

Health checks for our testing processes

Steve Watson, HUSTEF, October 2022

octopuslabs



A little bit about me...

I have been in testing for a number of years working across a variety of industries

I am Head of Quality Engineering at Octopus, responsible for our testing approach across our 5 delivery teams

I've spoken at a number of conferences, written for Test Magazine, and blog at stevethedoc.wordpress.com

You can also find me on LinkedIn <https://www.linkedin.com/in/sjwatsonuk/>

When I'm not testing, I present a weekly radio show on a station based in southern England



Testing, testing



Today we are going to discuss **health checks**

We have them for our cars, for our appliances and for our bodies, so why not have them for our **testing processes?**

We did, and this is our story of how it came about, what we learned and our journey



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)



It started with an idea...



In December 2021 we asked a Test Consultancy to look at how we work in terms of our distributed architecture and make recommendations

octopuslabs

Getting off the starting block



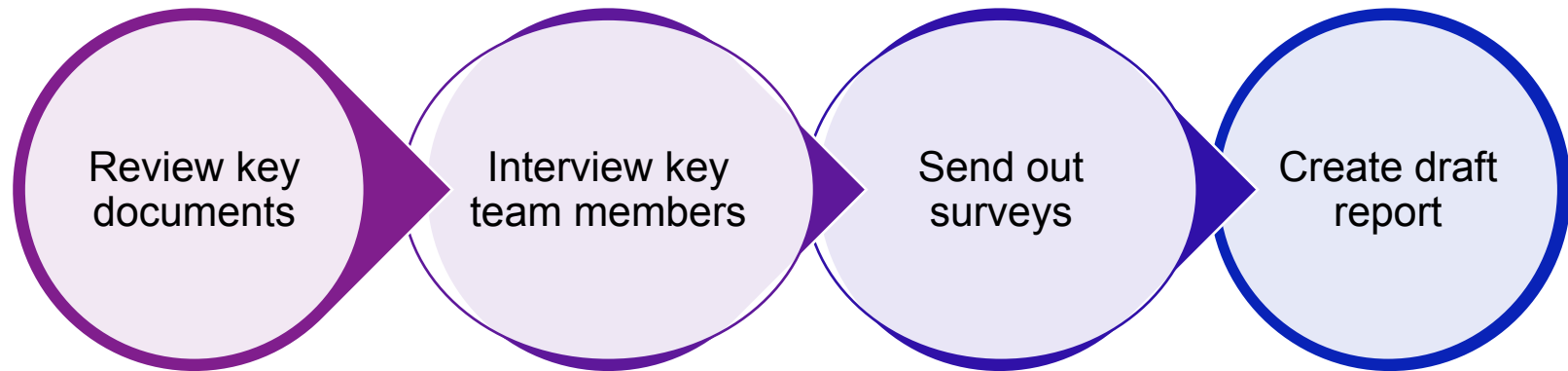
We engaged **nFocus** to help

Tony our consultant had **15 days**

His task - to independently assess how we test and report back

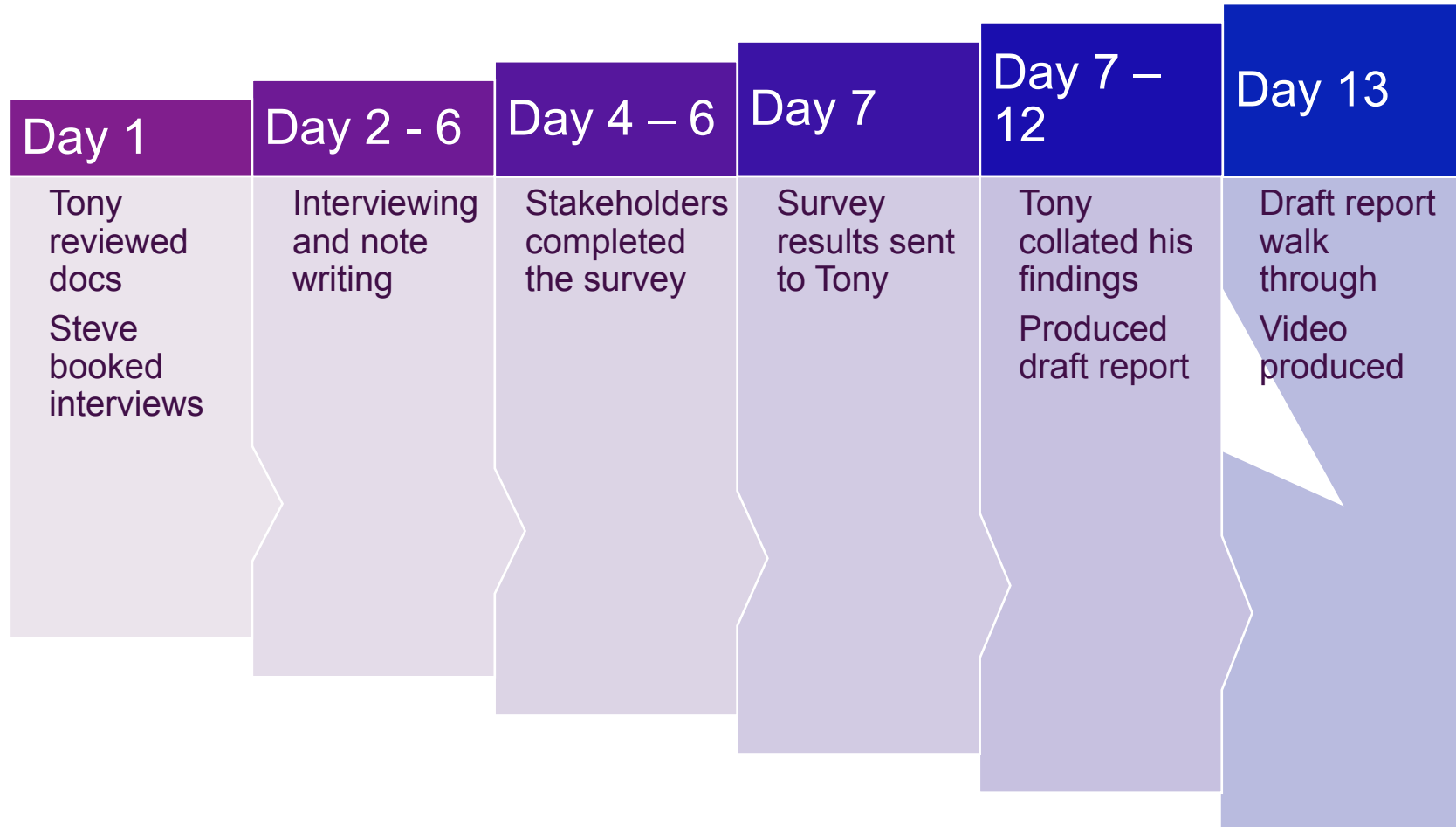


Tony's approach

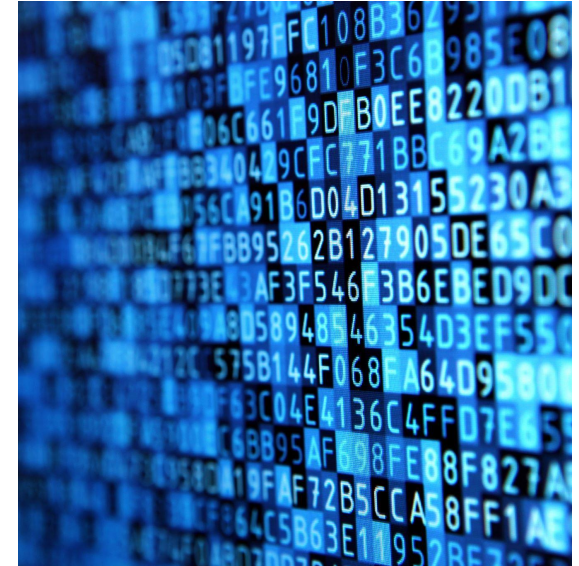


- We agreed roughly the **time to spend** on the activities
- And had **daily catch-ups** to cover off any queries/questions

The plan



Summary of findings...



Quality Engineering is in a **good place** 😊

A high degree of **satisfaction** with testing

There are some **improvements** we can make

Stretch goals for the next 3 years would help

There are 3 main **challenges**:

- Test Data
- End To End Testing
- Distributed Architecture

Challenges...



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Test data

- A **copy of Production Data** is taken twice a year and obfuscated for testing
- This takes about **5 days to complete** and has some limitations

E2E testing

- There are **no** comprehensive **end to end test suites**
- The 5 teams work in vertical streams **focusing on Sprint objectives**, and not holistically

