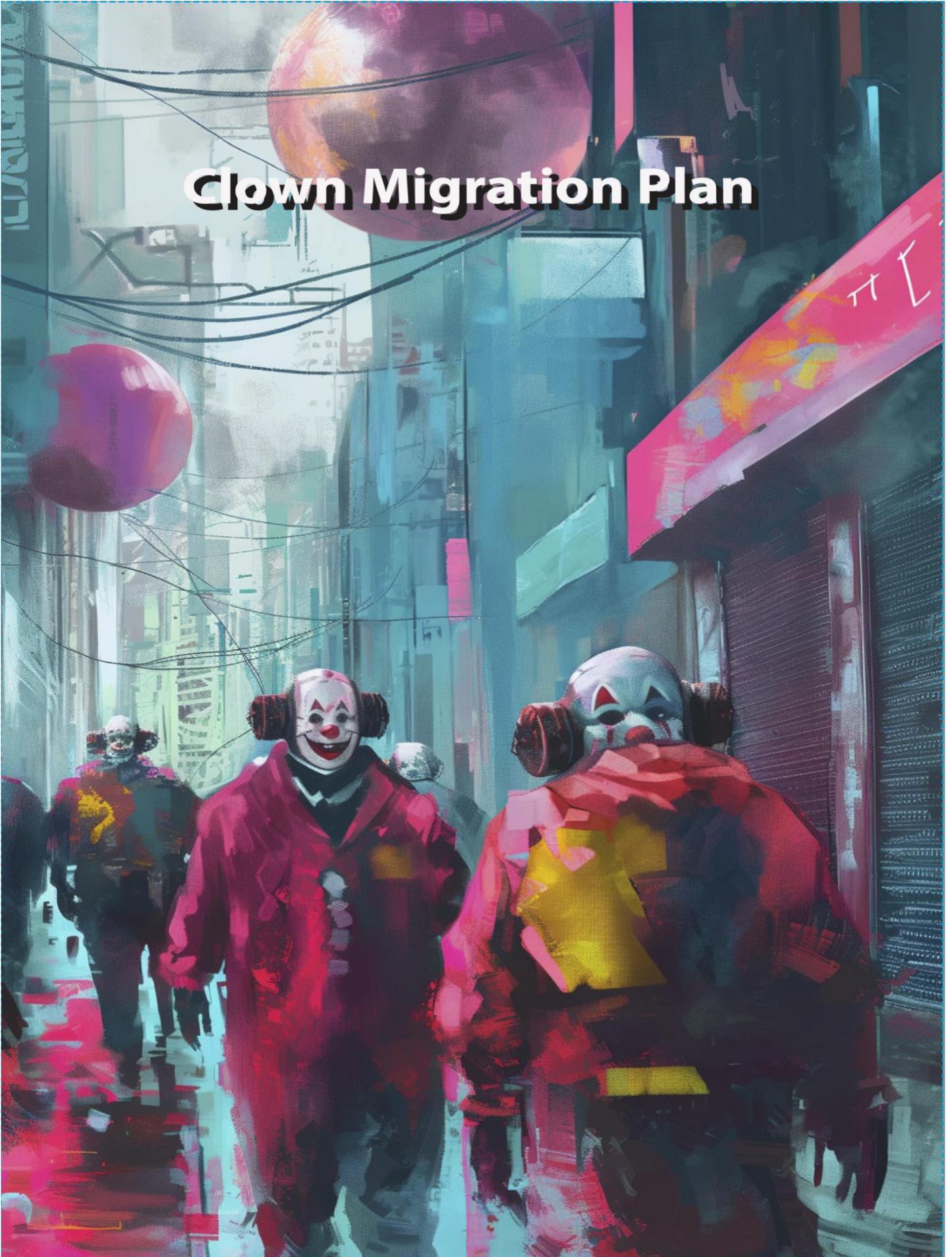


Clown Migration Plan



CLOWN MIGRATION PLAN

Based on a True Story

1-4 Players

Welcome to the Shit Show!

You are the proud owner of a cloud migration and enablement project, and your company is counting on you to complete it successfully. Many forces—both helpful and chaotic—will exert their influence over your project. With careful planning and a few metric tons of luck, you might just land the plane safely.

