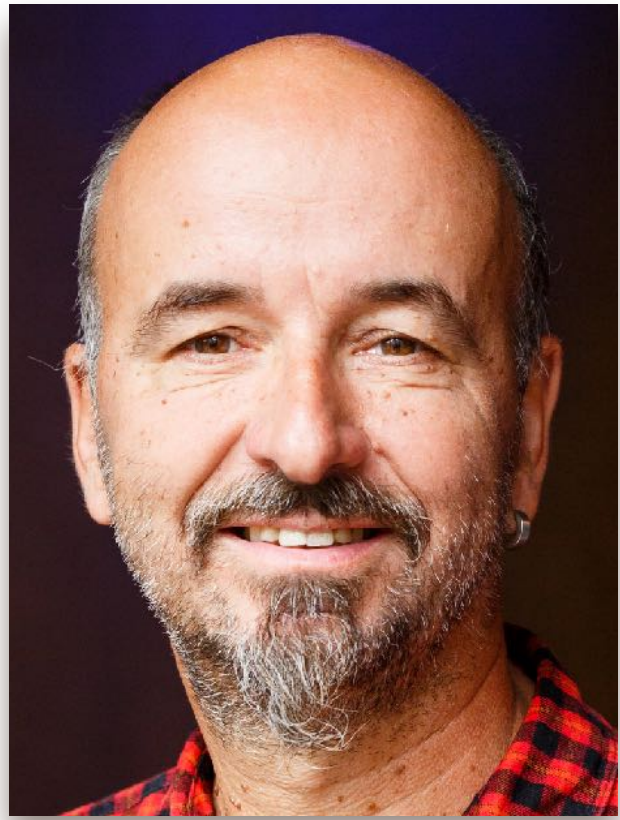


DISTRIBUTED TEAMS THAT ACTUALLY WORK



Bertrand Delacrétaz

Principal Scientist, Adobe Basel, Switzerland
Former Board Member, Apache Software Foundation

[@bdelacretaz@fosstodon.org](mailto:bdelacretaz@fosstodon.org) - grep.codeconsult.ch

BaselOne 2024

images from Adobe Stock, unless otherwise noted

slides revision 2024-10-17



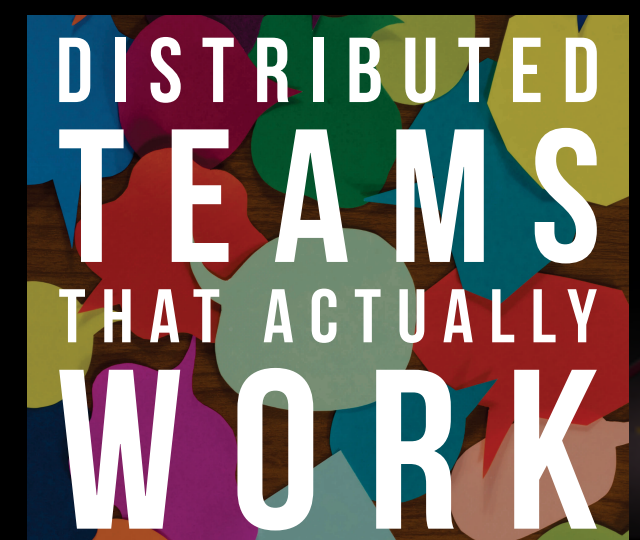
The background is a dark, abstract composition. It features several large, overlapping geometric shapes in shades of blue, yellow, and purple. A prominent vertical purple shape is in the center. To the right, there are several blue, translucent, rectangular shapes that look like they are part of a structure or machinery. At the bottom center, there is a crumpled ball of multi-colored paper. The overall aesthetic is modern and artistic.

building a dam



we are wired to create great things *together*

Hey, neighbours!





Day™



FOP The Apache™ FOP Project

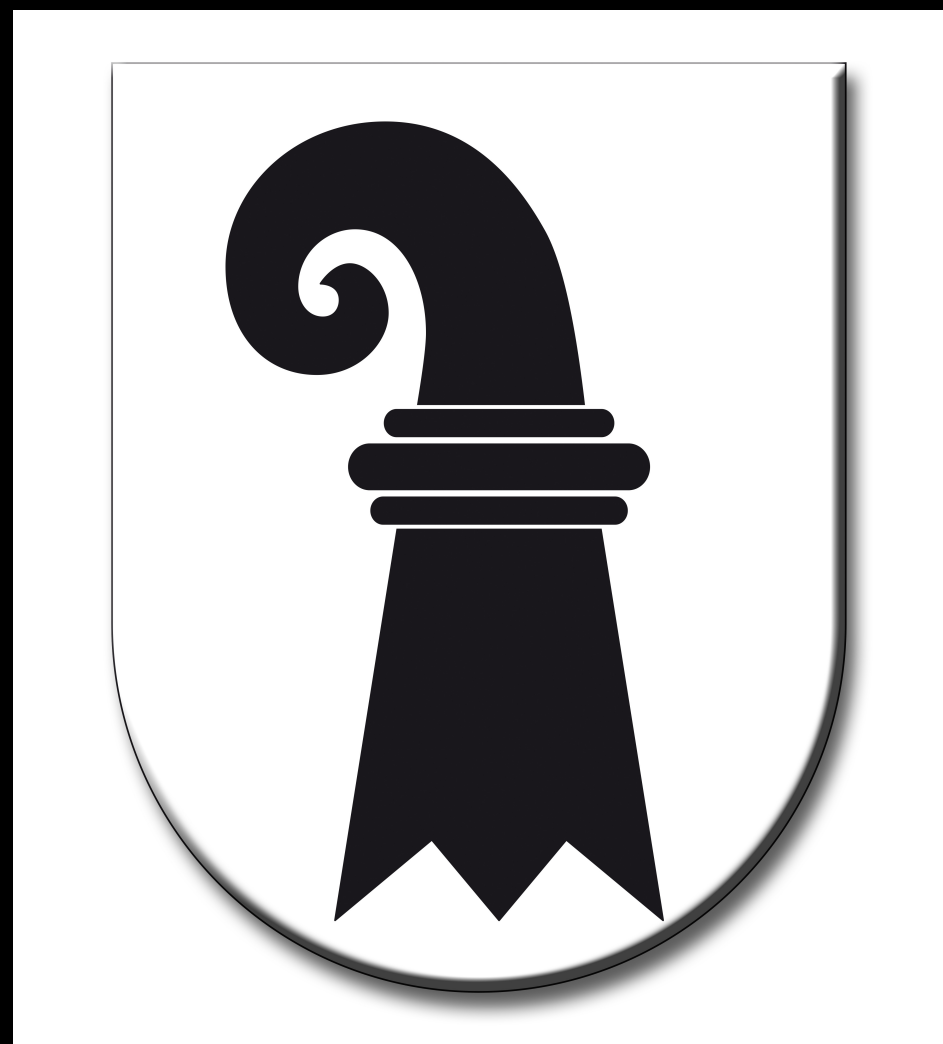
APACHE™ FOP DEVELOPMENT: RTFLIB (JFOR)

Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra



1998 2000 2003 2004 2007 2008 2009 2010 2011

A remote career...



Adobe Basel

home of *Adobe Experience Manager*



2010



careers.adobe.com

2025 Intern- Software Engineer

(Java, NodeJS, Cloud, AI, ...)

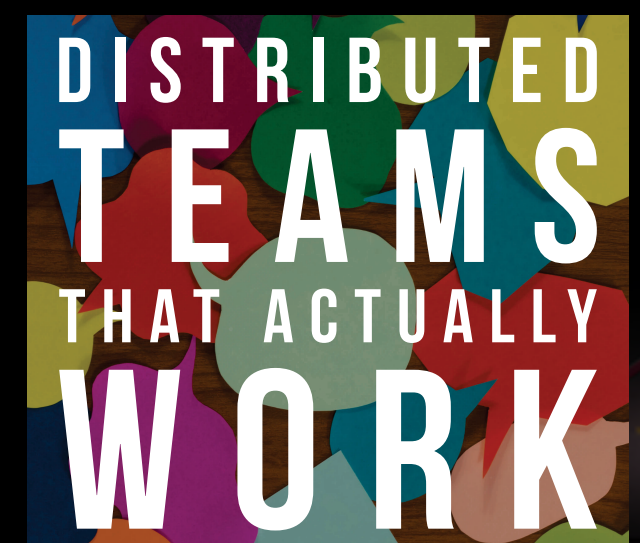
Lead Experience Success Engineer - SEO

SEO specialist, Experience Success

Senior Software Engineer

Java, Web, HTTP APIs, mentoring

challenges



2008

ApacheCon

Open Source collaboration tools are good for you!

Bertrand Delacrétaz, Senior Developer

Day Software, www.day.com

bdelacretaz@apache.org

ApacheCon EU 2008, Amsterdam, April 9th

slides revision: 2008-08-09



Leading the Wave
of Open Source

● Day

it's not new...

I will NOT attend
your meeting
I'm an Open Source person!

Bertrand Delacrétaz
@bdelacretaz, grep.codeconsult.ch

Principal Scientist, Adobe, Basel
Apache Software Foundation Member and Director

ApacheCon Séville, November 2016
slides revision 2016-11-14

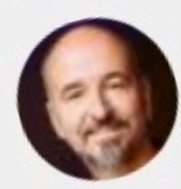


2016



Asynchronous decision-making: Helping remote teams succeed

Better communication with fewer meetings isn't a pipe dream. Here's how asynchronous decision-making can make it happen.



12 Dec 2017 | Bertrand Delacretaz | 21 likes | 2 comments



2017

The Apache Software Foundation Blog

MONDAY FEBRUARY 06, 2017

« The Apache News... | Main | The Apache Software... »

Success at Apache: Asynchronous Decision Making by Bertrand Delacretaz

Asynchronous decision making is a key enabler of our geographically and culturally distributed Open source teams. In this post I'll explain the ingredients that make it work the ASF.

I became active in the ASF in 2001 via Gianugo Rabellino - he was the one who started the discussions with Apache Fop about me donating the jfor XLS-FO to RTF converter that I had developed earlier. It was already too late to uninvent RTF which is a terrible format, but I digress. I am currently a member of the Board of Directors of the ASF and have been doing a lot of thinking (and presentations) about what makes the ASF tick in terms of collaboration and Shared Neurons.

2018

BETTA

They don't understand me! Tales from the multi-cultural trenches



Bertrand Delacretaz
Principal Scientist, Adobe Research Switzerland, Basel
Board Member, Apache Software Foundation
grep.codeconsult.ch - @bdelacretaz

