Agile Meetings

What is an agile scrum meeting?

Agile meetings organize tasks into increments to break down large projects. The meetings incorporate check-ins, discussions, and **shareholder-level feedback**. They are fast-paced and to-the-point discussions that efficiently utilize everyone's time. Team members discuss progress updates, client feedback, task plans, or other critical project data.

Agile meetings offer multiple benefits, from time efficiency to team alignment. The meeting works exceptionally well for remote workers since it voices their ideas, concerns, and allows them to ask questions incrementally throughout the project.

The role of the product owners in agile meeting

- Product Owners give everyone the stakeholder's or client's vision. They are responsible for communicating the task's **roadmap and backlog** to developers and other team members. A backlog is a list of improvements the product needs.

- Besides that, their role also involves release management. In turn, they plan and schedule product releases, assign roles and tasks within the project, and ensure product testing and other quality assurance measures.

The role of the scrum master in agile meetings

- The Scrum Master works similarly to a manager or supervisor. They ensure everyone in the Development Team completes their assigned tasks, as per the Product Owner's requirements. They also oversee standup meetings, update the team on any changing instructions, and guarantee that everyone is on-task.

- Scrum Masters manage reviews and feedback. If there are any potential distractions or roadblocks, they oversee their removal. Besides supervising, the **Scrum Master coaches** the Development Team to deliver quality results, and communicate and assist Product Owners.

What are the different types of Scrum meetings?
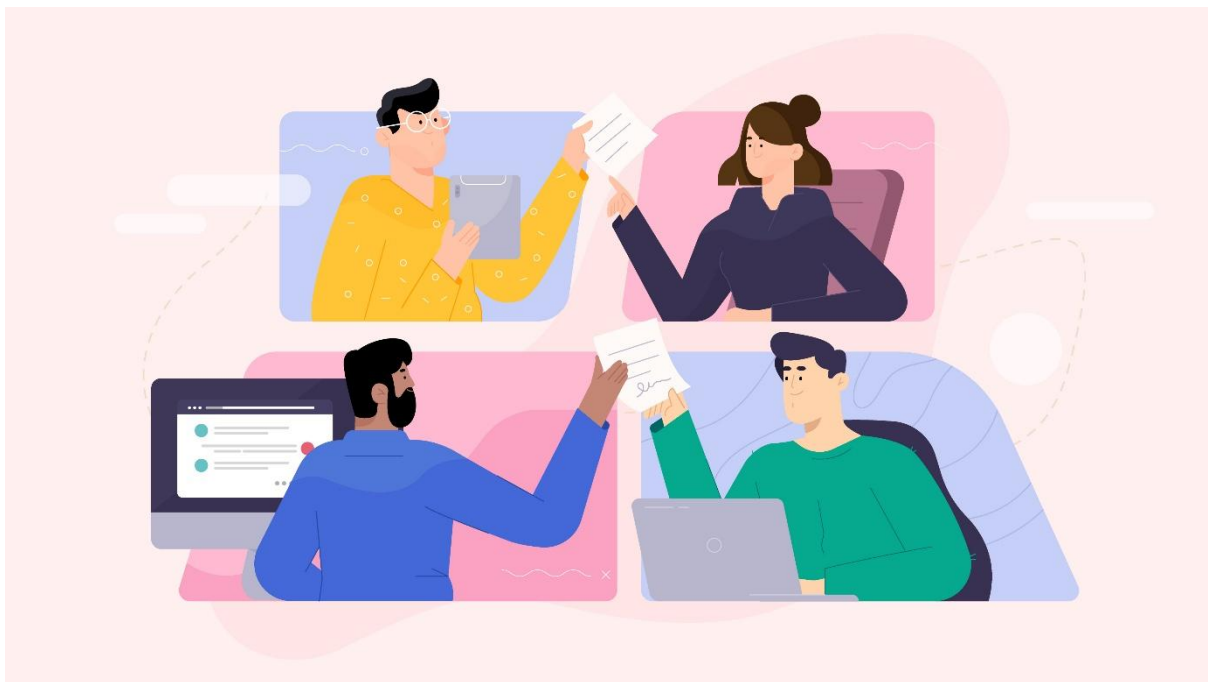
1. Daily stand-up meetings

Daily Scrum, or standups, are fast meetings used to keep the team informed of everyone's progress from the previous day.

Daily Scrums help teams inform the Scrum master about any challenges to their tasks. This gives the team transparency on roadblocks and allows the Scrum master to devise a plan of action.

How to run a daily Scrum standup

Daily Scrums are quick, 15-minute meetings that kick off the team's daily tasks. By the end of the meeting, each team member is informed of their team's progress and any roadblocks to look out for.

1. The Scrum master fills out the scrum's information and sprint number on a Daily Scrum template

2. The Scrum master calls out the participants and asks three questions. These are: 1) "What did you do yesterday?", 2) "What will you do today?", and 3) "Do you have any blockers?"

