



Shirlaws

Love business.

From the Trough of Sorrow to
Infinity and Beyond

Jacob Aldridge
Business Hacker

@jacobaldrige
Shirlawscoaching.co.uk



The Process

Tech Crunch
of Initiation

Wearing Off
of Novelty
wiggles of
false hope

Acquisition
of Liquidity

Upside of
Buyer

Trough of
Sorrow

the promised
land!

my '08
low

Releases
of Improvement

Crash of
Ineptitude

The Startup Curve (heroku.com)

39 points by prakash 1211 days ago | flag | comments

pg 1211 days ago | link

I didn't add those labels, though. Those were added by Trevor as a joke.

▲ jkush 1210 days ago | link

I would have thought there'd be a few more wiggles of false hope just before the trough of sorrow. You know, to make the trough of sorrow that much deeper and painful!

▲ alex_c 1210 days ago | link

The labels are what really make it shine. "Wiggles of false hope" is so very true.

▲ immad 1210 days ago | link

The first 3 comments on that post are hilarious

▲ diego 1210 days ago | link

The first comment says "Techcrunch only shows startups in the US or startups from the insiders - people who know Mike Arrington personally."

I know this is not the case. My company is not in the US and I don't know Mike Arrington. I just contacted them through their standard form, they liked one of our products and reviewed it favorably:

<http://www.techcrunch.com/2008/04/23/twitter-trends-twist/>

▲ ivankirigin 1210 days ago | link

Note that comment's author.

▲ edw519 1210 days ago | link

Looks like the seeds of a meta-essay.

▲ abstractbill 1210 days ago | link

This is *exactly* what justin.tv's traffic curve looks like. I joined just around the first Wiggles Of False Hope.

▲ mhartl 1210 days ago | link

N.B. This is from the whiteboard at the Y Combinator Mountain View office. Seeing it gives me an eerie *Lasciate ogne speranza, voi ch'intrate* feeling. The hockey stick at the end gives me a *little* hope, but that trough looks awfully long...

* 1 point by JacobAldridge 1211 days ago | link

We apply a similar framework that tracks all the Stages of a business journey; I like the additional depth and experience this adds (through both the graph and the labels, however humorous) to the initial Start-Up Stage.

<http://news.ycombinator.com/item?id=173261>

STITCHES
Love business.

