The full test

Once all the mechanics and puzzles have been validated, it is important to check that the puzzles work well together. Regardless of the consistency of your roadmap, theory and practice can be different for many reasons. For instance, you might not have assessed the time it takes to solve a puzzle correctly, or players might use a clue in a way that you did not expect.

During this test, it is possible that you are too busy with your role as Game Master: do not hesitate to be assisted by another person (an observer) who will also stay out of the game and concentrate on taking notes on the game's progress.

This test goes through several phases.

Steps

1. Preparation phase
• Identify the aspects that you want to evaluate or have a doubt about.
• Draft a questionnaire.
• Select your test team.

2. Introduction to the test
• Present to your test team the course of this session: briefing, game, debriefing and then questionnaire on the experience.
• Provide your testers with note taking tools.

3. Play the game
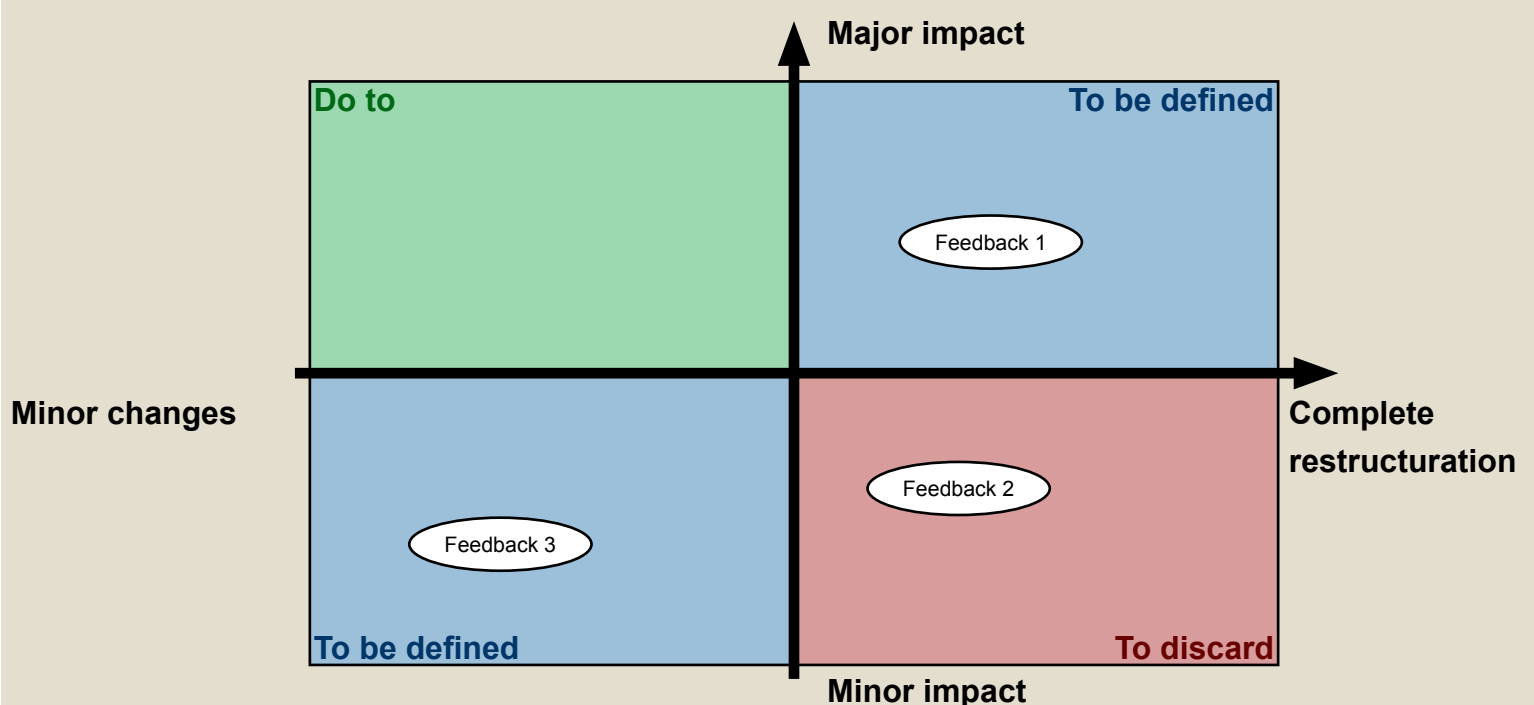• Play the game within the allotted time (brief, game, debrief).

4. Restitution
• Provide the questionnaire to the players.
• After completing the questionnaire, the observer may ask the players questions to gather their views on any points of doubt they may have.
• Allow players to add comments to the questionnaires if needed.

5. Thank the participants
• Thank your testers and the observer if you asked for one!

6. Conclusion
• Consolidate the feedback you received into an improvement list. In this list, you can show the impact of this modification (major or minor) as well as the difficulty to implement it (major or minor restructuring). This will enable you to assess whether a recommendation from a tester is necessary (because it is indispensable) or not (because it is minor and would require too much restructuring).

Related tool
• Roadmap