

# Backlog Refinement: “Writing Stories” isn’t the whole story

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<https://insideproduct.co/backlog-baw>

Do any of these  
sound familiar?



Multiple backlog items have celebrated *at least one birthday.*



You need a *shovel ready*  
backlog for six sprints



“Backlog” is a euphemism for  
*“stuff that won’t get done”*

# The user story Goldilocks problem



"THIS IS TOO  
DETAILED."

"THIS IS NOT DETAILED  
ENOUGH."

Backlog Refinement  
is not about  
writing user stories

Backlog Refinement  
is about  
shared understanding

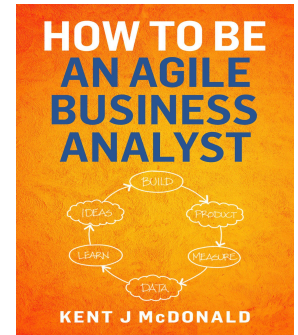
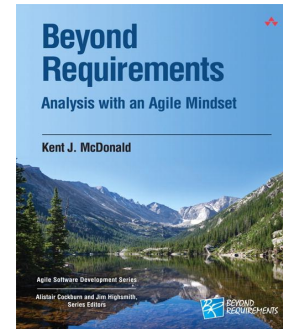
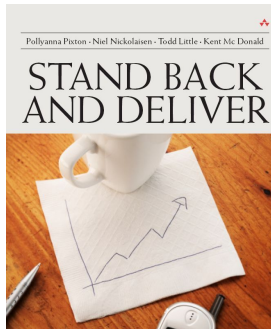
# A little bit about me

