

Everything you  
know is wrong

**Steve Krug**

UPA DC UserFocus

# I've been very fortunate

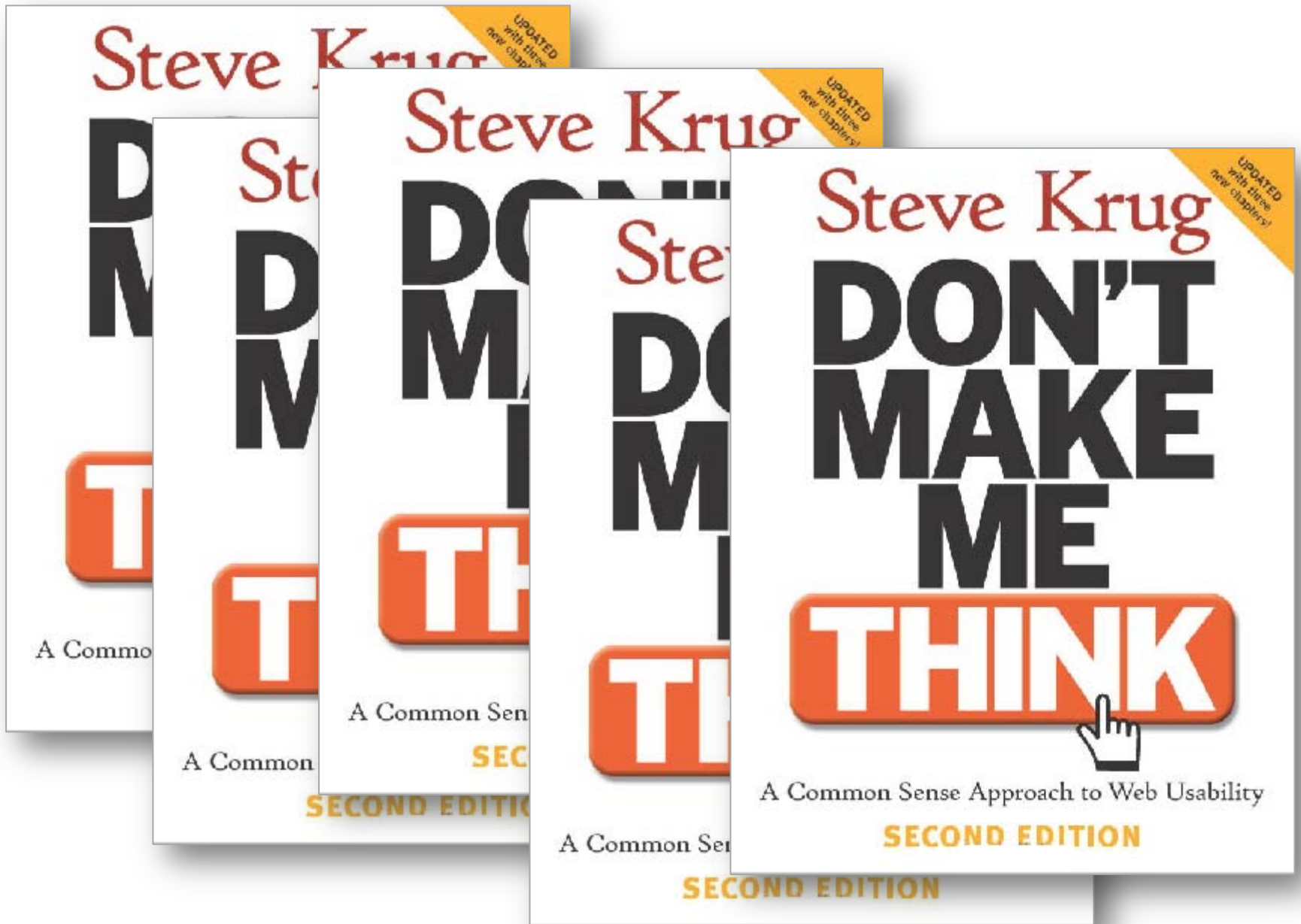
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- Ten years ago I got the chance to write a book
- Never expected to earn more than the advance
- Real motive: raise my consulting rate



As it turned out, though...

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Steve Krug

UPDATED with three new chapters!

Steve Krug

UPDATED with three new chapters!

Steve Krug

UPDATED with three new chapters!

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A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability

SECOND EDITION

SECOND EDITION

SECOND EDITION

And I got to teach workshops

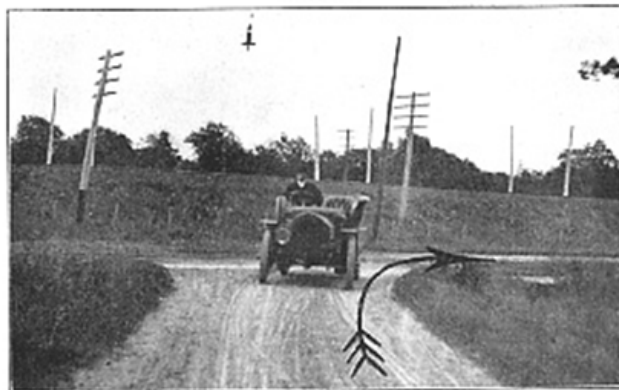
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## Krug's First Law of Usability

- "Don't make me think"
- Everything should be as **self-evident** as possible
- When people look at pages, they should just "get it"
- **Clarity trumps everything**
- ...but it's not easy to achieve



No. 19.



TO RIGHT, SOUTH.

C. & N. W. R. R. embankment on left. Next turn one-fourth of a mile south.



GOOGLE MAPS

## Google Maps Adds Street View to Turns



Today Google Maps adds a helpful visual feature to their driving directions: Street View turns. Search for directions at Google Maps, and click on the small camera next to each turn step in the left column to view the photos of the intersection or off-ramp. [\[via\]](#)

**Tagged:**

[DIRECTIONS, DRIVING](#)  
[DIRECTIONS, GOOGLE MAPS, IN](#)  
[BRIEF](#)

**1:15 PM on Tue Apr 29 2008**

**By Gina Trapani**

**1,422 views**

**4 comments**



*Caroline makes a suggestion...*

We could use a  
pulldown menu for  
the product list.



# Perfect for me

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- No chance to procrastinate
- No homework at the end of the day

# Nine years later...

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- My wife had finally forgotten the first one
- And I'd become more convinced than ever that testing was invaluable

# Things I believed

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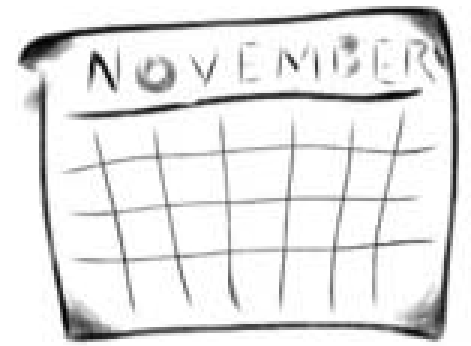
- Usability testing is the single best way to improve the effectiveness of what you're building
- Every site or app should undergo frequent usability testing during (and after) development
- Most people can't afford to hire someone to do it
- Even if they could, there aren't enough professionals to go around
- Ergo: They should be doing it themselves

# Things I believed

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- Usability testing can retain most of its value even if done simply
- With a little training, almost anyone can do valuable usability testing
  - ▶ “It’s not rocket surgery...”
- So off I went...





