December 11, 2024

Human-Centered Oversight for Health Care Enrollment and Eligibility

Presentation to the Oregon State Senate Health Care Committee

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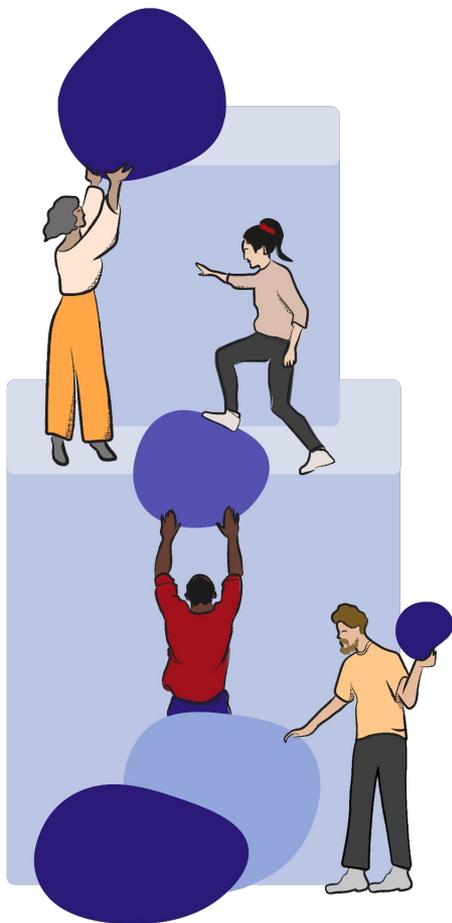
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CODE *for* AMERICA

Helping government work well for *everyone*

About Code for America

We use human-centered technology to improve public services that reduce poverty and advance equity.

Our national safety net track record

Legend: ● Current and former partners ● Consultative visits

MINNESOTA (Cohort 1)
Improve benefits renewals & caseworker efficiency: improve renewals for Medicaid, SNAP, and cash programs.

NEW YORK (Cohort 2)
Implement customer feedback loops to improve the WIC application and benefits maintenance experience.

CONNECTICUT (Cohort 1)
Reduce SNAP churn by launching texting and improving the Department of Social Services website.

CALIFORNIA (Cohort 1)
Increase equitable access to SNAP through government adoption of best practices.

WASHINGTON, D.C. (Cohort 2)
Improve timeliness: Improve caseworker efficiency & usability, to improve timeliness & error rate

COLORADO (Cohort 1)
Integrated benefits application: Reimagine the experience of applying for multiple benefits.

MARYLAND (Cohort 2)
Integrated benefits application: Reimagine the experience of applying for multiple benefits.

ARIZONA (Cohort 3)
Design a new integrated benefits application experience
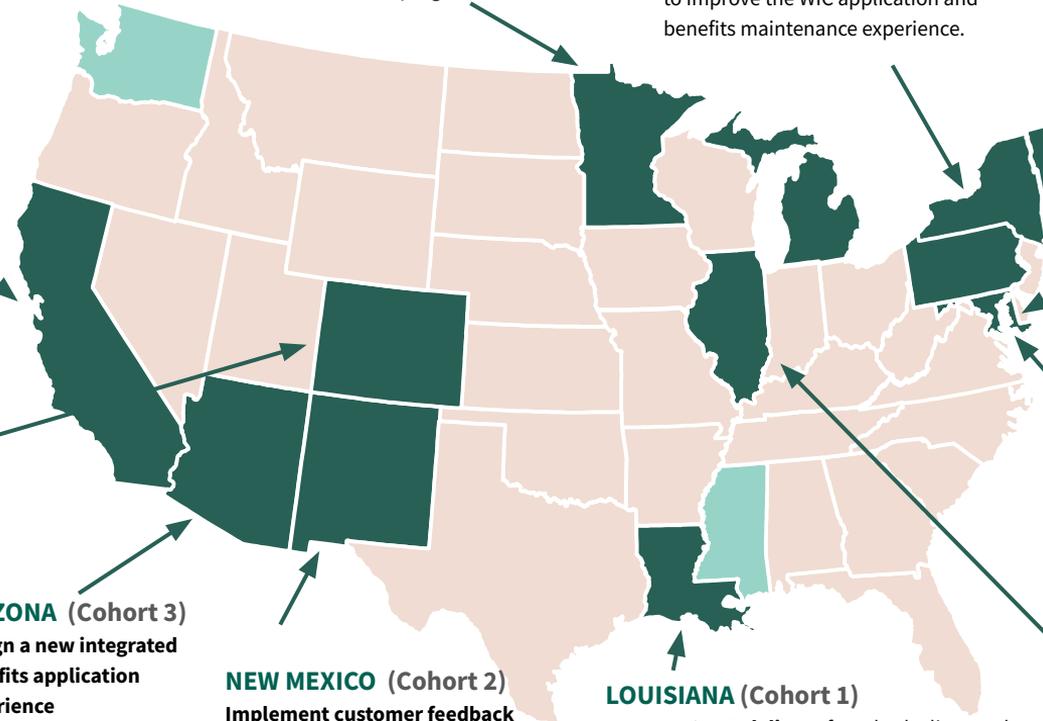
NEW MEXICO (Cohort 2)
Implement customer feedback loops to improve the integrated benefits application experience.

LOUISIANA (Cohort 1)
Improve SNAP delivery from both client and caseworker perspectives.

ILLINOIS (Cohort 2)
Supporting child care assistance programming (CCAP) access for families and providers.

Our Values

1

Listen first

2

Include those who've been excluded

3

Act with intention

We're **people-centered problem solvers** showing that with the mindful use of technology government can work well for *everyone*

We Believe:

- Services can be simple, accessible, and easy to use
- Outcomes can be measurably better
- Better can cost less
- We can serve everyone with respect and dignity

Of all government software development contracts over $6 million, ==only 11% are successful==.

-Source:

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The average government IT project costs 310% of the estimated price.