**Product Manager**  
(building internal products)

**Writer/Advisor**  
(helping others build internal products)

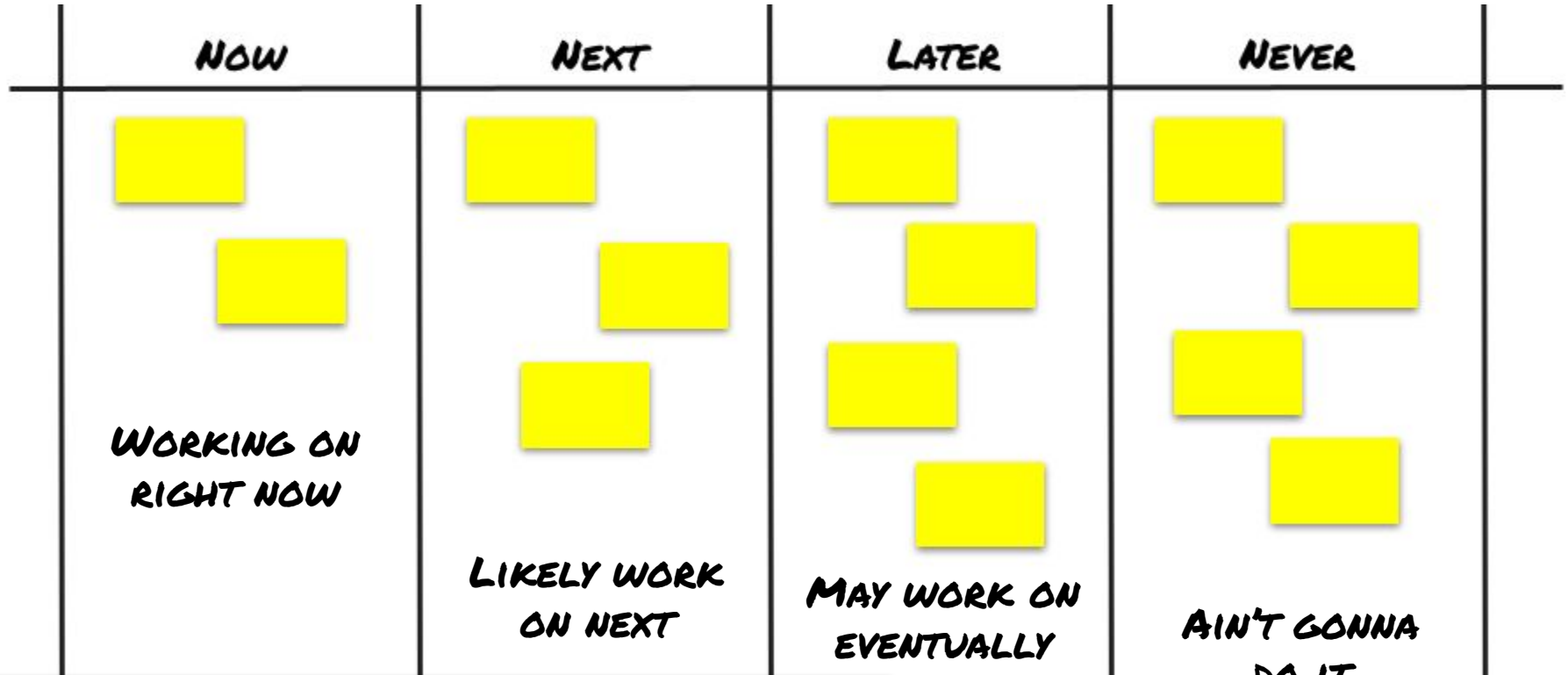


