

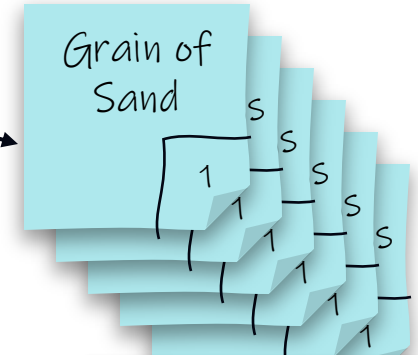


# Five Steps to Estimate Your Backlog

*"Backlog refinement turns massive epics into many little grains of sand. Use this approach to make better estimates than you can with Story Points!"*

As a banking customer, I want to send money...NFC\*

Backlog refinement turns Epics into Features and Grains of Sand.  
Grains of Sand are small enough when a Sprint contains 10 to 12 of them.



Epics

Grains of Sand

## Ensure the following are true:

**Autonomous Team:**  
Scrum Team is 100% dedicated and has control over its time.

**Free of Dependencies:**  
Team doesn't need to wait on outsiders.

**Valuable Items:**  
Items are done and deployable every Sprint.

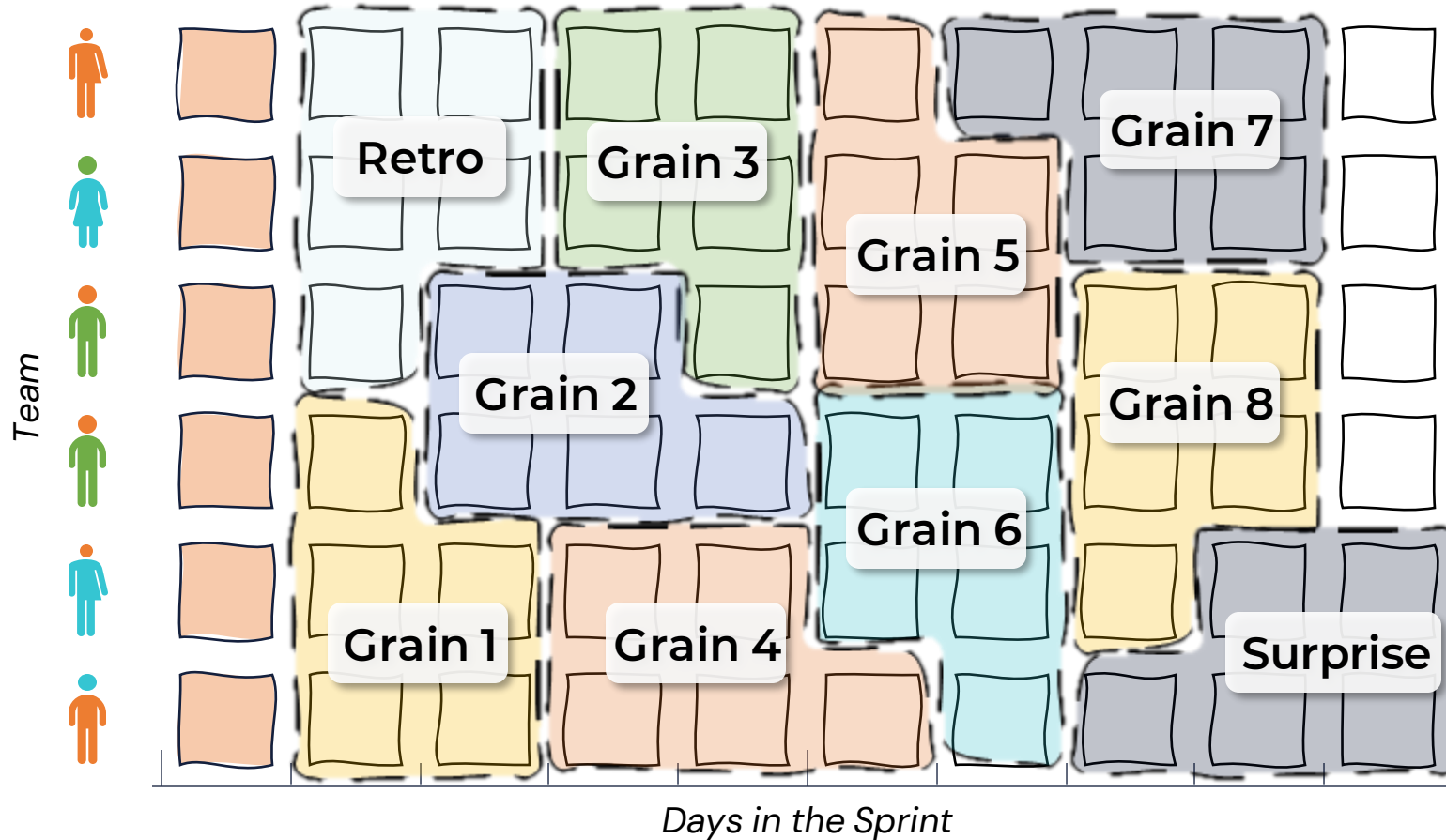
**Small Items Only:**  
Only Grains of Sand go in the Sprint.





