**Q: Your team is constantly failing to meet commitments, and its performance velocity is volatile. What might the possible reasons be? How would you address this issue?**

A: There are many possible factors that might combine to make a team’s velocity volatile. Such factors might include:

* New team members are being onboarded
* Team members are leaving
* Levels of seniority
* Working in uncharted territory
* Working with legacy code, probably undocumented
* Unexpected technical debt
* Holidays and sick leave
* Executive intervention

**Q: Should the scrum team become involved in the product discovery process, and if so, how?**

A: The scrum team should be involved in the product discovery process as early as possible. There are two principal reasons for this:

* The sooner the engineers participate in the product discovery process, the lesser the chances are that solutions are pursued that are technically not viable, or that would not result in a return on investment.
* Early involvement ensures that the scrum team and the product owner develop a shared understanding and ownership of what is to be built. This significantly improves the likelihood that resources are allocated to the most important issues, maximizing value for the customer and mitigating investment risk.

**Q: The product owner role is a bottleneck by design. How can you support the product owner so that they can maximize value?**

A: Product owner should work on design along with Scrum team to make WIN situation.

**Q: How do you ensure that the scrum team has access to a project’s stakeholders?**

A: All that can be done is to encourage stakeholders to engage in meaningful communication by being transparent and helpful. Sprint demos are a useful mechanism for this.

**Q: How do you spread an agile mindset across different departments and throughout a company, and what is your strategy when coaching non-IT stakeholders?**

A: There are various ways of engaging stakeholders with scrum:

* Product and Engineering teams can produce evidence, in presentations or otherwise, proving to stakeholders that scrum is significantly reducing the lead time from idea to product launch.
* Product and Engineering teams can demonstrate that scrum mitigates risk, e.g. regarding the prediction of when new features could be made available, thus contributing to other departments’ successes in planning and execution.
* One hands-on approach is to organize workshops designed to teach agile techniques for non-technical colleagues.

1. You have been just hired as a new Scrum Master. The team you’re going to work with doesn’t have any experience in Agile and is very skeptic about Scrum. They want to focus only on coding and don’t want to track their progress or attend any meetings. **How do you influence and motivate them to use Scrum?**

2. Product Owner doesn’t have any experience in Agile methodologies. He used to manage Waterfall projects. He doesn’t want to participate actively in Scrum events like Sprint Planning, Sprint Review and be available for Dev Team during Sprints. **What would you do to make sure the Scrum process is being applied?**

3. You already performed Scrum training for stakeholders. After an initial phase of trying to apply the concepts, when first obstacles/hurdles are encountered, you see that these colleagues build serious resistance in continuing with Scrum adoption. **What is your strategy/experience to handle such situations?**

4. The Product owner of your Scrum team tends to add ideas of all kind to the backlog to continue working on them at a later stage. Over time, this has lead to over 200 tickets in various stages. **What is your take on that: Can the Scrum team work on 200 tickets?**

5. Your Dev Team works on a very legacy software project. Unfortunately, the team was set-up recently and don’t have appropriate knowledge about the old platform. So far, all Sprints have finished with very low velocity and without significant results. **What would you do to help the team achieve success?**

6. A user story is lacking the final designs, but the design department promises to deliver on day #2 of the upcoming sprint. The product owner of your Scrum team is fine with that and pushed to have the user story in the sprint backlog. **What is your take?**

7. The Product owner of your team normally turns stakeholder requirement documents into tickets and asks to estimate them. **Are you okay with that procedure?**

8. The project is delayed three months/has lots of dependencies/based on old technology. Do you find this appealing/challenging for you? **Have you worked in the similar situation?**

9. In case you receive a story on the last day of the sprint to test, and you find there are defects, what will you do? **Will you mark the story to done?**

10. A team is always picking reasonable action items but is later not delivering on them. **How do you handle this habit?**

11. The product owner chooses new features regularly and never picks bug fixes. In the end, the crashes have to be fixed, and the tech debt is growing. Those problems are slowing down testing and development. **What would you do in short and in the mid-term?**

12. Your team approaches major release deadline and, as a result of the mid-iteration assessment, you realize that due to internal team reasons, release deadline has to be shifted significantly and this impacts marketing and other operational activities by the client which depend on product release date. **Please write an email notification to clients explaining the situation and your next steps.**

**Questions on Culture Fit**

1. Why did you decide to apply for this job?

2. What would you do during your first month if you were hired by our company?

3. What kind of project would you like to work on?

4. Describe your perfect company/organization culture.

5. What are your strengths and beliefs?

6. How would your Dev Team members describe you?

7. How do you maintain a good working relationship with Dev Team members?

8. What type of personality types did your team have?

9. Did you have a chance to work with international teams?

10. How do you handle conflict situations? Provide examples.

**Introduction to Scrum**

**Theory questions:**

1. Explain Agile in 2 minutes? When should you use Agile?

2. What is the Scrum process? How is Scrum different from Waterfall?

3. What is the role of Scrum Master, Product Owner and Scrum Team in the Scrum process?

4. What kind of Agile frameworks besides Scrum do you know?

5. What are the artifacts in Scrum? What are the Scrum ceremonies?

6. How do you understand ‘Self-organizing’ concept in Scrum?

7. Where does automation fit into Scrum?

8. Shall the Scrum team become involved in the product discovery process, and if so, how?

9. What do you recommend a newly formed Scrum team works on first? What is sprint Zero?

10. What are the characteristics of a good Scrum team? How do you as a Scrum Master facilitate that?

11. How do you measure the maturity of the Scrum process?

**Practical questions:**

1. How do you introduce Scrum to senior executives?

2. How do you ensure that the Scrum team has access to the stakeholders?

3. How do you spread an Agile mindset in the company across different departments and what is your strategy to coach these non-IT stakeholders?

