



# Project Rescue



Project Methodologies considered in this Discussion



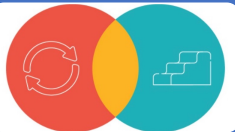
## Agile

- Collaborating to iteratively deliver valued-added functionality



## Scrum and Kanban (A type of Agile process)

- Enabling a small, cross-functional, self-managing team to delivery fast
- Improving speed and quality of delivery by increasing visibility of work and limiting multi-tasking



## Hybrid

- A combination of two or more methodologies to enable successful delivery of a project requiring a creative approach

3

The purpose of these roundtables was to discuss project rescue for Agile, Scrum, Kanban, Hybrid type projects. Considering that these methodologies were developed to replace Waterfall and the challenges associated with this approach, are they without problems or do they have their own, unique challenges? And how does one approach project rescue in these cases?

Discussion Point 1:

F

## Discussion Point

What indicators could be used to identify project challenges using these methodologies?  
 OR *“How do you spot a project going off the rails?”*

Lack of Progress (Velocity) against Objectives

Misunderstanding of project (internal/external)

Lack of Risk Management/Mitigation

Not achieving Earned Value

Other – Specify in Discussion

4

Results of the Votes:

Lack of Progress (Velocity) against Objectives	38%
Misunderstanding of project (internal/external)	23%
Lack of Risk Management/Mitigation	15%
Not achieving Earned Value	7%
Other – Specify in Discussion	15%

Lack of Progress (Velocity) against Objectives	33%
Misunderstanding of project (internal/external)	26%
Lack of Risk Management/Mitigation	20%
Not achieving Earned Value	13%
Other – Specify in Discussion	6%

Key Points:

- Velocity is a clear indicator. If completion of deliverables slips from sprint to sprint it presents a clear sign that something is not in alignment. Normally the velocity is set during sprint planning and the velocity is then measured from sprint to sprint. If velocity slows down it can point to various problems, such a team dynamic, incorrect measurement, misunderstanding of the project due to communication issues. Note that velocity at the beginning of the project, sprint 1 and 2, is meaningless as the team is still forming.

- 
- Another indicator is progress as observed in the daily scrums. The team may get stuck on an issue and is unable to resolve it, or the team repeatedly struggles to progress through items as originally identified.
  - Risk management is a key irrespective of the methodology being utilized. Consider contingency on timeline, managing technology risk by delivering on required technology before the regular sprints. Evaluate if the right methodology was chosen. If risk is not adequately managed it presents an indicator by itself.
  - Another indicator is team dynamic. If there is nagging, complaining, passive aggressive behaviour within the project team, this will lead to ongoing challenges. The team must work well together to achieve the objectives.
  - Misunderstanding or misalignment of the project may show up as missed objectives or late deliverables, and usually points to a problem with communications. Communications (internal and external) is more important in these types of projects than Waterfall because of how the project team works and the high degree of change that occurs. Managing the correct understanding of different stakeholders continuously is key.

Discussion Point 2:

## Discussion Point

What can cause project challenges using these methodologies?  
*OR "Why?"*

Lack of Experience with Project Manager

Lack of Business Support & Understanding

Expectations based on Waterfall Experience

Organizational Communications

Inconsistent Usage of Methodology

Team Stability & Continuity

5

Results of Votes:

Lack of Experience with Project Manager	11%
Lack of Business Support & Understanding	17%
Expectations based on Waterfall Experience	11%
Organizational Communications	17%
Inconsistent Usage of Methodology	17%
Team Stability & Continuity	23%

Lack of Experience with Project Manager	16%
<b>Lack of Business Support &amp; Understanding</b>	<b>25%</b>
Expectations based on Waterfall Experience	8%
<b>Organizational Communications</b>	<b>25%</b>
Inconsistent Usage of Methodology	8%
Team Stability & Continuity	16%

Key Points:

- Team stability and dynamic can lead to project problems. A project requires the right SMEs as they are key to project success. Resource dedication to a project and correct project priority against other responsibilities impact how well a team can work together or evolve into a high performing team. A high performing team can be very powerful in delivering project after project successfully. This will continue to enable business productivity until the organization

---

changes, the team changes, or the scope/objectives are modified beyond the team member's expertise.

- Having executive sponsorship is a key requirement to overcome issues and barriers external to the project. It can also happen that management is not fully committed to the methodology and expects delivery against Waterfall parameters due to a lack of understanding of how the selected methodology works. A project can be wrapped into Waterfall style (may or may not work) or the Scrum Master can act as a coach to leadership.
- Having the product owner empowered to correctly do their job is important as well. The product owner drives deliverables and priority. A project team can go in the wrong direction if the product owner does not provide correct direction.
- A project can run into problems if the wrong methodology is chosen. Who decides this and when? Should a methodology be chosen at the beginning of a project only or can the methodology change from sprint to sprint, iteration to iteration depending on what is to be delivered?
- Even for iterative or hybrid projects it is critical to set clear success factors and what does "done" look like. A project team must have a clear understanding of when they have reached the end of the project and when they need to stop. If these parameters are not set, it can lead to ambiguity and inefficiencies as the project is extended.

Discussion Point 3:

## Discussion Point

How do you prioritize project rescue actions depending on the problem?  
*OR "How do you fix it?"*

1. Complete Evaluation and Analysis

THEN

2. Resource Mgmt, Course Correction, Methodology Change

OR

3. Complete Reset

OR

4. PMO/Governance/Project Framework Refresh

6

Results of Votes:

Complete Evaluation and Analysis	35%
Resource Mgmt, Course Correction, Methodology Change	28%
Complete Reset	14%
PMO/Governance/Project Framework Refresh	21%

Complete Evaluation and Analysis	27%
Resource Mgmt, Course Correction, Methodology Change	36%
Complete Reset	18%
PMO/Governance/Project Framework Refresh	18%

Key Points:

- An issue should be analysed and resolved as quickly as possible when it first presents itself. Early detection through active monitoring and proactive risk management is key. Adapt the evaluation and analysis to the size of the problem.
- Taylor the response and course correction to the challenge specifically. Most challenges can be managed within the project through resource management, smaller course corrections, and even methodology change if it makes sense.

- Setting up pre-defined escalation paths, including triggers and response expectations, between steering committee/sponsor, stakeholders, vendors, and the project team will help with risk/issue mitigation in a proactive manner. This helps with avoiding surprises, especially for the steering committee and the sponsor. Project rescue/recovery requires partnership between leadership and project team.
- Courageous conversations are required when a project runs into a challenge or when projects continuously run into problems. Predeveloped relationships and clarifications of expectations will help prepare for the situation where the message is about challenges or problems. This can help the communications quickly lead to solutions which may be more systemic.
- Be proactive in avoiding project problems where possible. For example, ensure the out-of-scope definition of deliverables must be detailed as well as the in-scope definition.
- If the organization is running from an old governance model or framework setup that no longer aligns to current project implementation requirements, then a PMO/Governance/Framework Refresh is required.

### **Overall Learnings:**

- **Organization:** What is the organization capable of handling? The methodology and framework should be tailored to the company culture and structure and requirements. The methodology and implementation approach chosen cannot be one-size fits all.
- **Communication:** Communication and transparency is key and a critical factor to project success. How to communicate internal/external to the project, when to communicate, how to keep everyone in the loop is a primary requirement in iterative type projects.
- **Governance:** How to manage organization against project governance must be proactively managed and project team continuity must be considered a factor in enabling iterative type project implementation.