slides revision 2018-09-27 - ApacheCon North America 2018, Montréal

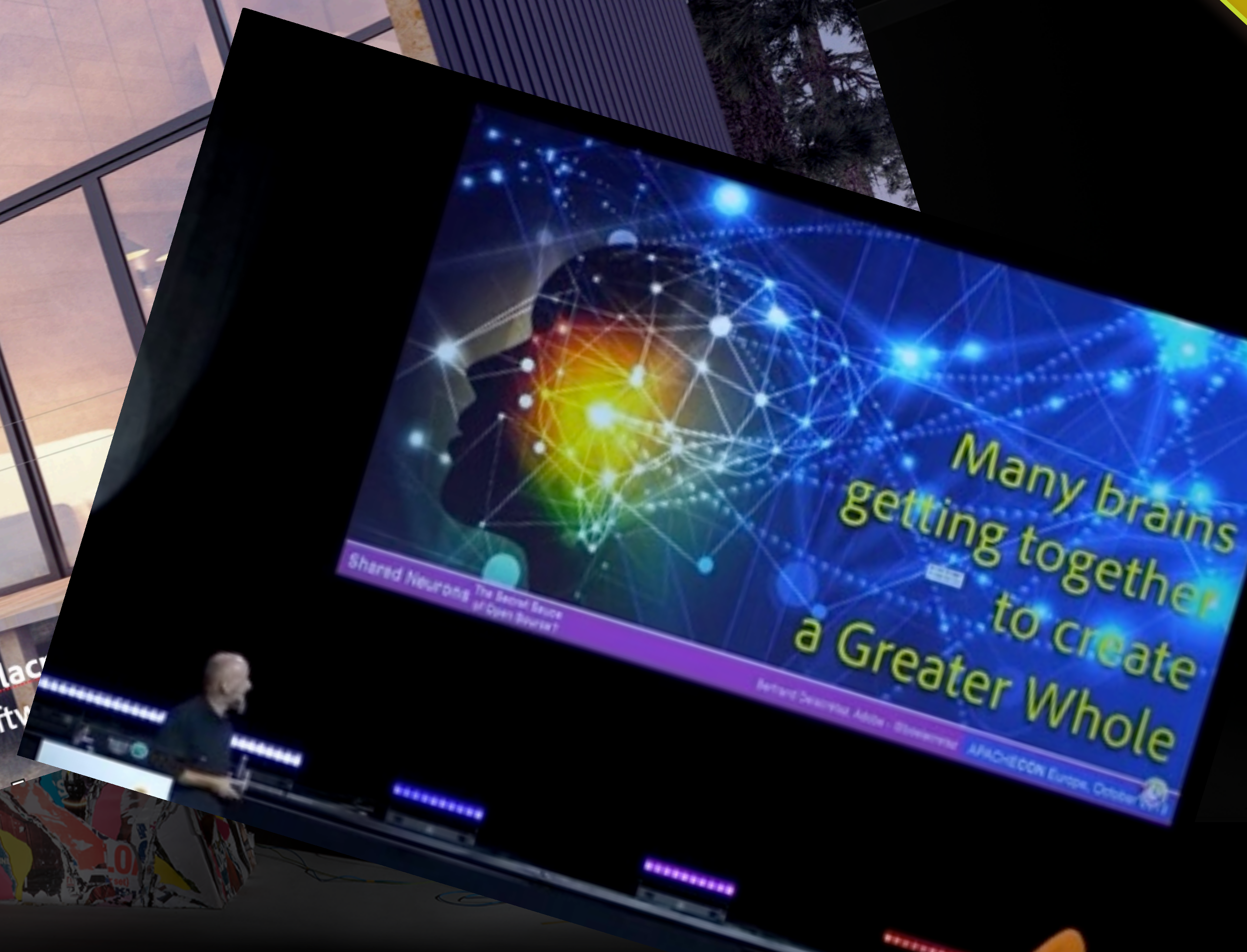
PACHECON
North America
Montréal, Canada
7 September, 2018



Surviving large online communities with conciseness and clarity

FOSS Backstage, March 2022 - Bertrand Delacour
& Board Member, Apache Software Foundation

2022



Shared Neuroning: The Secret Sauce of Open Source?

Many brains
getting together
to create
a Greater Whole

Bertrand Delacour, Adobe - @bertranddelacour
AFAC-EECON Europe, October 2017

cultures

shared neurons

concision & clarity

channels

meetings

language

timezones

async decisions

communication

challenges

meetings

DISTRIBUTED
TEAMS
THAT ACTUALLY
WORK



A close-up, sepia-toned photograph of a man with a full beard and mustache, wearing a dark apron over a t-shirt. He is looking intently at a piece of wood he is working on. He has a pencil in his mouth and is holding a wooden mallet in his right hand. The background is a workshop with various tools and materials.

On a maker's schedule:
meeting ruins half a day?

