**Words that changed in Scrum Guide 2020 update**

From January 10th, 2021 the Scrum.org assessments have changed to support the 2020 version of the Scrum Guide. Even though Scrum has not changed significantly, some of the wording and descriptions of Scrum have changed. The assessments take advantage of the new wording to ensure consistency with the new version of the Scrum Guide. However, it is impossible to change every piece of content, book, or article about Scrum to ensure the same consistency. This document is intended to provide a quick overview of the changes to avoid any confusion. For a more complete description of the 2020 version of the Scrum Guide please go Scrum.org.

**Role replaced by accountabilities**

Many people mistakenly thought that the Scrum roles were job titles. With the 2020 release of the Scrum Guide, the focus on “accountabilities” rather than job descriptions has been emphasized by removing the word “role.” However, it is a direct replacement and there are still many places where the use of the word “role” will still make sense when describing these accountabilities.

For a more detailed description of this change please read the blog (<https://www.scrum.org/resources/blog/scrum-guide-2020-update-role-accountabilities>)

**“Self Organized” replaced with “Self Managed”**

For many people these terms are synonyms. The change was inspired by the idea that the Scrum Team should take ownership of the management tasks necessary to deliver a useful, valuable increment. The use of the word “management” highlighted this focus. However, there remains a significant amount of valuable content that uses the term “self-organized.

For a more detailed description of this change please read the blog (<https://www.scrum.org/resources/blog/scrum-guide-2020-update-self-mgt-replaces-self-organization>).

**Servant Leadership**

The 2017 guide used the term “Servant Leadership” to describe the style of leadership that serves Scrum Teams well. This idea is still valid; however, the 2020 Scrum Guide places more emphasis on leadership, removing the potential misinterpretation that Scrum Masters are servants first and leaders second. Understanding the idea of servant leadership is still valuable when using Scrum.

**Development Team vs. Developer**

This change has the biggest impact on the content associated with Scrum. Development Team was a key role within the Scrum Framework which was replaced by the term Developer. This meant that the team (or shared accountabilities) went to the Scrum Team and individual accountabilities are held by the Developer.

**Scrum Guide 2020 Update - Role to Accountabilities**

With the 2020 release of the Scrum Guide, the term role was replaced with accountabilities. The purpose of this change was to place special emphasis that this is not a job description, but the bare minimum set of accountabilities necessary to execute Scrum. The accountabilities are split into 3 groups:

* Scrum Master
* Product Owner
* Developer

The term Developer is a new accountability based on the Development Team role in the 2017 Scrum Guide. This change of terminology ultimately DOES NOT CHANGE Scrum, as roles have always described a set of accountabilities. However, removing roles simplifies the Scrum Guide and helps to reduce the confusion often created by people thinking that a role is a job title and provides additional context.

Below are a set of some interesting questions that have come up when discussing this change:

**There is a lot of content in places that talks about roles in Scrum are that now wrong?**

No, the changes provide clarity and try to avoid confusion. The existing content that uses the term role is still valid because people will take on roles or personas as a part of being accountable. I hope that this change is a reminder that a role is NOT a job description.

**If my job title is Scrum Master is this now wrong?**

No, Scrum Master can still be a great job title, but it is likely that job title will include a job description that is larger than the accountabilities described in the Scrum Guide. The description of the accountabilities in the Scrum Guide provides the foundation; each organization and context will extend and make these accountabilities more specific for their situation. For example, the Scrum Master serves the organization by helping to plan Scrum implementations. In a job description, this will describe how that fits into a broader agile initiative.

**Scrum Guide 2020 Update - Self Mgt replaces Self Organization**

One interesting change to the Scrum Guide for the 2020 release was the change of the term Self-Organizing to Self-Managing. In the 2017 version of the Scrum Guide Self-Organization is described as:

“Scrum Teams are self-organizing and cross-functional. Self-organizing teams choose how best to accomplish their work, rather than being directed by others outside of the team.”

Another 3 references highlighted how self-organizing is important for the Development Team when planning work, and during the Daily Scrum.

In the 2020 version of the Guide, there is no longer a Development Team, but instead, a whole Scrum Team which includes accountabilities including those for Developers, and when talking about the Scrum Team self-managing is described as:

“They are also self-managing, meaning they internally decide who does what, when, and how.”

Other references include how the Scrum Master should support the team being self-managed, and the relationship with the Sprint Goal.

