



Transcript

Game Phase: The Sprint

Learning Objective

After completing this topic, you should be able to

- *describe the activities that take place during a sprint*

1. Sprint planning

The game phase is where the core Scrum practices exist and where the bulk of the work is done. The development team plans each sprint, meets regularly, and creates functioning deliverables. And at the end of each sprint, it delivers the results to the customer, or a customer representative, for review. The process is iterative, with a product developed incrementally over multiple sprints.

A Scrum team uses sprints of fixed length, typically of between two to four weeks. Each sprint results in a deliverable that can be handed to the customer.

Before the start of a sprint, the product owner and development team members meet to plan the sprint.

During an initial sprint planning meeting, developers work with the product owner to set the goal for the first sprint. This defines the deliverable that the sprint will create.

The team determines which user stories to move from the product backlog into a document known as the *sprint backlog*, which lists all items to be completed during the relevant sprint. It then determines the required work and divides it into tasks, ideally ensuring that each task requires less than two days – or a maximum of sixteen developer hours – of work.

Graphic

A whiteboard contains sticky notes under columns named Story, To do, In progress, To verify, and Done.

Whereas during the project's pre-planning meeting a decision is reached on what to build the complete product, the sprint planning meetings that follow the initial meeting are held to determine how best to build the various product deliverables for each upcoming sprint. The Scrum team, including product owner and Scrum Master, attend these sprint planning meetings.

During such subsequent sprint planning meetings, the team considers any new feedback resulting from previous sprint reviews and any new customer requirements to incorporate what they learned into future sprints. These meetings are often time boxed to not exceed a maximum of four hours.

Question

Which are examples of activities that occur as part of a sprint planning meeting?

Options:

1. Updating each other about completed tasks and new tasks
2. Selecting product backlog items to complete during a sprint
3. Breaking items into development tasks
4. Presenting completed work to stakeholders and the product owner
5. Reviewing changes in requirements and adjusting sprint plans accordingly

Answer

Option 1: *Incorrect. Team members update each other on completed tasks, tasks currently in progress and tasks that are pending during the daily standup meeting, not the sprint planning meeting.*

Option 2: *Correct. Once the Scrum Master and team compiled the list of tasks during the first sprint planning meeting, they commit to these tasks in the order in which the sprint backlog lists them.*

Option 3: *Correct. During the sprint planning meeting, the team verifies which backlog items to build as part of the upcoming sprint iteration and breaks selected items into actionable tasks.*

Option 4: *Incorrect. A sprint planning meeting occurs at the start of a sprint. Sprint results are presented to stakeholders at the end of each sprint.*

Option 5: *Correct. In subsequent sprint planning meetings, the team refer to the results of sprints that are complete, as well as other new information, and adjusts the current sprint accordingly.*

Correct answer(s):

- 2. Selecting product backlog items to complete during a sprint
- 3. Breaking items into development tasks
- 5. Reviewing changes in requirements and adjusting sprint plans accordingly

2. Daily standup meetings

During the course of a sprint, the members of a Scrum team meet to discuss task progress and any issues that are preventing tasks from being completed. The purpose of these daily standup meetings – also known as Scrums – is to get a quick update on a project's status and identify any roadblocks as soon as they arise. Daily standups are typically conducted with the team standing in an informal circle – or "huddle."

Daily standup meetings shouldn't exceed 15 minutes to ensure team members only briefly summarize how they're managing to complete their allotted tasks. Team members are allowed to flag potential problems at this meeting to make others aware of potential obstacles, but the Scrum Master should encourage the team to wait until after a standup meeting to raise any major issues. This is to prevent the meeting from turning into a long, drawn-out discussion.

Daily standup meetings should ideally be conducted at the start of a working day. Regardless of when they're held, however, it's mandatory that all team members involved in a sprint attend the meeting – either in person or via the phone or video conference.

In daily standup meetings, team members are expected to provide information of three types:

- the tasks they completed since the last meeting
- the tasks they plan to complete by the next meeting, and
- any obstacles that are preventing them from completing their tasks

The use of daily standup meetings helps ensure a high level of collaboration among team members. It also enables quick decision making and prevents time from being wasted during unnecessarily drawn-out meetings.

If a Scrum project involves multiple teams, meetings known as the "Scrum of Scrums" may be used to coordinate the work of the teams. In a Scrum of Scrums, a representative from each team meets after the daily standup meeting, for not more

than 15 minutes. Each team representative provides a quick update on a team's progress and on any issues that may affect other teams.

Question

Match each meeting type with its description. One of the descriptions won't be used.

Options:

- A. Sprint planning meeting
- B. Daily standup meeting

Targets:

1. A meeting lasting several hours, during which the team and the product owner collaborate to establish what work to complete during a sprint
2. A short meeting during which team members update one another on their progress
3. A meeting during which developers decide on a high-level product design

Answer

At the start of each sprint, a Scrum team holds a sprint planning meeting, which can last up to four hours. During the meeting, the team decides which product backlog items to address in the upcoming sprint.

A daily standup meeting lasts for a maximum of 15 minutes. During this meeting, team members update one another on what they've done over the past 24 hours, what they plan to do over the next 24 hours, and any obstacles that are hampering their work.

Developers decide on a high-level product design, based on a review of the product backlog, during the pre-game phase. Both sprint planning and daily standup meetings occur later, during the game phase.

