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**Kanban**

Kanban is a popular workflow management method for defining, managing, and improving services that deliver knowledge work. It helps you visualize work, maximize efficiency, and improve continuously. Work is represented on Kanban boards, allowing you to optimize work delivery across multiple teams and handle even the most complex projects in a single environment.

### **The 6 Core Kanban Principles**

The Kanban method is based on six foundational change management and service delivery.

1. **Start with what you do now:** Kanban is about continuous improvement, but it starts with an understanding of the current processes and workflows.
2. **Agree to pursue incremental, evolutionary change:** Rather than attempting a large-scale transformation all at once, Kanban advocates for small, incremental changes that build on each other over time.
3. **Encourage acts of leadership at all levels:** Kanban is not just for managers or team leads but for everyone involved in the work. Anyone can take leadership and suggest improvements based on their observations.
4. **Focus on customer needs and expectations:** Kanban promotes understanding the needs and expectations of your customers to elevate the quality of the provided services and the value it creates.
5. **Manage the work, not the workers:** Kanban respects the existing roles and responsibilities of team members and empowers people’s abilities to self-organize around the work.
6. **Regularly review the network of services:** Kanban encourages collaboration and encourages team members to share their observations, ideas, and feedback for improving the work through regular reviews of the entire network of services.

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* **Kanban board:** A Kanban board is one of the Kanban method's key components and is where you visualize all work items. It should be divided into a minimum of 3 columns – Requested, In Progress, Done, representing different process stages.
* **Kanban card:** Kanban cards represent the different work items moving through a Kanban board. They contain important details about the tasks, such as description, deadline, size, assignees, etc.
* **Columns:** They split the Kanban board vertically, and each of them represents a different stage of the workflow. Each Kanban board has 3 default columns: Requested, In Progress, Done. Depending on the complexity of a work process, these three stages can be divided into many smaller sub-columns.
* **Swimlanes:** Horizontal lanes that split a Kanban board into sections. Teams use them to visually separate different work types on the same board and organize homogenous tasks together.
* **Cycle Time:** Cycle time begins at the moment when a new task enters the “in progress” stage of your workflow, and somebody is actually working on it.
* **Lead Time:** Lead time starts at the moment a new task is being requested (it doesn’t matter if somebody is actually working on it) and ends with its final departure from the system.
* **Throughput:** The number of work items passing through (completed) a system or process over a certain period. The throughput is a key indicator showing how productive your team is over time.
* **Work in Progress (WIP):** This is the amount of work you are currently working on, and it is not finished yet.
* **WIP limits:** Limiting work in progress means limiting the number of tasks your team can work on simultaneously to avoid overburdening and context-switching.
* **Classes of Service:** Set of policies that help Agile teams prioritize work items and projects.
* **Kanban Cadences:** Cyclical meetings that drive evolutionary change and “fit for purpose” service delivery.
* **Kanban software:** Refers to a digital system that allows the practical application of the Kanban practices and principles to be used by various teams and organizations of all sizes.

## **Scrum vs Kanban: Which one should you choose**

* Scrum will set sprints as well as determine timeframes for each part of the job. Whereas with Kanban flow, you get continuity and the leader decides deadlines if required. With Scrum processes, you can expect a punctual team.
* If your project is goal-driven and you prefer fixed deliverables, then go for Scrum. For flexible teams and changing objectives, Kanban is the perfect match.
* With Scrum, by tracking the velocity of a particular sprint, you can also measure its productivity. While in Kanban methods, cycle times determine the performance.
* While Kanban encourages changes and adjustments, scrum does not support improvisations. If your project objectives are expected to vary with time, you should go for Kanban when you have the choice of Scrum vs Kanban.
* Kanban does not assign specific roles to team members, therefore, if your team is cooperative then only you can succeed with this methodology.