13A HOW TO SPLIT A USER STORY

1 PREPARE THE INPUT STORY

1A

1B Does the big story satisfy INVEST* (except, perhaps, small)?

NO → 1D Combine it with another story or otherwise reformulate it to get a good, if large, starting story. 1E

1C YES

1F Is the story size 1/10 to 1/6 of your velocity?

- You're done. 1G
- Continue. You need to split it. 1H

2 APPLY THE SPLITTING PATTERNS

2A

start here 2B

WORKFLOW STEPS

Does the story describe a workflow? 2C

- Can you split the story so you do the beginning and end of the work-flow first and enhance with stories from the middle of the workflow? 2D
- Can you take a thin slice through the workflow first and enhance it with more stories later? 2E

3C OPERATIONS

Does the story include multiple operations? (e.g. is it about "managing" or "configuring" something?) 3A

Can you split the operations into separate stories? 3B

4C BUSINESS RULE VARIATIONS

Does the story have a variety of business rules? (e.g. is there a domain term in the story like "flexible dates" that suggests several variations?) 4A

Can you split the story so you do a subset of the rules first and enhance with additional rules later? 4B

5C VARIATIONS IN DATA

Does the story do the same thing to different kinds of data? 5A

Can you split the story to process one kind of data first and enhance with the other kinds later? 5B

10C DEFER PERFORMANCE

Does the story get much of its complexity from satisfying non-functional requirements like performance? 10A

Could you split the story to just make it work first and then enhance it to satisfy the non-functional requirement? 10B

SIMPLE/COMPLEX

Does the story have a simple core that provides most of the value and/or learning? 9A

Could you split the story to do that simple core first and enhance it with later stories? 9B

MAJOR EFFORT

When you apply the obvious split, is whichever story you do first the most difficult? 8A

Could you group the later stories and defer the decision about which story comes first? 8B

INTERFACE VARIATIONS

Does the story get the same kind of data via multiple interfaces? 7B

Can you split the story to handle data from one interface first and enhance with the others later? 7C

Does the story have a complex interface? 7A

Is there a simple version you could do first? 7E

last resort 6A

6B BREAK OUT A SPIKE

Are you still baffled about how to split the story? 6C

Can you find a small piece you understand well enough to start? 6D

- Write that story first, build it, and start again at the top of this process. 6E
- Can you define the 1-3 questions most holding you back? 6F
  - Take a break and try again. 6H
  - Write a spike with those questions, do the minimum to answer them, and start again at the top of this process 6G

3 EVALUATE THE SPLIT

12A

12B Are the new stories roughly equal in size?

YES → 12C Is each story about 1/10 to 1/6 of your velocity?

- YES → 12E Do each of the stories satisfy INVEST?
  - YES → 12G Are there stories you can deprioritze or delete?
    - YES → 12I Is there an obvious story to start with that gets you early value, learning, risk mitigation, etc.?
      - YES → 12K You're done, though you could try another pattern to see if it works better.
      - NO → 12J Try another pattern to see if you can get this.
    - NO → 12H Try another pattern. You probably have waste in each of your stories.
  - NO → 12F Try another pattern.
- NO → 12D Try another pattern on the original story or the larger post-split stories.

NO

* INVEST - Stories should be: 11A
Independent
Negotiable
Valuable
Estimable
Small
Testable
11B-G

15A - Translation credit such as "Translation by John Smith - www.example.com"

14A Visit http://www.richardlawrence.info/splitting-user-stories/ for more info on the story splitting patterns

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