

Tell Me a Story About That...

A User Story Writing Workshop

Paul Hodgetts, Agile Logic


AgileSoCal, 8/27/14

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AgileSoCal – August 27, 2014
Your Coach: Paul Hodgetts

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What Is a Story?

“A story represents a feature customers want in the software, a story they would like to be able to tell their friends about this great system they are using.”

– Planning Extreme Programming, Beck/Fowler, 2000

“The stories are really the artifact at the heart of the continuing dialog between what is possible and what is desirable.”

– Kent Beck, C2 Wiki

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What Might Feel Different...

Incremental, Integrated
Product Deliverables

...not...

Disconnected Activities
Work Breakdowns
Resource Management

Continuous, Whole-Team
Collaboration

...not...

Isolated Work Silos
Hand-Offs

Product Evolution
Learning Experiences

...not...

Pre-Determined
End-State

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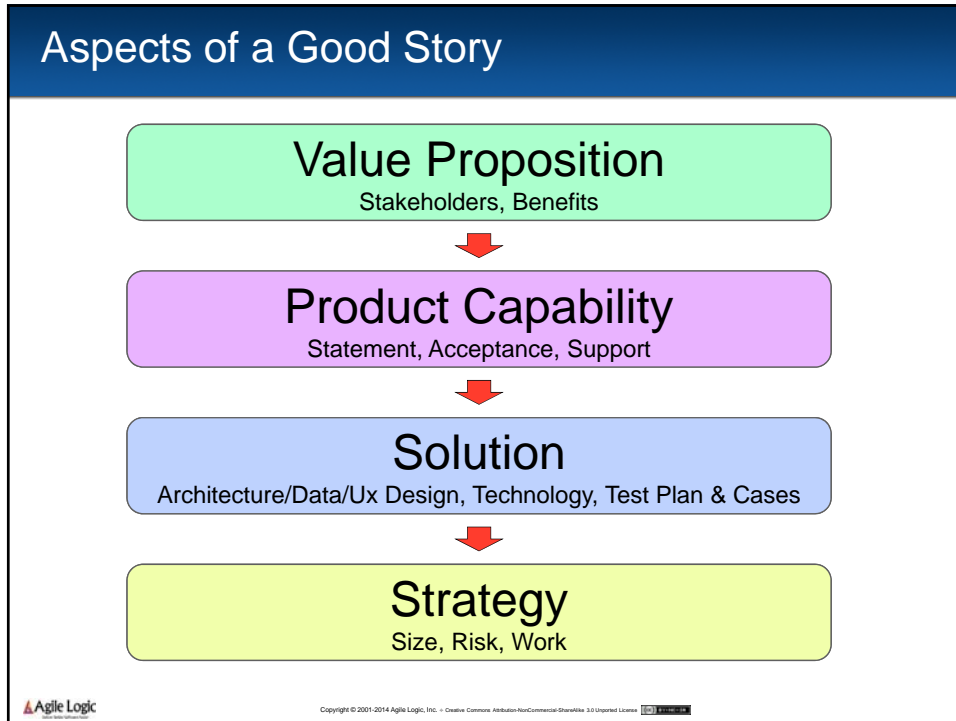
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Make a Strong Statement!

As a <persona>, I want to <capability> <clarifications>, so that <value proposition>.

As a customer,
I want to browse for products by department,
so that I can shop for products.

"A team at Conextra developed the traditional user story format in 2001." – Wikipedia
Mike Cohn vastly popularized the format in "User Stories Applied" (2004).

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Make a Strong Statement!

As a <persona>,
I want to <capability> <clarifications>,
so that <value proposition>.

As a <persona>,
I would like to <capability> <clarifications>,
so that <value proposition>.

A <persona>
can <capability> <clarifications>,
so that <value proposition>.

"A team at Conextra developed the traditional user story format in 2001." – Wikipedia
Mike Cohn vastly popularized the format in "User Stories Applied" (2004).

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Let's Write Some Stories!



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Example Story


Statement of Product Capability (title, primary description)	A customer can browse for products by department.
Value Proposition	This is important... So that a customer can shop for products. So that a retailer can show their products.
Acceptance Criteria Conditions of Satisfaction	I will know this is done when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A customer can select browse by department from the main shopping landing page. • A customer can see the department browser page that looks like the wireframe. • A customer can navigate the tree of departments and select a department. • A customer can see the list of products in the selected department. • A customer can navigate the products (scrolling, paging, etc.).
Cost and Risk	Size: 3 points Risks: Tree select control has not been used before

Can also attach additional understanding of the capability (Ux concepts, business rules), and/or description of solution (wireframes, design docs).
Think of it as writing bullet notes on the back of the card.