The Process

Tech Crunch
of Initiation

Wearing Off
of Novelty
wiggles of
false hope

Acquisition
of Liquidity

Upside of
Buyer

Trough of
Sorrow

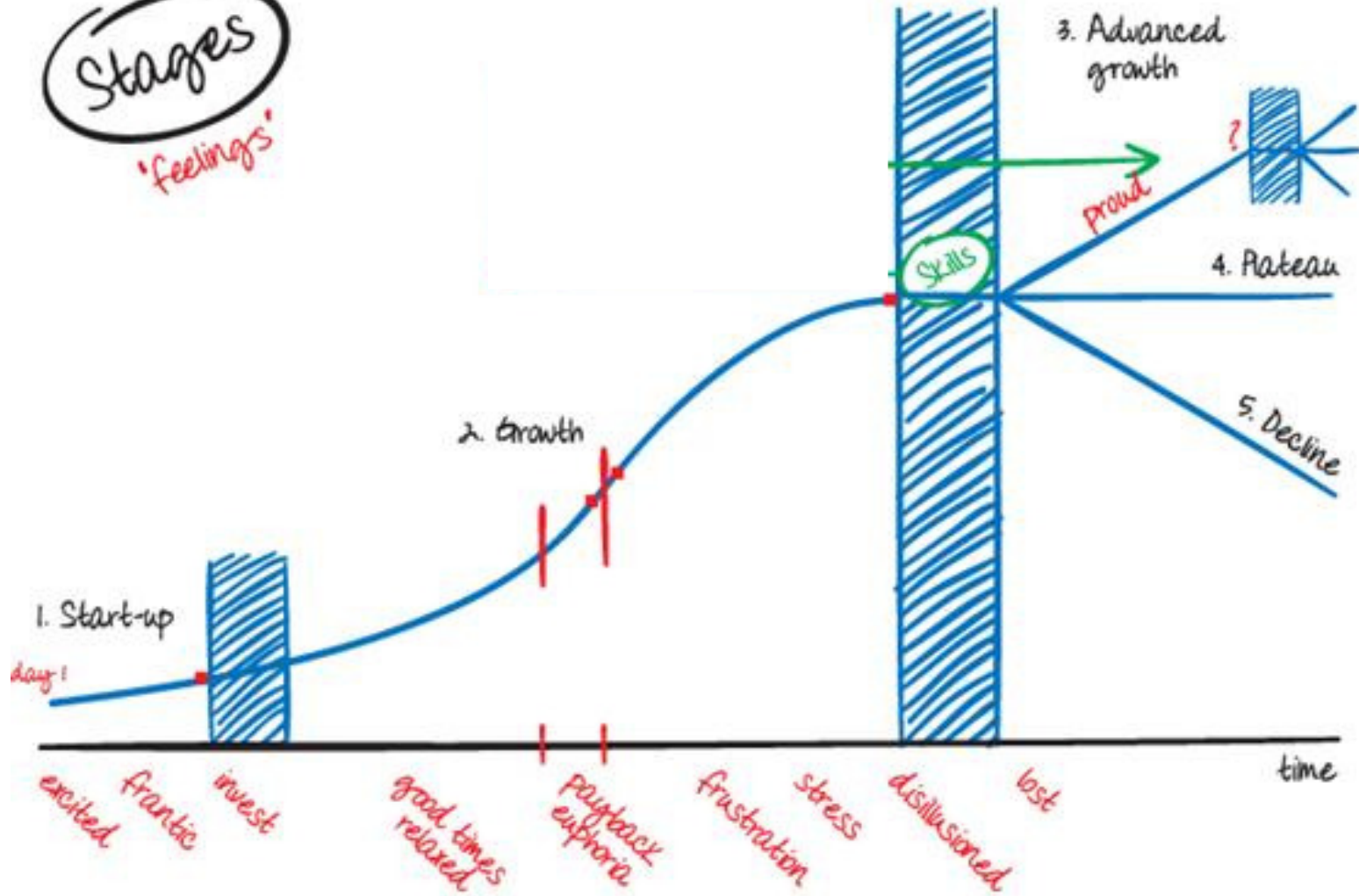
the promised
land!

