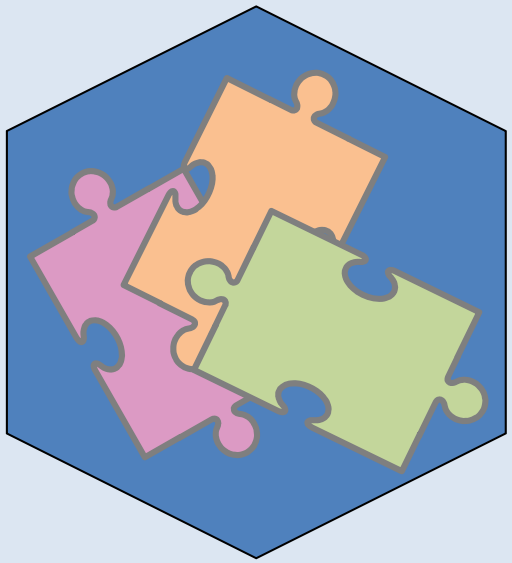
AGILE



Retrospective

Use this practice to gather insight into a period of activity or event, and to generate actions for improvement.

It includes basic instructions on the performance of retrospectives and a catalogue or useful techniques that can be use to keep the retrospectives focused, productive and entertaining.

Contents

Things to do:

- Hold Retrospective

Things to work with:

- Action List

Competencies:

- Leadership

Patterns:

- Mad, Sad, Glad
- 5 Whys
- 4 Ls
- Where Are We?

Key Resources

Agile Retrospectives – Ester Derby …..

Hold Retrospective

On Entry

- Things to be considered known
- Cards, boards and other tools available
- Action list

On Exit

- Action list (updated)

A facilitated session where a team reflects on all aspects of their way-of-working including:

- How have we done since the last retrospective?
- How can we do better?

Participants:

- Facilitator, who will run the session
- Team Members and selected Stakeholders

Typical duration:

- A time-boxed activity of 1 – 3 hours with a preference for the lower

Approaches:

- Workshop (preferred approach)

This activity produces:

- A list of actions the team agrees to implement in the next period

Patterns:

- Sad, mad, glad
- 5 Whys
- ….

Resources:

- Agile Retrospectives by Ester Derby

Parent: Undefined

Sub-activities: None

Hold Retrospective: Workshop Checklist

Before starting

(with Facilitator)

Are the entry criteria met?
☐ Things to be considered are known
☐ Cards, boards and other tools available

Are the participants prepared?
☐ The purpose of the retrospective is clear
☐ The attendees have been determined and notified
☐ Relevant data gathered and available

Are the tools / facilities available?
☐ Facilitation techniques selected
  ☐ Opener / Ice-Breaker
  ☐ Information Generators
  ☐ Close / Action Generators
☐ Cards, boards etc available
☐ Suitable room booked

Have relevant stakeholders been invited?
☐ Yes
☐ No, but the team can be trusted to represent them

During

(with whole team)

Focus on actionable improvements:
☐ Review progress on existing action items
☐ Review data on the last period:
  ☐ Metrics
  ☐ Personal reflections
  ☐ External feedback
☐ Identify highest priority problem areas
☐ Analyze root causes
☐ Generate actions:
  ☐ SMART
  ☐ Owned

Are the participants working together in an open and honest way (with no hidden agendas)?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Are all team members participating?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the group getting to the real issues?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Is the group generating actions as well as ideas?
☐ Yes ☐ No

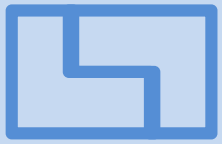
Before completion

(with the whole team)

Are the exit criteria achieved?
☐ Action list updated

Was the retrospective worthwhile?
☐ Were insights generated?
☐ Was the team engaged and involved?
☐ Are the participants satisfied with the results?

Are the team members committed to taking action?
☐ Have actions been agreed?
☐ Have the actions been prioritized?
☐ Do all the actions have owners committed to driving them forward?



