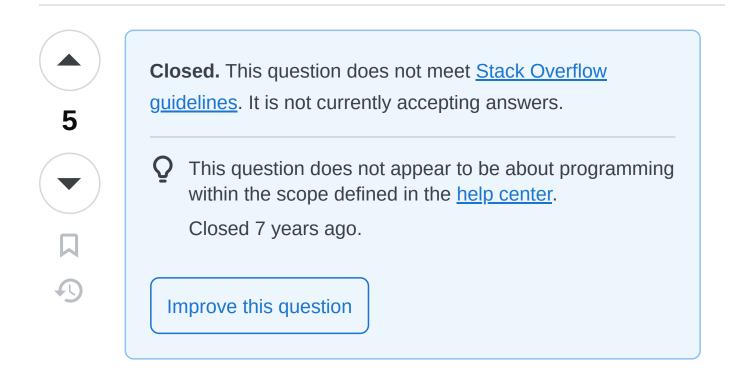# Best way of using Scrum and Sprint for Infrastructure improvement [closed]

Asked 16 years, 2 months ago   Modified 10 years, 6 months ago

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5

Does anybody use Scrum & Sprint for Infrastructure.

I'm struggling with the concept of a Sprint that never finishes i.e. a Network enhancement project.

Also any suggestions on how Item time can be built up to a Product Backlog, so that I can sanity check that resources are not overcommited on the sprint.
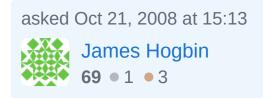
`agile` `scrum` `infrastructure`

edited Oct 21, 2008 at 15:21

DaveK
4,597 ● 3 ● 34 ● 33

asked Oct 21, 2008 at 15:13

James Hogbin
69 ● 1 ● 3

2   This question is off-topic because it is not within the scope of questions appropriate for this site, as defined in What topics can I ask about here? Please also see: What types of questions should I avoid asking? You may be able to get help on another Stack Exchange site, for example Project Management or Software Engineering. – Makyen ♦ Sep 2, 2017 at 23:58

4 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⇕

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I would suggest that you might start by refreshing your memory about the whole concept of Scrum (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Scrum might be a good place to start).

For example I don't believe that there should be such thing as a 'never finishing sprint'. If you have some very long and/or recurring task just break it into more specific ones. Network enhancement is very generic - break it down to:

- a spike to research new network equipment

- a spike to review your cables layout
- a task to draw the equipment physical locations and wires diagram

Estimate these and put them into your Backlog.

etc.

Then plan short (1-2) week sprints or iterations. Assign a specific goal to each of them. Add some of your tasks from the backlog to the iteration. Complete it.

Review the results, adjust the process, repeat.

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answered Oct 21, 2008 at 15:34

Ilya Kochetov

18.4k ● 6 ● 47 ● 62

> So my Network refresh is the Backlog and I split it into items for the sprint. Obvious Now :-) – James Hogbin Oct 24, 2008 at 8:39

▲

1

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Scrum is a project management method, it is not specifically aimed at software development ; so it can be used for network enhancement project.

You said you're struggling with "sprint that never finishes", that is not Scrum. Sprint are timeboxed, they finish on time, period.

Now, if the team overcommitted for the sprint, or if some tasks were underestimated, and there are backlog items that are not "done done", they are removed from the outcome of the sprint, and may be continued in the next sprint.

There are several things you can do to prevent overcommitement :

- backlog items shall be small ; small items are easier to estimate that large items. Actually, they should have [INVEST characteristics](). **EDIT**: the backlog items should be sized so that the Team can complete between 5 and 10 in one Sprint, *on average*.

- after the first sprint, you now how much the team can put in a sprint (provided comparable ressources)

- do not allocate people 100% on the sprint, start with 80% as a rule of thumb

- define what "done" means

- re-estimate your backlog items based on what your learnt

If the network enhancement project never finishes, I assume it is because new needs are identified. Add them in your backlog, prioritize them, estimate them, they will eventually be scheduled in a sprint.

Share Improve this answer   edited Nov 14, 2009 at 9:24

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I like the link. Will try that on the team and see where we go with it. – James Hogbin Oct 24, 2008 at 8:41

1

You might look into Kanban. You still have a backlog, but instead of timeboxing it imposes WIP limits throughout a process flow. I still recommend using the Scrum communication plan w/ standups and regular retrospectives and demos if appropriate. Planning meetings are a little different in that you are not actually committing to any work, but you can still use stories and story points (WIP limits can be on story points). If you are meeting every two week, I would make sure you have 2.5 or 3 week of work queued up (although an advantage of Kanban is you can always add the next big thing to the top of the queue without having to wait until the next sprint).

Also I like the fact that you can have swimlanes representing their various clients as infrastructure is often working on end user support tickets and supporting multiple projects in addition to their own day to day work.

In waterfall you would build and release all at once. In Scrum you build and release periodically, in short sprints. With Kanban, you just keep the water flowing.

Google Infra-gile for more.

A Sprint that never finishes is not a Sprint...it's a career. JK. Make sure you have clearly defined sub-goals if a major goal is not reachable and/or constantly shifting. Estimate man hours on each task and break it down into sub-tasks if those hours get to be more than half a day or so (very loose rule). Track time (doesn't have to be precise--can be logged at the stand up meeting or through your project management system or ticketing system) and compare to tasks. You will find some tasks that are similar in function and time to complete. Use those as prototypes for the next sprint and keep enhancing it until you are getting more and more on the mark.

Once you have a pretty good handle on that, revisit your backlog, assign estimated time and start defining solid goals (which are made up of discrete, well defined sub tasks), stretch goals, and distant goals for your sprint. Solid goals should be well within your team's reach (no more than 60% of your estimated goals you can accomplish and usually less), stretch goals should be from that point to what you estimate you can accomplish (at 100% estimated efficiency) and distant goals you should have on your radar in case you have a fantastic bit of luck that sprint. Everyday, review and chart your burn

down at the stand up, and re-eveluate your goals for that sprint. If there are wild changes in your estimates, note why, and if they are systematic, revisit your tasks and estimated time and readjust so your next estimate will be better. This is a whole lot of work at first and it takes a remarkable amount of discipline but the payoffs after a few months are huge. Just keep grounded in strict reality. Good luck!

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Have broken out Project to do some time planning. Is there anything more agile focused that would be appropriate?
– James Hogbin Oct 24, 2008 at 8:40