What is Scrum

Scrum is an agile way of working that helps you to respond more rapidly and more easily to changing customer and stakeholder needs. Instead of spending a lot of time preparing and writing plans Scrum seeks to add customer value in short cycles as early as possible. While Scrum was originally conceived for software development it is also readily applicable in many other sectors, such as health care, marketing, law enforcement, product development and the public sector at all levels.

Organize Agile offers coaching, consultancy, and training in working with scrum and other agile ways of working.

Scrum Framework

Scrum uses self-organizing cross-functional teams to incrementally develop products in short cycles. In Scrum these cycles are known as sprints. Each sprint contains a set of fixed events that help structure the teams work process. Scrum defines roles that clearly structure the responsibilities in the team, they are: development team, product owner, and scrum master. All work in close and constant collaboration with customers and stakeholders. A scrum team uses so-called artifacts, the product backlog, the sprint backlog and the product increment, to deliver "done" work.

Roles
Development team

The scrum development team is a self-organizing cross-functional team. It shares a joint responsibility to deliver customer value. It needs to be able to deliver products or services end-to-end. Therefore the team needs to contain all competencies required to do so within the team.

Product Owner

The Product Owner is responsible for maximizing the value of the work delivered by the development team. As such the Product Owner is responsible for managing the Product Backlog. The product owner is the only one who can decide what the development team should work on and needs to be mandated to do so. Stakeholder priorities are managed through the Product Backlog, exclusively by the Product Owner. He or she is in close contact with customer and stakeholders and is responsible for transparency of the product backlog and what the development team is working on.

Scrum Master

The Scrum Master is a servant leader who serves the development team, the product owner, and the organization. The Scrum Master coaches the development team and the Product Owner and helps them deliver better results. He or she helps the team to be transparent, deliver faster, reflect and continuously improve.

Stakeholder

Stakeholders are not part of the Scrum team but are continuously involved. They can be users, deciders or other interested parties. They are invited to offer their input and feedback, and collaborate with the team during the review. The Product Owner uses stakeholder input and feedback to revise the Product Backlog and adjust for the next Sprint.

TEAM

SCRUM MASTER

PRODUCT OWNER

STAKEHOLDERS
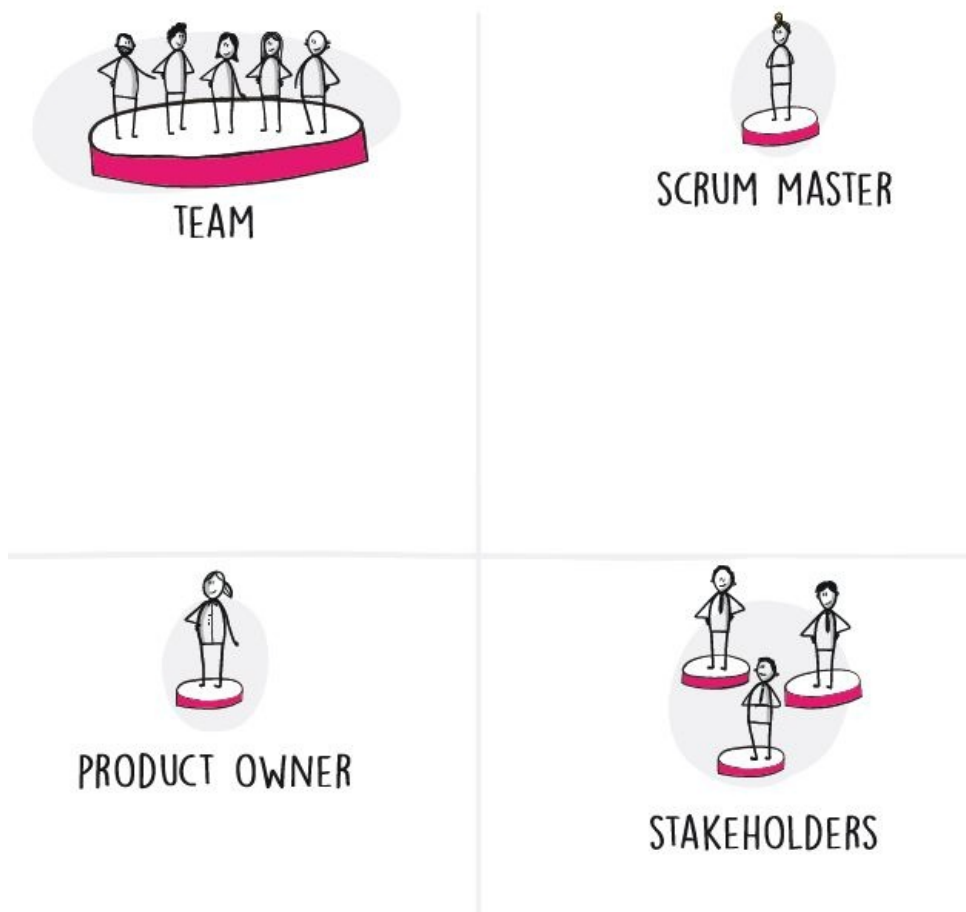
Artifacts and tools

To many Scrum is best known for visual management and abundant flip-over and post-it use. Such tools help

the scrum team to maintain constant transparency and overview. The Scrum Guide refers to the Product Backlog, Sprint Backlog and product increment as the "Scrum Artifacts"

Product Backlog

The product backlog is an ordened list of that is required to 'build' the product. It is the single source of truth of everything that is needed. The Product Backlog is dynamic, it is constantly updated as the team learns and discovers new things. It is a representation of the best knowledge about what is required at that time. The Product Owner is responsible for the Product Backlog.

Sprint Backlog

The Sprint Backlog is a collection of product backlog items that make up the current sprint. Every sprints has a new sprint backlog that contains the product backlog items that the Product Owner has decided will deliver the most value that Sprint.

