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Scaling a Team Tenfold

How to stay sane as a frontend team lead on the acquisition team



Saint Teamlead Conf

Tinkoff.ru

Speaker

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Frontend team lead, customer acquisition, Tinkoff.ru

What this talk is about

Five steps that reshaped the frontend architecture, the team structure, and the team lead's duties.

Focus

Frontend of the ↗ tinkoff.ru unauthenticated zone

Scale

Team 4 → 40, team leads 1 → ~10

Context

Tinkoff.ru acquisition

What we owned and what the business wanted

One frontend for all of tinkoff.ru

- Unauthenticated zone and internet bank
- Stakeholders — all business units
- Path from click to application
- Growing stream of requests

The business wants it all at once

Business goals Acquisition

At scale, cheaply

Clients in volume, at a price

Usable UI/UX

A modern path from click to application

Scalable processes

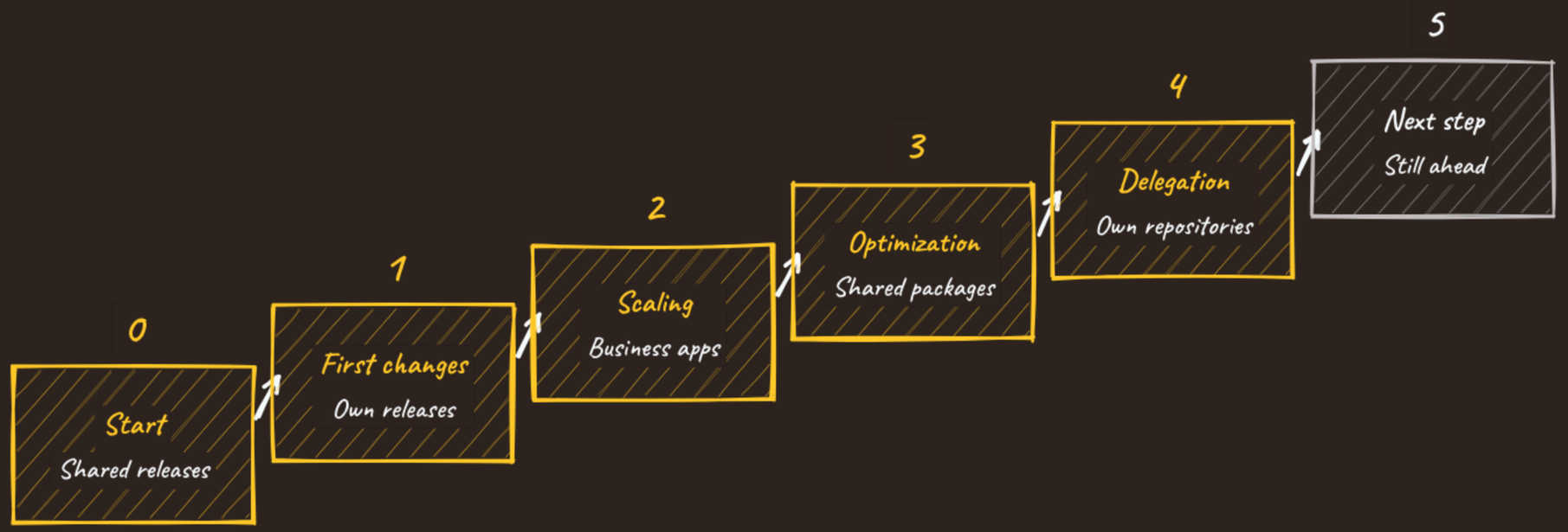
Campaigns and tests without releases

Manage content without releases

Technical goals Release-free

- Build product pages
- A/B tests and personalization
- Launch campaigns fast
- Measure the effect

