



Flowban

by Mike Burrows of Positive Incline Ltd, as modified by PraxisFlow
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What is FlowBan?

Based on the FeatureBan game developed by Mike Burrows (@asplake) to illustrate the principles of Kanban.

You can find out more at agendashift.com.



What is Kanban?

Visualize work and workflow.

Limit WIP.

“You can’t measure what you can’t see.”

-- Jim Benson

Visualize work and workflow using a kanban board but also using information radiators such as cycle time scatter plots, cumulative flow diagrams, and throughput distribution charts.

“Stop starting! Start finishing!”

-- Arne Roock

By limiting work in progress, we create a pull system, i.e. we can only start a new work item when something in progress finishes.


Pull systems emphasize delivering value.


Kanban Board Setup

Finish the board

FLOWBan® <small>a portfolio kanban game</small>		RESOURCE POOL ONE*	RESOURCE POOL TWO*	DAY: <input type="text"/>
READY	<div>NAME</div> <div>WIP LIMIT</div>	<div>NAME</div> <div>WIP LIMIT</div>	DELIVERED	
<small>Add days started and initial.</small>		<small>Directions for Resource One go here.</small>	<small>Directions for Resource Pool Two go here.</small>	

Portfolio Edition

  FlowBan was designed and developed by PraxisFlow, LLC. It is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International.



Move all the initiative cards into the “Ready” column.



I made a couple versions of the Featureban game. We use these for a portfolio level version with pools of SMEs.



Once you move a card out of Ready you have **personally** committed to completing that card.



Example Commitment

Everyone pull one card into the first Doing column, as an example.

WORK ITEM DESCRIPTION		INITIALS CS
		BLOCKED? <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
DAY DELIVERED	DAY STARTED 0	LEAD TIME

Put your initials
in top left

Put the day the work was
started in the "Day Started" box

Game Rules

Daily Standup

At the beginning of each “day” the team will have a standup meeting.

- Update the Day box in the upper right corner of your board.
- Each person flips a coin.
- **After** all team members have flipped make your moves based on heads or tails rules

