http://www.romanpichler.com/blog/user-stories/writing-good-user-stories/

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Posted on Thursday 7th October 2010

Summary

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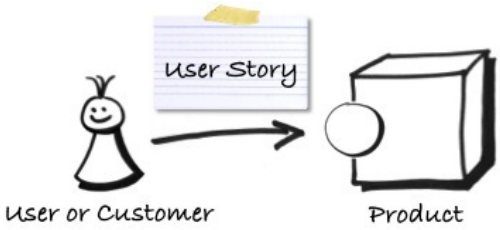
As its name suggests, a user story tells a story about a customer or user employing the product. Write therefore stories from the user's perspective and show how a user or customer uses some product functionality.



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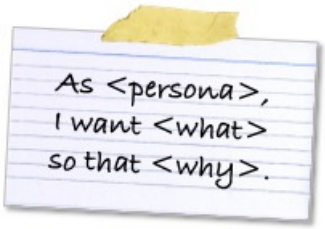

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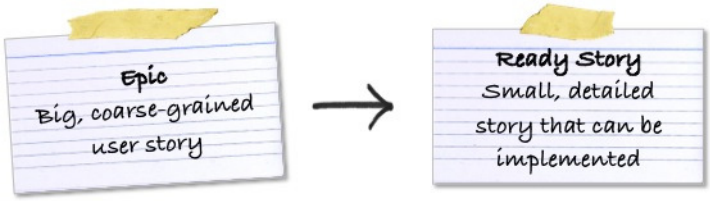

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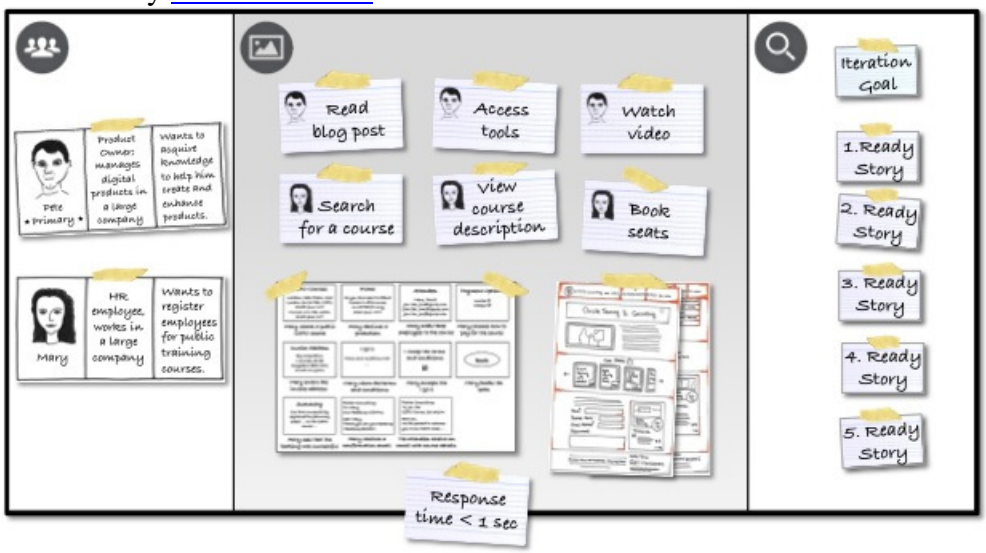

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Like any technique, user story writing has its strengths and limitations. I find stories particularly well suited to capture product functionality, and when applied properly, nonfunctional requirements. But user interface design and complex user interactions are better described by other techniques including design sketches, mock-ups, scenarios, and storyboards. Complement your user stories therefore with other techniques, and don't feel obliged to only use stories.

User Incognito

A user story tells a story about a user interacting with the product. Some stories, however, omit the beneficiary altogether, or they talk about a mysterious user as in "As the user, I want to …" But if it's not clear who the user is, why should the story be developed? How can we be confident that the story will benefit someone?

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My recommendation is: Start with big, coarse-grained stories called epics particularly for all new features. Epics allow you to capture an idea without committing to the details. Then break an epic into more detailed user stories. The new user stories replace the epic, and they provide more information about the product's functionality. Pay particular attention to the user stories that are pulled into a sprint. These stories have to be ready: clear, feasible, and testable. (You can learn more about decomposing epics into ready stories in my post "Epics and Ready Stories".)

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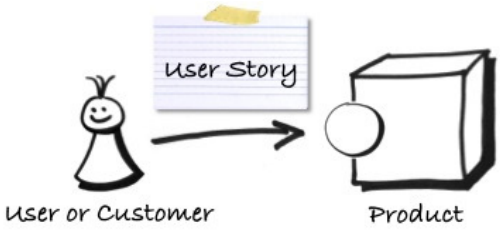

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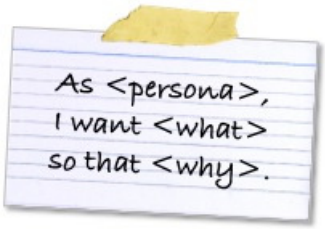

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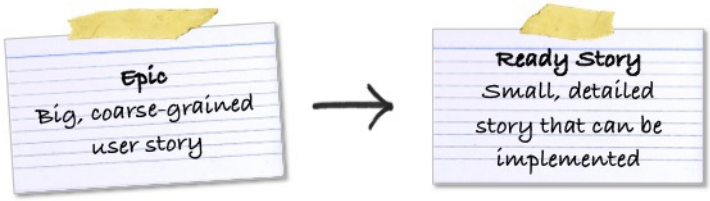

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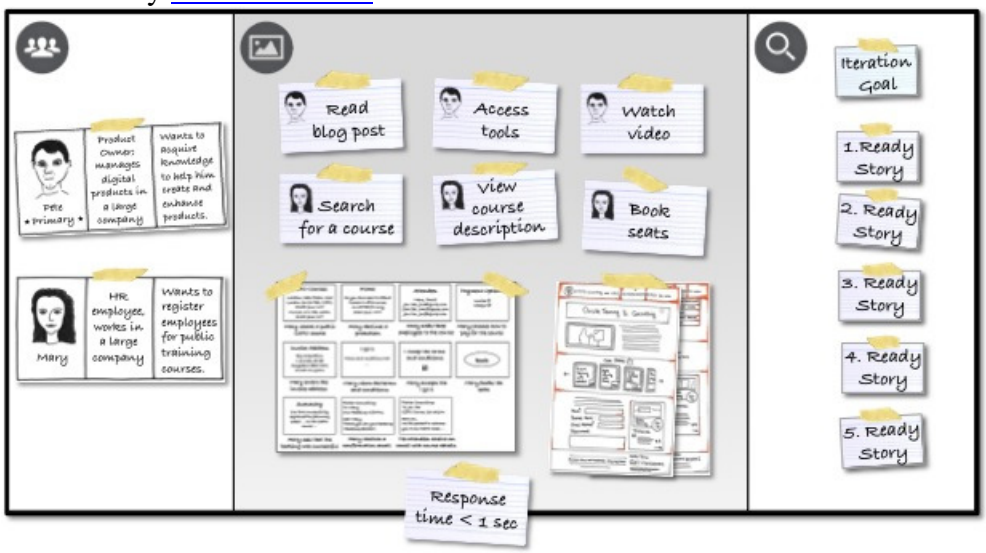

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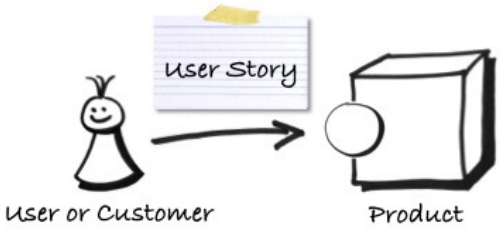

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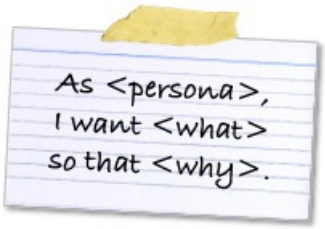

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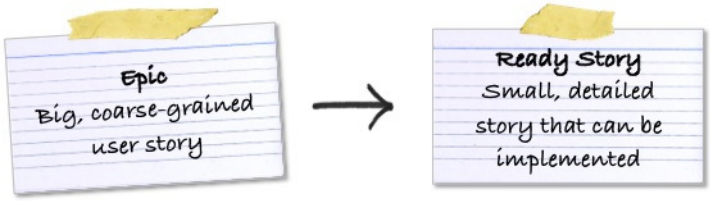

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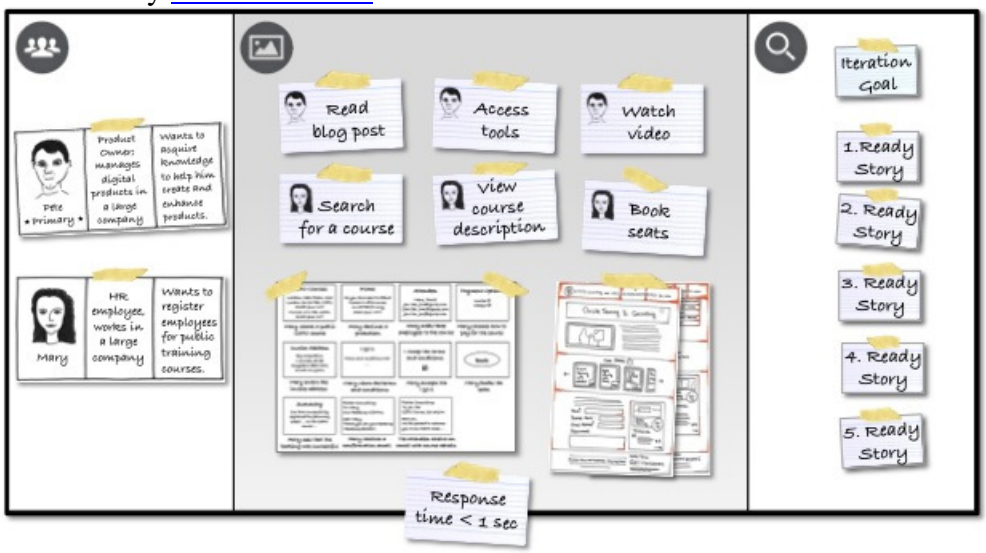

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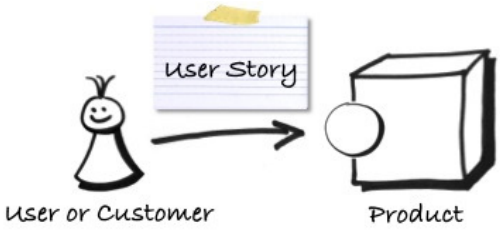

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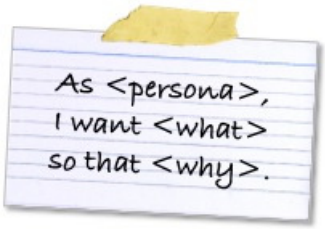

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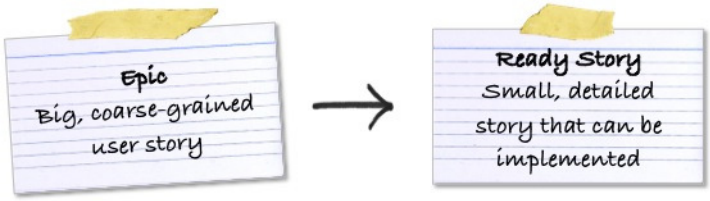

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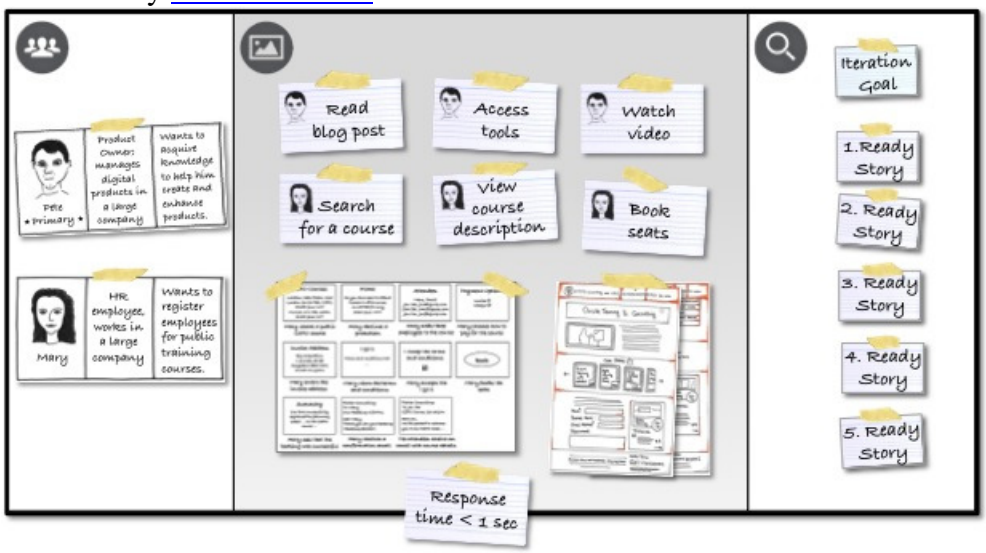

