



# **GG BAVARIA**

## **BUSINESS DAY 2026**

# **GAME DEVELOPMENT**

## **YESTERDAY, TODAY & TOMORROW**



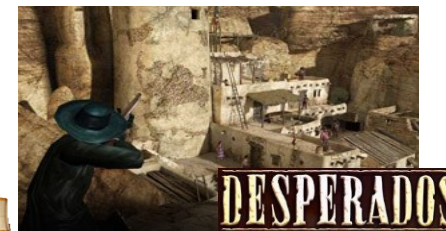
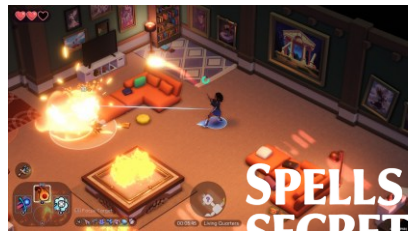
# BRIEF INTRODUCTION

# LOOK WHO'S TALKING



## Ralf C. Adam

- +30 years in the Game Industry
- Freelance Producer, Game Designer & Board Consultant
- Past roles include Executive Producer & Head/VP Production at Gameforge, Travian Games, flaregames, Infogrames, JoWood & Sunflowers
- Advisor to various Publishers, Dev-Studios, FFF Munich, Quo Vadis Conference et al.





# AGENDA



- **Every Journey starts with a first Step**
- **3 out of 2 people have Problems with Fractions**
- **Stop making Games (start shipping them!)**
- **The Pen is mightier than the Sword**
- **When three Dimensions hit five Senses**
- **The AI-elephant in the Room**



**EVERY JOURNEY STARTS  
WITH A FIRST STEP**

# THE WAY WE DO THINGS AROUND HERE



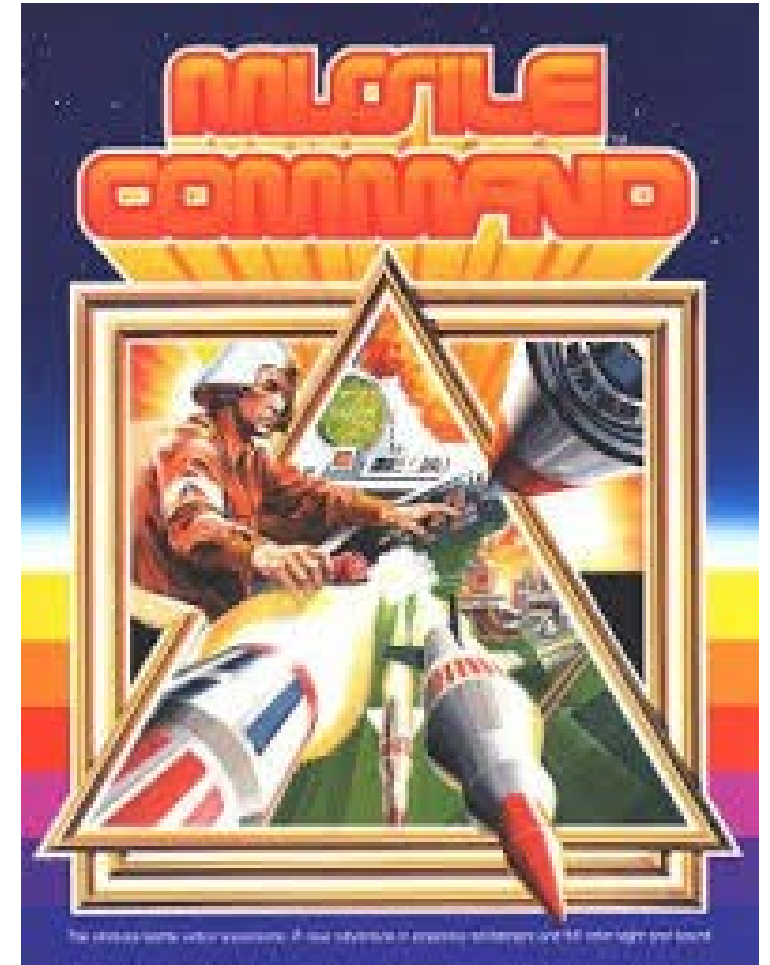
***»Pick an idea. Write up a game proposal. Get it OK'd by management.***

