Conquering User Stories Tools and Techniques

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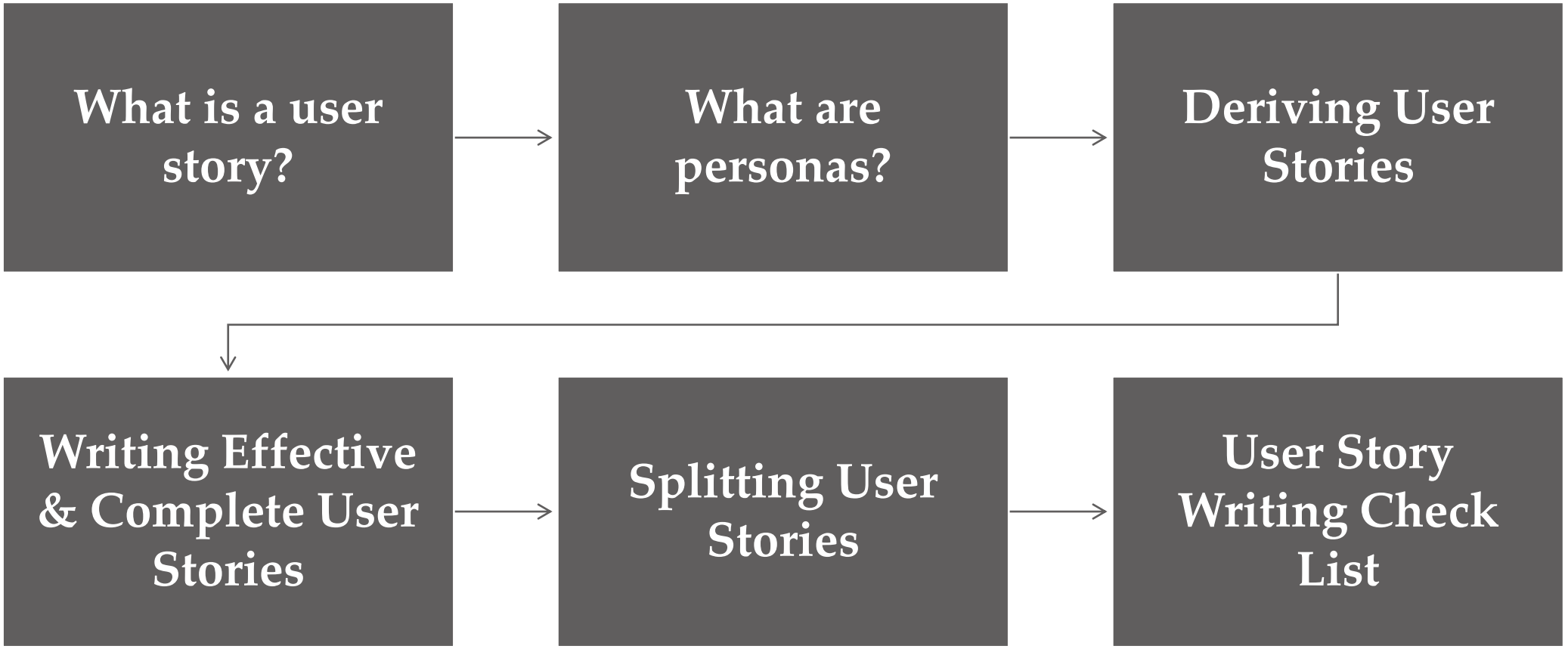
Agenda



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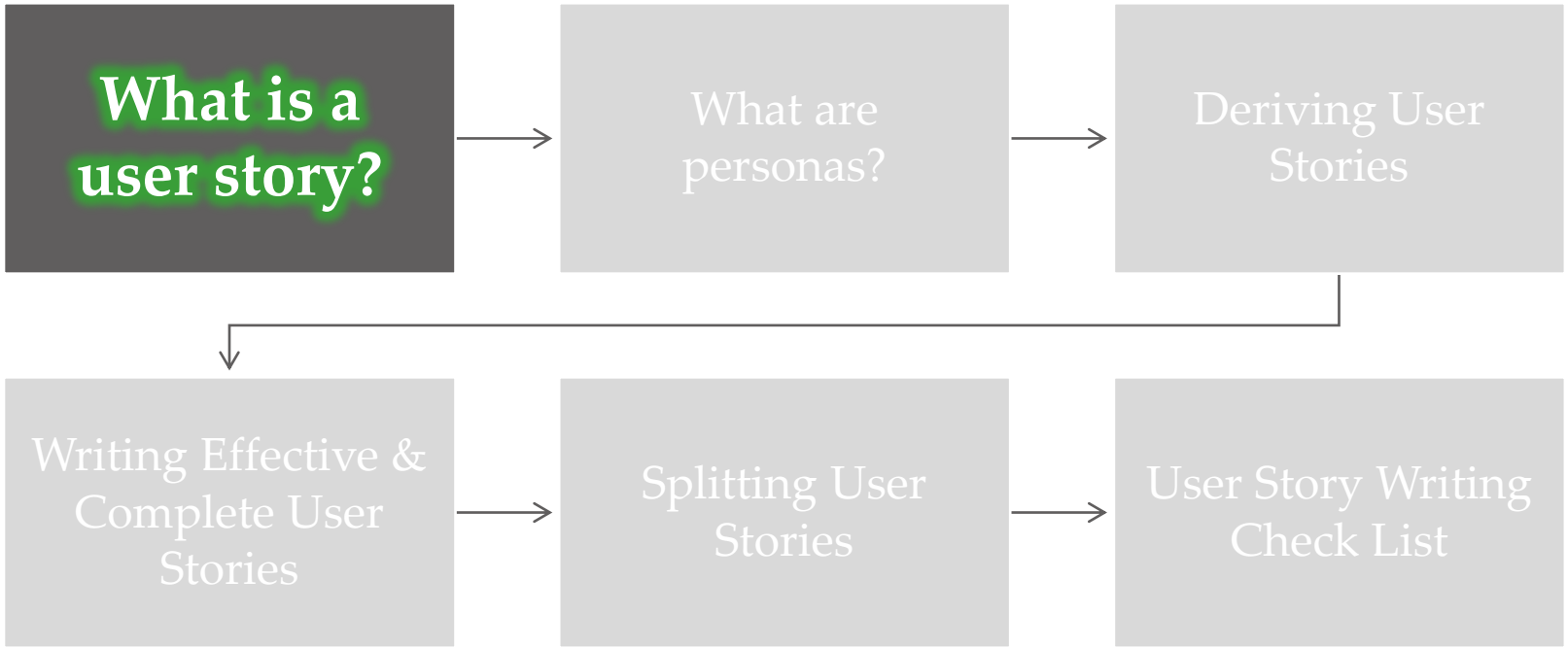

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A User Story…

- Is a brief description stating the need to perform an action, from a user's/persona's perspective, to achieve an objective, towards adding value.

