Introduction:
This document will walk you through a process to run a retrospective using a Celebration Grid.

When to Use It:
Good to use with a small team (6 or less) that has gone through an intense sprint or a 2-4 week stretch of work (if kanban).

What will it take?
Can probably run this in 60-90 minutes. If you have less time, you might do some of the Gather Data step asynchronously as prep for the actual retrospective discussions.
Preparation:

1. Watch the 5 min video and read this blog post at:
   
   b. *Optional, if you have time*, you might want to also read the following for other facilitation ideas
      i. [https://agilepriests.com/2016/02/05/sprint-retrospective-with-celebration-grids/](https://agilepriests.com/2016/02/05/sprint-retrospective-with-celebration-grids/)

2. Copy the **Celebration Grid** template at:
   [https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1-WEjwXNO68j50gStvj-d9bP7pRBS44StDLfW1yKGBec/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/drawings/d/1-WEjwXNO68j50gStvj-d9bP7pRBS44StDLfW1yKGBec/edit?usp=sharing)

3. Rename it for your retrospective. I like to replace “template” with team name and date.

   You might want to practice moving and typing in the sticky notes on the side if you have not used a format like this before. It will help you help the team.

4. Send out the Management3.0 video in (1) to the team and ask them to spend 5 min watching before they come to the retro.

5. Plan your activities to:
   a. Set the Stage / Opening to set Safety

6. Have a page for notes

Running the Retro:

Set the Stage

Pick something that will allow the participants to focus on their learning from the iteration or release. Keep this to 1-3 min per person for an hour long session. Remember this is just the warm up.

You might try:
- One Word Check-in
- Three Words
- Why Retrospectives? (get them a time or word limit on this one)
- Check In - Quick Question
- Positive and True
- You might choose another exercise such as a different one from Retromat.
Gather Data

- Give participants a brief overview of the Celebration Grid (even if they have watched the 5 minute video). Demonstrate how they will be able to move the sticky notes and write about events and learning on the notes.
- Tell them the timebox they will have to jot things down. Let them know that you will remind them of the time at the half-way point and with 1 minute remaining.
- Ask them to put one event per sticky note. Be sure to capture the learning and who was involved if they can.
- Ask if they have questions before they begin.
- To start them off on the actual writing, you might say something like:

  "What were key events during (time period)? You have X minutes."

- Remind them of the time half way through the timebox and with one minute remaining. If you call time, ask if anyone needs time to finish writing. Give them another minute if needed.
- Review the board together. Either go left-to-right across the board or round robin and ask each person to briefly recap an event they captured. Let others know they should ask questions if it’s not clear. Go until you have reviewed the entire board.

  You know have a shared view among the team of the events that occurred.

Generate Insights

Now it’s time to look at where the learning opportunities were. Ask the team to look over the board and respond to a few questions. Have a way to capture the observations.

You might ask 2-3 of the following questions for the team to reflect on the events on the board:

1. Where do you see the most learning occurring?
2. Where did you have some surprises in the learning?
3. Did we miss any learning opportunities?
4. Did we learn more from successful experiments or failed experiments?
5. Did we learn more from each other or from outside the team?

Capture Their Thoughts in Notes

- Have notes available that everyone can contribute.
- You could have multiple ways to capture the notes:
  - a google doc
  - another board with sticky notes to capture comments
  - A shared mind-map
  - (pick what can be easily added to by the team and they can all see)
Decide What to Do

Now that they have identified some learning opportunities, let's see how they want to carry that forward.

Tell the team to brainstorm ways that they can improve their learning.

You might ask questions like:
- Given what we see on the board, where do we tend to do our best learning?
- Do we see any learning opportunities we can be better prepared for and how would we do it?
- How can we more easily learn and share it out?

After generating a list, you might dot vote by giving each team member 3 votes each and tell them we have to narrow down the list to 2-3 top things we can try over the next couple of weeks. It might be a change to working agreements, a new activity to prepare for learning, or whatever. But let them know to continue in successful learning, they should only try a small number of new experiments.

Close the Retro

Make sure the top 2-3 actions are clear and there is a volunteer and due date for each. (Hint: Try to avoid being the volunteer for the team or they may not own the change.)

Thank the team for the time and do a quick review of how they thought the retrospective was for them.

You might try one of these exercise:
- Feedback Door (but just have them put a vote in a team’s chat backchannel where you might follow up with them.)
- SaMoLo (also good in team’s chat backchannel)
- Plus and Delta  (You could do this in notes or in team’s backchannel - i.e., in Slack, ask for Pluses via one threaded message and Deltas/changes in another threaded message. If you are not familiar with dedicated team backchannels, see references.)
- Or choose another short method to close the retrospective.

Variations

As more variations come up, we'll add them here.
References

- Sprint Retrospective with Celebration Grids - [https://agilepriests.com/2016/02/05/sprint-retrospective-with-celebration-grids/](https://agilepriests.com/2016/02/05/sprint-retrospective-with-celebration-grids/)
- **Agile Retrospectives: Making Good Teams Great** - by Diana Larsen and Esther Derby - [https://books.google.com/books/about/Agile_Retrospectives.html?id=zA5QDwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false](https://books.google.com/books/about/Agile_Retrospectives.html?id=zA5QDwAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=kp_read_button#v=onepage&q&f=false)
- Retromat.org - great online source of retrospective exercises - [https://retromat.org](https://retromat.org)
- On Backchannels
Using This Template

Distributed Celebration Grid exercise by Mark Kilby is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License. Based on a work at https://management30.com/practice/celebration-grids/.

Permissions beyond the scope of this license may be available at http://markkilby.com.