



The Card Game! Rulebook



2-4
players



12+
age



10-60
time

KUPILAS
MEDIA

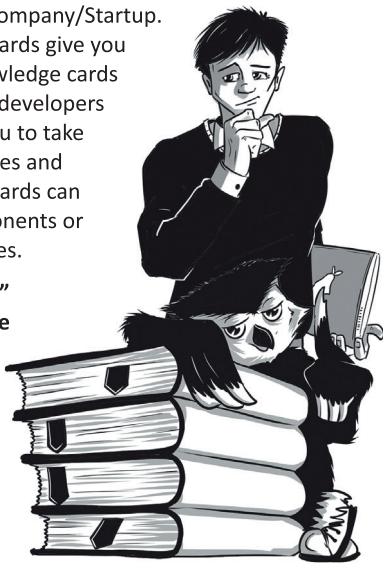
About the game

You play as the head of an IT Company/Startup. The programmer (developer) cards give you project points every turn. Knowledge cards improve the efficiency of your developers (+2, +3 etc.). HR cards allow you to take over your opponent's employees and draw additional cards. Action cards can be used to sabotage your opponents or to help out your own employees.

Winning a game in "IT Startup" is a matter of efficient resource management and landing a devastating sabotage on your opponents.

It's a game for 2-4 players, with an additional 2 vs 2 mode.

All players draw cards from the same deck.



*One of the best ways to learn the game is watching the **Quickstart Video Tutorial: playItStartup.com/video.** Some people may prefer it over the written rulebook.*

Game components

- 64 cards,
- 32 resource tokens,
- 32 red burnout markers (cubes),
- 1 six-sided die,
- rulebook.



Goal of the game

The goal of the game is to finish your project - the player who does that in fewer turns (or scores more project points, if another player finishes his project in the same turn), wins. **You finish your project by getting enough project points.** There is a standard game mode: **64** points, fast game mode: **32** points or a long game mode: **128** points. Choose your game mode depending on how long you want to play. You can also set a higher victory threshold (like 256 points if you enjoy really long game sessions), but our suggestion is to set the max goal to 128 points.

Scoring project points

Each developer has their efficiency value. The total sum of the efficiency value of your developers is the amount of project points you get at the end of your turn.

Example: you have 2 developers on the table. Look at the red numbers in circles (ignore the rest for now): **5** and **2**.

At the end of your turn, you get 7 (5 + 2) project points. The points are scored at the end of your turn – no need to wait for every other player to finish their turn.



Counting project points

The easiest way to keep track of points is using a sheet of paper. It helps control whether every player took an equal amount of turns and allows to quickly check the current turn count. In the example below, we can see that after 3 turns Player 1 has 8 points, and Player 2 has 10 points. The next turn is turn number 4.

Victory conditions

When **each player finishes their turn** and one of the players has the required number of points (or more), they win. Check the victory condition after everyone finishes their turn - **each player must have the chance to play the same number of turns**.

If more than one player reaches the victory threshold, the player with the higher total score wins. For example: if in the standard game mode (64 points), after 7 turns 2 players reach the required number of points (64 or more), **the player with the higher total score wins**. If they have exactly the same score: another turn is played.

Player 1	Player 2
2	0
5	5
8	10

Start of the game

- Each player draws 5 cards.
- Roll the six-sided die to determine the amount of starting resource tokens. **Each player starts with the same number**. E.g. if you roll 3, every player starts the game with (3) resource tokens.
- Mulligan unwanted cards. If you don't like a card from your starting hand, you can discard it and draw a new one. You can do this for one, two, three, four or even all five cards from your opening hand (you choose the cards only once – you can NOT mulligan away a card you have just

drawn from the mulligan). For starters:

it's good to have at least one developer in your opening hand. You will learn the best way to mulligan during your games.

- Roll the die and choose who starts the game.

