

# Backlog refinement

## □ What is it

- Ensures there is enough work in the backlog that is defined, understood and estimated to meet the definition of ready for the team to accept it as a candidate in an upcoming sprint.
- Refining the backlog is lead by the product manager. They identify the highest priority candidates to take forward in the next one or two iterations.
- How many items should be fully refined and ready is usually agreed within the team, recognising there is a balance to maintain between developer effort expended in refinement and delivering the current sprint goal.
- As part of refinement, product managers should regularly review the whole backlog to identify the most valuable outcomes to work on. This on going activity should also see the product manager close backlog items that are no longer relevant
- For items sitting near the top of the prioritised backlog, each item is refined by completing these activities: defining the user story including acceptance criteria, collaborative discussion with developers likely to be involved with the user story to understand its value and requirements, estimation, splitting the story if deemed too large.

## □□ Key Benefits / Why is this important

- Helps ensure that the team understands the backlog items and is ready to start work on them in the next sprint planning meeting. It leads to more efficient sprint planning sessions and helps the team maintain a steady, sustainable pace of work

## □□ Techniques supporting this practice

- Cost of delay prioritisation
- Effort / Value 2\*2 matrix prioritisation

- 3Cs
  - Planning poker
  - User story splitting
  - BDD
  - User story writing
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