The how-to companion to the bestselling *Don't Make Me Think!*  
*A Common Sense Approach to Web Usability*

Steve Krug

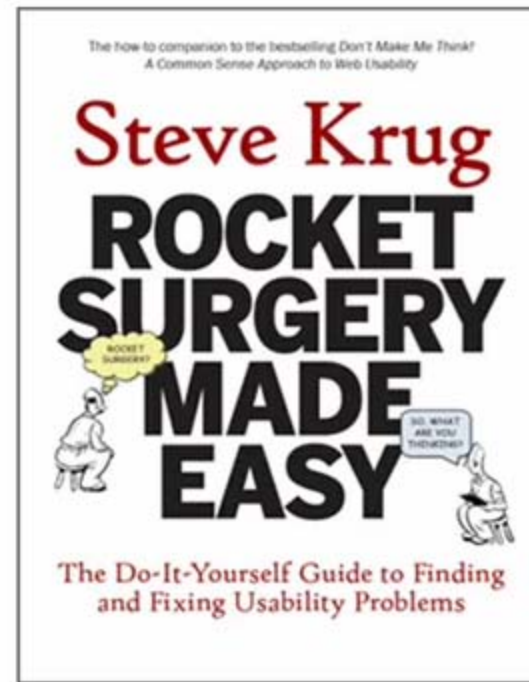
**ROCKET  
SURGERY  
MADE  
EASY**



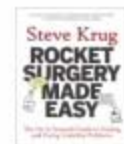
The Do-It-Yourself Guide to Finding  
and Fixing Usability Problems

# Demo Usability Test

for readers of



Rev. 1.1 / February 3, 2010  
© 2010 Steve Krug  
[www.rocketurgerymadeeasy.com](http://www.rocketurgerymadeeasy.com)



# 4. The Tasks

Give them a few things to do



Car Sharing, an alternative to car rental and car ownership – Zipcar - Mozilla Firefox

File Edit View History Bookmarks Tools Help

http://www.zipcar.com/

zipcar. wheels when you want them

sign in

for everybody for business for universities

where can I drive? join! is zipcar for me? how it works find cars rates & plans

You don't currently own a car, and you can get almost everywhere you need to go without one. You're about to sign up for a class that you can't get to using public transportation, and there are other times when it would be convenient to have a car.

A friend has been very happy using Zipcar for occasional trips so you decide to explore that option.

(fully-stocked fridge; loves to entertain)

find more cars near you

4 learn about the simple steps to zipcar freedom

1. join 2. reserve 3. unlock 4. drive

zipcar in the news

zipcar's iPhone app  
May | Sep 30, 2009

The best new idea in business  
Aug 27, 2009

zipcar gifts come in small medium & large

get yours

Steve Krug  
ROCKET SURGERY MADE EASY



wheels when you want them

sign in

for everybody

for business

for universities

Where can I drive?

join!

is zipcar for me?

how it works

find cars

rates & plans

Welcome to Zipcar



# MINI Convertible Mollie

(organizes the annual block party)

[find more cars near you](#)

learn about the  
**4** simple steps  
to zipcar freedom



1. join



2. reserve



3. unlock



4. drive

### zipcar in the news



Video: Zipcar's iPhone app  
*USA Today* | Sep 30, 2009

Zipcar - The best new idea in business  
*Fortune* | Aug 27, 2009

[More News](#)

wrap up a gift of  
membership  
or driving.



[get yours](#)

Steve Krug  
**ROCKET  
SURGERY  
MADE  
EASY**



touch  
and go

What were the  
top three usability problems  
you observed?



# Again my intention was simple

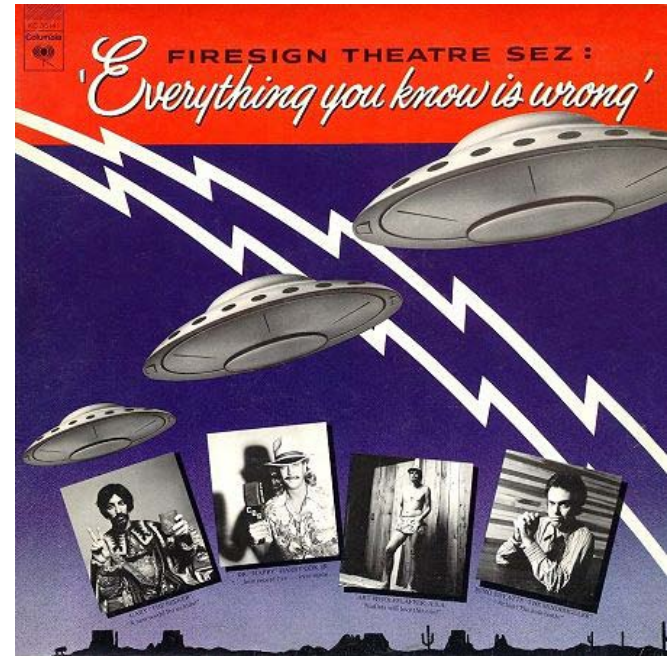
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- Write a do-it-yourself usability testing book that anyone could use
- Show how simple I think testing should be
- Persuade people to start testing

# Unintended consequences

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- By the time I was done, I ended up believing that some things I always thought about testing are wrong
- OK, not *everything*
- That's what I want to talk about today
- Hope you'll argue with me



# I'm just curious

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## ■ Show of hands:

- ▶ Read *Don't Make Me Think?*
- ▶ Read *Rocket Surgery?*
- ▶ Heard of *Rocket Surgery* before today?

# 1. Test on a fixed schedule

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- Don't schedule testing based on when things will be ready to test
- Schedule monthly testing



**A morning a month,  
that's all we ask.**

June						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
30	31	1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

July						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

August						
Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Thursday, June 24	
9:00	First test
10:00	Second test
11:00	Third test
12:00	
1:00	Debriefing lunch

## 2. Test three people per round

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- Forget “eight is enough” arguments
- Even four is too many
- It’s always easy to find more problems
  - ▶ Harder to find the resources to fix them
  - ▶ Having a long list you don’t have time to fix is dispiriting and distracting
- Three users will generate more than enough serious problems per round

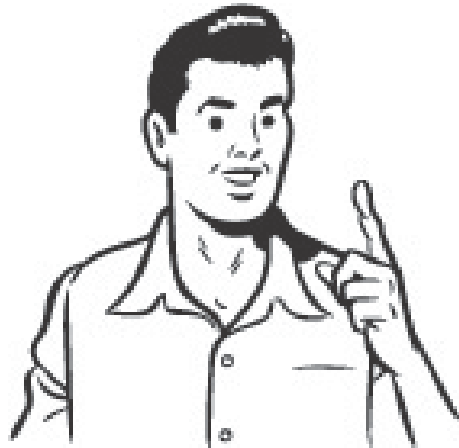
### 3. No more big honkin' reports

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- Written report has little value and takes a lot of work and time
- Debrief the same day over lunch
- At the end of lunch, you're done for the month
- Reinforces the importance of attending the sessions
- Publish a one-page email with a bullet list of tasks tested, problems you're going to fix

