Sprint: Solve Big Problems
+ test new ideas in 5 days, Knapp, Zeratsky, Kowitz
(from Google Ventures) published 2016

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
• Start at the end • map • Ask the experts target • ~~Target~~	• remix & improve • Sketch	• Decide • Rumble • Storyboard ○ Testable hypothesis	• Prototype	• Test • Learn

Preface

· where did good ideas/work come from? "My best work happened when I had a big challenge & not quite enough time"

① time to develop ideas independently, but not *too* much time
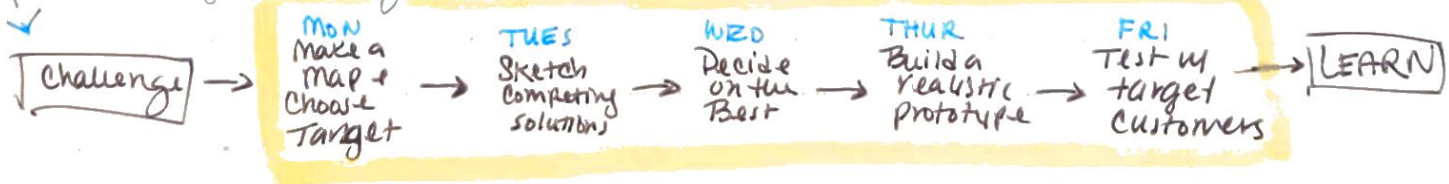
② all of the right people were in the room

"~~Sprint~~ Sprints offer a path to solve big problems, test new ideas, get more done, and do it faster." + have more fun

Introduction

· Sprints are a process by which the experts on your team can make good decisions

① Clear a week   ② Set a clear goal or question to answer   ③ make up a deadline

④ review relevant background info   ⑤ establish key metrics for success

⑥ identify risks & specific target   ④ Solution   ⑧ narrow & pick a solution to try

④ document potential solution in detail   ⑩ prototype for a very specific target + result

⑪ Test   ⑫ learn & adjust

★ test out risky ideas w/o making expensive commitments

"This book is a DIY guide for running your own sprint to answer your pressing business questions."

| Challenge → | MON
Make a map + Choose Target | → | TUES
Sketch competing solutions | → | WED
Decide on the Best | → | THUR
Build a realistic Prototype | → | FRI
Test w/ target Customers | → LEARN |

Set The Stage

You'll need to prepare: ① right Challenge ② right team ③ time + space

① Challenge

- Example, Coffee shop wanting to ↑ online presence + sales
  - challenge: → (Blue Bottle)
  - team: dev, COO, CFO, Comms manager, CS. lead, ex. Chair person + CEO (James)
  - time + space: a week

- Sprints can help w/ ① high stakes projects, ② not enough time, ③ stuck
  - ✱ go after your most important problems
  - ✱ No problem is too big for a sprint b/c ① sprints force you to focus +
    ② You can learn from the surface of a finished product
  - Solve the surface ~~force~~ first, where product/service meets customers, get the surface right + work backwards before committing

② Team

- Decider (or two): official decision maker for the project
  - ✱ Understand problem in-depth, have strong opinions + criteria to find solution
  - ✱ Should also be able to know what the right priority is
  - ✱ arguments to join: fast results, it's an experiment, walk through the tradeoffs of the sprint (what will be moved/removed), focus (excellent job at one thing)
  - ✱ Can join at key points:
    - ① (M) problem ② (W) right idea to test ③ (F) how customers react to prototype
    + set a delegate clearly
  - ✱ if they won't show, that's a red flag. talk w/ them
- ideal size ≤ 7 people + ideally a mix of skills
  - ↳ both the people who will build + ppl. w/ deep expertise + excitement
- Cheatsheet of who to include, needs to be a mix + not every role ~~should~~ needs to be included. May also have multiples:
  - Decider, ex. CEO, founder, product manager, head of design
  - Finance Expert; ex. CEO, CFO, business dev mgr.
  - Marketing Expert, ex. CMO, marketer, PR, community mgr.
  - Customer Expert, ex. researcher, sales, customer support
  - Tech/logistics, ex. CTO, engineer
  - Design, ex. designer, product manager
  - + Troublemaker, strong, contrary opinions but not a jerk

② Team cont'd.
  * can invite extra experts on (m) to share expertise + opinions ½ hr / expert
    Facilitator, manage time, convos, process, meetings, summaries, + flow of convo
      ↳ needs to be unbiased, can be an outsider
  * everyone will provide their key contribution during the sprint
③ Time + Space
  "Fragmentation hurts productivity"
    · longer hours ≠ better results   · 5 full days (M-Th) 10am-5pm (F) 9am-5pm
    · 100% focus while in the sprint
    "No laptops, phones or iPads allowed", they can suck the momentum out of a sprint
      ↳ exceptions: during breaks + if you leave the room
      ↳ or if you need to show something specific
    * whiteboards are helpful + good quality markers
      ↳ short term memory (↓), spacial memory (↑)
      ↳ 2 ≤ big whiteboards
    * try to use same room all day every day or retain the "shared brain"
      somehow overnight
    * shopping list is at the end of the book *
    → preface the use of the time timer w/ a narrative, it's a guideline not a rule