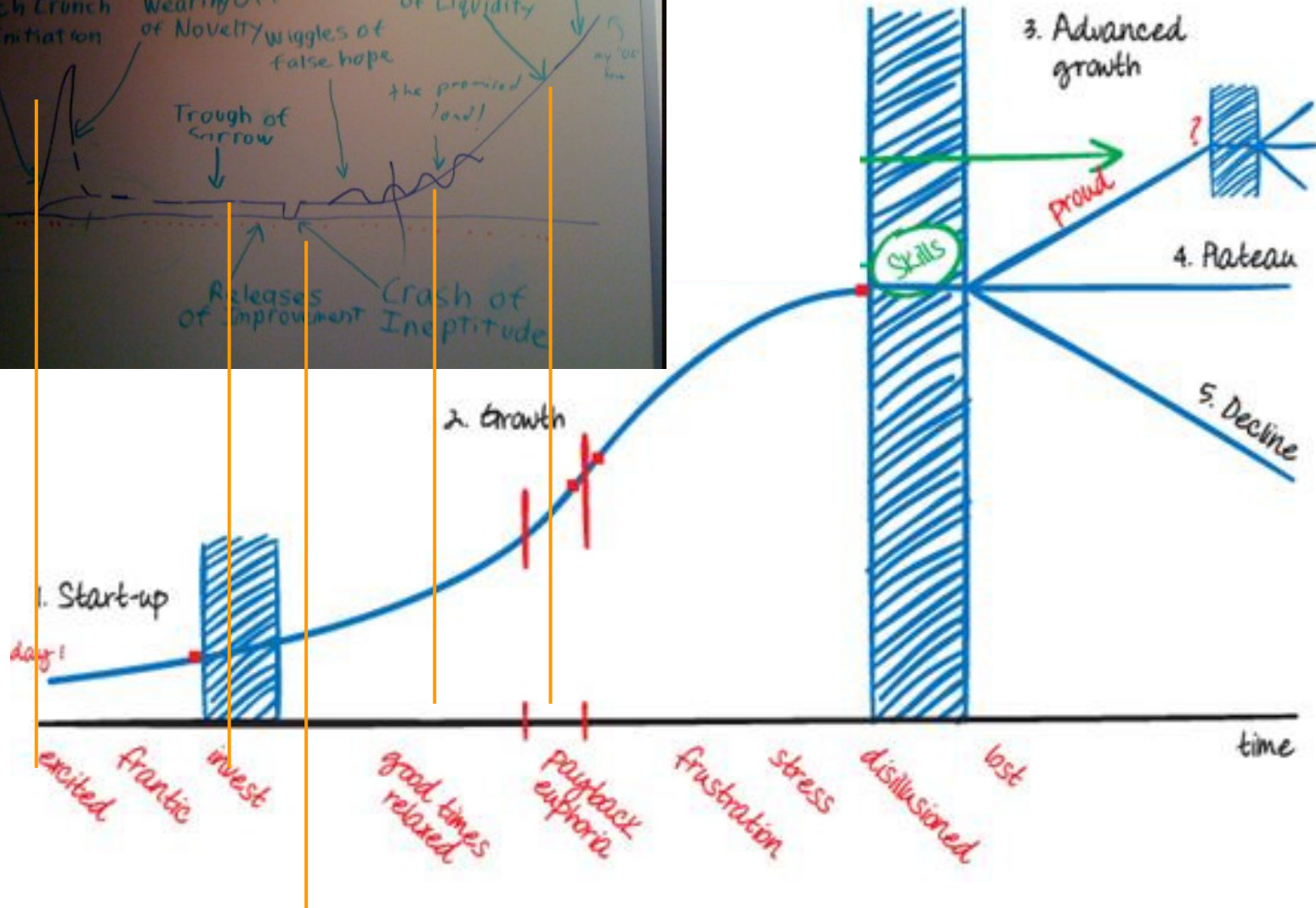
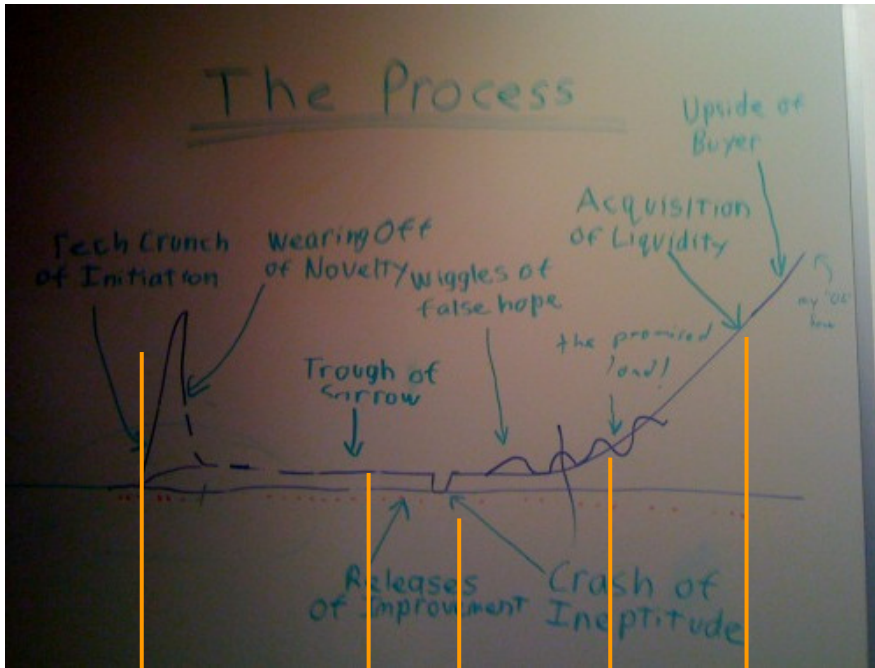
my '08
low