***Take a couple of weeks to bring up a playable simple version.***

***Management reviews that and OKs it or axes it. If OK'd, continue with the whole game.***

***Regular reviews by management to make sure still fun. Kill the game if not.»***

**DAVE THEURER – 1980  
(MISSILE COMMAND, TEMPEST)**



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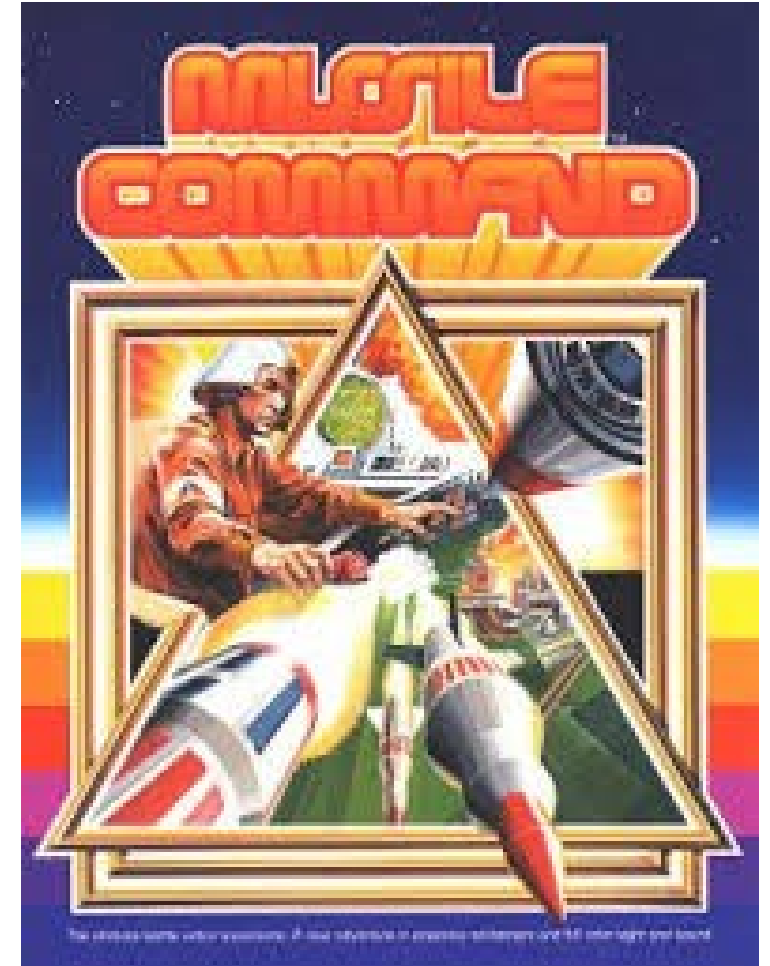
DAVE THEURER – 1980  
(MISSILE COMMAND, TEMPEST)