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Let's Write a Really Good Story!



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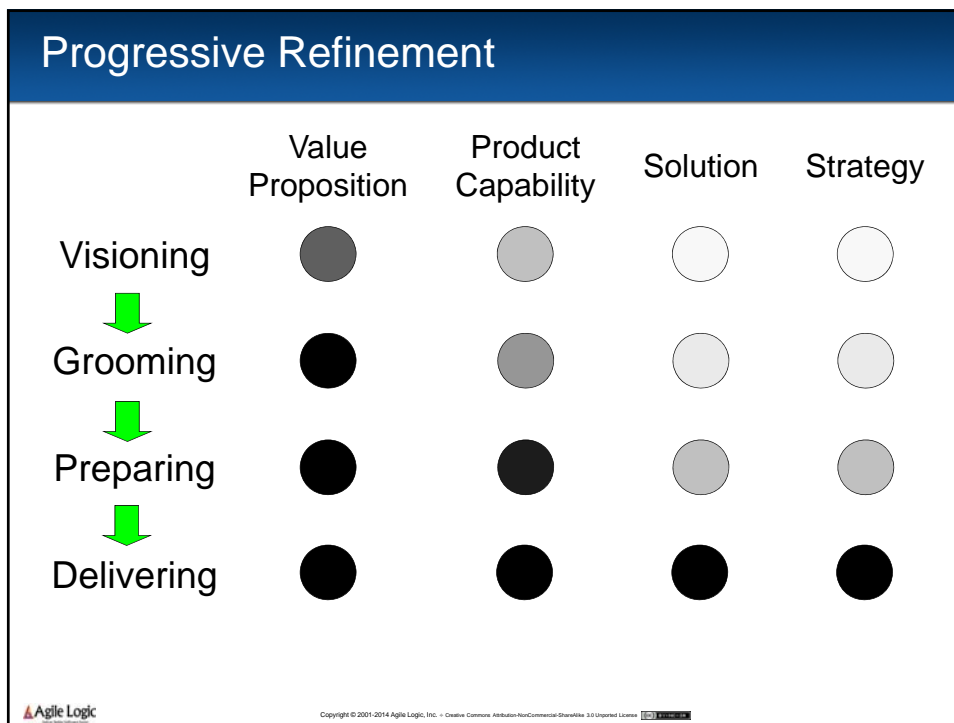
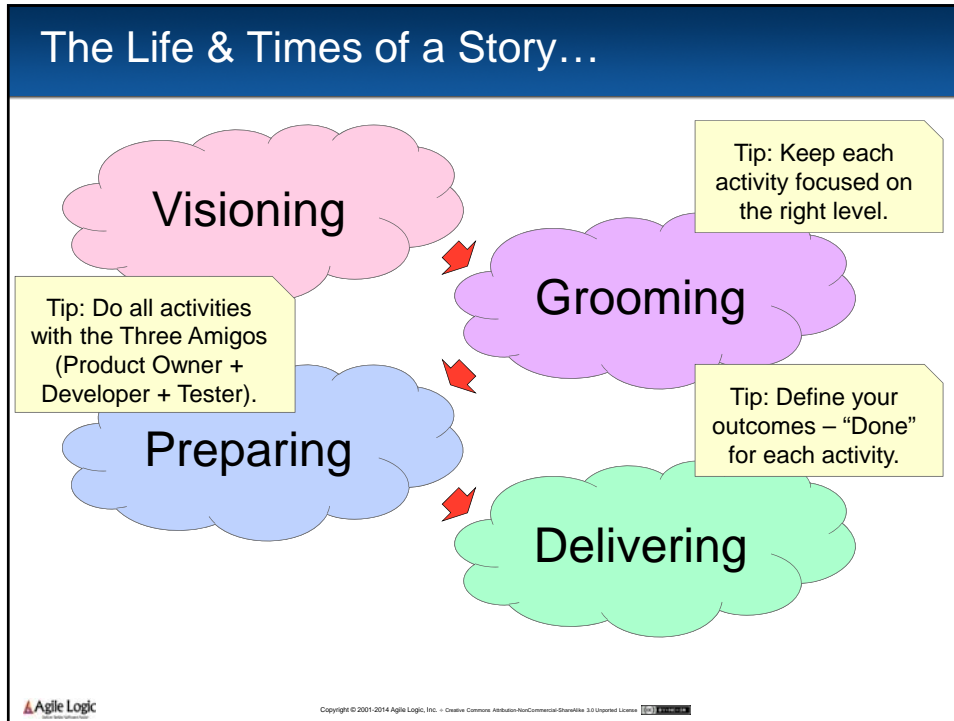


