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Agile Guide and Scrum Roles

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INTRODUCTION

Our mission at Kodella is to strive always to be better, faster, and stronger as a company. To meet this objective, we have a flat company model to empower our employees. Operating within this model means we encourage collaboration and employ Scrum as our framework that structures the way we do projects. The foundation of Scrum is open communication, cooperation, and constant team accountability. Because these values are critical to Kodella's success, we have created this guideline so that you can understand the Scrum process and where you fit in.

UNDERSTANDING SCRUM

The core of Scrum is the belief that the progression of a project relies on the whole team communicating and cooperating efficiently. Scrum is a framework where cross-functional teams use an iterative, incremental approach to optimize predictability and control risk through continuous short feedback loops. These teams are designed to include members of different departments to meet the required competencies to complete the project.

For the Scrum workflow, see **Figure 1** below. Scrum highlights the most critical aspects of a project and puts them in the Product Backlog (defined in more detail in the Scrum Terminology Section). Then the items in the Product Backlog are broken down into smaller, more achievable tasks. Top priority tasks are placed in the Sprint Backlog (defined in more detail in the Scrum Terminology Section). These smaller tasks are tackled during a sprint, a period of usually two weeks. During a sprint, the team must rely on each other, but each team member also has individual tasks for which they are accountable. The Scrum Team meets every day in a Daily Scrum meeting to discuss progress and obstacles. This meeting usually lasts for only 15 minutes.
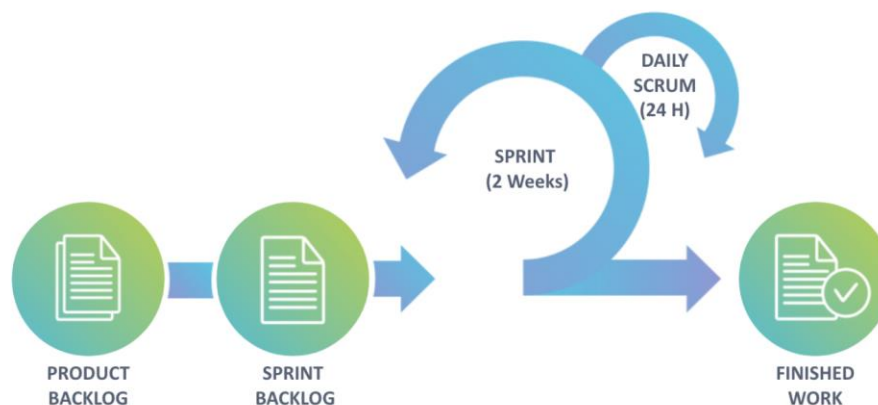

Figure 1. Scrum Workflow

SCRUM TERMINOLOGY

● Scrum Artifacts

These are the practices and tools used to help promote transparency and communication between Scrum Team members.

○ Scrum Board and Cards

A Scrum board is used to manage a project. Cards are placed in columns on the board where each card contains a task for the project. See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2. Scrum Board

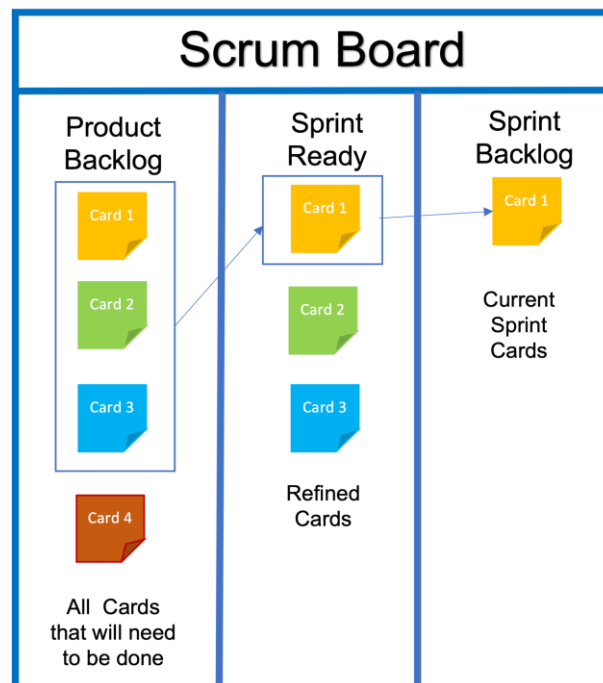### ○ Product Backlog

This is the first column of the Scrum board. It contains an ordered list of all the work that needs to be completed for an entire project. See Figure 2 above.