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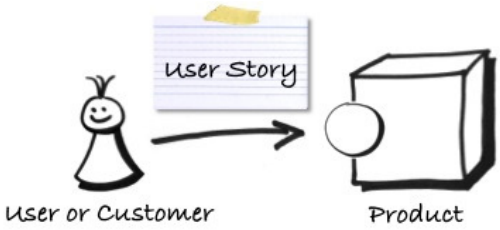

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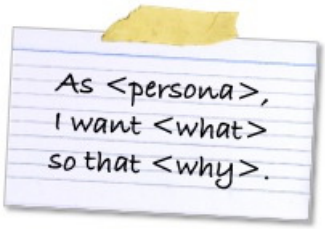

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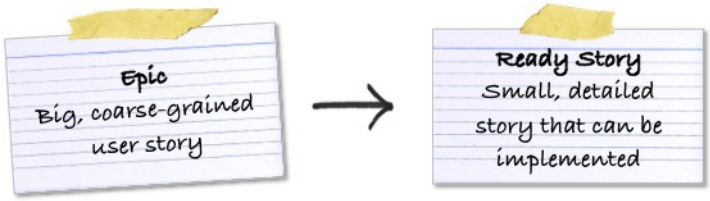

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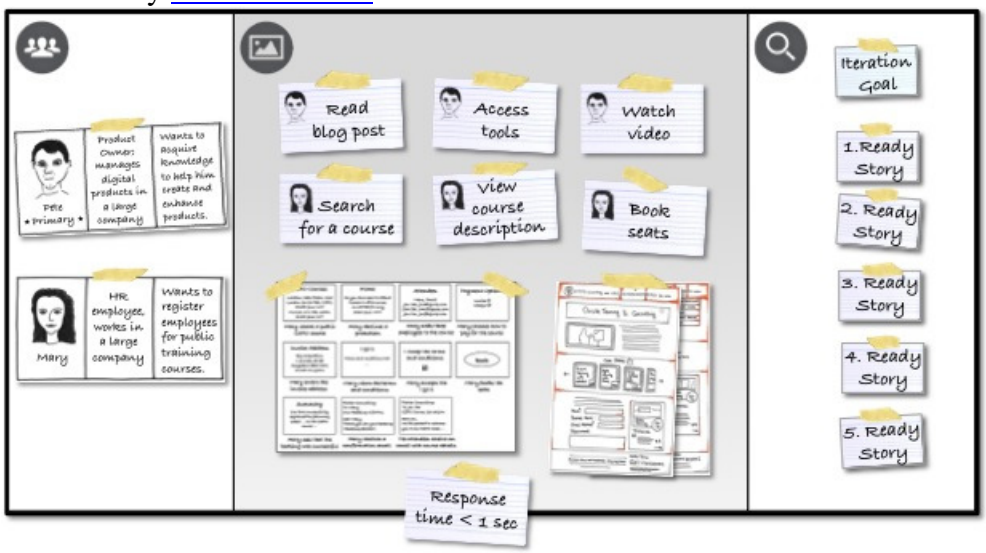

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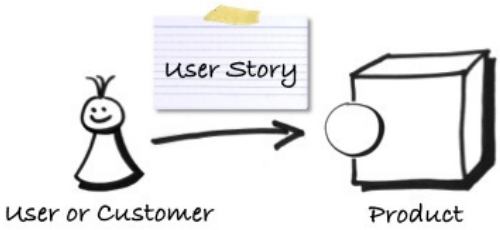

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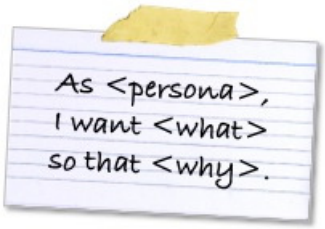

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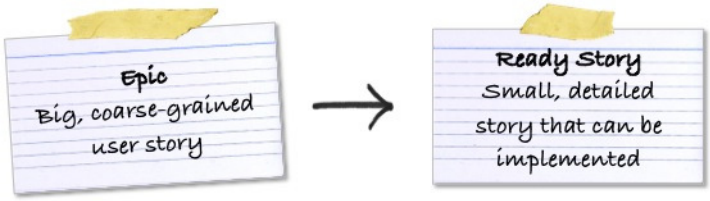

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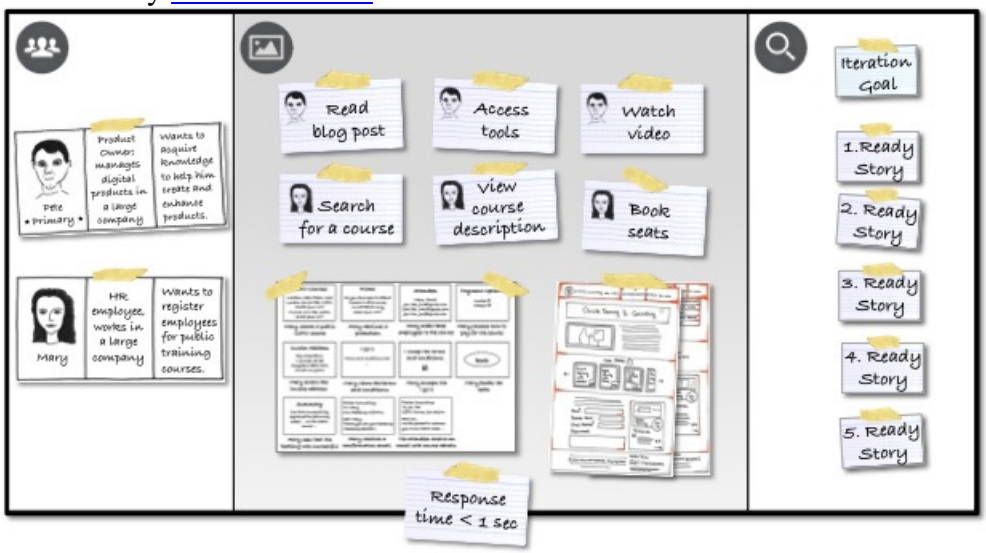

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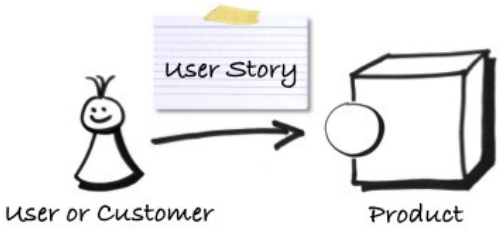

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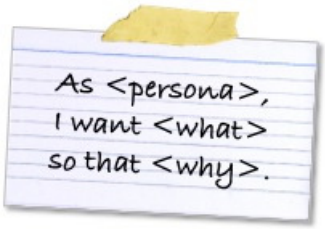

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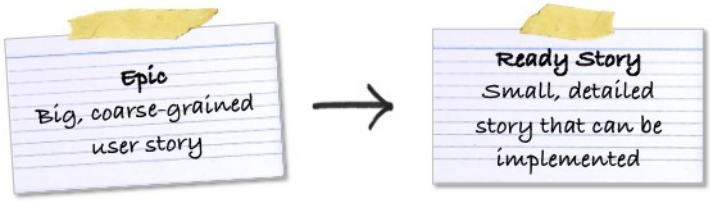

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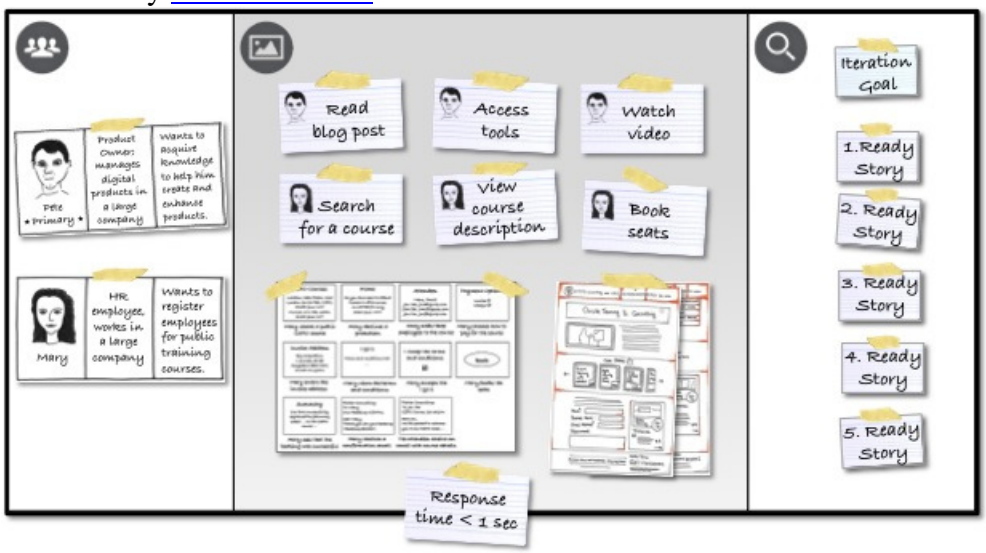

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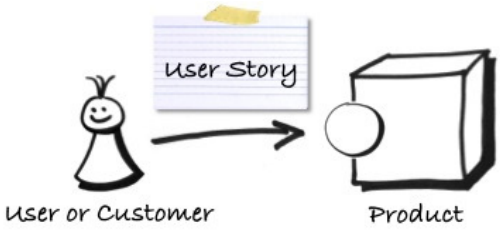

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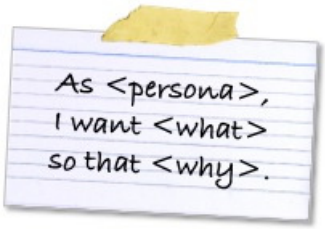

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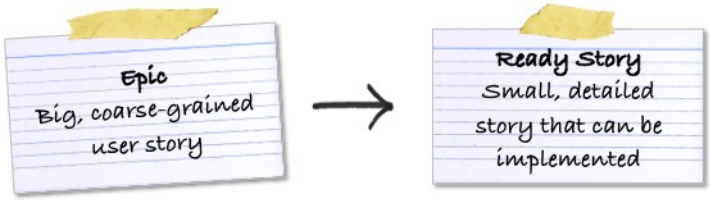

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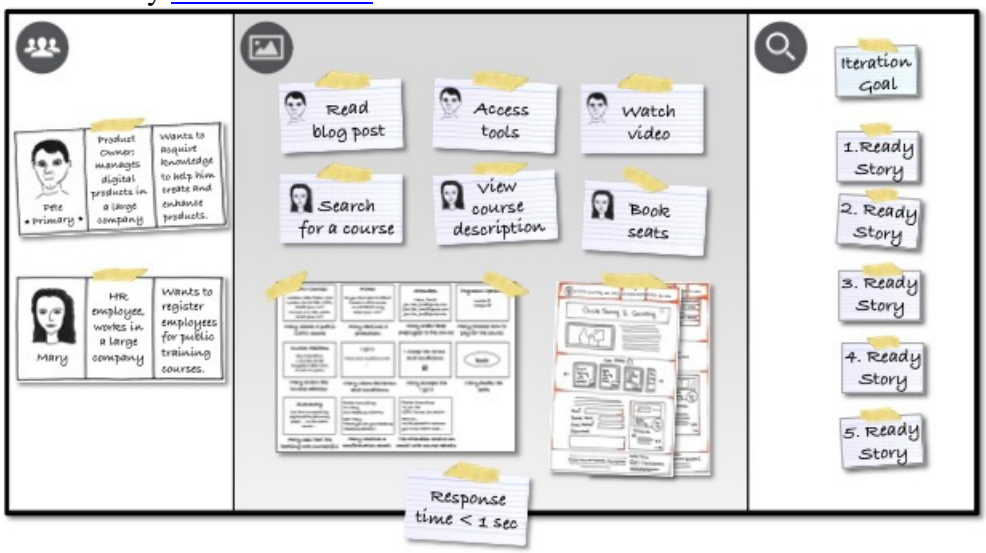

