

# UX in an Agile World

Fadi Stephan

# What is your experience with design on agile teams?

What worked?

What didn't work?

What challenges have you  
experienced?

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**Making design work  
with Agile can be hard.**

## Agile

Approach to delivering quality valuable products early and often while responding to changing customer needs

### Focus of Agile

Frequently deliver working software

Constantly deliver value

Continuously improve

## User Experience Design

Approach to solving problems by understanding what our users need, expect, and how they behave during interactions between product or service

### Focus of UX

Usable and accessible

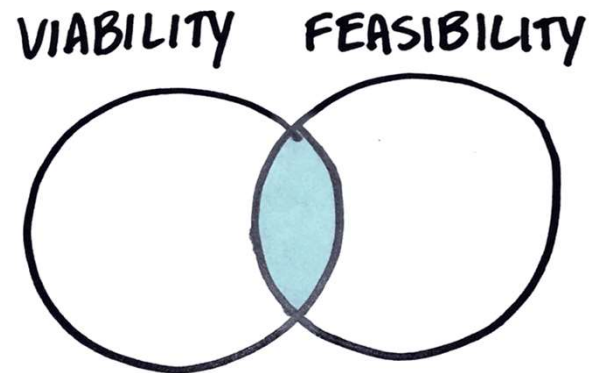
Help user achieve something meaningful

User satisfaction

# How Agile and UX Intersect

Agile

Focus on business value



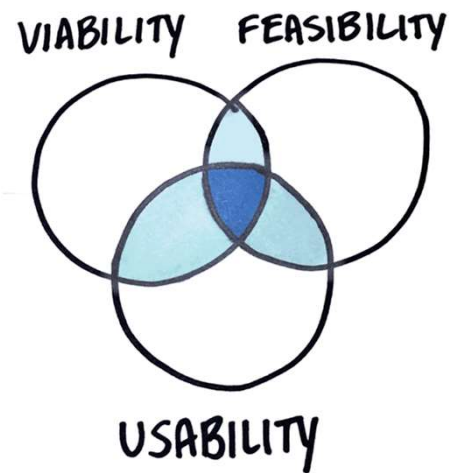
# How Agile and UX Intersect

Agile

Focus on business value

UX

Focus on user value



**Design is essential to  
success in satisfying  
your customers.**



# How Agile and UX Clash

## Agile

Building incrementally

Continuous delivery

Working software

## UX

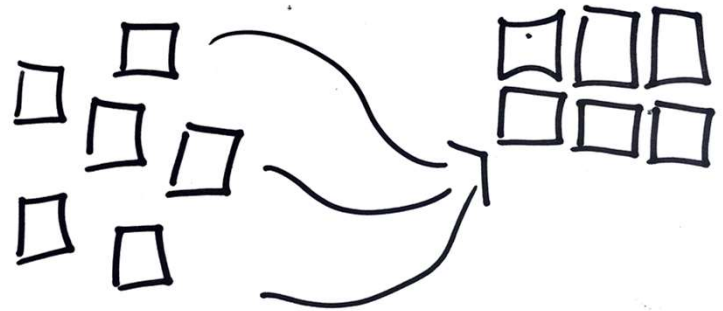
Design end-to-end experience

Time up front to research

Cohesive, quality experience



# How do you align Agile and UX?



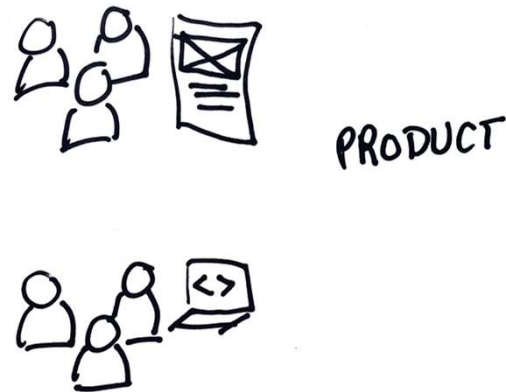
**Three ways to organize  
your teams.**