## 4. No one starts testing early enough

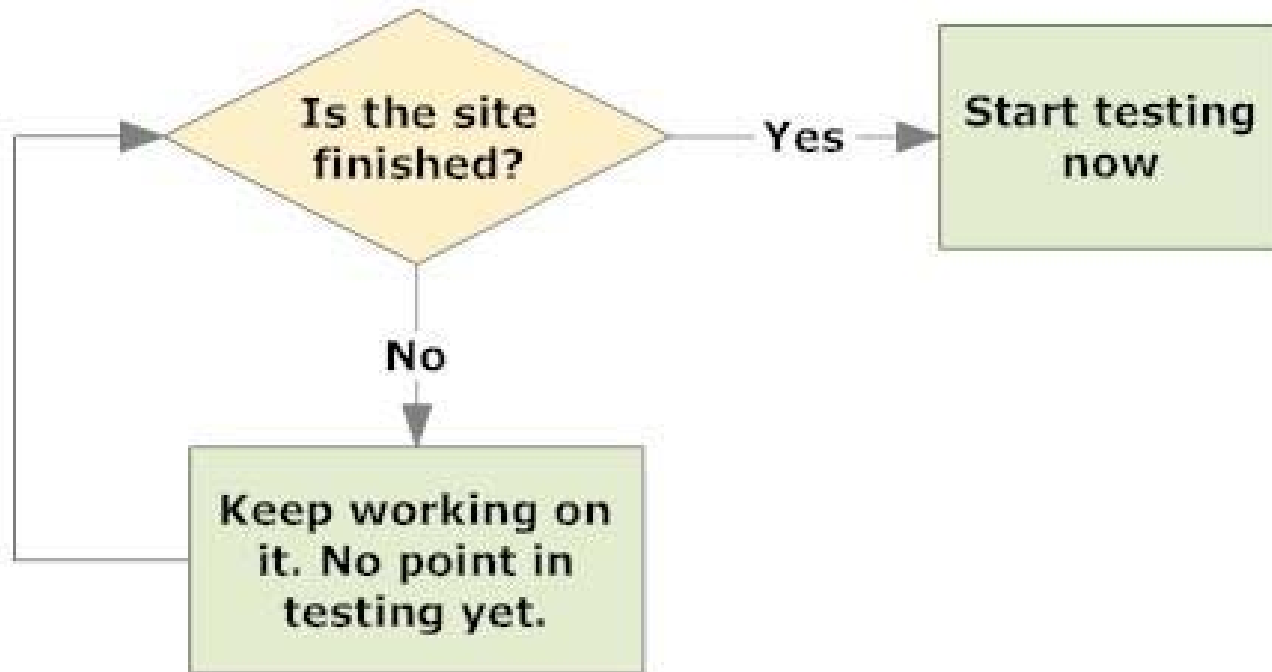
- Professionals all agree that starting early is very valuable
- Almost no one does it
  - ▶ “We know there are problems. Why waste their time and ours?”
  - ▶ We always have a better version in our head
- People need to be bullied into starting testing earlier
- Suggest testing competitors



**Start earlier than  
you think makes  
sense.**

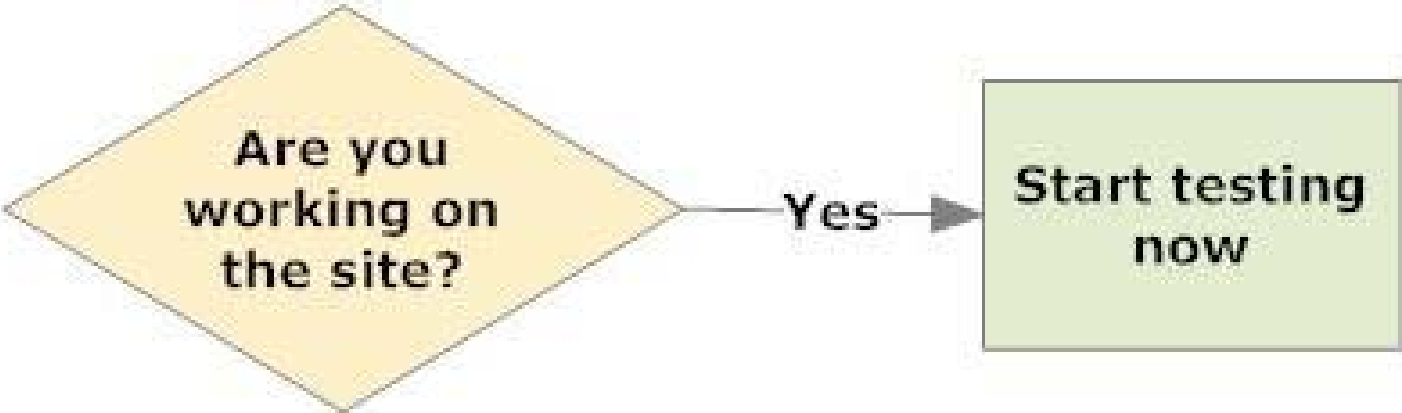
# Incorrect thinking

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# Correct thinking

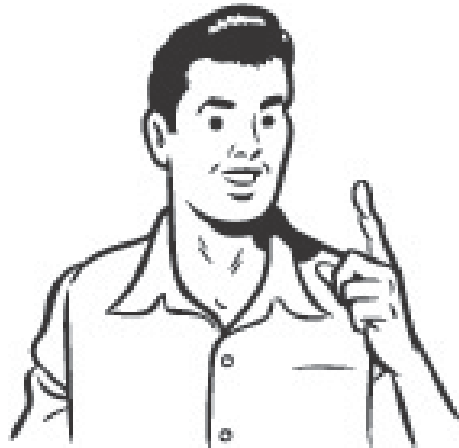
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## 5. Attendance is *the* top priority

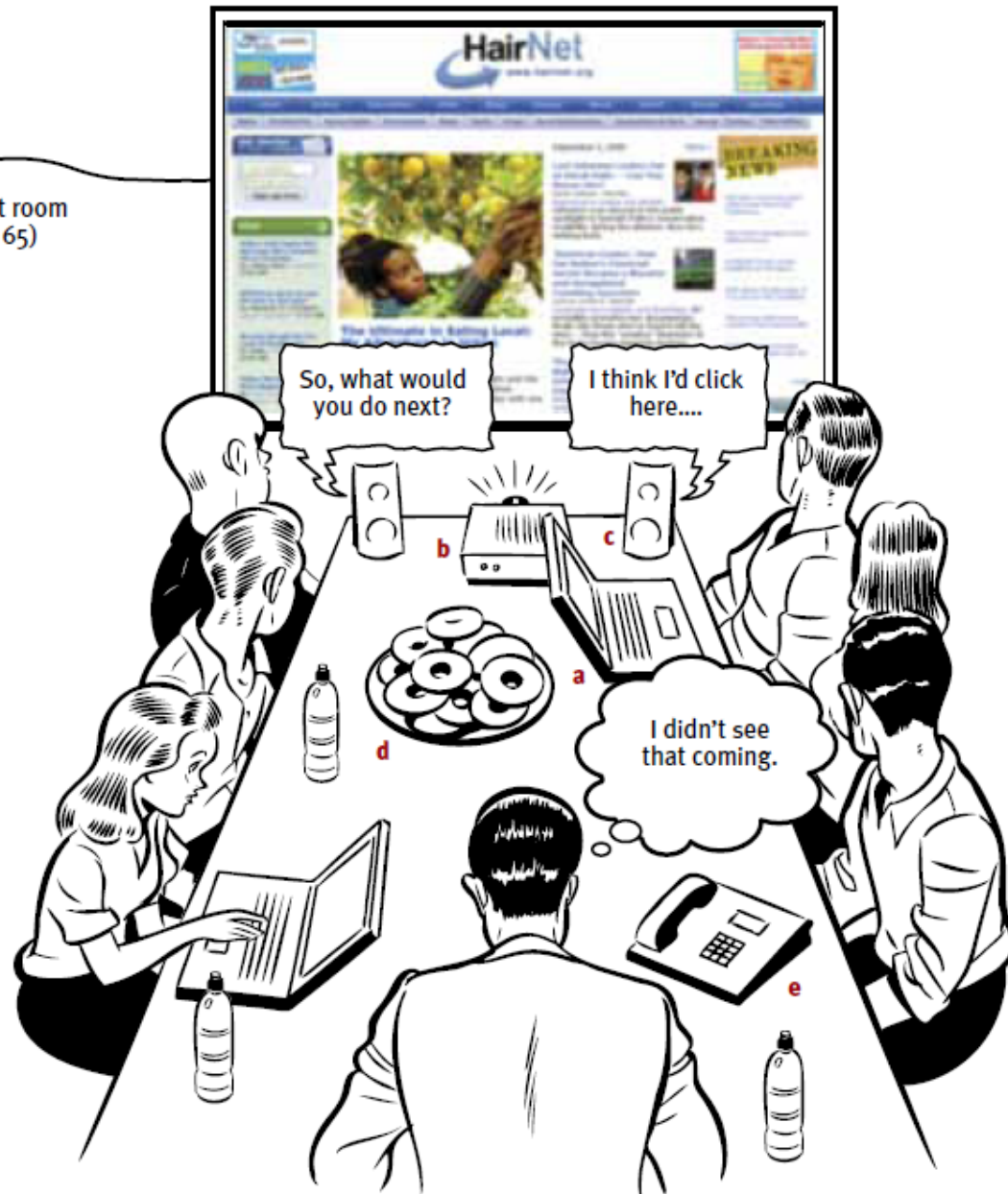
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- The conversion experience is what you're shooting for
- Live events are more compelling
- A lot goes on in the observation room
- If you have any money, spend it on great snacks
- Scheduling a monthly UT day helps
  - ▶ People can plan on attending
  - ▶ You can pick a slow time of month
- Testing onsite helps