Team and architecture grow together



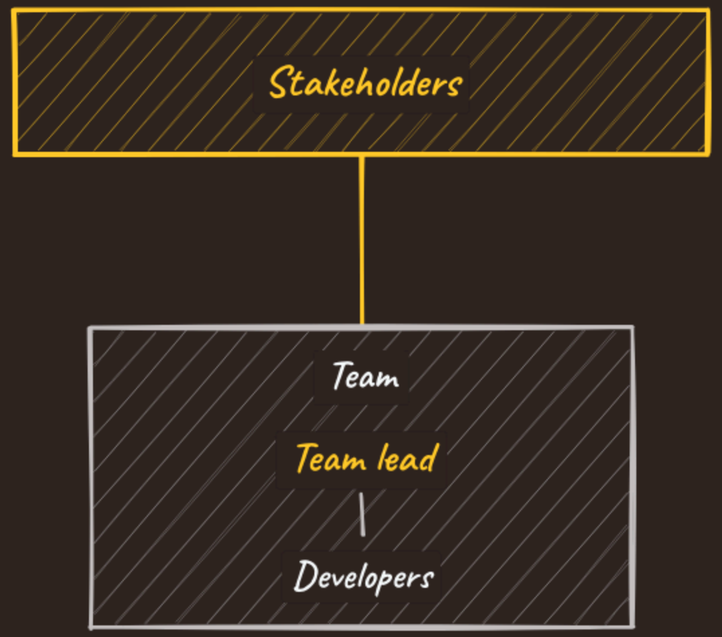
Step 0

00

Where it all began

A monolith with shared releases — one team for everything

One lead does everything



Lines show working relationships

Step 1

01

First improvements

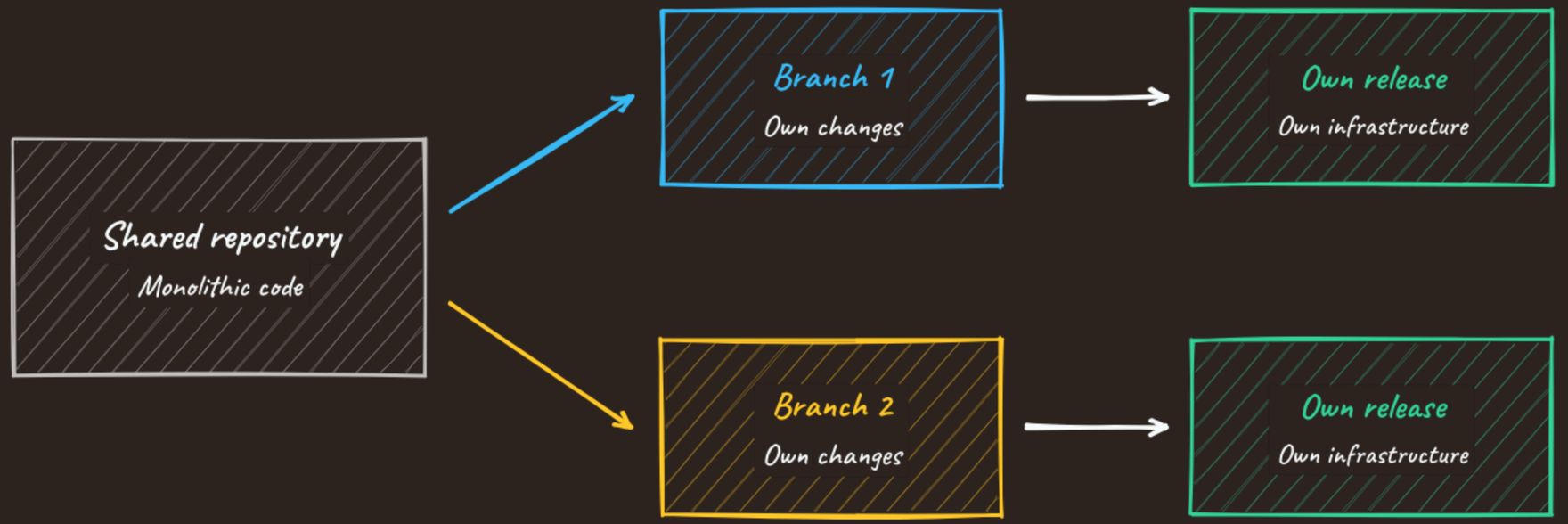
A buffer in front of stakeholders, and our own releases

