Jumping off the hamster wheel with Kanban

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Who are we?

Julia Wester
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Our story begins
Perceptions
Common challenges
“Today we are going to decide who to blame.”
Searching for help
We had learned to value starting over finishing.

*Could this be our problem?*
Four Core Principles

1. **Kanban**
   - current process

2. 

3. **QA Developer**
   - Project Mgr
   - Mgr
   - Tech Lead

4. **Lead**

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Our journey through Kanban's 6 core practices
1: Visualize your work (in your workflow)
Visualize info that gives you info about your problem

Expedite

Fixed Date

Standard

Intangible
2: Limit your WIP (aka Work-in-process)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Backlog</th>
<th>To Do</th>
<th>Development</th>
<th>Testing</th>
<th>Deployment</th>
<th>Done</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- **Backlog**: Items G, F, H, I
- **To Do**: Items D, G, Y, P, B
- **Development**: Items C, P1, D, E
- **Testing**: Item B
- **Deployment**: Item A
- **Done**: Item A

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The cost of not limiting your WIP

5 interruptions x 10 minutes = 50 minutes lost work time [pp/ per day]

50 minutes x 5 days per week = ~ ½ work day lost [pp/ per week]

8 people x ½ day per week = 4 working days lost in a week
Let’s test how well you multitask!

An exercise in two parts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>Ⅰ</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>C</td>
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<td>J</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>x</td>
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WIP limits put a focus on focus

Whether it is a standalone piece of work...
or an entire project.

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Enable focus at a higher level

Quit the percentage game
Quick break for questions
3: Manage Flow of Work

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My job: facilitate this process

find 1st rock

fix that rock

promote 2nd rock
4: Make Process Policies Explicit

- write down the rules
- keep inventory low
Goal: Know what work is most important

On Deck

Doing

Review

Done

Pull from the top
5: Implement Feedback Loops

SINGLE LOOP LEARNING

PLAN \rightarrow \text{DO} \rightarrow \text{CHECK} \rightarrow \text{ADJUST}

DOUBLE LOOP LEARNING

ASSUME \rightarrow \text{PLAN} \rightarrow \text{DO} \rightarrow \text{CHECK} \rightarrow \text{THINK AGAIN} \rightarrow \text{ADJUST}

http://www.reply-mc.com/
6: Improve Collaboratively

Our Cross-Training Experiment

Who’s Learning What?

Joey - CMS, Video Player
Chandler - Syndication
Ross - APS, CMS
Monica - Video Player
Rachel - Identity System

Specialization and a small team led to a focus on cross-training to remove bottlenecks.
Level out specialization to save the experts for the big stuff
“At first I was skeptical, but over time I realized that this was the only way to go.

I felt like I had a much higher confidence level in what would be delivered, when.

And that helped me better set expectations.”

Stacie Buckley, Director of Business Operations, NBA.com, Turner Sports (2012)
Successful journey, key outcomes

• More realistic about what we could accomplish
• Discussions became less emotional
• Increased capacity without increasing cost
• Saw major increase in revenue
Want to begin your journey?

- Start with a problem
- Respect the past
- Be a scientist
- Learn via all outcomes
- Repeat the cycle

You don't have to see the whole staircase, just take the first step.

— Dr Martin Luther King Jr.
Have any questions?

Want to dive deeper into any learning outcomes?

- Learn the signs of too much WIP & why it happens
- Learn how to avoid change resistance
- Learn ways to visualize your work & it’s key attributes
- Learn methods for prioritizing work
- Learn methods for balancing project & non-project work
- Understand why cross-training is key for specialist teams
Carry on the conversation...

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