# Three ways to organize your teams

Separate & sequential



Separate & parallel

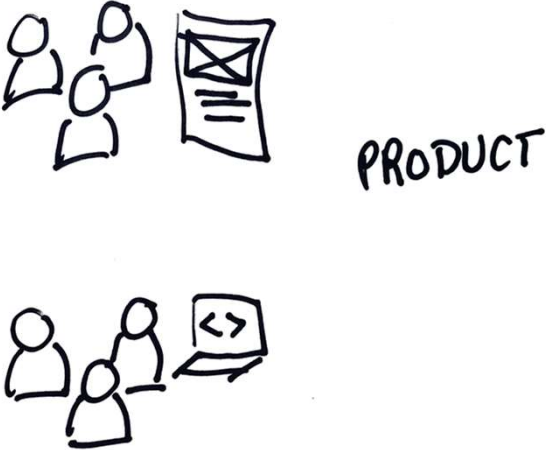


Integrated & cross-functional



# Two ways to organize your teams

Separate and parallel teams



Integrated and cross-functional teams



## Separate and sequential teams

Design team + development team

Big design up-front

Design hands-off to development

Runway needed for design

Cohesive end to end experience



Long design cycle

Delay in ROI

**PRODUCT**

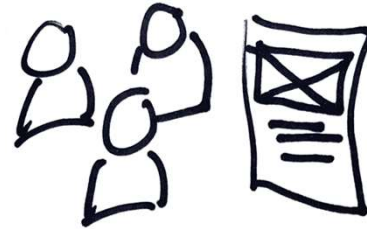
## Separate and parallel teams

Design team + development team

Design 2-3 Sprints ahead

Enough of a runway for design

Closer correlation of design & dev



PRODUCT



Knowledge gaps/lack of shared understanding

Hand-offs

Lack of collaboration/finger pointing

## Integrated and cross-functional teams

Everyone embedded on one team

Design & development are ongoing



Shared understanding

Shared ownership of outcome

Collaborative approach

Not enough time for research activities

Non-cohesive user experience/end to end design

Hard to balance skills/manage team size



# Separate and sequential teams

Big design up-front

Long design cycle



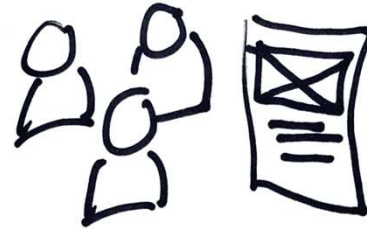
PRODUCT

## Separate and parallel teams

Knowledge gaps

Hand-offs

Lack of collaboration



PRODUCT



## Integrated and cross-functional teams

Balancing skills on team

Managing team size

Timing research activities



**How do we  
succeed at  
UX in an Agile World?**

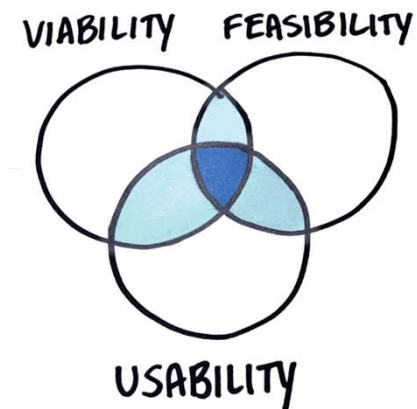
**Try integrated and  
cross-functional teams.**

## How do you do it?

Share responsibility of the backlog — you want the highest value features released