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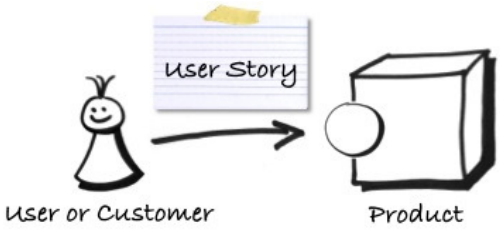

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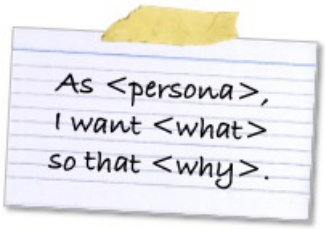

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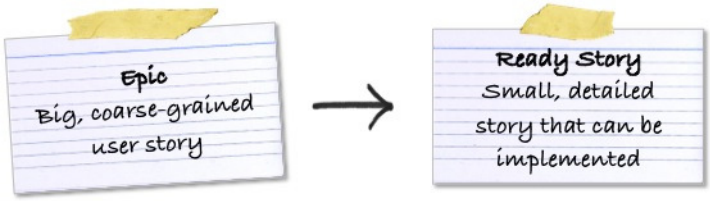

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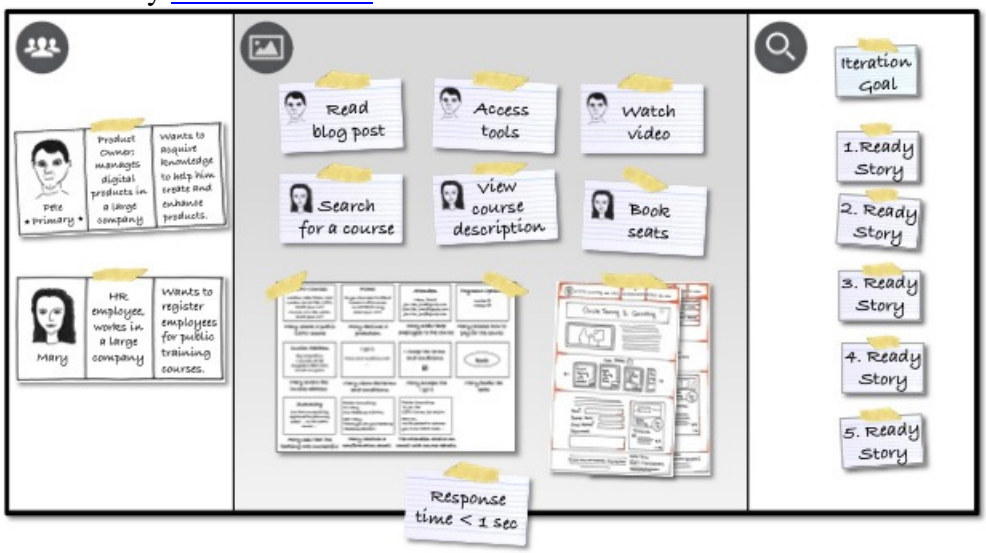

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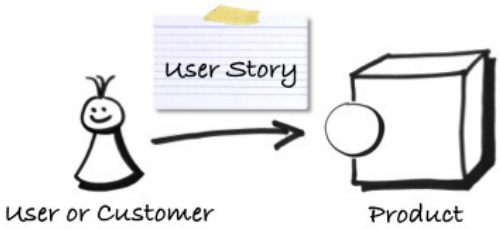

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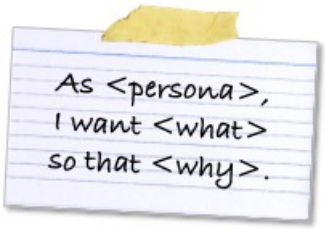

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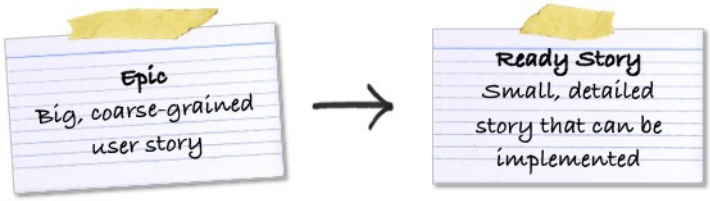

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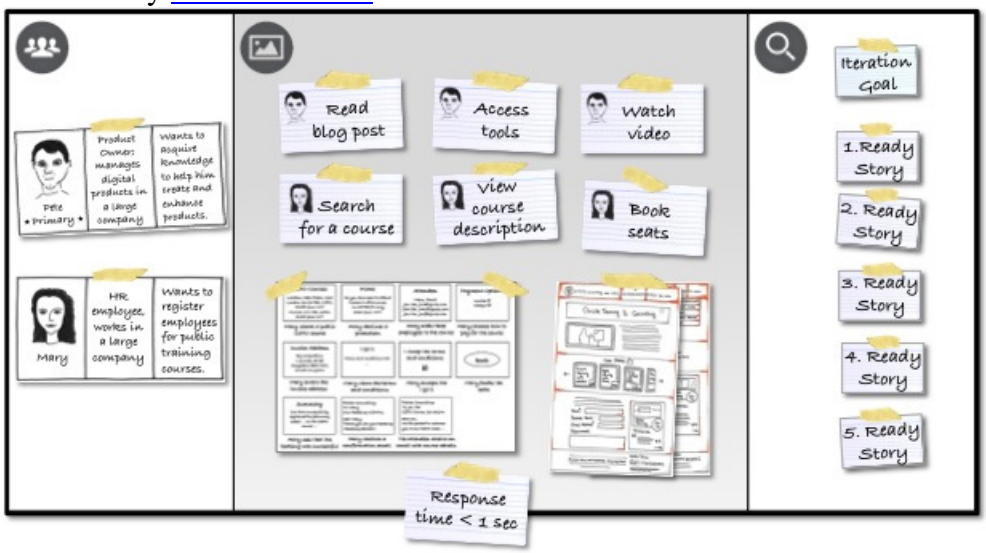

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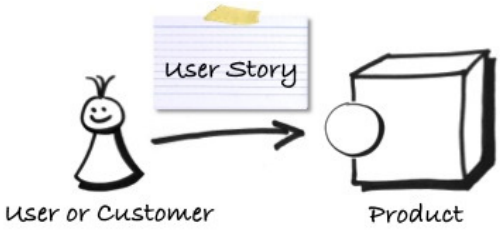

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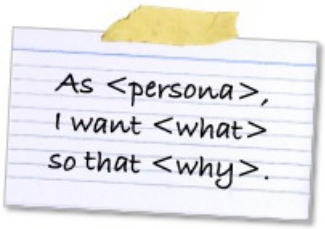

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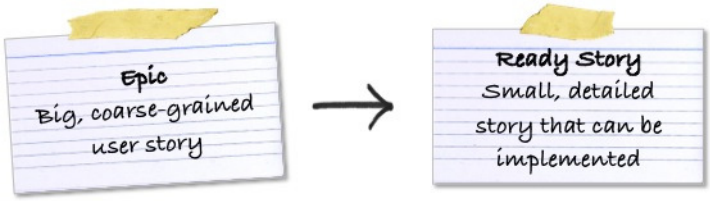

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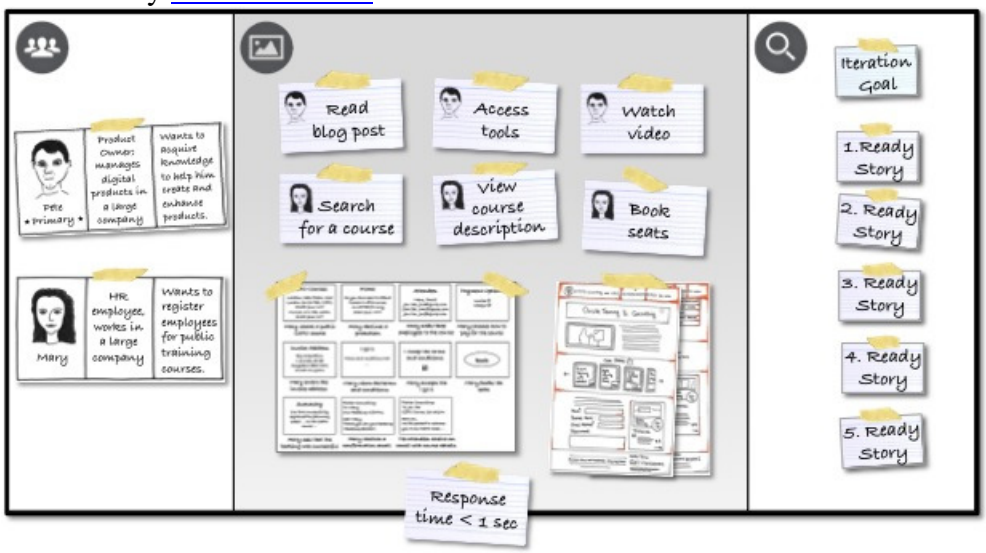

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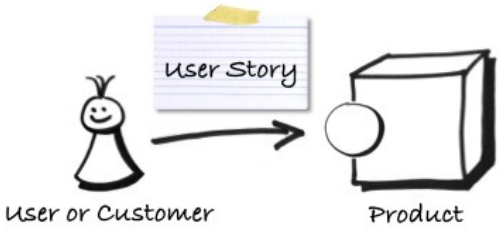

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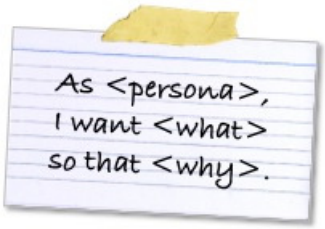

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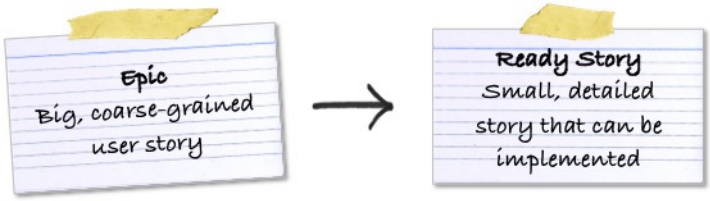

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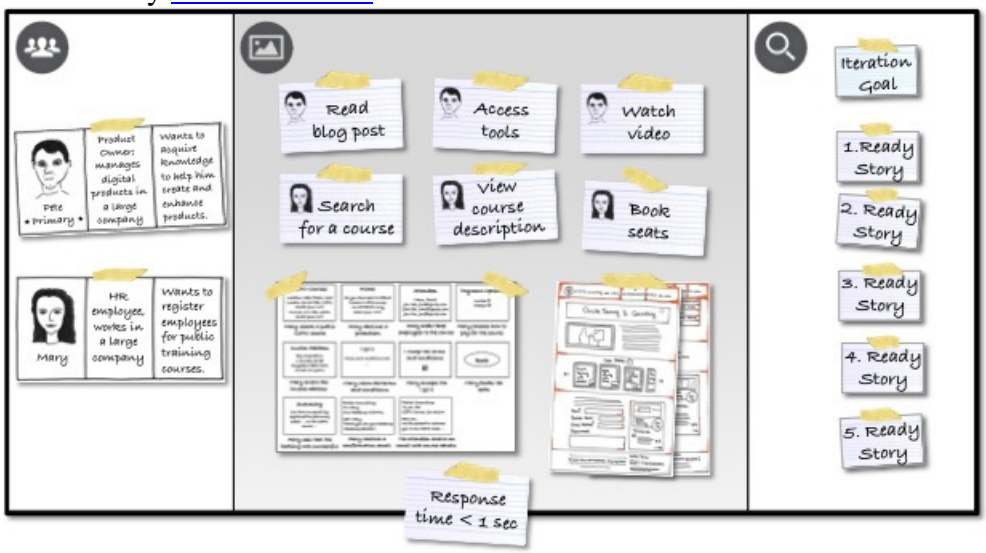

