Agile Project Management - Quick Review

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Robert Clines · Four sessions: October 21, 26, 28 and November 2. Based on the supplied 187-page version 8.0 workbook, including its slides. Use the Complete Guide for explanation and the Source Index for source differences. PDF pages count the cover as page 1.

The instructor highlighted Modules 3-5, roles, ceremony purpose/participants and sprint structure. These recall pairs retain course qualifications; they are not an official exam specification. All worked arithmetic in the practice bank is editorial.

Approaches and feedback

(Oct 21, 00:24:58-00:53:19; segments 133-198.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 17-22.)

Prompt	Recall
Agile / adaptive	Plan, deliver and learn in smaller pieces so feedback can guide change.
Predictive / plan-driven	Coordinate a sufficiently understood result and sequence through advance planning.
Hybrid approach	Deliberately combine approaches to meet different delivery needs.
Iterative work	Revisit and improve a solution using feedback; the focus is suitability/correctness.
Incremental work	Add completed, tested, usable portions of the result.
Prototype	A model for learning and feedback; not automatically a production-ready increment.
Rolling-wave planning	Plan near work in more detail and revisit later work as understanding improves.
Method-selection questions	What can be delivered separately, what is uncertain, what is fixed, and how will feedback change decisions?
Fixed deadline in Agile	Possible; examine feasible scope, resources, risks and dependencies instead of deciding from the date alone.
Methodology limitation	An approach cannot fix underlying delivery problems that remain unaddressed.
Individuals and interactions	Preferred over processes and tools; useful process and tools still matter.
Working software	Preferred over comprehensive documentation; necessary documentation still matters.

Prompt	Recall
Customer collaboration	Preferred over contract negotiation; contracts are not eliminated.
Responding to change	Preferred over following a plan; plans are revised, not abolished.

Framework recognition

(Oct 21, 01:00:26-01:10:42; segments 220-245.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 23-25.)

Prompt	Recall
Scrum	Agile framework organized around sprints, backlogs, roles and recurring collaboration/inspection.
DSDM constraint pattern	The course fixes cost and schedule and lets scope flex.
Timeboxing	Limit available time and select feasible work to fit.
Kanban emphasis	Prioritize flow and limit work in progress.
XP practices in the course	Pairing, continuous testing, test-driven feedback and responsiveness to change; workbook co-location claims are course-specific.
FDD emphasis	Use models and a feature list to plan/design/build small features linked to business needs.

People and decision boundaries

(Oct 21, 01:16:49-01:25:59; segments 258-278.) (Oct 26, 00:21:13-00:22:09; segments 56-57.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 27-29.)

Prompt	Recall
Product Owner	Clarifies business needs and orders the product backlog to support value.
Scrum Master	Coaches/facilitates, helps remove impediments and protects focus; does not dictate every task.
Team members	Estimate/select feasible sprint work, organize execution and bring the skills needed to deliver.
PO versus BA	A BA may be a PO; the lecture explicitly says a PO need not be a BA.
Product priority decision	The PO works with the business to decide the order of product work.

Prompt	Recall
Feasible sprint amount	The team determines what it can accomplish using estimates, availability and dependencies.
Self-management	Responsibility for organizing and doing work within shared priorities and obligations.
Cross-functionality	Cover needed delivery skills collaboratively; coordinate specialists/access when needed.
Course team-size preference	Nine or fewer team members if possible; an instructor convention, not a universal Scrum standard.
External PM coordination	Where used, connect budget, reporting, approval, dependency and release work to team delivery.

Requirements and stories

(Oct 26, 00:22:35-00:26:51; segments 59-67.) (Oct 26, 00:43:02-00:53:06; segments 130-156.) (Oct 26, 01:06:28-01:20:48; segments 207-244.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 49-56.)

Prompt	Recall
Need	The underlying problem or desired benefit.
Requirement	A capability or condition that addresses a need, specific enough for its intended use.
Elicitation	Collaborate, ask, clarify and check understanding throughout the work.
Gathering risk	Recording initial requests and disappearing can preserve misunderstandings.
Elicitation technique examples	Interviews, brainstorming and affinity diagramming.
Four requirement categories	Business, stakeholder/end-user, solution and transition.
Business requirement	The business goal or reason for change.
Stakeholder requirement	A need from a particular user or stakeholder group.
Functional solution requirement	What the solution does: its behavior or capability.
Non-functional solution requirement	A quality, performance or operating condition; classify the actual statement carefully.
Transition requirement	A temporary capability needed to move to the new state, such as migration or training.