POWERED BY GRANGER MOTORS

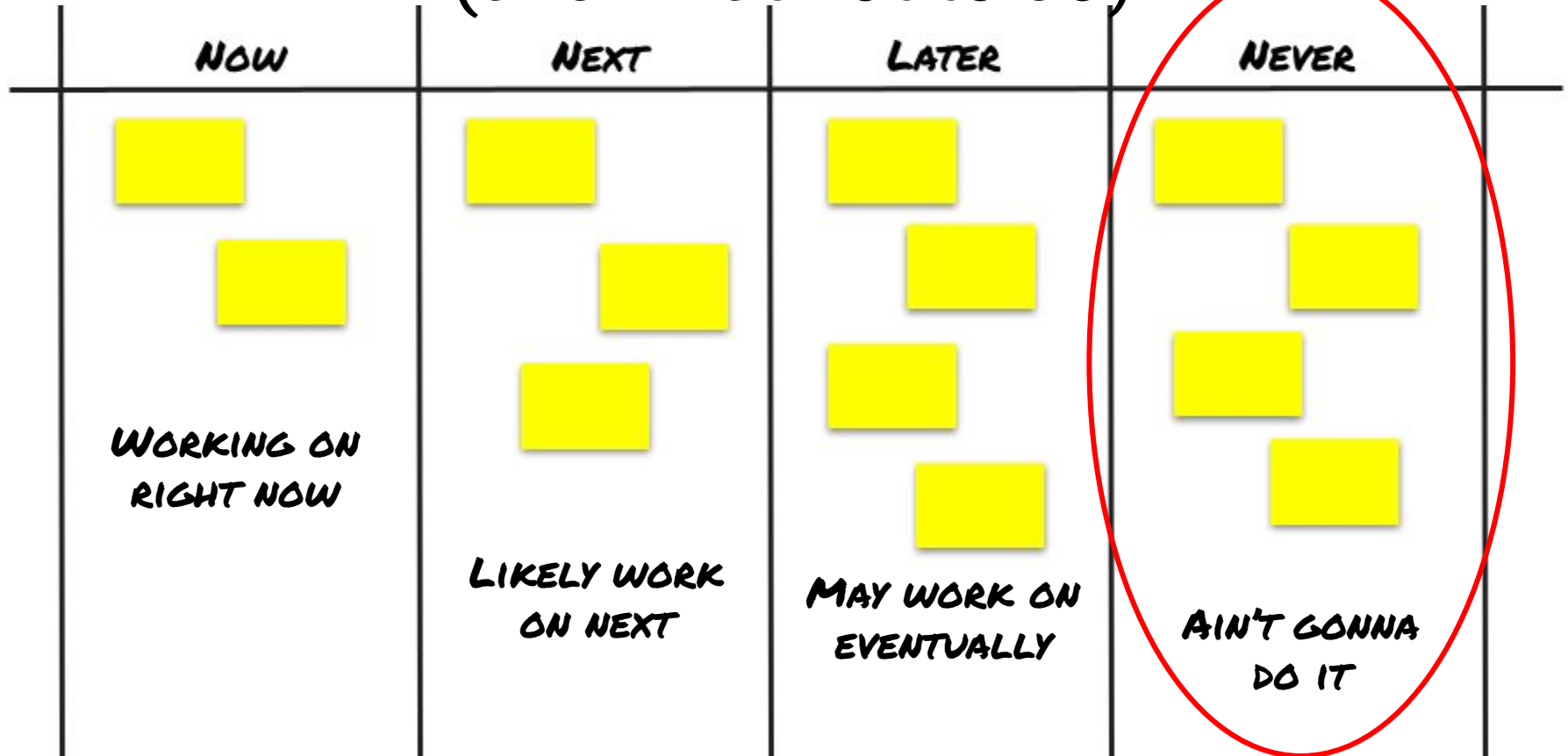


A few items,  
mostly big

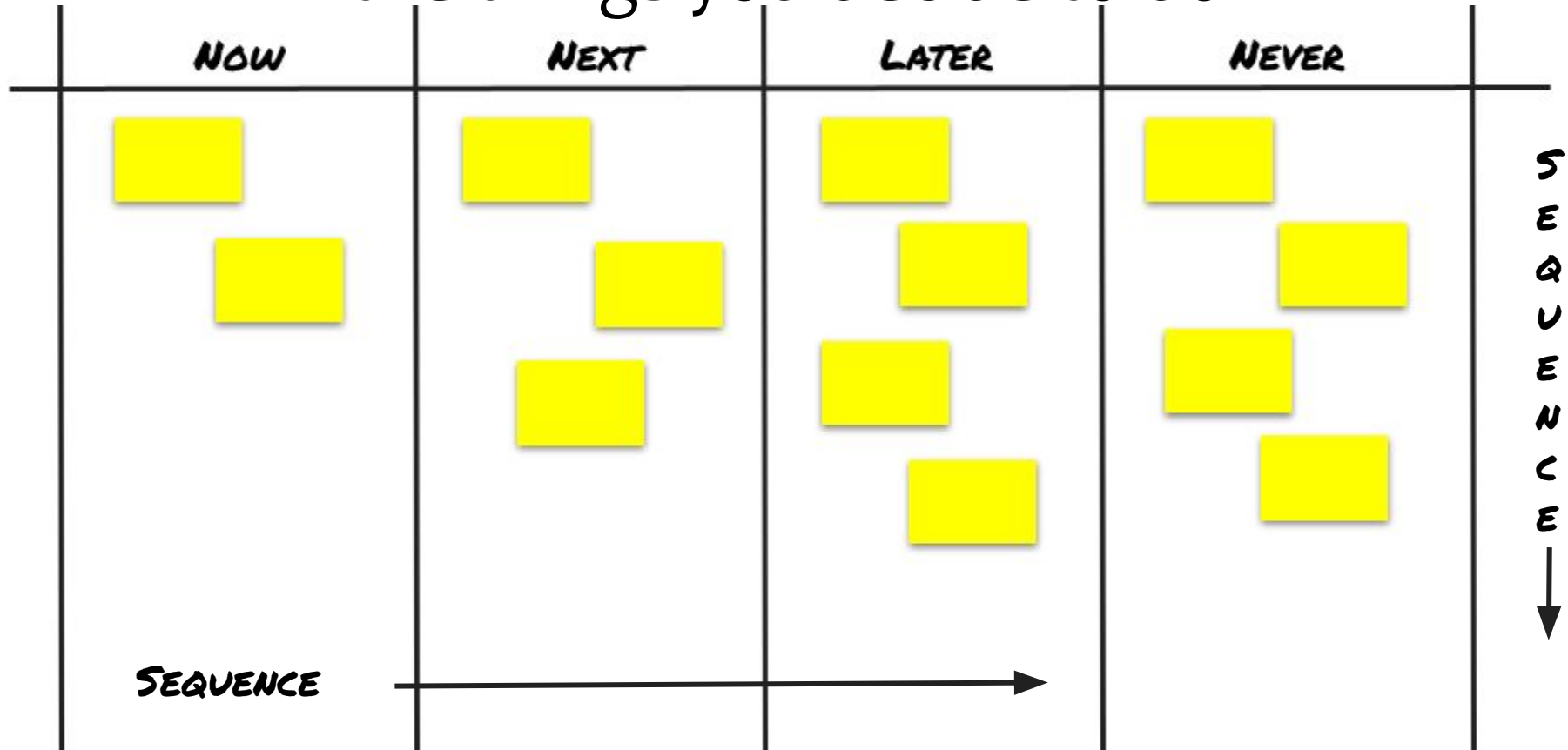
