

Lean-Agile Glossary of Terms

Agile the name coined for the wider set of ideas that Scrum falls within; the Agile values and principles are captured in the Agile Manifesto

Burndown (see Sprint Burndown, Product Burndown)

Backlog Item (see Product Backlog Item)

Business Value Add anything that the business judges as required to improve effectiveness and efficiency of the CVA work as well as any work required to remain legal and viable as a business entity

Chicken (arch.) term for anyone not on the team, the term offended some people so is now rarely used, cf. Pig

Cycle Time the time required to complete a cycle of an operation

Daily Scrum a fifteen-minute daily team meeting to share progress, report impediments and make commitments

Done also referred to as “Done” or “Done Done”, this term is used to describe a product increment that is considered releasable; it means that all design, coding, testing and documentation have been completed and the increment is fully integrated into the system

Emergence the principle that the best designs, and the best ways of working come about over time through doing the work, rather than being defined in advance, cf. Empiricism, Self Organization

Empiricism the principle of “inspect and adapt” which allows teams or individuals to try something out and learn from the experience by conscious reflection and change, cf. Emergence, Self Organization

Epic a very large user story that is eventually broken down into smaller stories; epics are often used as placeholders for new ideas that have not been thought out fully. There’s nothing wrong with having an epic, as long as it is not high priority

Estimation the process of agreeing on a size measurement for the stories in a product backlog . Done by the team, usually using Planning Poker

Flow Continuous delivery of value to customers (.vs. big-batch, big-release, big-bang)

Fibonacci Sequence the sequence of numbers where the next number is derived by adding together the previous two; the sequence has the quality of each interval getting larger as the numbers increase; the sequence is often used for Story Points, simply because estimates are always less accurate when dealing with epics.

How “the How” is a term used to describe the domain of the team, as distinct for the product owner, cf. *What*. Can also be described as tactic (i.e. how to win the battle)

Impediment anything that prevents the team from meeting their potential (e.g. chairs are uncomfortable). If organizational, it is the Scrum Master’s responsibility to eliminate it. If it is internal to the team, then they themselves should do away with it

Impediment Backlog a visible list of impediments in a priority order according to how seriously they are blocking the team from productivity

Iteration a short (2-4 week) development cycle focused on delivering an increment of useful business functionality

Just In Time a system for producing and delivering the right items to the right place at the right time. The intent of a just-in-time process is to reduce inventory by introducing systems and processes that create ‘flow’ and minimizes buffering. User stories are often applied to support just-in-time processes on IT delivery teams. The details of the requirement are defined at the latest appropriate moment reducing the level of inventory (requirements defined up-front) within the system

Kaizen continuous incremental improvement

Kanban signal card (*clear, simple, visual controls*)

Lean a set of techniques for delivering more value with the same or less resources by eliminating waste across organizations and business processes

Muda waster (any inefficient or ineffective activity)

None Value Add any work other than CVA Stakeholder any interested party both on the team and off the team

Pig (arch.) term for a team member, the term offended some people so is now rarely used, cf. Chicken

Planning see Sprint Planning

Planning Poker a game used to apply estimates to stories; it uses the Delphi method of arriving at consensus

Lean-Agile Glossary of Terms - *continued*

Process simply the way someone works. Everyone has a process. It can be pre-defined, empiric or merely chaotic

Product Backlog a prioritized list of stories that are waiting to be worked on

Product Backlog Item any item that is one the backlog list, which will include user stories, epics and possibly technical stories to deal with technical debt, etc

Product Owner person whom holds the vision for the product and is responsible for maintaining, prioritizing and updating the product backlog

Pull downstream customers drive upstream events (eliminates inventory)

Push a system in which items are produced not at the request of the downstream system but typically by schedule, predicting the downstream need. In a push system items are often ordered and produced before they are required and stored in a batch and queue system until the upstream operator is ready

XP 'eXtreme Programming' ; a set of software development principles that compliment lean-agile management techniques

