Are peer reviews synonymous with shift-left?

Robin F. Goldsmith, JD

GO PRO MANAGEMENT, INC.

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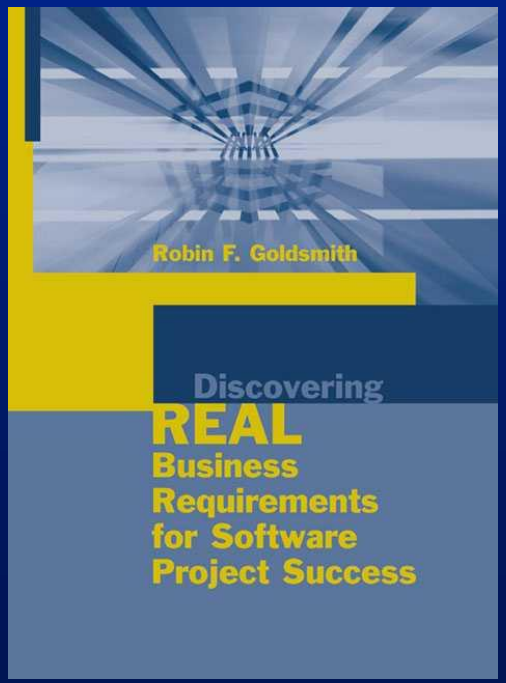

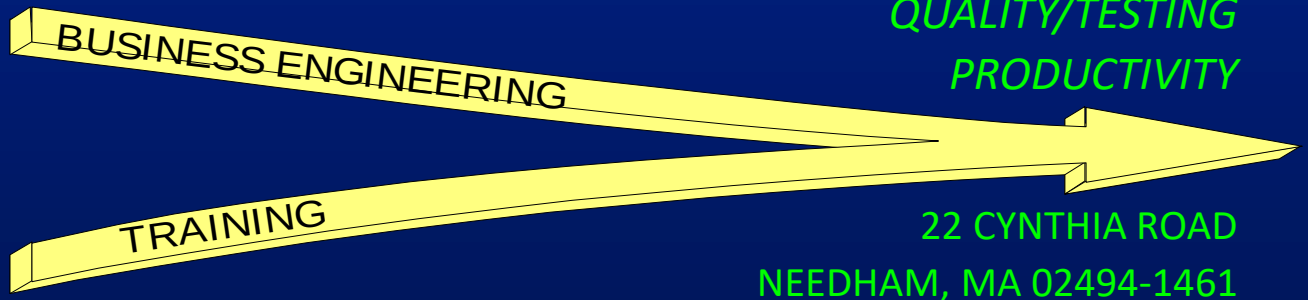

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True Shift-Left Secrets to Truly Quicker, Cheaper, but Better Software

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What does “shift-left” mean to you?

Quickly write **in the Q&A.**

Do you do it?

If so, how? How well is it working?

Do you use peer reviews?

Quickly write **in the Q&A.**

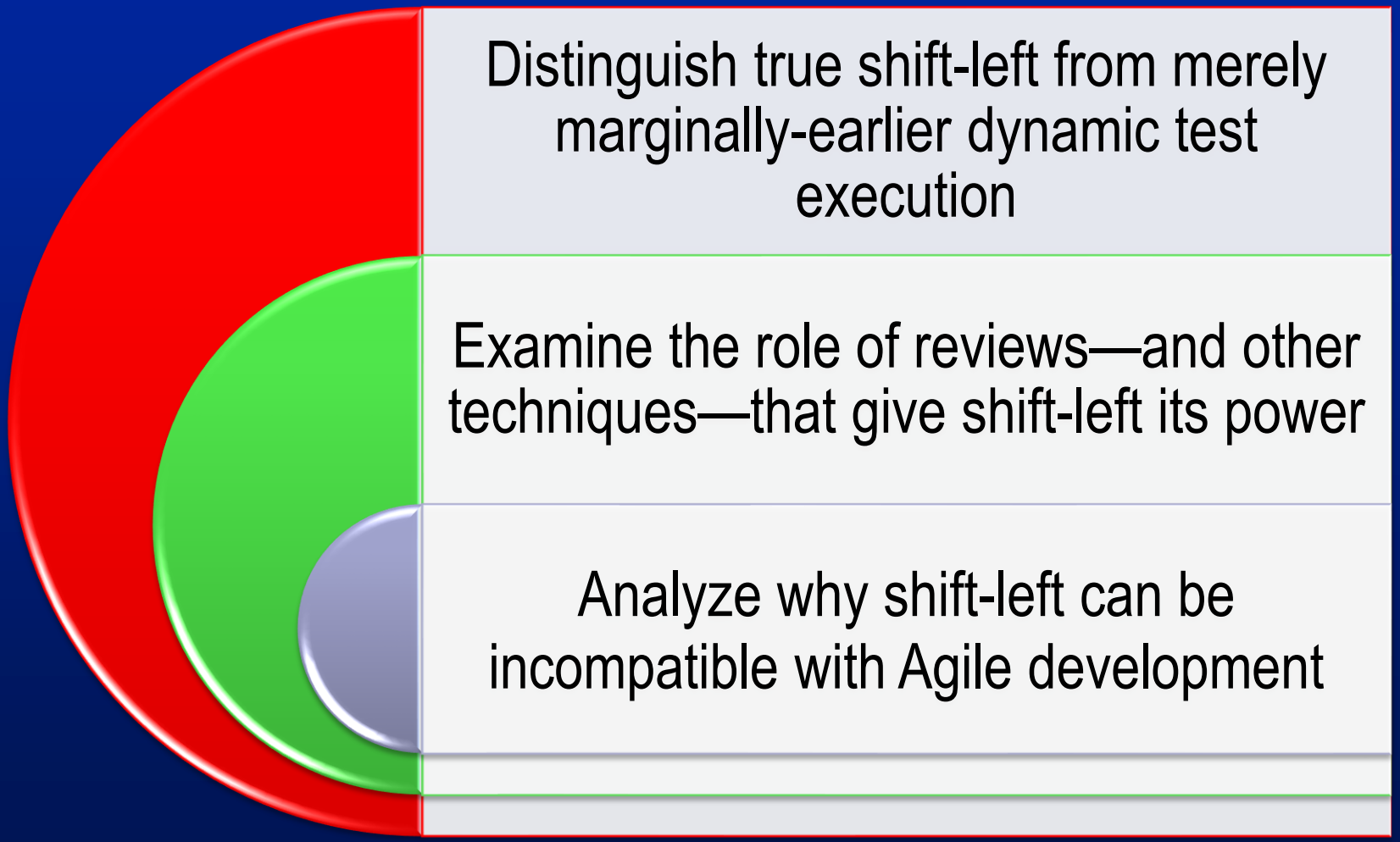
If so, are they synonymous with shift-left?

If not, how do they differ?

Your Issues and Objectives

Quickly write **in the Q&A.**

Objectives



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Typical Development Life Cycle

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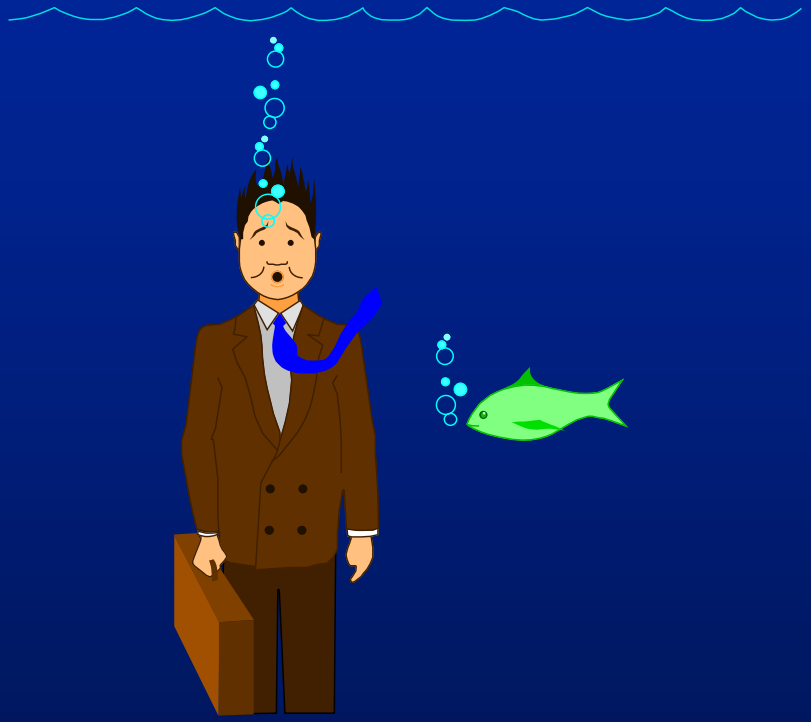
Tail-End Testing Issues