- Generates conversations between all stakeholders.

CARD

- A short simple description of a need or want. The card captures the general idea. It is a place to capture the "**who**", "**what**" and "**why**" of a user story.

CONVERSATION

- Capture the detail of what's needed, collaboratively. The card provides the basis of a conversation to develop a shared understanding of the functionality, goals, and any constraints.

CONFIRMATION

- Acceptance criteria is validated and agreed, which confirms that the story is ready. A well-defined user story can be completed in one sprint, is testable, and achieves a clear pass/fail.

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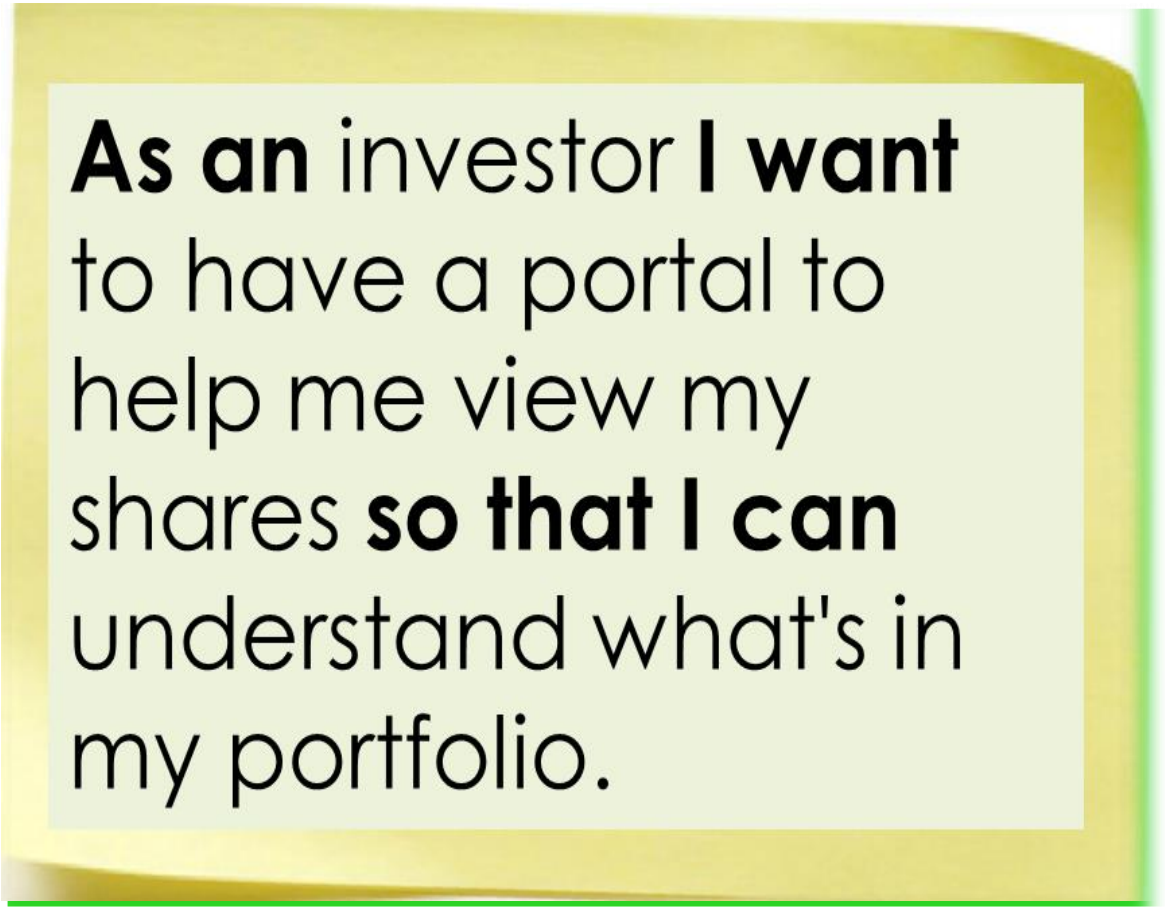
User Story Format

As a(n) [**Role/Persona**]
Stakeholder who benefits from the user story.

I want [**Goal/Action**]
A high-level overview of the functionality/capability desired by the user.

So that I can [**Benefit/Value**]
The business value the story delivers.



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A User Story Is Not…

- A thesis.
- A complete requirement set.
- The definition of ready.
- The definition of done.