**Make it a  
spectator sport.**

From test room  
(page 65)



**a** Computer **b** Projector **c** Speakers **d** Snacks **e** Speakerphone

# WEB DESIGN FUNNIES

Today's episode: "Religious Debates"

featuring...

Caroline makes a suggestion...

Kim the Project Manager

Rick from Marketing

Bob the Developer

Caroline the Designer

We could use a pull-down menu for the product list.

I hate pull-downs.

People don't like pull-downs. My father won't even go near a site if it uses pull-downs.

Well, I don't think most people mind them. And they'd save us a lot of space.

Besides, have you got a better idea?

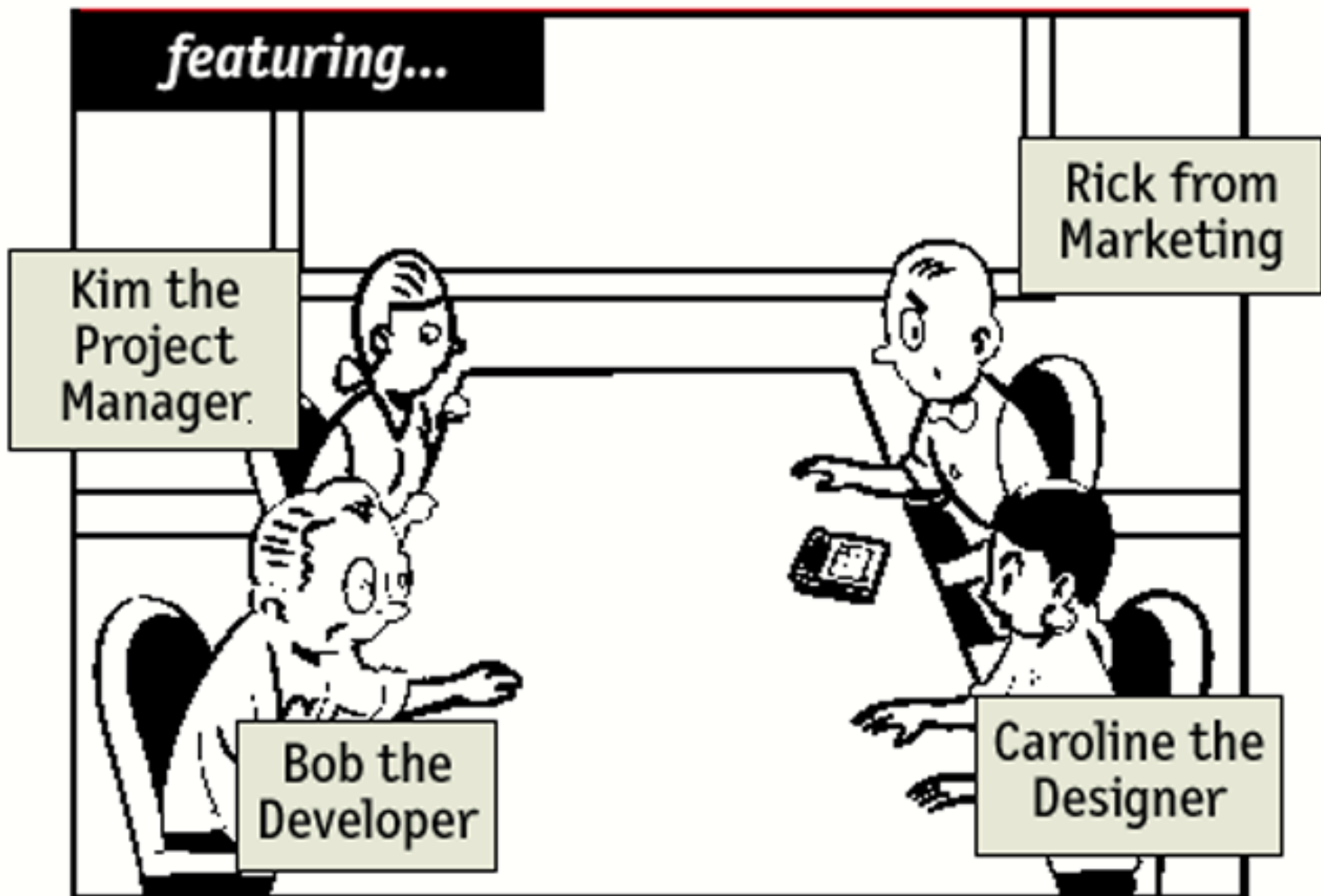
*featuring...*

Kim the  
Project  
Manager.