-Source: Flyvbjerg et al., "The Empirical Reality of IT Project Cost Overruns: Discovering a Power-Law Distribution," 2022

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The status quo for government technology procurement is full of risk.

Waterfall development model

Requirements

Design

Implementation

Verification

Maintenance

US DIGITAL RESPONSE

The premise of Agile

Design, Build, Test

Inspect
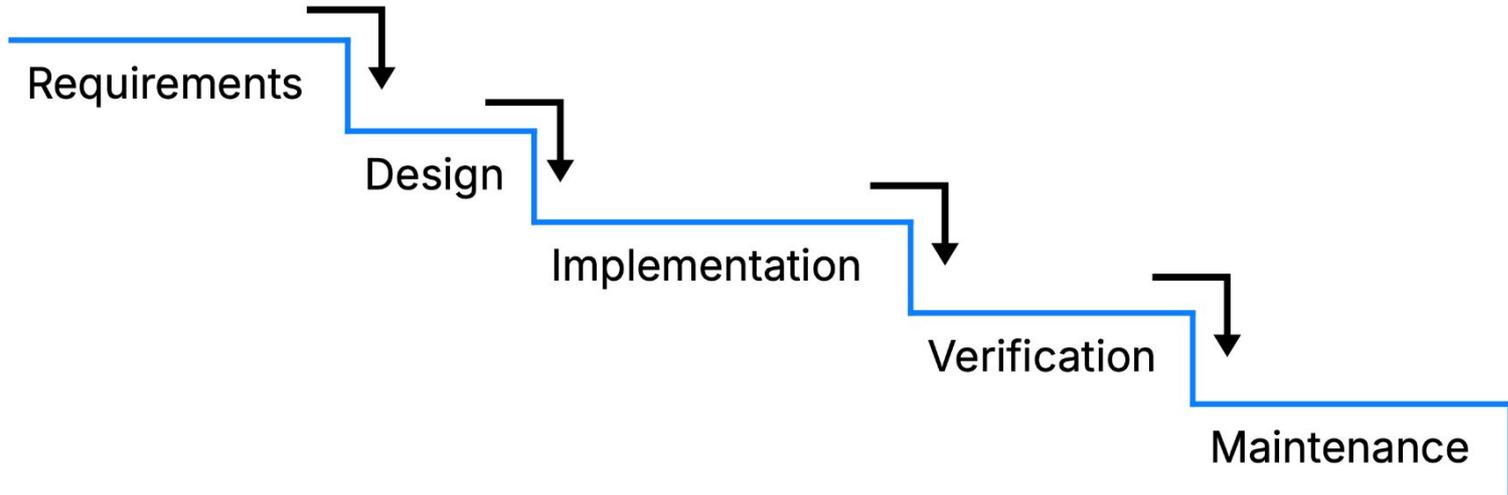
US DIGITAL RESPONSE
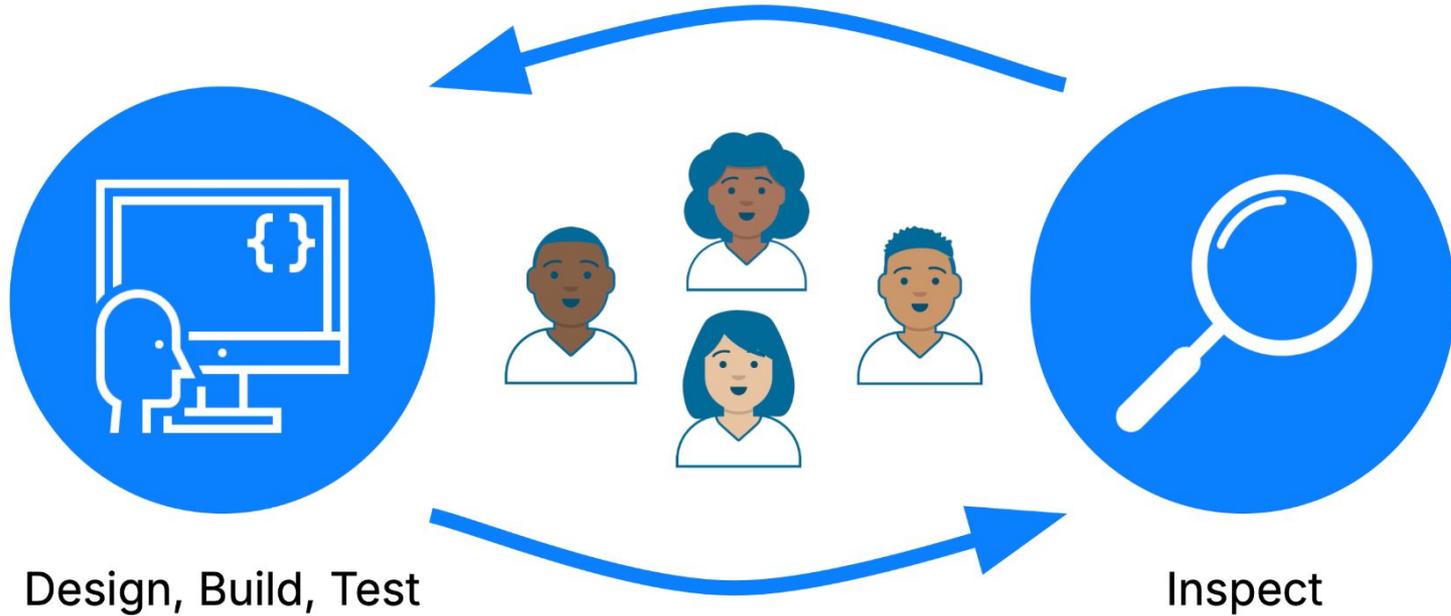
Value delivered over time
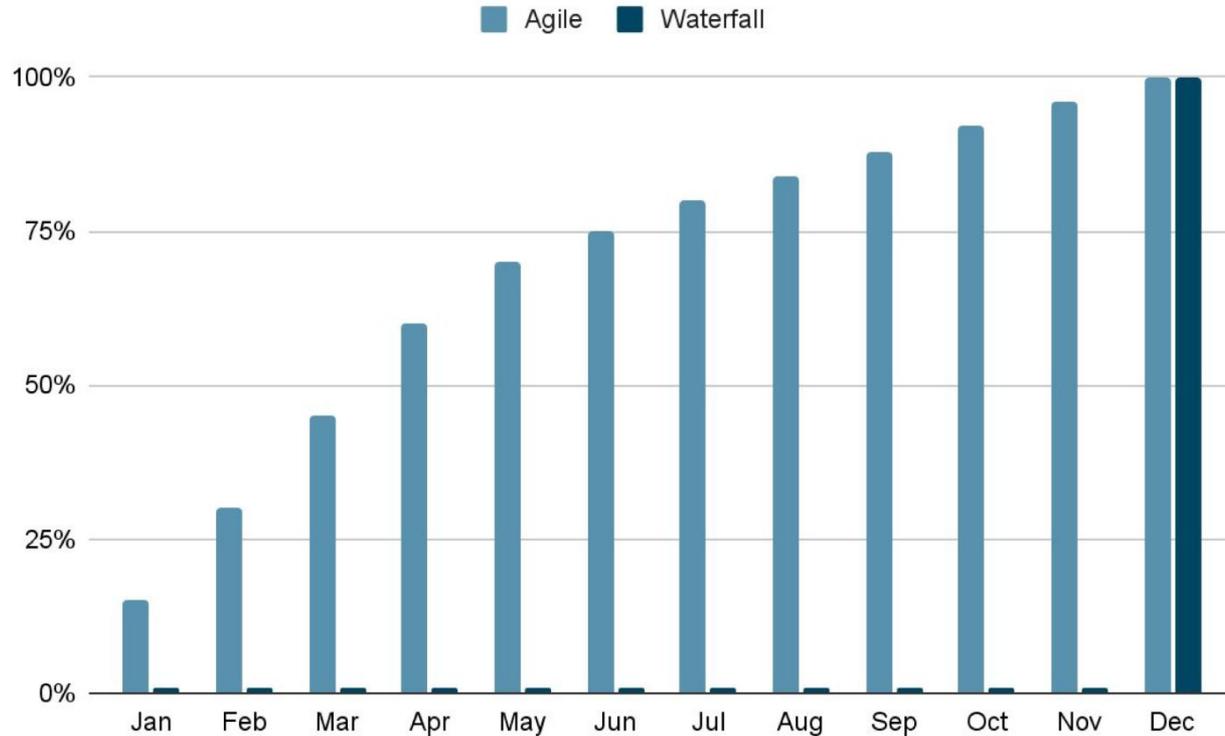
Risk of failure over time
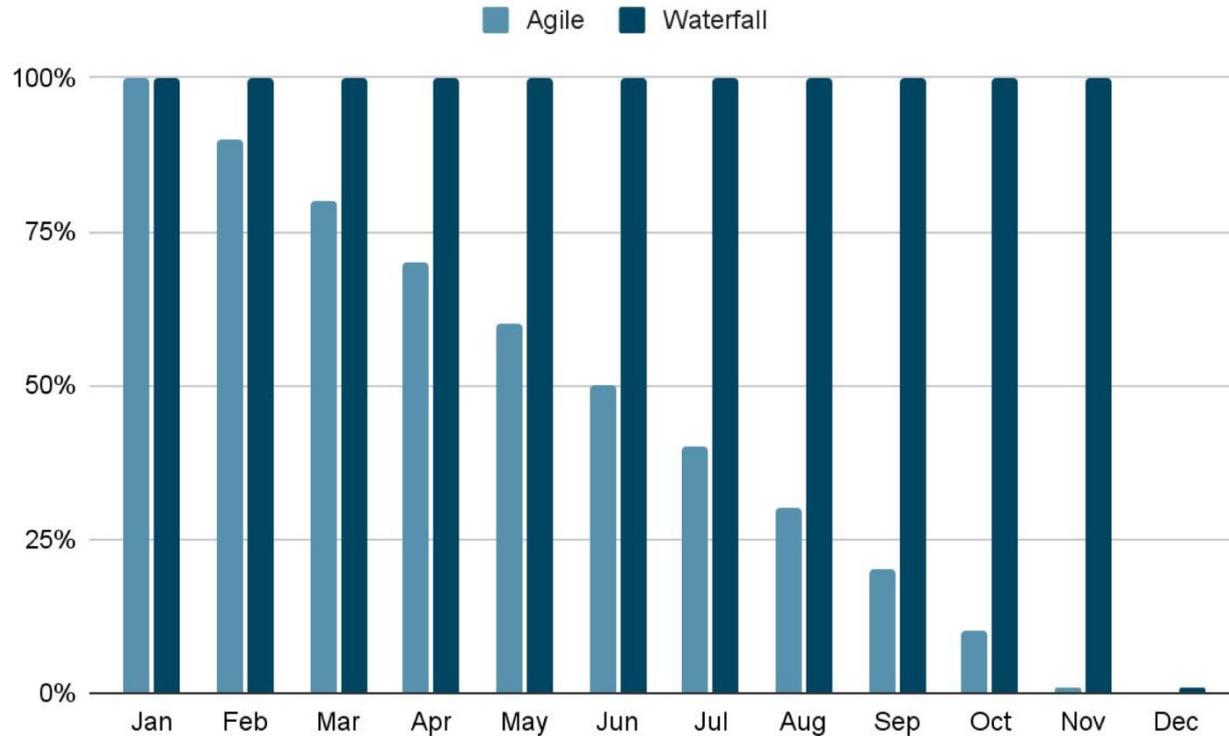
Common problems in state systems