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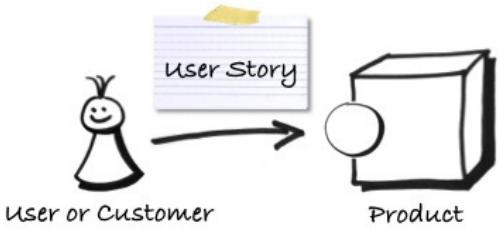

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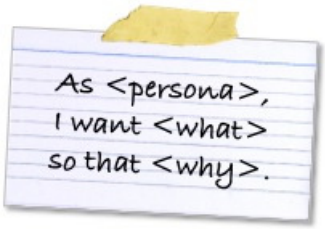

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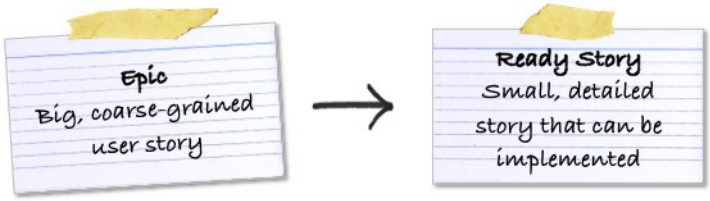

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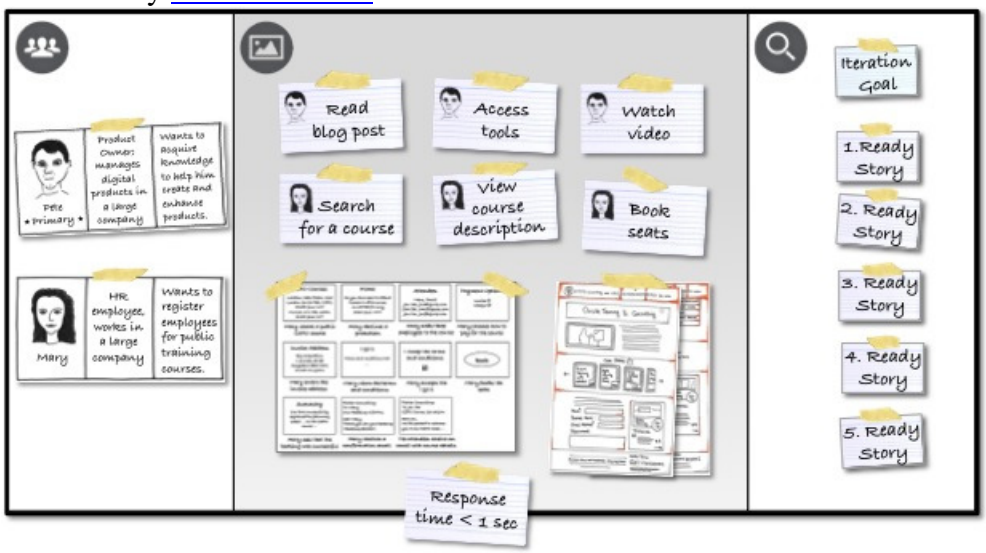

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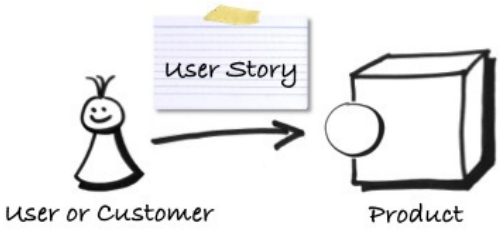

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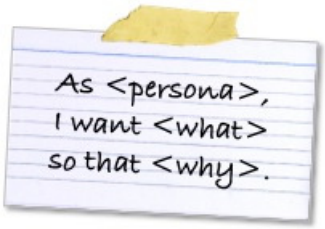

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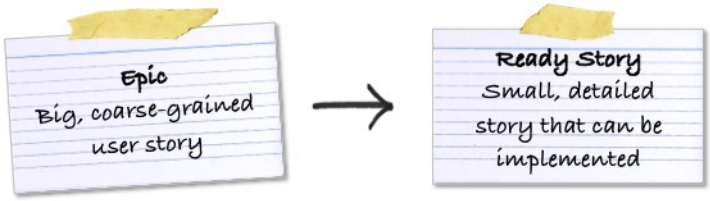

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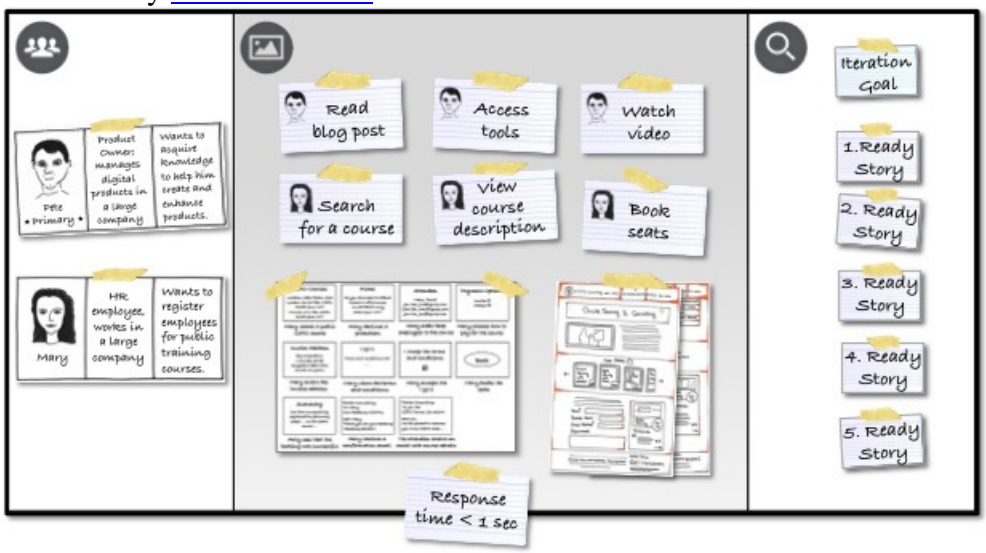

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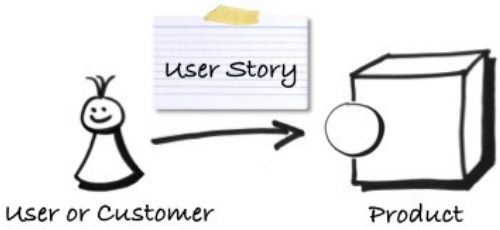

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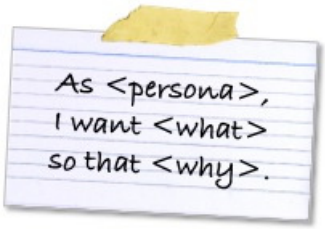

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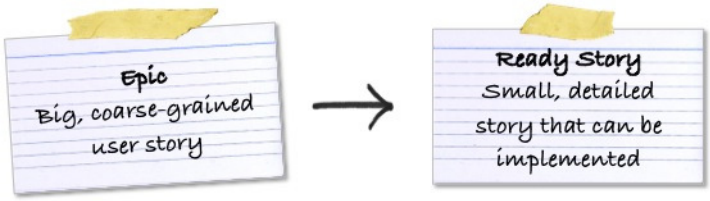

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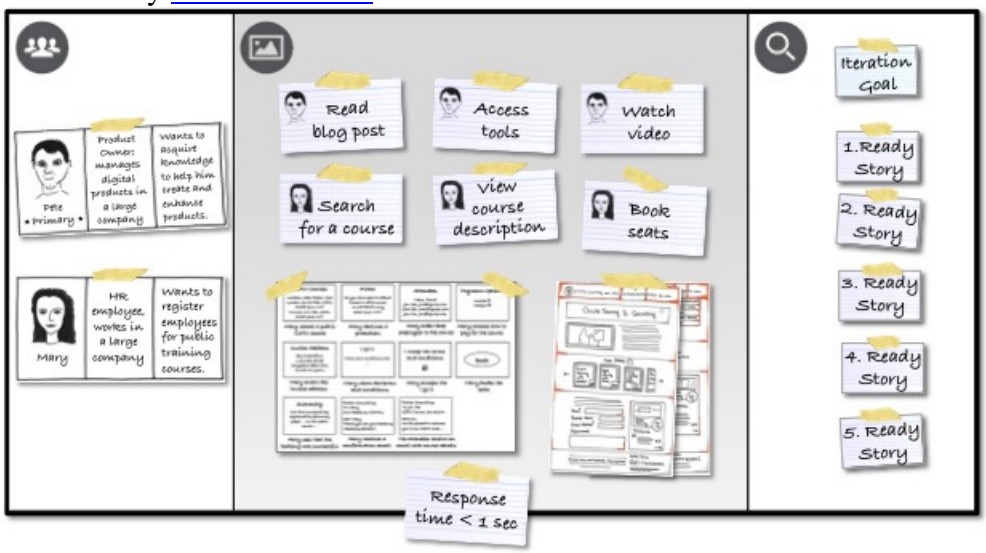

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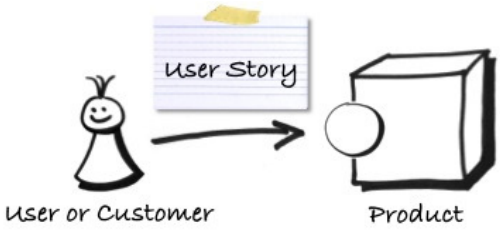

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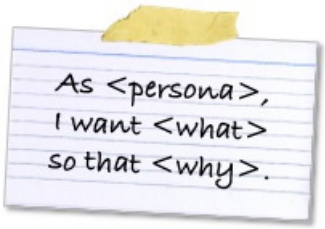

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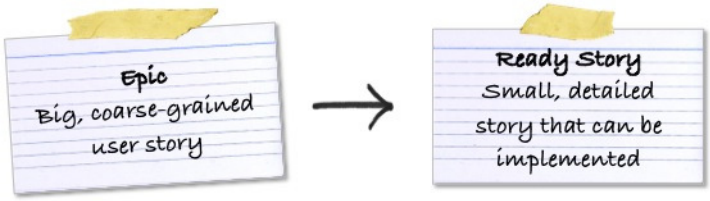

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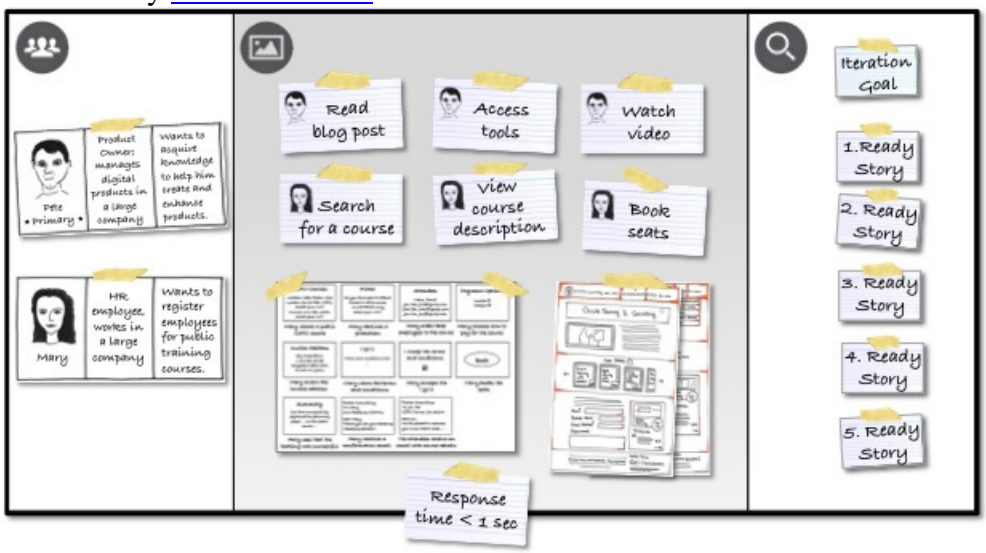

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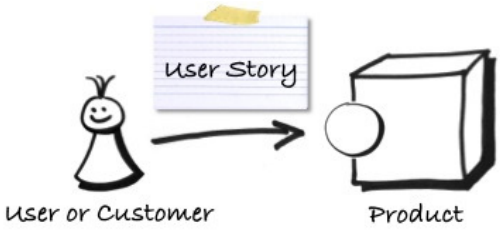

