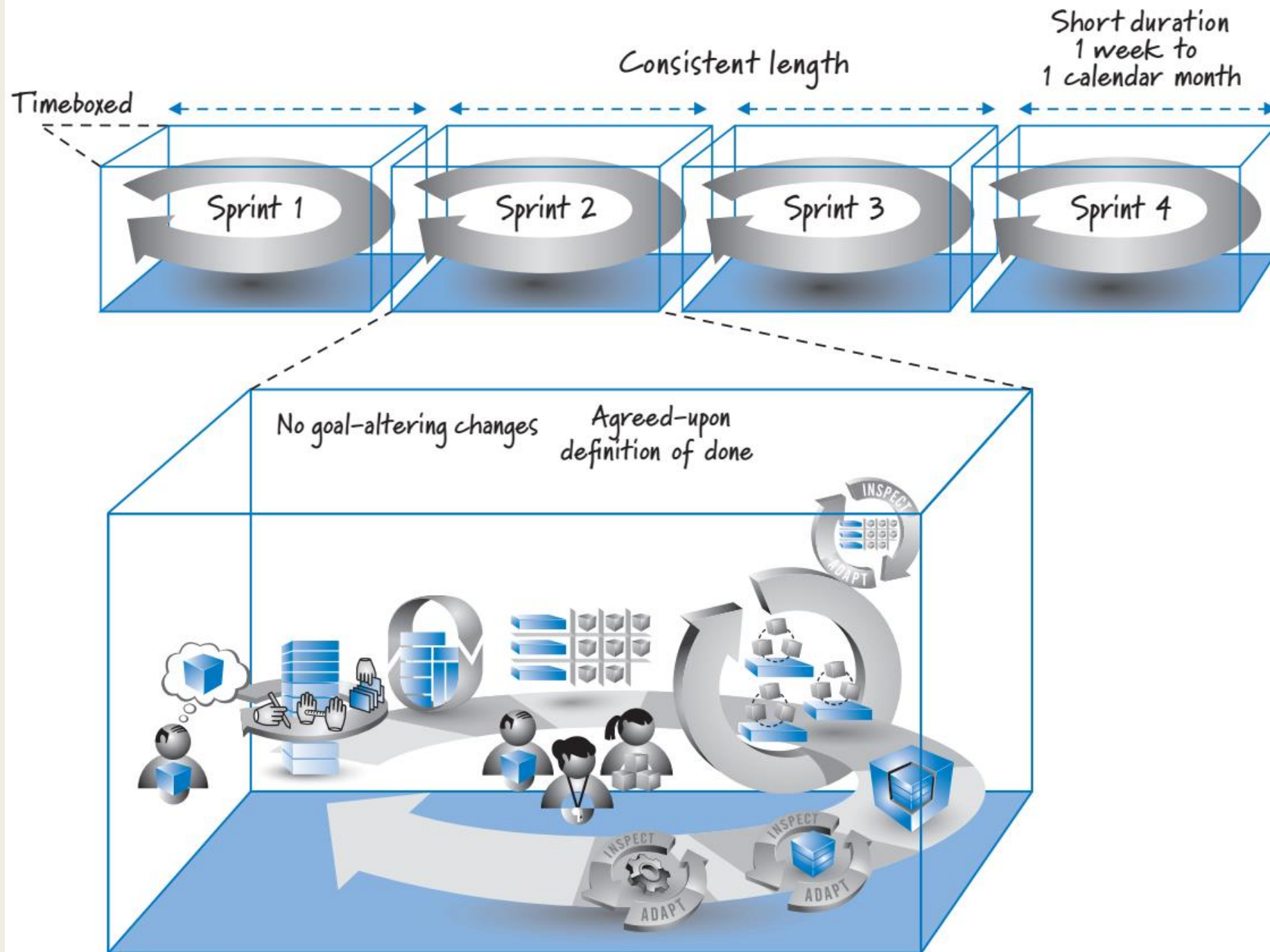# Sprint Rules(I)

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Introduction

- Scrum organizes work in iterations or cycles of up to a calendar month called sprints.

- Sprints are the skeleton of the Scrum framework.