1 Round = 1 Day

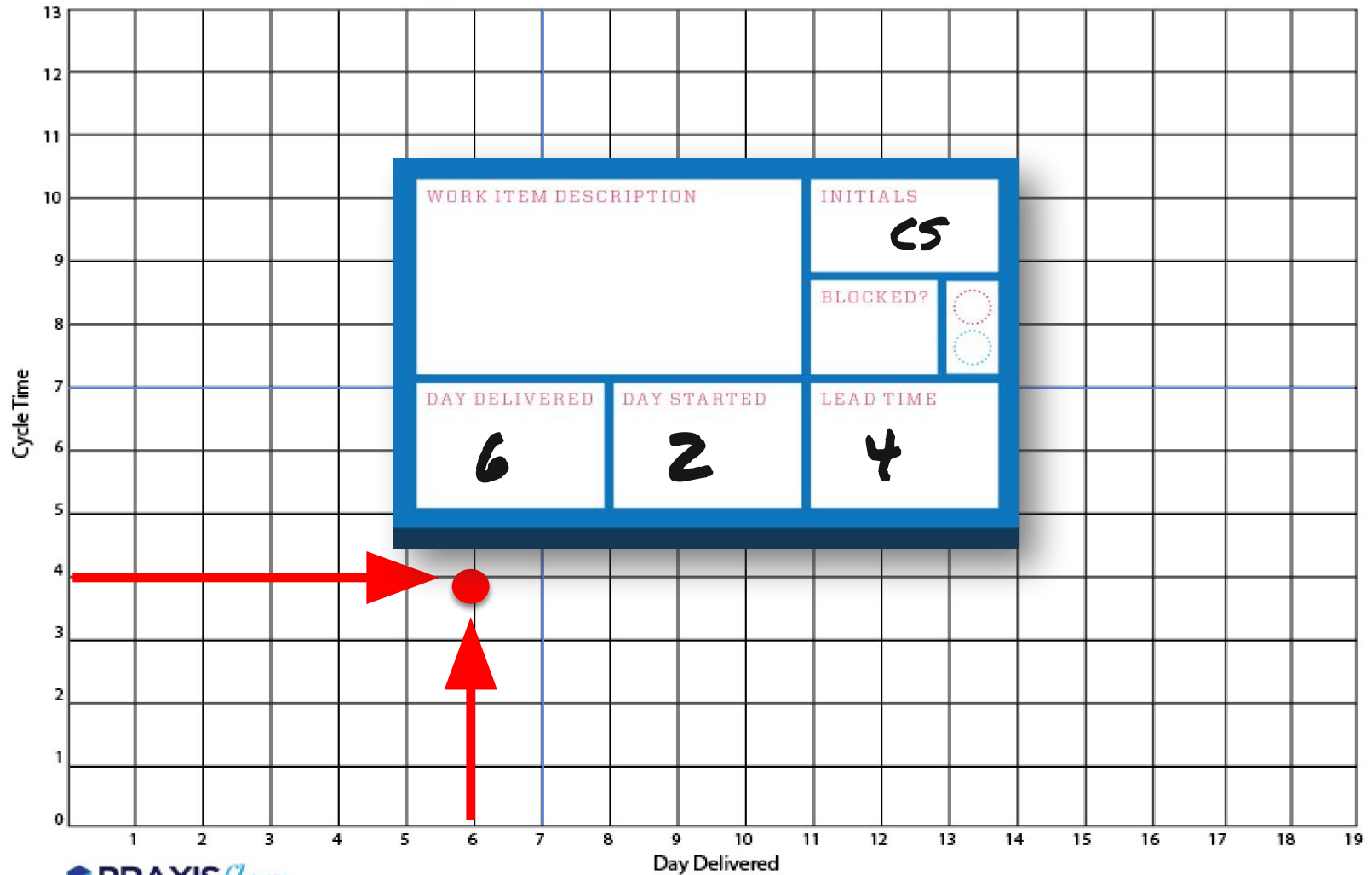


Coin Flip Rules

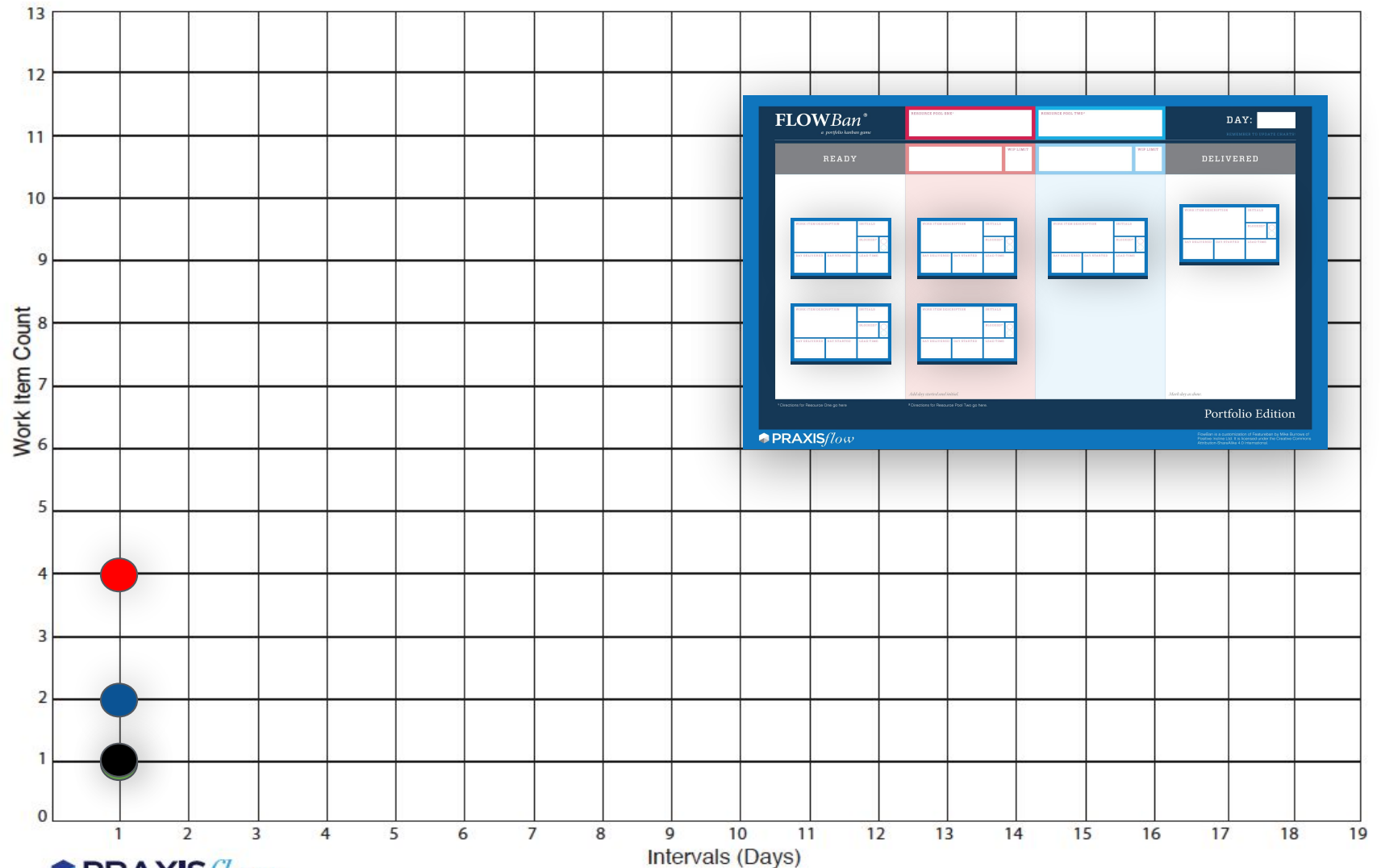
Heads	Tails
<p>Advance one of <u>your</u> unblocked features rightward</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Unblock one of <u>your</u> blocked features</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Start working on a new feature</p> <p>ELSE</p> <p>If you have no other option, pair up with someone who threw tails and move on their behalf</p>	<p>Block one of <u>your</u> unblocked features</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Start working on a new feature</p>



