The Problem

Estimation practices across teams are inconsistent, incomplete, and disconnected, making the data unreliable as a foundation for planning, forecasting, tracking progress, and measuring productivity.

Most organisations treat estimation as an informal practice rather than a calibrated discipline. This creates a cascade of data quality issues:

- **Gaps in coverage**: Not all work gets estimated, creating blind spots in capacity planning.
- **Inconsistent application**: What one person calls a "5" another calls an "8." Even within the same team, definitions drift over time.
- **Cross-team misalignment**: When multiple teams contribute to a shared initiative, their estimates don't speak the same language. Aggregating their plans produces misleading totals.
- **Size variability without visibility**: Teams that don't estimate formally end up with work items of wildly different sizes, making throughput metrics unreliable indicators of actual progress.

There's often no shared standard, no feedback mechanism, and no way to detect when estimation quality is degrading.

The Consequences

When estimation data is unreliable, everything built on top of it becomes unreliable too.

- **Plans don't hold**: Teams routinely overcommit and under-deliver—not due to lack of effort, but because the inputs were flawed from the start.
- **Forecasts that erode trust**: "When will this be done?" becomes a question no one can answer with confidence. Stakeholders lose faith in timelines.
- **Progress tracking that misleads**: Burndowns, burnups, and velocity charts look precise but reflect noise rather than signal. Teams can't tell if they're on track until it's too late.
- **Productivity insights that don't mean anything**: Reports on "work completed" mix large and small items indiscriminately, making it impossible to compare across sprints, teams, or quarters.
- **A widening gap between delivery and expectations**: Over time, leadership operates on one set of assumptions while teams operate on another—creating frustration on both sides.

The organisation loses the ability to make confident commitments, allocate resources effectively, or course-correct early when things go off track.

The Solution

We analyse your Jira data to surface the gaps and inconsistencies that undermine planning confidence before they show up as missed commitments.

The app calculates a set of health indicators across your projects, teams, and epics:

- **Coverage**: Are estimates actually in place? We flag un-estimated work at the story level and within epics, so you can see where blind spots exist before you commit to a plan.
- **Consistency**: When your team says "5," do they mean the same thing each time? We measure estimation consistency within teams and across teams—because when definitions drift, aggregated plans become meaningless.
- **Estimation timing**: Are estimates being added before work starts, or backfilled afterward? Late estimates often signal that commitments were made without proper sizing.
- **Sizing patterns**: For teams that don't use numeric estimates, we measure the actual size variability of their work items. Wildly inconsistent sizing makes throughput metrics unreliable.
- **Linkage and structure**: Stories that aren't linked to epics create gaps in progress tracking. We surface these so you can see the true state of larger investments.
- **Learning signals**: Are teams re-estimating work that rolls over? Persistent under-estimation on the same types of work suggests the feedback loop is broken.

Each indicator includes a benchmark against a comparison group, so you can see where you stand and where to focus improvement efforts.

The Impact

When you can see where your estimation data is solid and where it's not, planning conversations change.

- **More realistic commitments**: Teams stop making promises based on incomplete information. If 40% of an epic's work is un-estimated, that's visible before the roadmap review—not discovered halfway through the quarter.
- **Forecasts that hold up**: When estimates are consistent—within teams and across teams contributing to the same initiative—you can answer "when will this be done?" with actual confidence. Stakeholders notice when timelines start holding up.
- **Progress tracking you can trust**: Burndowns and velocity charts only work when the numbers underneath them are reliable. With visibility into estimation health, you know when to trust those charts—and when to be sceptical.
- **Simpler cross-team planning**: Aggregating plans across teams with inconsistent estimation practices produces forecasts that look precise but are actually fiction. Surfacing those inconsistencies lets you address them—or at least account for them.
- **A feedback loop that actually works**: The question that usually goes unanswered—did our estimates reflect reality? —becomes visible. Teams can spot patterns in their own data: persistent under-estimation, issue types that always blow up, estimates added too late to matter.