Agile meeting invites

Five calendar invites, written as charters

Use the text below to structure your calendar invites as charters for the events in your agreed cadence. It helps the people you invite to focus on why we are meeting, what to bring and what they can expect to get out of it.

I use plain terms such as timebox and alignment so that nobody needs to know Scrum to turn up prepared; each heading gives the plain name first, with the Scrum name under it. The timings are suggestions. This is a template, so inspect and adapt.

Planning: agreeing what we will work on next

Scrum calls it: sprint planning

Where the team agrees a goal for the coming timebox and the list of work that gets it there.

SUGGESTED LENGTH	HOW OFTEN	WHO TAKES PART
45 to 60 minutes	Once per timebox	The whole core team

PASTE INTO YOUR INVITE · TITLE: PLANNING

> **Purpose:** discuss, collaborate and plan the work for the coming timebox (the fixed stretch of time we plan and work in; Scrum calls it a sprint).
>
> **Come prepared with:** the items to be worked on, and your availability for the timebox, marked in the team calendar so that everybody can see it. Bring courage, transparency and your authentic self!
>
> **Leave with:** a goal for the timebox, and our list of things to do (the backlog) that lets us work towards it.

In the room: know what you are currently working on before you arrive. If you are raising new work, be ready to explain why it matters. Observers are welcome by invitation, and they listen until the end.

Alignment: checking we are still on course

Scrum calls it: daily scrum or stand-up

A short, regular check between the people doing the work on whether they are still on course for the timebox goal.

SUGGESTED LENGTH	HOW OFTEN	WHO TAKES PART
15 minutes	Daily, or Tuesday and Thursday. The team decides	The developers, meaning the people doing the work. A delivery manager is optional and can observe

PASTE INTO YOUR INVITE · TITLE: ALIGNMENT

> **Purpose:** regular alignment, to optimise collaboration and performance.
>
> **Come prepared with:** the goal for the timebox (the fixed stretch of time we plan and work in; Scrum calls it a sprint), our list of things to do (the backlog), an up-to-date board showing who is doing what, and a focused conversation.
>
> **Leave with:** an updated plan for reaching our timebox goal.

In the room: talk to your teammates; these are peer conversations, not status updates. If you are stuck, say so, because that is the whole point of meeting. Anything that needs longer is picked up afterwards by the people it concerns.

Refinement: getting upcoming work ready to start

Scrum calls it: backlog refinement

Where the team breaks upcoming work down until the items at the top of its list of things to do are clear enough to start.

SUGGESTED LENGTH	HOW OFTEN	WHO TAKES PART
30 to 45 minutes	Twice a week, ideally Tuesday and Thursday. The team decides	The product manager or product owner and the developers. A delivery manager is optional. Let the team self-manage

PASTE INTO YOUR INVITE · TITLE: REFINEMENT

> **Purpose:** break down and prioritise the items in our list of things to do (the backlog), and work out the “how” for the “whats” that deliver value.
>
> **Come prepared with:** prioritised items from that list. Bring an empirical mindset, heuristic neurons and your slicing knives!
>
> **Leave with:** the items at the top of the list closer to “ready enough for action” in the coming timebox (the fixed stretch of time we plan and work in; Scrum calls it a sprint).

In the room: if you have been invited, your knowledge is needed, so contribute. Challenge assumptions now, while it is still cheap to change course. Leave with a shared understanding of the work as well as a list of tasks.

Review: showing what we finished and asking for feedback

Scrum calls it: sprint review

Where the team shows what it finished in the timebox and asks the people it was built for what they make of it.

SUGGESTED LENGTH	HOW OFTEN	WHO TAKES PART
45 to 60 minutes	Once per timebox	The whole team and a wide range of the people the work is for (stakeholders)

PASTE INTO YOUR INVITE · TITLE: REVIEW

> **Purpose:** collaborate on what was done, ask for feedback and foster collaboration.
>
> **Come prepared with:** the goal for the timebox (the fixed stretch of time we plan and work in; Scrum calls it a sprint), our list of things to do (the backlog) and the work we finished (the "done" items). We show what we made where we can, and then we ask the people we are doing this work for (our stakeholders) for feedback. Bring curiosity, inspiration and jazz!
>
> **Leave with:** feedback from our stakeholders, and new ideas to go into the backlog.

In the room: we only show completed work. Feedback and questions are expected, and if something we show affects your area, say so there and then.

ADD FOR YOUR GUESTS

> Thank you for joining us. You do not need to read anything beforehand or bring anything with you. We show real work, not polished presentations, and your questions are the test the work needs. What you say here shapes what we do next.

ONE SENTENCE FOR EACH UPDATE

> For [who this is for], [what we learned]. This timebox we [what we changed]. Next, [the one thing that happens next]. This matters because [the goal, with a number if we have one].

Retrospective: improving how we work together

Scrum calls it: sprint retrospective

Where the team looks at how it worked, as distinct from what it delivered, and agrees one thing to improve. Allow 30 to 60 minutes, depending on the number of people in the team, the context and nature of their work, and their maturity. If in doubt, book the hour and finish early.

SUGGESTED LENGTH	HOW OFTEN	WHO TAKES PART
30 to 60 minutes	Once per timebox	The whole core team, and nobody else

PASTE INTO YOUR INVITE · TITLE: RETROSPECTIVE

> **Purpose:** look at our performance, relationships, processes and tools, and find what to improve.
>
> **Come prepared with:** our list of things to do (the backlog), and metrics where we have them. Bring courage and transparency, and call it as you see it!
>
> **Leave with:** a review of the improvements we agreed last time, and a plan for one improvement action in the coming timebox (the fixed stretch of time we plan and work in; Scrum calls it a sprint).

In the room: this is a closed session. What is said here is for the team's own learning, and it is not reported upward or shared outside the room.

How to use these invites, with guides for running each session: kubairshirazee.com/agile-events-agenda-template