This game is intentionally difficult. It simulates real-world scenarios where you don't always get dealt a good hand, and events beyond your control will impact your progress. How you adapt, leverage your Influence, acquire resources, and stay resilient are skills that will serve you in this game—and in the field.

Game Inventory

Before you begin, verify you have all the following components:

Per Player:

- 1 Project Board (includes The Board and The Backlog)
- 1 slider clip (red, green, blue, yellow)
- 1 Character variant card (FTE or Consultant)
- 10 Frontliner cards (starting deck):
 - 5x The Developer
 - 4x The IT Pro
 - 1x The Architect

Shared Components:

- The Event Stream (center play area)
- The Project Plan (for 1-2 players or 3-4 players)
- One clear tracking cube
- Event deck (shuffled draw pile)
- Leadership deck (5 cards per player dealt at setup)
- Resource tokens (for tracking card acquisition costs)
- Work item tokens (for Backlog tracking)

Note: Product Owners and Scrum Masters do not appear in this game, as they add no intrinsic value—just like in real life!

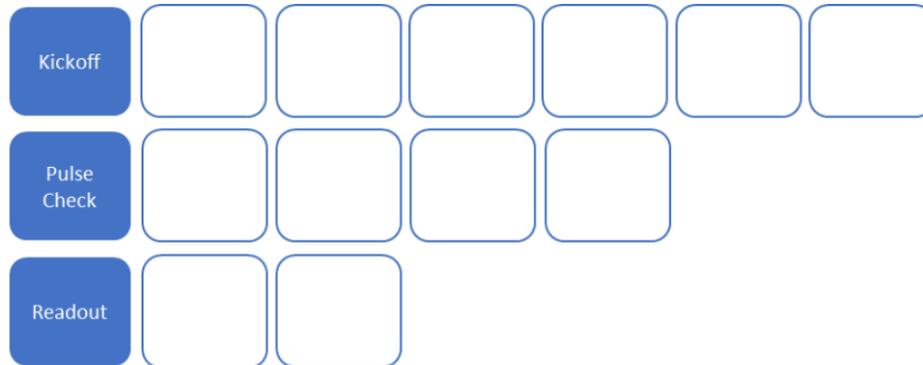
Game Overview

Objective

Successfully complete your cloud migration project by clearing your Backlog, maximizing your Influence, or outscoring your opponents across multiple metrics.

Game Structure

The game is played over three phases, with each player taking turns in rounds. An example of the Project Plan for a 3-4 player game can be seen below.



Kickoff initiates the game and the first round of play. Every player takes 4 Feature tokens and places them in the New column on their Backlog.

Pulse Check occurs roughly halfway through the game and causes **Scope Creep**, which is an event forcing all players to add 6 new items to their Backlogs (2 Features, 2 Bugs, 2 Unplanned Work Items). It also forces the fourth member of the Board to be exposed.

Readout occurs close to the end of the game and forces the fifth member of the Board to be exposed.

Play Style: Co-No-Op

This is a competitive game with occasional cooperative opportunities. Sometimes it benefits you to aid another player under attack; other times, you'll want to pile on. Cards marked with the Options symbol allow you to assist attacks or defenses but can only be used once per game. Choose wisely.

Game Area Setup

The Event Stream (Center Row)

The Event Stream is the central marketplace where players acquire personas, items, and events. Each card displays its acquisition cost in the upper right corner (number + colored resource indicator). When a card is acquired, all remaining cards shift left, and a new card is drawn to fill the rightmost position.

The Project Board (Per Player)

Each player's board consists of two key areas:

The Board: Five card slots at the top of your board. These hold Leader and character cards that can make your project run smoothly—or crash spectacularly.

The Backlog: Located to the right of The Board, this tracks work items across three columns:

- **New** (incoming work)
- **In Progress** (actively being worked)
- **Done** (completed work)

The maximum number of items in your In Progress column equals twice the total number of rounds in the game. Managing your work-in-progress is critical to success—don't overcommit!

The Influence Meter

Integrated on the left side of your Backlog board, the Influence Meter tracks your project's political capital and stakeholder support. It ranges from -2 to +11, with a stoplight gradient (red at bottom, green at top). Reaching +11 before the final round ends is one path to victory.

The Bench (Your Hand)

Cards you hold for playing during your turn. Standard hand size is 5 cards.

