AGILE IN A DAY – A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION TO AGILE PROJECT DELIVERY TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

Aim of course: A one day course for non-PM trained staff (either in PM or non-PM roles). Teach practical tools that can be used immediately, introduce concepts, raise awareness & understanding. Delegates should leave with <u>confidence</u> to work <u>with & alongside</u> agile projects and use <u>simple agile techniques in their current work</u> (whatever their role).

Caution: This is **not** about teaching any formal approach (ie Scaled Agile Framework) or training people to be project managers / scrum leads.

Structure of course: Using the Scrumples! agile board game, teacher gets the delegates using Kanban approach from the start. Keeping to plain English, a class project will be worked on throughout the day, using large group worksheets. Delegates will learn how to run a Kanban / sprint board, practice story point estimation, running retrospectives, sprint planning and will explore the Product Owner role. There are NO slides.

Duration: full day: 0930 – 16:30 with regular breaks (which can be combined with group sessions). Go at the pace of the delegates.

Logistics: Book teacher and room 0900-1700. Book delegates from 0930-1630 stressing course starts promptly at 0930. 12-16 delegates in groups of 4. There are always dropouts so book 18 per course and expect only 16 will turn up.
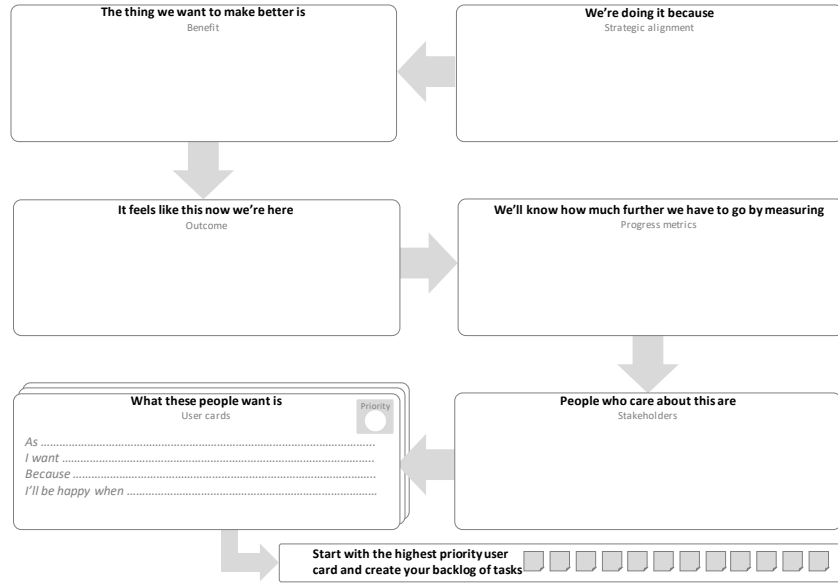
Time	Subject	Learning points
0900 – 0915	Setup & prep and welcome early arrivals	
0930 – 1110	Scrumples! and retrospective	Basic Kanban, estimation of capacity, retrospectives, prioritisation, appreciation of value
Break		
1125 – 1300	Introductions, hopes & fears for the day, class project outcomes, stakeholders, features and Product Owners	Hopes & fears tool, scoping out a new initiative, basic stakeholder analysis, writing features / user stories, breaking big problems into smaller ones
Lunch		
1330 – 1455	Class project, build backlogs and simulate sprints	Story point estimating, retrospectives, sprint planning, Product Owner role
Break		
1510 – 1630	Agile terminology, using agile in the real world, where next & full course retrospective	When to use (and not use) agile

Materials

- 1 x Scrumples! double pack box
- 1 x Choose your approach card game
- 4 x A1 worksheet (one per team + spare)
- Teacher guidance (important as NO slides!)

- Choose your approach / my first kanban A4 sheet (one per delegate)
- Agile theory / agile worksheet summary A4 sheet (one per delegate)
- Coloured pens, flipcharts, post-it notes etc
- A Jira or Trello board you can show to demonstrate agile being used

Pre-preparation: You will need to be familiar with the structure of the course and the worksheet the delegates will be completing. You must have prepared examples from your own career to add 'war stories' into the day.

