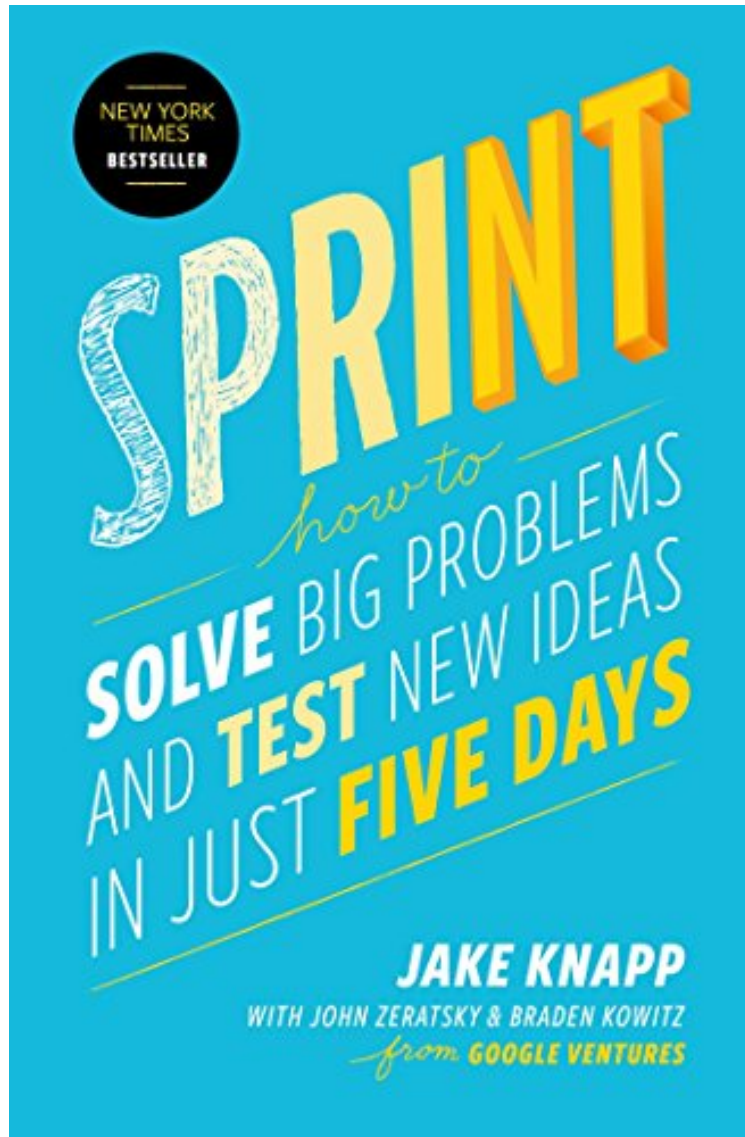


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Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days

Jake Knapp, John Zeratsky, Braden Kowitz
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Jake Knapp, John Zeratsky, Braden Kowitz : Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sprint: How to Solve Big Problems and Test New Ideas in Just Five Days:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Significant for describing what you can safely leave out By CW California A fantastic cookbook for getting better product outcomes faster. I'm going to use the Sprint checklists every time I run a workshop from now on. This book is notable for the things it leaves out of the design process. An example

is brainstorming. At one point in history, every collaborative design activity had to involve brainstorming. Jake and team actually discourage spending time brainstorming in Sprint. After some reflection, I'm starting to see the wisdom of leaving it out. This doesn't mean they discourage creative or divergent thinking, only that classic brainstorming as a group can create unwanted digressions. Another Design collaboration staple Jake leaves on the cutting room floor is creating exhaustive documentation and analysis of every step in the Design Sprint process. He promotes focusing the documentation work on the product prototypes, and user feedback which is very wise advice. 48 of 50 people found the following review helpful. Great book just not on KINDLE! By Mr. T. C. Jones The book content is great and the process methods and practice are well defined for any UX professional to pick up and be effective with out of the box. Four stars because the Kindle version is dreadful, don't buy it terrible image formatting of tiny indistinguishable blobs. The Kindle typography is also borderline. Buy paper you will thank me. 2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Well written account of a well designed process By Mr. K. Monahan The book is well written with good examples of how different Sprints progressed and worked as well as some that didn't and why. If you want to try running a Design Sprint I strongly recommend you do 2 things: 1. Read the The Design Sprint -- GV - Google Ventures [...] site thoroughly as well as Michael Margolis -- Medium [...] articles as there are a lot of important and helpful hints in there, E.g. Use Gotomeeting to stream and record the interviews on Friday and get the camera Michael recommends. 2. Make sure at least 2 of you read the entire book, ideally everyone should read it. The Sprint is a great process (I've used many and this is definitely one of the best) but there are many important steps day by day and it's hard for one person to stay on top of all of them. Good luck, if you stick to the process I think you will have success.

NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER WALL STREET JOURNAL BESTSELLER "Sprint offers a transformative formula for testing ideas that works whether you're at a startup or a large organization. Within five days, you'll move from idea to prototype to decision, saving you and your team countless hours and countless dollars. A must read for entrepreneurs of all stripes." —Eric Ries, author of *The Lean Startup*

From three partners at Google Ventures, a unique five-day process for solving tough problems, proven at more than a hundred companies. Entrepreneurs and leaders face big questions every day: What's the most important place to focus your effort, and how do you start? What will your idea look like in real life? How many meetings and discussions does it take before you can be sure you have the right solution? Now there's a surefire way to answer these important questions: the sprint. Designer Jake Knapp created the five-day process at Google, where sprints were used on everything from Google Search to Google X. He joined Braden Kowitz and John Zeratsky at Google Ventures, and together they have completed more than a hundred sprints with companies in mobile, e-commerce, healthcare, finance, and more. A practical guide to answering critical business questions, *Sprint* is a book for teams of any size, from small startups to Fortune 100s, from teachers to nonprofits. It's for anyone with a big opportunity, problem, or idea who needs to get answers today.

"Every business leader I know worries about the same thing: Are we moving fast enough? The genius of Jake Knapp's *Sprint* is its step-by-step breakdown of what it takes to solve big problems and do work that matters with speed and urgency. A sprint is a cure for what ails companies in an ever faster world." —Beth Comstock, vice chair of GE

"The key to success, often, is building the right habits. But which habits work best? *Sprint* offers powerful methods for hatching ideas, solving problems, testing solutions—and finding those small, correct habits that make all the right behaviors fall in place." —Charles Duhigg, author of *The Power of Habit*

"To quote one of my colleagues, 'don't get ready, get started.' Through hard won experience Jake Knapp and the team at Google Ventures have refined an efficient, hands-on approach to solving your product, service and experience design challenges. Try the book and try a Sprint." —Tim Brown, CEO of IDEO and author of *Change By Design*

"Read this book and do what it says if you want to build better products faster." —Ev Williams, founder of Medium, Blogger, and Twitter

"*Sprint* teaches you a novel process for solving really thorny problems in just 5 days. It's full of helpful, entertaining stories that will make it easier for you to succeed. What more, exactly, would you demand from a book? I wish all business books were this useful." —Dan Heath, co-author of *Made to Stick*, *Switch*, and *Decisive*

About the Author Jake Knapp Jake Knapp created the Google Ventures sprint process and has run more than a hundred sprints with startups such as 23andme, Slack, Nest, and Foundation Medicine. Previously, Jake worked at Google, leading sprints for everything from Gmail to Google X. He is currently among the world's tallest designers.

John Zeratsky John Zeratsky has designed mobile apps, medical reports, and a daily newspaper (among other things). Before joining Google Ventures, he was a design lead at YouTube and an early employee of FeedBurner, which Google acquired in 2007. John writes about design and productivity for Wall Street Journal, Fast Company, and Wired. He studied journalism at the University of Wisconsin. Excerpt. copy; Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved.

Sprint 1 Challenge In 2002, a clarinet player named James Freeman quit his job as a professional musician and founded a coffee cart. James was obsessed with freshly roasted coffee. In those days in the San Francisco area, it was nearly impossible to find coffee beans with a roast date printed on the bag. So James decided to do it himself. He carefully roasted beans in a potting shed at home, then drove to farmers' markets in