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A User Story Needs…

- **Supporting Artifacts:**
  - Acceptance Criteria
  - Non Functional Requirements
  - Definition of Done
  - Workflow (when applicable)
  - Mock-ups / Sketches (when applicable)
  - Other Value Add Documents

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Key Components of A User Story

Title	Write a simple title using ***action words/verbs***
Description	Role based, from a the user's perspective, defining portions of functionality
Acceptance Criteria	Set of statements or behavior expected Specify functional & non-functional requirements

Examples of Titles

- **Permit** end user to update credit card information
- **Prevent** unauthorized access to account information
- **Update** an account profile
- **Register** for a new account

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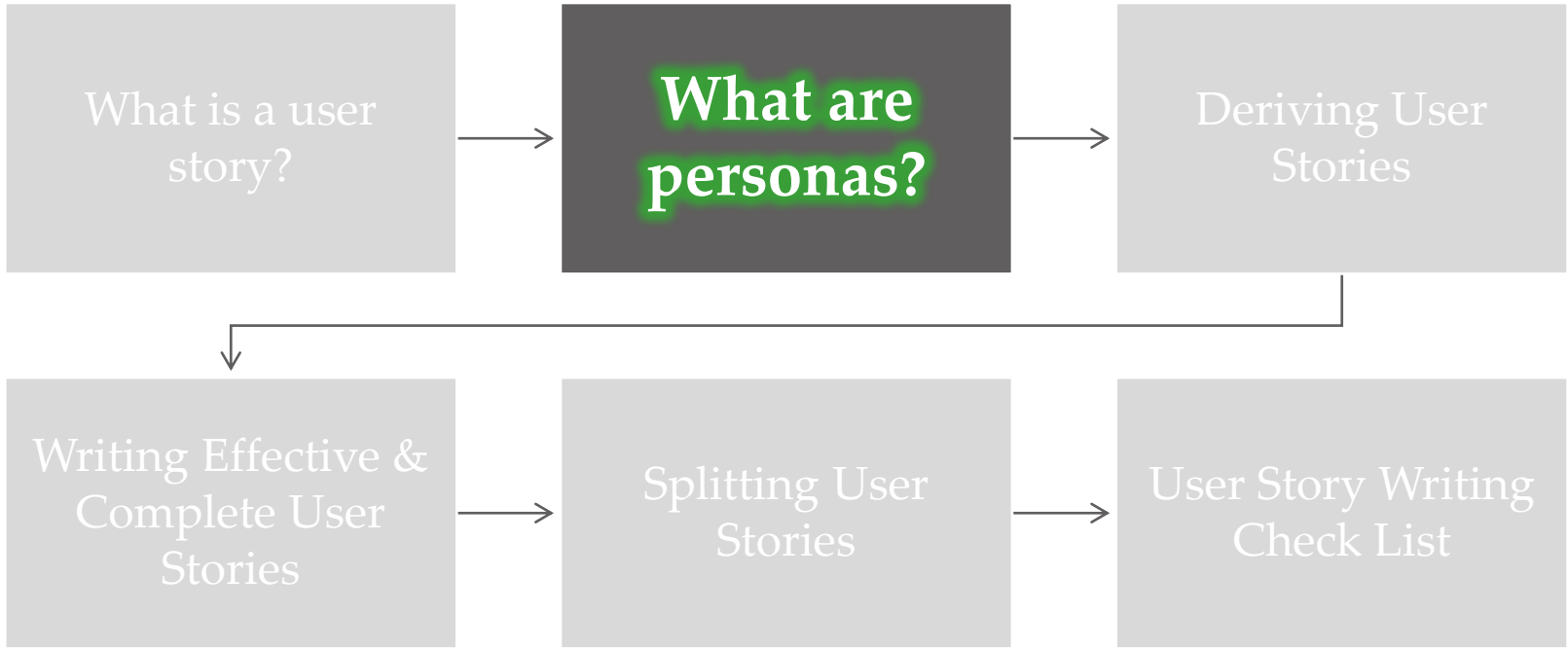

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The Persona Technique

- A persona is a role or a fictional character representation for whom a product shall be built.
- Describes how the character may expect to interact with the product.
- A persona describes the characteristics, goals and behavior or a specific group or demographic of users.

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Persona Examples

Melissa

"It's not about me. it's about my girls."

AT A GLANCE

AGE — 41

LOCATION — Chicago, IL

LIFE STAGE — Divorced with two kids

JOB — Corporate procurement manager

MOTIVATORS

FAMILY — Doing what's right for her kids and looking after her parents are the most important things in her life.

BEING HELPFUL & APPRECIATED FOR IT — She gets a lot of pride from being productive, effective, and helpful. Being thanked and acknowledged for it is the motivatin that keeps her going.

FEELING HAPPY & GRATEFUL — Melissa gets frustrated and frazzled because she's always running, but really she values being happy and tries to appreciate all the good things in her life, particularly after a difficult divorce.

BEHAVIORS

TIGHTLY SCHEDULES THE DAY — The morning routine to get the kids off to school and herself off to work is locked in. She's busy at work all day and tends to spend the majority of her day in meetings. The evening routine is equally structured. When her ex has the girls, she goes out with a friend for dinner or catches up on the phone.

VOLUNTEERS — At kids' school and church.

SPENDS TIME WITH EXTENDED FAMILY — Parents live and sister's family live nearby. Most weekends she visits their house or they vist hers.

TALKING ON THE PHONE AND "CATCHING" UP VIA FACEBOOK — Likes to talk on the phone with girls friends and her sister. Late at night after work she hops on FaceBook to achieve the same sense of connection.

NEEDS

- Social connection
- Would like to start dating again
- Exercise and "me" time
- Would like to just sit and unwind, but feels like she's usually so amped up from her schedule that simply resting feels wrong

