

expo QPA 24

MADRID
May 28th,
29th, 30th
2024



expoqa.com



Left flank is falling!

Continuous communication in the heat of battle

Who am I?

Veerle Verhagen

Tester for Dutch Railways

On the team that deals with
bikesharing and bike parking

Veerle Verhagen #expoQA24



Who am I?

Veerle Verhagen

Tester for Dutch Railways

Part-time Viking!



Part-time Viking?





Part-time Viking

- We live the Viking lifestyle through historical reenactment
- We wear period-correct clothing
- Combat sport involving historical weapons

Shadi Graphie

Veerle Verhagen #expoQA24



Part-time Viking

- We fight with historically accurate, steel weapons
- You win the battle by 'killing' your opponents
- You kill by hitting each other in pre-agreed hitzones

Veerle Verhagen #expoQA24



Line fighting

- You line up with your own group, along with many other groups
- Team effort!



Line fighting

- Short weapons defend, long weapons attack
- Starts structured, but chaos quickly ensues



Line fighting

- Short weapons defend, long weapons attack
- Starts structured, but chaos quickly ensues

What does this remind you of?

- cross-functional teams, 5 to 10 people
- specialisation per person, but everyone shares tasks
- work together with multiple similar teams
- to achieve the same overarching goal
- starts off neatly but ends in chaos



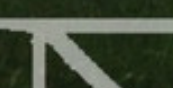
Agile software development



The secret to success, both on the battlefield
and in agile software development?




Continuous communication and collaboration





Today's topics

- 1 Agile anti-patterns
- 2 Expectation management
- 3 Written communication
- 4 Nothing to communicate
- 5 The power of a war cry

A man with a beard, wearing a brown long-sleeved shirt and a silver Viking helmet with two large yellow horns, is sitting at a desk. He has his hands behind his head and is looking towards the right. In the background, there is a computer monitor displaying some text and a blue office chair. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting an office environment.

