

Scrum Team Launch

Agile Chartering

Agile Chartering is a lightweight documentation approach to creating initial understandings, agreements and alignment about the product and the work and how it will be accomplished.

Chartering happens in two rounds:

- Stakeholders take a first pass at defining the purpose of the team
- The team refines the initial purpose and decides on its approach

Elements of an Agile Charter

- Purpose – provides inspiration and conveys the meaning of the work.
- Alignment – is a shared understanding about the work and why it exists.
- Context – how the team fits into the larger organisation

Scrum Agreements

- Definition of “Done” and Undone – state of the Increment entering Sprint Review and any additional work required for release
- Instantiation of Scrum – practical aspects of how the artefacts, events and work practise within a Sprint will be enacted

A good team launch should:

- Include a mix of informational topics, activities and social events
- have agenda items that build on the last one
- include an introduction by the sponsor or an executive
- create a sense of ownership of the outcomes.

Popular formats:

- a single meeting with a length between ½ a day and 2 days
- a series of events over a week or more

Resources on Team Launch

- Larsen, D., Nies, A., 2016. *Liftoff: Start and Sustain Successful Agile Teams*. Pragmatic Bookshelf.
- Team Working Agreement Canvas by Scrum Inc.: www.scruminc.com/team-working-agreement-canvas
- Scrum Kickoff Planner by Adam Weisbart: weisbart.com/kickoff

Scrum Team launch plan

[3.6]

Instruction: with a partner, create a plan for the launch of one new team. Use a real work context (product, programme, project etc.) that one of you has experience with. It does not matter if there is currently no mandate to actually launch an additional team in this situation, imagine that there is.

- Read “Guidance for your launch plan” below.
- Work together to sketch out your launch plan on one or more sheets of flipchart paper. Draw from the reference material in the remainder of this section considering what is most relevant to the context that you are working with.
- Manage time to get this posted to a gallery on the wall by the end of the time-box.

Guidance for your launch plan

Each team launch is unique just as each team and development effort are unique. This exercise is to create a plan that is customised to the context. Do not copy all activities from the reference material.

Assumptions:

- The membership of the team has already been decided
- A majority of the members are working together for the first time

Your plan should include:

- a. Who the mandate to launch a team comes from
- b. What is to be defined by leadership and Product Owner
- c. The activities most important to address (given the context) across Purpose, Alignment, Context and Instantiation of Scrum, each with:
 - the desired outcome,
 - participants (by role)
 - sequence

Chartering for Purpose

Three elements that can be used to articulate purpose are:

1. Product vision - (Why) a shared picture of the user outcomes and business impacts realised when your customer is using your product in the medium-long term future.
2. Mission - (What) the team or requirement area's unique contribution toward achieving the product vision is.
3. Mission tests - specify the external or internal indicators of progress toward successful mission achievement (aka objectives, progress indicators).

Mission test examples

External:

- 10 percent increase in customer satisfaction rating by End of Financial Year
- 20 decrease in support calls for the product by Q4

Internal:

- Downward trend for defects reaching production
- Increased internal stakeholder satisfaction reported by Sprint Review participants

Stakeholder Activities

For the first four activities, participants are: Sponsor, Product Owner and strategic decision makers.

Activity: Elicit stakeholder perspectives

Open-ended questions related to business strategy, market/customer segments, internal changes etc.

Activity: Develop a Preliminary Product Vision (if not already created)

Collaborative envisioning techniques such as Vision Statement, Product Box, Product Vision Board, Experience Canvas, Press Release, Magazine Review, Data Sheet etc.

Activity: Develop a Preliminary Mission

Consider brainstorming customers, what value is to be gained, who else will benefit, qualities or characteristics of the product. Use affinity-grouped ideas to develop a preliminary mission statement. Also consider using Impact Mapping.

Activity: Develop a Preliminary Mission Tests

Considering brainstorming effects (user outcomes and business impacts) will be different, how these differences can be measured, what we need to learn, what we would like our customers to say etc. Try writing a mission test that is S.M.A.R.T. for each cluster.

Team Activities

For the next five activities, participants are: full Scrum Team and stakeholders who will work closely with the team.

Activity: Review Preliminary Purpose

Explain why each part of the charter is written as it is and the thinking behind the choices.