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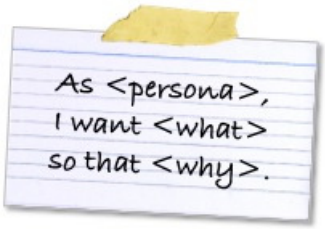

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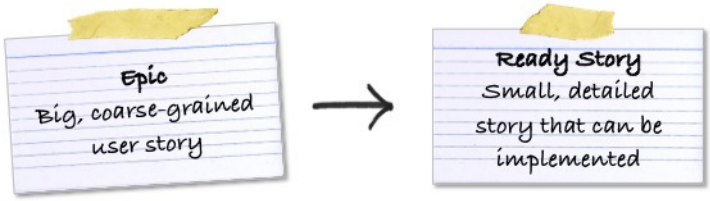

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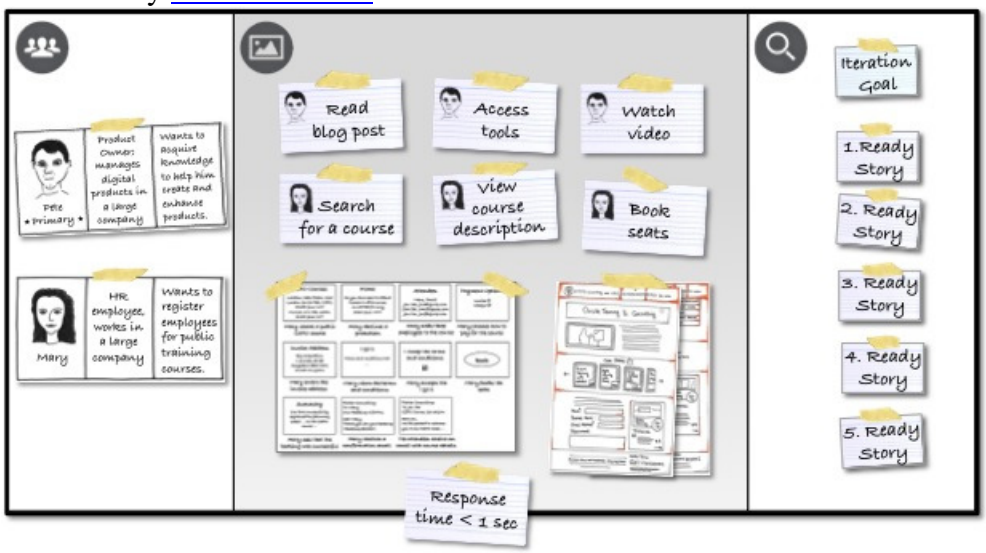

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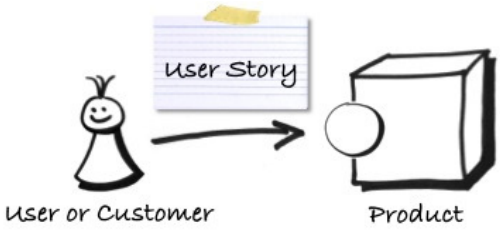

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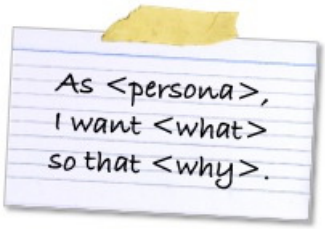

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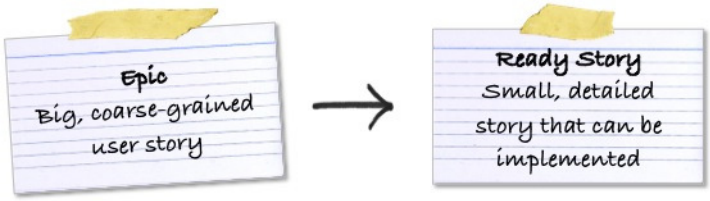

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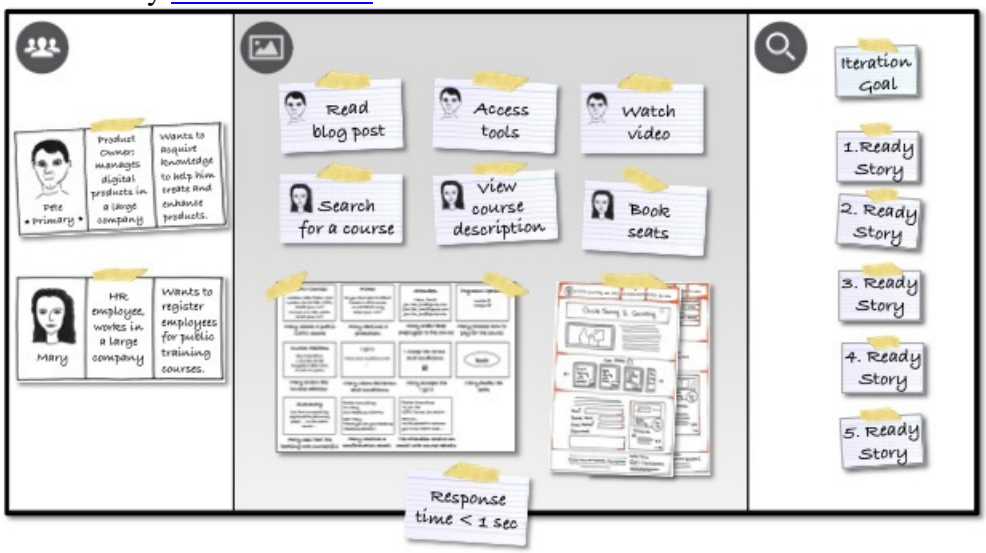

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Posted on Thursday 7th October 2010

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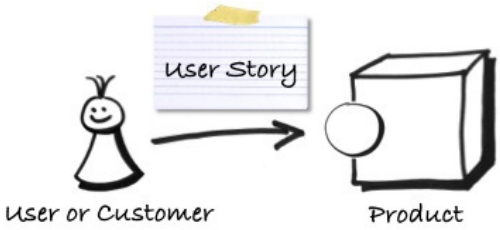

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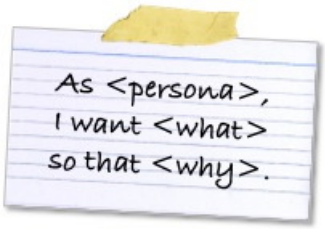

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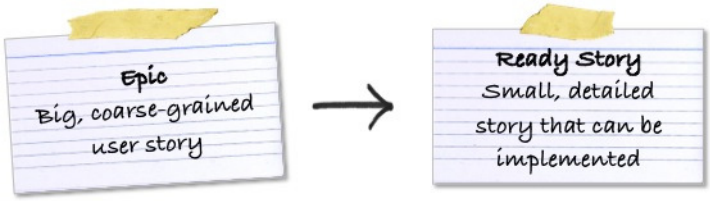

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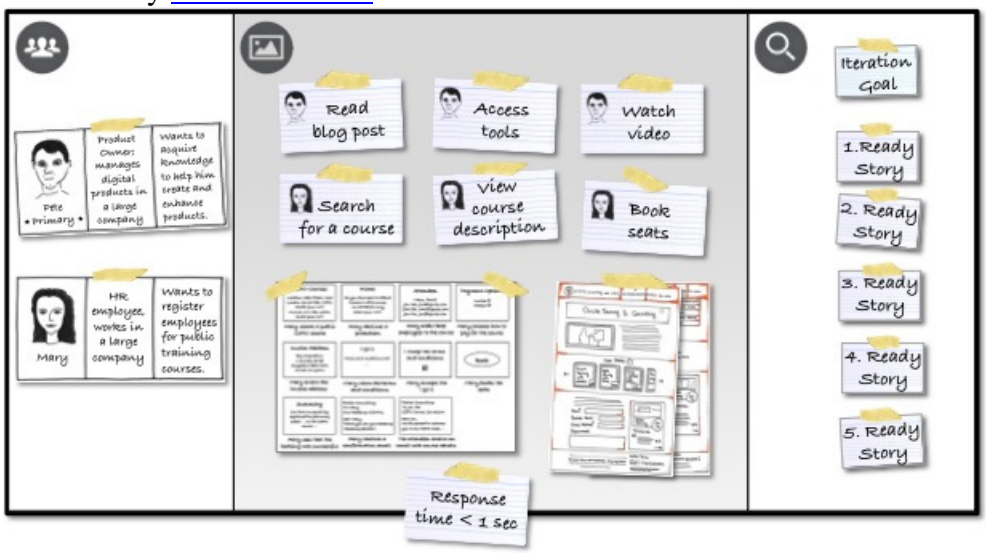

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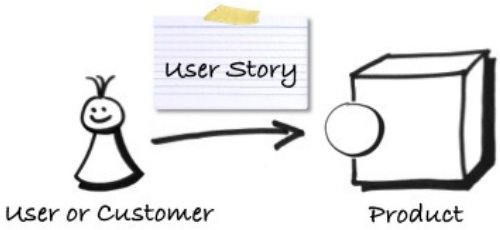

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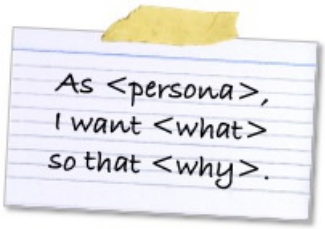

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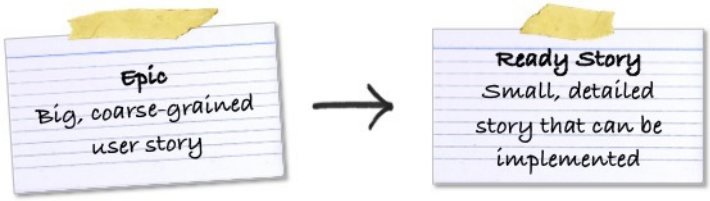

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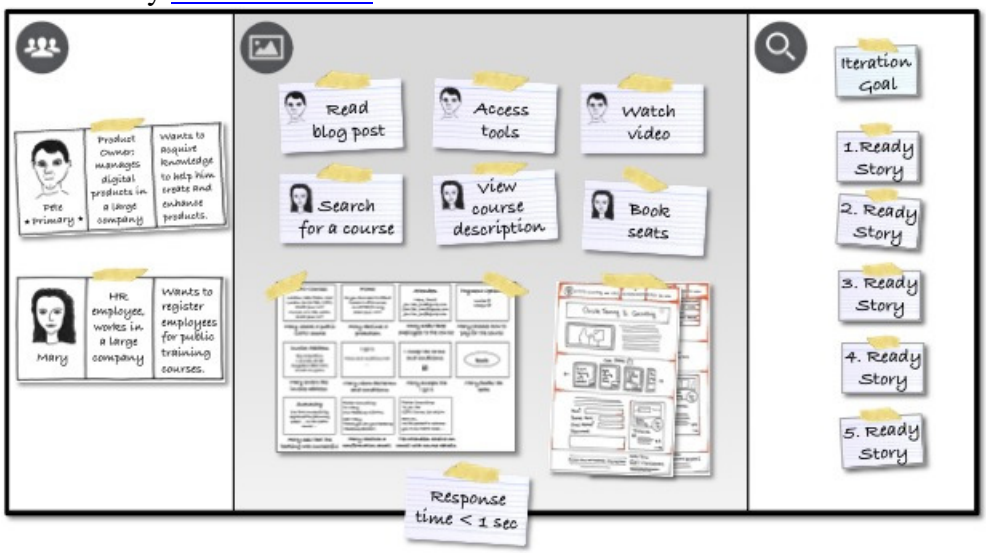

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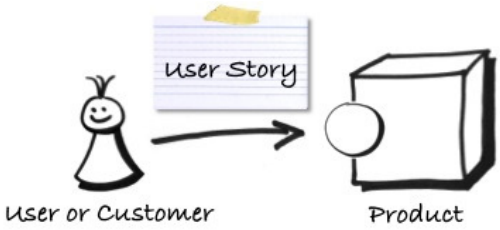

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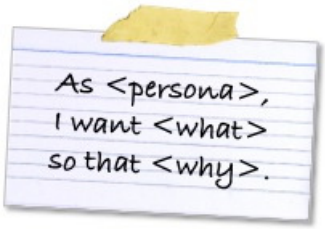