- States have someone responsible for a contract, but not someone who owns the process.
- Process and monitoring fall into black holes.
- Automated processes run with insufficient feedback loops.

Baseline data isn't enough if the person looking at it doesn't know what to look for

Example

The automation
that wasn't automating

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Goal of a recent state engagement:

Identify, prioritize, and align on opportunities to keep eligible people on Medicaid by improving *ex parte* processes.

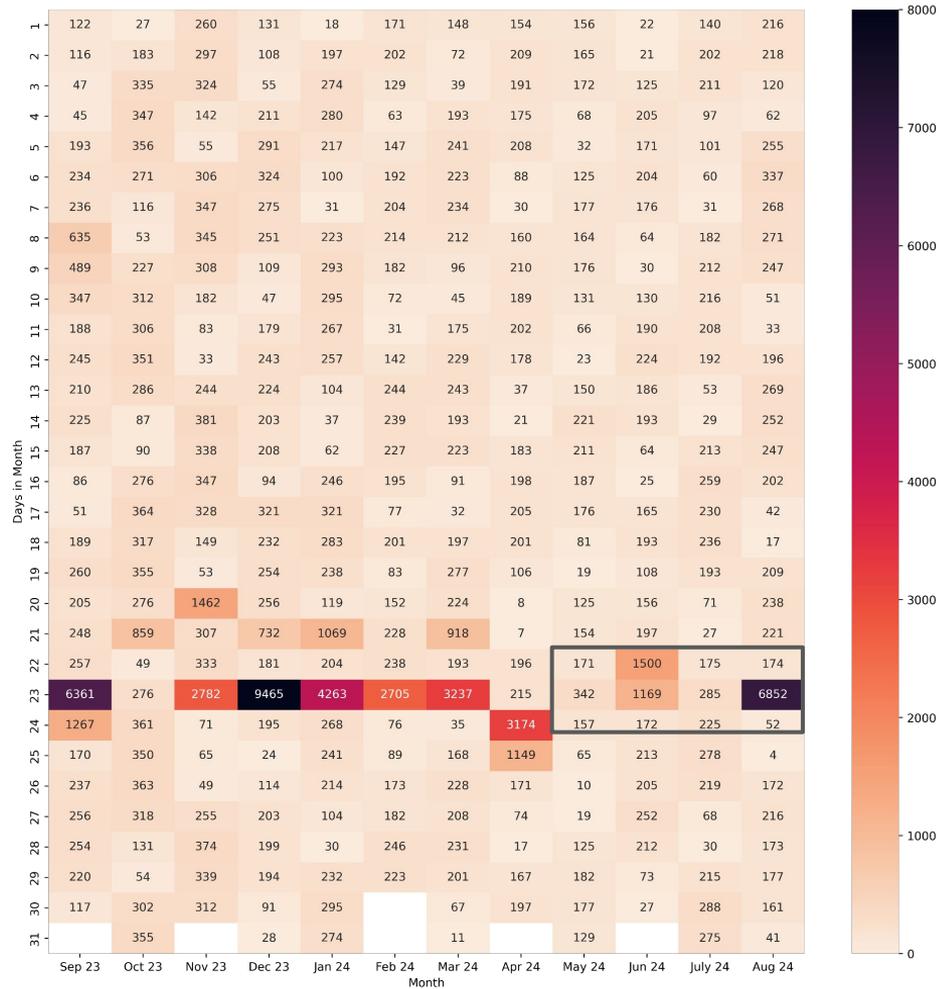| Day										
1	233	112	154	84	72	240	143	276	122	69
2	270	210	241	219	158	74	250	93	188	290
3	59	290	118	136	84	48	135	119	122	249
4	47	209	182	54	57	103	140	75	254	273
5	191	45	229	128	208	243	220	279	248	110
6	202	79	226	236	298	139	170	66	138	294
7	161	80	172	58	236	253	43	268	81	108
8	172	208	55	200	269	119	61	129	299	162
9	233	159	256	198	277	175	141	253	225	229
10	182	144	55	128	295	171	102	225	189	161
11	217	114	43	247	199	187	225	156	53	289
12	138	260	164	248	235	209	215	65	295	196
13	108	216	186	174	146	179	219	240	242	202
14	48	255	100	191	245	93	104	262	145	83
15	82	51	216	64	137	152	129	150	191	242
16	202	53	42	233	126	212	85	86	273	254
17	178	267	232	66	137	269	298	290	173	49
18	285	116	76	153	176	275	238	167	294	77
19	244	528	69	395	44	123	54	240	69	44
20	180	182	153	299	116	104	294	905	247	213
21	161	397	239	259	194	570	181	182	95	70
22	203	83	265	40	189	147	233	53	79	237
23	6714	3723	3366	3641	6718	2896	5844	3611	4964	6464
24	279	84	44	153	100	186	52	69	55	181
25	209	44	51	49	180	43	208	206	637	131
26	94	118	57	213	220	288	224	285	104	294
27	126	249	51	292	205	224	155	103	218	78
28	291	201	57	199	206	299	265	248	250	213
29	122	138	274	170	217		246	115	96	58
30	217	120	228	298	187		228	223	178	169
31		124		68	293		156		242	
Month	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June

Heatmap of counts by day of month (rows) and month (columns), Sep 2023 – Aug 2024.

