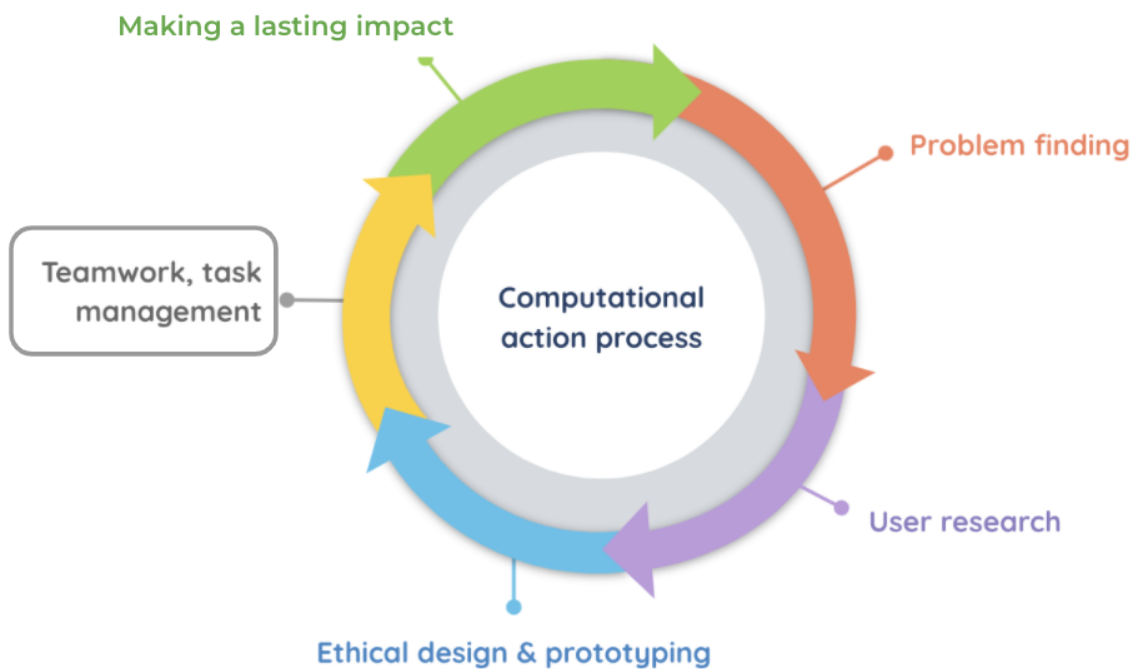# Implementation, managing tasks, and working on a team together

You've gone through problem definition, user research, ideating and designing with your team, and you've started coding with your team…. Now what?

Learning some tips and tricks for managing your tasks can help you and your team stay on track.

In technology companies, projects can involve many teams. Sometimes teams of a few hundred are involved in projects that can go on for many quarters and extend to multi-year projects. How do they track progress and stay on track when there are so many moving parts? We will learn some strategies used by real technology companies to help you understand task management.

As the size of a project scales with people and teams involved, the need for organization becomes even more important. It becomes more and more difficult to track progress easily as

more and more people are involved in engineering, design, and other parts of the team. Without task management done well, team members soon find it hard to know the status of parts of the project others are working on, what still needs to be done, if any issues need extra attention, or overall whether the status of the project is on track for completion.

Agile project management

What does it mean when a company says they use the "agile methodology"? **Agile** refers to a type of product process focused on iterative development. The scrum process includes having a backlog: which is all the tasks that need to be completed. Generally, it's good to make a task card for each specific task that needs to be completed. Each task has an assignee, who is the person in charge of completing the task. After a period, the team checks in to update the board. In companies, this is usually done weekly or biweekly. At this time, team members also raise any issues: blockers that have caused them to be unable to complete a task, or more.

Why could this be helpful for you?
1. Even though this program is relatively short and you can get by without using task management tools, learning task management and using it with your team can help you communicate with each other (esp. in a virtual work environment!) and keep on track for finishing your project by the deadline.
2. If you are interested in working in the tech industry, every tech company will use a similar type of project management so learning this early will continue to benefit you in your future career.