○ Sprint Ready

This is the next column in the board after the Product Backlog one. This column contains all the cards that the Scrum Team has discussed, refined, and are ready to enter a sprint. See Figure 2 above.

○ Sprint Backlog

This is the last column after the Sprint Ready one. This column lists all of the cards committed to in the Scrum Team's current sprint. During Sprint Planning, the Scrum Team selects a number of Sprint Ready items depending on the individual team member's capacity. These committed cards will be completed as a potentially shippable product at the end of the sprint. See Figure 2 above.

○ User Stories

- User stories are found in the description of the cards requirements. A user story is a way of describing a feature set as useful to the end customer.

- It should be a high-level description of how a customer employs their product as told from the user's perspective.

- It has the format: As a (*insert type of customer*), I need (*insert their need*), so that (*insert what feature is used for*).

- Examples of a user story:

  - As an *administrator*, I want to *view and export all sales* so that I can *keep track of them at any time.*

  - As an *administrator*, I want to *have a customized Check print form in my printing preferences* that *I can use for all check transactions*.

- Story Points

A story point is a value given to an individual user story to represent its complexity. This value is found by using the Fibonacci sequence (each number in the sequence is the sum of the two previous ones, for example, 1,2,3,5,8,13) following the relative sizing method which means estimating by comparing/ grouping tasks of equal complexity. The definition of the complexity of each story point is shown in Table 1 below.

1	**Quick to deliver and minimal complexity.** There is empirical evidence that the work was completed before.
2	**Quick to deliver and some complexity**
3	**Moderate time to deliver, moderate complexity**, and the team has acknowledged that there are possible unknowns

5	**Longer time to deliver, high complexity, likely unknowns,** or may include external dependencies such as a 3rd party integrations
8	**Long time to deliver, high complexity, critical unknowns,** or has critical external dependencies
13	**Long time to deliver, high complexity, many critical unknowns**, or it has multiple external dependencies.
	If it takes too long to deliver or its complexity gets too high, it is no longer a user story but an epic or feature and broken down into more cards

Table 1. Story Points complexities

- Acceptance Criteria (AC)

  - Acceptance criteria are a set of predefined conditions that act as guidelines to the feature and must be satisfied for a user story to be accepted by the user.

  - Acceptance criterion is unique to each user story while the Definition of Done (DOD) (described below) applies to all user stories that the team is working on.

○ Product Backlog Refinement

This is the process where the Scrum Team collaborates to make sure that everyone understands the items in the Product Backlog. They estimate how complex the items will be and how much effort they will require. Refinement also means that these cards are complete with Acceptance Criteria (defined above), Definition of Ready (DOR), Definition of Done (DOD) (see below), and have a story point value (defined above) associated with them. These cards are ready to be committed to in a future sprint.

- Definition of Ready (DOR)

  - DOR is when the Scrum Team has all the materials they need in order to commit a card/user story to a sprint. These materials are those that must be in place for a card to progress. DOR ensures that all materials have been provided, including but not limited to data files, login credentials, wireframes, and any documentation.

- Definition of Done (DOD)

  - The DOD for the Scrum Team is vital to the proper progression of a sprint. The proper definition of when a task is considered "done" allows the team to assess how much work is required to see if a card needs to be broken down into smaller increments. By having a baseline reference, the team can better assess the most effective way to tackle cards/user stories. A defined standard holds the team accountable for what a person presents for a review of completion.

○ Burndown Chart

A burndown chart (see Figure 3 below) is a graphical representation of the work left to be done versus the time left to do it. The Sprint Backlog represents the work that still needs to be done, and this has the unit efficiency in story points which is on the vertical axis of the chart. Time, which is time left in the sprint, is plotted along the horizontal axis. The Scrum Master is responsible for updating and presenting this chart to the Scrum Team on a daily basis.
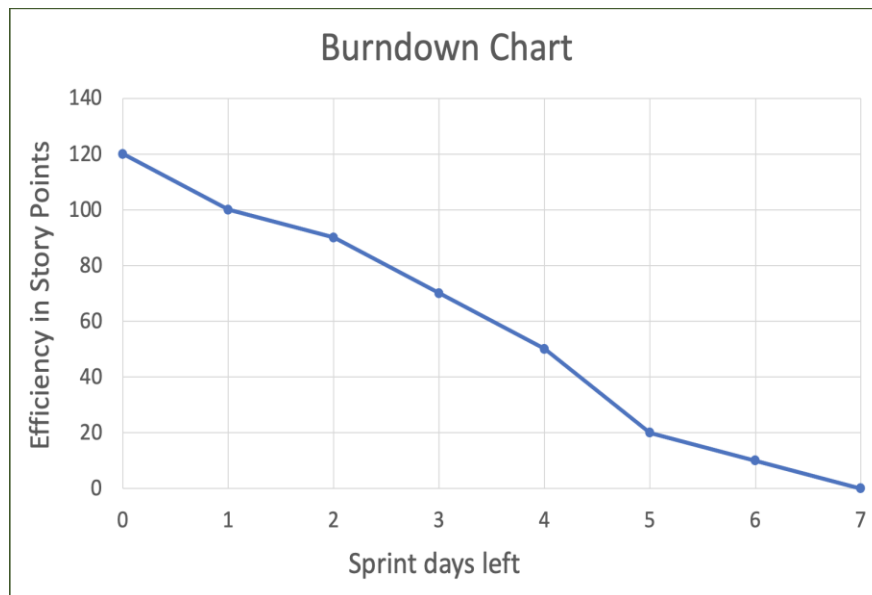