Days in Month	Sep 23	Oct 23	Nov 23	Dec 23	Jan 24	Feb 24	Mar 24	Apr 24	May 24	Jun 24	July 24	Aug 24
1	122	27	260	131	18	171	148	154	156	22	140	216
2	116	183	297	108	197	202	72	209	165	21	202	218
3	47	335	324	55	274	129	39	191	172	125	211	120
4	45	347	142	211	280	63	193	175	68	205	97	62
5	193	356	55	291	217	147	241	208	32	171	101	255
6	234	271	306	324	100	192	223	88	125	204	60	337
7	236	116	347	275	31	204	234	30	177	176	31	268
8	635	53	345	251	223	214	212	160	164	64	182	271
9	489	227	308	109	293	182	96	210	176	30	212	247
10	347	312	182	47	295	72	45	189	131	130	216	51
11	188	306	83	179	267	31	175	202	66	190	208	33
12	245	351	33	243	257	142	229	178	23	224	192	196
13	210	286	244	224	104	244	243	37	150	186	53	269
14	225	87	381	203	37	239	193	21	221	193	29	252
15	187	90	338	208	62	227	223	183	211	64	213	247
16	86	276	347	94	246	195	91	198	187	25	259	202
17	51	364	328	321	321	77	32	205	176	165	230	42
18	189	317	149	232	283	201	197	201	81	193	236	17
19	260	355	53	254	238	83	277	106	19	108	193	209
20	205	276	1462	256	119	152	224	8	125	156	71	238
21	248	859	307	732	1069	228	918	7	154	197	27	221
22	257	49	333	181	204	238	193	196	171	1500	175	174
23	6361	276	2782	9465	4263	2705	3237	215	342	1169	285	6852
24	1267	361	71	195	268	76	35	3174	157	172	225	52
25	170	350	65	24	241	89	168	1149	65	213	278	4
26	237	363	49	114	214	173	228	171	10	205	219	172
27	256	318	255	203	104	182	208	74	19	252	68	216
28	254	131	374	199	30	246	231	17	125	212	30	173
29	220	54	339	194	232	223	201	167	182	73	215	177
30	117	302	312	91	295		67	197	177	27	288	161
31		355		28	274		11		129		275	41

Key questions to ask about new technologies

- What outcomes do we expect?
- Are they happening?
- What were our goals?
- Is the technology meeting those goals several months after go-live, and on an ongoing basis?

Elements of human-centered oversight

- **High-level goals**
- **Visibility** into the right data
- **Expertise at the state level**, (not only vendors!) to interpret that data
- **Empowered state product owners** who can prioritize fixes and who can be **accountable for delivery**

Human-centered design is a creative and strategic problem solving process.

It helps teams respond to complex problems by asking **users to lead the way**.

← Thanks to our friends at Civilla for this photo!

Human-centered design asks users to lead the way. This requires direct engagement with the people intended to use what you're creating.

Start with user needs.

~~Start with business constraints.~~

Start with user needs.

A **user need** is a statement that describes who the user* is, what they are trying to do, and why it's important to them.

*Once a user is identified, we recommend using more specific words: caseworkers, clients, etc.

If you focus on what your users need, then you will never build the wrong thing.

If you let your business constraints guide what you build, you risk building the wrong thing.
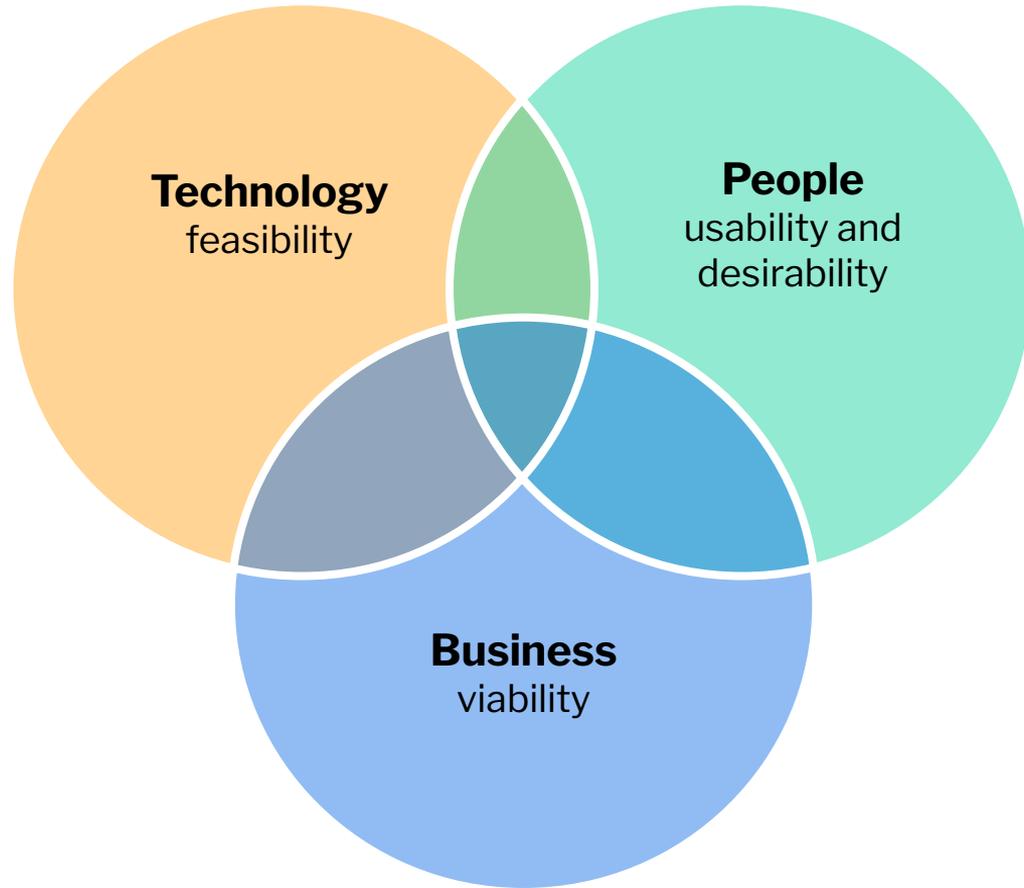
Technology
feasibility