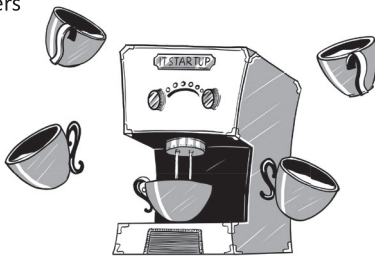


Turn overview

- Draw a card at the start of your turn.
- After the card draw, gain resources. (1) resource token in the first turn, (2) in the second etc. **The maximum amount of resources you get at the beginning of your turn is (8).**
- If you have an outsourced employee (an employee you got using the “Outsourcing” card), it returns to the opponent.

Optional game mechanic: bonus for proper project planning (during your first couple of games **you can skip this mechanic and introduce it later**). If your project points are equal to 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128 (power of 2), you can remove 1 burnout point from one of your employees.

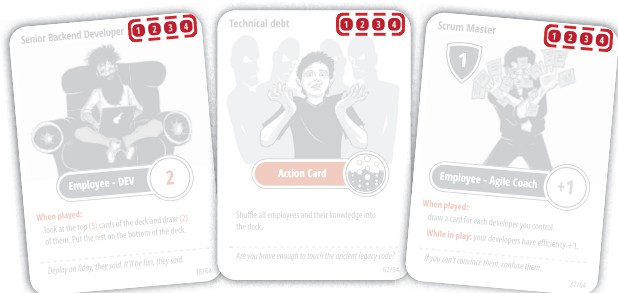
- Play your cards! Playing cards costs resource tokens (the resource cost is in the top- right corner of a card). You can do this only during your turn. You can also “plan” an Action Card (put it face down on the table). “Planning” Action Cards will be explained in detail later on.
- At the end of your turn you score project points for each of your developers. You count the efficiency value of your developers + any optional effects from Action Cards played this turn.
- After you added the project points, every employee you control gets (1) burnout point. Red markers (cubes) are used to keep track of an employee’s burnout points.



Resource cost of cards

To play a card, you have to pay its resource cost. In order to do so, the player returns the appropriate number of resource tokens back to the pool.

Here are 3 cards that cost (4) resources to play (see the upper right corner):



Gaining resources

- **At the start of your turn:** gain (1) resource token on the first turn, (2) on the second turn...(5) on the fifth etc. The maximum amount of resources received at the beginning of the turn is (8). So, on turn eight you get (8) resources, on the ninth turn also (8) and so on.
- **At the start of the game:** a roll with a six-sided die determines the number of resource tokens the players start with. Every player starts with the same amount.
- **By discarding (selling) cards from your hand** or playing the “Investor” Action Card.

Discarding (selling) cards and extra card draw

There is an option to discard cards from your hand (discarded cards go to the bottom of the deck) and get (1) resource token for every card discarded this way. You gain (1) resource token for discarding (1) card. This can be done **only during your turn**. Some players refer to this as “selling cards”. There is also an option to draw extra cards by paying resources. Paying (2) resources allows you to draw (1) extra card. There is no limit to the amount of cards you discard for resources or draw (**there is no hand size limit**) - you can perform those actions as long as you have cards to discard or resources to pay for the extra draws.

Hoarding resources

Resources can be hoarded and used in later turns (unused resources do not disappear at the end of your turn). There is no resource hoarding limit.

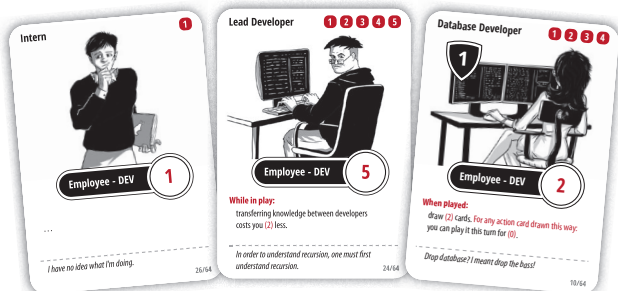
Card types

There are 3 basic card types:

- Employees,
- Knowledge (Knowledge cards),
- Action Cards.