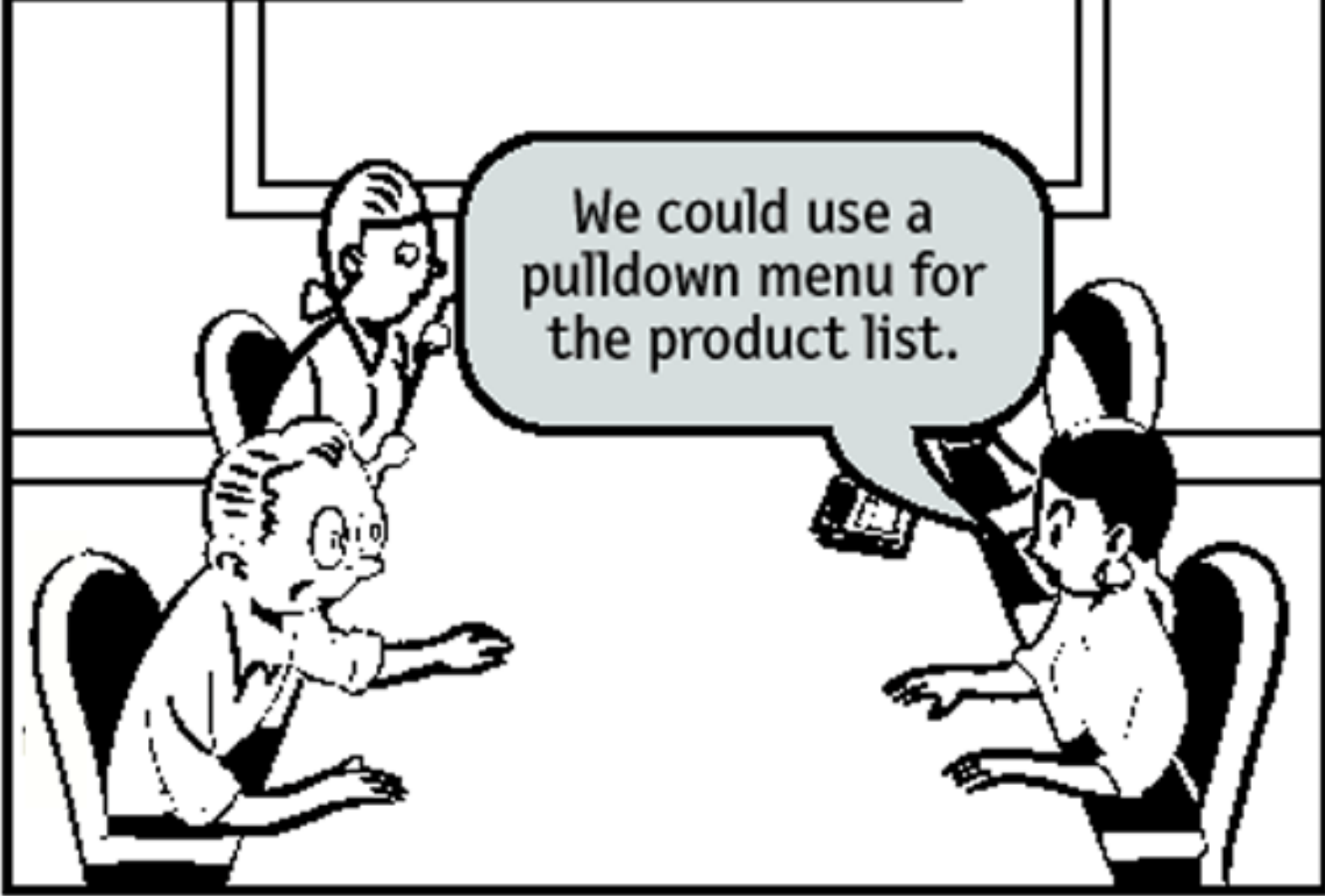
Bob the  
Developer

Rick from  
Marketing

Caroline the  
Designer



*Caroline makes a suggestion...*

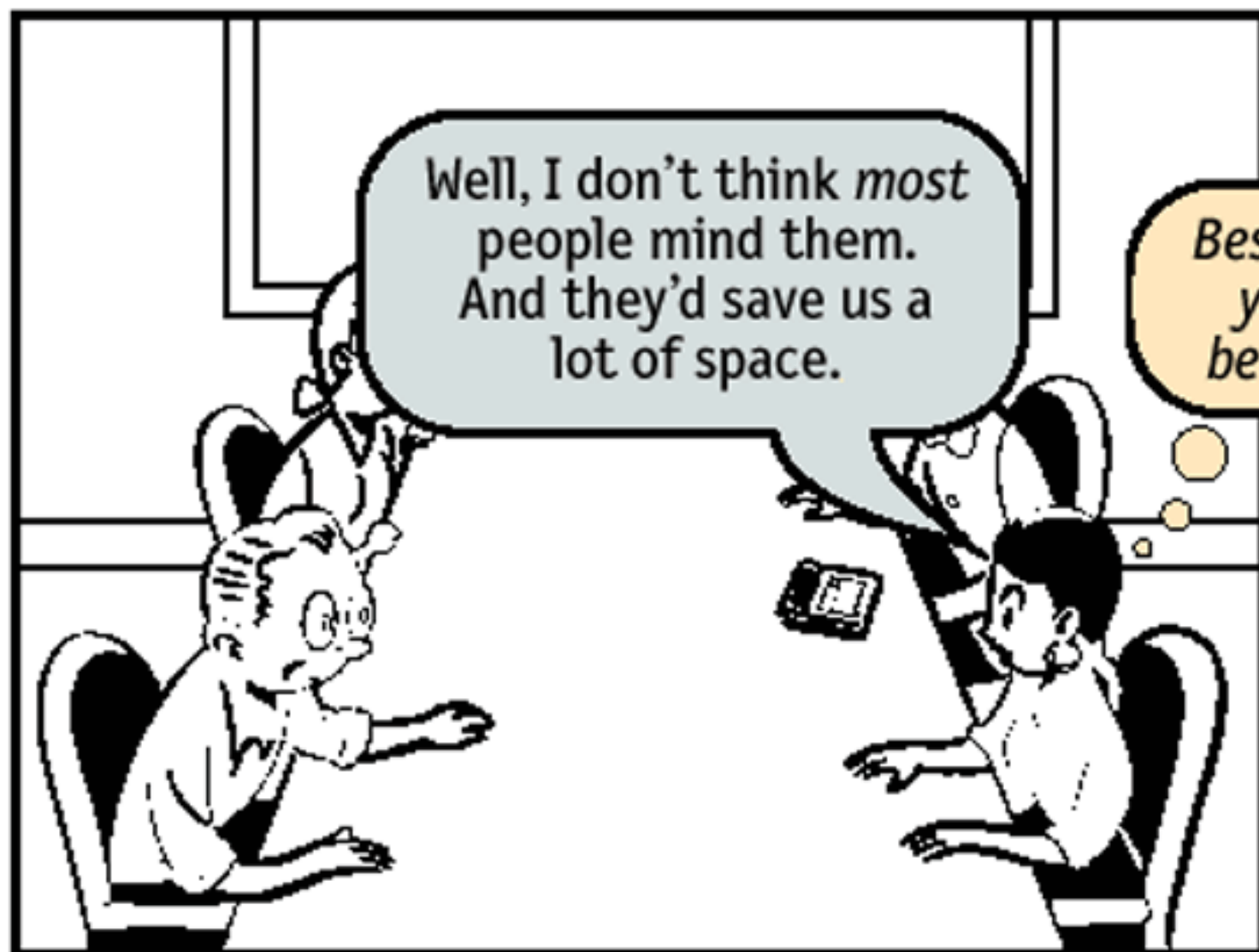


We could use a  
pulldown menu for  
the product list.



*I hate pull-downs.*

People don't like pull-downs. My father won't even go near a site if it uses pull-downs.



Well, I don't think *most* people mind them. And they'd save us a lot of space.