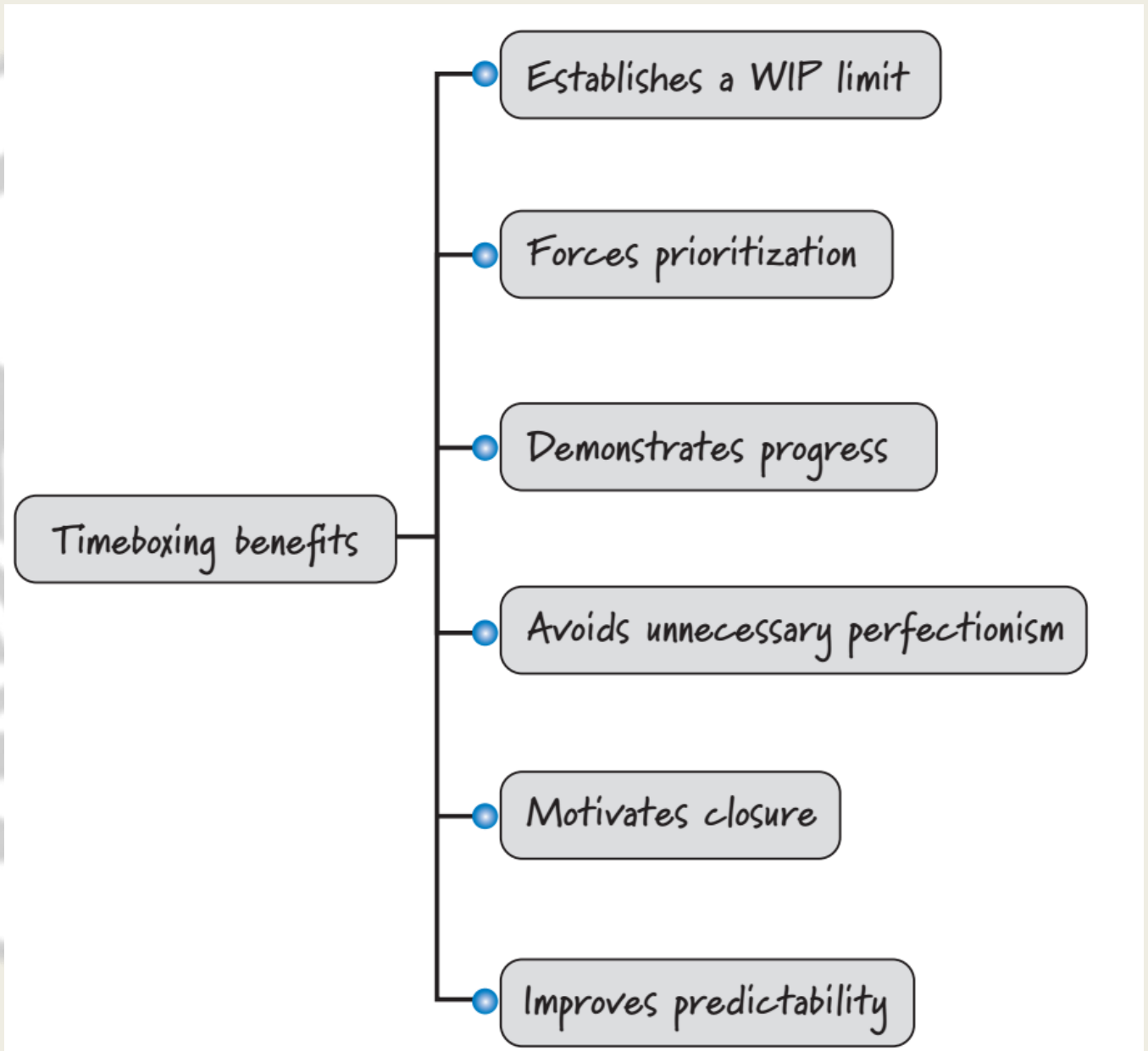- A sprint spans: Sprint Planning, Sprint Execution, Sprint Review, and Sprint Retrospective.

