

Scrum interview questions and answers

Q #1. How is scrum different from waterfall?

The major differences are:

- The feedback from customer is received at an early stage in Scrum than waterfall, where the feedback from customer is received towards the end of development cycle.
- To accommodate the new or changed requirement in scrum is easier than waterfall.
- Scrum focuses on collaborative development than waterfall where the entire development cycle is divided into phases.
- At any point of time we can roll back the changes in scrum than in waterfall.
- Test is considered as phase in waterfall unlike scrum.

Q #2. How is scrum different from Iterative model?

Scrum is a type of iterative model only but it is iterative + incremental.

Q #3. Do you know any other agile methodology apart from Scrum?

Other Agile methodology include – KanBan, XP, Lean

Q #4. What are the ceremonies you perform in scrum

There are 3 major ceremonies performed in Scrum:-

1. Planning Meeting – Where the entire scrum teams along with the scrum master and product owner meets and discuss each item from the product backlog that they can work on the sprint. When the story is estimated and is well understood by the team, the story then moves into the Sprint Backlog.
2. Review Meeting – Where the scrum team demonstrates their work done to the stake holders
3. Retrospective meeting – Where the scrum teams along with the scrum master and product owner meets and retrospect the last sprint they worked on. They majorly discuss about 3 things:
 - What went well?
 - What could be done better?
 - Action Items

Apart from these three ceremonies, we have one more called "Backlog grooming" meeting. In this meeting, the scrum team along with the scrum master and product owner. The product owner put forward the business requirements as per the priority and the team discussed over it, identifies the complexity, dependencies and efforts. The team may also do the story pointing at this stage.

Q #5. Do you know the Three Amigos in Scrum?

The three Amigos are – The product Owner, The Scrum Master and the Scrum Team.

Q #6. What do you think should be the ideal size of a Scrum team?

The ideal size is 7 to9 with +/- 2

Q #7. What do you discuss in Daily stand up meeting?

We discuss three things:-

- What did I do today?
- What I plan to do tomorrow?
- Any impediments / roadblock

Q #8. What is the "time Boxing" of a scrum process called?

It's called "Sprint"

Q #9. What should be an ideal duration of a sprint?

It is recommended to have 2 – 4 weeks of sprint cycle.

Q #10. How requirements are defined in a scrum?

Requirements are termed as "User Stories" in Scrum.

Q #11. What are the different artifacts in scrum?

There are two artifacts maintained in Scrum:

- Product Backlog – Containing the prioritized list of business requirements
- Sprint Backlog – Contains the user stories to be done by the scrum team for a sprint.

Q #12. How do you define a user story?

The user stories are defined in the format of

As a <User / type of user>

I want to <action / feature to implement>

So that < objective>

Q #13. What are the roles of a Scrum Master and Product owner?

Scrum Master – Acts as a servant Leader for the scrum team. He presides over all the scrum ceremonies and coaches the team to understand and implement scrum values and principals.

Product Owner – Is the Point of contact for a scrum team. He/she is the one who work closest to the business. The main responsibility of a product owner is to identify and refine the product backlog items.

Q #14. How do you measure the work done in a sprint?

It's measured by Velocity.

Q #15. What is Velocity?

Velocity is the sum of story points that a scrum team completes (meets the definition of done) over a sprint.

Q #16. So in scrum which entity is responsible for deliverable? Scrum master or Product owner?

Neither the scrum master, not the product owner. It's the responsibility of the team who owns the deliverable.

Q #17. How do you measure the complexity or effort in a sprint? Is there a way to determine and represent it?

Complexity and effort is measured through "Story Points". In scrum it's recommended to use Fibonacci series to represent it.

Q #18. How do you track your progress in a sprint?

The progress is tracked by a "Burn-Down chart".

Q #19. How do you create the burn down chart?

Burn down chart is a graph which shows the estimated v/s actual effort of the scrum tasks.

It is a tracking mechanism by which for a particular sprint; day to day tasks are tracked to check whether the stories are progressing towards the completion of the committed story points or not. Here we should remember that the efforts are measured in terms of user stories and not hours.

Q #20. What do you do in a sprint review and retrospective?