People
usability and
desirability

Business
viability

Technology
feasibility

People
usability and
desirability

Business
viability

we start here

Technology
feasibility

People
usability and desirability

Business
viability
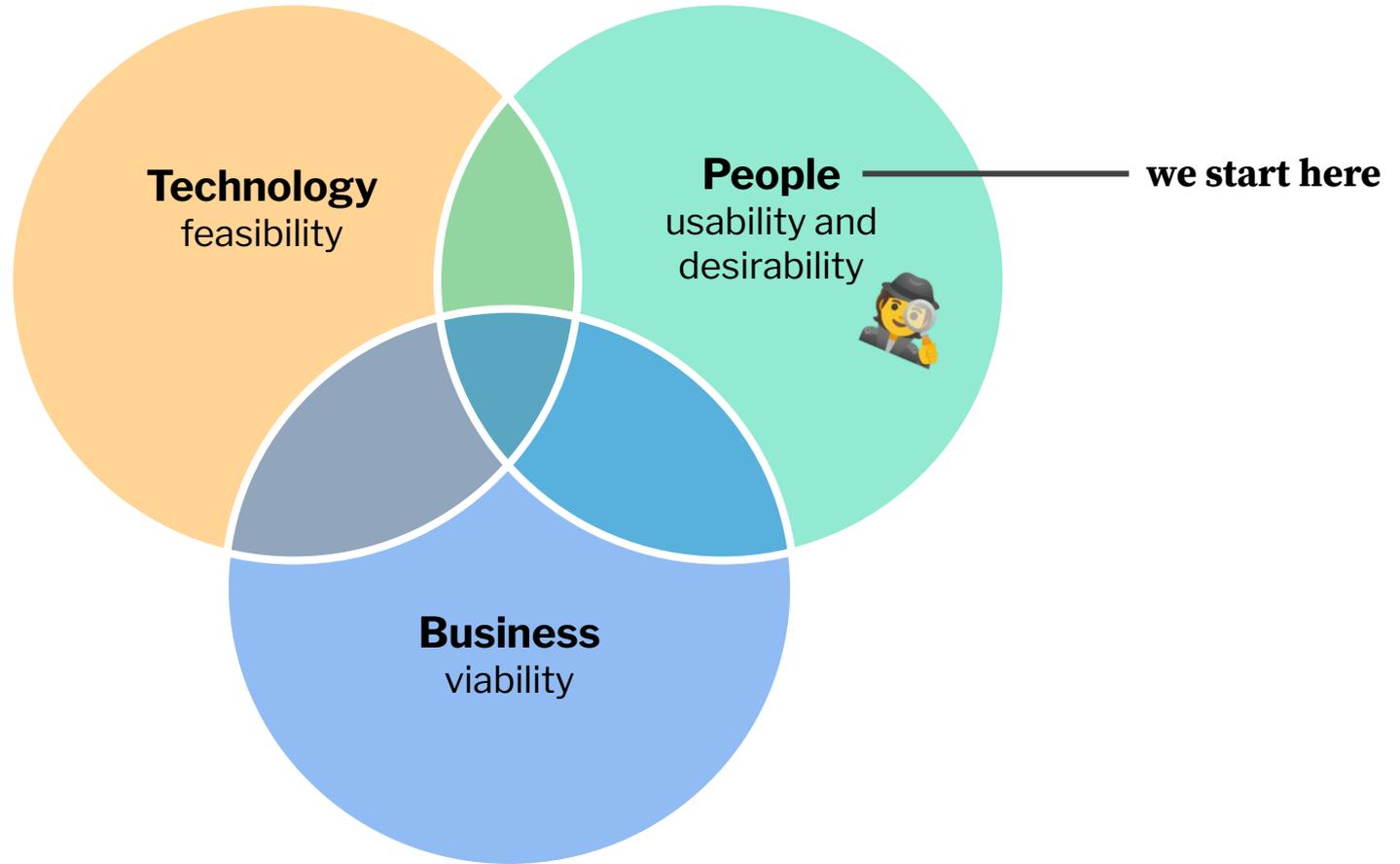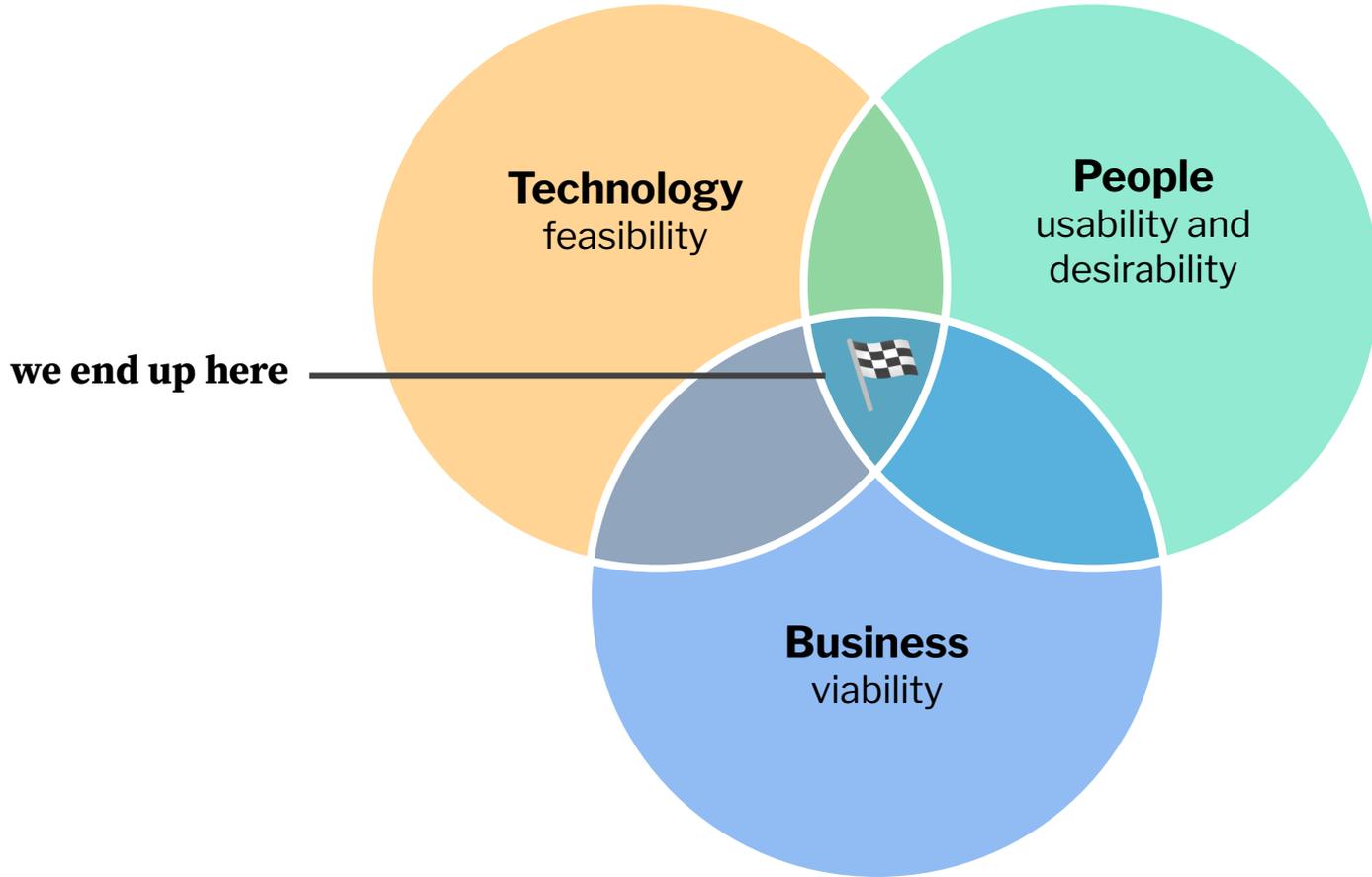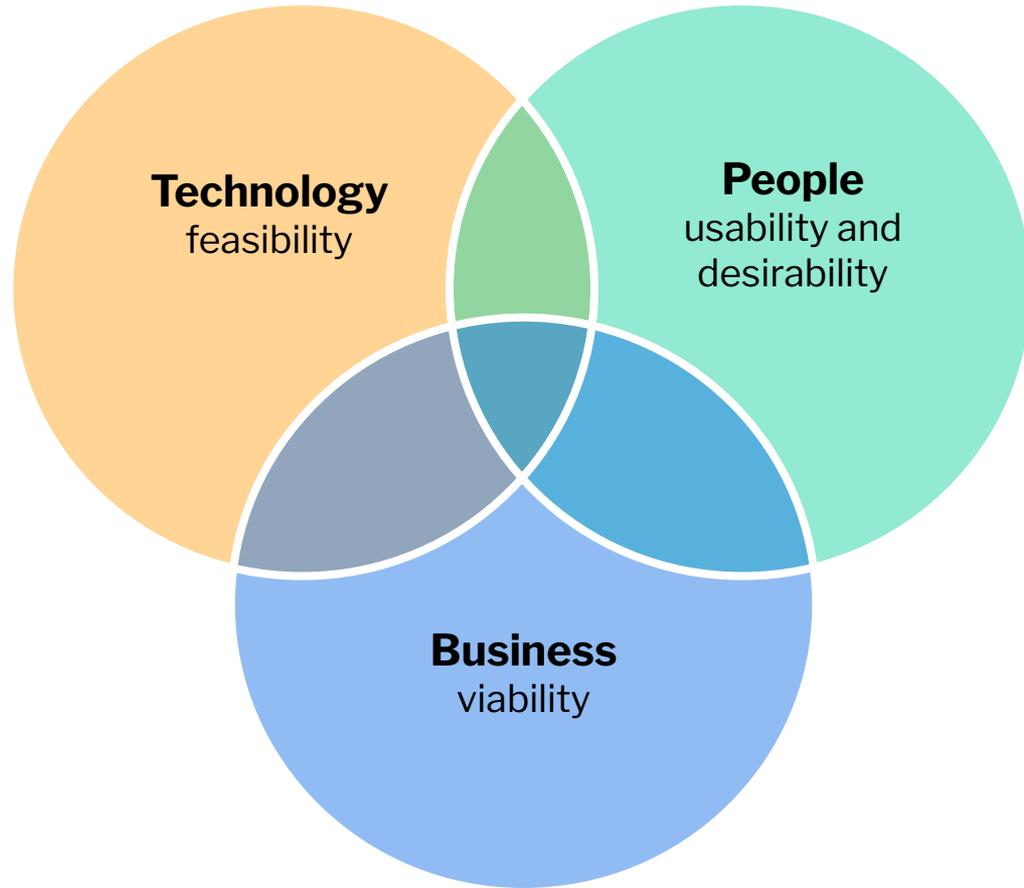
Technology
feasibility