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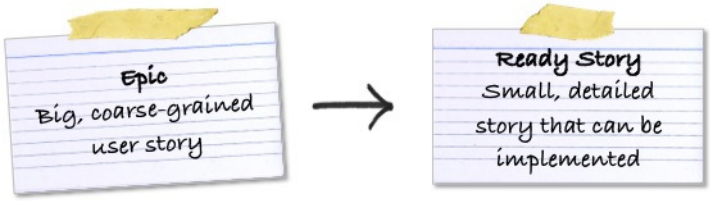

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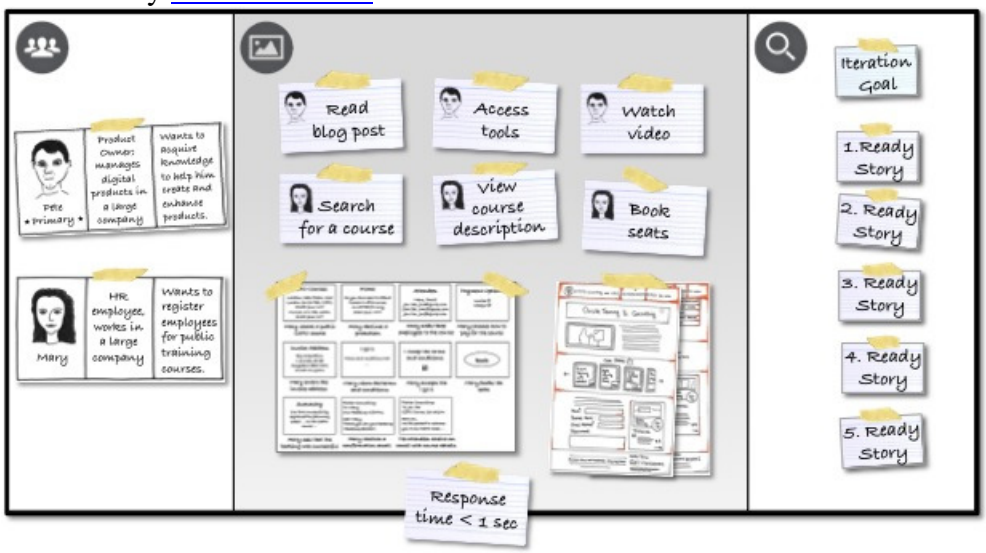

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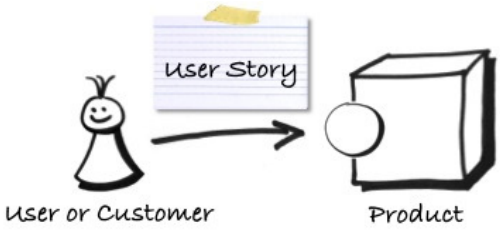

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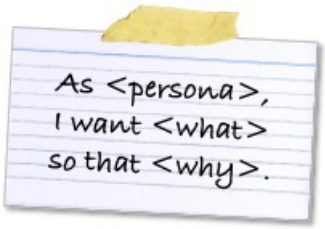

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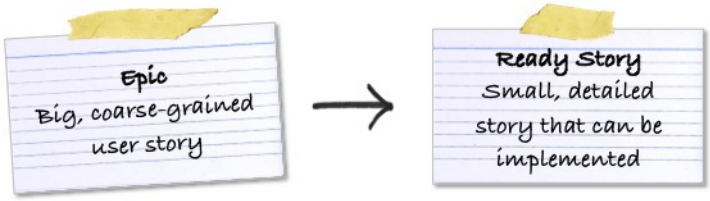

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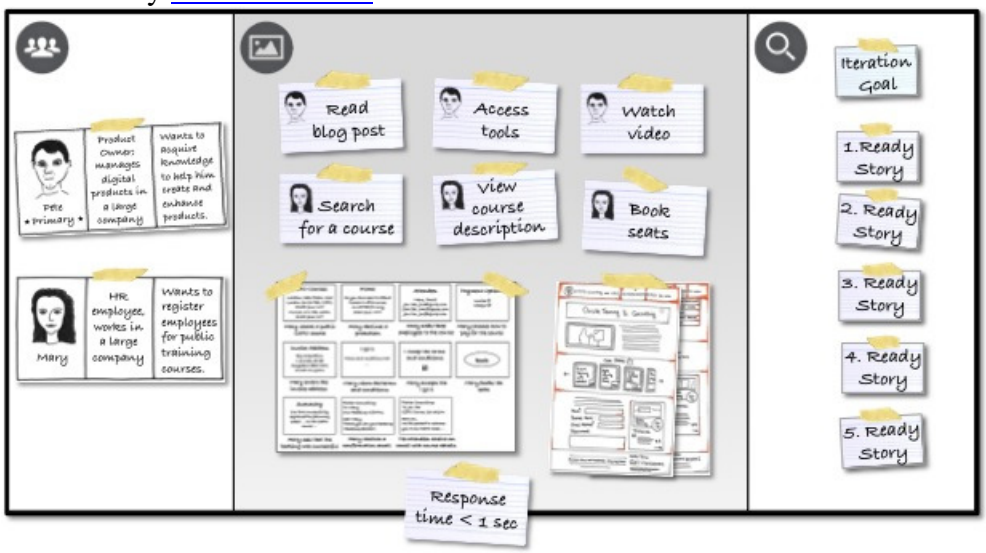

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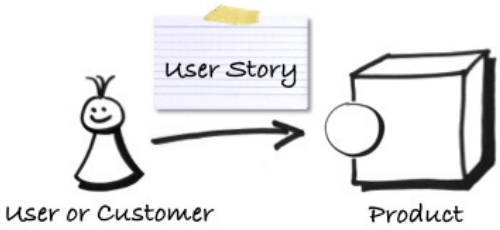

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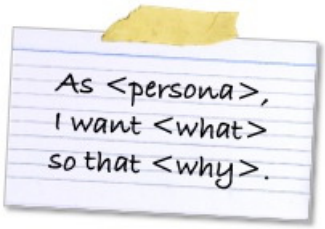

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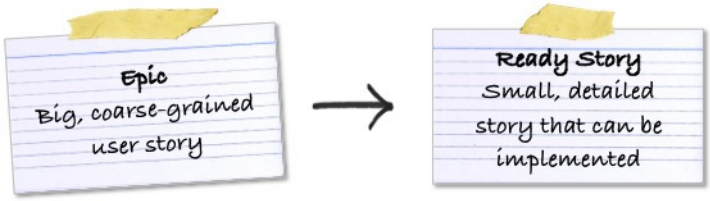

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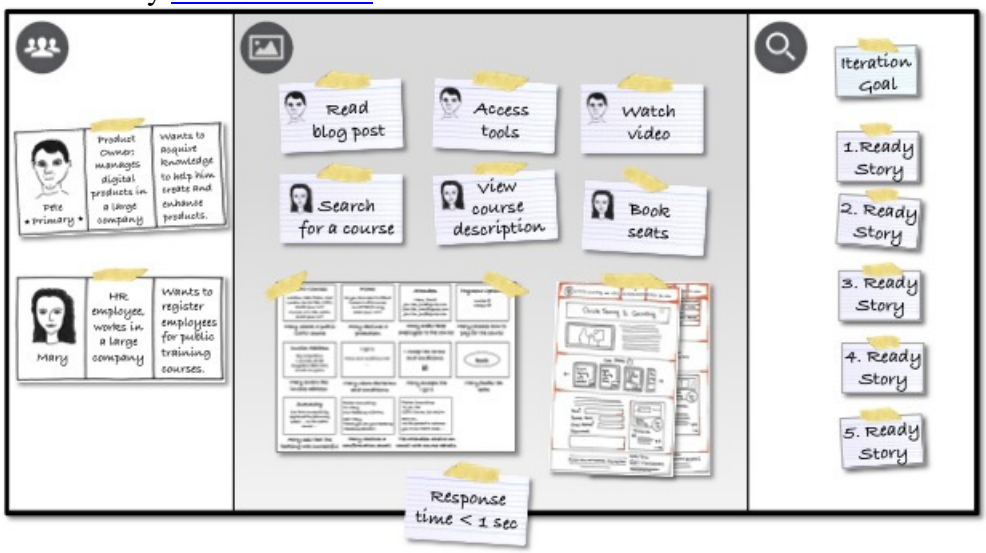

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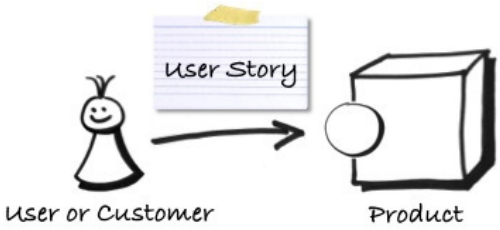

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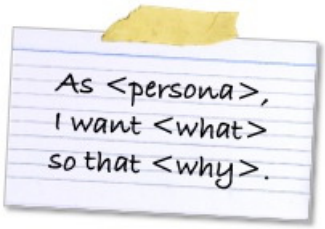

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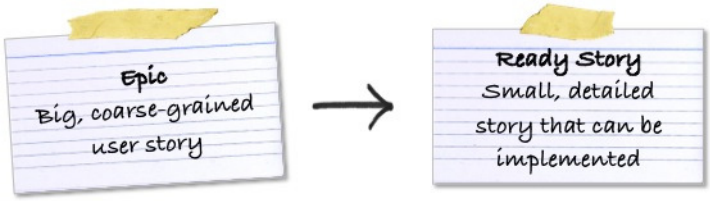

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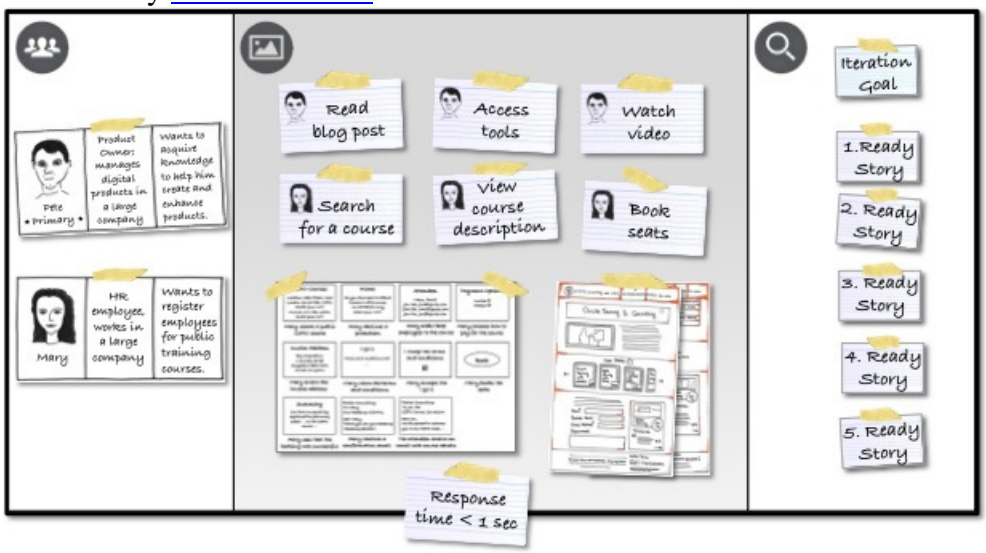

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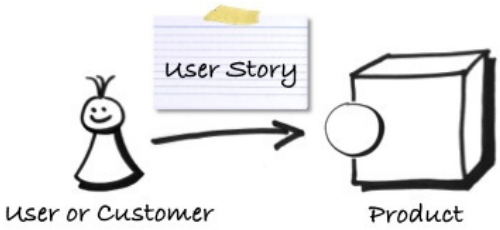

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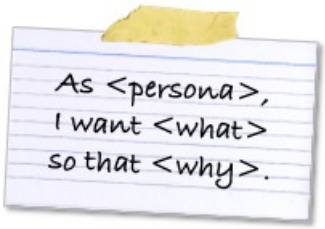

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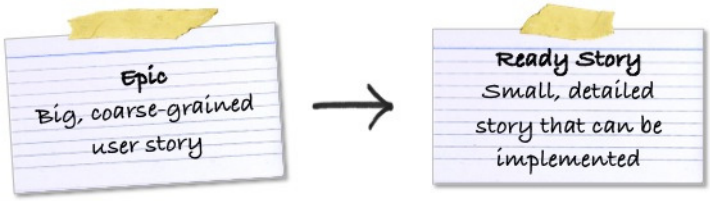