Setup

1. Each player chooses a character variant: Full-Time Employee (FTE) or Consultant.
2. Each player receives their Backlog with integrated Influence Meter (set to 0) and starting deck of 10 Frontliner cards.
3. Shuffle the Leadership deck. Deal 5 Leadership cards to each player: place the first 3 face-up on The Board and keep the last 2 face-down (revealed in later rounds).
4. Shuffle the remaining Leadership cards into the Events deck.
5. Draw 7 cards to fill The Event Stream (center row).
6. Each player shuffles their starting deck and draws 5 cards to form their initial Bench.
7. Determine first player (youngest player goes first or choose randomly).

Play Variants

There are two modes this game can be played in, which are cooperative or competitive. The original intent of the game is to be competitive and move toward a single-player victory—I win, you lose, sucks to suck. However, playing the game cooperatively can add a different dimension to the game, allowing players to share in the experience and

hopefully gain some appreciation for the perspective (and suffering) of others. There are also plans to add a third mode to the game (Anarchy), which allows for 2v1 or 3v2 or whatever configuration you wish to use. Consultants versus FTEs, everyone against Joey, whatever your heart's desire. More on that later.

Some cards in the deck should be removed depending on the play variant you select. For example, ElysiumOps is meant to trigger an endgame scenario for a single player. Having this card available for someone to play in a cooperative format would make a player seem not to work well with others.

Cards that are meant to be played during competitive play only will feature the target symbol (🎯), while cards meant to be played during cooperative play only will feature the co-op symbol (🤝).

Cards will have conditions that will impact another player in a negative way. When playing cooperatively, the effect of the card played is reversed, making it easier for other players to benefit. For example, if an Event is played that would add two Unplanned Work items to another player's Backlog, instead it is used to clear move two Unplanned Work items to the Done column on another player's Backlog. This does not apply to Outages, Leaders, or any other cards that specifically call out their lack of leniency.

Character Variants

Your character variant affects how certain cards impact you. Choose carefully—it will shape your strategy.

The Full-Time Employee (FTE): Job security comes with corporate bureaucracy. Some cards (like Outsourcing) will negatively impact FTEs more than Consultants. However, FTEs have access to internal political advantages.

The Consultant: Flexible and adaptable, but vulnerable to budget cuts and contract changes. Cards like Outsourcing benefit Consultants, while Vendor Consolidation can eliminate you from the game entirely.

Turn Structure

Each player's turn consists of three phases:

1. Sprint Planning

- Discard all cards currently in The Bench
- Draw 5 new cards from your deck
- Move any one item from the New column of your Backlog into the In Progress column

2. Sprinting (Main Phase)

This is where the action happens. You may:

- Play cards from The Bench
- Acquire cards from The Event Stream (if you have the required resources)
- Activate card effects
- Launch attacks or defend against them
- Resolve events or outages

Card effects, attacks, defenses, and special abilities are all resolved during this phase. Play strategically—the order matters!

3. Sprint Review

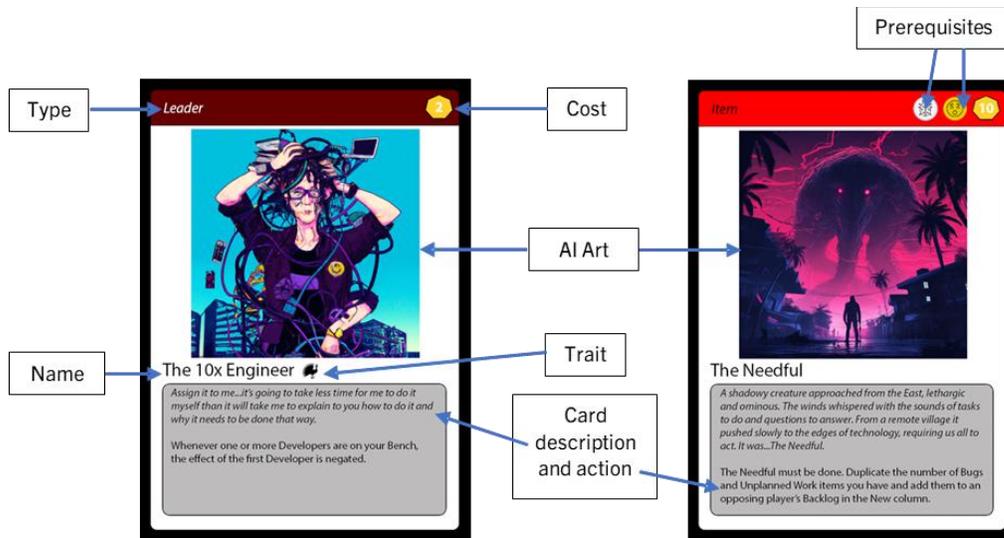
Review your board state and make any final adjustments you're able to make before ending your turn. Check The Bench, The Board, and The Backlog. If you can optimize your position, do it now.