People
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Business
viability
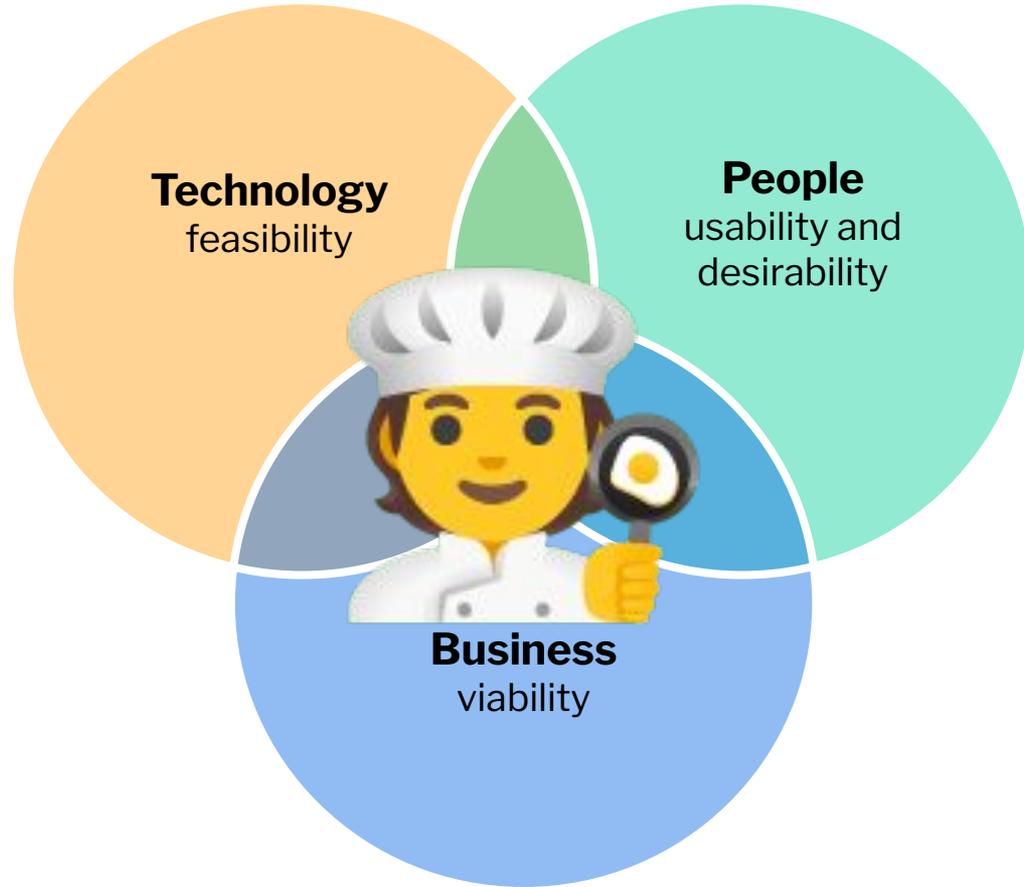
Empowered product owner