Releases
of Improvement

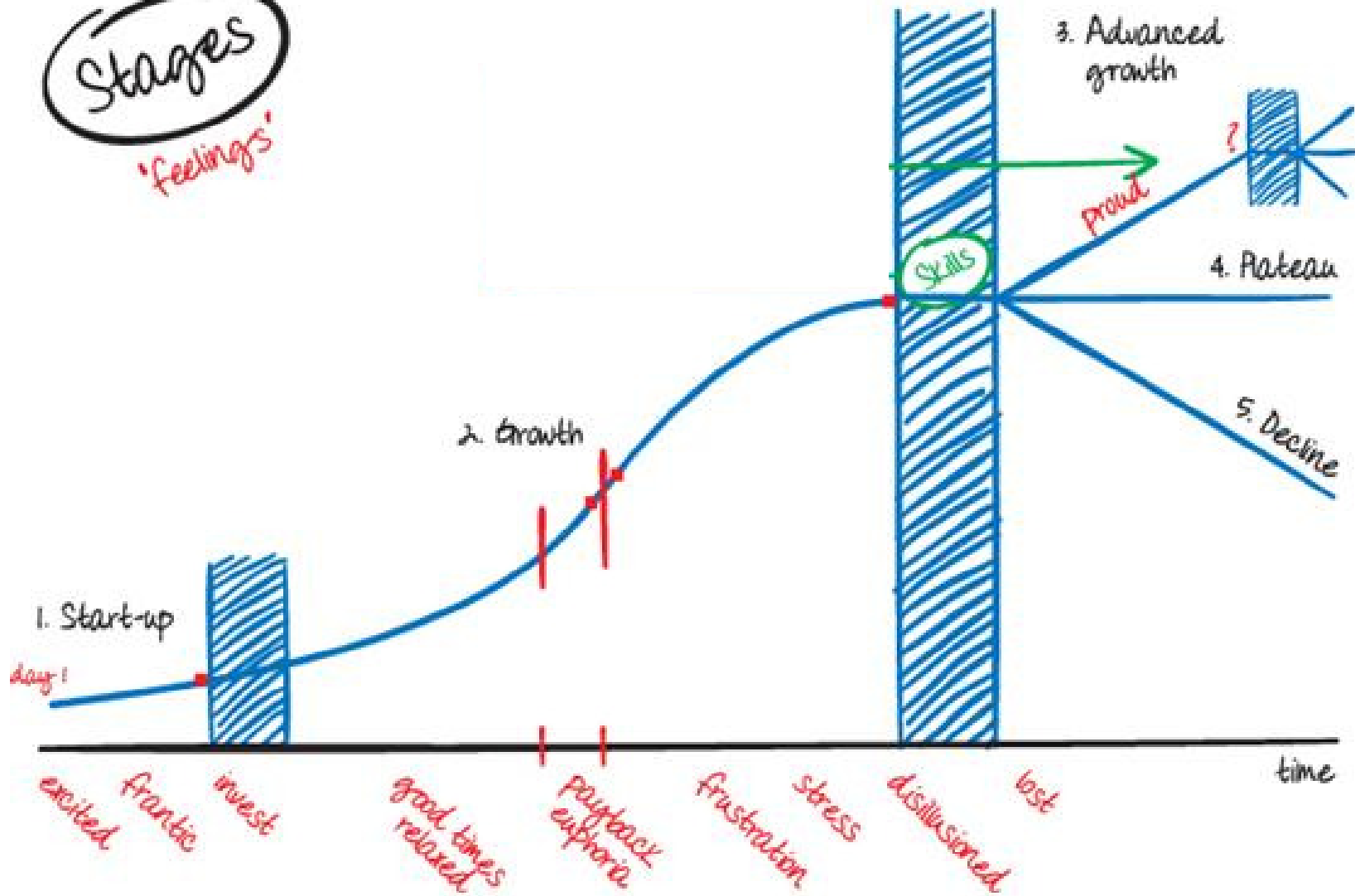
Crash of
Ineptitude

Stages
'feelings'



