

# Tips and tricks for managing WordPress projects

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# A little about me

I'm a freelancer in Bristol with different skillsets:

- Coding and web development (mainly WordPress)
- Project management and process change
- Training



I'm also the co-organiser of the  
Bristol WordPress community

[wpbristol.co.uk](http://wpbristol.co.uk)



# Oh, and I really like dogs

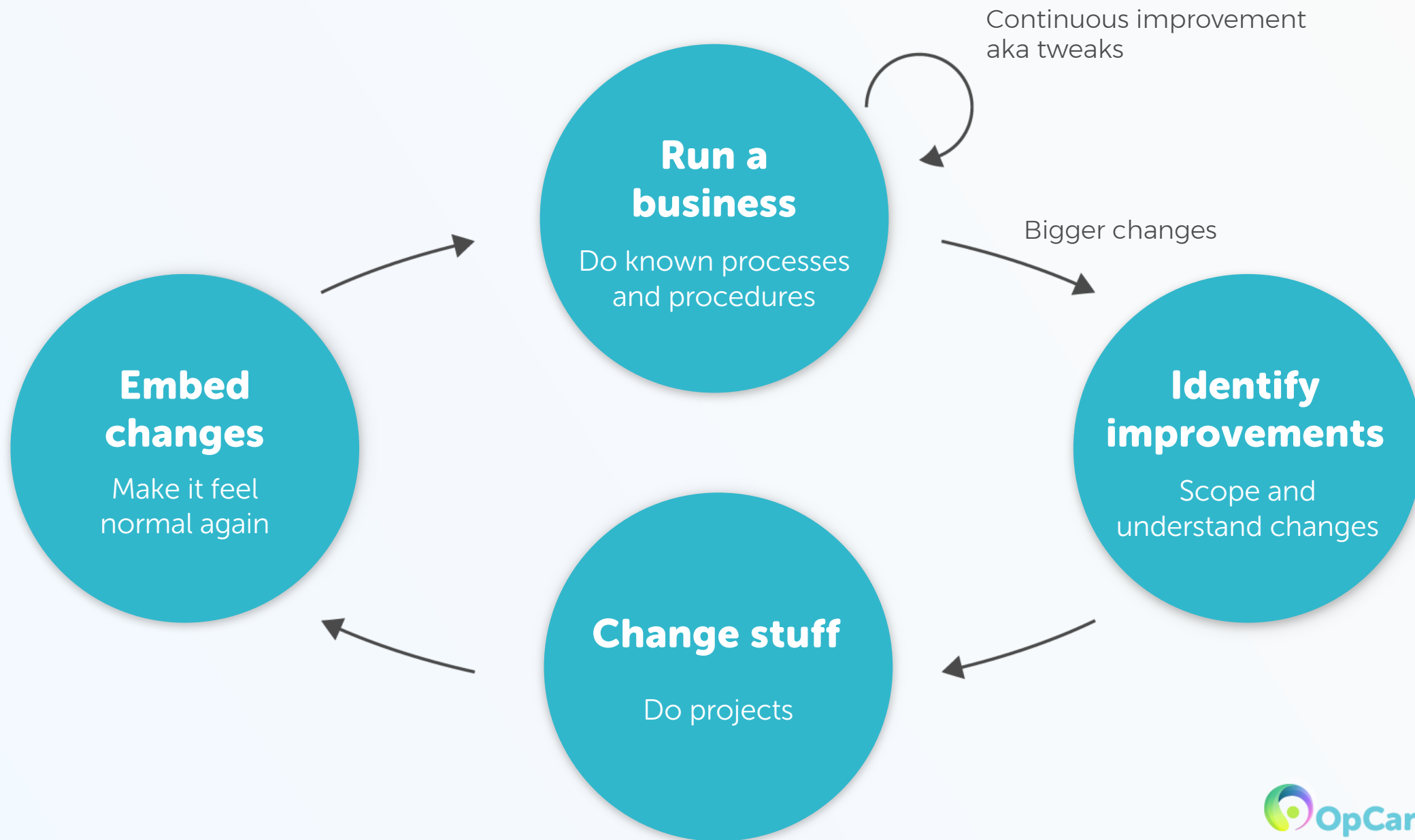


This is Lili (she's the real boss)