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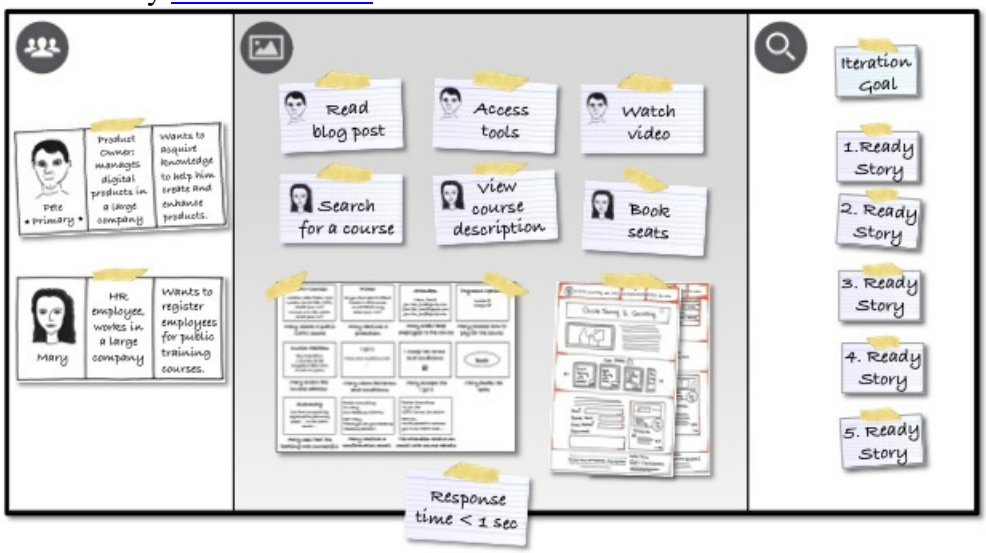

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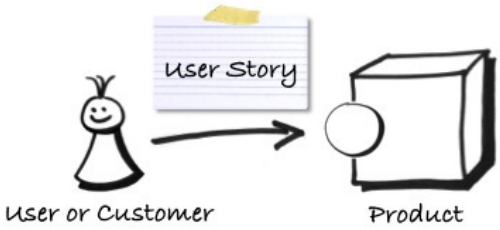

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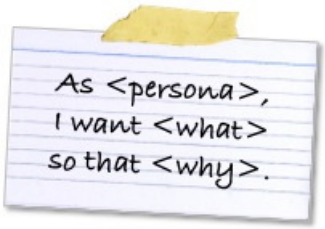

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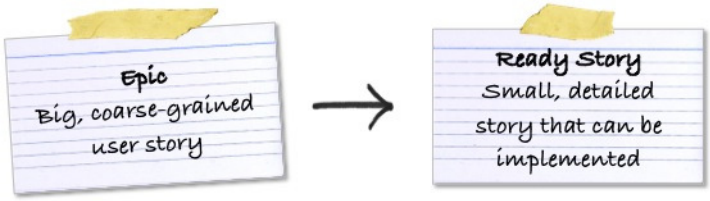

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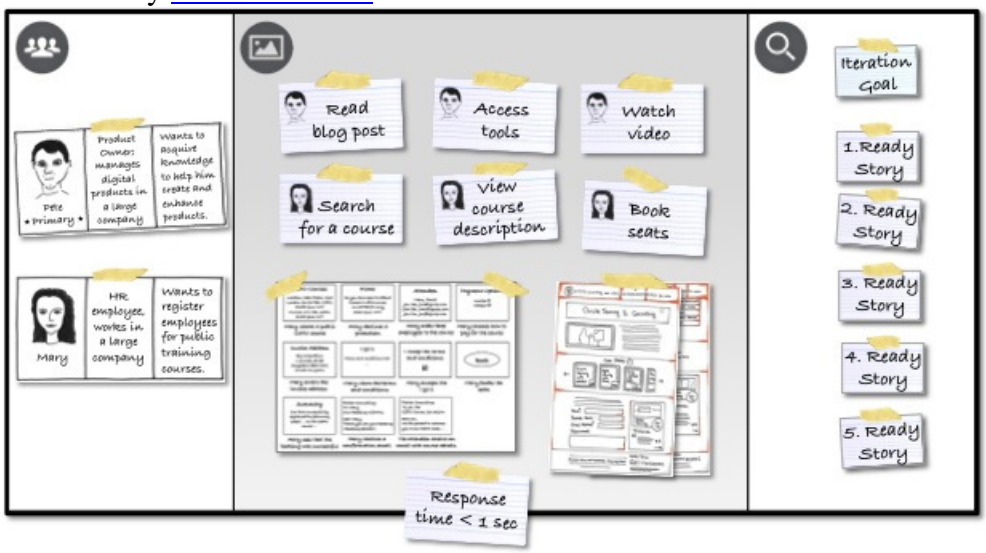

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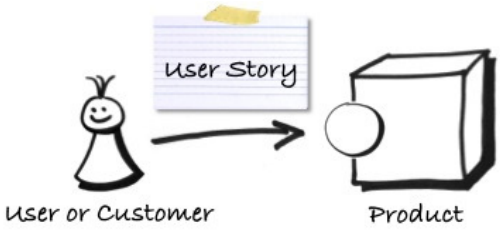

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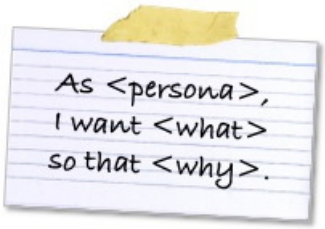

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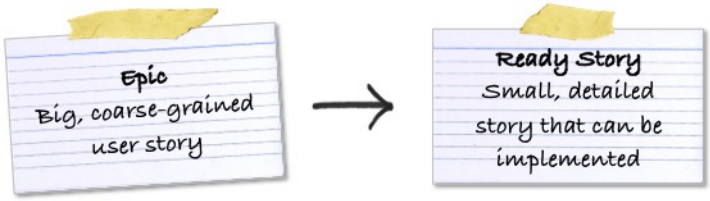

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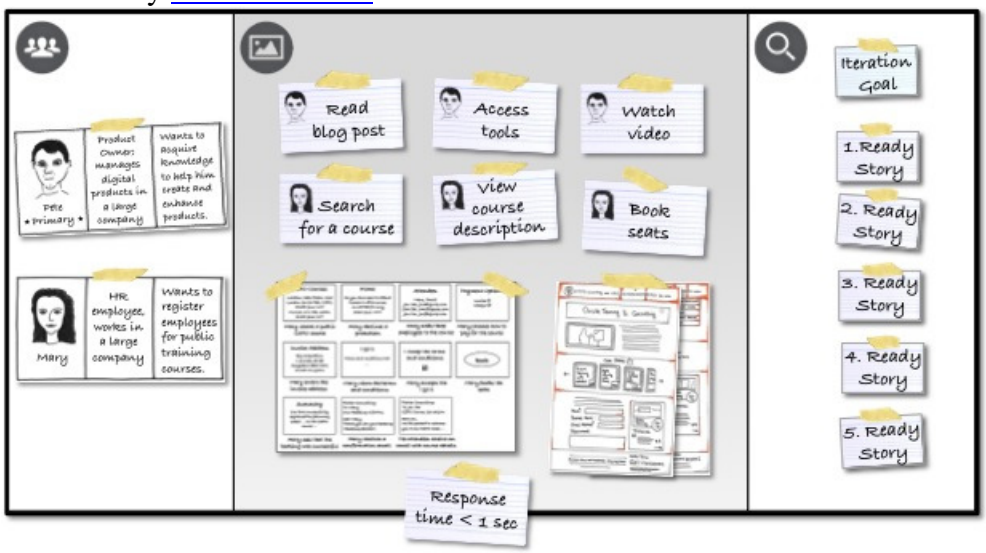

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Posted on Thursday 7th October 2010

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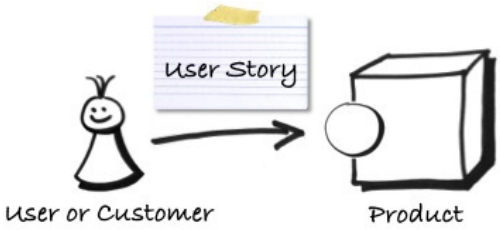

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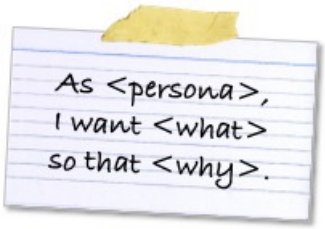

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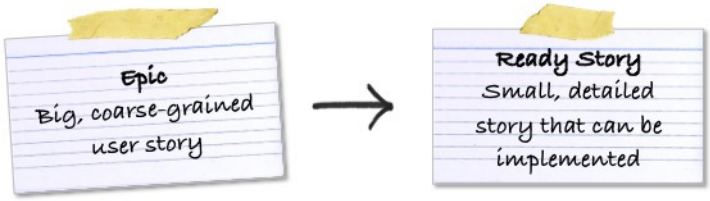

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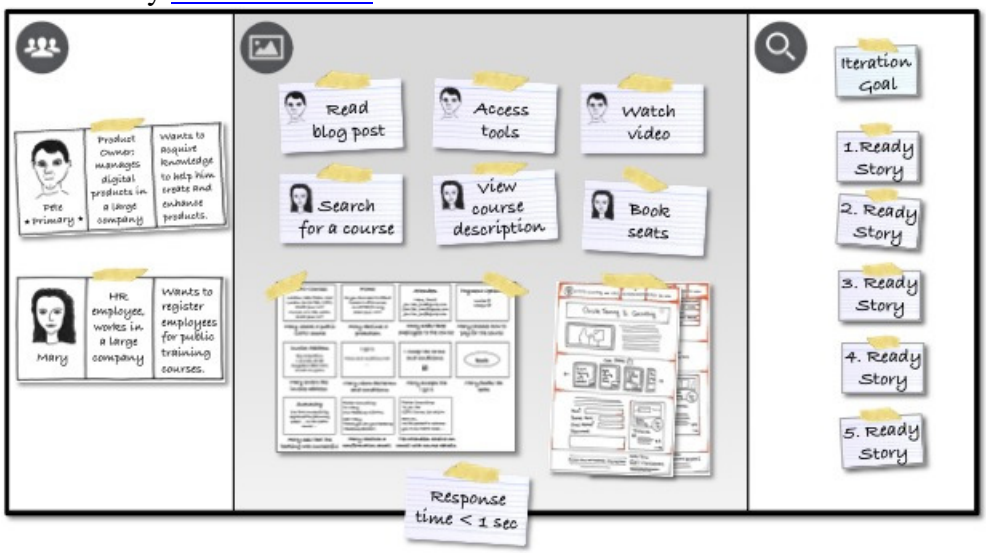

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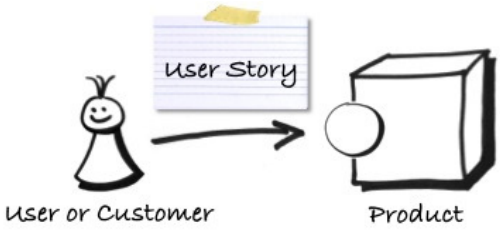

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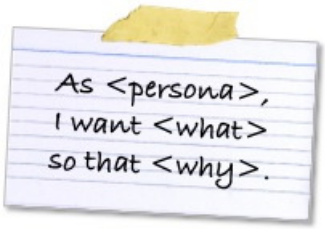

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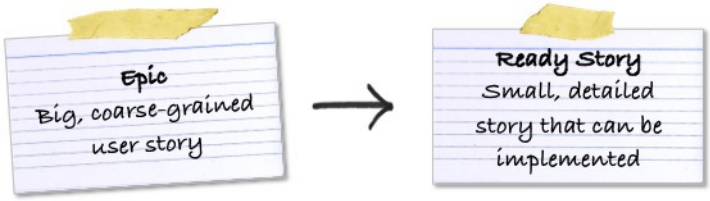