Activity: Discuss and Clarify the Product Vision

Show vision artwork from pre-work activities and discuss the vision.

Activity: Discuss and Refine the Mission

Discuss and refine the rough draft mission.

Activity: Discuss and Refine the Mission Tests

In diverse pairs/trios decide whether to ratify or revise each test. Encourage writing new phrases inviting feedback. Ask the Product Owner if these mission tests would lead to realising the vision.

Activity: Commit to an Initial Purpose

Have pairs/trios with mixed perspectives review whether the test measures progress toward the mission and look for opportunities to improve it. Share back to the whole group and use Decider Protocol to ratify or discuss it further.

Chartering for Alignment

Three components of alignment are:

1. Shared simple rules
2. Team membership
3. Working agreements

Simple rules guide the toughest decisions for everyone involved. Examples of Simple Rules:

- Seek diverse perspectives before judging
- Work to skillset, not job title

Working Agreements focus on operations and guide the daily work of the team. Example of Working Agreements:

- We listen to everyone in the team before we make a decision
- We don't schedule meetings after lunch except at Sprint boundaries.

Activity: Define simple rules

Participants: full Development Team.

1. Brainstorm values using questions:
 - What do we do to create a positive work environment?
 - What serves us well for building team coherence?
 - What would outsiders notice about our behaviour toward each other?
 - How do we want to treat our coworkers, vendors, customers etc.?
2. Generate simple rules from the values.
3. Check for relevance of simple rules: how will this simple rule help us with decision making?

Activity: Establish the team

Participants: full Development Team.

1. Complete a skills matrix showing the level of each skill for each team member plus which skills members particularly want to grow. See example to the right.

Review the skills matrix and discuss:

- What knowledge, permission and personal qualities do we have?
- Why is this team well suited to work on the mission?
- What gaps in the above do we have?
- What's the most important thing that others need to know about working with me?
- What do I want to accomplish personally?
- Explore similarities, differences and which differences make a difference.

Activity: Create Working Agreements

Participants: full Development Team.

- Create descriptions of aspirations for teamwork and professional standards using questions:
 - What are areas of concern from previous teams? Draw out implicit agreements from experiences.
 - What behaviours or standards do you want to guide your new team?
 - Complete the sentence: "We work together best when..."
- Prioritise and filter a substantial list down to the five or fewer items that offer the greatest benefit.
- Refine agreements, write each from a positive action oriented point of view.
 - Not: Don't interrupt team members with low urgency matters when they are busy.
 - Do: If someone appears to be in busy and in "flow", defer non-urgent matters until they take a break.

Activity: Create a Potentially Releasable mindmap

Participants: people with a stake in various aspects of the process and product release readiness.

1. Draw "Potentially Releasable" in the middle of a mindmap with branches for various categories such as development practices, testing, defect fixing, documentation, legal and standards compliance, user training and operations.
2. Invite participants to add everything that needs to be true of an Increment of the product in order to release it and to sustain the desired internal qualities through processes (e.g. "All unit tests pass" to uphold maintainability with lost cost of change).

Skills Matrix

	Andrew	Becky	Chris	Dani	Elle	Frank	George	Hellen	Joe
CSS									
HTML5									
Javascript									
Node.JS									
Cassandra									
Docker									

Legend

No skill		
Basic knowledge		
Perform basic tasks		
Perform all tasks		
Teach all tasks		

These are ideally stated as objective statements of what is to be true e.g. “All Acceptance Tests pass” rather than “Acceptance Testing”.

Activity: Create a Definition of “Done” and Undone list

Participants: full Scrum Team.

1. Invite the Development Team to consider each item from the Potentially Releasable mindmap and tick each one that they can feasibly achieve it within a Sprint given the current capability.
2. Ask the Development Team whether they can commit to everything ticked as their Definition of “Done”. Everything not ticked goes on an Undone list. The Undone list may then be prioritised to identify the best opportunities for capability improvement toward being Potentially Releasable each Sprint.

Chartering for Context

Activity: Map boundaries and interactions

Participants: full Scrum Team and key stakeholders

See the example on the right.

- Draw the team in the middle or a large whiteboard space.
- Sticky-note brainstorm all the parties that the team will connect with (both inputs and outputs).
- Place stickies in large circle around the team placing parties with similar interactions together.
- Draw arrows between team and the various parts to show the direction of interaction or exchange.
- Add to each interaction on the diagram initial ideas about communication channels and frequency.