3. The Scrum master fills out the Daily Scrum template, marking each task as accomplished, in progress, or on hold.

Tips to improve efficiency in your daily Scrum standup

Daily Scrums need to be quick and focused on task progress rather than discussing strategy.

Here are a few tips that will keep your daily scrum quick and efficient:

- **Focus the conversation:** Daily scrums inform the team on the status of tasks, not how to fix them. Any problems raised must be assessed outside the meeting time.

- **Use a timer:** Use a timer to keep participants within their talking time limits. This makes sure the meeting is quick, so everyone can communicate their progress and carry on with their daily tasks.

- **Keep the same update order:** Scrum masters should call out members in the same order daily. This ensures everyone is ready and prepared for their turn, avoiding delays like "unmuting mics" or outside distractions.

2.Sprint planning

Sprint planning is for the Scrum team to discuss their tasks in the upcoming sprint.

The goal of this meeting is to have a clear definition of the sprint's goals and to divide tasks between the team. This often involves the need for a backlog list to prioritize tasks between the team.

How to run a sprint planning meeting

The sprint planning meeting sets up the foundations for the next sprint's work, so it requires the attendance of the development team, the product manager, and the Scrum master — a team member or collaborator whose job is to make sure the scrum process is smooth and that the team understands the scrum practices and framework.

1. Define the goal of the upcoming sprint.
2. Prepare and refine the backlog. Here, you will want to ask your teams what tasks are achievable in the sprint.
3. Designate and plan work tasks.
4. Discuss the inputs or resources needed for the sprint to be successful.
5. Define clear expectations for the output of the sprint.

Tips to improve efficiency in your sprint planning

Sprint planning requires more time and preparation than other Agile meetings. This is because the meeting calls for past tasks and resources, so the Scrum master and product manager must do research beforehand.

Here are a few tips to help sprint planning moves smoothly and keep your team on track:

- **Keep track of time:** Timebox the sprint planning for no more than two hours. Time management will make sure that the meeting is focused on the tasks at hand and respects the team's working time. This is the scrum master's responsibility, and they can use timer tools to keep the team on track.

- **Define clear goals:** Creating a sprint without a goal is like looking at a map without a compass. It has no direction.

- **Use a digital whiteboard:** Using online whiteboards enables teams to visually understand the sprint and the tasks at hand. Teams can centralize information on the whiteboard and use it as a reference for the sprint. Additionally, remote Agile teams rely on these tools for reaching alignment and coordination projects daily.

- **End the meeting with a Q&A:** Keep time at the end of the meeting for the team to ask questions or for clarification. This keeps everyone on the same page.
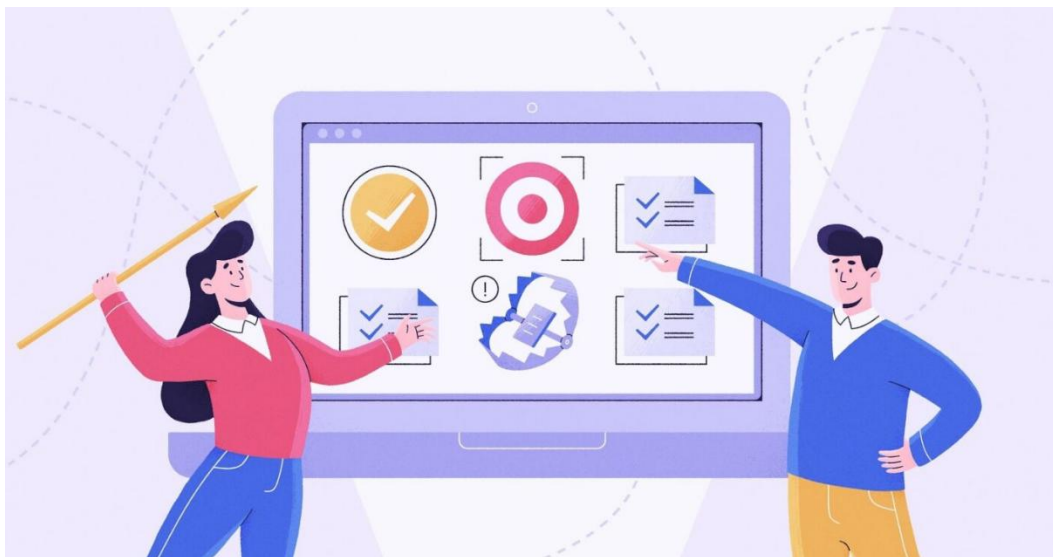
3.Sprint review meetings

Sprint reviews are for team members to demonstrate their output, completed tasks, new features, and how they fixed any bugs or issues.

The sprint review is conducted after the first sprint. The goal is to learn from one another's tasks and experiences. The aim is to adjust inputs and timelines to improve output quality.

It is also an opportunity for team members to ask questions and provide feedback on what's been done.

**How to run a sprint review**

Sprint reviews spotlight each team member's task progress and accomplishments.

1. Do a quick 15-minute team check-in to understand your team's current energy. This will help build team camaraderie before giving feedback to one another.