# Context of talk

- Written for individuals or teams working with **clients**
- My six tips focus on **behaviours** and **habits**, rather than process and tools

**Tip #1 – Know that projects are hard,  
because change is hard**



# The great unknown

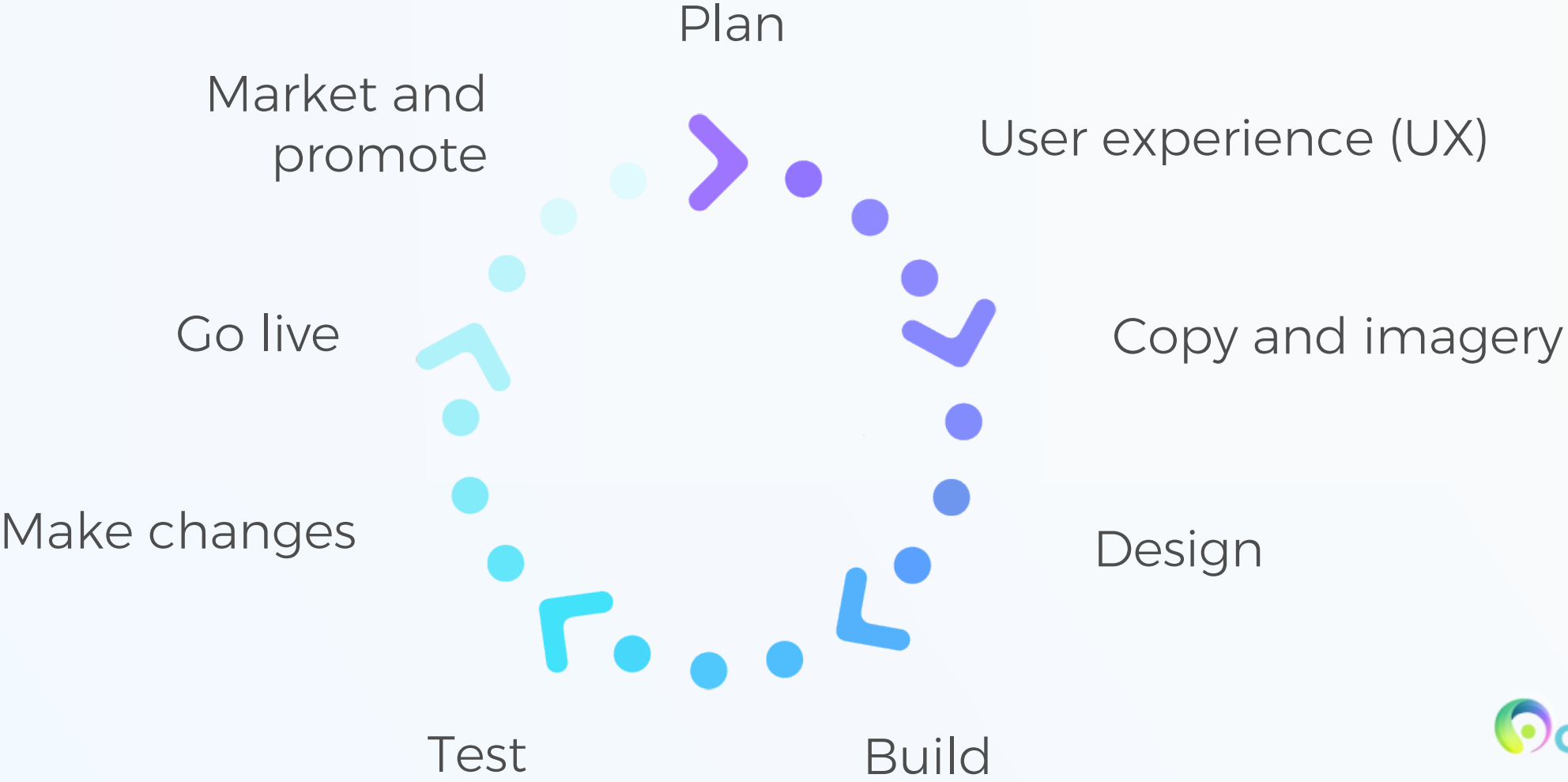
- ▶ Projects of any type are **unpredictable** and full of **unknowns**
- ▶ Software is especially **challenging**, not just for the developer but also for the business having to work with the new features