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INVEST in Good Stories

Independent

- Story can be delivered as an independent unit

Negotiable

- Story details can be adjusted as it evolves
- Uncertainties (risks) addressed with experiments

Valuable

- All of the story correlates to the value proposition
- Story produces recognizable progress
- Stakeholders agree to invest the cost

Estimable

- The story is understood enough to speculate on its size

Sized

- The story fits within the maximum for its maturity level

Testable

- The story has explicit, verifiable acceptance criteria

– Bill Wake, 2003

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Did We Write a Really Good Story?



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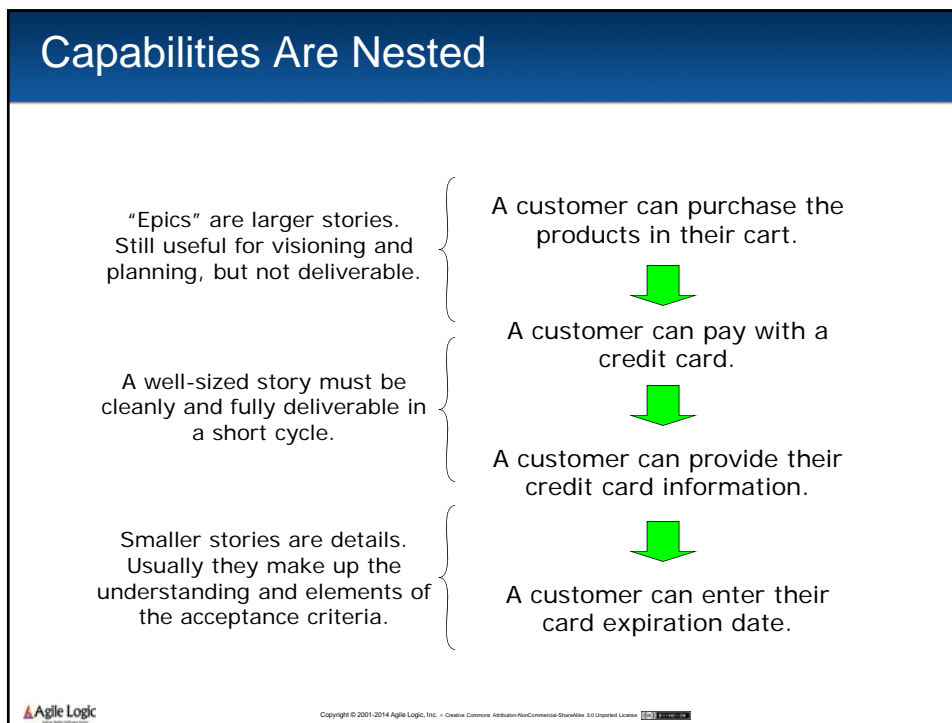
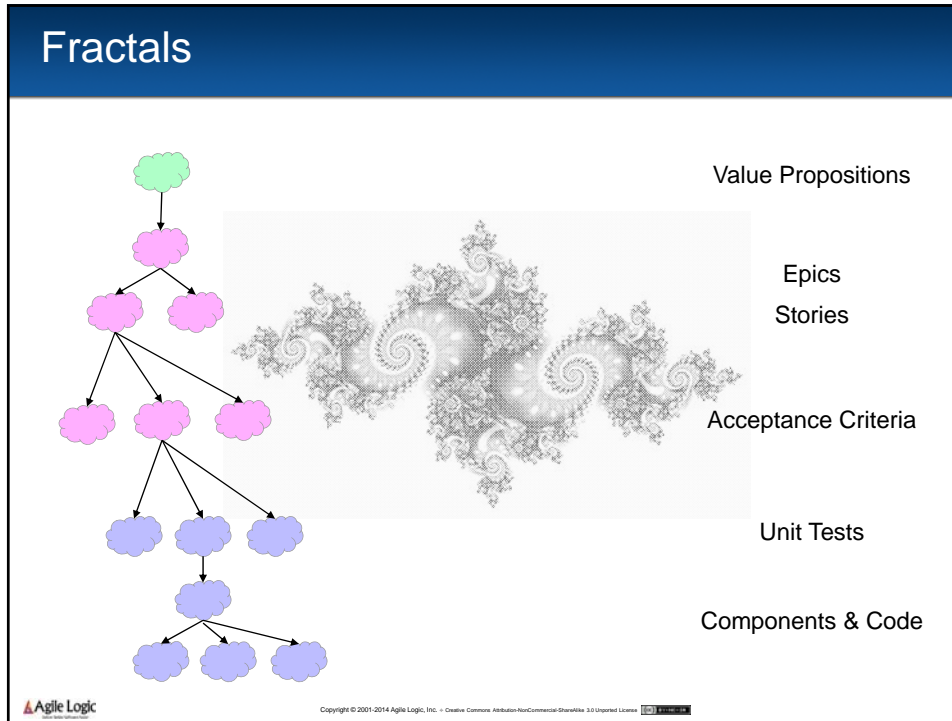
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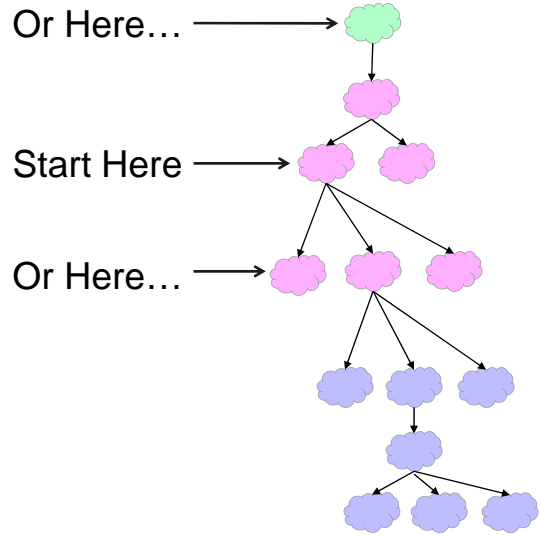
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Where Do I Start?



