

**in praise of**

**RIGIDITY**

**James Ross**

**CTO @ Envato**

**@jimmyjazz68**



**envato**

**AGILITY**

# AGILITY

nimbleness, deftness,  
dexterity, liveliness,  
sprightliness

**RIGIDITY**

# **RIGIDITY**

**solidity, hardness,  
stringency, stiffness,  
inflexibility**

A photograph of three speed skaters in a race, viewed from behind. They are wearing aerodynamic suits and helmets, leaning forward on their skis on an ice track. The image is semi-transparent, serving as a background for the text.

**no wonder we love**

**AGILITY**





**but what if we're  
missing  
something?**

**what if we're**  
**not seeing**  
**the whole picture?**



**the hypothesis**

**there is no**  
**AGILITY**  
**without**  
**RIGIDITY**  
**to support it**

**the examples**

**agile** software

**agile** wetware

**agile** systems

**agile** relationships

**event sourcing**

**concept maps**

**theory of constraints**

**crucial conversations**



**event sourcing**

**what is it?**

# TL;DR

event sourcing means that all truth in your system is captured as an append-only series of immutable business events

**TL;DR**

**no UPDATE**

**no DELETE**

**only INSERT and SELECT**



**an example**

**how does it support**

**AGILITY?**

by never **throwing** any data **away**

**event sourcing**

lets you **build** a **time machine** and

**reinterpret history** **whenever** you

**come up with** a **new idea** **you want to try**

how does it demand  
**RIGIDITY?**



**you must not**

**modify your events.**

**if you do,**

**all bets are off**



**agile interpretations**

**of**

**hard facts**

**what does it mean**

**for**

**you?**

**choose carefully**

**and**

**communicate clearly**

**your**

**system's hard edges**

**concept maps**

**what are they?**

# TL;DR

**a** concept map **is a** visual glossary  
**of the** specialised language  
**of your** problem domain

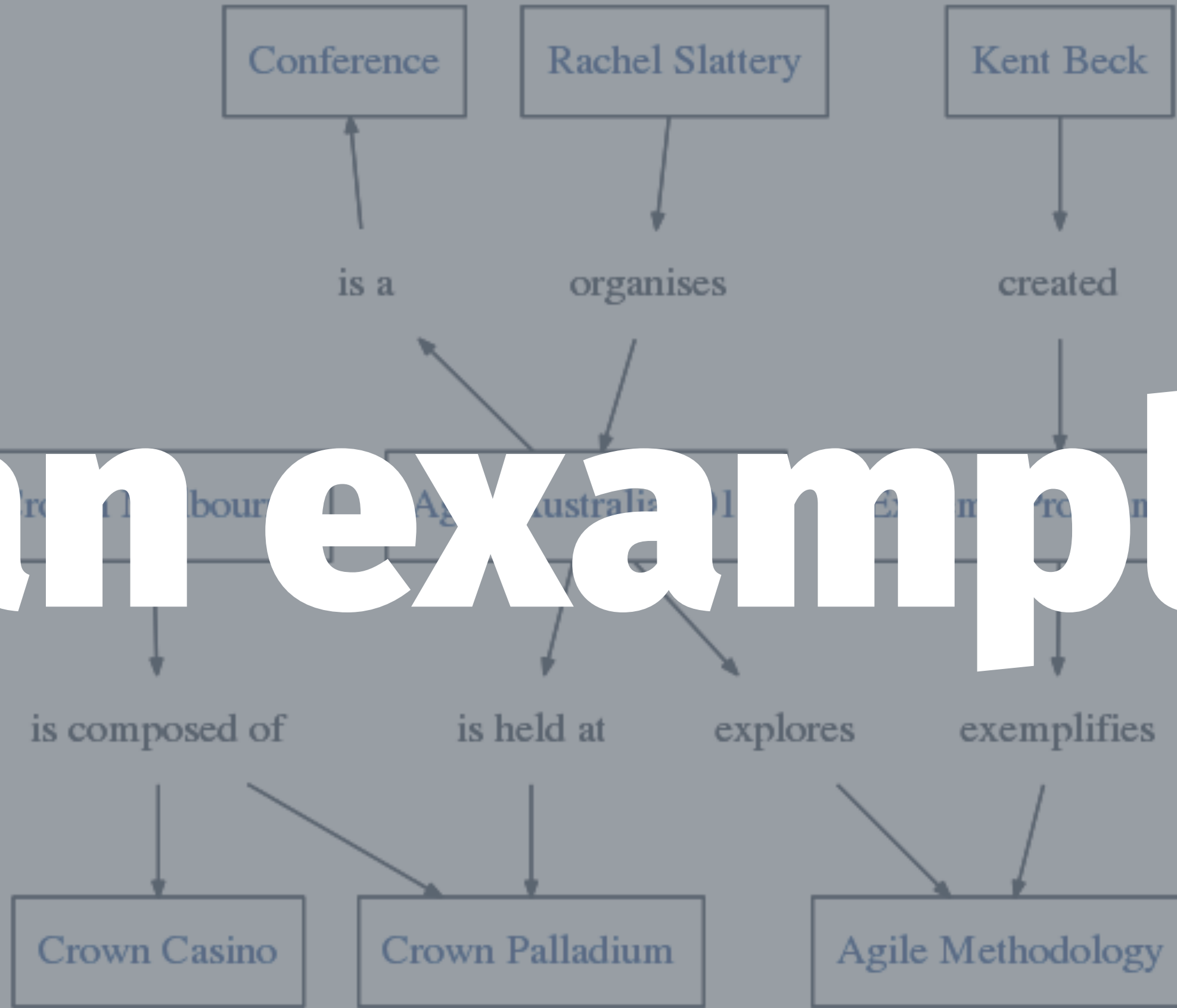
# TL;DR

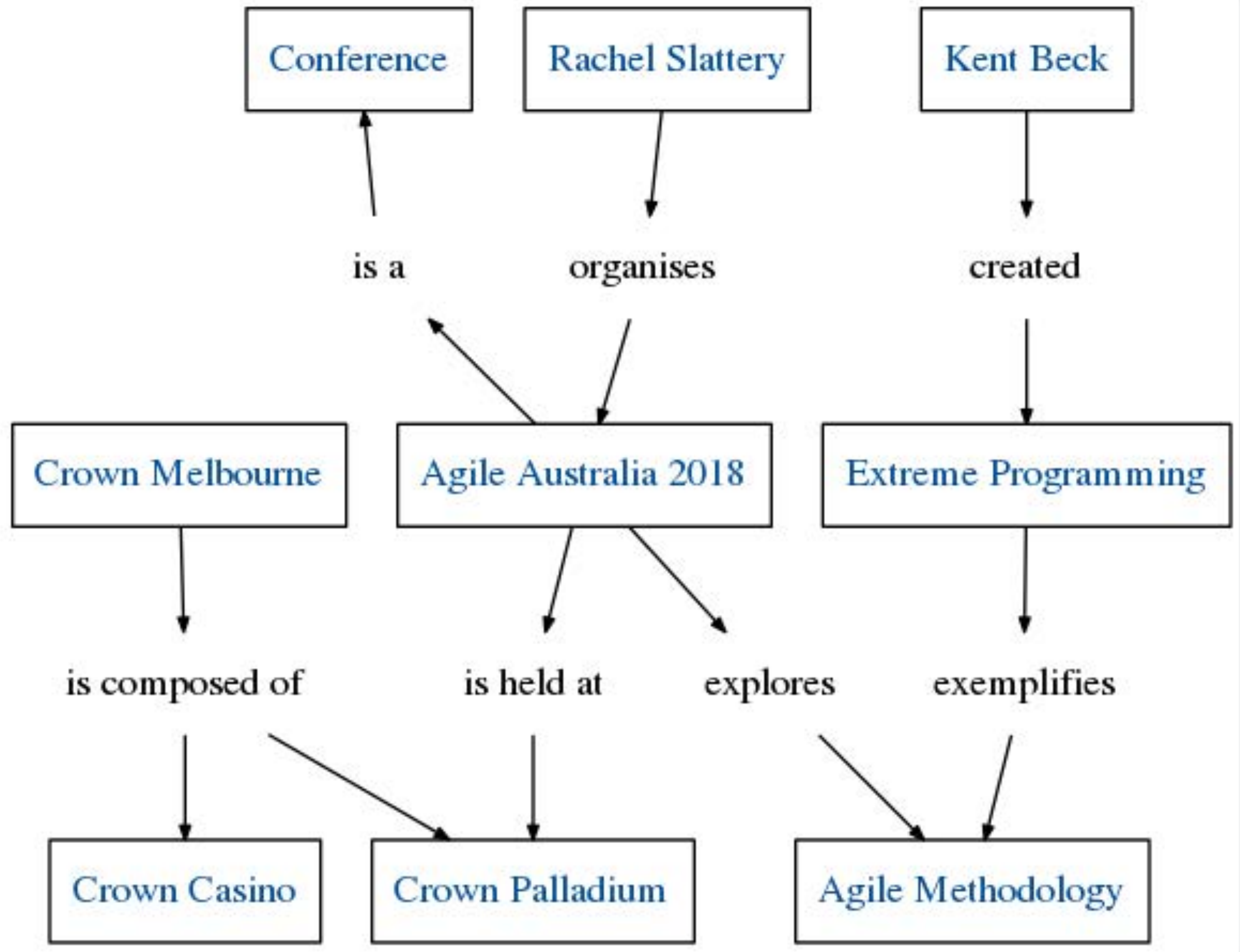
**a concept map is just  
a collection of propositions.**