# Product Roadmap



# Prioritization is deciding what to do (and what not to do)

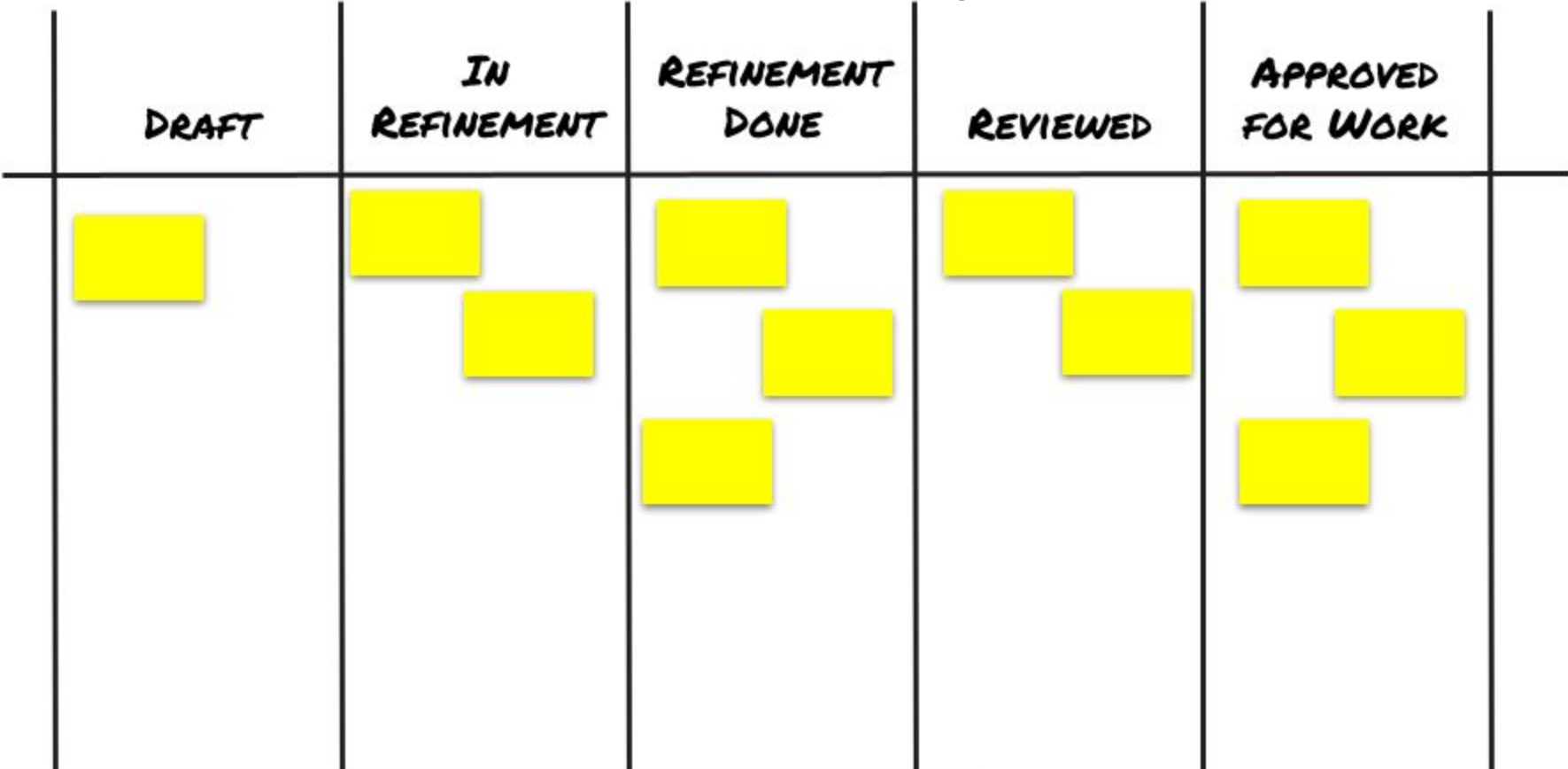