Maximum number of defects

Minimal time to fix them

Maximal cost to fix each defect



Too many missed and/or not fixed

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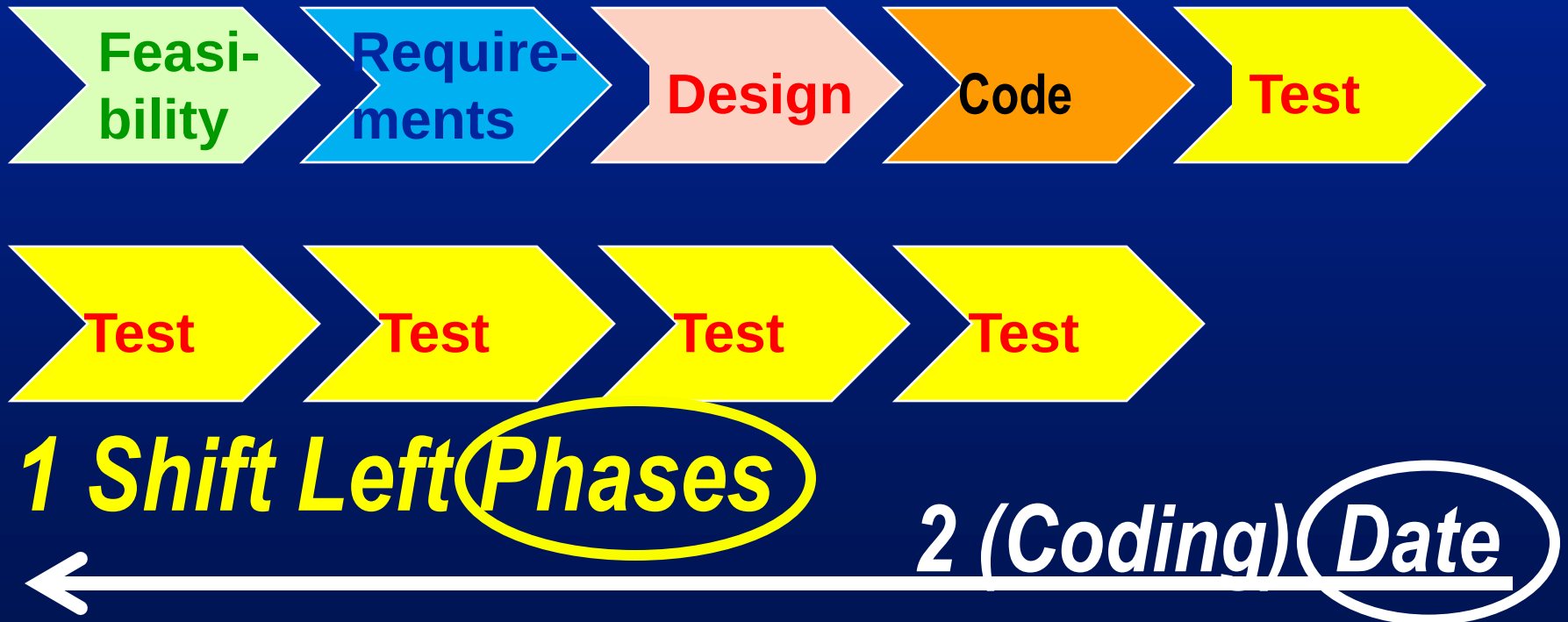
Solution—Shift Testing Left Two Ways



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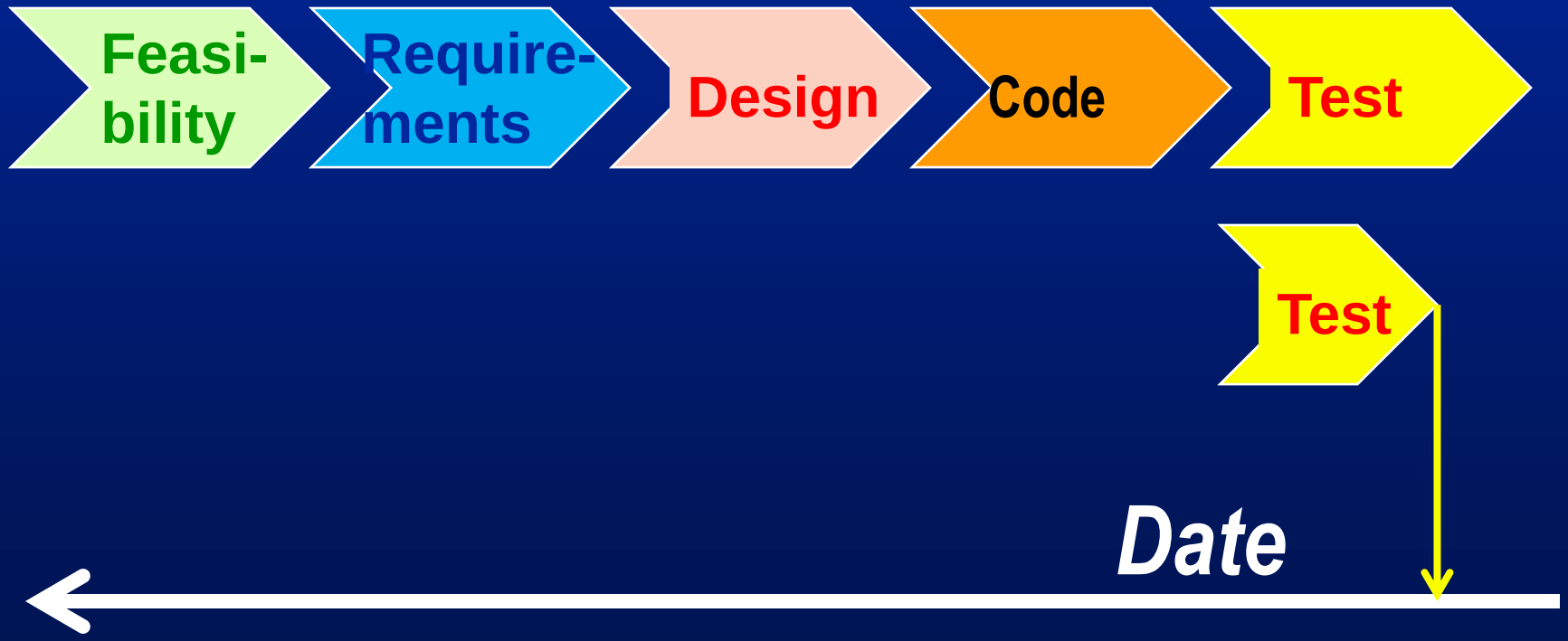
Claimed Shift-Left Approaches: Automated Testing



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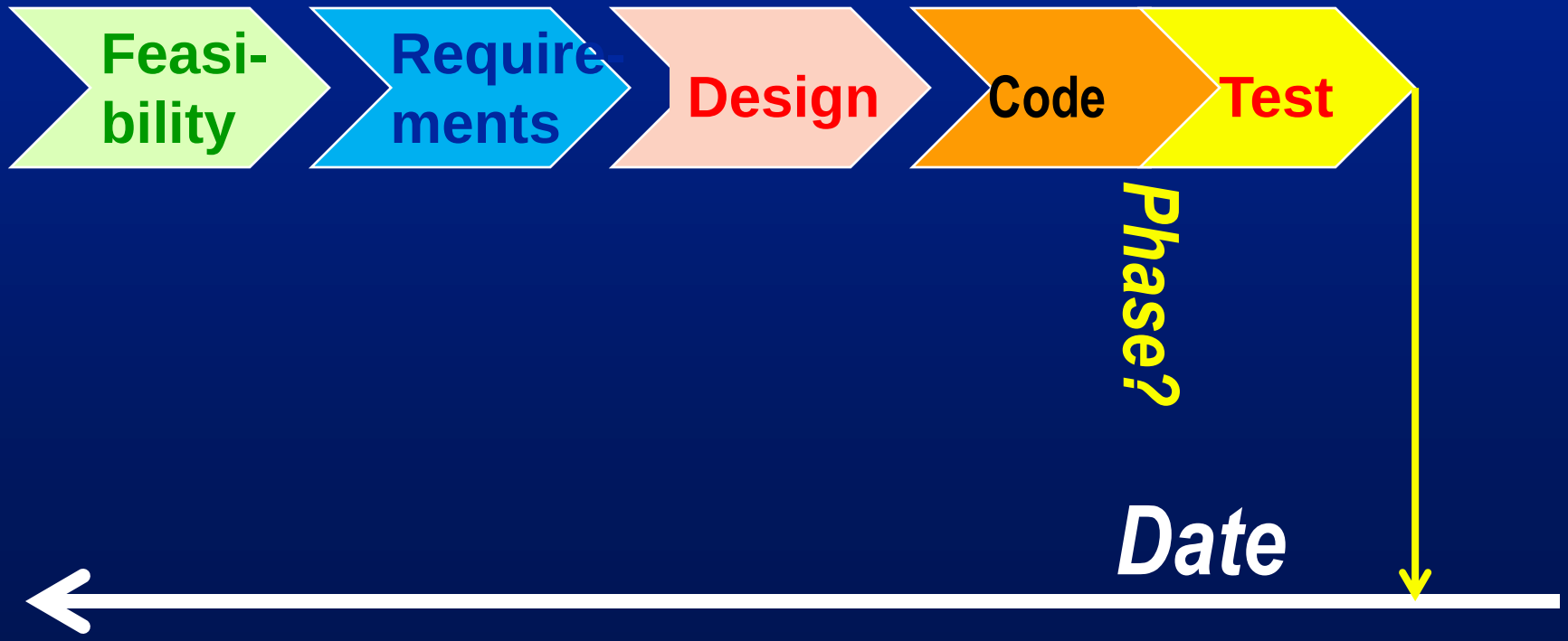
Rely on Developer to Test or Integrate QA/Testers with Developers