The lead loses focus

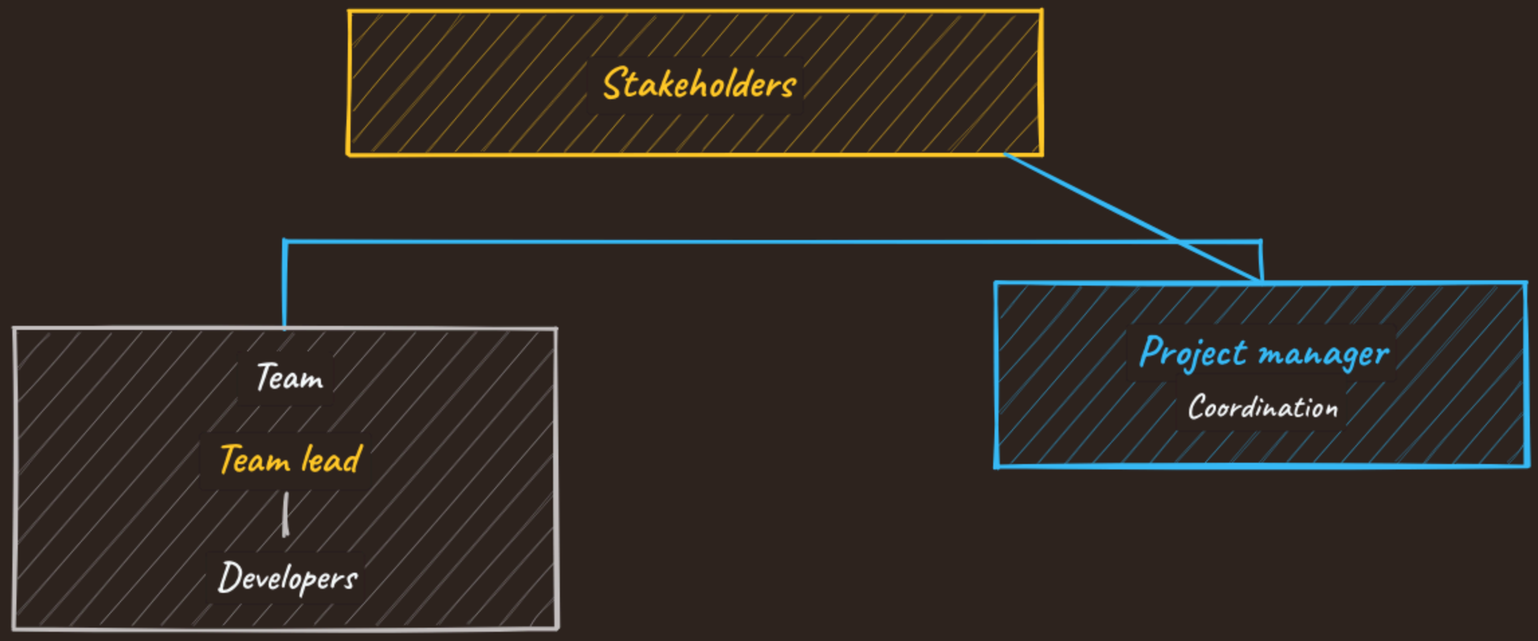
Step 1 · problem Focus

- Stakeholder communication
- Code and deploys
- Too many contexts

Our own releases, our own branch



A project manager appears



Lines show working relationships

Step 2

02

Scaling as-is

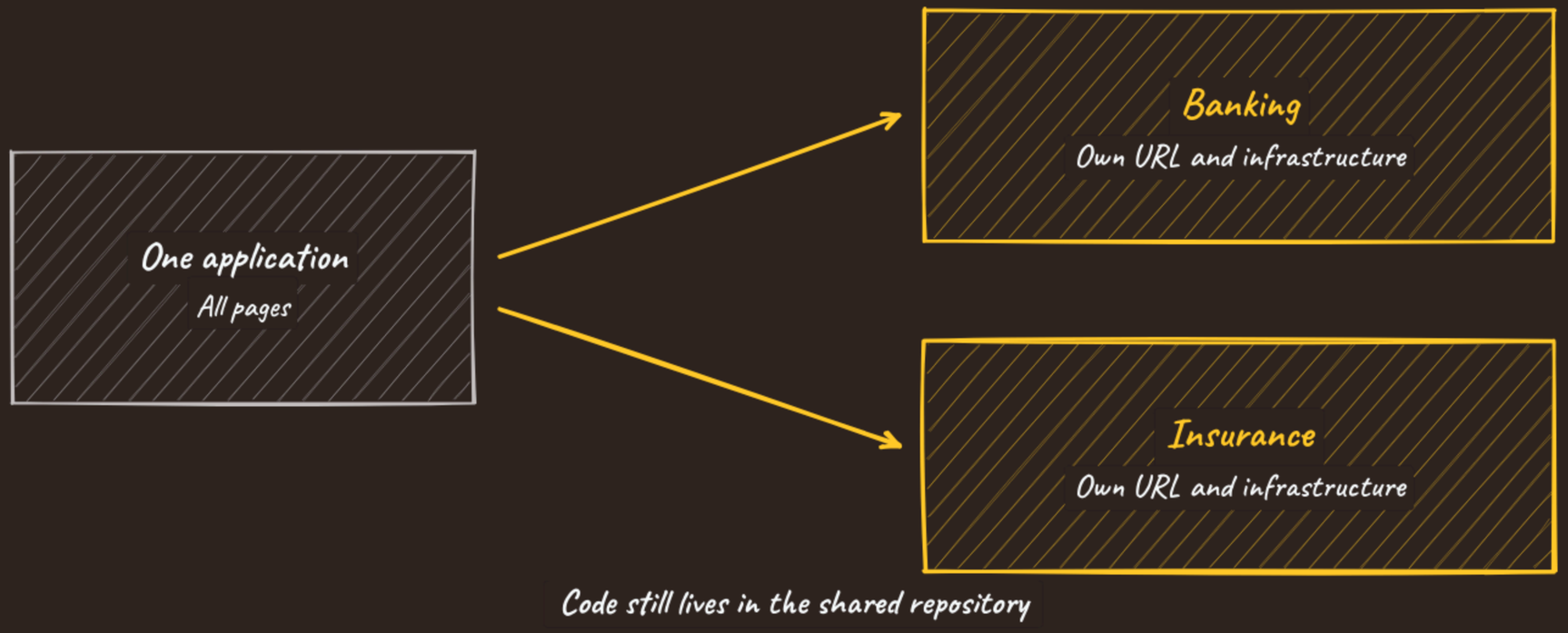
Split the app and the team by product

The team hits a ceiling

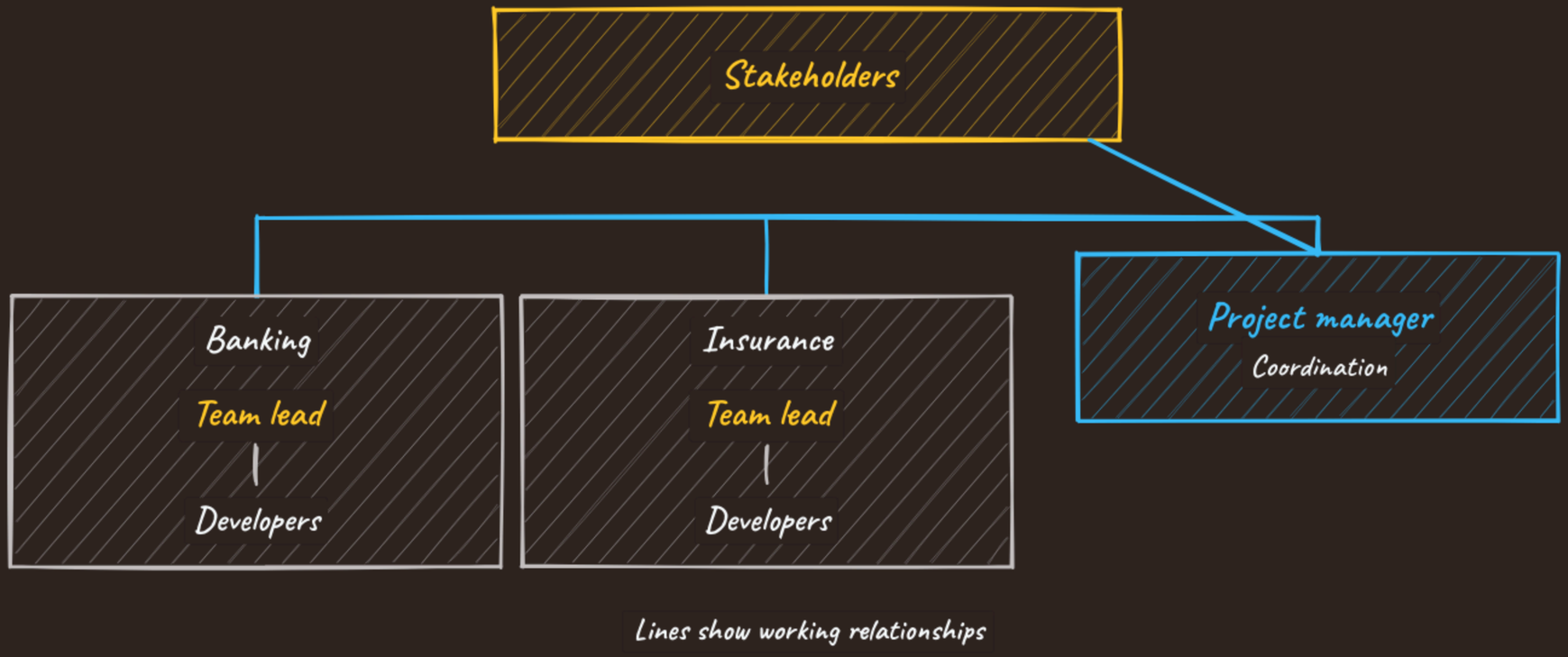
Step 2 · problem Scale