https://www.flickr.com/photos/rosenfeldmedia/9203796918

John

Anne

Nick

Beth

http://blog.flickr.net/en/2010/08/16/j-trav-persona/

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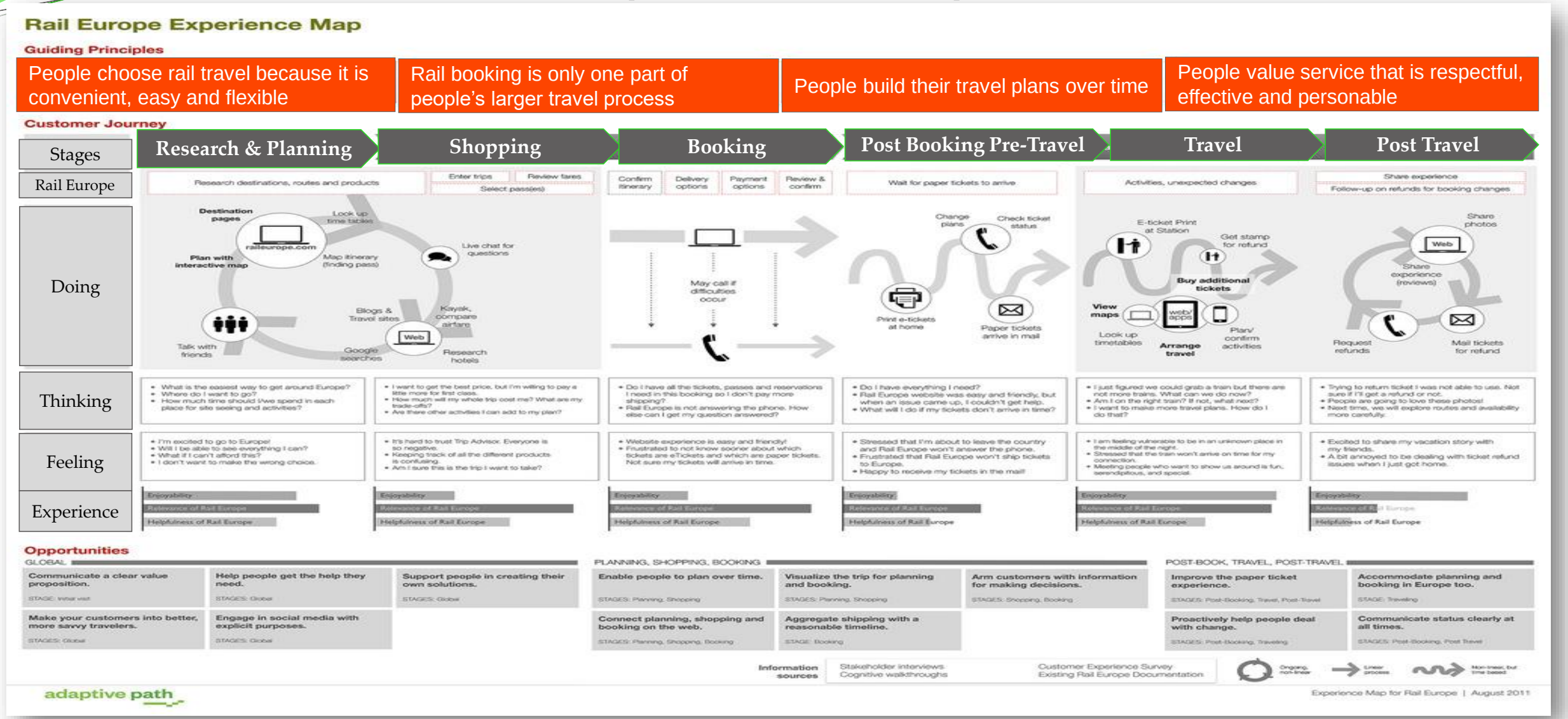
Persona/Customer Experience Journey



https://c1.staticflickr.com/9/8378/8462249080_6866235eab_b.jpg

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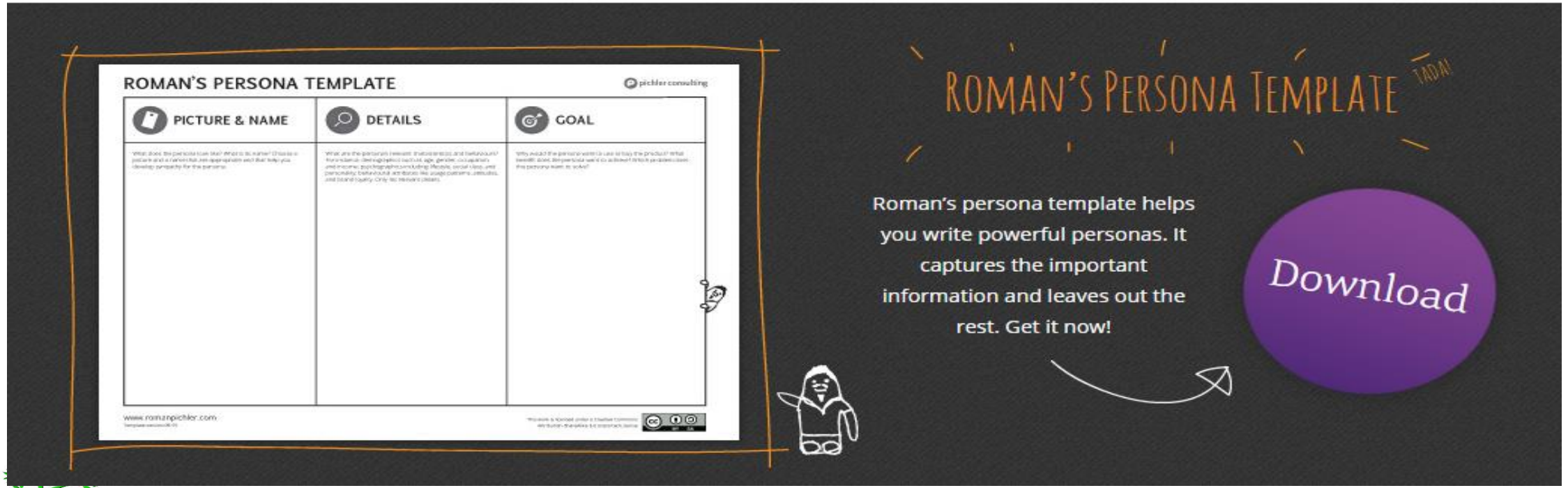
Free Persona Template to get you started