Cycle Time



Cumulative Flow Diagram



Game Play

Setting the Scene

Your organization has just gotten a new leader, Jane.

She would like to get a lay of the land before making any changes or improvements.

You get together as a group and decide you'll collect data for three days then reconvene.



Iteration 1 begins Day 1

Heads	Tails
<p>Advance one of <u>your</u> unblocked features rightward</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Unblock one of <u>your</u> blocked features</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Start working on a new feature</p> <p>ELSE</p> <p>If you have no other option, pair up with someone who threw tails and move on their behalf</p>	<p>Block one of <u>your</u> unblocked features</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Start working on a new feature</p>



Iteration 1 Debrief

Did you complete any work items?

Will you still be in business 6 months from now?

A year from now?

Five years from now?

Do you need to add any work items to your backlog? (Blank cards are included in the Backlog)



Iteration 2: WIP Limits

Jane is worried your organization is not keeping up with the market.

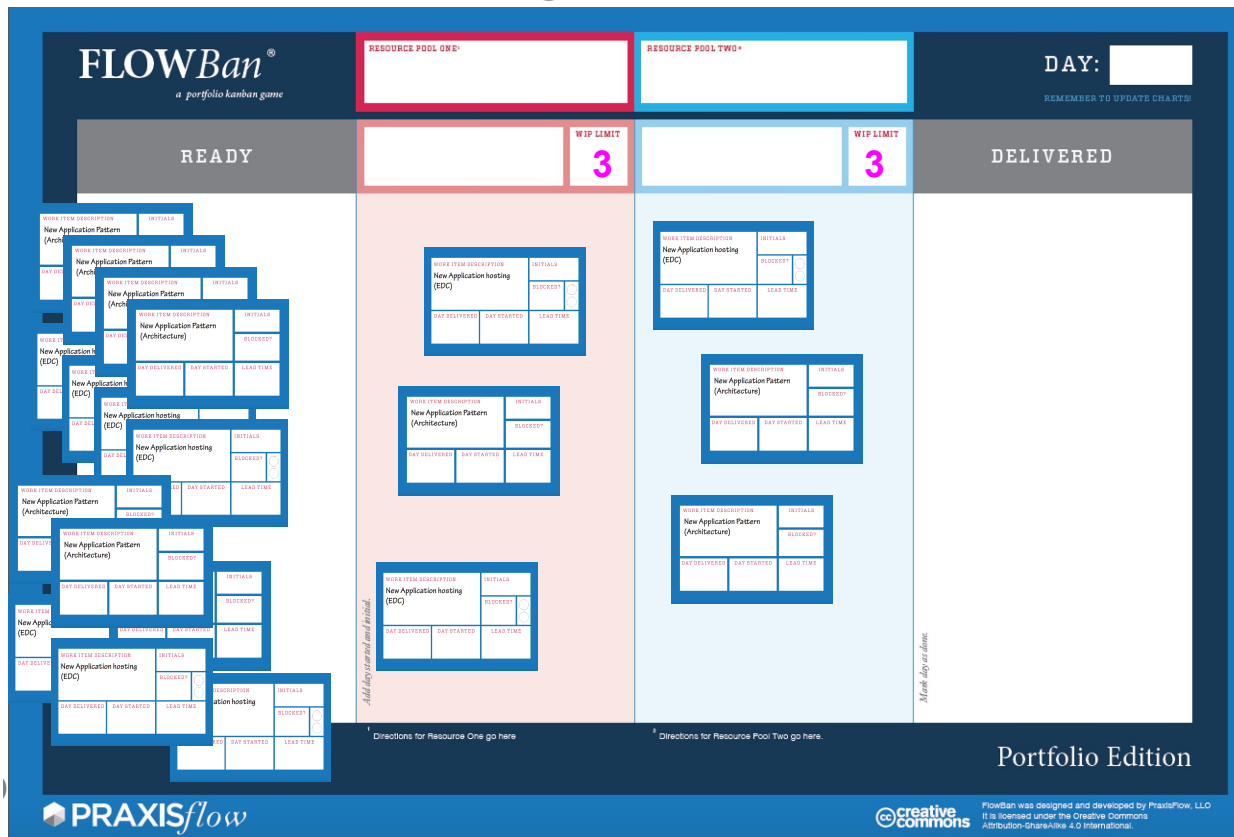
After looking at the Kanban boards and charts, she thinks we need to concentrate on finishing what's in progress before beginning new work.

