

Chris Gagné

AI Transformation Lead | ROI on AI spend

Nelson, New Zealand (US citizen) | Book a conversation at hi.chrisgagne.com

Full record: chrisgagne.com/cv.md

I was product lead on production machine learning at StubHub in 2013, and today I build and run deterministic and LLM tooling for clients myself. Most recently I built and shipped three tools into a 25+ team financial-services organisation, writing them myself in Claude Code and Codex: an LLM-based after-action review coach and two deterministic tools for portfolio forecasting and backlog quality.

Alongside the tools, I worked with the CTO and product leaders on ownership and planning across three value streams, and helped the CTO rework the career ladders, which collapsed specialised developer roles into one engineering role. When AI speeds up the work, the delay moves to the handoffs, reviews and approvals between specialists. I find where the work waits from the teams' own delivery data, and the fix is often a more generalist team that owns the whole problem; then I help leaders choose what to change and see it through. I started in UX design and product, then spent ten years as an Agile coach, learning why process and tool changes do little when the wider system stays put.

Experience

Approach Perfect, remote from New Zealand

Sep 2020 – present

Principal Consultant, Product and Operating Model

Won, scoped, priced and delivered every engagement, across four client organisations, and mentored product management from Product Owner to CPO, CPTO and CTO, and every layer of product leadership beneath them. One executive has hired me into four companies over the 18 years we've known each other.

Global financial-services firm

Feb 2025 – May 2026

Reshaped ownership and planning for 25+ teams: by the end, each of three value streams planned jointly every fortnight with the others represented, under one ranked view the CTO held. Designed the operating handbook the organisation ran on, since published de-identified as *Minimum Viable Bureaucracy*, and helped the CTO review and write the career ladders, including how each role would use generative AI. Built and shipped three tools into it: **AAR Maker**, an LLM-based after-action review coach built from the review templates I'd run at three clients; **Delivery Intelligence**, which ranked the teams' backlogs into one view with date-range forecasts and cost-of-delay sequencing; and a **backlog data-quality tool**. Only AAR Maker needed an LLM, and the teams still use it for most of their reviews. Published case study (Org Topologies, December 2025).

NRC Health (public B2B SaaS), strategic advisor to the CPO and CPTO

Mar 2024 – Feb 2025

Led prioritisation of the whole epic portfolio with 30+ stakeholders, including C-level leadership. Work in process fell, throughput rose, and we realised value sooner. Worked with the CPTO on organisational design and flow.

Episource, a division of UnitedHealth Group

Jul 2021 – Mar 2024

Advised the SVP Product and CPTO through the acquisition and integration into UnitedHealth Group's Optum. Managed five Agile coaches across a 300+ person organisation, owning their development and reviews and hiring one, and built and ran an 18-hour Remote Agile Masterclass. Speed-to-market and quality improved noticeably.

A healthcare startup

Sep 2020 – Jul 2021

Organised the teams around one product using LeSS and mentored the Head of Product and Engineering through a scaling phase. The teams gained a much better handle on what they were building and when they could release it, and quality improved notably.

Open-source context architecture: github.com/chrisgagne/grounded-forge. I also run my business development on agents I built; I evaluate what they find and do the outreach myself.

Holo.Host, remote from the US, then New Zealand

May 2019 – Nov 2020

Enterprise Agile Coach

Organised the four teams of a globally distributed company commercialising Holochain around one product with LeSS, and coached its two co-founders, Director of Product, Product Owners, Scrum Masters and teams.

Accenture | SolutionsIQ, San Francisco

May 2016 – Oct 2017; Jun 2018 – May 2019

Agile Coach, large enterprise clients

Coached 21 eBay teams and their Product Owners across selling, search science, trust, payments, identity, returns and risk during eBay's multi-year Agile transformation. Taught 140+ hours of workshops: seven two-day team workshops, leading the later ones; an Advanced Product Owner workshop I designed and led; and the Scrum Master workshop I co-designed. Later trained and coached 10 teams, their Product Owners and executives at a global hospitality technology platform and a global entertainment business. Between stints, coached independently (Oct 2017 – Jun 2018).

PagerDuty, San Francisco

Sep 2014 – Apr 2016

Sr. Product Manager, Incident Management

Product lead for PagerDuty Insights, then for incident management, the flagship product, where I began PagerDuty's work on incident response. Built **OpsDex**, an operations-maturity index, from regressions I devised and ran on incident data across the entire customer base, excluding research opt-outs; lead inventor on [US 9,367,810 B1 \(2016\)](#). Coached two distributed Scrum teams and fellow Product Owners.

eBay Inc / StubHub, San Francisco Bay Area

Sep 2011 – May 2014

Sr. Product Manager

Global product lead for StubHub's Intelligent Recommendations Engine, shipping production machine learning in 2013 with a three-developer ML and data-science team. Earlier, Sr. Product Manager for eBay Social Ventures.

Earlier Career**Evolve Media, Sr. Product Manager**

2008 – 2011, Los Angeles

Product strategy for four demographic hubs representing 75% of annual revenue and 60% of YoY growth. Product Owner for [Momtastic](#), researched, built and launched in under four months. Shipped the company's first mobile sites.

Student of Fortune, COO & Co-founder

2005 – 2009, Los Angeles

Co-founded and ran a C2C marketplace; designed its revenue-sharing model and managed payments, disputes and trust and safety. Hands-on Perl/MySQL development. Left in 2009 and sold my stake in 2010; [Chegg acquired the company in 2011](#).

Oversee.net, Product Manager

2007 – 2008, Los Angeles

Conceived and launched the industry's first credit-bureau-verified FHA lead product. Wrote SQL against credit-bureau data already on hand to validate the opportunity before launch.

Leads360, Director, Client Services

2005 – 2007, Los Angeles

Directed account management and technical support for a lead-management CRM through 45x revenue growth in under two years. Conceived and built [LeadGuardian](#), using honeypots to expose mortgage-lead theft.

Frontera, an Idealab company, Project Manager

1999 – 2001, Los Angeles

Wireframes, mockups and requirements for early web and Palm products.

Writing

Come Prepared to Die: An Engineering Leader's Field Guide to the Leadership Paradigms AI Is Exposing and ***Minimum Viable Bureaucracy: A Field Guide*** (CC BY-NC-SA). The first sets leadership habits side by side: measuring output or outcomes, speeding up every team or finding the constraint, pushing people or changing the conditions. The second is the operating handbook across strategy, structure, processes, rewards and people. Full PDFs: chrisgagne.com/cptd-pdf and chrisgagne.com/mvb-pdf. Feed them to an LLM and ask it to apply them to your context.

Education & Credentials

Training: Org Topologies Partner, Certified Org Topologies Consultant (C-OTC) and Practitioner (C-OTP), Certified LeSS Practitioner (3x), ICAgile ICP-ACC & ICP-ATF, Pragmatic Framework Certified III

Education: MBA, Advanced International Management, UCLA Anderson (top 15%; six countries, four continents); BA, Economics & History, Occidental College (Phi Beta Kappa, Magna Cum Laude)

Availability: Full-time or advisory, remote, with travel by agreement. US citizen based in Nelson, New Zealand, as one of 525 Edmund Hillary Fellows selected from 3,400+ applicants. I work close to US West Coast hours.