

01
YOU ARE
YOUR OWN
SCOPE CREEP

THE STORY

A leader was building a capacity planner.

He showed me what he had and asked:

“What do you think?”

As he walked me through it, I realized the problem was not the capacity planner itself.

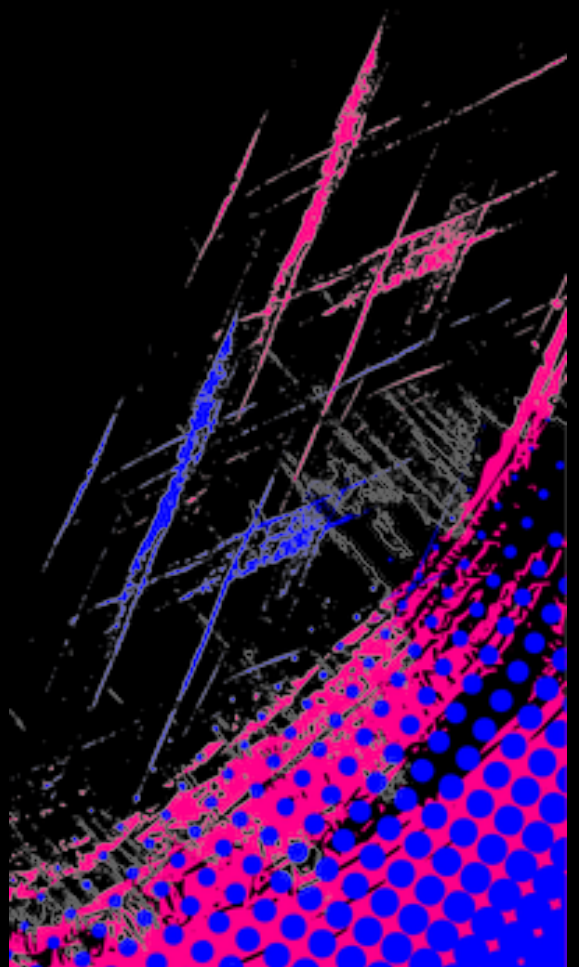
The problem was that he was trying to build the capacity planner and solve project management inside of it at the same time.

Nothing was live yet, but the work was already moving in too many directions.

I told him:

“What you are currently building is way more than a capacity planner. I think you need to narrow the scope. You are your own scope creep.”

Then we narrowed it into Phase 1.



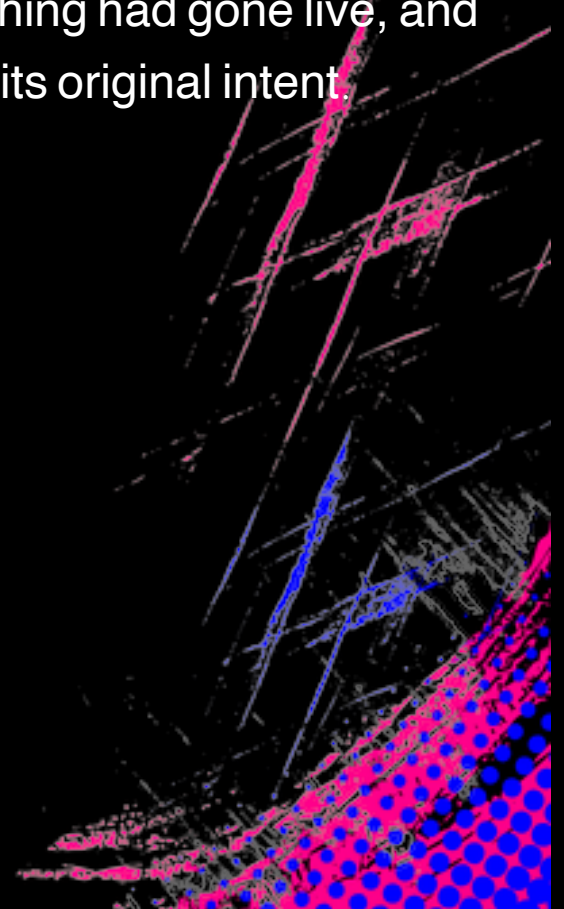
THEMES

The scope was too big.

The capacity planner was still being built, but additional project-management functionality was being pulled into the same effort.

There were too many directions to pursue at once, too many things to build before anything had gone live, and the work had expanded beyond its original intent.

The project needed structure.



THE ANCHOR

The capacity planner itself.

That was the thing the work needed to orient around.

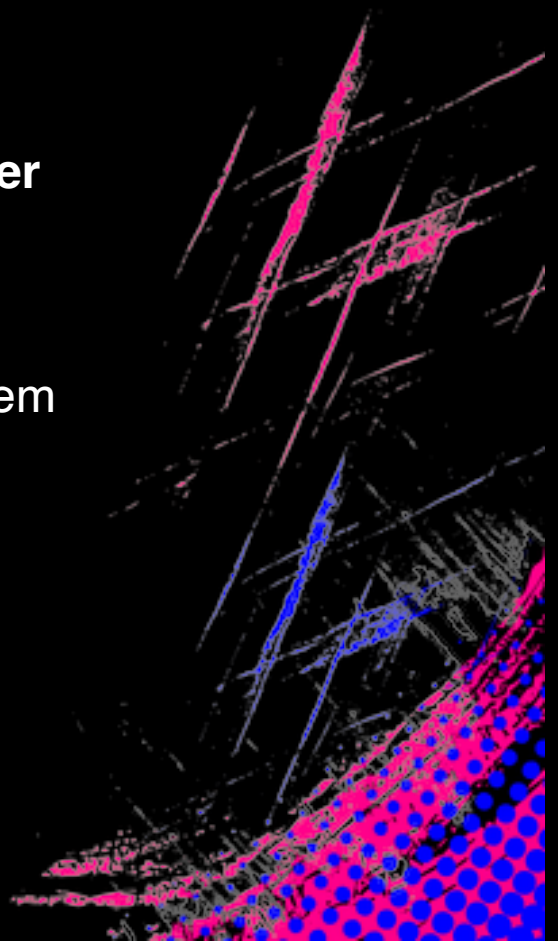
Once the anchor was clear, the question became simpler:

What does the capacity planner need in order to work?