pichler consulting

TRAINING CONSULTING TOOLS RESOURCES BLOG ABOUT CONTACT ROMAN

Roman's Persona Template



http://www.romanpichler.com/tools/persona-template/

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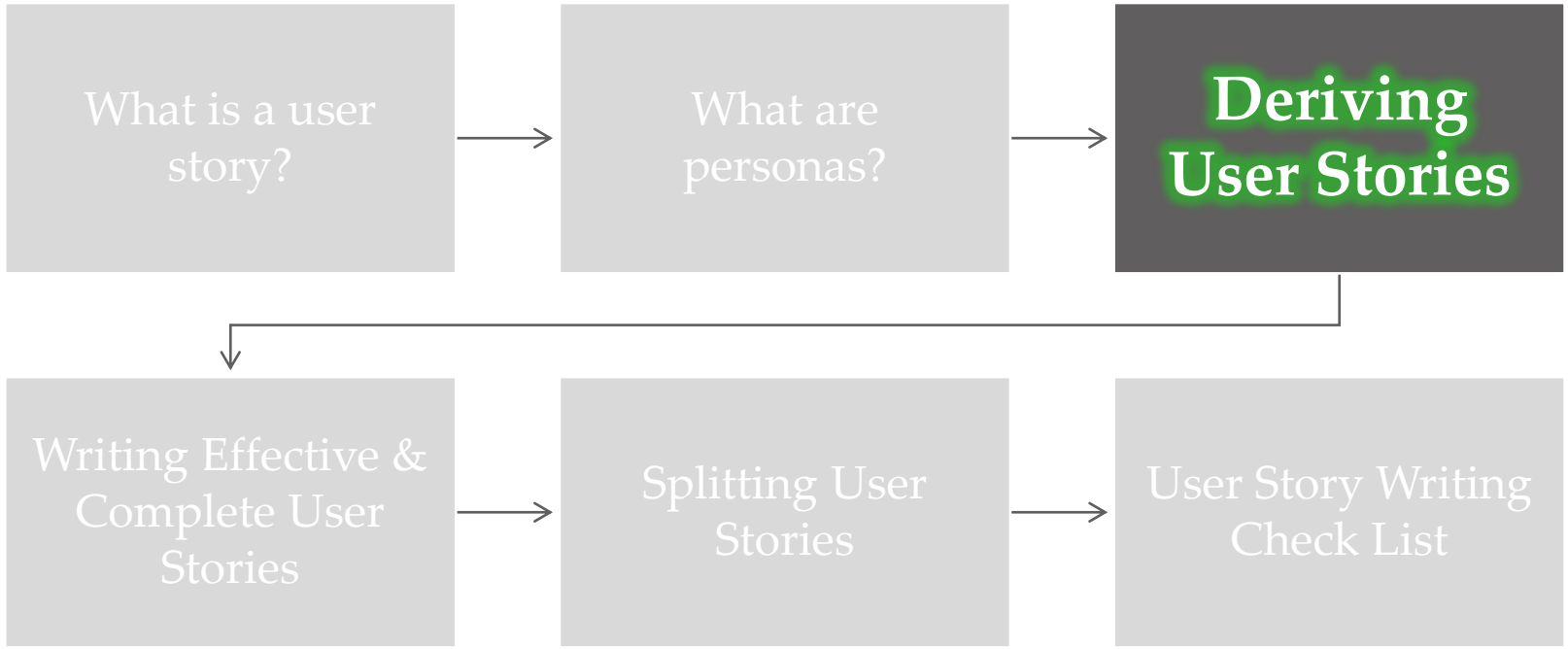

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Deriving User Stories For The Product

EPIC

Very large 'User Stories' commonly used to contain many related Capabilities and Features.

- Epics guide value streams.
- Large and crosscutting.
- Enablers (Technology, Architecture etc.)

Capability

Describes the functional solution behavior at the end to end value delivery (value stream) level.

Feature

Business value slices of an Epic or Capability often defining a Minimum Viable Product.

User Story

Small piece of a desired functionality.

Tracer Bullet (Vertical Slice)

Technical Debt (accumulated work to be done)

Spike Stories

- Research
- Proof of Concept (POC)

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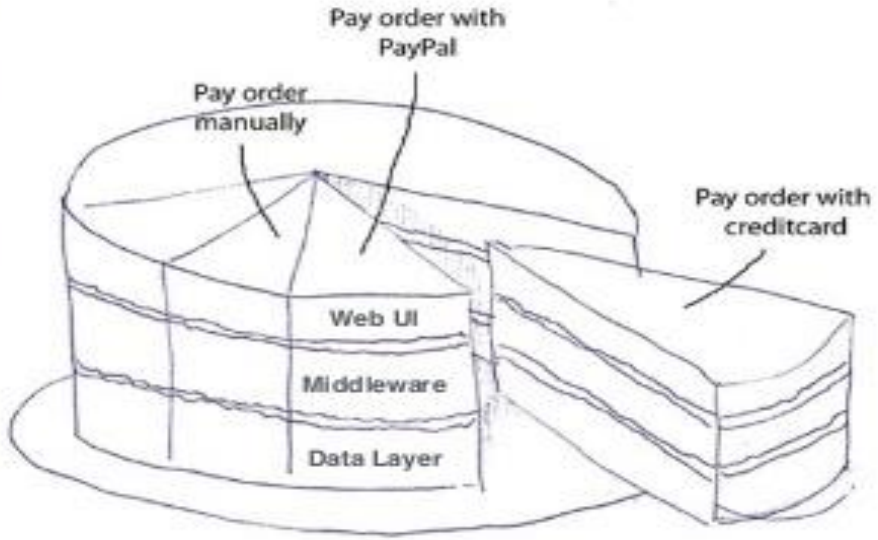
Vertical Slices