- More developers and QA
- Growing task volume
- One lead as the bottleneck

Splitting the app into business parts



Two streams: banking and insurance



Grow inside, hire outside

Finding leads People

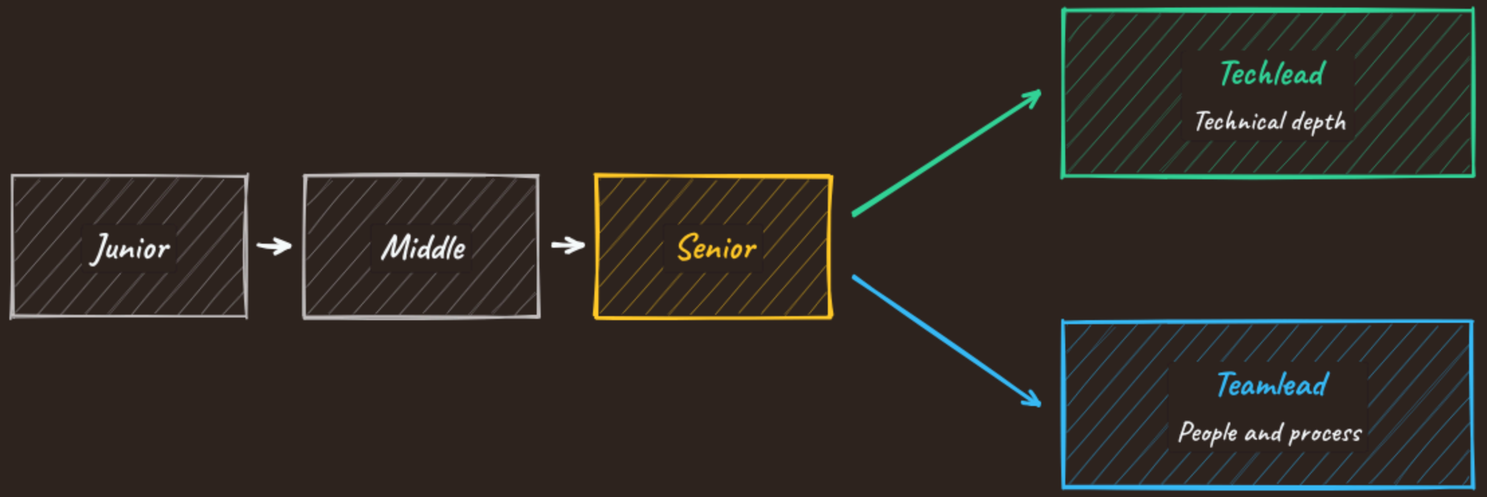
Inside the company

- performance review of developers
- potential tech and team leads

Outside the company

- candidate requirements
- a dedicated hiring track

After Senior: technical or team leadership?