Employee cards - Developers (programmers)

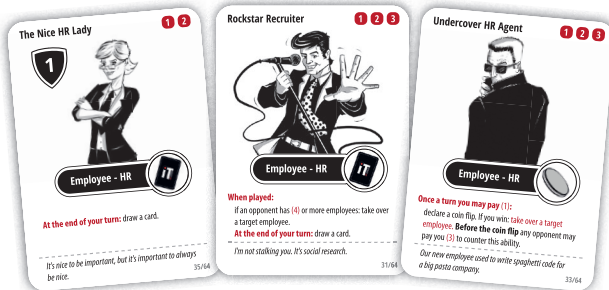
Developers are your main source of project points.



The upper right corner of a card informs you about the card's play cost. In the above cards the costs are as follows: (1), (5) and (4). The digit on the shield ("1" on the "Database Developer" card) is burnout resistance (the burnout mechanic is explained in detail in the "Employee burnout" section of this rulebook). The red number in the circle (1, 5 and 2) is the developer's efficiency value. The rule text on the card informs you about the effect when the card is played or while the card is in play. The text on the bottom (e.g. "I have no idea what I'm doing") is called flavor text - it does not affect the gameplay.

Employee cards - HR

HR lets you draw extra cards and take over your opponent's employees.



The upper right corner of a card informs you about the card's play cost (2, 3 and 3). Almost every card contains a rule text. The text on the card is its effect. It can be triggered when the card is played or at the end of your turn (**it's important to remember that "At the end of your turn" triggers EVERY turn** - as long as the card remains on the table of course). The "Undercover HR Agent" has an effect that can be activated by paying (1) resource token. The icons in the circle should help you remember what the card does: draw a card at the end of your turn or give you the option to flip a coin. HR has no efficiency like developers. HR (like every employee) can also have burnout resistance (the number on the shield icon).

Employee cards - Agile Coach

The value of the Scrum Master is higher with every developer you control. While the Scrum Master is in play, every developer has +1 efficiency value. When he is played, you draw a card for each developer you control.



Employee burnout

At the end of your turn your employees get 1 burnout point. **After an employee gets 3 burnout points, they are removed from the table** (put the card on the bottom of the deck) - this happens the moment they get the last burnout point (not only at the end of turns). An employee can have more than 3 burnout points if they have burnout resistance (shield icon).

With the burnout resistance of 1, an employee is removed after 4 burnout points, with burnout resistance of 2 - after 5 burnout points. Burnout is marked with red markers (cubes).



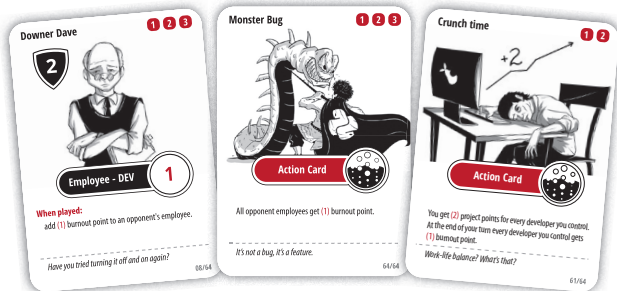
Burnout can also be removed. A few cards that can do this are: “Get away from it all”, “Coffee machine”, “Office Manager”.



Burnout can also be removed by using **the proper project planning bonus** - an optional game mechanic.

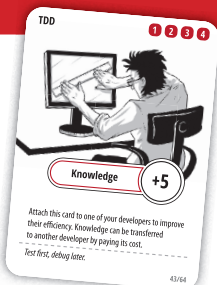
Proper project planning bonus (optional game mechanic) - at the start of your turn: if your project points are equal to 1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, 128 (power of 2) you can remove 1 burnout point from one of your employees. It's an optional game mechanic that makes the game more complex. You can skip it during the first couple of games and introduce it later if you want to add more depth into the game.

There are also cards that can add burnout points to employees. For example: “Downer Dave”, “Monster Bug”, “Crunch Time”.



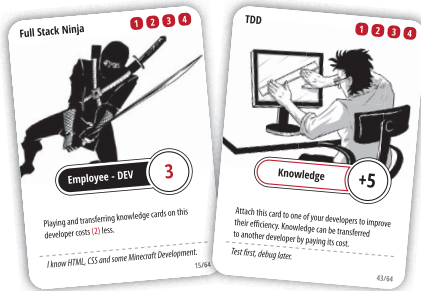
Knowledge (knowledge cards)

Knowledge cards improve your developers efficiency. They are attached to one of your developers by paying their resource cost. In the case of the “TDD” card you have to pay (4) resources.