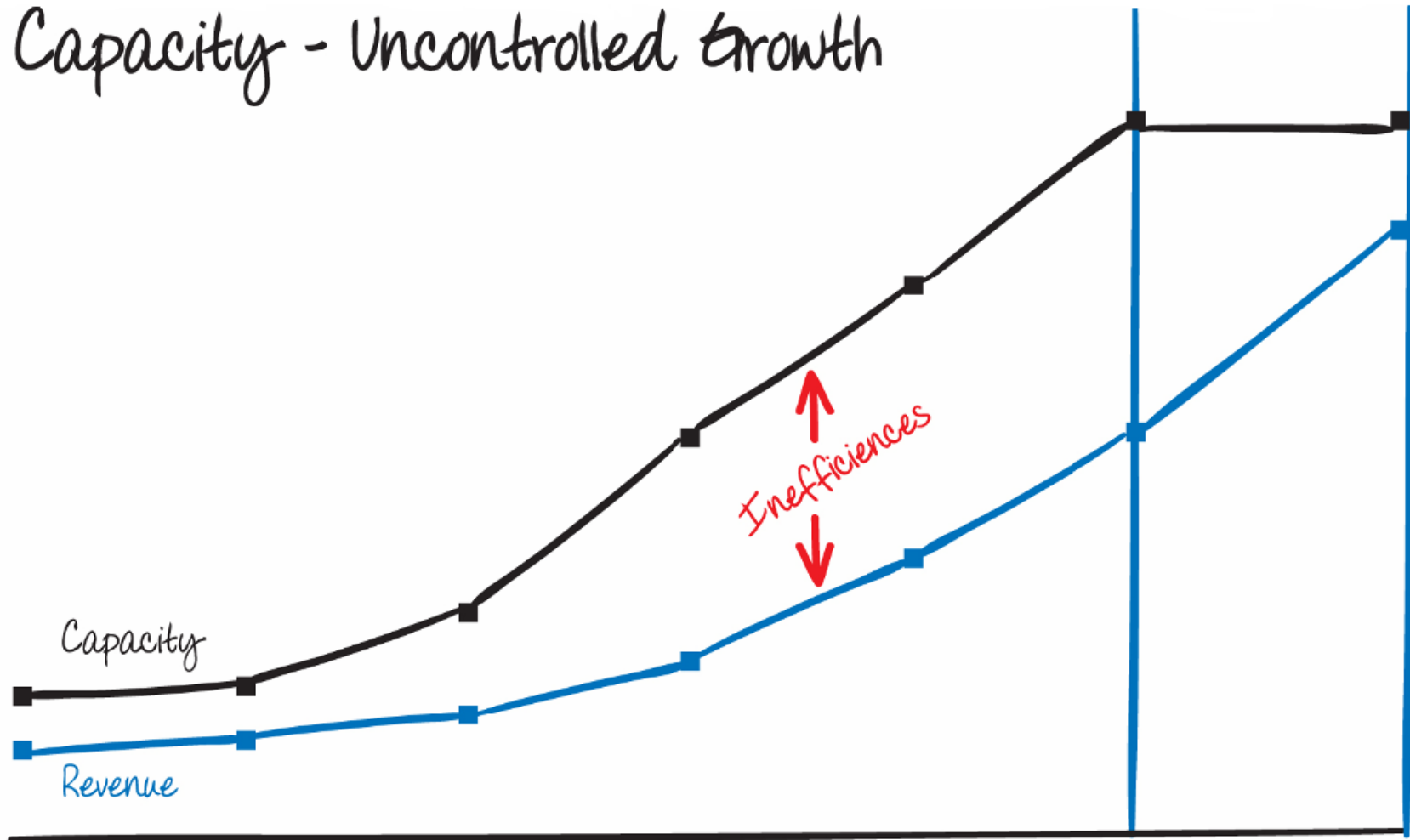


Stages
"Feelings"



Shirlaws
Love business.