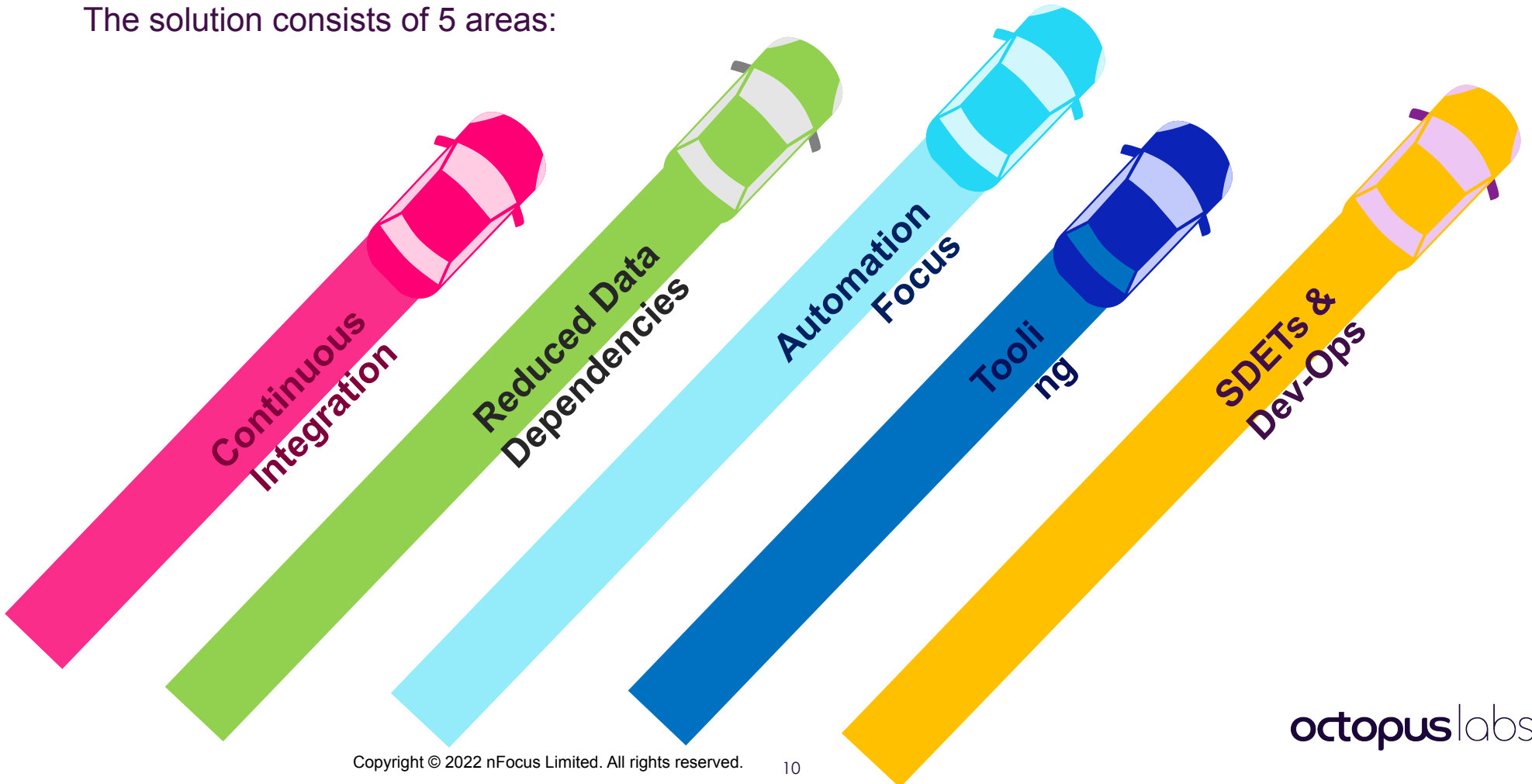
Architecture

- The system is **complex and distributed** across multiple applications, databases and technology platforms
- Some systems are **third party controlled**
- Not all have test environments and some are on **older technology**