HIGH CONCEPT & PITCHING

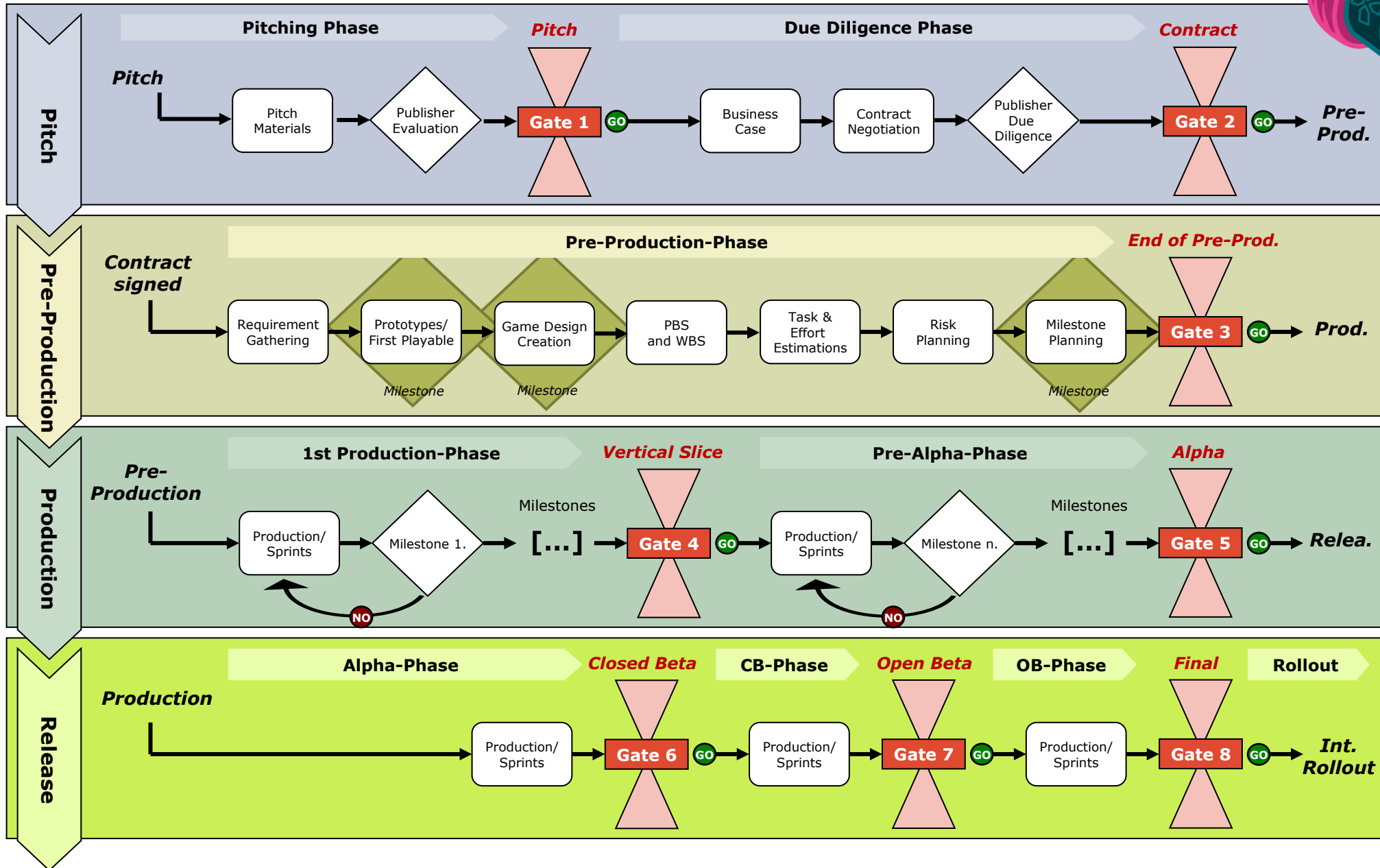
PROTOTYPING

END OF PRE-PRODUCTION

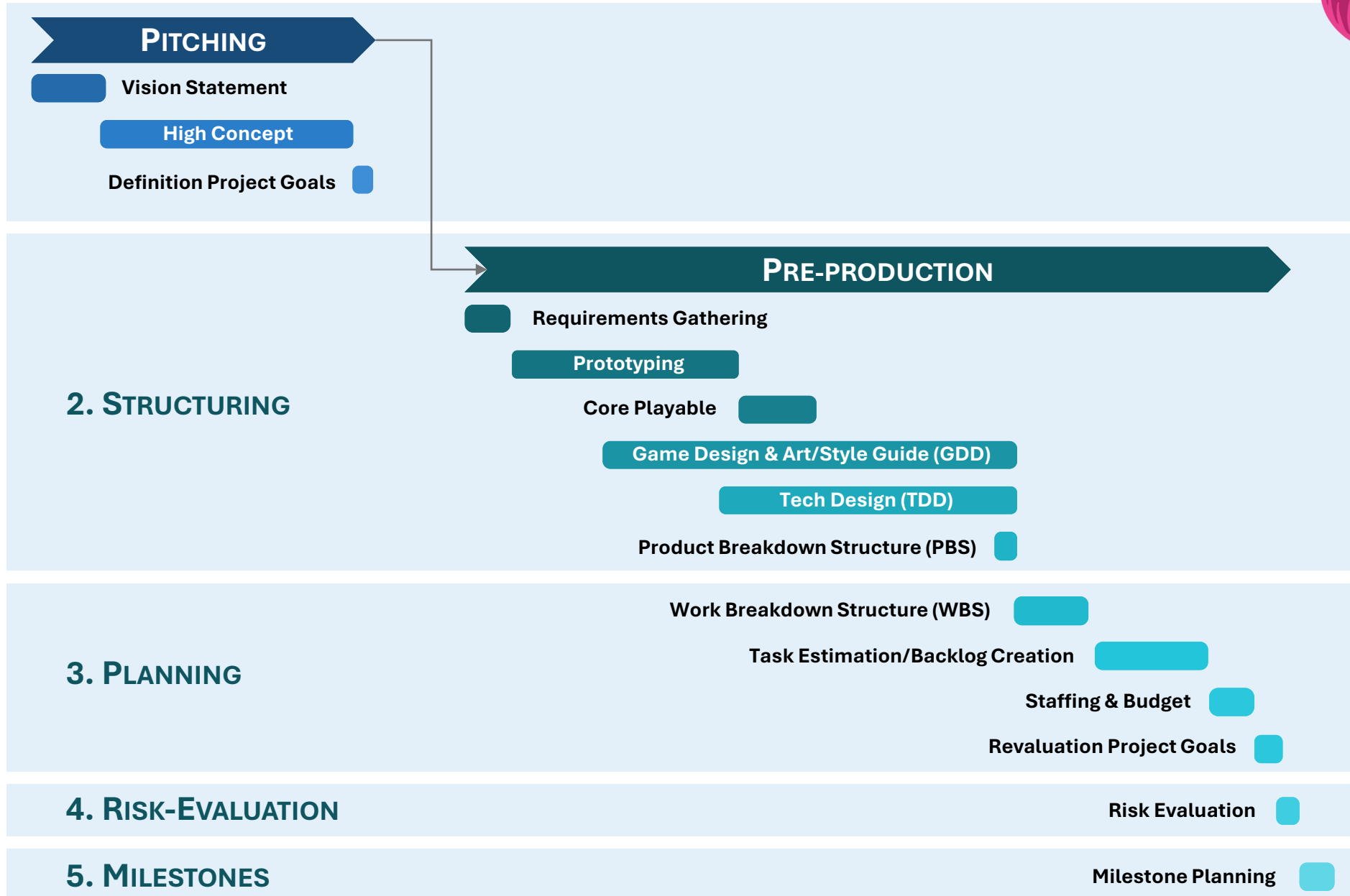
SPRINTS & MILESTONES



# COMMON GATE PROCESS



# PRE-PRODUCTION PHASE





**3 OUT OF 2 PEOPLE HAVE  
PROBLEMS WITH FRACTIONS**

# COMMON PLANNING MISTAKES



	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N
1		JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	OVERALL WORKDAYS
2	<b>ENGINEERING</b>													
3	<b>Coder #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
4	<b>Coder #02</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
5	<b>Coder #03</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
6														1080
7	<b>ART &amp; ANIMATION</b>													
8	<b>Artist #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
9	<b>Artist #02</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
10	<b>Animator #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
11														1080
12	<b>GAME DESIGN</b>													
13	<b>Game Designer #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
14														360
15	<b>MUSIC &amp; SOUND</b>													
16	<b>Sound Designer #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
17														360
18	<b>QA</b>													
19	<b>Tester #01</b>	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	360
20														360
21														3.240



