

FIGURE 6-1:
Agile project team, scrum team, and development team.

Drew

Product owner

The product owner, sometimes called the *customer representative* in non-scrum environments, is responsible for bridging the gaps between the customer, business stakeholders, and the development team. The product owner is an expert on the product and the customer's needs and priorities. The product owner, who is a peer member of the scrum team, shields the development team from business distractions, works with the development team daily to help clarify requirements, and accepts completed work throughout the sprint in preparation for the sprint review.

On an agile project, the product owner will

- » Develop strategy and direction for the project and set long- and short-term goals.
- » Provide or have access to product expertise.
- » Understand and convey the customer's and other business stakeholders' needs to the development team.
- » Gather, prioritize, and manage product requirements.
- » Take responsibility for the product's budget and profitability.
- » Decide when to release completed functionality.
- » Work with the development team on a daily **basis to answer** questions and make decisions.
- » Accept or reject completed work — as it's **completed** — during the sprint.
- » Present the scrum team's accomplishments **at the end** of each sprint, before the development team demonstrates **these accomplishments**.

Development team member

Development team members are the people who create the product. In software development, programmers, testers, designers, writers, data engineers, and anyone else with a hands-on role in product development are development team members. With other types of product, the development team members may have different skills.

On an agile project, the development team is

- » Directly accountable for creating project deliverables.
- » Self-organizing and self-managing. The development team members determine their own tasks and how they want to complete those tasks.
- » Cross-functional. Collectively, the development team possesses all skills required to elaborate, design, develop, test, integrate and document requirements into working functionality.
- » Multi-skilled. Development team members are versatile — they're not tied to a single skill set. They have existing skills to immediately contribute at the beginning of the project, but they are also willing to learn new skills and to teach what they know to other development team members.
- » Ideally dedicated to one project for the duration of the project.
- » Ideally collocated. The team should be working together in the same area of the same office.

What makes a good development team member? Take a look at the team respon-

Scrum master

A scrum master, sometimes called a *project facilitator* in non-scrum agile environments, is responsible for supporting the development team, clearing organizational roadblocks, and keeping processes true to agile principles.

On an agile project, the scrum master will

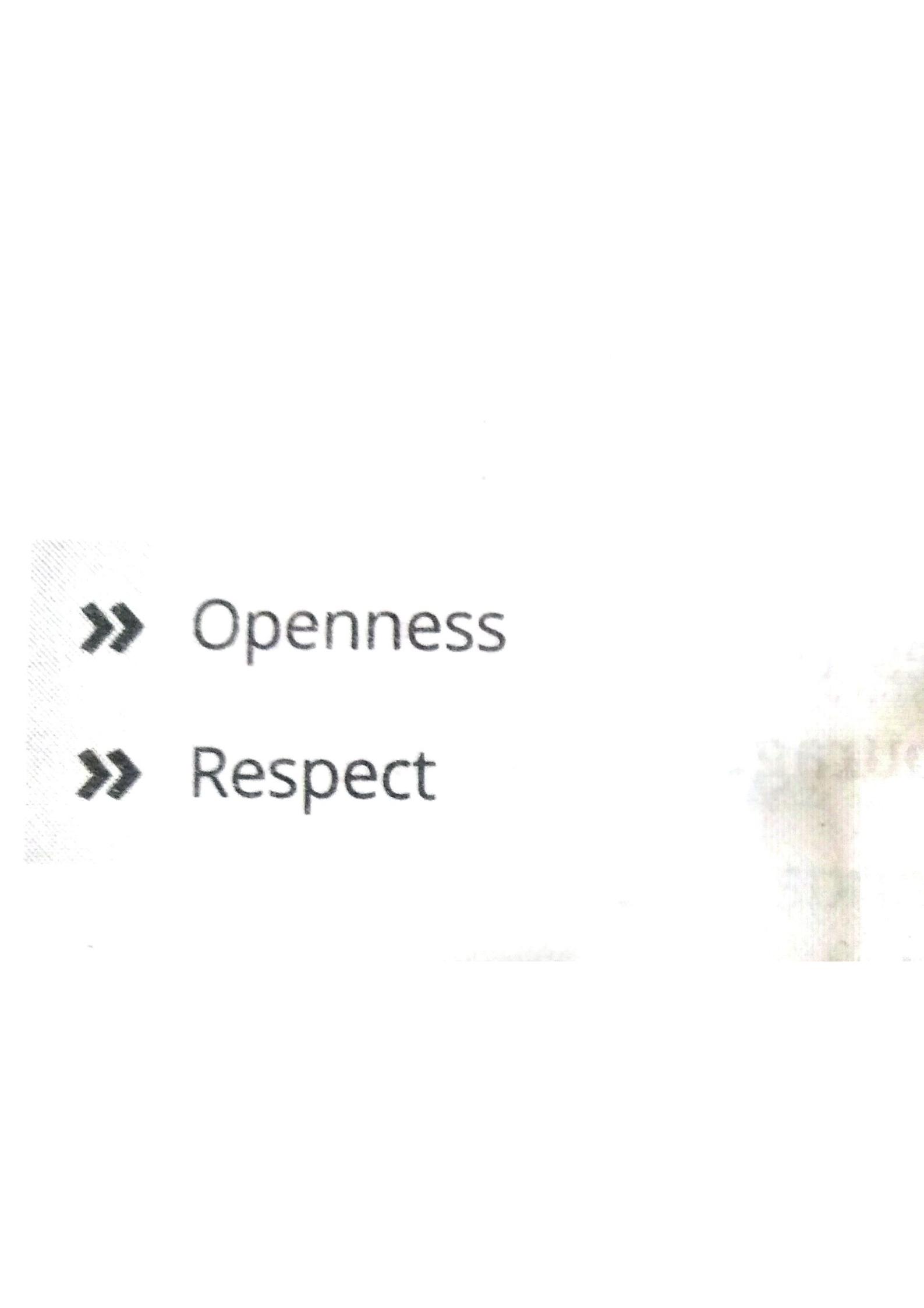
- » Act as a process coach, helping the project team and the organization follow scrum values and practices.
- » Help remove project impediments — both reactively and proactively — and shield the development team from external interferences.
- » Foster close cooperation between stakeholders and the scrum team.
- » Facilitate consensus building within the scrum team.
- » Protect the scrum team from organizational distractions.