**A proposition is just  
a sentence that uses a verb  
to connect two nouns (concepts)**



# an example





# source code

Agile Australia 2018 explores Agile Methodology

Agile Australia 2018 is a Conference

Agile Australia 2018 is held at Crown Palladium

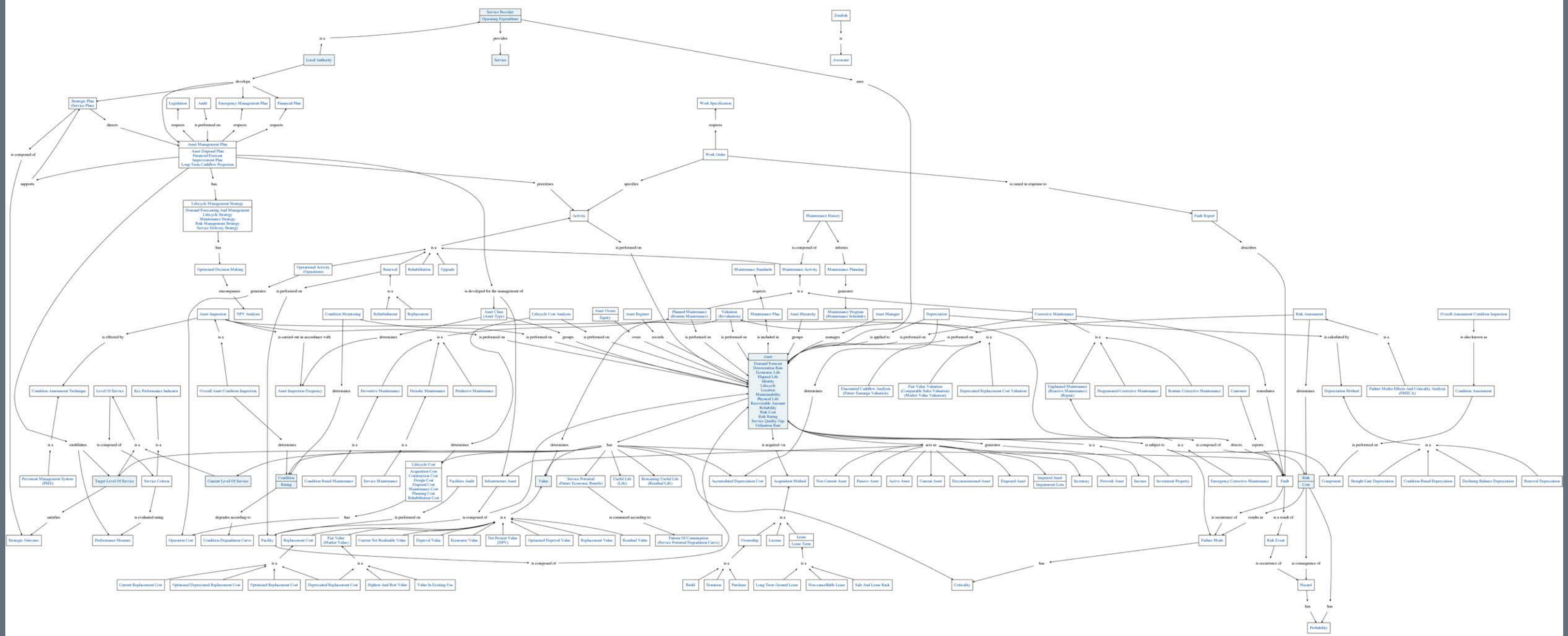
Crown Melbourne is composed of Crown Casino