You want customers to use your features and adopt your product

Focus on outcome not output



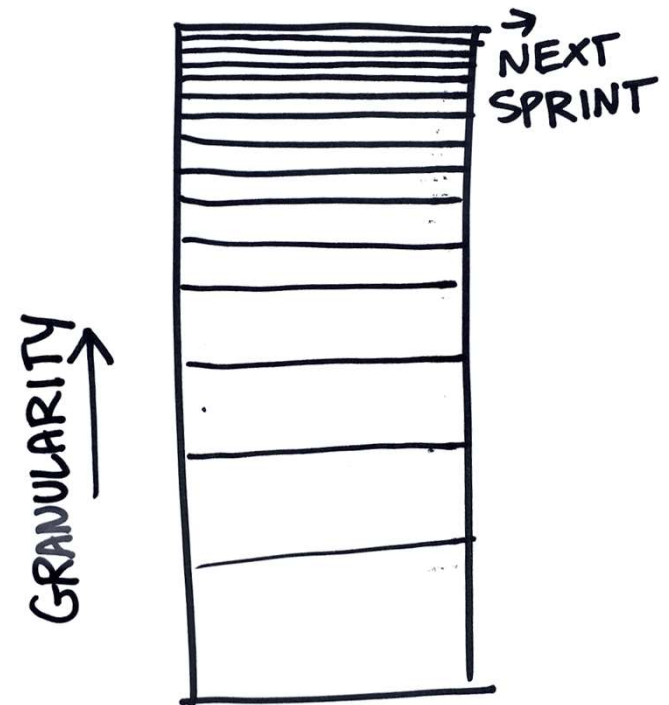
## Key ongoing activity

Generative research

Notional design

Implementation design

## PRODUCT BACKLOG REFINEMENT



## Key difference between integrated vs. parallel

One product backlog vs. multiple

UX skills vs. UX roles

Entire team is engaged in design vs. handoff

Focus is on measurable outcome vs. output





# Participation in ceremonies

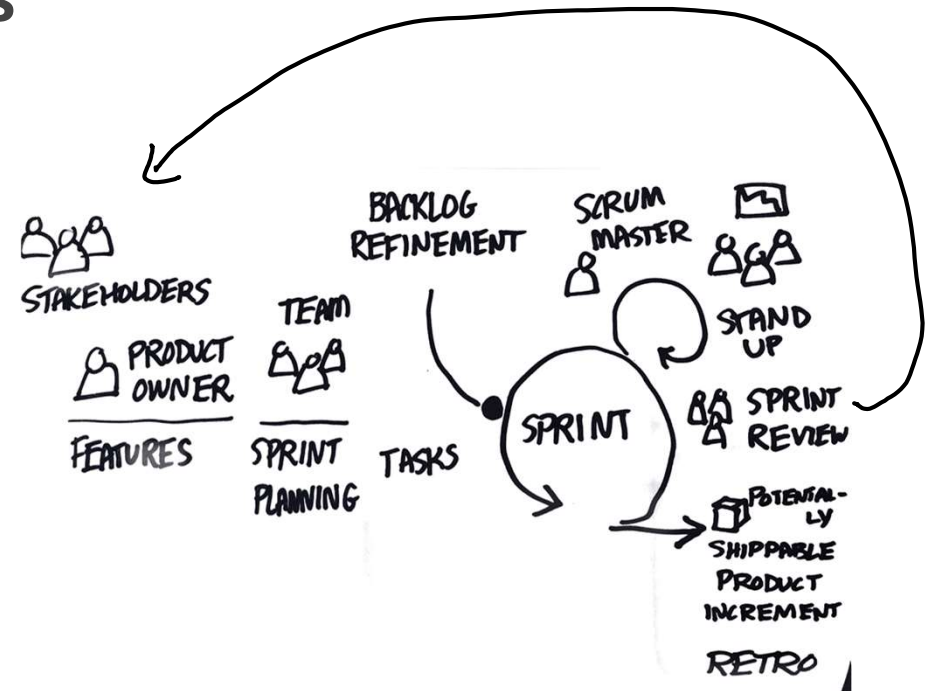
Advocate for the user

Help clarify designs in Sprint planning

Help address questions/impediments in daily standups

Address design questions from stakeholders in Sprint reviews

Contribute to team continuous improvement in retrospectives



## **Planning ahead and looking back**

Ensure top Product Backlog Items are ready for the next Sprint

Plan out research activities for new Product Backlog Items (strategically)

