GDC SUMMER

How to be a Force Multiplier

aka a Producer

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Game Producer, Google

GAME DEVELOPERS CONFERENCE
AUGUST 4–6, 2020 | #GDC20

Goals & Takeaways

- Production = designing & facilitating work systems for human beings, which means you have to understand human beings
- Frameworks, Methodologies, Mindsets, & Philosophies you can practice
- Things you can Google later :)

What do people think a Producer does?

Schedule Meetings

Administrative Overhead

Scrum Master

Track & Report Progress

Take Notes

Taskmaster

What is a Producer <u>really</u> doing?

Ensuring Alignment

Providing Visibility

Unblocking their Team

Increasing Predictability

Creating Consistency

Creating Source of Truth

Empowering Others

Managing Momentum

Reducing CHAOS

What Makes a Producer?

- The “Hard” Skills
  - Scheduling, Budgeting, Scoping
  - Following Process, Maintaining Status Quo
  - Emails, Reporting
  - Documentation, Dashboards, Charts

The Hard Skills

These things are easy to learn and practice. They are the tools that you use.

What Makes a GREAT Producer?

- The “Soft” Skills
  - Emotional Intelligence, Empathy, Humanism
  - Thoughtful Listening & Communication
  - Social Intelligence, Process Flexibility & Tailoring

The Soft Skills

These are harder to learn and require more practice.

They influence HOW and WHEN you use the tools.

Frameworks&
Methodologies&
Philosophies&
Mindsets

BIZARRO.COM
Facebook.com/BizarroComics
Dist. by King Features
I object! Counsel is trying to confuse the jury with the *intent* of the law, completely ignoring the loopholes and technicalities.
©DON 2
10·26·15

Agile Manifesto

Agile Manifesto

- **Individuals & Interactions** over processes and tools
- **Working Software** over comprehensive documentation
- **Customer Collaboration** over contract negotiation
- **Responding to Change** over following a plan

(while there is value in the items on the right, we value the items on the left more)

12 Principles behind the Agile Manifesto

12 Principles behind the Agile Manifesto

1. Our highest priority is to satisfy the customer through **early and continuous delivery** of valuable software.
2. Welcome changing requirements, even late in development. Agile processes **harness change** for the customer's competitive advantage.
3. Deliver working software **frequently**, from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, with a preference to the shorter timescale.

12 Principles behind the Agile Manifesto

4. Business people and developers must **work together** daily throughout the project.
5. Build projects around motivated individuals. Give them the environment and **support** they need, and **trust** them to get the job done.
6. The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is **face-to-face conversation**.

12 Principles behind the Agile Manifesto

7. **Working software** is the primary measure of progress.
8. Agile processes promote sustainable development. The sponsors, developers, and users should be able to **maintain a constant pace** indefinitely.
9. Continuous attention to **technical excellence** and **good design** enhances agility.

12 Principles behind the Agile Manifesto

10. **Simplicity** -- the art of maximizing the amount of work not done -- is essential.
11. The best architectures, requirements, and designs emerge from **self-organizing teams**.
12. At regular intervals, the team **reflects** on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

My Personal Highlights of Agile Manifesto

The most efficient and effective method of conveying information to and within a development team is **face-to-face conversation**.

My Personal Highlights of Agile Manifesto

At regular intervals, the team **reflects** on how to become more effective, then tunes and adjusts its behavior accordingly.

DOING Agile

BEING Agile

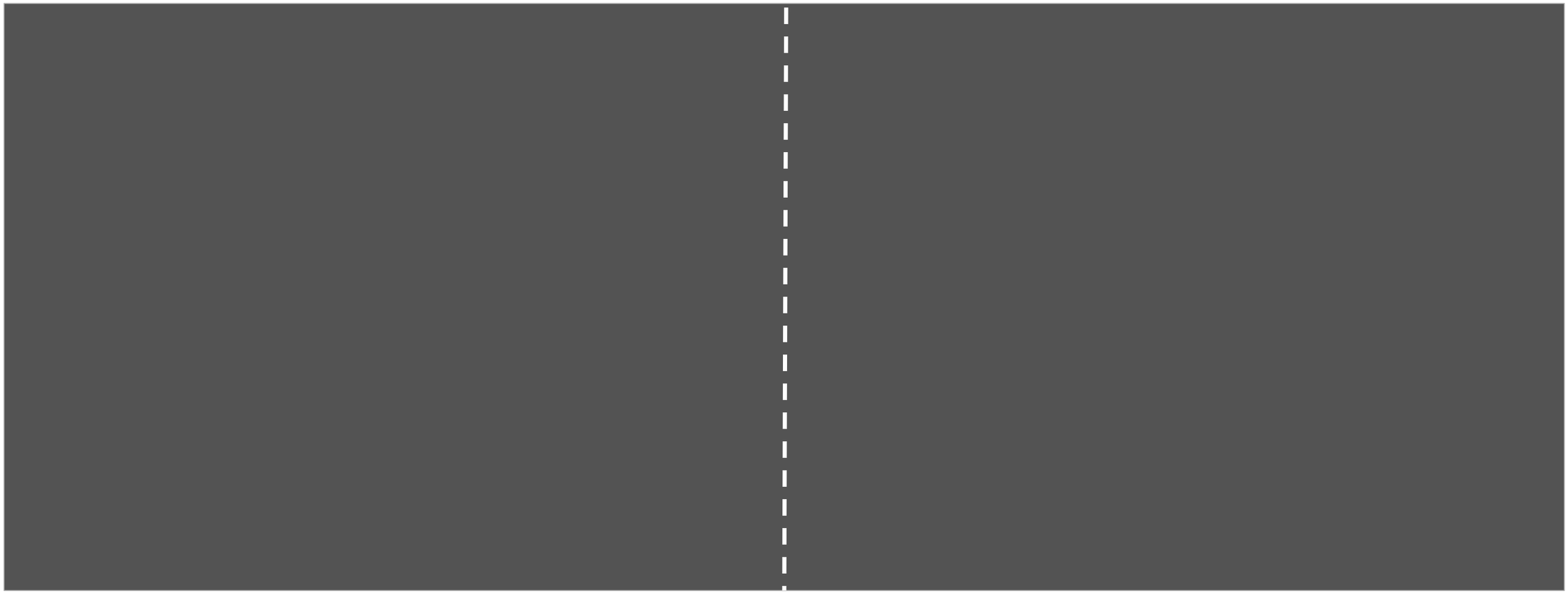
HOTEL
FITNESS & WELLNESS
LEIHHAUS
Internet Cafe
Snooker
Billard
Bistro
CASINO

