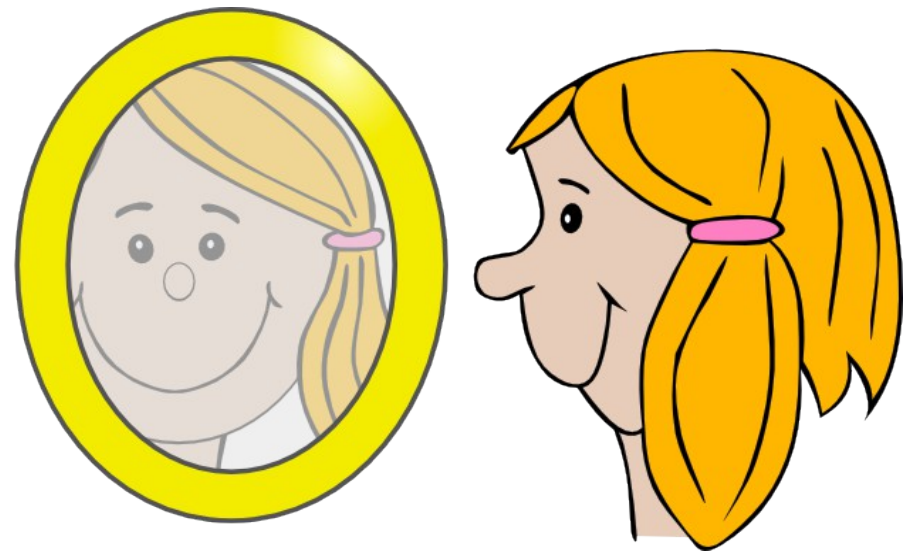# Retrospectives

Retrospectives

- Purpose
- Discussion: Styles of Retrospective
- Logistics
- General Structure
- Set the Stage
- One Structured Method
- Example In-Progress Notes
- Planning
- Resources
- Reflection

Purpose

- Examining "How we did our work" vs. "What we produced"
- Learning to get better at our own process
- Potential areas for consideration:
    - Technology
    - Work space
    - Corporate culture
    - Teamwork
    - Work planning and execution
    - Skill sets
    - Interpersonal dynamics
    - External groups
    - Personal circumstances
    - The process itself
- Also known as "post-mortems", "debriefings", "reflection meetings", "assessment meetings"

Discussion: Styles of Retrospective

As a group, come up with examples of ways of running a retrospective. Think about "post-mortems", "debriefings", "reflection meetings", "assessment meetings", and informal complaint or trouble-shooting discussions. Recall the specifics of how these meetings were run and their results.

Let's generate at least five examples of ways to run a retrospective – write out their agendas.

10 minutes.

Retrospectives
Logistics

- Done at the end of every Sprint, no exceptions
- Time boxed to one hour per week of Sprint length
- ScrumMaster is normally the facilitator, but may involve others
- Everyone on the team participates
  - Other stakeholders may participate if the team feels safe allowing their involvement
- Over the phone participation is strongly discouraged – remote team members and teams should all be brought together if the retrospective will deal with their concerns as well

General Structure

- All Retrospectives have the following five steps:

    1. Set the Stage
    2. Gather Data (Reflection)
    3. Generate Insights (Learning)
    4. Decide What to Do (Planning)
    5. Close

Set the Stage

The Retrospective Prime Directive

Regardless of what we discover, we understand and truly believe that everyone did the best job they could, given what they knew at the time, their skills and abilities, the resources available, and the situation at hand.

Source: Retrospectives.com

Retrospectives
One Structured Method

Materials: note cards, pens for everyone, flip chart and easel, markers
Setup: facilitator stands at front of room with flip chart
Rules: no discussion unless the facilitator says so, print legibly!

- Present the Retrospective **Prime Directive**

- Part One: **What Went Well**?
  - Everyone (including Product Owner and ScrumMaster) takes three note cards and on each one writes a single thing that went well in the past Sprint – **be specific**
    - everyone must contribute three examples even if trivial
  - Facilitator collects the cards, shuffles/hides them so order is not apparent
  - Facilitator reads them out in random order without comment
  - Facilitator gets group to identify themes