Sequencing is ordering  
the things you decide to do

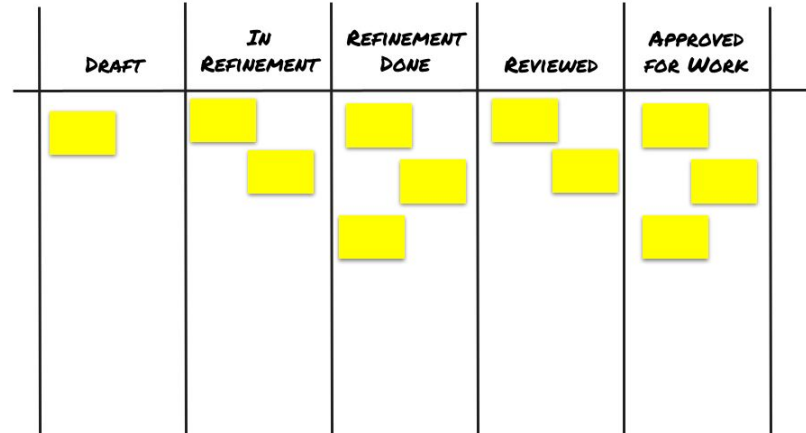
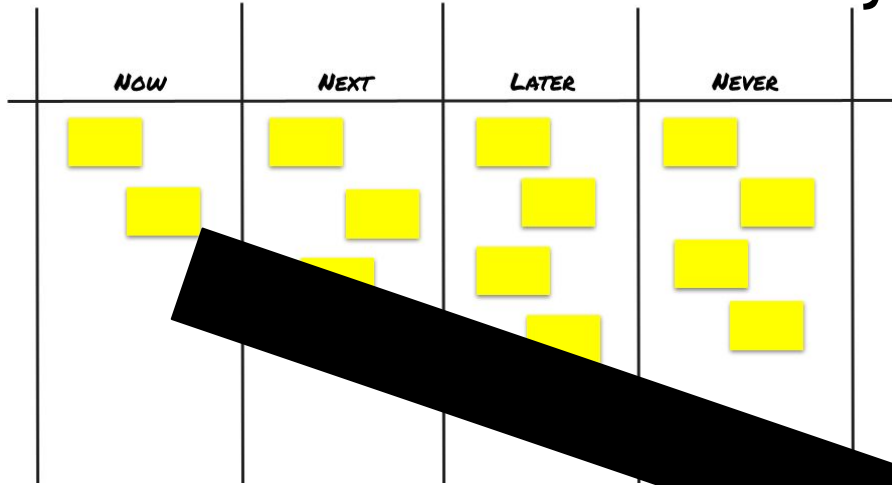