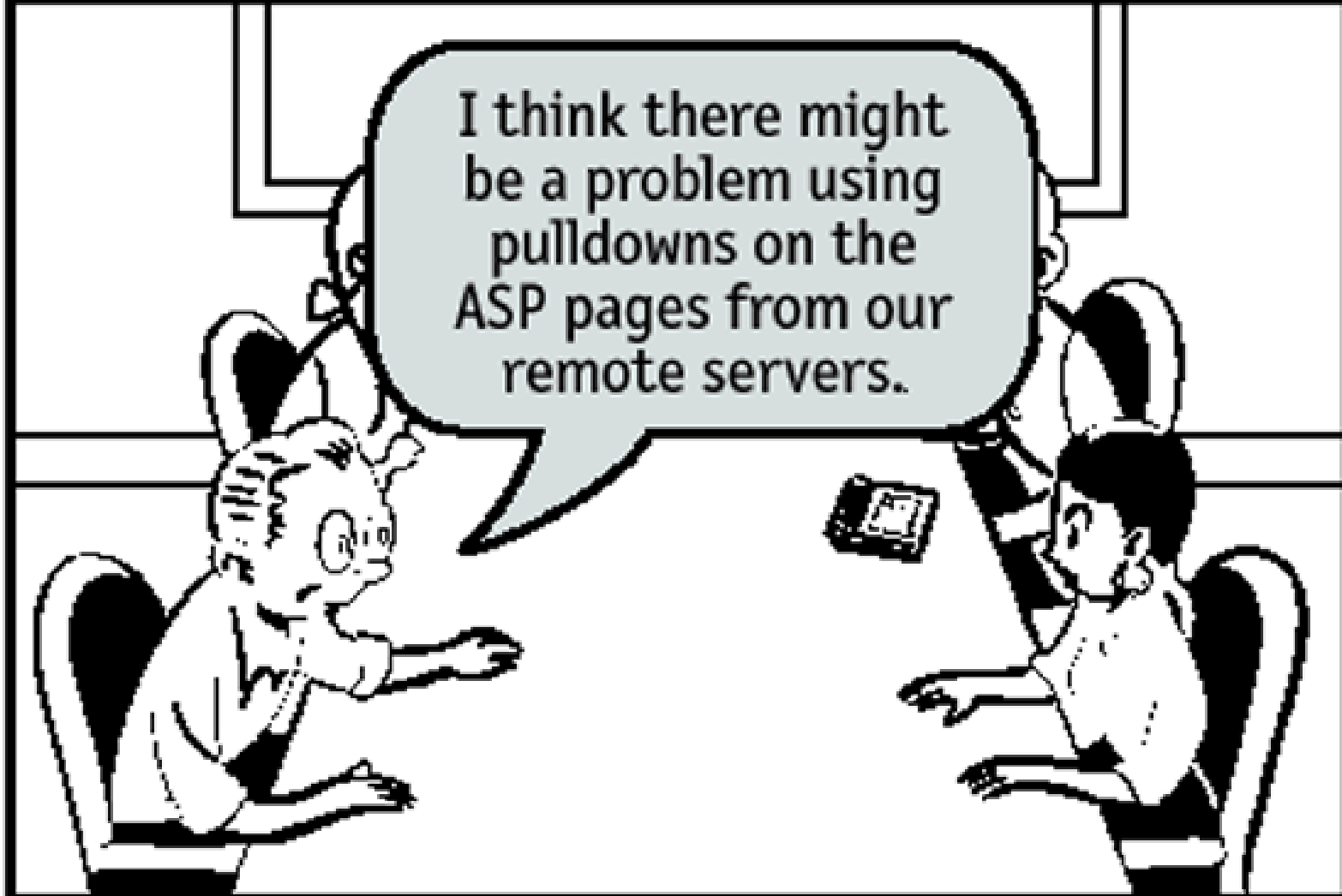
*Besides, have you got a better idea?*



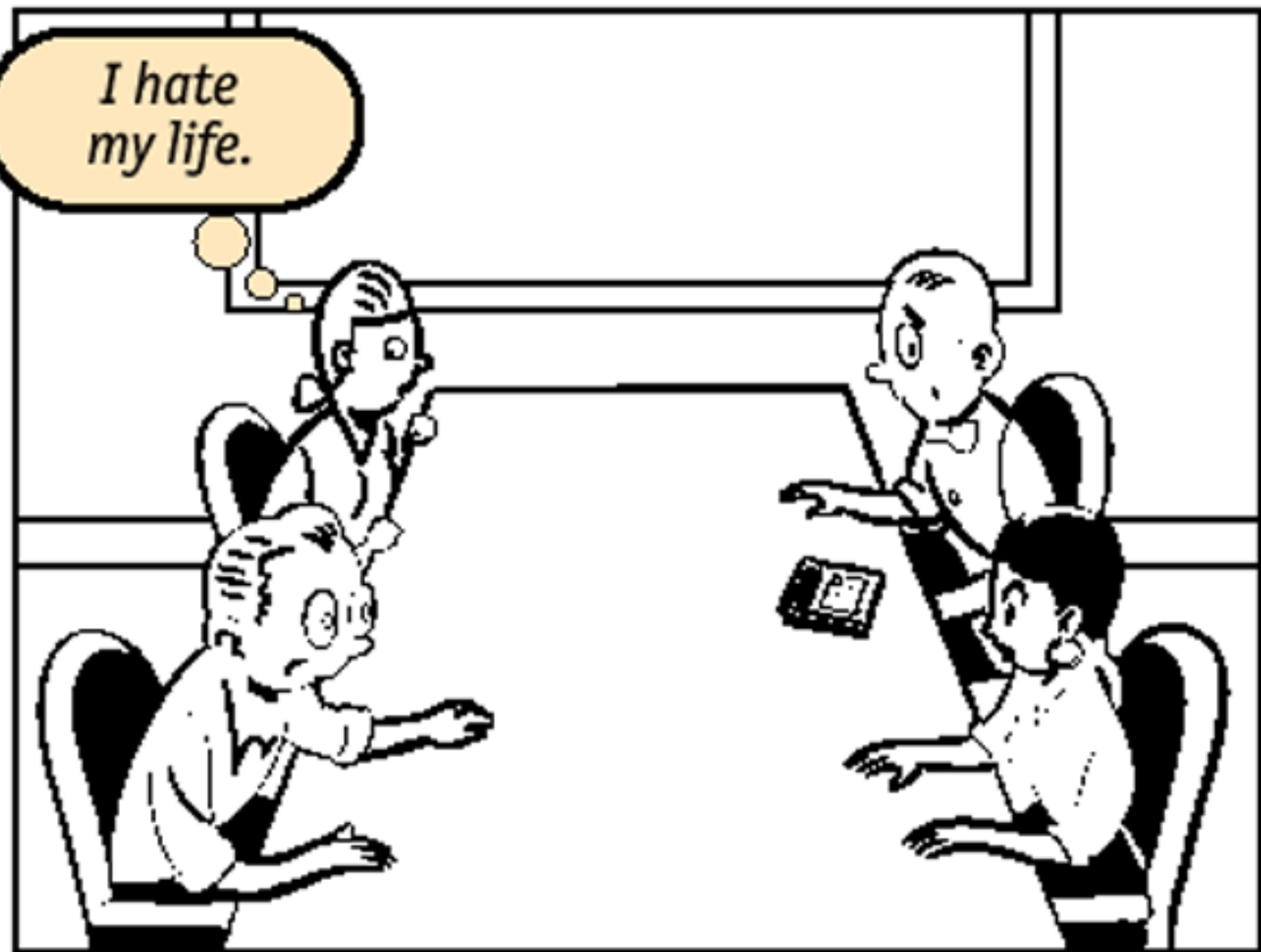
*Rick attempts an appeal to a higher authority...*

*...but Bob plays his developer's trump card*

I think there might be a problem using pulldowns on the ASP pages from our remote servers.