Establishing New Values

Lots of organizations post their core values on the wall. In this section, however, we are talking about values that represent a way of working together every day, supporting each other, and doing whatever it takes to achieve the scrum team's commitments.

In addition to the values from the Agile Manifesto, the five core values for scrum teams are

- » Commitment
- » Courage
- » Focus



» Openness

» Respect

Commitment



- » Scrum teams must be realistic when making commitments, especially for short sprints. It is easier, both logistically and psychologically, to bring new features into a sprint than it is to take unachievable features out of a sprint.
- » Scrum teams must fully commit to goals. This includes having consensus among the team that the goal is achievable. After the scrum team agrees on a goal, the team does whatever it takes to reach that goal.
- » The scrum team is pragmatic but ensures that every sprint has a tangible value. Achieving a sprint goal and completing every item in the goal's scope are different. For example, a sprint goal of proving that a product can perform a specific action is much better than a goal stating that exactly seven requirements will be complete during the sprint. Effective scrum teams focus on the goal and remain flexible in the specifics of how to reach that goal.
- » Scrum teams are willing to be accountable for results. The scrum team has the power to be in charge of the project. As a scrum team member, you can be responsible for how you organize your day, the day-to-day work, and the outcome.

Courage

- » **Realize that the processes that worked in the past won't necessarily work now.** Sometimes you need to remind people of this fact. If you want to be successful with agile techniques, your everyday work processes need to change to improve.
- » **Be ready to buck the status quo.** The status quo will push back. Some people have vested interests and will not want to change how they work.
- » **Temper challenge with respect.** Senior members of the organization might be especially resistant to change; they often created the old rules for how things were done. Now you're challenging those rules. Respectfully remind these individuals that you can achieve the benefits of agile techniques only by following the 12 agile principles faithfully. Ask them to give change a try.
- » **Embrace the other values.** Have the courage to make commitments and stand behind those commitments. Have the courage to focus and tell distractors "no." Have the courage to be open and to acknowledge that there is always an opportunity to improve. And have the courage to be respectful and tolerant of other people's views, even when they challenge your views.



Focus

- » **Ensure that you're not spending time on activities unrelated to the sprint goal.** If someone tries to distract you from the sprint goal with something that "has to be done," explain your priorities. Ask, "How will this request move the sprint goal forward?" This simple question can push a lot of activities off the to-do list.
- » **Figure out what needs to be done and do only that.** The development team determines the tasks necessary to achieve the sprint goal. If you're a development team member, use this ownership to drive your focus to the priority tasks at hand.
- » **Balance focused time with accessibility to the rest of the scrum team.** Francesco Cirillo's Pomodoro technique — splitting work into 25-minute time blocks, with breaks in between — helps achieve balance between focus and accessibility. We often recommend giving development team members noise-canceling headsets, the wearing of which is a "do not disturb" sign. However, we also suggest a team agreement that all scrum team members have a minimum set of office hours in which they are available for collaboration.
- » **Check that you're maintaining your focus.** If you're unsure of whether you are maintaining focus — it can be hard to tell — go back to the basic question, "Are my actions consistent with achieving the overall goal and the near-term goal (such as completing the current task)?"



Openness

- » **Be open and encourage openness in others.** Team members must feel free to speak openly about problems and opportunities to improve, whether the issues are something that they're dealing with themselves or see elsewhere in the team. Openness requires trust within the team, and trust takes time to develop.
- » **Defuse internal politics by discouraging gossip.** If someone starts talking to you about what another team member did or didn't do, ask him or her to take the issue to the person who can resolve it. Don't gossip yourself. Ever.
- » **Always be respectful.** Openness is never an excuse to be destructive or mean. Respect is critical to an open team environment.

Respect

Each individual on the team has something important to contribute. Your background, education, and experiences have a distinctive influence on the team. Share your uniqueness and look for, and appreciate, the same in others. You encourage respect when you

- » **Foster openness.** Respect and openness go hand in hand. Openness without respect causes resentment; openness with respect generates trust.
- » **Encourage a positive work environment.** Happy people tend to treat one another better. Encourage positivity, and respect will follow.
- » **Seek out differences.** Don't just tolerate differences; try to find them. The best solutions come from diverse opinions that have been considered and appropriately challenged.
- » **Treat everyone on the team with the same degree of respect.** All team members should be accorded the same respect, regardless of their role, level of experience, or immediate contribution. Encourage everyone to give his or her best.

Changing Team Philosophy

- » **Dedicated team:** Each scrum team member works only on the project assigned to the scrum team, and not with outside teams or projects. Projects may finish and new projects may start, but the team stays the same.
- » **Cross-functionality:** The willingness and ability to work on different types of tasks to create the product.
- » **Self-organization:** The ability and responsibility to determine how to go about the work of product development.
- » **Self-management:** The ability and responsibility to keep work on track.
- » **Size-limited teams:** Right-size development teams to ensure effective communication. Smaller is better; the development team should never be larger than nine people.
- » **Ownership:** Take initiative for work and responsibility for results.