During Sprint review we walkthrough and demonstrate the feature or story implemented by the scrum team to the stake holders.

During retrospective, we try to identify in a collaborative way what went well, what could be done better and action items to have continuous improvement.

Q #21. Do you see any disadvantage of using scrum?

I don't see any disadvantage of using scrum. The problems mainly arises when the scrum team do not either understand the values and principles of scrum or are not flexible enough to change. Before we deciding on scrum, we must first try to answer the

Q #22. Do you think scrum can be implemented in all the software development process?

Scrum is used mainly for

- complex kind of project
- Projects which have early and strict deadlines.
- When we are developing any software from scratch.

Q #23. During review, suppose the product owner or stakeholder does not agree to the feature you implemented what would you do?

First thing we will not mark the story as done.

We will first confirm the actual requirement from the stakeholder and update the user story and put it into backlog. Based on the priority, we would be pulling the story in next sprint.

Q #24. In case, the scrum master is not available, would you still conduct the daily stand up meeting?

Yes, we can very well go ahead and do our daily stand up meeting.

Q #25. Where does automation fit into scrum?

Automation plays a vital role in Scrum. In order to have continuous feedback and ensure a quality deliverable we should try to implement TDD, BDD and ATDD approach during our development. Automation in scrum is not only related to testing but it is for all aspect of software development. As I said before introducing TDD, BDD and ATDD will speed up our development process along with maintaining the quality standards; automating the build and deployment process will also speed up the feature availability in different environment – QA to production. As far as testing is concerned, regression testing should be the one that will have most attention. With progress of every sprint, the regression suit keeps on increasing and it becomes practically very challenging to execute the regression suit manually for every sprint. Because we have the sprint duration of 2 – 4 weeks, automating it would be imperial.

Q #26. Apart from planning, review and retrospective, do you know any other ceremony in scrum?

We have the Product backlog refinement meeting (backlog grooming meeting) where the team, scrum master and product owner meets to understand the business requirements, splits it into user stories, and estimating it.

Q #27. Can you give an example of where scrum cannot be implemented? In that case what do you suggest?

Scrum can be implemented in all kinds of projects. It is not only applicable to software but is also implemented successfully in mechanical and engineering projects.

Q #28. Tell me one big advantage of using scrum?

The major advantage which I feel is – Early feedback and producing the Minimal Viable Product to the stakeholders.

Q #29. What is DoD? How is this achieved?

DoD stands for Definition of done. It is achieved when

- the story is development complete,
- QA complete,
- The story meets and satisfy the acceptance criteria
- regression around the story is complete
- The feature is eligible to be shipped / deployed in production.

Q #30. What is MVP in scrum?

A Minimum Viable Product is a product which has just the bare minimum required feature which can be demonstrated to the stakeholders and is eligible to be shipped to production.

Q #31. What are Epics?

Epics are equivocal user stories or we can say these are the user stories which are not defined and are kept for future sprints.

Q #32. How do you calculate a story point?

A Story point is calculated by taking into the consideration the development effort+ testing effort + resolving dependencies and other factors that would require to complete a story.

Q #33. Is it possible that you come across different story point for development and testing efforts? In that case how do you resolve this conflict?

Yes, this is a very common scenario. There may be a chance that the story point given by the development team is, say 3 but the tester gives it 5. In that case both the developer and tester have to justify their story point, have discussion in the meeting and collaborate to conclude a common story point.

Q #34. You are in the middle of a sprint and suddenly the product owner comes with a new requirement, what will you do?

In ideal case, the requirement becomes a story and moves to the backlog. Then based on the priority, team can take it up in the next sprint. But if the priority of the requirement is really high, then the team will have to accommodate it in the sprint but it has to very well communicated to the stakeholder that incorporating a story in the middle of the sprint may result in spilling over few stories to the next sprint.

Q #35. In case you receive a story at the last day of the sprint to test and you find there are defects, what will you do? Will you mark the story to done?

A story is done only when it is development complete + QA complete + acceptance criteria is met + it is eligible to be shipped into production. In this case if there are defects, the story is partially done and not completely done, so I will spill it over to next sprint.