The worksheet everyone works on (printed A1, write directly on the sheet)

The thing we want to make better is
Benefit

We're doing it because
Strategic alignment

It feels like this now we're here
Outcome

We'll know how much further we have to go by measuring
Progress metrics

What these people want is
User cards
Priority

As ………………………………………………………………………………
I want ……………………………………………………………………
Because ……………………………………………………………
I'll be happy when ………………………………………………

People who care about this are
Stakeholders

Start with the highest priority user card and create your backlog of tasks

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User cards (right side)

Card 1:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Card 2:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Card 3:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Card 4:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Card 5:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Card 6:
As …
I want …
Because …
I'll be happy when …
Priority
User card

Hierarchy

Corporate strategy

↓

Epic(s)
Big chunks of work
3-18 months duration

↓

Feature(s)
Medium chunks of work
2-12 weeks duration

↓

Stories
Small chunks of work
1-5 days duration

Roles

Scrum Lead
The person responsible for leading the scrum team and making sure they do what they are meant to. Runs the daily standup, sprint planning and sprint retrospective

Scrum team
All the skills you need (stripy team) working together to deliver the stories within the sprint

Product Owner
The person representing the end user community (or business) who speaks authoritatively on their behalf and makes priority decisions for the scrum team during sprint planning

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Running a retrospective

☺ ☹ ↗

Use routinely to build a habit of continuous improvement. Put three post-it notes on the wall – a smiley face, a sad face and an upwards arrow. Ask people to write things that went well (smiley), things that didn't (sad) and what we could do differently (arrow) on separate post-its. Stick them to the wall then discuss through them. Use to look back over a meeting, the last week, month, 3 months etc.

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*Use "**tell me about a time when you did / felt something ……**" to get evidence from stakeholders to better understand their needs*

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6 sprints = one Programme Increment (PI)

plan	2 week sprint	retro	plan	2 week sprint	retro	plan	2 week sprint	retro	plan	2 week sprint	retro	plan	2 week sprint	retro	plan	2 week PI planning & innovation sprint	retro

During your "PI planning and innovation" sprint (the last sprint in each PI) you should reassess your Epic priorities (you may have new Epics to add or old ones to remove), review your backlog of features, and pick the features you want to focus on for the next PI. And start drafting the stories you will need to deliver to complete each feature.

Sprint planning
Meet for an hour on the last day of each sprint and combine with the retrospective: 20 mins retrospective, 40 mins planning. Review what you completed in the last sprint and how many story points you completed. Put unfinished tasks in the backlog (if they are no longer important) or move them to the new sprint if they need to be completed. Review your backlog and choose your next set of stories according to the priority of your features. Estimate story points. Load up the sprint 'to do' column making sure your total story points is aligned to the average number of story points you have been delivering historically per sprint.

Story point estimating
1 2 3 5 8 13 20 40

In your team, pick the smallest task in your backlog and assign this "1". Pick another task and vote how much effort it requires relative to your calibrated '1-pointer'. Don't over think it and only use the numbers above. In your sprint retrospective explore how effectively you estimated your team capacity. After a few sprints you will get the feel for how many story points your team can complete per sprint.

Kanban

Backlog	To Do	In progress	Done

Add to the backlog whenever you want – just don't open it until sprint planning!

Daily standup….
This will only work if you do it daily….it should only take 10 minutes when you have the hang of it. Ask 3 questions of each person.
- **What did you do yesterday?**
- **What will you do today?**
- **What is blocking you?**

Task cards (bottom right)

Task card 1:
Story points
Do …………………………
DoD Definition of Done
…………………………………
Task card

Task card 2:
Put your 1 story point calibration task here
1
Task card

Card 3:
Questions to ask your stakeholders
Tell me about a time when you………

Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri | Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri | Mon Tues Weds Thurs Fri

