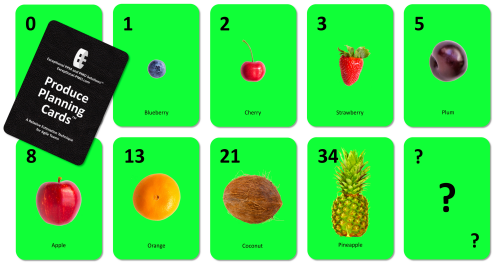
Exceptional PPM and PMO Solutions™

Produce Planning Cards™ - Information and Instructions



About These Produce Planning Cards™

- These cards are used to help agile teams estimate work
- Each deck contains four sets of cards—enough for four estimators
- Each of the four sets has a unique color on the front side of cards—it's in either blue, green, orange, or yellow
- Cards are based on the Fibonacci sequence, where every number after two is the sum of the two preceding numbers
- Each set includes cards with the following values and images:
  - 0 (No picture)
  - 1 (Blueberry)
  - 2 (Cherry)
  - 3 (Strawberry)
  - 5 (Plum)
  - 8 (Apple)
  - 13 (Orange)
  - 21 (Coconut)
  - 34 (Pineapple)
  - "?" (No picture)
- Each deck comes in a storage case

Reference

Graffius, S. M. (2016). *Agile Scrum: Your Quick Start Guide with Step-by-Step Instructions*. North Charleston, SC: CreateSpace.

Technical Editors:
Chris Hare and Colin Giffen.

Visit AgileScrumGuide.com.

Purpose

These planning cards and instructions support the most popular approach to estimating work in Scrum projects—estimating the complexity of work via story points.

The Development Team—which may be comprised of business analysts, coders, testers, etc.—collaboratively estimate each item in the product backlog in story points. Story points are a relative measure of complexity.

Activity

- Estimation—which supports the refinement and prioritization of items in the product backlog

Participants

- Product Owner
- Development Team
- Scrum Master (facilitator/observer)

Frequency

- Once or twice per sprint

Time-Box (Not-to-Exceed Duration)

- One hour for each week of the sprint
- It's a common practice to limit each meeting to one hour and have multiple meetings as appropriate

Prerequisites/Inputs

- Product backlog containing user stories, bugs, and other requirements
- One set of Produce Planning Cards™ for each member of the Development Team

Suggested Steps

1. If each member of the Development Team does not already have their own set of planning cards, the Scrum Master provides materials as needed.
2. The Development Team decides if they'll be referencing the numbers or the types of produce on the cards.
3. The Product Owner describes an item (a user story, bug, or other requirement) from the product backlog and mentions its intent and business value.
4. Each member of the Development Team silently picks a card best representing their assessment of the complexity of the work and places the card face-down.
5. After all of the Development Team members have made their selections, the cards are turned face-up, and the selections are read aloud.
6. If all of the selections are identical, the Product Owner records the number (if produce was used, the corresponding number on the card) as the estimate, and that completes the exercise for the item; otherwise, proceed to the next step.
7. Team member(s) who gave an outlier value—such as someone who gave a high value (or larger produce item) and/or someone who gave a low value (or smaller produce item)—explain their reasoning.
8. After a brief discussion, the team may take the most common selection as the estimate, or they may play another round of this planning game (steps 4-8).
9. Steps 3-8 are repeated until each item in the product backlog has been estimated.
10. The Product Owner updates the product backlog with the estimate values.

Adaptations

Some organizations use a subset of the cards and slice product backlog items when the estimate is "too large." Here's an example:

- The Development Team uses cards with the following values: 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, and 21 (34 is not used)
- Predetermined that 21 is "too large"
- If the Development Team estimates a user story/requirement at 21, the product backlog item is sliced into two or more parts in collaboration with the Product Owner, and the resulting smaller items are estimated by the Development Team

Additional Information

For more information on the Produce Planning Cards™, visit Exceptional PPM and PMO Solutions™ at Exceptional-PMO.com.

About Exceptional PPM and PMO Solutions™

Exceptional PPM and PMO Solutions™, an Inc. Verified Business, helps organizations achieve their strategic objectives and boost their business results through world-class project management. The consultancy leverages its expertise, industry standards, and best practices to deliver significant outcomes. Examples include faster delivery speed, improved on-budget performance, higher satisfaction, and greater competitive advantage.

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