# Planning Poker

**Questions that estimates try to answer:**

How big is a project?

How long will it take?

**What if you could answer both by playing a game with cards?**

**Poker Planning** is a consensus-based estimation technique for estimating. It is a variation of the Wideband Delphi method. It is most commonly used in agile software development.

Studies have found that estimates obtained through the Poker Planning process were less optimistic and more accurate than estimates other mechanical methods.

**Tell EIM or PMO estimation story**

**Cover the cards**

1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 20, 40, 100, ? (Unknown) and Coffee Cup (I need a break)

The Fibonacci sequence is used to reflect the inherit uncertainty in estimating larger items.

The larger the estimate the larger the degree of uncertainty.

With the POM Roadmap estimation we used hours to estimate task, and when doing iterative work like for EIM RF, we used ideal days.

An ideal day is 8 hours, total dedicated no interruptions. You may have also heard of using story points, story points are used to indicate the amount of effort needed when compared to other stories or requirements. Read form estimation book.

The team consists of everyone involved. Jorgenson (2004) concluded that “the people most competent in solving the task should estimate it”.

**How it goes down!**

At the estimation meeting each estimator is given a deck of cards.

During discussion, numbers must not be mentioned to avoid anchoring.

The developer with the most knowledge about the feature provides a short overview

The team is given opportunity to ask questions and clarify assumptions. The PM keeps notes.

Each individual lays a card face down representing their estimate.

Everyone reveals their cards. There will be differences

People with high and low estimates are given a soap box to offer justification for their estimate and discussion continues.

Each individual lays a card down with their new estimate for this round.

Repeat until a consensus is reached. Usually not more than 3 rounds.

**Why it works**

Brings together multiple expert opinions to do the estimating

Lively discussions during the estimation process, estimators are called upon by their peers to justify their estimates. This has been shown to improve accuracy (Hafafros and Brehmer 1983) and better compensate for missing information (Brenner 1996).

Studies have also shown that averaging individual estimates leads to better results (Hoest and Wholin 1998) as do group discussions (Jorgensen and Molokken 2002). Group discussion is at the core of Planning Poker.

This also provides a great way for documenting assumptions and risks.

And Its fun!!!