Scrum

A defining feature of the Scrum method is its emphasis on team collaboration and decision making. Tasks and projects are broken down into two-week sprints. At the beginning of each sprint, the entire Scrum team meets together to decide what they hope to accomplish and who will be assigned which tasks. Throughout each sprint, Scrum teams continue to meet together frequently to keep things moving smoothly.

That sprint's tasks are then arranged on a Scrum board—this can either be a physical whiteboard or a virtual Scrum board. The board is broken into three (sometimes more) columns: To do, in progress, and completed.

Types of Agile Meeting:

1. Sprint planning meeting
2. Daily Standup meeting
3. Sprint review meeting
4. Sprint retrospective meeting
5. Product backlog refinement

Sprint planning meeting

Before your team begins a Scrum sprint, you need to know where you're going. This is where the sprint planning meeting comes in. A sprint planning meeting should be one of the longest Scrum meetings you hold—plan on two hours of planning for each week of your sprint. (A two-week sprint, for example, requires roughly a four-hour planning meeting.) While this may seem like a lot, remember that you only need to hold one sprint planning meeting per sprint—right at the start.

The purpose of a sprint planning meeting is simple: Establish what you and your Scrum team want to accomplish this sprint and evaluate the bandwidth you have available. From there, you can plan the sprint, assign tasks, and set deadlines. Make sure each team member understands the ins and outs of the tasks they are assigned. You'll want to invite the product owner to this meeting so they can clear up any ambiguities and help establish expectations.

- **Purpose:** Plan what work will be done in the upcoming sprint.

- **Participants:** Product Owner, Scrum Master, Development Team.

- **Output:** Sprint Goal and Sprint Backlog (list of selected user stories/tasks).

- **Frequency:** At the beginning of every sprint.

Daily standup meeting

As the most frequently held Agile Scrum meetings, daily standup meetings are the bread and butter of Scrum sprints. They're short, to the point, and, as the name suggests, held each day—they're typically the first meeting of the work day. By the end of a standup meeting, each team member should have answered two questions: What did I accomplish yesterday? And what am I going to accomplish today? Standup meetings are also a time for team members to bring up any roadblocks they are facing.

Though daily standup meetings only take between fifteen and thirty minutes, they are an effective way to keep each team member up-to-speed, on task, and openly communicating with others. Because they are held so frequently, standup meetings also allow teams to address problems as they arise, keeping the sprint moving on schedule.

- **Purpose:** Sync up and update progress toward the sprint goal.

- **Time-boxed:** 15 minutes max.

- **Questions Discussed:**

- What did I do yesterday?

- What will I do today?

- Are there any blockers?

- **Frequency:** Daily.

Sprint review meeting

Sprint review meetings are held at the end of each sprint. This meeting is an opportunity for you and your team to demonstrate what you've accomplished to the product owner and other stakeholders outside of your team.

Your goal in a sprint review meeting is to gather feedback. As you demonstrate new product features and functionality, allow the product owner and other stakeholders to respond to and evaluate your work. Agile methodology relies on open and frequent conversations: As you and

your team document, respond to, and act on feedback, remember that these conversations help create a better product.

Certain feedback points may require additional work on the product—add them to your backlog and consider including them in the next sprint. This is a matter of priority: While you should implement the feedback eventually, if other tasks are more pressing you can save it for a sprint down the road.

- **Purpose:** Demonstrate completed work to stakeholders and get feedback.

- **Participants:** Team, Product Owner, Stakeholders.

- **Focus:** Working product increment.

- **Frequency:** End of each sprint.

Sprint retrospective meeting

Just like review meetings, a sprint retrospective meeting is held at the end of each sprint. Whereas review meetings include the product owner and other stakeholders, retrospective meetings are primarily for the benefit of your Scrum team—there's usually no need to get outside players involved.

During a sprint retrospective meeting, address these questions with your Scrum team: What went right this sprint? What went wrong? And what could we do differently next time?

These meetings don't have to be long (usually somewhere between one and two hours), but they allow teams to constantly improve.

- **Purpose**: Reflect on the sprint and identify improvements.

- **Participants**: Scrum Team (Dev team, PO, Scrum Master).

- **Focus**: Team processes, collaboration, and continuous improvement.

- **Frequency**: After the Sprint Review, before the next Sprint Planning.

Product backlog refinement

Product backlog refinement meetings occur between sprints (usually just once per interim, but you could always schedule another if needed). Your backlog tasks are likely a bit rough around the edges. This meeting is your chance to add clarifying details, establish deliverables, and prioritize the tasks in your backlog.

A thorough product backlog refinement meeting makes your life easier. If you take the time to refine your backlog, sprint planning is a quicker and smoother process.

- **Purpose**: Prepare and refine items in the Product Backlog.

- **Activities**:
    - Clarify requirements.
    - Break down user stories.
    - Estimate story points.

- **Frequency**: Ongoing or scheduled mid-sprint.

Other Agile Meetings:

Release Planning: Plan features and timeline for a release

Program Increment (PI) Planning: Align multiple teams on common goals for 8–12 weeks

Scrum of Scrums: Coordinate between multiple Scrum teams