Seriously, it really doesn't matter much where you start.

But we do need a good approach for navigating around.

You will learn what works best for your products and teams from trying things.

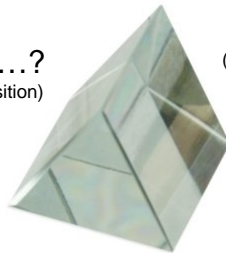
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The Prism

A customer can pay with a credit card.

Why would you like to...?
(to explore the enclosing value proposition)



What will it take to...?
(to explore the current capability frame)

How will we...?
(to recursively explore an acceptance criteria)

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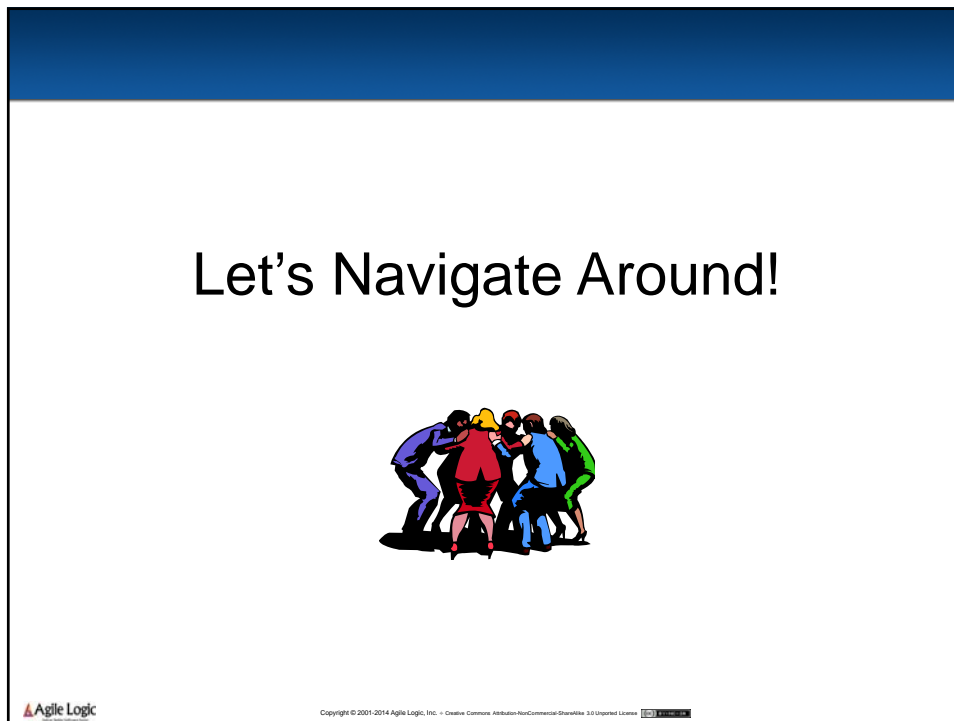
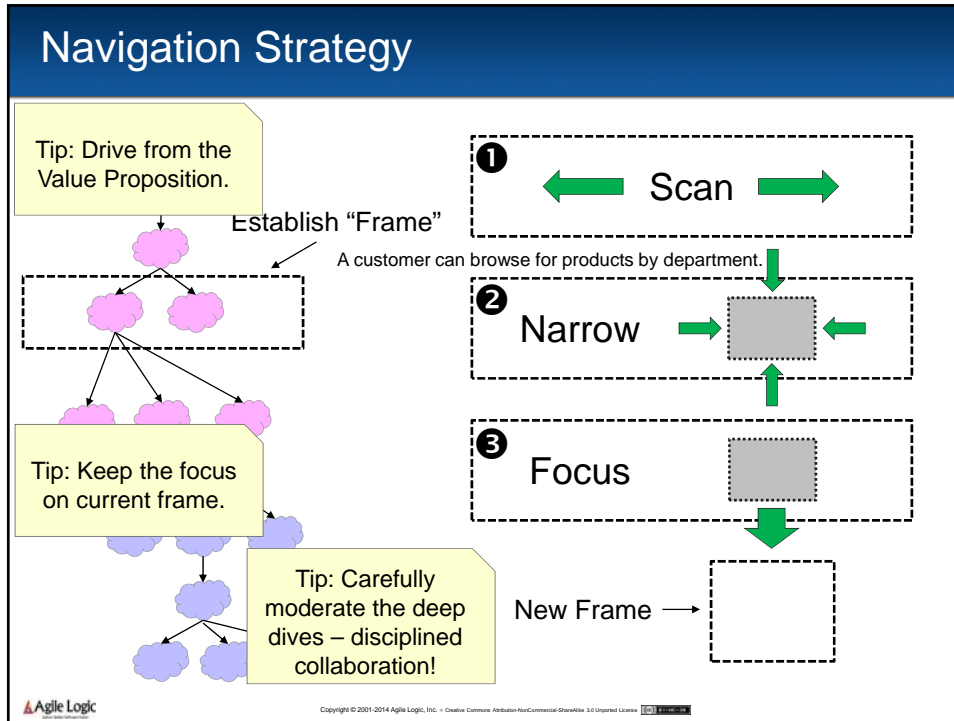
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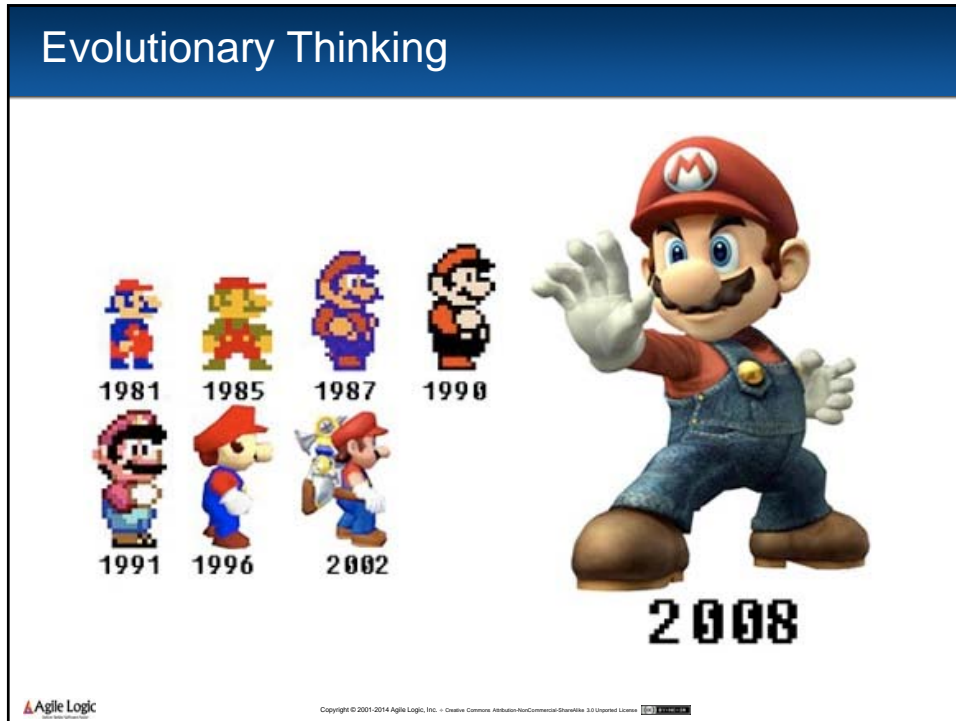