Step 3

03

Optimizing the effort

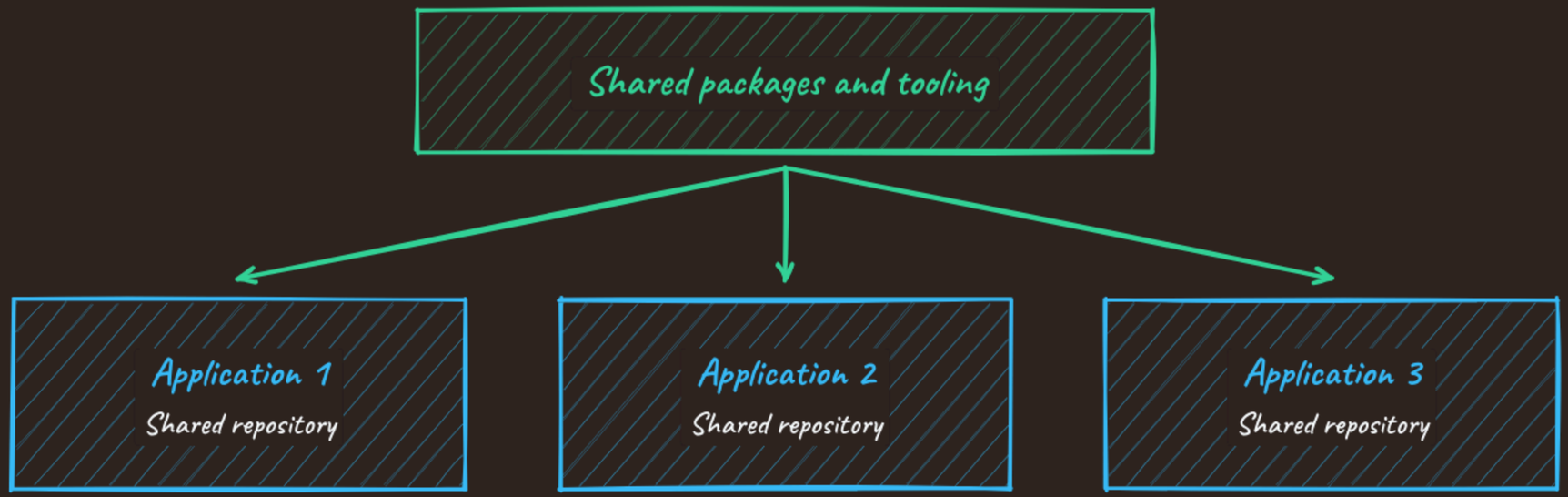
Shared parts into packages, org work to release managers