She suggests limiting work in progress by limiting each doing column to 3 work items each in order to increase throughput.



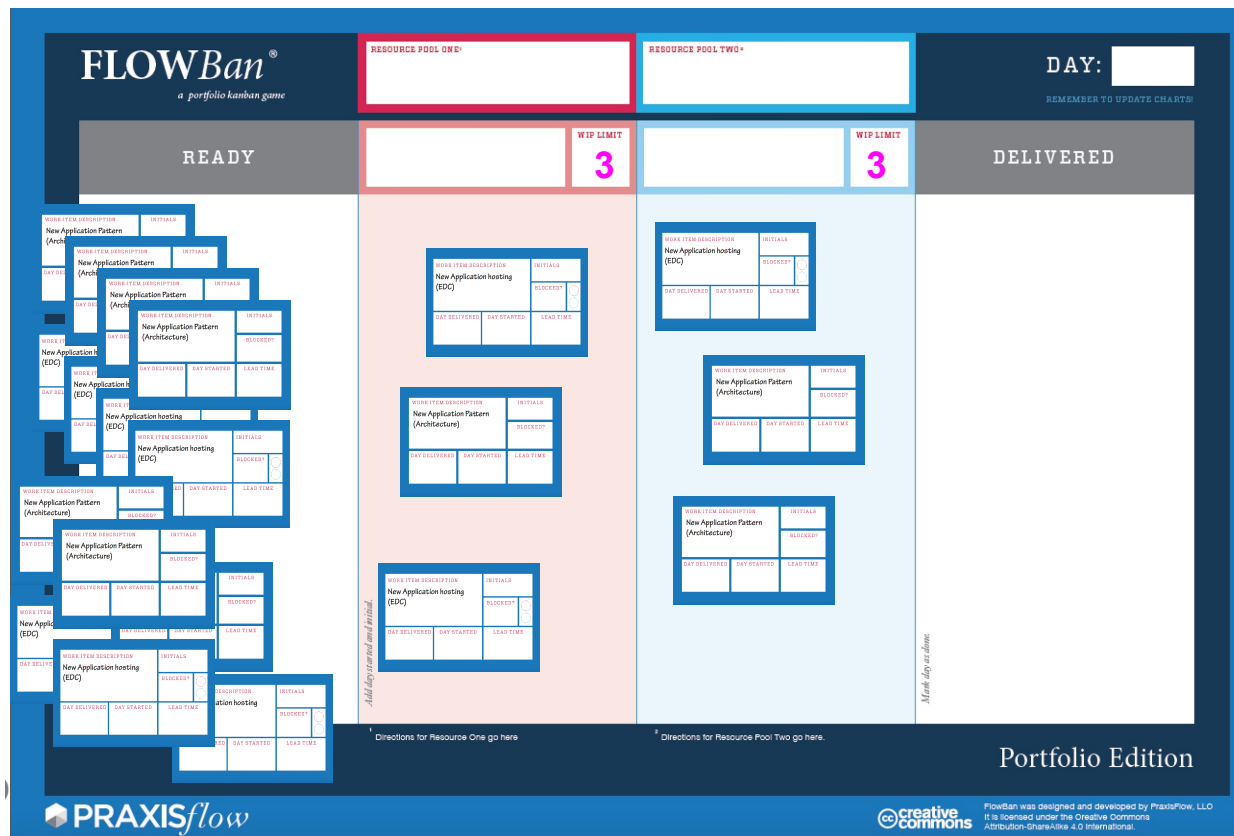
Iteration 2: WIP Limits

Limit Work In Progress to 3 for each of the “In Progress” states



Iteration 2: WIP Limits

If your team is currently exceeding WIP limits, you must resolve the limit before pulling cards.



Iteration 2 begins Day 4, runs through Day 7

Heads	Tails
<p>Advance one of <u>your</u> unblocked features rightward <i>(if WIP limits allow)</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p>Unblock one of <u>your</u> blocked features</p> <p>OR</p> <p>Start working on a new feature <i>(if WIP limits allow)</i></p> <p>OR</p> <p><i>If you have no other option, pair up with someone who threw tails and move on their behalf</i></p>	<p>Block one of <u>your</u> unblocked features</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Start working on a new feature <i>(if WIP limits allow)</i></p>