Scrum

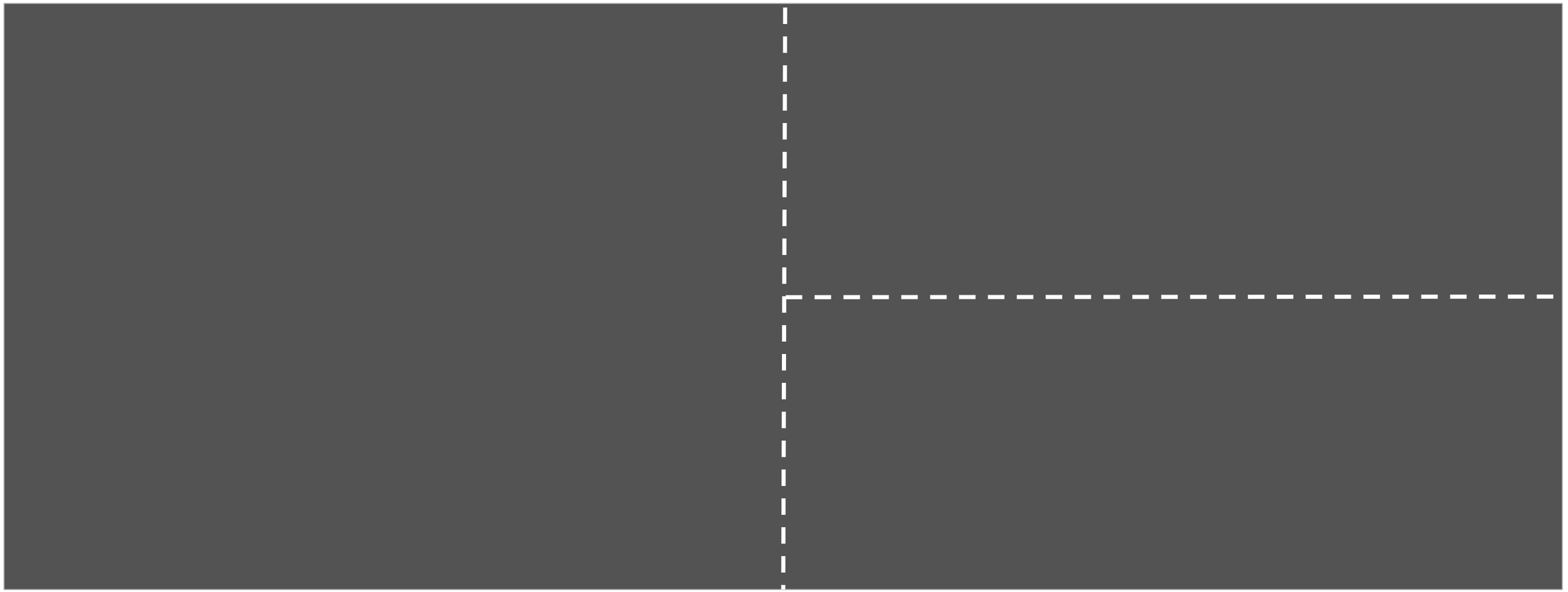
5 Rituals of Scrum

Backlog Grooming

Backlog Grooming



Backlog Grooming



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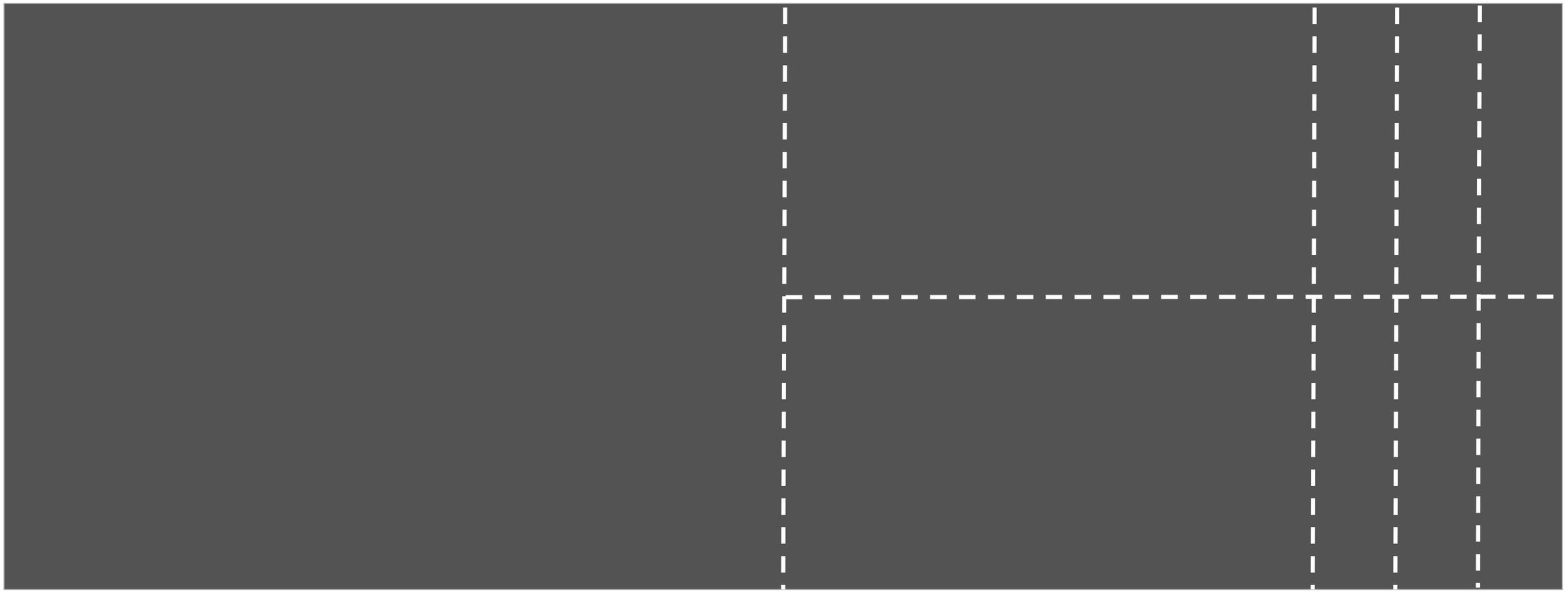

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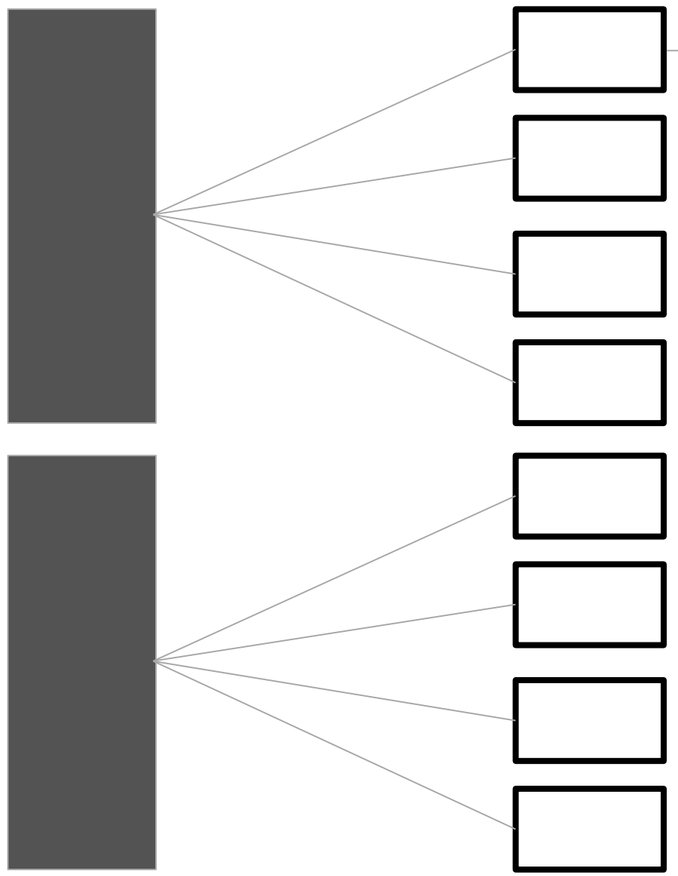
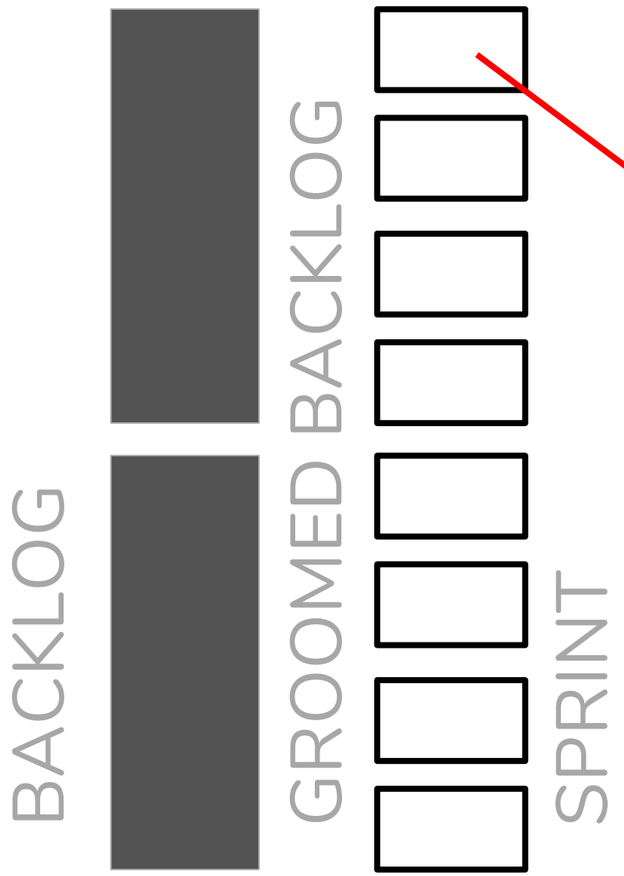