Prompt	Recall
Epic	A large story that needs decomposition before its pieces can be estimated and delivered.
Epic caution	A small unclear story may need investigation; inability to estimate alone does not prove large size.
User-story template	As a [role], I want to [capability], so that [benefit].
User-story purpose	State user value and prompt conversation; not a complete technical specification.
Card	Briefly capture the story and its intended user/value.
Conversation	Clarify assumptions, needs, exceptions and implementation questions together.
Confirmation	Agree observable checks that demonstrate acceptance.
Acceptance criteria	Story-specific conditions guiding testing; make success checkable without unnecessarily prescribing design.
Good-story characteristics	User value, understandable language, a clear user goal, conversation and testable confirmation.
Multiple user perspectives	Different goals, usage frequency and proficiency can reveal different requirements.
Usable vertical slice	Deliver the interface, logic, data and testing needed for one useful capability together.

Planning and activities

(Oct 26, 01:50:55-02:13:23; segments 319-374.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 78-84.)

Prompt	Recall
Five course planning levels	Vision, roadmap, release, sprint and daily.
Vision	High-level goal and reason for the work.
Roadmap	Strategic sequence for rolling out the product/capabilities.
Release planning	PO/team forecast candidate capabilities across several sprints for a release.
Sprint planning	PO clarifies priority/context; team estimates and selects feasible work and plans execution.
Daily stand-up purpose	Brief team coordination and impediment visibility; use the course's three prompts without turning it into manager permission-seeking.

Prompt	Recall
Course daily prompts	What did I do since the last meeting? What next? What impediments do I face?
Course daily timebox	15 minutes or less; the taught facilitation format is a course convention.
Detailed problem solving	Arrange follow-up after raising the issue; protect the brief daily meeting.
Backlog refinement / story time	PO/team clarify upcoming stories, dependencies and questions before later selection.
Refinement is not selection	Preparing a candidate does not guarantee it will be selected for a future sprint.
Sprint review	Team, PO and stakeholders inspect/demonstrate the completed result and exchange feedback.
Sprint retrospective	Team examines its way of working, preserves successes and agrees improvements; SM facilitates in the course model.
Review versus retrospective	Review inspects the product/result; retrospective improves the process/teamwork.
No surprises at review	Collaborate and demonstrate during the sprint, instead of first seeking stakeholder feedback at the final review.
Course sprint duration	One to four weeks; two to three weeks is the instructor preference.
Release versus sprint	A release may package results from multiple sprints; completion and deployment dates can differ.
Course sprint termination authority	Only the Product Owner in the taught exceptional scenario; new requests do not automatically require cancellation.

Artifacts, progress and change

(Oct 26, 02:04:30-02:18:36; segments 352-386.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 81-86.)

Prompt	Recall
Product backlog	Ordered potential product work, evolving as priorities and understanding change.
Sprint backlog	Work selected for the current sprint plus its execution details.
Unfinished story	Return it to the product backlog for PO reprioritization; no automatic next-sprint priority.
Mid-sprint new request	Clarify urgency/value with the PO and use the agreed change process instead of silently adding work.

Prompt	Recall
Task board columns	Common course example: to do, in progress, done.
Sprint task board horizon	Shows the current sprint’s work; product/release planning has a broader horizon.
Burndown axes	Remaining work against elapsed sprint days; the course uses hours.
Ideal burndown endpoint	Zero remaining work at the planned end of the sprint.
Burndown above ideal	Investigate remaining work, capacity, dependencies and uncertainty; the line alone does not identify a cause.
WBS versus sequence	A decomposition identifies work/deliverables; sequencing and dependencies are separate decisions.
8/80 course guideline	A sizing aid with exceptions, not a universal rule prohibiting smaller or larger activities.

Estimation and prioritization

(Oct 28, 00:01:24-00:42:26; segments 4-120.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 111-116.)

Prompt	Recall
Estimate	An informed forecast with uncertainty; revise it when evidence changes.
Cost in this course	Money charged/paid for the work.
Budget in this course	The estimate allocated against scheduled work and time.
Top-down estimation	Estimate the overall work first; splitting that number does not independently improve accuracy.
Bottom-up estimation	Estimate detailed pieces and aggregate them.
Analogous estimation	Use comparable previous work to inform the estimate.
Parametric estimation	Apply a relevant rate or relationship to quantities of work.
Expert judgment	Use informed expertise and its assumptions.
Three-point estimation	Consider optimistic, most-likely and pessimistic outcomes; workbook also lists PERT.
Story points	Relative story size in a team’s context; not hours and not directly interchangeable across teams.