Blog post by Paul Graham: <https://s.apache.org/ms>

meetings
are
VERY
expensive

MELIÀ
HOTELS & RESORTS

4 ENGINEERS	\$ 640
2 MANAGERS	\$ 370
MANAGERS' lost PRODUCTIVITY	\$ 1280
ROOM	\$ 50
Δ 66 Δ VATION	\$ \$

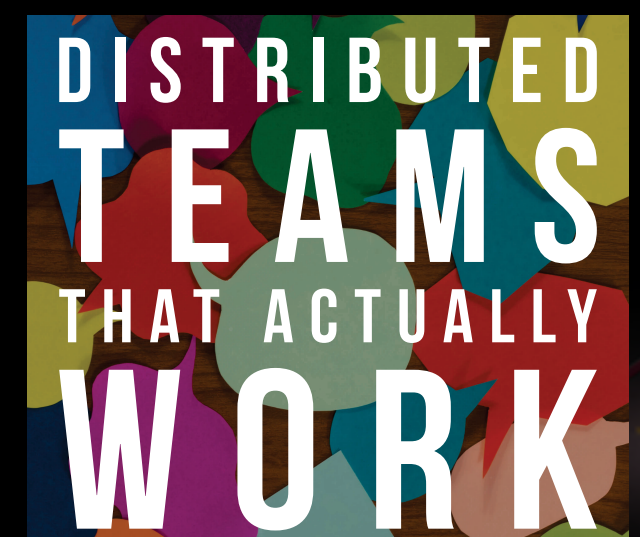
LOTS
OF \$

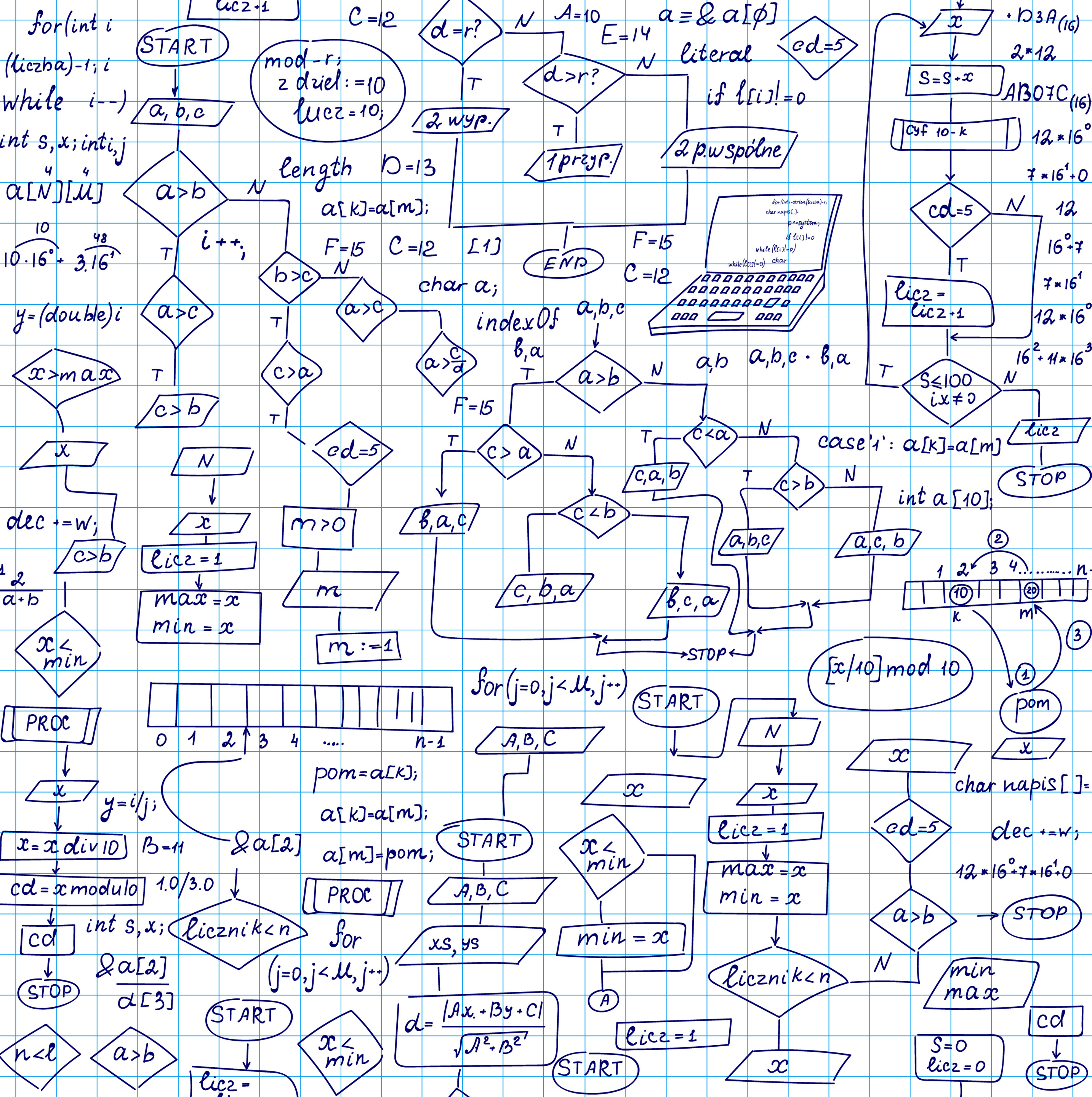
meetings
fail

but still:



asynchronous decisions





software is made of decisions

ASYNC



brainstorm

define options

build consensus

decide

four phases of a decision

ASYNCR



broadcast channel
to advertise upcoming decisions



case management tool
to manage each decision

key tools for async decision making


Orange list:
uncontested

Blue list:
respond to Parliament

White list:
important, complex

Green list:
confidential, complex



 Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft
Confédération suisse
Confederazione Svizzera
Confederaziun svizra

~70 decisions in a weekly 4 hours meeting
LOTS of async preparatory work

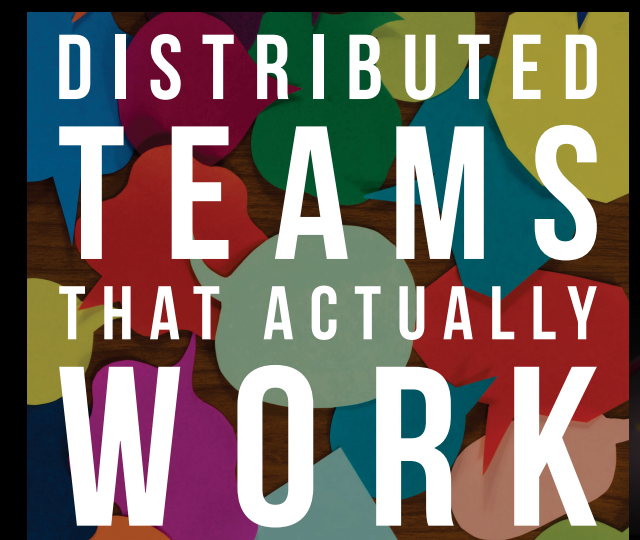


ASF Board:
similar principles,
different tools

Swiss Federal Council: Hybrid Meetings

picture: <https://www.admin.ch/gov/en/start/federal-council/tasks/decision-making.html>

communications tools



[openstack-dev] [neutron][kuryr][zun] python-neutronclient 6.3.0 broke the gate of kuryr-libnetwork and zun

Hongbin Lu [hongbin.lu at huawei.com](mailto:hongbin.lu@huawei.com)