Crown Melbourne is composed of Crown Palladium

Extreme Programming exemplifies Agile Methodology

Kent Beck created Extreme Programming

Rachel Slattery organises Agile Australia 2018



**how does it support**

**AGILITY?**

**by increasing the speed, effectiveness  
and correctness of sharing domain knowledge**

**concept maps**

**increase the speed, effectiveness  
and correctness of development efforts**

how does it demand  
**RIGIDITY?**

**the core concepts in your domain**

**do not change**

**and are not open to**

**interpretation**





**accelerated understanding**  
**of**  
**strict meaning**

**what does it mean**

**for**

**you?**

**provide clarity**

**and**

**demand consistency**

**your**

**team's communication**

**theory of constraints**

**what is it?**

# TL;DR

ToC is a management paradigm that sees any system as being limited in the achievement of its goal by a single constraint at any time

# TL;DR

ToC **adopts a**

**process of ongoing improvement**

**based on identifying the constraint**

**and reorganising everything else around it**

# TL;DR

**IDENTIFY** the constraint

**EXPLOIT** the constraint

**SUBORDINATE** everything to the constraint

**ELEVATE** the constraint

**RINSE & REPEAT**



# an example

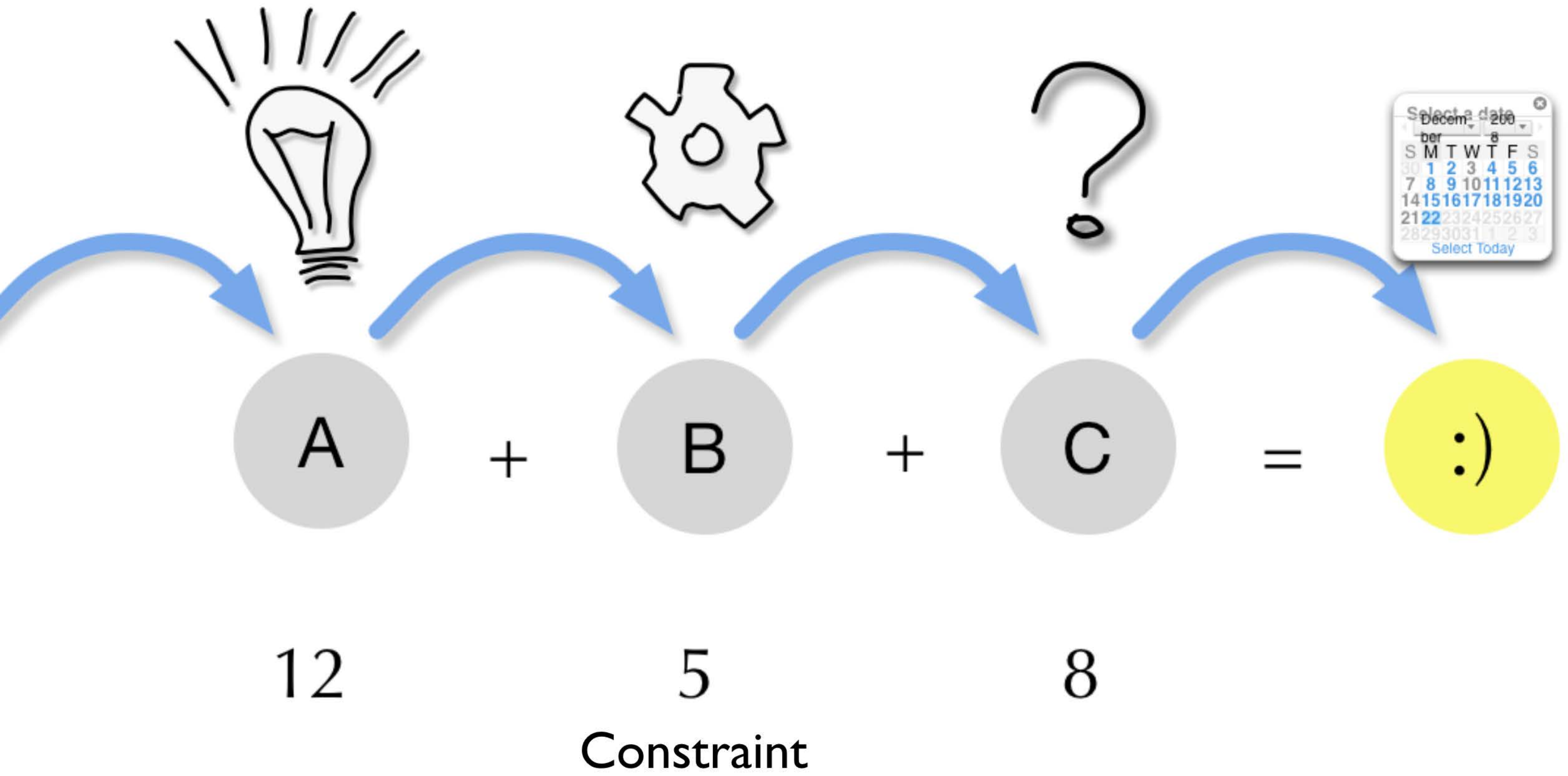
12

5

8

Constraint





**how does it support**

**AGILITY?**

**actually, that's the wrong question :)**

# ToC

**is instead supported by agile methods,  
applying them to elevate the constraint  
(step 4 of its 5 step improvement process)**

how does it demand  
**RIGIDITY?**

**anything you do  
to improve something that is  
not a constraint  
is a complete  
waste of time**

A background image showing three speed skaters in a race on an ice rink. The skaters are wearing aerodynamic suits and helmets, leaning forward in a racing posture. The image is semi-transparent, allowing the text to be overlaid.