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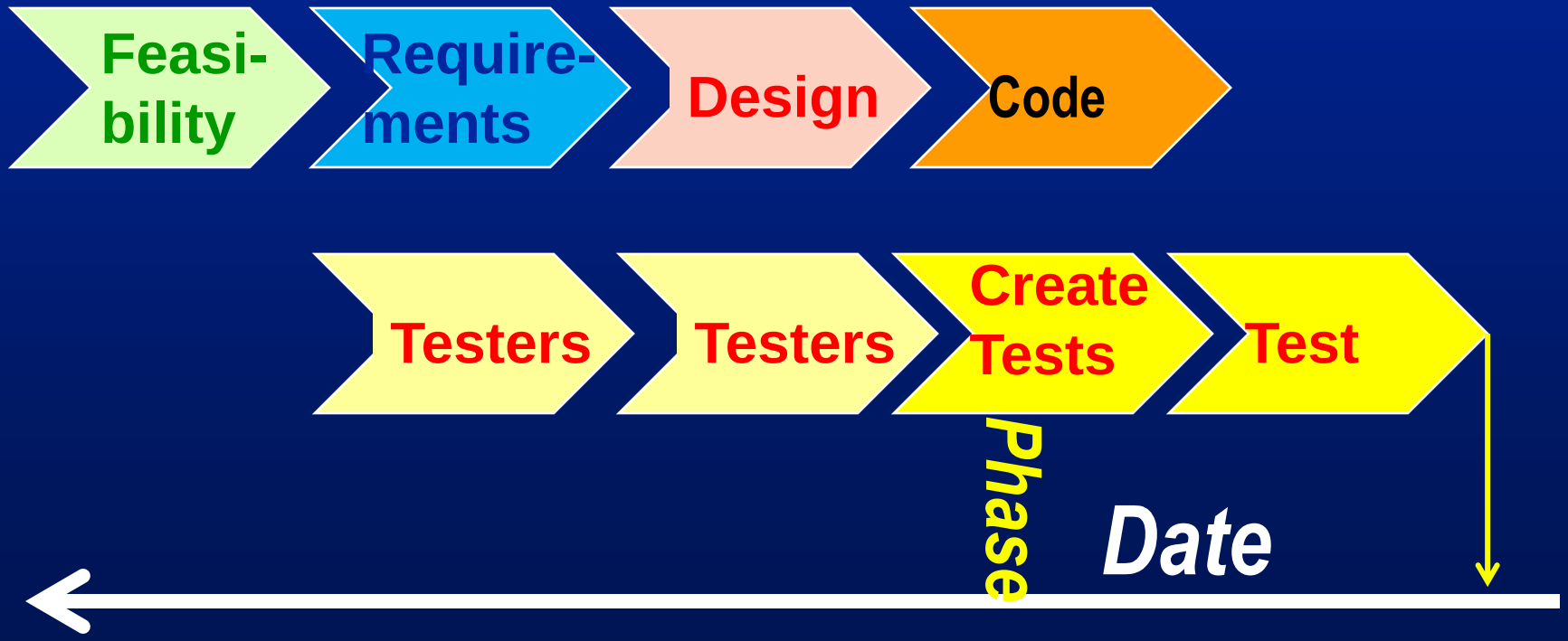
Involve Testers Observing Requirements and Design Definition



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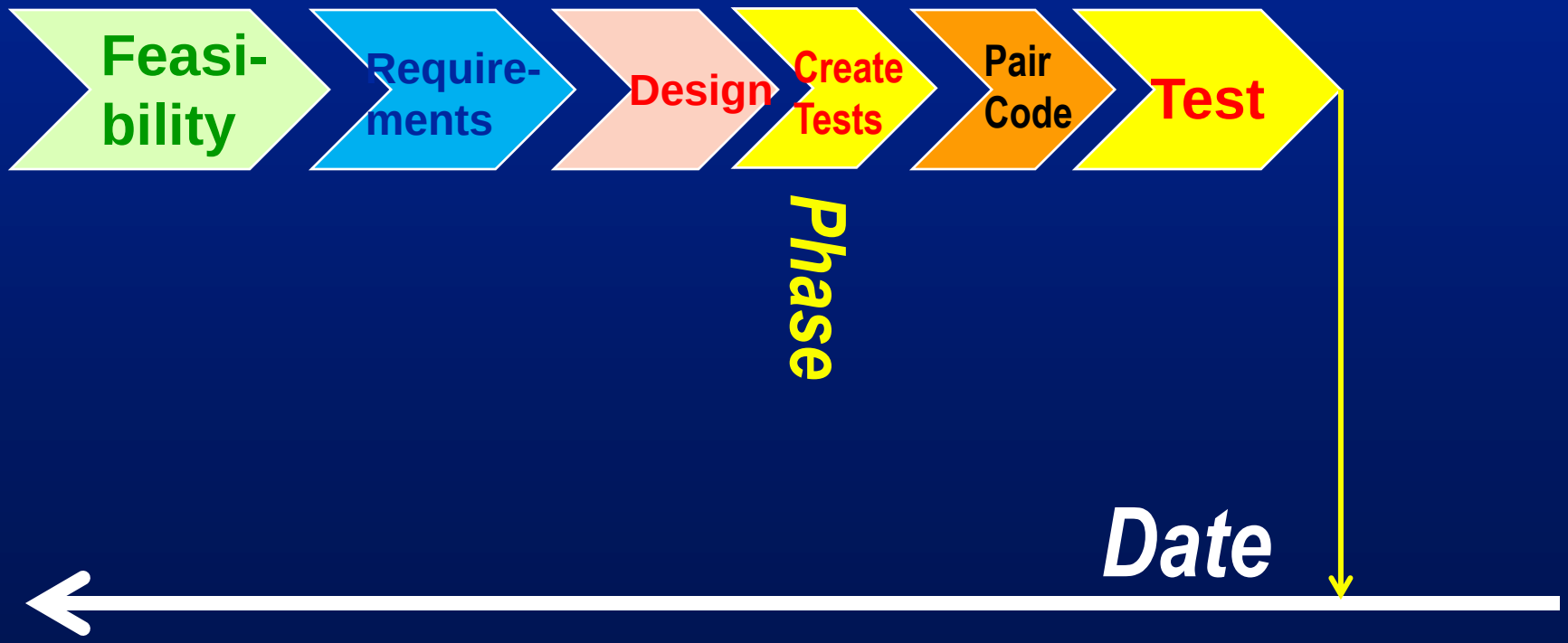
Test-First Development



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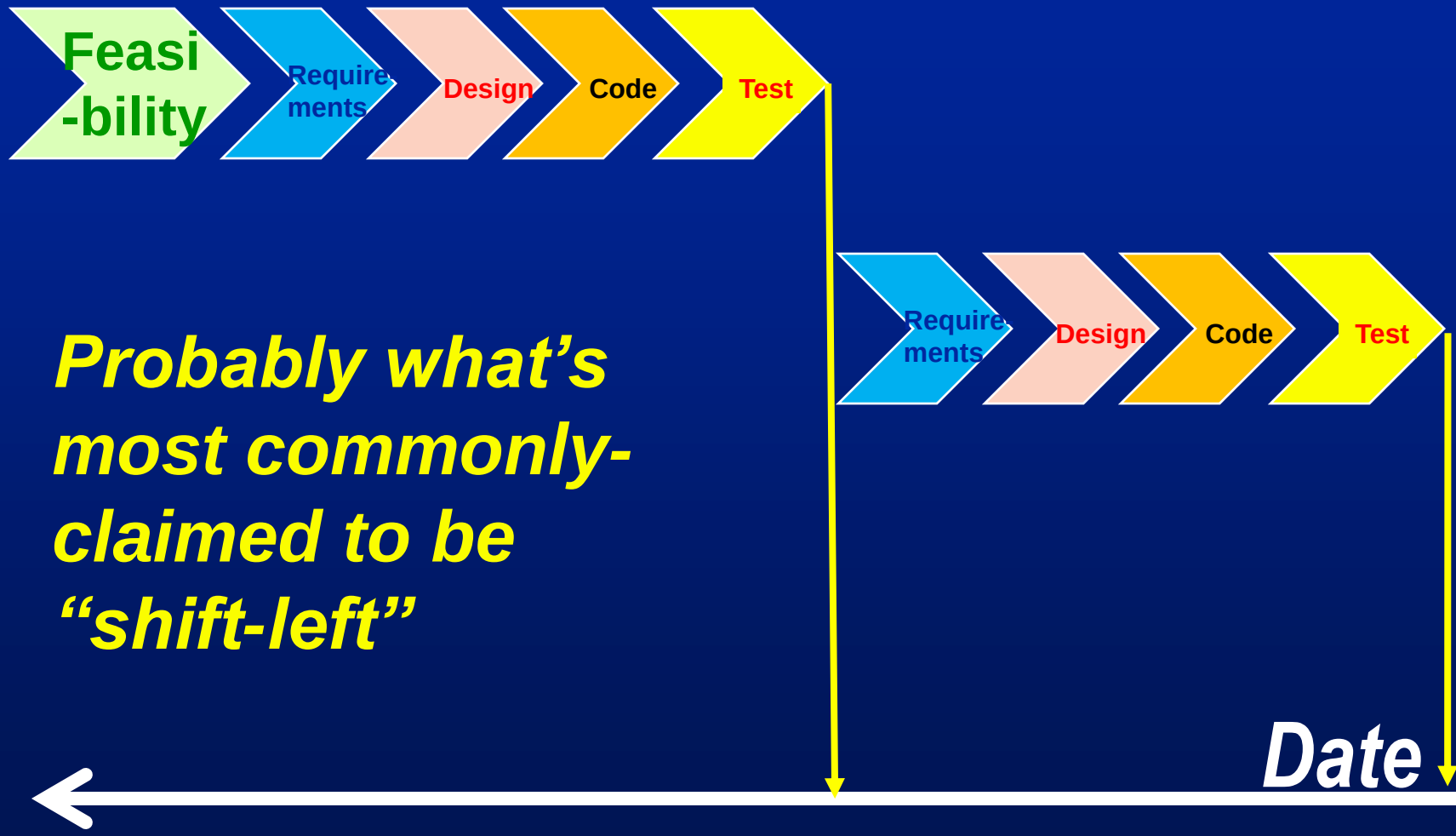
Small Iterations