Thu Jun 1 05:09:58 UTC 2017

- Previous message: [\[openstack-dev\]\[nova\]\[cinder\]\[barbican\] Why is Cinder creating symmetric keys in Barbican for use with encrypted volumes?](#)
- Next message: [\[openstack-dev\]\[Nova\]\[Scheduler\]](#)
- Messages sorted by: [\[_date_\]](#) [\[_thread_\]](#) [\[_subject_\]](#) [\[_author_\]](#)

async, threaded channel with tagged subject lines

apache.org should use tag-based navigation #196

Open bdelacretaz opened this issue 2 weeks ago · 9 comments

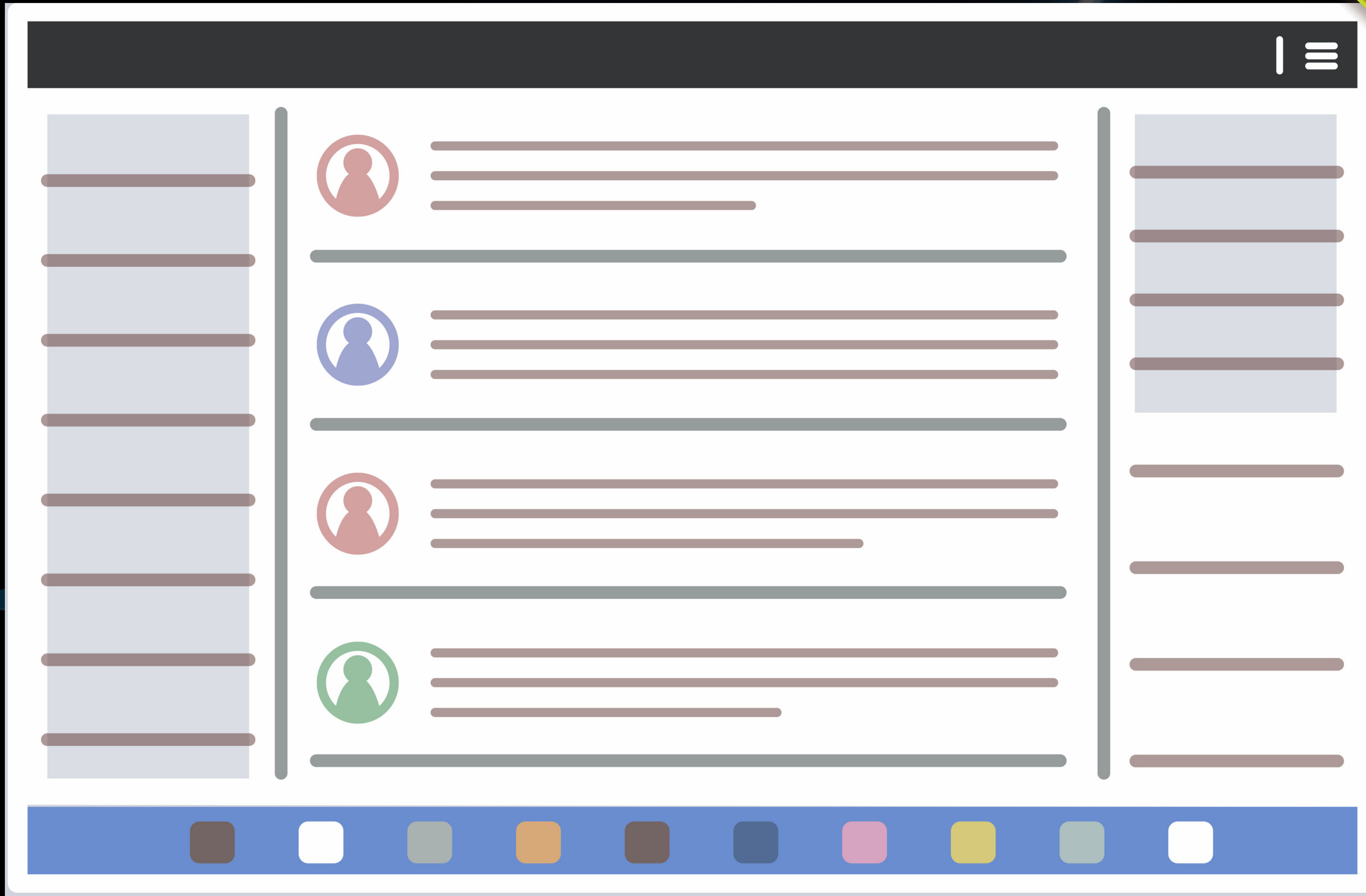
navigation website proposal

bdelacretaz commented 2 weeks ago Member ...