Release Burndown Chart a visible chart to show progress towards a release

Retrospective a session where the Team and Scrum Master reflect on the process and make commitments to improve

Roman Vote see Thumb Vote

Scrum a simple, low ceremony planning approach

Scrum Master a servant leader to the team, responsible for removing impediments and making sure the process runs smoothly so the team can be as productive as possible

Scrum Meetings Story Time, Planning, Review, Retrospective, Daily Scrum

Scrum Roles there are only three: product owner, Scrum Master, team

Self Organization the principle that those closest to the work best know how to do the work, so set clear goals and boundaries and let them make all tactical and implementation decisions, cf. Emergence, Empiricism

Spike a short, time-boxed piece of research, usually technical, on a single story that is intended to provide just enough information that the team can estimate the size of the story

Sprint a time boxed iteration

Sprint Burndown a visible chart that indicates on a daily basis the amount of work remaining in the sprint

Sprint Goal aka Sprint Theme, the key focus of the work for a single sprint

Sprint Planning a meeting between the Team and the Product Owner to plan the sprint and arrive at an agreement on the commitment

Sprint Task a single small item of work that helps one particular story reach completion

Stakeholder anyone external to the team with an interest in the product being developed

Story a backlog item usually using the template form: as a [user] I want [function] so that [business value], cf Product Backlog Item

Story Point a unit of measurement applied to the size of a story, cf. Fibonacci Sequence

Story Time the regular work session where items on the backlog are discussed, refined and estimated and the backlog is trimmed and prioritized

Task see Sprint Task

Lean-Agile Glossary of Terms - *continued*

Task List the tasks needed to complete the set of stories committed to a sprint

Taskboard a wall chart with cards and sticky notes that represent all the work of a team in a given sprint; the task notes are moved across the board to show progress

Team the development team, responsible committing to work, delivering and driving the product forward from a tactical perspective

Team Member any member of the team, including developers, testers, designers, writers, graphic artists, database admins

Theory of Constraints management approach to improving the output of a system by identifying, resolving and managing the constraints of a system

Throughput counts the product units of stakeholder value produced in a given time. For example if a software development team complete 12 story points in a two week iteration then the throughput would be 12

Thumb Vote a quick pulse to get a sense of where the team are in terms of commitment, or agreement on a decision, etc. thumb up generally means agree, yes, or good, and thumb down disagree, no or bad; the analog version of this allows the thumb to be anywhere on the half circle to indicate differing degrees of agreeability

Timeboxing setting a duration for every activity and having it last exactly that (i.e. neither meetings nor sprint are ever lengthened - ever)

Value Stream set of activities required to analyze, design and build a product from concept to launch

Value Stream Mapping a value stream map is a tool that is used to identify all of the process steps within a value stream for a given product. The value stream map can be used to identify process improvement opportunities by documenting opportunities to reduce the time taken for value-add activities, minimize non-value-add process steps and to ruthlessly eliminate waste

Velocity the rate at which a team completes work, usually measured in story points

Vision Statement a high-level description of a product which includes who it is for, why it is necessary and what differentiates it from similar products

VOC (Voice of the Customer) a principle of ensuring that the 'real' customers requirements have been solicited and are well understood. The voice of the customer informs and determines the specification and qualities of the product

Waste see Muda

What "the What" is a term used to describe the domain of the product owner, as distinct for the team, cf. How. Can also be described as strategy (i.e. what's the best order for battles)

Work Cells (or U-Shaped Cells) a work cell is a collection of equipment and workstations that have been specifically designed to support the processing of a product from start to finish as simply as possible

WIP (Work In Progress) any work that has not completed but that has already incurred a capital cost to the organization. Any software that has been developed but not deployed to production can be considered as work in progress

XP Practices the set of development practices, including pair-programming, test-first, or test-driven development (TDD) and continuous refactoring, which are drawn from the XP methodology; many Scrum teams find these practices greatly improve productivity and team morale