Probably what's most commonly-claimed to be "shift-left"

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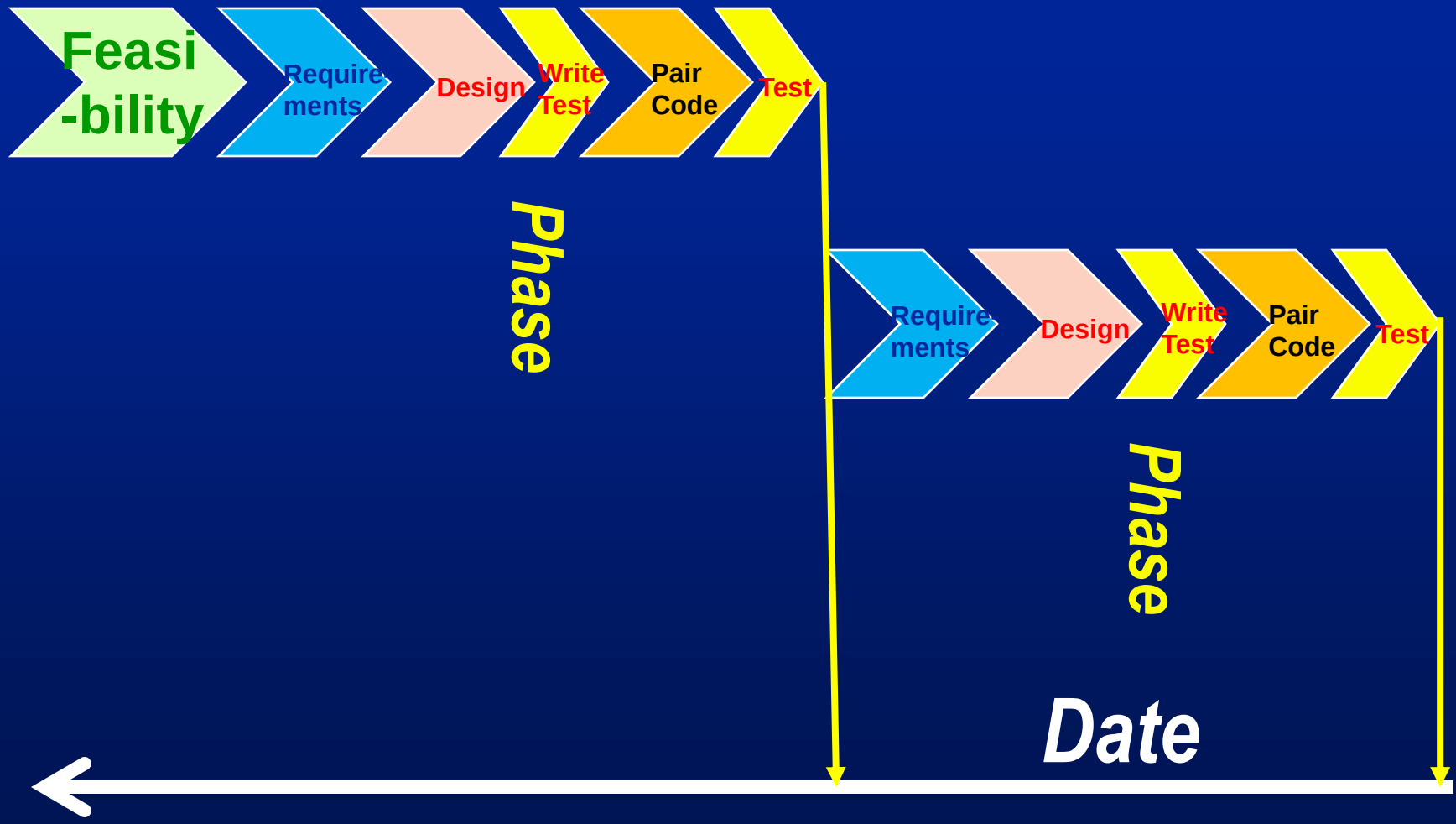
Small Iterations Plus Test-First



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Test-First Development Surely Beats Traditional Test-Last (or Never) Coding

- Developer(s) decide how to test that code works and write code in the program being developed (Software Under Test—SUT) to perform the tests
- Then write program's regular, functional code
- Code works when included tests are passed

Included tests are re-executed for every change

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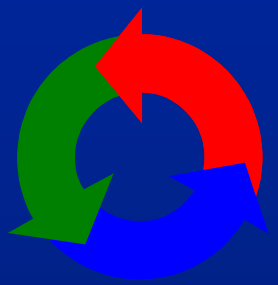
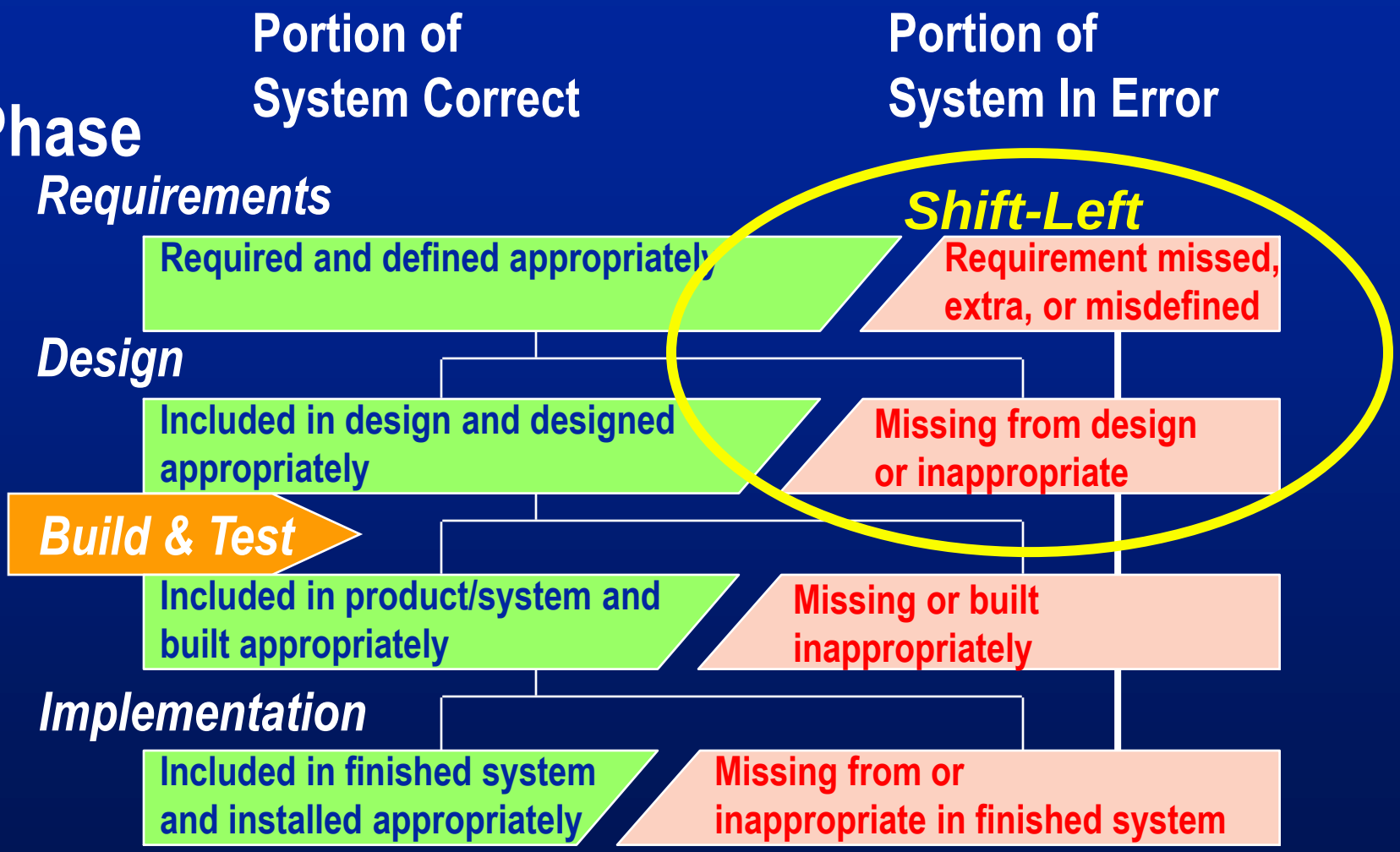
Test-First Development Is Good; but Has Some Seldom-Recognized Limitations



- Programmer/code-centric view can easily miss the bigger, more important issues to test
- Developer's (even the pair's) mindset defining tests is likely to be largely same as for the code
  - Mainly testing what is (going to be) written
  - Won't catch what developer doesn't understand adequately or overlooks
  - Developer still is unlikely to have a testing "break it" mindset or systematic test planning and design methods, so probably overlooks many conditions needing testing
- Agile's fanatical resistance to writing anything other than executable code, including tests, is high-effort with relatively low leverage payback

Plus the religious-like "How dare you question my Agile techniques?"