Timeboxed

Consistent length

Short duration 1 week to 1 calendar month

Sprint 1   Sprint 2   Sprint 3   Sprint 4

No goal-altering changes   Agreed-upon definition of done

3

Sprint Rules

- All sprints are timeboxed: They have fixed start and end dates.

- Sprints must also be short: Between one week and a calendar month.

- Sprints should be consistent in length, though exceptions are permitted under certain circumstances.

- No goal-altering changes in scope or personnel are permitted during a sprint.

- During each sprint, a potentially shippable product increment is completed in conformance with the Scrum team's agreed-upon "definition of done."

First Rule: Timeboxing

- Timeboxing: a time-management technique that helps organize the performance of work and manage scope.

- Each sprint takes place in a time frame with specific start and end dates, called a timebox.

- Inside this timebox, the team is expected to work at a sustainable pace to complete a chosen set of work that aligns with a sprint goal.

Benefits of Timeboxing

Timeboxing benefits
- Establishes a WIP limit
- Forces prioritization
- Demonstrates progress
- Avoids unnecessary perfectionism
- Motivates closure
- Improves predictability

Timeboxing Establishes a WIP Limit

- Timeboxing is a technique for limiting the amount of WIP (work in process).

- WIP represents an inventory of work that is started but not yet finished.

- Failing to properly manage WIP can have serious economic consequences.

- Because the team will plan to work on only those items that it believes it can start and finish within the sprint, timeboxing establishes a WIP limit each sprint.

Timeboxing Forces Prioritization

- Timeboxing forces us to prioritize and perform the small amount of work that matters most.

- This sharpens our focus on getting something valuable done quickly.

Timeboxing Demonstrates Progress

- Timeboxing also helps us demonstrate relevant progress by completing and validating important pieces of work by a known date (the end of the sprint).

- This type of progress reduces organizational risk by shifting the focus away from unreliable forms of progress reporting, such as conformance to plan.

- Timeboxing also helps us demonstrate progress against big features that require more than one timebox to complete. Completing some work toward those features ensures that valuable, measurable progress is being made each sprint.

- It also helps the stakeholders and team learn exactly what remains to be done to deliver the entire feature.

Timeboxing Avoids Unnecessary Perfectionism

- Timeboxing helps avoid unnecessary perfectionism.

- At one time or another we have all spent too much time trying to get something "perfect" or to do "gold plating" when "good enough" would suffice.