- Part Two: **What Needs Improvement**?
  - Same as part one, then...
  - Vote on most important themes needing improvement
  - Enough discussion to have volunteers take **action items**

www.agileadvice.com/archives/2005/11/retrospectives.html

Example In-Progress Notes

- This shows the notes taken during a retrospective
- This retrospective was run using a relatively informal method
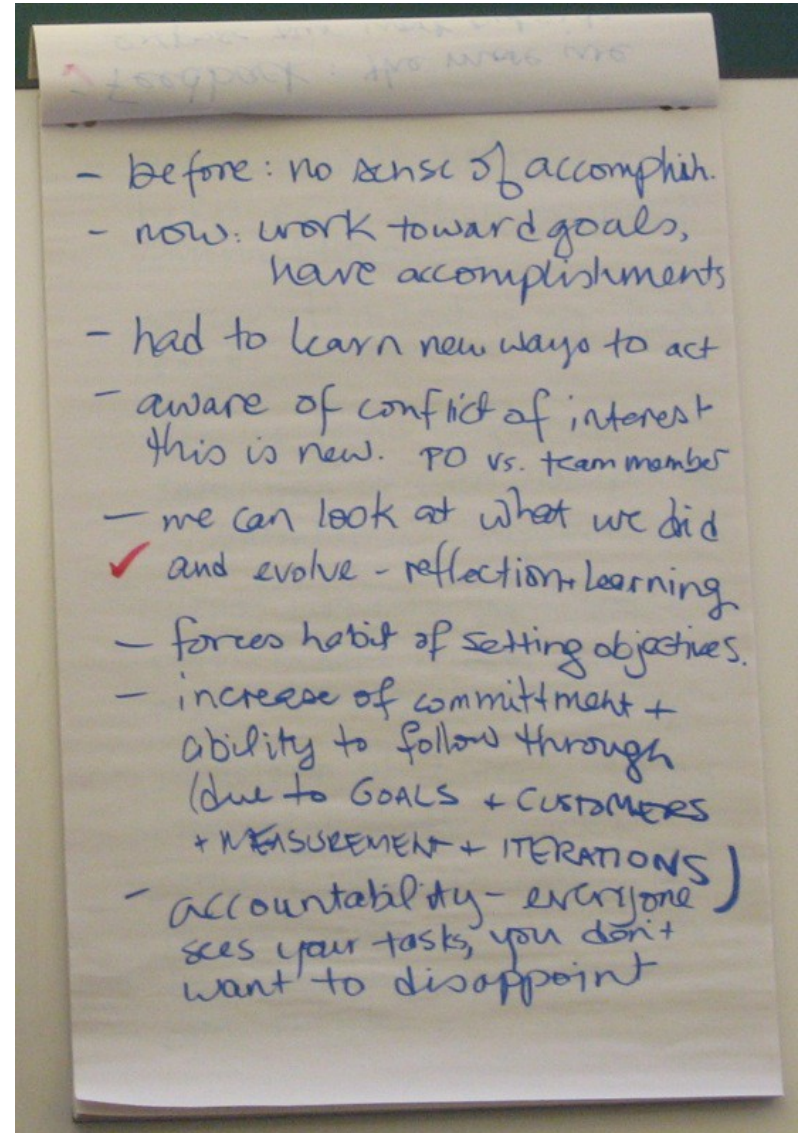
Planning

- How do we apply what we have learned in the next Sprint?

  - Add items to the Product Owner's Product Backlog
  - Add items to the Sprint Backlog in the next Planning meeting
  - Add items to the ScrumMaster's Record of Obstacles
  - Add to the Definition of Done
  - Update the Team Rules
  - Add special tasks to be done as the opportunity arises
  - Team member volunteers for "extra" work
    ...
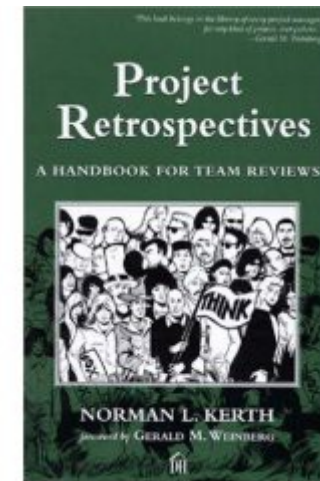- Or just agree to change behaviors and help each other keep to the agreement

Resources

"Agile Retrospectives: Making Good Teams Great" - Esther Derby, Diana Larsen, Ken Schwaber
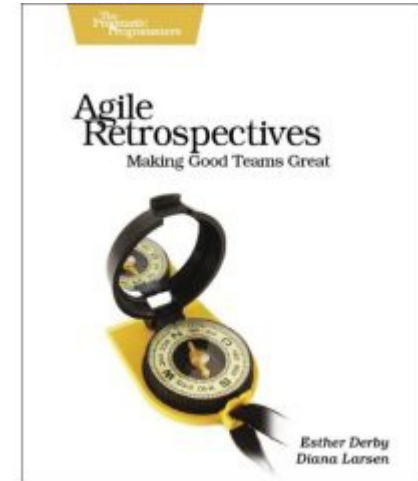
"Project Retrospectives: A Handbook for Team Reviews" - Norman Kerth

http://www.retrospectives.com/

Reflection

Take a few minutes to quietly write down your answers to the following:

Q: What are the five stages of a retrospective.

Q: Is the Retrospective optional if the team feels like everything is going really well? If management feels like everything is going well?