

The 2 Things You Need to Do in Daily Scrums to End Complaints

by Mike Cohn •

61 Comments

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You have undoubtedly had team members complain at some point about the length of your daily scrums. Join the club.

I want to share two extremely simple things you can do to put an end to most of those complaints. (I can't promise getting rid of *all* complaints—some people will always complain.)

Because of the Scrum guideline that a daily scrum is not to be used for problem solving, many Scrum Masters will note the problem during the daily scrum and then discuss it immediately afterwards.

For example, if two hot issues are mentioned during the daily scrum, the Scrum Master might stop discussion of those topics. The Scrum Master will then bring the two topics back up after everyone has first had a chance to address [the three questions of the daily scrum](#).

This leads to the team being there for longer than the standard timebox of 15 minutes for a daily scrum.

The first thing you should do is to end every daily scrum by announcing how long the meeting took. Do this right after everyone has addressed the three questions and before switching into problem-solving mode.

You might, for example, announce, “Thanks everyone. That took twelve minutes.”

But then, remind everyone of any problems or issues that were brought up. Suggest that those who are needed stay to discuss or resolve them. If possible, facilitate the team splitting into more than one subgroup if more than one issue needs to be discussed.

Then, do the second thing that helps end complaints about the length of the daily scrum: Announce that those who are not needed to resolve any of the issues being discussed can leave.

By taking these two actions:

1. Calling the daily scrum officially over and announcing how many minutes it took; and,
2. Telling team members who are not needed for further discussions that they can leave

You will help team members from feeling that the daily scrum is exceeding its 15-minute timebox.

What Do You Think?

What have you done to eliminate complaints about the daily scrum? How have you helped your team see the value of this meeting? Please share your thoughts in the comments below.

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Tagged: daily scrum, time management, time box, transitioning

About the Author

Mike Cohn specializes in helping companies adopt and improve their use of agile processes and techniques to build extremely high-performance teams. He is the author of User Stories Applied for Agile Software Development, Agile Estimating and Planning, and Succeeding with Agile as well as the [Better User Stories](#) video course. Mike is a founding member of the Agile Alliance and Scrum Alliance and can be reached at hello@mountaingoatsoftware.com. If you want to succeed with agile, you can also have Mike email you a short tip each week.