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
0900-0915 *15 mins*	Check and setup room	Confirm materials, get Scrumples! laid out and ready to go	12 in a class, 3 teams of 4 – wedding reception style
0915-0935 *20 mins*	Welcome & Coffee	Delegates get to know each other a bit and teacher gets to know delegates	To avoid that awkward silence, have a quick chat with each person as they come in the room Tick them off the attendee list, ask what their job is, and experience of agile or project management etc Advertised for an 0930 start but always 1-2 stragglers. Agree with class to wait 5 minutes and start at 0935
0935-0940 *5 mins*	Logistics introductions	Delegates understand emergency procedure, food, toilets, breaks	Run through local fire procedures, toilets, scheduled breaks or when we get tired, 30 min lunch at 1300 approx. Aim for 1630 finish. Introduce yourself and say we will introduce each other and go through the course structure later but first let's get cracking and have some fun.
0940-1050 *70 mins*	Scrumples!	Delegates relax and have fun Delegates learn basics of agile	Run Scrumples! as per the referee sheet inside the box Don't worry about the post-game discussions – that's what the rest of the day is for!
1050-1110 *20 mins*	Whole class retrospective	Delegates learn how to take part in a retrospective Delegates start thinking about how to improve the agile skills they have just gained.	Ref game of Scrumples! ask everyone to write on separate post-its things that worked well, didn't work well, things they would like to try differently next time. Cluster them on the wall and talk them through. Three post-its on the wall to cluster around: 😊 🙁 ↗ Ask if anyone has done a similar retrospective for anything? Make point you can do this in the last 10 minutes of any meeting to make the next one better…
1110-1125 *15 mins*	BREAK (clear up all Scrumples! but keep the dice handy for the afternoon)		
1125-1140 *15 mins*	Hopes & Fears	Teacher understands how to make the course successful Delegates feel empowered to call out if the course is not working for them	Get delegates into pairs, chat & prepare to introduce the person next to you in the class. Give their **name**, any project or agile **experience** one **hope** and one **fear** for the day. Two flip charts, one for hopes, one for fears. Don't record names on flipchart. Discuss fears with class and agree how to test them as we go. "Jargon" is a common fear – nominate people to be Jargon police and give them permission to wave whenever Jargon appears…. Spending time here is important so don't feel under pressure to hurry. Fears are most important and must re-check them at each break point.
1140-1142 *2 mins*	Teacher introduction	Delegates trust you know what you are talking about	Give a 2 minute career history, and Project Management experience and where your passion for agile comes from and where you have used it.
1142-1145 *3 mins*	Structure of the course	Delegates understand how the course will unfold	***We will work as a class and small groups to build and run our own Scrumples! using a single class non-work scenario to "make something better". We will explore what it will feel like when we are there, how we'll measure this, the people who care and what they want, and once we've prioritised their needs we'll break the work into small chunks, 'size' them and run through a 3 sprint game with them. And we'll back this up with a bit of theory and discussion on how you can make a start with these techniques tomorrow! We'll talk in plain English, please ask questions, share stories. We expect no prior knowledge. And have fun!***

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
1145-1147 *2 mins*	Name the group	Enforced fun!	*You will now be working in "scrum teams" of four people and you need to choose a name for your team – ideally with a scrum pun in the title!*
1147-1150 *3 mins*	Introduce the topic for the rest of the course **The thing we want to make better is (box 1)**	Delegates understand the topic they want to work on for the rest of the course	Introduce delegates to class project: *A local entrepreneur has just gifted £1M to the local area for it to spend on what it most wants to improve. You are the organising committee entrusted with making the best use of this investment. Your task is to: Use an unexpected £1M windfall to improve your local area* Ask the class to say what needs to be improved in their local area and explain they should assume they all now live in the same place with an amalgamation of these problems. Get class agreement on whether their local area is city, town or village and to name their area (eg uglyville). *Write "Make <name of place> better" in box 1 of the worksheet. We'll explore what 'better' means shortly.*
1150-1200 *10 mins*	Strategic alignment **We're doing it because (box 2)**	Delegates learn to ensure their initiatives are aligned with, support, or are driven by corporate strategic objectives Delegates learn the 5-whys tool	Introduce the 5-whys tool as an easy tool to get to the bottom of why someone wants to do something. Keep asking **why** until you can get no further An example – choose your own if you want! **I want to buy a new trombone…** **Why**: because my other one isn't good enough anymore **Why**: because it is not loud enough and plays out of tune **Why**: because it is cheaply made **Why**: because it is only designed for absolute beginners and I'm more advanced than that now **Why**: because I have practised lots and am really serious about my playing Keep asking the class why are we "making <name of place> better" until you can go no further, then ask groups to write the final reason in their worksheet box 2. Stress that in a world where there are far more ideas and initiatives than available effort to do them all, you should be really sure there is strategic alignment before you start something new! Please feel empowered to use the 5-whys to challenge work you have been asked to do!