Agile anti-patterns

Instant feedback

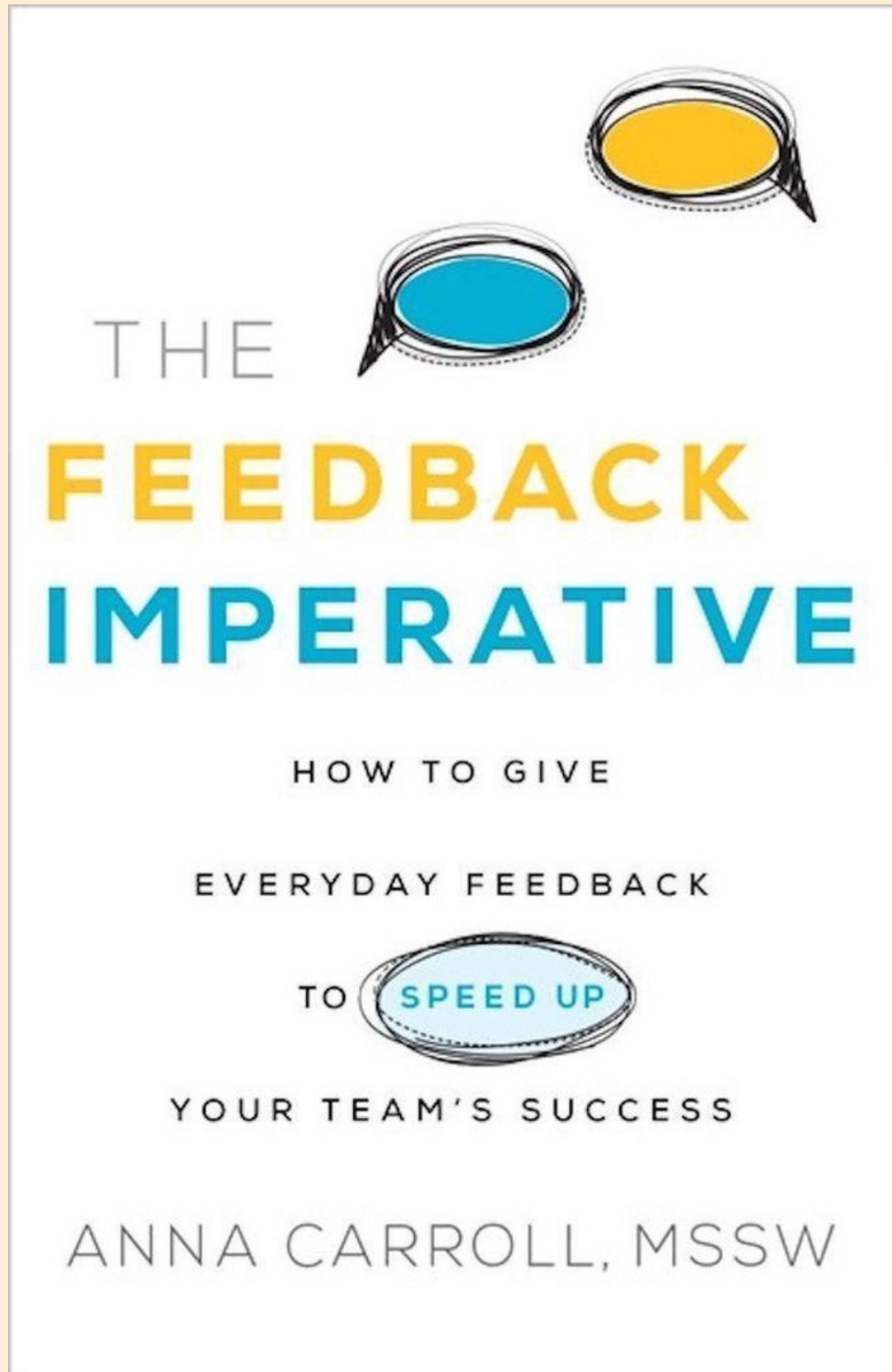


Agile anti-patterns

- Ceremonies were intended as a minimum, but have become a maximum
- The exchange of information is restricted to agile ceremonies

A man with a beard is wearing a silver Viking helmet with two large yellow horns. He is sitting at a desk in an office, looking towards the right. He has his hands behind his head. The background shows a computer monitor and a blue office chair.

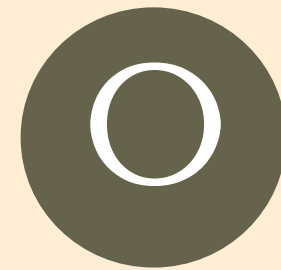
“We can discuss that in
the retro”



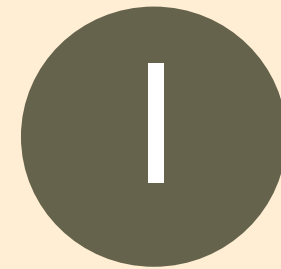
COIN-model



Context



Observation



Impact



Next steps

Continuous communication

Keep asking yourself:

Am I waiting for a ceremony to share this? Could I share it now?



Expectation management

Do you have a
moment?



Team Update

Monday, 15 April · 12:00 – 12:15pm



3 guests

2 yes (1 in a meeting room, 1 virtually)
1 awaiting



Your boss



Organiser
Office



Your boss's boss

Home



You

Home – [Edit](#)



10 minutes before

Going?

Yes

No

Maybe



Do you have a
moment...

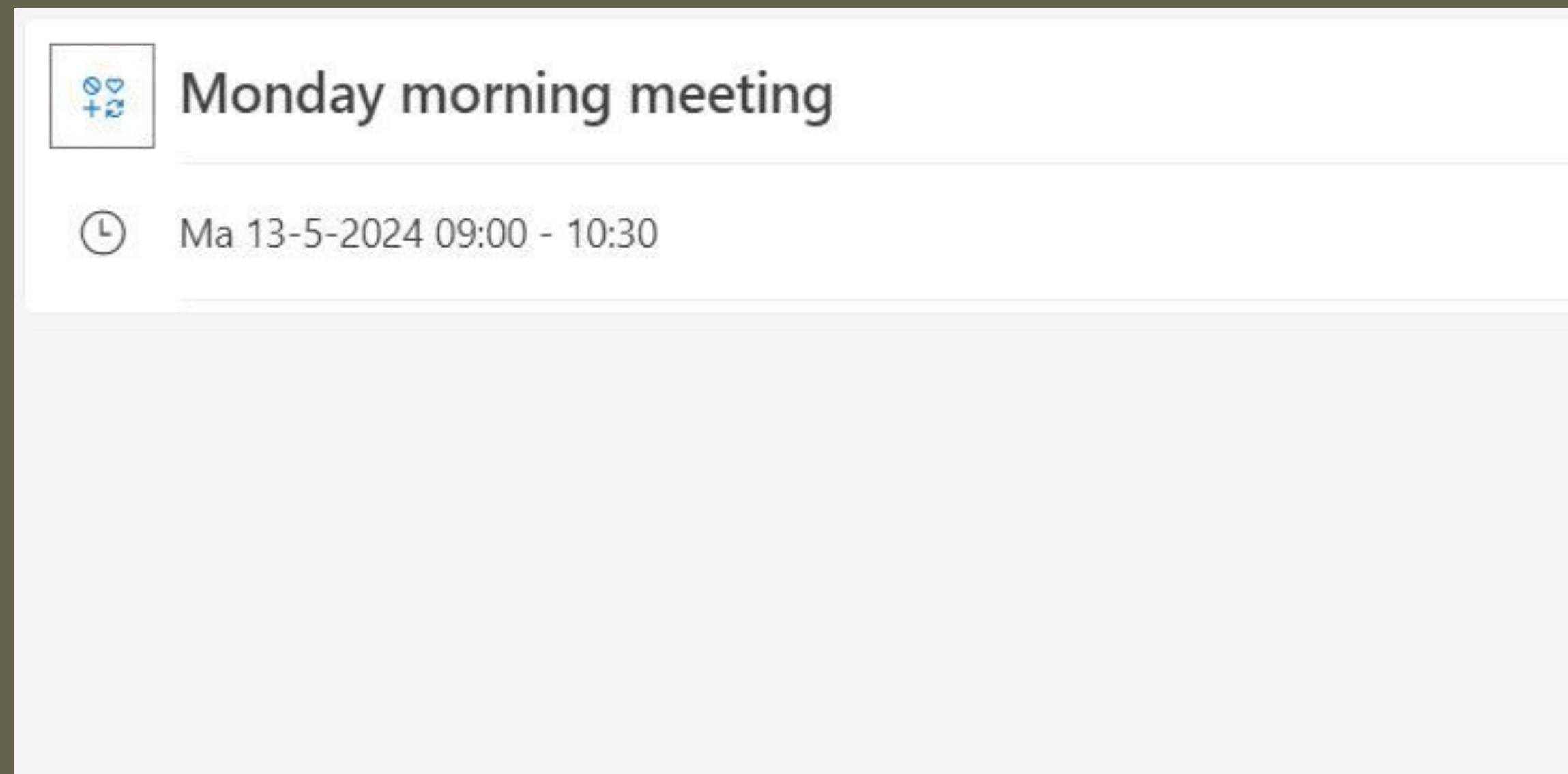
...to talk about
[insert topic]?