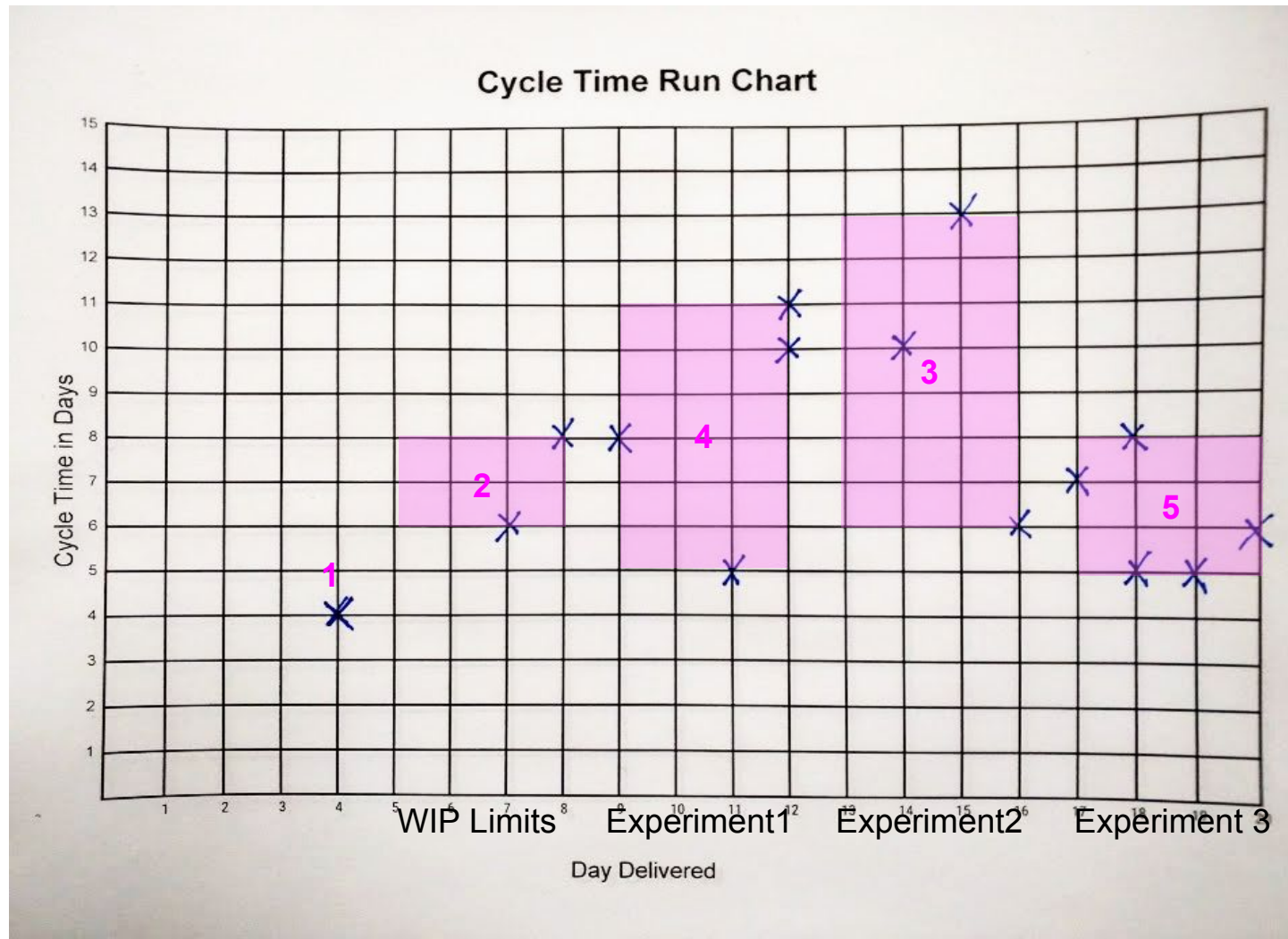
Iteration 2 Debrief

Did you complete anything? How long will your team be in business based on what you've finished?