# PLAN WITH BUFFER



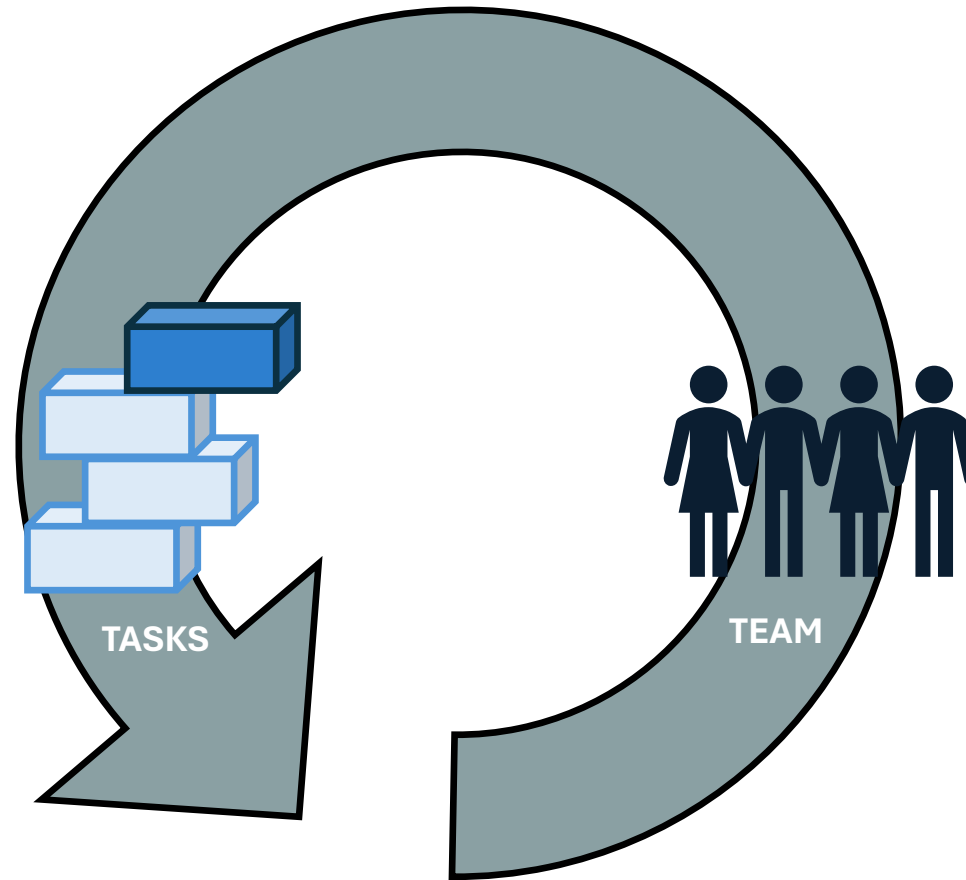
	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	OVERALL WORKDAYS
ACTUAL WORKDAYS	22	20	23	21	20	20	23	20	21	20	21	15	
VACATION (24 days)	20	18	21	19	18	18	21	18	19	18	19	13	
SICK BUFFER (12 days)	19	17	20	18	17	17	20	17	18	17	18	12	
<b>ENGINEERING</b>													
<b>Coder #01</b>	19	17	20	18	17	17	20	17	18	17	18	12	<b>210</b>
<b>Coder #02</b>	19	17	20	18	17	17	20	17	18	17	18	12	<b>210</b>

- Never plan for every single day of the month!
- Start with the actual work days minus week-ends and bank holidays!
- Consider vacation of your team members!
- Consider sick buffers!

# PLANNING IN A NUTSHELL



- Every project consists of work packages (no matter if you call them tasks, user stories, epics or whatever)
- Each work package takes time
- This inevitably always results in a total time aka. project duration



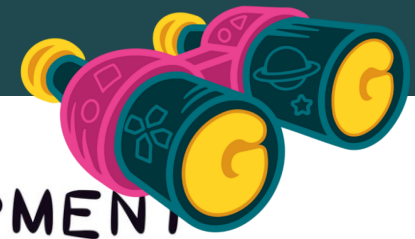
- Each team has team members
- They can spend X amount of working days per team member on the project (minus weekends, vacations and buffer for illness, meetings etc.)
- The project duration should always be 20% less than the cumulative available working days of all team members.

Constant tracking: How much remaining project time vs. remaining Person-Days - and acting accordingly (cutting, re-scoping, more time/money/resources) and adjusting the plan.