# Eyes wide open

- You and your client need to understand what you are about to do is **potentially hard**
- The time you **invest upfront** educating your client will pay dividends later down the line

**Tip #2 – Ensure decisions get made at the right times**

# A typical project process



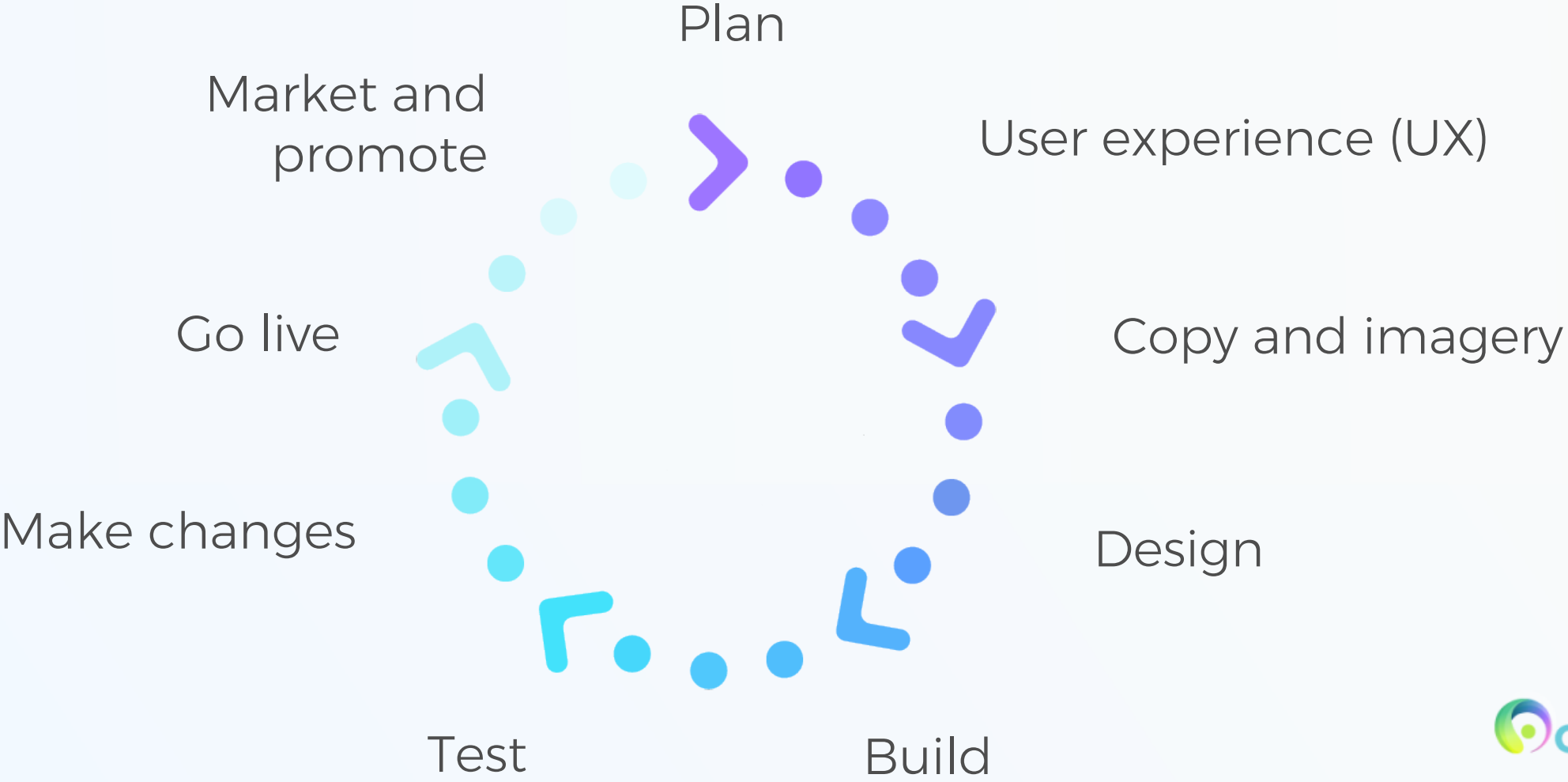
# Don't be a slave to the process

- The process is **not** something to live and die by
- Strive to **do it in order**, and go back and revisit when you learn something new