over

Horizontal Slices



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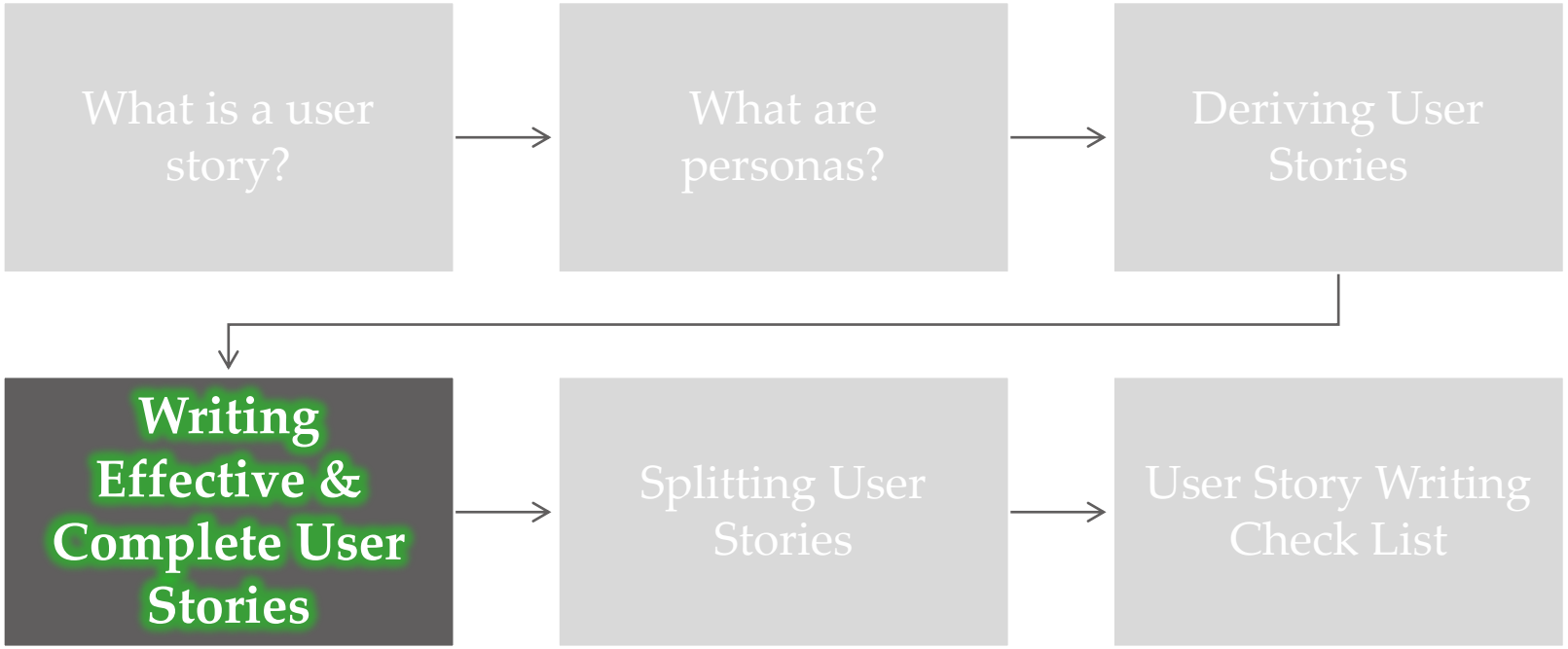

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Non Functional Requirements

Non-Functional Requirements Add Value to User Stories (Part 5).mp4

Available on YouTube: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NnD7UhnIsNc

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Acceptance Criteria

- Acceptance criterion are the elements describing how the user will use the product, and what they would like to have the ability to do with the product.

- Acceptance criterion also includes input from the team's perspective to support the user's needs. *i.e. non functional requirements.*

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Deriving Acceptance Criteria

- What capabilities are you expecting from this feature or functionality?
- How will this support your business process?
- What are the business problems that you would like to solve with this feature or functionality?
- What are the conditions that this feature or functionality should meet?
- What non functional requirements should be met by this feature?

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Avoid Ambiguity: Include Measurable Requirements

Express acceptance criteria in specific, measurable, testable terms so that developers and testers can derive code and test cases to deliver what is expected.

Avoid subjective language such as: **better, good, allowable, a few miles, fast up time** etc.

Avoid generalization such as, **all the time, never, everyone, always** etc.

http://bestandworstever.blogspot.com/2012/07/best-lane-ending-sign-ever.html

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Acceptance Criteria Examples

Statements:

1. Ability to select and view all shares in my portfolio any time I want to.

2. Ability to save different views of my shares by organization, and see saved views when I log back in.

As an investor **I want** to have a portal to help me view my shares **so that I can** understand what's in my portfolio.

Given When Then:

1. Given when I enter my credentials and log into my portal at any time, I would like to have options to select and view all shares in my portfolio.

2. Given when I save my views by organization and log out, then log back in, I would like to have the ability to see my saved views.

Non functional requirements:

1. The portal must be available 24 hours per day, 7 days per week
2. The page load time must be 4 secs or less.

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THE INVEST MODEL

I	Independent	Story stands on its own ("vertical slice")
N	Negotiable	The "what", not the "how"; there is enough information to start work
V	Valuable	Is this valuable to the Customer/Users?
E	Estimable	Can this work effort be estimated based on the information we have? There needs to be enough detail for the developers to estimate the user story.
S	Small	Sized Appropriately: Is the work small enough to be executed during a sprint? Is it too small (a Task vs User Story)?
T	Testable	Can you test this requirement?

User stories that are written with the INVEST model in mind, usually meet the expectations for a good user story.