Learn more about Agile and Scrum:
https://www.cprime.com/resources/what-is-agile-what-is-scrum/

How to manage your projects with Trello
A good tool for project management is Trello (www.trello.com). Similar popular tools are: Jira (www.jira.atlassian.com) and Asana (ww.asana.com). Atlassian is a big project management software company that owns both Jira and Trello.
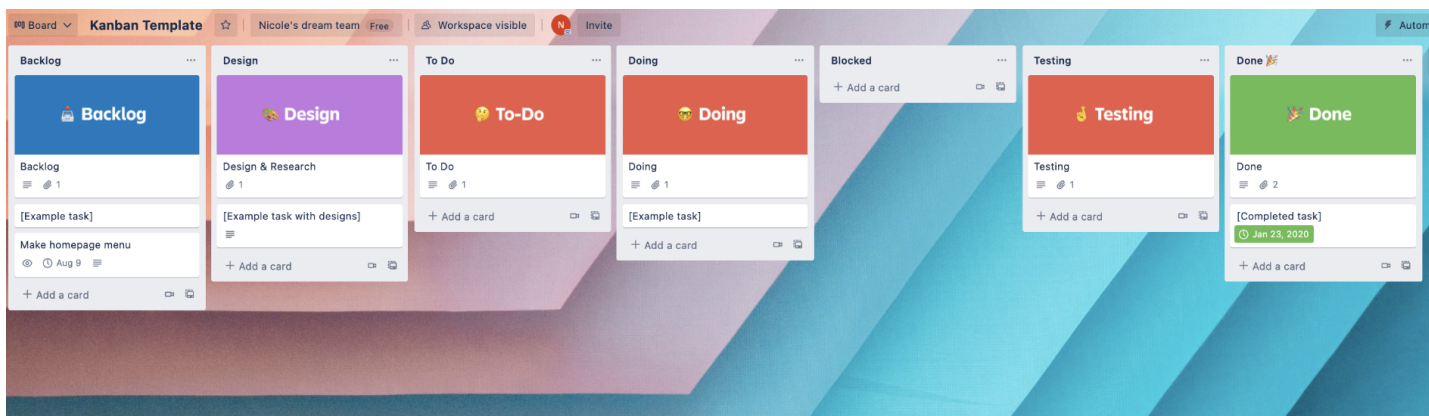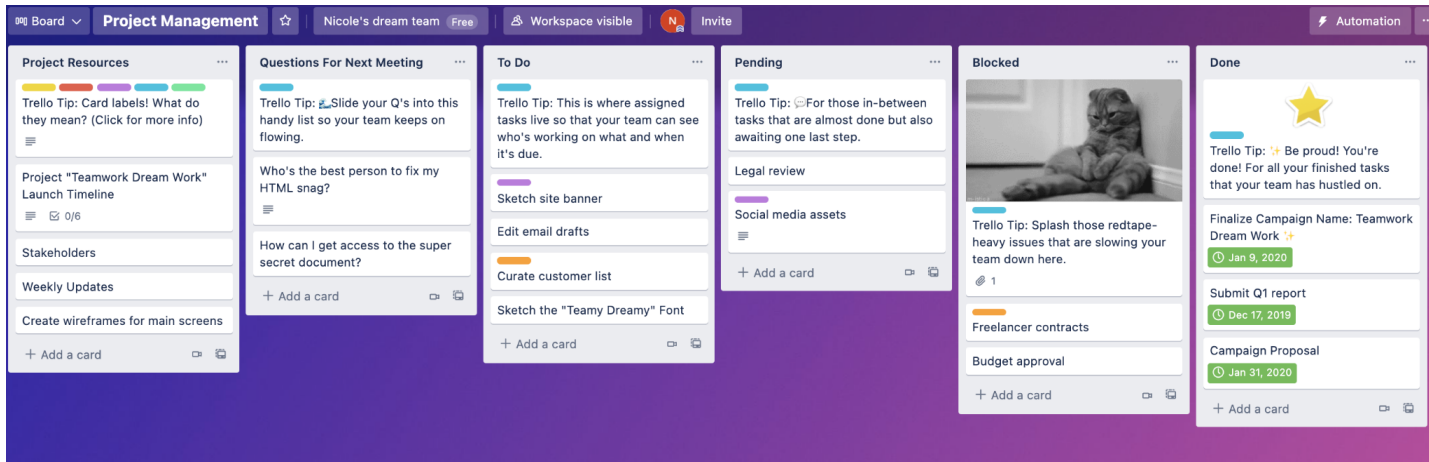
Example: Creating a task and tracking it on Trello