# Instead of abstract story points, use grains of sand.

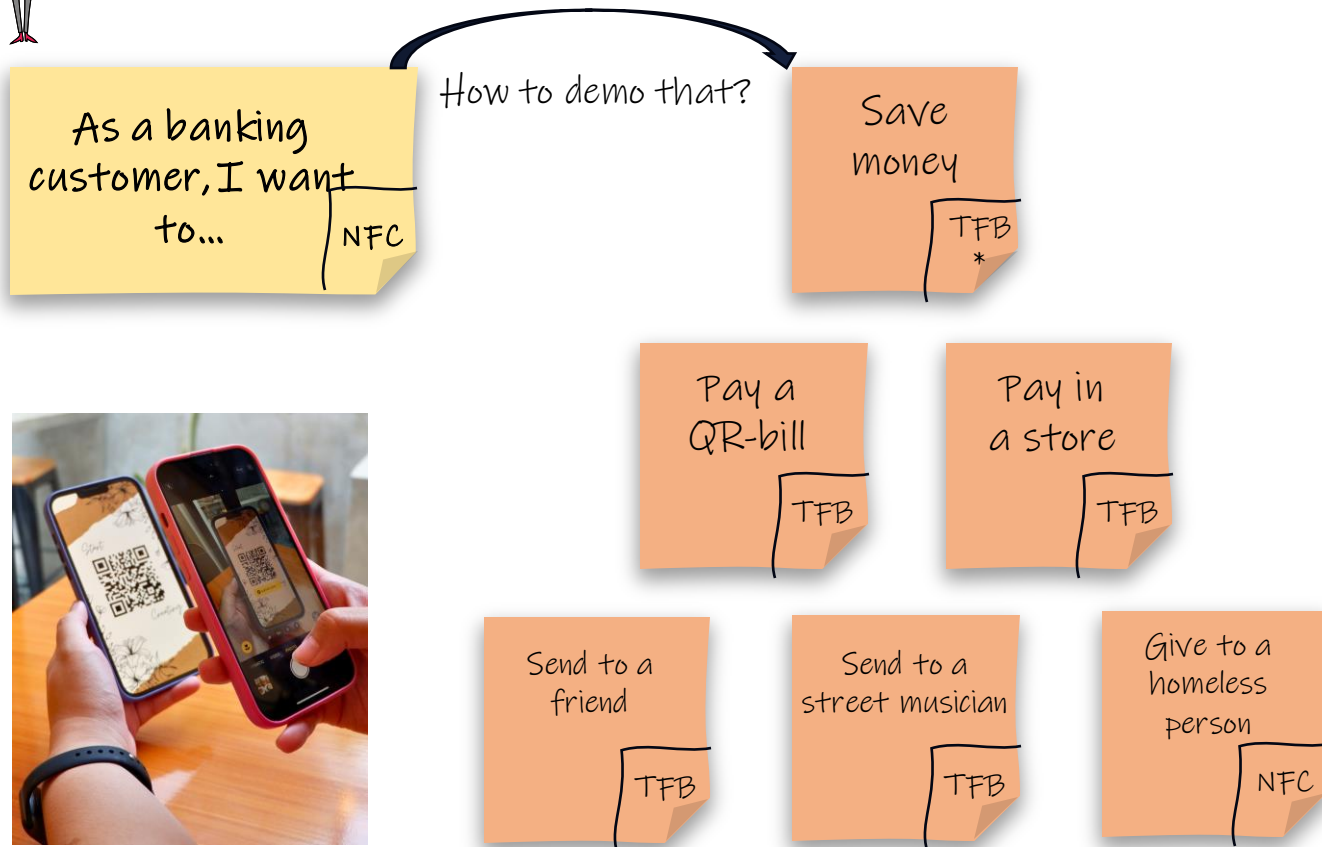
*"A Grain of Sand fits easily into a Sprint. It's a grain of sand if 10 or more will fit!"*



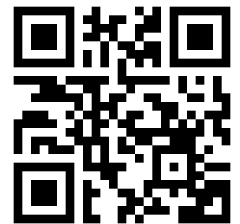


# Step 1: Refine Epics to Features

"One way to make the conversation tangible is to ask, 'How can we demo this?'"