Correct answer(s):

Target 1 = Option A

Target 2 = Option B

Target 3 =No Option Specified.

3. Unit tests and sprint reviews

Ongoing testing and the adaptation based on test results is a key principle of most agile methodologies, including Scrum. During the game phase of the Scrum development process, this principle is implemented in two ways – through unit testing and sprint reviews.

In Scrum, developers conduct unit testing of the work they complete, as they complete it. This differs from the traditional approach, in which most testing occurs only once a product has been fully developed.

Unit tests are routine inspections for testing the accuracy, reliability, and functionality of product components. Each test is designed with a specific unit – such as a piece of hardware or a code module – in mind.

If a unit test reveals a defect, the team can fix the defect immediately to ensure it isn't carried over into subsequent sprints. In the case of code development, unit testing also supports frequent code refactoring – the process of redesigning code to make it simpler and faster.

At the end of each sprint, the Scrum team – including the Scrum Master, product owner, and developers – hold a sprint review meeting. Other interested stakeholders, such as the customer, managers, and engineers, are also welcome to attend.

During the meeting, the development team presents the results of the sprint to the product owner and customer for review. They provide feedback and decide whether the goal for the sprint has been achieved.

Based on the results of the review, the product owner may make changes to the product backlog.

A sprint review meeting is generally informal and, if four-week sprints are used, shouldn't last more than four hours. Review meetings should be shorter for shorter sprints.

It's important to conduct effective sprint reviews because these are the main way that the product owner and Scrum Master gather feedback about a project. They are also the key to ensuring the team is delivering customer value.

To help ensure that sprint reviews are effective but don't waste development time, a Scrum Master should follow various guidelines:

- limit the preparation time for each sprint review to 30 minutes
- reiterate the sprint goal at the start of the meeting
- keep the product backlog visible and check each item as it's being discussed
- allow anyone present to ask questions and give input regarding the product demonstration

- add new input to the product backlog and make a note if any item's functionality is unsatisfactory, and
- be flexible about the meeting's duration – it can be as short as 10 minutes or as long as two hours, as long as there's sufficient time for feedback

Question

Match each type of evaluation with its description. One description won't be used.

Options:

- A. Sprint review
- B. Unit testing

Targets:

1. Engineers provide tools that are used to assess a product while it's in development
2. The Scrum team collaborates for a maximum of four hours to discuss a completed sprint
3. The product owner moves a product backlog item into the sprint backlog

Answer

When conducting unit testing, engineers write applications that can be used to test a product for defects. These tests are called unit tests.

During sprint review, the product owner and team meet for a time-boxed period of four hours to assess whether tasks that have been performed adequately during a sprint and whether they meet the sprint goal.

Moving items from the product backlog into the sprint backlog occurs during the sprint planning phase, not during sprint review or unit testing.

Correct answer(s):

Target 1 = Option B

Target 2 = Option A

Target 3 = No Option Specified.

4. Sprint retrospectives and closure

After each sprint review meeting, the Scrum Master conducts a sprint retrospective with the development team to discuss how the sprint went and how it could have been improved. This helps the team formulate best practices it can apply during the next sprint, in keeping with the agile principle of continuous improvement.

Also during a sprint retrospective, the team identifies any tasks in the sprint backlog that weren't completed – for example, due to unexpected difficulties or delays. These are then added back to the product backlog.

If a project uses 30-day sprints, each sprint retrospective meeting should be limited to a maximum of three hours. If shorter sprint intervals are used, proportionately shorter sprint retrospectives are appropriate.

At the end of a sprint, the end result should be a functional product, product component, or other deliverable of value to the customer.

Following sprint completion, planning for the next sprint can begin. This process repeats until a finished product is ready for final release or a deadline is reached. Once all required product work has been completed in the final sprint, the project is closed and the final product can be delivered to the customer.

Question

Match sprint components to their descriptions. One description won't be used.

Options:

- A. Sprint review
- B. Sprint retrospective

Targets:

1. The Scrum team reveals the chapter of a book they've been working on to the customer to receive feedback on it
2. The Scrum team informally discuss ways in which a sprint can be improved in a three-hour meeting
3. Once the first draft of a book is done, the team sign off on it so it can be shipped to the customer

Answer

This type of "demonstration" of a finalized part of a product to the customer occurs during the sprint review meeting.

The sprint retrospective is a meeting time-boxed at three hours for a month-long sprint. At this meeting, the team, product owner and Scrum Master talk about what worked well during the sprint, and what didn't.

The sprint closure occurs at the end of a sprint. During this phase, a shippable product component – such as the first draft of a book – is produced and delivered to the customer.

Correct answer(s):

Target 1 = Option A

Target 2 = Option B

Target 3 =No Option Specified.

Summary

During the game phase, a Scrum team plans what work to include in each sprint and completes actual development tasks.

Once a sprint is underway, the Scrum Master and developers meet once daily for a brief standup meeting. During the meeting, team members update everyone on their progress and any obstacles.

Throughout a sprint, developers conduct unit tests and make corrections or improvements based on the results. Once a sprint ends, the team conducts a sprint review, during which it presents the sprint results for customer review. Feedback is then incorporated in plans for subsequent sprints.

After each sprint review, the Scrum Master facilitates a sprint retrospective, to review the sprint and identify possible improvements for later sprints.