Discuss:

Are all parties aware of their role regarding this work?

Do we share a common understanding of the nature and timing of our interactions?

If not aware, how will go about contacting them and what will we ask?

Which parties have primary roles? Which are more secondary?

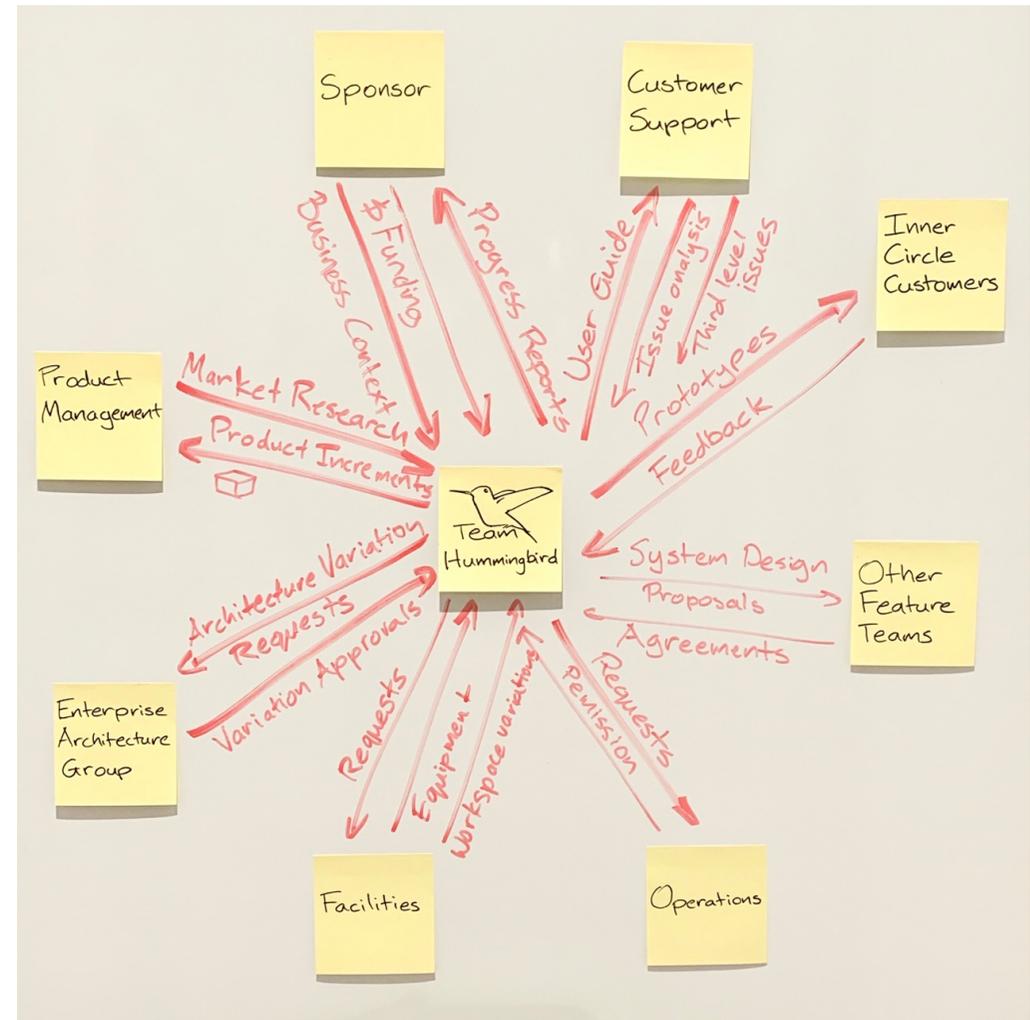
What authority does our team need to meet our accountabilities and responsibilities?

What needs to happen to gain any missing authority needed?

Activity: Validate committed resources

Participants: full Scrum Team and Sponsor

1. Brief everyone on the full breadth of the types of resources to be discussed including: time (inc. sustainable pace and use of slack), access, funding/budget, workspace, supplies/equipment, tools, team training.
2. Have the sponsor present ideas about intended resources.