Figure 3. Burndown Chart

- ## Scrum Roles

  - ### Scrum Master

    This role is responsible for guiding, coaching, teaching, and assisting the Scrum team. They make sure that the team has the right environment and proper understanding of Scrum to succeed.

  - ### Scrum Team

    A self-managing team that has cross-functional abilities so that together they can produce or complete the cards/user stories in the Product Backlog that make up a project.

  - ### Scrum of Scrum Master

    This is not an official Scrum role. This is a Kodella role that leads the Scrum Masters and Project Managers and schedules the Scrum Team's meetings. They also assist with all Scrum Master escalations.

  - ### Product Owner

    This role oversees the entire product lifecycle to ensure that as the process moves forward it is aligned with the needs of the customer. Two different Kodella roles fulfill this function:

    - Project Manager - is the main point of contact between the team and the client. The Project Manager's role is focused on the timeline and organization of the project.

    - Solution Consultant - consults with the Customer to ensure that the process is aligned with their needs. The Solution Consultant is more focused on how the technical part of the project is progressing.

RESPECT THE SYSTEM

Once the Sprint Backlog Refinement, Sprint Planning, Sprint Review, and Sprint Retrospective meetings are scheduled, these dates should not change and attendance is mandatory. These firm rules enable us to communicate effectively, quickly learn from our failures and become proactive in our market. However, the system will only work for us if we respect it; therefore, you are expected to participate in the Scrum events discussed below.

SCRUM EVENTS

● Sprints

Sprints are the most fundamental core of Scrum. Sprints are timeboxes in which the Scrum Team commits to completing specific, prioritized project-related tasks. After one sprint is completed, then another one immediately begins. The two-week timebox is intended to give the Scrum Team enough time to complete a certain portion of a large project. For the order of the sprint events, see **Figure 4** below.

● Sprint Backlog Refinement

The purpose of the Sprint Backlog Refinement Meeting is for the Scrum Team, Project Manager, and Solution Consultant to agree on and if necessary adjust the parameters of the items in the Sprint Backlog.

● Sprint Planning

Sprint Planning is done by the Scrum Team. They review the project roadmap and collaborate to decide which Sprint Ready cards will be committed to the current sprint based on the project's priority that is set for the current sprint.

● Daily Scrum

The Daily Scrum (or Stand Up) consists of a 15-minute maximum daily meeting where the Scrum Team updates each other on the progress or problems of the current sprint. Team members discuss what they worked on the day before, what they will work on that day, and any roadblocks they have encountered.
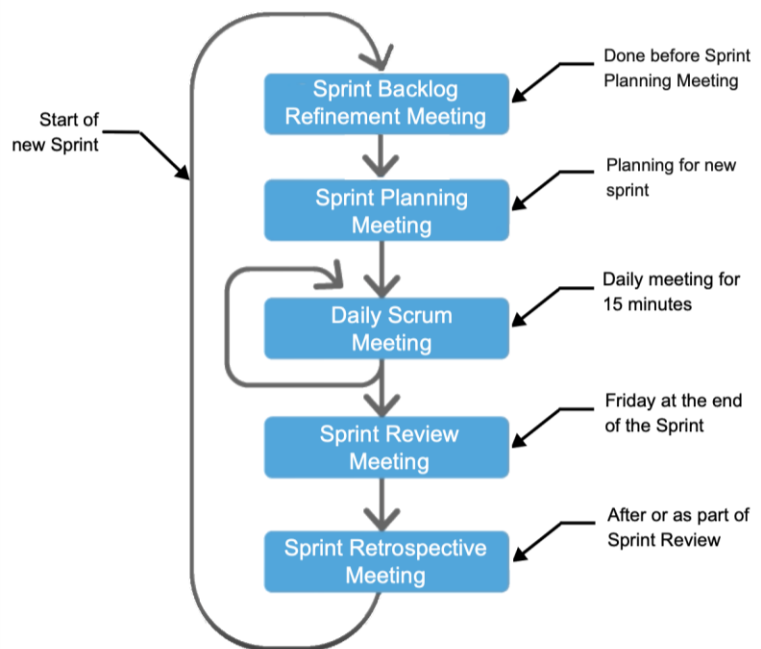
Figure 4. Sprint Meetings