- Description
- User Story
- Definition of Done
- Estimation

Sprint Planning



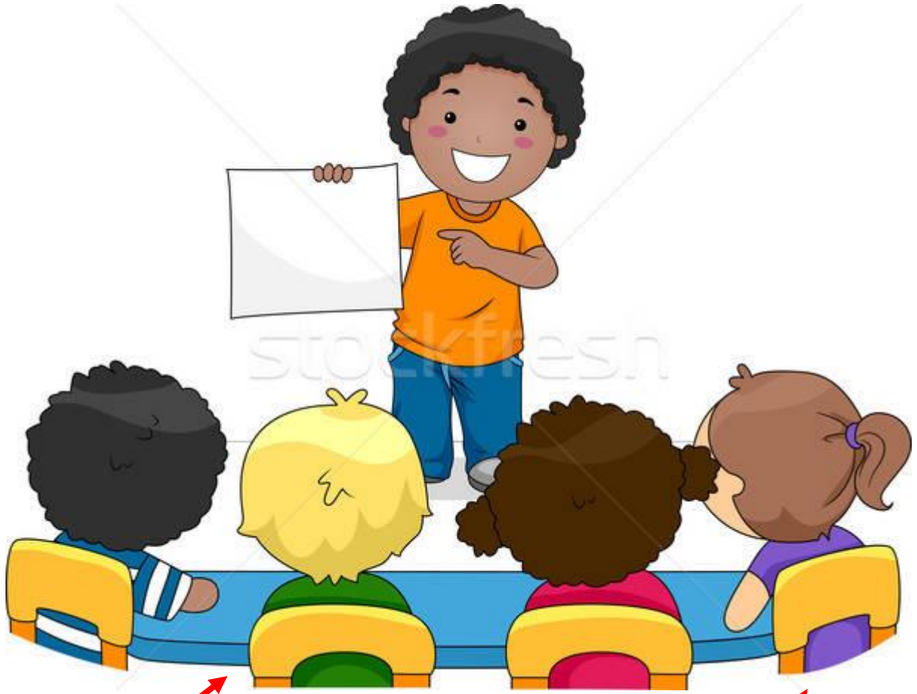
To Do	Doing	Review	Done
3 5 2 3 8 1			

= 22 points

Daily Scrum

- What did you do yesterday?
- What will you do today?
- Any flags to raise?

Product Review/Demo



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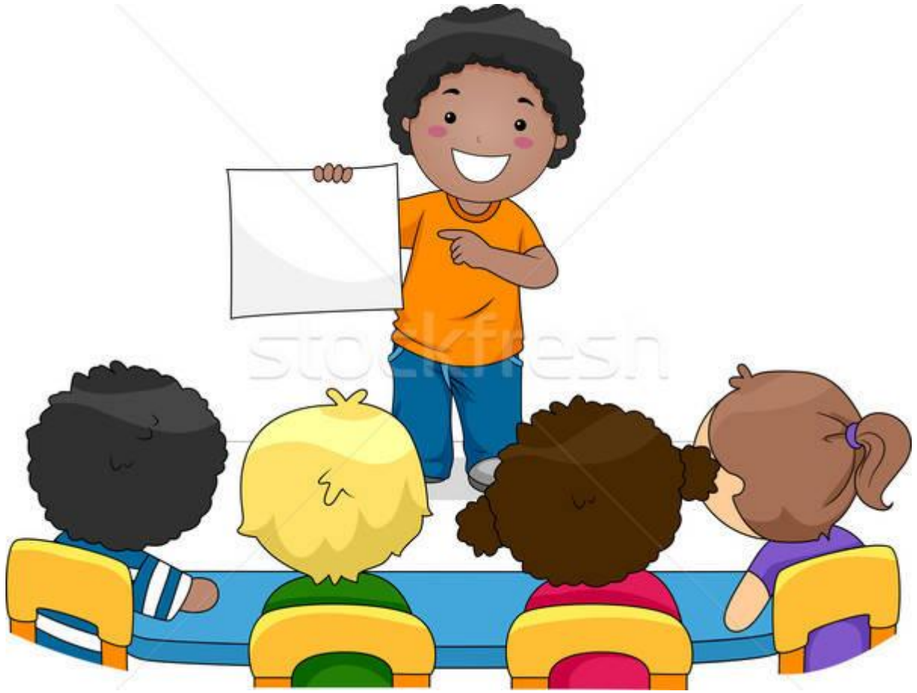

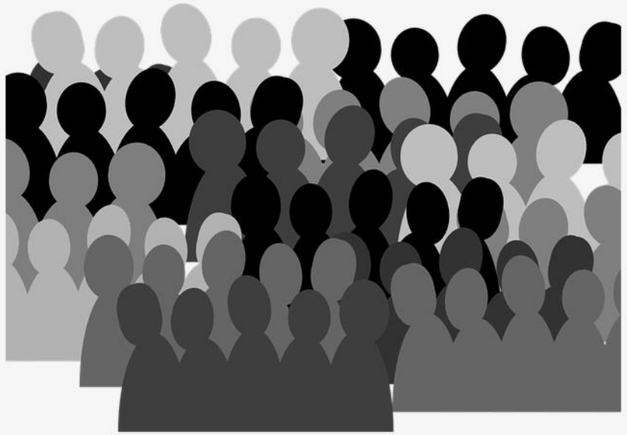

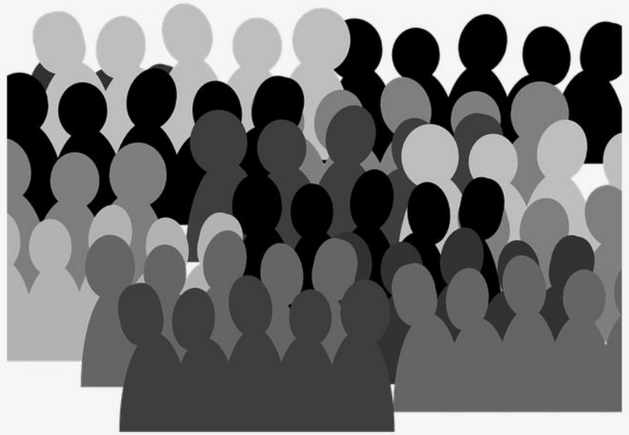

Process Retrospective

What Went Well	What Didn't Go Well	What Can We Change?

Process Retrospective

What Went Well	What Didn't Go Well	What Can We Change?
+ Batch Design + Texture Exploration + Spiking	- Emergent request from leadership - Comms about feature changes in personal chat instead of team chat so there wasn't visibility	

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celebrate! keep doing these!

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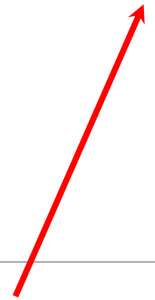
What Went Well	What Didn't Go Well	What Can We Change?
+ Batch Design + Texture Exploration + Spiking	- Emergent request from leadership - Comms about feature changes in personal chat instead of team chat so there wasn't visibility	+ negotiate a working agreement with leadership [save for future sprint] + **all feature-related comms should be in team chat [commit next sprint]**

celebrate! keep doing these!