Error Sources by Phase



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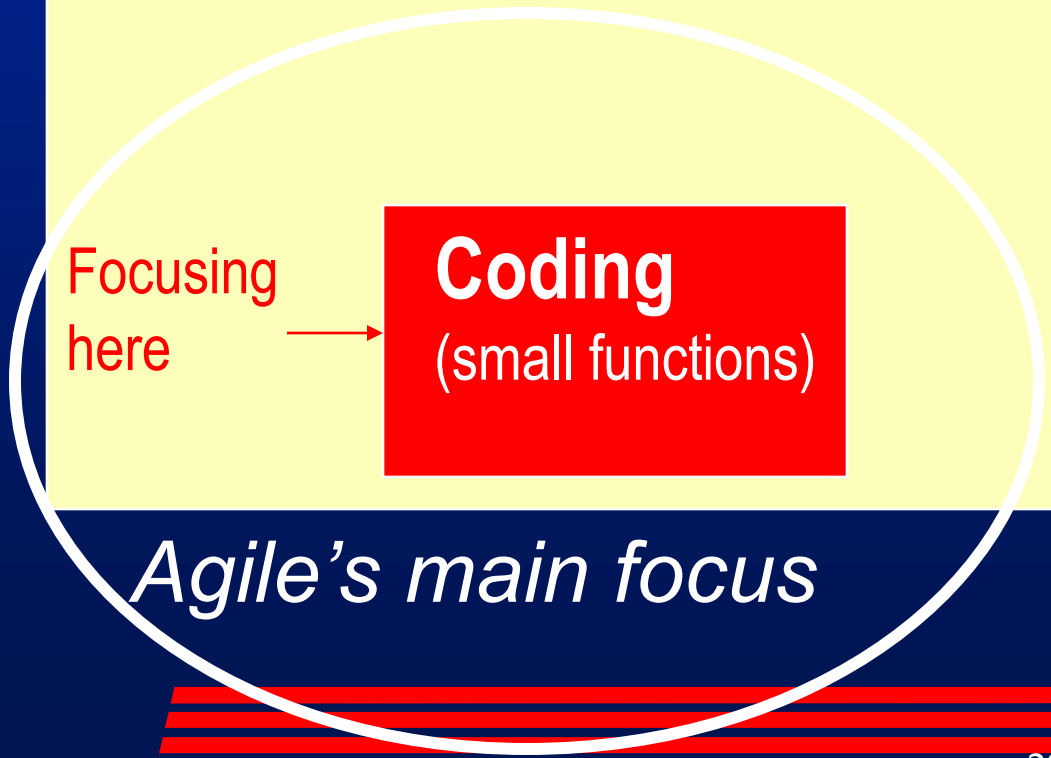
IT (and Other?) Project Economics

- Maintenance is 66-90% of system cost
- Maintenance is mainly completion/ correction of development (wrong/missed requirements)
- 2/3 of finished system errors are requirements and design errors
- Fixing a requirements error will cost
  - 10X+ during development/construction
  - 75-1000X+ after installation (maintenance)

Do your organization's routine measures show these effects?

Big effects of true Shift-Left

Coding Is Smallest Source of Errors



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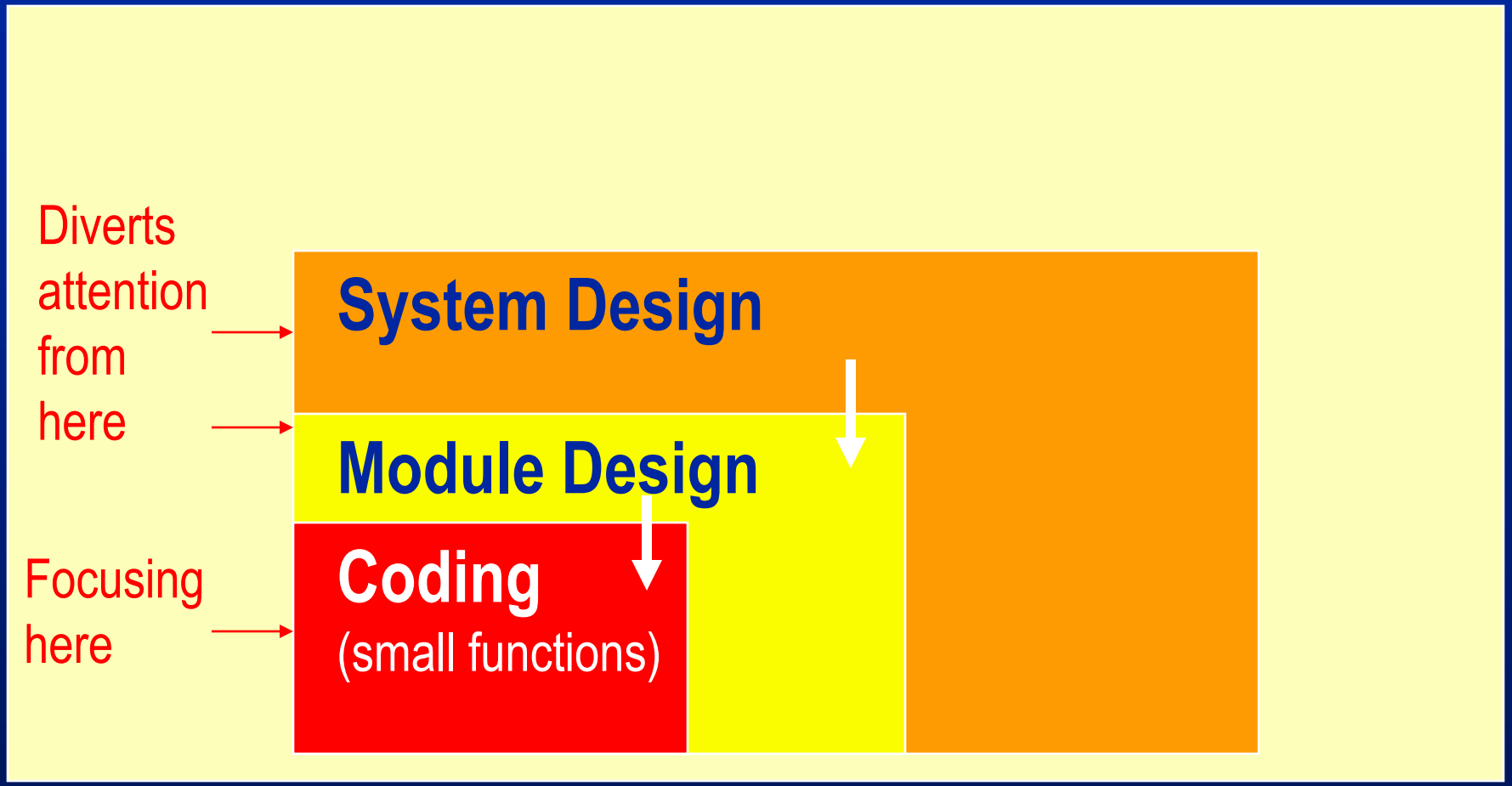
Coding Is Smallest Source of Errors



2/3 of errors in delivered code are in the design.

Does essentially having no design increase, decrease, or just mask that?

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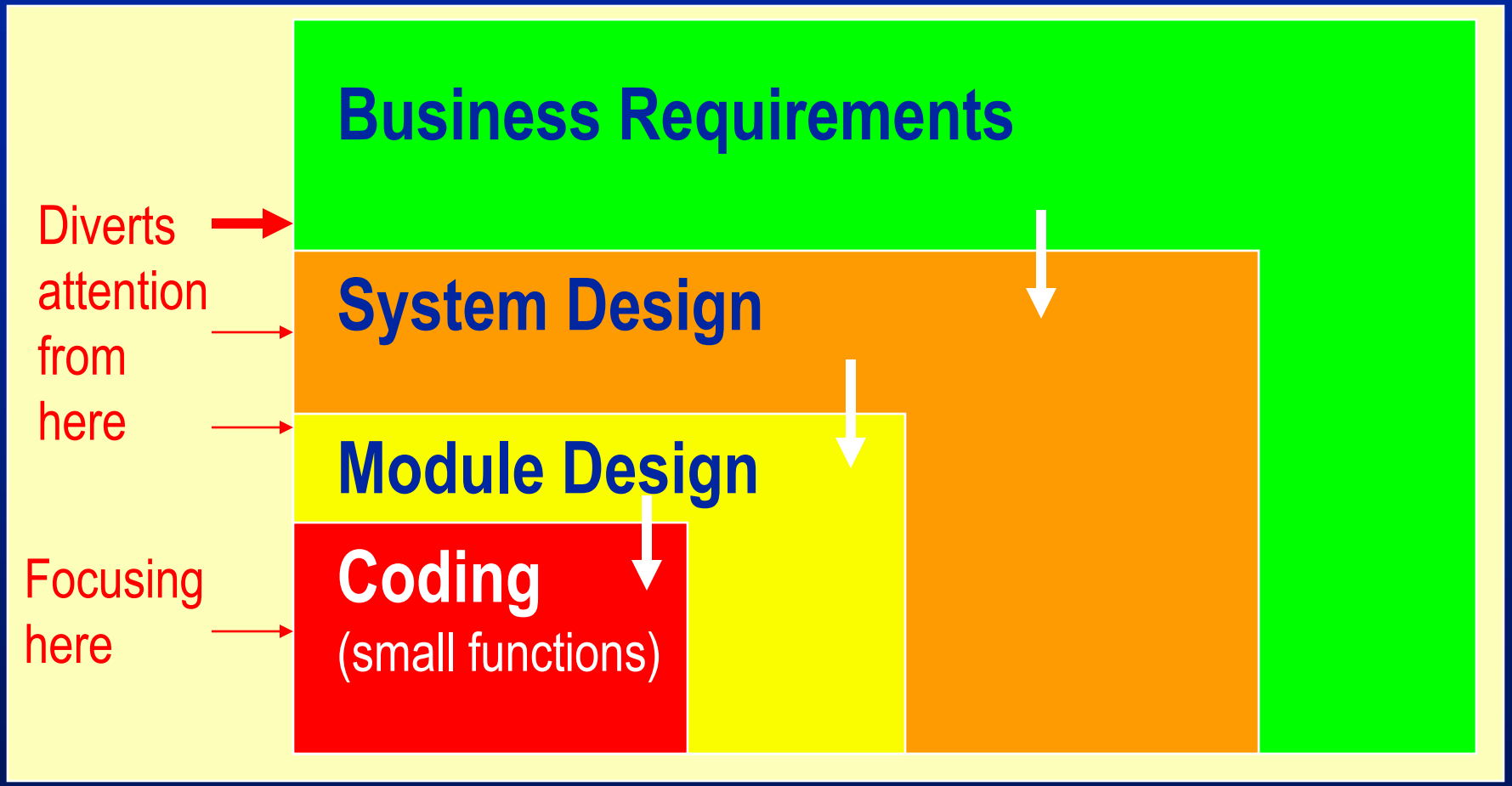
Coding Is Smallest Source of Errors