Duplicating shared work

Step 3 · problem Duplication

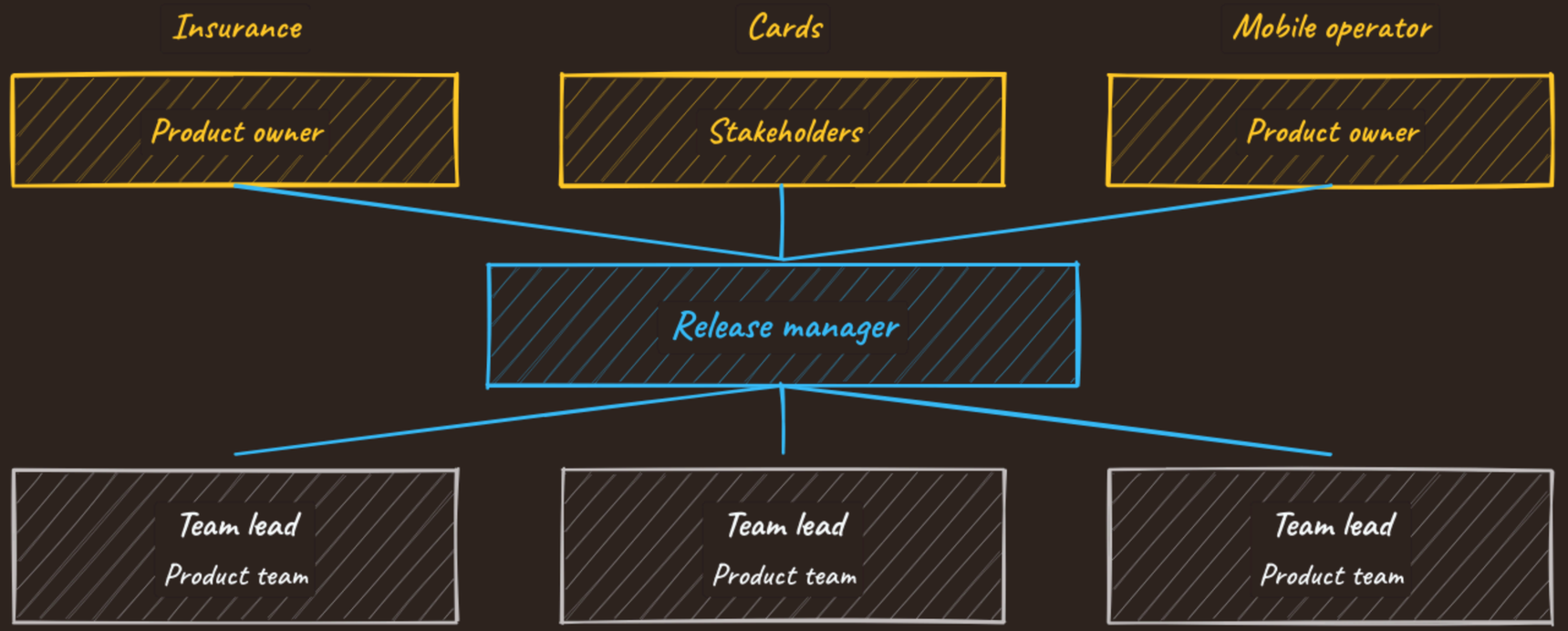
- More teams now
- Each builds its own
- Same forms rebuilt again

