

Sprint Planning Guide

What is it?

The purpose of the sprint planning meeting is for the team to agree to complete a set of the top-ordered product backlog items. This commitment defines the sprint backlog and is based on the team's velocity or capacity and the length of the sprint timebox.

Who does it?

Sprint planning is a collaborative effort involving:

- **ScrumMaster** – facilitates the meeting
- **Product Owner** – clarifies the details of the product backlog items and their acceptance criteria
- **Agile Team** – defines the work and effort necessary to fulfill the completion of agreed upon product backlog items

Before You Begin

Before getting started we need to ensure:

- The product backlog is top-ordered to reflect the greatest needs of the Product Owner
- The items in the product backlog have been sized by the team and assigned a relative story point value
- There is a general understanding of the acceptance criteria for these top-ordered backlog items
- Backlog items meet the definition of ready

The Backlog

The product backlog can address anything deemed valuable by the Product Owner. For the purpose of sprint planning, product backlog items must be small enough to be completed and accepted during the sprint and can be verified that they were implemented correctly.

Right Sizing Backlog Items

Product backlog items too large to be completed in a sprint must be split into smaller pieces. The best way to split product backlog items is by value not by process.

Plan Based on Capacity

Mature teams may use a combination of team availability and velocity to forecast what product backlog items can be finished during the sprint. New teams may not know their velocity or it may not be stable enough to use as a basis for sprint planning. In those cases, new teams may need to make forecasts based solely on the team's capacity.

Determining Capacity

The capacity of a team is derived from three simple measures for each team member:

- Number of ideal hours in the work day
- Days in the sprint that the person will be available
- Percentage of time the person will dedicate to this team for work related to the upcoming sprint

The Planning Steps

1. The Product Owner describes highest ordered product backlog item(s), that meet the definition of ready
2. The team determines and prioritizes what cross-functional work is necessary to complete the product backlog item(s)
3. Team members volunteer to own the work
4. Work owners estimate the ideal hours they need to finish their functional work
5. Planning continues as long as the team does not exceed determined capacity

Sprint Planning Agenda

1. Meeting Opening Welcome everyone, review purpose, agenda, and organizing tools	ScrumMaster
2. Product Vision and Roadmap Remind the team of the big picture	Product Owner
3. Development status, state of our architecture, results of previous sprints Discuss any new information that may impact the plan	Agile Team
4. Sprint name and theme Collaboratively decide on the sprint name and its theme	ScrumMaster
5. Velocity in previous sprint(s) Present the velocity to be used for this release	ScrumMaster
6. Sprint timebox (date range, working days) Determine the timebox and total working days (subtract days for holidays or other whole-team impacting events)	Agile Team
7. Team capacity (availability) Calculate capacity (each team member) based on personal availability, allocation to the project, and productive time for work in this sprint each day	Agile Team
8. Issues and Concerns Confirm any currently known issues and concerns and record as appropriate	ScrumMaster
9. Definition of Done Review the definition of <i>Done</i> and make any appropriate updates based on technology, skill, or team member changes since the last sprint	Agile Team
10. Stories/items from the product backlog to consider Present <i>Ready</i> product backlog items to be considered for the sprint backlog	Product Owner
11. Owning the work Determine the needs, sign up for work, and estimate the work owned; Product Owner answers clarifying questions and elaborates acceptance criteria as appropriate; ScrumMaster facilitates collaboration	Agile Team
12. New issues and concerns Confirm any new issues and concerns raised during meeting and record	ScrumMaster
13. Assumptions and Dependencies Confirm any assumptions or dependencies discovered during planning and record	ScrumMaster
14. Agreement ScrumMaster calls for a group consensus on the plan; Agile Team and Product Owner signal if this is the best plan they can make given what they know right now	Agile Team
15. Communications Review and update communications and logistics plan for this sprint	ScrumMaster
16. Parking lot Determine all items are either resolved or turned into Action Items	ScrumMaster
17. Action items Distribute action items to designated owners	ScrumMaster
18. Meeting Closure (optional retrospective) Solicit feedback on the meeting itself to ensure the meeting is useful to everyone	ScrumMaster