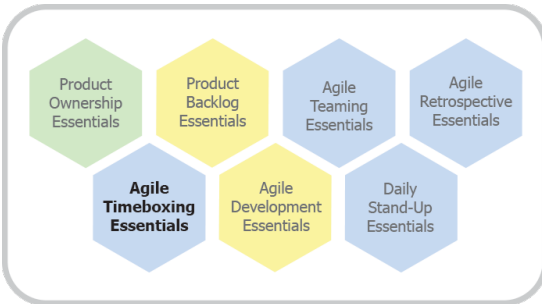




Agile Timeboxing Essentials

Part of the IJI Agile Essentials Practice Pack



Agile Essentials practices provide a starter kit that describes key common aspects of team-based development. Each practice contains cards that provide succinct advice on how to successfully adopt and apply the practice.

Practice Overview

Progress the work as a series of timeboxes, and assess and re-plan the work at the end of each timebox.

Activities – the things we do

- **Schedule the Timeboxes:** Put the dates in the diary when each timebox will start and end, typically through to the end of the project or through to the next major release or equivalent high-level milestone.
- **Plan a Timebox:** The team is guided on the current priority objectives, and collaborates to plan the work and negotiate a viable and acceptable work plan.
- **Review a Timebox:** Review the outcomes of a timebox, in terms of objectives achieved, and assess progress made, so that plans can be adapted as needed.

Alphas – the essential elements that we progress

- **Timebox:** A short, fixed time period for which a focused plan can be built to achieve a set of specified objectives and, after which, progress can be assessed and plans adapted as needed.

Work Products – the concrete things that we work with

- **Timebox Plan:** Describes how the team will work to achieve the timebox objectives.
- **Progress Board:** Makes the work to do and the progress in doing it visible.
- **Progress Update:** Communicates progress in achieving objectives and/or progress towards milestones.

Patterns - supporting practice guidance

- **Regular Heartbeat:** A sequence of short (e.g. 2 to 4 week), same-sized timeboxes is planned and executed.
- **SMART Objectives:** SMART Objectives are: Specific; Measurable; Achievable; Rewarding; Timebound.

Resources - referenced external sources of information and content

- This practice description uses the OMG Essence standard, with key concepts like Activities, Work Products, Alphas and Patterns being defined by this standard (<http://www.omg.org/spec/Essence/>).
- Development **timeboxes** are also called *iterations* (see for example *Managing Iterative Software Development Projects* by Kurt Bittner and Ian Spence (Addison-Wesley 2006). Scrum calls these i development iterations *Sprints* (see for example <http://www.scrumguides.org/>).
- **SMART** exists in many forms (see for example http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SMART_criteria). The one here is from *The Project Management Pocketbook* by Kith Posner & Mike Applegarth (Laurel House 1998).

Creating winning teams.