More ways to Split a Story!



Epics

Features

Grains of Sand



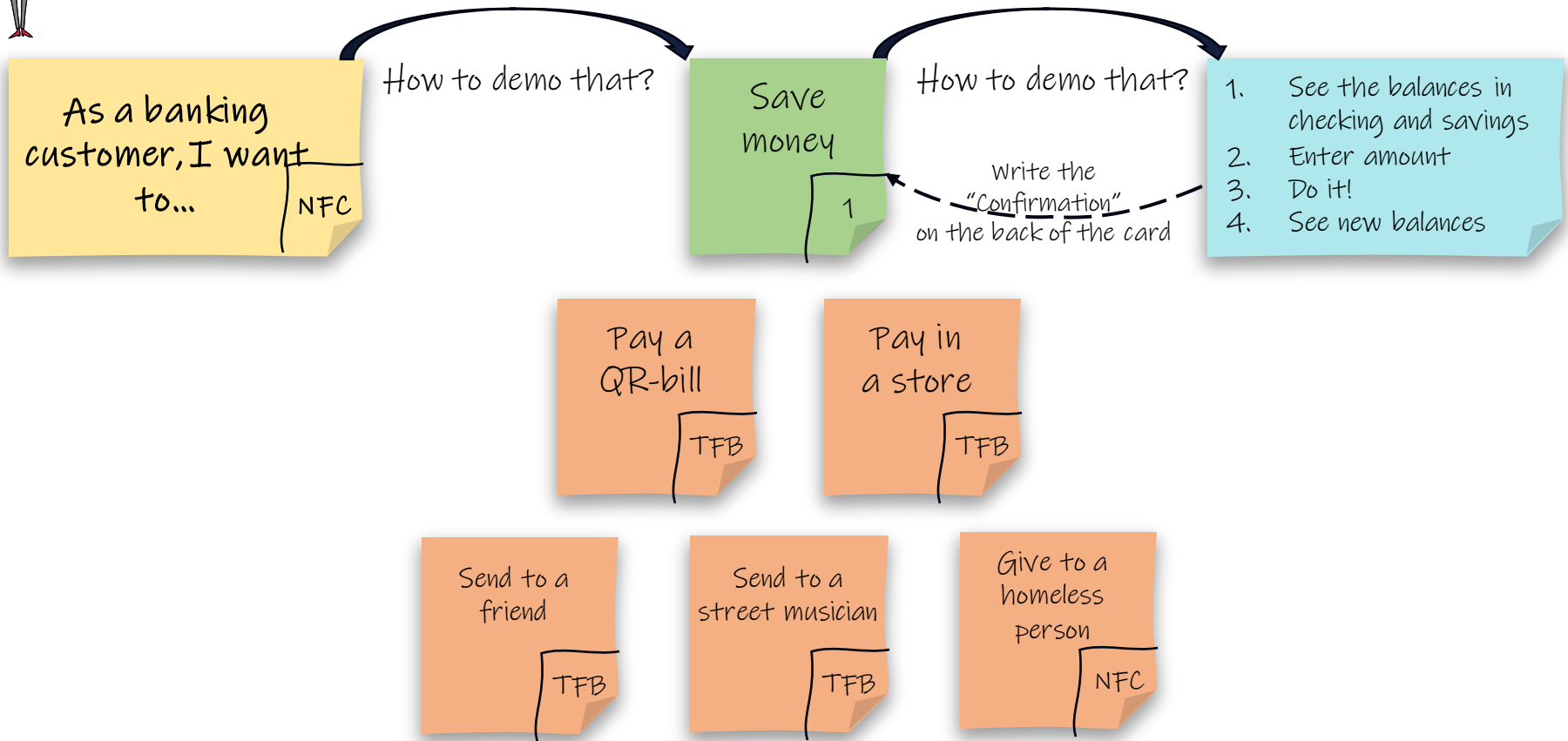
NFC: N = No, C = Clue, F is For you to Figure out  
\* TFB: T = Too, B = Big, F is Forever the same!