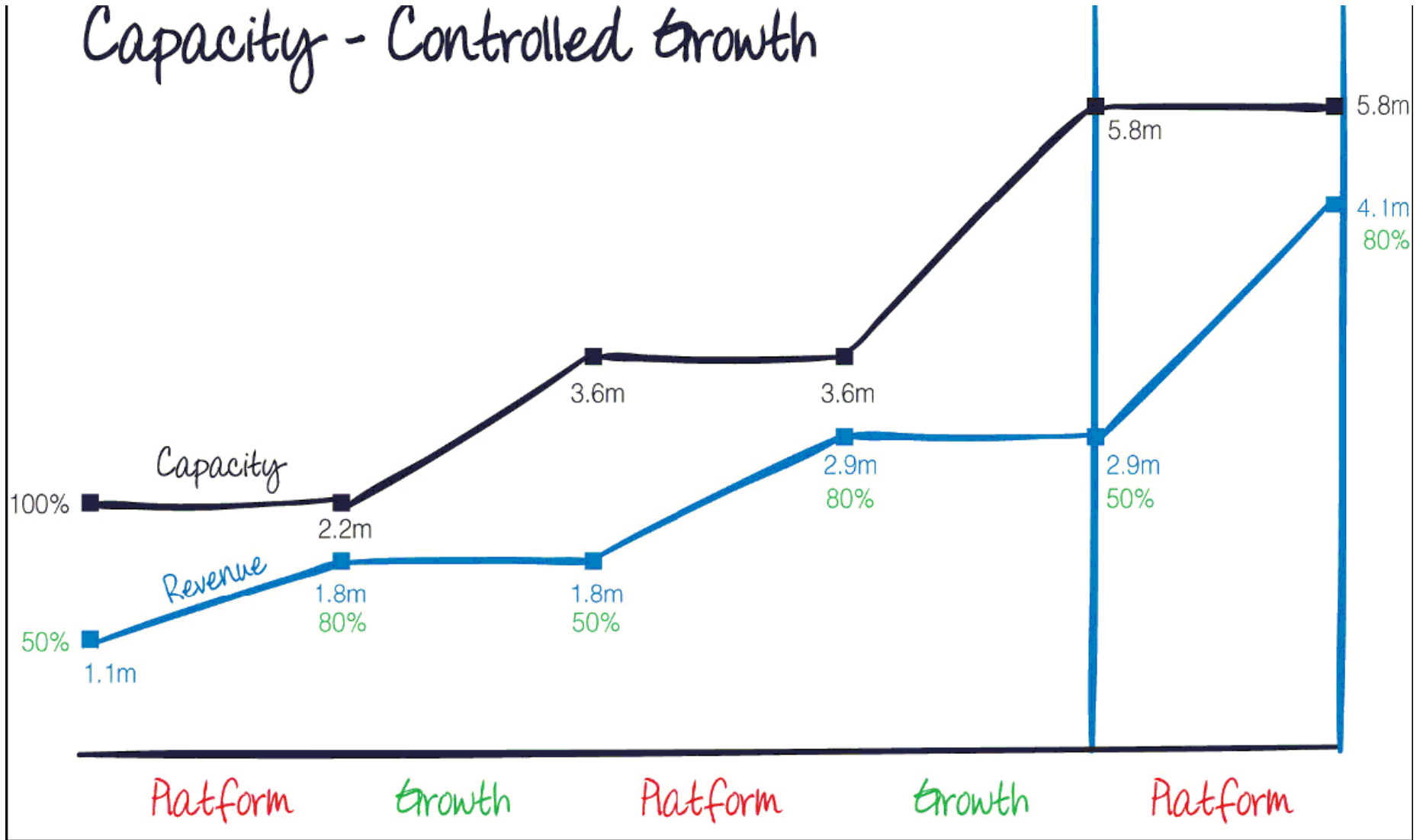
Capacity - Uncontrolled Growth



Shirlaws

Love business.

Capacity - Controlled Growth



Shirlaws

Love business.



Moving through the 1st Brick Wall

Wait until you reach the Trough of Sorrow

- Are you really committed?
- Document your business model
 - your product, your profit margin, and your necessary sales volume
- Have you the necessary sales / programming / deliver / service skills?
- Acknowledge your feelings
- Reset your expectations
- Reality check – let go of your ego
- Key question “What is the investment that will **create** the growth for you?”

Shirlaws
Love business.