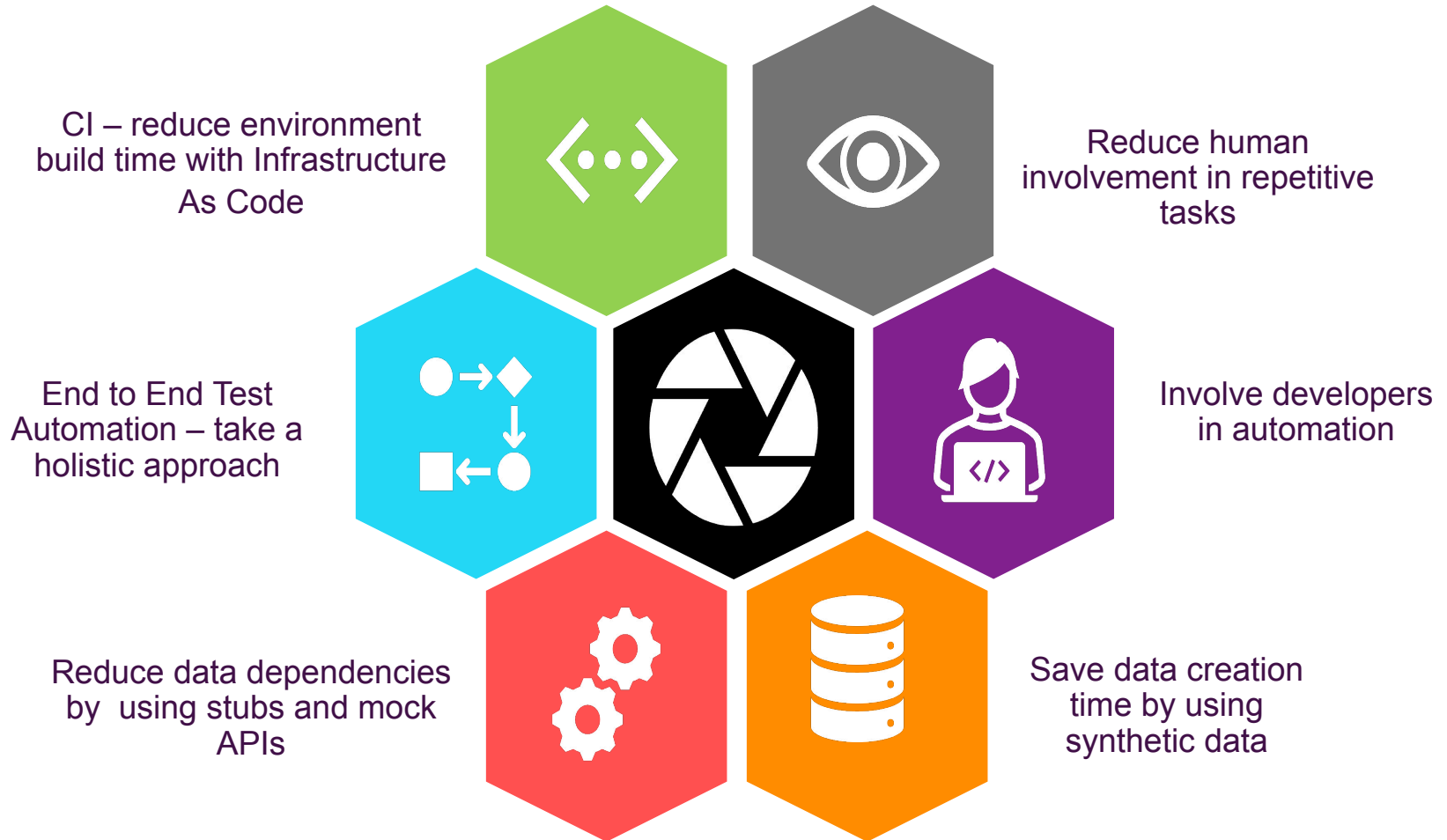
The 5 key areas

nFocus: *“Our proposed solution should be considered a journey towards Quality Engineering goals, with different lanes progressing independently to the same destination”*

The solution consists of 5 areas:



What does this mean?





To achieve a robust CI-CD solution, including upskilling existing team members or recruiting in the required skills, can take around 3 years as highlighted in the 2021 GitLab Dev-Ops survey results.

Other observations

Other than the 5 key focus areas, there were some other observations noted:

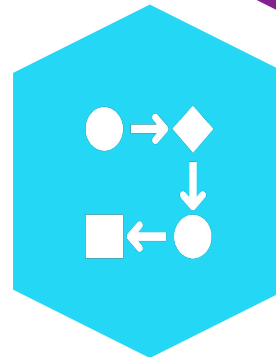
Non functional requirements
are not fully documented