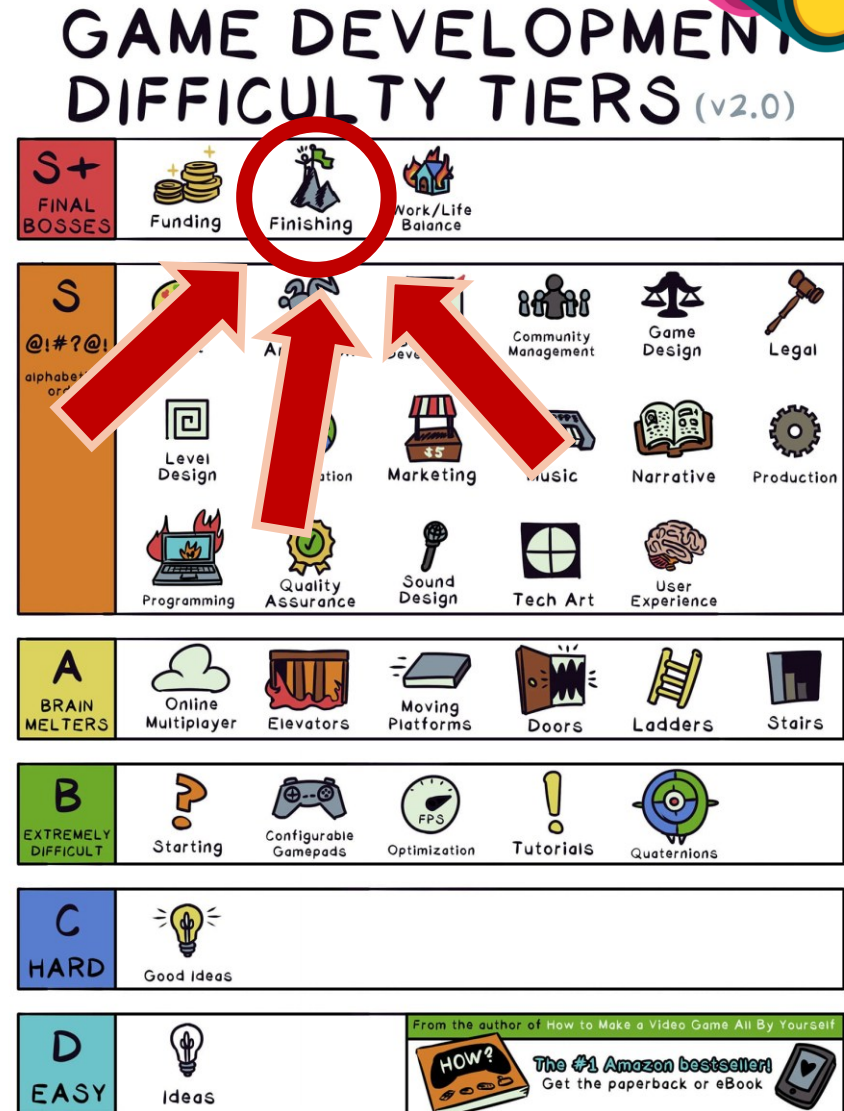
**STOP MAKING GAMES!  
(START SHIPPING THEM!)**

# SHIPPING IS THE HARDEST PART



## Reasons why games don't get shipped

- Unclear Vision (aka: Goal)
- Feature Creep
- Too ambitious Scope
- Unknown Unknowns
- Polish & Bugfixing
- Mental Fatigue
- 90/10 Rule





**THE PEN IS MIGHTIER  
THAN THE SWORD**

# WHY WE STILL NEED DOCUMENTATION



- Vision Statement
- High Concept

■ Game Design (GDD)

■ Product Breakdown Structure (PBS)

■ Detailed Production Documents

# WHY WE STILL NEED DOCUMENTATION



- Capturing **Game Vision**
- **Aligning** Team Members
- Preventing **Feature Creep**
- **Shared Understanding** of features, mechanics, systems, art style, quality parameters...
- **Record/history** of decisions
- Basis for any **planning** but also **onboarding**

# WHY WE STILL NEED DOCUMENTATION



## ANATOMY OF MODERN GAME DESIGN DOCU- MENTS

VERA FRISCH & RALF  
C. ADAM



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vU302sLgMyM&t=19s>



**WHEN THREE DIMENSIONS  
HIT FIVE SENSES**

# THINGS TO GET RIGHT IN PRE-PRODUCTION



## Many games fall short on fundamental mechanics...

- UI/UX and CCC (Camera, Character, Controls) are the two most important systems to get right from the start
- They are both like a joke – if you have to explain it, it's bad.
- The best user interface and the best camera are those that the player doesn't even notice or hasn't even thought about





# THE AI-LEPHANT IN THE ROOM

# OpenAI closes Sora video-making app and cancels \$1bn Disney deal

25 March 2026

Share Save Add as preferred on Google

Osmond Chia, business reporter and Emma Calder, technology reporter



BE (in) CRYPTO

## Anthropic: 512.000-Zeilen-Leak bei Claude Code erschüttert 350-Milliarden-USD-IPO



### Generative AI Lawsuits Timeline: Legal Cases vs. OpenAI, Microsoft, Anthropic, Google, Nvidia, Perplexity, Salesforce, Apple and More

March 25, 2026 by Joe Panettieri

#### The AI division of Take-Two has been hit by a wave of layoffs

Take-Two Interactive may have tempered its enthusiasm for artificial intelligence. The company reduced the team responsible for AI development.