A good meeting needs a good
invitation

“How to make team meetings not suck”

Lena Pejgan Nyström & Samuel Nitsche

Meeting invitations that don't set expectations



Meeting invitations that don't set expectations

Not a single coherent thought

Secretly coding

Desperately trying to explain the goal of the meeting

Answering emails


Secretly coding

Good meeting invitations contain

- The goal of the meeting
- The desired or expected outcome of the meeting
- Any preparation attendees need to do

Written communication





I SURVIVED
ANOTHER
MEETING
THAT SHOULD
HAVE BEEN
AN EMAIL.

I survived a 20+
email thread
that could have
been a 3-minute
phone call

Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Re: Fwd: Re: Re: Fwd:
Fwd: Re: Re: Very simple question



Veerle Verhagen <verha...> 1:45 PM (0 minutes ago)



to me ▾

Hi,

As per my last email, I'm not the person who can make a decision on this and you will have to consult the relevant person at cloud management.

Best wishes,

one very simple question Inbox x



Wickie the Viking

to me ▾

3:12 PM (1 minute ago)



Hey Veerle,

How are you? I was wondering if the morning of June 27th was clear and sunny, with the fresh warmth of a full-summer day; the flowers were blossoming profusely and the grass was richly green. The people of the village began to gather in the square, between the post office and the bank, around ten o'clock; in some towns there were so many people that the lottery took two days and had to be started on June 26th, but in this village, where there were only about three hundred people, the whole lottery took only about two hours, so it could begin at ten o'clock in the morning and still be through in time to allow the villagers to get home for noon dinner.

The children assembled first, of course. School was recently over for the summer, and the feeling of liberty sat uneasily on most of them; they tended to gather together quietly for a while before they broke into boisterous play, and their talk was still of the classroom and the teacher, of books and reprimands. Bobby Martin had already stuffed his pockets full of stones, and the other boys soon followed his example, selecting the smoothest and roundest stones.