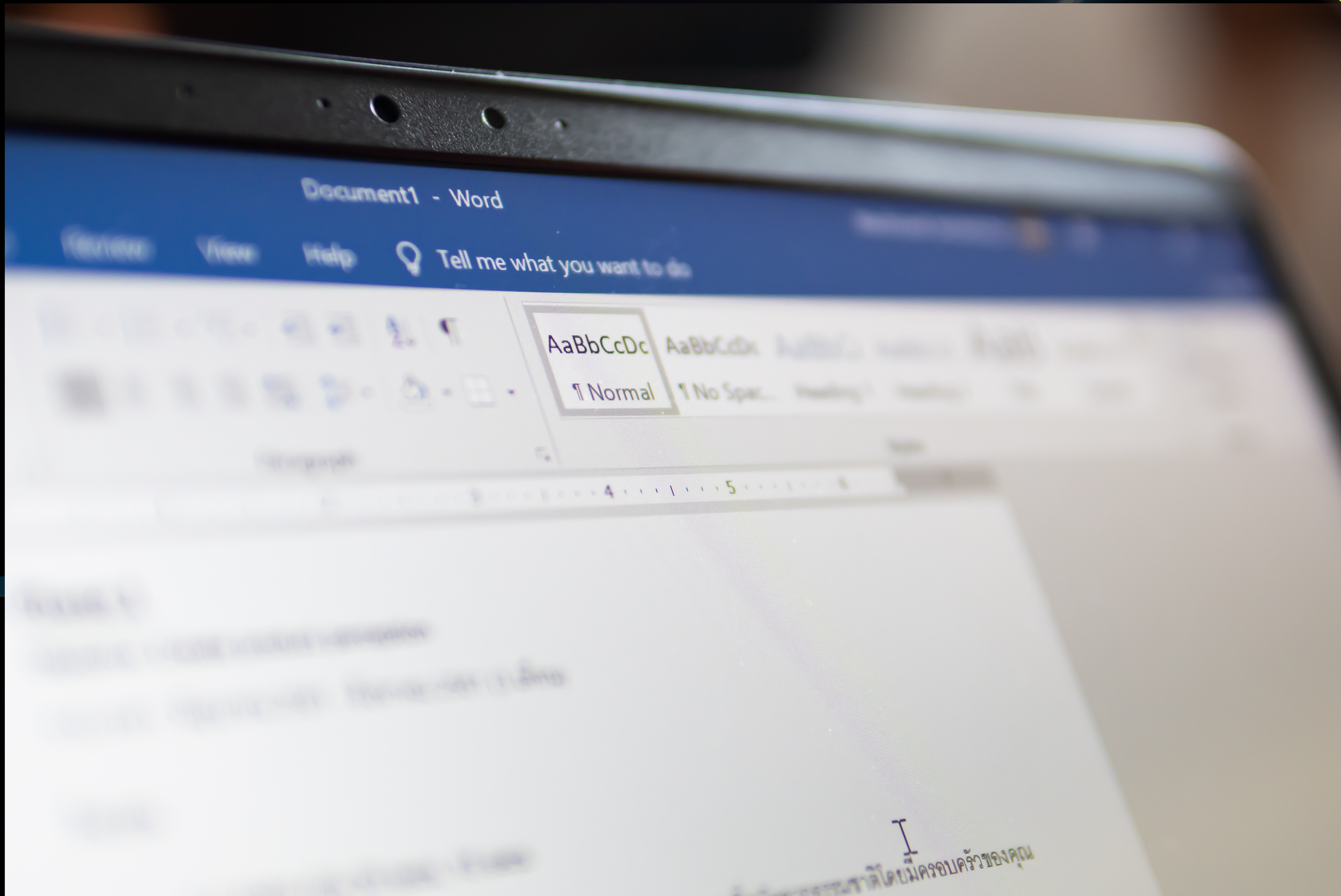
With more than 200 pages and a suboptimal organization, it's often hard to find pages on the apache.org website.

I think adding tag-based navigation, like we have on the Sling website (see

issue tracker for decisions, tagged



chat is mostly *here and now*...



central shared documents can work



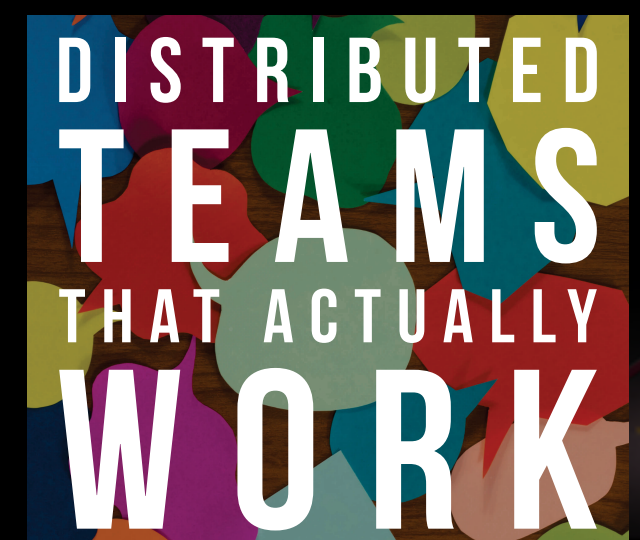
broadcast channel
to advertise upcoming decisions



case management tool
to manage each decision

what you actually need

concision & clarity





you are writing
for an audience

CLARITY

The screenshot shows the IMDb page for the movie 'Whatever Works'. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the IMDb logo, a search bar, and options for 'All', 'Sign In', and 'EN'. The movie title 'Whatever Works' is prominently displayed, followed by the year '2009', rating 'PG-13', and runtime '1h 33m'. Below the title, there is a section for the movie poster and a video player. The poster features the main character, an older man, with the title 'Whatever Works' and the subtitle 'a new comedy'. The video player shows a scene from the movie with a play button and the text 'Play trailer 2:18'. Below the video player, there are buttons for '1 VIDEO' and '68 PHOTOS'. The genre tags 'Comedy' and 'Romance' are visible. At the bottom, there is a synopsis: 'A middle-aged, misanthropic divorcé from New York City surprisingly enters a fulfilling, Pygmalion-type relationship with a much younger, unsophisticated Southern girl.' The source 'excerpt from imdb.com' is noted at the bottom right.

Title,
Abstract,
Trailer
help make a
decision in
stages

...more effort for you, less for them!

[WEBSITE] please review the staged /board content

Subject line

Bertrand Delacretaz <bdelacretaz@apache.org>

Hi

That section of the website is currently built from its own svn repository, for historical reasons, and it makes sense today to move it under the main www-site repository.

Introduction

For now I have moved the content to a preview branch, see <https://issues.apache.org/jira/browse/INFRA-22772> for details.

Please review that staged content at <https://www-board-site-migration.staged.apache.org/board/> and comment, or feel free to fix things directly in the <https://github.com/apache/www-site/tree/preview/board-site-migration/content/board> branch . Updates to that branch go live within a few minutes,

Body & References

I'll wait for the discussion (if any) to settle down before letting infra activate this new setup to serve <https://www.apache.org/board/>

What's next?

