

FOR DEVELOPERS, REVIEWERS & TECH LEADS

Which monster visited your team this sprint?

Bring one recent AI-assisted change. Leave with one countermove, a human owner, and a follow-up date.

Set up: 3-8 people, a facilitator, a timer, and a place to write. Start with the two cards below. Read the front and back together. No book reading or game experience needed.

Name patterns, not colleagues. Point to the work. Give people room to disagree or pass. No match is a useful answer.

RUN A 15-MINUTE AI CODING RETRO

- 00-03 min** **Show the work.** State the intended result. Bring a pull request, acceptance criterion, or decision note. Agree on what happened.
- 03-07 min** **Pick the card.** Read both examples. Each person names an observation. Choose the better fit for this change.
- 07-11 min** **Test the diagnosis.** Use one question below. What evidence supports the pattern? What would change your mind? Mark unknowns.
- 11-15 min** **Choose one move.** Write a small response, its owner, the evidence you expect, and a follow-up date on page 3.



Scope Creep Kraken

Helpful extras became commitments before the team chose to maintain them.

Ask: Which part serves the original goal? Which addition needs its own decision?

Try: Restate the acceptance criteria. Separate one extra into approved work with an owner, a reason, and a maintenance estimate.



Phantom Intern

The code works, but the team cannot explain its decisions or confidently change it.

Ask: If the author were away tomorrow, where would we find why this works this way?

Try: Record the important decision, alternatives, and assumptions alongside the code. Have a second maintainer trace one real input.

FOR MANAGERS, TEAM LEADS & AI ADOPTION TEAMS

What are we choosing? What justifies it?

Bring one proposed purchase, pilot expansion, or AI workflow. Include its owner and the evidence you have.

Set up: 3-8 people, a facilitator, a timer, and a place to write. Read the two cards below. Use the online bestiary if you do not have a deck.

Discuss the decision. Examine claims and cost assumptions. Describe the pressure on the choice without assigning a character to a person.

RUN A 20-MINUTE AI ADOPTION DISCUSSION

- 00-04 min** **Name the decision.** Write the problem, affected people, a useful outcome, the proposed change, and the decision date.
- 04-09 min** **Pick the card.** Read both examples. Which prompt helps this decision? Connect it to evidence in the actual proposal.
- 09-15 min** **Ask for evidence.** List what is known and unknown. Choose the smallest test or forecast that closes the consequential gap.
- 15-20 min** **Choose the next move.** Continue, bound the pilot, or pause expansion. Set an owner, a follow-up date, and the evidence needed to expand.



Vendor Bard

The promise of joining the future outweighs evidence for your actual problem.

Ask: Which of our problems did the demo solve? What does the product not do well?

Try: Write three problems. Assign an owner to test an ordinary and a difficult case from your workflow, then record the limitations.



Cost Singularity

A cheap pilot becomes a popular workflow before anyone has priced success.

Ask: What does this cost if everyone loves it, including retries, services, and human review?

Try: Forecast hoped-for adoption. Name a cost owner, usage boundary, and review trigger. Check what happens at the boundary before expansion.

USE FOR EITHER SESSION

One move. One owner. A date to check back.

A countermove is a small, specific response to the pattern. Choose one the team can verify. Copy this record into your team note or ticket.

Work or decision

Pattern + evidence from the work

One countermove

Human owner / Follow-up date

We will know it helped when...

At the follow-up: Did the action happen? What changed? Keep, adjust, or drop the move based on evidence. For an adoption decision, record whether expansion is now justified.

THE CARD STARTS IT. THE BOOK TAKES IT FURTHER.

Read the matching entry after the session. Use its diagnosis and countermoves to refine the action; bring one adjustment to your next meeting.

Volume I: Kraken - Chapter 8, "Aberrations: The Scope Creep Kraken and the Temporal Tangle Worm." Phantom - Chapter 10, "Spirits: The Phantom Intern and the Probability Pixie." Both - Chapter 12, "Diagnosis and Intervention."

slopcodex.com/books/volume-1

Volume II: Vendor Bard - Chapter 5, "Vendor NPCs and Anti-Patterns." Cost Singularity - Chapter 8, "The Cost Singularity."

slopcodex.com/books/volume-2

Try the online entries: slopcodex.com/bestiary

Book + matching deck kits: slopcodex.com/store/#book-deck-kits

Full review checklists: slopcodex.com/cheat-sheets

Original companion prompts adapted from The Slop Codex, Volumes I and II, and the existing AI Code Review and AI Team Field Kits. Copyright 2026 Tim O'Brien / Discursive. Print and share this guide with your team.