#### Capcom says it "will not implement any generative AI assets" into its games

Firm is experimenting with the technology in other areas to improve "efficiency and productivity in game development"



Image credit: Nvidia/Capcom

The DLSS 5 backlash is not going away | Opinion  
This isn't knee-jerk outrage; Nvidia has sacrificed its gaming credentials to its strategic embrace of AI, and both consumers and developers hate the results

HELEN VOGELSONG-DONAHUE CULTURE MAR 13, 2026 7:00 AM

## Gamers' Worst Nightmares About AI Are Coming True

From the global RAM shortage driving up console prices to job loss in the industry, gaming is shaping up to be one of the AI boom's biggest casualties.



Image credit: Nvidia/Capcom



## Machine Learning

- Systems capable of learning from data (data collection)
- Identifying patterns through training
- Based on these learnings it can make predictions or decisions when exposed to new data
- Used in...
  - Healthcare Diagnostics
  - Finance Models
  - Amazon, Netflix etc. -> recommendations of new content



## Generative AI

- Goes beyond analyzing data, but creates new content
  - Text, images, music, video
  - Mimics human creations
- Can create new data, that it wasn't programmed into it
- Utilizes neural networks such as LLM's:
  - Trained on vast amount of data
  - Chatbots, Deepfake Tech, AI generated Art & Music

# GENERAL ARGUMENTS AGAINST GENERATIVE AI



## Ethical

- Environmental Impact
- Energy Consumption
- RAM Memory Crisis
- Allegation of Intellectual Property Theft
- Massive Layoffs
- Deepfakes, (political) Manipulation etc.

## Business

- Legal Implications
- Security Issues
- Strong Opposition from the Gaming Community
- Shrinking Talent Pool
- Unknown Costs



## AI FoMO / Hysteria

Remember any of these...?

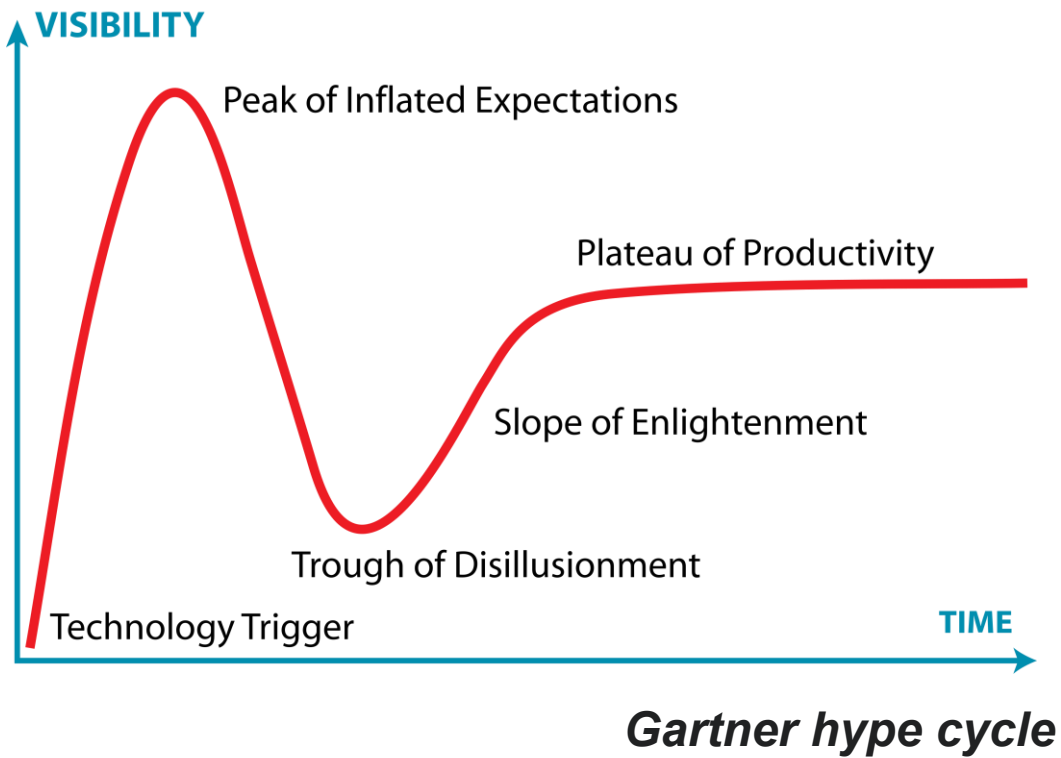
- Dot-Com Bubble
- Google+
- Blockchains/Web 3.0
- NFT
- Metaverse

