

Agile Dev Better Software DevOps **WEST**

A TECHWELL EVENT

AT9

Agile Product Development
Thursday, June 7th, 2018, 1:30 PM

Building the Perfect Product Backlog

Presented by:

Jamie Cooke

Both Hemispheres, LLC

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Jamie Cooke

Both Hemispheres, LLC

As a senior solutions consultant, business analyst, and project manager, Jamie Lynn Cooke has delivered successful solutions for many organizations across twenty-six industry sectors in Australia, Canada, and the United States. She has worked with every type of user you can imagine—and some that you would not believe—to turn their abstract, unclear, and unrealistic requirements into achievable business solutions. Passionate about productivity, Jamie Lynn spends her spare time researching and trialing methods that help people maximize the effectiveness of their work. She is an award winning author of several books on agile methods, including *The Power of the Agile Business Analyst*.



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Agile Dev WEST
A TECHWELL EVENT

BUILDING THE PERFECT PRODUCT BACKLOG



Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Where do you start?
 - End users
 - Subject Matter Experts
 - Management and Executives
 - Legacy system users
 - Integration system owners

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Other potential sources
 - Technical constraints
 - Organizational policies
 - Regulations
 - Industry articles and forums
 - People in your network

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Preparing for the requirements session
 - Review:
 - Previous correspondence
 - Notes from other requirements reviews
 - Existing systems
 - Bring sticky notes and markers
 - Find a quiet location with a whiteboard or large conference table
 - Pair with a business analyst

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Questions to ask
 - What do you want the solution to do?
 - Potentially loaded question
 - Fuzzy, high level requirements
 - Extremely detailed technical features
 - Kid in a candy store
 - Start by brainstorming then narrow down, refine and prioritize

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Additional questions to ask
 - Tell me about the “best case”
 - Tell me about the exceptions....
 - What is the *one thing* that would make this a successful solution for you?
 - What do you want the solution *not* to do?

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

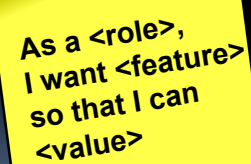
- Consider options *beyond* the software solution
 - Business process improvements
 - Targeted staff training
 - Restructuring of roles
 - Policy updates
 - More effective corporate communication

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Write down *every* requirement as a user story on a sticky note , even if it appears to be too high level, unrealistic or unclear



As a <role>,
I want <feature>
so that I can
<value>

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Gathering the *Right* Requirements

- Ask for supporting details:
 - Example reports
 - Screenshots of relevant systems
 - Corporate policies
 - Detailed business rules

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Getting to the *Right* Level of Detail

- Aim for INVEST
 - Independent
 - Negotiable
 - Valuable
 - Estimable
 - Small
 - Testable

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Getting to the *Right* Level of Detail

- If the requirement is too high level:
 - Split the story:
 - Go through workflow steps by role
 - Devolve compound statements
 - Clarify ambiguous terms like “manage” or “process”

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Getting to the *Right* Level of Detail

- If the requirement is too high level:

Patterns for Splitting User Stories:

<http://agileforall.com/patterns-for-splitting-user-stories/>

10 Useful Strategies for Breaking Down Large User Stories:

<http://blog.agilistic.nl/10-useful-strategies-for-breaking-down-large-user-stories-and-a-cheatsheet/>

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Getting to the *Right* Level of Detail

- If the requirement is too detailed:
 - Build up the story
 - Find shared stories across requirements
 - Find the business drivers
 - Ask for a one sentence description

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Getting to the *Right* Level of Detail

- If the requirement is unclear:
 - Define acceptance criteria
 - Restructure the user story
 - Ask for real life examples
 - Ask other stakeholders

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Prioritizing the Requirements

Remember that *every* requirement is valuable to someone

Prioritizing the Requirements

- Identify the value of each user story:
 - Reduction of cost
 - Reduction of time
 - Reduction of risk
 - Customer/Stakeholder satisfaction
 - Elimination of waste
 - Reduction of complexity
 - Improvement to quality

Prioritizing the Requirements

- Use Planning Poker for value assignment:
 - 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, 34, 100
- Or use non emotive language:
 - Important
 - Critical
 - Most critical
- Assure stakeholders that priority setting in an Agile environment is an *emergent* process

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Prioritizing the Requirements

- Add a priority to each sticky note:

As a <role>,
I want <feature>
so that I can
<value>

Priority: 5

As a <role>,
I want <feature>
so that I can
<value>

Priority: Critical

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Prioritizing the Requirements

- Arrange sticky notes into top down groupings
- Identify Minimum Viable Product (MVP)
- Use Top 5 and Bottom 5 technique
- Repeat before each iterative review

Quick Plug for My Books

- *Agile Productivity Unleashed: Proven Approaches for Achieving Real Productivity Gains in Any Organization*
- *Agile: An Executive Guide: Real Results from IT budgets*
- *Everything You Want to Know about Agile: How to Get Agile Results in a Less-than-Agile Organization*
- ***The Power of the Agile Business Analyst: 30 Surprising Ways a Business Analyst Can Add Value to Your Agile Development Team***
- *PRINCE2 Agile™: An Implementation Pocket Guide (coming)*



Building the Perfect Product Backlog

Questions?

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Building the Perfect Product Backlog

If you want to contact me:

- Am available after this session
- Send me your questions:
jamie@realproductivitygains.com

Thank you for your time!

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