Five Whys

Source: Agile Retrospectives
Ester Darby
Tags: ???
Insight Generation Technique

Participants:
- 7 + or – 2 team members
- A facilitator (could be team member)
- A customer rep/product owner

Equipment:
- Whiteboard or flip chart
- Sticky notes

Basic instructions:
1. Facilitator selects issue for discussion
2. Facilitator generates discussion by asking why issue has occurred
3. Discussion continues with multiple rounds of why, why, why questioning until root cause is identified or until group knowledge has been exhausted
4. Facilitator captures results

A simple technique that enables a team to quickly generate insights.

Use when:
- During a retrospective
- After SAD, GLAD, MAD technique, or when an issue has been identified that needs further discussion
- To generate insights related to cause of an issue
- Limit to 15-20 minutes

Applied to:
- Any issue raised by team

Related To:
- SAD, MAD, GLAD

Applied By:
- Team

Resources:
- None

MAD, SAD, GLAD

Source: Agile Retrospectives
Ester Darby
Tags: ???
Data Gathering Technique

Participants:
- 7 + or – 2 team members
- A facilitator (could be team member)
- A customer rep/product owner

Equipment:
- Sticky Notes

Basic instructions:
1. Facilitator asks group to each write down on sticky notes at least 1 or 2 issues that made them feel GLAD, MAD, and SAD during the previous Sprint
2. Facilitator create headings for MAD, SAD, GLAD on whiteboard
3. Team members place sticky notes under appropriate area
4. Facilitator clusters common sticky notes
5. Facilitator asked group to name each cluster
6. Group agrees on top 2-3 areas for further discussion/insight generation

A simple technique that enables a team to quickly gather data about potential issues to resolve.

Use when:

•During a retrospective

•After review of how we did addressing issues from last retrospective

•To generate issues for discussion/insight generation

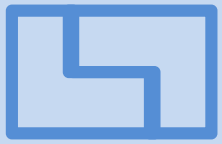
•Limit to 15-20 minutes

Applied to:
- Sprint retrospective

Related To:
- 5 Whys

Applied By:
- Team

Resources:
- None



Where are we?

Source: Agile Retrospective

Tags: Serious Games
Workshop Techniques

Participants:

- 7 +- 2
- A facilitator (who can also participate)

Equipment:

- Alpha State Cards
- Large, flat work area

Basic instructions:

1. Lay out the cards for each Alpha in a row on the table with the first state on the left and the final state on the right
2. Starting with the first state of the first Alpha, walkthrough the checklist and ask if the state has been achieved.
3. If the state has been achieved move the card to the left. Continue until you reach a state that the team has not yet achieved, or you run out of states.
4. If it is not clear which state one of the Alphas is in then a quick round of Progress Poker can be used to help reach consensus.
5. Repeat for all Alphas.
6. Consider the overall position of the cards:
   1. Are any Alphas lagging?
   2. What are the next states to be achieved.

A SEMAT game that helps a team to understand where they are and contrast this wit where they need to be. The game uses the SEMAT Alphas and Alpha State Card to:

1 Assess where the team is
2 Identify gaps between the current state and the desired state

Use when:

- You want to get a holistic, method independent view of where you are and identify areas for improvement
- Duration – up to 30 minutes

Applied to:

- Any software development endeavor

Related To:

- Progress Poker

Applied By:

- Retrospect

Resources:

- Alpha State Cards
- Alpha State Card Games: Chase the State
- Essence Quick Reference Guide

The 4L's: Liked, Learned, Lacked, Longed For

Source: Agile Retrospective

Tags: Serious Games Workshop Techniques

Participants:
- Unlimited
- A facilitator (who can also participate)

Equipment:
- Flip chart paper
- Post-it notes
- Pens

Basic instructions:
1. Hang an appropriately titled poster for each L on the walls of the room.
2. Ask the participants to write down the things they Liked, Learned, Lacked and Longed For and stick then on the appropriate poster. Allow 3 – 4 minutes.
3. Assign participants to groups – 1per poster – to red and group the notes.
4. Each group reports their highlights and themes
5. As a group explore action possibilities to exploit what was liked and learned, and address what was lacked and longed for.