4. How would you prepare to kick-off transitioning to Scrum? How would you create the first Scrum team?

5. What kind of information would you require from the Product owner to provide the team with an update on the product and market situation?

6. How do you manage risks in Scrum projects?

**Product Backlog Refinement and Estimations**

**Theory questions:**

1. What is a Product Backlog? Who is in charge of filling it up?

2. What is a User Story?

3. Who should be writing User Stories? What is the best practice for writing User Stories?

4. What are Epics? Provide examples.

5. List techniques for prioritizing User Stories.

6. What is “Definition of Done” and “Definition of Ready? How is this achieved?

7. What is the best practice for creating DoD, DoR?

8. What is a Story Point? How do you calculate that?

9. Why aren’t User Stories usually estimated in working hours?

10. What is Backlog grooming? How often does a Scrum team do it?

11. NFRs - what’s this and how to approach them?

**Practical questions:**

1. A Product Owner assigns user stories or tasks to individual team members, is that okay? How would you act in this case?

2. How do you deal with cherry picking tasks by team members?

3. How to deal with the problem when team members are not updating the tasks?

**Sprint Planning**

**Theory questions:**

1. What is a Sprint? Describe its purpose and ceremonies.

2. What is a Sprint Goal? Is it necessary?

3. How do you help a team meet the Sprint Goal?

4. What is the Sprint Review meeting? How often do you organize it?

5. On what metrics would you base the assessment of the value of a User Story and what metrics would be not acceptable?

6. How do you facilitate the User Story picking progress in a way that the most valuable stories are chosen without overruling the team’s prerogative to define the team’s commitment?

7. How can you as a Scrum Master contribute to the Sprint planning in a way that the team is working on the most valuable user stories?

8. How do you track team progress and the work done in a Sprint?

9. How would you know your team is improving with every Sprint?

10. How much capacity would consider being adequate for refactoring, fixing bugs, exploring new technologies or ideas?

11. What anti-patterns might a Scrum Master fall into during Planning poker?

**Practical questions:**

1. How do you ensure Product Backlog readiness for a Sprint?

2. What do you do if a member of the Scrum team doesn’t want to participate in the Sprint planning meeting?

3. How do you deal with new requirements from the Product Owner in the middle of the Sprint?

**Standup and Retrospective Meetings**

**Theory questions:**

1. What is the main purpose of a standup meeting? What do you discuss at a meeting?

2. How do you approach standups with distributed teams?

3. Would you recommend standups for all teams no matter their size or experience level?

4. What is a retrospective meeting? How often is it held?

5. Who shall participate in the retrospective?

6. What kind of techniques for running retrospective meetings are you familiar with?

7. What anti-patterns do you know of that can happen during a retrospective?

**Practical questions:**

1. Do stakeholders have to attend Scrum meetings? What do you if they abandon them?

2. How do you handle a situation when someone “leads” standups, turning them into a reporting session for them?

3. How do you handle a situation when some of the team members consider standups to be a waste of time and treat them as a status meeting?

4. Do you check the team health in a retrospective? If so, how would you do it?

5. How can you prevent boredom at retrospectives?

6. How do you recommend to follow up on actions items from a retro meeting?

**Agile Metrics**

**Theory questions:**

1. Are there any Agile metrics that you would track? If so, which metrics would you track and for what purpose?

2. What is Velocity? Can you compare Velocity of different teams?

3. What is a Burndown chart? How do you create it?

4. What is Burnup chart? What’s the difference between the Burndown and Burnup chart?

**Practical questions:**

1. What should you do if your Scrum team is consistently failing to meet commitments, and its velocity is volatile?

2. How can you improve a team’s performance using financial rewards?

**Scrum Master Role**

**Theory questions:**

1. What is your understanding of the Scrum Master role?

2. How is a Scrum Master role different from a Project Manager?

3. What kind of competencies should a Scrum Master have? Describe the perfect Scrum Master.

4. The Agile Manifesto says “People over processes.” Isn’t the Scrum Master – a role in enforcing “the process” – therefore a contradiction?

5. What are good indicators that “Agile” is working in your organization, that your work is successful?

6. The Product Owner role is a bottleneck by design. How can you support the Product Owner so that she can be the value maximizer?

7. How to increase self-discipline in a Scrum Team?

**Practical questions:**

1. Why have you decided to become a Scrum Master?

2. Describe your typical day at work as a Scrum Master.

3. How are you improving yourself as a Scrum Master?

4. What’s your favorite book about Scrum/Agile? What books would you recommend to a person eager to start his/her journey with Scrum?

5. Do you read any Agile blogs? What’s the main takeaway from that activity?

6. Are you a part of Scrum/Agile Community?

**Candidate’s Experience as a Scrum Master**

1. How big was your team? Was your team co-located or distributed?

2. Did your team had any ‘specific’ rituals?

3. What was the size of the projects you worked on as a Scrum Master?

4. What kind of Scrum Events did you have in your project? Did you facilitate and attend all of them?

5. How do you prepare yourself to Sprint Planning session?

6. How did your Sprint Planning meeting look like? Who was attending it? Did you use a physical whiteboard?

7. Can you give an example of one of the Sprint Goals your team had?

8. Did you have a chance to lead any change in the organization?

9. What kind of tools did you use for Sprint management?

10. Have you been involved in organizing any pieces of training about Agile/Scrum for other employees?

11. Walk me through your Scrum Demo Session.

12. What retrospective formats have you been using in the past?

13. Share the retrospective action you have taken and what was the outcome?

14. How did you help the team to self-organize?

15. How did you collaborate with the Product Owner?