Paper Prototyping

MIT Game Lab

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Why Prototype?

➤ Get feedback earlier, cheaper

➤ Experiment with alternatives

➤ Easier to change or throw away
Get on the same page!
Bring in players!
Useful tools

- Big sheets of paper
- Index cards
- Dice
- Post-it® glue and notepads
- Pencils, pens, markers, scissors, tape
- Game bits, small toys, kindergarten counters
- Photocopier, mobile phone camera
Keep it rough!

- Hand-drawn
- Sketchy
- Big
- One dark ink
Keep iterating!

› Question
› Rapid design
› Playtest
› Revise
› Repeat
Keep changing!

- Amend, replace, kill
- Limit/unlimit
- Player interference
- Mess with the play order
- Multiply/divide by 2
- Core and reconstruct
- Throw away
Keep track of your rules!

- Write rules on cards
- Rearrange flow control
- Update cards as you change rules
- Periodically take photos
- Simplify, simplify, simplify
Player vs Player

- People play together
- Cooperative/Competitive
- Symmetric/Asymmetric
- Very loose
- Open communication
- Rule negotiation
- Facilitator helps to explain rules
Wizard of Oz

- Someone plays the “computer”
- Very constrained
- Communication
- Rules
- Don’t let the player know what the “computer” is thinking
Live Action

- Not for today’s exercise!
- Predetermined rules
  - Explained before game
  - Loose interpretation and constraints
- Limited communication
- Try it for “avatar walks around” games
The roles

- Players
- “Computer” or facilitator
- Observers