AGILE PROJECT MANAGEMENT

ESTIMATE THE STORY POINTS

A story point is an abstract measure of effort required to implement a user story
It is basically a number indicating the difficulty level of a story

"*Difficulty*" could be related to:

- Complexities
- Risks
- efforts

COMMON SIZING SCALES FOR STORY POINTS

- **Numerical**:1,2,4,8,16
- **T-Shirt Sizing**: X-Small, Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large
- **Fibonacci sequence**: 1,2,3,5,8,13,21

It is not easy to identify a story from the defined scales
In order to do that each team would have to find a reference which is a baseline story
It does not necessarily to be the smallest one, but the one that everyone within the team can resonate with
Once determined, sizing of all the user stories should be initiated by comparing them against the baseline

Sizing has the following benefits:

- Provides an overview of the scope of work
- The size of work is estimated using different parameters
- It express an estimation and not a precise value
- Rectifies false assumptions

Sizing is estimated considering:

- The amount of work to do
- The complexity of the work
- Risk or uncertainty in doing the work
- Time / Duration

An estimate of effort/duration isn't possible in Agile, unlike traditional projects
This is because the duration is dependent upon:

- Used Technology / Tools
- Domain Knowledge
- Skill-set/technical expertise

The Sizing Process

Following is the process to estimate the size of user stories

User Story Listing

List all the stories to be sized

User Story Listing

User Story Ordering

The list of user stories must be ordered/sorted from smallest to largest

- Take the first and second user story
- Decide which is bigger and put it above
- Take the next one and decide where it fits relatively to the other two
- Repeat the process with the next ones until all the stories are now in the list (in a sequence from smallest to largest)

User Story Listing

User Story Ordering

Size the stories

- Start from the bottom and give that story a number 2 story points. Giving '2' provides you the room to give a smaller story '1' if discovered at a later stage.
- Look at the next story and decide how big is that story as compared to the first one
- Continue until you have a size on each story
- Use these set of numbers [influenced by Fibonacci] while sizing: 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21

Story points vs Task hours

A story point is a high-level estimation of complexity involved in the user stories, usually done before sprint planning, during release planning or at a pre-planning phase

Story points along with sprint velocity provide a guideline about the stories to be completed in the coming sprints

The hour-based estimation, on the other hand, is a low-level estimation used to represent the actual effort in man hours needed to complete all the tasks involved in a user story

Hour based estimation should be used when the task estimations are provided in hours

Story points vs Task hours

Story points and task hours serve different purposes at different times and we should avoid relating them to one another for better execution of the sprint and the release
It is recommended not emphasizing on the story points during sprint planning and focus more on estimating the time needed to complete all the tasks involved in the user story