- # Scrum of Scrums

The Scrum of Scrums is an agile technique that combines Scrum Teams that need to work together on more complex problems that affect both teams. It consists of weekly, 15 – 30 minute meetings that give the two teams a chance to discuss any cards/user stories that are dependent on each other. This collaboration between teams allows for a cross-pollination of information that can help eliminate impediments and enable both teams to complete the cards/user stories they committed to in their current sprints.

- # Sprint Review

At the end of each sprint is a Sprint Review. The Scrum Team demonstrates what has been completed to all stakeholders. The stakeholders accept or reject the work, and everyone collaborates on feedback and new ideas. The Product Backlog may be revised as a result of this.

- # Sprint Retrospective

The purpose of the Sprint Retrospective is to give the team an opportunity to discuss and find ways to increase its quality and effectiveness. The Sprint Retrospective is supposed to be a fun upbeat way to look at the previous sprint's "What Went Well" moments as well as "Areas to Improve." The Scrum Master leads this evaluation session to help create and implement ways to improve future sprints.

ROLE RESPONSIBILITIES

- # Scrum Master

  - ## Sprint Planning Meeting

    - Schedules calendar invites
    - Facilitates Sprint Planning Meeting
    - Timeboxes meeting
    - Moves all committed cards into the Sprint Backlog column

  - ## Refinement Meeting

    - Schedules calendar invites
    - Facilitates Refinement Meeting where the Scrum Team creates the DOR and DOD on the remaining project items housed in the Product Backlog
    - Timeboxes meeting

- Reviews current sprint committed cards with the Scrum Team to ensure there are no scope changes
- Moves all refined cards to the Sprint Ready column

- ## Sprint Review Meeting

  - Schedules calendar invites
  - Facilitates Sprint Review Meeting with stakeholders
  - Timeboxes meeting
  - Ensures the Scrum Team demos what was done in the current sprint
  - Keeps the Scrum Team focused on the Sprint Review agenda
  - Takes notes of any new topics that come up that the client might want to discuss in a separate meeting
  - Creates Sprint Review Meeting minutes that summarize what the Scrum Team completed and disperses them to the Scrum of Scrum Master, Project Manager, and stakeholders

- ## Sprint Retrospective

  - Schedules calendar invites
  - Facilitates Retrospective Meeting
  - Prepares team building game
  - Facilitates the discussion of what went well, what could have gone better, and areas for improvement
  - Prepares the Sprint Retrospective Meeting minutes and disperses them to the SoSM and CTO

- ## Daily Scrum

  - Schedules calendar invites
  - Facilitates Daily Scrum Meeting
  - Timeboxes meeting to maximum of 15 minutes
  - Ensures Scrum Team members discuss what they did the day before, what they will be working on the current day, and if they have any obstacles

- ## Scrum of Scrums

  - Schedules calendar invites
  - Facilitates Scrum of Scrums Meeting
  - Ensures teams work together to remove impediments

- ## Scrum Team

  - ### Sprint Planning Meeting

    - Commits to cards/user stories that follow project prioritization
    - Discusses cards/user stories to ensure there is no change to DOR and DOD

  - ### Refinement Meeting

    - Discusses cards/user stories in current sprint to ensure no changes to DOD
    - Discusses cards/user stories in Product Backlog to define DOR and DOD
    - Assigns a story point to cards/user stories
    - Breaks down cards/user stories when necessary into smaller more obtainable tasks while still preserving the overall goal and business value of the parent card/user story

  - ### Sprint Review

    - Demos what was completed in the current sprint to the Stakeholders
    - Applies feedback from stakeholders into the next sprint

  - ### Sprint Retrospective

    - Discusses what went well in the sprint and what areas can be improved upon
    - Creates a working agreement within team on how action will be taken to continually improve the item in the following sprint

  - ### Daily Scrum

    - Discusses what they did the day before, what they are currently working on, and if they have any impediments

  - ### Scrum of Scrums

    - Discusses what they committed to on the project for the current sprint as well as collaborates with other team to determine if there are any dependencies between the projects