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Slicing and Dicing

- By Value
 - Essential (MVP) vs. optional
- By Sophistication
 - Basic feature vs. bells & whistles
- Incremental Build-Out
 - Happy day to exceptional cases
 - Hard coded to automated
 - Fixed to configurable
 - Crude interface to full UI
 - Along the workflow (breadth first, then depth)
 - Stubbed/mockered services vs. the real thing
 - Split out research (spikes) & risk

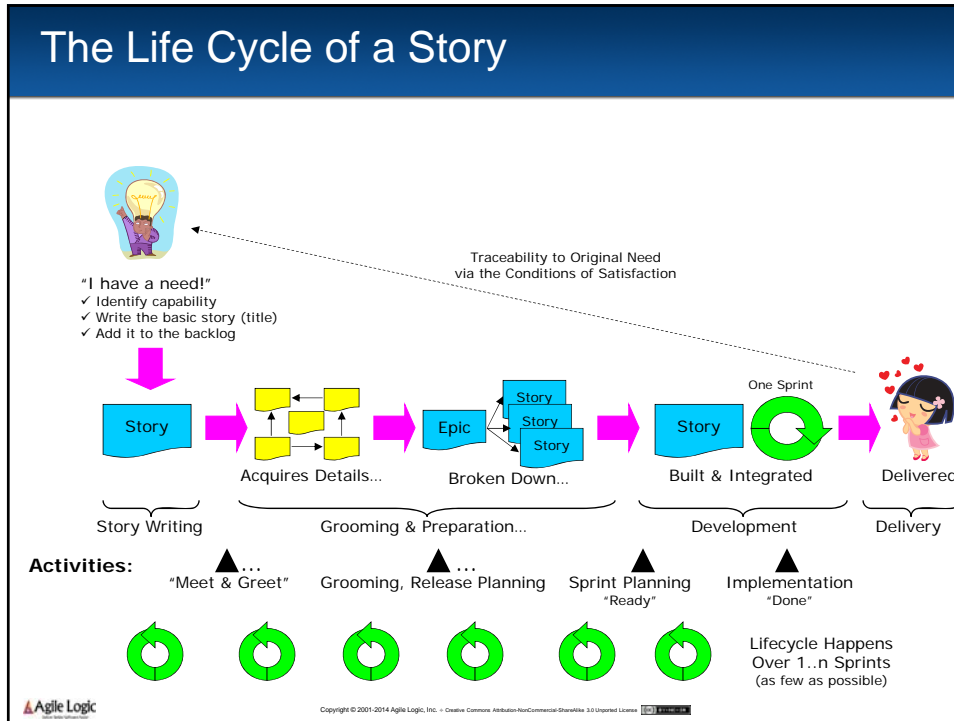
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Any Experiences to Share?

Any Tricky Stories to Discuss?

Any Therapy Needed? 😊

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Side Bars

- The Product Owner role
- Backlogs & Projects
- Other “types” of stories?
 - Defects
 - Spikes
 - Process Improvement
 - Product Improvement
 - Debt Payoff
- Tool Support

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Questions?



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