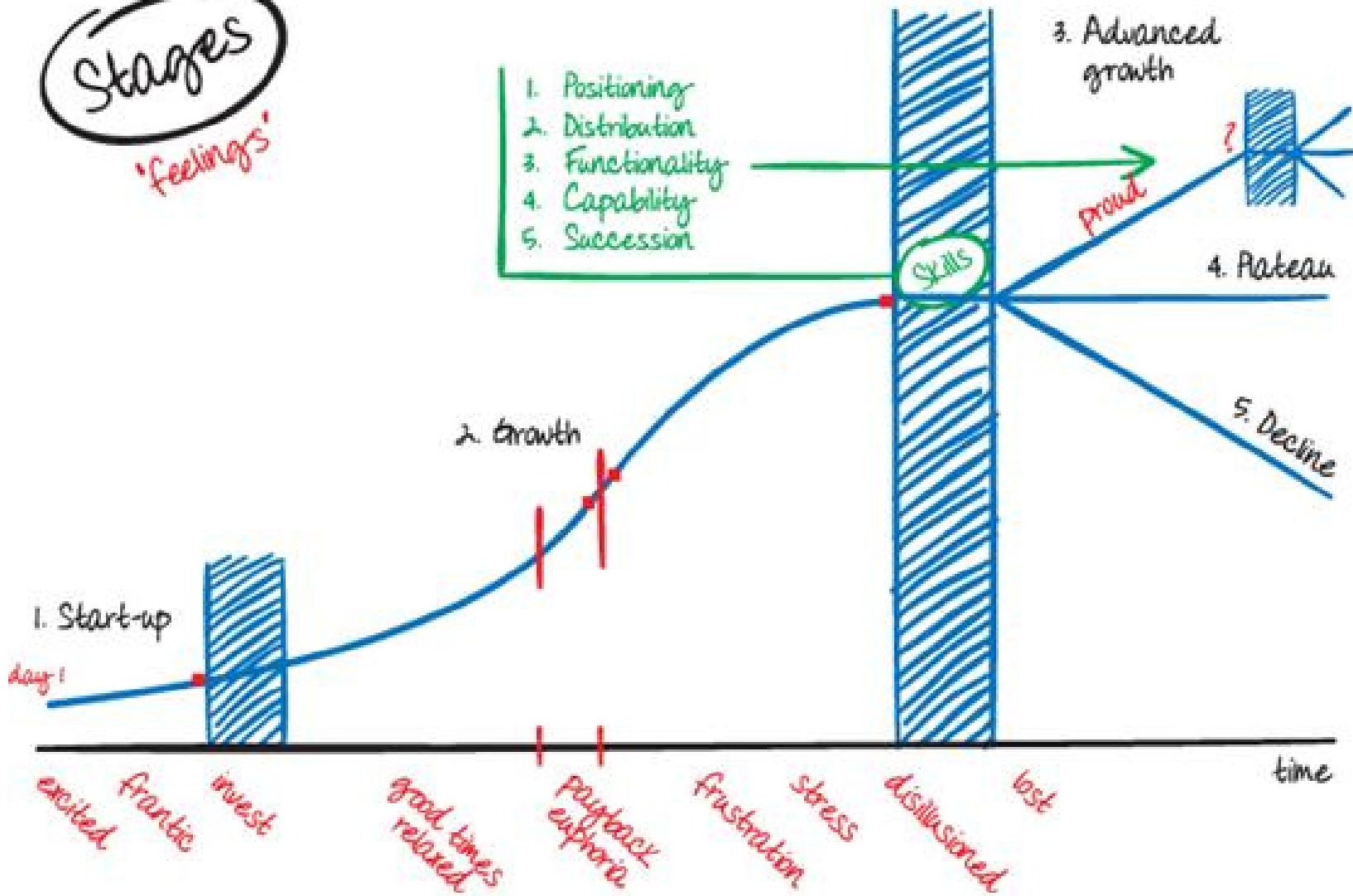
Moving through the 2nd Brick Wall

Start as soon as you can

- Positioning
 - why will customers use you over their other options?
 - what ONE WORD can focus all your decisions?
- Distribution
 - what are your channels to market?
- Functionality
 - are roles clearly defined in your business so the right resource (including tech specs) is doing the right task at the right time and for the right cost point?
- Capability
 - does your management team have the business capability for today AND for the next phase of your growth?
- Succession
 - do you have an exit plan at the top level?
 - do you have a career path at every other level?

Stages
"Feelings"

- 1. Positioning
- 2. Distribution
- 3. Functionality
- 4. Capability
- 5. Succession



Shirlaws
Love business.