- Timeboxing forces an end to potentially unbounded work by establishing a fixed end date for the sprint by which a good solution must be done.
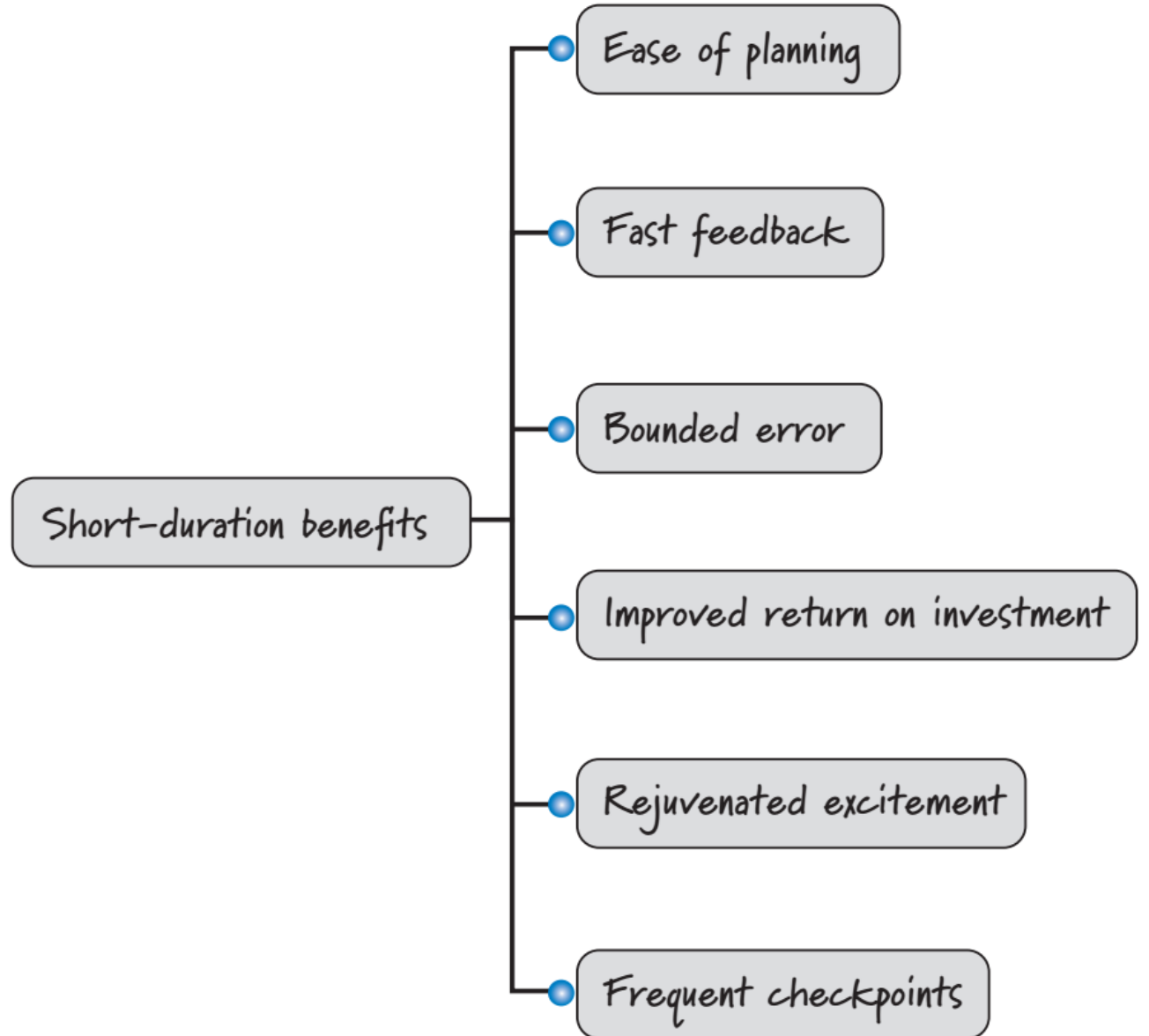
Timeboxing Motivates Closure

- Things are more likely to get done when teams have a known end date.

- The fact that the end of the sprint brings with it a hard deadline encourages team members to diligently apply themselves to complete the work on time.

- Without a known end date, there is less of a sense of urgency to complete the job.

Timeboxing Improves Predictability

- Although we can't predict with great certainty exactly the work we will complete a year from now, it is completely reasonable to expect that we can predict the work we can complete in the next short sprint.

Second Rule: Short Duration

Short-duration benefits
- Ease of planning
- Fast feedback
- Bounded error
- Improved return on investment
- Rejuvenated excitement
- Frequent checkpoints

Short duration sprints yields ease of planning

- Short-duration sprints make it easier to plan.

- It is easier to plan a few weeks' worth of work than six months' worth of work.

- Also, planning on such short time horizons requires far less effort and is far more accurate than longer-horizon planning.

Short-duration sprints generate fast feedback

- During each sprint we create working software and then have the opportunity to inspect and adapt what we built and how we built it.

- This fast feedback enables us to quickly prune unfavorable product paths or development approaches before we compound a bad decision with many follow-on decisions that are coupled to the bad decision.

- Fast feedback also allows us to more quickly uncover and exploit time-sensitive emergent opportunities.

Short Duration sprints Improve Return on Investment

- Short-duration sprints not only improve the economics via fast feedback;

- They also allow for early and more frequent deliverables.

- As a result, we have the opportunity to generate revenue sooner, improving the overall return on investment.

Short Duration sprints bound error

- How wrong can we be in a two-week sprint?

- Even if we fumble the whole thing, we have lost only two weeks.

- We insist on short duration sprints because they provide frequent coordination and feedback.

- That way, if we're wrong, at least we're wrong in a small way.