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Product teams are groups of people that build things.

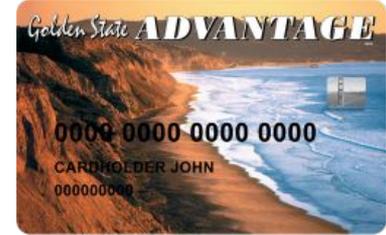# Government agencies are product and service delivery organizations.

# Government agencies build and deliver…

Websites
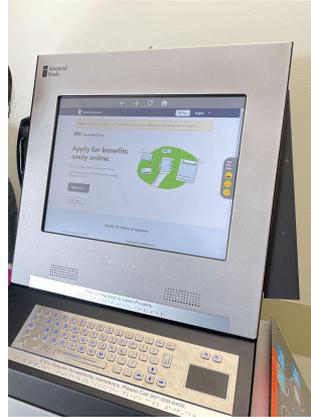
Tools

Services

But government agencies rarely function like product and service delivery organizations.

This can change.

An outcomes driven team needs....

1. Someone **accountable to progress** towards outcomes

2. Someone who **advocates for the end user's** real-world experience

3. Someone who can make **designs based on user needs**

4. Someone who can **facilitate compromises** between policy and operational needs and end user needs, to translate into requirements

5. Someone who can **design technical approaches** that enable the outcome

Technology
feasibility

People
usability and
desirability

Business
viability
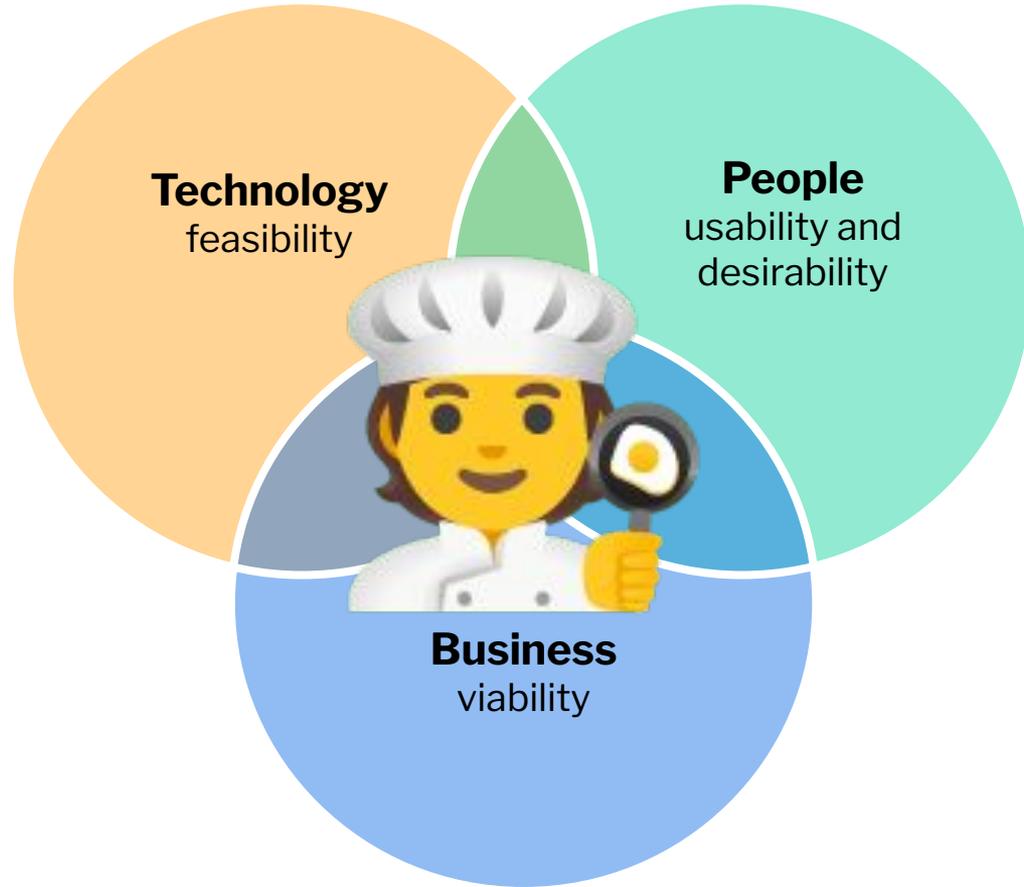
What leadership can do:

1. Demos, not memos

2. Demand interrogatable budget requests

3. Require user research to prove claimed needs

4. Fund incrementally

5. Fund product teams, not projects

Tools for more effective delivery

1. Demos, not memos
2. Budget requests you can interrogate
3. Require user research to prove claimed needs
4. Fund projects incrementally
5. Fund product teams, not projects

Credit: Waldo Jaquith, US Dept. of Treasury / US Digital Response

Thank you!

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Helping government work well for *everyone*