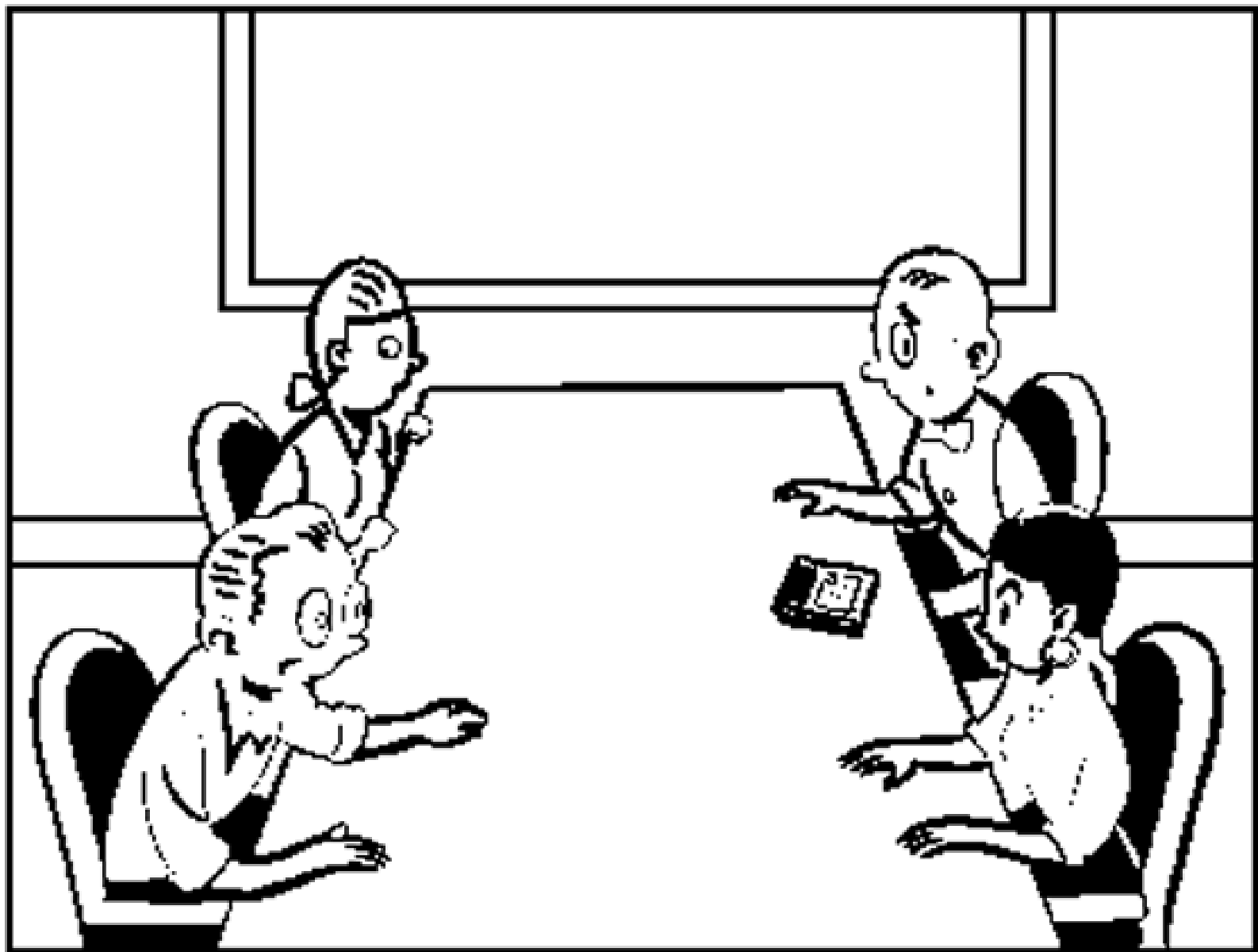


*I hate  
my life.*

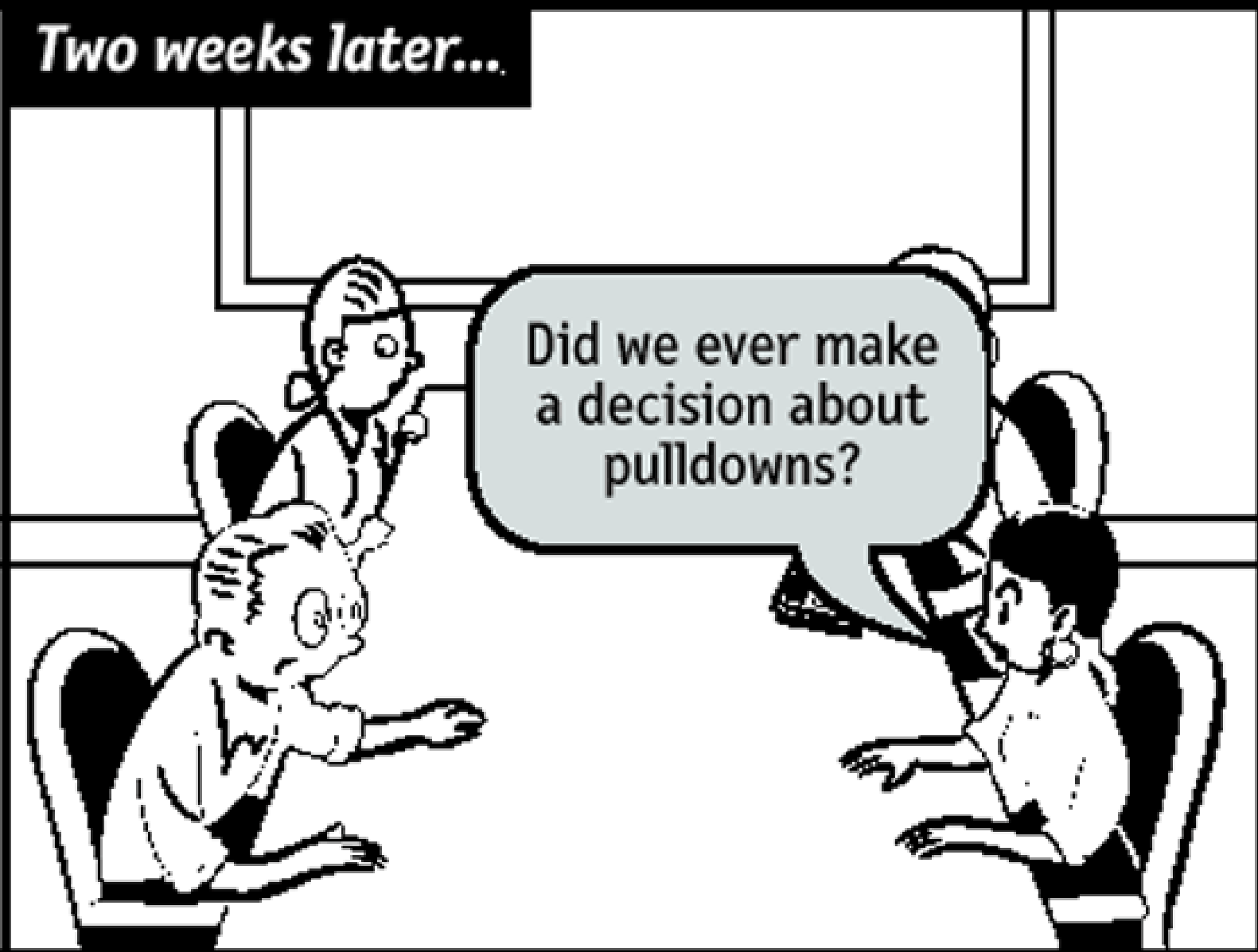


So, what does everybody think?  
Should we try using pulldowns?





*Two weeks later...*



Did we ever make  
a decision about  
pulldowns?

# “My ideal home page,” as told by...

**PIZZAZZ!**

CEO

## Registration

Follow these 2 quick steps for **FREE** stock tracking, analyst alerts, bank account tracking, and much more!

**Already Registered?** [Click here to sign in.](#)

**Step 1:** Create a Member ID and enter your email address and zip code.

Member ID

Use 4-40 letters, numbers, dashes and/or underscores.  
No spaces.