Missed/incorrect/unclear business requirements are biggest source of design problems

Ways to Truly Shift-Left

- Improve definition of
  - Requirements
  - Design
- Static review of
  - Requirements
  - Design
- Dynamic Proactive
  - Risk Identification
  - Test Design

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Two Types of Requirements:

Business/User

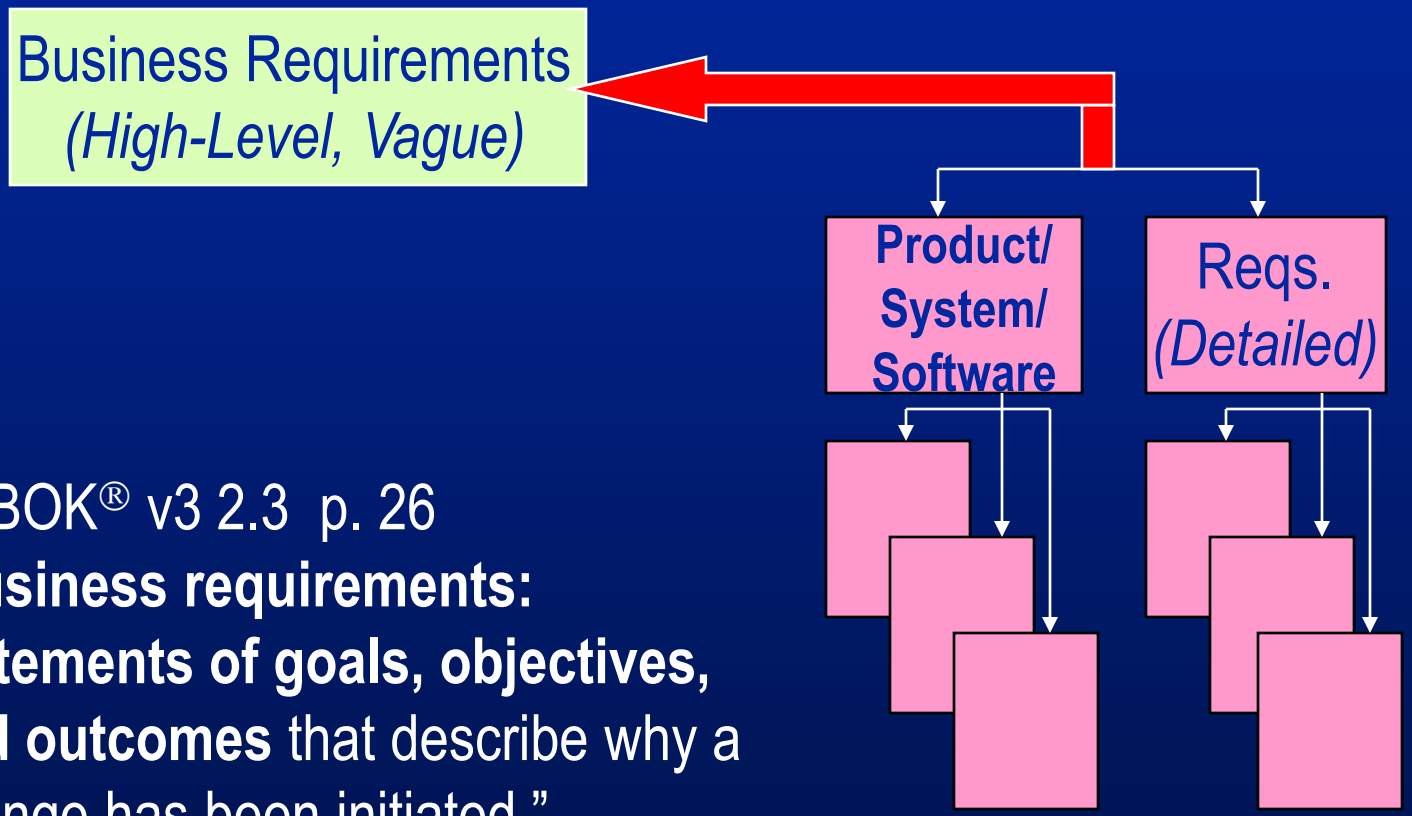
- Business/user language & view, conceptual; *exists* within the business environment
- Serves business objectives
- ***What*** business results must be delivered to solve a business need (problem, opportunity, or challenge) and provide value when delivered/satisfied/met

Many possible ways to accomplish

Product/System/Software

- Language & view of a *human-defined product/system*
- **One of the possible ways *How*** (design) presumably to accomplish the presumed business requirements
- Often phrased in terms of external functions each piece of the product/system must perform to work as designed (Non/Functional Specifications)

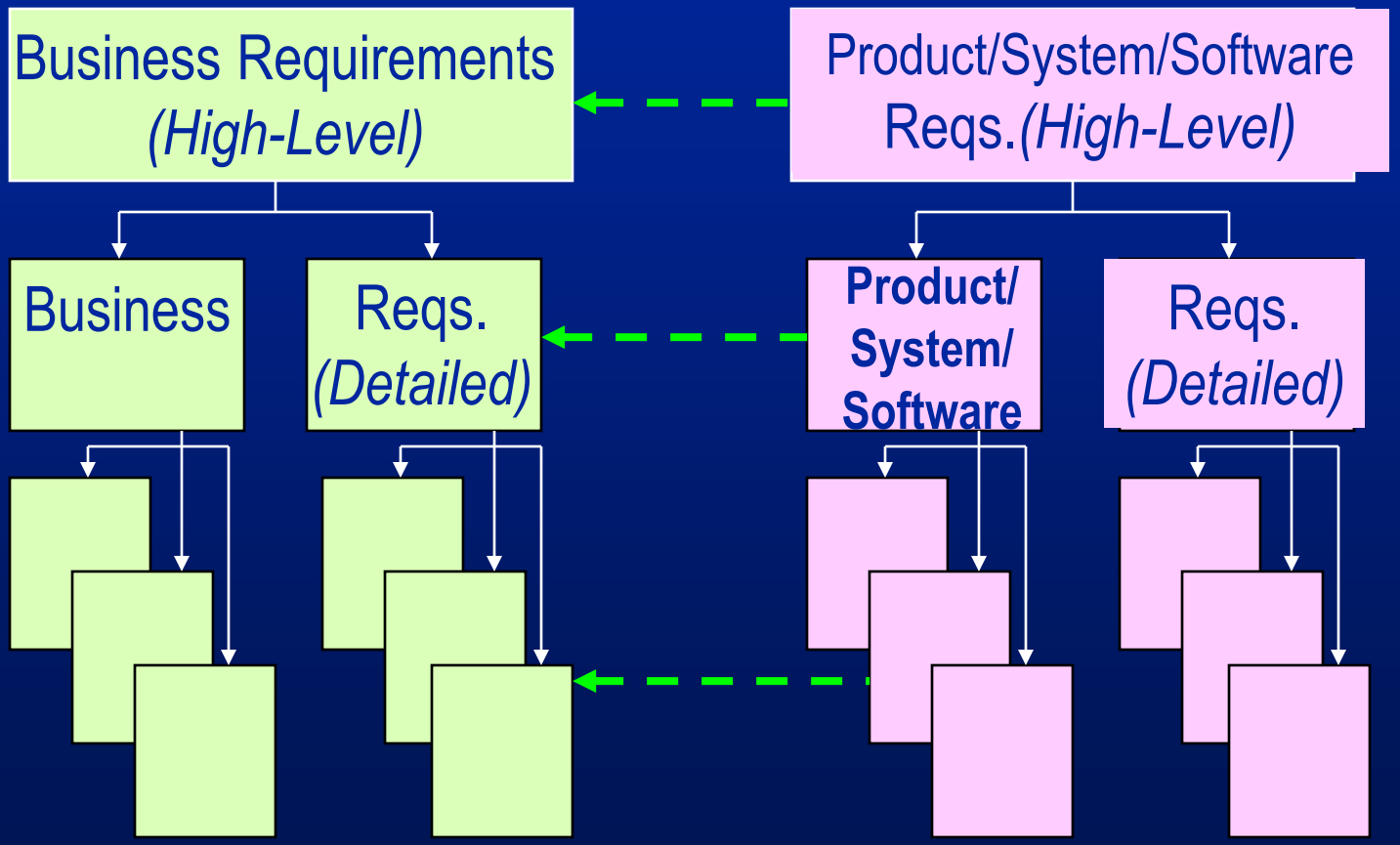
Even Requirements "Experts" Think the Difference Is Just Level of Detail



BABOK® v3 2.3 p. 26

"**Business requirements: statements of goals, objectives, and outcomes** that describe why a change has been initiated."

