

**“Dude, Where’s Our Release Plan?”**



**David Hussman - DevJam**

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**You Have  
Entered An  
Informal Zone**

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**A Quick Survey**

**Who does what?**

**Who’s done release planning?**

**Who has a living, meaningful plan?**

**Who has a dormant or missing plan?**

**Who trusts their release plan (accuracy)?**

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**Why Are You Here?**

(test driving this session)

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**Session Road Map**

*What is release planning?*

*Why do release planning?*

*How can you improve?*

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**What's The Problem?**

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## Confused Investors ( dormant release plan )



“Are We There Yet?”

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## Poor Product Vision



Ubiquitous domain language missing  
( not shared by entire community )

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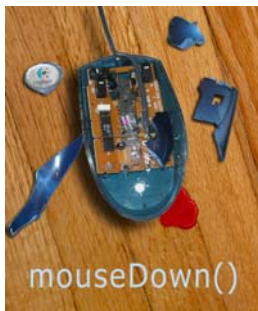
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## Poor User Experience



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## Other Common Issues?

Missing cross cutting concerns

Missing connections with other teams

Simple terminology confusions  
( public or internal release )

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## What is Release Planning?

## What is a Release Plan?

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### *What is release planning?*

What is your process?  
( mechanics – what's in and what's not? )

Who participates?  
( why or why not? )

What is the value of release planning?  
( why do release planning? )

Other considerations?

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## How: The Mechanics

Capacity calculation  
(relative spread of points or ideal days)

Short discussions of stories  
< *find new stories and other unknowns* >

Estimate (S,M,L / Story Pts. / 1,2,3 weeks)

Prioritize and select

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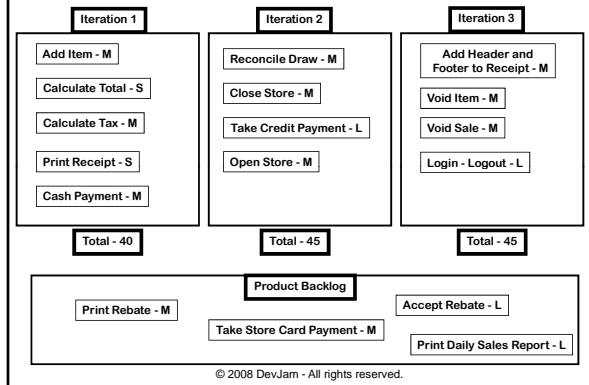
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## Sample Release Plan



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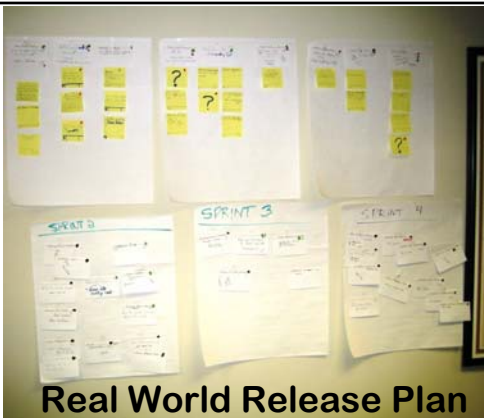
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Real World Release Plan

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## Why: The Value

Balances business priorities with technical costs and dependencies

Grows a common language  
( *“the big picture”* )

Helps smoke out cross cutting issues  
( *cross projects or sub-systems* )

Discover unknowns

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## The Experience



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## *Why do release planning?*

What's the health of your release planning?  
( *working? – not working?* )

Is your plan a tool which connects people?  
( *is it used for planning and re-planning?* )

Do your planning units work?  
( *granularity – pts / ideal time – others?* )

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# Hidden Values & Common Pitfalls

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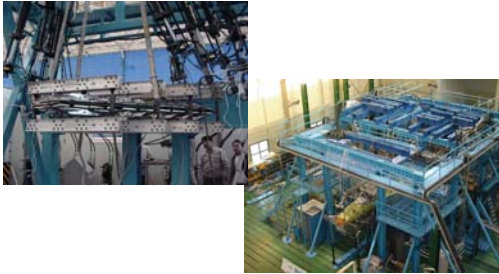
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## Systems Planning



## Cross Cutting Concerns

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## Common Pitfalls

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### Lack of Collaboration

Planning group was too limited  
( possibly missing testers )

Planning items are foreign  
( user stories without context )

Planners were simply not interested  
( e.g. limited context, limited interest )

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## Plan Not Valued or Trusted

Estimates or estimation units were not clear or valued by entire project community  
( point values were unclear )

No re-planning based on iteration output  
( over focused on iterations )

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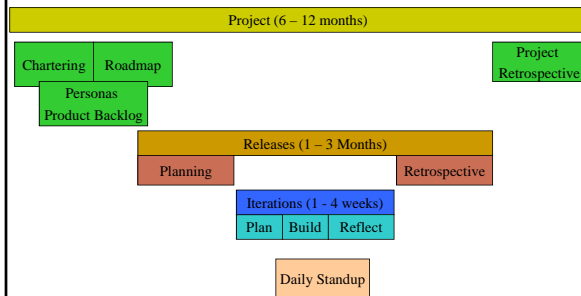
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## No Iterative Learning



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Good

Indicators

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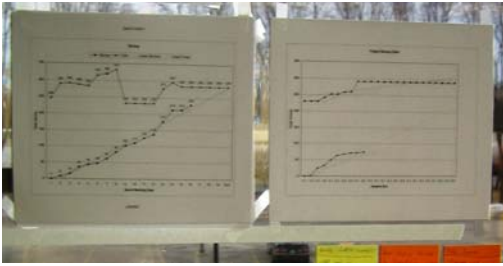
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## Meaningful Metrics



## Meaningful Dialog

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## Well Connected Communities



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## Bad

## Indicators

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## Missing the Big Picture



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## Others Bad Indicators

Iteration churn  
( shorten iterations? )

Sponsors are questioning everything  
( review your estimation units? )

"we thinks one point equals 12.35 hours"  
( increase your community connections )

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## *How can you improve?*

Is your release plan visible?  
( if not, what can you do? )

Who could you add to help increase product  
knowledge & ownership?  
( testers – operations – field support )

What indicators show that people are  
missing the "big picture"

Other improvements?

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**What Will  
You Change?**

**What is  
Stopping You?**

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**DevJam**

Agile Coaching - Training - Assessments

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