-Bertrand

CLARITY

Provide readers with **multiple decision points** to stop reading, if not interested in the next level of detail.

self-contained message, multi-level reading

Last slide's text:

Provide readers with **multiple decision points** to stop reading if not interested in the next level of detail.

Could have been:

It is often a good idea to make sure people who are reading your message have multiple options (shall we say "decision points"?) where they can opt to stop reading the rest of your message. If they are not interested in more than the current level of detail, they can then stop reading to avoid using more energy and time than strictly needed. I hope I'm being clear.

work on your concise writing!

Don't ask forgiveness, radiate intent

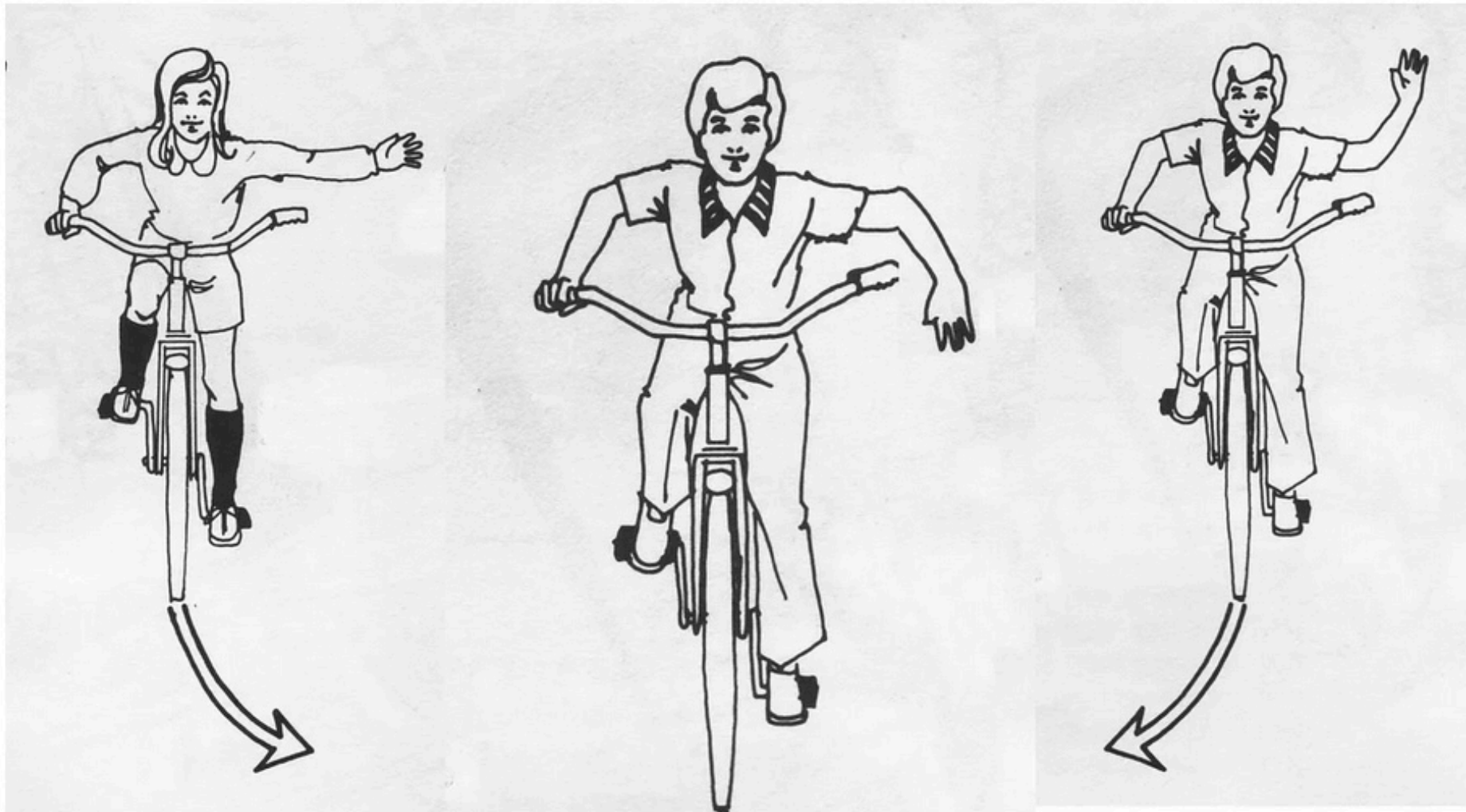
<https://bit.ly/3VX1k8F>



Elizabeth Ayer · Follow

3 min read · Jun 27, 2019

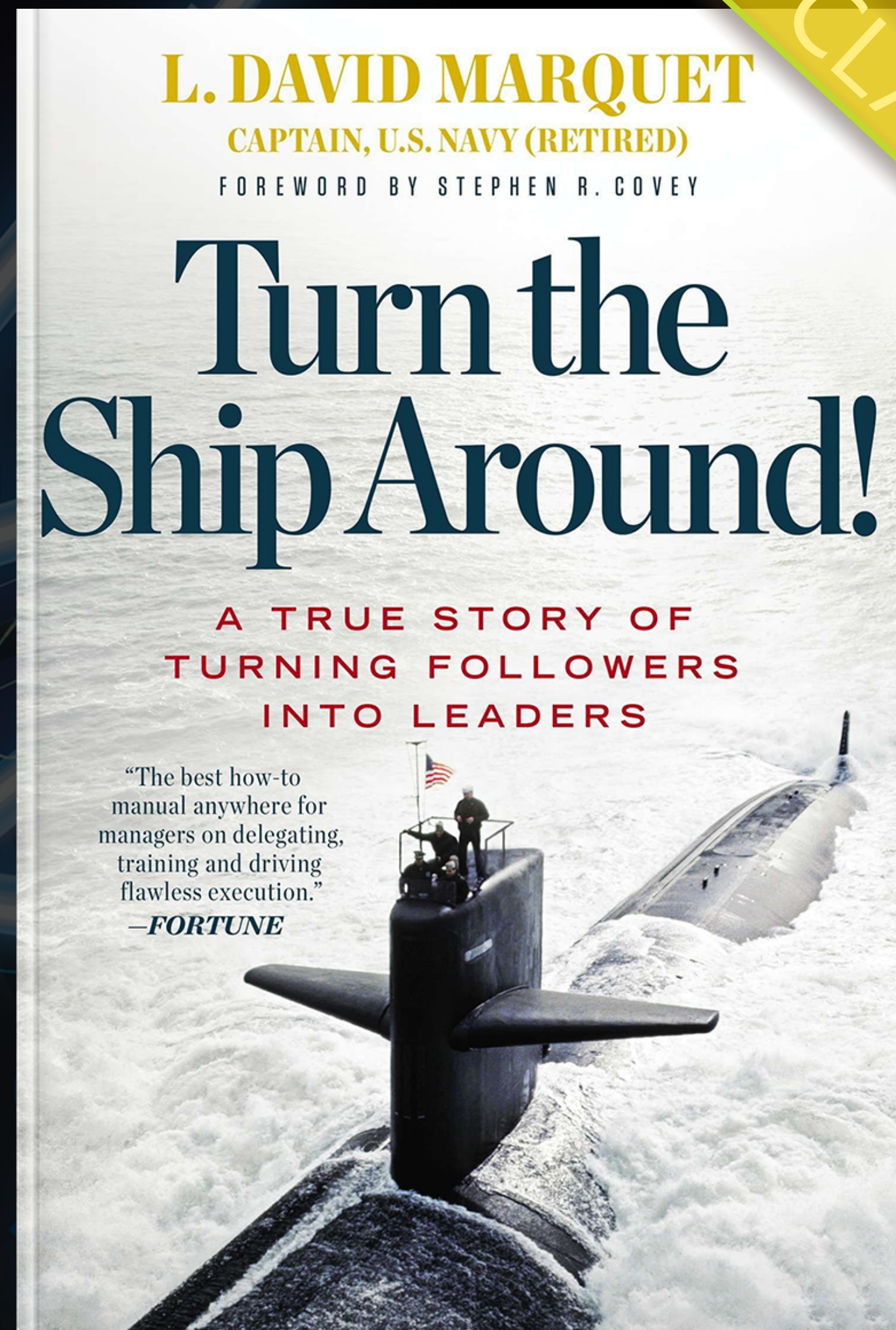
10



Images from [Hand Signals on Wikipedia](#)

unless someone objects, I intend to ...

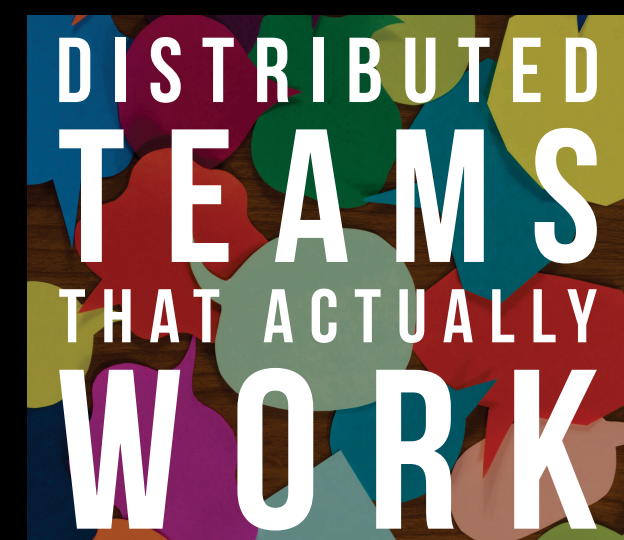
radiate intent!