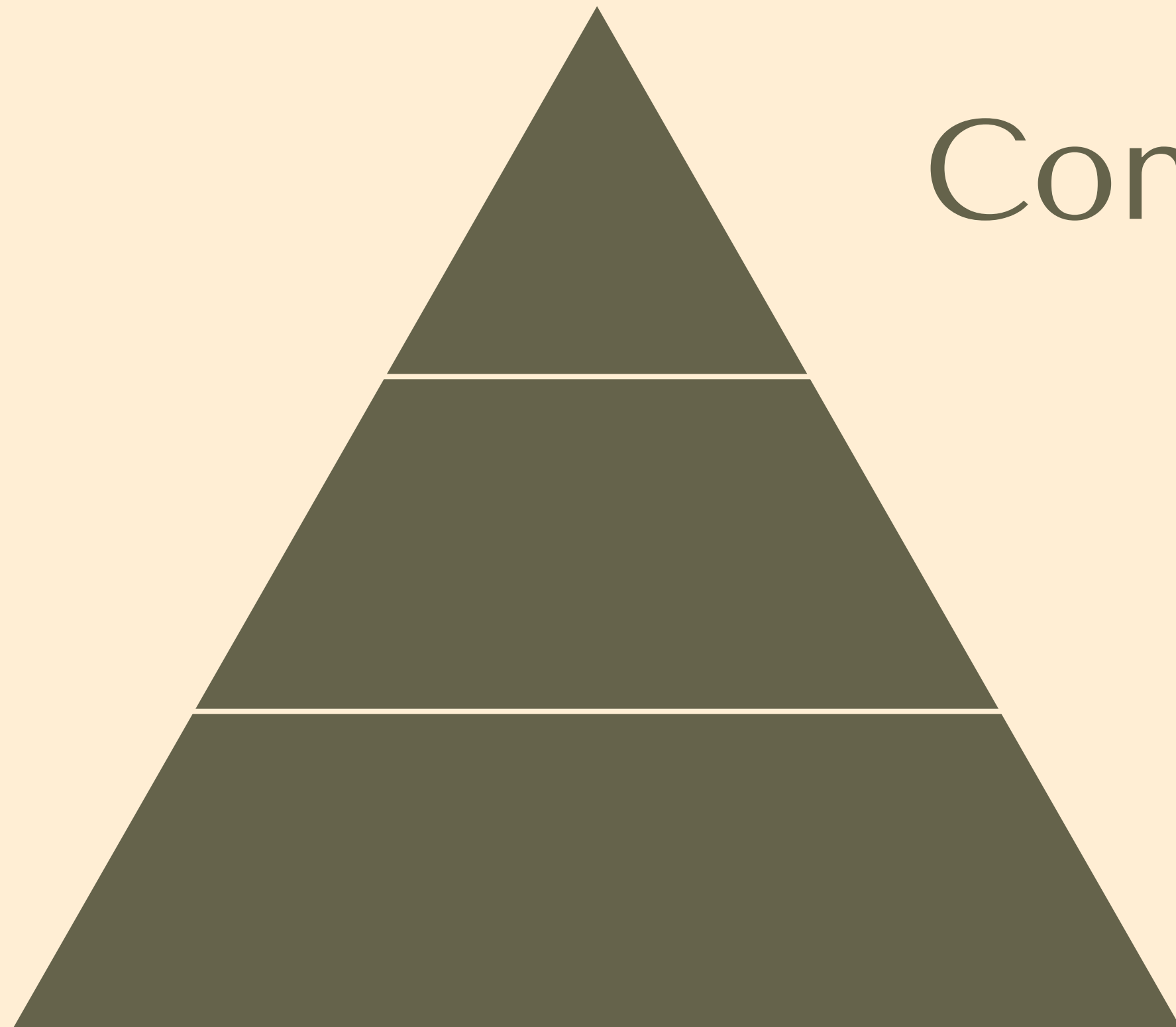
So my question is, could you send me the load test results?

Best wishes,
Wickie

Three golden rules for written communication

- Add a clear call to action
- Conclusion up front

The Minto Pyramid - by Barbara Minto



Conclusion

Key points

Details

Three golden rules for written communication

- Add a clear call to action
- Conclusion up front - Minto pyramid!
- If necessary, use if-statements

Coffee some time soon?

Hey! Would you be up for a coffee and a chat at the main office soon? If yes: I can do mornings until 11:30 except for Friday. Let me know!

Re: Coffee some time soon?

Hi! Yeah that sounds good, Tuesday at 10 works best for me. Let's meet at the coffee corner at the main entrance. See ya then!

Three golden rules for written communication

- Add a clear call to action
- Conclusion up front - Minto pyramid!
- If necessary, use if-statements

The fourth golden rule for written communication

Know when to pick up the phone!



What to do when there's
nothing to update





Runners (and other reasons to panic)



That time
we had to
deal with
an outage



Most damning
feedback:

'We weren't being
updated on what
was going on'

Examples of [null] to update:

- I can't protect you from that Dane axe
- I'll defend you against that spearman
- We're still fighting

Examples of [null] to update:

- Someone else needs to do [task]
- I'm on it, so you can stop spending CPU thinking about it
- 'Your' task is finished but there's still work to do for the whole team



The power of a war cry



You can't work at 100% of your
capacity all the time

But sometimes you can rally the
troops for an extra push

Thanks for listening!

Reach out:

[linkedin.com/in/veerleverhagen](https://www.linkedin.com/in/veerleverhagen)

[witchofthetest.social.bsky](https://www.witchofthetest.social.bsky)



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Thank you for attending

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