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
1200-1220 *20 mins*	Outcome / what 'good' feels like **It feels like this now we're here (box 3)**	Delegates learn how to succinctly describe the end state (outcome) of their objective	***It is important you all roughly agree on what good looks like. This will act as your guiding star and focus and will give clarity to the people your change will affect and empower you and your teams to make priority calls and other decisions later. When describing this future use words like 'feel' to keep everything at a personal and emotional level (rather than abstract) and write in the present tense (we do… not we will do…).*** ***In your scrum teams, draw a picture on a flipchart page using coloured pens that illustrates what good looks like. You have 10 minutes then you will explain your picture to the other teams.*** Keep the class feedback to 5 minutes. ***Please fill in box 3 with a high level and memorable summary (you have 2 minutes).*** Ask each group to read out what they wrote and as long as they are roughly similar then that is OK.
1220-1230 *10 mins*	Metrics & measures **We'll know how much further we have to go by measuring (box 4)**	Delegates learn how to measure the unmeasurable and the need to measure any improvement you have made	***The whole point of an agile approach is to learn and iterate as you go. Is what you are doing working, if not, change something and try again. We need to measure things to know if it is working or not…. In your scrum teams you have 5 minutes to agree what you will measure and write them in box 4.*** Get each group to feedback and get people to add other's good ideas to their worksheets. Could introduce the concept of leading and lagging indicators if the groups seem quite advanced.
1230-1240 *10 mins*	Stakeholders **People who care about this are (box 5)**	Delegates learn to put people at the heart of their decision making	***The list of people who care (or should care) about your project will change as the work progresses and will include people in favour and against the idea, people who will win or lose from it, and these people will have varying levels of influence and interest. You have 5 minutes to fill in box 5 with a list of people who care (or should care) about your project.*** Ask groups to feed back and get people to add other's good ideas to their worksheets ***We need to choose our most important stakeholders. Please all pick the most important stakeholder on your list, based on your gut feel of how much it will benefit them and their level of influence; then pick your second most important.*** Ask each group for their most important stakeholder, then go round a second time, writing on a flipchart until you have about six.

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
1240-1300 *20 mins*	Features **What these people want is**	Delegates start thinking as end 'users'	*The best way to understand what your stakeholders want is to listen to them! A good approach is to ask them to tell stories about past experiences. For example…will someone tell me about a time when you didn't feel safe in your local community; will someone tell me about a time you were in the local park?* (engage in a short conversation with the volunteer to extract out useful information). *As we don't have any 'real' stakeholders to hand, you will have to imagine yourselves in their shoes. In your scrum teams you have 15 minutes to think up some "tell me about a time…" questions to ask your top 2 stakeholders, then role play asking and answering the questions. From what you learn during these conversations, fill 2-3 'user cards' on your worksheet for each of your top 2 stakeholders (ie max of 6 user cards in total) – think back to the Scrumples! cards you used earlier.* Get them all to read out their user cards.
1300-1305 *5 mins*	Choose Product Owners & prioritise features	Delegates introduced to concept of Product Owners and some get to practice being them	*A critical role in the scrum team is the Product Owner. They need to be empowered to represent the wider business, give user context and make priority decisions. They must be committed to this role and must NOT be someone in the delivery team who thinks they know the business – or someone in the business who just cares about their own patch. Please can each group nominate two Product Owners to role play the two stakeholders you have prioritised.* *Can each Product Owner now review their group's user cards and pick ONE each (ie 2 in total per group) that they think is the most important to them that the group will now focus on.* Ask the Product owners to state which stakeholder they are role playing and read the user card they have prioritised. And to put a "1" and a "2" in the priority boxes for the two user cards.
1305-1310 *5 mins*	Test 'fears'	Teacher is able to make any adjustments over lunch	Ask the class how close we are to realising any of their fears for the day.
1310-1340 *30 mins*		**LUNCH**	
1340-1410 *30 mins*	Build backlog of tasks	Delegates learn to break down large chunks into small 'easily doable' chunks	Try a whole class flipchart exercise to break down one of the user cards NOT chosen – get people to shout out tasks that are part of delivering the feature – and get others to break then into smaller chunks. Do as an old-fashioned work breakdown structure on a flipchart (you will use this picture later). Make sure each task has a verb in it – and it is easy to measure when complete (capture a couple of definitions of done) – stress these are important disciplines. Make sure you get to some obvious '1-pointers' or 'quick wins'. *In your groups you have 25 minutes to produce your own backlogs of tasks for your two chosen user cards. Write each one on a different post-it. Make sure each has a verb and a definition of done on it. You will need 30-40 of these tasks.*

