

## Business Value Game Rules

### Your goal is to earn as much money as possible by:

- Releasing products containing features clients asked for.
- Making clients happy by releasing features
  - You earn money at the end of the game per happiness point.
  - Clients whose happiness reaches zero leave.

### The Roles

- The Salespeople represent clients and try to earn as much money as possible for the team.
- The Development team determines velocity, implements stories and builds releases.
- The Accountant keeps the score and verifies the rules.

### Business Value Algorithm

1. Sort Client Requests by taking into account the attributes of the request like income, Client Happiness and other important value drivers. Assign a Business Value (BV) number to each Client Request, relative to other requests. Re-sort Client Requests to take into account constraints like deadlines.
2. Distribute the Business Value of each Request over its set of stories.
3. Sort the stories from highest Business Value/Cost to lowest.
4. Align the stories per Client Request.
5. Select story cards until their total cost is equal to the developer's velocity. From the second round onwards, the Developer throws a die to determine actual velocity.

Die throw	Actual velocity
1	Velocity -1
2	Velocity -1
3	Velocity
4	Velocity
5	Velocity+1
6	Velocity+1

6. The Developer 'implements' one story at a time by marking it as Done, until the velocity is reached.
7. Salespeople update their Client Requests to indicate which stories have been implemented and/or released.
8. The Accountant updates the iteration sheet based on the Client Requests that are fully implemented. Fill in the columns as indicated on the sheet.
9. Salespeople update the happiness on each Client Persona card:
  - If no request of this client was released, decrement the Client Happiness by one.
  - If a request was released for this client, increment the Client's Happiness by the amount of happiness on the request card. Happiness is the second variable we want to maximise to win the game!

## Real Business Value Tips

- Look at the whole and reward appropriately. Keep the goal in mind.
- Start by collecting some useful base *estimates*: extra income that can be generated, income that could be lost if the product does not contain a feature, how much the client wants the feature, deadlines etc.
- To estimate the value of a request, start by the estimate of value added of the sale (or value lost if the feature is not available). Adjust the value based on factors such as client importance, client happiness, potential of further sales, risk. Compare and assign request business value relative to some baseline requests. This is your **Business Value Model**.
- Prioritise requests based on business value/cost. Adjust the ordering to take into account deadlines and other constraints.
- Sometimes it may pay off to look ahead a bit. For example, a relatively low value request implemented now may enable a high value request.
- Don't over-analyse story-level business value: start by distributing request value evenly over all the stories in the request. Compare and adjust.
- Define acceptance criteria and evaluate all stories against them.
- Value is generated by *releasing* minimal marketable features (MMFs), not by *developing* stories.
- Know your developer capacity and limit the intake of requests and stories accordingly.
- Focus. Sometimes it's better to satisfy one client and lose another than to have two unhappy clients.
- To close the feedback loop:
  - Compare actual income per client with estimated business value per client.
  - Track client satisfaction to see if your estimate of client happiness is correct.
  - Update your model.

Business Value isn't a value.  
Business Value is a model.  
Business Value models what you value.

Download the game from [www.xp.be](http://www.xp.be)

More games available on [www.agilecoach.net](http://www.agilecoach.net) and [www.agilefairytale.com](http://www.agilefairytale.com)

See also "Software by Numbers" by Mark Denne and Jane Cleland-Huang