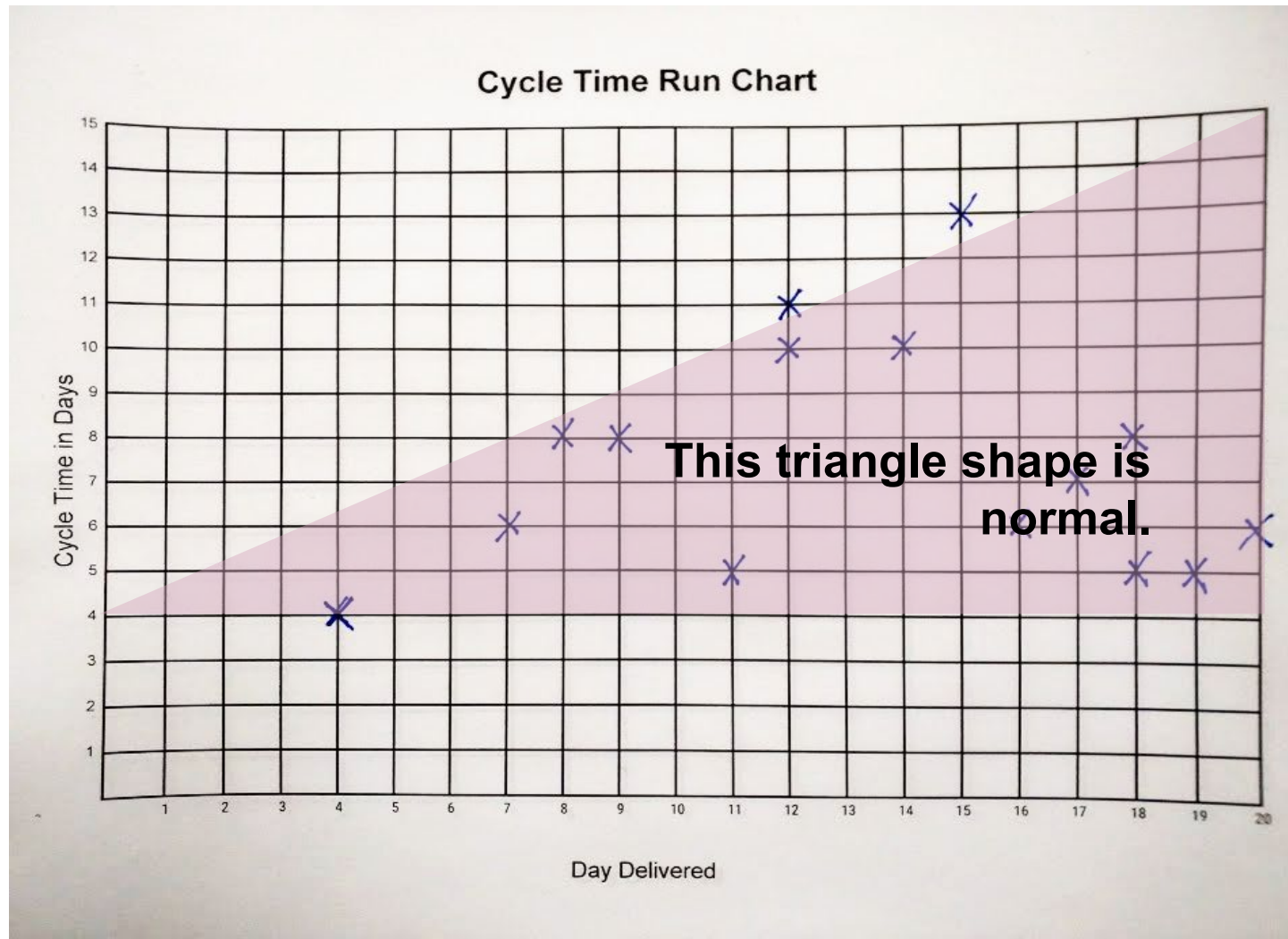
What impact did the WIP limits have? Did throughput increase, as Jane predicted?