# Step 2: Refine a small item into grain(s) of sand.

"Some features may already be grains of sand"



Epics

Features

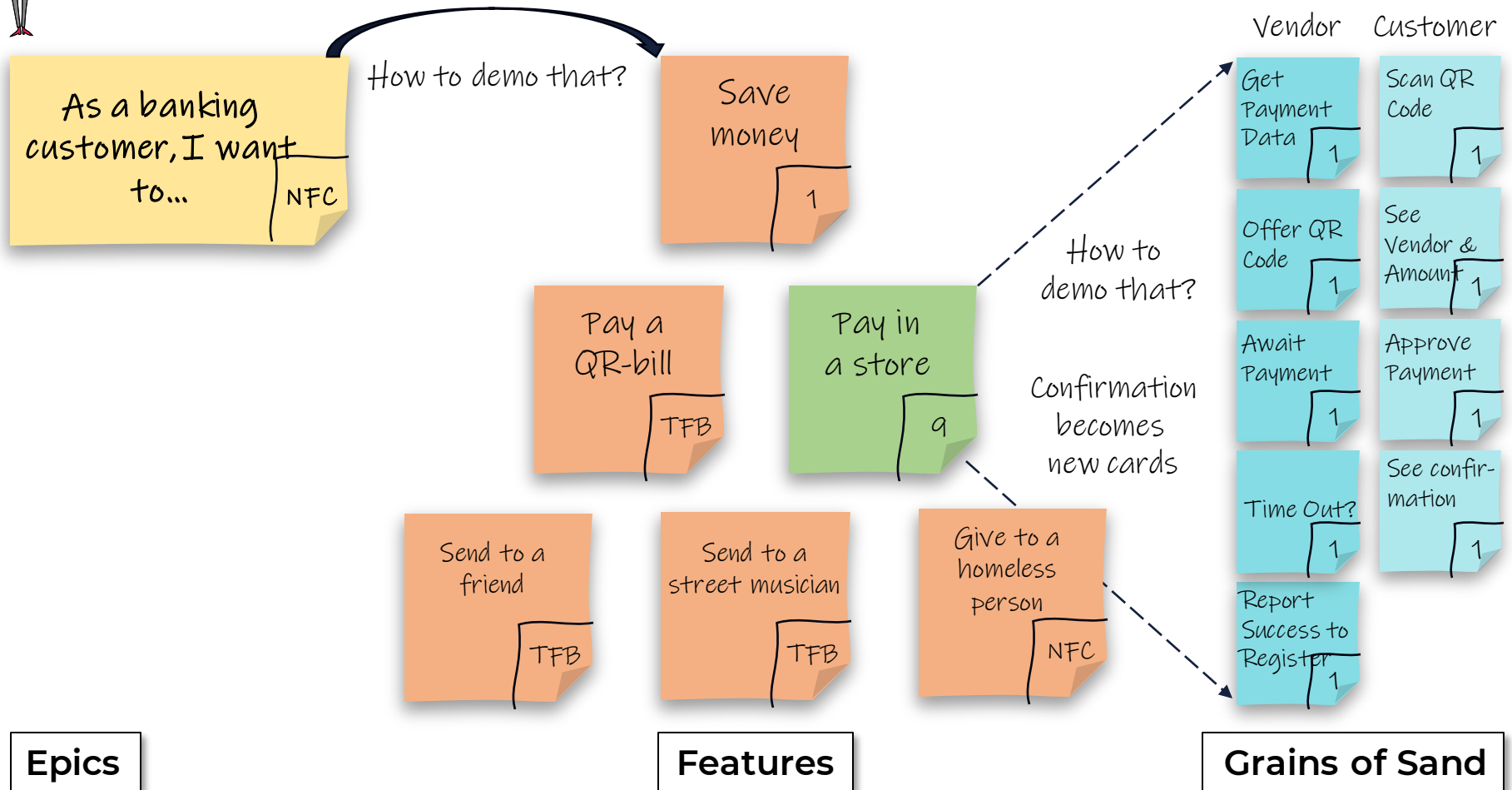
Grains of Sand





# Step 3: Larger features become many grains.

"Counting the grains gives you the estimate. Requiring that 10 items fit in a sprint keeps them tied to reality."





# Step 4: Use Traditional Methods to Size Features

"Refine epics to features (still TFB), then use planning poker or affinity estimation to gauge how many grains you expect for each feature."

As a banking customer, I want to... 18\*

Save money 1

Pay a QR-bill 3

Pay in a store 9

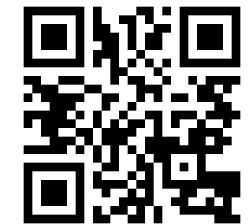
Send to a friend 2

Send to a street musician 3

Give to a homeless person NFC

\* This is about 2, maybe 3 Sprints, except we still have no clue how to get money to someone without a phone or bank account.

How small is small enough?



This is still TFB. Do not take into a sprint without refining to cards of one!!

Epics

Features

Grains of Sand





# Step 5: Refining validates your estimates

"You can recognize possible issues when the number of grains is different than the estimate."

