# Product Vision Meeting

**Case Study**

VMfoods is a 10 year-old nation-wide grocery chain with about 100 outlets. Of late, the management team at VMfoods has observed that their customers are leading a fast-paced lifestyle and do not travel long-distances to do their grocery shopping. They also feel that since grocery shopping is not a high-involvement process (and since VMfoods has always been providing high quality products), the best way to increase their market share would be to deliver groceries to the customer’s residence. In this regard, a representative from VMEdu has approached your team on behalf of VMfoods to create a website for customers to prepare their online delivery order and make payments.

The vision and generic requirements are given to you by a company representative (the faculty) in a product vision meeting.

Product Vision for this exercise: **“Help VMfoods develop an online sales channel”**

The vision for the case study is discussed by the Product Owner (i.e. in this case the faculty). The Product Owner (faculty) writes the Product Vision on a chart and explains to the whole team what has to be achieved in the project.

Encourage the students to go back to their companies and keep the product vision displayed out to the whole team so that everyone has the vision in mind when they work.

# Role Play: Create a Product Backlog

Work in teams to prepare a product backlog (high-level containing user stories) for the given Product vision. Some user-stories have already been defined for your reference. Come up with additional Product Backlog items (another 7 – 10)

Create user stories on your own, tell them to think of what an e-commerce website should have and guide any teams struggling.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Item # | User Story description | Initial estimate | Revised estimate |
|  | Sprint-1 | 14 |  |
| 1 | Login Feature | 4 |  |
| 2 | Access to payment gateways | 5 |  |
| 3 | Generic Browsing and Shopping cart facility | 5 |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Sprint-2 | 14 |  |
| 4 | Cart saved for future visit |  |  |
| 5 | Category links on landing page |  |  |
| 6 | Top selling items on landing page |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Sprint-3 | 14 |  |
| 7 | Featured products on main page |  |  |
| 8 | Individual pages for categories |  |  |
| 9 | Contact us, about us, T&C links and other info on main page |  |  |

**Instructions for all role-play activities:**

* Go around, look at how the teams are progressing and when required, guide the teams as to how they should be progressing.
* Post the activity, make the teams present their backlog and go through the same.
* Later, make one of the teams to conduct the same scenario in front of the class and every member of the team will be given a card each describing the role they have to play out.

**Card-types**

The cards will be of two types (all cards look identical so that no one is able to distinguish between them). One type of cards will be the normal cards (generally team members who will be playing out the normal scenario without any issues). The other type, are the action cards and the team members who have been given these cards will be told to enact a certain role/issue.

## Issues with creating Product Backlog

Discuss how you would deal with these issues in your groups

1. **Team members disagreeing with the Product Owner regarding priorities**

It is a good practice for the PO to define the tasks and take feedback from the team members regarding the Backlog Priority. In case of disagreements, the PO would be encouraged to share the Product vision and how the particular priority fits in the overall vision. The final decision regarding the priorities of the backlog items lies with the Product Owner.

1. **Product Backlog Item not well defined:**

It is the responsibility of the Product Owner to ensure that the Product Backlog is groomed and defined clearly. The backlog also has to be updated continuously in every cycle to keep it relevant to the business needs. It is also the responsibility of the Product Owner to explain the various items in a Sprint to the team and the product owner can use this opportunity to take feedback from the development team regarding the clarity of the items to be completed next Sprint. Clearly defined tasks help in accurate estimations. It is also possible that the Product Owner may not have clarity regarding the various tasks resulting in poor tasks definition. This issue can be dealt with by ensuring clear communication in the Product Vision meeting.

For the case of the Product Backlog, the following are the action cards:

Product Owner: “You are the Product Owner for this situation. As a part of this role, you will get access to the refined product backlog with user stories from the faculty. You are required to facilitate the team in breaking down the PBI into user stories. You have to describe the requirements for the website from the document provided by the faculty and you can only guide the team in making these user stories. Deal with any scenario that you face in this exercise.”

Action Team member 1: “You as a member of the development team, do not agree with the priorities set by the Product Owner. Pick any item in the Product Backlog and tell the Product Owner that the priority for that item should change.”

Action Team member 2: “You feel that items in the Product Backlog are not defined clearly. Choose any item on the backlog and tell the Product Owner to change the item or to define it better.”

Post this exercise, the faculty will discuss the two issues with the team and provide the resolution for such scenarios. This is repeated for all role plays.

**Role Play: Release Planning Meeting**

The Product Owner from each team will now conduct a release planning meeting to explain the project requirements to the team, minimum marketable feature set, decide on length of the Sprint, deadlines and also discuss the product backlog.

Depending on the size of the class, we can choose to either have separate release planning meetings with one of these issues per meeting or include these issues in a single meeting. The faculty will then discuss the resolutions to each issue (which is given below). The same procedure is followed for all the role-play exercises.