Ensure adherence to design as product increments are being developed

Help out wherever needed

Validate product increment delivers value

Help PO reprioritize Product Backlog based on insights and measurable outcomes

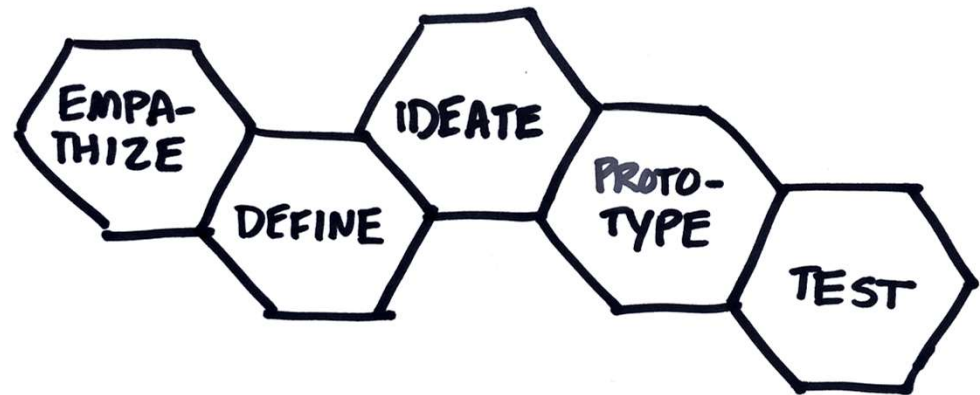
# Design Thinking

Solution-focused approach to problem solving

Timeboxed activities, scale as needed

Open ended prototype as output

Empathy, ideation, experimentation



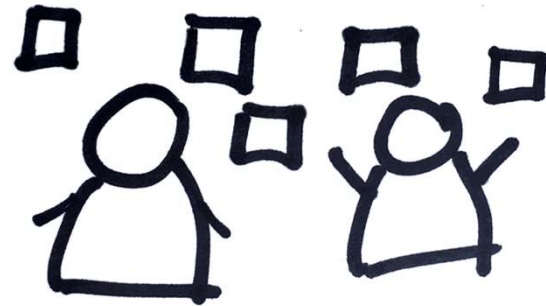
# Co-creation activities

Design studios

Cross-functional research trips

Journey mapping

Co-sketching sessions



# Design Sprint

Timeboxed activity

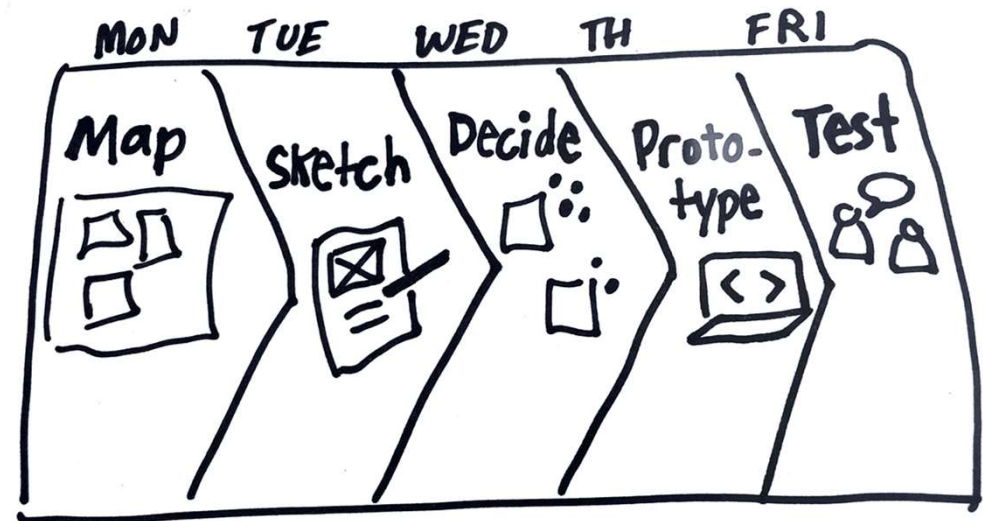
5-day process

Close-ended

Working prototype as output

Representation from different skills

Contributions from different teams



# Lean UX

Ongoing activities

Principles based on DT, Agile, Lean  
Startup

Artifacts used to move team's learning  
forward

Collaborative design, MVP,  
experimentation



VISION,  
FRAMING,  
OUTCOMES



COLLAB-  
ORATIVE  
DESIGN



MVPs &  
EXPERI-  
MENTATION



FEEDBACK  
&  
RESEARCH

# Style guides & pattern libraries

Atomic design system (Brad Frost)

Validated patterns

Co-owned between design and development

Eliminate need to recreate what already exists

Header 1

Header 2

Header 3

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# How to succeed at UX in Agile

Designers embedded on Agile teams

Participation in ceremonies

Co-creation activities

Design Thinking

Design Sprints

Lean UX

Style guides and pattern libraries



**But what about  
velocity?**

# UX in an Agile World

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