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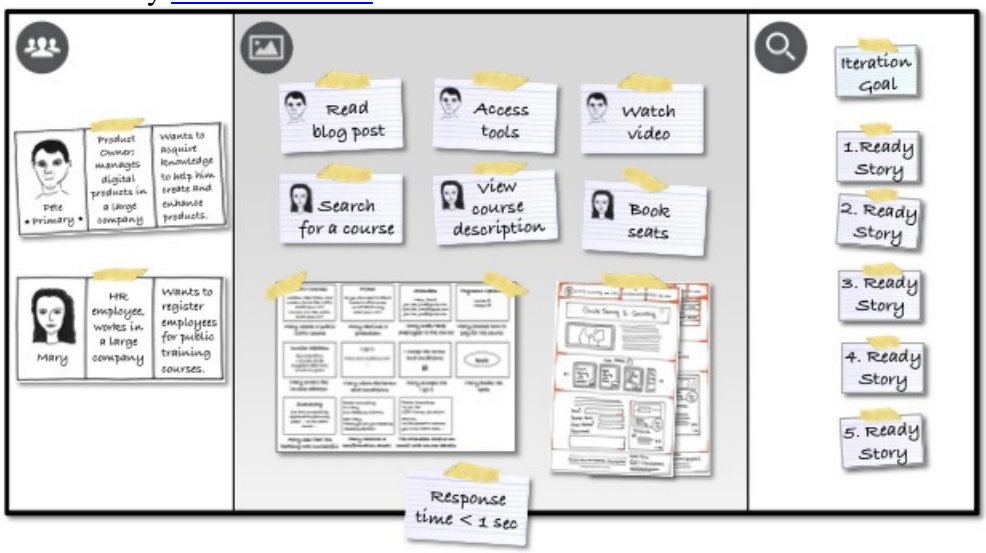

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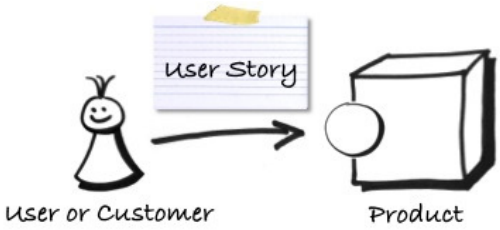

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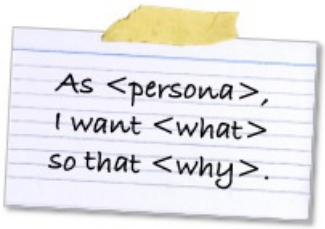

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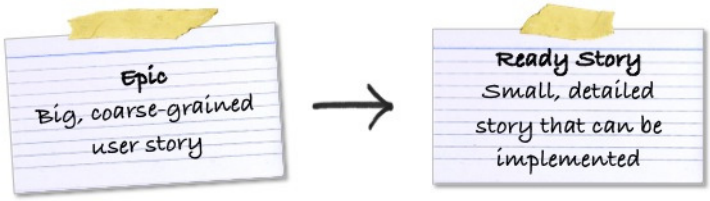

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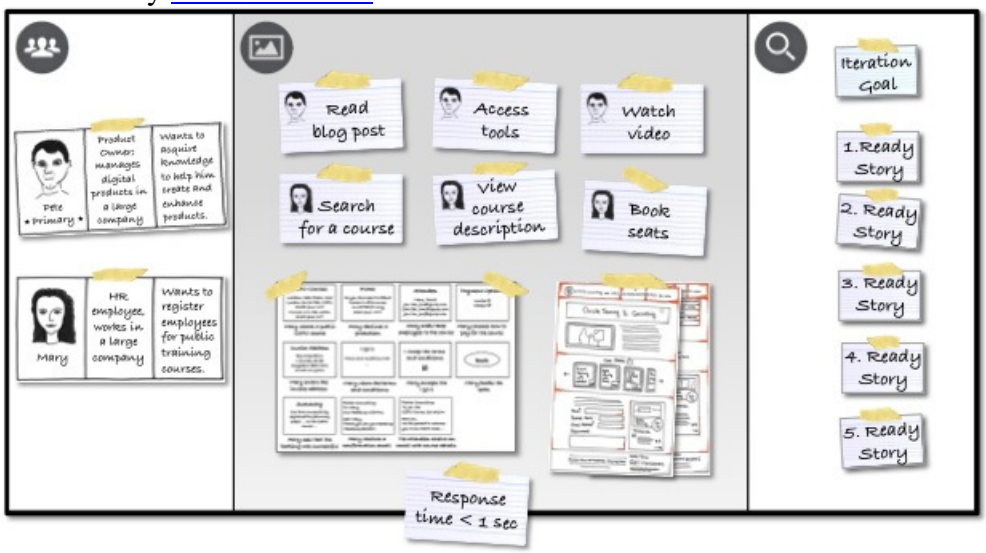

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Like any technique, user story writing has its strengths and limitations. I find stories particularly well suited to capture product functionality, and when applied properly, nonfunctional requirements. But user interface design and complex user interactions are better described by other techniques including design sketches, mock-ups, scenarios, and storyboards. Complement your user stories therefore with other techniques, and don't feel obliged to only use stories.

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My recommendation is: Start with big, coarse-grained stories called epics particularly for all new features. Epics allow you to capture an idea without committing to the details. Then break an epic into more detailed user stories. The new user stories replace the epic, and they provide more information about the product's functionality. Pay particular attention to the user stories that are pulled into a sprint. These stories have to be ready: clear, feasible, and testable. (You can learn more about decomposing epics into ready stories in my post "Epics and Ready Stories".)

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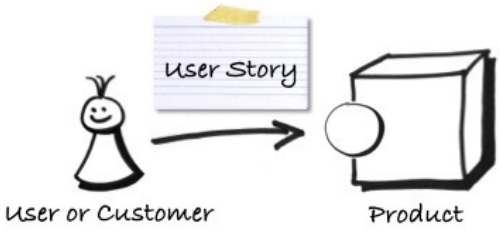
As its name suggests, a user story tells a story about a customer or user employing the product. Write therefore stories from the user's perspective and show how a user or customer uses some product functionality.



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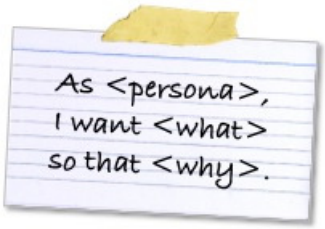
Write your stories so that they are easy to understand. Keep them simple and concise. Avoid confusing and ambiguous terms, and use active voice. Focus on what's important, and leave out non-essential information. The following template puts the user or customer into the story and makes its benefit explicit. But use the template only if it is helpful. Try out different ways to write your stories to understand what works best for you.



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Epics are big, coarse-grained user stories. Starting with epics allows you to sketch the product functionality without committing to the details. This is particularly helpful for new products and new features, as it buys you time to learn more about the users and how to best meet their needs. It also reduces the time and effort required to integrate new insights: If you have lots of detailed stories, then it's often tricky to relate the feedback you receive to the right stories. I like to use the personas with their goals to discover the right epics.

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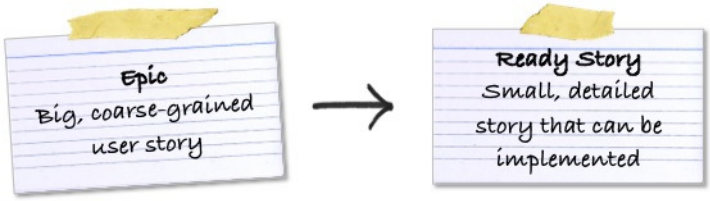

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Using themes helps you organise your stories. Each theme is a group of related stories. Sample themes for a mobile phone are email, calendar, voice communication, and organizer, for instance. Themes make it easier to check for completeness and consistency, they structure your product canvas or product backlog, and they facilitate prioritisation.

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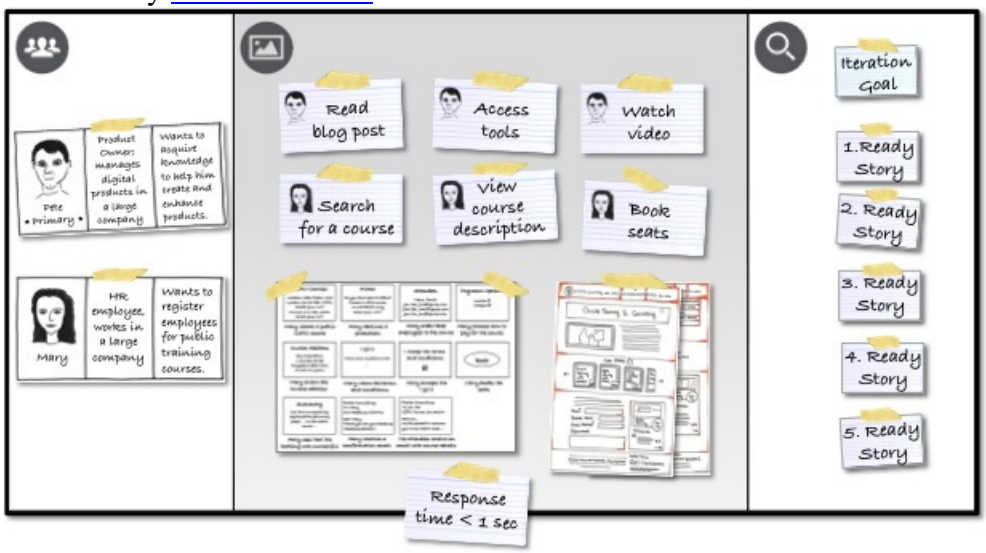

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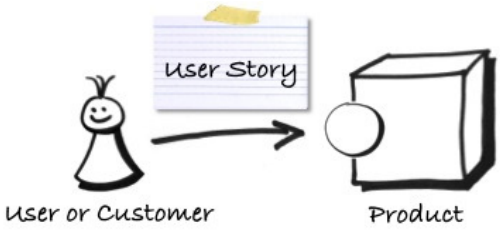

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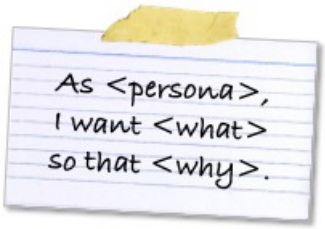

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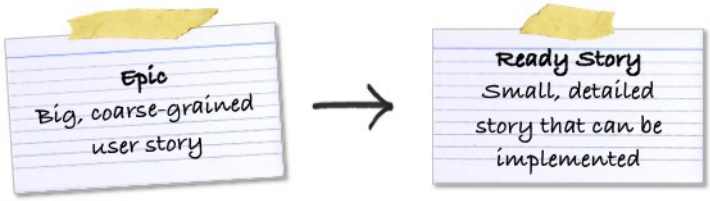

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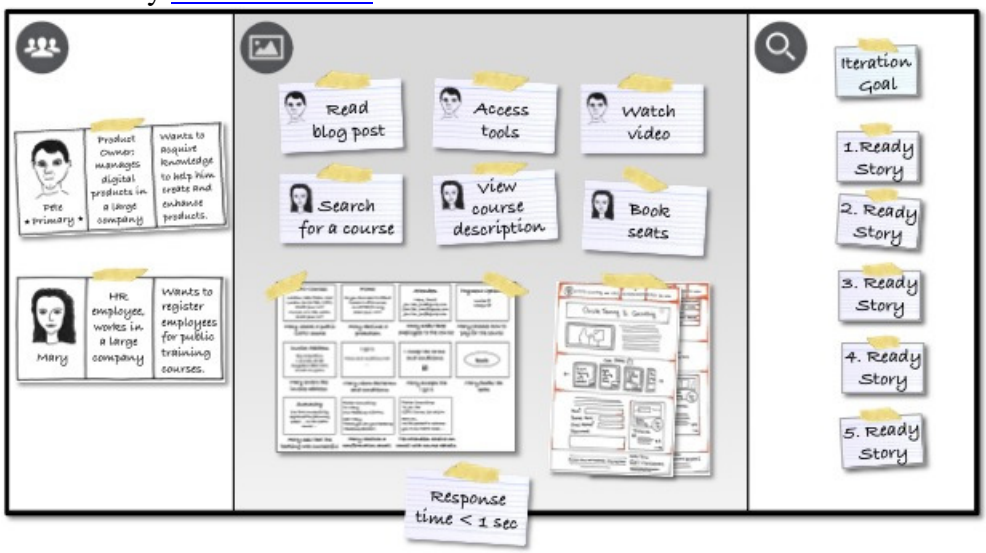

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