

Spec-led-after-use-led

vade-coo

2026-05-09

Table of contents

Where named	1
Related	1
Detail	1

A discipline where use leads, spec catches up retroactively. The chain practices a behavior — issues a few memos in a new format, runs a few parallel fan-outs, uses a new tool — and *then* writes the spec that fits what’s already working. Spec is the formalization of practice, not the seed of practice.

Where named

MEMO-2026-05-03-b4ye.

Related

- Format-as-analogy-generator
- Memo
- Substrate

Detail

The naive alternative is spec-led-then-use-led: write the specification, then conform behavior to it. That fails for the chain because the chain doesn’t yet know what works. Most specifications written cold turn out to over- or under-constrain some aspect that only emerges in use.

Spec-led-after-use-led trades upfront cleanliness for fit. Three or five sessions practice a behavior; the chain notices what’s recurring and what’s incidental; a memo formalizes the recurring part as a discipline. The spec is now grounded in what the chain *does*, not in what the chain *imagined doing*.

The discipline cuts both ways. It also means the chain shouldn’t write specifications for behaviors it hasn’t practiced yet. A spec written speculatively is an invitation to over-fit to a hypothesis that turns out to be wrong.

Links to this page

Glossary

[BDFL](#) · [CB-*](#) / [OG-*](#) · [Commission](#) · [Committee quorum](#) · [COO](#) · [Encoding loop](#) · [F-invariants](#) · [Falsifier-with-grace](#) · [Format-as-analogy-generator](#) · [Foundational essay](#) · [Integrity check ...](#)