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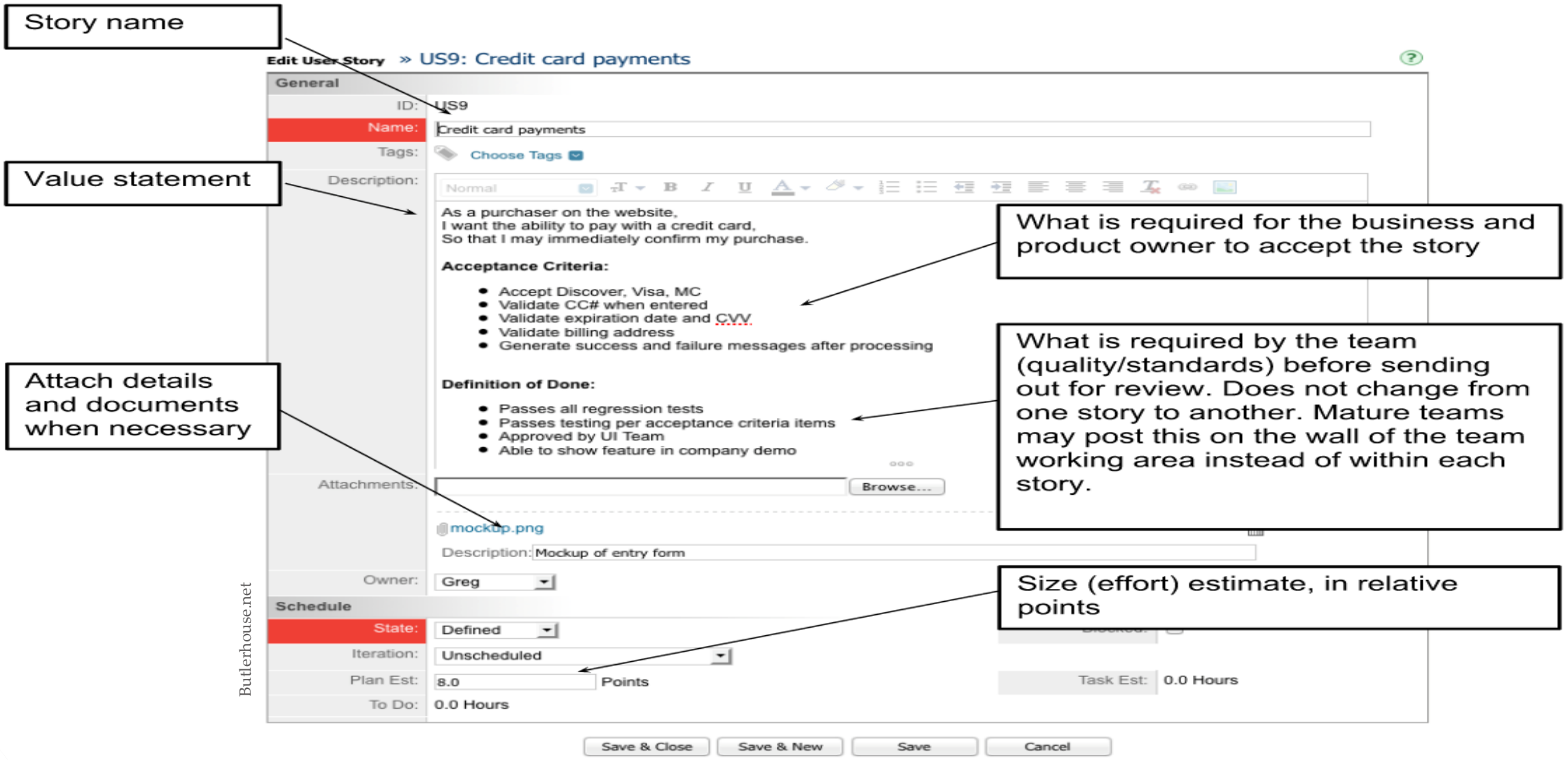
A Complete User Story



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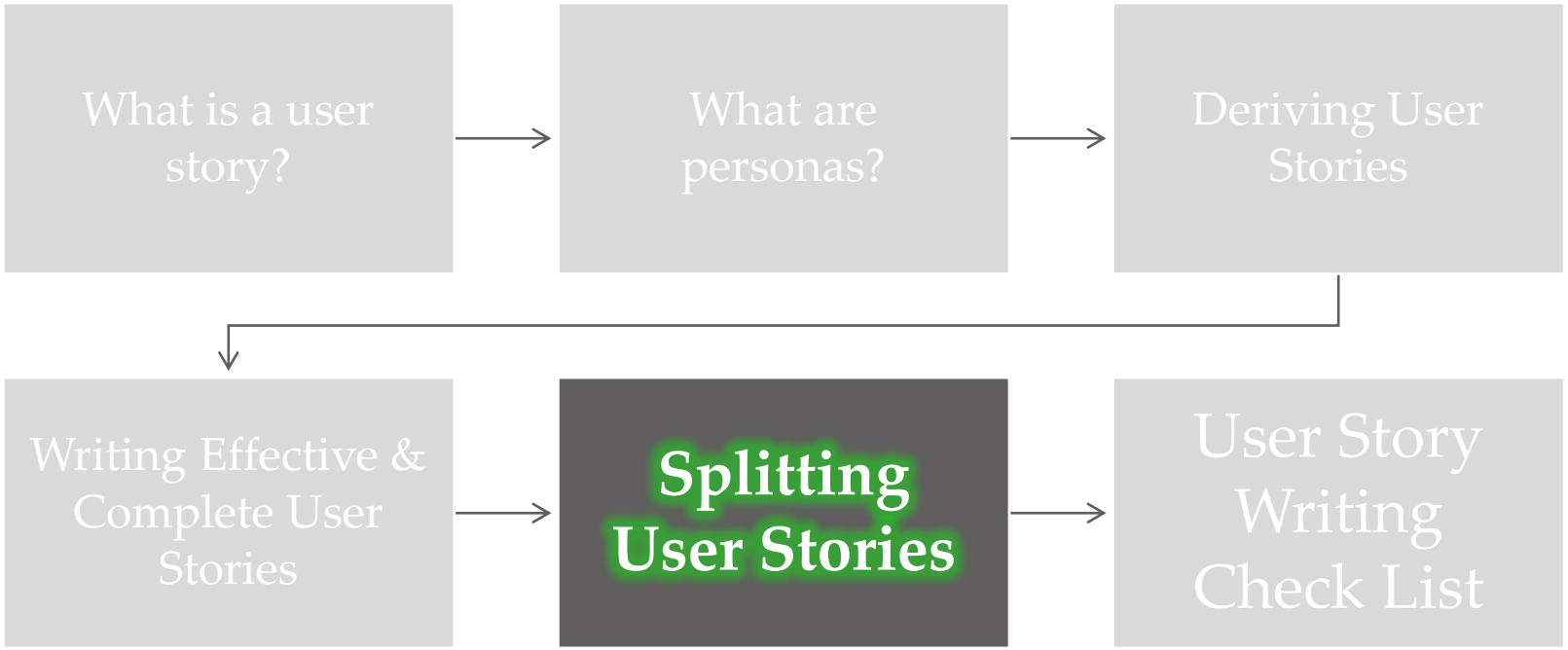

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HOW TO SPLIT A USER STORY

1 PREPARE THE INPUT STORY

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

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

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

- You're done.
- Continue. You need to split it.