Prompt	Recall
Relative sizing considerations	Effort, complexity, uncertainty, dependencies and what complete means.
Modified estimation scale	The workbook uses Fibonacci-style values including 0/100 endpoints; not every card is an exact Fibonacci number.
Task-hour estimates	Estimate task work/duration as needed for sprint planning, reporting and the course burndown.
Planning Poker independence	Select estimates privately, then reveal together to reduce anchoring/groupthink.
Planning Poker disagreement	Discuss assumptions and outliers, then re-estimate; avoid pressure to conform.
Course priority order	Business value, risk, difficulty, size.
Smaller-story preference	Prefer smaller work when other priority considerations are equal.
Preliminary estimate source difference	Workbook allows top-down or bottom-up; October 28 lecture groups it with bottom-up.

Velocity, done and capacity

(Oct 28, 00:42:29-00:48:20; segments 121-134.) (Oct 28, 02:08:08-02:11:55; segments 317-326.) (Nov 2, 00:32:45-00:35:21; segments 97-105.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 113-116 and 159-160.)

Prompt	Recall
Velocity calculation	Sum story points of completed stories in the sprint.
Partial-story velocity credit	None in the course calculation; count only stories meeting the agreed completion standard.
Average velocity	Use several comparable sprints as a forecast guide; not an exact quota.
Velocity forecast assumptions	Comparable scope/points, team availability and working conditions; changes can alter the forecast.
Calibration sprint in the workbook	Learning dry run with real work, excluded from the case's formal metrics; not a mandatory extra Scrum event.
Definition of Done	Shared completion standard that makes required quality/readiness work explicit.
Done versus acceptance criteria	Done is the shared completion standard; acceptance criteria confirm the particular story's behavior.
Production-ready versus deployed	Ready work can await the next authorized release window.

Prompt	Recall
Corporate readiness example	Needed testing, scripts, approvals, documentation, training, communication and packaging are complete before release.
Actual availability	Plan from allocated time, absences and other obligations, not headcount alone.
Production-support reserve	Use recent demand to reserve realistic capacity; the instructor suggests averaging four iterations.
Support exceeds reserve	Reassess capacity; unfinished stories return for PO reprioritization.
Hours versus points	A capacity reserve in hours is not the same number of story points.

Organization and improvement

(Oct 28, 01:45:22-02:08:06; segments 265-316.) (Nov 2, 00:01:53-00:20:08; segments 5-48.) (Nov 2, 00:35:53-00:51:53; segments 108-169.) (Workbook, PDF pp. 87-90, 136-138 and 155-161.)

Prompt	Recall
Agile documentation myth	Needed documentation still exists; working value is emphasized.
Agile planning myth	Planning is distributed across horizons and repeated as understanding improves.
Agile discipline myth	Self-management increases responsibility to coordinate and deliver.
Distributed-team myth	Agile can use virtual teams with deliberate collaboration practices.
Scaling example	Scrum of Scrums coordinates representatives around dependencies between teams.
Waterfall change myth	Predictive work can handle change through an established, often more formal process.
Automatic speed myth	Earlier usable increments do not guarantee a shorter total project duration.
Magic-cure myth	Agile adoption needs skills, discipline, management support and attention to root causes.
Organizational governance	Budgets, reporting, approvals and release obligations continue around Agile delivery.
Hardening-sprint example	Workbook release/documentation integration practice; plan its effort and do not hide unfinished required quality work.

Prompt	Recall
Context-switching response	Use realistic allocations and concentrated work blocks where feasible.
Virtual-team habits	Agree participation, access and communication practices; strengthen relationships and include remote members.
Team ground rules	Team creates and revisits shared working agreements; outside imposition alone weakens ownership.
Improvement targets	Useful shorter cycles, smaller effective teams, dedication, collaboration, ground rules, management education and coaching.
Management education	Set realistic expectations and respect decision boundaries instead of promising an easy cure.
Coaching and mentoring	Share learning and help teams build capability; consider disruption when moving experienced members.
Fail fast	Detect, learn and apply the lesson promptly so the same failure is not repeated.