Increment

The increment is the sum of all product backlog items of that sprint added to the value delivered in previous sprints. An increment must be 'done' at the end of a sprint, meaning it is potentially shippable.

Acceptance Criteria

Acceptance criteria help to determine whether a product backlog item is complete. As a product backlog item moves up the backlog item these criteria are constantly refined.

Scrum Board

Most scrum teams use a scrum board to keep track of the status of the current sprint. They can be either physical or digital. Typically it shows what work still needs to be done, what is in progress, and what is done. It is a visual aid to inspect the team progress towards the sprint goal.

Scrum Events

Scrum uses a set of events in a regular cadence to structure each sprint. This regular rhythm creates space for flexibility and adaptability. The Scrum events are: Sprint Planning, Daily Scrum, Review and Retrospective

Sprint planning

During the Sprint Planning the team and Product Owner decide on the goal for the sprint and how to deliver this result. They select the appropriate items from the Product Backlog and forecast what they will be able to deliver. Over time the team learns to estimate the appropriate workload by using a so-called yesterday's weather pattern.

Daily Scrum

The Daily Scrum is a short, time-boxed, event (15 minutes maximum) that takes place daily. The development team uses the Daily Scrum to inspect progress towards the sprint goal and plan the next 24 hours of the sprint. The goal of the Daily Scrum is to improve communication, surface impediments quickly, share knowledge and ensure rapid decision making. The Daily Scrum is also often referred to as the stand-up.

Review

The Review is used to demonstrate what was delivered during the sprint and invite stakeholders to provide feedback. This feedback is translated into the Product Backlog and provides fuel for the next sprint. The result of a good Review is to know what would deliver most value in the next sprint.

Retrospective

The goal of the Retrospective is to continuously improve as a team. During the Retrospective the team evaluates its process and performance and decide how to improve in the next sprint. It is a best practice to chose at least one improvement item and add this to the next Sprint Backlog. The Retrospective is the final event in the sprint, after the Retrospective the next sprint starts with a Sprint Planning.

SPRINT PLANNING   REVIEW   RETROSPECTIVE
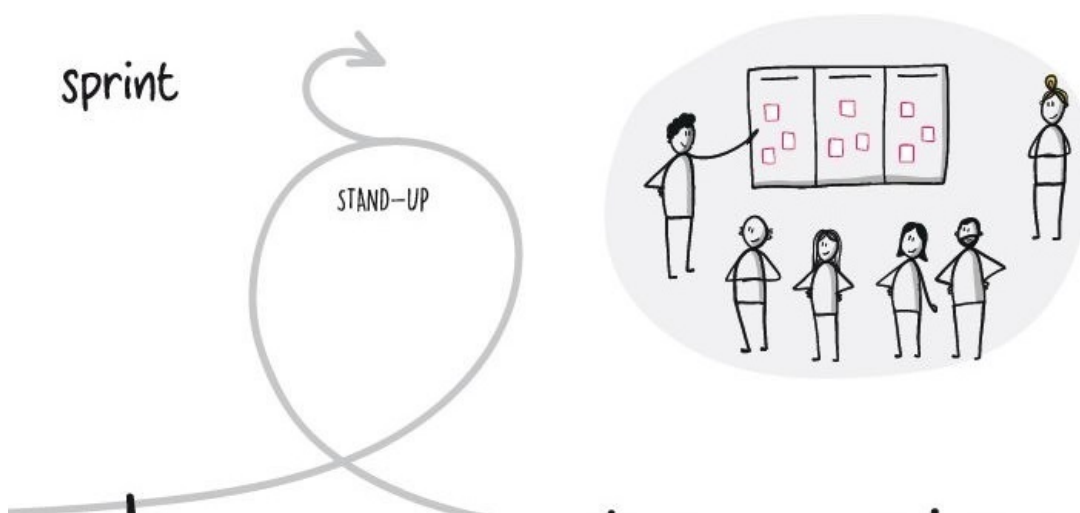
Refinement

Refinement is not a Scrum 'event' but does occur throughout the sprint. Some teams plan a specific time slot every sprint to refine the backlog. The goal of refinement is to ensure product backlog items are ready to be picked up in a sprint by adding detail and estimating the effort required to complete the work.

Three pillars of Scrum

The Scrum framework is built upon three pillars: transparency, inspection, and adaptation. Together they ensure empirical process control or 'empiricism'. Transparency helps everyone speak the same language, share information as quickly and easily as possible, and creates an open culture. Inspection is embedded in the Scrum events, most specifically the Daily Scrum, the Retrospective and Review. Transparency allow us to inspect and ultimately adapt and make the required improvements to our product and process.

Scrum Values

Ultimately the core of Scrum lies in living the Scrum Values. They are:

- Commitment
- Courage
- Focus
- Openness
- Respect

The team commits to work in a focused way towards attaining the agreed goals. They have the courage to tackle obstacles and do what is required. We are open about our work and the associated challenges and respect each other, our qualities, and our shortcomings.

Would you like to learn more about Scrum? Check out our [Scrum Training](#) or [contact us](#).

FOCUS

COURAGE

OPENNESS

Our clients

Latest updates

16 JUN — free webinar: get digital with agile hr

27 MAY — e-learning 'an introduction to agile hr'

24 APR — there and back again – how an omnivert scrum master became an international speaker

19 MAR — 5 tips for designing an agile job framework

more updates

Next Meetup

POSTPONED Lessons in agile transformation from the Dutch Police_OrganizeAgile

Thursday, Mar 19, 2020, 6:00 PM
Creative Valley Utrecht CS
Stationsplein 32 Utrecht, UT

29 Business Agilists Went

check out this meetup →

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