2 APPLY THE SPLITTING PATTERNS

start here

WORKFLOW STEPS

Does the story describe a workflow?

- Can you take a thin slice through the workflow first and enhance it with more stories later?
- 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?

OPERATIONS

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

Can you split the operations into separate stories?

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?)

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

DEFER PERFORMANCE

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

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

VARIATIONS IN DATA

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

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

SIMPLE/COMPLEX

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

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

MAJOR EFFORT

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

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

INTERFACE VARIATIONS

Does the story have a complex interface?

Is there a simple version you could do first?

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

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

last resort

BREAK OUT A SPIKE

Are you still baffled about how to split the story?

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

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

3 EVALUATE THE SPLIT

Are the new stories roughly equal in size?

NO → Try another pattern on the original story or the larger post-split stories.

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

NO → Try another pattern on the original story or the larger post-split stories.

YES → Do each of the stories satisfy INVEST?

NO → Try another pattern.

YES → Are there stories you can deprioritize or delete?

YES → Try another pattern. You probably have waste in each of your stories.

NO → Is there an obvious story to start with that gets you early value, learning, risk mitigation, etc.?

NO → Try another pattern to see if you can get this.

YES → You're done, though you could try another pattern to see if it works better.

* INVEST - Stories should be:
Independent
Negotiable
Valuable
Estimable
Small
Testable

[AGILE FOR ALL]
www.agileforall.com

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

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Last updated 3/26/2013

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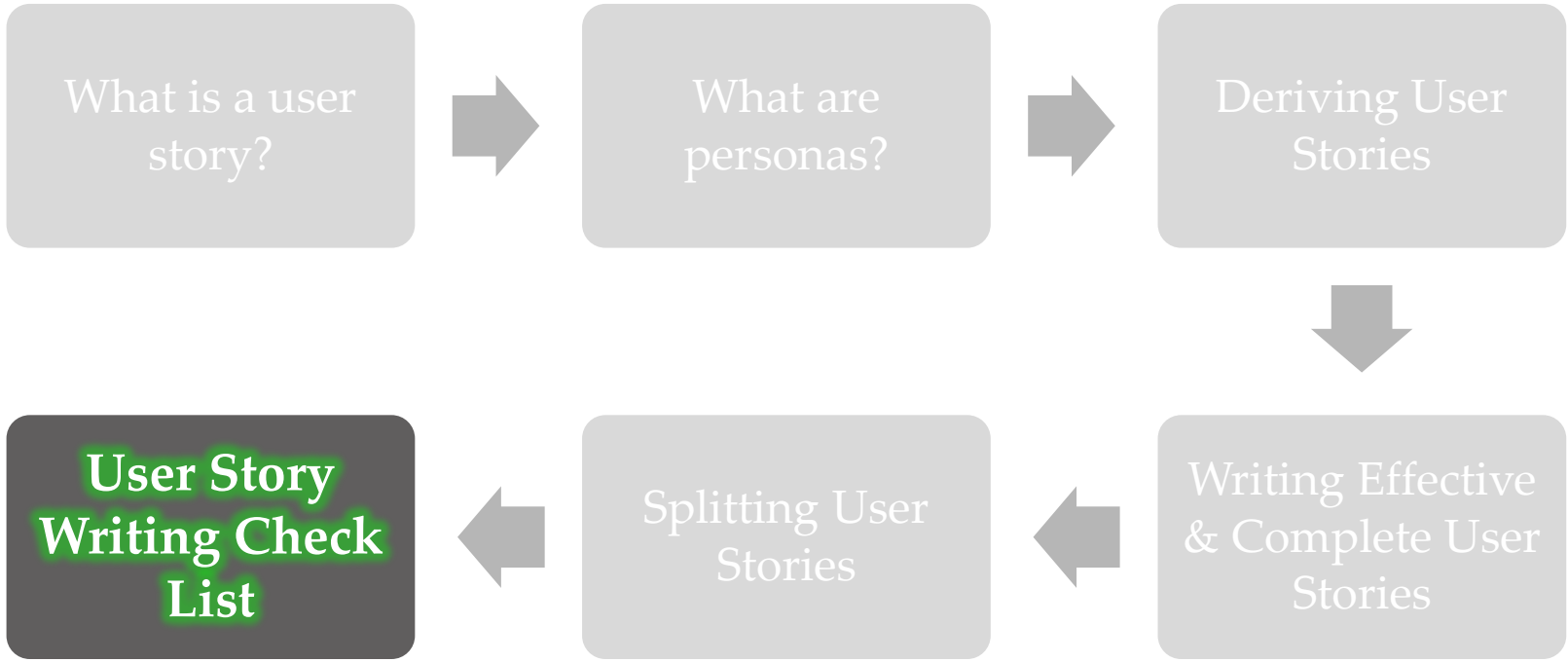

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User Story Checklist

☐ Standard Format

- ✓ As a(n) [**Role/Persona**]
  Stakeholder who benefits from the user story.
- ✓ I want [**Goal/Action**]
  A high-level overview of the functionality/capability desired by the user.
- ✓ So that I can [**Benefit/Value**]
  The business value the story delivers.

☐ Acceptance Criteria

- ✓ PO/BA defines what the feature is expected to do for them to accept the user story on behalf of the user.
- ✓ The "**what**" not the "**how**"
- ✓ What does the user need the ability to do?
- ✓ Non-Functional Requirements
- ✓ Reviewed by the team and team provided feedback and input for the acceptance criteria.

☐ Definition of Done

- ✓ Activities the team follows to complete the story.
- ✓ This includes satisfying the acceptance criteria.

Example:

- ✓ Met the INVEST model
- ✓ Coding done
- ✓ Testing done
- ✓ All bugs fixed
- ✓ Environments provisioned appropriately
- ✓ Code reviews done
- ✓ Automated builds created an executed
- ✓ Acceptance criteria satisfied

☐ Supporting Artifacts

- ✓ Source documents
- ✓ Wireframes
- ✓ Workflows
- ✓ Mock-ups
- ✓ Designs
- ✓ Narratives (background for the story)
- ✓ External Dependencies
- ✓ Links to other stories

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