Monday ① Start at the End ② map ③ Ask Experts ④ Pick a target
  "if you don't first slow down, share what you know, and prioritize you could end up
  wasting time + effort on the wrong part of the problem."
  ④ ① Start at the end + set long term goal
    "why are we doing this project? where do we want to be six months, a year, or
    even five years from now?"
      * your goal should reflect your team's principles + aspirations
      * keep your goal as a beacon for the week
      * unearth assumptions by thinking through how the project could fail + evaluate
        these failure states or questions after Friday
  ② List Sprint Questions
    "rephrase assumptions + obstacles into questions", shift to curiosity

⑤ map

↳ SIMPLE, major steps for customers to move from beginning to completion.

★ customer-centric w/ key actors on the left

★ is a story w/ beginning, middle + end

① list actors / characters
② write ending
③ words/arrows in b/w
30-60 mins. first draft

④ keep it simple (5-15 steps)
⑤ Ask for help

→ then interview experts + update map/questions/goals   *30 ≥ minutes/interview (schedule)

⑥ Ask the Experts

★ one-at-a-time interviews   ★ take notes individually   ★ can use "remind us" phrasing

- nobody knows everything

- helpful to have at least one expert to talk about:

  Strategy, Voice of the Customer, How things work, Previous Efforts

Interview: ① intro sprint   ② Review whiteboards   ③ listen to the expert
           ④ Ask questions   ⑤ Fix whiteboards

Notes Process: How might we (from P&G)

   ① indiv. write notes, on stickies   ② merge + organize stickies into groups
   ③ choose most interesting ones (dot voting)
   preface notes w/ "How might we…" and write in the form
   of a question to stay open ended + turn a problem into an
   opportunity.

★ use whiteboard markers in general, they don't smell as bad + it will avoid
permanently marking the whiteboard on accident

⑦ Target

Decider one target customer + one target event on the map
   ↳ can do a straw poll (privately vote on target customer + event) but
      the Decider makes the final call

Facilitator Notes   the whiteboard is the shared
                           brain of the team;
   ① make your role clear + ask for permission   ② always be capturing
   ③ ask obvious questions   ④ Take care of the humans   ③ Decide + move on
                                                          ↳ call on Decider
                                                             to do this

Tuesday — ⑧ Remix + improve existing ideas + ⑨ sketch

⑧ Remix + improve "but never blindly copy"

- ⓐ Search for existing ideas you can use for a solution
  - ↳ gather useful components + spend 3min turns presenting these ideas from all over in "Lightning Demos"
    - ↳ ⓐ write 1-2 products (unfinished, in-or-outside company/industry) to learn from
      - ⓑ give 3min demos + tour of why it's great
      - ⓒ Capture big ideas as you go w/ title of main point + drawing
- ② Decide how to tackle problem/solution
  - ↳ Divide or Swarm

· Several key pieces   Superfocused target
· ask for where ppl are
interested + rebalance

⑨ Sketch

- · Work individually, take your time, sketch
- · pen to paper is a helpful place to start
  - ↳ abstract ideas lack concrete detail its easy for them to be over or undervalued
  - ↳ sketching helps to go from abstract to concrete quickly
- · work alone, together + think about the first small step needed first + go

✱4-step sketch

① gather key info (20min)   ② Doodle rough soln's (20min)
   NOTES   IDEAS

③ Rapid variations (8min)   ④ Figure Out the Details (30+ mins)
   CRAZY 8's 8's   SOLUTION SKETCH
   ↳ 8 variations in 8mins   ↳ this part will be reviewed by others
   ↳ focus on good ideas at a   + should be detailed
     "crazy" pace   ① self-explanatory   ② anonymous
   ↳ split page into 8 sections   ③ ugly is o.k.   ④ words matter, don't
                                  ⑤ catchy title   use filler, make it specific
                                  ↳ 3 frames, like a comic book, to
✱ Don't look at sketches until (w)!   show flow + movement

Facilitator Notes

- · (m) or (t) find customers for (F), ideally someone other than the facilitator does this
  - · ^an use Craigslist or your network
     general ad then   skilldoscreener
     screener

Wednesday ① critique + decide ② weave storyboard

⑩ Decide

　① review solutions, discuss, dot vote on the sketch you'd like to prototype.
　　　　　　DECIDER decides
　　　ⓐ post all sketches on wall　ⓑ mark interesting parts　ⓒ quickly discuss the high lights
　　　ⓓ vote w/ dots　ⓔ Decider makes final decision
　　→ need to make honest decisions, so allow the Decider to commit + do their job
　　→ Supervotes (from the decider) can go on more than one sketch.