Card Reference

Each card comes with a set of common characteristics which impact how each player's turn is processed as well as how the game itself progresses. Card types tend to fall into a select few supersets:

- Leaders
- Events
- Items
- Allies
- Double Agents
- Countermeasures

Common elements include the Type, Cost, Name, Card description, and AI generated art. Some cards also have Traits, which give them specific abilities or powers.



These abilities need to be resolved before the abilities of any Bench cards at the start of your turn.

Some cards have Prerequisites, meaning you must have at least one of the icons shown in your Backlog to purchase as well as use this card.

Card Symbols

The following symbols appear on cards and affect gameplay:

Symbol	Name	Description
	Promotable	This card can be promoted to a spot on the Bench in place of an existing Leader.
	Demotion	This card allows you to demote a current Leader on the Board and replace it with a Leader you have on the Bench.
	Options	Just like stock options, it's unclear when the best time to use them is. This indicates a special ability that can only be used once per game.
	Poaching	Save the ivory! This allows you to take any one card from another player so long as it's currently in play.
	Double Agent	This indicates a card that carries a certain ability and belief system that can rather easily be swayed with the right card.
	Competitive	This card should only be played during a competitive game setup.
	Cooperative	This card should only be played during a cooperative game setup.
	Feature	An intentional grouping of work items on your Backlog. If this appears next to the card cost, it means you must have at least one active Feature to purchase (and/or use) this card.
	Bug	Something is awry—QA found some shit that doesn't work as intended. If this appears next to the card cost, it means you must have at least one active Bug to purchase (and/or use) this card.
	Unplanned Work	Either you didn't find this in discovery, or someone dropped a hot load of scope creep on you. If this appears next to the card cost, it means you must have at least one active Unplanned Work item to purchase (and/or use) this card.
	Company (Outage)	Only relevant to Outage cards. The impact of the Outage card is relegated to one player.
	Regional (Outage)	Only relevant to Outage cards. The impact of the Outage card is relegated to players that have Leaders on the Board with specific Trait symbols.
	Global (Outage)	Only relevant to Outage cards. This hits everyone. A real "fuck you all" kind of card.

Leader Card Symbols (Seven Deadly Sins)

Leader cards may display symbols representing the seven deadly sins. These impact how their effects persist while they're on The Board.

Symbol	Name	Description	Trait Effect
	Envy	I want the one <i>you</i> have!	Any Leader in play with this trait can poach once for free.
	Gluttony	I want everything!	Any Outage played has a 2x multiplier, causing twice the fun.
	Greed	I want everything and want you to have nothing!	Any Leader in play with this trait can get a one-time multiplier for their Purchase Pool, doubling the amount in the Pool.
	Lust	That's hot. I'm hot. You're hot.	Any Item card you wish to purchase from the Event Stream costs 1 unit less.
	Pride	Did you see all this stuff? I did it all. Pretty great, right?	You may pop one support card off the Event Stream and move it to the dead letter queue during your turn, replacing it as normal. Support cards are seen as any cards that fall into the Allies or Double Agents supersets.
	Sloth	There's plenty of time to get this done, let's not get too excited.	Any card allowing you to move an item to Done is only half effective, requiring two cards in play to move one item.
	Wrath	You're allowed to have your own opinion, but if you voice it, I will make it my mission to DESTROY YOU.	If this card is Demoted, or a card is Promoted to replace it, add Unplanned Work items to the New column of your Backlog that match the total number of Features and Bugs you have in your Backlog.

Special Cards & Events

Promotions: Cards marked Promotable can be moved from The Bench to The Board only when a Promotion card is played.

Demotions & Layoffs: If you have a Demotion card and a Leader on The Bench, you can swap them with a Leader on The Board. Layoff cards force each player to add one new work item to their Backlog for every item currently In Progress.