commit to improving something for the next sprint, but don't over-commit

SCRUM Sprint Schedule

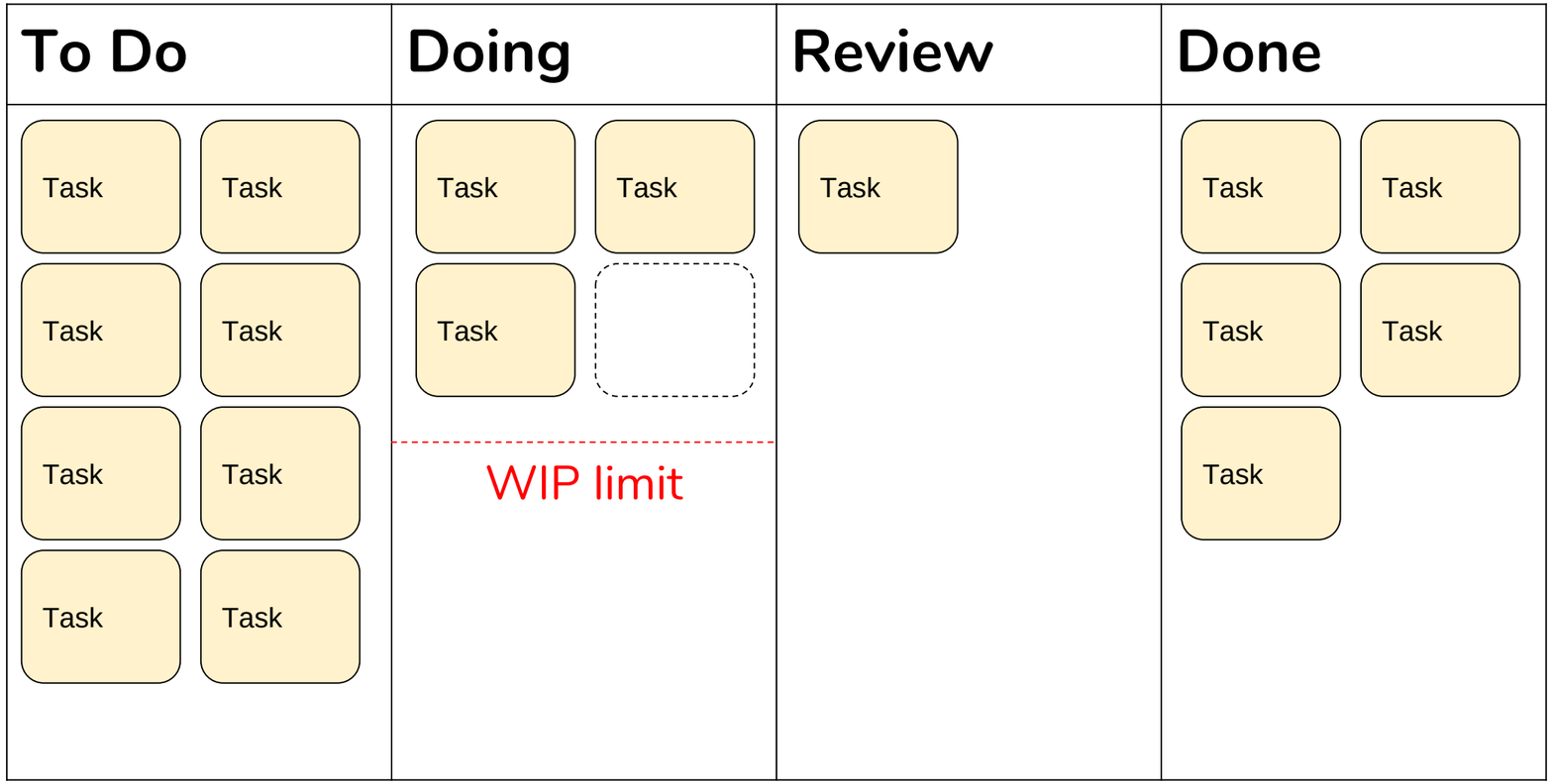
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Week 1	Sprint Planning	Daily Scrum	Daily Scrum	Daily Scrum	Daily Scrum
Week 2	Backlog Grooming	Daily Scrum	Daily Scrum	Daily Scrum	Product Review/Demos Process Retrospective