***“If you don’t start now and go all-in on AI, you’ll be out of business in two years. AI will change EVERYTHING!”***

*(every 2<sup>nd</sup> sponsored ad on LinkedIn)*



## AI FoMO / Hysteria



*“We tend to overestimate the effect of a technology in the short run and underestimate the effect in the long run.”*

*(Amara’s Law)*



## *“It will only get better from here...”*

- So, why is it then that CGI in movies looked so much better 25 years ago?
- No tool is of any use if you haven't learnt the craft!
- Model Collapse: GenAI trained on AI-generated data experience a decline in performance, producing increasingly inaccurate or nonsensical output
  - Also known as “Photocopy” Effect.
- Data Quality Constraints: the supply of fresh, diverse, high-quality human data is finite -> Garbage in, garbage out



## *The productivity lie*

- Amdahl's Law in Game Development
  - Even if AI may accelerate specific tasks (like Coding), the overall speedup is limited by tasks that require the human factor.

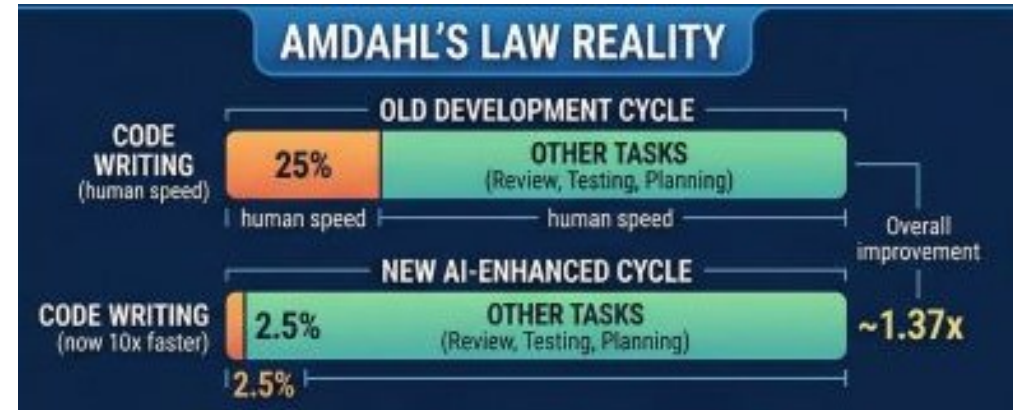
***“We’ll be faster and more productive. It’s great for efficiency – and will dramatically reduce overall dev time for our games.”***

*(Again: every 2<sup>nd</sup> sponsored ad on LinkedIn)*



## *The productivity lie*

- Game Development of a feature means more than “just” coding it:
  - Game Design, Planning, Kick-Offs and assessments
  - Art and Design implementations
  - Verification, User Testing, Feedback Loops and iterations
  - Etc.





## *The productivity lie*

- Also:
  - Even in coding you can't (or at least shouldn't) skip the long part of first planning the implementation properly





## *The productivity lie*

- Also:
  - I've never seen a game development where faster coding leads to faster release
  - Usually, in best case leads to more stable code – but often rather to more features = feature creep
  - *“GenAI isn't doing work; it's producing output.”* (Michael Fitch)





## Questions you should ask yourself

- What is your goal?
  - Do you want to make a product?
  - Do you want to make a game?
  - Do you want to make art?
- How can you avoid “skill skipping” and cognitive decline – and instead actually improve your craft?
- Remember: There are no shortcuts to any place worth going!

