# Scrum: The Art of Doing Twice the Work in Half the Time

December 26, 2024

## Appendix - Implementing Scrum—How to Begin

Now that you've read the book, here's how to start a Scrum project in a nutshell. This is a very broad-stroke description of the process, but it should be enough to get you started. The book was written to give you the *why* behind Scrum. This will, in an abbreviated form, give you the *how*.

1. **Pick a Product Owner.** This person is the one with the vision of what you are going to do, make, or accomplish. They take into account risks and rewards, what is possible, what can be done, and what they are passionate about. (See Chapter Eight: Priorities for more.)

2. **Pick a Team.** Who will be the people actually doing the work? This team needs to have all the skills needed to take the Product Owner's vision and make it a reality. Teams should be small—3 to 9 people is the rule of thumb. (See Chapter Three: Teams for more.)

3. **Pick a Scrum Master.** This is the person who will coach the rest of the team through the Scrum framework and help the team eliminate anything that is slowing them down. (See Chapter Four: Waste for more.)

4. **Create and prioritize a Product Backlog.** This is a list at a high level of everything that needs to be built or done to make that vision a reality. This backlog exists and evolves over the lifetime of the product; it is the product road map. At any point, the Product Backlog is the single, definitive view of "everything that could be done by the team ever, in order of priority." Only a single Product Backlog exists; this means the Product Owner is required to make prioritization decisions across the entire spectrum. The Product Owner should consult with all stakeholders and the team to make sure they are representing both what people want and what can be built. (See Chapter Eight: Priorities for more.)

5. **Refine and estimate the Product Backlog.** It is crucial that the people who are actually going to complete the items in the Product Backlog estimate how much effort they will take. The team should look at each Backlog item and determine if it is doable. Is there enough information to complete the item? Is it small enough to estimate? Is there a Definition of Done (i.e., agreed standards for completion)? Does it create visible value? Each item must be demonstrable and, ideally, potentially shippable. Use relative

sizing methods such as Small, Medium, or Large, or the Fibonacci sequence (1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13, 21, etc.). (See Chapter Six: Plan Reality, Not Fantasy for more.)

6. **Sprint Planning.** This is the first of the Scrum meetings. The team, the Scrum Master, and the Product Owner plan the Sprint. Sprints are fixed lengths of time, usually one or two weeks. The team examines the top of the Backlog and forecasts what they can complete during the Sprint. Velocity, the number of points completed in previous Sprints, helps the team predict what they can achieve. During this meeting, the team agrees on a Sprint Goal. Once committed, the Sprint scope cannot be changed. (See Chapter Four: Time and Chapter Six: Plan Reality, Not Fantasy for more.)

7. **Make work visible.** Create a Scrum Board with three columns: To Do, Doing, and Done. Use sticky notes to represent tasks and move them across the board as they are completed. Alternatively, use a Burndown Chart to visualize progress. (See Chapter Seven: Happiness for more.)

8. **Daily Stand-up or Daily Scrum.** A 15-minute meeting held at the same time every day. Team members answer three questions:

- What did you do yesterday to help the team finish the Sprint?
- What will you do today to help the team finish the Sprint?
- Are there any obstacles blocking you or the team from achieving the Sprint Goal?

This meeting fosters transparency and team coordination. (See Chapter Four: Time and Chapter Six: Plan Reality, Not Fantasy for more.)

9. **Sprint Review or Sprint Demo.** At the end of the Sprint, the team demonstrates completed work to stakeholders, management, customers, and others. Only items meeting the Definition of Done should be presented. (See Chapter Four: Time for more.)

10. **Sprint Retrospective.** After the Sprint Review, the team reflects on what went well, what could have been better, and what can be improved. The team agrees on one process improvement (the *kaizen*) to implement in the next Sprint. This improvement should be added to the Backlog with acceptance criteria. (See Chapter Seven: Happiness for more.)

11. **Start the next Sprint cycle.** Incorporate the team's experience with impediments and process improvements to continuously improve.