davidmarquet.com

CLARITY

multi-cultural teams



RAISE
YOUR
HAND



what's YOUR culture?



a multi-cultural disaster

Costa Concordia: 38 nationalities, official working language Italian, crew testifies not understanding orders given in English

Complicated English → ASD-STE100

All valves must be turned slowly in order to prevent strong steam jets which can damage both hose lines and components.

Turn all valves slowly to prevent strong jets of steam.
Steam can damage hose lines and components.



use simple language

example from <https://robertobertuol.com/simplified-technical-english/>



Assume
Good Intentions



Ask for
Clarification



Reformulate

avoid misunderstandings

coda

00

DISTRIBUTED
TEAMS
THAT ACTUALLY
WORK





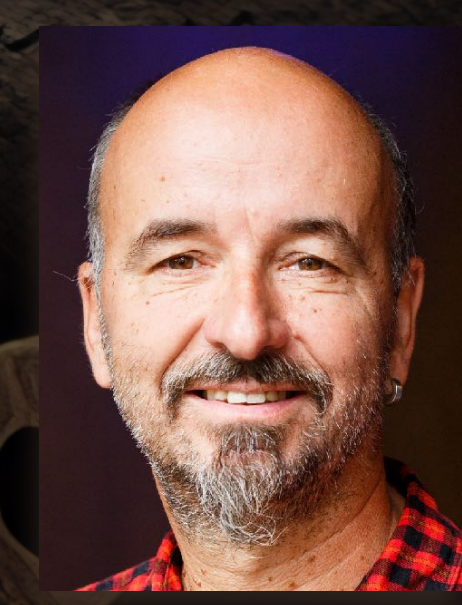
cultures
shared neurons
channels
meetings
timezones
language
async decisions
communication
concision & clarity

distributed teams mean many

challenges

first principles over tools!

get together when you can!



@fosstodon.org/@bdelacretaz
grep.codeconsult.ch

<https://grep.codeconsult.ch/pressbook/>

