The Meal Project

Ryan Dockstader

# Choosing a Method

For my method I chose to go with Scrum, which falls under the Agile project management methodology. Scrum is a method that takes a large problem and breaks it up into as many smaller problems as needed. Then a time frame is set to work on each smaller problem. These are generally called sprints. Scrum is highly iterative and allows for people to change their minds as they go along. I feel like this well be very good for testing recipes that you are going to share with others.

# Plan a Meal

The meal that I will prepare will be kept simple to stay consistent with budget, time, and dietary restraints. It will consist of the following:

* Sous-vide salt and pepper chicken
* A spinach salad
* Fruit cocktail
* Homemade rolls
  + Gluten free rolls will also be purchased, to account for dietary restrictions
* Cake for dessert
* Water to drink

## Invitations – Phase 1

The invitations will go out so they arrive a week in advance. They will state the time, address, and menu. They will also request an RSVP, and ask to announce any dietary restrictions in the RSVP.

## Shopping – Phase 2

The next phase, shopping, will take place the day before the event, to help with any cancelations/extra people. The shopping will take place at the local grocery store that has reasonably prices and fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables.

## Preparation – Phase 3

Preparation will begin the morning of the event. The cake will be put into the oven before 10 AM, to allow plenty of time for cooling and frosting. While the cake is baking, the chicken will be seasoned with the salt and pepper and placed in the vacuum sealed bags. The chicken will be placed in the sous-vide the time it takes to cook, plus 15 minutes for a sear and time for it to cool and rest. When the chicken is put into the sous-vide the rolls will be prepared and then covered to rise. While the chicken is cooking, and the rolls are rising, the fruit cocktail will be prepared, as well as the spinach salad.

Once complete, the cake will be frosted. When the rolls are ready to go into the oven, they will go into the oven. While in the oven the table will be set. Then, the rolls will be taken out of the oven and covered to stay warm, the meat will get seared, and the food will be brought to the table 5 minutes before the guests arrive allowing me as the host to enjoy their company.

# Post Mortem

I feel like I couldn’t do Scrum as well as I would have liked. It’s a lot more difficult to chunk out meals then it is something like software. Perhaps scrum was too ‘heavy’ of a tool to use for something like cooking a meal. Other then that, the meal went successful. I was able to make use of a lot of my kitchen equipment at the same time so that made things a little less stressful, I think. However, I was quite stressed the entire day of the event because that is when all the preparation took place. I was able to stay on budget for time and expense, but I do think with a few iterations of this I would be able to do the same in less time, with much less stress.

I would like to find a way to be able to do different tasks on different days. Obviously, you want all the food to be fresh, warm, and delicious. Which is why multi-type meals like this are stressful. If you bake the cake the day before generally you can taste that it’s day old cake. Same with all the items (Besides water) that were on the menu. Perhaps a re-visitation of the menu would be a good idea. Try something like a cold salad with chicken and apples in it. That way it checks all the boxes but doesn’t require anything other then bread to be prepared on the same day.