Not everything the broader system could eventually do.

Not every problem that might be solved later.

What does this thing need first?



THE SIGNALS

The signals were already inside the work.

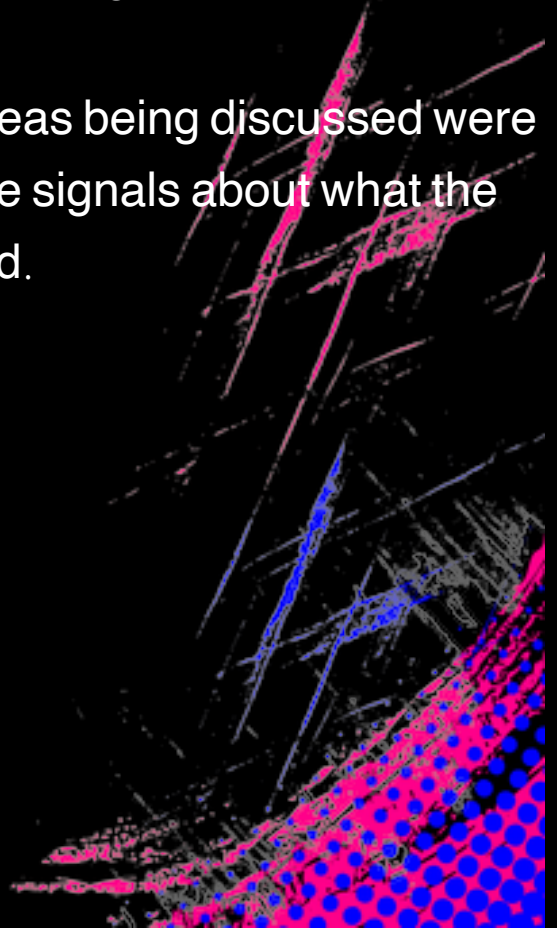
There were too many directions.

Too many things being built at once.

Nothing was live yet.

The scope had moved beyond the original intent.

At the same time, some of the ideas being discussed were not scope creep at all. They were signals about what the capacity planner actually needed.



THE SIGNALS

For example, I identified **project permissions** and **team permissions** as part of the structure.

Then we looked at team allocation.

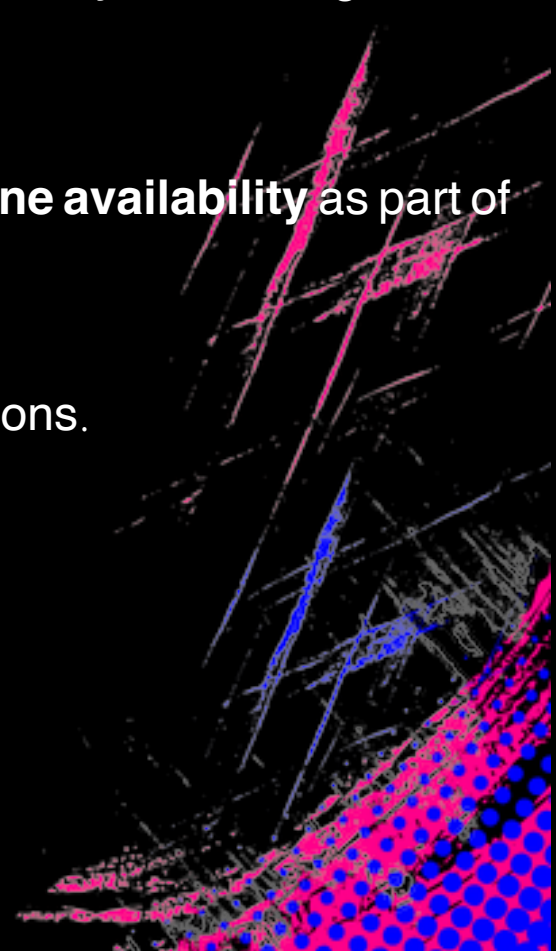
Capacity could not simply mean that someone had hours available.

If a team member was working in another timezone, their availability also depended on when they could actually work with the people and projects they were being assigned to.

So I suggested including **timezone availability** as part of team allocation.

Those were not additional directions.

They supported the anchor.



ORIENTATION

The project did not need to solve capacity planning and project management all at once.

It needed to become a working capacity planner first.

That became the orientation point.

From there, we could distinguish between:

What supports the capacity planner now

and

What belongs somewhere else or later.

That distinction gave the project structure.

We identified a Phase 1 around the core capacity planning need and moved the additional project management work out of the immediate scope.



MOTION

Now there was a clear first thing to build.

The project had a Phase 1.

The necessary pieces of the capacity planner were clearer.

The additional project-management ideas did not disappear, but they no longer had to compete with the core work for attention.

Within about 20 minutes, the work had moved from:

too many directions at once

to

a defined first phase with a clear purpose.



MOTION

At the end, he said:

“That’s why I need you.”

And something else stood out to me.

I did not take over the project.

I did not become responsible for managing it.

I did not take the notes.

He did.

My role was to look at what was there, recognize the mess, find the anchor, read the signals, establish an orientation point, and help him see the next move.

That is Clarity Architecture in practice.