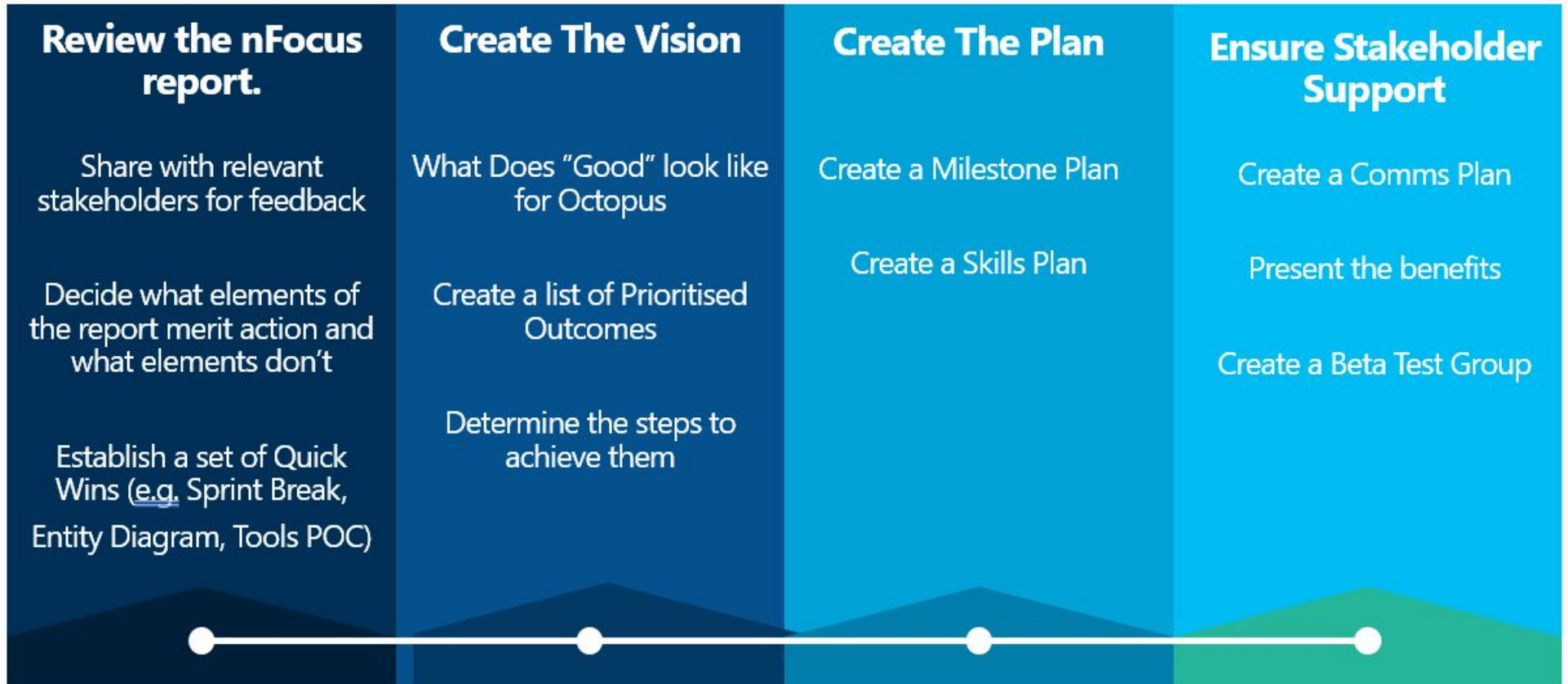
User Stories are generally
good but there is room to
improve



