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Scrum

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- Apply the core principles of scrum to a variety of functions
- Execute a scrum project

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Scrum

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by Mark C. Layton

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Scrum For Dummies®

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Introduction

Welcome to *Scrum For Dummies.* Scrum is an agile project -management framework with proven results in decreasing time to market 30 to 40 percent, improving product quality, and heightening customer satisfaction — all this while lowering costs from 30 to 70 percent. Scrum accomplishes all this through integration of business and development talent, improved communication models, increased performance visibility, regular customer and stakeholder feedback, and an empirically based inspect-and-adapt mentality. Even the most complex project can be managed more effectively using scrum to increase your bottom line.

About This Book

My goal is to demonstrate explicitly how scrum can be used for any project — not just software development. As with my *Agile Project Management For Dummies* (published by John Wiley & Sons, Inc.), this book is intended to be a field manual for the application of scrum in real-world situations. While I cover scrum fundamentals in detail, this book also delves into how to actually get out and experience its amazing benefits.

Scrum itself is easy to explain, but often the application is difficult. Old habits and organizational mind-sets need to be shifted, and new ways embraced. For this reason, I've included success stories so that you can see how scrum can fit into your unique situation.

The main thrust of understanding scrum lies in the three roles, three artifacts, and five events that form its foundation. While I cover these thoroughly, I also include common practices from myself and others in the field. From there you can choose what will work best for your project.

Several books on scrum already exist, but the one you hold in your hands differs in its practicality. I have over a decade of experience with agile methods and scrum, and I bring this to you in a practical guide. You don't need to be a rocket scientist or a whiz programmer; all you need is a project and a passion to get it done in the best way possible. I give you examples from Fortune 100 companies all the way down to a family organizing their vacation.

I focus on the steps necessary to get scrum's magic working for you. My audience ranges from code programmers to sales professionals to product manufacturers to executives to mid-tier management — and to stay-at-home moms who want a more organized household.

If you're in the IT industry, you have probably heard the terms *agile* and/or *scrum*. Maybe you've even worked within a scrum environment but want to improve your skills in this area and bring others in your firm along with you. If you are not in IT, you might have heard that scrum is a great way to run projects. You are right! Perhaps it's all new and you're just searching for a way to make your project more accessible; or you have a great idea burning inside and just don't know how to bring it to fruition. Whoever you are, an easy way exists to run your project, and it's called scrum. Within these pages, I show you how.

Foolish Assumptions

Scrum itself isn't technical. In fact, its basic tenets are common sense. However, in many cases, I've wrapped this information within the world of technology and have used technical terms to help explain this. Where useful, I've defined these.

I also cover common practices from scrum experts throughout the world. You can learn so much from others who use this framework in a seemingly limitless spectrum of projects.

Scrum falls under an umbrella of project management called agile project management. Neither scrum nor agile practices is a proper noun. Scrum is a framework for organizing your work, while agile is an adjective used to describe a wide variety of practices that conform to the values of the Agile Manifesto and to the 12 Agile Principles. Scrum and agile are not identical or interchangeable, but you frequently see them written in many sources, especially online, interchangeably. In this book, you will see terminology from both descriptions, because scrum is a frequently used subset of agile practices.

Conventions Used in This Book

If you do an online search, you will see the words *agile* and *scrum,* different roles, meetings, and documents; and various agile methodologies and frameworks, including scrum, capitalized. I shied away from this practice for a couple of reasons.

To start, none of these items are really proper nouns. *Agile* is an adjective that describes a number of items in project management: agile projects, agile teams, agile processes, and so on. But it is not a proper noun, and except in chapter or section titles, you will not see me use it that way.

For readability, I did not capitalize agile-related roles, meetings, and documents. Such terms include agile project, product owner, scrum master, development team, user stories, product backlog, and more. You may, however, see these terms capitalized in places other than this book.

Some exceptions exist. The Agile Manifesto and the Agile Principles are copyrighted material. The Agile Alliance, Scrum Alliance, and Project Management Institute are professional organizations. A Certified ScrumMaster and a PMI-Agile Certified Practitioner are professional titles.

Scrum For Dummies has six parts. Each part focuses on a different aspect of scrum and utilizing scrum in project management:

- **In Part I,** I show you the basics of scrum and its origin. I define concepts and important terminology as well as introduce the difference between scrum and common practices in scrum.
- **In Part II,** I show you how to get a project started using scrum. You get a look into how the three roles, three artifacts, and five events are broken down and get introduced to some common successful practices. You will discover release and sprint planning and find out how to estimate requirements.
- **In Part III,** I tell you how scrum is applied in industries such as software, manufacturing, construction, healthcare, and education and give concrete examples of success. You find out how scrum can address challenges specific to each industry.
- **In Part IV,** I show you how scrum is helping transform the business world. You see how scrum is used in large-scale organizations. You see how scrum is not just an individual unit or only in one company department but how using scrum can be incorporated across an entire organization from human resources to finance to business development and to customer service.
- **In Part V,** I help you to identify the universality of scrum outside of the business world and applied to daily life. You discover how scrum can be used to find love and for families, as well as how to use the framework of scrum for life goals.
- **In Part VI,** I introduce you to proven tips, metrics, and resources for making a successful transition to scrum and describe useful information to continue your journey in implementing scrum.

Icons Used in This Book

The following icons in the margins indicate highlighted material that I thought would be of interest to you. Next, I describe the meaning of each icon that is used in this book.

Tips are ideas that I would like you to take note of. This is usually practical advice that you can apply for that given topic.

This icon is less common than the others in this book. The intent is to save you time by bringing to your attention some common pitfalls that you are better off avoiding.

If you don't care too much about the technical stuff, you can easily skip these paragraphs and you won't miss much. If the technical stuff is your thing, you may find these sections fascinating.

This is something that I would like you to take a special note of. This is a concept or idea that I thought was important for you know and remember. An example of this would be a best practice that I think is noteworthy.

Beyond the Book

A lot of extra content that is not in this book is available at `www.dummies.com`. Go online to find the following:

- **Online articles covering additional topics at**

  `http://www.dummies.com/extras/scrum`

  Here you will find articles, blogs, and other information regarding the implementation and experience of scrum.

- **The Cheat Sheet for this book is at**

  `www.dummies.com/cheatsheet/scrum`

  Here you'll find the major highlights for understanding the scrum framework.

- **Updates to this book, if any, are also available at**

  `http://www.dummies.com/extras/scrum`

Where to Go from Here

To start getting scrum working for you, you can begin applying scrum on smaller projects to get the feel, and before you know it, you'll be handling your most important ones in the same way. This book is applicable to a diverse set of readers and is organized in a way that will allow you to navigate it by finding specific areas of interest that are relevant to you. Each chapter can be a reference to you at any time you have a technical question or want to see an example of scrum in real life.

- If you are new to scrum, begin with Chapter 1 to understand introductory concepts and terminology; then work your way through Chapter 6 to find out about the entire framework. Then, as you continue on past Chapter 6, you'll see how to apply scrum in any situation.
- If you are already familiar with scrum and want to find out more about how it applies to many industries, check out Chapters 7 through 10 and read about scrum being practiced in a variety of industries.
- If you are a product owner, scrum master, or business leader and want to know more about scrum on a larger scale, start by reading Chapter 12 and all of Part VI for valuable resources.
- If you are familiar with scrum and want to know how it can help you address daily life, read Chapters 16 and 17 to get inspiration and examples.

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