Berkeley and Oakland, California, where he brewed and sold coffee by the cup. His manner was polite and accommodating, and the coffee was delicious. Soon James and his cart, called Blue Bottle Coffee, developed a following. In 2005, he established a permanent Blue Bottle location in a friend's San Francisco garage. Over the next few years, as the business grew, he slowly opened more cafes. By 2012, Blue Bottle had locations in San Francisco, Oakland, Manhattan, and Brooklyn. It was a business that many would have considered perfect. The coffee was ranked among the best nationwide. The baristas were friendly and knowledgeable. Even the interior design of the cafes was perfect: wooden shelves, tasteful ceramic tiles, and an understated logo in the perfect shade of sky blue. But James didn't consider the business perfect, or complete. He was still just as passionate about coffee and hospitality, and he wanted to bring the Blue Bottle experience to even more coffee lovers. He wanted to open more cafes. He wanted to deliver freshly roasted coffee to people's homes, even if they didn't live anywhere near a Blue Bottle location. If that coffee cart had been Sputnik, the next phase would be more like a moon shot. So in October 2012, Blue Bottle Coffee raised \$20 million from a group of Silicon Valley investors, including GV. James had many plans for that money, but one of the most obvious was building a better online store for selling fresh coffee beans. But Blue Bottle wasn't a tech company and James was no expert at online retail. How could he translate the magic of his cafes to smartphones and laptops? Several weeks later, on a bright December afternoon, Braden Kowitz and John Zeratsky met up with James. They sat around a counter, drank coffee, and discussed the challenge. The online store was important to the company. It would take time and money to get it right, and it was difficult to know where to start. In other words, it sounded like a perfect candidate for a sprint. James agreed. They talked about who should be in the sprint. An obvious choice was the programmer who would be responsible for building Blue Bottle's online store. But James also included Blue Bottle's chief operating officer, chief finance officer, and communications manager. He included the customer service lead who handled questions and complaints. He even included the company's executive chairman: Bryan Meehan, a retail expert who started a chain of organic grocery stores in the UK. And, of course, James himself would be in the room. The online store was essentially a software project—something our team at GV was very familiar with. But this group looked almost nothing like a traditional software team. These were busy people, who would be missing a full week of important work. Would the sprint be worth their time? On Monday morning of our sprint week, the Blue Bottle team gathered in a conference room at GV's office in San Francisco. We made a diagram on the whiteboard showing how coffee buyers might move through the online store. The Blue Bottle team targeted a new customer purchasing coffee beans. James wanted to focus the sprint on this scenario because it was so difficult. If they could establish credibility and create a great experience for someone who had never heard of Blue Bottle, let alone visited their cafes or tasted their coffee, then every other situation should be easy by comparison. We ran into a big question: How should we organize the coffee? The shopper in this scenario would be choosing between a dozen or so varieties of bean, each in a nearly identical bag. Unlike in Blue Bottle's cafes—there would be no barista there to help choose. At first, the answer seemed obvious. From boutique coffee roasters to mainstream giants like Starbucks, retailers tend to organize coffee by the geographic region where it was grown. Africa, Latin America, the Pacific. Honduran coffee vs. Ethiopian coffee. It would be logical for Blue Bottle to categorize their beans the same way. "I have to admit something," Braden announced. Everyone turned. "I'm into coffee, okay? I have a scale at home and everything." Electronic scales are the hallmark of a true coffee freak. Owning a scale meant Braden weighed the water and coffee beans so that he could experiment and adjust ratios as he brewed. "I'm re talking science here. Coffee scales are accurate to a fraction of a gram. Braden smiled and held his hands palm up. "I don't know what the regions mean." There was silence. We avoided looking at James. After all, Braden's brave admission might be seen as heresy. "That's okay," said James. The floodgate opened. John and Jake didn't know the difference between coffee regions, and neither did Daniel Burka. We drank coffee together constantly, but none of us had ever admitted to our lack of sophistication. Then Serah Giarusso, Blue Bottle's customer service lead, snapped her fingers. "What do we do in the cafes?" she asked. After all, she went on, "The Braden Situation must happen to baristas all the time: a customer comes in for coffee beans, but isn't sure which kind to buy. James is a slow and thoughtful speaker. He paused for a moment before he answered. "The brew method is very important," he said. "So we train the baristas to ask the customer a simple question: 'How do you make coffee at home?' James explained that, depending on whether the customer used a Chemex, or a French press, or a Mr. Coffee, or whatever, the baristas could recommend a bean to match. "How do you make coffee at home?" Braden repeated. Everyone jotted notes. James had started the sprint by explaining his vision: that the online store should match the hospitality of the cafes. It felt as if we were onto something. The team spent the following day sketching ideas for the store. On Wednesday morning we had fifteen different solutions. That's too many to test with customers, so the team voted on their favorites as a way to narrow it down. Then James, the decision-maker, made the final pick of three sketches to test. The first sketch showed a literal approach to making the website match the cafes: It looked like the inside of a Blue Bottle cafe, complete with wooden shelves. The second sketch included lots of text, to mirror the conversations baristas