Kanban

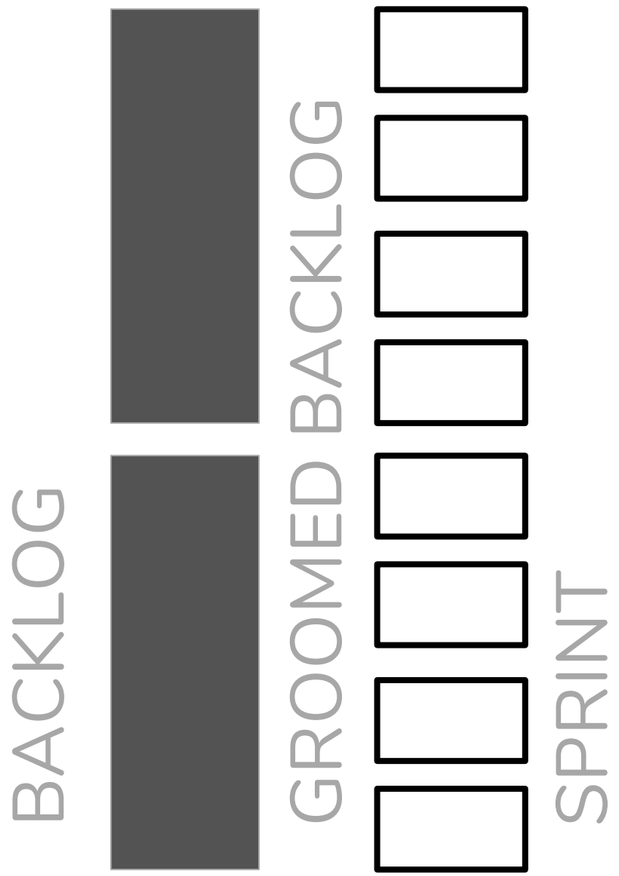
4 Principles of Kanban

1. Visualize Workflow
2. Limit WIP (work-in-progress)
3. Focus on Flow
4. Kaizen (Continuous Improvement)

Kanban Board



Sprint Planning

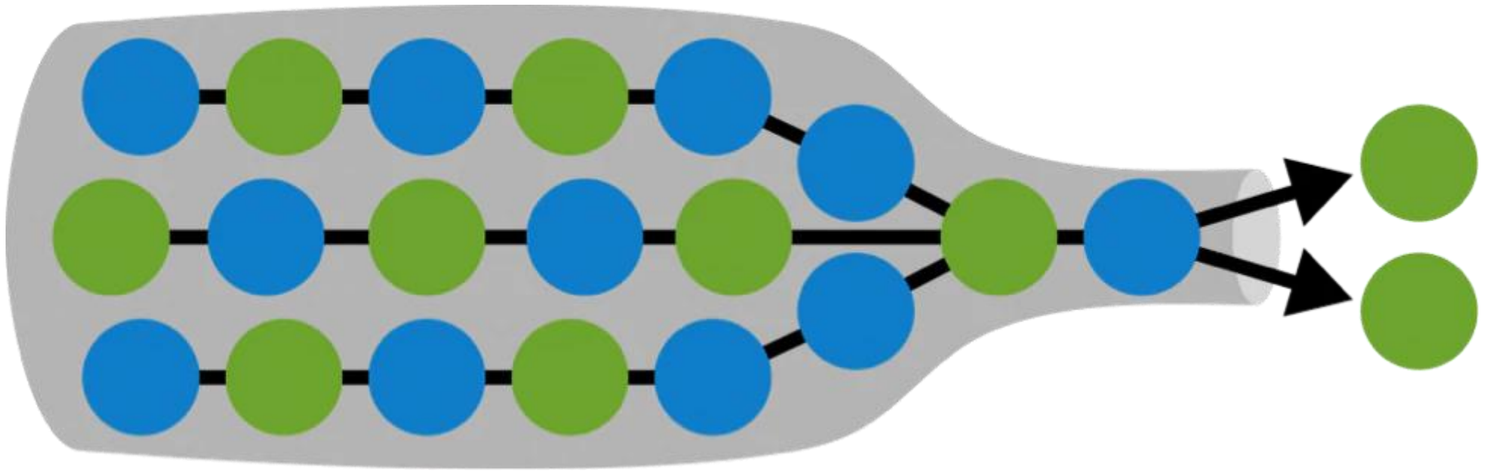


To Do	Doing	Review	Done
3 5 2 3 8 1			

= 22 points

Kanban Board - Merch Art Team

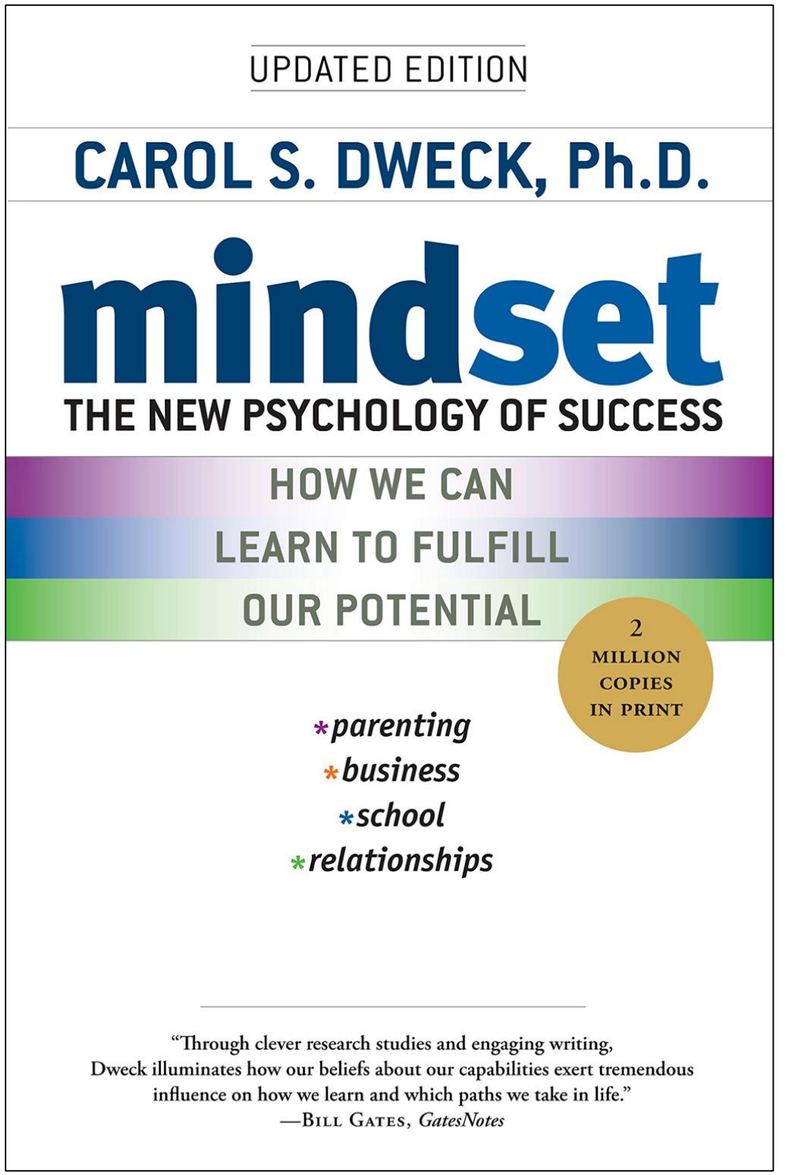
To Do	Concept	Turnarounds	3D Model	3D Print	Paintover	Ship to Vendor
Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task	Task
Task	Task	Task	WIP limit	Task	Task	Task
Task	WIP limit	Task		Task	Task	Task
Task		WIP limit		Task	Task	Task



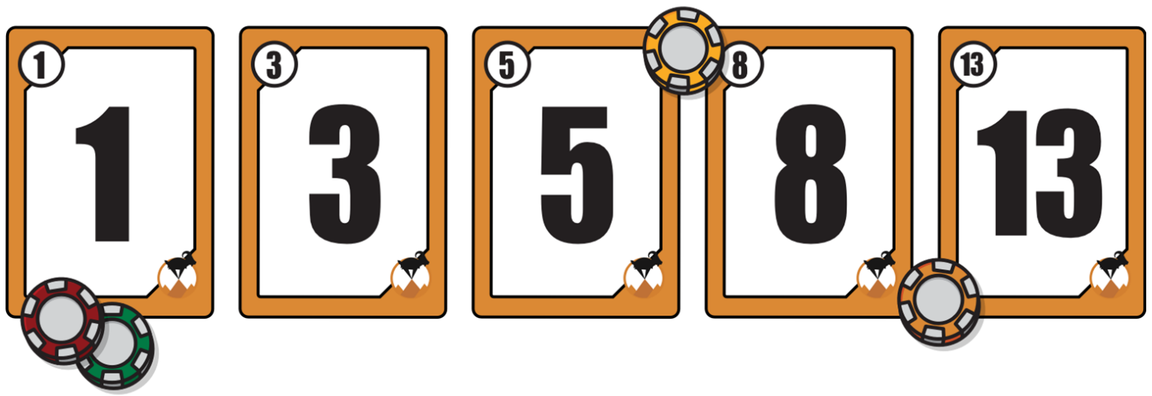
Kai
Zen
改善
Change
Good

Growth Mindset

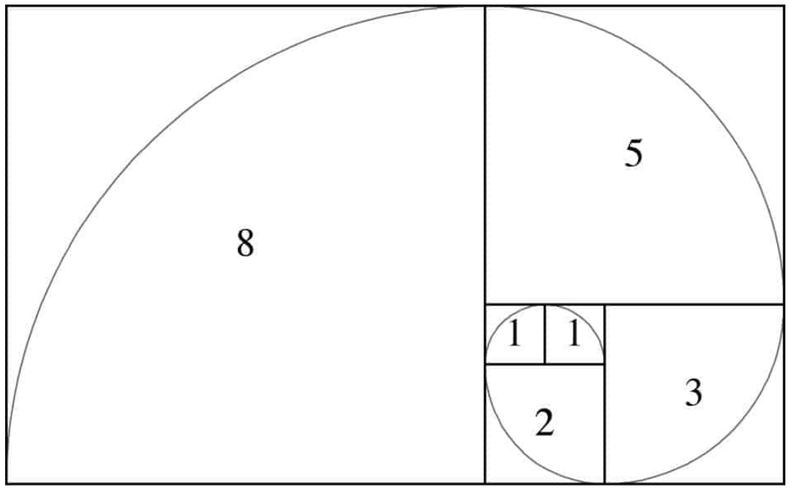
- Fixed Mindset
  - talented or not
- Growth Mindset
  - embrace failure and improve



Estimation



Fibonacci

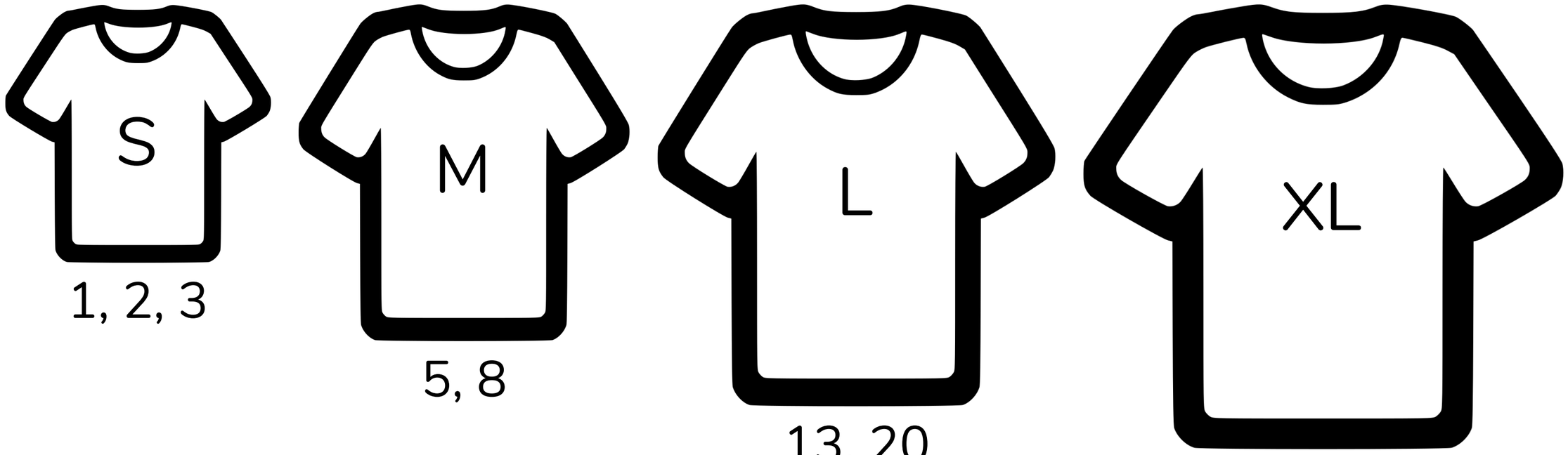


1
2
3
5
8
13
20
40
100

1
1 1
1 2 1
1 3 3 1
1 4 6 4 1
1 5 10 10 5 1
1 6 15 20 15 6 1
1 7 21 35 35 21 7 1
1 8 28 56 70 56 28 8 1
1 9 36 84 126 126 84 36 9 1
1 10 45 120 210 252 210 120 45 10 1