There are many wiki
pages which are not all
up to date

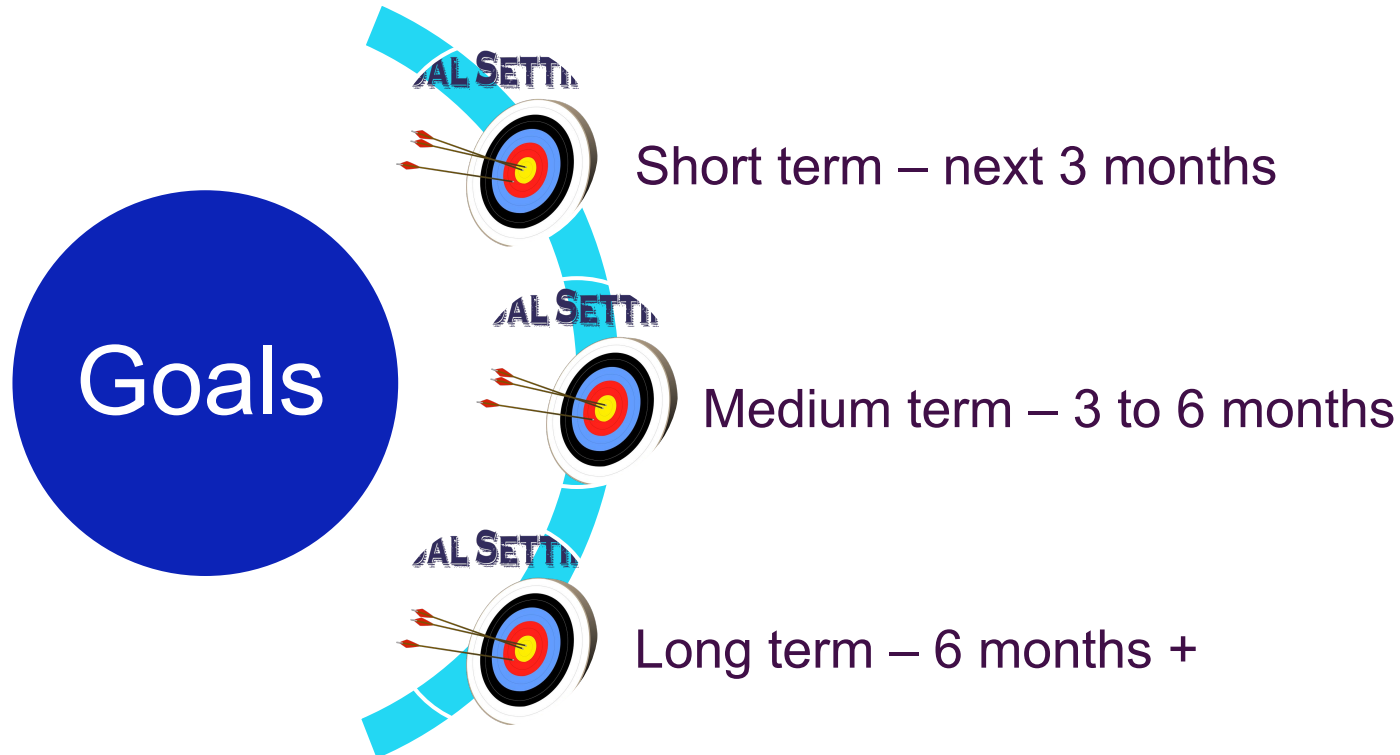


Digesting the report



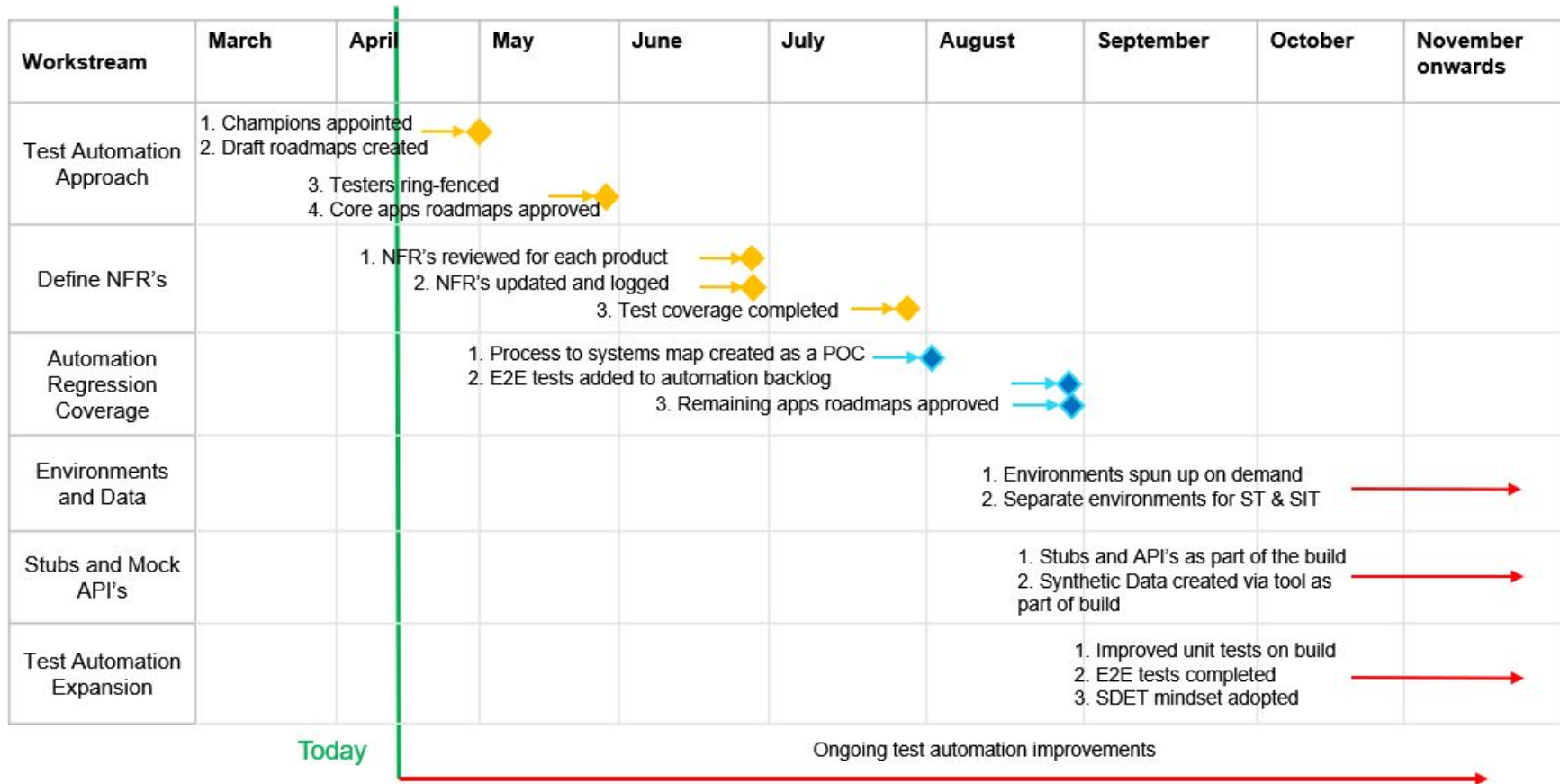
Presenting to management

I reviewed the report and picked out the suggestions to move forward with:

