Al Goerner
Learning to Manage Dependencies
& Maximize Value in Release Planning
A Prototype Learning Game
Release Planning Poker
– Simulating Release Planning & Execution

- Multiple Coordinating Teams
- Prioritization of Work & Dependency Management Dominates
- Realizing Value is the Goal
- Exploring Common Challenges
- Exploring Special Techniques
# Teams, Cards, Superpowers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Team</th>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Superpower</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Green Team</td>
<td>Component Team</td>
<td><strong>Superpower</strong></td>
<td>Mock Services – Team may plan/execute stories in a top-down or bottom-up dependency order.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Red Team</td>
<td>Feature Team</td>
<td><strong>Superpower</strong></td>
<td>Overburdened Product Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Team</td>
<td>Feature Team</td>
<td><strong>Superpower</strong></td>
<td>Test Automation – Team uses advanced testing techniques, making it immune to defects at the cost of +1 Effort Pt per story.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold Team</td>
<td>System Test Team</td>
<td><strong>Superpower</strong></td>
<td>Assign Defects – Team assigns defects (1-3 pt stories) when completing the test story on another team’s feature.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Example Stories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Value Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101, 102, 305, 306, 432</td>
<td>430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... depends on ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Story</th>
<th>Value Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>236</td>
<td>-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>131</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

... is a split/thinning of ...

... depends on ...

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All other teams depend on Gold to validate features.
Sprint Planning
Sprints in a Release Cycle

We start with a ...

- **PSI Planning Session [8 min.]**
  - Objective: (a) **Analyze your PSI Backlog** for dependencies.
    (b) **Your Superpower**: consider how you will use it.

Then, we will execute 5 cycles:

- **Sprint Planning [4 min.]**
  - Objective: (a) **Adjust your Sprint Velocity**: Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.
    (b) **Choose the stories that you plan to execute this sprint**, observing the dependency order and your superpower.

- **Scrum-of-Scrums [3 min.]**
  - Objective: (a) **Discuss dependencies between teams**.
    (b) **Request other teams to perform work**.
    (c) **Modify Sprint Plan**, if necessary.
    (c) **Commit to Sprint Plan** and set cards aside.
Initial Confusion is Part of the Experience
Release Planning [8 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Analyze your PSI Backlog for dependencies  
(b) Consider how you will use your Superpower
Release Planning  [4 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Analyze your PSI Backlog for dependencies 
(b) Consider how you will use your Superpower
Release Planning [1 min.]

Objective: (a) Analyze your PSI Backlog for dependencies
(b) Consider how you will use your Superpower
Sprint 1 Planning [3 min.]

- Objective: (a) Adjust your Sprint Velocity: Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no change.

(b) Choose the stories that you plan to execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Sprint 1 Planning [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.  
(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Playing the Game

Scrum-of-Scrums [4 min.]

Objective:  (a) Discuss dependencies between teams.
(b) Request other teams to perform work.
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Scrum-of-Scrums [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.  
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Sprint 2 Planning  [3 min.]

Objective: (a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.

(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Playing the Game

Sprint 2 Planning  [1 min.]

Objective:  (a) Flip 2 coins.  On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts.  On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts.  1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.
(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Scrum-of-Scrums [4 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.  
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Scrum-of-Scrums [1 min.]

Objective: 
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.
(b) Request other teams to perform work.
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Sprint 3 Planning  [3 min.]

Objective:  (a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts.  
On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head &  
1 tail: no velocity change.  
(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint,  
observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Sprint 3 Planning  [1 min.]

Objective: (a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.

(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Scrum-of-Scrums [4 min.]

Objective:  (a) Discuss dependencies between teams.
            (b) Request other teams to perform work.
            (c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.
            (c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Scrum-of-Scrums [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.  
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Sprint 4 Planning [3 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.

(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Sprint 4 Planning [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.

(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Scrum-of-Scrums [4 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams. 
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Scrum-of-Scrums [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.  
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Sprint 5 Planning  [3 min.]

Objective: (a) Flip 2 coins. On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts. On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 1 tail: no velocity change.
(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Sprint 5 Planning  [1 min.]

Objective:  (a) Flip 2 coins.  On 2 tails, adjust velocity -5 Effort Pts.  
On 2 heads, adjust velocity +5 Effort Pts. 1 head & 
1 tail: no velocity change. 
(b) Choose the stories that you will execute this sprint, 
observing the dependency order and your superpower.
Scrum-of-Scrums [4 min.]

Objective:  (a) Discuss dependencies between teams.
            (b) Request other teams to perform work.
            (c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.
            (c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Scrum-of-Scrums [1 min.]

Objective:  
(a) Discuss dependencies between teams.  
(b) Request other teams to perform work.  
(c) Modify Sprint Plan, if necessary.  
(c) Commit to Sprint Plan and set cards aside.
Done

Objective:  
(a) STOP!  
(b) Validate which features are Done-Done.  
(c) Sum up Value Pts for Done-Done features.  
(d) Reflect.
What were the Challenges?

On the Surface
- Time-boxing
- Only Value (Feature) Matters
- Story Dependencies
- Inter-team Dependencies
- Dependency on System Test Team
- Unplanned-for Work
- Variable Velocity

Beneath the Surface
- Non-Value-Added Work
- Getting Features to the System Test Team in Sprint 5
- Work-for-Me vs. Work-for-You
- Deadly Embrace

Was your goal to maximize value for your team or for the product?
What If We had ...

- Asked each team to commit, during release planning, to which features would be complete at the end of sprint 5?

- Provided a Program Board on which to visually map inter-team dependencies?

- Withheld some cards/work and injected them in sprints 2, 3 and 4?

- Added a Functional Test Team, which had to complete a test story in order to close every user story?

- Added a UX/UI Team, which had to complete a UX/UI story of every feature?
Session Feedback

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3. Visit the unique URL for this session located at the front and back of the room.

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Thank You!

If you have technical questions or comments that you would like to address to me, please feel free to email me at:

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or

Al.Goerner@gmail.com