**Instructions:**

Action cards

1. Product owner: Issue-1 “You are not satisfied with the work taken by the team and try to include items from the Sprint-3 to items in the Sprint-2”

Issue-2 “You do not agree with the individual task activity that the team have undertaken and want them to change these”

1. Scrum Master: “Ensure that the Release planning meeting for this Sprint (Sprint-2) is done smoothly”
2. Development team: “You have to decide on the items you want to include in your next Sprint. Based on your past team velocity, and agreed upon Product Backlog, decide on the items for the next Release”

As usual, the faculty will discuss the issues and their resolution with the students.

## Issues with Release Planning Meeting

1. **PO trying to convince the team to take on more than they want to:**

The goal of every Sprint is to get potentially shippable product functionality. Thus all the tasks taken in during a Sprint are those that help deliver that functionality. Since the Product Owner and the team mutually estimate the tasks in the Product Backlog, every member of the team is aware of the amount of tasks that can be undertaken in a Sprint. Also, based on past work done by the team, their past velocity gives a good indication of the amount of work that can be undertaken.

1. **PO not agreeing with activity estimates:**

Scrum assigns work to an entire team, not an individual. Scrum refuses to quantify work in terms of time because this would undermine the self-organization central to the success of Scrum. Team members in Scrum use effort and degree of difficulty to estimate their own work. The PO uses these estimates to prioritize items on the backlogs. Hence, it is primarily the team’s task to estimate the tasks and the PO helps this process by defining and explaining the various tasks. If the PO feels that the team estimates are improper, he/she can discuss the same with the team and provide a justification on what would be a proper estimate (a previous case where the team completed a similar task earlier or if any other team has completed a similar task earlier).

1. **All PO's don't have input / consensus:**

Just like previous cases, any decision taken in the PO meets has to ensure that effective communication is made regarding every decision and opinions of each member in the meeting are taken into consideration. However, as always, the final decision rests with the lead PO.

# Paper Product Development

We do a mock product development using the technique of paper product development. The technique will be explained to you by your faculty. You will use it to develop the features committed in the Sprint planning meeting.

The paper product process begins which are two Sprints long with 3 daily-stand-ups. We will introduce one scenario each from the Sprint planning and estimation and the daily stand-ups and apply them to the role-play by making a member of the team play the issue and see if the team reacts according to the way we’ve taught.

# Role play: Sprint Planning Meeting

Using the existing Backlog (initially provided by Product Owner and refined by you during Release Planning) plan your next sprint With the Faculty as your Product Owner, commit to the scope of your next sprint and create a Sprint Backlog ). List all the tasks related to each user story and estimate them. Create an initial Burndown chart.

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The Requirements are discussed below in detail including tasks description. This information is used by the faculty to guide teams so that we can replicate a time-bound Sprint Planning Meeting.

**Requirements:**

* **Login Feature:**
* VMfoods requires a website where the customer can create a unique login for themselves.
* This login would be able to save customer data that will be required for future transactions. Customer should be able to login as a guest if he/she does not want to sign up.
* The Login feature should be placed on the top right section of all pages. First time login should collect information like Name, e-mail id, delivery address, age (optional), gender (optional), family size (optional)
* Customer are allowed to create a unique password for themselves
* **Payment Mechanism:**
* The website should also have accessibility to various payment gateways in order to enable payment after the shopping.
* The page should be redirected to payment gateway when the customer clicks the proceed button after finishing shopping
* The gateway should return back to payment success page on the website which should have links to any loyalty discounts, referral discounts that we provide
* **Generic Browsing and Shopping cart:** 
  + Users should be able to, at a cursory glance, get an idea about the products in VMfoods portfolio. Include a downloadable magazine including all products at VMfoods
  + Users should have a shopping cart facility to track the products they’ve added
  + If the user has not completed the transaction in a given visit, the cart should feature in next visit as pending items
  + There should be a mechanism wherein the customer can alter products on the cart (increase quantity, change the brand etc.) without having to delete the product and go back to buy it
* **Category tabs:**
  + Categories should be featured as tabs on the landing page, leading to separate category pages when clicked
  + The tabs should be present on the top half of the landing page as a line where the users can click and proceed to the respective pages

* **Top-selling products:**
  + Individual category tabs on main page should have drop downs featuring the top 5 selling products in that category
  + A user should be able to go to the individual product page upon clicking the respective tab
  + Also, when a user enters the Past purchases from the user for a category should be present on the right side of the page
* Website to be prepared using house colors of VMEdu, green for headings, blue for sub-headings and black for text.

The contents for the 3rd Sprint are left as user stories as they have to be refined in the 3rd Sprint Planning meeting (which we haven’t simulated in our case study)

* Featured products to feature on the side of the main page.
* Contact us, terms and conditions, about us, etc. pages to be filled and present at the bottom of the page.
* Website to be prepared using house colors of VMEdu, green for headings, blue for sub-headings and black for text.