When Business/User Requirements Are Detailed First, Creep Is Reduced



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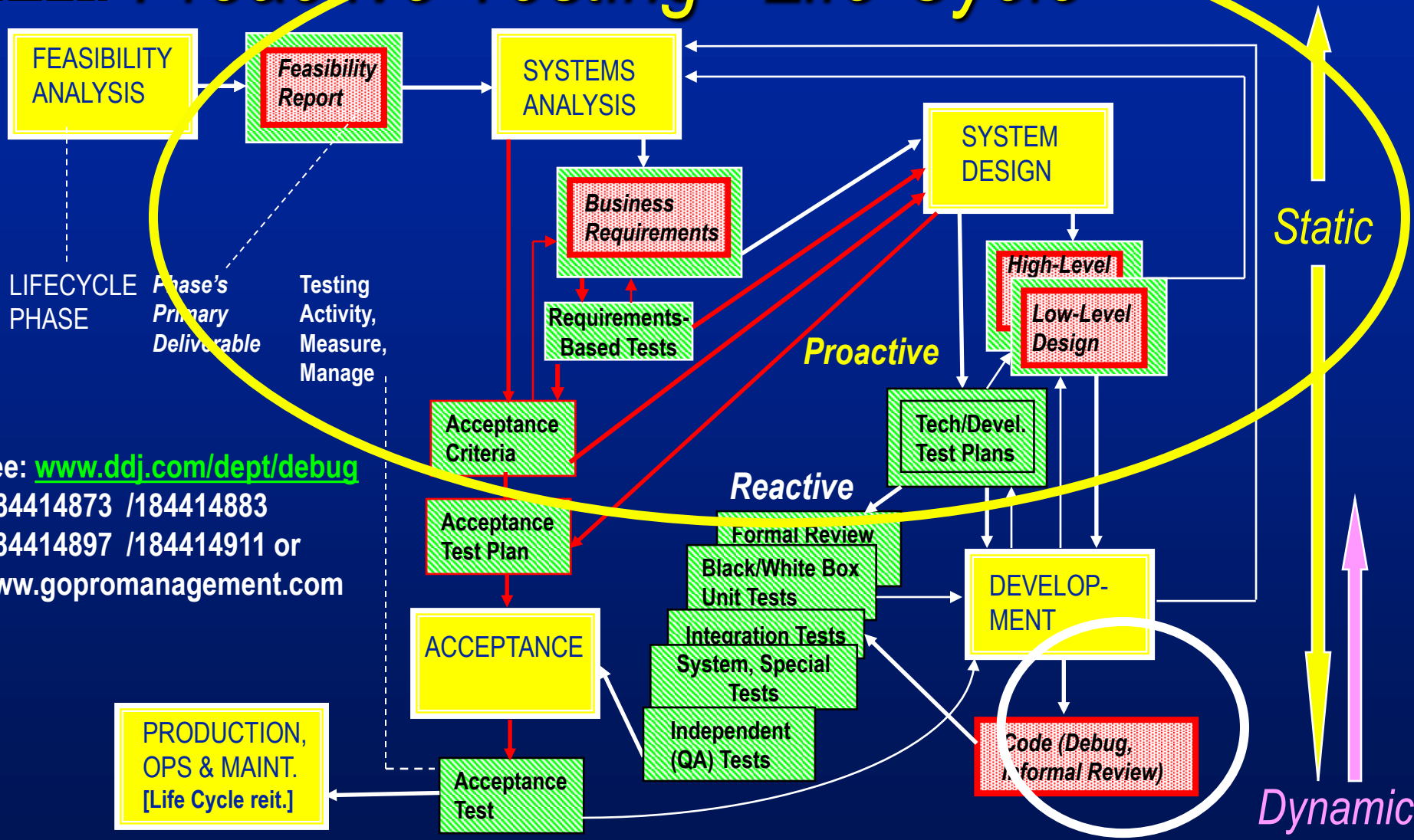
Proactive Testing™ Life Cycle



See: www.ddj.com/dept/debug /184414873 /184414883 /184414897 /184414911 or www.gopromanagement.com

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Key Proactive Testing™ Concepts 1 of 2

- Develop iteratively—whatever size piece is coded should be designed and responsive to adequately defined REAL, *business* requirements, which in turn both should be tested
- Define more complete true user acceptance tests proactively at start, *keep independent of design*
- Use Proactive Testing™, in conjunction with more effective discovery and specification, techniques to improve the accuracy, completeness, and clarity/testability of the requirements and design
  - Write enough to help—but no more, and no less
  - Catch big-picture issues, keep refocusing based on risk

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Key Proactive Testing™ Concepts 2 of 2

- **Let** higher-level (than just code) **testing** planning/design thought processes **drive development** to ***But Agile…***
  - Economically anticipate and avert larger consequences of design issues that ordinarily cause rework
  - Plan for coding/testing early to avoid biggest rework risks as well as implementing immediately useful functionality
  - Increase awareness of more of the frequently-overlooked conditions that code/tests must address
- Plan/design tests early, prioritize, promote reuse
  - Concisely define, detect issues top-down at varying levels
  - Create and apply reusable test designs and test cases
  - Implement selectively based on risk

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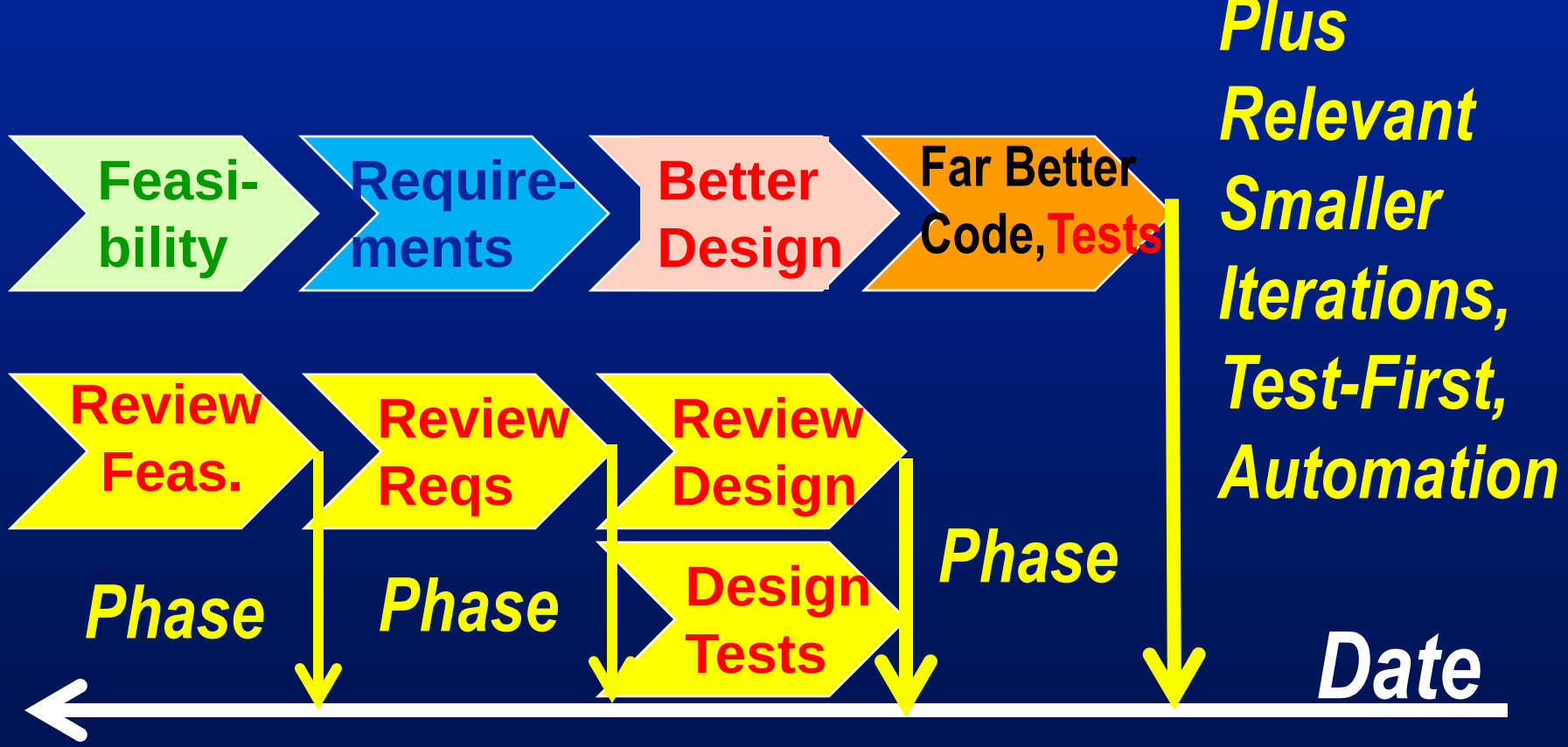
Proactive Test Planning/Design vs. Test-First

Far lower overhead

Prevents errors in first place

Can code tests first too

Proactive Testing™ Shifts Testing Left Both Ways



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Summary

- Most of what is claimed as "shift-left" is mainly coding-based timing gimmicks—okay but only marginally earlier
- Agile test-driven development shifts-left somewhat but still is largely coding-based and thus still relatively late
- Discovering REAL Business Requirements truly up-front prevents the major source of creep, overruns, and errors
- Proactive Testing™ truly early ***static*** techniques
  - 21+ ways to review requirements
  - 15+ ways to review designs
- Proactive Testing™ ***dynamic*** test design techniques
  - Detect and prevent many ordinarily-overlooked defects
  - Selectively test biggest and highest risks more and **earlier**

