

Ultimate Planning Poker

by Michiel de Wit

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Michiel de Wit

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A Brief History of Agile



“There’s a way to do it better – find it” — Thomas Edison

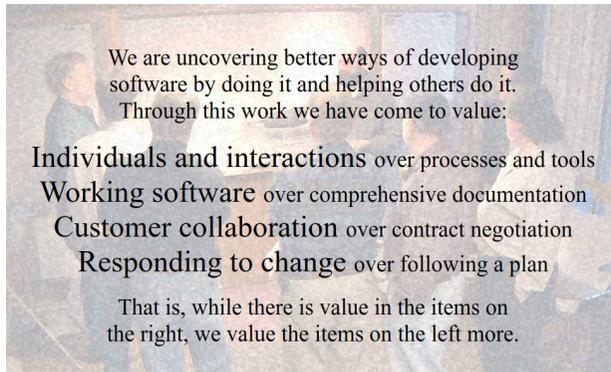
Agile revolution • 2001: Agile Manifesto • Agile methodologies • Focus on individuals and interactions • Estimation with Planning Poker • Ultimate Planning Poker

For most software developers, it will be hard to recall what their professional life looked like before the Agile revolution. By now, an entire generation of software professionals has grown up in the **Agile era**. Before the rise of agile project methodologies, traditional linear approaches were still very common. The term “Waterfall Approach” will send shivers down the spines of many engineers, both young and old.

In 2001, the Agile Manifesto was signed by Ken Schwaber, Jeff Sutherland, Robert C. Martin, and a number of other renowned software professionals. That manifesto had a profound influence on software engineering as a discipline. Rather than focusing on processes, comprehensive documentation and strict adherence to **The Plan**, the focus shifted to the people involved in the engineering process and how these professionals could build the best possible product, given the needs of their customers.

Over the years, various Agile-based methodologies have been developed, some more elaborate than others. The most popular of

these are, without a doubt, **Scrum**, Lean Software Development, and Kanban, but Extreme Programming (XP) and the Dynamic Systems Development Method (DSDM) are still in broad use as well. These methods build on the core principles of the Agile Manifesto but add practical systems, artifacts, and procedures.



The Manifesto for Agile Software Development

One of the four **core values** of Agile is to focus on individuals and interactions, rather than on processes and tools. As a result, all of the Agile-based approaches have a strong focus on ways to enhance communication and cooperation, often by introducing fixed meeting formats, daily rituals, and artifacts that help make communication and interaction more explicit and visible.

In meetings that involve estimation of required effort or expected value of units of work, a game called Planning Poker is often played. The term “game” may be a little misleading. Planning Poker is more of a meeting format or ritual—there are **no winners**, and the primary goal is not to have fun. Still, Planning Poker uses special playing cards, and it has its own set of rules, so it is not so terrible to refer to it as a game.

In the rest of this booklet, we will explain this game, its rules, and the caveats that you should be aware of. We assume you will be using the Ultimate Planning Poker Deck (available at

ultimateplanningpoker.com¹), but most of what is discussed will apply to any other deck you choose to use as well.

¹<https://ultimateplanningpoker.com>

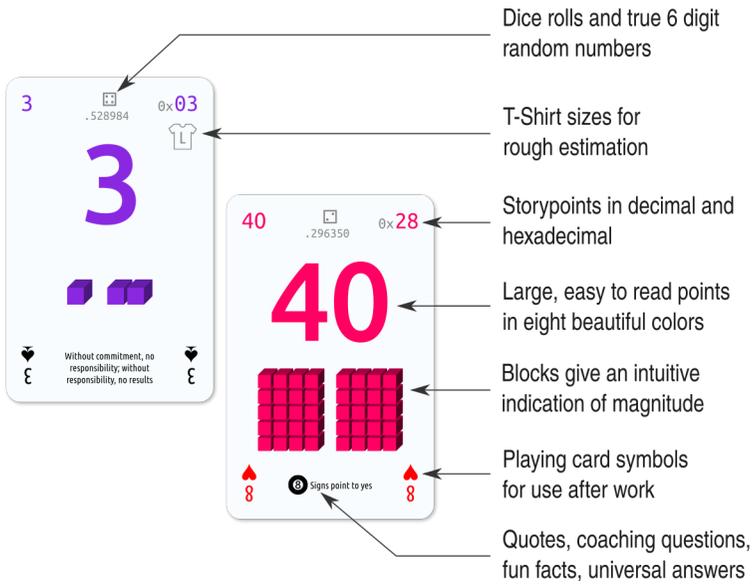
Why Planning Poker?

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at <http://leanpub.com/ultimateplanningpoker>.

Playing Planning Poker

This content is not available in the sample book. The book can be purchased on Leanpub at <http://leanpub.com/ultimateplanningpoker>.

Ultimate Planning Poker deck features



Printing the Ultimate Planning Poker deck

Together with this booklet, you also received what Leanpub calls **Extras**. For this booklet, these extras are a complete set of Print & Play files to create your very own Ultimate Planning Poker deck. So be sure to download the extras from the book page in your Leanpub library!

This appendix contains some basic instructions, mainly meant to help you navigate through the available content. But there is some advice on the actual production of your planning poker deck as well.

Included in this bundle you will find a number of folders:

A4 and Letter

These folders contain PDF files for the fronts (`front.pdf`) and backs (`back.pdf`) of the 110 cards in the game, formatted to be printed on paper of A4 or Letter size. Additionally, PDF-files for the Fold technique (`fold.pdf`, see below) are included. Please note that the backs for all cards are the same, and thus only one sheet of backs is included in each set.

Cards

in this folder you will find two PDF files with the back (`back.pdf`) and fronts (`front.pdf`) of all cards as separate pages. You can use these if you would like to print the deck using your own technique.

Included are PDF files (named `fold.pdf`) with the entire deck, fronts and backs, on the same sheets (A4 and Letter). These are meant to be **printed and folded**. When printed on 160 grams paper,

these files will yield perfect results on almost every printer. You will need glue, though. This is a great video to watch:

youtu.be/WyMVRJu5yQ4².

A **simplified version** of this deck has been released under the terms of the GPLv3 license. This version can be found on Github: github.com/spelinbedrijf/ultimateplanningpoker³. The repository contains separate SVG files for every card.

If you have any more **questions**, please don't hesitate to drop a mail at the following address: michiel@gaminbiz.com. If you would like to obtain a physical copy of the game, also please send an email. More and up-to-date information can be found on the website for this deck: ultimateplanningpoker.com⁴.

²<https://youtu.be/WyMVRJu5yQ4?t=1454>

³<https://github.com/spelinbedrijf/ultimateplanningpoker>

⁴<https://ultimateplanningpoker.com>