out of the team can cause the same disruption that the Stranger antipattern causes





The Magic Tool

Tools can facilitate collaboration
However, be careful, tools that
empower prototyping can
enable the Genius Designer to
work in isolation

The key is to always
collaborate and never “deliver”

Going Dark

When a developer, product manager, or designer goes dark for more than a day (or two) the team is losing valuable collaboration

Working in isolation is necessary. Limit to short periods of time. Make work always visible.



Change of Cadence

Change of cadence is actually a good and normal happening. However, whenever the rhythm changes, the team needs to ensure they understand this happened and adjust team working agreements.



Too Many Cooks

While lots of cooks are great, the work needs to be divided up among different type of cooks (Chef de cuisine, Sous-chef, Chef de partie)

The key is having clear decision makers in each discipline





Not Enough Pizza

Keep teams to 2-pizza size

When a team suddenly scales up in size the team is in danger of losing cadence, shared understanding and focus

Clear lines of responsibilities and laser focus for the team must be maintained

Tower of Babel

Shared understanding is key.
However, it is easy to assume
too quickly that team members
are speaking the same
language

Always ask, “what do you
mean by x?”

Explain clearly when in cross-
discipline discussions





You Got Mail

Email is a necessary form of communication, however it is not collaboration

Teams geo-graphically distributed especially can fall into using email instead of talking

Email encourages delivery not collaboration

Inmates are Running the Asylum

From Alan Cooper's classic
book of the same title

When engineers drive design

This can happen if UIEs are not
partnering correctly with
design/product

Secret is get experience out
ahead of technology





The Perfectionist

Not embracing the challenge of the unknown, the perfectionist will not share their work till it is perfect

This is anathema to build-test-learn

Engineers can fall into this trap. Build APIs & CLIs to break this.

The Weakest Link

Working in a lean environment means working in close proximity and transparency

Team members who aren't up to this challenge or not solid talent can really cause a team to stumble

Talent acquisition must match this style of product delivery





The Wall

Walls between teams can happen when

- We allow Tribes to form
- We see the other teams as separate delivery factories
- Geo-distributed teams
- (any of these antipatterns will create a wall)

Tangled up Technology

Unless the technology stack is built to have a clear separation from experience & services the lean team cannot make rapid progress

Key patterns are to build services, APIs and CLIs

Watch out when dev teams care too much about the UI



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