often have with customers. Finally, James chose a third sketch that organized coffee by brew method, bringing the "How do you make coffee at home?" question right onto the computer screen. James had chosen three competing ideas. So which one should we prototype and test? The idea of a website that looked like the cafe; was the most appealing. Blue Bottlers's aesthetic is celebrated, and a matching website would look different from anything else in the market. We had to try that idea, and it wasn't compatible with the other solutions. But those other solutions were also really intriguing. We couldn't quite decide. So we decided to prototype all three. After all, we didn't need a functioning website. To appear real in our test, each fake online store only required a few key screens. Working together with the Blue Bottle team, we used Keynote presentation software to make a series of slides that looked like three real websites. With a little ingenuity, and without any computer programming at all, we stitched those screens into a prototype that our test customers could use. On Friday, the team watched the customer interviews. One at a time, coffee drinkers shopped on several websites, with Blue Bottlers's three prototypes slipped in among the competitors. (To avoid tipping off the customers, we gave each prototype a fake name.) Patterns emerged. The store with wooden shelves, which everyone had such high hopes for? We thought the prototype was beautiful, but customers said it was "cheesy" and "not trustworthy." But the other two prototypes fared far better. The "How do you make coffee at home?" design worked seamlessly. And the "lots of text" design shocked us: People actually read all those words, and the extra information brought Blue Bottlers's voice and expertise to life. As one customer said, "These guys know coffee." James and the Blue Bottle team built confidence with their sprint. They were much closer to defining how their online store would work. What's more, they'd done it in a way that felt true to their principles of hospitality. They believed the online store could be an authentic Blue Bottle experience. A few months later, Blue Bottle launched their new website, and their online sales growth doubled. The next year, they acquired a coffee subscription company. With a bigger team and new technology, they expanded the web store and began experimenting with new offerings. They knew it would take years to get the online store right—but in the sprint, they started on their path. The bigger the challenge, the better the sprint. If you're starting a project that will take months or years—like Blue Bottle and their new online store—a sprint makes an excellent kickoff. But sprints aren't only for long-term projects. Here are three challenging situations where sprints can help: High Stakes Like Blue Bottle Coffee, you're facing a big problem and the solution will require a lot of time and money. It's as if you're the captain of a ship. A sprint is your chance to check the navigation charts and steer in the right direction before going full steam ahead. Not Enough Time You're up against a deadline, like Savioke rushing to get their robot ready for the hotel pilot. You need good solutions, fast. As the name suggests, a sprint is built for speed. Just Plain Stuck Some important projects are hard to start. Others lose momentum along the way. In these situations, a sprint can be a booster rocket: a fresh approach to problem solving that helps you escape gravity's clutches. When we talk to startups about sprints, we encourage them to go after their most important problem. Running a sprint requires a lot of energy and focus. Don't go for the small win, or the nice-to-have project, because people won't bring their best efforts. They probably won't even clear their schedules in the first place. So how big is too big? Sure, sprints work great for websites and other software challenges. But what about really large, complicated problems? Not long ago, Jake visited his friend David Lowe, a vice president of a company called Graco that manufactures pumps and sprayers. Graco is not a small startup. They're a multinational company who have been in business for more than ninety years. The company was developing a new kind of industrial pump—a machine used in assembly lines. David, the VP, wondered if a sprint might help lower the risk of the project. After all, it would take eighteen months and millions of dollars to design and manufacture the new pump. How could he be sure they were on the right track? Jake doesn't know anything about industrial assembly lines, but out of curiosity, he joined a meeting with the engineering team. "I'll be honest," Jake said. "An industrial pump sounds too complicated to prototype and test in a week." But the team wouldn't give up so easily. If limited to just five days, they could prototype a brochure for the pump's new features and try it in sales visits. That kind of test could answer questions about marketability. But what about the pump itself? The engineers had ideas for that, too. To test ease-of-use, they could 3D print new nozzles and attach them to existing pumps. To test installation, they could bring cables and hoses to nearby manufacturing plants and get reactions from assembly line workers. These tests wouldn't be perfect. But they would answer big questions, before the pump even existed. Jake was wrong. The industrial pump wasn't too complicated for a sprint. The team of engineers accepted the five-day constraint and used their domain expertise to think creatively. They sliced the challenge into important questions, and shortcuts started to appear. The lesson? No problem is too large for a sprint. Yes, this statement sounds absurd, but there are two big reasons why it's true. First, the sprint forces your team to focus on the most pressing questions. Second, the sprint allows you to learn from just the surface of a finished product. Blue Bottle could use a slide show to prototype the surface of a website—before they built the software and inventory processes to make it really work. Graco could use a brochure to prototype the surface of a sales conversation—before they engineered and built the product they were selling. Solve the surface first. The surface is important. It's where your product or service meets customers. Human beings are complex and fickle, so it's impossible to predict how they'll react to a brand-new

solution. When our new ideas fail, it's usually because we were overconfident about how well customers would understand and how much they would care. Get that surface right, and you can work backward to figure out the underlying systems or technology. Focusing on the surface allows you to move fast and answer big questions before you commit to execution, which is why any challenge, no matter how large, can benefit from a sprint.