Hard for Agile's rush to code

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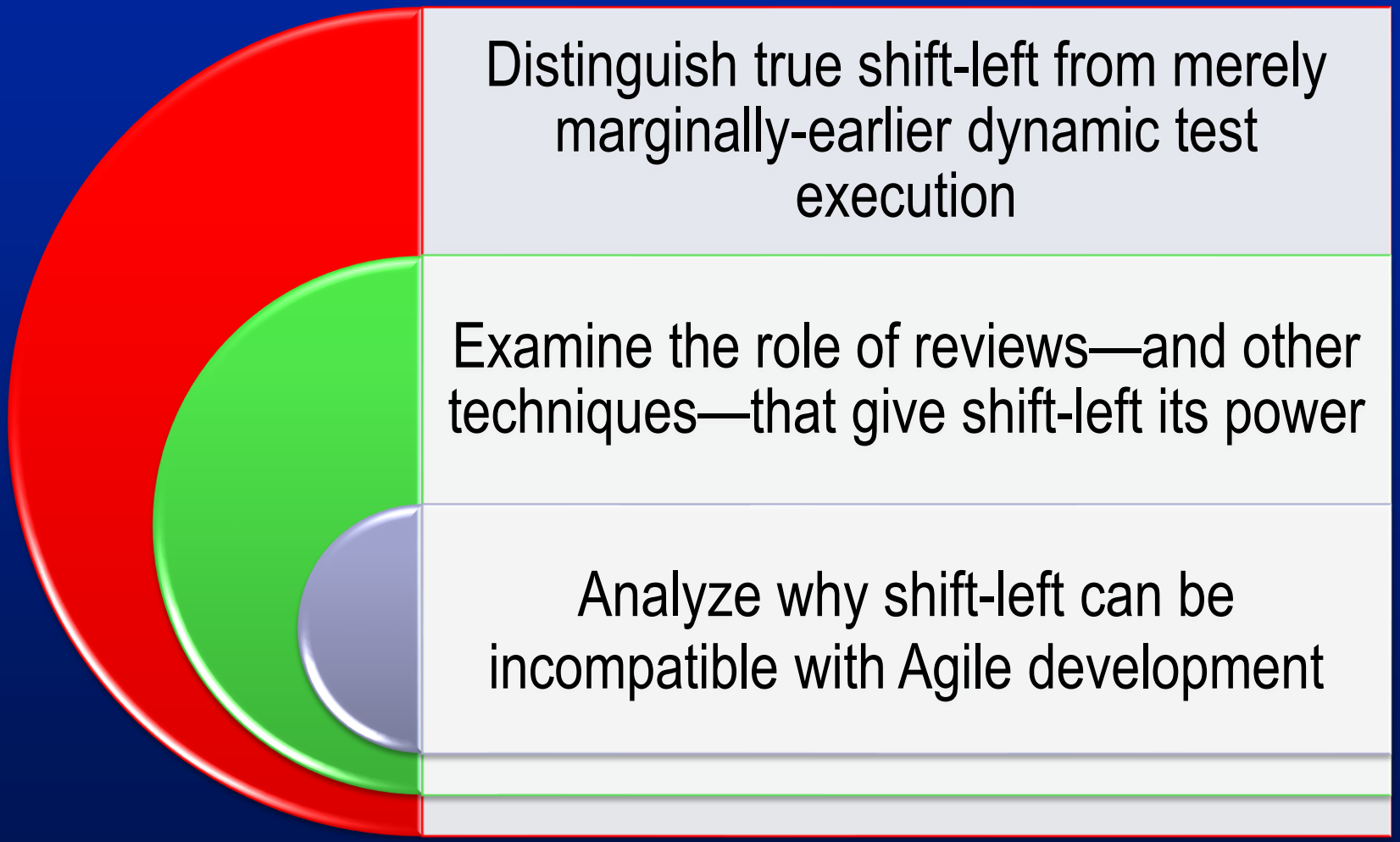
Objectives



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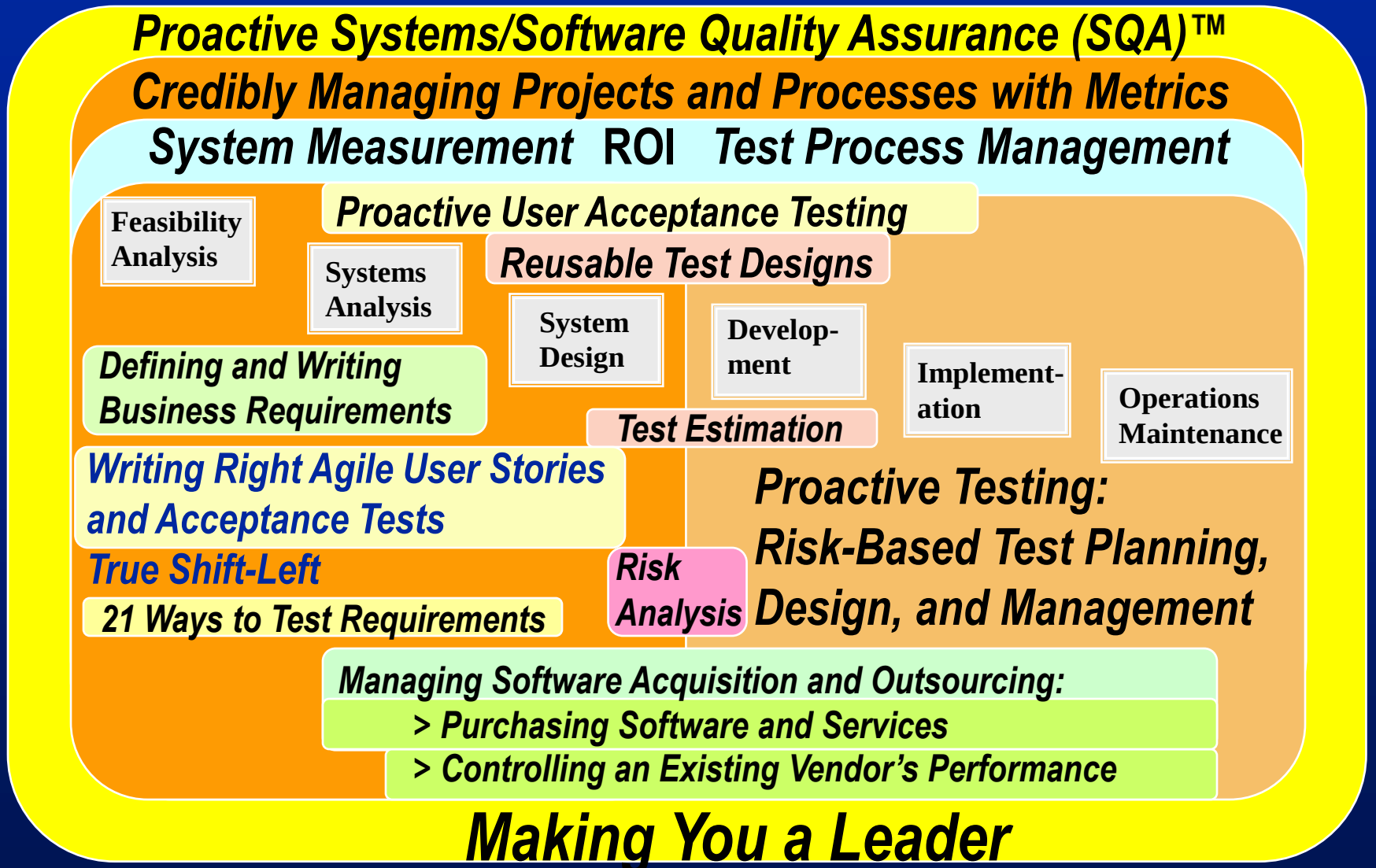
Go Pro Management, Inc. Seminars/Consulting--Relation to Life Cycle



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- President of Go Pro Management, Inc. consultancy since 1982, working directly with and training professionals in business engineering, requirements analysis, software acquisition, project management, quality and testing.
- Partner with ProveIT.net in REAL ROI™ and ROI Value Modeling™.
- Previously a developer, systems programmer/DBA/QA, and project leader with the City of Cleveland, leading financial institutions, and a "Big 4" consulting firm.
- Degrees: Kenyon College, A.B.; Pennsylvania State University, M.S. in Psychology; Suffolk University, J.D.; Boston University, LL.M. in Tax Law.
- Published author and frequent speaker at leading professional conferences.
- Formerly International Vice President of the Association for Systems Management and Executive Editor of the *Journal of Systems Management*.
- Founding Chairman of the New England Center for Organizational Effectiveness.
- Member of the Boston SPIN and SEPG'95 Planning and Program Committees.
- Attendee Networking Coordinator for STAR, Better Software, and Test Automation Conferences.
- Chair of record-setting attendance BOSCON 2000 and 2001, ASQ Boston Section's Annual Quality Conferences.
- Member IEEE Std. 829-2008 for Software Test Documentation Standard Revision Working Group.
- Member IEEE P730-2014, 2024 standard for Software Quality Assurance Revision Working Group.
- Member IEEE P41062-2023 standard for Software Acquisition Working Group
- International Institute of Business Analysis (IIBA) Business Analysis Body of Knowledge (BABOKv2) subject expert.
- TechTarget SearchSoftwareQuality.com requirements and testing expert.
- Admitted to the Massachusetts Bar and licensed to practice law in Massachusetts.
- Author of book: ***Discovering REAL Business Requirements for Software Project Success***
- Author of forthcoming book: ***Cut Creep— Write Right Agile User Stories and Acceptance Tests***

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