1 1 2 3 5 8 13 21 34 55 89

T-shirt sizing



1, 2, 3

5, 8

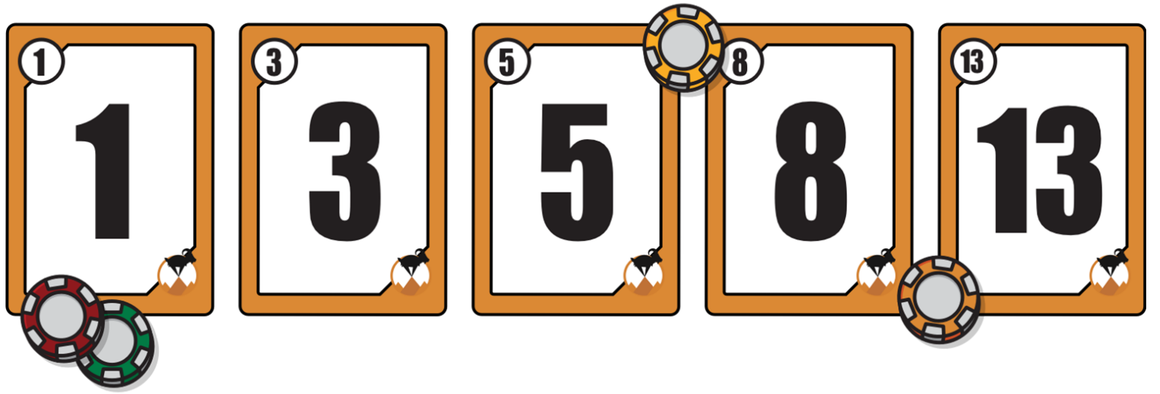
13, 20

40, 100

Fibonacci

1	Quick to deliver, minimal complexity (e.g. fill out a form)
2	Quick to deliver, some complexity, will take more than an hour
3	Moderate time, moderate complexity, will take a day or more
5	Longer time, high complexity, will probably take a week
8	Long time, high complexity, unknowns, couple weeks+
13	Long time, high complexity, many unknowns, could take a month
20	Even bigger so you should break me down ;)

Planning Poker



(Prerequisite: Backlog)

1. Describe feature to players
2. Players discuss feature
3. Each player privately selects a card
4. Cards are revealed at same time
5. Discuss discrepancies
6. Reselect cards
7. Repeat until consensus

https://www.mountaingoatsoftware.com/agile/planning-poker

Prioritization

MVP

- Minimum Viable Product
  - what does the end user need to be able to achieve?
  - what is critical to get there?

Example: Hotel Room

- user needs bed, shelter, access to toilet

MoSCoW

- Must Have
- Should Have
- Could Have
- Won’t Have

MoSCoW - Hotel Room

- Must Have - bed, shelter, access to toilet
- Should Have - private toilet, private shower, lockbox
- Could Have - TV, soundproof curtains
- Won’t Have - mini bar

Accessibility & Discoverability

Accessibility

- The things that make your product more accessible for end users can also make your work system more effective for your team.
  - text structure (headings, sub-headings, paragraphs)
  - font size, color, effect
  - images, infographics

Compare

Meeting Notes - July 24, 2020
There is a P0 bug in the most recent build. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nullam finibus fermentum eros. Fusce fringilla congue porttitor.
Sed dapibus nisl sollicitudin auctor congue. Nullam imperdiet fermentum arcu, a egestas urna consequat ut.
Aenean dictum nunc laoreet justo condimentum, at tincidunt nibh molestie.
Pellentesque sit amet diam sed quam ornare iaculis. Etiam a ullamcorper erat. Duis vitae pulvinar odio. Nam convallis aliquam imperdiet.

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- Sed dapibus nisl sollicitudin auctor congue. Nullam imperdiet fermentum arcu, a egestas urna consequat ut.
- Aenean dictum nunc laoreet justo condimentum, at tincidunt nibh molestie.
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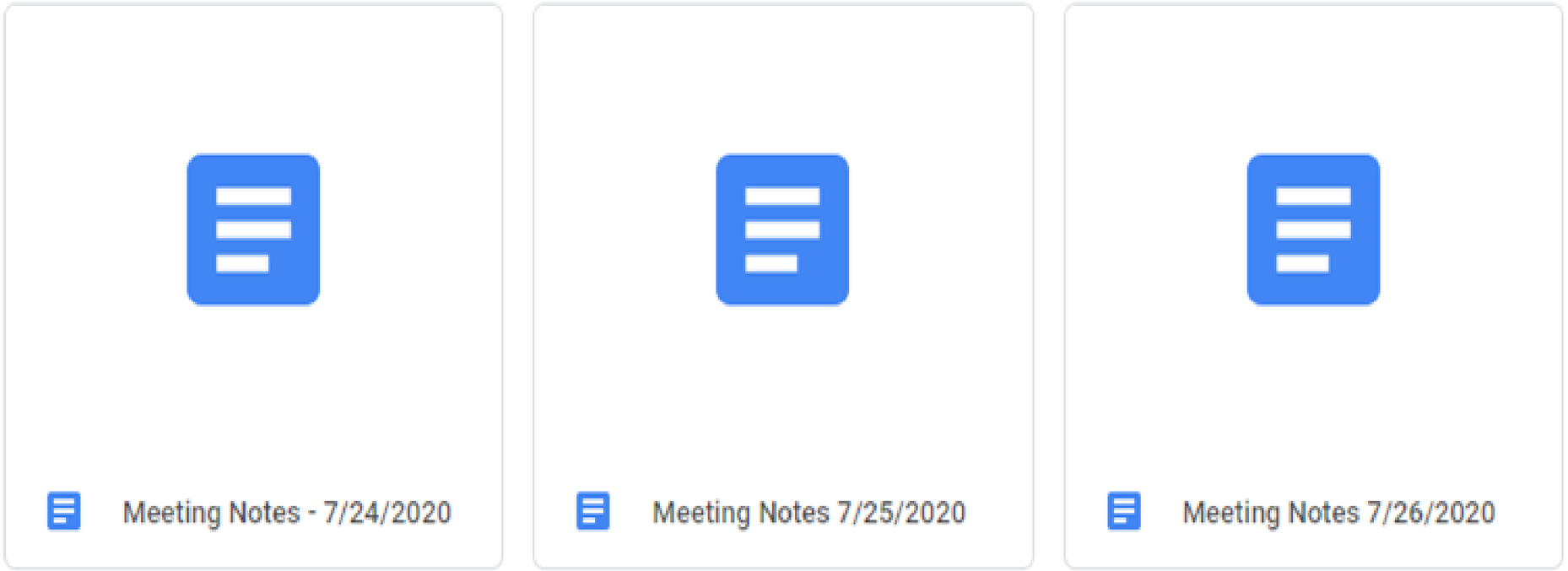
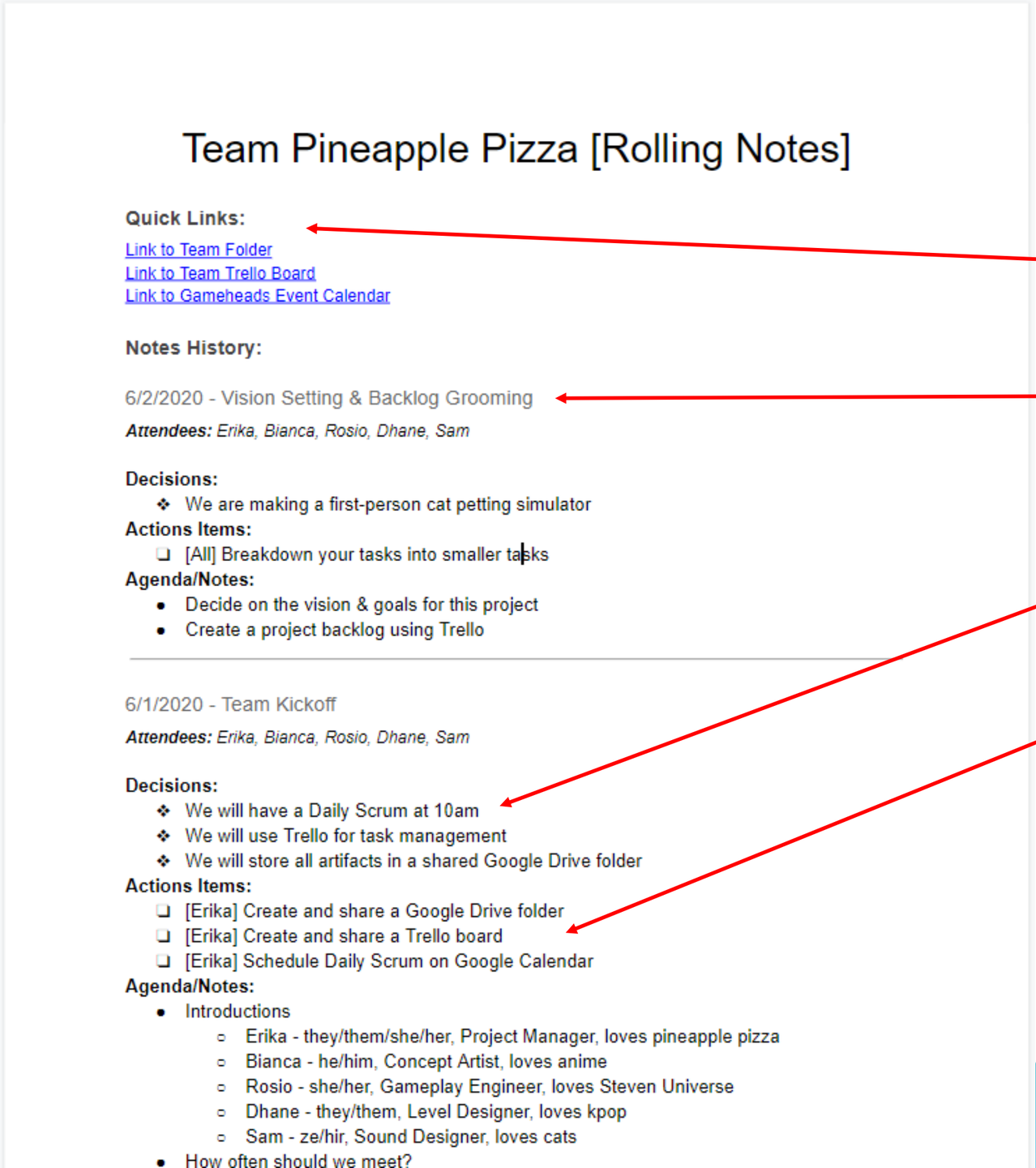
Discoverability