# Short Duration sprints helps Rejuvenated Excitement
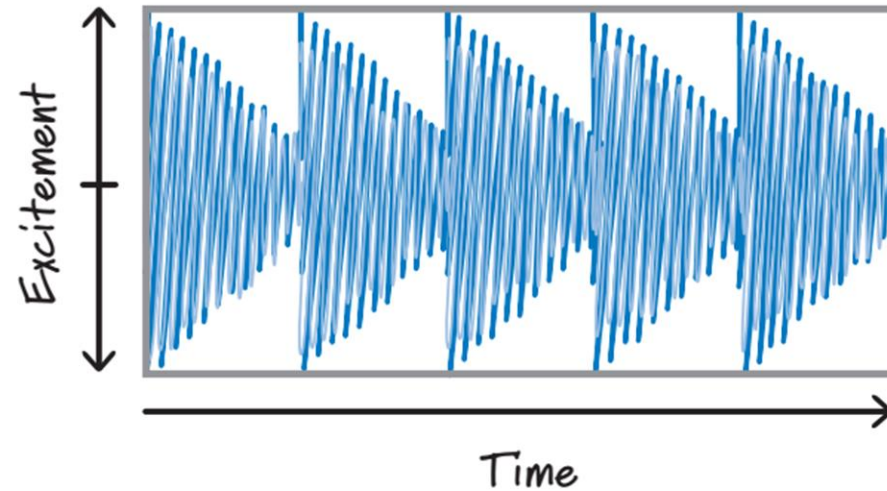
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■ It is human nature for interest and excitement to decline the longer we have to wait for gratification.

■ If we work on a very long-duration project, not only are we more likely to fail;

■ We are also more likely to eventually lose enthusiasm for the effort.

Excitement over time

Boil the ocean
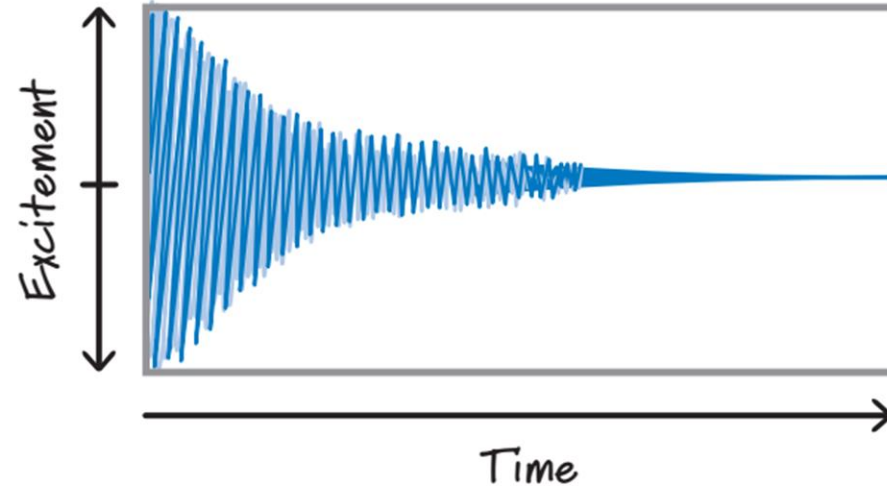
Short-duration incremental releases

"boil-the-ocean" projects

- In "boil-the-ocean" projects, they would take a really long time and a lot of effort to complete, if ever, like trying to boil an ocean.)

- With no visible progress and no end in sight, people begin to grow disinterested.

- Toward the end, they may be willing to *pay* someone to get moved to a different product!

Short-duration sprints keep excitement

- Keep participant excitement high by delivering working assets frequently.

- The gratification from early and frequent deliverables rejuvenates our interest and our desire to continue working toward the goal.