A brain-storming technique developed by Mary Gorman and Ellen Gottesdener.

We ***liked*** it when a good thing took on a life of its own. We ***learned*** that it really resonated with many folks. We ***lacked*** sharing the full understanding of the technique. We ***longed*** for more sharing.

Use when:
- You want to elicit feedback, share experiences, and explore action possibilities
- Duration 30 minutes

Also known as:
- The 3L's – where typically the learned category is dropped.

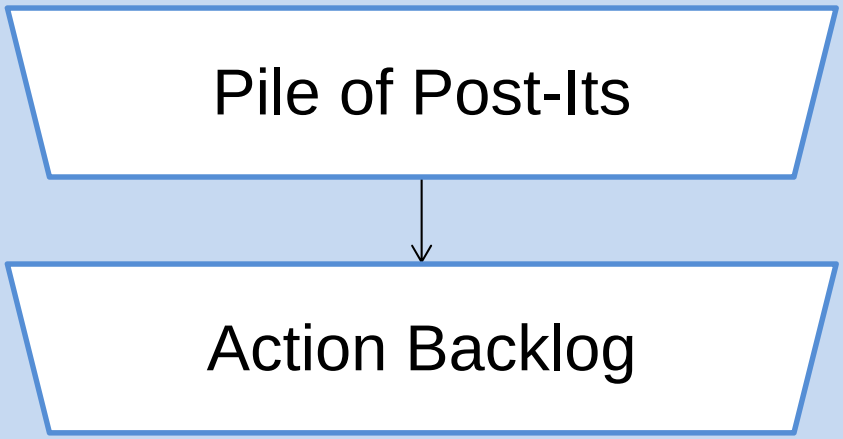
Applied to:
- Any event or time period

Related To:
- Mad, Sad, Glad

Applied By:
- Retrospect

Resources:
- www.ebgconsulting.com/blog/the-4l's-a-retrospective-technique/

Action List



A prioritized list of all the improvement actions identified for a team. The actions should be prioritized and those for immediate action clearly identified.

Each actions should be:

- SMART- Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound
- Assigned a specific owner

Essential Content:

- 1.N Actions

Describes:

- Work

Input to:

- Hold Retrospective

Output from:

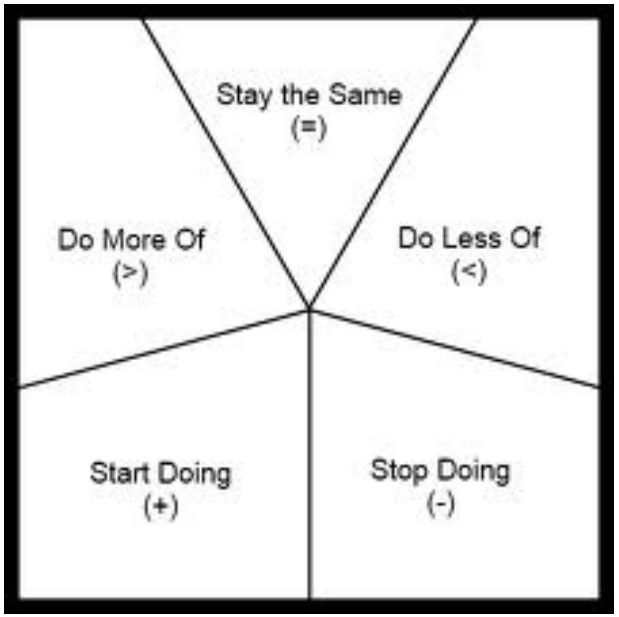
- Hold Retrospective

Patterns:

- None

Resources:

- None

Other patterns that could be added:

- SEMAT Method SWOT
- Speedboat / Sailing Ship