# Grumpy developers (builders)



# A typical project process



# Grumpy developers (builders)

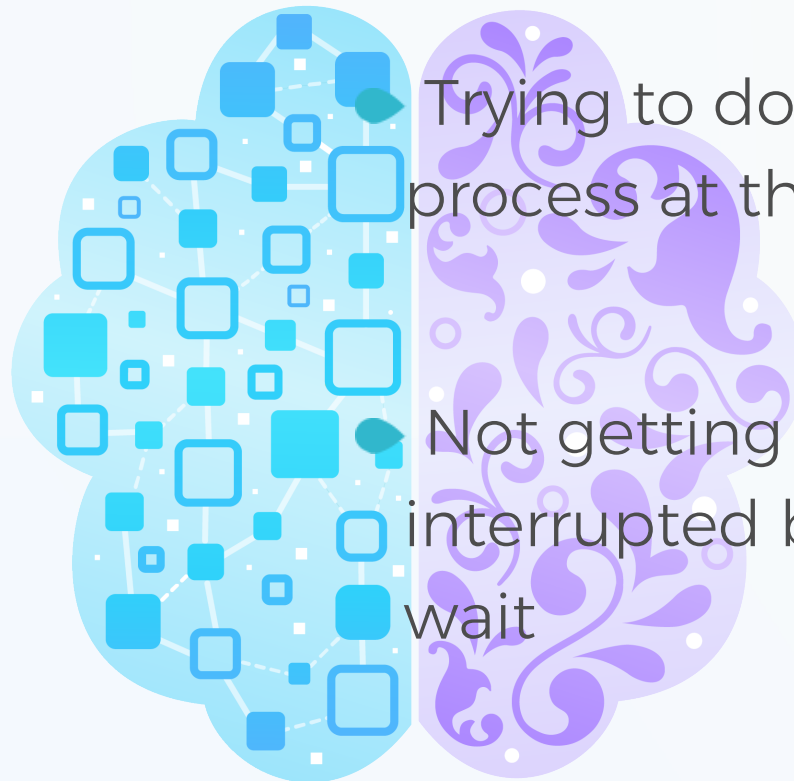
- ▶ Developers are at the bottom of the pile
- ▶ If previous steps haven't been thought through, it will become really obvious during build

# Make others aware of the importance of order

- Upfront conversations about the consequences of not thinking through each stage as best you can

**Tip #3 – Be kind to yourself, avoid  
split brain**

# What is split brain?



Trying to do **different stages** of the process at the same time

Not getting into **flow** and being interrupted by things that can wait

# Defeating split brain

- ▶ Schedule time in your diary to **consciously focus** on one thing at a time
- ▶ **Tell others** if you need to concentrate and say when it will be ok to interrupt you
- ▶ Turn off **distractions** - emails, Slack, social media etc

**Tip #4 – Deliver little and often**

# Have an agile mindset

- ▶ Agile is an **approach to project management** that focusses on ways of working and team culture
- ▶ A key part of the agile approach is to **deliver small** features or small changes as often as possible

# Make your milestones small

- Find the smallest thing of **value** you can create and focus on that (also helps with split brain)
- Look for discrete changes that are **actually usable**, even if they be improved at a later date

# Practice makes perfect

- Identification of appropriately sized features or changes comes with **practice**

**Tip #5 – Be open with your clients**

# Can you treat your client like a team member?

- Make sure your client knows what you are working on
- Ask them to try using your features as early as you can
- Be honest if you are behind as soon as you know it



knowledge  
POWER <sup>is</sup>



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**Tip #6 – Don't fight change, embrace it**

# Change is inevitable

Despite all your best laid plans, things will change:

- ▶ Your client may want something different
- ▶ You can suggest better ways of doing something
- ▶ Testing throws up things you missed

# Planning for change

Include time in your plan for dealing with change, following:

- ▶ Every round of testing
- ▶ Before launch
- ▶ After launch

Did anyone in the history of everything ever complain about **early delivery**?

# £ Quoting for change

In your quote, include a line item for dealing with change

- ▶ I usually add between **10% and 25%** to my build costs
- ▶ The amount varies depending on **how confident** I am that the client knows what they need
- ▶ If we don't use all the time, I **bill the client less**



# Thank you!

Stay in touch:

► Twitter - @hanOpCan

► LinkedIn - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/OpCan>

# Questions?