**Instructions**

Since we plan on having two Sprint meetings, we will include two scenarios in this.

Action cards:

Scrum Master: “You are the Scrum Master for this scenario; ensure that the Sprint Planning meeting proceeds smoothly.”

Action team member 1: (For 1st Sprint planning meeting): “In the estimation exercise, you estimate much higher compared to the team estimates. Do not budge from your estimate regardless of what the team members say”

Action team member2: (For 2nd Sprint planning meeting): “In the estimation exercise, as a member of the development team, you dominate the discussion with your views. Keep giving your ideas on every task even when not asked for by the Scrum Master”

## Issues with Sprint Planning and Estimating Tasks

1. **An outlier that will not change their mind:**

It is a normal practice that there would be one or two outliers during an estimations exercise. Generally, once the estimates are made, the two outliers are given an opportunity to provide justifications for their estimates. Post this discussion, the team conducts another estimation exercise and this process is carried out till a consensus is reached. In case there is an outlier who (after providing his/her justification for the estimate which the team rejects) refuses to change their estimate, it would be a good idea to look into the technical functionalities of the task to be completed. In case the outlier is the only team member with the required technical expertise or if there are past instances justifying the outlier, the task estimate might be changed.

1. **One person dominates the planning session. Doesn't give others the ability to share their ideas:**

Since Scrum is a technique which requires a lot of consensus based decision making, it is a good practice to appoint one member as the devil’s advocate who questions every decision and ensures that each member’s opinion is considered.

1. **Team arguing with the product owner about priority of User Stories**

Understanding the business impact or business value of the tasks is extremely critical in ensuring the relevance of deliverables from every Scrum. Generally, the tasks that have the highest business impact are delivered earliest. The Product Owner, along with other stakeholders develops an idea regarding tasks with greater business impact. It is the responsibility of the Product Owner to ensure that the team is aligned with the business objectives and in case of any disagreements; the Product Owner should clearly explain the logic behind higher business value to certain tasks. Ultimately, the Product Owner has the final say.

# Daily Stand-up

The students will be made to go through first through a normal stand-up scenario with no interferences. The next group will be faced with the first issue and then second issue for the third stand-up session

**Instructions:**

The first Stand-up runs smoothly (if you have multiple teams, let them run the stand-up amongst themselves)

Action cards:

Scrum Master: “Ensure that you, as the Scrum Master, ensure the daily stand-up runs smoothly.”

Action member 1 (for 2nd Stand-up): “You are a member of the executive member here to observe the meeting. Enter the daily stand-up at any point and tell the team that they are not doing this according to the requirement of the business and the deliverable should be changed”

Action member2 (for 3rd Stand-up): “As a team member, you try to solve the issue faced by one of the team members. Pick any team member and try and resolve his/her issue in the meeting”

## Possible issues

1. **Executive management trying to interfere:**

Executives can observe the Stand-up but cannot interfere. The Scrum Master has to ensure that they do not interfere during the meeting and any concerns they might have are dealt with offline.

1. **Problem solving occurring:**

The goal of the Stand-up is merely to provide updates to the PO and team. It is not a venue to solve problems. In case any member starts discussing the problem faced, they are to be stopped. Any such discussions can take place after the meeting between the relevant members.

# Sprint Review

At the end of the Sprint, demonstrate the items your team has completed in the preceding sprint to the Product Owner (represented by the faculty or a member from another team).

Similar to other scenarios, the first meeting is without any scenarios and the Product Owner will discuss all that has gone well in the Sprint. (We shall provide every team member with their role cards for the other sprints with issues; the Product owner will also be given a role card on how to enact the Sprint Review)

## Issues in Sprint Review

1. **Team member refuses to accept when Product Owner rejects a Product Backlog Item:**

Having a clearly defined Acceptance Criteria is the key to ensure that there is no discrepancy regarding any Product Backlog Item’s delivery requirements. The Product Owner also has to ensure that this Acceptance Criteria is communicated to the team members and all members of the team are in agreement of the Acceptance Criteria in the Sprint Planning meeting. It is also a good practice to keep reminding the team members of the Acceptance criteria for the task they are involved in (maybe by having the Acceptance Criteria for current Sprint tasks written on a board or a chart).

1. **Team members blame each other for failure to complete Sprint goals:**

Scrum has always been about collective responsibility and hence the failure of a Sprint is failure for the whole team. It is the responsibility of the team (and the Scrum Master) to ensure a smooth progression during the Sprint process. It is possible that the team over-estimated their team velocity or one or more members was not present for the whole duration of the Sprint due to some unplanned circumstances. Investigate the cause

for the failure and try to resolve it.

**Role Play: Sprint Retrospective**

At the end of the course

Do a retrospective of the preceding sprint. Discuss what went well and what did not. Identify improvements. (As would be done at the end of a Scrum)

This is the last part of the role-plays. If time is available after this, we move to practical aspects of Scrum.