**agile systems**

**through**

**stringent focus**

**what does it mean**

**for**

**you?**



**stop wasting time**

**applying**

**agile techniques**

**to things that**

**don't matter**

**crucial conversations**

**what is it?**

# TL;DR

crucial conversations **is a book**  
**that describes a set of tools**  
**for talking when** stakes are high

# TL;DR

**everyone has a path to action with 4 stages:  
observation -> interpretation -> feeling -> action**

**or**

**facts -> story -> feeling -> action**

The image shows three individuals from the chest up, each holding a white rectangular card in front of their face. The person on the left holds a card with a simple line drawing of a smiling face. The person in the middle holds a card with a simple line drawing of a sad face. The person on the right holds a card with a simple line drawing of a neutral face. The background is a solid, muted blue-grey color. Overlaid on the center of the image is the text 'an example' in a large, white, sans-serif font.

**an example**

**how does it support**

**AGILITY?**

**by broadening our perspective and  
building a pool of shared meaning  
crucial conversations  
breaks down walls and builds bridges  
between individuals and teams**



how does it demand  
**RIGIDITY?**

by

**strictly separating**

**observable facts**

from

**personal interpretations**

The background of the image shows several speed skaters in motion on an ice rink. They are wearing aerodynamic suits in various colors like blue, white, and red. The skaters are leaning forward in a racing posture, and their skates are visible on the ice surface. The overall scene is dynamic and conveys a sense of speed and competition.

**agile relationships**

**through**

**agile interpretations**

**of**

**hard facts**

**what does it mean**

**for**

**you?**

**learn to**

**share your path**

**and ask others to**

**share theirs**

**in praise of**

**RIGIDITY**

**in praise of**

**BALANCE**

**AGILITY <-> RIGIDITY**

**questions**