Break items down only  
when you need to

# Refinement Board

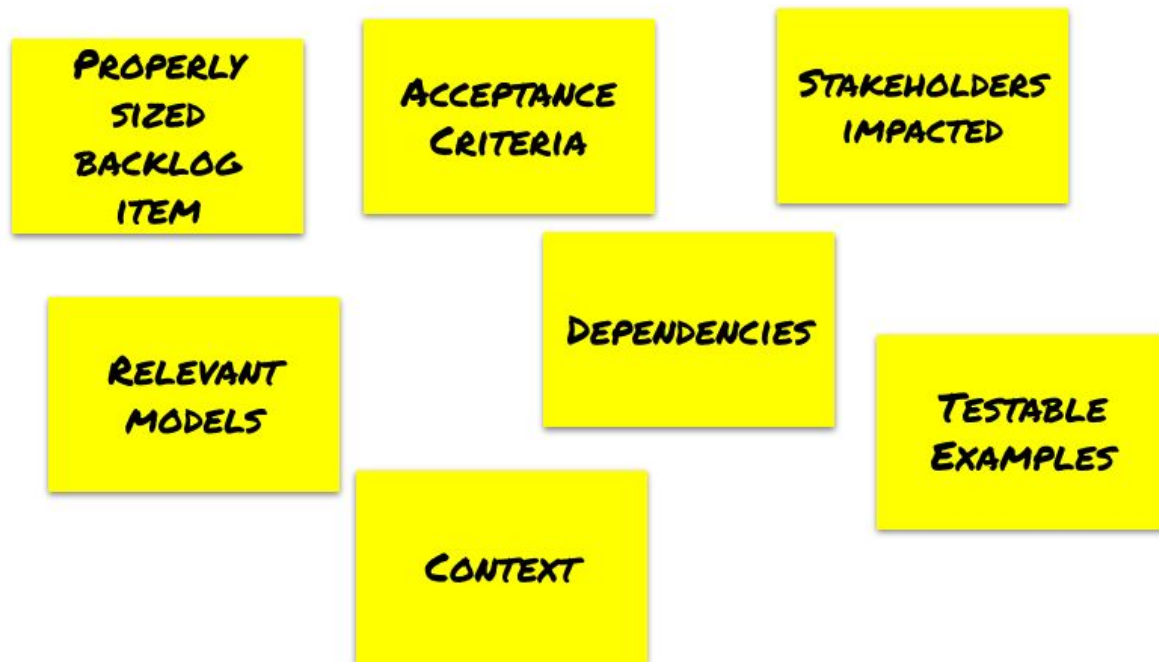


# Don't break down roadmap items until they are in Now



Get your team the  
information they need

# Definition of Ready



**AN AGREEMENT ON THE "NECESSARY INFORMATION" A BACKLOG ITEM NEEDS SO YOUR TEAM CAN START BUILDING THAT PORTION OF YOUR SOLUTION**

[HTTPS://INSIDEPRODUCT.CO/DEFINITION-READY/](https://insideproduct.co/definition-ready/)

# Describing backlog Items

## OVERVIEW

## REVISION NEEDED

## ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

## EXAMPLES

- PROVIDES CONTEXT FOR THE BACKLOG ITEM
- SHOULD EXPLAIN WHY THE BACKLOG ITEM IS NEEDED
- WHEN PERTINENT, SHOULD ALSO EXPLAIN WHO IS IMPACTED
- YOU COULD USE AS A, I WANT, SO THAT HERE, BUT YOU REALLY DON'T NEED TO.

