

Essential Agile Retrospective

An Agile retrospective is a meeting held by a team at the end of a sprint to reflect on the recent work done and identify areas of improvement for the next sprint.

A retrospective focuses on the team's performance as a whole rather than individual contributions. Everyone gathers together to discuss both positive and negative aspects of the sprint and identifies what to do next.

Preparation Introduction/Closing energizer/icebreaker theory exercise discussion/debriefing

TIME	NAME	DESCRIPTION	ADDITIONAL INFO
00:00 10m	Before the Retrospective	Schedule a suitable time after the project's close to hold a retrospective. Key tip: Align everyone with project outcomes by sharing the project brief and achievements. Invite people to reflect in preparation for the retrospective.	
Retrospective Introduction			
00:10 10m	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome everyone! Explain the purpose of the retrospective Remind everyone of the team's goals and objectives Review the agenda for the meeting Set any housekeeping rules 	<p>Welcome your team to space, and give everyone time to get settled.</p> <p>Share any rules around communication and general housekeeping</p>
00:20 10m	Check-In	<p>A check-in exercise is a great way to start an Agile retrospective as it helps to establish a collaborative atmosphere.</p> <p>As the team know each other having worked on a sprint together, try something simple yet effective such as a One Word Check-In:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask each team member to share one word that describes how they are feeling at the moment. Encourage them to be honest and authentic with their word. After everyone has shared, you could ask a few team members to explain why they chose that word and how it relates to their experience of the last sprint. 	<p>A check-in allows team members to express themselves briefly, and it can help to build empathy and understanding within the group. It can also help to identify if any team members are feeling particularly positive or negative, which can influence the overall mood of the retrospective. By doing this exercise, you can establish an open and safe environment for the rest of the retrospective.</p> <p>For variations, try Hyper Island's Check-In Questions Or use facilitation cards to check-in visually.</p>
Retrospective			
00:30 15m	Presentation	<p>The project manager or team lead can align the team by presenting the facts and data from the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define the project goals and objectives Highlight the achievements Present any data with regard to timescale, budget, and project scope. 	
00:45 20m	Retrospective Timeline	<p>Encourage the team to share feedback in a collaborative and constructive way. A productive way to gather data visually could be through a timeline exercise that identifies key milestones or events that affected their work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draw a timeline on a whiteboard or flipchart, marking the beginning and end of the sprint. Ask each team member to write down their observations and feedback on sticky notes and place them on the timeline at the relevant point in time. Ask the team to group the sticky notes by theme, and discuss each theme in turn. Encourage team members to share their perspectives on each theme and ask clarifying questions to deepen the conversation. 	
01:05 20m	Generate Insights	<p>The next step is to generate insights from the retrospective. Encourage team members to reflect on the data they have gathered and identify patterns, trends, and potential areas of improvement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask the team to identify the most important themes. Encourage the team to discuss both positive and negative themes. Ask the team to explore why these are important. You might use Liberating Structures 9 Whys or a similar shorter exercise: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Choose a specific theme that the team has identified as an 	

TIME	NAME	DESCRIPTION	ADDITIONAL INFO
		<p>area for improvement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Ask the team to ask "Why?" five times or more, with each subsequent answer building on the previous one. 3. The goal is to identify the root cause of the issue. 	
01:25 20m	Decide what to do	<p>Once the team has identified the root cause, ask them to brainstorm potential solutions, prioritizing them before assigning actions</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Encourage team members to think creatively and be open to different ideas. 2. Prioritize the ideas by having the team vote on the most important ones 3. Create a document to assign actions and owners for each idea <p>Your team could try an exercise designed to activate the team to take action at the end of a workshop. 3 Action Steps from Hyper Island is a powerful method to lead a group towards a shared vision.</p>	
Closing a Retrospective			
01:45 10m	Q&A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage team members to ask questions or share any additional thoughts or concerns 	
01:55 5m	Close the retrospective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summarize the key points of the meeting • Thank everyone for their participation • Remind the team of the next steps 	

02:00

TOTAL LENGTH: 2h 00m

Essential Agile Retrospective - block details

00:00
10m

Before the Retrospective

Schedule a suitable time after the project's close to hold a retrospective.

Key tip: Align everyone with project outcomes by sharing the project brief and achievements. Invite people to reflect in preparation for the retrospective.

Retrospective Introduction

00:10
10m

Introduction

- Welcome everyone!
- Explain the purpose of the retrospective
- Remind everyone of the team's goals and objectives
- Review the agenda for the meeting
- Set any housekeeping rules

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Welcome your team to space, and give everyone time to get settled.

Share any rules around communication and general housekeeping

00:20
10m

Check-In

A check-in exercise is a great way to start an Agile retrospective as it helps to **establish a collaborative atmosphere**.

As the team know each other having worked on a sprint together, try something simple yet effective such as a **One Word Check-In**:

- Ask each team member to share one word that describes **how they are feeling** at the moment.
- **Encourage them to be honest and authentic with their word.**
- After everyone has shared, you could ask a few team members to explain **why they chose that word and how it relates to their experience** of the last sprint.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A check-in allows team members to express themselves briefly, and it can help to **build empathy and understanding within the group**. It can also help to identify if any team members are feeling particularly positive or negative, which **can influence the overall mood** of the retrospective. By doing this exercise, you can **establish an open and safe environment** for the rest of the retrospective.

For variations, try Hyper Island's [Check-In Questions](#)
Or use facilitation cards to check-in visually.

Retrospective

00:30
15m

Presentation

The project manager or team lead can align the team by presenting the **facts and data** from the project.

- Define the **project goals and objectives**
- **Highlight the achievements**
- Present any data with regard to **timescale, budget, and project scope**.

00:45
20m

Retrospective Timeline

Encourage the team to **share feedback** in a collaborative and constructive way. A productive way to **gather data visually** could be through a timeline exercise that identifies key milestones or events that affected their work.

- **Draw a timeline** on a whiteboard or flipchart, marking the beginning and end of the sprint.
- Ask each team member to **write down their observations and feedback** on sticky notes and place them on the timeline at the relevant point in time.
- Ask the team to **group the sticky notes by theme**, and **discuss each theme** in turn.
- Encourage team members to **share their perspectives** on each theme and **ask clarifying questions** to deepen the conversation.

01:05
20m

Generate Insights

The next step is to **generate insights** from the retrospective. Encourage team members to **reflect on the data** they have gathered and **identify patterns, trends, and potential areas of improvement**.

- Ask the team to **identify the most important themes**.
- Encourage the team to **discuss both positive and negative themes**.
- Ask the team to **explore why these are important**. You might use [Liberating Structures 9 Whys](#) or a similar shorter exercise:
 1. **Choose a specific theme that the team has identified as an area for improvement.**
 2. **Ask the team to ask "Why?" five times or more, with each subsequent answer building on the previous one.**
 3. **The goal is to identify the root cause of the issue.**

01:25
20m

Decide what to do

Once the team has **identified the root cause**, ask them to **brainstorm potential solutions, prioritizing them** before **assigning actions**

1. Encourage team members to **think creatively** and **be open** to different ideas.
2. **Prioritize the ideas** by having the team vote on the most important ones
3. Create a document to **assign actions** and owners for each idea

Your team could try an exercise designed to activate the team to take action at the end of a workshop. [3 Action Steps](#) from Hyper Island is a powerful method to lead a group towards a shared vision.

Closing a Retrospective

01:45
10m

Q&A

- Encourage team members to **ask questions** or **share any additional thoughts** or concerns

01:55
5m

Close the retrospective

- **Summarize the key points** of the meeting
- **Thank everyone** for their participation
- Remind the team of the **next steps**