Shared parts into packages



Reuse through dependencies

Release managers take work off the leads



Processes Metrics

Growth quietly degrades everything

What we started measuring so quality wouldn’t slip as we grew

Volume

Functionality per release

Speed

Average time to release

Quality

Escaped defects

Step 4

04

Delegating ownership

Separate repositories and clear ownership boundaries

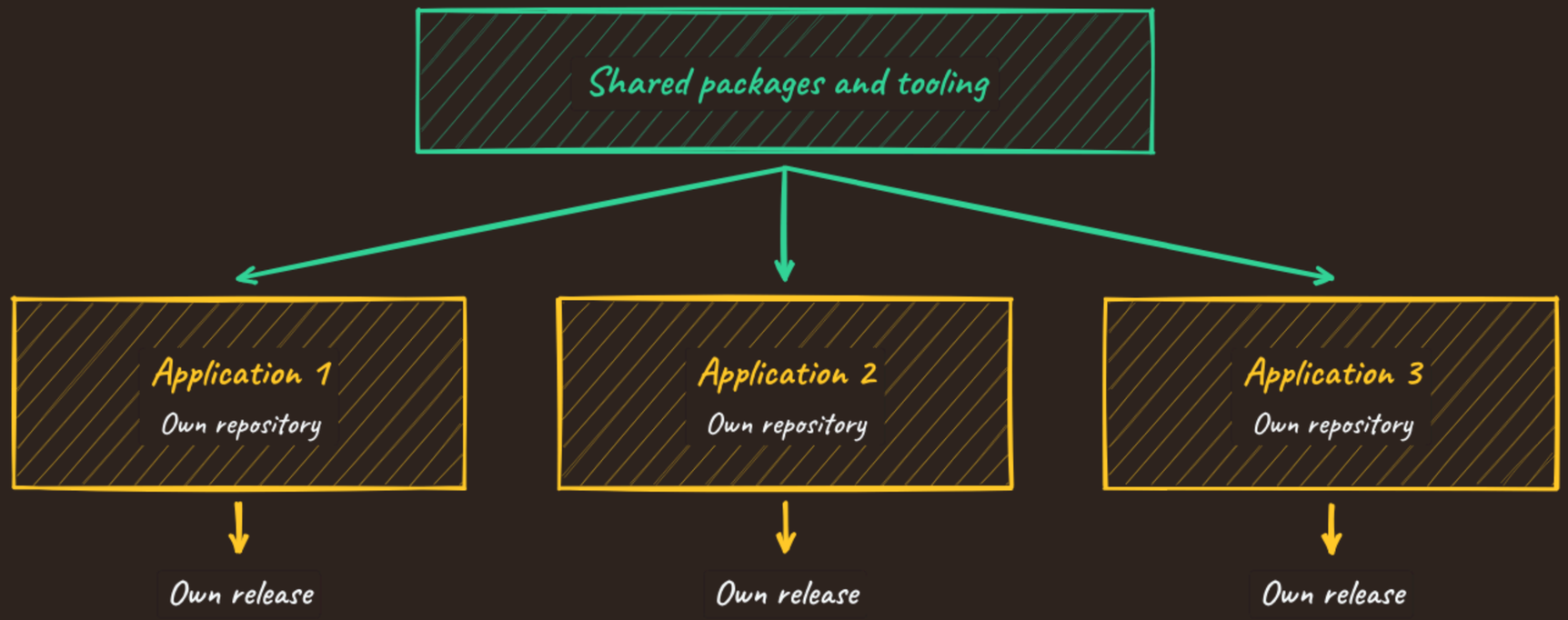
Monorepo blurs ownership

Step 4 · problem Ownership

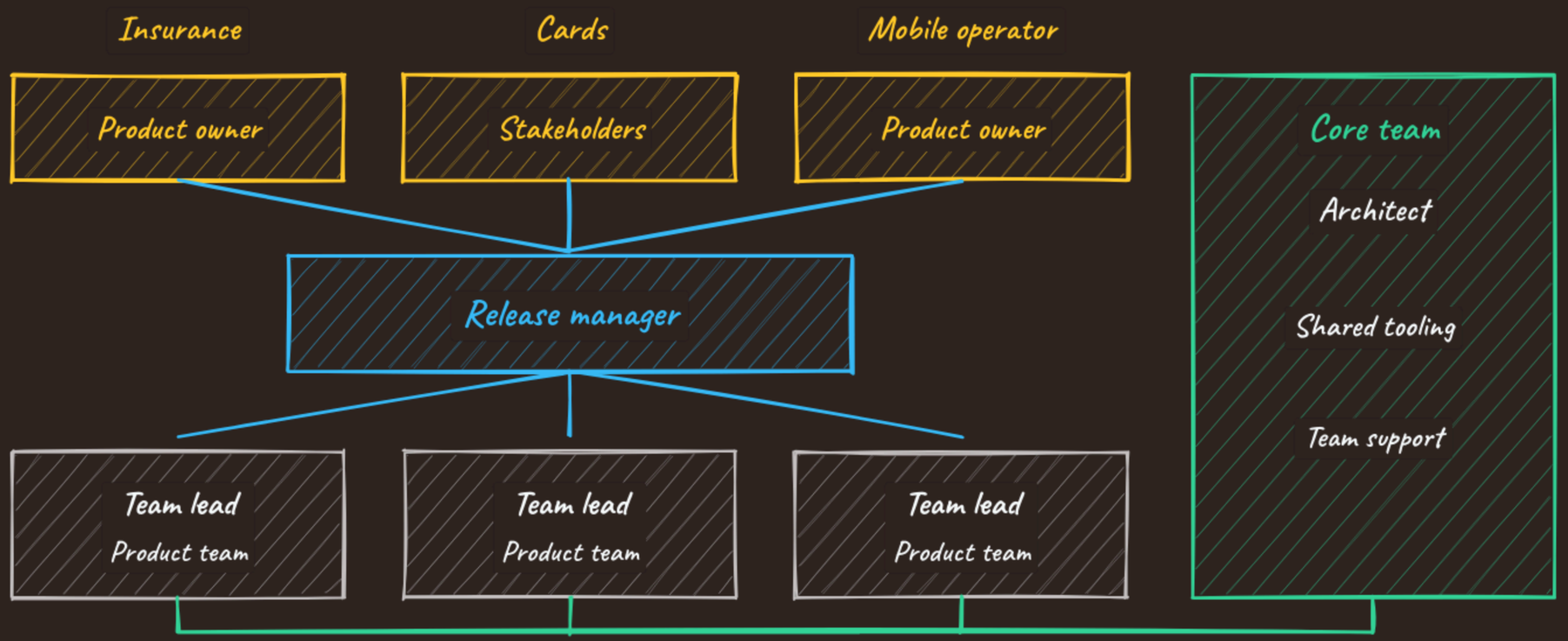
- Side effects from others' edits
- Hard to try new things
- Nobody owns the shared code

Separate repos + shared tooling

Step 4 · architecture Open source



A core team and an architect



Tools are products too

How it should work

- shared understanding of goals
- agreed architecture vision
- right decomposition