Email Address

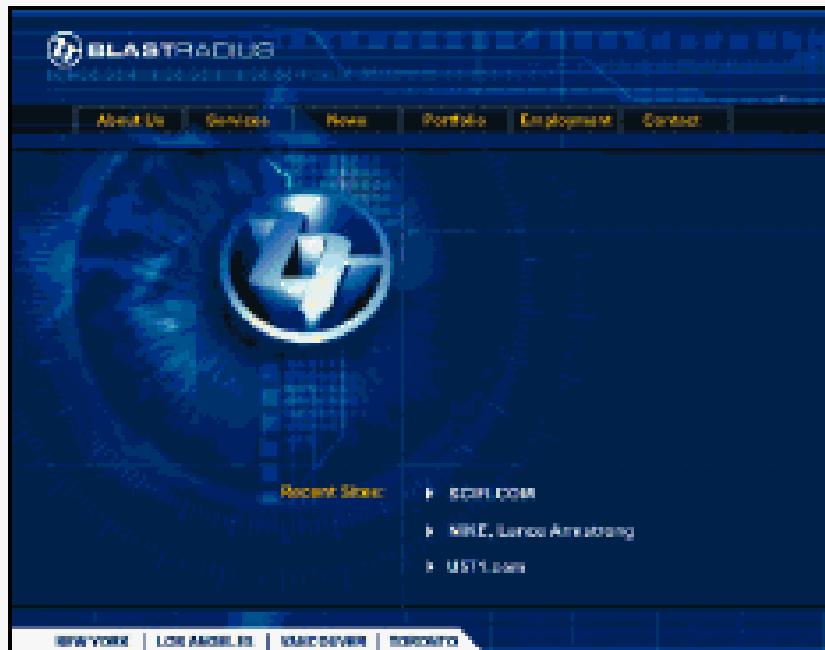
ZIP Code

**YES.** I would like to receive periodic financial updates and tips from Quicken.com via email. (I can unsubscribe later if I choose.)

[Continue to Step 2](#)

Developer

# “My ideal home page,” as told by...



Designer



Business development

## 6. Fix the worst first!

---

- The most serious problems we discover often don't get fixed



**Focus ruthlessly on  
a small number of  
the most important  
problems.**

## Top Three Usability Problems

After each test session, list the three most serious usability problems you noticed.

Participant #1

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Participant #2

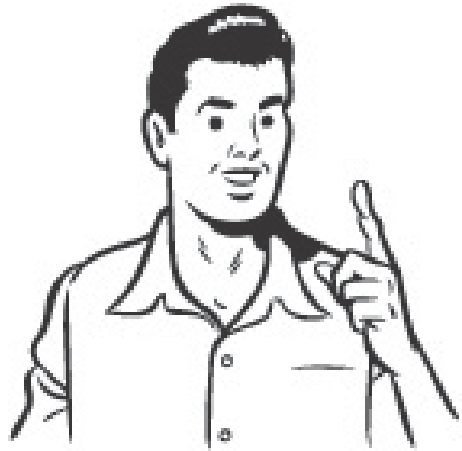
1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

Participant #3

1. ....
2. ....
3. ....

# 7. Tweak, don't redesign

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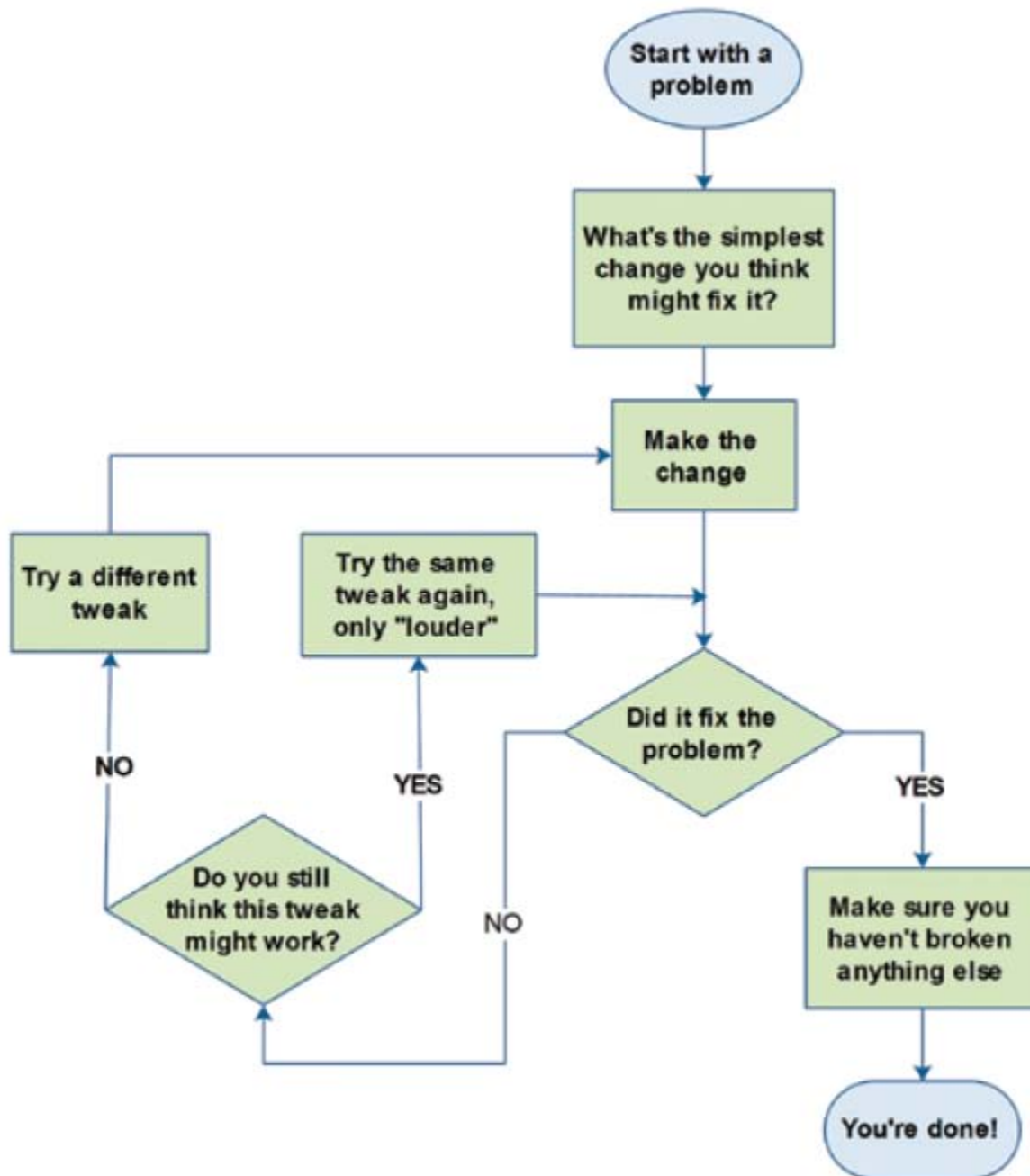


**When fixing problems,  
always do the  
least you can do™.**

# Your motto should be...

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- “What’s the smallest change we can make that we think might solve the observed problem?”
- Resist the impulse to defer serious problems to a redesign that may never happen



### **Nine reasons why tweaking is better than redesigning**

1. Tweaks cost less.
2. Tweaks require less work.
3. Tweaks don't ruin lives, break up families, and wreck careers.
4. Small changes can be made sooner.
5. Small changes are more likely to actually happen.
6. If you make larger changes, you're more likely to break other things that are working fine in the process.
7. Most people don't like change, so a redesign annoys them.
8. A redesign means making a lot of changes at once, with the attendant complexities and risks.
9. A redesign means involving a lot of people in a lot of meetings.  
Enough said.

## 8. Picture-in-picture must die

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- PIP isn't just unnecessary; it's a *bad* thing
  - ▶ More technology to deal with
  - ▶ Larger files
  - ▶ It's not necessary. If you have good audio, tone of voice gives just as much information
- But the real problem:
  - ▶ It's a distraction

# Shameless self-promotion

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- Next week in DC
  - ▶ **Me** (Weds.)  
*Do-It-Yourself Usability Testing*
  - ▶ **Ginny Reddish** (Thurs.)  
*Writing Web Content that Works*
  - ▶ **Lou Rosenfeld** (Fri.)  
*Site Search Analytics*
- If you can read this, \$100 off each day

# Thanks for all the fish

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- Send any questions, feedback, gripes to
  - ▶ [skrug@sensible.com](mailto:skrug@sensible.com)

# Questions?

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