Playing knowledge card for less resources

If a developer card has the effect “playing and transferring knowledge cards on this developer costs (2) less.” a knowledge card can be attached to this developer for less resources. In this example the “TDD” knowledge card can be played on the “Full Stack Ninja” for (2) instead of (4).

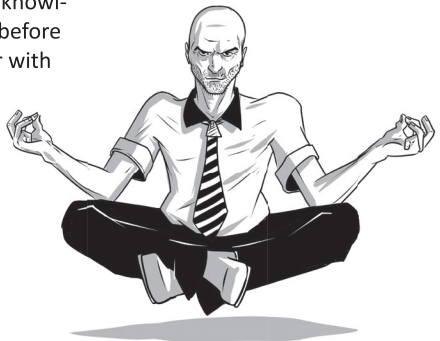


Transferring knowledge cards

Knowledge can be transferred to another developer by paying its resource cost. **There is one exception:** knowledge cannot be transferred to or from an outsourced employee.

There is no knowledge cards limit a developer can have.

It's a good idea to transfer a knowledge card from a developer before they burn out. If a developer with knowledge burns out, they are removed to the bottom of the deck together with all the knowledge cards attached.



Action Cards

Action cards do what the effect says. A played or countered action card is put at the bottom of the deck. An Action Card sometimes contains information on how it can be countered.

An Action Card can also be “planned” (played face down - this does not cost any resources) and played in one of the next turns for (1) less resource point.



Planning Action Cards

Action Cards (and only Action Cards) can be planned. **In order to do so, place it face down in front of you.** This does not cost any resources - you pay the cards resource cost after you turn the card face up. **If you have a “planned” card from one of your previous turns**

(a card has to be “planned” at least one turn before), you may play it for (1) less resource cost.

Only 1 card at a time can be “planned”.



This comes with a small downside: the planned card can't be replaced with another Action Card (you can't return it to your hand and "plan" another Action Card - another Action Card can be "planned" when the previous one was played). You may of course play another Action Card that was not "planned", but then you have to pay the cards full play cost ("planned" Action Card can be played for (1) less).

An example: you "plan" (place it face down) the "Head Hunter" card on your **third** turn. From the **fourth** turn, on the card can be played for (1) less resource cost. So in the case of the "Head Hunter" card you may pay (4) to play it instead of the cards standard resource play cost (5).

"Planning" Action Cards saves you resources, but remember that you can plan only one Action Card at a time and a "planned" Action Card can't be replaced (you have to play the "planned" Action Card to "plan" a new one).



Taking over employees

Some cards let you take over employees. Like the "Head Hunter" card from the previous example.

- An employee is taken over with his burnout points and knowledge cards.
- After you take over an employee, all normal mechanics apply: scoring project points from developers, burnout etc. The only exception are "**outsourced employees**" from the "Outsourcing" card. Rules for outsourced employees follow in the next section of this rulebook.



Outsourced employees

An employee who has been taken over by the “Outsourcing” card:

- Can’t transfer knowledge cards to your employees.
- Returns to their previous owner at the start of your next turn.
- Can’t be returned to your hand (returning employees to your hand is explained in the next chapter of this rulebook).
- Gets burnout points like every other employee.



The owner of the taken over employee gets the resources you paid for the “Outsourcing” card. If it was “planned” and you paid (1) - they get one. If it was played for (2) they get two resource tokens etc.

Returning employees to your hand

One of the cards allows you to return employees to your hand:

- When an employee returns to your hand they lose all burnout points.
- If the developer has Knowledge Cards attached, the Knowledge Cards also are returned to your hand.
- An outsourced employee can’t be returned to your hand.



Solo and 2 vs 2 Game Mode

There is also a solo and 2 vs 2 game version of “IT Startup - The Card Game”.

The current version of the **solo game mode**: playitstartup.com/solo

2 vs 2 game mode: playitstartup.com/2vs2