Thank you for taking notes! But I'm not sure where to find what I'm looking for…

Avoid Information Fragmentation



Team Pineapple Pizza [Rolling Notes]

Quick Links:

Link to Team Folder
Link to Team Trello Board
Link to Gameheads Event Calendar

Notes History:

6/2/2020 - Vision Setting & Backlog Grooming

Attendees: *Erika, Bianca, Rosio, Dhane, Sam*

Decisions:
- ❖ We are making a first-person cat petting simulator

Actions Items:
- ❑ [All] Breakdown your tasks into smaller tasks

Agenda/Notes:
- Decide on the vision & goals for this project
- Create a project backlog using Trello

6/1/2020 - Team Kickoff

Attendees: *Erika, Bianca, Rosio, Dhane, Sam*

Decisions:
- ❖ We will have a Daily Scrum at 10am
- ❖ We will use Trello for task management
- ❖ We will store all artifacts in a shared Google Drive folder

Actions Items:
- ❑ [Erika] Create and share a Google Drive folder
- ❑ [Erika] Create and share a Trello board
- ❑ [Erika] Schedule Daily Scrum on Google Calendar

Agenda/Notes:
- Introductions
  - Erika - they/them/she/her, Project Manager, loves pineapple pizza
  - Bianca - he/him, Concept Artist, loves anime
  - Rosio - she/her, Gameplay Engineer, loves Steven Universe
  - Dhane - they/them, Level Designer, loves kpop
  - Sam - ze/hir, Sound Designer, loves cats
- How often should we meet?

Links to things you will use often

Most recent notes at the top so there is less daily scrolling

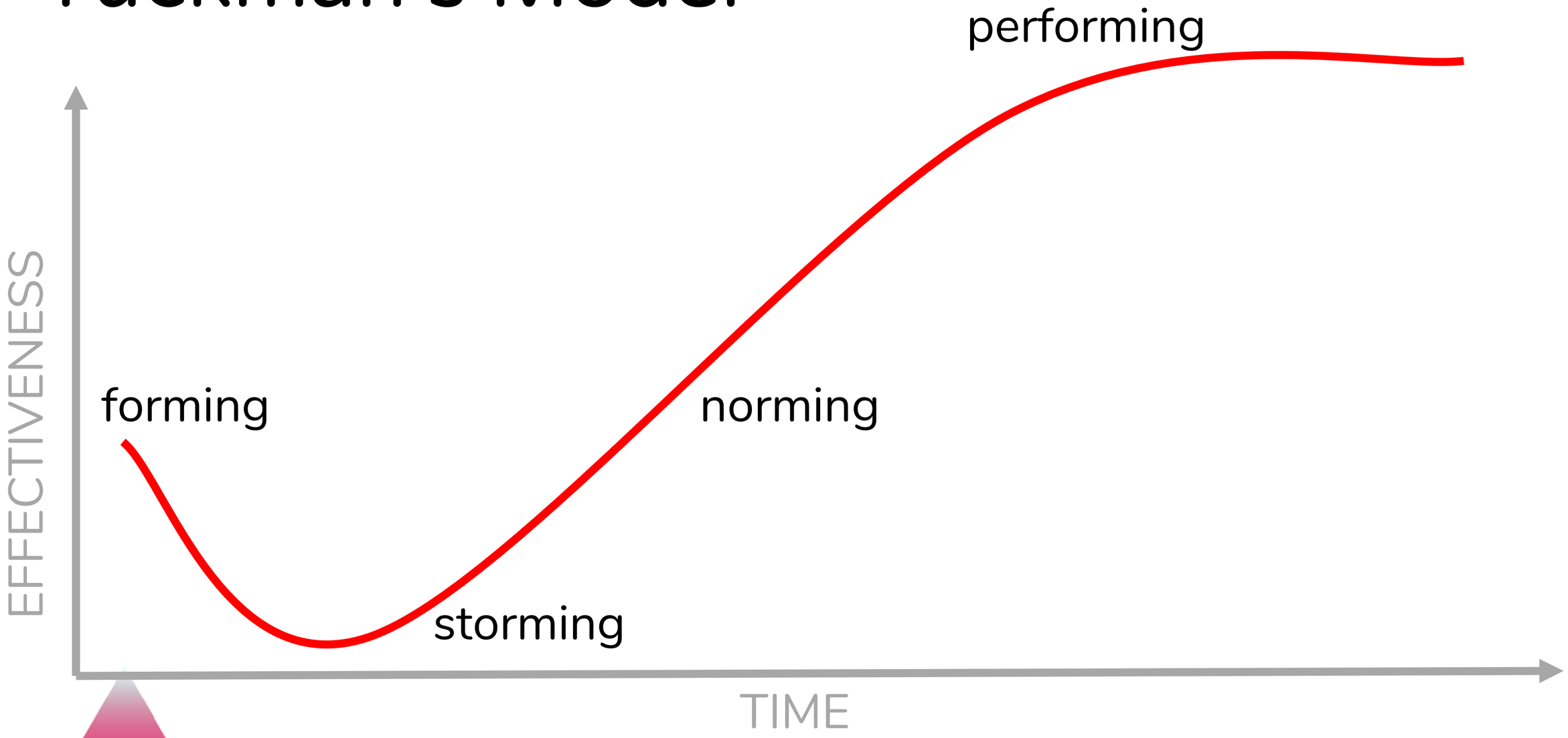
Call out **Decisions**

Call out **Action Items** and [who] is performing that action

** ALL TEAM MEETING NOTES IN ONE PLACE so that you don't need to go hunting for the right document **

Social Intelligence

Tuckman's Model



Signs of Team Dysfunction

1. Lack of Trust
2. Fear of Conflict
3. Lack of Commitment
4. Avoidance of Accountability
5. Inattention to Results

Lack of Trust

- hesitate to ask for help
- conceal weaknesses
- avoid team members

Fear of Conflict

- avoid problems
- do not confront tough issues or behaviors
- lack of transparency leads to confusion