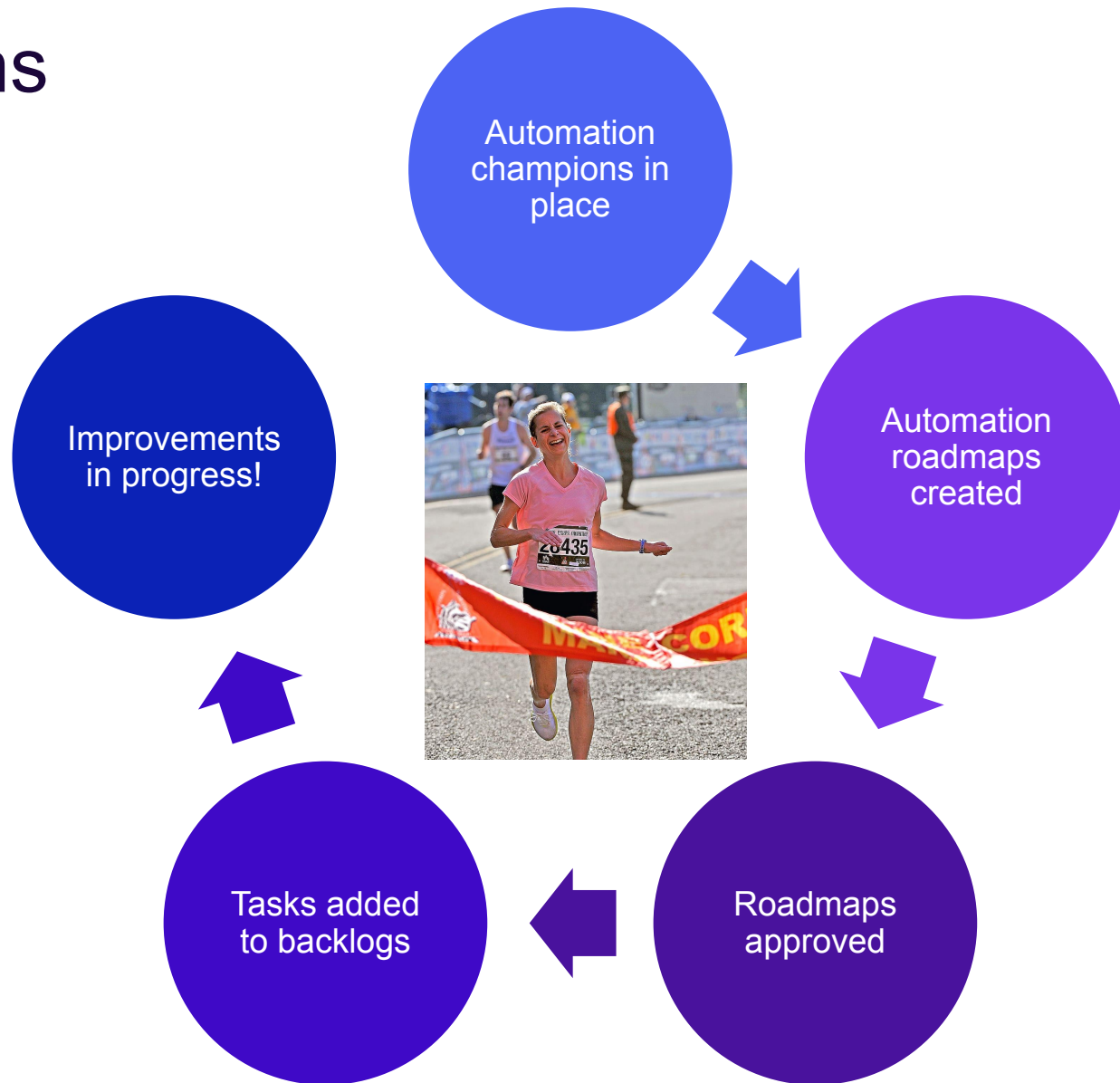


These were shared in a leadership meeting at an offsite afternoon in April, where we agreed to proceed with the short term goals