1. You can make a free account to work with your team on tasks at www.trello.com. Create a free account by signing up, and then invite your teammates so you're all on the same workspace.
2. Choose "Add a board to your workspace" to start managing your project.
3. Get started by taking a look at the **Project management** and **Kanban board** templates. You can use both or one to form the framework of your project board.
4. Some important categories that would be useful to have in your board:
   a. Backlog
   b. Doing
   c. Blocked
   d. Testing
   e. Done
5. How to write a task card:
   a. Select "Add a card" and write your task title. It's most helpful if the task is small enough to encapsulate a specific thing to do, but comprehensive enough for it to be meaningful. E.g.: "Create login backend", "Create login frontend", "Create user

database", "Make paper prototypes", "Create and test wireframes," "Send out 20 user research surveys", "Draft business pitch", "Create chat buttons and chat frontend" etc. are all example task cards.

b. You can fill out as much or as little of each task card as makes sense for your project. Some helpful items:

   i. Task title: for everyone to easily understand the task when looking at board

   ii. Description: Add more details. You can add links to your code or links to docs that are relevant for this task as needed.

   iii. Due date: Add a due date for the task

   iv. Members / Labels: Add the member who should get notified or is responsible for the task. In Jira (a similar project management tool), each task has an assignee. In Trello, I suggest you either add the person who is responsible for the task as a "Member" or you can use the colored "Labels" in Trello to assign a color/label to each teammate and add their label to the tasks they are responsible for.

   v. Watch: If you click "Watch", you will get updates for this card.

c. Move the card you created to the category that corresponds to its current status. As you work on each task, move the task to its new category so all your teammates can, with a quick glance at the board, know the status of all the tasks.

6. In industry, teams usually get together weekly or every 2 weeks to review the board and statuses. For this program, I suggest everyone update their cards once at the beginning of each day and once at the end of each day (asynchronously), and have a quick 5-10 minute check-in as needed either daily or every other day on the status to highlight anything urgent for the team.

7. Remember to move a card that is done to the "Done" category to indicate to your team members your progress!

Documentation

In industry, documentation is as important as implementation. If you are coding, you already know that you should comment along with your code in order to help the code be readable both for yourself and for others reviewing your code.

In project management, documentation is important because it helps you and your team track your progress, decisions, and to-dos. Common types of documentation include:

- Product requirements doc: for what feature you're building, why you're building it, and the details of the feature. Common components:
    - Motivation / background
    - User needs & research summary
    - Feature proposal summary
    - Feature details
    - Success metric(s)

- Implementation design / Request for comments (RFC): a technical write-up of what you're building and its details. Common components:
    - Background / link to product requirements doc
    - Features proposed summary
    - Technical details of features proposed

Other tips for teamwork

Communicating with each other is key for successful teamwork. Some tools can help!

I suggest you share a Google Drive with your team that includes all of your documentation, resources, and past work (like your user surveys and designs!)

If you have trouble scheduling, consider using When2Meet (www.when2meet.com) Each person highlights when they're available, so you can always view what time is good for everyone to meet.

Remember: ***Make organization work for you, but be aware of how much time you spend on task management and organization. It should help, not be another time sink!***