⑪ Rumble

　* if more than one sketch has a supervote, do two prototypes → create a fake brand
　* you can also (possibly) combine the winning sketches
　[Note + Vote] (~10 min) to gather ideas + make a decision
　　↳① everyone has paper + pen　② 3 min. write down ideas　③ self-edit to 2-3 ideas
　　④ Top ideas go on the whiteboard　⑤ pick indiv. favorite (2 min)　⑥ call out fav + mark on whiteboard
　　⑦ Decider decides (can follow votes or not)

⑫ Storyboard

　· 10-15 panel comic book to form cohesive story so you can spot issues or confusion
　① Draw a grid w/ ~15 frames, each ~2 pages size + start in upper left, opening
　　frame to give context
　② Choose opening scene → almost always a good idea to present your sol'n alongside
　　a competitor's sol'n
　③ Fill out storyboard, use sticky notes from winning sketch
　　↳ if there's a gap either leave it or look at "maybe-later" sketches / existing product
　* work w/ what you have　* don't write together, keep words basic
　* include just enough detail　* the decider decides, it'll keep the process fast + opinionated
　* when in doubt, take risks　* keep the prototype / story ≤ 15 min
　　　　　　　　　　　↳ each frame is ~1 min. of test

Thursday ① "fake it" philosophy ② realistic prototype

⑬ Fake It

* all about illusion ☆✧ * after one day you're not committed to the sol'n & can take criticism

"No plumbing, no wiring, no structural engineering. Just a façade."

→ focus on "just enough" for the prototype & temp. simulation

→ Prototype Mindset
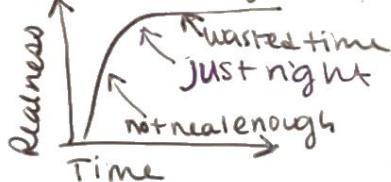
① You can prototype anything ② prototypes are disposable
③ Build just enough to learn, but not more ④ prototype must appear real

"In Friday's test, customer reactions are solid ~~to~~ gold, but their feedback is worth pennies on the dollar."

* goldilocks quality *

(graph: Realness vs Time, with labels "wasted time", "just right", "not real enough")

→ Question, Format, Tools

→ can build prototype on top of other tools you already have

⑭ Prototype

Four exercises: ① pick the right tools ② divide & conquer ③ stitch together ④ trial run

→ Tools are likely not going to be what you typically use, 90% sure we should use keynote to prototype (or Powerpoint)

→ or create a brochure / marketing material instead of the actual product

* Quick tips:
Screen → Keynote / PPT / Squarespace
paper → " | " | word
Service → Script & use team as actors
physical → modify an existing space
object → modify existing, 3D print, marketing prototype w/ Keynote

Divide & Conquer, split up these jobs:
ⓘ makers (2+), Stitcher (1), Writer (1), Asset Collector (1), Interviewer (1)

then ② divide the storyboard   best to not be invested or work on prototype

Trial Run

→ stitcher runs through prototype, interviewer needs to be familiar & comfortable

Friday ① Interview & learn

⑮ Small Data

"Watch target customers react to your new ideas — before you've made the expensive commitment to launch them."

* 5 interviews is the magic number, catch 85% of problems
- the whole team watches a stream of the interview
* ~~that~~ helps identify why things didn't work & you can ask the person being interviewed

⑯ Interview

The 5-act interview

① welcome ② contextual questions ③ intro to prototype(s) ④ detailed tasks for customer
⑤ quick debrief y customer

* will get permission to stream/record the interview
* also any other legal assurances
* flow the intro into a comfortable conversation vs. interview

"The customer is doing him a favor &, not the other way around, and it is the prototype that will be tested, not the customer" + indicate feedback won't be taken personally

★ "Good task instructions are like clues for a treasure hunt"
  ↳ the customer should work out how to accomplish the tasks on their own.
- the debrief helps you sort through everything you heard
- the interviewer should stay engaged but ~~not~~ neutral. The team will take notes for the interviewer

① be a good host ② ask open-ended questions ③ Ask broken q's, trail off at the end
④ curiosity mindset
  2 rules to avoid leading Q's
    DON'T ask ∞ choice/yes no q's ("would you...? Do you...? Is it...?")
    DO ask "5 W's & 1 H" q's (who? what? where? when? why? How?)

⑰ learn

· watch together - learn together & take notes together
· 5 columns (per interview) & 1-3 rows for aspects of prototype & put up sticks
· distinguish b/w positive, negative or neutral

⑦ Learn cont'd
- during the interview should be quiet to listen
  - look for patterns across >3 Customers or strong reaction
  ★ review the sprint question, created on (m)
  ★ no matter interview results, you'll learn & have a clearer idea of what to do next.
  ★ interviews also help you connect w/ your Customers

Liftoff
"When you go to work in the morning, you should know that your time & effort will count"

Checklists
  ↳ can be found online at thesprintbook.com
  ★ follow all steps for the first few sprints
  → They're also on Twitter
    @jakek @jazer @kowitz @GVDesignTeam

Personal Thoughts:
- This was a fast & to the point How-To guide for design sprints! I recommend either looking at the checklist online or reading the book.