

The Lucidworks Agile (Digital) Dojo

What is an Agile Dojo?

The Japanese word “dojo” literally translates to “the place of the way”. It is a dedicated location to learn, train, embrace and master an art, philosophy, system, etc. It is, in its most simplest form, a place for education, training and growth. The idea of the Agile Dojo was initially created by Target to promote Agile Mindset, train employees throughout the organization and assist teams with implementing Agility in ongoing work.

The Agile Dojo is typically a physical location within a company's office that development teams and Agile team members physically relocate to for a given amount of time. These teams do not change their backlog of work nor do they develop anything that will not actually deploy to production. Instead, the team arrives with their current scope of work to implement new systems for change and improvement into the work that aligns with the strategic vision of the enterprise. The two basic expectations within the Dojo are as follows:

1. **The team must continue to deliver on their current scope of work.** The team's ongoing development initiatives is the material to improve upon and learn better practices with.
2. **The team is willing to learn and implement new processes and systems into their current development practices.** Change is difficult and can be disruptive if there is unwillingness to understand and utilize new skillsets and knowledge.

While delivering on their current scope of work, the Scrum Master, Development Team, and/or Product Owner may identify specific places for improvement that the team is currently struggling with, or request specific training for the team in new frameworks and practices. This training can be requested through the Agile PMO (@Matthew Andrews (Deactivated)) and scheduled on a one-time or recurring basis. Training can include, but is not limited to:

- Basic Understanding of the Scrum framework
- Scheduling and facilitation of Agile ceremonies
- Refinement of story/epic estimation practices for increased release fidelity
- Agile tool training and implementation
- Deployment/Release planning

The Shu-ha-ri Method of Learning

Shu-ha-ri is a Japanese martial art concept that defines levels of growth during the learning process. It has been more recently applied to teams' and individual's learning paths within the Agile mindset. The phases of the Agile learning process through Shu-ha-ri are as follows:



- **SHU - FOLLOW THE RULE**

- As a new student of any philosophy, one must be willing to accept their place as a student and learn the basic principles of Agile/Scrum before implementing their own ideologies, past experience or ideas on how “things should work”. The students should be “knowledge sponges” at this point, willing to learn and implement from those at higher levels of Agile Shu-ha-ri. This level is tactical, where a student learns the systems of implementation without necessarily understanding the strategic or theoretical applications.

- **HA - BREAK THE RULE**

- At the “HA” level, students have a thorough understanding of the Agile Mindset, Scrum frameworks, various tools and systems, and the structured implementation of these “rules”. However, at this level, the students are able to understand when a rule needs to “bend” and in some cases even “break” the rule. Theoretical discussions on the application of various frameworks and systems are encouraged and a “if fail...fail fast” mindset is supported. A team should work on finding their best “way of working” at this stage of Shu-ha-ri.

- **RI - BE THE RULE**

- At this level of Shu-ha-ri, students have become true practitioners of Agile Mindset, not only learning from previous experiences throughout their Agile journey, but also developing new systems that increase agility for their teams and organization. RI level practitioners may act independently to design development and release systems, schedule cadences and train both SHU and HA level students. At this stage, strategic/philosophical understanding of Agile and subject-matter-expertise of framework implementation is expected. The student transcends to master at this echelon of Agile understanding.

How to Schedule Agile Training at the Lucidworks Agile Dojo

Please contact [@Matthew Andrews \(Deactivated\)](#) with the following information to schedule team and/or individual training within the (digital for now) dojo:

- Roster of Agile team members who will be attending
- List of viable scheduling blocks for either a one-time session or recurring training
- Current/projected scope of work for the Agile team
- A training request in email or slack containing the following

- What is the team currently struggle with
- Improvements expected from training within the dojo (quantify if possible)
- The team's state of maturity according to the [Tuckman Stages of Team Forming model](#)
- Length of time you want your team to develop within the dojo
- A winning attitude

Please contact [@Matthew Andrews \(Deactivated\)](#) with any questions, comments and/or concerns.