Short Duration sprints have Frequent Checkpoints(I)

■ Provide multiple, meaningful checkpoints.
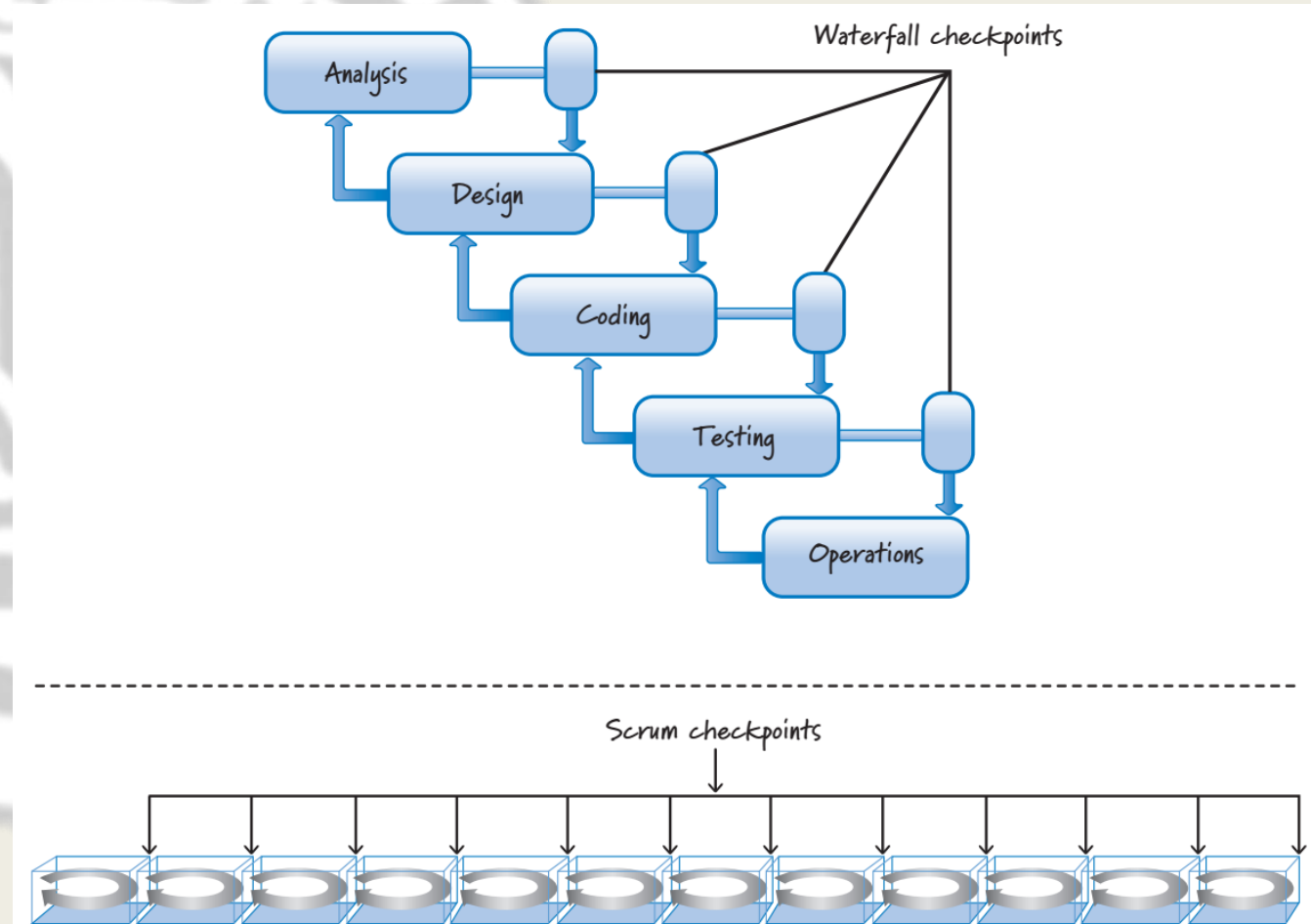
Short Duration sprints have Frequent Checkpoints(II)

■ Scrum provides managers, stakeholders, product owners, and others with many more checkpoints than they would have with sequential projects.

■ At the end of each short sprint there is a meaningful checkpoint (the sprint review) that allows everyone to base decisions on demonstrable, working features.

■ People are better able to deal with a complex environment when they have more actionable checkpoint opportunities to inspect and adapt.

Reference

1- K. S. Rubin, "Essential Scrum, A Practical guide to the most popular agile process," 2013.