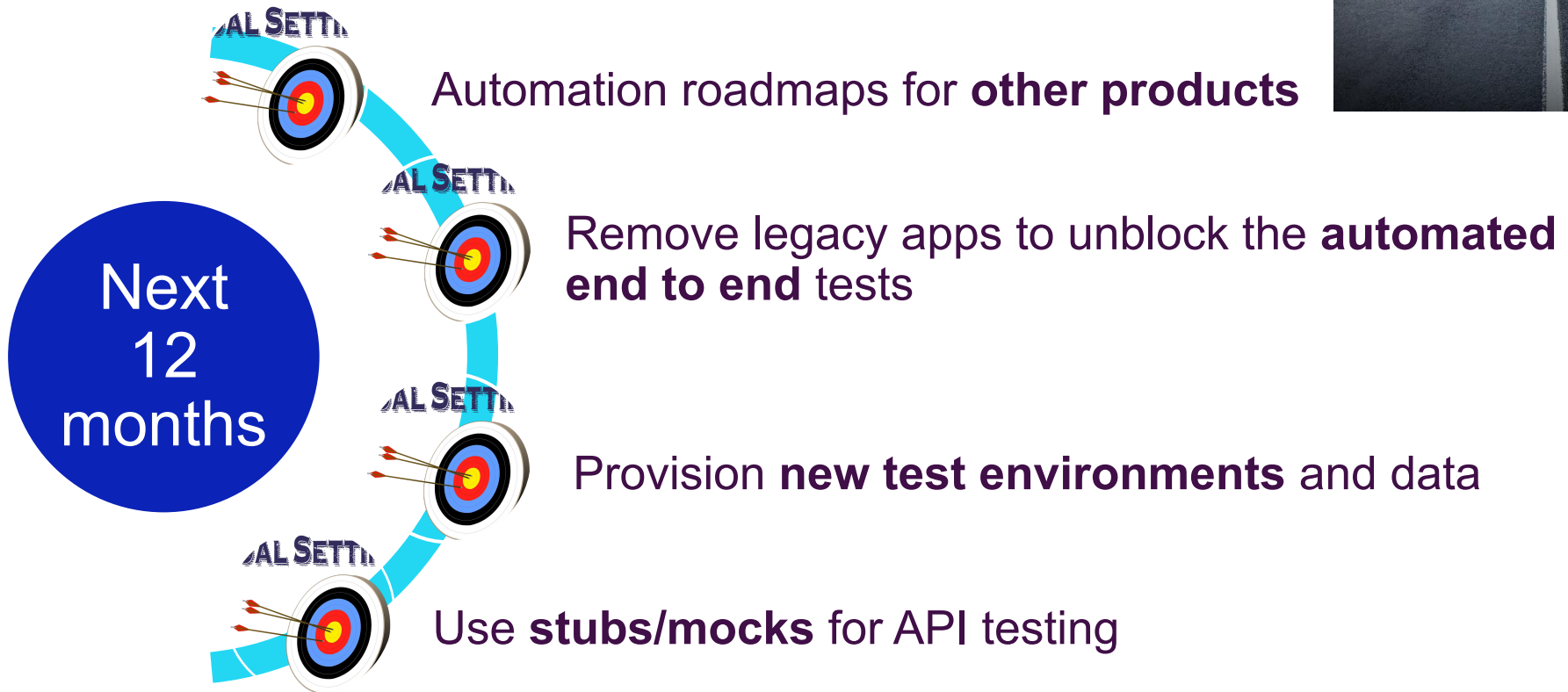
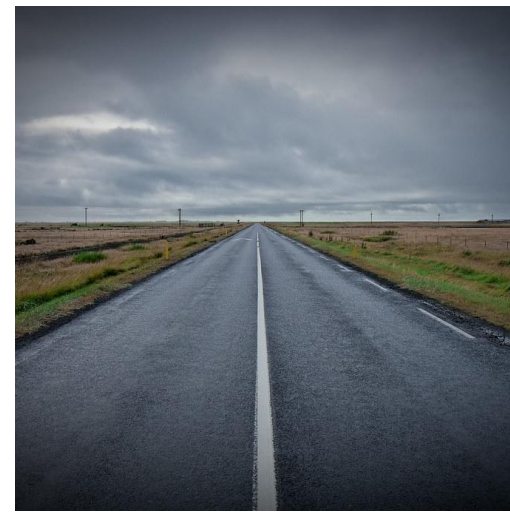
A high level plan



Quick wins



What's next?



Key takeaways



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY](#)

We can be **biased** and potentially **blind** to existing problems

An **independent view** can highlight things we are unaware of

The independent report gave us a **balanced view**

Knowing what to improve is good, but **knowing how to do it** is better!

An independent report and a good **action plan** are easier to sell

Thank you!



HUSTEF

HUNGARIAN SOFTWARE TESTING FORUM