In common practice, the terms self-organizing and self-management are often used interchangeably. In fact, there are many definitions that describe each term in the same way. For example, see Steve Dennings definition vs the Business Process Incubators definition. The reality is that both terms come with baggage and history. For some self-organization only describes how the team is organized and how they organize the work. For others, it describes empowering the team to do whatever is required to deliver a valuable increment.

**The opportunity that the change provides**

Ignoring the history of the phrase and the opportunity for debate we can focus on the intent of this style of work. Scrum has always required teams to be able to do what it takes to deliver a valuable Increment. In the 2017 version of the Scrum Guide, this was described in two areas. First, when describing the Scrum Team they “choose how best to accomplish their work, rather than being directed by others outside the team.” And then when describing the Development Team, “Development Teams are self-organizing. No one (not even the Scrum Master) tells the Development Team how to turn Product Backlog into Increments of potentially releasable functionality.” With the refactoring of the Development Team and the focus on one Scrum Team, the Scrum Guide has increased the clarity of the importance of empowered teams, focused on goals. With the Scrum Team being accountable for delivering a valuable Increment and the addition of a Product Goal, both of these changes highlight the importance of one Scrum Team focused on one Product Backlog in pursuit of a Product Goal. The change to self-managed seems a natural addition to this objective and highlights that the Scrum Team has the ability to not only organize the work but also decide who (is doing the work within the team), what, when, and how. Scrum always encouraged that approach and the new Scrum Guide provides extra clarity. In addition, the term management implies a level of discipline which makes sense as the Scrum Team responds to the opportunity.

**This does not mean there are no managers**

Scrum does not say if there are managers or no managers. The term self-management describes how the Scrum Team should work. Depending on the context this might require managers outside of the Scrum Team doing work in support of the Scrum Team. It might mean that people with the title manager are in the Scrum Team working on the Increment. Scrum is focused on delivering incremental value in pursuit of a Product Goal, it does not describe how outside of that context you should structure your organization and what job titles people should have. Scrum will, as it always has, encourage teams to challenge any management interference if it does not align to the Product Goal and help the team deliver value.

**Does this mean that Scrum Teams do all the tasks traditionally owned by managers?**

Again Scrum is silent on this because it does not know what tasks your manager, in your context does, or understands your organizational structure. Instead, it describes the idea that the Scrum Team, who is accountable for delivering useful, valuable increments, has the opportunity to do what it takes to deliver that value.

The bottom line is that what the Scrum Team does or what it doesn’t do to deliver value will vary depending on your context. The Scrum Guide highlights that if you want Scrum to succeed the Scrum Team needs to have the freedom to take ownership of how what, and when the work gets done.

# Scrum Guide 2020 Update - What has been removed

**A focus on the framework**

Scrum is described as a framework, not a methodology. The Scrum Guide provides just enough prescription to allow Scrum to work and encourages its ‘users’ to be smart, adding practices and other things specific to them on top of the framework as needed to form their process. It provides a mechanism called the Retrospective where the Scrum Team can reflect on what worked and what did not to allow the team to work together to change the process as needed to improve how they work. In fact, Scrum encourages inspection and adaption of both the Product and how the Scrum Team works.

Many Scrum Teams slowly add and remove practices as they seem to help or hinder their work. The Scrum Guide, like a good Scrum Team, has also added content to add clarity or to describe a convention. But unlike a good Scrum Team, it has rarely removed things. With this release of the Scrum Guide, Ken Schwaber and Jeff Sutherland have removed unnecessary content. They have focused on the Scrum Guide as a framework and tried to make it simpler and more focused. That resulted in some things being removed. The following is a list of the majority of removed elements:

* The prescriptive elements of the Sprint Review.
* The detailed outcomes defined in the purpose of the Sprint Retrospective.
* The improvements that will be implemented in the next Sprint from the Retrospective.
* Refinement usually consumes no more than 10% of the capacity of the team.
* How to monitor progress towards the goal in Product Backlog.
* The use of an organization’s “Definition of Done”.
* The three questions for the Daily Scrum.
* Meeting after the Daily Scrum for detailed discussions, re-planning, etc.

**Does that mean that these ideas are no longer relevant?**

In short, no; just because they are no longer in the Scrum Guide does not mean that they cannot still be usable for your situation. For example, the idea of always having at least one process improvement item from the retrospective in the Sprint Backlog is still a very good idea; however, they are no longer ‘mandatory’ to Scrum. By being less prescriptive the Scrum Guide is more usable and allows ‘users’ to add what works for them, in their context without forcing things that may not make sense for their team or organization.