# Describing backlog Items

## OVERVIEW

## REVISION NEEDED

## ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

## EXAMPLES

- CHANGES DRIVEN BY BACKLOG ITEM
- INCLUDE BUSINESS RULES, DATA, AND PROCESSES
- OFTEN INCLUDES LINKS TO OUTSIDE ARTIFACTS (SCREEN MOCKUPS, API SPECS, DATA DICTIONARY, PROCESS FLOWS)
- DEPTH OF TECHNICAL INFORMATION DEPENDS ON WHAT THE TEAM IS LOOKING FOR

# Describing backlog Items

## OVERVIEW

## REVISION NEEDED

## ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

## EXAMPLES

- **CONDITIONS THAT A BACKLOG ITEM MUST SATISFY TO BE ACCEPTED**
- **CAN REFERENCE FUNCTIONAL OR NON FUNCTIONAL REQUIREMENTS**
- **DEFINE THE BOUNDARY OF THE BACKLOG ITEM**
- **FOCUS ON BUSINESS INTENT**
- **CONFIRM THAT...**

# Describing backlog Items

OVERVIEW

REVISION NEEDED

ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA

EXAMPLES

- CONCRETE DESCRIPTIONS OF THE EXPECTED BEHAVIOR OF A SOLUTION
- USES REAL-LIFE DATA
- USEFUL FOR DESCRIBING A SOLUTION
- PROVIDES GUIDANCE ON WAYS TO VALIDATE IT.
- FURTHER EXPLAINS ACCEPTANCE CRITERIA, WHEN NEEDED

# Models, acceptance criteria, and examples

**SUBMIT SESSION REVIEW**

ONE LINE SUMMARY\*

(VISIBLE TO PRESENTER)

ADVICE TO PRESENTER\*

(VISIBLE TO PRESENTER)

THIS SESSION SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN THE

- AGREE
- NEUTRAL
- DISAGREE

DISCLOSURE OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

ADVICE TO PROGRAM TEAM

```
file | 35 lines (27 sloc) | 1.147 kb
1 Feature: Add Review
2 As a track reviewer
3 I want to add reviews
4
5 Background:
6 Given I am logged in as "Reed"
7
8 Scenario: Review a session
9 Given a session exists on my review track
10 When I add a review to that session
11 Then the review should be added to that session
12
13 Scenario: Unable to review for other tracks
14 Given "Sam" has created a session on another track
15 When I try to add a review to that session
16 Then I should not be allowed
17
18 Scenario: Unable to review my own session
19 Given I have created a session on my track
20 When I try to add a review to that session
21 Then I should not be allowed
22
23 Scenario: Unable to review sessions I'm a co-presenter on
24 Given a session exists on my review track
25 And I am the co-presenter on that session
26 When I try to add a review to that session
27 Then I should not be allowed
28
```

### Add Review

in [List To Do](#)

Description [Edit](#)

As Reed the Reviewer I can add a review to a session so that I can provide Sam Feedback.

#### Acceptance Criteria

- Reviewers must provide a title and description for the review.
- Reviewers may indicate whether they think the session should be included in the program.
- Reviewers may provide details of any conflicts of interest they have in reviewing the session.
- Reviewers may provide comments for the review committee.
- Submitters of the reviewed session can see only the title and description of the review.

#### Attachments

- Add\_review\_examples.png**  
Added a few seconds ago - [Comment](#) - [Delete](#)  
[Download](#) [Remove Cover](#)
- SubmitReviewMockup.JPG**  
Added 3 minutes ago - [Comment](#) - [Delete](#)  
[Download](#) [Make Cover](#)
- 15-4\_Acceptance\_Criteria\_Mind\_Map.png**  
Added 5 minutes ago - [Comment](#) - [Delete](#)  
[Download](#) [Make Cover](#)

#### Actions

- [Move](#)
- [Copy](#)
- [Subscribe](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Share and more...](#)

#### Add

- [Members](#)
- [Labels](#)
- [Checklist](#)
- [Due Date](#)
- [Attachment](#)

If you remember nothing else

**A FEW ITEMS,  
MOSTLY BIG**

**BREAK ITEMS  
DOWN ONLY  
WHEN YOU NEED  
TO**

**GET YOUR TEAM  
THE  
INFORMATION  
THEY NEED**



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