How to Run an Engaging Weighted Shortest Job First (WSJF) Workshop

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Today’s Session

Workshop Goal & Approach

Planning Tips

Facilitation Tips

WSJF = \[
\frac{\text{User/Biz Value + Time Criticality + RR/OE Value}}{\text{Size of Effort}}
\]

From Reinersten’s *Principles of Product Development Flow*

RR/OE = Risk reduction & opportunity enablement
Assigning Cost of Delay

1. Roadmap view for Time Criticality
2. Poker for User/Business Value
3. White elephant for Risk Reduction/Opportunity Enablement

Cost of Delay Factors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>User-Biz Value</th>
<th>Time Criticality</th>
<th>Risk Reduction-Oppoty Enablement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How valuable is this to our users?</td>
<td>1. Are there hard, externally imposed compliance deadlines?</td>
<td>1. How much does this reduce the risk for delivering close related features (if any)?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How valuable is this to our users?</td>
<td>2. Are there hard, externally imposed compliance deadlines?</td>
<td>2. How much does this reduce the risk for delivering close related features (if any)?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Customized cheat sheet
# Roadmap View for Time Criticality

Create a grid on the physical or virtual wall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sept.</th>
<th>Oct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nice to have by</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
<td>![Card]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Place the card in the cell at the intersection of the factor driving the deadline and the month when the work **needs to be completed**.

Step back & discuss results. Adjust internal targets if desired.

15 min.
Roadmap View for Time Criticality

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>April</th>
<th>May</th>
<th>June</th>
<th>July</th>
<th>Aug</th>
<th>Sept.</th>
<th>Oct</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hard, externally fixed date</td>
<td></td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal target</td>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nice to have by</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Prep Tips**
- Adjust the swimlane labels if necessary
- Create 2 – 3 sets of cards for the items under discussion
- Have a spreadsheet ready for results if your tool doesn’t handle this data

**Facilitation Tips**
- Participants layout their work, focusing only on the time aspect
- Capture the results & assign the values in a tool or spreadsheet while participants move to the next step
Poker for User/Business Value

- Why use the poker style?
  - Support independent thinking
  - Provide a safe, respectful way to share divergent views
  - Facilitate discussion to increase understanding and alignment

- Remind everyone to
  - Consider the questions/criteria
  - Wear their “company hat”
  - Think holistically

- Follow the same rules used by teams when estimating
  - Use physical cards, an online poll, etc.
White Elephant for Risk Reduction/Opportunity Enablement

1. Start the timer!
2. Pick a card (attach tape to it if needed).
3. Place it on the column representing its value and briefly explain why you’re placing it there.
   - No questions or judgment
4. The next participant has a choice:
   - Move a previously placed card or
   - Draw a new card or
   - Pass
5. Continue until all the cards are placed and everyone passes on moving a card when it is their turn.

Create a grid on the physical or virtual wall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Value</th>
<th>Some Value</th>
<th>Medium Value</th>
<th>High Value</th>
<th>Most Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Wear your “company hat” and think about the big picture when assigning relative values

15 min.
## White Elephant for Risk Reduction/Opportunity Enablement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Value</th>
<th>Some Value</th>
<th>Medium Value</th>
<th>High Value</th>
<th>Most Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image1" alt="" /> 1 <img src="image2" alt="" /> 5 <img src="image3" alt="" /> 8 <img src="image4" alt="" /> 13 <img src="image5" alt="" /> 20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Prep Tips
- Adjust the column labels if necessary
- Hang the cheat sheet on the wall next to the grid

### Facilitation Tips
- Participants focus only on the RR|OE aspect
- Capture the results & assign the values in a tool or spreadsheet while participants move to the next step
Options for Estimating Size

- **Timing**
  - Some groups estimate in this session
  - Others do it separately, starting to estimate based on highest cost of delay and stop when they are a bit over capacity

- Follow your organization’s working agreements for who estimates

- Using poker or the white elephant techniques are very common
Preparing for the Workshop

- Ensure there’s enough definition of the epics, capabilities, or features (good enough; not perfect)
- Collaborate with stakeholders to create a cost of delay cheat sheet with questions and/or examples relevant in your context and distribute these during the session
- Create 2 – 3 sets of identical cards; use one set per wall
  - Adjust card contents to suit your needs
- Have dots, flags, or stickers handy in case people want to classify work in a new way
- Determine how well participants understand the items to be evaluated
  - Less understanding = more time required per item, especially during poker
  - Good understanding but lack of shared vision = more time required per item
- Decide if estimating will be done in this workshop or separately
- Establish working agreements, especially if some people participate but don’t have “voting rights”
- Remind participants to think holistically, not within silos
Thank You

For follow-up information, please contact:

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