The risks

- work detached from business
- funded with leftovers
- botched decomposition

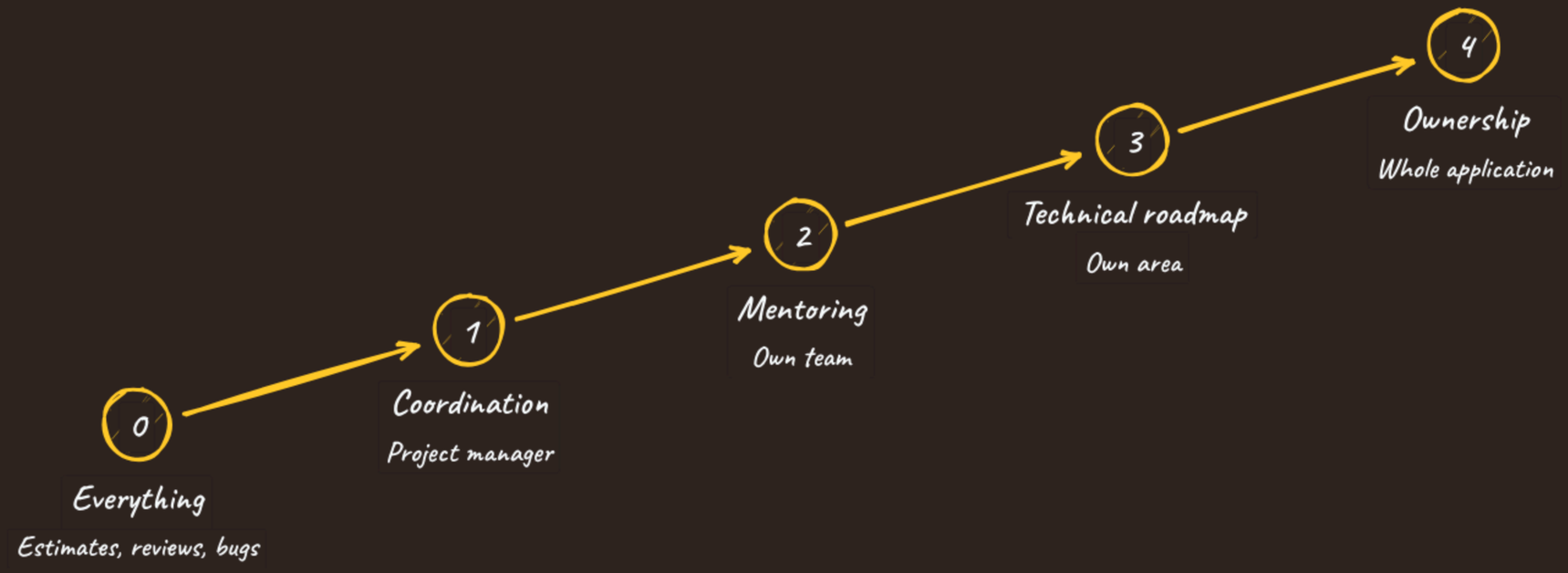
Step 5

05

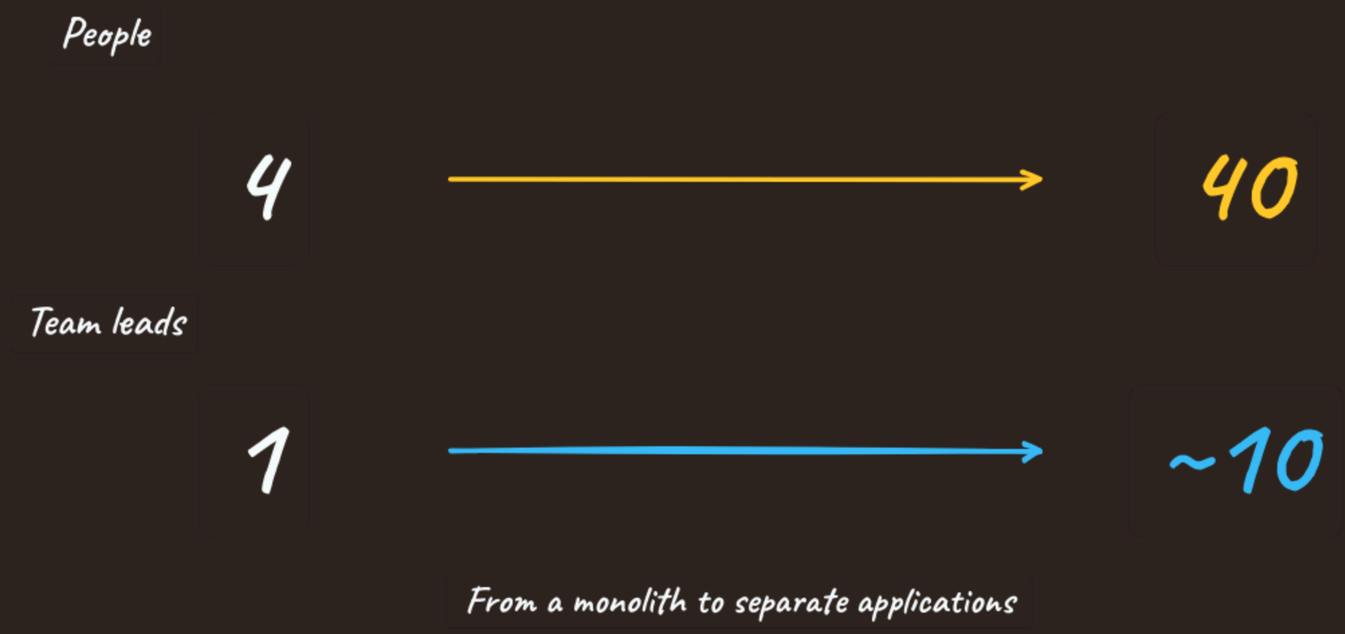
The step that isn’t here yet

Teams keep growing — the architecture has to catch up again

The lead’s duties move upward



The team grew tenfold



The lead’s role grows up



More autonomy means more responsibility

How a lead stays sane

Takeaway: Stay sane

- Clearly understand business goals
- Know the team’s lifecycle stage
- Know your duties at that stage
- Honestly decide: do you want it

- ...or keep writing code

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Questions

Thank you! Questions — scan the QR, or email

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Ask a question