2. One by one, each team member presents their finished tasks and what tasks are in progress. Each team member should go over what they did and if they faced any issues.

3. If possible, the participant should show a demo of their product.

4. The floor is open for questions and feedback for the team to discuss and improve the quality of future output.

5. The scrum master should write down all the items and feedback on a sprint review template for future reference.

Tips to improve efficiency in a sprint review

The following tips will help your team feel comfortable participating in the sprint review. In turn, increased communication will improve work quality, team knowledge, and project success.

- **Hand out a meeting agenda beforehand:** Send each participant an agenda before the sprint review. This helps the team prepare the documents and products they will need before the meeting and makes sure no documentation or product is left out in the review.

- **Share information:** Centralize information, documents, and materials in one place. This will help the team individually access materials and knowledge. Having a shared digital space makes it easier to keep track of all your progress.
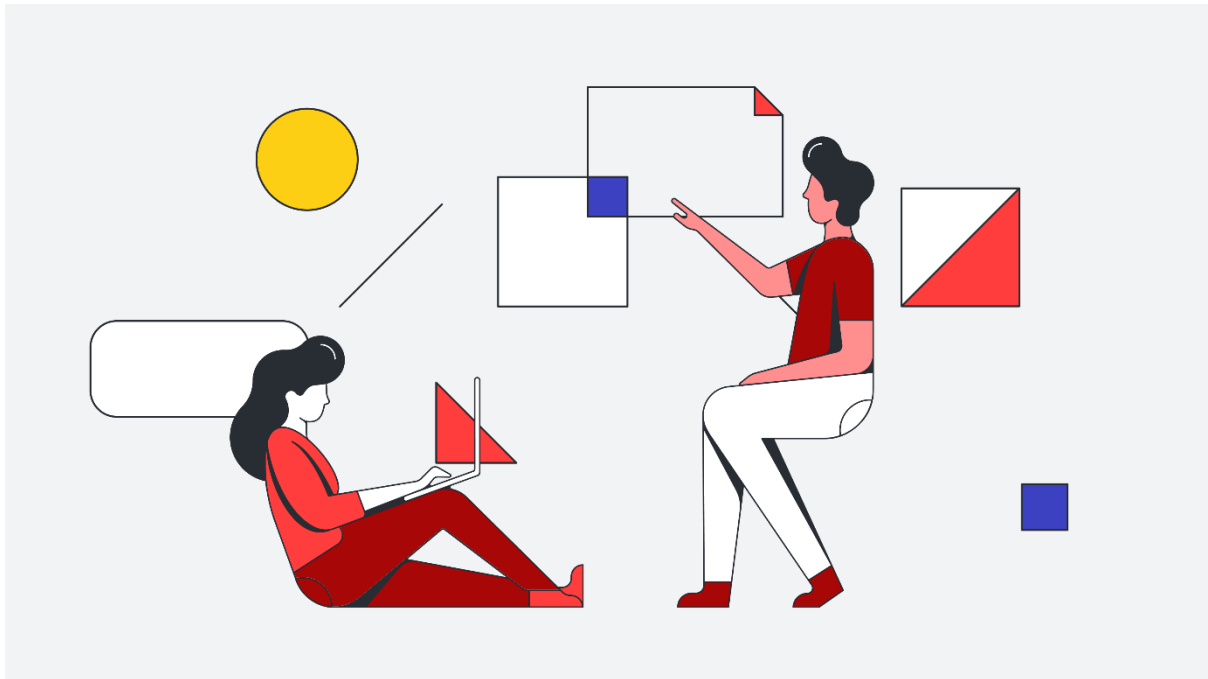
4.Sprint retrospective meetings

A sprint retrospective occurs at the end of the sprint and after the sprint review. It gives the team the opportunity for honest reflection and feedback on the project and the process for future improvement.

How to run a sprint retrospective

The purpose of a sprint retrospective is to focus on project improvement.

1. Start the meeting with some friendly icebreakers (don't worry, we have got you covered, whether you just need icebreaker questions, or your team is remote, or it's a small group).

2. The Scrum master asks the product owners and product manager the following questions: *What worked? What did not work? What can be improved?*

3. All the feedback is added onto a sprint retrospective template.

Tips to improve efficiency in a sprint retrospective

Sprint retrospectives provide valuable insights for project quality improvement by understanding each stakeholder's opinions and experience.

- **Start with connection:** Team-building exercises like warmups or icebreakers (see above) can quickly bring a team closer together and build psychological safety — a crucial element for constructive feedback and project improvement.

- **Ask probing questions:** Do not ask your team questions that can be answered with a "yes" or "no." Dig deeper and ask questions that require well-rounded answers. For example, instead of "did you encounter any challenges?" opt for "what challenges did you encounter?"

- **Avoid groupthink:** Use a virtual collaboration tool like Mural to run retrospectives, which offers features like private mode, where each team member can write on sticky notes that are only visible to the scrum master. Once all the notes are in, the scrum master shares the diverse thoughts with the group. That way, no idea or feedback is influenced by other team members.