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
1410-1420 *10 mins*	Story point estimation	Delegates learn how to estimate story points.	Write the numbers 1,2,3,5,8,13,20,40,80 on a flipchart Using the work breakdown structure picture from earlier ask the class to choose the smallest task. Write a '1' next to it. Then pick another task and ask class to vote with fingers (stand up for 20, jump for 40..) – give them a 3-2-1 countdown and pick middle ground. 2 means twice as much 'effort', 5 = 5 times as much effort. Stress not to get too hung up on what 'effort' means. Use your own example to put in context and after a few weeks you naturally learn how much you can actually get done in a sprint by trial & error. Ask each group to decide and then share their 'calibration 1-pointer' and an example story that is bigger than that. Explain teams don't need to calibrate between them.
1420-1430 *10 mins*	First sprint planning	Delegates practise story point estimating, prioritisation and sprint planning.	***You have 5 minutes to plan your first sprint. Your capacity is the same as in earlier Scrumples! – up to 60 in a sprint, 10 rolls of a 6-sided dice. Product Owners should be very involved in this prioritisation! Choose what you want to prioritise, then story point, then trim to fit into your sprint. You may find yourself re-writing post-its – this is good!*** ***Draw your own Kanban on a flipchart (to do, in progress, done, with a pile of posit-its for the backlog)***
1430-1435 *5 mins*	Run first sprint	Delegates practise mechanics of managing a Kanban.	Let teams do this in their own time. Trust they roll the dice properly for 10 days in a 2-week sprint. Get them to update their kanbans. ***Use pencil marks on each post-it to record how much effort has been completed. No need for horns as we are not competitive – we are working together now!***
1435-1440 *5 mins*	End of first sprint retrospective (in groups) and second sprint planning	Delegates learn to run their own retrospective.	Get each group to discuss what worked, didn't work and what they will do differently next sprint. Have teams run up to break in their own time – those that finish early get to break early!
1440-1445 *5 mins*	Run second sprint		
1445-1450 *5 mins*	Second retrospective & plan third sprint		
1450-1455 *5 mins*	Run third sprint		
1455-1510 *15 mins*	**BREAK**		
1510-1505 *5 mins*	Test 'fears'	Teacher is able to make any last minute adjustments	Ask the class how close we are to realising any of their fears for the day.

Time	Section	Aim	Teacher notes *(bold italics can be read out as written)*
1515-1525 *10 mins*	Full class retrospective of all 3 sprints	Delegates learn from each other's learning	Put 😊 🙁 ➚ on the wall and do it 'properly' – not just a quick chat. Teacher asks for a volunteer to facilitate this. Specifically ask about estimation, role of Product Owners, backlog items you ditched and why. Are Product Owners happy with progress – what do you think they should focus on next – explore whether the next 3 'prioritised' features are still top priority?
1525-1535 *10 mins*	Agile theory	Delegates learn some of the jargon and where to learn more	Bit of theory on Epics, Features, Tasks, Programme Increments. Talk through the agile theory part of the worksheet. Ask "what attributes make a good Product Owner" and "as a Line Manager of a Product Owner, what will you do to support them?". Answer any wider agile questions here.
1535-1550 *15 mins*	Choose your approach card game	Delegates learn when agile is the best (and not best) fit	Talk through the 'choose your approach' handout. Then run the choose your approach card game. Have a free discussion. Use examples when you have / haven't used agile.
1550-1600 *10 mins*	How will it work for you?	Delegates start to think how they will apply their new skills back in the workplace	Open discussion – how will you use your new skills back in the workplace. What are the blockers. What are your fears? What support can you get or do you need? Demonstrate a Jira or Trello board you are using and explain how you use it.
1600-1605 *5 mins*	Post-it pledge	Delegates commit to using their new skills	Ask everyone to write the ONE THING they will do when they return to the office onto a post-it note. These need to be small, memorable and achievable. For example, create your own personal flipchart Kanban and stick to the wall. Invite everyone in turn to say "I pledge to…<action>", get them to keep hold of their Post-it note and ask who will hold them to account to deliver to their pledge?
1605-1615 *10 mins*	Full course retrospective	Teacher learns how to make next course better	😊 🙁 ➚ on the wall – look back over the whole course.
1615-1630 *15 mins*	Goodbye & contingency	Delegates leave happy	One final test of fears (and hopes).
1630-1700 *30 mins*	Clear up!	Teacher winds down & reflects on the course…	Clear away all papers and reflect on what you have learnt from the day.