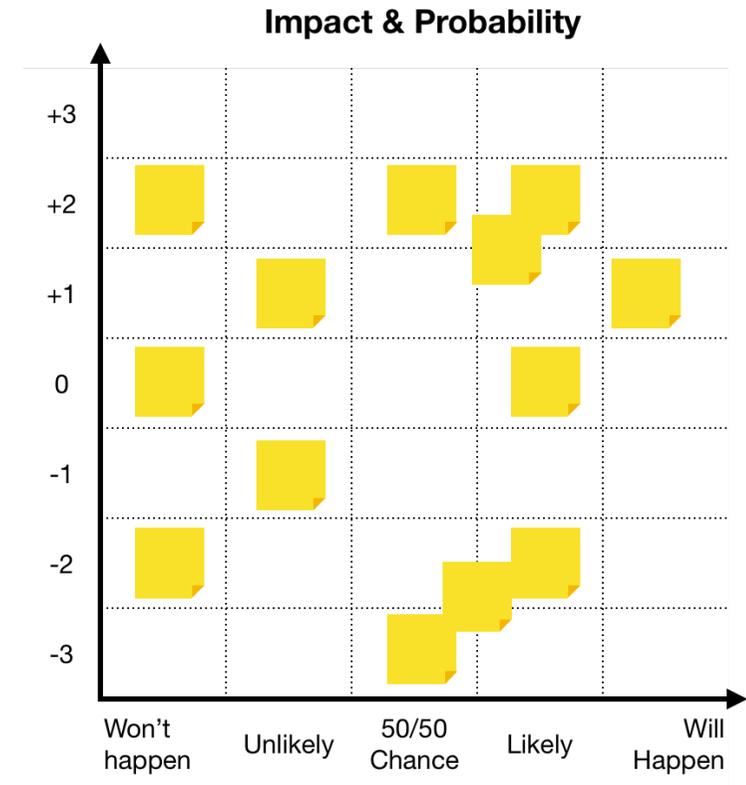


3. Development team and stakeholder present their resource needs.
4. Prioritise the resources into “must have”, “desirable”, “nice to have”, “can live without”
5. Discuss when and how details of resources acquisition will occur.
6. Ask sponsor to commit to providing resources or decide to postpone the initiative.

Activity: Conduct a prospective analysis

Participants: full Scrum Team.

1. In pairs: write on stickies all possible events you can imagine over the next two to three months including events with both positive and negative effects on the team.
2. Create a large Impact & Probability grid. Impact is from -3 (detrimental) to +3 (positive) and probability from “won’t happen” to “will happen” (see example to the right).
3. Ask participant to place all sticky notes on the grid. Where the same idea is plotted in different spots, discuss the discrepancy.
4. Prioritise the events that the team wants to track.



Chartering for Scrum implementation

Participants: full Scrum Team.

Identity

- What do we want to be called? Brainstorm many names and converge to a decision.

Scrum Artefacts

- Product Backlog – where is it, process for proposing items, guidelines on how to express items
- Sprint Backlog – if physical then where?
- Information radiators – what is valuable to make visible?

Scrum Activities and Events

- Backlog Refinement - who is involved when, what outcomes are expected?
- Estimation – what to estimate, when, how (e.g. Story Points, Planning Poker)
- Sprint Planning – pre-requisites and preparation, cards or electronic tool, structure, decisions to make, questions to answer
- Daily Scrum – time and place, rules / guidelines, how to deal with remote participants, impediment tracking, guidelines for follow-up discussions
- Daily responsibilities - Daily Scrum, daily update of sprint backlog etc.
- Sprint Review Meeting – who extends invitations, format e.g. tradeshow/bazaar with diverge then convert, agenda, preparation, what is allowed to be demonstrated, decisions to be made, process for adapting backlog during the meeting
- Sprint Retrospective – who is to facilitate, preparation, where output is to be published, how relevant items are to be brought into Sprint Planning, participation in overall retrospectives

Workflow to “Done”

- Continuous Integration – trunk vs feature branching, frequency of check-ins expected, broken build response
- Code review – pair programming or code review process
- Testing – overall testing strategy, techniques e.g. Unit Test, ATDD, BDD, batch size, what testing is done when
- Typical workflow – take a typical PBI and model tasks, lay out order over time including what can be parallelised, approach re “swarming” / limiting WIP