Flip: Double Agent cards can be turned to reverse their effect. Play a Flip card on any Double Agent—yours or an opponent's—to change allegiances.

Reorganizations: Less frequent than in real life, but powerful. Allows you to rearrange The Board without using a Promotion card. However, only Leaders on The Bench can be moved to The Board during a reorg.

Vendor Consolidation: Procurement hates extra work. If you're playing as an FTE and draw this rare card, you can pick one Consultant player and 'break their service agreement'—eliminating them from the game.

Special Circumstances

Scope Creep: Triggered by specific cards or during a Pulse Check. Each player immediately adds 6 new work items to their Backlog's New column: 2 Bugs, 2 Features, and 2 Unplanned Work Items. Welcome to reality.

Outages: Compensable SLAs in action! Outages occur at three levels:

- **Company:** Affects one opposing player
- **Regional:** Affects players with Leaders displaying specific symbols
- **Global:** Affects ALL players, including the one who played the card

Most Outages reduce Influence unless the card specifies otherwise. Read the card carefully before playing.

Poaching: The grass IS greener on the other side. Play a Poaching card to steal ANY card from ANY player's play area. Yes, any card. The stolen card can be played immediately. Choose your target wisely—this will make enemies.

Winning the Game

You can win through one of three paths:

1. **Clear Your Backlog:** Move all work items from New and In Progress to the Done column before the end of the final round.
2. **Maximize Influence:** Increase your Influence meter to +11 before the end of the final round.
3. **Highest Combined Score:** If no one achieves the above by the final round, the player with the highest total score wins.

Final Score Calculation

- + Items in In Progress column
- + Items in Done column
- + Your Influence meter value
- + Count of non-Frontliner cards in your deck
- - Items in New column

Tiebreaker: If players are tied, the player with the highest Influence wins. If still tied, the player with the most completed work (Done column) wins.

