

# WHAT IS WSJF?

Weighted Shorted Job First (WSJF) is a model used to prioritise work (e.g. features, enabling architecture, and epics) based on the cost of delay in order to deliver value to customers faster and produce the maximum benefits and outcomes.

## WSJF is based on economic models to assess the relative impact (cost) of delay on the organisation



What is the impact if we don't do it sooner rather than later?



Can some items wait to be delivered in a later Sprints or Program Increments?



Does it alleviate the pain of current workarounds?



If something is small can we realise its value sooner?



Are some items time critical due to regulatory, or legislative commercial timelines?



Does it enhance the quality and improve our current services or user experience?

The goal of WSJF is to create a structured, repeatable, evidence-based approach to prioritisation to avoid subjective decision-making regarding what work should be done and what is lower priority for the organisation. The results of WSJF are reflected in the evolving list of items in the Program Backlog.

## WSJF in Action



The items with higher WSJF rise to the top of the Program Backlog and are the next candidates for delivery by the team/s in order of priority to deliver the most valuable item in the shortest time. Large features are broken into smaller parts of functionality and can be worked on by Teams in parallel to associated features to collectively deliver a large piece of work/Epic.

**WSJF**  
(Value)

=

  
User/Business  
Value

+

  
Time  
Criticality

+

  
Risk Reduction/  
Opportunity  
Enablement



Investment size needed  
for the outcome

## What do you include in the product backlog for Prioritisation?



Prioritise everything you invest in in the product backlog. This enhances transparency and visibility of all the work so that leadership can make decisions based on value. This also helps stakeholders understand and forecast/predict likely release dates based on where that item currently sits in the Backlog.



New products creating new value for customers and staff



Organisational capabilities to improve ability to pivot, deliver faster and improve market share/save money



Business as usual work including upgrades and support

# WSJF is based on Relative Sizes

Epics and Features are assessed against each Weighted Shorted Job First (WSJF) and are typically scored relative to each other on a T-Shirt Size or Fibonacci scale.

Relative sizing means Features are compared to other Features, not sized on a linear scale of 1-10. For example, if Feature A scores a "business value" of size "L", and another Feature B will deliver an order of magnitude greater value than A, then Feature B is sized as an "XL".

## Cost of Delay Factors for WSJF



### BUSINESS VALUE

Digital service take up

- Clients moved to digital services
- Growth in digital transactions
- Take up of software

Enhanced user experience

- Process simplification
- Fit for purpose
- Tailored to user
- Easier to comply
- Red tape reduction

Cost savings

- Cost to support
- Cost to manage exceptions
- Internal efficiency and red tape

Cross business line benefits

### Direct Value



### TIME CRITICALITY

Non discretionary

- Legislation/compliance
- Shareholder announcements
- External commitments

Customer satisfaction

- Critical pain point
- Peak period interaction
- Service effectiveness

Investment priorities

- Strategic initiatives
- Dependencies
- Other programs and projects

Competitor landscape

- First to market pressures
- Losing market share
- Need to pivot to new market conditions

### Urgency



### OPPORTUNITY ENABLEMENT or RISK REDUCTION

Reputation enhancement

Organisational alignment

Channel strategy

- Streamlining services
- Reduction of non preferred channels
- Emerging opportunity

Service improvement /Innovation

- Consistent customer experience
- Security and privacy
- Service re-use
- Technology evolution
- Scalability and future flexibility
- System optimisation
- Speed to market

### Indirect Value

## WSJF helps to avoid



### Hippo

Decisions made solely because a person is the manager/ Highest paid person in the room



### Squeaky Wheel

Making decisions because someone has complained or their voice is 'loudest'



### ROI only

Decisions made solely due to financial considerations, e.g. it's cheaper

## What about dependencies ?



What needs to be sequenced first?



Which are core capabilities that then are needed for other features?



What should be tested with users sooner rather than later?



What time windows and constraints do we need to work around?



What has a long lead time that should be started earlier?



What will give us a good mix of size and complexity?