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3.5.2 Sprint Retro & Review Summary Points

Two parts to the end of a Sprint:

- **Sprint Review**: the Product Owner presents the completed, potentially shippable increment to the stakeholders.

- **Sprint Retro**: the Sprint Team collaboratively inspects the sprint and looks for ways to build on or change for the better.

Goals of a Sprint Review:

- Validate the product is something the users want

- Discuss what the next features should be

- Build stakeholder buy-in

- Force a shippable product to be ready*

The last point is often missed. People when running Reviews think that the Sprint Review is another lecture opportunity. "Look at all the great work we're doing....in PowerPoint.." That's NOT what the customer or stakeholders want to see. They want to see the product!

How to run a great Sprint Review:

- Focus on demonstrating the product

- Keep the presentations simple and small

- Avoid PowerPoint if possible, use skits or other creative tools

- Show planned work using the team's system (such as an electronic Kanban system)

- Prepare for the event, but not too much

- Get the stakeholders involved!

Sprint Reviews are also great opportunities to take what can be a very insular process of "Sprinting" to get work done and bring in those most impacted by the work.

Then, with a wonderful Sprint Review and lots of positive feedback, it's time to take that positive energy into the Sprint Retrospective.

Goals of the Sprint Retrospectives:

- Capture what went right during the sprint

- Capture what went wrong during the sprint

- Capture what the team can do to improve

Sprint Retrospectives are much like Sprint Planning, they require practice. However, the benefits are enormous for teams that perform "Retros:"

- Identify and plan work to improve team systems

- Stop doing the bad stuff early

- Use "lessons learned' on YOUR project (imagine it!)

- Dedicate time to hear from everyone, and gain team buy-in

Just like in the Sprint Planning, the best way to execute the Sprint Retrospective is to play a game. This has become known as the "Retro Game:"

- You have two parts:

  1. Evaluate what went right and wrong

  2. Evaluate what the team can do

- For both parts (you do this twice) the script should be as follows (requires sticky notes or a similar tool). Each step is timeboxed (e.g. has a time limit):

1. Each person writes down on sticky notes what they think - one idea per note

2. Each person then puts up on a board their thoughts on a board

3. The whole team then works together to group and label similar thoughts

4. The Scrum Master then facilitates a discussion, with the group's a talking points

- After the two rounds, the team should then work together to write User Stories on the "Can Do" items.

- Key points are recorded for later review by the Scrum Master

The heart and soul of an Agile team can be made stronger through great Retrospectives and Reviews. However, at first this practice is going to feel awkward for those in less open speaking cultures. That's why we need the structure and the games to organize input. That's also why the Scrum Master needs to be a great facilitator.

This process should be in its core a team building exercise. That's why there's one more step often missed, but sorely needed:

The whole team gets out of the building (or area) and does something social together.

If there's anything to remember is that we are all people on this team. It's all about Individuals and Interactions OVER processes and tools. As you engage in the end of Sprint ceremonies the momentum and potential fatigue from a hard-fought sprint looms over. Don't let that inertia win. Shake it off and run great, personal Retros and Reviews that treat people like people.

In short order you'll have a high-performing team that likes the way the work and the people they get to work with every day.

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