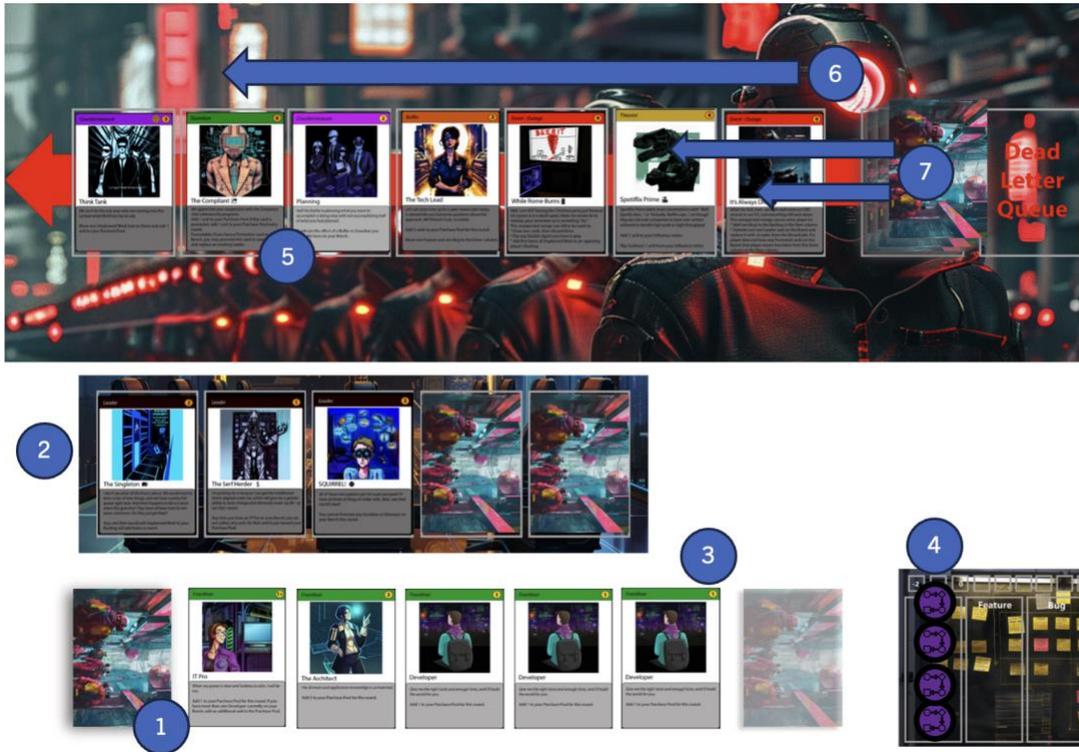
Tips & Strategy

- Don't overload your In Progress column—there's a limit for a reason
- Options cards can only be used once—save them for critical moments
- Your character variant matters—pay attention to card effects specific to FTE vs. Consultant
- Sometimes helping an opponent serves your interests. Co-no-op isn't pure competition.
- The Event Stream refreshes constantly—don't fixate on one card you can't afford yet
- Influence is a valid win condition—don't neglect it while chasing Backlog completion
- Moving items from New to In Progress happens automatically in Sprint Planning—plan accordingly

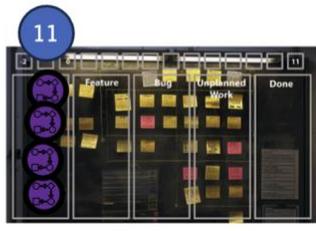
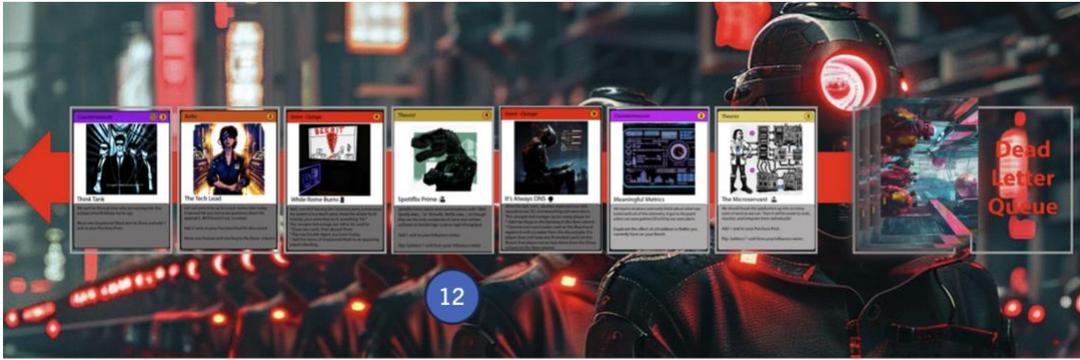
Example Round

Let's walk through an example of a typical round in a two-player competitive game. It is the first round of the game, the Event Stream has been populated, and Player A has laid out the Leader cards on the Board, three face up and two face down as a part of the game prep stage. Player A then draws five cards from the Draw deck (1). Player A, before tallying up units for the Purchase Pool, looks to the active cards on the Board to resolve any modifiers or card effects (2). Player A notices that none of the Leader

cards has an effect that impacts how units are added to the Purchase Pool, so Player A tallies up the units (3). This gives Player A a total of 8 units to work with. Player A next adds four Features to the Backlog since it is the start of the first round of play (4). Looking over the Event Stream, Player A decides to buy the second and third cards in the Stream (5), which causes all Events to shift to the left (6). Two new Events are then added to the Event Stream, moving from left to right (7).



It is now Player B's turn. Player B draws five cards from the Draw deck (8). Player B looks to the active cards on the Board to resolve any modifiers or card effects (9). Upon further inspection, Player B notices that two of the Leader cards on the Board have effects that impact how units are added to the Purchase Pool (10). The first Leader cuts the number of Frontliners able to add to the Purchase Pool in half, rounding down to the nearest number, which is two. The next Leader states that if the previous player (Player A) has more than two Frontliners on the Bench, Player B has to reduce the Purchase Pool by the number of Frontliners Player A has on the Bench. This results in a negative number of units in the Purchase Pool, disabling Player B's ability to purchase cards from the Event Stream. As it is still the first round, Player B adds four Features to the Backlog (11), then looks wistfully to the Event Stream at the cards that could have been purchased had the Board not been a bunch of terrible people (12).



Final Thoughts

This game was designed to reflect the absurdity, chaos, and occasional triumph of real-world IT consulting and cloud migration projects. Every card, every mechanic, and every frustrating moment is based on actual experiences from 20 years in the field.

If you've ever cried in a glass-walled conference room, been poached by a competitor, survived a poorly planned reorganization, or watched a leader pivot an entire project based on assumptions rather than research—this game is for you.

Good luck. You're going to need it.

— Josh, Creator & Survivor