Lack of Commitment

- ambiguous direction and/or priorities
- revisit the same discussions multiple times
- absenteeism

Avoidance of Accountability

- missed deadlines and key deliverables
- poor performance is tolerated and creates an environment of resentment or hopelessness

Inattention to Results

- poor performance and results
- team turnover

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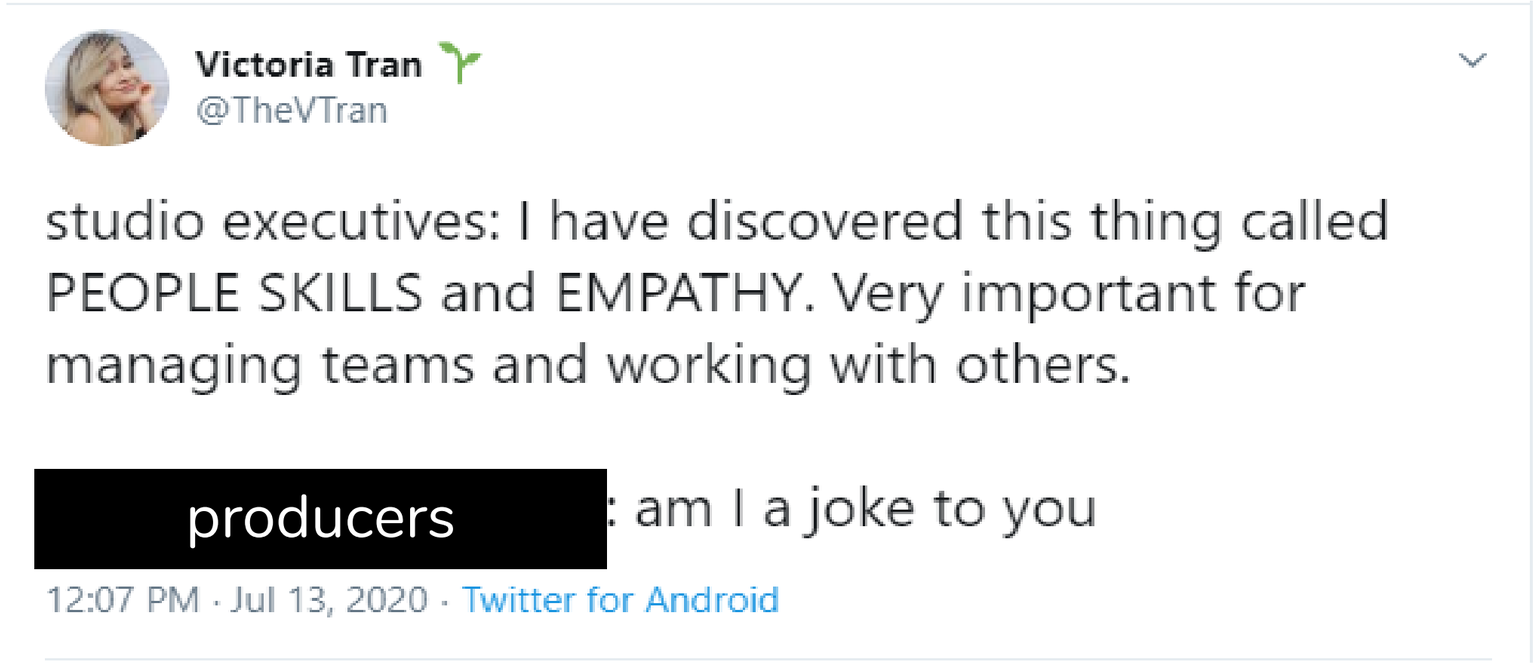
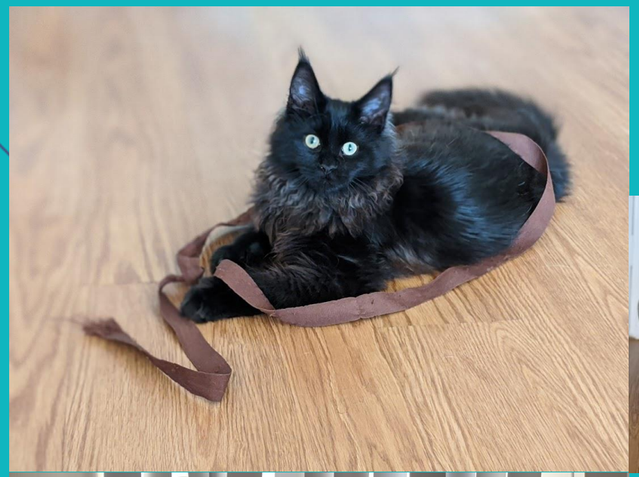
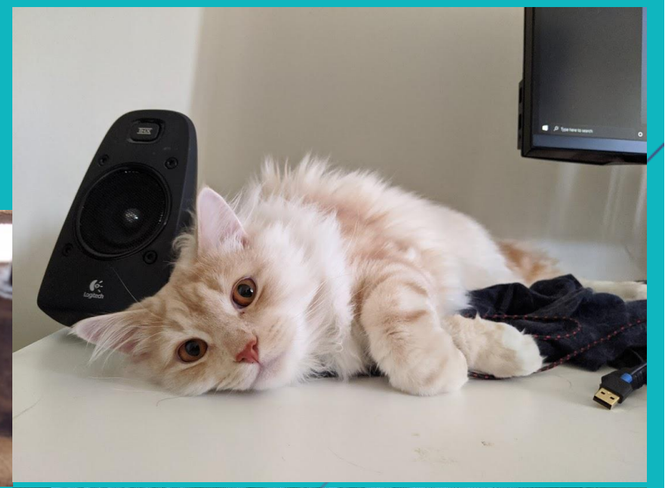
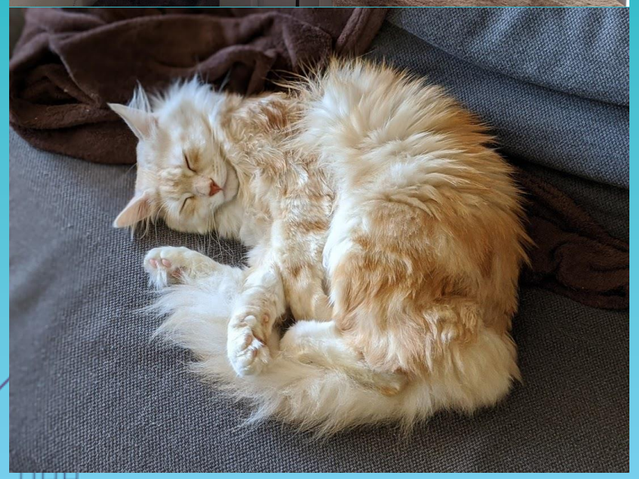
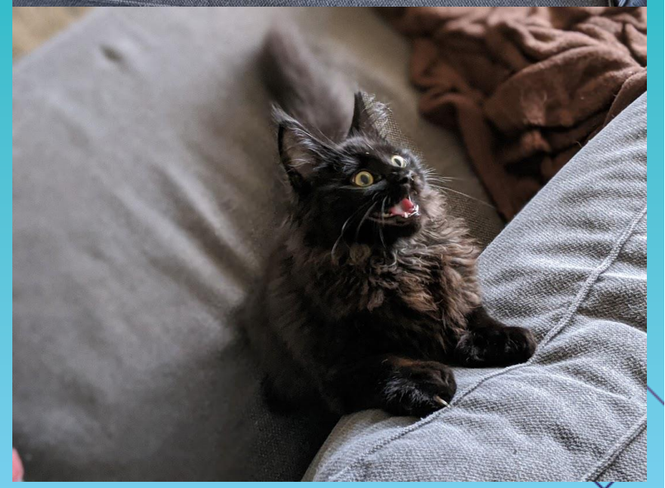
One Thing to Remember

Production = designing & facilitating work systems for human beings, which means you have to understand human beings







Thank You!

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