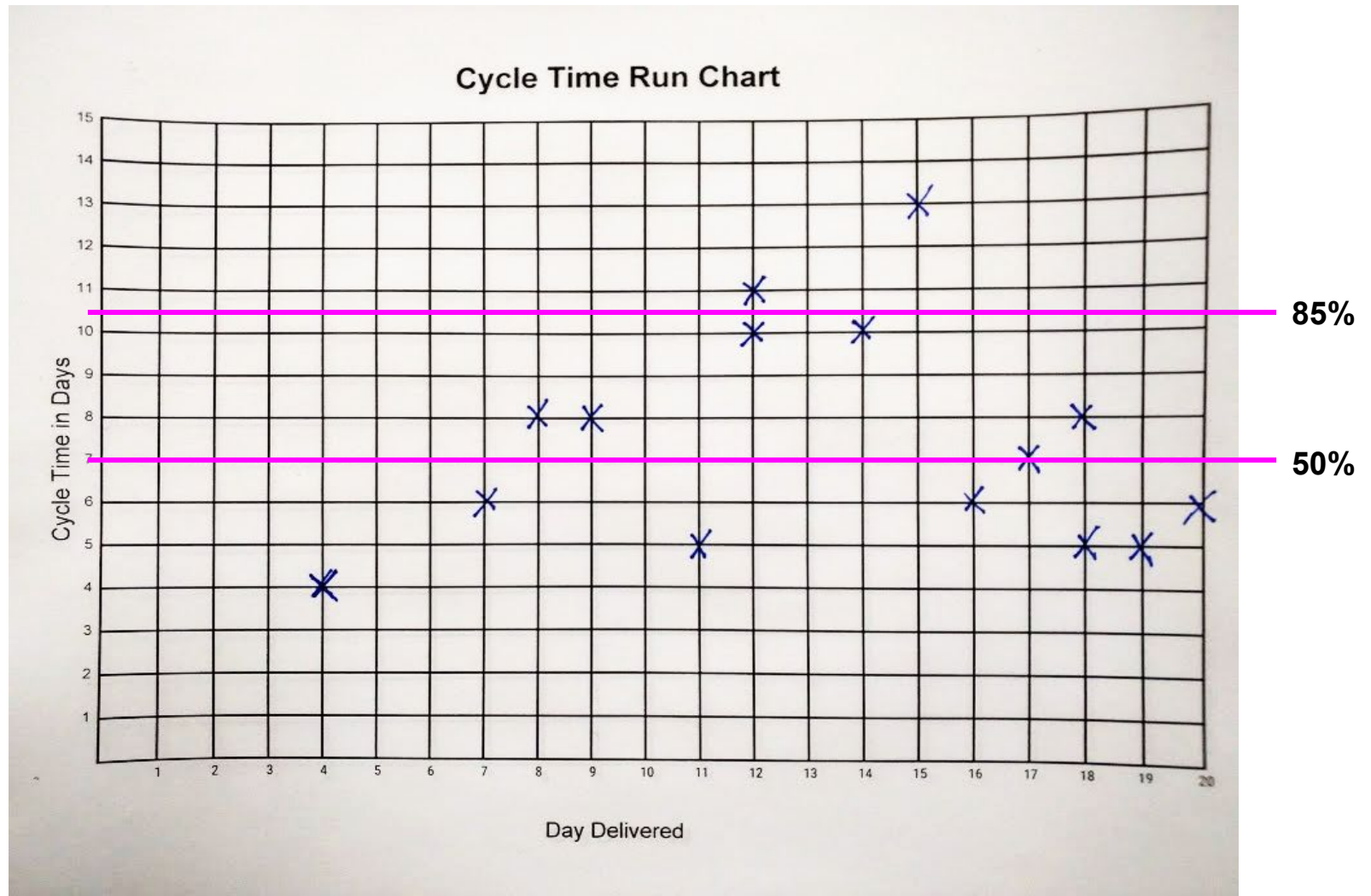
Metrics



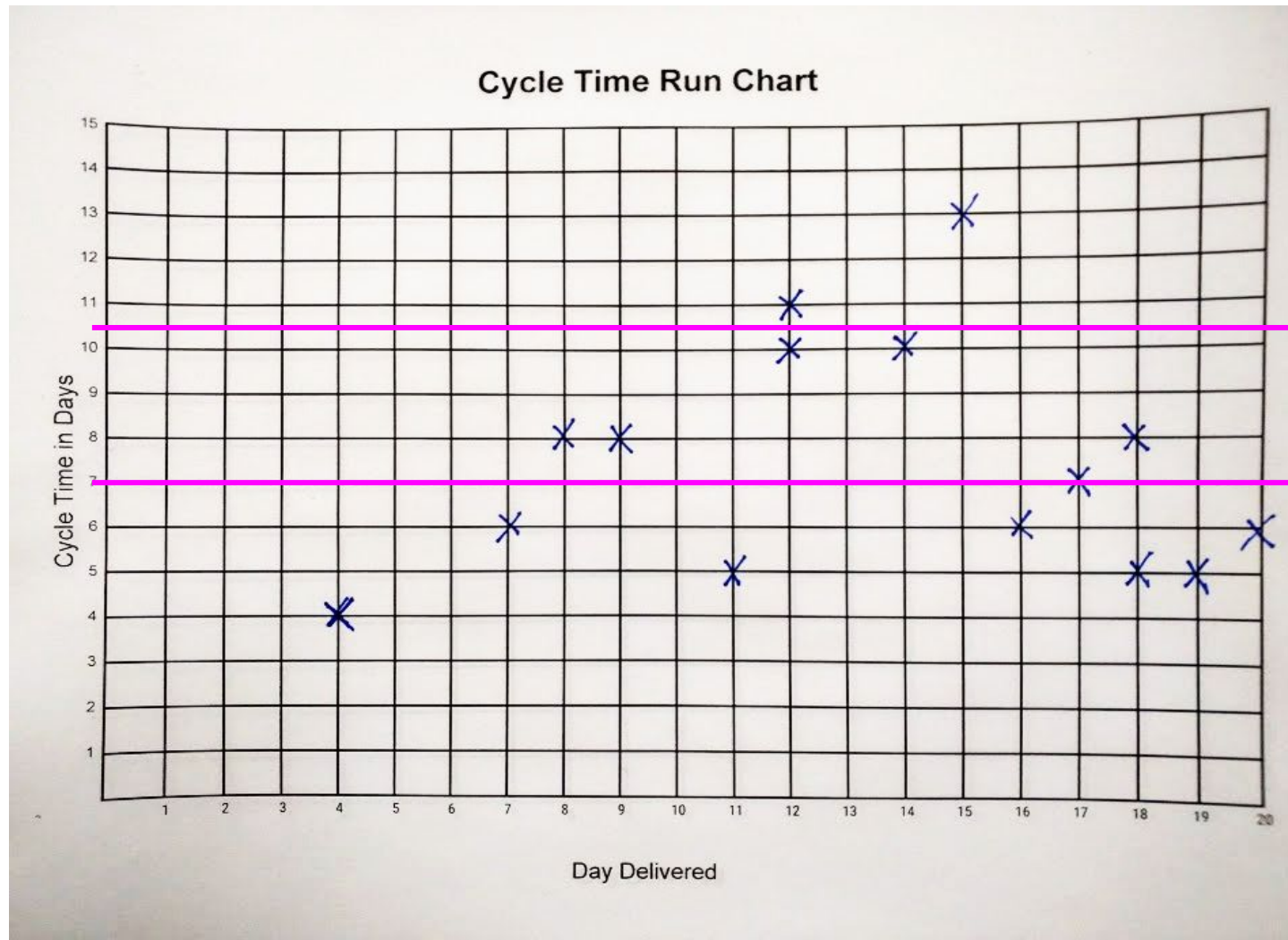
Metrics



Metrics



Metrics



Good for
establishing
SLAs

85%

50%
Good for
estimating e.g.
CCPM



Metrics

Little's Law

$$L = \lambda W$$

average # of items in a system

=

average arrival rate

*

average time spent in the system

average time spent in the system

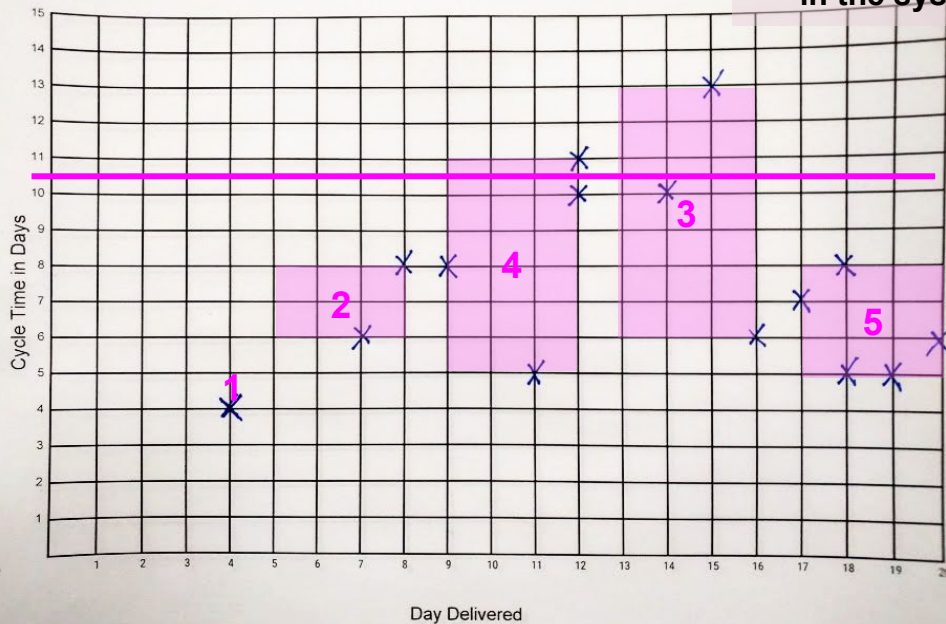
=

average # of items in a system

/

average throughput

Cycle Time Run Chart



85%

If we artificially break this relationship between the averages (arrival rate, population of the system, and departure rate), we can expect increased variability.



Iteration 3: Experimentation

A black and white photograph of three women sitting on a light-colored couch in a modern, brightly lit room. The woman on the left is looking towards the woman in the middle, who is looking at her laptop. The woman on the right is looking down at her laptop. All three laptops have various stickers on them. The woman on the left has a laptop with several small, colorful stickers. The woman in the middle has a laptop with a single Apple logo sticker. The woman on the right has a laptop with a large sticker that says "GOD IS DOPE." and other smaller stickers. The background shows a window with blinds and a doorway.

**Jane would like you, the people doing the work,
to design the next experiment.**

**Which one variable will you change?
What is the expected (measurable) outcome?**

picture courtesy of #WOCinTechChat

Iteration 3 Debrief

What was outcome of experiment? Was it what you expected?

If it failed, what is your recovery strategy?

If it succeeded, what is your amplification strategy?

Did you gain any ancillary insights?



Game Debrief

The structure of this game is the (roughly) the structure of an OpsFlow implementation:

Start with where you are now (map flow of work, understand what's in progress)

Implement WIP limits to drive out unnecessary variability

Establish directional goals (strategic intent)

Give teams the freedom to **conduct safe to fail experiments** aligned with the strategic intent

