

# Example Mapping

In 25 minutes, break one user story into rules, concrete examples, and open questions so the team knows whether it's ready to build, needs splitting, or needs more discovery.

## DURATION

# 25

min

## GROUP SIZE

# 3-5

incl. facilitator

## WHAT YOU BRING

One user story written on a yellow card, placed at the top of the table. No other preparation required.

## WHAT YOU LEAVE WITH

- Rules captured as acceptance criteria on blue cards
- Concrete examples on green cards, ready to become tests
- Red cards for open questions, each with owner and date
- A stated verdict: ready to build, split, or defer

## WHO TO INVITE

- **Facilitator.** Runs the clock, asks for the next example, keeps the room out of implementation detours and monologues.
- **Product owner.** Mandatory. Owns the story and decides which rule applies when participants disagree. No product owner, no session.
- **Developers (1-2).** Catch rules that are expensive or impossible to implement, and leave with concrete tests in hand.
- **Tester or QA.** Surfaces edge cases faster than anyone else and is the natural customer for the green cards.
- **Domain expert (ops, support, SRE).** Pulled in when the story touches a part of the system only one person really understands. Saves a week.

## USE WHEN

- A story is about to enter a sprint and you want to know if it's truly ready
- Developers and the product owner suspect they disagree about 'done'
- The story feels simple and you don't trust the feeling
- You need to decide whether to build, split, or defer a story

## AVOID WHEN

- × The story is genuinely trivial: a copy change, a flag flip, a config tweak
- × You don't yet know what you're building; use Event Storming first
- × The people who know the answers aren't in the room
- × Every rule produces a red card; you need discovery, not mapping

## How the session runs

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- **Phase 1 -- Seed the rules (3 minutes)**

Read the yellow story aloud in full, set the four-colour convention, then draw out the first rule from the product owner and immediately ask for a concrete example. Once the first blue and green card land, the shape of the session is visible.

- **Phase 2 -- Explore the rules (15 minutes)**

Cycle through rule, example, next rule, red card, keeping four questions on loop: give me an example, what happens if, is that always true, is that the same rule. Let new rules surface from edge cases and capture unknowns on red cards.

- **Phase 3 -- Assess readiness (5 minutes)**

Step back and read the shape of the cards. The product owner states the verdict out loud: ready to build, needs splitting, or blocked on red cards. Saying it aloud is the commitment everyone remembers later.